

Cover Page



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## Chapter 13 Masses

### 13.1 The Mass at the time of Gheerkin

The Mass Ordinary had developed from the 14th century onwards into the polyphonic cyclic Mass, becoming the most popular and widespread musical genre in the 15th century and continuing into the 16th. Musical unity in the Mass Ordinary was created by using a model, either a monophonic chant or a chanson melody, or a polyphonic composition, for example a chanson or motet.<sup>1577</sup>

In the early sixteenth century, the borrowing of polyphonic models to create a new Mass cycle became more and more a standard, superseding the cantus firmus Mass. At the same time, the four-voice motet, written in contrapuntal imitation, became a popular basis for Masses. Besides these so-called parody Masses (also called imitation Masses), other types were also composed, for example Masses set in canon throughout or Masses composed on freely invented material, but they clearly formed a minority.<sup>1578</sup>

In general, the motif of the opening of the model was also the basis of the opening of the separate Mass movements Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. The *Secunda Pars* of a motet model usually formed the basis of the subsections of the Mass movements (for example the 'Osanna' in the Sanctus or the 'Christe' in the Kyrie). However, the distribution of the borrowed material in the Mass was at the choice of the Mass composer, who also kept in mind the possibilities of text declamation. Sometimes complete blocks of a model were almost literally incorporated in a 'new' Mass, but on the other end of the spectrum we come across freely composed subsections, especially those in fewer voices, that do not seem to have any relation to the model whatsoever.

Composers as Gombert, Willaert, Hellinck and Clemens non Papa are strong representatives of the generation that made the parody Mass such a popular genre in the first half of the sixteenth century. Their choice of models often gives a good indication of their personal education, background and stylistic taste and preferences. Even the way a model was used in a Mass, or the division of the Mass

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<sup>1577</sup> § 1.2 and § 1.3.

<sup>1578</sup> This and the next paragraphs are based on McKinnon ('Mass').

into subsections might indicate a personal preference of a pupil following his master, a composer admiring his colleague or a composer finding his own way in the compositional landscape.

## 13.2 Models

The five Masses by Gheerkin de Hondt currently known are all based on polyphonic motets. Of four of the composers we know their name: Johannes Lupi (*Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*), Nicolas Gombert (*Caeciliam cantate pii*) and Lupus Hellinck (*In te Domine speravi* and *Panis quem ego dabo*); the fifth remains anonymous (*Vidi Jherusalem*).<sup>1579</sup> These composers are Gheerkin's contemporaries from the Low Countries; Gombert and Hellinck were born around the same time, Johannes Lupi about a decade later.

The motets by Johannes Lupi and Lupus Hellinck are found in sources today preserved all over Europe;<sup>1580</sup> the motets by Gombert and the anonymous composer seem to have been less popular. Table 13.1 gives an overview of the models, their composers and their liturgical function (if applicable).

The question arises how Gheerkin came to know these models and why he chose them as the basis for his five Masses. In the case of the two Hellinck motets it seems quite simple: both men worked at the same time in Bruges, and must have known each other's work. Furthermore, both motets were very popular, appearing in many sources. Finally, they were used by several other composers as the basis for a Mass, including by Hellinck himself.<sup>1581</sup> Therefore, Hellinck's music apparently contained 'suitable' material to work with.<sup>1582</sup> Gheerkin probably chose these two motets to pay tribute to his renowned colleague, whose compositional skills he

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<sup>1579</sup> Blackburn 1970, pp. 154; Diehl 1974, pp. 540-545, 531-535, 560-563; Roelvink 2002, pp. 162-163.

<sup>1580</sup> Blackburn 1970, pp. 378, 384, 388; Thomas (Motet Database), accessed November 2014.

<sup>1581</sup> Blackburn 1970, pp. 154, 260, 263. A sixth Mass was added to the group of Masses on *Panis quem ego dabo*, namely the one by Nicolas de Marle, published in 1558 by Le Roy et Ballard in Paris (mentioned by Frank Dobbins in his article on Nicolas de Marle in <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>). See also below, § 13.4.

<sup>1582</sup> On the suitability of motets for the bases of a Mass, see Blackburn 1970, pp. 155-159. In sum: the ideal motet should contain a Prima and a Secunda Pars (providing enough material), no chordal writing, new melodic themes for every phrase of text, contrasting themes and variety in themes.

appreciated very much and whose models also fit the musical needs for his own Masses. Why he chose these two out of a corpus of over fifteen motet compositions is probably also a matter of personal taste and preferences, and perhaps the liturgical occasion might have been a decisive factor as well.

Table 13.1 Models for Gheerkin's Masses

Mass	Model	Composer	Edition or sources <sup>1583</sup>	Liturgical function model
<i>Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel</i> , for 4 voices	Motet <i>Benedictus Dominus Israel / Honor virtus et potestas</i> , for 4 voices	Johannes Lupi	Blackburn 1980-1989, volume I, pp. XXXVI, 144-149.	The text of the Prima Pars is based on Psalm 71:18-19, and is sung as the second responsory at Matins of the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity; <sup>1584</sup> it is also used as a gradual for Sunday within the Octave of Epiphany. <sup>1585</sup>
<i>Missa Ceciliam cantate pii</i> , for 5 voices	Motet <i>Caeciliam cantate pii / Concordes igitur voce liete modos</i> , <sup>1586</sup> for 5 voices	Nicolas Gombert	Schmidt-Görg 1951-1975, volume VIII, pp. IX-X, 26-35.	The text of the motet is by an unknown poet, for the feast of St Cecilia (22 November). <sup>1587</sup>

<sup>1583</sup> The musical examples of the motets, below, are taken from the editions.

<sup>1584</sup> Blackburn 1970, p. 378; Blackburn 1980-1989, p. XXXVI.

<sup>1585</sup> Diehl 1974, p. 532. See also Appendix 13.

<sup>1586</sup> This motet was also known in a later version with the contrafactum text *Juravit Dominus [et non paenitebit] / Dixit Dominus*, but the source is now lost (Blackburn 1987, pp. 92-93). On compositional techniques in the five-voice motets by Gombert (in particular his dissonance treatment), see: Rice 2003 and Rice 2005.

<sup>1587</sup> Schmidt-Görg 1951-1975, volume VIII, p. X. See also Appendix 13.

<i>Missa In te Domine speravi</i> , for 5 voices	Motet <i>In te Domine speravi / Quoniam fortitudo mea</i> , <sup>1588</sup> for 5 voices	Lupus Hellinck	Tillman Merritt 1962, pp. 55-64	The text of the motet is based on the first six verses of Psalm 30, for common use throughout the year. <sup>1589</sup>
<i>Missa Panis quem ego dabo</i> , for 4 voices	Motet <i>Panis quem ego dabo / Locutus est populus</i> , <sup>1590</sup> for 4 voices	Lupus Hellinck	Bernet Kempers 1959 (CMM 4, VII), pp. 123-129; Albrecht 1957, p. 119-123; Schmidt-Görg 1930, <i>Notenbeilage</i> pp. 2-8.	Prima Pars: John 6:52-53; Secunda Pars: Numbers 21:5. For use at the feast of Corpus Christi. <sup>1591</sup>
<i>Missa Vidi Jerusalem</i> , for 4 voices	Motet <i>Vidi Jherusalem descendentem de celo / Ecce tabernaculum Dei cum hominibus</i> , for 4 voices	Anonymous	No edition. Sources: <sup>1592</sup> - CambraiBM 125-8, fols. 72v-73r; - <i>Tertius tomus evangeliorum, quatuor, quinque, sex et plurium vocum</i> , Nuremberg, Berg & Neuber, 1555, no. 12; <sup>1593</sup>	Berg & Neuber 1555 specifies 'In dedicatione Templi'. The text of the Secunda Pars from the Cambrai version (used by Gheerkin) is derived from Revelation 21:3, and is indeed used for the feast of the

<sup>1588</sup> On this motet: Blackburn 1970, pp. 263-265, 282-284, 296-297.

<sup>1589</sup> Blackburn 1970, p. 384; Macey 1998, pp. 240-243. See also Appendix 13.

<sup>1590</sup> On this motet see Blackburn 1970, pp. 260-263, 283-284 and Schmidt-Görg 1930, pp. 78-82.

<sup>1591</sup> Schmidt-Görg 1930, p. 78; Blackburn 1970, p. 388.

<sup>1592</sup> Thomas (Motet Database). The motet in Germany, Herdringen, Bibliothek Schloss Fürstenberg (*olim* Paderborn, Erzbischöfliche Akademische Bibliothek), Mss. 9822-9823, no. 46 is not the same.

<sup>1593</sup> The text is different at the end of the Prima Pars and in the entire Secunda Pars, but the music is the same (some mistakes in CambraiBM 125-8 have been corrected here), with slight differences. The text of Berg & Neuber is the same as in Susato 1553.

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|---|--|
| <p>- <i>Liber tertius ecclesiasticarum cantionum quatuor vocum vulgo moteta vocant tam ex veteri quam ex nouo testamento, ab optimis quibusque huius aetatis muscis compositarum. Antea nunquam excusus,</i><br/>Antwerp,<br/>Tielman Susato,<br/>1553, fol. VIIr-v.<sup>1594</sup></p> | <p>Dedication of the Church.<sup>1595</sup> The text of the Prima Pars is a Responsory used on several occasions during the liturgical year, mainly for the Second Sunday after Easter, but also for the feast of the Dedication of the Church.<sup>1596</sup></p> |
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These last arguments and the suitability of a motet to transform the musical material into a Mass are also valid for the other three motets. As a professional, having his place in the network of *zangmeesters* and composers in the Low Countries, Gheerkin was very well aware of the work of his colleagues. Both Lupi and Gombert had already made their names as composers in the late 1520s. *Vidi Jerusalem* remains anonymous, but is related in style to *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* (Lupi) and *Caeciliam cantate pii* (Gombert), as we shall see below in the paragraph on Gheerkin's style; therefore, this motet is not a surprising choice.

A more modern selection of model is the motet *Caeciliam cantate pii* by Nicolas Gombert, based on an exclusive text by an unknown poet. As already discussed in Chapter 6,<sup>1597</sup> Gheerkin's Mass could have been written during his employment at the Broederschap, since the Broederschap paid the singers on the feast of St Cecilia every year and this feast was on the official liturgical calendar. However, the connection between St Cecilia and music was not all that old: only at

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<sup>1594</sup> Different text at the end of the Prima Pars and in the entire Secunda Pars, but the music is the same (some mistakes in CambraiBM 125-8 are correct here), with slight differences. Text the same as in Berg & Neuber 1555.

<sup>1595</sup> Cantus Database.

<sup>1596</sup> Cantus Database.

<sup>1597</sup> § 6.4.12.

the end of the fifteenth century did Cecilia become the patron of music, with her feast celebrated mainly in the Low Countries and France. It was not until the second quarter of the sixteenth century before composers like Thomas Crecquillon, Cornelius Canis and Jacobus Clemens non Papa started to honour her more extensively with music.<sup>1598</sup>

Gombert was not unknown in 's-Hertogenbosch: in 1533 he became a canon of the Sint-Jan, receiving a prebend. However, he was a non-resident canon, because at the time he was in the service of Emperor Charles V. The motet *Caeciliam cantate pii* was published for the first time in 1541, so he probably wrote it during his work for Charles; one of the calendars of the court shows us that the feast was indeed celebrated there. How the motet ended up in the possession of Gheerkin de Hondt is not known; perhaps Gombert left it in 's-Hertogenbosch when he visited the city in 1531.<sup>1599</sup> But it could also be the other way around: Gheerkin wanted to honour his fellow musicians in 's-Hertogenbosch with a new Mass and searched for a suitable, modern composition which he personally liked to serve as material.

### 13.3 Gheerkin's style

#### 13.3.1 Form

Although the polyphonic Mass Ordinary had five fixed parts in Gheerkin's time (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei),<sup>1600</sup> there was enough room for a composer to give form to those parts in his own individual style. Several formal elements were specifically suitable for leaving a personal mark, for example the division of the text of each part into musical units (especially in the long Credo), the use of chords to emphasize text, the number of voices throughout the complete Mass (some parts were set in fewer or more voices than the basic number) or simply not setting some parts to music at all (for example the second and third Agnus Dei).

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<sup>1598</sup> Ferer 2005. Ferer also gives an overview of all the compositions related to St Cecilia as patron of music written in the period ca. 1492-1575.

<sup>1599</sup> Roelvink 2002, pp. 162-163.

<sup>1600</sup> See § 1.2 and § 1.3.

In Gheerkin's case a few formal aspects catch our attention. First there is the division of the texts into musical parts.<sup>1601</sup> The Kyrie always has three parts: 'Kyrie', 'Christe', 'Kyrie', according to the conventions of the time.<sup>1602</sup> The Gloria is split into two sections in the Masses in the Zeghere van Male partbooks, namely 'Et in terra pax hominibus' and 'Qui tollis peccata mundi'. But the 's-Hertogenbosch Masses have an extra subdivision in the 'Et in terra pax': from 'Dominus Deus Agnus Dei' onwards, only three voices continue.<sup>1603</sup> This typical division also occurs in the three Hellinck Masses in the same choirbook, and was Hellinck's trademark.<sup>1604</sup> But we also see it in the *Missa Fit porta Christi pervia* by Jheronimus Vinders. Therefore, six out of the ten Masses make this division, all of them setting the text for three voices, instead of the full texture of five.

In Gheerkin's time, there were many ways to create subsections in the Credo, and he seems to have tried quite a few of them, especially towards the end of the text. In all of his Masses Gheerkin makes the first division at 'Et incarnatus est'. A second new section usually starts at 'Crucifixus', but not in the *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii*. Here he follows Lupus Hellinck, who never started a new section with 'Crucifixus', but only at 'Et resurrexit', which is also a new segment in all of Gheerkin's Masses.<sup>1605</sup> The Cecilia Mass also has another new segment at 'Et iterum venturus est' (only incidentally made by Hellinck), which occurs as a new part solely in this Mass. Finally, in this and the Masses *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* and *In te Domine speravi*, Gheerkin starts a new section at 'Et in spiritum sanctum'.

In the way Gheerkin set the Sanctus to music we can see his own signature again. He starts a new musical section at the 'Pleni' in all of his Masses, for a limited

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<sup>1601</sup> For the text of the Mass and its translation, see Appendix 16. An overview of the divisions Gheerkin made is in Appendix 17.

<sup>1602</sup> Rather unusual is the 'Christe' in the *Missa In te Domine speravi*, which Gheerkin sets for three voices, instead of the five voices for which this Mass was basically written.

<sup>1603</sup> In the *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii* the contratenor, tenor and bass; in the *Missa In te Domine speravi*, the superius, second superius and tenor.

<sup>1604</sup> Blackburn 1970, pp. 141, 143.

<sup>1605</sup> Bonnie Blackburn investigated 146 Masses from Hellinck's contemporaries (including Gheerkin's two Masses in the 's-Hertogenbosch choirbooks) and concluded that only in 39 of them both the 'Et incarnatus est' and 'Crucifixus' formed a new section. She also mentioned that "Josquin, Hellinck, and Clemens prefer to make the first division at 'Et incarnatus', emphasizing the mystery of the Word made flesh. Gombert and Crecquillon place more emphasis on the sacrifice of Christ, beginning the second part at 'Crucifixus'" (Blackburn 1970, p. 142-143). Therefore, Gheerkin seems to have bridged those two schools.

number of voices.<sup>1606</sup> Only in the *Missa Panis quem ego dabo* it is sung by three voices; in all the other Masses the 'Pleni' is a duet using pervasive imitation. The 'Hosanna' is set to music only once; the second 'Hosanna' was probably sung to the same music as the first.<sup>1607</sup> Remarkable is the setting of the 'Benedictus': in all five Masses it is set for the same three voices contratenor, tenor and bassus, clearly a personal trademark by Gheerkin.

Gheerkin's five Agnus Dei settings do not correspond to any pattern at all. The *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* only has one Agnus Dei, as has the *Missa In te Domine speravi*. In this last case the Agnus is for as many as six voices, which is unique in Gheerkin's oeuvre.<sup>1608</sup> The *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii* does have a separate Agnus Dei, but the music turns out to be the same as for the first Kyrie.<sup>1609</sup> Extraordinary is that in the same manuscript ('s-HerAB 156) exactly the same construction is found in Hellinck's *Missa Ego sum qui sum*, where the Agnus Dei is also written out although it has the same music as the Kyrie, and in Vinders's *Missa Fors seulement*.<sup>1610</sup> Hellinck's *Missa Surrexit pastor* in the same choirbook has an Agnus Dei which strongly resembles the Kyrie, with some variations.<sup>1611</sup> As shown in Chapter 12,<sup>1612</sup> Gheerkin most likely had a great influence on the compilation of MS 156 of the Broederschap. The large number of Hellinck Masses in this manuscript, combined with the resemblances between the structures of the majority of the Masses, almost suggest that this choirbook was meant as a personal monument to Lupus Hellinck, who had died in January 1541. But at the very least it looks as if Gheerkin adjusted his own personal scheme of Masses more to the plan of Lupus Hellinck, as a tribute to his colleague.<sup>1613</sup>

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<sup>1606</sup> Compared to Hellinck: Hellinck only rarely starts a new section at the 'Pleni', but if he does, he also uses only two or three voices (Blackburn 1970, p. 141, 143).

<sup>1607</sup> Not many composers wrote a separate second Hosanna, except for Lupus Hellinck (Blackburn 1970, p. 141, note 2).

<sup>1608</sup> Since the basic number of voices of the Mass is five, adding an extra voice in the Agnus Dei is not unusual in general.

<sup>1609</sup> With a few small differences in the notation. This was not uncommon; other composers did the same thing (Blackburn 1970, p. 141, 148).

<sup>1610</sup> Nelson 2009b, p. 185 refers to the fact that an 'independent Agnus' of the *Missa Fors seulement* has come down to us in another manuscript, leaving aside if this Agnus was composed by the original composer or someone else.

<sup>1611</sup> On Hellinck's Mass: Blackburn 1970, p. 148.

<sup>1612</sup> §12.2.

<sup>1613</sup> In the other manuscript which was copied by the same scribe in the period Gheerkin was *zangmeester* in 's-Hertogenbosch, MS 157, there are only three Masses having the same specific subdivision in the Gloria, also for three voices, namely the two Hellinck

Since the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem* has no Agnus Dei at all,<sup>1614</sup> in performances it would be safe to use the music of the first Kyrie for the Agnus Dei, following the structure of the *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii*. A separate case is the *Missa Panis quem ego dabo*: it has the full three Agnus Deis, respectively for four, three and five voices. Exceptional in Gheerkin's work is the third Agnus Dei, in which the second tenor is a canon with the first tenor in inversion.<sup>1615</sup>

### 13.3.2 Use of models

Gheerkin used the same number of voices for his Masses as the models, and he also respected the range of the voices. He followed the conventions of his time, by generally using the first motif of his model in the opening movements of the five main Mass sections, almost always in imitation, with two real exceptions: the Agnus Deis of the Masses *Panis quem ego dabo* and *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*.<sup>1616</sup> For the openings of the subsections of the Masses, Gheerkin also follows his contemporaries in using the themes of the Secunda Pars of the models. However, there is no clear formal plan in the placement of the themes in specific subsections; Gheerkin handles them with much variety. In the *Missa In te Domine speravi*, for example, he used the first theme of the Secunda Pars in the 'Et resurrexit', but in the same movement in the *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii*, he takes the main theme from the Prima Pars of the motet to open this section. Gheerkin also did not maintain the order of the themes of his model: he mixes them up according to his own view.

A remarkable beginning is in the Masses *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* and *Vidi Jerusalem*. Instead of starting his Mass with imitation of the main musical theme of his models, which one would expect considering the conventions of the

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Masses and the *Missa Nigra sum* by Mathieu Gascogne. None of these Masses has an Agnus Dei with the same music as the Kyrie.

<sup>1614</sup> Zeghere van Male actually writes: 'finis' after the three-voiced 'Benedictus', as to confirm there is indeed no Agnus Dei.

<sup>1615</sup> This Mass was edited by Hans van Nieuwkoop, the edition used in this thesis (Van Nieuwkoop 1975).

<sup>1616</sup> See Van Nieuwkoop 1975 for an edition of the *Missa Panis quem ego dabo*. The themes of Hellinck's motet are given in Blackburn 1970, p. 262. Gheerkin uses other themes from the motet in the first and third Agnus Dei; the second seems to be composed of free material. For the Agnus of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, see below.

time, Gheerkin lets two voices begin at the same time.<sup>1617</sup> He even does this using exactly the same formula, with the superius and contratenor starting, followed two bars later by the tenor and again two bars later by the bassus (Example 13.1.a and b).<sup>1618</sup> Moreover, in both Masses the superius has the opening theme of the model in an adjusted form, using long note values at the beginning (Example 13.2.a and b and 13.3.a and b). The (important) difference is that in the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* the music in the contratenor, tenor and bassus seem to be built of free melodic material (not derived from the original model), whereas in the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem* these three voices use the same opening theme as the superius, in imitation.

The relationship between these two Masses is further ‘explained’ by the use of an ear-catching theme that does not appear in either of the models that was used for the Masses. It appears as the starting theme of the Agnus Dei of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* (Example 13.4). But it also suddenly occurs in the middle of the Credo of the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem*, at the words ‘et in unum Dominum’, which appear in imitation after the music had come to an interim stop (Example 13.5).<sup>1619</sup> In the Agnus Dei it is pervasive, in the bassus it is even ostinato-like (repeated constantly).

This theme, as it turns out, originates from another model that was used by Gheerkin, namely the motet *Caeciliam cantate pii* by Nicolas Gombert (Example 13.6).<sup>1620</sup> And it appears to be quoted even longer in the Credo of the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem* (Example 13.5, bassus, bars 29-31) than in the Agnus Dei of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*.

To confirm that Gheerkin is really referring to the Cecilia theme, he quotes the complete main theme of his Mass (Example 13.7) in the superius of the Agnus of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* (Example 13.8). In the Credo of the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem*, he only quotes the first four – characteristic – notes, but no fewer than eight times within four bars (Example 13.9).

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<sup>1617</sup> The *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* was the subject of an earlier article (Roelvink 2009). For the sake of comparison with Gheerkin’s other Masses, the results published there (specifically pp. 387-390) are repeated here.

<sup>1618</sup> A comparable opening is in the ‘Hosanna’ (Sanctus) of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*.

<sup>1619</sup> In music theory, in fact, there is no exact imitation here, since the melodic line only follows the motif precisely in the superius and tenor. Therefore, this is a case of ‘trapped in his own counterpoint’.

<sup>1620</sup> Roelvink 2009, pp. 389-390.

Example 13.1.a Opening bars of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* – Kyrie

4

Ky - ri - e [Ky - ri - e]

Ky - ri - e [Ky - ri - e]

Ky - ri - e

Example 13.1.b Opening bars of the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem* – Kyrie

5

Ky - ri - e [Ky - ri - e]

Ky - ri - e [Ky - ri - e]

Ky - ri - e [Ky - ri - e]

Ky - ri - e [Ky - ri - e]

Example 13.2.a Opening bars of the motet *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, S

Be - ne - di - ctus Do - mi - nus

5 De - us Is - ra - el

Example 13.2.b Opening bars of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, S

Ky - ri - e

9 [e - ley - son] [e -

11 ley - son] [e - ley - son]

Example 13.3.a Opening bars of the motet *Vidi Jerusalem*, S

Vi - di Je - ru - sa - lem de - scen - den -

5 tem de ce - lo de - scen - den -

Example 13.3.b Opening bars of the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem*, S

Ky - ri - e

9 - e [Ky - ri - e e - ley - son]

Example 13.4 Opening motif of the Agnus Dei of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*

Example 13.4 shows the opening motif of the Agnus Dei. The score is written for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "A - gnus De - i [A - gnus De - - - -] A - gnus De - i [A - gnus De - - - -] A - gnus De - i A - gnus De - i". The music is in 8/8 time. The first system ends with a key signature change to one sharp (F#) for the second system.

Example 13.5 Motif at the words 'et in unum Dominum' in the Credo of the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem*

Example 13.5 shows the motif at the words 'et in unum Dominum'. The score is written for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "um Et in u - num Do - mi - num Jhe - sum Chri - stum fi - li - um et in u - num Do - mi - num Do - mi - num Jhe - sum Chri - stum Jhe - sum Chri - stum fi - li - um De - Jhe - sum Chri - - - stum". The music is in 8/8 time. The first system ends with a key signature change to one sharp (F#) for the second system.



Example 13.8 *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel, Agnus Dei, S*

18  
Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di

Example 13.9 *Missa Vidi Jerusalem, Credo*

216  
dit qui cum pa-tre et fi-li-o  
dit qui cum pa-tre et fi-li-o  
dit qui cum pa-tre et fi-li-o [et fi-li-o]  
dit et fi-li-o

The use of ‘foreign’ themes in his Masses seems to be a characteristic feature of Gheerkin’s compositional technique. The question comes up if there are more quotations from other models, because some apparently obvious themes in Gheerkin’s Masses do not seem to derive from their models.<sup>1621</sup> Normally this would be called ‘freely composed material’, but since the themes are at the beginning of one of the sections of the Mass, and the fact that Gheerkin did quote from the Cecilia motet in two of his other Masses, might indicate that he also took material from other motets, and not only at the beginning of the main sections. A finding tool for themes in motets and Masses is not yet available.<sup>1622</sup> Therefore, this question has to remain unanswered at this point.

<sup>1621</sup> For example: the openings of the ‘Hosanna’ and ‘Agnus Dei II’ from the *Missa Panis quem ego dabo* (see also Van Nieuwkoop 1975, p. V; he only mentions the ‘Hosanna’), and the persistent motif in the bassus of the ‘Hosanna’ in the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*. Zeghere van Male actually writes in the tenor voice of the Agnus Dei II: *Secundum Agnus non est Lupus* (‘the second Agnus is not by Lupus’).

<sup>1622</sup> The Dutch Song Database has proved that such a database is indispensable to identify melodies (<http://www.liederenbank.nl>).

### 13.3.3 Specific compositional techniques

There is one more noticeable compositional technique that connects the three Masses *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, *Ceciliam cantate pii* and *Vidi Jerusalem* and that is a change of time signature in the Credo. In his entire known oeuvre, Gheerkin solely uses the so-called *tempus imperfectum* (the time unit of a breve divided into two equal units), but in sections of these three Masses he suddenly changes to *tempus perfectum* (the time unit of a breve divided into three equal units). And in all cases he does so with the words *Confiteor unum baptisma* ('I confess one baptism'). In the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* he then changes back to *tempus imperfectum*, in the other two Masses, the rest of the phrase (*in remissionem peccatorum*, 'for the remission of sins') is also in *tempus perfectum*. The *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* is the most extreme case, since the music comes to a full stop before and after the word *confiteor*, and the entire phrase is set in a chordal way (Example 13.10). In both the other Masses Gheerkin does use *tempus perfectum*, and the music does move in chords, but he writes it (partly) in imitation, therefore the words do not sound as one voice (Example 13.11). But the change in tempo, and the fact that the music is almost moving in chords, do give extra stress to the words. However, Gheerkin was not the only composer setting specifically these words in *tempus perfectum*.<sup>1623</sup> But the practice is unique and consistent in his oeuvre and it seems to be one of his personal trademarks.<sup>1624</sup>

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<sup>1623</sup> A limited search in the 's-Hertogenbosch choirbooks 156 and 157 shows that Vinders (*Missa Fors seulement*), Gascogne (*Missa Nigra sum*), Willaert/Hesdin (*Missa Benedicta es*) and the anonymous composer of the *Missa A l'aventure* did the same. Lupus Hellinck always used *tempus perfectum* in the 'Hosanna' and Agnus Dei III, and sometimes at the end of the Gloria and Credo (Blackburn 1970, p. 144).

<sup>1624</sup> In the two other Masses, Gheerkin sets the word *confiteor* in chords as well.

Example 13.10 Tempus perfectum in the Credo of the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*

300

am] con - fi - te - or con - fi - te -

304

or u - num ba - pti - sma

or u - num ba - pti - sma in

or u - num ba - pti - sma

Example 13.11 Tempus perfectum in the Credo of the *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii*

238

am Con - fi - te - or

am Con - fi - te - or u - num ba - pti - sma

am Con - fi - te - or u - num

Con - fi - te - or u - num ba - pti - sma

243

u - num ba - pti - - - sma  
 sma [ba - pti - - - sma]  
 sma ba - pti - - - sma in re - mis -  
 ba - pti - - - sma ba - pti - -  
 u - num ba - pti - - - sma

247

in re - mis - si - o - nem pec - ca - to - rum [in re -  
 in re - mis - si - o - -  
 si - o - nem pec - ca - to - rum [in re - mis - si - o - -  
 sma in re - mis -  
 in re - mis - si - o - nem [pec - ca - to -

251

mis - si - o - nem] pec - ca - to - rum Et ex - spe -  
 - nem pec - ca - to - rum Et ex - spe -  
 - nem pec - ca - to - rum] pec - ca - to - rum Et ex - spe -  
 si - o - nem pec - ca - to - rum Et  
 rum] pec - ca - to - rum Et ex - spe -

Gheerkin seems to have made a real effort to adapt the melodies and harmonies of his model before using them in his Masses. There are only a few instances where he (almost) literally copied his model.<sup>1625</sup> But normally, the themes Gheerkin took from his model differ from the original, especially in rhythm. Sometimes these adjustments were necessary for the declamation of the text. For example: the word Sanctus does not fit the opening motif with the four repeating notes in the motet *In te Domine speravi* and therefore Gheerkin had to adjust his theme (Example 13.12.a and b). But this was not always the case. The opening bars from the first Agnus Dei of the *Missa Panis quem ego dabo* are a fine example: here Gheerkin could have easily followed Hellinck's rhythm, but instead, he chose to make an adjustment (Example 13.13.a and b).<sup>1626</sup>

Example 13.12.a Opening motif of Hellinck's motet *In te Domine speravi*



<sup>1625</sup> For example: in *Missa Panis quem ego dabo*, the beginning of Kyrie I is the beginning of the motet, the beginning of the 'Crucifixus' and the 'Agnus Dei III' resemble the beginning of the Secunda Pars of the motet and the end of Kyrie II and the end of the Gloria equal the end of the Secunda Pars (and Prima Pars) of the motet; in *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, the final ten bars of the 'Agnus Dei' look a lot like the final bars of the Secunda Pars of the motet (Roelvink 2009, p. 389); in *Missa Vidi Jerusalem*, the beginning of the 'Qui tollis' section of the Gloria equals the beginning of the Secunda Pars of the motet and the beginning of the Credo equals the beginning of the Prima Pars.

<sup>1626</sup> Blackburn 1970, p. 262 (Hellinck's model) and Van Nieuwkoop 1975, p. 47.

Example 13.12.b Opening of Gheerkin's *Missa In te Domine speravi, Sanctus*

San - - - - -

San - - - - -

San - - - - - ctus San - - - - -

San - - - - - ctus [San - - - - -]

San - - - - - ctus [San - - - - -]

San - - - - - ctus San - - - - -

Example 13.13.a Lupus Hellinck, fourth theme of motet *Panis quem ego dabo, Ct*

Li - ti - ga - bant er - go Ju - de - i

[A - gnus De - - - - - i]

Example 13.13.b Opening of Gheerkin's *Missa Panis quem ego dabo*, Agnus Dei I

Gheerkin liked to use the full texture of voices, now and then alternating with passages in voice pairs, but these voice pairs are not specific to his style of composing Masses. The full texture is sometimes chordal. This happens specifically in the Credo and Gloria, which is no surprise, since these two parts of the Mass have extensive texts and are mostly syllabically set.<sup>1627</sup> Gheerkin is creative and flexible in which texts he sets to chords, but one (part of a) phrase is always in chords: the 'Et incarnatus est', which always forms the beginning of the second section in the Credo (Example 13.14 gives an example). Actually, the entire section more or less moves in chords, emphasizing the text 'And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary. And was made man.' Of course, this is a solemn and important moment in

<sup>1627</sup> Text placement is a little bit subjective. The Mass texts were well known in the 16th century, and Zeghere van Male, among others, just wrote the words somewhere under the notes, not bothering about if repetition of the text was needed, or that a melisma was desired. See also: Gabriëls 2010<sup>2</sup>, p. 87. Philippus de Spina seems to have worked more accurately in the 's-Hertogenbosch choirbooks.

Mass, where the congregation kneels, but not all composers actually stressed the words by using chords.<sup>1628</sup>

#### 13.3.4 Gheerkin and other composers

Although Gheerkin preferred to use the full texture of voices, he starts all his Mass sections and subsections with imitation.<sup>1629</sup> However, he also favoured that his music follow the phrases of the text: overlapping between text lines appears to only a small extent, and usually no longer than the duration of two breves (bars). To achieve variation, Gheerkin uses contrasting themes in imitation, but also chordal passages. The repeating of a theme in one voice in an ostinato-like manner, as we have seen above in the *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* (bassus, Example 13.4), occurs in more of Gheerkin's Masses. Usually it appears in the superius (mostly longer themes), but we also find the phenomenon in the bassus (shorter motifs). Often the melody recurs on different pitches.<sup>1630</sup>

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<sup>1628</sup> The stressing of the words 'Et incarnatus est' by using chords also appears with other composers and is a feature of the work of Lupus Hellinck. Hellinck, however, switches to a short imitative passage (Blackburn 1970, pp. 146-147), whereas Gheerkin continues his chordal approach.

<sup>1629</sup> With the exception of the 'Et incarnatus est', opening in chords. Another exception is the above-mentioned opening of the Kyrie in the *Missa Vidi Jerusalem* and *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* and the opening of the 'Hosanna' in the latter, where two voices start together and only three of the four voices sing in imitation.

<sup>1630</sup> For example: *Missa Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* (Kyrie – 'Kyrie II', Sanctus – 'Hosanna'), *Missa Panis quem ego dabo* (Kyrie – 'Christe', Gloria – 'Qui tollis', Sanctus – 'Pleni'), *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii* (Kyrie – 'Kyrie I').

Example 13.14 'Et incarnatus est' section from the *Missa Ceciliam cantate pii*

83

Et in - car - na - tus est  
 Et in - car - na - tus est  
 Et in - car - na - tus est de  
 Et in - car - na - tus est  
 Et in - car - na - tus est

87

de Spi - ri - tu San - cto  
 de Spi - ri - tu San - cto  
 Spi - ri - tu San - cto  
 de Spi - ri - tu San - cto [de Spi - ri - tu San - cto]  
 de Spi - ri - tu San - cto

92

ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne et  
 ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne et  
 ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne [et ho - mo fa - ctus  
 ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne et ho - mo fa - ctus  
 ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne et ho - mo fa - ctus

97

ho - mo fa - - ctus est [et  
 ho - mo fa - - ctus est et ho - mo fa -  
 est] et ho - mo fa - - ctus est  
 est [et ho - mo fa - ctus est] et ho -  
 est [et ho - - mo fa - ctus est] Cru -

The Mass style of Gheerkin de Hondt is an individual one, although certain elements can also be found with his contemporary colleagues. Gheerkin retains a basic formal plan of the Mass sections, which he adjusts when he wants to. In that way, he does not follow his colleague Lupus Hellinck. Within the Mass sections, however, Gheerkin likes to adhere to a stricter plan: text phrases are often separated, but when they melt into each other, it is only for a short period of time. In doing so, he does not follow Gombert.<sup>1631</sup> Both contemporaries, and also men like Thomas Crecquillon and Jacobus Clemens non Papa, were very creative in the use of the material of their models. That is something we cannot accuse Johannes Lupi of, who liked to copy complete sections of his models into his own (two) Masses.<sup>1632</sup> Gheerkin's choice of completely different models for his Masses manifests itself in his own music: it is a melting pot of stylistic elements, creating his own style.

<sup>1631</sup> The dissonance treatment is beyond the scope of this study, but in general, Gheerkin does not avoid the dissonant clashes that made his colleague so famous. Especially in the group of three Masses that are related to each other, there are quite a few challenges for the editor of Gheerkin's music.

<sup>1632</sup> The stylistic elements of Gheerkin's colleagues are taken from the descriptions in their biographies in <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

### 13.4 Other composers using the same models

Only two of the motets that Gheerkin de Hondt used as a model for his Masses were also used by other composers: *In te Domine speravi* and *Panis quem ego dabo*. Both motets are by Lupus Hellinck, and as it happens, Hellinck also composed a Mass on these motets himself.<sup>1633</sup> Table 13.2 gives an overview of the Masses by Gheerkin de Hondt of which the models were also used by other composers for their own Masses.<sup>1634</sup>

Table 13.2 Other composers using the same models for their Masses

Mass	Composer	Sources or editions
<i>Missae In te Domine speravi</i> : for 5 voices	Lupus Hellinck: for 4 voices	Sources, according to Blackburn 1970, p. 398: - CambraiBM 20, fol. 245v - Montserrat 776, fol. 72v - 1568 <sup>1</sup> Schwertel, no. 4 - CambraiBM 125-8, fol. 53 (fragment 'Et resurrexit', T and B)
	Loyset Piéton: <sup>1635</sup> for 5 voices	Source: <sup>1636</sup> - Rome, Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Manuscript Cappella Sistina 19, fol. LXXXIXv-CVIIr
	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: for 6 voices	Edition: - Bianci 1958, pp. 131-171.

<sup>1633</sup> I am very grateful to Dr. Bonnie Blackburn for giving me her transcriptions of both Masses, and her permission to use them in this thesis.

<sup>1634</sup> The list is put together by using the worklists of composers in <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, by using secondary literature on prints in general, for example Vanhulst 1990, and by checking tables of contents of manuscripts and prints.

<sup>1635</sup> Loyset Piéton's Mass probably dates from the early 1530s (the manuscript is copied circa 1535-1537; Census 1979-1988), therefore around the same time as Gheerkin's. Contrary to Gheerkin, Piéton seems to have spent his life mainly in Italy (Florence, Rome, Venice) or France (Lyon) in the 1530s and 1540s (biographical facts taken from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, 'Piéton, Loyset', accessed November 2014.)

<sup>1636</sup> The manuscript is heavily damaged, due to severe ink corrosion (Census 1979-1988), so the microfilm which I had at my disposal was hard to read on several pages.

<i>Missa Panis quem ego dabo</i> : for 4 voices	Lupus Hellinck: for 4 voices	Sources, according to Blackburn 1970, p. 398: - CambraiBM 20, fol. 230v - 1532 <sup>5</sup> Attaignant, fol. 175v - Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS 7, 28v-34r. <sup>1637</sup>
	Jacobus Clemens non Papa: for 4 voices	Edition: - Bernet Kempers 1959 (CMM 4, VII), pp. 85-123.
	Nicolas de Marle: for 4 voices <sup>1638</sup>	Source: - <i>Missa ad imitationem moduli (Panis quem ego dabo) cum quatuor vocibus</i> , Paris, Adrian Le Roy & Robert Ballard, 1558.
	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: for 4 voices	Edition: - Casimiri 1941, pp. 45-71
	Bartolomeo Le Roy: for 4 voices	Source: - Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, <i>Una messa a otto voci sopra il suo Confitebor a due cori. Et di M. Bartholomeo Lo Roi maestro di cappella del vicere di Napoli, una messa a quattro sopra Panis quem ego dabo tibi, de Lupo</i> , Venice, Girolamo Scotto, 1585.

Already in 1930 Joseph Schmidt-Görg wrote an article on the four Masses by Hellinck, Clemens non Papa, Palestrina and Le Roy based on Hellinck's motet *Panis quem ego dabo*.<sup>1639</sup> Schmidt-Görg gave an overview of the choices the different composers made in dividing the texts of the main Mass sections and he investigated which themes of Hellinck's motet were used in each of the parts. After doing so, he reached some important and interesting conclusions:

<sup>1637</sup> The Berlin source is mentioned on <http://www.cmme.org/database/pieces/6042>, accessed December 2014.

<sup>1638</sup> Mentioned by Frank Dobbins in his article on Nicolas de Marle in <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (not mentioned in Blackburn 1970). A copy of this print was not at my disposal, therefore – and since it is a rather late work – it is left out in the comparison here.

<sup>1639</sup> Schmidt-Görg 1930. He was not familiar with the Masses by Gheerkin and De Marle.

- The formal divisions of all the four Masses differ;
- Strict copying of the motet material is rare with all four composers;
- Although all Masses apparently follow the motet, each composer developed the material in his own way: between the four different Masses there are no notable similarities or relations;
- All Masses have the personal stamp of the composer;
- Hellinck and Palestrina are the most loyal to the model: they follow it closely, although not literally, but they use the themes largely in order of appearance;<sup>1640</sup>
- The Masses by Clemens non Papa and Le Roy contain more freely composed material, especially in the Credo;
- Clemens non Papa uses many variations on the themes of the motet; he also likes to repeat melodies in one voice, even on different pitches (so-called sequence);
- There is a difference in handling the motet material between the older and younger generation (Hellinck/Clemens non Papa versus Le Roy and Palestrina).<sup>1641</sup>

If we add Gheerkin's style to the above sketched overview of characteristics of the four Masses, we indeed get a different story. His formal plan of the Mass sections differs from the other four and he actually is the only composer in this group of six who took the trouble to write three Agnus Deis. Gheerkin joins Hellinck, Clemens non Papa and Le Roy in setting the 'Et incarnatus est' in the Credo as a new section, in chords.<sup>1642</sup>

Two stylistic elements in Clemens non Papa are striking, namely that he created variations on the themes and he liked to repeat melodies; these elements are also characteristic for Gheerkin's Mass oeuvre. But as we have seen above, it was only in Gheerkin's *Missa Panis quem ego dabo* that he quoted his model a few times literally. However, the number of quotations remained limited, and they were only for a short number of bars. Besides, Gheerkin did not follow Hellinck's strict formal plan; on the contrary, together with Clemens non Papa he mixed the themes from the two Partes of the motet according to his own preferences, using freely composed material in between. In that respect, his style is closer to Clemens's.

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<sup>1640</sup> Blackburn 1970, p. 309 states that Hellinck's Mass must post-date his motet by several years, since it shows 'a much more skillful imitative technique'.

<sup>1641</sup> This was of course to be expected, and is the reason my comparison of Gheerkin's Mass concentrates on the Masses by Hellinck and Clemens non Papa.

<sup>1642</sup> Palestrina did not set the 'Et incarnatus est' as a separate section, but did use chords for this phrase.

The conclusions Joseph Schmidt-Görg reached for the Masses based on the motet *Panis quem ego dabo* may in general also be applied to the Masses based on the motet *In te Domine speravi*: all four composers created a new composition, based on the material Hellinck had given them. Remarkable is that Hellinck chose to write a four-part Mass on his five-part motet. Palestrina decided to expand the number of voices to six, whereas Gheerkin and Piéton kept to the original number of voices in Hellinck's motet, except in the Agnus Dei, where they both raised the number of voices to six.<sup>1643</sup> As Table 13.3 shows, all composers divided the Mass text according to their own taste in musical units.<sup>1644</sup>

Table 13.3 Divisions of the text in musical units in the *Missa In te Domine speravi*

	Lupus Hellinck	Gheerkin de Hondt	Loyset Piéton	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
	à 4 (S/Ct/T/B)	à 5 (S/Ct/T1/T2/B)	à 5 (S/S2/Ct/T/B)	à 6 (S1/S2/Ct/T1/T2/B)
<b>Kyrie</b>	Kyrie Christe Kyrie	Kyrie Christe à 3 Kyrie	Kyrie Christe Kyrie	Kyrie Christe Kyrie
<b>Gloria</b>	Et in terra pax Domine Deus Agnus Dei à 3 Qui tollis	Et in terra pax Domine Deus Agnus Dei à 3 Qui tollis	Et in terra pax Qui tollis	Et in terra pax Qui tollis
<b>Credo</b>	Patrem omnipotentem Et incarnatus est	Patrem omnipotentem Et incarnatus est	Patrem omnipotentem	Patrem omnipotentem Et incarnatus est

<sup>1643</sup> Piéton writes three Agnus Deis: the first and second for four voices, the third for six, in the third two of the upper voices sing in canon ('in dyathessaron', at the perfect fourth).

<sup>1644</sup> Piéton does not make separate sections in the Credo at 'Et resurrexit' and 'Et iterum venturus est', but in fact starts the 'Crucifixus' with three voices, adding a voice to 'Et resurrexit' (à 4) and again to 'Et iterum venturus est' (à 5).

		Crucifixus à 3	Crucifixus à 3	Crucifixus
	Et resurrexit à 2	Et resurrexit à 3		Et resurrexit
	Et iterum venturus est			Et iterum venturus est
		Et in spiritum sanctum	Et in spiritum sanctum	
<b>Sanctus</b>	Sanctus	Sanctus Pleni sunt celi à 2	Sanctus Pleni sunt celi à 3	Sanctus Pleni sunt celi à 4
	Osanna Benedictus à 3	Osanna Benedictus à 3	Osanna Benedictus à 3	Osanna Benedictus à 4
<b>Agnus Dei</b>	Agnus Dei I à 5	Agnus Dei I à 6	Agnus Dei I à 4	Agnus Dei I
			Agnus Dei II à 4	
	Agnus Dei III à 5		Agnus Dei III à 6	Agnus Dei III

Lupus Hellinck's own Mass follows the model in a well-organised way again: the themes of the model generally recur in the Mass in the same order, although varied in rhythm.<sup>1645</sup> Piéton seems to have worked largely according to the same procedure, at least for the beginning of each Mass movement.<sup>1646</sup> Gheerkin, on the other hand, handles the themes in the same way he does in all of his Masses: he takes a theme when he needs it, and does not stick to the original sequence of the themes in the motet. He also views the themes more as motifs instead of (long) themes, since he makes continuous variations.<sup>1647</sup>

<sup>1645</sup> On Hellinck's *Missa In te Domine speravi*: Blackburn 1970, pp. 168-174. Unique in Hellinck's Mass oeuvre is that in this specific Mass he quoted literally from the motet, probably because it was his own. The consequent usage of the order of the motet themes in the same sequence in the Masses is a specific feature of Lupus Hellinck (Blackburn 1970, pp. 174, 199-203).

<sup>1646</sup> Except for the 'Hosanna', where he uses a variant of the last theme of the Prima Pars (*esto mihi*) instead of the first theme of the Secunda Pars and except for the Agnus Deis. Since the microfilm of this Mass is so poorly readable, only the beginnings of the main Mass sections have been checked.

<sup>1647</sup> As shown in Example 13.13.a and b above.

For both Mass groups the same conclusions can be drawn: the composers took the liberty of reconstructing the motet model into something new that matched their own styles. In this Gheerkin de Hondt followed his own procedures, according to his own specific way of composing.

### 13.5 Summary

Only two manuscript sources contain Masses that have been attributed to Gheerkin de Hondt, one originating from Bruges, the other from 's-Hertogenbosch. Both manuscripts were compiled when Gheerkin was *zangmeester* in those cities. There is no doubt about the attributions to Gheerkin de Hondt of the five Masses in question. Looking at the compositional style, the authenticity of these five Masses as works by the same composer is further strengthened.

All Gheerkin's Masses are based on polyphonic motets, of which four were composed by his contemporaries (Johannes Lupi, Nicolas Gombert and Lupus Hellinck); one of them remains anonymous.

Gheerkin de Hondt seems to have been a Mass composer who did have a formal plan for his Masses, although it was not a rigid one. In all of his Masses, he divides the text according to a basic scheme: the Kyrie is always three-part and in the Sanctus he always starts new sections at 'Pleni sunt celi' (which is always set for a limited number of voices, usually two), 'Hosanna' and 'Benedictus' (which is always set for contratenor, tenor and bassus). Furthermore, he makes a separate section in the Credo on 'Et incarnatus est' and on 'Et resurrexit'. In four of his five Masses Gheerkin starts a new part at 'Crucifixus'. The Gloria consists of at least two sections ('Et in terra pax' and 'Qui tollis peccate mundi'); in the 's-Hertogenbosch Masses Gheerkin makes an extra division at 'Domine Deus Agnus Dei'. Gheerkin's Agnus Deis do not seem to have had any formal plan: one of his Masses has no Agnus Dei at all, whereas another has all three of them. Also the number of voices strongly varies: from three voices to six and everything in between.

Gheerkin composed his Masses in imitative counterpoint, but at the same time he preferred to keep the single phrases of the text (as much as possible) separated. When they do overlap it is only for a limited number of bars (usually no more than two). Another compositional technique to give shape to the Masses is the use of chords. Although Gheerkin uses them whenever he thinks it is appropriate, in pure form they always appear at the beginning of the 'Et incarnatus est', this section mainly moving in chords anyway.

According to the conventions of his time, Gheerkin used the first theme of the Prima Pars of his model in the opening bars of the five main sections of his Masses; the first theme of the Secunda Pars is used for the openings of secondary sections, but not according to a specific model. The rest of the material derived from the motets is scattered throughout the different parts of the Mass sections, not following a clear plan; it seems that Gheerkin simply took a theme or motif when he needed it: he did not follow the order of themes of the model in his Masses. Notable too is that he was very creative in handling the themes: he preferred to make changes in the melodic material rather than copy the motifs literally. Sometimes he used a theme in an ostinato-like manner.

Unique in Gheerkin's oeuvre is the fact that in the three Masses *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, *Ceciliam cantate pii* and *Vidi Jerusalem* he changes the time signature in the Credo at 'confiteor unum baptisma' to *tempus perfectum*. The three Masses are also connected by the fact that they share a few themes from the motet *Ceciliam cantate pii*. This use of 'foreign' themes seems to be a characteristic feature of Gheerkin's technique of composing Masses. The Masses *Vidi Jerusalem* and *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* also share the same kind of opening of the first Kyrie: the superius and contratenor start at the same time (the superius in long note values), followed by the tenor and bassus each two bars later.

Only two of Gheerkin's Masses belong to groups of Masses based on the same motet model: the *Missa Panis quem ego dabo* and *In te Domine speravi*, both based on motets by Lupus Hellinck. All these Masses have their own formal plans, their own ways of using the motet material and the individual style of the composers.

The fact that Gheerkin de Hondt used diverse models on the one hand, but on the other hand combined themes from motets from different composers that in his eyes (or ears) looked alike, proves that he was part of the network of men who formed the great generation of Franco-Flemish composers. Nevertheless, he put his own personal stamp on the music, creating his own specific style among his contemporaries.