

6. *Franciscus Krafft and the Leuven Beguinage*

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FRANCISCUS KRAFFT, the husband of Jeanne-Catherine Willems and the Master of Chapel at the Cathedral of St. Bavo in Ghent, died on January 13, 1795. Research carried out in 2004 for the Alamire Foundation, has made clear that this Franciscus Krafft is not the same composer as François-Joseph Krafft. The biographies on Krafft usually refer to the latter, the composer who was born in 1721. Neither is Franciscus Krafft a synonym for François, the son of Jean-Thomas Krafft. François Krafft is François-Joseph's nephew, who was born in 1733.¹ We are concerned here with another François: he was the youngest son of Jean-Laurent Krafft, and was born in Brussels on February 17, 1729.² To avoid confusion between the two composers called François, the composer under discussion here will be referred to by the Latin version of his given name, Franciscus.

1 CHORON & FAYOLLE 1810, 379 mention only one Krafft from Brussels, namely "Krafft Fr.". Fétis was the first to recognise that there were two different Krafts, both of whom were active in Brussels: he mentions both François-Joseph and François (FÉTIS, 1875-80, 5, 93-96). Fétis was followed in this by VANNES 1947, 222-24; DEHENNIN 1958; RASPÉ 1980 and 2001 and CORNAZ 2003. Another scholar, GREGOIR 1862, differentiated between Jean-Frédéric Krafft and François Krafft. ROELSTRAETE 1966 and 1968 offered the hypothesis that there was only one Krafft. More recent researchers have only studied a small part of the source material: DEGLINNE 1979 and VERFAILLE 1988.

2 BOUCKAERT & CORNAZ 2005.

Franciscus Krafft worked first in Brussels and then in Ghent. The manuscripts of his – mainly religious – compositions are kept in various archives. For example, more than 130 of his works can be found in the music library of the Cathedral of St. Bavo in Ghent, the majority of which have survived as autographs. From the sources in this collection it is clear that Krafft's compositions were widely known in the Austrian Low Countries.³ Herman Roelstraete was the first to give attention to a less well-known aspect of Krafft's career, that is, his involvement with the Leuven beguinage in the 1760s.⁴ Before discussing this episode, however, Franciscus Krafft's family connections and the beginnings of his career need further clarification.

Franciscus Krafft was the youngest son of Jean-Laurent Krafft and his second wife, Marie Aubersin. His grandfather, Jean-Georges Krafft, was of German origin and had settled in Brussels in 1694. Jean-Laurent was baptised in that same year, on November 14. Jean-Laurent grew up partly in Germany and in time moved to Brussels, the capital of the Austrian Low Countries, as well. He had several occupations, earning his living as an artist – painter, drawer and engraver –, a writer, and also as a composer. We know that he wrote *Passion de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ* since its libretto documents the work's performances in De Munt in Brussels on April 8, 1727 and on April 6, 1732. Unfortunately, the music itself is lost. Krafft's activities as a music engraver and publisher are documented by the countless imprints that appeared during the period 1731 to approximately 1750, including Joseph-Hector Fiocco's *Pièces de clavecin*, opus 1 (1731), Willem de Fesch's *VI Sonate a violino o flauto traversiero col basso per l'organo* (1731), Charles-Joseph van Helmont's *Pièces de clavecin*, opus 1 (1737), Henri-Jacques de Croes' *Sonates à quatre parties, violino primo, violino secundo, alto viola et basso continuo*, opus 4 (1747), Willem Gommaar Kennis' *Six sonates en trios*, opus 2 (ca. 1750), and Andraeu (Andrau)'s *Six sonates italiennes* for violin and/or flute (1748, lost).⁵ According to the *Gazette van*

3 BOUCKAERT & VERCAMMEN 2005, 55-85 (nos. 247-380).

4 ROELSTRAETE 1966, 1968.

5 CORNAZ 2001, 39-56.

Antwerpen (Antwerp Gazette) of October 8, 1748, Jean-Laurent Krafft lived in the *Accolaysstraat* at that time, a small street in Brussels, near to the *Kapellekerk* (Chapel church) that connects the *Ursulinenstraat* with the *Priemsstraat*. During the years 1750-60, Jean-Laurent Krafft was probably no longer working as a music publisher. In the registers of the parish of St. Gudula his death was recorded on January 1, 1768.

From the above, it appears that Franciscus Krafft was born into a family to whom music was very important. His name is first mentioned in a document dated 1747, a subscription list for Henri-Jacques de Croes' *Six sonates à quatre parties, violino primo, violino secondo, alto viola et basso continuo*, opus 4, which included a "Mr. F. Krafft, Musicien". The 18-year-old Franciscus Krafft had ordered a score from his father's publishing house.⁶ Furthermore, it was a work composed by a friend of the family. The names "Mr. F. Krafft, Musicien" and "Mr François Krafft, Musicien" also appeared in subscription lists from 1749 for, respectively, the *Six Sonatas and Trios*, opus 2, by Willem Gommaar Kennis, mentioned above, and the *Troisième livre de pièces de clavecin* by Josse Boutmy. The latter work was printed by François Harrewijn, the godfather of Jean-Laurent's eldest son, François-Joseph Krafft: Harrewijn, too, belonged to the close circle of family and friends.

In 1755, the city of Brussels carried out a population census. From the written outcome of this census,⁷ it appears that at that time, the premises in the Accolay Street ("Acoley straat") associated with Jean-Laurent Krafft in 1748 were occupied by a young man, 25 years of age, and his mother. The young man was registered under the name "Craft" (to be exact, Franciscus Krafft would have been 26 years old in 1755). The document also indicates that Craft was a book printer. It was not at all unusual for people to practice a number of professions, thus the reference could very well be to Franciscus Krafft, not only active as a young performer and composer, but also earning his living in his family's music printing office.

6 *Ibidem*, 51-52.

7 B Bra Etats de Brabant, 409.

Similarly, it is logical to suppose that Franciscus Krafft is the person who is mentioned in the *Almanach nouveau ou guide fidèle* from 1758 onwards. This guide to Brussels listed a certain Krafft from the "rue d'Acolit" under the headings "composers" and "organists and masters of the harpsichord"—clearly the "rue d'Acolit" is a misprint for the *rue d'Accolay*. Between 1759 and 1763, Franciscus Krafft was also listed in the guides published by the Brussels printer, J. Moris, at the same address.

In 1758, the liégeois music printer Benoit Andrez published the first music periodical to appear in the Low Countries, *L'Echo ou journal de musique française, italienne contenant des airs, chansons, brunettes, duo tendres ou bachiques, rondes, vaudevilles, contredances*.⁸ This periodical continued to appear until 1773 and was connected to the initiatives taken by Johann-Theodor of Bavaria to stimulate musical life in the region. Johann-Theodor was prince-bishop of Liège between 1744 and 1763, and also an enthusiastic amateur cellist. The very first composition in the January number of 1758 was a short vocal work, *Agréables ruisseaux* (Pleasant brooks), composed by "Sr. F. Krafft". This choice of composer was probably partly influenced by the prince bishop's German descent. Altogether, no less than 30 arias, ariettas and duets by Krafft appeared in *L'Echo* between 1758 and 1763. In the June issue of 1759, with the arietta *Vous devez trop à la nature* (You owe much to nature) there is even a reference to "F: Krafft Maître de Musique a Bruxelles" (F. Krafft, Master of Music in Brussels).⁹ In August of that same year, and in July 1760, *L'Echo* printed two arias from the opera *Le faux astrologue* (The fake astrologist) "par F: Krafft" (by F. Krafft). All that is known about this opera is that it was based on the same libretto as *Le feint astrologue*, a comedy written by Pierre Corneille's brother, Thomas. Nothing is known about the music apart from the two extracts that appeared in *L'Echo*. Shortly afterwards, Krafft started to work on the same subject again, in a Dutch version this time—the libretto of *Den valschen Astrologant* was published in Brussels in 1763 by N. Jacobs. Whether the

8 RISM B II, 163.

9 With thanks to Olivia Wahnon de Oliveira, who was so kind as to provide the precise data.

French or the Dutch versions of the opera were ever performed in Brussels has not yet been established.

In addition to Krafft's short secular pieces published in *L'Echo*, a number of religious compositions dating from the 1760s have come to light. These early works are motets, written for the beguinage in Leuven. Krafft uses the same scoring in each of them: two solo sopranos, female choir and organ. The manuscripts of these works are currently kept at two locations: as a part of the Herman Roelstraete Collection in the music department of the Royal Library of Belgium and in the Archives of the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven.

The manuscript containing the oldest pieces, B Br Mus Ms 2181, is an eighteenth-century copy of the first soprano part taken from a series of short works for the scoring mentioned earlier. The original score and the two separate soprano parts can be found in the Beguinage Collection in the Archive of the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven (B LVu, Gbeg).

Table 7

Franciscus Krafft, compositions for the Leuven beguinage, 1760-67, in B Br Mus Ms 2181 and B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2

1760

Ave Maria in A (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (74))

1763

Tantum ergo in C (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (19))

1764

Alma redemptoris mater in G (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (56))

Ave Maria in F (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (76))

Ave Maria in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (77))

O sacrum convivium in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (51))

Regina caeli in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (67))

1765

Alma redemptoris mater in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (59))

Ave Maria in F (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (82))

Ave regina in A (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (60))

Crudelis Herodes Deum in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (13))
Magnificat in C (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (14))
Tantum ergo in C (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (21))
Te lucis ante terminum in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (16))

1766

Ave Maria in G (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (78))
Ego sum panis vitae in A (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (48))
Regina caeli in A (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (68))
Tantum ergo in F (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (93))

1767

Ave Maria in F (niet in B LVu)
Laudate pueri in G (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (49))

Women's names are mentioned in three of the manuscripts, (see below), presumably the names of the beguines in Leuven who sang the solo parts. In the *Ave Maria* composed in 1765, the names Thijsbaert (or Thuysbaert?) and Van Ernegem are noted. The second name also occurs in the original manuscript of the *Tantum Ergo* of 1766; in the *Tantum Ergo* composed a year earlier, the names Matant Paštiels and Nielandt are recorded. In the *Ave Maria* of 1766 only one name is given, that of Allo[ys]ia Crabbeels.

The music collection at the Cathedral of St. Bavo contains other autographs that the composer probably took with him when he moved from Brussels to Ghent in 1769. These autographs show that Franciscus Krafft did not only compose for the ladies of the beguinage in Leuven at that time, but also for many other kinds of ensembles. He wrote works for four or five soloists, choir and for orchestra.

In some of the beguinage manuscripts, the exact liturgical occasion for which the piece was composed is indicated. For example, the *Crudelis Herodus Deum* of 1765 was composed for Epiphany: the manuscript mentions "op drij koningen".

B Br Mus Ms 2165 contains a number of scores that are most probably partly autographs as well; the compositions in this source were also written for the same combination of two sopranos, female choir and organ. The corresponding separate parts can be found in the Archives of the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven.

Table 8

Franciscus Krafft, compositions for the beguinage of Leuven,
1764-66, in B Br Mus Ms 2165 and B LVu Gbeg 4

1764

Missa Solemnis in C (B LVu Gbeg 4 (3))

1765

Missa tertiae classis in G (B LVu Gbeg 4 (6))

Requiem in F (B LVu Gbeg 4 (21))

1766

Missa in C (B LVu Gbeg 4 (2), the version for three, instead of two sopranos)

Regnum mundi in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1 (55))

Veni sancte spiritus in C (B LVu Gbeg 4 (5))

The second soprano part of the *Missa Solemnis* also reveals a clear link with the beguinage (the score of this work can be found in the Royal Library of Brussels, but the separate parts are kept in Leuven). They include the inscription “*Missa Solemnis Primae classis Methodo facillimo elaborata a F. Krafft 1764 ad usum begguinage Lov.*”. The purpose of the motet *Regnum mundi* is also clear: it was sung “op den feestdagh van St begga, caecilia en apolonia” (on the feast of St. Begga, Cecilia and Apolonia). St. Begga was regarded as the founder of the beguines.¹⁰

Another series of manuscripts, kept in Leuven, dating from 1764, 1765 and 1766, turn out to have been written for the beguinage as well, and display the same scoring.

Table 9

Franciscus Krafft, compositions for the beguinage of Leuven,
1764-66, in B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2

1764

Salve regina in C (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (72))

Salve regina in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (73))

10 OLYSLAGER 1978, 29-30.

1765

Ave Maria in F (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (81); differs from the cited *Ave Maria* of 1765)

Fortem virili peccatore in A (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (10))

Homo quidam fecit in F (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (44))

Jesu redemptor omnium in A (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (8))

O quam suavis est in B flat (B LVu Gbef 3, 1, 2, (43))

Regina caeli in C (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (69))

Stabat mater in c

Tantum ergo in F (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (92); a different composition from the *Tantum ergo* in F of 1766)

Tantum ergo in Bes (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (20)).

1766

Ego sum panis vitae in A (a different composition from the B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (54) listed above)

O esca viatorum in A (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (45))

Te lucis ante terminum in B flat (B LVu Gbeg 3, 1, 2 (17); a different composition from the one in B flat of 1765).

These manuscripts, dating from the period 1764-66, are also autographs. The *Ego sum panis vitae* in A bears the inscription "Sondaeghs Den 1 jan 1766" (Sunday, January 1, 1766).

The Royal Library keeps an autograph from 1766, containing a Mass in B flat for two women's voices and basso continuo (B Br Mus Ms 2154, a part of the Roelstraete Collection). The title page of the manuscript bears the inscription "Boek Toebehoorende aen de Kerk van het groot Beggijnhof van Loven" (this book belongs to the church of the large beguinage of Leuven); the back of the second page mentions "Krafft 1767. 8 julii" (cf. ILLUSTRATIONS II and 12).

A short analysis of the liturgical purpose of the chants clarifies the function of these compositions. Apart from complete mass cycles, Krafft only wrote two other compositions specifically for use during Mass, namely the *Stabat mater* sequence for the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady, and the Pentecostal sequence *Veni sancte spiritus*. All the compositions that are related to the Mass were composed during the years 1764 to 1766 and, with the exception of the *Stabat Mater* (in C minor), all of them are set in major keys.



Illustration 11

B Br Mus Ms 2154: [Franciscus] Krafft, *Missa*: title page.

Adagio tutti *Missa* *Krafft 1787. 8. juli*

tutti
Ky-ri-e e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son Ky-ri-e e-lei-son e-lei-son Ky-ri-e e-lei-son

Duo
e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son

tutti
e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son

tutti
e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son e-lei-son

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tutti
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Illustration 12
B Br Mus Ms 2154, [Franciscus] Krafft, *Missa*: p. 2

The other compositions were written for use during the official daily services, more specifically for Vespers, Compline and Benediction. Krafft's setting of Psalm 112, *Laudate pueri Dominum*, was possibly intended for Sunday Vespers, which generally make use of the five Psalms 109 to 113. The Magnificat is also a set part of this service. Most of Krafft's other compositions for Vespers are hymns or Magnificat-antiphons: *Jesu redemptor omnium* (for Christmas), *Crudelis Herodes* (for Epiphany), *Tantum ergo* (Corpus Christi), and *Fortem virili* (Common of the Saints) are—in their plainchant form—hymns, while *O sacrum convivium* and *O quam suavis est* are Magnificat-antiphons for Corpus Christi. The Benedictus-antiphon for Corpus Christi, *Ego sum panis vitae*, is the liturgical parallel for Lauds. Finally, *Regnum mundi*, is a responsory for Vespers (from the Common of the Saints).

Krafft also composed a setting for Compline, *Te lucis ante terminum*. Compline is usually closed with a Marian antiphon, which changes according to the time of the year: *Alma redemptoris Mater* is sung between Advent and Candlemas, *Ave regina caelorum* from Candlemas to Maundy Thursday, *Regina caeli* from Easter Saturday to the first Sunday after Pentecost, *Salve regina* from the first Sunday after Pentecost to the Saturday before Advent. Between the years 1764-66, Krafft provided the beguinage of Leuven with the complete cycle and, with the exception of *Ave regina caelorum*, even supplied various settings of these Marian antiphons.

For Benediction, hymns were often "recuperated" from other services. The compositions listed as related to the celebration of Corpus Christi may also, or perhaps even exclusively, have been performed at Benediction, such as Krafft's setting of the chant antiphon *Homo quidam fecit coenam magnam*. The five *Tantum ergo*s were perhaps just intended for Benediction—which would fit in with the traditionally prominent veneration of the Sacrament in beguinages. The many *Ave Marias*, and the Marian antiphons used for Vespers mentioned earlier, may also have been used for Marian Benediction. Final answers to these hypotheses can only be revealed by further research.

Although Krafft appeared to have worked very closely with the beguinage in Leuven all those years, he remained an active

performer in Brussels throughout this time. In 1762, he was referred to as a "maître de musique à Bruxelles", in the subscription list for the *Sonates et concerts pour le clavecin, accompagné de deux violons, taille et basse*, opus 4, by Jean-Jacques Robson. Between 1764 and 1768, his name also appears again in the *Almanach nouveau ou guide fidèle*, advertised, as before, under the same rubric. However, from this guide, we can infer that he had moved in the meantime, and now lived "au poid[s] de la Ville".

The manuscripts containing *De profundis* in D and the *Levavi oculos meos* in E, both from 1766, are to be found in the music collection of the Cathedral of St. Bavo in Ghent. The separate parts state that the music was composed by "francisco Krafft Maestro di Cappella e Compositore di Musica in Bruxelles" (Francisco Krafft, master of chapel and composer of music in Brussels). The same information appears again in another manuscript from the same library, containing a *Credidi* in G from 1767. Franciscus Krafft had himself called "maestro di cappella" on the title page of two different instrumental works that were published in Liège by Benoît Andrez. The *Sei sonate per il cembalo*, opus 4, and the *Sei divertimenti per il cembalo da sonarsi con un violino solo o pura senza*, opus 5, are presented as works by "Francesco Krafft di Bruxelles", for sale in Jean-Joseph Boucherie's bookshop in Brussels.

Although the opuses 4 and 5 have still not been fully researched and therefore have not yet been dated as accurately as possible, there are indications that Benoît Andrez and Jean-Joseph Boucherie worked together very closely between 1760 and 1762. Boucherie closed his bookshop at the beginning of 1769.

Although Franciscus Krafft was probably pleased to be referred to as "maestro di cappella" from 1766 onwards, it is not immediately obvious where exactly he may have exercised that office. As yet, no firm evidence can prove that Krafft had an official position anywhere in Brussels. Similar positions at the court chapel and at the choir of the Church of St. Gudula were occupied by Henri-Jacques de Croes, a friend of the Krafft family, and Charles-Joseph van Helmont, a member of the Krafft family, respectively. There are no clear indications of Krafft having worked in other churches, or even in De Munt theatre. More-

over, one should not forget the fact that all *maestri di cappella* were listed by name under the rubric "Directeurs de musique" in the *Almanach nouveau*. Krafft's name does not appear in this list, although, for example, de Croes and van Helmont are included, along with various other musicians. Further research into the archives of Brussels may bring to light new references to Krafft. On the other hand, it may also lead to a dead end. After all, the possibility that Krafft earned his living as an independent harpsichord teacher, who, in addition, composed some instrumental and religious music, should not be ruled out.

After the end of his activities in Brussels and Leuven, Franciscus Krafft moved to Ghent in 1769. The exact circumstances under which the composer began his task as musical director of the Cathedral of St. Bavo are unknown, but it is clear that Krafft enjoyed a good reputation in the Austrian Low Countries. The geographical dispersion of his compositions is a sure sign of this: his compositions from the 1760s on came to light in, among other places, the churches of St. James and of St. Paul in Antwerp, the Church of St. Waldetrudis in Herentals, the beguinage in Leuven, the Church of St. Elizabeth in Mons, and churches in Brussels (St. Gudula) and Anderlecht.

On May 28, 1769, Marie-Marguerite Krafft was baptised in the Chapel Church in Brussels. On April 7 of that year, however, her father had already been appointed as *maestro di cappella* in Ghent. From 1770 onwards, Krafft's name ceases to appear under the musicians' rubrics of the Brussels *Almanach nouveau*, and neither was any other Krafft listed. In addition, Krafft's arias were no longer published in *L'Echo* of Liège from that time onwards. It seems as though his appointment in Ghent demanded all the composer's energy and dedication, only allowing him enough time to write church music for the Cathedral. The large number of Krafft's compositions in the Cathedral's music collection seem to support this hypothesis. Some of them are dated, and designate Krafft's origins as "Bruxellensi". Even after Krafft's resignation as Director of Music on August 23, 1794, his music continued to be performed in Ghent Cathedral. Krafft's *In exitu Israel* in D is the last choral work in the collection. The manuscript records that this is Krafft's last composition: "com-

position posthume francois Krafft Maitre de musique faite le 9 janvier 1795, decedé le 13 jan. 1795" (posthumous composition of Francois Krafft, composed January 9, 1795, died January 13, 1795).

From the available material, it can be concluded that Franciscus Krafft must have written about forty compositions for the beguinage of Leuven between 1760 and 1767. These were psalms, motets and masses for two sopranos, female choir and a simple organ accompaniment. As these works do not appear in other music collections of this period, it can be assumed that they were written for performance in the beguinage of Leuven. Although Krafft also composed for other types of ensembles in the 1760s, it is remarkable that from 1770 onwards he no longer wrote for this specific scoring, but concentrated on larger ensembles of four, five, six or even eight voices with orchestral accompaniment.