



Music Education in Poland in the Historical Aspect and the Present Day

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Abstract

The article presents the history of music education in Poland from the Early Middle Ages to the present day. Religion and secular musical centers together with schools developed through centuries. Several subjects, such as instrumental playing, choral singing, music theory, techniques of composition and other theoretical and practical subjects were taught. The level of teaching and its scope were constantly being improved. Apart from specialized education, music was also taught in general education schools. As it comes to the methods, Pierre Galin's, John Curwen's as well as Emil Jaques-Dalcroze concepts reached Poland in the 19th century. In the 20th century, methods of ear training were popularized by Tadeusz Joteyko, Karol Hławiczka and Stefan Wysocki. Methods of teaching music in general schools were proposed by Jozef Życzkowski. In the 1930s, Karol Szymanowski had a great impact on the shaping of a new model of music education in Poland. After the Second World War the adaptations of Dalcroze, Zoltan Kodaly's and Carl Orff's methods were implemented. In the 1960s the Polish concept of music education called 'Contemporary Polish Pluralistic Concept of Musical Education' was created by Maria Przychodzińska and co-workers. Another important idea is the 'Cracow Concept of Musical Education' which was created and established by Zofia Burowska and her team at the beginning of the 1970's. After the collapse of communist rule, the educational system changed. The major reform was implemented in 1999. The very new reform in general education in Poland started on the 1st of September 2017.

Keywords: music education in Poland, methods of teaching music, educational reforms

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A brief history

The beginnings of music education in Poland date back to the Early Middle Ages when, with the arrival of Christianity, a new current – Gregorian chorale – emerged. It was first taught to clergymen, and then to secular youth, too. The main centre was Cracow, but in other bishops' residences, such as Wroclaw, choral singing, as well as principles of music theory were taught. The most important educational center – the **Wawel Cathedral School in Cracow** – was considered to be the first one. In 1364 the **Cracow University** was established and it was a momentous moment in the history of Polish science. The lectures on music theory were conducted within the liberal arts (*liberalium atrium*) at Faculty of Philosophy. Music was part of the quadrivium alongside arithmetics, geometry, and dialectics, and was primarily a theoretical subject, although the practical teaching involved Gregorian chorale and playing musical instruments.

In the years that followed, Cracow continued to be the focus of musical culture, and the 16th century was called the “golden age” of music. Music was taught in the same centres as before, but the level of teaching and its scope improved tremendously. Playing musical instruments such as lute, cither, clavichord, and organs was taught. Compositional techniques were also popularised, and Mikołaj Gomołka (ca. 1535–1591), who became famous as the creator of psalms, is an outstanding example.

Baroque brought many changes to compositional techniques as well as performers (the flowering of instrumental and vocal-instrumental music). The changes also concerned the political situation, as the capital of Poland was moved to Warsaw. Despite the fact that some centres were experiencing a crisis, a very important centre for musical education of youth was established in Cracow. It was the Music School led by the Jesuit Order. The students were superbly educated vocally and instrumentally, but also prepared for teaching music.

In the 18th century Waclaw Sierakowski's School of Singing was established, which could be attended by children of all estates. It was the first music school dedicated to children aged 7-13, who were exceptionally talented and trained to be professional musicians. Unfortunately, the political situation resulted in liquidation of the school³. Apart from specialistic education, music was also taught in general education schools. The first textbooks included solfeggio exercises, elements of music theory, and emphasized the role of music in the general upbringing of man.

The nineteenth century was the time of the partition of Poland. The political situation of the country was reflected in the content of teaching and music repertoire, which was dominated by the patriotic element. According to available sources, it can be concluded that no foreign teaching methods in general education were applied at that time. It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that Pierre **Galin** (1786–1821) and John

³ Por. T. Przybylski From history of music teaching in Old Cracow *Musica Jagiellonica*, Krakow 1994, s. 11-32.

Curwen's (1816–1880) relational methods, as well as the absolute one, used by **Emil Jaques-Dalcroze** (1865–1950), reached Poland.

With the beginning of the twentieth century and the regaining of independence, the methods of ear training began to permeate Poland. They were: the French Galin-Cheve-Paris method and the English Tonic-Solfa method by John Curwen. These methods were being implemented and popularised by **Tadeusz Joteyko** (1872-1932), who used the digital method and the Galin's *meloart* in his pedagogical work, calling it phonoart. Also in terms of rhythm, he followed the achievements of the French *pedagogues*. The main musical activity was singing of songs, which aided improving of voice emission and introducing of music rules. In the interwar period, the English Tonic-Solfa method was supported and promoted by **Karol Hławiczka** (1894-1978) who, like Joteyko, paid attention to increasing the level of musicality among children and young people through singing. The proper selection of the repertoire was to serve the introduction of triads. He also attached importance to indigenous folk songs he included in Polish Solfeggio. Another representative looking for effective methods of ear training was **Stefan Wysocki** (1886-1940). He was a student of Dalcroze, studying at the Hellerau Institute near Dresden. According to Wysocki, the teaching of singing should be connected with the enjoyment of music. He was one of the first pedagogues who stressed the importance of practicing the habit of listening to music. He believed that by systematic learning, learners would develop the ability to listen to and hear music. Reading of the musical notation was done by arranging notes on four lines, the so-called *ruling*. In the same way as in the Tonic-Solfa method, he used *phonogesture* – a kind of manual communication. Another method of teaching music in general school was the method proposed by **Jozef Życzkowski** (1895-1967), which originated from the innovative combination of the two methods discussed earlier: the Galin-Cheve- Paris method and the Tonic-Solfa method. Życzkowski's educational offer brought good results in singing education, but it was still based mainly on one type of musical activity - the stereotypical teaching model, which was no longer sufficiently attractive and effective⁴.

In the 1930s, a prominent composer, **Karol Szymanowski** (1882-1937)⁵ undertook decisive action in favor of the progressive shape of Polish music education. The creator of the ballet *Harnasie*, the opera *King Roger*, or Symphony No.3 *Song of the Night*, besides composing and pedagogical activities, was also a great visionary and reformer of music education in Poland⁶. He took great care of raising of the musical culture of the whole society. Szymanowski included his credo in the 1930 treatise *On the educational role of*

⁴ A. Wilk, *The Methods of shaping musical hearing of children of school age*, Krakow 2003, s.48-56.

⁵ M. Dubaj, *Karol Szymanowski today - the composer's reflection*, *Karol Szymanowski dzisiaj - refleksja kompozytora*, [w:] A. Weiner (red.), *Karol Szymanowski - educational inspirations. The Project method* Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2008, s. 14.

⁶ Szerzej: T. A. Zieliński, *Szymanowski -lyric and ecstasy*, PWM, Krakow 1997, s.263-264; por.: L. Markiewicz, *Wybrane zagadnienia pedagogiki muzycznej*, Seria III: Skrypty nr 4, Akademia Muzyczna im. Karola Szymanowskiego, Katowice 2000; H. Feicht, *Wspomnienie o Karolu Szymanowskim*, [w:] J. M. Smoter (red.), *Karol Szymanowski we wspomnieniach*, PWM, Krakow 1974, s. 148-155.

*musical culture in society*⁷. This was the first Polish dissertation addressed to the society on the subject of social and educational function of music⁸.

Contemporary concepts of music education

The post-war (1945) period is the time of adaptation of European methods. In addition to the previously mentioned Dalcroze method, **Zoltan Kodaly's** (1882-1967) concept and **Carl Orff's** (1895-1982) system were included in the scope of interest.

When in the 1960s the Polish concept of music education was being created and introduced, they referred both to the theory of aesthetic education and the experience gained from practice. At the foundation of this concept there was belief that the existing school curricula in the field of music education (the subject "vocals") did not meet the changing needs of civilization and culture, as well as the postulates of aesthetic education⁹. As mentioned, the creators of the Polish concept built on the experience and diversity of foreign systems, which in a significant way shaped the new concept. It was influenced by the systems and methods of Emil Jaques-Dalcroze, Carl Orff, Zoltan Kodaly, **James Mursell** (1893–1963), and the French school of **Celestine Freinet**. Interest was also aroused by **Dmitri Kabalevsky's** (1904 1987) experimental program (learning of listening to music), conducted by this eminent composer in the Soviet Union in the 1960s¹⁰.

The co-creator and implementer of the "Contemporary Polish Pluralistic Concept of Musical Education" is Maria Przychodzińska. Besides this eminent figure, the circle of creators includes: Ewa Lipska, Dorota Malko and co-authors: Małgorzata Komorowska, Barbara Smoleńska, Leokadia Jankowska, Magdalena Stokowska and Anna Trojanowska-Karczmarska (music-art programs). In the discussed concept, the contents and forms of musical education are grouped into four groups: performance expression (singing and hearing training, playing instruments, movement with music), musical creation of children and youth (free expression, directed creation – subjected to discipline). An important element of the concept is the integration of art – music, visual arts, word, literature, movement, dance, film and theatre, whilst retaining specialised education in these fields¹¹.

⁷ K. Szymanowski, Educational role of music culture, PWN, Warszawa 1984.

⁸ Szerzej: G. K. Konkol, Karol Szymanowski on music education [w:] A. Michalski (red. naukowa. Ontology of Music Pedagogy. European Systems of Music Education, Wydawnictwo Athenae Gedanenses, Gdańsk 2017 (wyd. II rozszerzone).

⁹ M. Przychodzińska, , General music education 1960-1990. Between the concept and implementation (1), „Wychowanie Muzyczne”, 3/2011; M. Przychodzińska, General music education 1960-1990. Between the concept and implementation (2), „Wychowanie Muzyczne”, 4/2011.

¹⁰ M. Przychodzińska-Kaciczak, The Polish concepts of general musical education. Traditions – The Present times WSiP, Warszawa 1987.

¹¹ M. Przychodzińska-Kaciczak, Music and upbringing . Nasza Księgarnia, Warszawa 1979; M. Przychodzińska, Listening to music in grades 1-3. A guide to the record library WSiP, Warszawa 1988; M. Przychodzińska, , WSiP, Warszawa 1989; E. Lipska, M. Przychodzińska, Music in early years learning. Methodology.WSiP, Warszawa 1991; E.

Another concept of teaching music is the Cracow Concept of Musical Education (CCME) which was created by a team of musicians-pedagogues from Cracow universities (musical and pedagogical). CCME was established at the beginning of the 70's of the last century. Its creator was Zofia Burowska – an outstanding theorist and pedagogue, and the co-authors included Jerzy Kurcz, Andrzej Wilk and others. The concept was developed through a diagnostic and experimental study that examined two important educational problems, namely the study of the effectiveness of music education in training elementary school children's musical hearing by means of relational solmisation and the absolute method, and the study of the importance of musical creativity in preparation to music perception. The results of the research verifying the hypothesis allowed the first attempts to adapt the elements of Zoltan Kodaly and Carl Orff's systems in general education in Poland. The Cracow concept is characterized by:

- rigorous systematization of the teaching material, resulting from the principles of relational solmisation,
- spiral content,
- using various means of expression and musical perception, i.e.
- the use of appropriate types of musical activities such as: singing, playing instruments, music and movement classes, managing the process of making music, listening to music
- the use of exercises which trains the proper voice emission, dictation, musical score, and familiarize students with basic knowledge about music.

Among many empirical works related to music pedagogy and pedeutology (gr. Paidentes – teacher, logos – science) conducted by the Academy of Music in Cracow and the Pedagogical Academy (now Pedagogical University) two proposals are worth mentioning: the first is the analysis of reception of 92 radio broadcasts by Polish Radio in 1985-1990. The programmes were carried out in three cycles: I – *Let's dance one and two, and sing so mi la*, II – *How nice it sounds la so do re mi*, III – *Let's sing, let's listen*. The programmes were addressed to children, pupils in grades 1-3 of primary school and, to some extent, to their teachers. The content of the programme was based on the programme-methodological concept. The second proposal is the examination of musical and pedagogical competences of students of pre-school pedagogics at the Pedagogical Academy in Cracow in years 1992-1999. Without going into details, the result obtained in both studies have confirmed the high effectiveness of the concept. Numerous articles, research reports, classroom scenarios and book publications constitute the research and implementation activities of the CCME. The members of the department headed by Zofia Burowska, then by Jerzy Kurcz participated in seminars, scientific conferences in Poland and abroad, presenting achievements and exchanging experiences. The students from the above mentioned universities learn the theory and practice that they can verify during school practices. At present, the Cracow concept is more difficult to implement

Lipska, M. Przychodzińska, Roads to music. Methodology and repertoire materials, , WSiP, Warszawa 1999; por.: G. K. Konkol, , OSW Szkice Humanistyczne Tom XIV 2014 Nr 1-2, s. 259-271.

because after the introduction of reforms in general education schools, the subject Music is included in integrated teaching and is not always at a high level. Fewer hours than previously planned for music education of the future teachers results in the fact that not all graduates of pedagogical universities have sufficient competence to teach music. In conclusion, CCME is a proposal for multilateral education with a reference to theory, music didactics, aesthetics and psychology. It refers to the rich tradition of teaching of singing and music in Poland¹².

Music education in the context of the educational system¹³

When talking about the educational systems, we have to introduce the political, historical, economic and social context. The period of political transformation, which started in Poland in 1989, has brought about new legislation, which became the basis for reforms in education. The implementation of reforms started at the end of nineties. The new legislation permitted the development of non-state schools, brought a higher percentage of youth attending general secondary schools, as well as a rapid growth in the number of students attending higher education institutions. The major reform carried out in Poland's educational system in 1999 involved profound changes in the school structure as well as curricula, the grading system, and requirements for students.

Furthermore, a new priority of this reform is to discover and develop children's skills. As a result of teacher autonomy regarding the curriculum, the process of learning can be adjusted to suit students' musical abilities and individual achievements and their own interests.

The new education system comprises: pre-school institutions, primary schools, lower secondary schools (gimnazjum), upper secondary schools and post-secondary schools. Apart from the above mentioned schools, there are the following elements of the education system: schools of art, psychological and educational centers, special education and care institution, continuing education centers, practical training centers, teacher training institutions and teachers' (pedagogical) libraries. In the light of the existing law, institutions of higher education are excluded from the system. They form a separate higher education system.

A child aged 3 to 5 may receive pre-school education, which is not compulsory. The six-year-old children attend either kindergartens or pre-school classes organized in primary schools. From the school year 1999/2000 children between the ages of 7 and 13 attend

¹² A. Wilk, The Problem of musical and pedagogical competencies of early school pedagogy students and teachers of elementary school classes in the light of the research conducted in the years 1992-1999 Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, Krakow 2004, s. 51.

¹³ The chapter is based on: G. K. Konkol, Music Teacher Training and Educational Reform in Poland – Presentation of Music Education Curricula [in:] N. Kalyoncu, D. Erice, M. Akyuz (ed.), Music and Music Education within the Context of Socio-cultural Changes, Series of Culture Books 5, Abant İzzet Baysal Universitesi, Bolu 2010; G. K. Konkol, M. Kierzkowski, ICT in Music Teaching in the Context of a New Educational System in Poland [in:] M. Gall, G. Sammer, A. de Vugt (ed.) EAS Publications, Volume 1, European Perspectives on Music Education 1 New Media in the Classroom, Helbling, Innsbruck-Esslingen- Bern-Belp 2012.

primary schools for a period of six years. As it comes to primary schools (pupils aged from 7-13) it is divided into two stages: the first stage (grades from 1 to 3, ages 7-9) offering integrated teaching in the elementary classroom (no subject division) and the second stage (grades 4 to 6, ages 10-13) in which subject teaching is provided (music is obligatory only for two years once a week).

Since 1999/2000, all primary school leavers continue their education in a 3-year *gimnazjum* (obligatory education for pupils aged 7-16), a lower secondary compulsory school. At the end of this school, pupils take a compulsory external competence exam organized by the regional examination commission. Upon the completion of the lower secondary school, pupils (aged 16-19) are to attend different types of upper secondary schools. At the end of the some types of schools pupils can take the external exam, called Matura (introduced in 2005). On passing the Matura school-leavers' examination, students may continue their education at an institution of tertiary education (a university or college). Those who did not pass the Matura examination or who were not accepted by higher education institutions, could continue their education in post-secondary schools. Non-public schools, together with community and private schools, are becoming more and more popular at all levels - from elementary to higher education.

The Minister of Education in Poland is responsible for the whole system of education (including the vocational schools). The artistic schools (Music, Ballet, Fine Arts schools) are under the pedagogical supervision of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage. The reform of the state administration system and the education reform led to the situation that only the national educational policy is developed and carried out centrally, while the administration of education and the running of schools, pre-school institutions and other educational establishments are decentralized. The responsibility for the administration of public kindergartens, primary schools and since 1999/2000 also lower secondary schools have been delegated to local authorities.

Due to the decentralization of Polish education system it is now possible for teachers to create their own teaching programmes. The system promotes teachers' independence and autonomy which makes them become more creative. The main goal of music education is to stimulate comprehensive development of a child. The reform of the school system in Poland together with new music curricula brought creative methods and tools which can be used in teaching process.

According to the new education system teachers are promoted through successive grading of professional qualifications: from trainee teacher, contract teacher, to appointed teacher, and diploma-holding teacher. The highest level is professor of education, awarded only to the very best tutors.

As from 1999 (complete form from 2000), all educational tasks carried out by the three levels of territorial self-government are financed within the framework of a general

subsidy from the State Budget. The only exception is artistic education, the responsibility for which is still with the respective of Minister of Culture and National Heritage.

Since the introduction of new acts concerning both higher education and The State Committee for Scientific Research in 1991 the public financing of higher education is based on the state budget (subsidy). Higher Education Institutions can also receive funds from local self-governments' budgets as well as from donations including those from abroad. The Higher Education Act allows financing some schools' activities from non-budgetary sources (own income) which include fees charged for particular types of studies, sale of services and other. As a result, in Polish higher education institutions two types of studies can be observed: tuition fee paying and free of charge.

While mentioning present-day institutions of music education in Poland we may classify them as belonging to autonomous multistage system of music schools. It is a full, closed system covering professional music education, whose structure is analogous to the whole system of general education in all its stages. It comprises lower, middle and higher music schools; the latter being equal in level with universities. In 1961 all higher schools of music acquired the formal status of universities and could give the diploma of MA in Music. This status remained the same when in 1978 all of them were renamed as "academies of music".

During the last 40 years, music schools of all levels were both governed and financed by the supreme governmental administration, namely by the Department of Art Education in the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

The statistics show that in the school year 2013/2014, the primary and secondary music schools constituted 80 percent of all artistic schools in Poland. There were 537 schools in total which included 310 public schools (215 subject to the Minister of Culture and National Heritage and 95 run by local government entities) and 227 non public (95 with public schools powers and 132 without public schools powers)¹⁴.

The reforms of the educational system reached the higher music education institutions as well. There are following types of higher music education institutions in Poland: Academies of Music; Universities, and Pedagogical Universities (previous Higher Pedagogical Schools). The Academies of Music are dedicated to teaching the following subjects of studies: composition, theory of music, conducting, instrumental play, singing, jazz and pop music, church music, sound engineering, and music education. There are eight Music Academies in Poland. They take place in the biggest cities of Poland: Warszawa, Katowice, Krakow, Poznań, Wrocław, Gdańsk, Łódź, Bydgoszcz. Although the Matura exam in Poland replaced entrance examinations to the Universities (introduced

¹⁴ The Report on the state of music education of the second degree (red.) Z. Konaszekiewicz, M. Chmurzyńska, Instytut Muzyki i Tańca, Warszawa 2014, s. 19; The Report on the state of music education of the first degree (red.) W. Jankowski, Instytut Muzyki i Tańca, Warszawa 2012.

in 2005), the candidates to higher music institutions are obliged to take an additional competitive entrance examination.

The higher education system in Poland comprises both state and non-state institutions (created on the basis of the Higher Education Act, 1990), but all Music Academies in Poland are state owned. Most higher education institutions are under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. However, some as Academies of Music, Fine Arts, Theatre, and Film Studies are under the supervision of Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

On the 19th June 1999 in Bologna, the European ministers in charge of Higher Education signed a Declaration (so called Bologna-Declaration) with the intention to create a “European Higher Education Area”. Professional music training, which has gradually been integrated into the national higher education systems during the past decades, is also strongly influenced by these developments. The **Bologna Process** has initiated important changes in higher education system in Europe, including Poland. The Declaration was signed to increase the mobility of students, teachers and professionals and create greater transparency in European higher education¹⁵.

Nowadays, **professional degrees at higher music institutions in Poland** are regulated by the Bologna-Declaration indications. The graduates of institutions of higher music education receive the following degrees: **Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts** and **PhD**. Further academic degrees are as follows: **post PhD (habilitacja)** and **professor** is an academic degree awarded by the President of Poland. In addition to this grading scale Polish Higher Education Institutions introduced the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The reforms reached the higher music education institutions, as the Academies of Music¹⁶.

Conclusion

Since the collapse of the communist rule in Poland the education system has undergone quite a few severe changes. The major reform carried out in Polish school system in 1999 involved profound changes into the educational system. Currently music lessons in general education schools are not obligatory throughout the entire educational cycle. In primary schools music lessons are a part of the curriculum as a separate subject in grades 4-6 for three years (one hour per week). In the three-year upper secondary school music lessons are mandatory only in the first grade, whereas in secondary schools music was substituted with a more general subject of Cultural studies¹⁷. The

¹⁵ G. K. Konkol, The Impact of the Bologna Process on Higher Music Education in Poland [in:] Music Pedagogy in the Context of Present and Future Changes 4: Synthesis of the Traditional and Modern in Musical Education of the 21 st Century, eds. V. Balić, D. Radica, University of Split, The Arts Academy, Split 2016.

¹⁶ More: G. K. Konkol, European integration The Bologna process. Implications for music education , Wydawnictwo Athenae Gedenenses, Gdańsk 2013.

¹⁷ G. K. Konkol, Music lessons in general schools in Germany - comparisons with Poland [w:] A. Michalski (Ed.), Ontology of Music Pedagogy. European Systems of Music Education, Athenae Gedanenses, Gdańsk 2015.

insufficient number of music lessons at schools was the impulse for undertaking many actions to promote music education among children and youth. One of the strengths of Polish music education system is that music teachers are highly qualified. They are trained in Music Academies which prepare them to work in all types of schools (general education schools and music schools) and with children at all levels of education. Training takes place within subject-specialist departments which prepare professionals for their future careers. It also means that they have the necessary knowledge and practical skills to develop children's musical abilities.

Despite the passing of years and changing curricula, CCME is still up-to-date, the students of Cracow universities: the Academy of Music, the Pedagogical University, and Vocational School in Nowy Sącz become familiar with the concept and prepare to teach music in general schools.

A reform in general education, which will take effect on 1st September 2017, is currently being prepared in Poland. Middle schools will be liquidated and replaced by eight-year primary schools and four-year secondary schools. The curricula have not been published yet, but the number of hours for Music is already known. Grades 1-3 will be taught Music in the integrated system, and grades 4-7 will have 1 hour of this subject per week. We hope that the new curriculum will be enriched with even more interesting content that will contribute to the harmonious development of children and youth.

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