

## THE DON JUAN COMPLEX AND THE SADNESS OF HANDSOME LICĂ THE TROUBADOUR

### LE COMPLEXE DE DON JUAN ET LA TRISTESSE DE BEAU LICĂ LE TROUBADOUR

### COMPLEXUL DON JUAN ȘI TRISTEȚEA FRUMOSULUI LICĂ TRUBADURUL

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#### Abstract

*This article represents an analysis worksheet for a character in the literary work of the Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu (1876 – 1955): Lică the Troubadour, examined from psychoanalytical perspective. The details supplied by the Romanian writer in her novels and in the character's actions are outlines in the first part of the article, according to their relevance for this psycho-critical approach. The second part of the article offers the proper interpretation of the data. This interdisciplinary research leads to a better understanding of the coherence of the character, led by the author from a novel to another, to the penetration of the psychological mechanisms that constitute the motive of his actions and to a new evaluation of Lică's relationship with Sia, his daughter.*

#### Résumé

*Cet article représenté la fiche d'analyse d'un personnage de l'œuvre épistolaire de Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu (1876 – 1955): Lică qui est ici examine d'une perspective psychanalytique. Les détails y les actions du personnage dont l'auteur nous offre sont présentées dans la première partie de l'article en ordre de relevance pour cet analyse psychocritique. La deuxième partie de l'article présenté l'interprétation des dates. Ce recherche interdisciplinaire aide a comprendre la cohérence du personnage, qui l'auteur s'occupe a engager d'un roman a l'autre, approfondir les actions qui font le motif de son action et a découvrir une nouvelle évaluation de la relation que Lică a avec sa fille Sia.*

#### Rezumat

*Acest articol reprezintă o fișă de analiză a unui personaj din opera scriitoarei Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu: Lică Trubadurul, examinat din perspectivă psihanalitică. Detaliile furnizate de autoare în romane și acțiunile personajului sunt punctate în prima parte a articolului potrivit relevanței lor pentru această abordare psihocritică. Partea a doua a articolului oferă interpretarea propriu-zisă a datelor. Această cercetare interdisciplinară conduce la înțelegerea coerenței*

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personajului, condus de autoare dintr-un roman în altul, la pătrunderea mecanismelor psihologice ce constituie mobilul acțiunilor lui și la o nouă evaluare a relației lui Lică cu Sia, fiica lui.

**Keywords:** Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, the Don Juan complex, identification, Lică Trubadurul

**Mots-clé:** Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, le complexe Don Juan, identification, Lică le Troubadour

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, complexul Don Juan, identificare, Lică the Troubadour

In Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu's novels, *The Disheveled Maidens*, *A Concert of Music by Bach*, *The Hidden Way*, *Roots*<sup>2</sup>, a picturesque character appears, attracting the reader's attention, Lică. He is also mentioned by Ina, in the novel *The Stranger*, published in Papadat-Bengescu edition in 2012<sup>3</sup>. Known by cognomen **Lică the Troubadour** or "**Mierloiu**" ("The Blackbird") as feminist Nory called him (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *A Concert of Music by Bach*, p. 659), his name is, in fact, Vasile Petrescu and, when necessary (when he becomes a MP), Basile Petresco.

He is a sibling, "only by mother" (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *The Hidden Way*, p. 997) of Lenora Hallipa, therefore the uncle (by mother) of Elena Drăgănescu, of Coca-Aimée, of the twins Dorin and Codin and of Mika-Lé.

Lică is born of an extramarital relationship of his mother. His mother (legally married to Lenora's father) gets divorced and the two parents share their children: "Lenora was living in Mizil, with her divorced father and she used to come seldom to Tecuci, at her mother's, who was living with her son, that Lică the Troubadour. This voluntary sharing of children seemed reverse, but it corresponded to the very strong feelings of those parents: one, pampering the daughter; the other, the son, up to the extent of serious quarrels, with sad results on the education of the respective samples" (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *The Disheveled Maidens*, p. 503). Both (Lică and Lenora) are nicknamed "always in love blackbird" (*idem*, p. 414). But Lenora was living in Mizil, with her father whom she did not love, and Mizil was a town let "with airs" (*ibid.*, p. 503), not like poor Tecuci.

Lică is handsome, desirable for many women.

When he was 19 and would repeat the fourth class in middle school for the fifth time (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *A Concert of Music by Bach*, p. 745), Lică starts a sentimental and sexual relationship with Lina, then a student in Medicine. Sia is born from their union. Most of Lică's sweethearts were pretty, Lina was an exception. "When the trouble happened, the ugly and stupid (Lina, n.m.) would whine and wail. As he could not stand seeing an ugly woman making faces, in a moment of irritation Lică said: «Well, then, bring her to me!»" (*idem*, pp. 138-139). He took the child and asked his sweethearts, in turn, to host his daughter. Thus (with Sia by his side), he was building an image of a responsible man, with a child.

In love with beauty and with his own image (like Lina, but the latter defines herself by other values), he, who would always be careful with his clothes and boots which used to make his public image, noticed that the little girl, who had reached a certain age (ten/twelve years old<sup>4</sup>), when her

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<sup>2</sup> The novels of Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu have been translated into English in *The Hallipa Trilogy. The Disheveled Maidens. A Concert of Music by Bach. The Hidden Way*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> In this article, all the quotations are taken from HORTENSIA PAPADAT-BENGESCU, *Works [Opere]*, vol. I and II, Edition coordinated by Gabriela Omăt; Text supervised by Eugenia Tudor Anton (vol. I) / Text supervised by Viviana Șerbănescu (vol. II); Notes and comments by Eugenia Tudor Anton and Gabriela Omăt; Introduction by Eugen Simion; Bucharest, Publishing House of the National Foundation for Science and Art / Fundația Națională pentru Știință și Artă, Romanian Academy, 2012. The name of the novels are given in English (*The Disheveled Maidens – Fecioarele despletite, A Concert of Music by Bach – Concert din muzică de Bach, The Hidden Way – Drumul ascuns, Roots – Rădăcini, The Stranger – Străina*), as there is a mentioned translation of the novels.

<sup>4</sup> In edition D. Stamatiaadi (*apud* PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *A Concert of Music by Bach*, p. 645 and Note).

petticoats sewn by his mistresses were no longer becoming, was making a laughing stock with those shabby clothes. From that moment, Lică started to ask Lina for money regularly.

In order to obtain Sia's exclusive attention, but also to despise ugly Lina, who was socially superior to him, (and to make Lina the slave of his "financial" transactions), he would constantly keep backbite Lina in Sia's presence. Moreover, when finally he moves Sia to Lina's place, he warns her that Lina is her biological mother. As the others presented a bad image of his natural parents (and especially of the one of the same sex), in the same way he builds a negative identification for Sia<sup>5</sup>.

He keeps whistling and lashing with his little whip rod. He looks like an outlaw to Mini, but like a tramp to others. "Since he was a small boy he used to run away from home, he kept, like all tramps, loving to live on roads." (*ibid.*, p. 627) Later he had chosen trades that could be practiced also on the roads. "He resented brutality, but he was rather quick-tempered. (*ibid.*, p. 640). Compared to other men, he was an exceptional fighter. Regarding the army, he liked the clothes (the tunic, the gallons) and his job (*ibid.*, p. 640). He resented exams, he had never liked learning. He would do business with the husbands of the women who liked him, he enjoyed most the money gained "by cheating" (*ibid.*, p. 641). He is ambitious and very clean. Always freshly washed, smart. The child, Sia, had become "a small pivot of his life" (*ibid.*, p. 643), as he was "on bad terms with his family because he had failed" (*ibid.*, p. 642), and his sister, Lenora, "since she had got married to landlord Hallipa, treated him like her husband's dogs" (*ibid.*, p. 642). With his daughter, Sia, he felt fine, as she was a harmless presence, first he used to talk to himself, then he passed from the monologue to dialogue. "Lică was all the time the same happy guy, a little bit cruel, with a brief pedagogy." (*ibid.*, p. 644). With her he could do whatever he was pleased to do, command, correct, or scare her.

For Lina he used to have a "wicked rudeness" (*ibid.*, p. 646).

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<sup>5</sup> Sigmund Freud names *identification* what an individual wants to be. Identification can take successive forms. It is defined as a "process by which a person becomes similar to another, fully or partially." (LAROUSSE, 2006, p. 552). He considered identification had a preponderant role in the formation of the child's psyche.

Jacques Lacan adds a distinction "between the imaginary identification constituting the Ego and the symbolic identification constituting the subject". (*ibid.*). The essential distinction made by J. Lacan refers to the "ideal Ego" and "the ideal of the Ego" (i.e. what it would like to be). The first notion is related to the first stage of formation of the ego by the Narcissistic mirror image (the mother), and the second one is related to the second stage of formation of the Ego by the signifier, the symbolic image (the father).

S. Freud states that there are persons who choose their partners by the model of their own person, by their own image, loving in the other "what he/she is, was, would like to be himself/herself". (MANZANO; PALACIO ESPASA and ZILKHA, 2002, p. 12). A child's parents, in their turn, in their Narcissistic self-love, attribute perfections to the child and forget or hide his defects. Thus the parents place the child in their own ideal of the Ego, to identify the child with, and the latter, in his/her turn, will project it on his/her child.

Melanie Klein and Otto F. Kernberg notice the coexistence of a self-love in the other and a love for the other different from the self. (KLEIN, 1975 and KERNBERG, 1980).

The Narcissistic scenarios of parentage can be surpassed and harmoniously integrated, but they can take pathological dimensions when "the reality of a child's existence does not correspond to the projection placed on him." (MANZANO; PALACIO ESPASA and ZILKHA, 2002, p. 17). In this last case, a decompensation occurs with the parents and the child undergoes problems of development and adaptation to the outside environment.

A mother will consider her child as a part of herself or as a part of her internal objects, but this projective identification can become pathological "for defensive reasons, especially against the anguish of separation and of loss of the object" (*id.*, p. 29).

In order to understand her psychological functioning and disorders, "it is indispensable (...) to study in any man his femininity and in any woman, her masculinity" (PERRON and PERRON-BORELLI, 2005, p. 93).

Identification must not be mistaken for imitation. S. Freud calls the imitation phenomena hysterical symptoms.

There are simultaneous identifications with the father and mother. The inhibitions and failures "in education, professional life and love life" (*id.*, p. 103) have their origin in conflictual aspects of Oedipus – rivalry with the chosen model and love for the latter. The conflict takes place between the wish to surpass the father by power, success, physical attractiveness and fears to show weakness, of being a laughing stock or a subject of contempt, or to succeed too well, wounding and crushing the father.

A young primary school mistress, prejudiced against low army ranks, tells him: “What a pity you’re a military!” (*ibid.*, p. 647). As a result, Lică takes steps immediately to withdraw from the Army and visits her only wearing civilian clothes. But the war problem occurs. Trying to solve Sia’s problem (as Lina and Lenora refused him), he had to charm the school mistress in order to accommodate Sia at the latter’s place. This time, the war problem being ardent, the school mistress no longer resented the military uniform.

Lică does not want to go to the front. As his brother-in-law Hallipa was also worried about his wealth and family, when heroism was at stake, he protects Lică, who seemingly falls ill with typhoid fever from so much time spent on the roads, with preoccupations that surpass his habits, as far as effort was concerned. He remains ill during the German occupation, at Hallipa’s estate. His sister Lenora blames him, out of that snobbery specific to women of that time (according to which women worshipped the ideal of hero-men), while her beloved husband was also in the country. And thanks to Lică’s successful negotiations with the Germans, “his brother-in-law’s estate was spared”. (*ibid.*, p. 651).

Upon the return of the first soldiers from the front, he goes and “kidnaps” Sia from the school mistress who no longer regarded him favourably and had complained that Sia was not obedient (she wouldn’t take her orders, wouldn’t work).

Now, after the war, he thought how good he would have looked with some decorations “with red ribbon” (*ibid.*, p. 651). He got along well with his bosses, but, as his regiment had to leave for Transylvania and he did not trust the documents given by the Germans, he passes permanently to civil life. Meantime little midwife Mari got married and placed Sia at another school, as she had run away from the orphanage and had no good results at the vocational school. (Midwife Mari is the one who helped Lică to place Sia with a nanny and who would stay with dying Sia in hospital, sent by Lică.)

Then, Lina accepts Sia as a nurse for her husband, Dr. Rim, and introduces Lică to Rim as being Sia’s father, which, again, attracts Lică’s respect.

One day, in the street, he met a lady who, as he was to find out, was Princess Ada Razu. The latter reprimands him in French. He can’t stand foreign languages, just as he did not want to leave his motherland during the war. Skillfully, he quenches the horse which Maxențiu could not keep under control, thus impressing the latter’s wife.

After this encounter, he is employed as a riding trainer for Prince Maxențiu. He goes to the tailor’s, orders clothes adequate to his new condition and buys an apartment in Pake Boulevard, where he intended to bring Sia, too. But the Princess, his mistress, cannot accept that an ugly ordinary girl is Lică’s daughter. When Sia gets to hospital, he takes care of her from backstage, failing to visit her and to offer her the moral support Sia ardently wanted, but denies for his own good: “Sia, disappearing, did not make him part with Ada, but she emancipated him”. (*ibid.*, p. 814).

Sia dies and her corpse is so “terrible”, that only Lică (nobody else!) can still see it. In this context, Lică refuses Professor G.’s proposal to have an autopsy.

With his daughter’s death, Lică is prey to an unquenchable fury, with revenge fantasies for both Ada and the Rims. “A kind of molten lead still seemed to press on his body while thinking of Sia. (...) Who had Sia been? (...) A great self-love, deriving from himself and immobilized in the girl’s passion for him, which then turned back to Lică’s selfishness.” (*ibid.*, p. 837). Something had changed within himself with Sia’s death.

He had not married Ada yet, and Lică was already considered for an MP position for Bihor county. He could become even a minister.

Prince Maxențiu, Ada’s husband, is ill and dies, and Lică marries Princess Ada. Ada had started her relationship with him, intending to get, through him, in the entourage held in high esteem of Elena Drăgănescu, Lenora Hallipa’s daughter.

Lică persuades the Princess to lend him 20 thousand which she had refused to lend to him (they had wealth and guarantees), intending to make the Princess lose all the money (as

he meant never to return it), as a revenge for having made him marry her. In this respect, he initially tells midwife Mari and her husband that the money is lent with interest and with this money he has clothes made at tailor Paul, then he comes and tears the loan policy. Years later, when he divorces the Princess – not obtaining the expected amounts and not accepting the tricky business, proposed by the successor of the flour merchant, Ada Razu – is bankrupt, he comes back to claim the rest of the money, but midwife Mari's husband refuses. Lică resigns himself, but he keeps in touch with the midwife after Take's death, too.

Midwife Mari had a daughter, too and Lică immediately wondered if she might had been his. The child had died in the first months of its life, as it is said in *The Disheveled Maidens*. In *Roots* there seems that the little girl was three when Lică said: "It's a pity she isn't mine, but I might marry her later.... Will you, dolly? Yes, uncle Ică! The little girl answers. (...). He used to say that if the little girl had lives, he would have adopted her and given her a dowry." (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *Roots*, p. 586).

"In that uncomfortable world, he got along better with women, too." (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *The Hidden Way*, p. 981).

Coca-Aimée, the one adored by everyone, tries to build a social image or even find a protector, a source of money, getting close to Lică, whom she hardly knew. But he "didn't like her" (*idem*, p. 1042), he used to mock at her and rejected her contemptuously. Coca-Aimée, Lenora's favourite, "the porcelain doll", "the prude", was rejected and ugly Mika-Lé, the black sheep of the family, was preferred by Lică: "she amused him with her silence and stillness" (*ibid.*, p. 1043).

"He had Mr. Lică's logic, nonconformist, but well organized and true to himself." (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *Roots*, p. 655).

Having turned 52 years old, Lică finds himself compelled by Elena Drăgănescu's sister-in-law, old lady Tana, to marry Mika-Lé who was pregnant. (Mika-Lé's child might have belonged to a bohemian journalist with whom she used to be involved.) Mika-Lé lives in Drăgănescu's house, when Elena was in Switzerland and she was the one who took care of Drăgănescu when he had a heart affliction. Anyway, she had had plenty of lovers and had the experience of many pregnancies – abortions. She had attempted suicide before having been adopted by the Drăgănescu family.

Since that transaction-marriage, that was to take place, Lică kept dreaming Sia, the one who had left the world of the living. Sia, "the little monkey" crazy about father Lică, would not have allowed him to marry anyone. He remembered that strangers believed they were lovers: she looked older than 16 and he looked younger than 36. Twenty years later, remembering her, he could laugh, but he felt, at the same time, a requiem within. It had been a cage he escaped from. (*idem*, p. 657).

Often visiting Madam Mari, Lică discovers Aneta Pascu there, a rather ugly teenager, who had run away from home and lived as a host at Mari's place and fell in love with the midwife's stories about him. He didn't miss a chance to pat her on the chin, a gesture that scared the poor girl. Nory questions him to find out if he had not seduced her (deflowered her), but he had not gone so far. He seems to need money for the wedding, that is why he keeps visiting Madam Mari (whom he still does not marry, though she has been loving him for a life time). Old Lady Tana, Mika-Lé's protector, promised to leave them all her wealth after her death, thus wishing to assure Mika-Lé, to keep a husband near her, whoever he might be, all her life. Apparently, Lică does not like this situation, but he has no choice. Mika-Lé alleviates everyone's situation, running away from the estate, before being driven away by Elena (who accepts everything for her unborn child), symbolically committing suicide for the second time.

Lică is also mentioned in the novel *The Stranger*. In the variant of novel hypothesis, Ina remembers a fire that devastated her family home in Stirbei Street, and the neighbours, two old people, Lică and midwife Mari, die burnt.

#### **Character Approach from Psychoanalytical Perspective**

"Lică did not have principles, he had tastes." (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *A Concert of Music by Bach*, p. 645).

The character discussed here is an example of feeling – extrovert intuition typology<sup>6</sup>. C. G. Jung includes here the merchants, speculators, show artists, interpreters, actors, diplomats, politicians. But he says that most of the representatives of this typology are women. These people are guided by criteria of beauty, snobbery. We owe the beauty of social relationships to this category of people.

Lică has a maternal complex, the Don Juan complex<sup>7</sup>. We can reconstruct psychoanalytically his origin:

Lică is the son of a beautiful mother, who had had him by one of her lovers. Lică did not obey the father within the couple he was born in (the father cheated by the mother) and this father did not love him either. The father loved and pampered only Lenora, his sister. After the divorce (after the repudiation of the adulterous mother), Lenora gains ascendancy over Lică, she is in a superior social position by the fact that she lives with the father (i.e. the superior figure in the respective couple) and by the fact that she lives in Mizil, a town superior to Tecuci (where Lică lived with his mother). In association with this belittling, there intervenes, maybe, the repeating of the fourth class in middle school five times, as well. He had to reward his mother's love and have his revenge against his step-father, failing to submit to paternal authority, rejecting the development of the principles of reason and morality. His father could make him feel incapable, unintelligent, because he was his mother's favourite. His predominantly emotional, lonely mother had developed her son's emotional side, adoring him and satisfying all his whims. Lică could lie to her, could play her on his fingers, had an unlimited power over her, because she also loved him unconditionally, irrespective of what he offered in exchange.

Feeling restricted, unaccepted, unloved by his father (in the couple he was born to), he runs away from home when still very young, while his parents had not divorced yet. Being belittled by his father, he had to prove that he could earn lots of money at once, fast, suddenly, without making big efforts, as the principle of reason, Name of the Father, required<sup>8</sup>. In the street, as well as at home, he had to be diplomatic, to obtain what he wanted in a nice manner, the easier the more charm he had and people liked him for his physical appearance (he knew this from his mother). He had confidence in himself, as he was loved for his physical appearance, so he learned to bring people where he wanted.

An expert in the science of emotions, he knew how to express “a wide range of feelings” (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *A Concert of Music by Bach*, p. 658). He acceded to men through women, as, like his mother, he could use them in his business with men who, obviously, would not have admired him without the intermediation of women, his masculine values being unmanifested,

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<sup>6</sup> The feeling / extrovert type: With this type, the sentiment, feeling is directed to the objective datum, is “in agreement with objective values” (JUNG, 1997, p. 384), the feeling disregards the quality of the concrete object, but is “under the influence traditional or otherwise generally valid values” (*idem*, p. 385). In the extreme, an extraverted feeling responds to certain aesthetic expectations, but does not address the heart, but only the senses or – even worse – the intellect. “It leaves the impression of posing, of inconstancy, of something one cannot rely upon, and, in extreme cases, of hysteria”. (*ibid.*, p. 386). Only the suitable man is loved, the one corresponding as position, age, wealth, rank, respectability. There may occur exaggerated manifestations, prejudices and childish comparisons. Neuroses appear as hysteria or obsessive ideas.

The extrovert intuition type: He manifests a strong dependence on exterior situations, but not where there are generally accepted values, but, on the contrary, where there is a germ for a promising future. The stable situations threaten to suffocate him. He may pass as an “immoral unscrupulous adventurer” (JUNG, 1997, p. 400). Among women, we find persons that can establish promising worldly relationships, they intuit the men with a bright future, but they can quit everything “for a new possibility” (*idem*). This is the advocate of promising minorities. They instill courage and enthusiasm to their fellow people for a new cause, which they “will quit in a very short time”. (*ibid.*) “They waste their life too easily” (*ibid.*, p. 401), and “in the end they leave empty-handed” (*ibid.*). In neuroses there appear hypochondria, absurd physical sensations.

<sup>7</sup> The masculine mother-complex takes the form of homosexuality and Don Juanism, by partial identification with the anima (mother's image). (MINULESCU, 2001) (v. also GORGOS, 1989, vol. III, p. 50)

<sup>8</sup> **The Name of the Father** is a Lacanian concept designating the symbolic dimension of law, the paternal function of signifier, the symbolic order of language. (LAROUSSE, 2006, p. 830)

repressed. In order to make successful negotiations, he needed a nice, clean, neat image: he was very careful with this image (he was a handsome man, permanently clean and neat). From psychoanalytical perspective, we may say that washing was also necessary to remove certain guilt inherent to the business he used to practice. And in order to win, let us say at poker or other transactions face to face with a man, one had to possess what we now call the intelligence of emotions (one had, as Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu said, to be a “blackbird”). He thought how much he felt like making Sia’s allowance tenfold at the Stock Exchange, but he had not got familiar with this mechanism of the “new life” yet (*idem*, p. 654), it was too rational for him. But he refused it under other pretexts.

He identified himself with his biological father, whom the mirror of the world reflected as a kind of Don Juan, an easy-going man, a liar, always in search of new opportunities, running away from responsibilities. His step-father was also added to this identification, as the latter had punished his mother with the divorce, with lack of material means and remaining in / exile to Tecuci, while he left for Mizil, to compensate his image that had been stained by his adulterous wife. The correctness of this hypothesis was also confirmed by the fact that Lenora, although favoured by leaving for Mizil with her father, when she got married, she found herself named Desdemona by her officer husband (who committed suicide).

Lică’s relationship with Lina can be explained only by mutual attraction, generated by the need to compensate the repressed functions (i.e. thought in Lică’s case and feeling in Lina’s), but also by the fact that Lina was superior to him in the social hierarchy, like Lenora, favourite of the father (the representative of power). As Lina was ugly, Lică had, in his turn, an ascendancy over her and thus he could compensate the inferiority complex<sup>9</sup> set upon him through Lenora.

Till Sia became a physically ugly teenager, Lică had relationships with “rather pretty” women, due to his counter-sexual identification resulted from the mixture represented by his mother and Lenora, both pretty, and the ugly Lina. Since people began to perceive them like a couple, him and Sia, his counter-sexual image<sup>10</sup> underwent a change.

Thus the gipsy Ada Razu appeared, a successor of an enriched merchant, having ambition and thrust in her blood. She was not a classical example of physical beauty: she was “swarthy”, a force in an energetic physical constitution, strong, quick-tempered, “as dry as a devil”, with “bright eyes”, a “sharp chin” and “dark hands” (PAPADAT-BENGESCU, 2012, *A Concert of Music by Bach*, p. 658).

After divorcing Ada, with whom he disputes by similitude a competition from which neither of them wants to come out defeated (starting with the moment of Sia’s death), Lică has relationships mainly with “ugly women” – he feels powerful over them, as he felt over Sia: he prefers Mika-Lé to Coca-Aimée, even before a potential business through her was prefigured; Mika-Lé was accustomed to be bullied, while the self-worshipping Coca-Aimée was not; he also

<sup>9</sup> The inferiority complex or the self-estimation theory (the personality theory brought in by Alfred Adler; see ADLER, 1996, pp. 95-103) – refers to the feelings of inferiority or inadequacy that generate stress, psychological evasion attempts (reveries) or trigger compensation needs (given by an illusory feeling of superiority).

The inferiority feeling is not, for Alfred Adler, something pathological – as S. Freud considered –, but it is universal, unavoidable and transitory. A. Adler defines this complex as a result of the inferiority feelings owing to “organic, family and social” deficiencies. (LAROUSSE, 2006, p. 590): a physical disability or any physical characteristic deviating from the standard of the group; belonging to disadvantaged social categories, belonging to the female sex, excessively authoritarian education. (ZAMFIRESCU, 2007, pp. 313-314). A. Adler focuses on the wish for power, which compensates the inferiority feeling.

<sup>10</sup> The counter-sexual image is the type of partner a subject is unconsciously attracted to. The formation of the image of the life partner has its origin in the relationship with the parent of opposite sex: “when the Ego is feminine, Animus, as an archetype of masculinity is updated (by projective mechanisms) first by means of the girl’s existential experiences with her father. When the Ego integrates masculinity, Anima is expressed by the boy’s existential experiences with his mother. These types of updates represent the first ontogenetic activations of the counter-sexual archetype” (MINULESCU, 2001, p. 174). Subsequently, the experiences along life with other partners or persons of opposite sex that can modify more or less the initial image are added to the image the subject started from.

made an attempt with Aneta Pascu, a girl with a low self-esteem. And he has no intention to marry pretty midwife Mari.

He married only Ada and, thus, killed Sia. Ada had rejected Sia, and he, with Sia's disappearance, lost part of his motivation to win: "for the first time in his life (...) he [is] sad!" (*idem*, p. 830). The intention of revenge failed to animate him enough. Now he had no obstacle in his search for success, but he did not have the expected success in the political elections. There were, as always, too many rules of the others, authorities to be respected and, besides, he did not accept to function as an instrument of the others. So he preferred to return to his initial conditions of tramp / bargain-hunting "outlaw", trampling on the great opportunity of his life, to climb very high, remaining faithful to his nature, always in search of new chances, in places unsuspected by others.

After Lică goes to see Sia's corpse, we can notice the manifestation of the death instinct<sup>11</sup> at this character: a rash appears on his face. It is a sign that he identified himself with the dead person, with her wounds. Sia's corpse had been more "terrible" than any other horrors he had seen before at the regiment or maybe it had impressed only him so much (as he was the only one who saw it and who disposed that no autopsy would be made): "An indistinct connection, that was then tearing out of some roots, with a snatch that was, maybe, pain. Something (...) that was swelling and disaggregating in his gloomy unconscious, like Sia in the coffin." (*ibid.*, p. 830). Subsequently, he did not hesitate to take the place of the tubercular prince in bed, afraid of no microbe. He, who was always clean and dressed up to the knocker, "did not believe in the existence of microbes (*ibid.*, p. 838).

Lică appears as a permanently cheerful man. The first and only time when he was sad was at Sia's death. A man's mood cannot be always cheerful. If the conscience level is manifested so, it means that there is a suppressed depression, and everything that is repressed comes out through outlets in a strange form: vices, addictions. Lică's vices were women, fast gains and ... Sia.

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<sup>11</sup> Death drive / instinct (Thanatos) – a notion used by Sigmund Freud and introduced, together with the life instinct / drive (Eros), as one of the major concepts of the psychoanalytical doctrine. The self-preservation drives (Thanatos) serve the psychical development, being determined by the principle of reality. S. Freud theorizes the death drive starting from compulsion to repetition. Unconscious and difficult to control, this compulsion to repetition leads the subject repeatedly in painful situations, as a replica of some experiences from the past.

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