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METASPORIC CANONS. NOMADIC WRITING AND MICROPOLITICS OF THE PLANETARY

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Abstract: This paper aims to introduce three categories in treating the complex phenomenon of canons’ negotiation from the perspective of literature of migration seen from within and from without, notably the nomadic writing, the hybrid paradigm, and the metasporic identities. Its main focus is on the temporal displacement and the “messy” character of a type of writing that resists canonicity and systematization. This type of writing proposes translational subjectivities and a sense of identity framed rather by reworlding belongings than by stable identities. Starting from Des Rosiers’ text on *Metaspora: Essays on Intimates Homelands*, it extends the debate towards what we would call a *micropolitics of the planetary* and specifically on several “hybrid” and nomadic writers belonging to the Romanian literature, Panaït Istrati, Bujor Nedelcovici, Andrei Codrescu, and Norman Manea.

Keywords: metasporic identities, micropolitics of the planetary, Romanian literature, nomadic writing, hybridization.

This article stems from several perplexities I encountered in the last years, as someone who has long lived among writers belonging to the diaspora and who rejected this denomination. In the Canadian space, the concept of migrant literature tends to be avoided, because it is in most cases minoritized. The reason is not that writers in Canada prefer to be inscribed into the dominant trend, but because, eventually, their books

reconfigure the land of adoption in a specific way. Obviously, Canada is not a reference point for the way literature and national canons are perceived in Europe, where peripherality is a stronger imprinted concept, where the fight for centrality is screened generally as a part of an extended politicized spectrum. Therefore, I would highlight the distinctions between the commonality of politics and the specificity of the cultural discourses on diaspora, as it is suggested by Galin Tihanov in his conference “Two Types of Cosmopolitanism: Pathways away from Marginality”, held on November 4th, 2022, part of the Metacritic conference, *Worlding (Semi)Peripheral Literatures*.

While the political diaspora is centered around convergent communities or displaced populations or around the exporting of working forces, I suggest that diaspora as a representational form resists canons, can't be easily systematized, and is not at all porous. It is characterized by psychological factors that are not perceivable unless described through literary lenses. In my affirmation, I do not necessarily imply the use of close reading, but rather the idea of writers becoming literary tools, nomad cartographers, and metasporic identities. Nomadic material is resistant to categorizing, and the approximation of it is in most cases inexact. The first reason is the psychological experience of diaspora (psychological patterns, displacement, estranged experiences). Second, the chrono-discrepancies are critical because generally the historical time is reflected in fictional works through an important decalage.

In this respect, I would also like to add the fact that migration seen from within and migration seen from without do not necessarily overlap. I was surprised to notice this non-coincidence, especially on the occasion of the organizing of the event *Narratives of Belonging* in April 2022, as a follow-up of the international conference *Diasporic Voices*, in which writers of Romanian origin from the United States of America came to present online their literary productions. That was when I realized that a specific type of literature of migration does not cross the threshold of visibility in Romania, as if the nomadic writing was not yet legitimized through a common cultural space. Scarce voices are recaptured within the national canon, on the basis of their relevance for the myths of “boundaries crossing,” internalized by it.

The most important fact to be mentioned is that both the internal community of writers as well as the diasporic community gain visibility through their possible

encounters. When the cultural community established abroad is sufficiently sustainable as to perpetrate values, the vice versa movement is also possible.

Similar to the translational paradigm, where cultures (central and peripheral or double peripheral) come in contact, when talking about migrant writing, “contact is not sufficient for either to happen. Cultural contact does not necessarily bring interference right away, but, in order for an interference to take place, there must exist a clear ‘desire for change’...” (Ursa 135). What is most important is thus this “desire for change” (Ursa 134) rather than simple contact, which could remain without consequences. Most of the time, it does not really overlap with the multiple sociological or structural perspectives that tend to map the trajectories of migration as a clearly designed mechanism of input and response (for instance in neoclassical, voluntarist perspectives).

Whereas diasporic writing can be to some extent explained through sociological paradigms (as stated in *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* by Stephen Castles), there is always a rest, a displacement, a non-relational, a non-synthetic element, which is merely diachronic, related to de-familiarizing and displacement of time, to chrono-methodologies that are unsettling: We don’t know at what precise moment a culture is prepared to digest allogenic elements and at what moment it is tempted to expel them, when exactly a cultural market becomes multicultural and when it insists on reinterpretations of the past, and finally when writers cross boundaries in their desire of contact.

There is a certain deviation that resists synchronizing tendencies, a way of remaining in the interval perpetrated by a recurring Odysseus that is neither stabilized in the final destination nor errant in an in-between space, but concomitantly tempted by adventure and homeland, by loss and gain. Not every path leads home. There are paths leading perpetually to other paths. And this is precisely the condition of the nomadic writing.

Works on the unsettling condition of a diasporic writing that deviated from a confined use – a “horizontal” one (namely the physical dispersion of large populations from their homelands) – to a “vertical” one, which covers different phenomena and extended situations, are highlighted in the *Routledge Companion to Diaspora Studies* (2020), edited by Robin Colin and Carolyn Fischer. Shifts from the external boundaries of diaspora to internal boundaries, namely memory, and especially forces of amnesia and

forgetting that can forge a performative, subversive space, and overcome the binary logic of dispersal and return, are addressed in the volume *Diaspora and Memory: Figures of Displacement in Contemporary Literature, Arts and Politics*, edited by Marie-Aude Baronian (Brill 2006). Moreover, texts such as *Narratives for a New Belonging: Diasporic Cultural Fictions* by Roger Bronley (2000) made identity the construct of textualised narratives rather than the common denominator of a so-called authentic, established one.

Following these preliminary considerations, in order for us to analyze the paradigm of displaced contact, I would propose three terms: nomadic writing, metasporic identities, and hybrid paradigms.

These three terms could approximate the desire for change, the resistance to non-residual translation, and a third way—as an alternative to the nostalgia of loss or to the utopia of desire. Metaspora is derailment, nomadism, approximated by the figure of a perpetual Odysseus on his journey to an unattainable Ithaca. In order to do so, I will make reference to some paradigmatic Romanian writers, who have been inscribed in different ways on the map of the *planetary literature*. Therefore, I will try to capture different “negotiation strategies,” filiations, and temporal gaps that will map spaces beyond estrangement and loss.

First, when addressing the literature of the diaspora or of the exile, we must consider important distinctions that place Romanian writers who lived “abroad” in various contexts, such as forced political exile or cultural exile, the connection with the homeland as well as with the land of adoption, and the construction of personal myths at the thresholds of autobiography and fiction. We should also inquire whether or not these authors are accepted or expelled from the standard canon of national circuits, their hybridizations, etc. And last but not least, the influences they bear, as the canon of which they are part is, by the nature of things, completely different from that of the Romanian literature of origin. For example, Vintilă Horia chooses as characters Ovid and El Greco, Andrei Codrescu finds a formula of combination between the European avant-garde and the American beatnik current, Martha Bibesco is appreciated by Marcel Proust, Panait Istrati addresses his testamentary letter, which will propel him as a writer, to the French writer Romain Rolland; Norman Manea, whose writing is admired by Philip Roth, Gabriela Melinescu, influenced by Swedenborg’s occult writings or Strindberg’s translation of *Inferno*, etc.

For this purpose, the *Encyclopedia of Romanian Exile* (2013) by Florin Manolescu can be considered as an important hallmark for the entire spectrum of Romanian exile. It shows the lines of force and the cultural influences that constitute a different canon from that of the writers from within the country. This canon is understood as integrating different threads to the point of setting up a separate system. In most of the cases, it goes beyond of nostalgia for what has been lost, towards a metasporic integration of the future. The term metasporic is taken from Joël Des Rosiers' book *Métaspora. Essais sur les patries intimes* (2013), an essential work for outlining a canon as complex as that of the affiliations of those who no longer fall within the cultural references of the homeland, but do not overlap completely with the land of adoption. There are of course different degrees of negotiation, thus such a canon cannot avoid trauma, wandering, and loss, but it is mostly characterized by the possibility of amalgamating new identities all along the way: If there are writers entirely dedicated to trauma, such as Herta Müller, or writers who see exile as a long wandering (including Benjamin Fondane), there are, on the other hand, writers who coexist with the language and with their new position in the adopted homeland. Among them, I would mention the cases of Virgil Nemoianu (for whom the exit from familiarity and its smothering connections is a blessing rather than a damnation), Bogdan Suceavă, Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu, Saviana Stănescu, and Cătălin-Dorian Florescu.

Therefore, there are different positions on the map of the Romanian literature abroad, this is why I would also propose for analysis of the concept of metasporic identities, which integrates into their structure planetary cultural elements. Of course, on this twisted path, at least three factors are to be considered when it comes to shaping the new spirit that is declared by the transition to a new cultural space. First, it is a question of whether or not the transition to this new space has taken place by a radical act of rupture. For instance, Bujor Nedelcovici decided to write the novel *The Second Messenger* (1985), bearing in mind that it could push him into exile and final condemnation, which is indeed what happened. It is an indexed novel, and it will afterward appear in France, at the publishing house Albin Michel. Second, there is the issue of language. Not all Romanian writers in the diaspora have the same relationship to the language of adoption. Many of them are translated first, Alain Paruit being among the most important mediators of the Romanian culture in France. For instance, Tsepeneag creates a persona

in writing, after a long period of silence, under the pseudonym Ed Pastenague; Gabriela Melinescu writes in French, but lives in Sweden; Norman Manea negotiates the English versions of his books starting from the editions in various other languages of his Romanian translations. On the other hand, Martha Bibesco, Emil Cioran or Eugène Ionesco are considered to be perfect stylists in the French language. Third, in this negotiating strategy, fundamental is the degree to which the Romanian community in the diaspora has played or not a role in the artistic or professional career of the writer and especially the manner in which the writer himself manages to create a place in that society. For instance: Radio Free Europe was an extremely important factor in the integration of Romanians in France (Monica Lovinescu, Virgil Ierunca, Matei Vişniec, and Bujor Nedelcovici). Less the French university, compared to the American one, that welcomes many prominent figures belonging to the Romanian literature.

In this context, in the first part of my text, I will address the memoir as a genre of the planetary. In this respect, I will follow the considerations of Laurent Berlant in “A Properly Political Concept of Love: Three Approaches in Ten Pages”, in which she addresses what we could call a *micropolitics of the planetary*. The first characteristics of the memoir as planetary praxis in developing self passes through abandoning. Knowing oneself and being known by others develop through abandoning others, through the emphasis on narration. The difference between an initiation practice and the nomadic writing as planetary practice is that the planetary practice does not lead to redemption at the end, but its goal is doing and undoing language, reworlding the environment through polyphonic voices. In the worlding memoir, decomposition is the core stance. Planetary as nomadism involves the fact that other modes of being human must be invented. Not being part of any community, the nomadic writer is inhabited by language itself. He reworlds communities by connecting to space and inhabiting the environment. The way he connects to space describes him rather by solidarities than by identities. Identity is thus not connected to space, but to thinking about belonging and unbelonging.

Under these circumstances, reworlding space is always a matter of how the point of origin or home is perceived. If it is perceived as an apocalypse and there's no possible escape to it, the nomadic writing means the impossibility of escape, a narrative of trauma. Hence, fugitivity is the narration of refusal, through a series of dispossessions. Walking, inhabiting, and practicing a territory involve thus a traumatic tool.

In this context of the nomadic writer, the genuine figure is Panaït Istrati (1884-1935), probably the vagabond *avant la lettre*, a philosopher of wandering. His characters practice wandering as an art of living. The author states explicitly in *Mes Départs* (1928) and in *Le pêcheur d'éponges* (1930): “The adventurer wants and can make a fortune. The tramp doesn’t want to and he can’t. If the opportunity arises, the former is able to exploit the man, subdue him, and even commit infamy. The second one is totally incapable of it. And when the vagabond is endowed with a fruitful intelligence, the philosophy he draws from his life experience is always worthy of esteem. However, we must remain cautious.” (Istrati 115, my translation).

Istrati’s relationship with the French language, in the context of nomadic writing, is a tense one because it starts with a rupture. For the nomadic writer, wandering begins after assuming a radical act of consciousness. I will mention several cases: Bujor Nedelcovici with the novel *The Second Messenger*, after which he went into exile in France; Norman Manea with the publishing of the novel *The Years of Apprenticeship of August the Fool*, after which he left for the United States of America, Dumitru Tsepeneag with the novel *Waiting*, after which began the long odyssey of his French exile. For Panaït Istrati, the act of embracing writing occurs after a suicide attempt, when he sends the famous letter to Romain Rolland. The suicide attempt fails, and the letter to Rolland reaches him as a posthumous testimony, which marks the writer’s rebirth. All his novels focus on adventure as a way of being in the modern world and mark the passage through landscapes familiar to him: Italy, Egypt, Switzerland, Lebanon, and Greece. The writer invokes the introduction of pathos into the reconstruction of artistic truth. Without pathos, no truth can stand. Pure art is foreign to Istrati.

I have insisted on the case of Panaït Istrati because even though he is not yet a hybrid writer, as the ones I will mention soon in my analysis, he gives nostalgia a different dynamic – the dynamic of the future.

In a chapter from the previously cited book (*Metaspora: Essays on Intimate Homelands*), titled *Phenomenology of the Metaspora*, Des Rosiers quotes Rimbaud, who visionary addresses the paradigmatic figure of worldwide migrations, which can only increase: “Des migrations plus énormes que les anciennes invasions” (Rimbaud) (“Migrations larger than ancient invasions”, Des Rosiers 47). But this future and larger

migrations will not stabilize themselves into the classical category of nostalgia or loss, but into unexpected models of combination, of restoring, of negotiating.

In contrast to exilic nostalgia, which escapes from a poor present into a glamorous past, *metaspora* is “lighter, made up of fragments of existence rather than linear narratives; *metaspora* is what measures the distance between intimate beings and the unexpected intimacy of distance, whether geographical, temporal or cultural” (Des Rosiers 34)¹.

Making a city his/her own and making a new culture his/her own in a mixture of space improvisation and recreational logic is the logic of *metaspora*, on the tracks of Jorge Luis Borges, who states: “Of all the cities in the world, of all the intimate homelands that a man seeks to deserve during his travels, Geneva seems to me the most conducive to happiness” (quoted in Des Rosiers 35)².

To put it simply, exilic nostalgia means restoring idealized cities. Improvisational *metaspora* means reinventing them under the spell of a new environment, conducive to happiness, like Gombrowicz has made of Buenos Aires, like Codrescu of New Orleans, like Odysseus has imagined for a while, before falling indefinitely into the destructive nostalgia of Ithaca.

“*Metaspora* proceeds from a logic of improvisation of space and time, from a logic of recreation, placed under the sign of becoming. It is the art of the fragmentary. The logic of spatialization which translates its full awareness of the undecidability of the place, what the errant in general, any contemporary errant in particular, live in the globalized network in which they are inserted” (Des Rosiers 35)³.

¹ “Plus légère, constituée de fragments d'existence plutôt que de narrations linéaires, la *métaspora* est ce qui mesure la distance entre des êtres intimes et l'intimité inattendue de la distance, qu'elle soit géographique, temporelle ou culturelle.” (Des Rosiers 34, my translation).

² “De toutes les villes du monde, de toutes les patries intimes qu'un homme cherche à mériter au cours de ses voyages, Genève me semble la plus propice au Bonheur.” (Des Rosiers 35, my translation).

³ “*Métaspora* procède d'une logique d'improvisation de l'espace et du temps, d'une logique de récréation, placée sous le signe du devenir. C'est l'art du fragmentaire. Logique de spatialisation qui traduit en pleine conscience de l'indécidabilité du lieu, ce que les égarés en général, tout égaré contemporain en particulier, vivent dans le réseau globalisé dans lequel ils sont insérés.” (Des Rosiers 35, my translation).

Is there distress in the wandering figures of such beings animated by metasporic identities? Des Rosiers offers the answer: The imaginary of the urban territory, now extended on a global scale, is occupied by the memory of the metaspore. These debris of events – present in the resistance to the nostalgia specific to metasporic identity – find their origin in passionate tendencies, avoiding the pitfalls of linear logic.

Metaspore goes beyond nostalgia and at the same time avoids the easy solution of reconciliation.

Illusory self-images make it possible to present oneself to the other in a deliberately dispassionate form, purified of origin, in contradiction with the emotional, social and political charge of nostalgic subjects. It is this movement of hope in the primacy of travel that leads writers and their contemporaries to constitute themselves as metaspore, that is to say, to become cosmopolitans of their own culture, foreigners to their own nation (Des Rosiers 35)⁴.

It is perhaps the resolution of the problem posed by the identity of such beings, the leap out of non-belonging: What happens with those not wanting to remain in the purgatory of transitional spaces, who must overcome nostalgia or a certain type of identity politics, a reconciliation which passes through insoluble problems? Metaspore seems for the moment to be a convincing answer.

Des Rosiers makes further reference to Kundera's *Ignorance*, where the Czech writer characterizes the greatest adventurer of all times as being at the same time the greatest nostalgic. But he can't stop but deploring Odysseus' distress and his impossibility to forget Ithaca, Penelope (the return, the apotheosis of the known, the end, the finitude of human life) compared to Calypso (the voluptuous ecstasy, the endless adventure, immortality, love). Calypso, whose Greek name signifies *kaluptein* (hide, being hidden), keeps the hero hidden for seven years, against the gods' will.

⁴ “Les images illusoires de soi permettent de se présenter à l'autre sous une forme volontairement dépassionnée, épurée de l'origine, en contradiction avec la charge émotionnelle, sociale et politique des sujets nostalgiques. C'est ce mouvement d'espérance en la primauté du voyage qui conduit les écrivains et leurs contemporains à se constituer en métaspore, c'est à-dire à devenir les cosmopolites de leur propre culture, les étrangers de leur propre nation” (Des Rosiers 35, my translation).

The conclusion is the following: “Forget Ithaca. Forget the homeland. It is impossible today that we want to remain ignorant. My country is far away, and I know everything that happens there, says the errant now, captive to the enchantment of all the continuous news channels, enjoying all the semantic favors, when he does not create himself the IT organs of globalization. The suffering of ignorance, an eroticized form of suffering, therefore goes far beyond nostalgia” (Des Rosiers 49-50)⁵.

In order to conclude the passage of the second part of my presentation, which fills the gap between narratives of nomadic writing – equivalent to planetary practices – to the multilingual and cross-cultural hybridization, I would like to draw attention to this nomadic worlding energy that is always messy and resists canonicity. Nomadic writing is not reconciling, a texture of contrastive parts that draw correspondences among them, but it is rather characterized by ambivalence, by world-building through destructive tendencies, through discomfort.

My point is that, while many critics are trying to systematize an entire corpus of texts through mainstreaming peripheries, through their negotiation with the center, a different alternative would be to deal with the discomfort, the defamiliarizing exercise induced by nomadic practices of writing. These nomadic practices spell out the discomfort on its way to metamorphosis, through the urgency of encounter. It develops amid noises and interrupts the dominant discourse. This is the core of the nomadic experience and there is no cure to it; it defies the complete definition and it provides no cure for ambivalence, no guarantees. It is inclusive, producing transitional subjectivities that are reluctant to attachments.

I insist on these dynamics of nomadic writing because, as I mentioned in the previous part of my text, it is capable of producing transitional subjectivities that will reframe, deviantly, the map of negotiation of literary canons.

This is why the second paradigm I would like to address is that of large-scale hybridization, performed for instance by a writer such as Andrei Codrescu (Andrei

⁵ “Oublier l’Ithaque. Oublier la patrie. Il est impossible aujourd’hui qu’on veuille rester ignorant. Mon pays est loin et je sais tout ce qui s’y passe, dit désormais l’égaré, captif de l’enchantement de toutes les chaînes de nouvelles en continu, jouissant de toutes les faveurs sémantiques, quand il ne crée pas lui-même les organes informatiques de la globalisation. La souffrance de l’ignorance, forme érotisée de la souffrance, va donc bien au-delà de la nostalgie” (Des Rosiers 49-50, my translation).

Perlmutter) (1946-), who represents perhaps the most successful example of a two-headed avant-garde that, instead of annihilating itself, as has happened several times with the historical avant-gardes, succeeds in an extended hybridization experiment. Namely, he takes over from the American cultural space, in which he is organically implanted, the literary experiments of the poetry school in New York (Ted Berrigan, Paul Blackburn, Joel Oppenheimer), then in San Francisco (Poetry Readings from the Coffee Gallery – Tom Veitch, Aram Saroyan, Pat Nolan), then teaches comparative literature and creative writing at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, where he rediscovers the “southern indolence of the Balkans.”

The experiments that mark his creation are those of a successful hybridization experiment: Following in the footsteps of Fernando Pessoa, he creates several successive identities, namely Julio Hernandez, a Puerto Rican poet living in New York, Peter Boon, a former beatnik converted to fascist mysticism, Alice Henderson-Codrescu, his wife, Calvin Boone, a Dominican monk. The dispersal of the ego and its perpetual pseudonymization is a successful exercise for Codrescu, whose American space, of course, serves as a much less obstructive background than, it seems, the European for other Romanian authors. At first thinking in Romanian but writing in English, and later writing in English but returning to Romanian sources of influence, Andrei Codrescu manages the experience of “placing contemporary American lyric poetry at the intersection of European proto-(surrealism) with the local experimental direction – Olson-Berrigan” (Marcel Corniș-Pop, in Manolescu 180). Codrescu’s novels are, beyond their acute autobiographical aspect – *The Life and Times of an Involuntary Genius* (1975), *In America’s Shoes* (1983), *The Hole in the Flag* (1991), *The Blood Countess* (1995), *Messi@* (1999), and *Cassanova in Bohemia* (2002), *Prof on the Road* (2008), ghostly journeys on the roads of America, avatars of salvation in the modern era, and of the possible return to Romania after 1990.

Norman Manea (1936-), on the other hand, bears the imprint of a destiny marked by the genealogy of trauma. He is part of a group of writers for whom trauma becomes material of aesthetic transfiguration – the trauma of a Bucovina Jewish family which survived the World War II. But at the same time, he belongs to a category of writers whose hybridization was equally successful, in whose case the layers of metamorphosis are not retrospectively rejected. It is a destiny that, it seems, is fulfilled in an era of trauma, as it

can be said that the moment of consecration coincides with the moment of being chased by censorship and therefore of expulsion. From that moment on, the writer has only the alternative of going into exile. In the case of Manea, his farewell novel is *The Years of Apprenticeship of August the Fool* (1979) is considered as an “anti-novel of formation and de-formation of the writer” (Manolescu 487). Passing through West Berlin in 1986, Manea moved to the United States in 1988 with a Fulbright Scholarship on the topic “Holocaust Literature in Southeast Europe.” In his case, there is a fact that remains central, namely that, emigrating so late, and the language of his writing being Romanian, this is transposed into the language of adoption through a “surgical” mediation.

Trauma, linguistic mediation, hybridization, pseudonymization, these are the recurring themes typical for the hybrid writing. *October, Eight o'clock* (1992) is the result of a surgical process that the author applied, starting from the Romanian original *Octombrie, ora opt* (1981), to the German, Italian and French versions of the text, so that, together with the translator, he could produce an optimal English version. When asked by Philip Roth in 1992 about a possible return to Romania, Manea talks of the final departure from communism as equivalent to death. Strangely, the return does not differ too much from it. And yet, Norman Manea returned to Romania in 1997, and as a result, he wrote *The Return of the Hooligan* (2003), translated into French as *Le retour du hooligan* (2006), for which he received the Médicis Étranger award in 2006. Therefore, the recurring themes in Manea are trauma (of the Holocaust), the absurdity of the totalitarian system, the possible hybridization, and, obviously, the exile from which the partial return resembles death.

Both writers presented above could be inscribed in the typology analyzed by Mihaela Ursa in the case of cultures in translation. Whereas the author addresses the translated peripherality in the case of multicultural identities within a given territory (Gyorgy Dragoman and Radu Pavel Gheo), the multiple layers of translation expand to larger scales of hybridization.

If trauma is the most selling topic of a literature of exile, other modulations of it can be found in the idea of a lost paradise. For instance, Monica Spiridon (1952-), in

Central Europe Overseas: Exile and Identity Construction (2011)⁶, states, quoting Albert Camus, that “the only paradises are those we have lost” (7).

The difference between exile and diaspora must therefore be made, especially in the cases of writers and scholars such as Virgil Nemoianu, Bogdan Suceava, and Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu. The fundamental distinction that separates the two initial categories is that the first is always nostalgic for the place of origin, the starting point, placing its representatives in a permanent derailment. Most narratives symptomatic of the exile refer especially to this category, which to some extent confirms the adventure of exile as being a trajectory that involves important psychological losses. The other narrative, of the diaspora, is that of a hybrid or exclusive rediscovery of an adopted homeland, less gratifying, as it involves a major identity leap, possible only in limited cases. At the same time, it implies a departure from the paradigm of the familiar, which is described as suffocating and claustrophobic. Consequently, perpetual removal is the only possible attitude. This is what Virgil Nemoianu affirms when he says: “If I analyze myself carefully, I did not flee the country for political reasons [...] I detached myself from the immediate environment – from dear people, from family, from the network of friends and relationships –, all these suffocating things” (Manolescu 542).

A position is therefore unsettling, especially when its claim, above all, aims at restructuring the original canon or, in any case, its significant retouching. Having a doctorate from the University of San Diego in California, in *The Hospitable Canon* (1991), published together with Robert Royal, Nemoianu proposes “a possible reevaluation by undermining the great creators of a culture” (Manolescu 543). It is a utopian initiative of course, but extremely interesting in view of a genealogical rewriting of Romanian literature, as it is absolutely obvious that the sources and traditions of writers who fall into such cultures as France, the United States of America, Canada, or Germany, are completely different from those of the writers who remained in the country.

Through pseudonymous strategies, hybridization, through adventurous aspiration or the exploration of exile as *mise en abyme*, the literature of trauma is extensively challenged. It is very likely that in these categories, the influence of Romain

⁶ M. Spiridon, *Europa Centrală de peste ocean. Exil și construcție identitară*, 2011 (my translation).

Rolland, Philip Roth, Ted Berrigan, or August Strindberg could be invoked as naturally as the names of Eminescu, Arghezi, Stănescu, and Cărtărescu, who are part of the central canon of Romanian literature. Along this line of thought, Nemoianu suggests a recanonization of recent (for his time) Romanian literature around figures such as Mihai Şora, Alexandru Paleologu, Adrian Marino, Nicolae Steinhardt, Dinu Pillat, Ştefan Aug. Doinaş, Radu Stanca. I.D. Sârbu, Ion Caraion, Geo Dumitrescu, Virgil Ierunca, Monica Lovinescu, and Al. Zub. His key concept is pluralism, which relates the core and the marginal areas of an otherwise undisputed canon.

In this polymorphic formula, diaspora becomes the founding experience of a structure that deserts the rules of a single canon. In its center, we could find the nomadic writing – an unsettling concept, which does not provide certainties, but lines of flight; it resists pathetic structures and has a tendency toward ambiguity, temporal displacement, and messy reworlding strategies.

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