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**THE “NEW AUTOBIOGRAPHY” IN 1930’S ROMANIA:  
M. BLECHER, *THE ILLUMINATED BURROW***

In discussing the Romanian tradition of literary “life-writing”, one of the most interesting moments to be observed is that of the young generation of the 1930s. The Romanian scene was inflamed in the fourth decade of the 20th century by a debate around the concepts of “authenticity” and “experience”. The tradition of memoirs in Romanian culture had not been a very firm or prestigious one: apart from the warm and appealing *Memories from my Childhood* (1880-1888) by Ion Creangă, most memoirs had served a “patriotic” purpose, as accounts of the country’s modernisation or as open political pleadings for a particular path to be followed in the future. Camil Petrescu blamed, somewhat indiscriminately, the Romanian prose of the 19th century for its lack of a personal voice, since most writers had adopted a patriotic cause rather than decided to rely on their personal experience and idiosyncracies<sup>1</sup>. It was a situation the young writers of the 1930s tried to change, and they did so by publishing their early diaries, experimenting with the boundary between fiction and nonfiction in their novels and erecting theories about the necessary lack of stylistic virtues when writing literature. But the most complex Romanian response to the question of the “new autobiography” was given by M. Blecher (1909-1938) who, in three books written between 1934 and 1938, formulated a critique of autobiography and exemplified with several variants of life-writing, each representing a step in his progress towards a more satisfactory literary and autobiographical practice. Blecher was not a member of the “authenticist” group; rather, he came from the direction of surrealism, which he practiced for a short period of time. But, as he once said, he had a very idiosyncratic understanding of surrealism, and in the end felt distant from the “clearcut surrealism of manifestoes”<sup>2</sup>. His style seems to have been influenced by the direct and emotional rhetorics of Geo Bogza’s reportages, which he met in the summer of 1933, when he was preparing to write his first novel. It was a surprise to critics to find in his second novel, *Cicatrised Hearts*, an astonishing replica to

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<sup>1</sup> Camil Petrescu, “Amintirile colonelului Lăcusteanu și amărăciunile calofilismului” [“The Colonel Lacusteanu Memories”], in *Teze și antiteze*, București, Gramar, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> M. Blecher, *Întâmplări în irealitatea imediată. Inimi cicatrizate. Vizuina luminată. Corp transparent* [Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality. Cicatrised Hearts. The Illuminated Burrow], Craiova, Aius; București, Vinea, 1999, p. 396.

the memoir-like literature of the “authenticist” group, which had never claimed Blecher as a member<sup>3</sup>.

But Blecher’s most daring literary project was his last book *The Illuminated Burrow* (1971, written in 1937-1938), a memoir which can pass as a novel and which resets the discussion of his work as a novelist. It is here that Blecher seems to approach a new conception of literature as the space where fiction and autobiography meet, pursuing a deeper commitment to the “truth” of confession and, in the process, elaborating a new vision of the human psyche. I shall address the characteristics of his critique of the autobiographical discourse and the influence his critique has on the choice of narrative techniques. I shall then compare Blecher’s autobiographic writing to other innovative contemporary works (André Breton’s *Nadja* and Michel Leiris’s *L’Âge d’homme*), in an attempt to see how these autobiographies written in the proximity (or at the core) of surrealism transformed the genre.

*The Illuminated Burrow* is Blecher’s last book, written just before he died and published posthumously, in 1971. His first novel, widely regarded as his masterpiece, is *Occurence in the Immediate Unreality* (1936), an exploration of emotions surrounding an adolescent in a provincial town in Eastern Romania. His second, *Cicatrised Hearts*, tells a story of bedridden youths, ill with spinal tuberculosis, in a French resort, Berck, trying to cope with their unusual condition and with the discomfiting image of themselves they are forced to take in. The last work, *The Illuminated Burrow*, is similar to *Cicatrised Hearts* in that it takes place in sanatoriums for spinal tuberculosis located in France, in Switzerland (Leysin) and in Romania (Techirghiol). Literary critic Simona Sora finds a divide between the first novel and his other two in that *Occurence...* is “a novel of mystical premonition”, while in his later books, more autobiographic, “the metaphysical vision becomes an existential one”<sup>4</sup>. However, *The Illuminated Burrow* is more individualised because of its subtitle, “Sanatorium Diary”, and all the consequences it implies.

Blecher’s prose work in its entirety has an autobiographical dimension<sup>5</sup>: the first novel, *Occurences...*, is written in the first person and alludes to recognisable realities from the author’s home town, but this is not enough to talk of an autobiographical genre. There is no intention of assuming personally the events

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<sup>3</sup> Pompiliu Constantinescu, *Scieri [Selected papers]*, I, București, Editura pentru Literatură, 1967, p. 314.

<sup>4</sup> Simona Sora, *Regăsirea intimității [Finding intimacy]*, București, Cartea Românească, 2008, p. 182.

<sup>5</sup> For Radu G. Țeposu, all Blecher’s prose is, on some level, autobiographical, falling in the category of the “autobiographical novel”, made of “experiences epically organised” that “take the leap from mere referential notation to reflexive narration, where the narration in the first person is the result of a conscious artistic option”. Radu G. Țeposu, *Suferințele tânărului Blecher [The Sorrows of Young Blecher]*, Cluj-Napoca, Echinoc, 1996, p. 119.

and stories of this book by the author, and there is at least one indication in a letter to a friend that the names of the characters was altered, probably in order not to be too easily recognised by readers from the author's family circle<sup>6</sup>. The second, *Cicatrised Hearts*, is a novel written in the third person, whose main character bears a different name from the author's; the similarities between Blecher's biography and that of his hero Emanuel are not enough to call this prose autobiographical, probably just autobiographically-inspired. However, the author wrote in a letter from 1936 that he was considering dedicating his following books, in turn, to each of the three sanatoriums where he had been treated from 1928 to 1933 (that is Berck, in France, Leysin, in Switzerland and Techirghiol, in Romania), in a series that would be, as Blecher puts it, "my life's work". Rather than boasting an excessive self-confidence, the emphatic formula was designating ironically the autobiographical dimension of his later novels. But only his last, posthumous book would be openly autobiographical, with several amendments that I shall present further on. There is room for speculating why Blecher changed his literary formula so often: he wrote a childhood and adolescence novel in a lyrical and essayistic prose; then he switched to "psychological realism" in his second novel, and then turned to a diary that narrates mostly strange visions and emotions.

Although subtitled "*Sanatorium Diary*", *The Illuminated Burrow* does not respect the rules of the diary genre. It does not record events on a periodical basis and it is not written solely for the author's eyes<sup>7</sup>. It could not go on for ever or until the death of its author would bring it to an end, as would be the case with a diary, because the book presents itself as an "*oeuvre*" with a firmly marked beginning and a nicely prepared ending which generate, by their very existence, a unity of content. We may assume that the author is mistakenly or metaphorically referring to a diary; maybe he means memoir. The book opens with the phrase: "Everything I am writing was once real life"<sup>8</sup>. But the content of the book is not made up of recollections; the memories are polemical, in that, at times, the author decides to recall dreams or hallucinations as if they were actually lived events, and the scenes narrated do not succeed each other chronologically. The goal doesn't seem to be a recapitulation of the past from a unitary perspective, in order to detect the moral coherence or the essential structure of the character. Instead, the book puts into question the very possibility of recapturing the past "as it was" or of grasping its "meaning".

*The Illuminated Burrow* is therefore, from this point of view, an autobiography dissatisfied with the nature, goals and technique of most autobiographies, bent on

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<sup>6</sup> M. Blecher *măi puțin cunoscut* [M. Blecher less known], București, Hasefer, 2000, p. 109, letter to Geo Bogza from 24 March 1936.

<sup>7</sup> Eugen Simion, *Ficțiunea jurnalului intim* [The diary's fiction], I, București, Univers Enciclopedic, 2001, p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> M. Blecher, *Întâmplări*, p. 233.

producing a more “true”, “honest” and ultimately successful confession. Since autobiographies are deemed too “polite”, careful not to disturb conventional norms, this confession will proceed otherwise. Generic autobiographies construct an image of the author which flatters him/her and reassures the readers in their prejudices and expectations, while Blecher sees his literary enterprise as doing the opposite: “Since I am not writing this book either for my soul’s well-being, or for my reader’s, I shall also narrate this following horrible episode, embarrassing for me and for the girl who had to suffer from it”<sup>9</sup>. The goals of his confession, Blecher implies, are superior to the banal comfort one takes in recalling self-gratifying images (“writing for my soul’s well-being”) in a sentimental approach to one’s own past.

The essay structure that was already at work in Blecher’s first novel, *Occurrences in the Immediate Unreality*, is used once more in *The Illuminated Burrow*. Its themes are the individual’s estrangement from his own past, the epistemological value of lived experience versus dreaming or imagining, the error of seeing personality as a unit, the anticipation of death. All of these are at odds with the goal of a “canonical” autobiography (as defined by Blecher) which might be the eloquent illustration of a complex personality, its mission and achievements. The sanatorium memories in *The Illuminated Burrow* are constantly manipulated to accommodate certain intellectual debates, as pieces of an argument. Their chronology is often reversed and even the “reality in which they took place” is put into question.

In order to make this discourse acceptable, the book makes use of rhetorical strategies concerning, mainly, the production of a sensation of authenticity. For this purpose, great emphasis is placed on the awareness of the predicament of a written confession. Numerous passages in the book make known that the “present time” must be understood as the time in which the book is written. As such, the book may be considered an unconventional “diary”, but not one written in a sanatorium, but in the house in Roman where Blecher lived in 1937-1938; and it is an unconventional diary in that it doesn’t record any of the daily events, but a stream of memories and dream-like visions. In any event, *The Illuminated Burrow* is Blecher’s book which most persistently describes its own appearance. The narrator makes clear several times the moment when he writes, drawing the reader’s attention that the things he puts down do not attempt to create a refuge in a parallel time: “While I write, while my pen runs down the paper in curves and lines and undulations that will form words [...] in every atom in space something happens”<sup>10</sup>. The reader must make note that he/she reads lines that were once written by a real person. The text is therefore presented as something other than

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 290.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 268.

fiction; the truth of the narrated experience is attested through a declaration of presence in the act of putting it down on paper. But the "events" evoked are often interior states, hallucinations, dreams, false memories, phantasms. By evoking them, reality ceases to be defined as referring to a purely exterior, concrete world. The narrator's efforts to pinpoint the moment of writing in his book are indicative of the relativisation of the concept of reality, of the lack of belief in its consistency, which begins to be successfully opposed by the equally inconsistent world of dreams. This is why the issue of writing becomes essential in the book, part of its core intellectual argument.

But the most significant opposition to the idea of a "canonical" autobiography is justified by the rejection of several principles that Blecher sees as central to this form of life-writing. For instance, he rejects the tendency in life-writing to see all the different threads of a life converge into one major purpose. Of course, it is a natural desire for meaning that makes most people want to read a "logic" behind the acts and gestures of one person, but the "logic" tends to be fraudulent, usually a one-sided representation of something more complex. "Your life was thus and no other way"<sup>11</sup> is a phrase deeply abhorred by Blecher. Furthermore, since every attempt to recuperate meaning from one's past leads to the banal wisdom of "ephemerality" and "implacability", its uniqueness has been sacrificed; clinging to such wisdom is both a proof of epistemological narrow-mindedness and a lack of imagination. This is a critique of memory seen as an effort to extract the truth of the past; memory is blamed for making each second identical to the next and therefore making experiences lose their personal and intimate quality. Memory is compared to an unsafe armoire which doesn't protect photographs from fading: "It would seem that mental reminiscences fade out in memory like the ones we keep in drawers"<sup>12</sup>. The life told by memories, it would seem, is not the life lived, but a simplified version of it, reducing its natural diversity to a falsely unitary meaning, edified on an alienating common-sense judgement that Blecher calls "the logic of things". This "logic" is actually an irrational belief, "the belief in one reality, firmly constituted and sure of itself"<sup>13</sup>, and as such it is not to be trusted. To the "logic of things", Blecher opposes another kind of logic we may call "narrative", because the feeling of something happening for a reason depends on its taking part in a narration: "Everything that happens is logical since it happens and becomes visible, even if it takes place in a dream, while everything that is unprecedented and new is illogical, even if it takes place in real life"<sup>14</sup>. And, since autobiography is, habitually, the resumé of a lucid life, Blecher's decision to write a memoir who slides into dreaming must be understood as polemical.

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 133.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 233.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 249.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 247.

*The Illuminated Burrow* must be further dissociated from *Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality*, Blecher's first novel. *Occurrence...* functions as a novel, as it contains an "adventure", characters, a unity of space, it has well delimited episodes, a plot, a culmination of action and a tragical *dénouement*. Narration predominates and the large descriptions are framed in a novel-like narrative, with a development and suspense. Even the book's title ("occurrence", in the original: "happenings") is suggestive for the narrative dominant. *The Illuminated Burrow*, on the other hand, could have been titled "Reflections in the immediate unreality", since stories are fewer and are placed in an essayistic frame, as arguments to various theses. Many of the episodes in the posthumous book have a demonstrative, rather than expositive finality. The narrator in *Occurrences...* is a literary character, despite the fact that he tells his story in a digressive and antichronological manner. His sensitivity and moral profile may be aptly reconfigured in the course of reading. However, the narrator in *The Illuminated Burrow* is characterised more often through his thoughts than his actions. The discourse in this last book has a hybrid nature, like an intellectual dissertation that turns into narration.

But this must not make us forget that *The Illuminated Burrow* also has some novel-like traits. It tells the story of its narrator's disillusionment with his own vision of life brought about by falling ill, and it does that by recapitulating several exemplary moments that made him aware of the "indifference of time" (the death of a neighbouring patient) or of the incoherence of visible reality (by dreaming a beautiful garden and, only after that, visiting it in real life). In the process of remembering, not all the details serve as examples for a thesis; the narrator lets himself be carried away by the flux of associations and talks about the grotesque consolation of a widowed family with extra asparagus for dinner in the hospital's canteen or of the odd farewell he took from his beloved horse, after sacrifice, by eating a loaf of its meat, as a gesture of commemoration. The essayistic aspect of the book serves to maintain its unity of intellectual perspective and, also, its integrity as a story. Several themes are repeated, to consolidate the focus interest of the book: the presentiment of death, the inconsistency of reality, the need for self-attestation through writing. And there are several episodes which have a symbolic resonance and impress the narrator as if they carried a greater, universal significance, and not just a personal one: attending to a dying nun during a carnival at the sanatorium or the vision of a horse's skull seen from the inside, in Techirghiol, during a stormy night. *The Illuminated Burrow* refers to something more than an individual's preferences or fears; it strives to describe experiences with ample resonance, and addresses a readership interested in experiences, and not in their author's life.

One must also take into account the presence of heavily fictionalised pages in this self-proclaimed memoir. Two lengthy episodes narrate dreamlike experiences: a revolt of the police-dogs in the narrator's provincial home town and a surreal

metamorphosis of a city where each shop takes the form of its main merchandise. They are introduced as "proofs" that the limits which separate "actual reality" from dream are very thin: "I think it is the same thing to live or to dream an incident and everyday real life is just as hallucinating and strange as that of sleep"<sup>15</sup>. The second dream is introduced so as to preserve something of the other half of life that a memoir has to eliminate if it wants to "maintain some logic to the story"<sup>16</sup>. It is narrated as a defying gesture to the "order" that a memoir should keep by excluding all "illogical" memories from a life's story: "It is so difficult to separate [real life occurrences] from those that never happened! [...] But sometimes I would like to write down all the reveries and nocturnal dreams, to deliver a true image of the illuminated burrow that lays hidden in my most familiar and intimate darkness"<sup>17</sup>. As such, the dreams evoked are signals of the freedom and beauty of the events taking place deep down, rather than actual attacks to the coherence of the memoir. The "cinder made of dreams, interpretations and deformations" that might take the place of real-life memories does not occupy but a few pages of this unconventional memoir, probably because a memoir that would only contain dreams would lack structure and would be unreadable. Therefore, *The Illuminated Burrow* is not actually a book of obscure memories, extracted from a deep and mysterious layer of the psyche Blecher claims to have access to, but a commentary on the emerging possibility to explore this "burrow". But it will only be a repeated, incessant and never completed exploration, because it can never fully achieve its goal of describing the infinitely rich content of the "illuminated burrow". Blecher's memoir affirms it aspires to capture what current autobiographies fail to recall, but in the end it only tells the story of the failure to recall the past life and dreams exhaustively, as desired. Its literary success is grounded in the acknowledgement of this failure. The true value of the book is not given by the extent of its spiritual discoveries (since the "illuminated burrow" cannot be fully explored in an explicit, verbal manner), but by its determination, ethical consistency and, ultimately, "authenticity".

At the same time, Blecher's achievement in this memoir is literary, and its best pages are those which make use of the author's capacity, known to his readers from his previous books, to describe possible worlds, horrid or extatic visions of banal things and realities, mind-blowing experiences which force them question the truth of their own representations of the world. But it would not be enough to attribute all the merit to the imaginative passages. Fiction and confession contribute equally to this success, as the capacity to project unusual visions of the body (a notable representation of pain in the body as the flow of a symphony in a room) or

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 242.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 292.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

to imagine strange scenes (the horse's skull seen from the inside of the head) indicate the presence of a fiction writer, whereas the feeling of urgency and authenticity of all these experiences is given by the "sanatorium diary". It is precisely the strive towards a unique, definitive and revealing confession of a writer at the lowest point of his physical condition that guarantees that the visions in this book are not merely beautiful inventions and that they deserve interest, respect and even affection.

The association of the two is not particular to Blecher; reality must, for all surrealist writers, include aspects that only fiction has ever talked about. There are two other autobiographical writings in the vicinity of Blecher's project, both coming from the surrealist camp, where for a brief period Blecher himself was a member: André Breton's novel-like autobiographical narration, *Nadja* (1928), and Michel Leiris's atypical and anti-narrative autobiography *L'Âge d'homme* (1938). The differences are notable, even though the discontent with the "old" formula of autobiography is the same. Breton was telling one story, that of meeting a mysterious woman around which miracles seem to abound, while Leiris was engaged in telling the truth about himself by analysing his own complexes. In referring to a new form of life-writing, Breton was promoting, polemically, the uses of the anecdote and of the random details for life-writing. For instance, he viewed biography's merit in the attempt to "explain the opinions of [Giorgio de Chirico] on the artichoke, the glove, the cookie or the spool"<sup>18</sup>. These are indicative of the "objective hazard" which relates the individual to the world in a manner thought to be liberating<sup>19</sup>. Although Blecher had also been associated with surrealism, this is where he strays from the doctrine. In *The Illuminated Burrow*, Blecher is a nihilist, and the parallel reality of the inside of the mind where he likes to dwell is only a temporary refuge from death. *Nadja* has a fatal but also tonic quality, since the events it narrates "atest" the existence of a surreality, whereas *The Illuminated Burrow* assumes a morose disposition, dispersed only by splendid visions in dream-like episodes. But there is resemblance in the style of writing. Blecher probably borrowed from Breton the diary technique, which the French writer uses as a form of primitive enthusiasm that would neutralise the danger of "literaturisation": "I shall limit myself here to remembering without effort [...]. I shall talk about all these in no preestablished order, given to the hazard of the moment, that allows only what floats to emerge to the surface"<sup>20</sup>. On the other hand, Michel Leiris contests autobiographical narration by refusing the epical organization of memories ("the negation of a novel"<sup>21</sup>). He also uses the

<sup>18</sup> André Breton, *Nadja*. Translated by Bogdan Ghiu, Iași, Polirom, 2013, p. 8.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Ferdinand Alquié, *Philosophie du surréalisme*, Paris, Flammarion, 1977, p. 32.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15.

<sup>21</sup> Michel Leiris, *Vârsta bărbăției* [*L'Âge d'homme*, 1939]. Translated by Bogdan Ghiu, București, Cartea Românească, 2004, p. 21.



diary form, but his memories are grouped according to theme, like a psychoanalytical session. However, he is forced to surrender to "disorder", as a guarantee that his analysis reaches deeper and deeper layers of his memory: "As I write, the established plan escapes me and as I watch deeper inside me, everything I see becomes confused, and the themes that I initially thought I could discern prove inconsistent and arbitrary, as if this classification would be, in the end, an abstract inventory, or even less, a procedure of aesthetic composition"<sup>22</sup>. Leiris sees autobiographic writing as a form of going "beyond" literature, that is of making an essential literature. In this sense goes his essay *On Literature Seen as a Bullfight*, which promotes a dynamic view of literature as a confession that is dramatic and, indirectly, elegant. It is easy to see that Blecher belongs to the same family, as a dissident surrealist with a similar concept of reality and like-minded exigencies from literature. The hybrid conception of a striving towards a confession that is at the same time dramatic and revealing brings the Romanian writer close to Leiris's bullfighting metaphor. But, apart from his French colleagues, the Romanian writer seems to attach more importance to fiction (dream, hallucination, false perceptions) as a way out of autobiography's traps.

From this point of view, and for the sake of the argument, Blecher's book may also be discussed in relation to the French concept of the 1970s, "autofiction", elaborated and exemplified first by Serge Doubrovsky (*Fils*, 1977) and then by Alain Robbe-Grillet (*Le Mirroir qui revient*, 1984) and others. Of course, it would be bizarre and inconclusive to try to prove that the Romanian author anticipated by decades a narratological development so intimately connected to the structuralist taxonomic speculations of the 1970s. According to Laurent Jenny, the autofiction illustrates "the possibility of an autobiography critical of its own truth value and aware of its own effects of discourse"<sup>23</sup>. Serge Doubrovsky and Alain Robbe-Grillet both practice a critique on the style of autobiography, which they accuse of falsely simplifying and rationalising reality, by introducing an erroneous *a posteriori* logic in the narration of life, and by betraying the "moment" in favour of a belated totalisation of the individual experience. Doubrovsky also invoked a class issue when he explained why he chose not to write a plain autobiography: "An autobiography? No, it is a privilege reserved to the important people of the world, at the dusk of their lives, written in a beautiful style"<sup>24</sup>. Such arguments discussed by theorists apply to Blecher's concept of autobiography, while others do not; for instance, the intentional attribution of an autobiographical character to

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 122.

<sup>23</sup> Laurent Jenny, "Méthodes et problèmes. L'autofiction", available at <http://www.unige.ch/lettres/framo/enseignements/methodes/autofiction/afinteg.html>, consulted on July 23rd 2009.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*.

something that is obviously fictitious, as Marie Darieusecq defines autofiction<sup>25</sup>, is incompatible with what the writers with a surrealist background tried to do in the 1930s.

Better use can be made of another concept, recently re-introduced by Max Saunders, under the form of an old English portmanteau word, in circulation since 1906: “autobiografiction”<sup>26</sup>. This concept puts together autobiography and fiction by claiming that they are actually interdependent and both can be found in various combinations in all the historic versions of modernism. Furthermore, it attempts to build a dynamic theory of autobiography, without confining the genre to a strict series of rules contested by most (and the best) autobiographers in the 20th and 21st centuries, a theory which might also accommodate the requirements of Breton, Blecher and Leiris. The “surrealist” moment of autobiography (although poorly represented in English literature and uncharted by Saunders) is one of the most important in European literature, as it denounces the perceived limitations of the “canonical” autobiographical genre and creates a new mould for this kind of literary expression, still provocative even today for its radical critique and aesthetic achievements.

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<sup>25</sup> Marie Darieusecq, “Je est unE autre”, in Annie Oliver (ed.), *Écrire l’histoire d’une vie*, Rome, Spartaco, 2007, available at <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/ml/durand/darieusecq/fr/collautofiction.doc>, consulted on July 22nd 2009.

<sup>26</sup> Max Saunders, *Self Impression. Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature*, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 22.

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## THE "NEW AUTOBIOGRAPHY" IN 1930S ROMANIA:

M. BLECHER, *THE ILLUMINATED BURROW**(Abstract)*

This paper discusses Blecher's prose, especially his last book, *The Illuminated Burrow* (1971, written in 1937-1938), which brings forth a (comparatively) new conception of literature as the space where fiction and autobiography meet, pursuing a deeper commitment to the "truth" of confession and, in the process, elaborating a new vision of the human psyche. Blecher's critique of the autobiographical discourse is presented in its main aspects and the type of narration it produces is analysed. Blecher's autobiographic writing is then compared to other groundbreaking contemporary works (André Breton's *Nadja* and Michel Leiris's *L'Âge d'homme*), in an attempt to see how these autobiographies from the proximity of surrealism transformed the genre.

*Keywords:* autobiography, surrealism, literature of authenticity, "autobiografiction".

## NOUA AUTOBIOGRAFIE ÎN ROMÂNIA ANILOR '30:

VIZUINA LUMINATĂ DE M. BLECHER

*(Rezumat)*

Lucrarea discută proza lui M. Blecher, în special ultima sa carte, *Vizuina luminată* (1971, scrisă în anii 1937-1938), unde se manifestă o concepție (comparativ) nouă asupra literaturii, ca spațiu în care ficțiunea se întâlnește cu autobiografia. Această concepție se caracterizează printr-un atașament profund față de ideea de „adevăr” al confesiunii și prin încercarea de a elabora o nouă viziune a psihicului uman. În text, prezentăm critica realizată de Blecher la adresa discursului autobiografic, ca și tipul de narațiune rezultat din examenul critic implicat. Apoi comparăm scrierea autobiografică a lui Blecher cu alte scrieri contemporane majore (*Nadja* de André Breton și *L'Âge d'homme* de Michel Leiris), urmărind în ce fel aceste autobiografii din cercul de iradiere al suprarealismului au transformat genul la care se raportează.

*Cuvinte-cheie:* autobiografie, suprarealism, literatura autenticității, "autobiografiction".