The world we live in is dominated by multiculturalism, by multiple identity projects and witnesses a huge cultural production. Therefore, the literary field is always changing, and in the process it transforms not only the concepts by means of which we analyze it but also – more importantly – its relationships to the contemporary cultural environment.

The conference organized by the Tudor Vianu Research Centre (the LIRCO project) on 31 October – 1 November 2008 tackles a topic that has been placed under intense scrutiny during the past few years: the issue of cultural identity in the context of globalization. The themes we suggest for discussion originated in questions such as: which are the instances that define the concept of ‘national literature’ in the 21st century? How does the notion of globalization influence literary studies? Can we talk of a ‘national literature’ otherwise than in relation to a ‘global literature’? Comparative literature, cultural studies, literary theory and literary history are but a few of the disciplines bound to ask such questions.

The conference is structured in 3 sections: the first one, mainly theoretical, is meant to analyze the construction and functioning of several concepts widely employed in the recent discourse of comparative studies (European literature, globalization, canon and cultural identity); the second one is focused on the image of Romanian literature in contemporary Western culture and on the former’s strategies of (re)defining its identity and promoting it on the European/ global market of cultural goods; the third section – organized under the form of a workshop – is oriented towards the educational system as a shaping factor and a vehicle of the literary canon.

Proposals can be sent for any of the 3 sections of the conference (please indicate which you prefer) and have to be related but not restricted to the themes suggested below.

SECTION I – LITERATURE / LITERATURES

This section is devoted to several theoretical and methodological questions that address the changes undergone by disciplines such as comparative literature over the last decades, or the development of new disciplines such as cultural studies, or the construction of new realms of study (focused on issues of identity, globalization, and multiculturalism). The main topic will be the interplay of concepts such as ‘national’ and
‘global’ in the context of contemporary literature and theory, from a perspective that
would go beyond the traditional dichotomic approach, in order to investigate how they
interact in building actual literary canon(s). Another major point of interest will be the
consequences of such debates for the literary institutions and for the literary studies at
large.

The debates in this section target especially comparatists, theorists, specialists in
the field of cultural studies.

Suggested topics:

- **Identity, canon and cultural policies.** Building the canon – contextual/extra-
aesthetic influences. The canon and the ethnic dimension. National/ European/
global canon(s).
- **“European literature » - reality, ideology, utopia.** Constructing the field.
European literature as a side product of a European cultural identity (which is
itself *in-the-making*) and/or as a network of national literatures, either
“cosmopolitan” or not.
- **Globalization – a new “grand récit” ?** What does globalization mean and how is
it to be dealt with in the realm of literary studies?
- **Writers and borders (linguistic, cultural, geographic…).** Exile and identity.
Translations and self-translations, literary marketing strategies, avatars of
canonization, etc.

**SECTION II – ROMANIAN LITERATURE IN THE WESTERN CULTURE**

The relationship between Romanian literature and the Western culture as well as
the former’s situation within European literature have been constant – and almost always
debatable - concerns in the Romanian cultural field ever since the beginning of
modernity. The conference’s second section questions the position of Romanian literature
in a global context, as well as the image of Romanian literature in the eyes of the West.
Thus we are interested in analyses of various marketing strategies and mechanisms of
legitimating Romanian literature abroad (by means of translations into foreign languages,
for instance, and the study of their reception). We also welcome investigations of the
stereotypes at work in the process of interpreting/evaluating Romanian writers/ literature,
and of the forms of theoretical thinking over the “place of Romanian literature in the
world”.

The second section is meant for specialists in Romanian literature who are
interested in the following topics:

- **In and /or out: (re)defining the Romanian literary canon in the context of
globalization.** How does the Western canon interact with “minor” literatures in
the age of globalization?
- **Cultural strategies of promoting Romanian literature.** Case studies. Romanian
writers translated in foreign languages and the reception of their works.
- **Romanian literature and multiculturalism.** What are the points of reference we
relate to when constructing Romanian literary canons? Negotiating Romanian
identity with migrant writers. The literature of ethnic minorities in Romania.
(Re)shaping the image of Romanian literature within current frameworks of research: East/West, minor/major, centre/periphery, identity/alterity, etc. The complex of periphery and the trap of backwardness in Romanian literary theory and historiography. The deconstruction of dichotomist patterns of interpreting the Romanian literary institutions and their canon(s) – a practice to come?

SECTION III – THE DIDACTIC LITERARY CANON

One of the institutions that play a prominent part in building the literary canon is education at all levels (school, university etc.). The third section of the conference aims to undertake a comparative research of the formation of a didactic canon and its functioning in several European and non-European countries. This section is meant primarily for specialists in educational policies and the teaching of literature.

Suggested topics:
- The didactic canon and the critical canon.
- Means of legitimating the didactic canon.
- The didactic canon between curricula and the practices of teaching literature.
- The didactic canon in relation to the beneficiaries of the educational system.

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Paper proposals (title + a 200-250 words abstract in English, French or Romanian) will be submitted by email to one of the following addresses by the 20th April 2008: oana_fotache@yahoo.com, alexandra_vranceanu@yahoo.com, magda_raduta@yahoo.com (preferably as a word document attachment). Please include also a short biographical note with your: name, institutional affiliation, email, research interests, relevant publications.

Notification of acceptance will be sent by the organizers by the 10th May 2008. The conference proceedings will be published in a collective volume at the beginning of 2009.

More information will be soon available on the web site of Tudor Vianu Research Centre at: www.ciscer.ro.