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Fragmented Selves, Healing Visions

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to analyse two experimental “novels of the self”, written by two of the most innovative Jewish-Romanian writers of the '30s: Max Blecher and H. Bonciu, stressing on those aspects they have in common with the mainstream of the twentieth-century Western literature. In both authors, inward disquietude is experienced as outward atmosphere, submerging the world in indefinable strangeness and mystery. In this context, the concept of “inner exile” and “fragmented self” may prove useful in defining the particular status of the narrators’ perspective, as well as their relationship with the world (objects, settings, invisible traps, “sickly” or “healing” spaces).

Keywords: Jewish-Romanian Writers; H. Bonciu; M. Blecher; Identity; Fragmented Self; Quest; Authenticity.

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Two Franc-tireurs at the Periphery of the Avant-garde

Although at first sight the names of H. Bonciu¹ and M. Blecher² might appear less representative for the spirit of the Avant-garde (if compared to Tristan Tzara, Ilarie Voronca or Benjamin Fondane), yet both of them have proved an unquestionable propensity towards innovation (which can be identified on all levels – from that of visions’ articulation, up to the inventory of topics and techniques), as well as an undeniable ability in finding appropriate ways for mapping the unreal (or, in Blecher’s terms, the “immediate unreality”), in a precise, consistent and accurate manner.

Produced at the periphery of the Avant-garde (in as much as both are rather *franc-tireurs*), anticipating, to a considerable extent, the postmodernist taste for indeterminacy, fragmentarism, selflessness, irony, hybridisation, carnivalisation and performance, H. Bonciu’s novels – *Luggage* (1934) and *Mrs. Pipersberg’s Boardinghouse* (1936), as well as Blecher’s *Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality* (1936), succeeded in turning inward disquietude into fictional projections of indefinable strangeness and mystery. Displaying an obvious disregard

with respect to all sorts of norms and conventions (aesthetic, social and moral norms), these representations are, in part, the consequence of their authors' desperate attempts at finding creative responses to distressing existential crisis.

A Master of Clownish Games and Masque-Performances

Critics and scholars have underlined, in both cases, a tight connection between biography and work, even if – unlike Blecher, with whom he shares many obsessions and revelations – Bonciu displayed his pessimism with a great dose of humour, not only in his writings, but also in everyday life, where he used “to stage” various farces and happenings: during Anton Holban's funeral service he lay in the coffin, and before his own death, he told his puzzled friends that the easiest death was the others'.

The legacy of traumatic biographical experience, as it appears transfigured in his novels, could have provoked serious mental disorder, if not counterbalanced by the restorative potential of writing. Recollections about a tense father-son relationship (a typical Oedipus conflict), the bitter taste of the first, unhappy love affair, then the trauma of World War I, with its nightmarish everyday ordeals on the battle field, are all displayed in his first novel, *Luggage. The Strange, Double Life of a Man on His All Fours* (1934), where the hero's name – Ramses Ferdinand Sinidis – shows once more the author's inclination for producing duplications and masque-performances, as illusive escapes of a tormented self.

Restoring One's Existence through Writing

As for Blecher, in his correspondence with Geo Bogza,³ he also emphasizes more than once, his belief that writing would represent the only way of escaping the suffocating atmosphere of a predictable, tantalizing existence:

Besides my writing, my life has no meaning, it is chaotic, vague and lacks any interest, the people I see are stupid, banal and have no passions, all living dead, especially these despicable bourgeois I know so well, about whom, if I will have the vigour, I wish to write something that would pain them, such as a novel.⁴

The harsh criticism of the petty bourgeoisie seems less a misanthropic way of claiming one's superiority than an echo of Blecher's compulsive urge to find a deeper meaning of things and events, alongside with the force of restoring his peculiar existence through writing.

If Bonciu's prose, oscillating between morbid eroticism and nightmarish insights, carries the stamp of a similar endeavour of challenging norms and conventions (épater le bourgeois of all Avant-garde writers), the impulse of restoring one's *authentic* self through writing is doubled, in his case, by the complementary capacity of detachment (the writer is “staging” – often in mocking-allegorical representations – the suffering of himself and of the others).

Although it might seem inappropriate to infer from here that Blecher would simply record his real-life combat with Pott's disease, as some critics have stated,

yet his distinctive method remains that of refracting everything (from characters and events, up to sceneries and visions), “through the prism of his [...] unique, existential *illness*.”⁵

On the other hand, one must be aware that not only biographical, but also socio-political contexts should be heeded and eventually (re)considered when discussing the manifold works of two of the most original interwar Jewish-Romanian writers. Any attempt of coherently approaching their literature has to ponder upon the intricate relationships between individual and group-identity, as well as on the “sickly spaces” of the self. Gabriela Glăvan has rightly observed that, with Blecher, “marginality and Jewishness function as the dual agent of a biography defined by Blecher’s illness, which was to become the active factor at the foundation of his writer-as-martyr myth.”⁶

Such effects have been amplified by his Avant-garde friends and colleagues, who had written about his illness’s impact on the work (among them Sașa Pană, alias Alexander Binder,⁷ who describes him as having been “paralysed and wracked by pain for ten years, with a few relative intermissions”, burrowing “with the tenacity of a miner into the remotest seams of his rich mind, of a body engrafted with abscesses and gangrenes”)⁸. A similar effect had the publication of the above-mentioned epistolary exchange between Blecher and his friends, Geo and Elly Bogza, most of the letters testifying of the writer’s terrible, yet admirably contained, suffering:

[T]he scenery doesn’t matter at all, since it is obvious that I’ve been doomed to suffer only compulsions

and constraints. I learned how to get energy from the very roughness of my isolation; more dreary gets my everyday life, more determined I am to grind my teeth and to tell myself it is better like this. With every useless ornament of the “bourgeois life” I erase off the list of my needs, with every renouncement of the stupid “invented needs” of my idiotic bourgeois education (I mean ornamental and moral education), I feel stronger and more secure.⁹

It is not a case that Blecher’s literary work dates entirely from the period of his illness. Just as in W.N.P. Barbellion’s and J. D. Bauby’s cases, the “invented needs” of a common, “bourgeois” life, once removed, writing remains for him the only compulsive urge. Not really a comfort for a young man diagnosed with Pott’s disease at the age of nineteen and forced to abandon his studies, but perhaps, the only way of challenging an unfair fate and, ultimately, death itself. Instead of becoming a doctor, he turned into a “professional” patient, undergoing treatments at sanatoria in France (Berck-sur-Mer), Switzerland (Leysin) and Romania (Tekirghiol). These traumatic experiences have served as the inspiration for his second novel, Scarred *Hearts*.

For the remaining ten years of his life, Blecher was confined to his bed and practically immobilised by the disease, dying at the age of twenty-nine, after ten years of sufferings. Despite this tragic destiny, he let behind a remarkably coherent (yet uncanny) fictional universe, showing affinities not only with Surrealism, but also with some outstanding writers of Central and East-European literatures, such

as Franz Kafka, Bruno Schultz or Robert Walser. Not only that all these authors have in common the propensity for investigating “immediate unrealities”, but they also found similar creative responses to tormenting existential crisis.

Biography and Autofictional Experiments

A family of artists to which H. Bonciu has been related, too, his works illustrating, besides the iconoclastic intent of trespassing norms, an obvious propensity towards proto-expressionistic literary models (of Vienna Secession and even older). Without being properly affiliated to any direction, remaining constantly a sort of *franc-tireur*, Bonciu gained an Expressionist profile, as Ovid S. Crohmălniceanu argues, by performing his own mixture of literary themes, visions and techniques: transcendence is borrowed from Neoromanticism, instinctual drive from Naturalism, subjectivity from Impressionism and “paneroticism” from Jugendstil and Symbolism.¹⁰

The Oblique Confessions of an Eccentric

It is obvious that eccentricity and marginality function as dual agent of a biography defined by Bonciu’s extravagance, which was humorously acknowledged by the writer himself. In a poem called *Blazon* [Escutcheon], from his 1939 volume *Brom* [Bromium], he depicts himself as “one who never had a stable ground under his feet”, resembling one of his Jewish ancestors, vagabond and beggar, with swarms of bees on his bonnet, but nevertheless able

to interpret the Holy Scriptures like no other.¹¹

This atavistic inheritance might have passed on him the emphatic attitude for displaced lives and marginal characters, as Crohmălniceanu advances.¹² Such “actors” that proliferate in Bonciu’s novels, are usually hallucinatory or grotesque presences, acting as if propelled by self-destructive forces to search for an unbearable suffering, eventually released in erotic outbursts, alcoholism or madness. Uncle Avrum, for instance, the miserable coachman, is obsessed with his aching fingers, crippled by gout, and tries to “fix” them with a hatchet. The passion for a Gipsy woman makes Marcu Fișic, the barber, lose his mind: during these fits of rage, he destroys the furniture around him or breaks glasses, crunching the shards with his teeth. After having cynically executed a debtor, Ramses goes to a brothel, where he is received by “a young lady” dressed up like a school-girl. Once the carnal ritual consumed, with paroxysmic fervour, the “guest” kisses the young lady’s hand. In the end, the prostitute informs Ramses, amplifying the absurdity of the situation: “Do not come on Sunday mornings. I use to go to Mass then.”¹³

Contextual Pressure

These have been enough serious reasons for the traditionalist and far right sections of media to depict him as one of the most obscene authors in interwar Romanian literary landscape. The controversy was in effect sparked by Nicolae Iorga, and intensified with time, on the background of the rise of extreme right parties in the third and fourth decades of twentieth-century

Romania. Looking back on the 1930s, Paul Cernat remarks that Bonciu's original denunciators barely hid their politicized agenda: "a xenophobic accusation of Jewified, antinational, pornography."¹⁴

Subsequently, H. Bonciu saw himself included in lists of pornographers, alongside some other modernist writers, Jewish or not, such as Tudor Arghezi, Geo Bogza, N.D. Cocea, Mihail Celarianu, Mircea Eliade, Felix Aderca. Moreover, in 1937, the state opened a case against Bonciu and Bogza, shortly after the Romanian Academy, through the voice of I.Al. Brătescu-Voinești had openly demanded jail terms for both writers (Geo Bogza wasn't of Jewish origin, but he was acknowledged as a supporter of left-wing political parties).

Bonciu was released soon after and, in an interview with *Azi* magazine, described the censorship effort as ineffectual, placing himself, however, rather on a defensive position, when poignantly confessing: "What has driven me sometimes to depict explicit erotic scenes might have been the paroxistically intense panic caused by the eternal sexual mystery, which has often overwhelmed me with threat and horror in the solitude of my existence."¹⁵

As for Blecher, although he was not involved in controversies of such proportions, yet he did have moments when the topic of his Jewishness become problematic. In a letter to painter Lucia Demetrescu-Bălăcescu, in 1933, the writer confesses, for instance, that he thought of publishing his articles under a penname – such as Mihail Bera, Minu Bera or even Émile Zola – since his real name was "too Jewish". The writer was aware of the ideological confusion (or *dérápaje*), of many prominent members of his generation, since his friend

Mihail Sebastian was one of the direct targets of anti-Semitic intellectual discourse.¹⁶

Few years later (in 1937), Blecher's name would be referred to in the above-mentioned extremist press campaign, cunningly dissimulated as a cultural action against pornography. These circumstances, however, didn't determine the writer to make use a pseudonym, as he fancied in the letter to Lucia Demetrescu. He continued to sign his writings in his real name and he tried hard to gain recognition beyond ethnic or political criteria. Although he knew Yiddish from home, as Gabriela Glăvan has rightly pointed out, Blecher seemed "more interested in becoming acknowledged outside the Jewish intellectual circles than in establishing himself as part of a cultural minority."¹⁷

Yet, in *Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality*, indisputably the most notorious of his novels, he mentions some names and events directly related to his Jewish identity (the house of Webers – Old Samuel Weber, his sons Ozy and Paul, and, for a short while, Paul's wife, Edda).

Literary and Aesthetic Affinities

Even if Expressionistic elements provide Bonciu's narratives with an excess of stylistic violence, yet Bonciu meets Blecher most visibly at the level of some metaphors recurring in both authors' novels, as a result of a similar way of conceiving (un)reality and its reflections. What might be at stake here is that "habit of seeing dramas and issues in all moments of life", distinguishing "the German-Jewish writers of the Werfel type"¹⁸ and, more significantly, a fascination with *kitsch*, artificiality and simulacra. The persistent questioning of authority,

alongside their endeavour to discredit form and matter, as fundamental concepts of both, subjective and objective experience, become obvious when reading most of the paragraphs composing these fragmentary, hybrid, borderline novels. The following fragment from Bonciu's *Mrs. Pipersberg's Boarding House (The Book about Flesh)* offers substantial evidence to support this hypothesis. It is Ferdinand Sinidis the one who gives the narrator some advice:

You should write about the soft skin of pubescent girls, or the flesh of brunette women with hard breasts and dark, rough, skin. Or you could write about the flesh of dead people, or about the flesh of skinned calves, stabbed by the iron stake of the slaughterhouse; or maybe about the flesh of mushrooms and that of snails sleeping in wet, moist places [...] A book about flesh obviously means a heroic, almost impossible artistic accomplishment. You should still give it a try.¹⁹

We can notice here, besides that inclination towards "paneroticism" that Bonciu shares with proto-Expressionists and with Jugendstil artists, an endeavour to reveal the ultimate, genuine, essence of human being. A tendency that is deliberately assumed, since the writer chooses this passage from Blaise Pascal as the motto for one of his novels: "Il est dangereux de trop faire voir à l'homme combien il est égale aux bêtes sans lui montrer sa grandeur. Il est encore dangereux de lui faire voir sa grandeur sans sa bassesse. Il est encore plus dangereux de lui laisser ignorer l'une et l'autre. Mais il est très avantageux de lui représenter l'une et l'autre."²⁰

The Quest for Authenticity

As a matter of fact, for both writers the quest for authenticity remains central, a circumstance that explains why Bonciu and Blecher have been often included by literary historians among the young generation Romanian Existentialists (*trăiriști*), alongside Mircea Eliade, Anton Holban, Mihail Sebastian, Constantin Fîntîneru, Al. Robot or Octav Șuluțiu. Although thematically akin (there are at least five central *topoi* that their texts approach in more or less original ways, as Mihai Zamfir has demonstrated in a brilliant essay),²¹ not many of these writers prove capable of assuming at the same degree that sort of metatextual adherence which has turned Bonciu in one of the Postmodernism's indisputable precursors (as the above-quoted paragraph abundantly demonstrates).

On the other hand, G. Călinescu has rightly supposed an ideological link between Bonciu and Romanian surrealists at *unu* magazine (Geo Bogza, Sașa Pană, the graphic artist Jules Perahim etc., a group to which Blecher was, in some ways, connected), since *A man with hatstand head* sketch by Jules Perahim had been chosen to illustrate the first edition of Bonciu's *Bagaj*. In G. Călinescu's interpretation, the grotesque drawing brings to life "a moment of dementia", which is analogous to Bonciu's own intentions: "H. Bonciu, who despises realism [...] works in the same hieroglyphic mode."²²

Between Surrealism and Expressionism. The Chromatic Violence of Emptiness

Similarly, Blecher's prose represents an exercise "in the immediate unreality", as his novel's title states, being influenced by

Surrealism (the writer himself confesses in a letter to Sașa Pană that he was seduced by the controlled, lucid pictorial descriptions of delirium to be found in the work of excommunicated Surrealist outcast, Salvador Dalí (in his words, Blecher was attracted especially by Dalí's "cold, perfectly legible and essential dementia."²³

Not entirely unaware of the Surrealist experiments, *Occurance in the Immediate Unreality* consists of fifteen chapters, articulated in a modular construction meant to reveal a complex orchestration of *topoi* or semiotic nuclei, all of them pivoting around the central topic, that of a metaphysical-identitarian quest. The impossibility of answering such questions as "Who exactly am I?" brings on not only inward disquietude, but also an ambiguous sense of theatricality. As Alistair Ian Blyth has pointed out, in this strange novel "the world becomes an eerie stage set [...], Blecher himself dreaming of being an inanimate waxwork."²⁴ This is one of the key-attitudes in the novel, defining the particular disposition of its narrator, as well as his relationship with objects, settings and "sickly" spaces, eventually turned into invisible traps, at the same time menacing and protective, destined to submerge the world in indefinable strangeness and mystery. Such representations reveal, along with the tendency of counterbalancing (or even intensifying), the sense of an empty transcendence, an acute taste for artificiality and masque-performances, conveying at the same time a sense of unbearable solitude. Ultimately the universe itself seems nothing more than a vast museum of wax-figures:

The general and elementary impression of the theatrical turned into

authentic terror as soon as I entered the wax museum with its mannequins. It was a fear mixed with a tinge of vague pleasure and somehow with that bizarre feeling we each sometimes have of previously living in a certain setting. I think that if the urge for an aim in life were ever to arise in me and if this impulse had to be bound to something that is indeed profound, essential and irremediable in me, then my body would have to become a mannequin in a wax museum and my life a simple and endless contemplation of the display cases of the dioramas [...] The waxwork figures were the only authentic thing in the world; they alone falsified life in an ostentatious way, becoming part of the true atmosphere of the world through their strange and artificial immobility.²⁵

In brief, the quest for authenticity can hardly be separated – in Blecher's and in the existentialists' prose of the 1930s – of such topics as the unusual illness (often pertaining to the psychopathological sphere), the abnormal sexuality, the realm of objects – at the same time commonplace and disturbing, artificial and mysterious – and, above all, of the Thanatic obsession (death being conceived as the last stage of a meaningless performance). Associated to it, the hallucinatory image of fresh meat – the connection with Bonciu's *Book about Flesh*, in *Bagaj*, is manifest – the "fresh meat" acquires something of Soutine's violently coloured paintings. The wondering hero finds himself near a butcher's shop and sees the workers unloading fresh meat. The vision parallels the Expressionist-Surrealist hallucinations:

They were carrying in their arms crimson, lurid cattle, moist with blood, tall and proud, like dead princesses. In the air there was a warm scent of flesh and urine; the butchers were hanging up each cow head downward. Their bulging black eyes pointed at the floor. They were now lined up along white porcelain walls like crimson sculptures hewn from the most various and tender matter, with the watery and prismatic glint of silks and the cloudy transparency of gelatine. At the edge of the open belly hung the lacework of muscles and the heavy, strung beads of fat.²⁶

Relying on a bold, unusual imagery, the writer meets not only the Surrealist inclination towards hallucinatory, crepuscular moods, but – at a certain extent – the Expressionists' intensity and visual manner of representing reality. On the other hand, both writers embody in their works that centrifugal propensity defined by Jacques Le Rider as „unstable and solitary, untangled from all sort of coercive ideologies, autonomous and yet troubled at the encounter with the Other.”²⁷ Significantly, in this dialectics of fragmentation/ restoring the aesthetic experiment can hardly

be separated from the implications of the so-called *jüdischer Selbsthaß* that some researchers consider definitory especially for H. Bonciu's approach.²⁸

Conclusion

Marginal in more than one sense – since they belong to an ethnic minority and, at the same time to a minor culture, painfully aware of its marginality with respect to Western, canonical literatures, being, on the top, *franc-tireurs* at the periphery of the Avant-garde, Blecher and Bonciu have found appropriate methods of envisioning atypical fictional realms.

Constructed on such principles as discontinuity, fragmentarism and un-founding of the reality, they surpass the Surrealistic approach, anticipating the postmodernist predilection for simulacra, artificiality and performance. Integrated in a vaster perspective – that of a Central and Eastern European sensibility – their works prove to be not only paradigmatic cases of marginality, but also illustrations of that true European modernity, which was in effect, as Le Rider and Graff have proved – a genuine postmodernity *avant la lettre*. Or, in other words, a sort of merry apocalypse.

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NOTES

1. H. Bonciu or Horia Bonciu, also known as Haimovici Bonciu (1893-1950), was an atypical figure of his country's avant-garde scene. His work, comprising several volumes of poems and two novels, blends various influences from the different literary schools of European modernism, and – unusually in the context of Romanian literature – borrows largely from German movements, such as Jugendstil and Expressionism. The autofictional cruel details in Bonciu's narratives, as well as his manifest erotic subjects aroused the indignation of the establishment's leading figures. Further marginalized for his Jewish origin, Bonciu was even prosecuted in 1930s on grounds of pornography. His literary work was banned by the local fascist movements and later selectively censored by the communist regime.
2. M. Blecher (1909-1938), prose writer, poet, translator and essay-writer, was born in the town of Botoșani, as the son of a well-to-do Jewish merchant, who was the owner of a porcelain shop in Roman. After secondary school's graduation, Blecher left for Paris in order to study medicine. At the age of nineteen, being diagnosed with spinal tuberculosis (Pott's disease), he is forced to abandon studies. Shortly thereafter he went to seek treatment to a sanatorium in Berck-sur-mer, on the French shore of the Channel. For the remaining ten years of his life, he was confined to his bed and practically immobilized by the disease. In 1930 he made his debut in Tudor Arghezi's literary magazine *Bilete de papagal*, with two sketches and some aphorisms. In 1934, after returning to Romania, he met Geo Bogza in Brașov and, shortly thereafter, published a booklet of poems, entitled *Transparent Body*. During the same period, Blecher publishes also translations from Guillaume Apollinaire, Pierre Unick, Richard Aldington, Langston Hughes and Shane Leslie. Between 1934 and 1935, he wrote his best known novel, *Occurrence in Immediate Unreality*, published in 1936. Simultaneously he writes essays for various literary magazines (*Frize, Vremea, Azi*), preparing also his second novel, *Scarred Hearts*, which appeared in 1937. His third novel, *The Lighted Borrow. Sanatorium Journal*, was published posthumously, in part in 1947 and in full in 1971. The writer died on May 31st, 1938.
3. Geo Bogza (1908 -1993) was a Romanian Avant-garde poet, theorist and journalist, known for his left-wing political convictions. In the interwar period, he was known as a rebel and was one of the most influential Romanian Surrealists. Several of his controversial poems twice led to his imprisonment on grounds of obscenity, and saw him partake in the conflict between young and old Romanian writers, as well as in the confrontation between the avant-garde and the far-right. It is a fact that Bogza is the one most letters in the Avant-garde circle are addressed to (his answers, with one exception, missing), and an undisputed "catalyst" of friendship, an extravagant who conveyed a sense of camaraderie and frankness. An accomplished poet and an "iconoclast", more radical than

- some of the Avant-garde innovators of the first wave, who had seldom succeeded in driving their struggle against literary inertia above the field of syntactical experiments.
4. M. Blecher, "Letter to Sașa Pană", dated 7 July 1934, in *Întâmplări în irealitatea imediată. Inimi cicatrizate. Vizuina luminată* [Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality. Scarred Hearts. The Lightened Burrow], Bucharest, Editura Vinea, 1999, p. 396; in Blecher's case, some sort of ironical destiny has turned a biographical tragedy into the source and stimulus of one of the most representative literary works of the twentieth century. Reading these letters, we can intuitively envisage the main attributes of the writer: on the one hand, an extremely sensitive, perceptive and vulnerable young man, doomed to suffer terrible pains and constraints, but determined to repress any emotional outburst; on the other hand, the mature artist, painfully aware that, for him, the only way of overcoming a drastically limited and tormenting existence is restoring it in the limitless territory of art and imaginary.
 5. Ian Blyth, *Preface* to M. Blecher, *Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality*, trans. by Alistair Ian Blyth, Plymouth, University of Plymouth Press, 2009, p. 24.
 6. Gabriela Glăvan, "Mapping the Unreal: Max Blecher in the Shadow of the Avant-garde", in *Arcadia*, no. 49, 2014, p. 4.
 7. Sașa Pană (1902-1981), pen name of Alexander Binder, Avant-garde poet and theorist, born to a Jewish family in Bucharest. Like M. Blecher, he trained as a physician in Iași and Bucharest, becoming a qualified combat doctor in 1927. Yet, he was more interested in a literary career, coming to be one of the first Dada and Surrealist themes' promoters in Romanian interwar literature. Pană financed and edited the 1928 Avant-garde magazine *unu* (lower case was used on purpose). The magazine was the basis for a publishing house of the same name, which Pană used for printing works by writers with whom he had literary affinities, such as Urmuz, Tzara, Stephan Roll, Ilarie Voronca, as well as his own. His prose took the form of very short pieces that merged the short story pattern with that of prose-poem, reportage and manifesto.
 8. *Idem*, "Cu inima lângă M. Blecher", in M. Blecher, *Vizuina luminată*, București, Cartea Românească, 1971, pp. 6-7.
 9. M. Blecher, "Letter to Geo Bogza", in Mădălina Lascu (ed.), *M. Blecher, mai puțin cunoscut*, București, Hasefer, 2000, p.80.
 10. Ov.S. Crohmăniceanu, *Literatura română și expresionismul*, București, Eminescu, 1971, pp.186-187.
 11. *Idem*, *Evreii în mișcarea de avangardă românească*, București, Hasefer, 2002, p.174.
 12. *Ibidem*, pp. 174-175.
 13. H. Bonciu, *Bagaj. Pensiunea doamnei Pipersberg*, Iași, Polirom, 2005, p.78.
 14. Paul Cernat, "Blasfemia și drepturile artei", in *Dilema veche*, no.119, 2006, p 7.
 15. Apud. Adriana Babeți, "Sigismund Absurdul. Viața și opera", introduction at H. Bociu, *Bagaj. Pensiunea doamnei Pipersberg*, Iași, Polirom, 2005, p.12.
 16. See Zigu Ornea, *Anii'30. Extrema dreaptă românească*, București, Est, 2008. In the above-quoted book Zigu Ornea quotes manifold articles issued with far-right newspapers and magazines of the time (*Cuvântul, Axa, Ideea românească, Sfarmă Piatră etc.*), in which, among other themes of the anti-Semitic propaganda, one of the main topics appears to be the threat of a "Jewish conspiracy" intended to "usurp the nation's wealth."
 17. Gabriela Glăvan, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
 18. G.Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent*, București, Minerva, 1982, p.900. According to G.Călinescu's remark, it is not, perhaps, accidental that Bonciu chooses as motto of his *Mrs. Pipersberg Bording Bording House* this fragment of one of Werfel's poems: "Niemals im andern, nie im ich zu Hause! Bestand und Nichts, zugleich wie Nichts und Pause! Nimmer im jetzt und stets Erinnerung, / Und nur der Wille: Ewig sich zu teilen. / In jeder Form vertausendfacht zu weilen. / Und wieder Heimweh auf der Wanderung, / Sich aus Verlorensein zurückzueretten, / Und Sehnsucht, die sich selbst verfrisst, / Dem namen den man trägt, sich anzuketten, / Und dem Gestelle, das nicht ist."

19. H. Bonciu, *Bagaj. Pensiunea doamnei Pipersberg*, pp. 162-163.
20. *Ibidem*, p. 40.
21. Mihai Zamfir, *Cealaltă față a prozei*, Bucharest, Cartea Românească, 2006, pp. 170-187.
22. G. Călinescu, *Op. cit.*, p. 900.
23. M. Blecher, "Letter to Sașa Pană", *Op. cit.*, p.396.
24. Ian Blyth, *Preface* at M. Blecher, *Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality*, p. 24.
25. M. Blecher, *Occurrence in the Immediate Unreality*, pp. 54-55.
26. *Ibidem*, p. 75.
27. Jacques Le Rider, *Modernitatea vieneză și crizele identității*, trad. rom. Magda Jeanrenaud, Iași, Editura Universității "Al. I. Cuza", 1995, p.252.
28. See Dragoș Silviu Păduraru, *H.Bonciu și literatura de scandal*, București, Tracus Arte, 2016, especially pp. 123-127.