

Comparative analysis of musical-enlightenment concepts of L. Bernstein and D. Kabalevsky in Russian music education

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to compare the activities of Kabalevsky and Bernstein—two musicians who made a significant contribution to the musical education of the younger generation, reveals the principles, methods, forms of educational work and covers the subject of television programmes. In particular, the pedagogical and musical-enlightenment concept of the outstanding composer, scientist Dmitry Kabalevsky was widely spread in our country. Also, the achievements of American composer, lecturer, teacher Leonard Bernstein in the field of musical enlightenment differ in originality and are rarely used in Russian musical pedagogical practice. In accordance with the aim of the study, the following theoretical methods were used: analysis of the literature, epistolary texts, the repertoire of the concert programmes of the New York Philharmonic orchestra; generalisation of historical data on musical and educational activities of Kabalevsky and Bernstein, comparison of methods and techniques of music education, biographical method.

Keywords: Conversation, enlightenment, Dmitry Kabalevsky, Leonard Bernstein, TV.

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1. Introduction

Russian musical culture traditionally creates and translates works of art of a high level of skill. However, at the present time, there are negative processes of commercialisation of musical art, indecipherable imitation of modern Western musical forms, reorientation of the artist's artistic taste from aesthetic pleasure to the emotional expectation of technically complex tricks (Dyganova & Karkina, 2015; Musical Education, 2015). The problems of familiarising young people with academic art, the system of bringing cultural values to the aesthetic consciousness of the listeners fall within the scope of the tasks of musical enlightenment. There is a rich experience of musical-enlightenment activities which has accumulated in the Russian music education (Akbarova, Dyganova, Shirieva & Adamyan, 2017). In particular, the pedagogical and musical enlightenment concept of Dmitry Kabalevsky—the outstanding composer, the scientist was widely spread in our country. It should be noted that in recent years, there has been a tendency of mutual enrichment and mutual influence of concepts, ideas, methods of various schools, including foreign ones. In 2018, marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Leonard Bernstein, one of the greatest musical figures of the 20th century. The achievements of the American composer, lecturer in the field of musical enlightenment differ in originality, are of great interest but they have been little studied and are rarely used in Russian musical pedagogical practice.

So, the aim of this study is to compare the activities of Kabalevsky and Bernstein—two musicians who made a significant contribution to the musical education of the younger generation, reveals the principles, methods, forms of educational work and covers the subject of television programmes.

2. Methods

In accordance with the aim of the study, the following theoretical methods were used: analysis of the artistic, pedagogical literature, epistolary texts, the repertoire of the concert programmes of the New York Philharmonic orchestra (1958–1969); generalisation of historical data on musical and educational activities of D. Kabalevsky and L. Bernstein, comparison of methods and techniques of music education, biographical method.

2.1. Analysis of the data

Comparative analysis has been used to analyse the data on artistic, pedagogical literature, epistolary texts, the repertoire of the concert programmes of the New York Philharmonic orchestra; generalisation of historical data on musical and educational activities of D. Kabalevsky and L. Bernstein. Comparative analysis is separated from the sense in which all analysis is comparative: all attempts to find causes involve comparing what happened with a mental image of what is likely to have happened in the absence of certain features (Marshall, 1998; Smelser, 1976;).

3. Findings

The name of D. Kabalevsky (1904–1987)—composer, public figure, member of the board of Directors and vice-president of International Society for Music Education is widely known in our country. In 1961, he headed the Commission on children's musical education created at the Union of composers of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). During acute discussions related to concerns about the low aesthetic culture of students, Kabalevsky put forward the slogan 'Composers—to school!' and suggested ways to radically reorganise aesthetic education in the school. In the early 1970s, based on his own experience, as well as the pedagogical views of B. Asafiev, N. Grodzenskaya and V. Shatskaya, D. Kabalevsky developed a holistic concept of the musical education of children, which introduced fundamental changes in the content and methods of mass musical education of schoolchildren. Among its features, it is possible to single out the development of moral and aesthetic orientations of the personality, the thematic principle of programme construction, the

integration of arts, the inclusion of samples of the musical art of the national cultures of the USSR, etc. Kabalevsky proposed new principles of musical education, the thematic construction of the programme, the upbringing of musical culture as part of the whole spiritual culture, the principles of variability, dialogicity.

The leading form of musical and educational activity of D. Kabalevsky was a conversation about music—musical evenings ‘Rovesniki’, subscription ‘Music—Painting—Life’ in the State Tretyakov Gallery; radio programmes, pioneer musical meetings. In the 1980s, in order to improve the qualification of music teachers, the studio ‘Shkolfilm’ released six educational methodical films-lessons ‘Music Lesson’ by Kabalevsky.

Musical-enlightenment activity of D. Kabalevsky was embodied in the form of publications—critical notes and reviews, articles devoted to musical education, debatable issues of contemporary art, outstanding artists (Kabalevsky, 1981). Among his literary works are the following ‘Selected articles about music’, ‘About three whales and much more’, ‘Beautiful awakens good’, ‘How to tell the children about music?’ and etc.

The book ‘How to tell children about music?’ is devoted to the problem of educational work with children. Kabalevsky singles out two tasks in the educational work of a musician: the maximum objective—to arouse children's love for music, the minimum objective is to get them interested in music. In the same book, he gives important recommendations for the lecturer on the form of the concert, the construction of his programme, on the ways to increase the attention of listeners, in the manner of the musicologist's behaviour on the stage. D. Kabalevsky believes that a musician who works with children should himself actively feel and love music, be able to think about young audience, improve his own skills. In conversations recorded in the 1960s in the All-Union camp ‘Artek’ and schools number 31, 112, 209 of Moscow, Kabalevsky tried to give universal keys to comprehension of musical art, he acquainted with genres of music, the interdependence of musical and human speech, intersection of music with other arts, introduced into the wonderful world of composers. The musical-enlightenment works of the composer were popular not only in the children's audience but also among adults (Musical Education, 2015).

In his musical and educational practice, Kabalevsky often used the methods of music education developed by him. Let's consider some of them.

The method of ‘running ahead’ and ‘returning’ to the passed aims to establish a variety of links between topics, musical works, musical skills and experience. The significance of this method lies in the fact that it allows for the repeated hearing and execution of the same works, which is extremely important not only for their memorisation but also for a more emotional perception and understanding. The method allows to discover new, previously not noticed features, establish new connections with other works of the same composer and with the music of other composers (Abdullin & Nikolaeva, 2004). This is reminiscent of ‘the sight of a man climbing a mountain, when, having reached a new height, he looks from above on the distance travelled past and notices in it that which he did not see before’.

‘The method of the problem situation assumes the interrogative form of the construction of speech. In order, the children's interest from the question to the question does not fade, Kabalevsky suggests gradually to complicate them, alternating between questions that require a response ‘aloud’ and answers-reflections. The teacher could tell everything himself, saving time, but at the same time, the most evil and most dangerous enemy of all education and upbringing the passivity would enter the classroom, the ‘microbe of boredom’ would be appeared in the atmosphere’, said Kabalevsky.

The method of identifying similarities and differences should play a decisive role in all the manifestations during musical activity beginning from the perception and awareness of the smallest ‘building’ elements of music, up to the distinction of complete dissimilarity or, on the contrary, the considerable closeness of the creative styles of different composers. This method is important in creativity, and in performing, and in the perception of music.

Unlike Kabalevsky, Bernstein's (1918–1990) works in our country are little known. The talent of the musician is universal—an outstanding composer, the author of works that have received worldwide recognition, the largest American conductor, pianist-virtuoso, writer and educator. Bernstein believed that music and the ability to enjoy it are the greatest benefits granted to man by nature. However, these benefits are not accessible to everyone in equal measure. The achievements of the American composer in the field of musical education have been little studied and are rarely used in Russian musical and pedagogical practice. Let us consider his musical and educational activities in detail.

In 1958, CBS released 'Young People's Concerts'. Bernstein's conversations about music immediately attracted the attention of American viewers. Later to performing with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernstein began to introduce verbal comments on the works. In the concerts, the diversity and originality of the creative talent of the American enlightener were revealed. Bernstein appears before listeners in a variety of ways: as a conductor, under whose management masterpieces of performing art are created (Akbarova et al., 2017); as an inspired performer who can be able to play and sing the musical material; as a wonderful speaker; as a teacher, who in an accessible form for the listener evoke a desire to learn music (Kabalevsky, 1981). A series of 53 programmes 'Young People's Concerts' was broadcast during 14 seasons in 40 countries. On the basis of television concerts-conversations, the books 'The joy of music', 'The infinite variety of music', 'Young People's Concerts'. In these literary works, musical-enlightenment views of Bernstein were reflected (Bernstein, 2008; Nikolaeva, 2011).

The book 'Young People's Concerts' is addressed to the youth audience. Bernstein was convinced that the younger generation has a thirst for knowledge: 'there are no young people who do not want and could not understand music'. Let's note the main principles of content and construction of conversation-concerts:

1. Music has prevailing importance in concert.
2. Each subsequent section deepens what was said earlier, it is a new stage in the student's knowledge of the essence of a phenomenon.
3. The desire to present the problem in an unusual, often paradoxical form.
4. Appeal to viewers or readers with questions.
5. Inclusion of listeners in a musical activity. Bernstein invites them to sing a melody, to slap the rhythm, to try to convey the conductor's scheme in motion.
6. Widespread use of visual aids.
7. Building a conversation on the principle of emotional-imaginative contrasts.
8. The combination of the elegance of words with the shocking epatage.

There are several main thematic directions that can be identified, they are carried out through a series of his conversations:

1. Disclosure of the essence of musical terms and artistic expressiveness of the basic elements of the musical language, as for example: melody, tonality, interval, gamma (What is a melody?; Musical atoms: a study in intervals; What is orchestration?)
2. Acquaintance of listeners with musical styles (What is classical music?; What is impressionism?; The world of jazz).
3. Identification of the essence and features of the activity of the listener, composer, conductor (The Infinite Variety of Music; Beethoven's Symphony No.5", The Art of conducting) (Karkina, Fajzrahmanova & Gluzman, 2016; Salpykova & Politaeva, 2016).
4. Acquaintance of listeners with the creativity of composers (Eternal Mozart; The Music of Bach).
5. Analysis of masterpieces of the world musical art (Symphony No.4 by Brahms; Symphony No.6 of Tchaikovsky) (Bernstein, 2000).
6. Disclosure of meaning in music (What does music mean?; Humuor in music).

Let us reveal the features of some of the listed lectures.

In the lecture-conversation 'Musical atoms: a study in intervals' Bernstein explains that the interval is an atom of music, its heart and soul, one sound is meaningless and does not represent anything from itself. The lecturer explains the structure of the intervals in order to inform the children that the comprehension of music is impossible without the knowledge of special terms and basic concepts (Bernstein, 1990). Bernstein offers to get acquainted with unique works, for which only one interval served as the 'building material': the second in Williams Symphony No.4 and the third in Symphony No.4 by Brahms.

In the lecture 'What is orchestration?' Bernstein involves the guys in an active creative process: suggests to come up with a simple melody and then try to orchestrate it. The lecturer emphasises that there are many variants of orchestration and the task of the composer is to choose the only correct variant that is suitable for this particular case (Bernstein, 1990).

In order for an unprepared listener to understand music, Bernstein addresses in his conversations to a number of traditional and innovative methods and techniques. E.Nikolaeva systematised his methods of musical-enlightenment activity (Nikolaeva, 2009):

The '1-2-3' method helps to direct the listeners' attention to what they need to listen to, clearly structures and doses the material that should, and most importantly, can be heard by them.

Using *the method of developing interest in musical knowledge* promotes the development of listeners' desire to communicate with music and expand their ideas about it. The author introduces new information in such a way that not only to interest but to intrigue her listeners.

The essence of *the method of proof from the contrary* is to put forward for discussion an assumption prematurely doomed to the fact that in the process of reasoning, it will be rejected.

4. Conclusion

The comparative analysis of the musical-enlightenment activity of Kabalevsky and Bernstein leads to the following conclusions:

1. Kabalevsky and Bernstein—outstanding music figures of the 20th century, possessing a universal talent. Both showed themselves as prominent composers, bright pianists, talented writers, teachers and lecturers.
2. Russian and American educators aspired to interest the widest sections of the population with music, to awaken in them the desire to get acquainted with the masterpieces of musical art, to develop a musical taste for highly artistic music. Their musical-enlightenment concepts have common features but their approaches to understanding the meaning and content of musical art are different. So, according to the position of Kabalevsky, understanding of music is only possible based on the disclosure of the relationships of music and life: 'To understand a musical work means to understand its life purpose, to understand how this composer melted the melting pot in his creative consciousness, why he embodied it in this, and not in some other artistic form, in short, to find out how, in what atmosphere was born composition' (Kabalevsky, 1976).

According to Bernstein 'Music is never about anything. Music just is. If it tells us something—not a story or a picture—but a feeling <...>So you see, the meaning of music is in the music, in its melodies, and in the rhythms, and the harmonies, and the way it's orchestrated, and most important of all in the way it develops itself'.

3. Musical pedagogical ideas, methods and techniques of the work of Kabalevsky and Bernstein can be widely applied in international musical and educational practice due to universality. Studying and comparing the domestic and foreign experience of musical and educational activities contributes to

the mutual enrichment of educational systems, aimed at deep understanding of the problems of general musical education and increasing the effective activity of educators.

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