

The Memoirs of Nina Cassian. Language as Home

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Abstract

In 2003, The Romanian Cultural Institute released the first of the three volumes of Nina Cassian's autobiographical work entitled *The Treasure of Memories*. Designed as a three-layered piece of writing, the text blends diaristic notes with metatextual commentaries and additional information that the author provides starting with 1975, while still in Romania, and 1987 respectively, during her New-York-ese exile. In spite of their private, sometimes exhibitionist nature, Nina Cassian's diary and subsequent commentaries and confessions reveal not only autobiographical details, but, beyond the fresco of the communist Romania, they tell the story of an exiled Jewish female author, having to cope, at the age of 60, with living on another continent and with creating in a second language. This paper aims at analyzing the way Cassian depicts Romania and The United States of America, her current home country, as well as the writer's approach of the native language as an "essential territory", oblivious of any geographical or administrative borders.