

## Family as a fundamental value in human life in the works of L.Ulitskaya (on the example of the novel "Medea and her children", the story "Sonechka")

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### ABSTRACT

The article touches on the topic of family as one of the main ones in modern prose. The family theme occupies a leading place in the works of Ulitskaya, forming the general theme of the writer's creativity. The author comes to the conclusion that the writer, asserting the importance and primacy of the family in society, shows how people's understanding of each other is violated, how spiritual unity between close relatives is lost, but at the same time it shows another life when the family is a protection and support for a person.

**KEYWORDS:** L.Ulitskaya, Medea, women's prose, family theme, Sonechka's image, family values, biblical subtext.

In the modern world, there are noticeable changes in the life of society and the family, which are naturally reflected in the literature. At the turn of the century, modern Russian prose once again began to talk about the family, the relationship between generations, about the child, about the formation of character. The works of modern authors help the reader to think about the problems of modern life and family relations. Writers are acutely reacting to all the negative changes taking place in our current reality, turning to the most painful, the most tragic – discord in the family, discord in the soul.

The theme of family is still one of the main themes in modern prose, because in the tradition of Russian classical literature, the family is the moral basis of human existence. In the works of Lyudmila Evgenievna Ulitskaya, the theme of family occupies one of the most important places, since it is the family in the works of the writer that acts as a fundamental value in human life. As I. Kolodyazhny notes, "About his first novel already in 2005 year Ulitskaya said: "I know for sure that a person grows up in a family. He grows up in a city, a country, a society. But the first place is family. The family is the basis of everything, but the family principle was constantly etched out, the idea was imposed that the public is above the personal. And my novel "Medea" - and this is a book dedicated to the older generation - is in a sense my cry for family. The works of Lyudmila Ulitskaya, in which the image of a real family is created, include the novel "Medea and her children", the novella "Sonechka", as well as numerous stories of the writer.

The most complete embodiment of the theme of family in the work of L. Ulitskaya was in the novel "Medea and her children", which is a kind of family saga. The main heroine of the novel Medea Sinopli is an image of a wise loving woman who, despite her childlessness, gathered around her a large number of people who became, in fact, her family. This is not just a family, but a whole genus, but a genus based not on consanguinity and not on nationality, but on personal attachment to each other. This whole family gathers in an old cozy house, which, as noted earlier, in the works of Ulitskaya, acts as a symbol of a happy family. The plot of the novel undoubtedly has a biblical subtext – the legend

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of the scattering, and then the gathering of the Jewish people. After all, first the family The synopses have dispersed all over the world, and only now the descendants of those who left are gathering again in the old house. Medea's family is huge, it has many branches: "the Sinopli family was represented by all its branches – Tashkent, Tbilisi, Vilnius, Siberian." In addition, it has a vertical section - representatives of many generations are present in it, thus carrying out a kind of connection of times, in which family traditions play a special role. As already noted, it is family traditions that are the factor that binds family ties. In the finale of the novel, even grief (Masha's death) does not separate, but rather unites the family. So, Medea and her sister Alexandra forgive each other old grievances, because of which they had not seen each other for a quarter of a century. We can say that the novel, in fact, is an edification of modern families, showing that in this world only cohesion, friendship, mutual assistance can give confidence in the future, and just help to survive, it's not for nothing that the history of the Medea family is shown throughout almost the entire twentieth century, all its cataclysms and catastrophes. The leitmotif of the novel is the image of the family as the highest value for a person. According to the fair statement of I.G. Zumbulidze, "Ulitskaya 's novel Medea and her Children concerns not only family, but also deep human ties that forever seal the relationship. The writer reveals the theme of female existence against the background of rapidly changing historical epochs." As the critic T. Rovenskaya notes, the novel "Medea and her children" is an extremely rare example for modern women's literature when the author not only chooses a woman as the main character, but also puts her name in the title of the work. The researcher is sure that "... according to the writer's idea, the title of the work was intended to speak before its pages speak. Therefore, it can hardly be explained by chance that Ulitskaya chose for her heroine a name that carries a multi-level cultural connotation, going back to the legendary and heroine of the Corinthian epic Medea. But Medea Ulitskaya lacks not only the features of a furious maenad, but also offspring. She does not kill her sons, but gathers around her the children and grandchildren of her numerous brothers and sisters. Medea's main life revolves around her home and family - the main components of her being. This being is a symbolic model of a woman's world, which the writer reconstructs in her own way. Here it is impossible not to agree with the fact that Ulitskaya's novel stands out sharply against the background of works of modern literature covering the family theme, where the authors write mainly about the disintegration of the family, about fragile or incomplete families, about how relationships are collapsing. Medea Ulitskaya becomes the soul, the unifying center of a large family. The story "Sonechka" contains a story about happy love. The narration itself is a story about the life of the main character, whose life is very far from reality, since all the understanding about this life of Sonya is drawn from the books she has read. But at some point her life changes a lot due to her meeting with Robert Viktorovich. The vector of her interests shifts from books to her family, to which she gives herself with no less passion than reading. We can say that it is the family that becomes the main meaning in her life. It was this interest that led Sonya to the fact that "over the years of her marriage, Sonechka herself turned from an exalted maiden into a rather practical hostess. She longed for a normal human home, with a tap in the kitchen, with a separate room for her daughter, with a workshop for her husband, with cutlets, compotes, with white starched sheets not sewn from three unequal pieces. In the name of this great goal, Sonya worked two jobs, scribbled at night on a typewriter and secretly saved money from her husband." Family life brings Sonya not only a sense of satisfaction, but also makes her truly happy, although she feels some unreliability of this happiness. And at some point this happiness collapsed. Moreover, the trouble came from two sides: first came the decree on the demolition of the main character's house and the relocation of tenants, and

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then Sonya learns about her husband's love affair with her daughter's classmate. The new apartment did not become a real home for the main character, it essentially became a symbol of Sonya's other life – unhappy and lonely. The family Sony falls apart, and she is left alone in a new apartment, where she lives until her old age. "In the spring she goes to Vostryakovsky cemetery, plants white flowers on her husband's grave, which never take root. In the evenings, wearing light Swiss glasses on her pear-shaped nose, she goes headlong into the sweet depths, into dark alleys, into the spring waters." L. Ulitskaya, using the example of Sonechka, showed how important the image of a loving wife and mother, capable of sacrificing herself for the sake of loved ones, is for modern society. Thus, the following conclusion can be drawn: the family theme occupies a leading place in the works of Ulitskaya, forming the general theme of the writer's creativity. Asserting the importance and primacy of the family in society, the writer, nevertheless, shows how people's understanding of each other is disrupted, how spiritual unity between close relatives is lost. And in this case we can talk about the problem of the destruction and disintegration of the family, the loss of a person brought up in the Soviet Union (since it is at this time that the action of most of L. Ulitskaya's works takes place), the spiritual and moral foundations of family life. The family with its traditions ceases to be valuable for many of the writer's heroes (for example, Tanya from the story "Sonechka"). At the same time, Ulitskaya does not make such a situation the only possible one. It also shows another possible life, when the family is a protection and support for a person.

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