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Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's road to the Oratorio "Sanctus Adalbertus" in the context of the composer's fascination with the person and teaching of St. John Paul II

I am truly alive as a result of having had the good fortune – not much,
but enough for me – to meet Him¹.

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's profound personal religiousness was probably the source of his deep spiritual bond with the person and personality of Karol Wojtyła – Saint John Paul II. The relationship which developed between the composer and the Pope was of a special nature. They shared related views, specific historical events, one can also speak of the similarity of their childhood fates. The early loss of mother and the trauma associated with this, expressed in their numerous statements and creative acts. Let us recall an early (of 1939) poem by Karol Wojtyła, *Mother*, with a dedication: *To Emilia – my mother*, beginning with the words: *Over this, your white grave* is a type of poetic lament of a son over his mother's grave. There are also many Marian accents in the Pope's teaching, including his most important Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* of 1987. And John Paul II's constant veneration for the Mother of God was expressed in the 'motto' of his pontificate: *Totally Yours Mary – Totus Tuus*. Marianism is also clearly present in the aesthetic system of the Pope-artist. It is sufficient to quote just one of his formulations: "The beauty of Mary captured in images is a 'mirror of God's beauty'"².

¹ *Muzyka jest rozmową*, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki w rozmowie z Anną Wieczorek i Krzysztofem Cyranem, „Jubinalia” (2008) nr 4 (gazetka na okoliczność 120-lecia Akademii Muzycznej w Krakowie), s. 1–7.

² Jan Paweł II, Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*, Rzym 1987, 33 (quoted after: Jan Paweł II, *Piękno. Antologia tekstów*, red. D. Radziejowski, słowo wstępne J. Kupczak OP, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego, Kraków 2008, p. 144).

It turns out that also in Górecki's works 'Marianism' – 'maternity' – occupies an important, not to say special place. The motif of mother, his own, early lost one and the Mother of God standing under the cross, is constantly present in the composer's works: from the earliest songs [*Trzy pieśni op. 3: Do matki, Jakież to dzwon grobowy, Ptak*] through *Ad Matrem*, the famous *Symphony No. 3 – Symphony of sorrowful songs, Marian Songs to Totus Tuus*.

In general, the composer in his mature life was fascinated by the personality and teaching of the Holy Father. One could say, he lived and created feeling the constant presence of the person and thoughts of John Paul II.

1. From history

In 1977, Cardinal Karol Wojtyła commissioned a work from Henryk Mikołaj Górecki to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the death of St Stanislaus. The task was not easy. The composer searched for historical sources and texts suitable for musicalisation. And this was at a time of dramatic events in the Church and the world. The pontificate of Paul VI had come to an end and the shortest ever pontificate of John Paul I had begun. The next conclave brought a historic breakthrough – Karol Wojtyła – John Paul II became Pope. On the evening of 16 October 1978, the shocked composer was faced with a dilemma: for whom and about whom to write a piece? Would it be about St Stanislaus, or perhaps about a Pope 'from a distant country'?

The search for the text lasted until the spring of 1979, and in the end, as is often the case with Górecki, the Book of Psalms proved an inexhaustible source. The composer juxtaposed fragments of several psalms in such a way as to combine two symbolic figures and create a single – universal – 'blessed man' – 'beatus vir'.

The result was an oratorio work, *Beatus Vir Op. 38*, a psalm for baritone, mixed choir and orchestra. It is essentially a great collective prayer (choir) and individual prayer (solo baritone): a plea for mercy, a confession of faith, a confession of trust, and finally a point of clarification: "Taste and see how sweet the Lord is, Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him". The music is simple yet sublime, full of inner tensions. Links to folklore oscillate with references to church music; a quasi-quotation of a psalm tone³ performed by the choir *a cappella* in the final movement transports us as if to another, otherworldly reality, a sacred reality. The expression of Mieczysław Tomaszewski comes to mind: "epiphanic moment". This

³ K. Kiwała, *Problematyka sacrum w polskiej muzyce współczesnej na przykładzie utworów związanych z osobą Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, Kraków 2002, p. 74, master's thesis written under supervision of prof. dr hab. Teresa Malecka, Krakow Academy of Music.

is the phrase Tomaszewski uses to describe the sudden appearance of something new in the work, as if 'from beyond', referring precisely to the idiom of sacrality⁴.

Then came June 9, 1979, the moment of the real meeting with John Paul II, as the composer said – the most important moment in his life. The performance of the Psalm *Beatus vir* in the presence of the Holy Father in the Franciscan Church in Krakow was crowned by a short, emotional conversation between the composer and the man about whom the world cried "Santo subito" in April 2005, which became a reality.

Since the premiere of the *Psalm Beatus Vir*, the composer had been persuaded by the Pope – mainly in correspondence, as there were few personal contacts – to compose further works of religious music.

Initially, this was to be a larger cycle dedicated to the Polish saints (after *Beatus Vir* associated with St Stanislaus) – St Adalbert, St Hedwig, and possibly also St Maximilian Maria Kolbe.

The Holy Father did not stop encouraging Górecki to compose sacred works, and in the 1990^s he even asked the composer to compose a Mass. The impulse for the creation of *Kyrie* – the only part of the Mass – turned out to be the composer's conversation with John Paul II during a private audience in 2003, a conversation from which the composer remembered hardly anything, as, moved, he simply wept the whole time. Despite this great emotion, however, he heard the Pope jokingly encourage him: "one must work on the Mass, because the years are flying by"⁵. This only part of the Mass was written in 2004–2005⁶.

The fate of the piece on St Adalbert, *Sanctus Adalbertus*, was not known during the composer's lifetime. A note (by an unknown author) about the oratorio posted on the Ninateka website states that "the score of the complete composition was found in materials left by the composer by his son"⁷. In 2015, the work was published by the Boosey and Hawkes publishing house, and the premiere was held in Krakow.

⁴ *Sacrum i profanum w muzyce*, z prof. M. Tomaszewskim rozmawia M. Janicka-Słysz, „Maszkaron”, styczeń, luty, marzec 2000, p. 30.

⁵ *Postuchaj „Kyrie” H. M. Góreckiego!*, <https://muzykotekaszkolna.pl/aktualne/posluchaj-kyrie-hm-goreckiego/> (11.05.2023).

⁶ *Kyrie* op. 83 na 4-voice mixed choir, percussion, grand piano and string orchestra. It was premiered on April 21, 2014 at the Archcathedral Basilica in Warsaw during the concert *Próg nadziei – w hołdzie Janowi Pawłowi II*. The performers were the Polish Radio Choir and the Chamber Orchestra of the City of Tychy – AUKSO conducted by Marek Moś, Ninateka.pl (11.05.2023).

⁷ *Postuchaj „Kyrie” H. M. Góreckiego!*, <https://muzykotekaszkolna.pl/aktualne/posluchaj-kyrie-hm-goreckiego/> (11.05.2023).

One thing is certain – the piece was created at a time when the composer's thought was overwhelmed by many doubts about the sense of creation. In 2008, in his lecture after receiving an honorary doctorate from the Krakow Academy of Music, he said:

[...] for me the time of (...) authoritative statements, judgements or formulations is over. It is now a time for reflection, doubts, pondering. It is a time for questions – what was right and what was wrong? Was it worth it? Is it still worth it? Shouldn't we be silent already?⁸

The composer even doubted whether he knew what music was. He said:

MUSIC is one great mystery [...] I don't know ANYTHING concrete about it. I have more and more of these questions, even though my whole life has been and is filled with MUSIC. What exactly is MUSIC?⁹

I know less and less, I have more and more uncertainties and doubts¹⁰.

2. Sanctus Adalbertus Op. 71 (1997–2010) Oratorio for soprano, baritone, mixed choir and orchestra

The large-scale, almost one-hour-long oratorio Sanctus Adalbertus Op. 71 is, in a sense, the older and, above all, the larger 'sister' of the *Cantata on St Adalbert 'Salve sidus Polonorum' Op. 72*, which was created as a kind of substitute for the oratorio, so that the work would be ready on time for the planned premiere. And it was meant to be, as the composer told Maja Trochimczyk in more detail about his plans:

[The oratorio] is to have its premiere in June 1999 during the Holy Father's visit to Bydgoszcz. [...] I have to write a letter to His Holiness, as this oratorio is the second part of a whole cycle. The first was *Beatus vir*, which I wrote when he became Pope. The second is *Saint Adalbert*, and the third will be about Saint Hedwig. I would like to write a whole cycle on Polish saints. At first I wanted to start with the martyrs, but I changed my mind.

⁸ H. M. Górecki, *Wystąpienie Doktora honoris causa Akademii Muzycznej w Krakowie*, „Teoria Muzyki. Studia, Interpretacje, Dokumentacje” (2013) nr 3, p. 104. s. 104–110.

⁹ H. M. Górecki, *Wystąpienie Doktora honoris causa Akademii Muzycznej w Krakowie*, p. 106.

¹⁰ H. M. Górecki, *Wystąpienie Doktora honoris causa Akademii Muzycznej w Krakowie*, p. 107.

The fourth part will be about St Maximilian Kolbe. The fifth about all the saints, from Vespers, with the title *Your Lordship's Saints Will Blossom*. It's a great title, again with clumsy rhymes. The oratorio on St Hedwig will last half an hour, on St Adalbert an hour. The whole thing will be very long, I don't know if it will be possible to play the whole cycle in one evening, who would survive it¹¹.

It is not known whether the letter was sent.

As it turned out, the performance of the cantata in the presence of the Pope did not take place¹².

Just as the origins of both works on St Adalbert have common roots, there are obviously many affinities between them, both at the level of text and music.

3. Text of the oratorio

As usual in Górecki's work, the text of *Sanctus Adalbertus* is extremely laconic, building up already on the level of words a specific dramaturgy typical of the composer through the use of numerous, irregular repetitions (mainly due to the irregular, changing metre of the musical layer); it is sung in Latin alternating with Polish (there is also a Czech variant, which is understandable given the nationality of St Adalbert), and, as often in Górecki's work, is based on a thought taken from the Psalms. This time it is Psalm 116 a, (also referred to as Psalm 115:6, according to the Vulgate numbering) *Credidi, propter quo locutus sum... Worthy thanksgiving to God, or Thanksgiving to God who saves from*¹³.

4. Text of the entire Psalm 116 (114–115)

Thanksgiving to God who saves from Death

¹¹ "Composing is a Terribly Personal Matter": Henryk Mikołaj Górecki in Conversation with Maja Trochimczyk, transl. M. Trochimczyk, in: *Górecki in Context. Essays on Music*, ed. by M. Trochimczyk, Moonrise Press, Los Angeles 2017, p. 45–66 (Books on Music, 2).

¹² Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's cantata about St Adalbert *Salve sidus Polonorum* op. 72 (2000) was written for the millennium of Gniezno and the thousandth anniversary of St Adalbert's death. It was first performed on 21 June 2000 in Hannover during the EXPO 2000 World Exposition taking place there at the time, with the National Philharmonic Choir conducted by Henryk Wojnarowski. The first Polish performance took place the same year at the Wratislavia Cantans festival.

¹³ Nota bene many composers have drawn on the text of this very psalm, including: Palestrina, Monteverdi, Bruckner.

Psalm 116

Hallelujah! I love the Lord, who listened to my voice in supplication,
 Who turned an ear to me on the day I called.
 I was caught by the cords of death, the snares of Sheol had seized me, I felt
 agony and dread.
 Then I called on the name of the Lord: "O Lord, save my life!"
 Gracious is the Lord and righteous yes, our God is merciful.
 The Lord protects the simple: I was helpless, but he saved me.
 Return, my soul, to your rest, the Lord has been very good to you.
 For my soul has been freed from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from
 stumbling.
 I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

(Psalm 115, Wulgata)

I kept faith, even when I said: "I am greatly afflicted!"
 I said in my alarm: "All men are liars!" How can I repay the Lord
 for all the great good done for me?
 I will raise the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.
 I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.
"Dear in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his devoted".
 Lord, I am your servant,
 you servant, the child of your maidservant:
 you have loosed my bonds.
 I will offer a sacrifice of praise and call on the name of the Lord.
 I will pay my vows to the Lord
 in the presence of all his people.
 In the courts of the house of the Lord, in your mids, O Jerusalem¹⁴.

5. Text of the oratorio

Part I *Psalm* Pretiosa in conspectu Domini /Mors Sanctorum Ejus Pretiosa (Dear
 in the eyes of the Lord

is the death of his devoted (Psalm 115:6 Wulgata / 116, verse 15) Alleluia.

¹⁴ <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/psalms/116> (27.06.2023).

Part II *Lauda* Sanctus Adalbertus / Sanctus / Alleluia

Part III *Hymnus* Alleluia / Saint Adalbert, our dear patron saint / God's martyr pray for us (modli se za nas – variant in Czech language) Sancte Adalberte / Patrone Noster/ Martyr Dei/ Alleluia.

Part IV *Gloria* Gloria in excelsis / Gloria! / Sanctus Adalbertus.

Structure of the oratorio text and musical form

In the **first part** – *Psalm*, the words of Psalm 116 chosen by the composer open the work, and thus, one may presume, constitute its semantic key. It probably refers to the aspect of St Adalbert's martyrdom and the attribution of great value to it, this 'preciousness' or 'costliness'. These words belong to Part I, described by the composer pursuant to the genre of the text as a psalm – a prayerful, solemn song addressed to God. As St John Paul II said of this very psalm during an audience:

the voice of the psalmist expresses a love full of gratitude to the Lord, who has heard the fervent supplication: "I love the Lord, for he has heard the voice of my supplication. For he has inclined his ear towards me on the day I cried out"¹⁵.

In Part II – *Lauda*, two phrases: Sanctus Adalbertus and Alleluja provide the material for expressing, also pursuant to the definition of the genre, a statement of praise and solemnity. **Part III** – *Hymnus* – brings a prayer to St Adalbert, our patron saint and martyr, framed by the invocation *Alleluia*, identical to the text of *Part II* of the 1997 *Cantata of St Adalbert*¹⁶. The prayer is sung in Polish or Czech and Latin. The **final Part IV** – *Gloria*, also hymnic in nature, proclaims the glory of St Adalbert in Latin.

¹⁵ *O Lord... deliver me!*, General audience, 26.01.2005, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/2005/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_20050126.html (27.06.2023).

¹⁶ *Salve, Sidus Polonorum* – Kantata o św. Wojciechu (1997), op. 72 for a large mixed choir, organs, two grand pianos and percussion.

6. Music¹⁷

The essential drama of the oratorio is set to music (in part related to the *Cantata on St Adalbert 'Salve sidus Polonorum' Op. 72*). The laconic, simple text begins to mean something through the music.

The titles of the first three parts carry the genre categories of the types of non-liturgical chant: psalm, laud and hymn; the Gloria of the last part – the liturgical Mass chant – is the monumental finale towards which all parts of the work move.

The sound material, melodic, types of consonance and harmony are, on the one hand, differentiated and each part has some idiom of musical expression of its own; on the other hand, these idioms intertwine and the characteristic or key idioms of one part appear as references in subsequent parts. Constant to the work as a whole is the type of solo vocal utterance present in Part I *Psalm* and Part III *Hymnus*.

What are the characteristic idioms in Parts I, II and III?

For Part I – basic are:

- the sound of bells (*piano, tranquillo*) as a melody and in single beats **note example no. 1 (fig. 1)**
- choral recitation of the Psalm text (Pretiosa in conspectu Domini/ Dear in the eyes of the Lord) **note example no. 2 (slide 1)**
- Alleluia invocations on a single pitch **note example no. 3 (fig. 2)**
- simple, predominantly – descending minor-second melodic line to sing “Mors sanctorum ejus / is the death of his devoted” – rhetorical gesture – pathopoeia
- singing of the Alleluia by solo baritone and soprano and joint singing of both soloists – referring to the melody of the Easter Alleluia

For Part II:

- bell motif from Part I *piano tranquillo*,
- singing of male voices in *unison* (melodic line predominantly in a minor-second, undulating-ascending structure; fixed rhythmic pattern on a single word ‘Sanctus’). The impression created is of a persistent march, a procession (3/4). Dynamics

¹⁷ Instrumentation: solo soprano, solo baritone, mixed choir, orchestra (4 Fl, 4 Ob, 4 Cl, 4 Fg, 4 Tr, 4 Cr, 4 tn, Tb, Percussion – 2 tubular bells, tam-tam – very large, bass drum – 3, 3 Ar, Piano, Organ, Archi: min. 16, 14, 12, 10, 8). Text languages: Latin, Polish / Czech.

and expression undulating between a climax at *fff*; and *piano*, *Tranquillo Cantabile*, *Dolce*, and again *tutti*, in an increasing dynamics to *ffff*.

For Part III:

- Type of sad, mournful chant
- choir singing of Alleluia, almost *a cappella* (pedal note in pf and Cb), on notes of d-eolian scale, *cantabile*, *dolce*, momentary brightening; transition from d minor to f sharp minor
- type of church song in Polish or Czech: "Saint Adalbert, our dear patron saint, martyr of God, pray for us" (choir singing *piano*, almost *a cappella* with single piano-pedal consonances, in subcontra octave, coloured by tam-tam. Consonant harmony. **Note example no. 4 (fig. 3)**)
- same musical material, but in a new variant (chorus of 6 voices *ff*, featuring bells, two grand pianos and an organ. It is first a cheerful, then joyful – a 'ringing' church song, somewhat related to the hymn of the World Youth Day in Częstochowa (1991) *Abba, Father*).

Part IV

While in the first three parts of the oratorio *Sanctus Adalbertus* it is possible to speak of composing the whole by 'juxtaposing' different types of textures, sound models, different idioms repeated many times in an irregular manner peculiar to Górecki, the fourth part, with its clear three-part structure, is built in a processual way. Górecki's *Gloria* is derived, as it were, from the song *Bogurodzica* and moves towards it; the first appearance of the quotation of the oldest Polish hymn in the horns and harp in the *pp* dynamics is like music from the distance (Floros) – it is an epiphanic moment (Tomaszewski) from which this final part of the work develops.

The internal build-up of tension leads to a maximum climax, at the words: "Gloria in excelsis, Gloria" sung by the 10-voice choir and tutti of the orchestra in a dynamic *ffff*. And then the sequence *Salve sidus Polonorum* resounds briefly, but without words, somewhat distorted by sharp dissonances and instrumentation (bells and grand piano). In the maximally muted ending, the melody of the *Bogurodzica* returns, this time as if a reminder of it in the single, gentle strikes of bells and grand piano leading to the utterance of the saint's name: "Sanctus Adalbertus" on the sound of E great in the basses against E great and E contra in the low register of the strings and grand piano. The piece closes with the delicate sound of a full E major chord stretched between E major and gis3. **Note example no. 5 (fig. 4).**

On the one hand, Part IV has its own internal culmination leading to the sequence *Salve sidus Polonorum*, on the other hand, this whole part constitutes the climax of Górecki's oratorio on a macro scale. The work can be interpreted as a journey towards the quotation of the oldest Polish hymn – towards *Bogurodzica*, as a journey to the source – towards the roots of the Polish identity. Taking into account the 19th century characteristics of the key in E major (according to Schubart 1806 – cheerfulness, contentment, according to Hand 1837 – joyfulness, festivity; according to Berlioz 1856 – pompousness, nobility, according to Ertel 1896 – brightness, cheerfulness, cordiality), it can also be interpreted as a path towards St Adalbert's martyrdom, but towards hope – towards Christian hope.

On a side note: for several centuries – until the first half of the 20th century – there was an opinion that the author of *Bogurodzica* was none other than St Adalbert¹⁸. Today, this opinion is not confirmed, mainly due to the fact that St Adalbert did not know the Polish language. But did this view not influence the composer's decision to include this particular song in the Adalbert circle?

“Sanctus Adalbertus” in the context of late Górecki's style

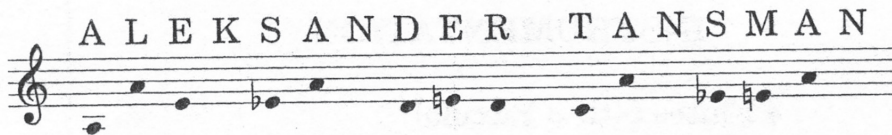
Some remarks or rather questions arise about the place of the *Oratorio on St Adalbert* in the composer's late oeuvre, to which this work undoubtedly belongs. The time of the so-called ‘late style’ occurred quite early in Górecki's creative path and lasted for many years; some of its symptoms appeared as early as the 1980^s (religious choral works, chamber music). How to interpret in this context the works from the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, and therefore the most recent works (1997–2000 – *Cantata on St Adalbert*, *Salve, sidus Polonorum*, 1997–2010, *oratorio Sanctus Adalbertus*, 2004 – *Song of the Families of Katyn*, 2004 *Two Tristan Postludes and Chorale*, 2005 – *Kyrie* and 2006 *Fourth Symphony. Tansman episodes*)¹⁹?

Well, these pieces show certain affinities, both at the level of the sound material and on a general level. Although the atmosphere of this music is dominated by consonant sounds, by modal-tonal relations between consonances, the tritone interval plays an important role, one might even say a structural one. It turns out that both the *Kyrie*, as well as the oratorio *Sanctus Adalbertus* and, interestingly, the *Fourth Symphony Tansman episodes* take their origins from the dissonance of the

¹⁸ Cf. J. Birkenmajer, *Zagadnienie autorstwa „Bogurodzicy”*, Gniezno 1935 (Studia Gnesnensia, 11).

¹⁹ I discuss this problem in more detail in *Wokół ostatnich dzieł Henryka Mikołaja Góreckiego. Styl późny a styl ostatni*, in: *Styl późny w muzyce, literaturze i kulturze*, vol. 4, Katowice 2016, p. 172–187.

tritone, and always of the same es-a, constituting the centre of the opening motives of each of the works. It seems particularly interesting that in the *Symphony*, the opening motif of the work is derived from the letters of Alexander Tansman's name and the tritone es -a is also present.



In the *Kyrie*, in the *Oratorio on St Adalbert* and in the *Fourth Symphony*, a different type of affinity can be observed: in these works there are passages that constitute a musical representation of a sad walk, a funeral procession, as it were, though, among other things, the extensive use of the *ostinato*, which proves to be one of the chief categories for shaping the narrative of these works.

On a more general level – irrespective of the widely understood intertextuality of Górecki's music, the role of quotation becomes more important in his late works. Already the *Recitativa and Ariosa 'Lerchenmusik'*, Op. 53, of 1986, provided a representative and at the same time original example of the specific appearance of a quotation – in this case of the first theme of Beethoven's *Fourth Piano Concerto in G major*. In the two most recent works – the *Fourth Symphony 'Tansman episodes'*, Op. 85, and the *Two Tristan Postludes and Chorale* – quotations from Wagner appear, with the fact of the inclusion of Siegfried's leitmotif in the finale of the *Fourth Symphony* not finding a straightforward interpretation, apart from his fascination with the Tetralogy of the Ring of the Nibelungs, known to me from conversations with the composer, nota bene in contrast to his somewhat not so high opinion of *Tristan und Isolde*. So how do we explain the appearance of the Tristan theme in the composer's final work? This remains one of the many question marks in Górecki's oeuvre.

The function of the quotation in *Sanctus Adalbertus*, on the other hand, seems simpler, clearer. Building the final part of the oratorio, as it were, on motifs and phrases from the *Bogurodzica*, even if one rejects the hypothesis of St Adalbert's authorship of this song finds possible interpretations. Here, in a work about the Polish-Czech saint, one of the three main patron saints of Poland, in a work whose performance was to take place at the turn of the millennium in the presence of the Polish Pope, at a time when Poland's sense of freedom and national identity was reborn, the first anthem of Poland – the *Bogurodzica* hymn – resounds. It resounds as a gentle reminder of the first few notes (at the beginning

of part IV), then to reach a grand climax, and in the work's conclusion to return to a hushed epiphanic aura.

Returning to the composer's thoughts recalled earlier from the time when the late and final works were written, it seems that the anxieties expressed by the composer in *Sanctus Adalbertus* have been overcome. To the composer's questions: "is it still worth it", "should one keep quiet" – after having seen the work – the answer is probably: **yes, it is worth it.**

And further following Górecki's doubts: 'what is actually MUSIC', or 'MUSIC is one great mystery', it seems that Leszek Kołakowski's thought, often referred to by Górecki, that 'music is a visitor from another world' finds a creative realisation in the oratorio on St Adalbert.

Appendices

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SANCTUS ADALBERTUS

op 71

I – Psalm

HENRYK MIKOŁAJ GÓRCKI
(1933–2010)

8 *Lento - Tranquillo* (♩ = 63) **10** **8**

Tubular Bells 1

8 **A** *Lo stesso tempo*
(*Lento - Tranquillo* ♩ = 63)
poco allarg - lunga

1
2
T Bells

S
A
T
B

VI I
VI II
Vln
Vcl

p ma sonoro (p - mp)

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

p ma sonoro (p - mp)

12 *allarg Più lento - Largo*

T Bells 1

S
A
T
B

VI I
VI II
Vln
Vcl

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

*poco **ff***

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Prepared for publication from the composer's original manuscript by Mikołaj Górecki

Fig 1. Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, *Sanctus Adalbertus* op. 71, Boosey and Hawkes Publishers Ltd, London 2015, s. 1.

4

Più lento **Ancora più lento** **Molto lento** **allarg**

71

T Bells I

S
A
T
B

Do - mi - ni Do - mi - ni Do - mi - ni Do - mi - ni Do - mi - ni

VI I
VI II
Vla
Vc

(allarg) - - - Cantabile espressivo (♩ = 66) **pochiss stretto** $\frac{3}{4}$ **Molto espressivo** (♩ = 72)

81

T Bells I

Bar Solo

p *(quasi) f* *f (molto)*

AL - - - - - LE - LU - IA AL - LE - - - LE - LU -

VI I
VI II
Vla
Vc

p *f (molto)*

[D] **$\frac{4}{4}$ Pochiss più mosso** (♩ = 80) **$\frac{4}{4}$ ma cantabile e poco marcato**

92

Bar Solo

IA

S
A

unis mp (mf)

AL - LE - LU - IA AL - LE - LU - IA AL - LE - LU - IA AL - LE - LU - IA AL - LE - LU - IA AL - LE - LU - IA

VI I
VI II
Vla
Vc

unis *div* *unis* *div* *unis*

div *unis* *div* *unis*

mp (mf)

Fig. 2. Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, *Sanctus Adalbertus* op. 71, Boosey and Hawkes Publishers Ltd, London 2015, s. 4.

18

04 **Lento - Cantabile** (♩ = 60) **Poco espressivo**

Tam-t *p* *pochiss meno p*

Pno *p* *pochiss meno p*

S Swie - e - ty Waj - cie - chu Pa - tro - nie nasz dro - gi Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - ty

A Swie - e - ty Waj - cie - chu Pa - tro - nie nasz dro - gi Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - zy

T Swie - e - ty Waj - cie - chu Pa - tro - nie nasz dro - gi Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - zy

B Swie - e - ty Waj - cie - chu Pa - tro - nie nasz dro - gi Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - zy *p* *pochiss meno p*

76 **allarg** $\frac{6}{4}$ **Più lento** $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ **subito attacca**

Tam-t

Pno

S Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - - - - zy módl się za na - mi módl się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi
*modli się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi

A Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - - - - zy módl się za na - mi módl się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi
*modli się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi

T Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - - - - zy módl się za na - mi módl się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi
*modli się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi

B Mę - czen - ni - ku Bo - - - - zy módl się za na - mi módl się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi
*modli się za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi za na - mi

p *poco*

* if sung in Czech

18854

Fig. 3. Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Sanctus Adalbertus op. 71, Boosey and Hawkes Publishers Ltd, London 2015, s. 18.

X **Lento e molto tranquillo** (♩ = 63) 35
2/4
4/4

177 *a2*

T Bells 1.2
Pno
Vla div
Vc div
Db div

allarg Molto lento - Molto largo **molto moltiss**
allarg allarg *lunga*

178

T Bells 1.2
Tam-t
BD
Hp 1-3
Pno
B
VI I
VI II
Vla div
Vc div
Db div

SANC - TUS A - DAL - BER - TUS

pp (senza dim)

Fig. 4. Henryk Mikotałaj Górecki, *Sanctus Adalbertus* op. 71, Boosey and Hawkes Publishers Ltd, London 2015, s. 35.

Abstract

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's road to the Oratorio "Sanctus Adalbertus" in the context of the composer's fascination with the person and teaching of St. John Paul II

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's profound personal religiousness became the source of his deep spiritual bond with the personality of Karol Wojtyła – Saint John Paul II. The relationship between the composer and the Pope was of a special nature. In 1977, Cardinal Karol Wojtyła commissioned a work from Henryk Mikołaj Górecki to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the death of St Stanislaus. The result was the oratorio *Beatus Vir* Op. 38, a psalm for baritone, mixed choir and orchestra. Since its premiere, the composer has been urged by the Pope to compose further works of religious music. This was to be a larger cycle dedicated to Polish saints. Only the oratorio on St Adalbert was written, the fate of which was unknown during the composer's lifetime. Its manuscript was found in materials left behind by his son. The text of *Sanctus Adalbertus* is laconic, building up already at the level of words a specific drama typical of the composer. It is sung in Latin alternating with Polish (there is also a Czech variant, which is understandable given St Adalbert's nationality), and, as so often in Górecki's work, is based on thoughts taken from the Psalms. While the first three parts of the work can be said to be composed as a whole by 'juxtaposing' different sound models, different idioms repeated many times in an irregular manner peculiar to Górecki, the fourth part, with its clear three-part structure, is built in a processual manner. Górecki's *Gloria* is derived, as it were, from the song *Bogurodzica* and tends towards it. In the maximally muted ending of the work, the melody returns, this time as if a reminder of it in the single, delicate strikes of the bells and grand piano leading to the utterance of the saint's name: "Sanctus Adalbertus". The work can be interpreted as a journey towards the quotation from the oldest Polish hymn – *Bogurodzica* (Mother of God), as a journey to the source – to the roots of a Polish national identity in times of rebirth.

Keywords: Górecki, John Paul II, Saint Adalbert, oratorio, *Bogurodzica*

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