

DESTINY AND THE MYTH OF ANDROGYNY, COSMIC ORDER AND REORDER ("THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU" OR THE REAL FANTASTIC)

Oana BĂDĂLUTĂ
University of Bucharest

Abstract: It is said that every man is defended and guided by a guardian angel, a defender, a savior in the choices he makes in life and that seeks his half, through its support (this „thirst” of eros is explained by the myth of the androgyny, which Plato expands in the „Banquet”, through the character named Aristophanes, explaining how love emerged and how, by separating sex, cosmos was reordered). The project entitled „Destiny and the myth of androgyny, reorder and cosmic order (The adjustment bureau or fantastic real”) debates the issue of (pre) destination, of illusion or reality of a half, implicitly the Creator’s acceptance or opposition, who founded the Grand Plan. The case study which I used as a reason for this concern is the film adaptation of „The adjustment bureau” (2011), starring Matt Damon (character, David Norris) and Emily Blunt (character, Elise Sellars). The objective of the project is to support the myth of the androgyny, and thereby reordering the Cosmos through these oracular instances, the guards-angels, which straighten things in favor of the Plan, the „vocation”. The hypothesis of the project is the existence and invocation of the androgyny myth several times, which is why we believe that fantastic universe that we face sometimes (through dissatisfaction, imbalance, factors that we cannot explain or perceive) finds its justification and reflection in a real and palpable form of life, predestination, sign and help, through the divine (seen as a return from the chaos). The main concepts used in the approach of this project are methodological, methodical (indirectly, via the film adaptation, for example: he/she relationship, concepts-tool: cosmos/chaos, balance/imbalance, observation method, through the act of rebellion against the lines or the trajectory of the Grand Plan). The development argument for the subject of study for this project is the insistence and, once again, the belief both in the calibration of the personal way and recalibration through the Cosmo Creator permission.

Keywords: destiny, cosmic order, reorder, myth of androgyny, the real fantastic.

The film adaptation „The adjustment bureau” (2011), starring Matt Damon (character, David Norris) and Emily Blunt (character, Elise Sellars), (p)resumes the myth of androgyny (developed by Plato in „The Banquet”, through the character named Aristophanes, explaining how love emerged and how, by separating sex, cosmos was reordered. Those who watch and (re)order the androgynous process are „guardians (of destiny)”, oracular instances, a kind of vigilant angels, severer, those who care (are treasure guardians) for things to happen according to a (pre) established plan; they are fortune tellers, viewers in crystal globe (guardian, fr. „gardien”= security guard). „Angelology” is the science that deals with the study of angels, tilting more toward the theological side than to its own symbolic system. We don't know (taking into consideration the adaptation) how the guardians are ranked (angels are divided by class, *celestial hierarchy*, according to the theory of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, 500 ad), only their function: personal angels (singular or collective, in the case of adaptation, whose reputation was established in the 19th century); the guardian angels, who intermediate between the divine and human, between winged beings and those without wings; their appearance is human, borrowed from people, beings without wings; they fulfill the

functions of the government (the guards), walk in groups (messengers) and are those who comply with law, protectors of the elected (David Norris, the chosen). Being a reflection of those elected, angels are considered symbols of the aspirations most difficult to achieve (those positioned in leadership functions); guards (celestial hierarchy) are representations of the image of the earthly hierarchies aspirations; angels exercise (according to the theory of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite) on people a role of enlightenment, they are guides, protectors, sages, those who can make the best choice at the crossroads, which follow the road correctly, are wingless creatures, and people cannot see, nor distinguish; angels-guardians are protectors (according to St. Basil), each man being accompanied in his life or death by his own guardian angel.

Androgyny myth has been discussed and analyzed infinite times, from antiquity to the modern literature, thereby preserving and explaining union of several androgynous beings (two men, two women or a woman and a man, pasted back to back, spherical), with absolute power, which frightened the gods. Separate halves were comprised of sadness, despair or loneliness. Thus was created Eros, which contributed to form the perfect merging of the two halves. The union of the two halves generates order (harmony) and clutter (chaos) in the cosmos, as neither the universe is perfect („The Legend of the Sun and Moon”, in multiple variants). Attempt was made to establish a link between the myths of the androgyny and fall into sin, so the union between man and woman, who gives another sin, by birth, from sin, because the process is like the reunion of the human being, the androgynous process. For this purpose (fig.), the androgyny myth will cause union of the terrestrial with paradise or of the (under) terrestrial with hell. Man seeks woman, and vice versa, this melding suggesting the man's permission to mingle with woman, so protection, osmosis, generosity. The angels (the guards) are androgynous, figuratively; they mediate between terrestrial and cosmic, between heaven and earth, between the two halves. They were detached from the process of androgyny, from the circle of these searches between male and female, because, knowing so well this act, they could intervene in their help. The construction, as well as the essence of the guardians (the angels) is in a continuous regularity. Reviews of „midras” type support the idea of androgyny, that Adam, being androgynous, was separated from Eve into two halves. Cosmic bisexuality (Sun and Moon) or divine (Adam and Eve) symbolizes the same process, of separation, of androgynous. Cosmic egg delivered neutral beings (chaos, terra), that delivered other beings (the stars), these being exceptions of the androgyny myth, i.e. self-procreation. Phoenix Bird symbolizes a form of self-procreation, by birth and rebirth, out of neutral. The gift of neutral beings transcends time which, for his programmers or guards, is preserved, programmed: „It's an important night for us.” Androgyny presents a form of conservation, through continuous infinite search between the two halves, in a loop measured by time. The guardian-angel: „Are you an angel? / We were called like this.”; „We are several case officers, who live longer than men.” (Harry-David) („live longer”, but do not reach immortality, yet differ from it and belong to a different register than human, are beings with another origin); the guardian-angel is a vigilante being, one who seeks, guides, guards; the guardian - angel guidance is the law: „I can't imagine being on the trail of the guy as much as you.” (the quality of the programmer is directly proportional to its compliance plan); in the hierarchical plan, guards or programmers hold a certain step, lower than the Grand Plan; they are those that are running: „No, no, sir. We handle him. Yes, Sir. We are in charge. Yes, Sir. No, Sir. I understand. I take care of him myself. What a mess!” (Donaldson, a guard); „The President has the complete Plan. We see only a part of it.”(the concept of the whole, part of the half, angels/God, angels/androgynous, the Creator, Demiurge, the President is the one who knows the plan, guards are those who interpret it and put it back in the circuit).

The subject of the adaptation underlies the androgyny myth: David Norris, the future senator from New York, meets Elise Sellas, a ballerina, who falls in love, but he can't be with

her, because the destiny is involved (in the form of the guardians, which prevent them from meeting). David outweighs prohibitions and insists on merging with his *half*, through meetings with Elise. Because of these oppositions, David is off in the rise (personal and professional) of countless times, is unmasked, brushed aside („David Norris, the exposed”), is not elected senator either for Brooklyn, or New York.

Documents belonging to the fantastic book: 1. The sudden intrusion of the relationships in this context, free and open conversation, known into unknown, suspends time and inserts into the text a certain expectation, a certain taste, a fantastic feeling „You don't fool me. I think you love it (the candidacy)./Do I know you? ” (Elise-David) 2. „He has to spill his coffee on the shirt until 7: 05. 7: 05 at the latest/I catch him as soon as he enters the Park.” („to catch” = to perform scheduling, temporal rule: „to”, „temporal index; 7: 05”; outer influences: „has”, „to spill”; the subject involved in the trial, „coffee”; „coffee” becomes item which passes through two worlds, real-fictional (the registry is a fantastic one). Thus, the guards were gifted with „something” from the experience of the solomonars, of those who cast out the rain, clouds, who deprived the lives of the subjects involved in the troubles, problems, they cast out the shade and keep the balance, existential excess. So, man became partner of god, if it met its requirements.

David's meetings with Elise are not included in the programmer's schedule, she is not part of David's destiny, and she coexists outside: „David, you make it even more difficult than it should be.” (a guard) (the opposition in front of destiny generates a fake destiny; David/Elise are undesirable subjects for the programmers' plans). Any deviation from the Plan schema changes schedule and the implications of the subject: „questions will torment him until the day he dies. He will never cease to seek answers. He won't give up. ”(a guard), seeking, without hesitation, to fill the void in his life: „we will have to keep an eye on him forever, to make sure that he does not speak. Endless wave effect.” („endless wave effect” means the effect wheel which moves in the opposite direction, figuratively, in the wrong repercussion; „wave” = pall, rhythmic motion of the stages of life; the clock that beats back, time in non-concordance with day/night plans, disordered).

The subject (David) is intrigued: „who the hell are you guys? /we are the ones who care for things to happen according to plan.” (Richardson-David) („those” = anonymity, instinct group): „I had to shed my coffee? / we call it adjustment.” („adjustment” = match, planning): „sometimes, when people are shedding their coffee, internet fails or they lose their keys, they consider that it's no accident. And sometimes it is. Sometimes we are. We reintegrate people in the Plan.” [definitive or final constants: „(sometimes) really is (a chance)”; (un)finished constants: „we are (sometimes)”?] Reintegration means the integration in the Great Cycle, assembly puzzle elements in the *game*; integration implies order, reintegration, the establishment of order and disintegration, chaos. Subjects who participate in understanding or not the Cosmos are David and Elise, and the Demiurge is „Cosmo Creator”¹; „Between human and the Cosmo Creator there is a synchronous collaboration. Each has its meaning and one failure can endanger the very existence of the Cosmos” or wounding the Creator, which is the reason for the epic „the wounding of Noah”². If the Demiurge is against the micro cosmos between two souls, macro cosmos will not participate and will not help the union between the two. Thus, the demiurge gets hurt and cannot give consent.

¹ Term used by ANDREI OIȘTEANU in „Order and chaos”, „Myth and magic in Romanian traditional culture”, Polirom, 2013, Chapter. I, „Carol type stars theft. Motifs and mythical meanings.”, p. 18

² Idem, Chapter. II „Flood's Romanian legend”, 6. „The Demiurge gets hurt”, p. 113

If the subject does not comply with the order of guardians, it is reset. Resetting involves overcoming the boundaries of the mind and, in the cosmological hole, resetting (emptying, inhibition of the brain, non-functionality) can identify with Alzheimer's disease, oblivion: „very few people have seen what you have seen today, and we are determined to keep it that way. If you ever reveal our existence, we will delete your mind; the intervention team will reset you. Your feelings, memories, your whole responsibility will be removed. You will not think at all. No word about us.” („very few people” = David is the chosen one, exception); „Recalibration makes a few changes in the people’s way of thinking.” (Harry) (recalibration outlines human-robot model, who acts and thinks robotically; „to recalibrate” (fig.) is to assemble identical pieces [(decisions, thoughts, opinions), anything that may cross your mind] instead of other parts degraded through attrition or damaged; Therefore, when the subject did not follow the plan, it was recalibrated: „(Recalibration) does not influence the feelings or personality. It would be too intrusive.” (Harry)

Fate intervenes in the rules of the game, but the rules do not identify themselves with the fate: „You have met a woman this morning in the bus. Elise. You shouldn’t have seen her ever.” (fate auto dictation, emptying time loop: „you have met”, „should not”, „seen”, „ever”); „The world turned upside down, and you think of a woman.” (Harry) [by standing against the face of destiny, it is accepted the *reverse* side of existence, as a (sub) order or a reversed order, the second plan of life, the back plan „(world) reversed”, „upside down”]; „Even if you remembered the number, you would not be able to pass the phones lost, changed numbers or whatever created some waves.” (Harry) [„where” = pluses, waves, elements that overlap with existing ones, (supra) stories, (supra) violations].

The guards were thoughts evaluators, depending on the choices of the subject: „when you make a decision, your mind will assess the options. We can perceive them. I know if you follow the plan or not, because the (...)We feel when it will happen.” (Harry) The guards are those that define a decision: „We are here to make you stick to the plan. Just so we are allowed to do.”; „You will seek her, eh? You will not find her. They will take care of that.” The only opponent that delays, bridles the fulfillment of destiny is water, the aquatic element: „(water) blocks your ability to read the decision tree.” (Water is turned on through the wave/wave confrontation); „The rain will stop in the next hour, and that is the only thing that prevents them from seeing us now.” (Harry) The fact that the water (rain) blocks the waves, crosses the mirror, deforming its clarity, has to do with its dark side, testing through water; If you intervene in the aquatic function, you dive into DEEP; water, rain, flood have the power to end the primary cycles of creation; on the other hand, the water freezes thoughts penetration into personality unconsciousness (thus, it crosses, in this case, a reversed function for itself, as her action function is to enable the streamlining of thoughts; unconscious personality structures of the guardians were vastly different from those of beings without wings, of men, and they did not function in the vicinity of water; water, in this case, is considered a „returned hierophany” (its transcendent is not manifested); David’s encounter with Elise, near water [matrix of the world and (dis)order of things], involves a particular function; all important meetings (in particular, in the fairy tale) are taking place near hot springs or stagnant water, like divine things, equal to the cosmos; in/from this space starts the love and union is determined by marriage, open gate to eternity, through Eros.

After three years, David and Elise are reunited: „Let’s stop the current at her dance studio.” (The Guards)(Stopping the tide = breaking wave) Destiny may change according to the decisions of the subjects, factors of conduct: „her decision differs from our models. Thirty-six hours without contact, and she would not ever talk to him anymore. If they kiss (...), any possible redress, strong enough to separate them, which will cause waves over your limit.” („Waves over your limit” meant (over) destiny, which exceeded the permissive factors of utilization, of wave programming)

„Why do you want to keep us separated?/ Because this is the plan. / Then you misread the Plan/It's no wrong reading regarding you and Elisa./Then the Plan is wrong./If I can't be with her, so why do I feel this way?/it doesn't matter how you feel. What matters is what is in black and white.” („Black and white”, rules, predetermination). The plan is judged: „intense chemistry between them, the constant bending points, and the impulse, you've separated them twice, just to have the opportunity to approach them.” („just to have the opportunity to approach them”, predestination, the great cosmic Plan assumes order and reorder, just in case of a change): „it seems that David Norris and Elise Sellas are meant to be together, because they were meant to be together. In the 1970s, when he was born, they were meant to be together, the same thing in the '80s, and '90s. The plan was not changed until 2005, and she had to remain with Adrian.” („she had to stay with Adrian”, reorder in the cosmic plan); the plan is handed to Thomson, lawyer-guardian: „these are the remnants of old plans that attract towards each other. They still feel that they belong to each other, even if it is not so.” (waves/fragments, remains of the past mean the convergence of the past upon the present, the old plans belong to the great Plan); „What happened with free will?/I tried free will. (...) You don't have free will, David, you have the appearance of free will.” [history is relatively-questionable, it can alter, reinvent itself: „once I've got you from hunting and gathering” (David finds a universal secret, factual non - existence of free will, so the confrontation of its own illusion control)]

Meeting with Elise, return, remembrance; the reason of each moment necessarily develops a (sub) reason, perceived as „cause”: „meeting Elise three years ago wasn't an accident. We have done that. I knew that you'd be inspired to make that speech. The speech that brought you back from oblivion.” (Thomson) („return from oblivion” = retrieval, reaffirmation, rediscovery, regeneration, reminder are constants of return from lost selves, into the retrieved); „It's not about who you are, but who I am.” [„but about who I am” every man pretends to be peculiar, (re)presents the whole, this criterion being part of the (pre)utilization scheme; if this scheme is not complied with, the subject undergoes a certain wear: „it is not about her, it's about you. What happens to you when you are with her. In small doses, Elise was a cure. But in larger doses, she wears you out.” („wear and tear” = depersonalization, removal from the purpose, center, personal goals and, in the end, loss of position within the Castle, within personal space, even driving away from the Castle); „The President cannot be an uncontrollable person. You can't run away from your fate, David.”]

Decoupling of the Plan: „I don't agree with you about my fate. I know what I feel for her and I'm not going to change that. I only have the choices I make. And I choose her, no matter what it will be.” (David)

Influence, broken destiny are repercussions and „mirrors” in the other, the mirror is broken, so the destiny; the image, once perfect, now distorts: „If you stay with her, you will kill not only your dreams but also her own.” (The lofty destiny of both subjects will be inverted) Fate intervenes in fate, it explains itself: „when you look back at all these, David, remember that we tried to explain.” (Thomson); „If you stay with her, you'll take the only thing that she ever had.” (Thomson)[Cause-effect action is relevant in this case, „If you remain” → „you will take” (it)]

Angel rebelled, Donaldson is the exception of the guardians, he shares David why he cannot be together with Elise, existential excess, which will wake up in David no desire, it will no longer generate anything creatively, it will not recall any dream, because she will be self-sufficient: „I can't stop thinking about her.” („I can't stop”, „thinking”, „her”, the attraction of the missing, the half of the whole, the incomplete androgyny).

David's chance to recover Elise: a theme surrounded by water; hats are the connecting points between the worlds, wearing them makes it possible to cross such spaces; passing through the doors, if you wore a hat [hats worn by guards invest them with leadership

positions, those with head covered by hats while presiding, given the idea that hats identify with the Crown (in the case of a tricorn); hats are connection tools between heaven and earth (hat, Crown) and, through the high corners, they identify with rays of light (and, thus, with the divine constants, light, sun, wisdom of the scholars, lettered); the hat symbolizing head or light disoriented those who read the Plan, guards [diagram doors: closed-open-closed implied crossing the periphery, crossroads/contradictions; labyrinth disorientates guards, because it can be decoded by the subjects; passing through the blue door was the road to the Center, the shortcut (doors = crossing and access point between two worlds; blue doors = doors of heaven, blue indicates spirituality and preserves meditation, is the color of ether): „I'm going to go through the blue door/This is how you can pass through it. (hat) Don't lose it.” (David-Harry); „He has a hat. It is in the substrate.” („substrate” = control layer, so the guards controlled people's decisions)]. Water becomes the assistant of destiny and, in the same time, it foretells chaos, a rift in the Grand Plan: „Clouds, storm, hail or excessive rain carriers, are seen as a hypostasis of chaos, which disturb order and cosmic balance, covering the *image* of god (the Sun, the blue sky).”³ David unmasks the guards. (He shares of the Great Secret; big secrets are always hidden); The Grand Plan is encoded in the book. The change of destiny involved modifying the Plan, rewriting the Book: „Did you really think that you could get to the President? And change your fate if you get to it? Or rewrite your own fate? It doesn't work so and I told you why.” (The Demiurge cannot be invoked, as is everywhere: „the President appears in different forms to everyone, so people rarely understand when that happens. Everything is a test. Even for members of the Office of Redress.” (subjects issue could solve in the future, the following key aspects of existence: exploring worlds, fight for gift, for free will, rewriting the Plan by the actors, and not by the Director, or in full concordance, accepting the destiny, the Demiurge).

The demiurge rewrites the plan, gives his consent with regard to predestination of David and Elise, thus we witness a (re) predestination, he promises exchange of mentality, unaccepted-accepted and seems to humanize: „Balancing the relationship Man-Demiurge achieved, on one hand, through holding a demiurgically power by the first and, on the other hand, through the humanization of God, (seen as *a great man* who gets tired, is wrong, asks for help), as well as permanent concordance of actions of the two, are specific mindsets that perpetuated over the time (...).”⁴; „The balance of the Cosmos should be restored as soon as possible, and the Dragon storm (Chaos) should be killed, tamed or banished.”⁵ (symbolically, the cosmos balance is restored by rebalancing the Grand Plan, and the Chaos is the order of things, disrupted existential clutter, after crossing over the Plan of the two subjects, David and Elise; The demiurge must bring cosmos back into the space without cosmos, by bringing the two from chaos into balance, from abroad into the Centre; according to the definition of terms formulated by Oisteanu, „upper/lower cosmic space”, the Demiurge has the task of bringing the man -„lower cosmic space” in the village, in the fortress – upper cosmic space, seated, ordered, determined). Rewriting the destiny of the two subjects is a magic gesture we can fit into *the rites of incorporation (crossing)*, as per anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep, who mentions the transfer of items from one space to another, and so, changing both the purposes and functionality of elements and space through rebirth, modification.

³ Idem, Chapter VI „Children folklore. Magic-ritual reminiscences”, 5. „Man, partner of god”, p. 397

⁴ Idem, Chapter II „Flood's Romanian legend”, 6. „Founders”, p. 121

⁵ Idem, Chapter VI „Children folklore. Magic-ritual reminiscences”, 5. „Man, partner of god”, p. 398

Bibliography

- ANDREI OIȘTEANU in his work "Order and chaos", "Myth and magic in Romanian traditional culture", Polirom, 2013

* This work was cofinanced from the European Social Fund through Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013, project number POSDRU/159/1.5/S/140863, Competitive Researchers in Europe in the Field of Humanities and Socio-Economic Sciences. A Multi-regional Research Network, sau Această lucrare a fost cofinanțată din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Sectorial pentru Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane 2007 – 2013, Cod Contract: POSDRU/159/1.5/S/140863, Cercetări competitivi pe plan european în domeniul științelor umaniste și socio-economice. Rețea de cercetare multiregională (CCPE).