

Romanian Interwar Literature – Currents and Trends

The Interwar Romanian Literature is characterized by the appearance of several new concepts and trends.

The Press

In the press, the main important titles were:

“*The Romanian Life*” (*Viata Romaneasca*). It appears on the 6th of March 1906 for the first time. It ceases to be issued during the First World War and it is launched again in 1920 when it is led by Garabet Ibraileanu. From 1930, the paper moves to Bucharest and it is managed by Mihail Ralea and George Calinescu.

The magazine focuses on:

- the authenticity and national spirit, as a social dimension that puts the people at the center
- the European trends
- the rejection of decadence and sympathy for the peasants.

“*The Flyer*” (*Sburătorul*) is issued in Bucharest between 1919-1922 and 1926-1927. It was coordinated by the critic Eugen Lovinescu. The aim of the paper was:

- promotion of young writers
- developing a modern trend in the evolution of the Romanian literature

Some of the writers that started their career here: Ion Barbu, Camil Petrescu, Ilarie Voronca, George Călinescu, Pompiliu Constantinescu.

“*The Wisdom*” (*Gândirea*) appears in Cluj in 1921 managed by Cezar Petrescu and I. Cucu. In 1922, it is moved to Bucharest and led by Nechifor Crainic. It will appear until 1944.

Ø Revista tradiționalistă “*Gândirea*” apare la Cluj în 1921 sub conducerea lui Cezar Petrescu și I. Cucu. Among the traditional writers and poets that cooperated here we can mention: Lucian Blaga, Ion Pillat, Vasile Voiculescu, Cezar Petrescu, Mateiu Caragiale, Adrian Maniu și Lucian Blaga.

“*The Magazine of the Royal Foundations*” (*Revista fundațiilor regale*) appears monthly in Bucharest in 2 series: the first from 1934 and 1945 and the second between 1945 and 1947. The magazine is aimed to have strong roots in the national spirit. Among the most important writers that were involved here we can mention: Tudor Arghezi, Gala Galaction, Ion Barbu, Hortensia Papadat Bengescu.

These years gave the way also for vanguardian publications, having the origin in the European non-conformist current called Dadaism. This was invented in Zurich by Tristan Tzara (Jewish writer of Romanian origin). The writers expressed contempt towards a world incapable to stop crime and wars. From this trend it appeared later the Constructivism and the Surrealism.

The famous sculptor Constantin Brâncuși based his modern art on these currents, like Pablo Picasso did the same in Spain.

The Novel

The Romanian novel widens its theme, covering different social issues and more rich and complex approaches.

A year of reference is 1920 when the novel “*Ion*” appears, written by Liviu Rebreanu. It is the first Romanian novel comparable with universal masterpieces, due to its strong impression of life which it is sending to its reader.

Another important writers from the interwar period are Camil Petrescu, George Călinescu, Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, Mircea Eliade, Ionel Teodoreanu, Mateiu Caragiale, Mihail Sadoveanu.

Among their works:

- "The Bed of Procust", "The Last Night of Love, The First Night of War" - by Camil Petrescu
- "Poor Ioanide", "Otilia's Enigma"- by George Calinescu
- "Concert with Music from Bach", "The Hidden Road", "Roots" – by Hortensia Papadat Bengescu
- "Mrs. Christina", "Maitreyi", "Gaudeamus", "The Novel of the Shortsighted Teenager" – by Mircea Eliade
- "At Medeleni", "Lorelei", "Noah's Ark" – by Ionel Teodoreanu
- "Old Court Kings" – by Mateiu Caragiale
- "Nicoara Horsheshoe", "The Marten Brothers", "Ancuta's Inn" – by Mihail Sadoveanu.

The Poetry

The modernist poetry developps around the Flyer Magazine. The modern poets include: Ion Barbu, Tudor Arghezi, Camil Petrescu, Al. Phillipide, Demostene Botez, Magda Isanos.

The traditional poetry continues the rural thematic of lyrism and traditional lyrical formulas, innovating too little at the level of the expression. The traditional poetry praises the nature and the land, but also the national history. The poets gather around the Wisdom magazine. The most representative poets are: Ion Pillat, Zaharia Stancu, Lucian Blaga, Vasile Voiculescu, etc.

Here is a brief list of the most important poems:

"Here I came on older times" (Aci sosi pe vremuri) – Ion Pillat

"Prayer" (Rugăciune) - Octavian Goga

"I don't destroy the crown of wonders of the world" (Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii) - Lucian Blaga

"The Oak" (Gorunul) - Lucian Blaga

"Lead" (Plumb) - George Bacovia

"Lacustrine" (Lacustră) - George Bacovia

"Background" (Decor) - George Bacovia

"King Crypto and Lappish Enigel" (Riga Crypto și Lapona Enigel) - Ion Barbu

"Timbre" (Timbrul) - Ion Barbu

"The One Who Thinks Alone" (Cel ce gândește singur) - Tudor Arghezi

"Indecision" (Nehotărâre) - Tudor Arghezi

"I Measure Thee in Noise'n'Silence" (Te drămuiesc în zgomot și-n tăcere) - Tudor Arghezi

"The Will" (Testament) - Tudor Arghezi