
Voicing the Ineffable

Musical Representations of Religious Experience

edited by

Siglind Bruhn



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The Passion According to Penderecki

Danuta Mirka

During Lent 1966, the Gothic cathedral in the German city of Münster celebrated its 700th anniversary with the premiere of a newly composed work, the *St. Luke Passion* by the Polish composer, Krzysztof Penderecki (born 1933). The great success this work enjoyed both with the reviewers and with the audience, and its subsequent triumphant march through the most illustrious cultural centers of Europe, both Americas, and Japan, was an event unprecedented in the history of the musical avantgarde.¹

Passio et Mors Domini Nostri Iesu Christi secundum Lucam holds a privileged position also within the output of Penderecki, marking as it does the place where two streams of his earlier music meet. These two streams are based on different compositional techniques: the sonoristic technique, employed in his instrumental compositions, and the twelve-tone technique, which he preferred when writing vocal works. These two techniques are here combined yet not intermingled, as they form methods of musical setting employed in two distinct plans of the *Passion*: the PLAN OF ACTION and the PLAN OF PRAYER.

The PLAN OF ACTION

The PLAN OF ACTION, which contains the report of the dramatic events of Good Friday as they are described in the Gospel of St. Luke, is set in Penderecki's original technique, the one he elaborated in his orchestral pieces of the so-called "sonoristic" period (1960-1962). A peculiarity of this technique is that its basic concept is not a single sound, but the sound matter taken as a whole. Distinct states of the sound matter are governed by a few categories underlying the sonoristic technique of composition, which assume the shape of binary oppositions:

¹In the course of the years 1967-70, Penderecki's *Passion* had almost seventy performances all over the world. See Ludwik Erhardt, *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim* (Cracow: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1975), p. 91.

spatial continuity vs. discontinuity
 spatial mobility vs. immobility
 temporal continuity vs. discontinuity
 temporal mobility vs. immobility
 high vs. low register
 loud vs. soft dynamics

Opposition between spatial continuity and spatial discontinuity denotes a relation between frequency bands and individually discernible pitches. Temporal continuity vs. discontinuity describes an opposition between lasting sounds and momentary impulses. Spatial mobility means a perception of pitch change, and temporal mobility is tantamount to rhythm in traditional musicological terminology.²

The characteristics implied by the opposite terms of individual categories are such that they require these terms to be represented by sets of sounds—sound fields or masses—which thus constitute elementary segments of sonoristic compositions.³ In order to obtain these characteristics, the composer devises numerous unusual sound effects such as clusters, glissandi, atypical playing techniques, and aleatoric play characterized by indefinite time relations between individual sounds. The striking effect the sonoristic technique has on listeners lies in the abrupt clashes of segments containing different sound effects and hence contrasting as to their register, dynamics, and texture. It is customarily believed that in the PLAN OF ACTION of the *St. Luke Passion*, these clashes serve as illustrations of the sounds accompanying the Passion of Christ: screams, cries of the crowd, blows and hits, struggle. Such a view is, however, entirely mistaken, since it does not take into account the expressive value of Penderecki's sonoristic technique.

Initially, expression was of no interest for the Polish composer, his exclusive focus of attention being the technique itself, with expression merely its side-effect. That the young Penderecki in fact held this aesthetic position is confirmed in the very abstract titles chosen for his early pieces,

²For a detailed discussion of Penderecki's sonoristic technique see Danuta Mirka, *The Sonoristic Structuralism of Krzysztof Penderecki* (Katowice: Akademia Muzyczna, 1997) or, in an abridged version, "Texture in Penderecki's Sonoristic Style," *Music Theory Online* 6/1 (2000), <<http://smt.ucsb.edu/mto/mtohome.html>>.

³Even though there occasionally occur segments consisting of single sounds, they are to be treated as liminal cases of segments, in the same way as a set containing only one element forms a liminal set.

in which the sonoristic technique was first developed *Anaklasis* (1959-60), *Dimensions of Time and Silence* (1960-61), *Polymorphia* (1961), *Fonogrammi* (1961), *Fluorescences* (1962), and *Canon* (1962). As stated at the outset, almost all of these pieces were instrumental. Only *Dimensions of Time and Silence* used a mixed choir, yet without providing its part with any literary text.⁴ The only wording to stray from the indifferent technicality of the other titles is the famous *Threnody—To the Victims of Hiroshima* (1960). It is an open secret that this title as well as the telling dedication came from Roman Jasiński, at the time the director of the Polish Radio, who suggested it to Penderecki before submitting the composition to the UNESCO International Tribune of Composers in 1961. The original title the composer had given the piece was the mere description of playing time 6'37". That Penderecki accepted the new title, however, was the first sign of his having discovered the deep emotional impact of the sonoristic technique.

Indeed, the maximal tensions arising as a result of the binary oppositions and manifesting themselves in abrupt shifts between contrary states of the sound matter can be easily comprehended as musical correlates of irrational shifts of a psyche tossing between opposite emotional states between horror and stupor, euphoria and apathy, torment and assuagement. Such emotional shifts are characteristic for pathologically neurotic states caused either by mental disease or by prolonged fear and pain. Interestingly, these two topics—of insanity and of martyrdom—dominated subsequent pieces of Penderecki, who from now on found himself motivated by literary texts or dramatic action. After *Threnody* and before the *Passion* Penderecki wrote *The Death Squad* (1963), a startling composition based on the diary of Leon Weliczker, a Jewish prisoner in Auschwitz.⁵ Another piece related

⁴The first version of *Dimensions*, performed during the 4th International Festival of Contemporary Music "Warsaw Autumn" in 1960, included the text of the well-known magic square characterized by unique formal properties

S A T O R

A R E P O

T E N E T

O P E R A

R O T A S

Yet this text was removed from the final version of the piece, published in 1962, in which the choral part is based exclusively on meaningless sequences of consonants and vowels

⁵Weliczker was a member of *Sonderkommando 1005*, a special squad whose task was to burn the corpses of the prisoners. The recitation of his drastic and unimpassioned account accompanied by Penderecki's tape music, when presented during a concert aroused highest disgust among the reviewers. As a reaction to their protests, the composer decided to withhold the piece (see Erhardt, *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim*, pp. 60-61)

to the tragedy of Auschwitz is *Dies irae* (1967), an oratorio written soon after the *Passion*. Written about the same time, Penderecki's first opera, *The Devils of Loudun* (1969), with its spectacular scene of the nuns' demoniacal possession, is related to the topic of insanity. From this consideration it should be clear that, when using the sonoristic technique in the action plan of the *St. Luke Passion*, Penderecki attributes the neurotic state of mind to its subject, the suffering Jesus. If one can speak of any onomatopoeia here, the illustrated sounds are not exactly the noises accompanying the Passion of Christ, but rather their perception by the tortured psyche of the victim. By using the sonoristic technique in the action plan of the *St. Luke Passion*, Penderecki shows the martyrdom of Christ from inside, as it were, as seen with Christ's own eyes. In this sense Penderecki's *Passion*—although nominally according to St. Luke—can be said rather to be a Passion according to Jesus Christ.

This interpretation of the piece is first attested to by the fact that the part of the Evangelist is not sung here but spoken, whereby the Evangelist—as the external observer and narrator of the Passion drama—is virtually placed outside the musical narration. Penderecki had applied such setting of the part of the narrator, which he conceived no doubt under the influence of radio plays, already earlier, in *The Death Squad* on Weliczker's diary, a piece commissioned by the Polish Radio and composed in the Experimental Studio of the Polish Radio in Warsaw.⁶ Characteristically, *The Death Squad* was designated by the composer explicitly as a radio play. In the *St. Luke Passion*, the part of the Evangelist is entrusted to a reciting male voice though occasionally turned over to the three mixed choirs that form part of the performing forces in this piece and are requested to deliver these lines *raccontando*. The effect resulting from this manipulation resembles a running commentary given straight from the thick of the fray,⁷ and the part of the Evangelist can be compared with a narration of a reporter animated.

⁶Penderecki's contact with the Experimental Studio of the Polish Radio dates back to 1959, when he participated in a seminar for composers organized there by Józef Patkowski, the director of the Studio. In the following years Penderecki visited the Studio mostly to prepare music for film, theater, and puppet shows. This almost unknown part of his output contains more than sixty titles. See Mieczysław Tomaszewski, *Krzysztof Penderecki i jego muzyka* (Cracow: Akademia Muzyczna, 1994), pp. 123-126.

⁷The first to draw attention to the association of this setting with a running commentary was Andrzej Kijowski, "Próby czytane Słuchając *Passji* według Pendereckiego," *Dialog* 1 (1967): 112-115 [115]. The observation was later repeated by Erhardt, *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim*, p. 84.

emotional, occurring against a background of surrounding noises. In turn, the narration in the choirs arouses associations with the feverish report of witnesses called by the reporter to the microphone, adding to his commentary from behind his back, even outshouting him as well as one another in a frenzy of excitement. This is particularly striking at those moments of the *St. Luke Passion* when the narration in the part of the Evangelist overlaps with those delivered by the choirs, as happens in the scenes portraying the capture (35)⁸ and the trial of Pilate (46), when excited and impatient witnesses anticipate the further course of the reporter's account. The effect of a live report is further heightened through other cases of overlap, with the result that the events of the Passion occasionally follow one another in rapid succession independently of the Evangelist's narration, as in the scene of Peter's triple denial (18). This is more evidence that in the *St. Luke Passion*, the composer treats the Evangelist not as the actual subject delivering the report, but employs him only insofar as it is indispensable in order that this report may remain comprehensible. For obvious reasons, the instrumental background of the narrative parts is very thin so as not to drown out the text. Quite often, the narration of the reciting voice is devoid of any musical background. In the most cases, however, it is accompanied by discreet yet suggestive sonoristic effects: protracted sounds or clusters that create very strong tension—the classical suspense of horror shows and movies, but also used in the avantgarde films of which Penderecki was an ardent admirer.⁹

Owing to their employment in the narration of the *St. Luke Passion*, the mixed choirs perform a dual role in the PLAN OF ACTION: that of participants in the Passion events, represented in the direct speech of the *turba* sections, and that of witnesses, portrayed in the narrative sections. Particularly interesting are instant switches between these two roles. These happen twice in the course of the piece: first in the scene when Jesus is mocked on the Cross [21 D], and then again during the dialogue with the

⁸Throughout this essay, numbers and capital letters given in square brackets refer to rehearsal numbers and letters in the score of the *St. Luke Passion*. Numbers in parentheses designate measures within individual scenes, counted from the preceding rehearsal numbers. The rehearsal numbers opening individual scenes of the PLAN OF PRAYER are indicated in Table 1.

⁹In the 1950s and 60s Penderecki, at the time a frequenter of Cracow cinemas, followed zealously the most recent output of the avantgarde film artists such as Bergman, Fellini, Antonioni. See Przemysław Cwikliński and Jacek Ziarno, *Pasja O Krzysztofie Pendereckim* (Warsaw Polska Oficyna Wydawnicza BGW, 1993), pp. 55-56.

Table 1 The text of the PLAN OF ACTION of Penderecki's *St Luke Passion* compared with the original text of the Passion according to St Luke * Omissions are indicated in square brackets, additions in parentheses

PART ONE

[2] Jesus in the Mount of Olives (Luke 22 39-44)

39 Et egressus ibat secundum consuetudinem in montem Olivarum Secuti sunt autem illum et discipuli
41 positus genibus orabat, 42 dicens "Pater, si vis, (Pater,) transfer calicem istum a me; (Pater,) verumtamen non mea voluntas, sed tua fiat" 43 Apparuit autem illi angelus de coelo, confortans eum 44 Et factus in agonia, prolixius orabat Et factus est sudor erus sicut guttae sanguinis decurrentis in terram

39 And he came out, and went as he was wont, to the mount of Olives, and his disciples also followed him
40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation 41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, 42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done 43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground 45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, 46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation

[5] Capture (Luke 22 47-53)

47 Adhuc eo loquente ecce turba et qui vocabitur Judas, unus de duodecim, anteedebat eos et appropinquavit Jesu ut oscularetur eum 48 "Juda, osculo Filium hominis tradis?"

47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him 48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? 49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? 50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear 51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far And he touched his ear, and healed him 52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? 53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me but this is your hour, and the power of darkness

52 "Quasi ad latronem existis cum gladiis, et fustibus? 53 sed haec est hora vestra et potestas tenebrarum"

[8] Peter's triple denial (Luke 22 54-62)

54 Comprehendentes autem eum, duxerunt ad domum principis sacerdotum Petrus vero sequebatur a longe
56 Quem cum vidisset ancilla quaedam sedentem ad lumen, et eum fuisset intuita, dixit "Et hic cum illo erat" 57 "Mulier, non novi illum" 58 Et post pusillum alius videns eum, dixit "Et tu de illis es" "O homo, non sum" 59 Et intervallo facto quasi horae unius, alius quidam affirmabat, dicens "Vere et hic cum illo erat nam et Gallilaeus est" 60 "Homo, nescio quid dicis" Et continuo adhuc illo loquente cantavit gallus 61 Et conversus Dominus respexit Petrum [Fi] recordatus est Petrus verbi Domini 62 Et egressus foras [Petrus] flevit amare

54 Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house And Peter followed afar off 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sat down together Peter sat down among them 56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him and said, This man was also with him 57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not 58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them And Peter said, Man, I am not 59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him for he is a Galilaean 60 And Peter said, Man I know not what thou sayest And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew 61 And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly

* The English wording for this and all further biblical excerpts is quoted after *The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments* (Oxford Oxford University Press, n d)

[10] Jesus mocked by the soldiers (Luke 22 63-71)

63 Et viri, qui tenebant illum, illudebant ei, caedentes 64 et velaverunt eum, et percutiebant faciem eius et interrogabant eum, dicentes "Prophetiza, quis est, qui te percussit?"

70 "Tu ergo es Filius Dei?" "Vos dicitis quia ego sum"

[13] Jesus before Pilate (Luke 23 1-25)

1 Et surgens omnis multitudo eorum, duxerunt illum ad Pilatum 2 Coeperunt autem illum accusare, dicentes "Hunc invenimus subvertentem gentem nostram, et prohibentem tributa dare Caesari, et dicentem se Christum regem esse" 3 "Tu es Rex Iudaeorum?" "Tu dicitis" 4 "Nihil invenio causae in hoc homine" 7 Et remisit eum ad Herodem

9 Herodes autem interrogabat illum multis sermonibus At ipse nihil illi respondebat 11 Sprevit autem illum Herodes indutum veste alba et remisit ad Pilatum

13 Pilatus autem convocatis principibus sacerdotum, dixit ad illos 14 "Ecce nihil dignum morte actum est ei

16 Emendatum ergo illum dimittam" 18 "Tolle hunc, et dimitte nobis Barabbam" 20 Iterum autem Pilatus locutus est ad eos, volens dimittere Jesum 21 At illi succlamabant, dicentes "Crucifige, crucifige illum" 22 "Quid enim mali fecit iste? Nullam causam mortis invenio in eo" 21 ("Crucifige, crucifige illum Crucifige")

63 And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him 64 And when they had blindfolded him they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophezie, who is it that smote thee? 65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him 66 And as soon as it was day the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, 67 Art thou the Christ? tell us And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe 68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go 69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God 70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them Ye say that I am 71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth

1 And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King 3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it 4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man 5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place 6 When Pilate heard of Galilee he asked whether the man were a Galilaean 7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time 8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him 9 Then he questioned with him in many words, but he answered him nothing 10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him 11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate 12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together for before they were at enmity between themselves 13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, 14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him 15 No, nor yet Herod for I sent you to him, and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him 16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him 17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast) 18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas 19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison) 20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them 21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him 22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him I will therefore chastise him and let him go 23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed 24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required 25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired, but he delivered Jesus to their will

PART TWO

- [15] The Way of the Cross (John 19 17) 17 Et bajulans sibi crucem, exiit in eum, qui dicitur Calvariae locum, hebraice autem Golgotha 17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha
- [17] The Crucifixion (Luke 23 33) 33 Ibi crucifixerunt eum et latrones, unum a dextris, et alterum a sinistris 33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left
- [19] (Luke 23 34) 34 Dividentes vero vestimenta eius, miserunt sortes Jesus autem dicebat "Pater, dimitte illis, (Pater,) non enim sciunt quid faciunt " 34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do And they parted his raiment, and cast lots
- [21] Deriding Jesus on the Cross (Luke 23 35-38) 35 Et stabat populus spectans, et deridebant eum principes cum eis, dicentes "Alios salvos fecit, se salvum faciat, si hic est Christus Dei electus " 36 Illudebant autem ei et milites accedentes, et acetum offerentes ei, et dicentes 37 "Si tu es Rex Judaeorum, salvum te fac " 35 And the people stood beholding And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others, let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God 36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, 37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself 38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, This is the King of the Jews 39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds but this man hath done nothing amiss 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise
- [22] Jesus speaks to the Good Thief (Luke 23 39-43) 39 Unus autem de his qui pendebant latronibus, blasphemabat eum, dicens "Si tu es Christus, salvem fac temetipsum, et nos " 40 Respondens autem alter increpabat eum, dicens "Neque tu times Deum, quod in eadem damnatione es 41 Et nos quidem juste, nam digna factis recipimus, hic vero nihil mali gessit " 42 "Domine, memento mei, cum veneris in regnum Tuum " 43 "Amen dico tibi Hodie mecum eris in paradiso " 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds but this man hath done nothing amiss 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise
- [23] Jesus speaks to His Mother and to St John (John 19 25-27) 25 Stabant autem juxta crucem Jesu mater eius, et soror matris eius, Maria Cleophae, et Maria Magdalena 26 Cum vidisset ergo Jesu matrem, et discipulum stantem, quem diligebat, dicit matri suae "Mulier, ecce filius tuus " 27 Deinde dicit discipulo "Ecce mater tua " 25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home
- [25] The Death of Jesus (Luke 23 44-46) 44 Erat autem fere hora sexta, et tenebrae factae sunt in universam terram usque in horam nonam 45 Et obscuratus est sol, et velum templi scissum est medium 46 Et clamans voce magna Jesus ait "Pater, in manus Tuas commendo spiritum meum " 44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour 45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst, 46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit and having said thus, he gave up the ghost
- (John 19 30) 30 "Consummatum est " 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost

Good Thief, where the mixed choirs function as a “multiplied” Bad Thief [22 A].¹⁰ The intent of such switches should be clear: the very people who take an active part in the events of the Passion of Christ simultaneously give account of them. There are no impassive witnesses of these most unique and significant events in the history of mankind. Their witnesses are at the same time their participants, and together form one crowd following Jesus up to Golgotha. In Penderecki’s own words, “the choir in the *St. Luke Passion* does not narrate, but takes an active part in the trial of Christ.”¹¹ This assumption prompts the composer to go so far as to replace a narrative passage given in the Gospel as indirect speech with direct speech, in the scene of the trial [13], when the crowd demands Jesus’ death (see Table 1, above).¹²

Further cues suggesting that the composer’s intention was to show the Passion of Christ as seen with the eyes of its victim can be found in the way the Passion text is prepared. Penderecki uses the original Latin text of the Passion according to St. Luke¹³—the most economical and substantial of all—but emends it through contraction and interpolations from the Passion of St. John.¹⁴ The general principle underlying these changes is to reduce all those passages of the Gospel text that dwell on what Jesus—as a suffering Man—could not know, see, or foresee. This resembles the techniques of contemporary film, where the frame shown by the camera represents the subject’s range of vision. Accordingly, all commentaries on the political background of Jesus’ trial are omitted; see the sentences describing the political connections between Pilate and Herod (Luke 23: 12), Pilate’s intentions (23: 16), the legal premisses of sending Jesus to Herod

¹⁰The most unusual setting of the role of the Bad Thief was certainly necessitated by the lack of a third male voice. In the scene with the thieves, the part of Jesus is sung by the baritone, and the part of the Good Thief by the bass.

¹¹Translated from an interview with Penderecki published in Ryszard Wasita, “Awangarda i dziedzictwo,” *Polska 7* (1966): 61-62 [62]

¹²In the Passions according to St. Matthew and St. Mark, the cry of the crowd is repeated twice as a direct speech (Mark 14: 13-14, Matthew 27: 22-23). Penderecki follows this example by repeating the cry of the crowd, *Crucifige, crucifige illum* (Luke 23: 21), instead of the account given by the Evangelist (Luke 23: 23).

¹³The composer does not allow for translations into vernacular languages. At the beginning of the score he puts this note: “The work should be performed in Latin only.”

¹⁴The Gospel text employed by Penderecki in the *St. Luke Passion* is shown in Table 1, where it is juxtaposed with the original text of the Passion according to St. Luke

(23: 6-7), Herod's attitude toward Jesus, characterized by sheer curiosity (23: 8), the custom of releasing one prisoner before Passover (23: 17), and information about Barabbas (23: 19). Equally removed is the text of the superscription on the Cross, which Jesus could not have read (23: 38), as well as the fragments concerning future facts. This is why, in the scene when Jesus—dying—commends His Mother and the Apostle John to each other's care by saying to her, "Woman, behold thy son," and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother," the final words "And from that hour that disciple took her into his own home" (John 19: 27) are left out in Penderecki's text. Significantly, the report on the Passion events concludes precisely at the moment of the death of Jesus, in contrast to the traditional text of the Passion according to St. Luke, which incorporates the description of the burial.¹⁵

As all the commentaries stem from the Evangelist's part, their removal further weakens the role of the narrator in Penderecki's piece. Ancillaries framing direct speech are also generally omitted. Yet the abridgments go even further, and the composer eliminates Gospel passages containing a description of certain features of Jesus. Deleted are thus the passages in which His divine dignity manifests itself: the description of the miracle Jesus worked in the scene of capture (Luke 22: 49-51) and the prophecy uttered by Him (22: 69). Also omitted are the instructions Jesus directs to the disciples in the Mount of Olives (22: 40, 45-46) and the scene in which He teaches the women during the Way of the Cross (23: 27-31). It was most likely this scene, strangely incongruous with the state of torment and distress of the victim, which impelled Penderecki to replace the account of St. Luke (23: 26-32) with the short excerpt from St. John (19: 17). Penderecki also removes the disputes with the representatives of the Sanhedrine, in which Jesus' human authority as well as His extraordinary intelligence become manifest, making Him prevail over His antagonists. In the scene of capture, the composer has manipulated the text in such a way that the words Jesus directs to the high priests are used as if they were uttered to the crowd (22: 52-53), and the question the high priests ask during the interrogation in the Sanhedrine, "Art thou then the Son of God?"

¹⁵However, when the Gospel text is read in church, the recitation is commonly suspended for a brief pause at the moment of Jesus' death, and the congregation genuflects. As a result of this pause, the description of the burial is separated from the main account of the Passion. The full text of the Passion according to St. Luke, which is read during the mass of Holy Wednesday, includes Luke 22 and 23, 1-53. It thus begins earlier than Penderecki's *St. Luke Passion* from the betrayal of Judas and the Last Supper.

(22: 70), is merged with the scene in which Jesus is being mocked as if it was posed by the soldiers as a further act of derision. In contradistinction to the three other Passions, the Passion according to St. Luke does not contain any extensive explanations of Jesus given to Pilate in the course of the trial. As a result, Jesus' utterances in Penderecki's *St. Luke Passion* are all either implorations [2, 19, 25], complaints and reproaches [5], or simple confirmations of identity [10, 13], the only exceptions being the promise given to the Good Thief [22] and the order directed to the Mother and to St. John as the last will of Jesus [23]. The two exceptions stem from the Gospel of St. John; their insertion in the *St. Luke Passion* is justified by the exceptional importance of the Words from the Cross in the Christian tradition and also, in the case of the latter, by the liturgical role played by this text, as it will be explained in the further course of these considerations.

Such a preparation of the Passion text, which portrays Jesus as defenseless, terrified, and tormented, testifies to the interpretation proposed earlier, according to which Penderecki shows the Passion of Christ as experienced by Christ, the martyrdom as experienced by the Martyr. If this interpretation is correct, what the audience is given is, in effect, a kind of psychoanalysis of the suffering Jesus. The portrait is thus of a suffering Man, not a suffering God. Unlike traditional settings of the Passion texts by Bach and his predecessors, which show Christ in a hieratic manner and stress His divine dignity, this setting concentrates on the human condition of Jesus, and does so in so psychologically naturalistic a way as to portray Him on the brink of madness caused by pain and terror. Those who wonder whether such an interpretation is not blasphemous will be reassured when they recall that it is fully in line with the theological dogma of the Christian faith according to which Jesus was a true Man "like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4: 15).¹⁶ During His Passion He suffered as every man would. And only owing to this was He able to redeem every human being. What Penderecki's *Passion* shows within the PLAN OF ACTION is precisely Jesus' human nature and the human dimension of His sufferings. Although it chronicles the sufferings of God in the realm of *profanum*, it is not a profanation inasmuch as God Himself entered this realm when He was born as Man.

¹⁶This orthodox dogma has been denied by several heresies of gnostic origins, such as Arianism or Monophysitism, influential in the period of Christian antiquity.

Table 2: The texts of the PLAN OF PRAYER of Penderecki's *St Luke Passion* and their liturgical function. Omissions are indicated in square brackets.

PART ONE

[1] Chorus <i>O Crux ave</i>	Hymn <i>Vexilla regis</i>	9. O Crux ave, spes unica. Hoc Passionis tempore Piis adauge gratiam, Reisque dele crimina. 7. Te, fons salutis, Trinitas, Collaudet omnis spiritus.	the Time of the Passion of Christ, vespers
[3] Baritone aria <i>Deus meus</i>	Psalm 22: 1	Deus, Deus meus, respice in me: quare me dereliquisti?	Maundy Thursday, barring the altars
	Psalm 5: 1	Verba mea auribus percipe, Domine, intellige clamorem meum.	second Sunday of Lent, communion
	Psalm 22: 2	Deus meus, clamabo per diem, et non exaudies.	Maundy Thursday, barring the altars
[4] Soprano aria <i>Domine, quis habitabit</i>	Psalm 15: 1	Domine, quis habitabit in taberna- culo tuo, aut quis requiescet in monte sancto tuo?	Tenebrae of Holy Saturday, first nocturn
	Psalm 4: 8	In pace [in idipsum] dormiam [et requiescam].	Tenebrae of Holy Saturday, first nocturn
	Psalm 16: 9	[Propter hoc laetatum est cor meum, et exsultavit lingua mea, insuper] et caro mea requiescet in spe.	Tenebrae of Holy Saturday, first nocturn
[6] Chorus <i>Ierusalem, Ierusalem</i>	The Lamentations of Jeremiah	Ierusalem, Ierusalem, convertere ad Dominum, Deum tuum.	Tenebrae of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday
[7] Chorus <i>Ut quid, Domine</i>	Psalm 10: 1	Ut quid, Domine, recessisti longe?	
[9] Bass aria <i>Judica me, Deus</i>	Psalm 43: 1	Judica me, Deus, et discerne causam meam.	Sunday of the Passion of Christ, introit of the mass
[11] Soprano aria <i>Ierusalem, Ierusalem</i>	The Lamen- tations of Jeremiah	Ierusalem, Ierusalem, convertere ad Dominum, Deum tuum.	Tenebrae of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday
[12] Chorus <i>Miserere mei</i>	Psalm 56: 1	Miserere mei, Deus, quoniam con- cultavit me homo, tota die impugnans tribulavit me.	Monday of the Time of the Passion of Christ, introit of the mass

PART TWO

[14] Chorus <i>In pulverem mortis</i>	Psalm 22, 16	In pulverem mortis deduxisti me.	Maundy Thursday, barring the altars
[16] Passacaglia <i>Popule meus</i>	Improperia	Popule meus, quid feci tibi? Aut in quo contristavi te? Responde mihi. Quia eduxi te de terra Aegypti, parasti Crucem Salvatori tuo?	Good Friday, Adoration of the Cross

	Supplication	Hagios o Theos. Sanctus Deus. Hagios ischyros. Sanctus fortis. Hagios athanatos, eleison himas. Sanctos immortalis, miserere nobis.	
[18] Soprano aria <i>Crux fidelis</i>	Hymn <i>Crux fidelis</i>	Crux fidelis, inter omnes Arbor una nobilis. Nulla silva talem profert, Fronde, flore germine. Dulce lignum, [dulces clavos,] Dulce pondus sustinet.	Good Friday, Adoration of the Cross
	Acclamation	Ecce lignum Crucis, in quo salus mundi pependit.	
[20] Chorus <i>In pulverem mortis</i>	Psalm 22: 16c, 18-20	In pulverem mortis deduxisti me. Foderunt manus meas et pedes meos: dinumeraverunt omnia ossa mea. Ipsi vero consideraverunt me [et inspexerunt me, diviserunt sibi vestimenta mea,] et super vestem meam miserunt sortem. Tu autem, Domine, ne elongaveris auxilium tuum a me, ad defensionem meam conspice.	Maundy Thursday, baring the altars
[24] Chorus <i>Stabat Mater</i>	Sequence <i>Stabat Mater</i>	1. Stabat Mater dolorosa Iuxta Crucem lacrimosa, Dum pendebat Filius. 5. Quis est homo qui non fleret, Matrem Christi si videret, In tanto supplicio? 9. Eia Mater, fons amoris, Me sentire vim doloris Fac, ut tecum lugeam. 10. Fac ut ardeat cor meum In amando Christum Deum, Ut sibi complaceam. 19. Christe, cum sit hinc exire, Da per Matrem me venire Ad palmam victoriae. 20. Quando corpus morietur, Fac, ut animae donetur Paradisi gloria.	the Feast of Seven Pains of the Holy Virgin Mary
[27] Chorus <i>In Te, Domine, speravi</i>	Psalm 31: 1-2, 5	In Te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in aeternum. In justitia Tua libera me. Inclina ad me aurem Tuam, accelera ut eruas me. Esto mihi in Deum protectorem et in domum refugii, ut salvum me facias. In manus Tuas commendo spiritum meum: redemisti me, Domine, Deus veritatis.	Friday of the Passion of Christ, introit of the mass

Yet the human sufferings of God have their theological consequence in the consecration of the sufferings of the people. The martyrdom of Christ is therefore an archetype of every human martyrdom, prominently among them that of millions of men and women during World War II. It is in this sense that, reflecting upon his piece, the composer says: “The [*St. Luke*] *Passion* is the suffering and death of Christ, but it is also the suffering and death at Auschwitz, the tragic experience of the mankind in the middle of the twentieth century.”¹⁷

The PLAN OF PRAYER

The Texts

Jesus, the true Man exposed in the PLAN OF ACTION, is at the same time the true God of Christianity. Penderecki does not omit this second, divine dimension of Christ’s nature, but exposes it on the PLAN OF PRAYER. If the PLAN OF ACTION represents the realm of *profanum* in the *St. Luke Passion*, the PLAN OF PRAYER introduces the realm of *sacrum*. It is based on liturgical texts of the Catholic Church in their original Latin versions as they are found in the *Missale Romanum* and have been performed in churches—also in Polish churches—until the reform of the Catholic liturgy initiated by the Vatican Council II. These texts were selected and arranged by the composer himself.¹⁸ For Penderecki, who grew up in the Catholic tradition and became acquainted with church music and liturgical chant in his early childhood,¹⁹ Latin texts were familiar not as objects of philological study, but from his own participation in the liturgical ceremonies. They were laden with the singular emotional quality that these ceremonies have for a believer. The liturgical reform of the Vatican Council, promulgated in the 1963 *Conciliar Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, led in subsequent years to the supersession of Latin by vernacular languages.²⁰ The *St. Luke Passion* is thus one of the last testimonies of the influence that the living tradition of the Latin liturgy exerted on contemporary music.

¹⁷Wasita, “Awangarda i dziedziectwo”. 62

¹⁸In his work on the text of the *St. Luke Passion* Penderecki was assisted by a philologist, Stanisław Krygiel (see Erhardt, *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim*, p. 79)

¹⁹Erhardt, *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim*, p. 22

²⁰In Poland, the first post-conciliar liturgical books in the vernacular began appearing at the beginning of the 1970s

Among the texts Penderecki employed are the hymns *Vexilla regis* and *Crux fidelis*, *The Lamentations of Jeremiah*, the improperia *Popule meus*, the supplication *Sanctus Deus*, the acclamation *Ecce lignum crucis*, the sequence *Stabat Mater*, and the psalms nos. 22 and 31 as well as 4, 5, 10, 15, 16, 43, 56. (Please refer to Table 2, which also gives detailed information about their liturgical functions.) Almost all of these texts belong to the liturgy of the period called Time of the Passion of Christ, the last two weeks of Lent. The most important fragments are sung during Holy Week, especially on Good Friday, and on that day particularly during the Adoration of the Cross. A chant not belonging to the liturgy of Lent, but closely connected with the Passion of Christ, is the sequence *Stabat Mater* for the Feast of the Seven Pains of the Holy Virgin Mary, falling on September 15. On that day, an excerpt from the Gospel of St. John is read (John 19: 25-27): the same that in Penderecki's *Passion* supplements the text of St. Luke and immediately precedes his *Stabat Mater*. Penderecki had actually composed this last choral piece a few years earlier, in 1962, and then integrated it in the *St. Luke Passion*. Clearly, the *Stabat Mater* text was too significant for Christ's Passion—particularly in the religious tradition of Poland—to be omitted in this work.²¹ Its inclusion in the PLAN OF PRAYER thus justifies the textual interpolation from the Gospel of St. John in the PLAN OF ACTION.

The Musical Setting

As stated at the outset, the musical setting of the PLAN OF PRAYER makes use of the twelve-tone technique Penderecki had employed earlier in his choral pieces with liturgical texts, *Psalms of David* (1958) and *Stabat Mater* (1962). However, Penderecki's twelve-tone technique departs from the classical twelve-tone theory of Schoenberg and his followers. This is apparent in the free manipulation of rows repeatedly pointed out by commentators on Penderecki's oeuvre: manipulations that neglect the rule of non-repetition of pitch and exploit row fragments and entities in their own right. The composer treats rows as melodic units—themes even—without resorting to octave transfer of their component pitches. Moreover, his way

²¹An important component of the Polish Lent tradition is the paraliturgical service *Gorzkie żale* (Bitter sorrows). It includes a prayer entitled *Rozmowa duszy z Matką Bolesną* (A Dialogue of a Soul with the Sorrowful Mother), which is a free poetic paraphrase of the *Stabat Mater* sequence. In its Polish translation, the sequence was set to music by Karol Szymanowski in his *Stabat Mater* (1926), a work constituting the corner stone of Polish 20th-century religious music.

of shaping rows displays two features characteristic of his pieces to this day: the predilection to gap-fill melodies, in which large intervals are subsequently bridged with semitones, and (as a complementary feature) the gradual intervallic expansion of a row melody starting from the semitone.

In the analyses of the *St. Luke Passion* that have been carried out to this day,²² two melodic rows are customarily indicated, both of them introduced at the very beginning of the piece and exposed in single melodic lines: row 1 in the lowest register played by instruments (Example 1) and row 2 in the highest register of the boys' choir (Example 2).

Example 1: Row 1. Opening chorus *O Crux, ave* [1], mm. 3-6

Example 2: Row 2. Opening chorus
O Crux, ave [1], mm. 7-8

²²Cf. Józef Chomiński and Krystyna Wilkowska-Chomińska, *Formy muzyczne*, vol. 5: *Wielkie formy wokalne* (Cracow: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1984), pp. 460-486, and Erhardt, *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim*, pp. 77-93.

These are undoubtedly the most prominent rows in the piece. And yet, a careful analysis leads one to discover one more melodic row. That this row has thus far escaped the attention of analysts may be due to the fact that it occurs in its full scope only at the very end of the work—in the final chorus—although the melodic material derived from it is employed already earlier in the course of the *Passion*. In the overall construction of the piece, row 3 thus counterbalances the other two rows. Its presentation is not less sharp and clear-cut than that of rows 1 and 2 in the opening chorus: it is sung in unison without any accompaniment and constitutes a self-contained entity both in the musical sense and as to its literary text (Example 3).

The image shows a musical score for three voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Tenor (T). The lyrics are: "In te, Do-mi-ne spe-ra - - vi" for the Soprano and Alto parts, and "Non con-fun - - dar in ae-ter - - num" for the Tenor part. The music is written in a minor key and features a complex melodic line with many semitones. The Soprano and Alto parts are in unison, and the Tenor part is also in unison with them. The score includes dynamic markings like *f* and *p*, and a fermata over the final note of the Tenor part.

Example 3: Row 3. Final chorus *In Te, Domine, speravi* [27], mm. 11-14

Particularly noteworthy is the internal construction of all three rows, which is exceptionally elaborate and complex (see Example 4). A striking trait is their symmetry. Row 1 is the most elaborate in this respect: when read backwards, it turns into its own inversion. In order to satisfy the demands of symmetry, Penderecki extends it by one note, making the last, thirteenth note the repetition of the initial C# in the higher octave. The seventh note, G, which is the axis of symmetry in row 1, divides the octave into two halves (1-7: C#-G, 7-13: G-C#); each of these halves in turn displays an internal symmetry in relation to its middle pitch, E and B \flat , respectively. As the entire row 1, so also each of its halves turns into its own inversion when read from the end. What is more, each of them spans a tritone, employing all semitones within it in the same way that the full row spans and covers an octave. In all its complexity, row 1 employs only two intervals between consecutive notes: the minor second and the minor third. It is a perfect exemplification of Penderecki's gap-fill melody because the skips of the thirds are instantly filled with semitones in contrary motion.

The symmetry of row 2 is different: not horizontal but vertical. This row forms a symmetrical process of gradual intervallic expansion which is accomplished by means of semitone steps downwards and upwards. These alternate in such a way that the interval between them (i.e., between the concluding pitch of the preceding semitone and the initial pitch of the following one) increases progressively: from the major second ($E\flat-F$) through the major third ($F\sharp-D$) to the tritone ($C\sharp-G$). In keeping with this regularity, the next interval should be a descending minor sixth leading to the semitone step $C-B$, and then an ascending minor seventh followed by the last semitone $A-B\flat$. However, the composer has reversed the succession of the two last semitones: instead of the ascending semitone $A-B\flat$, he uses its descending version $B\flat-A$ and inserts it before the previous semitone, $C-B$. As a result of this manipulation, a four-tone motif arises, which in the German (as well as the Polish) naming of musical pitches yields $B-A-C-H$: a broad hint at the greatest composer of passions in the history of music. This motif itself is again symmetrical in the same sense as row 1: when read from the end, it turns into its own inversion. The perturbation which the motif $B-A-C-H$ occasions within the structure of row 2 is reflected in a special distribution of its pitches in the original presentation of this row (refer back to Example 2): whereas this presentation is in the main performed by the boys' choir, the descending semitone $B\flat-A$ that disturbs the otherwise consistently and symmetrically expanding course of the row is turned over to the alto voices of the first mixed choir.

The image displays three musical staves, labeled row 1, row 2, and row 3, illustrating the inner structures of the rows. Row 1 is written in bass clef and shows a sequence of pitches with arrows indicating intervals: a major second (E-flat to F), a major third (F-sharp to D), a tritone (C-sharp to G), a descending minor sixth (G to C), and an ascending minor seventh (C to B-flat). Row 2 is written in treble clef and shows a sequence of pitches with arrows indicating intervals: a major second (E-flat to F), a major third (F-sharp to D), a tritone (C-sharp to G), a descending minor sixth (G to C), and a descending semitone (B-flat to A). The motif $B-A-C-H$ is explicitly labeled below the staff. Row 3 is written in treble clef and shows a sequence of pitches with arrows indicating intervals: a major second (E-flat to F), a major third (F-sharp to D), a tritone (C-sharp to G), a descending minor sixth (G to C), and an ascending minor seventh (C to B-flat).

Example 4: Analysis of the inner structures of the rows

Just like rows 1 and 2, row 3 also displays features of symmetry. Its overall course is divided into two segments consisting respectively of seven and five tones. This division is again reflected in the distribution of these tones between two groups of performers: the first seven tones are sung by the boys' choir, the remaining five tones by tenors of the first mixed choir. The symmetry of the second segment is clear: as in the case of row 1, it turns into its own inversion when read from the end. The symmetry axis falls on the central pitch, F#. Less apparent—since incomplete—is the symmetry of the first segment within row 3. If one added G# as its eighth tone, then its retrograde would once again be identical with its inversion. But such an addition is impossible as it would result in a repetition of a pitch within the row before all the remaining pitches had been employed in it, a violation of the basic rule of dodecaphonic composition Penderecki would admit only in later transformations but not in the original row form.²³

As mentioned before, the melodic rows do not necessarily—and even not frequently—occur as wholes. Much more often the composer operates with fragments. Interestingly, such fragments usually coincide with the component elements observed within the rows' structures. This is particularly evident in rows 1 and 2. Row 1 is represented by its two halves overlapping at the central tone. Row 2 is typically broken up in a way that segregates the final B-A-C-H motif. As two relatively independent melodic structures, these components of row 2 are employed chiefly in the choruses *Miserere* [12] and *Popule meus* [16]—the segments of the PLAN OF PRAYER in which the B-A-C-H motif is most widely exploited. In *Miserere* it constitutes the main melodic theme associated with the initial and most significant word of Psalm 56; in *Popule meus* it occurs predominantly as the recurrent formula carrying the tremendous construction of the *passacaglia*.²⁴ The function of the counterpoints to B-A-C-H is performed in both segments by the eight remaining tones of row 2, as shown in Example 5a and 5b below.

²³The repetition of the C# in row 1 happens instead as the thirteenth pitch 13, i.e., after all pitches have sounded.

²⁴Penderecki himself uses the word *passacaglia* in reference to *Popule meus* in the score of the piece. The term is employed loosely though, as there are in the course of this *passacaglia* passages that lack the B-A-C-H theme; in some other passages, the theme is allocated to a register other than the fundamental bass line.

The musical score for Example 5 consists of four staves. The top staff is for Soprano (S), the second for Boys (Boys:), the third for Alto (A), and the fourth for Tenor (T). The lyrics are: "quid fe - - - - - ci ti - bi" on the first line, "po - - - - - pu - le me - - - - - us" on the second line, "Mi - se - - - - - re - - - - - re me - - - - - i" on the third line, and "Mi - - se - re - re" on the fourth line. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Example 5: Component elements of row 2 as theme and counterpoint. Passacaglia *Popule meus* [16], mm. 47-54 and *Miserere* [12], mm. 6-12

Fragments comprising the first four pitches of a row are also crucial. As the entire rows, so also are their initial four-note groups employed in their original forms as well as in various contrapuntal transformations, but each of them occurs most frequently in one distinguished transformation (Example 6). In the case of row 1 this transformation of the first four-note group is an inversion, in the case of row 2 a retrograde, and in row 3, an inverted retrograde.²⁵ The composer has chosen these transformations so that all of them begin with the descending semitone.²⁶ As a result, they

²⁵The preference of one contrapuntal transformation is evident in the cases of four-note groups derived from rows 1 and 2. The first four-note fragment of row 3 is more equivocal in this respect since, apart from the inverted retrograde occurring in *Popule meus* [16 B], also its original and inverted forms are heard [12, 14, 20]. From among the three initial four-note groups, the most important is that of row 2. It occurs in the *Passion* more often than any other and constitutes the basis for further melodic structures derived from it, to be found in the opening chorus, *O Crux ave* (17), and in *Miserere* (35-37: basses).

²⁶There is one more melodic structure in Penderecki's *Passion*, consisting of four tones and starting with a descending semitone. It sounds twice in the soprano aria *Crux fidelis* [18], attached to the words of the acclamation, *Ecce lignum crucis in quo salus mundi pendit*, and performed there by the mixed choirs: see B \flat -A-F-F \sharp (58-65) and E-E \flat -B-C (99-105). This structure is not derived from any of the three rows. Instead, it should be interpreted as a juncture of two semitone steps: descending and ascending. The role of the semitone in the St. Luke Passion is discussed thoroughly in the further course of this essay.

sound very similar to one another as well as to the earlier-discussed four-tone motif B-A-C-H, in the context of which they actually very often occur.²⁷ It is worth observing that the B-A-C-H motif itself presents the last four pitches of row 2, or the first four of its retrograde.

The image shows four staves of musical notation. The first three staves are labeled 'row 1', 'row 2', and 'row 3'. The fourth staff is labeled 'B-A-C-H'. Above the first staff is the letter 'I', above the second 'R', and above the third 'RI'. A dashed rectangular box encloses the first four notes of each of the four staves. The notes in the first staff are G4, A4, B4, C5. The notes in the second staff are C5, B4, A4, G4. The notes in the third staff are C5, B4, A4, G4. The notes in the fourth staff are G4, A4, B4, C5.

Example 6: The initial four-note groups of the rows in their most salient contrapuntal transformations and the B-A-C-H motif

Apart from the three rows and their fragments, the *St. Luke Passion* contains one further melodic element of crucial importance: the descending semitone. This motif usually assumes the shape of a gesture displaying a rhythmic arrangement in which its second, lower note is repeated. Whenever it occurs in vocal parts, the first two notes of this gesture are sung on one syllable, joined by a slur, whereas the change of syllable happens on the last, third note. This is how the motif is presented for the first time, at the very beginning of the *Passion* (Example 7).

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for the 'Boys' Choir' and the bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment. Both staves have a dynamic marking of 'f'. The lyrics 'Crux a - - - - ve' are written below the notes. The vocal line features a descending semitone motif (G4-A4-B4-A4-G4) with a slur over the first two notes and a repeat of the second note. The piano accompaniment also features this motif.

Example 7: The descending-semitone motif. Opening chorus *O Crux, ave* [1], mm. 1-2

²⁷In *Miserere* [12], *In pulverem mortis* [14, 20] and *Popule meus* [16].

In this first presentation the gesture is preceded by a single tone lying a whole tone lower than the initial pitch. In previous analyses of Penderecki's *Passion* this phrase has been labeled a "trichord" and declared the main melodic unit of the composition alongside rows 1 and 2.²⁸ Without calling into question the importance this trichord has within the piece, one should observe that it does not form an integral musical unit. Rather, it arises through an attachment of the initial note to the gesture of the descending semitone. The supplementary character of this attachment is evidenced by the pause and also by the distribution of the component tones within the set of the performing forces: in the original presentation of the trichord in the first bars of the *St. Luke Passion* the initial note is performed by the choral *tutti*, whereas the following semitone is sung solely by the boys' choir. It is actually this last semitone which constitutes the most essential melodic element of the *St. Luke Passion*, as it sounds in almost all parts of the PLAN OF PRAYER. By contrast, the trichord as a whole occurs very rarely in the further course of the piece.²⁹

The essential character of the semitone motif in the *Passion* manifests itself above all through its frequent occurrences as an independent melodic gesture; its is heard chiefly in its descending form but appears also as the inverted ascending semitone. Furthermore, descending and ascending semitones are present in all three rows and their derivative four-note groups, and the B-A-C-H motif can legitimately be interpreted as a combination of two descending semitones.³⁰ Permeating the melodic material of the composition, the semitone thus makes for the musical homogeneity of the PLAN OF PRAYER. What is more, several motifs and themes characteristic of this plan are also derived from the descending semitone, as shown in Example 8 below.

²⁸Chomiński and Wilkowska-Chomińska, *Formymuzyczne* 5: 462. Incidentally, the structure of the trichord is another example of Penderecki's gap-fill melody in that its last pitch constitutes a semitone filling of the opening whole tone.

²⁹For the most important of these occurrences see the soprano aria, *Ierusalem, Ierusalem* [11].

³⁰Such an interpretation seems justified by the original presentation of the B-A-C-H motif in the framework of row 2 at the beginning of the piece (see Example 2), where the second semitone takes the shape of the descending melodic gesture just discussed. The same gesture occurs regularly as a part of the B-A-C-H motif in the course of the passacaglia *Popule meus* [16].

Soprano solo *p* Cruz

Baritone solo *p* De-us me - - us

Choir T *p* 8 Sta - bat Ma - ter do - lo - ro - sa

Example 8: Motifs and themes derived from the descending-semitone gesture (soprano aria *Cruz fidelis* [18], mm. 11-12; baritone aria *Deus meus* [3], m. 1; chorus *Stabat Mater* [24], m. 1); and survey of the derivation

In contradistinction to rows, which are spread relatively evenly all over the piece, these motifs and themes are assigned by the composer to its individual parts and univocally associated with them by listeners even if occasionally occurring outside them. Each of these univocal associations is strengthened by the textual phrases that the motifs carry. The descending-semitone gesture constitutes the main motif of the soprano aria *Cruz fidelis* [18] and is associated with its key word, *Cruz*. The omission of the final note repetition in this gesture results from the text, which is confined to only one syllable. In turn, the inversion of the semitone forms the core of the paramount motif in the baritone aria *Deus meus* [3]. It is also found in the theme of the sequence *Stabat Mater* [24], performed by the mixed choirs. Although, as observed earlier, *Stabat Mater* was composed independently of the *Passion* and only later inserted in it, this piece is thus not a foreign body within the *St. Luke Passion*. Instead, it is skillfully incorporated into the network of motivic relationships that underlie the larger composition. Its close intervallic relation to the motif *Deus meus*—and, consequently, also to *Cruz*—results from its being based on the combination of a whole

tone and semitone steps; this relation is shown in the vertical dimension of Example 8. At the same time, the characteristic shape of the *Stabat Mater* motif, with its slurred major second and its concluding repetition of the last note, makes for another dimension of its relation to *Deus meus* as well as to the basic motif of the descending semitone: a relation that could be called “diagonal” because of the way it is represented in the example.

Incidentally, apart from the motivic relationships of its theme to other segments of the work, the skillful inclusion of the *Stabat Mater* in the *St. Luke Passion* can also be ascertained from the way in which the theme of the sequence is employed earlier in the opening chorus. The *Stabat Mater* melody is sung there with the words *Te, fons salutis, Trinitas* (19-44)—a phrase that forms an obvious counterpart to the incipit of the third strophe in the sequence, *Eia, Mater, fons amoris*.³¹ In the *Stabat Mater* it is exactly this third strophe which brings the proper musical elaboration of the theme, whereas the first strophe presents it only once at the very beginning. Significantly, the first occurrence of the theme in the opening chorus (22-24) is identical to its second occurrence in the third strophe of the sequence (62-66): as there, so also here it is sung by the basses of the first mixed choir on the pitches B \flat -C-D \flat . Also identical is the way this theme is elaborated within the polyphonic texture of these sections as well as the selection of its accompanying melodic material, which consists of the ascending whole tone and the descending semitone. Both intervals are undoubtedly derived from the intervallic structure of the *Stabat Mater* theme itself.

The Theology of Prayer

For the theological meaning of Penderecki's *St. Luke Passion*, the most important factor is the extensive employment of psalm texts in the PLAN OF PRAYER. Psalms are not just prayers, they are prophecies. The so-called “Messianic psalms” in particular are prophecies uttered on behalf of the Messiah by the inspired authors of the Old Testament, traditionally identified with King David. Their subject—the suffering God's Servant—is a prefiguration of Christ. And indeed, Christ Himself during His Passion prays with the words of Messianic psalms. In the Gospels of St. Mark (15: 34) and St. Matthew (27: 46) the Crucified Christ cries: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?,” which are the words of Psalm 22. And

³¹This is the third strophe of Penderecki's setting, but the ninth strophe of the sequence as a whole. In his setting Penderecki selects only six out of 21 strophes of the *Stabat Mater* (see Table 2).

immediately before His death in the Gospel of St. Luke (23: 46), He says: “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,” a quotation from Psalm 31. St. Matthew in his Gospel (27: 43) chooses again words from Psalm 22, which he puts into the mouth of Christ’s executioners: “He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him” (Psalm 22, 9), while St. John (19: 24) comments on the Passion events by referring to the following words of the same psalm: “They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots” (Psalm 22: 19). The close connection of Psalm 22 with the Passion of Christ causes it to play a crucial role in the liturgy of the Holy Week. The entire psalm is sung during the ceremony of Baring the Altars, after the mass and the vespers on Maundy Thursday, a moment that constitutes a transition to the Liturgy of the Passion of Christ celebrated on Good Friday. Penderecki follows the liturgy in emphasizing Psalm 22 over all other psalms included in the *St. Luke Passion*. As shown in Table 2, its text is employed in as many as three segments of the PLAN OF PRAYER: in the aria *Deus meus* [3] and in the two choruses on the text *In pulverem mortis* [14, 20]. The composer also highlights Psalm 31. First heard as Christ’s prayer and for this reason as part of the PLAN OF ACTION [25], it subsequently returns in the PLAN OF PRAYER as the text of the final chorus, *In Te, Domine, speravi* [27]. Other psalm texts integrated into the *Passion* are chosen apparently under the provision that they could equally well be uttered by the suffering Christ (see the excerpts of Psalms 4, 5, 10, 15, 16, 56 in Table 2). This statement holds true even for some of the texts taken not from the psalms, such as the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* and, particularly, the improperia *Popule meus*, which are reproaches that the Savior directs to His people. As a result, Christ in the *St. Luke Passion* stands not only in the center of the PLAN OF ACTION—as its subject—but also in the center of the PLAN OF PRAYER—as the lyrical subject of the liturgical poetry. The interpretation of Penderecki’s *Passion* as a Passion according to Jesus Christ, proposed earlier, extends in this way on the entire construction of this piece.

Seen from this angle, the fact that psalms—as any liturgical texts—are at the same time prayers of the believers has a profound significance, for it reflects the vocation of every believer to be one with Christ. According to Christian theology, a believer’s life and death should be a participation in the life and death of Christ. As St. Paul emphasizes: “For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him” (2 Timothy 2: 11-12). This is why the words of Psalm 31, *In*

manus Tuas commendo spiritum meum (Into Thy hands I commend my spirit) appear in the *Missale Romanum* for the ceremony of the Extreme Unction, in the course of the sick person's prayer and among pious sighs to be suggested to him during the agony. Interestingly, the same words followed by the phrase *Redemisti nos, Domine, Deus veritatis* (Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth) are heard in the Short Responsory within the Complin, the evening hour of worship immediately preceding the night's rest. In Christian—and not only Christian—symbolism, sleep has often been understood as related to the last rest in death. The text of Psalm 5, inclusive of its initial verse *Verba mea auribus percipe, Domine, intellige clamorem meum* (Incline Thine ears unto my words, O Lord, my complaints consider), which Penderecki employed in the aria *Deus meus* [3], is used in the Matins of the Dead. And the words of Psalm 43, *Judica me, Deus, et discerne causam meam de gente non sancta* (Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation), heard here in the bass aria [9], are recited by a priest in the course of the introductory ceremonies of the mass, after the sign of the cross.

The texts of psalms used by Penderecki in the *St. Luke Passion* display thus a storeyed structure of prayer: (1) a prayer of Christ as the Son of God directed to His Father and (2) a prayer of the community of believers directed to Christ as the Redeemer. Within this structure, Christ assumes a double role: at the same time as a subject of prayer and as its addressee. In this former role His divine nature is involved, in the latter—His human nature:

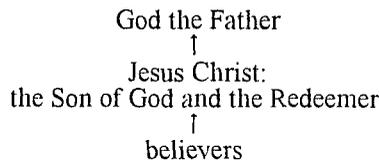


Figure 1. The storeyed structure of prayer in the *St. Luke Passion*

These two natures of Christ—the divine and the human—are separately represented in Penderecki's *Passion*. Musically, Christ-as-man is impersonated by the baritone solo within the PLAN OF ACTION, while Christ-as-God, the eternal Son of God, is embodied by the boys' choir within the PLAN OF PRAYER. The symbolic role performed by the boys' choir as the *alter ego* of Christ has not thus far been noticed. Yet there is strong evidence in favor of this hypothesis. In contradistinction to the three mixed

choirs that are part of the performing forces of Penderecki's *Passion*, the boys' choir never participates in *turba* sections. More importantly, the boys' choir presents only those texts of the PLAN OF PRAYER that could be uttered by Jesus, while omitting passages that would be proper exclusively for the believers. Lastly and most importantly, aside from the baritone solo it is exclusively the boys' choir that sings words uttered by Christ during His Passion. The most striking moment in this respect is certainly that of Christ's agony (see Example 9) when, after the baritone's line *Pater, In manus Tuas commendo spiritum meum* (Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit), the boys' choir adds Jesus' subsequent words according to St. John (19: 30), *Consummatum est* (It is finished).

Baritone solo

Pa - - ter, in ma - nus Tu - - as com-men-do

Boys S

Con-sum-ma - - - - - tum est.

Baritone solo

spi - - ri-tum me - um.

organ

Example 9: The Death of Jesus [25], mm. 27-29

The privileged role of the boys' choir is also evident in the fact that, although employed only infrequently, it is entrusted with introducing the most important melodic elements underlying the musical material of the piece: two out of three rows (2 and 3) as well as the descending-semitone motif. The choice of a boys' choir as the representative of Christ's divine nature in Penderecki's *Passion* corroborates the composer's deep theological insights. A boy is a close synonym to son—the Son of God. More generally, a boy is a child, and in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, “child” is rendered as *pais*, a word that also means “servant.”³²

³²Joseph Ratzinger, *Einführung in das Christentum: Vorlesungen über das Apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis* (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1990), p. 177.

As a result, Christ as the Son of God in the New Testament is identified with the Old-Testament figure of God's Servant, an identification that is crucial for the Christian faith.

Domine: the Essence of Prayer

The storeyed structure of psalm poetry characteristic of the PLAN OF PRAYER finds its emblematic realization in the musical motif that is attached to the word *Domine* and recurs several times in the course of the *St. Luke Passion*. The very expression, *Domine* (O Lord), is to be considered as the essence of prayer; it embodies the subject's recognition of his or her subordination and dependance—and even more, his or her acceptance of this subordination. To call someone “Lord” is to make him “my Lord.” *Domine* is thus a performative expression in the sense ascribed to this term by Austin: it does what it says.³³ The musical motif *Domine* completes the list of fundamental musical elements of the discussed piece (Example 10). Its function has often been compared with that performed by the motif attached to the word *Dominum* in Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. Both these motifs resemble each other owing to the homophonic texture of their four-part harmonies and similar rhythms rendering the natural rhythm of the word. Yet, whereas in Stravinsky the *Dominum*-motif forms a repetition of one chord, in Penderecki it is made up of a juncture of two harmonies: a dissonant four-note chord and its resolution to an octave duplication of a minor third.

Example 10: *Domine*-motif; original presentation in the baritone aria *Deus meus* [3], m. 12, and analysis of the inner structure

³³John Langshaw Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

Although the *Domine*-motif is the sole harmonic element within the musical material of the piece, it displays a close connection to the melodic elements discussed earlier. Its harmonic structure arises from a superposition of descending and ascending semitones derived from the essential melodic motif of the *St. Luke Passion*. As in the melodic gesture opening the piece (refer back to Example 7), each of the semitones is elaborated here by means of a repetition extending one of its notes. The difference is that the repetition occurs here not, as in the descending-semitone motif, after the second, but after the first note. The component semitone steps of the *Domine*-motif can thus be interpreted as retrogrades and inverted retrogrades of the melodic motif underlying the PLAN OF PRAYER. These semitones form two pairs such that within every pair one descending and one ascending semitone together create a resolution of an augmented sixth to an octave. The *Domine*-motif as a whole is thus symmetrical in its vertical dimension, this vertical symmetry as well as the component semitone steps making for its relationship with row 2. It is also noteworthy that in the *Domine*-motif Penderecki's earlier observed predilection for gap-fill structures manifests itself one more time. Were one to consolidate all its notes within one octave, the motif would present itself as consisting of two diminished thirds, each of them resolved inwards to—and thus filled by—a unison. By resolving two different diminished thirds to a minor third, the composer obtains thus a sound range staked out by a perfect fourth and completely covered with semitones.

The *Domine*-motif is heard eight times in the course of the *Passion*, always in the same musical setting but in different choral parts: either in the boys' choir or in the mixed choirs' *tutti*. In the former cases, since the boys' choir consists only of sopranos and altos, it has to be supplemented with two more voices in order that the four-part harmony of the motif may be obtained. Such supplementing voices are tenors of the first mixed choir.³⁴ Yet their role is merely auxiliary and does not affect the supremacy of the boys' choir, which gives these occurrences their special character and timbre. The occurrences of the *Domine*-motif in the boys' choir are most frequent and represent its basic, most typical version also as regards pitch: all of them constitute the same transposition of this motif—the one shown in Example 10—resolving to the third E–G. Instead, when sung by

³⁴In the last presentation of the *Domine*-motif at the very end of the piece [27], the part of the boys' choir is additionally reinforced by the sopranos of the first mixed choir.

the mixed choirs, the *Domine*-motif is transposed, resolving to C#-E [7], B-D [13], and again C#-E [19].

The twofold assignment of the *Domine*-motif to the boys' choir and mixed choirs can be easily understood in the context of the storeyed structure of prayer that is characteristic of the *St. Luke Passion* (please refer back to Figure 1). Within this structure there are two subjects that say *Domine*: the believers praying to Christ the Savior and Christ as the Son of God praying to His Father. Based on what has been acknowledged thus far about the roles played respectively by the mixed and the boys' choirs in Penderecki's *Passion*, one has to admit that the occurrences of the *Domine*-motif sung by the mixed choirs represent the prayer of believers worshiping Christ during His Passion, whereas *Domine* in the boys' choir epitomizes

the prayer of Christ Himself worshiping God the Father. Particularly interesting in this respect is the occurrence of the *Domine*-motif in the scene of Pilate's judgment [13]. Asked by Pilate: *Tu es rex Iudaeorum?* (Art thou the King of the Jews?), Jesus confirms by saying: *Tu dicis* (Thou sayest it). Immediately thereafter, the mixed choirs add *Domine*, a word that is absent from the original Gospel text (Example 11). With this textual insertion they pay homage to the divine dignity of Christ as He has just revealed it to them.

S
A
Choirs I, II, III
T
B

pp
Do - mi - ne
Do - mi - ne

organ

pp
p
Tu di - - cis

Example 11: Jesus before Pilate [13], mm. 35-38

In the Crucifixion scene [17], when Christ begs His Father to forgive His executioners, the mixed choirs insert the *Domine*-motif as a prayer offered by the believers. This occurrence can be understood in the light of an excerpt from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities” (Isaiah 53: 5). It is an article of the Christian faith that the Passion of Christ was “a propitiation for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2: 2). Therefore the believers, too, are Christ’s executioners and need to beg for His forgiveness. Parenthetically, this theological argument sheds light on the musical identification of the community of believers with the unbridled crowd that is deriding Jesus and watching His martyrdom, as both of these plural subjects are represented in Penderecki’s *Passion* by the mixed choirs.³⁵

Arguably the most unusual manifestation of the *Domine*-motif occurs in the course of the dialogue between Christ and the Good Thief [22]. This is the only time when the word *Domine* is part of the Gospel text, uttered by the thief and directed by him to Jesus. Yet the composer extracts the word from the thief’s lines and turns it over to the boys’ choir. The resulting effect is that of an inner cry emitted by the Redeemer. This may give the impression that Jesus was promptly submitting the thief’s request to the Father (Example 12).

The musical score for Example 12 consists of several parts:

- S (Soprano):** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 8/8. Lyrics: Do - mi - ne. Dynamics: *p*.
- Boys:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 8/8. Lyrics: Do - mi - ne. Dynamics: *p*.
- A (Alto):** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 8/8. Lyrics: Do - mi - ne. Dynamics: *p*.
- T (Tenor):** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 8/8. Lyrics: Do - mi - ne. Dynamics: *p*.
- Ch. I (Chorus I):** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 8/8. Lyrics: Do - mi - ne. Dynamics: *p*.
- B (Bass):** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 8/8. Lyrics: Do - mi - ne. Dynamics: *p*.
- Bass solo:** Bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 8/8. Lyrics: me-men-to me - i. Dynamics: *p*.

A dashed line connects the end of the Bass part to the start of the Bass solo part.

Example 12: Jesus speaks to the Good Thief [22], mm. 24-30

³⁵The same is true for Bach’s passions. Switches resulting from direct juxtapositions of these two roles performed by the choir—of the believers and of *turba*—which occur frequently in Bach’s *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion*, can also be found in Penderecki.

Domine, as emphasized before, fulfills the performative function of prayer and thus appears more often than not as belonging to the PLAN OF PRAYER. Yet in each of the three above-mentioned cases, when the word is set by means of its characteristic harmonic motif, it occurs in the context of the Gospel report of the Passion events. In this way it introduces the dimension of prayer into the PLAN OF ACTION and becomes one of the most important factors contributing to the unification of these two plans.

Interpenetration of Prayer and Action

Although the plans of action and of prayer in the *St. Luke Passion* are clearly delineated and governed by different compositional techniques, their separation is not absolute. That they penetrate one another follows from many compositional factors, which act in both directions: from the PLAN OF ACTION to the PLAN OF PRAYER and vice versa.

The former direction of penetration takes place when sonoristic effects characteristic of the PLAN OF ACTION are introduced into the PLAN OF PRAYER. Whereas in the PLAN OF ACTION their employment is necessitated by the rules of the sonoristic technique, in the PLAN OF PRAYER it is justified rather by their timbral and expressive qualities. The qualities are able to give an emotional coloring to the act of praying, which thus appears in Penderecki's *Passion* not as purely intellectual but swelled with an ardent emotion—the same, though more restrained, emotion which permeates the Gospel report. The sonoristic effects heard in the vocal parts are recitation and whisper. They are braided into the lines of the polyphonic texture as a prolongation of singing, which thereby appears as if stripped of its artistic artificiality and taken to the most immediate expression. Protracted sounds and clusters, which the composer employs as a background of the polyphonic lines or solo singing, add a flavor of imperceptible emotional tension similar to the one they elicit in the narrative sections of the PLAN OF ACTION. Semitone clusters, often of an elaborate intervallic structure, sound like vertical compilations of the rows and motifs of the piece. An impression of their being derivatives of those melodic elements arises particularly in clusters built step by step by adding and retaining their consecutive component sounds. Even though this impression is for the most part deceptive, this way of building clusters allows the composer occasionally to disguise real melodic structures derived from the rows. This is the case of the motifs B-A-C-H, presented many times as semitone

clusters in *Miserere* and *Popule meus*. The beginning of the soprano aria *Domine, quis habitabit* [4] and the segment of the improperia *Popule meus* [16] falling on words *Responde mihi* (87-120) offer exceptionally extended examples of the sonoristic technique penetrating into the plan of prayer. Especially the latter includes a great number of vocal as well as instrumental sonoristic effects without equivalent in the PLAN OF PRAYER.

In the PLAN OF ACTION, in turn, passages inspired by twelve-tone thinking emerge as sound sequences that have entered the composition of individual segments. This phenomenon—a fusion of the sonoristic and the twelve-tone techniques—is characteristic of Penderecki's late sonorism of the years 1963-73. It can be discerned in many pieces written after the *Passion*, the most important being *De natura sonoris no. 1* (1966) and *no. 2* (1970), *Dies irae* (1967), the diptych *Utrenia*, consisting of *The Entombment of Christ* (1969-70) and *The Resurrection* (1970-71), and the First Symphony (1972-73).³⁶ In the *St. Luke Passion*, where this fusion happens for the first time, it is most apparent in segments representing spatial movement. The glissandi employed in earlier sonoristic pieces are here replaced by very swift passages consisting of definite pitches, inspired by twelve-tone thinking though not derived from the rows underlying the PLAN OF PRAYER. A notable exception is the instrumental segment accompanying the Evangelist's account of Christ's death, which immediately precedes the Redeemer's last words on the Cross [25 AB]. Even though, as in the case of other segments of the same kind, its internal pitch structure is not audible, a careful analysis reveals that it is built consistently—and thus consciously—on the B-A-C-H motif in its original and retrograde versions. The reasons for such an elaboration of this segment can only be guessed, the most plausible being that, by using B-A-C-H in this context, Penderecki alluded to the meaning this motif has as a musical symbol of the Cross in works of Johann Sebastian Bach.

A different but equally curious case of weaving the melodic material of the PLAN OF PRAYER into the subsegmental level of the PLAN OF ACTION is the use of the inverted four-note fragment from row 1 in the Crucifixion scene [17]. This manipulation can be properly appreciated only insofar as one knows that these four notes form a phrase identical with the incipit of a Polish church hymn, *Święty Boże*. The text of this hymn constitutes a translation of the supplication, which in the *St. Luke Passion* occurs in Greek (*Hagios o Theos*) and in Latin (*Sanctus Deus*) at the very end of the

³⁶Mirka, *The Sonoristic Structuralism of Krzysztof Penderecki*, pp. 343-347.

four-note fragments derived from rows 2 and 3 as well as with the motif B-A-C-H.³⁸ Yet, because in those parts it is less exposed, it does not sound as a quotation and therefore has escaped the attention of earlier analysts.

A particular aspect of the interpenetration between the plans of prayer and action in Penderecki's composition concerns the solo voices carrying the utterances of the Passion's main characters: Jesus (baritone) as well as the other *soliloquentes*—Pilate, Peter, the Good Thief (bass), and the Servant (soprano). In shaping their melodic content, the composer has again taken recourse to a twelve-tone thinking devoid of connections with the melodic material of the rows. Yet in this free flow of twelve-tone melody there exists one motif, repeated several times, which constitutes an inversion of the descending-semitone motif that was identified as the most essential melodic element of the PLAN OF PRAYER. In the PLAN OF ACTION this gesture occurs exclusively in the part of Jesus and is always connected there with a single and very significant word or phrase of the text. Most often, this word is *Pater* (Example 14), which Jesus utters during His three prayers to the Father, in the Mount of Olives [2], during the Crucifixion [17], and before His death on the Cross [25].



Example 14: *Pater*-motif. Jesus in the Mount of Olives [2], mm. 2-9

In the last scene, the *Pater*-motif is used in inversion, whereby it becomes identical with the semitone motif itself and consequently—and significantly—with the motif *Crux* (please refer back to Example 9). At other times, the same motif occurs with the word *Amen*, in the confirmation of the promise given to the Good Thief [22], and with the phrases affirming the divine dignity of Christ; see *Ego sum*, with which He answers the question of the Sanhedrine, *Tu ergo Filius Dei?* [10], and *Tu dicis*, in answer to Pilate's question, *Tu es rex Iudaeorum?* [13]. Appropriately,

³⁸This is the case in the passacaglia *Popule meus* (184-192), where we hear a very quaint superposition of *Swat Bode* (choir I) with B-A-C-H both in the original (choir II) and in the retrograde (choir III). Earlier, the first four-note fragment of row 1 heard in the *Miserere* (18-21). Yet it is presented there (accompanied by B-A-C-H and by the retrograde of row 2) not in inversion but in its original form, and thus not identical with the incipit of *Swat Bode*.

these last are the only two moments of the Passion when Jesus confirms officially, as it were, His mandate of Messiah³⁹

Prayer as Action

The integration of the plans of action and prayer does not confine itself to the interpenetration of their musical characteristics, however. These two plans literally merge into each other when the action becomes a prayer. As just observed, Jesus prays to His Father three times in the course of the Passion—first in the Mount of Olives, then during the Crucifixion, finally on the cross. Whereas the second of those prayers—a prayer interceding for His executioners—is of lesser importance in the *St. Luke Passion*, the imploring prayers offered by Jesus for His own intention during the spiritual agony in Getsemani and during the physical agony in Golgotha expand into large musical scenes elaborated by Penderecki with a masterly compositional skill and pregnant with theological senses. Being respectively the first and the last scene of the *Passion*, they form an impressive frame of the discussed piece.

The Agony in the Mount of Olives [2-3]

In the Gospel of St. Luke, Jesus prays with these words: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from Me, nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). In Penderecki’s composition this text and the commentary added to it by the Evangelist lead directly into the baritone aria *Deus meus*. This is the only aria for baritone in the entire *St. Luke Passion*, and its position immediately after the prayer in the Mount of Olives is very meaningful, as it is sung by the very voice which represents Jesus in the PLAN OF ACTION and which, just a while ago, uttered the words of Jesus directed to His Father.

Seen from this angle, *Deus meus* turns out to differ radically from the other arias of the *Passion*. It is not a prayer offered by believer like the arias of soprano and bass, which follow in this respect the model of Bach’s passion arias. Rather, it is a prayer of Jesus Himself, and forms part of the action. *Deus meus* is a development of the scene in Getsemani and a continuation of Christ’s prayer, in words that have not been written down

³⁹In the tradition of the Old Testament, both the Son of God and the King of Israel are Messianic titles.

by the Evangelist or, more precisely, which other Evangelists recorded in another context. This is supported by the fact that the initial words of this aria, *Deus meus, respice in me, quare me dereliquisti?* (My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?), are those of verse 1 from Psalm 22, with which St. Mark (15: 34) and St. Matthew (27: 46) have Jesus praying on the Cross and which represent one of the two psalm quotations uttered by Jesus during His Passion in all the four Gospels. The quotation here discussed, however, does not occur in St. Luke at all. In order to use it in his *St. Luke Passion*, Penderecki thus took it from a different Gospel and inserted it at a different moment of Christ's Passion.

The special status of the first psalm verse as words of Christ Himself is musically reflected in that it is sung exclusively by the baritone. As has been pointed out, the opening phrase—*Deus meus*—constitutes one of the main melodic themes of the *Passion*. But it is only in this scene that the derivation of this theme is disclosed. *Deus meus* turns out to be an elaboration of *Pater*, the melodic motif of the PLAN OF ACTION that occurs for the first time in the scene of Jesus's prayer in Getsemani. Characteristically, it consists there of the same pitches (A–B \flat) that form the core of the motif *Deus meus* in its original presentation at the very beginning of the aria (Example 15). The elaboration of the *Pater*-motif is accomplished in *Deus meus* by adding an initial note g, which allows the composer to deal with the higher number of syllables in the latter phrase.⁴⁰

De-us me - us

Example 15: Derivation of the *Deus meus*-motif from the *Pater*-motif

In the opening section of the aria, based on the first psalm verse, the boys' choir joins the baritone to insert the exclamation *Domine*, which is

⁴⁰It is interesting that the *Pater*-motif is elaborated in the same way when attached to the longer phrase *Tu dicis* in the scene of Pilate's trial (Example 11). This version is already midway to the motif of *Deus meus*, and the lacking first note E actually occurs in the organ part.

musically set as the harmonic motif discussed earlier and presented here for the first time. What comes to mind in this connection is the passage from St. Paul, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8: 26).

Although designated as an aria, *Deus meus* features not only the solo of the baritone voice, but also choral parts. The subsequent text, which is excerpted from Psalm 5 and articulates the entreaty, *Verba mea auribus percipe, Domine, intellige clamorem meam* (Incline Thine ears unto my words, O Lord, my complaints consider), marks the beginning of a vast choral section. Because this text never occurs in the Gospels as uttered by Jesus, it is sung not by the baritone (in this section, the baritone enters just once with the initial motif *Deus meus*), but by the mixed choirs and the boys' choir. In light of the storeyed structure of prayer underlying Penderecki's *Passion*, the cooperation of these two choirs is to be interpreted as a combination of two dimensions of prayer: the prayer of Christ imploring His Father to strengthen Him before His Passion and the prayer of the believers beseeching Christ to save them through His Passion. The word-motif *Domine*, which occurs this time not as a textual insertion but as part of the psalm text, is performed here by the combined forces of both the boys' choir and the mixed choirs, in this way bringing together the two versions of its setting distinguished earlier. However, the transposition of this motif, resolving to the minor third E-G, attests to the leading role of the boys' choir as representing the Spirit of Christ, in accordance with these words of St. Paul: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 12: 3).

The text of Psalm 22 is continued in the final section of the aria, where we hear the words *Deus meus, clamabo per diem, et non exaudies* (O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not). The repetition of the initial phrase of verse 1, "Deus meus," at the beginning of verse 2 prompts the composer to avail himself again of the opening theme of the aria. But now, taken over from the baritone part by the boys' and mixed choirs, this theme gains power and expands in the polyphonic texture. The storeyed structure of prayer, characteristic of the central section, is still preserved. Yet, as the phrase *Deus meus* belongs to the words uttered by Christ on the Cross, this structure is made up not only of the choirs here, but includes the baritone voice. Having remarked previously that the roles performed by the baritone and the boys' choir function as two musical representatives of Christ, it is

now interesting to observe the complementary distribution of their parts in the section under consideration. They do not sing simultaneously here (or anywhere else), but the latter takes the lead only after the former has ended.

The closure of the aria, appended after a general pause, forms a kind of coda. It reverts to the opening section by summoning once again the baritone motif *Deus meus* and the exclamation *Domine* sung by the boys' choir.

The Agony on the Cross [25-27]

The scene of the agony in the Mount of Olives is counterbalanced by the scene of Christ's death on the Cross, which eventually leads into the final chorus of the *Passion*. This scene features the prayer of the dying Savior, the baritone's *In manus Tuas commendo spiritum meum* (i.e., Psalm 31: 5), which the boys' choir complements with the phrase *Consummatum est* (please refer back to Example 9).

Although the Gospel text ends here, the music continues. The initial segment of this epilogue, an instrumental interlude [26], is an exact repetition of the opening section of the soprano aria *Crux fidelis* [18] except that the melodic parts originally performed by soprano and flute are turned over to the violas. In this way, the interlude creates a wordless lament. Words recur only together with the beginning of the final chorus, *In Te, Domine, speravi* [27]. Yet before this first line of Psalm 31 is introduced, the composer summons all the melodic themes and motifs assigned earlier to individual parts of the PLAN OF PRAYER. This introductory section of the final chorus (1-11) has often been compared with the opening of the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The most important role is performed here by the three solo voices: the baritone and the soprano repeat the melodic motifs of their main arias, *Deus meus* [3] and *Crux fidelis* [18], whereas the bass sings the motif B-A-C-H of the *Miserere* [12]. The recapitulation of the melodic themes also extends to choral parts, as the altos of the first mixed choir perform the initial motifs of the *Stabat Mater* theme. And all these are strung together by the pedal-note D, on which the basses of the second and third choirs sing *In pulverem mortis deduxisti me*.⁴¹

⁴¹This last theme has not been listed among the melodic elements of the *St. Luke Passion* because, as a note repetition, it does not, strictly speaking, possess any melodic character. Yet it occurs already earlier, in the choral part of the PLAN OF PRAYER [20] based on the text of Psalm 22, where it is also heard in the basses and equally performs the function of a pedal point and an axis for higher polyphonic lines.

It is only after that recollection of the earlier themes that Psalm 31 is taken up—the same psalm with whose fifth verse the dying Christ was heard praying just a while ago. The final chorus repeats the Savior's prayer, develops it, and places it in its proper context, that of the complete psalm text. The initial verse of the psalm, *In Te, Domine, speravi* (In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust), is intoned in unison by the boys' choir, thus expressing Christ's trust in His Father. As pointed out earlier, this articulation constitutes the first full presentation of row 3 (see Example 3). In the further course of the chorus this melodic setting of the initial verse returns in the mixed choirs whereby, in turn, it expresses the believers' trust in Christ. The mixed choirs then proceed to sing the subsequent verse of the psalm, *Inclina ad me aurem Tuam, accelera ut eruas me* (Bow down Thine ear to me; deliver me speedily). The musical setting of this passage (20-22) echoes the choral climax, and with it the melodic theme, of the aria *Deus meus* (34-39). This unexpected musical analogy between the first and the last scene enhances their function as frames in the structure of Penderecki's *Passion*.

The subsequent section (23-36) is still founded on the same analogy: the musical setting of the rest of verse 2, *Esto mihi in Deum protectorem et in domum refugii, ut salvum me facias* (Be thou my strong rock, for an house of defense to save me), corresponds with the section of the aria *Deus meus* on the words *Verba mea auribus percipe* (20-27). The corresponding sections are both performed by the mixed choirs, with the motif of the descending semitone as their only melodic element.

The mixed choirs sing the full text of the final chorus, with the significant exception made for the phrase *In manus Tuas commendo spiritum meum* (see Example 16 above).

This verse, quoted earlier by Christ Himself, is reserved for the boys' choir as Christ's *alter ego* and performed in a quasi-recitative manner similar to the plainchant psalm tone, thereby standing out against the otherwise flexible style of the twelve-tone melodies that predominate in the *Passion*. Immediately before this phrase, the psalm incipit *In Te, Domine, speravi* is repeated by the mixed choirs. By way of this direct juxtaposition of praying subjects, the final chorus summarizes the storeyed structure of prayer underlying the conception of the work as a whole, and the text of the prayer ultimately reveals the profound sense of this structure: the believers trust in Christ, who in turn entrusts the Father with His spirit.

9 *quasi recit* 7
8 *meno mosso* 8

S
Boys
In ma-nus Tu-as com-men-do spi-ri-tum me-um

A
In ma-nus Tu-as com-men-do spi-ri-tum me-um

Choirs I, II, III: S, A, T, B

In Te, Do-mi-ne spe-ra - - vi

In Te, Do-mi-ne spe-ra - - vi

8 In Te, Do-mi-ne spe-ra - - vi

In Te, Do-mi-ne spe-ra - - vi

Example 16:

Chorus *In Te, Domine, speravi*
[27], mm. 36-39

To interpret this hierarchical situation of trusting, one must refer to the theology of St. John. In his Gospel, the paramount trait of the relation of the Son to the Father is the former's absolute subordination as manifested in His perfect obedience: "The Son can do nothing of himself" (John 5: 19). The fruit of this obedience is His perfect unity with the Father, as expressed by Jesus in this sentence: "I and my Father are one" (John 10: 30). This unusual logic of obedience and unity, subordination and equality between the Son and the Father is explained by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in the following way: "The Son, as a Son and insofar as He is a Son, is nothing by Himself, and thus is something completely one with the Father [...] If there is nothing in which He would be alone, no domain exclusive for Him, then This converges with That and is one with Him."⁴²

⁴²Translated from Joseph Ratzinger, *Einführung in das Christentum*, p. 146

An analogical subordination and obedience should also characterize the relation of a Christian to Christ. This is why Jesus says, in a different passage of the Gospel according to St. John, “Without Me ye can do nothing” (John 15: 5). As the Son is united with the Father through His obedience, so also a Christian becomes united with Christ when perfectly obedient to His commandments: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love” (John 15: 10). And, being united with Christ, a Christian is through Him united also with the Father. In the course of the high-priestly prayer—His testament, delivered during the Last Supper immediately before the Passion—Jesus prays for just this unity: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us” (John 17: 21). And it is exactly this unity, obtained through a hierarchical inclusion of the believers in Christ and Christ Himself in God the Father, which constitutes the profound sense of the storeyed structure exhibited in Penderecki’s *Passion*. In the center of this structure—as in the center of the history of Salvation—stands Jesus Christ, the only mediator between the believers and the Father, the One who says: “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14: 6).