

CONCEPT OF GOD IN FOLKLORE DISCOURSE

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INTRODUCTION

Folklore discourse of the concept of GOD was presented by the interest of historians, ethnographers, literary critics, linguists. A remarkable trace has been left by the following researchers: O. Potebnia, I. Franko, M. Drahomanov, M. Kostomarov, I. Nechui-Levytskyi, M. Hrushevskyi P. Chubynskyi, G. Bulashev, L. Niderle, B. Rybakov, B. Hrinchenko, I. Ohienko, V. Hnatiuk, S. Kylymnyk, A. Voropai, D. Antonovych, Khv. Vovk, P. Zhytetskyi, P. Kulish, M. Maksymovych, I. Sreznevskyi, M. Sumtsov, etc.

Ukrainian religious scholars paid a lot of attention to the study of the ethno-religious tradition of our ancestors. In their works, the historical-cultural, ideological and comparative analysis of the Ukrainian pagan heritage was carried out (B. Blobovyk, A. Kolodnyi, L. Fylypovych, V. Bodak, etc.), the role of religion in the spiritual life of the Ukrainian people was clarified.

The conceptosphere of GOD in the works of I. Franko, M. Kostomarov, V. Hnatiuk. O. Voropai, P. Chubynskyi and others is presented by the ethnographic material, which focuses on the deep layers of the religious outlook evolution of our ancestors.

The isolation of ethnolinguistics intensified the study of the phraseology of the Ukrainian language from the standpoint of reflection in the established linguistic directions of the ideological orientations of the ethnos. In the linguistic-cultural study of phraseological units, an important place is given to the elucidation of the ratio of prototype characteristics with etymon and the semantics of the components of phraseological units. As we know, on the conceptual level, the concept of GOD is explicated in religious, mythological, folklore, philosophical, psychological plans which form the basis of linguistic and cultural information. The ethnogenesis of humanity (including Ukrainians) is characterized by the evolution of religious views. Supernatural phenomena were objectified through animistic, totemic, pantheistic, monogenistic, monotheistic representations, recorded in the structures of phraseological units with the component of GOD.

Ethnolinguological and cultural information is contained in the internal form as the primary form (idea) of the phraseological units representing the basic concepts that are characteristic of certain stages of human development in general, and Ukrainians in particular. Despite the partial deactivation of the components of phrases, the nomination of God does not lose its meaning, retains all the signs of the word. The theonim component of God is seen as a semantic center of phraseological unit. In the dichotomous phraseological structures with the participant God, different semantic-cultural oppositions are objected. The analysis of phraseological units (in the broad sense) is carried out on the basis of semantic profiling technique. The Ukrainian phraseology and paremiology reflects people's ideas about God, which testify to the evolution of the religious views of Ukrainians. Christian values are dominant in popular beliefs.

1. Subconcept "Creation of the World" in Folklore Discourse

The subconcept "creation of the world" in folklore discourse represents the ideological evolution of prehistoric, mythological and biblical notions, the peculiarity of which is the presence of dualistic forces in the creation of the world. Cosmogonic motifs are felt in many carols, which are exploded by експлікуються *cosmic waters*, *great-grandfather (paradise tree)*, *world-creation essence (spirit)*, *spiritual beings*¹. *Cosmic water* is an inalienable attribute of the beginning of the creation of the world. Representatives of cosmic waters are the sea, the rivers that existed before the beginning of the world and through which the world was created: (*Що ж нам було з світа початку? Не було нічого, – одна водонька*)².

Personification of water through mystical wells, lakes originating from dew which has fallen from heaven or paradise tree, served as a tree of life, acquired signs of holiness and the object of worship. Water represents the implicit – the idea of God, as well as the original God's craft appealing to Him (here He bathes with the apostles or other saints, here there are godlike beings embodied in birds (falcons, swallows). This becomes especially noticeable through the image of a paradise well, the celestial beauty of the Danube, etc. By the way, the name of the

¹ Грушевський М. С. Репринтне видання: Історія України–Руси: В 11 т., 12 кн. / Редкол.: П.С.Сохань (голова) та ін. К., 1991. Т.1. 648 с.

² Сосенко Ксенофонт. Різдво–Коляда і Щедрий Вечір. К.: Радянський письменник, 1994. С. 286.

Danube correlates with water, a river in general, and not with its own name (385 I, 40).

Since ancient times, water was considered to be saint in Ukrainian, the one in which neither spitting nor fulfilling the need was possible. Our ancestors made sacrifices to waters (rivers, lakes, wells). Water taken from a place where three rivers or three wells converge is considered to be particularly healing (17 I, 43), as well as sacred water – Holy Night, Jordanian and Candlemas water, which is preserved year-round in many Ukrainian families³ and used for therapeutic purposes. Healing power is also characteristic of "unbroken water" – water, which is scooped up from the river, well (three wells) before sunrise. A definitely animistic view of water is revealed in the presentation of the river as vessels of the earth through which water flows (an analogy to the blood of man). There is a belief that water for the Epiphany turns into wine for some time (17 II, 6), which is in harmony with Christian dogmas about the body and blood of Christ. The drying-up of rivers (waters) is God's punishment (17 I, 46).

Lexeme *water* is the semantic center of a large number of phraseological units, serving as a component of figurative nominations of sacral or profane content. The water symbol in folklore discourse retains traces of both animistic and Christian outlooks. It is a symbol of life, cleansing, fertilization, reproduction, and love. Nominations for *live water*, *dead water* (*waterless water*) express the dualistic properties of water to give strength / take away strength. The name *deep water* is also inherent in binary meanings, but of a different nature. Thus, with the depth of water, not only the mind of man is associated, but also danger (*пор.: глибока вода тихо плине і глибока вода – видима смерть* (13, 108).

An invariable attribute of cosmic waters is *the paradise tree* (*mother tree*) with a mythical world-creation force. In the carols, the motif of the mother tree is associated with a green yarrow, oak, pine tree, and others. The mysticism of the paradise tree appears in the light celestial range of colors and shades, in its connection with the moon.

Sometimes the paradise tree is not located on the terrestrial or marine space, but in a mystical church. The image of the church, as

³ Апокрифи і легенди з українських рукописів / Іван Якович Франко (зібрав, упорядкував і пояснив). Репр. вид. 1896 р. Львів, 2006.

K. Sosenko⁴ claims, is the boundless astral sky in dimension, in which God resides⁵.

The mother tree symbolizes the unity of the earthly and celestial forces, although the motive of the earthly paradise tree that precedes, in our opinion, the precultural type of the outlook of our ancestors – the paradise tree as a symbol of ideal primitive life is dominant. Tree worship, making sacrifices to them, their use in ceremonies (wedding tree, Kupa's tree, beating with a willow branch at Easter) is the next stage of the genesis of the idea of the mother tree in paganism as religion. The idea of a tree of knowledge of good and evil by its origins reaches, as we know, the biblical text. We draw attention to the absence of dualism in the symbolism of the mother tree and its appearance in the Holy Scripture as a consequence of human interference in the process of the universe. In the carols, the image of the mother tree (world's mother tree) (13, 176) appears as the first birth of life; it is on it that there are eternal brothers – the Sun, the Moon and the Rain, or their Christian successors – the Lord, Saint Peter and Paul.

The creators of the world in many carols are *spiritual beings* in the form of *pigeons, swans, falcons, rarely swallows, cuckoos*. The personification of the birds is beyond doubt because of their frequent replacement by the angels. Their world creating power acts as self-sufficient or as directed by God. The idea of a bird as the creator of the world is closely intertwined with the idea of the mother tree (as an attribute). A special place in popular representations is taken by *the swallow and the bee* – God's birds, created by God from the earth, whose presence in the human dwelling symbolizes family happiness; *the eagle*, which, according to legends, was declared God Himself by the King of birds; *the stork*⁶ – the Servant of the Blessed. The "divinity" of the named birds does not quite coincide with the ancient cultural flood of the beliefs of our ancestors, which obviously testifies to the significant influence of Christianity that interrupted this tradition by affirming and spreading the apocryphal literature through the Bible, the symbolism of birds that does not correlate, with minor exceptions, neither with prehistoric nor with people's ideas. In some carols, we can trace the motive of creating the world from *a stone (white stone): А що там було*

⁴ Сосенко Ксенофонт. Різдво–Коляда і Щедрий Вечір. К.: Радянський письменник, 1994. С. 286.

⁵ Сосенко Ксенофонт. Різдво–Коляда і Щедрий Вечір. К.: Радянський письменник, 1994. С. 285.

⁶ Чубинський Павло. Мудрість віків: українське народознавство у творчій спадщині Павла Чубинського: У 2 кн. / С.К. Горкавий (упоряд.), Ю. О. Іванченко (упоряд.). К. : Мистецтво, 1995. С.224.

з нащадку світа? Славен єси Боже та в усім світі і на небесах! Ой не було ж нам – хіба синя вода, синя вода та й білий камінь. А прикрив Господь сиров землицею, Виросло в нім кедрове дерево, Барз височейке і барз слічнейке⁶.

A characteristic feature of these carols is the combination of the idea of great water, mother tree and stone in one image, which is the unity of three spheres: underground, earthly, heavenly. Here it is said, probably, not about the creative forces of the universe, but about our ancestors' conception of the universe. Moreover, the idea of God as the creator of the world and the sky is visibly present in this carol.

Ancient cultural motives do not dominate, their ideas are "laid on", dissolved in religious motives, which are usually Christian, though pagan traces are quite expressive.

God is the Creator of heaven and earth in the later sources of origin. The sky in Ukrainian folklore is "the place where God, angels and saints live. They live on separate vaults of heaven, on the highest of which is God, on the middle one there are angels, and on the lower one are saints" (17 I, 24). According to popular beliefs, the sky opens (*мов небо розтворилося*) (23, 240), and at this time you can see angels, they are listening to human wishes and convey them to God, who will surely fulfill them, but it is opened only to God's saints.

The brightness and light of the sky cannot be tolerated by human eyes, so it is covered with clouds. When the thunder rises, the sky opens – it cannot be seen at that time (17 I, 12). The beliefs of Ukrainians in the plurality of heaven are evident in a phrasal unit "*на сьомому небі*" (26 II, 538), which denotes the highest measure of happiness. This is obviously due to the fact that the seventh heaven is considered to be the place of residence not only of God, saints and angels, but also the place of the eternal kingdom.

The sky appears in the folkloric sources as "the stronghold", this "stronghold" acts as a house or church: "*Церкву ставлять, вікна будують: одне віконце – ясне сонце, друге віконце – ясний місяць, третє віконце – ясні зірки*" (11). The concept of the sky as the stronghold correlates with the concept of the heavenly way. The Pagan tradition regards Perun (17 I, 98), Dazhboh and Svarog (13) as rulers of the sky.

The attributes of the *earth (holy, mother)* correlate with the biblical ones, since the first person is created from it, it is the source of human's and animals' lives. The habit of kissing the land, giving a vow, swearing

by it, is familiar to most Ukrainians, sayings about which are eloquent: *земля мама наша* (12 I, 537), *на що тебе свята земля носить* (12 I, 539), *бодай то свята земля не приймила* (12 I, 512). The earth is animated in paremias, it *cries, buzzes, trembles, is eaten*. It acts as a refuge for the dead souls (for example: *нехай над ним земля пером* (23, 55), on the other hand, the earth symbolizes evil power: *щоб тебе сура земля пожерла* (23, 194).

Land worship as an expression of pre-Christian and Christian outlooks is illustrated by epithets (attributes): *God's, holy, native, sacred, generous, rich, etc.* The earth appears to be a personified being, which one must treat with special respect, love, otherwise it may be angry and absorb the offender or sinner, since it is a fair witness and judge (13, 243). According to popular beliefs, the earth stands on the ocean, three (two) whales, the movement of which determines the yield / non-productivity of the earth, earthquakes (17 I, 35). According to the legend, the creation of earth by God was as follows: when God wanted to create land, he flew with Sataniel over the sea and sent him to bring sand from the bottom of the deepest ocean. Sataniel brought the sand, but part of it was hidden in the mouth. Thus, in the places where God sowed sand, the land was flat, and where Satanail spat and hatched, mountains and rocks appeared. (16, 14–15).

Another legend says: "When God created the earth, he initially cooked it, then quickly cooled; the blistering bumps, as the ground was boiling, turned to the mountains, and the gaps between them formed the valleys⁷". God acts as the creator of the world. According to the legend, there was no heaven or earth at first, there was only darkness and water mixed with the earth, and God in the form of the Holy Ghost was flying above the water, which was noisy with the foam from which He created the angel, after which he created the world, on the second day He created the sky, on the third one – the earth, on the fourth He created the sun in the sky, the moon and stars, on the fifth day – two large fishes and two small ones. The large fish support the land, and the small ones are thrown into water for breeding, afterwards God created birds (17 I, 146–147). In another legend, God acts only as the creator of the higher, spiritual world, and the visible world, including the body of man was created by Sataniel, which existed forever and represents the

⁷Булашев Г. О. Український народ у своїх легендах, релігійних поглядах та віруваннях: Космогонічні українські народні погляди та вірування. К.: Довіра, 1992. С. 365.

embodiment of evil (22, 70). The creation of the soul by God, and the body by Sataniel laid the duality of good and evil in man. Sataniel (Satan) is sacked to the earth for sins, bound in bonds, waiting for God's judgement, and has no creative power.

The denial of the foreknowledge of God can be seen in one of the legends according to which there was "neither God nor people, nor angels; There was no earth or sky, but there was complete darkness. It was at this time that God appeared and lived in the air. Here God decided to create heaven and earth. Originally He created the sky, and then climbed down from the sky to the ground and created the earth. Then, from the body, He began to create people, birds and animals, after that God began to plant trees and grass. Then he returned to heaven again and created angels. He sat on the throne and began to reign. God created people gradually, day by day (for four days), and the land filled with them. And He tied the earth up from the edges" (22, 86). Phraseological units formulate the idea of God the Creator: *Бог дав, Бог дає* (26, 36–37), as well as His uniqueness, absoluteness: *нема в світі над Бога; над Богом нема нікого* (23, 39).

People's imagination divided the animals into God's and devil's creatures. The first of them include: *oxen, sheep, donkeys, pigs, cows, bears*. Sataniel is said to have created: *a horse, a goat (goat), a dog, a wolf, cats, a hare*. Oxen are considered to be blessed animals, since they were present at the birth of the Child (Jesus Christ), covering him with straw and warming his breath, giving worship. This event is one of the centerpieces of the plot of Christmas carols, carols of the bells. In paremias, the duality of the ox / horse is preserved (*кінь волу не товариш* (23, 86), *чешися кінь з конем, а віл з волом* (23, 87). The diligence of the ox is noted. The sheep are also considered to be blessed for the fact that they covered the Lord when he was hiding from Herod with their food and wool (22, 24). While Jesus Christ's hiding from Herod, God hid himself from the persecutors in a manger with hay, which was eaten by horses, God hid deeper, but chickens rolled up the hay, then He was captured, but He was able to escape and the Lord was hid in the straw, the pigs buried him deeper, so this way, the pigs also received God's blessing. Although there are other beliefs about pigs (like the men of werewolves) (17 I, 52). The pig in paremias received a definitely negative connotation. It is attributed a lack of spirituality (*свиня не вірує в Бога – тільки в великого стога* (12, 159); ill manners (*посади свиню за стіл, а вона й ноги на стіл* (12, 159), bad

taste (*так до діла, як свиня штани наділа* (12, 341) *свиня свинею* (12, 158). As we see, the traces of God's blessing have not survived.

Particularly honored is the cow as a nurse of the family (*пропала корова, не треба й здоров'я* (12, 454). People's sympathies are addressed to it (*одізвуться вовкові коровлячі слізки* (12, 207), it is greeted at Easter, given "holiness" and protected from evil eyes. The sheep in popular representations, on the one hand, is seen as the carrier of the most valuable traits (*вівця – як бджола* (12, 364), on the other hand – it categorizes the negative traits (*паршива вівця все стадо спаскудить* (12, 283), *хто стається вівцею, того вовк з'їсть* (12, 197). According to legends, the animals mentioned have the ability to speak the human language on the eve of Christmas. Other animals (dog, wolf, rabbit, etc.), although being created by God, are cursed by Him and are believed to serve the devil. "Animalistic" dualism (good / evil) is the result of the people's fantasy, which probably reflects idio-ethic and mental characteristics of our ancestors.

The appearance of heavenly bodies (sun, moon, stars) correlates with the biblical narrative of God's creation of heavenly bodies. Folk imagination made their unique symbolism. In the precultural plan, the astral Trinity – the sun, the moon, the stars (*"Ясен місяць – пан господар, Красне сонце – жона його, Дрібні зірки – його діти"*)⁸ is the cult of the Lord⁸.

The main idea in these ancient carols is the cult of the sky, with which the idea of God is connected. Sometimes, from this heavenly triad, one or two lunar symbols (moon, dawn, and moon) are singled out, which combine a precultural stratum of Christian beliefs. The sun is worshiped by the people and is considered to be holy and righteous, "*the face of God*" (17 I, 14), "*the king of heaven,*" "*the eye of God.*" The eclipse of the sun symbolizes the punishment of the Lord and therefore terrifies people: at this time they light "Good Friday's" candles and pray earnestly for the remission of their sins (18, 45). The sun is personified with a person with a clear face, whose rays are illuminated by the whole world. It rises up to the sky in the morning on the ladder, and in the evening goes down another one. In sayings, the concept of a ladder is associated with the sky *небом* (*нема тоєї драбинки, щоб до неба залізти*) (12, 622). Kupala Night, Christmas and Koliada are dedicated

⁸ Сосенко Ксенофонт. Різдво–Коляда і Щедрий Вечір. К.: Радянський письменник, 1994. С. 255.

to the sun (13, 564). On these days, the sun was personified (for example: the sun plays, bathe, jumps, dances, walks, blooms, beats, etc.)

The second most significant heavenly light is the moon. This is the youngest brother of the sun, the sun sets in the night and illuminates the world. The phases of the month, according to popular beliefs, have an effect on people and plants: yes, a person who is born on a new moon will lead a life in happiness and health; instead, at the end of the month, the reciprocal effect is attributed to it.⁹

The spots on the moon symbolize, according to a popular belief, the assassination of Abel Cain. That is why God has commanded the moon to be born on a monthly basis, to be formed and to die (17 I, 9–11). This heavenly light has long been the object of religious worship, which is objectified in the epithets: *light, ash, flood, horn, etc.* (13, 36). *Stars* are children of the sun and the moon. The stars are inextricably linked with humans, they are likened to candles. There is a belief that the birth of a man is accompanied by a flash of stars in heaven, which God lights up. The bright burning stars symbolize a happy life; while the dimly light of the stars means a bad life. According to another folk notion, stars are considered to be the souls of deceased people, who lead a sinless life on earth, as well as children who did not manage to sin yet (13, 251). As for the falling stars, they denote the overthrow of Satan from heaven, the souls of deceased people (17 I, 23). The sun, the moon, the star in Christmas songs and carols of the bells are a kind of heavenly family that personifies with the earthly family. In some cases the astral Trinity mentioned above explicits the external and internal attributes of God. (*“Тогди пізнали Господа Бога, Господа Бога, Ісуса Христа, Бо в правім личку – світле сонечко, А в лівім очку – ясний місячко, А в грудях йому – ясна зоречка”*).¹⁰

Apocryphal literature about the creation of man (Adam and Eve) formed the basis of the legend, according to which God created man from the earth, taking the body from it, the bone, from the stone, blood from the sea, eyes from the sun, thoughts from the clouds, light from the ligh, breath from the wind, warmth from the fire. "When God went to take eyes from the sun, and Adam was lying on the ground, accursed Satan came up to him and smeared him with mud. God, turning back, wanted to attach Adam's eyes, and when he saw him in mud, he got

⁹Гнатюк Володимир. Нарис української міфології / Роман Кирчів (підгот.та опрацюв.тексту, вступ. ст. і примітки). Львів : Інститут народознавства НАН України, 2000. С. 264.

¹⁰Сосенко Ксенофонт. Різдво–Коляда і Щедрий Вечір. К.: Радянський письменник, 1994. С. 254.

very angry with the devil and cursed him. And the devil vanished into thin air like the lightning. The Lord, having removed Satan's filthiness from Adam, made a dog out of them, and ordered it to guard Adam, and he himself went to the mountainous Jerusalem for Adam's breath. The dog came again to bring evil to Adam. Seeing the barking dog at Adam's feet, he was afraid, and taking a "tree", pricked him and cursed him with seventy ailments. The Lord returned and sent the devil away again, but the ailments entered the man ", – this is what is told about the creation of the world by one of the Ukrainian legends based on the "Paleya" (13, 88).

The creation of man, as we see, happened due to Satan too, the dualism of *God / Satan* is often traced in folk sources: it often correlates with the notion of the soul as God's substance and body as the fruit of Satan in a certain way. A similar story is found in the apocryphal legend "How God created Adam". According to another legend, God created man from clay, and Satan tried to imitate God in creation, but this did not work out, since the creation, which is not enlivened by God, has no life prospect. The gender of a person is also categorized in the binary opposition: the creation of a man belongs to God, women come from Satan, and the "material" from which men and women are created is different; respectively – earth and dough, although the creation of a woman (Eve) very often correlates with the biblical narrative, however, with the difference that, in addition to Adam's ribs, the woman's creation also occurred from the flower (rose). The woman created from the flower is the mother of Jesus Christ. Here there is a significant cosmogonic influence on the legend to glorify the name of the Virgin before all earthly creations.

The creation of the world in folklore discourse modifies Biblical notions in a certain way. Ancient waters, the tree of the paradise as well as spiritual beings possess the divine power of creation, not personifying in the name of God, which, however, does not deny the invisible presence of God, which is embodied in the images of water, trees, spiritual beings. Such representations reflect the cultural experience of our ancestors about the beginning of the world. Such representations are typical of other peoples of the world, which allows us to express assumptions about the original "religious universalism" of most peoples of the world.

2. Subconcept "Birth of Jesus Christ" in Folklore Discourse

The sub-concept of "the birth of Christ" is realized in the actional frame by the lexemes of *Вифлеєм, яскиня, ясла, шопя, сіно, холод (зимно), біль, Богородиця, новий рік (літо) and others*. Jesus Christ was born in a manger, in a desert place: “*Не в царській палаті, а поміж бидляти, На пустині, у яскині*” (11); “*В біднім вертепі, в яслах на сіні*” (11), in a quiet night, which in a certain way dissociate from His omnipotence all-power. Singing of the angels and their joy accompanied the appearance of the God-man, which objectifies the transcendence of the event. In everything else there is a likeness of God to the common man. His birth is associated with the province (it was in that cultural, political and geographical plan that Bethlehem was at that time. In the name of this city, sacred information was encoded. The word Bethlehem, translated from the Hebrew, means "bread house" (17 I, 47), later Bethlehem becomes the prototype of the Church of God on earth, the heavenly bread). "People of the earth", shepherds, are the first to learn about the birth of God. The place of birth, at first glance, is not equal to His grandeur at all. God's power is personified in the poor, cute Baby, which embodies the paradox of the power of the weak. It is the shepherds, common earthly people, who had the right to be the first to witness the greatest mystery, the most surprising news – the birth of the Savior of mankind. Why did they get this news? Obviously, because for God both human happiness and human pain is understandable and under His protection; on the one hand, these are angels, the perfection of God, on the other hand, shepherds are the embodiment of human prosaicness, for whom God sends a spark of hope, joy and love in such a way.

In Christmas songs and carols of the bells, heavenly forces (angels, archangels) do not only bring happy messages to the Virgin Mary or announce the birth of Jesus Christ, but also act as active participants in the sacred action. Nomen Archangel Gabriel (“*Видів Бог, видів Сотворитель, що весь світ погибає, Архангела Гавриїла в Назарет посилає*” (14) objects the news of the birth of Jesus Christ (as in biblical discourse) in Nazareth to Mary, telling her that she is chosen by God to become the mother of His Son. Folklore discourse actualizes the heavenly forces in the face of angels, their presence harmonizes the rebirth of life in its original form, when both heaven and earth were the only spiritual essence (like men and angels). The same picture is also observed in carols where *waters* gaily roar, *fire, mountains, land, hills, princes, men, kings, cattle, beasts* set a community, devoid of

contradictions and radiate the joy of the birth of Jesus Christ (16). In paramia units such motives are not reflected. Here the following dual oppositions predominate: angel / devil (good / evil): *був би ангел, коби не роги; ангельський голосок, а чортова думка* (13, 13), which testify to a kind of neutralization of sacredness in lexeme angel and its legitimization in the profane manifestation.

The Virgin (along with the birth of God) is the central character of folklore discourse (carol). In the biblical discourse of Mary (Greek and Latin form of the Hebrew name of Miriam "majestic, magnificent" (17, 454), the future mother of Jesus Christ from an early childhood was made dedicated by her parents to serve God. Through Archangel Gabriel she receives the good news that she would be a mother of the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit (1: 26–38). Righteous Joseph, having learned about the pregnancy of his wife, wanted to secretly let Mary go for good to avoid disgrace. In the dream, an angel of the Lord comes to him, saying: *“Йосине, сину Давидів, не бійся прийняти Марію, дружину свою, бо зачате в ній то від Духа Святого”* (Jacob 1:20). Joseph then accepts his wife, who gave birth to the Son of God, circumcised on the eighth day, named Angel Jesus (John 2: 21). Then, because of the mortal threat to Jesus' life, Mary with Joseph fled to Egypt. The name of Mary the Virgin is mentioned in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (John 19: 25) and after His resurrection (*“Вони всі однодушно були на невпинній молитві, із жінками, із Марією, матір'ю Ісусовою, та з братами Його”* (Дії 1:14).

The biblical story of the Virgin Mary is retransmitted in Christmas songs, carols of the bells, church songs. In Christmas songs and carols of the bells, the image of the Virgin Mary is objectified in sacred, ethno-national, profane and archetypal dimensions. The aforementioned aspects appear differently at the text level. The variety of palette of names of Mary is rather rich, which is characteristic of folklore discourse. The dominant motive, which is seen in the Virgin's onyms, is the motive of holiness, which is realized by attributes such as як *чиста, пречиста, непорочна, предвічна, пречудна, єдина, Богомати, Божя невіста, вибрана, благодатна, святая*. This image of holiness (sacredness) is verbalized through the signs of God – *прескверна Агниця, предвічна, пречудна, єдина*, which equalize the Virgin Mary with God in the essential manifestation. These Divine signs are complemented by the sacred virtues of Mary – *чиста, пречиста, непорочна* as the mouthpieces of one of the hypostases of God – the

Holy Spirit; Her connection with God-Son is transmitted in the onyms *Божя невіста, Божя Мати*. The idea of God correlates with the subject and epigrammatic codes of the Maria's names, thereby expressing the divinity of her origin and deeds. The Biblical image of Mary is "sporadic": *"І ми прибігаймо, Марію витаймо, Чеснішу Херувим, Славнійшу Серафим"* (14). An insignificant number of the the Virgin's onyms (*Марія, Панна, Лелія*) reflect the profane sphere, the secular nature, the purely folk interpretation of this image, which, however, appears in the system of onymies sporadically. A characteristic feature of the functioning of the above mentioned onymies is the combination of sacred and profane plans in them – *Пречиста Панна, непорочна Лелія, Марія чиста, Пречиста Діва Марія*.

In the content plan, the figure of the Mother of God is characterized not so much by archetypal functions, but by canonical materiel functions. She *народжує, годує, колише, повиває, співає, леліє, присипає* her Baby. *"Марія Пречиста Його сповиває, Миленько, тихенько щось Му промовляє: "Спи, Сину маленький, для нас дороженький, для світа цілого, для своєї Неньки"* (14); *"Спи, Ісусе, спи, спатоньки ходи. Я Тебе му колисати, Пісоньками присипляти: Люлі, серденько, люлі!"* (14). *"А Марія повиває, до серденька пригортає"* (14); *"Марія Му Мати прекрасно співає, І хор Ангельських їй допомагає"* (14).

For Ukrainian folklore the following words are characteristic: *серденько, до серденька пригортає*, thus making the folk "face" of the Virgin's image clearer. The non-archetypal image of Mary is vividly seen in the dialogues of Mary with Joseph, with the Child. The dialogue is based on folklore samples, in particular, folk-verse genres: *"...А там за ярмом зелена ліщина. Пасли вівці, з пастирями, Прийшла їм новина. Бери, Петре, трубу, Затруби ід Богу"* (11). In the carol "Sleep, Jesus, Sleep", the linguistic patterns, typical for the genre of lullabies, are used: *"Можеш рибко, тихо спати, Тебе буду колисати"*; *"Спи, убогий, спи, Рученьки зложи"*; *"Спи, терпіне, спи, Очка зажмури"*, *"Спи, Ісусе, спи, спатоньки ходи"*; *"Спи, Лелійку, спи, голівку схили"*. The image of the Virgin Mary in some carols explicitly explains the national motifs embodied in the image of Ukraine: *"Гожа невіста, треба нам знати, То українська мати"* (16). Here the image of the Mother of God, the patron of Ukraine whose sphere of influence is virtually unlimited, is clearly traced – spiritual and bodily health, protection from natural disasters, restoration of ruined

shrines, etc. Spiritual motherhood of the Virgin Mary deduces the human nature from an indefinite state, bringing in the very natural existence of an absolute system. Along with this, the Virgin is also depicted in a transcendental manifestation. Through actions such as escaping to Egypt, during which the miracles are manifested (the fire from the ice was struck, "the wheat" was grown during the day). Mary's miracles are actualized in folk legends, they are then canonized in Christianity, especially in Catholicism, to a lesser extent – in Orthodoxy.

The Bethlehem *star* is the characteristic symbol of the birth of Christ. In the New Testament, the description of the Bethlehem star is found in the Gospel from Matthew: scientific evidence does not confirm the appearance of a new star in heaven at this time. The Gospel of Matthew says that only the wise men knew this star, but it was not known in Jerusalem; otherwise, Herod would have known about this. Obviously, the author of the Gospel used a metaphor that made it possible to elucidate the significance of the events described. From ancient times it has been believed that every person has their own star, which flashes at the moment of birth and fades at the time of death.

Specific witnesses of God's birth are *the beasts*. The world of animals in folklore texts is represented – indirectly or directly – through the presence of participants in the Bethlehem night. The central place here is given to oxen and donkeys. A separate group consists of carols, in which the bird's joy is portrayed as the forerunner of the harmony of heaven and earth forces in the eschatological dimension.

The presence of animals in the texts is a manifestation of the specificity of carols, their forms, genesis, in which the conceptualization of the world and its sacred expression finds special forms of expression. The conflict between the world of religion and the profane one; material and ideal things in carols shows that the archetypes of the animistic and totemistic character are preserved and involuntarily brings us closer to the eschatological time, when people and animals will be a special unity of living beings, devoid of antinomies.

Ancient Ukrainian customs presupposed the presence of animals on this holiday, according to which God came to birth at night both to humans and to animals, in addition, the latter were able to speak on that night. Witnesses from animals in carols are most often oxen and donkeys, who, like people, give a worship to a newly born Baby: : “*І вїл з ослом до ясел вступили, Пред рожденним Христом колїна склонили*” (11). A slightly different picture is observed in the carol

"God is being born": *"А віл стоїть, трясеться, Осел смутно пасеться"*, which testifies the greatness of the event through the fear of God, before which angels did not stand. God is majestic and terrible, the latter sign generalizes the true Christian feelings that are felt in the moment of God's actions, this is a natural manifestation of the power of the Lord. In other carols, it is said that these animals warm a nursery with a little Jesus: *"Де віл, осел Дитину гріли"* (16); *"Віл і осел приклякають, Паров Його огрівають"* (15).

There is no mention of animals as witnesses of the mysterious Bethlehem night in the Gospels. In the Gospel from Isaiah (1: 3) we read: *"Віл знає свого власника, а осел ясла пана свого, а Ізраїль не знає Мене, не звертає уваги народ Мій на Мене..."*, which made it possible in the rabbinical literature to make an assumption that the ox is a symbol of the chosen people – Israel, and the donkey represents pagan people.

In the apocrypha we find confirmation of the presence of these animals on the third day after the birth of God: *"Третього дня по народженні Пана Марія вийшла з будинку і зайшла до стайні. Там зложила дитячко в жолобі, а віл і осел віддали Йому поклін. І сталося те, що сказано через пророка Ісаю: пізнав віл Пана свого, а осел жолоб Пана свого..."*. The names of *the donkey and the oxen* are characterized by rich symbolism in the biblical text. Thus, the *donkey* objectifies humility (Zechariah 9: 9), peaceful intentions (let us recall at least the entrance of Jesus Christ on the donkey in Jerusalem); *the ox* symbolizes fidelity (Isaiah 1: 3). In the modern Ukrainian language, the axiological dimension of the lexeme donkey is negative (*дурний як осел; тупий як осел*), while it is positive when speaking about the ox (*працьовитий як віл; сильний як віл*).

The motive of the presence of the donkey and the ox belongs to the central mystery of the birth of Christ. However, the texts of the carols also contain birds that join the joyous news. The motive of joy and fun of birds can be traced in the carols "The one that lies in the manger"; "God of nature" (*"Веселяться – голубиці невинні, Інші птиці предивні"*).

This birds' joy at the time of God's birth in a secular sense seems paradoxical. The unusual behavior shows the primary harmony in nature and in heaven, which is characteristic of the eschatological perspective, this is stated in the book of prophet Isaiah: *"І замешкає вовк із вівцею, і буде лежати пантера з козлям, і будуть разом телятко й левчук,*

та теля відгодоване, а дитина мала їх водитиме! А корова й ведмідь будуть пастися разом, разом будуть лежати їхні діти, і лев буде їсти соломку, немов та худоба! І буде бавитися немовлятко над діркою гада, і відняте від перс дитинча простягне свою руку на нору гадюки...” (Іс. 11: 7–9).

Actions that are not characteristic of the categories of "this world" cause unusual, paradoxical forms, on the one hand, people turn into animals, on the other – animals perform the roles of people. Birds in the people's imagination are associated with the sky, with the higher world. In Scripture, turtledoves and doves are sacrificed. The symbolism of the birds is rich: *the pigeon* represents the process of restoring life on earth (Genesis 8: 11), the Holy Ghost (Mathew 3: 16), tiredness, and innocence (Isaiah 38: 4; Mathew 10: 16); *the eagle* in the Bible stands for a symbol of power, youth, liberation; *the swallow* – God's concern.

The symbolism of birds, like animals, in Ukrainian folklore does not coincide with the biblical symbolism. Completely different examples of the presence of animals on the occasion of the birth of God are given in carols, where the animals serve as a constituent of the gift. There is a lot of humor here, jokes, and sometimes even obscenities, although they represent the natural aspect in the ritual of the Birth of God. The very act of the gift was a very ancient tradition of a pagan origin that symbolized the time of transition to a new time, a new life.

The name New Year (Summer) (*“Нове Він літо починаєт”*) (14) symbolizes the idea of sacred time, which fits organically into the concept of the French ethnologist Arnold van Gennep (rites de passage), the fundamental foundation of which is the assertion that human life is characterized by the sequence of transitions from one state to another, as well as the universe is subject to the rhythms that find their expression (imprint) in human life [10, 339]. The concept of rites de passage is presented in the ceremonies which are characterized by the following structure: 1) exit phase; 2) transition phase; 3) return phase. The transition phase is considered as a separate independent stage, to which attention was drawn by scientists a long time ago. The time of the birth of Jesus Christ is, on the one hand, a historical fact (Luke 2: 1), on the other – it is an eschatological one, which is characterized by the fullness of time, sometimes times, although He had been before Abram, He had always existed, His coming is not the last. In Christianity, this time of the birth of Christ correlates with pagan ideas about the birth of the sun.

In the Christian culture, the birth of Christ is associated with a cycle of ordinances that begin on the day of St. Nicholas, then the central action – the Supper, the Nativity, and the end is at Epiphany. In folklore and religious tradition, time passes not linearly, but cyclically and always returns to the exit point. Because of the cyclicity and repetition, the idea of returning to what had occurred already, to the mythical time of beginning, creation and change (Eliade) is expressed. The ceremonial re-actualization of the birth of Jesus Christ is cyclical and correlates with the renewal of the world and man. With the idea of sacred time the motive of a road is connected too, as well as the one of a journey, a tall tree growing in the yard, wells, which symbolize the separation of man's water borders, the transition to a new quality, a new life. The constituent part of sacred time is the motives of coming from afar, proclaiming happy news, making gifts to God, etc. to secure the grace of God. The cycle of God's birth coincides with the winter time, which in Ukrainian folklore was identified with old age. As you know, December 25th is the day of sunshine, the birthday of the sun, the beginning of a new sunny year, signalling the beginning of a new life, its restoration. In this "limiting" time (transition phase) there appear demonic forces that are struggling against God's truths and against man as the bearer of righteous life. The sign of the transition time is the extraordinariness, the difference from the previous time, an example of which is the human language of animals talking with God, with people (on the night of the Nativity of Christ); holy water in rivers, lakes; joy of people and angels, etc. The transition phase is characterized by generalization, which combines the old and the new, the end and the beginning, life and death. The birth of Jesus Christ marks the beginning, the joy of life, which restores cycles in relation to man and the universe. It was forbidden to work from Christmas to Epiphany. Fun, jokes, music embodied the "triumph of life over death."

The paradox of God's birth is represented by the lexeme *throne* in the actuality frame, which demonstrates, on the one hand, a lack of attributes of power – the throne, the scepter during His birth, on the other hand – it indicates that His glory is a message from heaven rising above the thrones, palaces, filling the whole visible and invisible world with the joy of God's incarnation in man, the joy of salvation. His true throne is on earth and in heaven (*“Най за тую малу жертву Він нас просвічає Ту на землі і там в небі, Де престол Свій має”* (21), which symbolizes the totality of the power of God and correlates with the idea

of a throne in sacred discourse as a throne of grace (Hebrews 4: 16), the throne of righteousness (Psalm 9: 5).

The birth of Jesus Christ as God-man is objectified by the nomination *body* in folklore discourse (“*Що Бог взяв на себе людське тіло, щоб до неба всіх запровадив і при троні своїм посадив*“ (11), whose mission is to convert mankind to the life of the time of the first Adam, when the harmony of the earthly and the heavenly was a fulfilled fact. In the biblical discourse the body, its transcendence is a payback for the fall of man, although the Bible also refers to the salvation of the body by Jesus Christ: “*Який перемінить тіло нашого пониження, щоб стало подібне до славного тіла Його, силою, якою Він може і все підкорити собі* (Фил 3: 21), “*Він Голова тіла, Церкви*“ (Кол 1: 18). The body (of Christ) is seen in the Bible as bread (spiritual): “*Узявши ж хліб і вчинивши подяку, поламав і дав їм, проказуючи: Це тіло Моє, що за вас віддається. Це чинить на спомин про Мене!*“ (Лк 22 : 19). Jesus Christ calls himself a living body (“*Я хліб живий, що з неба зійшов: коли хто споживатиме хліб цей, той повік буде жити...*“ (Ів. 6: 51). Therefore, the body is seen as the refuge of the spirit, of the soul and forms with them the internal (spiritual) unity. Such "unity" is documented in Ukrainian phrases: *погубити душу й тіло* (26 II, 884), *з тілом і душею* (26 II, 885), although the body can also be correlated with the earth alone (26 II, 884), *його тіло не дасть уже тині* (23, 369). The duality of the soul / body is considered through the prism of the struggle of good and evil: *що тіло любить, тоє душу губить* (23, 39).

In Ukrainian folklore, the birth of Jesus Christ is considered in the eschatological perspective, and reactualizes in the idea of the cyclicity of time.

CONCLUSIONS

The study of the concept of GOD in folklore discourse has revealed the interaction of ontological, mythological, cosmological and religious strata with regard to the verbalization of the concept and subconcepts.

1. The most indicative in terms of objectification of prehistoric (archetypal), mythological, biblical symbols is the subconcept of "creation of the world". Ancient historical representations are reflected in the archetypes of *the mother tree, cosmic waters, stone, birds, world creative power*, which form an inseparable attribute of the creation of the world, represent the spiritual creation, in which the animistic

understanding of the faith of our ancestors and mysticism (the idea of a paradise tree as a symbol of ideal paradise life) are clearly traceable. The idea of the mother tree, which is available in pre-Christian beliefs (worship of trees, sacrifice to them), finds its expression in the rites of Christianity. There was a transformation of the cult of the tree from the worship to the idea of health, physical strength, which is enshrined in Christianity. Ancient cultural motives of creating the world in folklore discourse are dominating. The owner of the sky is not only the Christian God, but also the pagan one – Perun, which demonstrates the complex interweaving of religious dualism in the X-XII centuries. The dualism of another plan occurs in the legends, according to which not only God but also Satan (originally *an angel*) are the creators of the earth. God in folklore acts only as the creator of the higher, spiritual world, and the visible world, including the body of man was created by Sataniel. Sometimes legends deny the eternity of God, ascribing it to the darkness, but this is not characteristic of the vast majority of folkloric sources. The binary opposition to God is determined, according to our observations, by the nature of the folk genre. Thus, legends, carols of a precultural plan affirm dualism; instead, small folk genres (proverbs, sayings, phraseological units) are basically deprived of dual oppositions in the conceptual sphere of God.

In the folklore discourse we see the division of animals as God's and the devil's creations. Although all of them are created by God, some are cursed and serve Satan. "Animal" dualism (good / evil) is the fruit of people's fantasy, which reflects, probably, the peculiarities of the perception of the world by our ancestors. As for the heavenly bodies, they reflect people's ideas about the creation of the world by God. At the same time, there is a unique symbolism: the astral Trinity as the cult of God; external and internal attributes of God.

The creation of man in folk legends reflects the opposition of *чиста, пречиста, непорочна God / Satan*, and this dualism refers to both internal and external attributes, spiritual qualities (soul / body, good / evil). In general, the subconcept of "creating the world" in folklore discourse is a kind of synthesis of animistic, totemic, pantheistic and monotheistic representations of our ancestors.

2. The branched verbal structure in folklore discourse is revealed by the sub-concept of "the birth of Jesus Christ". The emergence of the God-man is characterized by transcendence, in all other attributes, is brought closer to man and is identified with him, thus representing the

idea of equality of all before God (on the one hand there are angels, on the other one – common shepherds).

The appearance of Jesus Christ into this world is objectified through the prism of the sacred and profane, with the expressive dominant of the divine. This event correlates, on the one hand, with the times of the first Adam, and on the other hand, with the eschatological perspective of mankind ("new evil", "new earth"). The indicated macromotives form sacral integrity and are more connected with the church-Christian sphere than the pagan one. The second most significant image of the Virgin Mary (the Godmother) manifests itself in sacred, profane, archetypal and ethno-national dimensions. In the correlation of the sacred / profane, the first sign is actualized to a greater extent which manifests itself in Mary's divine qualities of – *чиста, пречиста, непорочна* – or the attributes of God: *Божя невістка, Божя Мати*. In the content (event) plan canonized maternal functions are dominating. The image of the Virgin Mary expresses the national motifs embodied in the image of Ukraine (the intercession of Ukraine).

The complicity to the birth of Jesus Christ in folklore discourse is demonstrated by animals (oxen and donkeys) that express the greatness of this event and are drawn primarily to an eschatological perspective or symbolize the primordial harmony of nature and heaven, in which birds (symbols of the higher world) and angels, land and water participate as well.

The idea of sacral time (the re-actualization of the birth of Jesus Christ) is also objectified by the motives of the journey, the road, the tree, the well, symbolizing the transition (initiation) to a new quality, a new life, as well as the restoration of cycles in relation to the emergence of the individual and the universe.

SUMMARY

The concept of GOD in folklore discourse is objectified in the precultural, mythological, ontological, cosmological, religious strata, which form the paradigm of the people's understanding of God in a synthesized form. The evolution of religious views is characteristic of the Ukrainian ethnic group, its ancestors, thus the segments of these strata are reflected in them. The discovery of the specifics of folklore discourse is achieved not only by framed modelling, but also by semantic profiling, cultural semantics, and binary oppositions. This versatile approach, at first glance, contributes to the integrity of the

study of the cultural universe of GOD, which is represented in folkloric discourse by small folklore genres and great folklore texts. Folklore genres, content of the text determine the peculiarities of the use of research methods, traces significant semantic differences in legends, carols, phraseological constructions in relation to the implementation of the concept of GOD. Differences are also observed on the diachronic axis of the coordinates. Binary oppositions usually concern the early period of the ethnogenesis of the Ukrainian people, dualism in the transcendental sphere at the later stages of development undergoes a modification towards monotheism, although the elements of monogenism, animism, totemism, pantheism are preserved in the Ukrainian linguistic consciousness.

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