Born in Trieste in 1939, Claudio Magris is an internationally renowned writer and intellectual. After graduating from the University of Turin with a degree in Germanic Literature, Magris began teaching at the University of Trieste.

In 1963, he completed his dissertation on the Hapsburgs as depicted in Austrian literature. The cultural history of Europe would remain an important topic for Magris, playing a central role in many of his best-known works.

Magris’ first novel, Illazioni su una sciabola (Inferences on a Saber), was published in 1984, yet Magris’ literary breakthrough did not occur until the publication of his second novel, Danubio (Danube), which won both the Chianti Rufino-Antico Fattore International Award and the 1987 Bagutta Prize. Described as “unclassifiable,” Danubio follows its namesake from its origins in Germany’s Black Forest to the Black Sea, providing an insightful, colorful depiction of Central Europe. Magris’ other novels include Alla cieca, Un Altro Mare, and Microcosmi.

Magris’ writing has taken many forms other than the novel. A prolific writer of essays, Magris saw more than thirty years’ worth of his essays published in 1998 in a compilation entitled Utopia ed isincanto, or Utopia and Disenchantment. Though much of his academic writing focuses on European culture, history, and society, he has also published literary critiques and translated many works into Italian. He also authored three plays: Stadelmann, Le Voci, and La Mostra.

Magris has long been an important figure in Italy, and served as a member of the Italian senate from 1994 to 1996. He has also frequently written for Italy’s foremost daily newspaper, Corriere Della Sera and in 2001, he was appointed to the Collège de France. Magris currently lives in Trieste. His most recent work is Lei dunque capirà, a modern reworking of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, published in 2006.

He was awarded the Bagutta Prize (1987), the Strega Prize (1997), the Erasmus Prize (2001), the Prince of Asturias Award for Literature (2004) and the Austrian State Prize for European Literature (2006).

Magris currently lives in Trieste