

Introduction

The turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Polish Commonwealth was a time of intense and profound changes in the field of music¹. The reorganization of the royal chapel, stemming in large part from the dynastic politics of Sigismund III Vasa, but also the artistic tastes and religious attitudes of the king, resulted in the influx of Italian musicians, composers, and works to the royal court: at that time Italy was the musical center of Europe. The changes initially centered in the royal court and its close cultural surroundings fairly quickly spread to many ecclesiastical centers. The 1611 Venice edition of a monumental collection of compositions by Mikołaj Zieleński — including polyphonic, vocal-instrumental and instrumental works intended to provide the musical accompaniment to offertory and communion at every mass throughout the liturgical year — enjoyed the patronage of the primate Wojciech Baranowski², and it epitomizes the acknowledgment of the importance of polyphonic vocal-instrumental music in the Polish Commonwealth, in religious context). In the preface to that publication, the primate expressed his hope that this kind of music will resound in the most important temples of the kingdom. Of course, this type of repertoire required wider acceptance of the diocesan and monastic clergy. Moreover, its performance was wholly dependent on the establishment and maintenance of sufficiently trained and financially stable ensembles, which turned out to be a long process covering the seventeenth century to reach its peak in the eighteenth.

The earliest vocal-instrumental ensembles were established in the wealthy and prominent churches: the ensemble at the Wawel Cathedral in Kraków was founded in 1619. On the other hand, the professional musicians were from the very beginning employed in the influential shrines of pilgrimage to mention only the ensemble from the Pauline monastery at Jasna Góra considered to be the most recognizable in the country. However, the majority of Polish churches could not afford to maintain their own ensemble and contented themselves with the employment of organists. The clergy soon became aware how positive is the impact of rich musical setting on the solemnity of the proclamation of the glory of God and the number of believers attending the holy services. A pastoral and educational policy adopted by Jesuits and Piarists included an exceptionally thriving musical life in their churches, which is perhaps the best example showing how active was the attitude towards music in the Polish Common-

¹ The synthetic history of Polish music in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, together with the most current literature on the subject can be found in the following publications: Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, *Barok – część 1: 1595–1696*, Sutkowski Edition Warsaw, Warszawa 2006 (Historia muzyki polskiej, ed. Stefan Sutkowski, vol. III part 1); Alina Mądry, *Barok – część 2: 1697–1795. Muzyka religijna i jej barokowy modus operandi*, Sutkowski Edition Warsaw, Warszawa 2013 (Historia muzyki polskiej, ed. Stefan Sutkowski, vol. III part 2).

² The collection was published in two volumes and is known as *Offertoria et Communiones Totius Anni* (Venetia, Alessandro Vincenti, 1611).

wealth in the seventeenth century. Other religious congregations followed in their footsteps as much as they could. The network of church and monastery ensembles was quite dense as early as in the second half of the seventeenth century. At that time the position of the royal court as the main musical center of the country was in gradual decline. Therefore, the above ensembles have started playing an extremely important if not fundamental role in composing and spreading Polish musical works, but also in the field of reception of foreign artistic achievements. This trend intensified significantly in the eighteenth century when musical ensembles performing at diocesan and religious churches have become an indispensable part of the spiritual life and art of the Polish Commonwealth, making the music available to all strata of the society.

For many reasons, for some decades, the mainstream of Polish (and, in large part, foreign) musicologists abstained from studying the issue of musical culture in monasteries. It was considered as an unattractive task that requires tedious archival queries producing scant results. Music once reverberating in old cloisters, but now buried in dusty manuscripts stashed in remote archives, libraries, and attics, was condescendingly marked as something "rightly forgotten."

Fortunately, these circumstances did not discourage some researchers from rediscovering the stories of the long-dead ensembles and the repertoire they played. Their efforts have proven priceless. As regards Poland, such studies gained momentum after 1989 when the major political changes and subsequent possibility of studying many more sources coincided with the new trends in musicology. These trends embraced, among others, the in-depth research into the relationship between a musical work and a man, yet they also included the search for those elements in music which are local and typical only of the particular cultural environment (of course, against the universal backdrop). In the case of the Polish Commonwealth, the core of local musical culture were the ensembles performing at monasteries³; the testimony of this phenomenon are the collections of surviving musical manuscripts and the long inventory lists comprising the works which are regrettably lost.

When Karol Mrowiec CM, inspired by the earlier publications by Robert Świętochowski OP published a printed catalog of musical manuscripts remaining after the ensemble from the Dominican monastery in Gidle, he considered his work as imperfect, showing thus the respectable modesty. However, Mrowiec was aware that it is an open invitation for further studies of this particular repertoire; he encouraged the potential researchers to delve deeper, too⁴. The above catalog enables the readers to appreciate the internal abundance and value of

³ It is not a coincidence that the synthetic history of music in the Polish Commonwealth in the eighteenth century by Alina Mądry bears a significant but in the second part controversial subtitle i.e. *Muzyka religijna i jej barokowy modus operandi* (Eng. Religious Music and its Baroque Modus Operandi). Cf. footnote 1.

⁴ Ks. Karol Mrowiec CM, *Katalog muzykaliów gidelskich. Rękopisy muzyczne kapeli klasztoru gidelskiego przechowywane w Archiwum Prowincji Polskiej OO. Dominikanów w Krakowie*, Archiwum Prowincji Polskiej OO. Dominikanów, Kraków 1986, pp. 7–8.

the collection of Gidle. Anyone who studied it and is acquainted with the scholarly papers by Świętochowski must consider in which context it was possible to create such a collection of musical manuscripts. On the other hand, an equally important question remains about the historical shape and evolution of musical culture in Dominican monasteries in the Polish Commonwealth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The essays included in this publication contribute to the toil of many musicologists striving to shed more light on the issue.

Anyone who would address these issues must first analyze the pioneering studies by Robert Świętochowski whose titanic work has laid the foundations of knowledge about musical life in the Dominican monasteries and temples in the past centuries. In his essential multi-part paper published 1963-1964 in the quarterly "Muzyka"⁵ and entitled *Tradycje muzyczne zakonu kaznodziejskiego w Polsce* (Eng. Musical Traditions of the Order of Preachers in Poland) Świętochowski discerned all of the most important issues related to musical life in the Dominican monasteries. At first⁶, he referred to the rules imposed by the authorities of the order concerning the introduction of Gregorian chant (with facultative organ accompaniment) into the religious services, despite the fact that it was, for centuries, the most basic and everyday form of musical prayer for every Dominican monk; Gregorian chant has been successfully composed by them since the thirteenth century⁷. Świętochowski focused on the description of the particular features of short breviary chants, especially for the offices to St. Hyacinth performed since at least 1561.

In the period covered by this volume, the following Dominicans discussed the issues of monophonic chant: Alan Jan Bardziński in his *Discursus de Ortu musicae* (1707) and Alan Mach in his *Manuale ecclesiasticum* (1740). It is thought that about 1626 plainchant compositions in the Dominican Order were simplified and pruned of folk elements and that reform was owing Izajasz of Lipnica. On the other hand, Alan Mach is considered as a renowned composer of pseudo-plainchant works⁸. Świętochowski mentioned the foundations established in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, owing to which the musicians were provided with financial support in exchange of singing, on a regular basis, the prayers chosen by the found-

⁵ Robert Świętochowski, *Tradycje muzyczne zakonu kaznodziejskiego w Polsce*, „Muzyka” VIII, 1963, nr 1–2, pp. 12–26 and „Muzyka” VIII, 1963, nr 3, pp. 23–33; idem, *Tradycje muzyczne zakonu kaznodziejskiego w Polsce (ciąg dalszy)*, „Muzyka” 1963, nr 4, pp. 10–31; idem, *Tradycje muzyczne zakonu kaznodziejskiego w Polsce (dokończenie)*, „Muzyka” IX, 1964, nr 1–2, pp. 49–61; idem, *Tradycje muzyczne zakonu kaznodziejskiego w Polsce: uzupełnienie*, „Muzyka” IX, 1964, nr 1–2, p. 152.

⁶ Robert Świętochowski, *Tradycje muzyczne...*, op. cit., 1963, nr 1–2, pp. 12–26 oraz 1963, nr 3, pp. 23–33.

⁷ The historical evolution of plainchant in the Dominican Order is a broad and important field of study, but it hardly pertains to the main issue discussed in this collection of essays. Therefore, it is sporadically referred to in the further text.

⁸ Tadeusz Miazga, *Alan Mach – skrytor i kompozytor choralny w XVIII w.*, in: *Studia Hieronymo Feicht septuagenario dedicata*, Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, Kraków 1967, pp. 284–297.

ers⁹. His study also highlights the work of copyists in the Dominican monasteries and enumerates many manuscripts once belonging to the order that contain plainchant compositions.

Concerning church songs, Świętochowski took a closer look on the practice of singing the Office to the Blessed Virgin Mary also known as hours (or, formerly, *cursus*). The cantors singing votive masses, rosary and hours were recruited, among others, from the members of fraternities of the Holy Rosary actively participating in religious life of Dominican temples. Enumerating the titles of the songs, including numerous Polish ones, the author emphasized the richness of the texts within the books used by the church brotherhoods, usually wrote to the well-known liturgical melodies.

The bans concerning the use of polyphonic music were consistently imposed until the first decades of the seventeenth century and resulted from the fact that the authorities of the Dominican Order paid considerable attention to the intelligibility of the sung texts. The second part of the Świętochowski's study¹⁰ regards such music. However, his marginal notes pertain to the performances taking place outside the church, e.g. in the taverns belonging to the Dominicans. The author focused on the chosen monasteries. Some of them maintained their own ensembles. Interestingly enough, Świętochowski described the long-term musical policy of the monastery of St. Hyacinth in Warsaw which, apart from employing a secular treble singer in the years 1680-1685, did not so.

In the seventeenth century, musical setting in this church was limited to the organ accompaniment performed by the brothers or lay people. Since as late as the first half of the eighteenth century, the monastery had begun to employ the Piarist or Jesuit ensemble from Warsaw¹¹ (once a year, usually in August when the feast of St. Hyacinth falls). Świętochowski delved deep in archival sources and used the skilfully picked out information to make some remarks on those ensembles whose professional activity has not been attested by the sufficient number of surviving sources or connected with the currently non-existent monasteries. He gave the example of the monastery of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Luck (nowadays in Volyn Oblast in northwestern Ukraine). It was one of the richest cloisters in the Polish Commonwealth inhabited by about fifty monks, but in 1793 fire irreparably consumed it; about the half of the nineteenth century, it had to be demolished. The life of the

⁹ For instance, in the chapterhouse of the Dominican monastery in Warsaw the seminarians have sung the litany of Loreto on behalf of the soul of Tadeusz Ogiński since at least 1771.

¹⁰ Robert Świętochowski, *Tradycje muzyczne...*, op. cit., 1963, nr 4, pp. 10–31.

¹¹ These performances were probably referred to by Michał Siejkowski OP in his work entitled *Dni roczne Świętych, Błogosławionych, Wielebnych y Pobożnych Sług Boskich, Zakonu Kaznodziejskiego [...] Zebrane*, Drukarnia Akademicka, Kraków 1743, k. H4v–Ir) where the following description can be found: “there is a rood screen above the organ loft in the church and a gallery surrounded with balustrades below — all gilded and partially painted in red. From this gallery the ensemble provides music to masses at great feasts [...] and, on every Friday of the Lent, the fraternity of the Holy Rosary sings a passion service composed by Ludwik Weycher (a father from the local monastery); sometimes the service is accompanied by the scourging of the members of the fraternity”.

monastery was centered on two miraculous images. One of them was a painting of Our Lady being a gift from the Pope Clement III. The second one was the statue of the Scourged Jesus. The sanctuary attracted many people and maintained its own ensemble. According to Michał Siejkowski, whose remark was written in 1743: “Inside the church, in the chapter house, one can also find the miraculous statue of the Scourged Lord. The monastery ensemble plays the passion service there every Friday”¹².

Some fragments of the referred paper is dedicated to the pipe organs in the Dominican temples. Such analysis required a painstaking archival query because in his work Świętochowski included both the instruments which survived and those that ceased to be long time ago¹³.

Two other studies by the same author concern the history of the ensembles performing in Gidle and Podkamień¹⁴. The latter is particularly valuable. Drudging analysis of multiple sources enabled Świętochowski to present a lot of data regarding the ensemble from Podkamień despite that fact that the related monastery fell prey to fire in 1915 and its archival documents burnt. The articles were provided with the lists of known members of both ensembles from their establishment until the final dissolution.

The above-mentioned scholarly papers by Świętochowski and Mrowiec for many years were the only source of information about music in the Dominican monasteries in Poland. It should be noted with satisfaction that end of the twentieth century brought a revival of interest in the issue. The largest group of recent studies were created and widely released by Waldemar Kapeć OP¹⁵ who focused, among others, on organ music in the Dominican environment and beyond (including the particular organ instruments). His analyses also concerned musical life in the Dominican monastery in Lublin¹⁶, where the friars probably did not maintain their own vocal-instrumental ensemble but invited the external musicians instead.

The studies by Ewa Hauptmann-Fischer¹⁷ and Tomasz Jeż¹⁸ pertain to the cloisters of the Order of Preachers in Silesia whereas Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska analyzed the relationships between Marcin Mielczewski and the fraternity of the Holy Rosary in Warsaw in the first half of the seventeenth century.

¹² Ibidem, k. H1v.

¹³ Robert Świętochowski, *Tradycje muzyczne ...*, op. cit., 1964, nr 1–2.

¹⁴ Robert Świętochowski, *Kapela oo. dominikanów w Gidlach*, „Muzyka” XVIII, 1973, nr 4, pp. 58–74; idem, *Kapela oo. dominikanów w Podkamieniu*, „Muzyka” XXI, 1976, nr 3, pp. 56–76.

¹⁵ The digital versions of many studies and the information on the printed publications by the author are available on the following webpage: <http://users.dominikanie.pl/~wkapec/> [accessed: June 2016]

¹⁶ See Waldemar Kapeć, *Organy i organiści w polskich klasztorach dominikańskich od XIII do XX w.*, Kuria Polskiej Prowincji Dominikanów, Lublin–Warszawa 1998; idem, *Życie muzyczne w lubelskim klasztorze dominikanów*, the digital version: see the previous footnote; idem, *Kościół i klasztor dominikanów w Lublinie*, Ponad Granicami, Lublin 2008 (guidebook).

¹⁷ Ewa Hauptmann-Fischer, *Rerum patris Pii Hancke. O muzykaliach nyskiego dominikanina*, „Hereditas Monasteriorum” vol. 2, 2013, pp. 81–93.

¹⁸ Tomasz Jeż, *Contrafacta of Operatic Arias among the Dominicans of Baroque Silesia*, „De musica disserenda” XI, 2015, nr 1–2, pp. 147–162.

The authors of this collection of scholarly essays took their inspiration from those studies by Świętochowski that regarded the vocal-instrumental ensembles, but required some further development and verification; the historical evolution of the particular ensembles they presented was insufficiently detailed. The process of writing the included essays was preceded by archival queries combined with the selection and evaluation of the available sources. It was determined that the most valuable be account ledgers from the monasteries as they contain many entries pertaining to the fees spent on musical life. The conventual books of councils were also used and, in the case of Lviv, the source of utmost value i.e. the separate ledger of the local ensemble.

If possible, the historical data were compared with musical material stored mainly in the archives and libraries in Krakow, Sandomierz and at Jasna Góra. The researchers wanted to refer primarily to the direct sources confronted, of course, with the literature on the subject. However, such policy was in many cases hindered by the poor condition of many sources or their lack. The authors focused on the monasteries belonging the Polish province of the Dominican Order except for the cloister in Lviv being the most important cultural center with regard to musicology.

The main issue discussed in this publication is musical life in the Dominican monasteries that maintained their own ensembles i.e. Gidle, Borek Stary, Dzików, and Lviv. Besides, one presented the selected but representative examples of musical life (especially in respect to vocal-instrumental music) in those churches of the Order of Preachers that did not so. The included essays comprise numerous tables containing excerpts from the archival sources relating to music, which should allow all readers for conducting in-depth analysis of the provided materials.

As it turned out, the issue of musical culture in the monasteries of the Dominican Order in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has not been thoroughly studied by musicologists from the other countries. Therefore, we managed to collect — for comparative purposes — more information about the musical life in the church of San Domenico in Bologna, and in several monasteries located on the territory nowadays belonging to Croatia. It resulted in another two studies putting the core of the collection in a wider context. The separate table embraces the still data pertaining to musical life in the main Dominican monastery in Košice (contemporarily in Slovakia). This material is still to analyze, as none of the foreign researchers have done it.

The issue of musical culture in former Dominican monasteries in the Polish Commonwealth is a very broad and diverse field of study, although it has some limitations: the availability of archival sources may be a critical factor able to put a stop to even the most inquisitive researcher. One can be sure that the analysis of new materials and musical scores will bring unexpected discoveries and fill in some of the existing gaps in knowledge. We think, however, that the authors of this collection of scholarly essays were able to capture the

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decisive mechanisms shaping musical life in the monasteries of the Dominican Order and governing the activity of the ensembles maintained in its churches.

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