

Recruitment Activities by a Sixteenth-Century Italian Princely Chapel:

Josquin Persoens' Recruitment Travels in 1565

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This article examines how Josquin Persoens acquired Flemish musicians for the ducal chapel of Parma in 1565. Cipriano de Rore served as the chapel master in Parma from 1561 to 1565. Josquin succeeded him, although no document definitely calls him the chapel master. As the leader of the chapel, Josquin was in charge of educating boys, and had an opportunity of publishing his works.

In 1565, Josquin accompanied Duke Ottavio Farnese to Brussels. He travelled the Flanders three times to acquire musicians. First, he visited Liège, but failed in his mission there. After stopping at Leuven, he returned to Brussels alone. Second, he visited Leuven, where he acquired a boy “Guglielmo”. Third, he visited Mechelen, where he acquired an adult alto “Teodoro d’Olanda”.

Josquin’s recruitment activities can be observed in two contexts. First, it was an important duty of Josquin as the leader of the chapel. His project can be estimated to be quite successful, because he acquired a boy. Second, it was a project of the ducal chapel of Parma without a help of the Brussels government. From a macroscopic point of view, Josquin’s recruitment travels were a project in which a new princely chapel tried to acquire Flemish musicians to expand its size and force.