

MIHAI EMINESCU BETWEEN KANT AND SCHOPENHAUER

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Abstract. The study examines the huge cultural debt of Romanian culture and philosophy before Mihai Eminescu. In the terms of Emil Cioran, besides Eminescu, everything is approximate. Eminescu is in his view an inexplicable exception for us. He wonders actually how it was possible to have someone as him into existence: What business had here the one who could have made a Buddha jealous? Constantin Noica named him “the complete man of the Romanian culture” and included him among the most significant Romanian thinkers. After Eminescu philosophy has a definite central role in Romanian culture and a specific language enriched by meditation on Greek and Roman philosophy and, especially, Schopenhauer and Kant. Both these influences are interwoven in his *avant-la-lettre* postmodern masterpiece, *The Poor Dionysus*.

Key words: Eminescu, Kant, Schopenhauer, philosophical language, *The Poor Dionysus*, postmodernism.

Mihai Eminescu whom we also name according to Constantin Noica “the complete man of the Romanian culture”¹ was among its most significant thinkers. Eminescu was among the few read even by Emil Cioran, in a superlative key, considering that he gave purpose to our nation: “Everything created in Romania until now was under the sign of the fragmentary. Besides Eminescu, everything is approximate. None of us bragged about him. For haven’t we not declared him an inexplicable exception for us? What business had here the one who could have made a Buddha jealous? Without Eminescu, we could have known that all we could have been was mediocre beings that it is not exit from ourselves and we would have adapted perfectly to our minor condition. We are extremely indebted to his genius and to the uneasiness that he poured into our soul”.² We shall start from the definition given philosophy by Mihai Eminescu, emphasizing his high esteem for all who are into the philosophical meditation according to *Mihai Eminescu – Kantian Readings* quoted also by Constantin Noica: Eminescu noticed: “Philosophy is the situation of the world into notions, for which precision thinking resides to no other authority than its own, by this eliminating any *captatio benevolentiae* be it as faint as it may be. It is not in philosophy’s manner to find the *God of Science*, nor the relationship among the exact sciences, nor the immortality of the soul, nor the principles of moral. The judgement makes *tabula rasa* of all these, they are for it matters whose nature and standing are to be researched, without any preoccupation for the outcomes which it is to encounter. For this, any preconceived idea has to be firstly rejected. For this reason, the thinker can imagine neither absolute time, nor absolute space, nor will absolute causality – for all these form a chain within his mind, unlimited at each end, outside any absolute fixation”.³ This shows that metaphysics is not made for everyday minds.

¹ C. Noica, *Omul deplin al culturii românești*, in “Revista de filosofie”, no. 1-2/2000.

² E. Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 1999, p.78.

³ C. Noica and Al. Surdu, *Mihai Eminescu – Lecturi kantiene*, Ed. Univers, 1975, p. XXXIII-XXXV. Fragment undertaken in *Cultura, creația, valoarea – motive dominante ale filosofiei românești*, coord. D. Gișe, A. Botez, Bucharest, Ed. Eminescu, 1983, p.104-106.