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IDENTITY AND OTHERNESS IN THE NOVEL "AMBIGEN". AN EXISTENCE FILE OF OCTAV ȘULUȚIU

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Abstract

"Ambigen" by Octav Șuluțiu is a diary type novel, a subjective, first person confession like the ones of Max Blecher, Mihail Sebastian. Character-narrator explores, analyzes his deepest, hidden emotions, feelings, weaknesses, defects, demons, impossible loves, visions of the world. It is actually an investigation of the subconscious states of a man-woman who hides two genders: male and female, hence the dual nature of the character, bigender. There is an inner battle between the character's masculine and feminine side. The woman inside him needs another woman he can own and the man inside wants a strong woman who can have the male features that he lacks.

1. Introduction

The character-narrator of the novel "Ambigen" is totally dissatisfied with himself, from the outside to inside. He considers himself ugly, both on the outside and in the inside. All his features, all the physical and moral characteristics define him more as a woman than as a man. The androgynous motive is obvious and it blends harmoniously with the splitting the other motive so that the other ego that he has is able to despise the other one. The character-narrator feels the need, mad lust to split himself, the ego in the mirror to come to life, to move, to breathe and spit, to show the contempt that it has for himself.

2. "Ambigen", an existence file of Octav Șuluțiu

Di, the main character in the novel "Ambigen", discovers with amazement that the feminine elements within himself are more numerous than male elements, the author started from the theories of Freud and Weiniger that the inside of the human being, depending on certain circumstances manifests both men and women "The other one in me", is the challenge that the author proposes the reader, Di is a dual character trying to understand and discover himself and his temperamental diseases.

He feels "pulled in two directions by two equal forces which cancel each other." (Octav Șuluțiu, 1992, p. 199) These two forces exist in any individual, is one man and another woman. There is a constant struggle in each one of us between the two, and in the case of Di the strongest turns out to be the woman, that he feels in the flesh, in his white skin. There are women who are more men and men who are more women.

He feminizes even his name instead of Di, Dida. He sees himself as an absurd woman, he likes to lie on the couch, to be admired, he loves beautiful words like a woman. He is shy, proud and modest like any woman, he is terrified of violence or any form of affirmation, of standing out. To all feminine features add prudence, cunning, his keen sensitivity, the pleasure for perfume, flowers, for all that is sensual. Of course, to all this it adds the dreamy nature, the pleasure of reading, his rich imagination.

Di is desired by masculine women because they see the woman in him, and this attraction is mutual. He feels attracted by virile women, not men, however he sees a gram of benine perversity. In himself there is a collage of women domination. He tries to hide his feminine side, so it is not so physically visible. The narrative ego exposes in the form of a narration his most painful confessions, and most sincere feelings. Everything is put on paper, the ego remains nude inside after the oppressive first person confession, which devotes to his most devoted confessor-the reader, to which he dedicated his most intimate relieves. This inner

monologue is very deep and intimate, almost oppressive, the narrative ego mourns the life that has, nothing but a waiver to the happiness of not feeling, not understanding, "a intellectual waiver" (Octav Șuluțiu, 1992, p. 10), he feels ill, suffering from a temperamental disease. Writing is the only way to release himself, he feels spiritually impotent and disappointed that SHE is not coming. He wants his son to take the mother's qualities and to leave behind all the traces of father; if it was a girl there would be no problem because she resembled her mother. He is aware that he is not a good example, and the paper becomes a patient confessor, impartial, objective, it understands, listens, doesn't criticize. When he writes he under the impression that he hears every word sounding in the ears of thousands of people and it seems even that they answer furthering his cry of suffering.

The darkest shadows of his conscience, the most frightening experiences, defects that are shaped as inner demons that are not in line with the outside world, make him different, a misfit, a man incomprehensible to those around him. This narrative ego is unable to be happy, but also of making anyone happy. All he wants is an ideal love, simple, quiet, uncomplicated, which does not cause suffering, pain, struggle, burden.

He doesn't know how to behave with women who awaken in his soul feelings, although there are a number of women he loves madly (Ata, Eveline, Judith, Ana) he doesn't know how to behave with them, makes them suffer, believing that this will make them love him madly, to draw their attention. The only one who manages to love him is Elina, a prostitute.

He stalks obsessively women on the street, he is attracted to the tall ones and loves women dressed in black silk, colour that reminds him of the his mother's image. Silk symbolizes femininity, passion, through it you can feel the woman's body. He Does not ever dare to take the first step and always expects one of them to stop and to give him an encouraging smile. He searches in every woman on the street the woman to love and to be loved by, soulmate,

anima. He understands that love is not found on the street, on the contrary, love finds you, and the narrative ego considers that this uplifting feeling can not be searched, comes unexpectedly, surprises: "Maybe because I was not yet found by love, I didn't dare to stop any woman that I have stalked. Love must give you the courage needed to enterprise." (Octav Șuluțiu, 1992, p. 17)

He expects the woman to call, to make him love her, to impose her love, to become a puppet, to make out of him what she wants: "What happy would I be to be obliged by a woman to love her! And to impose me her love!" (Octav Șuluțiu, 1992, p. 32)

In the beginning of the novel the character-narrator speaks about the unattainable ideal, impossible, about that perfect anima to which he dreams with open eyes. He believes that "dreams never come true; the greater is their reality." (Octav Șuluțiu, p. 9)

He feels alone in this world, he is not concerned by anything but perfect, absolute, untouchable love and needs such love to heal. He wants to have a woman's soul, to take possession of it, dreamS of a love calm, without struggle.

Death is the salvation, he realizes that his soul is unable to love, to be generous, to adore. He realizes all these things, but is unable to overcome them, to take action for correction. He thinks that suicide is the only way out, he hates himself, he despises himself, he considers himself a mere caricature, not a human being. There is nothing good in himself, which causes a crisis in the character and he comes to want only to rest forever, the introspection has made him tired, he lost his powers and wants a place where he can find eternal peace.

In the mirror appear his black idols mirror, demons as grotesque masks, expressing all his sinister ideas and feelings, and behind these masks the original is hidden, a kind of person, snub-nosed person, with eyes cracked under the forehead, with Malaysian lips.

This duality is also anticipated and by the mirror motive in which they can look at the other, that frighten him, is a kind of inner demon. The mirror is ruthless and shows him a monstrous, hideous, grotesque portrait.

"The nose could be proudly worn by a monkey. Meat and small, guarded between two smaller eyes, between two olive brown eyelids not wide open-Mongolian - my nose is lost in deep chasms and black nostrils. It's something in it, the lugubrious charm of caverns in an ancestral skull. Under the nose, the too fleshy mouth upper lip geometric cut a generous painter in carmine, it would be nice if her sister had not grown down too hard before reflecting more besides the red meat, abundant, disgusting: african lips. The cheekbones are out. Under the eyes two violet recesses. Little forehead under a soft, soft, hair, no stability, flat hair, greasy, barely picking rows of comb, flowing over the eye, wide, attracted by an irresistible chaotic state. hideous figure, my figure. Expressionless. Lifeless eyes, speechless." (Octav Șuluțiu, 1992, p. 18).

He abhorred himself, he hates himself, he feels like spitting in the mirror. It is bad because he is ugly and that's why no woman loves him, he is not relevant.

He is constantly governed by conflicting feelings and aspires to integration in nature, one that can provide absolute living craves: „ To be a nice and good tree, brother of the forest. Do not think, just feel." (Octav Șuluțiu, 1992, p. 178) He only gets

along with the nature because it is stable and immobile, it doesn't change, it is always the same, it is calm, full of surprises, varied. The demon inside of Di pushes him to the guilty pleasure games. Seeks pleasure in a brothel, is possessed by a fever and a furious passion. This carnal and very dangerous love for those who get carried away, causing even violence, destroys any will, caution, contemplation.

„The female nature is regarded as an open vase in the center of which unrestrained passions are boiling. Men's task is to rein in the worst excesses by crossing moral and practical obligations. The leap into demonic is otherwise always possible." (Robert

Muchembled, 2002, p. 124)

He likes voluptuous women, stately, and he found this only at the brothel, where the act of possession made him feel good. He is taken to the fornication bed without his permission, is pushed into the bed and does not respond. The prostitutes even quarrel among themselves, fight to have him in their bed, that happens between Nina and Elina. He can not accept to be loved or to love such woman with low morals because women like this have their soul removed. However, here appears Elina's love for him, a pure love in a vulgar place.

GH Mead in *L'esprit in them sort et la société* "believes that we can not make a clear distinction between our own self and that of others as ours does not exist and does not enter into our experience only if others self exists and is included in our experience." (Richard J. Bourhis, Jacques-Philippe Leyens, 1997, p.54)

So Di aspires to Another, to something else, the desire of love appears. Thus:

"Desire is the desire for absolute Other. Beyond that quench hunger, quench thirst and feelings that you can settle down, metaphysics wants the Other, beyond all satisfactions, without any gesture to be possible to reduce aspiration, with no possibility of sketching any known comfort touch or to invent a new one. desire without satisfaction and hears the distance, otherness and exteriority of another." (Emmanuel Lévinas, 1999, p. 18)

Despite this fierce need, the character suffers a disappointment, fails, and his desire to find his anima will always put him in opposition to the other. The otherness can be brought to discussion only by reference to the other. The ego is the being, whose existence involves identifying, finding identity in everything that happens. The ego reveals his own thoughts, feelings, listens to himself, analyzes himself, but also analyzes what happens outside himself. It really surprises himself and feels sometimes stranger in his own body. This situation is with Di, who suffers a doubling in his interior, that being a struggle between the two egos.

3. Conclusions

In conclusion, from the woman, the male character expects to receive more than the ability of the ego, he aspires to infinity, absolute. Thus: "Thanks to the size of interiority, the being resists and refuses himself the concept of aggregation. Refusal necessary for the idea of Infinity, which does not produce, by itself, this separation." (Emmanuel Lévinas, 1999, p. 41)

The ego needs the Other, needs happiness, the creation of the perfect androgynous being. Love unites animus and anima in a unique being, this feeling implies the reporting to the other, which becomes indispensable. Love requires knowledge of the other ego. The other male character plays with the female aspect as it plays with some animals. The other one is possessed only if it has me, she has a

man and vice versa.

"To love is to exist as the lover and the beloved are one world. [...] Your love is me satisfied by you, which notices in the other the justification for his being. [...] The Community of love is a community of two, a community of solitude, refractory to universality." (Emmanuel Lévinas, 2000, p. 28) Di misses this, misses the ideal in love, and finally he is left with a vulgar prostitute.

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