

MUSIC THEORY: CINDERELLA OF MUSIC EDUCATION

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This study has been produced as part of the KEGA 003UKF-4/2015 project, *Application of Information and Communication Technologies in Teaching Music Theory*, focusing on the development of the propaedeutically oriented music theory software, *Albrechtic*.

Abstract: Since 1994, several educational framework programmes, concepts, reforms and evaluation reports have been developed in Slovakia in the field of education. In 2016, the pedagogical public was debating the thesis of the educational reform called *Learning Slovakia* (2017), which outlines how education should work (colourful and up-to-date teaching materials, pupils' individuality development, etc.). The contribution opens up a number of issues of musical education (the status and share of musical education on the all-round development of the youth, the status of music teachers and music education in the school system, etc.). It deals with the importance of music theory in the structure of musicology and highlights its importance for music education at all levels. Through the prism of publications issued, it notes the status of elementary music theory in the music education of music teaching at faculties of educations.

Keywords: musicology, music theory, music education

Introduction

Education and the school system have stood in the centre of public attention for several years. In the media, as well as in periodicals, articles have been appearing which deal with the accreditation of public universities, with the reform of state education programmes, or with the evaluation of the quality of education and of the knowledge level of the students by various agencies, e.g. by the ARRA (Academic Ranking and Rating Agency) or the OECD PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), assessing education results from the aspect of the labour market. We hear of a low standard of education, of strengthening subjects related to natural history and those of a technical character at primary and secondary schools, of strengthening science (primarily it is strengthening natural history and technical sciences, since arts are often perceived as "pseudosciences", and this was one of the reasons why the Memorandum of Social Scientists and Humanity Scholars came into being at the end of 2016), of strengthening practice, of emphasis on the language skills of the students, of undervaluing the status of the occupation of a teacher and of a lack of teachers, while, paradoxically, we also hear of a large number of faculties of education and of their dissolution. Since 1994, several education framework programmes, concepts, reforms and, in some cases, evaluation reports have been developed in Slovakia: the Constantine Project (1994), the Millennium Project (2000), the Content Reform of Education (2008), the Report on the State of Slovak Education (2013), the *Learning Slovakia* reform of the school system (2017), and several other partial reports. However, all the good ideas incorporated into these documents by leading experts who have been connected to the school system for long years got stuck midway: they were terminated by a change of the government or of a minister. This year, *Learning Slovakia*, a reform of primary and higher education, resonates in Slovakia, about which the specialist public could already learn from the submitted theses. However, the presented reform, which drafts how the school system should work (colourful and up-to-date teaching materials, all-round support of a lifelong education of the teachers, development of pupils' individuality, etc.), does not mention anything about the real state of our school system. The goals are ideal, but what is reality like, and what will be actually achievable from these goals?

There are many unsolved and open questions in the education of children and the youth, while many questions connected to the presented reforms have not even been raised. What is the real case with music education? What is the status of art education and art pedagogical education in the system of disciplines, and what is the state of a music teacher and of music education at

primary schools, primary schools of arts, and at conservatories? Who modifies the contents of music education at schools, and why? What does a decline in interest in art music and in teaching art music stem from? Is it only a consequence of a descending demographic curve, or do the reasons lie significantly deeper, e.g. in a decline in the status of an artist into the role of a mere "entertainer", and are they, consequently, also a manifestation of a decline in culturalism? Why is the subject of art and culture, which offer stimuli for thinking and tools against the manipulation of the youth by the media, not enhanced at grammar schools? Why does the time allocated to music education lessons keep changing? Why do parents, and competent bodies, not mind that children are taught art music by unqualified teachers, and that instead of music education lessons they solve maths problems or compositions? Why do school directors prefer to assign the teaching of music education to unqualified teachers amending their working hours, or to undergraduates, and why do they not support increasing the qualification of their employees and, instead, follow the instructions of local governments to save funds? Why do parents and parents' organizations not protest against this?

It appears solutions are being preferred in music education which do not solve anything, for they do not focus on increasing the quality of music education, they do not create optimal working conditions for qualified teachers, and they continue the sad practice that music education is assigned to many teachers who teach what they should not. The consequence? Decreasing interest in higher education in the field of art music teaching at faculties of education (even in art disciplines at universities of arts), and a gradually decreasing entry level for the candidates of higher studies in the given disciplines. While it was unthinkable twenty years ago that a candidate without an adequate background in music theory would apply for studies of art music teaching, or preschool education, or primary education (which provides the teaching of the music education subject on the first level of primary education), today it is not an exception that a candidate having problems with notation struggles in the first lessons of music theory. How can the condition and the standard of primary music education be evaluated if the question of how many lines does a staff have figures in the final of the most watched quiz show? This small example from the media tells it all.

The following text does not set a goal to answer all the above questions in detail. Many of them could be answered by initiating targeted research, experiments, case studies, or public discussions about the primary, secondary and tertiary school system with respect to arts and art pedagogy. The following paper ponders the status and role of music theory in the system of music education from the aspect of the existing teaching materials.

1 Music Theory in the System of Musicology

1.1 A Brief Outline of the Development of Systematic Musicology

Back in 1978, Ladislav Burlas noted in his publication *Music Theory and the Present* that "... the current state of music theory is rarely theorised" (Burlas, 1978, p. 11). This thesis is valid even today, since, in contemporary specialist and scientific literature, we can find ample volumes dealing with partial problems of music theory but no publications dealing with the conceptional and topical tasks of music theory in connection to the music educational and compositional practice, or related to contemporary musical and musicological thinking. The reason might lie in the polysemy contained in the term of music theory which brings together several areas and concepts. Indeed, music theory is perceived as: a) a part of several elementary music theories (general music theory, forms, harmony, counterpoint, etc.); b) the theoretical formulation of subjective composition techniques; c) the theory of a scientific theory and, lastly, it also

represents d) a set of music analysis methods. Ever since its conception, music theory has been struggling with the dilemma whether to be a practical and propaedeutic discipline or a scientific and theoretical one (Burlas, 1978, pp. 14 – 15).

Along with music acoustics, music theory is the oldest discipline of musicology, even though it was not assigned such a position in the early systematics of musicology. Friedrich Chrysander's system of 1863 was among the first systematics of musicology, assigning three areas of research to musicology in the *Jahrbucher für musikalische Wissenschaft I*: historical, acoustic and aesthetic. He excluded other practical and elementary pedagogical theories from musicology (excluding music theory as well). Guido Adler also dealt with the systematics of musicology (*Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft*, 1885). Adler divided musicology into a historical field (music palaeography, historical development of musical forms, historical development of regularities, history of musical instruments) and a systematic field which includes, inter alia, the field of music pedagogy and didactics with elementary theory, harmony, counterpoint, composition, instrumentation and methodology for teaching song and instruments. Music theory is connected here primarily with elementary doctrines, and has a propaedeutic character, although the research into the regularities of the structure of a musical composition (research into melody, rhythm, harmony, etc.) can be found in the systematic part. That is why he suggested that music theory should be approached in three ways, while maintaining the historical overview of the development of musical regularities: a) as it manifests itself in works of art, b) as it is treated by music theoreticians, c) as it is taught (Kresánek, 1980, p. 35). Somewhat later, Hugo Riemann in his systematics of musicology (*Grundriß der Musikwissenschaft*, 1908, 1915, 1918, 1928) strived for cleansing music theory from a propaedeutic accumulation, and presented it as a scientific discipline: instead of works of art, he made elementary theory disciplines the objects of research (which, however, are artistic in nature and have a pedagogical purpose).

Subsequent development brought a gradual atomisation of the scientific disciplines in order to grasp the heterogeneity of musicology in the most perfect way possible. New research widened not only cognition but also the range of musicological approaches and partial disciplines cooperating with other scientific disciplines. However, besides positive results, there was doubt and scepticism, as well as claims that the contemporary systematics of musicology was experiencing a crisis, that it was not possible to render the multidisciplinary character of musicology into the implications, and that there was no clear integrated concept. By time, however, the influence of ethnomusicology strengthened, and it gained a leading position in the development of the overall scientific and research concept of musicology thanks to its methodological and practical approach.

1.2 The Development and Characteristics of Systematic Musicology in Slovakia

In Slovakia, several musicologists began to deal with the issues of the systematics of musicology in the latter half of the twentieth century: Jozef Kresánek (*Introduction to the Systematics of Musicology*, 1980), Ladislav Burlas (*Methods of Musicology*, in *Musica slovacica IV*, 1973; *Music Theory and the Present*, 1978), Miroslav Filip (*Music Theory and Its Relation to Formal Sciences and The Contemporary Notion of Music Acoustics*, in *Musica slovacica IV*, 1973), Oskár Elschek (*Musical Systematics and Ethnomusicology*, in *Musica slovacica I*, 1969; *The Systematics and Subject Matter of Today's Musicology*, in *Musica slovacica IV*, 1973; *Current Musicology*, 1984). A symposium in Moravany in 1970, with papers presented by leading Slovak and Czech musicologists and subsequently published in the fourth volume of the scientific journal *Musica slovacica IV* in 1973, became the basis for contemplations about the modern systematics of musicology.

Oskár Elschek presented to the specialist public several possibilities for the systematics of musicology. In 1969, he suggested dividing it into three areas: basic research of music (musical regularities), history of European art music, and ethnomusicology. At the same time, he divided these areas into special disciplines and general systematic disciplines. At a symposium in 1970, he proposed other alternatives: Alternative 1 divided musicology into theoretical and applied musicology, alternative 2 perceived musicology as a combination of systematic (theoretical) musicology and regional musicology (the music and musical problems of non-European cultures), alternative 3 referred exclusively to theoretical musicology, which included twelve scientific disciplines of natural historical, social or spiritual character, with a separate position assigned to music theory. To eliminate terminological ambiguities and problems, he further elaborated his ideas in his synthetic work, *Current Musicology*, where he again talked about three possible alternatives:

Alternative 1 represented a triple scheme: i. systematic musicology, or basic musicological research, ii. research of European art music, iii. ethnomusicology;

Alternative 2 complied with this triple scheme with minor terminological modifications: i. systematic musicology, or basic musicological research, ii. euromusicology (euromusicology), iii. ethnomusicology;

Alternative 3 relied on a division into only two fields of research, whose names, however, differed in his proposals.

The third alternative thus had two alternatives:

1. i. theoretical musicology, ii. applied musicology (A. euromusicology, B. ethnomusicology);
2. i. systematic musicology (theoretical musicology), ii. regional musicology with several disciplines according to major cultures (A. ethnomusicology, B. sinomusicology, C. indomusicology, D. orientomusicology, E. afromusicology).

In the above publication, this second alternative became a basis for the systematics of musicology, but the division of systematic (theoretical) musicology is also to be noted. In his systematics of theoretical musicology, Elschek presents twelve scientific disciplines, each of which has its own subject matter and research methods. He divides these twelve disciplines according to their character into three basic sets: a) natural historical disciplines (music acoustics, physiological acoustics, psychoacoustics, aural and musical psychology, organology); b) socio-philosophical disciplines (music sociology, music aesthetics, critique, music philosophy); c) technical musical disciplines (music theory, music pedagogy, music performance, musical palaeography). While natural historical disciplines are specifically theoretic (systematic) ones, the other two sets apply historical and regional, or stylistic and social approaches (Elschek, 1984, pp. 53 – 60).

We have to devote our attention to yet another concept of the systematics of musicology. Jozef Kresánek, applying the existing findings of European musicology, proposed (in contrast to Riemann as well as to Elschek) a division of musicology into four areas of research: a) systematic area, with music acoustics (organology), music physiology, music psychology, music sociology, music aesthetics and music pedagogy, while each subsequent discipline relies in its research on the results of the previous discipline; b) historical area, which is more homogeneous with respect to common methodology, and includes the following scientific disciplines: music palaeography, history of musical instruments, history of musical performance, history of music pedagogy, history of the social status of musicians, biographies, history of styles and trends, history of music aesthetics and views on music; c) ethnomusicology, which was to overcome eurocentrism; d) the area of music theory, which synthetically combines the systematic and as well as the historical aspect (Kresánek, 1980, pp. 25 – 41).

1.3 The Propaedeutic Aspect of Music Theory

In his *Introduction to the Systematics of Musicology*, Kresánek emphasised the need for music theory as the basis for musicological cognition from the systematic as well as the historical aspect and, at the same time, he outlined its further dimensions. That is why he defined music theory as a separate area in musicological research. He pointed to the fact that theory and practice do not always correspond, and that theoretical findings lag behind practice. However, theory has helped in every era to differentiate the essential features from less important ones and, in this way, it overcame the elemental stages of development. Many stimuli for creative practice arose in the field of theory. Theory often helped build rational creative methods. That is how it manifested its connection not only to creative practice but also to pedagogical practice. The preconditions for a creative development of the students' thinking were formed on the basis of the findings of music theory, although several pieces of knowledge had been simplified and generalised for propaedeutic reasons. Although, in the past, theory was often underrated and degraded exclusively to elementary subjects, even this pedagogical aspect of its scope must not be undervalued. Several specialisations ranked among the elementary subjects of music theory: elementary music theory, elementary harmony and counterpoint, elementary forms and genres of art music, elementary instrumentation, elementary theory of performance (with further subdisciplines: phrasing, dynamics, accents, colouristics). At the same time, within practically oriented elementary theories, there were talks of tonality, melody, metro-rhythmic relations, etc. The history of music theory formed a non-negligible part of propaedeutically oriented music theory. The division and the specialisation of the various elementary theories within the theory literature and in the compendia was given by the pedagogical and didactic aspects of teaching at schools of performing arts, and also at pedagogical schools. This type of literature presumes an abstraction of the findings from incentive determinants in the development of music, as well as from determinants of the social and cultural development or of a style. It appears to be a rigid and conservative area of literature. However, this type of the application of the findings of music theory may take into account the development of musical thinking, new findings and creative methods, or new didactic tools. It means that the methods of music historiography (taking into account the developmental aspect of musical thinking) and ethnomusicology (comparative method) penetrate music theory. (Kresánek, 1980, pp. 7 – 41)

Today, the relationship of the various areas of music theory is more than clear. The aim of propaedeutic music theory in the form of the above mentioned elementary theories has primarily, though not exclusively, a pedagogical and didactic nature. There is a connection between music propaedeutic theory and the theory of composition. A candidate of composition must first master compositional problems on the level of generally valid conventions, and individual creative solutions in the sense of overcoming tradition may be presumed only afterwards. The relationship of elementary music theories to the analytical area of music theory is also clear. No part of elementary music theories may do without a knowledge of the analytical procedures, whether with respect to the presentation of the material, or to the evaluation of examples and exercises. What remains is the relationship of propaedeutic music theory with scientific music theory. Scientific music theory scrutinises the essence and the specificities of the musical material, the essence of the poetry of music. It examines the constant (natural) conditions and the historical and developmental (variable) elements of music, and their organisation. By applying the historical and developmental aspect of scientific music theory in the field of propaedeutic literature, which usually presents the material as a set of invariable norms, these norms become dynamic, variable phenomena. For example, the elementary theory of musical forms becomes the history of musical forms and genres, the elementary theory of harmony becomes the history of harmonic thinking, the elementary theory of musical instruments becomes the development of the aural ideal of a

specific era. In this way, scientific music theory may revolutionalise the statically and conservatively perceived propaedeutic music theory, which faces a threat that it will become rigid, conservative and boring for the pupils and the students, and will not reflect the contemporary state of art music on all of its levels.

The interplay of all these four areas is indispensable for music theory as a part of musicological systematics. Only the mutual influence and interaction of propaedeutic music theory and the theory of composition with analytical and scientific music theory can move the development of music theory forward. The mutual interplay in the inside reflects also on the outside, as an interaction of theory and practice. (Burlas, 1980, pp. 11 – 21)

2 Elementary Music Theories

We find several names in propaedeutically oriented musical literature: general theory of music, elementary theory of music, music theory. Although they appear to be synonyms, the various theories should be explored in more detail.

The general theory of music, as a schoolbook, appeared already in the 19th century, and its authors pursued only one goal at the time: to create a work which would be the sum of all the existing pieces of knowledge in the field of music theory. The general theory of music could not match up to specialised theories in the depth of processing the subject matter, and it was not its purpose, either. It had to present an exposition of music on a basic level and, therefore, it contained chapters on musical sound, notation, metre, rhythm, tempo, intervals, scales and tonal sequences, tuning systems, diatonism and chromatism, enharmony, consonances and dissonances, and also on the basics of harmony, counterpoint, musical instruments, etc. At schools where specialised theories were taught, it formed the necessary general base for a knowledge of music. Therefore, it was an informative and summarising exposition of the system of music on various difficulty levels, depending on its function and orientation. Due to the swiftly developing science and the amount of new pieces of knowledge in richly differentiated and heterogeneous musicology, the general theory would have to present a significantly more extensive summary of the existing pieces of knowledge. In spite of the attitude of music teachers who often perceive the general theory of music as a system of pieces of knowledge on music given once and for all, the general theory of music cannot respond to the current state of knowledge. One of the problems of the conception of the general theory of music is the fact that it usually refers to European art music only, and does not inform, and does not present a picture, about the musical regularities of other music cultures (mentioned above). After all, it is equally difficult to fit all the various forms and expressions even of European music, e.g. archaic folk song, mediaeval liturgical music, or the latest experimental expressions in music, into a common denominator. Thus, the general theory of music would have to be transformed into an extensive encyclopaedia of music, presenting the ontology and gnoseology of music in light of the latest pieces of knowledge in the field of musicology. Therefore, is it possible at all to conceive a general theory of music which would contain all the existing pieces of knowledge about music? When pondering over the concept of a general theory of music, the author cannot avoid two tendencies: a) a tendency to consciously limit the scrutinised material in a historical, geographical as well as factographical sense; b) a tendency for the highest possible degree of generality within the limited system, so that the discussed pieces of knowledge could become part of a higher system. A general theory of music should be conceived as a dynamic system of pieces of knowledge about music, predetermined by the existing state of scientific knowledge of musical thinking and of the musical system. Consequently, a general theory of music heads towards a scientific concept of music theory.

Unlike the general theory of music, the elementary theory of music is expected to present only the most essential characteristics of music with a necessary limitation and

elimination of pieces of knowledge depending on the level of the education programme. It does not mean, however, that scientific music theory should diverge from the teachings of the elementary theory of music, or that the elementary theory of music should not accept the current state of scientific knowledge. The relationship between the scientific and the propaedeutic is not ruled out. Even seemingly static basic pieces of knowledge about art music may be presented in a novel way, by novel methods and didactic tools.

2.1 Propaedeutic Literature of Music Theory

It is not our aim to present a complete list of propaedeutically oriented works from the field of music theory. Instead, we would like to highlight the fact of little, almost no, publishing activities in this field, unless we take into account the official schoolbooks of music education for primary schools and for primary schools of arts. The question is, however, what literature represents music theory at faculties of education, preparing future teachers of art music and teachers of music education? What specialist literature in the form of elementary music theories (not specialised theories, i.e. of harmony, counterpoint, etc.) is available for them in the libraries? We will look primarily at Slovak titles post 1945, but we will also note certain titles produced by Czech authors.

The oldest titles include *General Music Theory [Všeobecná náuka o hudbe]* by Ján Valaštan Dolinský from 1946, dealing with basic information on sound and tone and its features, the musical alphabet (the names of the notes, octaves), notation (staff, clefs, shapes of the notes, shapes of the pause), metro-rhythmic system (division of rhythmic values, bar lines), beats, notation of melodic ornaments, tonal system (diatonic, chromatic, enharmonic notes), up to the notation of rhythm, tempo, dynamics, and various abbreviations. It represents the first part of a basic, elementary theory of music.

Elementary Music [Náuka o hudbe] by Peter Hýroš from 1957, first published back in 1950, is a lot more extensive. Based on feedback, as well as on his own teaching practice, he revised the second edition and added new examples to it because, as he himself notes in the introduction, since that time (i.e. from 1950 to 1957), no similar publication appeared in Slovakia, so he decided to publish the already sold out title again. Hýroš's *Elementary Music* begins with characterising music as such, and with the systematics of musical disciplines. He continues with the acoustic features of music (tone and its characteristics), and with notation. Through natural, inflected and enharmonic notes, he arrives at tempered tuning and scales (major, minor, enharmonic, mediaeval, chromatic, exotic, pentatonic, whole tone, Gypsy), also taking into account the connection of keys and modes, and the relationship between the keys. These are followed by intervals (inversions of intervals, enharmonic intervals, defining and resolving dissonant intervals), transposition, aliquot and combination tones, and progression in a harmonic movement. Subsequently, he treats tempo and the performance of compositions (dynamics, accents, melodic ornaments), then chords (from triads and their inversions up to ninth chords, Lydian triad, Neapolitan sixth chord) and the basics of musical forms and genres, including free forms and contrapunctual forms. Finally, he discusses musical instruments, types of orchestras, and scores, as well as the range and tuning of orchestral instruments. The above elementary theory is very extensive and relatively complex, definitely also due to the contribution of the editors of the publication, composers Andrej Očenáš and Dezider Kardoš.

Two years later, the Slovak Publishing House of Fine Literature published Ján Fischer's extensive *Music Theory* (1959), which perceives the basic areas of music theory also from a developmental aspect, e.g. it takes into account the developmental trends of notation. A significant part is dedicated to the field of music acoustics (sources of sound, free and forced vibration, sources of tone and the tonal area, sound propagation, etc.). Contrary to previous publications, it deals also with the

basics of harmony, and again from a developmental aspect (an overview of the chordal progressions from the Viennese classics up to the twentieth century). Of course, it does not omit the area of musical forms and musical instruments, either, and brings a glossary of the Italian terminology and the biographical data of the most significant composers in the conclusion. Andrej Očenáš was the editor of this, truly voluminous, publication, too.

The still topical *Brief Theory of Music [Stručná náuka o hudbe]* by two authors, Eugen Suchoň and Miroslav Filip, for the general public and for music lovers, as well as for future professional musicians and music teachers, appeared first in 1962. As the title itself suggests, the authors limited the information to a significant extent (they mostly omit historical development and present only some essential facts). On the other hand, they devoted more attention to areas which had not been adequately treated in similar types of literature: the basics of music acoustics, tuning and ornamentation, relying on the latest pieces of musicological knowledge. Similarly, they changed the usual methodical procedure for presenting the material on scales and intervals, which was more efficient than in its previous treatments. This publication has been reprinted, and is available even today.

Ever since the publication of this elementary music theory, there have only been two more titles in propaedeutically oriented Slovak music theory: *Music Theory for Conservatories [Hudobná teória pre konzervatóriá]* by Juraj Pospíšil (1985), whose first volume came out in the form of cyclostyle copies, and which reflects exclusively the requirements of specialised secondary schools of arts (meant for the first year in conservatories), and a simple revision course of elementary music theory for pupils of primary schools of art, *Minor Theory of Music [Malá náuka o hudbe]* by two authors, Peter Šidlik and Božena Dlháňová (1994).

A similar situation, even if somewhat better, exists even in propaedeutically oriented Czech music theory. The most sophisticated introduction to the study of music theory was the *General Theory of Music [Všeobecná hudební náuka]* by František Pícha (1961), progressing from simple sound (explained in all aspects), through dyads (intervals), triads, tetrads, up to pentads (chords). Each chapter is concluded by a brief revision of the previous material.

In 1965, Adolf Círal's *Basic Musical Terms [Základní pojmy hudební]* was published, which is divided into three basic areas: a) general musical terms, b) chords and the basics of harmony, c) musical forms and genres. In the other parts, the reader can learn about the history of music and about selected composers and their oeuvre. Both publications have been re-edited as well. 1965 saw already the seventh edition, but without the author's personal participation. It means that there was a significant demand for this type of literature, whether at schools or among the public. Another proof of this demand is the constant interest (in Slovakia as well) in *The ABC of Music [ABC hudební nauky]* by Luděk Zenkl (1976), which presents basic information in the following areas: a) general theory of music: tones and the tonal system, notation, pitches and tuning systems, time and rhythm, performance and other symbols, scales, intervals, chords; b) music acoustics; c) musical instruments, human voices, musical ensembles and scores; d) introduction to the study of compositions; e) introduction to the study of the history of music.

In spite of a persisting interest in this type of music theoretical literature, suitable for studies at specialised secondary schools of art and at faculties of education, we find other available titles only in the twenty-first century. In 2003, the Faculty of Education of Palacký University in Olomouc published Pavel Režný's *Elementary Music Theory [Elementární hudební teorie]* and, two years later, the gap was filled by Věra Grigová's *General Theory of Music [Všeobecná hudební náuka]* (2005) which, similarly to Juraj Pospíšil's publication, was meant for the study of music theory at conservatories. Nevertheless, it is fit even for training future teachers of art music and of music

education, studying at faculties of education. As the editor noted, this is a type of publication which had not been published in the Czech Republic in such a coherent and detailed form for decades. It should be noted that propaedeutically oriented literature in the field of music theory had the same fate in Slovakia.

Conclusion

As we have pointed out, music theory has long been a discipline focusing on finding and explaining pieces of knowledge of music. This musicological discipline reflects the overall development of musical thinking, and of the methodology of musicology. From a description of the observed phenomena, the research of music theory heads towards a deeper cognition of the system of music, and towards understanding its essence from the aspect of the dynamics of its development in all its complexity. All new pieces of knowledge get inevitably reflected also into music pedagogical practice, including the exposition and understanding of the complex current musical practice with its diverse styles.

Nevertheless, primary schools often devote minimal attention to teaching music theory, and the time allotted to it at faculties of education does not suffice to cover all the shortcomings of the students' previous education in music. The shortage of generally available literature is also due to the fact that even scholars, i.e. musicologists and music theoreticians, who often criticise the state of music education, do not devote adequate attention to it, and do not contribute to the improvement of this state by their own publications. How else can it be explained that, unbelievably, half a century has passed from the first edition of the *Brief Theory of Music* by Suchoň and Filip, and no one has filled the gap in propaedeutically oriented music theory in Slovakia for teacher candidates of music education. Compared to specialised theories, or histories, of music, music theory does appear to be the Cinderella of music education.

This study has been produced as part of the KEGA 003UKF-4/2015 project, *Application of Information and Communication Technologies in Teaching Music Theory*, focusing on the development of the propaedeutically oriented music theory software, *Albrechtic*.

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