

*Journal of the
American Musical
Instrument Society*

VOLUME IV • 1978



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Terminology for the Bass Violin in Seventeenth-Century Italy

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IN an earlier article in this *Journal*¹ a theory of the early history of the bass violin was proposed. It was argued that until the invention of wirewound strings, which appears to have occurred in the 1660's and probably in Bologna, it was impossible to make a bass violin of a size that would both produce a reasonable sound on the lowest strings and also allow the easy cultivation of the rapidly developing solo violin style. Since the most characteristic sounds of a bass instrument, unlike those of a violin, are the lowest ones, it was a matter of concern that these sound well. Yet with solid gut strings, used earlier for all strings on all members of the violin family, it was possible to produce a reasonable bass sound only if the bass strings were longer than they now are, which meant that the instrument had to be larger than its present size.² But the larger size hampered the extensive cultivation of violin style, and hence the soloistic possibilities of the instrument, since among other things it necessitated a larger reach for the fingers of the left hand than is presently required on the violoncello. It was further argued that as a consequence of this dilemma the bass violin, probably from about 1610 on, was made in two sizes. The larger instrument, apparently the more common and most often called *violone*, sacrificed ease of playing in favor of bass sonority. The smaller reversed the priorities. With the advent of

1. "From Violone to Violoncello: A Question of Strings?" ("Violone") in this *Journal*, III (1977), 64-99.

2. Additional consideration is given to the rationale behind string instrument design in the author's "Further Thoughts on the History of Strings," *The Catgut Acoustical Society Newsletter*, no. 26 (1976), pp. 21-26.

wirewound strings, however, it became possible to satisfy both requirements on the smaller instrument, which soon became the only form of the bass violin, and was henceforth most commonly called the *violoncello*.

The present study supplies further evidence to support this theory through an examination of the available evidence concerning the names attached to both sizes of bass violin throughout the seventeenth century in Italy. We shall draw primarily on two kinds of sources, printed music and archival records. Printed music emanating from Venice, and later in the century from Bologna, employs the following names in association with music in the bass clef:

bassetto	violetta
bassetto di viola	vivola da braccio
basso da braccio	violone
basso di viola	violone da braccio
basso viola da braccio	violonzono
viola	violoncino
viola da braccio	violoncello
contrabasso	

The fact that these names are found in printed music suggests that the instruments specified were widely available.

Archival records in Bergamo, Bologna, and Venice add several more names that we must consider:

viola granda	violone basso
violonzino	violone grande
violonzello	violone doppio
violone piccolo	violone grosso
violone grande contrabasso	

The sheer variety of names suggests that we have at hand several instruments of differing sizes. It also suggests continued experimentation with the size of the bass violin as well as a lack of standardized terminology. It might, on the other hand, suggest local usage, either in time or in place—or in both. We shall attempt to show that there are discernible patterns of usage in Italy that reduce this multiplicity of names to some four instruments, one of which can be called the proto-violoncello.

The difficulties encountered in our previous study are just as pressing here. We must, for example, determine whether each name

was associated with the viol family or the violin family—or with both. We must also determine whether or not the name refers to a bass or a contrabass instrument—or to both. And finally, we must attempt to determine whether any of the names are being used in a generic sense, to refer to any one of a number of instruments.

In our use of both archival and musical evidence we shall see, as before, the necessity of considering the context within which a name is found—that is, what do we know about other names that are found at the same time in the same place? And what do we know about those who used the names? Were they bookkeepers, notaries, or musicians? We shall also see that, in the absence of musical evidence, archival evidence can be problematical. That is, knowledge of the context within which a name is found can be of limited value without some indication of what music the instrument bearing that name could have played. What was its character? What was its compass? We shall see an instance of this sort in trying to determine the Bergamasque meaning of the term *violone* before 1650.

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An appropriate place to begin is with the question of whether any of the instruments named on our lists can be identified as members of the viol family. The practice of using the suffix *da braccio* for some but not all of the names might lead one to suspect that those names lacking a suffix were understood to be viols. But such a known exception as the violoncello raises doubts about all the rest. Since, however, with the exception of *basso di viola*, all other names on our lists are found either in prints that supply music for the church, or in church records, we may be able to find answers through a close examination of the names of stringed instruments in use in a specific Italian church during the first sixty years of the seventeenth century. Let us expand our consideration to include evidence that might suggest the use of viols of any size in this church. If it can be shown that there is reason to doubt their use in one church during these years, we of course raise doubts about their use in any others, unless clear evidence to the contrary is available. We shall further test our findings by a brief consideration of the evidence from printed music of the time.

Our focus will be Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo,³ the principal church in one of the smaller cities of northern Italy, not far from either center of violin-making, Cremona or Brescia. As one of the lesser centers of music, Santa Maria may be more typical of its time than are the larger churches of Venice or Bologna or other major cities. And since the surviving records are so nearly complete, our purposes will be well served. We shall (not so incidentally) see both the value and limits of such archival records for a study of this sort.

We shall restrict our investigation primarily to documents known to have been prepared by musicians, citing those from the hands of others only by way of corroboration or qualification. Our primary focus will be the names of instruments played by five individual performers. The names we encounter will include all those identifiable as bowed strings during these years. Of particular concern will be the term *viola*, since there appears to be no question about the family connection of the term *violino* during this time period, and there is reason to have doubts about the violone being a viol since we have already demonstrated that it may be a bass violin as early as the 1620's.⁴

The first *suonatore* is Marc'Antonio Garzerino, who played in Santa Maria from time to time from at least 1595 to 1623. In documents in the hand of Giovanni Florio, maestro di cappella from 1586 to 1598, he is listed as playing the following instruments:⁵

1595 viola da braccio
1597 viola da brazo, viola

Under the following maestro, Giovanni Cavaccio, who served from 1598 to 1626, and from whose hand we have further documentation on Garzerino's activities, we find him listed as playing:⁶

3. For a study of musical life at the church during much of this time see Jerome Roche, "Music at S. Maria Maggiore, Bergamo, 1614-1643," *Music and Letters*, XLVII (1966), 296-312.

4. "Violone," pp. 78-79.

5. See Bergamo: Biblioteca Comunale (=MIA) MIA LXXI/3, *Spese della Chiesa* (=Spese), fol. 119 for 1595, fols. 9 & 8 for 1597. It is probable that Garzerino is the one Florio names as Marc'Antonio d'Albin in 1594, who played the violino. See MIA LXXI/2, *Spese*, fol. 50.

6. See MIA LXXI/3, *Spese*, fol. 370 for 1600; MIA LXXI/3B, *Spese*, fol. 40 for 1601, fol. 121 for 1602, fol. 231 for 1604, fols. 355 & 424 for 1606, fol. 590 for 1609, fol. 89 for 1621.

1600	tenor di braccio nelli organi
1601	viola di brazza
1602	tenor di braccio
1604	viola
1606	viola, viola da brazza p[er] il contr'alto qual servira alli organi p[er] i concerti
1609	tenor di braccio
1621	viola

It is clear that all the identifiable instruments associated with him, a sizeable majority of the entries, are members of the violin family. The most reasonable interpretation of the four entries labelled simply *viola* is not that *da gamba* was implied, but rather that both Florio and Cavaccio were somewhat casual in their use of the term; they meant *viola da braccio*.

The bookkeeper's entries concerned with a second string player, Gioseffo Dalmasoni detto il Moro, provide further evidence on this matter. Apparently a somewhat younger contemporary of Garzerino, Dalmasoni was serving in the basilica in 1600 and was active there until 1629. From the contract for his rehiring in 1602 we learn that his duties were to play "il violino, il basso."⁷ In this same year the bookkeeper in Santa Maria listed him in one place as a performer on the "violino, viola, et violone,"⁸ in another as playing the "violino, viola da braccio, et violone."⁹ When Dalmasoni was rehired in 1614 the notary added the *violone grande* to the list of instruments he was expected to play, at the instructions of the Deputati per la Chiesa.¹⁰ In two subsequent entries for 1615 and 1616, however, the bookkeeper identifies Dalmasoni's instruments simply as "le viole."¹¹ Here too the terms *viola* and *viole* appear to imply *da braccio*.

A similar situation is encountered with Dalmasoni's successors, Giovanni Battista Moresco and his son Francesco, both newly arrived from Cremona in 1630,¹² who were engaged to play "il violino e

7. MIA LXXXII/2, *Strumenti e Scritture* (= *Strumenti*), fol. 31. The contract is dated 30 April 1602.

8. MIA LXI/1, *Libro Maestro* (= *Libro*), fol. 349.

9. *Ibid.*, fol. 188.

10. MIA LXIII/36, *Terminazioni*, fol. 192^v, entry for 12 May 1614.

11. MIA LXI/4, *Libro*, fol. 556; MIA LXI/5, *Libro*, fol. 103.

12. See the payment for travel expenses from Cremona, recorded in MIA LXI/7, *Libro*, fol. 605.

violon basso.”¹³ The father served at Santa Maria until 1657, the son until at least 1667. In a petition for a salary raise in 1631 they refer to themselves as *sonatori di viole*.¹⁴ This same phrase is used by the bookkeeper on a number of occasions from 1641 on.¹⁵

Our final *suonatore* is Lazzaro Norsino, another occasional string player in Santa Maria Maggiore from 1644 to 1666. On his first appearance in the basilica the maestro, Giovanni Battista Crivelli, identifies his instrument as the *violino*.¹⁶ During 1653 (and from the hand of Giovanni Legrenzi, organist) we find Norsino playing the viola, violoncino, and violone.¹⁷ Once only, in 1645 (in a document from an unknown hand), is he associated with the viola da braccio.¹⁸

Thus we have encountered five string players over a period of more than sixty years, four of whom can be identified as violinist, and who further are referred to on occasion as playing *viola* or *viole*. The reasonable presumption in all cases is that both terms imply *da braccio*—except perhaps for a contrabass instrument. But even this was considered by one of our string players to be a member of the violin family.¹⁹

But there is other evidence to be considered. First, not once is the suffix *da gamba* encountered in surviving documents from Santa Maria Maggiore between 1595 and 1709, whether the document was prepared by any of the musicians or by a bookkeeper or notary. Second, in all known instances of performers known to be competent on several instruments, and who served in Italian churches during the seventeenth century, not once is a member of the viol family

13. The contract, dated 2 January 1630, is found in MIA LXIV/2, *Scritture della MIA* (= *Scritti*), fol. 378. Another signed for the elder Moresco “p[er] non saper scriver.”

14. MIA LXXIV/4, *Scritture presentate al Consiglio* (= *Scritture*), fol. 678. The petition is undated, but the increase was granted on 9 March 1631 (see MIA LXIII/38, *Terminazioni*, fol. 223).

15. See, e.g., MIA LXI/10, *Libro*, fol. 189; MIA LXI/11, *Libro*, fol. 373.

16. MIA LXXI/5, *Spese*, fol. 602.

17. See MIA LXXI/6, *Spese*, fol. 403 for viola, fol. 413 for violoncino, fol. 432 for violone.

18. *Ibid.*, fol. 58.

19. See the bill for repairs “sul violone grande et laltra viola da brasso,” submitted in 1602 by Dalmasoni (MIA LXXI/3B, *Spese*, fol. 146).

specifically mentioned as one of their instruments.²⁰ Other reasons, directed specifically to the bass viol, but surely applicable here as well, are given in our previous study.²¹

Evidence from Italian printed music of the seventeenth century also suggests that viols were not used in church—except perhaps for the contrabass.²² The contents of the few known prints that specify viols indicate that the correlation between instrumentation and function, found late in the century with the church and chamber sonata,²³ was also operative in this area; if viols were used at all, it was outside the church. The earliest known print calling for viols appeared in 1626, the latest in 1673.²⁴ Of these only two were devoted solely to what are called church sonatas—although they are called simply *sonate* in the prints. Both are also somewhat suspect as to their indication of common practice in Italy.²⁵ For the rest, the viols are found only in prints containing secular music²⁶ or dances,²⁷ none of

20. "Violone," p. 79, n. 55; Giovanni Parenti, another instrumentalist in Santa Maria Maggiore, refers to himself as "suonatore di Violino, Viola, et Violone" in a petition of 1659 (MIA LXXIV/5 [iii^o], *Scritture*, fol. 436); see also Francesco Todeschini, who calls himself "sonatore di violino e di violone" on the title page of his opus 1 [1650b]; finally see p. 34, n. 123, below. Lettered dates in this study refer to Claudio Sartori's invaluable *Bibliografia della musica strumentale italiana*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1952 & 1968).

21. "Violone," pp. 76–77.

22. The only known instance from this century of the use of the contrabass viol in Italian prints of church music is in Monteverdi's *Vespro della beata Vergine* (1610b), which calls for the *contrabasso da gamba* solely in the *Domine ad adiuvandum*, where it doubles the trombone and *viola da braccio* at the octave.

23. "Violone," p. 86, n. 87. It should also be mentioned that although the violin is specified in both parts of Giovanni Gabrieli's *Symphoniae Sacrae* (Venice, 1597 & 1615), and in his *Canzoni e Sonate* [1615f], not once is a member of the viol family called for in these three prints. A copy of *Symphoniae Sacrae* (1597) was acquired by Santa Maria Maggiore in August 1597. See the entry in Florio's hand in MIA LXXI/3, *Spese*, fol. 229.

24. Those composers specifically calling for the viol are Marini [1626m], Waesich [1632], Monteverdi [1638d], Ferro [1649e], and Legrenzi [1673j].

25. Ferro (1649e) was a *musico da camera* at the Emperor's court in Vienna at the time. He probably reflects German rather than Italian practice when he uses the *viola da gamba* as the bass instrument for violins in his sonatas. See p. 40 and n. 151 below for a discussion of the circumstances surrounding the latest work [1673j].

26. Waesich [1632]; Monteverdi [1638d] calls for *viola da gamba*, *viola da braccio*, and *viola contrabasso*.

27. Marini [1626m] calls for the *viola da gamba* as the bass instrument in one piece, *Sonata sopra la monicha*.

which include any indication that any of the music might be used in church.²⁸

The surviving instrumental prints by Giovanni Battista Buonamente provide further evidence of the segregation of instruments by function as well as another probable name for the bass viola da gamba. The bass instruments he calls for are as follows:

Libro IV [1626d] *Sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, corrente, e brandi: Basso di viola*

Libro V [1629a] *Sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, corrente, et ariette: Basso di viola*

Libro VI [1636] *Sonate e canzoni: Basso di braccio*

Libro VII [1637d] *Sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, corrente, et brandi: Basso di viola o da braccio*

The instrument specified in all three collections containing dances is the *basso di viola*. It is clearly different from the *basso di braccio* called for in the one collection containing *canzoni*, which were doubtless intended for use in the church.²⁹ The *basso di viola* is probably therefore the bass viola da gamba.

Publications by the Modenese Marco Uccellini, appearing slightly later and stretching over a period of thirty years, provide a further instance of the use of the *basso di viola* solely in collections of secular music, in this case dances. They also suggest a gradual change in practice with regard to the bass instrument. For although the earliest collection to contain music "per chiesa e per camera," opus 4, employs the neutral term *basso*, a later collection of the same sort, opus 9, now calls for the *violone*:

Libro II [1639b] *basso di viola* for one sonata

Sonate [1642a] *basso* for six sonatas

Opus 4 [1645f] *basso* for sixteen sonatas³⁰

Opus 7 [1660d] *basso* for three sonatas, *violone* for one

28. The common phrase "per camera ò chiesa" is not found in any of these prints.

29. For information on this point see the author's "The Uses of the *Sonata da Chiesa*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, xxii (1969), 54-84.

30. This particular work was purchased for Santa Maria Maggiore, Bergamo, in 1648 (see MIA LXXI/6, *Spese*, fol. 11). In 1656 Cazzati purchased Ferro's sonata collection (1649e) for use in the church (see MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fol. 140). The *violone* was doubtless used for the bass part of this latter work when it was performed in Santa Maria (see below).

Opus 9 [1667g] partbook labelled *violone*

Libro VII [1668g] partbook labelled *basso continuo e basso violone*³¹

Thus the weight of evidence from Bergamo, and from our printed sources, argues against the use of any viols in the church, and thus against the assumption that any of the unqualified names on our lists—with the exception of *basso di viola* until about 1640—refers to the bass viol da gamba. We shall return for a further consideration of the term *viola* presently.

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Other evidence from Santa Maria Maggiore is useful in eliminating several names for the contrabass from our lists, at least in Bergamo but probably elsewhere as well. As can be expected, a certain laxness in the use of terms is also apparent here. But even today the contrabass is plagued by this problem. We encounter our same string players once again. Giovanni Battista Moresco was apparently consigned the string instruments currently owned by the basilica, and signed for them periodically. In one such document, dated 1632 and in the notary's hand, he acknowledges receipt of "quattro instrumenti da archetto cioe due viole uno violino, et uno violone grosso con li suoi fornim[en]ti . . . et vi è anco la chiave di ferro p[er] il violone. . . ." ³² In a document prepared the following year by someone else, but clearly at Moresco's behest since it is entitled *Nota delli istrumenti che ho nelle mani Io Gio[vanni] Batt[ist]a Moreschi*, and bears his signature, he acknowledges having custody of "un Violone doppio con il suo arco . . . due viole, et un Violino con un'arco." ³³ In yet a third document, also from 1633 and in the notary's hand, it is recorded that Moresco has custody of "un violone grande con sua chiave, due viole, tre violini." ³⁴ It seems clear that we are confronted by the same instruments in all three docu-

31. Since this last print is from Phalèse's presses in Antwerp, and appears to be a reprint of part of the contents of opus 7 [1660d], it was probably Phalèse rather than Uccellini who added the adjective *basso* to *violone*, suggesting that in northern Europe the term *violone* normally meant *contrabasso* at this time.

32. MIA LXIV/3, *Scritti*, fol. 154.

33. *Ibid.*, fol. 179.

34. MIA LXXIX/1, *Inventario*, fol. 139. In the interim between our second and third documents two additional violins had been consigned to Moresco. See MIA LXIV/3, *Scritti*, fol. 179.

ments, and that the largest was called variously *violone grande*, *violone grosso*, and *violone doppio*. Clearly this must have been a contrabass. Clearly notaries were also lax in their use of names since in the first document the same instrument is called both *violone* and *violone grosso*.³⁵

We can establish that the *violone doppio* consigned to Pietro Antonio Carara in 1597³⁶ is the same instrument Moresco signed for some thirty-five years later, since there is no record of the purchase by the basilica of a contrabass by any of the above four names—or by any other name—in the intervening years. In tracing the history of this instrument we shall learn more about it, and also about what it was called. We already know that Dalmasoni, to whom it was transferred in 1600,³⁷ considered it to be a contrabass violin. The same instrument was apparently still in use in 1637 when a new bow was purchased for it,³⁸ and also in 1653, when it was repaired shortly after the arrival of Maurizio Cazzati as maestro. This time the repairman was Lazzaro Norsino, whom we have also encountered as a string player. Norsino requested payment “per aver Acomodato il contrabasso.”³⁹ The bookkeeper in recording the payment to Norsino, however, refers to this instrument as *violone*.⁴⁰

It appears that *contrabasso* was Cazzati’s preferred name for this instrument, since it is the only one musicians used during his years at Santa Maria. And it was used with a certain regularity.⁴¹ Once

35. This same equation of *violone* and *violone grosso* is found in a document from 1632, clearly prepared for Moresco since he was the one to receive payment (see MIA LXI/8, *Libro*, fol. 123). It is entitled *Spese fatta p[er] il Violone Grosso*, and includes two items of interest: *Per conciatura dell’violone*, and *Per una chiave d’accordarlo*. The document is found in MIA LXXI/5, *Spese*, fol. 53.

36. MIA LXXXII/1, *Strumenti*, fol. 379.

37. *Ibid.*

38. See MIA LXXIX/1, *Inventario*, fol. 139. An entry in the notary’s hand records a payment “per un archetto per il Violone grande.”

39. MIA LXXI/6, *Spese*, fol. 425.

40. MIA LXI/14, *Libro*, fol. 146.

41. See the *polizza* concerned with extra musicians for the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1654, signed by Ottavio Mazza, then vice-maestro di cappella (MIA LXXI/6, *Spese*, fol. 479); three others for feasts in 1655, two in Cazzati’s hand (MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fols. 49 & 86) and a third in Legrenzi’s hand (*ibid.*, fol. 56). Cazzati also used the term *contrabasso* in his opus 35 (1665a). See “Violone,” p. 78, fig. 4, for an example of his writing for the instrument.

Cazzati departed in 1657 for San Petronio, Bologna, the term disappears for some years. His successor, Ottavio Mazza, who had been associated with the basilica since 1631, and who was also a string player, reverts to an earlier form, *violone grosso*.⁴² During Cazzati's years we encounter yet another instance of terminological confusion. Sebastiano Vide, a regular hosteler for non-Bergamasque musicians engaged for the Assumption, the principal feast, included the following item in his bill for 1655: "Per quatro pasti fatti da uno che porto un Basso da Clusone."⁴³ Cazzati's request for payment for transport of this instrument, however, reads as follows: "P[er] la portatura del contrabasso di Clusone."⁴⁴ The next reference to a contrabass instrument is the purchase of a *Violon Grande Contra Basso* in 1679.⁴⁵ Confusion persists, however, since within the month Antonio Fantone, a carpenter, submitted a bill for "un cassa p[er] il nuovo Violone."⁴⁶

Records at Santa Maria are incomplete for the years between 1684 and 1688, but when we next encounter evidence on a contrabass instrument, in 1692, it is again called *contrabasso*.⁴⁷ And it is by this name that the instrument is henceforth known, as late as 1725, although the bookkeeper still occasionally refers to it as *violone*.⁴⁸

Our overview of Bergamasque terminology for the contrabass from 1597 to 1725 reveals five names that appear to be unequivocal in their meaning:

contrabasso	violone grosso
violone doppio	violone grande
violone grande contrabasso	

42. MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fol. 328 (1659), which reads as follows: *Gio Barbiero con il violon grosso continuo*; and MIA LXXI/8, *Spese*, fol. 27 (1664), which reads: *al sig Pederzoli p[er] Accomodato l'arco del violon grosso*.

43. MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fol. 84.

44. *Ibid.*, fol. 86.

45. MIA LXXI/9, *Spese*, fol. 13.

46. *Ibid.*, fol. 62.

47. MIA LXXI/10, *Spese*, fol. 145. See also the request for payment for repairs to the *contrabasso*, submitted by Andrea Mauritij in 1701 (MIA LXXI/11, *Spese*, fol. 10). Mauritij was an occasional viola player in Santa Maria Maggiore (see "Violone," p. 97).

48. Marc'Antonio Bernardi, who is normally called a contrabassist from 1701 through 1725, is at least twice referred to as a *sonator di violone*. See, e.g., MIA LXI/30, *Libro*, fols. 186 & 248.

It further discloses that at least one player, Dalmasoni, considered the earliest identifiable contrabass here to be a member of the violin family. And finally it reveals continuing instances of laxness in the use of terms. It should be stressed, however, that one cannot assume from our discussion that we have uncovered *all* the Bergamasque names for the contrabass. One—and only one—other likely candidate remains, *violone*. Let us turn now to a consideration of that name, and what it means in Bergamo.

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It is impossible at present to determine precisely what the term *violone* meant in Bergamo in the early years of the seventeenth century. Much evidence from before 1650 suggests that it was interchangeable with *contrabasso*, even though we have just identified specific names for this instrument from these years. But there is also some evidence that *violone* meant a bass instrument. In considering evidence of both sorts we must keep four things in mind: (1) bass violins with four strings were being made in the latter half of the sixteenth century; (2) there is no evidence of viols in use at Santa Maria between 1595 and 1709; (3) the term *violone*, without any suffix, appears in association with the bass clef in published music for the church from 1609 on;⁴⁹ (4) *violone* can mean bass violin as early as 1624.

Two things are immediately apparent about the Bergamasque use of the term: its persistence and its constancy. Both of these qualities it shares with the term *violino* in Bergamo during the seventeenth century. This stands in marked contrast to what we have just found for the contrabass, or for the instrument we call today the *viola*.⁵⁰ But is the name, in fact, constant in meaning? In seeking an answer let us consider the available evidence on whether the term without any suffix meant a bass or a contrabass instrument—or both. If it can be shown that it was a bass instrument it must have been, as we have seen, a bass violin. We shall restrict our consideration once again primarily to documents prepared by musicians.

It is a curious fact that although we have evidence of the existence

49. "Violone," p. 70, n. 16.

50. See the various names cited on p. 6, above.

of a contrabass at Santa Maria Maggiore as early as 1597, it is not until the 1650's that we seem to have unequivocal indications of its use in the services. In fact, we can identify only one player, Dalmasoni, whose duties appeared to include playing such an instrument.⁵¹ The sole name associated with other performers on the lowest stringed instrument before 1650 is *violone* or *violone basso*, whether the performer was a regular member of the musical establishment or a supernumerary hired for the occasion. This holds true for both Moresco and Norsino. The term *violone basso*, encountered for both Giovanni Moresco and Girardo Coleone, another violonist from 1604 through 1613, is unfortunately suspect, since in every case it is employed by a bookkeeper or a notary, and sometimes in a context that suggests that it meant contrabass.⁵² This should not surprise us since today even musicians speak often of the string bass and bass viol when they mean contrabass, suggesting that the term *basso* refers not to the instrument but rather to the part played. Thus it would seem that both terms, *violone* and *violone basso*, meant *contrabasso*, at least until the 1650's.

Other evidence supporting this interpretation is found in the instruments named by Dalmasoni in his periodic bills for repairs, submitted between 1602 and 1623.⁵³ Surviving documents in his hand list the following instruments:⁵⁴

- 1623 four instruments, including *viola, violino, violon*
 1624 four instruments, including *viola, viola grande, violon* (with repairs to *la giave* [= *chiave*])

51. See p. 9, n. 10, above.

52. See, e.g., the inventory of instruments signed for by Alessandro Grandi in 1628, in the notary's hand, which includes *une violone basso, tre viole da braccio, e doi violini*, but no *violone grande* (MIA LXIV/2, *Scritti*, fol. 289^v); or see Jerome Roche, "An Inventory of Choirbooks at S. Maria Maggiore, Bergamo, January 1628," *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, v (1965 [1967]), 50. See also the fact that Giovanni Battista Moresco was hired to play the *violone basso* (p. 9, above), yet was never consigned such an instrument, but only a *violon doppio*. See also the bookkeeper's entries on Girardo Coleone, which sometimes list his instrument as *violone* (MIA LXI/2, *Libro*, fols. 238 & 434), other times as *violone basso* (*ibid.*, fol. 328; MIA LXI/4, *Libro*, fol. 22).

53. Although the *Libro Maestro* survives for the years 1611–1621, the *Spese della Chiesa*, our commonest source of data, do not.

54. See MIA LXXI/4, *Spese*, fol. 187 for 1623; fol. 472 for 1624; fol. 365 for 1626.

1626 four instruments: *doi viole da braccio, violino, violon* (again with repairs to *la giave*)

Dalmasoni's references to the tuning key indicate that he means *contrabass* when he says *violon*, and probably in all three cases. There is another instance of this sort. In 1605 Girardo Coleone submitted a bill for parts he had supplied for the violone. It reads:⁵⁵

fornimenti p[er] il violone che si serva p[er] la musicha p[er] la Giesia de santta maria maggior . . .

Uno archetto p[er] il Violone
una corda che si dimanda sol re
una altra corda che si dimanda G sol re utt

The strings named are d and g, and are tuned a fourth apart. These could therefore be the top two strings of the *violone da gamba* described by Banchieri in 1609.⁵⁶ But since this instrument is used in church, it is more probable that Coleone names the top two strings of the contrabass violin mentioned by Dalmasoni, and that in his use of hexachord nomenclature for the strings he implies octave transposition.⁵⁷ In neither case, however, could he refer to the bass violin, which was always tuned in fifths.⁵⁸ Coleone therefore probably also uses the term *violone* for a contrabass.

Further evidence may or may not be supplied by Cavaccio's statement in 1600 that Garzerino played the "tenor di braccio nelli organi."⁵⁹ The implication here probably is that Garzerino is supplying a continuo part. And if he was doing this on what was considered to be a tenor instrument, Cavaccio would seem to imply that the contrabass was considered to be a bass instrument. But this does seem a bit far-fetched.

Most of the evidence presented thus far, however, predates the first known appearance of published works that clearly specify the

55. MIA LXXI/3, *Spese*, fol. 278.

56. "Violone," p. 73.

57. How else but by octave transposition was Coleone to identify the strings if he used the hexachord system? On the other hand, how would he have referred to strings below Gamma ut, if they existed—or, for that matter, to the bottom three strings of Banchieri's *violone da gamba*? (See "Violone," p. 73.)

58. "Violone," p. 67.

59. See pp. 8–9, above.

bass violin—although not the first appearance of publications calling for a *violone*. We turn now to a consideration of Bergamasque evidence that suggests that the violone was a bass instrument, remembering that as such it must have been a bass violin. The earliest indications that appear to be unequivocal in this regard are found in the 1650's and 1660's, some thirty years following the first publication calling for the bass violin, and beginning with Cazzati's term as maestro. The term *violone* is encountered in the following contexts:⁶⁰

1654 violino, viola, violone, contrabasso
 1659 violino, viola, violone, violon grosso
 1664 violino, viola, violone, violon grosso

But there is other evidence to suggest that the violone was a bass instrument. From 1624 on it was the practice at Santa Maria Maggiore to engage several highly paid musicians, both singers and instrumentalists, to perform at the Feast of the Assumption. Beginning as an occasional practice, it was to become an annual one from 1642 through 1666. The musicians came from such distant places as Genoa, Ferrara, and Venice. Considering the fees they received, many must have been hired as soloists. A list of those engaged for the Assumption for three different years will indicate the kinds of performers and the fees paid.⁶¹

1655	Al Basso di Ferara	£362.10
	Al Violone da Venetia	171 —
	Al Contralto forestiero	29 —
	Al Padre dell'organista [violino] ⁶²	43.10
	Al Frate del Carmine sonatore	43.10
	Al Tenore forestiero	19.8
	Al Soprano di Milano	145 —
	Al Soprano di Milano	174 —

60. See the following *polizze* in Mazza's hand: MIA LXXI/6, *Spese*, fol. 475 for 1654; MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fol. 328 for 1659; MIA LXXI/8, *Spese*, fol. 27 for 1664. Other entries, for 1655, are found in MIA LXXI/7, fols. 49 & 86 (in Cazzati's hand), fol. 56 (in Legrenzi's).

61. See MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fol. 85 for 1655; fol. 156 for 1656; fol. 257 for 1658.

62. This is Legrenzi's father, Giovanni Maria, a violinist, who was hired for the Assumption numerous times between 1647 and 1665.

1656	Al Tenore Pavese e suo figliuolo	£300 —
	Al Violino di Milano	180 —
	Al Basso Celidone di Mil[an]o	178.10
	Al Pre[te] S[an] Franc[esc]o Bressano suonator di Violone	180 —
	Al Sonator di Citara venuto da Brescia	180 —
	Al soprano di Caravaggio	75 —
	Al Legrenzio da Clusone [violino]	60 —
	Al Pre[te] Marino servita di Clusone	45 —
	A due soprani di Adrara	30 —
	A due contralti di Adrara	30 —
	Al trombone di Adrara	30 —
	Al R[everendo] D[on] Pietro facotto [= fagotto]	45 —
	All'org[anis]ta di Milano	90 —
1658	Al S[igno]r franc[esc]o Gallo Basso di Milano	£170 —
	Al Ferrari Tenore di Milano	140 —
	Al Griantino sopr[an]o di Milano	140 —
	Al Mangiarotto di Pavia [tenore] }	210 —
	Al Pre[te] francesco Cornetto di Pavia }	
	Al contralto di Brescia	20 —
	Al Violone da Crema	57 —

Even allowing for the fact that travel expenses were included in these fees,⁶³ many were sizeable sums of money. Bergamasque singers and instrumentalists (except for organists) hired from outside Santa Maria for the same feasts received at most 12 lire apiece.⁶⁴ What concerns us are the violonists that begin to appear from 1655 on, and who are found on all three lists. They, too, must have been soloists, unlike the local violonists hired for the same feast each year, but at far lower fees.⁶⁵ And if they were soloists, it was not as contrabassists, since this instrument also appears at the feast for 1655.⁶⁶ Nor would they have been viol players, as we have seen.⁶⁷ In fact, these are probably among the earliest virtuoso 'cellists.

63. But not lodging expenses while in Bergamo, which were borne by Santa Maria. See, e.g., the hosteler's bill for 1655, cited in n. 43, above.

64. MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fol. 86 for 1655, fol. 24 for 1656 (both in Cazzati's hand), fol. 256 for 1658 (in Mazza's).

65. Norsino played violone in all three of these feasts. See the previous note for documentation.

66. See n. 64, above.

67. See also in this regard Maugar's observations about the scarcity of viols in Rome in 1639 ("Violone," p. 77, n. 43), and Hill's on the same matter for Lucca in 1657 (*ibid.*, p. 77).

But this evidence comes from the 1650's, at a time when the contrabass was also identifiable at the services in Santa Maria, and long after music for the bass violin was first published. What are we to make of an entry from 1604, in Cavaccio's hand, that indicates that the famous violin-maker Gasparo da Salò was hired as the only non-Bergamasque musician for the Assumption, and was paid ten times more than any other musician at the feast, and whose instrument was the violone?⁶⁸ Was he not also a soloist on this occasion? And was he not also playing the bass violin? We cannot be sure. But we can adduce several additional pieces of evidence to suggest that his instrument was probably the bass violin. First, we know that Santa Maria possessed a contrabass at this time, which was often called *violone doppio*. We also know that as early as 1595 both a violin and a viola da braccio were in use in Santa Maria,⁶⁹ and that a *tenor da braccio* was purchased in 1601.⁷⁰ Since we can identify not only a soprano and a contrabass string in use from 1597 but also at least one other form of the violin, it is inconceivable that a bass violin was not in use, especially since a primary function of a contrabass, as early as 1610, appears to have been to double a bass instrument at the octave.⁷¹ Second, evidence from printed sources of church music emanating from the nearby city of Milan indicates that the term *violone*, at least as early as 1610, must have meant bass violin.⁷² A third piece of evidence is concerned with continuo practice. We can identify the purchase by the basilica in 1608 and 1622 of music that

68. MIA LXXI/3B, *Spese*, fol. 231. The entry reads: "Di piu ha servito con il suono del Violone mr. Gasparo Bertulotti da Brescia - £35." The other players were paid 3 lire 10 soldi.

69. See p. 6, above.

70. See MIA LXI/1, *Libro*, fol. 125, which records a payment on 26 November 1601 to "Giovanni Battista Ceresolo per una viola da braccio" and MIA LXXXII/1, *Strumenti*, fol. 379, of the same date, in which Dalmasoni acknowledges receipt of a "tenor da braso."

71. See the *Domine ad adiuvandum* cited in n. 22, above.

72. See the violone part in Giovanni Paolo Cima's *Concerti ecclesiastici* (Milan, 1610), which has a compass of C-d'. This is the same compass found in Merula's writing for the violone in the 1620's. Therefore the arguments advanced in connection with Merula's instrument also hold here (see "Violone," pp. 70-85). In the present study the following terminology is employed with respect to pitch: CC-BB=16' octave; C-B=8' octave; c-b=4' octave; c'-b'=2' octave.

required a continuo part not as an option but rather as an integral part of the music.⁷³ Surely if the bass line in this music were reinforced by a melody instrument, as Praetorius recommended in 1619, it would have been by a bass, not a contrabass, instrument. Praetorius specifically mentions bass instruments, giving preference to a bass string, the *violone*.⁷⁴ In light of the evidence presented above it is a reasonable presumption that Gasparo was playing the bass violin in 1604, and that the term *violone*, at least on occasion, refers to a bass violin in Santa Maria from 1595 on.

Perhaps the most reasonable explanation of this seventeenth-century evidence from Bergamo is that the term *violone* from 1595 on meant bass violin, but that it was also frequently used for a contrabass instrument as well until the mid-century point. This would of course explain the fact that the term is both omnipresent and unchanged in Bergamo from 1595 to 1709. The appearance of a clearly different name for the contrabass around 1650 could therefore signal a shift in function for the bass violin; originally serving primarily as a continuo instrument, it now came into its own as a concertante instrument. It should be noted, however, that if this is the correct scenario for events at Santa Maria Maggiore, it suggests that the church was not in the forefront in the exploitation of the possibilities of the bass violin, even though Tarquinio Merula was maestro there in 1631–1632, shortly after publishing his first collections with concertante parts for violone. But whether or not the above scenario proves valid, it still seems that we can safely advance

73. For 1608 see MIA LXXXII/2, *Strumenti*, fol. 431, in which Cavaccio acknowledges receipt of *Motetti, a piu voci di Alovisio Balbi*, a work identifiable as 1606f: *Concerti ecclesiastici a 1–8 voci*. For 1622 see MIA LXXI/4, *Spese*, fol. 161, which records the purchase of *Motetti di Aless[and]ro Grandi pr[im]o et sec[on]da parte*, which are identifiable from other evidence at Santa Maria as one of the editions of *Il primo libro de motetti a 2, 3, 4, 5, & 8 voci* (Venice, 1610; 4th ed., 1621) and [1613m]: *Il secondo libro de motteti a 2–4 voci* (3rd ed., 1619).

74. See Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum* (Wolfenbüttel, 1619), III, chap. vi, section on organ, Appendix. Our translation is taken from Robert Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, new version (New York, 1974), pp. 360–361. Praetorius says, “It is very good, and indeed almost essential, to have this same General Bass played in addition by some bass instrument, such as a bassoon, a dolcian, or a trombone, or best of all on a violone.”

to 1610 the earliest date that the bass violin was called *violone*. Prudence dictates that we advance the date no further at present.

* * *

In our previous study it was suggested that there is evidence of the existence of the smaller form of the bass violin before the advent of the violoncello in the 1660's. Let us now consider this question, beginning with an examination of the sorts of evidence available to us. Organological evidence is of little help because we do not presently have the measurements for three of the four violoncellos that Mucchi attributes to Gasparo da Salò.⁷⁵ However, as was suggested at the outset of our previous study, organological evidence poses problems because of the continuing practice of altering string instruments, right down to the present day; in our area of concern this means reducing the size of the violone, or, to put it another way, converting a violone into a violoncello. And, in fact, even if these instruments of Gasparo prove to be of the smaller size, it would still have to be demonstrated that they were not at some later time cut down from a larger instrument. (Such a problem even exists with the larger instruments that survive.) The one violoncello-like instrument of Gasparo for which we have information dates from the 1580's.⁷⁶ But since its body length lies halfway between that of the tenor viola (45 centimeters)⁷⁷ and that of the eighteenth-century standardized violoncello (75 centimeters), it is likely that this instrument, at least in its present form, was used as what is called by many today a *tenor violin*—that is, the *bass viol da braccio* with the F tuning given by Praetorius.⁷⁸

Yet even without trustworthy organological evidence we can still adduce some terminological and musical evidence to suggest that such an instrument in fact existed before the 1660's. But since the

75. See Antonio Mucchi, *Gasparo da Salò* (Milan, 1940), p. 202. Unfortunately Mucchi gives no measurements. But since one of these instruments subsequently became part of the instrument collection in the Castello Sforzesco, Milan, we now know its measurements. The body length is 60 centimeters. Mucchi also mentions (p. 97) a violoncello made in 1630 by Giacomo Lanfranchini, a student of Gasparo, but again fails to supply measurements.

76. Mucchi, p. 202, calls this a *violoncello piccolo*.

77. See W. Henry Hill et al., *Antonio Stradivari* (London, 1902; reprint, New York, 1963), pp. 99 & 296.

78. See "Violone," p. 68.

term *violoncello* was yet to be invented, we are obliged to look for some other name, probably another diminutive form of the term *violone*. And it must be a name associated with music for the church since, as we have seen, it is doubtful that the bass viola da gamba was used in church. One candidate is *violoncino*, a term that appears off and on from the 1640's through at least the end of the seventeenth century,⁷⁹ and always in connection with a concertante bass part in *sonate da chiesa* or vocal music for the church.⁸⁰ Its first known appearance is in a collection of instrumental pieces by Giovanni Battista Fontana [1641b]. But since the collection was published some ten years after Fontana's death by a friend from Brescia, there is some question as to whether or not Fontana was the one to specify the violoncino as an alternative bass instrument for many of the sonatas, or the violonzono for Sonata 9. In any case the compass required is D–d'. In 1653 the term *violoncino* crops up in Bergamo shortly after Maurizio Cazzati was appointed maestro di cappella in Santa Maria Maggiore,⁸¹ and in the company of the violone and viola. Five years later the term again appears in association with Cazzati's name, this time, however, at San Petronio in Bologna, and again shortly following his appointment as maestro di cappella.⁸² Now the context is alto viola, tenor viola, and contrabasso violone grosso. Here, then, is a likely conjunction of violoncino and violoncello—in San Petronio. And since in this latter case the term appears in a document that grants approval for the proposed restructuring of the cappella (a proposal that surely came straight from Cazzati), it

79. Muffat calls for the violoncino as the bass instrument for the concertino in his *Auserlesene Instrumentalmusik* of 1701; a modern edition in *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich*, Jahrg. XI/2, Bd. 23 (1904).

80. The only known instance of the violoncino not functioning as a concertante instrument is in Domenico Freschi's *Messa a 5 e salmi a 3 e 5* (Venice: Magni, 1660). Here the violoncino for the most part doubles as the vocal bass, not the basso continuo.

81. See the *polizza* of 4 September 1653, in Legrenzi's hand (MIA LXXI/6, *Spese*, fol. 413).

82. See Bologna: Archivio della Fabbrica di San Petronio, vol. VI, *Decreti Congregationis*, fol. 100, a policy statement of 6 September 1658 (cited in Anne Schnoebelen, "The Concerted Mass at San Petronio in Bologna ca. 1660–1730: A Documentary and Analytical Study" [= "Concerted Mass"], unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1966), pp. 57–58.

would appear that he was one of the earliest advocates of the smaller violone. In the circumstances one wonders what happened at the Accademia della Morte in Ferrara when Cazzati was appointed maestro di cappella *there* in 1648.

But why, then, one may ask, are there two terms for the same instrument in Bologna? What is wrong with the term *violoncino*? Why must one invent a new one? We have already proposed an explanation for this: the difference between violoncino and violoncello resides in the material used for the bottom string; that on the violoncello was wirewound.⁸³ But it is worth examining the situation in Bologna more closely, since it suggests that the famous quarrel between Cazzati and Arresti may have played a part in the history of the violoncello.⁸⁴ Arresti was the first to use the term *violoncello* in a print published, not in Bologna, but in Venice [1665e], four years after he had been dismissed from San Petronio. It was not until 1674, three years after Cazzati had in turn been dismissed and Arresti reinstated, that the term *violoncello* first appears in San Petronio,⁸⁵ even though Placuzzi had meanwhile used the term in a Bolognese print [1667a]. The implication is that this new development, wirewound strings, was not to be allowed in San Petronio so long as Cazzati was maestro, either by Cazzati from within or Arresti from without. It also carries the hint that Arresti was trying to upstage Cazzati in a continuing campaign against him, showing the authorities at San Petronio that he, Arresti, was the more progressive musician.

The two terms, *violoncello* and *violoncino*, are subsequently encountered at the same feast on at least one occasion in San Petronio.⁸⁶ But it has not been possible to ascertain whether this reflects scribal taste in terminology or a genuine difference between the instruments, since the violoncellist was a regular member of the concerto, the

83. "Violone," pp. 95–96.

84. See Schnoebelen, "Concerted Mass," pp. 49–51 & 62–67, for a discussion of the affair, including the hint that the founding of the Accademia Filarmonica in 1666 may have been, at least in part, an act directed against Cazzati since he, the most important musician in the city, was never a member.

85. "Violone," p. 79.

86. See Anne Schnoebelen, "Performance Practices at San Petronio in the Baroque" (= "Performance Practices"), *Acta Musicologica*, xli (1969), 43. This occurred in 1687.

violoncinist an extra, hired for the occasion. But if the difference between the two instruments was as slight as we have suggested, a scribe could easily overlook it. The only known Bolognese publication calling for the violoncino is a print of 1674 by an outsider, Sempliciano Olivo of Parma.⁸⁷ The compass required by Olivo is D–e'.

Shifting our attention to Venice, the term *violoncino* is encountered there on occasion from 1656 to 1694. The manner of its first appearance, in Cavalli's *Musiche sacre* [1656a], suggests that it was a new instrument in Venice, not in widespread use, and, furthermore, that Cavalli was insistent upon its use against the better judgment of his publisher, Vincenti, who saw his potential sales outside Venice jeopardized by the inclusion of a partbook labelled *violoncino*.⁸⁸ For the print includes, in addition to the customary *L'Autore a chi legge* in the partbook marked *Canto Primo Choro*, a rather unusual *Lo Stampatore alli Signor Virtuosi* in the partbook marked *Canto Secondo Choro*. In the former Cavalli suggests that the part for the violoncino was optional and could be omitted. Vincenti, in the latter, agrees with Cavalli that the part is *ad libitum*, but then goes on to suggest that there were several suitable substitutions, a "Chitarone, Bassoon, or another instrument capable of the same rapidity."⁸⁹ The end of this phrase provides confirmation for our earlier suggestion that the smaller form of the violone was preferred for its greater ease in playing rapidly.⁹⁰ Significantly the violone is not mentioned. Cavalli's writing for the violoncino is however not very demanding. In fact it is less so than Merula's writing for the violone, except for the matter of compass, which has been extended to C–f'.⁹¹

87. *Salmi di Compieta . . . a due violini con una violetta e violoncino ad libitum*, opus 2 (Bologna: Monti, 1674).

88. Bartolomeo Magni had published Fontana's print in 1641. Cavalli's work, on the other hand, was one of the last that Vincenti published before going out of business.

89. "la parte nominate Violoncino, che si ritrova in tutta l'opera (quale deve sempre essere collocata presso il Violini, gareggiando questi insieme) può servire anco per un Chitarone, Fagotto, ovvero altro Istromento simile, pronto alla velocità, si può anco tralasciare ad arbitrio."

90. See "Violone," p. 86.

91. See "Violone," p. 71, Fig. 2, for an example of Merula's writing for the violone.

Later uses of the term in Venetian territories are found in 1660 in a work by Domenico Freschi of Vicenza,⁹² and in a publication by Gasparo Gaspardini of Verona [1683g] that requires a compass of D–f'. Also, a certain Tonino (possibly Bernardo Tonino of Verona) was hired to play violoncino for the Christmas feasts at San Marco in 1687.⁹³ Significantly he was rehired the following year to play violoncello, along with a certain *Venago del Violon*.⁹⁴ Finally, the last known use of the violoncino in Venice was in 1694, when two players were hired for a special occasion at San Marco.⁹⁵

Further evidence from Venetian territories is encountered in Santa Maria Maggiore, Bergamo, toward the end of the seventeenth century. And this evidence also suggests that violoncino and violoncello were the same if not very similar instruments.⁹⁶ For between 1678 and 1681 requests for payment for extra musicians, all in the hand of Giovanni Battista Quaglia, maestro di cappella, regularly include a violoncino, and always in the company of the violino, violetta or viola, and violone.⁹⁷ As we have seen, between 1684 and 1688 these records are missing. But from 1690 on—and from 1692 in the hand of Francesco Ballarotti, the new maestro di cappella—the term *violoncello* is used,⁹⁸ in the context of violino, viola, and (occasionally) violone.⁹⁹ We have already noted that the contrabasso begins to reappear in 1692. All of the above are, however, examples

92. See n. 80, above.

93. Venice: Archivio di Stato (=ASV), Procuratia de Supra (=Procuratia), Registro 17, entry for 7 January 1687 (m.v.).

94. *Ibid.*, entry for 19 January 1688 (m.v.).

95. See the entries of 15 February 1693 (m.v.) for Antonio Caldara and Trachiero, cited in Eleanor Selfridge-Field, *Venetian Instrumental Music from Gabrieli to Vivaldi* (New York, 1975), pp. 304–305.

96. See also Giovanni Maria Bononcini's *Arie e correnti a tre, due violini, e violone* [1678a]. The bass partbook for this publication is labelled *Violoncello*. According to William Klenz (*Giovanni Maria Bononcini* [Durham, 1962], p. 19n), a manuscript copy of this work, found in Modena, has a bass part that is labelled *Violoncino*. It should be noted that this is the first publication of Bononcini after the arrival of Giovanni Battista Vitali to Modena.

97. MIA LXXI/8, *Spese*, fol. 777; MIA LXXI/9, *Spese*, fols. 22, 122, 149, & 203.

98. MIA LXXI/10, *Spese*, fols. 54, 91, 132, etc.

99. MIA LXXI/11, *Spese*, fol. 75 for 1702. Even after the violoncello has been introduced it is still occasionally supplanted by the violone. See, e.g., MIA LXXI/10, *Spese*, fol. 561 for 1700; MIA LXXI/11, *Spese*, fol. 24 for 1701.

of musicians hired for special occasions. It is not until 1701 that the violoncellist permanently replaces the violonist in the concerto at Santa Maria Maggiore, and that a contrabassist is identifiable as a regular member.¹⁰⁰

Thus it would appear that the violoncello as a violoncino does indeed have a past, and that it can be tracked back to the 1640's, possibly even to the 1630's if Fontana rather than his editor, Giovanni Battista Reghino, was the one to use the term *violoncino*. It may even be that *violone piccolo*, the name of the instrument that Alessandro Grandi employed for the Feast of the Assumption in Bergamo in 1629, was yet another synonym.¹⁰¹ The context here was violino, viola, and violone. But since we know nothing about the music Grandi used for the instrument, nor what the instrument looked like, we can do nothing but speculate in this particular instance.¹⁰²

* * *

Our search for alternative names for the smaller bass violin is still unfinished. Returning to Bologna, we note the curious fact that even though the term *violoncello* can be identified with Bologna as early as 1665, and with San Petronio as early as 1674, it is not until 1687 that the term began to be widely used by those publishing in Bologna.¹⁰³ In the meantime the violone remained the preferred bass instrument. None of the three early Bolognese violoncellist-composers, Giovanni Battista Vitali (c. 1644–1692), Petronio Franchesini (c. 1650–1680), or Domenico Gabrielli (c. 1659–1690), ever pub-

100. MIA LXIII/45, *Terminazioni*, fol. 170.

101. See "Violone," p. 71, and n. 18.

102. See Wilhelm Joseph von Wasielewski, *The Violoncello and Its History*, trans. I. S. E. Stigand (London, 1894; reprint, New York, 1968), p. 39. Wasielewski suggests that both a larger and a smaller violoncello were built from the outset, the standard size being established by Antonio Stradivari. Unfortunately he gives no documentation for his statement.

103. The earliest appearances of the term from Bolognese presses are as follows: 1667a, 1678a, 1683a, 1683c, 1685f, & 1686a. Since what appear to be first editions of G. B. Degli'Antonii's opus 1 [1687a] and opus 2 [1687f] both postdate what appears to be the first edition of his opus 3 [1677a], the date for opus 3 must surely be 1687, not 1677. 1688c is the *siglum* for a reprint of opus 3, 1698l for the first edition of opus 5. Consequently, Degli'Antonii's opus 3 [1677a] has not been included in our list.

lished anything for the instrument (although there are, of course, works in manuscript for violoncello by Gabrielli). Without exception and regardless of the genre (*sonate da chiesa* or *sonate da camera*), Vitali specified the violone as the bass instrument in all his prints, the last of which appeared in 1692. And in Gabrielli's one publication of instrumental music the pattern of segregation of instruments by genre, outlined in our previous study,¹⁰⁴ is followed. For even though in the title he is referred to as "Sonatore di Violoncello in S. Petronio di Bologna," the partbook, since the print consists of dances, is labelled *violone o spinetta* [1684a].

However, it looks very much as if other composers elsewhere, all of whom used Giacomo Monti in Bologna as their publisher, were writing for the smaller violone under yet another name, again a diminutive form: *bassetto di viola*. Although the term was used once much earlier by Biagio Marini for one sonata in his collection of 1626,¹⁰⁵ it suddenly emerges in Bologna in 1674, being used until 1693 for first editions, and for reprints through at least 1700 (see Table I). But its main period of use was the fourteen-year period from 1674 through 1687.¹⁰⁶ And interestingly it seems to disappear in Italy as suddenly as it appeared, just at the time the term *violoncello* began to be widely used. Like the violoncino it was employed for concertante bass parts in church sonatas, motets, and psalms, and only rarely for chamber sonatas. It was like the violoncino also in the compass of its music, D–e'; furthermore, the writing for one is indistinguishable from that for the other. Its connection with the bass violin is suggested by two prints at the beginning and apparent end of its period of use. In the first, a collection of dances by Andrea Grossi in Mantua [1678g], the instruments called for in the title are "due violini e violone," yet the bass partbook is labelled *Bassetto*. In the second, a collection of church sonatas by the Bolognese Giovanni

104. "Violone," p. 86, n. 87.

105. According to Tharald Borgir ("The Performance of the Basso Continuo in Seventeenth Century Italian Music" [unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1971], p. 165), Marini called for *bassetto* or *viola da gamba* for the *Sonata sopra la monica* in his opus 8 [1626m]. We should also note a similar term used by Banchieri in 1611: *basso violetta da braccio* (see "Violone," p. 68, n. 8).

106. Our consideration of the term *bassetto* stops with 1700. It of course has a subsequent history outside Italy, possibly also within as well.

Buoni [1693g], the instruments specified in the title are “due violini e violoncello,” but the partbook is again labelled *Bassetto*.¹⁰⁷ The *bassetto* may, of course, have been yet a third form of bass violin, different in size and characteristics from both the violone and the violoncino. But if the difference was significant enough to warrant a new name, one would expect either the composer or the publisher to call attention to this fact in some way. So far as we know they did not. No explanation is currently possible for this curious phenomenon. But in any case we know that *bassetto* was widely used as a synonym for *violoncello* in eighteenth-century Austria.¹⁰⁸

The term *bassetto* was particularly favored by two Ferrarese composers, Giovanni Battista Mazzaferatta and Sebastiano Chierico (or Cherici). The former used the term for all concertante bass parts, the latter for all but one, the exception being the *violetta* (yet another diminutive) that Chierico calls for in his opus 1 of 1672, also published by Monti.¹⁰⁹ Written in the bass clef, this part has a compass of E–d'. Andrea Grossi in Mantua was another to use the term *bassetto* for all his known publications, as did Teofilio Macchetti, a Venetian active in Pisa. Stefano Filippini, who worked in Rimini and San Marino, on the only occasion he wrote a concertante bass part, called for the *bassetto*. Giuseppe Colombi in Modena employed it in his only collection of *sonate da chiesa*, relying otherwise, as we have found the practice with others, on the violone. The two Bolognese to use the term were Giorgio Buoni, mentioned earlier, who employed it for his three known publications, all chamber sonatas, and Giovanni Paolo Colonna, maestro di cappella at San Petronio, who on only one other occasion published music with a concertante bass part, his *Messe e Salmi concertati*, opus 10, of 1691. The latter

107. According to Borgir, p. 164, the *Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca*, 4th ed. (Florence, 1729), defines the *bassetto* as “Strumento di quattro corde, che si suona come il contrabasso.” It is not clear whether “si suona come” means “is played like” or “sounds like.” Nor is it clear what the term *bassetto* meant to the Florentines at this time.

108. See the evidence on this in the superb study by James Webster, “Violoncello and Double Bass in the Chamber Music of Haydn and His Viennese Contemporaries, 1750–1780,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, xxix (1976), 415–418.

109. *Inni sacri a 2, 3, 4, e 5 voci*, opus 1 (Bologna: Monti, 1672).

TABLE I

Publications of Giacomo Monti
Calling for the Bassetto or Bassetto di Viola

Composer	Date	Title
1. G. B. Mazzaferata	1674d	<i>Sonate</i> , opus 5
2. G. B. Mazzaferata	1676	<i>Salmi concertati</i> , opus 6
3. G. Colombi	1676b	<i>Sonate</i> , opus 4
4. G. B. Mazzaferata	1678e	reprint of #1
5. A. Grossi	1678g	<i>Balletti</i> , opus 1
6. A. Grossi	1679a	<i>Balletti</i> , opus 2
7. S. Chierici	1681	<i>Harmonia di devoti concertati</i> , opus 2
8. G. P. Colonna	1681	<i>Motetti sacri</i> , opus 2
9. A. Grossi	1682b	<i>Sonate a 2, 3, 4, 5</i> , opus 3
10. G. B. Mazzaferata	1684	reprint of #2 by Gardano in Venice
11. A. Grossi	1685h	<i>Sonate a 3</i> , opus 4
12. S. Filippini	1685	<i>Salmi concertati</i> , opus 11
13. S. Chierici	1686	<i>Compieta concertata</i> , opus 3
14. S. Chierici	1686	<i>Motetti sagri a 2 & 3</i> , opus 4
15. T. Macchetti	1687	<i>Sacri concerti di salmi</i>
16. G. B. Mazzaferata	1688e	reprint of #1
17. G. Buoni	1693f	<i>Divertimenti per camera</i> , opus 1
18. G. Buoni	1693g	<i>Suonate</i> , opus 2
19. G. Buoni	1693h	<i>Allettamenti per camera</i> , opus 3
20. G. P. Colonna	1695	reprint of #8
21. S. Chierici	1698	reprint of #7
22. S. Chierici	1700	reprint of #14

publication includes two partbooks of interest, one entitled *violoncello*, the other *violone o tiorba*.

We still are not through with our consideration of the terms in use for a bass stringed instrument in seventeenth-century Italy. But enough evidence is already at hand to suggest that the conscientious church musician must have been thoroughly confounded as he sought, day by day, to supply the appropriate instrument for each new collection of psalms or sonatas that was published. Consider also the problem of the publisher. In the same year, 1678, Giacomo Monti in Bologna is found publishing works containing bass partbooks that appear to require three different instruments: violoncello, violone,

and bassetto.¹¹⁰ Three years later Magni in Venice went one step further, publishing in a single print—a collection of sonatas by various unidentified *signori virtuosi moderni*—works that required as the bass instrument a viola, a violone, and a violoncino [1681e]. In the circumstances the church musician could be forgiven if he picked up any instrument at hand—which he probably did—or even stayed home.

* * *

What we have just witnessed in Bologna also took place in Venice. The initial appearance of the term *violoncello* in a music print was followed by a period of many years before composers publishing there began to use the term with any regularity. For even though the first appearance anywhere of the term was in Venice in 1665, it was not until 1697, some thirty years later, and—just as important—some ten years following its adoption in Bologna, that it appears with any frequency in Venetian music prints.¹¹¹ Again, a logical explanation for this is that a perfectly good term, *violoncino* was already in use in Venice, so why change? But it may also indicate the rather late adoption of wirewound strings in Venice.

We must look more closely at the evidence from Venice, examining the terminology found both in musical establishments there and also in music emanating from Venetian presses. Several sources from the last forty years of the seventeenth century list four kinds of strings: violino, violetta, viola da braccio, and violone. The most comprehensive of these is a series of inventories of *mobili* for the Conservatorio dei Mendicanti, made periodically between 1661 and 1705.¹¹² The continuity in the number of instruments over a period of some thirty-five years, as well as the consistent order in which they were listed in the inventories each time, allows us to establish a certain family of names for several of the instruments. We must

110. [1678a]: Giovanni Maria Bononcini, *Arie e correnti*, opus 12, violoncello; [1678d]: Giovanni Battista Vitali, *Balletti*, opus 4, violone; [1678e]: Giovanni Battista Mazzaferata, *Sonate a due violini*, opus 5, bassetto viola.

111. The earliest appearances of the term in Venice are: 1665e, 1687l, 1691h, 1692e, 1692g, 1693j, & 1694d.

112. ASV Ospitali e Luoghi Pii Diversii, Busta 642, no. 3, *Libro de mobili de Chiesa*. Inventories were made in 1661, 1664, annually from 1668 to 1673, 1682, 1700, and 1705. I am indebted to Professor Pierluigi Petrobelli for these data.

remember, however, that unlike the prints we have thus far been considering, which were made under the supervision of musicians, these furniture inventories may well have been prepared by anyone at hand. In fact, the nature of the parenthetical explanations added for the *violetta* from time to time suggests just this possibility. The name *violino*, as could be expected, is constant throughout all eleven inventories; so, too, is the name *violone*, just as it was in Bergamo. *Violetta*, on the other hand, is a term used in the first two inventories, as well as in those of 1682 and 1705.¹¹³ In the inventories from 1668 to 1673, however, the name for this instrument is *viola piccola*,¹¹⁴ to which someone has added in 1673 the parenthetical explanation, *cioè di collo*.¹¹⁵ In 1700 the *violetta* is called *viola da colo*.¹¹⁶ The term *viola da braccio* is found in all but two inventories, that of 1682 mistakenly calling this instrument a *viola di collo*,¹¹⁷ that of 1705 calling it *viola da spala*.¹¹⁸

Other evidence on the Venetian use of terms is provided by an oft cited document of 1685 from San Marco, which authorized the size of the concerto there.¹¹⁹ Since the names of the instruments have so often been badly mangled through translation, we must return to the original wording: “Applicati gli soprascritti Ill[ustrissi]mi, et Ecc[ellentissi]mi Sig[no]ri Proc[urato]ri a tener provisto la Chiesa Ducal di S[an] Marco di Sonatori per il numero necessario, e prescritto, che sono Violini n[umer]o 8; Violette n[umer]o 11; Viole da braccio n[umer]o 2; Violoni tre; Tiorbe quattro; Cornetti doi; Fagotti uno; e Tromboni tre in tutto numero trentaquattro.” The string complement uses the same terminology we have found in the inventories. From other documents of the time associated with San Marco we get a slightly different view of terminology, however. For although the terms *violino* and *violetta* are encountered from 1669 through

113. *Ibid.*, fols. 4^v, 12, 21^v, 25, & 41^v.

114. *Ibid.*, fol. 13.

115. *Ibid.*

116. *Ibid.*, fol. 33.

117. *Ibid.*, fol. 21^v. Another inventory for the same year [fol. 25] uses the same term.

118. *Ibid.*, fol. 41^v.

119. ASV Procuratia, Registro 147, fol. 209^v.

1689¹²⁰ (and in fact as late as 1766¹²¹), the term *viola da braccio* is not. In fact, insofar as is presently known, on only three occasions is a player associated with the *viola da braccio*.¹²² The term more frequently found in the *Decreti*, from 1644 through at least 1714, was simply *viola*.¹²³ A somewhat similar situation is encountered with the *violone*, which appears to have been subject to the same confusion we found with this term in Bergamo.¹²⁴

What are we to make of all this evidence? Considering first the size of the string complement authorized at San Marco, it would appear that Legrenzi, who as vice-maestro at the time surely was the instigator of the document,¹²⁵ had five-part scoring in mind for the orchestra—with a contrabass added—that is, two violins (four performers each), two violas (six and five performers respectively), bass (two performers), and contrabass (three), a common orchestral scoring of the time.¹²⁶ Hence the *violone* mentioned here must be a contrabass—a term never encountered in San Marco during these

120. Three violetta players were engaged at San Marco on 17 January 1668 (m.v.) (see ASV Procuratia, Registro 146, fol. 145^v); see also Carlo Platti in 1685 (ASV Procuratia, Registro 147, fol. 198) and Giovanni Battista Mazzoni in 1689 (*ibid.*, fol. 280).

121. See Denis Arnold, "Orchestras in Eighteenth-Century Venice" ("Orchestras"), *The Galpin Society Journal*, xix (1966), 9.

122. Francesco Valletta (Selfridge-Field, p. 303); Gaspare Tanesche (*ibid.*, p. 307); and Francesco Trevisan (*ibid.*).

123. See, e.g., Carlo Fedeli, who was regularly paid as a *sonator di viola* in 1682 and 1683 (ASV, Procuratia, Registro 16, entries for 30 April 1682, 19 August 1682, 30 December 1682, etc.); see also the entries in Selfridge-Field, pp. 301–304, and Arnold, "Orchestras," p. 5. Francesco Calisti was hired to play *viola o violone* (see Selfridge-Field, p. 302).

124. See Francesco Rossi and Alessandro Fedeli for the *violone* (Selfridge-Field, p. 302); Giovanni Marchetti for the *violone contrabasso* (*ibid.*, p. 299); Zuane Noris for the *violone grosso* (*ibid.*, p. 302).

125. For the circumstances surrounding this decision see the author's "The Church Sonatas of Giovanni Legrenzi" ("Legrenzi") (unpublished Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1964), vol. I, pp. 92–96.

126. This scoring is found in the *sinfonie* for all six of Legrenzi's surviving operas, from *Germanico sul Reno* (1677) through *Eteocle e Polinice* (1690). (The dates refer not to the original Venetian performances, but rather to those in Modena, scores for which are found in the Biblioteca Estense.) More important, this scoring is also found in his *Sacri e festivi concerti*, opus 9 (Venice, 1667), and in several church sonatas in his opus 8 [1663b].

years, nor even apparently as late as 1766.¹²⁷ And since the terminology at San Marco agrees with that at the Mendicanti, it would appear that *violone* was the Venetian term for contrabass from at least 1661 on. Corroborating this interpretation is the fact that very few Venetian composers ever called for the violone as a bass concertante instrument. In fact, after Alessandro Grandi, who was the first [1613m] (and who was, in fact, active in Ferrara not Venice at the time), the next is Don Alessandro Ziani [1683b]. Only two other Venetians appear to have done so before the end of the century, Giovanni Maria Ruggieri [1689j], and Antonio Caldara [1699c]. Furthermore, once music publishing commences in Bologna in 1659, the term *violone* appears from Venetian music presses almost exclusively in connection with reprints by non-Venetian composers.¹²⁸

What then was the viola at San Marco? Clearly this question cannot be separated from a consideration of the identity of the violetta. All available evidence suggests that this latter term was used for what we call today the viola. It is so used (with two known exceptions)¹²⁹ in both Bologna¹³⁰ and Rome¹³¹ during these same years.¹³²

As for the viola at San Marco, there can be no question, first of all, but that it was a member of the violin family. This is explicit in the

127. See Arnold, "Orchestras," p. 9. See also Selfridge-Field, p. 308. See, however, the one earlier use of the term *contrabasso*, cited in n. 124, above.

128. See, e.g., Cazzati [1659b, 1668f], Vitali [1670d, 1677g].

129. See Sebastiano Chierici on p. 28, and n. 109, above; and Schoebelen, "Performance Practices," p. 53, for an example from 1678 by Giacomo Perti.

130. See Schoebelen, "Performance Practices," p. 53, and "Concerted Mass," p. 80.

131. See Andreas Liess, "Materialien zur römischen Musikgeschichte des Seicento," *Acta Musicologica*, xxix (1957), 150-157 and 163, for its use in the Oratorio San Marcello from 1674 to 1677, and again in 1690. See Hans Joachim Marx, "Die Musik am Hofe Pietro Kardinal Ottobonis unter Arcangelo Corelli," *Analecta Musicologica*, v (1968), 123-161, for its use at the Ottoboni court from 1689 to 1705. See also Ursula Kirkendale, "The Ruspoli Documents on Handel," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, xx (1967), 256, for evidence for 1708.

132. See the manuscript score of Legrenzi's *Eteocle e Polinice* (Naples: Biblioteca del Conservatorio), which contains two parts labelled *Violetta I* and *Violetta II*. The first uses alto, the second tenor clef, a normal notation for what is called elsewhere *alto viola* and *tenor viola* (see the partbooks by these names in Legrenzi's *Sacri e festivi concerti*, cited in n. 126, above).

inventories at the Mendicanti, implicit at San Marco because of the appended tag *da braccio* in the policy statement of 1685. And we should expect it from our study of the use of the viol in our model church, Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo. It is also clear that the viola was a bass instrument. The context alone would suggest this in both our sources. But it is confirmed beyond doubt by the parenthetical amplifications that were added, and the alterations in common terminology that were made in the inventories. All imply that the basic term, *viola*, refers to a bass instrument. Why else would one speak of the alto or tenor viola as *viola (cioè di collo)* or *viola piccola*?

The same terminology we have discovered in San Marco and the Mendicanti is to be found in Venetian music publications from 1663 on. In that year Giovanni Legrenzi, then active in Ferrara, published his opus 8 in Venice. He called for the viola da braccio as the bass concertante instrument.¹³³ Composers active in Venetian territories preferred the term *viola* for the bass instrument.¹³⁴ Before 1663, however, with few exceptions,¹³⁵ both terms, *viola* and *viola da braccio*, were used in a generic sense, applying on occasion to our present-day viola,¹³⁶ or to either alto, tenor, or bass members of the violin family.¹³⁷ But from about that time the term *violetta* was

133. The bass partbook of his opus 10 [1673] & 1682g] is, on the other hand, labelled simply *viola*. The *Tavola* specifies both *viola da braccio* and *viola da gamba*, but not for the same sonatas. The bass partbook of his opus 8 [1663b & 1671b] is labelled *viola da braccio*, even though the violone is specified within for all *sonate a tre*, and for five sonatas for larger combinations. A later reprint of opus 8 [1667k] contains a partbook labelled *violone o viola*. Legrenzi also uses the term *basso viola da braccio* for the concertante bass part in his opus 9 (1667) (see n. 126, above).

134. See Giovanni Bonaventura Viviani [1673b & 1679f]; Natale Monferrato (*Salmi concertati*, opus 8 [Venice, 1671], and *Salmi concertati*, opus 16 [Venice, 1678]); Carlo Fedeli [1685s]. The latter two composers were associated with San Marco. The first had operas performed in Venice from 1677 to 1679. The viola part in Monferrato's opus 8 has a compass of E-d'; that in his opus 16 is D-f'.

135. See, e.g., Neri's opus 1 [1644b], which has partbooks for alto viola, tenor viola, and viola, the latter in the bass clef. The bass instrument he specified in his opus 2 [1651b] is unknown since the partbooks are lost.

136. See, e.g., Rovetta [1626a].

137. See, e.g., Rigatti [1640c]; Monteverdi, *Selva Morale* (Venice, 1641); Fontei, *Messa e salmi*, opus 6 (Venice, 1647); Vesi, *Motetti e salmi*, opus 2 (Venice, 1648). Rigatti and Monteverdi were active in San Marco, Fontei in Verona, and Vesi in Padua.

reserved for our present-day viola in both sizes then current.¹³⁸ The term *viola*, unless qualified by the adjective *alto* or *tenor*,¹³⁹ was reserved for the bass member. In the circumstances we can sympathize with the poor souls who were called upon to undertake the inventories at the Mendicanti. Here they were confronted by three different instruments, all of which used the same name: alto viola, tenor viola, and bass viola. Is it any wonder that they invented their own distinctions between them? And they are to be forgiven if, in the process of trying to keep things straight, they occasionally made matters worse for us. The term *viola* for the bass violin persists in San Marco until at least 1708.¹⁴⁰ But beginning in 1688 the violoncello gradually replaced the *viola*.¹⁴¹

So this *viola* appears to be a bass violin. But of what size? Since, as we have seen, the term *violoncello* was in use in Venice from 1656, and specifically at San Marco in 1687 and 1694,¹⁴² it seems likely that the *viola* was (or closely resembled) what would have been called outside Venice a *violone*—that is, our larger violoncello. Such an interpretation is supported by the illustration of the *viola* that

138. See, e.g., Cavalli [1656a]. The term *violetta* is encountered in Venetian opera orchestras as early as 1658; see Denis Arnold, "'L'Incoronazione di Poppea' and Its Orchestral Requirements" *The Musical Times*, CIV (1963), 176. Both *violetta* and *viola* are listed for another production in 1665. The context suggests that they are different instruments. Earlier composers to use the term *violetta* for the *viola* are Rovetta [1626a], Castello [1629e & 1629f]; (see Selfridge-Field, p. 134, n. 29), Ganassi [1637e], and Vesi (*Motetti e Salmi*, opus 2 [Venice, 1648]).

139. See n. 135, above. In Legrenzi's opus 8 [1663b] and opus 10 [1673j] the *Tavola* uses the name *Alto* for our present-day *viola*. In the music for two sonatas in opus 8, *La Fugazza* and *La Marinona*, the term used is *viola, alto*. His posthumous collection, opus 16 [1691h], includes partbooks labelled *alto viola, tenor viola*, and one labelled *violoncello*. Cazzati used the terms *alto viola* and *tenor viola* in 1656 in a *polizza* he himself prepared, requesting payment for extra musicians hired for the Assumption at Santa Maria Maggiore, Bergamo (see MIA LXXI/7, *Spese*, fol. 24). One cannot help wondering whether the terminological clarification evident in Venice around 1663 reflects the invention of wirewound strings, which appears to have occurred at just about this time ("Violone," p. 96).

140. Arnold, "Orchestras," p. 5. See, however, the persistence of the term *viola da braccio* until 1729 (Selfridge-Field, p. 307).

141. See n. 94, above. Violoncellists were first hired on a permanent basis at San Marco in 1714. See Selfridge-Field, pp. 304–305 and 307.

142. See p. 27, above.

appears in Bonanni's *Gabinetto Armonico* (1723).¹⁴³ It receives further support from the definition of the violone given in the *Vocabulario* (1729),¹⁴⁴ which equates the *basso di viola* with the *violone*. Such an interpretation further explains why five Venetian prints from 1677 through 1700, all published by Sala, and all but one written by Giovanni Battista Bassani, offer the option of *violon o viola* for the bass concertante instrument. Bassani, active in Ferrara, published in both Bologna and Venice. Bass partbooks, when required, are labelled differently in each city. Those emanating from Bologna never mention the viola, but usually read *Violone o tiorba* (see Table II).¹⁴⁵ Finally, such an interpretation of the term *viola* would explain why it is that one never finds both the violoncino and the viola da braccio in the same print.¹⁴⁶

If our interpretation of the Venetian term *viola* is correct, it would suggest that the concerto at San Marco retained several of the larger bass instruments through at least 1729,¹⁴⁷ a date that is not out of

143. See the modern edition, ed. by Frank Ll. Harrison and Joan Rimmer as *The Showcase of Musical Instruments* (New York, 1964), plate 56.

144. See "Violone," p. 85, and n. 81. Pietro Sanmartino, a Florentine composer, used the term *basso di viola* for the bass instrument in a collection published in Florence [1688a]. Considering its provenance, and the definition given in the *Vocabulario*, he surely intended the bass violin, not the bass viol. I am indebted to Professor Richard Taruskin for calling this work to my attention.

145. Table II also provides further evidence of the segregation by musical genre of violone and violoncello (see "Violone," p. 86, n. 87) and the appearance of the term *violone* in Venetian reprints by non-Venetian composers (see p. 35 and n. 128, above).

146. It is impossible presently to say just what Legrenzi meant by the *viola da braccio* he called for in opus 8 [1663b] and opus 10 [1673j]. By the subtle difference in style between his writing for *viola da braccio* and his earlier writing for *violone* in opus 2 [1655c] and opus 4 [1656d] he seems to imply that the *viola da braccio* was a smaller instrument. If so, however, he could have used the term *violoncino*, current at the time in Venice, and a term he himself had used in 1653 in Bergamo (see p. 10 and n. 17, above). Perhaps *viola da braccio* meant in Ferrara (where he was working at the time) a neutral size of bass violin, since Chierico, a Ferrarese, used the term *violetta* (see p. 28, above). We know of no other users of the term *viola da braccio* (a form associated with Venetian territories) in Ferrara at that time.

147. In this connection see Georg Kinsky, *Katalog des Musikhistorischer Museums von Wilhelm Heyer in Cöln* (Cologne, 1912), vol. II, pp. 561–562. Here appears an instrument, possibly by Carlo Tonino of Venice (1765), which has a body length of 82 centimeters, some 7 centimeters larger than the average modern instrument.

TABLE II
Bass Partbooks in the Music
of Giovanni Battista Bassani

Opus	Title	Date	Publisher		
			Monti, Bologna	Silvani, Bologna	Sala, Venice
1	<i>Balletti, Correnti</i>	1677	violone		
		1680			violone
		1684	violone		
		1686			violone
2	<i>La Moralità</i>	1683	violone o tiorba		
		1690	violone o tiorba		
5	<i>Sonate da chiesa</i>	1683	violoncello		
		1688		violoncello	
9	<i>Armonici Entusiasmi</i>	1690			violone o viola
		1698			violone o viola
10	<i>Salmi di Compieta</i>	1691			violone o viola
11	<i>Concerti sacri</i>	1692	violone o tiorba		
13	<i>Armonia festive</i>	1693	violone o tiorba		
20	<i>Messe per il defonti</i>	1698		violone o tiorba	
23	<i>Le Note lugubri</i>	1700			violone o viola
25	<i>Completori</i>	1701		violone o tiorba	
26	<i>Antifone sacre</i>	1701		violone o tiorba	
27	<i>Motetti sacri</i>	1701		violone o tiorba	
29	<i>Corona di fiori</i>	1702		violoncello	

line with what we know about events in Rome.¹⁴⁸ Its persistence there over a quarter of a century after the violoncello first appears in the basilica would further suggest, however, that the concerto at San Marco was by 1714 somewhat behind the times, at least with regard to the bass strings.¹⁴⁹ And it follows that the same could be said of musical institutions in Rome.

148. See "Violone," pp. 80-81, noting that although the violoncello appears in Rome as early as 1694, as late as 1722 the violone was still the normal—and only—bass instrument.

149. Denis Arnold ("Orchestras," pp. 3-15) provides an elegant argument for the gradual deterioration of the cappella at San Marco from the early years of the seventeenth century. Such a process would of course explain the late retention of an out-of-date instrument.

But can we be sure, even as late as 1700, that the term *viola*, when used without a qualifier, could not signify a viol? There should be no question about this at San Marco, both because of the terminology in the policy statement of 1685, and because it was a church. Nor should there reasonably be any question about prints of church music by Venetian composers from the 1670's and 1680's. But the fact that throughout the seventeenth century one often encounters in Venice the appendage *da braccio* suggests the continued local use of the *viola da gamba*. Such a suggestion is supported by the inventories at the Mendicanti, which in 1673 record the rather unusual—at least to us—acquisition of seven *viola da gamba*.¹⁵⁰ In this same year Giovanni Legrenzi, who was active at the Mendicanti and may well have been the instigator of this acquisition, published an instrumental collection that included two sonatas for “quattro viole da gamba ò come piece,”¹⁵¹ the only works for these instruments he is known to have composed. But it seems safe to assume that after 1640, whether in Venice or anywhere else in northern Italy, inside or outside the church, unless the suffix *da gamba* is specifically present, *da braccio* was always implied.¹⁵²

* * *

Our study is finished. Clearly it has been only a beginning. Much work is still to be done, mainly with archival records. But it would seem even so that the outlines of the early history of the bass violin have begun to emerge—and in sufficient detail to allow us to draw some tentative conclusions as to the seventeenth-century meanings of the terms laid out in long lists at the outset—those employed

150. ASV Ospitali e Luoghi Pii Diversii, Busta 642, *Libro de mobili di Chiesa*, fol. 13. The viols disappear from subsequent inventories until 1705 when, reappearing, their number is now six, their condition “vechie e rote” (*ibid.*, fol. 41^v). It should be noted that these viols were not purchased by a church.

151. See his opus 10 [1673]]. We can associate Legrenzi with the Mendicanti, probably as early as 1673. See the author's “Legrenzi,” 1, 76–81, for the evidence on this point.

152. We therefore agree with Owen Jander's interpretation of the term *viola* in Stradella's *concerto grosso di viole*. See his “Concerto Grosso Instrumentation in Rome in the 1660's and 1670's,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXI (1968), 176. We also agree with Borgir (p. 156), who gives almost the same date, but for different reasons.

before the widespread use of wirewound strings.¹⁵³ Using present-day terminology we can hazard a grouping as follows:

CONTRABASS

contrabasso	violone doppio
violone (in Venice, and Bergamo before 1650)	violone grosso
violone grande	violone grande contrabasso

VIOLONCELLO

(in every case with the present-day tuning)

large size

basso di viola (Florence, c. 1688)	violone da braccio
violone (from 1610, outside Venice)	viola da braccio (Venice, from 1663)
violone basso (northern Europe)	viola (Venice, from 1644)

small size

bassetto (mainly Ferrara and Mantua, 1674-1693)	violoncino (Bergamo, Bologna, Venice)
bassetto di viola (as above)	violoncello
violetta (Chierici and Perti)	violonzino
	violonzono

size undetermined

basso viola da braccio (Legrenzi)	viola da braccio (Legrenzi)
basso da braccio (Buonamente)	vivola da braccio (Monteverdi)
	violone piccolo (Bergamo)

VIOLA

viola (Bologna, Venice before 1663, Bergamo c. 1655)
violetta (Bergamo, Bologna, Rome, Venice from 1626)

VIOLIN FAMILY OF UNDETERMINED SIZE

viola granda (Bergamo)

BASS VIOLA DA GAMBA

basso di viola (until 1640)
violone (1600-1610, perhaps only in Bologna)

If our thesis on the pre-history of the violoncello is valid, one must include among the earliest composers for the instrument—as a violone, viola, violoncino, or bassetto—such able men as Tarquinio Merula, Mauritio Cazzati, and Giovanni Legrenzi. In so doing we have included perhaps the greatest of the instrumental composers

153. It will be noted that, with the exception of the term *viola* in Venice before 1663, we have once again rejected the possibility that any of our terms was being used in a generic sense. See the arguments presented in "Violone," pp. 87-88.

from the 1620's on—and have in the process enlarged the legitimate repertoire for the 'cellist (at the expense, unfortunately, of both the gamba player and contrabassist), providing him not, however, with solo works but rather with well-crafted ensemble sonatas that will include one or two violins and continuo. *Vivi lieto.*

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