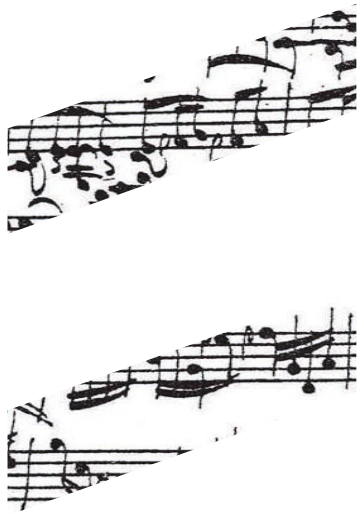Kwartalnik Młodych
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A Collage-Like Work of Music. Aspects of Variation Technique in Maria Szymanowska's Nocturne in B-flat Major

Abstract

The article aims to examine the ways in which selected variation techniques are used in Maria Szymanowska's *Nocturne in B-flat Major*. The author discusses both conventional thematic modifications and collage-like transformations of brief motifs. By comparing the composition to selected works of John Field and placing it within appropriate historical contexts, the author seeks to illustrate how such an approach to variation not only enriches the conventional form of the nocturne as a genre, but also highlights the possibility of programmatic intent being present.

Keywords

Maria Szymanowska, nocturne, John Field, variation technique, programme music

The *Nocturne in B-Flat Major* is, along with the *Nocturne in A-Flat Major 'Le Murmure'*, one of the two surviving 'songs of the night' by Maria Szymanowska. The former is sometimes described as something 'in between a prelude and an étude',[1] first of all because of its simple structure, in which a uniform figuration in the accompaniment serves as an illustrative background for the melody in the top register. In this context, One might venture the thesis that the *B-Flat Major Nocturne* is unique within that composer's output, and not only in terms of classification. The piece, published in Saint Petersburg in 1852, more than twenty years after its author's death, stands out from among her earlier works also because of its dramatic construction, which some consider similar to the 'spirit of Chopin's nocturnes or even ballades'.[2]

Especially frequent are direct comparisons between Szymanowska's *Nocturne in B-flat major* and Chopin's *Nocturne in A-flat major* Op. 32 No. 2. Their dates of publication seem to effectively eliminate the chance that the artists might have mutually inspired each other. The striking similarity between these two compositions probably results from a similar way of thinking and developing the genre models. According to Irena Poniatowska, of special interest in Szymanowska's nocturne are such elements as the broad cantilena and extensive codas.[3] What seems to confirm her claim is that these similarities most distinctly reflect both Chopin's and Szymanowska's characteristic tendency to use the variation technique.

Its use in the *Nocturne in B-flat major* depends primarily on a subtle combination of means typical of the virtuosic brilliant style with textural and temporal modifications. From such simple variation devices as ornamenting the melodic line to development-type techniques, Szymanowska makes creative use of the sound material within the framework of the nocturne genre. This endows the music with a high degree of individuality and emotional (possibly even semantic) depth.

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1 Quoted after: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 167.

2 Quoted after: G.S. Golos, 'Some Slavic Predecessors of Chopin', *The Musical Quarterly*, 46/4 (1960), 445.

3 I. Poniatowska, 'Styl brillant i idee preromantyczne w twórczości Marii Szymanowskiej', in I. Poniatowska, *Historia i interpretacja muzyki. Z badań nad muzyką od XVII do XIX wieku* (1995), 105.

The Origins of the Composition

For the *Nocturne in B-Flat Major*, the exact date of composition is unknown. In his monograph dedicated to Szymanowska, Igor Belza hypothesises that it was written towards the end of her life (cut short by a cholera epidemic that broke out in Petersburg in the summer of 1831). It was because of the outbreak of the November Uprising (1830–31), he suggests, that the composition waited for nearly two decades for its publication. As a consequence of the uprising, 'the situation of Poles in Petersburg rapidly deteriorated. They were viewed with suspicion, and anti-Polish sentiment grew strong in many circles.'[4] What is more, Belza claims that the *Nocturne* itself 'was to some extent […] an emotional response to the events related to the uprising.'[5] Relations between Poles and Russians in Petersburg, including the artistic circles, did become significantly cooler in the autumn of 1830, though the city remained an attractive place for Poles looking for work or education outside the territory affected by the empire's repressive measures.[6] It is possible that the composer found it reasonable to postpone the publication of her *Nocturne*.

The manuscript used as the basis for its first edition at one point became the property of renowned pianist-composer Łucja Rucińska, who was later also Juliusz Zarębski's teacher. It was she who in 1852 included this piece in her Album muzyczne na fortepian, wydanie Lucyi Rucińskiej [A Musical Album for the Piano, Edited by Łucja Rucińska], comprising works by such Polish composers as Szymanowska, Dobrzyński, Moniuszko, and Rucińska herself.7 From that moment on, the Nocturne in B-Flat Major sporadically appeared in print, frequently in anthologies dedicated to women composers, more often abroad than in Poland, where in fact it only became a bit more widely known as late as in the mid-1950s.8

4 Quoted after: T. Syga, S. Szenic, *Maria Szymanowska i jej czasy* (1960), 38.

5 Quoted after: I.F. Belza, *Мария Шимановская* (1956), Polish edition: *Maria Szymanowska*, tr. J. Ilnicka (1985), 175.

6 Cf. e.g. T.M. Smirnova, 'Życie społeczne i kulturalne Polaków w Petersburgu (XIX–XX wiek)' and A. Kowalczykowa, 'Petersburg. Burzliwe losy i koneksje polskich pisarzy w stolicy carów', in D. Konstantynów, ed., *Petersburg i Polska*, http://www.polskipetersburg.pl/zbior-esejow, accessed 17 Oct. 2020.

7 Quoted after: Belza, *Maria Szymanowska*, 172.

8 The piece became known thanks to a reproduction printed in Belza's monograph (Moscow, 1956), though the Polish translation of this book only appeared in 1987. Cf. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska*, 168.

Transforming the Model
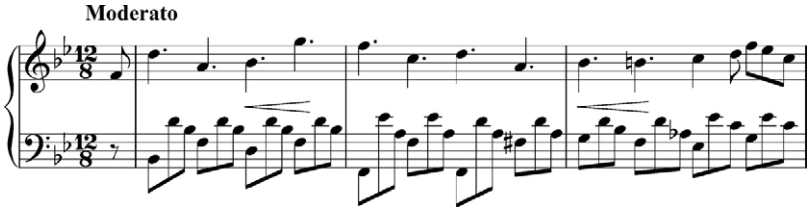
Maria Iwanejko perfectly sums up the significance of the *Nocturne in B-Flat Major* for the history of the genre's development by emphasising that '[it] represents the first attempts at composing in this genre in Poland, parallel to the beginnings of Chopin's nocturne writing.'[9] Both Szymanowska and Chopin used as their starting point the models worked out by the Irish composer John Field, universally considered the 'father' of this genre.[10] For many years, Szymanowska was even viewed as Field's pupil. However, scholars (including Teofil Syga and Stanisław Szenic in their book *Maria Szymanowska i jej czasy* [*Maria Szymanowska and Her Times*]) refute this thesis. The latter authors quote the composer's statements printed in nineteenth-century press, in which she claimed that not only had she never studied with Field but she 'had no good music teachers at all'.[11]

Nevertheless, Szymanowska knew Field personally, frequently played his works[12] and sometimes even performed with him on the same stage.[13] No wonder, therefore, that her *Nocturne in B-flat major* demonstrates some features highly characteristic of the Irish composer's output. Among those qualities, Szymanowska elevated the use of variation techniques to the rank of a fundamental principle for shaping the sound material in her composition. Before analysing her technique in detail, It may be worthwhile to look at the opening section of *Nocturne in B-flat major* (example 1), which, especially in comparison with the first bars of Field's *Nocturne in E-flat major* No. 1 (example 2), constitutes a kind of a miniature artistic manifesto dedicated by Szymanowska, among other things, to the idea of the variation form.
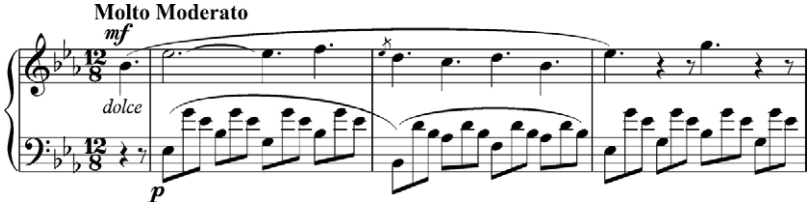
Similarities between the above-presented fragments are easy to observe. Both nocturnes are in 12/8 time. Their themes start with an interval leap, and later mostly follow the constituent notes of successive chords. Differences are equally evident, though. These divergencies result partly from the rapid changes taking place in sound language in the first half of the nineteenth century, and partly from Szymanowska's

[9] Quoted after: Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska*, 179.
[10] R. Langley, 'Field John', in *Grove Music Online*, https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.09603, accessed 15 June 2020.
[11] Quoted after: Syga, Szenic, *Maria Szymanowska*…, 38.
[12] Syga, Szenic, *Maria Szymanowska*…, 262–263, 273, 288, 303, 346.
[13] Syga, Szenic, *Maria Szymanowska*…, 117.

highly individual approach to shaping the sound material. For instance, she exhibits greater freedom in using notes foreign to the given harmonic structure, especially suspensions, irregularly superimposed on the harmony outlined in the accompaniment. The undulating melodic line in the theme likewise resembles that from Field's *E-flat major Nocturne*. However, in Szymanowska's piece the intervals between successive notes can be as large as a sixth, whereas as far as m. 6 Field does not exceed a fourth within any single phrase. An even more significant reference to Field's piece can be found in the melodic scheme of the left-hand figurations in the first measure of the *B-flat major Nocturne*, as if literally transposed from the key of Field's piece to that of her own. This quotation, however, is only momentary, and already one measure later we can observe Szymanowska's tendency to introduce faster harmonic changes, which distinctly reflect her intention to diversify the static homophonic texture.



Ex. 1. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 1–3. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 168.



Ex. 2. J. Field, *Nocturne in E-flat major* No. 1, mm. 1–3. Source: J. Field, *18 Nocturnes*, L. Kohler, C.F. Peters, eds, Leipzig [n.d.], 3.

All this suggests that variation, which is the central idea of *Nocturne in B-flat major*, was conceived from the outset as something more than

merely 'modified repetition of a musical thought'.[14] Szymanowska's approach seems to anticipate the idea of collage, since it largely depends on variational transformations and juxtapositions of existing elements, which, thanks only to this kind of creative stance, can develop in musical-aesthetic terms and gain additional extra-musical meanings.

Variations on a Theme
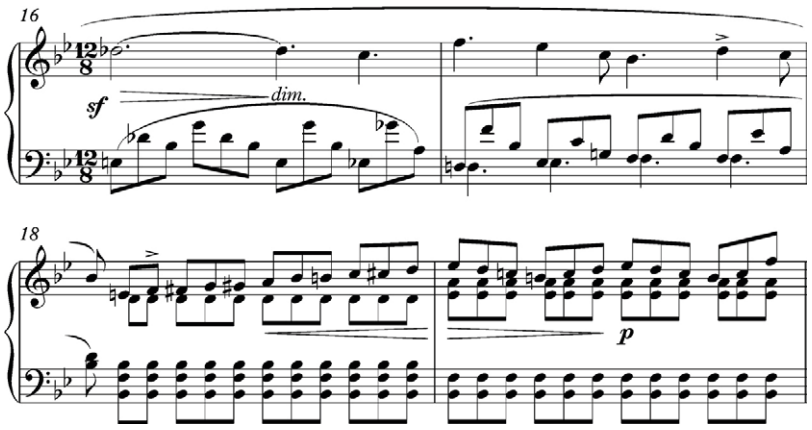
A texture based on a monotonous, usually triple-time accompaniment and a cantilena unfolding above it in a higher register is frequently considered a nearly idiomatic quality of the nocturne genre. The merit for this concept should probably go to Field, who was the first to apply it in lyrical piano pieces on such a broad scale. Of the 18 nocturnes and other similar works he composed, the first two, in *E-flat major* and *C minor*, are texturally most conventional and entirely based on a homophonic relation between a static melody in the right hand and an accompanying motion of the left. However, as David Rowland observes, 'the emergence of a particular texture can only go so far in providing the main element for a successful composition'.[15] That traditional homophony can weary the ear after some time was also observed by Field himself. He therefore gradually diversified his nocturnes with regard to texture. This is evident in such works as the *Nocturne in B-flat major* No. 5, in which the cantilena passages are contrasted with segments representing a completely different texture (example 3).

Szymanowska likewise seems to have applied this type of segmental form-building principle as the point of departure for her *Nocturne in B-flat major*. Nevertheless, her piece is much more complicated and elaborate in comparison with Field's eponymous composition. While Field chooses a simple stanza-and-refrain structure (ABA_1B_1), Szymanowska constructs a kind of unhurried rondo, in which the initial melodic theme recurs as many as three times ($AA_1BA_2CA_3$ + coda).

[14] Such an understanding of the word 'variation' was universal among music theorists in the first half of the nineteenth century. Cf. Z. Chechlińska, *Wariacje i technika wariacyjna w twórczości Chopina* (1995), 18.

[15] Quoted after: D. Rowland, 'Piano sonority and melody c. 1800-1835', in K. Stępień-Kutera, ed., *The Lyric and the Vocal Element in Instrumental Music of the Nineteenth Century* (2017), 59.

In both nocturnes the cantilena passages (marked A) alternate with sections characterised by a more massive chordal texture.



Ex. 3. J. Field, *Nocturne in B-flat major* No. 5, mm. 16–19. Textural contrasts between sections. Source: J. Field, *18 Nocturnes*, L. Kohler, C.F. Peters, eds, Leipzig [n.d.], 18.
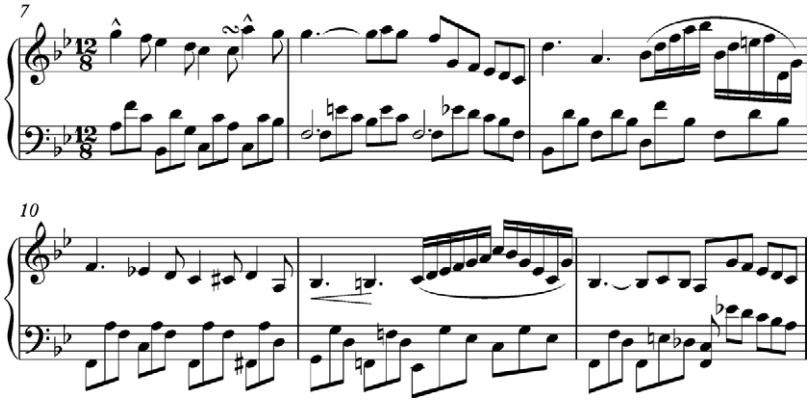
Both Field and Szymanowska apply variation techniques first and foremost in the refrain sections. The most obvious of these techniques is embellishing the repeated melody of the theme with ornaments and progressions of small rhythmic values, which creates the impression of 'an irregular flow of sounds within the rhythmic framework maintained in the accompaniment'[16] characteristic of the brilliant style. This technique, applied by virtually all nocturne composers, draws on the performance practice of the Italian *bel canto*, where singers felt in a way 'obliged' to enrich the repeated sections (for instance in *da capo* arias and in stanzaic forms) with ornaments in which they could demonstrate their vocal skills.[17] Field came in contact with Italian opera during his stay in Russia early in the nineteenth century, which justifies the hypothesis that *bel canto* may have inspired this composer, and, through him, others who followed in his footsteps.[18]

[16] Quoted after: Poniatowska, 'Styl brillant…', 98.

[17] M. Elliot, *Singing in Style. A Guide to Vocal Performance Practice* (2006), 156–159.

[18] Field's first three nocturnes were published in 1812 in Petersburg. Cf. J.E. Brown, 'Nocturne (i)', in *Grove Music Online*, https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.

Interestingly, Szymanowska has it her own way even in this area. She applies conventional ornamentation only in the first repetition of the theme (mm. 9–16), and, as Maria Iwanejko observes, she is 'more restrained in the use of the variational-ornamental-virtuosic manner than Field was, since in his music the virtuoso element frequently gets the better of the expressive aspect for a while'.[19] Szymanowska ornaments her theme very subtly and in agreement with the musical phrase. In m. 9 she bridges the notes B-flat and G (forming the head of the theme; the latter note is transposed an octave lower) with an elaborate passage, but just one measure later she fills in the same melody with just two transition notes, E-flat and C-sharp, which transform m. 10 in such a way that it becomes rhythmically similar to the second half of the original theme (example 4).
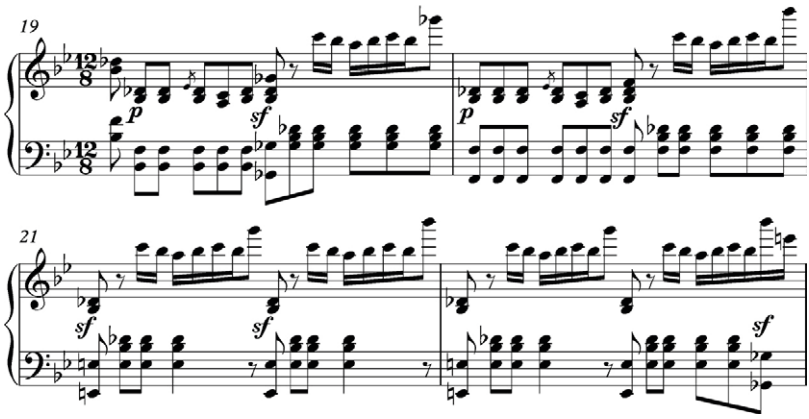


Ex. 4. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major,* mm. 7–12. The similarity between the A_1 section (m. 10) and the consequent of section A (m. 7). Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 168.

Notable among the more complex ornaments incorporated into the theme's melodic line in the A_1 section is also the characteristic motif consisting of a 'looped' turn (*gruppetto*) and an interval leap in m. 13. This ornament recurs several times later in the *Nocturne*, first as a transitional element towards the end of A_1 (m. 15), and later in
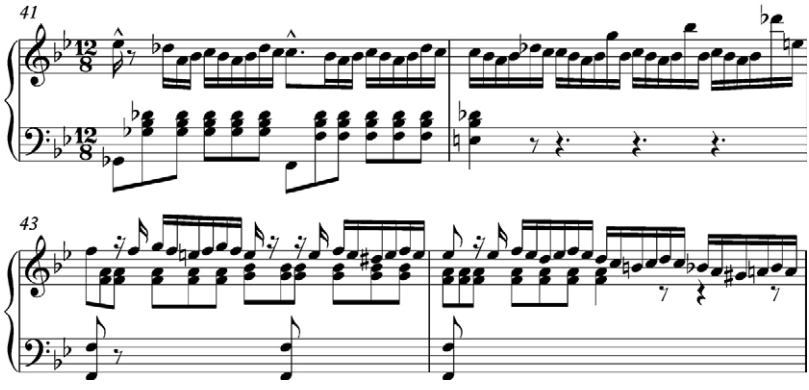
article.20012, accessed 15 June 2020.

[19] Quoted after: Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska*, 176.

section B (mm. 19–22), where it attains the status of a kind of leitmotif (example 5), and finally in section C (mm. 39–41 and 43–44), where it becomes embedded in the figurative texture of the right-hand part, whereas in m. 42 it serves as a fine 'lacy' background for the C9 chord components emphasised in the soprano (example 6).



Ex. 5. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 19–22. The *gruppetto* leitmotif. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 169.



Ex. 6. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 41–44. Various applications of the *gruppetto* motif. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 170.
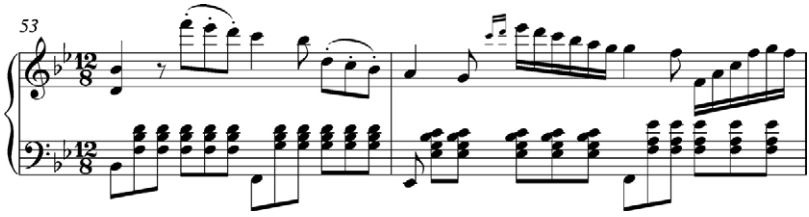
These examples show Szymanowska going a step further than Field in transforming the melodic line of the theme. The variation techniques

she applies in one section can serve as material for further variations in the next one. Similarly as in the case of the above-mentioned two notes added to the theme's melody in m. 10, such collage-like juxtapositions of previously introduced figures make the music develop in an extremely organic and internally coherent manner, despite distinct contrasts between the individual sections.

The contrasts themselves are mainly textural and similarly contribute to the variational transformations of the musical thought presented in Szymanowska's *Nocturne*. It is the texture that constitutes the dominant medium for the variations occurring in the third and fourth theme presentations. In mm. 27–29 of the A_2 section, the theme's melody remains unchanged, but the arpeggiated left-hand chords disappear in favour of vertical harmonies in the beat of three, which are a kind of reference to section B. In mm. 31–33, the cantilena of the right hand is transposed an octave higher, possibly in order to allow for the virtuosic semiquaver passages, whose ambitus may even exceed three octaves. Following section C, akin to the first 'stanzaic' segment (though featuring more elaborate figurations in the right hand), the composer returns to the 'skeleton' of the theme's melody. In the antecedent of A_3, however, she enhances this core theme with octaves so that it can stand out against the accompaniment based on arch-shaped figurations, while in the consequent she returns to a more static, chordal texture.
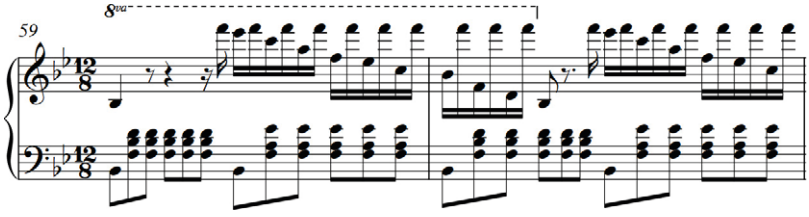
Variations in the Closing Sections

Despite the transformations which the theme undergoes in the *B-flat major Nocturne*, its overall structure remains unchanged. It is based on two four-bar phrases, each of which (except for the consequent in section A_2) ends with a characteristic descending motif. In most cases, this motif makes use of notes from the B-flat major natural scale, save for m. 30, where the composer goes beyond the scale, which is chromaticised and transposed to the sixth (three-line) octave. Of interest is also the non-melodic variation technique at the end of A_3, which consists in abandoning regular rhythmic pulse in favour of one that makes it possible to smoothly connect the last refrain segment with the *Nocturne*'s coda (example 7).



Ex. 7. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 53–54. Smooth transition from the last theme presentation to the coda. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 171.

The impression of the lack of a clear boundary between the A_3 section and the coda is enhanced by the left-hand part, which is the same for both of these passages and consists of vertical harmonies repeated at a regular pulse – a concept very similar to the transition between B and A_2. This allows the coda essentially to function not as a separate element of the work's form, but as the 'last sound of the last word' in this instrumental song; a sound extended in time, and possibly even beyond it. At the same time, the coda is a form of summary, since it employs a number of solutions previously used in the course of the composition, such as accompaniment, scale and passage ornaments, motifs repeated in various registers, as well as figurations building up 'from inside' – a highly characteristic element of this Szymanowska's style (example 8).[20]
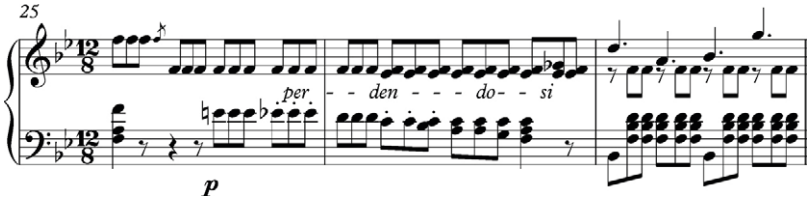


Ex. 8. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 59–60. The build-up of figurations. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 171.

Here again, the variation technique depends on the idea of a collage, though this time it is more than a mere direct 'quotation' of

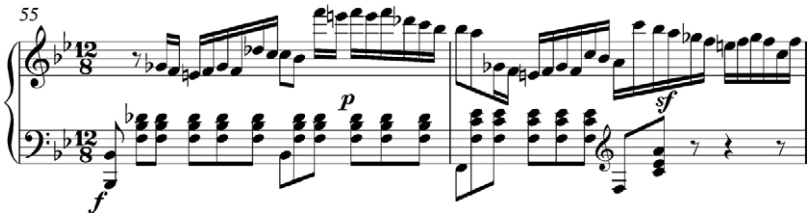
[20] Poniatowska, 'Styl brillant…', 99.

components used in the previous segments. It can easily be observed that the said figurations are nothing else but the result of a temporal shift in one of the 'parts' in motifs such as that in mm. 25–26 (example 9). Before being transplanted into the coda, the motif is not only transposed and melodically modified, but also 'cut up' and creatively reassembled into a less condensed, fragmentary whole.



Ex. 9. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 25–27. A motif made up of vertical harmonies, resembling the figurations in the coda. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 169.
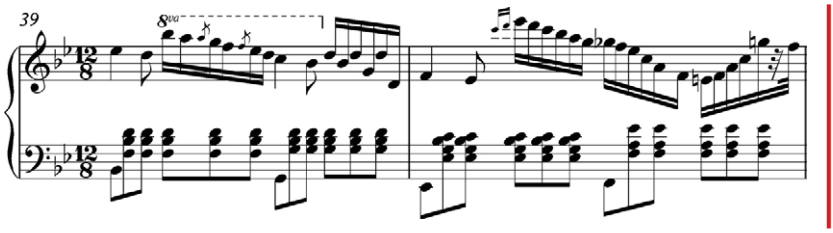
A temporal distortion of a different kind constitutes the basis for the right-hand part in mm. 54–56 (example 10). Its melodic contour distinctly refers to the material of mm. 39–40 (example 11). The successive semiquaver progressions lead up to motifs in which the suspension note value is prolonged, which gives an impression of decreased tension, a slowing down and a kind of 'shutting down'.



Ex. 10. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 55–56. Semiquaver progressions separated by crotchet-and-quaver groups. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 171.

Concerning Szymanowska's concept of time, it is worth noting that overlapping (mm. 53–54), the echo effect (m. 61), and introduction of

additional melodic material in the form of ornamental progressions of small values belong to techniques frequently applied in order to introduce variety into regular periodic structures.[21] In the coda of Szymanowska's *Nocturne in B-flat major*, they affect the perception of time to some extent, but at the same time they coexist with the overall sense of regularity that dominates in this piece. The whole remains consistently clear, but also highly colourful, as befits a collage form.



Ex. 10. M. Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B-flat major*, mm. 39–40. Semiquaver progressions separated by pairs of quavers. Source: M. Iwanejko, *Maria Szymanowska* (1959), 170.

Summary

Regardless of whether the variation techniques applied by Szymanowska in the successive repetitions of the theme concern melody or texture, the composer uses them in agreement with a 'consensus' worked out by nineteenth-century theorists. Variation is defined in this context as such a theme repetition in which only some selected elements are transformed; what differentiates it from development is the lack of structural modification.[22] The shorter motifs, however, are treated differently by the composer; she cuts them out of the phrases in which they constituted the element of variation and rearranges them into completely new structures.

All this not only enriches the sound structure of the work and broadens Field's original perspective, but also endows the *Nocturne*

[21] Cf. J. Chomiński, K. Wilkowska-Chomińska, *Teoria formy. Małe formy instrumentalne* (1983), 215–217.

[22] Chechlińska, *Wariacje i technika…*, 17.

in B-flat major with a nearly programmatic character. In her essay on oneiric soundscapes in Romantic music, printed in the anthology *Chopin and His World*, Halina Goldberg observes that early nineteenth-century composers commonly and consciously applied such techniques as fragmentary recall of previously used motifs, producing the effect of a 'fading' and 'blurring' of sound, in order to musically illustrate the manner in which human memories are deformed, for instance, in the distorting mirror of dreams.[23] While stressing that 'dreaming and remembering overlap and share similar musical vocabularies',[24] the author points out the role of nostalgia for the lost homeland in émigré composers' oneiric soundscapes. If we accept Belza's claim that the *Nocturne in B-flat major* was written in Petersburg in the last years of Szymanowska's life as her emotional response to the political situation in Poland at that time,[25] comparing that musical composition to a dream (in which past events recur, mix, interact, and take completely new forms thanks to a vivid use of variation techniques) becomes even more legitimate.

All these processes are assisted by the use of a musical equivalent of the collage technique, which essentially aims to represent things indeterminate, deformed, and fragmentary by nature. Risky as it might be to compare Szymanowska's *Nocturne* to Kurt Schwitters' collages (created approximately a century later), a hypothetical analogy may be drawn between the ways in which both artists reflected the emotions towards the surrounding reality in their works, making use of 'found objects' appropriate to their respective artistic disciplines.[26] Schwitters's graphic material frequently consisted of everyday objects, transformed and arranged in abstract combinations which, however, evoked well-defined associations. To Szymanowska, sounds, though themselves devoid of programmatic content, could potentially attain such extramusical meanings when juxtaposed by means of collage-like variations.

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[23] H. Goldberg, 'Oneiric Soundscapes and the Role of Dreams in Romantic Culture', in J.D. Bellman, H. Goldberg, *Chopin and His World* (2017), 20.

[24] Goldberg, 'Oneiric Soundscapes…', 20.

[25] Belza, *Мария Шимановская*, Polish ed. *Maria Szymanowska*, 175.

[26] In one of his works, *Merz 19*, Schwitters applies the fragmentation and abstract juxtaposition of material to present a cityscape affected by the ravages of war. Cf. D. Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters. Tradition and Innovation* (1993), 9.

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The Artistic Profile of Aleksander Zarzycki: A Forgotten Composer of the Romantic Era

Abstract

The second half of the nineteenth century is a neglected period in the history of Polish music, in the aspects of both research and performance. Works by many composers from this period have unfortunately been forgotten. One such composer is undoubtedly Aleksander Zarzycki (1834–1895), also a teacher and piano virtuoso, the author of more than 40 opuses, including many solo songs with piano accompaniment, which have frequently been compared to the songs of Stanisław Moniuszko. Similarly as Poland's most famous song composer, Zarzycki created two songbooks that belong to the trend of egalitarian songs. He was also renowned for his short piano pieces, written in the salon style with virtuoso elements. One of his most famous works is the *Mazurka in G major*, popularised by the Spanish virtuoso violinist Pablo Sarasate. Also of note is his *Piano Concerto in A-flat major* Op. 17, drawing on Fryderyk Chopin's *Piano Concerto in A minor* and Józef Wieniawski's *Concerto in G minor*. Zarzycki's works are

characteristic of his era, and contain elements of folklore, national style, virtuosity, and the so-called 'Romantic mood'.

Keywords

Aleksander Zarzycki, Polish music of the nineteenth century, piano works, solo songs

The second half of the nineteenth century was undoubtedly a difficult time in the territory of former Poland. In 1795, after the Third Partition, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had ceased to exist, undergoing a political and cultural collapse, which intensified after the defeat of two uprisings – one that broke out in November 1830 and another in January 1863. No wonder, then, that the development of musical culture in Poland was significantly hindered at that time, and many works from that period have not survived to our day, as they were often lost due to the ravages of war. It should also be pointed out that the possibilities for the development of both art and science were different in the territory of each partition. Artists had the greatest degree of autonomy under the Austrian rule (in Galicia), slightly smaller in the lands annexed by Prussia, and the smallest – under the Russian authority.

As Irena Poniatowska rightly observes in *Wstęp do Historii Muzyki Polskiej. Romantyzm 1850–1901*[1] [*Introduction to the History of Polish Music. Romanticism 1850-1901*], Polish music written in the second half of the nineteenth century has largely been neglected by both performers and researchers. Apart from the aforementioned difficult political and cultural situation in the former Poland, the author points to the poor availability of sheet music, or rather of its printed editions, as a problem which results in the inability to perform these works and undertake research on a wide scale. Despite the passage of ten years since the publication of Poniatowska's book, the musicologist's comments remain relevant. The musical output of the late Romantic composers still seems to be insufficiently studied. This problem concerns both well-known Polish composers such as Zygmunt Noskowski and Władysław Żeleński, not all of whose works have been fully researched

[1] I. Poniatowska, *Historia Muzyki Polskiej, 5. Romantyzm,* II A. *Twórczość muzyczna w drugiej połowie XIX wieku, 1850–1900* (2010), 57.

or even published at all, and less recognised artists, whose music has in many cases not been the subject of scholarly analyses even to the smallest extent. One such forgotten Polish composer active in the second half of the nineteenth century is undoubtedly Aleksander Zarzycki. He gained fame mainly as the author of solo songs with piano accompaniment, piano miniatures, and virtuoso violin music. It is an oeuvre which, on the one hand, can easily be dismissed as epigonic (as imitation of Moniuszko or Chopin). On the other hand, though, it does not lack individual qualities so characteristic of the Romantic era. Zarzycki's output is undeniably an important item in the treasury of Polish nineteenth-century musical culture.

That Aleksander Zarzycki's life and work have largely fallen into oblivion is evident from the still insufficient number of studies dedicated to his music. One exception is an MA thesis presented in 2018, devoted to Zarzycki's selected solo songs with piano accompaniment.[2] There are also mentions of his oeuvre in various encyclopaedias, including *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM*[3] [*PWM Edition's Music Encyclopaedia*], as well as in publications on late Romantic Polish music. Many of the composer's works still remain only in manuscript form and are frequently even omitted from lists of his compositions.[4] Nevertheless, the last decade has evidently brought growing interest in Zarzycki's oeuvre, for instance in the field of publishing.[5] His works are also experiencing a renaissance in performers' repertoires. A significant proportion of them have been listed among compositions that can be selected for performance in the first and second stages of the Stanisław Moniuszko International Competition of Polish Music in Rzeszów, both in the category of pianists and chamber ensembles.[6]

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2 K. Popielska, 'Pieśni solowe z fortepianem Aleksandra Zarzyckiego do słów Heinricha Heinego i Adama Asnyka w kontekście tradycji solowej pieśni romantycznej', MA thesis (2018).

3 B. Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', in E. Dziębowska, ed., *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM*, 12, (2012).

4 Individual works by Zarzycki that have never been published can be found, among others, in the collection of the Jagiellonian Library and in the Święta Lipka music archive.

5 Some of Zarzycki's piano and chamber music works have been published in recent years by the Gdynia – based publishing house Eufonium.

6 Details of the competition programme can be found at: https://konkursmuzykipolskiej.pl/, accessed 23 Oct. 2020.

Aleksander Zarzycki – A Biographical Profile

Born on 26 February 1834 in Lwów (now Lviv, Ukraine), Aleksander Zarzycki graduated from a secondary school in Sambor. He began his musical education under the guidance of his father, an amateur violinist. He then studied with such masters as Joseph Christoph Kessler, Rudolf Viole, and Napoléon Henri Reber. He also took up supplementary studies in composition and piano under Carl Reinecke in Leipzig (1860).[7]

At the beginning of his career, Zarzycki gained fame mainly as a pianist. He went on his first concert tour still as a student, in 1856, at the age of twenty-two, in the company of violinist Nikodem Biernacki. The duo performed, among others, in Iasi (Romania), Poznań, and three times in Kraków.[8] Zarzycki played his first major concert on 30 March 1860 in Salle Herz in the capital of France. The concert's programme included original works by Zarzycki, such as his *Piano Concerto* Op. 17, *Grande Polonaise* Op. 7, as well as compositions by Fryderyk Chopin and Adolf von Henselt. From 1862 onwards, after the successful debut in France, Zarzycki gave a series of concerts, first in Koblenz, Wiesbaden, Dresden, and later in Leipzig at the Gewandhaus (1863), in Bonn and Cologne (1864). During this period, the composer-pianist also gave concerts in the territory of present-day Poland, including Wrocław (4 February 1865), and twice in Poznań (on 6 February at the Bazaar and on 22 February at the Municipal Theatre). Three years later (in 1868) Zarzycki also visited London and Vienna with his programme. His concerts were highly appreciated by the audience, as evident from this comment by Maria Zduniak concerning one of the composer's concerts in Wrocław:

> This concert, demonstrating Zarzycki's versatile skills, gave the audience considerable satisfaction. The artist turned out to be an excellent pianist and awed the audience by playing the entire program from memory. His piano talent and composing skills won sincere critical acclaim.[9]

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7 Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki' 332.

8 Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 332.

9 W. Żeleński, 'Aleksander Zarzycki: ze wspomnień osobistych', in J. Kleczyński, ed., *Echo muzyczne, teatralne i artystyczne*, XII (1895), 567.

Zarzycki was particularly eager to include in his concert repertoires the music of nineteenth-century masters. Apart from the already mentioned pieces by Chopin and Henselt, he would also perform *Hungarian Rhapsody* No. 13 and *Spanish Rhapsody* by Franz Liszt, compositions by Robert Schumann, Franz Schubert, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Anton Rubinstein,[10] among others.

The composer's numerous travels facilitated making new acquaintances. Zarzycki had the opportunity to associate with great European talents, such as Liszt, the already mentioned Reber and Reinecke, as well as the Rubinstein brothers and Spanish violinist-composer Pablo Sarasate. Contact with such major personalities from the world of music undoubtedly had a direct impact on the formation of Zarzycki's characteristic musical style, which however, did not lack individual features.[11] It is also worth mentioning that apart from the opportunity to mingle with world-famous composers, Zarzycki also met eminent Polish poets, whose texts he set in his songs. For about a dozen years from around 1851, Zarzycki was a regular guest in Miłosław, on the estate of Count Seweryn Mielżyński. The count's house was an important centre of artistic life in Greater Poland. It was there that Zarzycki had the opportunity to meet, among others, such poets as Teofil Lenartowicz, Władysław Syrokomla, and Józef Ignacy Kraszewski.[12]

In 1866 Zarzycki settled permanently in Warsaw. He limited his concert career in order fully to dedicate himself to composing and teaching.[13] The composer played an immense role in the flourishing of artistic life in nineteenth-century Warsaw. In the years 1871–1874 he was the artistic director of the newly established Warsaw Music Society, of which he was also a co-founder. His activity at WMS was extremely important for this institution. It was thanks to Zarzycki that the society took its seat in the Ball Chambers of the Grand Theatre in Warsaw, where already after a month of activity WMS held its first major music concert. Over time, such concerts became a tradition. In 1871 Zarzycki set up a mixed choir, which he conducted until 1875. In 1872 he also established a string orchestra. In 1874 Zarzycki founded the WMS music publishing house.

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10 J. Skarbowski, *Sylwetki pianistów polskich. Od Wincentego Lessla do Henryka Puchalskiego*, 1 (1996), 111–114.

11 Żeleński, 'Aleksander Zarzycki…', 566.

12 J. Mechanisz, *Poczet kompozytorów polskich* (2004), 142–143.

13 Żeleński, 'Aleksander Zarzycki…', 568.

Its first publication was a piano transcription of Stanisław Moniuszko's *Crimean Sonnets*. In 1875, as a result of a decision by the Russian authorities, which looked askance at the composer's Austrian citizenship, Zarzycki was forced to resign as director of Warsaw Music Society. The position was taken over by Józef Wieniawski. After leaving WMS, Zarzycki became the choir and orchestra director at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Warsaw, a post he held in 1879–1892.[14]

After the death of Apolinary Kątski, on 13 September 1879 the Supervisory Board of the Music Institute in Warsaw entrusted Zarzycki with the position of director of this music college. At the Institute, the composer strove to establish European standards of teaching. With this aim in mind, he introduced a number of reforms, re-writing the syllabuses of all courses. The changes included, among others, the obligation to play works by Johann Sebastian Bach, études by Carl Czerny, Hermann Berens, Theodor Kullak, and Stephen Heller in the piano class. Thanks to Zarzycki's efforts, Ignacy Jan Paderewski and Stanisław Barcewicz, among other personalities, began to teach at the Institute. The newly elected director himself took over the 'collective music training', the school's orchestra and the top years of the piano. Apart from classes, Zarzycki also organised musical soirees where both students and teachers could present themselves. He reserved, however, the right to approve the repertoire that was to be performed during such concerts (he only accepted works that he found valuable).[15]

Zarzycki resisted the progressive Russification of the Institute, frequently risking conflict with the authorities. From the academic year of 1887/1888, that institution's newly amended statute included a regulation concerning the cancellation of all courses taught in Polish and the requirement that the head of the music college had to be a Russian citizen, fully subjected to the Russian authority. Zarzycki, who had

[14] A. Spóz, 'Warszawskie Towarzystwo Muzyczne', in A. Spóz, ed., *Kultura muzyczna Warszawy drugiej połowy XIX wieku* (1980), 42–54.

[15] A. Rutkowska, 'Nauczanie muzyki w Warszawie w drugiej połowie XIX w. (1861–1918)', in *Kultura muzyczna Warszawy…*, 17–33. Because of his objections to some of the repertoires which were to be performed during these 'musical evenings', Zarzycki exposed himself to hostility from some of his fellow teachers. As a result, he could no longer organise concerts at the Institute, so he began to invite everyone to 'musical soirees' held in his own home.

Austrian citizenship, was thus forced to resign from the post of director of Warsaw's Music Institute.[16]

In the late 1880s he became seriously ill, which, however, did not stop him from accepting an honorary fellowship of the Government Theatres of Warsaw (1888). He also continued to perform. Zarzycki played his last concert in March 1895 in the Warsaw City Hall. He died in the same year, on 1 November, and was buried a few days later in the Powązki Cemetery.[17]

Aleksander Zarzycki's Oeuvre

Zarzycki's output comprises more than forty opuses and several unnumbered works, including orchestral and chamber music, pieces for solo piano, songs for four-part choir and for voice and piano, three cantatas and an arrangement of the song *Boże coś Polskę* [*God Thou Hast Poland*] for piano.[18]

These compositions represent varied artistic standards. We can find both short, uncomplicated salon miniatures and elaborate virtuosic pieces among them. Some draw on the music of other composers (mainly Moniuszko and Chopin), while others abound in individual solutions. Musicologist Józef Reiss described Zarzycki's oeuvre as follows:

> [It] is characterized by Polishness, refined form and elegant taste as well as noble lyricism. Characteristic of his piano music is the miniature, light, witty and graceful, with subtle harmonies. It is salon music in the best sense of the word.[19]

Vocal Music

Songs, especially solo ones, undoubtedly constitute the largest group in Aleksander Zarzycki's artistic output. The composer wrote nearly

[16] Rutkowska, 'Nauczanie muzyki w Warszawie…, 17–33.
[17] Skarbowski, *Sylwetki pianistów...*, 112.
[18] Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 332.
[19] Żeleński, 'Aleksander Zarzycki…', 569.

sixty of them. His songs have sometimes been criticised for wrong word accents and incorrect counterpoint.[20] All the same, his solo songs are worthy of attention. Their artistic value is not different from, for example, Moniuszko songs.[21] In Zarzycki's own times, these pieces attracted great audience acclaim. Listeners appreciated their simple melodies, the expressive role of accompaniment, and the choice of poetic texts. The song *Między nami nic nie było* [*There Was Nothing Between Us*] from *Śpiewnik na jeden głos* [*Songbook for One Voice*] Op. 13 was one of those to have gained great popularity. This song was made especially famous by the Polish singer Marcelina Sembrich Kochańska, who performed it in Europe and the United States.[22] The substantial artistic value of Zarzycki's songs was recognised, among others, by the composer's close friend Władysław Żeleński, who thus wrote about his songs after the artist's death:

> From among the artistic achievements of the late Aleksander, we appreciate the most those songs that have enriched our musical literature with genuine inspired pearls. In them, Zarzycki proved to be a true poet [...]. These are veritable little jewels, the splendour and artistic setting of which are genuinely impressive. Everything about them is refined and noble.[23]

Zarzycki wrote his songs during two development phases in the history of the Polish artistic song genre.[24] According to the division proposed by Mieczysław Tomaszewski, Zarzycki's works should be classified as belonging to either the High Romantic (Opp. 2 and 9) or the late Romantic phase (the remaining compositions).[25] Despite the temporal division into stages (according to the date of composition), these songs maintain a homogeneous style derived from the works of the High Romantic era.

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[20] W. Poźniak, 'Pieśń solowa po Moniuszce', in A. Nowak-Romanowicz ed., *Z dziejów polskiej kultury muzycznej. Od oświecenia do Młodej Polski* (1966), 452.
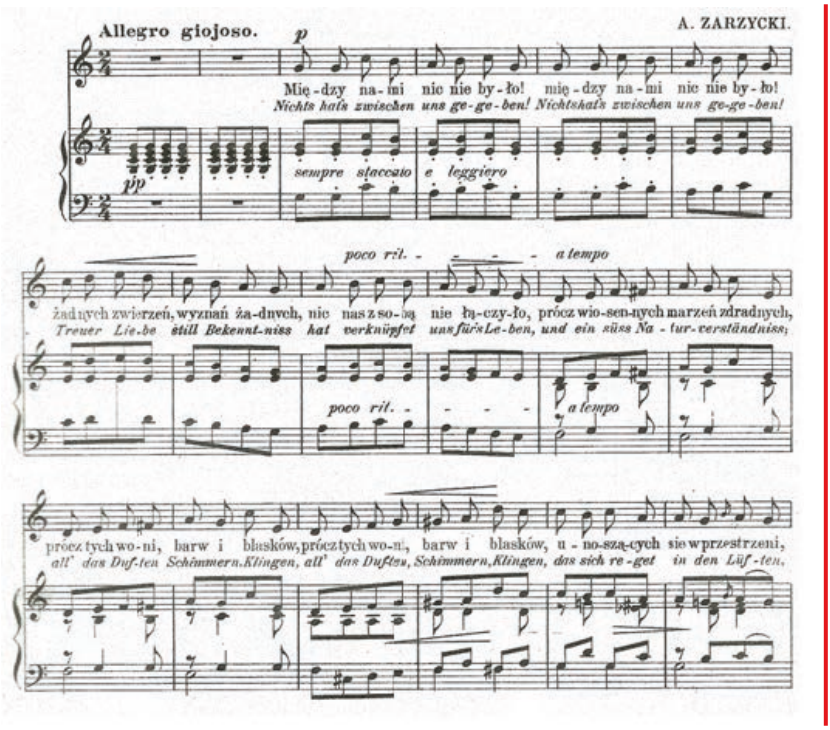
[21] Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 334.

[22] Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 334.

[23] Żeleński, 'Aleksander Zarzycki…', 569.

[24] Mieczysław Tomaszewski, 'Pieśń polska "wieku uniesień". Rekonesans', in W. Nowik, ed., *Topos narodowy w muzyce polskiej pierwszej połowy XIX wieku*, 1, (2006). The author presents five development phases of the Polish Romantic song, in chronological order: pre-Romantic, early Romantic, High Romantic, late Romantic, and post-Romantic.

[25] Tomaszewski, 'Pieśń polska "wieku uniesień"…'.



Ex. 1. A. Zarzycki, *Między nami nic nie było*, mm. 1–18.

Zarzycki composed songs to texts by both famous and obscure, Polish and foreign poets. Most frequently, however, he set poems by Adam Asnyk (16 songs) and Heinrich Heine (6 songs). The topics of Zarzycki's songs fully correspond to the trends of his time. The focus is on love themes, often combined with patriotic and additional rustic-pastoral elements (numerous descriptions of nature, rural customs). The songs are autonomous works (rather than forming cycles, as in Schubert's case); most of them were grouped into larger sets consisting of several pieces each. The most extensive collections of Zarzycki's songs are the two *Songbooks for One Voice*, Opp. 13 and 14, which consciously refer to Stanisław Moniuszko's *Śpiewniki domowe* [*Songbooks for Home Use*], of an egalitarian character.[26]

Apart from solo vocal pieces, Zarzycki's output also includes choral songs written for four-part choir, such as: *Pieśń nocnego wędrowca*

[26] Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 334.

[*A Nightly Wanderer's Song*] (to a poetic rendering by Aleksander Michaux of a poem originally written by Johann Wolfgang Goethe) as well as *Two Songs* ('Chór Strzelców' ['Chorus of Hunters'] to words by Stefan Florian Garczyński and 'Z łąk i pól' ['From Meadows and Fields'] to a poem by Maria Konopnicka). The composer also wrote two sacred choral settings, *Veni Creator* and *Salve Regina*.[27] His other vocal works include three cantatas: *Hymn do muzyki* [*Hymn to Music*] for mixed choir, wind instruments and harp, *Chór myśliwych* [*Chorus of Hunters*] for four male voices, piano and two horns, as well as *Serenade* for soprano, piano and orchestra. These are the compositions that appear in lists of Zarzycki's works. however, accessing the musical material is an extremely difficult task. Precise analyses of song structures and the appraisal of their aesthetic values therefore still wait to be performed.[28]

Piano Miniatures

The vast majority of Aleksander Zarzycki's compositions, apart from solo songs, are piano pieces. Polish music of the second half of the nineteenth century abounded in this type of repertoire, mainly due to the expansion of the piano as a music instrument, which became more and more popular not only in large concert halls, but also in small salons. Moreover, the piano can be said to have acted as a transmitter of all the music literature in the nineteenth century (orchestral works were also very often arranged, for example, for two pianos). The instrument allowed composers perfectly to reflect their intimate experience, for instance by differentiating sound colours and dynamics.

In Zarzycki's output, we can find many genres of piano music that are representative of his times. They are mainly mazurkas, such as *Deux Mazurkas* Op. 12, 20, and 36, *Mazurka in E major*, Op. 38, both drawing on Chopin. Another example of dance forms among Zarzycki's piano works are his waltzes: *The Great Waltz in G minor* Op. 4, *Valse Brillante in A-flat major* Op. 8 and the *Great Waltz in D major* Op. 18, which exhibit virtuosic elements. Moreover, among the composer's piano works there are also examples of lyrical miniatures, including

[27] Mechanisz, *Poczet*…,142.
[28] Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 333.

nocturnes (*Deux nocturnes* Op. 10), songs without words (*Deux Chant Sans paroles* Op. 6), a serenade (*Serenade in A-flat major* Op. 24), and many others.

The illustrious Antoni Sygietyński thus wrote about the aforementioned *Serenade* in *Echo Muzyczne*:

> *Serenade*, pure piano music, is a gem of erotic poetry, full of grace and simplicity. Against the background of peaceful harmonies, the melody of passionate affection is clearly outlined. The two bars of the ritornelli, skilfully interwoven three times into the whole, give this piece an original and extremely refined form. Love breathes from every measure, from every note, and noble love it is, without sloppy sentimentality and devoid of any exaggeration in the manner of expressing emotions.[29]

The *Serenade*'s structure is indeed not very complicated. However, it seems perfectly to meet the principles implied in its name. The serenade was a kind of love song performed to the accompaniment of (usually) a guitar under the window of a loved one. In Zarzycki's *Serenade* we can likewise find elements referring to this traditional form. The simple chordal accompaniment, coupled with arpeggio articulation, is certainly meant to evoke distinct associations with guitar playing, and provides a perfect background for the lyrical cantilena that unfolds above the accompaniment.

Briefly to summarise Zarzycki's piano output, one should first of all point to the strongly emphasised lyricism present in his compositions. As for the melodies, they demonstrate a characteristic song-like quality alternating with virtuosic passages.

Chamber Music

Piano miniatures and solo songs were undoubtedly the genres most frequently exploited by Polish composers in the second half of the nineteenth century (and thus preserved in the greatest number to the present). This was due, among others, to smaller requirements with regard to their performance. Bringing together a small chamber ensemble, not to mention a large symphony orchestra, was often very

[29] J. Kleczyński, *Echo Muzyczne*, 38 (1894).

problematic in the difficult times when the Polish nation had no state of its own. In the musical literature of that period we can nevertheless find chamber music works. In his publication *Z dziejów polskiej kultury* [*From the History of Polish Culture*], Włodzimierz Poźniak observes that the amount of chamber music composed in the Polish territories under the partitions was not small at all, but many of these works have not survived to our times.[30] However, some chamber music by Polish composers has successfully been restored to concert (and publishing) life; this concerns, among others, works by Antoni Stolpe, Antoni Rutkowski, Zygmunt Stojewski, and by Zarzycki himself.[31]

Among Zarzycki's chamber pieces, one can mention the *Romance in E major* Op. 16, *Deuxième Mazurka in E major* Op. 39 and the *Mazurka in G major* Op. 26, as well as works that were originally composed for the orchestra, but also exist in versions for smaller performing forces (*Andante et Polonaise in A major* Op. 23 for violin and piano, *Introduction et Cracovienne in E major* Op. 35 for violin and piano).

One of Zarzycki's most famous compositions is the *Mazurka in G major* Op. 26 for violin and piano, which brought the composer great popularity and recognition. It belongs to the canon of violin literature. It was composed in 1884 and dedicated to Pablo Sarasate. The Spanish violinist liked this virtuosic mazurka and enjoyed performing it as an encore, thus contributing to the popularisation of this work on an international scale.[32]
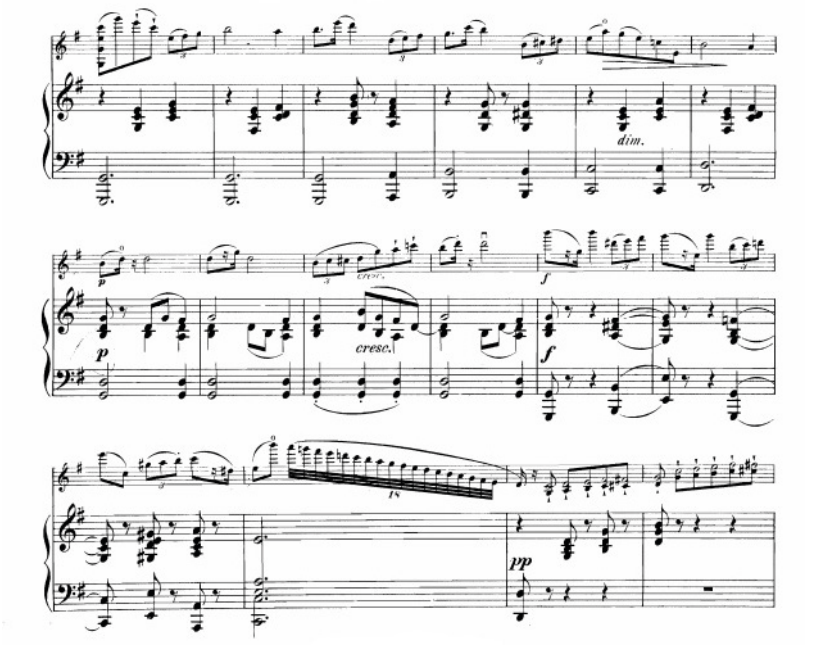
Zarzycki's chamber music composition that comes second in terms of popularity, directly after the *Mazurka in G major*, is the *Romance in E major* Op. 16 for violin and piano.[33] It was printed in 1875 by the German publishing house Bote & Bock. As we read in Jerzy Kusiak's *Przewodnik po muzyce skrzypcowej* [*Guide to Violin Music*]:

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30 W. Poźniak, 'Pieśń solowa…', 453.

31 Interest in performances of music by the above-mentioned composers is exemplified, among others, by the programme of the above-mentioned Stanisław Moniuszko International Competition of Polish Music (see footnote 6). In the publishing market, Eufonium is the leader in the field of works by somewhat forgotten Polish composers (http://www.eufonium.pl/pl/).

32 J. Kusiak, *Przewodnik po muzyce skrzypcowej* (2014), 472.

33 In the entry for 'Aleksander Zarzycki' in the *PWM Musical Encyclopedia*, one can find a note that the *Romance in E Major* was originally intended for wind quartet and violin. See Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki'.



Ex. 2. A. Zarzycki, *Mazurka in G major* Op. 26, mm. 7–22.

The *Romance*, though not as popular as the *Mazurka in G major*, continues to captivate the ear with its poetic mood, noble melody and original harmonies. Its form is immaculate, exhibiting a great sense of the instrument's character, using the full range of the violin.[34]

Orchestral Works

Orchestral works written in partitioned Poland in the second half of the nineteenth century are relatively rare due to the small number of orchestras then available. Composers who decided to write orchestral pieces were frequently aware that their works may not be performed by full orchestral forces in their own lifetime. This is why many artists resolved to arrange their orchestral works for chamber ensembles. This

[34] Kusiak, *Przewodnik…*, 472.

practice was also very frequent in the output of Aleksander Zarzycki, who likewise rewrote some of his orchestral works for violin and piano, and in the case of the *Concerto* – for two pianos.

Zarzycki's orchestral works include: *Solemn Overture, Polish Suite* Op. 37, *Great Polonaise in E-flat major* Op. 7 for piano and orchestra (dedicated to Hans von Bülow), *Andante et Polonaise in A major* Op. 23 for violin and orchestra, and *Introduction et Cracovienne in D major* Op. 35 for violin and orchestra. These works strongly emphasize the values idiomatic to Polish music in the period following the national uprisings, such as national elements. They are present in the very titles of some works (e.g. *Polish Suite*), as well as in references to folk music, such as elements of Polish national dances (the polonaise, the mazurka, the krakowiak) incorporated into the composer's output.
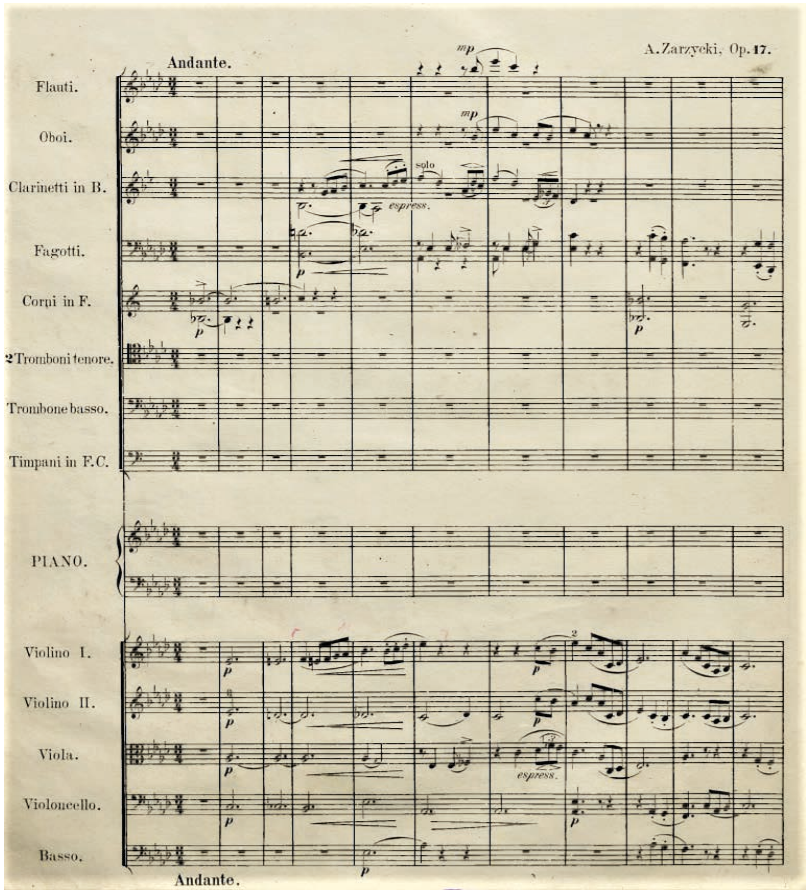
Probably the second most popular work by Zarzycki, after the *Mazurka in G major*, is his *Concerto in A-flat major* Op. 17 for piano and orchestra, dedicated to Nikolai Rubinstein. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the first piano concerto in partitioned Poland was composed by Józef Wieniawski (in 1858), while the second came from Aleksander Zarzycki, and was premiered in 1860 in Paris. The composer played it in Warsaw, for the first time in 1868, and in a revised version twelve years later. After the first presentation of the concerto in front of the Warsaw audience, the Polish pianist and music critic Jan Kleczyński wrote in his review:

> The *Andante* is nobly conceived and constructed. In the finale, we like the first theme less than the second. The passages are graceful. It seems that, though there is no distinct similarity at any point, the image of Chopin's wonderful *Concerto in F minor* loomed large in the composer's soul.[35]

Zarzycki's concerto consists of two movements: *Andante in A-flat major* and *Allegro non troppo in F minor*. It was probably originally planned as a three-movement work. The first movement takes the form of a nocturne with a contrasted middle segment based on a recitative. It is a very long movement, marked by the strong presence of the krakowiak rhythm. As in the 1858 concerto by Wieniawski, Zarzycki resigned from bringing in a full orchestral *tutti* in the first section. The

[35] Żeleński, 'Aleksander Zarzycki…', 569.

second movement is an example of the sonata form. The work is characterised by internal stylistic diversity and subtle instrumentation.[36] The composer makes use of remarkable harmonic solutions, which include frequent dissonances combined with complicated functional relations. The meditative mood is built, among others, by making the whole sound like chamber music and avoiding frequent *tuttis*. Conversely, the piano part, not devoid of figurative virtuosity, makes use of the full sonic possibilities of this instrument.[37]



Ex. 3. A. Zarzycki, *Piano Concerto in A-flat major* Op. 17, mm. 1–11.

[36] Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 333.
[37] Poniatowska, *Historia Muzyki…*, 477.

Zarzycki's *Piano Concerto in A-flat major* Op. 17 was performed, apart from the composer himself, also by other virtuoso pianists such as Berthe Marx Goldschmidt, Franciszek Bylicki, Józef Śmidrowicz, and Władysław Kędra.[38]

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Zarzycki's output of compositions did not contribute to any breakthrough in Polish music. The composer's oeuvre demonstrates his indebtedness to the works of Chopin, Moniuszko, and other European masters. Zarzycki's compositions present a highly varied artistic level, which made commentators speak now favourably, now critically about them. His musical themes are characterised by notable lyrical melodiousness combined with virtuosic elements. The harmonic solutions he used were in no way innovative, but nevertheless sound interesting in their own manner. It is undoubtedly a body of works worthy of being explored by both performers and researchers of nineteenth-century Polish music.

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[38] Chmara-Żaczkiewicz, 'Aleksander Zarzycki', 333.

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Mieczysław Weinberg and the Category of Borderland

Abstract

Polish musicologist and author Danuta Gwizdalanka titled her publication *Mieczysław Wajnberg: kompozytor z trzech światów* [*Mieczysław Weinberg: Composer from Three Worlds*] (Poznań, 2013). Weinberg (1919–1996) was a Polish composer with Jewish roots who spent most of his life in the USSR. Without any doubt, he can be called 'a composer from the borderland' due to his 'hybrid identity', which was one of the most important reasons that affected the appreciation of Weinberg's output both during his lifetime and after death. The main ideas of this paper centre on the category of 'borderland' and its representations in Weinberg's biography and oeuvre. According to the typology proposed by Krzysztof Zajas, Weinberg's life and works can be considered in terms of the following types of borderland: interdisciplinary, spatial, psychological, existential, sociological, and mythological. Through the prism of the category of 'borderland', Weinberg's creative work manifests itself as a highly individual and invaluable testimony of his times, Far from eclectic and epigonic in

relation to the music of Dmitri Shostakovich, his oeuvre is unique in the world's music literature.

Keywords

Mieczysław Weinberg,[1] borderland, identity, Krzysztof Zajas

Mieczysław Wajnberg: kompozytor z trzech światów [*Mieczysław Weinberg: Composer from Three Worlds*] is how Danuta Gwizdalanka[2] titled the only biography of the composer available in Polish musicological literature so far. A Polish artist of Jewish descent, he lived and worked in the USSR for over five decades… That the task of defining Weinberg's cultural identity presents some difficulties is evident even from such a brief description,. Intuition suggests that the term 'borderland composer' may prove appropriate. It was the composer's 'hybrid identity' that constituted the main obstacle to appreciating his artistic work, both in his lifetime and after death. The closeness of the three cultural circles undoubtedly had a significant impact on the artistic choices that Weinberg made. How does the category of borderland fit into the composer's biography and works? Is it possible to interpret Weinberg's musical legacy through this prism, and if so, how can it be interpreted? In this paper, I will make an attempt to answer these questions.

The word 'borderland' invariably refers us to the concept of the border. In his article 'Pogranicza bez granic' ['Borderlands without Borders'] Włodzimierz Próchnicki points out, however, that a border is a line, while a borderland is an area. Though inextricably connected with the border, that area cannot be fully defined, and remains, in a sense, open.[3] Borderlands are always heterogeneous; their character-

[1] The composer's name and surname have been spelled variously as Mieczysław Wajnberg (the Polish-language version also preferred by the composer himself, who signed his scores in this way), Mieczysław Weinberg (the spelling found in most English-language publications and music releases), Moisey or Moishe Vainberg (Vaynberg). In the English-language version of this paper, I will consistently refer to the artist as Mieczysław Weinberg (the internationally preferred spelling of his surname), so as to facilitate tagging and searching the text.

[2] D. Gwizdalanka, *Mieczysław Wajnberg: kompozytor z trzech światów* (2013).

[3] W. Próchnicki, 'Pogranicza bez granic', in J. Fazan, K. Zajas, eds, *Na pograniczach literatury*, 21 (2012), 35.

istic features are 'separateness' and 'interpenetration',[4] which generates tense oppositions, sometimes involving a value judgment, such as 'us' versus 'them' or 'strangers'.[5]

As Próchnicki points out, the border need not exist geographically. It manifests itself in the form of linguistic and cultural differences both between neighbouring societies and those separated by a considerable geographical distance.[6] True boundaries are therefore not an obstacle to the emergence of differences. This entails differences in the ways of artistic thinking, as well as a veritable fusion of mutual influences. Weinberg's oeuvre turns out to be an excellent example of this phenomenon.

Scholarly literature in the humanities offers numerous typologies of borderland. The fact that 'borderland' is still a dynamically developing category is evident e.g. from a paper by Grzegorz Babiński, which suggests, among others, a division into new and old borderlands.[7] The

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4 W. Panas, 'O pograniczu etnicznym w badaniach literackich', in T. Michałowska, Z. Goliński, Z. Jarosiński, eds, *Wiedza o kulturze i edukacja. Księga referatów Zjazdu Polonistów* (1996).

5 W. Próchnicki, 'Pogranicza…', 36–37. Due to their evaluative aspect, borderlands are frequently the subject of postcolonial research. Examples of interesting publications on this subject, include: J. Kieniewicz, *Ekspansja, kolonializm, cywilizacja* (2008); H. Bhabha, 'Of mimicry and men. The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/undergraduate/modules/fulllist/special/crimefiction/homi_bhabha_-_of_mimicry_and_man.pdf, accessed 28 Mar. 2021; H. Bhabha, *The location of culture* (2010); Ch. Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000).

6 W. Próchnicki, 'Pogranicza…', 37

7 G. Babiński, 'Przemiany pogranicza narodowych i kulturowych – propozycje typologii', in R. Stemplowski, A. Żelazo, eds. *Polskie pogranicza a polityka zagraniczna u progu XXI wieku* (2002), 18. The old borderlands include: a) territorial; b) historical; c) those demonstrating a significant degree cultural interpenetration, and therefore of similarity between the communities living there; d) more frequently transitional than bordering on each other; e) those lacking sharp divisions and boundaries between communities; f) economically and socially diversified, which does not lead to sharp divisions (since there is an observable continuity and completeness in their social stratification); g) those existing between 'social wholes'; h) those evolving from the acceptance of subordinate cultures to cultural equality, but essentially preserving vertical intercultural and identity relations, with a significant role played by religious diversity (though it is not constitutive to social divisions). Under the heading of new borderlands, Babiński lists: a) slightly territorial ones (with an indefinite or only symbolic territory); b) 'ahistorical' ones; c) those demonstrating significant cultural diversity and civilizational distances; d) bordering on each other in both territorial and cultural terms; e) those

most universal typology, however, seems to be the general one proposed by Krzysztof Zajas, who distinguishes between the following borderlands: interdisciplinary, spatial, psychological and existential, sociological, and mythological.[8] The author conceives of the interdisciplinary borderland as the interpenetration of scientific discourses and the application of research tools derived from diverse disciplines.[9] When undertaking research on the work of a composer such as Mieczysław Weinberg, scholars must be aware of the need to extend their knowledge so as to include the thematic fields of history, sociology, religious studies, literature, and anthropology, that is, disciplines necessary to present the fullest possible interpretation of the artist's output.

Spatial borderland is a specific territory or space. It comprises local homelands, which create the conditions for the co-existence of many cultures and determine the emergence of works characterised by a specific form or language. In the case of Weinberg, spatial borderland and its influence on the composer's work seems to be one of the key manifestations of Zajas's category. Weinberg came from a family of Moldavian Jews who managed to escape a pogrom in Chișinău.[10] Born in 1919 in Warsaw,[11] he was brought up as a Polonized Jew. Weinberg himself, although he drew abundantly on the Jewish tradition in his

in which boundaries between groups are clear but often only symbolic and identity-related; f) demonstrating various social and economic differences (both very large and minimal – no complete social stratification has been formed); g) those between communities selected as a result of migration processes; h) those exhibiting distinctly horizontal ways of perceiving intercultural relations (especially on the part of the minorities); i) those in which religious diversity plays a highly significant role.

8 K. Zajas, 'Widnokresy literatury', in J. Fazan, K. Zajas, eds, *Na pograniczach literatury*, 21, (2012), 5–10.

9 K. Zajas, 'Widnokresy literatury', 5–10.

10 With regard to biographical information, I draw on two monographs dedicated to this artist: David Fanning's *Mieczysław Weinberg: In Search of Freedom* (2010) and the aforementioned work by Danuta Gwizdalanka. The former publication offers the first comprehensive overview of the composer's life and work. The book became the point of departure for other studies, including *Mieczysław Wajnberg: kompozytor z trzech światów*. All the biographical data come from these two books, unless stated otherwise.

11 This date, although it appears in official biographical sources, was verified by Danuta Gwizdalanka. It turns out that the composer's birth centenary in 2019 should rather have been celebrated a year earlier, because he was most likely born in 1918; cf. D. Gwizdalanka, 'Nieznane fakty z biografii Mieczysława Wajnberga', https://

output, always felt more Polish, which he emphasised until the end of his life. He did not know Hebrew, nor did he speak Yiddish.[12] In 1939, he managed to escape from occupied Warsaw to Minsk, where he studied at the local conservatory in the class of Vasily Zolotarev. The artistic legacy of the Romantic national schools was still alive in that centre, which influenced Weinberg's musical output, among others in the form of references to folk melodies and his late-Romantic orchestration (one of the examples is *Rhapsody on Moldavian Themes*, Op. 47, written long after leaving Belarus). Fate, however, forced Weinberg to make another escape, necessitated by Nazi Germany's invasion of its recent Soviet ally in 1941. The composer reached Tashkent, from which, thanks to the protection of Dmitri Shostakovich, he managed to move to Moscow in 1943. He resided in the latter city until his death in 1996. It is impossible not to notice that as a consequence of changes in territorial divisions and the resulting (forcible or life-saving) mass migrations, twentieth-century Europe became a continent of intermingling influences, of which the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics seems to be the most distinctive example. What emerged from Weinberg's wanderings was a musical language which (though undergoing some transformations over the years) incorporated elements of both his native (Moldavian, Jewish and Polish) traditions and the achievements of Romantic national schools. It also made allowances for the communist party's thematic requirements, and demonstrated many stylistic parallels to the output of Dmitri Shostakovich. Despite the political thaw and the easing of restrictions on citizens of Jewish origin after the death of Joseph Stalin, Weinberg never left Moscow, probably owing to his friendship with Shostakovich.[13] This fact relates to another set of categories in Zajas's typology, namely, the psychological and existential borderlands, related to the difficulty of classifying one's identity and

culture.pl/pl/artykul/ nieznane-fakty-z-biografii-mieczyslawa-wajnberga, accessed 3 Aug. 2019.

12 Testimony of Victoria Bishops, the composer's daughter, now living in Toronto, contacted online during the International Conference 'Weinberg: Between East and West', organised by David Fanning and Michelle Assay at the Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama, University of Manchester, which I attended on 24–27 January 2019. The meeting with Victoria Bishops was entitled 'Letters from My Father'. Publishing work on the conference proceedings is currently underway; they will be published by The British Academy.

13 Testimony of Victoria Bishops, International Conference 'Weinberg…'.

true affiliation. Zajas describes this as 'the sense of identity being upset by the presence of the Other, settled within the same space; as a way of living, it is the existence of a nomad who seeks to communicate with Others'.[14] In Weinberg's case, this phenomenon can best be described within the framework of Zajas's third proposed type, that of the sociological borderland, which refers to group identification on the level of language, national identity and national minorities. It is a problem that arises as a result of neighbouring groups delineating the boundaries of their existence within one and the same territory.

As already mentioned, the misconceived 'need' to identify Weinberg as a Jewish and / or Polish and / or Soviet composer possibly constituted the greatest obstacle to promoting his work. Starting in the 1960s, which David Fanning sees as the golden years of the composer's artistic activity, Weinberg's music failed to attract any major interest in either publishers or the public. Victoria Bishops recalls her father's words: 'he had more luck in his life for the quality than for the number of [his music's] performers'.[15] In the USSR, Weinberg was regarded as a Jewish composer, whereas in Poland – as a Soviet one, which effectively blocked his way to the concert stages. The Polish Ministry of Culture became interested in the person of Weinberg only as late as 1994, and the first CD recordings of the composer's works were released after his death thanks to the great commitment of Tommy Persson, an admirer of Weinberg's talent.[16] Due to his Jewish origin, Weinberg and his relatives repeatedly encountered unpleasant remarks or prejudice, and his life also came under serious threat. He suffered slights even from his friends, fellow-composers. Georgy Sviridov, also a close friend of Shostakovich, apparently officially expressed the view that Weinberg, although writing similarly to Shostakovich, would never be able to match the latter composer's talent because of his Jewish roots.[17] Through his first wife, Natalia, whom he had met

[14] K. Zajas, 'Widnokresy literatury…', 8.

[15] Testimony of Victoria Bishops. Weinberg's works were performed by artists of such calibre as Mstislav Rostropovich, Sviatoslav Richter, and David Oistrakh.

[16] Tommy Persson, *Weinberg's Last Years*, speech delivered during the International Conference 'Weinberg…', unpublished.

[17] Daniel Elphick's unpublished statement at the International Conference 'Weinberg…'. Daniel Elphick is the author of an excellent doctoral dissertation dedicated to Weinberg's quartets. His statement confirms the assumption of Grzegorz Babiński that internal divisions exist even within the 'borderland' and that it is

in Tashkent, Weinberg became the son-in-law of Solomon (Shloyme) Vovsi-Mikhoels. Mikhoels was not only a respected actor and director in Jewish theatres, but also a committed activist and chairman of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. Anti-Semitic policies intensified in the USSR in the late 1940s and the early 1950s, leading to many arrests and political assassinations. As a result of anti-Semitic campaigns, Mikhoels was murdered by the NKVD in a mock car accident in 1948, and all his family came under close surveillance by the authorities.[18] Weinberg was accused of 'bourgeois formalism' and imprisoned at Lubyanka in 1953, but he was released after the death of Joseph Stalin. Additionally, Shostakovich wrote a letter to Lavrentiy Beria requesting a pardon for Weinberg.

The composer's fullest contact with the 'Other', in the positive sense of this word, was that with Dmitri Shostakovich, who became not only his faithful friend, but also an artistic authority. The composer never tried to conceal the decisive impact that Shostakovich's music had a on him. This profound private relationship found its natural reflection in Weinberg's musical language, which is frequently brought up as one of the main objections to his work and the reason for dismissing him as Shostakovich's 'epigone'. Alexander Ivashkin is extremely critical of Weinberg in this regard:

> The influence of Shostakovich's music on Russian composers manifested itself on many levels. In the 1960s, many artists took over his style, while to a large extent compromising its value. Among its imitators were Moysey Weinberg, Yuri Levitin, German Galynin, and the most talented of them, Boris Tishchenko. However, Shostakovich appreciated their works because he heard in them many elements characteristic of his [own] musical language. Probably, like many composers, he was under the illusion that this was the direction that

itself hierarchical (G. Babiński, 'Przemiany pograniczy…', 15.). In his book *Music behind the Iron Curtain: Mieczysław Weinberg and his Polish Contemporaries*, Elphick adds that Weinberg dedicated his *Symphony No. 6* to Sviridov and that despite the latter's anti-Semitic views, they remained in close contact. The diaries published after Sviridov's death present him as a staunch anti-Semite. On this basis, it can be concluded that his views did not stop him from making friends with Weinberg, which seems quite controversial. Cf. D. Elphick, *Music behind the Iron Curtain. Mieczysław Weinberg and his Polish Contemporaries* (2019), 180.

[18] In the event of the Weinbergs' death, the Shostakovich family were prepared to take care of their daughter, Victoria.

future music was to take. Today, however, it is known that these works were destructive to Shostakovich's music, as it got lost among a multitude of poor copies.[19]

In reality, the composers mutually influenced and inspired each other. Jewish themes probably appeared in Szostakowicz's works thanks to his friendship with the Polish artist.

Weinberg's nomadic biography resulted in a kind of musical 'trilingualism', which was a combination of native elements, the Zolotarev school, and a style close to the music of Dmitri Shostakovich. Each of these languages was meant to help the composer establish communication with the 'Other' in the new reality that he faced, and the first of them – also to emphasise his roots. Native elements are represented, among others, by the idioms of Jewish music, frequently 'vulgar' and imitating a klezmer band. In this way, Weinberg alludes to his childhood (his father wrote revue and theatre music). References to Fryderyk Chopin's oeuvre play a significant role, especially in the form of quotations in *Symphony No. 8 'Polish Flowers'* Op. 83 and *Symphony No. 21 'Kaddish'* Op. 152.[20] Chopin was not only one of Weinberg's favourite composers. As an émigré, Weinberg had a sense of shared experience and fate with the Polish Romantic. Additionally, Chopin's music evoked memories of his studies at Warsaw Conservatory. Weinberg was considered as one of the most talented students of Józef

[19] A. Ivashkin, 'Shostakovich and Schnittke: the Erosion of Symphonic Syntax', in: D. Fanning, ed., *Shostakovich. Studies* (1995), 254-255. Shostakovich himself valued Weinberg's music highly: 'He always appreciated and liked Weinberg's music. He dedicated his *String Quartet No. 10* to this composer. In 1975 he also wrote a sketch for the program of Weinberg's opera *Мадонна и солдат* (*The Madonna and the Soldier*).' Shostakovich, in his turn, 'talked with joy about Moysey Weinberg's new opera *Пассажирка* (*The Passenger*). "It is an amazing work" he used to repeat, "just extraordinary."' Cf. K. Meyer, *Dymitr Szostakowicz i jego czasy* (1999), 327, 340. On the other hand, Weinberg saw no danger in imitating Shostakovich's musical style, which is evident in his defence of his friend's *Symphony No. 10*: 'He opposed the thesis that Shostakovich's music exists just for its own sake. He added that, in his view, the composer had tens of thousands of admirers in the Soviet Union alone. He also confessed that he did not see anything wrong in the fact that the young composers' generation was within the sphere of influence of the author of *Symphony No. 10*' (K. Meyer, *Dymitr Szostakowicz*..., 240–241).

[20] In *Polish Flowers*, the composer quotes Chopin's *Sonata in B-Flat Minor*, Op. 35 (Movement Three: *Marche funèbre: Lento*), while in *Kaddish – Ballade in G Minor*, Op. 23.

Turczyński, teacher of the Chopin Competition third-prize winner Witold Małcużyński. Weinberg himself was seen as the would-be winner of the event's next edition. After playing in front of Józef Hoffman, he received an offer of studies in Philadelphia. The journey, however, never took place since Weinberg's Jewish origin prevented him from obtaining a visa. The composer's 'rooting' was enhanced by the profoundly autobiographical character of his output. Weinberg considered giving testimony to the tragic history of his nation as his artistic creed. He thus spoke on behalf of all the victims of European totalitarian regimes. His belief in the profound meaning of humanism meant that in his art he responded to the need of upholding the memory of the horrors of World War II, so that such atrocities would never take place again. As the composer himself commented:

> Many of my works are related to the war. But it was not I who chose this topic. It was dictated by my fate, and by the tragic fate of my relatives. I consider it my moral duty to write about the war, about the terrible fate that has befallen humankind in our century.[21]
>
> If I consider myself distinguished because my life has been saved, this fact gives me a conviction that it is impossible to pay off the debt, that even hard creative work for twenty-four hours a day, four days a week would not bring me even an inch closer to this repayment.[22]

Another, mythographic type of borderland concerns the space of 'special cultural significance, as for example, in the concept of *Kresy* [the historical eastern borderlands of Poland – translator's note].'[23] I assume that 'mythographic borderland' also refers to a space of special significance to the author of the given text, on which he or she bestows a symbolic, almost legendary meaning. To Weinberg, Warsaw seems to have been such a place until the turning point which came in 1966. There is no doubt that the Warsaw of his childhood and youth stayed in the composer's imagination as a carefree time of family happiness and security, as well as his first artistic successes. In 1966, for the first and only time since his escape, he had the opportunity to visit Poland

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21 D. Gwizdalanka, *Mieczysław Wajnberg…*, 60.

22 H. Milewska, 'Mieczysław Weinberg – muzyczne dziękczynienie', *HFiM*, 2 (2011), https://hi-fi.com.pl/sylwetki-muzyczne-lista/740-mieczys%C5%82aw-weinberg-muzyczne-dzi%C4%99kczynienie.html, accessed 3 Aug. 2019.

23 K. Zajas, *Widnokresy literatury…*, 8.

as a Soviet delegate to the 'Warsaw Autumn' International Festival of Contemporary Music. That return to his 'paradise lost' is known to have proved a great disappointment for Weinberg, as his second daughter Anna recalls:

> Father's trip to Poland was very sad for him. He met almost nobody of his youth friends [...] He was sad because Warsaw was absolutely reconstructed and many friends were gone.[24]

Krzysztof Meyer comments on the situation in more detail:

> I knew his [Weinberg's] name because while reading *Soviet Music* regularly I kept coming across information about his works. Moreover, I had several Soviet CDs with recordings of his music at home. I liked it very much, for example his second *Sinfonietta*. I thus developed an interest in Weinberg and we had something to talk about from the start. Other Polish composers shunned him. This was due to the negative attitude to Russian cultural policies, as the works of the composers sent to the Festival were, almost without exception, conventional and traditional. What we expected from the 'Warsaw Autumn' was not merely good craftsmanship. We thus preferred Edison Denisov and Alfred Schnittke. Weinberg did not fit into the Warsaw Autumn landscape, either. The only Pole who sought contact with him was Zbigniew Turski because they had studied together before the war and it was Weinberg who had played his piano concerto at that time. Such a reception must have been a bitter experience for Weinberg. After all, Poland was his lost motherland, and Polish – the mother tongue. He still spoke flawless Polish, without any colloquialisms, articulating the words as if they had been printed. He spoke the Polish of the pre-war intelligentsia, cultivated and elegant-sounding. He did not seem it to consider it a great tragedy that most of our colleagues kept a distance from him... His greatest disappointment was that the city, which he remembered from the past, had ceased to exist.[25]

The category of the borderland, in all the manifestations and senses of this term, clearly demonstrates that an attempt to 'assign' one identity to an artist is doomed to failure. This intuition is confirmed

[24] D. Elphick, *Music behind the Iron Curtain*…, 193.

[25] K. Meyer, 'Im Schatten Schostakowitchs', *Opernwelt*, 6 (2010), 42–43, quoted in: D. Gwizdalanka, *Mieczysław Wajnberg*…, 40.

by the reflection of Daniel Elphick, who calls for a reconsideration of Weinberg's musical legacy, free of cultural value judgments. He believes that the only right way is to take his music as

> an intersectional weaving of Jewish, Soviet-Russian, and Polish influences and experiences. In this manner, we understand his music as the expression of a full and rounded human being, and not the simple culmination of any national tradition.[26]

Viewed from this perspective, the musical output of Mieczysław Weinberg as a 'composer from the borderland' takes on eminently individual qualities, becoming at the same time an extremely valuable testimony of the times in which he lived. It is a legacy unique in the history of the world's music literature.

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Musical Representations of the Past in Children's Cartoons Produced in Central-Eastern Europe under Communism[1]

Abstract

The subject of this article are the composition strategies employed to represent the past in animated films produced in the integrated cultural space which Central-Eastern Europe constituted during the communist era. Productions made in two countries, the Soviet Union and in Poland, have been considered. Film examples have been discussed in approximate chronological order, according to the time of production of individual cartoons. By selecting specific movies I do not intend exhaustively to analyse these audio-visual works. I have limited myself to reviewing thematic threads related to the past and, in this context, ideas and tendencies in film music composition.

[1] This is an extended version of a paper delivered during the 47th Musicological Conference of the Polish Composers' Union 'The Past in Music – Music towards Tradition', held between 25 and 27 October 2018 at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw.

Keywords

cartoons in Central and Eastern Europe, musical representations of the past, music in cartoons

The twentieth century left behind many animated films presenting the past. Especially popular were the 1990s productions by Walt Disney such as *Hercules* (1997), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996), and by 20th Century Fox (*Anastasia*, 1997), as well as the earlier French educational series *Il Etait Une Fois… L'Homme* (Eng. title: *Once Upon a Time... Man*, 1978–1981), with J.S. Bach's *Toccata in D Minor* in the title sequence.

The music that accompanies scenes from the past usually represents the late Romantic idiom, commonly accepted as universal. Using period music from the age in which the plot is set might entail the risk of historical distance interfering with the perception of the movie. As Zofia Lissa observed, the audience perceives the archaic visual layer of the film merely as a change of stage sets and so it does not fundamentally influence our understanding of the presented world. With music, it is quite a different case: 'The authentic historical element "works" as long as it is integrated into the standard modern categories and stylistic norms, that is, as long as it has been subjected to stylisation.'[2] All this finds confirmation also in the field of cartoon music.

I will begin my survey of cartoons produced in Poland and the USSR before 1991 with the oldest animated Soviet sound films from the 1930s. They were made in the Central-Eastern European communist world which constitutes the context of our study. Those 1930s Soviet cartoons cover a quite wide range of topics, from film adaptations of national literature (including folklore) to (educational and other) screenplays dealing with the then everyday reality, to films with oriental or tropical settings, to a number of adaptations of Western classics. Notably, folk fables became a major source of inspiration only in the second half of the 1930s. In the early Soviet period, they had been considered (similarly as other literary works related to folklore) as remnants of feudalism.[3] The first Soviet cartoon with a script based

[2] Z. Lissa, *Estetyka muzyki filmowej* (1964), 340.

[3] Ü. Pikkov, 'On the Topics and Style of Soviet Animated Films', *Baltic Screen Media Review*, 4 (2016), 20.

on a fable was *Царь Дурандай*[4] (*Tsar Durandai*) of 1934. Incidentally, this movie offers an intriguing proof of the fact that that Soviet animated film art was originally inspired by the avant-garde. The movie demonstrates a tendency to 'suspend' realism; the characters are highly stylised and modelled in some cases on folk sculptures, while the music is based on the principle of grotesque bordering even on deformation, which manifests itself in 'false' cadences, glissandi, and the use of exaggerated sound contrasts. At some points we also hear circus music. All this accompanies the folk tale of an inept tsar who has made up his mind to get married.

Musical references to the past can also be found in those 1930s Soviet films which might be described as animated 'comedy-operas', including two adaptations of the Western literary canon: Charles Perrault's *The Master Cat, or Puss in Boots* and Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers*. The film *Кот в сапогах*[5] (*Puss in Boots*), produced in 1938 by Soyuzmultfilm, sparkles with humour. The fact of the action being set in the times of princesses and marquises inspired the authors to create a kind a mini-opera. The music soundtrack opens with an overture, and includes recitatives and arias of various types, which, however, stylistically come closer to songs. Operatic pathos is represented in a humorous manner. Orchestral sound dominates in *Puss in Boots*, as in the other movies discussed here. One interesting exception can be found in the prologue, in which the pages of an ancient book open one by one. In this passage, the instrumentation was reduced to three string instruments; the violin and viola play solo, while the cello provides an Alberti bass accompaniment, which brings to mind associations with the trio sonata and should therefore be considered as a form of archaization. The 1938 Soviet production of *The Three Musketeers*[6], on the other hand, contains references to the first half of the seventeenth century. In this humorous adaptation of Alexandre Dumas' famous novel, the comic effect is achieved through a clash between the exalted mood of the tale about the adventurers of old and the idea of setting a duck (modelled on Disney's Donald) in the role of the main protagonist, as well as anthropomorphic cats in the roles

[4] *Царь Дурандай* (1934, dir. I. Ivanov-Vano, V. and Z. Brumberg; music composer unknown). Cf. Ü. Pikkov, 'On the Topics…', 20.

[5] *Кот в сапогах* (1938, dir. V. and Z. Brumberg, mus. Nikita Bogoslovsky).

[6] *Три мушкетера* (1938, dir. I. Vano, mus. Nikita Bogoslovsky).

of the three eponymous soldiers. Musically, the soundtrack employs the sound of a large orchestra and the neo-Romantic idiom prevails, though archaising stylisations are also present (as in the theme accompanying a cat's preparations to sing a serenade, played by a flute and resembling a historical duple-time dance). The film's situational humour is further enhanced by the juxtaposition of (stylistically inappropriate) music characterised by serious-type expression with the protagonists' humorous lines (though spoken in earnest) and funny situations. The leitmotif of *The Three Musketeers* is the duck's archaising song, in which a rhythmic ostinato in the accompaniment illustrates a horse's hoofbeat. The style of the melody evokes associations with early music, and the verbal layer – even more so, since the text draws on the convention of the brave hero addressing his horse as the most faithful companion in his adventures.

Images of the past return in cartoons produced after World War II[7]. Soviet filmmakers continued to draw inspiration from fables and folklore, similarly as in other countries of the Eastern bloc[8]. One of the fruits of these inspirations was *Сказка о рыбаке и рыбке*[9] (*The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish*), produced in 1950. Its visual layer reproduces in detail the folk costumes and wooden architecture, including the interior of an old Ruthenian cottage. The soundtrack, which betrays neo-Classical influences, features intertextual elements and stylisations of folk and courtly music. The first Polish cartoon for children, *Za króla Krakusa*[10] (*When Krakus Was the King*, 1947) recounting the legend of the Wawel Dragon, was made by Zenon Wasilewski using the stop motion puppet animation technique. The soundtrack is dominated by illustrative music performed by a large orchestra, in which the woodwinds (particularly the clarinet) are especially highlighted and frequently follow the notes of the pentatonic scale.

During the Khrushchev thaw that came after Stalin's death when Nikita Khrushchev took over as leader of the USSR (1953), Soviet animation underwent changes analogous to those taking place in other disciplines of art. A certain liberalization[11] manifested itself, among

[7] During the war, Soviet animators continued their work to a limited extent. Soyuzmultfilm film studios were evacuated to Samarkand (Uzbekistan).
[8] Pikkov, 'On the Topics…', 23.
[9] *Сказка о рыбаке и рыбке* (1950, dir. M. Tsekhanovsky, mus. J. Levitin).
[10] *Za króla Krakusa* (1947, dir. Z. Wasilewski, mus. S. Wisłocki).
[11] Pikkov, 'On the Topics…', 24.

others, in the greater freedom of choosing film subjects, as well as in growing stylistic diversity. Notably, it is apparently from the time of the thaw that we have the greatest number of cartoons set in the past.

It is in a fairy-tale court, at some indefinite time and place, that the plot of *Двенадцать месяцев*[12] (*The Twelve Months*, a 1956 adaptation of a play by Samuil Marshak) is set. The eminently Disney-like animations are accompanied by Mieczysław Weinberg's remarkable music, rather high-calibre for a cartoon soundtrack, which is partly due to the monumental sound of a large orchestra. In the palace scenes we hear, among others, a waltz (the figurations played by bells suit both the rich chamber setting and the spoilt princess's character). During the New Year's concert, the orchestra performs a rather peculiar programme, featuring a polonaise tinged with… oriental elements (probably because one of the courtiers comes from the Far East). Though there is but one couple on the dance floor, it performs steps known from that Polish dance.

A considerable number of cartoons draw on various medieval themes and on works inspired by those motifs. An interesting portrayal of heroism and the ethos of pre-Christian Slavs can be found in *Детство Ратибора*[13] (*Ratibor's Childhood*, 1973), made in the USSR. The leitmotif of this movie is a vocalise-lullaby based on a modal scale sung by a mixed choir. The austere contemplative sound of this music (attained primarily through imitating the early tonal models) deliberately emphasises the temporal distance which separates the viewers from the presented events, while on the other hand bringing to mind associations with the Russian choral tradition and with sacred music.

The medieval legend of the Wawel Dragon and the shoemaker Skuba (Twine), which had inspired the 1947 production *Za króla Krakusa*, was taken up again by Polish animators in the 1960s. 1965 saw the publication of Stanisław Pagaczewski's novel *Porwanie Baltazara Gąbki* [Eng. title: *The Abduction of Balthazar Sponge*], which became the basis for the famous eponymous TV series[14]. This is a completely new version of the legend, in which the events and role division are radically

[12] *Двенадцать месяцев* (1956, dir. M. Botov, mus. M. Weinberg).
[13] *Детство Ратибора* (1973, dir. R. Davydov, mus. W. Krivcov).
[14] *Porwanie Baltazara Gąbki* (1969–1970, dir. W. Nehrebecki, A. Ledwig, E. Wątor et al., mus. T. Kocyba).

altered. Still, the film adaptation contains numerous historical elements, from the view of Cracow's Main Market Square to references to the city's university traditions and the presence of Italians at the Polish royal court. The clarinet reigns supreme in the soundtrack (a possible reference to the 1947 production[15]). The place of action is represented by the well-known opening music from the title sequence (in the rhythm of a krakowiak dance) and a quotation from St Mary's Trumpet Call (played regularly from the tower of the city's Saint Mary's Church). The humorous character of the music, devoid of any pomposity, makes it suitable for the young audience. There are virtually no archaising stylisations. This agrees with the aesthetic and convention of the entire production, which leaves room for a modern[16] perspective, in the form, for instance, of walkie-talkies and license plates.

In some of the more 'recent' animations (those made during the political thaw) the temporal setting may sometimes change even multiple times in the course of one movie. This is the case with the production *Як козаки у футбол грали*[17] (*How Cossacks Played Football*, Kiev 1973). The swashbuckling strongmen play their first match with German knights in a medieval monastery, the next one – with French courtiers, and the last – with English gentlemen. All these events are accompanied by a jazzy soundtrack with comical references to music of the long-gone eras, such as the piano repeating a low note in imitation of a burden (drone) or the use of percussion in the role of a harpsichord. There are even courtly dance steps, although the ethereal movements of minuet dancers can hardly stand the competition with the Cossacks' jumps and *holubetz* figures.
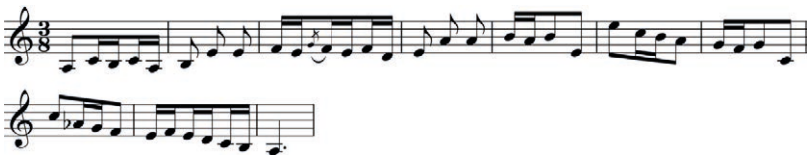
Among the Central-European film adaptations of fables and fairytales, there are also cartoons with the standard indefinite 'once-upon-a-time' settings, which cannot unequivocally be situated on the axis of

[15] This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by another similarity – a humorous detail: In Wasilewski's cartoon, the king ponders on the monster pestering his subjects while soaking his feet in a bowl. In the first episode of the now cult TV series, likewise humorous, it is the Dragon that sits with its feet in a basin, while the monarch himself is paying him a visit.

[16] The concepts of 'modernity' and 'the contemporary', as in the whole paper, should be interpreted as referring broadly to the present, but also to the entire 20th century.

[17] *Як козаки у футбол грали* (1970, dir. V. Dakhno, mus. B. Buyevsky).

historical time. This is the case with *Винни Пух*[18] (*Winnie-the-Pooh*), a Soviet cartoon version of A.A. Milne's eponymous book, with music by Mieczysław Weinberg. Already the music in the title sequence, a harpsichord piece[19] in the late Baroque style, specially composed for this purpose, introduces us into the 'archaic' atmosphere; there is motivic work, ornaments associated with the harpsichord idiom, and a texture resembling the fine constructions known from the French harpsichord masters.



Ex. 1. M. Weinberg, title sequence from *Винни Пух* (1969, dir. F. Khitruk) – fragment of the top harpsichord part.

All the examples I have listed so far come from films set in the past, in which the music serves to illustrate the times when the action is taking place, what Lissa calls 'represented time'.[20] Another type of musical representations of the past can be found films with contemporary settings in which the past is only briefly and locally recalled or imagined. Phenomena that accompany such references to the past can thus be labelled 'double representations', as the viewers project in their imagination the way in which the imaginary toon character possibly projected the given situation in his or her own mind.

From the period of the thaw, we have numerous animations which, though basically set in the contemporary realities, nevertheless refer to the past under such pretexts as, for instance, the workings of a child's imagination. In *Bycze przygody Gapiszona*[21] (*Gapiszon's Fantastic*

[18] *Винни Пух* (1969, dir. F. Khitruk, mus. M. Weinberg).

[19] The harpsichord is rather rarely heard in cartoons. Czech composers are an exception, as this instrument seems to have been their favourite in evoking the atmosphere of bygone times. It appears as one of the soundtrack components in, among others, the TV series *Pohádky z mechu a kapradí* (Eng. title: *The Tales of Moss and Fern*) and *O makové panence a motýlu Emanuelovi* (*Tales of the Poppy Doll and Emanuel the Butterfly*).

[20] Lissa, *Estetyka muzyki filmowej*, 169.

[21] *Bycze przygody Gapiszona* (1964, dir. J. Kotowski, mus. P. Hertel).

Adventure with the Bull, 1964, part of the Polish TV series *Przygody Gapiszona* / *Gapiszon's Adventures*, illustr. by Bohdan Butenko), the title hero parades around in a meadow wielding a sabre and a shield. We can easily guess that his mind has wandered into the Middle Ages since the clarinet imitates the sound of early court trumpets, playing a stylised melody. The toon boys Bolek and Lolek also play at medieval knights (in the episode *Dwaj rycerze*[22] / *Two Knights*), accompanied by a trumpet, which emulates a medieval instrument (fanfare motifs). The same TV series contains a reference to *Don Quixote* (in *Zabawa w rycerza* / *Playing at Knights*: Dulcinea is minding geese while the protagonists are battling windmills). The repeated musical section in which the clarinet and the trumpet engage in a dialogue brings to mind associations with early music.[23]

In *Коля, Оля и Архимед* (*Kolya, Olya, and Archimedes*)[24] of 1972, two Soviet pupils are transported into an even more distant era, namely, to Syracuse in the times of the Second Punic War. The ancient city's architecture is represented in detail,[25] including details of sculptures. In the soundtrack, the Greek plucked instrument bouzouki plays a major role. The filmmakers even introduced some musical jokes, as when the cruel Romans sing in twentieth-century popular music style and a young inhabitant of Syracuse holding a harp in his hands sings a piece after the fashion of Soviet children's songs, starting with a typical rock intro (a descending semitone progression performed on an electric guitar).

In some movies the time boundary is crossed thanks to museums, including open-air ethnographic centres, presented in a citizen-friendly urban space. Such places are visited by the most famous four-legged Polish toon character, the dog Reksio (Rex). The episode *Reksio przewodnik*[26] (*Rex the Guide*) depicts a kennel museum. Here, the atmosphere of bygone times is evoked by a contemplative flute theme,

[22] *Dwaj rycerze* (1964, dir. W. Nehrebecki, mus. W. Kazanecki).

[23] In a whole series of films featuring Bolek and Lolek, the eponymous characters are accompanied by figures from fairy-tales, which get involved in events taking place in the present, cf. *Bajki Bolka i Lolka* (*Bolek and Lolek's Fairy Tales*), 1970–1971.

[24] *Коля, Оля и Архимед* (1972, dir. J. Prytkov, mus. J. Ptichkin).

[25] The film makes fun of some historical conventions, as when on a catapult we see an inscription, stylised on the Greek alphabet, saying: 'Made in Syracuse'.

[26] *Reksio przewodnik* (1977, dir. L. Marszałek, mus. Z. Kowalowski).

characterised by broad phrases and an improvisational character. Some of the exhibits receive a separate musical commentary. For instance, a kennel with an ancient portico is depicted by the composer by means of a semitone progression played by a synthesiser, while the image of a palace-like doghouse is accompanied by an electronic minuet. In the same film, the protagonists also visit a zoological museum, which is illustrated by a neo-Baroque miniature familiarising the young audience with a type of sound typical of the age of figured bass. The atmosphere is quite different in the museum visited by the Wolf and the Hare in *Hy, nogodu!*[27] (Eng. title *Well, Just You Wait!* 1978, twelfth episode of this TV series), where the wolf puts on huge protective museum slippers and 'skates' along the slippery floors like a figure skater, to the rhythm of Ion Ivanovici's *Waves of the Danube*.

Incidentally, the *Hy, nogodu!* series itself has historical value today, since it documents the everyday life of a great Soviet city, its fashion, architecture, even the musical tastes of its inhabitants[28], thus reflecting the atmosphere of the late communist era.[29] In that tale of the modern times, the past is most prominently present in the tenth episode[30] (1976), where relics of wooden architecture are being demolished to make room for blocks of flats. The world that is just disappearing is represented by the sound of a recording of the *Vstrechi* tango sung in the 1930s by Klavdiya Shulzhenko, played from a gramophone standing in a window with decorative shutters. Nostalgic recollections of the pre-revolutionary past also seem to have been hinted at in other Soviet movies made in the so-called Era of Stagnation (Rus. *Период застоя*) that followed the takeover of power by Leonid Brezhnev (1964). This is a paradox, considering the renewed tightening of censorship in that period, which, however, concerned the contents of artistic works rather than their aesthetic. In effect, this made it possible for animators to act with more freedom than in the previous two decades.[31] This is evident in movies where a thoroughly modern setting is accompanied

[27] *Hy, nogodu!*, ep. 12 (1978, dir. V. Kotyonochkin).

[28] Cf. K. Babulewicz 'Nu, pogodi!, or the Musical Chronicle of the Late USSR', in *Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia. Konteksty kultury medialnej. Perspektywa Rosji i Ukrainy*, M. Brzezińska-Pająk, K. Dwornik, J. Getka et al., eds (2018), 167–178.

[29] Cf. O. Romanova, '"Ну, погоди!", или беготня на фоне "застоя"', http://www.polit.ru/article/2006/09/22/nupogodi, publ. 22 Oct. 2006, accessed 9 Aug. 2019.

[30] *Hy, nogodu!*, ep. 10 (1976, dir. V. Kotyonochkin).

[31] Pikkov, 'On the Topics…', 28–29.

by evocative music conjuring up the spirit of the past and of the Russian romances. These are, first and foremost, animations featuring Gena the Crocodile and the Three from Prostokvashino, as well as the series *Кот Леопольд* (*Leopold the Cat*). In the episode *Месть кота Леопольда*[32] (*Cat Leopold's Revenge*) the noble and quiet title character, an intellectual living in an old-fashioned flat, is musically represented by M.K. Ogiński's *Polonaise*, which had gained popularity in Russia already in the nineteenth century.

In the 1980s, the Soviet Union's final decade, the idea of evoking the past using a gramophone record (as in *Ну, погоди!*) was taken up again by the cartoon director Vyacheslav Kotyonochkin, who developed this concept and interpreted it in an unequivocal manner. In the film *Старая пластинка*,[33] he confronts two musical worlds, the old and the new, assessed by an objective jury of aliens from outer space, who take to their planet a set of records by Leonid Utyosov (1895-1982)[34] and listen with great pleasure to five compositions. Of special interest in the context of our subject (representations of the past) is one of them, entitled *Song of the Old Coachman*, accompanied by animated scenes in which an old man crosses contemporary Moscow driving an old-fashioned carriage. In the song, he addresses his old friend, the horse. His vivid recollections unfold a panorama of old Moscow, whose green and atmospheric streets they used to traverse together at full speed. The old man nostalgically recalls the bygone age, now replaced by the era of asphalt and the Metro. The old Russian style of this piece is additionally brought out by being contrasted with electronically generated sound effects in the previous scene (the aliens put on the record; the 1980s brought a widespread use of electronics in Central and Eastern European animated films).

Cartoons produced in the communist period frequently feature modern urban settings. This is also the case with films made in the last decade of that era, whose action takes place in various locations,

[32] *Месть кота Леопольда* (1975, dir. A. Reznikov, mus. B. Savelyev).

[33] *Старая пластинка* (1982, dir. V. Kotyonochkin).

[34] While in the case of *Ну, погоди!* we may talk of a kind of 'musical chronicle', *Старая пластинка* draws in a way on the tradition of musical tombeaux composed as a homage to eminent deceased figures, here recalled in the late twentieth century (the cartoon was made to mark the anniversary of the singer Leonid Utyosov's death).

including living interiors. *Reksio remontuje*[35] (*Rex the Dog Renovates the Flat*) of 1980 shows the kind of interior decoration (presented in a journal) that was considered as the most attractive at that time; an aristocratic apartment resembling those found in rich tenements. The music refers to that very sphere of past culture; a wistful melody unfolds in the violin, accompanied by a synthesiser, used here to imitate the sound of a harpsichord, just as the old-style interiors are in fact a product of the contemporary times. This stylistic fusion is by no means conceived as a condemnation of the old bourgeois achievements and tastes. In the Soviet movie *Каникулы в Простоквашино*[36] (*A Holiday in Prostokvashino*) from the same year we similarly find a 'salon', which, though not very luxurious, clearly draws on the pre-revolutionary rather than contemporary fashion. This is also illustrated by the music. The piano waltz associated with that latter interior could more likely have been performed in a flat of the prewar intelligentsia than in a working-class block of flats. Shop interiors are rather less common in cartoons. One of them, in the fourth episode of the series about Gena the Crocodile (*Чебурашка идет в школу*[37] / *Cheburashka Goes to School*, 1983) is the 'Young Pupil' shop, in which the shortage of supplies and shabbiness are easily noticeable, and the two ready-made school uniforms are kept in a glass case as in a museum. Can this be the reason why the visit to this gloomy place is accompanied by a piano fugue?

In some cases, though the time of action is not defined in any way or even suggested by the visual-narrative layer, it is revealed at one point thanks to the musical soundtrack. This is the case with *Przygoda z Franciszką*[38] (*An Adventure with Franciszka*, 1983), one of the episodes of the series *Trzy misie* (*Three Bears*) produced by the Semafor Studios in Łódź, in which a toon character (a frog) dances to the rhythm of an instrumental setting of the charleston *Dzisiaj, jutro, zawsze* from the repertoire of Bohdan Łazuka, claiming that this is 'all the rage now', which (since the film was made in 1983) points back to a period more than three decades earlier. Similarly as in the Soviet productions described above, the music thus points to the past.

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35 *Reksio remontuje* (1980, dir. L. Marszałek, mus. Z. Kowalowski).
36 *Каникулы в Простоквашино* (1980, dir. V. Popov, mus. E. Krylatov).
37 *Чебурашка идет в школу* (1983, dir. R. Kachanov, mus. W. Shainsky).
38 *Przygoda z Franciszką* (1983, dir. J. Kudrzycka, mus. P. Hertel).

Not all the 80s' productions follow the convention of confronting a nostalgically depicted past with a more or less definite reality. From the same decade, we have Soviet animations which directly concern major historical events. The 1980 film *Лебеди Непрядвы*[39] (Eng. title: *The Swans of Nepryádva*) marks the six hundredth anniversary of Rus' victory over the Golden Horde at Kulikovo (1380). The warriors are Christians, as evident from the banners they carry and, even more, from the visit they pay to St Sergius of Radonezh before the decisive battle. Views of the birchwood surrounding the hermitage are accompanied by a flute melody. The instrument's sound, combined with a modal scale, seems to imitate the early wind instruments. The church door is left ajar and for a moment we can hear the monks' chant.

In *Мартынко*[40] (Martynko, 1987), the time of action is precisely defined by the narrator at the start of the movie: 'It happened long ago, when the old letters were still used to write words, in the reign of tsar Nicholas II.' In this humorous tale of a soldier and magic cards, music is absent most of the time. When it appears, it consists of citations very carefully selected to suit the place and time of action, from the romance *Ugolok* (1905) and two romances once sung by Varvara Panina (1872–1911): *Ne tverdi* and *Kak khorosho*.[41] Quite different are the overtones of *Солдатская сказка*[42] (*Soldier's* Tale, 1983), the story of a soldier taking part in World War II, though accompanied by music in the spirit of the nineteenth century (sentimental accordion pieces drawing on the poetics of Russian romance), which is juxtaposed with the noise of battle, sounds of nature, and silence. The armed conflict is presented here from a romantic perspective. The scene in which, on his return from the war, the protagonist stands in a field with a young boy, brings to mind associations with the famous postwar movie *Судьба человека*[43] (Eng. title: *Fate of a Man*).

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39 *Лебеди Непрядвы* (1980, dir. R. Davydov, mus. V. Krivcov).

40 *Мартынко* (1987, dir. E. Nazarov, music composer unknown).

41 The expressive power of such a soundtrack concept lies, on the one hand, in the use of recordings which are perfectly 'authentic' in relation to the events, and on the other – in the presence of silence. Nazarov also applies this idea in another film, *Жил-был пёс* (Eng. title: *Once Upon a Dog*), a Ukrainian folk tale in which scenes of village life are accompanied by folk melodies sung by Ensemble Drevo.

42 *Солдатская сказка* (1983, dir. A. Gracheva, music composer unknown).

43 *Судьба человека* (1959, dir. S. Bondarchuk, mus. B. Basner).

While taking up historical subjects, the 1980s animators simultaneously continued to draw on legends, tales, fables, and fairy-tales. Towards the end of the decade, Moscow's Soyuzmultfilm studios produced cartoon adaptations of individual ancient Greek myths. The cartoon visuals, maintained in a serious and austere style, are accompanied by suitable music: lofty, emphasising gods' majesty and the heroes' courage, and corresponding to the protagonists' theatrical gestures. The sound of a large orchestra, in which brass plays a prominent role, brings to mind associations with musical drama, emphasising the importance and the monumental scale of the events, while the presence of historical instruments (or others, such as the guitar, which may suggest references to their Greek equivalents) is meant to evoke archaic associations due to their unusual sound. For instance, the composer of the soundtrack for the film *Лабиринт. Подвиги Тесея*[44] (*Labyrinth. The Deeds of Theseus*, 1986) demonstrates a predilection for combining brass instruments with a harpsichord.

The production that explores the fairy-tale world on possibly the greatest scale is the last episode of the famous *Ну, погоди!* still produced in the USSR (1986)[45], in which the concept of bringing together characters from different stories foreshadows the one-and-a-half decade later US film *Shrek* (2001). Appearances by figures from various fables and fairy-tales provide the opportunity to include numerous musical quotations, such as the then popular pieces by Igor Sklyar and Yuri Antonov, as well as folksongs, etc. Despite its electronic sound, resembling that of the early computer games, the soundtrack demonstrates elements of classical musical language which are responsible for the impression of archaization on the one hand and for enhancing the comic effect – on the other.

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As I have attempted to demonstrate on selected examples, cartoons produced in Poland and the Soviet Union before 1991 contain many scenes which call for music bringing associations with the past. Among the settings that justified such musical choices, the Middle Ages, legends

[44] *Лабиринт. Подвиги Тесея* (1986, dir. A. Snezhko-Blotska, mus. V. Geviksman).
[45] *Ну, погоди!*, ep. 16 (1986, dir. V. Kotyonochkin).

and tales about heroes, as well as classic fables (and references to these subjects in films with contemporary settings) enjoyed particular popularity. More 'historical' animations appear to have been produced in the USSR, but it is possible that the multiplicity of examples is due not to their authors' thematic preferences, but to the fact that overall a much greater number of cartoons were made in that country than in Poland. Soviet and Polish composers created successful, interesting and artistically valuable music stylisations, which at the same time were comprehensible and attractive for children. In the films for which those artists provided musical settings, non-diegetic music dominates in representations of the past. Attempts to present political topics in children's cartoons on historical themes are extremely rare. Even in Soviet movies of this kind, the past was not stigmatised; on the contrary, starting with the so-called Era of Stagnation it was even presented with nostalgia and sentiment. Preliminary research does not provide sufficient material to talk about specific qualities of music for children's cartoons containing references to the past. Nevertheless, it seems that historical subjects provided the artists with a kind of refuge and a way to escape from the obligation to represent the communist reality. This may have been the reason why composers of music for the films under study frequently engaged in various games and interplays with early music, evidently deriving much fun from such projects.

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Digitisation of Folklore Archives: A Crisis of Tradition or Its 'New Life' on the Internet? The Example of Adolf Dygacz's Collection

Abstract

The process of digitising archives, a universal trend in the last decade, also concerns music resources, thus offering new functionalities to their users. Its effects can facilitate researchers' work since digital material is readily available and easy to locate. The questions that remain open concern the status of oral history contained in those audio-visual documents, its value and durability, the current results and possible consequences of making these materials accessible on a mass scale, as well as the effectiveness of multidimensional grassroots initiatives, such as cooperation on building virtual collections of materials. What possibilities open up for the musical folklore archives that are currently being discovered? Can digitisation suddenly make them more valuable in the eyes of the society? In this paper, I attempt to diagnose the problem of musical archive digitisation on the

example of the ethnomusicological collection of Adolf Dygacz. I stress the importance of local history, which is a common subject in the humanities and has always been part of folklore studies but was not considered in the light of memory studies until very recently.

Keywords

music digitisation, ethnomusicology, musical folklore, Adolf Dygacz, memory studies

The process of digitising archives, a universal trend in the last decade, also concerns musical resources, thus offering new functionalities to their users. In the field of folklore studies, these advanced functions include searching for folksongs by their verbal text contents (the incipit or text fragment) and melodies (notated music), as in the case of the digital version of Oskar Kolberg's *Complete Works*.[1] They also include facilitated access to archive audio recordings of traditional music available in the so-called 'phonographic' repositories.[2] Such facilities make research more effective since the digitised material is readily available and easy to locate, which allows scholars to save time and improve their efficacy on a previously unattainable scale. However, as many scholars studying the mediatisation of culture have noted,[3] the currently 'fashionable' digitisation, involving 'a number of activities of diverse nature and varied scope',[4] 'much emphasised

[1] For the English-language version of this database, available on the website of the Oskar Kolberg Institute, see: http://www.oskarkolberg.pl/en-US/MusicDb, accessed 3 Apr. 2021.

[2] Notable in this context is the multi-stage project 'Polish traditional music – the phonographic heritage. The current state of affairs, storage and accessibility', implemented by the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences. More on work within this project in: J. Jackowski, H. Klekowicz, E. Grygier, eds, 'Documental recordings of Polish traditional music in the digital domain. Digitization and dedicated system of archiving, developing and making historical ethnophonographic resources available', *Digital Transformation Playbook*, https://crido.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Documental-recordings-of-Polish-traditional-music-.pdf, accessed 3 Apr. 2021.

[3] Cf. K. Kopecka-Piech, 'Mediatyzacja w ruchu, czyli kształtowanie się medialnej mobilności', *Kultura i Historia*, 24 (2013), http://www.kulturaihistoria.umcs.lublin.pl/archives/5065, accessed 15 June 2020.

[4] M. Turska, 'Cyfrowe archiwa tradycji lokalnej', *Biblioteka*, 16 (25), 2012.

in expert literature',[5] nevertheless still leaves many questions open. These questions concern the status of oral history contained in those audio-visual documents, its value and durability, the current results and the possible consequences of making these materials accessible on a mass scale, of bringing to live the little private tales and recordings, as well as the effectiveness of multidimensional grassroots initiatives in the form of participatory processes[6] such as cooperation on building virtual archives. The latter process is now encouraged by dynamic societies and institutions, such as libraries, museums, and galleries. The vast amount of material submitted to this process both as part of institutional projects and as a result of grassroots digitisation means that some of it is 'frequently not free of errors',[7] unbrowsable, and, as Michael Frisch put it, 'closer than most people realize to that shoebox of unviewed home-video camcorder cassettes',[8] which, 'rarely organized, much less indexed in any depth' becomes useless, and 'the considerable potential of audio and video documents to support high-impact, vivid, thematic, and analytic engagement with meaningful issues, personalities, and contexts, is largely untapped'.[9] To avoid such situations, the process of efficiently collecting and managing excess data resulting from the ease of digital data recording ought to be supported by a number of good practices, such as correct cataloguing,

5 Turska, 'Cyfrowe archiwa…', 307.

6 More on grassroots digitising initiatives in: A. Tarkowski, J. Hofmokl, M. Wilkowski, eds, 'Digitalizacja oddolna. Partycypacyjny wymiar procesu digitalizacji dziedzictwa', https://wilkowski.org/notka/94, accessed 8 Oct. 2020. The authors define 'grassroots digitisation as the involvement in the process of digitising the cultural heritage of persons and institutions from outside the group of bodies traditionally concerned with digitisation, such as libraries, archives, museums, as well as specialised commercial companies cooperating with the former. In the case of born-digital contents, grassroots digitisation entails ever wider democratisation of the process of co-creating culture,' which 'supplements the results of institutional projects through less formalised activities taking the form of a kind of social movement for the digitisation of culture.' This process can also be referred to as civic or participatory digitisation (a term derived from Henry Jenkins' concept of participatory culture).

7 Turska, 'Cyfrowe archiwa…', 308.

8 M. Frisch, 'Oral History and the Digital Revolution: Toward a Post-Documentary Sensibility', for publication in R. Perks and A. Thompson, eds., The Oral History Reader (2nd edn, London: Routledge, in press), https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.582.7124&rep=rep1&type=pdf, accessed 3 Apr. 2021.

9 Frisch, 'Oral History…', 1.

naming and 'tagging' principles applied to the digitised collections.[10] However, even these principles, apart from the technical aspect of streamlining research, come down to the question of virtual archives' effectiveness, functionality, and durability.

According to Paul Thompson, 'all history (in his text, this term also concerns the documentation of ancestral heritage through digitisation – note by AK) depends ultimately upon its social purpose,' which is in many cases 'obscure'. For this reason, collecting data may sometimes appear to be an unreflective 'pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.'[11] This statement may equally be applied to the process of digitisation, whose effects are frequently limited to placing the archive materials in (un)limited space without their further use or control over their social applications. This problem affects many areas of culture. In my paper I will limit myself to the issue of traditional music resources, whose digitisation has for many years been accompanied by methodological doubts and concerns about the future of the thus modernised archives. In the case of well-known collections, such as Kolberg's oeuvre,[12] this concern is of secondary importance, since (thanks, among others, to active promotion by the staff of Poznań's Oskar Kolberg Institute and the Museum of Oskar Kolberg in Przysucha) that scholar's role and achievements in the fields of ethnography and folklore studies are universally known and appreciated today. The case is rather different, however, with collections compiled by less-known folklorists, whose field recordings, though frequently mapping out major uncharted territories on the ethnomusicological map of cultural traditions, are

[10] Frisch, 'Oral History…'.

[11] P. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (1988), 21. It is thanks to its social purpose, Thompson claims, that 'in the past [history] has been handed down by oral tradition and written chronicle, and why today professional historians are supported from public funds, children are taught history in schools, amateur history societies blossom, and popular history books rank among the strongest bestsellers.' However, '[t]here are academics who pursue fact-finding research on remote problems, avoiding any entanglement with wider interpretations or contemporary issues, insisting only on the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.' Thompson, *The Voice of the Past…*, 21.

[12] An interesting analysis of Oskar Kolberg's presence in, among others, social space, media, and diploma theses, has been presented by: Łukasz Smoluch, 'Oskar Kolberg (1814–1890). Dostępność dzieła, świadomość społeczna, obecność w przestrzeni publicznej i mediach', in W. Grozdew-Kołacińska, ed., *Raport o stanie tradycyjnej kultury muzycznej* (2014), 12–39.

still waiting for their promoters. In their case, those involved are full of concerns about the future of small niche projects, including digitisation plans.

These concerns are related not only to the 'crisis of tradition and identity' diagnosed by ethnomusicologists, music life organisers, and representatives of social sciences, but also to the following, methodologically significant question: 'Is traditional music losing its inherent value, transformed under the powerful impact of breath-taking technological progress?'[13]

What are the future chances of the currently discovered folk music archives which, despite their historical value, may prove quite irrelevant in confrontation with tendencies in the contemporary society, which include diminishing participation in local music life? Can digitisation suddenly make them socially more important and valuable? And, finally, is there a risk that such a new and modern form (a hot digital medium, as described by Herbert Marshall McLuhan's already classic equation 'the medium is the message') may transform musical resources to such an extent that they will completely lose their former power of involving the audience in the process of cultural communication?

The Adolf Dygacz Archive

The collection of Polish ethnomusicologist Adolf Dygacz (1914–2004), who conducted intensive field research from the 1940s onwards,[14] is an example of a music archive thematically comparable to the above-mentioned work of Oskar Kolberg. Dygacz's expeditions were at first part of the institutional Musical Folklore Collection Campaign; later he undertook them privately. They took him to nearly all the ethnographic regions of Poland, with particular focus on Upper Silesia and the

[13] M. Wosińska, 'Formowanie tożsamości społecznej a muzyka tradycyjna w Polsce XX i XXI wieku', in W. Grozdew-Kołacińska, ed., *Raport o stanie tradycyjnej kultury muzycznej* (2014), 206.

[14] Danuta Kaszuba describes Dygacz's earliest research undertaken in 1929; cf. D. Kaszuba, *Krytyka artystyczna Adolfa Dygacza* (2004), 17. The greatest part of his collection, however, comes from the period between the 1940s and the 1970s, as evident, among others, from field recording protocols and the informants' announcements contained in the audio recordings.

Dąbrowa Basin, in which the greatest proportion of his collection originates. His resources are currently being transformed into the Silesian Library's digital stock as part of the multi-stage project 'Digitisation of Professor Adolf Dygacz's Collection' implemented by the Upper Silesian Ethnographic Park in Chorzów. The aim of the project's first stage (initiated in 2018 and co-financed from the Silesian Province Regional Operational Programme / European Regional Development Fund for 2014–2020) and its second phase (implemented as part of the programme 'Digital Culture 2019: Digitisation of Professor Adolf Dygacz's Collection – Stage Two) has been to organise the archive documents (manuscripts containing sheet music, partly unpublished typewritten texts of folksongs, and audio recordings on reel-to-reel tapes). The music material is being reconstructed (using modern notation) and placed on two open access online platforms: the Silesian Digital Library[15] and the RegMus museum information system.[16]

Differently than in Kolberg's case, however, Dygacz's writings published to date have only enjoyed modest popularity in musical and academic circles[17] and not enough has been done properly to publicise his output. As a result, he remains unknown and has not received due appreciation as a folklorist, either on the local or the nationwide scale.

Born in 1914 in the village of Droniowice (between Lubliniec and Koszęcin, Upper Silesia), Adolf Dygacz attended primary state school, and later the Oblate Fathers' secondary school in Lubliniec, where he received both general and music education. Following his end-of-school exams at Katowice's Adam Mickiewicz Secondary Humanities School, he completed active military service at the Grodno Reserve Officers' Training Corps. Until the outbreak of World War II he studied law at Warsaw University, simultaneously continuing his music

[15] https://www.sbc.org.pl/dlibra/collectiondescription/458, accessed 9 June 2020.

[16] http://simuz.pl/sim/a_multimedia/index.php, accessed 9 June 2020.

[17] Cf. W. Nagengast, ed., *Adolf Dygacz 1914–2004. Życie i działalność* (2007). This volume, comprising the memories of persons who collaborated with Dygacz, was published in connection with the research session entitled 'Professor Adolf Dygacz, PhD, Habil. – Life and Work', held in 2007 by the Silesian Museum and the Society of Friends of Science in Katowice. The second publication, Danuta Kaszuba's monograph *Krytyka artystyczna Adolfa Dygacza*, is an attempt to describe Dygacz's activity, including his work on the traditions of Upper Silesia, which was his main research area, as well as the achievements of his MA and PhD students.

training. He took part in the Polish September Campaign of 1939 as a reserve officer. Having escaped from German captivity, he joined the Polish resistance movement in Upper Silesia. Arrested by the Gestapo in January 1941, he stayed in Nazi prisons (in Opole, Bytom, Katowice, and Racibórz) until the end of the war. In 1945–1948 he completed his interrupted law and business studies at the Higher School of Social and Economic Sciences (now the University of Economics) in Katowice, as well as music pedagogy and music theory studies at the same city's State Higher School of Music (now the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music) and musicology at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow. Most of his academic and research work, beginning with his master's thesis entitled *Charakterystyka pieśni ludowych na Śląsku Opolskim* [*Folksong Characteristics in the Opole Silesia*], was dedicated to analyses of folksongs from Upper Silesia and the Dąbrowa Basin, with a focus on the culture of Polish social-professional groups (miners' and steelworkers' songs), which are most characteristic of these regions owing to their industrial development.

Apart from intensive field research, Dygacz taught at Katowice's State Higher School of Music, the University of Wrocław, and the University of Silesia's Cieszyn branch, where he was head of the Music Theory and Music Folklore Department and the deputy director of the Institute for Music Education.[18] He was also active as a music journalist and critic. His impressive list of publications includes texts on folk music culture written from 1947 onwards for such newspapers and magazines as 'Trybuna Robotnicza', 'Dziennik Zachodni', 'Życie Bytomskie', 'Trybuna Opolska', 'Śląsk Literacki', the Polish minority's magazine 'Zwrot' in Český Těšín, and others.[19] He collaborated with Polish Radio's broadcasting station in Katowice, for which he prepared and presented broadcasts, as well as the Katowice branch of Polish Television. The latter collaboration bore fruit in the form of a series of TV broadcasts entitled 'Z teki folklorystycznej Adolfa Dygacza' ['From Adolf Dygacz's Folkloric Portfolio'], for which he independently wrote scripts and introductions, as well as appearing in

[18] K. Turek, 'Adolf Dygacz – zarys życia i działalności', in: W. Nagengast, ed., *Adolf Dygacz 1914–2004. Życie i działalność* (2007), 7–11.

[19] J. Dygacz, 'Bibliografia prac Adolfa Dygacza (w układzie chronologicznym)', in W. Nagengast, ed., *Adolf Dygacz 1914–2004. Życie i działalność* (2007), 58–59.

some of them as their presenter.[20] He also distinguished himself with his work for cultural institutions and organisations, among others as Poland's representative at the International Centre for the Study of Workers' Songs in Budapest, a member of the Ethnological Sciences Committee at the Polish Academy of Sciences, the International Federation of Music Folklorists, and a music consultant to 'Śląsk' Song and Dance Ensemble.[21]

Dygacz's collection comprises songs (recordings, manuscripts, and typescripts) from nearly all the ethnographic regions of Poland. In the light of conducted research and digitising work, the music of Upper Silesia and the Dąbrowa Basin forms by far the largest group among these sources. This category can be internally subdivided into three regions: the Opole Silesia and the area of Częstochowa in the north; the industrial district around Katowice, Bytom, and Tarnowskie Góry in the centre, with the Dąbrowa Basin as a culturally separate subregion studied at length by this ethnomusicologist,[22] and the Cieszyn Silesia with the Silesian Beskids mountain range in the south. In terms of subject matter, the folklore of individual social-professional groups (miners and steelworkers) occupies an important place in his collection; in this topic, Dygacz found his academic niche and new research direction, which has no continuators at present.[23] The immense potential that he recognised in songs associated with the mining profession is reflected in his monograph *Ludowe pieśni górnicze w Zagłębiu Dąbrowskim*[24] [*Miners' Folksongs from the Dąbrowa Basin*] and his postdoctoral thesis (1975), as well as in numerous other publications, such as *Śpiewnik pieśni górniczych* [*Miners' Songbook*] (1956), *Pieśni górnicze. Studium i materiały* [*Miners' Songs: Studies and Materials*] (1960), 'Polska pieśń górniczo-hutnicza' ['Polish Miners' and Steelworkers' Songs'] (*Literatura Ludowa*, 1964), 'Z badań nad folklorem muzycznym górników naftowych' ['From the Studies on Oil Rig

[20] Kaszuba, *Krytyka artystyczna…*, 17.
[21] Kaszuba, *Krytyka artystyczna…*, 18–19.
[22] Comprising the administrative units (Pol. *powiaty*) of Zawiercie, Myszków, Będzin, Olkusz (partly), as well as two municipalities with county rights: Sosnowiec and Dąbrowa Górnicza.
[23] Kaszuba, *Krytyka artystyczna…*, 61.
[24] A. Dygacz, *Ludowe pieśni górnicze w Zagłębiu Dąbrowskim. Studium folklorystyczne* (1975).

Workers' Musical Folklore' (*Literatura Ludowa*, 1972).[25] Despite numerous thematic links to miners' folklore, which has been explained by the interrelations between mining and steel production and the fact of both groups living in the same local communities, steelworkers' folk tradition was approached by Dygacz as an autonomous phenomenon, the precious heritage of that professional group, which brought a new perspective into many fields of literature and music. 'The cult of work typical of steelworkers' songs,' the ethnomusicologist claimed, 'casts a new light on that splendid monument of Polish literature and of old Polish steelworkers' culture, the early seventeenth-century poem *Officina ferraria*[26] by Walenty Roździeński.'[27] As Dygacz emphasised, thanks to the study of steelworkers' songs that poem's links to folklore had been found to include elements of folk poetics, vocabulary, phraseology, and artistic typisation.[28] During his field research the musicologist visited several dozen glassworks throughout the country, which brought to his attention another previously largely unresearched topic – that of glass instrument construction (*Ludowe instrumenty szklane polskich hutników szkła*[29] [*Polish Glassworkers' Folk Glass Instruments*], 1979). Dygacz developed his own classification of occupational songs, which he divided into: ritual- and custom-related; historical, social, and revolutionary; pieces dedicated to the profession and accompanying work; songs related to family and social life; songs of courtship

[25] J. Dygacz, 'Bibliografia prac…', 58–59.

[26] Some of the oldest evidence of the development of industry in Upper Silesia and of the separate cultural identity of the then territory of the Polish Crown can be found in Walenty Roździeński's seventeenth-century poem *Officina Ferraria*. The author emphasises the natural resources, types of occupations, activities, and religious beliefs as elements shared by the Polish Kingdom and Silesia. Nevertheless, he also notes the separate character of these regions. Though born in and associated with Silesia, Roździeński spent more than forty years in the territory of the Crown. He stresses the fact of belonging to both countries: Silesia and the Crown, but he does not sign his poem 'Silesius', which may suggest that the cultural differences between Silesia and the Dąbrowa Basin were recognised already in that period, creating an identity dilemma for the region's population. Cf. R. Ocieczek, 'Officina ferraria (1612)', in M. Jarczykowa, ed., *Renarda Ocieczek: odnowienie doktoratu* (2014), 29–38.

[27] Source: Library research in the collection of the Upper Silesian Ethnographic Park in Chorzów (May 2020). *Pieśni ludowe hutników polskich* [*Polish Steelworkers' Folksongs*], 95/5.

[28] *Pieśni ludowe hutników polskich*, 95/5.

[29] J. Dygacz, 'Bibliografia prac…', 58–59.

and love; comic and satirical songs, those about music-making and dance, as well as occupational dances. He improved the terminology, paying special attention to the text's character, metrical and rhythmic qualities, and tonal features, including musical scales.[30] Dygacz described such now rare and unique rituals as 'a miners' and steelworkers' nativity play' and 'a steelworkers' wedding', as well as children's music-and-movement games related to these two professions, such as *Ele mele dutki, górniczek malutki* [*Pear pie primer, yon little miner*] and the game of a carter delivering coal as fuel on his horse-drawn cart *Idzie zima, węgla nie ma, furman jedzie, węgiel wiezie* [*Winter's coming, we've run out of coal, here comes the carter with more coal*].[31] The musicologist took great care, first and foremost, to record and transcribe the music. A separate group that he described consists of songs dedicated to Saint Barbara, patron of miners, and Saint Florian, steelworkers' patron.

The folklorist's collection proves of special significance also in the context of the vanishing and scantily researched traditions of the Dąbrowa Basin, which in folklore research has usually not been distinguished as an autonomous region, ethnographically different from the neighbouring areas. For this reason, it has been the subject of only a few academic studies and songbooks.[32] Dygacz's contribution to our knowledge of the musical culture of that region consists of nearly three thousand songs, among which, apart from the occupational categories described above, a sizeable group is made up of multi-thematic common songs, including some on historical subjects as well as 'frivolous' ones. In the Dąbrowa Basin, songs have their distinct melodic and textual variants, which testifies to the separate local identity of the region's inhabitants.

Another, equally interesting folklore study, considered by scholars as Dygacz's pioneering discovery and achievement,[33] is his 1966 publication *Rzeka Odra w polskiej pieśni ludowej*[34] [*The Oder River in Polish Folksongs*], which is a preliminary survey of the state of research into

[30] A. Dygacz, *Ludowe pieśni górnicze…*, 42.

[31] Source: Library research in the collection of the Upper Silesian Ethnographic Park in Chorzów (May 2020).

[32] The Dąbrowa Basin has usually been discussed jointly with Lesser Poland, the Kielce Region, or with Upper Silesia.

[33] Kaszuba, *Krytyka artystyczna…*, 79.

[34] A. Dygacz, *Rzeka Odra w polskiej pieśni ludowej. Studium folklorystyczne* (1966).

the previously unidentified 'Oder folklore', complete with extensive source material.

Closely as these works are related to the cultural policies of communist Poland, which gave priority to the songs 'of the working people in cities and villages' (evidence of this can be found, among others, in the activities of the International Centre for the Study of Workers' Songs, 1965–1968, with headquarters in Budapest, in which Dygacz represented Poland), there is no doubt that the scholar's ethnomusicological studies and analyses fill major gaps on the map of previously uncharted territories of traditional music. They are, on a nationwide scale, an essential source of knowledge about musical folklore in southern Poland, providing us not only with a wealth of texts, but also with solid music transcriptions and with comparative analyses.[35] Thanks to audio recordings, both the texts and melodies of songs collected during field research could be transcribed precisely, with details of tempo, accentuation, and such specific qualities of performance as register or elements important in musical folklore: the vocal and interpretative manner of the informants, who had been born at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Precise documentation (including the informant's name and surname, age, place of residence, and date of recording) does Dygacz much credit as a researcher, and makes it possible to perform, for instance, contemporary analyses of the current state of musical folklore memory in individual regions of Poland.

[35] In his work *Ludowe pieśni górnicze w Zagłębiu Dąbrowskim* [*Miners' Folksongs from the Dąbrowa Basin*], Dygacz compares the musical folklore of Polish 'workers' community' to that collected by Bartók: 'From what I have managed to establish so far, the migration range of this melody [i.e. the song *Górnicy, górnicy* / *Miners, Miners* – A.K.] is considerable. It was recorded by Béla Bartók in Slovakia early in the twentieth century, as the setting of a text about love. However, in the Slovak version there is no trace of syncopation, just as the song's Silesian varieties have lost their krakowiak characteristics. This shows how in the process of local integration folksongs may lose the characteristics of one folkloric tradition or acquire new ones, and undergo more complex transformations as well. In any case, the phenomenon of poetic and melodic motifs migrating between cultures has thus proved to be present in miners' folklore as well.' He also related the workers' culture he studied to the Moravian folklore known from František Bartoš's collections of Moravian national songs and from the work of František Sušil: 'I have written it down [i.e. the lullaby *Lulajże mi, lulaj* / *Lullaby, My Darling* – note by A.K.] in many variants in Silesia, the regions of Kielce, Rzeszów and Kraków; but I have also discovered it in Moravian sources'. Cf. A. Dygacz, *Ludowe pieśni górnicze…*, 42; 58–59; 26.

The 'New Life' of Music Collections vs 'Use-Neutral Digitisation'

In the context of digitising archives such as the one which is the subject of my paper, one may easily and almost automatically define their main target users as well as the expected effects of further use. The likely users of folk music repositories are teachers and students of regional culture; both will access them for educational purposes. Judging by the results of reports on the presence of traditional music in the core curricula of general and artistic schools,[36] Their use of this resource will only be sporadic. Another category I should add are leaders of folk ensembles looking for new repertoire (assuming that they will not first yield to the pressures of folklorism[37] and will not consider it pointless to return to bygone traditions which are not necessarily in vogue anymore). It is nevertheless likely that the crisis of identity and tradition observed in social sciences and the humanities, as well as in reports on the state of traditional music, will rebound on digital archives. Even now, a digitised collection may be viewed from at least two perspectives: as a 'store' into which 'someone has uploaded' contents (the so-called 'use-neutral' or 'uncommitted' digitalisation', which prioritises the technological dimension of the project) or in the context of breathing a 'new life' into that music by bringing in the individual stories of the music's co-authors, that is, the local communities, including folk musicians, artists and performers.

One of the currents in the humanities, known as 'restitutive', 'regenerative', 'supportive', or 'affirmative',[38] aims at a restitution of

[36] Cf. D. Grzybek, 'Muzyka tradycyjna w szkolnictwie powszechnym i artystycznym', in W. Grozdew-Kołacińska, ed., *Raport o stanie tradycyjnej kultury muzycznej* (2014), 249–256.

[37] What is meant here by folklorism is *not* 'the artistic activity of those ensembles which put special emphasis on bringing out archaic elements in folk music, those which call for profound understanding and long practice (for instance, of using untempered intonation in singing or the fingernail technique when playing knee fiddles), or of those ensembles tending toward contemporary (classical) and improvised music which can hardly be accused of simplifying musical forms or pandering to mass taste' (cf. W. Grozdew-Kołacińska, 'Muzyka folkowa – "tradycja na skróty" czy "współczesna muzyka ludowa"?', in W. Grozdew-Kołacińska, ed., *Raport o stanie tradycyjnej kultury muzycznej* (2014), 51. The term 'folklorism' has been used in my paper in the opposite sense.

[38] E. Domańska, 'Historia ratownicza', *Teksty drugie*, 5 (2014), 13.

traditions – a process which is dynamic, open, community-based, and depends on individuals' proactive role and causal power. This trend concerns the past-becoming-future-as-researched-in-the-present. It entails a multidisciplinary approach that reinforces the causal power of both individuals and groups with respect to shaping reality. Its aim is 'to seek out, recover, preserve, and make available the non-existent, neglected, frequently forgotten pasts, deleted from the annals of Great History, as well as to document the various traces of those pasts', with special emphasis on reconstructing and cultivating local history and on 'the role which participatory forms of building knowledge about history play in this process […]'.[39] Humanities experts who opt for a turn towards the local are convinced that shared responsibility for creating history can build a sense of meaningfulness and purpose; it can encourage and involve people in the cultivation of what is gradually disappearing, but also make them use and share what still exists. According to Anna Nacher, the thus conceived 'regeneration' reiterates the vision of digitisation as a mechanism for building 'a community of practice', whose essential purpose was defined, among others, by John Dewey's model of pragmatism. His model is based on the principle of informally sharing resources, knowledge, techniques, and skills. In this model, knowledge inspires action, provides a foundation for, and bestows meaning on, human activity, as well as helping to recruit new participants. Practice is defined here as a way in which the group focuses its energies and activities on one jointly defined purpose, that of transmitting knowledge and skills.[40] This, as Nacher emphasises, creates a chance 'to guarantee to digital archives a certain degree of durability, since in the age of "archive fever" they are under the constant threat of becoming mere "archival silos" for data, that is, vast virtual networks filed with objects whose virtual life is fading away since they have failed to enter the social space in any manner'.[41]

As Dobrosława Wężowicz-Ziółkowska observes in her paper 'Folklorystyka a historia ratownicza: czy się spotkamy?' ['Folklore Studies and Lifesaving History: Can We Meet?'], delivered during the

[39] Domańska, 'Historia ratownicza', 13.

[40] A. Nacher, 'Cyfrowe archiwa/bazy danych. Wspólnota praktyki w działaniu', *Kultura współczesna*, 2 (2019), 43.

[41] A. Nacher, 'Cyfrowe archiwa…', 43.

conference entitled 'Folklor w społecznościach tradycyjnych i nowoczesnych' ['Folklore in Traditional and Modern Communities'], folklore studies, like other humanities research, have in fact always stressed the importance of local, potential, existential, and affirmative culture. A still, that culture has not been considered so far in the light of memory studies, which open up new horizons for thinking about the past, as well as new original methodological perspectives.[42] What is more, the turn towards local knowledge and art, fundamental to postcolonial studies and post-humanities (which '[r]ather than reiterating the established forms and methods of disciplinary knowledge […] examine the ways in which changes in the society and culture force researchers to rethink the theoretical, methodological, and ethical foundations of their work'[43]), provides a chance for an attempt to lead folklore studies out of the deadlock. Folklore studies have been perceived so far as a petrified discipline of the humanities, largely irrelevant and quite unadjusted to the contemporary state of culture; as, in fact, a relic of the nineteenth-century humanities. In this context, 'lifesaving history'[44] (also referred to by Domańska as 'digital lifesaving history'), which allows for the involvement of local inhabitants, enthusiasts, and rightful owners (that is, folklore' co-authors, including musicians) in the process, seems to provide a remedy for the crisis of tradition, since it makes us aware that tradition is still needed. Astrid Erll seems to express a similar view in her work *Memory in Culture*. She opens the chapter on 'Media and Memory' as follows: 'Cultural memory is unthinkable without media. It would be inconceivable without the role that media play on both levels — the individual and the collective.'[45] This, however, does not change the fact that, though media technologies make it possible to disseminate cultural memory content in space and store it in time[46], they 'are far from being neutral containers for memory semioses. Their specific materiality, their potential and limits

[42] Dobrosława Wężowicz-Ziółkowska, 'Folklorystyka a historia ratownicza: czy się spotkamy?', an unpublished paper delivered during the International Research Conference 'Folklor w społecznościach tradycyjnych i nowoczesnych', held on 26 Sept. 2019 in the Upper Silesian Ethnographic Park in Chorzów.

[43] E. Domańska, 'Historia w kontekście posthumanistyki', *Historyka. Studia Metodologiczne*, 45 (2015), 6.

[44] Domańska, 'Historia w kontekście…', 17.

[45] A. Erll, *Memory in Culture* (2011), 113.

[46] Erll, *Memory in Culture*, 121.

contribute to the character of the message.'[47] The media do not offer a direct reflection of memory, but only a construction of the past. At this point, therefore, I will return to the fundamental issue of the medium itself, which should by no means be neglected in the study of the cultural memory digitisation process.

Despite the chances and hopes that 'digital lifesaving history' and the pragmatic 'community of practice' present for the future of digital archives, one needs to be aware of the downsides of uploading data into the World Wide Web. These include an impoverished message and the ephemeral character of that message, as commented upon by Aleida Assmann. The latter author distinguishes three transformations which digitisation has generated in 'storage memory'[48]: a) the shift from material to electronic carriers of information; b) expansion of storage space accompanied by a radical reduction of long-term stability; c) fast circulation and wide (immediate and precisely directed) access to information. By juxtaposing the internet with other human memory carriers from the past, such as papyri, stone, and parchment, Assmann highlights the progressive 'dematerialisation' process whereby solid carriers are replaced by fluid, virtual, ephemeral ones, existing only here-and-now, from which deleted data disappear without a trace. In this age of fast technological transformations, she thus views the internet as an unstable tool tuned exclusively to the here-and-now dimension, which, though it does store information, nevertheless contains no solid and tangible store, despite ever more convenient forms of storage and the growing amount of memory space available. The new digital media, Assmann claims, have not invalidated the concept of culture as memory; on the contrary, they have brought out its importance. By

47 Erll, *Memory in Culture*, 122.

48 Assmann distinguishes functional memory (*Funktionsgedächtnis*) from storage memory (*Speichergedächtnis*). 'By functional memory one should understand here cultural knowledge which binds the members of a given group. It must be instilled and embodied, learned and internalised, so that all the participants of a given culture can identify with it and feel that they belong to it. By storage memory, on the other hand, one should understand objectified cultural knowledge which is recorded in sign systems and transferred to material carriers.' The author emphasises that 'despite and in the face such technical transformations, culture conceived as transgenerational communication nevertheless still depends on both these types: functional and storage memory.' Cf. A. Assmann, 'Speichergedächtnis und Funktionsgedächtnis in P. Rusterholz, R. Moser, eds, *Wir sind Erinnerung* (Haupt: Bern, 2003), 183–184.

separating objects from their material form, the internet now comprises everything that can be converted into information (including texts, images, and sounds). At the same time, however, it contains nothing else, since remembering is not the internet's proper quality. The essence of memory still lies in its truth and authenticity.[49] In the context of musical folklore, the latter qualities are inextricably linked with the act of performance: with music, singing, and dance (and thus with the community!) The meaning of that act is now being lost in the 'fluidity' of the medium and is becoming susceptible to such destructive phenomena of cultural diffusion as borrowing, copying, imitating, and 'remaking' elements of culture.[50]

It would be hard not to agree with Erll that 'media products must always be understood as no more than an "offer" to a mnemonic community. This offer can be accepted, but the media product can also be ignored or used in other than memorial ways.'[51] An archive is in each case a kind of offer whose further uses depend on their social usefulness and on the community's involvement. It might thus seem that we have come a full circle and returned again to the sense of crisis and the lack of chances to restore traditions. The success of digitisation depends, in a way, on the local community's sense of identity, which is now dissolving and fading away under the influence of numerous globalising and technological transformations. Music, however, still remains at the very core of the deepest experience of culture. It is a core type of cultural event,[52] comprising a variety of social meanings and operating on all the levels of the human society, both on the individual and global scale. It plays a key role in human life.[53] It constitutes the cultural capital of local communities, equipping social groups with resources which they can use to construct and negotiate their own identity. Music is a resource for controlling social space, but also for marginalising some groups.[54] This is why in ethnomusicological re-

[49] Assmann, 'Speichergedächtnis und Funktionsgedächtnis…', 191–192.

[50] C. Obracht-Prondzyński, P. Zbieranek, 'Dziedzictwo kulturowe jako narzędzie rozwoju regionalnego i lokalnego. Przypadek Pomorza', in *Kultura na peryferiach* (2018), 158.

[51] Erll, *Memory in Culture*, 123.

[52] Cf. T. Turino, *Music as social life. The politics of participation* (2008).

[53] S. Hallam, 'Where now?', in *Oxford handbook of music psychology* (2009), 561–564.

[54] R. Lidskog, 'The role of music in ethnic identity formation in diaspora: a research review', *International Social Science Journal*, 66, 24. https://doi.org/10.1111/

search the topic of relations between music and identity is gaining more and more importance. Old sources are being restored to favour and new ones are indicated, which makes it possible to form insightful multi-subject biographies of the little local communities. Without the latter, Wężowicz-Ziółkowska observes (in the paper quoted above), our world would not exist, however uniformised and globalised it may appear to have become.

We may suspect, naturally, that the digitisation of Adolf Dygacz's folk archive, whose historical importance and value I hope to have demonstrated here, is likely to produce yet another 'silo of data'. That digitisation project, however, is also an institutional 'offer' addressed to the local community (in this case, to the inhabitants of Upper Silesia and the Dąbrowa Basin), for which it can become 'memory fodder' capable of reinforcing and initiating processes that will involve both individuals and groups. This is a two-way process, both grassroots (bottom-up) and institutional (top-down). It still represents an unblazed trail full of mounting (financial, promotion-related, and educational) obstacles on both sides. Though this process may not head off the crisis of tradition, it will nevertheless demonstrate how much still depends on ourselves, on our passive or proactive participation.

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Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's Chamber Music Works in the Context of the Transformations of the Composer's Style: Selected Examples

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse stylistic changes in Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's output on the example of four selected chamber music works: Quartettino, Op. 5, Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet, Op. 11, Little Music 4, Op. 28 and Aria ('operatic scene'), Op. 59. By applying the methods of structural and auditory analysis as well as style criticism, I discuss the diversity of composition techniques found in these compositions. Additionally, my methodology has allowed me to represent the idiomatic, idiosyncratic features of Górecki's style and study the ways in which Górecki approached chamber music.

Keywords

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, twentieth-century music, chamber music, Polish music, composition techniques, Aria ('operatic scene'), Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet, Quartettino, Little Music 4

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's presence among 20th-century Polish composers is distinguished by a highly individual approach to music, manifesting itself in remaining faithful to selected composition techniques and in his uncompromising attitude to composing commissions, from among which he only accepted some carefully selected ones, in accordance with his internal personal motives.[1] Górecki's compositions are distinguished by their strongly expressive character and the diversity of structures and techniques, which has made them recognisable and won them the appreciation of both audiences and scholars. Górecki's oeuvre reflects his personality, full of internal contrasts, which are also present in his interviews and the opinions of those who knew him in person. In his music expression and emotions (contained in the texts which inspired him and in strategies for handling music material) come to the fore. On the other hand, his works are characterised by structural clarity, which is reflected in their makeup. The confrontation of these two qualities, contrary by nature, is what makes Górecki's oeuvre unique and stylistically idiosyncratic. From both the audience and performers, these compositions require commitment and concentration, without which their aesthetic value cannot be fully experienced. Despite Górecki's status as one of the 20th century's major composers, not all of his works have been studied in detail. In this paper, I have focused on a selection of less known pieces, which, nevertheless, played a significant role in his output.

The analyses I have conducted confirm the thesis that Górecki's style constantly developed and evolved, while at the same time the idiomatic qualities of his technique were retained. The four compositions

[1] '[…] I have been raised in the conviction that art is not a business […]'. A. Malatyńska-Stankiewicz, 'Nie będę pisał na metry i łokcie. Wywiad z 2003 r. z niedawno zmarłym Henrykiem Mikołajem Góreckim' [A 2003 interview with the recently deceased H.M. Górecki], http://www.strony.ca/Strony24/articles/a2402.html, accessed 20 Oct. 2020.

I have selected for the purposes of this study are: *Quartettino* Op. 5, *Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet* Op. 11, *Muzyczka IV* [*Little Music 4*] Op. 28, and *Aria* ('operatic scene') Op. 59. What most of them have in common is the use of small performing forces typical of chamber music, and, more specifically, of four instruments. The *Concerto* is an exception here in that the string quartet accompanies solo instruments. Nevertheless, in its character this work also belongs to chamber music. The works listed above have only been researched to a vestigial extent, in comparison with other, more famous pieces by the same artist. I have therefore decided to analyse these particular works, which clearly illustrate the changes that occurred in Górecki's sound language.

Quartettino Op. 5

Quartettino, written during the composer's studies in 1956, demonstrates direct influences from Béla Bartók and Karol Szymanowski, and was inspired by the neoclassical style, propagated at Górecki's *alma mater* at that time by Bolesław Szabelski. The piece exemplifies a creative use of that style, which had been well established and much exploited in music ever since the period between the two World Wars. The use of the Italian term *quartettino*, diminutive for a quartet, points to a genre of chamber music, but also indicates the lightness and cheerful character of the composition.

The work's structure is that of the classical chamber music cycle consisting of three movements (the sequence of fast – slow – fast sections). Rather than making use of any ready-made forms, each movement consists of segments internally diversified with respect to texture. This segmental form is also determined by the thematic and motivic material, whose transformations in the course of the work's narrative make it possible to distinguish melodic-rhythmic structures underlying the smaller-scale segments juxtaposed within each movement on the principle of similarity or contrast.

The choice of instruments plays a major role in attaining the above-described musical character. Two flutes, an oboe, and a violin are responsible for the unique sound colour. Such a complement of instruments is untypical in comparison with historical chamber music

practice. In the *Quartettino*, these instruments do not appear on an equal footing. The first flute, the oboe, and the violin all present the thematic material, while the second flute only accompanies the others and does not contribute to building the work's form. In the course of the composition, each of the instruments is assigned one definite function within a given segment, for instance melodic, accompanying, or related to shaping the homorhythmic texture. The *Quartettino* represents a creative approach to neoclassicism, but at the same time it has some idiomatic qualities characteristic of Górecki's output and also found in his later works. The composer makes use of the material of the extended chromatic scale and the minor scale, organised by distinguishing tonal centres. Individual segments are centralised by means of ostinatos and tremolos. The intervals of a second and a third are employed to an equal extent, so that the work's sound concentrates around these two, which gives the auditory impression of tonality. The ostinato segments centralise the sound, but also bring to mind the structures of folk music, in which the accompaniment is usually based on simple and repetitive sound structures. References to folk music were also frequent in neoclassicism. Repetitive melodic-rhythmic structures would later become a constant individual quality of Górecki's style.

In the *Quartettino*, the themes exemplify a modern approach to melody as an element shaping musical narration. The melodies are frequently based here on one selected scale or its fragment and presented in counterpoint or in dialogue – a compositional strategy which likewise draws on the heritage of the past.

Though intensification of sound and dense dynamic markings would only become characteristic of Górecki's music in a later period, already in the *Quartettino* the composer makes use of a wide dynamic scale from *p* to *sff* within a relatively brief space, which bestows energy on the work's narrative and contributes to its dynamic transformations. The resolute articulation makes use of *staccato*, *spiccato*, as well as accents falling on both the strong and the weak part of the beat. These contrast with the *legato*, usually appearing in theme expositions and functioning as a way of organising musical phrasing in the given segment.

The use of centralisation and repetitive motivic-thematic structures integrates the work as a whole. Of special interest is the element with

which the individual segments end. It is a chord usually accompanied (surrounded) by rests, emphasised by an accent and intensified by *forte* dynamics. The work's unity is also reflected in the makeup of the musical narrative, which consists of a sequence of similar variant segments and those contrasted by the introduction of new thematic material. This strategy guarantees integrity on the levels of macroform and of the individual sections within the work, despite its cyclic structure.

Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11

Composed in 1957, this *Concerto* belongs to the second phase of Górecki's artistic development, according to the typology of his works proposed by Krzysztof Droba.[2] The work was dedicated to Leon Markiewicz, a critic who exhibited a lively interest in Górecki's output from the very start and reviewed the composer's works in music periodicals. When asked to comment on the reasons behind this dedication, Markiewicz said:

> The dedication took me by surprise. It may have been a friendly way to return my favours, since I have been genuinely fascinated with his music from the start, and in my first Górecki review in 'Ruch Muzyczny' I devoted more space to this *Concerto* than to his dynamic *Songs*.[3]

The *Concerto* is notably considered by both Krzysztof Droba and Adrian Thomas[4] as a turning point marking the beginning of a new phase in Górecki's output. We must remember, however, that the composer's style evolved gradually, and so this work also demonstrates qualities known from the first phase.

The *Concerto* Op. 11 was Górecki's first composition scored for an untypical instrumental ensemble. The unconventional choice of

[2] K. Droba, 'Henryk Mikołaj Górecki', in: E. Dziębowska, ed., Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM. Część biograficzna, 3 (1979), 424.

[3] B. Bolesławska-Lewandowska, Górecki portret w pamięci (2013), 88.

[4] A. Thomas, Górecki (1997), 13.

instruments is viewed by other researchers[5] as a harbinger of the composer's fascination with sound colour, which would lead him to the sonoristic technique.

The *Concerto*'s form does not follow that of a classical instrumental concerto, either. Górecki's work consists of four sections and begins with a slow movement. The first and third movements are much shorter, out of proportion with the second and fourth ones. The sections are contrasted with respect to density of texture; the shorter ones are significantly rarefied. Instead of using ready-made forms, the composer builds sequences of segments contrasted in terms of texture, tempi, structure, and duration.

Of primary importance in this context is the composition's title. The word 'concerto' points directly to the presence of solo instrumental *concertante* parts performed by the eponymous five instruments, which, however, are not listed in the title. By taking up a dialogue with the main instruments, the string quartet replaces the orchestra, which performed this function in a classical solo concerto. The quartet or its selected members accompany the individual solo instruments and continue to dialogue with them throughout the piece. However, not all the five *concertante* instruments are equally involved in the solo parts. The flute and the clarinet are clearly dominant. The trumpet, xylophone, and mandolin parts are reduced at times to individual, incidental notes, but still remain in dialogue rather than providing accompaniment. It is only in the last movement that all the instruments play *tutti*. The texture evidently tends to grow denser in the course of the work's narration. The whole opens with a 13-bar introduction by the solo flute playing *piano*, while in the closing section all the instruments thrice repeat one chord in *ffff* dynamics, though in the last measure the texture is reduced to the single note D in the parts of both violins. The notation also becomes reduced. In sections where a given instrument is silent throughout the bar, instead of rests the whole fragment is left out, and linked to the remaining fragments of the instrument's part with dotted lines so that the musician and the conductor do not get lost in the score. Such well-thought-out notation facilitates fast and precise score reading.

[5] Cf. the discussion of Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11 in http://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzej-kompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/koncert-na-piec-instrumentow-ikwartet-smyczkowy-op-11, accessed 9 June 2020.

The *Concerto* is an atonal piece making use of twelve-note material, with a distinct predilection for highlighting second intervals in both horizontal and vertical structures. In Górecki's output, the 1950s were the time of his most active interest in the avant-garde. This is evident in the multiplicity of techniques and solutions applied in the piece, which draw on the modern achievements of Western music. Instead of traditional time signatures, in the course of the composition digits placed above the staves refer to the number of metrical units comprised within a given measure. Crotchets are the basic unit, but quavers and semiquavers briefly take over as the beat of the bar in movements two and four. Both simple and complex time signatures are used. In auditory perception, the music gives the sense of irregularity, because the beat changes fast and frequently, and irregular rhythmic groupings appear. Rapid changes of time organisation create the impression that tempi are altered as well, but in reality they remain stable throughout the sections. In the *Concerto*, Górecki makes use of traditional expressive and agogic indications such as *sostenuto*, *dolce*, *animo*, *feroce*, but also marks, for instance, the return to *a tempo* or *ritenuto*, though such markings can only be found in the second movement and in the closing section.

The stylistic evolution that was taking place at the time when Górecki composed his *Concerto* is also reflected in the use of pointillistic technique. The composer independently studied serialism and pointillism, thus continuing the line of development mapped out by Anton Webern. Examples of pointillism in Górecki's oeuvre can be found in the *Concerto* that is the subject of this analysis, as well as in such pieces as *Three Diagrams* for solo flute. The individual melodic-rhythmic groupings are distinctly separated by short rests, which creates the impression of isolation of selected motifs. A pointillistic texture is also created by the accumulation of interval leaps, sometimes larger than an octave, which, though not separated by rests, make the impression of autonomous notes, motifs, and melodic phrases. This effect is enhanced by fast changes of dynamics.

Górecki's special sensitivity to sound colour and to sound as a form-building element (later labelled as the sonoristic technique) manifests itself, among others, in the choice of instruments and the use of their extreme registers. Though the flute, the clarinet and the trumpet are all wind instruments, they differ significantly in timbre.

In the *Concerto* Górecki exploits the colouristic qualities of the flute, first and foremost in the top registers and in *forte* dynamics, which brings this instrument to the fore in terms of auditory perception. The melodic line unfolding in the clarinet takes full advantage of its sonoristic possibilities. In the case of the trumpet, it only makes use of the middle register and appears only five times throughout the piece, which means that this instrument does not play a major role in the overall auditory impression. The xylophone part mostly explores its top register. As in the case of the trumpet, this instrument's possibilities are not fully represented since the melody is introduced either monodically or in the form of two-note harmonies. The mandolin's part, with short values or tremolos in the middle register, does reflect the instrument's characteristic colour qualities. Though employed in a traditional manner, the mandolin only plays a secondary role and is not distinctly audible in the context of the other instruments. It is only in the solo flute and clarinet parts as well as those of the violins and viola (despite the latter belonging to the accompanying section) that we hear quasi-melodies in the traditional sense of autonomous instrumental parts. The treatment of the trumpet, the mandolin, and the xylophone is selective, and their music material – limited. The string quartet part, on the other hand, constitutes an integral whole accompanying the soloists. The expressive and articulatory markings in this part are very precise, and include, apart from the use of such conventional techniques as *arco*, *pizzicato*, *con sordino*, also detailed guidelines concerning types of vibration, *sul ponticello*, playing 'with very broad bow strokes', etc. The precision with which Górecki describes expressive and coloristic elements is typical of the sonoristic technique.

The quasi-classical melodies and the presence of counterpoint derive from traditional composition strategies known from the past. The string quartet's strident repetitive chords, especially in movement four, are characteristic of Górecki's music and had also been present at an earlier stage. They betray neoclassical inspirations as well as the influence of Béla Bartók and the composer's already mentioned teacher, Bolesław Szabelski.

The dominance of strongly contrasted dynamics (*pppp* to *ffff*, and even *sffff* at some key moments) looks back to Górecki's earlier works. Frequent changes of dynamics bring out the concise narrative form.

Changing dynamics enhance expression in movements one and three, reinforce the dynamic quality of movement two, and in the last movement they contribute to a synthesis of expressive qualities. This element of the music work may pose a challenge for instrumentalists since dynamics accumulating towards a *crescendo* sometimes change from *p* to *fff* within one measure. The vast majority of dynamic markings in the *Concerto* refer to extremes of sound volume, while such indications as *mp* and *mf* only occur much more rarely.

Muzyczka IV [*La Musiquette 4, Little Music 4*] *'Trombone Concerto'* Op. 28

The fourth work in the *Little Music* cycle was composed in 1970 as a commission from Zygmunt Krauze, leader of Warsztat Muzyczny[6] [Music Workshop] ensemble specialising in most recent works. They performed music specially written for that ensemble, thus building new repertoire for an untypical chamber music line-up (trombone, clarinet, cello, and piano). At the special request of this group, Górecki returned (after a three-year break) to writing chamber music. The fruit of this collaboration was *Little Music 4* Op. 28, subtitled *'Trombone Concerto'*.

The piece consists of two contrasted sections. Section one is made up of eleven segments marked 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B and 5, 6A, 6B, 7 and 8. Section two comprises four segments labelled as A, B, C, and D. The sections are contrasted in character, tempo, and duration (the second one is much shorter).

The subheading *'Trombone Concerto'* misleadingly suggests that the trombone is the leading solo *concertante* instrument here, whereas in fact the trombone part stands out not so much for its music material as for its unique function. It is the leading part since the trombonist acts as the conductor in this piece, initiating and ending most segments. Appropriate graphic markings in the score indicate the beginning (a downward arrow) and end (an upward arrow) of each fragment. The score also comes complete with a description of the

[6] For a discussion of Little Music 4 'Trombone Concerto' Op. 28, see: http://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzejkompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/muzyczka-iv-koncert-puzonowy-op-28, accessed 9 June 2020.

trombonist's function. Apart from conducting, he or she is to count the duration of general pauses as well as freely interpret and indicate all the caesurae, rests, and fermatas. Importantly, this work has never been published as a score. Instead, it exists in the form of separate instrumental part books. The clarity of the notation is supported by verbal commentaries and by precise representations of the trombonist's gestures.

Having entrusted a special function of the trombonist, who organises the entire performance, Górecki also assigned characteristic roles to all the other instruments. Apart from acting as the conductor, in the first section the trombonist also builds the form by playing the only traditionally fully composed and notated part in this piece. What the other instruments do is perform predefined sound structures. The number of their repetitions depends on the trombonist's interpretation of how long it should take to complete his or her part. The characteristic use of the clarinet (playing at the very top of the instrument's range) increases the overall energy of the music and intensifies the dynamics of all the segments in section one. The homogeneous rhythmic patterns of the cello part, on the other hand, mostly based on a quaver pulse, create the impression of rhythmic monotony, which in auditory perception relegates this instrument to the role of background for the other instrumental parts. In section two, however, the trombone, the clarinet, and the cello jointly develop the melody, which makes them equally responsible for the course of the musical narration. The piano has three functions in the piece. On the one hand, it accompanies the other instruments (section two), but it also contributes to building the sound mass (section one) and integrates the two sections.

Górecki's exploration of the sonoristic technique manifests itself in the characteristic way of shaping the individual instruments' parts in *Little Music 4*, which brings out their sound qualities. The untypical choice of instruments creates ample opportunities for exploiting their colouristic palette and juxtaposing them in an individual manner. The trombone part stays most of the time in the instrument's higher register. It is built of lively, changeable music material and performed at a very fast tempo. Such treatment of this instrument is untypical in comparison with classical works. The clarinet also plays in the top register, though as a traditionally melodic instrument it would normally

be expected to explore the warm and mellow timbres generally characterising the middle part of its range. By performing fast and brief motifs largely made up of demisemiquavers in section one, the clarinet part becomes 'squeaky', thus adding to the dynamic character of the narrative. The cello likewise plays in the high register, though it does not reach the extremes of its range, as in the case of the clarinet. Untypically of this instrument, the cello part in section one is entirely notated in the treble clef. Section two introduces new solutions in the parts of the trombone, clarinet, and cello with respect to sound colour. In segments A and C of this section, these three instruments play in the middle and lower registers, this time performing a regular rhythmic pattern based on long rhythmic values. Segment B is an exception in that its sound resembles the solutions applied in section one and the instruments return to the high register. The piano part in this work is mostly notated in the bass clef (for both hands), which reflects a preference for low and dense sound evident in the piano part. This creates contrast between the piano and the other instruments, which becomes less marked in section two (segments A and C).

Górecki's avant-garde approach to composition manifests itself here also in the absence of time signatures, which are replaced throughout the score by metronomic markings indicating changes of beat (for instance, in the piano part in segment 1, q = 60) or by the use of such agogic terms as *moderato*, *largo*, and *prestissimo*. As a result, the bar lines take on a new function since they mark the limits within which individual musical structures are executed. These form-building structures consist of a varying number of measures. The music material comprises the full chromatic scale, which is why only accidental signs are used. The sound material is organised by the choice of notes central to the given music structure.

Little Music 4 is Górecki's last composition belonging to the phase classified by Krzysztof Droba as 'reductionist'. The piece is characterised by a reduction of expressive means and a restriction of sound material. Such a reductionist approach enhances the tension and expression. The strongly expressive quality of the music is achieved through the repetition of selected motifs, their development and introduction of variant forms. The energy of musical progressions is reinforced by emphasising the divisions or caesurae between segments separated by general pauses. In most passages expressive power is

combined with the dynamism of musical narration. In section two, however, a momentary release of tension brings a new type of narration. Expressive contrasts are also intensified by corresponding use of dynamics, predominantly *ffff* in section one and still intense but at times dropping to *mp* in section two. Expressive contrast between the two sections was thus achieved through incidental dynamic modulations in section two. Expressive markings only appear at the beginning of sections one and two, while the cellist is instructed to play *e ancora piu dell'arco*.

Despite the use of traditional agogic terms such as *moderato* and *prestissimo possible*, and precise indication of tempi by means of metronomic markings, an element of chance is nevertheless present in the way the individual instrumental parts are synchronised. This results from the diversification of tempi for the individual players, as well as the presence of fermatas and a variable number of beats to a bar, which creates the effect of a collective *ad libitum*, which in auditory perception sounds like improvisation. The trombone part, featuring in the subtitle, is naturally the most improvisational in character, and fermatas are most frequent in this part. What is also audible in section one is the non-selective use of sound material. The division of both sections into smaller units in which the trombonist clearly indicates the start of every new segment allows the musicians to attain full synchrony at those points in the composition, which introduces a certain degree of control over the musical narrative. The trombonist plays a key role in this context, since his indications determine the choice of material executed at any given time, and he is therefore largely responsible for the composition's macroform.

Energetic contrasts between the two main sections of *Little Music 4* also result from differences in the structure and use of form-building units. The segments of section one are based on five melodic-rhythmic motifs introduced by the trombone. The cello and clarinet parts consist of one initial motif which evolves and assumes variant forms in the course of the narration. The piano part is made up of four melodic-rhythmic motifs which undergo transformations thanks to transpositions of notes or the diversification of their number within the chord. The motifs found in segment 2 of section 1 and those forming a bridge between sections 1 and 2 are an exception in that they are autonomous structures. Section two, on the other hand, is constructed,

unlike section one, entirely out of the same sound material in the parts of the trombone, the clarinet, and the cello, while the piano presents its own separate material, stable throughout this section and structurally based on the pentatonic scale. Pitch organisation is also differentiated between the sections. In the first one, motifs centre on selected notes or intervals. The second section makes use of a pentatonic scale and a fragment of a chromatic scale. Centralisation and the use of scales to organise music material in this piece suggests conscious neoclassical inspirations, as in Górecki's first period. *Little Music 4* employs avant-garde composition strategies, but it also draws on solutions known from the past and rooted in tradition.

Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59

The *Aria* was composed in 1987 at the request of Belgian stage director, playwright and choreographer Jan Fabre, as part of a prospective setting of Fabre's libretto based on a sequence of symbolic scenes united by the music. The composer began his work on the opera but eventually withdrew from the project, and the music for Fabre's spectacle was written in its entirety by Eugeniusz Knapik. *Aria* for tuba, piano, tam-tam and bass drum is thus the only product of Górecki's involvement in this stage work.[7]

Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59 is a monologue of the 'tuba' set against the background of the piano and two percussion instruments. The title refers to the classical opera form with arias as one of its key components, a vocal-instrumental form usually appearing at climactic points in the action. The emotionally developed vocal part in the foreground focuses the audience's attention on a moment of high drama. In the heyday of the opera genre, arias usually followed the tripartite arch form.

Górecki's piece represents the essential qualities of the aria form in an extremely suggestive manner. It is a kind of tuba 'monologue', and the accompanying instruments do nothing to disturb its free and dramatic narration. The music is strongly charged with energy, making the impression of vivid action taking place directly in the musical layer, without the need for additional stage design or actors.

[7] Thomas, Górecki, 127.

The *Aria* is bipartite with a coda. Its two contrasted sections will be referred to here as A and B. The whole follows an arch form with a crescendo since the coda brings back the motif from the opening of the piece. This coda has been distinguished within the composition's structure because it serves as a summary of the whole. While making use of melodic material from section A, it features the set of instruments appearing in section B. The texture and material of the piano accompaniment draws on both sections of the piece. The sections differ in energetic charge and duration. Section A is longer and can thus be divided into smaller segments marked in the score with separate agogic indications.

Each of the instruments plays its own role in the composition. Setting the tuba in an untypical solo role brings out new possibilities in this instrument, applied here in a unique manner so as to bestow a lyrical and expressive character on the *Aria*. The composer takes maximum advantage of the tuba's sound and expression, while the piano part, despite its enormous expressive potential, is reduced to a simple accompaniment. In a large proportion of the work, it only playing the note C multiplied in four octaves or a group of five accompanying chords (B-flat major, B-flat minor, G minor, F-sharp minor, A-flat major / A-flat minor). These two instruments' functions, known from the classical orchestra, are thus reversed as part of what could be called 'playing with conventions'. Traditionally, it is the tuba as an orchestral instrument that accompanies the solo piano. The percussion instruments, on the other hand, retain their classical function of accompanying and enhancing dramatic expression.

As in *Little Music 4*, Górecki reduces the musical means in the *Aria*. Though this work already belongs to the next phase, it applies solutions worked out in the previous one, which confirms the evolutionary development of the composer's style. To achieve such reduction, the role of the melody in the narration is minimised in favour of dynamics, rhythm, and tempi, which are responsible for the dramaturgy of the piece. This is a typical example of reversed hierarchy of musical components, typical of avant-garde composition strategies in the twentieth century. In the *Aria*, the harmony centres around the note C in section A, while in B the focus moves to the B-flat minor and B-flat major chords. The composer plays with registers and modes. Rhythmic organisation, on the other hand, is not unequivocally defined, and moves

freely between duple and triple time. The notated time signatures and the constant crotchet pulse do not obliterate the sense of irregularity in the work's musical narration.

Conclusions

I have selected four pieces of chamber music by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki to illustrate transformations in the composer's style. Since each of them comes from a different phase of his artistic work and represents a different approach to form and aesthetics, together they offer proof of the evolutionary character of Górecki's output. Despite many similarities between these four compositions, each of them has its own unique character. Gradual transformations are reflected, among others, in the choice of instruments. Evident in the works under study is a tendency to construct progressively untypical instrumental line-ups far removed from chamber music tradition. One example is the use of instruments in the Aria. Avant-garde composition strategies also concern form. Górecki's compositions (except for the Concerto) diverge from the traditional four-movement cycle. Little Music 4 and the Aria are bipartite, and the Quartettino – tripartite in structure. All the four works are built as sequences of segments, with the exception of the Quartettino's second section, which has a thematic structure.

Despite their relatively small dimensions and chamber-music-like character, the works employ a considerable number of composition techniques. Among the dominant ones is the use of variant forms, applied in all the four analysed pieces, similarly as the repetition or ostinato technique, reflecting a tendency to exploit the initial material to the full. Górecki also makes use of counterpoint, dialogues between parts, imitation, quasi-improvisations, evolutionary elements, and pointillism. The choice of techniques as well as qualities of style and composition strategy depend on the period when a given piece was composed. The *Quartettino* and the *Concerto* are predominantly neoclassical, but this effect is achieved by different means in each case. In *Little Music 4* and the *Aria*, on the other hand, the main principle of shaping musical narrative is reductionism. The other techniques, pointillistic in the *Concerto* and sonoristic in *Little Music 4*, are not

found in the other works from the group under study. Their use was the result of the composer's brief fascinations with selected trends in twentieth-century music.

The choice of pitch material is closely related to that of techniques. In all these compositions, however, the material is organised around harmonic centres. Górecki's use of scales is also idiosyncratic and includes, apart from minor and major in the *Quartettino*, *Little Music 4*, and the *Aria*, chromatic scales in the *Quartettino* and the *Concerto* as well as pentatonism in *Little Music 4*. My examples demonstrate a tendency to present relatively varied music material drawing on 'new tonality'. The dimensions of the basic form-building unit change gradually in Górecki's works from a theme to phrase to a single motif. An extended dynamic range was a trademark of this composer's style virtually from the beginning. With time, however, Górecki focused first and foremost on powerful expression (up to *ffff*) while giving up explorations of the bottom extreme and thus not venturing any more below *p* or *mp*. Avant-garde as Górecki's works are in many respects, his ways of notating tempi and types of expression are traditional, not extremely detailed, and such markings generally concern longer sections. One exception is the *Aria*, in which agogic and expressive indications become a primary element, are long and detailed, and refer to smaller-scale segments. Irregular changeable metric structure or its lack is one of the tools of time organisation applied in all the compositions under study. In auditory perception, however, these works are different, since some comprise regular rhythmic patterns whose repetitive character makes the music sound orderly and stable, while in the other works the use of irregular, for instance syncopated rhythms is responsible for the sense of variability.

The above-discussed strategies, tools, and selection of elements for each work reflect the gradual changes that took place in Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's chamber music writing. In most cases, the composer also drew on technical solutions from his earlier period, and the unique qualities of his style were preserved regardless of what strategies he currently borrowed from recent trends or techniques. The above analysis also demonstrates the high artistic value of Górecki's less known compositions, whose qualities reflect the same stylistic evolution that has so far been analysed on the example of his main body of works.

Appendix 1. Summary in Tabular Form

	***Quartettino* Op. 5 (1956)**	***Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet* Op. 11 (1957)**	***Little Music* 4 Op. 28 (1970)**	***Aria* ('operatic scene') Op. 59 (1987)**
Phase of artistic work (after K. Droba)	1st phase	2nd phase	4th phase	5th phase
STYLE / STRATEGY OF COMPOSITION	neoclassicism	neoclassicism, pointillism	reductionism	reductionism
PERFORMING FORCES	1st and 2nd flutes, violin, oboe	flute, clarinet, trumpet, xylophone, mandolin, string quartet	trombone, clarinet, cello, piano	tuba, piano, bass drum, tam-tam
MACROFORM	**3 movements** 1st mov. – 4 segments 2nd mov. – 2 themes 3rd mov. – 6 segments + coda sequencing, thematic structure	**4 movements** 1st mov. – 4 segments 2nd mov. – 3 segments 3rd mov. – 2 segments + coda 4th mov. – 4 segments + conclusion sequencing	**2 sections** 1st sect. – 11 segments 2nd sect. – 4 segments sequencing	**2 sections** 1st sect. – 10 segments 2nd sect. – 3 segments + coda sequencing with elements of arch form
MATERIAL AND ITS ORGANISATION	major and minor scales, chromatic scale, harmonic centres	chromatic scale, atonal organisation with some harmonic centres	major and minor scales, pentatonism, harmonic centres	major and minor scales, harmonic centres

	***Quartettino* Op. 5 (1956)**	***Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet* Op. 11 (1957)**	***Little Music 4* Op. 28 (1970)**	***Aria* ('operatic scene') Op. 59 (1987)**
COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES	1st mov. – ostinato, variant forms 2nd mov. – counterpoint, variant forms 3rd mov. – ostinato, imitation, dialoguing, variant forms	1st mov. – variant forms, counterpoint, quasi-improvisation, repetition 2nd mov. – dialoguing, ostinato 3rd mov. – pointillism, ostinato 4th mov. – ostinato, variant forms of motifs, dialoguing	1st sect. – variant forms, ostinato 2nd sect. – ostinato, variant forms	1st sect. – variant forms, repetitions of selected structures, evolutionary structure 2nd sect. – variant forms, repetitions of selected structures, evolutionary structure
FORM-BUILDING UNIT	theme	phrase	motif	motif
METRICAL AND RHYTHMIC ORGANISATION	changeable beat, regular rhythmic patterns	changeable beat, irregular rhythmic patterns	1st sect. – no metre 2nd sect. – changeable beat 1st sect. – irregular rhythmic patterns 2nd sect. – regular rhythmic patterns	No metre, regular rhythmic patterns

	***Quartettino* Op. 5 (1956)**	***Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet* Op. 11 (1957)**	***Little Music* 4 Op. 28 (1970)**	***Aria* ('operatic scene') Op. 59 (1987)**
INDICATIONS OF TEMPO AND EXPRESSION	constant tempo (and expression) indications within the movement; brief sporadic changes of tempo	constant tempo and expression indications within the movement; brief changes of tempo in the 2nd and 4th movements	1st sect. – agogic-expressive indications shared by all instruments within the section; tempo markings different for each instrumental part within segments 2nd sect. – agogic-expressive indications shared by all instruments within the section; tempo markings shared by all instruments except for the piano throughout the section	tempo and expression indications change frequently; frequent and brief changes of tempo
DYNAMICS	*ppp* to *fff*, crescendo-type	*pppp* to *ffff*, contrasted in successive fragments	*mp* to *ffff*, contrasted in successive fragments	*p* to *ffff*, crescendo-type

Appendix 2. The Phases of Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's Artistic Work. Titles of the works analysed in this paper have been marked in bold.

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Adrian Thomas, Górecki</th><th>Teresa Malecka, 'Henryk Mikołaj Górecki. Styl późny'</th><th>Krzysztof Droba, Encyklopedia Muzyczna PWM</th><th>examples of compositions</th></tr>
<tr><td>1955</td><td>Songs of Joy and Rhythm</td><td>The Beginnings</td><td>Early Works</td><td>Songs of Joy and Rhythm Op. 7
Quartettino Op. 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>1957</td><td>Scontri</td><td rowspan="2">Early Works</td><td>Serial Constructivism</td><td>Scontri op. 17
Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11</td></tr>
<tr><td>1962</td><td rowspan="2">Genesis</td><td>Sonorism</td><td>Genesis I: Elementi for three string instruments Op. 19 No. 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>1964</td><td rowspan="2">Mature Works</td><td rowspan="2">Reductionist Constructivism</td><td>Little Music 4 Op. 28</td></tr>
<tr><td>1967</td><td>Old Polish Music</td><td>Old Polish Music Op. 24</td></tr>
<tr><td>1971</td><td>Sacred Songs</td><td>The Heyday</td><td rowspan="4">Synthetic Constructivism</td><td>Symphony No. 3 'Symphony of Sorrowful Songs' Op. 36</td></tr>
<tr><td>1979</td><td rowspan="2">Wide Water</td><td rowspan="3">Late Works</td><td rowspan="2">Beatus vir Op. 38; Miserere Op. 44</td></tr>
<tr><td>1980</td></tr>
<tr><td>1986</td><td>Quasi una fantasia</td><td>Recitatives and Ariosos 'Lerchenmusik' Op. 53
Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59</td></tr>
</table>

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Iga Batog

Black Box Music by Simon Steen-Andersen: The Visual Layer as a Sound-Determining Factor. An Exploration of Prospects for Development

Abstract

The article attempts to summarise the work of Simon Steen-Andersen and describe his composition titled Black Box Music in the context of fusing visual and musical experiences. I have examined how modern technology influences the composer's creative process. His achievements and understanding of audiovisuality and the music object have also been compared with Pierre Schaeffer's concept of acousmatic listening.

Keywords

audiovisuality, Simon Steen-Andersen, Black Box Music, music object

The Italian *Classic Voice* magazine's invitation (addressed to a hundred music critics, musicologists, conductors, and festival organisers, excluding composers) to list the most important compositions created after 2000 resulted in two charts of the most highly appreciated works and their authors, printed in the monthly's January 2017 issue. The top three pieces on this list were: 1) Georg Friedrich Haas' *In Vain*, 2) Simon Steen-Andersen's *Piano Concerto*, 3) Stefan Prins' *Generation Kill*. Steen-Andersen himself came second among the most interesting contemporary music composers,[1] His works, like those of Prins, represent a similar 'visual trend' in new music, depending on the perception of sound as part of a total sensory experience. In *Black Box Music* this is achieved through the use of theatrical elements; in *Generation Kill* – by means of game controllers, video projections, and live electronics.

Simon Steen-Andersen. Life, Methodology, and Composition Techniques

Simon Steen-Andersen (born in 1976), a composer, performer and installation artist, studied composition in 1998–2006 with Karl Aage Rasmussen, Mathias Spahlinger, Gabriel Valverde, and Bent Sørensen in Aarhus, Freiburg im Breisgau, Buenos Aires, and Copenhagen. He now teaches composition at the Royal Academy of Music (Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium) in Aarhus. Since 2013 he has also been a visiting professor at the Norwegian Academy of Music (Norges musikkhøgskole, NMH) in Oslo. He has collaborated with such leading contemporary music groups as Ensemble Intercontemporain, London Sinfonietta, Klangforum Wien, ICTUS, and Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej (New Music Orchestra). His works have been presented at the world's main new music festivals. His numerous accolades include the Sonning Music Foundation Talent Award (2006), the Kranichsteiner Musikpreis (2008), Award of the International Rostrum of Composers (2010), the Carl Nielsen Prize (2013), the Nordic Council Music Prize

[1] For a full list of works and composers, see: *Classic Voice*, 212 (2017), http://www.classicvoice.com/riviste/classic-voice-digital/classic-voice-212-digitale.html, accessed 14 June 2020.

(2014), the Carl Prisen Prize (2015), and the Mauricio Kagel Music Prize (2017).[2]

In my analysis of Simon Steen-Andersen's output, I will apply the criteria and refer to the methods of composition used in this composer's works. These criteria and methods have become progressively clearer in his successive compositions. For this reason, it seems worthwhile to preserve a certain chronology in my analyses of Andersen's output. Such an approach will make it possible to trace back a developing trend which came to the fore and reached its climax in *Black Box Music*.

Methods of Composition and the Relation Between Traditional and Modern Media

Steen-Andersen defines his method of composition as 'trying to come up with ideas first, and then looking for a suitable medium and material, and a suitable technology if needed'.[3] His fascination with new technologies takes different forms. The composer makes frequent use of electronically amplified acoustic instruments in combination with a sampler, non-standard constructions of his own device, as well as everyday objects. He notes a certain analogy between the aesthetics and approaches of traditional and electronic music. For instance, when looking for a suitable way to perform a *crescendo* he draws on the dolly zoom electronic effect (zooming a lens to adjust the angle of view). In many of his works the nostalgic dimension of technology is brought out by the use of older generations of sound modifiers, such as the 1982 version of the Whammy pedal in *Study for String Instruments #2* or of a joystick controlling the divided screen in *Run Time Error*. These two compositions, written in 2007–2010, mark the beginning of a tendency to use unconventional and distinctly specific means.

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[2] The programme book of the 58th 'Warsaw Autumn' International Festival of Contemporary Music, 2015, biographical note submitted by the composer, 269–270.

[3] *Simon Steen-Andersen - A musical approa[c]h to audio/visual composition: Implicit AV aspects of musical performance, AV-objects and musical excuses...*, Cursus de composition et d'informatique musicale de l'Ircam, Ircam, 5 Dec. 2018, https://medias.ircam.fr/x13ea23, 1'18" – 1'35", accessed 10 Apr. 2021.

The Link Between Sampling and Quoting the Surrounding World

Another field of interest for Steen-Andersen is the sampling technique, which appears in what is chronologically his next composition, *Double Up* (2010) for sampler and small orchestra. This piece exemplifies the technique of using pre-recorded sound samples and giving them new meanings and musical contexts. The work's dramaturgy is based on a simple sequence of everyday sounds played back from the sampler and doubled by the orchestra. The same sound sequence is presented from two different perspectives: narrative and musical. The former represents the semantic and informational potential of the sampled material. Snatches of sound information, such as the sound of tooth-brushing, a shower, coffee maker, and a key turning in the door all add up to a coherent and comprehensible (even if slightly trivial) narration. The successive sounds organise auditory perception and give meaning to those that came before. This situation is reversed and rearranged in the second segment, in which the sounds are sorted by their acoustic potential and musical value, which allows the composer to present the same material from a new perspective.

Ouvertures, written in the same period, also makes use of a sampler, but this time as a medium for translating one selected cultural image into the language of music. Written for amplified guzheng solo, sampler and symphony orchestra, it incorporates a recording of Chinese dictator Mao Zedong's speech of 1956. Digitally slowed down and interwoven with the course of the music, the speech loses its political content while preserving the cultural context and musical qualities. It becomes, in a way, a song unfolding against the background of a guzheng and the orchestra.[4]

Gesture: The Visual Aspect of Playing an Instrument, and Its Uses

The physical aspect of playing an instrument is a recurring element of Steen-Andersen's music. The choreography of the sound production

[4] *Simon Steen-Andersen - A musical approa[c]h…*, 19'51" – 24'11".

process is for him a point of departure for comments on the subject of audiovisuality, that is, on the visual layer of music as a determinant of sound. The visual component of the concert experience is of fundamental sensory and form-building importance to the composer. It is out of an exploration of the shared visual-and-auditory space that his technique was born (and later improved over the years) of coordinating the visual and the auditory effect so that they mutually influence each other and form one whole.[5] By working with elements taken from different fields of perception, the composer claims, we may attempt to superimpose them or oppose them to each other, but also look for the point of their perfect integration, where the two experiences interpenetrate.

The concert experience, Steen-Andersen notes, is always audiovisual (as long as our eyes remain open). It is only our habit of attributing a definite function for instance to the motion of the bow (necessary to produce sound) that makes us perceive movement exclusively as a way to achieve the goal of sound production. In this case, audiovisuality is thus a phenomenon of perception. If we adopt a conscious and open stance, the object may work in both categories towards a complete integration of auditory and visual elements or show the two from different angles. Many of Steen-Andersen's works explore pre-existent motion-and-sound setups and have been composed within certain set structures. This approach differs from theatricalization of instrument playing as proposed by instrumental theatre. The composer's cycle *Studies for String Instrument #1-3* (2007–2011) is dedicated in its entirety to the study of relations between sound and motion. The whole work is notated only as body movements and can therefore be performed on any bowed string instrument.[6] The first piece in this cycle, *Study #1*, can be described as a study of glissando. As the composer observes, the focus of a glissando is on the sound's movement from one point to another. Glissando therefore already contains 'movement of the sound' within itself, as experienced in auditory perception, as well as the aspect of the hand's actual movement along the string and

[5] S. Steen-Andersen, *Festival TACEC 2018*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PF-SkfwRcv1E&t=33s, accessed 10 Apr. 2021.

[6] The programme book of the 58th 'Warsaw Autumn' International Festival of Contemporary Music, 2015, the composer's own commentary on *Studies for String Instrument*, 270.

of the bow producing the sound. These two exemplify both aspects of audiovisuality. However, due to our knowledge of functions performed by the body movements, a glissando is usually only conceived as an articulation technique, subordinate to sound. In order to extend the visual perspective, the composer highlights and individualises the movement by frequent repetitions and tripling the number of instruments. At the same time, the rhythmic bow movements bestow a choreographic dimension on the work, forming a kind of self-accompanied dance.

The piece is also an exploration of the boundaries of motion-and-sound structures and of the use of limited glissando material. To compose means, in this case, to explore the possibilities of one specific setup and gradually to extend it. Another example of such practice is *Study #3*, where the cello, prepared by wetting the strings slightly and fixing pieces of paper to the bow, is later submitted to such experiments as turning the instrument to the side, while at the same time preserving the cello playing technique. Superimposed on the cello part is a pre-recorded version of the same musician's performance, which multiplies the visual perceptions. According to the composer, it was a challenge to create a given setup and then actively to study its possibilities. The resulting experience, though frequently not necessarily theatrical, nevertheless has its own internal sense and logic.

Black Box Music

Composed in 2012 for percussion, amplified box, fifteen performers and video, *Black Box Music* consists of three sections: *Ouverture*, *Disambiguation*, and *Finale*. The piece was originally written for Norwegian percussionist Håkon Stene.[7] The ensemble consists of baritone saxophone, bass clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, piano, three sets of percussion instruments (including a güiro, an opera gong, sandpaper, a balloon, and slide whistle), as well as harp, electric guitar, viola, cello, and double bass. In his introduction to the score, the composer explains:

[7] R. Holmboe, 'Out of the Box', liner notes for a DVD, Dacapo Records, https://www.dacapo-records.dk/en/recordings/steen-andersen-black-box-music, accessed 10 Apr. 2021.

> The starting point is the classical soloist-conductor, only in this case, the conducting and solo part are one and the same. The setting is a traditional theatre stage with curtains, props and light; only in this case, the stage is also an instrument. *Black Box Music* could be said to be a deconstruction of conducting and puppet theatre as well as an exploration and exploitation of the audio/visual relations inherent in conducting and staging.[8]

The work reflects the composer's strong convictions concerning the link between conducting and the visual-choreographic aspects of the music work. The conductor's part may make the impression of a mere set of gestures performed in the air; nevertheless, these gestures have actual impact on the orchestra's sound. The cultural dimension of the conductor's role relates his gestures in our minds subconsciously to the orchestral part. His presence in the concert situation is not viewed as an attempt to make the music visual; however, as the composer emphasises, once a discrepancy between the conductor's gestures and the orchestra has occurred, this visual aspect becomes noticeable and clear.

Steen-Andersen reverses the traditional concert situation by dividing the orchestra into three groups and placing it on both sides of the audience as well as behind it. The eponymous black box is placed where the conductor would normally stand. The box is equipped with a camera and sound system consisting of six microphones connected to the corresponding speakers, which creates the topophonic effect of sound surrounding the audience.

The box also comes complete with a miniature curtain and a set of lights, which makes the whole look rather like a puppet show with an elaborate musical layer. The noise of a fabric strip pulled along rubber bands and the sound of the light switch are also treated as musical elements and precisely marked in the score. The protagonist of this peculiar spectacle, however, is the soloist, who at the same time acts as the conductor. He places his hands inside the box, while the image from the camera is projected onto a screen behind the box.

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[8] S. Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music* (editor's materials), introduction to the score (2020), https://www.edition-s.dk/music/simon-steen-andersen/black-box-music, accessed 10 Apr. 2021.

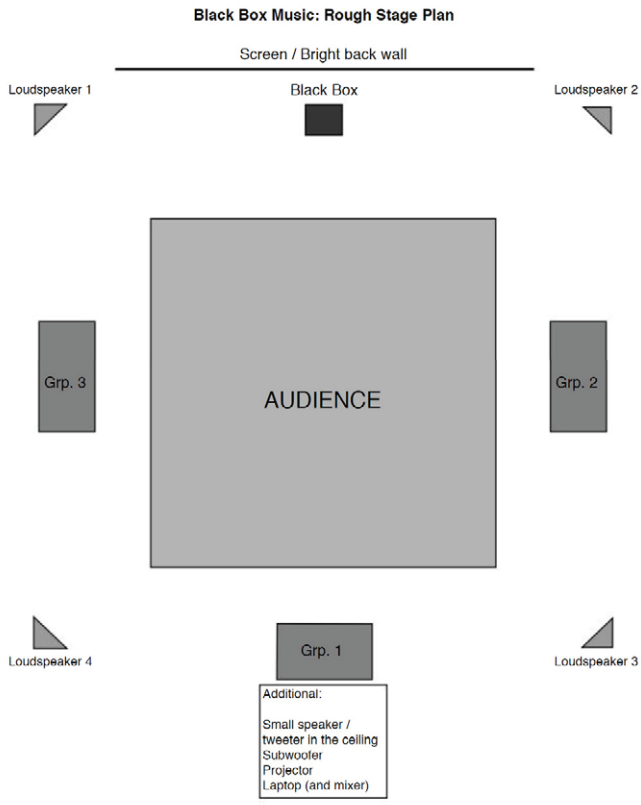


Fig. 1. Simon Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music*, rough stage plan.[9]

Steen-Andersen amplifies the visual element by projected a magnified image and showing only the soloist's hands, which makes this figure seem unreal. The soloist's role is, in a way, a variation on classical conducting, since it does include gestures traditionally performed by the conductor such as beat patterns and indicating the onset of sound. These gestures, however, are juxtaposed with others known from everyday non-verbal communication as well as with hand signals belonging to the sign language.

The gestures may be divided into several categories:

[9] S. Steen-Andersen, introduction to the score….

- emblems, that is, gestures independent of speech, but possessing precisely defined meanings. In this case they indicate numbers, approval (thumbs up), the victory sign (the index and middle fingers form a 'V');[10]
- illustrative signs, that is, speech-dependent gestures related to verbal communication, such as the sports sign for 'time out' (right hand placed vertically, the left hand placed horizontally on the right);
- signs for individual letters taken from sign language, illustrated with photographs in the introduction to the soloist's part. Those that recur are indicated by symbols in the score.[11]

The main idea of *Black Box Music* is to reunite sound with gesture using the above-described audiovisual technique. Music, an art abstract by nature,[12] is linked here to concrete gestures which have their unequivocal meanings in Western culture. This justifies the use of the term 'music object' rather than interpreting this setup as a visual imitation of the musical layer.

Section one, *Ouverture*, begins with a sequence of the curtain rising, lights going on, then a *tutti* chord, followed by a hush-up, lights going off, and the curtain being drawn. The soloist gradually introduces more and more gestures, invariably linked to sound, and begins to build a kind of audiovisual narration. As the composer explains, the procedure consists in 'taking some kind of natural consequence of that gesture and then trying to find a sound for it'.[13] In this case, the natural consequence of the given gesture is the gesture that follows, visually most closely related to the previous one, and selected from the repertory defined in the score. Thus, after the movement symbolising a phone call ('PHONE'; see Fig. 2, gesture of picking up the phone[14]), there comes the gesture for 'HANG UP' (Fig. 3, gesture of hanging up[15]), while thumbs down can easily come after thumbs up since all it takes to move from one to the other is turn the hand without moving the fingers.

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[10] 'Emblem', in *Oxford English and Spanish Dictionary*, https://www.lexico.com/definition/emblem, accessed 10 Apr. 2021.

[11] S. Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music* (score), https://issuu.com/edition-s/docs/black_box_music/3, accessed 10 Apr. 2021.

[12] H.H. Eggebrecht, *Understanding Music. The Nature and Limits of Musical Cognition*, tr. by Richard Evans (Routledge: London, 2010).

[13] *Simon Steen-Andersen - A musical approa[c]h…*, 1 59' 00" – 1 59' 10".

[14] S. Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music* (editor's materials).

[15] S. Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music* (editor's materials).

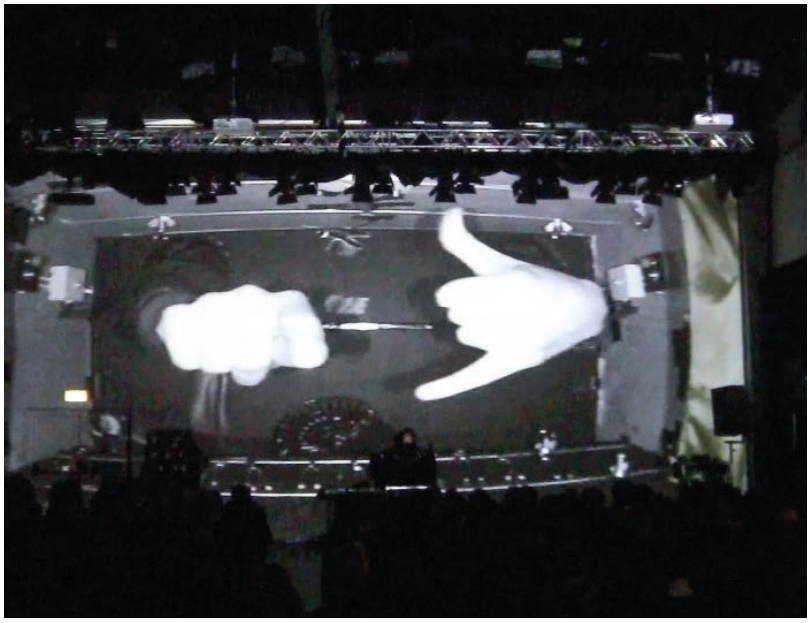


Fig. 2. Simon Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music*, gesture of picking up the phone.

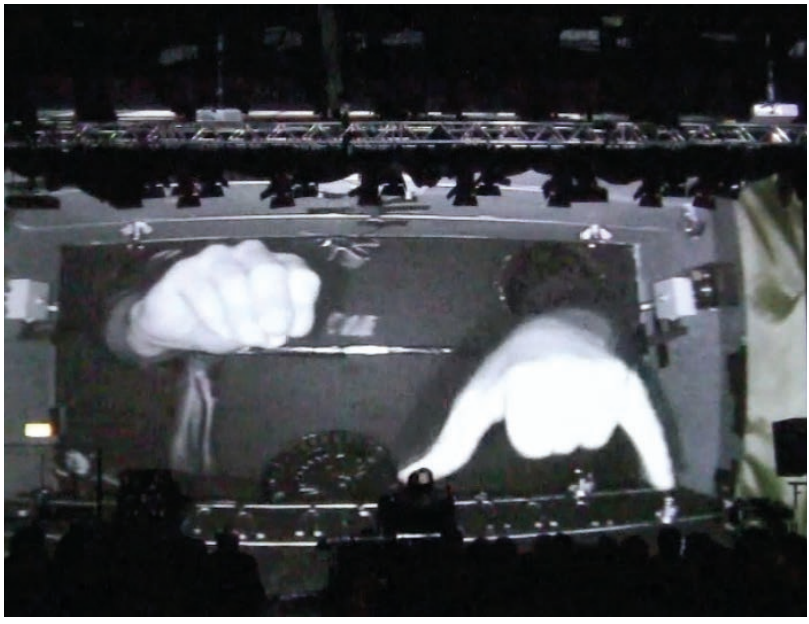


Fig. 3. Simon Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music*, gesture of hanging up.

Gestures also control the topophonic aspect of the composition since the direction of the hand's movement points to the group of instruments responsible for producing the sound compatible with the given gesture. While beating triple time, the soloist's hand moves left-right-up, thus activating in succession the instrumental groups situated to the left of, to the right of, and behind the audience. Gradually the relations between gestures become more and more obvious, so that the whole takes on a progressively choreographic character. From time to time, however, the composer breaks the rules in order to, as he puts in, 'establish a logic, repeat it so many times until you forget it in a way, and then start bending it', using a consonance to bring out a dissonance.[16] This is why after a series of visually logical and correlated gestures there comes another one consisting of apparently unconnected gestures which, for instance, use the successive degrees of a musical scale as their corresponding sounds. This again directs our attention towards the auditory aspect of the 'spectacle'. The parts of the orchestra and the conductor likewise begin to disintegrate, in imitation of a concert situation when the conductor is perceptibly not synchronised with the orchestra. The composer first provides the spectators with a context through multiple repetitions of a *tutti* chord indicated by the conductor, and then gradually delays the orchestra's reaction until the orchestra eventually takes over the initiative and the situation is reversed.

The central section is slower and more tonal. Various objects begin to appear in the box, including microtonal tuners with the successive frequencies of 442 Hz, 392 Hz, 329.6 Hz, 523.25 Hz, 466 Hz, 415 Hz, 435 Hz, 440 Hz, and 443 Hz. Through an appropriate use of articulations and dynamics (accents, *crescendo dal niente*), the instrumental ensemble imitates the sound of the tuning forks, which are made to vibrate by being hit against the base and sides of the box. The tempo calms down; the rhythmic pulsation of the instruments relieves the tension, which prepares the foundations for section three. In the interval between the sections, the composer experiments with the scheme of a classical symphonic concert, making the musicians tune their instruments in a staged fashion until a conductor's baton appears on the screen as a sign from Steen-Andersen's soloist-conductor.

[16] *Simon Steen-Andersen - A musical approa[c]h…*, 2 12'01" – 2 12'09".

The finale brings a change. Having exploited a certain pool of gestures, the soloist begins to explore the acoustics of the empty box by knocking on its base and sides. Finger snapping in various rhythmic configurations inaugurates a dialogue with the instrumental groups. The soloist also begins to build his own sound installation by stretching rubber bands on hooks previously attached to the base of the box and constructing something like a string instrument. More objects come into the box, one by one: plastic cups, a fan, pieces of paper, a fabric strip, and balloon, hanging on pieces of string and together making up one 'music machine', which works until the box is packed full of objects.[17] The composer describes the finale as follows: 'It's very festive […]" but due to the excess of objects 'in the end it kind of collapses in festivity, in a big anti-climax'.[18] The last act of this spectacle thus leaves us with the image of a useless sound installation.

Sound Objects in Simon Steen-Andersen's Works and Pierre Schaeffer's Acousmatic Listening

Though Steen-Andersen distances himself from direct inspirations in his works, his audiovisual explorations fit very well into Pierre Schaeffer's concept of new ways of listening, and acousmatic listening in particular. As a composer, leading theorist of the music listening experience, radio announcer and sound engineer, Schaeffer (1910–1995) was especially interested in the influence of the radio and music recording industry on sound reception.[19] In his work *Traité des objets musicaux*, Schaeffer distinguished three listening modes:

1. Causal listening – its main objective is to define the cause (or source) of sound on the basis of its qualities; it is an attempt to establish what or who produces the sound, where it comes from, how it behaves, etc.
2. Semantic listening – is responsible for decoding and interpreting messages using a key such as spoken language or sound codes.

[17] S. Steen-Andersen, *Black Box Music* (score).
[18] *Simon Steen-Andersen – A musical approa[c]h…*, 2 17'05" – 2 17'16".
[19] P. Schaeffer, 'Acousmatics', in Ch. Cox, D. Warner, eds, *Audio Culture. Readings in Modern Music* (2004), 76-81.

3. Reduced or acousmatic listening: 'Listening for the purpose of focusing on the qualities of the sound itself (pitch, timbre, etc.), independent of its source or meaning.'[20]

Schaeffer's acousmatic concept is probably routed in phenomenology, which attempts to describe the object without reference to its cause. 'Phenomenology disregards the traditional philosophical distinctions between "subject" and "object," "appearance" and "reality" and instead attempts simply to describe the contents of experience without reference to its source or subjective mode (e.g. dreaming, waking, etc.).'[21]

The term 'acousmatic' (Fr. *acousmatique*) is derived from the Greek word *akousmatikoi* (*ἀκουσματικοί*), referring to Pythagoras' pupils who would listen to their master deliver his lecture from behind a veil or screen, so that only his voice could reach them. This opened their minds up to a new way of perceiving sound. According to Schaeffer, this effect can be achieved nowadays by using modern technical solutions; the Pythagorean veil has been replaced by the radio. At the same time, the acousmatic method provides us with access to 'sound objects', which are the objects of acousmatic listening.[22] Schaeffer distinguishes four main traits of sound objects:

1. A sound object can be distinguished from the instrument which produces the given sound. As he explains,

> It is obvious that when we say 'That's a violin' or 'That's a creaking door,' we are alluding to the *sound* emitted by the violin, to the *creaking* of the door. But the distinction we would like to establish between the instrument and the sonorous object is even more radical: if someone plays us a tape which records a sound whose origin we are unable to identify, what are we hearing? Precisely what we are calling a sonorous object, independent of any causal reference, which is designated by the terms *sonorous body*, *sonorous source* or *instrument*.

2. The magnetic tape is not a sound object because the tape is merely the carrier of that object. The presence of the object is associated with our subjective perception. It only acquires sense and meaning at the moment when it is registered and interpreted by the listener's

[20] M. Chion, *Audio-Vision. Sound on Screen* (1990), 223.
[21] Ch. Cox, D. Warner, introduction to Schaeffer, 'Acousmatics', 76.
[22] Schaeffer, 'Acousmatics', 79.

ears. Acting on the tape physically (for instance, cutting it) does not change the object, since it 'is nonetheless *contained entirely in our perceptive consciousness*'.[23]

3. The same tape may comprise a number of different sound objects. According to Schaeffer, manipulating the tape does not modify the object itself, but rather creates other objects out of it. The composer also accepts the correlation between the manipulations to which we subject the tape and the perception of the object:

> Suppose, for example, that we listened to a sound recorded at normal speed, then slowed down, then again at normal speed. The slowed-down portion, acting like a magnifying glass in relation to the temporal structure of the sound, will have allowed us to discern certain details – of grain, for example – which our listening, thus alerted and informed, will rediscover in the second passage at normal speed. We must let ourselves be guided here by the evidence, and the very way we have had to formulate our supposition dictates the response: it is indeed the *same* sonorous object, subjected to different means of observation, that we are comparing to itself, original and transposed. But what makes it one and the same object is precisely our will to comparison […].[24]

4. A sound object is not a state of the mind.[25] Schaeffer emphasises the subjective character of object perception. This, however, does not preclude the possibility of analysing and describing the object:

> To avoid confusing it with its physical cause or a 'stimulus,' we seemed to have grounded the sonorous object on our subjectivity. But – our last remarks already indicate this – the sonorous object is not modified for all that, neither with the variations in listening from one individual to another, nor with the incessant variations in our attention and our sensibility. Far from being subjective (in the sense of individuals), incommunicable, and practically ungraspable, sonorous objects, as we shall see, can be clearly described and analyzed. We can gain knowledge of them.[26]

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[23] Schaeffer, 'Acousmatics', 79.
[24] Schaeffer, 'Acousmatics', 80.
[25] Schaeffer, 'Acousmatics', 81.
[26] Schaeffer, 'Acousmatics', 81.

Steen-Andersen's understanding of the sound object has many features in common with the way it was defined by Pierre Schaeffer. Steen-Andersen claims: 'even my purely instrumental music has always been kind of electronic', which is owing to his 'approach to acoustic music as sound, and also an attempt to get away from the identity of individual instruments'.[27] In *Black Box Music*, this manifests itself in the division of instruments into groups and blending their sound, in using similar articulations, playing in unison, and dynamics ranging from *fortissimo* to *fortissimo possibile*. The composer avoids 'noise' as a direct effect aiming to attract attention. Besides, a type of sound perceived by audiences as unpleasant effectively bars the composition from entering the mainstream. Nevertheless, he understands the 'sound object' itself as the visual layer which is an integral part of the musical one, inseparable from it for as long as our eyes remain open. Steen-Andersen comments that the concept of integrating elements belonging to different categories of perception need not be limited to hearing and sight but may also be extended so as to include other senses.[28]

The acousmatic method to some extent necessitates the presence of the visual component, be it the Pythagorean veil or a loudspeaker. The subversive situation in *Black Box Music* incorporates and in a way presupposes all of Schaeffer's listening modes. By creating a topophonically arranged and speaker-transformed instrumental layer, the composer puts the audience's causal listening abilities to the test. The same effect is achieved through blending (unifying) the instrumental colours and concealing the relations between the ensemble's playing and the position of the hands in the box. Semantic listening is also present in the motion-and-sound narrative of the work, despite the lack of any verbal content. Interpretation of the given gesture takes place in conjunction with the sound that is identified with that gesture. For instance, the sound of the phone ringing is associated with the gesture of picking up the phone, clearly distinguished from the movement which represents 'hanging up'.

Acousmatic listening is present, first and foremost, in the above-discussed technique of blending instrumental sound. The role of the 'Pythagorean veil' is played in *Black Box Music* by the

[27] *Simon Steen-Andersen - A musical approa[c]h…*, 1'46" – 2'15".
[28] *Simon Steen-Andersen - A musical approa[c]h…*, 28'00" and ff.

screen with the projection of the soloist's hand movements. Though our intuition might suggest that the projection only reinforces causal listening, it in fact creates one more, additional visual layer which camouflages the actual source of the sound. A similar technique has been applied in numerous productions of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, or even at contemporary pop music concerts. In Act Two of Mozart's opera, Papageno the bird-catcher is looking for his beloved Papagena, and, having not found her, in despair makes up his mind to hang himself. Three child-spirits appear just in time to remind him of the magic silver bells he possesses. Their sound brings Papagena to the stage, and this scene is followed by a triumphant finale.[29] In many stage productions of the opera such as the one presented in 2006 at the Metropolitan Opera[30] and in Miloš Forman's film *Amadeus*,[31] the part of the bells is actually performed by a celesta hidden in the orchestra pit, whereas the bells only serve as a stage prop.

Another example is the playback technique frequently used by pop artists while performing songs accompanied by complex choreographies, which make simultaneous singing difficult. In this case, the pre-recorded soundtrack comprising the vocal part is played back from the speakers, while the singer only moves his or her lips, thus acting out a performance of the piece in real time. During the 2011 *California Dreaming* concert tour, US singer Katy Perry imitated playing the recorder in one of the songs but was exposed since her movements were evidently at odds with the flute's melody.[32] The anecdotal end of this episode can be interpreted in the context of audiovisuality. The situation is similar here to that described by Steen-Andersen. The listener, who normally does not expect the artist to use playback during a concert, will take it as a jarring note; even more so if the visual and auditory layers no longer correspond to each other.

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[29] P. Kamiński, *Tysiąc i jedna opera* (2015), 1052.

[30] Metropolitan Opera, *The Magic Flute* (2006), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFolidudY74, accessed 12 Apr. 2021.

[31] M. Forman, excerpt from *Amadeus*, 1974, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3glswAQNR7c, accessed 12 Apr. 2021.

[32] *ABC News*, 'Katy Perry Flute Fail: Singer Accidentally Reveals She's Not Really Playing Recorder', https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbqFMgdSeGs, accessed 12 Apr. 2021.

Conclusions

The visual factor has always played a very important role in music. Intermedia art perception has invariably been part of culture from ancient syncretism to the opera to film soundtracks. In all these genres, however, the musical and visual layers can be separated from each other. The opera as a predominantly musical form still retains its artistic value when listened to as a recording, while its various productions may be considerably different in visual terms. In films, though music is their integral part and frequently provides an emotional context, it is still in many cases not directly related to any specific movie sequence. For instance, Ludwig van Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9 in D minor* Op. 125 can be heard in many different films, but this fact does not have any impact on the original music content.

The situation is reversed, however, in the works of Simon Steen-Andersen. *Black Box Music* is a perfect research area for a discussion of audiovisuality, the role of modern technologies in the composition process and in music theatre, the relations between the conductor and the orchestra, topophonics, and many other aspects of the topic. Most of all, Steen-Andersen's composition impresses the listener/viewer with the complexity of experience. The work's carefully designed structure, which combines the achievements of previous generations of composers with new technologies, is an example of a comprehensive intermedia event whose every component has its precisely defined place and function. The absolute integration of visual and musical elements in this work makes it possible to interpret it on many levels and opens up completely new possibilities for music work perception and conceptualisations of audiovisuality.

The question remains open whether Simon Steen-Andersen's output should be viewed as the summary and closing achievement in the field of interactions between visual and auditory elements, or whether, conversely, his output paves the way for further explorations of audiovisual interrelations.

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