

## IN SEARCH OF SOURCES IN JACOBUS HANDL'S *OPUS MUSICUM* THE "INSTRUCTIO AD MUSICOS" AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN RELATION TO THE COMPOSER'S PLAN

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**Izleček:** *Jacobus Handl - Gallus v besedilu »Instructio ad musicos« z začetka tretjega zvezka zbirke Opus musicum omenja pet svojih motetov z namenom, da pojasni svoj načrt. Natančen pregled besedil teh motetov razodeva, da teksti sami niso popolnoma v skladu z liturgično redakcijo, kar napeljuje k podmeni, da imamo opravka s priredbami, ki nosijo skladateljev osebni pečat. Zdi se, da je vsebina zbirke Opus musicum precej manj homogena, kot se kaže v razporeditvi po liturgičnem koledarju.*

**Glavne besede:** *Opus musicum, Jacobus Handl - Gallus, motet, liturgični koledar*

**Abstract:** *Jacobus Handl-Gallus mentions five of his own motets in the "Instructio ad musicos" placed at the beginning of Opus musicum, volume 3, in order to explain what his plan was. A close examination of these motets reveals that the texts themselves do not follow a strict liturgical prescription, which leads to the conclusion that we actually have here settings bearing the personal stamp of the composer. These examples provide useful clues leading one to reconsider the sources for the entire collection. The contents of the Opus musicum may indeed prove far less homogeneous than one might initially infer from their impeccable distribution according to the liturgical calendar.*

**Keywords:** *Opus musicum, Jacobus Handl-Gallus, motet, liturgical calendar*

Texts written by Jacobus Handl-Gallus are not very numerous<sup>1</sup> and mostly comprise forewords introducing his music prints published between 1580 and 1591.<sup>2</sup> If these texts abound

<sup>1</sup> The latest and most accurate monograph devoted to the composer and the sources of his music is Motnik, *Jacob Handl-Gallus*.

<sup>2</sup> These texts have been published separately in a volume by Edo Škulj specially devoted to Gallus's forewords (*Gallusovi predgovori*), where they are presented together with a Slovenian translation. Access to the original texts is now facilitated by digital copies of the prints, notably the *Opus Musicum* discussed in the present article, accessible online via scans made by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. These are consultable at pages: <https://stimbuecher.digitale-sammlungen.de/view?id=bsb00092000> (*Opus Musicum*, vol. 1), <https://stimbuecher.digitale-sammlungen.de/view?id=bsb00092001> (*Opus Musicum*, vol. 2), <https://stimbuecher.digitale-sammlungen.de/view?id=bsb00092002> (*Opus Musicum*, vol. 3), <https://stimbuecher.digitale-sammlungen.de/view?id=bsb00089119> (*Opus Musicum*, vol. 4).

in rhetorical *loci* common to the genre of the introductory epistle in the Renaissance,<sup>3</sup> such is not the case with the “*Instructio ad musicos*” (Instruction to musicians) which complements the foreword to volume 3 of the *Opus musicum* (Prague, 1586–1591), the composer’s most ambitious achievement.<sup>4</sup> Within this vast collection of 374 motets in four books, ordered according to the liturgical calendar, the “*Instructio ad musicos*” appears unique in that it deals with specific matters concerning invention and performance. Moreover, it provides us with the only words written by the composer about his own works. Two important points are made in this text. These concern, first, the possible participation of instruments in motets employing a large number of parts and, second, the choice of texts used in the motets, as well as the ordering of these motets within the liturgical calendar. Handl clarifies for the reader that the first point is his considered response to a complaint (*querela*) that he had received about the difficulty of performing the many motets of the collection calling for a large number of parts. With his second point he aims to shed light on the general scheme he has followed in the collection as a whole and, more specifically, on the grouping of the pieces according to the liturgical calendar.

Although this document has already received a certain amount of critical attention, the secondary literature seems to have focused almost exclusively on the participation of instruments, the subject of the first point.<sup>5</sup> If available voices are not sufficient in number, then instruments may be used in their place, says Gallus in discussion of this first point; he mentions how organ (*organo*) or trumpets (*tibicines*) may be considered as possible substitutes for voices where necessary. The resulting mixture of voices and instruments, the composer adds, serves to recreate the concerts of the ancient Levites, in which, according to Solomon, “trumpets, cymbals, kitharas and harps, and instruments of different kinds were playing together”.<sup>6</sup> Remarks made by Handl on the choice and distribution of the motets relate to the second point discussed in this text, which does not seem, unlike the first one, to have elicited much comment.<sup>7</sup> It is the purpose of the present article to draw attention to the second point made in the “*Instructio*”, for it seems to provide us with interesting pointers to the choice of motet texts in the *Opus musicum*, as well as to the conception of the collection as a whole, an element which up till now has rarely been studied. The passage in question reads as follows:

<sup>3</sup> The common expressions found in these forewords have been examined in detail by Paweł Gancarczyk in his monograph on music and printing. See Gancarczyk, *La musique et la révolution de l'imprimerie*, 98–105.

<sup>4</sup> A scan, made by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, of the original edition of the “*Instructio*” is consultable at the page [http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/bsb00092002/image\\_165](http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/bsb00092002/image_165).

<sup>5</sup> Especially in Mantuani, “*Einleitung*”, xv, where this text is taken as evidence that the reworking of Handl’s motets to include instrumental parts, such as the ones found in Breslau (Wrocław) manuscript copies, was probably undertaken under the composer’s personal supervision, if not directly by himself. See also Škulj, “*Liturgična vsebina Opus Musicum*”, 56, and Motnik, *Jacob Handl-Gallus*, 197–200.

<sup>6</sup> “[...] et tubis, et voce, et cimbalis, et citharis, et diversi generis Musicorum concinebant”. See Škulj, *Gallusovi predgovori*, 79n146, which mentions another allusion made by Gallus to this Biblical reference (2 Chronicles 5,12–13) in the foreword of his first book of Masses (1580).

<sup>7</sup> Cvetko (*Jacobus Händl Gallus vocatus Carniolanus*, 95) mentions this second point, but only in a paraphrastic way. Škulj (“*Liturgična vsebina*”) does not refer to this part of the text.

Furthermore, since the Church sings *Media vita in morte sumus* on the Saturday preceding Septuagesima, the Alleluia being omitted, I have not departed from the path of the Church for this canticle either, and have inserted, in conformity with this liturgical season, the motets *Domine quando veneris*, *Scio quod Redemptor*, *Patres qui dormitis* and *Audi tellus*, as well as others of similar content. In the same section, where the subject was of a penitential nature, I have inserted those pieces that are sung by the Church in autumn, such as the excerpts from the Book of Judith, *Tribulationes civitatum audivimus*, *Nos alium Deum nescimus* and many others of the same kind, which can easily be located. I did not use anything coming from the Book of Wisdom outside the Advent season, since it is during Advent that the Church celebrates the day of Wisdom. Because some of these compositions are sung also on other liturgical occasions, they are necessarily located in this section. I will say nothing about the psalms, for the Church uses them every day, making it impossible for me to assign them to any season in particular. This is enough about my project and the complaint<sup>8</sup> that was sent to me.<sup>9</sup>

The motet titles mentioned by Gallus in this section are not difficult to associate with liturgical sources:<sup>10</sup>

- Both *Domine quando veneris* and *Scio quod Redemptor* are responsories for Matins in the *Officium defunctorum* sung on 2 November, an occasion that similarly accommodates the *cantio* (song) *Audi tellus*.
- *Tribulationes civitatum* and *Nos alium Deum* are similarly responsories for Matins taken from the Book of Judith, exactly as stated by the composer and as they are classified in liturgical books of the time.
- *Patres qui dormitis* alone seems to constitute a special case, which is discussed later in this article.

If there is no apparent difficulty in confirming the liturgical associations established by the composer, the reason why Gallus should have brought these particular titles to attention in order to introduce the guidelines for the publication appears somewhat more

<sup>8</sup> This term refers to the first point; see above, p. 112.

<sup>9</sup> Original text: “Praeterea cūm Ecclesia Sabbatho ante Septuagesimam, omisso Alleluia, canat, *Media vita in morte sumus* ; ego neque in isto cantico Ecclesiae vestigia reliqui, et, quod tempus ipsum postulabat, haec muteta interserui, *Domine quando veneris* ; *Scio quod redemptor* : *Patres qui dormitis* ; et, *Audi tellus* ; Cum aliis horum similibus. Adhuc eidem parti, siquidem de poenitentia agit, interposui ea, quae Ecclesia in Autumno canit ; ut, ex libro Iudith, *Tribulationes civitatum audivimus* ; *Nos alium Deum nescimus praeter Dominum* ; et plura his non dissimilia ; quae inde non difficulter peti possunt. De libro sapientiae nihil extra Adventum posui ; quod in Adventu sapientiae dies festus ab Ecclesia celebretur. Quare, quae ex illis etiam aliis anni temporibus canuntur, hinc accersenda sunt. De Psalmis nihil dico ; nam, ut eos Ecclesia omnibus festis diebus adhibet, ita, ubi opportuni fuerunt, ab iisdem nullo unquam tempore abhorruī. Sed de ratione mea satis, etiam de querela”. Handl, *Opus musicum*, vol. 3, fol. [3v].

<sup>10</sup> Many different liturgical sources for these examples can be located easily using the Cantus database (<http://cantus.uwaterloo.ca/search>), where they are unambiguously placed exactly at the same time during the liturgical year.

puzzling. To state the matter simply: why would Gallus feel the necessity to inform us about precisely these motets and their position within the grand scheme of the *Opus musicum*? Can we be certain of having grasped the real debate at issue underlying these apparently straightforward assertions by Gallus?

### An Obvious Purpose: Restating Consistency

The most obvious explanation for the mention of these five motets is the question of their position within the liturgical calendar. This is best understood when considering the nature of the entire *Opus musicum*, which assembles in four volumes a total of 374 motets, ordered according to the calendar commonly observed in liturgical books. Volumes 1–3 follow the divisions of the *Temporale* and advance through successive seasons of the liturgical year: Advent – Christmas – Epiphany – Lent (volume 1), Holy Week – Easter – Whitsun (volume 2), Corpus Christi – Dedication – *Tempus per annum* up to Advent (volume 3). Volume 4, in contrast, observes the divisions of the *Sanctorale*, proceeding through the festivals and commemorations of the saints present in the calendar. It consists of motets for Marian feasts, the feasts of the respective Commons of Apostles, Martyrs and Virgins and feasts of individual saints.

Leaving aside the exceptionally large number of pieces contained within this general scheme, one may note that such a form of organisation was no real novelty for the time, especially in Central Europe. Gallus and the Prague printer Jiří Nigrin were indeed following an already well-established model used for large motet anthologies that for the most part were printed in, but not limited to, Nuremberg. A careful perusal of other motet collections ordered according to a similar scheme reveals that two main types of publication predominated among those that adhered to the church calendar:

1) Collections of polyphonic settings of Mass Propers, or of Propers for specific feasts, where the motets display clearly the plainchant melodies used as *cantus firmi* in the polyphony; these emanate from both Catholic and Lutheran composers. Collections of this kind, initiated by the monumental *Choralis Constantinus* of Heinrich Isaac,<sup>11</sup> continued to be brought out in Nuremberg at the Montanus-Neuber (later, Gerlach) workshop, in publications such as Leonhard Päminger's *Cantiones ecclesiasticae* (1573–1580)<sup>12</sup> and Johannes Knöfel's *Cantus choralis* (1575).<sup>13</sup>

2) Motet anthologies bringing together works by different composers, where liturgical use serves as a means of ordering a large quantity of previously composed music, this time conceived, more often than not, without direct reference to chant melodies. Such is the

<sup>11</sup> Printed between 1550 and 1555 by Hieronymus Formschneider, this collection of Mass Propers, completed by Ludwig Senfl after Isaac's death, arrives at a global total of 375 motets, matching almost exactly the dimensions of the *Opus musicum*. On the *Choralis Constantinus* and the question of polyphonic Mass Propers, see Burn and Gasch, *Heinrich Isaac and Polyphony for the Proper of the Mass*.

<sup>12</sup> On the chant-based compositions of Päminger, see Burn, "Analysing Sixteenth-Century Chant-Based Polyphony", 144–161.

<sup>13</sup> On Knöfel's Propers, see Leitmeir, "Lutheran Propers for Wrocław/Breslau", 89–114.

case with the three volumes of *Sacrae cantiones* edited by Friedrich Lindner (1585–1590), where motets by Italian and Flemish masters are assembled and ordered according to the liturgical year for use in German churches.<sup>14</sup>

This is not the right place to reopen the perennial musicological debate over the liturgical use of motets,<sup>15</sup> since one cannot be sure of finding in the *Opus musicum* a sufficient amount of relevant material. Motets composed on the texts of responsories or antiphons without reference to their respective plainchant melodies were in most cases not intended to be performed within the liturgical framework implied by their text alone, but they could be found suitable for paraliturgical performance or be assigned to a season or specific festival similar in mood. Such is precisely the case regarding *Domine quando veneris* and *Scio enim quod Redemptor*, both mentioned by the composer in his “Instructio”.<sup>16</sup> These motets utilise texts of responsories for the *Officium defunctorum* celebrated on 2 November, whereas they are placed in volume 1 of the *Opus musicum* within its Septuagesima section – thus after Epiphany, roughly one month before Lent starts. This implies that their chosen position within the calendar displayed in the *Opus musicum* does not reflect their primary and most obvious liturgical assignation. A similar case is that of *Audi tellus*, likewise mentioned in the “Instructio”. Originating from South Germany, this poetic elaboration of an ancient trope for the *Libera me* enjoyed wide circulation in the Low Countries as well as in Central Europe and was traditionally sung on the vigil of the same day, 2 November (All Souls’ Day).<sup>17</sup> The reason why the composer should have inserted these three motets in the Septuagesima section of the *Opus musicum* calendar, taking as their precedent the antiphon *Media vita*, now becomes clear. *Media vita* was itself originally designed to be sung at the same *Officium defunctorum*, but by tradition was sung also on any penitential occasion within the liturgical calendar.<sup>18</sup> The justification is that of similitude: Gallus tells us in his “Instructio” that since the Church sings during Septuagesima a piece prescribed for All Souls’ Day, he has granted the same kind of latitude to three other texts of similar mood and original liturgical destination: *Audi tellus*, *Scio enim quod Redemptor* and *Domine quando veneris*. In the case of two further motets, *Tribulationes civitatum* and *Nos alium Deum*, the situation turns out to be exactly parallel, except that, since their texts are extracted from the *De Judith historia* office, the latter two motets have a different original location within the liturgical calendar, this time at the end of summer.<sup>19</sup> When one considers these five references in the “Instructio”

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<sup>14</sup> Lindner and Handl not only knew each other but seem to have been in close contact. See Motnik, *Jacob Handl-Gallus*, 108.

<sup>15</sup> A debate active since at least the publication of Oliver Strunk’s article “Some Motet-Types of the 16th Century”.

<sup>16</sup> Significantly, *Scio enim quod Redemptor* is cited by Gallus in the “Instructio” as *Scio quod Redemptor* – a detail that is probably not unintentional. See below, p. 116–117.

<sup>17</sup> On the origin of this text and its many elaborations in late medieval manuscript, see Ciglbauer, “Quoting, Rethinking and Copying”. Classified as a Sequence in liturgical books, the piece is assigned to the liturgy of the *Commemoratio animarum* (originally denoting the commemoration of the souls of deceased brothers or benefactors of ecclesiastical foundations).

<sup>18</sup> See Daniel, *Thesaurus hymnologicus*, 2:329.

<sup>19</sup> Or the beginning of autumn, as stated in the “Instructio”. On Judith responsories, and their liturgical

as a group, their similar nature becomes obvious. Handl probably felt a need to justify his action in placing these motets together within the Septuagesima section of volume 1 of his *Opus musicum*, for ordinarily one might have expected to find them elsewhere in the collection. The fact that these five motets could more logically have been expected to appear in volume 3 rather than in volume 1, is equally telling, since it is precisely at the start of volume 3 that Handl places his “Instructio ad musicos”. Does this mean that the composer anticipated criticism for having “misplaced” these motets? Were these compositions ones especially likely to be sought out by users of the later volume despite having appeared earlier in the collection? Could also the fact that Handl appears to adopt a rather defensive posture in his statement<sup>20</sup> be an acknowledgement that musicians or ecclesiastics had already expressed reservations about the liturgical appropriateness in relation to the calendar of some of the contents of volume 1 of the *Opus musicum*, with its surprisingly large number of pieces related to All Souls and the post-Pentecostal period rather than to Advent and Lent?<sup>21</sup> However, a closer look at the texts of these motets leads us to a slightly different hypothesis, revealing that there is probably another factor in play behind their mention by the composer.

### **Opus in Its Operative Meaning: Poetics of Liturgy in the Making**

If none of the motets mentioned in the “Instructio” appears to conform to its original liturgical placement, none of them seems, either, to refer to an actual liturgical formulation. The simplest and most obvious case is represented by the two *Judith* motets, *Tribulationes civitatum* and *Nos alium Deum nescimus* – two responsories that are presented in an incomplete form, lacking their verse. *Scio enim quod Redemptor* is likewise presented without its verse, but the liturgical incipit (itself an excerpt from Lectio VIII of the *Officium defunctorum*), *Scio quod Redemptor*, appears in a slightly modified version in the motet as *Scio enim quod Redemptor*, which happens to be the original Biblical text found in the Book of Job,<sup>22</sup> as well as that of a responsory for the *Officium defunctorum*. This motet therefore combines the liturgical text of a responsory, shorn of its verse and employing the exact phraseology of the biblical text on which it is based, with (following “Deum”) the final, additional word “Redemptorem”, which this time belongs to the Lectio, not the biblical text. The alternative version of the text was probably well known at the time Handl wrote his motet, since it appears during the Renaissance in numerous versions, including

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position within the calendar, see Helsen, “Great Responsories of the Divine Office”, 10.

<sup>20</sup> As revealed by the expression “ego neque in isto cantico Ecclesiae vestigia reliqui” (Nor for this canticle have I departed from the path of the Church), repeated in paraphrased form for the psalms: “De Psalmis nihil dico; nam, ut eos Ecclesia omnibus festis diebus adhibet, ita, ubi opportuni fuerunt, ab iisdem nullo unquam tempore abhorruī” (I will say nothing of the Psalms, since the Church uses them on any feasts day, I have not departed from them at any time).

<sup>21</sup> The *querela* (complaint) addressed to him in connection with the performance of motets calling for a large number of voices could perhaps have additionally concerned this question of appropriate placement, since the Latin syntax authorizes the “double” reading.

<sup>22</sup> Job 19,25.

two by Lassus.<sup>23</sup> The fact that Gallus cited this very motet in his “Instructio” under one particular version of the title, *Scio quod Redemptor*, whereas he actually set to music a different version, *Scio enim quod Redemptor*, deserves mention, since it adds a pinch of authorial confusion to these minute details.

With the traditional *cantio*, *Audi tellus*, we encounter a further case of a close approximation to the approved liturgical form that falls short of total conformity. It is not so much the accuracy of the text as the choice of text itself that is remarkable here; having as its source a poetic elaboration originating in a South German *lai* that first appeared around 1300.<sup>24</sup> As Jan Ciglbauer has clearly stated in his study of this *lai* and its many reformulations in the late-medieval manuscript tradition, this text is made unique by the list of names it contains. These are taken from Greek and Roman history, but also from mythology and the Old Testament. Versions could differ from one another, depending on the selection of names appearing in this section: “a scribe would often add or take away names, according to his tastes and needs”.<sup>25</sup> The text set to music by Handl, following the opening lines common to all versions of the *lai*, presents the following sequence of names:

Ubi Plato? Ubi Porphyrius? Ubi Tullius aut Vergilius? Ubi Thales? Ubi Empedocles aut egregius Aristoteles? Alexander, ubi rex maximus? Ubi Hector, Troiae fortissimus? Ubi David, rex doctissimus? Ubi Salomon prudentissimus? Ubi Absalom pulcherrimus, cum Helena Paris pulcherrima? Ceciderunt in profundum ut lapides; quis scit, an detur eis requies?<sup>26</sup>

This kind of poetic elaboration seems to anticipate the manner of Renaissance neo-Latin motets<sup>27</sup> and even the *Moralia*, of which Handl himself was to produce a large quantity.<sup>28</sup> Exactly the same text had already been set to music by Lassus,<sup>29</sup> who followed the same series of names. The first edition of this Lassus motet was produced in Venice by Gardane in 1566, but soon afterwards, in 1568, this was reprinted in Nuremberg by the Gerlach workshop. Still later, in 1579, it reappeared from the same press in a new edition

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<sup>23</sup> In his two different musical settings of the Job Lessons, where it forms the *secunda pars* of the *Lectio Pelli meae*. See Lassus, *Sacrae lectiones novem ex propheta Iob*; Lassus, *Lectiones sacrae novem, ex libris Hiob excerptae*.

<sup>24</sup> See Ciglbauer, “Quoting, Rethinking and Copying”, 24.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Free translation by the author of the article: “Where is Plato? Where is Porphyrius? Where are Tullius or Virgilius? Where is Thales? Where are Empedocles or the famous Aristotle? Where is the great king Alexander? Where is Hector, the champion of Troy? Where is David, the most erudite king? Where is the most wise Solomon? Where are the most beautiful Absalom and Paris with his very beautiful Helen? they have fallen into the depths like stones; who knows whether rest will be granted to them?”

<sup>27</sup> See Cœurdevey, *Roland de Lassus*, 136 and 453, where the piece is labelled “neo-Latin”.

<sup>28</sup> Handl, *Harmoniae morales*; Handl, *Moralia*.

<sup>29</sup> Lassus, *Sacrae cantiones*.

by Leonhard Lechner.<sup>30</sup> These two volumes may have been known to Handl, furnishing the textual source for his composition.<sup>31</sup>

In the case of *Domine quando veneris*, the distance between the text and a liturgical context becomes even more patent. The responsory is this time given complete, with the verse placed in immediate succession to the responsory without any intervening pause, therefore not forming a musical *secunda pars*. Such a conception departing from the liturgical structure was common in motet literature of the time. As in most such cases, we do not encounter at the end of the verse the liturgically prescribed repetition of the last words of the responsory. At the point where the repetition of the first lines would have been expected, an added sentence is substituted, forming the actual final section of the motet:

[End of the verse:]

Commissa mea pavesco et ante te erubesco  
Dum veneris iudicare, noli me condemnare.

[With an added sentence at the end, instead of the expected repetition of the responsory:]

sed secundum magnam misericordiam tuam,  
miserere mei Deus.

It is easy to identify in these added two lines the beginning of Psalm 50, presented in inverted order, but it is an interesting fact that Gallus should have insisted so forcefully on this added episode by repeating these lines no fewer than seven times: that is, more frequently than any other section of the motet.<sup>32</sup> These lines, which do not belong to the liturgical text of the responsory, were not set to music in the motets on the same text by contemporaries of Handl, who included Lassus, Palestrina, Vecchi and Rognoni.<sup>33</sup> This means that this motet is a “free” composition using the responsory for All Souls’ Day as its initial basis, but emphasizing the penitential nature of the original text by appending two extra lines and increasing the musical pathos thereby.

In his “Instructio” Gallus mentions by title one further motet, which until now has received hardly any scholarly attention. *Patres qui dormitis* is nowhere to be found in liturgical or paraliturgical sources of the time, and it does not appear elsewhere in the motet literature of the Renaissance. Its text is limited to one sole sentence: “Patres, qui dormitis in Hebron, portas paradisi Eden huic aperite” (Fathers, who sleep in Hebron, open to this person the doors of paradise Eden). This rare text is a Jewish prayer for the dead, of which a first mention in the sixteenth century occurs in the *Symbolum fidei*

<sup>30</sup> Both volumes as *Selectissimae cantiones*, the second being a revision of the first.

<sup>31</sup> Given the links of Gallus’ brother Georgius Handl with the music printing business in Nuremberg, and since many of such other Nuremberg volumes were in his possession, this hypothesis appears more plausible than that of the influence of one of the many polyphonic compositions on this text circulating in manuscript form. On the printed partbooks in the possession of Handl, see Desmet, “Jacobus Handl Gallus’ Inventory”.

<sup>32</sup> See the edition of the piece by Škulj: Handl, *Opus musicum*, 199–201.

<sup>33</sup> Of the twenty-two references given in the Motet Online database developed by Jennifer Thomas at the University of Florida (<http://legacy.arts.ufl.edu/motet/default.asp>), four are sources of the Handl motet and another eight of that by Lassus.



*Judaeorum*, an edition of the Jewish liturgy for the Dead established by Maimonides, which was published in a Latin translation in 1569 by the Parisian Hebraist Gilbert Générard (1535–1597). The fact that this text was also used by Générard in what became his most famous publication, the *Chronographia libri quatuor* (Paris, 1580), can probably explain how it came to be known to Handl, since a German edition brought out in Cologne in 1581 ensured diffusion of the work in Central Europe. This text was later mentioned (but after the publication of the *Opus musicum*) in many accounts of travel to the Holy Land in connection with the city of Hebron, the burial site of the patriarchs.<sup>34</sup> Such a motet would therefore have been suited to an erudite audience, or it may have held a special significance for Handl himself. At all events, it offers a distinctively personal “touch” on the composer’s part within this imposing collection.

A summary of the different cases presented by the six examples mentioned by Handl in his “*Instructio*” leads us to the following conclusions:

- Two motets are responsories displaced from their usual position within the calendar, being transported from the *De Judith historia* office of late summer to the Septuagesima season on the basis of their “penitential” character. Both appear without their verse.
- One motet is a traditional *sequentia* from the late Middle Ages that is especially noteworthy for its lines dealing with Mythology as well as Greek and Roman history. It became widely disseminated in Northern and Central Europe using various different versions of these lines. Handl moves it from its original liturgical context, that of All Souls’ Day, to a different season, Septuagesima.
- Two further settings are responsories for the *Officium defunctorum*, likewise transferred from All Souls’ Day to the Septuagesima season, but this time following the example of the canticle *Media vita*, which has the same liturgical provenance but may also be sung in identical fashion at the start of Septuagesima. One of these two responsories is slightly modified in text; the other is presented in an extended version foreign to the liturgy that is made to end with a quotation from Psalm 50, the words of which are repeated no fewer than seven times.
- One final piece is a setting of a Latin translation of a Jewish prayer for the dead that is not set to music elsewhere and has no identifiable connection to Christian liturgical practice of the time.

What appears striking about these arrangements at all levels is their personal stamp:

- The composer tells us he has himself decided himself to rearrange the calendar position of two responsories following the example of *Media vita*.
- He has decided himself that, in view of their penitential character, the *De Judith historia* responsories can be presented during another season other than their original one, and he has acted similarly for *Audi tellus*, a traditional Central European *cantio*.
- He does not hesitate to modify the text of one responsory, adding an extra two lines at the end and lending them deliberate emphasis in his musical setting.
- And, finally, he chooses in *Patres qui dormitis* a rare text unknown to the liturgical and motet tradition, as if to illustrate in an original way the meaning of a prayer for the dead.

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<sup>34</sup> As, for example, in Zuallart, *Le tresdevot voyage de Jerusalem*.

Such a poetic and personal approach is of course not limited to these five examples. The composer himself tells us in the “Instructio” that he has done the same with many similar examples (“et plura his non dissimilia”). But this is precisely why, having in mind to explain via this “Instructio” what his plan was, the composer seems indeed to reveal, even if unwittingly, that an added and unexpected layer of complexity lies at the core of the whole collection. When one considers the complete contents of the *Opus musicum*, it appears obvious that the free and personal vein displayed by the examples mentioned in the “Instructio”, can be opposed to a different one, expressed through the choice of texts and compositional gestures, that in contrast displays strict adherence to liturgical prescription and to the most recently formulated musical ideals of the Counter-Reformation.<sup>35</sup> Among those ideals, a sober declamatory style and an absence of word-repetition are probably the most immediately perceptible features,<sup>36</sup> to which one may add the fact that many motets within this category strictly observe the liturgical structure of a responsory, sometimes with allusions to plainchant melodies, but most of all via a restatement of the opening verse at the end of the composition.<sup>37</sup> The fact that all the motets mentioned by Gallus in the “Instructio”, with the sole exception of *Audi tellus*, are noteworthy for their richness in word-repetitions is a transparent sign that they are not to be placed within the same group as this more confessionally oriented second category. This latter, sharply contrasted component of the *Opus musicum* contributes towards giving the collection as a whole the character of a multi-level complex, in which a third element is provided by the somewhat more neutral layer of motets based on those “classic” texts most frequently encountered in the common repertory of the Renaissance.<sup>38</sup> Definable neither as motet “classics” nor as compositions housing the most recent expressions of Catholic musical piety, the group of “free” compositions to which the composer refers in the “Instructio” arguably identifies

<sup>35</sup> This group is likewise very important and can readily be linked to the environment in which the composer lived in Moravia, whether in monastic surroundings or in and around the chapel of prince-bishop Stanislav Pavlovský, one of the earliest champions of the Counter-Reformation in Moravia. Among the numerous motets within this category we may name a few that typify the late-Renaissance motet composed in a Catholic context or even point towards the early baroque period: *O sacrum convivium* (vol. 3, nos. 9 and 22), *O salutaris hostia* (vol. 3, no. 23), *Quem vidistis pastores* (vol. 1, no. 28), *Versa est in luctum* (vol. 1, no. 95), *Pueri Hebraeorum* (vol. 2, no. 10), *Duo Seraphim* (vol. 3, no. 1), *Domus mea domus orationis* (vol. 3, no. 36), *Estote fortes in bello* (vol. 4, no. 9) and *Notum fecit Dominus* (vol. 1, no. 49).

<sup>36</sup> In his study of visitation reports mentioning music that concern the Jesuit college in Paris between 1575 and 1590, David Crook presents a significant amount of information regarding this favoured tendency towards sobriety and the avoidance of word-repetition; see Crook, “A Certain Indulgence”, esp. 468. Regarding the insistence on the “pious” nature of motet music performed during the Office or Mass in Jesuit Institutions, see Kennedy, “Jesuits Colleges and Chapels”.

<sup>37</sup> Such motets as *Recessit pastor noster* (vol. 2, no. 12), *Cum rex gloriae* (vol. 2, no. 30), *Maria stabat ad monumentum* (vol. 2, no. 38), *Ascendo ad patrem meum* (vol. 2, no. 41) and *Alleluia Ardens est cor* (vol. 2, no. 42) can be regarded, alongside many others, as clear examples illustrating this category.

<sup>38</sup> With titles such as *Pater noster* (vol. 1, no. 69), *Ave Maria* (vol. 1, no. 70; vol. 4, nos. 39 and 73), *Te Deum laudamus* (vol. 3, nos. 4 and 24), *O admirabile commercium* (vol. 1, no. 33), *Hodie Christus natus est* (vol. 1, no. 46), *Laudate Dominum in sanctis* (vol. 1, no. 31), *Laudate Dominus de caelis* (vol. 1, no. 36) and *Tribus miraculis* (vol. 1, no. 37).

a segment of the *Opus musicum* that we may aptly describe as the composer's "personal museum": that is, those musical creations where the poetics of the genre betray the most obviously personal authorial touch. Other aspects of this "personal museum" will have to be clarified by further research, but we can already be certain that these would include all compositions usable in both Catholic and Lutheran contexts,<sup>39</sup> as well as all settings of textual *unica* assembled from novel juxtapositions of diverse scriptural or liturgical fragments<sup>40</sup> or of texts eschewing any liturgical or even Christian reference, such as the four motets "in echo" *Quid ploras mulier* (vol. 2, no. 55), *Quo mihi crude dolor* (vol. 2, no. 33), *Dum vagus huc ille* (vol. 4, no. 21) and *Nympha refer* (vol. 4, no. 22), where Gallus makes use of the rhetorical device of echo poetry, well represented in late Renaissance and early baroque literature, to set texts not encountered elsewhere.

### **Conclusion: Associating the Composer's Two Points of Explanation Found in the "Instructio"**

If one considers Handl's *Opus musicum* within the dual context of (a) collections organised according to the liturgical calendar – that is, collections of Propers or chant-based motets and (b) anthologies ordering previously composed motets by several composers according to the liturgical calendar, it becomes clear that this masterpiece can be situated exactly mid-way between the two kinds of publication. It shares with the first kind the fact of being the work of a single author, and with the second the fact that the liturgical ordering has been undertaken *a posteriori* as a method of organising already composed material not necessarily intended originally for this purpose. Similar publications can be found at the time. One is the second book of motets by Johann Wanning, a Dutch musician who was the principal cantor of Saint Mary's church in Danzig (Gdańsk) between the late 1560s and 1603. This book, published in Dresden in 1584,<sup>41</sup> employs a liturgical order for the motets that is not founded on plainchants. As close to the *Opus musicum* as this publication may seem at first, it nevertheless differs somewhat from Handl's in that it emanates from solely one, well-defined Lutheran milieu, displaying a remarkable unity of style, in contrast to which the Gallus collection contains motets composed in many different contexts, both liturgical and confessional. Although the *Opus musicum* exhibits

<sup>39</sup> Such as *Veni Redemptor* (vol. 1, no. 17), *Dies est laetitiae* (vol. 1, no. 29), *Gloria laus* (vol. 2, nos. 7 and 11) and *Sancta Trinitas* (vol. 3, no. 6), alongside many other examples. There is sometimes a reference to the chorale melody within the polyphony.

<sup>40</sup> A motet such as *Adjuro vos filiae Jerusalem* (vol. 4, no. 2), would be a good case in point. Here, one encounters a rare mixture of no fewer than ten fragments taken from the Song of Songs (Cant. 5 – 8, 9, 16 and 17 and Cant. 6 – 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9), a diversity that seems unique in the motet literature of the time. Interestingly, a motet with the same incipit, *Adjuro vos filiae Jerusalem*, appears shortly after the previously mentioned one in the same volume (vol. 4, no. 7). This has a similarly long text, but this time one formed by a continuously running biblical extract (Cant. 2 – 7 to 14).

<sup>41</sup> Wanning, *Sententiae insigniores ex evangeliiis dominicalibus excerptae* (Most elevated sentences taken from the Sunday Gospels).

an impeccable ordering of the motets according to the liturgical seasons, it has to be borne in mind that the provenance and context of composition of these motets is not uniform, leaving aside the fact that the musical forces and the kind of liturgical ceremony for which they were written also differs markedly from one piece to another.<sup>42</sup>

So the ordering of motets in the *Opus musicum* according to the liturgical calendar probably serves to conceal rather than to reveal the true nature of the collection. A comparison with other motets productions of the time can certainly help us to understand how this façade of unity is misleading. For instance, Paulus Bucenus (d. 1586), a composer active in Riga, published at approximately the same time as Handl's *Opus musicum* a collection of motets in two volumes.<sup>43</sup> This was organised in two series, the first entitled *Sacrae cantiones [...] accomodatae musicis instrumentis scholisque aptissimae decantatae* (Sacred songs [...] very fittingly composed and suitable for musical instruments as well as choirs), comprising motets without any specific liturgical function, and the second, containing Masses as well as motets, entitled *Preces vespertine: responsoria, hymni, Magnificat et aliae quedam cantiones quae in praecipuis diebus festis et totum annum in Ecclesia Rigensi decantantur* (Evening prayers: responsories, hymns, a Magnificat and some other songs sung on principal feast-days throughout the year in the Cathedral of Riga), where the compositions are all liturgical in function. A similar "duality" of presentation is also observable in the works of other Central European composers of the time. For instance, Johann Knöfel preceded his already mentioned *Cantus choralis* of 1575<sup>44</sup> (organised according to liturgical divisions) with a collection of *Dulcissimae quaedam cantiones* (Nuremberg, 1571). Johann Wanning offers a similar instance: in 1580 he preceded the publication of his already mentioned *Sententiae* of 1584 with a collection of motets having no reference to a liturgical calendar entitled *Sacrae cantiones*

<sup>42</sup> Before the publication of the *Opus musicum* began, Handl had lived and worked – mostly, but not exclusively – in all three territories belonging to the crown of Bohemia:

- In Moravia, Gallus and his music found a warm welcome in the Praemonstratensian monastery of Zábrdovice near Brno during the early 1570s. Gallus was subsequently, between 1580 and 1585, appointed principal organist and choir director of the bishop of Olomouc, Stanislav Pavlovský. This was his sole official post, from which he resigned in 1585 in order to go to Prague and supervise the publication of his works.
- In Bohemia, Gallus was in close contact with Utraquist musicians in the city of Prague at the time of his numerous travels during the 1570s; Prague was also the city where he finally settled, in 1585. He became around that time the choir director of an old Romanesque church, Saint John the Baptist, situated near the leading music printshop in Bohemia, that of Jiří Nigrin.
- In Silesia Gallus lived in various cities – most probably Breslau (Wrocław), but also Liegnitz (Legnica) and Brieg (Brzeg) – providing music for large churches and the private chapels of the duchy.
- To these places of activity must be added not only the earliest known residence of the composer at the monastery of Melk in Austria but also, and especially, the many links of the composer with Lusatia and Saxony, as revealed by accounts and reports of visits as well as by certain compositions, such as German *Lieder* and motets. See Motnik, *Jacob Handl-Gallus*, 172ff. (esp. 176).

<sup>43</sup> This twofold collection, unfortunately not preserved in all its partbooks, has recently been presented and described by Agnieszka Leszczyńska in the Brno Colloquium held in 2015. See Leszczyńska, "Liturgical Function".

<sup>44</sup> See above, note 13.

*tum vivae vocis tum musicis instrumentis aptae* (Sacred songs fitting for human voices as well as for musical instruments). It is indeed an interesting fact that the twofold remark inserted by Gallus at the beginning of his “*Instructio ad musicos*” should follow this dual orientation so exactly, the first remark dealing with the participation of instruments in large-scale motets (that is, referring to compositions of the *cantio sacra* type), while the other remark addresses the matter of the “irregular” placement of some motets within the liturgical calendar. Although they belong to a different species, these latter compositions, too, could legitimately be labelled *cantiones sacrae* – not only because they are only loosely associated with a liturgical season but also because their texts themselves do not always belong to the liturgy. This leads us to remark in conclusion that if, hypothetically, we had access to the motets of the *Opus musicum* through a publication divided between *cantiones sacrae* on the one hand and *preces ecclesiasticae* on the other hand, we would probably be adopting a completely different approach to the composer’s creations in the genre of the motet, to their history and to their style. Our search for sources for the *Opus musicum* therefore requires above all that we initially sort the contents of this vast collection into pieces employing classic motet texts (making up the first group), those setting strictly liturgical texts in accordance with Counter-Reformation precepts (the second group) and those employing poetic texts merely inspired by the liturgy or in fact completely foreign to it and conceived as *cantiones sacrae* (the third group). Only then will it become possible to attempt to reconstruct the chronology of composition of this fascinating collection.

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ISKANJE VIROV ZA *OPUS MUSICUM* JACOBUSA HANDLA: »INSTRUCTIO AD MUSICOS« IN NJEGOV POMEN ZA SKLADATELJEV PROJEKT

Povzetek

Edino besedilo Jacobusa Handla - Gallusa, ki obravnava njegove lastne skladbe, je »Instructio ad musicos« z začetka tretjega zvezka (1587) zbirke motetov *Opus musicum* (Praga, 1586–1590). Gallus v tem besedilu izpostavi naslove petih motetov, s pomočjo katerih razlaga svoj načrt, in omeni, kako je pri premeščanju motetov s konca poletnega časa ali motetov z besedili, ki pripadajo obredjem za umrle (*Officium defunctorum*), 2. novembra, v čas septuagezime, sledil zgledu Cerkve. Natančen pregled besedil teh motetov razodeva, da teksti sami niso popolnoma v skladu z liturgično redakcijo. Včasih so liturgiji celo tuji, kar napeljuje k podmeni, da imamo opravka s priredbami, ki nosijo skladateljev osebni pečat. Ker tovrsten poetični in oseben pristop ni omejen na omenjenih pet primerov, kot navaja skladatelj sam, se zdi, da je vsebina zbirke *Opus musicum* precej manj homogena, kot se kaže v razporeditvi po liturgičnem koledarju. Moteti, ki se zanašajo na liturgična besedila in so komponirani v skladu s protireformacijskimi vzori zmerne deklamacije in omejenih ponovitev besed, se razlikujejo od motetov, bogatih v besedilnih spremembah in invencijah ter polnih glasbenih figur in besedilnih ponovitev. Ta dvojna zmožnost moteta kot žanra – med cerkvenimi molitvami (*preces ecclesiastice*) z navezovanjem na liturgijo in bolj prostim načinom duhovnih pesmi (*cantiones sacrae*), katerim pripadajo tudi moteti, ki jih je Gallus omenil v besedilu »Instructio ad musicos« – je prisotna tudi v dosežkih drugih skladateljev tistega časa. Vendar pa bodo nadaljnje raziskave zbirke *Opus musicum* s preučitvijo razporeditve skladb in s tem s preučitvijo virov in okvira te zbirke gotovo prinesle nadaljnja bogata spoznanja.