



Onuma Nemon

Ogr

"In order to enter into the strange universe of this strange writer who refuses to name himself, you have to put aside all prejudice... The minute you have this book between your hands, you feel as if you are going to make a mysterious discovery. You can open the book at random and be amazed intrigued and even seduced... Onuma Nemon deals with borderline worlds, with dazzling extremes. His style is very calculated: the rhythm, the sheer inspiration."

Le Monde

"Onuma Nemon's texts are more or less unrealistic... he mixes the 19th Century with the avant-garde, his style is always excessive.... he is inventive down to his very vocabulary, he would seem to be a writer who will prove difficult to classify."

Libération

"His imagination knew no limits, but his sense of reality was very limited."

"Onuma Nemon always wrote for two... Onuma Nemon never paid any attention to his train of thought; it was endowed with fantastic ideas, but they were disjointed, devoid of any structure, dislocated. Even for a friendly therapist, it would have caused great mental turmoil."

Is the author of these twenty apparently unrelated texts talking about himself? The name Onuma Nemon apparently means no-one: the writer has been swallowed up by the work, and his name now matters only as a kind of poetical sound, a hidden symbol used to label some shapeless structure. We are only told that he is "an anonymous 20th Century writer". Proust set a precedent, warning the reader not to look for the historical man in his work which comes from a deeper self. Pessoa also resorted to more than five pseudonyms, and in his "a-mazing" way so did Borges... These artists share the fact that their art is far too deep, complex and manifold to pertain to only one "person". "You have to die as an author to be created by writing". We know only that this author started writing for his dead brother, as was the case with William Blake whom he openly admires.

These texts, which scatter and dissolve like so many icebergs in a nuclear reactor, are beyond description. Each section bears no apparent relation to any of the rest and blends drawings, prose and poetry. They represent a sample of the 22,000 pages the author claims he has already written. "*Ogr* is from the realm of the gold-questers, of Rimbaud, Ezra Pound, Lawrence, the realm of dazzling consciousness." There is, however, a structure and these 20 texts may hide a secret link. "*Ogr* is a contrived kind of madness" says the author, but it is part of the game for the reader to find the link.

He shares with Borges a vivid and fertile admiration for many Anglo-Saxon writers: Pound, Blake, Melville, K Mansfield, Windsor McKay, the Bronte sisters, Poe, Burroughs and Thomas Pynchon. The reader will also be reminded of Joyce, Sterne and Michaux; Rabelais, Ginsberg and Lewis Carroll are not far away either. But the book is definitely original and carves its own quite new style. The author acknowledges that other authors could adopt the same style: "My work is inventive but that is not necessarily an end in itself, perhaps other authors will make better use of it." Is this modesty or does this radical openness herald the advent of a refreshingly new way of coping with literature?



We know very little about the so-called real life of the author of this work. We don't even know his name, just the name of the small village near Valence where he lives. He is married, he has studied Chinese, he is far from insane and probably not even a bit quirky.... he is beyond biography. When asked about himself, he replies "is it useful for you to know this?" He describes himself as "an anonymous 20th Century writer" and adds "I am completely convinced that the author is merely a cross-roads". Thanks to his bold innovation, he will probably reach many more cross-roads.

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254pp. 100 F

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