

rious critics, like R. Uhry (Uhrynowsky) and R. Catargi, both but briefly mentioned on pp. 7 and 107.

On the other hand, it is astonishing to find Iacob Mureșianu's piano pieces styled simultaneously, as mere "drawing-room works" and as creations "deeply influenced and permeated by folk music intonations" (on p. 31); as for us, we agree to the latter assertion, not to the former one! It is an unaccountable fact why the 'Comedia' journal is twice presented, at first more succinctly and then at greater length (pp. 67 and 69–70)! The great playwright and connoisseur I. L. Caragiale who died in 1912 could not have written the music articles in 'Revista Critică' issued in 1918–1919, and in fact these were due indeed to the pen of his son, the poet L. I. Caragiale (see pp. 73–74 and fn. 109 on p. 74!). The great forerunner of ethnomusicology, G. N. Georgescu-Breazul, who shortened afterwards his name to George Breazul, in order to avoid any confusion with his no less famous namesake, the renowned conductor George Georgescu, could have enjoyed a presentation, too, as his no less celebrated emulator, C. Brăiloiu had got one! Dinu Dumbravă-Emanoil Riegler (presented on pp. 140–141) is obviously one and the same with Emil Riegler-Dinu, the well-known critic and ethnomusicologist from the inter-war period, so that the author's perplexity concerning his further activity seems unfounded. Paul Prodan's activity as a music critic during the Iași refuge in World War I was far richer than described here on p. 149, especially in his chronicles devoted to George Enescu, who had founded and conducted an orchestra there (see e.g. Maria Rafailă's forthcoming essay)! Of course, a most welcome chapter is the one dealing with the writers' musical preoccupations; however, the two subsequent chapters, discussing almost exclusively the musicalness of poetry could have been better placed in an *Appendix*; as a matter of fact, if there are two "retours en arrière" for two not very great poets, like Radu Ionescu and Traian Demetrescu-Tradem (pp. 307–311), why has the author wholly omitted the extraordinary musicalness of Mihai Eminescu's poems, which is by far greater than that of Alexandru Macedonschi & Comp.? It is quite strange, indeed!

However, all these omissions are of rather minor importance. Above all, the volume is an extraordinary achievement, as it required indeed a tremendous documentation and selection that has resulted in a first-rate reference work in Romanian musicology. Therefore, we express our warm greeting to its author and are looking forward towards reviewing the forthcoming volumes as soon as possible!

Constantin Stîhi-Boos

PASCAL BENTOIU, *Capodopere enesciene*, Bucharest, Ed. muzicală, 1984, 584 p.

... Once, in his *Traité de la critique musicale* (Paris, 1947), Armand Machabey has shown that a composer is not fit to become a reliable music critic, because of *his own aesthetics*, both formative and temperamental, that is by far too individual and personal, founded and based on his own creations; in this respect he showed that, e.g. both Verdi and Ravel, feared the "passion" and "the Procrustean bed" of a composer when a critic. For instance, we add that even R. Schumann, who was very eager to asseverate that Chopin was really a genius, on the ground of a less significant work such as the *Variations Op. 2*, was in exchange quite puzzled by and failed utterly to understand a real masterpiece of Chopin's, the famous *B Flat Minor Piano Sonata op. 35*! We think that in fact a composer, like any other creator is carrying on his activity chiefly on the vertical, which allows him to explore the inner depths of the human soul and at the same time to rise to unsuspected summits! A critic, who is not a creator, must therefore try, in exchange, to take a broader view on the horizontal, i.e. to grasp and embrace all truly genuine music! Of course, a margin of error is always left: one can overrate a work that is to be later on utterly forgotten; on the other hand, one can deny the merits of, or even neglect, a work that will be afterwards acknowledged as a masterpiece; but one must try hard to diminish this margin of error as much as possible! (See in this respect also B. Gavoty, *Les Souvenirs de Georges Enesco*, Paris, 1955, pp. 83–84). All this is true also of Pascal Bentoïu's bulky volume *Capodopere enesciene* (Enescu's Master-

pieces). The author believes that "I like it" or "I don't like it" "is the final point of every philosophy of art" (sic) (p. 547) and acts accordingly. However, as long as his extreme bias and intolerance of other people's assertions and opinions do not get the upper hand, his analyses are most exceptional, very judicious, skilful and deep-going, revealing a very good knowledge of Enescu's works. Nevertheless, it happens, rather often in this case, too, that every motif and cell "was pointed out with a minuteness which left beauty entirely behind", to use a sentence from Jane Austen's famous novel *Pride and Prejudice*. In fact Pascal Bentoiu thinks that in Enescu's works, "the main point ... is made up of the obvious dose of originality and of the perfection of his (compositional) technique (our italics — C.S.-B.)" (p. 7); he shows thus quite clearly that what he admires in Enescu is made up above all of his *means*, not of his *achievement* — but this is precisely turning things upside down! On the other hand, the author believes that "Enescu has actually *no inner affinity* with Brahms (the author's italics), no matter what Enescu had said in this respect in various talks and interviews" (p. 93). This is a very categorical assertion, but, alas, far less convincing and conclusive as it might seem at first sight! In exchange, Pascal Bentoiu is resuming again and is dwelling most unconvincingly, too, upon a quite obsolete preconception, viz. would-be affinity of Enescu with ... Berlioz! (pp. 21, 75 and chiefly 107!). However, although Berlioz was indeed a master of ensembles, he had never been, in exchange, such a first-rate jeweller continually polishing up his precious stones, as Enescu, who had followed, in this respect, too, as in many other instances, the patterns set precisely by Wagner and Brahms (who though rivals had nevertheless been both supremely worshipped by Enescu)! Such a minute polishing of themes and motifs is not to be found in Berlioz! Enescu's modalities and those of Berlioz are diametrically opposed; the former is going from the microcosm to the macrocosm, whereas the latter is always waiting for the macrocosm to reveal him the microcosm! Enescu is a *Builder*, as Wagner and Brahms are, not an *Architect* not so much interested in the details, like Berlioz! It is quite strange, indeed, that such an admirer of Enescu's perfection in point of com-

positional technique, should be so eager to deny him every affinity with the two masters of this same compositional technique, Wagner and Brahms and to dwell in exchange so much upon Berlioz, whose chief merits lie elsewhere! Along another line, one is gladly aware that Pascal Bentoiu does not agree with late Mihail Jora's "purism" aiming at expelling from Enescu's output all his "posthumous" works, exactly like those who once desired to deal in the same way with Eminescu's "posthumous" poems! (p. 346). But, in turn, one ought to ask Pascal Bentoiu why is he denying any value to Enescu's best youthful work, the *Sonata for Piano and Cello in F Minor Op. 26 No. 1*, or to a song like *Soupir Op. 4 No. 3*, which equals both in merits and intrinsic musical worth the renowned song on the same lines by Sully-Prudhomme, due to H. Duparc? Why is he analysing solely three movements from the *Piano Suite No. 3 'Pièces Impromptues' Op. 18* (pp. 552—555), or only the first movement out of the four of the sketched *Symphony No. 5* (pp. 558—562)? (By the way, this reminds us of a certain analysis of Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 6 'Pathétique' in B Minor Op. 74*, in which the last movement was no longer presented, its analysis being replaced by the following statement: "Unhappily Tchaikovsky concluded his work with a pessimistic-reactionary *Finale*" — sic!! —). And now, let us mention *Vox Maris*, as our modest opinions are directly quoted therein. It is difficult to discuss the matter, when one is making but categorical-unqualified and intolerant assertions (as those on p. 535). Still, a few things can and must be said. Concerning the third subject of the work, on which Pascal Bentoiu does not agree to our opinion, but offers no other alternative, we shall again quote here the view of our distinguished professor, the lady composer Myriam Marbé, who pointed out, and most rightly, too, that in his ripe, mature works, Enescu often used to turn, quite imperceptibly at first, but very firmly afterwards in the development of the respective work, a motif into a quite new subject! The fact that a new subject is emerging from a previous one, might be styled as a commonplace; but its being afterwards submitted to an ever-going change and its being thus endowed with quite a different function within the work is no longer a ... com-

monplace ! But if one is interested solely in the smallest units of the subjects, of the motifs and of the cells and, because of this, can no longer grasp their transfigurations, i.e. cannot see the forest because of the trees, who is then to blame ? We are further told (p. 367) that we just "kindly" have not understood that in Pascal Bentoiu's conception neither the "replica" nor "the reflex work" ever imply an "echo" — while both the "replica" and the reflex work are ultimately but echoes, although the notions they convey are somewhat slightly different ! An echo, however, has not a pejorative or deprecating signification, although the author likes to think it has ! We simply say that *Vox Maris* is a work quite independent from *La Mer* by Debussy, and that is all ! Madách's masterpiece, *The Tragedy of Man*, is a reflex work, being a replica, i.e. and echo of both Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Goethe's *Faust*, but this quite obvious fact is implying neither deprecating nor pejorative significations ! As for the form used by Enescu in *Vox Maris*, we confess that in all sincerity we deem it a most obvious sonata form, since it contains an exposition with two or three main subjects, a development and a recapitulation ! "Yet Brutus said he was ambitious and he is an honourable man !" — Yet Pascal Bentoiu says it is not a sonata form, and he is a most honourable musician, — although he quite agrees to the fact that *Vox Maris* has indeed got an exposition, a development and a recapitulation — like any other work written in a sonata form ! (see p. 351). Both here, as previously, although he is asserting most categorically his disagreement with us, he does but repeat, in the main, our conclusions ! Therefore, until new elucidating elements will be revealed, we go on maintaining our former "heretic" opinions, both concerning the third subject in *Vox Maris* and the sonata form in it, although in Pascal Bentoiu's conception, they are so very ... "erroneous" ! The parallel with *Œdipus* is as unconvincing as the rest. Both the opera and the poem are two quite independent works ; the similitudes between them are but casual, as they have been both created by the same composer, and belong to his ripe, mature works ; however, in all other respects they are utterly different. Coming again to the third sub-

ject in *Vox Maris*, although its form in the recapitulation is meant by Enescu to represent most obviously a quotation from Brahms (a fact observed not only by us, but by the musicologist Gheorghe Firca as well !), Pascal Bentoiu, fully enslaved by his preconceptions and misconceptions, persists in denying it ! (p. 362). Another preconception of Pascal Bentoiu's is his persistency in considering the fiddler Lae Chioru as having been a ... "violin-teacher" of Enescu when a child (p. 411), although the falsity of this allegation has been proved for rather a long time.

However, there are lots of exceptional things in this stately book, too ! Apart from the exceptional analytical skill of the author's, revealed as such in hosts of instances, we cannot but agree to his justified elucidations such as : "The influence of impressionism on Enescu was rather insignificant, although such an influence did exist and contributed to a certain extent to some refined shades of tone colour and elements of harmony in his works". (p. 217). Another justified opinion of his is his bitterly reproaching and blaming those who have dared to maim and to distort the meaning of the last scene of *Œdipus*, in 1959 and in the following years (pp. 286—288). In spite of the strange impression conveyed by such a mixture of right and disputable views, once Pascal Bentoiu's nearly 600 pages full of real, great love for Enescu have all been read, one feels that one cannot forget them ! Pascal Bentoiu has indeed written a really Great, Imposing, Work about Enescu ! His analyses, although sometime excessive and of a tiresome minuteness, are nevertheless in hosts of instances most soundly done and well-grounded. Of course, it would be desirable for Pascal Bentoiu to remember Leopold Stokowski's words : being once asked what works by Tchaikovsky he liked best, the greater conductor answered : "All of them, without any exception, as Tchaikovsky is Tchaikovsky !" *Mutatis mutandis*, we say : "Enescu is Enescu, and no exception must be made concerning his works !" As for us, we like better Pascal Bentoiu the highly skilled and conversant master of analyses, than Pascal Bentoiu the author of partial assertions, ruled by preconceptions and biases ; we better like his two brisk, youthful *Piano Concer-*

tos, than his too laboured and heavy "opéra bouffe" *L'Amour Médecin* after Molière. But there is no dichotomy; here are merely the obverse and the reverse of one and the same medal. And even if one does not like too much the reverse, the obverse has got plenty of interesting things on it. At any rate, although one should read but *cum grano salis* Pascal Bentoiu's work on Enescu's masterpieces, it remains nevertheless an *Imposing, Great, Reference Book* in our musicology.

Constantin Stîhi-Boos

FLORIAN POTRA, *Aurul filmului*, București, Edit. Meridiane, 1984.

*Aurul filmului* (L'or du film) est le titre du cinquième livre consacré par Florian Potra à la problématique du septième art. Précédé par *Experiență și speranță* (Expérience et espoir) (1968), *O voce din off* (1973), *Voci și vocații cinematografice* (Voix et vocations cinématographiques) (1975) et *Profesiune : filmul* (Profession : le film) (1979), ce dernier volume (qui a comme sous-titre « Œuvres qui évoquent le passé » s'annonce comme le premier d'une trilogie future, en cours d'élaboration.

Dans le préambule de l'ouvrage, l'auteur déclare avec précision ses intentions, expliquant, avec un humour bienfaisant, qu'il a donné « ce titre — *L'Or du film* — à ce possible tryptique (sans aucune relation de frénésie méthodologisante wagnérienne, sauf l'assonance agréable avec

*L'Or du Rhin*) (...), séparant, par des raisons faciles à comprendre, les films historiques (d'époque, de costume), de ceux de l'actualité » (p. 7).

Parlant des films de la contemporanéité inspirés par les temps de jadis, Florian Potra utilise avec habileté les armes du critique d'art et, aussi, celles du théoricien et de l'historien du cinéma, toujours au courant avec les plus récentes victoires dans ce domaine. Ainsi, ses opinions très personnelles concernant des films déjà célèbres, comme *Les histoires de la lune pâle après la pluie*, *Mort à Venise*, *Œdipe Roi*, *La forêt des pendus*, *André Rubliov*, *Pièce non terminée pour pianine mécanique*, *Le tambour en tôle*, etc. sont exprimées dans un dialogue permanent et fertile avec celles appartenant à des esthéticiens et hommes de culture d'une certe notoriété. Les citations, soit de György Lukács ou de Guido Aristarco, soit de D. I. Suchianu ou de Fernando di Giammatteo, de Henri Agel ou d'Umberto Barbaro, occupent de larges espaces dans l'économie du tout.

Sans savoir la prétention que ses opinions ou ses classifications sont infailibles, au contraire, apprenant toujours de ses pensées ou de celles des autres, des idées contraires à l'argumentation initiale, l'auteur de *L'Or du film* réussit à faire du jeu dialectique de ses propres subjectivités (d'ailleurs, le point de départ même du livre se base sur un « jeu », celui de « la tour chinoise ») une lecture vive et captivante.

Olteea Vasilescu