

ROW CONSTRUCTION AND ACCOMPANIMENT IN
LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA'S *IL PRIGIONIERO*

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DORI WAGGONER

Dr. Neil Minturn, Thesis Supervisor

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

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presented by Dori Waggoner,

a candidate for the degree of master of music,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

Professor Neil Minturn

Professor Stefan Freund

Professor Rusty Jones

Professor Thomas McKenney

Professor Nancy West

Thank you to my husband and son. Without your support, patience, and understanding, none of this would have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

Italian composer Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-75) invested his art with personal responses to dire social injustices. Because of the dangers surrounding any attempt to protest the repression of individual freedom, hate crimes, and anti-Semitism before and during World War II, he turned to composition to express his outrage. The second of his three protest works is a one-act opera, *Il Prigioniero* (1949). In it, Dallapiccola uses a unique approach to twelve-tone composition.

Following discussion of compositional influences and a plot summary, this thesis explores the types of rows used throughout the opera. Rows are analyzed in terms of intervallic relationships, hexachordal content, and aural cues for their identification. Several types of accompaniment materials—octatonicism, chromaticism, accompaniment by same and different rows—and the impact of these compositional choices on the dramatic elements of the opera are surveyed. Though he used multiple rows and several types of accompaniment in this twelve-tone composition, Dallapiccola created unity in his own distinctive way.

Introduction

Like so many creative figures traumatized by political tyranny in Central Europe during the first half of the twentieth century, Luigi Dallapiccola (1904–1975) invested his art with his own personal responses to dire social injustices. Because of the obvious dangers surrounding any public attempt to protest the repression of individual freedom, hate crimes, and anti-Semitism perpetrated in his homeland between 1910 and 1945, he turned to the more abstract realm of his own compositions to express outrage.¹ *Canti di Prigionia* (1941), *Il Prigioniero* (1949), and *Canti di Liberazione* (1955) comprise what came to be known as his “liberty/protest triptych” – his own testimony in the wake of unconscionable acts by political regimes.² Many scholars have invoked this term since the 1940s to characterize these pieces; the composer himself acknowledged this label in his writings. Long regarded as the leading Italian composer of his generation, Dallapiccola is especially significant as one of the first composers outside of the orbit of Arnold Schoenberg to embrace dodecaphonic principles.

In this thesis, I explored the characteristics of the tone rows used in Dallapiccola’s opera, *Il Prigioniero*, through analysis of rows in terms of interval classes, trichordal and hexachordal content, and compositional usages. The types of accompaniments used in the opera—octatonic harmonies, chromatic scales, and accompaniment by the same and different rows—are surveyed; for it is here that one can observe the relationship between technique and expression that makes this music so powerful.

¹ Luigi Dallapiccola, “The Genesis of the *Canti di Prigionia* and *Il Prigioniero*,” trans. Jonathan Schiller, *The Musical Quarterly* 39 (July 1952): 362.

² Luigi Dallapiccola, *Il Prigioniero*, trans. Harold Heiberg (Milano: Edizioni Suvini Zerboni, 1976).

Following World War II, Dallapiccola's music was performed frequently throughout Europe and the United States. This recognition and the success of his dodecaphonic works encouraged publications by various European and American scholars who analyzed Dallapiccola's music and his compositional techniques. In addition to theoretical commentaries on specific works, a growing body of articles addressing the evolution of his style and its distinctive features has been published over the last fifty years. Three authors—Hans Nathan, Rudy Shackelford, and Roman Vlad—published invaluable documents based extensively on conversations with or the diary entries of this composer. These publications, in conjunction with the composer's own writings, lend great insight to the mental and compositional processes involved in the creation of his music. Raymond Fearn wrote the only book-length biographical study published to date.³

Compositional Influences

Dallapiccola began studying the piano at the age of eight. During his family's exile in Graz, he had the opportunity to see several operas. Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* was especially influential, as noted by Dallapiccola in his own writings.⁴ A performance of *The Flying Dutchman* inspired him, at the age of 13, to dedicate his life to music. In 1922, the young musician moved to Florence to continue his musical education, focusing on piano. While at the Conservatory, he was introduced to a variety of modern music including works of Bartók and Ravel. On April 1, 1924, he attended a performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* conducted by its composer, Arnold Schoenberg. Dallapiccola chose on

³ Raymond Fearn, *The Music of Luigi Dallapiccola* (Rochester: The University of Rochester Press, 2003).

⁴ Luigi Dallapiccola, "The Genesis of the *Canti di Prigionia* and *Il Prigioniero*," *The Musical Quarterly* 39 (July 1953): 360.

that evening to focus his musical life and “learn the trade” of composing.⁵ He began serious study of composition with Vito Frazzi in Florence and was particularly interested in Frazzi’s work with non-traditional scales, especially the octatonic. In 1932, a group of well-known Italian musicians published a manifesto, “Italian Musicians for the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century Romantic Art.” In this statement of conviction, the composers blasted the new compositional trends, including “atonal and polytonal honking.”⁶ They were focused on the tradition of Italian music extending from Palestrina to Puccini, and were opposed to music that was a “mechanical game or a cerebral amusement.”⁷ Though Dallapiccola, like the authors of the manifesto, believed that music should be expressive, he also believed that the expressiveness could come from non-traditional compositional techniques. Because of this attitude of traditionalism by the leading Italian composers of the day and the political climate of the times, Dallapiccola had no contact with the Viennese school. As a result, he found his own path to atonality and dodecaphonic music.

Il Prigioniero is obviously entrenched in a style using twelve-tone rows, but it does not strictly follow the usual tenets of the Viennese methodology. Though examples of deviations from his teachings occur in his music, Schoenberg professed that, just as a Wagnerian leitmotif could create unity within a composition, the basic set was a source of unity within a twelve-tone composition.⁸ He also stated that “using more than one set would allow repetition of one or more tones too soon. Again there would arise the danger

⁵ Luigi Dallapiccola, “On the Twelve-Note Road,” *Music-Survey* 4 (Oct. 1951): 318–19.

⁶ Raymond Fearn, *The Music of Luigi Dallapiccola* (Rochester, NY: The University of Rochester Press, 2003), 9–10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁸ Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), 143.

of interpreting the repeated tone as a tonic. Besides, the effect of unity would be lessened.”⁹ Schoenberg’s concern with unity is characteristically modern: derive much from little and assume that all the parts contribute to the whole.

Dallapiccola used rows to represent ideas or themes in the opera, like leitmotifs. Beyond the use of multiple rows, he stretches the twelve-tone parameters by inserting chromatic accompaniments, not derived from a row, in many places throughout the opera. He uses repeated notes which would appear to violate Schoenberg’s stated aims. Where Schoenberg’s approach to unity is thoroughly modern, Dallapiccola’s is thoroughly romantic. Strict economy was not an aspiration of the Romantic era, and Dallapiccola continued this tradition in his twelve-tone compositions. He weaves a variety of tone rows into the rich fabric of this opera.

Dallapiccola’s orchestral writing differs from Schoenberg’s because of his approach to the twelve-tone idiom. Schoenberg advocated the avoidance of octave doublings, as they would tend to place emphasis on a particular pitch. Dallapiccola, in contrast, uses thick orchestration with doublings at many points in *Il Prigioniero*. His primary compositional goal was the expression of the musical and dramatic thought of that moment in the opera, the equality of pitches is not important. Schoenberg tended to use more transparent scoring, a practice that allowed the pitch/rhythmic content to be more easily identified, not covered or overlooked because of the sonorities that could be created. Schoenberg says, “More mature minds resist the temptation to become intoxicated by colors and prefer to be coldly convinced by the transparency of clear-cut

⁹ *Ibid.*, 108.

ideas.”¹⁰ His music demands an intellectual listener, not just an emotional one.

Dallapiccola’s music is a contrast to this. While certainly this opera is masterfully crafted, and understanding the techniques is interesting in and of itself, the emotional impact is strong, and just as important.

Dallapiccola explained his interest in the twelve-tone technique thus:

It seemed to me that twelve tones would enable me to articulate a melody better than seven – to write a richer and (as far as my capacities would allow) more expressive melody. To say nothing of the fact that for many years I had observed how often the same succession of tones was used (and with not too dissimilar characteristics) by the great masters, the less great, and the very small ones.¹¹

His goal was not to conquer the restrictions of the 12-tone system, it was to compose as expressively and dramatically as the musical materials would allow. Chromatic elements had been used by many composers in the realm of “major-minor” tonality and, continuing this tradition, Dallapiccola stretched diatonic chromaticism and incorporated it into his own twelve-tone style.

The music of Alban Berg influenced Dallapiccola as well. In 1933, he made Berg’s acquaintance at the International Music Congress in Florence. In April of the following year, he heard a performance of Berg’s *Lyric Suite*, followed in September by a performance of *Der Wein* in Vienna. During the rehearsals for the performance of the latter, Dallapiccola was able to speak with the composer. After hearing the entire work, Dallapiccola wrote:

When Hanna Schwarz began to intone: “Du gibst ihm Hoffnung, Liebe, Jugendkraft und Stolz”, cultural reminiscences began to proliferate in great

¹⁰ Ibid., 131.

¹¹ Hans Nathan, “The Twelve-Tone Compositions of Luigi Dallapiccola.” *The Musical Quarterly* 44 (July 1958): 303.

number in my memory: *L’Absinthe* above all, with its nameless melancholy. It seemed to me as though I were hearing for the first time horns mixed together with strings pizzicato: at that moment the gong transformed everything. One of those miraculous and extremely rare moments that are imprinted in one’s memory.¹²

Dallapiccola is more interested in the orchestration and creation of sounds than serial technique. Examination of this opera reveals a variety of thoughtful compositional decisions that are used to create a dramatic, tragic dynamic throughout the opera.

Berg’s influence is seen in Dallapiccola’s opera *Volo di notte* (1938). He studied the score for *Wozzeck* extensively and heard the broadcast of the premiere of *Lulu*. As in Berg’s operas, the saxophone is used in the orchestral writing. Closed musical forms were used in the opera as well as rhythmic cells. Example 1 is taken from the third scene of *Volo di Notte* which is labeled “Pezzo Ritimico” and is based on variations of the rhythmic cell.¹³ This technique is also seen in *Wozzeck* (Act 3, Scene 3) and *Lulu* (Act 1, Scene 2).¹⁴

Example 1: *Volo di Notte*, mm. 382–387

¹² Fearn, *The Music of Luigi Dallapiccola*, 17.

¹³ Luigi Dallapiccola, *Volo di Notte*, (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1940).

¹⁴ Fearn, *The Music of Luigi Dallapiccola*, 45.

Each rhythmic cell is two measures long. Within each cell the subdivision increases with each beat until the first beat of the second measure, then the subdivision decreases in the same manner.

Volo di Notte is the final work in Dallapiccola's early period (1930-1938). The influences assimilated into his personal style at this point in his compositional career carry through to the next phase. In the middle period (1939-1953) of his compositional career, Dallapiccola takes his evolving musical vocabulary and uses it to express his outrage, grief, and utter despair concerning the events taking place around him. He writes:

To return to a question one hears very frequently: is the twelve-tone system a language or a technique? To my way of thinking, it is even a state of mind. In any case, it seems to me a natural development of music, and Schoenberg's recent definition *nuova logica* will perhaps one day be thought as satisfactory as the definition *seconda pratica*, adopted by Monteverdi three centuries ago...Personally, I have adopted this method because it allows me to express what I feel I must express.¹⁵

Monteverdi (1567-1643) is credited with moving composition from polyphony to monody.¹⁶ The change in texture and treatment of dissonance allowed Monteverdi to create greater expressiveness in his compositions, and eventually led to his operas.

Dallapiccola asserts that Schoenberg's *Method of Composing with Twelve Tones Which are Related Only with One Another* may be the same type of dramatic change that occurred when Monteverdi led the world toward functional harmony. Dallapiccola created music with a twelve-tone focus that allowed him to express his musical and dramatic ideas. He did not view dodecaphony as a technique, or its use as part of a

¹⁵ Dallapiccola, "On the Twelve-Tone Road," *Music Survey* 4 (1951): 318-32.

¹⁶ K. Marie Stolba, *The Development of Western Music: A History*, (Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Publishers, 1990), 306-307.

handbook of rules to be followed. It was simply the best way for him to communicate the story of this opera and, more subtly, to express his incredible disgust with the events happening to and around him.

Plot Summary

In November of 1943, Dallapiccola's wife, Laura, went into hiding over mounting fears about what might happen to her because of her Jewish heritage. Dallapiccola would visit her as often as he could, always taking a different path to her hiding place. One night as he walked down a long corridor he saw the shadow of a tree on the wall and it inspired him to create the closing scene of the opera. In the shadows of the tree, Dallapiccola saw the giant arms of the Jailer encircling him. The shadows of the tree came to represent the Prisoner's barrier to freedom and also the barrier between Dallapiccola and his wife.

The opera, based on *La torture par l'esperance* by Count Villiers de L'Isle-Adam and *La legende d'lenspiegel et de Lamme Goedzak* by Charles de Coster, is set in Spain in the late sixteenth century. A cast of five singers is used in this 50-minute, one-act opera. The Prologue opens with the Prisoner's Mother waiting to visit her son. She is enveloped in a horrible recurring nightmare involving King Philip. He appears in her dream as the ruler and oppressor of his kingdom, then his appearance is altered. His face collapses into a death's head, the appearance of which frightens the Mother from her sleep. Each night she awakens, crying out for her beloved son.¹⁷

Scene One finds the Mother visiting her son, the Prisoner, in a dungeon during the Spanish Inquisition. He relates to her the hope the Jailer has offered him, calling him brother and encouraging him to keep living, despite the torture he has had to endure. This

¹⁷ Francesco Lombardi, Liner Notes from *Il Prigioniero*, trans. Gwyn Morris, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Choir, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen, Sony Classical SK 68 323, 1995, CD.

friendship has given him faith in prayer again. They hear the Jailer approach and the Mother leaves, fearing she will not see her son again.

The Jailer joins the Prisoner in Scene Two, again giving him hope by telling him of revolts in Flanders and Ghent. He speaks of the ringing of the Bell of Roelandt proclaiming freedom and the defeat of the Inquisition and King Philip. The Jailer sings of freedom and liberty and the Prisoner thanks him for offering such great hope. After the Jailer leaves, the Prisoner notices the cell door has been left slightly ajar.

Facing a long, dark passageway the Prisoner leaves his cell at the opening of Scene Three. He pauses to pray. Two priests approach and the Prisoner sinks into the shadows. Amazingly, his presence in the passageway remains undetected. He prays again and hears the sound of the Bell of Roelandt.

The final scene opens as the Prisoner bursts out of the prison into a garden. Just as he is about to inhale his first breath of freedom, the arms of the Jailer surround him. The torturer calls the Prisoner “brother” again and admonishes him for attempting to escape. As the Prisoner is being led to the stake, he realizes that the greatest torture of all was being given the hope of freedom.

Row Construction

In *Il Prigioniero*, most of the musical material is developed from five tone rows. The first three have the generally accepted labels of Prayer, Hope, and Freedom. Articles that deal specifically with *Il Prigioniero*, are rare, though sometimes it is mentioned in studies of his liberty/protest music and his total compositional style. However, in his text *Twentieth Century Music*, Elliot Antokoletz dedicates several pages to the personal and historical events prompting the composition of the opera and Dallapiccola’s innovative

manipulation of the twelve-tone system.¹⁸ Antokoletz notes that the three tone rows, representing prayer, hope, and freedom, used throughout the opera “appear to be the source of all the main musical motifs or thematic cells of the opera, so a highly systematic and integrated network of pitch relations is formed in connection to the dramatic symbology.”¹⁹ The fourth row, not widely acknowledged in the existing published analyses of the opera, will be referred to as the “chorus row” in this thesis. Finally, the Fratello Row is derived from the three-note “Fratello motif.”

The Prayer Row

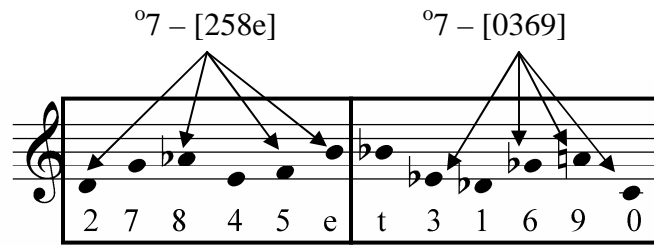
The Prayer Row, shown in Example 2, begins with <27845e>. This chord contains octatonic elements, including a diminished seventh chord. A pattern of alternating large and small intervals is used in the first hexachord. Ic5 is followed by ic1, then ic4 is followed by ic1, which is immediately followed by a “leap” of ic6.²⁰ The second hexachord, <t31690>, completes the row with a succession of leaps. It also contains a diminished seventh chord.²¹

¹⁸ Elliot Antokoletz, *Twentieth Century Music* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 360.

¹⁹ The three rows are labeled as Prayer (27845et31690), Hope (67895et40132), and Freedom (9e257t036814). In this thesis a fixed do number system will be used. C=0, C#=1, etc. Enharmonic equivalence is assumed.

²⁰ The acronym “ic” represents the term “interval class” throughout this thesis.

²¹ In this thesis angled brackets, < >, are used to designate an ordered set of pitch classes. Square brackets, [], will be used to designate an unordered set of pitch classes.



Example 2: Prayer Row

As noted previously, a variety of ics are used in the Prayer Row when considering intervallic relationships of contiguous notes. Each ic, from 1 to 6, is represented in the row. The alternating skip-step quality of the first half of the row is a clue to hearing when this row is in use. Another indicator is the use of diminished seventh chords in the accompaniment; diminished seventh chords are found in both hexachords and the Prayer Row is often accompanied with that tonality.

The prayer row is first used in the prologue, following the strident opening chords. Throughout the opera the row is seen in prime, retrograde, inversion, and retrograde inversion at a variety of transpositional levels. The original statement of the row begins in measure 9, shown in Example 3, and is sung by the Prisoner's Mother as she expresses her fear that this will be her last visit to see her son. She has been plagued by a nightmare concerning her son's plight.

octave + major sixth

Ti ri - ve - dro, mio fi - glio! Ti ri - ve - dro.

Example 3: mm. 9–14

Example 4 shows the first half of this initial row statement, in which the Mother begins singing in her lower register and then soars an octave and a major sixth in just two measures. The declamation of the text is mostly syllabic. Her grand leaps are accompanied by a static chord composed of pcs [5e24]. Note that pcs 2 and 4 are in both the vocal line and the accompaniment, while pcs 5 and e are the next two notes in the row.²²

²² The acronym “pc” represents the term “pitch class” throughout this thesis.

Prayer R2: 2 7 8 4 5 e t

Ti ri - ve-dro, mio fi - glio!

[5e24] [8e45]

Example 4: mm. 9–10

As the Mother sings pcs 5, e, and t, the orchestra plays $\langle 8e45 \rangle$. This syncopated presentation uses the Prayer Row–P2, positions 3 – 6 (assuming numbering begins with 1). The chords that accompany the first half of the phrase are composed of five notes, [2845e], of the first hexachord of P2, $\langle 27845e \rangle$, while the accompanying chords of the second half of the phrase, shown in Example 5, are made of the second hexachord $\langle t31690 \rangle$ along with pc7, which was omitted from the first hexachord, and a repetition of pc2, the first pitch of the row.

The end of the phrase/row, also stated in two measures, brings an arch shape to the opening vocal phrase, and is accompanied by two chords. The square brackets in Example 5 show that the second half of the vocal phrase is accompanied by [7t16]. As was the case in Example 4, the accented chords are placed in rhythmically weak locations, while the vocal line uses a complementary rhythm.

t 3 1 6 4 0

Ti ri - ve dro

[7t16] [3902]

Example 5: mm. 11–12

The second chord in Example 5, [3902], not only accompanies the end of the first row statement in the vocal line, but also continues to be played as the accompaniment of the next statement of the Prayer Row–R6. Example 6 shows that the orchestral transition between the phrases is made of the [3902] chord played simultaneously with a chromatic scale.

Prayer R6
6 3 0 7 9 4 5 e

[3902]

chromatic scale

Example 6: mm. 13–16

In fact, in addition to the use of tone rows, Dallapiccola often employs chromatic scales in this opera. In the Prologue and First Scene, chromatic passages are used in the orchestral lines in measures 13–14, 216, 235-238 and 246. Further discussion of the use of chromaticism is in the Accompaniment section of this thesis.

The Hope Row

Each of the hexachords in the Hope Row is a form of Forte's 6-2 chords, as shown in Example 7. These hexachords, whose prime form is [012346], are almost completely chromatic.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff is divided into two measures, each labeled '6-2' above it. The first measure contains six notes: F# (labeled '6'), G (labeled '7'), A (labeled '8'), B (labeled '9'), C (labeled '5'), and D (labeled 'e'). The second measure contains six notes: E (labeled 't'), F (labeled '4'), G (labeled '0'), A (labeled '1'), B (labeled '3'), and C (labeled '2').

Example 7: Hope Row – Forte chords

Parsing the row into contiguous tetrachords reveals that it begins with four chromatically-ordered notes; in P6 they are pcs <6789>. The end of the row is similar to the beginning, as the unordered set of the final four notes comprise a chromatic tetrachord, making the row nearly symmetrical. In Example 8, the pcs are labeled above the notes, while the prime forms are displayed below the row. The chromaticism at the beginning and the end of the row makes the Hope Row aurally distinguishable from the others used in the opera.

Example 8: Hope Row-P6 in tetrachords

The unordered pc set [45te] occurs in contiguous order positions in both the hope and prayer rows. In the hope row the central tetrachord is ordered as <5et4>. Within the prayer row the same pc set is found in the third through sixth notes ordered as <45et>, a rotation of the ordering in the hope row. Interval classes 2 and 3 comprise the vast portion of the interval succession in the freedom row, a distinct difference from the other rows.

In its first appearance, represented in Example 9, the Hope Row is sung by the Prisoner and is doubled by the cello.

Hope Row P6:

Example 9: mm. 202–203

The intervals widen as the phrase expands and leads to the double use of pc2 at the end of the phrase. That pitch is then sustained in the cello for six beats, placing even greater emphasis on it.

Example 10: Expanding Hope Row–P6, mm. 202–203

As the melodic line widens, compound melody appears with both ascending and descending lines. The descending line has strict half-step movement toward the final pitch, 2, while the ascending line moves chromatically with only one exception, pcs e and t are reversed.

Example 11 portrays the same type of expanding occurring in the next statement of the Hope Row, a near mirror image of the first statement. The I3 version begins with a descending chromatic tetrachord. The ascending portion of the compound melody begins with pc3 and moves up to pc6, while the descending portion moves down the nearly chromatic line with the same reversal of e and t.

Example 11: Expanding Hope Row–I3, mm. 203–204

The chromaticism used in the Hope Row is its most distinguishing characteristic.

In addition to the tetrachords at the beginning and end of the row, Dallapiccola mines the row for more chromaticism by using compound melody. Each of the melodies moves chromatically toward its goal.

The Freedom Row

The Freedom, or Liberty, Row was the first row composed for the piece. Upon completing the first draft of the libretto, Dallapiccola began writing the Jailer's aria for Scene Two. This song, expressing hope for freedom, is sung after the Jailer shares information about the Beggar's Revolt in Flanders. During this three-strophe aria, the row is heard in prime, inverted, retrograded, and retrograded inversion forms.²³

As shown in Example 12, when divided into triads, the Freedom Row contains two forms of {025}, one form of {036}, and one of {037}. The first hexachord is 6z46, while the second is 6z24. Both hexachords have one degree of symmetry. The row is composed mostly of ics 2 and 3, and is the only row that does not contain any ic1. Unlike the Prayer and Hope Rows, there are no appearances of ic6 and no adjacent chromaticism. The absence of ic1 makes this row aurally distinguishable from both the Prayer and Hope Rows. The Freedom Row is also identifiable by the dominant 9th chords created by its first five notes, [7e259], and the minor triad formed by the last three notes of the row, <814>.

²³ Fearn, *The Music of Luigi Dallapiccola*, 116–117.

{025}	{025}	{036}	{037}
9 e 2	5 7 t	0 3 6	8 1 4

Example 12: Freedom Row

The Jailer’s aria employs the Freedom Row. Three of the most striking features of this melody are the repetition of notes, insertion of neighbor tones, and diatonic implications. The first three pcs, which are stated with a total of six notes due to repetition and ornamentation, encompass a perfect fourth within a pentatonic tonality (see Example 13). The next three pcs are presented as a sequence of the beginning of the phrase, with a minor rhythmic adjustment necessary for declamation. The pcs in positions 7-9, arpeggiate a diminished triad from E_b5 to A5 (enharmonic of B_{bb}). A dramatic drop of a minor seventh brings in the final three pcs of the row, which spell a minor triad.

Example 13: Freedom Row–P0, mm. 360–365

Great technical demands are placed on the performers of the opera. Example 13 displays the challenging range necessary for the Jailer’s role, encompassing an octave and a major sixth. Unlike the phrase in Example 5, an arch-shaped melody is not created within a single row statement, but requires the use of another phrase to find its conclusion. The Freedom Row–R6 begins in measure 366. Example 14 shows the vocal line from measures 366–370, the conclusion of the phrase which began in measure 360.

Example 14: Freedom Row–R6, mm. 366–370

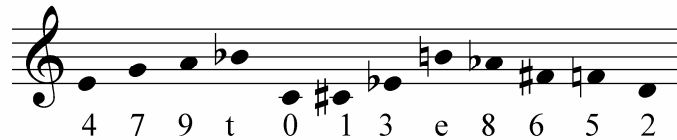
Trichordal segments dominate these measures, beginning with an E \flat minor triad. Example 14 shows that following the E \flat minor triad is the use of another modified sequence, which outlines a D diminished triad. The final two trichords bring back the pentatonic sounds that span a perfect fourth in a descending pattern. The phrase that begins with ascending segments spanning fourths, ends with descending segments following the same pattern. *In toto*, the phrase is composed of eight trichords. Examples 13 and 14 show both halves of the phrase. These excerpts show that in addition to an arch-shaped melody, a mirror-image is used in the treatment of the trichords. In Example 15, each rectangle surrounds bracketed descriptors of each trichord in the first and second halves of the phrase.

First Half (Freedom P0)	Second Half (Freedom R6)
<div style="text-align: center;">[dim triad]</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> [trichord] [minor triad] </div> <div>[trichord]</div>	<div>[minor triad][dim triad]</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> [trichord] [trichord] </div>

Example 15: Trichords in Arch-shape

The Chorus Row

The Chorus appears three times in the opera. The only row the ensemble uses is the Chorus Row, shown in example 16, though there are times when the chorus sings chords that do not come from any row.



Example 16: Chorus Row

In its first intermezzo, a powerful chorus presents the Chorus Row canonically. Example 17 is a reduction of the choral parts.

Two staves of music in treble clef, common time. The top staff shows the 2nd and 4th entrances, and the bottom staff shows the 1st and 3rd entrances. The notes are: 2nd entrance (F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6), 4th entrance (G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6), 1st entrance (G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6), 3rd entrance (F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6).

Example 17: Chorus Canon, mm. 151–157

This is a canon at Te, a “minor second,” with two measures separating the dux from the comes. Each imitation happens at a two-measure increment and a Te transposition. Following the tenor line is the alto entrance, then the bass, while the soprano is last. The first canon is accompanied by a solo organ doubling the first two measures of each voice of the canon, giving the first hexachord of the row added emphasis.

The chorus is set offstage and performs in the First and Second Choral Intermezzos and in the Fourth Scene. Each time, canons of the Chorus Row are presented, each time at regular increments of time, and each entrance is at Te. When the chorus is not singing in canon, they generally sing emphatic chords which are not taken from any of the opera's rows. Example 18 shows the first three measures of the Second Choral Intermezzo. Dallapiccola sets this prayer in a series of major and minor chords.

C Major B \flat minor

Example 18: Second Choral Intermezzo, mm. 823–825

In the score, Dallapiccola instructs the performers thus:

The sonority of the Second Choral Intermezzo must be formidable: every spectator must feel himself literally overwhelmed and submerged by the immensity of the sound. To this end there should be no hesitation in making use, if necessary, of mechanical means, such as loudspeakers, etc.²⁴

The use of a dark, empty stage combined with the formidable sound created by the organ and the chorus enhances the ominous mood of the opera.

²⁴ Dallapiccola, *Il Prigioniero*, 75.

The prominent use of the organ, the Biblical Latin text, and the canonic treatment of the row intensify the religious undertones in the opera during the choral intermezzos. The opera takes place in 16th century Spain, so this compositional choice is an appropriate connection to the setting. The text, taken from Psalm 51:15, is “O Lord, thou wilt open my lips: and my mouth shall declare thy praise.” This verse is also used in the Catholic Prayer in praise of the Blessed Trinity. The lyrics resonate with a faith in God that echoes the Prisoner’s own prayers as he endures his incarceration. There is an ironic juxtaposition between the chorus and the accompaniment in the Second Choral Intermezzo. Example 20 shows the condensed choral score with the condensed orchestral score.

The musical score for Example 19 (measures 823-825) is presented in three systems. The top system is a single staff in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature change from C Major to B \flat minor between the second and third measures. The second and third systems are grand staves (treble and bass clefs) showing the harmonic progression. The progression is: E $^{\circ}7$ (measure 823) → E \flat $^{\circ}7$ (measure 824) → D $^{\circ}7$ (measure 824) → D \flat $^{\circ}7$ (measure 825). Arrows indicate the chromatic movement between these chords.

Example 19: mm. 823–825

Diminished seventh chords and tritones²⁵, each at Te below its predecessor, accompany the major and minor chords of the chorus. The diminished seventh chord is voiced as double tritones, obviously in conflict with the religious nature of the text. With the diminished seventh chord clearly stated in measure 823, the tritones that follow can be heard synecdochically as diminished seventh chords as well. With the reference to

²⁵ Tritones refer to ic6, both augmented fourths and diminished fifths.

Catholicism in the text, the use of the tritones, or the devil’s interval, intensifies the conflict between faith and torture. The conflict between the text and major/minor chord construction of the chorus, and the powerful tritones in the accompaniment foreshadows the Prisoner’s escape and subsequent capture. The off-stage chorus continues to interject its prayer throughout the last scene as the Jailer captures his “Brother” and returns him to his cell.

The Fratello Motif/Row

The Fratello motif (<430>) is used many times throughout the opera; initially it occurs in measure 39 of the prologue. The motif uses a descending minor second followed by a descending minor third, highly evocative of both the prayer and hope rows. Example 20 shows the Fratello motif used three times in succession at different transpositions.

The image displays a musical score for three measures. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a common time signature. It contains three measures of music, each with a different transposition of the Fratello motif. Above the notes are numbers indicating fingerings: '3 2 e', '5 4 1', and 't 9 6'. Brackets with the number '3' are placed under the first two notes of each measure. The lyrics 'Il mio so-gno', 'Il mio sog - no', and 'Tut-te le not-ti m'op pri-me' are written below the vocal line. The bottom two staves are piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs. The bass line features a tritone interval, which is highlighted by a bracket and a colon. The piano part includes various chords and melodic lines that support the vocal melody.

Example 20: mm. 39–42

In some parts of the opera, the Fratello motif is subjected to both retrogression and inversion, as seen in Example 21.

Example 21: m. 240

In this measure the orchestra performs forms of the motif five times. In the uppermost voice the motif spans two beats, while the prime, retrograde, and two inverted forms are played, each lasting half a beat. The derived row <430t1256978e> is created by the transformations of the Fratello motif. This row is constructed from the original three-note cell. All twelve tones come from manipulation, through retrograde or inversion, of the Fratello motif.

Translated into English, Fratello, means brother. It is this simple word that the Jailer uses sadistically to torture his prisoner. While the Prisoner languishes in his cell, the Jailer quietly extends a hand of friendship. He calls the Prisoner his brother and gives him hope that he will gain freedom soon. The sweetness of the word represents the opposite; it is representative of the Jailer's premeditated plan to torture his captive as cruelly as possible.

Accompaniment

Dallapiccola's approach to the orchestral writing in *Il Prigioniero* is unique. He uses a variety of techniques to support the vocal lines, create transitions, and enhance the tragic spirit of the opera. Though in some places a row is accompanied by itself, often the voices are supported by instrumental doubling or a different row altogether. Octatonicism and chromaticism are used throughout the orchestral parts as well.

Accompaniment that Doubles the Vocal Line

At times, Dallapiccola doubles the vocal line in the orchestra. Example 22 shows the cello doubling the Prisoner as he sings the Hope Row–P6. At this point in the opera, the Prisoner is relating a story to his mother. He tells her of the time the Jailer spoke kindly to him. From the Jailer's single utterance, "Fratello", the Prisoner feels great hope. The translation of the text in example 22 is "it renewed in me a desire to go on living."

Hope Row P6:
6 7 8 9 5 e t 4 0 1 3 2 2

che mi diede an cor fi - du³cia nel - la vi_____

3

Example 22: mm. 202–203

Dallapiccola's choice of doubling the vocal line, combined with the rising motion, enhances the feeling of hope, support, and brotherhood the Prisoner was experiencing.

In the first appearance of the chorus row, Dallapiccola uses doubling in a slightly different way. In this passage a fortissimo organ accompanies the chorus. Though not an exact rhythmic doubling, Example 23 shows how the organ forcefully supports the chorus in its presentation of the Latin text.

The musical score for Example 23 consists of four vocal staves and a grand staff for the organ. The vocal parts are arranged in a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). The lyrics are: "Fi - at, Fi-at mi-se-ri - cor-di-a-tu-a Do-mi-ne su-per - nos". The organ part is marked *ff* and provides a rhythmic accompaniment to the vocal lines. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, notes, and triplets.

Example 23: mm. 126–134

Dallapiccola selected two verses from the book of Psalms for this portion of the First Choral Intermezzo. They are translated as follows:

Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have hoped in thee.
 Let thy priests be clothed with justice: and let thy saints rejoice.²⁶

²⁶ These verses are from Psalm 33:22 and Psalm 132:9.

These verses echo the Prisoner’s hope for the future and hope for justice. The choice of an organ performing with a choir carries a heavy religious connotation, as does the use of the Latin text.

Accompaniment by Same Row

As the second scene opens the Prisoner sits in solitude. He is lonely and misses his mother. The use of the Hope Row sadistically foreshadows the Jailer’s entrance and subsequent offer of friendship and reassurance to the Prisoner that there is still hope for the future. In Example 24, the orchestra plays Hope Row–P6. Upon the completion of the orchestral row statement, the Prisoner begins singing Hope Row–P3. Before he has sung the entire row the orchestra begins a third statement, which is completed before the Prisoner is able to finish his statement.

Example 24: mm. 275–281

Though only one row is being used in this excerpt, it is clearly deployed in a manner different than a Schoenbergian approach. The rows overlap, causing pitches to be repeated before all of the tones have been used. Under the weaving of various

transpositions of the Hope Row, Dallapiccola places a pedal. This lends stability to the passage otherwise filled with the activity of the many Hope Row presentations, which contain chromaticism and compound melody. In this scene the Prisoner laments his loneliness. The solitary pedal under the activity of the voice and the accompaniment enhance the feeling that even though his life is turbulent and his mind is racing, he is still alone in the world. The pedal disappears when the Jailer enters and offers kind words of brotherhood and hope.

Accompaniment by Different Row

As Scene II continues, the Jailer admonishes the Prisoner to “hope till agony fills your bosom.” He recounts tales of the successes the Prisoner’s comrades and their impending liberty. As the Jailer weaves his well-disguised web of torture, Dallapiccola uses the Hope and Freedom Rows simultaneously. Example 25 is an excerpt with both rows being used.

Freedom P9
9 e 2 5 7 t 0 3 6 8 1 4

end of Hope P9
8 2 1 7 3 4 6 5

Incomplete Hope Ie
t 9 8 0 6 7

Incomplete Hope I8
8 7 6 5 9 3

Incomplete Hope I4
4 3 2 1 5 e

Freedom Row P9 9 e 2 5 7 t 0 3 6 8 1 4

Freedom Row P9 9 e 2 5 7 t 0 3 6 8 1 4

Freedom Row P9 9 e 2 5 7 t 0 3 6 8 1 4

Example 25: mm. 292–297

A thinly veiled foreshadowing of the reality to come, the Hope Rows used in this excerpt are incomplete, each using only its first hexachord. Ironically, the Freedom Row is used in its complete form in the Jailer’s line and in a canonic setting in the orchestra. The combination of the Hope and Freedom Rows supports the lyric.

As the Jailer sings of hope to the Prisoner, Dallapiccola uses the Freedom Row. One part of the accompaniment includes a canonic treatment of Freedom Row–P9. In Example 25, the two lowest staves show the beginning of the canon, but it carries into the staves two and three as indicated by the lines. Simultaneously, another part of the orchestra plays incomplete versions of the Hope Row.

The use of incomplete Hope Rows symbolizes the false hope the Jailer offers to the Prisoner. The translated text is as follows:

Hope, O brother, hope now with all that is in you,
now you must hope till agony fills your bosom,
use every hour of the day for your hoping
you must go on living that you may keep hoping.²⁷

As the opera progresses, we learn that the Jailer's method of torture was to offer, and even aggressively encourage, hope of freedom to the Prisoner. Miraculously, the Prisoner is able to escape, but this is all part of the most despicable of all punishments. Rather than using physical abuse, the Jailer subjects his prisoner to a more brutal fate. He builds a false sense of hope within the Prisoner, allowing him to believe that he may be able to someday be free. The Prisoner never has any chance of achieving freedom, and as he begins to breathe its sweetness, the Jailer takes that freedom, and all remaining hope, away from the captive. While the text and the canon use the Freedom Row–P9, the other accompaniment figure uses fractured Hope rows, symbolic of the broken hope with which the Jailer tortures the Prisoner.

Accompaniment with Chromaticism

Chromaticism is used throughout *Il Prigioniero* in a variety of ways. The first chromatic passage occurs within the first minute of the opera. Example 26 shows a passage that serves as a transition into the second phrase of the vocal line.

²⁷ Dallapiccola, *Il Prigioniero*, 32-33.

Prayer R6
6 3 0 7 9 4 5 e

chromatic scale

Example 26: mm. 13–16

The sustained chord played with the chromatic scale is not from any of the opera's rows, but is part of an ongoing progression of chords derived from octatonic scales. In the opening of the opera each phrase of the vocal line is one complete row. The use of one complete chromatic scale is consistent with this technique. Though the Hope Row begins and ends with chromatic tetrachords, the Prayer Row does not have the same connection to chromaticism, making this use of the chromatic scale an independent idea, unrelated to either the chordal accompaniment or the vocal statement of the Prayer Row.

In scene I, Dallapiccola employs the chromaticism in a different way. This portion of the opera, see Example 27, uses the Hope Row in the duet between the Prisoner and his Mother, while the orchestra plays short chromatic rips.

Example 27: mm. 234–237

In prime, inversion, retrograde, and retrograde inversion, the Hope Row begins with four chromatic notes, and the chromatic rips are reminiscent of those four notes. In this excerpt, the chromatic segments are not creating a transition, they provide a quiet flurry of activity after a previously more sustained accompaniment.

Accompaniment with Octatonicism

The opera's opening chords, representing the Bell of Roelandt, are loud and strident, and are not representative of any of the rows used in *Il Prigioniero*. They have an octatonic flavor that is found throughout the opera. Example 28 shows the first three measures of the opera.

Example 28: mm. 1–3

The first chord is derived from the O3, the second chord from O2, and the third from O1, which are Te statements of the pitch collection.²⁸

Throughout the Prologue, octatonic elements are used, not only in repetitions and transpositions of the opening chords, but also accompanying the singers. With the first appearance of the singer, in measure 9, shown in Example 29, the orchestra continues to use chords from the octatonic sets, again beginning with O3, then moving to O2, and finishing the phrase with O1. The three octatonic scales share many common notes, but each tetrachord belongs uniquely to its own octatonic set.

²⁸ In this thesis, O1 represents the octatonic scale made of pcs[0235689e]. O2 represents the octatonic scale made of pcs [134679te]. O3 represents the octatonic scale made of pcs [24578te1].

Prayer Row P2
2 7 8 4 5 e t

Example 29: mm. 9–12

The Prayer Row contains an octatonic set in its first hexachord; however, the chords used in this example do not appear contiguously in any permutation of the row.

Conclusions

Dallapiccola immerses himself in a very personalized version of the twelve-tone style, one that owes less to any demands that might be made by a general theoretical system, than it does to the specific task at hand, communicating the message of *Il Prigioniero*. Needing to find a compositional language that could adequately express his outrage at events in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s led him to experiment with the style, though he had very little exposure to the Second Viennese School because of the politics of the time. The use of multiple tone rows, octatonic and chromatic elements, moments of seemingly tonal material, and simultaneous use of different rows is antithetical to Schoenberg's classic twelve-tone technique, in which such motivic sumptuousness threatens the coherence of the piece. While Schoenberg created unity in his twelve-tone music through an economy of elements, Dallapiccola responds to the exigencies of the specific work at hand, rather than to compositional, systemic consistency.

Unity in this opera comes less from limited motivic resources than from a restricted array of motivic transformations. Consider, for example, this reduction of the first appearance of the Chorus Row, where each entrance is at Te.

Example 30: Chorus Canon, mm. 151–157

The dux begins on pc4 followed by the first comes at pc3, the second at pc2, and the third at pc1, as shown in Example 30. When diminished seventh chords and other octatonic elements are used they are often transposed at Te, again creating unity within the music. Examples 19 and 28 are excerpts showing these transformations.

Example 31 shows the Te manipulation as it occurs in the Jailer’s Aria.

Example 31: mm. 360–370

The structure of the second half of the phrase is retrograde at Te of the first half, another example of the creation of unity through manipulation of the material.

The use of multiple rows in a twelve-tone work creates clarity and adds to the drama. The tone rows are used like leitmotifs, each representing specific ideas. The major themes of the opera—hope for the future, prayers for well-being/survival, and desire for freedom—are each assigned a row. At times the rows are used in congruity with the libretto, as when the Mother’s prayer is sung and accompanied by the Prayer Row. Elsewhere, Dallapiccola uses the rows with a sadistic irony. When the Jailer sings words of encouragement to the Prisoner he uses the Freedom Row, though he certainly knows that his captive will never taste freedom again. Both treatments of the rows help to intensify the anguish of the story.

In its first appearance, the Hope Row is sung by the Prisoner as he intones, “‘Brother’ no other work ever sounded sweeter, it renewed in me a desire to go on living.”²⁹ He reminisces of the kind words the Jailer had for him: calling him ‘brother’ and sharing news of the successes of the revolution. As the Prisoner sings, beginning in measure 202, his vocal line is doubled exactly by the cello; this doubling is representative of the support and friendship the Jailer seemed to be offering.

As noted earlier, the construction of the Freedom Row allows for moments of tonality to appear. Dallapiccola used the Freedom Row for the Jailer’s Aria in Scene II, beginning in measure 360. In this aria, he sings of the Beggars’ victories and impending liberty. In this aria the Freedom Row is notably tonal, expressing pentatonic, minor, and diminished triads. These glimmers of tonality parallel the mirage of freedom seen by the

²⁹ Francesco Lombardi, Liner Notes from *Il Prigioniero*, trans. Gwyn Morris, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Choir, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen, Sony Classical SK 68 323, 1995, CD.

Prisoner as he suffers in his cell. Tonality, like the Prisoner's freedom, is something from the past, its appearance is fleeting and ultimately fails to survive beyond the Jailer's false words of hope.

In this intensely dark drama, Dallapiccola symbolically expresses his disgust with fascist oppressors of his time. He uses a twelve-tone technique that is a unique combination of romanticism and modernism; blending his revered Italian operatic tradition with an interpretation of the twelve-tone system. In *Il Prigioniero*, Dallapiccola uses a wealth of compositional materials, but he manages that material with economy. He uses a twelve-tone technique that is a servant to the drama. Compositional decisions are driven by the expression of the story, and ultimately by speaking out against the atrocities in his life. These personal and musical needs are the impetus for the creation of this distinctive brand of serialism.

Il Prigioniero clearly conveys of Dallapiccola's outrage. From his family's exile from Italy, as demanded by the Fascist regime, to his constant fear for the safety of his Jewish wife during World War II, Dallapiccola had a lifetime of horrific events to protest. This opera is a masterful commentary on these social injustices using a compositional language that is unique to the composer. Like many great composers, he digests and reinterprets the techniques of his predecessors—twelve-tone techniques of Schoenberg and Berg, leitmotif of Wagner, Italian lyricism of Puccini—and creates a powerful tool for his own expression of pain, fear, and revulsion. Dallapiccola uses intellectual methods that required much sophisticated planning and forethought, to create an opera with an enormous emotional impact. Each compositional choice adds to the sorrow, dejection, and torture of the characters and, by extension, the listener.

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