Ostinato Patterns in the Opera "Antigone" by Carl Orff and an Original Composition for Organ and Orchestra, "In Nomine".

Wieslaw Sta Rentowski
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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OSTINATO PATTERNS IN THE OPERA ANTIGONE BY CARL ORFF
AND
AN ORIGINAL COMPOSITION
FOR ORGAN AND ORCHESTRA, "IN NOMINE"

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

in
The School of Music

by
Wieslaw Sta Rentowski
M.A., University of Lodz, Lodz, 1978
M.A., Lodz Academy of Music, Lodz, 1985
M.A., Fr. Chopin Academy of Music, Warsaw, 1987
M.M., Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1993
December 1996

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation consists of two parts: a discussion of the ostinato patterns in Carl Orff's five-act opera Antigone and an original composition for organ and orchestra, In Nomine.

The purpose of Part One is to discuss the different applications of the ostinato idea throughout the opera Antigone as this is an integral part of the work. This part is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter focuses on biographical background of the composer, his stylistic transformations, and his interest in a total musical theater. The second chapter introduces definitions and music examples of the ostinato and ground bass, associated with different historic periods and musical styles. In the third chapter attention is given to the opera Antigone, based on Hölderlin's creative translation of the ancient tragedy. The fourth chapter is a discussion of different kinds of the ostinato patterns, used by Orff to support his musical interpretation of Sophocles' play. This chapter also emphasizes some structural characteristics controlled by different ostinato ideas created by the composer. Priority is given to the relationships between ostinato patterns and the basic types of foot, derived from Greek verse prosody. Finally, the last chapter summarizes the composer's extensive use of ostinato patterns throughout the entire opera. In
conclusion, the opera Antigone is the composer's glorification of ostinato patterns, as related to his contemporary vision of a total theater.

Part Two of this dissertation is the author's original composition for organ and orchestra entitled In Nomine. The work is in three movements and is based on the original scale called Gamma. Gamma is very active and it acts as a universal force which can lead to many other forces manifested by other scales. The scale resources are related to the concept of open tonality developed by the composer since 1985. This system is in opposition to the traditional tonal system in which the main force of activity is a sonority, the dominant that dominates the flow of the music and leads to only one predetermined resolution (tonic), thus closing the circle of the music.
PART ONE

Ostinato Patterns in the Opera Antigone by Carl Orff

I. Introduction

Carl Orff (1895-1982), German composer and educator, learned to play the piano, organ and cello and began to compose songs as a boy. He studied music under Beer-Walbrumn and Zilcher at the Munich Academy of Music and graduated in 1914. His early compositions show the influences of Debussy, Schoenberg, Strauss and Pfitzner.1 In 1924, together with Dorothee Günther, Orff founded the Güntherschule for gymnastics, music and dance in Munich. This institution was formed to explore new relationships between movement and music. In the early 1930’s he wrote Schulwerk ("School Music"), a series of musical exercises for young children. Their purpose was to stimulate and teach children to develop as musical personalities in their own right, by developing self-expression through the process of improvisation. Orff’s output is divided into two main categories: stage-work and school-work. Both were nourished by the same creative spirit and exhibit very similar technical characteristics. "In the Schulwerk Orff has succeeded in writing in an elementary, but not

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primitive, idiom which is within the range both of the child and the ordinary music lover”.2

From 1930 to 1933 Orff was conductor of the Munich Bach Society, for whom he made many arrangements of early music. During the Second World War Orff remained in Germany, and from 1950 to 1955 he taught composition at the Staatliche Hochschule fur Music in Munich. In 1955 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Tubingen and from the University of Munich, in 1972. He died in 1982.

Carl Orff first came to wide attention through his composition Carmina Burana, a scenic oratorio for soloists, choruses, and orchestra. After the first performance of Carmina Burana in June, 1937, Orff said to his publisher: "Everything I have written to date, and which you have, unfortunately, printed, can be destroyed. With Carmina Burana, my collected works begin".3

Carmina Burana is this composer’s apotheosis of ostinato patterns and his principal goal, first realized in this work, has been a "total theater". The idea was to engage music, words and movement in producing an overwhelming effect. As incorporated by the composer, both Greek and Baroque models exhibited his interest in two

3Ibid., p. 27.
aspects of musical theater: a tragedy of archetypes and a visionary embodiment of metaphysical ideas. All Orff's subsequent works employ musical effects similar to those first found in Carmina Burana, although his later compositions are distinguished by a diminishing musical content and increasing metaphysical aspects.

In fact, Orff's style is based on very simple musical devices like pedal point and ostinato. His works generally give an important place to the chorus, while the orchestra (usually rich in percussion) is often used in block triadic harmony to underline the highly accented choral rhythms. Extended melodic writing, thematic development or polyphony can rarely be found in his music.

Using effects based on very fundamental musical instincts, almost throughout his entire output, Orff avoided the most common difficulties encountered in much of the 20th century music by many other composers. Because of its simplicity, audiences respond to Orff's music almost immediately.

II. Ostinato and Ground Bass

The ostinato (Italian for "obstinate") is a term related to the repetition of a motive or theme (whether pitched or purely rhythmic) many times in succession, usually in the same voice. A repeating melodic phrase set in the bass is called a basso ostinato, or ground bass, and is usually accompanied by continuous variation in the upper
parts. The *melodic ostinato*, in which a melodic unit recurs, is the most common type of ostinato. An early example can be found in the eight-measure *pes* of *Sumer is icumen in* (c. 1310). See Example 1.

Example 1:

![Musical notation]

A two-voice ostinato, sometimes accompanies a four-voice canon. It is used in double counterpoint or *Stimmtausch* (German for "voice exchange"). The four-measure ostinato of the English virginal composition *My Lady Carey’s Dompe* (c. 1525) is an early form of a ground bass with a set of continuous variations. See Example 2 on page 5.
The term "ground" may refer to the bass pattern itself, to the process of repetition in general (including the harmonies and upper voices), or to a composition in which these occur (e.g., in the passacaglia or chaconne). The word "ground" was first used in England late in the sixteenth century and appeared frequently there throughout the Baroque period, sometimes associated with improvisation. When the recurring element is a succession of chords, the harmonic ostinato element predominates. In a rhythmic ostinato, rhythm is the only constant factor while melody, harmony and articulation change on repetition of the pattern. The repetition of a rhythmic pattern throughout a voice part is known as isorhythm. This device is found in many motets of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. An isorhythmic voice usually contains
two patterns that are repeated, a rhythmic pattern or talea and a melodic pattern or color. A pitch ostinato refers to the recurrence of a succession of pitches with changing rhythms. As suggested by the author and in relation to the species of eighteenth century counterpoint, at least three statements must occur before an ostinato can be said to exist. The length of the repeated pattern may extend over several staves or systems, as in a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century motet when a cantus firmus is repeated a number of times.

There are some examples of simultaneous or double ostinatos in the final movement of I. Stravinsky’s Symphony of Psalms (1930), (See Music Example 3), and in the ballet Petrushka from 1911.

Example 3:

Contemporary composers have shown a tremendous interest in the melodic ground, perhaps rivaling even those produced throughout the Baroque period. Many twentieth-
century composers have written entire works based on large and melodically more substantial ostinato patterns. Probably the best known example of this kind is Ravel's ballet, *Bolero* (1928). In this piece, Ravel repeats a single theme over and over, each time a little louder than the time before, beginning with only a few instruments and ending with the whole orchestra. Throughout the entire work neither melody, rhythm, nor essential harmony changes. The only change is that of color resulting from the varied instrumentation (the composition lasts about twenty minutes), and the very abrupt and effective changes of tonal centre (e.g., from C-major to E-major).

**III. The Opera Antigone**

Since Orff based *Carmina Burana* (1937) almost entirely on ostinato patterns, it is no surprise that his creation of *Antigone* is also based on the same technique. The opera was planned by the composer as early as in 1940, and a first draft was written in 1943. In 1947-48 Orff completed the opera and the work received its first performance on August 9, 1949, as part of the Salzburg Festival.

It is a setting of Hölderlin’s version of the ancient tragedy by Sophocles and the translation is a creative achievement in its own right. Orff was very concerned with the presentation and spiritual vitalization of Sophocles’ tragedy. He once said that "From the very beginning, I saw that there was nothing to add to Sophocles’ text. My task
was to interpret it in a contemporary medium. Antigone is not a work for the opera repertory; it is a ceremonial cult work. I consider my work merely as an interpretation of Sophocles' play for our time; his is the significant contribution, not mine".4

The cast of characters includes: Antigone, Ismene, A Chorus, Creon, A Sentry, Haemon, Tiresias, A Messenger, and Eurydice. The orchestra, preferably not visible to the audience, consists of special and unique instruments: 6 grand pianos, also played with drumsticks and plectrum, 4 harps, 9 double basses, 6 flutes, 6 oboes (3 English horns), 6 trumpets with mutes, 7-8 timpani (one tuned to high A), percussion (10-15 players) including 1 soprano lithophone, 2-3 xylophones, 2(1)5 trough-xylophones (soprano), 6(4) trough-xylophones (tenor), 2(1) trough-xylophones (bass), 1 small wood-block, 1 large African wood-block, 2 bells, 3 glockenspiels, 4 pairs of cymbals, 3 Turkish cymbals, 3 pairs of Turkish cymbals, 1 small anvil, 3 triangles, 2 bass drums, 6 tambourines, 6 pairs of castanets, and 10 large Javanese gongs. The orchestration, following a terraced structure, becomes more intense at each stage. According to the 1959 edition by B. Schott's

4Ibid., p. 119.

5The numbers in parentheses probably suggest necessary instruments for performances with reduced orchestra.
Soehne, Orff's massive, monumental construction is in five acts:

Act I, Con larghezza e passionate
Act II, Calmo
Act III, Molto tranquillo
Act IV, Con gran lamento
Act V, Molto estatico

The instruments and characters are introduced successively, following one after the other, and each instrument/character has its own symbolic significance. The flutes, for example, appear for the first time at the words die göttliche Schönheit (German for "heavenly beauty"), and they represent bird-song. In the fourth act, characteristically, the Tiresias melisma is reintroduced at each of his entries, and therefore constitutes an element of the rondo-like structure of the scene.

In Antigone, as in Carmina Burana, Orff's final concern is not with musical, but rather with spiritual exposition and his music shows this spiritual development. This development has a corresponding musical technique and is expressed mainly through rhythm and melody, while the tonal effect is built up through formal repetition from a minimum of material. As in Stravinsky's music, the rhythm has an immense intensity, which often breaks through the regular meter by either changing the time signature or by shortening and accelerating the phrases. Orff achieves a
synthesis of the musical theater and spoken drama through a psalmodic form of expression that caused him to ask for a new kind of interpretation from his actor-singer performers. The basic idea of the drama is pronounced by the Messenger at the end of the opera: *Vom zuvorgesezten Verhängnis hat kein Sterblicher Befreiung.* ("No mortal can escape his preordained fate").

As will be discussed, the entire opera is based on ostinato patterns. The unique style and texture of *Antigone,* as of Orff's work in general, does not belong to any easily defined musical or stylistic category of 20th-century music.

IV. Ostinato Patterns in *Antigone*

A. Act I

Prior to the discussion of ostinato patterns, general structure will be given. The formal structure of *Antigone* is created by sections that follow exactly the unaltered and unabbreviated text of Sophocles in Hölderlin's version. Because the opera has many unmeasured sections, the location of various aspects of the analysis will be stated through rehearsal numbers. These numbers will be provided according to the 1959 edition of *Antigone* by B. Schott's Soehne.

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7 Rehearsal numbers will be abbreviated as r.#.
The tragedy begins at the point when Antigone (dramatic soprano), despite Creon’s savage decrees, is determined to accord her brother Polyneices the true rites of burial. Antigone ignores her sister’s (Ismene, soprano) discouragement and visits her brother’s corpse alone.

As mentioned before, Antigone is based on different ostinato ideas that control the whole opera. Both extended ostinato patterns and intoned, often monotonous vocal lines, which follow the natural rise and fall of speech, support Orff’s musical interpretation of an original Greek tragedy. As suggested by W. Schadewaldt in the introduction to the recording of Antigone "With this work he created a new idiom which completely left behind the forms and methods of classic-romantic opera, marking the culmination of a trend that had been increasingly apparent in his earlier works".8

The form of the first act is created by six major sections:

A  r.# 1-12 Antigone and Ismene/Orchestra
B  r.#13-17 Instrumental Interlude
C  r.#18-31 Chorus/Orchestra
D  r.#32-43 Creon/Orchestra
E  r.#44-58 Sentry, Creon, Chorus/Orchestra
F  r.#59-72 Creon, Sentry/Orchestra

There are seven different, distinctive types of ostinato patterns in this act:

1. **Isolated rhythmic patterns in solo voice**
2. **Rhythmic/harmonic patterns as accompaniment for voice**
3. **Melodic-rhythmic patterns as accompaniment for voice**
4. **Complex instrumental patterns with changing texture**
5. **Harmonic patterns as accompaniment for chorus**
6. **Harmonic patterns based on chordal interventions as accompaniment for voice**
7. **Harmonic patterns as accompaniment for voice with imitations**

1. **Isolated rhythmic ostinato patterns in solo voice**

   At the beginning of the phrase, an unaccompanied solo voice repeats the same note. For example, Antigone’s pattern always starts with a three-note motive (long-short-short note pattern) related to a Greek foot, the *dactyl* (Greek, "daktylos"). In classical Latin and Greek verse prosody, a foot, is a unit of two or three syllables and a verse consisting of anywhere from two to six feet. There are many examples of these short ostinatos based on the dactyl in Antigone’s part: on A (r.#1-3), on B (r.#1-3), on D (r.#4) and on E (r.#1-3, 5, 9-11). See Example 4 on page 13.
As will be discussed later, all basic types of foot derived from Greek verse prosody are present in the opera Antigone:

- the iamb (short, long)
- the trochee (long, short)
- the anapaest (short, short, long)
- the dactyl (long, short, short)
- the spondee (long, long)
- the tribrach (short, short, short)
Ismene, Creon and Sentry also introduce many isolated rhythmic patterns that vary in length throughout the first act. Most entrances of this type of the ostinato, with its three-note beginning motive, start on E. Orff uses the same pitch for the opening and closing section and the E natural serves as a tonal center for the entire movement. This helps the listener to follow the many extensive recitative/parlando-like areas which are not related to well-defined tonal centers.

2. Rhythmic and harmonic ostinato patterns as 
   accompaniment for solo voice

   At r.#3, all four instruments (two percussion instruments and two pianos) repeat the same notes forty-one times. Pitches D and E, sounding as major seconds, are used as the pedal point, against an independent melody line sung by Antigone. The meter changes, but a monotonous pulse of ostinato remains the same, following an eight-note/rest alternation. See Example 5 on page 15.

   This type of ostinato is also present at r.#7: D and E sonorities against Ismene's part.

3. Melodic and rhythmic ostinato patterns as 
   accompaniment for solo voices

   At r.#6, Lithophone and Piano 1 introduce seven quarter-notes, an ascending melodic pattern (D#-F-E-G-G-flat-F-E), then repeated thirteen times. While Timpani and Piano 2 play a two-note motive on E, over and over again
Example 5: Score, page 4

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(for twenty-seven measures), Ismene pronounces her message through a constantly repeated E. After sixteen measures, the texture is completed by Pianos 3, 4. These two instruments play another short pattern, based on the D, D#, E pitch collection. See Example 6 on page 16.
Example 6: Score, page 8

4. Complex instrumental ostinato patterns with changing texture

A long instrumental interlude starting at r.#13 (section B), has its own development related to the texture, gradually becoming more and more complex. From a simple rhythmic pattern on E, played at the beginning of this section by Piano 1,3, Orff creates a full and massive
texture that is highly homophonic. However, by introducing changes in different instruments, the composer achieves almost heterophonic effect. See Example 7 on page 18.

According to the New Harvard Dictionary of Music, heterophony (a term coined by Plato) can be described as "the simultaneous statement, especially in improvised performance, of two or more different versions of what is essentially the same melody (as distinct from polyphony). It often takes the form of a melody combined with an ornamented version of itself, the former sung and the latter played on an instrument..."9

Even more complex and massive are three instrumental interludes in section C at r.#26, r.#28, and r.#30. Here, the sonority is created by an eleven-note diatonic cluster, diatonic chords: C-D-G-A, G-C-E-G, and repeated notes derived from the A, C, E collection. Small Anvil, as the top instrument of this section, plays the same rhythmic pattern on A (two triplets), while Piano 1, 3 use this pattern for the repeated C-E-G-A chord. Highly unified melodic-rhythmic/harmonic ostinato patterns of instrumental interlude correspond very well with their function as a structural element. See Example 8 on page 19.

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Example 7: Score, page 23
5. Harmonic ostinato patterns as accompaniment for chorus

Orff composed a different kind of instrumental harmonic background for the Chorus. Beginning at r.#18, the orchestra plays only block chords based on sonorities related to the A-minor scale. These sonorities include: eleven-note diatonic clusters on white keys (from E-A), A-minor chords, A-minor chords with added G (minor 7th from A), and A, G#, A chords emphasizing the leading tone in A-minor scale. The oscillation between notes A and G# serves as the key-related center for the Chorus, that primarily remains on A. Most chords (harmonies) also function as downbeats as well as the conductor's cues for the Chorus. The rest in Chorus' part is usually supported by instrumental, chordal intervention, articulated through the same rhythmic value (eight-note). See Example 9 on page 21.

Characteristically, this A-minor related section (r.#18-21) ends on E, giving the feeling of half cadence (subito fff). However, the whole C section ends at r.#30 on A (ff).

6. Harmonic ostinato patterns based on chordal interventions as accompaniment for solo voice

Orchestral, chordal interventions (defined by the author as homophonic sonorities that suddenly occur between other events) are also present as a support for solo voices. At r.#66, the orchestra repeats five times the
Example 9: Score, page 32

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same harmony, based on the C, D, E, F, A pitch collection. These pentatonic sonorities, articulated as quarter-notes, are reinforced by accents. They give the listener a feeling of strong beats in support of an otherwise unmeasured section. All Creon's solo entrances based mainly on E have a rest against instrumental block chords. See Example 10.

Example 10: Score, page 78

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7. Harmonic ostinato patterns as accompaniment for solo voice with imitations

At r. #63, the texture changes again. Pianos 2 and 4 introduce a one-measure pattern, which is then repeated for twenty-three bars. The motive is based on a D-C, F, A chord alternation. This repetition creates a very long pedal point that serves as a minimal type of accompaniment for Creon. Some short motives derived from Creon's part are repeated by Piano 1, 3 and 5, 6. The existing dialogue between the two pairs of instruments is based on simple imitation, that corresponds with the same pentatonic collection (i.e., A, B, C, D, E) used for solo parts (r. #63, 64). See Example 11 on page 24.

Conclusions

The seven distinctive types of ostinato patterns create a very meticulous and consistent texture for the entire first act and for the rest of the opera. The work follows the compulsive text of the action virtually without pause. Most dialogues are carried over long stretches on sustained, intoning notes; culminating points contain stress words reinforced with strong accents. See Example 12 on page 25.
Example 11: Score, page 74

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Example 12 (Ismene/Antigone dialogue): Score, page 6

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B. Acts II and III

Act II

The second act begins with the Chorus, which comments on the action throughout the whole opera. Antigone has returned to her brother’s corpse and is throwing earth on it with lamentations. After she is brought before the king, she admits that she is aware of the penalty, but that she has a sacred duty to Polyneices, her brother. Ismene also admits complicity in the deed. Consequently, both Antigone and Ismene are sent by Creon (baritone) to prison.

The second act is constituted of five major sections:

A  r.#73-84  Chorus/Orchestra
B  r.#85-103:
   a)  r.#85-91  Sentry/Creon (dialogue)
   b)  r.#92-103  Sentry, monologue/Orchestra
C  r.#104-113:
   a)  r.#104  Creon/Antigone (dialogue)
   b)  r.#105-113  Antigone, monologue/Orchestra
      (with Chorus/Orchestra conclusion)
D  r.#114-121  Creon-Antigone (dialogue)
E  r.#122-131:
   a)  r.#122-123  Chorus/Orchestra
   b)  r.#124-128  Creon, Ismene, Antigone
   c)  r.#129-131  Creon, Chorus/Orchestra

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In addition to the above structure, the entire second act is clearly marked by many chordal, homophonic sonorities which in this act function in two ways. First, there are chords with changing harmonic colors, that always appear on pianos. For instance, see piano parts at r.#73-75 (ff), r.#85 (fff, secco), r.#106 (fff), r.#128 (fff), r.#129 (ff and f), and r.#130 (f). Second, there are three vertical sonorities that in a sense control the entire act. These most significant, tutti chords, (like the pillars in a Greek temple), appear always at fff dynamic level at r.#83 (G-minor chord with added minor 6th and major 7th), r.#121 (C-minor chord) and r.#131 (final G-minor chord with added minor 6th and major 7th).

This act is dominated by many isolated rhythmic ostinato patterns that were also present in the first act. The Chorus, Creon, Sentry, Antigone, and Ismene introduce different rhythmic motives at the beginning of their phrases. Because of many key changes throughout the whole act (only flat keys and natural keys are used by the composer), the entrances of this type of the ostinato patterns start on different notes. The key changes occur at r.#78 (ff), r.#84 (f), r.#95 (ff), r.#105 (fff), and at r.#122 (ff).

As discussed before, there are also many examples of the use of three-note motives based on dactylic meter as well as on the anapaest (short-short-long note pattern) and
the spondee (long-long note pattern). At r.#104 Creon’s part is related to the dactyl and the anapaest. Antigone, however, ends her pattern on the spondee. See Example 13.

Example 13: Score, page 106

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Example 14 illustrates another dialogue, based on the dactyl and its retrograde the anapaest (Ismene-Antigone, at r.#126):

Example 14: Score, page 121

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The above examples confirm that Orff’s musical ideas follow different rhythmic aspects of Sophocles’ text as translated by Hölderlin. Consequently, by emphasizing key
words of the text, the composer creates a new type of musical theater which is very different from any typical opera: "What finally produces the special character of the Antigone tragedy is Orff's musical shaping, which leaves behind most earlier interpretations of drama, those that are merely read and spoken". In this act, complex instrumental patterns have no changing texture (See Example 15 on page 31) and they accompany the Chorus (See Example 16 on page 32). The above texture for the first time shows long glissandos in both down and up directions (Tenor Xylophones 1-6) and a pedal point on high D (double basses). The basic motive of this pattern is half-measure long (four quarter-notes unit).

The most characteristic instrumental pattern of the second act occurs at r.#110. One measure rhythmic pattern based on the G, C, G pitch collection is repeated by the whole orchestra as accompaniment to the solo voice (Antigone's monologue on G). Present also at r.#107, r.#112, and r.#113, this ostinato pattern constitutes a long and emotionally very intriguing section in the opera's next act. See Example 17 on page 33.

W. Schadewaldt, Introduction to Antigone, p. 4.
Example 15: Score, page 126

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Example 16: Score, page 95

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Example 17: Score, page 110

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Act III

In the third act of the opera, Creon's son Haemon (tenor), to whom Antigone is betrothed, pleads for mercy for her. Creon releases Ismene but he condemns Antigone. She will be immured in a rocky cave. The Chorus appeals to Creon's spirit of love, but the king orders Antigone to be taken away. This act is especially important, because of its symbolic value and moral implications for the rest of the opera. Antigone feels that the human law represented by Creon should be superseded by a higher, divine law which must be obeyed by the people of Athens. She appeals to the unwritten law derived from a religious principle, that the dead should be given proper burial.

The third act is created by five major sections with many subsections. The Chorus with the Orchestra opens this act at r.#132:

A r.#132-143 Chorus/Orchestra

B r.#144-158:
  a) r.#144-147 Instrumental
  b) r.#148 Chorus/Orchestra
  c) r.#149-158 Creon, Haemon

C r.#159-182:
  a) r.#159-171 Haemon/Orchestra
  b) r.#172 Chorus/Orchestra
  c) r.#173-182 Creon, Haemon/Chorus

D r.#183-210:
Orff wants to dramatize the two conflicting claims, based on opposing political and religious rules. To emphasize the importance of the drama, he decided to use a Sprechstimme, Chorus divisi (a very ornamented and complex part for Antigone), and an instrumental repetition of the characteristic rhythmic pattern from the second act (r.#110). Sprechstimme" (German for "speaking voice, speech-song") was first employed by Engelbert Humperdinck in his Königskinder (1897). Later, Arnold Schoenberg made the greatest use of Sprechstimme in works such as Pierrot lunaire (1912), Die glückliche Hand (1910-13), and Moses und Aron (1930-32). In the third act, Orff uses the Sprechstimme twice. The first time (at r.#143), the Chorus-solo articulates its message on C note. Characteristically, the unaccompanied short phrase is based

"According to The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 804, Sprechstimme or sprechgesang is a "(...) use of the voice midway between speech and song. In general, it calls for only the approximate reproduction of pitches and in any case avoids the sustaining of any pitch".

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on three different Greek feet. They are related to the iamb (short-long note pattern), the trochee (long-short note pattern), and the tribrach (short-short-short note pattern). See Example 18.

Example 18: Score, page 144

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After the very ornamented and chromatic monologue of Antigone (r.#209-210), the composer features the Sprechstimme again. Creon pronounces a four-note motive on B-flat (r.#10, violento) and continues to sing on the same note. After the key change at r.#214, Orff returns to the
most characteristic ostinato pattern from the second act: a one-measure instrumental rhythmic motive, based on the C, D, E, G pitch collection which is repeated continuously as accompaniment for Antigone. Her part, however, is associated with Locrian mode on G (G, A-flat, B-flat, C, D-flat, E-flat, F). This ostinato pattern is present until the end of the third act. See Example 19 on page 38.

As mentioned earlier, to underline the drama of this act, the composer also creates a complex *divisi* of the Chorus. It is the first time at r.#191 that the score calls for eight solo voices. An almost instrumental texture of the Chorus part is based on the Mixolydian mode, starting from D. The whole phrase is dominated by the tribach (short-short-short note pattern). See Example 20 on page 39.

Another very special ostinato pattern is present from r.#167 to r.#171. Haemon's monologue (dolce, calmo con intima emozione) is based on a single, steady repetition of the two, eight-note motive. The same interval of a major third (A-F) is heard with no rhythmic variation over and over. This instrumental accompaniment derived from the most basic elements of music, recalls the pulsed background of the minimal composers of the early 1960's. Simple texture, with Pianos 2 and 4 always sounding, emphasizes Haemon's message starting on C. See Example 21 on page 40.
Example 19: Score, page 193

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Example 20: Score, page 178

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Example 21: Score, page 161

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Conclusions

In the second and third acts, Orff uses four new types of ostinato patterns:

1. Complex instrumental patterns with no changing texture.
2. Complex instrumental patterns with no changing texture as accompaniment for solo voice.
3. Extensive homophonic patterns with no changing texture as accompaniment for solo voice.
4. Limited melodic ostinato patterns as a pulsed background for solo voice.

These distinctive kinds of ostinato patterns clearly emphasize the importance of the dramatic aspects of Antigone.

In addition to the use of Sprechstimme and in support of the symbolic value of this part of the opera, different musical ideas follow different rhythmic patterns of Sophocles' text. All six basic types of foot derived from Greek verse prosody are present in acts II and III. See page 13.

C. Acts IV and V

Act IV

In the fourth act, Antigone declares that she must attempt to pay her last respects to Polyneices. The blind soothsayer Tiresias (tenor) appears and foretells disaster for the king if he does not release Antigone and give her
brother an honorable burial. When the Chorus insists that Tiresias has always been correct in his prophecies, Creon bows to the pressure. He promises that he will see Antigone's release and an honorable burial of Polyneices.

The fourth act is based on two major sections:

A  r.#229-249:
   a)  r.#229  Antigone, monologue
   b)  r.#230-249  Chorus/Orchestra

B  r.#250-294:
   a)  r.#250-290  Tiresias,
       Creon/Orchestra
   b)  r.#291-294  Creon/Chorus

The following new, distinctive types of ostinato features appear in this act:

1. **Complex instrumental melodic/harmonic ostinato patterns as accompaniment for chorus**

   At r.#233, Piano 4-6 repeat a one-measure motive, based on two chords: C-minor with added minor 6th and C-major with added minor 7th (first inversion). This motive, repeated 151 times over and over, functions as a rhythmic/harmonic background for the melodic pattern repeated many times with alterations. The original melodic motive (Piano 1-3) is based on a pentatonic scale, but it is given rather a Dorian/Aeolian flavor, since the 6th
degree of the mode is missing (i.e., F, G, A-flat, B-flat, C). See Example 22.

Example 22: Score, page 209

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In this type of ostinato, whenever the instrumental "melody" of Piano 1-3 is discontinued, the Chorus enters with the solo part. This ostinato pattern ends at r.#247, with a seven measure repetition of Locrian mode (ascending pattern), starting from G (Piano 1-3).

2. Rhythmic ostinato patterns, combined with pulsed melodic background, as accompaniment for solo voice

At r.#256, five instruments (Piano 3-4, Harp 1, 3 and Percussion) repeat the same rhythmic motive, based on a minor second (C, D-flat sonority). This two-measure pattern is derived from the most characteristic instrumental ostinato pattern which accompanied Antigone in acts II and III (see music examples 17 and 19, respectively). Simultaneously, Piano 5 and harp 2 play a four-note motive against a steady repetition of G, E notes (Piano 6 and Harp 4). The whole texture creates a characteristic, albeit monotonous, music background for Tiresias' monologue on C. See Example 23 on page 45.

3. Dense orchestral ostinato patterns with cluster-like texture

Very complex, harmonic ostinatos at r.#265 are based on a single one-measure rhythmic motive. This motive is derived from the previously discussed type at r.#256. It has appeared several times throughout the opera like a leitmotif (German for "leading motive").
Characteristically, this instrumental section functions as a climax, emphasizing Tiresias' prophecy throughout the three forte dynamic marking. See Example 24 on page 47. Exactly the same cluster-like texture appears during Creon's monologue at r.#273 with the same orchestral harmonic and rhythmic material.

4. **Single chromatic ostinato patterns as accompaniment for solo voice**

   At r.#281-282, Piano 1 repeats a four-note motive, based on a descending chromatic pattern from A-flat. A four-note motive sounds at the high register of the keyboard (pp), against Tiresias' monologue. The solo part ends also on the same chromatic motive, although this one begins on G and occurs in augmentation. See Example 25 on page 48.

   **Act V**

   In the last act of the opera, the Chorus offers praises to the gods of Thebes, but it is too late. When a Messenger arrives, Creon's wife Eurydice (contralto) orders him to tell his story. He relates that Antigone has already hanged herself with her sash and Haemon killed himself with his sword. Eurydice goes out and the messenger and the Chorus then confer as to what she may do. When Creon comes back carrying his son's corpse, the Messenger returns with the news: Eurydice has taken her
Example 24: Score, page 243

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own life. Creon is now in despair and longs for death himself. The final words in the opera are pronounced by the Chorus: "Only in wisdom can there be peace of mind and man should not profane the teachings of the gods".12

The fifth act is in three long sections:

A  r.#295-303:

a)  r.#295-302  Chorus/Orchestra

The following new kinds of ostinato patterns are present in this act:

1. **Harmonic ostinato patterns based on chordal interventions as accompaniment for chorus**

   Similar to the rest of the opera, there are many vertical, homophonic sonorities that in this act support the chorus. However, chordal interventions are now based on two different sonorities, articulated with tremolando figurations. At r.#295-302, the keyboard instruments repeat the polychord consisting of E-flat major and D major triads. See Example 26 on page 50.
Example 26: Score, page 269

This polychord, with its distinctive Neapolitan association, functions as a strong unifying element for the
entire section, that ends on a D-major tutti chord at r.#303 ("pillar" chord on fff dynamic level).

Interestingly enough, Stravinsky's *Petrushka* (1911) is also based on ostinato patterns that employ sonorities derived from two major triads in the tritone relationship. They produce similar polychordal effects that permeate the ballet.

2. Modal and chromatic ostinato patterns as figurations underlying solo entrances

From r.#232 to r.#361, there are many examples of short instrumental passages that function as grace notes, preceding different, accented chords. There are three distinctive types of these figurations:

a) ascending patterns based on the Phrygian mode, on F. See Example 27 on page 52.

b) ascending patterns based on the Mixolydian mode, on B. See Example 28 on page 53.

c) patterns dominated by descending chromatic scale: D-flat, C, C-flat, B-flat, A. See Example 29 on page 54.

These ostinato patterns always correspond with monologues of the Messenger and Creon, and accentuate their important dramatic parts. Orff uses this kind of patterns most extensively in Act V. They serve as significant instrumental cues that control the entire act and alert the performer to an approaching entrance.
Example 27: Score, page 296

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Example 28: Score, page 316

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3. Monochordal harmonic ostinato patterns, combined with pulsed melodic background, as accompaniment for speaking voice

At r.#355, Piano 1-4 introduce a C-minor chord, that is then repeated for thirty-one measures, always in high register and pp. While the Creon/Messenger dialogue continues, Harp 1-4 focus on a different ostinato pattern. A four-note motive (i.e., F, B-double flat, G-flat, A-flat) is repeated over and over, creating again a very soft, repetitive melodic background. Here, at the end of the last act, the composer uses Sprechstimme to highlight the announcement of the Messenger and Creon’s tragedy. See Example 30 on page 56. These steady, minimal-in-nature patterns are very appropriate at the end of the Sophocles drama. Creon has lost his family and there is nothing left to him after Eurydice has taken her own life. Creon’s complete despair is well emphasized by ostinato patterns that have no pitch change.
Example 30: Score, page 323

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Conclusions

In the fourth and fifth acts, Orff uses seven new kinds of ostinato patterns:

1. Complex instrumental melodic/harmonic patterns as accompaniment for chorus.
2. Rhythmic patterns combined with pulsed melodic background, as accompaniment for solo voice.
3. Dense orchestral patterns with cluster-like texture.
4. Single chromatic patterns as accompaniment for solo voice.
5. Harmonic patterns based on chordal interventions as accompaniment for chorus.
6. Modal and chromatic patterns as figurations underlying solo entrances.
7. Monochordal harmonic patterns, combined with pulsed melodic background, as accompaniment for speaking voice.

The above distinctive types of ostinato patterns support the ongoing action of the last two acts of Antigone. Both modal and chromatic passages progressively develop into cluster-like textures which control various climaxes of the opera. These climaxes are later resolved to repetitive figurations at the end of the opera. In the last act, the effectiveness of different ostinato patterns is again
achieved, by the use of speaking voice (see "Sprechstimme", p. 35).
V. Summary

Antigone by Carl Orff is a vivid example of the composer’s extensive use of ostinato patterns. The entire opera is based on many different types of ostinato ideas that in various ways control the whole composition. These distinctive kinds of ostinato patterns are related to the basic types of foot derived from Greek verse prosody. The many ostinato patterns clearly emphasize the most important dramatic aspects of the opera and support the symbolic values of Sophocles’ tragedy. Throughout the whole opera, different ostinato ideas follow specific rhythmic patterns of Hölderlin’s German version of the ancient tragedy. This ceremonial composition is totally dominated by these ostinato patterns, which possibly are meant to resemble the way in which ancient tragedies combined music and text.\(^{13}\) According to the composer’s intention, Antigone remains his musical interpretation of Sophocles’ play for our time.

Although Antigone’s style is associated with very simple musical devices, the composer creates highly consistent and meticulous textures for the entire work. He gives an important place to the chorus (an essential element of the Greek drama), while the orchestra is often used in blocks of vertical sonorities. As in Carmina Burana, the opera Antigone is the composer’s glorification

\(^{13}\)Although we are not sure if there was a relationship between music and text.
of ostinato patterns. They control dramatic form of the opera and support Orff's principal goal related to his contemporary vision of a total theater. Audiences respond to the simplicity and almost minimal style of Orff's music spontaneously. Recurring ostinato patterns emphasize rhythmic-motivic ideas which serve as a substitute for traditional, tonal organization. As a technique, the use of ostinato patterns is consistent with the anti-Romantic trend present in Orff's music after *Carmina Burana*. The opera is not and could not be a work of the regular opera repertory. However, it is very important because it represents an example of serious musical theater in which the music serves the word. In *Antigone*, Orff set out to connect twentieth century musical practices with his own vocabulary based on ostinato patterns.
PART TWO

"In Nomine" For Organ and Orchestra
In Nomine for organ and orchestra is based on the original scale, called by the composer, Gamma. There are two kinds of Gamma: open and closed. The open Gamma stands for G, A, B, C, C#, D, E, F# and the closed Gamma stands for G, A, B-flat, C, C#, D#, E, F#.

The scale resources are related to the concept of open tonality developed by the composer since 1985. The basic principle of this system implies the existence of an open tonic (equivalent to traditional dominant function). The open Gamma scale serves as an open Tonic, with F# as a "leading tone". Gamma (open Tonic) can lead to 5 different harmonic "resolutions", called "predominant centers" or "predominant forces" (equivalent to traditional tonic function). Predominant centers always dominate and all five are of equal importance. Each predominant has its own characteristic articulation. For example, diatonic cluster from D to C# sounds as a trill.

In general, the system of open or universal tonality reverses the function of traditional dominant and tonic. In traditional tonal system, the dominant functions as a single channel that leads to only one predetermined resolution (tonic). This concept assumes the existence of an open channel (open Tonic) that leads to many different resolutions (predominants). Because "predominants" are related to and based on different representative scales (not on chords), the system creates open universe of...
equally important tonal levels that have a freedom of coexistence. Finally, this concept focuses on creating universal language derived from the opposition of tonal and nontonal principles of organizing pitch.
INSTRUMENTATION

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in B flat
2 Bassoons
Contrabassoon

2 French Horns in F
2 Trumpets in B flat
3 Trombones
Tuba

3 Percussionists

I. Timpani A,B flat
II. Timpani D,E
III. Chimes

Organ

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Contrabasso

Score in C

All instruments sound as written except those of normal octave transposition.
EXPLANATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Notation

(1) - rest applied to all bars on the page

(4) - all notes of the chord raised by a semitone

(2) - all notes of the chord lowered by a semitone

(0) - all notes of the chord are natural

L.V. - lasciar vibrare (allow to vibrate)

Organ Divisions

Manual III - Swell
Manual II - Great
Manual I - Positive
Pedal - Full Pedalboard
poco rall.  C  meno mosso

2 FL
2 Ob
2 CL
2 Bb
C Bb
2 Fp
2 Tr
2 Tn
Tn, Tb

poco rall.  C  meno mosso

Org

ped

1
2
VI
Vc
Cb

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poco 2 rall. D 4 a tempo (J = 144)
poco rall. ------- a tempo

\( \text{\( J = 144 \)} \)
poco ral. --- a tempo \( (J = 132) \)
poco a poco accel.
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poco rall.
$T(=88)$ \textit{meno mosso}
$U(j = 66)$
rall. $\frac{2}{4}(l=60)$
II. Largo

\[ \frac{4}{4} \ ( \text{}\underline{J=60}) \]

\[ \text{loc}\]
B

piú mosso

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C
$(J = 58)$

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III. Fugue

A $\frac{3}{4}$ ($J = 96$)
 accel. —— $E^{(j=112)}$
L (J = 8\textsuperscript{4})
molto rall.
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2 FL
2 Ob
2 Cl
2 Bb
C. Bb
2 HE
2 Tr
2 Tn
Tb
Org
Ped
1 Vn
2 Vl
Vc
Cb

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Q

allargando

...
poco a poco accel. 2/4
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BIBLIOGRAPHY


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VITA

Wieslaw Rentowski was born on November 23, 1953, in Bydgoszcz, Poland. He studied composition with Wlodzimierz Kotonski at the Fr. Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw, Poland, (Master of Arts in 1987) and organ at the Academy of Music in Lodz, Poland, (Master of Arts in 1985). He also holds a Master of Arts degree in Psychology from Lodz State University. He has participated in the Darmstadt International Summer Courses in New Music (1984) and in Organ Master classes in Bayreuth, Germany (1985). In 1988 he was awarded First Prize in the National Composition Competition for Young Composers in his native Poland. He entered the graduate program at Louisiana State University in 1990, and studied with Boyd Professor Dinos Constantinides, for the pursuit of the degrees Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts (Master of Music in 1993). His output of compositions includes works for a variety of media, such as solo, chamber, orchestral, electronic, computer, and film music. Among his numerous commissions, grants and awards are those from the Polish Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, the Banff Centre School of Fine Arts in Canada, the Kosciuszko Foundation in New York, Louisiana Music Teachers Association, Louisiana Sinfonietta, and the Dance Council of New Orleans. Rentowski’s works were performed at many International Festivals and Conferences in Poland, Germany, Bulgaria, Denmark, Switzerland, the
United States and Canada. He has appeared as soloist at concerts and recitals in Lodz, Warsaw, Bayreuth, Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton, Buffalo, Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Many of his works are recorded and published in Germany (Munich and Trossingen), Poland (Warsaw, Lodz, Bydgoszcz) and in the United States (Wisconsin). Rentowski has been a faculty member at the Academy of Music in Lodz, Poland (1981-1989) and a music tutor at Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana (1994-1996).
Candidate: Wieslaw Sta Rentowski

Major Field: Music

Title of Dissertation:
Ostinato Patterns in the Opera Antigone by Carl Orff and an Original Composition for Organ and Orchestra, "In Nomine"

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

October 21, 1996