



# MUSIC OF THE POLISH RENAISSANCE

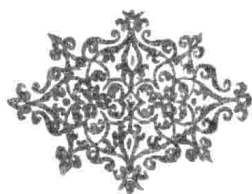


MUSIC  
OF THE POLISH  
RENAISSANCE





# MUSIC OF THE POLISH RENAISSANCE



*A SELECTION OF WORKS FROM THE XVI<sup>th</sup>  
AND THE BEGINNING OF THE XVII<sup>th</sup>  
CENTURY*

EDITED BY  
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AND ZOFIA LISSA

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# GRAPHIC ARRANGEMENT

## ADAM MŁODZIANOWSKI AND WŁADYSŁAW DULĘBA

THE MANUSCRIPTS, PRINTS AND RENAISSANCE  
WOOD-CUTS REPRODUCED IN THE EDITION  
ARE TAKEN FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

Jan of Lublin's *Organ Tablature* 1537–1548. Marcin Bielski: *Kronika wssyithy-ego swyata*. (Chronicle of the whole world) Printed by Hieronim Scharffenberger, Cracow, 1554 \* *Kancjonał puławski* (The Puławy song-book). A Collection of Religious Songs published between 1545 and 1567. The Czartoryski Library, Cracow \* *Kancjonał Zamojski* (The Zamość song-book). A Collection of printed XVIth century Songs and Psalms. National Library, Warsaw \* Mikołaj Rej: *Zwycieradło albo kształt, w którym każdy stan snadnie się może swym sprawom iako we zwierciadle przypatrzeć*. (A mirror, or form in which every rank see its own dealings as in a mirror) Printed by Maciej Wierzbęta, Cracow, 1568 \* Bartosz Paprocki: *Gniazdo cnoty* (A nest of virtue). Printed by Andrzej Piotrkowczyk, Cracow, 1578 \* Mikołaj Gomółka: *Melodiae na psalterz polski...* (Melodies for the polish psalter...) Printed by Łazarz, Cracow, 1580 \* *Constitutio Seymu Walnego Koronacyey Krolewskiej 1576*. (Constitution of the general diet for the king's coronation 1576) Printed by Mikołaj Scharffenberger, Cracow, 1576 \* *Constitutio Seymu Walnego Warszawskiego Roku MDLXXXI*. (Constitution of the general Warsaw diet, MDLXXXI) Printed by Mikołaj Scharffenberger, Cracow, 1581 \* *Kronika polska Marcina Bielskiego. Nowo przez Joach. Bielskiego syna iego wydana*. (Polish chronicle of Marcin Bielski newly published by his son Joachim Bielski) Printed by Jakub Stebeneicher, Cracow, 1597 \* Mikołaj Zieleniński: *Offertoria totius anni and Communiones totius anni*. Printed by Jakobus Vincentius, Venice, 1611 \* Stanisław Słupski: *Zabawy orackie, gospodarza dobrego, uczciwe, uciężne, y pożyteczne*. (The amusing, honest and useful ploughman's pleasures of the good farmer) Printed by Maciej Jędrzejowczyk, Cracow, 1618 \* Jan A. Gorczyn: *Tabulatura muzyki albo zaprawa muzyczna...* (Tablature of music, or musical exercises...) Printed by Walerian Piątkowski, Cracow, 1647 \* Jakub Kazimierz Haur: *Skład albo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomicy ziemian-skiej*. (Store or treasure of excellent secretes of landowning economy) Printed by Mikołaj A. Schedl, Cracow, 1689 – Józef Muczkowski: *Zbiór odcisków drzeworytów w różnych dziedzinach polskich w XVI i XVII wieku odbitych a teraz w Bibliotece Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego zachowanych*. (A collection of impressions of wood-cuts printed in various polish XVIth and XVIIth century works, now in the Library of the Jagiellonian University, Cracow) Printed by the Jagiellonian University, Cracow, 1849.



FAMAM EXTENDERE FACTIS EST VIRTUTIS OPVS.



Przeciw prawdzie rozumnie.





# E D I T O R ' S N O T E



*THE PUBLICATION of "Music of the Polish Renaissance" is intended to bring the music of that period nearer to the contemporary listener and performer; it is intended that it should again be played by Polish vocal and instrumental ensembles, and be spread as widely as possible amongst our contemporary society, showing the high musical culture of Poland in past centuries. But it is also intended to reach the listeners and performers of other countries, and convince them of the flourishing of Polish music in those times, taking up those same forms and kinds of music as the music of the countries neighbouring or further away. Today, when interest in the music of olden times is increasing everywhere in Europe, and that not only among musicologists but also among artists and a wide circle of listeners, it is especially significant that in this "renewed Renaissance" Polish music also should not fail to take its place. It may not be so luxuriant in quantity as in Italy, France, Germany, or the Netherlands, but using the same forms of creation and means of expression, the Polish music of the Renaissance belongs to the same stream of development, lives by the same problems of style, realizing them on the ground of the native Polish tradition, in its own national manner. In order to obtain a picture of the whole shape of the development of musical culture in Europe at the time of the Renaissance, a knowledge of the Polish music of those times, which as a result of the specific conditions has not been justly valued, is of great importance. To the numerous ensembles of performers of early music, of which the popularity in Europe is today so great, constantly increasing, the supplementing of the repertory by the little-known works of Polish Renaissance music will certainly be interesting.*

*This music, covered in the dust of archives and libraries in convents and country houses, lay forgotten for centuries. The Polish-Swedish wars in the seventeenth century, the Partitions of Poland in the eighteenth, the two World Wars in the twentieth, devastating the land and the economy of Poland, especially the last war and the occupation by Hitler's troops, who utterly destroyed many towns and villages, ravaged libraries and collections, ruining the mementoes of Polish culture – all this could not be propitious for the preservation of the monuments of early Polish music. Many of the acquests of Polish music of the Renaissance period were lost for ever, many are now scattered through foreign libraries and archives, not always accessible to our researchers.*

*It was only in the middle of the nineteenth century that this forgotten and misunderstood music began to reach the light of day in Poland. This was thanks to the first historians of Polish music and lovers of the national culture. Józef Surzyński, Aleksander Poliński, Adolf Chybiński, Zdzisław Jachimecki, Józef Reiss, and after them their pupils: Hieronim Feicht, Maria Szczepańska, Józef Chomiński, etc., began deliberate action in this field. The "Editions of Early Polish Music," undertaken before the war in 1928 by the Early Polish Music Society, enabled concert performances of some of these works to be given. To the 17 parts published before the war, a further 9 have since been added, and 5 more are now printing. They include works of Polish music from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth. They constitute, however, scarcely even a small part of the treasures of early Polish music, the greater part is still waiting to be brought out into the light of day and made available to the Polish public and to scholarship.*

*It should be stressed that the interest of learned circles in the monuments of Polish music, both in Poland and beyond her borders, was concentrated before the war rather on the religious forms, and so the secular current of early Polish music, not sufficiently brought into prominence, reached the knowledge of wider circles of musical recipients only to a slighter degree. In the post-war period this state of things underwent a fundamental change; works of every type and kind, of various currents and developmental tendencies, were brought into prominence, and exhibited in their full historical-social conditioning by economic-structural and cultural processes.*

*In 1953, when the whole of the Polish People's Republic and all the world honoured the genius of the great Renaissance scholar Nicolas Copernicus, as well as Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski, the great representative of Polish progressive social thought at that time, the learning and culture of the Polish Renaissance again became topical and with them the music of that period. The session of the Polish Academy of Sciences devoted to the Polish Renaissance rendered it possible to view this question from*

*the standpoint of new, and especially historical, research. In the course of investigations carried out by the State Institute of Fine Arts on behalf of the Polish Academy of Sciences, in connection with the preparations for this session, many MSS and first editions of music were brought to light, enabling a series of the compositions in the present collection to be published.*

*The anthology of Polish Renaissance music recorded for the gramophone will not only make it possible for Polish dances and madrigals, historical and religious songs, organ and lute music, to be heard in a Polish environment, but will also enable this music to go far beyond the frontiers of Poland, giving proof that we may say of the Polish music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries what the Renaissance poet Mikołaj Rey (the first Polish poet to break away from the tradition of writing verse in Latin and to use the vernacular) said of the Polish language, that "Poles are not geese, they have their own tongue."*

*The publication which is now presented to musicians and lovers of music should contribute to the reanimation of this early music, so that it may be played everywhere, and — the necessary accompaniment of this — should make the widest possible sections of the community aware of the value of our old musical culture. For this reason, this album should not be treated as a learned but rather as a practical publication, directly destined for performers, for students in schools of music, for vocal and instrumental ensembles, and for those who find pleasure in music. The wide choice represented by the works included (vocal and instrumental, organ and clavecin, lute and orchestral, choral and choral-instrumental) testifies to the great variety and richness of the forms and species which Polish music had at its disposal in the sixteenth century and in the first half of the seventeenth.*

*Our publication contains religious and secular works, side by side, just as they appeared at the time of the Renaissance, together shaping the rich and varied aspect of Polish musical culture at this period. The compositions for the organ given here testify that the Polish instrumental music of the sixteenth century speedily took the path of independent evolution showing the constantly increasing development of instrumental structure. The many dances with Polish titles were performed in the houses of the Polish magnates and urban aristocracy, and no doubt served the purposes of social recreation. Besides the Polish dances contained in the Polish tablatures, some Polish dances from foreign tablatures (German, French, Netherlandish, etc.) are also given. In spite of their anonymous character, we see in them the result of the influence of the Polish dance on foreign national environments, and on this basis we reckon these works as belonging to Polish culture, as an expression of its expansion.*

*Besides these, there are also included foreign dances by Polish composers active beyond the frontiers of their own country. Some of the compositions appear both in the clavecin and in the lute sections, always remembering the different structure of these instruments. The present popularity of the clavecin repertory, and to a lesser degree of the lute, has suggested to us the adaptation of the most interesting items for performance on either instrument, the more so since at the time of the Renaissance this was a universally accepted practice. On the basis of our knowledge of the type of "consorts" of players in Poland in the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, some Polish dances handed down in organ tablature or part-books have been arranged for instrumental ensembles.*

*The choice of vocal works presented in this album is also very varied. Besides the madrigals and "dumy" (dum a (plural dum y), a Slavonic folk-song, with slow sad sections alternating with quick and gay) reconstructed from the texts of the music and words, written separately but fitted to each other, we give a wide range of songs of a secular character. Here are represented various species: love, historical, wedding, funeral and even satirical songs.*

*Among the unaccompanied religious songs of Wacław of Szamotuły, Marcin Leopolita and Tomasz Szadek, we have given settings by Polish composers of Polish religious works, and first and foremost in the field of the Polish religious lyric, Gmólka's settings of the translations of the Psalms by Jan Kochanowski, the greatest Polish poet of the Renaissance.*

*Polish polychoral and vocal-instrumental music in the style of the Venetian school is represented by the works of Mikołaj Zieleński. Finally, in the desire to show the forms during the transition of the Renaissance into the first phase of the Baroque in Poland, we give a concerto by Mielczewski for solo voice with instrumental ensemble, in which there is still to be seen the crossing of the elements of both these stages of development.*

*It should be emphasized that among the works of professional composers we have included, of set purpose, the "Pieśń rokoszan" (The Rebels' Song) as an example of amateur composition. A work of this type is a proof of widespread musical culture. Certain technical faults in this work have caused it to be given with considerable corrections.*

*So wide a range of forms and species in music and performance indicates the rich and varied musical life of Renaissance Poland, the strong bonds between the Polish music of that time and the currents of European music in general, and at the same time — as shown by the music contained in our collection — its specific, native, Polish character.*



Today, we look at this music somewhat differently than we used to: we see in it the direct reflection and expression of the "Renaissance man". In the contemporary meaning of this conception, we see a man who is breaking away from the mediaeval theological ideology and ascetic attitude to life, who is more interested in the living and concrete world surrounding him than in the intangible and mystic "other world" promised by the Church; a man who observes the world, examines and masters its laws and formulates them himself; a man who "discovers himself", who boldly reveals and expresses his experiences, his joys and sorrows, in his art; who makes of his art the salt and the delight of human life, a recreation "to both teach and delight", which comes to have a conscious social value.

In the music of the Polish Renaissance we find the humour of Rey, the social ideas of Modrzewski, the liberation from the bonds of the theological ideology given by Copernicus, and the profoundly individual declaration of the master of poetry, Jan Kochanowski. The music of Mikołaj of Cracow, Mikołaj Gomółka, Wacław of Szamotuły, Cyprian Bazylik, Wojciech Długoraj, Mikołaj Zieleński and of the many anonymous composers, is drawn from the same sources as are drawn the poetry and prose, the social-political thought, and the scholarly conceptions of the great Poles of this epoch; from the new ideology of the community, turning the page of its history, beginning – in spite of difficulty and resistance, in spite of periods of waxing and waning, in spite of the egoism of the feudal class, which was to have so much influence on the history of Poland – the modern era.

Today, we look with a different eye upon these old Polish dances, whether peasant, bourgeois, or courtly, which have been preserved both in Polish and in foreign tablatures. We come to the Polish secular songs, and what is more, in the songs from the Protestant song-books we see the kindling of the anti-feudal, anti-papal thought of revolt. Here we see the germ of the national Polish style in process of formation, the penetration of elements from folk forms into professional music: we see the mediaeval ecclesiastical mysticism and ascetism being shaken off in favour of the love of life, of man, and of the variety of his experiences.

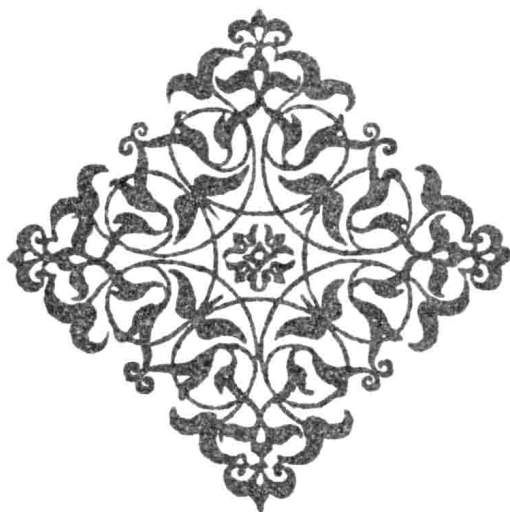
It is precisely these traits of Polish Renaissance music which draw it particularly near to the imagination of the composers of the Polish People's Republic, as it is already a music with certain national features of style, as it is music growing out of the attitude of the modern man, a man who is transforming his own world.

Today we look on the Renaissance as the social and cultural revolution of its epoch; today, within the framework of Polish socialistic culture, it is experiencing

*a renewed "renaissance". This collection of musical works, which we now give for use in a form adapted to the means of contemporary performers, is intended to serve the secondary renaissance of the music of that period. The short historical outline, in which we have endeavoured to show as clearly as possible the main currents of the musical Renaissance in Poland, as well as the many illustrations from originals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, by means of which we wish to bring the reader and the musician nearer to this epoch, are also dedicated to this end.*

*Józef Chomiński*

*Zofia Lissa*



# MUSIC OF THE POLISH RENAISSANCE



THE CRUCIAL problem in the investigations which are now being carried out on the music of the Polish Renaissance is to reach a real understanding of the fundamental questions of the musical culture of that period. When subjected to a fresh analysis and interpretation, the true ideological sense and the class aspect will be shown, and this in turn will render it possible to determine what role music plays in the Polish Renaissance as a whole. The earlier history of Polish music has left us with a false picture of this art during the period of the Renaissance, because the numerous links between the musical phenomena and the social movements and intellectual currents during this period have not been sufficiently appreciated. The role of music in the struggle between the contradictory ideological currents, i. e. the role of music in the class struggle of that epoch, has not been perceived. Hence comes the necessity for a new interpretation of musical facts and monuments, and for a revision of the method hitherto used in analysing the musical works of the Renaissance. With few exceptions, the older generation of Polish historians of music, e. g. Adolf Chybiński, Zdzisław Jachimecki, Józef Reiss, Maria Szczepańska, etc., understood the musical culture of the Polish Renaissance as an autonomic course of development. Today, we understand the musical culture of this period as a reflection of the fundamental social processes of those times, as one among the many factors which were actively helping in the development of the community.

This problem is mirrored in the music of the Polish Renaissance in different forms: the penetration of secular elements into religious music; the appearance of new forms of secular music, forms which have a new content of expression; the enlargement of the class range of musical culture; the penetration of elements of folk

music into the forms employed by the bourgeoisie and in the country houses of the gentry; the rise of forms of instrumental music as an independent kind; and above all the crystallization of the elements of national style in music — these are the specific musical reflections of the ideological changes which took place in that epoch. This is the reflection of those tendencies which are accepted as typical of the culture of the Renaissance in philosophy, science, and in all spheres of art, and so of its laicization, its humanism, its crystallization of the national character of culture, its individualism in artistic expression, and its bonds of union with ancient thought and art.

The social changes which took place in Poland during the Renaissance brought in their train definite and typical changes in the social consciousness. Their reflection is to be seen in all fields of ideology — in the whole of the superstructure. The criteria of the Renaissance in music must therefore be the phenomena typical of the social consciousness in the ideology of this period, which find their typical reflection for every branch of art. All the fundamental aspects of the ideology of that period find their own forms of expression in music, becoming realized in a manner conforming to the specific character of the given art. The forms of this realization constitute the criteria of the Renaissance style in music.

In the Polish music of the Renaissance we can see, in accordance with the processes taking place in the social-economic foundation, successive phases of the growth of progressive and regressive tendencies of which the main basis is the opposing forces of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. This process finds its direct reflection in the forms of Church music and of religious music outside the Church. From the point of view of musical development the period of the Renaissance in Polish music is complicated. We cannot speak of any one developmental current. Beside the secular music, then coming to its florescence, there is a parallel current of religious music, which in spite of its absorption of secular influences exists as a separate, strong current, and at the time of the intensification of the retrograde elements during the Counter-Reformation and then in the Baroque period, becomes of great importance. In order to set the Polish music of the Renaissance in its true light, it is necessary to understand the main tendencies in European music in general during this period.



The new humanistic attitude of the Renaissance appears in European music in different forms. First, in the transition from the music stiffened in the great forms of Church music towards the secular forms; songs, madrigals, and various forms of independent instrumental music. Second, in the emotional expression in these forms;