

## Flusseriana - "Music" - Annie Goh

Flusser's relatively few and apparently isolated writings on music appear significant in both content and position for his wider thought. A strong personal interest in music can be shown biographically from writing jazz reviews in London in his early life (Wagnermeier 2003: 29), as well as correspondence with his daughter Dinah Flusser testifying to Flusser's musical tastes (Goh 2012: 127)\*. Many themes which occur in Flusser's earlier writings on or mentioning music (Die Geschichte des Teufels/A história do diabo, *Lingua e Realidade*, lecture manuscripts *Na Musica*, *Na Musica Moderna*) re-occur with shifted emphasis in his later German works on music (most notably *Die Geste des Musikhörens*, Kammermusik).

Flusser refers to music in its etymology as "musiké techné", the art of the Muses, as the Greek art "par excellence" (*Na Musica* 1965: 1). Particularly present in earlier works is an idea of music as the articulation of pure thought, pure beauty, will (with reference to Nietzsche and Schopenhauer) as well as reality (*Na Musica* 1965: 6). His "map of languages" ("*Lingua a Realidade*" 2010: 216) shows a spectrum between "inauthentic silence" and "authentic silence" in both plastic arts and music. References to the musicality of languages in *Bodenlos* (Bodenlos 1999: 88) and in "*Die Melodie der Sprachen*" attest to a strong emphasis on both the musical dimension of language, interlinked with their semantic content and cultural specificity. The fundamental relationship between music and mathematics is repeatedly emphasized with reference to Pythagorus. The act of listening to music as a "Körperstellung" and a form of "acoustic massage" is given the privileged place of overcoming the Hegelian unhappy consciousness, an "ecstatic gesture" of "absolute experience" which avoids the contradiction between subject and object and establishes a pure relation in the field of "mathesis universalis" ("*Gesten*" 1991: 201-202). Music also appears as a social model, both as a reflection of current cultural climate (*Na Musica Moderna* 1965: 3) and as a metaphor for a future telematic society (Kammermusik 1985: 135) in which music and "Einbildungskraft" are inseparable (Kammermusik 1985: 139).

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Goh, Annie, "*Zeichen, Symbol, Symptom – Zur (spekulativen) Semiotik der Klänge bei Vilém Flusser*" in *Zeitschrift für Semiotik*, Band 34, Heft 1-2, Tübingen: Stauffenberg, (2012)

\* Either use this reference of quote directly from Dinah Flusser in a footnote, ""[*Mein Vater*] hörte sehr gerne Barockmusik aber interessierte sich auch für moderne elektronische Musik...ich kann mich erinnern dass er indische Musik gehörte hatte, Ragas""

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