

The 80th anniversary of the life of Alfred Bączkowicz

Personality and musical achievements

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Alfred Bączkowicz

Introduction

The encounter with a musical personality almost immediately raises the question about “the roots” i.e. where he comes from, whom he studied with, who was his master and what educational tradition or “school” he belongs to, and above all, in what environment of musical inspiration he grew up and what group of artists he represents. Providing answers to these questions makes it easier to identify ourselves with the person and experience an emotional connection with the creativity presented, i.e. with the achievements and even with the way of evaluating different kinds of musical creativity.

Alfred Bączkowicz is an extraordinary personality in the Opole music community. Celebrating his 80th birthday in December 2019, he was a long-time organist at the Opole Cathedral who has influenced the environment of church musicians in Upper Silesia, a pedagogue, a distinguished teacher of harmony and theoretic subjects, and a teacher of several generations of musicians, graduates of the State Primary and Secondary Music Schools in Opole and the Diocesan Institute of Church Music in Opole (formerly the School of Church Music). In each of these fields, his professional work encompasses more than 40 years of solid and dedicated work.

The effectiveness of his pedagogical activity is highlighted by the title of “professor” frequently used by students and graduates. In his case, it is not only a polite phrase customarily derived from secondary schools, but it indicates his achievements and the way of his actual influence and a fact of being a mentor predominantly in the field of harmony. In addition, Alfred Bączkowicz has been a composer of many liturgical hymns and melodies, an author of respected harmonic arrangements and co-editor of chorales which are important for the Silesian tradition of church music, i.e. harmonic arrangements of church hymns for organists. These activities demonstrate his personality, and above all his human sensitivity, kindness and readiness to sacrifice himself. For these reasons the name “Bączkowicz” says a lot among the musicians of Upper Silesia and in other parts of Poland as well (K. Grytz-Jurkowska 2017: 36-37). Therefore, it is academically justified to ask about his roots, the beginnings of his musical path, the people who he met on the path of his life and who had an impact on the formation of his attitudes and passions that place him in a certain perspective almost for his entire life.

This text is an attempt to find answers for the aforementioned questions that arise from meeting and getting to know the person and musical achievements of Alfred Bączkowicz. The complete text consists of several points covering his biography, organist’s service, pedagogue’s work, involvement in diocesan commissions, participation in the work of editorial teams and his compositional work, with a particular emphasis on the Mass in F major.

Biography

Alfred Bączkowicz was born on 3rd December 1939 in Radzionków in Upper Silesia, where the Bączkowicz family had lived for generations (the information obtained during an

interview with A. Bączkowicz conducted in Opole on 11th October 2019). One of the family lines represents a strong baking tradition which dates back at least 100 years. The musical traditions of the Bączkowicz family also turn out to be centuries-old. The family history recalls that in the 17th century an organist in Piekary Śląskie was Balthazar Bączkowicz whose father was also an organist (J. Grytz-Jurkowska 2015: X–XI). This fact also has a spiritual meaning, because then Piekary Śląskie church still had a painting of Our Lady which has now been located in Opole since 1702. At the beginning of 19th century the painting was transferred from the Jesuit church to the cathedral of the Opole Diocese, where it has been worshipped as an image of Our Lady of Opole. A copy of the painting remained in Piekary Śląskie. As a consequence, Alfred Bączkowicz, being a descendant of the family, had this special gift of playing the organ before the same painting of Our Lady as his forefather, however, not in Piekary, but in Opole. The nephews and nieces from the family of his eldest brother also embrace musical traditions. Alfred Bączkowicz's nephew, being a graduate of violin class at The Academy of Music in Warsaw (currently The Fryderyk Chopin University of Music), was a long-term musician in the symphonic orchestra of North Rhine-Westphalia, and his niece, being a graduate pianist of The Academy of Music in Katowice, is a teacher in The Primary Music School and a church musician who also graduated from the School of Church Music in Opole (G. Poźniak 2014a: 58).

The Bączkowicz family had seven children. Alfred and his sister Elżbieta were the youngest twins among their siblings. The children's idyll of the family home occurred during the difficult years of World War II. After the war, Alfred began his education in a 7-class primary school in Radzionków. In addition, as a boy, he also learned to play the violin with Mr Maciejowicz in nearby Rojca (today Rojca is a district of Radzionków). Mr Maciejowicz was a local musician who conducted an orchestra in Rojca, in which A. Bączkowicz also played. There he had met a friend who was also learning to play the violin: Eugeniusz Juretzko who later became a missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate working for many years in Cameroon and eventually being appointed the first bishop of the diocese of Yokadouma. Both students of Mr Maciejowicz continued their studies in the State Primary Music School in Tarnowskie Góry. Their paths parted when E. Juretzko began his studies in the Minor Seminary of The Katowice Diocese in Tarnowskie Góry (he later continued his studies in the minor and higher seminaries of the OMI Oblates), and A. Bączkowicz entered in the High Music School in Katowice.

The wedding ceremony of his eldest brother Augustine, which took place in Rusinowice near Lubliniec was an important moment in the development of Alfred Bączkowicz's musical talents. As a boy he played music at that ceremony together with other musicians, including Joanna Piecuch, a sister of the "new" sister-in-law, who was a teacher at the State Primary Music School in Tarnowskie Góry, Ruda Śląska-Nowy Bytom, and later also in Lubliniec. During the ceremony, the parents were persuaded to send their gifted "son" to a proper music school and this is what happened. Alfred became a student of the State Primary Music School in Tarnowskie Góry, where Jerzy Golek became a violin teacher. At the same time, Gizela Skop, originally from nearby Strzybnica and who would later become a musicologist and composer

of liturgical hymns, was a student at the music school in Tarnowskie Góry involved in the “Light-Life” Movement. To gain acknowledgment from her, other boys, including A. Bączkowicz, used to write short musical compositions based on the sounds of Gis-e-a (in reference to the name of Gizela). During the aforementioned period, Ernest Koj, who was a renowned musician endowed with absolute hearing as well as an organist in St. Peter and Paul’s Church in Tarnowskie Góry, was a teacher of musical hearing (A. Reginek 2018: 169). A characteristic element of his classes were his auditory dictations which the students were to write down in 1-voice, while he was playing them in 4-voice – it was meant to practice the students’ harmonic hearing. This experience generated the Jubilarian’s love for harmony. Another important event that somehow influenced Alfred’s future was the fact of organising a composing competition among the school’s students (for “young artists”), whose initiators were the director of the State Primary Music School in Tarnowskie Góry Tadeusz Okuljar and a violist Zygmunt Kurz. A. Bączkowicz composed a violin quartet in the form of a minuet. This composition won the first place. As a prize, the winner received a two-volume work “Instrumentation” by Nikolai Rymyski-Korsakov (Part I – theory, Part II – examples from the composer’s works). This work became the subject of comprehensive personal studies of harmony and instrumentation, which also resulted in the fluent reading of scores. An additional advantage of cooperation with the aforementioned teacher Zygmunt Kurz was playing in his orchestra which he conducted in the parish of the Camillians in Tarnowskie Góry on Jan’s Sediment (formerly this district was called Galenberg, from German Galgenberg).

During his music school, A. Bączkowicz developed interest in organ music and the organ itself. Together with his friend Aleksander Glinkowski he was even visiting the churches in his area and asked the parish priests to make the organ available to them even for a short moment so that they could play it, which, as we can easily imagine, was not an easy task.

The next stage of Alfred Bączkowicz’s education was marked by the Karol Szymanowski Secondary Music School in Katowice, which was located on the ground floor of the current Academy of Music building, where A. Bączkowicz continued to learn playing the violin. His music teacher was Józef Salacz, who, as the Jubilarian recalls, not only taught playing, but above all taught listening. This systematic work alongside his master made A. Bączkowicz sensitive to the matter of tunes. Among other things J. Salacz taught how to play in natural tunes so the student had to learn to hear, for example, clear quarts. The sensitivity to the matters of temperance learned at that time has remained for life.

An important stage of education was participation in the high school choir which at that time was conducted first by Edmund Kajdasz, and later by Napoleon Siess. This was an opportunity to study new, or perhaps even the newest choral literature, e.g. the works of Józef Świder who used to come to the choir’s final rehearsals when his compositions were being prepared. At that time the Jubilarian was also involved in the choir’s activities in his hometown Radzionków. However, as he already had “something” to say from a musical perspective, he was not welcomed by the organist and conductor, who, for instance, was indifferent to obvious mistakes in manually transcribed choral works, e.g. those written by J. Świder,

which A. Bączkowicz knew from his high school choir. As the conductor of the parish choir tried to be faithful to what was written, all comments from the young chorister were not welcomed. This was followed by the lack of possibility to practice playing the organ in the hometown church. However, according to the proverb that “there is no evil that would not bring good”, the Jubilarian found such opportunities in nearby Bytom, amongst others in the church of the Holy Trinity in cooperation with the then organist Franciszek Matejczyk. In most cases there happened an opportunity to accompany the choir. A. Bączkowicz was yet involved in other ways in his hometown Radzionków, taking part in the activities of the poetry club. While others were reciting various texts, A. Bączkowicz improvised on the piano, which created a unique atmosphere that combined the values of words and music.

The next stage of his education was marked by studies in music theory at the State Higher School of Music in Katowice (today's Academy of Music). Among his masters were also such personalities as Bogusław Szabelski, under whom he studied one semester, Witold Szalonek, and later also Jan Wincenty Hawel. For B. Bączkowicz, studying under the guidance of such renowned teachers was a dream come true and an opportunity to develop his interest in the matters of harmony. However, our Jubilarian never gave up his interest in organ music, which resulted in the decision to undertake the organist ministry, first in Bytom and then in Zabrze. This decision was related to the necessity of interrupting studies and dedicating oneself to working in a large parish, i.e. St. Joseph's Parish in Zabrze, and then at the Cathedral Parish in Opole. When he took up a job in Opole, he became invariably connected with the city. In 1979, he married Beata Wencel who was a first year student at the Organist School established in Opole in 1974 (later a graduate of the Faculty of Music Education at the Academy of Music in Katowice and German studies at the University of Wrocław), of which A. Bączkowicz became the first teacher (A. Reginek 2018: 24). Apart from his work as a cathedral organist and teacher of the aforementioned organist school, A. Bączkowicz also started a job in music education.

His choice to work as a teacher of theoretical subjects at the State Primary and Secondary School of Music in Opole influenced his decision to complete his studies in the field of music theory at the Katowice Academy of Music. The already mentioned Jan Wincenty Hawel became the master for A. Bączkowicz. He was also a supervisor of his master's thesis dedicated to selected issues of hearing education, principles of music and harmony preceded by a critical analysis of Polish, German, French, Czech and Russian textbooks available in this field. The further part of A. Bączkowicz master's thesis presented his own proposals for the methodology of teaching the aforementioned subjects, which gained great interest of his supervisor. It is worth mentioning that studying in Katowice and the necessity of continuous commuting were creating certain problems, e.g. he had to find and reimburse others for supplying him. The second period of studies which were completed successfully also resulted in friendship with the then docent Julian Gembalski who used to give the Jubilarian organ lessons. Today, A. Bączkowicz nostalgically recalls that if his studies had not been interrupted, he would certainly have remained at the university as a researcher, in the same way as his aforementioned colleague Aleksander Glinkowski.

Organist ministry

As it has already been mentioned, during his studies A. Bączkowicz began his first professional career as an organist in St. Margaret's parish in Bytom run by the Divine Word Missionaries. There, the Jubilarian was working from 1965 for a period of 1,5 years playing only on Sundays and holidays. After this period, there happened an opportunity to undertake service in the noble St. Joseph's Church in Zabrze, which was one of the largest parishes in the diocese. The service in the Zabrze church lasted 8 years (1966–1973) (A. Reginek 2018: 24). During that time A. Bączkowicz founded a 40-person children's choir which functioned beside the mixed one. He composed two Masses for the choirs he led. One of them is included in the current issue of this journal (Mass in F major), and the other was written for mixed and children's choirs. Apart from that, there were also other Mass compositions which were completed during his work in Opole (including a.k.a. *Missa rogativa*).

After eight years of his work in Zabrze, the opportunity to work in Bytom at St. Barbara's Church arose, where the largest Carl Berschdorf's 65-voice instrument is located (4 manuals and a pedal). Regarding this matter A. Bączkowicz already had an arrangement with the local parish priest Hubert Kowol. However, at the same time, in 1973, the possibility of becoming an organist at the Opole Cathedral appeared. At the instigation of the then vicar Fr Czesław Gac who acted on behalf of the then parish priest Fr Antoni Jokiel, A. Bączkowicz began his service in Opole on 1st December 1973. It is worth mentioning that the organist lived in the rectory for 1,5 years, and only later in his official apartment. Undertaking organist ministry at the Opole Cathedral was not an easy task. During the first 12 years of his ministry, the Jubilarian was playing on his own, without any alternate. It was only later that Józef Chudalla, who was a graduate in musicology from the Catholic University of Lublin and at the same time the first graduate from the Organist School in Opole and A. Bączkowicz's student, took up his duties. In this way A. Bączkowicz's ministry at the Opole Cathedral began, which lasted until 2018, i.e. 43 years. In recognition of his long and dedicated service in 2004, the Jubilarian received the papal medal *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* (F. Koenig 2006: 55).

The function of a cathedral organist was associated with the need to collaborate with the cathedral choir which was run by Jan Ludwig from Żędowice near Zawadzkie. He was also a graduate of the State Music School in Tarnowskie Góry, and his piano teacher was the aforementioned Joanna Piecuch who influenced the decision of A. Bączkowicz's parents to send their son to the music school in Tarnowskie Góry. As a consequence, the paths of the former colleagues from the music school met in Opole after so many years. They attended the State Primary Music School in Tarnowskie Góry together, sang together in the school choir, and attended the High Music School in Katowice, and afterwards, Alfred began his studies at the Katowice Music Academy, while Jan did the same at the Wrocław Music Academy. Years later, they worked together at the Opole Cathedral. Jan Ludwig was also a teacher at the Opole State Primary and Secondary Music School and conducted a choir at the Opole Philharmonic.

Pedagogical work

As a result of undertaking the function of an organist at the Opole Cathedral, there occurred an opportunity and at the same time a necessity to undertake pedagogical work. In 1974, A. Bączkowicz together with Fr Helmut Sobeczko began to educate young organists for the needs of the Opole Diocese within the framework of the “Organist School” (J. Chudalla 2014: 25). The beginnings were very modest, including a lack of suitable rooms, which meant using even the choir loft in the cathedral. For a year only the two aforementioned persons were involved in this work. After a year, other people also joined them: Fr Bogdan Kicingier, Fr Wenencjusz Kądziołka, and others, and later the directors of the school were Fr Nabzdyk, again Fr H. Sobeczko, and later also Remigiusz Pośpiech and Fr Grzegorz Poźniak (G. Poźniak 2014b: 53). In this way the work of the diocesan institution educating church musicians had begun, which later underwent various organizational transformations and changed its naves. The Jubilarian worked in this institution for over 40 years. During this time he taught hearing training, principles of music, harmony, playing the piano, playing the organ with liturgical accompaniment and organ improvisation. Among the graduates of the aforementioned institution, who mostly benefited from the opportunity to learn alongside A. Bączkowicz and followed in his footsteps as musicians and authors of music arrangements, are, among others: Józef Chudalla, Hubert Prochota, Waldemar Krawiec, Ernest Malik, Jarosław Jasiura and Michał Blechinger. Keeping in mind the students of the Diocesan Institute of Church Music, A Bączkowicz was also able to create smaller organ pieces. Fughetta “Hallelujah, Jesus lives” is an example.

The second place of A. Bączkowicz’s pedagogical work became the State Primary and Secondary Music School in Opole. As it frequently happens, some important stages of life begin with surprise and in an unplanned way. That was also in the case of A. Bączkowicz. Something that was supposed to last just “for a short time” became extended to 45 years. The teacher at the Opole music school in the early 1970s in the field of theoretical subjects was Janusz Kościów who even had additional hours. Because of his emigration, Alfred was asked to replace him from December of the academic year 1974/1975. After several months of work, the management, seeing the commitment of the new teacher, offered him a permanent job and commissioned him teaching mainly in the fifth and sixth class. This fact became the reason why the Jubilarian decided to complete his studies in music theory. Thus began a job that lasted more than four decades. A. Bączkowicz was the head of the theory section for 18 years, so he was responsible for teaching general music subjects. For a certain period he was also responsible for the vocal section. Being a long-time employee of the Opole music school he taught the following subjects: hearing training, principles of music, harmony, counterpoint, organ playing, and for some time even piano playing. Because of pedagogical purposes and seeing certain deficiencies or the need to improve certain technical problems in playing, A. Bączkowicz created musical miniatures, including a piano piece of medium difficulty with its own theme and variations (“Theme with variations”), which his students played during piano classes. Similarly, for pedagogical purposes, A. Bączkowicz wrote a children’s song “Ginger squirrel” with piano accompaniment,

which is sung by children as part of “Music Preschool” in the Diocesan Institute of Church Music in Opole. He also wrote for pedagogical purposes 100 hearing training exercises (i.e. 10 two-voice exercises devised in a permanent counterpoint in subsequent intervals) which could be used in music education with the ministerial consent. However, they have never been published in a music publishing house, but have only appeared in photocopies. The most valuable work related to pedagogical work, which has also never been published officially, but only appeared in photocopies, is the course book on harmony that is a results of the author’s vision formulated during the second period of aforementioned studies. It has been developed and improved over the years. It still enjoys great interest among students and is a basic literature for learning harmony in the Diocesan Institute of Church Music (A. Bączkiewicz 2014: 150–154). The author still hopes to publish it in a renowned music publishing house. So far, he has been trying to promote his methodological *modus operandi* which has proved its value in the pedagogical practice (A. Bączkiewicz 2007: 67–73). In recognition of his work as a teacher he received Golden Cross of Merit awarded by the President of the Republic of Poland in 2002.

While describing and thus characterizing the pedagogical work of A. Bączkiewicz, it should also be mentioned that in general he has never given private lessons or tutoring. Such activities were exceptional, as in the case of this paper’s author. Alfred agreed to prepare him in the area of harmony, which would allow him to apply for musicology studies at the Institute of Musicology of the Catholic University of Lublin. However, this task was a result of a personal request from Bishop Jan Wieczorek, then the Bishop of Gliwice.

Member of the commission and an organ builder consultant

The appearance in 1973 in the Opole community of an educated musician with a positive experience of organist ministry in two earlier parishes of Upper Silesia caused him to become noticeable from the very beginning as a person who could be involved in the works of the “new diocese” that was established in 1972 after its transformation from the previous Opole Administration. This need was noticed by Fr Helmut Sobeczko, a liturgist and chaplain of the then Opole Bishop Franciszek Jop.

Apart from the honourable musical service at the Opole Cathedral, A. Bączkiewicz’s involvement in the diocesan work included four additional directions of activity. The first was the aforementioned pedagogical work at the Diocesan Institute of Church Music (formerly the Church Music School). With a certain degree of humour one can notice that although the institution was changing, its names were changing, the directors of the institution were changing, Alfred continued to work, teaching and requiring.

The second field of activity was the participation in the diocesan commission responsible for the organ commission after repairs and consulting on the issues related to the

reconstruction or construction of new instruments. It was a moment of collaboration with the following priests: Jerzy Kowolik, Bogdan Kicingier and Wenancjusz Kądziołka, which covered the period from 1973 until 2002, when the responsibility for this area of diocesan work was taken over by the musicologist and organologist Fr Grzegorz Poźniak. During all the years of his involvement in the organ building field, A. Bączkiewicz was responsible for assessing the sound issues, so his task was to check the intonation and the temperance of the organ, which is the most appropriate feature of the organ as a musical instrument.

Another important facet of Bączkiewicz's participation in the wider diocesan dimension was his involvement in publishing chants, the first of which was the Opole Chorale published in the 1980s under the auspices of Fr H. Sobeczko (*Chorał Opolski* 1985–1993). A. Bączkiewicz became the author of many harmonic arrangements for church hymns published in the chorale and the author of new hymns which were to be included in the planned edition of the Opole Chorale. In the same way and to an even greater extent, A. Bączkiewicz had become involved in the edition of the Chorale “Road to Heaven” adjusted to the new edition of the traditional Silesian prayer book and the hymnbook “Road to Heaven” over 10 years ago (*Chorał “Droga do nieba”* 2008–2009). This work was edited by Fr Joachim Waloszek. As regards the chorales, A. Bączkiewicz was also involved to the same extent in the work on a chorale in the German language in cooperation with Hubert Prochota. Besides, A. Bączkiewicz became the author of harmonic arrangements for “Fatimska Hymnbook” and collections of responsorial psalms and bidding prayers entitled “Psallite Domino sapienter” (“Psallite Domino sapienter” 2018, “Fatimska Pani” 2012). The last two publications were also edited under the direction of Fr J. Waloszek. As regards the aforementioned publications, it should be stated that the harmonic arrangements of the hymns made the author famous among a wider group of church musicians, including those far beyond the borders of the Opole Diocese. Some of A. Bączkiewicz's original works were used by other editors without the consent of their author. However, this issue should be regarded as acceptable in the context of giving glory to God Himself.

The fourth dimension of A. Bączkiewicz's involvement in the diocesan work was his participation in the preparation of various liturgical “events” which were important for the diocese. Among them most important was the papal pilgrimage to St. Anne's Mountain in 1983, where A. Bączkiewicz was an organist (at that time he had one leg in a plaster due to a fracture). For this occasion, the earlier written hymn was used: “O Mary, our Lady”, as well as the intercessory prayer for Vespers, which was later included in the Opole Chorale. He also wrote harmonic psalms for the brass band, which were instrumented by Fr Jerzy Kowolik. In collaboration with the brass band, one of the “exceptional” experiences of the pilgrimage is recorded. Alfred mentions that when preparing for the meeting with the Holy Father, due to the harsh sun and high temperature the temperance of the wind instruments rose so much that it was decided that the orchestra should play its psalm parts without the support of the organ, precisely because of the lack of tuning. However, before the Pope's arrival, the sun set behind the clouds, and in addition, a cold wind blew. The instruments turned out to cool down and regain its proper temperance. Therefore, everything could have happened in accordance with the previously arranged plan.

Composer of religious music

An issue which deserves a distinct discussion is the compositional achievement of A. Bączkowicz. In this respect, as it frequently happens, the “mother” of the work is a result of an accident or an emergency. According to the Jubilarian, the first liturgical compositions were created out of a concrete need. It should be highlighted that so far no author’s set or catalogue containing a list of all of A. Bączkowicz’s compositions has been published, so it still exists in “dispersion”, and in fact in “computer”. However, we can notice a few or a dozen compositions that somehow mark the entire compositional works of A. Bączkowicz.

The whole works can be generally divided into three parts. The first are Masses, first monodic, which are published, among others, in “The Road to Heaven”, “The Opole Chorale” or the chorale “The Road to Heaven”, including *Jubilee Mass* (DN 160, 161) (A. Bączkowicz 2000: 391–395). The second dimension of Mass compositions consists of Masses written for choirs and organs, including the presented Mass in F major. The second part of Bączkowicz’s compositions comprises composed hymns and the third one are other compositions, such as melodies of intercessions or responsorial psalms and acclamations before the Gospel. The latter in the latest edition of the collection “Psallite Domino sapienter” comprises a total of 38 original melodies (“Psallite Domino sapienter” 2018: 150).

Due to the situational need, the first Mass composition was created during the aforementioned ministry in the Divine Word Missionaries parish of St. Margaret in Bytom. During that time A. Bączkowicz wrote fragments of the first Mass in Polish, which in 1963, i.e. the era of the post-conciliar reform, had a pragmatic significance. This applies to e.g. a part of *the Lamb of God*, which today creates the “Lenten Mass”, popularly known by organists as the “funeral mass”.

The important composition created at the beginning of A. Bączkowicz’s musical ministry during his service in St. Joseph’s parish in Zabrze was *Missa rogativa* for mixed choir, children’s choir and organ. The inspiration for the composition was the fact of existing two instruments in the Zabrze St. Joseph’s Church built at the beginning of World War II by the company *Rieger* (1939–1940). The main organ has been located in the main choir loft above the main entrance to the church, and the second instrument during Alfred’s ministry was in the crypt of the church under the sanctuary; however, the organ could be controlled from the playing table of the main instrument (now the instrument from the crypt is at the side wall of the sanctuary) (F. Koenig 2019: 541–544, 837). This arrangement of instruments prompted the composer to place children on the steps of the sanctuary, accompanying them on the front instrument, and to place the mixed choir in the main choir loft. This arrangement created an opportunity for a unique dialogue between the children’s choir and the mixed choir. While hearing the voice of the front instrument, the children perfectly entered with their parts to such an extent that they did not need any help from the conductor. Beside this information regarding an important composition from the beginnings of A. Bączkowicz’s musical activity, it is essential to mention that this composition was not signed with the composer’s name

and surname, but with his pseudonym „Derfla” (the name of the composer written in reverse order - backwards). This was due to the then parish priest, Jan Dolla, for whom it was inconceivable to perform in the church a composition written by the organist. The priest regarded it as a lack of dignity for the liturgy. According to him, it was possible to perform compositions in the liturgy that had the characteristics of something “from above”, i.e. familiar, accepted, without taking into account the actual musical value of the work. The same nickname was also used by the composer while writing many other hymns.

The Mass in F major, which will be discussed in a separate place is also part of the same trend of Mass creation intended for choir.

The second current of A. Bączkowicz’s compositional achievements is marked by various kinds of hymns. The most famous hymns include, among others, the hymn to Our Lady of Opole “Opole Lady” (DN 831) to which A. Bączkowicz wrote the text and melody. This hymn is sung in the Opole Cathedral, where the devotion to Our Lady of Opole is present. Its creation was to be “provoked” by the aforementioned Fr Helmut Sobeczko. He noticed that despite having an image of Our Lady of Opole in the Opole cathedral, the diocese did not have a hymn in Her honour. Then he said: “Alfred, think about it”. And in that way the hymn was written. It was the early period of Alfred’s ministry at the Opole Cathedral, most probably in 1974. Due to the fact that the cathedral bears the name of the Holy Cross, A. Bączkowicz wrote a short hymn “You, Mary stood under the cross”, which was most frequently sung during Lent, but not only. Both hymns were included in the new edition of the Chorale “Road to Heaven” (Chorał “Droga do Nieba” 2009: 564). Besides, A. Bączkowicz is the author of melodies to many other hymns, such as the hymn to Our Lady of Lubecko, which is sung in the Marian sanctuary in Lubeck near Lubliniec in the Gliwice Diocese. The city of Lubliniec on the day of proclaiming St. Edith Stein - St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross the patron saint of the city (8.10.2008) also received a melody to the hymn dedicated to St. Edith Stein written by Cornelia Czogalik as a gift from Alfred. These are just some examples of hymns to which A. Bączkowicz created the melodies.

The collection of hymns also includes carols, e.g. “There was no room for You” or “Hurry up, shepherds” (A. Bączkowicz 2002a: 397; A. Bączkowicz 2002b: 398–399). In this respect, A. Bączkowicz is the author of studies, among others, for 3 equal voices and mixed choir (A. Bączkowicz, G. Poźniak 2005). There is also one of the carols entitled “Sleep My Little Jesus” intended for mixed choir with a children’s choir. The aforementioned compositions were also created due to the requirement of the “moment”.

The third collection of A. Bączkowicz’s religious compositions encompasses various types of smaller hymns and psalm melodies. This category includes, among others, invocations for the novena to Our Lady of Opole “Be greeted the Lady of Opole”, or hymns composed for the needs of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit in Racibórz.

Mass in F major

Due to the fact that the Mass in F major is included in this publication, this work deserves a separate conduct.

This composition was created over 50 years ago for mixed choir and organ during the music ministry of A. Bączkowicz in the St. Joseph's Church in Zabrze. Unfortunately, the exact year of the composition's creation was not recorded. However, according to the author the composition could have most probably been written in 1968, and certainly before 1970. It was then performed twice. Its performance on the organ was accompanied by Henryk Orzyszek, one of the most recognized organists from Zabrze, who came from Pawłów near Zabrze (today's Zabrze district), and then was a teacher at the State Primary and Secondary Music Schools in Zabrze, and an expert on the history of organ building in Silesia (H. Orzyszek 2011).

According to the author, the creation of this composition is not associated with any specific occasion, and thus without any link to any celebration. It was created out of the personal desire of the composer who, while serving the liturgy, observed a clear lack of choral Masses in the Polish language. At that time, the choirs were only singing Latin Masses in accordance with a pre-conciliar tradition.

Regarding the creation of this composition, it is worth mentioning that it was composed in conditions in which the composer did not have an instrument "at his disposal". During his ministry in Zabrze A. Bączkowicz lived in a rented flat in a private house of Mr Bartkowiak. Housing conditions did not allow for the use of an appropriate instrument. He could play the fragments of the composition he had created only during his ministry in the parish church.

The Mass in F major consists of five parts: *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei*. Examining the particular parts one can clearly notice that the composition represents the classical trend. It is a conscious and deliberate reference to the Mozart tradition. It was created - out of the composer's desire - in the spirit of paying homage to W.A. Mozart, the unsurpassed Mass creator, although Bączkowicz's Mass lacks the instrumental cast which is so typical of Mozart's Masses. However, the composition is characterised by a similar lightness and melodiousness, which ultimately expresses its sublime and solemn character. In this way the composer perceived similar motifs of Mozart Masses which were written in the spirit of joyful worship of God. Similarly as Mozart's compositions, the Mass contains musical rhetoric, i.e. musical emphasis of words essential for the pronunciation of the text, which was stressed, e.g. by polyphonic elements (e.g. in the *Kyrie* part), and which ultimately impacts the theological significance of each of the parts.

From a harmonic point of view, the composition yet represents a type of simple and clear harmony.

The Mass is a closed composition which, perceived by the author himself from the perspective of the past 50 years since its creation, evokes different feelings. According to the composer it is yet a testimony to that time, to that sense of *sacrum* and to those skills in the free application of various musical coefficients, which hinders the temptation of modern “fine-tuning” of the work.

Conclusion

Alfred Bączkowicz’s biography and the description of his achievements on various levels of his activity, together with the composition presented, demonstrate that we deal with a real “personality”, and his achievements of music service, pedagogical work, compositional and editorial activity (and Alfred Bączkowicz has not yet said his last word on this subject) place him among such Upper Silesia’s musical personalities as Józef Nachbar, Ryszard Gillar, Karol Hoppe, Roman Dwornik or Józef Jakac.

None of the above mentioned persons included themselves in this group, because it did not exist. It is the right of descendants to get to know, discover, appreciate, categorize and include. The Jubilarian himself definitely avoids this classification, but the facts speak for themselves.

Trying to sum up the rich and multidimensional achievements of the Jubilarian, it must be stated that his skilful combination of daily music service with pedagogical work and other activities was an exceptional ability which stands in the midst of all his involvement’s dimensions. This ability was certainly associated with great effort, self-discipline, and diligence. The skilful connection of the aforementioned levels of musical engagement could only be derived from the great love for music, exceptional musical abilities, and the love of pedagogical work. What is left in young people, students, their minds and hearts does not pass away, but it lives in next generations.

When young musicians ask about the cultural and musical “roots” of their masters, the Jubilarian undeniably demonstrates the model of a well-educated musician who “definitely” draws inspiration from the rich tradition of Silesian religious music (including the tradition of organ music), as well as from the rich heritage of the Silesian Church’s faith, which became the space of fulfilment for the Jubilarian.

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