

Abstract

Folklore, Patriotism, Spirituality - Timeless Sources of Inspiration in the Works of Selected 20th-Century Polish Composers

In the centuries-old history of choral music, one can find diverse sources of artistic inspiration. In Polish music, in particular in the works of 20th-century composers, dominance of three such sources is discernible:

- **Folklore** with its great richness of traditional ceremonies, customs, and songs. Diversified according to the place of origin, these are passed on from one generation to another, in particular in rural areas;
- **Patriotism** strongly influenced by the complex history of the Polish nation and state;
- **Spirituality** closely associated with the eminent role played by Christianity in the over one thousand years of Poland's history.

The current dissertation is intended to present the link between the source of composer's inspiration and the final shape of artistic rendition. It also aims to demonstrate conditions indispensable for the timeless relation: source-of-inspiration – composer – performer to occur and come to life, as well as to expand by adding to it the listener, the final consumer of a work. The thesis consists in four chapters. In the first, I attempt to define the notion of inspiration, as well as to analyse the process that takes place between a source of inspiration and its recipient. Next, putting particular emphasis on the said three sources of inspiration, I study this phenomenon in music, eventually to narrow the analysis to vocal music. In chapter two, I demonstrate and describe the influence of folklore-, patriotism-, and spirituality-based inspiration upon elements to determine the final shape of a work. Chapter three lists and examines compositions discussed in the present work. The role played by sources of inspiration in their composers' biographies, as well as in the works in question is examined. Chapter four constitutes a detailed analysis of the scores from the conductor's perspective. It aims to present a personal interpretation that provides an opportunity for the relation source-of-inspiration – composer – performer to occur, and owing to inclusion of the person of the work's ultimate consumer to expand.