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***EXILES OF THE ETHNIC MIND:  
NORMAN MANEA'S THE HOOLIGAN'S RETURN***

**Abstract:** *The paper discusses Norman Manea's rendition of his exiles as a Romanian Jew in Transnistria, in Ceausescu's Romania and in North America, in his fiction/memoir/essay *The Hooligan's Return*. Manea's major "snail's house" concept, expressing the significance of national literary language for the ethnic/political émigré writer, will be illustratively analyzed within the intertextual (novel, diary, essay) discourse in his book. Three major uses of the hooligan concept in Romania are also tackled in connection with Norman Manea's novel-memoir: as a qualifier applied to the amoral young generation contributing to the Iron Guard activities (Mircea Eliade, *The Hooligans* [1935]), as describing the ethnic outsider in a nationalist mainstream Romania (Mihail Sebastian ("How I Became a Hooligan" [1935]), as ironic cultural reference in Manea's *The Hooligan's Return* (2003). In the last case the concept refers back to Sebastian's term, but it is redefined as the condition of the writer (also near to his clown-intellectual or Auguste the Fool prototype) opposing the Romanian anti-Semitic Communist and Post-Communist community. The social outsider and rebel status suggested by this Jewish-Romanian hoodlum condition dramatizes Manea's triple minority group exilic allegiance: ethnically as a Jewish Transnistrian Holocaust victim of the Romanian nationalist anti-Semitic Antonescu regime (1934 – 1945), politically as an anti-Communist inmate of the Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's (1952 – 1965) and Nicolae Ceausescu's gulag (1967 – 1986), and artistically as an immigrant writer in danger of losing his native linguistic foothold in the multicultural United States of America (1987-to date). Back in Romania, for a brief reluctant visit (1997) that occasioned *The Hooligan's Return*, Manea has the opportunity to doubly confirm the foreigner condition of his now dually cultural hyphenation as a Romanian-Jewish-American artist.*