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Musical *topoi*. The chosen perspectives of *topos* in music

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Abstract

This article studies diverse approaches to *topoi* in music. For this end, the history of how the understanding of *topos* developed, as well as how it manifested itself, shall be presented. This term, one which originates from the Ancient Greek rhetoric, quickly gained acceptance in a broad cultural context. It is thanks to this growth that it was promptly incorporated into *ars musica*. During the Middle Ages, this concept from the Antique era was revived, notably influencing the illustrative nature of this era's music. The concept continued throughout the Common era, when the role of affects in music was reinforced. The 20th century witnessed a parallel progression of many unique understandings of *topos*. The contemporary thought of this era has presented numerous propositions that oscillate between the fields of musicology, literature studies, and philosophy. It may be assumed that in the future defining *topos* in the field of music will be closely connected with the emerging “transcultural” perspective which appears to be the appropriate paradigm with which to observe the processes occurring in the European culture, such as globalization and orientalization.

Keywords: philosophy of music, history of music, musical rhetoric, *topos* in music, transcultural *topos*.

The modality of the Gregorian chant, the isorhythmic constructivism of *ars nova*, the imitational forms of Renaissance polyphony, the Mannerist harmony of the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Bach's fugues, classical idiom of the sonata form, the individualism of Chopin, romantic programme music, the aphoristic style, *musique concrète*, minimalism... These phenomena focus our attention as elements of the development process, encompassing changes of the musical language, genre, forms, styles, and

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techniques, approaches to expression, and so forth, but more often, we experience them as autonomous *topoi* that seem to exist, in a way, above the historical evolution of music¹.

This text is a contribution to presenting the notion of *topoi* in the musical thought. In order to bring the different approaches together in one article, selected paradigms of thinking about this category in a diachronic perspective will be presented. The history of *topos* in the art of sounds originates from ancient rhetoric. Medieval theorists adapted the achievements of the Ancient and passed them on to their successors. Modern thought highlighted the role of affects: the Baroque apogee is followed by a Classicistic relaxation, leading to Romantic new rhetoric; while the 20th century and the contemporary musicological and philosophical thought is the time of creation of many parallel concepts. *Topoi* seem to be important not only for the study of the links between literature and music, but they are also connected with an attempt to understand the creative process and allow for the categorization of the elements of musical content.

The article will focus on the above-mentioned issues from the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, with emphasis on the achievements of Polish researchers. In this situation, the historical context is a side theme, which aims only to show the cultural continuity of the notion of *topos* and changes in its understanding.

Ancient Rhetoric

Topoi are a product of the ancient rhetoric. The *ars oratoria* originates several intellectual themes, suitable for adaptation and development at the speaker's will, intended to be used in various situations². For Aristotle, the concept of a *topos* is a place in the text of a speech, which must be complemented by a proper argument³. *Topoi* are, according to the Stagirite, "common points of reference (*loci communes*) for the issues of the rule of law, physics, politics and many other fields that have nothing in common with each other"; the thinker also stresses the existence of *common topoi* (what is right, lawful, useful, noble, pleasant, etc.) for all kinds of speeches⁴. Quintilian focuses on the practical aspect and defines *topoi* as the repository of thoughts (*argumentorum sedes*)⁵. Late Antiquity defines a new function of the concept, which ceases to be just a domain of rhetoric

¹ T. Jasiński, *Polska barokowa retoryka muzyczna*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2006, p. 11.

² See: E.R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (A. Borowski, trans.), Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, Kraków 1997, p. 76.

³ Cf. K. Szymańska-Stułka, *Topos w muzyce – topos narodowy. Miejsca wspólne, przestrzenie i idee*, [in:] *Topos narodowy w muzyce polskiej pierwszej połowy XIX wieku*, W. Nowik (ed.), Akademia Muzyczna im. Fryderyka Chopina, Warszawa 2006, p. 86.

⁴ Aristotle, *Rhetoric* (H. Podbielski, trans.), Polskie Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa 2014, pp. 54, 256.

⁵ Cf. E.R. Curtius, op. cit., pp. 76–77.

and spreads to all literary forms. A poetic topos becomes a topos of culture – a reconstruction of permanent possibilities of building concepts⁶.

It might seem that these *principia mundi*⁷ have appeared quite recently in the context of musical work. Even there, however, they have an ancient equivalent, since “the entire system of teaching music has been taken over from rhetoric and adapted”⁸ [own translation]. Following the history of topos in *ars musica*, Jacek Jadacki explores the art of ancient Greece, and more specifically: *nomoi*⁹. *Nomos* is then the most important type of composition and, moreover, the manner of its performance. It is characterized by a somber mood and “high aesthetic and artistic values”¹⁰ [own translation]. It also has features of certain fixed musical patterns, which reflects the topical space it contains. For Jadacki, the case of the *sui generis* topos are Old Greek scales, but the philosopher abstains from a broader analysis of this phenomenon¹¹.

The Ancient ascribe essential meaning to the genera: the chromatic expresses emotionality, the diatonic expresses calmness, and the enharmonic expresses passion. In this way, the musical *modi* become a conventionalized ground for *topoi*. Pythagorean theory of ethos (discussed in the writings of Plato and Aristotle) was somewhat forgotten by the Romans and resurrected only by Augustine of Hippo, who discovered and linked it with the Christian culture. According to the author of *Confessiones*, the therapeutic role of music consists in turning the soul away from earthly matters and direct it towards the eternal beauty of God Himself¹². The conviction about specific impact of art can also be found in the ancient theory of *catharsis*, in which music and poetry are meant to cause an emotional shock through a violent arousal and discharge of emotions¹³. This becomes a source of pleasure and ultimately leads to inner purification.

⁶ J. Eichstaedt, *Od toposu poetyckiego do toposu kultury*, [in:] *Toposy (w) filozofii. Filozofia i jej miejsce w doświadczeniu kulturowym*, M. Woźniczka, M. Perek (eds.), Wydawnictwo im. Stanisława Podobińskiego Uniwersytetu Humanistyczno-Przyrodniczego im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie, Częstochowa 2018, p. 46.

⁷ This is how *topoi* is called by Jolanta Szulakowska-Kujawik (see her *Antyczne dokonania enologiczne jako źródło inspiracji europejskiej kultury muzycznej*, computer printout of a doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Z. Mach, University of Silesia, Katowice 2015, p. 679).

⁸ E.R. Curtius, op. cit., p. 84.

⁹ Cf. J. Jadacki, *Topos – archetyp – mit: analiza semantyczna*, [in:] *Topos narodowy – w muzyce polskiej pierwszej połowy XIX wieku*, W. Nowik (ed.), Akademia Muzyczna im. Fryderyka Chopina, Warszawa 2006, p. 75.

¹⁰ *Nomos*, [in:] *Encyklopedia muzyki*, A. Chodkowski (ed.), Warszawa 1995, p. 611.

¹¹ Cf. J. Jadacki, op. cit., p. 75.

¹² Cf. A. Karpowicz-Zbińkowska, *Teologia muzyki w dialogach filozoficznych św. Augustyna*, Wydawnictwo Nomos, Kraków 2013, p. 90. The Pythagorean harmony of the spheres also becomes an important “musical” topos, used centuries later by, inter alia, Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht in one of his essays entitled *Das Rad der Zeit* (E. Orman, *Kategoria Stiftung von Zeit w Eggebrechtowskiej koncepcji muzyki*, [in:] *Kultura i sztuka w ujęciu filozoficznym*, B.A. Nowak, K. Maciąg (eds.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe Tygiel, Lublin 2017, p. 21).

¹³ Cf. *Katharsis teoria*, [in:] *Encyklopedia muzyki*, p. 433.

The illustrative Middle Ages

The Christian culture offered a basis for the development of permanent biblical genres (prayers, psalms, hymns, lamentations, parables)¹⁴, which were sung, often with accompaniment. In her commentary on Psalm 150, Hildegard of Bingen wrote about the allegorical significance of musical instruments: “the psalter of deep piety”, “the zither of mellifluous song”, “the drum of mortification”, “the organ of Divine defense” [own translation], etc... It was a distinctive topical convention embedded from Augustine’s *Expositions of the Psalms* to Wolbero’s comment on the *Song of Songs*¹⁵, passed on, developed and – what seems most important – sensed in that manner for centuries.

In turn, the Gregorian chant frequently used text content illustrations. An important role in the expression of the *canto gregoriano* is played by individual intervals, which can be described as *Tonmalerei* (sound painting). The ascending fourth and the descending third convey great joy and emotion. The fifth, on the other hand, expresses an intense experience even more strongly than the fourth¹⁶. Apostrophes (*ave, salve*) and exclamations (*oh*) frequently feature an elaborate melisma in the melody, clearly diverging from the neighboring structures. Other figures that are noticeable in the chant are melodic constructions used to emphasize specific words of a given text. These incidental procedures, thanks to their shapes and semantic references, herald the *topoi* codified in further centuries¹⁷.

Theoreticians of the Middle Ages perfectly adapt the ancient theory of music, mainly thanks to the treatises of Augustine and Boethius. The Medieval scholars also notice the importance of the movement of sounds, within which the motif is formulated¹⁸. Some researchers consider the music of the Christian Middle Ages as a prelude to (pra)rhetorical figures. However, the musical rhetoric *in se* and its varied catalogue of figures will not be formed until the Renaissance¹⁹.

¹⁴ See: J. Szulakowska-Kujawik, op. cit., p. 477.

¹⁵ Cf. B. Matusiak, *Hildegarda z Bingen: Teologia muzyki*, Wydawnictwo Homini, Kraków 2003, pp. 127–129. Such significant instrument is also a funeral *tinnabulum*, whose sound announced the death of a monk in a monastery. See also the works of the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt.

¹⁶ Cf. E. Hinz, *Nurt religijny w muzyce różnych epok*, Pelplin 2003, p. 12. Bernard Sawicki notes that the Gregorian chant – the apex of Medieval music – is a theological and existential archetype of all melodies of later European epochs: “pervaded not only by the rhetoric of the age, but also by a deep personal devotion, the motifs and melodic themes of Johann Sebastian Bach, pure and direct in their theology melodies of Mozart, deeply human and truly open to the Infinite melodies of Chopin, Schubert, Brahms, or Rachmaninoff – they all meet somewhere at the source with the chant” [own translation] (Id., *W chorale jest wszystko*, Wydawnictwo Tyniec, Kraków 2014, pp. 40–41).

¹⁷ Cf. T. Jasiński, op. cit., pp. 12–14, 26.

¹⁸ Cf. W. Tatariewicz, *Estetyka średniowiecza*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Wrocław 1962, p. 149.

¹⁹ See: L. Polony, *Symbol i muzyka*, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, Kraków 2011, pp. 119, 121–122, 129–130, 142.

The affective Modern Era

The continuation of the medieval thought is the theory of affections, which originates directly from the *topoi* of the linguistic area. Bohdan Pocij points out that music was also influenced by the Christian duality, originating from the Greek thought on matter and spirit, body and soul. This process is intensified in the 17th century, when music takes on a form combined with the affective expression of sounds²⁰. Rolf Dammann further emphasizes the role of modern human philosophy in the embedding of the doctrine of affections, while Carl Dahlhaus writes about affections in music as a *topos* strongly rooted in history²¹. According to *Affektenlehre*, music is primarily intended to arouse emotions which is achieved by appropriate selection of elements of a musical work, such as rhythm, tempo and harmony. Renaissance theorists implemented certain principles of expressing feelings, with the poetic text being the starting point²². Subsequently, the science of affections is considered by German and French authors in connection with imitation (art as *mimesis*)²³.

Baroque musical rhetoric is a topic discussed in numerous musicological works, however, due to the volume of this article, this issue will not be discussed in detail. It should be noted, however, that in the first half of the 17th century, René Descartes made philosophical suppositions on the science of affections in his writings. This rationalistic spirit surrounds the formation of such concepts as Marina Mersenne's *musique accentuelle*, Giovanni Battista Doni's *musica scenica*, Joan Albert Ban's *musica flexanima* or Athanasius Kircher's *musica pathetica*²⁴. In the 18th century Germany, the *Affektenlehre* is fully developed. Leszek Polony describes the Bach's era as a time of dominance of imaginary symbolism: "Feelings (affections) are presented rather than directly expressed, largely by means of a conventionalized system of *loci topici*, musical imagery based on the imitation of rhetorical properties of affected speech"²⁵. Topical locations were therefore figures that were supposed to "depict" or "represent" musical affections through culturally fixed meanings²⁶. The then established system of musical-rhetorical figures was to help to understand emotions by combining them with appropriate sonic turns²⁷. In the Classical era, they were considerably relaxed and eventually gave way to romantic expressiveness.

²⁰ Cf. B. Pocij, op. cit., p. 16.

²¹ See: S. Paczkowski, *Nauka o afektach w myśli muzycznej I połowy XVII wieku*, Wydawnictwo Muzyczne Polihymnia, Lublin 1998, pp. 15, 42.

²² The topic of forming the Polish tradition of rhetorical figures in the music of the Renaissance is addressed by Tomasz Jasiński (see Id., op. cit., pp. 37–56).

²³ See: *Afektów teoria*, [in:] *Encyklopedia muzyki*, p. 15.

²⁴ Cf. S. Paczkowski, op. cit., pp. 203–204.

²⁵ L. Polony, *Symbol i muzyka*, p. 80.

²⁶ Cf. S. Paczkowski, op. cit., p. 15.

²⁷ "In general, if the entire output of the Baroque theory is analyzed, the result of such identification was a considerable number of figures, amounting to nearly one hundred. This estimation does

The theory and practice of the 19th century brought musical works closer to literature (especially poetry). The Romanticists formulated their own version of *topos*, which manifested itself in art as an organic whole²⁸. According to Mieczysław Tomaszewski, conventions and the universal character of the language of expression were rejected, and the domination of rhetoric was abolished along with a codified manner of using *topoi*. Thus, a new rhetoric was created and became almost the opposite of the old one. The new rhetoric was not based on convention, but on the composer's direct lyrical expression²⁹. There was a breakthrough in the treatment of music. It ceased to reflect the cosmic order and became a carrier of human ideas. The harmonious, pre-Kantian perception of the universe was abandoned (the ontological nature of understanding music *de facto* changed³⁰). At that time, exaltedness in the struggle for freedom in personal, religious and national dimension appeared as a common place for many cultural texts³¹.

Pluralistic continuity: 20th century and contemporaneity

The 20th century marks the achievements of Ernst Robert Curtius, who shows the inseparability of *topoi* from the ancient rhetoric and the Latin culture of the Middle Ages. The researcher also emphasizes the exceptional affinity between the *ars oratoria* and the art of sound, quoting Wilibald Gurlitt's afterword to Arnold Schering's book:

How often [...] do we perceive in melody or rhythm, in motif or figure, in melodic or harmonic phrase, an idea or inspiration in the modern poetical meaning, which is substantially no more than an elaboration on those traditional *topoi*, or, in other words, a resumption, transformation or remake of specific typical topics, formulae and phrases³². [own translation]

Also worth noting is Eero Tarasti, who uses the term *elementary signifiers* in his work *A Theory of Musical Semiotics*. The Finnish musicologist writes, inter alia, about researchers who analyze the universal patterns found in musical works within the framework of iconological theories. In Tarasti's con-

not include the number of terms, for mere names were much more numerous (approximately 160), which resulted from simultaneous use of Greek and Latin terms for one and the same figure, and from gathering synonyms" [own translation] (T. Jasiński, op. cit., p. 22).

²⁸ Cf. A. Mazur, *Epopoea XIX wieku czyli totalność powieściowego świata*, [in:] *Transcendencja realistów. Motywy metafizyczne w polskiej i niemieckiej prozie II połowy XIX wieku*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole 2001, p. 94.

²⁹ Cf. M. Tomaszewski, *O muzyce polskiej w perspektywie intertekstualnej. Studia i szkice*, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, Kraków 2005, pp. 88–89.

³⁰ See: A. Karpowicz-Zbińkowska, *Zwierciadło muzyki*, Wydawnictwo Tyniec, Kraków 2016, p. 170.

³¹ Cf. K. Szymańska-Stułka, op. cit., pp. 95, 97.

³² E.R. Curtius, op. cit., pp. 84–85.

cept, topoi are heteronomous thematic or mythical categories, which are a kind of “content-based premise” for the work. The researcher refers to semantic categories such as tragic, magical, pathetic, pastoral, fairy tale, mystical or exotic. In this perspective, *topoi* are to allow a uniform interpretation of a specific piece of music³³.

Tarasti also discusses the concept of Ernst Kurth, who wrote about harmonic structures, motifs and musical themes, naming them *portions of energy*. The Swiss music theoretician considers the motif to be the primary source and field of clash of internal energies, and also considers it to be the smallest unit of musical segmentation. Another of the authors mentioned by Tarasti is Deryck Cooke, whose analyses feature sixteen interval topoi; in his book *The Language of Music*, the British musicologist describes *topoi* as parts of a sequential system or as self-contained entities (within the framework of the issues of emotivism of musical intervals)³⁴.

Therefore, topoi became important for aesthetic reflection, which had a direct impact on the ontology of a musical work. Thanks to this approach, a bridge was created between the epochs, which is, more or less consciously, continued to this day in many parallel perspectives. Some of them will be presented below.

The tradition of musical *loci communes* is clearly present in the 21st century. Contemporary musicological theory develops its own definitions of *topoi*. Leszek Polony writes about the topos as an “elementary thematic-stylistical unit”³⁵ which is the core of a work of art. According to Robert Hatten, however, *topoi* are fragments of music or stylistic types that have a close connection with genres, styles and expressive meanings³⁶. The American music theoretician introduces the concept of topos to musicology in order to systematize semantically marked *common places* in the works of Ludwig van Beethoven³⁷. Renata Borowiecka discerns Hatten’s *topoi* in Paweł Łukaszewski’s compositions, specifically in neo-rhetoric phrases from the *affectus doloris* circle, which make up contents of lamentable nature³⁸.

Raymond Monelle presents the semiotic mechanism of the musical topos: “original «icons» or «indices» – imitating or indicating specific «objects» (cry, hunting or military fanfare, dance) – secondarily «index» topical meanings, because they imitate symptoms of emotions or «reproduce the style of some

³³ Cf. M. Jabłoński, *Muzyka jako znak. Wokół semiotyki muzyki Eero Tarastiego*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, Poznań 1999, pp. 19, 74.

³⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 120. Furthermore, Władysław Tatarkiewicz enumerates several dozens of fixed motifs, “evergreen or recurring over and over” [own translation] (see *Id.*, *Dzieje sześciu pojęć*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa 1988, pp. 399–403).

³⁵ L. Polony, *Symbol i muzyka*, p. 207.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

³⁷ Cf. L. Akopian (Hakobian), *Koncepcje teoretyczno-muzyczne jako czynnik przeszkadzający w rozumieniu muzyki*, “Teoria Muzyki” 2015, no. 7, p. 23.

³⁸ R. Borowiecka, *Twórczość religijna Pawła Łukaszewskiego. Muzyka jako wyraz zmysłu wiary artysty*, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, Kraków 2019, pp. 554–555.

place»³⁹ [own translation]. Leonard Ratner, in turn, presents three categories of musical *topoi*: stylistic, dance and painting. The dance *topoi* originate mainly from emancipation of rhythms and dance genres and in the suite of Baroque dances; the stylistic *topoi* are connected, inter alia, with military and hunting music, strict (fugal) or free (improvisational) style, while the painting *topoi*, i.e. pictorial, are manifest in imitating the sounds of battle or in painting the natural phenomena⁴⁰. As it turns out, the issue of topos in music is interesting primarily for researchers of semiological orientation.

Also worth mentioning is the concept of a *classeme*. Márta Grabócz defines this significant musical unit as a musical sentence or period (theme), while Kofi Agawu believes that it corresponds to Ratner's topos. Agawu defines *classemes* as units with precise meanings – clarified in the history of music⁴¹. Furthermore, Grabócz also uses the semiotic square of Algirdas Greimas in her analyses. Using the concept of the Lithuanian linguist, the researcher illustrates the relationships between different characters within a musical composition: “one topos turns into its opposition, which in turn leads to a next topos, leading to its opposition, which leads to the first topos”⁴². In Bartók's work, Grabócz finds fifteen *topoi*, used by the Hungarian composer to make up semantic models⁴³.

Some researchers, in their analyses of contemporary works, reach for the *topoi* that originate from early music. Michał Sławecki discovers the Romano-Frankish topos in the works of such composers as Maurice Duruflé (*Four Motets on Gregorian Themes* Op. 10), Domenico Bartolucci (*Two Marian Antiphons*), Stanisław Moryto (*Trzy responsoria żałobne* [*Three Funeral Responsories*]) or Marian Sawa (*Missa Claromontana*). Sławecki justifies the use of the term *topos* in analysis of musical works with its broad definition. It is supposed to bear witness to the continuity of culture and its archetypal nature⁴⁴.

³⁹ L. Polony, *Symbol i muzyka*, p. 87.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 164–165.

⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 225.

⁴² M. Tomaszewski, *Odczytywanie dzieła muzycznego. Od kategorii elementarnych do fundamentalnych i transcendentnych*, “Teoria Muzyki” 2012, no. 1, p. 9.

⁴³ Those are: the ideal, the grotesque, the character in despair, tranquil nature, menacing nature, night time nature, elegy, perpetuum mobile, popular songs and dances, metamorphosis, danger, discordancy, chant, lament, typical element (Hungarian). She further distinguishes four major *topoi*, which frequently follow each other in the given order: 1. Nature, 2. Character, 3. Metamorphosis, 4. Cathartic moment (Cf. M. Gamrat, *Od Kuhlaia do Dusapina, czyli muzyka, narracyjność i znaczenie według Márty Grabócz (Márta Grabócz, Musique, narrativité, signification, préface de Charles Rosen, L'Harmattan, Paris 2009)*, “Res Facta Nova” 2013, no. 14 (23), pp. 277–278).

⁴⁴ See: M. Sławecki, *Topos romano-frankoński. Aspekt wykonawczy na przykładzie wybranych utworów*, computer printout of the doctoral dissertation under the supervision of K. Szymonik, Uniwersytet Muzyczny Fryderyka Chopina, Warszawa 2011; Cf. *idem*, *Topos romano-frankoński na przykładzie “Missa Claromontana” (2005) na chór, organy i kotły Mariana Sawy*, “Pro Musica Sacra” 2017, no. 15, p. 186.

According to Katarzyna Szymańska-Stulka, the topical components of music are the arrangements of notes which determine the dynamics of the motif and the relations of height between them (i.e. harmony, intervals, melodic turns and rhythmic formulas inside the motif or phrase)⁴⁵. Jolanta Szulakowska-Kujawik, on the other hand, when writing about the significance of the ancient heritage to the European music, points to the important function of *topoi* in the art of sound and to the phenomenon of their diverse presence. The very topos of the garden with its concept changing over the centuries becomes a reflection of the changes in the philosophy of life, social revolutions and history of ideas⁴⁶. At the musical level, the researcher shows a semantic metamorphosis of the following intellectual motifs: road, wanderings, journey, idyll, pilgrim, as well as the interval of the minor sixth. It turns out that the latter is a well-established common place for many musical love themes (including compositions by Richard Wagner, Claude Debussy, Eugene Knapik, and Howard Shore)⁴⁷. Mieczysław Tomaszewski, in turn, notes the *topoidal* nature of expression in the works of Krzysztof Penderecki. This means from on the “universal alphabet of idioms and *topoi* of culture” and is also connected with the Krakow artist’s conviction that the paramount element of all compositions is the message, which is carried by sounds and the lyrics chosen to match them⁴⁸.

Topoi may also be taken from another perspective: the original semantic core, i.e. the topos as a *place* or *area*, is added the meaning of a model that is realized in an ideal manner (as a mental construction) or real manner (as a visualization in reality). In this context, it is presented as a scheme according to which we discover the *topos koinos* (Old Greek τόπος κοινός – common place) of interest: in the space with fixed meanings and in the perspective from which we watch these places. That is why Jadacki writes not only about topical products of activity (such as krakowiak, mazurka, polonaise), but also about the piano as the most important Polish topical instrument since the times of Frédéric Chopin⁴⁹.

Despite the fact that in most musical works only a part of the work is determined by *topoi*, sometimes they may even be identified with the theme and expressed through it. Therefore, when reflecting on topoi, it is worth asking oneself questions about the way in which the composer uses the literary text in a musical work. Reflections on the relationship between literature and music occupy an im-

⁴⁵ Cf. K. Szymańska-Stulka, op. cit., p. 91.

⁴⁶ Cf. J. Szulakowska-Kulawik, op. cit., pp. 445–446, 680–697.

⁴⁷ Cf. Ibid., pp. 701–707, 739. This author’s analyses also feature a connection of the Antique topos with *Beatus vir* op. 38 by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki: “The Arcadia of a praying man, soothed by God, expressed in simple, numerous repeated chords and simple psalm songs” [own translation] (ibid., p. 717). In this context, the famous psalm composed for the first pilgrimage of Pope John Paul II to Poland not only draws from the Biblical topic, but also leaves a space for the Old Greek *mythos*.

⁴⁸ See: M. Tomaszewski, *W zadziwieniu i zadumie nad “pokoleniem 33”*, “Teoria Muzyki” 2013, no. 3, pp. 21, 24.

⁴⁹ Cf. J. Jadacki, op. cit., pp. 71, 77.

portant place in the works of Krzysztof Lipka and Tomasz Górný⁵⁰. However, such interdisciplinary analyses are still not sufficiently popular. Andrzej Hejmej even writes about downright restraint in music and literature studies due to difficulties in defining and recognizing the model more precisely, as well as the radical distinctness of the material used by the two arts⁵¹.

What is it then that appears in the contemporary methodological consciousness? It is proposed, *inter alia*, to analyze music as a *key word* in the texts of various authors. This concerns mainly program works, which use almost exclusively musical narrative. This approach results from the constant correspondence of *ars musica* with other arts. Some of the *topoi* from the history of music are listed by Grażyna Bobilewicz-Bryś:

The most frequently represented are literary inspirations, especially popular topics – Prometheus, Macbeth, Hamlet. Also popular are myths and antique legends, e.g. Orpheus, Psyche. Numerous musical pieces are created under the influence of graphic inspirations (e.g. Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Isle of the Dead* according to Arnold Böcklin)⁵². [own translation]

The researcher also writes about Alexander Scriabin, who created literary commentaries on his works and published them as separate brochures or wrote interpretative and expressive guidelines on the margins of the score. Scriabin's compositions contain a philosophical and aesthetic program, a formal arrangement and symbolic elements (this happens, for example, in *The Poem of Ecstasy*)⁵³. Also known is the example of Franz Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, whose integral interpretative element is the autobiographical literary text *My Dream*, which precedes the arrangement of the musical material⁵⁴. Therefore, the above-described *loci communes* complement the theoretical indications of individual *topos* concepts from the point of view of the creative process and composer's practice. As Bohdan Pocij notes:

Great creators of piano, symphonic and dramatic music need literary and poetic impulses: descriptions, performances, *topoi*, metaphors, comparisons – in order to stimulate, incite, and develop their own inventiveness...⁵⁵ [own translation]

⁵⁰ See: K. Lipka, *Słyszalny krajobraz. Szkice o powiązaniach muzyki i literatury: od Abélarda do Rilkego*, Wydawnictwo Nowy Świat, Warsaw 2004, pp. 5–34; See Id., *Utopia urzeczywistniona. Metafizyczne podłoże treści dzieła muzycznego*, Uniwersytet Muzyczny Fryderyka Chopina, Warsaw 2009, pp. 262–264; See: T. Górný, *Polifonia. Od muzyki do literatury*, Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, Krakow 2017, pp. 9–35.

⁵¹ See: A. Hejmej, *Muzyka w literaturze. Perspektywy współczesnych badań*, "Teksty Drugie" 2000, no. 4 (63), p. 29.

⁵² G. Bobilewicz-Bryś, *Aleksander Skriabin w myśli estetycznej i twórczości symbolistów rosyjskich*, "Slavia Orientalis" 1993, no. 1, pp. 29–30.

⁵³ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁵⁴ See: L. Polony, *Muzyka jako projekcja świata. Symbol w polu pojęć pokrewnych w myśleniu muzykologicznym*, "Estetyka i Krytyka" 2011, no. 1 (20), p. 141.

⁵⁵ B. Pocij, *Bycie w muzyce. Próba opisanja twórczości Henryka Mikołaja Góreckiego*, Akademia Muzyczna im. Karola Szymanowskiego, Katowice 2005, p. 68.

Summary

In arts, *topoi* appear as tools in the hands of a creator and as a field of inspiration. Janina Abramowska emphasizes both their hereditariness and repetitiveness, for it is in *topoi* that certain cultural structures or conventions are embedded⁵⁶. Music may express them through motifs which last “unchanged” for centuries and are connected with a specific historical and musical circumstances, while its individual elements may be presented through pragmatic, oratory concept⁵⁷.

Following analysis of understanding of topoi in music, ever deeper reflections appear, embracing not one, but more areas of the arts at the same time. Together with the appearance of new ways of communication, the musical *loci topici* encroach upon new semantic codes. The presence of music in film, advertisement or the Internet is the basis for implanting more and more topical grounds, while intercultural relationships show their supra-European value. Without any doubt, new common places will appear, along with the update of the older *topoi*. It may be assumed that the thought will develop towards a transcultural topos in a broad sense. The traditions of other cultures can have a significant impact on the core of certain European archetypes. In music, on the one hand, we are dealing with obliteration of distinguishing features through globalization, and on the other hand, with the process of orientalization as a result of closer contact between civilizations and polyvalences of many artists.

With this in mind, it is worth ensuring that topoi, whose importance is the basis for a deeper understanding of the Mediterranean civilization, remain alive. Responsible communication of musical *topoi* is important because the European culture remains in the Antique circles if “the rules of the rhetoric sinusoidally determine the rules of musical construction until the 20th century”⁵⁸ [own translation]. Thus, the struggle between generations in music takes the form of endless disputes between the avant-garde, which fills in new spaces, and the topical tradition, which tries to absorb it.

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⁵⁶ Cf. J. Abramowska, *Topos i niektóre miejsca wspólne badań literackich*, “Pamiętnik Literacki” 1982, LXXIII no. 1 (2), pp. 3–4.

⁵⁷ Cf. K. Szymańska-Stułka, op. cit., pp. 89–90.

⁵⁸ Cf. J. Szulakowska-Kulawik, op. cit., p. 461.

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Topoi umuzycznione. Przegląd koncepcji toposu w muzyce

Streszczenie

Treść artykułu ma ukazać różne ujęcia *topoi* w sztuce muzycznej. W tym celu zostaje przedstawiona historia pojęcia toposu. Ten termin z antycznej retoryki dość szybko stał się pojęciem używanym w szerszym kontekście kulturowym, dzięki czemu połączono go również z *ars musica*. W okresie średniowiecza dokonała się adaptacja starożytnych koncepcji oraz rozwinięcie ich w stronę ilustracyjności, w epokach nowożytnych nastąpiło zaś wzmocnienie roli afektów. W XX stuleciu wiele ujęć umuzycznionego *topoi* zaczęło funkcjonować równolegle. Współczesna myśl w omawianym zakresie dostarcza licznych propozycji oscylujących między muzykologią, literaturoznawstwem a filozofią. Można przypuszczać, że pojmowanie toposu w muzyce będzie się w przyszłości wiązało z perspektywą transkulturową, która wydaje się odpowiednim paradygmatem badawczym wobec zachodzących w kulturze europejskiej procesów, takich jak globalizacja i orientalizacja.

Słowa kluczowe: filozofia muzyki, historia muzyki, retoryka muzyczna, topos w muzyce, topos transkulturowy.