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Metachronotopy and Transcultural Ideals: Insights into the Poetic Art of Eminescu and Tagore

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Abstract

This paper delves into the Romanian and Indian (Bengali) literatures to discover the concept of *self* in poetic art in relation to nature and divinity, keeping in the spotlight two major literary figures belonging to these different cultures: Mihai Eminescu and Rabindranath Tagore. I roughly argue firstly that the authors and their works embody *metachronotopic entities* that enable points of convergence and divergence, as well as varied articulations of 'reality', and secondly that 'some self of Eminescu' and 'some self of Tagore' meet into a 'global cultural unconscious' from where intriguing revelations emerge. I illustrate these instances of emergence by comparative critical analysis of their works, fragments of their lives and 'selves'.

[**Keywords:** Tagore, Eminescu, Indian literature, Romanian poetry, self, nature, divinity]

I. Introduction

In all cultures, the concepts of art, nature and divinity take shape in relation to the *self* – be it the human and 'empirical' or the transcendental selves – in different degrees. This study intends to review the concept of *self* – the authorial/ poetic and 'empirical' selves – in the Romanian and Indian (Bengali) cultures, keeping a main focus on the works of two major poets: Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889) and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). Hopefully it will unravel some literary relations between these two cultures, common aspects of their imagistic worlds and their distinctions, but it will equally emphasize the differences and the uniqueness of the two authors and their poetic selves. Though there are innumerable perspectives that may be extremely revealing if analyzed in comparative fashion, I chose to focus on the *self* in relation to 'nature' and 'the divine' because among other aspects, acknowledged or not, they stand for integral dimensions of the human life. Moreover, they effusively populate the oeuvres of both Eminescu and Tagore, and in today's world these concepts face serious challenges due to the actual 'modern' living as well as new discourses that render them more complex. All human beings *experience* these aspects of life in varied forms irrespective of their nationality or social customs, but each society imposes on people distinct patterns of *cognition* and *manifestation* of their experiences and the distinction between these two needs clear emphasis.

I argue, firstly that the authors and their works embody *metachronotopic entities* that enable points of convergence and divergence, as well as varied articulations of ‘reality’ and cognition and poetic art. Secondly, ‘some self’ of Eminescu and ‘some self’ of Tagore meet into a ‘global cultural unconscious’ from where intriguing revelations emerge. Thus, each “empirical self”¹ of the authors’ oeuvres represents concrete reflections of their ‘actual selves’ and their ‘lived’ experiences. Moreover, even though the two litterateurs under scrutiny belong to different chronotopic and cultural coordinates, ‘some self’ of Eminescu has met somewhere ‘some self’ of Tagore. Life is in itself a *Text* that cannot be deconstructed easily (a *lived* and *living Text*) and these ‘some’ and ‘somewhere’ are by themselves entities (even ‘empirical selves’) that depend highly on hermeneutical practice, as well as on the readers’ comprehension of the authors’ *literary* and *lived Texts*. I further the argument by maintaining that in general between the authors, their *inspirations* and their texts, multiple *dialogical* interactions generate complex and multifaceted selves that outlast the authorial beings in/ as different ‘alien’ contexts and *metachronotopic entities*. Elsewhere, I explained that “the ‘chronotope’ [Mikhail Bakhtin] of a given literary/ visual Text artistically expressing the intrinsic time-space matrix at the moment of its creation may be combined with the time-space matrix at the moment of its exhibition and reception, as well as with other works existing independently of, yet (in)directly, referring to it. All these can be seen as interconnected in a ‘real’ (*lived*) *chronotope*, which may be defined as a kind of *metachronotope*. This implies a “dialogic” encounter between the text and its contexts at different points in the course of a given work’s existence. It also suggests ‘an excess of seeing’ [Bakhtin]” on the part of the view-reader’s experience of ‘reading’ the text (Ceciu, “The *Architectonics* of Corporeal and Textual Selves...” 2013).

Tagore’s Bengali *Gītānjālī* and other works serve as appealing poetic-spaces for the ‘meeting’ of various concepts – divinity, nature, art, death etc. – and the *metachronotopic entities* ensued by them. The present paper will delve into Tagore’s poetic art to untangle significant metaphors, to draw comparisons with Eminescu’s writings, and to offer insights into the artistry of the two authors.²

II. Insights into the Poetic Selves, Cultures and Art

Mihai Eminescu – though having ‘journeyed’ for a very short time span in this world, for only 39 years – managed to create an oeuvre that would last forever in the cultural treasure of Romania, as a rare essence containing the whole spectrum of aromas specific to the spirit of the people inhabiting the ancient land of Dacia, specifically the space within and around the Carpathian Arch, bordered by the lower Danube and the Black Sea. Born in Moldova County, Eminescu became an icon of the Romanian culture the way Tagore was an icon of the Bengali culture. The tragic death of Eminescu, in a psychiatry

¹ Concept coined by William James to refer to the Self that “may be known” and includes all that a person is and does, one’s work, relations etc.

² I have translated myself from Romanian and Bengali into English all passages and verses quoted in this article, except some cases where I mention the translators.

ward where he had been admitted with depressive psychosis, in the full bloom of his life, stopped the author from gifting his culture with a vaster treasure of ideas and philosophical views, which may have provided the contemporary critics with clearer cues about his principles and personality. Being hailed as “the star of universal spirituality” and “the unmatched poet” during the communist era, after 1989 the poet came under the scrutiny of the literary and cultural criticism that had since then split into two camps, pros and cons. As he never kept a diary and his existence abounded in controversy and inconsistency, all critics had a partial understanding of his persona, which at times seemingly contradicted the content of his writings. Irrespective of all such controversies, the literary work of Eminescu speaks for itself: it is wonderful in its tonal, intellectual, philosophical, emotional, musical, aesthetic variations and concerns that cannot be easily defined or classified. In this sense, Constantin Noica (1909-1987) declared:

“at this moment, Eminescu is not to be critically judged by us, he is to be somehow assimilated as a cultural consciousness larger than ours - considering that his work ranges from folklore to positive sciences -, this way improving our consciousness or maybe that pang of conscience belonging to every intellectual who can grasp his infiniteness by synthesis itself.” (Junona Tutunea, trans.)³

Bernard Shaw considered that “Eminescu’s music matches the music of Berlioz and the palette of Delacroix”, while the Romanian poet Tudor Arghezi called him “the Beethoven of Romanian language”. K. Gajendra Singh described Eminescu as “Romania’s all-time great poet, novelist and journalist... – a sort of Ghalib and Tagore rolled into one” (2011).

At the end of nineteenth century, Mihai Eminescu published his first *Poezii* (Poems, 1883) and marked a new era in Romanian literature. Along with Vasile Alecsandri, Eminescu became the most published Romanian author of the *fin-de-siècle*, drawing his inspiration from the Romanian popular culture, traditions and folklore, philosophy, mythology and his understanding of life itself. At the same time, concepts of cosmogony rooted in other European cultures, Asian philosophies, especially Indian, along with Latin, Greek and Dacian myths among others, can be identified throughout his literary works. His oeuvre incorporates all culturally specific myths and symbols, some included in this investigation. Although the actual lives of Eminescu and Tagore were different and the two poets were not fated to meet in this life, their writings contain the unique vision that only great poets and artists are gifted with, embodied in exceptional panoply of expressions, feelings, experiences and aesthetic sensibilities.

Tagore himself has visited Romania in November 1926, during the reign of King Ferdinand and Queen Mary, being awarded the Honorary Doctorate by the Bucharest University. Tagore was acquainted with Romanian writers and intellectuals living both in the country and abroad, such as Ion Marin Sadoveanu, Duiliu Zamfirescu, Victor Eftimiu,

³ ‘Constantin Noica: Eminescu or Some Considerations on Total Mind in Romanian Culture’ translated by Junona Tutunea. www.mihaieminescu.ro.

Otilia Cazimir, Ion Pillat, Countess Anna de Noailles (born Ana Brâncoveanu) and of course, Mircea Eliade who had met Tagore while doing his studies in Șantiniketan.

Regarding the Romanian culture, Tagore acknowledged:

“I have heard about your literature before getting to know you and I have appreciated it. After reaching Romania, I was particularly interested to see, among others, your traditional dances and costumes. [...] You have a language which is destined to be molded into rhythm and poetry. Honor your poets; they embody the good heart of the people.” (“Despre literatura dumneavoastră am auzit înainte de a vă cunoaște și am apreciat-o. Când am venit în România, am ținut între altele să văd jocurile și costumele dumneavoastră [...] Aveți o limbă destinată pentru ritm și poezie. Cinstiți-vă poeții; ei înfățișează sufletul bun al poporului”).⁴

Interestingly, in Romania there is a saying that “the Romanian is a poet by birth.”



Tagore and Rani Mahalanabis in Bucharest, 1926 (courtesy, Hetel Voicu)

Eminescu himself had a close connection with the Indian culture and, as critics have noted, during his studies in Vienna he became acquainted with *Śakuntalā*, *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*, which imprinted their alluring scent in many of his works. Amita Bhowe, a Bengali intellectual who studied and lived in Romania and who loved Eminescu’s oeuvre, admitted that Eminescu could have easily passed as “an Indian poet” and by getting to know the Romanian poet she had “somehow rediscovered Tagore” (2009: 11). Eminescu’s thinking was highly influenced by Arthur Schopenhauer’s writings, carrying seeds of *Buddhism* and *Upaniṣadic* philosophy. Many Romanian critics and writers, like Amita Bhowe, Teodor V. Stefanelli, I. L. Caragiale, Ioan Slavici, George Călinescu and others, have mentioned such Indian philosophical traces in Eminescu’s work. As Bhowe states, Eminescu was “a *dārśanik* (one who sees), he was a *kavi* (poet-thinker), in the sense of the Indian terms” (2009: 29).

However, reminding us of a few comments Tagore had made regarding Romanian authors like Eminescu and Panait Istrati, the critic Liviu Bordaș questions the similarity between Eminescu and Tagore in terms of ‘thinking’, which Amita Bhowe endorses.

⁴ Cited by Hetel Voicu, “Tagore o vedeta a anilor 20 in Romania” (Tagore – a star of the 1920s in Romania), <http://www.hetel.ro/index.php/2012/02/5350/>. Accessed 1 March 2013.

Bordas states that “Tagore’s lack of understanding for Eminescu’s ‘sadness’ and ‘revolt’ raises questions regarding the ‘similitude between the two poets’ thinking and forms of expression’ which Amita Bhose tried to demonstrate” (1999: 3). Along with Tagore, Bordas reviews other Indian figures, such as Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and J. Krishnamurti, which have influenced the Romanian indologists for a long time.

Of course, Amita Bhose’s insistence on the “similitude” between Eminescu and Tagore in many aspects of their literary renditions might find an explanation in the understanding of her immense love for the two poets and the two cultures that nourished their creative genius. She belonged, probably in equal measure, to two extremely different cultures and her own self lived within this “in-between” space where some elements from the Romanian and Indian cultures met. Psychologically speaking, her own *self* drew its essence from this interstitial space where similarities proved richer and more sustaining for her ‘being’ and her enthusiasm in bridging the two cultures. That does not mean that her reading of Tagore and Eminescu must be full-proof or quantifiable in other readings, but her outlook is valuable in itself as *one* of the multiple possible perspectives on the same topic. Being both an insider and an outsider in Romania (as I am myself one in the Indian culture), her vision and understanding of the two poets and their *textual selves* could only bear the specificity of ‘temporality’ and ‘locality’, and what I call, ‘instances of situatedness’, which characterized her life. However, as this paper illustrates it is clear that directly or indirectly ‘some Eminescu’ had met ‘some Tagore’ at an ideatic level, and these points of ‘meeting’ reside in a universal unconscious, deserving meaningful research. For both Eminescu and Tagore, the *self* is connected with art, nature and the *divine*, but it manifests distinctly in each case.

While in *Bhagavad-Gītā* the self goes through three stages, from non-manifest to manifest and again to a state of non-manifestation, for Eminescu death represents just another form of life, a continuation of life from the bodily existence, where the body is “a white and cold clay”, to a life in the form of spirit or, in the Upaniṣadic sense, a return to the source of life itself (Bhose 47). The texts of *Bhagavad-Gītā* and *Upaniṣad* have greatly influenced Tagore’s writings and thinking, and nature is not only the space in which events, such as the manifestations of the divine, generally take place, but nature represents itself a personification of self and divinity, in different forms. In their particular ways, Tagore and Eminescu were both philosophers – insightful artists, being and residing in ever-changing *metachronotopes*.

Tagore states that in Indian literature, personal truths and philosophical ideas are woven together and one can extrapolate this to be equally true of other forms of Indian art. In his essays collected in the volume titled *On Art and Aesthetics* (1961), Tagore points out that “the *I am* in me realizes its own extension, its own infinity wherever it truly realizes something else” and “the ‘I am’ in me crosses its finitude whenever it deeply realizes itself in ‘Thou art’; this crossing of the limit produces joy, the joy that we have in beauty, in love, in greatness” which ultimately leads to “our joy in all arts” (40-41). For Tagore, “art is *māyā*, it has no other explanation but that it seems to be what it is. It never

tries to conceal its evasiveness; it mocks even its own definition and plays the game of hide-and-seek through its constant flight in changes” (42). The identities of a text get always constructed through the interactions and intersections with other identities like those of the author and those of the receivers, but equally the ‘chronotopic’ matrixes of the acts of creation, circulation and reading of the artistic text. The “game of hide-and-seek” which, as Tagore points out, art plays “through its constant flight in changes” is not only a play of identities, but a play of multiple “chronotopic” meanings as socio-cultural and ideological constructs rooted in the process of achieving ‘*artha*’ (and ‘*purushartha*’) or meaning throughout life towards the ultimate ‘*mukti*’ (liberation) of both art and human self. Thus, the multiplicity of identities of literary/ artistic texts are in one way premised on the array of “chronotopes” that in turn are founded on the notion of “change” as the text itself undergoes its own process of achieving ‘*artha*’.

Conversely, Eminescu’s language pulsates with life in each utterance and constantly creates new architectonics of textual selves and signification. The ‘*artha*’ (meaning) of each Eminescian poetic expression takes constantly different roles in the overall *textual self* – with its multifaceted and infinite significations.

Tagore does not dissociate sentiment from art – a rich inheritance of the *rasa* theory elaborated by the Sanskrit rhetoric – because sentiments signify the drive behind both the artistic creation and the reception of art; ‘feeling’ is the bond that brings together the artist, the work and the receivers of art. Speaking *On Art and Aesthetics*, Tagore stated that art “never tries to conceal its evasiveness” (1961: 42). The ‘evasiveness’ of which Tagore speaks is nothing but one dimension of the work of art, be it a poem or a painting, which may or may not intrigue the reader enough to determine him to explore the deeper levels. Tagore says: “the true principle of art is the principle of unity”, art deals with “personal truths”, which include philosophical ideas; the object of art is not the production of beauty, which is “a mere instrument”, but “the expression of personality” (1961:18-19). He makes distinction between knowledge and emotion, the latter being the drive behind the creation of art, “the outlet of expression” for man’s “efflux of the consciousness of his personality”, while in art the principles of “utility and self-expression tend to meet and mingle” (15-17).

On the other hand, Eminescu’s art carries the intensity of passions in all expressive forms, with some moments of stillness and reflection, and others pregnant with restlessness of mind. Speaking about ‘Studies on Style and Literary Craft’, the famous critic Tudor Vianu (1898-1964) noted that “Eminescu gave Romanian poetry the dimensions it had not had before him. The world where Eminescu takes us is tremendously vast related to space and time. There, the thinker’s eye reaches the most hidden recesses of the human soul and rises to the highest concepts of reason” (Junona Tutunea trans.).

Eminescu’s language shapes a new architectonics of meaning. Inheriting a specific poly-semantic, aural aesthetics and linguistic resonances, Eminescu’s ‘wording art’ becomes a vehicle of thought reflections that dissipate the darkness of daily life only to

create the mystery of the unseen, of the unknown, of the unconscious, 'between the lines', between the words and their 'shadows'.

II. Self in Relation to Nature and the Divine

About Eminescu, the renowned literary critic George Călinescu (1899-1965) stated: "This is how the greatest poet ever born or likely to be born on Romanian land passed away in his prime. Below a lonely star fading in the far-off skies, rivers might run dry and a forest or a fortress might sprout over his tomb, before this land could gather up every drop of sap to make it rise again in the slender stalk of another lily, whose perfume strength could match the poet's own" (Junona Tutunea trans.).⁵ It goes without saying then, that no one can think of Eminescu without thinking of the natural splendor of the land that had received the gift of his life and his lyrics.

Eminescu died young and during his short worldly voyage he witnessed the death of some friends and mentors as well, such as Aron Pumnul to whom he dedicated touching verses. Admittedly, death of a close person marked both Eminescu and Tagore and their artistic creation with similar strength, but their beliefs in the 'immortality' of soul helped them cope with loss and pain. At the same time, death and loss functioned as instruments of self-discovery in both cases, the Divine showing glimpses of *Oneself* to the poets through their experience of birth-death of the people surrounding them. Such experiences, pregnant with strong and varied emotions, lead the sensible minds to explore all avenues of reason and non-reason towards the comprehension of the realities of life – from the individual realities to the macrocosmic *Being* of the world. In varied manners, both Eminescu and Tagore 'suffered for the pains of the world.'

In *Scrisoarea I* ('First Epistle', 1881) for instance, Eminescu tries to understand the birth of the world, the creation of all out of nothingness, and the evolution of the human race as part of the universe:

“...back through thousands upon thousands of hoar ages
 To the very first, when being and non-being were naught still,
 When there was but utter absence of both life-impulse and will, [...]
 And, with its own self-contented, peace eternal reigned supreme.
 Suddenly, a dot starts moving - the primeval, lonely Other... [...]
 And in endlessness begotten, endless swarms of light are thronging
 Towards life, for ever driven by an infinite of longing; [...]
 Lilliputian kings and peoples, soldiers, unread, erudite,
 We engender generations, reckoning ourselves full bright!

⁵ 'George Călinescu: Mihai Eminescu's Life', translated by Junona Tutunea. www.mihaieminescu.ro.

One-day moths upon a mud ball measurable with the chip,
 We rotate in the great vastness and forget 'twixt cup and lip
 That this world is really nothing but a moment caught in light,
 That behind, or else before it, all that one can see is night.” (Leon Levitchi trans.)

These lines witness the manifestation of the poet as a seer, as a man of wisdom, who has understood that the materiality of the world, the human achievements, social positions and living conditions represent illusory accomplishments and beyond their temporary significance attributed to them by people, they have no true value for the human self. Such thinking came on the background of a life of struggles, as Eminescu had always financial problems and hang on different jobs, among many personal attacks and obstacles. Thus for him, it seems, the true learning and realization of *Self* comes only by becoming aware of this transitory nature of earthly existence, beyond which “eternal peace reigns supreme”, where being and non-being, or dark and light, are one and the same. Having reached this awareness, the poet himself wishes in a later poem (*Mai am un singur dor/ One Wish Alone Have I*, 1883) that at death he should be left to rest in the lap of nature:

“No candles shine,/ Nor tomb I need, instead/
 Let them for me a bed/ Of twigs entwine/[...]
 And I be earth again/ In solitude”.⁶

By entering eternity in the embrace of nature, the poet becomes *one* with the nature. Through death, he may regain an existence as a specter of light that was once part of the “endless swarms of light... thronging towards life”. In other words, he leaves behind one life to gain another. It is interesting to note that both in the ‘First Epistle’ and in some other poems, for Eminescu death appears related to light, it is “a sea of stars” or “a chaos of light” (*La Moartea lui Neamțu/ ‘Neamțu’s Death’*), in contrast to life which appears as an “ugly fairy-tale” in the poem *Mortua Est!*, where the spirit crosses “the border of the world” into the eternity. In such associations, Amita Bhowe identifies a connection with the *Upaniṣads*, where the Divine manifests as “the light beyond darkness” (2009: 46).

While during life, nature was the companion of the poet, both in times of love and times of agony or confusion, in death nature becomes the path on which the soul enters the mansion of the universe. In fact in Romanian literature and folklore, nature becomes personified as the constant and sincere companion of people in their life voyage, assisting them in all trials and difficulties, listening to their confessions about heartaches and struggles, ‘advising’ them how to overcome the obstacles they meet in life. At times, nature acts as the ‘conscience’ of the hero, of a character, the writer or the thinker, suggesting the ethical solution to a problem over the immoral one. If a character acts against his ‘conscience’, nature may turn against him and sanction such acts. However, for Eminescu nature manifests an honest friendship and solidarity in any hardship faced by the poet – be it in his philosophical quests, time of meditation over history and cultural roots, or in matters of the heart.

⁶ *One Wish Alone Have I*, translated by Corneliu M. Popescu.

The Bengali poet viewed nature as intrinsic part of the Divinity, a manifestation of the divine into the material sphere, in natural beauty, people and all phenomena. Nature occupies an important space both in Tagore's literary creation and in his paintings – brushed in varied hues of feeling, strong coloristic contrasts and surprising shapes. Through the discovery of nature, through extreme emotion and the search for the 'unknown' – in splendor and ugliness – Tagore explores the possibilities of experiencing beauty as an attribute of the *divine* and thus, reaching the realization of 'Truth'. In *Poem 15* of the Bengali *Gītānjali* he wonders:

“When will I fall in love with winds,
With all streams, the skies and light,
And they, united all in beauty,
Will adorn in many forms my heart!?”

Often, nature becomes a feminine personification or it appears – in all its manifestations as seasons, months, time, weather etc. – as embodiment of the Divine. In the *Poem 55* of *Gītānjali* the poet addresses spring as if addressing a person: “Ah, beauty, sweetheart, grace embodied,/ Whom do you mysteriously summon?”, while in *Poem 100* “the beauty of the rain” walks among people “dressed in deep darkness and uproars”. In other verses, the Divine appears as a guest (*Poem 38*: “What guest came on the breeze of spring –/ To knock at my life's door!/ You heart, sing jolly songs, oh, sing!”); when the poet feels disconnected from ‘the *Limitless One*’, he asks him to come in any form: “Come into my life forever in new shapes!” (*Poem 7*); or in *Poem 115* of the Bengali *Gītānjali*, he invokes the Divine: “Come on this small ray of light,/ Like wishes, kindness, like a child! ... In the middle of the Ocean/ Reveal yourself as an island/ Of myriad various shapes” (my translation).

Several of Tagore's poems have drawn on the Baul philosophy and several of their principles regarding the relation between the human body and the soul or the Eternal self. In the Bauls' imagery, the body represents the “mansion of the soul” while the soul is “like a bird in a cage”, and the body enjoys at times its celebration as a vehicle of love and other times it is seen as a ‘burden’. Other Tagorean poems, especially those related to nature and God, had some roots deeply nourished by the Śākta poets, being equally rooted in the landscapes of Bengal, rich in rivers and harvests, so often associated by lyricists and visual artists with the image of the nurturing ‘mother’ or a clear incarnation of the ‘mother goddess’ – a manifestation of the Divine Self.

When in pain or in difficulty, that is, when “the harp of life/ doesn't play the right tune” (*Poem 128*), Tagore (in *Gītānjali*) invokes God: “You, Essence, open your blossoms/ In the depth of my heart!” (*Poem 5*) and “lacerate the bondage of comfort” (*Poem 74*). Thus, the worldly bonds may get shattered and the *self* may be freed from the burden of illusion and pride (like in *Poems 37*, and respectively *41*); the poet realizes that the self liberation will unfold entirely once the body, human desires and all material possessions, including ‘name’ and ‘identity’, are abandoned either through renunciation – which, as the poet admits, is difficult or almost impossible to achieve – or certainly through death.

Towards the end of his Bengali lyrical offerings, *Gītānjali*, Tagore has reached the realization that “eternity lies within the end itself” (*Poem 156*).

At the same time, as Basabi Bagchi noted, in the collection of poems titled “*Katha O Kahini*”, Tagore “calls upon the beginningless past (*Anadi Ateet*) to speak to the present” while “the past is in the very marrow of the bones of the present” (2012: 106). Ultimately, Tagore’s philosophy of life was equally rooted in his belief in an ‘absolute truth’ and in the worldly reality of the human beings.

In *Sādhana* (1913) Tagore suggests that as a high ‘value’ in life, “[the] principle of unity which man has in his soul is ever active, establishing relations far and wide” through literature, art and society and so on (Gerber, *The Mind of India* 180). The metaphysical views of the *Upaniṣads* reemerge in the perspective proposed by Tagore, whereas both in art and in life, the One is in many and many are in One, the essence of art like that of life being ultimately the essence of the One, Supreme Being that flows as ‘endless beauty’ through all visible and invisible things.

On the other hand, as a literary artist in his writings Tagore “holds up before our vision the facts of history that bear witness of India’s social psyche” (Bagchi, 2012: 103). As Bagchi discussed in a different context, this Indian social psyche took manifold forms in all the activities and creative manifestations of Tagore – in his reformist attitudes, his criticism of politics and societal evils, in his identities as educator, aesthete, social thinker and so on – although many times he was only a “spectator” of the social conflicts.

III. Final Remarks

To draw a line after all the points discussed here does not denote the end of the exegetic possibilities regarding the oeuvres created by the two literary figures, Eminescu and Tagore. This paper has presented some points of entry and introspection into the works of these authors belonging to different spheres and cultural roots, with specific focus on the *self* in relation to the poetic expression, nature and the *divine*. Unlike Eminescu, Tagore was gifted by the Universe with a long life which he rendered fruitful by creating a colossal body of work abundant in innovative devices (linguistic, visual, conceptual etc.).

In their own styles and vision, the two litterateurs have fashioned perfect attires for the psyches of their societies, they have molded intricate installations of affect and designs that can unravel over time, in various hues of light, myriad reflections of cognitive, emotive, aesthetic, intellectual and philosophical histories, as well as empirical embodiments of social – personal selves and identities. By their ‘metachronotopy’, their ‘being’ in the world and ‘situatedness’, in artistic idioms, they stand indeed for *tailors of histories* and *sculptors of cultural ethos*.

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