

Yeliseienko A. P.

State Biotechnological University

DECONSTRUCTION OF RELIGION IN D. H. LAWRENCE'S NOVEL "THE RAINBOW"

D. H. Lawrence – the author of numerous novels, literary criticism, poems got a profound religious education that influence most of his novels, especially the novel "Rainbow". Each generation of the Brangwen family is an example of the search for their own path to God, to the Incomprehensible and the Absolute. These concepts are generally identified in the text and indicate the impossibility of giving a universal designation and indicating a single path in the religious search of men. The author implied different allusions from the Old and New Testaments which included such notions as Flood and Rainbow as a symbol of forgiveness, Lamb and Dove as symbols of innocence and submission, Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Each of these allusions is considered separately through the prism of deferent points of view by most of the characters of the novel. The author showed how different it could be depending on person's background, education, circle, the influence of society and progress. Parables from the Old Testament are also deconstructed by means of an attempt to apply them to everyday life. Religiosity of Ursula and her father Will is changed under the influence of "well-educated" people who managed to indicate the specific features of dogmas that exist in each religion and how people are influenced by them.

Three generations of the Brangwen family put into question the same religious connotations: the possibility of a miracle, the search for the Absolute through an attempt to delve into the meaning of the sayings from the Holy Scripture. Ursula, like her father, is looking for her own path into the Unknown, however, unlike Will, she has enough strength to resist her mother and remain true to her convictions. She goes through a rather difficult path of development, tries to give new meaning to church sayings, questions some of them, refuses to apply them in everyday life. Ursula turns out to be the only one in the Brangwen family, who, after all the trials of life, was able to remain true to herself. Her experience in "Rainbow" became the "foundation" on the way to creating her "star union" with Rupert Birkin in the next novel – in "Women in Love".

Key words: *Absolute, religious connotations, religious symbolism, Lawrence, Old and New Testaments.*

Definition of the problem. The novel "Rainbow" by D. H. Lawrence has the biggest number of religious connotations and allusions compared to all author's novels. Their study is of great importance and will lead to better understanding of the peculiar features of the religious symbolism in the novel. In the article the attention is paid not only to the definition of specific religious notions, but also to their comparison among three generations of the Brangwen family in "Rainbow". This approach has not been previously applied by other researchers who worked with this novel and will contribute to better understanding of author's worldview.

Analysis of recent research. D. H. Lawrence's novels became the object of numerous researches. Lebreton Melanie in the article "The subtle sense of the Great Absolute": D. H. Lawrence and the Nomadic Godhead" [1] investigated some peculiar features of religious symbolism typical for writers of the beginning of the twentieth century, traced the search

of the Absolute in literary criticism by the author and shortly mentioned the search for the Absolute and religious symbolism in Lawrence's novels. Worthen John [2] in the book "D. H. Lawrence. The life of an outsider" (2006) reveals the difficulties with publication of Lawrence's novels and their controversial perception by contemporaries due to themes that were discussed on the pages of the novels, including religious connotations and religious symbolism. Wilson Frances [3] in the book "Burning man. The ascent of D. H. Lawrence" (2021) paid attention to the author's personal search for the Absolute and its realization in writer's works. This article can be regarded as the continuation of the study presented in the article "Religious allusions in the novel "Rainbow"" [4].

Purpose of the article is to distinguish the peculiar features of representation of deconstruction of religious symbolism in the novel "Rainbow" by D. H. Lawrence and to compare different points of

view on religious symbolism by mail characters of the novel.

Presentation of the main material. Deconstruction of religion is connected to the notion Absolute which is manifested as a subconscious target for each of the characters in the novel "Rainbow". The search for the Absolute in the first two generations of the Brangwen family is represented by the images of two married couples: Tom and Lydia, Anna and Will. Tom and Lydia managed to create a strong family union by comprehending the unknown, trying to understand each other better. Living in harmony with nature gave them the opportunity to isolate themselves from the influence of progress and the opinions of others. Anna and Will, in turn, built relationships differently. Will by nature had the ability to mentally immerse himself in the unknown, through church painting, architecture, to feel a connection with the Absolute. This natural feature of Will caused envy and disapproval of Anna, which ultimately led to the fact that Will had to resign himself, focus on the trivial things, on everyday worries and bringing up of eight children.

The third generation of the Brangwens in "Rainbow" is represented through Anna and Will's eldest daughter, Ursula, and her partner Anton. Ursula, naturally endowed with the same gift that her father once possessed, was the complete opposite of her mother. "As a child, she had turned against her mother, passionately seeking spirituality and royal severity" [5, p. 516]. Once, having seen Rubens's painting "Fertility", which depicted naked children, the girl "shuddered with disgust, the very word was hateful to her" [5, p. 516]. Her younger brothers and sisters reminded her of "an incredible Sodom" [5, p. 530]. She reproached her mother for no longer caring "about the Lord, about Jesus and the angels of the Lord. All her worries are about the everyday, the momentary" [5, p. 531]. Ursula lived in a world of visions. And if her father was drawn into the world of the unknown by church paintings and symbols, Ursula sought to comprehend the Absolute through the Bible. The stigmata that awakened a feeling of admiration in Will, caused "disgust" in her daughter. For her, Jesus belonged to another reality, to infinity. "He was not of this world. He did not wave his hands in front of her face, did not show her his wounds, did not cry out: "Look, Ursula Brangwen, it is for you that I have suffered! So please do as you are told!" In her mind, Jesus was beautifully distant, he shone in the distance, like a white crescent moon at sunset, he nodded to us, following the sun, nodded welcomingly from his incomprehensible distance" [5, p. 538].

Between Anna and Will and their eldest daughter Ursula, three points of view regarding the image of Christ can be traced. For the father of the family, Will, He appears as the Son of God, who suffered and was crucified for humanity. Will bows before the stigmata, understands the meaning of the Eucharist and religious metaphors. His wife Anna points out the humanity of Christ, denies the meaning of religious symbolism, the possibility of a miracle, the truth of the Holy Scripture. Their daughter believes in Jesus precisely as a manifestation of the Incomprehensible, rejecting the slightest attempts of people to "dress Him in a tailcoat" and, nevertheless, humility, righteousness and obedience, which occupy such an important place in Christian teaching, are alien to her.

It was precisely the rejection of the biblical image of Christ that served as the beginning of Ursula's search for other Sons of God, different from Jesus. Ursula tries to comprehend, to delve into the words of Scripture, which spoke of – "other offspring of the Lord, besides Adam, besides Jesus" [5, p. 539]. The girl reflected on the fact that if they do not trace their lineage back to Adam, then "these Sons of God did not know the expulsion from Paradise and the shame of the fall. These sons came to the daughters of men free and of their own free will and saw that they were beautiful, and took them as wives so that the wives would bear them strong and anciently famous people" [5, p. 539]. Ursula dreams that her chosen one would not be a descendant of Adam, but one of the "mysterious and timeless Sons of God" [5, p. 540]. Having met Anton Skrebensky, she immediately made him a character of her imaginary world. He was what, in her imagination, the Sons of God were.

The girl tried to rethink the Scripture in her own way. She was particularly impressed by the story from the Bible that says, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God" [5, p. 541]. The girl wondered, "Which rich and which eye of a needle are meant, and what is the Kingdom of Heaven? Who knows? These are concepts from the world of the Absolute, and how can they be explained by concepts taken from the relative world? And should the literal meaning of the sayings be applied to life around us?" [5, p. 542]. Ursula wondered what connection there might be between wealth, heaven and the eye of a needle, whether her father was rich and whether he should give everything he had to the poor in order to gain the Kingdom of Heaven. At these moments, she imagined herself as one of the neighboring beggars and, in horror, drove this thought away. The theme of wealth and the "examination of conscience" that

arises in some people as a result of having what others do not have will be raised repeatedly in the next work in the novel "Women in Love". Mr. Crich, the owner of the local mines, experiences a feeling of guilt until the last days of his life for the fact that he, possessing wealth, did not distribute it to the poor in order to gain the Kingdom of Heaven. His mental anguish will negatively affect his wife and gradually drive her crazy, since she has long been convinced of his duplicity and insincerity, fear of the poor. The beggars, in turn, are depicted as the most selfish, cunning people, trying to beg as much as possible for themselves, secretly appealing to Mr. Crich's fear of violating the teachings of Christ. In the above-quoted fragment, it is worth paying attention to the opposition of the concepts of the Absolute and the relative, which, apparently, is an allusion to Einstein's general theory of relativity, put forward by the scientist in 1915, which coincides with the time of writing the novel.

Ursula tries to rethink Christian teaching. She, like her father once, raises the question of the Resurrection. However, the essence of her reflections lies in the re-evaluation, deconstruction of the generally accepted view of the death of Christ: "Why are wounds and death so remembered? Did not the wounds on the hands and feet of the Savior heal, did he not rise strong, healthy and cheerful? Should not the cross from the grave be forgotten? But no! And will this memory of wounds, this smell of burial shrouds, haunt us forever? In the eternal cycle of the Christian year, the Resurrection was lost next to the bulk of the Cross of Calvary and the death of the Savior" [5, p. 548]. These reflections of Ursula coincide with what Lawrence claimed in an article on a religious theme. The author considered the Resurrection as a return to life, as a victory of life over death, inherent in all living things. The following fragment is more of a monologue by the author himself than the reasoning of an underaged girl: "Woe to those whose memory of the torments of Sorrow, Death, the Holy Sepulchre triumphs over the pale shadow of the Resurrection. <...> The Resurrection is a return to life, not to death. <...> Has not the Resurrection opened for us a new era of maturity, incarnation, joy? Can Death and the torments of the cross darken the resurrected, and can the flesh, mysteriously perfect, the flesh granted by Heaven, know fear? <...> Is the flesh of the Crucified poison for the crowd, and not food that conceals joy and hope, just as the bloom of a flower conceals earthly humus?" [5, p. 551]. Ursula's reflections are a continuation of the theme outlined in the previous generation. They sound like a worthy response to Anna, the reply which Will was unable to

formulate in his time. Gradually, "the world of absolute truths and living mystery, the world where one can walk on water, go blind at the sight of the Savior, walk on the sea as if on dry land, cross the sands of the desert following the pillar of cloud, see the burning bush, burning and crackling in the flames, but never consumed" [5, p. 553] began to disintegrate for the girl. It was replaced by the everyday world with its difficulties and troubles, and "she, Ursula Brangwen, had to adapt to this world" [5, p. 553]. "The everyday world triumphed over the Sunday world" [5, p. 553]. However, no matter how hard the girl tried to concentrate on household chores or caring for her younger brothers and sisters to please her mother, she mentally returned again and again to the stories from her favorite book, the Book of Genesis, trying to understand the meaning of the sayings.

The girl wonders if the Flood could have really destroyed everyone except the chosen few who got into the ark. What if some of the dryads and fauns could have escaped to the mountains and escaped God's punishment. She imagined herself as one of the escaped nymphs, clinging to the ark. She would have looked in through the windows and seen Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth, "sitting there under the streams of rain, confident that they were the only four people left on earth <...> and that everything now belonged to them, they would receive everything in possession, the only tenants of the Lord's incalculable wealth" [5, p. 637]. "She would have laughed then, looking through the opening of the ark, splashed water on Noah, and then swam to other people, less important to the Creator and his Flood" [5, p. 637]. Despite the sarcasm that is clearly felt in the quoted fragment, the theme of Divine punishment and the rainbow as a symbol of forgiveness is again introduced into the narrative. The flood and the rainbow as symbols once again unite the real and unreal worlds. Let us recall that Ursula's grandfather died during the flood in the village of March, but now in Ursula's thoughts the Flood is mythologized, becoming part of the fantastic stories that arise in the girl's imagination. The rainbow, "as a sign of the covenant" [5, p. 636] between man and God, becomes a link connecting the real and unreal worlds. While all religious symbols are deconstructed by Ursula, the rainbow remains the only one whose meaning is not questioned. It serves as the marker of person's decision to accept or reject the world of the Incomprehensible, to allow or not to allow the search for the Absolute comes into life.

Despite the fact that this search for Ursula and her mother developed completely differently, both women gradually distance themselves from the world of the

Incomprehensible and only a rainbow will occasionally remind them of what their souls once yearned for.

Next stage of the deconstruction of religion occurs in Ursula's teenage years. Anton leaves to serve in South Africa. The girl becomes close to her school teacher Winifred, who introduces her to her circle of acquaintances – “educated but dissatisfied with life” men and women, “restless”, “in a prim provincial society”, seemingly meek, but inside hiding “the fury of passions” [5, p. 673]. In Winifred's view, religion was “much more humane” [5, p. 699]. The teacher sought to point out to Ursula the numerous dogmas and falsehoods. Gradually, Ursula realized that “all the religions known to her were only different clothes in which the human dream dresses itself. The dream was reality, and the clothes depended, in general, on national preferences or were dictated by necessity. The Greeks had their naked Apollo, the Christians their white-robed Christ, the Buddhists their royal offspring, the Egyptians their Osiris” [5, p. 670]. She was convinced that the main themes of religion are fear and love. “Christianity used the crucifixion to get rid of fear: Do the worst to me to destroy in me the fear of the worst. But what frightens is not necessarily evil, just as what you love is not necessarily good” [5, p. 670]. Gradually, Ursula was persuaded to the idea that the only criterion of both goodness and truth is human desire. “Truth is not transcendental and not supermundane, it is itself a derivative of the human mind and sensation” [5, p. 670]. And if at the beginning of their relationship with the teacher, Ursula felt a desire to get closer to the world of ideas and views that Winifred possessed, over time, the girl began to sense in her a trace of “some kind of deadness” [5, p. 674] and felt a desire to part with her as soon as possible.

It is precisely the experience of her relationship with Winifred that leads Ursula to rethink the symbols of the Lamb and the Dove. And if her mother, in an argument with her husband, pointed to the lamb as an animal that she would not mind feasting on for dinner, rejecting its religious symbolism, Ursula's indignation is caused by the meekness of the Lamb, its submission. “Her god was not meek and humble, with the Lamb and the Dove as a symbol. He was a lion and an eagle. But not because both the lion and the eagle had strength, but because they were proud and irresistible; they were what they were, and not the submissive slaves of a shepherd, not the pets of a gentle lady, or the sacrifices on the altar of a priest” [5, p. 671]. Thus, Ursula deconstructs the image of the Lamb as a Christian symbol in a different way. She does not deprive it of Christian connotations. On the

contrary, recognizing the same meaning for it as the church, Ursula refuses to accept it as true, and seeks to replace it with those images (the lion and the eagle) that seem closer to the girl. As in the case of the Universal Flood and with the recognition of Adam as the first man created by the Lord, she does not question their truth, but strives to find out and read between the lines in Scripture the things which were perhaps omitted for some purpose.

Unlike her mother Anna, the world of unknown was not completely supplanted for Ursula by the real world. It continued to influence her actions and decisions. Intuition continued to dictate the girl's life priorities, which can be traced by examining her relationships with the opposite sex. Anton, despite the fact that at the beginning of their relationship, was perceived as the Sons of God, “who entered to the daughters of men”, later, through his pragmatism and lack of his own vision of the world, caused “a shade of emptiness and worthlessness” [5, p. 645] in girl's perception. Even pregnancy, which at first seemed to force her to marry Anton Skrebensky, after long mental and physical torments, led to the realization of the impossibility of “betraying herself”. The school teacher's brother Anthony, a wonderful and sincerely loving guy, was also refused marriage, and only Rupert Birkin (Lawrence's prototype) in the next book, in “Women in Love” will become the chosen one with whom she will decide to marry, creating a “star balance”. As Lawrence once noted in one of his letters, Ursula (at that time she was called Elaine) had to go through some experience of relationships before meeting Rupert.

Conclusion. The writer's worldview undoubtedly influenced the formation of images in the novel “Rainbow”. Each generation of the Brangwen family is an example of the search for their own path to God, to the Incomprehensible and the Absolute. These concepts are generally identified in the text and indicate the impossibility of giving a universal designation and indicating a single path in the religious search of men.

In the third generation of the Brangwen family, the same themes developed that were outlined in previous two generations: the possibility of a miracle, the search for the Absolute through an attempt to delve into the meaning of the sayings from the Holy Scripture. Ursula, like her father, is looking for her own path into the Unknown, however, unlike Will, she has enough strength to resist her mother and remain true to her convictions. She goes through a rather difficult path of development, tries to give new meaning to church sayings, questions some of them, refuses to apply them in everyday life. Ursula

turns out to be the only one in the Brangwen family, who, after all the trials of life, was able to remain true to herself. Her experience in “Rainbow” became the “foundation” on the way to creating her “star union” with Rupert Birkin in the next novel – in “Women in Love”.

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Єлісеєнко А. П. ДЕКОНСТРУКЦІЯ РЕЛІГІЇ В РОМАНІ Д. Г. ЛОУРЕНСА «ВЕСЕЛКА»

Д. Х. Лоуренс – автор численних романів, літературної критики, віршів, отримав глибоку релігійну освіту, яка вплинула на більшість його романів, особливо на роман «Веселка». Кожне покоління родини Брангвен є прикладом пошуку власного шляху до Бога, до Незбагненого та Абсолютного. Ці поняття загалом ототожнюються в тексті та вказують на неможливість дати універсальне позначення та вказати єдиний шлях у релігійних пошуках людини. Автор використав різні алюзії зі Старого та Нового Заповітів, які включали такі поняття, як Потоп і Веселка як символ прощення, Агнець і Голуб як символи невинності та покорі, Хрест і Воскресіння Ісуса Христа. Кожна з цих алюзій розглядається окремо крізь призму різних точок зору більшістю героїв роману. Автор показав, наскільки ця точка зору може бути різною залежно від походження людини, освіти, кола, впливу суспільства та прогресу. Притчі зі Старого Завіту також деконструються шляхом спроби застосувати їх у повсякденному житті. Релігійність Урсули та її батька Вілла змінюється під впливом «добре освічених» людей, які зуміли вказати на особливості догматів, що існують у кожній релігії та їхній вплив на людей.

Три покоління родини Брангвен ставлять під сумнів одні і ті ж релігійні конотації: можливість дива, пошуки Абсолюту через спробу заглибитися в зміст висловів зі Святого Письма. Урсула, як і її батько, шукає власний шлях у Невідоме, однак, на відміну від Вілла, у неї вистачає сил протистояти матері та залишатися вірною своїм переконанням. Вона проходить досить складний шлях розвитку, намагається надати нового змісту церковним висловам, ставить під сумнів деякі з них, відмовляється застосовувати їх у повсякденному житті в загальноприйнятому сенсі. Урсула виявляється єдиною людиною в родині Брангвенів, яка після всіх життєвих випробувань змогла залишитися вірною собі. Її досвід в «Веселці» став «фундаментом» на шляху до створення її «зіркового союзу» з Рупертом Біркіним в наступному романі – в «Закоханих жінках».

Ключові слова: абсолют, релігійні конотації, релігійна символіка, Лоуренс, Старий і Новий Завіти.