## The Parody Technique in the Works of Renaissance Composers from the Gdańsk Area\*

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The parody technique, also described as *imitatio*<sup>1</sup>, was in the sixteenth century the basic method of shaping the Mass. The procedure involved using in the newly composed work musical material taken from various voices of an existing composition — a motet, a madrigal or a chanson. The principles of such composing, which had become habitual in compositional practice, were described by Pietro Pontio in his treatise Ragionamento di musica in 1588. The author's advice was to begin particular parts of the Mass with the same theme, which could be given different settings, but he suggested that at the beginning of the internal segments, such as Christe, one should use a motif different from the initial motif taken from the original model. He also pointed to the necessity of employing the ending of the original model in the cadences of the individual parts of the Mass<sup>2</sup>. Pontio's ideas were adopted and developed by Pietro Cerone in the treatise El melopeo y maestro in 1613. That author was of the opinion that the more motifs from the original are used in a given Mass, the better the final result. He also recommended frequent repetition of selected quotations in Masses of a solemn character<sup>3</sup>. Individual compositions reflect these principles to varying degrees.

In manuscripts written in Gdańsk and Elbląg at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as: Ms. 4005 and Ms. 4007 from Biblioteka

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Gdańska of the Polish Academy of Sciences and manuscript V 845-850 from the University Library in Toruń, we find a number of Masses of the parody type<sup>4</sup>. Most of them are copies of compositions printed in Western Europe, but some are works of musicians with links to Royal Prussia. Among them we can count with certainty two Masses by Johannes Wanning and two by Johannes Celscher; a number of other compositions might also be included. Unfortunately not all of them are preserved in full.

Johannes Celscher, a composer from Spiš, who around 1600 had links with Kwidzyń, Toruń and Elbląg, also tried — unsuccessfully — to obtain employment in Gdańsk<sup>5</sup>. Perhaps the presence of his six-voice Mass Domine quid multiplicati sunt in Ms. 4005 is an indirect result of the composer's contacts with that city. The two Masses are Celscher's only extant sacred compositions. Although he had written at least two other motets (lost), most of his works are of secular character — songs and epithalamia. Perhaps it was the need for a springboard to transport him into the plane of religious music which made Celscher use in both his Masses - Domine guid multiplicati sunt and Angelus ad pastores — sacred compositions as a starting point. The first of these Masses is Celscher's only work in which all the voices have been preserved. It comprises Kyrie and Gloria, following the Protestant tendency to abbreviate polyphonic Masses, which intensified towards the end of the sixteenth century. Missa Domine quid multiplicati sunt is a parody of a six-voice motet by Orlando di Lasso, published in the collection Motetta sex vocum (Munich 1582). In accordance with the theoretical rules quoted earlier, both Kyrie and Gloria begin with a motif taken from the incipit of the initial model. This is the setting of the words "Domine quid multiplicati sunt", quoted most faithfully in the highest voice of the Mass. At the beginning of Gloria, Celscher kept almost exactly the same order of entry of the voices as Orlando (see figure 5.1.). The rhythmic character of this fragment, although somewhat different from that of the motet, is nevertheless similar (concentration of semiminims, syncopes). The second fragment from Lasso's composition quoted by Celscher is the one which provides the setting for the words "[animae] meae, non est salus, ipsi in Deo eius" — in the Gloria, this fragment accompanies the text "[glorifi]camus te, gratias agimus tibi" (see figure 5.2.). What deserves attention here is the four-voice cadence quoted almost literally at the beginning of the fragment being described here. Although it is preceded by totally different settings in the two works, it constitutes an introduction to the fragment, consisting of a few bars, which enters after a pause in the Mass and clearly refers to the motet material. This device is not typical, since quotations in parodies generally came from distinct beginnings of phrases. Material of cadence character, according to Pontio's recommendations, should appear in the cadences — this postulate is realised in the words "filius Patris" in the cadence of the segment "Et in terra", clearly modelled on the motet's ending. Worth noting in the quoted example is the sharp dissonance which appears in the motet between the soprano and the remaining voices on the word "eius". Although such a device was in accordance with the rules of counterpoint of that time, it had to be introduced and resolved in an appropriate manner; its use demanded a master's hand, and Lasso's was undoubtedly in that class. Celscher eagerly repeats this somewhat unusual solution<sup>6</sup>. The third fragment of the motet is parodied in the segment "Qui tollis peccata mundi" and is basically limited to one bar of modern transcription (see figure 5.3.). Apart from a short literal quotation from the motet, Celscher also borrowed from Lasso's composition the idea of distributing voices in a few neighbouring bars, and then reworked it in his own way. Lasso preceded the six-voice fragment which provides the setting for the words "et exurrexi" with four voices, and then limited the texture again to four voices. Celscher proceeded in a similar manner, but his full-cast fragment is placed between four-voice sets which are different from those in Lasso's motet. As a result there is a very interesting effect in the highest voice of the Mass: the only words which remain from the text "Qui tollis peccata mundi miserere nostri" (sic!) are "peccata mundi", and their foregrounding has given this fragment a particularly dramatic effect.

The choice of a motet with appropriate content as the original for the Mass also seems to provide evidence that Celscher consciously manipulated the text. The text *Quid multiplicati sunt* is Psalm 3 (Septuaginta version), described as the Psalm of David running from his son Absalom, or sometimes as the prayer of the persecuted<sup>7</sup>. Celscher concentrated on three fragments chosen from Lasso's motet, which consecutively constitute the setting of words

"Domine quid multiplicati sunt" ("Lord, many there are of those [that afflict me]"), then "meae: non est salus ipsi in Deo eius" ("[they say] about me: there is no salvation for him in his God") and finally "exurge" ("arise"). The juxtaposition of these quotations does not appear to be accidental, especially if one adds to them the words "peccata mundi" ("sins of the world") stressed in the *Gloria* part. The whole may give the impression of an individualistic, very personal dialogue between the composer and God. Possibly the Mass was written with a penitential-suppliant intent.

Celscher's second Mass, entitled Angelus ad pastores, is recorded in a manuscript held at the Marian Library in Elblag. The manuscript is incomplete (two out of the five voices are extant) and now belongs to the Library of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (manuscript V 850)<sup>8</sup>. This composition is shorter than the Mass Domine quid multiplicati sunt, as it is made up of Kyrie and part of Gloria taken half-way, i.e., to the words "filius Patris". It is not known whether this was its original shape, or whether it was shortened by the copyist from Elblag. This Mass is also based on a motet by Orlando di Lasso, a work from the collection Sacrae cantiones quinque vocum (Nuremberg 1562). The text Angelus ad pastores was taken from a Christmas antiphon and the possibility exists that the Mass was written with that holy day in mind. Indirect evidence that the composition was meant to be performed at large celebrations is provided by the fact that, in accordance with the instructions of Pietro Cerone, some motifs from the original motet are repeated many times. A little fragment containing a characteristic jump of a fifth which goes with the words "annuntio vobis" ("I announce to you"), given prominence in Lasso's composition, can serve as an example. In Celscher's work it is used as the motif accompanying, among others, the words "laudamus te", then "benedicimus te", and "glorificamus te". Another fact testifying to the feast-day character of Angelus ad pastores is its dimension: the preserved parts are almost twice as long as those in the Mass Domine quid multiplicati sunt.

The source of inspiration for the Mass Angelus ad pastores might have been provided by an analogous composition by Gregor Lange, which was a parody of the same motet by Lasso and was entered into the Gdańsk manuscript

4005 immediately after Celscher's Mass *Domine quid multiplicati sunt*. Celscher might have become familiar with Lange's composition, known only from manuscript sources, in the musical community in Gdańsk, where manuscript 4005 was either written, or where it was being used. However, the possible inspiration would have been limited to using the same original model, with the treatment given to it by the two composers being quite different.

In contrast to Celscher, Johannes Wanning spent most of his life as a church music director, and he largely subordinated his compositional activities to his work in the Marian church in Gdańsk. Out of his 107 compositions, only two epithalamia are of secular character; on the other hand both his parody Masses are based on secular models. The five-voice *Missa Vestiva i colli*, probably dating from 1582, has been preserved in two incomplete manuscripts which, however, together provide an almost complete version. These are: Mus. A 203 from Bibliothek der Hansestadt Lübeck and Ms. 4007 from Biblioteka Gdańska of the Polish Academy of Sciences<sup>9</sup>. Wanning took as his models one of the most popular madrigals by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina; this madrigal had also been used as the basis of a Mass by other composers, such as: Palestrina himself, Giovanni Francesco Anerio, Ippolito Baccusio, Ruggiero Giovanelli, Rudolph de Lassus, Philipp de Monte, Giovanni Maria Nanino, Johannes Nucius or Annibale Stabile. Wanning's composition is perhaps the earliest to be based on that work<sup>10</sup>.

Wanning's Mass was written before this kind of composition began to be reduced to two parts in Gdańsk, and therefore it contains the full set of ordinarium missae. The most faithful recollection of Palestrina's madrigal is to be found in the first *Kyrie*, where the motif structure has undergone slight changes, but the sequence of entry of particular voices is reproduced in full (see figure 5.4.). The incipit *Vestiva i colli* appears then also at the beginning of the segments *Et in terra*, *Patrem* and *Crucifixus*, but nowhere is the quotation so literal again. In the *Crucifixus*, the composer has reduced the structure to two voices, and, almost as a form of recompense for not reproducing the full madrigal sound, has quoted with great accuracy the beginning of the discantus melody of the madrigal. However, in the alto part he has limited himself to recalling only a few of the notes from the madrigal original.

An important part is also played by the initial fragment of the second part of the madrigal Vestiva i colli, which becomes the incipit of the segments Et resurrexit, Et in spiritum, Benedictus and the six-voice Agnus Dei II. On the other hand, Sanctus and Agnus I begin with melodies which are a juxtaposition of the incipits of the first and second parts of the madrigals. Wanning also made use of fragments of Palestrina's composition other than the initial ones. In the Christe and Domine Deus segments he employs motifs which in the madrigal accompany the words "espirava soavi Arabi odori". In Wanning's composition there are numerous repetitions of these motifs, creating a quasi-ostinato melodic line, particularly in the highest voice (see figure 5.5.). It is also worth noting that the first half of the Mass is dominated by motifs from the beginning of the madrigal, while the second — by quotations from the second part of Palestrina's composition, appearing for the first time in the segment Et resurrexit. The introduction of new musical material on these particular words may have been intended to have symbolic meaning.

The second of Wanning's parody is the five-voice *Missa Dormiend ung iour* recorded in the same Elblag manuscript as Celcher's Mass *Angelus ad pastores* and damaged in a similar way: the Toruń University Library holds its only two extant voices.

This composition, according to the convention of its day, is made up of Kyrie and Gloria parts up to the words "filius Patris". The title of the Mass is intriguing — some years ago I interpreted it as a French translation of Philippe Verdelot's madrigal from 1541, Dormendo un giorno — since the transposed incipit of that work<sup>11</sup> appears at the beginning of Kyrie <sup>12</sup>. By now the puzzle of the mysterious French appears closer to being solved. The archaic spelling of the phrase "ung iour" brings to mind a text by G. Guérault, Susanne ung iour, set to music by, among others, Orlando di Lasso. This extremely popular chanson, which first appeared in print in 1560, by the end of the century had been reprinted over 20 times. A few older editions kept the original spelling of the text, "ung iour", which in later editions was changed to "un jour" The title of the Mass, Dormiend ung iour, may thus be a play on words which refers both to Verdelot's madrigal and to Orlando's chanson. The similarity of the incipits of both works, as well as the co-incidence of

the words "giorno" and "iour", cannot have escaped Wanning, who made use of it in his Mass (see figure 5.6.). It is difficult to conduct a satisfactory analysis of the composition on the basis of two extant voices, but it does seem that the composer from Gdańsk did not make intensive use of motifs from the works of Verdelot and Lasso; however, he made more frequent references to the madrigal. The beginning of *Christe* is of interest, being a quotation both of the motif "che la fiamma d'amor" from Verdelot, and the somewhat transformed motif "triste et déconforté" from Lasso. The similarity between the sound of the words "Christe" and "triste" does not appear coincidental. It is well known that Palestrina often made use of such convergences in his parody Masses<sup>14</sup>.

Among the community of Gdańsk musicians using the parody technique one should probably also include Franciscus de Rivulo. His untitled six-voice Mass preserved in an incomplete state in the same Elbląg manuscript as the Masses by Wanning ( $Dormiend\ ung\ iour$ ) and Celscher ( $Angelus\ ad\ pastores$ ), also seems to be based on some polyphonic, so far unidentified model<sup>15</sup>. The presence of characteristic fanfare motifs at the beginning of Kyrie and Gloria is one of the features which make this likely.

The anonymous five-voice *Missa Io mi son giovinetta* from manuscript 4005 held at Biblioteka Gdańska of the Polish Academy of Sciences, based on a four-voice madrigal by Domenico Ferrabosco, is also undoubtedly a parody Mass. One cannot exclude the possibility that its composer had some links with Royal Prussia.

Finally, another Mass which deserves attention is Adorna thalamum by J. Neubauer, from Ms. 4005 held at Biblioteka Gdańska of the Polish Academy of Sciences. This author's identity has so far been taken to be that of Kassel Johannes Neubauer, who flourished in the mid-seventeenth century and who is the only composer of that name preceded by the initial J. mentioned by lexicons<sup>16</sup>. However, since Neubauer's Mass is to be found at the beginning of the manuscript, which was probably started at the end 1580s, this composer must have belonged to an earlier generation. In all probability he was a singer, later titular composer, employed in the years 1561–1563 at the Könisberg court of Prince Albrecht<sup>17</sup>. In 1562 Urban Störmer, the maestro di cappella

at the court, wrote to his employer that Johannes Neubauer had composed two Masses: for six and for eight voices, and therefore deserves additional renumeration. On behalf of his protégé, Störmer also asked for a rise in his annual salary, remarking that such a talented musician would receive a much higher renumeration in other places, such as for instance Gdańsk<sup>18</sup>. The request was probably granted, which may be confirmed by the accounts of the Könisberg court. The name of Neubauer appears there for the last time on 16 July 1566, when Prince Albrecht paid him a 100 marks as an advance towards the cost of printing his compositions in Nuremberg<sup>19</sup>. Even if this enterprise came to fruition, we do not know the results. Nothing is also known about transmissions of Neubauer's other compositions apart the Mass Adorna thalamum. This work is probably one of the Masses mentioned by Störmer. The mention of Gdańsk in the kappelmeister's letter is probably not accidental. It is likely that, like many other contemporary musicians, Neubauer sent his work to Gdańsk councillors, hoping for payment from the city coffers<sup>20</sup>. In all likelihood these hopes were not vain, which is why Störmer might later make reference to that city's generosity. The Mass in question thus probably found its way to Gdańsk in 1562, and over twenty years later became the opening composition of the manuscript now referred to as Ms. 4005. Unfortunately it has not been possible to identify the motet which served as the model for it, but Missa Adorna thalamum undoubtedly belongs to the parody type. Evidence for this is provided by the use at the beginning of nearly every part of variants of one main motif, as well as a number of other characteristic phrases in other places, probably taken from a motet. Neubauer composed a work which in respect of voice distribution fits in with the trends dominant in sixteenth-century Masses: he limited the volume of sound from six to four voices in Crucifixus and Benedictus, while increasing it to eight voices in the final Agnus Dei.

The examples described above certainly do not indicate any particular manner of using the parody technique which would be shared by composers from Gdańsk. Rather, they testify to their ability to use the technique which had become widespread throughout the whole of Europe. The two composers who were given most attention — Johannes Celscher and Johannes Wanning —

had different approaches to this technique. The first treated it as a convenient manner of filling the intended form of the Mass with sound material of the highest quality, since it came from the compositions of Orlando di Lasso, which is why the percentage of borrowings in Celscher's work is relatively large. For Wanning, the parody technique became merely the starting point for independent treatment — the percentage of quotations in his compositions is relatively small, and there are no references to the initial model in the cadences. The case of the Mass *Dormiend ung iour*, provided it has been interpreted correctly, is certainly rare, and may be unique within Europe. The use in a Mass of material from a number of various compositions, especially monophonic ones, was a common phenomenon. However, this cannot be said of purposeful reference to two different compositions through the use of one quotation.



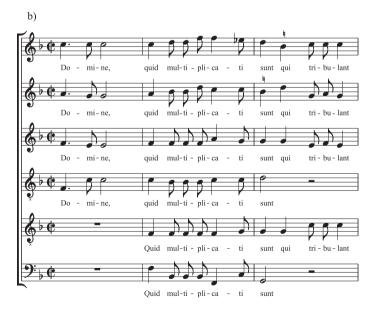


Fig. 5.1. a) J. Celscher *Missa Quid multiplicati sunt, Gloria* (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN, manuscript 4005); b) O. di Lasso *Quid multiplicanti sunt* (Orlando di Lasso, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. F. X. Haberl, vol. XVII).





Fig. 5.2. a) J. Celscher *Missa Quid multiplicati sunt, Gloria* (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN, manuscript 4005); b) O. di Lasso *Quid multiplicanti sunt* (Orlando di Lasso, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. F. X. Haberl, vol. XVII).

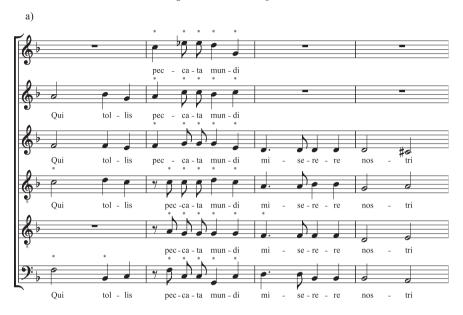




Fig. 5.3. a) J. Celscher *Missa Quid multiplicati sunt, Gloria* (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN, manuscript 4005); b) O. di Lasso *Quid multiplicanti sunt* (Orlando di Lasso, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. F. X. Haberl, vol. XVII).



Fig. 5.4. a) J. Wanning *Missa Vestiva i colli, Kyrie* (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN, manuscript 4007; Bibliothek der Hansestadt Lübeck, ms. Mus. A 203); b) G. P. da Palestrina *Vestiva i colli* (*Pierluigi da Palestrina's Werke*, ed. F. X. Haberl, vol. XXVIII).

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Fig. 5.5. a) J. Wanning *Missa Vestiva i colli, Kyrie* (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN, manuscript 4007; Bibliothek der Hansestadt Lübeck, ms. Mus. A 203); b) G. P. da Palestrina *Vestiva i colli* (*Pierluigi da Palestrina'a Werke*, ed. F. X. Haberl, vol. XXVIII).

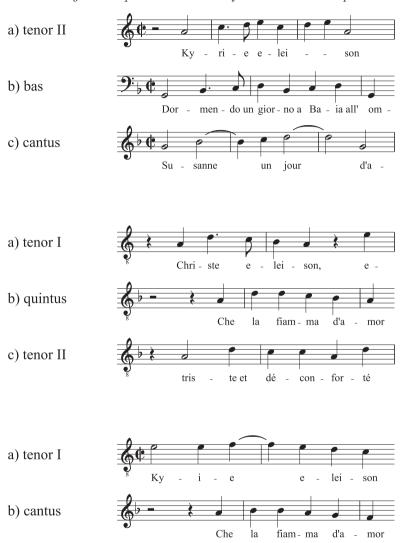


Fig. 5.6. a) J. Wanning *Missa Dormiend ung iour, Kyrie* (Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Toruniu, ms. V 849); b) Ph. Verdelot *Dormendo un giorno* (Philippe Verdelot, *Madrigals for Four and Five Voices*, ed. J. A. Owens, New York 1989); c) O. di Lasso *Susanne un jour* (Choral Public Domain Library, http://www.cpdl.org).

## Notes

- 1 Both terms have been the subject of discussion by musicologists. See for example: Lewis Lockwood, 'On "Parody" as Term and Concept in 16<sup>th</sup>-Century Music', in: Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Music. A Birthday Offering to Gustave Reese, ed. Jan La Rue, New York 1966, pp. 560–575; Honey Meconi, 'Does 'Imitatio' Exist?', The Journal of Musicology 12, 1994, pp. 152–178.
- 2 Source Readings in Music History, ed. Oliver Strunk, Revised Edition, ed. Leo Treitler, New York, London 1998, pp. 473–474.
- 3 Source Readings in Music History. From Classical Antiquity through the Romantic Era, ed. Oliver Strunk, New York 1950, pp. 265–268.
- 4 Cf. Otto Günther, Katalog der Handschriften der Danziger Stadtbibliothek, part 4: Die musikalischen Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek, Danzig 1911; Danuta Popinigis, Danuta Szlagowska, Musicalia gedanenses. The 16th and 17th Century Musical Manuscripts in the Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Gdańsk 1990; Agnieszka Leszczyńska, 'Późnorenesansowe fragmenty mszalne z dawnej biblioteki elbląskiego kościoła Mariackiego', in: Źródła muzyczne. Krytyka analiza interpretacja, ed. Ludwik Bielawski, J. Katarzyna Dadak-Kozicka, Warszawa 1999, pp. 190–199.
- 5 More information about this composer can be found in: Agnieszka Leszczyńska, 'From Spiš to Royal Prussia the Creative Development of Johannes Celscher', *Musicology Today* 2005, pp. 37–48.
- 6 Celscher's tendency to quote Lasso's work literally allows one to verify the record of his own composition. In the first bar of the fifth voice of the Mass the copyist from Gdańsk entered consecutively the notes: aaf. That f creates a dissonance with the note f located in the alto, and if possibly raised it would cause parallel octaves between the two voices; one can thus assume that note f had been entered in error. A comparison with the motet original makes it more likely that the intended note was d.
- 7 Biblia Tysiąclecia. Wydanie trzecie poprawione, ed. Kazimierz Dynarski SAC, Poznań-Warszawa 1980, p. 571.
- 8 A. Leszczyńska, 'Późnorenesansowe fragmenty mszalne...', op. cit., pp. 194–195.
- 9 Detailed commentary on these two records can be found in: Agnieszka Leszczyńska, 'Johannes Wanning kapelmistrz kościoła Mariackiego w Gdańsku', *Muzyka*, No. 3, 1999, pp. 15–16.
- 10 It has not been possible to establish the dates of composition of all the Masses; among those with a definite date of recording Wanning's Mass is the earliest; analogous composition by Palestrina did not appear in print until 1599.
- 11 A similar transpositon from cantus mollis g to cantus durus d had been used by Gaspar de Albertis in the Mass Dormend' un giorno a Baia published in Venice in 1545. Cf. Gasparis de Albertis Opera omnia, ed. Gary Towne, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 105, vol. 1, American Institute of Musicology 1999, pp. 227–287.
- 12 A. Leszczyńska, 'Późnorenesansowe fragmenty mszalne...', op. cit., pp. 192–193.
- 13 This chanson appears also under the title Susanne ung iors in the Gdańsk manuscript 4003. Wanning may have known this copy, but was more likely to be inspired by another source, containing the full text.
- 14 Quentin W. Quereau, 'Aspects of Palestrina's Parody Procedure', The Journal of Musicology I, No. 2, 1982, p. 208.

- 15 A. Leszczyńska, 'Późnorenesansowe fragmenty mszalne...', op. cit., p. 192.
- 16 Cf. Robert Eitner, Biographisch-Bibliographisches Quellen-Lexicon der Musiker und Musikgelehrten, vol. 7, Leipzig 1902, p. 177; Christian Engelbrecht, Neubauer, Johann, in: Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. Friedrich Blume, vol. 9, Kassel 1961, col. 1387; Danuta Popinigis, Danuta Szlagowska: Musicalia gedanenses..., op. cit., p. 541.
- 17 Maria Federmann, Musik und Musikpflege zur Zeit Herzog Albrechts. Zur Geschichte der Königsberger Hofkapelle in den Jahren 1525-01578, Kassel 1932, pp. 144-0145, Martin Ruhnke, Beiträge zu einer Geschichte der deutsche Hofmusikkolegien im 16. Jahrhundert, Berlin 1963, p. 143.
- 18 Ludwig Finscher, 'Beiträge zur Geschichte der Königsberger Hofkapelle', Musik des Ostens I, 1962, p. 176.
- 19 M. Federmann, Musik und Musikpflege..., op. cit. p. 145.
- 20 The practice of sending musical compositions to city councils of the richer centres was quite widespread in the second half of the sixteenth century. Cf. Agnieszka Leszczyńska, 'W poszukiwaniu hanzeatyckiego sponsora: listy muzyków z przełomu XVI i XVII wieku do rad miejskich Torunia i Gdańska', in: Complexus effectuum musicologiae. Studia Miroslao Perz septuagenario dedicata, ed. Tomasz Jeż, Kraków 2003, pp. 239–247.