

**Atlantis as a Christian Myth in the Poem 'Atlantis' by V. Shuliko**

During the last decade there has been a set of researches occurred, which view the problem of the Bible reception in Ukrainian and world culture considering modern aesthetic criteria and key points of the world view. It is connected particularly with the works of M. Zhulynsky, O. Myshanych, A. Niamtsu, I. Betko, L. Golomb, V. Mokry, L. Moroz, Y. Rozumny, L. Rudnytsky, T. Salyha, H. Syvokon, V. Sulyma, M. Yatsenko and the others, which are focused mostly on biblical images and motifs functioning in the works of ancient and modern Ukrainian writers, and are also aimed at the analysis of patterns and peculiarities of the transformation of the New Testament plot and images in the world literature.

The image of God is a fundamental notion in Christianity. The Bible as a literary monument became an integral part of the literature of all Christian nations, including Ukrainian one; it lies deeply in our consciousness. Writers from various countries referred to biblical images, motifs and plots. No writer in XIII-XVIII centuries would do without turning to the Bible. The Book did not lose its significance in a later period. Biblical images and motifs saturated and inspired H. Skovoroda, T. Shevchenko, I. Franko, Lesya Ukrainka, P. Kulish, Lina Kostenko and such modern writers as V. Shuliko. The history of the Christian world in its deep essence always relied and is still relying on spiritual and religious values, which, as a matter of fact, changed priorities with the flow of time. Biblical plots and images have a symbolic meaning; the writers of various countries will continue referring to them in their search of the answers to the questions about good and evil, death and immortality, love and hatred. Taking into consideration everything mentioned above, the analysis of the image of God in literature was and still is a topical problem.

The image of God described by the writer from Uzhhorod Viktoria Shuliko in her poem *Atlantis* (2009) and novel *Ascending* (2009) acquires different manifestations,

though preserves its initial features. In her works Viktoria Shuliko often used biblical motifs and images. This tendency is observed in her poetic works and prose. God's image in the writer's interpretation preserves its traditional features, but the peculiarity lies in its modern perception and the connection with ancient literature. God in the poem *Atlantis* is depicted as a creator of Atlantis. Shuliko endows God with such features as justice and faith in future, belief that the atlantes have a chance for salvation, that good will eventually be victorious over the evil. God in Viktoria Shuliko's interpretation does not blame the humanity of choosing the wrong path, but accuses the evil powers of influencing the people who in their turn can not resist.

A quite interesting thing is the author's description of God's appearance and the life of the Virgin Mary. The title of the novel – *Ascending* – was not chosen by accident. Viktoria Shuliko vividly depicted Christ's sacrifice for the sake of salvation of the following generations. The leading character of the novel as well as the Virgin Mary was chosen by God, her soul was filled with sadness and uncertainty, but later she refused this for the sake of the service of God. The author makes a drastic suggestion that the main heroine Mary is a Hebrew woman by origin, though the Holy Bible does not contain direct references to this. On the whole, the Gospel tells little about the Virgin Mary what is caused by the social status of a woman in that period. The evangelists are laconic about the life of the Virgin Mary, in particular, almost nothing is mentioned about her childhood, the novel however contains a quite detailed description of her early years and her parents as well. The novel gives each person the hope for salvation; everyone has their own way of rebirth and ascending to the highest.

The image of a mysterious continent appears in the poem as the result of a combination of the legend about Atlantis, biblical mythology and the review of hypotheses concerning the extraterrestrial impact on the evolution of civilization. The literature is familiar with an original blending of myths about Atlantis and biblical ones, but this combination is more complicated in V. Shuliko's poem: the atlantes appear as interstellar ambassadors to the mankind – the bearers of faith and good. It is interesting

that according to the author evil in its condensed form comes to the Earth from the inside: the atlantes are confronted by the assimilated expatriates who came from a ruined Hron.

In re-interpretation of the image of Atlantis V. Shuliko turns to an original combination of methods for working with legendary-mythological images and motifs, reaching a necessary artistic effect.