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The Motif of the Danube in Eminescian Lyrics

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Abstract: The Danube is an integral part of Romanity. In the nineteenth century the Danube had become an obsession in the sense of its integration into the lyrical triad “Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic”. In a natural way, Eminescu integrates the Danube motif among the others frequented with lyrical diligence. The specific marks of Eminescianism are found in the poetic visionarism, integrated in emblematic poems such as “Memento mori”, “The 3rd Letter”, or “Farewell”. The lyrical instancetransposess the geographical detail into an integral part of a perception of the grand and transcendent.

Keywords: Romanity; Danube; Eminescianism; lyrical triad; poetic visionarism; perception of the grand and transcendent

The Danube has always been a rich source of inspiration for the arts, accumulating traditions, customs, feelings that express the identity of the peoples who interact with this special river over the flow of time. It has inspired poets and composers, painters and storytellers; it travels through ten European countries and reaches us, the Black Sea, to pour over here its stories that it has witnessed and that she has reapt throughout the course.

In the poem “From the Spirit's Song of Waters,” Goethe correlates water to the human soul, comparing “drops spreading to the slippery rock” to the immortal spirit of the human being who, merely like water: “Comes from heaven, goes to heaven,

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having to descend to earth again, in an eternal fluctuation.” He concludes this resemblance with a inference that links the primordial elements of nature and the essence of human being: “Soul of man, how much you are similar to water! Fate of man, how much you resemble the wind!”.

Composers such as Johan Strauss and Ion Ivanovici tried to express through their songs the closeness to the Danube and the feelings that this river of culture aroused in their souls. The “Blue Danube” and the “Danube Waves” represent people’s connections with the Danube and their proximity to the mysteries that surround this element of nature.

Other spiritual connections of mankind with the Danube, but especially with water in general, can be expressed by the existence in the culture of peoples of proverbs concerning water. Thus, in Romanian culture we identify several expressions of this kind. In our daily lives we often use sayings such as: “it leaves his mouth watering!”, “One is washed with all the waters”, “Able to cook from bare water”, “When water comes to one’s throat!”, due to which we establish, even unconsciously, new relationships with this primordial element of nature, involving it in our personal activities.

The Danube is present either in prose, or in Romanian poetry, or in daily life, or in expressing the feelings of great artists, bearing a particular importance in all the masterpieces where we find it. It is important for the history in which it played part and for the events that took place throughout it.

Among Eminescu’s forerunners, who carolled the Danube, Alecu Russo may be considered, especially through the prose poem “The Carol of Romania”. Written with a recognized mastery, the poem was intending, in Alecsandri’s opinion, “the exaltation of the spirit and the development of the patriotic feeling of the young people who were in Paris” (1968, p. 316). The poem is allegorical and presents in historical portrays the past of Romania, but in a generalizing form of a fairy tale. The same past comprises apocalyptic trembles in an alternation with moments of silence.

“The Carol of Romania” is an eulogium of the heavenly beauty of the Romanian land and the great history of the people who live in this landscapes. As it is conceived, the poem resembles a legend of the centuries in the history of Romania. Knowing Eminescu’s interest in national history as well as fragments of dramatic and poetic projects in *national* past, there is no doubt that the poem “The Carol of Romania” finds its place amongst the creations that had largely influenced Eminescu’s inspiration. The image of Dacia in “Memento mori” is also created

starting from the image of Romania in Alecu Russo's poem: "Romania is like the wide, big and deep Danube, in which the miraculous waters from the right and from the left overlap; the more brooks, the more the Danube grows; abroad waves swept over Romania, no wave could sink us down... many times a threatening wave of doom strengthened us, many times that wave pushed us towards a prosperity..." (1968, p. 316).

The Danube motif is present in Mihai Eminescu's work, in the poem "Memento mori". As a universal genius, M. Eminescu appears to us as the demiurge artist who realized in his work the deepest and fullest synthesis of the Romanian creative spirit.

D. Popovici in his study "M. Eminescu's Poetry" establishes the singular place that Eminescu occupies in the evolution of Romanian poetic literature,... strongly linked to the previous literature through the topics he cultivates and the learning a large number of technical procedures, also strongly linked to posterior literature, of which works serve him to a large extent as a starting point, Eminescu rises between some and others and dominates the spaces of literature as a lonely mountain peak. Exceptional appearance, his destiny had to be exceptional" (Popovici, 1969, p. 32).

The greatest Eminescu poem and "without a doubt, the greatest lyrical construction of our literature" (Negoïtescu, 1980, p. 69) is "Memento mori" ("Panorama of vanities") known in Junimea under the title of "Diorama". The poem is part of the posthumous and was published entirely by G. Călinescu in "Literary Romania" from 1932. "Poetry is the literary expression" the most important of the theme - fortuna labilis (Popovici, 1972, p. 207). and it is a panorama of the history of human civilization, conceived as a series of portraits from the history of mankind, depicting its apexes.

Regarding the sources of the poem, G. Călinescu fixed them in the knowledge assimilated in the university atmosphere in Vienna, an atmosphere that abounded in post-Kantian idealism, especially in Hegelianism and Herder's historicism. To these must be added the roots of Schopenhauer's philosophy, with which the poet was already familiar.

Negoïtescu notes: "Through the descriptions of landscapes and monuments, through flowering and decline, flows the river of lyricism with heavy waters, sometimes lazy, sometimes frothy and in the monotonous magic of the verses, in their abundant succession, leavens the Eminescian conception, the philosophical idea that this time does not alter *the poetry*, leaving it to be filled with the bitter sap of the tone and to be overwhelmed by visions. A conception that unites the idealism of Hegel,

reconstitutor of the spirit, of the thought in the history, with the pessimism of Schopenhauer, of ruining of the history, undermined by the blind evil *that is pushing it*" (Negoițescu, 1980, p. 69).

"Memento mori" offers a panoramic view of the birth and disappearance of human civilizations affected by the relentless passage of historical time. Ioana Emil Petrescu comes with a new interpretation of the poem: "More than an image of the death of successive civilizations, "Memento mori" is a meditation on the birth and death of myths, beliefs, *that is*, it is a meditation on incorporations (each followed by an inevitable alienation) of the spirit in history" (Petrescu & Em, 1978, p. 79).

The poem has impressive dimensions, over 1100 verses arranged in stanzas of six verses and is structured in portraits. The poet's imagination is identified in a romantic manner with the "dream" that spans from the lapse of time the centuries. The beginning of the poem creates the general atmosphere and *fixes* the specific romantic framework. The poet *isolates* himself from the real world, remaining in the world of dream.

This separation between the "real world" and the "world of imagination" is *accomplished* by the "pulpy clouds". The painting is mythological and suggests a fantastic atmosphere with a nuanced colouring (Eminescu, 1958, p. 270):

"Me, the shepherd of my dreams like golden sheep.

When the dark of night - the starry Moorish king -

Leaves his pulpy clouds folded in their celestial bed.

And the silverish moon, like a pale, sweet sun,

Casts its spells upon the world through the starry snowfall,

When in glowing layers fairy tales children grow".

The imagination - the "flock of dreams" that the poet feeds as "golden sheep" takes him to the beginning, in a preformal time, the time when fairy tales are born. That is the time and realm of the imagination, the time and place of Genesis.

The whole poem is based on the opposition between reality and the free universe of thought, between the "real world" (in which the thought is subject to erosion and alienation in historical time) and between the "world of imagination", free from any determination or constraint:

"One thing is the world of imagination with its happy dreams,

*Another one is the real world, where with worked sweat
You are trying to squeeze milk from the dry rock's ribs,
One thing is the world of imagination with its proud golden flowers,
Another one is where you're trying to shape your lifelike a craftman,
Just try to give the rough iron the shape of cold thinking."*

This opposition reflects the antithesis between two temporal values, between the auroral time of mythical thought, an eternal, cosmic, equinox time and the historical time, profane, of solstice, which marks the sunset of ideas. The "tragic rupture" in relation to the perpetual continuity of the equinox time leads to the decline of the mythical thinking and, implicitly, to that of civilizations.

"The history of humanity –*gives her opinion* the researcher from Cluj - *appears* as a succession of mythical interpretations of the divine, each incorporated in a civilization that is born at the same instance with its central myth and dies the moment the myth loses its active value, ceasing to represent the living faith of an age. The history of humanity therefore appears as a perpetual pilgrimage in search of the divine" (Todoran, Eminescu, 1972). Upon entering the temple of Time, the poet's thought turns the huge wheel of time to its beginnings:

*"Under the black arches, with high pillars, ascended into the stars,
I am listening deeply to the voice of my thoughts,
And I am turning back this huge wheel of time"*

The poet first stops at the Stone Age. The primitive man has as a dimension the adoration from which the practices of combining superhuman forces, magic and idolatry were born:

*"There stand wild blacks with stone axes,
In the desert they are running forever, without a house, without a hearth..."*

The huge wheel of time is stopped at the first moment of human civilization - the civilization of Babylon "a citadel as proud as a country", with the gardens of Semiramide. Human civilization has evolved from magical practices to the sacerdotal functions of priests - functions often performed by kings who by their origin were closest to the gods. The flow of time *follows without* rest. There is nothing left of the *greatness* of Babylon:

“Today” you will wander in vain in the sandy plain...

In the version published by G. Călinescu, the episode of Palestine would follow. Perpessicius, after careful analysis of Eminescu’s manuscripts, inserts after the Babylonian episode “Egypt”, published by the poet in 1874. In this context, which is structured by the poem of civilizations, the poem “Egypt” acquires much deeper meanings. Through his inner structure as well as through the assimilated culture, Eminescu approached the history of Egypt with great curiosity. The Nile Valley has been the cradle of human civilization. The temples of the Nile valley, the pyramids, the Egyptian religion exerted a special fascination on the romantics.

And in its motion, the wheel of time stops for a moment in Palestine and the mythical Jerusalem. The historical presence of Palestine has two defining elements: the temple in Jerusalem and monotheism, and as memorable characters, David and the wise King Solomon. The atmosphere suggested by the picture of Palestine is idyllic, “agricultural”, as G. Călinescu says. Some images remind of Alecsandri’s poetry, but also of Victor Hugo’s “Legend of the Centuries”. The monotheism of the Jewish religion aims at the unity of man, the believer and the servant of God, the One and the Eternal. Man must strive for the holiness of God. Man aspires by faith to the Divine, but sin, one’s personal act, the deed put him in contrast with God. The conscience of sin disturbs the souls of the kings of Judea.

But the judgment came that led to the fall of the Jewish people from the height of their messianism to their dispersal in the world, and to the demolition of the temple in Jerusalem — which marked the historical presence of Palestine:

“And the people and the kings and the priests all are buried under the ruins ...”

But the law of ascension and fall, a law known since Dimitrie Cantemir, makes Greece emerge from the dark sea. The picture of the civilization of ancient Greece occupies a fairly large place in the canvas of the poem. Eminescu, connoisseur and admirer of the history of Greece, includes in the images made by verses multiple and deep meanings. In fact, on the episode of ancient Greece, from the poem in question, most exegetes of Eminescu’s work stopped, deciphering deep meanings.

The sea, through the eternal immortality of the waves that carry the song of Orpheus’ harp, brings the memory of eternal Greece, through its culture, art and science in universal history. In the chronological order of the flow of time in the “Panorama of Vanities” appears Rome. In the eternal running of the worlds to infinity or to the “beginning of the beginning”, the radius, the direction of running is the thought of history - the destiny-law above men, above the gods, above time.

If the brilliance of Greece *resides* in its culture, art, science, and philosophy, in a way becoming the mistress of the ancient world, the glory of Rome lay in *the conquest* of the ancient world. The peoples of the ancient world knelt, one after the other, in front of the power of Rome and the boundless will of its kings.

In Romanian culture, the motif of Rome appears related to the origin of the Romanian language and Romanian people. Rome has been present since the writings of chroniclers, it is in attendance in Dimitrie Cantemir's works, as well as in the writings of the leaders of the Transylvanian School. Overcoming the restraint of romanticism towards the motif of Rome, Minai Eminescu presents Rome as a tomb of antiquity.

In presenting Rome's moment in the relentless flow of time, Eminescu is probably influenced by Montesquieu's ideas: "Through the philosophy on the rise and decline of peoples in human history, Eminescu is not unfamiliar to Montesquieu's work on the rise and fall of the Romans, but with a dialectical understanding of historical becoming in the "Panorama of Vanities", he notes in Caesar's victory the beginning of the decline of Roman power, expressed poetically in the same symbols of ancient eternity, which act in history. (Todoran, 1972, p. 165). Because the "cunning" of history *acts* in the passage of time, the poet observes in the power of the Romans only its culminating point in history, the conquest of Dacia, *followed* by the end.

All the civilizations reflected by Eminescu, except the mythical Dacia, seem to appear from a primordial element (water in Greece, earth in Babylon and Egypt, fire in Rome, etc.), an element that "is dreaming" its form and is receiving it through the modeling effort of thought; when the thought is alienated, each civilization comes back to the element from which it was born. Mythology is considered to be the poetry of the beginnings of the history of any people. F. Schelling in his course "Philosophy of Mythology" stated: "It cannot be said that myths have nothing to do with history, since they form the content of the history of the oldest ..." (Schelling, 1940). (121) The mythological beginnings of the history of peoples, understood as cosmogonic visions, are the basis of poetic reconstructions in the epics of ancient peoples and in historical myths.

The mythology of the Geto-Dacians did not have a Homer, which would give it a scale of epics. He had no Shakespeare to discover the significance of human tragedy in the symbolic representations of poetic myths. In a more modest achievement, which remained mostly in the form of a project, it found in Eminescu the poet who would make it an epic of the historical beginnings of the Romanian people. "In

Romanian literature, the poet wanted to open to national art the perspective of universality by creating a Romanian myth as an artistic reconstruction of national history” (Todoran, 1972, p. 184) (122).

The most comprehensive evocation of the historical antiquity of the Romanian people, as a Geto-Dacian episode in universal history, can be found in the myth of the great poet Eminescu, the episode of Dacia from the poem “Memento mori”. Dacia was for the poet a fundamental theme of the primordial, in proportion to the mythic in our national being. “The poet’s Dacism, of which Garabet Ibrăileanu spoke, is a feature of his poetry. Unlike his predecessors, lovers of ancient times not for poetry, but for their glory, Eminescu loved “antiquity for antiquity”, which is similar with the poetry of antiquity, with mythology. The Geto-Dacians came to his attention because their history is lost in the mists of mythical fable. Decebalus was for the poet Eminescu, as well as for Alecu Russo, a kind of “unseen deity”, in a Geto-Dacian myth, which appears, in his vision as the second age of history, after the cosmological myth, in the Romanian story” (Ibrăileanu, 1984, p. 59) (123).

Dacism had still found expression in the works of the representatives of the Transylvanian School: Petru Maior, Gheorghe Șincai, Budai-Deleanu. The passion for the Geto-Dacian past has learned new forms of expression in the Pasoptist literature of Gheorghe Asachi in “Dochia and Trajan”, in the poem “La patrie”, in a volume of poems written in *Italian* “Leucaide d'Alviro Dacico”, in “Getica” by Vasile Pârvan. We may also meet Dacism in Dimitrie Bolintineanu’s creation in an epic “Traianida” and in Alecu Russo in the prose poem “The Carol of Romania”.

The mythical Dacia revived under Eminescu’s pen in his great project of reconstruction of the universal past, “Memento mori”. Along with the other episodes of “The Panorama of Vanities”, which are the civilizations that are succeeding and dying, in Eminescu’s poem, on a thread woven by the Parcels of Lyricism, the Dacian fragment appears to Ion Negoïtescu “as the most full of the original secretion and, at the same time, the richer in mythical infiltrations. The rural landscape, of rocks and impenetrable forests, reproduces a deified *nature*, mother of the gods that inhabit it, never has the Eminescian *fantasy* been more exuberant freer, nor the dream richer in images” (Negoïtescu, 1980, p. 186) (124).

The Dacian episode, representative of Eminescu’s Dacism, offers the vision of a Dacia living in the age of myth that does not carry in itself the germs of destruction; its death comes from outside, brought about by the victorious “historical” civilization of Rome. It is worth insisting on this painting both for its beauty and for the fact that

it can be considered a component part of the creation of a Dacian myth, in the poem the natural setting of Dacia is evoked in a fairytale atmosphere. Goddess Dochia, a symbol of Dacia, has her palace in the fairytale country, where the “silver” rivers flow in thousands of waves, where “golden groves” are present, silver woods and forests of brass. There, between the mountains, Dochia has got her palace. The road to Dochia’s palace is a road to the beginning. It passes through an enchanting country, with lush vegetation that shades everything, each thing.

White horses, the “foam of the sea” that populate this fairytale *land* have not seen the light of the sun or the moon. The golden boat, drawn by swans, in which the fairy Dochia goes, enters the empire of light, but, towards the Rising Sun, rises a mountain, half in the world, half in infinity. Through this mountain, on a gate, not open to all, Dochia entered the kingdom of the gods, of the Sun. The appearance of the entrance and the gate, as presented in the poem, are reminiscent of folk creations in which the entrance to the other realm is made not only through a cave in which the hero descends, but also by opening a secret gate on the side of a hill or on the rock of a mountain. Through the mountain gate Dochia enters a paradise of vegetation abundant with tall trees intertwined with ivy, vines and enticing grapes. It is the land of Dacia:

*“Proud trees in the garden with dark greencolouring
Circled and covered with ivy disappearing at the top;
Moving its white flowers - flags with curly flowers -
And in walls of shining leaves and in stairs of hanging flowers,
And in sleepy bridges, swayed by drowsy zephyrs
From one tree to another the ivy passes solemnly
Hanging are the vines from the tall branches.
Aubergine grapes with frost, golden white grape.
And the swarming bees are drinking the bright honey.”*

So, in this garden, there is the palace of the Moon, the goddess of vegetation, and in the high rooms of the palace there are proud paintings in which the Dacian myths are depicted. Here, in this eden, the Sun has its palace and also from here come the smiling dawn:

“This is the paradise of ancient Dacia, - inspirations of the gods:

In a place it is an eternal day, in another it is an eternity.

And in a third placer, eternal dawns with fresh May air”.

In this Edenic nature we discover the Danube, which is depicted as a symbol of time flowing into eternity:

“There, the old, free-spirited, big Danube

With a murmur rolls its thoughtful waves,

That moving assleep fall into The Sea of bitterness;

Thus thousands of centuries with lives and thoughts, a thousand

Asleep and old, they are sinking deeper into eternity

And behind the springs breezy and clear times sunrise”.

Throughout the poem we encounter symbolic meanings of water and in the form of the river, either bearing the meaning of the flow of time, or signifying a border between two realms. To cross the Edenic realm of Dacia, you must follow the river:

“But as the river is flowing down and widening, it is deepening

In dark forests, where the water barely shines...”

Of course, the poet applies other aquatic forms together with symbolic meanings: the lake, the spring. The lake appears as a mirror of Edenic reality - Dacia:

“There have been clear lakes, from the gardens of hidden mirrored rays.

And out of the silver court come the smiling dawn.

Green and transparent clothes include pink shades

Smoothing in their eyebrows, brushing their thick hair off the forehead”.

The Brook appears as an Edenic decor element in the Dacia episode, the twinings of words are happy: “Through the white gardens with white brooks, there have been the sweet bitteresses of the world,” but the epithet that only suggests the visual, still does not have the later reverberation of “Calin, pages from the story”, where it has got acoustic resonances, visual and even tactile.

Eminescian Dacia belongs to the present of the being, which goes, chilled towards the origins, to the first ontogenetic point. For Eminescu, the Dacian world has *special* meanings. It imposes itself as a natural, immediate and simple appearance. It is par excellence, the purely mythical realm: “A world that thought in fairy tales and spoke

in poetry". Dacism means total insubordination to destiny, death and history. The Dacians do not know fear. It is no coincidence that their first virtue, which Herodotus mentions in his "Histories," is heroism. The Eminescu's ego bears the stamp of heroic and ascetic Dacism, especially in its ethical, titanic and demonic behavior of the beginnings. However, depending upon the circumstances, Eminescu's Dacism has a specific coloration: it can appear Indianized in a way (in "The Prayer of a Dacian") or mioritized (in "I have got one more longing", also entitled "The Desire of a Dacian"). Anyway, the descents into the cave, the immersion of the Dacian gods themselves in the "grey halls" are archetypal actions, sealing an intimate structural Dacism, a descent into the area of the true self. Eminescu's Dacian consciousness is expressly Hegelianized. It is imposed in the case of Decebalus, the moment of antithesis, of the painful return of the spirit upon itself, is required. In "Memento mori" the serene, beautiful and abstract Dacian soul will be expressed.

In Eminescu's manuscript notebooks was found a folkloric material, collected by the poet, not copied from others, including fairy tales, proverbs, epic songs and, especially, numerous species of lyrical poetry. His intention was not to publish a popular collection, as Alecsandri had done, but to learn through the folk creation the beliefs, customs and language of the people, as well as the entire system of artistic means developed through the centuries and preserved through oral traditions. In Eminescu's conception, the folkloric sources of the cultivated literature contribute decisively to the definition of its own features, of its national specificity.

What Eminescu appreciated especially in popular poetry was its ability to find the most appropriate, simple and natural expression to name the thought or to name the feeling. The influence of the folkloric creation is evident in many of Eminescu's poems. He took over themes, motifs, lyrics, rhythms, harmonies, images that he assembled into new compositions, bearing the inimitable seal of his style. Some are folkloric processing with additions of refinement in terms of expression or idea (Farewell, Why are you swaying, In the middle of the forest, The Book of the Son from Epistle III, etc.), others are deeply original, the popular source having experienced essential transformations (Calin - pages from the story, Luceafarul). In everything, however, we meet that unmistakable combination between the poet's voice and the voice of popular poetry, through which Eminescu acquired his specific stamp. In this regard, G. Calinescu made the following observation: "Eminescu's greatest trait is to make popular poetry without imitating and with cultivated ideas, to descend to that sublime folkloric impersonalism."

“Farewell” is Eminescu’s first creation in popular-trochaic poetic metre, published in “Literary Conversations” on October 1, 1879, but written a few years earlier. Through it one can follow what the folklore gave to Eminescu and what the folklore gained itself from the poet. The distant model is that of Alecsandri from Doine, but Eminescu deepens the intentions of the forerunner or to whom he is superior through his poetic force, philosophical vision and versification technique.

Farewell is a meditation on the theme of *Fortuna labilis*, in a versification assumed by the poet from popular poetry and a poetic burn on the theme of the poet and poetry. The idea is that the poet must be an exponent of the national consciousness and poetry an emanation of this national consciousness. Compositionally, the poetry consists of four sequences: two of which concentrate upon the questions of the poet as exponent of the human soul, in other two in present the forest, the symbol of the Romanian people, of the national beings.

The poet expresses in a declared, indirect form the longing he felt when he went to study in Germany and, on his return, finds in popular poetry the answers he sought in the great European and Asian philosophies.

Hence the appreciation of folklore which is not only an expression of the romantic character of poetry, but especially a conclusion to meditation on national and personal destiny, the eternity of soul and creation, the meaning of life, of the man and world, the law of harmony and balance as the nucleus of the national consciousness of the Romanian people: (“What is time to me when for centuries/stars are sparkles on my lakes.”) The image of stars in lakes reflects the constellated model of national consciousness but also of its exponent poet.

Human destiny, individual destiny is under the sign of the relative. (“Only man is changeable on the wandering earth”) while the national destiny expressed and lived by the forest aims at the eternal (“And we hold on to the place, as we were we remain”). National being, national consciousness are suggested by a series of symbols that incorporate local myths: the sun - the Holy Sun, the moon - the Holy Moon, the stars - destinies, the Danube - the Holy Waters. That is why some verses have archetypal depth: “And since the weather is good or bad/The Danube flows for me”. The Danube gathers geographically the waters of the country, archetypal-mythical - the Holy Waters, that is why it is a symbol of the national consciousness, because the Water is a symbol of the spirit, of the Holy Spirit. This eternal national consciousness is the eternal *Source*: “On the path to the source/What I gave to all/Filling their buckets/The women sing it to me”, from which the poet also drinks.

Here is the eternal source of eternity “You from the young as you are/You always rejuvenate”.

Interpreted as *ars poetica*, the poem *Farewell* brings into discussion not only the concept of poet and poetry, but also through the theme, through the aesthetic synthesis, suggests the Eminescian poetic universe. Thus the themes of this universe are suggested by symbols. The theme of nature is developed in the sense of national universe through the forest - national being, lake - national consciousness, stars - destinies, brook - spirit, leaf - destiny, Danube - Holy Waters, sun - Holy Sun, moon - Holy Moon.

Love for a person is transfigured in the sense of love for the country, becoming the connecting element between the poet, the people and the homeland. From the external rhetorical model of forty-eighth of the verse *What I Wish You, Sweet Romania*, to the philosophical meditative inner model in an apparent simplicity of popular creation, there is a journey from the poet-bard, to the poet exponent of national consciousness. This road knows intermediate stages as in Letter III, where the poet's ego takes the form of Mircea the Old. This idea of the identity poet - people - homeland is the pillar of the Romanian poetry of national specificity represented by Vasile Alecsandri, George Coșbuc, Octavian Goga, Lucian Blaga, Ion Barbu.

The theme of history appears to us in the form of the concept of harmony and balance “What is my time, when for centuries/My stars sparkle in the lakes”, as a synthesis of the national consciousness, eternal, passing through the events of history: “In winter I listen to the blizzard/Breaking my branches/Clogging my waters”, that is, destroying parts (branches) of the forest (nation) hiding for a time the national spirituality.

The theme of consciousness is subtly contextualized by the myth of doina and longing (“Which are listening to doina in summer”), by the symbol of the brook (“On the path to the brook”), but especially by suggesting the myth of the Holy Waters (“The Danube flows to me”). with symbolic value of the national consciousness.

“Farewell” is an elegy on the theme of human ephemerality, a melancholy song about the fragility of the human condition in the face of time. The starting point is the popular doin, but Eminescu rewrites everything from the perspective of the romantic poet shaken by the spectacle of the eternal universe, which makes him feel small and transient. Poetry thus acquires a philosophical substratum, which is no longer of folkloric origin.

There are of popular origin: the motif of the forest as a mythical being; the dialogue with the nature, the originality and the familiarity of the trochaic style, the measure of 7 - 8 syllables and the paired rhymes, as well as the general harmony of the poetry.

There are of cultivated origin: the expressive refinement, the accentuation of the idea of permanence of the forest, the cosmic amplification of the opposition man - nature; the romantic vision of the condition, the elegiac sentiment.

Making a perfect fusion between the popular sources of lyricism and some of the fundamental themes of European poetry and philosophy, the basic characteristic of his entire creation, Eminescu wrote one of the most beautiful poems in popular meter.

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