

**MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  
IN MACEDONIA IN 1945-1962**

In the modern society, the primary education presents minimal mandatory schooling for every young citizen. The primary education has a general educational character whose purpose is to provide solid and modern general education to every young person as basis for further education. The primary education, which is today conducted solely through eight-year school programme, does not have selective character, i.e. it is available to the members of every social group. Through planned and systematic work, it strives to provide direction for further education of the young person in a field which best fits the wishes and capabilities of the individual.

In the versatile development of a young person, the curriculum containing the so-called aesthetic fields of education is of great importance. This section helps the students to:

- Comprehend of the artworks;
- Develop of the creative capabilities;
- Introduce the most appreciated art works.

**The music education** is part of this aesthetic field. Therefore, in the frames of the general eight-year school programme it is present in all eight grades. Music education is not a privilege of the musically talented children, but a subject which plays important role in the forming of a young person. It helps with a person's socialisation and it presents an introduction to the different fields of art apart from contributing to the development of a sense for the beautiful.

The renowned methodologist Ms. Irena Kojov - Bukvic says that the music education in the frames of the general education has irreplaceable role in the forming of a complete personality. According to her, the significance of the music in the life of school children is tremendous, since it serves as tool for:

- aesthetic education (it leads the students towards understanding and experiencing the beautiful in different fields of art; it enriches the emotional life; develops the children's fantasy and creative abilities);
- forming the moral character of the student (music engagements influence general culture and behaviour; joint music experiences nurture collectivism and develop social relationships);
- activating the students' intellectual capabilities (perceiving and playing music are closely related to the intellectual processes, i.e. require intellectual effort from the students such as attention, recognition, comparison, differentiation); and
- students physical development (singing develops the vocal apparatus and improves the speech; rhythmical exercises improve co-ordination and easiness in walking and running). (Kojov - Bukvic 1989: 17-18)

Considering the afore, the music education in the Republic of Macedonia presents integral part of the general schooling. Over the many decades of contemporary educational system, the music education notes continuous development. The importance of the subject through which it is conducted was recognized at the very beginning of our country's constitution, immediately after the Second World War in 1945. In this post-war period of building a country and an educational system, the first attempts of moving towards contemporary music education were made.

Further on we shall try to picture the situation of the music education in the elementary schools in the period after the Second World War, i.e. the period from 1945 to 1962. In doing so, we refer to the period when The Music High School in Skopje was the leading facility for creating teaching resources necessary for conducting the music education classes in the elementary schools.

The research of the music education in the mentioned period was made on the basis of the following parameters:

- structure of the general elementary education;
- presence of the music education in the frames of the general elementary education;
- treatment of the music education; and

- aspects of study curricula and programmes in music education.

### **Structure of the elementary general education**

An analysis of the organizational and institutional development of the elementary education in the Republic of Macedonia after the Second World War until the first reform of the educational system in 1958 shows that the mandatory schooling was executed in several institutional forms, as follows:

- primary four-year-long school;
- high primary school;
- seven-year-long school;
- three-year-long lower gymnasium;
- lower classes of extended gymnasium; and
- eight-year-long primary school (Kamberski 1994: 81)

From the above we can see that in this period a common educational institution for elementary education has not been established and every institution worked according to its own curricula and programmes. This institutional inequality remained unchanged until the first educational reform of 1958. Ever since and with the General Law for Schooling, the primary 8-year-long school becomes unique educational institution for elementary education, the attendance of which became mandatory for all children age 7 to 15. Such elementary 8-year-long school presented a "...modern and contemporary socialist pedagogical institution based on the principles of social management, which suited the then required extent of our general social and economic development." (Potkonjak 1977: 49)

### **Presence of the music education**

After the Second World War until 1952 the subject which tackled the issues of music within the frames of the general education was called "singing". This subject was included even in the "First temporary plan for training in the elementary schools" of 1944, which means that from the very beginning of the introduction of education on the free territory, the studying of music was instituted as regular subject. This document lists only the subjects which should be studied, without any further explanations and/or clarifications. Thus the number of weekly classes with which

music education was present cannot be determined for sure. In the educational plans (curricula) dated 1945 to 1951, the subject "singing" was present in all classes with one lesson per week.

During the school year 1951/52, the curriculum and programme related physiognomy of the 8-year-long schooling is further shaped as one of the school institutions for elementary education. With a unique programme for the elementary schools enacted on 05 June 1952 by the Council of Education, Science and Culture of the People Republic of Macedonia, the music education experiences contextual and conceptual changes (from "singing" it is transformed into "music [vocal and instrumental]", and then it immediately changes to "music education"). In the frames of the aforesaid curriculum, the music education was present with one lesson per week from first to fourth grade and two lessons per week in fifth to eighth grade.

The 1958 reform of the elementary education introduces attempts for relieving the students' schedule in terms of the weekly lessons, reducing the weekly total from 208 to 199 lessons. This affects the music education in the lower classes. The subject "music education" is present with one lesson in the first and second grade and with two in the third and fourth. In the higher classes "music education" is present with one lesson per week in all grades.

### **Treatment of the music education**

Despite the great efforts for successful implementation of the curriculum in the schools, the results of the analysis and controls in the schools are not very favourable. In one of the reports of the Inspection for Music Education it is said that this is due primarily to "...not having suitable textbook of children's school songs, as well as selected folk songs, because of which the teaching of this subject is dominated by unsystematic, accidental and spontaneous manner of work" (Archive of Macedonia 01.0170.0013.0026/0151-0228). One of the larger reasons for such results is the "...utter lack of care of a great number of our teachers. The reports of the county and city educational departments prove that these subjects are not sufficiently present in all schools." (Archive of Macedonia 01.0170.0013.0026/0151-0228) In this period

similar results were obtained with subjects such as drawing, calligraphy, handwork and physical education. According to the analysis of the work in the elementary schools "this is because the teachers do not pay sufficient attention and that they regard their educational value as secondary." (Archive of Macedonia 01.0170.0013.0026/0151-0228) Such circumstances can be explained with the low level of training of a greater number of teachers, which presents significant problem in the realization of the education. Many of them were not suitable for the job they were performing, nor did they have possibility for using literature in the field of general and music pedagogy.

According to this, the greatest problems in conducting the music education are:

- ***Non-existence of a proper textbook:*** In the period after the Second World War, one of the characteristics of the music education is lack of textbooks. The lack of textbook, which would completely respond to the programme's needs, is negatively affecting the entire educational process. As such, this problem is emphasized in all reports and analysis of the respective inspection.

In Macedonia, textbooks for music education are printed for the first time in 1952. The printing of the "*Textbook of Elementary theory and Solfeggio for first class of gymnasium and fifth grade of eight-year-long schools*" by Zhivko Firfov and the "*Textbook for note singing for the third grade (of eight-year schools)*" by Stefan Gajdov opens new chapter in the music education. More textbooks in Macedonian language are printed after these.

- ***Deficit of trained teaching staff:*** In order to overcome this problem courses for teachers in singing were organized (in 1945 and 1946), whose attendants were the most active teachers of music in the period after the Second World War. But, in time and with the greater "growth" of music education in terms of contents, such staff proved to be insufficiently trained to cope with the new challenges and newly emerged needs for conducting of the teaching process in music education. Often it happened that elementary school teachers taught mathematics and music education at the same time, which speaks a great deal about the treatment of the subject and the unsuitable results of such treatment.

In this period, apart from the existence of Teacher's Schools and The High Pedagogical School, the leading facility for creating trained staff who would then conduct the music education in the elementary schools was the High Music School in Skopje – Teaching-Theoretical Department. The basic goal of this department was to "create new profile of a music teacher, with solid training and general education, who would be able to respond to all needs of the school and outside of it, at the field." (Archive of Macedonia 01.0887.0002.0031/0513-0554) In the frames of their schooling, the future teachers were to "...adopt contemporary concepts of music education in order to, as teachers, properly manage the music education of our youth." (Archive of Macedonia 01.0887.0002.0031/0513-0554) The graduated students of this school were included in the teaching process immediately, in order to quickly strengthen the weak teaching staff.

Due to the fact that in this period the level of attendance of the general schools has been significantly increased, the need for more numerous and suitable teaching staff has grown accordingly. However, the specialized schools which were obliged to create the necessary human resources were not capable to fully satisfy the newly occurred needs. Therefore the music education could not be executed with the properly trained staff alone, but its realization had to rely also on less trained staff. "The analysis of the music schooling" of 1959 lists the staff which conducts the music education in 236 primary 8-year-long schools, which again confirms the fact about the low level of qualifications with the existing teaching staff:

Professors - 1

Teachers - 25

Trained teachers - 26

With improper education - 21

With teaching school - 199

### **Programme and contents of the music education**

When reviewing the programme and contents of the music education, we use the curricula and programmes stored in the Archive of the Republic of Macedonia. Upon

their analysing we received a clearer picture of the matter and manner studied at that time. In order to picture the evolution of the subjects, the analysis of the curricula and programmes was divided in two parts:

- The curricula and programmes of the subject "singing" (until 1952) were separately analysed
- The curricula and programmes of the subject "music" and "musical education" (from 1952) were separately analysed

Upon the completed analysis, we can conclude that the programmes of the subject "singing" are shorter and offer less information in respect of the programmes of "musical education". The former are more concentrated on the contents of the subject, but in them, though formally not separated and in short range, some other important segments are presented, such as the goals and the tasks and the methodical directions.

The following topics are present in the subject "singing":

- 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 programmes of the subject "musical education" are in scope significantly greater in respect of the subject "singing". There we can notice a greater extent of trained approach even in the preparation phase. At the beginning of each programme a thorough explanation is given about the subject and the essence of its existence, while the goals and tasks which should be accomplished through it are clearly noted. In the frames of the programmes, there are special guidelines which lead the teachers through the processing of the teaching contents.

These programmes offer clear separation of the teaching topics. Occurrence of the same contents as in the previous programmes is noted, but at the same time they are enriched with others which were not present before, such as:

- listening to music;

- playing (Orff instruments);
- creative work and
- children's music games.

### **Conclusion:**

In the Republic of Macedonia the importance of music in the forming of a child's complete personality was sought even in the first years after the Second World War. In the frames of the elementary general education in our country, the studying of music was anticipated even in the first curriculum in 1944, and during the post-war years the music education notes continuous development.

Following the analysis of the condition of the music education in the elementary general schools in the Republic of Macedonia in the period from 1945 to 1962, we have concluded that the development of the music education can be divided to two periods:

- **First: from the end of WW2 to 1952:**
- The music education in the elementary general schools is conducted through the subject "singing".
- In this period there are no textbooks for music education, so the only sources of information were the urgently enacted curricula and programmes.
- The programmes are basis on which contemporary programmes were developed. In scope they are short, do not offer much information and the important segments of the programmes (teaching contents, goal and tasks and methodical guidelines) are not yet formally separated.
- **Second: from 1952 to 1962:**
- The subject through which the music education is conducted in the elementary general schools experiences conceptual and contextual changes (from "singing" it is transformed into "musical education"). Such conceptual and contextual change requires new approach towards the same matter, new attitude towards the education of children and their qualification for aesthetic experiences.

- In this year for the first time in Macedonia textbooks in music education by authors Zhivko Firfov and Stefan Gajdov are printed, which marks the period of work with textbooks.
- The curricula and programmes are revised. The new programmes differ from the old ones in scope, greater extent of expert approach and enrichment of teaching contents.
- Although greater attempts are made for training of teachers (through the teaching department of the secondary music school, teaching schools and High Pedagogical School), the lack of suitable expert teaching staff is still one of the greatest problems in the execution of the teaching process.

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