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Josquin's "Absolve, quaesumus, domine": A Tribute to Obrecht?

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JOSQUIN'S *ABSOLVE, QUAESUMUS, DOMINE*: A TRIBUTE
TO OBRECHT?

After Josquin had died in Condé-sur-l'Escaut on August 27, 1521, three of his younger colleagues wrote a lament to honor the composer who was unanimously regarded as the 'princeps musicorum'. The laments by Jheronimus Vinders, Benedictus Appenzeller, and Nicolas Gombert have been known since early times: All three were published in 1545 by Tielman Susato in his *Septiesme livre*, along with a collection of chansons by Josquin, and edited in 1922 by Albert Smijers in the first issue of the *Werken van Josquin des Prez*.¹ A fourth lament, however, was discovered 1970 by Martin Picker in the Archivio del Duomo at Piacenza, and was commented upon in his paper at the International Josquin Festival-Conference in New York in 1971.² The *nenia* found by Picker in three partbooks is according to the original index a motet for seven voices, of which only the Bassus primus, Bassus secundus and Tenor secundus are extant. The composer is unknown. The text is a prayer for remission of sins: "Absolve, quaesumus, domine, animam famuli tui Josquini ab omni vinculo delictorum: ut in resurrectionis gloria inter sanctos et electos tuos resuscitatus respiret. Per Christum dominum nostrum. Amen. Requiescat in pace." (We beg Thee, O Lord, to free the soul of Thy servant Josquin from the bonds of all his sins, so that in the glory of the Resurrection he may rise to new life amid Thy saints and chosen ones. Through our Lord. Amen. May he rest in peace.)

The Tenor secundus provides the cantus firmus, which is the plainsong introtit of the Mass for the Dead: "Requiem aeternam dona ei domine: et lux perpetua luceat ei." (Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord: and let perpetual light shine upon him.) Giving good reasons Picker has pointed out the relationship between the Piacenza *Absolve, quaesumus, domine* and the one in Toledo MS 21, which is ascribed to Josquin. Both compositions, preserved as *unica*, are totally different settings of the same text. But they have the cantus firmus and its canonic appearance in common: In both works, the plainsong melody is stated in canon at the fifth. Picker then, I think, rightly concludes that "Josquin's composition served as a model for a motet on his death."³

As mentioned above, the Piacenza partbooks preserve the anonymous lament on Josquin fragmentarily. Three of the seven voices are missing. The motet's last passage, however, can, as Picker has shown, easily be transcribed in seven parts. Due to the circumstance that each of the three surviving voices divides into two, and the canon voice continues to be the *comes* of the *dux* that is lost, seven parts result from the three partbooks. The passage displays the prayer "requiescat" three times as *pes ascendens*, in syllabic declamation, ending almost motionless with the words "in pace". One can hardly imagine that still more voices – Picker suggests as many as eight⁴ – should be added to these seven. Taking into account that the seven voices of

the prayer for absolution were probably intended as a symbol of mourning⁵ and that from a rhetorical point of view the *peroratio* in its present form is highly effective, another argument may be considered to explain the division of the voices in the extant partbooks. Must we not suppose that there was simply not enough room left for the final passage in the partbooks for the higher voices? As the final passage reads now, its compass is from F to a'; the harmonic and contrapuntal progress is nowhere defective.

Whereas the Piacenza *Absolve* explicitly mentions Josquin's name, the one in Toledo contains the letter 'N' (from *nomen*), reserving three notes for a name in the genitive with the accent on the second syllable. This led Helmuth Osthoff to speculate that Josquin might have written the prayer for Philip the Fair, who died on September 25, 1506, at Burgos.⁶ Jeremy Noble, on the other hand, has suggested that Josquin may have prepared the motet for his own obsequies.⁷ That Josquin set the text of *Absolve* merely to be used in the regular liturgy for the dead and without having a particular person in mind, seems less obvious from both the liturgical function of the prayer (see p. 17) and the source, which is rather late and therefore makes a second use of the motet more than probable. As has been indicated in the title of the present contribution, I will try to find some arguments which point to Jacob Obrecht as the person to whom Josquin has been paying a tribute while composing his *Absolve*. To this end I shall discuss some arguments and assess the results of my analysis of the facts.

First of all, I shall deal with the nominees of Osthoff and Noble. At the occasion of the meeting of Philip the Fair and Louis XII at Blois in 1501, the future king of Castile is reported to have been won over to the idea that Josquin should accompany him on his trip to Spain.⁸ There is, however, no evidence that Josquin indeed followed Philip since his name is not mentioned in the 80 extant chapel registers from 1502-6.⁹ Osthoff's argument that a more personal relationship between Philip and Josquin could perhaps be deduced from the re-dedication of his Hercules-Mass to the king¹⁰ – this Mass was incorporated in the Brussel MS 9126 as *Missa Philippus rex Castilie* –, is weakened by the circumstance that the same Mass occurs in Jena MS 3 with the title *Fridericus dux Saxonie*. These re-dedications, thus, have probably been made by the scribe, whether or not at the request of the person who commissioned the choirbook, we cannot be sure. It seems further incongruous with our ideas as to Josquin's conception of creating music: The well-known symbolic message of his ostinato theme *re ut re ut re fa mi re* would be totally lost after any change of the Mass title.¹¹ If Osthoff is right in pointing out the possibility that Josquin's *Absolve* could have been performed at a ceremony for Philip in Brussels or Malines,¹² seems questionable: It lasted more than six months before Philip's sister Marguerite of Austria arrived in the Netherlands to assume the leadership of government.¹³ And contrary to the seven-part lament *Proh dolor*, which she commissioned as a prayer motet after her father Maximilian I had died in 1519,¹⁴ the motet *Absolve, quaesumus*,

domine is not included in her personal chanson album Brussels 228. Instead, MS 228 contains the anonymous lament *Si je souspire* (No. 50), which text, according to Picker, was written by Marguerite herself and clearly points to Philip in the Latin Tenor: "Doleo super te, frater mi Philippe, rex optime, nec est qui me consoletur." (I am weeping for you, my brother Philip, greatest king, not one consoles me.) The argument, finally, that Josquin's *Absolve* is only preserved in a Spanish source need not be indicative of a relation with Philip. The fact that its twin only survives in Piacenza, which is far from Condé-sur-l'Escaut, and that La Rue's motet *Delicta juventutis*, which is an elegy on Philip the Fair and which was certainly composed at Burgos, survives only in Rome MS Palatini 1976-1979 and in RISM 1538³, shows that source tradition in this case proves nothing at all.

It seems, then, that Noble's suggestion merits more attention. No one less than Dufay, who set the antiphon *Ave regina celorum*¹⁵ for four voices, to be sung at his deathbed, could have been Josquin's forerunner in this respect. The expressive style of Dufay's late compositions finds in this antiphon its final perfection. As is the case with Philip (the Fair), also Josquin's name, if used in the genitive, fits well to the three-note motif. But the question arises as to whether the quality of the music justifies Noble's suggestion. Although there appears to be no longer reason to cast doubts on the authorship of the Toledo *Absolve*,¹⁶ the motet certainly does not display the high quality of e.g. Josquin's self-portrait *Illibata dei virgo* or his musical testament, the linked *Pater noster – Ave Maria*. The latter motet-pair was chosen by Josquin to be sung after his death in front of his house during all general processions.¹⁷ It is hardly conceivable that Josquin would not have exacted more from his creative power for a work intended to be performed during his own obsequies. A liturgical argument which makes Noble's suggestion unlikely will be dealt with below.

If neither Philip the Fair or Josquin himself are nominees for the letter 'N', who else is eligible? To answer this question, we must first try to find out if Josquin composed his *Absolve* at the request of some official or of his own accord. Although the composition of a *nenia* or a liturgical prayer for remission of the sins of the dead may have been a tradition in the Low Countries in the 15th and 16th centuries, not many of them have survived. In the case a person of high rank dying, he or she would normally be commemorated in a specially written text. So we find the name of Queen Anne of Brittany in Mouton's and Festa's settings of *Quis dabit oculis nostris fontem lacrimarum*; that of Philip the Fair in the anonymous motet-chanson *Si je souspire* (see above); Maximilian was honored in *Proh dolor*, which by some scholars has been attributed to Josquin;¹⁸ Lorenzo de' Medici in Isaac's setting of Poliziano's *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam*.¹⁹ But poets and composers also honored their fellow-artists in occasional verses or music that recalled the merits of the deceased and prayed for their salvation. This series contains Andrieu's and Deschamps' *Armes, amours / O flours de flours* for Machaut; Dufay's *En triumpnant de cruel Deuil* and Ockeghem's *Mort tu as navré* for Binchois; Josquin's and Molinet's *Déploration de*

*Jehan. Okeghem; etc.*²⁰ As to the question put above, I believe it seems more obvious to place the first group of compositions in the category of ‘commissioned’ music than the second one. It is hard to prove that settings of texts drawn from the liturgy for the dead, in which no names are mentioned, were made as a tribute to a particular person. Whereas there are good reasons for believing Richafort’s Requiem Mass to have been composed in memory of Josquin,²¹ those of Ockeghem, Brumel and Clemens have, as far as I know, never been claimed. For Josquin’s five-part psalm *De profundis clamavi*, sung in the office for the dead, Jeremy Noble lists no less than four nominees.²² Since the text of *Absolve, quaesumus, domine* is not newly written but drawn from the liturgy for the dead, I am inclined to look for its possible principal rather in clerical than laic circles. The circumstance, however, that the date of composition of *Absolve* cannot be fixed precisely and that Josquin’s whereabouts and activities after he left the Este court in Ferrara in 1504 are still unclear interferes with any further investigation of the question put above. It thus seems inescapable that for lack of external evidence the search for a nominee can only start from the composition itself.

The text *Absolve, quaesumus, domine* forms part of the so-called *Absolutio*. The Absolution (Fr. *Absoute*) is a ceremony which is composed of prayers for the dead, accompanied by sprinklings of holy water and burning of incense, and is performed either on the day of the funeral in the presence of the dead or on a different day if sung in memory of the deceased.²³ In the first event, the ceremony takes place after the office for the dead and the Mass. Before going to the cemetery, several chants are recited: *Non intres...*, *Libera me...*, and the *Pater noster*. What seems important with respect to the function of *Absolve* is that the latter chant may be sung in absence of the deceased.²⁴ The *Absolve* is considered as a true formula of absolution, which is to be found in the earliest plainsong manuscripts. The term *Absolutio* was certainly derived from it.

I mentioned above that Josquin’s six-part setting is based on the plainsong introit “Requiem aeternam”; the chant is quoted until the psalm verse “Te decet...”, and set as a canon at the fifth in Altus secundus and Tenor secundus. The *peroratio* “Requiescat in pace” is free-composed: the cantus firmus voices no longer imitate each other “ad brevem” but at five breves, while also the sequence is reversed. It seems, then, as if this final phrase falls outside the canonic design. As in Josquin’s lament for Ockeghem, all notes are black, symbolizing mourning. Contrary to *Nymphes des bois*, the plainsong melody is not transposed to the Phrygian mode. Different as these two plainsong arrangements are, the free *perorationes* look very similar. Music examples 1a and 1b present that of *Nymphes des bois* and *Absolve* resp. It is this part of the setting which offers the first key to the solution to our problem. Jaap van Benthem found that the final passage of *Nymphes des bois* in Susato’s edition contains exactly 64 notes, and undoubtedly represents the name ‘Ockeghem’ when written down according to the Kabbalistic method of *gematria*.²⁵ Well then, in

Absolve the same text has been set to 97 notes (see Plate 1). This number may represent the name “Jacob Obrecht”.

Example 1a. The final phrase of *Nymphes des bois*

Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce. A-men, a-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce. A-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce. A-men, a-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce. A-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce. A-men, a-men.

Example 1b. The final phrase of *Absolve, quaesumus domine*

Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce, requiescat in pa-ce. A-men, a-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce, requiescat in pa-ce. A-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce, requiescat in pa-ce. A-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce, requiescat in pa-ce. A-men, a-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce. A-men.
 Re-qui-e-scat in pa-ce. A-men.

One could question, of course, why Josquin would have used both the Christian and family names this time. The answer may be that Josquin desired to use the name as Obrecht himself had incorporated it in his well-known *Parce domine* (Petrucci, *Motetti B*, 1503).²⁶ It seems, moreover, likely that Josquin, who was certainly familiar with Jacob Obrecht’s lament for his father, the musician Willem (see below, p. 20), may have tried to exclude any ambiguity in this case.

If the 97 notes indeed stand for ‘Jacob Obrecht’, we must ask why Josquin should have written a tribute to his younger colleague. Up to now, musicologists gave more attention to the personal relations between Ockeghem and Josquin than those between Obrecht and Josquin. It must, however, be remembered that both composers served at the Este court in Ferrara, and several circumstances allow us to pose the

following working-hypothesis: Although Josquin and Obrecht may not have known each other personally, the extent to which they knew each other's music is such that one cannot exclude the possibility of a prayer motet written by Josquin after Obrecht had died. A short survey of the data seems useful.

During the last two years of Ercole's patronage in Ferrara, both composers had been active at his court as chapel master. According to Lewis Lockwood, "Josquin's departure from Ferrara could have been a purely prudent gesture. Chroniclers and letter writers tell us that in July 1503 plague broke out at Ferrara and lasted throughout the summer and autumn. By September, Ercole and his entire court were ensconced at Comacchio, on the coast; two-thirds of the citizens of Ferrara had fled the city, where many lay dying. Correspondence about the plague between Ercole Strozzi and the Duke was carried on until January 1504. After Josquin's departure, his place was taken by Jacob Obrecht, who in turn fell victim to the plague" sometime before 30 August 1505.²⁷ The duke died on January 25, 1505. Lockwood's fine monograph *Music in Renaissance Ferrara 1400-1505* reveals in detail how strongly Ercole exerted himself to recruit what he considered to be the two greatest composers of his time. Already in 1487, during Obrecht's first visit to Ferrara, he tried vigorously to procure benefices for the composer from Rome.²⁸ And although the earliest record that indicates a personal connection between Ercole and Josquin is from 1501, Lockwood claims that a mutual relationship had been established as early as the 1470s.²⁹ It should therefore not come as a surprise to find that the compilation of the large MS α M.1.2 of the Estense Library (Modena F), containing Masses by Obrecht, Josquin, and Ockeghem, probably has its background in the successive service of Josquin and Obrecht. "It contains, in order, six Masses by Obrecht, then two by Josquin, another by Obrecht, and finally the Mass by Ockeghem on 'Ecce ancilla domini', the antiphon that figured prominently in Ercole's printed *Corona* of 1496. Furthermore, the two Josquin Masses are deliberately selected so as to make the most of a comparison with those of Obrecht; the sequence, in the later part of the MS, is:

Obrecht	<i>Missa Fortuna desperata</i>
Josquin	<i>Missa Fortuna desperata</i>
Josquin	<i>Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales</i>
Obrecht	<i>Missa L'homme armé</i>
Ockeghem	<i>Missa Ecce ancilla Domini.</i> ³⁰

Lockwood supposes that the predominance of Obrecht's works allows us to consider Modena F as a commemorative manuscript for the composer.³¹

Apart from the *L'homme armé* song and Busnois's *Fortuna desperata*, both Obrecht and Josquin based a Mass upon Martini's (?) chanson *Malheur me bat* and perhaps also on Morton's *N'auray je jamais*.³² Obrecht further wrote a parody Mass on Josquin's *Adieu mes amours*, and his fragmentary *Missa Scaramella* may also have been written

after Josquin's song of the same name. If the opening of the Credo in Obrecht's *Missa De tous biens playne* refers to that of Josquin's instrumental arrangement of the same song, or vice versa, is hard to tell. It seems obvious that Obrecht owed much to the ten year older Josquin. Although a broad comparison of the composition techniques of both masters has not yet been established,³³ no other composer of his generation appears to have 'followed' Josquin to a greater extent in the ingenious treatment of the *cantus prius factus* and in the use of ostinato or sequential motifs.

I will now deal with the question of whether Josquin may possibly have made use of material borrowed from a work by Obrecht. Laments for Ockeghem and Josquin refer almost without exception to a composition of the honored colleague. In the *Déploration de Jehan. Okeghem*, not only the absence of clefs points to Ockeghem's *Missa Cuiusvis toni*, Josquin also paraphrases the opening motif. And possibly in imitation of Obrecht, who wrote a lamentation motet based on a Phrygian transposition of the plainsong Introit upon the death of his father Willem Obrecht, a trumpeter, in 1488,³⁴ Josquin employs the *cantus firmus* a semitone lower. The same exceptional transposition is to be found in Gombert's *Monodia* "Musae Iovis" for Josquin. This time, the Lydian chant "Circumdede- runt me gemitus mortis, dolores inferni circumdede- runt me" (The sighing of the dead surrounds me, the pain of hell encloses me) is set in the Phrygian mode, although Josquin had used it in his chanson *Nymphes, nappés* in its original melodic form. Clearly, in both cases the transposition to Phrygian is meant to symbolize the protest against the death of the composer.³⁵ Gombert also quotes the opening motif from *Nymphes des bois*. Avidius' epitaph *Musae Iovis*, set by Gombert, served likewise as text for the lament upon Josquin's death by Benedictus Appenzeller. The latter may have borrowed his opening motif from Josquin's motet *Domine, exaudi orationem meam*, a psalm from the office of *All Soul's Day* (November 2). It is indeed surprising that the initial motif from Josquin's *Domine, exaudi orationem meam* also recurs in Verdelot's(?) *Tribulatio et angustia*

Example 2.

Ab- sol- ve, quae- su- mus, do- mi- ne,

invenerunt me. The text of this short motet is composed of two psalm fragments, Ps. 118:143 and Ps. 114:3-4, and seems unsuited to be performed in a liturgical context. But it is a testimony of the prayer sent to God by man in his darkest hour. May we not speculate, then, that this piece may have been ascribed, erroneously, to Josquin in some later German sources, as a result of the possibility that Verdelot set the psalm verses as a tribute to this master?³⁶

Absolve, quae sumus, domine starts in all voices, except those which state the *Requiem* chant, with the motif presented in Example 2.

Myroslaw Antonowycz has shown that the sequence of two rising fourths was favorite with Josquin.³⁷ *Absolve*, however, is his sole composition which has this motif right at the beginning and in full imitation. As head-motif it occurs only once with Obrecht. And the surprising thing is that he used it in his *Missa Fortuna desperata* at the opening of the Credo, see Example 3.

Earlier we saw that both Josquin's and Obrecht's *Fortuna Masses* were incorporated into the Estense MS ∞ M.1.2., which was compiled in commemoration of the latter. A long quotation in Obrecht's *Osanna* from the *Agnus II* by Josquin establishes not only a relationship between the two *Masses*,³⁸ but reveals once more Obrecht's reverence for Josquin.

We shall probably never know when and where the news of Obrecht's death reached Josquin. But the aging master must have been shocked by it. While having prudently left Ferrara in 1504 because of the increasing plague, his nearest colleague had fallen victim of it! For an artist as familiar with humanist thinking in Italy as he himself, Josquin cannot have considered Obrecht's fate but as a consequence of bad fortune. At the same time, however, from his Christian conviction he realised that none other than God could save the soul of his companion. If this indeed has been the conception from which Josquin's tribute originated, the choice of the opening

Example 3.

The image displays a musical score for Example 3, consisting of two systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line (soprano and tenor parts) and a basso continuo line. The lyrics are in Latin and are written below the vocal staves. The first system covers measures 5 through 9, and the second system covers measures 10 through 14. The lyrics are: "Pa- trem o- mni- po- ten- tem, fa- cto- rem ce- li et tem, fa- cto- rem ce-".

motif for his prayer motet should be interpreted as follows: The *Pater omnipotens* quoted represents the “almighty Father”, who is invoked to help Jacob Obrecht, the musician that was struck by *Fortuna desperata*, the ill-fated goddess, whose malicious policy is described properly in the song that served as model for the Mass. The idea of God’s intervention in the action of Fortune is testified by the arts of the time. A mid-15th-century tapestry from the Low Countries, now in Toledo, represents the Celestial Sphere, the Astrolabes and the Signs of the Zodiac, and illustrates how God the Father acts as Supreme Power while Fortune is turning her wheel³⁹ (see Plate 2).

One can question, of course, why Josquin did not write a more personal prayer for Obrecht, as he did for Ockeghem, if he had desired to pay a tribute to him at all. The same objection, then, should be made in the case of Verdelot. The latter composed a tribute for Obrecht, taking as text the Introit *Recordare domine* from the *Missa pro vitanda mortalitate* and using the Tenor part from his *Parce domine* (see p. 18) as cantus firmus.⁴⁰ In Attaignant’s edition of 1534, Verdelot’s motet bears the superscript “contra pestem”. Finally, we should not exclude the possibility that *Absolve, quaesumus, domine* may have been commissioned by one of the church officials in Bergen op Zoom, Antwerp or Bruges. Especially the chapter of St Donatian in Bruges showed more than once its high respect for the greatest

musician that ever served their church.⁴¹ A decision to have sung an *Absolve*, set by Josquin, during an *absoute* in commemoration of Obrecht, would have been the most appropriate farewell one can think of.

1. For a survey of the sources, see afl. 1, pp. VII-VIII.
2. *Josquiniana in some Manuscripts at Piacenza*, in Josquin des Prez, ed. by E. E. Lowinsky (London 1976), pp. 247-60.
3. *Op.cit.*, p. 258.
4. *Ibidem*.
5. Cf. W. Elders, *Studien zur Symbolik in der Musik der alten Niederländer* (Bilthoven 1968), especially pp. 104- 5.
6. H. Osthoff, *Josquin Desprez*, Vol. 2 (Tutzing 1965), p. 59.
7. J. Noble, *Josquin Desprez*, in NGD 9, p. 717.
8. Cf. Osthoff, *op.cit.*, Vol. 1 (Tutzing 1962), p. 51.
9. Cf. Noble, *op.cit.*, p. 715.
10. Cf. *op.cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 61.
11. Cf. W. Elders, *op.cit.*, p. 79.
12. Cf. *op.cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 59.
13. I. de Jongh, *De Hertogin. Margaretha van Oostenrijk, Hertogin van Savoie, 1480-1530* (Amsterdam 1981), p. 472.
14. Cf. M. Picker, *The Chanson Albums of Marguerite of Austria* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1965), pp. 89-91.
15. Dufay, *Opera Omnia*, ed. by H. Bessler, Vol. 5, No. 51.
16. Cf. M. Picker, in Josquin des Prez, ed. by E. E. Lowinsky (London 1976), p. 258.
17. Cf. H. Kellman, *Josquin and the Courts of the Netherlands and France: The Evidence of the Sources*, in Josquin des Prez, ed. by E. E. Lowinsky (London 1976), p. 208.
18. See Picker, *The Chanson Albums*, p. 90; Elders, *op.cit.*, pp. 22-4.
19. Further examples are: Crecquillon's *Cur, Fernande, pater* for Elizabeth of Polen, and the anonymous *nenia O mater nostra, felix Regina Anna* for Anne of Hungary (cf. A. Dunning, *Die Staatsmotette 1480-1555* (Utrecht 1970), p. 224).
20. More laments on composers have been dealt with in W. Elders, *Death and Immortality in the Music of the Low Countries*, in *Holland Festival Oude Muziek Utrecht: Programmaboek* 1986, pp. 15-20.
21. J. Milsom, 'Circumdedertunt': *A Favourite Cantus Firmus of Josquin's?*, in *Soundings* 9 (1982), pp. 2-10.
22. Cf. *op.cit.*, p. 715.
23. Cf. F. Cabrol, *Absoute*, in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, 1 (Paris 1907), c. 200.
24. Cf. *Ibidem*, c. 201.
25. J. van Benthem, *Struktur, Zahl und Symbol in den Kompositionen von Johannes Ockeghem*; paper at the Round Table "Nombre, Symbol, Musique", Bydgoszcz 1982, published in a supplement to *Musica Antiqua* VI, *Acta Scientifica* 1982, p. 4. Also in the Kyrie of his *Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales* Josquin quotes the name 'Ockeghem' in the number of 64 cantus firmus-notes; cf. D. Heikamp, *Zur Struktur der Messe 'L'omme armé super voces musicales' von Josquin Desprez*, in *Mf* 19 (1966), p. 132.

26. Cf. K. Vellekoop, *Zusammenhänge zwischen Text und Zahl in der Kompositionsart Jacob Obrechts. Analyse der Motette 'Parce Domine'*, in TVNM 20 (1967), pp. 106ss.
27. *Music in Renaissance Ferrara 1400-1505* (Oxford 1984), pp. 207-9.
28. Cf. *op.cit.*, p. 157.
29. *Op.cit.*, pp. 157 and 202.
30. *Op.cit.*, p. 208.
31. *Op.cit.*, p. 227.
32. If the anonymous *Missa N'aray-je jamais* (BerlS 40021) is indeed by Jacob Obrecht; cf. M. Just, *Der Mensuralkodex Mus. Ms. 40021 der Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin* (Tutzing 1975), Vol. 1, pp. 297-338. The Mass will be published in Vol. 14 of the NOE.
33. First attempts have been made by O. Gombosi, *Jacob Obrecht. Eine stilkritische Studie* (Leipzig 1925), and M. Antonowycz, *Renaissance-Tendenzen in den 'Fortuna-desperata'-Messen von Josquin und Obrecht*, in Mf 9 (1956), pp. 1-26.
34. A. Smijers, *Twee onbekende moteteksten van Jacob Hobrecht*, in TVNM 16 (1940), p. 134.
35. In an anonymous 16th-century treatise on music theory originating from Ghent, the character of the modes is related to the content of the text of the chant in question. By reason of the ethos attributed to it from of old, the Phrygian mode appears to be badly suited to liturgical texts. In imitation of Johannes van Afflighem (c1100) the author describes this modus as "harsh and inciting to wrath and conflict"; cf. NGD 12, p. 398.
36. This could also be the case with the attribution to Josquin of Richafort's Requiem Mass in Leyden MS 1440. If *Tribulatio* indeed was composed as a mourning prayer for Josquin, the motet's presumed earliest source, London 8 G vii, should then have the year 1521 as a *terminus post quem*; cf. Kellman, *op.cit.*, p. 212.
37. Cf. *Zur Autorschaftsfrage der Motetten 'Absolve, quaesumus, Domine' und 'Inter natos mulierum'*, in TVNM 20 (1967), pp. 155-8.
38. Cf. B. Hudson in his edition of the Mass, NOE, Vol. 4, p. XXXIII.
39. That the idea of God, guiding Fortune was well known in the 15th century goes also from an engraving by the Master of 1464, showing the Wheel of Fortune and the Tree of Life; cf. A. Doren, *Fortuna im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance*, in *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg 1922/23* (Leipzig 1924), Vol. 1, plate 5.
40. Cf. N. Böker-Heil, *Die Motetten von Philippe Verdelot* (Ph. D. diss., Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main 1967), p. 93.
41. Cf. R. Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges* (Oxford 1985), pp. 39-40.

The image displays two pages of a musical manuscript, likely a vocal score, featuring Latin lyrics and musical notation. The notation is written on five-line staves with square neumes. The lyrics are in Latin, and the music is arranged in systems. The text on the left page includes: "op. recitatus resp. rē resp.", "rē per dōstū cōsūmū", "amēn.", "Requiescāt in pace", "lu ce at", "Requiescāt in pace", "amēn.", "fuitatus recitatus resp. rē per", "dōstū cōsūmū piam amēn.", "Requiescāt in pace a mēn.". The text on the right page includes: "tano recitatus resp. rē per", "dōstū cōsūmū cōmūmū nōstrū amēn.", "amēn.", "Requiescāt in pace", "lu ce at", "Requiescāt in pace", "amēn.", "tano resp. rē per dōstū", "amēn.", "Requiescāt in pace". The manuscript is written in a historical style, with decorative initials and a clear layout of staves and lyrics.

Plate 1. Josquin des Prez, *Absolve, quaesumus, domine* (Toledo, Biblioteca Capítular de la Catedral Metropolitana, MS B.21, ff.120'-121).



Plate 2. The Tapestry of the Celestial Sphere, executed in the Low Countries, c1450 (Toledo, Museum of Santa Cruz; property of Toledo Cathedral).