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Romanian Book Review



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Editorial

by Horia GÂRBEA

The Prizes of the Writers' Union – A Recommendation for Foreign Editors

Every year, the Writers' Union of Romania, its subsidiaries and its magazines award prizes which reward the best volumes (and their authors, implicitly) published over the previous year. Of course, literary prizes have a different moral importance, as well as unequal financial value. For the valuable authors, they compensate a little for the small or inexistent fees which Romanian publishing houses can give to writers and to translators. These prizes could represent a guide for the foreign editors who want to publish translations of Romanian books. They could trust the judgment of the Romanian juries because, no matter how partial and subjective the latter's opinion is, they know the Romanian literary phenomenon better than it can be known from without.

That is why the juries have an extra responsibility: to award works that should capture the attention of foreign editors. Although the criteria used for the choice of a volume to be translated into a language or another are slightly different from those of an internal jury, the option of a serious jury for a volume is indicative of value. Not necessarily of translatability, of course.

In the middle of the month of June, the Writers' Union nominated its laureates for the editorial year 2012. Some volumes were presented in our magazine and one can predict that the trust shown by two juries (the one who dealt with the selection, and the other with the awards) will influence the international dissemination of these works.

Here is the list of winners, accompanied by short comments:

Poetry: Nicolae Prelipceanu, *Upon Losing Hope*, Casa de Pariuri Literare. A natural choice of the jury, I myself have written enthusiastically about this volume.

Prose: Florina Ilis, *Parallel Lives*, Cartea Românească. The novel of a very skillful writer, already known in the literary circles outside Romania.

Criticism, essay, literary history: Mircea Mihăieş, *What is Left. William Faulkner and the Mysteries of the Land of Yoknapatawpha*, Polirom. A substantial volume: to read Faulkner's work is awe-inspiring, and to synthesize it in a coherent essay is even more so.

Theatre: Radu F. Alexandru *Theatre 7*, Cartea Românească. I think that this is the third prize of this type that the playwright has received. I am happy for him and especially because this prize, which had been often overlooked before, was awarded this year.

Let us also mention the laureates for **translations:** Dinu Luca – Mo Yan, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, Humanitas Fiction and the Prize of the Foundation "Andrei Bantas"; Irina Horea – J.M. Coetzee, *Summertime*, Humanitas Fiction. The merits of the translators have been acknowledged on the occasion of many other volumes and this prize is a reward for them.

The prize for "Literature for Children and Young People" was not awarded. I regret to admit that the choice of the jury was the right one. SF prose was not taken into account as there is also the *Hobana* prize which is awarded annually by the Romanian SF and Fantasy Society.

The National Prize for Literature: Ion Pop. Again a well-thought choice.

I believe that the jury – Gabriel Coşoveanu, Irina Petraş, Cornel Ungureanu, Dan Cristea and Mihai Zamfir – deserve to be congratulated.

Two days after the festivity organized by the Writers' Union, the magazine *Luceafărul de dimineaţă* awarded, with the support of Ministry of Culture, the annual prizes to a few meritorious writers such as: Iolanda Malamen, Andrea Hedeş, Andra Rotaru, Gelu Negrea, Călin Stănculescu and Radu Aldulescu. Again, they deserve to be recommended anytime to foreign translators and editors.

TRANSYLVANIA BOOK FAIR the 1st edition



In this issue:

BOOKS AUTHORED BY:

Lucian Anghel • Alexandra Ares • Mircea Carp • Remus Cernea • Teodora Coman • Dumitru Constantin Dulcan • Cătălin Ghiţă • Paul S. Grigoriu • Doina Ioanid • Ovidiu Ivancu • Iolanda Malamen • Ion Mureşan • Stelian Neagoe • Aurel Pantea • Marian Petcu • Răzvan Petrescu • Alexandru Rădescu • Octavian Soviany • Peter Sragher • Mircea Struţeanu • Bogdan Suceavă • Mihai Vakulovski • Aurel Vlad • Matei Vişniec



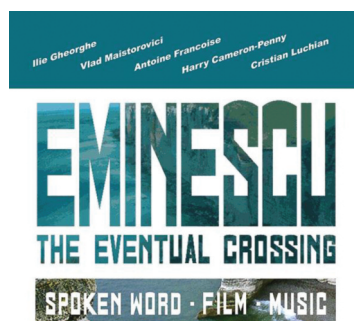
AN EMINESCU FOR LONDON: RECITED POETRY, MUSIC, FILM AND VIDEO ANIMATION

The Romanian Cultural Institute in London proposes a contemporary project of the great poet Eminescu, recomposed for the British public by means of verses, movies, music and video animations made by Romanian and international artists in an original collaboration.

On the 20th of June, the actor Ilie Gheorghe recited Eminescu's poems on the stage in Belgrave Square, next to original musical interventions with the violinist and composer Vlad Maistorovici, the pianist Antoine Francoise, and clarinet singer Harry Cameron-Penny, members of Mercury Quartet. Cristian Luchian, movie director and artistic director of Immersive Theatre, completed the show with video animations in real time, synchronous with the music and with the verses of the recital.

One of the attractions of the evening was the premiere of the first movie dedicated to Eminescu, made in 1914, by Octav Minar, a pioneer of Romanian cinematography. Recently discovered in the National Archive of Films Bucharest, the pellicle was produced by the legendary company Pathé, and it includes rare images from the native home town Botoșani at the beginning of the 20th century, from Iași, from the Central Library, "Bolta Rece" and the pub "Trei Sarmale", images with his bronze bust in front of the Athenaeum and with the grave in Bellu graveyard – all these being genuine historical documents, rendered topical by the experimental music of the three musicians, who illustrated the screening of the movie live.

The film and the verses of the recital were provided with English translations for the British public, invited to know the last Romantic European poet from a modern, perspective which is familiarized with transdisciplinary and multimedia productions.



EMINESCU, IN THE HEART OF LISBON

During his European tour, the actor Dorel Vișan stopped in Lisbon, where he participated in an ample commemorative show dedicated to the poet Mihai Eminescu, an event organized by the Romanian Cultural Institute in Lisbon. On the 20th of June, the event was hosted in the Auditorium of the sumptuous Independence Palace under the tutelage of Sociedade Histórica da Independência de Portugal.

The opening of Dorel Vișan's recital consisted in a set of scenes of the master's most important cinematographic creations ("A Clod of Clay", "The Most Beloved Man on Earth", "The Senator of Snails" and "Jacob") and was accompanied by an exhibition of Eminescu's photos and facsimiles, put at the disposal of the Romanian Cultural Institute in Lisbon by the National Museum of Romanian Literature. The aggregation of the accompanying images and legends (both belonging to the Romanian Cultural Institute in Lisbon) tried to familiarize visitors with the personality of the great poet and to make him understood by the Portuguese public as well.

THE EUROPEAN UNION: LIMITS OF THE INTEGRATION?



On Wednesday, the 26th of June, 2013, E.S. Daithí Ó Ceallaigh, General Director of the Institute for European and International Business, president of the Irish Press Council held the conference: "The European Union: Limits of the Integration?" Mr. Ó Ceallaigh was ambassador of Ireland to the United Nations Organization in Geneva (2007-2009), Great Britain (2001-2007), Finland and Estonia (1993-1998).

The event was attended by Mr. Dan Petre, director of the Romanian Diplomatic Institute and His Excellency Oliver Grogan, the ambassador of Ireland in Bucharest.

The event was organized by the Romanian Cultural Institute in partnership with the Embassy of Ireland and the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Bucharest.

Of Men and Snails at the International Film Festival in Edinburgh

The movie *Of Men and Snails*, directed by Tudor Giurgiu, will have the premiere in Great Britain on the occasion of the International Film Festival in Edinburgh. The Romanian Cultural Institute in London is a constant partner of the festival, and will support the director's participation in the debate that will follow.

The feature film was selected, along with nine other movies, in the section *International Competition*, a selection that deals with new remarkable movies from all over the world. Described in the festival program as "The Romanian Full Monty" (a Romanian version of the well-known British Full Monty), the movie features Andi Vasluianu, Monica Birlădeanu, Dorel Vișan, Andreea Bibiri and Jean-François Stevenin.

The second movie directed by Tudor Giurgiu (after his debut with *Sickly Liaisons* in 2006) was highly acclaimed internationally as well: it was awarded the Special Prize of the Jury at the 28th Edition of the International Film Festival in Warsaw, and won the trophy of the Meeting Point section (ex-aequo) in the 57th edition of the International Film festival in Valladolid. The movie was also presented on the occasion of the movie festivals in Trieste and Göteborg.

This is the 67th edition of the Edinburgh International Festival, which is the second



largest and the most important festival in Great Britain, and one of the most important of category A, representing, at the same time, the oldest annual festival in the world and an attraction for the international movie industry. In the capital of Scotland, the projections took place on the 28th and the 29th of June, at the Cineworld.



"The Resistance, the Fight and the Salvation of the Romanian Jews during the Second World War"

The Unitary Organization of Romanian Jews (AMIR), the Rosh Pina Town Hall, the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Romania and the Romanian Cultural Institute in Tel Aviv organized a round table with the topic: "The Resistance, the Fight and the Salvation of the Romanian Jews during the Second World War".

The event also included a visit to the historical center and the viewing of the exhibition "The Contribution of the Romanian Jews to the Construction of the State of Israel", organized by the Jewish Community in Bucharest.

George Banu & friends

Friday, the 28th of June Salle Byzantine - Palais de Bé Hague, Ambassade de Roumanie hosted a homage night *George Banu & friends*.

The author and the actor Patrick le Mauff read fragments from *L'oubli* by George Banu, and the pianist Andrei Vieru and the traditional music band Iza rounded off the memorable night.



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Classics of Romanian Literature

G. CĂLINESCU

by Gelu NEGREA

Theoretician, literary critic and historian, novelist, poet and playwright, encyclopedic spirit, open to universality, G. Călinescu “remains one of those exceptional personalities who are born only once a century”, as Nicolae Manolescu judiciously wrote down in the *Critical History of Romanian Literature*.

Considered a genius while he was still alive (he was, in fact, one of the few Romanians to be labeled as such), nicknamed “the divine critic”, G. Călinescu left to posterity a substantial and diverse work, which represented a fundamental cultural model for the following generations who have been constantly using it as reference point. Adulated, as well as contested, sometimes, violently, after the revolution in December 1989 he was accused of collaborationism with political communist authorities, but the human being’s weaknesses were not able to shadow the value of his creation.

“The moment Călinescu” represents the highest point reached by Romanian criticism in its historical evolution.

BIOGRAPHY

On the 2nd of July 1899 the child Gheorghe Vișan was born in Bucharest to a maid and an unknown father. Adopted at a young age, the future great author took the name of his foster parents, Călinescu.

He attended primary school, secondary school and high school in Bucharest and Iași, then graduated from the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy in the capital of Romania, where he studied the Italian language and literature; the head of the chair was Ramiro Ortiz and among his teachers were Nicolae Iorga, Vasile Pârvan, Mihail Dragomirescu, Ovid Densusianu, P.P. Negulescu, Dimitrie Onciul and others. Upon one of the latter’s recommendation, he received a two-year scholarship in Rome. His editorial debut with the volume *Alcuni missionari cattolici italiani nella Moldavia nei secoli XVII e XVIII* (1925) is related to the Italian period.

After he came back to the country, he collaborated with several literary magazines, he set up others, and in the autumn of 1937 he joined higher education – initially, at the

Conferences (1956), *Foreign Writers* (1967).

Prose: *The Book of the Wedding* (1933), *Otilia’s Enigma* (1938), *Three Short Novels* (1949), *Poor Ioanide* (1953), *The Black Chest of Drawers* (1965).

Poetry: *Poesii* (1937), *Praise to Things* (1963)

Theatre: *Sun or the Untroubled Path – Mongolian Myth* (1940), *Louis the 19th* (1964), *Theatre* (1965)

Published articles: *The Optimist’s Chronicles* (1964), *Ulysses* (1967)

Travel impressions: *Kiev, Moscow, Leningrad* (1949), *I Went to New China* (1953)

THE LITERARY THEORETICIAN AND HISTORIAN

In spite of several attempts – some of which meritorious – to connect Romanian literature to the European and universal literary phenomenon, the process was difficult and had modest results. The

at the level of the theoretical dissertation; the underlying principles of the work are to be found fruitfully in the architecture and the construction of the monumental *The Romanian Literature History from Its Origins to the Present Times* – a matchless book, more than 1.000 pages long, in big format, which has become a genuine cult object, a Bible of our culture. It was the first to capitalize on the creation of the 19th century Romanian authors and it imposed a set of convincing and durable values, which has remained topical even today, seventy years after the publication of the volume. An authentic “novel of Romanian literature”, and, equally, an epic work and treatise of applied axiology, Călinescu’s *History...* abounds in exceptional portraits and in captivating biographies which, along with the evocative passages and the charming and picturesque descriptions, make up a fascinating book, which is fundamentally subjective, but which never trades value off for anything else.

We must also mention, some of G. Călinescu’s unforgettable studies – *Domina*

Eminescu’s personality up to this day, and in spite of some inherent corrections, made as a result of the discovery of biographical sources unknown at the time when the book was written.

The image of the great poet was completed when G. Călinescu published the five volumes about *Mihai Eminescu’s Work*, appreciated as the most valuable monument dedicated to Eminescu in Romanian criticism up to now.

Another spectacular reassessment Călinescu proceeded to was that of another classic of national literature, Ion Creangă, whose damaging label as a lowbrow author was removed, and who was righteously placed in the space of refined, Rabelais-like creation.

THE WRITER

The most resistant part of G. Călinescu’s literary work itself consists in novels. If in the beginning they were assimilated to the realist, Balzac-like creation method (recommended to the Romanian literature by the critic himself), they were subsequently subsumed to interpretative visions that were closer to their real specificity: comic novels, in which Balzac’s artifacts and stereotypes were used skillfully by the author in order to create the image of a derisory world, in accelerated decay (*The Book of the Wedding*, *Otilia’s Enigma*), or, on the contrary, animated by false progressive enthusiasm (*Poor Ioanide*, *The Black Chest of Drawers*).

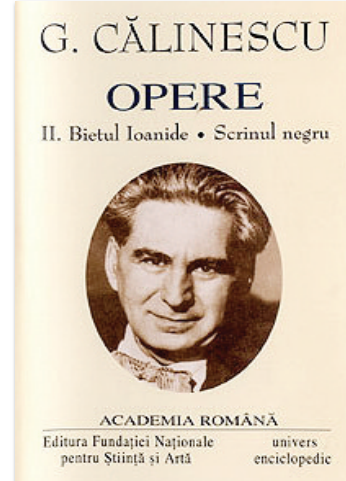
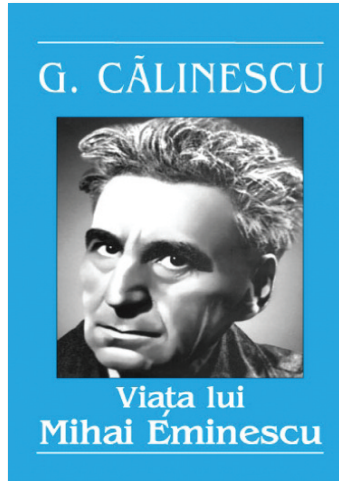
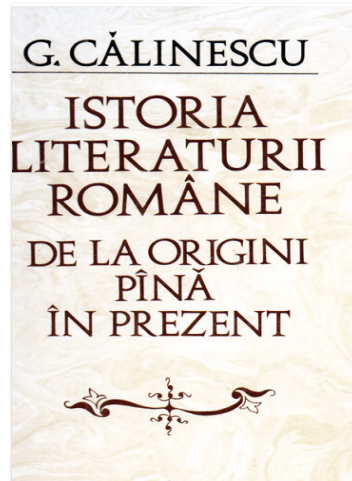
Most of G. Călinescu’s poetry is of a scholarly origin, circumscribed to a pragmatic classicism (“I am Greek!” the author exclaimed suggestively at a certain point.)

More interesting, because of their similarity with Brecht’s theatre and absurd theatre, which would appear later, are the short plays that were also staged by Călinescu and his collaborators from the Institute of Literary History and Folklore. They are dramatic poems (*Sun or the Untroubled Path – Mongolian Myth*), texts in verse created for the puppet show (*The Tragedy of King Otakar and of Prince Dalobor*), or scenic fantastic or parodic proposals, populated by known historical characters (*Napoleon and Saint Helena*, *About Wrath*)

CRITICAL LEGACY

We will mention some of the most important volumes dedicated to his life and work.

Ion Bălu: George Călinescu. *Criticism and Interpretation*, G. Călinescu. *Essay about the Stages of Creation* (both, 1970), G. Călinescu’s *Life* (1981) and G. Călinescu: *The Show of Personality* (2004), S. Damian: *G. Călinescu, the Novelist. Essay about the Masks of the Game* (1971), Dumitru Micu: *George Călinescu: Between Apollo and Dionysus* (1979), M. Nițescu: *Under the Sign of Proletkult. A Book with a Forced Domicile* (1979-1995), Valentin Ionescu: *The Comic Nature of Călinescu’s Comment* (2000), George Pruteanu *Călinescu’s Way of Being* (2001), Nicolae Manolescu: the chapter in *The Critical History of Romanian Literature* (2005), Andrei Terian: *G. Călinescu. The Fifth Essence* (2009).



Faculty of Letters of the University of Iași, then, in 1945, as head of the modern literature chair at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Bucharest.

In 1946 he was chosen deputy for the first time in the Great National Assembly (the unicameral parliament in communist Romania); after two years, he was received in the Academy, and in 1949 he was appointed director of the Institute of Literary History and Folklore, which would take his name after his death.

He died on the 12th of March 1965.

WORK

The overall configuration of G. Călinescu’s creation, from the perspective of the volumes published anthomously, is the following:

Literary history and criticism: *Mihai Eminescu’s Life* (1932), *Mihai Eminescu’s Work* (1934), *Ion Creangă’s Life* (1938), *The History of Romanian Literature from Origins to Present Times* (1941), *The History of Romanian Literature. Compendium* (1945), *Nicolae Filimon* (1959), *Gr. M. Alexandrescu* (1962), *Ion Creangă* (Life and Work) (1964), *Vasile Alecsandri* (1965).

Studies of aesthetics and universal literature: *Principles of Aesthetics* (1939), *Impressions of Spanish Literature* (1946), *The Meaning of Classicism* (1946), *The Universe of Poetry* (1947), *Studies and*

tentative of synchronizing the national creation with the Western world, theorized by Eugen Lovinescu, did not prove to be more productive either. This happened, among other things, because neither the Romanian writers’, nor the Romanian critics’ endeavors managed to go beyond the mimetic level of foreign models or the stage of the obedient comments of literary doctrines, ideas and analysis methods which made the everyday agenda of worldwide cultural activity.

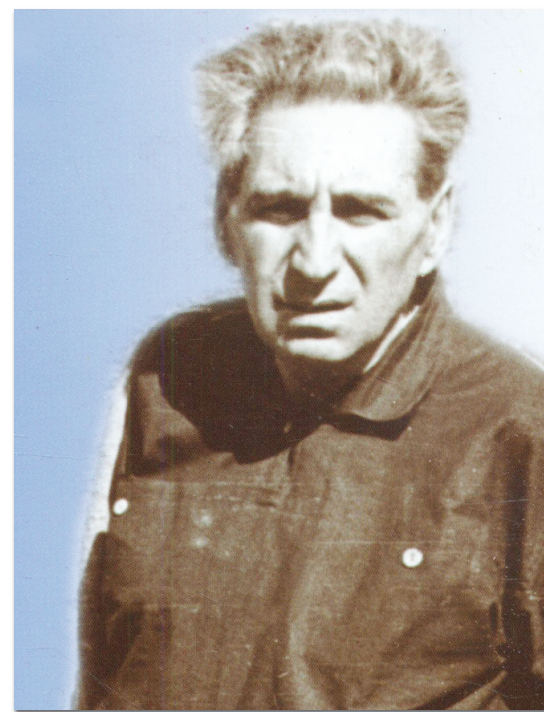
The first fearless Romanian critic who took the plunge into the arena of great debates dedicated to the topic of contemporary aesthetics and hermeneutics is G. Călinescu. Moreover, he preceded R. Wellek’s thesis by a decade in his famous book *The Theory of Literature* as he made, as early as 1938, some extremely interesting and pertinent considerations on the relation between criticism and literary history – one seen by Călinescu as complementary, in striking contrast with Wellek, who considered that the intention to render the two spheres compatible was doomed to fail as aporia. The Romanian critic considered literary history to be a history of values and he took a stance on the pair subjectivity-objectivity in literature research before Wellek did. Călinescu’s study *History as Ineffable Science and Epical Synthesis* is original and revolutionary. Another remarkable fact is that the author does not remain

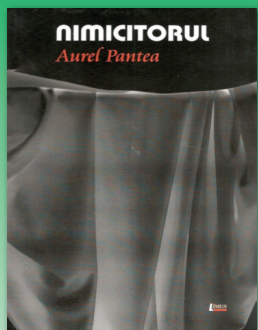
bona, *The Poetry of Realities*, *Classicism*, *Romanticism*, *Baroque*, *The Aesthetics of the Fairy Tale*, *The Universe of the Poetry*, *The Meaning of Classicism*, etc. – which highlight his scintillating critical intuitions, his speculative genius, his extraordinary associative capacity and the subtlety of dissociations practiced in diverse spiritual domains, the expressivity of writing, and the stylistic elegance.

A special place in the work of the critic who aspired to read not only authors, but also literatures, is held by works dedicated to prominent figures of universal literature from various places and times: Horatio, Lev Tolstoy, A. P. Chekhov, Torquato Tasso etc, as well as a book whose ingeniousness and depth are amazing: *Impressions of Spanish Literature*.

THE CRITIC

G. Călinescu’s vocation as a literary critic was clearly revealed as early as the publication of *Mihai Eminescu’s Life*, the first biography of the national poet written scientifically, and based on exhaustive research. The author’s interpretative ability led to the edification of the entire mythology which has been accompanying Mihai





AUREL PANTEA

Terminator
With a Latin Version
by Marcela Ciortea
Limes Publishing House, Cluj, 2012

Account of Nothingness

Aurel Pantea, a poet of the 1980s generation associated with the Transylvanian group preoccupied with 20th century German Expressionism, has recently published a book of poetry entitled *Terminator*, gravitating around the themes of death, sliding into nothingness, dissolving the being.

Literary critic Al. Cisteleanu remarks: "Aurel Pantea writes from the very inside of a sensation of going into nothingness and makes the acute, clinical film of it. His reports are no longer anxiety reports, but live broadcasts of decomposition, of the being in the process of rotting, of slow and implacable degeneration. The feeling of this slowness, of decadence is so profound and solidly constructed, that it no longer produces fears: it just reproduces itself. Calm, downright ataraxic, the poet only notes the agonistic progress of this disintegration and reports on the gangrene spreading all over the world, of the climate of extermination by slow void formation."

Cosmin Ciotloș: "A fully remarkable book, in my view *Terminator* is above all a major declaration of conscience for poetry."

Irina Petras: "With Bacovia and Cioran, death is secreted extra-vitally, as a double of life, deliberately to be contemplated insistently, monotonously, in a monochord manner, but with Aurel Pantea it loses its autonomy, it is incompletely and crisis-bent integrated, it builds its nest in the very core of the language and of the evanescent body, blowing up their lucidity and cynicism, painfully twisting them in place: 'I have spoken, Lord, and written, till I got black/ overall, I grew, Lord, in my words, and my words/ have grown in me and placed my body in the void/ I stay in my body as if in an abyss, each word making it deeper/ because I see time and death moving, my hands are dark/ Lord, for chatting, I bear my body as if it was my own grave/ I would bear it, in it, language meets itself and it goes mad.'"

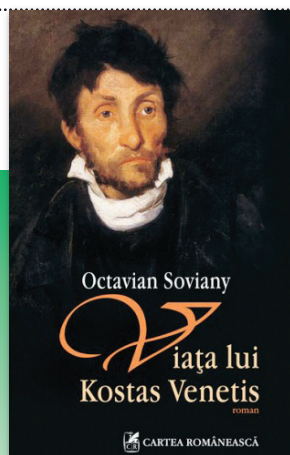
AUREL PANTEA (b. 1952 in Chețani, Mureș County) was educated at the Philology Faculty of the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj. Now, holding a Ph.D., he is a professor at the 1 December 1918 University in Alba Iulia. Since 1990 he has been editor-in-chief of the *Discobolul* magazine in Alba Iulia. We mention here some of his poetry books, many of which have received awards: *House With Rhetors* (1980); *In the Third Person* (1992); *Black on Black* (1993); *These Venices, These Lagoons* (1995), and *Black on Black (Another Poem)* (2005). Aurel Pantea is also the author of literary criticism books including: *Poets of Full Transcendence* (2003, second edition in 2005) – award for essay from the Romanian Writers' Union, the Mureș chapter, *Critical Sympathies* (2004), *Ștefan Augustin Doinaș (Monographic Study)* (2007), *The Sacred in Romanian Poetry* (collective volume) (2007). He got the Tudor Arghezi Award for poetry from the Romanian Writers' Union. His poetry is included in the bilingual anthology entitled *Streiflicht – Eine Auswahl zeitgenössischer rumänischer Lyrik (81 rumänische Autoren)* (*Slanted Light*, translated by Christian W. Schenk), Dionysos Verlag 1994.

This book is a bilingual (Romanian-French) edition with 18 reproductions of original engravings in *aqua forte* and *aqua tinta* by: Matei Vișniec, Andra Bădulescu, Joela Vișniec, Oana Maya Isar, Smaranda Isar, and Iuri Isar. Equally, it includes two CDs with poems recited by Matei Vișniec in Romanian and French against a musical background composed and performed by Ionuț Bogdan Ștefănescu.

„If all things have a beginning and an end/ it means that death, too, has a beginning and an end/ that's why I'm staying here with you/ I'm waiting for the end of death.“

(„Si tout a un commencement et une fin/ c'est que la mort aussi a un commencement et une fin/ c'est pour cela que je suis ici avec vous/ j'attends la fin de la mort“).

MATEI VIȘNIEC, a Romanian poet and playwright, works in France. The plays he wrote in 1977-1987 were censored in Romania and were only circulated underground; only his poems were published. In 1977-1987, he avidly wrote several books of poems, numerous plays, a novel, and a few movie scripts. With the exception of his poetry, his other texts



OCTAVIAN SOVIANY

The Life of Kostas Venetis
Cartea Românească Publishing House,
Bucharest, 2011

The Life of Kostas Venetis, a novel by Octavian Soviany, received an award from Radio Romania Cultural, the Prose Section, in 2012 and it was unanimously acclaimed by literary criticism as the most savory period novel in Romanian contemporary literature. The book by this famous author (who has written 10 poetry books) describes the adventures of a *picaro* in the form of initiatory confessions disguised as a thriller.

"In short, Octavian Soviany's novel . . . is the story of a Greek-origin gay man on his death bed, a decrepit man doubled by an un-quenched hatred of women, then

Revelation According to St. Matthew

Matei Vișniec



MATEI VIȘNIEC

Securi decapitate/ Haches décapitées/ (Beheaded Axes)
Tracus Arte Publishing House,
Bucharest, 2013

were systematically rejected by censorship; but the writer managed to make numerous photocopies of his plays and to circulate them in the theatrical and literary milieus, a good example of a literary samizdat. He was an active member of the Monday Circle led by literary critic Nicolae Manolescu. Before 1989, some of his books were published in Romania: *It Will Snow Tonight* (Albatros Publishing House, 1980), *The City With One Inhabitant* (Albatros Publishing House, 1982), and *The Wise Man at Tea Time* (Cartea Românească Publishing House, 1984). In 1987 he defected from Romania and requested political asylum in France, obtaining French citizenship in 1993. Now he lives in Paris working as a journalist for Radio France Internationale and contributing to various French magazines. After 1989 he became the playwright with the largest number of plays produced in Romania, in Bucharest and other places, on radio, and

on television. In October 1996, the National Theater in Timișoara organized a Matei Vișniec festival with 10 of his plays produced by 12 theatrical companies. Over the years, he has received many awards.

"Evil's Share in Its Splendid Manifestation"

expanded to hate almost everybody, being naturally evil; he himself tells this story to his lover – the narrator nicknamed the German Woman, who has the duty to write down everything. In this text, other stories are then intercalated, which the characters confess to themselves, completing, one layer upon another, a complex picture described with a rare talent. It seems that it was ordained that the life of Kostas Venetis should account for one of the two faces of the divinity, evil's share in its splendid manifestation. I just wish to add one more idea, in fact a feeling, which the atmosphere created by this story has awakened in me: a feeling about *The Name of the Rose* combined with certain movies by Almodovar." (Dorin David)

Literary critic Luminița Corneanu remarks: "Octavian Soviany's novel is a virtual narrative *tour de force*, managing to touch most targets of any genuine prose writer: to subjugate the reader with the charm of his story, to build a unique character in Romanian literature – sodomite Kostas, badly created since birth –, to take the reader through far-off epochs and places which he reconstructs masterfully and minutely, to keep the suspense going over all the 400 pages, and to create a rich gallery of secondary characters which give life and thrills to the story. This novel of adventures and mysteries, a Bildungsroman turned

upside down, including a philosophy that explains the bad makeup of the world, *The Life of Kostas Venetis* is one of the acmes of Romanian contemporary prose, a remarkable achievement for Octavian Soviany, who proves to be a first-rate prose writer."

OCTAVIAN SOVIANY (b. 1954 in Brașov) graduated from the Philology Faculty in Cluj and received his Ph.D. in philology from the Bucharest University. Since 1994 he has been a tenured professor of Romanian language and literature and world literature. He made his debut with the book *The Apprenticeship of the Old Alchemist* (1983), followed in the 1990s by four poetry books collected in the anthology *The Book of Benedict* (2002). After 2000, he published *Other Old Style Poems* (2004), *Letters From Arcadia* (2005), *Dilecta* (2006), and, more recently, *Dust, Dirt and Revolution* (2012), apart from the novel *The Texts of Monte Negro* (2003, re-published under the title *The Archives of Monte Negro*); most of his writings have received awards. He has also published criticism and drama books, and his poems are included in several poetry anthologies, as he is one of the most polyvalent contemporary Romanian writers. In 2004 he was awarded the Cultural Merit Order in the rank of Knight from the President of Romania.

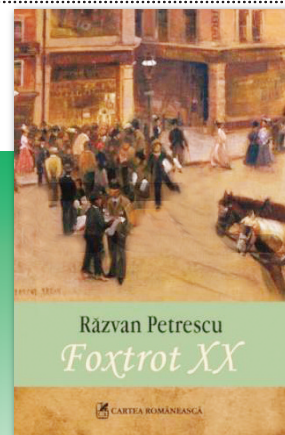
Short Prose With Scalpel

Regarded as one of the best short-prose writers in Romanian literature, Răzvan Petrescu collects in his book *Foxtrot 20* varied texts (in point of themes and style) that make up a seductive reading, received by specialized critics with great enthusiasm: "The *Foxtrot 20* anthology is a feast-book the likes of which have been absent from bookstores for a long time. Poetic meditations on fear of death, confessions of fatherly love for his son Andrei, memories from the Universitas literary circle, hand-picked journalistic fragments, short but piercing family episodes, an interview full of irony with a fugue structure, political satire, samples of healthy erudition and imagination, music hobbies and very many feelings of a movie lover. Răzvan Petrescu perceives the world with an amazing acuity of senses. Nothing escapes him, while his sensitivity often remains hidden by a masque of cynicism..." (Alexandru Budac)

„Răzvan Petrescu is nothing short of the best short-prose author in our country. If he wrote one book of stories per year (or even less often) this genre should be totally forbidden to the other writers. It would not make any sense." (Marius Chivu)

"Fragile and tough, breaking and stainless, uncomfortable to the others and most of all to himself, Răzvan Petrescu is a master of disappointment and despair, now wrapped in humor, now exhibited as an accusing wound. His force resides in his style and the sharpness of his observation, his favorite instrument being the scalpel." (Dumitru Radu Popa)

RĂZVAN PETRESCU (b. 1956) graduated from the Bucharest Medical Faculty in 1982. He worked as a physician in the countryside and as editor for various literary magazines and publishing houses. Since 2004 he has been an editor at the Curtea Veche Publishing House. He is a member of the Romanian Writers' Union. He debuted in 1986 in the collective short-prose volume *Debut 1986*. He has published the prose books *Summer Garden* (1989), *Eclipse* (1993), *One Friday After-*



RĂZVAN PETRESCU

Foxtrot 20
Cartea Românească
Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008

noon (1997), and *Foxtrot 20* (2008), and theater books *The Farce* (1994) and *Spring at the Eatery* (1995). All his books have received awards granted by prestigious cultural institutions in this country. His work is included in the anthology of Romanian short prose entitled *The Phantom Church and Other Stories* edited by Florin Manolescu (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996).

Literature



Book of Hard Essences

Ion Mureșan is one of the most important contemporary Romanian poets, also serving as a model for younger generations of poets. In 2008 he published *Alcohol Book*, seen by literary criticism as one of the most avidly-awaited poetry books of the past decade.

"The poems in *Alcohol Book* gravitate around the image of the pub and the lives of alcoholics. They live somehow outside of this world, but they undoubtedly live authentically, able to even awaken sparks of the divinity." Cezar Gheorghe

Literary critic Iulian Boldea remarks: "The universe outlined by Ion Mureșan is one of existential damnation, of fragility, and the evanescence of the human, a universe painted in somber colors, with things that get limpid contours intermittently ('And suddenly, things became limpid to me/ like when someone writes a poem after weeping/ for a long time/ and he doesn't want to understand anything anymore'), in the recurrent scenery of the pub, where, alongside drunkards, alongside a low-brow humanity, the declining, derisive image of the angel naturally finds its place... Ion Mureșan's poems excel, as it has been pointed out, mostly in the overwhelming force of their vision, in the tension of strongly ontic and poetically poignant images ('Now I am tranquil, my mind is clear/ clear and sterile/ As I sing, the images cluster into blood clots/ above the white cups./ Scents get thinner like cigarette paper/

and get stuck on ice cubes/ like stamps')."

But this universe of damnation is sprinkled with love poems whose suggestion force is extraordinary, like this *Love Poem (in Satu Mare)*: "Her eyes are circled with little claws/ Her eyes are circled with very sweet spines/ So one feels like tying her up and making her lie down/ in a bed with ladybugs./ She is wild and always ready to jump/ and to bite, and ready to fall asleep in the middle of the jump./ She has honey traps around her mouth./ so one feels like pulling the forest sheet over her./ She is green and bitter./ She is very meek, very beautiful, and very dangerous./ Citizens, don't let her get out of the house!"

"No less than the best book of Romanian poetry in recent years; and one which, in my opinion, definitively consecrates Ion Mureșan as a great poet." (*Daniel Cristea Enache*)

ION MUREȘAN (b. 1955 in Vultureni, Cluj County) graduated from the History-Philosophy Faculty of the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca. He worked as a history teacher and editor for the *Tribuna* magazine in Cluj. Now he is an editorialist with a newspaper in Cluj and editor-in-chief of the *Verso* literary magazine in Cluj. He has published poetry books *Winter Book* (1981) – award for debut from the Romanian Writers' Union, and *The Incomprehensible Poem* (1993) –

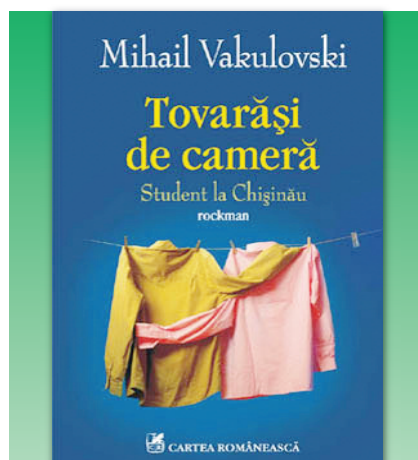


ION MUREȘAN

Alcohol Book
Charmides Publishing House,
Bistrița, 2010

award for poetry from the Romanian Writers' Union, as well as an essay book entitled *The Lost Book - A Poetics of Trace* (1998), translated as *Le mouvement sans coeur de l'image*, French version by Dumitru Țepeneag, Belin, 2001; *Glass / Au fond de verre* with drawings by Ion Marchiș, translations by Virgil Stanciu and Dumitru Țepeneag: Baia Mare, Archeus and Scriptorum Cultural Foundation, 2007; *Zugang verboten / Access Denied*, Büroarcasch, Vienna, 2008, German version by Ernest Wichter. In 2005 he was invited to France as part of the Les Belles Étrangères program.

Novel of University Student Life Under Post-Communism



MIHAIL VAKULOVSKI

Room Mates. Student in Chișinău. Rockmance.
Cartea Românească Publishing House,
Bucharest, 2011

Student in Chișinău is the first volume of a planned trilogy entitled *Room Mates* by Mihail Vakulovski, a Romanian writer of Bessarabian origin: this is an original literary project which the author subversively calls *rockmance* rather than romance. The book describes the student life of the main character, Hai, in 1989-1993, a time of great historical upheavals. It is a book written with great natural ease, in a savory language, with inciting elements from the Moldovan slang, where the

alert narrative episodes are crisscrossed with epistolary passages taken out of reality.

"Mihail Vakulovski's novel is a special experience also from the literary viewpoint (an extremely successful mix of diary, historical novel, Bildungsroman, epistolary novel and many other things). These pages are alive, it is a virtual picturesque literary clatter where people talk about everything and everybody, it is exactly like entering into a students' dormitory room: first, one has to get used to the disorder one gets into, and only then is it possible to figure out a thing or two. Because, although at first sight, everything seems caricature-like and tonic, somewhere there is an undercurrent with a few drops of bitterness sneaking in (perhaps precisely due to the grotesque size of the caricature)." (*Sever Gulea*)

Literary critic Gabriela Gherghișor: "Self-fiction, authenticity, and misérabilisme. All this is found in Mihail Vakulovski's novel *Room Mates*, the first volume of a planned trilogy. Mihail Vakulovski's book picturesquely describes the evolution of a young man and of a country, unforgiving, but with love, offering a vivacious, fast reading . . . pleasurable owing to the narrative foam despite the deep Cioran-like undercurrent."

"The extremely dense epic matter and the dizzying verbiage instantly connects the reader to the narrative universe. The oral elements are savory, ascribing authenticity to the living language, which is extremely real. A

provoking stylistics, requiring participation and courage as much as its conception has claimed. The breaks, which are rare and inserted carefully and stealthily, are virtual reverie tests within the same killing irony." (*Cristian Robu Corcan*)

MIHAIL VAKULOVSKI (b. 1972 in the village of Antonești, USSR, today called Ștefan Vodă in the Republic of Moldova) graduated from the Philology Faculty at the State University of Moldova and in 2002 he received his Ph.D. from the Bucharest University. Author of many poetry books, including: *Immortal in Corn* (1997), *Book of Kites I Never Lifted, Not Even When I Was a Kid, YOU* (with Al. Vakulovski), *Tattoos* (2003), *Autobiography* (2009). He has also published drama: *nEUROSURGERY* (2010), literary criticism: *Group Portrait With the 1980s Generation*, *Poetry* (2010), a prose anthology, a monograph, books of literary interviews and a recent history book called *The Holocaust of Romanian Jews. Testimonies by Survivors* (2004). He has won several literary awards. Member of the Writers' Union in the Republic of Moldova. Founder and editor of the *Tiuk!* online literary magazine. Included in several anthologies in this country and abroad. Translator of Russian literature (Vladimir Vysotsky, Bulat Okudzhava, Daniil Kharms, Marina Vlady, Victor Erofeyev, Vladimir Sorokin, and others).

Attic Mole

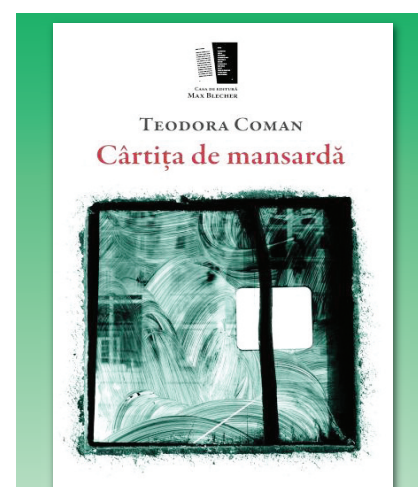
The book entitled *Attic Mole* by poetess Teodora Coman has won several literary debut awards. Her poems gravitate around the special topos of the attic room, dominated by an obsession for the carnal in utterings that are sometimes abruptly tender.

"*Attic Mole* is a book by a poetess possessing a secure and distinct voice, without any trace of hesitation in her language, without compositional effects seeking to impress, whose tranquility, elegance, and austerity evoke to me the performance of a swordsman." Mihaela Ursa

"In *Attic Mole*, Teodora Coman makes a subtle, but also impressively poignant X-ray of a domestic, feminine daily environment on the threshold between actual biography and the heavy, self-ironic brush strokes of an individual mythological deconstruction . . . her poetry has the heartrending tension and melancholy of Frida Kahlo's painting, grown upon the monstrous, anarchic Surrealism of a Max Ernst." Rita Chirlian

"In *Attic Mole*, both the 'attic' and the 'mole' are images of the interior and of interiorization, outside (under, above) a reality that has to be placed between brackets to discover and scan the body . . . The discovery is rather an essential drilling into the existential, a cold analysis of the several basic elements a man and all his fellow men are made up of. The individual accent disappears, as the texts configure a 'canonical' human infra-reality, a body who could belong to anyone, anytime, anywhere, subjected to a revealing dissection . . . The poetess no longer has to say 'we' in order to reach 'me': she notices the unnoticeable and coldly analyzes what is not analyzable in a dissection of this world, of the whole that she/(we) perform. Everything enters into resonance and correspondence with everything else, like with Ileana Mălăncioiu, but with an obvious discourse novelty: "every time I separate/ the egg yolk/ from its white/ I have deep remorse/ the circle flows against itself/ from one edge to another/ of the ravine between/ my hands// the toothed blade of the egg shell/ cannot cut without anesthesia/ the yellow blood of a chic/ before the creation of its body/ it flows equally, and I mean equally/ red." Daniel Cristea Enache

TEODORA COMAN (b. 1976 in Sibiu) has published poems in several Romanian magazines and since 2011 she has been writing book reviews for the *Poesis Internațional* magazine. A group of her poems was included in the anthology entitled *The Longest Day* (2011). The book *Attic Mole* is her editorial debut and it was nominated for the National Mihai Eminescu Award, Opera Prima, having won the Iustin Panța poetry debut award and the award granted by *Accente* magazine for literary debut.



TEODORA COMAN

Attic Mole
Max Blecher Publishing House,
Bistrița, 2012



Open Books on an Open Stage

A few days before the first edition of Transylvania Book Fair, which took place in Cluj-Napoca between the 19th and the 23rd of June 2013, written and virtual mass-media, radio and TV stations presented to the general public a nationwide event, with a considerable participation of the national publishing houses, with a 13 hours a day visiting schedule, with book launches, public readings, music and theatre shows, poetry recitals, with more than one hundred authors on stage, so that readers could meet those who provide them with pleasant reading hours.

What followed was a celebration of books, and especially of the authors, who got a big round of applause from several thousands of visitors a day; the latter faced the heat for an autograph on their favorite book. Dozens of sites and blogs took over and commented enthusiastically a genuine celebration of books in Cluj organized by Eikon Publishing House, after other eight similar events in Bucharest, Galați, and Zalău. This time, the partners of the publishing house were the Cultural Association Eikon, the Town Hall and the Cluj-Napoca Local Council, with the help of several sponsors who understood that, even when books don't make life better, they make it more beautiful.

Transylvania Book Fair was a celebration and an occasion to pay homage to writers, once appreciated and acclaimed in the city, now forgotten, each one in the shelter of his own visions. The stories of the authors created this book industry, nowadays mostly reduced to its financial dimension and sometimes conducted by semiliterate cellulose merchants. The value of a book has been mistaken for its saleability, and the authors who are no longer liked by today's public are simply forgotten, when they are not downright eliminated by the... saleable "competition". It is precisely this moral repair that Transylvania Book Fair has made, as it had the authors up on stage so that they could be admired, applauded, approached for autographs, so that they could meet their readers. The substantial prizes of this first edition were offered exclusively to the authors, to the creators of books, today fallen into the disgrace of those blinded by the models and fashions of visual tyranny.

We will enumerate some events, and we ask those who are not mentioned not to mind. Starting with the launch of two books dedicated to Mihai Eminescu, one belonging to



the academician Mihai Cimpoi, the other to the writer Florina Ilis, the first day of the festival ended with a recital by the jazz musician Mircea Tiberian, who, this time, was in Cluj as a book writer as well. The recital was followed by a symphonic rock concert. The first day also saw the opening of the exhibition of the master of graphics and intelligent caricatures Octavian Bour. At dusk, the poets



Mureșan, Eugen Suciu, Pavel Șuşară, Cosmin Perța presented an exciting poetry recital, followed by the launch of several theatre volumes by Ștefan Caraman, Ion Sapdaru, Mihai Ignat, and of a script by Mircea Măluț.

The volume "Reading. Profession and Enjoyment", by Constantin Cubleșan, prepared the public for "An Inner Romania" as seen by Vasile Sebastian Dâncu, a book of confessions written with genuine literary talent by an author known to the general public rather as a politician and sociologist, and two prose volumes by Ana Ludașan and Dumitru Hurubă, in the proximity of other... "Proximities and Confessions" made by Ioan Pinteia and commented by Mihaela Ursa, Ștefan Baghiu and Paul Siladi. The poet Ion Mureșan chilled the atmosphere with his "Winter Book", the second edition, but he rendered it hot again with "Alcohol Book", this time recited by the author and sung by Ada Milea, accompanied by Bobo Burlăcianu. On Friday morning, the 21st of June, Ioan Aurel Pop and Ioan Bolovan launched "The History of Transylvania", next to their guests Vasile Sebastian Dâncu and Vasile Pușcaș. And the conference from the Cluj subsidiary of the Writers' Union, "Gastronomy and History in 15th-16th centuries Transylvania", reminded us that literature goes down to the stomach, but good books, just like good wine, go up to the head...

"The Writings of the Metropolitan Nicolae Colan" was launched in the presence of the Metropolitan Andrei Adreicuț, Acad. Horia Colan, Elena Abrudan and Constantin Cubleșan. The publishing house Caiete Silvane of the Culture and Art Center of the County of Sălaj went on the stage of the festival with an interesting series of books, "Diary from Times of War" by Corneliu Coposu, "Chronicles on the Poesis Border" by George Vulturescu, next to the "Collection of Inkstands 1 and... 2" of the discreet, but talented poet Viorel Mureșan, and by "Brâncuși after Brâncuși" written by Ioan-Viorel Bădică, evoked by Vasile Muscă, Constantin Zărnescu and Daniel Săuca.

The author of the book "The Intelligence of the Matter", awarded on the occasion of this festival, the renowned neurologist and psychiatrist Dumitru Constantin-Dulcan, launched his new book "The Mind Beyond", a synthesis of the experiences of clinical deaths, which, with the means of today's science, corroborates the researches and the truth of religion, and offers the possibility of searching and believing at the same time.

Saturday, after a poetic recital by Eliza Macadan, Iulian Dămăcuș, Flore Pop, Ion Cristofor, Adrian Popescu, Aurel Pantea, Mircea Petean, saw the launch of the volume "The Brother of the Prodigal Son" by Aurel Cioran, an event-book, with an ample correspondence between Aurel Cioran and Emil Cioran.

On Sunday, the old fellow from Humulești, Ion Creangă, forever young, topical and updated in cartoons by Șerban Andreescu, after a script by Liviu Antonesei and Adriana Nazarciuc, presented by Ruxandra Cesereanu, Adrian Barbu and Ovidiu Pecican, delighted the young public, preparing them for the show "The Smart Little Tailor", offered by the actors of Puck Puppet Theatre,

Ion



Event

the 1st edition



Florin Suciu-Buh and Laura Corpodean, by courtesy of director Emanuel Petran.

“Read what you like” was the challenge-invitation to public reading. Readers of all ages came with their favorite book under their arm and, once on the stage, they tried to (re)kindle the public’s appetite for reading. Those who went on stage with their books were photographed and included in the project “I Love books” by Marta Popescu.

Finally, at 7 o’clock, Transylvania Book Fair closed its doors for visitors, but it opened instead the doors of the cinema hall Victoria; after the launch of “Fahrenheit 451” by Ray Bradbury, republished with elegant graphics, the viewers watched the movie made after this book by François Truffaut. Let us hope that “the prophecy” of the movie will not become true, and that, from now on, there will be more people of books, not book-people. (T.F.)



A Subjective Viewpoint

I went to Cluj for the 1st edition of Transylvania Book Fair, in the last days of the month of June. Good organization (my thanks to Eikon Publishing House, and to Mr. Ajder). But – ironically, in the style of Caragiale or of his character Mitica, who is not really loved in Transylvania – it was a sweltering weather, remindful of the one in “Scorching Heat” and “Petition”. Luckily, there were dozens of welcoming pubs and terraces on Eroilor Street and not only, where, especially when the evening approached and the celestial body hid beyond spires, there were plenty of people and the ice melted usefully in the liquids in the glasses. I am pleased to mention “La Piazzetta” with its almost Genovese charm and “Insomnia”, somewhere across the regretted “Arizona”.

Some of the friends in whose company I spent pleasant minutes and even hours at

book launches and not only are: Ms. Florica Bud and Andreea Hedes, who had come from Baia-Mare and Dej, Marta Petreu, the distinguished local writers: Ion Mureșan, Mircea Petean, Ion Vartic, Ștefan Manasia, Ioan-Pavel Azap, Constantin Cubleşan, Ovidiu Pecican and many others from Cluj. There were also others from Bistrița (Gavril Tărmure for example), Arad (Ioan Matiuț), and an important team from Bucharest: Ioan Es. Pop, George Volceanov, Ioan Cristescu, Eugen Suciu, Pavel Șuşară, Cosmin Perța, Dan Mircea Cipariu, a bit later and, of course, Mircea Tiberian with an amazing performance on Wednesday evening (the 19th of June), just like Ada Milea, on the lyrics of Ion “Muri” Mureșan. I regretted not having met professors Ion Pop and Mircea Muthu, but the latter sent me a precious book of Balkanology, a gift which made me happy. After not seeing Alexandru Dabija for many years, in spite of the fact that we both live in Bucharest, I had the pleasure to meet him right there in Cluj.

Nevertheless, any joy must be paid with some sad news: when I was in Cluj I found out about the death of Alexandru Mușina, poet, professor and essay writer, an old acquaintance with whom I sometimes disagreed, but whom I admired and who left us shortly after he had found the royal path of poetry. God rest him in peace! (H.G.)



The International Festival of Literature “Tudor Arghezi”

the 33rd edition, 2013

THE LIST OF WINNERS

The prize “Opera Omnia”, awarded to some writers of international prestige, given by the County Council of Gorj via the Center of the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj:

- Eric Sarner, France
- Stephen Watts, England

The prize “Opera Omnia” for poetry (awarded by the Romanian Writers’ Union):

- Adrian Popescu, Cluj

The prize “Opera Omnia” (awarded by the Romanian Cultural Institute):

- Acad. Eugen Simion

Prizes for the promotion of Arghezi’s work (Council of Gorj via the Center of the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj)

- Mircea M. Pop, Germany
- Acad. Vasile Târâțeanu, Ukraine
- Acad. Adam Puslojic, Serbia

Prizes for the promotion of the Festival (awarded by the Center of the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj)

- Eliza Macadan, Italy
- Imola Feldberg Popescu, South Africa
- Dragoliub Firulovici, Serbia

The prize for Argheziology (awarded by the Center for the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj)

- Ion Trancău, Târgu-Jiu

The prize “Opera Prima”, the volume of debut (awarded by the Center for the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj)

- Mihai Amaradia, Târgu-Jiu

The Special Prize for debut volume (awarded by the Center for the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj)

- Raluca Blezniuc, Cluj-Napoca

The First Prize for group of poems (the Center for the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj) and the prize of the magazine Acolada ad of the magazine of Vinea Publishing House:

- Lavinia Nichifor, Suceva

The Second Prize for group of poem (awarded by the County Council via the County Library of Gorj):

- Estera Stanciuc, Suceava

The Third Prize for group of poems (awarded by the Town Hall of Târgu-Cărbunești):

- Gheorghe Mira, Pitești, Argeș

Mention for group of poems (awarded by the County Council via the Center for the Preservation and the Promotion of Traditional Culture, the county of Gorj) and the prize of the magazine Arges:

- Ionela Mădălina Grosu, Suceava

The prize of the magazine Discobolul and of the magazine Familia:

- Virgil Todeasa, Blaj, Alba

The prize of the magazine Portal Măiastra:

- Dragoș Niculescu, Bucharest

The prize of the magazine Convorbiri Literare:

- Romina Cătălina Stoichin, Balș, Olt

The Prizes “Arghezi’s Legacy”, awarded by the Town Hall and the Local Council Târgu-Cărbunești

For poetry:

- Maria Denisa Firulete, the 11th grade, Târgu-Cărbunești
- Vasilica Luiza Radu, the 9th grade, Târgu-Cărbunești

For essay:

- Victoria Andreea Ivănuș, the 10th grade, Târgu-Cărbunești

The Jury: Aurel Pantea – co-president, Ion Pop – co-president, Gabriel Chifu, Gheorghe Grigurcu, Paul Aretzu, Mircea Bârsilă, Nicolae Dragoș, Ștefan Melancu, Nicolae Tzone, Florica Bud, Ion Popescu Brădiceni, Spiridon Popescu, Zenovie Cărlugea, Viorel Surdoiu – secretary.





Initiatory Experiences on Mount Athos

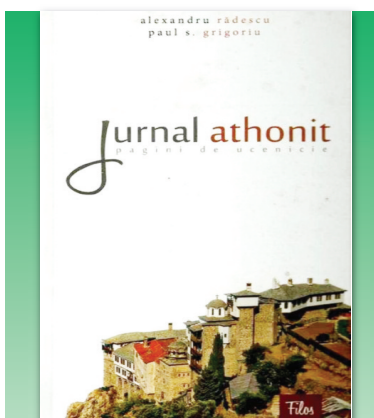
This *Journal* is a new editorial project reproducing an itinerating experience on the paths of Mount Athos. The mountain is regarded as the very fortress or bastion of Orthodoxy, being a virtual monastic republic. The authors, a consecrated journalist and an artist, deal with this subject in a pious, friendly, and warm manner, in an unfinished journal. Unfinished because its authors are still living the experience of Mount Athos, which experience they share any time they have the opportunity.

The book is accompanied by previously-unknown photos made by artist Irinel Cirlănu. "I don't know of any man who has been there at least once and who doesn't crave to, doesn't long for returning to the Holy Mountain. The memory of Athos is somehow like that of the paradise lost. It is like a sweet wound in the soul of any pilgrim." (*Silviu-Andrei Vlădăreanu*)

"A mystery I am still unable to decipher; nothing is fulfilled in this journal without the participation of the other group members. Not like the public in a theater or on a stadium, but as witnesses-together. I must gather them back around me every time, have them in front of my eyes when I choose my words that would spring in front of the cursor on my laptop monitor. If any of them is missing, regardless of the reason, it is pointless to start a new page of this journal. Witnesses-together when I write these lines and bearers of the others' crosses on the paths of the Holy Mountain." (*Alexandru Rădescu*)

ALEXANDRU RĂDESCU is a journalist. In 2008 he was chosen IT&C Journalist of the Year at the Mobile Communic@tion Gala, while in 2010 he received the Young Journalist of the Year Award, IT&C Section, an event organized by Freedom House.

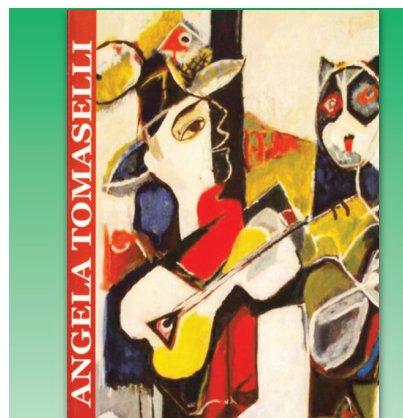
PAUL S. GRIGORIU was educated at the German School in Bucharest (now called the Goethe High School), then he went to the Orthodox Theology Faculty (Department of Theology-Letters) and to the National Music University (Department of Pedagogy, Master's degree in Musicology). He is a Rock musician and a poet.



ALEXANDRU RĂDESCU and PAUL S. GRIGORIU

Athonite Journal.
Pages of Apprenticeship
Filos Publishing House, Bucharest, 2013

Oneiric Painting in the Mirror



IOLANDA MALAMEN
(coordinator)

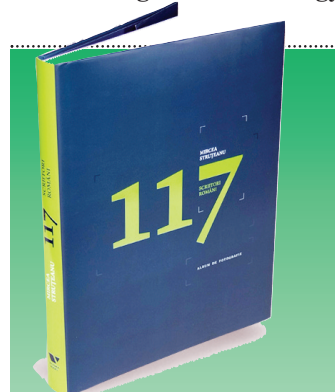
Angela Tomaselli
Tracus Arte Publishing House,
Bucharest, 2013

This album gathers 42 color reproductions of works by a major contemporary painter (born in 1943 in Brezoi, Vâlcea County): Angela Tomaselli. The reproductions are preceded by ample pages of critical references with writers and art critics voicing opinions about this artist's work, plus a group of biographical and artistic data out of which we note: in 1961-1967 Angela Tomaselli was a student at the

Nicolae Grigorescu Plastic Arts Institute in Bucharest; she had her first one-woman exhibition in Bucharest in 1970; she took her first study trips abroad to Czechoslovakia and Hungary in 1973; and she participated in numerous one-man and group exhibitions. She has lived in Bucharest since 1993. Over the years, she received the Award of the Plastic Artists' Union in the Republic of Moldova (1995), the award of the Art Museum in Bacău (1995), the honorary diploma at the Salon International d'Art Quissac, France, and the excellence diploma awarded by the Culture Ministry in the Republic of Moldova (2009).

"Angela Tomaselli authentically illustrates oneiric painting in this country. It has steadfast poetic valences, with musical sonorities. The artist proposes delicate mysteries whose profoundness resides precisely in their not being unraveled. Come to think of it, she does not invoke the immediate reality, but, rather, man's inner reality, our own reality, her own reality." (*Cornel Radu Constantinescu*)

This work was published as part of the collection called Contemporary Romanian Artists, which has also published works on Radu Costinescu, Cela Neamțu, Ervant Nicogolian, Anca Seel-Constantin, Ion Pantilie, Gheorghe Pantelie, Costin Neamțu. In the making: Ana Ruxandra Ilfoveanu, Vladimir Zamfirescu, Silvia Radu, Mihai Sărbulescu. The collection is coordinated by writer Iolanda Malamen.



MIRCEA STRUȚEANU

One Hundred Seventeen Romanian Writers.
Photography Album
Publica Publishing House,
Bucharest 2013, bilingual volume

In this photography album, we can read for the first time the faces behind the texts belonging to some writers who have delighted us over the years. The result of work done for two years, this album gathers black-and-white portraits of 117 illustrious contemporary Romanian writers, including Andrei Pleșu, Gabriel Liiceanu, Herta Müller, Mircea Cărtărescu, Mircea Horia Simionescu, Nicolae Manolescu, Emil Brumaru, Filip Florian, Matei Vișniec and many others.

"Mircea Struțeanu's photos are not portraits of writers, rather, they are landscapes with writers. The spaces where the photos were taken indicate that the photographer has read his subjects and that, in this album, he outlines a visual description full of unexpected subtleties and details. In a country that ignores its writers, his project is more than welcome. It is a homage to the most silent Romanian artists, who publish

The Most Silent Romanian Artists

their prose and verses in unjust numbers of copies." (*Cosmin Bumbuț*)

"A multitude of feelings and emotions are depicted on the faces or bodies of those photographed: relaxation, frustration, bonhomie, fear, embarrassment, suffering, playfulness, joy, aristocratic disdain, con- tempt, boredom, grimness, and so on. Seeing Mircea Struțeanu's images one cannot help thinking about what a fellow writer of those photographed here said some time ago – namely that depth is hidden at the surface of things." (*Radu Jude*)

"I can say I was struck by this idea rather suddenly, although many things had led to its construction in time, from my family type, having strong literary ties, up to my fascination with the world of stories, which engulfed me when I was a kid, which has always been an obsession for me,

and which made me research its limits and texture. I took this opportunity to research its creators. For the most part, the places and shots were chosen at random. Most often, I allowed myself to be led by certain situations, often in completely new places. I decided to discover what the moment in question offered me, what each person transmitted to me, how we could communicate. The photos in this album are the results of this triangle." (*Mircea Struțeanu, author of this album*)

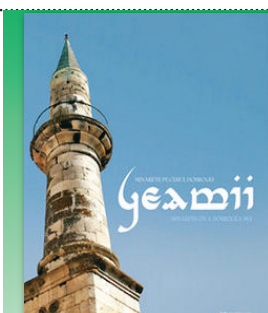
Born in Bucharest, **MIRCEA STRUȚEANU** graduated from the Faculty of Geography and Environment Protection and got a Master's degree in landscape painting. He is a self-taught photographer; in time, his hobby was turned into a profession, so Mircea became famous with his first travel photography project, called *Wide World* – the illustration of a long journey through Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Mongolia, China, Tibet, India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and Malaysia.

Muslim Places of Worship

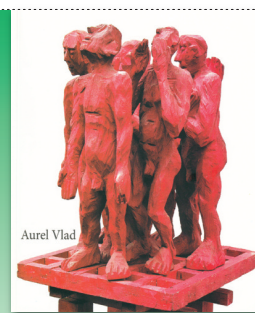
Along the path already consecrated by the preceding albums of the Igloo Patrimony collection, this new publication called *Mosques. Minarets Against the Sky of Dobrogea* approaches an area of our autochthonous patrimony that is too little researched and promoted: Muslim places of worship. Present on Romanian soil in significant numbers, many of them grouped in the Dobrogea area, they are architectural monuments with huge tourism potential. The publication of a book on Dobrogea mosques is an older project of the Igloo Media Publishing House, but, more than this, it is a necessary gesture, considering the lack of Romanian publications to group them and assign to them the cultural status they deserve. Plus, the major transformations undergone lately by the original mosque constructions, following which they became unrecognizable, make it necessary to catch and photograph them before they are subjected to new "restoration" processes.

This album gathers the most interesting mosques in our country from the architectural, cultural, and historical standpoints. In the forefront there are the mosques included on the list of historical monuments (the mosques *Carol I* and *Hunkiar* in Constanța, *Esmahan Sultan* in Mangalia, *Gazi Ali Pasha* in Babadag, *Sultan Abdülmegid's mosque* in Medgidia, *Sultan Abdul Aziz's mosque* in Tulcea, *Sultan Mahmut's mosque* in Hârșova, *Mestan Aga* in Măcin, and others), also including other historical *Muslim places of worship* (the mosques of Cobadin, Negru-Vodă, Hagieni, Tuzla, and so on).

Introductory study: Prof. Dr. Mihai Maxim, a famous Turkologist, director of the Dimitrie Cantemir Turkish Studies Center at the Bucharest University. Texts: architect Cristian Brăcăescu. Photos: Șerban Bonciocat.



Mosques. Minarets Against the Sky of Dobrogea
Igloo Media Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012



AUREL VLAD

Dread
Uj Kriterion Gallery,
Miercurea Ciuc, 2013

Over the past decades, sculptor Aurel Vlad, a noteworthy representative of the 1980s generation, has developed one of the most coherent and important artistic projects in Romania. Interested in probing human behavior in limit situations, the artist places his characters in typically Expressionist contexts.

Dread is one of the most frequent, yet one of the most terrifying feelings of man. A continuous interrogation is what launches the human drama. Aurel Vlad's sculpture troubles and seduces the viewer at the same time. The artist makes use of hints and metaphors full of magic and mysticism, he seeks

and interrogates the evanescence of human life. His characters represent the world, a world lacking reference marks, which can only redeem itself through its power to probe its own self. Dread is what defines us, but it is also what renders us back to humanity. To decipher Aurel Vlad's sculpture means to activate a consciousness of anxieties which he has penetrated into their very depths. The album includes reproduction of 16 works faithful to the same theme.

"I don't want to work on forms visible through touching, because sculpture is essence in form, it can also be seen tactically if desired. In my work I'm preoccupied with another way of opening people's eyes: I wish to make works that will manage to enlighten, to create an inner view, also for those who look without actually seeing."

Born in 1954, **AUREL VLAD** graduated from the Belle Arte University in Bucharest, the Sculpture Section. Among others, he has received the Constantin Brâncuși Award, the Romanian Academy Award for sculpture, and the Cultural Merit Order in the rank of Commander.

Ideas



REMUS CERNEA

The Politics of Change
Paralela 45 Publishing House,
Pitești, 2013

This book includes a selection of the best articles written by Remus Cernea in 2008-2013, dealing with issues such as the presidential campaign of 2009, domestic politics, environment protection, the separation of state and church, free thought, religion, human rights, LGBT rights, animal rights, ethics, education, and evolutionism, plus cultural, historical, and foreign policy subjects. Many

Toward a Philosophy of Action

of these articles focus on issues that have generated hot public debates, polemics, and controversies in recent years. These are some of the most eye-catching titles in this book: *Toward a Pragmatic Philosophy of Action Starting Out From Friedrich Nietzsche, Emil Cioran and Albert Camus*; *Financing, Fiscalizing and Taxing the Church*; *Civilian Nuclear Accident in the United States! How Long Until the Next Chernobyl or Fukushima?*; *Animal Rights vs. Cruelty Against Community Dogs and Their Abusive and Arbitrary Killing*; *Forty-Two Percent of Romanians Reject Copernicus and Galileo, Sixty Percent Reject Hawking and Seventy-Three Percent Reject Darwin! The Importance of Evolutionism for Knowledge and Democracy. One Year on Vox Publica*; *The Photo That Made the Earth Stand Still for a Second. Hawk Eyes of Politicians Glare Over a Starved Country*; *Is War Ever Justified? If Yes, in What Situations? Romania Punishes Its Citizens' Solidarity With Free Libya. How Gendarmes Are Ordered To "Arrest Cernea!" via Walkie-Talkie.*

"I deeply believe that politics can be

conducted honestly, strongly anchored in moral values, without compromise... Doing such politics actually means to be aware of the serious issues one's fellow citizens and the overall society are faced with and to decide to offer some of one's time and energy to correct them. Politics conducted in such frameworks is necessary and it is a noble action... Regardless of the difficulties, in Romania, in Europe, all over the world, democratic values will have to be defended and promoted. So I seek and assume the politics of change..." (Remus Cernea)

Born in 1974 in Bucharest, **REMUS CERNEA** was educated at the Philosophy Faculty of the Bucharest University, being a high-profile member of the civil society, a militant for human and minority rights, for freedom of conscience and of expression, for environmentalism. Currently he serves as a deputy in the Parliament of Romania, representing the Green Party. He has also published a book entitled *Manifesto Against the Becali-zation of Romania* (2007).

Ideas Behind Numbers

The essays making up the *Memoirs in this ideal library* tell the story of encounters made possible by mathematics: encounters through books with ideas of late scientists (Huygens, Newton, Meusnier, Euler, and Sophie Germain, among others), plus direct encounters with people who have influenced the author's evolution. Emblematic personalities in the development of mathematics study at the Bucharest University (Gh. Țițeica, Dan Barbilian, and Nicolae Teodorescu) add to this picture.

"The dream of thoroughbred mathematicians is to prove theorems bearing their names, but my dream was to understand, up to the ultimate consequences, not only certain mathematical ideas, but also their origin, their historical filiation, and their evolution in time," writes Bogdan Suceavă. Episodes of an individual history – under the dual sign of

mathematics and literature – are thus intertwined with research of major mathematical notions: the *curvature*, since it first appeared in the works of Nicole Oresme, up to the latest research.

BOGDAN SUCEAVĂ was born in 1969. Educated at the Bucharest University, where he got his degree in mathematics and a diploma of in-depth studies in geometry. Literary awards: The First Nemira Prize in 1993 for the novella *The Empire of Late Generals*; The CopyRo Award in 2002 for the book *Empire of Late Generations and Other Stories*; The Prose Award from the Association of Bucharest Writers in 2007 for the novel *Miruna, a Story*; The First Prize from the Literary Network in 2010 for *The Night Someone Died for You*. Books of prose and essays: *Fear of Sunset*; *Under the Sign of Orion*; *Empire of Late Generals and Other*



BOGDAN SUCEAVĂ

Memoirs of an Ideal Library
Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2013

Stories; Coming from an Off-Key Time; Distances, Demons, Adventures; Vincent the Immortal.

The Exotic Horizons of the Romantics

literatures: English, French, and Romanian. Two concepts form the foundation of the Romantics' interest in that space: "otherness" and "exoticism," "*Oriental*" meaning just *exotic* or *different*, rather than an identifiable geographic region. Over and over, the book focuses on poets such as Percy Bysshe Shelley, George Gordon Byron, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, Alphonse de Lamartine, Dimitrie Bolintineanu, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, and Mihai Eminescu. Some of the spaces that became the destinations of more or less imaginary travels of the European Romantic poets are the desert, the profane and the sacred gardens, the aquarium, and the ruins; regarding the description of human types, they focus on the couple, the woman, the artist, the prophet, the dervish, the wizard, the wandering Jew, and the tyrant. There is

also a discussion of non-human representations: gods, monsters, spirits.

"In spite of the fact that abroad they have published several research works on the Oriental references disseminated both in the prose and in the painting of the Romantic epoch, studies dealing exclusively with poetic documents are relatively few. Anyway, certainly, so far there has been no study exclusively dedicated to the theme discussed here incorporating three different cultures." (Cătălin Ghiță)

CĂTĂLIN GHIȚĂ born in 1976, is a professor at the Letters Faculty of the Craiova University. He has participated in numerous national and international scientific conferences. He has published several books, including *The Worlds of Argus*; *Hypostases of the Criticism Act*; *Deimography. Scenarios of Terror in Romanian Prose*.



CĂTĂLIN GHIȚĂ

The Orient of Romantic Europe
Tracus Arte Publishing House,
Bucharest, 2013

This book is about the Orient, not about its intrinsic reality, but, rather, its lyrical projections, the way the Orient is pictured in the imagination of the European Romantic poets in three

Who Are We Today?

This book applies general themes to well-delineated time and space. In this book's pages you will find out how myths and tales function today, you will discover the difference between image and reality, you will be offered details about the genesis of the collective mind, collective memory, and identity clichés; afterwards, you will accompany the author through *Romanian Post-Communism*, where you will find out about identity mutilations, the suspension of normality, about the new man and the Romanian intellectual during the transition, as well as the literature of the transition. Chapter III, entitled "*In Search of an Identity*," includes sections such as: "*Nation? A Whim?*"; "*Are We Still at the Gates of the Orient?*"; "*The Romanians and Europe (Integration, Synchronization, Recuperation)*"; "*The Frontier as Trauma*"; "*The Romanian Pantheon*"; and "*Statues Being Fissured*."



OVIDIU IVANCU

Cultural Identity and the Romanian Collective Mind Under Post-Communism (1990-2007)

Eikon Publishing House,
Cluj, 2013

"The passage from communism to post-communism has reactivated a variety of mythical structures which had been latent for a while. Under communism, millennialist myths were on the stage center, but under post-communism, the center-stage is occupied, one by one, by the myth of the besieged city, the myth of world conspiracy, and a great variety of resistance myths. The Golden Age continues to fascinate people, now moving toward the inter-war period in Romania, often associated with the idea of normality." (Ovidiu Iancu)

Since 2009, **OVIDIU IVANCU** has been a Romanian-language lecturer at the New Delhi State University, India. He is mainly interested in literary criticism, imagology, the theory of mentalities, and the history of mentalities.

Love Sanctifies Man's Endeavor

His Beatitude Father Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, underscores the following in the *Foreword* to this work: "The Orthodox Church is trying to make an increasing contribution to soothing suffering, both through its liturgical, spiritual, and pastoral endeavor and through its philanthropy and social-health care. The Church's philanthropic or charitable endeavor is the legacy of the philanthropic, healing, sanctifying, and redeeming endeavor of Our Lord Jesus Christ as an integral part of proclaiming the Gospel of redemption and of the active presence of God's Kingdom. Therefore, the Church's social philanthropy must not be separated from the ecclesial Liturgy, because prayer is a font of humble, sacrificial love within and for the sake of the community. The Church's social philanthropy is primarily a pastoral philanthropy, to help and guide man along the path of salvation, cultivating his communion with God and with his neighbor."

With the blessing of His Beatitude Father Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the album entitled *The Facts of Merciful Love. The Endeavor of the Social-Philanthropic Institutions Established and Administered by the Romanian Orthodox Church*, a project implemented by the Social-Philanthropic Sector of the Romanian Patriarchy, was published in the context of the Year for the Homage of the Holy Unction and of Caring for the Sick and it includes a synthetic presentation (accompanied by representative photos) of the accredited social-philanthropic establishments as well as of those undergoing the accreditation process, created and administered by the Romanian Orthodox Church through the six metropolitan churches in this country. At the beginning of the book, there is a long introduction entitled "Christian Philanthropy Between Its Historical Landmarks and the Present," by Prof. Dr. Constantin Păuleanu.



THE ROMANIAN PATRIARCHY

The Facts of Merciful Love
Basilica Publishing House,
Bucharest, 2013

Economic Culture for Everybody

The author deals with inflation, budget deficit, foreign investments, account deficit, gross domestic product, economic growth, country risk premium, currency exchange rate, monetary policy interest rate, interest rates, and investments. At the end of this book, there is an ample glossary.

Lucian Anghel: "This book is addressed to people who have not studied economics or have forgotten what they learned a long time ago; to those who have not read economic treatises or who have tried to get one such treatise and had a hard time trying to read at least some of it, falling asleep after a few dozen pages. Therefore, in this book, I take the chance of trying to simplify to the maximum the explanation of the main economic notions, to make them easier to understand, sometimes even distorting them for didactic purposes... I strongly believe that basic economic notions should not be comprehensible exclusively to those who have studied very much or who have graduated from an economic education institution... In my opinion, there is no greater cost to a civilized society than the people's lack of economic culture. A lack or low level of economic culture affects us all... Using the simplest possible examples, I tried to explain what is behind economic notions that seem easy to understand at first sight, but, if we analyze them in detail, many of us will realize that we do not know exactly what they mean."

LUCIAN ANGHEL was chief economist and director of the directorate in charge of strategy at the Romanian Commercial Bank. For over 16 years he has worked in banking and finance. Having a Ph.D. in economy, Lucian Anghel graduated from the Cybernetics Faculty of the Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest and did post-graduate studies at Georgetown University in Washington. He began his career as a banker in 1996.

Saga and Tragedy

Before this book, Stelian Neagoe edited the 11-volumes *Memoirs* and 10-volume *Daily Notes* of C. Argetoianu (1871-1955), former politician and prime minister of Romania, a wealthy businessman, director and shareholder in many companies. The book describes this exceptional life, starting out from Argetoianu's genealogy up to his tragic end on February 6, 1955, when this great anti-communist politician died in the prison of Sighetul Marmatiei. The text catches the evolution of this highest-rank personality of the Romanian political history, who left his unmistakable mark on most major events, beginning with the construction of the Great Union in 1918 and ending with Romania's communization after January 1948. For the most part, the book was written based on previously unknown documentary sources in the National Archive, the Foreign Ministry Archive, and the archive of the National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives.

STELIAN NEAGOE (born in 1938) is the author and editor of numerous historical culture studies and works. He is the coordinator of the major work *Encyclopedia of Romania's Political History (1859-2002)*. Equally, he edited a variety of memoirs or historical works by late politicians in Romanian history: King Carol I, Ion Gh. Duca, Constantin Argetoianu, Alexandru Marghiloman, Titu Maiorescu, and others. Currently, Stelian Neagoe is a researcher at the Institute for Political Sciences and International Relations of the Romanian Academy.



LUCIAN ANGHEL

Economy for Average Readers
Smart Books Publishing House, Bucharest, 2013

From Radio Mike to Book Pages

Many Romanians know Mircea Carp as the voice they heard for many years on Radio Free Europe or the Voice of America. He left communist Romania in 1948, reaching Austria, and then, in 1951 he arrived in the United States, where he worked for The Voice of America. Twenty-two years later he returned to Europe, to Munich, continuing to broadcast for a while for the Voice of America; then he moved to Radio Free Europe, where he stayed until that radio station discontinued its activity in 1995. All during his career, Mircea Carp met people and reported historic events: as a special correspondent, he accompanied Richard Nixon, the first US President to visit Romania, he covered the 1977 earthquake in our country, plus the events of 1989. Readers find all this and much more in his memoir book, completed with fragments of the intelligence file the Securitate kept on

him, portraits of the personalities he met, and reports and interviews. Foreword by Dinu Zamfirescu. The book was published under the aegis of the Institute for the Investigation of the Crimes of Communism and the Memory of the Romanian Exile.

Out of the Table of Contents: "Gherla"; "Chișinău"; "Botoșani"; "The General G. Macarovici Military High School in Iași"; "Military School in Germany"; "Incarceration in Our Country"; "The Road to Freedom"; "On the Mike for the Voice of America"; "In Europe: From the Voice of America to the Mike of Radio Free Europe"; "Mircea Carp in Securitate Documents"; "Interviews and Reports".

MIRCEA CARP served as chief of the Voice of America Romanian service and later as assistant director of Radio Free Europe. The Polirom Publishing House published his book



MIRCEA CARP

This Is Mircea Carp,
Hope for Good News Only!
Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2013

The Voice of America in Romania (1969-1978).



Two Hundred and Eighty Years of Romanian Press

MARIAN PETCU

The History of Romanian Journalism in Dates - Chronological Encyclopedia
Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2012

Marian Petcu is proud to legitimize a new science branch – the history of journalism – following the fact that the "history of the press" was reduced in Romania to a history of the literary press. For this, he published *The History of Journalism and Publicity in Romania: Ten Issues of Journalism History* and the chronological encyclopedia *History of Romanian Journalism in Dates*.

This encyclopedia brings to the reader, for the first time ever, a giant volume of information on all types of media entities – newspapers, magazines, radios, televisions, news agencies, and so on – having emerged in 1731-2011. To this information is added that on the evolution of the press, associations of journalists, information about various events – strikes, conflicts, and others of the past 280 years. It is the very first such work published in a former communist country and it may be regarded both as a data bank and as a preliminary work before a history of Romanian journalism treatise.

Marian Petcu: "The History of Romanian Journalism in Dates is the result of work done by 120 specialists – librarians, professors, historians, archivists, and journalists – for four years. They were joined by an equal number of students and candidates for master's degrees and for Ph.D. from public universities of Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, and Sibiu. We present here, in summary form, 18,000 periodicals, radios, televisions, and news agencies, as well as 33,500 journalists and publicists. For the first time ever, we put together relevant information not only about the journalistic production in the Romanian language, but also about the journalistic productions of the Hungarian, German, Jewish, Bulgarian, Serb, Russian, and other communities. We developed the project for this work in 2008, the time we also began to contact collaborators. To debate and approve the work methodology, we called the first national press history congress held in the castle of Macea with support from the Vasile Goldiș University in Arad (2008). A first evaluation of the stage reached in collecting/drafting the requested information was made in Iași at the second congress (2009). Then came the next stages of processing, correcting, and ordering the collected material. The book is useful to all those interested in press history, culture history in our country – a great variety of specialists."

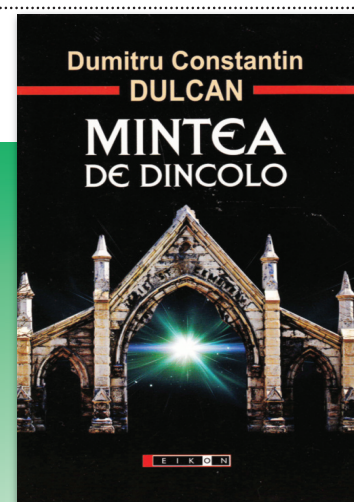
MARIAN PETCU is a professor at the Cultural Anthropology and Communication Department, Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences, of the Bucharest University. Having a degree in journalism, he holds a Ph.D. in sociology. He has published works on the history of censorship, the history of publicity in Romania, media sociology, the typology of the Romanian press, and others. He has founded and managed periodicals: *Jurnalism și Comunicare*, *Revista Română de Istorie a Presei*, *Studii și Cercetări de Istorie a Presei*, *Revista Balcanică de Istorie a Comunicării*. He has initiated national press history congresses.

Clinical Death Experiences

Three decades after publishing *The Intelligence of Matter*, Dumitru Constantin-Dulcan publishes a complementary work, in which he synthesizes, from the scientific point of view, the out-of-body experience in clinical death, reaching, through reason, the place where religious man reaches with his heart. Using the methods of today's science, the author proves the reasons of the heart and of the spiritual universe, felicitously contradicting Pascal's famous assertion: "The heart has its own reasons which reason does not know." In *The Mind Beyond* there are enough elements to elaborate a mental ethics that is extremely necessary to us who live today: despite excessive communication through the media and sophisticated technological means, we live, perhaps, in sad public solitude. We are not alone in the Universe, the author tells us, rather, we are directly responsible not only for our acts, but also for our thoughts, which can instantly influence the lives of our fellow men.

Out of the Table of Contents: "Consciousness – Just a 'Secretion' of the Brain?"; "The Neurophysiology of Consciousness"; "Consciousness and Quantum Physics"; "Perceiving the Future – A Great Mystery of Consciousness"; "Becoming Aware of Death"; "Journersonal Regressions"; "Journeys Out of the Body – Reality or Fantasy?"; "Splitting"; "The Physical Universe and the Invisible Universe"; "Modern Medicine Suggests Reincarnation"; "James Van Praagh – A Famous Medium"; "Revelation – A Quantum Leap Into Consciousness"; "Neuro-Psychology and Emotions."

"The clinical death experience was a great gift God gave us to let us know that we must change the path we have walked on so far. It is for the first time in the history of the Universe that, at celestial level, it was decided that our world should be redeemed not through death, but through spiritualization." (Dumitru Constantin-Dulcan)



DUMITRU CONSTANTIN DULCAN

The Mind Beyond
Eikon Publishing House,
Cluj-Napoca, 2013

DUMITRU CONSTANTIN DULCAN is a medical doctor, neurologist and psychiatrist, holding a Ph.D. in medical sciences.

Interview

Dialogue by
ANDRA ROTARU

“The Liberty of My Mind Didn’t Take the Lack of Liberty in Our Lives Into Account”



DENISA COMĂNESCU

At the Bookfest 2013 International Book Salon, a book called *Banishment From Paradise* by Denisa Comănescu was launched; it was published by the Tracus Arte Publishing House, being a reprinting of the writer’s debut book. When first published in

1979, the book received the Debut Award from the Romanian Writers’ Union. “In a world dominated by dogmas and an art institutionalized in patterns, this writer found her own space, writing an intimist poetry, bearing an obsession with biography, her

own biography. How did poetess Denisa Comănescu manage to become today’s famous editor is something she alone knows. How did editor Denisa Comănescu manage to preserve her poetry is a great mystery to me.” (Florin Iaru)

One’s biography gets inserted into poems like a print whose becoming permanent has to do with the one who interacts with the memories of this unique world. This way, a topographic, emotional, amorous, astrological universe is being revealed. This biographism is also expanded in the books that followed Banishment From Paradise.

Biographism is rather a way of writing, a style, less so a material for poetry. Robert Lowell is the one who made this remark half a century ago. In poetry, the important thing is for language to support such a relationship with the biography. I wrote *Banishment From Paradise* when I was 20-24, and I know I didn’t realize this back then.

“Rottenness was buried within me too deeply/ buried within me/ for it to reach surface on its own.” This is what you wrote in the poem The Obsession of Biography. What forces extract the nuclei out of biographism, how does the insight occur?

No strategy of a poem at the time of its writing has ever been clear to me, not even now. What one can do in order to end up dosing profound variations of emotion, starting out from the surface of things. Every time, I wrote these poems in a first form from the beginning to the end. Then I worked hard on some of them, on the words, on certain expressions, on the weight of syllables, on rhythm, on syntax, on calibrating the verses, on breaking them up, no matter how prosaic they may appear.

A young literary critic, Raluca Dună – at your book launching at Bookfest 2013 – said that your poetry, its specificity, had to do with the cosmopolitan spirit it lets out.

I read a lot of foreign poetry, even since I was a teenager. Then, in 1972, the *Panorama of Contemporary World Poetry* by A.E. Baconski was published, and, when I began to study at the Letters Faculty in Bucharest, I had access to the original

books of Anglo-American poetesses and poets. It was like waking up in a different world, the real one, whose language I recognized and where I was happy to live. I cleansed my mind of “metaphorisis.” The liberty of my mind didn’t take the lack of liberty in our lives into account. There was yet another essential encounter, the one with Surrealism. Three professors (of the ones I studied with) gave exemplary lectures as far as their universal opening was concerned in the 1970s at the Letters Faculty: Dan Grigorescu on plastic arts and the literature of the 20th century, Ovid. S. Crohmălniceanu on German Expressionism (in comparison with modern Romanian literature), and Alexandru Sincu on literary theory. Then I met Mircea Ivănescu and Professor Ștefan Stoescu of the English Department, they were good friends, those two, who literally lived within world literature.

What is it like to play at being a cloud?

I was only able to do that by reading and re-reading Julio Cortázar, during a summer which wasn’t very happy for me. The naïveté of the girl who thought one could escape this way.

Between a somber poetry and one with shades of acute purity, the evanescent creeps in, perhaps a balancing note, the one through which poetry avoids drama, but gets charged with a wisdom of the whole, not just of the detail. You were just over 20 when you published this book, Banishment From Paradise. Where did you get all that experience? Did becoming mature in poetry precede the writer’s becoming mature, did it foresee it?

Trying to transmit poetic emotion, I don’t think this has to do with becoming mature. If one succeeds, it has to do with the quality of diction. Then, the society we live in forces one to open one’s eyes earlier. When I was 17, I traveled to West Berlin. I acted in a theatrical production at the Culture House

of Buzău, the city where I lived, and, since that team had won the 1971 First Prize for Amateurs, the bonus was our participation in a great international amateur theater festival, Interdrama 71. It was some kind of an initiatory journey, through Budapest, Prague (on the Charles IV Bridge, I cried for Jan Palach), Dresden, East Berlin, and West Berlin. After 10 days of that festival, followed our return and its consequences. Then, for the first time I experienced directly something about the nature of good and evil. Afterwards, until 1990, I never managed to travel to the West again, although I had scholarships and invites to festivals. I couldn’t get the Romanian visa.

The people around, the young people of this time pull “the ring of poetry/ as if it was a grenade.” What do you think they are like today? How can anyone reestablish the “honor of biography/ left under a tram chair/ near a basket of dreams and poppy”?

1. Explosive.

2. By opening up to existence, not only to the epidermis. Although, paraphrasing Sylvia Plath, one can write about anything in this life, on condition one has the strength and the necessary imagination to improvise.

What was the first book you published in the collection called Denisa’s Shelf? What is the relationship between a creator and a person who helps creators, between poet and editor?

This year in late May, it was the seventh birthday of the Denisa’s Shelf collection. I launched it in the spring of 2006 at Humanitas Publishing House, using a few criteria which I also followed when I built previous collections, be it at Univers Publishing House until 2001, or at Polirom Publishing House (Polirom Library collection) from 2001 until February 2006. These are the first two criteria, the most important ones: literary quality and salability. The key is their dosage. Denisa’s Shelf debuted energetically, with seven titles at the same time, of which I’d like to mention *Player Piano* by Kurt Vonnegut and *The King David Report* by Ștefan Heym. The collection has always sought to offer to readers, in translations as beautiful and faithful as possible, fiction authored both by classics of modernity and consecrated names of the 20th century, and by writers who made names for themselves in the early 21st century and distinguished debutants, as well as best-sellers that have been adapted into movies several times. What I’m interested in is that the selected titles should be as diverse as possible, both in point of style (from realism to present-day experiment) and of geographic area (from Japan, China, Malaysia, and India to Canada, Australia, and South Africa, from the United States to Albania, Portugal, and Finland). In recent decades, I found that women writers play an increasingly important role in fiction and I was happy to bring many new, important names to the Romanian book market. In August 2007, as part of the Humanitas Editorial Group, a publishing house dedicated to foreign literature was established, Humanitas Fiction, whose backbone is the Denisa’s Shelf collection. Out of this “Shelf,” several author series sprang out (Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt, Isabel Allende, Amos Oz, Herta Müller): currently, there are nine of them.

The relationship between poet and editor? They hate each other, each would gulp the other’s time, if they were not like Siamese twins. More often than not, their perpetual fighting has this result: the one who edits wins while the one who writes continues her lethargic existence. But when she wakes up...

After reprinting that debut book, what surprise are you preparing for us? You benefit from a creation residence in Switzerland currently.

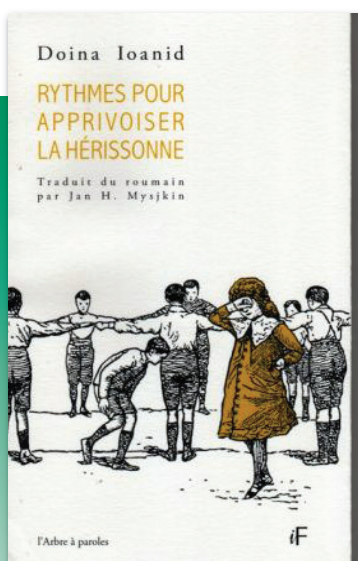
I don’t know yet. Now I’m erasing my traces in Switzerland. At the end of the scholarship, after a few months, I’m deleting my name from the population records at the City Hall, I’m handing over my temporary permit to the library, I’m paying my last phone bill, I’m taking old recipients to the collector of white, green, and chocolate-colored bottles, and I’m saying goodbye three times a day to the lake in the valley. This residence was a gift I had not hoped for: it cleared my thoughts.

THE OBSESSION WITH BIOGRAPHY

If somebody would brush my hair aside
if somebody would raise my hair gently from my brow
as a crazy diamond might appear
this city
with its lonely streets and ramshackle houses
that tumble down at the mere shutting of a door
with its strelitzia gardens and rubbish bins
where childhood echoes
still can be heard whispering:
*Mea mater, mea pater,
filium vestrum lupus est*
with its music shattering cars’ eardrums
photographs that murder the leer of old men
and clay jugs of curdling milk
left everywhere in the houses
by the dying father
to be found only by the lover
who deserted his daughter
(no, he won’t be coming back
the old man gave up the ghost for nothing
and even if he returned
he wouldn’t give a damn
thinking that later his own father
would sell his soul
in who knows what kind of shady deal)
with the lilacs in the courtyard of the girls’ dormitory—
blind men standing watch over their anemic flowers
blossomed too early have a premonition
of Gemini wallowing in Aquarius
(insane, it’s insane
soon we’ll celebrate a feast)
with the old hunchback woman
when she shrieked:
“You too will be like me
Someday”
(A week later you fell
and followed the old woman’s shadow
like a calf.
If she were still alive in her little house under the hill
what things she could tell you)
with your friend who bore her ugliness

like a purse bulging with silver
(she abandoned you too:
retreating in the ear of a mountain
next to a strong young man, she
the small, the weak, the stunted . . .
When she comes back home
with her poems bound in precious metals
many who remained here
will have disappeared)
with the virginal bed
the bed of torment
(somebody climbed through the window
and stole your nights)
where you tossed about
as if a baby had installed its cries
inside you
but you didn’t know any lullabies
with the pigeons in the cage received as a gift
at eighteen
(every fall you kill them one by one
and read their entrails
bang: your father’s dying
bang: your lover’s leaving
bang: you guzzle the bottle of not enough Neuleptil
bang bang . . .
But nobody brushed my hair aside
but nobody raised my hair gently from my brow
and this city where
*Mea mater, mea pater,
filium vestrum lupus est*
is like a dead sea
(and it’s in vain the blind men prophesy
a feast
rottenness was buried in me
too deeply
to reach the surface)
will remain hidden forever
like a crazy diamond.

Translated into English by
Adam J. Sorkin and the poet



DOINA IOANID

Rhythms To Tame the She-Hedgehog/
Rythmes pour apprivoiser la herissonne
L'Arbre à parole Publishing House, If Collection,
French version by Jan H. Mysjkin

Crossroads of Literary Genres

The book *Rhythms To Tame the She-Hedgehog* was published for the first time in 2001 by Cartea Românească Publishing House. The book recuperates and recomposes a feminine lyricism of diary entries and traumas of incisive poetesses of the years 2000. The writer devises a survival manual, a poem-diary, writing down the regresses and progresses of a body that has been spiritualized for a long time. Beginning with this book, the poetess's writing acquires a stronger intensity, which used to pulse in a latent state in her previous books.

"Doina Ioanid's texts in *Rhythms To Tame the She-Hedgehog* oscillate between poem and diary entry, between poetry and prose, between raw note-taking and oneiric imagination, being part of a zone which in older approaches was called quasi-literature." (*Octavian Soviany*)

DOINA IOANID published poems in the collective volume entitled *Windows '98*, Aristarc Publishing House, Onești, 1998. She participated in the experimental volume *40238 Tescani*, Image Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000. She debuted individually with a book of poems and prose: *The Marzipan Demoiselle*. Other poetry books: *It's Time To Wear Earrings*, *The Books of Bellies and Solitudes*, and *Passage Poems*.

Her poetry books have been translated into French, English, Dutch, Turkish, Slovenian, Bulgarian, and Croatian.

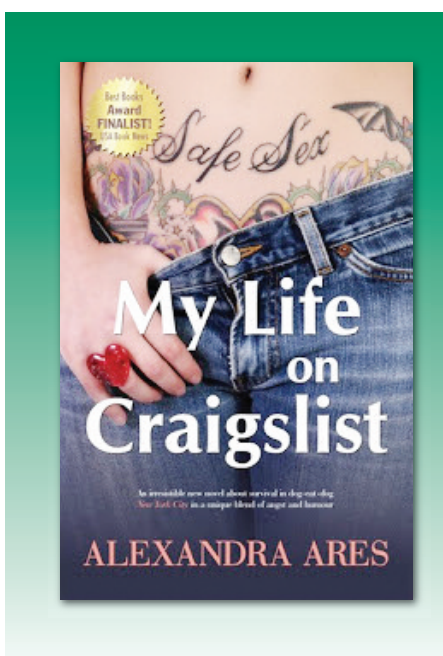


The Babel Library

US: Alexandra Ares Finalist for Fourth Award

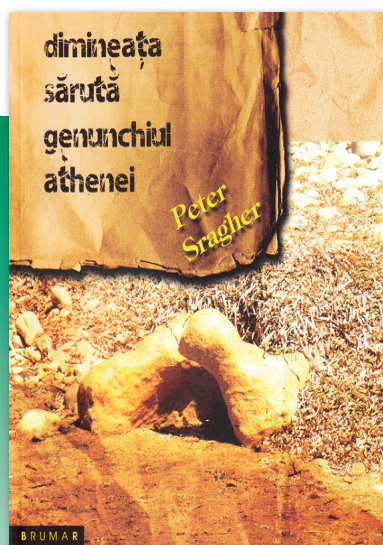
In July 2013, the novel *My Life on Craigslist* by Romanian-American author Alexandra Ares became an Award-Winning Finalist of Readers' Favorite International Awards for Humour/Fiction. The Readers' Favorite contest is open to all the books in the world published in English: the results are set by bloggers and readers, being a popularity barometer. This is the second time this novel has been nominated for an American award: in 2011, the first edition of *My Life on Craigslist* became a Best Books Award Finalist USA for women fiction offered by US Book News in Los Angeles. The Readers' Favorites winners will be announced on November 23, 2013 at Regency Hotel in Miami in the opening ceremony for the Miami Book Fair.

Alexandra Ares's novel was published in Romania in 2012 by Polirom; it is a satire of the way the internet has



perverted many people's way of relating sentimentally to others, equally offering an acid mirror of young Americans' latest mores in their race to survive and have a partner. So far, Alexandra Ares got a national award in the United States for her mini-novel *The Other Girl* and her works became award-winning finalists three times: *My Life on Craigslist* twice and *Dream Junkies* once by the prestigious *ForeWord Reviews* in the spring of 2013 (a novel also published by Polirom).

"Each award is a lottery, because much is being written, and very well too, so any quantification in art is utterly subjective," Alexandra Ares told the *Romanian Book Review*. "Plus, my novels are written for the public, not for critics. Of course I'm happy when they are appreciated across the ocean and in Romania. I hope that my readers abroad will go to Amazon, too, or to the Polirom website, to read my books."



PETER SRAGHER

The Morning is Kissing
Athena's Knee
Brumar Publishing House,
Timișoara 2012

This book of poetry and poetic prose is the result of two journeys in Greece – with

Seventeen Years for a Book

the association "Panait Istrati's Friends" – in August 1995, and one to the island of Zakynthos, as well as the result of an endeavor which lasted for seventeen years. In the beginning, there were texts written exclusively in Romanian; in time the author added two poems written in the German language, seven poems written in English and another two texts – about the poet and about poetry, written by him in English.

"I woke up with Greece in my soul and I thought it was a dream, but it stayed there. *There* is a just a way of saying, because up to this day this *there* has remained unknown to me, because nobody has found out where the soul is. Some people think it is next to the heart. The only thing I found out was that this feeling for Greece enriched me without my being aware of it. And while in the beginning it was captured only in the sounds of the Romanian language, as time passed by, it acquired other sonorities as well, those of the German language, then those of the English language. Seventeen years in which a

dream became a book which took the title of one of the poems."

The volume also contains five photos, as an integral part of the poetic endeavor made by the author between 1995 and 2008.

PETER SRAGHER did German studies in Bucharest, and he is the president of the Translations Department of the Writers' Association in Bucharest. Some of the published titles are: *Why Did You Make Me the Kiss of Hate?*, Du Dyle Publishing House, Bucharest, 1995; *Let Us Have a Baby*, Paralela 45 Publishing House, Pitesti, 2003; *Why Have You Made Me, God?* *Por qué me hiciste, Dios?*, in Romanian and Spanish, AMB Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005; *Hear Silence Speaking*, in Romanian and English, Lapwing Publications, Dublin, 2012. He translated books by contemporary Austrian poets Bernhard Widder, Ernst David, Gerhard Kofler, Bruno Weinhalts and Christian Loidl.

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