

A Comparison of the  
Missae "Ecce ancilla Domini"  
of Dufay and Ockeghem

by  
Kyle Gann

THE MISSAE ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI of Guillaume Dufay and Johannes Ockeghem both date from around the seventh decade of the fifteenth century, and are written in the mature styles of their respective composers. Despite the fact that they use two different "Ecce ancilla Domini" chants as cantus firmi, they are musically related by their head motives. One was apparently written by someone familiar with the other, and a comparison should bring forth many of the composer's essential differences in their conceptions of the cantus firmus mass.

Barring superficial characterizations applicable to many pre-Baroque composers, it is difficult to generalize about the music of Dufay and Ockeghem. From the number of movements per mass to localized contrapuntal considerations, there is hardly anything either of them always does, and the favorite tricks of one can usually be found employed by the other to a lesser degree. Any generalizations that follow, then, are intended to suggest tendencies, rather than to draw clear distinctions.

There are many points in common to the masses on "Ecce ancilla Domini" which, though typical of the composers' late styles, are far from universal. Both Kyries are divided into three parts with a Christe in imperfect prolation forming a contrast to the Kyries in perfect prolation. The Glorias, Sanctus', and Agnus Deis of each mass all exhibit a two-part division, beginning in perfect prolation

MISSA ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI:  
Structural Diagram

DUFAY:

OCKEGHEM:

Movement:	Chant Phrase:	Mensuration:	Chant Phrase:	Movement:
Kyrie I Christe Kyrie II	Ecce/fiat - Beata	○ ○ ○	Ecce secundum Alleluia	Kyrie I Christe Kyrie II
Gloria Qui tollis	Ecce/fiat Beata	○ ○	Ecce/secundum Alleluia	Gloria Qui tollis
Credo Et incarnatus Et in spiritum	Ecce/fiat Beata Ecce/fiat	○ ○ ○	Ecce/secundum Ecce/secundum/Alleluia	Credo Et resurrexit
Sanctus Pleni Osanna Benedictus Osanna	Ecce - fiat - Beata	○ ○ ○	Ecce - secundum - secundum	Sanctus Pleni Osanna Benedictus Osanna
Agnus Dei I Agnus Dei II Agnus Dei III	Ecce/fiat - Beata	○ ○ ○	Ecce - secundum (/Alleluia)	Agnus Dei I Agnus Dei II Agnus Dei III

identical

identical

and ending in imperfect; though, as the structural diagram on page two shows, the last two movements are divided at different points. Ockeghem's Credo is also divided into two sections at the "Et resurrexit," but Dufay's Credo demonstrates the slightly rarer three-part division, split as in so many of his masses at the "Et incarnatus," and also at "Et in spiritum." A glance at the comparison of the Glorias and Credos on page four reveals that in the division of the texts the composers follow no standard form, and in fact have little in common. In the Missa Ecce ancilla, as in most of his masses, Ockeghem uses the same music for both settings of the "Osanna;" while Dufay, who seldom follows this practice, here repeats the second Osanna as the third Agnus Dei, an unusual formal device.

As so often in the late masses of both composers, each of the five movements, as well as each major division of the Credo, begins with a two-voice passage for the superius and contratenor, and ends with all four voices. The sole exception is the Sanctus of Dufay's mass, which adds the bass to the opening head motive. The Benedictus' and second Agnus Deis of each mass are also extended duets for the higher voices, as well as the Pleni sunt caeli of Dufay's mass. These are all common features of the fifteenth-century mass.

In line with a tradition which dates back to Machaut, the Glorias and Credos of each mass are paired in contrast to the shorter-texted outer movements, though in different ways by each composer. Dufay's Gloria and Credo are linked by identical rhythmic settings of the cantus firmus and by head motive extensions which are different from those used in the other three movements. The Gloria and Credo of

MISSAE ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI:  
Glorias, Cremos




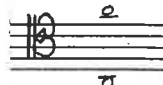
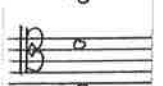
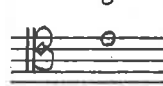
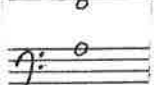
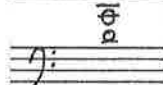
MISSAE ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI: Glorias, Credos										DUFAY										OCKEGHEM											
										Measures Divisions	Measures Phrases	Mensuration	Voices	Opening pitch	Cadences											Measures Divisions	Measures Phrases	Mensuration	Voices	Opening pitch	Cadences
Et in terra...Laudamus te Benedicimus te. Adoramus te Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus...gloriam tuam Domine Deus Rex coelestis...pater omnipotens Domine fili...Jesu Christe Domine Deus...filius patris										61	20	○	SC	G G G C	G	G G D	SC	○	14	72	9	22	5	22							
											15		SCTB	G	G	(G) C	SCTB	CTB	SCTB												
											10		C B	G	G	(G) G C	G	CTB	SCTB												
											7		SC	C G C	G	(G) G C	G	SCTB	SCTB												
											9		SCTB	G D C	C		G														
Qui tollis...paccata mundi suscipe deprecationem nostram Qui sedes...miserere nobis Quoniam tu solus sanctus Tu solus dominus Tu solus altissimus...Amen										55	14	○	SC	C	C	G C G G	SC	○	25	113	18	9	61								
											8		SC B	C C	G	(G)	SC B	CTB	SCTB												
											7		CTB	(G) A			G														
											6		C B		G	G D	CTB	SCTB													
											20		SCTB	C D G C	G	D C	SCTB	C D C G													
Patrem omnipotentem...et visibilium et in dominum...unigenitum Et ex Patre...lumen de lumine Deum vero de Deo vero Genitum...omnia facta sunt Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram...de coelis										74	30	○	SC	G C	G C G C	G G C G	SC	○	15	93	18	39									
											16		SCTB	C	C	C D G	SCTB	SC	SCTB												
											15		C B	C G C	C																
											13		SCTB	C G C	C			SC	SCTB												
																B															
Et incarnatus est in Spiritu Sancto ex Maria...factus est Crucifixus...et sepultus est											22	○	SC	A C	E G	D C	S T	C B		6											
											41		variable	G		F C	SCTB	SCTB		15											
														C C	G C																
Et resurrexit...dexteram patris Et iterum...non erit finis																G D	SC	○	25												
																G C	C B		21												
Et in spiritum...procedit Qui cum Patre...et prophetas Et unam sanctam...Ecclesiam Confiteor...remissionem peccatorum Et exspecto...mortuorum Et vitam saeculi Amen											14	○	SC	C C G	(C)		SCTB		38												
											23		SCTB	G C		D	SC B		70												
													SC B		E	(D)	SCTB														
											13		SC B	C C			C B														
											8		SC	C C	C		S T														
											10		SCTB	C		G D	C	SCTB													

MISSA ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI:  
Kyries, Sanctus', Agnus'

DUFAY						OCKEGHEM					
Divisions Measures	Phrases Measures	Mensuration	Voices	Opening pitch	Cadences	Divisions Measures	Phrases Measures	Mensuration	Voices	Cadences	Opening pitch
Kyrie eleison i	47	4 ○	SC	G	G	G D A SC	10	24			
" " ii	10		SCTB	(G)	G		6				
" " iiij	20		SC	G	F C	D D SCT	8				
	13		SCTB	G	C	G G SCTB					
Christe eleison i	33	9 C	SC	C	E	G G G SC	21	55			
" " ii	10		C B	C	G	(G) C SCT	14				
" " iiij	14		SC B	G	C G	C SCTB	20				
Kyrie eleison i	44	12 ○	SCTB	C	A C	(E) E SC	8	31			
" " ii	13		SC	C C C C		(C) C C G SCT	6				
" " iiij	12		SCTB	F G C (G)			17				
" " iv	7		SCTB	D	C						
Sanctus	33	16 ○	SC B	G C G C		G C C G SC	13	32			
Sanctus Dominus Deus	17		SCTB	(C)	C	(G) G SCTB	19				
Pleni sunt caeli	29		SC	C G		G D A G C B	9	23			
et terra gloria tua				C E G C		C D G SC B	14				
Osanna	17		SCTB	G G C		G C G D G SCTB		41			
Benedictus	23	C	SC	C G		C C SC	15	49			
qui venit				E C		A C G C SC	34				
Osanna	27		SCTB	C ACGDG C		G C G D G SCTB		41			
Agnus Dei i	33	6 ○	SC	G	C	G G A SC	10	30			
qui tollis	27		SCTB	(C) G C C		(D) C G SCTB	20				
Agnus Dei ii	32	16 C	SC	C	C	G C G C SC	29	29			
miserere nobis	16		SC	C F C		D G					
Agnus Dei iiij	27	C	SCTB	C ACGDG C		G G SCTB	40	40			

Ockeghem's mass follow the opening superius-contratenor duet with an extended passage for contratenor and bass, both of which use certain melodic parallels which will be touched upon later. The length of the text necessitates a greater variety of textures in these two movements in both masses than is found in the outer movements.

Much has been made of Ockeghem's preference for a generally lower tessitura than Dufay uses. A more important difference, from a compositional standpoint, is the extension of the individual ranges in both directions:

	Dufay:	Ockeghem:
Superius:		
Contratenor:		
Tenor:		
Bassus: (or Tenor Secundus)		

Ockeghem increases the total vocal range by a fifth, and the individual parts by as much as a sixth. As a result, while a typical Dufay melodic line will vacillate within a characteristic octave, touching on a predictable set of scale degrees:

Dufay  
Christe, m.57:



Ockeghem's lines are less predictable because of their potentially greater freedom of movement:

Ockeghem  
Sanctus, m. 23



An examination of the composers' respective treatments of the cantus firmi brings their differences of method into clearer focus. Pages 8-9 and 11-14 compare each statement of the cantus firmi of both masses with the corresponding phrases of the original chants. First of all, Dufay's use of the chant is primarily structural. The "Ecce ancilla" phrase is invariably separated from the "fiat mihi" by an extended rest for the tenor, making the cantus firmus a recurring texturally architectural device. The "Beata es" chant is always used as the last (or, in the Credo, middle) section of each movement. Dufay uses the same rhythmic settings of the chants for the Gloria, Credo, and Et in spiritum, and for the Qui tollis and Et incarnatus, giving the Gloria and Credo together the form A B : A B A. That the final Agnus is a repetition of the second Osanna eliminates the need for a fourth setting of the "Beata es" chant.

Dufay restricts the chant setting internally as well. The tenor moves generally slower than the three other voices, and often in slow, even values, which further limit variety among successive cantus firmus statements. As a result, note additions to the chant are comparatively limited, consisting of a few neighbor notes, an occasional passing tone, and perhaps a flourish now and then at the end of a section.

Ockeghem's tenor, on the other hand, is an equal member of the four-part texture, and entire phrases are frequently added to the chant,



## CANTUS FIRMUS TREATMENT IN DUFAY'S MISSA ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI

Ecce ancilla Domini

Kyrie:

Gloria\*:

Sanctus:

Agnus Dei:

fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum

Kyrie:

Gloria\*:

Osanna:

Agnus Dei:

\*The chant settings in the Credo and Et in spiritum are identical to this one in the Gloria, with the exception of the number of measures of rests.  
+ denotes a note added to the original chant.

Beata es Maria, quae credidisti:

Kyrie II:

Qui tollis\*:

Osanna II\*:

perficientur in te quae dicta sunt tibi a Domino, alleluia

Kyrie II:

Qui tollis:

Osanna II:

\*The chant setting in the Et incarnatus is identical to this in the Qui tollis, and the Agnus Dei III is a repetition in all parts of the Osanna II.  
 \*\*These measures of rest are only in the Et incarnatus.

along with numerous passing, neighbor, and escape tones. The "Alleluia," for example (page 14) is barely recognizable in its manifestations in the first three movements. Not only is each successive setting of the chant rhythmically different, but even the form of the chant changes from movement to movement. For example, after the first four notes of the original "secundum verbum tuum" chant, a ten-note phrase is repeated. Only in the Et resurrexit is this phrase repeated as in the chant. In the Christe, Gloria, Credo, and Osanna, not only this phrase but the one following it is repeated. In the Agnus Dei, the first phrase is not repeated, while the second is. In contrast to the clearly structural cantus firmus procedure of Dufay, Ockeghem runs the "secundum verbum tuum" and the "Alleluia" together in the Et resurrexit in such a way that the point of their separation is a matter for conjecture; although in the Kyrie and Gloria, the "Alleluia" is the basis for entire sections. The Sanctus avoids the "Alleluia" chant entirely, while in the Agnus it takes the form of a fleeting reference appended to the "secundum verbum." The tenor frequently has rests which relate neither to a structural division nor to a rest in the original chant. Some of the original rests are likewise omitted.

Twice in the Credo the chant is transposed a fifth downward by a change of clef, with the result that these sections end on C, instead of G as in the other movements. Dufay's cantus is not transposed, and all movements end on C. While in Dufay the chant was a foundation upon which to erect a structure of order and symmetry, here the chant is merely raw material which suggests

## CANTUS FIRMUS TREATMENT IN OCKEGHEM'S MISSA ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI

Ecce ancilla Domini,

Kyrie: 10

Gloria: 23

Credo: 3

Et resurrexit: 46

Sanctus: 13

Agnus Dei: 10

fiat mihi

Kyrie: + + +

Gloria: 1 + + +

Credo: + +

Et resurrexit: + +

Sanctus: +

Agnus Dei: +

+ denotes a note added to the original chant.

secundum verbum tuum

Christe: 

(cont.) 

Gloria: 

(cont.) 

Credo: 

(cont.) 

Et resurrexit: 

(cont.) 

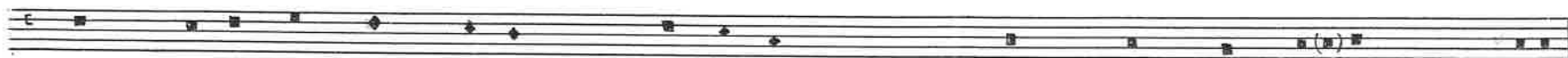
Osanna: 


(cont.) 

Agnus Dei: 


(cont.) 

(continued next page)




Christe:  to cont.

(cont.) 

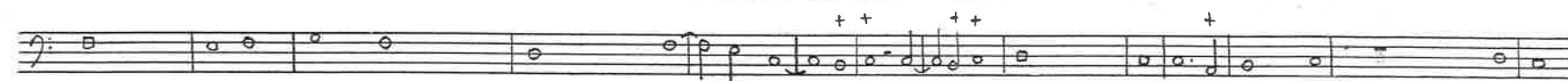
Gloria:  to cont.

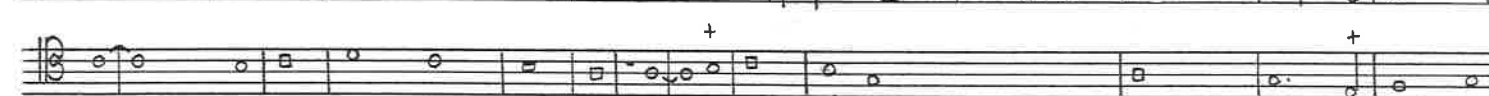
(cont.) 

Credo:  to cont.

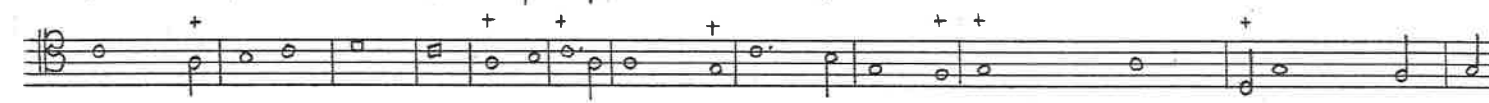
(cont.) 

Et resurrexit:  to continuation (previous page)

(cont.) 

Osanna:  to continuation

(cont.) 

Agnus Dei:  to cont.

(cont.) 

(cont.) 

# Alleluia

Kyrie III: 7

Qui tollis: 46

Et resurrexit: 2

Kyrie III: 1

Qui tollis: 3

Et resurrexit: 7

etc.

only a general pitch direction. This contrast between a simple, symmetrical order and an embellished complexity lies at the heart of the difference between these two masses and between Dufay and Ockeghem in general.

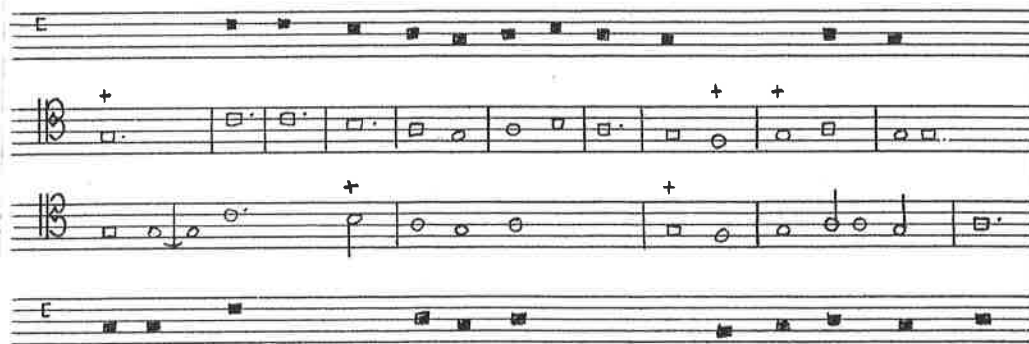
Dufay's concern for symmetry is apparent in his choice and use of the "Beata es" chant as a counter-balance to the "Ecce ancilla." Aside from liturgical considerations, it is apparent from the notes Dufay adds to the original chants that he chose the pairing for their potential resemblance. Although the two original eleven-note chants have only six notes in common, Dufay's fourteen-note altered versions are almost identical, save for an extra neighbor note in the "Ecce" and the final note of the "Beata:"

Ecce ancilla:

Kyrie I:

Kyrie II:

Beata es:



Four and a half centuries later, Charles Ives would think along the same compositional lines, combining the "Missionary Hymn" with the opening motive of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in his "Concord" Sonata, as Schoenberg paired "O How a Rose Ere Blooming" and "Silent Night" in his "Weihnachtsmusik" for their motivic similarity. The opening fourth Dufay adds to the "Ecce" chant serves the additional purpose



of echoing the rising fourth of the head motive.

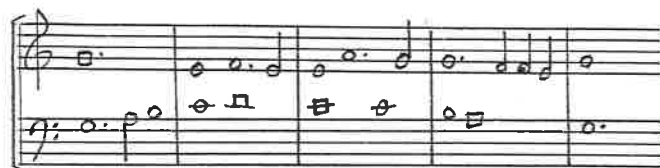
The use of the head motive clearly reveals the contrast between Dufay and Ockeghem (see page 17). For the first  $2\frac{1}{2}$  measures, Dufay's five head motives are virtually identical with the single exception of a bass added to the beginning of the Sanctus. Dufay's masses on "L'homme arme," "Se la Face ay Pale," and "La Mort de Saint Gothard" each contain similar exceptions of an added or subtracted voice to an otherwise consistent head motive, as if Dufay could rarely bear the monotony of five successive identical openings. The head motives of the Gloria and Credo share a further identity for 6 measures until a unison cadence on G, and those of the Kyrie, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  measures until an octave cadence on G. As mentioned earlier, this is one of Dufay's methods of linking the two longer-texted movements in contrast to the others.

As Dufay prefers a repetitive head motive technique with an occasional exception, Ockeghem's masses avoid strict head motives altogether. In this mass, the Kyrie, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei share the same first measure, but there all strict resemblance ends. The head motives of these two similarly-named masses based on different chants are their only musical link. If it is easier to view Ockeghem's head motives as different variations on Dufay's standard one than to see Dufay's as the extracted essence of those of Ockeghem, then internal evidence asserts the chronological priority of Dufay's mass. If this is the case, then the homage Ockeghem pays to Dufay in his head motives consists of a rising filled-in fourth in the contratenor, a tendency for the contratenor's C to rise to D, and a tendency for the G of the superius to move to A and then down to E.

MISSAE ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI:  
Head Motives

DUFAY

Kyrie:



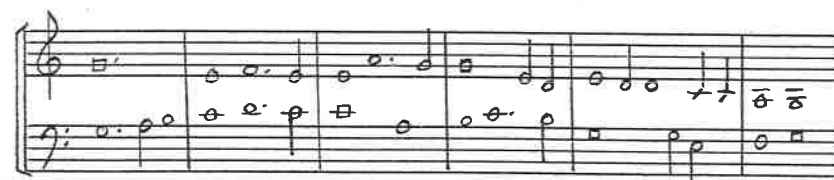
Sanctus:



Agnus Dei:



Gloria:

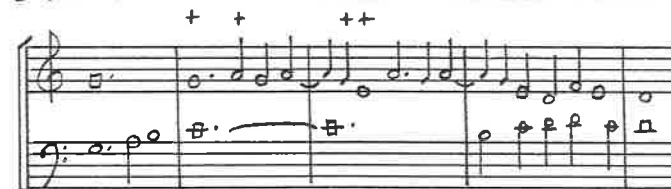


Credo:



OCKEGHEM

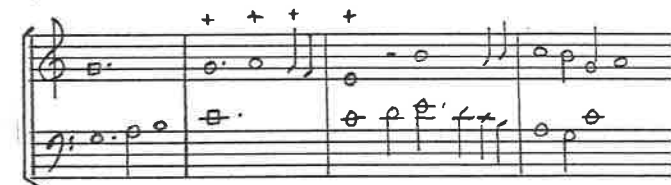
Kyrie:



Sanctus:



Agnus Dei:



Gloria:



Credo:



Outside of these elements, no similarities are preserved from one head motive to the next. The opening rising fourth is omitted in the Credo for a very interesting apparent reason: since in this movement the chant is transposed, causing the Credo to end on C, the omission of the first measure of the head motive allows the movement to open with an open fifth on C. Thus every movement of the mass ends in the same "key" in which it began: G G C G G. Oddly enough, measures 1-4 of the Credo continue almost identically to measures 2-5 of the Gloria, providing a link between these two movements. This complex variation of the head motive is another contrast to the repetitive clarity of Dufay.

Turning to more intrinsic aspects of compositional method, Dufay's rhythm and harmony are both influenced by a tendency to use fauxbourdon style as a background. Though in both Dufay's and Ockeghem's masses the upper two voices tend to move slightly faster than the lower two, the contrast is greater in Dufay; and the rhythmic coincidence between the lower two voices:

Dufay  
Kyrie m.5:



and sometimes the lower three:

Dufay  
Kyrie m.106:



is in sharp contrast to the overlapping, alternation, and suspension of Ockeghem's lower voices:

Ockeghem  
Gloria m.39:



The rhythmic pairing of tenor and bass in Dufay lends itself to fauxbourdon, and its use is often in connection with a fauxbourdon cadential formula:



Dufay  
Kyrie m.37:

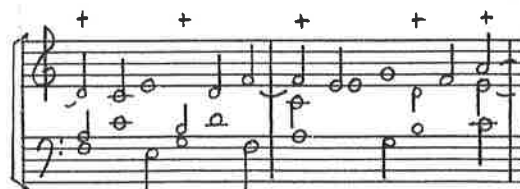


Credo m.182:



or at least with a parallelism which suggests fauxbourdon:

Dufay  
Osanna m.69:



Ockeghem more characteristically avoids fauxbourdon by the use of contrary motion and unequal intervals in the same direction:

Ockeghem  
Kyrie m.20:



The cantus firmus has a role as harmonic determinant in Dufay's mass, a role of which Ockeghem does not take advantage. Shown below are the six statements of the "fiat mihi" chant together with the accompanying bass lines. Although the upper two voices are varied in each of these passages, examination of the points marked with an asterix shows to what extent each of these passages parallels the others harmonically:

Dufay

Kyrie: 

Gloria: 

Credo: 

Et in spiritum: 

Osanna:  etc.

Agnus Dei: 

At many of these points only one harmony is stylistically possible; the bass lines frequently coincide, and as the "fiat mihi" phrase continues, the harmonies for each passage become more and more pre-determined. It is obvious, at least, that each phrase was written with the others in mind. Sometimes this harmonic pre-determination is carried to such an extent that one passage is simply a rhythmic re-working of another:

Dufay

Kyrie II:



Osanna II:  
(also  
Agnus III)



Even outside of the influence of the cantus firmus, parallels exist, for example the seven duet passages for the upper voices in which both parts begin on C. In six of these, the upper voice ascends to G through a prominent E and F. In three of these, the G is followed by a prominent A, and all of them descend again back to C. In the one remaining duet, the Et in Spiritum, the lower voice follows this pattern:

Dufay

Christe:



Pleni:



Kyrie m. 93:



Benedictus:



Qui tollis:



Agnus Dei II:



Et in  
spiritum:


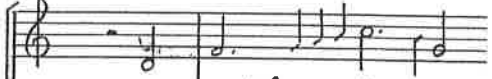
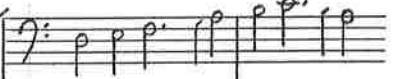

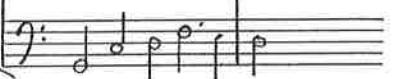
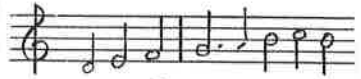
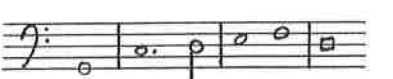
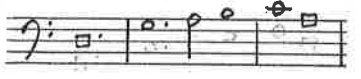
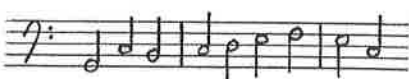




never. (The rare times this does happen, A is usually an escape tone between B and C, rather than B a neighbor to A.)

Where Dufay creates unity, Ockeghem seems to seek out endless variety. As the cantus firmus is set with as much rhythmic variety as possible, so are the harmonies associated with it unpredictable, as the harmonic contexts of the eleven settings of the "verbum" phrase on page 24 demonstrate. If Ockeghem kept one of these passages in mind while writing another, it was more likely to ensure a lack of repetition than to create a parallel. But the "verbum" phrase illustrated exerts another influence. From these five notes, which are filled in with passing tones in every statement of the cantus firmus (see page 12), Ockeghem shapes a motives which occurs in all four voices throughout the mass:

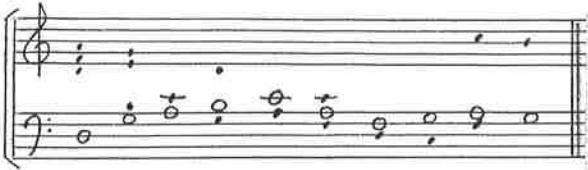



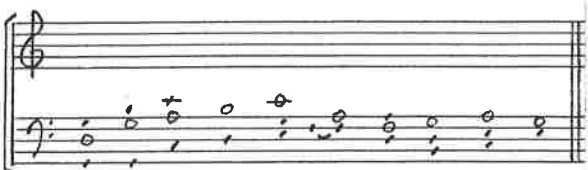

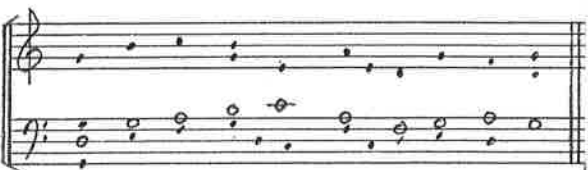




# Ockeghem

Kyrie S m.8:		Credo S m.58:	
Gloria C m.20:		Credo C m.58:	
Gloria B m.145:		Sanctus S m.50:	
Credo S m.210:		Agnus B m.11:	
		Agnus B m.92:	

This motive is quite flexible, but also easily recognizable, and unlike Dufay's recurring phrases it is transposable to different ranges and to different pitches (though still modally limited). It crops up in mid-line as well as any Wagnerian leitmotif, and like many of Wagner's leitmotifs, it contains an even smaller motive which



THE INFLUENCE OF CHANT ON HARMONIC CONTENT  
IN OCKEGHEM'S MISSA ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI

Christe: m.48		Et resurrexit: m.157	
m.66:		m.177:	
Gloria: m.45		Osanna: m.63	
m.51:		m.82:	
Credo: m.63		Agnus Dei: m.66	
m.79		CHANT: "verbum" D G A B C A F G A G	

BASS LINES:			
Christe	D G A G A F D C F G	D E A G A F D C F G	
"	D E C D C D D C F C	D C F B C D D C F C	
Gloria	G G C D E F D B C E	G G A B C F D G A E	
"	G E F G C F D E D G	G E F G C F D E D G	
Credo	D G F G C F F G A G	D G F G A A F G A G	} transposed
"	D G A G C A F G A G	D G A G C A F G F G	
Et resurrexit	D E F E C C F E F G	D E F E C A F E F G	
"	D G A G F D D C	D G A G F D D C	
Osanna	D E C D A D D B A C	D E A B A D D G A C	
"	D B C D C D D E D B	D G A B C D B C D G	
Agnus Dei	B C F D C F F E	G C F B C F D E	

is even more pervasive: the one which opens the entire work:



The difference between Dufay's melodic lines and those of Ockeghem is the difference between modal thinking and thinking which has just begun to abstract intervals from scale degrees to form motives, although still in a limited way. Ockeghem does use parallel passages to link movements; but with one major exception, the very similar duets which open the Gloria and the Credo, the parallels are so varied that they are perceptually obscure. What does lie on the perceptual surface of Ockeghem's mass is the motive, and this abstraction of motivic intervals from scale degrees is the beginning of a musical development which will destroy modality, destroy tonality, culminate in Schoenberg, and disintegrate in Webern, into the motive-less ultra-abstraction of which so much recent European music consists.


One justification for Ockeghem's reliance on motivic thinking is the modal relationships are not quite adequate to deal with the extended vocal range he is using. Other reasons become clear when we compare the kinds of imitation used by Dufay and Ockeghem.

Dufay's use of imitation in the Missa Ecce Ancilla Domini is limited and easily characterized. Imitation usually occurs between the upper two voices, usually when the remaining voices are silent, and almost always at the interval of a unison or octave. These qualities combine to make Dufay's imitation audibly obvious.

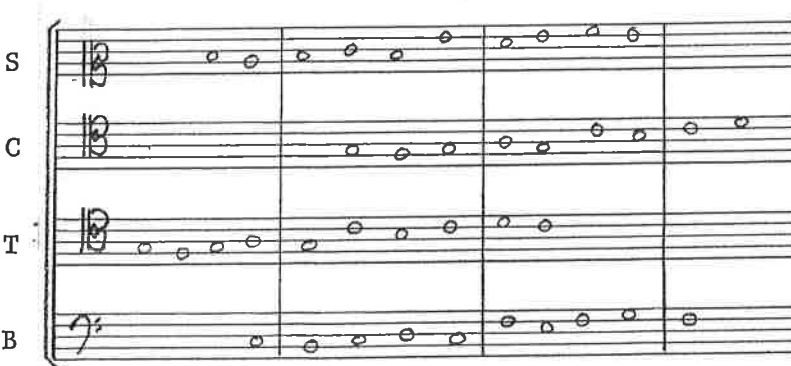
Ockeghem's points of imitation are generally briefer than Dufay's, and more numerous, and their immersion in a four-part texture often makes them very difficult to perceive. His imitation

is quite often at the interval of a fifth, and for a very interesting reason. Of the 39 major points of imitation in Ockeghem's *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini*, 21 involve lines that are notated identically, so that the interval of imitation results from the use of different clefs. Or the remaining 18, 12 are at the octave or unison as in Dufay, though one (*Credo* m.63) is at a second, one (*Sanctus* m. 52) at a sixth, and the rest at fifths. That, in over half of the imitation, the parts look the same on the page indicates the influence that Ockeghem's notation had on his compositional technique. 85% of his imitation involves a visual congruency, an audible congruency (interval of a unison) or both:

Ockeghem  
Gloria m.45:



Gloria m.180:



By lending itself to transposition, the notation leads the mind away from the scale degrees of the modal system to the idea of the interval, and hence the motive.

A word should be said concerning the influence of notation on the rhythmic interval of imitation. Points of imitation such as these, at rhythmic intervals of  $\frac{3}{8}$  of a measure and  $\frac{1}{6}$  of a measure, respectively:

Dufay  
Benedictus m.99:



Ockeghem  
Sanctus m.52:



are hardly recognizable as such in modern notation, while fifteenth-century notation devoid of ties or bar-lines, lends itself to the use of such rhythmic intervals. Under the tyranny of the bar-line, eighteenth-century composers tended to use rhythmic intervals which could be expressed in terms of bars or half-bars.

Although differences in dissonance treatment between the two composers are negligible, Ockeghem is very fond of two deceptively cadential devices not found in Dufay. The first device is the replacement by a rest of one of a pair of resolving notes, which, while leaving the resolution unambiguous, leaves the resting voice free to move to another register for immediate continuation:

Ockeghem  
Credo m.12:

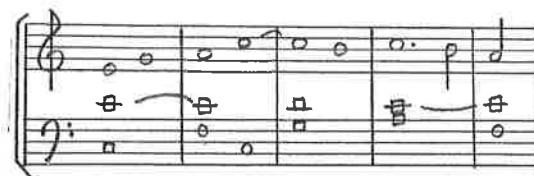


Ockeghem  
Christe m.30:



The second device corresponds to the familiar deceptive cadence of much later music: one voice merely moves to the third below the expected resolution, depriving it of the pure octave or unison which gives Dufay's phrase endings their finality:

Ockeghem  
Christe m.55:



These devices give a Wagnerian, non-stop continuity particularly to Ockeghem's two-voice writing, in sharp contrast to the predictability of Dufay's full cadences. Ockeghem apparently found Dufay's starting and stopping as troublesome as later composers (such as Cage) found Haydn's, and he developed means to keep the music going despite the rhythmic and contrapuntal necessity of coming to rest every so often. The overlapping possibilities of four-voice writing make continuity less of a problem, which is why Ockeghem's cadential devices crop up more in his two-part writing.

Clear phrasing, exposed unison imitation, large-scale repetition, and higher rhythmic coincidence between voices make Dufay's *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini* a perceptually easier work than that of Ockeghem. Ockeghem uses the same kind of phrase outlines as Dufay, but obscures them by

the use of overlapping and deceptive cadences. He uses imitation like Dufay's, but alters the interval and hides it within the texture. He uses several chant phrases as underlying structure as Dufay does, but he runs the phrases together, adds notes, and changes their harmonic significance with each repetition.

It is tempting to make a case for Dufay the Classic and Ockeghem the Romantic. They stand within the history of modal music as Haydn and Wagner within that of tonal music, and as Wagner pointed to the eventuality of the twelve-tone system, so Ockeghem shows us the seeds of the tonal system - all seen with twentieth-century hindsight, of course. But these fifteenth-century distinctions are parallel to only the technical distinctions between Romantic and Classical music, and it would be ludicrous to project into the music of Dufay and Ockeghem the same differences in aesthetic outlook and emotive content that exist between that of Haydn and Wagner. The differences between these two masses are more akin to those between a simple, straight-forward landscape painting and a highly ornate and detailed depiction of the same scene. Neither the subjects nor the intentions of the two works are different, only the ideas of how to best carry them out.

In comparison to Dufay's clearly audible symmetry, Ockeghem's complexity may be of the sort that leads, not to distraction, but to austerity. Instead of portraying that "purity of heart that wills one thing" in the music, Ockeghem may have felt that by hiding his structural and contrapuntal devices, and giving the listener less to hold on to, he was leaving the listener's mind free to attain that purity itself. Ockeghem was certainly no stranger to either formal

simplicity nor strict pre-compositional devices, as the Missa Prolationem certainly bears out. But Ockeghem's simplest and strictest works still have a seamless, opaque surface, in contrast to Dufay's melodious repetition, which he may have felt was more suitable for encouraging religious devotion.

Dufay and Ockeghem represent two successive steps in a long development, and resemble each other more than either resembles composers of the 14th or 16th centuries. In comparison, however, Dufay reminds us of earlier music with his invariant rhythmic settings of the cantus firmus, reminiscent of isorhythm; his fauxbourdon passages, which hark back to his earlier, English influenced music; and his structural "Gothicisms," such as the final Kyrie statement in fermata-capped chords, reminding one of the slow "Jesu Christe" chords of Machaut's mass. Ockeghem points to the 16th century with his equal voice writing, his pervasive points of imitation, and the seamless euphony of his texture.