

CLAUDIO MAGRIS

BIO

A critic, journalist, novelist, and translator, **Claudio Magris** is one of Europe's leading cultural philosophers. His novels and dramatic works include ***Illazioni su una sciabola*** (1984, *Inferences from a Sabre*), ***Danubio*** (1986, *Danube: a sentimental journey from the source to the Black Sea*), ***Stadelmann*** (1988), ***Un altro mare*** (1991, *A Different Sea*), ***Microcosmi*** (1997, *Microcosms*), ***La Monstra*** (2001), ***Alla Cieca*** (2005, *Blindly*) and ***Lei dunque capirà*** (2006, *You Will Finally Understand*) [forthcoming in English]. Hailed as a masterpiece in Italy, ***Blindly*** recounts one man's life as he passes through the horrors, hopes, betrayals, and revolutions of the last century. Three of his plays have been published in English in the volume *Voices*. His numerous studies have helped to promote an awareness in Italy of Central European culture and of the literature of the Habsburg myth. Magris is a member of several European academies and served in the Italian Senate from 1994 to 1996. His cultural and literary works of non-fiction have won him special acclaim worldwide: ***Danube*** has been translated into more than twenty languages and ***Microcosms*** received the 1997 *Premio Strega*. Magris has been the recipient of several awards, prizes and honorary degrees. He was awarded the *Erasmus Prize* in 2001, the *Prince of Asturias Prize* in 2004, the *Premio Viareggio Tobino* (writer of the year) in 2007, and the *Friedenspreis des deutschen Buchhandels* (*The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade*) in 2009. Its citation reads, "The German Publishers' and Booksellers' Association awards the 2009 Peace Prize of the German Book Trade to **Claudio Magris**. In so doing, the association and its members have chosen to honor the Italian literary scholar, essayist, novelist and rare examiner of the problems associated with how different cultures interact and live together. In numerous works, Magris speaks of the diversity of systems and languages in Central Europe – of their peculiarities and opposites. He brings together narratives, ruminations, fact and fiction in a thoroughly inimitable literary manner. In doing so, Magris shows just how creative these differences can be when they are respected and considered in terms of their very uniqueness. This way of understanding the world has lead him to become an ardent opponent of exclusionary mind-sets and a powerful foe of attitudes of superiority held by one culture over another. Claudio Magris argues in favor of a Europe whose self-understanding is not based purely upon economic criteria. Instead, he supports one that takes full account of – and insists upon – its historical and cultural tradition and diversity. This is the understanding of individual humanism that derives from the cultural tradition of Central Europe, and it embraces what Claudio Magris calls "our ironic feeling for the diverse." (*The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade*, 2009)