

NEVER AS ONCE ...

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Abstract. The paper investigates the negotiations of meanings between the current and older linguistic systems, to follow the wonderful journey of words, images and meanings in Eminescu's poetry. There is no final version even for one manuscript of the Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu, not even the one that went to the printing press. And, then, we must know that even after it saw the light of print, Eminescu worked on the text again. His effort is divine, his poetry is incantatory, bringing the universe of existence closer to God.

Key words: meanings, sense, writing systems, incantatory poetry, "once"

When one governs an older writing system he must be attentive to the meanings twice: first, in relation to the current and usual ones, then, to those in the respective older system. The authors that have long thought about writing are involving the 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" used by Eminescu. I am giving the first stanza of "Luceafărul" (*Evening Star*) in the form from *Almanahul România Jună* (April 1883):

There was, as in the fairy tales,
As ne'er in the time's raid,
There was, of famous royal blood
A most beautiful maid.¹

Convorbiri literare magazine resumes the poem in August 1883, as following:

There was, as in the fairy tales,
As never in the time's raid,
There was, of famous royal blood
A most beautiful maid.

Titu Maiorescu kept, for release in December 1883, the form from the Almanac, in the second edition (1885) it is the same - but in the third edition (1888) he put *A fost o dată ca nici o dată* (*There was once ... as not ever*) form

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¹ Transl. by Petre Grimm.