

***A Philosophy of Music
through the Artistic
Education***

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Ion Gagim. *Muzica și filosofia*. Kishinev: Știința, 2009. Pp. 159

Trying to synthesize the essence of the last book signed by Ion Gagim, some words of the author are the most eloquently: „The musical education – he writes -, in its ultimate form ... becomes education through music” (p.155). This is the final idea of the intellectual effort of a thinker with a rich educational experience in the field of musical practice, exploring the philosophizing act.

For those who are hurrying to read this book, it would be enough to consider the issue about “Music – *Didactica Magna*: A Philosophical overview”. But, undoubtedly, by choosing the „essence”, they would lose the „way” to reaching it; eventually, the way of musical education that the author wants to share with us. So, I am wondering: What is more important, in such a situation? Is it the way toward Wisdom or the „wisdom” without the reading work? I invite all the interested people to journey with Ion Gagim through a well done cultural work, grounded on the *tryad* Music-Human Being-Existence.

The *corpus* of the book contains 19 studies that bring into light the relation between music and philosophy; the entire material also has a motivation and a short introductory, and a referential bibliography at the end.

Step by step, the music art is followed within the existence, the sound and the silence, the cosmos, the experienced philosophy, the

movement and time, the transcendental world, the self-knowledge and the climax one, and the consciousness.

The very own experiences of personalities like Cioran, Kant, Lupasco, on the one hand, and on the other, those of great authors coming from music art and theory, as Dimitrie Cuclin, have been considered. No less, the book offers some significant elements of contemporary thinkers; i.e. George Balan and Carmen Cozma.

The collected studies about philosophy and music art put together the sagemess / the wisdom. Constantly, the *theory* – the contemplation – is linked to the *practice* – the experienced harmonious sound, the felt one as soul vibration; seeing that the musicality of human being is conceived in its function to activating the polyphonic variations of our universe of life.

The book begins in a Kantian style. Thus, some philosophical inquiries *sound* in the framework of the 19 sequences of living *into* music and philosophy, emphasizing the assertion that „music means an experienced and not just a reflected philosophy of life” (p.6).

Ion Gagim returns to Im.Kant in a peculiar study: *Kant and music art* (pp.98–108). He puts in act part of the Kantian concepts, applying them to a modern understanding of music art; as he underlines, „the music has nothing to do with the conceptual thinking” (p.105).

Somehow, despite this notice, Ion Gagim meditates upon the human soul and the consciousness, in terms of musical harmony, elevating towards a generous spirituality. He communicates us his ideas by using the musicality of the thought; that, beside its characteristics of rationality, is a full one of the emotion of „speaking” about music art. Sometimes, it is difficult to find: What is the prime term? Is it the music art or the philosophy? At this point, it really deserves to stress the rectitude of man and the methodical writing, showing an internal silence to which the author has reached by a long cognition of the musical and philosophical culture - that is so necessary to every human agent.

Ion Gagim tries to argue that music is not a phenomenon that controls the emotions, but it is a phenomenon that *creates* emotions; it challenges a sort of detachment of any system, of the material, generally, opening toward happiness and divine revelation – at the same time -, toward harmonious sound and silence, alike. Too short seems to be the topic around the “Philosophy of silence” (p.33); but, this is unfolded by a subtle educational method. The author mentions

some other contributors who have written about silence, as an invitation to a deep comprehension (Note 52).

The silence and the music art are rejoined. If the silence and the mystery are initiating routes in the world religions, there is also a new approach of the relations between contradictory categories: sound and silence.

Especially, the section “Music – An experienced philosophy” develops fundamental aspects: the very peculiar musical experience; the musical act; the experience of music art. According to Cioran, we could say: „When the whole existence becomes music, and when your entire beingness is metamorphosed into a vibration, all the regrets are finished!” (*Cioran and the Music*. Bucharest, Humanitas, 1996, p.61).

Ion Gagim dedicates a study to Emil Cioran. Being a gifted educator, he presents the Cioranian vision about music art and life, at large.

The central part of the book is upon the spiritual destiny of George Balan – the considered man by the author of the book as being able to think and to experience in a veritable musical manner. He is the man who, many years ago, has founded a School of music for the listeners, sustaining the concept of *musicosophia*. This means a way to taking the music and the life together; it is a spiritualization method, a way of human “musicalization”, a particular form of education.

George Balan represents the character to which the author devotes his friendship homage. The respect for the Romanian-German contemporary philosopher reveals part of the creator’s potential who can find even the human mystery within the musical sound.

Using a very short bibliography, Ion Gagim discusses the „case of Dimitrie Cuclin” - a great personality of 20th century in Europe. Cuclin is the representative thinker for whom music art means much more than „a mirror of life”, seeing that he has elaborated an axiological perspective about „human life as the way between Substance and Essence” (p.94). I just allow to say that „Cuculin case” needs a larger approach, to enlightening his major contribution for the philosophy of music art.

In his turn, Stéphane Lupasco is mentioned with his theory around *logic and music art*. According to Ion Gagim, the reputed philosopher has reached the *apex* of music art by his concept of „the knowledge of knowledge”. As a philosopher of science, Lupasco has realized a transcendental movement in the horizon of sciences, by understanding

the music art in relation with the dynamism of the „contradictory energy”.

The fine unity of music art and the ethics is also undertaken in the presented volume. Ion Gagim insists on the concept of philosophy of music that Carmen Cozma has launched many years ago; namely: the „meloethics”. It is a nucleus concept, by which the classic values are brought into light, on the thesis that „music is a state-of-beingness-in-the-world of humanness” (See, Carmen Cozma. *The Meloethics. A Semiotic Essay on the Moral Values of Musical Artistic Creation*. Junimea Publishing House, Jassy, 1996, pp.10-11).

The „meloethics” has been created by its author in the framework of a phenomenological hermeneutics, by starting from the musical experience. The dynamic integrality of „meloethics” guides to the self-knowledge, as a continuation of psychology in the relation with music art (Ion Gagim, *op.cit.*, pp.131–134).

The book of Ion Gagim is an impressive one not only thanks its content, but also thanks the design at large; one made by grace and harmonious color.

I dare to say that Ion Gagim has already discovered a superior level of living and writing about the „singing status”. His works represent a veritable openness from music art towards philosophy; and from philosophy towards music art, no less. On this pathway, we find the human beingness with all the gifts, inscribing itself on the eternal route by activating: living, experience of harmony, emotions and virtues, psychic balance and creativity, cultural horizon and inquiries labyrinth. Anything else is merely silence ... – as a possible source for a new musical sound, for a new other book.