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The Composition of Meaning:

Construction and Semantics in Karlheinz Stockhausen's
Luzifer-Gruss vom Samstag aus Licht

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CONSTRUCTION AND SEMANTICS
IN KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN'S
LUZIFER-GRUSS
VOM SAMSTAG AUS LICHT

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THE SOBER IDEA of coherence is one of the central concepts in the composition of new music in the twentieth century. The linguistic transmission of this central aesthetic conception, which represents a modern relic of unity in diversity as a general definition of the beautiful as well as the specifically romantic view connected with it of musical form as an organism, orients itself by preference to observational models of the natural sciences. In 1933 Anton Webern, for example, makes clear his view that the historical legitimation of twelve-tone composition is to be seen in the possibility, heightened by this means, of a comprehensive forming of musical coherence, with reference to Goethe's metamorphosis theory. Webern's objective (produced from the aesthetic concepts of unity and intelligibility), that everything is "always the same; only its manifestations are different,"¹ is not only rationalized in the scientific sense but at the

same time also provided with a natural-religious dignity through the analogy he draws to the "rules of order and the significance that's in all natural events, and that can be sensed in them."² By means of the parallels to processes of nature the establishment of maximal "coherence" as a compositional aim is elevated to a higher plane, which transcends the music. Karlheinz Stockhausen's multiformal composition technique, as it has evolved out of formula composition since *Mantra* in the early 1970s, and on which is based his work *Licht—Die sieben Tage der Woche* (Light—The Seven Days of the Week), is comparable, closely connected with the demand for a comprehensive forming of coherence, in the individual work as well as in the cycle. And Stockhausen also clarifies the implications of the category of coherence as a central compositional objective in using technical terminology from the natural sciences. While the choice of the term "formula" already signals an orientation towards derivational processes and definitional procedures in mathematics, physics, and chemistry, Stockhausen's comprehension proves to be indebted in a still much more fundamental sense to the latest discoveries in biology. For, without the discovery made since the forties of the molecular structure of DNA and its function in controlling the phylo- and ontogenesis of living organisms, and in particular the research done since 1953 by James D. Watson and Francis H. C. Crick, a formulation such as the following, with which Stockhausen described in 1978 the consequence of the formula for musical coherence, is not conceivable:

The *formula* is **more** than a leitmotivic or psychograph-like sign, **more** than a theme to be spun out or a generating series: the *formula* is a matrix and plan for micro- and macro-form, but at the same time also a psychological *Gestalt* and vibrational image of a supra-mental manifestation.³

A three-layered or -voiced structure, described by Stockhausen as a "superformula," forms the foundation for the scenic work *Licht*, which is laid out over seven opera-evenings (see Example 1). The construction of the individual layers as well as their polyphonic connections obeys serial criteria in all parameters, as does the shaping of the audible melodic and harmonic construction. The structure unites the three formulas, or melodic *Gestalten*, which are assigned to the three protagonists named Michael, Eve, and Lucifer—the characters of a comprehensive mythology taking as its subject all the central aspects of human life. The starting-points for the seven operas *Monday* through *Sunday* arise from the articulation of the superformula into seven segments ("Monday" to "Sunday" segments). A specific complex of themes is assigned to each of the

Stockhausen

(Super-Formula for LIGHT)

[illegible]

Donnerstag segment -

EXAMPLE 1

"days of the week," with a certain constellation of the three protagonists, derived from particular dominance and characteristics of the individual formulas and character-related centers of gravity, as well as further symbols, primary and secondary colors, and also numerous other extramusical constituents such as planets, metals, stones, and crystals.⁴

The designation "superformula of *Licht*" is directed at the same time toward the ultimate stage of a series of interrelated and increasingly more complexly organized polyphonic organizations of the tone material. To start with there is an orderly distribution of thirty-six tones or three twelve-tone series into a complete, an incomplete, and an over-complete form, in seven segments in three layers (*Töne von Licht*—see Example 2), in the course of which a vertical division into three complete twelve-tone fields results at the same time.

Töne von LICHT

5 Glieder (3) + (2) + (4) + (1) + (3) + 6 = 13
 MICHAEL

7 Glieder (2) + (4) + (1) + (3) + (2) = 12
 EVA

6 Glieder (1) + (3) + (2) + (4) + (1) = 11
 LUTIFER

I MONTAG II DIENSTAG III MITTWOCH IV DONNERSTAG V FREITAG VI SAMSTAG VII SONNTAG

$13 + 12 + 11 = 36 \text{ Töne (} 3 \times 12 \text{)}$

Stockhausen 1977

EXAMPLE 2

From this constellation of pitches the rhythmically and dynamically differentiated melodic structures for Michael, Eve, and Lucifer are derived (cf. Lucifer's nuclear formula in the lowermost layer of Example 3). And finally, the addition of further musical elements and events, such as improvisations, echoes, sound coloring, modulations, rhythmic charac-

Handwritten musical score for *Samstag aus Licht*, featuring a "Formel-Ausschnitt" (Formula Excerpt) for the *Samstag aus Licht* section. The score is written for four staves: M (Melody), E (Electric Guitar), L (Bass), and L-Kern (L-Kern). The title "SAMSTAG" is written in large letters at the top right, with the date "Mai 1981" below it.

The score is divided into sections: *LUZIFER*, *TRAUM*, *REQUIEM*, *TANZ*, *STREIK*, *ABSCHIED*, and *SAMSTAG*. The *Samstag* section is marked with a large bracket and the duration "113,89'".

Key annotations include:

- LUZIFER*: 71, 27,04' (20kl. 8. 1622,4")
- TRAUM*: 75, 19,07
- REQUIEM*: 50,86
- TANZ*: 31,78
- STREIK*: 80
- ABSCHIED*: 36
- SAMSTAG*: 113,89'

Other annotations include:

- evtl. Griffe wechseln* (possibly change frets)
- breit* (broad)
- "nervöser" Farbwechsel* ("nervous" color change)
- zähltes flüstern* (counted whispering)
- Formel-Ausschnitt für SAMSTAG aus LICHT* (Formula Excerpt for SAMSTAG aus LICHT)

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (p, mp, f, ff, mf, fff).

EXAMPLE 3: FORMULA EXCERPT FOR SAMSTAG AUS LICHT

terizations, noises, names of numbers, and much else besides, constitutes the actual superformula.⁵ This is on the one hand a meaningful, audible musical composition in itself, whose substance also serves as material for the internal structure of the work. On the other hand, the superformula represents—by spreading its durational values over the total time of the seven evenings of more than twenty hours—the overall form of the extensive cycle. For, into this by no means just imaginary form-skeleton, on increasingly smaller-scale levels down to the individual composition of actual musical experiential time, further variants of the Superformel (or of its individual layers) are “fitted into position” as local triple or single formulas⁶ in ever-different registral constellations, transpositions, and corresponding durational stretchings (see Example 3). The superformula of *Licht*—in itself consequently an intensely complex, but at the same time melodically, rhythmically, and harmonically audible composition about one minute long—in this way influences, as a generating principle, all compositional decisions regarding the individual realizations of the separate scenes of *Light*. The spectrum of these decisions encompasses not only concrete and quasi-deterministic derivatives, as for instance those of the individual durations and the number as well as proportions

of the individual scenes, but also associative and individual determinations in the composition. However, the latter are not by any means less strictly tied back to the superformula because, as has already been suggested, these also include numerous extramusical and programmatic connotations. Alongside the dimension literally defined by the tonal material appears a level of compositional organization which—although based on subjective freedom—has divested itself of every arbitrariness and by means of strong semantic brackets gains recognition for the postulate of coherence in all constituent parts and dimensions of *Licht*. The relational network between micro- and macroform is supplemented by various semantic associations and by this means is intensified beyond the material aspect.

The precisely controlled intermeshing of construction and semantics in Stockhausen's multiformal composition technique or, to be precise, the relation of an elegant material constraint on the one hand and a striven-for subjective decision-making latitude on the other, may be illustrated by means of an example: the work *Luzifer-Gruss* (Lucifer Greeting) (or *Samstags-Gruss* (Saturday's Greeting) from *Samstag aus Licht* (Saturday from Light), which was composed in 1984. At the same time, the interactions which exist between the material aspect of formula composition in the stricter sense and the semantic or meaning-establishing potential are recognizable, not only in the formulas themselves, but also in the complex of themes to be compositionally shaped. The following remarks will make it clear that Stockhausen, in continuing serial music with multi-formulaic composition technique, integrates into the coherence-forming taxonomy of a creative concept those organizationally unconstrained areas which up to that point had been excluded from the rationality of teachable poetics (as well as being assigned to the realms of subjective inspiration and creative expressive needs) and, through the formation of intentional fields of association, draws them into the logic of the structural constitution of form and process.

The *Luzifer-Gruss* belongs—and this makes this work particularly suited to an investigation in our context—to those sections of *Licht* which are not to be found in the large-scale formal design of the superformula, or do not proceed directly from the original durational expansion of it. Like almost all the so-called “greetings” which open (and “farewells” which close) each opera-day—*Lucifers Abschied* (Lucifer's Farewell) from *Samstag* constitutes an exception, being based in the complex of themes and position of *Samstag* in the cycle—the *Luzifer-Gruss* also refers freely or associatively to the four scenes of *Samstag*, which are derived directly from the sixth, “Saturday” segment of the superformula (cf. Example 3). As a result, and owing to the fact that each

greeting possesses an introductory character (which also manifests itself in an intentionally more comprehensible and, with respect to complexity, reduced construction), the semantic aspects of Stockhausen's multi-formal composition technique emerge more clearly. Nevertheless these aspects are applicable—even though to a far higher degree—to the fashioning of the more complex works which are derived directly from the segments of the superformula.

The *Luzifer-Gruss* is written for four instrumental groups, comprising twenty-six brass and two percussion, which are to be positioned as far apart from each other as possible in the four upper endpoints of the lengthwise and transverse axes of a space. The four groups play, in several phases, varied successions of an exactly determined excerpt from the three-layer superformula. Groups I and II, which are placed at the ends of the longitudinal axis, modify in alternation a segment of the lower layer (the Lucifer formula) of the superformula, group III concentrates upon varying the pertinent excerpt from the middle formula layer (the Eve formula) and group IV upon the corresponding element of the upper layer (the Michael formula)⁷ (see Example 4).

Stockhausen's note that the *Luzifer-Gruss* "clarifies, in concentrated form, a process which occurs in the four scenes of the entire *Samstag aus Licht* (Saturday from Light): the opening up of the space and the liberation of the sound,"⁸ refers to the complex of themes assigned to Saturday.

According to pagan symbolism of the weekdays, derived from their namings (which can only be touched on here), *Saturday*, as Saturn's day,⁹ is musically as well as scenically concentrated on the protagonist Lucifer. His character (as well as his formula, the color black, and the sound characterization by low brass instruments) symbolizes, from the point of view of content, the examination of death and related subjects particular to the organization of the sixth day, such as rebirth in the sense of an overcoming of human physicality, bound to physical space.¹⁰

If in a first stage the subjects of death and rebirth, in the treatment of which Stockhausen blends constituents of numerous world cultures, consequently lead to a concern with space (also organizable in musically concrete terms) as well as to the broader association of infinity in the sense of immortality, then in a further stage the network of references is also extended directly onto the musical material by means of the inclusion of quantitative as well as metaphorical aspects of the level of numbers. For, apart from the idea of space (here a concretely central dimension of the compositional fashioning of the *Luzifer-Gruss* in the form of chord-, tone-, and interval-space) the number eight—a sacred number in Antiquity, in horizontal form a mathematical symbol of infinity, and a written symbol of a motion which turns back on itself—characterizes in a decisive

SAMSTAGS - GRUSS

Stockhausen

(LUZIFER - GRUSS)

4 $\text{♩} = 53,5$

Regl. *immer klingen lassen*

I 4 Hn. *sempre*

4 Hn. *sempre*

4 Hn. *sempre*

4 Hn. *sempre*

Jav. *immer klingen lassen*

II 2 Apas *sempre*

2 Bar. *sempre*

4 Euph. *sempre*

III 6 Pos. *sempre*

Glissandi: mit Zug-Glissando auf gestrichelten Oberlin. Ton nicht brechen.
① vom linken, ② vom rechten (jeder spielt seine eigene Tonhöhe)

alle Glissandi in voller Länge aushalten

IV 4 Tuba *sempre*

8... *sempre*

I 7gl. *sempre*

I 4 Hn. *sempre*

4 Hn. *sempre*

7

II Jav. *sempre*

2 Apas *sempre*

2 Bar. *sempre*

4 Euph. *sempre*

III 6 Pos. *sempre*

Die 2 Töne müssen unbedingt gleich laut klingen (entsprechend Takt 15, 28 etc.)

IV 4 Tuba *sempre*

8... *sempre*

EXAMPLE 4

way the constituent parts of the underlying formula segment and the durational relation of the central formula excerpt to the initial material.

This excerpt involves the essential components of the fourth or "Thursday" segment from the form plan of *Saturday*'s third scene—from

the "Triple-Formula of *Lucifer's Dance*"—which differs from the superformula in particular by the fact that it exhibits a different registral distribution of the three formulas (with the Lucifer formula as the uppermost layer) and a different transpositional relationship, as well as the addition of the three stretched-out formula excerpts of the "Saturday" segment from the superformula (see Example 5, which shows the manner of derivation, and Example 6). The selection of just this excerpt results from several factors. First of all, in terms of its contents *Thursday* is thematically devoted to Lucifer's antagonist, Michael, and his complex of subjects. The text related to the part of the triple formula coming from this segment of *Luzifers Tanz*—a dance of several instrumental groups which symbolize parts of the face—reads "Auge gegen Auge" (eye against eye),¹¹ in which the Old Testament's "an eye for an eye" may easily be recognized as a metaphor for the relation of Lucifer and Michael. Furthermore, this excerpt exhibits the involvement of four instrumental groups, whose number recurs in the four groups of the *Luzifer-Gruss*. They can easily be interpreted as two pairs of eyes.¹² Secondly, the Lucifer formula, which is dominant in *Saturday*, contains in its "Thursday" segment the sound-spatial characteristic typical of the "echo," while the other formulas at this point manifest stock features closely connected with musical space as well. And thirdly, precisely these elements of the segment in each formula each exhibit a quantitative and a symbolic allusion to the number eight (see Examples 1 and 6). So the duration of the Lucifer formula encompasses eight "eighths," in a corresponding place, i.e., in the figure of a falling third without its two dynamically gradated and in each case shortened repetitions (echoes)—a fact which connects the quantitative aspect of the number eight with the terminology of the note values. The Eve formula possesses eight space-crossing or—in Stockhausen's phrase—"space-expanding" glissandi with six different starting pitches, and articulates at the beginning of this segment an octave figure which—as well as the aforementioned intervallic designation—covers the space of the eight diatonic tone levels. The Michael formula, on the other hand, exposes at the beginning of the formula excerpt the interval of a falling minor sixth as a compass of exactly eight chromatic steps and subsequently traverses this interval—and with the necessary omission of one tone—with exactly eight notes.

So it is also no accident that Stockhausen extracts the temporal expansion of the central material in the *Luzifer-Gruss* from an eightfold durational expansion, for the selected echo segment of the Lucifer formula—the falling third (eight eighth notes) and its first echo (five eighth notes)—exhibits a duration of thirteen eighths all together which, through multiplication by the factor four, leads to the antiphonal formation lasting twenty-six quarter-note beats in groups I and II (measures 1

to 7). A further durational expansion by a factor of two arises as a result of the choice of the tempo indication $\text{♩} = 53.5$ for the *Luzifer-Gruss*, which represents a halving of the tempo indication of $\text{♩} = 107$ from the relevant echo segment of the triple formula for *Luzifers Tanz* (see Examples 4 and 6).¹³ The value 53.5 in turn corresponds also to the numbering of the *Luzifer-Gruss* in Stockhausen's catalog of works, by which means its derivation from the work numbered "Nr. 53"—*Luzifers Tanz*—is demonstrated at the same time.

In addition, this concrete as well as metaphorical networking of the pitch material with the numerical aspect and its pitch-spatial as well as extramusical symbolism is amplified by Stockhausen through the historical associational richness of the performance parameters regarding auditory space and the religious aspect of death. Because, first of all, it may be no coincidence that the spatial aspect (which manifests itself in the prescribed positioning of the four instrumental groups of the *Luzifer-Gruss* at four widely separated and elevated points in the scene of action) alludes in terms of music history to the performance practice of the Venetian polychoral style, and thus to the spatial music of baroque ceremonial church music. Secondly, the intended sound characteristic underlined by low brass, the static deportment of the composition, and by the jerky coordination gestures prescribed for the musicians (cf. the arrows in Example 4), had surely been reflected by Stockhausen with regard to constants of ritual music—from the Christian trombone choir to far-eastern ceremonies. And thirdly, instrumentation, tempo organization, and the exposed opening interval of the tritone in the *Luzifer-Gruss* can be understood as a direct obeisance to Stockhausen's teacher Olivier Messiaen, and in particular as a thematic connection to the fifth movement of *Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum* (1964).

In equal measure, just as the choice of the initial material in the *Luzifer-Gruss* is determined by intensively composed-in semantic elements, the musical process or "development" of the three formula segments in the *Luzifer-Gruss* is determined by a temporal transplantation of the spatial aspect. The shaping of the formal progression picks up the sound-spatial characteristic of the echo, the continuous crossing of the pitch space with glissandi, as well as the traversing of the intervallic spaces with sixths and octaves in discrete pitch levels.¹⁴

In seven-measure phases, instrumental group I plays the echo segment of the Lucifer formula. Right at the beginning of the work, in measure 1, the note A is interposed into this segment's interval of a third, D $\sharp$ -B, forming the interval of a falling tritone with the first note (D $\sharp$ -A-B). Group I plays this figure in thirteen quarter notes (with one quarter

Triple formula for *Luzifers Tanz* → (see Example 6)

Donnerstag segment

Starting point for the composition of *Luzifer-Gruss*

EXAMPLE 5: DERIVATION OF THE MUSICAL MATERIAL OF LUZIFER-GROSS

- 1: spreading of the "Tanz" segment of the Michael formula of the formula excerpt of *Samstag*
- 5: complete Lucifer formula on A; cf. the initial relationship of the three formulas in the superformula of the formula excerpt of *Samstag*
- 2: spreading of the "Tanz" segment of the Eve formula of the formula excerpt of *Samstag*
- 6: complete Eve formula on D; cf. the initial relationship of the three formulas in the superformula of the formula excerpt of *Samstag*
- 3: spreading of the "Tanz" segment of the Lucifer formula of the formula excerpt of *Samstag*
- 7: complete Michael formula on E; cf. the initial relationship of the three formulas in the superformula of the formula excerpt of *Samstag*
- 4: spreading of the "Tanz" segment of the Lucifer nuclear formula of the formula excerpt of *Samstag*

(1-4, cf. Example 2;
5-7, cf. Example 1)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for 'Luzifers Tanz' by Stockhausen. The score is written on multiple staves, with various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is divided into sections labeled with Roman numerals (XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX) and includes various performance instructions and tempo markings.

Key elements of the score include:

- Section XII:** Marked 'B', includes 'Silb.' and 'Schlag' markings.
- Section XIII:** Includes 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' markings.
- Section XIV:** Includes 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' markings.
- Section XV:** Includes 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' markings.
- Section XVI:** Includes 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' markings.
- Section XVII:** Includes 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' markings.
- Section XVIII:** Includes 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' markings.
- Section XIX:** Includes 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns' markings.

The score also includes various performance instructions such as 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns', 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns', and 'Pizzicato-Flöte & Horns'. The tempo markings include 'Allegro', 'Moderato', and 'Adagio'.

EXAMPLE 6: TRIPLE FORMULA FOR LUZIFERS TANZ

rest), whereupon group II answers with an echo of twelve quarter notes, reduced by the last note of the three-note figure, as well as two quarters' rest.¹⁵

In the subsequent seven-measure phases of groups I and II with the alternating "third call," the second and third tones of the initial motive chromatically traverse the pitch space. In each phase, the tone A moves successively a semitone upward, during which exchanges between the phases can occur (A-B-A $\sharp$ -C $\sharp$ -D-C-D $\sharp$ -E-F $\sharp$ -F-G $\sharp$ -G-A-A), and at the end reaches its upper octave. From the third tone, B $\natural$, group I descends regularly by a semitone in each phase. At the same time, however, in some voices of this group the original tone B $\natural$ is maintained and by that ever-expanding interval of the resulting simultaneity the sound space is opened into the lower region—until it reaches the tone B $\flat$ and, as a result, stands in the relation of a major seventh with the end-point of the movement to the second pitch, A. This major seventh constitutes the head-interval of the Lucifer formula. The formal process in groups I and II thereby represents an opening out of the tritone (in the Middle Ages also called *diabolus in musica*) to the initial interval of the Lucifer formula. Group III plays the octave element of the Eve formula, also in invariable seven-measure phases, with a subsequent "spreading" of the tonal space by means of glissandi.

In passing through each phase, the octave's lower note moves in each case a semitone higher in three of the six trombone parts, until reaching the upper note, and by this means opens the sound space of the pitch dimension in increasingly larger intervals. At the same time, the durations of the three octave-leap tones change irregularly and in certain phases, until the conclusion of the initial figure, which had four quarter-notes' total duration, has grown to double its original length (ratio 1:2). Group IV begins with the falling sixth and its subsequent incomplete chromatic filling-out from the Michael formula, but repeats these initial seven measures six more times with, in each case, two additional measures (= seven phases with lengths of 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 measures), in irregularly varied progression, and concludes its process with the intonation of the figure in its original succession of steps and with a length of nine measures.

Despite the unambiguousness of these three different progressions with regard to both the compositional procedure and the underlying progression idea in the separate description, nevertheless the complexity of multi-formal composing (which goes beyond taking the spatial aspect as its theme, and is based on the interaction of the individual formulas as well as those of their protagonists) is revealed only in view of the relationships between the individual progressions. The observable and purpose-

ful deviations from all-too-expectable patterns of progression in the fashioning of the formal process in the *Luzifer-Gruss* result on the one hand from Stockhausen's formal consciousness which, in the case of all-too-predictable or deterministic form plans in earlier works led him again and again to the splicing-in of so-called "inserts." On the other hand, however, despite or even because of its strict requirement regarding the forming of coherence through the polyphonic construction and semantic elaboration, multiformal composition technique offers numerous possibilities for adjusting, by means of interactions between the formulas, the individual tolerances in those processes which progress in an overly straightforward manner.

This strategy, of deriving progressions "polyphonically," as it were, contributes substantially to the compositionally and analytically inexhaustible richness of the *Licht* cycle and is—although in an attenuated form—to be observed in the *Luzifer-Gruss*. For instance, Stockhausen arranged the formal progressions with a view to the fact that here, in the selected transpositional relationship of the Lucifer and Michael formulas to each other, in the chromatic filling-out of the interval of a sixth the originally omitted note B $\flat$ is at the same time the first of the two framing notes of the head interval B $\flat$ to A of the Lucifer formula, which are reached at the end of the process in groups I and II. Setting out from this, the irregular absence of other pitches as well in the individual phases of the traversal of the sixth in group IV also reacts to the fashioning of the echo figure in groups I and II. Whenever in the course of the fourth, seventh, ninth, and eleventh phases these groups (recapitulating, as it were, the interval of a fourth, A-D, in chromatic steps) draw ever closer to the upper tone D and, as a result, break up the antiphonal structure, one or more of these tones is missing in the overlapping phases of group IV. In the course of this, B $\natural$, as the concluding pitch of the falling third, remains excluded from the omission, and is concerned in particular with the pitches A, C, and C $\sharp$, which, as a constellation of fundamental tone plus minor and major third (i.e., an 034 set), can in turn embody either the intervallic characteristic of the Eve formula's "Wednesday" segment, or of the Lucifer formula's "Saturday" segment (or indeed, the last three notes of Michael's "Sunday" segment, Eve's "Monday" + "Tuesday" segment, the combination of Eve's two notes plus Lucifer's third note in the "Saturday" segment (where precisely the untransposed A-C-C $\sharp$ occurs, across the join between *Luzifers Tanz* and *Luzifers Abschied*), or the verticality at the outset of the "Sunday" segment, as well as some others). The note B $\flat$ is also included in the deviating successions of steps in the traversal of the sixth until, in measure 95—after a two-measure acceleration of the tempo to $\text{♩} = 107$ beats per minute—the pitch B $\flat$ is

reached, with a sudden halving of the tempo to 53.5 in group I (and II). As a result, in the overlapping phase of group IV the Michael segment returns in its original pitch sequence—i.e., with omission of the B $\flat$. Likewise, the occurrence of certain tones in the interval modification of the three-note Lucifer segment (e.g., D $\sharp$ -D $\sharp$ -F in the seventh phase) must lead to the additional inclusion of the doubled pitch D $\sharp$ in the original descending sixth, D-F $\sharp$. In the same manner the irregular dropping-out of the tone G $\sharp$ in the falling sixth reacts to the reaching of this tone in the transformation of the echo segment. It can be assumed that such irregularities, as well as the exchange of notes in the phasewise ascent of the second pitch in the echo segment, were actually intended by Stockhausen, precisely in view of the avoidance as well of any analytically demonstrable regularity or predictability in their occurrence whatsoever. Nevertheless, the figure of Lucifer—as opposed to Michael as the representative of a divine order—always symbolizes in Stockhausen's understanding (productive) unrest and confusion,¹⁶ which here might also extend to the "Michael" segment.¹⁷

Consequently, if the intended irregularity of individual progressions is also a reflection of the semantic structure, then the *Luzifer-Gruss* fulfills in several respects the function of a traditional "overture" as a formal opening section: by the transformation of the tritone into the head interval of the Lucifer formula (a major seventh) it serves as an introductory motion toward the formula layer which is dominant for *Samstag*; in the direction of motion of the opening-out harmonies in groups I and III, it symbolizes the expansion of (intervallic) space from the unison to the octave in the dimensions of height (Eve) and depth (Lucifer) and, in the transformation of the basic characterization of the protagonists into the structural formation of the formal progression, it outlines the thematic core of the following four scenes of *Samstag*.

The exorbitant expansion of the coherence-forming dimensions, as they can be demonstrated in the *Luzifer-Gruss* and equally be applied to all scenes from *Licht*, by no means serve the formulation of a cryptic or numerologically symbolic message. The "relational magic" (only illustrated here to a limited extent) which prevails between the organization of all musical material levels and the production of polyphonic formal processes, auditorily participates through the direct materialization of these references in the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic shaping as well as in its spatial and temporal transformation. This is the aesthetic aim to which the category of coherence is related as a function of a comprehensive compositional control. The relation of construction and musical statement is not the historically new thing about this, but rather the complete inclusion into coherence-establishment of all available extramusical

aspects of the musical material which are historically invested in this as well—for example, by the rational and numerical character of the Western tone system. The historically developed demand on the act of composing (as is to be observed since twelve-tone composition came into existence in the twentieth century) to take increasingly into account the relations between the tone material and its unfolding in time as well as in pitch-space is now extended by multiformal technique to the remaining, but by no means secondary dimensions of the creative sphere of organization as well. In the process, not only are approaches from earlier music-historical epochs (such as the inclusion of the visual character of the notation (“Augenmusik”), of tone symbolism, or of assembling names out of the combination of notes’ letter-names) elevated to an advanced and incomparably more complex level, but in particular the shaping of the formal course as a semantic process of historical evolution, in the sense of Western historical dynamics, is carried forward as well. Stockhausen himself formulated this in 1978—including his own creative path—as follows:

After a long historical convolution of the expansion spiral (increasingly complex proportions in rhythm-meter, melody-harmony, coloristics, dynamics, and topology, including all the serial extensions up to the extremely aperiodic, aleatoric, momentary, and universal-stylistic), *multiformal composition* picks up again where Classical bithematicism was left dangling in favor of a processual, discursive forming.¹⁸

Striving for coherence in the new music proves to be—after the achievement of independence of the linguistic character of major-minor tonal music in the nineteenth century and the associated expansion of merely arbitrary compositional decision-making processes in the sense of a subjective renunciation—just as indispensably associated with the recovery of the increasingly repressed realm of creative freedom as it is an autonomous disposition over expressive intention and construction. Webern’s recognition that from the formation of coherence even larger formative free spaces result—“the great advantage [of composition with twelve-tone series] is that I can treat thematic technique much more freely”¹⁹—applies in a much increased measure also to Stockhausen’s multiformal compositional technique.

—Translated from the German by Jerome Kohl

NOTES

1. Anton Webern, *The Path to the New Music*, ed. Willi Reich, trans. Leo Black (Bryn Mawr: Theodore Presser Co., 1963), 40.
2. Ibid.
3. "Multiformale Musik," cited from Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Texte zur Musik 1977–1984*, vol. 5: *Komposition*, ed. Christoph von Blumröder (Cologne: Dumont Buchverlag 1989), 667 (subsequently cited as *Texte 5*).
4. Cf., for example, the sketch for *Samstag* reproduced in *Texte 5*, 508.
5. Cf. in this regard the detailed accounts by Christoph von Blumröder, "Formel-Komposition—Minimal music—Neue Einfachheit. Musikalische Konzeptionen der siebziger Jahre," in *Neuland*, vol. 2, ed. Herbert Henck (Cologne: Neuland Musikverlag Herbert Henck, 1982), 183–205; Rudolf Frisius, "Komposition als Versuch der strukturellen und semantischen Synthese. Karlheinz Stockhausen und sein Werk-Projekt *Licht*," *ibid.*, 160–78; Rudolf Frisius, "Reihen—Schichten—Bedeutungen. Zu Karlheinz Stockhausens Werkprojekt 'Licht,'" *Melos* 48, no. 3 (1986): 82–116; and Rudolf Frisius, *Karlheinz Stockhausen*, vol. 1: *Einführung in das Gesamtwerk. Gespräche mit Karlheinz Stockhausen* (Mainz: Schott Musik International, 1996), 301–16 et passim.
6. The derivations using single formula layers are probably encountered especially in connection with weekdays assigned to single protagonists—such as *Saturday* to Lucifer, *Thursday* to Michael, and *Monday* to Eve. Cf. Example 3, where the nuclear Lucifer formula is added to the *Saturday* segment of the superformula.
7. Cf. in this connection Stockhausen's remarks in the preface to the score, reprinted in *Texte 5*, 514–19.
8. *Texte 5*, 518; English trans. by Suzee Stephens, from the score of *Samstags-Gruss (Luzifer-Gruss)*, Werk Nr. 53-1/2 (Kürten: Stockhausen-Verlag, 1984), p. G III.
9. In some north-German dialects the pre-Christian Latin designation *Saterdag* has been preserved, as also in Dutch (*Zaterdag*), and in the English name "Saturday." This refers to Saturn(us), the Italic deity who had already in Roman times become identified with Kronos, the Greek Titan. The Celtic languages also retain the Saturn element

(Irish *an Satharn, dia Sathuirn*; Gaelic *Disathairne*; Welsh *dydd Sadwrn*; Breton *disadorn, sadorn*). Etymologically, the German *Samstag* is traced back to Old High German *Sambaztac*, which is derived, via the Greek *Σάββατον* (*Sabbaton*, supposed to have once had a dialectal pronunciation *Sambaton*, evidenced also by the Rumanian *Sâmbătă/Sîmbătă* and Hungarian *szombat*) from Hebrew *shabbāth* (from *shābath*, "to rest"), and has—within the largely compulsory occidental-Christian (for Stockhausen as well) articulation of the week, with its culmination in Sunday, at once the week's destination and starting-point—its German counterpart in the alternative name *Sonnabend*—the day before Sunday.

10. Cf. in this regard Stockhausen's statements in an interview published under the title "Musik und Tod: SAMSTAG aus LICHT," in Stockhausen, *Texte zur Musik 1977-1984*, vol. 6: *Interpretation* [= *Texte* 6], ed. Christoph von Blumröder (Cologne: Dumont Buchverlag, 1989), 234–46.
11. Cf. *Texte* 5, 585.
12. The fact that *Donnerstag* originates from the fourth segment may also play a role here.
13. Furthermore, the number eight also plays a role in the duration of the work (ca. 8 minutes) and is the basis for the choice of eight brass instruments each in groups I and II, while the total number of twenty-six brass instruments is derived from the doubling of the Lucifer number 13, as well as from the total duration of the relevant part of the echo segment (descending third and first echo = thirteen eighth notes). The discernible proportion 1:2—a ratio likely also symbolic here of the constellation of Lucifer being opposed to Michael and Eve—consequently governs not only the relation of the numbers 4 (the position of Thursday as Michael's day, two pairs of eyes, four instrumental groups, four directions in space, and so on) and 8 (the number of themes in the complex associated with Lucifer, of immortality, and so on), but is combined in the setting also with other numbers like 13, both generally (as for instance in the fashioning of the echoes—the thirteen eighth notes of the triple formula are stretched to twenty-six quarter notes in the *Luzifer-Gruss*) and specifically.
14. Concerning this and the following, see Stockhausen's explanatory notes to the score, reprinted in German in *Texte* 5, 518–19. English translation by Suzee Stephens in the score, pp. GIII–IV.

15. The association and function of certain numbers in *Licht* cannot be gone into in detail here. For the comprehension of the *Luzifer-Gruss* it may be observed that the number seven, coming from the number of days in the week in *Licht*, plays a central role; the number thirteen, on the other hand (as has already been mentioned in note 13) is an integral component of the Lucifer formula (cf. Example 1, end of the Lucifer formula).
16. Cf. also, for instance, the text of St. Francis of Assisi's *Lodi delle virtù* (Hymn to the Virtues), upon which the scene *Luzifers Abschied* (Lucifer's Farewell) is based, published in *Texte* 5, 638–39, as well as in the score of *Luzifers Abschied* (Kürten: Stockhausen-Verlag, 1984), pp. A II–III, VIII–IX.
17. Likely intentional as well is the effect of this “confusion” just on the ascending and not on the descending intervallic opening in Lucifer's “third call,” as well as on the exchange made in certain intervals in the succession of echoes in groups I and II subsequent to the phases or phase segments performed synchronously by both groups.
18. “Multiformale Musik,” *Texte* 5, 667.
19. Webern, op. cit., 40.