

O CĂLĂTORIE SPRE MAREA INTERIOARĂ

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Abstract: *The three volumes of Romulus Rusan's masterpiece A Journey to the Inner Sea describe the journey to the Mediterranean Sea the author and his wife undertook under the auspices of the Herder Prize awarded to his travelling companion Ana Blandiana in 1982. The trilogy presents a geographical survey of the great cities they visited and which is depicted on the cover map of the 1986 first edition. The first volume starts in Vienna, Austria and follows with descriptions of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Turkey. The second volume picks up from Turkey and ends up in Greece and it is followed by a third volume continuing with Greece and ending up in Egypt. The travelling writers' intent is in discovering the culture and the daily life of the places they visit. The chosen route has been documented with maps and atlases six month in advance of the trip, and researching history books, art albums and other travelers' journals (i.e. Nicolae Filimon and Gustave Flaubert). Explorers' interest is in visiting as many museums, palaces, churches, monasteries, temples and artefacts that speak about and confirm the knowledge the explorers found in other history books and art compositions. The trip unveils ancient civilizations of which the authors seem to have ample cultural and historical knowledge. Greece and Turkey in particular provide genuine opportunities for travelling back in time and for encountering numerous mythological, legendary and literary references. The trip appears as an alert 13,000 km journey over a three-month period that involves more than six countries and their cities and metropolises, and which stimulates the readers' curiosity to see all those intriguing places, but also somehow leaving the feeling of longing for ever seeing them again. In fact, it is a cultural and spiritual journey with a strong literary character that pleads convincingly for art as a form of survival in the face of time.*

Keywords: *journey, literature, civilization, history, mythology, culture, art, journal*