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Project Description

A Bio-Prosographical Study of French Musicians during the Early Italian Wars (1494-1516)

This dissertation will research the lives of French singers and composers from the beginning of the Italian Wars in 1494 during the reign of Charles VIII to the events and aftermath of the Battle of Marignano in 1515 during the reign of Francis I. This project considers the roles of French singers not only as composers and performers in the service of the French king but as mobile clerics and members of battle entourages. Using the methodology of prosopography, the project will expand upon the known trans-alpine mobility of Franco-Flemish musicians and evaluate trends in migration both on a group and individual level to determine the effect of the wars on their employment. This analysis will focus on the ability to enter the service of a foreign chapel or court during times of conflict, including across enemy lines. Furthermore, considering the integration of many French musicians into religious institutions, this dissertation will examine local ordinances and institutional documents that reveal details of clerical life during French military campaigns. Finally, this dissertation will examine chronicles, memoires, and letters that document the events preceding and following the Battle of Marignano in the fall of 1515 to determine the circumstances under which French chapel singer Jean Mouton arrived in Italy and his relationship to the battle itself.