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GASPAR VAN WEERBEKE

COLLECTED WORKS

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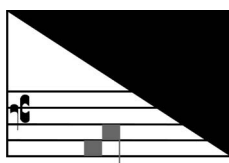
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I. Masses, Part 1

Edidit

AGNESE PAVANELLO
in collaboration with
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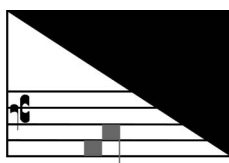
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General Preface

The purpose of the Gaspar van Weerbeke-Edition is to make accessible the complete music transmitted under the name of Gaspar van Weerbeke. The complete edition will consist of five volumes arranged according to genre: mass and mass movements, cycles of motets, motets, other liturgical compositions (lamentations and magnificat) and secular works. Works of uncertain authorship (with conflicting attributions or anonymous) are also included in the edition, and are marked by an asterisk before the title. All extant sources of Weerbeke's music have been considered in order to establish a version of each composition as close as possible to the composer's conception. The critical appraisal of the sources is based on the complete collection of variants for each piece: this allows one to determine the relationship of the sources to one another and establish the main source or sources used as basis for the edition. The reasons behind the editorial decisions are clarified in the critical commentary.

Editorial Principles

The layout of the critical commentary of the Gaspar van Weerbeke-Edition closely follows the editorial principles of the *New Josquin Edition*. It consists of different sections concerning the extant sources and their evaluation, the *cantus prius facti* where used, the text (accompanied by an English translation), variants and readings of the sources (critical commentary), modern editions and related settings. Due to the great number of *unica* and the paucity of conflicting attributions in the transmission of Weerbeke's works, a comment on authenticity is provided only when there is some reason to question the ascription to Weerbeke.

In the Table of Sources each source is supplied with a short siglum following the CENSUS abbreviation or, for prints, the *RISM siglum*. In the critical commentary a complete list of variants and readings from the sources under consideration has been subdivided into special categories: designation of voices, clefs, key signatures, mensuration, and proportion signs, musical symbols (*signa congruentiae*, fermatas, and repetition signs), coloration, errors and variants in pitch and rhythm, accidentals, ligatures, and text placement. These categories are specified only where required. All entries refer to the modern critical edition and are ordered according to the bar number, number of symbol (including notes and rests) within the bar, voice, source, variant, and commentary (if necessary). For instance, the line

10¹⁻² B **Mi:** Sb/p

means that the first two symbols in measure 10 in the bass (a semibreve and a semibreve rest in the edition) correspond to a dotted semibreve (on the same pitch) in the source with *siglum Mi*, the First Milanese choirbook. Pitches are given according to the modern system whereby middle C is *c'* and the octave above and below *c''* and *c*, respectively.

The transcription of each composition starts with an incipit giving original clefs, key signatures, and the range of each voice. Voices names are standardized (Superius, Altus, Tenor, and Bassus); where sources attribute specific names, this is mentioned in the critical commentary. The original mensuration sign is printed above the modern time signature at the beginning as well as where changes occur within the piece.

Notes have been transcribed so that a semibreve correlates with a half note (etc.); the final notes are rendered as *breves* or *longae*, with the implication of indeterminate duration. No attempt has been made to visualize the difference between the mensuration signs **C** and **ϙ** or **O** and **ϕ**. Since they are not consistently given in the sources and since the meaning of the slashed signs (a general tempo acceleration) should not normally result in double meter, the modern time signature does not attempt to distinguish them. Barlines are set in each single system like in modern vocal scores. Only when the *brevis* unit crosses the modern barline is the barline left "open" (see *Missa Ave regina celorum*, Kyrie, A, mm. 1–3); if this occurs in the first measure of a new system, a stemless note in parentheses is provided rather than leaving a blank space.

Introduction

The present volume is an edition of four masses handed down under the name of Gaspar van Weerbeke: the earlier masses *Missa O Venus bant* and *Missa Ave regina celorum*, and the two relatively later masses *Missa Se mieulx ne vient* and *Missa Princesse d'amourettes*, both preserved in Codex 35 of the Cappella Sistina (**Va**³). The transmission of each of the masses has its own peculiarities, but all four masses are found in sources from the Papal Chapel, of which Weerbeke was a member from 1481 to 1489 and from 1500 to at least 1517. The two masses from **Va**³ were probably composed within the context of Weerbeke's activities for the Papal Chapel in the course of the 1480s, while *Missa O Venus bant* and *Missa Ave regina celorum* certainly date back to the preceding years. Proposed dates for the composition of the masses range from the final years of the 1460s to the end of the 1470s, but at present, this range of dates cannot be further narrowed down because there is no consensus on the date of and provenance of the earliest sources, the codices Cappella Sistina 14 (**Va**¹) and Cappella Sistina 51 (**Va**²). Thus the possibility remains open that the two masses, or either of them, may have been composed in the period preceding Weerbeke's arrival in Italy in 1471, or that they originated during the years of his service at the court of the Sforza at Milan (1471–81). Nevertheless, the *Missa O Venus bant* and *Missa Ave regina celorum* have not been found in any known musical source from Flanders. Like the later masses edited here, and more generally all the works found with an attribution to Weerbeke, the earliest history of their transmission is documented exclusively in Italian sources, which date from the composer's arrival in Italy, and which accompanied the ascent both of his musical career and of his position within the bosom of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Three of the four masses edited here were published by Ottaviano Petrucci in Venice in 1507 under the title *Misse Gaspar*, a print exclusively devoted to the composer and containing five of the eight masses currently known as the author's work.

The Transmission of the Four Masses: An Overview

The *Missa O Venus bant* is the composition that enjoyed the greatest dissemination among all of the existing works attributed to Weerbeke. Its ten surviving sources give testimony to its wide transmission, and they distinguish the mass cycle not just from the composer's other masses, but more generally from all contemporary mass cycles, which are rarely found in such a large number of sources. Equally significant is the fact that the *Missa O Venus bant* is the most widely transmitted mass of all of the masses found in its earliest sources, **Va**², Modena α . M.1.13 (**Mo**), and Verona 755 (**Ve**). It is possible that this has to do with the circumstances surrounding the composition and performance of the mass, whose origin would appear to be related to the celebration of an important political event.¹

1. Eric Fiedler suggested that the Mass was composed for a political marriage. See Fiedler, *Heinrich Finck, Gaspar van Weerbeke und die Göttin Venus*, p. 52. On this idea see Adalberth Roth, who based his hypothesis on the origin of the Mass, namely that *O venus bant* was composed on the occasion of Ercole d'Este's marriage to Eleonora of Aragon, which took place in July 1473. This hypothesis was formulated on the basis of certain iconographical elements associated with the transmission of the mass in the Sistine Codex, in which Roth identifies emblems of the Sforza and the Este, and whose symbology he interprets in light of the complex marriage negotiations that occurred between the Sforza family, Ferdinand of Aragon, and the Este family. See Roth, *Studien zum frühen Repertoire*, pp. 310–27. The problems raised by Roth's interpretation, which was used by the scholar as a supporting argument for the dating of the manuscript itself, have been discussed in various places, such as in the reviews of his book (see note 4).

Critical Commentary

1. *Missa Ave regina celorum*

Sources

PRINCIPAL SOURCE

Mi fols. 160'–176; text in all voices; T: “Ave regina celorum ...”; Gaspar

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

Pe [no. 1]; [Missa] “Ave regina celorum ...”; text in all voices; Gaspar (copy I–Bc, Q.65)

Up [no. 1]; [Missa] “Ave regina celorum ...”; with text; Gaspar (only S partbook)

Va¹ fols. 14'–27; T: “Ave regina celorum ...”; text in all voices; Gaspar

Evaluation of the Sources

The *Missa Ave regina celorum* is preserved in four sources: the manuscript Codex Milan 2 (**Mi**), the Capella Sistina manuscript 14 (**Va¹**), the single manuscript partbook **Up**, and the Petrucci print **Pe**, which is entirely devoted to Weerbeke's masses. **Up** is derived directly from **Pe** and therefore has been excluded from the following discussion.

Mi, **Va¹**, and **Pe** represent independent sources of the mass, each of which shows unique variants and their own unique notational features. **Va¹**, which is characterized by a more extensive use of coloration and ligatures (when compared to **Mi**) and by the two-flat signature B \flat –E \flat in the Bassus, is certainly the oldest of the two copies of the mass, even if a precise date and the origin of the manuscript have not yet been established. The musical text of the mass is transmitted by **Va¹** in close agreement with **Mi**, but a number of significant variants distinguishes the two sources, with direct consequences on their overall evaluation.

Among the variants in **Va¹**, which can be noticed from the comparison with **Mi** (e.g. Kyrie, mm. 35–36 or 46–47, Gloria m. 52, Credo m. 13, mm. 214–17, Sanctus m. 39), the readings of the Agnus Dei II are of particular significance. At m. 55 (see Example 2) the Bassus has a reading matching the Superius at m. 57. Unison between Altus and Bassus and an open fourth, which characterizes the reading of **Mi**, is avoided by **Va¹** thanks to an E \flat . At mm. 63–64 of the Altus, a minim rest absent in **Mi** appears in **Va¹**. Due to this break, the following passage is shifted in **Va¹** one minim ahead (see Example 3), so that the melodic imitation of the Altus is emphasised and rhythmically assimilated (with the additional advantage of giving the Bassus a rest for breath). At mm. 67–68 in **Va¹** the Altus, instead of the notes c–a–g of **Mi**, shows rests. The repetition of the notes c–a–g in the reprise of the Altus, characterizing the transmission of **Mi**, is absent in **Va¹**.

Considering these and other variants in the two manuscripts (and considering what could have been their relationship with the original text of the composer), it appears that while the readings of **Va¹** can be explained as revisions or changes made to improve the musical writing of a version like that of **Mi**, the opposite is not true: the readings of **Mi** cannot be explained either as following from the variants in **Va¹** nor as corruptions or copying errors, nor, ultimately, as variants introduced on purpose. Although **Mi** was certainly copied later than **Va¹**, variants such as those described seem to point to an earlier stage of transmission.

Disregarding the group of significant variants, one may notice that the musical text is transmitted in the two sources without large discrepancies, as emphasized, for example, by the very small number of rhythmic substitutions. This confirms the idea that both sources were originally related to a common source, which was probably very close to the composer. Compared to **Va¹**, however, the text disposition of the *Ordinarium missae* in **Mi** is more complete and in some places more reliable. In **Mi** the full text of the antiphon *Ave regina celorum* is placed in the Tenor of the Kyrie, suggesting that the antiphon text was sung along

80

a,
a, glo - ri - a tu -
glo - ri - a tu - a,

85

glo - ri - a tu - a.
- a, glo - ri - a tu - a.
glo - ri - a tu - a.

90

S O - san - na, o - san -
A O - san - na, o -
T O - san - na
B O - san - na, o - san - na,

94

- na, o - san - na in ex - cel - sis, in
- san - na in ex - cel - sis, in
in ex - cel - sis, in
o - san - na in ex - cel - sis, in