

Chapter 8

Via Crucis and Resurrectio

by Paweł Łukaszewski: In the Circle of Christian Culture

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Abstract “The Church continues to experience [...] the death [of Christ] on the Cross and His Resurrection. They are the substance of the Church’s everyday life.” These words of the Polish Pope resound in the musical work of Paweł Łukaszewski. *Via Crucis* (2000) and its continuation of sorts—*Resurrectio* (2012) belong to his significant works taking up the subject matters of Passion and Easter. Both compositions may be classified as part of the oratorio genre tradition. Their verbal text, Latin language as well as musical means (often deeply rooted in the European music of the past) distinctly indicate their affiliation to the circle of Christian culture and a reference to its values. Sometimes the author also introduces references to that which is specifically Polish. The paper attempts to point out the composer’s measures serving a higher purpose mentioned by Łukaszewski himself, i.e. *to bring man closer to Truth through reflection and contemplation*.

8.1 Introduction

Artists are constantly in search of the hidden meaning of things [...]. How then can we fail to see what a great source of inspiration is offered by that kind of homeland of the soul that is religion?

So wrote John Paul II in the *Letter to Artists* (1999: §13). He also added that in every epoch:

The religious theme has been among those most frequently treated by artists [...] it has been a great boon for an understanding of man, of the authentic image and truth of the person. The special bond between art and Christian revelation has also become evident (John Paul II 1999: §13).

Christian religion and tradition have been part of Polish history and culture for centuries. In contemporary times, beginning from the second half of the 20th

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century, they clearly resonated in musical compositions especially in the works of such outstanding composers as Krzysztof Penderecki, or Henryk Mikołaj Górecki. In their works they both once again point to fundamental and transcendental values. “Restoring the sacral dimension to reality is the only way to save man”—Penderecki said (1997: 68), “this world needs beauty so as not to wallow in despair”—Górecki quoted the famous conciliar thought (2013: 112).

The sacral works of Paweł Łukaszewski seem to emerge from the spirit of such music. He is a composer of the young generation (born 1968) and his work is recognized both in Poland as well as in the West. In 2012 he admitted:

Writing sacral music is for me a way of life. I live within that music [...] (Matwiejczuk 2012).

His ideology and artistic activities were most definitely influenced by where he was born, i.e. Częstochowa with Jasna Góra (the spiritual capital of Poland, an important place of worship and historical events), but also the atmosphere of his family home, and in particular his father, the composer. The heritage of the Second Vatican Council remains significant which is visible in the vocal and instrumental composition referring to the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et spes* with its title and text.

The majority of Łukaszewski’s work constitutes vocal as well as vocal and instrumental compositions, among which the subject of Lent and Easter Passion are high-ranking. The most significant of these are *Via Crucis* and *Resurrectio*.

The Church never ceases to relive his [Christ’s] death on the Cross and his Resurrection (John Paul II 1979: II 7).

Over centuries art has helped to understand and approach the greatest mystery of Christianity. Both of Łukaszewski’s compositions are part of the tradition of an oratorio genre, and the applied composing strategies (often deeply rooted within the European music of the past) clearly indicate their affiliation to the circle of Christian culture and a reference to its values.

8.2 Subjects, Text and Language of Compositions

The composition’s text is of fundamental significance to the composer. He writes:

I try to consider every word so that its meaning and message reaches the listener. Thus, I use the sound language, which I define as “renewed” [...] for my own use I thought it was necessary to formulate the concept of renewed tonality (Łukaszewski 2006: 66).

One may add—neotonicity. Whereas, Adrian Thomas defines Łukaszewski’s musical style as anti-modernism (Thomas 2005: 318).

Via Crucis mystery (2000) for countertenor, tenor, baritone, reciter, mixed choir, organs and orchestra originated from the composer’s fascination with the liturgy of

Lent and Polish Lenten songs (Markuszewski 2011: 3).¹ The service of the Way of the Cross has a special place amongst prayer practices of the Catholic community. Firstly—it commemorates the Christ's passage with a cross on his shoulders through the streets of Jerusalem from Pilate's Praetorium to the place of crucifixion. Secondly—the principal content of the service is a reflective contemplation of the Christ's passion which takes place during a symbolic and, at the same time, real way marked by 14 subsequent stations. In 1998 Łukaszewski said:

I am thinking of writing the Way of the Cross – *Via Crucis*, but I have a problem with texts. There are some very beautiful reflections about individual stations but they don't convince me. I think I'll stick to the texts from the Holy Bible because they are the most beautiful (Młynarczyk 1998).

The composer selected texts from all four Gospels and—what is interesting—fragments from the Book of Isaiah. In so far as the words from the New Testament refer directly to the passion events, the prophetic Old Testament texts play a role of a reflective commentary (removal from God and committing sins, God's boundless love). Text compilation is not surprising. It is part of the Way of the Cross service as well as the musical tradition of the passion genre. Suffice it to mention Schütz's stories, Bach's passions or the 20th-century St Luke Passion by Penderecki. Juxtaposing the texts from the Old and New Testaments brings to mind associations with yet another distinguished work of Baroque—Händel's *Messiah*.

Resurrectio (2012)² for mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, mixed choir and orchestra is a kind of continuation for *Via Crucis*. The anticipation for the composition is introduced by the fact that Łukaszewski adds into the *Way of the Cross* station 15—the Resurrection, sanctioned by the Second Vatican Council. As the composer writes:

[In *Resurrectio*] it was my intention to convey all events that take place after the Resurrection [...] (PWM 2013).

Once again the author used texts from various sources, and integrated them with music. Primarily he selected fragments from the Gospel describing the events after the Resurrection connected with the women visiting the grave and the Christ's disciples (*Sepulcrum*, *Noli me tangere*, *Emmaus*, *Thomas*, *Galilea*). Moreover, he introduced non-Biblical texts. One of them is the Medieval hymn *Salve, festa dies*, excluded from the post-Vatican liturgy, although sang in previous centuries during the Resurrection Mass procession (it seems that is why it is one of the initial parts of the composition). Next one is a known medieval sequence *Victimae paschali laudes*, obligatory in the Easter Sunday liturgy by way of a resolution of the Second Vatican Council. Placed as the second-to-last part of the composition, kept in a

¹Polish premiere took place in Białystok, 8 March 2002 (soloists: Piotr Olech, Krzysztof Szmyt, Wojciech Gierlach, Krzysztof Kolberger, Cantica Cantamus Choir, conductor Violetta Bielecka, Białystok Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor Piotr Wajrak).

²Premiere: 1 April 2013, Cologne; Neues Rheinisches Kammerorchester Köln, con. Richard Mailänder.

laudable and solemn tone, it once again refers to the Mystery of Salvation and the Creed: *My Lord and Hope*. Łukaszewski also turned towards the church of the East, thrice introducing fragments of an Orthodox prayer from the Feast of the Myrrh-Bearing Women. The feast—exceptionally significant in the tradition of Eastern Christianity—refers to the events described in the Gospels of St. Mathew and St. Mark. The composer himself justified the application of yet two other texts:

An important role is also played by *Lumen Christi*, the Light of Christ – it is part of the Holy Saturday liturgy... For me, it was a starting point, opening the whole story. And the last part, *Christus heri et hodie* – the Christ yesterday and today – is a recapitulation of the meaning of the entire composition, an emphasis of the whole message, and musically also referring to the beginning, to *Eicon* (PWM 2013).

Texts referring to the Western ritual are in Latin, which is—according to Łukaszewski—the language of prayer continually potent with meaning, still alive thanks to the church but also to religious music. Whereas, the orthodox words resound in the original, i.e. the Old Church Slavonic language. Introducing traditional languages of both Christian churches as well as a specific selection of texts clearly points to universal values and messages.

8.3 Musical Macro- and Micro-form

One of the qualities of the composer's individual style is his exquisite structuring and a sense of musical form which often results from the text itself.

The macro-form of *Via Crucis* is an outcome of the stations system of the Way of the Cross service (with an added 15th station). The center is structured around stations 10–12 as a climax for the suffering on Golgotha concluded by Christ's death, after which the narration tempo slows down considerably (Table 8.1).

Łukaszewski reaches for traditional patterns applying a concise *exordium*³ as the composition's frames, transferring the listener into the times of another, "sacred reality" (twice the choir calls out with an instrumental accompaniment: *Via Crucis*) and *conclusio*—*Christus vincit*, based on the initial musical material and acting as a contemplative message (see Fig. 8.1).

The individual stations (except the last one) are separated by instrumental interludes connected with each other also by related musical motifs. On one hand, this is a reference to the moment of actually passing from one station to another in the Way of the Cross liturgy (which is mentioned by the composer himself), and on the other—the time of prayer meditation. Moreover, the musical layout of every station is identical:

- at the beginning the station's number is indicated by a certain number repetitions of vertical structure in the instrumental part (it means: Station I—one beat, Station II—two repetitions/beats etc.);

³The terms *exordium* and *conclusio* are used within the meaning of the baroque rhetoric.

Table 8.1 *Via Crucis*, macro-form

Part	Title	Text	Forces
Exordium	<i>Via Crucis</i>	–	Choir
Interlude Station I	Judgment is pronounced by Pontius Pilate	Luke 23: 21–25	Narrator, Choir, Pilate (T), Evangelist (cT)
Interlude Station II	Jesus takes up his Cross	Luke 9: 23	Narrator Jesus (Br)
Interlude Station III	Jesus falls under the cross for the first time	Isaiah 53: 1–3	Choir
Interlude Station IV	The mother comes across the path of her Son	Luke 2: 34–35	Narrator Symeon (T)
Interlude Station V	Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene	Matthew 27: 32	Evangelist (cT)
Interlude Station VI	Veronica wipes the face of Jesus	Isaiah 25: 8–10	Evangelist (cT) Evangelist (T)
Interlude Station VII	Jesus falls under the cross a second time	Isaiah 53: 4–5	Choir
Interlude Station VIII	The women lament for the lamentable Jesus Christ	Luke 23: 27–31	Evangelist (cT) Narrator Jesus
Interlude Station IX	Jesus falls under the cross a third time	Isaiah 53: 6–7	Choir
Interlude Station X	Jesus is stripped of his garments and drinks poison	John 19: 23–24	Choir
Interlude Station XI	The tortures crucify Jesus Christ	Mark 15: 22– 23, 25–28	Choir
Interlude Station XII	Jesus Christ dies on the Cross	John 19: 25–30	Narrator Evangelist (cT) Jesus
Interlude Station XIII	The body of Jesus Christ is taken down from the Cross	John 19: 31–34	Evangelist (T) Evangelist (cT)
Interlude Station XIV	The body of the Christ is laid in a tomb	John 19: 38–42	Narrator
Final Station	The Resurrection	John 20: 1–2	Choir
Conclusio	Christus vincit (Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ rules)	–	Choir

- then the Biblical story is included in constant frames (apart from the last one): name of the station (male voices), invocation *Adoramus te* (female voices), and concluding with a lamentation (once again female voices). Łukaszewski adapted

(a)

4/4 Adagio ♩, 60-70 3/4 2/4 4/4 2/4 4/4 Allegro ♩, 120

flauto
oboe
clarinetto in si
fagotto
1
2
4 corni
3
4
1
2
3 tromboni
3 tuba
timpani
campane
2 triangoli
2 campanelli da messa
piatti a due
gong
frusta
gran cassa
CONTRATENORE [solo]
TENORE [solo]
BARITONO [solo]
RECITATORE [basso profondo]
S
A
T
B
organo
10 violini I
8 violini II
6 viole
4 violoncelli
3 contrabbassi

Fig. 8.1 a Paweł Łukaszewski, *Via Crucis*: exordium. **b** Paweł Łukaszewski, *Via Crucis*: conclusion

the prayer calls along with their melodic sound from the liturgical service. This specific type of chorus creates a form defined by the composer himself as a mega-rondo.

(a)

4/4 Grave $\text{♩} = 40$

flauto

oboe

clarinetto in si b

fagotto

2 corni in fa

campane tubola

triangolo

piatto sospeso con catenine

tam-tam profondissimo

org. gr. (grand)

5 violini I

5 violini II

4 viole

3 violoncelli

2 contrabbassi

Grave $\text{♩} = 40$

Fig. 8.2 a Paweł Łukaszewski, *Resurrectio*: exordium. b Paweł Łukaszewski, *Resurrectio*: conclusion

This musical icon bearing witness to the Resurrection seems to symbolically refer to the sign of light (just as the third part of the composition), in which Christians saw the image of Christ—the Light of the World, the conqueror who defeated the darkness of death. Łukaszewski conducts narration in a slow tempo extending the registers in the direction of the higher ones, overlaps melodic plans, introduces the sound of bells, and finally—disperses rhythmical values and applies repetitions of second motifs in the violin part creating a “shimmering” sound.

(b)

6/4 $\text{♩} = 50$

flauto

oboe

clarinetto in si

sassofono soprano in si

fagotto

2 corni in fa

campanelli

triangolo

S

A

T

B

cembalo

5 violini I

5 violini II

4 viole

3 violoncelli

2 contrabbassi

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Fig. 8.2 (continued)

Table 8.2 *Resurrectio*, macro-form

Part	Title	Text	Forces
I (Exordium)	Eicon	–	Orchestra
II	Salve festa dies	Venantius Fortunatus	Choir, Orchestra
III	Lumen Christi	From the Holy Saturday liturgy	BR, Choir, Orchestra
IV	Sepulcrum	Matthew 28: 1–7	RECITATIVO Evangelist (T with fg) cembalo, vc ARIA DI ANGELO MS with ob org, vla
V	Myrophoros I	Orthodox prayer from the Feast of the Myrrh-Bearing Women	Choir: S1, S2, A1, A2 fl, ob, cl in Bflat, fg
VI	Noli me tangere	John 20: 11–13, 15–18	RECITATIVO Evangelist (T with fg) cembalo, vc DUETTO BR with sax. s. MS with ob org, vn I, vla
VII	Emmaus	Luke 24: 31–32	RECITATIVO Evangelist (T with fg) cembalo, vc T with fg BR with sax. s. choir: T, B cembalo, org vn I, vc
VIII	Myrophoros II	Orthodox prayer from the Feast of the Myrrh-Bearing Women	Choir: S1, S2, A1, A2 fl, ob, cl in Bflat, fg
IX	Thomas	John 20: 19–29	RECITATIVO Evangelist (MS with fg) cembalo, vc DUETTO BR with sax. s. T with ob org, vn I, vla
X	Myrophoros III	Orthodox prayer from the Feast of the Myrrh-Bearing Women	Choir: S1, S2, A1, A2 fl, ob, cl in Bflat, fg
XI	Galilea	Matthew 28: 16–20	RECITATIVO Evangelist (T with fg; MS with ob) cembalo, vla, vc ARIA DEL SIGNORE BR with sax. s. org, vnI
XII	Victime paschali laudes	Vipo from Burgundy	Choir, Orchestra
XIII (Conclusio)	Christus heri et hodie	From the Holy Saturday liturgy	Choir, Orchestra

Conclusio, being the composition's expressional culmination, refers to the ending of *Via Crucis*. In *The Way of the Cross* words referred to Christ—the leader, king, ruler; in *Resurrectio* they emphasize His everlasting reign and they are strengthened by the last laudatory *Hallelujah* sang by the choir.

The composition also stands out due to its type of arc structure (Table 8.2).

The musical score for Station XII of *Via Crucis* by Paweł Łukaszewski is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff is for the Flute (fla), with time signatures of 4/4, 3/4, 6/8 (marked with a tempo of 50-60), 9/8, 3/4 (marked with a tempo of 50), and 2/4. Below the flute are staves for Oboes 1 through 11 (oc 1 to oc 10 e 11), Trombone (tmp), Trumpet (cmp), Clarinet (CT), Bassoon (BR), Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), Violin I (vn I), Violin II (vn II), Viola (vl), Violoncello (vc), and Contrabass (cb). The vocal parts include a Chorus Tenor (CT) and a Bass (BR) with Latin lyrics. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf*, *f*, *fpp*, and *p*, and performance instructions like "Evangelical *mf*" and "(Sings)". A rehearsal mark "670" is present at the top right.

Fig. 8.3 Paweł Łukaszewski, *Via Crucis*: Station XII

The hymn from part 2 corresponds to the sequence in part 12, the Angel's aria from part 4 exhibits similarities to the Christ's aria from part 11. The scene with the faithful Mary Magdalene by the Lord's grave (part 6) corresponds to the scene with the unfaithful Thomas (part 9). The composer consolidates the form by using certain types of vocal and instrumental forces and textures connected with similar text, related instrumental starting motifs of parts as well as numerous repetitions of phrases or motifs on constant notes in a dominant slow tempo.

A definite type of a macro-form and its internal integration (often achieved by constant repetitions of verbal and musical formulas) serve religious ritualization, immersion in prayer and directing the community of the faithful towards the sphere of *sacrum*.

8.4 The Structure of Musical Narration. Forces

The way of structuring musical narration and the symbolic selection of the forces are part of the European tradition of passion music although they are not devoid of individual composer's touch.

In both compositions three narration layers may be distinguished: epic (the Evangelist's tale), dramatic (a specific time of events connected with the crucifixion and resurrection) and lyrical (bringing about the moment of consideration).

In *Via Crucis* the Evangelist's text is divided into no less than three parts: the narrator—reciter (the most objective account), the Evangelist counter-tenor, whose utterance resembles a Baroque recitative, sometimes *arioso* and marked with emotional tint, and the Evangelist tenor (stations 6 and 13), melo-declamatory words referring to the community of Jews or the faithful. In *Resurrectio* the epic and dramatic layers are blurred due to the application of *arioso*-type signing sometimes smoothly evolving into a more singsong duet or an aria. The narrator's text is this time divided into two parts: tenor or mezzo-soprano—always accompanied by a bassoon.

The characters participating in the Biblical scenes were given their natural, real voice registers. Moreover, in *Resurrectio* their utterances are accompanied by a concerting, dialoguing solo (Mary Magdalene and the Angel—mezzo-soprano with an oboe, the unfaithful Thomas—tenor with an oboe, the disciples—the male choir).

Jesus (the main character of the drama) received a baritone register, an *arioso*-type utterance, and in *Via Crucis* usually a monotonous rhythm (frequent duplets). Station 8 is an exception when Jesus admonishes the Daughters of Jerusalem. The rhythmical course becomes more varied and narration is more dynamic. The instrument accompaniment has symbolical significance. In *The Way of the Cross* these are not only strings but also an alto flute whose part at the moment of Christ's death has quasi-concerting qualities. Additionally in this central point of the composition, Łukaszewski achieves an unusual effect of a sound landscape introducing an ocarina. The tone of instruments (similarly as many years earlier in

Canticum Canticorum by Penderecki) seems to transport the listener into a sacral dimension, referring to that which is distant and unreal (see Fig. 8.3).

In *Resurrectio* all utterances related to the character of Christ are accompanied by a rather unusual instrument (in the context of Passion tradition)—a soprano saxophone.

The choir not only performs the part of the turba but also takes up the words of Old-Testament deliberations (*Via Crucis*), or represents a community of the faithful remembering the events of the Resurrection, expressing gratitude and eulogy of God (*Resurrectio*). In the second of the two compositions, the type of lyrical commentary is made up of three parts to eastern church texts (composed earlier and then included into the composition). Mimicking the multi-voiced orthodox singing, Łukaszewski conducts the female choir in a declamation texture, *nota contra notam*, and it is accompanied by the delicate sound of woodwind instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon; see Fig. 8.4).

In both compositions, operating on the time of narration is of considerable significance. The narration time seems to be stopped. It is influenced by a similar tempo of type of a vocal utterance, numerous constant notes, repetitiveness of musical structures, predilection for specific registers. Especially in *Resurrectio* it may be defined as “numinotic time” (referring to Rudolf Otto’s thought); the dynamic but also meditative narration type of *Via Crucis* is substituted with the dominant “duration”. Łukaszewski comments as follows:

The repetitiveness of musical thoughts and words slows down the tempo of events, extends time – it is stopped, suspended, contemplated [...]. Sacral time is the time of inner experience (Markuszewski 2011: 2).

This time is certainly necessary to men in the new millennium, at the bend of time (Łukaszewski 2006: 67).

8.5 “Music in Music”

Łukaszewski’s compositions are an example of the so-called “inclusive music”,⁴ and that is because of allusions, quotations and auto-quotations characteristic both for the composer’s style as well as the Polish composing tradition.

In *Resurrectio* Łukaszewski quotes the melodies of the Gregorian hymn *Salva festa dies* and the sequence *Victime paschali laudes*. Thus he refers to that which is universal in Christian culture and which constitutes the roots of European religious music. In the second part, the chant version of the hymn is introduced by male voices and is then taken up by sopranos. The author adapts it as part of his musical language applying a specific type of vocal and instrumental texture, rhythmization and harmonization. Whereas, in part 12 the composer places the original melody of the sequence in the soprano and tenor voices (along with a discreetly accompanying

⁴“Inclusive music”, or assimilating music, accepting a foreign fragment in a way harmonious with the whole (see Tomaszewski 2005: 29).

We search for beauty, peace, and contemplation in a harried and degenerated world (Petrovič 2013).

Via Crucis, being part of European tradition is not devoid of Polish accents. For Łukaszewski's countrymen, the composition may become the national Way of the Cross due to numerous allusions to or quotations of Polish passion songs intertwined within instrumental interludes. The most distinctly referred to are: a 17th-century song *Ogrodzie Oliwny* [Oh, Olive Garden] after station 9 and a 16th-century song *Krzyżu Święty* [Oh, Holy Cross] after station 10. Moreover, in station 14 the composer introduced the melody of a Christmas carol lullaby *Jezus Malusieńki* [Tiny Baby Jesus] as a background for the reciter's declamation. As the composer states himself:

This quotation symbolizes the birth of a new life at the moment the body dies (Łukaszewski 2006: 67).

8.6 Conclusions

Already ancient thinkers emphasized that the spirit of culture is the culture of spirit, and it may be expressed by works of art. In Europe, the Christian faith has been the source of important culture-creating inspirations for centuries. Religiousness was used to express certain beliefs, it helped to transfer man from the world of senses into spiritual reality. In 1983 in La Scala the Polish Pope reminded:

The world of culture and art was assigned to build man: to support him along the frequently torturous way in search of truth (John Paul II 1983).

Benedict XVI also mentions the moral and spiritual confusion of the 21st-century man. He emphasized the fundamental significance of art for our civilization—inspired by the Gospel of culture and spirituality. It seems that both of Łukaszewski's compositions refer to the heritage of those teachings. The artist applies it consciously, and—referring to the concept of Yuri Lotman—his “being yourself” means identifying, being part of the space of Christian culture, also of Polish origin. Łukaszewski confessed:

Sacral music should move listeners and be a prayer which reaches God (Matwiejczuk 2012).

Thus all the composer's measures serve a superior value which is also mentioned by the author himself:

I want my music to inspire people to reflection, and by slowing down the tempo of life to aid them in concentration and contemplation. By creating it maybe I could become a mediator in delivering the Truth (Markuszewski 2011: 4).

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