

A retrospective of vocational music education in the post-war period

CAROLINA KAROLI, PhD Student
National University of Music Bucharest
ROMANIA*

Abstract: Currently, Romanian pre-university music education has a considerable experience accumulated over seven decades, during which it manifested its direct contribution to the evolution of the entire Romanian musical culture. An empirical research from a historical point of view, of the institutional management process from the post-war period, contributes to the outline of a general picture of Romanian vocational music education. Through this study, we want a synthetic analysis of the vocational musical educational process between 1949-1989, which represented the period of the communist regime. The content of the article chronologically approaches the main events regarding the social, demographic and educational context, starting from the first school formations of middle level music education until the revolution. At the same time, the synthetic research follows the evolution and development of the organization and functioning of the schools, the didactic process and the didactic means used from this period, all of which are synthesized in the finality of this educational process. The collaboration of music schools with the cultural environment on the one hand, and with the educational sciences, on the other hand, with pluses and minuses, secondary music education has left its mark over time, by educating and training many generations of young people with artistic potential from that period.

Keywords: vocational music education, institutional management, specialized music education, evolution of music schools.

1. Introduction

The state pre-university music education was established on the basis of a solid foundation of a music education that took shape during the previous decades. From the beginning of the 20th century until the beginning of the Second World War, music education accumulated a rich history with a vast experience regulated by: 1) the inclusion of music education in the norms of mass education as a compulsory discipline, 2) the contribution of *the Music Conservatories of State* from Bucharest, Iași, Cluj, Chisinau and Cernăuți, and 4) *the Municipal and Communal conservatories*, supported by the local administration and cultural associations, existing in various cities of the country, such as: Timișoara, Târgu Mureș, Brașov, Satu Mare, Oradea,

* carolina.karoli@yahoo.com

Craiova, Lugoj *et al.*, 5) *the existence of private music schools*, such as: the School of Music Education in Bucharest (princ. Manya Botez), *the Private Music Conservatory* in Brăila, *the Hungarian Music Conservatory* in Cluj, also 6) *the Institute of Military Music* in Bucharest and the pedagogical and religious confessional schools. Among the outstanding personalities who supported the field of music education, we can mention: George Breazul (Bucharest), Gavriil Galinescu (Iași) and Traian Vulpescu (Cluj). They made the first attempts at courses in music teaching, the example being followed by: Constantin Brăiloiu, Dimitrie Cuclin, Marcel Botez, Nicolae Lungu, Maximilian Costin, Timotei Popovici, Ion Chirescu, Gheorghe Chirvasie, Alma Cornea – Ionescu, Adrian Damian, Maria Cernovodeanu and many other pedagogues and composers. Also, the foundations of the Romanian musical pedagogical education were strengthened through the creation and improvement of music programs in general and specialized education. At the same time, the pedagogy and didactic of general education was modernized through the establishment of pedagogical sections within the state conservatories. In terms of musical didactics, it was enriched with courses, manuals, didactic methods, publications and scientific studies, treated in the field of musical pedagogy.

2. The context of the emergence of the first school formations and their benefits

From the second half of the 20th century, after the end of the Second World War, the communist regime was established through the political system in the entire Romanian society. One year after the proclamation of the socialist republic on December 30, 1947, Romanian education went radical changes. *By Decree no. 175 of 1948, the Romanian Education Reform is adopted.* Education comes under the exclusive care of the state, and school becomes secular and compulsory. All institutions under private regime are dissolved and the entire education receives a unitary organization with a free character.

In this context, *the Municipal and Communal conservatories* throughout the country, in the best case, were transformed into *Art Institutes or Popular Art Schools*, and in the worst case, abolished. There are cases where conservatories were transformed into music schools (Timișoara and Târgu Mureș). As far as music higher education is concerned, the *Royal Academies of Music and Declamation* in Bucharest, Iași and Cluj remained in operation, gaining their fully deserved legal status in 1931.

Starting with 1948, a real cultural explosion took place in the cultural field. Renowned intellectuals in education and prominent artists of the time gave birth to various artistic formations, especially in the field of theater, music and folk dance. The executive committees of the Regional People's Councils looked after the cultural sector. Between the years 1945-1957 there were 110

professional artistic institutions financed by the state budget and from the budgets of the Regional People's Councils. The leaders of the cultural institutions, the musical secretaries and conductors of orchestras and ensembles, made repeated written and verbal interventions specifying the lack of staff in the musical and artistic field at the Regional Cultural Sections. Meanwhile, new higher education institutions appear, such as: *the Institute of Pedagogical Sciences*, Bucharest, *the Institute of Fine Arts*, Cluj, *the Institute of Art*, *the Institute of Theater and the Institute of Choreography*, Bucharest, *the Institute of Hungarian Theater*, Târgu Mureș and *the three Conservatories* from Bucharest, Iași and Cluj, which also had a beneficial role in the establishment of medium-level music and art schools.

The first music school formations were opened in 1949 in the cities of: Bucharest, Iași, Cluj, Târgu Mureș, Brașov and Reșița. Then in the fifth decade they appeared in the cities of: Timișoara, Craiova, Constanta and Galați and the second school in Bucharest. The year 1957 dates back to the most spectacular period, when ten music schools were established in a single year in the cities: Ploiești, Bacău, Focșani, Sibiu, Târgoviște, Pitești, Bacău, Oradea, Râmnicu Vâlcea and Botoșani. Their number continued to grow in the following years in other cities of the country. During the institutional evolution, they had numerous titles such as: “Elementary School of Music” for 7 years, “High School of Music”, “Technical Secondary School of Art”, “Technical Secondary School of Music” for 10 years, “Secondary School Music and Choreography Technique” for 12 years, “Music and Fine Arts School”, “Music and Fine Arts General School”, “General School with additional music program”.

The establishment of music schools had a beneficial impact on the regulation of the certification of music studies. With the establishment of middle-level music and art schools, the status of “under-graduate student musician” was delimited from the status of “post-graduate student musician”, as previously conservatories had to educate under-graduate students alongside post-graduate students under a single operating regulation. Also, the admission of candidates to the conservatory was regulated, as some sections, such as the pedagogical and canto section, only accepted the files of candidates with a baccalaureate diploma, and for the candidates of the instrumental sections the baccalaureate diploma was not required. The appearance of music schools in the pre-university environment solved the situation of all conservatory graduates who completed their studies before the reform of 1948. Those who did not have the baccalaureate, had the opportunity to complete their studies at the *3-year Evening Music Schools*. They offered graduates *Certificates of Completion of Complete Studies* on the basis of which employees in the artistic field entered the labor field in full legality.

The mode of operation of these institutions was diverse depending on the specifics of the school adopted according to the educational and cultural needs, as well as the material possibilities, the existence of teachers available in the local or regional communities. The popularity of these schools was very high. Elaborating a retrospective of school dynamics, we can mention that at the beginning of the 60s there were around 34 formations of 7-year music schools, and secondary schools had risen to 17 educational units nationwide. The number of school students was approximately 19,700.

3. Some aspects of improvement in music education

As for the educational quality of secondary music institutions, it improved considerably after the organization of *the 3rd Congress of the Romanian Workers' Party* in 1960, through which *the 7-year Elementary school* will change to 8 years of schooling, and in 1968 thanks to the appearance of *the new Law on education in the Romanian Socialist Republic*, it was regulated that general education should last 10 years and high school education should last 4 years. These events gave the opportunity to regulate certain dysfunctions regarding the specialized didactic process. As can be seen following these regulations, one extra year of study is obtained at the gymnasium, through which the music education system has the possibility of a thorough deepening of the specialized disciplines and a much better connection between school life and life in outside of it. At the same time, from the point of view of pedagogical rigor, improvements are achieved at the level of the framework plan, through the gradual phasing of the subjects, taking into account the age of the students (7-14). As a result, there is a balance between the number of classroom teaching hours (specialist and general culture) in correlation with the compulsory individual study hours and the students' rest time.

In the second half of the 1960s, secondary education placed increasing emphasis on professionalization and obtaining a qualification in the shortest possible time. This justifies the considerable growth of music and art high schools throughout the country, a fact for which future graduates can develop their potential by: 1) obtaining a job immediately after graduating from high school, 2) the opportunity to continue their studies in an education higher music and 3) the possibility to be employed and at the same time to continue studies in higher education. Thus, high school education becomes a priority in order to satisfy the professional needs of musical education of the educable. Among the first high schools that appeared in the country were: *Music High School* (Dinu Lipatti) – Bucharest, the *Music and Fine Arts High School* - Sibiu, the *Arts High School* – Craiova (1965), *Music High School* – Cluj and *Music High School* – Galați (1966), *Art High School* – Baia Mare and the *Art High School* – Sfântu Gheorghe (1968), the *Music and Fine Arts High School* –

Arad and the *Music and Fine Arts High School – Satu Mare* (1969), the *Music High School* (“George Enescu”) – Bucharest and the *Music High School – Pitești* (1971).

The status of music high schools will be consolidated with the appearance of *Decree no. 207 of 1977, regarding the organization and operation of high school education* at the national level. The content of this regulation brings clarity with regard to specialized training and qualification on the labor market in the artistic music field. It brought progress in order to increase the cultural level of the entire civil society and the didactic quality, the school performance of the students. In the official Nomenclature, *specialized music* included the following qualifications: *instrumentalist, chorister and soloist*.

4. Educational reform to the detriment of artistic education

For all the opportunities that specialized music education could benefit from the middle level educational system during the communist period, there were also extremely difficult moments during its history. The 1977s represented the period in which the country was going through the third stage of the communist regime, during which the obsessive ideology of the industrialization of the entire country intensified. All material and human resources were channeled in this direction, and the system of musical and artistic education did not really find its place in secondary education. In this context, under the pretext of the economic crisis (but actually a deeply political crisis), most of the institutions were abolished under the pretext of the lack of efficiency of the production provided or the lack of demand on the labor market, which did not really correspond to reality.

Despite all the efforts made by the management of these institutions, locally or regionally, few were kept in operation, at best they were turned into *additional music schools*. The abolition of specialized school units was carried out in two stages:

1) the integration of music and art schools as a separate section in pedagogical education, then

2) the definitive dissolution of the number of students and the restriction of the activity of dozens of specialized teachers. Many of the students who opted for an artistic career during this period never saw their dream come true, re-profiling in completely different fields. Some of the specialized teaching staff had the same fate.

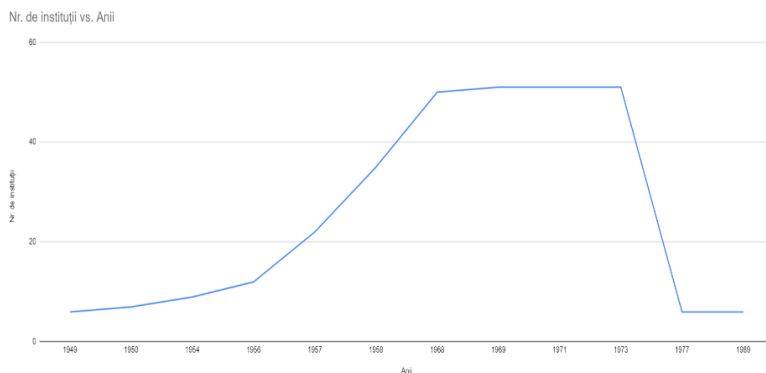


Fig. 1 The graph of the evolution of secondary level music education institutions

From the developed graph, a strong dynamic growth can be observed due to the popularity of music schools among the population, especially in the early 60s. Thus, until the end of the communist regime, only six music and art high schools remained in operation throughout the country, namely: “*Dinu Lipatti*” Art High School and “*George Enescu*” Music High School in Bucharest, the Music and Fine Arts High School in Iasi, the Music High School in Cluj and the Art High School in Baia Mare and Timișoara.

It was not an easy period for the institutions that remained in operation either, as the number of classes at all levels increased. In order to alleviate the tense situation created at the national level, school canteens and boarding schools were established to support students coming from other regions to continue or complete their studies. Here is a table whose informative figures represent the beginning of the organizational reform of the music education system in 1977:

Location	Institution	Number of students
București	“George Enescu” Music High-School	1.309 students
Cluj	Music High-School	1.000 students
Baia Mare	Art High-School	702 students
Iași	Music and Fine Arts High-School	600 students

Table 1. The number of students during the period of music education reorganization in 1977

At the beginning of the 80s, the organization of the primary school classes was 32 students, at the secondary school 36 students, at the high school classes in an early phase there were 25 students in the class, after which it reached an overcrowding of to 36 - 40 students. The most difficult to manage

were the choral ensemble/folk music ensemble and orchestra classes in which, during the 2 hours of activity, the coordinators/conductors had to deal with 4-5 classes per level.

In 1981, the "George Enescu" Music High School in Bucharest reached a number of 2,043 students (1,852 during the day and 191 in the evening). The didactic norm for an instrument and singing teacher in a first phase was 21 hours, then it had increased to 24 hours per week (1987). However, statistics show that the number of students and teachers at the end of the 80s halved (***,1981 pp. 583-585 and 593-595, respectively ***, 1990, pp. 150-152).

5. Organizational aspects and educational resources

Along with the educational reform established by the policies of the Ceaușescu regime in the 70s, the Ministry of Education also regulated certain aspects regarding the organization and institutional management of school activities. The material basis for cabinets, instrument rooms, concert halls, rooms for the creation of choral / popular and orchestral ensembles, workshops for the maintenance of musical instrument repairs, sound libraries and libraries, canteens and boarding schools and other needs of students, falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and of the local administration. At the head of the school governance of the vocational high schools of music and art was the management board, which had the role of carrying out periodic analyzes of the fulfillment of the plans of the entire school activity, together with principals and deputy principals. The norms regarding the institutional management were delimited by clear attributions of the principal and the deputy principal of the educational unit. The most important tasks of the management of the musical education institution was to ensure the good conduct of the general and specialized educational - educational process and the coordination of all educational and financial - administrative and household activities. Also under the care of the principals were the carrying out of extracurricular activities, such as: contests, celebrations, class productions, circles on school subjects, the fulfillment of plans for the collection of recoverable and reusable materials, the preparation and participation in the National Festival of Political Education and Socialist Culture "*Singing of Romania*", specialized school Olympiads. The main strategies at the level of institutional management that had to be applied by the school principals were included in two plans: the *General annual work plan* specific to the profile of the institution and the *Unitary program of political-educational, technical-scientific, cultural-artistic and sports - tourism*. They were monitored by the office secretary of the organization P.C.R. (Romanian Communist Party) from the home school, to which the school principal had to tacitly obey.

With regard to the didactic resources and means, the basic tools in the approach to the specialized didactic process, they consisted of the framework

plans, specialized analytical programs, manuals and methods for various musical instruments. In a first phase, the music institutions adopted their own study program for the specialized subjects depending on the possibilities of each newly established institution and the situation of the teaching staff, the students and the material resources at the local level. Since the Romanian education campaigned for a policy of standardizing the entire education system, it was necessary to develop unique programs for all musical institutions in the country. Thus, at the beginning of the 1970s, a program was created for all the specialized subjects of music-related high schools. In 1974, the Ministry of Education officially publishes *the School Programs for the specialized subjects for music high schools*. To achieve them, a mixed working group was formed, made up of university and pre-university teaching staff from *the "Ciprian Porumbescu" Conservatory* in Bucharest and *the "Gheorghe Dima" Conservatory* in Cluj-Napoca and from *the "George Enescu" Music High School* in Bucharest, *the Music High-School* in Cluj and *the Arts High School* in Iași. Teachers with rich pedagogical and artistic experience in specialized education were chosen. The coordinator of the entire set of programs was the university lecturer Vasile Nicolescu from I.C.P.P.D. in Bucharest. The programs had a good methodological benchmark for many years in a row for whole generations of teachers. In order to comply with the specialized analytical programs and to have a high-performance didactic training, manuals and didactic methods were developed for theoretical and instrumental subjects. Textbooks were unique for all music schools. There was a great diversity in the discipline of music theory, piano and strings. Among them we can mention: *the Music Theory and Solfege textbooks for music schools and high schools* by M. Juberiță, C. Zamfir, V. Giuleanu, *the History of Music* by H. Petrescu and L. Brumariu, *Armonia* by Al. Pașcanu, *Counterpoint* by L. Comes and A. Florescu, *Musical Aesthetics* by A. Iorgulescu. *For musical instruments*: E. Cuteanu, V. Filip, Geantă L. Manoliu G., M. Niculescu; M. Petre Mărginean (strings); Ana Voileanu Nicoară, A. Pitiș and I. Minei, G. Solomon; A. Dumitrescu, M. D. Răducanu (piano); P. Tornea (oboe), D. Pop, I. Cudalbu, D. Ungureanu and E. Radovici (clarinet), D. Ungureanu (trumpet), I. Avesalon, I. Goia (wind instruments) and others. Composer Liviu Comes and Dan Voiculescu will remain among the personalities marked in didactic pedagogy for applied didactic methods. They also left a rich didactic repertoire: V. Jianu, C. Dimitrescu, G. Dinicu, C. Băclea, P. Farkaș, L. Comes, D. Voiculescu, T. Ciortea, C. Brăiloiu, D. Bughici, T. Olah, G. Constantinescu, M. Marbé, V. Herman and S. Pautza.

Conclusions

The establishment of music schools was auspicious for musically gifted students and their parents. The secondary education system offered a wide palette with various possibilities for their operation, for example: schools with integrated program 1st-8th grades, with additional program 1st-8th grades and with integrated program 1st-12th grades. Although music education faced numerous problems throughout its evolution, such as: fluctuations in tuition figures creating a note of insecurity for students to opt for music education since 1977, poor classroom conditions and the lack of material and maintenance resources, the lack of instruments, the increasingly deteriorating food situation in school canteens, the mandatory “voluntary” work of students in agricultural work and the progressive isolation of the middle music education system from the higher one, vocational music education managed to face hardships, bringing a number of benefits to society. Spotting and cultivating young talents from an early age raised musical performance to a much higher level, increased the number of musicians for symphony orchestras, folk orchestras, opera houses, marching bands, choral groups of all kinds. At the same time, vocational music education became a rich nursery for higher musical education institutions in the country. Also, the possibility of employment in the field of work in various formations and artistic ensembles after graduating, contributed to raising the cultural level of the entire Romanian society during this period of time.

References

***. *Anuarele Statistice ale Republicii Socialiste România* [Statistical Yearbooks of the Socialist Republic of Romania], editions 1948-1989.

Apostu, O. & Balica, M. (2015). *Analiza sistemului de învățământ preuniversitar din România din perspectiva unor indicatori statistici. Politici educaționale bazate pe date* [Analysis of the pre-university education system in Romania from the perspective of some statistical indicators. Educational policies based on data]. București: Universitaria.

Coman, L. (2019). *Școala de artă în epoca de aur* [Art School in the Golden Age]. București: Grafoart.

Diac, F. (2004). *O istorie a învățământului românesc modern* [A history of modern Romanian education], vol. I (XVIIth century-1944). București: Oscar Print.

Diac, F. (2004). *O istorie a învățământului românesc modern* [A history of modern Romanian education], vol. II (period 1944-1989). București: Oscar Print.

Suciu, E. (1967). Dezvoltarea școlilor de artă din R.P.R. [Development of art schools in the P.R.R.]. *Pedagogia* [Pedagogy Journal], 6.

School legislation

*** (1948). *Decret nr. 175 pentru reforma învățământului din 1948* [Decree no. 175 for the education reform of 1948].

*** (1968). *Legea privind învățământul în Republica Socialistă România* [The Law on Education in the Socialist Republic of Romania].

*** (1977). Decret nr. 207 din 12.07.1977 privind organizarea și funcționarea învățământului liceal [Decree no. 207 of July 12, 1977 regarding the organization and operation of high school education].

*** (1978). *Legea educației învățământului* [Education Law].