

**SYMBOLIC INTERPRETATION OF THE WORLD IN THE MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY ON
ROBERT GROSSETESTE'S WORKS**

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Статья посвящена символическому прочтению мира в Средневековой философии на материалах работ Роберта Гроссетеста. В этой статье автор делает попытку рассмотреть вариант символического видения мира, который сложился в Средние Века. Центральное понятие работы – «двуосмысленность», в том понимании, в котором предоставляет его Светлана Неретина. Двуосмысленность видения мира средневекового человека – это направленность сознания на сакральное и мирское; это особая форма средневекового символизма.

Ключевые слова: дуализм, средневековое мышление, двуосмысленность, символизм, Роберт Гроссетест, мировосприятие.

Стаття присвячена символічному прочитанню світу у Середньовічній філософії на матеріалах робіт Роберта Гроссетеста. У цій статті автор робить спробу розглянути варіант символічного бачення світу, який склався в Середні Віки. Центральне поняття роботи – «двуосмисленність», в тому розумінні, у якому його надає Світлана Неретина. Двуосмисленність бачення світу середньовічної людини – це спрямованість свідомості на сакральне і мирське; це особлива форма середньовічного символізму.

Ключові слова: дуалізм, середньовічне мислення, двуосмисленність, символізм, Роберт Гроссетест, світосприйняття.

The article is devoted to the symbolic reading of the world in medieval philosophy on Robert Grosseteste's works. In this article the author attempts to consider the option of a symbolic vision of the world that formed in the Middle Ages. The central concept of the work is "dual meaningfulness" represented by S. Neretya. Dual meaningfulness is the vision of the world of a medieval man, it is a focus of consciousness on the sacred and the profane; it is a special form of medieval symbolism.

Key words: dualism, medieval thinking, dual meaningfulness, symbolism, Robert Grosseteste, worldview.

The author investigates the symbolic reading of the world in medieval philosophy on materials of Robert Grosseteste's works. Apart from the fact that the problem of the symbolism of medieval thought is very interesting, it is also urgently relevant today. After all, it will help to understand an medieval man; his consciousness; what he was guided by committing any acts. This, in turn, will help us to understand the Middle Ages on the whole. We consider this problem, not only in the philosophical tradition, but also in other areas of human activity.

Robert Grosseteste is one of the most important representatives of English medieval philosophy, after this example, you can examine and analyze the phenomena of symbolism and dual meaningfulness of the world in the Middle Ages. And better feel the spirit of his era. Medieval masters, writers, artists, neglecting visible outlines of surrounding earthly world, peer into the other world. And Robert Grosseteste is just such a figure in the Middle Ages. Despite the fact that Grosseteste's treatise "About light or about the beginning of forms" is a monument of long-past era, in many ways it has not lost its relevance today too. The symbolism of medieval mind is often seen in domestic and foreign literature. But Robert Grosseteste's work has been poorly studied from this point of view. Robert Grosseteste's philosophical concepts were investigated by: A. Speer in "Light and space. Robert Grosseteste's speculative study of "natural science", Shishkov A.M. in the article "Robert Grosseteste, light metaphysics and Neoplatonic tradition", M. Koshkin in his article "The Path of "The Divine Comedy"".

Many researchers pay attention to his natural-philosophical ideas. But the symbolism in his ideas and concepts is poorly studied. As the main material for analysis, we chose Robert Grosseteste's work "About light, or about the beginning of forms", because is considered the best work possible to develop a theme of the thesis. The theoretical basis and the starting materials for the study of dual meaningfulness of the world in the medieval philosophy were the works by: A.Y. Gurevich "Categories of Medieval Culture"; M. Koshkin "Along the path of "Divine Comedy""; S. Neretina "The word and text in medieval culture. Abelard's conceptualism; P. Bitsilli "Elements of medieval culture"; Etienne Gilson "Philosophy in the Middle Ages: from the beginnings of patristics to the end of the XIV century" etc.

The aim of the work is to study the phenomenon of dual meaningfulness of the picture of the world in the medieval philosophy. Many investigators were engaged in Middle Ages' symbolism of thinking and its various manifestations in life. D.S. Berestovskaya in her book on the cultural studies described the Middle Ages, and linked the symbolism with the culture. She says that the European Middle Ages determined the emergence of a new type of culture and a different understanding of it: it was a Christian culture in which there was a concept of another spirituality, an ascetic ideal. A medieval man, having found the inexhaustibility of personality, set a goal to self-improve and get rid of sinfulness [3: 11].

So, the Middle Ages – is an extremely interesting era, despite the fact that this period of history is considered by many people who did not go deep into the study of the Middle Ages, the "Dark Ages" and is associated with something dark and

gloomy. Gurevich in his book "Categories of medieval culture" studied the epoch of the Middle Ages. He considers that we know the historical events, but we don't know their internal causes, motives that had inspired people in the Middle Ages and that caused social and ideological collisions [6: 17]. Just in the Middle Ages the European nations were borned and modern states were formed, and languages we speak now, were developed. Many of the cultural values that form the basis of our civilization, date back to the Middle Ages [6:15]. And perhaps, if we study the Middle Ages, it will help to understand our contemporary world too.

A.Y.Gurevich is aware that the Middle Ages are not as primitive and simple as it seems at first glance. He wrote in his book that we will not understand the medieval culture, if we consider that the era was dominated only by ignorance and obscurantism, because everyone believed in God – without this "hypothesis" which was not a hypothesis but a postulate for the medieval man, an urgent need of his vision of peace and moral consciousness, he was unable to explain the world and to be guided in it [6: 16]. S.Averintsev suggests that the meaning of a symbol objectively carries himself as a dynamic trend, it was not given but set out. It is essentially impossible to explain by unambiguous expression, and it can only be explained by relating a further symbolic clutch that will sum it to sound more clear [2: 159].

Symbol comes from the Greek language. Simbolon is a distinguishing mark; sign, image, embodying any idea. Symbol is an image in which there is always a certain sense, fused with the image, but not reducible to it. The meaning of a symbol is usually a hint of what is in excess or sensually perceived (for example, a cross – the symbol of the Christian faith; certain signals of a horn mean the beginning or the end of the raid) [5: 502]. The meaning of the symbol can not be a simple effort to decipher the reason, it is necessary to "get used" [1: 510]. Schelling said that the symbol is a way "to be understood as what it is, and only because of this it is taken what he stands for". Everyday life is filled with symbols that remind of something, act, make enable or disable, amaze or captivate. All can be considered a symbol behind which something else is hidden [5: 502]. So, the vision of the world of a medieval man is essentially different from the modern vision of the world. Dualism determined consciousness of medieval people. Everything around was understood as a sign of God. The language of symbols, allegories were widely used. In philosophy, this tradition was formed in the patristic period.

The symbolism of the Middle Ages is the main phenomena of the period. Throughout the all historical development of philosophical thought we can see an attempt of descriptive and essential analysis of this phenomenon. Dual meaningfulness of the world of a medieval man is a focus of consciousness to the sacred and the profane. Reason of a medieval man was in a strong relationship with faith. S.Neretina said in "Word and text in medieval culture" about dual meaningfulness. The external form of speech, for example, can contain dual meaningfulness for understanding (intellectus), which can bring true or false understanding of it and depends on the interpretation of a particular situation different people. She writes that R. Thomas highlighted several bundles of words that have dual meaningfulness in the secular and the sacred practice, combining a single mark of the word. They are not homonyms, i.e. they are not the words that have the same sound but different meanings; this is dual meaningfulness when one word shines through its different meanings: a sacred and literal. Here are some of them: "Inspirare" – to inspire and to call for prayer. "Cognoscere" – to learn, to distinguish between space and natural reason to love God. 'Intellegere' – to understand in the sense of increasing knowledge within the natural thinking in terms of concepts, resting between the sphere of natural and transcendental thinking of the middle area – and understanding of the relationship within the sphere of revelation through allegory. 'Comprehendere' - to understand, but in the sense of "grasping" the essence of faith, virtue, love [10: 81]. A man of the Middle Ages believed that in addition to real-flesh (earthly) world, there is a heavenly, spiritual world, where he finds true bliss, peace, to which belongs the human soul, found that there are laws and regulations that are beyond the human mind, namely: Higher Reason and the Supreme Justice. This all led to the fact that people are trying to get closer to this world and interpret the corporeal world with the help of symbols.

God tells the world of its semantic significance, divine symbols filled the world [3: 12]. Therefore, S.Neretina claims that symbolic consciousness of the people of the Middle Ages can be seen in completely different fields of human activity, of human culture. And it is not only "the stamp influence of the church on people's minds" or "traces of the processing, which Christian consciousness imperceptibly undergone in this consciousness", but it is the principle of Christian thought as a whole, acting on the basis of analogy, which allows a person to join the highest truth [10; 172]. In the "Elements of medieval culture", P. Bitsilli described the symbolic mentality of the medieval man. He says that everything that the medieval man sees, he tries to interpret symbolically. Everything around it is full of special significance, the mysterious meaning of and in accordance with this relationship to reality, it creates a science of it [4: 3]. And so, the world and a man, as considered the Middle Ages ideologists, have a basis in God. In the Middle Ages at the heart of culture, as we know, one text was the foundation, the Bible, the Scriptures, or the Word. This text was originally set out, the God was considered to be the author of Bible readers (listeners) were offered, and sometimes had the duty if it was a cleric of his comment, layering gloss to gloss, notes on the margins, which, in turn, create of opportunities for new notes on the margins. So Bible was wrote again. Just this secondary text inscribed in the Bible itself, is the cultural identity of the Middle Ages [10, 9]. Karsavin underscores the commitment and validity of medieval commentators "values" of characters offered by them in the Scriptures.

In the XIIIth century in England there was too strict control from the part of the Church. At Oxford University he studied diligently and natural works of Aristotle. Their transfer, in particular, Robert Grosseteste, - the founder of the Oxford school of philosophy scientific. Robert Grosseteste is one of the most important representatives of English medieval philosophy, which you can examine and analyze the phenomena of symbolism and dual meaningfulness peace in the Middle Ages.

Robert Grosseteste was a philosopher, a theologian and a scholar. He was engaged in optics, geometry, astronomy, experimented on the refraction of light. Robert Grosseteste had also a church, he was a bishop of Lincoln. Robert Grosseteste research interests concentrated around issues of optics, mathematics (especially geometry), astronomy. He explained the applicability of geometrical laws multiplying itself light to the entire physical reality, and also formulated the doctrine of the

generation, and the ratio of the summation of infinite value, and the doctrine of the “multiplication of species”, developed later by Adam Marsh and Roger Bacon. Robert Grosseteste, one of the first translated from Greek into Latin “About the Heavens” of Aristotle, where he had to think of Aristotle’s understanding of the magnitude and value. That later influenced the philosophy and ideology of Grosseteste. For example, this influence can be seen in his work “About light, or about the beginning of forms” when Robert Grosseteste wrote: “understanding of matter could not take place by final multiplication of light because, it was shown by Aristotle in “About the Heaven and the World”, something simple (simplex), reproduced finite number of times, it does not generate the value of (quantum)» [7: 123]. Also, in his treatise “About light” Grosseteste uses Aristotelian terminology: the construction space is presented in the categories of matter and form.

Robert Grosseteste argued that the need for knowledge of the world based on observation, experiment, and subsequent analysis of the results with hypotheses, initial generalizations. M. Cat writes that Robert Grosseteste, assuming that all things are somehow corporeal, will highlight the general physicality (corporeitatem) into the “first corporeal form” (Formam primam corporalem), specifying the length of things and spatial definition [9; 23]. Robert Grosseteste in his treatise “About light, or about the beginning of forms”, which was written in c.1225, offered a coherent theory cosmogenesis, in which a key role was played by the light and the optical-geometric distribution rules. As it was mentioned earlier, Grosseteste’s work “About light, or about the beginning of forms” is of a special value for us. On the basis of this work, we can come closer to understanding of the symbolic worldview of the consciousness of a medieval man. The idea of light which takes the central role in the origin and formation of the universe, as Etienne Gilson says, came to Robert Grosseteste under the influence of neo-Platonism and the Arabian treatises on optics “Perspectives”. But in his essay “About light, or about the beginning of forms”, this old concept is realized in all its depth and is presented with a perfect sequence. In the beginning, God created instantaneously from nothing its primordial form. In accordance with the reasons that we will consider soon, we can assume that God created first a simple material point and give it a shape. This form is the light; but the light has a very fine bodily substance approaching the incorporeal, the characteristic properties of which are the continuous generation of itself and instantaneous propagation of the field around the point. Let’s imagine a bright spot: a huge luminous sphere arises around it as around the center immediately. The diffusion of light can stop only for two reasons: either it encounters an obstacle opaque or it reaches the extreme limit of the sparseness and then the diffusion of light stops itself. This is a substance having the form of the active principle of all things; It is the first bodily form, sometimes called as a corporeality in the first matter [8:356].

Grosseteste sets the light as a primary form of matter: “The light is the primary form created in the primary form of matter”. So corporeality is either light itself, or that makes said action and brings a matter of measurement due to the fact that it is involved very light and works through the properties of the world” [5:123]. As a part of his metaphysics of light, the light is perceived as the literal meaning (that is, the very physical world that we see with our eyes), and within the meaning of the symbolic, where it has an image of the divine light, giving the world the possibility of being or form of light, carrying the process of registration of matter [11: 5]. It is impossible not to recall a fragment from the book of Genesis, where the divine word of the first light is created. But in the work itself, R. Grosseteste never uses the word “God” or “divine light”. God appears in R. Grosseteste’s works as a form that has no substance, and light – as a materialized form, worthy of all consideration. Light as an analogue of the divine light to the foreground, and a theological perspective is like a background against which developing naturalistic research.

Through subtle reasoning, as Grosseteste believes, it is possible to prove that as a result of this infinite multiplication of light and its matter, a finite universe always had to be formed. So, if we start from the simple, the final amount is sufficient to infinitely surpass. An infinite number would not only infinitely greater, it would be infinitely higher infinity of individual multiplications. So light is simple by being multiplied by an infinite number of times, and has to stretch as a simple matter and has a finite value. Thus the ultimate sphere was formed, on the borders of which matter is in an extremely rarefied condition; as we approach the middle it becomes denser. After this initial expansion, fixing the boundaries of the universe, matter in the center, still retains the ability to be diluted. Therefore bodily substance of the earthly world are endowed with activity [8: 356].

When all possibilities of dissolving light (lux) are exhausted, the outer boundary of the sphere forms a solid, which reflects the light (lumen) to the center of the world. This action reflected light (lumen) consistently produces nine celestial spheres, of which the lower – the sphere of the moon. Following this final celestial sphere, unchanging and fixed, scope elements are arranged: fire, air, water and land. Thus, the Earth receives and concentrates the action of the higher spheres – because poets and call it “Pan” that is “Everything”. After all, it concentrated all the higher light and can be found on the ground impact of any sphere. It is Cybele, the mother general, from which all the gods may occur [8:357].

Experiments with the refraction of light for R. Grosseteste are interesting not only from the point of view of science, but also in terms of theology. When a ray of light is refracted – it forms a rainbow, and many people admire it, forgetting about the source of this beauty. Here it is manifested the R. Grosseteste’s symbolism. After all, since we live in this world, marveling at its beauty and joy, but we forget about the source (creator) of the world. It is God who, as the light is the source of everything. That’s just R. Grosseteste’s treatise “About light, or about the beginning of forms” it does not say whether or not the light of God, or the light appears only the creation of the Lord. But based on his words, it seems that Robert Grosseteste, nevertheless, believed that light – is the creation of God: “I believe that the first corporeal form which some call corporeality (corporeitatem) is light (lux)” [7: 120]. After all, God is incorporeal, and the light by R. Grosseteste – a bodily form.

In describing the origin of the earth as the fourth element, R. Grosseteste resorts to the image of Cybele, goddess of fertility, generating other gods. Apparently, here we are faced with a peculiar mindset of medieval man for whom the use of symbols is the norm. After Robert Grosseteste described the formation of spheres, he decided to prove it mathematically, through the symbolism of numbers. It forms the most simple and not reducible to what entity it equates to a unit; Matter that can change shape under the influence, it shows the dual nature and therefore expressed deuce; light as a combination of form

and matter – a triple; and each area consists of four elements, there are four. If these numbers are added, – says R. Grosseteste, it will be ten. Therefore, ten is the number constituting the scope of the universe. For these reasons, the ten is the perfect number in the universe, because every perfect body includes a form, and therefore the unit, matter is hence the two, a combination of both (light), ie, three elements is four. For this reason every perfect whole is ten. This is how Robert Grosseteste wrote: “In the highest body, which is the simplest of the bodies, we must distinguish four features, namely form, matter, their combination (compositio) and composed of them (compositum). Form because of its simplicity, takes the position of greatest singularity. Matter, as a result of its dual capacity, that is, due to its ability to take and store experience, on the other hand, because of its divisibility, which is the fundamental property of matter itself primarily and predominantly relates to duality, rightfully gets the nature of duality. The combination of Trinity contains in itself, because its composition is detected and decorated matter and material form, and especially the combination itself, which, as a third thing different from matter and form, is at least drawn up. And that is compiled as a result of these three features, sealed by virtue of its inherent fourfold. Consequently, in the first body, which, of course, in reality (virtualiter) are present and other bodies, is there a quaternary and therefore the numerical quality of other bodies does not exceed the decimal. For in fact the unit forms duality of matter, the three combinations and Tetraktys compiled when they are connected, form the ten. That is why one of the world spherical bodies is ten: because the scope of elements, though divided into four, though is one, because of its involvement in the Earth’s physical nature. This shows that ten is the perfect number of the universe as a whole and perfect all has something similar form and unity, something like matter and duality, something like a combination and Trinity, and something like a compilation and quaternions. And there is no need to add anything more than these four fifth. That’s why every entity and has committed ten” [7: 126]. So, with greater certainty than Augustin, R. Grosseteste makes light -lux formalis, light form, and how the original form of corporeality, the light that shows any being, provides clearance matter [9: 23].

According to Robert Grosseteste, matter, as a result of expiration of the first form of light, stretched, and is dispersed in all directions – “spherical”: “Light is spread by an infinite uniform in all directions multiplying itself evenly spreads the matter and giving it on all sides by a spherical shape; and this spread necessarily follows that extreme matter that spread out the field, and are diluted to a greater extent than its inner region, close to the center. And as long as the marginal area does not become sparse in the extreme, they will be exposed to all domestic large sparse” [7: 123]. “Light, in this way the first matter that spread out, thereby giving it a spherical shape, and marginal areas of its highly dilution, the full potential of matter at the field, and then left her impervious to further attack. Thus, on the edge of a perfect sphere was first formed body called hard, nothing has in its composition, but the first material and the first form. And so the body is the simplest in this respect to the parts constituting its essence, and with respect to its maximum value; and does not differ from the total of all kinds of bodies (a corpore genere) except that it is filled with matter in only one of the first form. The general race of all bodies, is there in the firmament and in other bodies, having in essence the first matter and first form, is no longer subject to filling its first form of matter, and a decrease in its first form of matter” [7: 124]. Grosseteste assumes that light is not just the original form or the idea, she had a special nature capable multiplying itself, which makes its first and universal.

Finally, the last thing we would like to draw the attention despite the fact that Robert Grosseteste’s treatise “About light ...” is a monument of long-past era, in many ways he has not lost its relevance even today, for cause of particular interest the reader in comparing it with some modern physical theories (for example, Einstein’s formula $E = mc^2$ and the theory of the Big Bang) [11, 10]. The symbolism of the worldview of medieval man is interesting and important to study. Based on the work it is clear that the symbolic mentality of the Middle Ages is so inclusive and meaningful phenomenon, it manifests in absolutely all spheres of human life in this era. Symbolism is conscious and unconscious, as a fundamental trait of thinking as such – has become in the Middle Ages in the way of perceiving reality. In order to uncover the meaning of the symbolism of medieval thinking enough to speak only of its forms, it is necessary to thoroughly investigate any particular manifestation of it. This article is an example of the work of Robert Grosseteste turned out to fully disclose a given topic. Robert Grosseteste is one of the most important representatives of English medieval philosophy, about Robert written as a very bright theorists and even the practice of experimental science. Robert Grosseteste, in his treatise “About light, or about the beginning of forms”, written c. 1225, offered a coherent theory cosmogenesis, in which a key role was played by the light and the optical-geometric distribution rules. It is of interest to science. But philosophy is important because in R. Grosseteste’s treatise “About light, or about the beginning of forms” we find the symbolic content; it gave us the opportunity to explore the mechanism of the symbolism of consciousness of medieval man as an example of his work.

Robert Grosseteste explained and justified the process of creation, using symbolism and dual meaningfulness. We were able to reveal the mechanism of symbolic thinking in the text of R. Grosseteste “About light, or about the beginning of forms”. So, it is possible to understand the general principle and the thinking of people in the Middle Ages; to understand what they were guided to perform any actions. This, in turn, will give us an understanding of the whole of the Middle Ages and the historical background that led to the current situation of history.

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