

SVB PONTIO PILATO



an opera
concerning the death and remembrance
of Caius Pontius Pilatus
one-time governor of Judæa

Libretto by Jim Bisso
Music by Erling Wold
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Overview

The opera *Sub Pontio Pilato* concerns the suicide of Pontius Pilate and his subsequent historical transformation from a minor Roman bureaucrat into a major character in the drama of the Christian liturgy. He is portrayed as a pathetic figure, preoccupied with philosophy and obsessed with his past.

In the first act, his young slave, Ptolemæus, slits Pilate's wrists. Pilate sings that there is nothing after death. He wavers between consciousness and hallucinatory flashbacks of events that led to his downfall. In subsequent scenes, *Historia* warns Pilate that his historical fate will be the result of a misconstrued memory. Ptolemæus reveals that Pilate has attempted suicide before. Pilate remembers three men he knew while in Judæa: two enemies and one a friend. Ptolemæus pretends to be Pilate's long-dead wife, Procula. *Historia* sings of Pilate's biggest political mistake: the introduction of the military standards into Jerusalem. (These standards were an affront to Jewish law, because they displayed graven images of the Roman emperor.) While *Historia* sings, children act the parts of both the Roman soldiers and the angry Jewish crowd. Pilate relents and withdraws the troops to Cæsarea.

The first entr'acte consists of a short invocation of Æon, the god of time, and arias which become increasingly delirious and cryptic.

The second act begins with Procula's frightening vision of a bleeding youth. Next, Ptolemæus plays the young man from the vision as a Judæan rebel and is tried before Pilate. He is sentenced to crucifixion and nailed to a cross. Pilate finally understands his wife's vision is the same as *Historia*'s earlier warning. As Ptolemæus is lowered from the cross, we see that he is alive. Pilate remembers his dismissal from office by Tiberius and his recall to Rome. *Historia* imparts to him her dark secret: whatever we perceive—like the food we eat—is taken in, digested and excreted into the sewer. A trio, sung by Procula, *Historia* and Pilate, implies that it would have been better if we had never been born. Pilate sings one last aria and dies.

During the second entr'acte three women take Pilate's body and place it on a bier which they set ablaze. Afterwards, they gather up his ashes into an urn and place it on an altar surmounted by a bust of Pilate. Suddenly the bust moves and Pilate bursts out from the monument wearing dress armor. An elderly soldier awakes and roughly leads him to the final act: his trial.

Pilate is put on trial by the Jews and Christians, who sing a polyglot text recounting his crimes and demanding his death. Three judges, Æbutius, Sejanus, and *Historia* hear the testimony. Sejanus defends Pilate, but he is found guilty and sentenced to death. Instead of crucifixion Pilate and Procula are dressed as saints in golden raiment. Elaborate masks are placed over their faces and a chorus sings the Credo. His fate is complete. The opera ends on a quiet note: during the the 1970s, an Ethiopian soldier and a Russian advisor discuss Pilate's place among the saints of the Abyssinian Orthodox Church.

Dramatis Personæ

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Caius Pontius Pilatus, former Procurator of Judæa [26-36 CE] | tenor |
| Ptolemæus, a young boy slave belonging to Pilatus | |
| Claudia Procula, the wife of Pilatus and the sister of Sejanus | mezzo-soprano |
| Historia, personification of history | |
| Poeta, an old Greek slave | |
| Russian advisor | contralto |
| Ælius Sejanus Strabo, the favorite of Tiberius [d. 31 CE] | |
| Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee | tenor |
| Joseph Kaiāphas, Jewish High Priest [18-36 CE] | |
| Tiberius Claudius Nero Cæsar Augustus, emperor of Rome [14-37 CE] | |
| Æon, Greek god of a period or passage of time | |
| Ethiopian soldier | bass-baritone |
| Ananas bar Seth, Jewish High Priest [6-15 CE] | countertenor |
| Longinus, a centurion | |
| Sacerdos, Jewish prosecutor | baritone |
| Pueri, children | mixed children's chorus |
| Legatus, a young legate | a boy from the chorus |
| Christiana Prima, Christiana Secunda | two girls from the chorus |
| Lucretius, a poet | from the chorus |
| Epicurus, a Greek philosopher | from the chorus |
| Æbutius, Jewish judge | |
| Mulieres, women | chorus of women |

The Greek and Hebrew texts in this libretto are transcribed using the International Phonetic alphabet (IPA).
(See also <http://www2.arts.gla.ac.uk/IPA/ipa.html>).

Table 1: IPA Pronunciation Guide

| IPA | Example(s) |
|-----|---|
| χ | German <i>Bach</i> /baχ/, Scots English loch /lɔχ/ |
| ʕ | pharyngeal stop, ayin in Hebrew |
| ʔ | glottal stop, English <i>Hawai'i</i> /havajʔi/ |
| ə | schwa, unstressed vowel: English <i>sofa</i> /sófə/, German <i>junge</i> /júŋə/ |
| θ | English <i>thin</i> /θɪn/ |
| ð | English <i>then</i> /ðen/ |
| j | English <i>you</i> /ju/, German <i>ja</i> /ja/ |
| ŋ | English <i>finger</i> /fɪŋgər/, German <i>Finger</i> /fɪŋər/ |
| ɣ | voiced pharyngeal fricative, Arabic; can be pronounced like a /j/ |
| ʃ | English <i>ship</i> /ʃɪf/, German <i>Schiff</i> /ʃɪf/ |
| ɛ | English <i>pet</i> /pet/, German <i>nett</i> /net/ |

Act I: Vivat mortuus*I. Long live the corpse!***1. Ataraxía***1. Impassivity*

Late afternoon. Pilatus' villa in Gallia Viennensis. The cicadas chirp. Ptolemæus enters and pours a bucket of hot water into a large marble tub. Pilatus enters, disrobes, and gets into the tub. Ptolemæus brings a beaker of wine and two glasses on a salver. He fills the glasses and removes a knife from his robes. Suddenly, as the opening chords sound, he slits his master's wrists. Pilatus settles back to die, listening to Ptolemæus sing .

PTOLEMÆUS

u χρονίδzi to alyún sineχós en tí sarkí
 alla to men ákron ton eláχiston χρόnon páresti
 to ðe mónon ipertínon to idómenon kata sárka
 u pollás iméras simméni
 e ðe poliχρόnzi ton arrostjon pleonádzon éχusi
 to idómenon en ti sarki é per to alyún.

*Continuous pain does not last long in the flesh;
 on the contrary, pain, if extreme, is present a very short time,
 and even that degree of pain which barely outweighs pleasure in the flesh
 does not last for many days together.
 Illnesses of long duration even permit of an excess of pleasure over pain in the flesh.*

PILATUS

An excess of pleasure over pain, I shall savor,
 For fleshly pain lasts not too long.
 I, a pliant mortal, with body soft,
 A brittle mortal, with crumbling frame,
 Shall die soon enough and to nothing return.
 When the spark departs, to the gods it flies.
 Distraught and with just a hint of fright.
 If there be gods, yet I know not.
 Fallen stones, gray with dust, at the crossroads,
 Familiar shades, beneath the dying embers in the hearth,
 Or crouching on cupboards, amongst the mealworms.
 The gods are absent fathers.
 We know them not, nor can we,
 For there are no gods.

PTOLEMÆUS

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.
Religion has the power to induce so much evil.

PILATUS

Religion drives everybody to evil.

Nature herself barks after nothing,
 Save the wretched hearts and minds of those
 Who tremble before sweating illusions:
 The foul images of our republican gods,
 Our unknown and unknowable gods.
 We are barely children, frightened
 By those calm ones, who in serene repose,
 Terrify us with their long shadows.

Softly.

I see the distant majesty of our native gods
 In their abodes of everlasting calm,
 A divine stillness, which the winds cannot shake,
 The rain cloud with its eyes cannot soak,
 And the snow with a white blanket cannot cover.
 A faceless, ashen mouth which laughs, a voice,
 Rolling with mighty waves of wrath on wrath,
 Out of a flawless sky it roars:
 All things from nothing again to nothing do return.

Pilatus sinks back into the bath. He is quiet and calm. Ptolemæus exits.

2. **Sortes Pilatianæ**

2. Pilate's fate

Historia enters.

HISTORIA

póndju pilátu istoríis apódeksis íðe,
 os míte ta yénomena eks tú epítropu to xróno eksítila yénite,
 míte érya meýála te ke θomatá, akleléa yénite.

*This is the exposition of the history of Pontius Pilatus,
 so that neither the deeds of the procurator may be forgotten by lapse of time,
 nor his works, great and marvelous, may be forgotten.*

PILATUS

I must assume the moral attitude of an historian,
 And ignore the mere consequences of time:
 The love and care of friends and busy hatred of enemies.

For any creature is rendered unfit
 If out its eyes are plucked,
 As truth from history is removed.
 What remains but an improbable tale?

O Historia:

Be my impartial judge.

Maltreat me not.

Tell history as it unfolded,

Justly and plainly.

HISTORIA

I recount a life's work:
The deeds one would change.
Histories are not pretty songs,
Sung by blind, unsexed poets,
But the unweaving of a text.

Of prodigies and wonders, shall I sing,
Those ilk, dwelling in lonely spots,
Deserted even by the gods.

Who shall boast of miracles?
The greedy poets, prattling,
Disgorging evil histories,
Spewing forth uncouth words,
And emptying themselves into the void.

PILATUS

O miseras hominum mentes, o pectora cæca!
O wretched minds of men! O blinded hearts!

HISTORIA

Pontius Pilate:
You will endure mild fame for a disremembered deed.

PILATUS

Hic Acherusia fit stultorum denique vita.
And therefore a fool's life is hell on earth.

HISTORIA

Sed magis in vita divom metus urget inanis
mortalis casumque timent quem cuique ferat fors.
Sed metus in vita pœnarum pro male factis
est insignibus insignis.

*But, rather, in life an empty dread of gods
Urges mortality, and each one fears such fall of fortune as may chance to him.
But in this life is fear of retributions just and expiations
For evil acts.*

3. Casus primus

3. First fall

Ptolemæus enters, this time with the children. While this text is sung, we are back in real-time with the dying Pilatus.

PTOLEMÆUS

Omnis cum in tenebris præsertim vita laboret.
 Nam veluti pueri trepidant atque monia cæcis
 in tenebris metuunt, sic nos in luce timemus
 interdum, nihilo quæ sunt metuenda magis quam
 quæ pueri in tenebris pavitant finguntque futura.
 Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necessest
 non radii solis neque lucida tela diei
 discutiant, sed naturæ species ratioque.

*The whole of life but labours in the dark.
 For just as children tremble and fear all
 In the viewless dark, so even we at times
 Dread in the light so many things that be
 No whit more fearsome than what children feign,
 Shuddering, will be upon them in the dark.
 This terror, then, this darkness of the mind,
 Not sunrise with its flaring spokes of light,
 Nor glittering arrows of morning can disperse,
 But only Nature's aspect and her law.*

PUER

Does he sleep?

PTOLEMÆUS

The master lies dying:
 Slowly his life's blood ebbs.

PUELLA

Yet can we save him from this rash gesture?
 He was such a friend to us.

PTOLEMÆUS

This is not the first attempt.
 Since Procula, his wife, was taken from him
 In that arid and barbarous land
 Which he ruled twenty-five summers ago,
 Three times has he tried to cut short his virtuous life.

*Ptolemæus exits. The children sing and dance around Pilatus until he regains
 consciousness.*

PUERI

Io Hymen Hymenæe. Io.
 Io Hymen Hymenæe.

*Io, Hymen Hymenæe. Io.
 Io, Hymen Hymenæe.*

4. Simon Cyrenensis*4. Simon the Cyrenian***PILATUS**

Hail, Herod Antipas, second son of King Herod the Great,
 tetrarch of Galilæa and Peræa,
 client king, friend of Rome and ally of the senate,
 Tiberius' darling, lover of silence, the so-called fox,
 clever, miserly, and fond of show:
 Only yesterday you died and have lain in rotting clods of earth.
 Why do you disturb me?

HEROD ANTIPAS

I am come to deliver you to the underworld.

PILATUS

Mors æterna tamen nihilo minus illa manebit,
 nec minus ille diu jam non erit, ex hodierno
 lumine qui finem vitai fecit, et ille
 mensibus atque annis qui multis occidit ante.

*Eternal death shall there be waiting still;
 And he who died with light of yesterday
 Shall be no briefer time in death's No-more
 Than he who perished months or years before.*

PTOLEMÆUS

Di meliora velint!

Let the gods grant better things than what you say!

HEROD ANTIPAS

Denique tanto opere in dubiis trepidare periclis
 quæ mala nos subigit vitai tanta cupido?
 certe equidem finis vitæ mortalibus adstat
 nec devitari letum pote quin obeamus.

*And too, when all is said,
 What evil lust of life is this so great
 Subdues us to live, so dreadfully distraught
 In perils and alarms? one fixed end
 Of life abideth for mortality;
 Death's not to shun, and we must go to meet.*

PILATUS

You seem to feign some fitness for this trifling matter.
 How apt, you sluggard,
 Too hellenized for the Levant,
 Too barbarous for Rome,
 Marriage to some niece was your only fame.

HEROD ANTIPAS

Angry.

You played Sejanus' whore
on the crossroads and in the back alleys
of Rome and Judæa.

Pilatus binds his wrists, retrieves his robe, and gets out of the tub. The image of
Sejanus appears before him, crucified.

PILATUS

Ælie Sejane Strabo.

Heu! miser frater adempte mihi.

O Ælius Sejanus Strabo!

O wretched brother who was taken away from me.

PILATUS

Hail, Ananas son of Seth:
You, who once held high office,
And afterwards merely became
The strength behind the public joke:
Your daughter's husband,
The high priest Joseph Kaiaphas.

ANANAS

mot jumat haʔiʃ ragom ʔoto baʔvanim
kol-haʔdah miʔuts lamayaneh

The man shall be surely put to death:

all the congregation shall stone him without the camp.

PILATUS

Turning away from Ananas, he faces Joseph Kaiaphas.

O Joseph Kaiaphas, dear old friend and confidant.
Appointed by my predecessor,
You too fell from grace, as did I,
Another casualty in Tiberius' war upon Sejanus.

JOSEPH KAIAPHAS

Hail, Caius Pontius Pilatus, old friend.
You brought justice to our dry and thirsty land,
And I embraced your Pax Romana
So that I was called gentile by my people.
We were victims of our naïve devotion to the truth.

PILATUS

Truth?

τί estin aláθia

What is truth?

Pilatus turns and gets back in the tub and unbinds his wrists. He is exhausted.

5. **Verum eikon**

5. *True image*

A screen is lowered at the rear of the stage. There are two model, medieval cities at the extreme ends of the stage. The children enter, playing the Roman soldiers, marching from right to left across the stage. As the story progresses, they act it out, some staying in the role of the soldiers, some playing the angry Jewish crowd, and one even pretending to be Pilatus.

Enter Historia.

HISTORIA

Now, Pilate, he that was governor over the Jews,
Ordered the Roman army out of the capital of Judæa,
And marched them out from Cæsarea Palæstinæ on the coast,
Removing them inland to winter in the holy city of Jerusalem.

Thus would he destroy the laws of the Jews,
By importing images of Cæsar into Jerusalem,
Attached to military standards carried by legionaries:
For Jewish law forbids the making of images.

ANANAS

From behind the screen.

loʔ taʔaseh-ləχa pəsel
vəχaʔtəmunah ʔaʔer bashamajim
mimaʔal vaʔaʔer baʔarets mitaχat vaʔaʔer bamajim
mitaχat loʔarets

*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,
or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above,
or that is in the earth beneath,
or that is in the water under the earth.*

HISTORIA

That is why previous governors
Had used special standards
Without ornament
When they entered Jerusalem.

And, lo, Pilate was the first
To bring such images into the city,
Under cover of darkness,
And display them on high,
Visible to everyone, on the hill
Above the sacred temple.

Then a holy throng gathered and swelled,
 Since discovering Pilate's nocturnal trick,
 And they went to Cæsarea, daily to demand
 The removal of these impure images.

The screen is lifted to reveal Ananas (in the full regalia of the High Priest). As he sings, the text of the second commandment is projected (in ancient letters) upon the screen above his head.

ANANAS

ʔarur haʔiʃ ʔaʃer jaʃaseh peʃel
 umaseʒah toʃavat ʔadonaj
 maʃesah j,de ʒaraʃ vəsam basater vəʃanu
 ʒal-haʃam vəʔaməru ʔamen

*Cursed be the man who maketh any graven or molten image,
 an abomination unto the Lord,
 the work of the hands of the craftsman,
 and putteth it in a secret place.*

PILATUS

Deliriously.

Quippe ubi imaginibus fumi nebulæque movetur.
Even when it is moved by smoke and mist.

HISTORIA

Pilate would not yield to their outrageous assault
 On imperial Rome's authority.
 And the Jews would never cease their righteous uproar
 Entreating him to remove the very icons
 Of Cæsar's impiety.

So, after a week's impasse,
 He placed his troops,
 Armed and ready,
 Secretly within the stadium,
 Wherein he granted audience.

When he mounted the speaker's stand
 To soothe the distraught crowd,
 With perfumed words,
 He gave a privy sign to a centurion
 To rush his hundred upon the crowd,
 Surround and threaten them
 With instant death
 If they did not quit this city
 And quietly return to Holy Salem.

But they threw themselves down
 And baring throats,

Declared their unanimous resolve to die,
 Everyone of them,
 Rather than trample under foot
 Their stern and unbending laws.

ANANAS

jevoʃu

χολ-ʃovæde pesel hamitəhaləlim baʔlilim

hiʃtaχavu-lo χολ-ʔelohim

*Confounded be all they that serve graven images,
 that boast themselves of idols:
 worship him, all ye gods.*

Ananas leaves the stage.

PTOLEMÆUS

Quam tenui natura constet imago.
How tenuous is the nature of an image.

HISTORIA

And Pilate, astounded by their moral strength
 and the safeguarding of their laws,
 Forthwith removed the images
 From Jerusalem and took them back to Cæsarea.

TBD

The children march off with the standards. Historia also leaves.

PILATUS

Rhetorically.

Quam multas nobis imagines
 (non solum ad intuendum,
 verum etiam ad imitandum)
 fortissimorum virorum expressas scriptores
 et Graeci et Latini reliquerunt?

*How many images of the bravest men, carefully elaborated,
 have both the Greek and Latin writers bequeathed us?
 (Not merely to gaze upon, but also for imitating.)*

6. Casus secundus

6. *Second fall*

Ptolemæus, accompanied by the children, comforts Pilatus.

PTOLEMÆUS

The whole of life but labours in the dark.
 For just as children tremble and fear all
 In the viewless dark, so even we at times
 Dread in the light so many things that be

No whit more fearsome than what children feign,
Shuddering, will be upon them in the dark.
This terror, then, this darkness of the mind,
Not sunrise with its flaring spokes of light,
Nor glittering arrows of morning can disperse,
But only Nature's aspect and her law.

PUERI

Omnis cum in tenebris praesertim vita laboret.
Nam veluti pueri trepidant atque monia caecis
in tenebris metuunt, sic nos in luce timemus
interdum, nihilo quae sunt metuenda magis quam
quae pueri in tenebris pavitant finguntque futura.
Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necessest
non radii solis neque lucida tela diei
discutiant, sed naturae species ratioque.

*The whole of life but labours in the dark.
For just as children tremble and fear all
In the viewless dark, so even we at times
Dread in the light so many things that be
No whit more fearsome than what children feign,
Shuddering, will be upon them in the dark.
This terror, then, this darkness of the mind,
Not sunrise with its flaring spokes of light,
Nor glittering arrows of morning can disperse,
But only Nature's aspect and her law.*

Parergon primum

Párergon primum
First Entr'acte

PTOLEMÆUS

έον ο αἴτος ἐν τῖς αἴτῖς εἰ ἴσι θία μένον κόσμος τε ἰς κατα τα αἴτά,
οπίς ἐστὶ κε ἰν κε ἐστὶ
αρχίν μεσότιτα τέλος υχ ἔχον,
μεταβολίς ἀμέτοχος,
θίας ἴσεος ἐρυάτις ἐονίῦ πάnda.

*Aeon, by his very divinity, forever unchanging,
who moreover is the only World;
he who exists, has existed, and will exist;
he who has neither a beginning, a middle, nor an end,
nor who partakes of change;
he who makes his divine nature absolutely eternal.*

PILATUS

εόν.
πόθεν το κακόν.

Æon.
Whence evil?

Herod Antipas, wearing a titulus which reads O TETRARXHS (the Tetrarch),
steps forward.

HEROD ANTIPAS

Hodie atque heri.
Ave Sautrane.
Rotas opera tenet arepo sator.
Amo ac ano.
Sautrane vale.

Today and yesterday.
Hail Sautranus.
Untranslatable palindromic magic formula.
I love and I swim.
Sautranus, farewell.

Herod Antipas turns over his titulus. On the reverse side is written PARVIXH-
MENOS (he who went his own way). He steps back. Ananas, wearing a titulus
which reads O PENUEROS TOY KAIAPA (the son-in-law of Kaiaphas), steps for-
ward.

ANANAS

ki tsav latsav tsav latsav
kav lakav kav lakav
zəŋer ʃam zəŋer ʃam

*Because command upon command,
command upon command,*

*marking line upon marking line,
there a little bit there a little bit.*

He turns over his titulus. On the reverse side is written ENESTVS (he who was present). He steps back. Joseph Kaiaphas comes forward, wearing a titulus which reads [TBD] (kohēn hagāḏôl, the High Priest).

JOSEPH KAIAPHAS

Trio with Procula and Pilatus.

is tus eónas ton eonón.
sator arepo tenet opera rotas.
o spíron árotron kratí érya tróχus.

Forever and ever.

Untranslatable palindromic magic formula.

The seedsman, watching over his plow, carefully holds his wheels.

PROCULA

Trio with Joseph Kaiaphas and Pilatus.

is tus eónas ton eonón.
nus. lóγos. frónisis. sofía. ðínamis.
spermatikós lóγos. anástasis tis sarkós. panspermía.

Forever and ever.

Mind. Reason. Understanding. Wisdom. Power.

The generative principle. Raising of the dead. Mixture of all elements.

PILATUS

Trio with Procula and Joseph Kaiaphas.

**In sæcula sæculorum.
Mens. Ratio. Prudentia. Scientia. Potentia.
Mors æterna. Janua mordax. Umida saxa.**

Forever and ever.

Mind. Reason. Understanding. Wisdom. Power.

Eternal death. Biting gate. Moist rocks.

Joseph Kaiaphas turns over his titulus. On the reverse side is written MELLVN (he who is destined to be). He steps back. Æon, wearing a titulus which reads AIVN (Æon), steps forward.

ÆON

abraksás ke abrasáks.
áfti estin i kataftus oyðoas leyimeni,
ópu estin o méγas árχon kaθímenos.

Abraxas and Abrasax.

This divine Eight is to be gathered to the others.

Where is the greatest of the gods to be seated?

Everybody but Pilatus exits.

Act II: Aut lacrimas meretur aut risum*Either it merits tears or laughter***7. Visum Proculæ***7. Procula's vision*

Ptolemæus re-enters dressed as a Roman matron. She comes forward, but does not walk. She fades in and out of sight during the scene. He is in a fever.

PROCUA

Spoken.

míðen si ke to ðikéo ekíno,
polla γar épaθon simeron katónar ðjaftón.

*Have thou nothing to do with that just man:
for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.*

PILATUS**O Claudia Procula sponsa carissima.***O Claudia Procula, dearest wife.***PROCUA**

Spoken.

Husband.

Sung.

In dreams small signs have bred a larger whim:
No wiser in heart than stronger in sense,
This wingèd harbinger, unclean and grim,
Sends sights that stir my soul to violence.
Th'epicene youth before me falls, a corpse:
Four stones weep blood, and time has lost its beat.
Mine eyes whore after idols without source;
My thoughts expire in snarls of self-deceit.
Though lustrous daylight should these shades dispel
My dark and haunted visions still remain:
Bloody streams from this dying boy foretell
Your hands the crimson issues ever stain.
Death's icy finger marks your dusty tomb,
And indicates eternal night's blind gloom.

Procula fades from sight.

8. Ho túpos tôn hêlôn*8. The mark of the nails*

The children enter, laughing and running about. Pilatus watches them as they play a game of tag. They exit, and when they return, they are again dressed as Roman soldiers. They lead Ptolemæus in, dressed as a Judæan rebel. He is carrying a beam of wood which he drops on the floor in front of Pilatus' bath. The tall-

est child, dressed as a centurion, walks over and stands next to Pilatus. Ananas enters and stands on the opposite side of the bath.

PILATUS

stavroθito.

Let him be crucified!

PUER CENTURIO

Sic.

Yes.

The children grab Ptolemæus, remove his cloak, and crucify him. They bind his arms to the beam of wood (which he had carried) and hammer nails through his wrists. Then they attach ropes to the beam and raise him above the stage.

Puer Primus and Puer Secundus kneel and play. The other children stand and watch the game.

PUER PRIMUS

Jacta alea esto!

Play dice!

PUER SECUNDUS

Ælia Claudia.

Aelia Claudia (a woman's name).

Puer Secundus throws the four knucklebones.

PUER PRIMUS

Jactus Venerius.

The Venus throw, (i.e., the best one at dice).

Puer Secundus stands with his winnings, a fine cloak. The other children congratulate him.

ANANAS

ʔasaper χol-ʔats,motaj hemah jabitu jirəʔu-vi

*They part my garments among them,
and cast lots upon my vesture.*

PUER CENTURIO

Quattuor tali jacti sunt casu Venerium efficiunt;
num etiam centum Venerios.

Si quadringentos talos jeceris, casu futuros putas?

*Four dice are cast and a Venus throw results—
that is chance; but do you think it would be chance, too,
if in one hundred casts you made one hundred Venus throws?*

The children drop their spears and armor. They are no longer Roman soldiers, but children. They run about, laughing, and then exit. Ananas and the Puer Centurion leave. All is quiet.

PILATUS

Why are you weeping tears of blood?

The crucified Ptolemæus hangs over Pilatus, and (audible) drops of blood drip into the bath. Ptolemæus shivers and then dies.

My lot was cast before my mother bore me:
With cursèd augury on that distant, frigid night,
You prophesied my lonely death by suicide
In transalpine exile far from Rome's urban breast.

The crucified Ptolemæus is lowered to the stage.

I—foretold that daily, upon countless lips, his name would rest,
Yet, here within death's cold embrace—have learned to mistrust words,
And fear that tiny nook in memory where dwells my mother goddess,
Who always shows the way that dreadful fate bids me follow.

Ptolemæus opens his eyes.

Quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis
ludis imaginibus? Cur dextrae jungere dextram
non datur, ac veras audire et reddere voces?

*Why do you fool your son with false images?
Why are you so cruel? Why don't you give me your hand,
That we may raise our voices and speak together truly?*

PTOLEMÆUS

At lacrimans exclusus amator limina sæpe
floribus et sertis operit postisque superbos
unguit amaracino et foribus miser oscula figit;

*But he, the lover, in tears
Because shut out, covers her threshold o'er
Often with flowers and garlands, and anoints
Her haughty door-posts with the marjoram,
And prints, poor fellow, kisses on the doors.*

9. Nescio et excrucior

9. I do not know, and I am tormented.

A flourish. Enter Tiberius. He walks over to Pilatus and examines him, then he reclines on a couch and summons his entourage.

TIBERIUS

Come, minnows.

The children enter. They seem timid, but becoming bolder, they begin to dance.

Come lick at me, my little fishes.

Pilatus and Tiberius watch them. Suddenly Tiberius stands, and the children scatter.

Come, Pilatus,
Come dine with me.

Food and drink enough for soldiers twelve.
 Our feast: an enormous mullet, fresh from the sea,
 And a huge crab, gotten from a blue grotto.
 And, then, a culinary contest ...

He claps his hands and reclines again. The children re-enter one by one. They are dressed as the dishes that Tiberius enumerates; each one carrying the actual dish.

... A victual battle:
 A mushroom,
 A fig-pecker,
 An oyster,
 And a thrush.

These four shall compete for our stomachs.
 Bring my honored guest an amphora of wine ...
 Ptolemæus rushes off to get the wine.
 ... And no water, mind you.

Tiberius calls for his poet.

Poet, old man!

Re-enter Ptolemæus dressed as an old man, Poeta.

Come and sing us a lusty tale,
 Full of betrayal and revenge.

As Poeta sings, the ghost of Sejanus (as a pale and bloodied corpse) enters with the amphora of wine. He pours for Pilatus first and then for Tiberius. The former is visibly moved by the apparition, but the latter scarcely notices it.

POETA

Genitus Vulsiniis patre Sejo Strabone equite Romano,
 et prima juventa Caium Cæsarem,
 divi Augusti nepotem, sectatus,
 non sine rumore Apicio diviti et prodigo stuprum veno dedisse,

Enter Historia.

mox Tiberium variis artibus devinxit,
 adeo ut obscurum adversum alios sibi uni incautum intectumque efficeret,
 non tam sollertia (quippe isdem artibus victus est)
 quam deum ira in rem Romanam,
 cujus pari exitio viguit ceciditque.

*Born at Bolsena, fathered by Sejus Strabo, a Roman knight,
 when young, Sejanus followed Tiberius,
 (the grandson of the divine Augustus),
 and he prostituted himself to a rich and profligate man, Apicius.
 Suddenly Sejanus attached himself by various means to the emperor Tiberius
 so much so that though the emperor was reserved with others,
 he was incautious and frank only with Sejanus.
 It was not so much by his ingenuity (for indeed he was defeated by that),*

*as because of the wrath of the gods against Rome,
that his rise and fall were so equally destructive.*

Sejanus and Tiberius dance.

HISTORIA

Corpus illi laborum tolerans, animus audax;
sui obtegens, in alios crimator;
juxta adulatio et superbia;
Sejanus and Tiberius stop dancing.
palam compositus pudor, intus summa apiscendi libido,
ejusque causa modo largitio et luxus,
saepius industria ac vigilantia, haud minus noxiae,
quotiens parando regno finguntur.

*Sejanus had a body which could ensure hardships, and a daring spirit.
He was one who screened himself, while he was attacking others;
he was as cringing as he was imperious;
before the world he affected humility;
in his heart, he lusted after supremacy, for the sake of which he was sometimes lavish
and luxurious, but oftener energetic and watchful, qualities quite as mischievous when
hypocritically assumed for the attainment of sovereignty.*

SEJANUS

Seja: long ago, wearing the skins of wild beasts and soaked in blood,
We sang to nameless gods in meadows wide.
Now dressed in purple and gold, carrying grim weapons,
We fight idle wars that waste the lives of countless men.
Goddess, sister, mother:
Why do you still carry sheaves of wheat,
And I a bloody sword?

POETA

As the instrument of Rome's disgrace,
Sejanus owed his every office
To the whim of that pock-marked, old satyr, Tiberius.
So did Pontius Pilatus his governorship receive—
A favor from Procula's twin brother, Sejanus.
And, when the emperor's fawning toady at last fell from dizzying heights,
Destroyed in equal measure by his cunning and his greed,
His brother's descent was likewise swift.

TIBERIUS

Stop, Poet, you bore me.
The Muse has abandoned you,
So I will sing mine own history.
Sejanus: that you killed my son Drusus matters not to me,
That you wish to wed his wife is merely a farce,

But that you would assume tribunician powers merits death.

Death.

I give you now your due.

You may withdraw and kill yourself.

SEJANUS

Despot!

Hairy, stinking, old goat.

Rome is no more.

Drink your wine without water,

You thirsty, rancid, old bastard.

Come let me warm your cup with my blood.

Drink, fool.

Rome's golden age has passed.

Here there is only a taste of iron on our tongues.

August and divine father of our country:

You will die, vomiting forth your rotten entrails,

With the taste of your vile life rising in your nostrils.

Your innumerable victims shall be avenged

In each incessant retch and sweating convulsion.

Come grandfather, drink my dark and fouled blood,

And die with me.

Sejanus screams incoherently at Tiberius and is dragged offstage to his death.

HISTORIA

Tunc singulos, ut cuique adsistere adloqui animus erat,

retinens aut demittens partem diei absumpsit,

multoque adhuc cœtu et cunctis interpidem vultum ejus spectantibus,

cum superesse tempus novissimis crederent,

gladio, quem sinu abdiderat, incubuit.

Then detaining those of his friends who were minded to stay with him and converse, or, if otherwise, dismissing them, he thus spent part of the day, and with a numerous circle yet round him, all gazing on his fearless face, he fell on a sword concealed in his robe.

Enter Ptolemæus. Tiberius dictates a letter to him. Children come out and play around Tiberius while he declaims.

TIBERIUS

Emperor of Rome,

Tiberius Claudius Julius Cæsar Nero,

Father of His Country,

To our legate Caius Pontius Pilate, greeting.

Your office of procuratorship is at an end.

Pilatus sighs.

Urgent business demands your presence here at Rome.

The bearer of these letters is your successor.

Given at Rome this fifth day before the Kalends of November
In the eighteenth year of our reign.

Pilatus faints.

POETA

Shortly afterwards the tyrant died.

He exits. The children mock Tiberius as he dies.

PUERI

Tiberius in Tiberim.

Throw Tiberius into the Tiber.

Ptolemæus and the children drag Tiberius off stage.

HISTORIA

Biberius Caldius Mero.

Hircus vetulus
capreis naturam
ligurrit.

Drinker of wine without water.

(A pun on Tiberius' name.)

Old goat,

who after does he goes,

licking.

Historia leaves with the golden bust.

10. Thugatères Ierousalêm

10. Daughters of Jerusalem

A young legate enters, dressed in formal armor. He throws a letter to Pilatus.

LEGATUS

Slowly, deliberately, and methodically.

Hail Pontius Pilate, greetings.
I bring you tidings from Rome:
Your brother Sejanus has fallen upon his sword,
Tiberius has joined the divine Julius and Augustus in Hell,
Your career is finished,
And I am here come to assume your office.

He turns sharply on his heel and exits.

PILATUS

Wretchedly.

Væ! Frustra, mei suscepti labores!

O spes fallaces!

O cogitationes inanes meas!

Alas, my labors have been in vain!

*O deceptive hope!
O my worthless thoughts!*

Ptolemæus (as Procula) enters.

PROCUA

Duet with Pilatus.

Facilis descensus Averno;
noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis;
sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
hoc opus, hic labor est."

*The way down to Avernus is easy going-
Night and day the door of the Dark God
Is open wide-but to retrace your steps,
To re-climb to the upper air: what a task, what a toil!*

PILATUS

Duet with Procula.

The road to hell is straight and smoothly paved.
Night and day, the dark god's gate yawns wide,
But to recall the way and climb back out again:
How exhausting, how laborious!

Historia enters.

HISTORIA

With great sadness, she sings to Pilate.

u no?ite
óti pan to isporevómenon is to stóma
is tin kilían chorí
ke is afeðróna ekbállete

*Do not ye yet understand,
that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth
goeth into the belly,
and is cast out into the draught?*

PROCUA

Trio with Historia and Pilatus.

makárje e stíre
ke e kilíe e uk eyénnisan
ke masti i uk éθrepsan.
ke iðu yini
emorro?usa ðóddeka etí
proselθúsa ópisθen
ipsato tu kraspéðu tu imatíu aftú.

*Blessed are the barren,
and the wombs that never bare,
and the paps which never gave suck.*

*And, behold, a woman,
which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years,
came behind him,
and touched the hem of his garment.*

HISTORIA

Trio with Ptolemæus and Pilatus.

Beatæ steriles
et ventres qui non genuerunt
et ubera quæ non lactaverunt.
Et ecce mulier,
quæ sanguinis fluxum patiebatur duodecim annis,
accessit retro,
et tetigit fimbriam vestimenti ejus.

*Blessed are the barren,
and the wombs that never bare,
and the paps which never gave suck.
And, behold, a woman,
which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years,
came behind him,
and touched the hem of his garment.*

PILATUS

Trio with Ptolemæus and Historia.

Blessed are the barren,
And the wombs that never bare,
And the paps which never gave suck.
And, behold, a woman,
Which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years,
Came behind him,
And touched the hem of his garment.

11. Casus tertius

11. Third fall

The poet Lucretius comforts Pilatus with a final rendition of this text from his *De rerum natura*.

LUCRETIUS

Omnis cum in tenebris præsertim vita laboret.
Nam veluti pueri trepidant atque monia cæcis
in tenebris metuunt, sic nos in luce timemus
interdum, nihilo quæ sunt metuenda magis quam
quæ pueri in tenebris pavitant finguntque futura.
Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necessest
non radii solis neque lucida tela diei
discutiant, sed naturæ species ratioque.

The whole of life but labours in the dark.

*For just as children tremble and fear all
 In the viewless dark, so even we at times
 Dread in the light so many things that be
 No whit more fearsome than what children feign,
 Shuddering, will be upon them in the dark.
 This terror, then, this darkness of the mind,
 Not sunrise with its flaring spokes of light,
 Nor glittering arrows of morning can disperse,
 But only Nature's aspect and her law.*

12. Mors Pilati

12. Pilatus' Death

Pilatus has regained his initial calm.

PILATUS

My world, so mighty once, is past its prime:
 So too my mind's ramparts have been breached
 And are fallen crumbling down to ruins round.

My breath departs, as this exhausted earth
 That once brought forth gigantic marvels
 Can scarcely now tiny worms and insects breed.

For know ye the manifold beasts
 Were not lowered by the gods from on high
 On a golden thread into fields below,
 Nor came they out of Ocean's depths
 To whelp between the cliffs and pounding surf.

Rather all were born of mother earth
 Who nurtures and provides for us.

This same earth, she, (who first created us tiny
 Dusty mortals, bright grains, and lusty grapes),
 She, (who gave us sweet fruits and joyful pastures),
 Today cannot even be urged on by sweating toil
 To produce a handful of food.

PROCULA

At the same time, she has broken all the oxen,
 And worn away the strength of stalwart farmers,
 And iron tools can barely scrape furrows in her fields,
 And Rome's seed lies sown in barren soil,
 There to rot, never to yield a harvest,
 Coaxed by so much wasted labor.

For man is an ancient plowman, forever sighing,
 Shaking his head and shivering over his lost toils,
 And these days are not as those of yesteryear,
 When our pious forefathers were most fortunate

For back then it took less land to produce such bounty
That kept a Roman family fat and jolly.

PILATUS

I, (the sad sower of withered and decaying vines,
Protesting time's passage and fatiguing heaven),
Shall never understand why everything languishes
Little by little, while I head for hell worn out by old age.

He stops suddenly, for he is near his end. Then with one last breath he sings firmly.

My soul—not given of the gods,
But by my body spawned—departs
And I cease to be.

Sobbing and coughing, Pilatus sinks back in the bath, relaxes, and dies.

Epicurus walks slowly out onto the stage. He ignores Pilatus' corpse and sings directly to the audience.

EPICURUS and CHORUS MULIERUM

o θánatos uðen pros imás,
to yar ðjaliðen anesθití to ðanesθitún
uðen pros imás.

*Death is nothing to us;
for the body, when it has been resolved into its elements, has no feeling,
and that which has no feeling is nothing to us.*

Páreragon secundum*Second Entr'acte*

The following scenes are performed as a masque, although during 13. Descensus, there are vocal effects and in 14. Passus et sepultus est, the mourners sing arias without words.

13. Descensus*13. The Descent, or A Lying-Down*

A screen descends behind the bath. The daughters of Jerusalem (that is, Procula, Historia, and the children) take Pilatus' body out of the bath and carry it to a bier. They set it on fire. They mourn with loud ululations while he burns. After a time, the bier collapses into ash.

14. Passus et sepultus est*14. Suffered and was buried*

The daughters of Jerusalem gather up the ashes of the bier into an urn. The ashes are placed on an altar which is built into a larger monument topped with a bust of Pilatus. They move around the monument, wrapping it like a maypole.

15. Sancta Helena*15. Saint Helene*

The screen ascends, revealing a tranquil, dreamy afternoon tableaux of soldiers sleeping and children playing (as in scene 8). One elderly soldier is sleeping.

Suddenly, the bust moves. Pilatus breaks out of his altar wearing dress armor and trailing bits and pieces as he walks away. The children scatter. The elderly soldier is revealed to be Æon who grabs Pilatus and roughly leads him into his trial and future.

Act III: Infamia*Infamy***16. Rationale Judicii***to Logeion tôn Kriseôn
Pouch, or Breastplate, of Judgment*

It is the trial of Pilatus, and the Great Sanhedrin sits in judgment of him. Historia, also one of the judges, answers her colleagues defending Pilatus. The text is projected on the wall.

The judging nations at the trial number three: the Jews who despise Pilatus for his treatment of Judæa, the Romans who are disgusted by both the Christians and the Jews and disappointed with Pilatus.

ÆBUTIUS

Caius Pontius Pilate,
one-time military governor of the province of Judæa,
come into the Court.

CHORUS PUERUM

They sing along with the Chorus Mulierum.

Velitis, jubeatis, Quirites, et cetera?

... procurator provinciæ Judææ ...

*Is it your pleasure, Quirites, and do you hold it as the divine will, &c.
... governor of the province of Judæa ...*

o tis juðeías iyemon.

governor of the Jews.

CHORUS MULIERUM

They sing along with Chorus Puerum.

O judices ... o Æbutius ... ecce homo ...

O judges ... O Æbutius ... behold the man ...

tin fisin akampís ke meta tú aftháðus amíktos

An unbending and ruthlessly hard character.

SACERDOS

Know ye, O learned judges,
That this man of unbending character,
Arrogant and pitiless,
Is guilty of countless crimes against the people of Judæa.

He sings along with the Chorus Puerum.

This man surrendered himself to:
The taking and giving of bribes, and corruption,
Wanton violence and lewdness,
Robbery and rape,

Outrage, torture, and assault,
 Insults and abuse,
 Slaughter and murder, without verdict, one after another in close order,
 And never-ending cruelty and savagery.

CHORUS PUERUM

They sing along with Sacerdos.

tas ðoroðokías
 tas íbris
 tas arpayas
 tas ekías
 tas epirías
 tus akrítus ke epallilus fónus
 tin aniniton ke aryaleotátin omótita.

*Corruption,
 violence,
 robbery,
 oppressions,
 humiliations,
 constant executions without trial,
 and unlimited, intolerable cruelty.*

CHORUS MULIERUM

They sing along with Herod Antipas.

pemfþis ðe is juðéan epítropos ipo tiberíu
 pilátos níktor kekalimménas is jerosólíma pariskomídzi
 tas késaros ikónas, e simeʒe kalúnde.

*Having been sent by Tiberius to be procurator in Judæa,
 Pilate brought into Jerusalem, under cover of night,
 Images of Cæsar, which are called standards.*

HEROD ANTIPAS

He sings along with the Chorus Mulierum.

Having been sent by Tiberius to be procurator in Judæa,
 Pilate brought into Jerusalem, under cover of night,
 Images of Cæsar, which are called standards.

CHORUS PUERUM

They sing along with Ananas.

meta ðe táfta taraχín etéran ekíni ton jeron þisavrón,
 kalite ðe korbónas, is katayoyin idáton eksanalíkson.

*And later he caused a new tumult by using the sacred treasury,
 Called the Korbonas, to construct an aqueduct.*

ANANAS

He sings along with the Chorus Puerum.

And later he caused a new tumult by using the sacred treasury,
Called the Korbonas, to construct an aqueduct.

PILATUS

If there had been no effigies upon those standards,
Would you have complained about the coins in legionary wallets?
And what better expenditure of municipal funds
Than for betterment of the commonweal?

LEGATUS

The obstinacy of a Judæan is proverbial.

LONGINUS

Judæos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantis Roma expulsi.

Since the Jews were constantly causing disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, [Claudius] expelled them from Rome.

SEJANUS

Sequitur clades quæ Romæ
per violentiam ignium acciderunt
gravior atque atrocior.

*A disaster followed worse, however,
and more dreadful than any which has ever happened to Rome
by the violence of fire.*

HISTORIA

Sed non ope humana,
non largitionibus principis aut deum placamentis
decebat infamia, quin jussum incendium crederetur.

*But all human efforts,
all the lavish gifts of the Emperor, and the propitiations of the gods,
did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was the result of an order.*

LONGINUS

Nero subdidit reos et quæsitissimis pœnis affecit,
quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Christianos appellabat.

*Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class
hated for their abominations, called the Christians by the populace.*

SEJANUS

The testimony of these so-called Christians is a farce.
The Christian Jews themselves set fire to the Eternal City,
To malign her most pious servants, Pilate and me.
They need worthy sacrificial victims to distract the people
From their irreligious calumny.
There is an uproar from the Jews and the Christians.

HISTORIA

O judges, O Æbutius.
Remember why we are here:
To try this man.

CHRISTIANA SECUNDA

Sings with Christiana Prima.

parisan ðe tines en aftó to kero apañéllontes aftó peri ton γαλιλέον
on to éma pilátos émiksen meta ton θισjón aftón.

*There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans,
whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*

CHRISTIANA PRIMA

Sings with Christiana Secunda.

Aderant autem quidam ipso in tempore, nuntiantes illi de Galilæis,
quorum sanguinem Pilatus miscuit cum sacrificiis eorum.

*There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans,
whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*

PILATUS

Innocens ego sum a sanguine Galilæum horum.

I am innocent of the blood of these Galileans.

There is a great disturbance among the judges.

SEJANUS

O judges:

Why do these poor, misguided creatures still worship
A renegade sophist from the oven-blast that is Judæa?
He, who has duped half-witted slaves, serving women, and bastard children
That they are all brothers of one another—and even us—
And inducted them into his bizarre sect,
Teaching them to deny their traditional gods,
And pray instead to him,
That queer, donkey-headed god as man.

ANANAS

ʃekets

Abomination!

CHRISTIANA PRIMA

Non habes deos alienos coram me.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

ANANAS

ne?otsah

Blasphemy!

HISTORIA

What does all this have to do with my client?

PILATUS

I do not recognize this ecclesiastic court's jurisdiction over me.
I am a Roman citizen.
I had a duty and I did it.

ANANAS

Addresses Pilatus directly.

dameχα ἑλ-ροῖεχα κι φιχα ἱannah
vəχα leʔmor ʔanoχι motati ʔet-məʃiχα ʔadonaj
*Thy blood be upon thy head;
for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying,
I have slain the Lord's annointed.*

CHRISTIANA SECUNDA

τί ἐτί ἐχόμεν martirías χρίαν
afti ʔar ikúsamen apo tú stóatos aftú.
*What need we any further witness?
for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.*

JOSEPH KAIAPHAS

loʔ tisaʔ ʃimaʔ ʃavəʔ ʔel-taʃet
jadəχα ἱim-raʃaʔ lihəjot ʔedyamam
*Thou shalt not raise a false report:
put not thy hand with the wicked
to be an unrighteous witness.*

SEJANUS

Judæans and Christians—rogues and thieves—
Have already replaced patricians and knights,
Within the senate and within the government.
Our eyes have been clouded by a curious whim.

Pilate, your case is lost
The judges have decided.
You are guilty.

ÆBUTIUS

Condemno.
Ibis in crucem,
lictor conliga manus.
Verebetur.

*I sentence thee.
Thou shalt go on the cross.
Lictor, bind his hands.
Let him be flogged.]*

17. Pilatus beatus est.

17. Pilate was beatified.

While Pilatus sings, the entire cast clothes him and Procula in the golden raiment of a saint.

PILATUS

Extorres idem patria longeque fugati
conspectu ex hominum, fœdati crimine turpi,
omnibus ærumnis adfecti denique vivunt,
et quocumque tamen miseri venere parentant
et nigras mactant pecudes et manibu' divis
inferias mittunt multoque in rebus acerbis
acrius advertunt animos ad religionem.

*For mark these very same:
Exiles from country, fugitives afar
From sight of men, with charges foul attaint,
Abased with every wretchedness, they yet
Live, and where'er the wretches come, they yet
Make the ancestral sacrifices there,
Butcher the black sheep, and to gods below
Offer the honours, and in bitter case
Turn much more keenly to religion.*

Crudeles gaudent in tristi funere fratris
et consanguineum mensas odere timore.

*Of corpse on corpse they have a cruel laugh
For the sad burial of a brother-born,
And hatred and fear of tables of their kin.*

Intereunt partim statuarum et nominis ergo.
et sæpe usque adeo, mortis formidine, vitæ
percepit humanos odium lucisque videndæ,
ut sibi consciscant mærenti pectore letum,
obliti fontem curarum hunc esse timorem,
hunc vexare pudorem, hunc vincula amicitiai
rumpere et in summa pictatem evertere suesse;

*Some perish away for statues and a name,
And oft to that degree, from fright of death,
Will hate of living and beholding light
Take hold on humankind that they inflict
Their own destruction with a gloomy heart-
Forgetful that this fear is font of cares,
This fear the plague upon their sense of shame,
And this that breaks the ties of comradry
And oversets all reverence and faith,
Mid direst slaughter:*

Nam jam sæpe homines patriam carosque parentis
prodiderunt, vitare Acherusia templa petentes.

*For long ere to-day
Often were traitors to country and dear parents
Through quest to shun the realms of Acheron.*

18. Credo

18. The Creed

A mask is placed over Pilatus' face and he is quiet. During the Creed, he and Procula are slowly raised up and disappear. By the end, the stage is plunged into darkness.

CHORUS PUERUM ATQUE MULIERUM

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum.

Et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula.

Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero.

Genitum, non factum, Consubstantialem Patri: per quem omnia facta sunt.

Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de cœlis.

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine: et homo factus est.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis; sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est.

Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas.

Et ascendit in cœlum: sedet ad dexteram Patris.

Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare vivos, et mortuos: cujus regni non erit finis.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem: qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.

Qui cum Patre, et Filio simul adoratur, et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per Prophetas.

Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.

Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.

Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum.

Et vitam venturi sæculi.

Amen.

19. Martyrium Pilati

19. The Martyrdom of Pilate

The sun rises. Pilatus and Procula are seen in heaven above the stage dressed as medieval saints. They reside in glory as the opera comes to an end.

A bar somewhere in Ethiopia. An Ethiopian soldier and a Soviet advisor sit drinking beers and smoking. They are quiet for a while.

RUSSIAN ADVISOR

Я как-то прочел, что Абиссинская Ортодоксальная церковь канонизировала Понтия Пилата.
Это правда?

*Ja kak-to prochel, chto Abissinskaja Ortodoksal'naja tserkov' kanonizirovala Pontija Pilata. Eto pravda?
I read in a book once that the Abyssinian Orthodox Church beatified Pontius Pilate. Is this true?*

ETHIOPIAN SOLDIER

Да, это так. После того как, Пилат приговорил господу нашего, Иисуса Христа, к распятию, он раскаялся. Позже Пилат и его жена Прокула обратились в христианство и были замучены в Риме, вместе со своими детьми. Ты, конечно, понимаешь что я настоящий Марксист и атеист.

Da, eto tak. Posle togo kak, Pilat prigovoril gospoda nashego, Iisusa Khrista, k raspyatiju, on raskajaltsja. Pozzhe Pilat i ego zhena Procula obratilis' v khristijanstvo i byli zamucheny v Rime, vmeste so svoimi det'mi. Ty, konechno, ponimaesh' chto ja nastojashchij Marksist i ateist.

Yes, it is. After Pilate sentenced our Lord, Jesus Christ to be crucified, he had a change of heart. After some time Pilate and his wife Procula converted and were martyred, along with their children, in Rome. Of course, you realize that I am a good Marxist and an atheist.

RUSSIAN ADVISOR

Да, я тоже.

Da, ja tozhe.

Yes. Me, too.