

The moment of love, composed into a fulfilled instant of musical *moments*, imparts to time the dawning of eternity. On eternity, Meister Eckhart writes “daß Dasein und Jungsein bei ihr eins sind” (in it, existence and youth are one).¹⁹ In Moment Form, time can again and again rejuvenate itself through the sounding form, as if the music would last forever...

3. “Astronic Music”

When asked by the French Association *ÉTHIQUE & Politique*, “Do you believe in the existence of God?”, Stockhausen replied, “GOD is the I of all universes.”²⁰ And when the music critic Heinz Josef Herbort, writing for the weekly newspaper *DIE ZEIT*, wanted to know from Stockhausen if God was also musical, he answered, “Yes, yes. God is the greatest musician of all time, the greatest composer.”²¹ Stockhausen’s cosmic view of God is imbued with a theology of Creation. The derivation of his own method of composing from the process of divine creation in the cosmos has led him to being accused of hubris, and to malicious press. Criticism of ideology, however, turns itself into ideology, if it rashly reduces Stockhausen’s conception to a dated aesthetics of genius. Rather, it should be asked whether “creation” isn’t exactly *the* term which should impel theology, natural science and art theory to enter a dialogue.²² Commenting on his heptalogy LICHT, Stockhausen aims in this direction by saying, “As a small assistant of the greatest composer, may I be able to satisfactorily complete the work: ‘God willing’”²³. Even Martin Luther, in spite of his reservations regarding the possibility of knowing God through nature,²⁴ speaks of the *cooperation* of man in the process of creation, and the accentuation of passivity in Luther’s assessment of the *cooperatio hominis* – he demands that a Christian should accept everything which God fashions for us²⁵ – easily

19 Meister Eckhart, *Schriften und Predigten I*. Leipzig: E. Diederichs, 1903, p. 164. Cf. Jürgen Moltmann, *Der Geist des Lebens*. Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1991, p. 298.

20 K. Stockhausen, “‘Fortschritt – Bewußtsein...’” (21 July 1989), in *Texte zur Musik* Vol. 10, p. 180.

21 K. Stockhausen, “Der Mensch steht mit dem Kopf im Himmel” (19 August 1988), in *Texte zur Musik* Vol. 10, p. 177. Partial translation by Tim Nevill as “The Glorification of God” in *Towards a Cosmic Music*. Longmead: Element Books, 1989, pp. 111–114.

22 A very useful reader with regard to the dialogue between theology and natural science is *Der Kosmos als Schöpfung: Zum Stand des Gesprächs zwischen Naturwissenschaft und Theologie*, ed. Johann Dorschner. Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1998. Cf. in this context the aesthetics of Franz Rosenzweig in *Der Stern der Erlösung*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 4th ed. 1993; cf. Francesca Albertini, “Musik, Poesie, Offenbarung”, in *Musik & Ästhetik*, No. 15. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, July 2000, pp. 55–67.

23 K. Stockhausen, “Klang der Schöpfung” (5 February 1986), in *Texte zur Musik* Vol. 10, p. 39. – The physico-theological poet Barthold Heinrich Brockes saw himself as a small tool of the “great writer”, cf. Günter Peters, *Die Kunst der Natur*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1993, p. 154.

24 Martin Luther, “Der Prophet Jona ausgelegt” (1526), *Werke, Weimarer Ausgabe*. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883, Vol. 19, pp. 206f. The English translation reads: “Thus reason also plays blindman’s buff with God; it consistently gropes in the dark and misses the mark. It calls that God which is not God and fails to call Him God who really is God. [...] Therefore it rushes in clumsily and assigns the name God and ascribes divine honor to its own idea of God. Thus reason never finds the true God, but it finds the devil or its own concept of God, ruled by the devil.” (Translation: *Luther’s works* Vol. 19, Hilton C. Oswald, editor, Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974).

25 See Luther’s interpretation of the 1st section of the Affirmation of Faith in: Martin Luther, “Der Große Katechismus”, *Werke, Weimarer Ausgabe*, Vol. 30, 1, pp. 183–185; furthermore, see Luther’s pamphlet “Vom unfreien Willen” (1525).

correlates to Stockhausen's designation of the composer as a "translator", a "radio receiver"²⁶. In angelology, the archangel Michael, whom Stockhausen venerates as his patron saint, is assigned the role of interpreter between God and man.²⁷ In the current discussion on the theology of Creation the thoughts of Jürgen Moltmann²⁸ seem to relate most closely to those of Stockhausen. Moltmann rehabilitates the theology of Creation, which seemed to be obsolete for a long time, and expounds it in the context of world religions. His argumentation is pneumatologic, oriented toward the creative energies of the Holy Ghost, and thus it opens new possibilities for a dialogue with the natural sciences. As Moltmann argues, "It follows that the triune God also unremittingly breathes the Spirit into his creation. Everything that is, exists and lives in the unceasing inflow of the energies and potentialities of the cosmic Spirit."²⁹ As Spirit, the transcendental Creator is omnipresent in the material structure of the physical world. From the point of view of the theology of Creation there is neither uninspired matter nor immaterial spirit: "there is only *informed* matter. But the different kinds of information which determine the systems of life and matter must be given the name 'spirit'. In human beings they arrive at consciousness in a creaturely way." Although the open system of the cosmos is the subject of rational scientific research, it can still be considered "corresponding to God". This is, perhaps, why the artist is allowed to consider himself to be an "assistant" in God's creation of the cosmos: "because it is effected through God the Spirit, and exists in God the Spirit, it also moves and evolves in the energies and powers of the divine Spirit."³⁰ Moltmann's theology of Creation and Stockhausen's creationist aesthetics are very closely related to each other. Nevertheless, though they both even use the same terminology, this does not necessarily mean that there is a literal influence from either side: their neighbourhood is a spiritual one. Stockhausen asserts that, without the constant influx of the energies of the cosmic spirit (in a Moltmannian sense), no artist can press forward to the New and no work of art can come to life. For example, in the intuitive music of ES / IT from the cycle AUS DEN SIEBEN TAGEN / FROM THE SEVEN DAYS (1968), the point is "that a hitherto unknown sonic entity comes into being which is full of refinement and also full of energy, of surprises"³¹. Stockhausen speaks of "cosmic rays" – from an incalculable dimension – that

26 K. Stockhausen, LITANEI 97 for choir and conductor. Kürten: Stockhausen Verlag, 1999, p. I; also printed in "Freiheit – das Neue – das Geistig-Geistliche", p. 22 (see note 1).

27 Alfred Hermann (in cooperation with W. v. Soden), passage "Dolmetscher," in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, ed. Theodor Klauser, Vol. 4. Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1959, pp. 24–50.

28 Jürgen Moltmann, *Gott in der Schöpfung: Ökologische Schöpfungslehre*. Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1985. 4th ed., Gütersloh 1993; English edition: *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985; 4th ed., Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993. See also Jürgen Moltmann, *Der Geist des Lebens: Eine ganzheitliche Pneumatologie*. Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1991; regarding the relationship between the theology of creation and creationist aesthetics, see the annotated bibliography by Alexandre Ganoczy and Johannes Schmid, *Schöpfung und Kreativität*. Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1980.

29 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, p. 9. – Regarding the physical basis of a cosmic pneumatology, Moltmann refers to James Clark Maxwell, *A Dynamic Theory of the Electromagnetic Field*, ed. Thomas Forsyth Torrance. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1982. – Next two quotations: Moltmann, *Der Geist des Lebens*, pp. 287f., *God in Creation*, p. 200.

30 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, p. 212.

31 K. Stockhausen, "Freiheit – das Neue – das Geistig-Geistliche", p. 21 (see note 1). Next two quotations *ibid*.

enter into the rational process of composition: “if, in the best moments, I use all my craftsmanship as a constructor, it is necessary that something from an unknown world shoots into my construction. You could certainly call this ‘something’ cosmic rays, since we have only very few words for this metaphysical world. So, if someone calls me a mystic, I reply: ‘Gladly!’ For mysticism is that which begins where reason gets stuck, despite its efforts. Precisely when reason has reached the limit of that which is analyzable and explicable: that is where mysticism begins. For me as a musician, my home is there. That is where I want to go.”

As a composer, Stockhausen is constantly searching for God,³² and his quest for God leads him deeply into admiration for the cosmos, as it appears in the most recent theories and observations of natural science. With this stance, regardless of his highly advanced musical language, he follows a tradition which is as old as art itself and which found its expression, for example, in the physico-theological poetry of the early Enlightenment. Also here, the issue was to transform the discoveries of Newton’s *New Science* into an artistic, intensified praise of God: Instead of using them to refute the biblical images of creation, physico-theological poets modernized these images. Playing on a line from the large programmatic poem “Die Welt” (The World) in the first volume of the collection *Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott* (Earthly Pleasure in God) by Barthold Heinrich Brockes, which I have cited in my book *Die Kunst der Natur* (The Art of Nature), Stockhausen replied to me in a letter: “‘Durch’s Ohr lies’t unser Geist die Ziefern seiner Macht’: das praktiziere ich besonders nun beim Studium unseres Sonnensystems mit 9 Planeten, 61 Monden und ihren Rotationen um sich selbst und um die Sonne: Komplizierte Musik!”³³ At present, Stockhausen is working on the opera SONNTAG / SUNDAY, the first scene of which is entitled LICHTER – WASSER / LIGHTS – WATERS. In it, he composes the solar system as musical space.³⁴ From a contemporary perspective, the relevance of Pythagoras, Boethius (*De institutione Musicae* I, 27) and Kepler (*Harmonices mundi* III) concerning the harmony of the spheres and the music of the planets is reinforced by Stockhausen’s composition. According to these theories, the cosmos is mathematically organized and the tones of the planetary orbits combine into scales – following those laws of proportionality that also form the basis of music (*Musica theorica – practica; Musica mundana, humana, instrumentalis*).³⁵ Stockhausen’s concept of “Weltmusik” relates more to this *musica mundana* than to that which today is fashionably called “World Music”. At the same time, his understanding of the *Geistig-Geistliche* goes beyond the biblical notion

32 K. Stockhausen, “DIE WELT im Gespräch” (Conversation with Reinhard Beuth for DIE WELT, 1987), in *Texte zur Musik* Vol. 10, p. 85.

33 Letter to the author, 4 April 1999: “‘Through the ear, our mind reads the digits of His power’: I am practicing this especially now as I study our solar system with its nine planets, 61 moons, and their rotation around themselves and around the sun: complicated music!” Stockhausen quotes Verse 17 of the poem “Die Welt” (The World) by Barthold Heinrich Brockes. Cf. footnote 23 and German footnote 33 (p. 14).

34 This composition had its world première during the Donaueschinger Musiktage 1999. Concerning “light” and “water” as mystical metaphors, see Moltmann, *Der Geist des Lebens*, pp. 294–298.

35 Cf. Hans-Georg Nicklaus, *Die Maschine des Himmels. Studien zur Kosmologie und Ästhetik des Klangs*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1994.

of God as the Creator and the Christian expectation of salvation, reaching the cultures, myths, and religions of the world.³⁶ Perhaps risking identification with esotericism and New Age philosophy, Stockhausen argues for a new form of religiosity. Speaking from the perspective of a musician, he says, "the next step is to disentangle the clinches among the individual religions. A new orientation has to occur, which embraces all of humanity and in which no one feels excluded and fought against simply because he or she thinks differently or has a different meaning of life. A new religiosity has to evolve. I believe that, for example, the pure, abstract arts acquire a new significance: to connect man with the mysteries of the vibration structures of the entire cosmos. Therefore it can be said that, the more profoundly one grasps, understands, and comprehends a musical work of art, the more humble he will eventually become – and will admire God. One senses the intelligence of the universe that pulsates through everything. And then one also realizes that a composer is a servant, a collaborator of the universal God who creates such a wonderful work."³⁷ By the way, as a composer Stockhausen always finds new ways to ensure that the humble posture of admiration for God while listening to music does not turn into bigoted false piety. This is achieved in part through a certain bizarre imagery in the music, but most importantly through the humor and the great variety of comic relief in the musical situations. An example of this is the choral opera *ATMEN GIBT DAS LEBEN / BREATHING GIVES LIFE* from 1974/77. In this work, Stockhausen probably went furthest in juxtaposing texts of the most contrasting kinds of knowledge and different world cultures. He uses Japanese *haiku* poetry, Socrates, Meister Eckhart, and the Gospel according to St. Thomas, together with his own casually formulated texts about the incarnation of Christ and theorems of particle physics. In this way, a *geistig-geistliche* phantasmagoria about the "Grand Unification Theories (GUT)",³⁸ which connect particle physics and cosmology by using common equations, comes into being.

The cry of the sorcerer-bass, reacting to the witch-like "Muons" of the mimicking women's voices, calls to mind the exclamation of the tone HU in Stockhausen's work *INORI*. HU is, according to the mystical Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan, "the only name of the nameless ... the only name of God."³⁹ HU corresponds to the divine pitch G₄, the tone in the middle of the pitch-range that all instruments can play. By way of linguistic mysticism, Hazrat Inayat Khan connects the name of God with that of man: HUMAN means "man who is aware of God". In *ATMEN GIBT DAS LEBEN*, God's voice penetrates the musical "hide-and-seek"

36 *The Bagavadgita*, 6, 30 reads, in N. V. Thadani's translation (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990), "Who seeth me in everything, / And everything within me sees, / I am never lost to him, / And he is never lost to me." (cf. Moltmann, *Der Geist des Lebens*, p. 48 – cf. note 28).

37 K. Stockhausen, "Komponist und Kosmos" (21 July 1990), in *Texte zur Musik* Vol. 10, p. 222.

38 Stockhausen is fascinated by Stephen Hawking's book *A Brief History of Time* (German edition, see note 5); Cf. especially pp. 95f., 100, and 148.

39 *The Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan*, Vol. 2: *The Mysticism of Sound*, chapter 8, "Abstract Sound." London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1960; 3rd ed. 1970, pp. 64–66; cf. English booklet of Stockhausen Complete Edition CD 14: *AUS DEN SIEBEN TAGEN*. Kürten: Stockhausen-Verlag, 1993, notes to *GOLDSTAUB*, pp. 112–113 in the English version. The German text also appears in *Texte zur Musik* Vol. 4, p. 151. See also Karlheinz Stockhausen, "Notenflügel" (25 June 1986), in *Texte zur Musik* Vol. 10, p. 61.

Holy Seriousness in the Play

of the elementary particles by the calling out of His name. However, the hissing noises, with which the bass later casts a spell on the chorus, could also come from Lucifer, the angel who negates the creation of man, and whose quarrel with Michael and Eve runs through the opera cycle LICHT.

ALL WOMEN witch-like, mimicking, voice breaks each time

B1 Suddenly walk backwards towards the public to the outermost edge of the stage, with shoulders pulled high, stomach hollow, and the hands stretched defensively to the front.

CHORD 5 [ca. 12] all jerk simultaneously, startled

Flutter the hands and end by making 3 bewitching movements to all choristers accompanied by hissing noises.

STRINGS Fl 1/Ob 1/Cl 1/VI Fl 2,3/Ob 2,3/VI II CL 2,3/Bsn 1/Vc Bsn 2,3/Vla

ORCHESTRA

B1 ent-stehn die Mu-ons mit ei-nem Le-ben
are born the mu-ons with a-(h)a life span
se forment les mu-ons d'une du-rée de vie

B1 von zwei Mil-li-on-stel Se-kun-de, be- vor sie ein E- lek-tron er- zeu- gen. Und in die- sem Le- ben
of two mil-li- on-st of a sec- ond, be- fore they can con- (h)on- ceive an e- lec- tron. A (h)and dur- ing this li- (h)ife
de deux mil- li- on- nes de se- con- ds, a- vant de pro- duire un é- lec- tron. Et pen- dant cel- te vie un

B1 kann ein Mu- on ei- ne wei- te Rei- se
can a mu- on mu- on make a di- stant di- stant
mu- on mu- on -on peut faire un long long voy-a- ge,

B1 ma- chen. jour- (h)our- ney, long voy-a- ge.

instruments as in chord 5

(supplement the crescendo with potentiometer)

B1 sings the following TUTTI for 13 measures ♯ towards the public, then turns back around, singing.

Illustration 40: ATMEN GIBT DAS LEBEN / BREATHING GIVES LIFE (1974/77), pp. 18–19.