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THE CONTINUITY OF THE MUSICAL TRADITION IN THE MODERN EDUCATION

Abstract

In the era of globalization, with increasing migration, the coherent power of music is promoted in a way and as a means of maintaining its own tradition. Motivated by modern living that is characterized by the dominance of global culture in all its forms of technical and technological achievements, we have explored in the recent years the trend in the musical tradition and the modern tendencies in the educational system. In the Republic of Macedonia, which is a multiethnic country, music in the field of education is represented by all institutional, as well as many noninstitutional forms such as CAS-es (cultural artistic societies). In this paper we observe the role of music education in maintaining the musical tradition of the Albanian population. Research in 2012 carried out in Skopje included basic educational institutions teaching in the Albanian language and the CAS-es. According to the field information, musical tradition is represented in the schools through a segment of curriculum in the subject—Music Education. At the same time CAS-es that are very active in Skopje are confirmed as the main nuclei in the cultivation of folk musical heritage that is realized through instrumental, vocal, and dance sections. Their common characteristics are essential for the usage of traditional instruments and performance of traditional music and

dance repertoire specific to the local community. Public musical performances are particularly important for the dissemination of musical tradition.

Keywords: Music education, Music tradition, Dissemination, Modern education.

1. Local versus global

The global culture in the intermediate period between 20th and 21st century is characterized by the dominance of electronic media and electronic communication, digitalization, and segmentation of genres and audiences. Globalization of today, as the people in the developed countries call it (which would not have happened without the digital and other technologies) consisted of the fast exchange and quantity of information that are transmitted everywhere around the world (Taylor 2001:119).

Music, as a part of musical arts and as a part of a broader phenomenon of culture, is influenced by all these factors. Therefore, a specific difficulty in the theoretical review of music lies in permanently changing the concept of music in historical and geographical sense. Expansion of electronic media for the synthesis and interpretation of music (synthesizers, computers, etc.) has drastically increased the expansion of the existing electronic media and the emergence of new sound recording mediums and digital formats.

Segmentation of musical genres, according to which the audience communicates is still one of the basic features of today. Though diversification of musical genres is a continuous process in human history, in the past decade it reached unprecedented proportions. Thus, in the world today, segmentation is in parallel with the globalization of the entire range of genres of various provenances.

For less than a decade, Internet has become a central communication system in many areas of human living. The quantity of music, which is exchanged over the Internet today at its scope

is vast and most probably equal to the cumulative volume of all other known forms from the past (Castells 2001). This imposed and relatively artificial cultural veneer is only a deeper act of globalization leading to higher local cultural diversification.

Westernization, Americanization etc., of musical culture is an issue that has recently been given greater importance. This led us to consider their influence on musical events in our region in the sphere of folk music, which is a product of the level of cultural development of the majority of population in the society, while at the same time it relies on the musical traditions of a particular environment (Golabovski 1999:170).

We witness the fact that in the Macedonian music culture these changes are equally happening, and they are evident in all ethnic communities. All these encouraged us to carry out a research related to the trend and the perspectives of traditional music of the Albanian population. For this purpose, we included all the subjects of music education that have their share in nurturing the traditional music practice.

We performed the research in Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, because it is the largest and the most important center of cultural manifestations in the state. Within the institutional forms, musical tradition is represented in schools through one segment of the curriculum in the subject, Music Education. The CAS-es (cultural artistic societies), as noninstitutional forms, are the main cores of nursing and dissemination of the folk musical heritage. One of their characteristics in maintaining musical tradition is teaching and performing of the traditional instruments and dances.

We implemented the realization of the set methodology through field research, interviews, questionnaires, as well as through the analysis of the Curriculum and the program of teaching in music education, by attending the teachings and by attending their public musical performances.

2. Institutional forms of music education

In the Republic of Macedonia music within education is provided by all the institutional forms of education. Music education among formal institutions is provided based on the National Program adopted by the Ministry of Education (2005) under the Law on Primary Education and the Changes (2007). The subject, Music Education consists of studying the theory of music, history of music, repertoire of singing and listening to music, playing children's instruments with West European provenance contents, as well as of domestic authorial works. Primary schools help in providing the ways of maintaining their own musical tradition through the segment of studying folk creation and free musical activities. The issue of music education refers to getting knowledge in: (1) the level of musical preparation in relation to the general needs of music education in the state and abroad; (2) compliance of music education with entirety of musical living in the society; and (3) the contribution of educational institutions in the maintenance of musical tradition.

2.1. The subject Musical Education in the class and subject teaching

The Curriculum in music education, provided by the Ministry of Education, is identical in all the state schools throughout the country, regardless of the language in which it is taught. Under this program, in all 5 years of class teaching, the following teaching topics are being studied: (1) singing songs; (2) playing on children's musical instruments; (3) listening to music; (4) basics of musical literacy; (5) music and movement; and (6) children's musical expression and creativity. The repertoire of teaching topics differs depending on the language of teaching, which implies integration of musical creations from their own music tradition. Starting from VI to IX grade, the basic task of teaching music consists of expanding the knowledge in the field of theory and history of music through teaching subjects: (1) singing,

(2) musical literacy, (3) listening to music, (4) playing, (5) basics of musical forms, and (6) folk music creation.

In the central area of Skopje, there are eight active schools teaching in Albanian language. The subject Music Education is taught through textbooks in the native tongue according to the prescribed curriculum. The central musical activity is manifested through the work and performances of school choirs in all the schools. The activity of school choirs is especially important, and in their repertoire there are songs from the music folklore too. In this context, individual commitment of the teacher is very important, which is confirmed by the activities of the vocal groups in some of the schools that foster strictly Albanian traditional music.

Of the musical instruments, the most dominant is piano, which in the recent years is the most preferred instrument among the young population.

Based on our findings, we may conclude that the students tend to show more interest on the Western music, under the influence of global musical flows. However, music education plays an important role in maintaining musical tradition through the compulsory contents of the curriculum where the folk musical creation is studied.

3. Noninstitutional forms of music education— CAS-es

Based on the research findings, the main carriers of noninstitutional music education are the CAS-es. They represent the cores aiming at affirmation of cultural identity, popularization, and protection of the traditional cultural heritage.

Cultural artistic societies of the Albanians in Skopje are "Emin Duraku", "Ibe Palikukja", "Karshijaka", and "Drita". The oldest and at the same time the most renowned CAS is "Emin Duraku," which has been active for more than six decades.

In each of the above-mentioned societies, the number of members on average ranges from 100 to 120 persons divided three sections: dance, instrumental, and vocal. Joint performances of the sections depend on the needs and the occasion of public appearances.

Dance sections include three settings depending on the age of the members that ranges from 10 to 35 years. Members of the youngest group are recruited from the primary schools with mutual cooperation between the experienced members of the CAS-es and the music education teachers. This is one of the most common way to maintain the continuous participation of the CAS-es in the interest of expanding the folk music tradition.

Folk dances are accompanied by two kinds of instrumental groups: traditional—sharkia, chiftelia, prim, kaval, zurla, dajre, and tupan (drum), as well as imported—string and wind instruments of Western provenance.

Instruments that are used in the preparation and presentation of the repertoire vary depending on the occasion, or more precisely, the type of manifestations where the CAS participates. Their appearances at festivals, in accordance with propositions, are usually accompanied by traditional instruments. In contrast to this, at the noncompetition performances or solo concerts, CAS-es use a wide range of musical instruments, mostly combining traditional with Western European, to attract a wider audience.

With regard to the program itinerary of CAS-es, based on our research, it has been found out that it consists of traditional (authentic) and folk music (newly created). From the traditional repertoire, the local musical dialect that dominates is Karadac, Dervents-Tetovo, as well as the dialect from Kichevo. Vocal and dance performances of this repertoire are realized solely through the traditional instruments. Folk repertoire focuses on the newly created authorial creations that are performed with the imported instruments. More interestingly, in this genre, old melodies are recomposed and the original dance steps are modified stylistically to provide

a more impressive visual and musical stage experience. Transmitting vocal and dance repertoire is still performed through oral tradition.

CAS-es are also important in forming their own dancing genre and they represent fundamental ensembles that continue standardizing folk dances and dancing music in front of the wider domestic and international audience. These folk dances form the base for new choreographies and staging that have appeared in the past decades with an important role in establishing the Albanian folklore dance idiom.

The most important segment of the activity of CAS-es is the public performances that contribute to the affirmation, popularization, and preservation of musical tradition. Public performances are realized through solo concerts, as well as through participation in festivals and manifestations in the country and abroad—Albania, Kosovo, Turkey, and so on. Over the last decade, solo performances seem to decline due to financial crisis.

Public appearances are always accompanied by presentation of folk costumes authentic to the region of repertoire, through which other segments of cultural heritage are also preserved.

Recently, there is an intention to promote authentic folk tradition at private collective manifestations as weddings, circumcision, etc., through the professional performances of the members of CAS-es..

Besides secular music, some of the CAS-es nurture spiritual music. This repertoire is presented as required during the public performances that are usually realized during the spiritual holidays such as Ramadan and Bayram.

The CAS-es whose activity is based on enthusiasm, dedication, experience, knowledge, and patience, succeed in developing interest in the younger generations, thereby contributing to the preservation and widening of the perspectives of musical tradition in the expansion of new musical tendencies.

Conclusion

Based on the observations, we can conclude that despite the global musical influences many forms of knowledge and practices remain and will remain local because they are more influential than the influences. Therefore, this process does not imply that the "whole music will remain the same" or that all forms of musical trends are equally receptive to mixing. In this sense, the role of music education in the institutional and especially noninstitutional forms are essential in nurturing and affirmation of the musical tradition. Preservation and continuity in carrying of the tradition versus expansion of the new musical tendencies is achieved through them.

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