Example 20.

H. M. Górecki, *Symphony no. 4 'Tansman Episodes'*, manuscript of title page, with cryptogram in upper portion.

In the manuscript, the composer left a cryptogram in which he explained the manner in which he built the theme of *Symphony no. 4 'Tansman Episodes'*.[98]

Górecki was always fascinated by numerology. This has its source in the application of complex numerical manipulations in his *œuvre* already at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s. The phenomenon of utilization of cryptograms in Górecki's music is well-known today and appears to be used mainly in the later years of his *œuvre*. It is always done for personal reasons; it was a part of the composer's existential, human experience.

The first spectacular example of numerology appears in *Ad Matrem* for soprano, choir and orchestra (1971). The length of the individual measures, filled with the bass drum strokes that open the piece, is an encoded form of dates associated with the life and death of the composer's mother. In *Beatus vir* for baritone, choir and orchestra (1979), the *coda* conceals in its 11 repetitions of 4/4 *ostinato* the day and month of St. Stanisław's death in 1079; likewise, the orchestra's culmination contains within its two phases the day and month of Karol Wojtyła's election as pope in 1979.[99]

There exist suggestions – and here I cite Adrian Thomas – that *O Domina nostra* for soprano solo and organ (1985) contains hidden or encoded allusions. This composition was written after a difficult operation that the composer had undergone, and represents – as is explained in the title – *Meditations on Our Lady of Claromontana*. The composer mentioned personally to the author of these words that the doctors gave him no chance after the operation and excluded the possibility of his making a pilgrimage to Częstochowa. The rehabilitation was supposed to last many months. There could be no discussion of such physical exertions. Nevertheless, a few weeks later, just as the composer had planned…

Other encoded allusions are confirmed in such pieces as: the coda of the third movement of *Good Night* for soprano, alto flute, 3 tam-tams and piano *In memoriam Michael Vyner* (1990); as well as occasional works composed for friends, e.g. *Lento cantabile* for flute, violin and 'cello (1994), written for colleagues from the Boosey & Hawkes publishing house; and *Moment musical* for piano (1994), composed for the wedding of Ruth Williams and Stephen Gieser.

In turn, we notice the utilization of 'musical' letters to write motifs and themes in the *Recitatives and Ariosos 'Lerchenmusik'* for clarinet, 'cello and piano (1984–86), in which both themes are derived from letters in the surname of the person who commissioned the work, Louise Lerche-Lerchenborg. These are the notes 'e–c–b [h in Polish]' and 'b-flat [b in Polish]–g'. Another example is *Valentine Piece* for flute and bell (1996), written for American flutist Carol Wincenc, in which the composer utilizes the notes 'a–c–e'.

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[98] Cryptograms had been utilized by other distinguished composers before Górecki. Such a procedure was utilized, for example, by such artists as Johann Sebastian Bach, Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms.

[99] A. Thomas, *Górecki*, PWM, Kraków 1998, p. 39.

In the case of *'Tansman Episodes'*, Górecki utilized the 'musical' letters of the first and last name of Aleksander Tansman. To obtain all of the possibilities, he uses solfège syllables and, for the note 'c', the Latin name 'ut'. In this way, aside from the notes 'a', 'e', 'e-flat [Polish: es]' and 'd', he adopts the letters 'l' – 'la' i.e. 'a'; 'r' – 're' i.e. 'd'; 'm' – 'mi' i.e. 'e'; and 't' (from the Latin 'ut') i.e. 'c' for his own purposes.

The composer clearly needed the note 'c', so he made a certain 'intellectual effort' to seek out the missing element of his construction. And he found it. But there is something metaphysical about it. His search for the necessary note led him to one that was already there anyway(!), though perhaps in a somewhat veiled manner. How is this possible? In fact, Górecki probably did not remember that during one of our first conversations, I mentioned to him that the proper spelling of 'Tansman' is actually' Tancman'.[100]

After leaving Łódź, Tansman personally changed the letter 'c' to 's' in his passport, no doubt wanting to avoid the none-too-fortunate association of his surname as read in foreign languages – for example, in English, Tancman would be pronounced… tank-man.

A certain portion of the title page, beneath the title itself, has been erased by the composer's hand (see Example 18, p. 163). Since he did this, his decision remains final. However, theorists will always try to discern and interpret the composer's intentions, especially in this case, where we are speaking of his final great work, his last symphony – which possesses such an intriguing title.

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[100] The proper surname of Aleksander Tansman read 'Tancman' – or in German spelling, 'Tanzmann'. At the end of the 19th century, in 1897 when Tansman was born, Łódź – the composer's birthplace – was located in the Russian Partition of Poland. All of his documents, including his birth certificate, were drawn up in the Russian language. Thus, the surname written in the Cyrillic alphabet contained the letter 'c' (Cyrillic: 'ц'), according to the phonetic pronunciation.