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PASSIO:
THE ICONOGRAPHY OF ARVO PÄRT

by

Carol L. Matthews Whiteman

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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Chair of Examining Committee

19 Sept 97 — Date

Executive Officer

Leo Treitler

Joseph N. Straus

Thea Musgrave

Philip Lambert

George Stauffer

Supervisory Committee

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

ABSTRACT

PASSIO: THE ICONOGRAPHY OF ARVO PÄRT

by

Carol L. Matthews Whiteman

Adviser: Professor Leo Treitler

Arvo Pärt's Passio is his largest work and the culmination of his tintinnabuli style. It is a 70 minute setting of the Passion according to John, characterized by highly static tonal centers, limited rhythmic motion, and repetitive melodic figures. This study develops the theory that Pärt's style is iconographic. That is, instead of giving dramatic shape to the music, Pärt deliberately subverts the events of the narrative in order to create a work of contemplation and veneration, much as the icon painters of the Orthodox Church would prepare and create visual icons. This study demonstrates how Pärt's very careful and mechanistic method, based on the actual number of words and phrases in the text, makes the normally foregrounded melody, harmony and rhythm secondary, and places the primary form and structure in the lines of texture, the changes of timbre, and the use of tessitura. With these parameters of musical structure Pärt does indeed construct an

aural icon of the crucifixion, as delineated with and within the four voice groups.

Like the Russian icons of the crucifixion Pärt's construction is multi-layered and filled with symbols of the Passion, particularly that symbolism associated with the gospel of John. Crosses exist at all levels, from the note to note cross relations of the Chorus voice to the four great sections of the Evangelist voice. The pitch centers and durations for each voice group indicate their relationship to one another and to the great D major ending sonority, as figures in a visual representation might be related. All the symbols come together as the arms of the cross come together at Rehearsal 111, with the words "*crucifige, crucifige eum,*" a point located exactly two thirds into the entire work,

As well as a full analysis of Passio, Pärt's relationship to the Eastern Orthodox faith, his use of bell tones, his connection with minimalism, and the relationship of his work to the art of creating icons is shown. Because Passio stands as both a pivot and a pinnacle in Pärt's mature works, the relevance of his choice of gospel offers a unique insight into and understanding of all of his work since 1976.

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Finally, to my partner, Dr. Elizabeth Gould, I will forever be indebted for the late-night discussions, the endless readings and faultless editing, the encouragement, patience, and support that she has shown me over the long years this has taken.

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God.

John 1:1

Something which has existed since the beginning, that we have heard, and we have seen with our own eyes; that we have watched and touched with our hands: the Word, who is life--this is our subject.

1 John 1:1

It is he who is coming on the clouds; everyone will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the races of the earth will mourn over him. This is the truth. Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Revelation 1:7,8

Pour Maman

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

THE PASSION AND ARVO PÄRT

Settings of the Passion are among the oldest forms of western European sacred music. The Passion refers to the telling of the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth as presented in the four gospels of the New Testament. It is the quintessential heroic narrative with one notable exception. The hero is transformed in most heroic narratives, overcoming death or defeat, and in so doing becomes heroic. The biblical story does indeed contain this transcendence of death with the recounting of the resurrection; however, in settings of the Passion the resurrection is generally not included, because the evolution of Passion settings and the dramatization of the story occurred within the context of the Mass. The scriptural readings, or retelling of the story, are given during Holy Week, usually on Good Friday (Gospel of John), and the telling of the resurrection can not be done until Easter Morning. Without the resurrection the story is about suffering and death alone, of the man-God who could have escaped, but did not, who chose to accept agony for the sake of love, death for the sake of obedience. This part of the narrative is, in these terms, aptly called the Passion.

The twentieth century has seen a blossoming of Passion

settings, such as Hugo Distler's Choralpassion and Ernst Pepping's Passionsbericht nach Mathaus. Among them is the work that is the focus for this thesis, Passio, by Arvo Pärt. Completed in 1982, much in this work is reminiscent of older works, yet is entirely different from both historical settings and other contemporary settings. More importantly, the musical approach to the text and to the narrative seems to speak to what we know about the retelling of the Passion in the earliest centuries of the church; that is, quietly and with great reverence, focusing entirely on the words of the gospels, and not on the performance of the reading. Evidence of possible dramatic interpretations of the Passion exists as early as the ninth century, an interpretation that Pärt assiduously avoids. In this work Pärt more closely adheres to the tradition of ritual than reenactment, heeding Augustine's admonition to celebrate the Passion with great solemnity. In contemporary Western culture we are surrounded by the constant telling of narrative, particularly heroic narrative, with strong emphases on enactment and drama, tension and release, and it is difficult for us to conceive of another way in which to present a narrative. Indeed, the best known of all the contemporary settings of the Passion, Krzysztof Penderecki's *Passio et mors Domini nostri Jesu Christi secundum Lucam* (1965), is most moving because of its dramatic effects.

Passio, however, has no dramatic effects whatsoever. It is nearly seamless in its presentation, static in its musical constructs, distanced from the audience by language and lack

of mimetic effects in the score. There are no interpolations of other material, no divisions into numbers, no instrumental interludes. There is, in fact, no way to know where one is in the story unless one has a reasonable grasp of church Latin. Even then the music moves across the story line, negating the events of the narrative, making them disappear, with sonorities so passive, so repetitive, so seamless that no kind of musical structure, much less textual structure may be discerned. There is just one moment in the work when an audience might possibly hear what is happening, when the Chorus sings "Crucifige, crucifige eum!" However, that moment is fleeting, going by so quickly that one cannot be sure that it truly happened.

The critical writings about Pärt's music have been at best incomplete and at worst, superficial. While lengthy discussions of Pärt's "sound" have been published, most of these tend to range from the banal to incomprehensible.[1] Wolfgang Sandner's article on the orchestral works of Pärt is accessible and informative, but is more concerned with the man than the music.[2] Two authors, however, do explicate Pärt's compositional style well. The best description, by

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[1]For example, the least edifying are, possibly, the liner notes to Arbos, by Wilfred Mellers, digital recording, Munchen, Deutchland: ECM Records, 1987, and even with an excellent translation Svetlana Savenko's discussion of Arvo Pärt's music is difficult to understand. *"Strogij stil Arvo Pjarta"* [The Stern Style of Arvo Pärt], Sovetskaja Muzyka 10 (October 1991), 15-18.

[2]Wolfgang Sandner, "Der stille Ton. Zu den Orchesterwerken von Arvo Pärt," Studien zur Instrumentalmusik Lothar Hoffmann--Erbrecht zum 60. Geburtstag, Anke Bingman, Klaus Hortschansky und Winfrid Kirsch, eds. (Tutzing: Schneider, 1988), 509-513.

far, is that of Paul Hillier, whose ensemble, The Hilliard Ensemble, has premiered a number of Pärt's choral and vocal works.[3] His approach to the aesthetic affect of Pärt's music is lucid and practical, as precise and clear as the music itself. However, until this year his published writing on Pärt was limited to one article. Taking his cue from Hillier, Stephen Wright, in his thesis on the evolution of Pärt's style, gives a thorough description of Pärt's compositional technique.[4] Because of the space afforded to him by the format, he is able to go into Pärt's various strategies with a completeness not found in any of the shorter articles. However, probably also due to the format, he does not link his descriptions effectively to the expressive content of Pärt's works, nor does he include any research on a number of significant aspects of Pärt's style.

Few descriptions of Passio have been published. Enrico Raggi's discussion is very superficial, with some general outlines of the structure, but gives no insights to the work at all.[5] Kurt von Fischer also recognizes the large-scale structure of the Evangelist and offers some thoughts

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[3]Paul Hillier, "Arvo Pärt - Magister Ludi," Musical Times 130 (March, 1989), 134-137.

[4]Stephen Wright, Stylistic Development in the works of Arvo Pärt, 1958-1985 (Master's thesis, The University of Western Ontario, 1992).

[5]Enrico Raggi, "Arvo Pärt," *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra* XI, no. 4 (1990), 356-371.

regarding symbolism in the work.[6] But even knowing and discussing the work with the composer, he raises more questions than he answers and moves the reader in a meaningless direction when he suggests that the four sections of the Evangelist outline particular scenes in the Passion story. Wright gives a succinct and fairly complete description of the structure of Passio, but leaves out much of the work that is symbolic and iconic.[7] He makes no mention of the middle ground in any voice but the Evangelist, has no detailed description of the harmonic structures of Passio, or how they relate to the overall work, and does not locate all the parameters of the large scale form.

By far the most complete discription of Pärt's style and of Passio is found in Hillier's study, Arvo Pärt.[8] In his first chapter Hillier discusses the concepts that are essential to understanding Pärt's work: mysticism in the Russian Orthodox Church, minimalism, bells, and what is most critical to this study, the tradition of icons in the Orthodox Church. His discussion of these areas is rich and engrossing and gives a depth to the hearing of Pärt's music that other authors have not provided. His last chapter on performance is also rich with insights. He gives pride of place to Passio in chapter seven, introducing the work as

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[6]Kurt von Fischer, "*Zur Johannes-Passion von Arvo Pärt,*" *Kirchenmusicalisches Jahrbuch* vol LXXV (1991), 33-38.

[7]Wright, Stylistic Development.

[8]Paul Hillier, Arvo Pärt, Oxford Studies of Composers, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

"the quintessential example of Pärt's tintinnabuli music, in which the tintinnabuli principles function on a large scale to convey a long prose text of very special spiritual significance, and in such a manner that the two cannot be viewed separately."[9] However, there are a number of Hilliard's points with which I take issue, such as Hillier's explication of Pärt's rhythmic modes and his determination of pitch centers. More important areas not discussed are vertical sonorities and the middleground construction of the Pilate voice and the Chorus voice. Hillier also makes no connection between his explication of the Russian icon tradition and how that tradition is specifically worked out in Pärt's music. That Pärt's music is part of that visual and spiritual tradition is clear, but where and how it is constructed in Passio is nowhere discussed.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to describe and analyze Passio in detail and in doing so demonstrate how Pärt uses the music to subvert the drama of the text. In subverting the drama, Pärt creates a work that is far different than most realizations of Passion settings. Pärt, in fact, brings this concert work to an area which has been considered specific to the spiritual pilgrim: contemplation and meditation. Passio is not the telling of a story in the normative, performative sense. Here the music is wood, frame, paint, gold, silver cover, manipulated by an artist who has prepared himself both technically and spiritually for

[9]Ibid., 122.

this task. The text itself in Passio is an icon within a frame of contemplative beauty, where narrative is less important than wonder. With this study I will show how Pärt transcends the narrative to create an object of worship in the same manner as the early Orthodox masters created their visual objects of worship, with rigid and precise rules of proportion, placement, color, subject, and materials, and profound spiritual inspiration.

This study begins with an introduction to Arvo Pärt and a brief overview of the evolution of his style to 1980, including discussions on the influence of music of the Eastern Orthodox Church and early Roman Catholic Church. I then examine in detail that aspect of his mature compositional style he refers to as tintinnabuli. While he gained some international attention in contemporary music circles for his early works, Pärt's mature works are his most distinctive and have reached the broadest audiences around the world. These pieces have been described as mysterious and powerfully spiritual, and in this chapter those compositional strategies that he employs generally in all his works since 1976 will be examined carefully.

Chapter One will also include discussions of minimalism and Pärt's relation to that style; bells, especially the tradition of bells in the Orthodox Church and their influence on Pärt's music; and icons and icon covers of the Orthodox Church and their relationship to Pärt's style.

Chapter Two presents analyses of the text, pitch structures, and durational usage in Passio. The first

includes a discussion of the particular qualities of the fourth gospel and the problems of its presentation to a contemporary audience. The analysis of pitch structures includes a discussion of how Pärt applies his rules of melodic and harmonic construction to Passio, demonstrating Pärt's use of the triad to create strong pitch centers while at the same time avoiding functional harmony. In all three discussions it is clear that these usually structurally basic aspects of a musical work do not reveal more than local form, which is based entirely on the text, and that melody, harmony, and rhythm, once established, are truly static and unchanging. This demonstrates how Pärt defines text and narrative, shaping the music with the structure of the words while revealing almost nothing of the story.

Chapter Three moves beyond pitch and rhythm to examine texture, tessitura, and timbre, parameters of composition that do not usually determine form in a musical work. In Passio, however, they become the defining strategies of form both at the middleground of the individual voices, and the large scale of the entire work. With a close examination of these areas I will be able to show the symbolic nature of their structures in relation to the entire work and in doing so demonstrate clearly how this work has no connection to the act of narrating. Neither is it a series of scenes, nor a minimalist concert work. It is, rather, an image, fixed and unchanging over time, which reveals itself symbolically in contemplation. It is a self contained, carefully framed depiction of the Passion presented as a whole work, such as a

rood screen, or a triptych altar piece. It is, in fact, an icon of the crucifixion, as carefully created as the best of the orthodox icons of the 16th century, and as such it is closer to Eastern Orthodox sacred iconic art, than to drama, either medieval or contemporary.

Arvo Pärt

Arvo Pärt was born in 1935, in Paide, Estonia, which was at that time part of the Soviet Union. He attended a children's music school in Rakvere, a type of school that provided general education combined with special tutoring in music. In 1953 he entered a preparatory music school in Tallinn, and five years later, after completing his course of study along with two years of compulsory military service, he was accepted into the Tallinn Conservatory, where he studied music with Heinz Elder (1887-1970). His early pieces were in the accepted "Socialist Realism" style, and he took a first prize at the All-Union Composer's competition in 1962 with his children's cantata Meie aed (1959) and an oratorio, Maailma samm (1961). In the same year, however, he had the distinction of being one of the first young composers publicly condemned for his use of the "ultra-expressionist" twelve-tone techniques of the bourgeois West.[10] With the death of Stalin, western modernism became more available to young composers and Pärt used the compositional strategies of dodecaphonic music to create his first orchestral work,

[10]Tikhon Khrennikov, "Third U.S.S.R. Congress of Composers I: On the road to the musical culture of communism," Information Bulletin, Union of Soviet Composers (English language edition, January, 1962)

Nekrolog, in 1960. Premiered in Moscow, it drew the attention and wrath of the Composer's Union, which singled him out for particular criticism two years later.

Symptomatic of the times, however, Pärt continued to write, using "western" techniques in his music despite this public criticism. His employment at Estonia Radio gave him some financial security, while his distance from Moscow kept him from being too "present" to the Soviet hard-liners. It was also easier for Estonian composers to get scores from the west, as they could be smuggled in through Finland.[11] In 1963 and 1964 he composed two works of importance. His Symphony no. 1, subtitled "Polyphonic," was written in 1964. It is in two movements--"Canons" and "Prelude and Fugue"--both of which are based on a twelve-tone series. This series, which appears in inversion, retrograde, and retrograde inversion, is primarily melodic, though harmonic structures are built out of the melodic material.[12] Pärt was able to publish this work in 1967, and it was included in Mikhail Tarakanov's analyses of new dodecaphonic works in Sovetskaya Muzyka in 1968, bringing him a certain measure of local and Soviet acceptance.[13]

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[11]Joel Sachs, "Notes on the Soviet Avant-Garde," in Russian and Soviet Music: Essays for Boris Schwarz (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1984), 287-308

[12]For this and all other descriptive references to Pärt's early works, I am indebted to Stephen Wright, Stylistic Development, 23-27. All analytical references to works after 1976 are my own.

[13]Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917-1981 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 119.

The other work, composed slightly earlier than the first symphony, was Perpetuum mobile (1963), a single movement work for orchestra that is based on a twelve tone series and two durational series. This was also the first work that demonstrated Pärt's use of addition and subtraction. Each instrument of the orchestra plays one of twelve chromatic pitches. Using one of twelve durations, each instrument enters one at a time until all are in, at which point the process is reversed until only one is left.[14] Perpetuum mobile found an audience in the West with performances at a number of contemporary music festivals. Published by Universal Wien in 1968 it was Pärt's first score to be printed outside the Soviet Union. Universal continues as his publisher today.

Pärt was to explore other western techniques as well, including aleatorism, extended techniques, and collage. The piece that most effectively demonstrates all these compositional approaches, Credo (1968), is the last of his works to use serial techniques. Scored for piano solo, mixed choir and orchestra, this work was also the last of his collage works and the last of the series written around J.S. Bach quotations. In this work the quote, used structurally and in powerful conflict with the tone row, is Bach's "Prelude in C major" from Book I of Das wohltemperirte Clavier. The text is a mixture of an opening statement of faith, "*Credo in Jesum Christum,*" and a passage from the Sermon on the Mount, "*Audivistis dictum oculum pro oculo*

[14]Wright, Stylistic Developments, 23.

dentem pro dente, autem ego vobis dico: Non esse resistendum injuriae."[15] Divided into seven contiguous sections, Pärt's careful structuring is very clear: 1) the prelude is presented by all forces; 2) the row in prime form builds in the orchestra; 3) the prelude is in reverse, the row pitches are transferred to the choir; 4) the choir chants while the row in retrograde builds again in the orchestra; 5) both choir and orchestra improvise; 6) in the presence of a C pedal, the choir gives the last statement of the row retrograde at T5; 7) the prelude is presented in its entirety, while the row fragments and disappears. The structure of the work is typical of Pärt's lucidity, even at this time. The sections are individually audible yet have strong, obvious continuity. But built around the concept of contradiction and conflict, the work demonstrates Pärt's own conflict about what and how he was writing. It was at this point in his life that Pärt stopped composing. After hearing Credo performed he felt he had nothing more to say.[16]

Sometime during 1968 or early 1969 Pärt heard, for the first time, Gregorian chant. Music written before Bach or after Debussy was not taught in the Soviet Conservatories and was not generally available to music students. Pärt was

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[15]"I believe in Jesus Christ." And "You have learned how it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I say this to you: offer the wicked man no resistance." Matt. 5:38-39a, The Jerusalem Bible (The Reader's Edition, Garden City, New York, 1968), NT 11.

[16]"Ich habe einfach nichts zu sagen gehabt." Roman Brotbeck and Roland Wachter, "Lernen, die stille zu hören: Ein Gesprach mit dem estnischen Komponisten Arvo Pärt," Neue Zeitschrift fur Musik CLI/3 (March 1990), 14.

deeply moved by what he heard and began a quest for early music that led him not only to the study of early church chant, but to the music of the Notre Dame school, the Burgundian and Flemish schools, and the Renaissance. During this period from 1968 to 1976 Pärt composed little of significance. He left Estonian Radio, to compose exclusively for films and to study and perform early music. Significantly, he also converted from Lutheranism to the Russian Orthodox Church. It is clear that the composer and the man found spiritual solace as well as creative direction in what he was learning.

> I believe that my being attracted to this music was not because of the music, but rather because of the religion. Religion was for me the main problem, and in this Gregorian chant I found that which I had been thirsting after.[17]

During this eight year period only two works of significance were created, his Symphony no. 3 (1971), and Laul armastatule, a symphonic cantata (1973). With these works, Pärt shifted from collage toward a more integrated style, incorporating the gestures and ideas he was absorbing from medieval and Renaissance composers. It was to be another three years of silence before he was able fully to realize where his inquiries would take him.

In 1976 Pärt began writing in the new style he calls "tintinnabuli." It began with a brief piano piece called

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[17]"Ich glaube, diese Musik ging mir nicht so nah wegen der Musik als vielmehr wegen der Religion. Die Religion war für mich nämlich das Hauptproblem, und in dieser gregorianischen Musik habe ich das gefunden, wonach ich durst gehabt hatte." Ibid., 15.

Aliinale (For Alina), written for a twelve-year-old expatriate Estonian girl living in London. Wright notes,

> On examining the work . . . one is immediately struck by its austerity and simplicity: a theoretically continuous pedal point above which two parts move in rhythmic unison. There is but one dynamic marking, no indication of tempo, no accidentals, no time signature, the notes are filled or unfilled note heads with no stems, the bar lines are irregular, apparently corresponding to the ends of phrases; the whole is reminiscent of the sparsity of information to be found on a medieval or Renaissance score.[18]

The arpeggiation of a B minor triad, prevalent in the lower part, is the principal attribute of his tintinnabuli style, evident for the first time in this work. "It was here that I discovered the triad series, which I made my simple, little guiding rule."[19]

Pärt and his wife were allowed to emmigrate in 1980. They eventually settled in Berlin, where they live and work today. With the recording of Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten and the recordings of the Hilliard Ensemble in England, Pärt's music has begun to reach a wide and diverse audience.

In his thesis, Wright outlines and discusses the philosophical precepts that Pärt describes in his music: truth, purity, beauty, simplicity, and silence.[20] Of these five characteristics, the last two are most relavent to this

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[18]Wright, Stylistic Development, 64.

[19]Sandner, "Der Stille Ton," 21.

[20]Wright, Stylistic Development, 66-72.

study, and seem most apparent in the structure of Pärt's music. Simplicity to the point of austerity is the surface impression of his work. The underlying structures, too, have strong but very lucid shapes which carry nothing extraneous and are pared down to the essentials.

Silence is also critical to Pärt's work. As will be seen, it figures significantly in shaping lines and creating aesthetic moments in the music by framing individual gestures. While the grand pause occurs rarely in most concert works of this size, silence in Passio is essential to its impact, and occurs as frequently and as naturally and as necessarily as breathing.

Tintinnabuli Style

The word "tintinnabuli" refers to bells, in particular the sound of small bells. It comes from the Latin *tintinarre*, meaning small bell, tintinnabulum, or the jingling or ringing of bells, tintinnabulation. Pärt himself does not explicate greatly on this principle of his work:

> I found that it is sufficient if one tone is played beautifully. This one tone, quietness or silence calm me. I work with sparse materials, with one voice, with two voices. I build on the simplest elements, on one third, one specific tonality. The three notes in a triad sound bell-like. So I called it tintinnabuli style.[21]

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[21] "Ich habe entdeckt, dass es genügt, wenn ein einziger Ton schön gespielt wird. Dieser eine Ton, die Stille oder das Schweigen beruhigen mich. Ich arbeit mit wenig Material, mit einer Stimme, mit zwei Stimmen. Ich baue aus primitivstem Stoff, aus einem Dreiklang, einer bestimmten Tonalität. Die drei Klänge eines Dreiklangs wirken glockenähnlich. So habe ich es Tintinnabuli-Stil genannt." Sandner, "Die Stille Ton," 511.

Hillier is a bit more explanatory:

> This word refers to the ringing of bells, music in which the sound materials are in constant flux, though the overall image is one of stasis, of constant recognition. Listening to a good sonorous peal of bells you may notice that, apart from the rich jangle of overtones, the reiteration of lower notes creates an undertow of strange pitches that both belong and do not belong, revealing melodic numeration and variation known as "ringing the changes"; and at its simplest there is the single tolling bell with its ominous insistence. Each of these phenonemena is present in some way in Pärt's tintinnabuli music.[22]

For a complete understanding of Pärt's mature style, however, it is necessary to have a complete understanding of the acoustic structure of the sounding bell as it is known in Europe.[23] There are two forms of bells; the open, cup form, and the hollow sphere, or crotal. Both forms have many shapes, but we are primarily concerned here with the open, cup form, with the flared rim, loop, and clapper typical of European Church bells. In these bells clappers are rods suspended within the bell that have knobs on the distal end. In western Europe the tradition is to move the bell by means of pulleys, wheeled frames, and ropes, causing the bell to strike the clapper. In eastern Europe the tradition is to move the clapper by means of a rope, causing it to strike the inside of the bell. This is an important distinction in the type of ringing that takes place in the different churches.

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[22]Hillier, "Magister Ludi," 134.

[23]Percival Price, "Bell," New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (London and New York: MacMillan Publishing So., 1980), vol. 1, 424-437.

The western bells ring much more slowly and have a delay between the pull of the ropes and the sound of the bells. The tempos of these bells are frequently ponderous, and have to be carefully timed to establish particular rhythmic and pitch patterns. Because they are stationary Eastern bells can be rung much more quickly, and their rhythms are more complex while their pitches are less in tune.

The tuning of bells and their particular overtones are also relevant to Pärt's style. Unlike most wind and string instruments, bells do not sound in the expected manner, with a fundamental pitch and concordant overtones sounding above it. The principal sounding tone of the European bell is actually the first partial, an octave above the lowest sounding pitch. It is called the fundamental because it is the clearest pitch of the bell heard over the decay period. The lowest pitch is called the "hum note" by English bellfounders. It does indeed sound the longest and is the lowest, but has a muffled quality to it. In English bells the fundamental is carefully tuned one octave above the hum note, but in Eastern Europe the fundamental is often less precisely tuned, giving it a less concordant sound.

Above the fundamental are two other pitches, referred to as the tierce and quint. As might be surmised by their names they lie approximately a third and a fifth above the fundamental. The tierce, however, tends to be a minor third above, something that does not occur naturally in overtone systems, and is therefore referred to as an independent partial, not stemming from the same base pitch. Above the

quint, approximately one octave above the fundamental, is the nominal, which has the loudest sound immediately when the bell is struck and therefore determines the first pitch heard and the accuracy of its tuning. Its decay is quite rapid, however, and it is the fundamental which is heard most clearly in the sounding of the bell. Above the nominal are any number of partials from ten to a hundred, which are generally dissonant to the fundamental, but decay very quickly, being primarily important for the richness of the attack of any particular bell.

The history of bells in eastern Europe is different from that of western Europe. Western Europe adopted the open bells through the Celtic traditions of northern Europe as early as the fifth century. Eastern Europe had a tradition of "knocking," striking a thick wooden board called a *Semantron*, to call people to service. As they began to adopt the bell they kept the idea of a stationary bell with a moving clapper. This made the stress on the bell tower less and so they were able to hang more bells than the churches in the west. The bells also tended to be heavier. It is not surprising that the largest bell ever cast was the Tsarina Kolokol of Moscow's Kremlin in 1733. The largest bell in existence at this time is the Trotzkoi, also in Moscow, which weighs c. 383,000 pounds.[24]

English bell practice is famous for its ringing of "changes," for the beautifully tuned melodies of its ringing,

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[24]"Bell," Harvard Dictionary of Music (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1972) 89.

not to mention the art of hand bells. On the continent, carillons have long been in use both in churches and civic towers. Precise tuning has become crucial to these western bells with the evolution of melodic and harmonic considerations in bell ringing. Eastern Orthodox bells, however, are rung in rhythmic patterns, big bells ringing slowly while higher, smaller bells are rung more quickly in complex patterns over them. The eastern bells are less "tuned" than western bells and have richer overtones, giving their sound a distinctive quality that is easily identifiable.

Pärt would be familiar with bells and their complex timbres. In his study of early music he may have come across examples of composers using bell sounds. What is certain is that he believes the triad to be a naturally occurring phenomenon, with a fundamental pitch and a third (usually minor) and a fifth sounding as the overtones of bells sound.[25] From the triad comes all the material Pärt uses for each individual work, melodic as well as harmonic. The triad for each piece remains static throughout, though in larger works, such as Passio, more than one triad may be used.

Pärt would also be familiar with the music of the Russian Orthodox Church. Much of the music is triadic with step motion melodies gracing the top line, while other voices outline the triad. Of course, it is also tonal, with all that that implies about chord progressions, leading tones, and harmonic resolution. But reduced to its simplest form

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[25]Hillier, "Magister Ludi," 134.

much of this music is basic triads, with simple, graceful melodies that repeat over and over. Some of the older music is structured with the melody over drones or pedal points, a texture that is also part of Pärt's style.

The resource materials for each work of Pärt's are few and simple. The first is the triad, usually a minor triad. The second is step-motion melody, while the third is a held pitch or a repeated pitch acting either as a drone or pedal. Generally just a few carefully selected durations, closely related to each other, are used. Dynamics are spare. Tempos given at the beginning of a work may remain the same throughout and are approximate, as the nature of the rhythmic patterns dictate that they be sung or played with a certain amount of flexibility. Textures can be monophonic, polyphonic, or homophonic, but are primarily the last. The horizontal nature of Pärt's lines is compelling, but the music remains homorhythmic in most instances, creating vertical sonorities with every pitch change. This is a reference perhaps to the modal rhythms of the *ars antiqua*, but may also reflect the influence of Russian Orthodox chant as well as Lutheran hymnody which is also primarily syllabic and chordal.

Pärt and Minimalism

Because of this simplicity of resource material Pärt is sometimes referred to as minimalist and is often programmed

with composers such as Steve Reich or Philip Glass.[26] Both Wright and Hillier address the issue of Pärt's mature style and minimalist music. However, the only thing that links Pärt to the American movement is his use of minimal resources. His aesthetic response to these resources is very different. Pärt does not "phase" his music, his repetitions always carry some kind of variation, and, as Wright states, "for Pärt the process is a means to an end, whereas for the minimalists the process is the end in itself."[27]

Hillier places his explanation of minimalism and Pärt's place in it, within a more complete context, giving the movement the view from Europe, perhaps, rather than America. He, too, describes the process as both the goal of the style as well as the means to the goal, but goes on to explicate the internal aspect of minimalist music.

> In addition to the emphasis on process, the "linear" aspect of minimalism, there has been a focus on the internal qualities of sound such as may be found in the work of LaMonte Young and (though differently) Morton Feldman, which we might call the "point" aspect of minimalism. Ultimately these two aspects fuse together: an isolated musical event and a continuously repeated musical event both force our attention on to the inner details of the event itself, rather than its relationship to a distinctly other event.[28]

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[26]This issue was brought up to Pärt in his interview by Jamie McCarthy to which he replied, "Am I really a minimalist? It's not something that concerns me." "An Interview with Arvo Pärt," Musical Times CXXX 1753 (March 1989), 130-133.

[27]Wright, Stylistic Development, 137.

[28]Hillier, Arvo Pärt, 16.

Neither, however, confronts Dennis Kam's thoughts on minimalism, though Wright includes Kam in his bibliography. Writing in 1983 on American minimalism, Kam addresses European minimalism (which he refers to as "Polish" minimalism) under the heading "Repetition and Temporary Focus."[29] In his description of works by Penderecki and Lutoslawski, he could be describing Pärt as well.

> In this music, textural change and differentiation become the prominent structural features; in fact, changes are mainly noticeable on the textural level. In general, these works tend to be composed of juxtapositions of blocks or sections of sounds rather than of discrete sounds. In order to sustain textures as well as to differentiate them from each other, there is heavy reliance on stasis and on repetitions of elements within a texture, often via repeated "loops."[30]

Kam goes on to state that this type of repetition slows down the rate of information, giving the listener more time to perceive musical events, and therefore allowing them to identify the repeated textures as entities. While the composers he is discussing could not be more different from each other as well as from Pärt, these concepts are critical when considering Passio. The effect, as Kam indicates, is psychological. The audience identifies discrete entities in the music and is able to juxtapose them psychologically as they occur, allowing a kind of temporal focus that is not possible in the long-phase music of American minimalists. This concept becomes critical when considering the length and

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[29]Dennis Kam, "Minimalism and Constant Focus," Percussive Notes (Research Edition, September, 1983), 50.

[30]Ibid., 50.

stasis of Passio, and the focus of its composition.

Hillier seems to underline this when he states, "The use of repetitive patterns and harmonic stasis suggests an awareness of time quite different from the materiality of Western 'clock' time, though just as real to the person who experiences it."[31] Hillier also points out that the listener is obliged to go "one step further" with Pärt and accept that it is Pärt's underlying Christian faith that permeates his music. Together the slowing of time and the consideration of faith create a sense of ritual as well as "a sounding icon."[32]

Pärt's Compositional Method

The method Pärt uses is very simple, but is one that gives him an interesting array of choices. The principal line is the tintinnabuli line, outlining the selected triad (see Figure 1). It is present even when the melodic line is not. This line generally rotates back and forth around a center pitch sounding the pitches above and below that make up the triad.

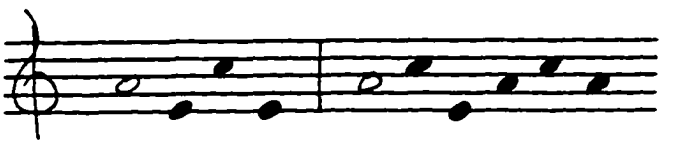

Figure 1. Example of tintinnabuli line

[31]Hillier, Arvo Pärt, 17.

[32]Ibid.

If the triad is A minor then the center pitch might be A or E, more rarely C, and the line will cycle A minor triad pitches away from and back to the center pitch. Melodies are always moving away from or back to the central pitch by step.

In instrumental pieces this works by addition and/or subtraction. For instance, in the work Fratres each phrase of the melody begins on A (see Figure 2).

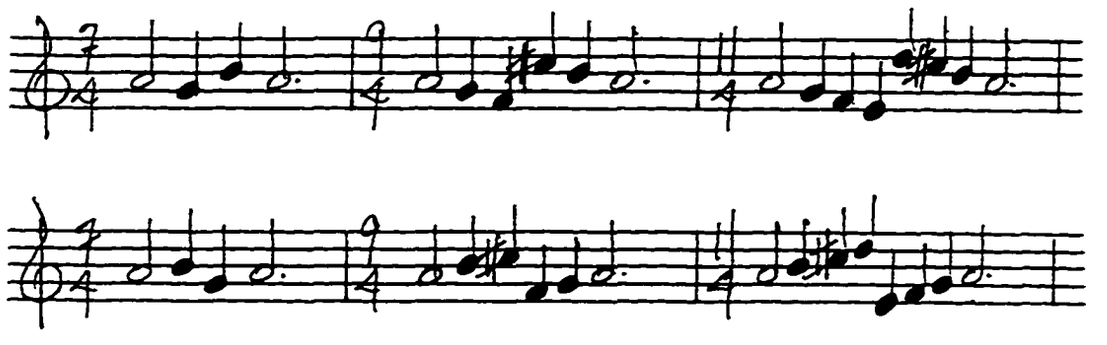

Figure 2. Melodic line from Fratres.

The first phrase is a step down from A, leaps to a step above, then returns to A: A, G, B, A. The second phrase broadens the range stepping down from A to G to F, then leaping up to C sharp to step down to B, then back to A. The third phrase takes it one step more in both directions reading A, G, F, E, leaping up the 7th to read D, C sharp, B, A. When that cycle has completed he reverses the process so

that the first phrase is A, B, G, A, the second phrase is A, B, C sharp, F, G, A, and the third phrase is A, B, C sharp, D, leaping down to E, F, G, A. Each phrase is a bar that uses as many beats as is needed to complete the process with a half note as the starting A and a dotted half note as the ending A, and quarter notes for all the notes in between.

Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten has a melodic line that is even simpler. The upper line of the divisi first violins begins on A, then plays A,G, then A,G,F, each time returning to A and playing down one more note of the A minor scale until it has descended two full octaves. The second violins, cellos, and double basses, also all divisi, have one part playing the descending A minor scale by increments as well. The violas, undivided, do the same. The divisi parts not playing the scale segments play the A minor triad, one note at a time in the same durations as the scaler line. Each group of instruments--first violins, second violins, violas, and basses--have one long and one short duration that are smallest in the first violins and then doubled with each successive instrument that enters. The entire work consists of an A minor triad played against a descending A minor scale and ends when the double basses have completed a full octave descent.

When there is text the melodic lines are less flexible. Each melodic motion is determined by the number of syllables in each word. Whether the word has one syllable or ten, it must begin or end on the pitch given to that line. There are

four "melodic modes" as Hillier refers to them.[33] The first begins on the center tone and ascends. The second begins on the center tone and descends. The third begins above the center tone and descends to it and the last begins below the center tone and ascends to it (see Figure 3).

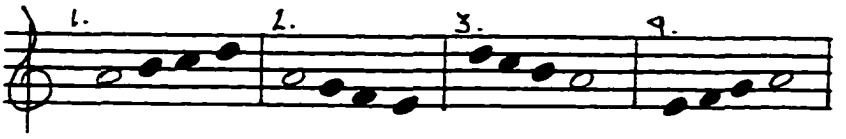

Figure 3. Four melodic modes

Very often Pärt moves the central pitch of the melodic lines. For instance, in Fratres, the first set of phrases begins on A and ends on A. In the second set, however, the principal melodic line begins and ends on F. The third set begins and ends on D. With each set the starting point of the principal melodic line descends a third until it returns to A. The shape of the phrases do not change. He continues to shape each phrase as before, adding notes below and above, then changing to add above and below. Between each six phrase section there is a two bar punctuation (which takes a slightly different form depending on which of the ten or so versions of the work is being performed) and then the phrases start again a third lower.

Pärt often creates lines in pairs. A melodic line might

[33]Hillier, "Magister Ludi," 135.

have another melodic line paralleling it in a different octave (see Figure 4). Frequently the secondary melodic line will be in inversion to the principle melodic line. This can happen around the same central pitch or around another related pitch. For instance, the principal melodic line may be centered on A. The secondary melodic line can be in inversion to the principal line, mirroring it in another octave around A. It might also mirror the principal line around E.

Figure 4. Paired melodic lines in parallel motion at the octave and the tenth, and contrary motion at the octave and the fifth.

In putting the two types of lines together, the tintinnabuli or disjunct line and the melodic or conjunct line, Pärt has three approaches. The tintinnabuli line can be below the melodic line, above the melodic line, or the two lines can be embedded (see Figure 5). Hillier indicates that Pärt "selects that note in the arpeggio adjacent to the melodic voice, alternating the nearest above and the nearest

below."[34] However, Wright shows that Pärt uses all three positions for his lines.[35]

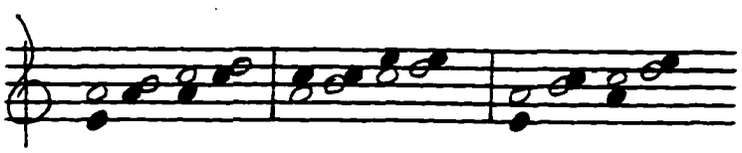

Figure 5. Relationship of tintinnabuli line to melodic line: tintinnabuli line below, above, and embedded.

The tintinnabuli line is placed on the note of the triad that is nearest to the starting note of the melodic line, though never the same pitch. The tintinnabuli line will stay on that note until the melodic line gets too close and then it will move to the next nearest pitch of the triad. If the melodic line moves away from the tintinnabuli line the latter will move to remain on the pitch of the triad closest to the melody. When the lines are embedded the tintinnabuli line will alternate above and below the melodic line moving to the nearest triad pitch above. Wright has also shown that the tintinnabuli line might not always be on the triad pitch that is nearest the melodic line. It might be the pitch that is the second or third pitch of the triad away from the melodic line (see Figure 6). Wright refers to these positions as

[34]Ibid., 135.

[35]Wright, Stylistic Development, 77-78.

close position, second position or third position tintinnabuli lines.[36] Hillier, too, uses these positions to describe the lines. I have borrowed those terms to indicate relative positions of the disjunct lines.

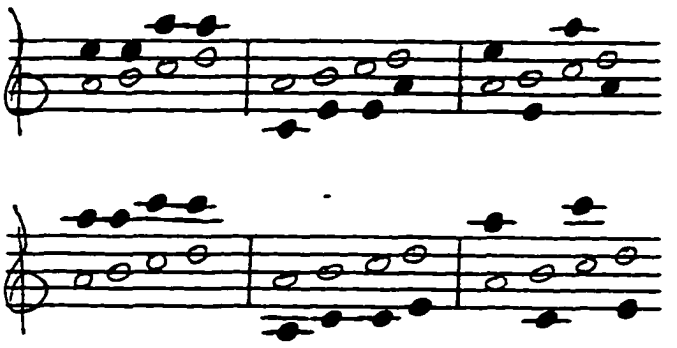

Figure 6. Second and third position tintinnabuli and melodic lines, above, below, and embedded.

Pärt's precise style of composition seems to contradict the aesthetics of his works. It is clear that his music is greatly dependent on aspects of music other than pitch and duration. Tempo, dynamics, articulations, performance practice, acoustics, all play crucial roles in the performance of his works. Without the closest attention to the smallest details, his music might become tedious or lose its sensibility. Similarly, without understanding the aesthetic context of his work there can be no way to approach those details. The titles of his works create a particular kind of expectation: Fratres, Tabula rasa, Miserere, Summa,

[36]Ibid., 78-79.

Te Deum, Magnificat, Psalom, Litany. However, to say that his music is religious or spiritual, to say that it is timeless, minimalist, or new music looking backward, is simply insufficient. Nor is it enough to describe his compositional process. One must understand all these things and more to discover what it is that Pärt is creating and what meaning it might hold.

The Orthodox Icon

Icon paintings of the Greek and Russian Orthodox Church are more than a representation of a particular person or event. Each icon is itself an object of worship. The art of icon painting and its history is very old and has been steeped in controversy since the earliest centuries of the Christian Church.[37] The Hebrew people worshipped no graven images, but their neighbors did. Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and other eastern Mediterranean traditions created sculptures and paintings of deities which were worshipped as the actual god. In the first centuries of the Christian cult, as many non-Jews embraced the faith, images of the Christ were painted on walls and carved on tombs. As this practice proliferated, so did opposition to it, the primary complaint being that it violated God's injunction against honoring graven images and likenesses. God was invisible, and to worship an image was to worship something other than God. Defenders of the practice, among them Basil the Great (329-379), stated that one was not worshiping the image, but rather the prototype

[37]Richard Temple, "Icon," The Dictionary of Art ed. Jane Turner volume 15 (London: MacMillan Publishing Ltd., 1996), 75-77.

represented by it. This difference of opinion gradually intensified over the centuries, climaxing in 726 when Emperor Leo III Isaurikos gave permission to destroy the icons in the churches of Constantinople, igniting what became known as the iconoclastic controversy.

The battle over whether or not icons were permissible raged for over a century, and was settled finally in 843 with the establishment of Orthodoxy and the acceptance of the worship of icons. During one of the lulls in the war of images, the Second Council of Nicea established the formal theological defenses for icons. The first argument was that used by Basil the Great, while the second was that because Christ appeared on earth in human form, so God had given approval of painted images representing the Christ and other holy figures and events. It is for this reason that God the father is never portrayed in an icon, only God's son. It was also argued that icons could have miraculous powers, and that they could guide the illiterate in learning about the gospels. With the advent of Orthodoxy, it became accepted that saints could be actually present during the liturgy and that the holy figures represented in true icons invested the images with their sanctity. For this reason icons have been carefully defined and explicated by the Orthodox Church and have been set about with formal guidelines for their creation.

There are two types of icons. The first is the portrait image and is in the same style as Roman images of nobles during the empire. The other is scenes depicting church

feasts which are likewise based on paintings and carvings of the late Roman period. The style, subject matter, and composition of icons has been unalterable down to this day. Icon painters are not allowed and would not consider changing the composition of an icon in any way, nor would they introduce any new elements into the icon. Painters prepare themselves spiritually, as well as technically, and must realize their work as much through their own internal sense of divinity as their outer inspiration.

> The pictorial language of icons is primarily symbolic. Literal and narrative values are secondary. An icon is a mystical commentary that goes beyond the face value of the historical event. If this is lost, if the image becomes merely narrative or sentimental and decorative, it is no longer an icon, since it is no longer an image of the divine expressed in the physical world.
>
> The icon becomes a living reality when the painter, through prayer and spiritual endeavor, realizes the divine within himself. With this achievement the Incarnation is spiritually reenacted, transforming the idea into an actual event.[38]

The icon of the crucifixion has a number of unalterable symbols and figures in it. Central to this icon is the cross with the figure of Christ. There is the upright beam and the cross beam that are usually in a 2:3 ratio like the latin cross, that is, the cross beam is two thirds the length of the upright and crosses the upright at two third of its length from the bottom. There are also on occasion two other cross pieces, one the foot rest and the other Pilate's sign saying "Here is the King of the Jews."

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[38]Ibid., 76.

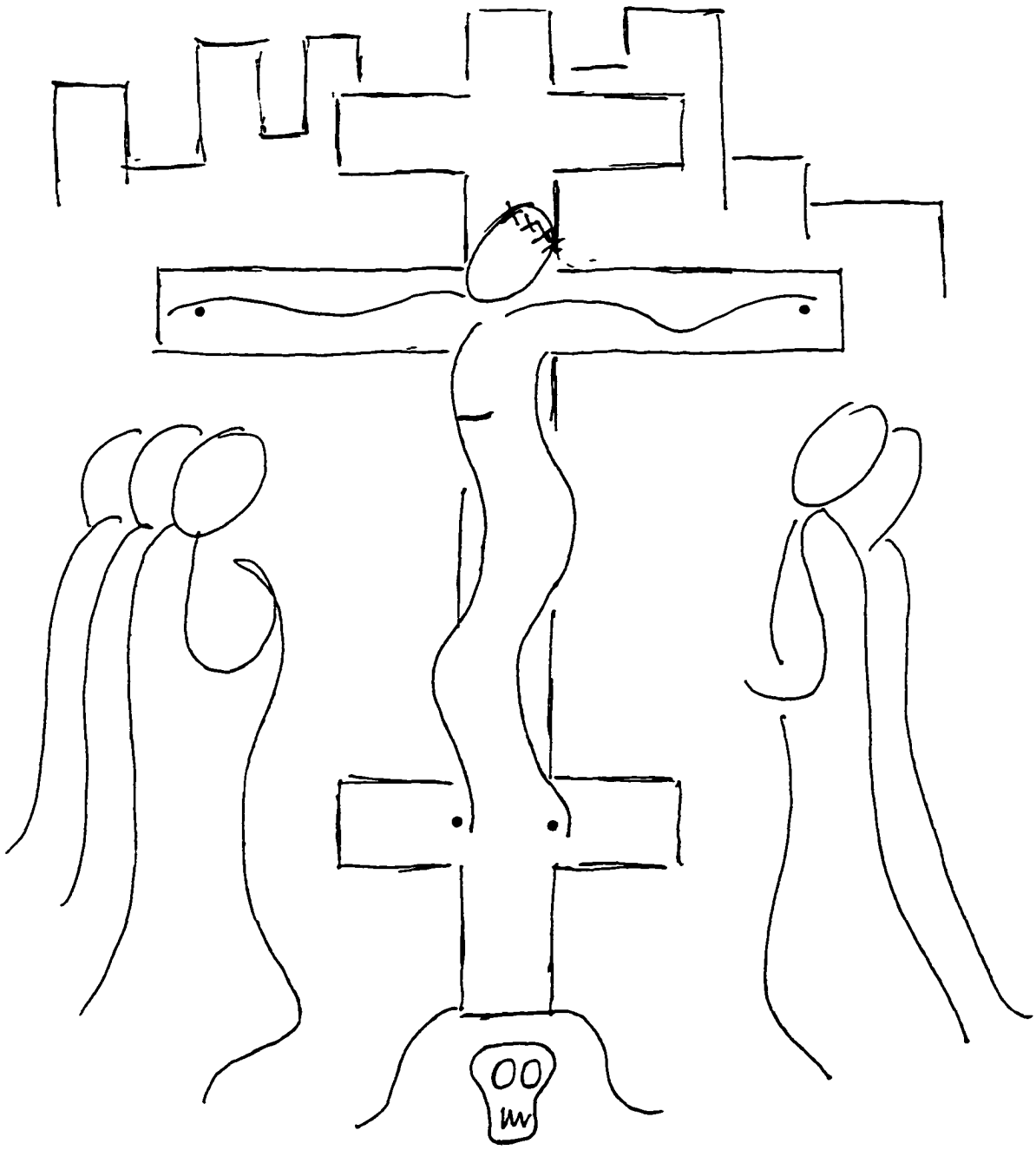

Figure 7. Sketch of the crucifixion as usually seen in icons.

The icons of the crucifixion observed for this study seem to be divided half and half between those which have the extra cross bars (which seem to be about one third the length

of the main cross beam) and those which don't. The cross is often represented as standing on a hill of rock underwhich a human skull is visible. This is the skull of Adam, the first man, the symbology representing Christ's sacrifice in payment for Adam's original sin. On either side of the cross are always the same figures. To the right as one views the icon is St. John, the apostle, the author of the Gospel, the "beloved disciple." Behind John can be any number of saints and/or other holy figures. Often it is the centurion who was said to be converted to the faith at the foot of the cross. Opposite John is Mary, the mother of Jesus. She is the beloved Virgin, the Mother of God, the Holy Bride. In these icons she is generally portrayed soberly, in dark garb, and in attitudes of grief and faith. Behind her is another holy woman or several women, either those said to be at the foot of the cross or particular saints. Behind all the figures are the walls of Jerusalem

That Pärt came to his present style of composition through the intensification of his religious faith is clear. His conversion to the Russian Orthodox faith, which occurred during his intense study of early music of the Western church, was either inspired by or itself inspired his drive to seek meaning from his art and to place greater meaning within it. As we noted above, it was not technical delight that filled him when he discovered Gregorian chant, but religious delight. Here was the means to fulfill his deepest spiritual needs in the artistic medium that God had given him.

"Implicit in all icons and central to their meaning is Christianity's doctrine of salvation: 'God became man in order that man might become God.'"[39] Pärt seems to expand on this line of thought when talking about faith and composition.

> Once, in the Soviet Union I talked to a friar and asked him how I could improve as a composer. He answered that he did not know. I told him I also wrote prayers or psalms, thinking this might help me as a composer. To that he answered: "No, you are mistaken. All prayers have already been written. You do not have to write any more. That has all been prepared. Now you have to get prepared!" I believe there is truth in this. We have to expect that some day our songs will come to an end. Perhaps there comes a moment when even the greatest artist does not need or desire to make art any longer. And perhaps we cherish his creativity even more because there has been a moment when he transcended his work.[40]

Icon painting reached its apogee when associated with schools of mystical prayer such as the *hesychasts*, which comes from the Greek word for stillness, *hesychia*. This approach seems to be part of Pärt's creative process as well.

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[39]Ibid., 76.

[40]"Ich habe einmal in der Sowjetunion mit einem Mönch gesprochen und ihn gefragt, wie man sich als Komponist bessern könne. Er antwortete mir, er wisse dafür keine Lösung. Ich erzählte ihm, dass ich auch Gebete schreibe, Musik zu Gebeten oder Psalmtexten, und dass dies mir als Komponist vielleicht helfen könne. Darauf sagte er: 'Nein, du irrst dich. Alle Gebete sind schon geschrieben. Du brauchst keine mehr zu schreiben. Das ist alles vorbereitet. Jetzt musst du dich vorbereiten.' Ich glaube, darin steckt eine Wahrheit. Wir mussen damit rechnen, dass unsere Lieder eines Tages ein Ende nehmen. Vielleicht kommt auch für den grossten Künstler ein Moment, in dem er nicht mehr Kunst machen will oder muss. Und vielleicht schätzen wir sein Schaffen gerade dann noch höher ein; weil es diesen Augenblick gegeben hat, in dem er über sein Werk hinausgelangt ist." Sandner, "Der stille Ton," 509.

> Tintinnabuli-style is an area in which I ramble when I am trying to find a solution for my life, my music, my work. During hard times I feel without doubt that everything that surrounds a thing is not important at all. Plenty and plenitude only confuse me and I have to search for the One. What is it, the One, and how do I gain access to it? There are many forms of perfection: everything unimportant fades away. The tintinnabuli style is somewhat similar. I am alone with silence.[41]

What is difficult to understand in Pärt's work is the confluence of East and West. To listen to Russian chant is to hear rich tonality and movement, a lushness of sound beyond what Pärt offers. His is the sparity of Gregorian chant and early Western polyphony. He brings to his music the same level of intellectual and aesthetic consideration as Machaut or Okheghem. But to hear Western Passion settings in his work is also misleading. His creation is the carefully delineated presentation of an icon, beautiful beyond doubt, but non-narrative, non-dramatic in its presentation, the essence of Orthodox celebration. Like the visual icon it is created for contemplation and meditation of its subject, the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the central feast of the Christian Church, east and west. The icon presented here is the crucifix, as will be shown, both the painted icon of the Orthodox Church, its highly decorated

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[41]"Tintinnabuli-Stil, das ist ein Gebiet, auf dem ich manchmal wandle, wenn ich eine Lösung suche, für mein Leben, meine Musik, meine Arbeit. In schweren Zeiten spüre ich ganz genau, dass alles, was eine Sache umgibt, keine Bedeutung hat. Vieles und Vielseitiges verwirrt mich nur, und ich muss nach dem Einen suchen. Was ist das, dieses Eine, und wie finde ich den Zugang zu ihm? Es gibt viele Erscheinungen von Vollkommenheit: alles Unwichtige fallt weg. So etwas Ähnliches ist der Tintinnabuli-Stil. Da bin ich alleine mit Schweigen." Sandner, "Der stille Ton," 511.

cover, as well as the shadow of the three-dimensional crucifix of the western rood. It is the identification and understanding of the motivational context of Pärt's work, in which the Eastern affect of ecstatic contemplation and the more ascetic Western modes of expression are united, that is the larger purpose of this study. This will be accomplished through the examination and understanding of Passio, the largest of his tintinnabuli works.

CHAPTER TWO

TEXT, PITCH, DURATION

Passio, completed and published in 1982, is a setting of the passion story from the Gospel of John, 18:1 through 19:30. It contains also the *exordium*, which is a setting of the full title of the work and from which the single word title is drawn, *Passio Domini nostri Jesu Christi secundum Joannem*,[1] and the *conclusio*, *Qui passus es pro nobis, miserere nobis, Amen*.[2] The text is entirely in Latin, taken from the Vulgate Bible. Approximately 75 minutes in length, the work is scored for baritone solo, tenor solo, SATB quartet, SATB choir, violin, oboe, cello, bassoon, and organ. The only commercially available recording of the work was made in March 1988, by the Hilliard Ensemble, Paul Hillier, conductor.[3]

Pärt arranges his forces into four distinct groups, which I refer to as voices, due to the nature of the work. The most substantive voice is that of the Evangelist, which carries the bulk of the text and frames all the other voices in the work. The Evangelist consists of the SATB quartet and the instrumental quartet, violin, oboe, cello, and bassoon,

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[1]The Passion of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to John.

[2]You who have suffered for us, have mercy upon us. Amen.

[3]Arvo Pärt, Passio, Hilliard Ensemble, ECM 1370, compact disc.

used in various combinations. The second voice that is heard is that of Jesus, sung by the bass/baritone soloist and accompanied by the organ. The third voice in the narrative is the Chorus, used for minor parts and turba scenes. It is also SATB, and is sometimes accompanied by the organ, sometimes a cappella. The Chorus with organ also sings the *exordium* and *conclusio*. The last voice to enter is that of Pilate. This voice is sung by a tenor soloist, accompanied by the organ. In this scoring Pärt reflects some of the traditions of Passion settings: Jesus as bass voice, chorus for minor parts, the *exordium* and *conclusio* of Renaissance settings. Yet, his groupings also reflect a twentieth century approach, particularly his setting of the Evangelist as a multi-voiced texture. Pärt's Pilate voice shares traits of different practices. Set for tenor with organ accompaniment, it is neither the Pilate from Bach's St. John, a bass singing in accompanied recitative, nor the Pilate of Schutz's St. John, a tenor singing in unaccompanied plainchant.

I begin this chapter with a description of the method of text setting of Passio, which is the framework from which the music derives its structure. This description includes a discussion of the particular text chosen and its relationship to Pärt's method of composition. This discussion of text is followed by a detailed examination of Pärt's use of pitch and of the tintinnabuli principles as they apply to this piece. The final section in this chapter is concerned with durations and durational structures in Passio.

The description and analysis of Passio in this chapter will demonstrate the rigorous, formalistic approach Pärt takes with regard to pitch and duration, their subjection to the text, and the stasis that this creates. With the individual word at the center of his method, I will show that the text is rendered flat and reflective, having no depth of meaning within the word or phrase or sentence, yet is unified in its presentation by pitch and duration, as a particular technique of applying color and shape unifies a work of visual art. With a single exception, at no time are melody, harmony, or rhythmic patterns allowed to give expression to an individual word or line of the narrative. That single exception is the the passage "*crucifige, crucifige eum,*" sung by the Chorus voice at R111. These are the only words a listening audience might understand and will be examined in detail, when the Chorus voice is examined.

It is not the meaning of the words in Passio that dictate the direction and sound of the music, but the actual syllabic construction of the individual word and the length of the individual phrase. The constant repetition of pitch and durational patterns in this work create the effect of brush strokes and application techniques in visual art. This close examination of Pärt's deliberate subjection of pitch and duration to rigorous formulas explicates the need to shift analytical attention away from those concerns and toward other parameters of musical expression.

Text and Text Setting

The text of Passio is identical to the *vulgatae editionis juxta exemplaria ex typographia apostolica vaticana, Romae,* 1592 and 1593, revised 1863. The *exordium* and *conclusio* are examples of congregational frameworks normally applied to passion settings in the Renaissance, such as that by Antoine de Longueval.[4]

The Gospel of John holds a special place in the theological speculations of biblical scholars. Of all the Gospels it is considered the "most mature fruit produced of gospel composition, and the perfect embodiment of all that 'Gospel' implies by its very nature."[5] John is unique among the gospels, its text couched far differently than the others. It gives no account of the nativity, and, even more surprisingly, no account of the last supper. The tone of the text is more theologically developed than that of the other, synoptic, gospels. Though no longer thought to be part of classical 2nd century Gnostic thought, its symbols and metaphorical/allegorical approach to the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth have remained central to the theological speculations of the church since the earliest patriarchs.

Liturgically, John is given a central place in celebrating the events of salvation. The text is aimed at

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[4]Ray Robinson and Allen Winold, A Study of the Penderecki St. Luke Passion (Celle: Moeck, 1983).

[5]Rudolf Schnackenburg, The Gospel According to St. John Kevin Smyth, trans. vol. one (New York: The Crossroads Publishing Company, 1982), 12.

the general Christian believer at the end of the first century and was "designed to root the believer deeper in his faith."[6] The believer should see Jesus as real and the sacraments as grounded in reality. Only in this way can the spirit or the paraclete continue to exist in the Christian community. In particular, it is John's "Book of Glory" that is considered central to the salvation of both the individual and the Church.[7]

> The hour of which we hear so much in John (ii 4, viii 20, xii 23, etc.) the hour of Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, and ascension, is the culminating hour in the long history of God's dealing with men. Jewish customs, feasts, and religious institutions find their fulfillment in Jesus.[8]

It is John's account of the passion and death of Jesus that is traditionally read on Good Friday, the darkest hour of Holy Week, before the great feast of Easter. The apocalyptic eschatology is of both divine intervention and historical fulfillment and tells the Christian that the end is near, that with the death and resurrection of Jesus comes the end of the first age, and the beginning of the second greater age of the divine. This sense of impending final judgment that was so present in the last half of the first century is still vivid in the text of John, and it is no

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[6]Raymond E. Brown, The Gospel according to John XIII-XXI, The Anchor Bible, 2nd ed., vol. 29A (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1978), lxxviii.

[7]Ibid., cxvi.

[8]Ibid.

surprise that the author or editors of John are also linked, not only to the epistles of John, but to the book of Revelation, the Apocalypse.

While John clearly holds a central place in the church theology and liturgy, it is also the most problematic of the Gospels in terms of its historical fact and narrative telling. It is not chronological. It comes from a tradition separate from the synoptics, and is assumed but not known, to be traditional. It is fragmented, frustrating in its omissions, puzzling in its redundancies. It is by far the most dramatic of the gospels, particularly in its recounting of the arrest and trials of Jesus. It is also the most troubling in its attitude toward the Sanhedrin, the Jewish populace, and the synagogue. It is the most mysterious of the gospels in its dualistic references to light and darkness, truth and falsehood, good and evil.

For this study, several distinctive qualities of the text of the fourth gospel need to be highlighted. The first is the critical importance of the word, both as multi-dimensional concept and foundation of faith. Set out in the Prologue, probably originally a hymn, and added later to the gospel text, the author wants us to understand that Jesus lived, that he is the living word, that the living word is also God. The second is the quality of immanence, considered almost formulaic in John, which is the "condition of mutual indwelling" that is essential to the human being's ability to

attain oneness with God.[9] The third is the symbolic/metaphorical quality of the language. For instance, Jesus is the light in the darkness, given to us that we may see. This is reflected also in the way the text is handled.

Inclusion is one technique, a rounding off of a passage with an allusion to a detail from the beginning. One example would be the reference to the two Cana miracles in 2:1 and 4:46 and 54. Chiasm or inverted parallelism is another. For instance in the trial before Pilate the first scene is outside with the crowd demanding the death of Jesus (18:28-32). The next scene moves inside where Pilate questions Jesus about kingship (18:33-38a), and then outside again where Pilate finds Jesus not quilty and gives the crowd the choice of Jesus or Barabbas. There is a pivot scene in which the soldiers scourge Jesus (19:1-3), then the former scenes reverse themselves, returning outside first where Pilate again finds Jesus not guilty but gives him to the crowd (19:4-8), returns inside where Pilate talks with Jesus about power (19:9-11), and finally outside again where Jesus is put to death. What must be understood is that in this Gospel a multiplanar structure of meaning exists that includes instruction, guidance, persuasion, faith, warning, and mystery.

Pärt seems to take his direction from the Prologue.

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[9]Michael Bangert, "A Mystic Pursues Narrative Theology: Biblical Speculation and Contemporary Imagery in Gertrude of Helfta" trans. John E. Crean, Jr., Magistra vol. 2, no. 2, (Winter, 1996), 12.

In the beginning was the Word:
the Word was with God
and the Word was God.[10]

If not the first texted work in Pärt's tintinnabuli style, Passio is certainly one of the earliest. Wright[11] has found references to an early version in Olt's Estonian Music, which was scored somewhat differently, but was a setting of John as early as 1977. Pärt would have had difficulty in getting this piece performed in Estonia, but no difficulty after his emigration to Berlin in 1980, by which time it could have been revised. Every word of the text, both biblical and non-biblical, is set individually, each to its own measure. As indicated above, all of Pärt's texts are now set in this manner, but it seems highly significant that this should be one of the first texts to do so. It could be that the Gospel's prologue inspired the small scale handling of the text, or that the decision to give each word its own measure influenced the choice of gospel. Whichever way it happened, the setting of each individual word reflects back powerfully on the prologue to John and to the symbolism of that text.

John's declaration also seems to be echoed at smaller and greater levels. Each syllable has its own note. The entire text is set syllabically, and, except for the very last phrase of the Evangelist and where single syllable words

[10]Unless otherwise indicated, all direct biblical quotes in English are taken from the Jerusalem Bible (Reader's Edition, Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1968).

[11]Wright, Stylistic development, 102.

follow each other, each syllable is on a note different from the note preceding or following it within the measure.

The musical phrase, too, seems to reflect the biblical presentation. The prologue of John is written out as verse, with each phrase on a separate line. Pärt sets each phrase of the Passion text separately, with bars of rest between each phrase. If the end of the phrase is also the end of a sentence and is not followed by a change of voice the rest is followed by an instrumental echo of the last word. In this way Pärt indicates musically each syllable, word, phrase, and sentence of the text.

Pärt does not indicate the end of a biblical verse or chapter. While verses are indicated in the score by chapter and verse number, there is no musical indication when they change. Most verses end with the ending of a sentence, but this is not always true, and frequently verses are made up of more than one sentence. This may be due to the fact that the verses were not set until many centuries after the gospels were written. It may also be because the verses are fairly arbitrary in their make-up being designed for ease of reading aloud in the liturgy. In singing the text, rather than speaking it, no more than a phrase or sentence can be sung in one breath unless the text is rushed. Rushing would be antithetical to Pärt's purpose. Pärt's focus is to present the text itself, its basic structural elements: syllable, word, phrase, sentence. The syllables move the words. The phrases breath and the sentences rest. These elements are treated consistently throughout, and in doing so Pärt creates

a gently undulating fabric of sound that presents the text, with the word at its center, in a whole piece, without break.

Pärt chooses to present the text in Latin. Using an unfamiliar language creates a distance between text and listener, the kind of distance one might experience viewing visual art created of materials no longer in common use today, such as tapestry work, or manuscript illumination. There is the distance created by contemplating an unfamiliar medium, and there is the historical distancing of recognizing a medium that was common in the past.

In writing about his use of Latin in Symphony of Psalms, Stravinsky states, "What a joy it is to compose to a language of convention. One no longer feels dominated by the phrase, the literal meaning of the words . . . . The text . . . becomes purely phonetic material for the composer. He can dissect it at will and concentrate all his attention on . . . the syllable."[12] Of course, Stravinsky did "paint" some of the words, and deliberately subverted the meaning of others in his work.[13] He also made a deliberate switch from Slavonic to Latin, which may have been due to his move away from the Russian Orthodox Church and toward the Roman Church, but was more likely due to his familiarity with Latin and his understanding that it was not as obscure to his audience as Slavonic. For Pärt the basic premise was, I believe, the same: to use a text that has intrinsic meaning, while

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[12]Igor Stravinsky, Autobiography (New York: Norton and Co., 1936).

[13]Ruth Zinar, "Stravinsky and His Latin Text," College Music Symposium 18, no. 2, (Fall 1978).

avoiding the individual expression of each word; where syllables can be set individually using the composer's own particular method. For Stravinsky, the syllables were symphonic, part of the concerted sound. For Pärt, they are brush strokes on wood, layers of oil and patina, creating a surface of depth and light.

Pitch

Pärt's use of pitch is mode-like in the sense that all of his works since 1976 use a basic diatonic collection as their pitch source material, and rarely employ chromatically altered pitches. Nor does he often use the C major collection. Many of his works use what we term the A natural minor or the D dorian collection. This predilection for pitch collections that audiences understand as modal makes his pitch language at once recognizable, yet one step removed from tonality. When the triadic or tintinnabuli lines are placed against the melodic lines, the resultant dissonances create brief moments of tension that do not resolve in the same way as traditional non-harmonic tones are resolved. There is always a strong pitch center, making the work accessible to the average ear, yet there is no movement toward other pitch centers, no movement by fifth, in fact no sense of change over time at all, making the harmonic structure the very antithesis of what we expect in tonal works.

Pärt creates a stasis within each voice with his use of pitch. With small repetitions made over time the listener

can understand each voice as an unchanging whole and it is this quality that is one of the strongest characteristics of the iconic aspect of his work. Stasis in the music is reminiscent of the stillness of a picture. His total control of direction, range, and contour, also enables him to make a logical expansion of his tintinnabuli concept. Even as the individual tintinnabuli line rotates a triad, so this study will show how the entire work rotates or oscillates between pitch centers a third apart to its inevitable conclusion.

In this section the use of pitch will be examined first by a description of each voice, the number of lines, and the relationship of tintinnabuli lines to melodic lines. I will then discuss each voice in terms of its centricity and its harmony. Pitch structures and their relationships will be illustrated with graphs (see Figure 8).

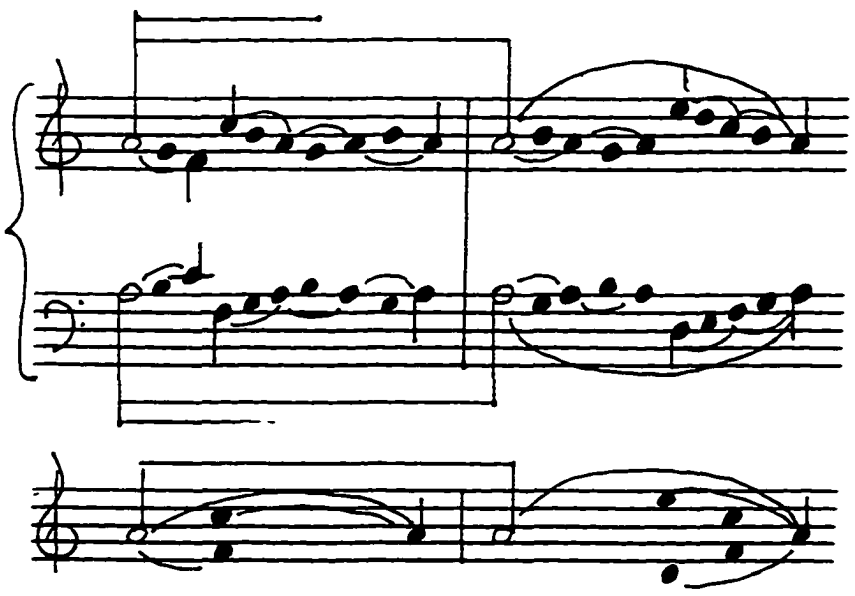

Figure 8. Example of surface level graph and reduced graph

The lowest level pitches, the ones fundamental to the voice, will be notated in white noteheads with stems. The middle level pitches will be notated in black noteheads with stems and the surface pitches will be black noteheads without stems. Straight lines will connect the fundamental pitches, curved lines will connect middle and surface level pitch structures. As every word has its own measure, bar lines in the graph will be used to indicate phrases. These graphs will not be used to asses value or substatiate any claims about Passio, only to highlight the structure of the lines.

When discussing specific pitch structures by name, vertical arrangements of pitches are indicated by slashes; for example A/C/E = A,C, and E sounding simultaneously, lowest to highest. Horizontal arrangements are indicated by dashes; for example, A-C-E = A moving to C moving to E. Commas between pitch names simply refer to the pitches under discussion and not to their specific arrangement.

Pitches are also indicated by number. Since the work is entirely diatonic the diatonic collection A,B,C,D,E,F,G, also may be numbered {1,2,3,4,5,6,7}. Likewise any other diatonic collection can be numbered the same way from whatever pitch it starts on. For instance, the above collection starts on A, with A as 1. Another diatonic collection might be E,F,G,A,B, numbered {1,2,3,4,5}. Triads also are numbered. If the diatonic collection A,B,C,D,E,F,G, is numbered {1,2,3,4,5,6,7} then the triad A/C/E or A-C-E would be numbered [135] and the triad F/A/C or F-A-C would be numbered [613]. All numbered triad sets are in square brackets. All

numbered scales or scale segments are in curly brackets, i.e. {123}.

Octave locations of pitches are indicated by a number after the pitch name. For instance, middle C is indicated C4, the B immediately below it B3, and the B above it B4. All octaves are considered C based with the number changing at the next C above.

Rehearsal numbers reflect much of Pärt's middle-ground structure and so are referred to in this study by a capital R followed by the number, such as R14. Bars between rehearsal numbers are indicated by a number either added to or subtracted from the rehearsal number, for example, R4-2 = two bars before rehearsal 4, or R135+6 = six bars after rehearsal 135.

Finally, though not immediately obvious in this chapter, the biblical portion of the work is divided into four sections: section one (I) from R2 to halfway through R37, section two (II) from halfway through R37 through R76, section three (III) from R77 through R131, and section four (IV) from R132 through R167. This is followed by a coda from R168 through R172. The explication of this division will be given fully in Chapter Three, but the sections are referred to peripherally in this chapter from time to time.

The use of pitch in each voice

The Evangelist consists of eight lines: four vocal, four instrumental (see Figure 9). As described previously, the lines have two different characters in regard to pitch. They

may be disjunct (tintinnabuli line) or conjunct (melodic line). In this voice the tintinnabuli line constantly revolves through the pitches of an A minor triad, A-C-E. The melodic lines consist of scale segments based on A, and comprise a total pitch collection of A,B,C,D,E,F,G, or what is usually referred to as an A natural minor scale.

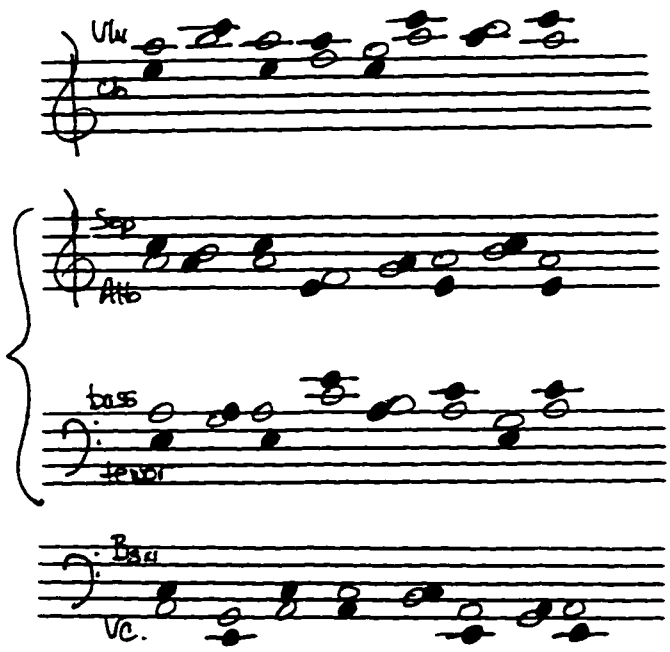

Figure 9. Example of the eight lines of the Evangelist voice. White noteheads indicate conjunct lines and black note heads tintinnabuli lines.

The bass and alto are always the tintinnabuli lines, and the soprano and tenor are always the melodic lines. The instruments, however, may be either. Usually paired with

specific voices (violin and soprano, oboe and alto, cello and tenor, and bassoon and bass), the instruments are occasionally paired with other voices or with other instruments and may be either melodic or tintinnabular, depending on what the other lines in the voice are doing.

In Passio, melodic and tintinnabuli lines are paired together in all three ways and in all three positions as described in Chapter One. The melodic line may be above the tintinnabuli line, below it, or embedded with it, with the notes of each line alternating above and below. In the vocal parts the lines are embedded in pairs, soprano/alto and tenor/bass. When the instruments enter, the cello and bassoon are usually below the voice lines, while the violin and oboe are usually above the voice lines. However, if an instrument is paired with a voice in its own range, i.e. soprano and oboe, they are embedded. In the following paragraphs I will describe how the lines enter and fill the Evangelist voice, establishing A as the pitch center.

The Evangelist voice is the first heard after the *exordium* and begins with the bass solo. A is immediately established melodically by the weight of its presence (see Figure 10). Every word has an A on one of its syllables, either first or last, and if there is just one syllable, it is A. The line first descends a third, from A to F, then returns to A. In the second phrase the line descends from C to A, ascends from E to A, then from F to A. The melodic cadences in these two phrases are A-B, B-A. The line circles A, reinforcing its centrality by the number of times A is

sounded and by the motion, mostly by thirds, towards A.

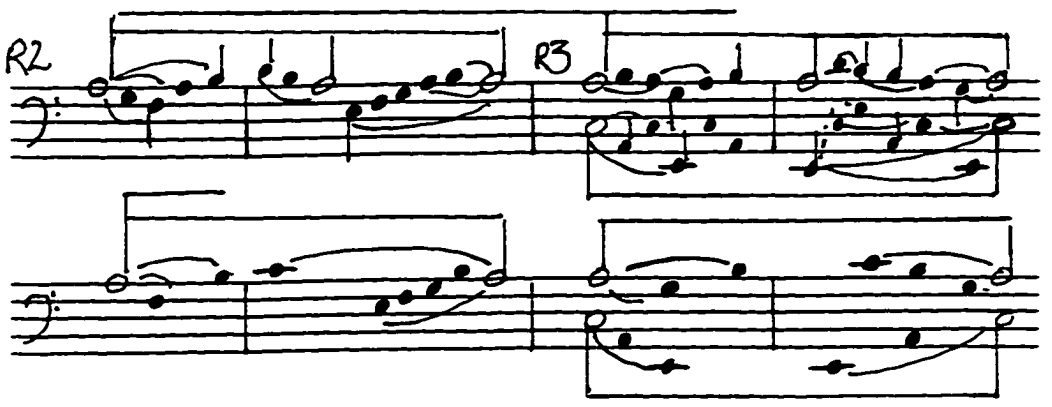

Figure 10. Evangelist voice, R2 through R3.

The cello enters at R3 outlining an A minor triad in the octave below the bass. Starting on C3 it is in 1st position, that is the second closest note of the triad below the bass. This line would establish an A minor tonality except that whenever it is sounding A the bass line above it is sounding B and when the bass line is sounding A the cello line below it is sounding C or E. This gives the sense of an incomplete tonic sonority, particularly at the cadences, which are (reading pitches vertically from bottom to top) C/A-A/B and E/G-C/A. Certainly the second cadence has more sense of resolution than the first. The feeling of antecedent-consequent is maintained, but there is no real moment of rest at the second cadence. With the implied first inversion, the feeling is one of suspension.

At R4 the oboe enters as a third line (see Figure 11).

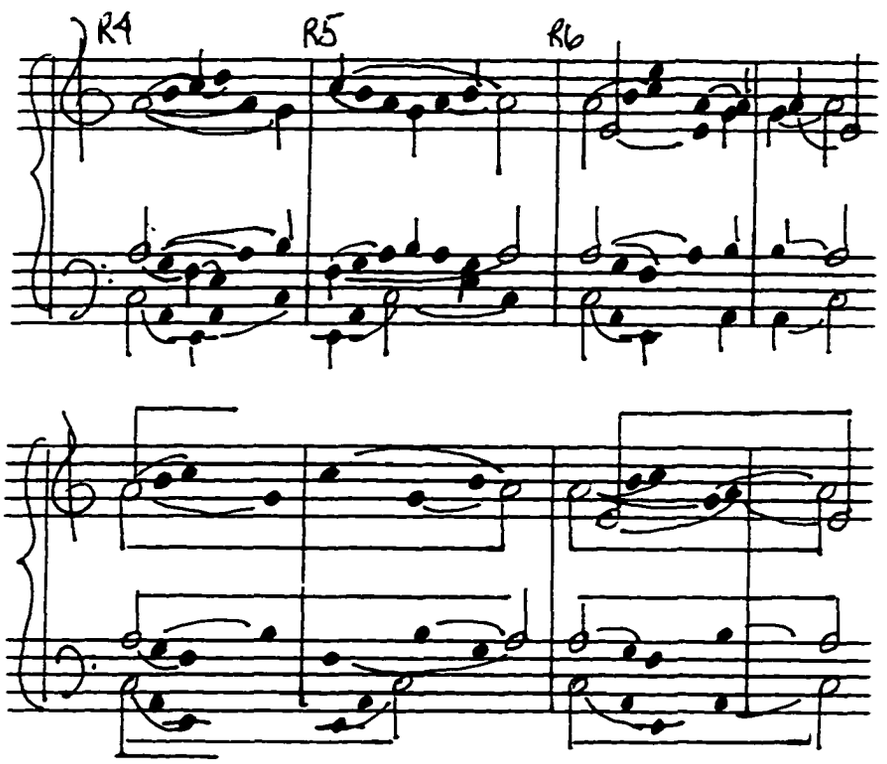

Figure 11. Evangelist voice, R4 through R6.

A melodic line, the oboe is in inversion to the bass line at A4, again reinforcing the centricity of A. The first whole-note cadence, E/A/A-C/B/G is at R4+3. The E in the bass of the penultimate sonority is the fifth to A and makes that sonority sound in second inversion, while the vertical structure to which it leads is a most ambiguous and unexpected pitch group. This last sonority could be seen as an incomplete C major 7 or an incomplete scale segment. At

R5 the oboe, cello and bass continue with the next phrase, this time ending at R6-2 with a near "authentic" cadence, E/G/B-C/A/A.

The entrance of the violin at R6 is the first instance of embedded lines; that is, lines that are inextricably wound about each other, alternating highest and lowest pitches, in close position. The violin has the A minor triad, moving in contrary motion (but not strict inversion) to the cello around A two octaves apart. It is in the same octave, however, as the oboe and the two parts alternate position every note, so that while the oboe is the top note on the word *"qui"* the violin is the top note on the first syllable of *"tradebat."* The two parts continue in this manner through the entire phrase and the result is a great deal of weight on A4. In addition, the pitch A sounds in two octaves on nearly every syllable of text.

As lines enter the Evangelist voice, filling it out, a pattern is established of melodic and tintinnabuli lines winding around each other. At R20, all eight lines of the Evangelist sound for the first time (see Figure 12). In the first phrase the voices are in embedded octaves: violin/oboe above soprano/alto and tenor/bass above cello/bassoon. Because instruments and voices double each other the lines of the graph have been rearranged to show tintinnabuli lines together and melodic lines together.

All lines circle A in four different octaves. The opening sonority at R20 is an A minor triad in second inversion.

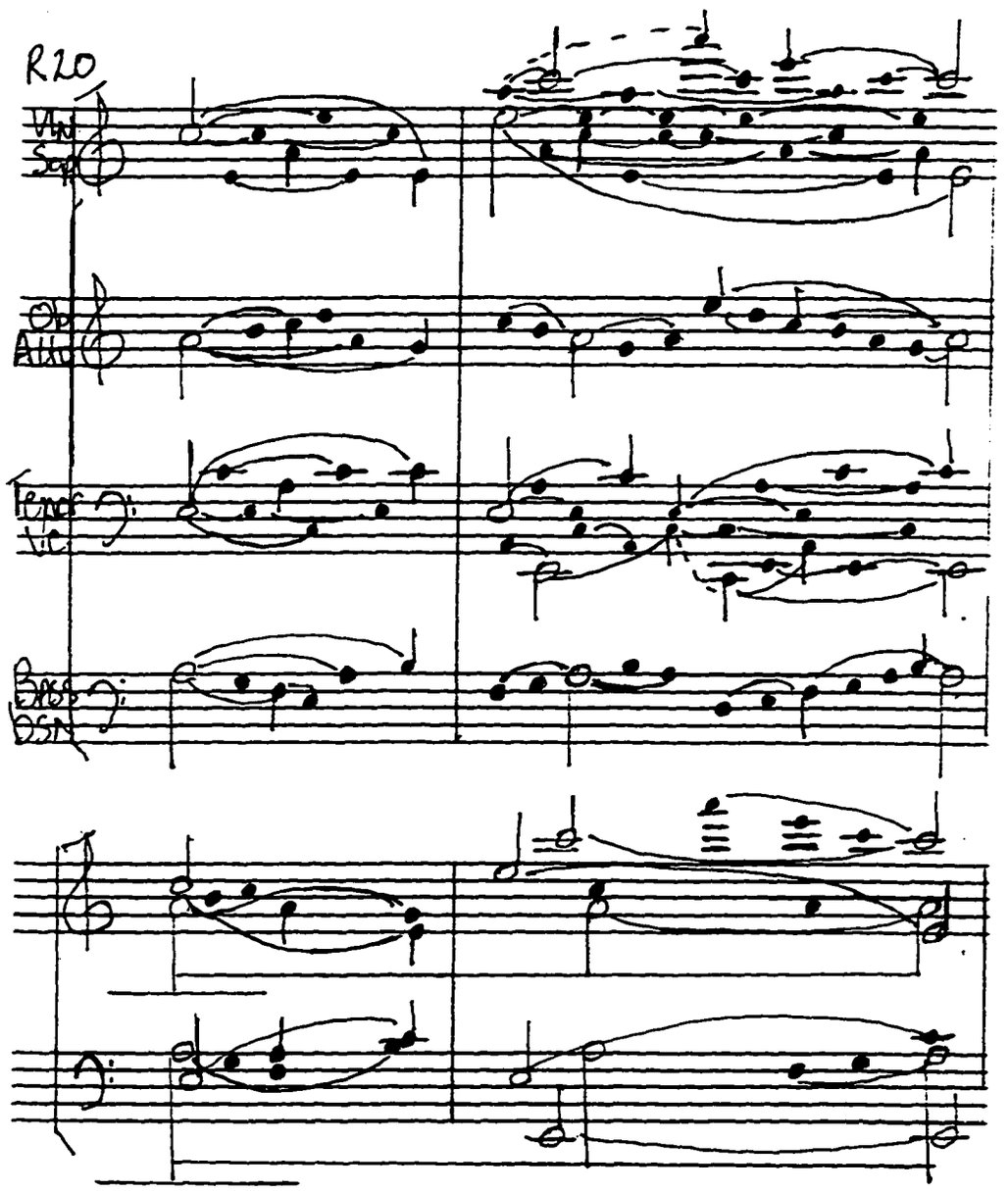

Figure 12. Evangelist voice, R20.

The cadence of the first phrase moves from that same chord and position to B/C/E/G, which could be construed as a major C7 in third inversion. After the instrumental punctuation the second phrase begins on an F major triad. It ends with a cadence moving from the C7 that ended the first phrase, to the A minor triad in first inversion that began the first phrase.

In the second phrase of R20, the contour of the tintinnabuli line also changes. Instead of moving in parallel octaves the violin/soprano and tenor/cello are in contrary motion to each other. This creates six differently pitched lines instead of four doubled in octaves. It is also clear that there is contrary motion between tenor and soprano which move a full octave toward each other. These contrary motions occur around A. The presence of six different lines makes it possible to put an A in every single vertical sonority.

Throughout Passio the lines of the Evangelist voice continue to circle around A. This is reinforced from time to time by a pedal tone on A, which occurs only in the conjunct voice lines, the alto and bass. The bass has the pedal tone at R19 in short durations and then again at R60 where it is almost immediately answered in longer durations at R 64 by the alto line. In the second phrase of R116 the bass has it again in long durations this time. At R146 the bass has it in short durations and is answered again by the alto just before R148 in a single long measure. Finally, the Evangelist's last utterance is in A octaves, voices alone.

The second voice to present itself is Jesus (see Figure 13). This compound voice consists of four lines: one is the vocal bass soloist while three belong to the organ. The vocal line is never alone, it is always accompanied by the organ. The three organ lines are sometimes compressed with two in one stave, leaving a stave empty, but they are always present.

The vocal line is similar to the vocal bass line in the Evangelist in that it is always conjunct and constantly revolves around a particular pitch. However, in this case the pitch E is the pivot around which the vocal melodic line turns. E is sounded in every word in much the same way the melodic lines circle A in the Evangelist.

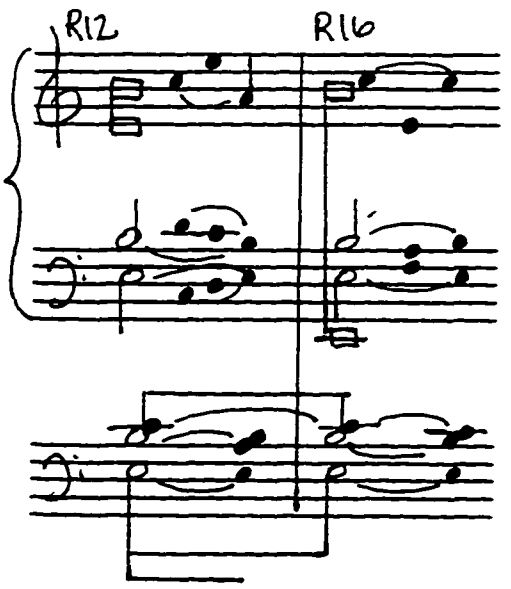

Figure 13. Jesus voice, R12 and R16..

The vocal line begins on E in every section but one, R84 which begins on D, and ends every section on E, except R50, which ends on D, R54 which ends on F, and R166, which ends on D. The other exception to this practice is the last utterance by this voice, on the words *consumatum est*. Here Pärt has set the five syllables on E-D-C-B-A.

The organ has three types of lines in the Jesus voice. The first is a sustained E/B pedal, represented in the graph with square noteheads. This occurs throughout the voice, occurs in various octaves, and sustains throughout the measures of rest in the vocal line. The second type of line occurs in either of the two upper staves and is melodic around the pitch B. This line is in inversion to the vocal line. It may occur in any octave, though is usually in the first two octaves above the voice. The third type of line is the tintinnabuli line, an outlined A minor triad in all but the very last section.

The A minor works to undermine the E centered lines and there is no suggestion at any time of harmonic movement between the two sonorities. In sounding in the same durations simultaneously they both relate and conflict with one another. Very often the beginning and ending sonorities of phrases are E/A/B or E/B/C with the E doubled. To the ear the constantly rotating A minor triad ties the line strongly to the Evangelist and has the effect of making the strong E/B dyad sound non-central. In fact, the entire voice sounds dominant, as if waiting for resolution to A.

Resolution of sorts does occur in the very last section.

As mentioned previously the vocal line descends from E to A. The melodic organ line, in inversion to the vocal line, ascends B-C-D-E-F. The tintinnabuli line, which has been outlining an A minor triad for the entire piece, here outlines a D minor triad ending on F. Only the pedal tones remain as they were, on E/B. This makes the final sonority E/F/A/B. This particular collection of pitches is highly significant to the larger work as will be demonstrated later.

The third compound voice to enter is the Chorus (see Figure 14). At all times during the biblical body of the work the Chorus sings all four parts in the same configuration. Soprano and tenor are the tintinnabuli lines, and alto and bass are the melodic lines, which is the same configuration as the vocal quartet of the Evangelist. The tintinnabuli lines outline the chord E major and move in contrary motion to one another. The melodic lines circle about B3 in the bass and B4 in the alto and are in mirror inversion. The pitches in the melodic lines are all "white key" notes including G natural. Cross relations between the two types of lines are frequent, with G natural preceding or following G sharps and vice versa. The two notes never occur at the same time. As with the Evangelist, the two upper voices and the two lower voices are embedded, alternating upper and lower pitches.

Very often the tintinnabuli lines appear to be in inversion to one another around B. At R14, for instance, the first entrance of the Chorus, they are in contrary motion to one another around B and are in inversion except for the last

two sonorities.

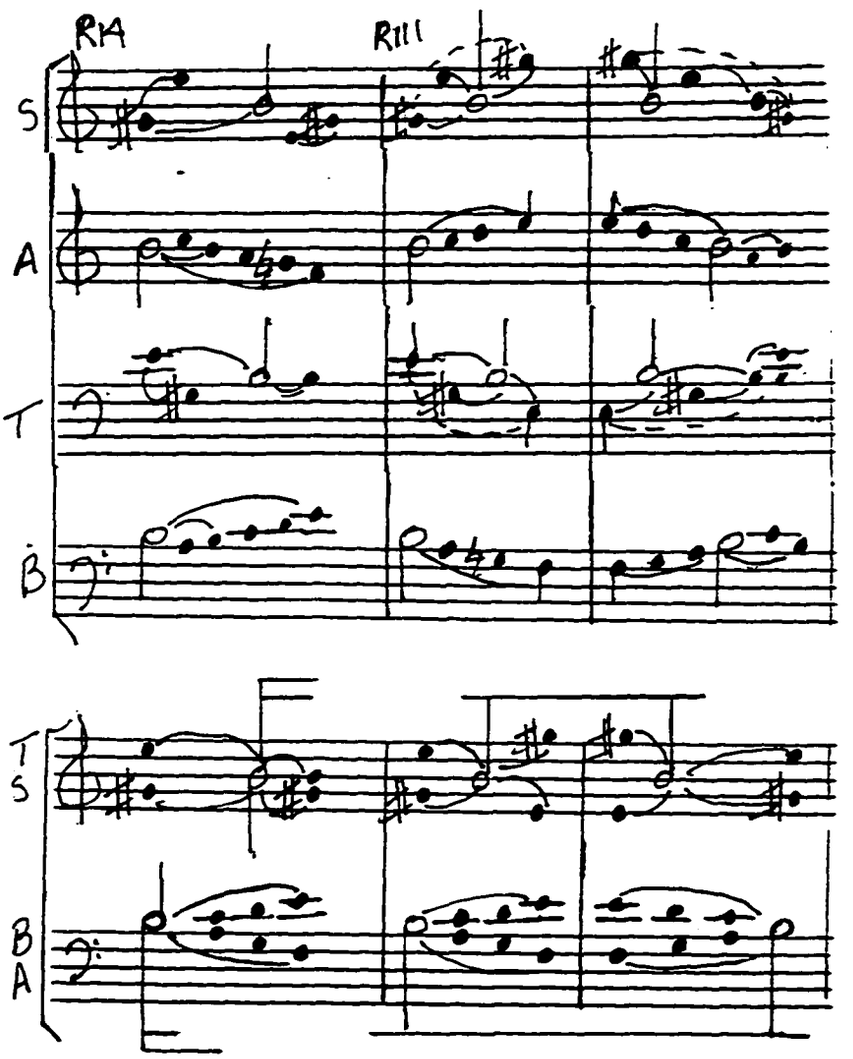

Figure 14. Chorus voice at R14 and R111.

At R111 the tintinnabuli voices are in inversion over two phrases. In the first phrase the soprano rises from G

sharp 4 to the octave G sharp 5, while the tenor descends from E4 to E3. In the second phrase the direction is reversed, returning each line to its starting pitch. The inversion is around B an octave apart. This is the exception mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, where word painting may actually be occurring. Where the text has the word, *crucifige*, the tintinnabuli lines again move an octave in opposite directions and back again in this section.

The Chorus voice is not always a cappella. The organ accompanies the Chorus for four sections out of a total of nineteen.

The organ always doubles all four lines of the Chorus so it does not affect the pitch content of this voice. When accompanying the Chorus it never has pedal tones and never sounds between phrases. The presence of the organ in this voice will be considered more fully in Chapter Three.

The final voice heard is that of Pilate (see Figure 15). This voice consists of a tenor vocal line and three lines of organ. The vocal line is at times melodic, and at times tintinnabuli. Of the fifteen sections for Pilate, eight are the former and seven are the latter. Like the Chorus, Pilate's melodic line circles around B.

As with the melodic lines in every voice, every word contains the central pitch, in this case B, and, depending on the number of syllables in the word, the pitches either ascend or descend by step, away from or toward B. Unlike any of the other voices, however, there is only one melodic line occurring at any given time (at R131 the organ has the

melodic line in all three staves, but they are in parallel octaves, which I consider to be one line).

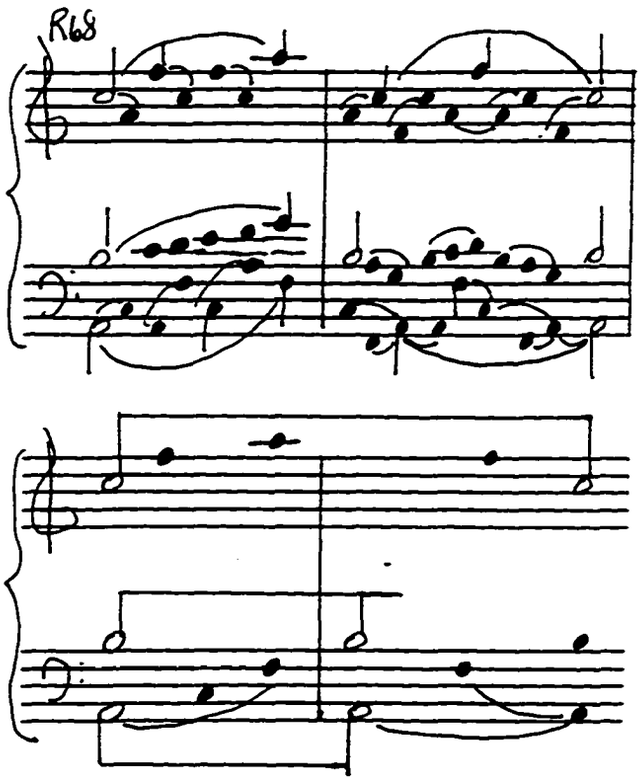

Figure 15. The Pilate voice at R68.

The tintinnabuli line, whether vocal or instrumental, is the triad F, A, C, what we hear as an F major triad, which creates an immediate dissonance with the B natural of the conjunct voice.

The organ is scored much more lightly in the Pilate voice than it is in the other voices. In the first section, for instance, at R68, there are only two organ lines scored,

both tintinnabuli lines, in contrary motion to each other. At R72 the organ is scored for three lines for the first phrase, but just two for the second. At R78, there is only one line, in tintinnabuli motion, scored for the organ. Frequently the organ lines are very high, sometimes two octaves above the vocal line. Sometimes they are wide apart, one line being in octave 2 or 3, while the other line is in octave 5 or 6.

Three times the organ punctuates during a measure of rest. At R82+5 there is a brief B/C sonority between the two phrases. At R93+7 there is a B/C-C/A, and at R122+3, there is a three sonority punctuation, B/C-A/F-G/A. These punctuations, reminiscent of the punctuations in the Evangelist, underscore the basic pitch materials of this voice, the triad F-A-C and the scale segment, G-A-B-C.

More interesting, however, is the presence of the pedal tone in the organ part. Unlike the other voices which have pedal tones that are the same pitches in every instance, the pedal tones in this voice rotate between three pitches. At R72 it appears briefly in the pedal staff for the first phrase, on B. At R82 it appears briefly under the second phrase on F. At R90 it underlines the single phrase on B. At R105 it underlines the first phrase on E. At R113 it underlines the second phrase on B again. At R122 it underlines the longer second phrase on F. And finally, for the last short utterance of Pilate at R151 the pedal tone sounds again on B under the first phrase. In all there are seven sections with pedal tones that sound in the order B-F-

B-E-B-F-B. These alternate with the nine sections without pedal tones.

The other sections to be considered are the *exordium* and *conclusio*, the introduction and conclusion of the work (see Figure 16). Both are scored for chorus and organ. In the *exordium* the chorus is divided into six lines, soprano one and two, alto, tenor one and two, and bass. The four soprano and tenor lines are tintinnabuli lines, while the alto and bass are melodic. In the former the triad outlined is the A minor triad, and descends a full octave, E-C-A-E in the soprano lines and A-C-E-A in the tenor lines. The melodic alto and bass descend an incomplete octave by step in parallel sixths from A4 to B3 in the alto and C4 to D3 in the bass.

The upper staves of the organ double all six voice parts, changing as the voice lines change. The pedal stave, however, sustains an E pedal through the length of the seven bars. Because of the incompleteness of the octave in the melodic lines the ending sonority of the *exordium* is highly dissonant, an A/B/C/D/E scale segment over a bass E pedal tone.

In the *conclusio* the voice parts are divided into eight lines. Each voice part has a melodic line and a tintinnabuli line. Despite their close proximity the lines are not embedded. The tintinnabuli lines are above the melodic lines in close position.

All lines begin on some member of the D major chord. For the first time there is a true key signature. All Fs and

Cs are sharp. The tintinnabuli lines, as in the *exordium*, move a full octave, but this time they ascend rather than descend. The first soprano, for instance, moves A-D-F sharp-A. The melodic lines ascend also, by step, again in parallel sixths starting and ending on A/F sharp. There are two intervening measures, each after a comma. None of the voices reach their final pitch destination until the last *"Amen."* Because there are eight words the melodic lines all encompass an octave.

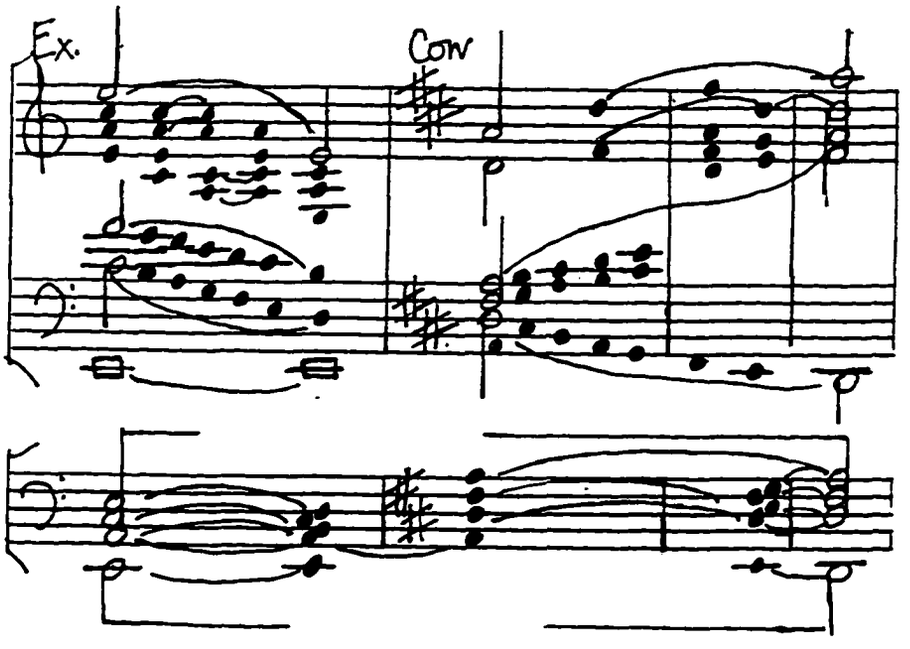

Figure 16. *Exordium* and *conclusio*.

The organ does not double all the vocal lines. In fact, it doubles only the second soprano, second alto, and second

tenor lines. The other two organ lines are tintinnabuli lines and double each other starting on D3 and D4 and ascending the octave to D4 and D5. Like the vocal lines the upper organ lines all ascend one full octave. The pedal line, however, descends. Starting on D, it descends by step to G, holds through the first bar of rest, then descends by step to E, which cuts off during the second bar of rest, then completes the descent to D, ending with all the other lines in a four octave D major chord in root position.

Centricity

Centricity is defined here as a particular pitch or pitches that dominate the sound fabric of a voice. This differs from a tonic pitch as tonic implies functional harmony with movement from tonic to dominant and back as well as the presence of a leading tone. Centricity means that a particular pitch is the center of melodic pitch movement, that melodic lines move to and away from that pitch frequently enough to establish it as preeminent to the ear. The vocal line of the Jesus voice moves away from and back to E continuously, establishing E as the center, or focus of that melodic line. Centricity may also mean that a particular pitch is sounded more often than any other pitch or that a particular pitch is a pivot point around which lines move in contrary motion. When all eight lines of the Evangelist are present, A is sounded in at least two octaves on every syllable, while in the Chorus voice the tintinnabuli lines move in contrary motion around B, which itself sounds

only occasionally.

Pitch centricity in Passio is both reinforced and undermined by the tintinnabuli triad structure. We hear the lowest pitch of a triad as its root and therefore the strongest pitch in the structure. When that pitch is in conjunction with other lines that have the same pitch as a center, as, for instance, the A triad tintinnabuli line combined with the A dominated melodic line of the Evangelist, the triad reinforces the centricity of A. When the root of the triad is different from the pitch that dominates the concurrent melodic line, as, for instance, the F triad against the B dominated conjunct line of Pilate, then the centricity of B is undermined and rendered ambiguous.

Pedal tones primarily reinforce centricity in the individual voices, though occasionally they distort it. The constant E/B pedal in the Jesus voice tends to fix the centricity of E in the melodic line, giving it a strength it otherwise would not have when combined with the A minor triad of the tintinnabuli line. The pedal tones in Pilate also seem to reinforce, however tenuously, the pitches B and F of the melodic and tintinnabuli lines respectively, until, that is, the pedal tone is E, which undermines both.

Looking at the voices individually we find that A dominates the Evangelist voice. No accidentals or chord outlines other than A minor occur in any of the individual lines in this voice. Cadences are ambiguous. They move away from an A triad to either a third related sonority, such as C or F, or to a vertical scale segment, then back to an A

triad. When the A minor sonority returns it is usually in some inversion, equally first or second. In fact, the cadences sound A minor in root position so rarely that the ear comes to hear first and second inversion triads as resting places.

The Jesus voice has two pitch centers, E and A. The melodic vocal line, like the melodic lines of the Evangelist, constantly revolves around E. E sounds in every word, short lines move away from and back to E. In addition the E/B pedal sounds continually in the organ. The second melodic line, in inversion to the vocal line, is centered around B. As the fifth above E, the B reinforces its centricity. What undermines the E is the tintinnabuli line which outlines an A minor triad. While present in only one line, it takes strength from its presence in the Evangelist voice. Because of the dominance of its triadic structure and its root a fifth below E it undermines the centricity of E, creating a sense of oscillation back and forth between E and A. In fact, every cadence in this voice has an A sounding along with the E/B and throughout this voice A sounds nearly as often as E and B. This oscillation becomes highly significant when the whole work is considered.

The Chorus voice has no such ambiguity. The central pitch is E. Even though the melodic lines revolve around B, that B, as in the Jesus voice, serves to reinforce the centricity of E, here the root of the triad in the tintinnabuli lines. All ending sonorities contain an E or a B, and most contain both. The only ambiguity in this voice

is the G natural of the melodic lines against the G sharp of the tintinnabuli lines, a fact which has nothing to do with the centricity of E, but more with local moments of dissonance in the prevailing harmony.

As Jesus seems to oscillate between E and A, carrying both pitch centers at the same time, so Pilate seems to oscillate between B and F. However, the pitch centers of the Jesus voice are very solid. With the Pilate voice the melodic line has no reinforcement. The pedal sounds here are short, single-pitched, and rotating away from B. With the triad on F, a tri-tone away, there is no strong sense of pitch centrality to this voice, although its connection to the other voices through B, particularly the Chorus voice, seems audible. Of all the lines in Jesus and Pilate, the vocal lines are the most foregrounded. They are the lines that command the ear. And indeed, the vocal line in Jesus remains resolutely on E until the last phrase. The vocal line in Pilate, however, alternates between the melodic line around B and the F triad. While B connects the voice line to the chorus voice and the Jesus voice, the F seems a very long way away harmonically and melodically from the rest of the piece.

The relationship between the *exordium* and *conclusio* is easy to understand when they are considered together. The *exordium* is A centered. Though rendered somewhat ambiguous by those devices one comes to expect in the main part of the work, a six four position of the opening chord, the pedal E throughout the section, and the final chord cluster, it

sounds primarily A minor. The *conclusio*, on the other hand, is explicitly D major. It, too, begins on a six four arrangement of the chord, but because of the voicing this is not clearly audible. Only the second basses have the low A. There are scale segment chords but they are not closing sonorities. The chord ending the second phrase is the same set as the closing chord of the *exordium*. The final sonority of the *conclusio* is D major. Neither of these sections need be considered beyond their primary pitch centeredness. The *exordium* is A centered, with A minor tintinnabuli lines. The *conclusio* is D centered with D major tintinnabuli lines.

Melodic and tintinnabular relationships

The range of the bass, the first voice to enter the Evangelist, is essentially from E3 to E4 (see Figure 17). It touches the D below just four times in the whole work, The F above just once. Its pitch collection is the complete diatonic collection A,B,C,D,E,F,G.

While in a different octave the same is true for the alto line. The instruments move back and forth between melodic and tintinnabuli lines, but when they are melodic the same can be said for them in their respective octaves.

Figure 17. Evangelist voice bass and alto ranges, melodic line collection, and tintinnabuli collection.

The tintinnabuli lines have the pitch collection A,C,E, and nothing else. The Evangelist then, has two basic pitch collections with A as 1: {1234567} and [135].

The range of the vocal part of the Jesus voice lies primarily from A2 to A3 (see Figure 18). Like the Evangelist the collection is A,B,C,D,E,F,G, or {1234567} with A as 1. The outlined triad is also [135]. There is also a third pitch structure to consider here and that is the E/B pedal, which would be [52] with A as 1.

Again we can consider the first set the full diatonic or an A natural minor scale. However, E is central to the vocal line and B to the inversional melodic organ line. If we then say that E is 1, the inversional organ line is at 5. That makes two full diatonic collections circling about [15], which is also, of course, the E/B pedal.

We can also say that if E is 1, then the A minor triad becomes [461], showing that it is not in the same relationship to the full diatonic collection in the Jesus voice that [135] is in the Evangelist voice.

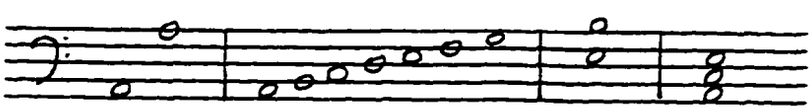

Figure 18. Jesus voice, vocal line range, melodic pitch line collection, pedal pitches, and tintinnabuli line collection.

For the melodic lines of the Chorus voice the pitch collection remains the same as for Jesus and the Evangelist, that is {1234567}, the full diatonic (see Figure 19). But here the collection is clearly based on the pitch class B. This does not change the full diatonic set, but it does influence the triadic second set.[14]

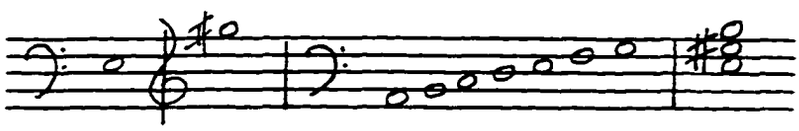

Figure 19. Chorus voice, range of vocal lines, melodic line pitch collection, tintinnabuli pitch collection.

With E as 1 the triad is [135], but with A as 1 it is [572], showing that it is in another relationship to the full diatonic than the triad in either the Evangelist voice or the Jesus voice. With B as 1 it is [461], putting the triad in the same relationship to the diatonic as that in the Jesus voice.

In Pilate we again see the same two pitch constructions (see Figure 20). As with the Chorus the melodic full diatonic seems to be centered on B, while the triad is F, A, C. If B is 1 then the triad can be said to be [572], which is the same set found in the Chorus with A as 1. If E is 1, then the triad can be said to be [246]. If A is 1 then the

[14]The accidental here will not be considered, so the G sharp of the E major chord in the tintinnabuli voices is not considered differently from the G natural of the melodic collections.

triad can be said to be [613]. A fifth from [572] is [135] while [246] is a fifth from [613]. Despite the distance of the sound of the F major triad it has a relationship to the full diatonic collection in the same way the other triads have.

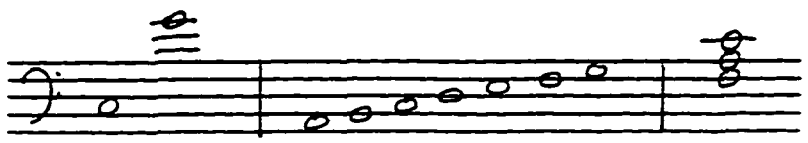

Figure 20. Pilate voice range, melodic pitch collection, tintinnabuli pitch collection.

The *exordium* and *conclusio* are unambiguous (see Figure 21). The *exordium* has the full diatonic collection {1234567} with A clearly as 1, and the A minor triad in [135] relationship to it. It is, in fact, no different than the Evangelist voice.

Figure 21. *Exordium* and *conclusio* melodic line collections and tintinnabuli collection.

The *conclusio* is also clear, but the relationship it has to the rest of the work is different. The full diatonic is

present, but now presented as the key of D major. 1 is D, and can be nothing else. The triad is also D major and therefore must be [135] and nothing else. The strength of its presentation makes it clear that this is the final focus for the work and the other sections or voices must be considered in relationship to it.

Figure 22 gives all the possible diatonic triads for all the possible diatonic pitch centers.

	Ex/Ev/Js	Chorus	(missing	Pilate	(missing	(missing	con
	A/C/E	E/G/B	(B/D/F)	F/A/C	(C/E/G)	(G/B/D)	D/F/A
A=1	[135]	[572]	([246])	[613]	([357])	([724])	([461])
E=1	[461]	[135]	([572])	[246]	([713])	([357])	([724])
B=1	[724]	[461]	([135])	[572]	([246])	([613])	([357])
F=1	[357]	[724]	([461])	[135]	([572])	([246])	([613])
C=1	([613])	([357])	([724])	([461])	([135])	([572])	([246])
G=1	([246])	([613])	([357])	([724])	([461])	([135])	([572])
D=1	([572])	([246])	([613])	([357])	([724])	([461])	[135]
	[]=the set as it exists in the work						
	([]) the set as it exists outside the work						

Figure 22. Table of triad sets and their relation to diatonic pitch collections.

It shows that the triads are certainly fifth related, but more importantly that they are each in a different relation to the diatonic collection, giving each voice its own particular sound, its own particular coloration.

Harmony

Harmony is quite probably not the best word for discussing Pärt's vertical sonorities. The horizontal lines are compelling, the vertical sonorities determined by principles other than those of functional chord progression. However, the term indicates vertical pitch placement and so will be the term used for the vertical sonorities throughout Passio.

The word "chord," however, will be avoided for reasons which will be made clear in the following discussion. It assumes a particular form and a particular hierarchy of pitch which I do not believe occurs in this work except in a very local sense. In Passio all vertical sonorities are the result of those principles guiding the horizontal lines.

In this analysis the types of vertical sonorities that occur will be examined, as will the frequency of their occurrence and the variations from voice to voice. Cadences will be a particular focus with an explication of how they are constituted, their placement and effect. That the vertical sonorities in Passio do not function in the same sense that chords do is clear, but this study will also show that they do have purpose essential to the overall affect of the work, that they demonstrate very clearly how the sound fabric is woven together and made seamless.

There are 1235 words in the narrative of Passio, with each consisting of one to nine syllables. Every syllable has a vertical sonority that is different in some way from the vertical sonorities on either side of it. In analyzing every

vertical sonority in this work, however, it is very clear that there are only four types of vertical arrangements created by Pärt's techniques (see Figure 23).

Figure 23. Veritcal sonority types, combination of triad and scale segment, triad, seventh, scale segment

The first type is the triad. Every voice has a vertical triad and some have two. The second type is a scale segment, what we might hear as a cluster. Each voice has one or two scale segments of three or more pitches. The third type is combination configurations, which are made up of both triad and scale segment, and the fourth type is what we usually think of as a seventh chord, four pitches arranged in stacked thirds. Some triads are part of the seventh chords. Primary triads are not. These four types are arranged differently in each voice and will be described separately.

The Evangelist voice has from one to eight lines. The sections most closely examined are those containing four or more lines. There are a total of eight specific sonorities in the Evangelist voice, all of which fit into the four categories above (see Figure 24). There are two triads, A/C/E and F/A/C, two scale segments C/D/E and G/A/B/C, two combinations E/G/A/B/C and A/C/D/E, and two sevenths,

F/A/C/E, and C/E/G/B. Those sections with fewer than four lines have pitches that suggest the above sonorities.

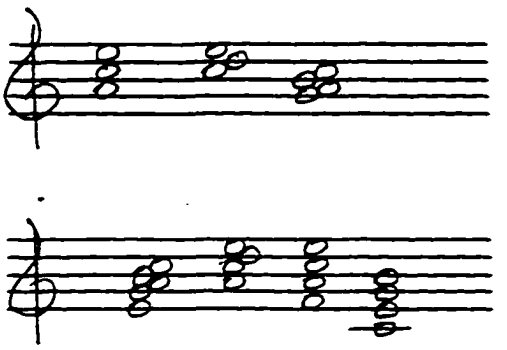

Figure 24. Evangelist voice vertical sonorities.

The most prominent vertical sonority is the A minor triad. It occurs in every word. If the word has only one syllable the pitches are some arrangement of A/C/E. If there are two one syllable words together, each has a different arrangement of the triad, which are considered the same in this study.

The second most frequent sonority is the scale segment G/A/B or G/A/B/C, When linked with the combination sonority, E/G/A/B/C, and the seventh sonority, C/E/G/B, this combination of pitches nearly equals the number of occurrences of the A minor triad, in a ratio of approximately 4:3. Less frequent are the A combinations, the C/D/E scale segment, and the F triad and seventh.

Equally interesting is where these sonorities occur in the overall piece. For instance, the scale segment G/A/B occurs with great frequency in those sections of four line

texture. G/A/B/C, however, does not occur in that texture, nor E/G/A/B, though both are possible.

When the texture goes to five voices the sonority E/G/A/B/C appears. This combination sonority remains prominent, second only to the A minor triad throughout the expansion and contraction of line until the texture returns to four lines. The subset of that combination, the scale segment G/A/B/C which also appears when the texture goes to five lines also disappears when the texture reverts to four.

Along with the G/A/B scale segment, another prominent sonority in four line texture is the C seventh, C/E/G/B. Where the texture is just four lines this sonority alternates with the G/A/B scale segment as second most prominent sonority. In Section I, G/A/B is more prevalent. In Section II, C/E/G/B is more prevalent. In Section III there are more occurrences of G/A/B, and in Section IV more occurrences of C/E/G/B. In the Coda, which is entirely four line texture, G/A/B is again more frequent, though only by four occurrences.

These changes in the prevailing vertical sonority reflect the changes in the prevailing directional modes of the melodic lines. In Section I the prevailing modes are 1 and 2; that is, each word begins on A and moves away from it. In Section II the prevailing modes are 3 and 4, where the melodic line begins away from A in each word and moves back to it.

The triad F/A/C appears in the four line texture of the Evangelist voice along with the implied seventh sonority

F/C/E. In many instances of the latter sonority Pärt could have moved one of the lines to A but he does not. In fact, F/A/C/E does not appear at all in the Evangelist voice until the texture reaches five lines.

Cadences are described as open cadences or closed cadences. An open cadence in the Evangelist voice is one that moves from the A minor sonority to something other than A minor, such as a scale segment or combination. A closed cadence is one that moves from something other than A minor to A minor. All of the phrases have cadences that are paired open/closed. For instance at R6 the first phrase ends with A minor triad to scale segment G/A/B. The next phrase (which is just one two syllable word) is scale segment G/A/B to A minor triad. At R9 the first phrase ends with a three syllable word for which the vertical sonorities are A triad, scale segment G/A/B and the implied F seventh, F/C/E. The second phrase is also a three syllable word with vertical sonorities of an F triad, C seventh, and A triad. This kind of open/closed pairing is fairly consistent throughout the Evangelist voice, but may vary when the final word of a first phrase is a single syllable and therefore must be an A minor triad. At R19, for instance the first phrase ends with the word *"sum."* This word is an A triad. The second phrase in this utterance ends with a three syllable word which Pärt also ends with an A triad. This is still considered paired phrasing.

When there is a single phrase in an utterance it is paired with the first phrase in the next utterance. At R22,

for instance the phrase ends with a three syllable word that is an A triad moving to a combination moving to an F seventh. The next phrase is at R24 and ends with a C seventh to an A triad. At R107 the cadence is an A triad to a scale segment. At R109 the utterance has three phrases. Pärt pairs the first with the phrase at R107 ending it on the A triad, then pairs the second and third phrases together open and closed.

Only the coda presents Pärt with problems in pairing cadences. At R168 there are three phrases which are closed/closed/open. It is impossible to know if the preceding phrase, the last phrase of R167, is open or closed because it is a single line texture and ends on C. The first phrase of R168, however, ends with a one syllable word, which as we have seen, must be an A triad. That would mean the first two phrases could be paired closed/closed as they were at R19. The third phrase of R168 then must go with the first phrase of the next utterance at R170, and indeed the first phrase at R170 is closed.

There are six phrases at R170. Their cadences are alternating closed/open. If the first phrase is paired with the last phrase of R168, then the second and third phrases are paired and the fourth and fifth phrases are paired. That leaves the sixth phrase, which ends on a two syllable word *"dixit,"* an open cadence. The next phrase is the very last utterance of the Evangelist, a single phrase at R172, and consists of A octaves only on every syllable of every word. It is, in fact, the most closed of all cadential ideas and not only closes the pair but closes the biblical portion of

the work.

The Jesus voice also has eight vertical sonorities (see Figure 25): a triad E/G/B, a scale segment, A/B/C/D/E, and six combination sonorities, E/F/A/B/C, E/G/A/B, A/B/D/E, B/D/E, E/B/C, and A/B/E.

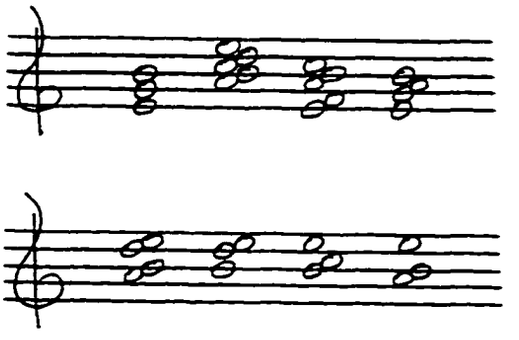

Figure 25. Jesus voice' vertical sonorities.

Because of the constantly sounding E/B pedal only one triad is possible in this voice, the E minor triad. However, this triad is rare, occurring only 12 times in the entire work. Far more common are the combination sonorities E/B/C and A/B/E, which together account for more than half of all the harmonies in this particular voice. Neither combination can be found in every word, but every word has one or the other or both. In words of four or more syllables one or the other can sometimes be found twice. Only Section II (R38 through R76) has all eight sonorities present.

Like the sonorities in the Evangelist, some of the sonorities in the Jesus voice can be found in one another. A/B/E, A/B/D/E and B/D/E may all be found in the scale segment, A/B/C/D/E. E/B/C fits into E/F/A/B/C and E/G/B fits

into E/G/A/B. The close relation between these sonorities is clear.

What is equally clear is that there is no attempt by the composer to "choose" a particular vertical arrangement and that the sonorities in this voice are completely the result of the principles dictating the structure of the horizontal lines. It is here, in the Jesus voice, that Hillier's melodic modes are most clearly demonstrated. With E as the center pitch the vocal line at R12 moves below then returns, moves up then returns, in the pattern mode 4, mode 1. This is repeated at R16. At R25, the first substantial utterance by this voice, the pattern is mode 1, mode 2, mode 4, mode 3, mode 1, mode 2, mode 4, mode 3, in an alternating pattern of up and down motion. With one, two, and three syllable words prevailing this creates a very smooth flowing horizontal line up and down around E. The vertical sonorities that are thus created are also very smooth and repetitive. The E minor triad can occur only when there are enough syllables for the melodic lines to reach G from both E and B, and when the tintinnabuli line moves to E instead of A or C. This is usually a local event, in the middle of a phrase, and left very quickly.

Only three of the four types of harmonic constructions are found in the Jesus voice: triad, combination, and scale segment. Given that the triad is the least used of the types present in this voice, it is not surprising that there are no seventh constructions at all. It also seems somewhat ironic that this voice of all the voices should have so little

triadic harmony.

Even the cadences fall before the inevitable up and down motion of the horizontal lines. They very often end with the combination pitches mentioned above, E/A/B or E/B/C, or some expansion of them. In this voice Pärt tends to begin a phrase with the sonority with which he ended the previous phrases, which only adds to the continuity of the flow. There is no obvious pairing of phrases, no sense of closure for any of the utterances except the last, where the vocal line makes its descent from E to A, the only time Part transgresses his practice of placing that line on E at least once in each word.

The Chorus voice has a four line texture and has seven vertical sonorities throughout the piece (see Figure 26). The most frequent, by a wide margin, is the triad E/G sharp/B. In this voice every word has the E major triad in it once. Like the A minor triad in the Evangelist, there is one and only one in every word, and when there are two or more one syllable words together, each is a different arrangement of the E triad. There is another triad in the voice, G/B/D. Like the F major triad in the Evangelist it plays a secondary role, but here in the same mode. Unlike the Evangelist F triad, the G major triad does not occur often, only 17 times in the whole work.

Of the other sonorities there is just one seventh construction, A/C/E/G sharp. Like the C seventh and the F seventh in the Evangelist, it is a major major seventh construction.

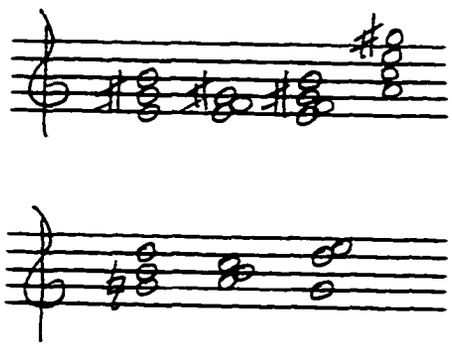

Figure 26. Chorus voice, vertical sonorities.

The two scale segments are A/B/C and E/F/G sharp. The first is found almost as frequently as the seventh construction. The second is the least frequent sonority and one of the strangest with its augmented second. The remaining sonority is a combination, E/F/G sharp/B, combining the E major triad with the E/F/G sharp scale segment. And like the scale segment, it occurs rarely, only eleven times in the whole work.

Cadences in the Chorus do not strictly alternate, though at time they appear to do so. Like those of the Evangelist, they are open and closed cadences. The former is an E major triad going to any other kind of vertical sonority and the latter is any vertical sonority going to an E major triad. For instance, at R126 where the Chorus has five phrases, the endings alternate. The first, third, and fifth phrases are closed on E major triad, the second is open on a G triad, and the fourth is open on a scale segment. But where there is no more than one phrase, such as the consecutive utterances at R52, R57, R59, and R62, the cadences are all closed.

The Pilate voice has just six vertical sonorities, which seems in keeping with its very spare scoring (see Figure 27). The most prevalent sonority in Pilate is the scale segment A/B/C, which occurs a total of 110 times. Like the A minor triad in the Evangelist and the E major triad in the Chorus, this scale segment construction occurs once in every single word. Where there are two or more single syllable words together they each have a different arrangement of this sonority. In other words this very dissonant scale segment functions in this voice as the central triads function in the other voices.

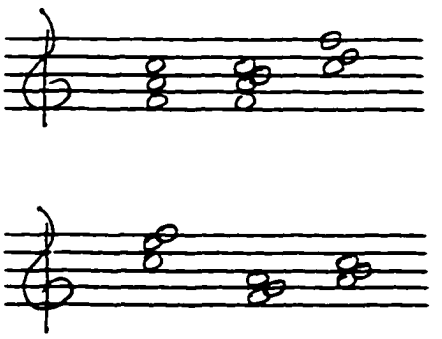

Figure 27. Pilate voice, vertical sonorities.

There is an F major triad in this voice. It is the next most prevalent sonority with 85 occurrences. Considering that the Pilate melodic line is always centered on B, and must move by step to either C or A, and that the tintinnabuli line is always on some member of the F major triad, this is not surprising. There are two combination sonorities that are reminiscent of the dominant sonorities in the Jesus voice, C/D/F and C/E/F, where C/F seem to remain constant while

another line floats around them. However, no C/F pedal exists in this voice, and these sonorities together occur only 30 times. The scale segment F/G/A occurs about the same number of times as the two combinations just mentioned and a four pitch combination, F/A/B/C, with its embedded F major triad, as well as its tri-tone, occurs just seven times. There are no seventh constructions at all.

There is a clear reluctance on Pärt's part to have the tri-tone sound with any frequency at all. Texture in the Pilate voice is sometimes reduced to just two lines. In those places Pärt could use the dominant sonority F/B, but he never does. While the other sonorities become more ambiguous the prevailing sonority is always a second, A/B or B/C. In this voice Pärt both implies the tri-tone with his horizontal lines and subverts it with the vertical sonorities.

As for the cadences of the Pilate voice, they are almost all open, ending with the A/B/C scale segment. Very often the cadence goes from the F triad to the scale segment. Less often it goes from scale segment to F triad. Rarely is another sonority found in the cadence. The phrases at R82 are typical. The first phrase ends with scale segment to scale segment, the second phrase ends with a triad to combination, the third phrase ends with scale segment to triad and the last phrase has an implied triad to scale segment. Of Pilate's 27 phrases 17 end with the scale segment A/B/C, only seven end with the F major triad and just three end with one of the combination sonorities.

Considered as a whole, the vertical sonorities of the

work have some clear properties of significance. Not only does every voice have a triad sounding within it, there are frequently other sonorities that are third related. Besides the A minor triad in the Evangelist, there is also the F triad and the F major major seven sonority and the C major major seven sonority, all a third away from A. The Chorus, too, has a triad, G/B/D, a third away from the central triad, E/G sharp/B, and a major minor seven construction on A. This becomes significant when considered with the Jesus voice, which has no other triads other than its central one, E/G/B, which sounds rarely. The Pilate voice also has no more than one triad, F/A/C, and no seventh construction. But the most prevalent sonority in this voice, A/B/C, is just a third away from the F triad root, and in that regard the Pilate voice can be said to have an additional third relationship.

Embedding of vertical sonorities seems also to have some significance. The Evangelist has about half of its vertical sonorities embedded in the other half. F/A/C, for instance, as well as the principal triad, A/C/E, is found within the seventh construction F/A/C/E. The scale segment G/A/B/C is found in the combination sonority, E/G/A/B/C, and the major seven C/E/G/B is part of the combination, C/E/G/A/B. In the Jesus voice there is also a lot of embedding. All the vertical sonorities may be connected to at least one other and in the case of some, to two other sonorities.

Less embedded is the Pilate voice. The triad F/A/C is found in the combination sonority, F/A/B/C, as is the most common sonority, A/B/C. The other sonorities seem to be only

slightly connected, and rather free floating, representative, perhaps, of the variable aspect of this voice.

Like Pilate, the Chorus voice has only slight relationships between the vertical sonorities. The triad, E/G sharp/B is part of the combination E/F/G sharp/B, as is the scale segment E/F/G sharp. But all the other vertical sonorities are like Pilate's, only loosely connected to one another and not embedded at all. Given the harmonic structures of the other two voices, this seems deliberate on Pärt's part, perhaps a way of indicating the disparity of character in the Chorus voice and the disparity of mind in Pilate's character.

Even within the rigorous principles of his method Pärt has choices he can make in deciding his harmonic sound. He has done so with each voice in a way that is both individual and evocative. The Evangelist voice, with its strong sense of A centrality and its carefully paired phrases in alternating cadences is in strong contrast to the fluctuations of the other voices, and seems to be inexorable in its stasis. It is the voice of inevitability, the voice that knows how the story will end. The Jesus voice has an alternating combination sonority that predominates, vertically reinforcing the strong pull between E and A, perhaps the pull between past and present. The Chorus voice is that of life within the narrative, strongly sounding the E major triad. The local dissonances of G natural and G sharp make it a harsh voice, a voice in dissonance within itself. And Pilate, in all his vagaries, is colored in the constant

presence of the scale segment sonority and the tritone, the strength of the triad undermined, the weakness of character underlined by the forever open cadence.

Durations

Just as he carefully limits the parameters of pitch, so Pärt limits the durations of each voice. The main body of Passio consists of three sets of durations, one each for the Evangelist and Jesus, and one for both Pilate and the Chorus, with three types of durations in each set (see Figure 28).

Each of the three set of durations share one duration in common with each of the other sets; that is, the Evangelist, Chorus, and Pilate voices all contain half notes. Likewise, both the Evangelist and Jesus voices contain whole notes, and the Jesus voice shares the dotted half note with the Chorus and Pilate. This makes a total of six durations covering the three sets, with each set having just one duration unique to its set. The Evangelist is the only voice to include quarter notes, while the Jesus voice is the only voice to include breves. The only set to include dotted whole notes is the Pilate/Chorus set.

The *exordium* and *conclusio* each have four durations: half notes, dotted half notes, whole notes, and dotted whole notes, durations shared with the internal voices. The smallest duration in the entire work is the quarter note and it is the quarter note which is the underlying tactus for the main body of the work. While the *exordium* is marked *langsam* and the *conclusio* is marked *largo*, the passion text starting

at R2 is given only a tempo marking of quarter note equals circa 132.

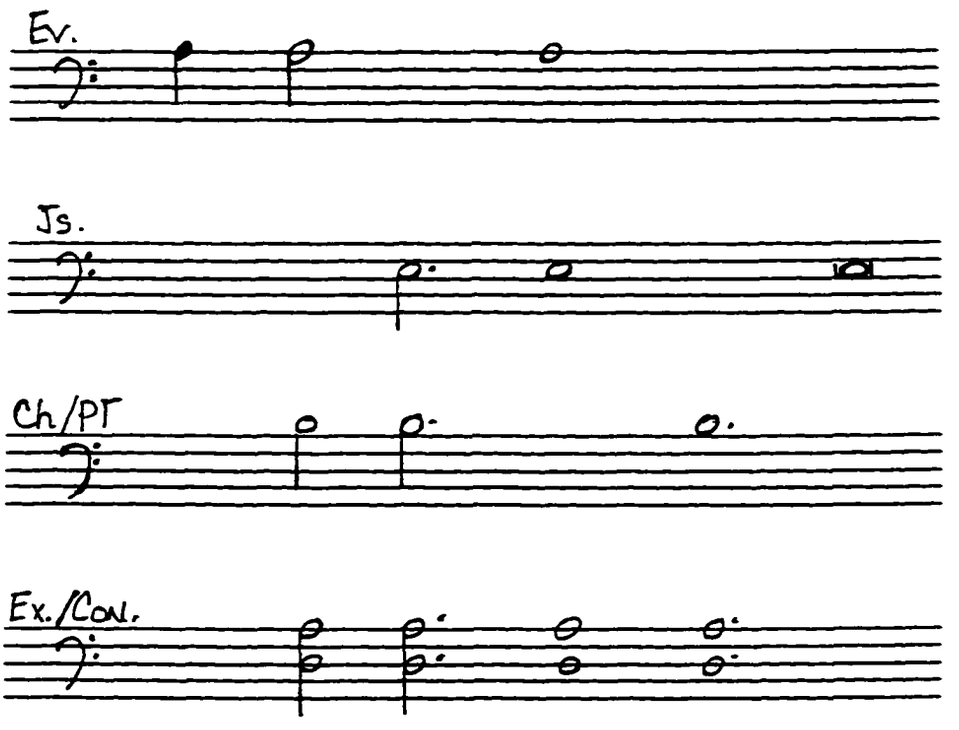

Figure 28. The durations assigned to each voice group

The one other duration that is used, the dotted quarter note, may be found only twice, both times in Pilate's voice, one at R82 and three at R122. As pointed out above, these are two of the three punctuation moments in Pilate's voice. No extra-musical reason is apparent for their presence, however. The dotted quarter notes are half the value of the last notes of each phrase, dotted half notes. Pärt is simply maintaining his rule of halving the durational value of the vocal cadence in the instrumental echo. It is this rule that creates a few aberrations in the organ part of Jesus's voice,

also. At R31+8 and R54+5, half notes tied to longer durations appear as part of the sustained E/B sonority. At R50+31, Jesus ends a sentence in whole notes, requiring the instrumental punctuation that follows to be in half notes.

As in all of Pärt's subsequent choral works the length of the measures is determined by the length of the individual words and the durations assigned to each syllable. The length of the duration has little to do with the content of the words and everything to do with the placement of the word within the phrase or sentence. The longest durations are used to create a cadential feel at the end of sentences where there is a period or a question mark. The second longest durations are used for internal cadences in the text, commas, colons, and semi-colons. The smallest durations are used for all the other words in the sentences. For instance, at R2 the Evangelist bass begins on a half note, follows with four quarter notes, and finishes the phrase with a half note followed by a quarter. The sentence does not end here, only the phrase ends. To indicate the comma and the internal cadence, Pärt uses a half note as the penultimate note and a quarter note as the final. The first whole notes occur with the last word of the sentence, R4+3.[15]

All phrases are marked musically by a bar of rest. Every measure of rest consists of a whole rest whether or not four quarter notes worth of time is intended. For instance,

[15]At R11-1 and R169-4 Pärt has placed a musical "comma" where there is none in the text. According to the Vulgate Bible there are commas in both these places in the text. From this we may assume that their omissions are typographical errors.

at the first full cadence, R4+4, all the bars are marked with a whole rest. The bassoon punctuation, however, is in half notes and is followed by a half rest. The meter marking for this bar is 3 X 2/4. In order to determine the number of beats for each bar of rest, then, the meter signature must be noted and the meter signatures does not always reflect the durations assigned to a particular voice. For instance, the Jesus voice has a 5/4 bar of rest at R31+7. This is not equal to any of the durations or combinations of durations assigned to that voice.

The phrases range from one to eight words in length, the average being two to four. Only one of the Evangelist phrases is longer than eight words. At R167 the Evangelist has a nine word phrase. The only other phrase longer than eight words is one by Pilate. At R93+7 he begins a ten word phrase. The sentences range in length from one to seven phrases. The average is two to four phrases.

Neither chapter nor verse are indicated musically in the score, as stated before. Though Pärt provides book, chapter number, and verse number printed in the score whenever the verse changes in the text, he has no musical devices to indicate the individual verse or the change from chapter 18 of John to chapter 19. There are 70 verses included in the text. Each ends with a period except for two. The ends of verses are indicated musically only by virtue of the fact that they coincide with the ends of sentences, which are marked by an instrumental punctuation or a change of voice. The two exceptions are at John 18:12, and John 19:17. In

both these places the verse text ends with a colon and is marked musically by a bar of rest as it would be if it were not the end of the verse. This verifies that while Part is careful to acknowledge every mark in the text itself, he is musically unconcerned with how the text is laid out in the Bible. Interestingly, these two exceptions are nearly equidistant from either end of the text, twelve verses from the beginning, where the Evangelist describes Jesus being bound and taken out of the garden of Gethsemene, and thirteen verses from the end where the Evangelist tells of Jesus going out of the city to Golgotha. While both of these moments have their dramatic place within the narrative, Pärt musically marks neither any differently from the rest of the text. His principles never falter in his approach to duration, any more than they do with pitch.

Summary

Pärt has a rigorous, almost mechanical approach in his use of pitch and duration. Seeming to take his direction from the prologue to the Gospel of John, he places the individual word at the center of his method, making it the arbiter of each individual line. Each syllable has its own notes and only its own note. Each word has its own measure. Each phrase is marked by a bar of rest, unless it is the end of a sentence and then it is marked by an instrumental echo. Using one of four directional modes half the lines are melodic, moving in conjunct motion away from or toward a central pitch. The other half are assigned a triad to sound

one pitch at a time and never any pitches outside that triad. The number of syllables in each word determines how high or low the melodic lines will go, away from or back to the central pitch. The melodic lines are in contrary motion to each other and the tintinnabuli lines are in contrary motion to each other. Melodic and tintinnabuli lines are often paired in a predictable pattern, above or below one another, or embedded around one another. In this way Part creates only a few and very particular harmonic sonorities. Only four types of vertical sonorities exist in this work: triads, scale segments, combinations of triads and scale segments, and seventh constructions.

Pärt groups his forces in just four voices, each of which have their own melodic center or centers and their own particular triad. The Evangelist is A centered and has an A minor triad. The Jesus voice has an A minor triad, and an E centered melodic line. The Chorus voice is entirely E centered, with melodic lines centered on B and the tintinnabuli lines outlining E major. The Pilate voice also has the melodic line on B, but its tintinnabuli line rotates the F major triad. In constructing his horizontal lines he makes certain that each word has a particular vertical sonority in it. The Evangelist has an A minor triad sounding once in each word. Jesus has one of two combination sonorities sounding in each word. The Chorus has an E major triad sounding in each word, and Pilate has a scale segment, A/B/C, sounding in each word.

Another use of pitch is the sustaining of particular

pitches, which are referred to as pedal tones in this study. There is a constantly sounding E/B pedal in the Jesus voice, an occasional A pedal in the Evangelist voice, and an occasional pedal in the Pilate voice that rotates between B, F, and E. There are no pedal tones in the Chorus voice.

The durations used in this work are equally spare. Just three sets of durations are used: one set to the Evangelist, one set to Jesus and one set shared by the Chorus and Pilate. In each set there are just three durations, one of which is shared with each of the other two sets, leaving just one that is unique to each individual voice. The smallest duration is the quarter note, the largest the breve. The dotted quarter is used only twice, but makes the total number of durations used just seven.

The materials presented in this chapter have been shown to be primarily concerned with the small scale. Melody, harmony, and duration are almost solely concerned with presenting the text as it is given in the Vulgate Bible. As these materials are concerned with presentation of the text so are they controlled by it. In this regard I am able to discuss only the surface of the work, and cannot locatethe middle ground and large scale structures of the piece.

Also, given this paucity of materials, Pärt could, indeed, be considered minimal in his compositional resources. Melodically, harmonically, and rhythmically, Passio flows without digression, static as a stream in its bed is static, obeying those irresistible principles that keep it within firm boundaries as dictated by word, phrase and sentence.

There are brief, local colorations in each voice such as the cross relations in the Chorus voice, and the tri-tones of the Pilate voice, but they are only momentary as the work oscillates gently from voice to voice, always returning to the Evangelist. And like watching a stream over time, we begin to understand the work as a single unchanging picture laid out before us, one in which the patterns, constantly repeating themselves, give us a sense of the whole. The constantly rotating triads, the small melodic turns, the held pedal tones, the simple cadences, are colors and shapes on a flat surface, the rests between phrases like the pauses between strokes, the instrumental interludes like the reinforcement of a previous stroke. They are not the brush strokes of a freely creating artist, however. Rather they are the strokes of one who works to a particular purpose and in a particular method. There is no drama in these materials, no sense of change of scene, or even of spinning out of a harmonic process. The surface of this work is still, confined, and except for one fleeting moment, perfectly placid, as if overlaid with a clear lacquer. Considered alone it is this surface level that creates a sense of minimalist style and gesture. However, by looking deeper at parameters other than pitch and duration it will be clear that the underlying purpose of this work, and the subject of its purpose, are far from minimal, and cannot be considered as such.

CHAPTER THREE

TEXTURE, TESSITURA, AND TIMBRE

Given that the melodies, harmonies, and durations of Passio are static, and in fact are entirely dependent upon the text for their structure, it is essential to look to other parameters to discover the larger forms. How is it possible to find structure in this work beyond word, phrase and sentence? As stated previously, biblical chapter and verse are not indicated musically, so it would seem that any larger formal divisions cannot depend on the text. In this chapter texture, tessitura, and timbre, will be defined and both middleground form in the music of the individual voices as well as large scale form for the entire work will be discussed. It is apparent in this analysis that Pärt's decisions regarding these compositional strategies are concerned with creating structures that are symbolic, with meaning derived from non-musical sources, and that these structures are, again, built upon the structure of the actual written text. It is with these parameters that we are able to hear the larger picture and the shape it lays before the mind.

These individual discussions will be followed with a summary and conclusions. While there is much that may be speculated upon, it is clear exactly how Pärt has conceived

and laid out his icon, where the central figure of the crucifix lies, as well as the placement of the separate voices and their contribution to the structure and form of the icon.

Texture is defined here as the number of different musical lines occurring at any given time. The Evangelist voice, for instance, has the potential for eight lines, four vocal, four instrumental. The arrangement of the voices does not affect the texture. Bassoon, bass, and soprano, for instance, is the same texture as violin, tenor, and cello. In texture, the only determining factor is how many lines, using different arrangements of pitches, are heard at any given moment. Pärt has made this particular examination easier by placing rehearsal numbers at every textural change in the Evangelist voice as well as changes from voice to voice. He does not, however, place rehearsal numbers at the textural changes within any voice other than the Evangelist. When lines are doubled, as in the *exordium*, for instance, where the vocal lines are all doubled in the organ, they will be considered as one line.

Tessitura is defined as the median of the general range of each line within a voice and the median of the total range of all lines within each voice. For instance, in the Evangelist voice, the bass range is from E3 to E4, the tenor from C3 to A4. The tessitura of these two voices may be considered the upper end of octave 3. The soprano and alto tessitura is about an octave higher. The bassoon and cello can go as low as A2, the violin and oboe as high as E6. When

all eight lines are sounding the range may cover from octave 2 to octave 6. However, it is not the range that is important here; it is the median of the range, the location of the center of the voice, that indicates its tessitura, which, when all eight lines are sounding, is around A4. Tessitura is generally indicated by octave.

Timbre is defined as particular configurations of vocal and instrumental lines. Changes from one particular configuration to another are examined. As an example, the shift from Evangelist to Chorus is a timbral change. Within the Evangelist voice, changing from soprano/cello to soprano/oboe, is not a textural change, but it is a timbral change. The change from SATB texture in the Evangelist to SATB texture in the chorus is another example of timbral change.

Texture

Texture plays the most significant role in Passio with respect to its large-scale form. Unable to use large progressive harmonic shifts, Pärt has chosen this means to divide the work into four large sections. Because of the volume of Evangelist utterance and the dominant role it plays in the fabric of sound, it is not surprising that it is this voice which is structured to give the work shape and a certain coherency of form. What may not be immediately clear is that this form is very symbolic in both its structure and its purpose. Pilate, also, is shaped by texture in an interesting and evocative way. In the following paragraphs

the role of texture is described in each voice, with discussion on how it reflects strong non-musical images in the voices and in the overall work.

The *exordium* with chorus and organ has a total of six lines, five lines in the chorus, plus the E pedal in the organ. The *conclusio* has a total of nine lines, seven lines in the chorus, an additional tintinnabuli line in the organ, and a melodic line in the organ pedal. Neither of these sections has any fluctuation in texture within the section, but if considered as a pair, they show a definite and deliberate shift from six to nine. Given Pärt's grasp of details, this shift may reflect his view of the congregational petition, and the subsequent reinforcement of its foundation in faith (nine being the ultimate number of the trinity) through the crucifixion.

The Jesus voice has the same number of lines throughout the work: the vocal line, the melodic line in the organ, the tintinnabuli line in the organ, and the E/B pedal sonority which is always present in the organ. This format never changes. The texture is always at four lines, as long as the vocal line is singing, a predictable strategy for this voice, which should fulfill its role as a strong and certain presence.

The Chorus changes little as well. Except for the *exordium* and *conclusio*, the Chorus voice is always in four lines, two melodic, two tintinnabuli. In those places where the Chorus is joined by the organ, the texture remains the same as the organ is simply doubling the voices. This may

also reflect a certain inevitability. The doubling organ parts are crucial to the structure and meaning of this work and are examined in detail in the section on timbre.

The texture of the Pilate voice varies, as stated above, in an interesting and evocative way (see Figure 29). The number of lines in this voice rotates from two to three to four to three to two and back again, changing with each phrase. It never skips a number, that is, it never goes from two lines to four, and it never has a single line texture.

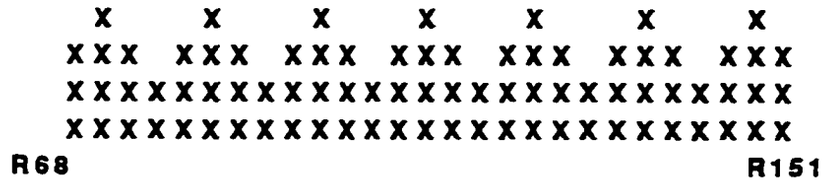

Figure 29. Texture of each phrase of the Pilate voice.

Whenever it has a four line texture the pedal tone appears briefly to create the fourth line. This occurs every fourth phrase starting with the first phrase of R72. The pedal tone, then, would seem to group Pilate's phrases into groups of four. The first Pilate utterance at R68 has no pedal tone, but seems to be an introductory phrase, with a vocal line spanning an octave to its highest pitch, and all the pitches touching all the octaves from 2 to 6. If we use

this as the first phrase of the first cycle, the cycles then run 3-4-3-2, with the pedal tone on the second phrase of each cycle. That would leave three phrases, in the pattern 3-4-3, as an incomplete seventh cycle.

As discussed above, the Pilate voice has certain features reflecting a kind of indecision as well as underlying malice: the scale segment vertical sonorities that figure in every phrase, the constantly implied tri-tone between the F major triad and the B centered melodic line. This is reinforced by the textural changes. The different textures of this voice seem at first random, fragmented, uncertain, as if the character is unwilling to be fully engaged. In actuality, however, the constantly circling textures reflect the deviousness and purposefulness of the character and his role in the narrative. Or, perhaps more symbolically, it is the pulling of this voice between the other forces at work. Again it is predictable that this voice should end with an incomplete cycle. Pilate cannot escape the struggle between himself, the prisoner before him, and the populace, without breaking the cycle. Of all the voices in Passio, it is Pilate who seems most susceptible to the pull of the narrative, whose text seems to reflect the ebb and flow of the character in struggle. And yet, how else to paint a portrait of the second most central figure in this icon?

The voice that varies most significantly in texture, however, is the Evangelist (see Figure 30). By virtue of the sheer amount of text this voice occupies, the flow of texture

is critically important.

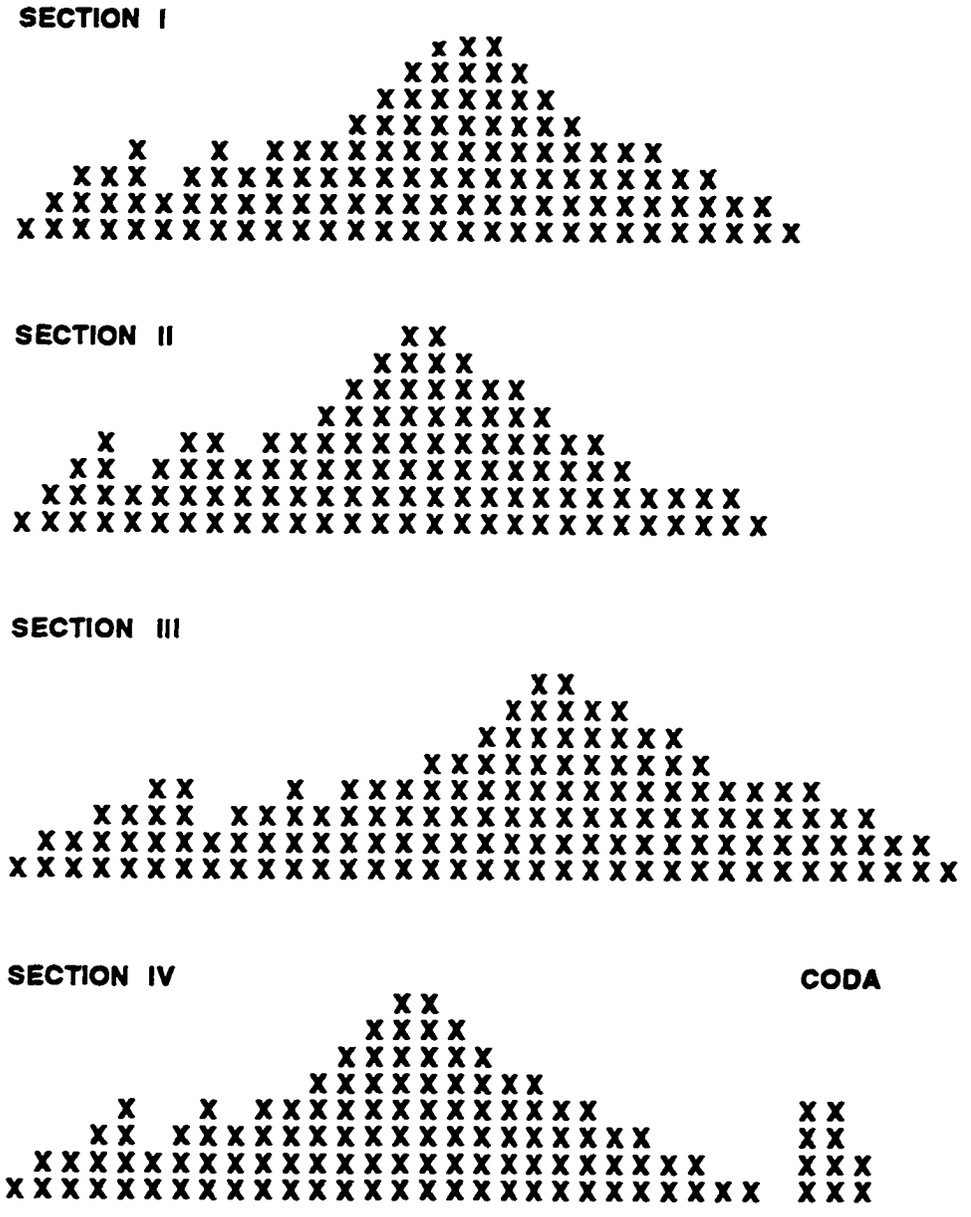

Figure 30. Textural outlines of all the phrases of the Evangelist voice

Given also that this voice has more lines than any other, the potential for variation is also greater than any

other voice. Starting at R2 with a single line, the texture varies in clear patterns. At R2, R37, R76, and R130, there is just one vocal line. In each case this line is added to by increments until there are four, then the number of lines is reduced to two (R7, R41, R91, and R140) which is added on again until there are four again. Then the number of lines is reduced to three (R10, R47, R97, and R143), which is then increased to four. The lines are then increased by increments of one until they reach eight (R20, R56, R107, and R150) where they begin to decrease by increments of one until there are just two lines left before the next section begins.

This pattern of adding and subtracting voices, so characteristic of Pärt's style generally, divides the biblical portion of the work into four large sections, R2 to R37, R37 through R75, R76 through R130, and R132 through R167. In an additional section, a textural coda starting at R168, the texture jumps to four lines where it stays until the end. The reason for the coda becomes clear when it is understood that each of the four sections is exactly 50 Evangelist phrases long. Again, the change of texture has to do only with the phrases, and not the content of the narrative. There are 210 phrases in this voice, which leaves ten phrases after the first phrase of R168. These ten phrases enclose the last two utterances, or three words, of the Jesus voice, four before *"Sitio,"* five before *"Consummatum est,"* and one after.

The four sections are not equal in performance time to one another. Because of the number of utterances of the

other voices entering the flow of the Evangelist voice, section three is longer, in terms of its overall number of phrases and its performing time, than the other three sections. However, as has been seen in other areas, that seems to matter little to Pärt's purpose. Each section of the Evangelist is 50 phrases long and no longer or shorter. Symbolically then, the four sections could mean a number of things, such as the four evangelists or the four scenes of the Passion to which Sandner refers. However, given the central theme of the narrative, it is more likely that the four sections refer to the four arms of the cross, in which case, the greater length of the third section might be meaningful, indeed. I will return to this idea in my conclusions.

Tessitura

The placement of each voice in the pitch spectrum also plays a role in this work. While the Evangelist's form is determined by texture, the tessitura of its lines almost never changes. There is an expansion of range , but the center of the range of this voice is octave 4, that octave from middle C to the C above, with expansion into the octave below and the octave above. The majority of the vocal lines lie between E3 and E5, while the instruments expand only occasionally into octave 2 or octave 6. But while the range expands the center remains constant. The sense of stasis in the voice of the Evangelist depends on the tessitura's remaining stable and centered within the broader range of the

whole work.

The Chorus also remains constant. It, too, lies primarily in octave 4 with expansion into octave 2 and octave 5. The range remains almost always between E3 and G sharp 5. This changes only when the organ accompanies the chorus. In those instances the organ expands the range upward and downward, but does not shift the center. The center of the Chorus voice, like the Evangelist, remains in octave 4. In fact, the tessitura and range are so stable in the Chorus voice that the center can be found with some exactitude. The range of the vocal lines is from B2 to G sharp 5. Between these two pitches there are 21 pitches, including the G naturals and G sharps. The exact center of that range is E4. When the organ is added to the vocal lines the range is from F2 to B5, a total of 29 pitches. Here the exact center is D4, just one step removed from the center of the vocal lines.

Of all the voices Pilate is the least predictable in terms of its tessitura. Other than the vocal line, there are no other lines that occur from phrase to phrase or utterance to utterance with any continuity. At R68, for instance, while the vocal line stays between G3 and G4, the organ has two lines, one in octaves 2 and 3, the other in octaves 5 and 6. At R105 the vocal line lies between F3 and F4. The accompanying lines in the organ are in octaves 3 through 6 in the first phrase, octaves 2 through 5 in the second. What is most noticeable is that this voice has the greatest extremes in range. Often the organ lines will go as low as octave 2 and as high as octave 6, with two phrases containing C7, the

highest pitch in the entire work.

The pedal tones in the Pilate voice do have a downward direction, from B3 to B2. There is no accompanying upward direction in any other line of the Pilate voice. The range is from F2 to C7. The very center of this range is A4, but that pitch and that octave seem to have no particular significance in this voice. There is, in other words, no particular pattern within the four phrase cycles of the Pilate voice, a kind of deliberate randomness, perhaps, and no seeming significance in where the lines lay. Again, this seems to show a kind of dithering oscillation, an indecisiveness, but with an underlying descent into dark purpose.

Tessitura has the most significance in the Jesus voice. While the vocal line remains constant, rarely moving beyond octave 3, the other three elements, the E/B pedal, the melodic inverse line and the tintinnabuli line, move with every phrase, in a precise pattern (see Figure 31.)

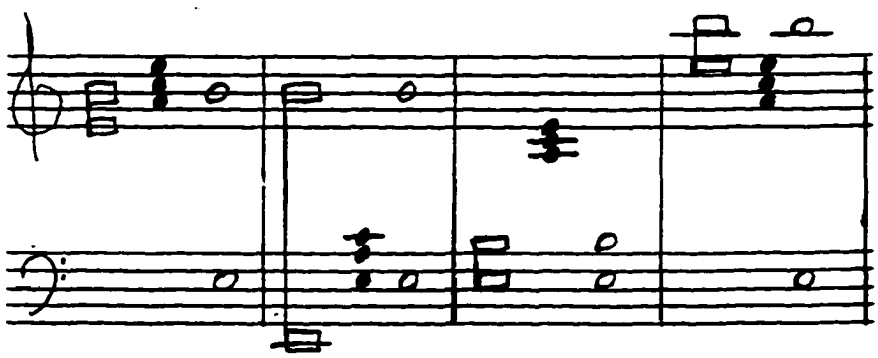

Figure 31. Tessitural pattern in the Jesus voice, showing pedal tones, tintinnabuli pitches, and melodic central pitches of the voice line and its inverse.

The pattern is in sets of four phrases. The E/B pedal starts in the first phrase in octave 4. In the second phrase it splits, the B remaining in octave 4, the E dropping to octave 2. In the third phrase it contracts so that both E and B are in octave 3 and in the fourth phrase they both move up to octave 5. The melodic inversional line moves with the B of the E/B pedal. Because the E/B sonority moves from octave to octave, this line moves from octave to octave. In the first and second phrases it remains in octave 4. In the third phrase it drops to octave 3, and in the fourth phrase it jumps up to octave 5. The tintinnabuli line, outlining the A minor triad, crosses the octaves. In the first phrase it spans octaves 4 and 5. In the second and third phrases it spans octaves 3 and 4. In phrase 4 it spans octaves 4 and 5 again. What is important here is that every line moves to a specific place in each phrase of a four phrase cycle and that the pattern never changes from cycle to cycle. In the first phrase the instrumental elements are all an octave above the voice. In the second they split and surround the voice. In the third phrase all the elements seem to be contained within or close to the voice in octave 3, and in the last phrase the instrumental elements move 2 octaves above the voice.

Although there are fifteen utterances of the Jesus voice in this work, the tessitural pattern does not reflect those utterances at all. The pattern reflect groups of four phrases at a time and continues from phrase to phrase, across the gaps between utterances without a break. Like the textural changes of the Pilate voice or the Evangelist voice

it makes no difference if an utterance has only two or three phrases. The cycle will continue with the next phrase of the next utterance, no matter how much has intervened.

There are forty-six phrases in the Jesus voice. Dividing the phrases by four makes 11 statements of the pattern with two phrases left over. The last phrase, while very different in pitch language from the other phrases remains unchanged in tessitura. There are, in fact, eleven and one half tessitural cycles for this voice, a symbolic number for this voice indeed.

Timbre

Timbral changes between voices are, of course, determined by the text. The voices remain essentially the same throughout the piece in terms of instrumentation and vocal lines so there is no way for timbre to affect the musical form of the work from voice to voice.[1] However, the use of timbre within the voices is, again, like texture and tessitura, highly significant.

The timbres of the Jesus voice and the Pilate voice are unvarying within the voices. Both are single vocal lines with organ accompaniment. With the Jesus voice this lack of variation is important to the solid, always certain and unchangeable character of this voice. With the Pilate voice, the changes of texture and tessitura are so varied from phrase to phrase, a change in timbre would make little

[1]It should be noted here that there are no indications in the score for differences in stops for the organ. There is, therefore, no indication of differences in sound between the three voices that use the organ: Jesus, Pilate, and Chorus.

difference to the overall effect of shifting indecisiveness.

With the Evangelist, changing timbre is fundamental to maintaining musical interest, since there are neither harmonic nor durational changes occurring (see Figure 29). Less obviously, timbre confirms the form outlined by the changes in texture, and creates other larger rotational cycles for the whole work. This is done both vocally and instrumentally, and with each group it is done in a somewhat different way(see Figure 32). .

Using his additive/subtractive technique Pärt begins the vocal layering with the bass, adds the tenor, adds the alto, and finally soprano. He then removes the voices in the same order, bass first, then tenor, then alto, leaving the soprano to solo in the last phrases of the first section. In section two he then begins with the solo soprano, adds alto, then tenor and finally bass, and removes them in the same order again, beginning with the soprano and ending with solo bass. In the third section he goes through the same addition and subtraction, only this time he begins with the tenor, adds the bass, then the soprano, and finally the alto. The third section begins, then, with the alto and ends with solo tenor.

While texture gives us the four sections of the work, it is the changing timbres that define those sections: bass to soprano, soprano to bass, tenor to alto, alto to tenor. If we extrapolate the sections further we can find two long curves: bass to soprano to bass, and tenor to alto to tenor.

Section I	Section II	Section III	Section IV & coda
2. B	38. S V	77. T	132. A
3. B C	39. S N V	79. T C	134. A V
4. B CO	40. S NC V	81. T C	136. A V
5. B CO	41. AS	83. T CO	138. A N V
6. B COV	43. AS N	85. T CO	139. A NC V
7. BT	45. AS N	87. T COV	140. AS
8. BT O	46. AS NC	89. T COV	141. AS N
9. BT OV	47. TAS	91. BT	142. AS NC
10. BTA	48. TAS C	92. BT O	143. B AS
11. BTA V	49. BTAS	94. BT O	144. B AS C
13. BTAS	51. BTAS O	BT	145. BTAS
15. BTAS	53. BTAS OV	96. BT OV	146. BTAS O
17. BTAS N	55. BTAS N OV	97. BT S	147. BTAS OV
18. BTAS NC	56. BTAS NCOV	98. BT S V	BTAS N OV
19. BTAS NCO	58. BTAS NCOV	99. BTAS	148. BTAS N OV
20. BTAS NCOV	60. BTAS NC V	100. BTAS	150. BTAS NCOV
22. BTAS NCOV	61. BTAS NC	101. BTAS N	152. BTAS NCOV
24. BTAS NCOV	63. BTAS NC	103. BTAS N	153. BTAS NC V
26. BTAS COV	64. BTAS C	104. BTAS NC	154. BTAS NC
27. BTAS OV	65. BTAS	106. BTAS NCO	155. BTAS C
28. BTAS V	66. BTA O	107. BTAS NCOV	157. BTAS C
29. BTAS	67. BTAS	109. BTAS NCOV	158. BTAS
30. BTAS N	69. BT	110. BTAS COV	159. BT S O
32. TAS N	71. BT	112. BTAS COV	160. BT S
33. TAS	73. BT	114. BTAS OV	161. BT V
34. AS C	75. B N	116. BTAS OV	162. BT
35. AS	76. B	BTAS	163. T N
36. S O		117. BTAS V	165. T
37. S		118. BTAS	
		120. BTAS	167. T
Key: B=Bass		121. B AS N	168. BTAS
T=Tenor		123. B AS N	170. BTAS
A=Alto		125. B AS	172. BTAS
S=Soprano		127. AS C	
N=Bassoon		128. AS	
C=Cello		129. A O	
O=Oboe		130. A	
V=Violin			

Figure 32. Timbral graph of the Evangelist voice.

The instruments take a somewhat different path from the vocal lines. The first section begins with the inner voices, beginning with the cello and ending with the oboe, while the second section begins with the violin and ends with the bassoon. This cycle is repeated exactly in the third and fourth sections. The instruments are also enclosed by the voices, which begin every section before the instruments and end every section after the instruments. Thus, each of the four sections is precisely defined by timbre. The instruments also, in repeating the completed cycle in the second half, reinforce a larger two part division of the work.

If timbre plays a defining role with the Evangelist voice, it is crucial to the Chorus voice (see Figure 33). We have seen middle ground structure in the Jesus voice, the Pilate voice, and the Evangelist voice, but it is timbre that gives structure to the Chorus voice, in a way that is powerfully symbolic and central to the entire work.

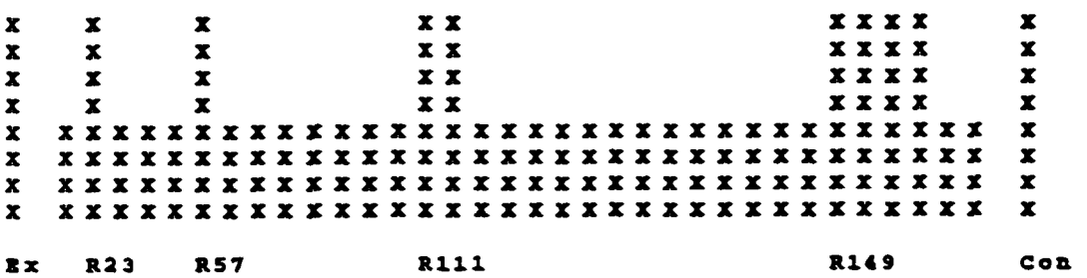

Figure 33. Timbral graph of the Chorus voice.

Within the biblical portion of the text the Chorus is entirely unaccompanied with the exception of four utterances, where the vocal lines are doubled by the organ, changing the timbre of the voice. Each of these accompanied utterances falls in approximately the middle of each of the four large sections of the work. There seems no obvious reason for Pärt to make these particular utterances stand out. The first one at R23 is the voice of those that have come to the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Jesus. The second utterance at R57 is the handmaid asking Peter if he is not one of Jesus' disciples. The third at R111 is the one moment that stands out in the work as dramatic. It is the voice of the crowd crying, "Crucify him, crucify him!" The last place is at R149 and is the voice of the priests asking Pilate to take down the sign that says Jesus is the King of the Jews.

Given the near oppressive restriction that Pärt exerts over every parameter of the entire work, it would seem there has to be some significance to these places where the organ doubles the choir. However, when one creates a method that is dependent upon the actual number of words, phrases, sentences, and number of times a voice utters their words, exactitude should be nearly impossible. Here Pärt manages it with great precision (see Figure 34). The first and last utterance of the accompanied Chorus, in sections one and four, are exactly two utterances from the beginning and the end respectively. The second accompanied utterance at R57 is one third of the words of the entire biblical text, beginning exactly at word 412 out of the total of 1235 words. The

third accompanied utterance is exactly two thirds of the words of the biblical text, word number 822, at R111.

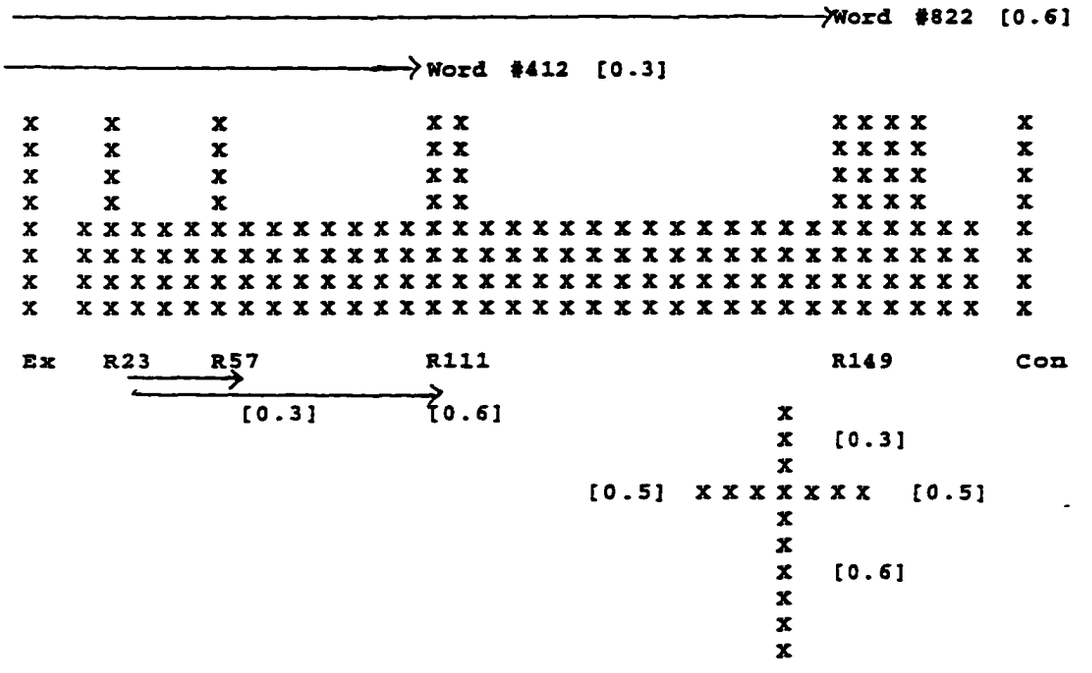

Figure 34. Division of phrases within Chorus voice.

We must consider for a moment the proportions of the Christian cross as iconized by the Western Christian Church. The horizontal beam is evenly divided into two sections, the vertical beam is divided by the horizontal beam into two uneven sections, one a third of its length, the other two thirds of its length. The accompanied Chorus in the first section and the last section have nothing to do with each other according to the text, but are even in their balance from either end of the work. Equally significant is that

there are fifteen utterances between them. The second accompanied utterance, at R57 is one third of the biblical words from the beginning, and it is also one third of the Choral utterances from the first accompanied utterance at R23. The third accompanied utterance, that troubling cry at R111, occurs at two thirds of the biblical text, and also two thirds of the Choral utterances between first and last accompanied utterances.

With the Chorus Pärt has created another cross, and a cross within a cross. The smaller cross is the cross created by the utterances of the Chorus, the actual number of times they sing. The larger cross is defined by the number of words in the entire work. Using the smallest unit Pärt creates the largest cross in the voice of those who cry out for its use.

Summary and Conclusions

To summarize, then, those parameters of music not generally used to define large scale structure in music are used in Passio. Because Pärt has chosen to make melodic, harmonic, and durational patterns static, it is with texture, tessitura, and timbre that he has created the more formal outlines of this work. With textures Pärt has created divisions within Pilate's voice with cycles of four phrases, in a repeating pattern of thicknesses. With tessitura the Jesus voice is also divided by four phrase cycles. With timbre, Pärt creates a cross with the utterances of the Chorus voice.

He has also divided the Evangelist voice into four exact sections, with an additional coda, by texturally thickening and thinning the number of lines in a specific pattern, identical in each section, and with the identical number of phrases. Because of the ubiquitous nature of this voice, this division tends to section the whole work into four large parts. When the use of timbre in the Evangelist is considered it is clear that these four sections are really two long arcs through the work, with an additional brief coda at the end. A second large-scale division seems apparent in the Chorus voice, with the second and third accompanied utterances. These fall at the one third and two thirds place in the overall work when the individual words alone are considered.

Symbolism seems to be everywhere in this work: the eleven and a half cycles of the Jesus voice that seem to reflect the broken circle of the disciples: the twelve phrases of the coda, ten of which surround the last two phrases of the Jesus voice: the three phrases of the *conclusio*: the tritone in the Pilate voice as well as the descending pedal tone that characterizes his descent into acquiescence: the cross relations in the Chorus voice that seem to represent both the turba's determination to crucify and the betrayal of Jesus' own disciples. But overwhelmingly it is the number four that presents itself in every guise possible. There is the four-part Chorus and the four-part vocal lines of the Evangelist, combined with the quartet of instruments. There are the four lines of the Jesus voice.

The occasional four lines of Pilate. There are the cycles within Jesus and Pilate of four phrases in constant rotation. There are the four-voice groupings themselves, Evangelist, Jesus, Pilate, and Chorus, and the four pitch centers within the biblical portion of the work, A, E, B, F.

When considering texture in the Evangelist voice I suggested that the four large sections might be considered the four points of the cross. When all of the phrases of the biblical portions of the work are counted, the other voices as well as the Evangelist, the first and last sections are almost equal at 65 and 66 respectively (see Figure 35). The second section is slightly longer at 75, and the third section is approximately one third longer with 103 phrases. When arranged with the outer sections as the horizontal beam, they appear rather convincingly as a Latin cross.

This cross form is also apparent in the timbral divisions of the Chorus voice, the organ dividing the choral utterances into both the lateral beam, divided evenly, and the upright beam divided one third and two thirds. The cross permeates the Chorus voice from the momentary cross relations of the pitches within each word to the large scale cruciform for the entire work. It is also the Chorus voice that focuses the work around the word, "crucifige." Where, then, is the subject of this icon? Which of these many crosses is central to the work? There are crosses within crosses, like shadows cast into a nave by a suspended rood, or the ornamental outlining of the earliest painted crucifixes. Where is the central crucifix of this work and how can it be

identified as such?

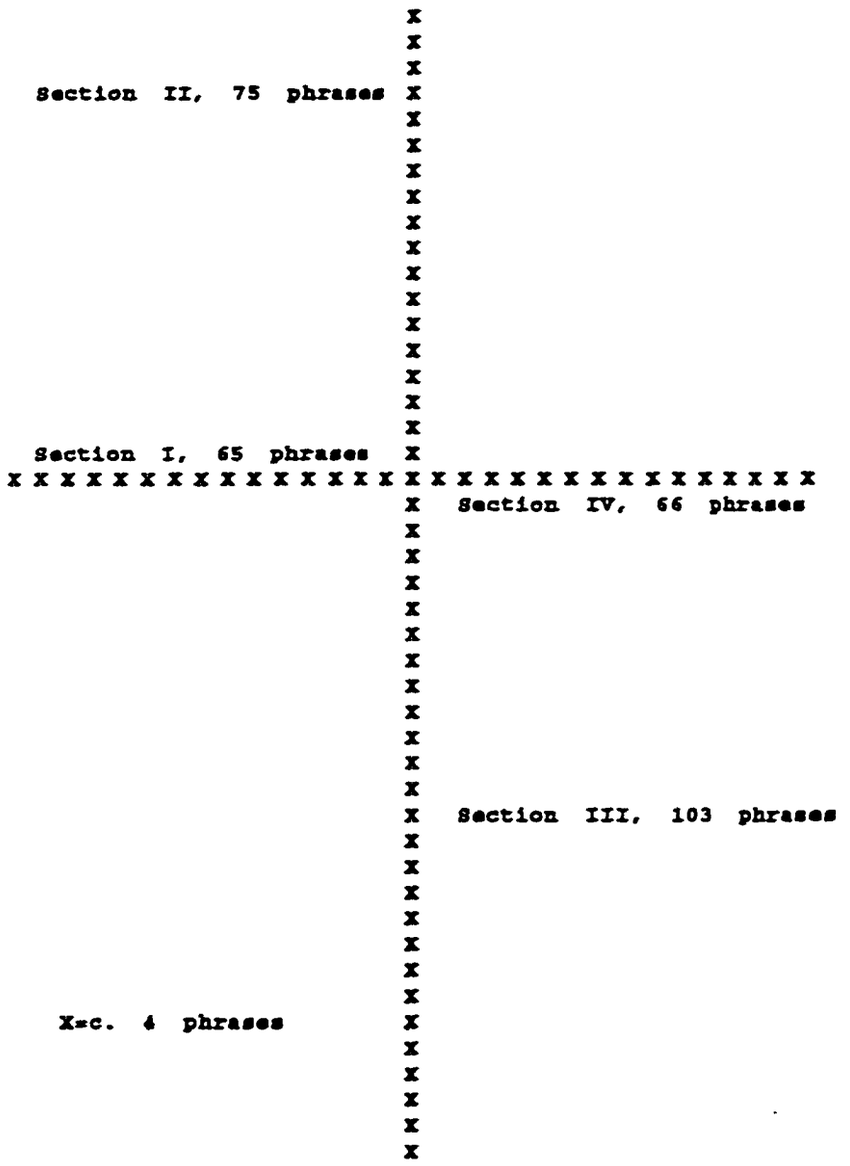

Figure 35. Arrangement of total number of phrases in the four sections.

In examining the Jesus voice and the middle ground structure created by the rotating pedal tones, one is struck by the position of these tones, the particular pattern Pärt creates with their four positions (see Figure 31): close position in octave four, split between octave two and four, then closed again in octave three, and and lastly in octave five. It is the split fifth of the second phrase that gives the cycle its particular character, and when considering the crucifix, one cannot help but liken the split fifth to arms outstretched on the crossbeam. If such is the case then what can the other positions of the fifth indicate? The lowest fifth, third in the cycle, might be the feet, the highest, the last in the cycle, the head. As for the first in the cycle, the fifth in octave four, I would suggest the fourth wound inflicted on the cross, the piercing of Jesus' side while on the cross.

John is, in fact, the only gospel to include the wounding of the side in the account of the crucifixion. None of the synoptic gospels tell of the soldier testing to see if Jesus was indeed dead and none of them give the account of the disciple Thomas, who would not believe until he had placed his hand in Jesus' wounded side. This would, perhaps, indicate that the pedal fifths are the wounds suffered at the hands of the Roman guard: the wounded side, the nailed hands, the nailed feet (in later crucifixes represented by a single nail through both feet), and the crown of thorns. When considered in this way the Jesus voice takes on a further dimension that transcends the temporal telling of the

narrative. The crucifix, the end of the story, is present at the beginning, and all through the telling, and in fact is presented in reverse order, the last wound first, as if the death of Jesus is what must be known first.

If the cycling fifths are the crucified Christ, the figure is part of the middle ground of the work: between the words and phrases that are the small-scale building blocks and the large scale crosses of the the Chorus and the Evangelist. This would be in keeping with the other elements in this voice that indicate a comprehensive embrace. The triad is A minor, the same that dominates the Evangelist voice. The vocal line is centered on E, the pitch center of the Chorus voice. The melodic line in inversion to the vocal line, somewhat distanced but still present, is centered on B the same as the melodic lines of the Chorus and of Pilate. Of the four types of vertical sonorities, triad, seventh, scale segment, and combination, only the Jesus voice has combination sonorities, that is both scale segment and triad, that predominate. The Evangelist and the Chorus both have triads in every word. Pilate has scale segments in every word.

The Jesus voice also shares a duration with the Evangelist, and a duration with the Chorus and Pilate. It is as if Pärt created the music of this voice to embrace the other voices, both past and present, speaking to all, at some level that they may understand. This seems to be underlined when the vocal line descends in Jesus' last utterance, the triad is changed to D minor, and the final sonority is

E/F/A/B, encompassing for a last time the tonal centers of all the voices.

The setting of the Pilate voice must also be considered further at this point. After examining the internal structure of the Jesus voice we find, too, with Pilate that the circular textures of the voice, if considered in the formation of 3-4-3-2, could also be a kind of cross, constantly rotating within the voice. This cross, however, does not seem to posses one arm that is longer than the others. There is no golden section to be found. There are, rather, arms of equal length, rotating in a circle, like a Catherine wheel, or St. Andrew's cross. Both, like the Latin cross, were symbols of torture transcended. When considering the structure of the Pilate texture, however, the fact that the four line texture occurs only when there is a pedal tone, there is, perhaps another type of cross visible, one much older than the Latin cross.

When the Gospel of John becomes the subject of discourse there can be no avoiding the charge of its anti-semitism. John seems to place the blame for the crucifixion on "the Jews," drawn so vividly in the text.[2] Scholars have, in the past, ignored the charge, or, at best, even in the most exhaustive discussion of the Gospel, dismissed it as not truly anti-semitic, but rather a political ploy to prompt

[2]There seems no consensus of opinion about who was intended when the Joannine circle used this term. Certainly the Sanhedrin was included, but who else is unclear. The gospel speaks of priests, guards, the crowd, but whether that meant just the Pharisee sect, or included the Sadducees, and/ or the general Jewish populace is undetermined.

those Christians who had not yet left the synagogue to do so.[3] More recent exegeses, however, are less forgiving and raise the issue in the pulpit as a troubling one.[4] It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the issue in depth. However, how Pärt has approached this gospel must be considered in this context.

I would suggest that Pärt does not avoid the issue but confronts it directly. He places a double cross in the Chorus voice, the voice of the turba, as well as Peter, a serving maid, the priests, and the Roman guards. This is the voice of friend and foe alike, as well as disinterested observers. The crosses outlined in this voice touch them all. Pärt's method of composition places no emphasis on any word, either profound or hostile, with the exception of the word, *crucifige*, which is composed with double voice crossings, as well as cross relations between lines. But, as pointed out before, this is the word that says the picture, and this is the word that stands at the center of the large form cross. This utterance is undifferentiated in all aural senses from the other utterances of the voice, except by virtue of the word itself, which may be understandable to the listener when the rest of the text is not. Pärt seems to

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[3]Brown, The Gospel according to John, The Anchor Bible, LXX-LXXV.

[4]Gerard Sloyan, John, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, (Atlanta, GA, John Knox Press, 1988) vii-xv. This work gives a comprehensive, yet accessible introduction to the gospel and all the difficult issues it raises, as well as a review of the defining literature. Sloyan does not give explanations or apologies for these issues but seems to look at them unblinkingly, while also presenting the reader with information for further research.

excuse no one from guilt, not the crowd, not the soldiers, not the distanced narrator, not Jesus himself. And he does not excuse Pilate. That voice, in all its musical uncertainty, seems to reel about, fragmented, divided, weak. Yet there is at its center the tri-tone, which is unchanging and ever present. There is the clash of the scale segment sonorities, and there is that turning, rolling cross that cycles around and around through the voice, descending on feet of stone. I would suggest that this cross is the swastika cross, one of the oldest cross symbols in the Indo-European world.

From the sanskrit for "be well," anciently the swastika stood for the words "amen," or "so be it." In the Medieval era in Europe it became the symbol for an anti-semitic order, and of course, in modern times, it became one of the most feared symbols of all time, and certainly one of the most virulent symbols of anti-semitism. Pilate seems to echo the original meaning of the symbol when he says, "What I have written, I have written," his final words in this gospel. If Pärt indeed, intended this particular cross in the texture of this voice and the placement of the pedal tones, then he places the guilt equally upon Pilate, as well as the crowd, with both ancient and profoundly modern meaning.

This, then, is the icon "seen" in this work. The central crucifix is the middle ground of the Jesus voice. There are the internal crosses of the Chorus voice and the

Pilate voice.[5] The Chorus and the Evangelist form larger crosses, which embrace the entire work. The larger cross of the Chorus seems to focus the attention at the center of the cross, while the Evangelist cross seems to outline or frame the entire work. We may see the disciples in the eleven and a half revolutions of the crucifix in the Jesus voice. We may also see the four gospels represented in the precisely even number of phrases of the Evangelist voice.

The tonal centers may be considered as we would figure placement in an icon. As in many visual symbols, in icons how and where figures are placed is very important. In Passio the choice of pitch centers is also symbolically important (see Figure 36). The primary pitch centers are A, E, B, and F. The final pitch center is D.

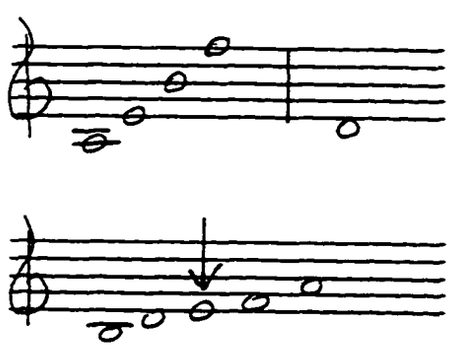

Figure 36. Primary and final pitch centers, arranged in thirds around E.

[5] It is tempting to see these internal crosses as the good thief and bad thief. However, John does not include this story in the telling of the crucifixion and I have, as much as possible, endeavored to tie the symbolism in this work to this particular gospel.

The first four could be considered in fifth relationship to one another. However, while Pärt definitely uses fifths, he is clear about the magic of thirds in his compositional methods. It is the thirds of the triad that are central to his methodology and when considered in thirds, four of the five pitches may be arranged thus: B-D-F-A. The E alone is not a third away, and can be placed most closely to D and F (a second), or more distantly to B and A (a fourth). If it is placed in closest position, between the D and F, then it is in the center of the pitch centers. This would support the cross of the Chorus (with pitch center E) and the cross within the Jesus voice (the E-B pedal) as central to the icon. If the E pitch center represents the crucifixion then we can perhaps say that the F pitch center represents the evil of the act (the tri-tone, Pilate's acquiescence), and D, as the salvation inherent in it, (the resolution from A, D as *Deus* or *Deum*). In other words, the crucifixion stands between humanity and God. It also stands equidistant between B and A. B is a tonal center used for the people other than Jesus in the story, Pilate, Peter, the Handmaid, the soldiers, the Priests, the crowd. A is the voice of the Evangelist. It is also the voice of distance, the voice between then and now, and E stands between. It is the event that ties past to present. In Passio, these tonal centers are blocks of color and form that do not change from utterance to utterance. As the eye observes a painting, moving slowly from place to place, so the ear is allowed to roam from shape to shape, hearing the icon in its stasis.

When considering icons, one must also consider icon covers. Icon covers are a type of art, designed to be placed over the icon to protect it and, in some cases, to reveal only a portion of the painting. They are generally made of silver and highly ornamental. There are three types. One is a frame that covers only the background of the work, leaving the figures entirely visible. A second type is one that covers the entire icon figure except face and hands. The third type is one that covers the entire icon. Icon covers are created with the same spiritual preparation as the icon itself, and its ornamental design is also very symbolic. In revealing only a portion of the painting the cover highlights those portions, making the viewer more aware of these portions as objects of veneration.

I would propose that, intended or not, the Evangelist functions in just such a way in Passio. It highlights the cross with its four sections, outlines it, and is the distancing material that acts as the selective ear between now and then. And like a silver cover it is just one color, the pitch center A, a single bell, with beautiful, but very symmetrical patterns. If there are four arms to the cross, there are also four corners to the icon and four gospels in the bible. The four Evangelists are frequent figures in a crucifixion icon, sometimes placed at the distal ends of the cross, sometimes placed under the horizontal arms, but most frequently in the four corners of the picture. Also in the gospel of John the passion story has only two figures at the foot of the cross, the Evangelist and Mary, the mother of

Jesus.[6] They are almost always placed one on either side of the cross in visual presentations. This is reflected in the binary division of the Evangelist voice.

And surely it is the gospel that protects the salvific act of the crucifixion. It is the Evangelist who, as eye witness, tells the story down the ages, keeps it alive, but also makes certain it is told in a particular way. Pärt reflects this in the structure of the music, in its very careful and particular patterns in the Evangelist voice. Because it is the Evangelist that is heard first, heard most, and is the most complex voice, it is as if all the other voices are heard through the Evangelist. Like a single story teller, the Evangelist decides what part of the story is to be known and how the voices in the story should be framed. Like the silversmith carefully designs and chases the icon cover, Pärt uses the Evangelist to reveal the image.

And if the Evangelist is the icon cover, about the icon and its cover lies the congregational frame, that which brings the image to the present. It gives the listener the understood context of the resurrection in its move from unresolved A minor to the glorious ending D major. It bridges the distance between speaker and audience, and gives sacred space to the aural image.

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[6]The synoptic gospels do not say who or how many are at the foot of the cross, only that "some women stood at a distance," as witnesses, and who are generally thought of as the three Marys. John, on the other hand is specific about Jesus' mother, Mary, and the "beloved disciple", understood to be John. And, in fact, most of the Orthodox icons that have the crucifixion as their subject, seem to divide the image by the cross with John on the right and Mary on the left, sometimes with other figures behind them,such as particular saints, sometimes alone.

The Gospel of John is unique in many ways and one of the more interesting aspects about it is that it is not the only Joannine writing in the New Testament. There are also the letters of John, the first letter being most particularly relevant to this study, and the Book of Revelations. The first letter has a prologue similar to the Gospel of John and once again emphasizes the Word made visible. It also emphasizes the eternal truth of the Word, of the true God, of eternal life. The Gospel of John is a book of signs and is concerned with more than just the telling of the life of Jesus. It is also concerned with leading Christians "into all truth."[7] Likewise, the first letter of John is concerned with instructing the nascent Christian Church with the symbols of Christian faith, love, charity, and guarding against their enemies. Unlike the synoptic gospels the mystery of Christ's glory, his crucifixion and resurrection are part of the here and now, not something to be awaited in the future; judgment, salvation, and eternal life are to be gained in this life by those who believe. The story of Jesus' life has fulfilled the Jewish liturgy. Belief in the signs and symbols, knowing the deeper meanings, brings the believer into true and eternal understanding and guaranteed salvation.

Likewise the final book of the new testament, the Book of Revelation or the Apocalypse, is also attributed, if not to the author of the Gospel of John, certainly to his followers, to what is generally referred to as the Joannine

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[7]Jones, "Introduction to Saint John," The Jerusalem Bible, 113.

circle. Revelatory writings were a particular literary form at the time of its writing in the first or second century. It was particularly popular in various Jewish circles, and all of the Joannine writings have been determined to be semitic in origin.

The language of apocalyptic writing is rich with imagery and symbolism that hides much. These images are deliberately elusive and ambiguous in order that the message may be interpreted in many ways. This protects the author and makes the deciphering of the writings clear only to insiders, who have the knowledge to interpret the images correctly. The Book of Revelation is generally thought to be an essay written to strengthen the tiny church against the power of Rome. What is relevant to this study, however, is that throughout the writings of John and the Joannine circle, the symbols and apocalyptic language are consistent. The images these writers evoke are signs of particular significance, some that warn, some that instruct, but most importantly some which are icons for veneration and contemplation. John gives the young church images with layered and varied meanings, heavy with the mystery of the Christ, filled with hidden symbols to be discovered only with study and meditation. In this way the Christian soul might be illuminated and transformed in faith.

Pärt has done very much the same thing. He has taken the crucifixion Passion, made of it an icon for contemplation, hiding within the larger image of the work the signs and symbols of a profound faith, a faith that can

comfort and strengthen. For those who would look for a deeper understanding of the passion, he gives great depth to the structure and form, layers of meaning upon which to speculate. For those who seek to worship, he gives a beautiful image for veneration. For those who seek only to listen, he gives a shimmering gift of music.

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