

THE ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1945 AND 1950

The 60-year long period after the liberation of the Republic of Macedonia saw the establishment of the entire educational system. The first steps towards contemporary education were taken in the 1940s, after the Second World War. The change of the social system based on the ideology of socialism greatly influenced the development of the educational system. In this period, this system began to be established, so general education – including music education – faced various kinds of problems:

- inadequate technical equipment
- deficit of teaching staff
- deficit of specialist literature, course books and books
- need for organizing teaching materials (syllabus and curriculum, themes, content, methodology...)

At the same time, there is an attempt to overcome these problems:

- organizing courses for specialist teacher training
- preparing multi-purpose syllabi
- building and supplying schools, etc.

The lower level of the researched period was set at the end of the Second World War and the liberation of Macedonia, whereas the upper limit was defined according to several developments:

- 1949 saw the initiative for extending elementary education to 8 years
- in 1952 the first course book in sight singing by Zhivko Firfov was published; thus we also covered the period of education without course books
- during this period most of the elementary music schools were founded across the entire country

The interval of 60 years does not provide the opportunity of finding documents and materials which can clearly present the subject of our interest. Most of the subjects which would be able to best describe this period (above all, the teachers) are no longer living, and their records, together with all the records of that time are lost. Nevertheless, in the attempt to clarify this period, especially because of the insufficient research in this field, with the help of existing documentation, we decided to systematize the data and to present the situation at the time by analyzing the content and methodology of music education.

We found some information in the Republic of Macedonia Archives (originals and copies of the first syllabi and curricula, from the correspondence between the sections of the Ministry for Education, from the annual reports from the schools, etc.) and in the University Library (official newspapers issued between 1945-1950).

The problems in the structure and organization of the education system were examined through the differentiation of the two streams in music education: as part of elementary and secondary general education, and as a professionally oriented elementary and secondary music school.

General music education

Structure of general education

Many qualitative and quantitative changes occurred in the organization during the discussed period.

Elementary education: - Elementary schools were mostly oriented towards attaining massive literacy. Schools were founded across the country, and efforts were made to continue the existing four-year long education to seven years. On 24.11.1948 the “Seven Year Elementary Education” law was passed, creating a legal basis for extending the length of elementary education (from 1952 until the present, elementary education lasts for 8 years).

Secondary Education – According to structure, there existed several types of secondary schools: gymnasiums, specialist secondary schools, teacher-training schools, art schools and vocational schools. The gymnasium was the most popular form of secondary education (as in the pre-war period) since it was widely available to the public. Until the school year 1950/51, the gymnasium was structured as an 8-grade school, divided into partial and full gymnasium.

Music Education in elementary and secondary schools was obligatory. In this period, the school subject was known as “singing” (in 1951, it acquired a new name - “music” – vocal and instrumental). At that time, much attention was paid to singing songs in class as the most widely represented content in the syllabus and curriculum, thus the name of the school subject. Based on the available documents it is not possible to define the weekly schedule of classes.

The above-mentioned problems (lack of course books and trained teaching staff) disabled the successful outcome of the music classes (Archives of Macedonia, 0013.0026/0151-0228)

Specialist music education

The system of specialist music education was established during this period. Thus, a number of elementary music schools were founded across the country, with the following purposes:

- to promote massive music education among the youth
- to professionally orient the most talented students towards instrumental departments in the higher levels of education

Apart from the two elementary music schools in Skopje, the period between 1945 and 1950 saw the establishment of such schools in Kumanovo, Titov Veles (now, Veles), Shtip, Bitola, Prilep and Tetovo. The first institution for music education was the first Secondary Music School in Skopje, opened on 02.02.1945, as a symbol of the continuing music education in Macedonia.

Training of teaching staff

In order to overcome the problem with the lack of teaching staff, the Ministry of Education organized **singing courses for teachers** - the basic form of methodological instructions for young teachers. The first – basic, and the second – advanced course were organized in 1945 and 1946.

For specialist training in **conducting staff**, two types of conductors’ courses were organized in 1948:

- courses for conducting village singing groups in the elementary music schools in Bitola and Kumanovo and
- courses for choir-conductors at the Secondary Music School in Skopje.

Aspects of content and methodology in music education

The basis for analysis of the aspects of content and methodology in music education were the curricula and syllabi for:

- elementary education (total of 7)
- specialist music schools (total of 2)

- adult courses (total of 2)

They enable us to depict the situation of music education in general, as well as to define the grounds of development of the contemporary music programs. The restored programs are incomplete. It is possible that they either have not been properly preserved, or have never been properly composed (the first possibility is more reasonable). Most of these programs lack the specific years of production. Therefore, during the process of synthesizing the data, we had to compare their content in order to detect their evolution.

While examining the syllabi for general education (elementary and secondary school), elementary music education and singing courses for teachers and choir conductors, we realized that they concentrate on the content of the subject. Even though they are not formally separated, the syllabi contain other significant segments particularly important in contemporary syllabi (aims and tasks, methodological instruction).

After having to systematize the syllabi ourselves, we defined the following contents:

- singing (with a defined number of voices, voice range, song character, ways of learning the music material – by hearing and notes);
- exercises for hearing development
- music-rhythmic movements
- music folklore
- music theory

The programs for specialist music education contain the following:

- singing (solfeggio) according to the defined number of voices, pitch and range of voices
- music theory
- dictations
- exercises for listening development.

In the syllabi for adult courses, the contents of the subjects are listed. The following subjects were to be studied: solfeggio and elementary theory, harmony, study of music instruments, study of music forms, music history, singing methods, instrument playing and conducting.

The analysis of the syllabi concludes that their role was specific and had multiple tasks:

- they were the only source of data with the lack of specialist literature;
- they were the only source of methodological instruction to help the teachers (even though the instructions were scarce)
- with the lack of Macedonian course books, especially in the field of music, these syllabi were the only source of technical terminology.

The strongest component of the syllabi lies in the content; in this period, the detailed content of music education covered almost all fields of music theory and history.

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