

Weronika Sucharska

THE ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY IN POZNAŃ

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's Chamber Music Works in the Context of the Transformations of the Composer's Style: Selected Examples

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse stylistic changes in Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's output on the example of four selected chamber music works: Quartettino, Op. 5, Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet, Op. 11, Little Music 4, Op. 28 and Aria ('operatic scene'), Op. 59. By applying the methods of structural and auditory analysis as well as style criticism, I discuss the diversity of composition techniques found in these compositions. Additionally, my methodology has allowed me to represent the idiomatic, idiosyncratic features of Górecki's style and study the ways in which Górecki approached chamber music.

Keywords

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, twentieth-century music, chamber music, Polish music, composition techniques, *Aria* ('operatic scene'), *Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet*, *Quartettino*, *Little Music 4*

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's presence among 20th-century Polish composers is distinguished by a highly individual approach to music, manifesting itself in remaining faithful to selected composition techniques and in his uncompromising attitude to composing commissions, from among which he only accepted some carefully selected ones, in accordance with his internal personal motives.¹ Górecki's compositions are distinguished by their strongly expressive character and the diversity of structures and techniques, which has made them recognisable and won them the appreciation of both audiences and scholars. Górecki's oeuvre reflects his personality, full of internal contrasts, which are also present in his interviews and the opinions of those who knew him in person. In his music expression and emotions (contained in the texts which inspired him and in strategies for handling music material) come to the fore. On the other hand, his works are characterised by structural clarity, which is reflected in their makeup. The confrontation of these two qualities, contrary by nature, is what makes Górecki's oeuvre unique and stylistically idiosyncratic. From both the audience and performers, these compositions require commitment and concentration, without which their aesthetic value cannot be fully experienced. Despite Górecki's status as one of the 20th century's major composers, not all of his works have been studied in detail. In this paper, I have focused on a selection of less known pieces, which, nevertheless, played a significant role in his output.

The analyses I have conducted confirm the thesis that Górecki's style constantly developed and evolved, while at the same time the idiomatic qualities of his technique were retained. The four compositions

¹ '[...] I have been raised in the conviction that art is not a business [...]'. A. Malatyńska-Stankiewicz, 'Nie będę pisał na metry i łokcie. Wywiad z 2003 r. z niedawno zmarłym Henrykiem Mikołajem Góreckim' [A 2003 interview with the recently deceased H.M. Górecki], <http://www.strony.ca/Strony24/articles/a2402.html>, accessed 20 Oct. 2020.

I have selected for the purposes of this study are: *Quartettino* Op. 5, *Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet* Op. 11, *Muzyczka IV [Little Music 4]* Op. 28, and *Aria* ('operatic scene') Op. 59. What most of them have in common is the use of small performing forces typical of chamber music, and, more specifically, of four instruments. The *Concerto* is an exception here in that the string quartet accompanies solo instruments. Nevertheless, in its character this work also belongs to chamber music. The works listed above have only been researched to a vestigial extent, in comparison with other, more famous pieces by the same artist. I have therefore decided to analyse these particular works, which clearly illustrate the changes that occurred in Górecki's sound language.

***Quartettino* Op. 5**

Quartettino, written during the composer's studies in 1956, demonstrates direct influences from Béla Bartók and Karol Szymanowski, and was inspired by the neoclassical style, propagated at Górecki's *alma mater* at that time by Bolesław Szabelski. The piece exemplifies a creative use of that style, which had been well established and much exploited in music ever since the period between the two World Wars. The use of the Italian term *quartettino*, diminutive for a quartet, points to a genre of chamber music, but also indicates the lightness and cheerful character of the composition.

The work's structure is that of the classical chamber music cycle consisting of three movements (the sequence of fast – slow – fast sections). Rather than making use of any ready-made forms, each movement consists of segments internally diversified with respect to texture. This segmental form is also determined by the thematic and motivic material, whose transformations in the course of the work's narrative make it possible to distinguish melodic-rhythmic structures underlying the smaller-scale segments juxtaposed within each movement on the principle of similarity or contrast.

The choice of instruments plays a major role in attaining the above-described musical character. Two flutes, an oboe, and a violin are responsible for the unique sound colour. Such a complement of instruments is untypical in comparison with historical chamber music

practice. In the *Quartettino*, these instruments do not appear on an equal footing. The first flute, the oboe, and the violin all present the thematic material, while the second flute only accompanies the others and does not contribute to building the work's form. In the course of the composition, each of the instruments is assigned one definite function within a given segment, for instance melodic, accompanying, or related to shaping the homorhythmic texture. The *Quartettino* represents a creative approach to neoclassicism, but at the same time it has some idiomatic qualities characteristic of Górecki's output and also found in his later works. The composer makes use of the material of the extended chromatic scale and the minor scale, organised by distinguishing tonal centres. Individual segments are centralised by means of ostinatos and tremolos. The intervals of a second and a third are employed to an equal extent, so that the work's sound concentrates around these two, which gives the auditory impression of tonality. The ostinato segments centralise the sound, but also bring to mind the structures of folk music, in which the accompaniment is usually based on simple and repetitive sound structures. References to folk music were also frequent in neoclassicism. Repetitive melodic-rhythmic structures would later become a constant individual quality of Górecki's style.

In the *Quartettino*, the themes exemplify a modern approach to melody as an element shaping musical narration. The melodies are frequently based here on one selected scale or its fragment and presented in counterpoint or in dialogue – a compositional strategy which likewise draws on the heritage of the past.

Though intensification of sound and dense dynamic markings would only become characteristic of Górecki's music in a later period, already in the *Quartettino* the composer makes use of a wide dynamic scale from *p* to *fff* within a relatively brief space, which bestows energy on the work's narrative and contributes to its dynamic transformations. The resolute articulation makes use of *staccato*, *spiccato*, as well as accents falling on both the strong and the weak part of the beat. These contrast with the *legato*, usually appearing in theme expositions and functioning as a way of organising musical phrasing in the given segment.

The use of centralisation and repetitive motivic-thematic structures integrates the work as a whole. Of special interest is the element with

which the individual segments end. It is a chord usually accompanied (surrounded) by rests, emphasised by an accent and intensified by *forte* dynamics. The work's unity is also reflected in the makeup of the musical narrative, which consists of a sequence of similar variant segments and those contrasted by the introduction of new thematic material. This strategy guarantees integrity on the levels of macro-form and of the individual sections within the work, despite its cyclic structure.

Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11

Composed in 1957, this *Concerto* belongs to the second phase of Górecki's artistic development, according to the typology of his works proposed by Krzysztof Droba.² The work was dedicated to Leon Markiewicz, a critic who exhibited a lively interest in Górecki's output from the very start and reviewed the composer's works in music periodicals. When asked to comment on the reasons behind this dedication, Markiewicz said:

The dedication took me by surprise. It may have been a friendly way to return my favours, since I have been genuinely fascinated with his music from the start, and in my first Górecki review in 'Ruch Muzyczny' I devoted more space to this *Concerto* than to his dynamic *Songs*.³

The *Concerto* is notably considered by both Krzysztof Droba and Adrian Thomas⁴ as a turning point marking the beginning of a new phase in Górecki's output. We must remember, however, that the composer's style evolved gradually, and so this work also demonstrates qualities known from the first phase.

The *Concerto* Op. 11 was Górecki's first composition scored for an untypical instrumental ensemble. The unconventional choice of

² K. Droba, 'Henryk Mikołaj Górecki', in: E. Dziębowska, ed., *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM. Część biograficzna*, 3 (1979), 424.

³ B. Bolesławska-Lewandowska, *Górecki portret w pamięci* (2013), 88.

⁴ A. Thomas, *Górecki* (1997), 13.

instruments is viewed by other researchers⁵ as a harbinger of the composer's fascination with sound colour, which would lead him to the sonoristic technique.

The *Concerto*'s form does not follow that of a classical instrumental concerto, either. Górecki's work consists of four sections and begins with a slow movement. The first and third movements are much shorter, out of proportion with the second and fourth ones. The sections are contrasted with respect to density of texture; the shorter ones are significantly rarefied. Instead of using ready-made forms, the composer builds sequences of segments contrasted in terms of texture, tempi, structure, and duration.

Of primary importance in this context is the composition's title. The word 'concerto' points directly to the presence of solo instrumental *concertante* parts performed by the eponymous five instruments, which, however, are not listed in the title. By taking up a dialogue with the main instruments, the string quartet replaces the orchestra, which performed this function in a classical solo concerto. The quartet or its selected members accompany the individual solo instruments and continue to dialogue with them throughout the piece. However, not all the five *concertante* instruments are equally involved in the solo parts. The flute and the clarinet are clearly dominant. The trumpet, xylophone, and mandolin parts are reduced at times to individual, incidental notes, but still remain in dialogue rather than providing accompaniment. It is only in the last movement that all the instruments play *tutti*. The texture evidently tends to grow denser in the course of the work's narration. The whole opens with a 13-bar introduction by the solo flute playing *piano*, while in the closing section all the instruments thrice repeat one chord in *ffff* dynamics, though in the last measure the texture is reduced to the single note D in the parts of both violins. The notation also becomes reduced. In sections where a given instrument is silent throughout the bar, instead of rests the whole fragment is left out, and linked to the remaining fragments of the instrument's part with dotted lines so that the musician and the conductor do not get lost in the score. Such well-thought-out notation facilitates fast and precise score reading.

⁵ Cf. the discussion of Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11 in <http://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzej-kompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/koncert-na-piec-instrumentow-ikwartet-smyczkowy-op-11>, accessed 9 June 2020.

The *Concerto* is an atonal piece making use of twelve-note material, with a distinct predilection for highlighting second intervals in both horizontal and vertical structures. In Górecki's output, the 1950s were the time of his most active interest in the avant-garde. This is evident in the multiplicity of techniques and solutions applied in the piece, which draw on the modern achievements of Western music. Instead of traditional time signatures, in the course of the composition digits placed above the staves refer to the number of metrical units comprised within a given measure. Crotchets are the basic unit, but quavers and semiquavers briefly take over as the beat of the bar in movements two and four. Both simple and complex time signatures are used. In auditory perception, the music gives the sense of irregularity, because the beat changes fast and frequently, and irregular rhythmic groupings appear. Rapid changes of time organisation create the impression that tempi are altered as well, but in reality they remain stable throughout the sections. In the *Concerto*, Górecki makes use of traditional expressive and agogic indications such as *sostenuto*, *dolce*, *animo*, *feroce*, but also marks, for instance, the return to *a tempo* or *ritenuto*, though such markings can only be found in the second movement and in the closing section.

The stylistic evolution that was taking place at the time when Górecki composed his *Concerto* is also reflected in the use of pointillistic technique. The composer independently studied serialism and pointillism, thus continuing the line of development mapped out by Anton Webern. Examples of pointillism in Górecki's oeuvre can be found in the *Concerto* that is the subject of this analysis, as well as in such pieces as *Three Diagrams* for solo flute. The individual melodic-rhythmic groupings are distinctly separated by short rests, which creates the impression of isolation of selected motifs. A pointillistic texture is also created by the accumulation of interval leaps, sometimes larger than an octave, which, though not separated by rests, make the impression of autonomous notes, motifs, and melodic phrases. This effect is enhanced by fast changes of dynamics.

Górecki's special sensitivity to sound colour and to sound as a form-building element (later labelled as the sonoristic technique) manifests itself, among others, in the choice of instruments and the use of their extreme registers. Though the flute, the clarinet and the trumpet are all wind instruments, they differ significantly in timbre.

In the *Concerto* Górecki exploits the colouristic qualities of the flute, first and foremost in the top registers and in *forte* dynamics, which brings this instrument to the fore in terms of auditory perception. The melodic line unfolding in the clarinet takes full advantage of its sonoristic possibilities. In the case of the trumpet, it only makes use of the middle register and appears only five times throughout the piece, which means that this instrument does not play a major role in the overall auditory impression. The xylophone part mostly explores its top register. As in the case of the trumpet, this instrument's possibilities are not fully represented since the melody is introduced either monodically or in the form of two-note harmonies. The mandolin's part, with short values or tremolos in the middle register, does reflect the instrument's characteristic colour qualities. Though employed in a traditional manner, the mandolin only plays a secondary role and is not distinctly audible in the context of the other instruments. It is only in the solo flute and clarinet parts as well as those of the violins and viola (despite the latter belonging to the accompanying section) that we hear quasi-melodies in the traditional sense of autonomous instrumental parts. The treatment of the trumpet, the mandolin, and the xylophone is selective, and their music material – limited. The string quartet part, on the other hand, constitutes an integral whole accompanying the soloists. The expressive and articulatory markings in this part are very precise, and include, apart from the use of such conventional techniques as *arco*, *pizzicato*, *con sordino*, also detailed guidelines concerning types of vibration, *sul ponticello*, playing 'with very broad bow strokes', etc. The precision with which Górecki describes expressive and coloristic elements is typical of the sonoristic technique.

The quasi-classical melodies and the presence of counterpoint derive from traditional composition strategies known from the past. The string quartet's strident repetitive chords, especially in movement four, are characteristic of Górecki's music and had also been present at an earlier stage. They betray neoclassical inspirations as well as the influence of Béla Bartók and the composer's already mentioned teacher, Bolesław Szabelski.

The dominance of strongly contrasted dynamics (*pppp* to *ffff*, and even *ffff* at some key moments) looks back to Górecki's earlier works. Frequent changes of dynamics bring out the concise narrative form.

Changing dynamics enhance expression in movements one and three, reinforce the dynamic quality of movement two, and in the last movement they contribute to a synthesis of expressive qualities. This element of the music work may pose a challenge for instrumentalists since dynamics accumulating towards a *crescendo* sometimes change from *p* to *fff* within one measure. The vast majority of dynamic markings in the *Concerto* refer to extremes of sound volume, while such indications as *mp* and *mf* only occur much more rarely.

Muzyczka IV [La Musiquette 4, Little Music 4] 'Trombone Concerto' Op. 28

The fourth work in the *Little Music* cycle was composed in 1970 as a commission from Zygmunt Krauze, leader of Warsztat Muzyczny⁶ [Music Workshop] ensemble specialising in most recent works. They performed music specially written for that ensemble, thus building new repertoire for an untypical chamber music line-up (trombone, clarinet, cello, and piano). At the special request of this group, Górecki returned (after a three-year break) to writing chamber music. The fruit of this collaboration was *Little Music 4* Op. 28, subtitled '*Trombone Concerto*'.

The piece consists of two contrasted sections. Section one is made up of eleven segments marked 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B and 5, 6A, 6B, 7 and 8. Section two comprises four segments labelled as A, B, C, and D. The sections are contrasted in character, tempo, and duration (the second one is much shorter).

The subheading '*Trombone Concerto*' misleadingly suggests that the trombone is the leading solo *concertante* instrument here, whereas in fact the trombone part stands out not so much for its music material as for its unique function. It is the leading part since the trombonist acts as the conductor in this piece, initiating and ending most segments. Appropriate graphic markings in the score indicate the beginning (a downward arrow) and end (an upward arrow) of each fragment. The score also comes complete with a description of the

⁶ For a discussion of *Little Music 4* '*Trombone Concerto*' Op. 28, see: <http://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzejkompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/muzyczka-iv-koncert-puzonowy-op-28>, accessed 9 June 2020.

trombonist's function. Apart from conducting, he or she is to count the duration of general pauses as well as freely interpret and indicate all the caesurae, rests, and fermatas. Importantly, this work has never been published as a score. Instead, it exists in the form of separate instrumental part books. The clarity of the notation is supported by verbal commentaries and by precise representations of the trombonist's gestures.

Having entrusted a special function of the trombonist, who organises the entire performance, Górecki also assigned characteristic roles to all the other instruments. Apart from acting as the conductor, in the first section the trombonist also builds the form by playing the only traditionally fully composed and notated part in this piece. What the other instruments do is perform predefined sound structures. The number of their repetitions depends on the trombonist's interpretation of how long it should take to complete his or her part. The characteristic use of the clarinet (playing at the very top of the instrument's range) increases the overall energy of the music and intensifies the dynamics of all the segments in section one. The homogeneous rhythmic patterns of the cello part, on the other hand, mostly based on a quaver pulse, create the impression of rhythmic monotony, which in auditory perception relegates this instrument to the role of background for the other instrumental parts. In section two, however, the trombone, the clarinet, and the cello jointly develop the melody, which makes them equally responsible for the course of the musical narration. The piano has three functions in the piece. On the one hand, it accompanies the other instruments (section two), but it also contributes to building the sound mass (section one) and integrates the two sections.

Górecki's exploration of the sonoristic technique manifests itself in the characteristic way of shaping the individual instruments' parts in *Little Music 4*, which brings out their sound qualities. The untypical choice of instruments creates ample opportunities for exploiting their colouristic palette and juxtaposing them in an individual manner. The trombone part stays most of the time in the instrument's higher register. It is built of lively, changeable music material and performed at a very fast tempo. Such treatment of this instrument is untypical in comparison with classical works. The clarinet also plays in the top register, though as a traditionally melodic instrument it would normally

be expected to explore the warm and mellow timbres generally characterising the middle part of its range. By performing fast and brief motifs largely made up of demisemiquavers in section one, the clarinet part becomes 'squeaky', thus adding to the dynamic character of the narrative. The cello likewise plays in the high register, though it does not reach the extremes of its range, as in the case of the clarinet. Untypically of this instrument, the cello part in section one is entirely notated in the treble clef. Section two introduces new solutions in the parts of the trombone, clarinet, and cello with respect to sound colour. In segments A and C of this section, these three instruments play in the middle and lower registers, this time performing a regular rhythmic pattern based on long rhythmic values. Segment B is an exception in that its sound resembles the solutions applied in section one and the instruments return to the high register. The piano part in this work is mostly notated in the bass clef (for both hands), which reflects a preference for low and dense sound evident in the piano part. This creates contrast between the piano and the other instruments, which becomes less marked in section two (segments A and C).

Górecki's avant-garde approach to composition manifests itself here also in the absence of time signatures, which are replaced throughout the score by metronomic markings indicating changes of beat (for instance, in the piano part in segment 1, $q = 60$) or by the use of such agogic terms as *moderato*, *largo*, and *prestissimo*. As a result, the bar lines take on a new function since they mark the limits within which individual musical structures are executed. These form-building structures consist of a varying number of measures. The music material comprises the full chromatic scale, which is why only accidental signs are used. The sound material is organised by the choice of notes central to the given music structure.

Little Music 4 is Górecki's last composition belonging to the phase classified by Krzysztof Droba as 'reductionist'. The piece is characterised by a reduction of expressive means and a restriction of sound material. Such a reductionist approach enhances the tension and expression. The strongly expressive quality of the music is achieved through the repetition of selected motifs, their development and introduction of variant forms. The energy of musical progressions is reinforced by emphasising the divisions or caesurae between segments separated by general pauses. In most passages expressive power is

combined with the dynamism of musical narration. In section two, however, a momentary release of tension brings a new type of narration. Expressive contrasts are also intensified by corresponding use of dynamics, predominantly *fff* in section one and still intense but at times dropping to *mp* in section two. Expressive contrast between the two sections was thus achieved through incidental dynamic modulations in section two. Expressive markings only appear at the beginning of sections one and two, while the cellist is instructed to play *e ancora piu dell'arco*.

Despite the use of traditional agogic terms such as *moderato* and *prestissimo possibile*, and precise indication of tempi by means of metronomic markings, an element of chance is nevertheless present in the way the individual instrumental parts are synchronised. This results from the diversification of tempi for the individual players, as well as the presence of fermatas and a variable number of beats to a bar, which creates the effect of a collective *ad libitum*, which in auditory perception sounds like improvisation. The trombone part, featuring in the subtitle, is naturally the most improvisational in character, and fermatas are most frequent in this part. What is also audible in section one is the non-selective use of sound material. The division of both sections into smaller units in which the trombonist clearly indicates the start of every new segment allows the musicians to attain full synchrony at those points in the composition, which introduces a certain degree of control over the musical narrative. The trombonist plays a key role in this context, since his indications determine the choice of material executed at any given time, and he is therefore largely responsible for the composition's macroform.

Energetic contrasts between the two main sections of *Little Music 4* also result from differences in the structure and use of form-building units. The segments of section one are based on five melodic-rhythmic motifs introduced by the trombone. The cello and clarinet parts consist of one initial motif which evolves and assumes variant forms in the course of the narration. The piano part is made up of four melodic-rhythmic motifs which undergo transformations thanks to transpositions of notes or the diversification of their number within the chord. The motifs found in segment 2 of section 1 and those forming a bridge between sections 1 and 2 are an exception in that they are autonomous structures. Section two, on the other hand, is constructed,

unlike section one, entirely out of the same sound material in the parts of the trombone, the clarinet, and the cello, while the piano presents its own separate material, stable throughout this section and structurally based on the pentatonic scale. Pitch organisation is also differentiated between the sections. In the first one, motifs centre on selected notes or intervals. The second section makes use of a pentatonic scale and a fragment of a chromatic scale. Centralisation and the use of scales to organise music material in this piece suggests conscious neoclassical inspirations, as in Górecki's first period. *Little Music 4* employs avant-garde composition strategies, but it also draws on solutions known from the past and rooted in tradition.

***Aria* ('operatic scene') Op. 59**

The *Aria* was composed in 1987 at the request of Belgian stage director, playwright and choreographer Jan Fabre, as part of a prospective setting of Fabre's libretto based on a sequence of symbolic scenes united by the music. The composer began his work on the opera but eventually withdrew from the project, and the music for Fabre's spectacle was written in its entirety by Eugeniusz Knapik. *Aria* for tuba, piano, tam-tam and bass drum is thus the only product of Górecki's involvement in this stage work.⁷

Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59 is a monologue of the 'tuba' set against the background of the piano and two percussion instruments. The title refers to the classical opera form with arias as one of its key components, a vocal-instrumental form usually appearing at climactic points in the action. The emotionally developed vocal part in the foreground focuses the audience's attention on a moment of high drama. In the heyday of the opera genre, arias usually followed the tripartite arch form.

Górecki's piece represents the essential qualities of the aria form in an extremely suggestive manner. It is a kind of tuba 'monologue', and the accompanying instruments do nothing to disturb its free and dramatic narration. The music is strongly charged with energy, making the impression of vivid action taking place directly in the musical layer, without the need for additional stage design or actors.

⁷ Thomas, Górecki, 127.

The *Aria* is bipartite with a coda. Its two contrasted sections will be referred to here as A and B. The whole follows an arch form with a crescendo since the coda brings back the motif from the opening of the piece. This coda has been distinguished within the composition's structure because it serves as a summary of the whole. While making use of melodic material from section A, it features the set of instruments appearing in section B. The texture and material of the piano accompaniment draws on both sections of the piece. The sections differ in energetic charge and duration. Section A is longer and can thus be divided into smaller segments marked in the score with separate agogic indications.

Each of the instruments plays its own role in the composition. Setting the tuba in an untypical solo role brings out new possibilities in this instrument, applied here in a unique manner so as to bestow a lyrical and expressive character on the *Aria*. The composer takes maximum advantage of the tuba's sound and expression, while the piano part, despite its enormous expressive potential, is reduced to a simple accompaniment. In a large proportion of the work, it only playing the note C multiplied in four octaves or a group of five accompanying chords (B-flat major, B-flat minor, G minor, F-sharp minor, A-flat major / A-flat minor). These two instruments' functions, known from the classical orchestra, are thus reversed as part of what could be called 'playing with conventions'. Traditionally, it is the tuba as an orchestral instrument that accompanies the solo piano. The percussion instruments, on the other hand, retain their classical function of accompanying and enhancing dramatic expression.

As in *Little Music 4*, Górecki reduces the musical means in the *Aria*. Though this work already belongs to the next phase, it applies solutions worked out in the previous one, which confirms the evolutionary development of the composer's style. To achieve such reduction, the role of the melody in the narration is minimised in favour of dynamics, rhythm, and tempi, which are responsible for the dramaturgy of the piece. This is a typical example of reversed hierarchy of musical components, typical of avant-garde composition strategies in the twentieth century. In the *Aria*, the harmony centres around the note C in section A, while in B the focus moves to the B-flat minor and B-flat major chords. The composer plays with registers and modes. Rhythmic organisation, on the other hand, is not unequivocally defined, and moves

freely between duple and triple time. The notated time signatures and the constant crotchet pulse do not obliterate the sense of irregularity in the work's musical narration.

Conclusions

I have selected four pieces of chamber music by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki to illustrate transformations in the composer's style. Since each of them comes from a different phase of his artistic work and represents a different approach to form and aesthetics, together they offer proof of the evolutionary character of Górecki's output. Despite many similarities between these four compositions, each of them has its own unique character. Gradual transformations are reflected, among others, in the choice of instruments. Evident in the works under study is a tendency to construct progressively untypical instrumental line-ups far removed from chamber music tradition. One example is the use of instruments in the *Aria*. Avant-garde composition strategies also concern form. Górecki's compositions (except for the *Concerto*) diverge from the traditional four-movement cycle. *Little Music 4* and the *Aria* are bipartite, and the *Quartettino* – tripartite in structure. All the four works are built as sequences of segments, with the exception of the *Quartettino*'s second section, which has a thematic structure.

Despite their relatively small dimensions and chamber-music-like character, the works employ a considerable number of composition techniques. Among the dominant ones is the use of variant forms, applied in all the four analysed pieces, similarly as the repetition or ostinato technique, reflecting a tendency to exploit the initial material to the full. Górecki also makes use of counterpoint, dialogues between parts, imitation, quasi-improvisations, evolutionary elements, and pointillism. The choice of techniques as well as qualities of style and composition strategy depend on the period when a given piece was composed. The *Quartettino* and the *Concerto* are predominantly neoclassical, but this effect is achieved by different means in each case. In *Little Music 4* and the *Aria*, on the other hand, the main principle of shaping musical narrative is reductionism. The other techniques, pointillistic in the *Concerto* and sonoristic in *Little Music 4*, are not

found in the other works from the group under study. Their use was the result of the composer's brief fascinations with selected trends in twentieth-century music.

The choice of pitch material is closely related to that of techniques. In all these compositions, however, the material is organised around harmonic centres. Górecki's use of scales is also idiosyncratic and includes, apart from minor and major in the *Quartettino, Little Music 4*, and the *Aria*, chromatic scales in the *Quartettino* and the *Concerto* as well as pentatonism in *Little Music 4*. My examples demonstrate a tendency to present relatively varied music material drawing on 'new tonality'. The dimensions of the basic form-building unit change gradually in Górecki's works from a theme to phrase to a single motif. An extended dynamic range was a trademark of this composer's style virtually from the beginning. With time, however, Górecki focused first and foremost on powerful expression (up to *ffff*) while giving up explorations of the bottom extreme and thus not venturing any more below *p* or *mp*. Avant-garde as Górecki's works are in many respects, his ways of notating tempi and types of expression are traditional, not extremely detailed, and such markings generally concern longer sections. One exception is the *Aria*, in which agogic and expressive indications become a primary element, are long and detailed, and refer to smaller-scale segments. Irregular changeable metric structure or its lack is one of the tools of time organisation applied in all the compositions under study. In auditory perception, however, these works are different, since some comprise regular rhythmic patterns whose repetitive character makes the music sound orderly and stable, while in the other works the use of irregular, for instance syncopated rhythms is responsible for the sense of variability.

The above-discussed strategies, tools, and selection of elements for each work reflect the gradual changes that took place in Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's chamber music writing. In most cases, the composer also drew on technical solutions from his earlier period, and the unique qualities of his style were preserved regardless of what strategies he currently borrowed from recent trends or techniques. The above analysis also demonstrates the high artistic value of Górecki's less known compositions, whose qualities reflect the same stylistic evolution that has so far been analysed on the example of his main body of works.

Appendix 1. Summary in Tabular Form

	<i>Quartettino Op. 5 (1956)</i>	<i>Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11 (1957)</i>	<i>Little Music 4 Op. 28 (1970)</i>	<i>Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59 (1987)</i>
Phase of artistic work (after K. Droba)	1 st phase	2 nd phase	4 th phase	5 th phase
STYLE / STRATEGY OF COMPOSITION	neoclassicism	neoclassicism, pointillism	reductionism	reductionism
PERFORMING FORCES	1 st and 2 nd flutes, violin, oboe	flute, clarinet, trumpet, xylophone, mandolin, string quartet	trombone, clarinet, cello, piano	tuba, piano, bass drum, tam-tam
MACROFORM	3 movements 1 st mov. – 4 segments 2 nd mov. – 2 themes 3 rd mov. – 6 segments + coda sequencing, thematic structure	4 movements 1 st mov. – 4 segments 2 nd mov. – 3 segments 3 rd mov. – 2 segments + coda 4 th mov. – 4 segments + conclusion sequencing	2 sections 1 st sect. – 11 segments 2 nd sect. – 4 segments sequencing	2 sections 1 st sect. – 10 segments 2 nd sect. – 3 segments + coda sequencing with elements of arch form
MATERIAL AND ITS ORGANISATION	major and minor scales, chromatic scale, harmonic centres	chromatic scale, atonal organisation with some harmonic centres	major and minor scales, pentatonism, harmonic centres	major and minor scales, harmonic centres

	Quartettino Op. 5 (1956)	Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11 (1957)	Little Music 4 Op. 28 (1970)	Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59 (1987)
COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES	1 st mov. – ostinato, variant forms 2 nd mov. – counterpoint, variant forms 3 rd mov. – ostinato, imitation, dialoguing, variant forms	1 st mov. – variant forms, counterpoint, quasi-improvisation, repetition 2 nd mov. – dialoguing, ostinato 3 rd mov. – pointillism, ostinato 4 th mov. – ostinato, variant forms of motifs, dialoguing	1 st sect. – variant forms, ostinato 2 nd sect. – ostinato, variant forms	1 st sect. – variant forms, repetitions of selected structures, evolutionary structure 2 nd sect. – variant forms, repetitions of selected structures, evolutionary structure
FORM-BUILDING UNIT	theme	phrase	motif	motif
METRICAL AND RHYTHMIC ORGANISATION	changeable beat, regular rhythmic patterns	changeable beat, irregular rhythmic patterns	1 st sect. – no metre 2 nd sect. – changeable beat 1 st sect. – irregular rhythmic patterns 2 nd sect. – regular rhythmic patterns	No metre, regular rhythmic patterns

	<i>Quartettino Op. 5 (1956)</i>	<i>Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11 (1957)</i>	<i>Little Music 4 Op. 28 (1970)</i>	<i>Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59 (1987)</i>
INDICATIONS OF TEMPO AND EXPRESSION	constant tempo (and expression) indications within the movement; brief sporadic changes of tempo	constant tempo and expression indications within the movement; brief changes of tempo in the 2 nd and 4 th movements	1 st sect. – agogic-expressive indications shared by all instruments within the section; tempo markings different for each instrumental part within segments 2 nd sect. – agogic-expressive indications shared by all instruments within the section; tempo markings shared by all instruments except for the piano throughout the section	tempo and expression indications change frequently; frequent and brief changes of tempo
DYNAMICS	<i>ppp</i> to <i>fff</i> , crescendo-type	<i>pppp</i> to <i>ffff</i> , contrasted in successive fragments	<i>mp</i> to <i>ffff</i> , contrasted in successive fragments	<i>p</i> to <i>ffff</i> , crescendo-type

Appendix 2. The Phases of Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's Artistic Work. Titles of the works analysed in this paper have been marked in bold.

	Adrian Thomas, Górecki	Teresa Malecka, 'Henryk Mikołaj Górecki. Styl późny'	Krzysztof Droba, Encyklopedia Muzyczna PWM	examples of compositions
1955	<i>Songs of Joy and Rhythm</i>	<i>The Beginnings</i>	<i>Early Works</i>	<i>Songs of Joy and Rhythm</i> Op. 7 Quartettino Op. 5
1957	<i>Scontri</i>	<i>Early Works</i>	<i>Serial Constructivism</i>	<i>Scontri</i> op. 17 Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11
1962	<i>Genesis</i>		<i>Sonorism</i>	<i>Genesis I: Elementi</i> for three string instruments Op. 19 No. 1
1964		<i>Mature Works</i>	<i>Reductionist Constructivism</i>	Little Music 4 Op. 28
1967	<i>Old Polish Music</i>			<i>Old Polish Music</i> Op. 24
1971	<i>Sacred Songs</i>	<i>The Heyday</i>	<i>Synthetic Constructivism</i>	<i>Symphony No. 3 'Symphony of Sorrowful Songs'</i> Op. 36
1979	<i>Wide Water</i>	<i>Late Works</i>		<i>Beatus vir</i> Op. 38; <i>Miserere</i> Op. 44
1980				<i>Recitatives and Ariosos 'Lerchenmusik'</i> Op. 53 Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59
1986	<i>Quasi una fantasia</i>			

Bibliography

Score Editions

- Górecki, H., *Aria Op. 59* (Boosey & Hawkes: London, 2007).
Górecki, H.M., *Koncert na pięć instrumentów i kwartet smyczkowy* (PWM: Kraków, 1977).
Górecki, H.M., *Muzyczka IV Koncert puzonowy* (PWM: Kraków, 1976).
Górecki, H.M., *Quartettino* (PWM: Kraków, 1980).

References

- Bolesławska-Lewandowska, B., *Górecki portret w pamięci* (PWM: Kraków, 2013).
Droba, K., 'Henryk Mikołaj Górecki', in E. Dziebowska, ed., *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM. Część biograficzna* (PWM: Kraków, 1979).
Dziadek, M., Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, in M. Podhajski, ed., *Kompozytorzy Polscy 1918–2000* (Wydawnictwo Akademii Muzycznej im. S. Moniuszki w Gdańsku: Gdańsk–Warszawa, 2005).
Kłaput-Wiśniewska, A., 'Redukcjonizm jako przejaw indywidualnych cech stylistyki utworów Henryka Mikołaja Góreckiego', *Zeszyty Naukowe Akademii Muzycznej w Bydgoszczy*, 8 (1995).
Lindstedt, I., *Sonorystyka w twórczości kompozytorów polskich XX wieku* (Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego: Warszawa, 2010).
Malecka T., 'O rezonowaniu historii w życiu i twórczości Henryka Mikołaja Góreckiego', in A. Nowak, ed., *Dzieło muzyczne i jego rezonans* (Akademia Muzyczna im. Feliksa Nowowiejskiego w Bydgoszczy: Bydgoszcz, 2008), 205–227.
Malecka, T., 'Henryk Mikołaj Górecki. Styl późny', *Res Facta Nova*, 11 (2000).
Paja-Stach J., *Muzyka polska od Paderewskiego do Pendereckiego* (Musica Iagellonica: Kraków, 2009).
Pociej B., *Bycie w muzyce. Próba opisanego twórczości Henryka Mikołaja Góreckiego* (Akademia Muzyczna im. Karola Szymanowskiego w Katowicach: Katowice, 2005).
Skowron Z., *Teoria i estetyka awangardy muzycznej drugiej połowy XX wieku* (Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego: Warszawa, 2013).

Thomas A., Górecki (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1997).

Online Sources

Malatyńska-Stankiewicz A., 'Nie będę pisał na metry i łokcie. Wywiad z 2003 r. z niedawno zmarłym Henrykiem Mikołajem Góreckim', <http://www.strony.ca/Strony24/articles/a2402.html>, accessed 20 Oct. 2020.

Discussion of Aria ('operatic scene') Op. 59, <https://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzejkompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/aria-scena-operowa-op-59>, accessed 24 June 2020.

Discussion of Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11, <https://ninateka.pl/audio/koncert-na-piec-instrumentow-i-kwartetsmyczkowy-op-11>, accessed 9 June 2020.

Discussion of Little Music 4 'Trombone Concerto' Op. 28, <http://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzej-kompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/muzyczka-iv-koncert-puzonowy-op-28>, accessed 9 June 2020.

Discussion of Quartettino Op. 5, <https://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzejkompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/quartettino-op-5>, accessed 24 June 2020.

Recordings

Recording of Aria (operatic scene) Op. 59, <https://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzejkompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/aria-scena-operowa-op-59>, accessed 24 June 2020.

Recording of Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet Op. 11, <http://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzej-kompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/koncert-na-piec-instrumentow-i-kwartet-smyczkowy-op-11>, accessed 24 June 2020.

Recording of Little Music 4 'Trombone Concerto' Op. 28, <http://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzej-kompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/muzyczka-iv-koncert-puzonowy-op-28>, accessed 24 June 2020.

Recording of Quartettino Op. 5, <https://ninateka.pl/kolekcje/trzejkompozytorzy/gorecki/audio/quartettino-op-5>, accessed 24 June 2020.