

**ASPECTS OF THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN
THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION (VIOLIN AND FLUTE EXAMPLES)**

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Abstract: The authors of the paper are Jeta Starova-Mehmeti, PhD, a university flute professor and a professional flutist and Ermalj Mehmeti, PhD, a violinist, musicologist and composer. They are part of the instrumental band “Skupi” (violin and flute), which has performed in Macedonia and throughout the world for about ten years. The repertoire includes works from the folk tradition of the Balkan nations, as well as works from classical music. The processing and arrangement are carried out by Ermalj Mehmeti. In this paper they present their original opinions about the processing of the folk motives and the classical works, as authentic contribution of the nations of South-East Europe to the European and universal culture with their integration in Europe and the system of values of culture and art. As pedagogues and musicologists of their instruments, they give their opinion about the role not only of the violin and flute, but also of the other instruments that are used in the educational process at all levels – from elementary to university education. They also present how the wider community can employ instrumental music education not only as a catalyst of the general culture, but also of the intellectual efforts of the students. Music as “mathematics of the spirit” can influence not only the logical reasoning of the young people in the educational process and the process of cultivation, but it can also give life a greater sense.

Keywords: violin, flute, education, culture, Europe, Balkans

The music art and generally music with its absolute domination in the previous centuries (XV-XIX) had its peaks in the work of Beethoven, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Debussy and others, the domination of the famous soloists and instrumentalists, the development of the music schools and the great conservatories. In the first decades of the XX century it continues with the inertia in the preserving of the classical musical values. However, new challenges arise considering the economical and cultural development, trade and the faster rate of exchange of ideas and values among nations.

Music deserves the undisputed top spot in the domain of education. The schools of music in Europe, especially the Paris Music School, the German Music School, The Italian Music School and others, resiliently maintain the traditional values, especially the unquestionable authority of the professor for the students, the elitist cultivation of the classical musical values, and keeping up with the technical evolution of the musical instruments.

In the European education and culture – the instrumental musical discipline is considered as relatively new and it is a reflection of the reforms that are slowly taking place in the music education in many of the European countries. In this period, the artistic in the interpretation becomes dominant in terms of the craft, i.e. the playing technique, which at times was a goal in itself.

Today, most of the instruments reach a sophisticated perfection, which without a doubt reflects in the work of the instrumentalists and bids them to search for the right tones and to enrich their performance with additional movements and effects that are especially attractive for the young audience. The introduction of the instrumental music at the conservatories, as well as in the educational institutions, from primary school, high school to university education is especially prominent in the European countries – nations, especially after the French revolution, which resulted in processes of centralization of all social spheres of life, including education, culture and art. France, Germany, Italy and other countries with profound musical tradition take turns in the leading role.

Today in the world, the great schools of music such as the Paris Music School and the Vienna Music School are disappearing. Also, the cult towards the great performers slowly fades away. We can no longer find instrumentalists from the type of David Oistrakh, Yehudi Menuhin (violinists), Pablo Casals (cellist), Jean-Pierre Rampal¹ (flautist) and others. In order to keep the real contact with the young audience (the older generation being more inclined towards classical music, the younger generation towards the modern) the contemporary instrumentalists are forced to accomplish perfection in the two domains, both as performers of classical and modern music, but in the form of “dancers on the stage” with the instruments.

In this rank we can place the great violinists of our time such as Anne-Sophie Mutter, Vanessa Mae, Hilary Hahn and others. The conditions are similar with the flautists in the world as well. We are going to focus on two flautists from the South-East part of Europe. One of them is Irena Grafenauer and the other is the Bulgarian, Lidia Oshavkova. Both are among

¹ Cf. Jean-Pierre Rampal. *Le métier de professeur de musique dans le secteur spécialisé*, Cefedem, Alpes, 2003.

the best pedagogues and flute soloists. They come from the Paris Music School, from the class of one of the best theoreticians, professors and author of books, Pierre-Yves Artaud.²

The previously mentioned flautists, as instrumentalists playing the violin, flute and other instruments, perform as carriers of the program, i.e. as soloists of famous symphonic orchestras in the world. They are active musicians and pedagogues (one of them plays the flute and the other the violin), and from the aspect of this paper, several questions come to mind.

We live at a time when the universal laws for globalization of the world change the cultural habits of the nations relatively fast and the relatively small nations can get stuck in phases of isolation if they fail to adjust to the new processes. The traditional giftedness of the Balkan nations, especially in the domain of the folk vocal and instrumental music, along with the increasing number of educational and cultural institutions, the influence of the European musical experience, the unstoppable development of communication in the transfer of music (the Internet), and the sophisticated portable devices create significant new relationships in the projection of the music culture and education.

In this context, we must also take into consideration the opinion of the composer and philosopher Igor Stravinsky that when it comes to music, in the relationship between tradition and identity, tradition should not be understood merely as a “routine mechanism”, but as a living force cultivating the present moment.³

Today, with the prevalence of “plurality” of tastes in music and when the giftedness of the students is often focused on the educational process, in attractive music groups, most of them being short lived, the instrumental music education should undergo reform in our educational process and adapt to the modern times. In primary and high school, apart from gaining knowledge about the basic music culture and education, we should also include a subject for playing an instrument (for example, all students in France must learn how to play the recorder” (flûte à bec), made from firm plastics and adjusted for massive use, being easy to carry. Considering that for playing an instrument it is necessary to have sense, giftedness and desire, the playing of an instrument could be facultative. The guitar, flute, violin and other instruments could be part of instruction.

The musical instrumentalism in the Republic of Macedonia achieved great historical development after the Second World War, when the important musical institutions were

² Cf. Yves-Pierre Artaud, *Apropos de la pédagogie*, G. Billaudot Editeur, Paris, 1996, Yves –Pierre Artaud, *Méthode de la définition élémentaire pour la flûte traversière*, édition Lemoine, Paris, 1972.

³ Ivan Foht, „Muzika po sebi postoji – Igor Stravinski” , in *Suvremena estetika muzike*, Nolit. Beograd.

formed (the Symphonic Orchestra, the Philharmonic, the Opera, the Chamber groups, the music groups, etc.), as well as the music educational institutions (the Faculty of Music Art, the elementary and middle music schools in many cities in the Republic of Macedonia), the national and international music and cultural manifestations, such as “The Ohrid Summer Festival”, “The Autumn Music Celebrations”, State music competitions, Music virtuosi, etc.

The educational music institutions and the music-artistic institutions should by all means be included in the process of forming of future musicians – instrumentalists in the conditions which are imposed by the new social processes and imperatives. The music instrument is not just a catalyst for creating and sharing the universal musical values of mankind, but it also plays an irreplaceable role in the bringing of the nations together.

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