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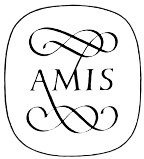

Apollo, Orpheus, and David

A study of the crucial century in the development of bowed strings in North Italy 1480–1580 as seen in graphic evidence and some surviving instruments

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IN 1967 Emanuel Winternitz opened a classic study[1] with the statement, "One of the great lacunae in the history of musical instruments is the question of the origin of the violin. This seems absurd, considering the increasing importance of this instrument for more than three hundred years." In this paper I have sought to bring together for the first time a body of documentation of three different kinds relating to North Italian bowed strings during the crucial century of their development, ca. 1480 to ca. 1580.[2] To provide as much information as possible which is central to the core of my study I have deliberately omitted reference to many fascinating and important details which I hope to discuss in later articles, such as bow-types, players' positions in holding instruments and bows, types and arching of fingerboards and bridges,

1. *Gaudenzio Ferrari, His School and the Early History of the Violin* (Varallo Sesia, 1967).

2. I wish to acknowledge at the outset the immense debt of gratitude I owe to the many museum curators, experts, and scholars without whose generous sharing of information and encouragement I could not have brought together the material presented here, and especially to the late Rembert Wurlitzer, the late E. M. W. Paul, and to Charles Beare, who has allowed me to publish here for the first time documentary evidence located by Paul, and who has helped me immeasurably to reach an understanding of many challenging problems. Lest the reader misunderstand, it should also be made clear that the hypotheses advanced in this article are entirely my responsibility.

varnishes and other details of workmanship, etc., in order to concentrate on a main theme: the careers of principal types of instrument throughout the period and, in synopsis, beyond it, with the eventual emergence of a single dominant type. I have divided the instruments into three classes along lines which may at first seem arbitrary, and which clearly are not traditional:

Class I: Instruments with cornerless, guitar-shaped bodies.

Class II: Instruments with bodies having two well-defined corners, one on each side of top and back of the body.

Class III: Instruments having bodies with four corners, two on each side of top and back of the body.

It will at once be asked why I have not followed traditional classifications developed by the most eminent organologists and universally employed. My answer must be that the evidence I shall present does not always permit the student to state categorically whether a certain ancient instrument depicted in a graphic, or even surviving today in a collection, is a viol, a lira, or a member of the violin family. Just as much to the point, the study of these instruments has suggested that traditional organological classifications do not really coincide with the character of the instruments and the course of their development. In this view I agree with Winternitz that "neither the strict distinction between the families of the viola da gamba and the viola da braccio nor the direct evolution of the violin from the lira da braccio conforms to its actual evolution, and some attempts at condensation of its complex story have resulted in oversimplification."[3] For instance, it has very often been asserted that viols (with flat backs) are older than violin types (with arched backs); but I have not found the slightest hint of concrete evidence to support this assertion, and furthermore there survive today viols with arched backs and violin-family instruments with flat backs, just as my evidence will show that presence or absence of frets does not define type. Again, it has been argued[4] and widely accepted that the lira da braccio is the immediate ancestor of the violin family; actually, it appears to me from the evidence that otherwise

3. *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, p. 10.

4. First by A. Hajdecki, *Die Italienische lira da braccio* (Mostar, 1892; reprinted Amsterdam, 1965).

similar instruments with and without drones developed side by side. Similarly, details of head and pegbox design, or sound-hole design and position, are not the factors which separate one type from another. Instead, the evidence known to me suggests that the evolution of the three body types is the crucial factor: the first died out shortly after 1600 in North Italy, but experienced a last brief revival in the last quarter of the seventeenth century; the second, quite popular in the atmosphere of experimentation characteristic of the Renaissance, persisted until about 1625, then disappeared forever; the third type, the four-cornered instrument, came into dominant favor in North Italy by the mid-sixteenth century and was used with many variations indiscriminately for viols, lire, and violin types throughout the developmental period and up to about 1625 in North Italy. Then, quite suddenly, no doubt because of a large number of complex sociocultural factors we cannot entirely fathom, but perhaps including the devastating plague of the years around 1630, the lira made its exit forever, and the viols also departed from the Italian scene with only brief reappearances from about 1685 to about 1730, when a comparatively small and short-lived demand for viols (of powerful violinlike construction) seems to have been created in Italian court orchestras by northern music and/or musicians—and once more in the brief eighteenth-century vogue under Vivaldi's influence for the viola d'amore, of which a number of Italian examples survive. But, aside from these brief episodes—the result of non-Italian influences—the violin type and shape definitely became the dominating force in North Italy after 1625. This is how the violin family, which we really should call the "viola family," because nearly all the earliest instruments of the type appear to have been very large violas, at last emerged and completely triumphed over the other types. It must have become clear to Italian players and craftsmen that the violas, and then their soprano and bass counterparts, violins and 'celli, had much stronger voices with more varied and ductile expression than flat-backed, many-stringed viols, and that they were superior also to the developed lira with its extra fingered string plus two drones. This is not to say, of course, that the viols, which had so much appeal for so long outside Italy, or the lire, on which very interest-

ing effects could certainly be obtained, were or are dull and worthless instruments; it is simply that the musicians of North Italy came to prefer the violin type, and these were therefore built in ever-increasing numbers from the 1530's forward to the exclusion of other types a century later. Rebecs of various configurations have been ignored in this study; they are rather frequently seen in late fifteenth-century and slightly later graphics from North Italy, but then they die out. They have been excluded because they were already becoming extinct as our period begins and left no real descendants that demand our attention.

A difficult problem of nomenclature faces the student of this field. While scholars have created a large literature to explain precise meanings of early terminology, making heroic efforts to separate the material into rigid classes, the facts are that Italian nomenclature in our period was extraordinarily fluid, and that the instruments simply will not be squeezed into pigeonholes for our convenience. Not wishing to add to the confusion by creating new names, and not finding any of the scholarly solutions yet published satisfactory, I have simply called the "da braccio" instruments throughout this article "violas" when they have no drones and "liras" when they do. Both terms were current in the period, but I am not sure that even the single distinction I have made was actually employed consistently at the time. Virtually all of the "da braccio" instruments to be considered are of large dimensions; we should most likely call them "tenors" today.

The three types of evidence employed here are North Italian woodcuts and engravings apparently not well known to students of the subject, Venetian documents which have not previously been published, and the North Italian bowed strings which survive in public and private collections today, perhaps never before discussed as a group and very often assigned erroneous dates where previously published. I have become familiar with the North Italian graphics of the period as an antiquarian bookseller with a special interest in early Italian books and graphics; thus it has happened that I am thoroughly acquainted with the bibliography of the subject, have seen great numbers of the graphics myself, and have rather often found graphic material relating to this study which has

previously gone unnoticed. The sources of the Venetian archival material which have at last provided much dated documentary evidence concerning instrument makers in Venice are to be discussed in much further detail by Charles Beare in a work now in progress. The research which led to the discovery of this material was originally carried out by the late E. M. W. Paul with the encouragement and assistance of the late great expert in stringed instruments Rembert Wurlitzer, both of them friends who encouraged my interest in the subject. And with few exceptions indeed I have seen and closely examined the surviving instruments. No reference is made in the text to the rather large body of North Italian paintings in which numerous representations of instruments occur, often including Apollo playing the lira da braccio, as these have been frequently published.[5] It should be noted, however, that many of these pictures are by Venetian masters.

The title of my study has thrust itself upon me because of an amazing set of circumstances in North Italian graphics, and especially in Venetian printed books, during the period under discussion. First, in the classicizing atmosphere of the Renaissance, Greek mythology was popular, and it was especially attractive to the neo-Latinists, translators of Greek, editors of classical texts of all kinds, and to the burgeoning crop of vernacular poets. At the same moment a period of rapid experimentation and development accompanied the creation of music which featured independent instruments more importantly than hitherto. And what could have been more attractive to Renaissance literary figures and their musical audiences than the poet-god Apollo, who played his "lyre," and the sweetest singer of all mortals, unfortunate Orpheus, who played the same instrument? Thus it happens that Renaissance graphics are full of depictions of god and mortal with their instruments, or of poets who hoped to emulate their classical counterparts; in the process the Greek lyre was forgotten, and the then-current Italian instrument called the same name by Italians, the "lira," was depicted. A still more extraordinary transferral occurs

5. In Georg Kinsky, *Geschichte der Musik in Bildern* (Leipzig, 1929), and elsewhere.

relative to the biblical psalmist, King David; his instrument, typically shown in medieval and early Renaissance depictions as a psaltery, was suddenly converted without apology or explanation to a "da braccio" instrument, either viola or lira. Why this occurred I cannot say, but as the reader is to see, whether or not the royal composer actually plays his lira in these graphics, the instrument is virtually always displayed, often lovingly and in great detail. When these graphic conventions are combined with the facts that Venice was the world capital of the book trade and printing production during our period, and still more specifically that Venetian presses provided religious service books for nearly the whole civilized world, and typically furnished them with two colors, printed music, and copious illustration in which the psalmist nearly always appears, it is easy to see how it happened that the sweet singers of antiquity, god, mortal, and king, were depicted playing the Venetian instruments of the day. I suggest that these graphics are "photographs taken at the time" of actual instruments, and we know this because enough Venetian instruments of the period survive to prove that the graphics do not lie.

The following works are frequently cited in the text by means of abbreviations which appear at farthest left below:

Ba Anthony Baines. *European and American Musical Instruments*. New York, 1966.

Bo David Boyden. *The Hill Collection of Musical Instruments in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*. New York, 1969.

E Prince d'Essling. *Les Livres à figures vénitiens de la fin du XVe siècle au commencement du XVIe*. Florence and Paris, 1907–1914.

H Arthur Mayger Hind. *Early Italian Engraving*. London, 1938–1948.

K Georg Kinsky. *Musikhistorisches Museum von Wilhelm Heyer in Cöln, Katalog*. Cologne, 1910–1912.

Kr Paul Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*. London, 1897 (reprinted 1968).

M Victor Charles Mahillon. *Catalogue descriptif et analytique du Musée Instrumental du Conservatoire Royal de musique, Bruxelles*. 2nd ed., Ghent and Brussels, 1893–1922.

S M. Sander. *Le Livre à figures italien*. Milan, 1942.

V Julius Schlosser. *Die Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente* [in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna]. Vienna, 1920 (reprinted 1974).

A word about the techniques of woodcut and engraving may be useful to the reader in explaining the limitations of these media. First, woodcut is a process in which empty areas are cut away leaving the desired design in relief on a block of very hard, virtually grainless wood, such as box. The most difficult limitation lies in reproducing in the block very detailed work, for instance the very close series of parallel lines which would be used in a drawing to represent a set of strings on an instrument. When the representation is made smaller, as in a very small woodcut, this limitation is greatly increased. The problem is much less severe in metal engraving, where the most delicate detail may be introduced by the graver into a metal plate (cut in intaglio, the opposite of the woodcut), and so absence or loss of detail in an engraving can only be the result of two random factors, the laziness of a metal engraver who omits detail because it is too much trouble, or the ignorance of the craftsman who does not understand and therefore does not faithfully reproduce the model before him. The same random factors are not the exclusive property of the metal engraver, however; woodcutters may have been and often were just as lazy or ignorant. Another point is simple but crucial: whether the model is a drawing or a scene observed live by the engraver of wood or metal, it must be engraved onto the block or metal plate *in reverse* if impressions are to come out in the same direction as the original. We shall see that this cardinal rule was not always observed. To sum up, some representations to be examined below are clearly defective, while others proclaim themselves to be extremely careful and faithful. Enough of them exist, both good and bad, to enable us to interpret them with considerable reliability, though we must remain cautious and severe in our interpretations.

Where only the year date of a graphic or instrument discussed below is known it is expressed as, for example, "1500." When month and year are known, but not day, the date is expressed as "V.1500," meaning May 1500. Where a complete date is known, it is cited as "21.VII.1500," that is, 21 July 1500.

Labels of instruments are generally not discussed in detail in this article. The reader is to assume that the author has studied and has confidence in the labels cited herein unless specific questions about them are raised in the text.

Class I: Guitar-Shaped Bodies

Class I in this study comprises instruments having a cornerless, guitar-shaped body, usually only slightly narrowed at the waist. This type appears to be very old and is repeatedly seen in medieval and Renaissance paintings, but it is the least frequently observed of the three types here discussed. An example (Figure 1), played by an angel, is the high-sided viola with round (?) head, round rose soundhole, and four strings, seen in an anonymous Florentine engraving ca. 1480–1490 in the "Fine Manner" (H A.II.25). Somewhat more developed types are seen slightly later. In an engraving (Figure 2) by Jacopo de' Barbari, ca. 1500 (this artist designed a famous bird's-eye view of Venice printed on several woodcut sheets in 1500) a satyr is seen playing a large lira da braccio (how modern is his position!) with seven strings two of which are drones, five pegs shown, leaf head, c-holes, and bridge set rather low (H 19).

A virtually identical instrument is played by a young man seated on an elevated platform (fiddler's throne or simply a stage?) before an audience in a woodcut (Figure 3) expressly made for an edition

FIGURE 1.

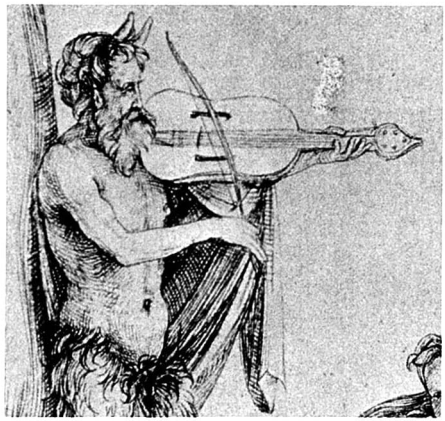

FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 3.

FIGURE 4.

of Luigi Pulci's *Morgante maggiore*, Florence, 22.1.1500 (Kr 150); it has central c-holes, four strings (?) and five pegs, no drones. Of just this type is the viola seen hanging from a tree in the title woodcut (Figure 4), with the Medici arms, of an elegant youth (surely the

FIGURE 7.

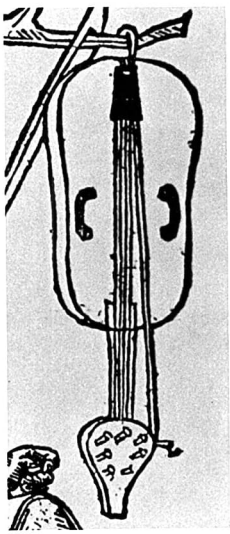

FIGURE 5.

author is intended) seated playing a lute in Lorenzo de' Medici's magnificent collection of love poems, *Selve d'amore*, one of the editions of which appeared with this cut in 1518 (Kr 187). Virtually identical in other details to the viola just cited, this example has four fingered strings clearly depicted, no pegs shown. Another very similar instrument (Figure 5), but with two drone strings, four fingered strings, and seven pegs shown, appeared on the title of Plutarchus, *Epitome* in Latin, printed at Ferrara (sixty miles south-west of Venice) on 17.II.1501 (S 5772); the same cut was reused in 1505 (S 4977). Again, Apollo is seen playing an unusually small and quite narrow version, though with a long neck, of this type, in an engraving by Nicoletto Rosex da Modena (working in North

Italy 1500–1512), one of a pack of cards (H 121-f); it has four strings, a rose-hole, low-set bridge, and leaf head with four pegs. In a cut (Figure 6) from the *Historia de Apollonio di Tiro*, printed at Florence about 1515 (S 474–5), a young dandy plays a viola from a fiddler's throne to an audience, with high-placed c-holes, leaf head, only two strings and three pegs shown. A narrow, guitar-shaped viola with indistinct sound holes (can they be early f-holes?) is played by a woman in Ovid, *Epistolæ Heroides*, Venice, 20.VIII. 1516 (E 1145); three strings can be seen, but the head is obscured. Another instrument of this class is played by Apollo in Vitruvius, *De architectura*, Italian translation and commentary by C. Cesariano, Como, 5.VII.1521 (S 7696); it has a leaf head, c-holes at waist, and three visible strings in the tiny representation. In Figure 7, from Baldassare Olympo's *Ardelia*, Venice, 9.IV.1522 (E 2136), Orpheus plays a fretted viola, waisted, leaf head, five strings visible, with

FIGURE 6.

low-lying c-holes, and no bridge. This subject is copied from, and therefore later than, the engraving of the same scene by Marcantonio Raimondi (Figure 27). But in the Raimondi original, interestingly enough, an entirely different four-cornered instrument, discussed below in Class III, is depicted. I have observed only eight North Italian graphics depicting instruments of Class I, of which this is the last, but it is certain that the genus did not die out in 1522, despite the want of additional graphic representations.

An instrument in Vienna (Figure 8, V C.71), made at Venice by Francesco (De Machettis) Linarol, of Bergamo, is described by Schlosser as a "Diskantgambe (Violetta piccola)." It is guitar-shaped, has f-holes, six strings, scroll head, arched back, but (unlike any of the instruments depicted in the graphics) it has the pointed upper end of the back characteristic of viols. "Francesco Lirer" (i.e., maker of lire) has first been located in Venetian documents in 1566; in a later document concerning his son Ventura we learn that the family name was De Machettis, or Machetti, and that they stemmed from Bergamo. As Ventura was over sixty in 1601 and was signing instruments at least as early as 1577, we may then infer that Francesco was born no later than about 1515–1520 and was probably already deceased in 1577 (certainly in 1601 as the documents tell us), as sons ordinarily did not sign their names in the world of instrument makers unless their fathers had died or definitively retired, or the son had moved away and established himself independently. The pseudonym "Linarol" (modern equivalent "Linaiolo") used by both father and son means "dealer or worker in flax." Perhaps the father Francesco actually had been a flaxworker when he first came to Venice, and the nickname stuck. In one document his son is styled "cembaloer," i.e., maker of keyboards or harpsichords; but vagueness about the precise nature of the instruments made by an individual is frequent in early archives, and there is no evidence that such a great maker of bowed strings ever actually made a keyboard instrument. We shall return to Francesco's son Ventura again in discussing his surviving instruments, all of which fall into Class III.

Another well-known guitar-shaped viol of our period which has survived is the beautiful treble (Figure 9) signed by Gioan Maria of

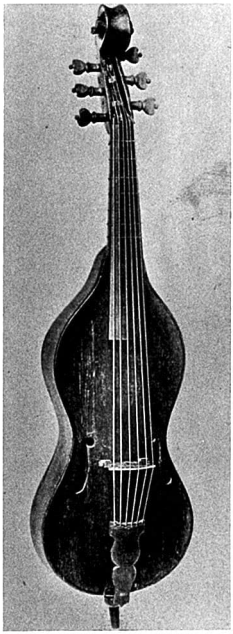

FIGURE 8.

FIGURE 9.

Brescia, preserved along with a lira by the same maker (discussed in Class III below, Figure 45) in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Bo 1). The viol has six strings, inverted c-holes, and a typically Venetian type of scroll head in which the volute of the Doric capital is carved into a flat surface so that the ears do not protrude, factors which combine to link this treble with a group of surviving viols calling for our attention. Instruments in many ways comparable to the viol by Gioan Maria, and especially in the treatment of the earless scroll which is unique to this group, are to be found in two groups of instruments, one (now at Vienna) from Palazzo Catajo,

the seat of the Obizzi family outside (Venetian) Padua, and the other from the collection of Count Pietro Correr of Venice itself, now at Brussels. A few other related pieces like the two by Gioan Maria now at Oxford and an unpublished gamba by Ventura Linarol in the Witten collection were formerly in the collection of the late Andrea Bisiach, Senior, of Milan, and were obtained in the Veneto, according to the Bisiach family. Worthy of a separate article, the group includes a terzet of viols (Figure 42 shows two of these) in Vienna by Antonio Cicilian (V C.75–77; others by this maker are at Brussels and Yale), a pair of viols by his son Batista at Brussels (M 1425–6), a treble by Hainrich Ebert at Brussels (M 1402), the Ventura Linarol bass gamba (Figure 43) made at Padua in 1585, now at Vienna (V C.78, an enlarged twin of the Witten instrument, which was made in 1582 at Venice), and doubtless a few others. Ebert is found in Venetian documents of the 1560's; Antonio Cicilian is recorded in Venetian documents in 1566, 1569, and 1581; Ventura De Machettis Linarol of Bergamo, son of the deceased Francesco, gave his age as sixty-odd in 1601 in a Venetian document; and, finally, Gioan Maria of Brescia stated in a Venetian document of 1591 that his age was sixty-one (this figure may be approximate, as such statements of age often vary in documents of the period, but the margin of error is not great, usually within three years at most). Unfortunately, the document does not state how long Gioan Maria had been a resident of Venice, but he is also recorded in a Venetian document of 1576, where he reckons he has been in Venice since about 1560. A further analysis of the dates of these instruments will be made below when the lira by Gioan Maria, and its contemporaries, are discussed in Class III.

The guitar-shaped viol did not entirely die out in North Italy with the close of our period. There are extant several cornerless gambas of Brescian origin, ca. 1600: an unpublished example authentically signed by Gasparo da Salò (died 1609) in the Witten collection was altered to 'cello form with corners added, and there is another related but unsigned example in fragmentary condition in the same collection; two more by Gasparo are in Vienna (V C.73 and C.74), but the companion piece of the terzet ascribed to Gasparo (namely, V C.72), has the wrong label today, and is clearly by

Antonio Cicilian, as both Schlosser's Plate XVII and *de visu* inspection have shown.

The design experienced a revival a half-century or more later: in the 1680's and the 1690's the famous Antonio Stradivari (1644–1737) made some cornerless viols of alto and bass sizes at Cremona, none of which survives unaltered; and his near-contemporary, the Cremonese Pietro Guarneri I (1665–1720), who worked at Mantua and played in the court orchestra there, made at least one viol of tenor size, dated 1689, now in an English collection.[6] These instruments, including the earlier Brescians, typically have f-holes and scroll heads, but flat backs angled and pointed at the top; however, Gasparo and his contemporaries experimented widely, often placing arched backs on viols, and flat backs on violin-family instruments. Guitar shapes are sometimes seen in "experimental" instruments of the nineteenth century, but none of these has found favor. This, insofar as I know it, is a synopsis of the history of the guitar-shaped type of bowed string instruments in North Italy.

Class II: Two-Cornered Bodies

The two-cornered shape in bowed instruments almost always, perhaps invariably, has a narrower upper body slimmest at the waist, and a broader lower body, exactly as seen in the beautiful (but reversed) woodcut (Figure 10) of a lira from G. A. Augurello's Latin *Carmina*, printed at Verona, 5.VII.1491 (S 667). This woodcut is of extraordinary interest and importance because it is obviously a closely accurate drawing, almost a *trompe l'oeil*, of an actual instrument and its bow, which atypically is not arched, shown hanging from nails on a wall. The fact that the book was printed at Verona is interesting on two counts: first because Verona recalls Ioannes from Verona, the craftsman who made the great (four-cornered) Vienna lira of 1511 (Figure 25), and the two instruments might have been made by the same hand; secondly because Verona is less than seventy miles west of Venice and a small city where there was relatively little strongly independent cultural ac-

6. This instrument was offered for sale at auction by Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd., London, 19.XII.1974, Lot 154.

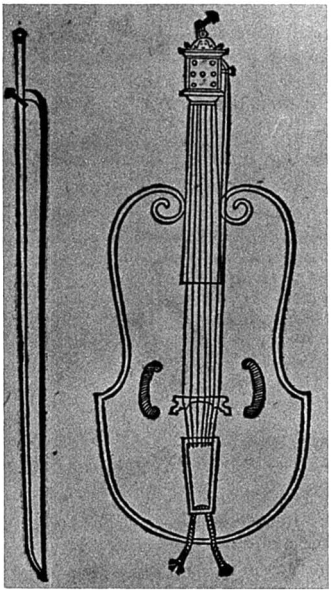

FIGURE 10.

tivity (including printing) in the period which concerns us. We cannot be certain that the lira illustrated was actually made at Verona, though it may have been; perhaps it is Venetian, though Venetian graphics do not show exactly comparable heads. The drawing of this instrument was either made directly on the woodblock to be cut (not very likely, but possible), or it was transferred, probably by pricking through the drawing onto the block, in either of which cases the effect was to reverse the original drawing (the drones are on the wrong side). We at once understand the loving depiction of this instrument when we realize that the author compares his songs to those of Apollo, by suggesting the god's lyre as the frontispiece of his little book.

In two Venetian *Officia* of the Blessed Virgin dated 1493 and 26.IV.1494 (E 456, 457; the latter is Figure 11), attractively illustrated prayer books that were carried to devotional services by the faithful, occur the two earliest representations of the psalmist King David that I have found in Venetian books. In both woodcuts, which differ but are closely related, David plays a two-cornered large lira comparable to the 1491 example. Both have leaf heads, but there are differences of detail; the earlier has five strings plus single drone, no pegs shown, low-lying c-holes and bridge, while the 1494 cut has four strings plus drone, and the appropriate five pegs, but is otherwise comparable. In the edition of *Epistolæ Heroides* by Horace printed at Venice on 5.II.1505 (E 1165) Apollo holds a large instrument of similar type, only partly visible; its most striking feature is a broad, scrolling treatment of the edge of the top, related to the scrolling upper extremity of the body in the 1491 example. A copy of this cut was used in a Venetian edition of Horace, 7.IV.1520 (E 1168), but it adds few significant details except a leaf head. In an *Officium*, Venice, 1.IX.1512 (E 479), there

FIGURE 11.

FIGURE 12.

FIGURE 13.

occurs a two-cornered lira (Figure 12) or viola in the foreground of a woodcut in which David kneels praying, facing right; the instrument has a leaf (?) head partly obscured, low c-holes with bridge at their center, and three strings. The subject is repeated in a sketchily drawn cut signed "I.A." in another Venetian edition of the same work, printed v.1516 (E 483), in which the instrument has an animal head and the same number of strings, other details omitted; and it occurs again in a different cut of the same period signed by "z.a.," in the undated *Regola*, a religious manual by Bartolommeo Caroli (E 2338) printed at Venice by A. Bindoni, who died no later than 1523, when his heirs began signing books. It is certain that all three woodcuts are closely related.

A classicizing representation of Apollo (?) adorns an edition of Pasquillus, *Versi posti. . .* , Rome, 1513 (S 5445); in this woodcut (Figure 13) a clearly drawn large viola with c-holes, leaf head with

six strings and the same number of pegs, no drones, and low-lying bridge, hangs from the branch of a tree. This fine example, one of the few graphics printed outside North Italy during the period which displays any instrument of the three classes here discussed, has been included for purposes of comparison; its similarity to northern examples is striking.

A similar lira or viola is played by a youth in a company of music makers in a cut on the title page of Antonio Carmigiano's poems, *Le cose vulgare*, Venice, 23.XII.1516 (S 1737; E 1916); though the woodcutter has depicted eight pegs on the leaf head, he has only been able to manage three strings in addition to c-holes and a low-lying bridge. A not dissimilar instrument is depicted in a portrait of the author writing on the title page of Ioannes Q. F. Stoa's *De syllabarum quantitate*, first printed at Pavia, 30.VI.1511 (S 7087), showing three fingered strings and one drone, c-holes, low-lying bridge, and leaf head. A reprint of the book with a close copy of the woodcut was issued at Venice, 20.VI.1519 (S 7088; E 2036) but it is instructive to note that the copy shows four fingered strings and no drones, clearly a simplification.

Yet we cannot be sure that such instruments did not actually exist with or without drones, ad libitum, if a considerable body of graphic evidence including a famous woodcut in a famous music book means anything at all. In Pietro Aron's *Toscanello in Musica*, Venice, 5.VII.1519 (E 2037), an instrument (Figure 14) of exactly comparable type is displayed on a table in the foreground; it has five strings, no drones, five frontal pegs on the leaf head, low-lying

FIGURE 14.

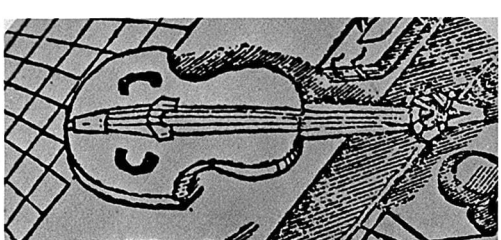

FIGURE 15.

FIGURE 17.

c-holes, and a bridge placed rather surprisingly high, above the sound holes and just below the corners. There are Venetian reprints of this book and another title by Aron in which the same woodcut was invariably used as late as 1539 (E 2038–2040, S 623–626). And again in Folengo's *Macaronea*, Venice 10.I.1520 (E 1168), appears a large viola (Figure 15) of exactly this type, four strings without drones (but six pegs) shown. A good representation of such an instrument in lira form is found in an engraving (Figure 16) of Orpheus playing (left-handed, as the subject and instrument are reversed) by Benedetto Montagna (H 10, State II). The instrument has all the features we would expect: seven pegs, but only two drones and four fingered strings, the latter surely a simplification or an error for five, are seen. Hind dates plates in this style by Montagna, who was from Vicenza near Venice and worked in the Veneto, about 1500, and it is hard to see how this plate can be later than 1520 in any case.

In Pamphilo Sasso's *Strambotti* (almost certainly printed at Venice), dated XII.1522 (E 2059), Orpheus is seen playing a viola (Figure 17) of this type, with inverted c-holes, six strings, and seven pegs, but no drones shown. In a closely related cut in Luigi Pulci's

Strambotti & fioretti (Venice, ca. 1525, E 2537/8), Orpheus plays another such instrument (Figure 18) with four strings and no drones, but five pegs. A rather poor woodcut occurring in a large

FIGURE 16.

FIGURE 18.

Roman breviary printed at Venice, 1523 (E 1006), has an angel playing (in reverse) a two-cornered, four-stringed viola, leaf head without indication of pegs, low-lying c-holes and still lower bridge. In another breviary printed at Venice the same year, but in small format (E 1005), David is seen praying in the now-familiar pose facing to the right, with his instrument in the foreground; though the details are indistinct in the very small cut, the instrument is a viola or lira of this type. In 1544 a cut of the same subject occurring in a Venetian *Officium* (E 503) provides considerable detail of a lira (Figure 19), though the single drone is shown on the wrong side; apparently four fingered strings are indicated. This is the latest occurrence I have traced of a two-cornered instrument in North Italian graphic materials.

It will have been noted that in the graphics without exception (nearly all of which are Venetian) the instruments of Class II have the lower body rounded, as in the conventional modern violin family. It is surprising to note, then, that the few surviving examples of two-cornered instruments all have a feature not seen in the graphics: the two lower bouts curve upward and inward from their lowest point at the bottom of the instrument to join in an inverted V or notch at the bottom center of the belly and back. I enumerate here the examples known to me, of which not a single one has its original head (all have been supplied with more recent scroll heads of viola type). The very large instrument at Brussels with complex c-holes (M 1415, Ba 12) is the oldest of the group and beautifully made. Close examination does not support its attribution to Gasparo da Salò; but it is not possible at present to say where in North Italy or by whom it was made. The other surviving examples are unequivocally Brescian. The fine Ashmolean instrument (Bo 9; Figure 20) by Gasparo da Salò (though its dated label is surprising, because authentically dated labels by this maker, or indeed by any other Brescian of the period, are not known, and Gasparo was probably not at work in Brescia quite so early as 1561) was made about 1600 in my opinion. Still later is a nearly identical example authentically signed Gio Paolo Maggini, Gasparo's pupil and successor at Brescia; it is preserved in a European private collection. It must have been made after 1602 when Maggini was still an ap-

prentice, and probably between 1609 (Gasparo's death) and 1632 when documents relate that Maggini, too, was deceased.

Now, what precisely are these three instruments, whose bodies are so similar but whose heads are all missing? There can be no doubt that they belong to the North Italian tradition of two-cornered bowed strings, but the lower body has an inverted V which we shall see becomes a trademark of North Italian lire of the later sixteenth century. Why should all have lost their heads? To me, the most obvious and logical hypothesis is this: the heads were of an obsolete type, but the instruments themselves could be and were used as violas (one still is). I deduce that these instruments almost certainly had heads of leaf shape and were very likely lire. If all are Brescian, as two of the three unquestionably are, then perhaps we can hypothesize that the typical Brescian lira of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries characteristically had this shape. No complete Brescian lira is known today.

FIGURE 19.

FIGURE 20.

In all, I have enumerated twenty North Italian graphics (fifteen of them Venetian), depicting two-cornered instruments of Class II, the latest dated 1544, and three instruments of this class, two certainly and all probably considerably later. No successors to the most recent examples like the one by Maggini are known to me, and this line of development in stringed instruments seems to have been terminated by consent with Maggini's death early in the second quarter of the seventeenth century.

Class III: Four-Cornered Bodies

The instruments of Class III have bodies with four corners, as in the typical instruments of the violin and viol families from the seventeenth century forward. I have found more specimens of this class than either of the other two illustrated in early Italian graphics, and there are also far more surviving instruments of this type from the period than of the other classes.

The earliest such illustration I know is a woodcut (Figure 21) found in an *Officium*, Venice, 1.X.1497 (E 462), signed by "ia," in which we see a version of the familiar David praying, facing right, with his instrument in the extreme foreground. It has c-holes at the center bouts, low-lying bridge, and leaf head with an undetermined number of strings. Because it is seen from the left side in profile, which is very rare, we cannot know if it has drones, nor with certainty whether its back is rounded or flat. What we can see is very well drawn, however. In an engraving (Figure 22) by the anonymous "Master of the Sforza Book of Hours," probably located at

FIGURE 21.

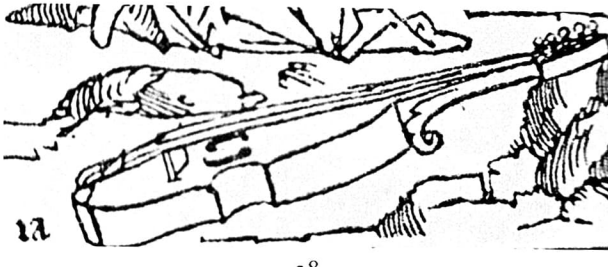

FIGURE 22.

FIGURE 23.

Milan and working about 1500 or slightly earlier, two angels who flank the Virgin play instruments (H 3). One instrument is plucked, but the other, which is bowed, has four scrolling corners with the top of the body also scrolled, leaf head, c-holes in the upper body (which mirrors the center bouts), and frets; details of strings and pegs are not indicated.

In an edition of Ovid's *Epistolæ Heroides*, Venice, 10.VII.1510 (E 1136), a woman plays a viola (we have already remarked on the rarity of this) with indistinct low-lying c-holes, leaf head with five pegs, only two strings shown (Figure 23). The body appears well developed. In the verse *Capitoli* by Cristoforo Scultore, Florence,

undated but ca. 1505 (S 2245), a similar instrument is seen (Figure 24), but with the unusual feature of straight center bouts.

In 1511 we come to one of the most extraordinary of all early Renaissance instruments to have been preserved (Figure 25), the great lira da braccio of large dimensions from Palazzo Catajo near Padua, now at Vienna (V C.94). Though restored in the nineteenth century, the lira definitely preserves its original characteristics without alteration, and there is no reason to doubt any feature of it. It has the incurving central section of the lower bouts we have already seen in the surviving instruments of Class II which I believe to have been lire originally, and we shall see that this feature becomes a trademark of Venetian lire. A similar incuse treatment is found at the top of the body.

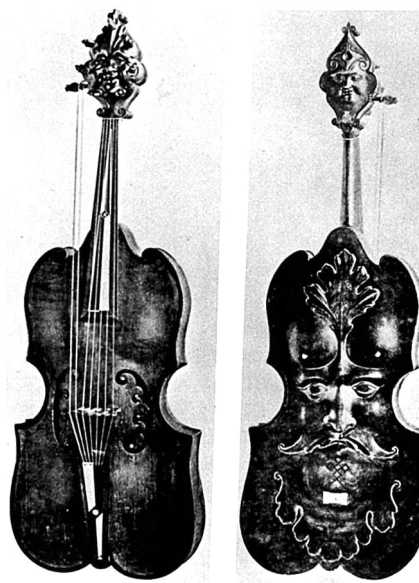

FIGURE 25.

FIGURE 24.

FIGURE 26.

Where was this magnificent instrument (possibly prepared for a court entertainment, as Charles Beare has suggested) actually made? Its maker tells us on the label that he is Ioannes (Giovanni), Andree (son of Andrea), Veronen(sis) (from Verona). Padua, whence the instrument came to Vienna in the nineteenth century, is precisely halfway between Verona and Venice, only about thirty-five miles from either city; we may note that virtually all of the earlier instruments from Catajo whose makers are clearly identified are in fact Venetian. So perhaps this instrument, too, is Venetian. Whether made in the capital of the republic or not, it is almost certainly from the Veneto.

An engraving (Figure 26) by Nicoletto Rosex da Modena of

FIGURE 27.

FIGURE 28.

Orpheus playing a basically four-cornered, smaller, violin-size instrument (H 13) displays a complex outline, c-holes placed in the upper body and pierced rose in the center, three strings and three pegs, and the earliest scroll head I have seen in Italian graphics. Nicoletto worked in the years 1500–1512 and it would be difficult to assign a more definite date, but a chiaroscuro woodcut by Johann Wechtlin[7] is clearly based on Nicoletto's engraving and was executed about 1520.

In a *Diurnale ordinis S. Benedicti*, Venice, 13.VII.1515 (E 972), appears a woodcut of the psalmist playing a rather narrow viola with leaf head, four pegs (of five intended?), four strings, the bridge and sound holes omitted. An anonymous engraver known as the

7. Reproduced in Arthur Mayger Hind, *A History of Woodcut* (London, 1935), V, 50.

"Master of the Year 1515" produced about 1515 a plate (H 40) of a satyr playing a small fiddle (in reversed direction) with leaf head, three strings, c-holes in the lower body, and low-lying bridge. About this time (at Rome?) Marcantonio Raimondi engraved a plate of Orpheus and Eurydice (reproduced in connection with E 2136) in which the hapless Orpheus plays a well-drawn large viola, fretted, with six strings and pegs, no drones, and central c-holes, bridge not shown (Figure 27). The different, guitar-shaped instrument in the woodcut copy (dated 1522) of this engraving has already been mentioned in Class I (Figure 7). In an edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Venice, 20.IV.1517 (E 230), is a woodcut (Figure 28) of Orpheus charming the beasts—but actually the artist has confused his subject, who wears armor, with Apollo—in which another large viola with leaf head, seven pegs, but only three strings and no drones, is shown; the c-holes are located low on the table, no bridge indicated. A similar instrument (Figure 29) is seen in an edition of Angelo Poliziano's *Favola d'Orfeo* printed at Florence, ca. 1550 (S 6318), but the woodblock clearly has wormhole damage in this late impression, and it can be safely dated no later than ca. 1500–1520 on stylistic grounds. The instrument depicted has central c-holes, with the bridge placed at the midpoint of them, leaf

FIGURE 29.

head with five pegs, three strings indicated, no drones. Not after about 1520 and somewhat later than the plate of Orpheus discussed above in Class II (Figure 16), Benedetto Montagna engraved two plates of Apollo-as-musician. In the first (Figure 30), depicting Apollo and Pan (H 40), Apollo plays a large, five-string viola, with leaf head, central c-holes, and low-lying bridge, no drones or pegs indicated; the second (Figure 31) is a scene of Apollo and Marsyas (H 41) in which the handsome god holds a somewhat different type of viola with complex central inverted c-holes and additional small round holes placed in patterns on the body; leaf head without indication of pegs, no drones, three strings shown (the bow is strikingly like much later examples). Another large viola (Figure 32) very similar to the group just described occurs in the anonymous *Istoria et favola di Orfeo*, printed at Siena about 1520 (S 5220). The leaf-headed viola is shown with low-set inverted c-holes and two supplemental small round holes near the upper corners, low-lying bridge and no drones indicated. At Venice, in Baldassare Olympo's *Camilla*, 21.X.1522 (E 2168) we see a narrow viola crowded into the right side of a woodcut, with five strings, high complex c-holes, high-lying bridge (?), and partly visible leaf head; and in the edi-

FIGURE 30.

FIGURE 31.

FIGURE 32.

tion of Ovid, *Metamorphoses* printed in Toscolano in 1526 (copy in Witten collection) by the printer Paganini (rather recently transferred from Venice) Orpheus plays an instrument that is probably a four-cornered viola, though the woodcutter has had some trouble with the block, so that the effect is at first glance guitarlike, with pegless leaf head, three strings, high-placed c-holes, and no bridge; the very small cut is reversed.

The earliest depiction yet identified of an instrument which has all the basic elements of a typical specimen of the modern violin family occurs in the fresco painting of the cupola of the Santuario at Saronno, a town only a short distance northwest of Milan, in

FIGURE 33.

Lombardy.[8] The fresco was commissioned in 1534 and painted during 1535; in a concert of angels playing a large variety of sometimes bizarre instruments one of the many shown is a four-cornered small viola (apparently, though Winternitz refers to it throughout as a violin), which has four pegs set laterally in a scroll head, f-holes, and a low-set bridge, the strings omitted. Although the instrument depicted by Gaudenzio Ferrari is undeniably a four-cornered, four-stringed viola with scroll head, its outline and the drawing of the sound holes, which appear to be very inept, seem to reflect either a provincial instrument or a lack of acquaintance with the type by the artist. One wishes that more information on the possibility of later repainting in this fresco and accuracy of its assigned date were available.

In a very fine North Italian engraving (Figure 33) with the monogram IMF with Maltese cross and the date 1536 (copy in Witten collection) is an early occurrence of a very modern-looking viola with central f-holes of quite developed shape including central nicks, bridge located just below these nicks, but the head obscured.

8. Studied in detail in Winternitz, *Gaudenzio Ferrari*.

FIGURE 34.

The subject is Apollo with the flayed corpse of the defeated Marsyas. We cannot of course know if this instrument, so carefully depicted including the arching of the belly, had a scroll head. But we can be positive that the elements of true modern violin-type are now in the air; for in the very next year there was printed at Venice a *Breviarium Romanum*, II.1537 (E 1022), in which the crowned psalmist David plays a large viola (Figure 34) with four strings, scroll head, low-lying bridge, and central c-holes. The only element missing is the f-hole, already seen in the engraving of the preceding year and Ferrari's 1535 fresco. We may interrupt this train of thought by pointing out how easy it is to proceed design-wise from c-holes to f-holes. If the former is cut in half horizontally and either half turned around (or flipped over, if it is imagined as a solid), the result is an S-shape or its mirror image, requiring only central nicks to give the characteristic modern appearance of the f. The present state of our knowledge makes it impossible to say how the basic c-hole was transformed into the f-shape, but exigencies of construction may provide the best clue. One of the faults with some otherwise very fine instruments is that the sound holes are set too far apart, and this potential risk exists in every instrument with c-holes. Conversion to a sloped f-shaped configuration places the upper part of the holes in close proximity, and this unquestionably benefits volume and quality of sound emission.

There exists an instrument (Figure 35) which might in every essential have served as the model for the 1537 graphic. It is the fascinating Vienna viola da braccio (V C.70), which has every feature of the 1537 picture except that its c-holes are inverted, a detail of no importance whatever in my judgment. Dated ca. 1500 by Schlosser, it must have been made in the period 1535–1550. Schlosser remarked on the similarity of its scroll head to that of the Francesco Linarol viol with slightly arched back (V C.71 discussed above in Class I, Figure 8), and indeed both appear to compare closely with that in the 1537 illustration. All these factors, taken with its prov-

FIGURE 35.

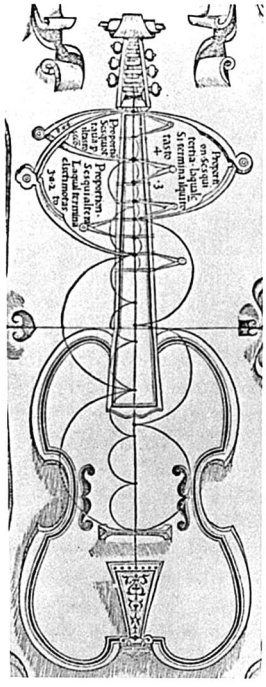

FIGURE 36.

FIGURE 37.

enance from Palazzo Catajo, confirm the Venetian origin of the Vienna viola.

An instrument (Figure 36) described and illustrated by Silvestro Ganassi in his technical manual for musicians, *Regola Rubertina* (Venice 1542–1543; not noted by Essling or Sander), is called by its author a "viola darcho Tastado." It has a scroll head, six pegs (and string holes in the tailpiece), complex c-holes reminiscent of the Brussels instrument (M 1415) discussed in Class II, and both top and bottom are curved inward to neck and button (like the 1511 lira). No instrument directly comparable to it has survived, though I think it is basically a fretted viol, but it serves again to document the use of developed scrolls with pegboxes at this time.

The examples we have seen in the late 1530's and early 1540's of more or less developed violas are not isolated. In an edition of Giovanni Boccaccio's *L'amorosa Fiammetta*, Venice, 1542 (copy in Witten collection), there occurs an exquisitely designed and executed woodcut initial S (Figure 37) only slightly more than one inch square, showing King David enthroned playing a large viola, with

scroll, f-holes, and only three strings shown in the tiny cut. The pose and style are related to the 1537 cut, and perhaps this initial letter was also originally conceived for a service book not yet identified. Again in 1553, in a Venetian edition of Lodovico Dolce's *Le Transformationi* (Bongi, *Giolito*, I.4, pp. 395–401) for which new illustrations were specially prepared, occurs a woodcut (Figure 38) of Apollo playing a large viola in a scene with Pan and others. The instrument has three strings indicated, a scroll head with perhaps only three pegs, central f-holes; the bridge is omitted. And in the next year, 1554, at Venice, a female figure occurring in the elaborate woodcut border of Fausto da Longiano's *Trattato delle nozze* (copy in Witten collection) holds a viola with scroll, f-holes, low-placed bridge, and six (? indistinct) strings. Once again, in the Venetian *Breviarium Romanum* printed in the very next year, 1555 (E 1055), the crowned King David kneels facing right, as we have so often seen, but lifts the bow from the large viola he has been play-

FIGURE 38.

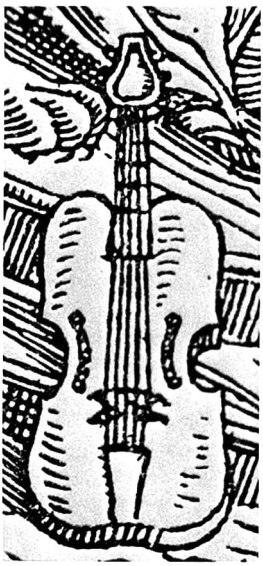

FIGURE 40.

FIGURE 39.

ing (Figure 39); it has a scroll, four strings, f-holes, and the bridge is placed low.

Does this series of depictions at Venice in the years 1537–1555 of instruments which are undoubtedly violas in the modern sense mean that other types had been overcome by the newcomer and were disappearing? No, not yet, as we may observe from additional evidence of graphics and surviving instruments. In a *Breviarium Romanum* printed at Venice, 1.1559 (E 1062), a viola is depicted in the foreground of a scene in which David is enthroned (Figure 40). It has four corners, five strings, frets, and f-holes; the bridge is set low, and both top and bottom form incuse curves like the Ganassi instrument of 1542 described above, but this example has a leaf head with lateral pegs indicated.

The Venetian engraver Nicolo Nelli, best known for a wholly engraved book of brands for horses which he published himself in 1569, also engraved in 1564 a huge *Il trionfo de carnavale nel paese de Cucagna* on two oblong folio plates of which the impressions are glued together at the center to make a whole (copy in Witten

collection). One of its scenes includes a violist who plays a four-cornered instrument with rounded body but outmoded central rose sound hole, low-placed bridge, five strings, and leaf head showing only four pegs. Though issued by the publisher Claude Duchet at Rome, the engraving is wholly Venetian both in manner and in the language of the doggerel verses complementing the various scenes. A similar instrument is shown in a rather crude version of the repetitive praying David scene in a *Breviarium Romanum* printed at Venice, 1569 (E 1084); in this example the upper body is incuse, but the lower is rounded, and six strings, four pegs on the leaf head, f-holes (both in the same direction through error), and low-lying bridge are seen. One final appearance of such an instrument (Figure 41) occurs in precisely the same scene in a *Breviarium Congregationis Montis Oliveti*, Venice, 1580 (E 1106). It has a leaf head with four pegs and four strings clearly drawn, f-holes, low-lying bridge, and curved top and bottom of the body.

From this period of the 1540's to the 1560's we do not have any surviving Venetian violas which have been firmly identified as such (except the Vienna example cited), but there is a rather large group of surviving Venetian strings of Class III, sharing many characteristics in common, but entirely absent from graphics I have seen, and these may now be discussed. Typical of the group is the terzet of viols (Figure 42 shows two of these) in Vienna (V C.75–77) by Antonio Cicilian, who has been briefly discussed in Class I. Also by him is a viol in New Haven, Yale collection, and there is another at Brussels (M 1424).[9] Also in Brussels are two very similar viols by Francesco's son Batista (M 1425 and M 1426); it is interesting that the four Yale and Brussels instruments all have c-holes (when by Batista) or inverted c-holes (when by Antonio), while the four in Vienna by Antonio all have f-holes.

It will be clearest to the reader, I think, to discuss the remaining Venetian viols before considering the final group in Class III. Probably later than any of the viols by the two members of the Cicilian family just mentioned, and certainly more highly finished, are two surviving instruments by that splendid artist Ventura di Francesco

9. Illustrated in color, Plate III.9, in Roger Bragard and Ferdinand J. De Hen, *Musical Instruments in Art and History*, tr. Bill Hopkins (New York, 1968).

FIGURE 41.

FIGURE 42.

De Macchetis Linarol(o), whose series of signed and dated instruments is of unique importance. Best known is the large contrabass (double bass) gamba of 1585 (Figure 43) at Vienna, (V C.78), especially striking because of its bird's-eye maple back; this is the latest extant and the only known instrument signed by Ventura at Padua, where he seems to have removed at least temporarily. The smaller twin to the double bass, virtually identical in every detail including the wood, is a bass gamba of normal size in the Witten collection, dated 1582 at Venice. Perhaps they originally formed part of a larger group, a consort. Both have the characteristic flat-sided Venetian scroll we have seen in the work of the Cicilians, Ebert, and in the guitar-shaped viol of Gioan Maria (Figure 9), but Ventura's

instruments have his characteristic sweeping f-holes and are of superior workmanship, equalled at Venice only by that of his contemporary Gioan Maria, who also used the sweeping f-holes (but not in his surviving viol). To my knowledge these are the last Venetian viols of the period under discussion. In fact, we encounter viols in the Veneto only once more a century later at Venetian Treviso. There a crude and retrogressive artisan named Pietro Zenatto appears to have made a large set of viols for a private orchestra; some eighteen of them passed to Brussels with the Correr collection (M 1403–1413, 1417–1423).

To be considered next is a series of graphics and surviving instruments which form another very distinct and definable group, the Venetian lire of the later sixteenth century.

First exhibited at South Kensington in the nineteenth century and still in an English collection today is a lira which prefaces the group and is the earliest extant example of the form which was to predominate in the construction of the finest Venetian lire. Its label asserts that this example was made by Francesco Linarol at Venice, 1563. The label has troubled some observers, not on account of any feature of its content, but because of general appearance, ink, and handwriting. In my opinion the label, if it should prove to be comparatively modern, most likely reproduces the terms of the original, for this instrument appears to be a Venetian lira of the time indicated by the label, and its not-very-elegant workmanship coincides well with that of the Vienna viol by Francesco and his time. The head is a modern replacement, but the body outline is like that of the group of instruments which follows next in this discussion in chronological array.

A fully developed example (Figure 44), more elegant than Francesco's lira of 1563 and superbly drawn, is introduced into the foreground of the familiar David praying scene in the *Breviarium Congregationis Casinensis*, Venice, 1575 (E 1097; there is an identical reissue dated 1581). The instrument has the upper end of the body rounded, the lower with an incuse curve at the tailpin, leaf head (partly cut off by the border of the cut) of specialized form which we shall see repeatedly again, four fingered strings and two

FIGURE 43.

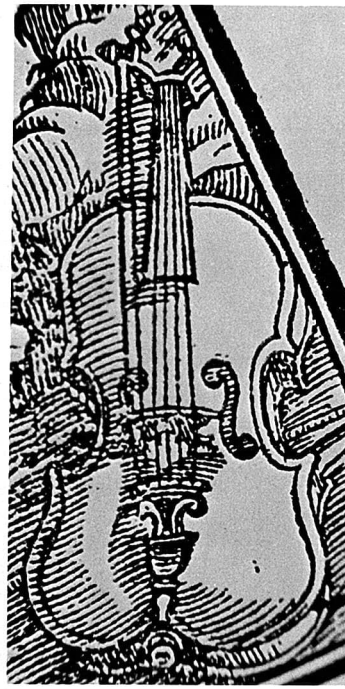

FIGURE 44.

drones, central f-holes, and bridge near the lower end of the sound holes. We may immediately point to three surviving instruments which carry out this design in great detail, one of them dated 1577, and the body of another (its head has been replaced) dated 1580. But the example best known to students is probably the extremely

beautiful lira made by Gioan Maria of Brescia at Venice (Figure 45), now in the Ashmolean Museum (Bo 8). It is of highly sophisticated design and workmanship, fine materials, and has the head handsomely decorated in high Renaissance style. There has unfortunately been much confusion about the date of this instrument, which has five fingered and two drone strings. A twin to it was the basis for A. Hajdecki's famous monograph on the Italian lira,[10] and Boyden has conjectured that the two might be one. As he states, however, Hajdecki's instrument had a label reading "Gaspar Duiffopruggar / Bononiensis anno 1515," an impossible date for both maker and instrument. The facts that the Ashmolean lira has a label of Gioan Maria, not the Hajdecki label, and that the type in which it was printed was designed at Paris not before 1570 have troubled Boyden, who dated Gioan Maria's instrument ca. 1525. Because this date is about a half-century too early, the difficulty over the label disappears, and I for one believe it is perfectly genuine. There exists another instrument, virtually a twin to the Ashmolean example (but without decoration), and in my opinion by the same hand, which very well could have been Hajdecki's. This lira, Brussels M 1443, is cited by Mahillon without any provenance whatsoever, but with a substantial reference to Hajdecki's monograph; it is one of the few Italian instruments at Brussels not from the Correr collection. Mahillon would have known that the "Duiffopruggar" label was spurious, and Hajdecki may have been glad enough to dispose of the instrument, though reluctant to have it known that he had sold it. This would explain away the whole problem. At any rate, we know that Gioan Maria of Brescia was a maker of this kind of instrument through documentary evidence, that he lived in Venice from about 1560 and was still there in 1591, and every detail of the Ashmolean lira proclaims that it is a Venetian lira of the period 1575–1590 as can be seen from the graphics just described and the dated Venetian instruments to be considered next; furthermore, the Garamond type developed about 1570 could easily occur on the label of a Venetian instrument of this period.

10. *Die Italienische lira da braccio* (Mostar, 1892; reprinted Amsterdam, 1965).

A splendid large lira (Figure 46) very close to the woodcut of 1575 and to the Ashmolean lira is the instrument dated 1577 by Ventura di Francesco Linarol from the Heyer collection (K 780) now at Leipzig, which Kinsky called "historically the most important stringed instrument" in the Heyer Museum. Only the scrolling outline of its head, a detail, distinguishes it generally from the Gioan Maria example. All of the surviving instruments by Ventura, every one of which is dated between 1577 and 1585, have characteristic, sweeping f-holes, very like those of the Gioan Maria and Brussels lire. This feature, whether one finds it sophisticated or

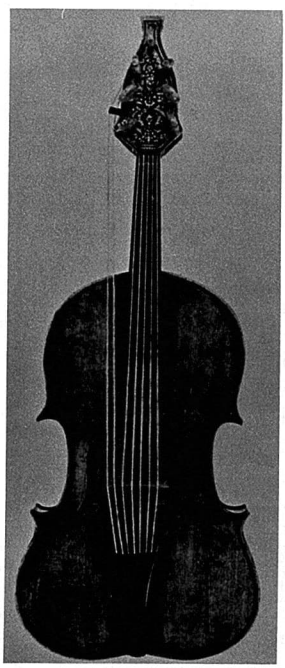

FIGURE 45.

FIGURE 46.

primitive, is undeniably characteristic of Venetian work at its zenith, following the city-state's great victory over the Turks at Lepanto in 1571.

In 1580 Ventura Linarol signed another lira at Venice, now at Vienna (V C.108). Its beautiful back has stringing inlay in stripes in the manner of black-white-black purfling, but its head has been replaced by a more recent viola head.

The other surviving Italian lire are probably all somewhat later and provide some puzzles to the student. The rather ungainly "lirone perfetto" at Brussels (M 1444) is of uncertain origin, and Mahillon does not supply its provenance. The instrument in Vienna (V C.95) with a label, "in Padua Vendelinus Tieffenbrucker," is disturbing because it does not appear to be so old as the ca. 1590 date assigned to it and which would be appropriate for the Paduan maker who habitually signed himself: "Wendelio Venere di Leonardo Tieffenbrucker." This maker's surname was indeed Venere, as has now emerged from Venetian documents. Finally, the lira in the Royal College of Music, London, number 52 (Ba 5, 6), is, sad to relate, a comparatively recent copy of an instrument of the Gioan Maria type, apparently based on the Brussels example.

The lira makes one more graphic appearance in the Veneto before disappearing into oblivion. Among the many woodcuts figuring in the edition of Joachim de Flore, *Profetie*, printed at Padua, 1625 (copy in Witten collection), is an emblematic cut (Figure 47) containing several musical instruments and symbols of the sun and moon, along with a Latin phrase. In the foreground is a fully developed Venetian lira of the Gioan Maria or Linarol type, six fingered strings and two drones, but with rather upright, wide f-holes which are not like the work of these two masters. They are, however, very like the actual sound holes of the violin in Vienna (V C.97) signed "Giovanni di Ventura in Venetia 1622." As Schlosser thought, I am sure this important instrument is by a son of Ventura Linarol. The possibility that the woodcut in the 1625 edition cited is actually considerably older should not be ignored; this very text was frequently reprinted in Venice and elsewhere in North Italy in the period 1589–1625 (after a great many earlier appearances as well), and it is quite possible that this particular wood-

cut actually dates from twenty-five years or so earlier than its apparent date of 1625.

An instrument, unfortunately unsigned, of which the 1625 woodcut might as well be a photograph, so similar is one to the other, exists in the Musikinstrumenten-Museum, Berlin, no. 2578 (the recent head restored in old style is too large and not of exactly appropriate design). The back of this lira has vertical inlaid stringing in the manner of Ventura's (also headless) lira in Vienna, described above, and one cannot doubt the family relationship of all these instruments. I have not seen the rather bizarre lira da gamba from the Heyer collection (K 784), now also at Leipzig, which does not seem to relate to the Venetian group at all.

Another important four-cornered instrument of our period to be considered (Figure 48) is the extremely beautiful, delicate violin by Ventura Linarol, Venice, 1581, in Vienna (V C.96). This lovely vio-

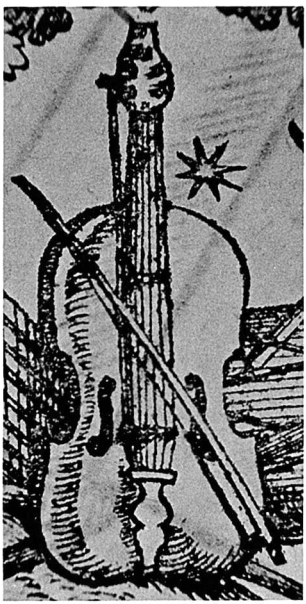

FIGURE 47.

FIGURE 48.

lin, one of the earliest authentically signed and dated violins extant, was for an extended period not on exhibition in the Kunsthistorisches-Museum, as the claim had been made that it is just a modern copy. This judgment is to be ignored, as the violin is unquestionably authentic, and the only surprise is its beautiful state of preservation. In the treatment of the scroll, with a single broad scallop, we are reminded of the viol by Ventura's father, but here the idea has been much more artistically developed. A new feature is the location of protruding points midway in the pegbox, front and back; both ideas are repeated in a few other surviving instruments, none authentically signed, which may possibly be Venetian.

At the extreme end of our period, perhaps even just beyond it, is the earliest surviving 'cello made in the Veneto, signed "Dorigo Spilman," another instrument from the rich hoard at Catajo (V C.111). Though it is not very elegant, it is certainly related to the Ventura Linarol violin of 1581, as Schlosser pointed out, especially in the f-holes. Its date and point of origin would remain uncertain were it not for the 1788 inventory of the collection of Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol at Schloss Ambras, which contains the description of a pochette, now lost, by "Doricus Spilmann in Padova 1591." There is no reason to think the 'cello is much later, or that it was made anywhere but in Venetian territory, most probably at Padua.

It will have been noted by the observant reader that the sound holes of the typical Venetian lire of Ventura and Gioan Maria are really more in the shape of the letter "s" than "f," as they do not generally have central nicks; here they have been referred to as f-holes chiefly for convenience, because they certainly relate to the later, fully developed types typically seen on violins of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, tiny nicks occur on Ventura's 1582 gamba already discussed (though it would have been easy enough to add them at any time, and therefore they might not be original; there are no such nicks in the sound holes of the large bass of 1585). When we come to Ventura's violin of 1581 and Dorigo Spilman's 'cello, however, very large and characteristic nicks at the centers of the sound holes are introduced in both instruments.

* * *

Instruments made during our period are known to survive from three localities in North Italy outside Venetian territory. Brescia and Cremona have already been mentioned in connection with instruments of Classes I and II, but Bologna has remained unnoticed. We must now consider all three cities as centers of production of instruments of Class III, keeping in mind that there is not a single known graphic representation to support the evidence of documents and surviving instruments in these three towns. In part this must be because book production at the other three towns—and above all the production of illustrated books—was never more than a tiny fraction of the immense production of Venetian presses during the period. Also, Brescia, Cremona, and Bologna were small, provincial towns in comparison with that bustling, rich, world-famous center of commerce, Venice, the Queen of the Adriatic. For this reason alone, if for no other, it seems to me highly unlikely that the developed, modern violin form was "created" at either of the two smaller towns, Brescia and Cremona, as has so often been claimed, and there is only a single Bolognese maker at the very end of the period to be taken into consideration. Much more likely from every point of view is the hypothesis that Venice was the most important center in the development of stringed instruments, and this view is very strongly supported by Venetian graphics, documents, and surviving instruments, which taken together demonstrate beyond question the unbroken line of development of viols, lire, and violin-family instruments throughout the period, with fully developed Venetian violas in existence from the 1530's.

But let us briefly examine the earliest surviving Brescian, Cremonese, and Bolognese instruments in the hope of clarifying the problem still further.

The earliest Brescian instruments known to me are two viols: a small bass in my collection[11] which bears the unquestionably genuine label in good Italian chancery script, "Zanetto da Bressa"

11. Formerly Bisiach-collection, Milan; cited in A. M. Mucchi, *Gasparo da Salò* (Milan, 1940), p. 161.

(with, below, the spurious addition in a later hand and in ink of different color of "1459"); and a tenor in the Brussels collection (M ?) which has no label. These two instruments were made by Zanetto De' Micheli from the hamlet of Ro da Montichiari, near Brescia, born about 1489, died not after 1564. He is the Zanetto mentioned in the final lines of Lanfranco's *Scintille* (Brescia, 1533) as a prominent maker of stringed instruments. The workmanship, varnish, and f-holes are identical in the two examples. In addition, the highly original design of the scroll head in the Brussels instrument is directly parallelled by the head of a large viola in the Witten collection, authentically signed at Brescia by Peregrino son of Zanetto (1522 – not after 1615), while the Witten gamba unfortunately has a replaced head. These instruments may all be by the hand of Peregrino, who would certainly have been the chief craftsman in his father's shop in the closing years of the latter's life, when the two gambas must have been made, and when the produce of the shop would have born Zanetto's name, regardless of who actually made it. The viola must be placed after the death of Zanetto in or before 1564, when Peregrino's name would have appeared on the shop's labels, but may be not much later, and is certainly one of the earliest Brescian violin-family instruments extant.

The many surviving instruments signed by or attributed to Gasparo da Salò (1540–1609) with reasonable reliability are all to be placed in the period from ca. 1565, when the maker is first recorded at Brescia, to his death. It is unlikely that any of the violas and violins known to me is much earlier than 1600, as all appear to belong to the most developed type of work he produced, and many seem to show the hand of Gasparo's successor at Brescia, Maggini, long an apprentice in Gasparo's shop. There are other makers in the Brescian constellation of this period, but it is virtually impossible to identify their work with any degree of reliability, as the original labels have for centuries been systematically removed to be replaced by spurious ones of the more famous Gasparo. To sum up this very brief account of early Brescian work, which does not do justice to the great makers there: before 1550 there are only two documented Brescian makers of "Liuti, Violini, Lyre & simili" (Lanfranco, op. cit.), Giovan Giacobo dalla Corna, mentioned by

Lanfranco and in other documents, and Zanetto. Of dalla Corna we have no surviving instruments at all; the documents tell us that he gave up lutemaking, which may have been his principal activity in 1533, to become an armorer some years later. The number of Brescian names of makers known from documents and the number of surviving instruments of the period before 1575 simply does not approach in quantity the Venetian documentation, graphics, and surviving instruments.

In studying early Cremonese instruments, students are faced with a difficult problem. There is only scant documentary evidence of instrument making in that town prior to Andrea Amati (ca. 1505 – not after January 1581); and there are no surviving Cremonese instruments of any type whatsoever known to me from the period before Andrea's death, except the group of violins, violas, and 'celli which are attributed to him, many of them painted with the arms, mottoes, and devices of King Charles IX of France (1550–1574) who was very much under the influence of his mother Catherine de' Medici, the Italian princess who brought Italian culture to the French court. Though about 1800 the noted Italian collector and diarist Count Ignazio Cozio di Salabue saw a three-stringed violin with non-scroll head, which he described as being signed by Andrea Amati and dated 1546, the instrument has not been traced in modern times. And no other instruments by Andrea earlier than 1564 (one), 1569 (one), and the 1570's (several)—some painted and some plain—are known today (if their labels, or at any rate some of them, are authentic, which at present seems open to question). All those known are of the violin family, consisting of small-pattern violins (under modern "normal" length), large-pattern violins (modern "normal" length), violas (all originally of large, "tenor" size), and 'celli (all originally of very large size).

Thus the surviving Cremonese four-cornered instruments date from the 1560's and 1570's at the earliest, and there is the record of a possible sighting of such an instrument (though not with scroll head) dated 1546. We know that nearly ten years earlier, violas with all the earmarks of modern instruments were depicted in a painting near Milan and in graphics executed at Venice; and the Vienna "viola da braccio," to use Schlosser's nomenclature, clearly

dates from this period and is nevertheless modern in almost every essential respect. Andrea Amati's beautiful, highly developed, and sophisticated instruments cannot, like the goddess Venus, have sprung up fully developed from the sea, and are not likely to have been a development of a small-town culture. Where, if not at Venice, could Andrea have received his inspiration, training, and the models for his magnificent instruments?

There is a small group of surviving instruments signed by or attributable to Antonio Brenzio (Antonius Brensius) of Bologna. Although their maker's period of known activity, 1592–1628, in fact places him beyond the scope of this study, his work is included for completeness, partly because much has been rumored and asserted about the early date of this maker. A bass gamba signed "Antonius Brensius Bonon 1592" in the former Heyer collection (K 782), now at Leipzig, has been restored as a lirone da braccio as it did not have its original head; though this restoration may be correct, the instrument is nearly a duplicate to the complete bass gamba attributed to Gasparo da Salò in the Ashmolean (Bo 2), especially in the presence of a carved rose on the table in both instruments, the complex c-holes or inverted c-holes of the two examples, and above all in the curious ridges on the tables of both which extend from the points of all four corners. Though the Ashmolean instrument has a label of Gasparo da Salò, countless other early instruments have been supplied with authentic or spurious labels of the great Brescian maker, and I do not know of any example authentically by Gasparo which is remotely like the specimen in question. Another instrument with exactly the same characteristics is also in the Ashmolean (Bo 3), but it has been attributed in the catalogue to Venice for reasons not made evident in the text; I have not seen any Venetian graphic evidence, nor any signed Venetian instrument to support this attribution, and it too is probably by the same hand. Finally, there exists a large viola authentically signed by this maker, labelled "Ant. Brenzi Bologna Año 1628," now in the possession of a distinguished English player.[12]

12. Both signed instruments by Brenzi are noted by Donald H. Boalch, *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord 1440–1840*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1974), p. 19.

It has little in common with the gambas, but instead recalls early Brescian work to some degree.

* * *

All of the evidence now in hand relating to the violin type which became dominant may be recapitulated very briefly in closing. The Saronno cupola fresco was painted during 1535 by Gaudenzio Ferrari very near Milan, and the artist had certainly seen an instrument of rather developed viola type, though his depiction of it has bizarre elements; but not a single instrument of known Milanese origin of any of the classes here discussed has survived from the early period. From an unknown place in North Italy comes the engraving of 1536 which depicts a fine viola body, but without the head. Beginning the next year there is a series of Venetian graphics, supported by an extended series of surviving instruments documenting the development of the type in Venice. In the case of Brescia we know that Zanetto De' Micheli was already a prominent maker in 1533, and one fully signed instrument made before his death, not after 1564, survives; a viola by his son (and several other instruments by his hand which have been seen) date from about 1564 forward, and there is ample documentation of the work of Gasparo during the latter third of the century. At Cremona we can find no trace of instruments in our categories (or any other) except the wonderful group by Andrea Amati, which foreshadow everything that was to be made in Cremona for the next two centuries.

It cannot be said that a final answer to the origin of the violin can now be supplied, but it is not too much to hope that the interjection of a mass of new evidence may stimulate further research. And if Venice was not the original locus for the "invention" of the violin, an overwhelming mass of evidence nevertheless demonstrates convincingly that Venetian makers played a major role in the early development of instruments of the four-cornered types.

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