DISSERTATION ABSTRACT: KRISTINE KAREN FORNEY


The study of early music printing and publishing is yet a young discipline. Previous inquiries have concentrated on sixteenth-century music publishing and provided the necessary bibliographies of the principal printers of music. The present work represents a second stage--an investigation of the technical aspects of music printing by surveying the surviving documentation and the printed book. The subject is Tielman Susato (ca. 1515-ca. 1565), active in Antwerp from 1543 to 1561 as the earliest major Flemish music printer.

This study surveys the beginning of music printing in the Low Countries with particular emphasis on the introduction and development of the single-impression process prior to Tielman Susato. Recently discovered biographical material has provided new insight into the life of this printer/publisher/musician, and has shown that he did not die ca.1561 as previously thought, but that he moved to the north of Holland during the “time of troubles” of the 1560’s. An investigation into the life of his son-in-law, Arnold Rosenberger, has shed new light on the later years of Susato and has shown him to have been politically active at that time.

Archival documents from the Stadarchief and the Plantin-Moretus Museum of Antwerp and from the Archives Générales du Royaume of Brussels have allowed a reconstruction of the shop and materials available to Susato; the extant prints themselves have permitted the compilation of a catalogue of all materials used by the Antwerp shop. The combination of the documents and the information afforded by the books has led to a detailed reconstruction of the making of a sixteenth-century music book. Though the specifics are based on the Susato shop, a more universal application of principles and methodology may certainly be possible. Of particular interest in this study is Susato’s adoption of “nested” music type, a refinement of the single-impression process developed in Paris ca. 1525 by Pierre Attaingnant.

The application of the descriptive bibliographer’s tools to extant Susato books has made possible the identification of new, corrected editions, especially of the chanson books. The methodology employed is clearly outlined and the results are supported by an appendix containing quasi-facsimile transcriptions of titles pages, collation formulas and a classification of the editions of the chanson books.
Consideration is given to Susato as a publisher of the Franco-Flemish chanson. Repertorial relationships between publishers are investigated as are manuscript sources of the music published by Susato. A survey of the geographic distribution of the composers of the Franco-Flemish chanson is outlined as is what information is known of composer/printer arrangements. Other commercial considerations include aspects of patronage of publishing, book provenance and distribution and book price.