

## THE DUALISTIC MYTHOMODEL OF S. CHERKASENKO'S DRAMA "THE PRICE OF BLOOD", PARTICULARLY IN ITS PHILOSOPHICAL, SPATIO-TEMPORAL CHARACTERISTICS

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**Abstract:** The article deconstructs the poetic mytho-model of world of the drama "The Price of Blood" by S. Cherkasenko, in particular in its philosophical characteristics: reveals the artistic features of the author's dualistic model of the world, examines the reinterpretation of biblical Christological themes, motifs and images. This thematic exploration adds depth to the understanding of the drama and underscores the profound philosophical questions S. Cherkasenko raises. The analysis shows that dualistic myths are represented through the forms of binary oppositions, such as cosmological (e.g. the space and chaos, the moon and the sun, heaven and earth, day and night), biological (e.g. male and female), social (e.g. dual organization of society) and ethical (e.g. good and evil). The drama "The Price of Blood" is based on the mythological plot of the Gospel story of Judas Iscariot's betrayal, in which S. Cherkasenko uses dualistic mythological thinking to contrast "faith – mind", which is reproduced through the following oppositions: "good – evil", "sin – righteousness", "truth – lie", "God – Devil", "life – death", "freedom – slavery", "love – hate", "loyalty – betrayal". This is a confrontation between faith and mind in a kind of search for the salvation of humanity. The relevance of this topic lies in the study of the author's dualistic model and the disclosure of biblical motifs in the drama "The Price of Blood" by S. Cherkasenko: comprehension of the problem of betrayal in a mythopoetic way. The results of the study showed that the author describes the universe as a unity of opposites, which is typical for a dualistic myth, where the victory of good implies the elimination of evil. The archetypal characters – Jesus Christ (faith) and Judas the Tempter (mind) – are encoded by the binary opposition "good – evil" and their confrontation can be seen as an antagonistic duality.

**Keywords:** Dualism, Drama, Mythologeme, Archetyp, Symbol.

### 1 Introduction

From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, when national consciousness and culture were developing, Ukrainian writers used mythopoetic thinking actively. This is due to the desire of writers to assimilate the sources of mythology and folklore to create general models of human interaction with the world. Therefore, mythology became a permanent artistic presence in the literary transformation of reality. This requires a study of the artistic "products" of the interaction between the systems of myth and literature, and the definition of the functions of myth in literature.

The work of Spyrydon Cherkasenko is of particular interest, as he was a representative of Ukrainian modernism, a poet, a prose writer, a playwright, a participant in the national liberation struggle, and an emigrant who was unknown in Ukraine for a long time. After a long break in research, his work was resumed in the 1990s. Cherkasenko's work helped bring Ukrainian literature closer to philosophical trends and movements, and his mythofolklore synthesis shows the artist's aesthetic power in using folklore.

### 2 Methodology

The theoretical and methodological basis of the article consists of: works on philosophy and aesthetics by J. Campbell, M. Muller, F. Nietzsche, F. Tönnis, O. Spengler, F. Schelling, etc. explorations in the field of mythopoetics by S. Averintsev, M. Bakhtin, Ya. Golosovkera, Vyach. Sun. Ivanov, M. Eliade, O. Losev, Y. Lotman, E. Meletynskiy, V. Toporov, O. Freudenberg, etc.; scientific concepts of archetypal criticism by K. Jung, ritual-mythological method by J. Fraser, N. Fry.

An active civic and cultural figure of the early twentieth century, Spyrydon Cherkasenko lived in a difficult historical time (revolutions (1905 and 1917), world wars (World War I and World War II), which left "its mark on his work, made him its chronicler, forced him to drink the bitter cup of misery

together with his people" (Myshanych, 1991), but he "withstood the difficult battle of the worlds, did not tarnish his talent with opportunistic distortions and political speculation" (Myshanych, 1991, p. 20), and was an active participant in the National Revolution and the armed defense of the state will of Ukraine. The territory of his residence is diverse (the Russian Empire, the Ukrainian People's Republic, Austria, Czechoslovakia), as is his work, "a whole continent of literature: poetry, drama, prose, publicist, satire, literary criticism, journalism, pedagogics" (Myshanych, 1991, p. 20).

S. Cherkasenko's literary debut (1904) and subsequent poetic works received both favorable and devastating criticism, in particular, they did not go unnoticed by S. Yefremov ("Cherkasenko ... entered the literary field as if he was already quite ready") (Yefremov, 1995), who became a teacher and an adviser in Cherkasenko's development as a playwright. S. Yefremov notes the original style and recognizability of his poetry, noting that "his verse is light, there are beautiful and apt images, strong turns of phrase; the content is dominated by calls to fight for a broad, free life, protest against bourgeois everyday life" (Yefremov, 1995). Ukrainian art critic D. Antonovych praises Cherkasenko's dramatic works for creating symbolic drama alongside social drama, calling it "the most accessible and close to the old household theater, it is like a bridge or a branch of a chain that connects the old household repertoire with the repertoire of the modern theater" (Antonovych, 1925).

It is well-known that the formation of S. Cherkasenko as a playwright was largely influenced by S. Yefremov, his literary and theoretical recommendations, which he expressed to S. Cherkasenko in the process of epistolary discussion of his dramas "The Old Nest" (1907) and "The Snowstorm" (1908). Among Cherkasenko's dramatic works, S. Yefremov singles out "The Tale of the Old Mill", "on the theme of the struggle between the newest forms of capitalist life and the "old tale" of the steppes. The author introduces symbolic images alongside real-life paintings, emphasizing his main idea, the struggle between the old and the new" (Yefremov, 1995).

With the arrival of the Bolsheviks in Ukraine, Cherkasenko's work was erased from Ukrainian literary life, and the death of the "singer of the country of black brilliance, Donbas" was first reported in Ukraine in the occupation year of 1942 in an article by Y. Sheveliov in the newspaper "Nova Ukraina", "Two years ago, in a foreign land, in bitter exile, broken by poverty and deprivation, Spyrydon Cherkasenko died, and his premonition did not come true, his greatest dream was to "touch his native land" (Shevelyov, 1945).

In this article, the author briefly characterizes the peculiarities of the writer's artistic world, for whom the main thing is not "a description, but problematics, who wants his reader to think about life, to actively seek conclusions and generalizations, to make the work evoke a certain mood (the latter is especially evident in such works as "Must" or "Horror")" (Shevelyov, 1945). The critic especially notes the dramas "What the Sawdust Rustled About" ("as a highly poetic poem about the struggle of two principles in the human soul - active and contemplative, animal and angelic-poetic") (Shevelyov, 1945) and "The Tale of the Old Mill", where "the problems of the philosophy of history are developed" (Shevelyov, 1945).

The writer's work became forgotten during the Soviet era, and only a few receptions of his work appeared abroad. In particular, R. Karpia's article "Don Juan: A Universal Theme in Ukrainian Dram" in the magazine "Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes (Karpia, 1982). The author, comparing S. Cherkasenko's play "The Spanish Caballero Don Juan and Rosita" (1931) with the dramatic poem "The Stone Master", concluded that by using the myth of Don Juan, Lesia

Ukrainka reproduced the myth, establishing it in Ukrainian literature, and S. Cherkasenko refuted it (Karpiak, 1982).

Thanks to V. Pohrebennyk (in collaboration with O. Leontovych), the scientific heritage of the diaspora scholar N. Ishchuk-Pazuniak returned to her native land and was published in two books. The first of the two books represents "the writer's archival work, the drama-extravaganza "The Forest Song" in broad comparative aspects – both the world (works by H. Hauptman, H. Ibsen) and the Ukrainian one (personality and creative heritage of S. Cherkasenko)" (Ishchuk-Pazuniak, 2008), where the researcher revealed typologically comparable features of S. Cherkasenko's and Lesya Ukrainka's plays.

In the context of the development of Ukrainian drama, literary critic, Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania, L. Zaleska-Onyshkevych distinguished the writer's work for introducing "new themes and a new approach" in the literature of the early twentieth century (Zaleska-Onyshkevych, 1998).

After a long break, only in the early 1990s did Spyrydon Cherkasenko's work become the subject of research in Ukraine. Today, the writer's work has been studied by literary critics, theater critics, and researchers of the history of pedagogical thought in Ukraine.

O. Myshanych was one of the first in Ukraine to study Cherkasenko's work, and he is the author of a thorough foreword and compiler of a two-volume collection of the writer's works. The main content of the foreword is devoted to the analysis of Cherkasenko's creative career: his stay in Ukraine and in emigration.

The problem of mythofolklore writing by S. Cherkasenko-lyricist was studied by V. Pohrebennyk (Pogrebennyk, 2002). In his monograph "Folklorism of Ukrainian Poetry (the last third of the nineteenth – the first decades of the twentieth century)", the scientist studied the peculiarities of the ideological, aesthetic and emotional transformation of Ukrainian folklore in the poetry of the symbolist S. Cherkasenko. The author of the monograph emphasizes that "folklore provided the symbolist S. Cherkasenko with protomotifs and prototypes that served as an expression of his attitude to the world. In his interpretation, each of them carried a certain mood; in general, folk art has become a well-developed resource of poetics, subordinated to the main one (national liberation struggle) and other topics" (Pogrebennyk, 2002). The researcher notes that a number of traditional folklore images (Beauty-Girl, Motherland-Ukraine, black ravens) in S. Cherkasenko's lyric epic sounded in a new way in symbiosis with original mythologemes.

In general, S. Cherkasenko's drama has been studied extensively. S. Khorob examines S. Cherkasenko's dramatic works "in the typological context through the prism of European modernist trends" and for the first time decodes the Christian symbolism of S. Cherkasenko's dramas (Khorob, 2001). The scholar notes the national codedness of the symbols of S. Cherkasenko's drama, which "become an artistic expression of acute public and social problems" (Khorob, 2001, p. 133). The evangelical motifs of S. Cherkasenko's drama "The Price of Blood" have been studied by V. Antofiichuk, O. Kohut, O. Kuzma, A. Niamtsu, and others. In the article "The Evangelical Archetype of Betrayal in the Drama 'The Price of Blood'", V. Antofiichuk emphasizes the manifestation of the archetype of betrayal in the drama, which S. Cherkasenko complicates with numerous national, historical, spiritual and moral motivations, excluding from the content plan of the drama the traditional, gospel interpretation of Judas' betrayal" (Antofiichuk, 2000). O. Kuzma revealed the intertextual richness of S. Cherkasenko's drama "The Price of Blood" and proved that the drama is "a kind of 'palimpsest' text, which clearly distinguishes biblical intertext, ideological and thematic connection and associations with the works of Lesya Ukrainka ..." (Kuzma, 2014).

It is worth noting the dissertations by V. Shkola, who traced the evolution of the writer's individual style, revealed the genre and style features of the writer's drama. In particular, V. Shkola considers the mythological level of the dramas "The Tale of the Old Mill" (1914) and "Fern Blossom" (1926), asserting the combination of fantasy with reality, "modern conflicts and ancient folklore motifs" (Shkola). In her argument, the researcher singled out mythological world plots, images (Judas, Don Juan) and motifs (Prometheanism) in S. Cherkasenko's drama.

N. Maliutina, T. Sverbilova focused on the issues of genre and style transformations of S. Cherkasenko's dramatic works and sometimes analyzed a number of S. Cherkasenko's dramatic texts for the first time.

Having traced the evolution of the reception of S. Cherkasenko, we see that the mythological aspect of artistic comprehension of S. Cherkasenko's work has been studied selectively and superficially, so we see the need for a deeper and more systematic interpretation of the writer's works.

The purpose of the article. The comprehension of S. Cherkasenko's work in the mythopoetic vein is a continuation of our dissertation research (Moshnoriz, 2021). Therefore, our goal is to study the embodiment of the dualistic myth in the drama "The Price of Blood". The achievement of this goal entails a number of tasks, such as studying the author's dualistic model and revealing the biblical motifs in S. Cherkasenko's drama; identifying the moral and psychological reasons for Judas Iscariot's betrayal and his actions in terms of historical, social and national originality.

The Representatives of modernism in the early twentieth century cultivated artistic and reinterpreted biblical Christological themes, motifs, and images in a new way. This led to a change in the perception of the image of Judas Iscariot. Instead of unequivocally stating the fact of betrayal, they began to study Iscariot's moral and psychological motives and his actions in terms of historical, social, and national originality. That is why the world image of Judas as a traitor takes on a new meaning in the works of L. Andreiev, V. Vynnychenko, T. Hedberg, O. Kobylanska, S. Cherkasenko, Lesia Ukrainka, and others. In general, "religious drama becomes dominant for diaspora playwrights of the early twentieth century, in which Christian plotting and figurative references to the Holy Scriptures serve faith not as much as national Ukrainian centrist components, Gospel quotations and allusions serve as matrices for discussing mainly social, political, ideological, national, cultural, and philosophical problems" (Bondareva, 2006).

The result of a significant attempt to rethink the gospel motif of betrayal was the drama "The Price of Blood" (1930) by S. Cherkasenko. The drama has been the subject of research by V. Antofiichuk, L. Demianivska, O. Kohut, O. Kuzma, O. Myshanych, T. Sverbilova, and others. O. Kuzma analyzed the intertextuality of the drama and called it "a kind of 'palimpsest' text, which clearly distinguishes biblical intertext, ideological and thematic connection and associations with Lesia Ukrainka's works" (Kuzma, 2014).

O. Kohut and T. Sverbilova studied the poetics of symbolism in the drama. In particular, T. Sverbilova interprets the image of Judas as a victim. V. Antofiichuk notes that the image of Judas Iscariot has acquired an archetypal meaning in world literature, as it combines the motivation for betrayal of one person by another in the most general form (Antofiichuk, 2000, p. 17). In S. Cherkasenko's drama, Judas "realizes his plans thanks to his excellent knowledge of the psychology of the crowd, excited by talk of the coming appearance of the Messiah and therefore ready to believe in the divine election of Jesus. In addition, he cleverly uses the ignorance and fanaticism of some of Jesus' disciples, spreading rumors about Christ's deliberate participation in the hoax of the resurrection of Lazarus" (Antofiichuk, 2002, p. 6).

In world literature, there are many examples of the use of the image of Judas as a universally recognized symbol of betrayal and inevitable retribution for crimes. The main motives for Judas' betrayal in Ukrainian literature were classified by A. Nyamtsu: 1) Judas' disappointment in the Messiah; 2) perception of Jesus as a rival in love with Mary Magdalene; 3) Jesus' ingratitude, who did not realize that Iscariot was his main disciple; 4) betrayal is the realization of Jesus' desire; 5) betrayal as a provocation to rebellion; 6) betrayal as Judas' desire to get rich; 7) betrayal, without which there would be no death and resurrection of Jesus, and, as a result, no sacrifice necessary for the salvation of humanity (Nyamtsu, 2000, p. 89). We agree with O. Kohut and I. Fediushyna that "the image of Judas Iscariot, which concentrated in the most generalized form the motivation for betrayal of one person by another, has acquired an accentuated archetypal sound and meaning in world literature" (Kohut, 2000).

Also it's worth noting the informative observations on the specifics of the author's modeling of the figure of Judas in Lesia Ukrainka's drama "The Price of Blood", made by His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk in a conversation with Oksana Zabuzhko about Lesia Ukrainka, "There is a conflict between two experiences, two ways of cognizing God: cognition of God through personal, existential life experience - and cognition of God through the repetition of certain logical mental schemes" (Zabuzhko & Shevchuk, 2020).

### 3 Results

Understanding the problems in mythopoetic way should begin with the realization that dualistic myths are widespread in all mythologies of the world, they have many variants in many religions, including Christianity. M. Eliade notes that the word dualism was invented in 1700 to characterize the Iranian doctrine of two spirits and meant the recognition of two opposing principles.

Dualistic myths are reflected in binary oppositions: cosmological (the space and chaos, the moon and the sun, heaven and earth, day and night), biological (male and female), social (dual organization of society), and ethical (good and evil). In our opinion, S. Cherkasenko, using dualistic mythological thinking, reproduced in the drama the opposition "faith - mind", which is depicted through the oppositions "good - evil", "sin - righteousness", "truth - lie", "God - Devil", "life - death", "freedom - slavery", "love - hate", "loyalty - betrayal". The author touches upon the confrontation between faith and reason in the salvation of humanity, based on the mythological plot of the Gospel story of the betrayal of Judas Iscariot. The author gives the right to solve this problem to two archetypal firstfruits - Jesus Christ (faith) and the tempter Judas (mind). The confrontation between Jesus and Judas can be interpreted as an antagonistic duality, as an archetype of a Person and a Shadow. The external features of Judas impose the semantic meaning of Satan the tempter ("Judas, with eyes burning feverishly (emphasis added by M. M.), cautiously crept up to Jesus as he prayed alone on the stone"), burdened with human problems and desires. Let us agree with M. Moklytsia that Satan "loses the aura of unconditional evil and begins to symbolize something not so clearly marked in moral and ethical terms" (Moklytsia, 2002). The image of Jesus Christ corresponds to the canonical prototype and speaks only words from the Bible. In the drama, Judas is a provocative catalyst for its plot development, whose image deviates from the canon and is largely based on apocryphal sources. At the very beginning of the drama, the author emphasizes the secret intentions and insidious calculation of Judas, who wants to get closer to Jesus in any way possible. S. Cherkasenko portrays his inner world as a complete picture of the soul, which reflects the worst flaws of human nature. The author interprets three reasons for Judas' betrayal of Jesus: revenge, rivalry in love, and belonging to another ethnic group. In the drama, Judas is a humiliated soldier of the defeated Jewish army who became a disciple of Jesus and served as a treasurer. He is offended by his defeat in the war, by the fact that he had to steal to eat, by the fact that he was beaten

and thrown into a ditch while admiring a beautiful harlot, by the fact that the invaders laughed at him (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 791).

There is nothing to distinguish Judas from the crowd; his appearance gives the image only negative semantics. The only thing that distinguishes him from the others is his mind. The author shows Judas' lack of confidence in his abilities and human envy of Jesus, whom he perceives as a rival. The author emphasizes Judas' belonging to another ethnic group, which is conveyed through the opposition "friend - foe". Jesus and all his apostles, except Judas, were Galileans. Ethnically, Judas is a stranger who joined the Galileans to achieve his own goals.

The binary opposition "good - evil" is also encoded in the names of Jesus Christ and Judas Iscariot. "The nickname Iscariot (a man from Cariot) has a symbolic meaning "from the darkness", because "kariot" is something dark, from the root kar, which means dark, dark brown". The name Jesus means "light, clear, sunny. The nickname Christ (from the Hellenic "Christ") was given to those who were the best, kind, decent, honest, noble".

The drama has a vertical structuring of the universe, as there is a clear division into top and bottom. The author notes this in his remarks. During a meeting or conversation, Jesus of Nazareth is always on the higher ground (On a mound, on a barren chunk of rock, in deep thought - Jesus, the young son of Mary from Nazareth) (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 759) unlike Judas, who often sits down among the stones, i.e. in a mythological dungeon, which also reflects moral and ethical qualities (high and low deeds). According to N. Lysiuk, within the mythological worldview, heaven was imagined as a solid rock. Throughout the work, Jesus and Judas met once in the desert, and all other meetings were fenced off by some objects. This contrast is also reinforced by temporal parameters. Judas is often associated with the dark time of the day, for example, after his conversation with Jesus, he goes into the desert, which is "covered with night"; Judas also has a conversation with Hanan at night.

A variant of the opposition "good - evil" is "God - Devil". In the drama, the first meeting between Jesus and Judas takes place in the desert. This meeting is analogous to the biblical encounter between Jesus and the devil in the desert, who tempted him to sin. It is no accident that such a place for the meeting was chosen, because, as J. Ciriot notes, the desert is a place of trial, the place of residence of Satan and evil spirits. This meeting is significant as the eternal spiritual struggle between good and evil, faith and mind. Jesus Christ and Judas aim to save people: Jesus - from sins, Judas - from slavery, Jews in particular.

The confrontation between Jesus and Judas is a kind of duel between the forces of good and evil that takes place at the bottom of the vertical - on the ground. But Jesus saves the soul, guiding it to the path of goodness and salvation, while Judas cares only about satisfying bodily needs, and only by insidious means (deception, lies, betrayal) and with the benefit of himself. The human mind alone is not able to cognize God and the ideal basis of reality, because it is captive to feelings. At the same time, faith helps to overcome doubts and begin a spiritual life. In this way, S. Cherkasenko reveals the idea of Judas' betrayal. From the very first meeting, the author depicts the communicative conflict between Jesus and Judas. Not understanding and not trying to understand the Christian doctrine, Judas chooses Christ to achieve his own desires, and for this reason he followed Him.

During the conversation in the desert, Judas tempts Jesus with what people always want. First, Judas tempts Jesus to perform a miracle as a proof of his divinity, urging him to turn stones into bread. To which Jesus replies, Does man live by bread alone? (Cherkasenko, 1991). This proves the superiority of the spiritual over the material in Christian mythology: professing the words of God is more important than satisfying hunger. For Judas, the

material is more important, - Set bread before them and be king over all the world) (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 761). The motif of turning bread into stone is used to realize the opposition between the spiritual and the material. This means that even in times of need, there are more important things than food. Judas believes that the Savior of the world can prove His authority by giving everyone something to eat. Jesus is convinced that power is not the determining, true criterion for measuring salvation. But Jesus performed a miracle by feeding the five thousand people who had come to hear God's Word, leaving everything else behind, opening their hearts to God, so they would receive the bread with faith in their hearts. And finally, an important element of this miracle is the mutual willingness to sacrifice to one's neighbor. Judas cunningly, using his own mind, desacralizes this miracle, using the example of Salome to prove that not everyone can sacrifice. He forces Salome to give the last of her food to the hungry people, provoking her to manifest sinful actions and qualities – greed and anger (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 773).

The motive of turning stones into bread is connected to the motive of satisfying one's own material needs. In the Bible, the devil is the enemy of God and people, the one who breaks the connection between God and a man. The word "devil" means the one who scatters, separates one object from another or one person from another. In mythology, he is a person who causes discord, division, and strife in thoughts and feelings. Mostly he does everything with the help of temptations. Judas tempts all the apostles, proving that their faith is not true: he sows even more doubt in the heart of the unbeliever Thomas about the truthfulness of faith; provokes John to aggression by paraphrasing Jesus' words; he tempted Magdalene with passionate compliments, reminding her of her dissolute, easy, and luxurious life. Once tempted, it is very easy for a person to sin a second time. For example, by promising Salome to see "her eaglets flying at the king's side", Judas forces her to arrange a "false resurrection of Lazarus".

Later, Judas suffered the same fate as Jesus' temptation: for the sake of his own enrichment, he hid John's jewelry from everyone, and received 'thirty pieces of silver' that would not bring him what he wanted, - Is it for will, or for blood?... / How cheap that blood is... After all - / Only thirty pieces of silver... / (She shudders, then maliciously throws the money into the hole). / Away with the price of blood / When everything died!.. And I ... what am I Now? (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 868). In this way, the author realizes the opposition "spiritual – material", in which he emphasizes that focusing only on "material bread" that satisfies temporary hunger leads to unbelief, and as a result, to spiritual death.

The opposition "sin – righteousness" is manifested in the temptation of Jesus by Judas to commit sin, - Oh, proud Rome / Will fall at your feet as a humble slave. / And Israel will sing a song of freedom (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 760). But Jesus understands the cost of achieving all these "benefits", - I do not bring war to people, but peace" (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 760). Judas, on the other hand, has no obstacles to achieve his goals, not even a human life, - Blood?.. What is blood?.. / It has no price: the blood of such slaves, / Like us ... It is nothing, it is water, / Which can be swim ashore / Freedom, with the blood of its enemies / Mixing it. (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 817).

Judas tempts Jesus with power, - Listen to me, Rabbi Jesus, / And you will become a king and a god on earth / And you will save the world from slavery and abuse (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 762). Jesus overcomes temptation because his faith is unshakable. By his victory over all temptations, Jesus shows that he is indeed the Son of God who came to destroy the devil and his works. His great weapon is the Word, which helps him recognize truth and lies. The author introduces this dialog to show that the motive of temptation is a part of life in this world, and a man should imitate the God-man.

The grace of God changes a person, enabling him or her to make the right choice and act in accordance with the will of

God. An example of this is the image of Mary Magdalene, who underwent a spiritual rebirth thanks to Jesus. For the Christian Magdalene, Jesus became the light of her spiritual life. Solar symbolism is associated with cathartic ideas (the idea of purity and purification). Jesus is likened to light, a valuable factor to which the soul of the righteous is directed. Jesus showed Magdalene her path and how to avoid temptations, and helped her change her own life. Magdalene was most afraid of succumbing to the sin of fornication again, and so because of her fear she did not see Judas' true intentions. Of all the people who followed Jesus, Magdalene supports Judas the longest in his quest to make Jesus the king. But the sentencing of Jesus to death forced Magdalene to see the real Judas. Judas himself did not overcome this temptation: thanks to his ingenuity, his intelligence, and his power, he betrayed Jesus to the Romans, not realizing that he himself had been used and deceived.

Another of Jesus' temptations in the desert is deception. Judas suggests that he jump off a cliff because God will not let him fall, challenging him to prove that he is truly the Son of God. During this test, Judas quotes from the Bible, - ... there it is also said that God / will order his angels / to protect you in all your ways / so that you do not trip over a stone with your foot. / (With malicious irony). Do I say yes or no, son of God? (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 762), changing the tactics of temptation. As in his previous attempts, Jesus does not compromise with Judas, categorically rejecting his proposal, "Do not tempt God". With these words, Jesus emphasizes his complete trust in God's Providence. All material things are the cause of sin, but a man is given the freedom of choice. This is how the opposition "freedom – slavery" is realized. Jesus asserts that a person has the choice to do good or evil, and the highest degree of freedom is the ability not to do evil. The person who has the grace of God is the freest; true freedom is serving Christ. Judas, however, is convinced that freedom must be gained through war, and then a person can be free in his own land without Roman invaders, - Only free people need peace, not slaves. / From slavery, peace will never liberate (Cherkasenko, 1991, p. 760).

With his action, Jesus teaches people to refuse momentary pleasures and vicious desires, no matter how persistently they are offered. Evil makes life more difficult because it encourages us to pursue what is more convenient. Judas himself cannot give up love, which is devoid of spiritual meaning. He is clouded by his passion for the harlot woman and does not take into account the feelings of his beloved one. In the desire to possess this woman, a certain obsession can be traced, indicating that the devil has taken possession of his soul and body. The same obsession can be seen in the revenge against the Romans, which Judas sees as realized through the return of the independence of his homeland. In this way, in his opinion, he will regain his status and get a life with the woman he desires.

S. Cherkasenko emphasizes that when a person's goals become the only purpose of life and prevail over relationships with loved ones and other important aspects of life, this can lead to negative consequences: a sense of dissatisfaction, alienation from family and friends, and loss of balance in life.

In our opinion, the great drama of Judas is that he understands himself and his ideas about Christ better than he understands the person of Christ. The meeting between Judas and Jesus Christ is an opportunity for Judas to get closer to a spiritual life, to get closer to God, to change his life for the better. Judas, like every person facing a choice, has two options: good or evil. Christ encourages Judas to constantly change his plans and actions, but always gives him a choice. And Judas' life depends only on his own choice, and as a result, it may turn out that you have not achieved what you originally wanted. Judas' death is not accidental; it is the logical outcome of his sinful life, because the author, in our opinion, sees the salvation of humanity in the Christian religion. We agree with Y. Polshchuk that Judas is more likely a person that strives for "mastery of the high ego, ... but stops before internal obstacles-passions, temptations, personal benefits-that are unable to overcome them. In the end,

those passions and temptations turn out to be illusory, but the realization of this comes with a tragic delay” (Polishchuk, 2002). Judas’ suicide can be interpreted as the loss of “mind” to “faith”. Jesus’ self-sacrifice is the highest price for the salvation of people, which is the sacred meaning of sacrifice. Judas realized that mind without faith will not save people. All of Christ’s disciples had left Judas, the woman he desired had left as well, and even the precious glory, which had been misappropriated, had been stolen. In this situation, the mind suggests one thing: suicide, which in Christianity is the greatest sin, indicates the final possession of the “unclean” soul of a person. In our opinion, in this way the author describes the universe as a unity of opposite phenomena, which is characteristic of the dualistic myth, where the victory of good implies the destruction of evil.

#### 4 Conclusions

S. Cherkasenko wrote the drama “The Price of Blood” in 1930, when he was already an adult. It was a difficult adaptation period of the writer’s life abroad. Perhaps this was the reason for his appeal to human existence.

The dualistic mythomodel in “The Price of Blood” is modeled through the motif of the battle between faith and mind and is represented by the binary oppositions of “good – evil”, “sin – righteousness”, “truth – lie”, “God – Devil”, “life – death”, “freedom – slavery”, “spiritual – material”, “loyalty – betrayal”. The binary opposition “good-evil” is encoded in the archetypal first - Jesus Christ (faith) and the tempter Judas (mind), and their confrontation can be interpreted as an antagonistic duality.

The artistic realization of betrayal is at the same time the protagonist’s redemption, which is connected with the inconsistency and contradictions of Judas’ character, who is perceived as a hostage to his existence, his fate.

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