

GEORGES ENESCO'S MUSICAL INFLUENCE ON THE FOLLOWING GENERATIONS – REALITY OR IDENTITY JUSTIFICATION?

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SUMMARY. Georges Enesco, performer, conductor and composer, represents the indispensable reference for the Romanian composers. His propose of a specific musical school was a solution both for traditionalists and modernists; on the one hand, in the case of composers who over appreciated the native Romanian space, he was seen like a justification for their own folklore's affiliation; on the other hand, those composers who depreciate the native space, could justify themselves as followers of Enesco's modernism. But, in the two cases, Enesco represented the "right" solution.

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When researching Romanian music, Georges Enesco appears to be the principal composing figure in all dictionaries and music histories. For researchers, outside Romania, the available information on Romanian "art music" is oftentimes restricted to folk music and Enesco's folk-influenced music.

In fact, Enesco was «the first Romanian composer to have imposed his rhapsodic works on the international public opinion (who, unfortunately, had often had the occasion to know only his youth works, valuable, but not the most representative ones).»¹

Between the wars, Enesco strongly encouraged the efforts of the young composers to realize the dream of a Romanian musical school, principally inspired by the Romanian folklore: «I have confidence in the destiny of the young Romanian music. [...] The folklore remains an extraordinary source and, in this field, Constantin Brăiloiu's efforts had wonderful results. Brăiloiu saved the folklore, revealing some of its beauty and originality.»²

According to Enesco, the realization of this school had all the chances to succeed; in 1924, he spoke about the favourable foreigners' image on the Romanian music by mentioning even the presence of an original school:

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¹ Niculescu, Ștefan, *Reflecții despre muzică (Thoughts on Music)*, Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1980, p. 173.

² Enesco, Georges, *Interviuri I (Interviews)*, in: Manolache, Laura (éd.), Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1988, p. 260.

«the special affection that French people grant us is very flattering. Never before has another country had the happy opportunity to present itself completely to Paris... Gabriel Pierné shows an exceptional sympathy for the Romanian school and composers.»³

Octavian Lazar Cosma said that Enesco was determined to assume the role of national schoolmaster and that, as the main characteristic of this school, he suggested to the composers to exploit the folklore as primary source of inspiration, without using folkloric quotations: «the originality of our music must be looked for in the folkloric melody. However, I think that there is a wide discrepancy between the classical forms and the Romanian folklore. Therefore, our composers do not have to «adapt» the folklore to the European style, but to keep his original form. Romanian composers' works must follow the way of the invention in a folkloric style/spirit.»⁴

Had Enesco succeed in realizing this school?

What is conveyed in Romanian musicological literature is that the generation of composers who came after Enesco's death had their musical "roots" in some or other musical technique - heterophony, unisons - used by Enesco in his music, such that one can discern the similarities and the coherencies among the new generation of composers' music.

Why this image of Enesco was appreciated so much by the following generations?

Enesco, so esteemed in occident as performer, conductor and composer, could represent the essential reference (or idealistic image) for the Romanian composers to be accepted in the musical fields of the west. His propose of a school was a solution both for modernists and traditionalists.

But, what was the after-war Romanian politic concerning Enesco? Even if Enesco was the founder of the Romanian Composers' Society and its director since 1920, after his departure toward west, in 1946, the political regime marginalized him, because, viewing his affinity for the royal family (even his marriage with the princess Maria Cantacuzino), he could easily have been considered as a "formalist" composer.

However, since 1955 (after his dead), the communist regime installed Enesco as a national icon and began to build monuments instead. So, his Romanian image started to change, becoming even a national symbol.

It is very interesting how a composer's image could take such different connotations! For instance, Prof. Tudor Chiriac from the Arts University of Iasi, sustained that, in the soviet era, the Moldavian composers used entire fragments of Enesco's works in their own creations, so the public, recognising those fragments during performances, considered them as a proof of freedom

³ *Idem*, p. 134.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 215.

possibility - because Enesco's works were banned by the Russian government. By hearing that, they felt more closely to Romanian people and expressed their wish of being part of Romania.

In the same time, for some of the 1960 Romanian composers' generation, Enesco's works had another signification (especially because he was also partly banned by the Romanian communist government). He seems to represent sometimes the royalty; another times the modernists or the occidentals. So, many composers declare themselves as followers of an Enesco school – a national school, however, that enabled them to create one of the most Western-oriented music of the East European communist countries.

In order to avoid the censorship and the official recommendation to get inspiration from the folklore, the 1960s modernist composers declare that their inspiration comes from Enesco's mature works, such as the *Chamber Symphony*.

I wonder to which extent the contemporary Romanian musical scholars' discourse about "Enesco's musical influence" (musical language, ideas, techniques) is a pertinent one. At what level/field was this sentence a pertinent one? At the same time, I wonder if Enesco's image as a national musical model has not been used by the generation of composers that came after him for credibility, thereby guaranteeing the success of their music.

Between the Romanian composers, during the communist era, there were two exaggerated situations: some Romanian composers have practiced the self-depreciation, especially those who left the country in order to live abroad. Thus, they sometimes chose to adapt themselves to the western currents and to forget their ethnic attachment.

The opposite reaction is also present.

There is an entire category of Romanian composers who find that the Romanian culture is the best of all, falling thus in an exaggerated self-assessment. Those composers tried to show that Romanian music is unique because of its «essence» and «spirituality», «superior» in comparison with other cultures.

For the 60s generation, Enesco could represent the great solution: on the one hand, in the case of composers who over appreciated the native Romanian space, he was seen like a justification for their own folklore's affiliation; on the other hand, those composers who depreciate the native space, could justify themselves as followers of Enesco's modernism. In the two cases, Enesco represented the "right" solution.

So, at what level was the so-called "Enesco's paternity" true?

Most of the composers claimed that the principal melodic similarity between them and Enesco was the use of heterophony in their musical works. In fact, Enesco's heterophony comes close to the folkloric model and can be

defined as: «simultaneous distribution of the same thematic material between several parallel voices, and oscillations of those between the unison state and the multiple voices music.»⁵

Therefore – according to Octavian Lazar Cosma - the solution for the Romanian contemporary composition “long searched by that generation in sterile experiences – was discovered in Enesco’s heterophony.”⁶

Corneliu Dan Georgescu, a Romanian composer living in Germany, said “one cannot ignore Enesco, because it is with him that begins the ‘common underground line’ among Romanian composers”.⁷ In fact, Ștefan Niculescu had the merit of observing that Enesco used the heterophony in his 3rd *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, so, he is the principal Romanian theorist of the heterophony.

Ever since 1964 – as Octavian Nemescu stated – Ștefan Niculescu advised young composers to follow the heterophony and not the textures⁸. That meant a will to find a Romanian way of doing things, by avoiding the danger of imitating Iannis Xenakis or the Polish school. And Ștefan Niculescu can notice that his advises did not remain without visible results: “Today, many Romanian composers use, in one way or another, the heterophony, but each having his own manner.”⁹

After the 1989’s revolution, the opinion over Enesco’s paternity in creating a composition school has become general. Most composers uphold it, which means that Enesco’s symbolism is perfectly integrated in the “intrigue” of building a history for the Romanian music of the 20th century.

In a survey realized between 2000 and 2002 by the *Muzica* magazine, some Romanian composers living in Romania or abroad confirmed the idea that Enesco represents, even to this day, the absolute master of the Romanian composing school “Enesco is the one who will fundamentally influence the next evolution of the Romanian music.”¹⁰ And also, Dinu Ghezzo said that “there is a great variety of new ideas and concepts that help the present generation to orientate in all parts of international music stylistics [...] in

⁵ Niculescu, Ștefan, *Georges Enesco et le langage musical de XX^e siècle (Georges Enesco and the XXth century musical language)*, in: *Studii de muzicologie*, București, 1968, vol. IV, p. 99.

⁶ Cosma, Viorel, *Enesco azi (Enesco today)*, in: *Facla*, Timișoara, 1981, p. 102-103.

⁷ Georgescu, Corneliu Dan, *succesul muzicii românești depinde de succesul României pe plan politic sau economic... (The romanian music success depends of the romanian politic or economic success)*, in: *Muzica*, București, 2002, n° 2, p. 6.

⁸ Stan, Luana, *Octavian Nemescu – Oboseala care urmează unui fenomen de efervescență (Octavian Nemescu – The overtiredness that comes after the effervescence)*, in: *Muzica*, București, 2001, n° 4, p. 10.

⁹ Stan, Luana, *Ștefan Niculescu – Un public al muzicii moderne (Ștefan Niculescu – A modern music public)*, in: *Muzica*, București, 2001, n° 4, p.15.

¹⁰ Wendel, Eugen, *Secolul XX reprezintă aproape întreaga istorie a muzicii din România (The XXth century represents the whole Romanian music history)*, *Muzica*, București, 2002, n° 3, p. 9.

this process, all Enesco, after-Enesco and after-after-Enesco elements are constantly changing and becoming uniform".¹¹

So, we can conclude that, in contemporary musicological discourse, Enesco's image is used both as a musical Romanian standard and especially as a pertinent guarantee for the international Romanian composer's credibility.

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