

Outstanding Romanian personalities in world literature and literary studies

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The questions posed by contemporary literary theory and history are now wider-ranging than ever, opening up literary study to areas that were previously domains of other isolated disciplines. The focus on social, cultural, institutional, and political events changes the perspective on art and literature. A study of literature outside the frame of one nation or language, e.g., exilic writing or the literature of multilingual areas, is common today. There are still areas, however, that deserve a closer look. Among these are literary theory, history and criticism developed by authors living in exile or outside of their native linguistic and epistemological tradition who have asserted themselves in a worldwide context. A study of their ideas and points of view represents a particular contribution to comparative literature studies and history of literatures, because it reveals the hidden tendencies, turns, changes and blank spaces still present in literary scholarship.

This issue of **WORLD LITERATURE STUDIES** focuses on the work of significant personalities of Romanian origin, including literary critics, historians, linguists, sociologists, historians of religions and writers. These exilic authors have had the opportunity to make a worldwide impact in various areas of the humanities and social sciences, as well as in literature and art. They have made important contributions in transforming literary theory, history, and criticism due to their different epistemological backgrounds, uncommon approaches, atypical points of departure, as well as their capability to reveal previously unnoticed connections.

The main editorial contribution, as well as the conceptualization of its theme, were created by a team of scholars from Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu who are involved in a research project titled *A World-Systems Analysis of Semiperipheral Literatures: The Case of Romanian Literature*, based on the ideas of the sociologist I. Wallerstein and led by Andrei Terian. The other contributions in this issue were made by literary scholars from two Romanian universities (Bucharest, Iași). The Slovak contribution and conceptualization of the theme is provided by several scholars of Romanian and world literature from the Institute of World Literature SAS (Libuša Vajdová) and Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia.