

# *Cogita*

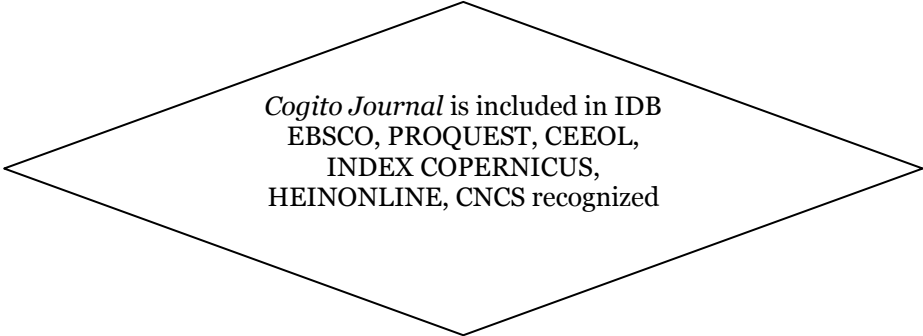
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*Every author is responsible for the originality of the article and that the text was not published previously.*

## ABOUT EMINESCU'S UNIVERSE

*Gheorghe Văduva*

*Eminescu was present again – as he is: profound, romantic, powerful, unpaired, immortal and incandescent – at the time of commemorating 125 years from his passing away and into eternity, a moment also recorded, in mid-June 2014, at „Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, in the presence of the Rector, Mrs. Corina Dumitrescu Prof. Dr., of important personalities in the culture and education sphere, professors, master students, undergraduate students of the University and from other institutions, such as a group of pupils from the schools of the capital city that the University works with. All people attending this event, together with two prestigious Eminescologists - Nicolae Georgescu and Nicolae Cheșu – were both creators and beneficiaries of a very special dialogue about Eminescu and, in remember, in the spirituality of Romanian culture light's age, an age from which the great poet, great journalist and great Romanian - Mihai Eminescu -, only had 39 springs, recalled with emotion, thought and word, a genius, a value and a symbol: Eminescus' Universe.*

*Eminescu is not only a poet, only a journalist, only a writer, only a fighter for keeping unaltered tradition, Romanian spirit, nation's soul and spirit, this Godly space's values or only a brave soldier in the war for nation's and union's survival, as a great people, on the old Dacia's territory, as those from „Carpathia” upheld, created by him specifically to revive to spirity of what he called „from Niester to the Tisa River”... Eminescu means all this together and it is very hard to understand how so much of a universe fitted, during such a tormented and narrow age, into the life, toil and soul of this man of an extremely special sensitivity and profundity that make him one of the most acute Romanian analysts of those times. Eminescu's creed and endeavour for it are in a sense subject to the epoch's spirit, particularly in the one of the German classical philosophy that was approaching its upmost fulfillment, in the spirity of pure reason and judging power, generated by Kant, of transcendental analytics and dialectics, its cosmological theory, but, somehow, through the force of volunteer type reasoning, Ego's role in the knowledge of the world, and the bravery of Schopenhauer who dared to tell Goethe that neither the Sun would have been up in the sky if he had not been there to see it.*

Certainly, these are only connections. They may have not been unfamiliar to Eminescu, as he was educated by their school. But Eminescu is not a synthesis of the others, he is not a connection result, a text quotations repeater, a parlour encyclopedia. Eminescu is labour, bulldozer, a brilliant hack, on this realm of knowledge. Eminescu is himself in everything and all that he wrote, all he did within the space of written word and the one of the battle for truth.

Nicolae Georgescu, perhaps the most active and passionate toiling researcher on the complicated field of Eminescu's creation, the one that has sought to the highest degree not only Eminescu's texts, but also the connected texts of that times' publications that explained Eminescu's labour, emphasized, among others, the great poet's journalistic works value, his endeavour at „The Time”, his polemic with „The Romanian” Journal, but particularly the very special quality of this type of Eminescu's writings. One of the participants, in his intervention, also revealed the up-to-dateness of these texts, their clarity and huge force.

Nicolae Cheșu revealed Eminescu's uniqueness, especially as a poet, his writings' quality and irrepeatability, the universe of Mihai Eminescu the scholar and his role in generating modern poetry, enriching the language, in Romanian creation.

Prof. Dr. Gabriela Pohoată, the moderator of this roundtable, presented an interesting and new-fangled vision of Eminescu's philosophy, of Eminescu the philosopher. Certainly, Eminescu did not create a philosophical system, did not write major philosophical works either on the topic of ontology, or on gnoseology or logic and did not even generate criticism of the philosophical systems he knew so well. But Eminescu's entire oeuvre is philosophical, as it includes profound thinking (philosophy being, in its essence, a way of thinking, science, practice and method of thinking and knowing). Philosophy in Eminescu, is one of the implicit type, which is found in every text, in every word written on paper, is a *modus cognoscendi* and, for the great poet, even a *modus vivendi*. Great Eminescu lived intensely, just because he thought intensely, profoundly and creatively. For Eminescu, life, as short as it was, did not mean either „Où sont les neiges d'antan”, as Vilho meditated, or „Fugit irreparable tempus” or even as *Carpen Diem*, but a maximum concentration of the thought up to its essentialization in a leibnizian type of monad, as a place from where the source is regenerated... Eminescu's philosophy is a maximum concentration in the verb and a maximum expansion in the semantics of each word. Only a genius can do that. And the philosophy of a brilliant poet and journalist is not an explicit, but an implicit one, contained in the phoneme and semanteme.

Undoubtedly, Eminescu is the source of words and central axis of many of us in terms of education, irrespective of the time and circumstances in which we learnt de. The situations and conditions were different from one epoch to another, but Eminescu was and remained forever the same, unique and irrepeatable, as a beautiful and lonely fir tree somewhere on a mountain top. The big ones whipped him, shortened his life and even killed him, but most loved him and kept him immortal.

From the moment I read and memorized the first poem written by Eminescu, the great poet of any soul, the great journalist not of the moment but of the eternity, and the great Man, he remained in my life as a basic reference and heritage. Years ago, at the „Bibicescu” library from Drobeta Turnu Severin, in a copybook from Literary Talks, the large ones, with 200 lined sheets, kept piously by the people there, in the very „Special Fund”, as it was then, Eminescu cited two lines from Ovidius, in purple ink, with his small, neat and straight handwriting:

„Donec eris felix multos numerabis amicos,  
Tempora si fuerint, nubila solus eris.”

And, below, he was translating them:

„When you are happy you have many friends,  
In dire straits, you remain alone”

Below, his signature followed, with that unmistakable floral model, and, two more lines down, with the large and relatively calligraphic handwriting, like the one of a schoolboy, Creangă added:

What's the world?  
Call it world and be saved!

So were people then, in the timeless times of Eminescu. The meditative, profound philosophy, somehow withdrawn in the text's pessimistic note of the poet exiled at Pontus Euxinus, on the same wavelength with Eminescu's feeling, but generous in revealing the world's saving facet, as Creangă saw it, remains one

*essence of Eminescu's thought, reasoning and creation and of the four unfulfilled decades in which he lived and worked.*

*That is why, when we are sad, we cite Eminescu, as he cited Ovidius; when we are not sad, we adore him for the lights he lit on the heights of the Romanian language.*



## NEVER LIKE ONCE ...

Nicolae Georgescu\*

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**Abstract:** *The author deals with the philosophy of language in Mihai Eminescu's poetry, referring to The Evening Star (Luceafărul), A Dacian's Prayer (Rugăciunea unui Dac), Separation (Despărțire) and The Years Have Passed (Trecut-au anii), taking notice of the time expressions in the poet's writings from manuscript to his best known editions. This philosophy of Eminescu is better reflected in the first printing that have the poet's consent than in the subsequent editions of his poems.*

**Keywords:** *Eminescu, Hegel, Al. Surdu, Petru Creția, Lucian Costache, The Evening Star (Luceafărul), A Dacian's Prayer (Rugăciunea unui Dac), time, negation, never, not once, not ever, writing, punctuation.*

When one regulates an ancient writing system he must be attentive to the meanings twice: first to the current usual ones – then to those in the respective system. The authors that have long thought about writing involve thought in the script; one must at least ask oneself whether *what* and *how* they wrote make sense, before changing that for us. Look, for example, at the ordinary *once* in Eminescu. I am giving the first stanza of "Luceafărul" (*The Evening Star*) in the form from *Almanahul România Jună* (April 1883)<sup>1</sup>:

There was once, like in the fairy tales,  
As ne'er in the time's raid  
There was, from a large famous royal family  
A most beautiful maid.

*Convorbiri literare*<sup>2</sup> magazine resumes the poem in August 1883, as follows:

There was once, like in the fairy tales.  
As never in the time's raid  
There was, from a large famous royal family  
A most beautiful maid.

Titu Maiorescu kept, for release in December 1883<sup>3</sup>, the form from the Almanac, in the second edition (1885) it is the same - but in the third edition

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<sup>1</sup> M. Eminescu: *The Evening Star, The „România Jună” Almanac of Social-Literary Academic Society*, Vienna, April 1883.

<sup>2</sup> M. Eminescu: *The Evening Star, Literary Talks*, Iași, August, 1883.

<sup>3</sup> *Poems by Mihail Eminescu*, Socecu et Comp. Bookshop, Bucharest, 1884 /published 1883/, p. 277.

(1888) he put *A fost o dată ca nici o dată* (*There was once ... like not ever*) forms that he then abandoned. (It is not difficult to understand why he dropped them: when resuming the term, in the girl's words, he had: *Noi merge nici odată* (I will ne'ver go), so he also intended to correct here: *o dată* (*once*), but the proofreader misunderstood and this is how the mistake *Noi merge* (I won't go) appeared instead of *N'oi merge* (*I will not go*); usually near Maiorescu's corrections, new typographical errors appear. So, in the fourth edition he gave it up.) The publishers after him oscillated between *niciodată* (*never*) and *nici odată* (*ne'ver*). Today the text is like this, according to Perpessicius<sup>4</sup>:

There was once, like in the fairy tales,  
As never in the time's raid,  
There was, from a large famous royal family,  
A most beautiful maid.

In the first edition of 1939, Perpessicius had nothing after the first verse, against the whole tradition up to him, but then he returned to the form adorned with commas – that in fact C. Botez<sup>5</sup> (1930) had set.

As to the manuscripts, they do not clarify too much, “The Evening Star” laboratory being extremely broad. We find somewhere “A fost odată ca ‘n povești, / A fost ca nici odată” - *There was once, like in the fairy tales / As ne'ver in the time's raid* (Ms. 2277, 132, correlated with “N'oiu merge nici odată” – *I will ne'ver go*), it is the same in Ms. 2275, 39, as in *The Legend of the Evening Star* (Ms. 2261, 198, dated April 10, 1882 by the poet) we find “A fost odată ca ‘n povești / A fost ca nici o dată” - *There was once, like in the fairy tales / As not ever/once in the time's raid*, but correlated with “N'oiu merge nici odată” – *I will ne'er go*. Throughout the manuscript the punctuation is white - whether there are drafts or it is left aside on purpose (probably in order to be completed on the final text systemically) - so that we can only attribute to the author himself for sure the comma from the *Almanac* or the full stop from *Convorbiri* after the first verse. Once again: who deludes himself the illusion that the manuscripts solve the most editorial problems is wrong: rather they give suggestions. For not (even) a poem by Eminescu do we have the final manuscript, the one given to printing. And, to be even more reassured about this, there is one thing we also have to know: even after printing the poet intervened on the text (see the case of *Letter III*, published in *Convorbiri literare* and then in *Timpul*). I have shown<sup>6</sup> elsewhere that, in extreme cases for typographical errors interrupted the printing of literary talks, due to typographic mistakes, the printing process of *Convorbiri literare* used to be interrupted, the correction was made and then it printing was resumed. (There

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<sup>4</sup> M. Eminescu: OEUVRE, I, *Poems publishing during poet's life, A Critical Edition*, edited by Perpessicius, Bucharest, *The Royal Foundation for Literature and Art, Vol. I*, 1939, p.167.

<sup>5</sup> Mihai Eminescu: OEUVRE. POEMS. Tome I. Edited by Constantin Botez, Bucharest, National Culture Publishing House, 1933, p.152

<sup>6</sup> N. Georgescu: *Eminescu and His Editors*, Floare albastră Publishing House, Bucharest, Vol. II, p. 78.