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**FROM THE DUALIST GNOSIS TO THE
IMAGINARY LITERATURE ON THE DEVIL
REVIEW FOR THE VOLUME IMAGINEA
NEFRATELUI ÎN LITERATURĂ, AUTHOR
SIMONA-MARIA DRELICIUC, LUMEN
PUBLISHING HOUSE, IAȘI, ROMANIA, 2015.**

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From the Dualist Gnosis to the Imaginary Literature on the Devil

Review for the volume *Imaginea nefratelui în literatură*,
author Simona-Maria Drelciuc, Lumen Publishing House, Iași,
Romania, 2015.

Antonio SANDU¹

Abstract:

This paper represents an excellent overview of the censorship of the European collective imaginary, challenged as stranger of the one that is different, of the non-brother identified eventually as Satan.

In the vision of the author Simona Maria Drelciuc, the Devil is the existential pole of the medieval imaginary, a fundamental cultural mark, “catalyst of the European civilization” (Drelciuc, 2015). This bringing into attention of the image of the non-brother allows us to reflect on the European civilization, of religious nature, and of “cultural periphery placement” of the Christian moral values such as love, tolerance etc.

Keywords: *book review, European collective imaginary, Devil, Lumen Publishing House, Imaginea nefratelui in literature, Simona-Maria Drelciuc.*

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Introduction

The question we ask can be formulated in the phrase “is Europe and its culture forged with the hammer of the witches?”. The author indirectly suggests that *Malleus Maleficarum* can be seen as a guide of the relationship with the other.

Otherness is not a divine one, but on the contrary, an evil and terrifying one. The non-brother is the pole which legitimizes and terrifies me at the same time. The European dualism of gnostic nature takes two forms: a spiritual one, with theological influences where the Devil is the enemy, the one opposing the good God, and the second one, of popular nature, of gnostic nature, which incorporates the reminiscences of pagan adoration of the cult of the Great Goddess where the Devil is temptation, leaving the cosmological order. The Devil as the enemy, as a personification of evil, justifies the oppression of otherness, of the stranger who is touched by the terrible wing of the demonic. On the contrary, the Luciferic represents the cosmogonical enemy, the one standing beside God in the creation of the World – and which joins God in the cosmogonic act according to the Bogomile tradition.

Image of the Devil in literature

The ambivalent image of the Devil best fits the term non-brother, since he is known in the popular Romanian mythology and in the current volume, because only thus it can talk about him whose name cannot be talked about unless accompanied by curses. The idea of non-brother suggests a *coincidentia oppositorum* in the person of the Devil being the very denial of the idea of brother. From a logical perspective, the idea of non-brother is anything other than the identical, the brother. The brother and the non-brother depletes the universe, as such the non-brother invades the transcendent since our world is made up of brothers. Invading the transcendent, the non-brother attacks the position of the creator which he claims not in the absolute order of the world, but in the order of the magical real in which the individual lives.

Not coincidentally Simona-Maria Drelciuc (2015) quotes a myth where the Devil confronts God. The latter one, being asleep, is attacked by the satanic forces, but the Earth increases constantly, stopping the abysmal sink of the divine forces. The dualist gnosis enters the folklore, bringing the initiatory element, the forbidden knowledge on the nature of the brotherhood of the two cosmogenic divinities, Ahura Mazda and

Ahriman who became God and the Devil. The good God in gnosis meets the evil one, the Brother and the Non-brother being both responsible of creating the world. We present a significant quote taken from Gheorghe Vlăduțescu (1998). *Filosofia legendelor cosmogonice românești* [The philosophy of Romanian cosmogenic legends]:

„La început era peste tot apă fără margini și numai Dumnezeu cu Diavolul umblau pe deasupra. Întâlnindu-se, se hotărâsc să facă pământul :
– Cum te cheamă pe tine? zice Dumnezeu.
– Nifârtache, zice dracul.
– Da’ pe tine? întreabă dracul.
– Pe mine mă cheamă Fârtache.
– Haide și-om face pământ, zice Dumnezeu.”
(Vlăduțescu, 1998).

“At the beginning, there was all endless water, and only God and the Devil walked on top of it. Meeting each other, they decide to create the Earth:

- What is your name? said God.
- Non-brother, said the Devil.
- What is yours? asked the Devil.
- My name is Fârtache².
- So let’s create the earth, said God.” (Vlăduțescu, 1998)

Endless water reconstructs, in the cosmogenic myths, the primordial chaos from which the Divine Logos extracts the Cosmos of the current world. One of the mysteries of the Genesis is addressed plural that God performs: “Let there be light”; “Let us make a human in our image and likeness”. The theological interpretation says that the biblical text refers to a dialogue inside the Trinity of a Being. The cosmic Christianity embraced by the oral tradition and kept by folklore and fairy tales (Eliade, 1995), prefers to see this speech as a meeting between God and the non-brother. It is interesting that in the cosmogenic myth presented by Vlăduțescu, God identifies itself as Fârtache (the Brother)

² Fârtache is in archaic romanian word, designating God who is the brother of the Non-brother (the Devil).

only when addressing the Nefratele (Non-brother), otherwise, towards all his creation, he is God and implicitly the non-brother is the Devil. The name spoken by God to his non-brother can be allegorically stated as being the real name, “the one forbidden from being spoken” of God. Therefore, God together with the non-brother forms the whole (Levinas, 1999), the whole that can be referred to also through the expression “I am Alfa and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending” (Apocalypse 1 (8)). The interpretation given by Vulcănescu (1985) and quoted by the author is that the Brother is revealed as being a semiurg of the sacred, and the non-brother a demiurge of the profane. In our opinion, this statement must be supplemented with what we have previously presented, namely that in an ontological logic, the non-brother represent transcendence, since it represents everything that the brother isn't. This interpretation can be correct from the perspective of the *coincidentia oppositorum* since the transcendence lowers itself in immanence (and the Christian mythology talks about the fall of Satan) while immanence is lifted into transcendence through divine light.

The same mythology of creation talks about a pre-creation in which Lucifer is the Archangel of the Light of God or the Carrier of Light or the one bringing the Light. By the fall of Lucifer, with or without his will, the light of the brother is brought into the sub-lunar world, the non-brother being the one persecuting the human by revealing and in the same time hiding the divine light. This cosmogony of the relationship of the brother with the non-brother is regarded as being part of ancient initiation rituals which come from the time of Decebal. The same Vulcănescu (1985) considers it a reminiscence of the religion of pre-roman Dacia.

Instead of conclusion

It is time to appreciate the fact that the author Simona-Maria Drelciuc extends the image of the non-brother from a simple negative cosmological deity, which belongs to the Romanian area, to a generic name of the demonic forces that impregnate the collective European mentality. The author shows that the image of the non-brother is closer to the one of Satan from the Old Testament which appears sitting at the same table as God, making bets with Him regarding the strength of Iov's faith.

We recommend this book to all those passionate about the issue of censoring the imaginary and the resurrection of symbolic pre-Christian forms in literary works, bot popular and classical.

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Biodata



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