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THE SITUATION OF DRAMA/THEATRE and EDUCATION (D/T
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IN THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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DRAMA/THEATRE & EDUCATION in PORTUGAL

This paper will firstly focus on a historical view of Arts and Theatre Education in Portugal and the relevant aspects of the development of drama in education in the last 30 years, since the April Revolution, across all the levels of education, since the preschool until the teacher training in University.

Secondly, it will give you an account of the presence of theatre Education from 12 to 16 in the formal curriculum - secondary education in Portuguese schools, which developed through an investigation project in the field of theatrical studies.

Let's start:

Hhistorical view of Arts and Theatre in Education in Portugal

The seventies

- In the generalist teacher training appears for the first time the field of “Expressions” like a larger area in the curriculum. Originally the Movement and Drama area was carried by graduate in Education through Art and in Theatre.
- In the National Conservatoire of Lisbon, the only one in Portugal, Theatre School / Actor’s training was reformed and Education through Art School is created.
- In Primary Education – (6 to 10): new curriculum is implementing. Expressions take place named music, movement and drama.
- In Intermediate and Secondary Education:
- Theatre appears in the curriculum as an optional subject as well as theatre clubs in several schools
- Visual arts compulsory existence. In the 9th school year there is visual arts as option, and many craft clubs
- In some schools there is music as an optional subject but it has little expression. Existence of musical clubs in some schools
- Existence of some dance clubs mainly traditional dance clubs runner by physical education teachers.
- A lot of amateur and independent theatre groups appeared.
- Important role in cultural field of child and young theatre Movement

The eighties

- Increase of basic education from 6 to 9 years – “Dramatic Expression” took place between the others expression areas.
- Secondary school:
- Organisation of arts groups (only teachers connected to visual arts are in charge)
- Visual arts and drama in education laboratories are created.
- Expressive arts started to be present in the curricula of technological courses with pre-professional features
- Reform of the Teacher’s training. Specialized Drama teacher appears in the Educational System
- APED organized the 1º Drama in Education Congress - IDEA’s foundation in Porto

The nineties

- Theatrical Studies at the University
- Drama teacher training at the University
- O.E.D. – Drama Laboratory at Secondary Education (15-18)
- Non-formal education get more importance with larger offer of drama workshops

New Millenium

- Basic skills for basic education are defined
- Visual arts continue in curriculum as compulsory subject
- Existence of a second artistic subject (music, dance or theatre)
- Curricular Organization for O.T. – Theatre Laboratory at Intermediate Education – (12-15)

Theatre in Education Training

After the revolution (25 th April 1974)

Teacher training

- “Movement and Drama” started to be offered in the teaching training programme, by professionals trained at the Theatre School and Education based Through Art School – both at the Conservatory of Lisbon
- Creation of the first Drama in Education Association (APED)
- National and International meetings about Theatre in Education practices

Picture of the present time

Teacher training start to be offered in Universities and Polytechnic Institutes

- Six first degree training programmes: Évora, Coimbra, Leiria, Lisboa, Porto and Vila Real; covering the main country towns.
- Since the nineties there is also an offer of post-graduate studies: Lisbon and Faro

In-service training in Theatre in Education

- 500 recognised short courses
- These courses involved all levels of teaching: from nursery to secondary education
- These courses vary from 25 hours to 150 hours of training.

Problems arising in-service training

As training is concerning:

- Arts are not yet considered as a priority.
- Change in the rules for teaching carriers are not clear about the role of in-service training (these does not encourage teachers to search for training)

Theatre in Education from 12 to 16 in Portuguese Schools

The data available for this research show that:

There is a larger offer of Drama in Education in Portuguese schools

- 1997 – there were 80 drama teachers
- 2003 – 95 schools offered theatre
- 2006 – 150 schools offered theatre

There are difficulties concerning the implementation of the O. T. - Theatre Laboratory at Intermediate Education – (12-15)

- Most of the drama teachers in schools doesn't have the appropriate skills
- There is not yet a group of official specialized teachers what prevents the access of this professional to a career
- There is a limited time for theatre in education as an optional subject (90 min per week / one semester)

There is Ministry support in launching O. T. - Theatre Laboratory at Intermediate Education – (12-15)

- Definition of the curriculum contents for the O. T.
- Devised training programme to solve the problem of untrained teachers

There is Trainees profile deficit

- Within 32 trainees only two have specialised training
- Only 8 show some experience in theatre practice as amateurs

Recomendations

- To adequate training to the official programme for O. T. - Theatre Laboratory at Intermediate Education – (12-15)
- Make proper use of the professional specialized in theatre in education by public Universities and Polytechnics.

Non formal educational and cultural perspective

Most of the public visibility of the dramatic work done in schools is made by Presentations at the end of the school-year.

There also exist some particular institutos that organize Amateur festivals or school festivals, over the country, like Mostra de Teatro de Sº André, Festival de Teatro Escolar de Portalegre, Encontros de Teatro na Escola.

There exist some organizations like MUS-E Project and others who carried on artistic programs with children, youngs, artists, teachers and community for several years. (inside and outside the public schools). MUS-E Project supports its intervention in the school and in the community over the idea that the inclusion of cultural diversity, through the experience of art expression, contributes to the increase of greater respect between individuals.

The most relevant theatre groups in the main portuguese cities preserve a relationship with the schools in the neighborhood and some of them have a permanent educational service and repertoire plays in offer for young public.

Recently, the National Theatres of Lisbon and Porto and some Art Centers and Museums, like Culturgest and Centro Cultural de Belém youth festivals, residential artistic creation and performances. exp: Percursos and Panos.

In the last decade projects of social theatre and comm theatre gain entusiasthics praticioners and is possible recognize a few good practice: exp: Detention Centre of Évora with „Alem Grades“ Project; The special needs people theatre group Crinabel and Debate Theater against drugs.

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C.V.

Isabel Bezelga, trained as an actress, is a lecturer in the Education Department of the University of Évora, where she teaches drama in the teaching training programme and didactics of theatre in Theatrical Studies. She worked in different settings (special needs, adolescents, elderly). She works with the Education Department of Portugal in the curricular design of Drama and Theatre in Education. Since 1999 she is Director of a community project with different cultures present in the region of Évora (gypsies, nomadic workers, rural immigrants) having focused research for a master on intercultural arts education. She is a researcher at The Research Centre Paulo Freire of the University of Évora where she is researching in the area of Popular Theatre. She is a member of the Chair Committee of the Menuhin Association in Portugal MUS-E Project (Artists in Schools) and until a few years ago she was a member of APED.

The MUS-E Project (Muses Europe / Artists in school) is an artistic, social and educational project created by Yehudi Menuhin. He defended the idea of a plural Europe that could grow peace inside. He believed that, by the practice of the arts since early childhood, it would be possible to form more tolerant European citizens. Today Yehudi Menuhin's dream is being developed in 12 European countries.

MUS-E Project Portugal celebrates this year its tenth year of activity. It all started in Algés Elementary School, followed by Marrazes and Quinta do Alçada School in Leiria, Lagarteiro and S. Gens School in Porto and Cruz da Picada School in Évora.

When in Portugal, directing the Expo 1998 Overture Concert, Yehudi Menuhin got to know in greater depth MUS-E Project Portugal, referring to nº1 Algés School as "*l'école de mes rêves!*".

Today, MUS-E Project Portugal is formed by a multidisciplinary team of 25 artists (teachers/artists), whom, daily and throughout the school year, with students and teachers of these five schools, begin to make sense of concepts such as: **respect for the different, cooperation, solidarity**, via the practice of expression and art in the field of music, dance, drama, visual arts, cinema animation, creative writing, puppets, arts and crafts, etc.

The work process was entirely built over the idea of team communication and exchange of real experiences, so the whole project gained consistency and overcame the borderlines of the different areas of expression, drawing a path of confluences towards performative public events, with the participation of the whole community.



„Dramatizing pictures“
In service teacher training – Fátima (2002)



„Creating Monsters“
Children from the MUS-E Project in Évora (2005)



„Ceci n'est pas un....“ performance with objects
Theatre students in a interactive workshop - Conference in Lisbon (2003)



Performance
“As mãos pelos pés”
Youth theatre Gato SA - Santo André (2003)

