

Review article

THE ARTS EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BULGARIA

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Abstract. *The development of art education in Bulgaria is determined by factors like historical circumstances, industrial development, professional experience and competence. They all decide the methods and approaches in art pedagogical practice, influenced to a great extent by the science approaches in England, Russia and America. In the past there was lack of traditions in the field of art pedagogy, so the teachers in art used the foreign experience. The subject “arts” appears in the Bulgarian schools at the end of XIX century, the first program in arts - in 1885. Many art programs have been created since then and their content has been improved up to nowadays. The paper gives a brief overview of the art education system in Bulgaria development from its beginnings in 1396 to the present day.*

Key words: *history of art education, art teaching methods*

1. INTRODUCTION

The roots of the artistic traditions of Bulgarian art take us back to medieval times when their specific features originated. After the establishment of the Bulgarian state in the year 681 and the spread of Glagolitic alphabet the artistic activity was concentrated in monasteries, where liturgical books were transcribed. That’s how the traditions in artistic activity during the first Bulgarian kingdom were created.

2. THE ARTISTIC EDUCATION DURING THE I AND II BULGARIAN KINGDOM

In the early Glagolitic manuscripts ornamentation is much more richly developed than in the miniature itself. This tendency was influenced by the traditions in stone sculpture, metal working, pottery, traces of which we find in the art the old Bulgarian capitals – Pliska and

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Preslav. The Gospel Codex is in the Vatican. It is named after its inventor Joseph Simon Asemani (1687 – 1768). The form of the initial letters in the Gospel Codex stands closer to architecture. The decoration is determined by the geometric style of Glagolitic letters.

The Tarnovo Artistic School emerged during the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. It developed on the concept, themes and images of Christian art, but it had its own typical features. They are reflected in the realism of the depiction – the poses, gestures and ethnography. The frescoes of the Boyana Church come round to the opinion that the achievements of the Tarnovo Artistic School can be compared with the artistic achievements of that time in Western Europe.

During the time of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom the pattern of the manuscripts changed. Bulgarian miniature flourished. The Tomich Psalter is one of the best examples of illustrated and ornamented manuscript. It presents the trends in the development of the manuscripts. The scenes are painted by skillful master. They have sophisticated iconography and style, free, expressive drawing and intense colors.

3. THE ARTISTIC EDUCATION DURING THE PERIOD 1396 – 1878

During the Ottoman period (1396 – 1878) the Bulgarian monasteries became literary centers, treasuring the medieval traditions, the Bulgarian language and consciousness. In those years students were trained mainly in church schools or private houses. Until the 30 years of the XIX century many church schools were established in the country. They dominated in the Bulgarian education system. The pupils were trained by priests, and rarely by teachers. Bulgarian school Schoolboys and schoolgirls were trained altogether. Passing to a higher grade was achieved by moving students to another desk.



Fig. 1 Church school

In 1753 Bulgaria had only one school in the town of Plovdiv. Until the Liberation war in 1878 Bulgaria had 1500 primary schools, 50 schools for boys and 20 schools for girls, 3 high schools and 4 professional schools. The historical and social conditions in the country hindered the development of education and creativity. While during the XVI century art and culture flourish in the European countries, the efforts of Bulgarian educators focus on basic literacy. Students drew in the classes of writing, but the drawing doesn't exist as independent discipline. The "fun" of drawing was punished severely by the local teachers in some schools.

Special attention was paid to the ornamentation of the initial letters in some schools. The students used plant and teratological motifs painted with colored inks, bought from the monks in the local monasteries.

The national artistic schools developed during the Renaissance as a result of social and economic factors. Schools expanded from small group of artists or small group of students headed by their master. Due to the high demand of artists, the groups grew rapidly into art schools. They were concentrated in towns with well developed crafts. The towns were well-known centers of Bulgarian education and culture with Bulgarian population, usually located close to important trade routes in the foothills or among the mountain ranges. In the XVIII century artists travelled often to Mount Athos to obtain their "holy" patterns. Many religious buildings were built and they needed to be decorated and painted. Art schools were in great demands for their work. The cultural exchange for art developed with the neighboring countries. The copy sheets brought from the old Zograph monastery embodied new emotions. Beautiful, smiling faces appeared in the icons and frescoes. Some local artists got their education in foreign schools and academies (Moscow, Petersburg, Vienna, Munich). Their creative results match with the progressive demands of many European painters from this period.

The Tryavna artistic school was the oldest. Its artists participated in the painting of many churches. The iconographers revived the old models, but enriched them with new feelings. As a result, the icon was exempted from the mystique and got nearer to secular art (Божков, 1982, p. 74).

In the XVIII century appeared the Erminia of Dionysius from Furna. It gave precise instructions to the artist for the composition scheme and the way to prepare the paints. But the Erminia gave the artist freedom in the treatment of details. Some women also became icon painters decades before the opening of the State Drawing School and before the opening of Esther Slepyan private school for art education of boys and girls.

In 1836 a school was built in Tryavna with a capacity of 200 pupils. The students had different obligations – to show, to supervise and to allow pupils to leave the classroom. The first desk was for the youngest children, who were taught to write with their fingers on sand. The older pupils sat behind them and wrote on a table fixed on the desk. Behind them sat the pupils who wrote on paper. There were iron semicircles bolted to the wall for those who showed tables and texts with wooden stick. There were penalties for the pupils who didn't keep discipline. Different signs hang on the neck of the pupils with the words: lazy, thief, disobedient, wise, diligen etc. In Tryavna the subject of drawing was introduced in 1856 and the physical punishment was eliminated.

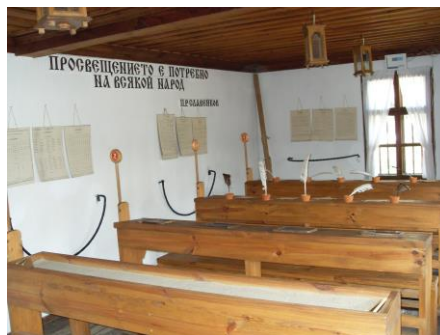


Fig. 2 Classroom in the Tryavna school

Another school appeared in Samokov. Its representative Zahariy Zograf continued the old Byzantine tradition but he revived and individualized the images.

The intellectual and cultural needs in the country grew as a result of the development of new forms of production. Some artists opened private art schools and trained the future icon-painters. Others returned after their studies abroad and tried to establish art schools. But their dreams remained unrealized. The idea for the introduction of drawing in the Bulgarian schools was supported by many educators. One of them, Neophyte Rilski gave the students as models, (because of the lack of other drawings) pillars, doors, windows, etc. These drawings are still kept in the monasteries.

For the first time as an independent subject the drawing was introduced in 1832 in the Danubian town of Svishtov – at that time developed crafts and trade center. The first art teacher in Bulgaria with higher education was the Czech Mayzner Joseph, who graduated from the Art Academy in Vienna (Здравков, 1998, p. 213). Besides the first Bulgarian teachers There were many foreigners. Among them was the Hungarian immigrant Kalman Roger and the Czech George Proshek. In 1873 the Bulgarian teacher Dimitar Shishmanov graduated in Vienna and opened in Svishtov the first Commercial school. He considered that the future traders should appraise the product and its aesthetic qualities – shape, color, packaging. Therefore, he introduced the subject of drawing in the curriculum of the high school.

The teacher councils in 1873 and in 1874 accepted a decision to introduce the subject of drawing in primary school, but the council did not point out the program and methods of teaching (Папазов, 1936, p. 21). The drawing subject was gradually included in the programs of a dozen schools, but the teachers used mainly the "linear" method.

After 1878 the art education took another direction – to the geometric-copying system. It relied on several main methods: copying from patterns, linear painting (reproduction of variety of lines and geometric shapes), copying, drawing by networks, stigmografic, dictate and bar drawing.

4. THE ARTISTIC EDUCATION DURING THE PERIOD 1878 – 2015

The first programs were based on the Swiss, French, Belgian, Czech and Croatian programs. The first Bulgarian program was established in 1885 and had geometric character. It copied the French program and put accent on the depiction of geometric shapes, different kinds of lines and simple objects. The students drew, or it would be better to say “traced” the image on printed patterns or dots. The subject of drawing existed in the school programs at a frequency of two lessons a week. Teachers of drawing were mainly foreigners who stayed in the country for certain period of time. From 195 schools and high schools in Bulgaria nine tenths of teachers were not professionals.

The State Drawing School opened in 1896 with a class of 48 students. Many foreigners were invited to be teachers in it: Ivan Mrkvicka, Boris Schatz, Jaroslav Veshin, Raymond Ulrich, Jan Travnitski, Joseph Silaba, Peter Joseph and Theresa Holekova. The first Bulgarian teachers graduated from European Academies of art. The programs they introduced were similar to the programs of the academies they had studied.



Fig. 3 State drawing school

The States Art School achieved world-wide recognition at many international exhibitions – the gold medal from the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900, gold medal from the Universal Exhibition in St. Louis in 1904, participation in the International Congress of painting in 1900 in Paris and in 1904 in Berne. The school was also awarded "Grand Prix" at the International Exhibition in Liege in 1905, the Balkan exhibition in London in 1907, the International Exhibition in Venice in 1910 and Munich.

The subjects of drawing increased until 1902 but the geometric character remained. The students transferred the drawing from the blackboard, or drew from models and patterns. According to statistics the number of drawing specialists was already 30. They were working in the bigger towns. Many teachers arrived in the country from abroad - from Italy, France, Austria, Russia, Bessarabia, Croatia. Among the first teachers were the Czechs Otto Horeishi, who stayed in the country all his life and Ivan Mrkvicka, who was engaged in pedagogic activities for 40 years and stood at the head of the newly created State Art School (Здравков, 1998, p. 252). The first graduates of the European Art Academies started to come back and trained the students with new methods.

The geometric copying system was replaced by nature drawing in the primary schools in 1907 and in high schools – in 1910. But our understanding of the essence of “nature drawing” doesn’t coincide with the interpretation of the term at that time. The teachers understood the “nature drawing” as drawing objects from the reality. For that purpose they used different methods of work – from patterns, drawing from the board, copying and so on.

From here onwards the development of drawing can be organized as follows:

1. Domination of nature drawing – 1910 – 1970.
 - 1910 – 1922 – predominantly usage of geometric models and analytical methods of nature drawing;
 - 1922 – 1935 – drawing objects from reality; extension of extracurricular education; increase of the interest of students’ aesthetic feelings;
 - 1935 – 1945 – interest to the decorative and applied character of the training; educational tasks; strengthening the monitoring of the training; reducing the drawing lessons;
 - 1945 – 1970 – removal of the drawing as a subject in the high school and reduction of the lessons in the primary school. New educational tasks.
2. Reorganization of the education in drawing – 1970 – 1993.
 - 1967 – 1970 – creating projects for new programs of drawing and their experimentation;
 - 1970 – 1974 – 1984 – 1993 – 2001 – 2005 – 2015 creating and development of experimental programs.

The curriculum from 2001 covers the primary and secondary classes. Now the secondary education continues after 7th grade. The structure in the primary school is as follows:

- Pre-school education – 6/7 years;
- Elementary School – 1, 2, 3, 4. grade – from 7/8 to 10/11 years;
- Secondary School – 5, 6, 7. grade – from 11/12 to 13/14 years;
- High School – 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. grade – from 14/15 to 18/19 years.

In the textbooks the teams take into consideration the syllabus, based on state educational requirements. The program outlines the taught content, standards, expected results, key concepts and knowledge, activities and possible links with other educational subjects. The training kit also includes a teacher's guide and electronic books with resources for each lesson.

We believe that the ability to make and create textbooks, enriched and based on the new scientific knowledge will give us a great chance to assist students' development.

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SISTEM UMETNIČKOG OBRAZOVANJA U BUGARSKOJ

Razvoj umetničkog obrazovanja u Bugarskoj određivan je faktorima kao što su: istorijske okolnosti, industrijski razvoj, profesionalno iskustvo i kompetencije nastavnika. Osim toga, veliki uticaj na izbor metoda i pristupa umetničkoj pedagoškoj praksi imali su naučni pristupi koji su primenjivani u Engleskoj, Rusiji i Americi jer su nastavnici umetnosti, s obzirom na nedostatak tradicije u polju umetničke pedagogije, koristili iskustva iz inostranstva. Predmet „umetnost“ prvi put se javlja u bugarskim školama krajem XIX veka, a prvi nastavni program u umetnosti – 1885 godine. Od tada su stvoreni mnogi umetnički programi, a njihov sadržaj je unapređen do danas. U radu je dat sažeti prikaz razvoja sistema umetničkog obrazovanja u Bugarskoj od njenih začetaka 1396. godine do danas.

Ključne reči: istorija umetničkog obrazovanja, nastavne metode u umetnosti