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VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY OF AMERICA

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The Viola da Gamba Society of America is a not-for-profit national organization dedicated to the support of activities relating to the viola da gamba in the United States and abroad. Founded in 1962, the VdGSA is a society of players, builders, publishers, distributors, restorers, and others sharing a serious interest in music for viols and other early bowed string instruments. VdGSA members receive a quarterly newsletter and this annual journal, and have access to the many activities and valuable resources of the Society. The website provides additional information on the annual Conclave, instrument rentals, the microfilm lending library for researchers, and other offerings.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

The *kokyū* is a Japanese instrument about the size of a treble viol, though with a very different shape and playing technique. Many have assumed that the *kokyū* was modeled after the Chinese *èr-hú*. This perception is reinforced by YouTube videos of *èr-hú-kokyū* duets, where *kokyū* players use techniques similar to those associated with the Chinese instrument. Videos of more traditional performances reveal techniques and styles of playing the *kokyū* that are considerably different. Yukimi Kambe presents new research that makes the case that the instrument was developed in the seventeenth century as a result of Japanese exposure to the viol and other European instruments brought to Japan by Christian missionaries. The *kokyū* is thus an interpretation of European instruments adapted to Japanese taste and musical aesthetics.

Two articles are devoted to the work of Michel Collichon (d. c. 1695), whose innovations in viol building contributed to the flowering of the instrument in late-seventeenth-century France. The evidence points to Collichon as the luthier responsible for the addition of the seventh string to the *basse de viole*. Thomas Mace presents new evidence that Collichon was the inventor of the *pardessus de viole* as early as 1686 (and perhaps even earlier). This evidence calls for a reinterpretation of the place of the *pardessus* in the history of the viol. It coexisted with the seven-string bass and outlived it, so the *pardessus* can no longer be considered simply a symbol of the final flowering of the French viol tradition in the eighteenth century. Shem Mackey presents the results of his examination of the Collichon bass in the Musée de la Musique in Paris, with evidence that calls into question some of the conclusions reached in previous examinations of this instrument. Both Mace and Mackey are instrument builders and thus approach their subjects from a somewhat different perspective from that of musical scholars.

Also included are Ian Woodfield's annual list of recent viol-related research and Thomas Mace's review of the superb publication concerning the Caldwell Viol Collection.

Robert A. Green

THE ORIGIN OF THE *KOKYŪ*¹

Yukimi Kambe

Abstract

The *kokyū* is the only traditional Japanese bowed string instrument. New interpretations of materials from the period when the *kokyū* came into use, including chronologically ordered documents about bowed string instruments in sixteenth-century Europe, Christian missionary documents, Japanese documents, and visual materials, lead to new insights on the origin of the *kokyū*. It was invented by people connected with the guild of blind performers. It was not a simple copy or imitation of European instruments. In the late sixteenth century, the *shamisen*, a plucked string instrument, became popular to double the voices in singing. This in turn evoked a desire for an instrument capable of sustaining long notes to further enrich the sonority. Also involved was the popularity of *Namban* foreign fashion among cosmopolitan citizens in Osaka and Kyoto. In the beginning of the seventeenth century the Christians' use of bowed string instruments, namely viol and violin, with voice in their liturgical music generated the idea for a new Japanese instrument, the *kokyū*.

The *kokyū* is the only traditional Japanese bowed string instrument. The modern *kokyū* is unique in Japan and differs in many respects from the bowed string instruments of other cultures.² The earliest known record mentioning the *kokyū* is a nobleman's diary dated April 21, 1609, indicating that the *kokyū* was in use by this date.³ Scholars have not found a definitive answer as to the origin of the instrument. I propose the following hypothesis based on both published and unpublished documents: that

¹This article is based on my article “Kokyū-to rabeca: sofuto-to shitenō Kirishitan kigensetsu” [Origin of the *kokyū*: circumstantial evidence related to the viol and violin], *Nihon Dentō Ongaku Kenkyū* 7 (2010): 37–59. It is a report of joint research on “The source of the *kokyū* and its reception—from the viewpoint of relations between East and West” (2008) and “Acceptance and the present of the *kokyū*” (2009) at the Research Center for Japanese Traditional Music at Kyoto City University of Arts.

²Kazue Nakamizo (Collection for Organology, Kunitachi College of Music, Tokyo) said, “There are probably no instruments identical with *kokyū*,” in a lecture for joint research at Kyoto City University of Arts on September 22, 2008.

³In Japan, the lunar calendar was in use up to 1872. The dates are all converted here to the solar calendar unless otherwise noted. For more about this diary, see “Blind Musicians” section and footnote 80 below.

the *kokyū* was modeled on European bowed string instruments, namely viol and violin, but that the inventors of the *kokyū* did not simply imitate the European instruments but only borrowed the sound-producing principle to make a unique instrument to meet Japanese taste.

The modern *kokyū* has the shape of the *shamisen* (a Japanese three-string fretless plucked lute) but is somewhat smaller (Figure 1). The neck penetrates the body, and the pegs are located at the top of the neck. The lower end, called the *nakagosaki*, supports the instrument in a way similar to the endpin of a cello. The strings are made of silk, and catskin covers the wooden framework of the body. The player sets the bridge on the skin. There is no soundpost. The instrument normally has three strings, but a four-string version, first appearing in Edo (present-day Tokyo) in the eighteenth century, has had limited use. The instrument is usually about 70 cm (27 inches) long. Traditionally, the player sits or kneels on the floor, holding the *kokyū* upright with the *nakagosaki* placed between the knees. The player uses a bow to which a large amount of horsehair is loosely attached. The bow length is 1 to 1.3 m (39 to 51 inches), and the player must rotate the instrument to access the different strings.



Figure 1. Modern *kokyū* (with 1-meter scale). Instrument and photograph from collection of Mari Kanō.

The *kokyū* was traditionally used in the *sankyoku* ensemble together with the *koto* (a Japanese long zither) and *shamisen*, but from the nineteenth century onwards, the *shakuhachi* (a Japanese vertical flute) gradually replaced it. The *kokyū* is used in incidental music in *bunraku* (puppet theater) and *kabuki*. In the theater, the *kokyū* is usually used in sad scenes, such as those depicting forbidden love or the separation of a family. The *kokyū* has a solo repertoire (*honkyoku*). It is also used in folk music. It plays a central role in the *kaze no bon* festival in Owara, Toyama Prefecture.

Prior Studies

From the Edo period onwards the origin of the *kokyū* was mentioned many times, but those writers merely revisited older accounts found in scant Japanese documents.⁴ They have cited Japan, Ryūkyū (present-day Okinawa Prefecture), China, South-east Asia, and Europe as possible locations for the first appearance of the *kokyū*, but their conclusions have merely been based on supposition in the absence of new and firm evidence.⁵ No persuasive answers have emerged from either ethnomusicological or organological approaches.

Among these scholars, Eta Harich-Schneider claimed that the *kokyū* had its roots in China, evidently regarding the Chinese *èr-hú* (also spelled *erhu*) as the model for the *kokyū*.⁶ However, China is unlikely to be the place of origin. First, the *èr-hú* is not likely to

⁴ For example, Santō Kyōden, *Kottōshū* (Edo, 1814–15, Possession of Nara University of Education) [not paginated]; Hisao Tanabe, *Nihon-no gakkī* (Tokyo: Sōshisha, 1964), 133; Onno Mensink, “Strings, Bows and Bridges: Some Provisional Remarks on the *Kokyū* in Woodblock Prints,” *Andon* 15 (1984): 1–9; and Mihoko Nogawa, “*Kokyūgaku*,” in *Nihon-no dentō geinō kōza: Ongaku* (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2008), 370–83, and others.

⁵ For details of those theories, see Kenji Hirano, the booklet for the LP records *Kokyū: Nihon-no satsugen gakkī* (Tokyo: Nippon Phonogram Company, 1976), 5–8. Hirano could not decide which was more persuasive. As for South-east Asia, Tomiko Kojima, “*Shamisen-to kokyū-no kigen-to dempanrūto-ni tsuite*,” *Minzokuongaku kenkyū* 29 (2004): 30.

⁶ Eta Harich-Schneider, *A History of Japanese Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 521. William P. Malm and Shigeo Kishibe also sought the roots of the *kokyū* in China, according to David Waterhouse in “An Early Illustration of the Four-Stringed *Kokyū* with a Disquisition on the Early History of Japan’s Only Bowed Musical Instrument,” *Oriental Art* 16 (1970): 162–68.

be the model for the *kokyū*, because the structure of the two instruments differs in the number of strings, the shape of the body, and the angle between the strings and pegs. And while the bow of the *kokyū* is separate from the instrument, the bow of the *èr-hú* is inseparable, with its hair running between the two strings. Second, bowed string instruments were not common in China in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the *kokyū* first appeared in Japanese documents. The *Shì-wù-gàn-zhū*, a Chinese encyclopedia (1591), mentions no bowed strings in the entry for stringed instruments.⁷ Chinese music called *minshingaku* (literally “music of the Ming and Qing dynasties”) was introduced to Japan by the Chinese trader Wèi Zhī-yan in the mid-seventeenth century. *Minshingaku* makes use of bowed string instruments, and it became popular in eighteenth-century Japan, but because the *kokyū* was already in use by that time, *minshingaku* could not have contributed to its creation.

Although Japan had cultural, trade, and diplomatic contacts with Korea from ancient times, records are scarce from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when the first references to the *kokyū* appeared. Records of players of bowed string instruments among the Korean diplomatic envoys to Japan do not predate the mid-eighteenth century.

Fumihiko Ōtsuki asserted that the *kokyū* showed evidence of European origins, based on his investigation of European stringed instruments. He discussed the activities of the Portuguese missionaries in sixteenth-century Japan and proposed that their *rabeca* (violin) was the origin of the *kokyū*.⁸ Ōtsuki’s knowledge of European bowed string instruments was limited, and he failed to distinguish among the viol, violin, and medieval rebec.⁹ Likewise, Eishi Kikkawa stated that the Japanese learned bowing from the Euro-

⁷ Extract of *Shì-wù-gàn-zhū*, in Liàng Zài-píng, ed., *Zhōng-guó-dài yī-yuè shì-liào jí-yào* (Taipei: Xué-yì chū-ban-shè, 1971), 732–33.

⁸ Fumihiko Ōtsuki, “Shamisenshi,” unpaginated manuscript article (1885), published in *Ongaku* 61 (1897): 21–22, and 62 (1897): 24.

⁹ He quoted the information about the rebec from Carl Engel’s *Musical Instruments* (ed. William Maskell; South Kensington Museum Art Handbooks, 1875) and misinterpreted an illustration of a viol as a rebec. Ōtsuki, “Shamisenshi,” *Ongaku* 61:22 and 62:24.

pean *rabeca*.¹⁰ Yoshihiko Tokumaru speculated on the possibility that the *kokyū* originated from European instruments, based on general historical information on contemporary cultural interaction between Portugal and Japan.¹¹ Kenzō Hayashi dismissed this hypothesis.¹² Yūko Chiba studied the Jesuit missionaries' documents on Japan and asserted that hypotheses linking the *kokyū* with European instruments were merely "imaginary" speculation.¹³

David Waterhouse also claimed that the *kokyū* was modeled on European instruments. "We should be willing to allow the Japanese the independent invention of this method of playing stringed instruments only if no satisfactory alternative can be found ... but it can be stated that the *principle* of the bow was certainly known in Japan some time before the 1590s, through the musical activities of the Jesuits."¹⁴ The sources for his assertion were the Jesuit reports describing their activities and experiences in Japan, but he merely summarized secondary materials, and as a result his argument was partly erroneous. Moreover, he did not explain why he made reference to Japanese documents in relation to those of the Jesuits, nor support in detail his views concerning the relationship between the *kokyū* and the viol and rebec. Although Waterhouse's argument is in part unsupported, I nevertheless agree with his conclusion that the origin of the *kokyū* is found in its relation to the viol and violin. I will reinforce this hypothesis with detailed analysis of existing historical materials.

Present Approach

My earlier article on viols in sixteenth-century Japan is based in part on the *Kirishitan monjo*, the Jesuit missionaries' reports about

¹⁰ Eishi Kikkawa, *Nihon ongaku-no rekishi* (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1965), 176.

¹¹ Yoshihiko Tokumaru, "Kokyū-no shomondai," in *Sōritsu gojussūnen kinen ronbunshū* (Tokyo: Kunitachi College of Music, 1978), 326. See also Toshisaburō Miura, *Hompō yōgaku hensenshi* (Tokyo: Nittō shoin, 1931), 24–26; and Fumio Koizumi, *Nihon-no oto* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1977), 181.

¹² Kenzō Hayashi, *Higashiajia gakkikō* (Tokyo: Kawai gakufu, 1977), 402.

¹³ Yūko Chiba, *Doremi-o eranda Nihonjin* (Tokyo: Ongaku no tomo sha, 2007), 246.

¹⁴ Waterhouse, "An Early Illustration," 164.

Japan.¹⁵ The Jesuits actively sent missionaries to Asia with Francisco Xavier at their head. Xavier arrived in Japan in 1549, and subsequent missionaries brought musical instruments to support the singing of liturgical music. Aires Sanchez (c. 1525–1590) came to Japan in 1561 and reported in the following year that he taught *violas de arco* (viols). The missionaries celebrated sung masses with viols on principal feast days, such as Easter and Christmas. I also mentioned that a single violin—called *rabeca* (or the diminutive, *rabequinha*) in Portuguese—was brought from Europe to Japan in 1591.

No early examples of the *kokyū* survive today; the oldest surviving instrument was made in 1819.¹⁶ Our research group at the Research Center for Japanese Traditional Music at Kyoto City University of Arts has collected documents, both visual and written, including the *Kirishitan monjo*, and has compiled a comprehensive chronology of references in all sources to the *kokyū*.¹⁷ At present, thirty-five written references are known, including diaries, *kanazōshi* (tales), *haiku* poetry, encyclopedic books, geographical descriptions, and song verses, from 1609 to 1704. In addition we have found fifty pictures, including *byōbu* (folding screens), *emaki* (pictorial scrolls), illustrations, and *funaema* (votive offerings) from 1624 to 1704. While researchers have noted, without comprehensive documentary studies, that the early *kokyū* differed in shape from the modern type, our group has revealed that the early *kokyū* also differed in the way in which it was played.¹⁸

¹⁵ Yukimi Kambe, “Viols in Japan in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries,” *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America* 37 (2000): 31–66.

¹⁶ *Catalog of the Musical Instrument Collection of the Koizumi Fumio Memorial Archives* (Tokyo: Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku, 1987), 116, No. 320. The instrument is 26 inches (65 cm) long and has four strings.

¹⁷ Available online: <http://venus.kcua.ac.jp/databases/kokyuu/index.php> (only in Japanese). Published on December 27, 2011.

¹⁸ Mari Kanō, “Shoki-no *kokyū*-ni tsuite—jūnana seiki-no moji shiryō-to zuzō shiryō-kara” [The early *kokyū* from written documents and iconographic documents of the seventeenth century], *Nihon Dentoo Ongaku Kenkyuu* 8 (2011): 45–65.

I have studied the relationship between the Jesuit missionaries and Japanese people based on the *Kirishitan monjo* and Japanese documents mentioned above and have concluded that the Japanese people made the *kōkyū*, an instrument of their own, with some inspiration from European viols and violin; the Japanese did not simply imitate, or copy, European instruments but merely borrowed the sound-producing principle (bowing); the creation of the *kōkyū* took place in the Osaka-Kyoto area between summer 1607 and spring 1609; and blind musicians played an important part in the process. In addition to expanding on these conclusions below, I will also present my personal view concerning what motivated the Japanese to make the *kōkyū*.

The Jesuit Missionaries in Sixteenth-Century Japan and the *Kirishitan monjo*

Jesuit missionaries were active in Japan from 1549 to 1613. The majority of them were Portuguese, initially sent with the support of Portuguese King Joan III, but there were also missionaries from Italy and Spain. The Jesuit missionaries began their activities in Kyūshū Island under the local feudal lords. As part of introducing the Christian faith to Japan, missionaries emphasized education. They translated European books into Japanese, printed Japanese books using European movable type, and produced sacred art, such as copper prints of the Virgin Mary. European things were quickly accepted and absorbed in Japan. The Jesuits were highly successful and won many followers. The Jesuit *visitador* (inspector), Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606, visited Japan 1579–82, 1590–92, 1598–1603), sent four Christian boys (the Tenshō Christian envoys)—Mancio Itō, Miguel Chijiwa, Julian Nakaura, and Martino Hara—to Europe from 1582 to 1590 to demonstrate how successful they had been. Jesuit missionaries were active with the official permission of two successive rulers of Japan, Oda Nobunaga (1534–82) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–98), but Toyotomi abruptly prohibited the Christian faith in 1587. Their activities were thus limited and finally banned in 1613.

The *Kirishitan monjo*, the Christian documents concerning Japan, contain the Jesuit missionaries' reports addressed to the superior generals, provincials, and other members of the Jesuit order from 1549 to 1655. The reports were limited to religious affairs

and information about missionary activities, according to Ignatius Loyola's prescription. Their descriptions of events are generally reliable, because they agree with those in Japanese documents, but the *Kirishitan monjo* sometimes contain information that Japanese documents do not. In addition, most of the reports consist of letters whose dates, authors, places, and addresses are clearly documented; thus the *Kirishitan monjo* provide important source material for the history of sixteenth-century Japan.

Thousands of *Kirishitan monjo* documents survive. They take the form of missionaries' autographs, copies by contemporaries and by later hands, and printed copies. Manuscripts between 1549 and 1578 mainly consist of missionaries' letters called *cartas*. These contain their unvarnished impressions, subjective judgments, prejudices, and errors. From 1579 onward, the vice-provincial's secretary compiled the reports of missionaries in various regions and made an annual official report called the *Annua de Japão*.

After reaching Lisbon and Rome, manuscripts were further copied, translated, and printed in Europe from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries. In the translations, technical terms were sometimes replaced by similar words to make them understood by local contemporary readers. In the process of compiling them for publication, episodes were sometimes excised. Similar changes took place in Japan as well, where translators, working from printed versions rather than the original manuscripts, and without sufficient knowledge of sixteenth-century European musical instruments, when confronted with the term "viol" used many different terms for "viol-like" instruments, even if the original manuscript used only one term to indicate viol. As a result, it is impossible to base conclusions concerning musical instruments on these translations.¹⁹ We must refer to the original manuscripts, or similar sources, in preference to later copies or printed ones, in order to extract accurate information from the *Kirishitan monjo*. We also need a musicological perspective for this purpose.

¹⁹ We should thank the enormous efforts of the influential *Kirishitan* researchers in Japan, such as Kiichi Matsuda and Momota Kawasaki, but they misinterpreted viols as "bow-shaped viols." Matsuda and Kawasaki, eds., *Furoisu nihonshi*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chuō Kōronsha, 1977), 107.

Stringed Instruments in Sixteenth-Century Europe

When the Jesuit missionaries brought Christian liturgical music to Japan, they required European musical instruments to support the singing, so they brought a set of viols. The viol was a relatively new family of bowed string instruments. As the custom of playing the stringed instruments with bows became widespread, it was necessary to distinguish between plucking and bowing, but terminology was not standard. In Spain, the plucked version was called *vihuela de mano* (hand *vihuela*) and the bowed one *vihuela de arco* (bow *vihuela*). The Italian counterparts were *viola da mano* and *viola d'arco*, respectively.²⁰ *Viola* was a generic term for stringed instruments in Italy, regardless of the manner of playing.

Both the viol and violin were widely played in sixteenth-century Italy, but they were distinguished by their cultural context. The viol was an instrument used by the upper classes. Baldassare Castiglione, an influential writer in sixteenth-century Italy, mentioned a viol consort in 1528: "... and music of four viols [*quattro viole da arco*] is no less pleasant [than other instrumental music]. It is very delightful and artful."²¹ Giovanni Maria Lanfranco called viols in 1533 *violoni da tasti & da arco* (viols with frets and bow).²² An important resource of viol history, Sylvestro de Ganassi's *Regola rubertina* in 1542 has a viol ensemble on its title page: a bass viol in the center, a smaller one on the right and on the left, and also a singer on the left. Beneath them is the designation "*viola darcho*."²³ He uses the term *viola da gamba* (leg *viola*) where he mentions the holding position,²⁴ because it was held between the legs. In 1553, Diego Ortiz calls

²⁰ Ian Woodfield, *The Early History of the Viol* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 38–98.

²¹ Carlo Cordié, ed., *Opere di Baldassare Castiglione, Giovanni della Casa, Benvenuto Cellini* (Milan and Naples, Riccardo Ricciardi Editore, 1960), 107–8. In the footnote he erroneously interpreted this ensemble as a modern string quartet, i.e. two violins, a viola, and a cello.

²² Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, *Scintille di musica* (Brescia, 1533; reprint, Bologna: Forni Editore, 1970), 142.

²³ Sylvestro de Ganassi, *Regola rubertina* (Venice, 1542; reprint, Bologna: Forni Editore, 1970), title page.

²⁴ Ganassi, *Regola rubertina*, p. V line 15.

the viol *viola de arco*, *violone*, etc. in the Italian version of his treatise,²⁵ and *vihuela d'arco*, *violones* in the Spanish version.²⁶ Philibert Jambe de Fer agreed that viol was an instrument for the upper classes in his *Epitome musicale* (1556): “We call them viols with which gentlemen, merchants, and other virtuous people pass time.”²⁷

The violin, by contrast, was played almost exclusively by professional musicians, as Jambe de Fer attested: “Few persons are found using it except those who make a living by working with it.”²⁸ It is held on the arm and hence called *viola da braccio* (arm *viola*) in contrast to *viola da gamba*. Girolamo dalla Casa clearly distinguished between *viola da braccio* and *viola da gamba* in 1584.²⁹ In Portuguese, *rabeca* was an archaic term for violin that had its roots in the Moorish *rabāb*.

Although none of the instruments brought to Japan in the sixteenth century survive, the *Kirishitan monjo* record them. From 1562 on, viols are described mostly in the plural form *violas de arco* (Portuguese).³⁰ In the Italian version of the *Kirishitan monjo*, the instruments are called *viole de arco* or *violoni*, and in the Spanish version *vihuelas de arco*. This terminology agrees with Ortiz in both the Italian and Spanish versions. The *Kirishitan monjo* sometimes use *viola* simply as an abbreviation of *viola de arco* or as a generic term for a stringed instrument.³¹

²⁵ Italian version: Diego Ortiz, *Tratta delle glose sopra le cadenze & altre sorte de punti* (Rome, 1553; reprint, Florence: Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1984), fol. (1r) and (3r).

²⁶ Spanish version: Ortiz, *Trattado de glosas sobre clausulas y otros generos de puntos* (Rome, 1553; reprint, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1967), p. (1) and p. (5).

²⁷ Philibert Jambe de Fer, *Epitome musicale* (Lyon, 1556), 62; reprint, François Lesure, “L’*Epitome musicale* de Philibert Jambe de Fer (1556),” *Annales musicologiques* 6 (1963): 377.

²⁸ Jambe de Fer, *Epitome musicale*, 63 (reprint, 378).

²⁹ Girolamo dalla Casa, *Il vero modo di diminuir... libro secondo* (Venice, 1584; reprint, Bologna: Forni Editore, 1976), “Alli lettori” [not paginated].

³⁰ For details, see Kambe, “Viols in Japan,” 36–65.

³¹ For example, the term *viola* was also used to describe the Japanese *biwa* (a Japanese short-necked fretted lute).

In 1585 the Tenshō envoys received a *rabeca* (or *rabequinha*)—a violin, which was a gift from the future cardinal Ascanio Colonna, and they brought it to Japan in 1590.³² Since the *Kirishitan monjo* invariably referred to it in the singular form, there was clearly only the one violin. The *Kirishitan monjo* mentions it on two occasions where it figures in audiences with Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1591 and with Toyotomi Hideyori in 1607.

The Opening of a Book

In a general sense, the opening of a book is constructed with the purpose of convincing readers that the thoughts contained therein are worth pursuing. Writers usually try to satisfy the readers' taste and quote authorities persuasive to them. The same is true for the narrative associated with the origin of a new musical instrument, and the authorities enlisted in the construction of this narrative may differ from one period to another. For example, in creating an origin narrative for the viol, Ganassi quoted Greek mythology (Orpheus) in 1542,³³ Vincenzo Galilei cited Roman mythology (Apollo and Diana) in 1588–91,³⁴ and Jean Rousseau referred to the Bible (Adam and Eve) in 1687.³⁵ This practice was also true in Japan.

Nakamura Sōsan (dates unknown) wrote *Shichiku shoshinshū* (Kyoto, 1664), which may support the theory that the *kokyū* had its origin in European instruments. *Shichiku shoshinshū* is the oldest known self-teaching manual for the *shakuhachi*, *koto*, and *shamisen*. Nakamura was a blind virtuoso of the *koto* and *shamisen* who studied *shakuhachi* with a great master, Ōmori

³² Kambe, "Viols in Japan," 58–59. This violin was brought to Japan with a harpsichord, which was very expensive and decorated with pearl oyster shell and jewels ordered from Rome by Colonna. From this description, the violin is regarded a precious item.

³³ Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina*, p. VIII.

³⁴ Vincenzo Galilei, *Il primo libro della prattica de Contrapunto* (1588-91), in *Die Kontrapunkttraktate Vincenzo Galileis*, ed. Frieder Rempff (Cologne: Arno Volk Verlag Hans Gerig, 1980), 9.

³⁵ Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la viole* (Paris, 1687; reprint, Amsterdam: Antiqua, 1965), 1–2.

Sōkun (1570–1625). Nakamura made reference to the *kokyū* in his explanation of the origin of the *shamisen*:

This is a story of the beginning of playing the *shamisen* in Japan. In the Bunroku period [1592–95] or thereabout, there was a priest called Ishimura Kengyō [d. 1642]. He had a delicate mind and was pre-eminently skillful in playing musical instruments. One day he visited the Ryūkyū Islands. He found a three-stringed instrument called the *kokyū* [the two characters used here mean *ko* “small” and *kyū* “bow”] because it was played with a small bow to which horsehair is attached. Ishimura examined this instrument and found that it was a remodeling of the *biwa* [a Japanese short-necked fretted lute]. As for the tuning, the first and second strings are tuned at the same pitches as those of the *biwa*. The third is two steps or so higher than that of the *biwa*. The local people said that there were many poisonous snakes; that there was a creature called the *raheika* which ate those snakes; and that the people played the *kokyū* to drive the snakes away, because the singing of the *raheika* is not the least bit different from the sound of the instrument. The *biwa* master [Ishimura] played this instrument while he stayed in these islands. Later Ishimura returned to Kyoto and similarly remodeled the *biwa* and invented the *shamisen*.³⁶

While Waterhouse and others have pointed to the probable relationship between Nakamura’s *raheika* and the Portuguese term *rabeca*, i.e. violin, no one has supported this argument with linguistic analysis. According to Nakamura, the *kokyū* was closely related to the *raheika*. The word *raheika* is not found in native Japanese vocabulary, because indigenous traditional Japanese has no words beginning with *r*.³⁷ Japanese traditionally wrote words of Chinese origin in Chinese characters and other words of foreign origin in Japanese *kana* (phonetic script). Since Nakamura wrote this word in *kana*, it does not seem to have been a Chinese word. The word *raheika* is not found in Ryūkyū vocabulary, nor are any

³⁶ Nakamura Sōsan, *Shichiku shoshinshū*, vol. ge (3 of 3) (Kyoto, 1664), fols. 1r–2r; reprint, Kenji Asano et al., eds., *Nihon kayō kenkyū shiryō shūsei*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1978), 89–91.

³⁷ Mitsuo Okumura, “Kodaino on’in,” in *Koza kokugoshi*, vol. 2, ed. Norio Nakata (Tokyo: Taishukan shoten, 1972), 24, 29, 113.

similar words, so *raheika* is unlikely to be of Ryūkyū origin.³⁸ According to Japanese traditional orthography, the syllable *be* was customarily written down as *he*. Consequently, *raheika* can be interpreted as *rabeika* as well. In fact, when people heard *rabeika*, they wrote down *raheika*. *Rabeika* sounds like the Portuguese word *rabeca*.

Nakamura's statement is well known among scholars. However, it has not been accepted as a valid and accurate historical description, because they believe that the *shamisen* was in use before the Bunroku years.³⁹ Nakamura's claim that the *shamisen* was created in the Bunroku years thus conflicts with their previously held views.⁴⁰ From an organological point of view as well, Nakamura's statement is questionable. It is generally difficult to accept that a plucked string instrument was created after the model of a bowed stringed instrument. The chronological order is usually the reverse; for example, the bowed vihuela (*vihuela de arco*) was created after the model of the plucked *vihuela* (*vihuela de mano*) in the Iberian Peninsula.

At the same time, it is similarly unreasonable to suppose that Nakamura shared a positivist view of history with modern scholars. We should not reject Nakamura's statement simply because it conflicts with historical facts, nor regard it as an invalid historical description, as some scholars do.⁴¹ While Nakamura's comment contains questionable points, it has possibly significant elements in a historical sense. For example, why did he specifically mention the Bunroku years? It may contain some important messages that deserve our attention.

Kokkei Taiheiki (author unknown, unpublished, and probably completed after 1679) contains a similar reference concerning the origin of the *shamisen*:

³⁸ *Okinawagoten* (1896), *Omorogojiten-Konkōkeshū* (1972), *Okinawagojiten* (1975) Ryūkyūkogojiten (1983), *Okinawagodaijiten* (1995), and other regional dictionaries.

³⁹ Yumiko Tanaka, Mihoko Nogawa, and Mika Haikawa, *Marugoto shamisen-no hon* (Tokyo: Seikyusha, 2009), 43–44.

⁴⁰ I point out that scholars may argue the earliest records of the *shamisen* without distinguishing between Japanese *shamisen* and Ryūkyū *sanshin*.

⁴¹ Kojima, "Shamisen-to kōkyū-no kigen," 30.

The *shamisen* first came from Ryūkyū to Satsuma [present-day Kagoshima Prefecture]. Ryūkyū is abundant in snakes, which crawl in houses and on the streets and disturb people greatly. They are especially active in the rainy season in May and are really annoying. However, they are frightened of the sound of *shamisen* and *kokyū*, and do not approach the sources of the sound. Therefore, people, both men and women, like to play these two instruments. Some play to escape snakes and others for pleasure. *Shamisen* and *kokyū* are called *jabi* and *raheika* [respectively] there.⁴²

This account is logical, and at least more natural than Nakamura's. The unnamed author of *Kokkei Taiheiki* could not have been quoting *Shichiku shoshinshū*, because this version is much more detailed than Nakamura's. It is possible that the *raheika* episode was widely known in the early seventeenth century, and that Nakamura and the unnamed author learned of it separately.

The German surgeon and naturalist Engelbert Kaempfer, who worked for the Dutch East India Company in Japan from 1690 to 1692, saw bowed stringed instruments in Ise—the greatest Shinto shrine both then and now, visited by many pilgrims from all around Japan.

One sees so-called *junrei* here and there, pilgrims who visit the thirty-three most famous *kan'non* temples located in various regions of Japan. They travel in groups of two or three. They sing a *kan'non* song pitifully at each house, sometimes with viol [*kokyū*] or zither [*shamisen*]... Other usual beggars, some of them sick and others well, beg by singing and playing the viol [*kokyū*] and the zither [*biwa*]...⁴³

A Japanese document from the same period also cited Ise beggars playing the *kokyū*.⁴⁴ While this episode is in itself historically interesting, it is too late to be related to the origin of the instrument.

⁴² In Sen'ichi Hisamatsu and Nōichi Imoto, eds., *Teimon haikaishū*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1971), 67–83.

⁴³ Engelbert Kaempfer, *Heutiges Japan*, vol. 1 (Munich: Indicum, 2001), 342 and 345.

⁴⁴ *Jinrin kimmō zui*, vol. 7 (author unknown, illustrations by Genzaburō) (Osaka and Edo, 1690), fols. 19r–v; Atsuo Masamune, ed., *Fukkoku Nihon koten zenshū* (Tokyo: Gendaishichōsha, 1978), 281–82.

In his encyclopedic book of 1713, Terajima Ryōan commented, “There is a legend that the *kokyū* had its origin in *Namban*. The native people of that land play it when they go out in order to escape poisonous snakes. Beggars from Uji and Ise region always sing and play it.”⁴⁵ Terajima assigned the place of origin of the *kokyū* not to Ryūkyū but ambiguously to *Namban* (“southern barbaric lands”). The term *Namban* originally described Portuguese objects in the late sixteenth century. After a century of isolationism the Japanese lost their knowledge of foreign lands. As a result they called foreign objects *Namban* in general, including Southeast Asian, Dutch, and Chinese objects that came to Kyoto and Edo via Hirado, Nagasaki, or via Ryūkyū, Satsuma, and Sakai. Although without any detailed explanation, Terajima implied by mentioning *Namban* that the *kokyū* had its origin in a foreign land.

Shichiku shoshinshū appeared in the publisher’s on-demand catalog for the last time in 1715.⁴⁶ The *raheika* episode seems to have lost its appeal by the mid-eighteenth century. For example, Naniwa Sanjin mentioned Ryūkyū in *Chikuhōkoji* (1756) as the place of origin of the *kokyū* but said nothing about the *raheika*.

The *shamisen* was originally an instrument in Ryūkyū called *Ryūkyūgen* [meaning Ryūkyū strings]. It imitated the sound of the *koto*, *wagon* [a Japanese six-string long zither], and so on. It was brought to Japan during the 107th emperor Ōgimachi’s reign [1557–86], more precisely, in spring 1562. It first came from Ryūkyū to Sakai. Lord Oda Nobunaga found it and offered it to the imperial court. The emperor summoned the *biwa* master Takino Kengyō, who was then famous for his musical talent, through Lord-*udaijin* Kuga Michioki. The emperor commanded Takino to play it. The instrument sounded really well and impressed the emperor....⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Terajima Ryōan, *Wakan sansai zue*, vol. 18 (publisher unknown, 1713, fol. 6v; reprint, Tokyo: Tokyo Bijutsu, 1970), 294.

⁴⁶ Usaburō Mabuchi, *Shichiku shoshinshū-no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1992), 27.

⁴⁷ Naniwa Sanjin Ichiraku, *Chikuhōkoji*, vol. 3 of 3 (Osaka, 1756), fols. 2v–3r; Michio Marunishi, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 7 (Tokyo: San-ichi shobo, 1975), 30.

Naniwa, writing about one hundred years after *Shichiku shoshinshū*, chose the imperial court to give authority to the introduction of the *shamisen* into Japan (the emperor was regarded as living god up until the Second World War). This change certainly reflected images favored by contemporary readers. Nakamura found that his readers longed for exotic things, and that he needed to mention Ryūkyū and *raheika* in order to authorize the origin of a new instrument, the *shamisen*. If we assume, as do many scholars, that Nakamura's *raheika* was related to the Portuguese *rabeça*, it demonstrates that the Japanese retained positive memories of European culture in 1664 after the Christian faith had been banned for fifty years.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi's Audience in 1591

Numerous accounts testify that the Japanese found the violin attractive and admired it seventy-four years before Nakamura's *Shichiku shoshinshū*. We recall that the Tenshō envoys brought a violin back to Japan in 1590. When they were granted an audience with Toyotomi Hideyoshi (ruled 1585–98) in 1591, they took the instrument with them. The success of this audience was highly significant not only for the Christians but also for non-Christian Japanese. Toyotomi Hideyoshi valued trade and had active contact with the missionaries, but he had abruptly banned the Christian faith in 1587 and eradicated the Christian feudal lords. This sudden change of policy caused great confusion everywhere in Japan, especially in trade centers such as Nagasaki, Sakai, and Kyoto, as many people from feudal lords to commoners lost their livelihoods.

The Tenshō envoys were part of the entourage of Valignano, who was visiting Japan as an envoy of the Spanish viceroy of India because the ban on the Christian faith prevented him from returning to the country as the Jesuit *visitador*. His party set off from Nagasaki for Kyoto, the capital of Japan, hoping to meet Toyotomi Hideyoshi (see map, Figure 2). They stayed in the seaport Murotsu (in present-day Hyōgo Prefecture) and waited for events to go fa-

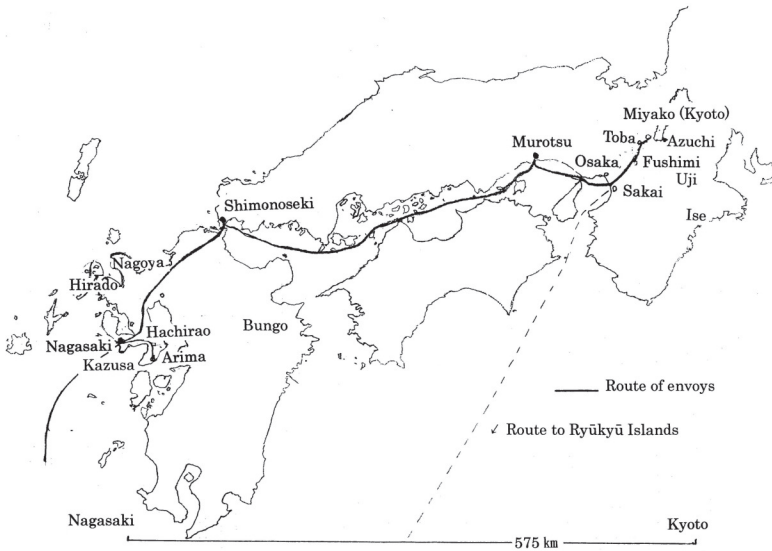


Figure 2. Map of Central and Western Japan showing places mentioned and route taken by envoys.

vorably.⁴⁸ Their time there included New Year's Day.⁴⁹ The feudal lords from the western parts of Japan also stayed in Murotsu to visit Toyotomi for the New Year's Day's greeting. The lords appreciated the envoys' exotic objects, their stories about Europe, and their music. Luis Frois (1532–97, came to Japan in 1563), a Portuguese missionary who chronicled the experiences of the missionaries in Japan from 1549 to 1592, wrote:

The lords similarly admired how gracefully and skillfully the envoys played the instruments. They asked questions and requested them [to play] with great interest and curiosity to understand how

⁴⁸ The missionaries witnessed the Korean envoys who visited Toyotomi Hideyoshi in winter 1590. The Koreans may have brought bowed string players. However, it is unlikely that Korean strings (if any) kindled the Japanese people's aspiration for bowed string instruments, because the Koreans "walked with their shin uncovered and, as it was customary with Chinese and Koreans, were so ill-mannered that they ate on the street. Japanese people were scornful of them." Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, ed. Josef Wicki, vol. 5 (Lisbon: Biblioteca nacional, 1984), 295.

⁴⁹ Based on the Japanese lunar calendar.

to play. Thus, we achieved a great reputation and became acknowledged among various Japanese lords.⁵⁰

Toyotomi Hideyoshi heard of the envoys and was interested in what they had to offer. He decided to grant them an audience, and he received them with supreme courtesy. The Christians sailed along the Yodogawa River from Osaka to Toba, south of Kyoto.

On the following morning [after landing at Toba], the Portuguese wore splendid costumes and went in good order. When they went to *Miyako* [Kyoto], there were many people from all the districts to see such new things. As they arrived in *Miyako*, there were countless people along every street where the Portuguese went. People were all surprised to see such strange and eccentric people, richly ornamented and in luxurious costume, going to *Miyako* as a well-organized group. They said that each of the Portuguese looked like *hotoke*, i.e. a pagan [Buddhist] deity from the skies [the supreme reputation among Japanese]. It was a very new idea because people usually had low opinions of the Portuguese.⁵¹

The people of Kyoto formed a highly favorable impression of the Christians on this occasion. The eminent nobleman Nishi-no Tōin Tokiyoshi (1552–1640) and his fellow nobles saw them, and he wrote in his diary on March 3, 1591:

The Europeans visited His Majesty [Toyotomi]. Both upper- and lower-class people watched them. I also went out and watched them in front of Empukuji Temple. Madenokōji [Atsufusa], Haku [Shirakawa Masatomo], Nakanomikado [Nobuyasu] and others went out with me. The company had a little more than 30 members. Each of them was on horseback except for the leader who rode in a Japanese-lacquered palanquin. A 5-*shaku*-tall [about 1.5 m] horse was a tribute [to His Majesty]. Their costumes were nice.⁵²

Frois similarly described the Japanese attitude toward this memorable event:

From the house [previous residence of Toyotomi] which the Father [Valignano] left to the palace [Toyotomi's Jurakudai], there were

⁵⁰ Frois, *Historia*, 5:281.

⁵¹ Frois, *Historia*, 5:295.

⁵² Nishi-no Tōin Tokiyoshi, *Tokiyoshiki*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Honganji Shuppansha, 2001), 90–91. Entry is dated leap January 8, Tenshō 19, according to the Japanese lunar calendar.

innumerable people on the street, at the doors and windows to see such a new spectacle. They all said that they had never seen anything like that since the beginning of *Miyako* [Kyoto].⁵³

At the Jurakudai Palace,

... [Toyotomi] began to talk about various things and told the four gentlemen [the envoys] to appear in front of him because he wanted to hear their music.

Then musical instruments were brought, which had been prepared in advance. The four gentlemen began to play and sing with the *cravo* [harpichord], the *arpa* [harp], the *laude* [lute] and the *rabequinha* [violin]. They performed very gracefully because they had learnt much in Italy and Portugal. He listened to them with great attention and curiosity. The envoys stopped playing soon after they began in order not to cause troubles to the ruler. [It was customary for musicians to stop playing when the dignitaries began to speak.] He ordered them to perform three times on the same instruments. Then he took each instrument in his hands and asked the four princes [the envoys] questions about the instruments.

He further ordered them to play the *violas de arco* [viols] and the *realejo* [portative organ]. He examined them with great curiosity. He told various things to the gentlemen and said that he was very happy to find them to be Japanese.⁵⁴

Toyotomi Hideyoshi was so impressed by their visit that he called for Itō Mancio, the leader of the envoys, on the following day.

... [Toyotomi] spoke to Don Mancio again to join with him [Toyotomi] and to be in his household, after speaking about music and the instruments, the lands where they had visited, and many other things.⁵⁵

After this audience the envoys stayed in Kyoto and in Nara until March 25, 1591. Frois recorded their situation.

Throughout the period when they [the missionaries] stayed at *Miyako*, gentlemen and lords were motivated by curiosity, and competed to see and to have contact with the Portuguese. They es-

⁵³ Frois, *Historia*, 5:301.

⁵⁴ Frois, *Historia*, 5:308.

⁵⁵ Frois, *Historia*, 5:318.

pecially liked to talk to the Japanese gentlemen [the envoys]. Many of them [the local gentlemen and nobles] invited the envoys to their houses. The locals were pleased with what they heard [from the envoys]. Without doubt, reputation was growing about our matters in Japan as people learned what the envoys had seen [in Europe] and how honorably they had been treated [there]; and as they saw the splendid costumes which the envoys wore....

Meanwhile, there was a great number of Christians who lived in all the regions, both men and women. It looked like a continuous line to the house where the ambassador stayed.⁵⁶

João Rodriguez Tçuzu (1561/62–1633, came to Japan in 1577), a Portuguese missionary, attended the audience as an interpreter. He described the occasion later:

This audience was a solemn event in Japan at that time. There were principal noblemen and high officials of the kingdom [Japan]. The entire city was ordered to gather on the street where the ambassador passed by.⁵⁷

The audience was a high point of the Christian movement in sixteenth-century Japan. The Christians had a great impact on the Japanese people, at least in Kyoto. The fact that Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the ruler of Japan, had given them an audience established the Christians' reputation in Japan, and, as a result, Christian culture was perhaps more than just attractive—it was even deserving of admiration.

Namban Taste

Toyotomi Hideyoshi stayed in Nagoya (in present-day Saga Prefecture) along with Japanese noblemen during the 1592–93 war against Korea, at the beginning of the Bunroku period.⁵⁸ Ac-

⁵⁶ Frois, *Historia*, 5:321.

⁵⁷ João Rodriguez Tçuzu, *Historia da igreja do Japão*, written at Macau in 1620–33. MS: Biblioteca da Ajuda, Jesuitas na Asia 49-IV-53, fol. 67v; ed. João do Amaral Abranches Pinto (Macau: Notícias de Macau, 1954), 243–44.

⁵⁸ Juan Ruiz-de-Medina mentioned thousands of prisoners of war in Nagasaki. *Iezusukaishi-to Kirishitan fukyō* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2003), 175. I could not find any mention of musical instruments in the Christian documents quoted by Medina.

ording to the Italian missionary Gneccchi-Soldo Organtino, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the noblemen saw Portuguese fashions in Nagasaki and brought them to Kyoto.

It is not easy to distinguish Japanese and Portuguese. Some [Japanese] even learn *Pater noster* and *Ave Maria* entirely in imitation [of the Portuguese]. When they talk about the Portuguese, they always speak well of them and call them prudent and humane men with liberal and great minds. When the Father *visitador* came here as a legate with 25 Portuguese to see the king [Toyotomi], all the Japanese were surprised at their friendliness, kindness, and good character.⁵⁹

Frois also reported on this:

After Father *visitador*'s visit, our things won a great reputation among the Japanese. If one did not wear any Portuguese clothes at the court, he was not regarded as a man. [Such a vogue of Portuguese things] was strange. Many lords had various goods, such as coats, veils, high-collared shirts, socks, culottes, hats, caps, and so on. When *taikōsama* [Toyotomi] moved from Nagoya to *Miyako*, the entire city and the court accompanied him in the costume of our style. They entered *Miyako* in that manner. The tailors in Nagasaki did not have a holiday [i.e. were very busy preparing Portuguese clothes]. The lords were all busy and departed to *Miyako*.⁶⁰

The success of the audience with Toyotomi Hideyoshi encouraged Portuguese fashion to flourish in Japan. Japanese admired it, calling it *Namban*. The *Namban* fashion was conspicuous in the goods and clothes of the nobility. It was a popular theme of *byōbu* pictures; *byōbu* are movable partitions used to divide rooms or to hide objects and luxurious ornamental furniture. The *Namban byōbu* depicts Portuguese ships with a unique dark blue color for the sea. That *Namban* fashions were accepted and appreciated in Japan is evident in the depictions of clothing on these screens: two examples show a Portuguese man dressed in Portuguese costume

⁵⁹ Gneccchi-Soldo Organtino, letter to Claudio Aquaviva (the Superior General of the Society of Jesus), written in Kyoto, dated September 29, 1594. MS: Archivium Romanum Societatis Iesu (hereafter ARSI), Japonica Sinica (hereafter Jap. Sin.) 12, fol. 185r. In John Hay, ed., *De rebus japonicis, indicis, et pervanis epistolae recentiores* (Antwerp: Martini Nutij, 1605), 205.

⁶⁰ Frois, *Historia*, 5:508.



Figure 3. Detail of *Namban byōbu* showing the *Namban* fashion at the time of Kanō Naizen (1570–1616). Kobe City Museum.



Figure 4. Detail of *Namban byōbu* showing several Japanese men in Portuguese clothing, c. 1600. Kunaicho Sannomaru Shozokan, Tokyo. From *Kinsei fūzoku zufu*, vol. 13 (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1984), p. 32.

(Figure 3) and three Japanese *samurai* wearing hybrid *Namban*-style costumes (Figure 4). Two of the Japanese men are wearing wide trousers called *bombāsha* (after Portuguese *bombacha*); they also have topknots and swords, unique to Japa-

nese *samurai*. The man on the left has a high-necked shirt in the Portuguese style. Another *Namban byōbu* depicts Japanese *shichifukujin* (Seven Lucky Gods) on the right and a group of European gods dancing in European costume on the left. *Namban* fashion was not short-lived but took root in Japanese culture. Some Portuguese objects and words still survive today, such as *tempura* (a kind of cooking, after Portuguese *temperar* or *tempero*), *tabako* (tobacco), *karuta* (playing cards, after *carta*), and *kasutera* (sweets, after *castella*).⁶¹

That the *Namban* fashion began to flourish in the Bunroku years corroborates Nakamura's mysterious comment concerning the origin of the *shamisen*. He asserted in his *Shikuchi shoshinshū* that Ishimura Kengyō flourished in the Bunroku period and that he encountered the *kokyū* in a foreign land (Ryūkyū). Both Christian and Japanese documents state that foreign culture (Portuguese and Ryūkyū) was brought to Japan during this period. In my view, this correspondence between the appearance of new instruments and the taste for foreign culture is not just a coincidence. Nakamura subtly introduced a *Namban* element into his account by mentioning the *rabeca*, while he set his stage in Ryūkyū instead of Portugal. His readers retained a fondness for *Namban* culture long after the Christian faith had been banned in Japan. They knew what *raheika* actually meant. To Nakamura, it was a good means to gain the readers' sympathy and to lend greater authority to his argument.

Music and Musical Instruments of the Period

While the *Namban* fashion flourished in Kyoto, new elements of Japanese culture also appeared, such as the tea ceremony (*cha-no yu*) in Sakai and *kabuki* theater in Kyoto. In the late Azuchi-Momoyama period (1568–1600), an enterprising atmosphere pervaded these cities. The society was active both politi-

⁶¹ Our joint research group argued the possibility that Nakamura's *raheika* was not a European word (hence related to the Christians) because the Christian faith was forbidden in Japan. We concluded that Christian-related words had not been necessarily taboo in the Edo period. In fact, a songbook after the ban contains a verse that has a phrase "Santa Maria." Shū Shōken, ed., *Matsu-no ha* (1703); reprint, Kenji Asano et al., eds., *Nihon kayo kenkyū shiryō shusei*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1977), 166.

cally and culturally. It was flexible, even chaotic, as people were receptive to new things and ideas, and traditional ideas were easily rejected and replaced with new ones.

As peoples' lives gradually became more comfortable, they acquired the means to enjoy music. They wanted new musical styles, different from the traditional ones from which they felt disconnected. Indeed, new music such as *jōruri* (storytelling with *shamisen*), *shamisen* music (singing poetry with *shamisen*), and *sōkyoku* (singing with *koto*) arose from this trend.

In sixteenth-century Japan, the *shamisen* quickly became popular. This instrument has a long neck without frets, enabling the production of narrow intervals and the doubling of the singing voice. The *shamisen* can be substituted for the *biwa* to play fill-ins in the *Tale of the Heike* recitation, and in addition is adept in fast passages. These characteristics suited the emotional singing style of this period.

European documents confirm that the Japanese loved musical instruments that could play sustained notes. In his annual report of 1581, Gaspar Coelho (c. 1530–90, came to Japan 1572) listed the organ and viol as instruments particularly appreciated by the Japanese.⁶² As the Japanese began to double singing with the *shamisen*, it is possible that they wanted to more closely approach the sustained sound of the voice. Koizumi described the mixed ensemble performance as “music to express the joy of playing the same melodies with instruments of different sounds.”⁶³ In European terms, the Japanese people loved mixed ensembles (broken consort) rather than ensembles of the same family of instruments (whole consort). This inclination is a significant factor in explaining the emergence of the *kokyū* in the late sixteenth century.

In comparing the *kokyū* and *shamisen*, our research group concluded that the *kokyū* was always depicted as a single instrument and smaller in size than the *shamisen*, and that the *kokyū* player was of lower status than the *shamisen* player. Thus, the early *kokyū* was not played as an independent and self-contained instrument but remained subordinate to the *shamisen*. The inferior status

⁶² Gaspar Coelho's annual report of 1581 to Acquaviva, written in Nagasaki, dated February 15, 1582. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 45 II, fol. 50.

⁶³ Koizumi, *Nihon-no oto*, 179–80.

of the *kokyū* explains why the oldest known *kokyū* textbook was not published until the nineteenth century.⁶⁴ The *kokyū* was closely related to the *shamisen* from the beginning.

Toyotomi Hideyori's Audience in 1607

In 1607, as part of an effort to restore relationships and to secure protection for Christians, the Jesuit vice-provincial Francesco Pasio (1553–1612, came to Japan in 1583) went to Sumpu (in present-day Shizuoka Prefecture) to see the retired *shōgun* Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616), and to Edo to see the reigning *shōgun* Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632). Pasio returned to Kyoto around July 10 and then visited the Christians' residences in Kyoto, Fushimi, Osaka, and Sakai. He stayed there for about a month, then returned to Nagasaki.⁶⁵

According to Pasio, "In all the residences, solemn masses were celebrated. Various musical instruments were played."⁶⁶ Pasio's secretary João Rodriguez Giram (1558–1629, came to Japan 1586) also reported:

We received consolation and strength not only from preaching and sacred advice ..., but also particularly from solemnity of divine offices at the houses which we hold in this region. For that purpose Father brought good ritual items and musical instruments and took some *dōjukus* [lay devotees who served the churches] [who were also] players and singers.⁶⁷

In Osaka the Christians were granted an audience with Toyotomi Hideyori (1593–1615), Hideyoshi's fourteen-year-old

⁶⁴ Kanō, "Shoki-no kokyū-ni tsuite," 47.

⁶⁵ Takashi Gonoï, *Tokugawa shoki Kirishitanshi kenkyū*, rev. ed. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1992), 104.

⁶⁶ Pasio's letter to Acquaviva, written in Nagasaki, dated October 14, 1607. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 14 II, fol. 281r.

⁶⁷ Giram's annual report of 1607 to Acquaviva, written in Nagasaki, dated February 25, 1608. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 55, fol. 380r. Fernão Guerreiro, ed., *Relação anual das coisas que fizeram padres da Companhia de Jesus nas suas missões*, vol. 3 (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1942), 140.

son.⁶⁸ Toyotomi Hideyori's high official Katagiri Katsumoto coordinated this meeting. Pasio recorded that the *dōjukus* brought musical instruments with them and that they played them on this occasion. He specifically named the instruments.

Father [Pasio] went [to Osaka castle] with some *dōjukus*. Ichinokami [Katagiri] asked if they had any notable art or special talent to please Hideyori. Since he was young, he loved to see new things. Father said, "We do not know anything but singing and playing the musical instruments of our land. If it pleases him, it is very easy." Katagiri said that there was nothing similar to it and asked the *dōjukus* to come with the said instruments on the following day because they would be something of great pleasure and contentment to see and hear. The *dōjukus* went with their musical instruments, *harpa*, *viola*, *rabeca* and *realejo*, and played and sang in front of Hideyori and many others of the palace. All were very much pleased. Hideyori was particularly pleased with the shapes of the instruments. He took them one by one in his hand and examined the structure and workmanship. He admired the talent and knowledge of the Europeans who invented such things.⁶⁹

Pasio successfully impressed Toyotomi Hideyori in Osaka, Tokugawa Ieyasu in Sumpu, and Tokugawa Hidetada in Edo (there are no descriptions of the instruments used at the audiences in Sumpu and Edo). Although the Christian faith suffered increasing oppression, 945 Japanese newly converted to Christianity after Toyotomi Hideyori's audience.⁷⁰ It is notable that many people, both Christians and non-Christians, saw and heard European music in the Osaka-Kyoto area in the summer of 1607, including singing doubled by viol and violin. This report is the last mention of bowed string instruments in *Kirishitan monjo*.

⁶⁸ Toyotomi Hideyoshi was the first to unite Japan under one ruler. Upon his death in 1598 Hideyori became his designated successor, but since he was still a child, five regents were appointed to rule in his place. Soon each began maneuvering to eliminate the others. In 1600 the regent Tokugawa Ieyasu destroyed the others at the Battle of Sekigahara. Toyotomi Hideyori was now a potential rival, and in 1615, after a failed attempt to claim his inheritance, he, together with his mother, committed suicide.

⁶⁹ Giram's annual report of 1607, fol. 382r. (Guerreiro, *Relação anual*, p. 141.)

⁷⁰ Gonoi, *Tokugawa shoki Kirishitanshi*, 105.

The oldest known record of the *kokyū* comes from the diary entry of April 21, 1609 of Nishi-no Tōin Tokiyoshi, a Kyoto nobleman. This entry was made one year and eight months after Pasio's visit in the Osaka-Kyoto area. Japanese craftsmen's ability to copy Western guns quickly and produce them in their own right⁷¹ demonstrated that sixteenth-century Japan possessed the requisite manufacturing skills to copy or create a musical instrument. One year and eight months would certainly have been sufficient time for them to make a *kokyū* modeled on European musical instruments. The proximity of the time and place of the Christians' solemn masses and the oldest known record of the *kokyū* is not a coincidence. The evidence strongly suggests that the Japanese luthiers who made the *kokyū* were inspired by European bowed string instruments.

Bowed String Instruments as Precious Items

After the Christian audiences with Toyotomi Hideyoshi and with Toyotomi Hideyori around 1600, the Japanese apparently began to admire both the violin and viol. We have already noted Nakamura's *raheika* in the context of aspirations to European culture. Meanwhile, the missionaries also seem to have regarded the violin and viol as precious items. This is reflected in their description of the Japanese musical instrument *wagon* as analogous to the viol or violin. The *wagon*, Japan's only indigenous string instrument, was held in especially high regard, as it was associated with the musical activities of the imperial household.⁷²

The Jesuit Society permitted the missionaries to conform to local customs when necessary. They studied the Japanese language and culture, and compiled a Japanese-Portuguese dictionary, *Vocabulario da lingoa de Japam* (in Japanese *Nippo jisho*), in 1603 (with a supplement in 1604) for this purpose. This is an ex-

⁷¹ Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 142–44.

⁷² The *wagon* is a six-string zither that can be plucked either with the fingers or with a plectrum. In *Kojiki* (compiled 712), the oldest historical document in Japan, the *wagon* is described as symbolizing the relationship between the gods and the imperial household, thus authorizing its power, in the chronicles of Ōkuni-nushi-no mikoto, Jingu kōgō, and Emperor Nintoku.

cellent source for exploring the Jesuit missionaries' understanding of Japan. In this dictionary, the *wagon* is described as "a musical instrument like *rabeca*."⁷³ In the supplement, the *azumagoto* (another name for *wagon*) is "a musical instrument like *viola de arco*."⁷⁴

The *Vocabulario* contains many quotations from the *Taiheiki* chronicle, an important Japanese historical work completed in the late fourteenth century. The missionaries carefully analyzed the language of the *Taiheiki*. João Rodriguez Tçuzu said, "The gravest style of writing is that of history books. Some of them are called tales, such as *The Tale of the Heike* and *The Tale of Genji*. *Taiheiki*, a history book, is also one of them."⁷⁵ The missionaries further published an extract of the *Taiheiki* chronicle entitled *Kirishitanban Taiheiki nukigaki*, from 1603/07 to 1610. Toshiaki Kōso suggests that the extract was compiled to provide support for the *Vocabulario* by giving historical and cultural contexts to the words.⁷⁶ In other words, the extract was closely related to the *Vocabulario*. The sixth volume of the extract describes an elegant *waka* poetry session held by the emperor. Here a *kuge*, a high-ranked nobleman related to the imperial household, plays the *wagon*.⁷⁷ The missionaries learned from the *Vocabulario* that the *wagon* was a stringed instrument like the viol and violin, and from the chronicle that it possessed noble characteristics. In sixteenth-century Europe, the violin was regarded as the instrument of humble musicians, but in Japan both the viol and violin were re-

⁷³ Padres e Irmaõs da companhia de Iesu, *Vocabulario da lingoa de Japam* (Nagasaki: Collegio de Iapam, 1603–4; facs. ed. Tokyo: Benseisha, 1973), fol. 267r. "Vagon: Instrumento musico como rabeca."

⁷⁴ *Vocabulario*, fol. 333v. "Azzumagoto [*sic*]: Certo instrument musico como viola de arco."

⁷⁵ João Rodriguez Tçuzu, *Arte breve da lingoa Iapoa* (Macau, 1620), fols. 74v–75r.

⁷⁶ Toshiaki Kōso, ed., *Kirishitanban Taheiki nukigaki*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 2009), 231–32.

⁷⁷ Tenri toshokan zempon sosho washo-no bu henshū iinkai (series), *Kirishitanbanshu II* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 1978), 607–8. The session was held on April 20, 1367.

garded as precious instruments, suitable for comparison with the *wagon*.

In previous studies, scholars have cast doubt on the validity of these descriptions of the *wagon*,⁷⁸ or interpreted them as the authors' errors,⁷⁹ because these definitions do not agree with the general history of European musical instruments and do not take into account the difference in construction and in the ways the instruments are played. If we understand the situation of the Christians in Japan and the peculiar characteristics of the *Vocabulario*, we can comprehend why the definitions in the *Vocabulario* differ in concept from those found in modern linguistic and organological sources. The descriptions in the *Vocabulario* were neither errors nor misunderstandings. The definitions are derived from the comparative uses and societal status of the instruments rather than from their physical construction or methods of playing. These definitions were useful for the environment in which the Christians created and used them.

Blind Musicians

From pictorial and written evidence, the early *kokyū* was customarily used in ensemble performance by people enjoying rich merchants' festivities such as eating, drinking, dancing, and playing games in and outside of houses. It was also used by the *yūjo* (female) and *wakashū* (young boy) performers in early *kabuki*, as well as the *geinōsha* (exorcist, acrobat, magician, mime, animal charmer, and vendor of golden fish, baked sweet potato, etc.) and blind musicians. These blind performers were especially involved in the birth of the *kokyū*. The *kokyū* was associated with popular and folk music from its beginning.

The diary entry of April 1609 previously cited reads, "The blind Kōtō Jōhatsu, my servant, came. His servant brought the *shamisen* and the *kokyū*. He [Jōhatsu] recited a phrase of *The Tale*

⁷⁸ Tadao Doi misinterpreted *violas de arco* in *Vocabulario* as Japanese *biwa*. He then found it strange that *wagon*, a zither, was compared with *biwa*, a kind of lute. He also found it strange that *wagon* was translated as *rabeca*. Tadao Doi et al., eds., *Hōyaku Nippo jisho* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980), 45 (*azumagoto*—viol) and 676 (*wagon*—violin).

⁷⁹ Yūko Chiba, *Nihon ongaku-ga wakaruru hon* (Tokyo: Ongaku no tomo sha, 2005), 94.

of the *Heike*...”⁸⁰ This brief entry needs some explanation. Recitation of the fourteenth-century *Tale of the Heike* was popular among both learned and common people. It was customary for blind musicians to recite the story accompanied by the *biwa*. Only the blind musicians who belonged to the guild *tōdōza* were allowed to perform it, and they were required to pass a performance examination in order to be a member. They also had to pay a large sum of money to be promoted into the group, a sum often beyond the means of a musician, so the musicians’ patrons paid it. Kōtō Jōhatsu was one of those performers who was then serving the diarist Nishi-no Tōin Tokiyoshi. The blind musician’s name expresses his status. Kōtō means that he had achieved the second highest place in the four major ranks of *tōdōza*. Jō- of Jōhatsu means that he belonged to a *jōkata* school located in Yasaka in the eastern part of Kyoto. Hatsu of Jōhatsu is his given name.

The Jesuit missionaries were closely associated with blind and other disabled people from the beginning of their activity.⁸¹ A Japanese blind musician, Lourenço Ryōsai (1525–93), was baptized by Xavier, debated with Buddhist priests, and traveled with the principal missionaries, Cosme de Torres, Gaspar Vilela, Luis de Almeida, Giovanni Battista de Monte, Gneccchi-Soldo Organtino, Gaspar Coelho, Alessandro Valignano, Francesco Pasio, and Luis Frois.⁸² Once a Buddhist blind person converted to Christianity, missionaries could learn from him about the Buddhists’ world and their logic, as well as the beliefs associated with Shintōism, other local customs and practices, and Japanese history. Blind performers recited *The Tale of the Heike* for their patrons, and also were sent out with messages because they were generally discreet and good at conducting business.⁸³ High-ranking blind performers of

⁸⁰ *Tokiyoshiki* (Nishi-no Tōin Tokiyoshi’s diary), *Dai nippon shiryō* XII, vol. 6 (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1970), 880. Entry is dated March 17, Keichō 14, according to the Japanese lunar calendar.

⁸¹ Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, “The Role of the Blind Biwa Hōshi Troubadours in the History of the Christian Mission in Japan,” *Bulletin of Portuguese / Japanese Studies* 6 (2003): 113–14 and 122–30.

⁸² Ryōgo Yūki, *Lourenço Ryōsai*, (Nagasaki: Nagasaki Bunkensha, 2005).

⁸³ Frois, *Historia*, 4:333.

the *tōdōza* guild were allowed to meet feudal lords and rulers.⁸⁴ Working with blind musicians gave the Jesuit missionaries a big advantage in obtaining important information for their missions. It was customary among feudal lords and senior officials in the Osaka-Kyoto area to employ a young blind servant.⁸⁵ Frois discussed the *tōdōza* in the annual report of 1595.⁸⁶ He also mentioned five Christian *kengyōs* (the highest-ranked members of the *tōdōza*) in the report of 1596.⁸⁷ Although little is known about the Christian *kengyōs*, it is obvious that the Jesuit missionaries were closely associated with them. The early *kokyū* was closely connected with the *tōdōza* musicians, and thus was linked to the Jesuits.

The Instruments

The *kokyū* and European bowed stringed instruments shared the same sound-producing principle, but they belong to different cultures. The center of European music in Japan was Nagasaki, because the Jesuits used it as a base for their operations. In fact, viols were made there in 1603.⁸⁸ In contrast, the *kokyū* was made in the Osaka-Kyoto area. Sakai, an important seaport in this area, was a center of the trade with Ryūkyū. For this reason Nakamura Sōsan and others linked the early *kokyū* with Ryūkyū.

Our research group found that the oldest known depictions of the *kokyū* occur in two scenes in *Kaka yūrakuzu byōbu* (1624–43; one is shown in Figure 5). The instruments are small with round

⁸⁴ Organtino's letter to Aquaviva dated 14 February 1595. Hay, *De rebus japonicis*, 220.

⁸⁵ Frois, *Historia*, 4:333.

⁸⁶ Frois's annual report of March 1594 to October 1595, addressed to Aquaviva, written at Nagasaki, dated October 20, 1595. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 52, fols. 115r–v. Hay, *De rebus japonicis*, 260. Frois did not use the word "tōdōza," but it is indicated by the context.

⁸⁷ Frois's annual report of 1596 to Aquaviva, written at Nagasaki, dated December 3, 1596. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin., 52, fol. 219r. Hay, *De rebus japonica*, 472. Among the five Christian *kengyōs*, Vgoradono Joahim and Miguel are known. Organtino also mentioned Vgora in his letter written in Kyoto dated February 14, 1595. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 12 II, fols. 255r–v.

⁸⁸ Recorded as *biguelas de arco*. Luis Cerqueira's letter dated January 12, 1603, no address. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 20 II, fol. 154r.



Figure 5. *Kokyū* (left) and *shamisen* (right). The oldest known depiction of a *kokyū*, in the third part from the right side of *Kaka yūrakuzu byōbu* 1624–43. Collection of Shokoku-ji, Kyoto. From *Nikuhitsu ukiyoe taikan* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1996), p. 7. Used by kind permission of Shokoku-ji (Kyoto). Reprinting or other reproduction of this image is prohibited without prior approval.

bodies, a common feature of the early *kokyū*. However, depictions after 1660 illustrate various shapes of the instrument. The comment in *Shikidō Ōkagami* (1678) that a great *koto* master of the period, Yatsunami Kengyō (1614–85), made radical changes to the *kokyū* may explain this lack of uniformity.⁸⁹ In the second half of the seventeenth century, after various experiments, the body of the *kokyū* was made in a square shape similar to the modern *shamisen*.⁹⁰ In short, the shape of the early *kokyū* differed from that of the modern instrument.

The early *kokyū* also differed from European instruments in its sound ideal. Unlike the latter instruments, the *kokyū* is always depicted with a smaller body than the *shamisen*. It was not designed

⁸⁹ Fujimoto Sozan, *Shikidō Ōkagami*, vol. 7 (1678), fols. 38r–39r.

⁹⁰ Kanō, “Shoki-no kokyū-ni tsuite,” 54.

for the rich, resonant sonorities of a viol consort. We demonstrated this to be the case when our research group made an experimental example after the model of the contemporary depictions and played it with a small bow with hair tightly attached.

The *Kirishitan monjo* testify that the Japanese wanted sounds different from that of European music. European music worked well in the missionaries' activities. While Valignano, during his first visit to Japan, argued for the abolishment of musical instruments in liturgy (except keyboard instruments) according to instructions from Rome, the missionaries opposed this ban based on their success.⁹¹ Consequently Valignano elected not to enforce the ban, basing his decision on the Jesuit policy of localism.⁹² Valignano also established a timetable for the Seminarians to learn musical instruments including viols.⁹³ He seems to have had greater regard for the merits of musical instruments in Japan than for their negative effects. Nevertheless, the Japanese people in general had their own musical tastes, and Christian music was not unanimously accepted in Japan.

In 1583 Valignano explained why the Japanese disliked European music:

[After discussing the difference in their taste for colors] The contrast [of taste] is no smaller with hearing. Our music of voices and instruments hurts their ears. They extremely like their music which seriously injures our ears.⁹⁴

Frois agreed in 1585.

The melodies of *cravo*, *viola*, *frautas* [recorder], *orgãos* [organ], *doçainas* [shawm], etc. are very comfortable to us. On the contrary, all our instruments are uncomfortable and disgusting to the Japanese.

⁹¹ Valignano, *Obedientias*. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 2, fol. 140r.

⁹² Valignano, *Regimento que se ha de guardar nos semynarios*, June 28, 1580. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 2, fol. 37r.

⁹³ Valignano, *Distribuição das missas*. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 2, fol. 39r.

⁹⁴ Valignano, *Sumario de las cosas de Japon*, dated October 28, 1583. MS: ARSI, Jap. Sin. 49, fol. 268v. José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz, ed., *Sumario de las cosas de Japon (1583)/ Adiciones del sumario de Japon (1592)*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1954), 35.

We appreciate the consonance and proportion [i.e. harmony] of our music of *canto d'orgão* [polyphonic sacred song] very much. The Japanese find it *kashi mashi* [noisy] and did not like it.⁹⁵

Japanese musical taste was not susceptible to outside influences. Shigemi Takei suggests the possibility that the *kokyū* was used as a camouflaged *rabeca* for Christian music under the strict surveillance, simply because the *kokyū* was called *raheika*, i.e. Portuguese *rabeca*.⁹⁶ However, it is careless to link the *kokyū* and a European instrument used in a liturgical setting without taking such a difference of taste into consideration. I have not found any reference to the *kokyū* or a related instrument in any *Kirishitan monjo*. It was out of the question to celebrate large-scale ceremonies with musical instruments given the suppression of the Christian faith, especially in such urban areas as the Osaka-Kyoto area, the birthplace of the *kokyū*. It is unlikely, therefore, that the *kokyū* was used for liturgical purposes. According to Minagawa, a solo *koto* piece (instrumental) quotes the structure of a Credo.⁹⁷ But the *kokyū* had a limited repertory in its earliest phase. It had no instrumental music of its own and certainly no pieces that consisted of vocal melodies with accompaniment, like the *koto* piece. Instead, the *kokyū* was used to double voice lines by elaborating the *shamisen* part. It is highly unlikely that *kokyū* music would contain influences from European music.

Our research group found that visual materials show that the early *kokyū* was held on the player's knees. It did not have the endpin-like *nakagosaki*, so the player did not change strings by turning the body of the instrument. *Nakagosaki* gradually began to be depicted after the 1660s. The bows became longer, similar to those for the modern instrument. These changes reflected Yatsushashi Kengyō's reforms. As a result, it became difficult to

⁹⁵ Luis Frois, *Tratado ... contradições e diferenças Europa e ... Japão* (Kazusa, 1585), chapter 13, verse 17; ed. Josef Franz Schütte (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1995), 246.

⁹⁶ Shigemi Takei, *Namban ongaku sono hikari-to kage* (Tokyo: Ongaku no tomo sha, 1995), 170.

⁹⁷ Tatsuo Minagawa and Satoko Kubota, "Sōkyoku Rokudan-no seiritsu-ni kansuru—shiron—Nihon dentō ongaku-to kirishitan ongaku-no deai," *Nihon Dentoo Ongaku Kenkyuu* 8 (2011): 93–117.

move from string to string by means of the right-hand bow position. When we experimented playing with long bows, we found that the long sleeves of the *kimono* prevented us from doing this smoothly. The players apparently began to turn the instruments to solve this problem. We concluded that this change was inevitable. From the pictorial evidence, *kokyū* players held the bow from above when it was short, but after the bows became long, the players held them from below.

The early *kokyū* player held the body in the upright position, like viols in Europe, and held the bow from above like the violin. In the course of time, the holding position of bows changed to that of the viol. Some people may find it strange that the playing style of the *kokyū* was similar to the violin only in the bowing, because I have argued that the *kokyū* was inspired by the Portuguese *rabeca*, i.e. violin. However, it was important for the early *kokyū* to fit the Japanese life style—to be held comfortably by a player sitting on the floor. It also had to work well with other instruments in ensemble performance.

The difference in sound and expression based on different ways the instrument was held did not matter in Japan. Among the fifty depictions of the early *kokyū*, thirty-six illustrate the players sitting, whether they are playing indoors or outdoors. Only six show the players standing. Players sit on a bench in only three examples. There are no illustrations of players holding the instrument against their waists or necks. The *kokyū* did not simply imitate European instruments, nor serve similar purposes, so these technical differences are irrelevant.

Our research group examined various documents, both from Europe and from Japan. Information from the *Kirishitan monjo* is in many cases complemented by Japanese documents, without major differences.

Conclusion

The preponderance of historical evidence presented here suggests that the Japanese borrowed the sound-producing principle of the bow from the Christian viols and violin and invented their own instrument, the *kokyū*, in the Osaka-Kyoto area between the summer of 1607 and early 1609. Blind musicians of the *tōdōza* were deeply involved in the origin of the early *kokyū*. The European

viol and violin influenced the birth of the *kokyū* and inspired the Japanese to develop their unique sensitivity.

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MICHEL COLLICHON AND THE ORIGINS OF THE PARDESSUS DE VIOLE

Thomas Fitz-Hugh Mace

Abstract

The recent discovery of a pardessus de viole built by the great Parisian luthier Michel Collichon in 1686 pushes the invention of the pardessus back from the early eighteenth century, when it was previously thought to have occurred, to the height of the seventeenth-century French viol tradition. With this earlier historical context in mind, this study examines the unusual design of Collichon's pardessus, which served as models for later French makers for as long as six-string pardessus continued to be built. The pardessus's higher tessitura and extremely long scale (ratio of pitch to string length), unprecedented in earlier or contemporary viols, seems to have been designed to achieve a maximum of power and penetration. The adoption of a shorter absolute string length, a very close match to that of the late-seventeenth-century violin, may have marked the moment when diatonic fingering, documented weakly if at all for treble viols in contemporary written sources and inherently difficult to execute on large French trebles of the period, became the norm. The study also reviews the documentary evidence concerning the Collichon workshop, including the important viol players who found lodgings under its roof. It suggests a collaboration between Michel and his father, Nicolas, also a master luthier, which came to an end only in the final decade of Michel's relatively brief life. The paper looks at possible musical roles for the pardessus at the time of its invention and suggests, contrary to some previous studies, that the burgeoning fashion for Italian music in the French capital may have been one of several driving forces behind the invention of the instrument.

The pardessus de viole is most often associated with the height of the French Rococo, and with good reason: the decades leading up to the middle of the eighteenth century saw the creation of the beautiful instruments of Louis Guersan, the fine music of Charles Dollé and Louis de Caix d'Hervelois, Michel Corrette's substantive *Méthode pour apprendre à jouer du pardessus de viole* (1738), and the virtuoso performances of Mlle. Levi and Mme. Haubaut at the *Concert Spirituel*. This period was undoubtedly the heyday of a final flowering of the French viol tradition. What is less well understood is that, at the height of its

fashion, the pardessus had already been in existence for well over half a century.

This article will look, not at the zenith of the instrument, but at a time some sixty years earlier and at a musical culture quite different from that of Louis XV's early reign, when the first pardessus were conceived and built in a busy and well-connected Parisian workshop. We will look at the strikingly original design of this instrument and consider why it was first built and in what milieu. We will also make some conjectures as to what impulses in French musical culture brought the pardessus into being at that particular moment, who the first pardessus players were, and what some of their early repertoire may have been. In tackling these problems, it will be necessary to describe the earliest instruments in somewhat minute technical detail if we are to understand how the pardessus, rather than being merely a smaller dessus de viole, represented a considerable break with viols of the past.

A great deal of scholarly work has been done on the pardessus since the 1980s, and much of it has focused on the mid-century decades when the instrument was at the height of popularity.¹ Nonetheless, several scholars, most notably Robert Green and Adrian Rose, have looked to the turn of the eighteenth century to consider the origins of the instrument.² This is an inherently vexed undertaking, as there is no music composed specifically for pardessus before Thomas Marc's *Suite de Pieces* of 1724 and the historical record is quite thin in other regards.³ Two problems in particular have presented themselves to past scholarship.

¹ For a comprehensive bibliography of research on the pardessus, see Richard Sutcliffe, "Re-examining the Pardessus de Viole and Its Literature," *Journal of the VdGSA* 37 (2000): 5–30. The only paper published in the interim that I am aware of is Simone Eckert's "Mme Lévi—'La Célèbre': Eine Virtuosin auf dem Pardessus," in *Pièces de Viole: Fünf Beiträge zur Viola da Gamba; Jubiläumsschrift zum zehnjährigen Bestehen der Viola da Gamba-Gesellschaft* (Leipzig: CH-Winterthur, 2004), 26–32.

² Robert Green, "The Treble Viol in 17th-Century France and the Origins of the Pardessus de Viole," *Journal of the VdGSA* 23 (1986): 64–71. Adrian Rose, "The Pardessus de Viole: Notes for a Master's Thesis," *Chelys* 24 (1995): 34–46.

³ Mr. [Thomas] Marc, *Suite de Pieces de Dessus et de Pardessus de Viole et trois Sonates, avec les Basses Continüe, Livre 1er* (Paris, 1724).

Until recently, the earliest extant instruments themselves were little known and difficult to place in historical context. The oldest pardessus was long thought to be an instrument by Nicolas Bertrand dated 1714 and preserved in the collection of the Musée de la Musique in Paris.⁴ In the 1980s, Peter Tourin drew attention to an apparently earlier instrument by Michel Collichon in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg although, unhelpfully, this beautiful example was undated and appeared to be an unicum.⁵ The later identification of another Bertrand pardessus from 1701⁶ along with the first written reference to the instrument from the same year seemed to provide some solid ground and place the invention around 1700.⁷

The impetus for the present article was the recent discovery of a second Collichon pardessus, unquestionably authentic, and firmly dated by the maker's manuscript label to the year 1686. This instrument puts the other Collichon pardessus into context and rolls back the date of the instrument's invention to a very different musical culture from that of the turn of the century. In 1686, Lully was still alive and at the peak of his powers, and Marin Marais's *Premier Livre* was just coming off the presses. De Machy's *Pieces de Violle en Musique et en Tablature* (1685) had appeared the year before, while Jean Rousseau's *Traité de la Violle* (1687) and Le Sieur Danoville's *L'Art de Toucher le Dessus et Basse de Violle* (1687) would both appear one year later. In other words, the pardessus was first created not in some post-classical twilight of the French viol tradition but at its absolute height. This new context calls for a reassessment.

A second problem with previous scholarship, a more subtle issue, seems to me to be a certain mental picture we have of the viol in French culture in the period. The early eighteenth century saw

⁴Inventory number E.1005, Musée de la Musique collection, Cité de la Musique, Paris.

⁵Inventory number MIR782, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg.

⁶Inventory number 0222, Collectie Muziekinstrumenten, Muziekinstrumentenmuseum, Brussels.

⁷Adrian Rose discovered a tuning for pardessus in a table (Plate III) at the back of Joseph Sauveur's *Principes d'acoustique et de musique* of 1701. Cited by Green, "Treble Viol in 17th-Century France," 70.

an explosion of polemical literature that pitted older (read properly French) music against the incursions of Italian music, especially the cantata and instrumental sonata. The best known works of this literature in modern times are perhaps François Ragueneau's *Parallèle des Italiens et des Français* of 1702, Le Cerf de La Viéville's *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française* of 1704, and Hubert Le Blanc's *Défense de la basse de viole contre les entreprises du violon et les prétentions du violoncel* of 1740. In this literature, most particularly in Le Blanc, the viol and the violin become proxies for French and Italian influence respectively and are praised or condemned accordingly.

On the French side of the polemic, the treble viol and, later in the century, the pardessus, are often put in the role of a sort of anti-violin that allowed viol players to strive “contre les entreprises du violon” and enabled lady players especially to maintain a decorum that the inherent vulgarity of the violin did not allow. Pierre Bonnet-Bourdelot contrasts the two instruments in 1715:

The violin, cried Mademoiselle M., ... as for the great tenderness you attribute to it, cannot the treble viol do as much? If simple airs, such as “Le beau berger Tircis” or some other, are played on the treble viol, are you not enchanted? I think the treble viol will speak as tenderly as the violin.⁸

Regarding the pardessus, Ancelet's often-quoted remarks from 1757, although satirical, show the same partisan spirit alive in the mid-eighteenth century:

The bass viol is now confined to the apartments of the old supporters of the old style of music, who, being entertained by it all their lives, seem to want to perpetuate their tastes and inspire their children, and especially their young daughters, for decency's sake to prefer the Pardessus de Viole to other instruments, as if it would be

⁸ Pierre Bourdelot and Pierre Bonnet, *Histoire de la musique et de ses effets depuis son origine jusqu'à present & en quoi consiste sa beauté*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1715), 104. Also included without attribution in the earlier Brussels edition of Jean-Louis Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française* (Brussels 1705), 111. See Green, “Treble Viol in 17th-Century France,” 67, for the original French and the translation given here.

less respectable to place the violin on the shoulder than the pardessus between their legs.⁹

Modern viol players, who in their own way have had to put up with “les prétensions du violoncel,” may be forgiven if they are mentally inclined to recapitulate these battles of the eighteenth century. It is nonetheless important to recall that the actual interplay of French and Italian influence in the period was far more fluid and complex than the polemical literature suggests, and that it was an ongoing process throughout much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was also one in which the great composers of the time, and the instrument makers for that matter, remained surprisingly aloof. Yet both Green and, in particular, Rose have tended to look exclusively to “French” influences (as defined by the French-Italian polemic) to account for the origins of the instrument.

Green traces the pardessus from the late French dessus and stresses the important relation of performance on both instruments to solo vocal traditions. He proposes that the apparent lack of music for both the dessus and the pardessus in the late seventeenth century is deceptive and that both were used for instrumental performance of *airs sérieux*.¹⁰ Rose also seeks French cultural origins for the pardessus, giving primacy to three factors: the increasing range and complexity of French treble viol music in the later seventeenth century, the influence of Marin Marais’s playing and especially of his *Pièces en Trio* of 1692, and the needs of *précieuses* women players, with regard to both the maintenance of their elegant appearance and the limitations of their shifting technique.¹¹ It is difficult to do justice to the arguments of either scholar in a few words, and I am in agreement with many of their conclusions. Still, it strikes me that both discounted the effects of the flood of Italian influence, particularly the influence of the violin sonata, that was sweeping Parisian musical culture at precisely this time. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, we need to consider that viol

⁹ Ancelet, *Observations sur la musique, les musiciens et les instruments* (Amsterdam, 1757). See Sutcliffe, “Re-examining the Pardessus de Virole,” 29, for the original French and the translation given here.

¹⁰ Green, “Treble Viol in Seventeenth-Century France,” 64–71.

¹¹ Rose, “Pardessus de Virole,” 34–46.

players of the era might have reacted to the new Italian music with enthusiasm rather than horror, and may have wished for an instrument on which to perform it. So, while not disputing the conclusions of either scholar, I will attempt to draw a somewhat wider circle.

With the earlier historical context in mind, and attempting to take a conscious distance from the French-Italian polemics of the eighteenth century, I would like to re-examine the invention of the pardessus. I use the word “invention” advisedly, for, as we shall see, it was a definitive creation with very marked and unusual characteristics, rather than merely a gradual evolution of or different tuning for the dessus de viole. It also seems fitting to give credit for this invention to the *maître faiseur d’instruments de musique* Michel Collichon (d. c. 1695), that remarkably inventive Parisian viol maker who, based on everything we know at present, was also the first to give the classical French seven-string viol its definitive form.¹²

The Nuremberg Pardessus

The most convenient place to begin an examination of the early pardessus would be to take a close look at the signed but undated instrument by Michel Collichon now in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (Figure 1). Even though this instrument is probably not the earliest pardessus, it cannot have been made more than a few years later than the newly discovered example from 1686. All of Collichon’s dated instruments fall between 1683 and 1693, and the master is thought to have been dead by 1695 at the latest.¹³ The Nuremberg pardessus makes a good starting point because of its excellent state of preservation and because it foreshadows in virtually every regard the design of the six-string pardessus that was to become standard through the middle of the

¹² See Tilman Muthesius’s classic study, “Michel Collichon, premier facteur de violes à sept cordes?” *Musique-Images-Instruments* 2 (1996): 41–52.

¹³ Corinne Vaast, “Michel Collichon: Repères biographiques,” *Musique-Images-Instruments* 2 (1996): 56.



Figure 1. This signed but undated Collichon pardessus, preserved in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, was probably made around 1690. It exhibits in virtually every regard the design of the six-string pardessus that was to remain standard in France for as long as six-string pardessus continued to be built. Photo: Germanisches Nationalmuseum

eighteenth century.¹⁴ It will provide us with an opportunity to summarize the physical characteristics of the new instrument as well to begin considering its implications for the musicians of its time.

This instrument is a perfect, tiny six-string viol, reproducing on a smaller scale features and details familiar from Collichon's eight other surviving instruments. The similarity is more than superficial. The outline of the Nuremberg pardessus reproduces with accuracy but on a smaller scale the outline of Collichon's only surviving treble viol, a privately owned example dated 169-.¹⁵ Expressed in proportional terms, the pardessus is 10/11ths of the size of the dessus in all major dimensions, within an accuracy of a millimeter, suggesting that both instruments were derived from the same theoretical layout.

A close look at the details of the pardessus's construction shows that Collichon built it, probably reflexively, with the same well-honed techniques used in all his other viols. If we compare the Nuremberg pardessus to the well-preserved "Paris" bass of 1683, for example, we find the same elegant and light build with mitred corners and linen and parchment reinforcement strips on the back and sides, the characteristic obliquely set bass bar, relatively narrow and low soundpost plate, and the typically French through-neck construction. The flow of the bouts, the deeply incurved waist, and the open, well-controlled curves of the C holes with their nod towards the style of older English work also show a unity of style. The chaste decoration—a single line of painted purfling on the belly, none on the back, and a painted floral ornament with a central heart at the upper middle of the belly—is also typical of Collichon's oeuvre. Even the carved heads, a putto on the bass and a mustachioed gallant on the pardessus, appear to be by the same hand, although it is unknown if Collichon cut his own heads.

The only significant constructional difference between the pardessus and Collichon's bass instruments is that the pardessus has a center-joined top with two wings rather than five bent staves.

¹⁴ The bridge and tailpiece are reconstructions and the museum states that the tuning pins and nut may not be original, but otherwise the instrument is perfectly preserved and in remarkably pure condition.

¹⁵ Data from Muthesius, "Michel Collichon," 41–52.

The dessus of 169- and the newly discovered pardessus of 1686 also have center-joined tops, so we can infer that this was a characteristic of all of Collichon's treble instruments. Thus, from the onset, we see that Collichon conceived the pardessus as a true viol, rather than as a hybrid with borrowed organological features from the violin or other bowed strings.

How was this tiny instrument tuned? The earliest documented tuning for the pardessus is given in Joseph Sauveur's *Principes d'acoustique*¹⁶ of 1701, which gives the familiar *g-c'-e'-a'-d''-g''* tuning also found in the Avertissement of Marc's *Suite de Pieces*, Corrette's *Méthode*, and every other authentic and ungarbled source.¹⁷ Because the Collichon pardessus is essentially identical to later eighteenth-century examples with regard to body size and string length, and because only one tuning was ever documented for the six-string instrument throughout its later history, we are on firm ground in applying it here.

The string length of any viol is always slightly indeterminate due to the possible variations of bridge placement, but if we assume that the soundpost of the Nuremberg pardessus was placed in the middle of the fairly narrow soundpost plate, a string length of 320 mm seems most likely.¹⁸ Although it might not be immediately obvious, this string length, with the tuning going up to *g''* for the top string, yields an astonishingly long scale (relationship of string length to sounding pitch), one that is without precedent in the history of the viol in any country. One way to grasp this immediately is to consider that the string length of Collichon's pardessus is essentially the same as that of the Cremonese violin of the eighteenth century, yet the top string is tuned a minor third higher. Another is to consider that a treble viol in *d* with equivalent scaling

¹⁶ Joseph Sauveur, *Principes d'acoustique et de musique* (Paris, 1701), Plate III.

¹⁷ The pardessus tuning given by Diderot is incomplete. He indicates the correct *g-c-e-a-d[-g]* tuning in a plate derived from Sauveur's *Principes* but fails to list the top string. See Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, *L'Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (Paris, 1751–65), "Lutherie, Seconde suite," Planche XXII, *Table du Rapport de L'etendue des Voix et des Instrumens de Musique comparés au Clavecin*.

¹⁸ Muthesius, "Michel Collichon," 52, gives 310 mm to 325 mm as the extreme range of possible string lengths.

would have a string length of 42.6 cm and a matching bass viol would have a string length of over 85 cm, giants indeed! Figure 2, which compares the scalings of pardessus by Collichon, Nicolas Bertrand, and Louis Guersan to those of contemporary French bass and treble viols, a Cremonese violin, and several well-known bass viols from several other countries, makes clear just how far the pardessus goes beyond the established design traditions of its time. This extremely long scale was to remain a feature of the pardessus throughout its history.

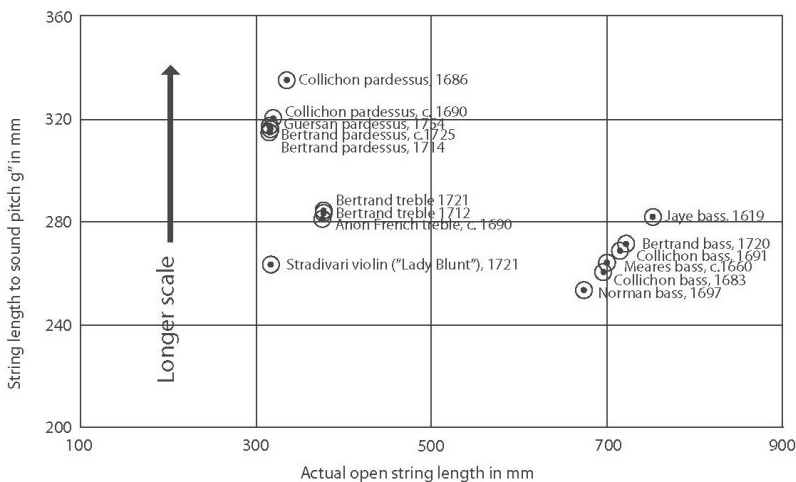


Figure 2. Comparative scaling of gut-stringed instruments

As any owner of a pardessus will know, such long scaling takes even the best gut strings extremely close to the breaking point. Gut was by far the strongest stringing material available to instrument makers before the invention of steel piano wire in the nineteenth century. Its tensile strength was considerably greater than the iron wire used to string harpsichords, for example. By and large, Northern European viols had always had longer scales than instruments of the violin family, but the pardessus takes gut scaling to an unprecedented extreme. To discover just how close to critical stress, the point beyond which a string will break, it is necessary to con-

sider the pitch to which the instrument was tuned and learn something about the breaking strain of gut.

In pre-industrial Europe, pitches were less solidly defined and more difficult to measure than was to become possible in the nineteenth century, but musicians still had clear concepts of pitch standards and we can trace these with fair accuracy both from extant instruments and theoretical writings. As is well known, pitch standards varied greatly between different nations, linguistic areas, spheres of political or cultural influence, and within nations, even from city to city. Pitch standards were also quite mutable historically, particularly in the later seventeenth century, as French musical fashions and French woodwind instruments in particular replaced older traditions throughout Europe. Finally, multiple pitch standards were often in use in one location, according to the needs and traditions of different venues—church, theater, chamber, and so on. Accordingly, any discussion of early pitch needs to be quite specific as to time, place, and musical setting.

In Paris in the late seventeenth century, at least four and possibly five conceptual pitch levels are mentioned in written sources and are documentable from extant wind instruments, organs, and pitch pipes.¹⁹ In practice, some standards overlapped and all would have fluctuated slightly. It should also be understood that these were pitches for fixed-pitch instruments like the organ or hautbois, or for ensembles, in which instruments had to agree with each other. For variable-pitch instruments that played solo like the lute, an older tradition of tuning to a “reasonable pitch” by ear is still traceable.²⁰

The two lowest Parisian pitch levels, the *ton de la chapelle* and the *ton de l’opéra*, are well documented at about two semitones below $a'=440$ Hz. They seem to have been almost identical in pitch and have been distinguished conceptually by their respective use in church music and for the production of Lully’s operas. The *ton*

¹⁹ For a detailed discussion of documents and physical evidence relating to French pitches in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Bruce Haynes, *A History of Performing Pitch* (Lanham, Maryland, and Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. 2002), 97–102, 116–24, 169–71, 273–77.

²⁰ Rousseau, for example, advises tuning the viol to a *ton raisonnable* (Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole* [Paris, 1687], 35) except when one is obliged to adjust to other instruments in concerts (*Traité*, 38).

de l'opéra would last astonishingly long into the eighteenth century, as any changes threatened the singability of haute-contre roles in Lully's operas. The highest pitch standard of the time was the *ton de l'écurie*, about a semitone above $a'=440$, a pitch mainly associated with the wind music of the Grande Écurie at Versailles but also apparently used by Lully's Petits Violons before he gained control of the Vingt-Quatre Violons between 1664 and 1670.²¹

Between these extremes lay the *ton de la Chambre du Roy*, somewhat less than 1.5 semitones below $a'=440$ (Haynes's research suggests 404–409 Hz as the most likely range). Several sources including the preface to Georg Muffat's *Florilegium Secundum* (1698), a trove of information on Lullian practice, point to this as having been the primary French instrumental pitch.²² This also proved to be an astonishingly long-lived pitch level, as witnessed by a tuning fork tuned to 409 Hz that belonged to the harpsichord maker Pascal Taskin in 1783. Sauveur in 1701 contrasts the *ton de la chapelle* and *ton de l'opéra* with a chamber pitch for private concerts, which Haynes suggests is likely to have been the same as the *ton de la chambre*.

Of these pitch levels, the *ton de l'opéra* and the *ton de la chambre* seem the only realistic candidates for the pitch of Collichon's pardessus. The *ton de l'opéra* comes into consideration largely because of Danoville's advice that this is an appropriate pitch for viols.²³ The *ton de la chambre* seems the more likely of the two, however, as this would have been the pitch habitually used by members of the influential Musique de la Chambre du Roy as well as for the music of the royal chapels (which, unlike the Parisian churches, did not use the *ton de la chapelle*).

If the top *g''* string of Collichon's pardessus is tuned to the *ton de la chambre*, say $a'=405$, how close is it to breaking? Here it is necessary to consider the breaking stress of gut. The breaking point of a musical string is a property of the stringing material itself and, in theory at least, has nothing to do with the diameter of

²¹ Haynes, *Performing Pitch*, 100–101.

²² Georg Muffat, *Florilegium Secundum* (Passau, 1698), 48. For discussion, see Haynes, *Performing Pitch*, 121–22.

²³ Danoville, *L'Art de Toucher le Dessus et Basse de Violle* (Paris, 1687), 32.

the string.²⁴ In 1974, Abbott and Segerman published an exhaustive and useful set of mathematical tools for investigating the properties of historical gut strings, but were forced to rely essentially on guesswork to define the breaking stress of the material.²⁵ Their chosen figure, expressed as a breaking index (maximum possible string length in meters times pitch in cycles per second) of 275–295 for gut²⁶ lies somewhat higher than the breaking index they give for nylon and strikes me as impossibly high. The authors also present an analysis of Mersenne's data for the breaking point of gut (which yields a breaking index of 185) and correctly find it far too low.²⁷

Empirical data on modern gut from the string maker Dan Larsen and my own experiments suggest (using Abbott and Segerman's terms) a breaking index for gut of about 250.²⁸ As Figure 3 shows, this means that the *g*" string of the Nuremberg pardessus tuned to the *ton de la chambre* is just slightly more than a semitone away from critical stress, even with a flawless string. If we assume that the instrument was set at the *ton de l'opéra*, this increases the safety margin slightly, perhaps by half a semitone. My own experience stringing copies of pardessus suggests that any flaw in the string can cause immediate breakage and that even under the best of circumstances, pardessus strings do not last very long.

This was clearly a musical instrument design balanced on the knife-edge of possibility. It is hard to believe that Collichon arrived at this solution in ignorance of how far he was challenging the properties of the stringing material. On the contrary, a maker of

²⁴ A thicker or thinner string of the same length and material should break at the same pitch, since the total tension varies directly in proportion to the cross-sectional area. String construction, especially treatments to the string surface, may make for small variations between thicker or thinner strings as the relation of the surface to the interior will vary, but these are secondary and somewhat unpredictable effects.

²⁵ Djilda Abbott and Ephraim Segerman, "Strings in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *The Galpin Society Journal* 27 (1974): 48–73.

²⁶ Abbott and Segerman, "Strings," 58.

²⁷ Abbott and Segerman, "Strings," 57. If Mersenne's results had been correct, one could not even string a violin, much less a viol.

²⁸ Private communication, 2005.

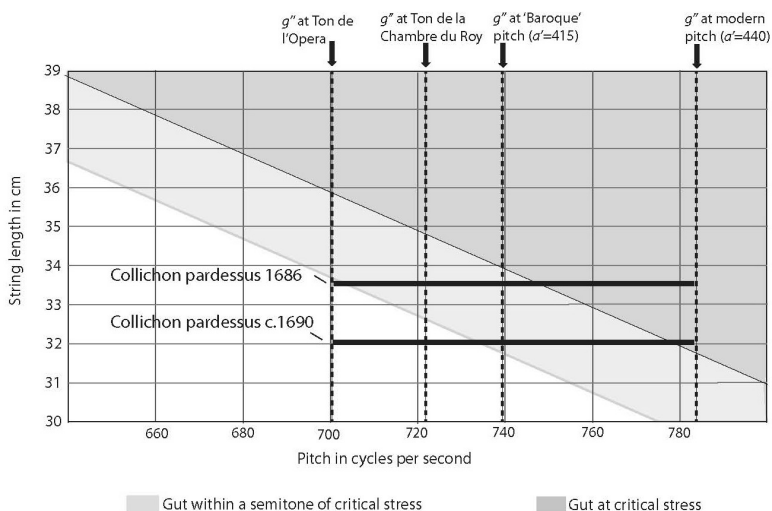


Figure 3. Collichon pardessus scales and the breaking point of gut

his skill would have fully understood what he was about. Three things are immediately striking about the musical possibilities of this design. The most obvious is the shift of the tessitura upwards in relation to that of the treble viol by the not inconsiderable interval of a fourth. It should be noted that, conceptually, the pardessus drops the bottom *d* string of the dessus but adds a *g''* at the top so that the third, *c-e*, comes to lie between the fourth and fifth strings rather than between the third and fourth strings as is the case with all classical six-string viol tunings. This new tessitura allows the performer to play up to *d''* in first position, the same top note as that of a violin played in third position. This compass is exceptional in seventeenth-century French string music, which rarely ventures beyond *c''*, and will come to be exceeded routinely only in the more virtuoso literature of the eighteenth century. We sense that Collichon made provision for the highest reaches of string writing of his time with room to spare.

The second, an implication of the extreme scaling, is that the instrument was intended to achieve a maximum of volume and penetration. It is hard to interpret the combination of higher pitch and critically stressed stringing material in any other way. This is striking, and somewhat antithetical to the tendency of French treble vi-

ols of the period in which we see few signs of a striving for greater volume. Tonally, Collichon's design was certainly successful. Antique pardessus and good copies typically combine sweetness and volume with a striking, sharp penetration in the treble register, a sound that, while quite viol-like, is also not unlike the sound of a Stainer violin, the most prized violins of the period. This new sound was probably even more striking to contemporaries than to us. Le Sieur Danoville, for example, shows great sensitivity to the effects of pitch on gut strings where he discusses the way to tune a viol:

In order to tune a viol on which all the strings are entirely slack, one begins raising the fourth [string] until it may be at a proportionate pitch and a level that the high strings can bear without being forced, because, by nature [*naturellement*], the ear cannot tolerate any whistling or sourness; nor must one use too low a pitch, where one is unable to draw forth any sound from the bass strings. At this juncture one must be guided by the *ton de l'opéra*, or possess, as do some curious persons, a small pitch pipe made according to this same pitch.²⁹

To such ears, the highly stressed top string of the pardessus must have sounded extraordinarily piercing. The effect proved enormously popular in the long run, however. As we know, the pardessus would effectively come to supplant the dessus over the course of the next forty years.

The third element to consider is the string length and its implications for fingering. As we have already noted, the string length of Collichon's pardessus is essentially a match for that of the eighteenth-century Cremonese violin.³⁰ It is difficult to believe that

²⁹ Danoville, *L'Art de Toucher*, 32. "Pour accorder une Violle dont toutes les Cordes sont entierement lâches, on commencera à la monter par la quatrième jusques a ce qu'elle soit à un ton qui soit proportionné, & à une hauteur à laquelle les petites Cordes puissent s'accommoder sans estre forcées, parce que naturellement l'oreille ne peut souffrir les sifflemens ny l'aigreur; il ne faut pas non plus que ce soit sur un ton si bas, qu'on ne puisse tirer aucun son des grosses Cordes; on pourra dans ce rencontre se regler sur le ton de l'Opera, ou comme font les curieux avoir une petite Flutte faite sur ce mesme ton."

³⁰ Pitifully little evidence remains of exact string lengths of Cremonese violins from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. An original fingerboard preserved with the "Lady Blunt" violin of Antonio Stradivari (1721) allows us to reconstruct the string length of this instrument as having been 31.7 cm.

this was mere chance. Rather, I am convinced that this was a conscious decision made in part to facilitate a type of fingering that had shown itself to be advantageous on the violin.

Most, although not all, modern viol players instinctively use violin-style diatonic fingerings on the treble viol and chromatic (finger per fret) fingerings on the bass. One reason for this may be previous experience playing the violin, another that modern treble instruments tend to be quite small by historical standards, making diatonic fingering somewhat easier. But whether diatonic fingering on the treble viol was the norm in France in the period under discussion is worth considering.

Jean Rousseau's *Traité de la Violle* is the most interesting argument *ex silentio* in that his chapter "Du Dessus de Violle, & de son caractere" has a great deal to say about the treble viol but nowhere mentions that it is fingered differently from the bass.³¹ To summarize the pertinent section of his extended remarks, he observes that the dessus has the same range as the bass except that it lacks the seventh string, that its tuning is the same, and that the only difference is that the dessus lies an octave higher. He advises the student to use the same three diagrams of the neck he has supplied for the bass viol in order to learn all the notes (these diagrams do not address fingering). He says that one should tune the instrument to a reasonable pitch ("à un Ton raisonnable") because of its thin strings. The instrument is held between the knees and the way of holding the left hand on the dessus is the same as that of the bass except that the thumb is placed behind the first finger rather than behind the middle finger. This is detailed information, and it is hard to believe that Rousseau would have failed to mention something as salient as a completely different system of fingering.

The evidence regarding fingering for the treble from Danoville's *L'Art de Toucher le Dessus et Basse de Violle* is mixed and somewhat difficult to interpret. The pertinent chapter reads as follows:

Chapter V. Of the different positioning of the fingers, both for the dessus and the bass

³¹ Rousseau, *Traité de la Violle*, 71–73, Chapitre VI. Rousseau gives a clear explication of chromatic fingering on the bass viol, 42–43.

The spacing of the frets of the bass is such that the same fingers that are used on it will not serve for the treble. One sees this distinction in those pieces full of chords composed by various authors, for the execution of which they are obliged to number the fingers; which is to say, when the first finger [is used], they write above the note in numbers that it is necessary to finger a 1 & the same sometimes for the others, a 2, a 3, or a 4. This rule is also used because of the holds. In the explanation of ornaments further on, I shall show what a hold is.

The treble is different in this manner, because one plays it with all the fingers [*parce qu'on se sert de tous les doigts*]; and what renders the accuracy of intonation difficult to acquire, is that the distance between the frets is very small and very narrow, which means that the fingers have as much trouble pressing together as they have in stretching out for the bass.³²

This passage can be interpreted as a description of diatonic fingering, but its concern with chordal pieces, holds, and intonation seems oddly beside the point. The remark about the trouble pressing the fingers together also does not sound like the extended hand position required for diatonic fingering. In any case, the treatise contains no clear statement of the principal of diatonic fingering to match that of chromatic fingering (in the tacit context of the bass viol) that it gives further on.³³ The other treatises of the period, Etienne Loulié's *Méthode pour apprendre Jouer la viole* (c.1690) and the *Avertissement Très-Necessaire* from De Machy's *Pièces*

³² Danoville, *L'Art de Toucher*, 13–14. The original reads:

CHAPITRE V. De la differente situation des doigts tant pour le Dessus que pour la Basse.

L'Eloignement des touches de la Basse fait que les mesmes doigts qui servent pour elle ne servent pas pour le Dessus, on reconnoist cette difference dans les pieces remplies d'accords composées par differents Auteurs, pour l'execution desquelles ils sont obligez de chiffrer pour les doigts; c'est à dire, que quand c'est le premier doigt, ils marquent sur la note necessaire de toucher un 1. en chiffre, & de mesme des autres tantost un 2. un 3. ou un 4. Ces Regles se pratiquent aussi à cause des tenuës: Par l'explication que je donneray des agrèemens dans la suite je feray voir ce que c'est que tenuë.

³³ Danoville, *L'Art de Toucher*, 25–26 (“Explication des Unissons, faisans voir de quels doigts on les doit toucher”).

de Violle (1685), do not address the subject of fingering the treble or discuss the instrument in a substantive way.³⁴

A cautious conclusion from this evidence might be that diatonic fingering was not the norm for all dessus players in France towards the end of the seventeenth century and that some may have used the same fingering system on both the bass and dessus. This might seem less surprising when we consider that some of these music masters would have regularly switched between treble and bass, or between viol and theorbo, for that matter. We should also consider that French dessus tended to be quite large by modern standards. Relatively few trebles of the period have survived with their original necks, but two well-preserved instruments by Nicolas Bertrand have string lengths between 37 and 38 cm, depending on bridge placement.³⁵ A somewhat smaller anonymous French treble in the Caldwell Collection has an original string length of 37.5 cm.³⁶ With such string lengths, comparable to those of a very large viola, diatonic fingering can be something of a challenge for all but the largest hands.

If diatonic fingering was not a universal norm, the newly invented pardessus, with a string length of about 32 cm, would have changed the player's approach to fingering substantially, since it can scarcely be fingered any other way than diatonically. For players used to bass fingering with its essential orientation around the hand span of a fourth, it would have presented a challenge but also placed more notes under the hand without string crossings, especially on the top string. For any player used to diatonic fingering or a mixed system on the treble with an extension up to *a*", it would have at least offered a considerable contraction and relaxation of the hand. Both of these effects point toward greater virtuosity of execution.

³⁴ Loulié's handwritten draft of a method, possibly to be published at some future date, is found in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS fonds fr.n.a.6355, fols. 210r–222r.

³⁵ One is dated 1721, Inventory E.986.9.1, Musée de la Musique collection, Cité de la Musique, Paris; the other, dated 1712, is privately owned.

³⁶ This instrument has painted marks on the neck to show the fret positions, from which the original string length can be extrapolated with accuracy.

This new pardessus, with its raised tessatura, extreme scaling, and new potential for left-hand technique, must have been considered eminently successful by at least some influential players of the time, and would come to challenge and eventually replace the dessus within a few decades. Its design was copied with little modification for as long as the six-string pardessus continued to be built. Later eighteenth-century developments such as the five-string pardessus with lower sides like those of Louis Guersan, or changes in construction such as the arched-back pardessus of Nicolas Chappuy, however musically significant, are essentially variations on this basic design as established by Collichon.

The Proto-Pardessus of 1686

The undated Nuremberg pardessus was thought to be unique in Collichon's output until the recent discovery—better, the recovery—of the Collichon pardessus dated 1686.³⁷ This instrument brings the total number of surviving Collichon viols to nine. The fact that two of these are pardessus suggests that these instruments were not an insignificant part of his output.

The instrument also has the typical characteristics of Collichon's work (see Figures 4–9) and in particular shows strong affinities with his other treble instruments as described above. The back and sides are made from figured ash, which would seem unusual were we not familiar with the eclectic woods found in many of Collichon's other instruments. The only decorative elements on the exterior of the instrument are a single line of painted black purfling around the top and, in the upper center of the belly, a heart-shaped floral wreath with a smaller flaming heart at its center, both executed in translucent brown outlined in black.³⁸ The parchment strip reinforcing the center joint on the inside of the

³⁷ This instrument, now in private ownership, was unknown to scholars before appearing at auction in May, 2008.

³⁸ At least two other Collichon viols, the Nuremberg pardessus and the “Kessler” bass, have heart-shaped belly ornaments executed in similar media. The added flaming-heart motif on the 1686 pardessus is somewhat unusual. It may be the familiar symbol of courtly love known to French iconography since at least the late fifteenth century or possibly an allusion to the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a cult of seventeenth-century French origin that was reaching an apogee of popularity during the 1680s.



Figure 4. The Collichon proto-pardessus of 1686 with the top removed. The two-piece back and sides are made of faintly flamed ash, with the back cut more or less on the slab and the sides on the quarter. The original soundpost plate is conifer. The parchment reinforcements on the center joint, the fold, and mitered corners are original. The top block and possibly the liners are later additions, probably dating from the eighteenth-century conversion to a five-string pardessus. Otherwise, the instrument is very well preserved. The parchment used to reinforce the center joint shows fragments of Gregorian notation and appears to have been recycled from a fifteenth-century *Graduale*. Photo: John Pringle



Figure 5. The inside of the top of the 1686 proto-pardessus. Note the highly oblique angle of the bass bar, a typical feature of Collichon instruments. The linen reinforcements on the bass bar, the center joint, and the two wings are original. The parchment strips are later, possibly eighteenth-century repairs. Photo: John Pringle



Figure 6. The original bottom block of the 1686 proto-pardessus. The hole for the tailpin gives every appearance of being original. There is no sign that the instrument ever had a hookbar. The fact that the tailpin hole is centered in the block suggests that the height of the relatively shallow sides is original. Photo: John Pringle



Figure 7. The original handwritten label from the 1686 proto-pardessus. All of Michel Collichon's extant instruments are signed with handwritten labels that closely resemble this example. Muthesius has pointed out that, while certainly authentic, the extant labels exhibit several different handwritings. It may be that, at any given time, the labels were written by the person in the shop with the best calligraphy. Note the spelling "Colichon" that appears on six of the nine extant labels. Collichon's own somewhat shakier signature, spelled with two Ls, is preserved in a legal document from 1682. Photo: John Pringle



Figure 8. The painted belly ornament of the 1686 proto-pardessus. The heart motif may be the familiar symbol of courtly love or may refer to the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a cult of seventeenth-century French origin that was reaching a height of popularity about the time this instrument was built. Photo: John Pringle



Figure 9. The top of the 1686 proto-pardessus. Here and in other Collichon viols, the cut of the sound holes alludes to the style of older English work. The single line of purfling and the heart ornament are painted on using black and brown glazes.

back was cut from what appears to be a fifteenth-century Gregorian *Graduale* with black notes on eye-catching vermilion four-line staves. It is interesting to speculate whether this selection of musical scrap parchment was entirely fortuitous or a deliberate choice.

The instrument was rebuilt as a five-string pardessus in the eighteenth century by the addition of a fine new head and neck typical of mid-century French work (the original head and neck were discarded). In its original state, the instrument would have almost certainly had the through-neck construction found in the Nuremberg pardessus and all of Collichon's unaltered basses. The current W-shaped top block and the top and bottom liners date from the conversion. There are no other features of the instrument body that are at odds with the style of Collichon's other works, and after examination by several experts, no grounds have been raised for questioning the instrument's authenticity. Nonetheless, it has at least three unusual features when compared to the Nuremberg pardessus or later pardessus by other makers.

The ribs, only 4.8 cm deep, are somewhat shallower than the 6.4 cm ribs found on the Nuremberg pardessus and on the similar instruments of Nicolas Bertrand. Although shallow ribs are a feature of mid-eighteenth-century five-string pardessus, those of Guersan for example, it seems very unlikely that the ribs of the Collichon instrument were lowered during the eighteenth-century conversion. The hole for the original tailpin is well centered in the ribs (see photo) and any cutting of the ribs from the top would have meant that the tailpin hole would originally have been far below the center of the rib, a bizarre and unlikely arrangement. Any significant cutting from the bottom can be ruled out as this would have grossly altered the position and size of the fold and required significant modifications to the back.

The tailpin itself is an unusual feature, as most Northern European viols, including all those by Collichon that did not suffer conversion to cellos, have a hook bar. The tailpin attachment for a tailpiece has every appearance of being original, however. The bottom block, which closely matches that on the Paris Collichon bass of 1683, shows no sign of a plugged channel for a hookbar. The ribs, joined at the center of this block, are unpatched, and the

bottom outline shows no sign of alteration as would have happened if the ribs had been cut and shortened to hide an original hookbar channel.

The final oddity is the size of this instrument. The body length of 33.2 cm is somewhat large for a pardessus although tiny by the standards of smaller French dessus. How are we to interpret this artifact that, according to our present knowledge, is the earliest extant pardessus-like viol?

The width of the belly at the sound holes is a good match for the Nuremberg instrument, so we are on safe ground concluding that this was originally a six-string instrument. In the absence of the original neck it is impossible to know the string length, but we can make a reasonable estimate using the length of the belly as a proxy. Many classical French viols, including examples by Nicolas Bertrand and Collichon, have string lengths that are only one or two percent longer than the belly length. This presumably came about from a practice of marking out the neck using the distance from the bridge line to the bottom of the belly as the measurement. The small additional string length would come from the hypotenuse formed by the strings and the height of the bridge. Two Collichon viols with original necks, the “Kessler” (belly length 71.1 cm, string length ~71.7 cm) and, conveniently enough, the Nuremberg pardessus (belly length 31.5 cm, string length ~32 cm), conform to this pattern. If we extrapolate to this example, we arrive at a possible string length for the 1686 instrument of about 33.5 cm.

Is this instrument truly a pardessus and if not, what sort of viol is it? Certainly, the eighteenth-century maker who converted the instrument to a five-string pardessus (with a string length of 32 cm) had no qualms about its identity. Problems arise, however, if we assume the pardessus tuning at anything much above the *ton de l'opéra*. Figure 3 shows the scaling relationship of the two Collichon pardessus with the critical stress of gut strings (breaking index of gut assumed to be 250 as discussed above). We see that the instrument could have safely been put into a conventional pardessus tuning at the *ton de l'opéra*, even if we increase our estimate of the string length to 34 cm. Raising its pitch to the *ton de la*

Chambre du Roy, however, would have put it within less than a semitone of breaking.

This instrument may perhaps be best interpreted as a survivor from the immediate period when Collichon was experimenting with new designs for a smaller treble instrument. The shallow ribs and smaller body are more diminutive than anything we would cheerfully call a treble viol, and point to a higher-pitched instrument even if not in the nominal pardessus tuning. Other (completely speculative) tunings on *e* or *f* suggest themselves, and the former would have had the interesting property of matching the pitch of the top string of the violin. The instrument might also have been intended for solo play only and simply pitched by ear to “un ton raisonable.”

A further intriguing possibility suggested by the shallow ribs and tailpin-tailgut attachment of the tailpiece is that this instrument was intended to be held at the breast or chin rather than between the knees. This is not without historical precedent. Benjamin Hebbert has documented changes made to the lower bouts of older English trebles in the early Georgian period to allow them to be played violin-wise under the chin.³⁹ In German-language areas and parts of Italy, this period also saw the vogue of the viola d’amore, a small viol also held *a braccio*. However it was held, this early Collichon instrument can be interpreted as an attempt to embody the goals of higher tessitura, greater sound, and easier fingering, but one that proved to be less successful than the design of the Nuremberg pardessus described above. Its survival may be attributed to its maker’s reputation and to the fact that it could be successfully converted to a “true” pardessus at a later date.

Michel Collichon and His Workshop

Michel Collichon’s instruments point to his having been an extraordinarily inventive and adaptable maker who responded surely to the musical impulses of his time. Sadly, we know very little about the man. Documentary evidence is limited to nine manuscript labels in his instruments, not all in his own hand, and two

³⁹ See Benjamin Hebbert, “Nathaniel Cross, William Borraclaffe, and a Clutch of Tudor Viols,” *The Galpin Society Journal* 56 (2003): 71.

documents preserved in the Minutier Central both dating from 1682.⁴⁰ His dated instruments all fall between 1683 and 1693, a sadly narrow span of years. Surprisingly, we do possess numerous documents relating to his father, the *faiseur d'instruments* Nicolas Collichon, and these allow us to resurrect a somewhat more concrete picture of the milieu in which Michel worked.

Michel Collichon was born around 1641 into a substantial Parisian bourgeois family. His grandfather Michel Collichon was a Paris merchant who placed his son Nicolas, the future father of Michel, into apprenticeship with the instrument maker Edmond Hotman, who had his shop on the Pont Saint-Michel.⁴¹ After his training, Nicolas was sworn into the guild of master luthiers and is referred to in documents as “*maître faiseur d'instruments de la musique du roi*,” a title indicating court patronage and its attendant connections. In other documents, he is referred to as “*faiseur de luth*.” One of his brothers was a merchant, another a jurist and *procureur au parlement de Paris*.

Nicolas leased a shop on the Pont Saint-Michel and owned a house on the Rue de la Vieille Bouclerie as well as two additional houses in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. He was also the lessee or owner of an atelier on the Pont Saint-Michel at the entry of the Rue de la Harpe. He had at least four other children in addition to Michel, one other son and three daughters. Michel's brother François is referred to in documents as *musicien à Paris* or *maître de musique*. Through the daughters' marriages, the family contracted alliances with a well-placed officer of the navy and two *maîtres menuisiers*. Indirect connections through these alliances stretched into court and intellectual circles. Another interesting feature of the Collichon family business was that they provided lodgings for at least two notable viol players, and probably many others. A manuscript treatise on viol playing written by Dubuisson

⁴⁰ For an excellent summary of the documentary evidence pertaining to Michel Collichon, see Vaast, “Repères biographiques,” 53–57.

⁴¹ I have been unable to find evidence linking the viol maker Edmond Hotman to the famous contemporary viol player Nicolas Hotman (d. 1663), although the coincidence of this somewhat unusual name is striking. For a summary of Nicolas Hotman's biography and work, see Stuart Cheney, “Hotman and Dubuisson,” *A Viola da Gamba Miscellanea*, ed. Christophe Coin and Susan Orlando (Limoges: Presses Universitaires de Limoges, 2005), 43–51.

(first name unknown) and dated 1666⁴² contains the following information: “Dubuisson lives in the middle of the Rue du Fort L’Évêque next to the Quay de la Vallée de Misère ... or else you will find his dwelling at the entrance of the Rue de la Harpe at the home of a lute maker named Monsieur Collichon.”⁴³

Years later in 1688, Jean Rousseau, defending himself against De Machy in his *Réponse de Monsieur Rousseau*, also recalled his time spent as a lodger *chez* Collichon, apparently some time between his arrival in Paris in 1676 and the time of his marriage in 1678: “You know that at the time I was learning from Monsieur de Sainte Colombe, I lived at the house of old [*bonhomme*⁴⁴] Colichon, lute maker, who lived at that time at the bottom of the rue de la Harpe, where the author of the libel visited quite often...”⁴⁵

This implies not only some type of acquaintance, passing or otherwise, between the Collichon family and Sainte Colombe, but that De Machy was also a frequent visitor to the Rue de la Harpe. Overall, we see that the Collichons were not only prosperous and well connected but had, at various times, several professional musicians of standing living under their roof.

⁴² Washington, DC, Library of Congress ms. M2.1/Book.T2 17c, fol.1–25^r and 67^v–90^r.

⁴³ “Dubuisson demeure au milieu de la rue de Fort L’évêque, proche du quai de la vallée de misère ... ou bien on saura sa demeure à l’entrée de la rue de la Harpe chez un faiseur de luth nommé Monsieur Collichon.” See Gordon J. Kinney, trans., “Writings on the Viol by Dubuisson, DeMachy, Roland Marais and Etienne Loulié,” *Journal of the VdGSA* 13 (1976): 17–18. Also Vaast, “Repères biographiques,” 55, for the more complete reading of the original text given here.

⁴⁴ Corinne Vaast points out that in the seventeenth century the epithet “*bonhomme*” denoted a man of relatively advanced age, in this case almost certainly Nicolas Collichon. Previous writers beginning with François Lesure have assumed that the *bonhomme* in question was Michel, who would only have been about 35 at the time.

⁴⁵ “Vous sçavez que dans le temps que j’apprenois de Monsieur de Sainte Colombe, je logeois chez le bonhomme Colichon, luthier, qui demouroit en ce temps-la au bas de la rüe de la Harpe où l’auteur du Libelle venoit tres-souvent...” See François Lesure, “Une querelle sur le jeu de la viole en 1688: J. Rousseau contre Demachy,” *Revue de Musicologie* 46, no. 122 (December, 1960): 187.

No signed works by Nicolas seem to have survived despite what must have been a long working life. He was probably already a *maître faiseur d'instruments* by the year of his marriage in 1638 and he is thought to have died over 50 years later, between 1690 and 1696.⁴⁶ It is unknown if Michel Collichon apprenticed with his father or another maker. As noted above, all of Michel's dated instruments fall between 1683 and 1693, and Corinne Vaast gives 1695 as the latest possible year of his death. Thus, the work of Michel's first twenty years seems unaccounted for, and all of his signed works fall within a single decade. Did Michel spend those years working on his father's account? This is a particularly interesting problem, as these years would have seen the development of the first seven-string viols such as those used by Sainte Colombe by the 1670s.⁴⁷

The most substantial surviving archival document concerning Michel Collichon is dated 22 July 1682 and concerns a suit for the payment by his father of his deceased mother's dowry of 6,000 livres to Michel and three siblings. Nicolas is unable to pay this substantial sum in cash and offers his children the equivalent in "immeubles" or real estate. The suit probably does not represent family strife so much as one of the routine dynastic transactions of the day. Could this have been the time when control of the work-

⁴⁶ Vaast, "Repères biographiques," 56.

⁴⁷ Although all the viols from the Collichon workshop are signed by Michel, I find it improbable that Nicolas, nominally a lute maker, was not also involved in viol-making. The fact that Nicolas was providing lodging to young professional viol players as early as 1666 seems to support this. During the years when the seven-string viol was becoming established, much of the work may have been in the conversion of existing instruments. A possible candidate for Nicolas's work is the Henry Jaye viol from 1624, Inventory E.73 currently in the Musée de la Musique collection, Cité de la Musique, Paris. This instrument was converted into a seven-string viol in the seventeenth century in France, and the characteristic oblique placement of the bass bar, added at that time, points strongly to the Collichon workshop. The conversion, although very deft, has a somewhat ad hoc feel to it. The strings were lengthened and the fingerboard widened, not by replacing the old head with newer and more fashionable French work, as was later the norm, but by splicing an extension in the middle of the neck and building up layers between the old neck and the new fingerboard. The pegbox itself was widened by driving a wooden wedge into the inside. Could this somewhat unorthodox work betray the hand of the father, Nicolas, datable to the earliest years of the seven-string viol?

shop passed to Michel and he began to sell instruments under his own name? Although he is listed as “*maître faiseur d’instruments de musique*” in the document, there are no instruments signed by his hand that predate it.

By the time Michel Collichon came to build the proto-pardessus of 1686, all indications are that he was master of the Collichon workshop and the inheritor of its traditions, including its long-standing connections to professional musicians. This said, it is difficult to imagine that he would have developed the pardessus on his own account. The social hierarchies of the seventeenth century and practicalities of commerce would seem to rule this out. Rather, it seems most likely that the first pardessus would have been developed as the result of commissions or at least at the suggestion of and in consultation with a professional musician of some standing. Here, Jean Rousseau may be the most plausible candidate, not only because of his ties to the family but because, at his death in 1699, the inventory of his possessions lists a pardessus. This makes him the first professional viol player who can be definitively linked to the instrument.⁴⁸ It seems reasonable to suppose that it was an instrument made by Michel Collichon.

What changes in French music at this time could explain why players felt the need for a new, higher-pitched viol? This is a subject that could be expanded almost without limit, so I propose to touch briefly on only four topics that suggest reasons for the invention of the pardessus or explore what some of its first repertoire may have been.

The “Instrumental Revolution” of the Lullian Orchestra

The central fact of French music from the mid-1670s until the beginning of the eighteenth century was the absolute dominance of Jean-Baptiste Lully, the king’s *surintendant de la musique de la chambre du roi* since 1661. Beginning in the 1660s but definitively by 1673, with *Cadmus et Hermione*, he had created a new musical style and palette of sound whose influence became inescapable in every genre he touched: ballet, opera, and the grand

⁴⁸ Inventory cited in Sylvette Milliot, “Du nouveau sur Jean Rousseau, maître de musique et de viole (1644–1699),” *Recherches sur la Musique française classique* 17 (1991–1992): 41.

motet. His style also profoundly influenced composition in genres in which he himself was not active, from the organ mass to the harpsichord suite to the solo viol literature. Lully's music came to define French expectations for vocal recitative and air, and it set the style for a huge variety of dances including those with organizational structures like the chaconne. It also provided a definitive treatment of solo, duo, trio, ensemble, and choral textures. The sound of his orchestra, the *grand choeur*—a five-part ensemble of violin-family instruments with a rich addition of newly invented woodwinds—became definitive and quickly spread throughout Europe, a sea change Haynes has described as the “instrument revolution” of the late seventeenth century.⁴⁹ By the time of Lully's death in 1687, his operas had been performed in London, Amsterdam, Brussels, The Hague, Antwerp, and Wolfenbüttel, with many more cities and courts to join the list in the following decade. John Evelyn, writing years later, recalled that in Restoration London “...all the compositions of the town were strained to imitate Baptists vein”⁵⁰

To a contemporary listener, especially one used to older music, one of the most striking things about the Lullian orchestra, in addition to its precision and power, must have been the dominance of the *dessus*, made up of violins doubled by winds. Violins had been a feature of French court entertainments since Balthasar de Beaujoyeux had staged the *Balet comique de la Royne* for Catherine de Medici in 1581, and they had been a workhorse of court dancing since the establishment of the 24 Violons du Roi in 1626 by Louis XIII. But Lully's music represented something far different from the quasi-improvised dance repertoire of the “Roi des Violons” and his band. When Lully first led the Petit Violons in 1656 and finally gained control of the 24 Violons beginning in 1661, he established a strict bowing discipline and normalization of ornamentation unknown to the older ensemble. This music of this orchestra was rhythmically incisive, frequently homophonic in texture, and dominated by the instruments of the *dessus*. It was one in which the bass viol at the bottom of the texture could partic-

⁴⁹ Haynes, *Performing Pitch*, 115.

⁵⁰ Roger North, *Memoirs of Musick*, ed. Edward Rimbault (London: George Bell, 1846), 102.

ipate to some extent, if not in the orchestra directly, at least in music whose style was modeled on the style of this orchestra. The weaker treble viol was at an immediate disadvantage, however, and would have seemed out of place in any instrumental composition that imitated Lully's manner, even on a smaller scale. One can easily imagine that any viol player, faced with this impressive and supremely fashionable music held in the highest royal favor, would have considered the advantages of a more assertive treble instrument with a higher tessitura.

Instrumental Accompaniment of the *Air Sérieux*

The later French *air sérieux* represents an interesting case of reciprocal influence between Lully's style and a pre-existing form, the older *air de cour*. Robert Green has pointed out a very interesting connection between the treble viol and the *air sérieux* in the person of the composer Sébastien Le Camus (d. 1677), who was also a famous player of the treble viol.⁵¹ He very plausibly suggests that Le Camus may have performed his *airs* on the viol as solos and that instrumental performance of the *air sérieux* may have been part of the early repertoire of the pardessus. Green notes that Jean Rousseau, in discussing the treble viol, cites Le Camus as an ideal: "Its proper character is in melodic playing, which is why those who wish to play well on this instrument must devote themselves to the delicacy of singing, to imitate all that a beautiful voice can do, with all the charms of art, as did the late Monsieur Le Camus who excelled in all ways at playing the dessus de viole"⁵²

The finest and most famous composer of the *air sérieux* in his time was undoubtedly Michel Lambert (c. 1610–1696), the father-in-law of Jean Baptiste Lully. Lambert was also a famed singing teacher praised in many contemporary sources. His singing method, according to Le Cerf de La Viéville, was prescribed for the Opéra of Paris. The chronology of his music is vexed, the first print appearing in 1660 and the *Airs à une, deux, trois, et quatre parties avec la basse continué* of 1689 representing a collection of

⁵¹ Green "Treble Viol in 17th-Century France," 66.

⁵² Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole*, 72.

many years, according to James R. Anthony.⁵³ Le Cerf credited Lambert with having provided Lully with a vocal model. In Lambert's presumably later works, such as "Ma bergere est tendre & fidelle," organized on a chaconne bass, or the impassioned recitative-like "Ombre de mon amant," the influence between father- and son-in-law seemed reversed.

Lambert's instrument was the theorbo rather than the viol, but one notable feature of the pieces in the print of 1689 is that they include beautifully written *ritournelles* for two treble instruments and continuo that introduce and frame the vocal sections. The print contains no indication as to what instruments are called for, but the music is notated in French violin clef and the style is both Italianate and quite violin-like. The ranges of the *ritournelles* are fairly modest although they sometimes ascend to *c*", notably in "Ma bergere est tendre et fidelle." It seems certain that on some occasions at least, they were performed by violins. We are reminded almost uncannily of the aspiring Monsieur Jourdain in Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (1670), whose music master addresses his worries about his upcoming concert:

Monsieur Jourdain: Is that what people of quality do? ...

Music master: Without doubt. You must have three voices: a soprano, a high tenor, and a bass, who will be accompanied by a bass viol, a theorbo, and a harpsichord for playing the continuo, with two treble violins to play the *ritournelles*.⁵⁴

Lambert's *airs* were probably performed for the king. A payment in July 1688 of 1,200 livres to Lambert from the "Compte de la Maison du Roi" indicates continuing royal favor toward the ag-

⁵³ James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeux to Rameau*, rev. and expanded ed. (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1997), 417. For more on the dating of Lambert's music, see Catherine Massip, *L'Art de bien chanter: Michel Lambert (1610–1696)* (Paris: Société de Musicologie, 1999), 303–9.

⁵⁴ Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin), *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme. Comedie-Ballet. Faite à Chambort, pour le Divertissement du Roy*, first performed 1670 (act II, scene 1). "Maître de musique: Sans doute. Il vous faudra trois voix: un dessus, une haute-contre, et une basse, qui seront accompagnées d'une basse de viole, d'un théorbe, et d'un clavecin pour les basses continues, avec deux dessus de violon pour jouer les ritornelles."

ing composer.⁵⁵ The Ballard print indicates a wider popularity, however, and we assume that performances also took place at many private concerts that are a well-documented feature of the period. Performance of *ritournelles* of this sort would also have been an obvious role for the early pardessus, giving masters of the viol the ability to perform music in a fashionable, top-dominated style that would have been less well suited to the less assertive dessus. For listeners such as the future polemicist Le Cerf, for whom nothing exemplified the perfection of French music as much as the *airs* of Lambert, the pardessus would have been a welcome substitution for the hated violin, whether Lambert had originally conceived his *ritournelles* for violin or not.

The French Instrumental Trio

From the later seventeenth century well into the eighteenth century, the instrumental trio was to be one of the most popular genres of chamber music in France. After the turn of the century the form came under the influence of the Italian trio sonata (François Couperin's *Les Nations* of 1726 is an example), but in the late seventeenth century it was more distinctly "French" in that much of the repertoire consisted of transcriptions of Lully operas and ballets. In this music, the instrumentation is generally either unspecified or presented as a wide range of choices. The repertoire was quite substantial. Herbert Schneider lists 57 publications appearing between 1657 and 1726 containing trios;⁵⁶ numerous other collections are preserved in manuscripts. Anthony cites one example copied by André Danican Philidor containing over 500 extracts from Lully ballets, scored for two violins with bass violin, alternatively two oboes and bassoon.⁵⁷

Marin Marais's *Pièces en trio*, published in 1692, and preserved in part in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms.1397

⁵⁵ "Michel Lambert," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 1/2013.

⁵⁶ Herbert Schneider, "Die französische Kammersuite zwischen 1672 und 1720," in *Jakob Stainer und seine Zeit: Tagungsbericht*, ed. Salmen, Walter, *Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft* 10 (Innsbruck: Edition Helbling, 1984): 164–73.

⁵⁷ James R. Anthony, review of *Trios pour le coucher du roy: Jean-Baptiste Lully et Marin Marais*, ed. Herbert Schneider, *Music & Letters* 69, no. 3 (July 1988): 438.

in what may be somewhat earlier versions,⁵⁸ are representative of the genre and fine works in their own right. The full title of the print is *Pièces en Trio pour les Flûtes, Violon, & Dessus de Viole*. The music is decidedly “French” in flavor in that its main stylistic origins are the *écrits*, *airs*, and especially the dances of Lully. The three parts are merely designated 1er Dessus, 2me Dessus, and Basse-Continue. The title alone indicates that Marais was far from joining a cabal against the violin. The beautiful title page, which is realistically engraved and seems to relate directly to the scoring of the work, shows recorders, transverse flutes, various reed instruments, a violin, and a treble viol all in happy coexistence. Title pages were made to sell copies of the music, and Marais must have imagined that the preferred instrumentation for the top voices would be *les flûtes* (recorders and transverse flutes), with violins the next most popular.

The range of the two dessus parts frequently goes as high as *c*”, unproblematic for the recorder and traverso, but requiring an extension on the violin and a shift on the treble viol. It would lie fully under the hand on the pardessus, however. Like the *ritournelles* of Lambert’s *airs*, this is music in a modern style with a modern sound ideal. Adrian Rose has quite rightly pointed out that trios of this sort, and this work in particular, would seem to be an obvious choice of repertoire for players experimenting with the pardessus in this decade.⁵⁹ What seems worth adding is to point out Marais’s apparent lack of enthusiasm for the dessus de viole and the way he embraces the possibilities of the violin. Even the ordering of the title suggests that the dessus is a third-best option. This may tell us something about the thinking of other viol players of the time, especially those experimenting with the pardessus. This work suggests that Marais is responding with enthusiasm to new instrumental possibilities instead of fighting a rear-guard action in order to cling to old ones.

⁵⁸ MS published as *Trios pour le coucher du roy: Jean-Baptiste Lully et Marin Marais*, ed. Herbert Schneider, *Le Pupitre* 52 (Paris: Leduc et Heugel, 1987).

⁵⁹ Rose, “Pardessus de Viole,” 35–36.

The Italian Sonata in France

“What joy, what a fine opinion has not a man of himself who knows something of the fifth opus of Corelli?”⁶⁰

Le Cerf was a self-appointed defender of French national music, and his ironic remark captures something he loathed: the excitement and *snobisme* that Italian music was inspiring in the French capital at the turn of the eighteenth century. Anthony describes the situation well: “Of all the ultramontane importations, the sonata caused the French musical pulse to beat most rapidly, and it was the sonata in company with the cantata that gave the sharpest focus to the confrontation of national styles during the first decades of the eighteenth century.”⁶¹

The sonata meant above all either the trio sonata or solo sonata for violin, and in particular, those of the most admired Italian instrumental composer of the period, Arcangelo Corelli. It is difficult to overstate his influence on French music of the time. Most obviously, it lay behind such diverse and extraordinary works as the violin sonatas of Leclair (four books published between 1723 and 1738), and the *Goûts réünis* (1724), *Apothéose de Lully* (1725), and *Les Nations* (1726) of François Couperin, a composer whose entire oeuvre may be seen as a conscious blending of French and Italian styles.

There is no need to recapitulate this well-known chapter of French music history except to point out that the importation and imitation of Italian music, usually thought of as a phenomenon beginning in the first three decades of the eighteenth century, were already well underway in the later seventeenth century at the time of the invention of the pardessus. In the preface to *Les Goûts réünis* Couperin writes that it was more than thirty years since the first Italian sonatas appeared in France, giving a date of about 1692 or possibly earlier.⁶² In a famous passage from the preface to *Les Nations* (1726), he describes his own first efforts at writing in the Italian style:

⁶⁰ Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison de la Musique*, 3:201.

⁶¹ Anthony, *French Baroque Music*, 378.

⁶² François Couperin, Préface to *Les goûts-Réünis ou Nouveaux Concerts à l'usage de toutes les sortes d'instrumens de Musique augmentés d'une grande Sonade en Trio Intitulée Le Parnasse ou L'Apothéose de Corelli* (Paris, 1724).

Charmed by the sonatas of Signor Corelli, whose works I shall love as long as I live, just as I do the French works of Monsieur de Lully, I attempted to compose one myself which I [then] had performed in the concert series where I had heard those of Corelli. Knowing the keen appetite of the French for foreign novelties above all else, and being unsure of myself, I did myself a very good turn through a little “technical” deceit. I pretended that a relation of mine [his cousin Marc-Roger Normand], in very truth in the service of the King of Sardinia, had sent me a sonata by a new Italian composer. I rearranged the letters of my name to form an Italian one, which I used instead. The sonata was devoured with eagerness, and I need not trouble to defend myself.⁶³

Anthony considers the sonata in this story to have been “La Pucelle,” which, along with five other early trio sonatas, is preserved in two different manuscripts, which he dates to between 1692 and 1695.⁶⁴

Corelli’s opus 1 had appeared in 1681, and his music probably began to circulate in such advanced Parisian musical circles shortly thereafter. In the preface to *Le Maître de Clavecin Pour l’Accompagnement* (1753), Michel Corrette recounts a similar scene:

The author of *Dons des Enfants de Latone* [Serré de Rieux, Paris, 1734] said that it was Mons. Mathieu, curé of St. André des Arts at the end of the last century, by whom Italian music was introduced in Paris. He gave a concert every week where nothing was sung but the Latin music of the best masters of Italy, Cassati, Carissimi, Bassani, Scarlatti, and others. It was at this concert where the Trios of Corelli, printed at Rome, were heard for the first time. This music in a novel genre encouraged all the composers to work in a more brilliant style.⁶⁵

Couperin was not the only composer who felt the urge to imitate the new music. Others included Sébastien de Brossard,

⁶³ François Couperin, Aveü, de L’Auteur au Public, *Les Nations Sonades; et Suites de Simphonies en Trio* (Paris, 1726). For the translation given here, see Edward Higginbottom, “François Couperin,” in *The New Grove French Baroque Masters* (New York: Norton, 1986), 155.

⁶⁴ Anthony, *French Baroque Music*, 380.

⁶⁵ Michel Corrette, Preface to *Le Maître de Clavecin Pour l’Accompagnement, Methode Theorique et Pratique* (Paris, 1753).

Jean-Féry Rebel, and the well-placed court protégée Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre. Rebel's *Pièces Pour le Violon avec la Basse-Continue*, printed in Paris in 1705 but thought to have been written around 1695, show a surprisingly mature and successful absorption of the Corelli idiom. Jacquet de La Guerre's *Sonates pour le violon et pour le clavecin* of 1707 are stylistically more "French" in inspiration but the violin writing also shows clear Corellian influences.

By this time, Parisian musicians had also had opportunity to hear at least two internationally famous virtuoso violinists in person. Johann Paul Westhoff (1656–1705) had played for Louis XIV in 1682.⁶⁶ The Neapolitan violinist Nicola Matteis, who had settled in London, apparently visited Paris in 1678, although he seems to have found Paris less financially rewarding than London. Roger North reports that, in France, Matteis "...soon found that pistolls [i.e. French money] did not walk so fast as ginnys [guineas]."⁶⁷

How did viol players react to this *avant-garde* of Italian violin music that had fashionable musical circles in Paris all agog? I am unaware of anything written by a viol player or composer of the time that suggests a distaste for the violin sonata or an alignment with the "French" side of the polemic that would erupt in the early eighteenth century. Jean Rousseau certainly contrasts the violin and dessus de viole, saying that the violin's proper role is to animate while that of the dessus is to please (*flater*),⁶⁸ but there is no hint of the condemnation we will later hear from Le Blanc or Le Cerf. The music of the great viol composers, Marais and especially Antoine Forqueray, while showing the clear influence of Lully, also shows a smooth absorption of many elements of Italian violin style.

Certainly, the earliest extant music specifically for the pardessus has adopted a great deal from the Italian sonata. In

⁶⁶ David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 224. Also see Anthony, *French Baroque Music*, 379.

⁶⁷ Roger North, *Memoirs of Musick*, ed. Edward F. Rimbault (London: G. Bell, 1846; repr., 2004), 126.

⁶⁸ Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole*, 73.

Thomas Marc's *Suite de Pieces de Dessus et de Pardessus de Viole* of 1724, we find distinctly Corellian string figurations blended with the older Lullian influence. We do not know the specifics of Mme. Lévi's repertoire during her performances at the *Concert Spirituel* in 1745, but descriptions make it clear that she had command of a highly virtuosic concerto technique of the sort associated with the Italianate concerto.⁶⁹ The mid-eighteenth-century letter writer Sarrau du Boynet mentions enthusiasm for Italian music and the lack of opportunity to learn the violin as his reasons for playing the pardessus.⁷⁰ Such obvious admiration for Italian music and the broad adoption of its techniques by eighteenth-century pardessus players and composers makes better sense when viewed as a continuation of impulses that led to the creation of the instrument in the first place, rather than something at odds with the instrument's early history. The higher range and greater power of the first pardessus, a string length equivalent to that of the violin, and even the hint of experiments with an instrument designed to be held *a braccio* can be most economically understood in this light.

The Adoption of the Pardessus after Collichon

Just under a quarter of Michel Collichon's extant instruments, two out of nine, are pardessus. It is hard to know if this percentage indicates demand for these instruments in his time, or merely reflects the popularity of the pardessus (and thus, improved chances for their survival) in the later eighteenth century. As we have seen, Collichon was not blessed with a particularly long life and may have had only some ten years as a master craftsman working independently from his father, so his total output was probably not large.

⁶⁹ See Eckert, "Mme Lévi," 27. Also Tina Chancey, "Gender, Class, and Eighteenth-Century French Music: Barthélemy de Caix's Six Sonatas for Two Unaccompanied Pardessus de Viole," *Journal of the VdGSA* 33 (1996): 62–66.

⁷⁰ Letter cited and excerpted by Rose, "Pardessus de Viole," 34–46. Boynet reported that he played an instrument built by Bongard in 1665 that was "monté en pardessus." This was a re-necked instrument, as, for reasons explained in this paper, it would have been physically impossible to tune even a small dessus to a pardessus tuning.

Once invented, how quickly did the pardessus make inroads among viol players at the expense of the older dessus de viole? The evidence is scanty but it would seem likely that the pardessus was initially known only in limited musical circles that had some connection to the Collichon establishment. As noted above, Jean Rousseau owned a pardessus at the time of his death, and may have been involved in the instrument's creation. Etienne Loulié was almost certainly another early adopter of the instrument. His manuscript treatise makes no mention of the pardessus, but he, in addition to being something of a scientific polymath, was the practical musician who assisted Joseph Sauveur with his acoustical research. Oddly for an acoustician, Sauveur himself seems to have been all but tone deaf, so it would almost certainly have been Loulié who alerted Sauveur to the instrument's existence and supplied him with the information on its tuning listed in the *Principes d'acoustique et de musique* of 1701. Marin Marais, at the time of his death in 1728, had a borrowed pardessus among his possessions, although this is more suggestive of a tenuous relationship with the instrument, even at this relatively late date.⁷¹

The Violist database of extant historical violas lists 12 extant pardessus dated from before 1725.⁷² In addition to the two Collichon instruments discussed in this paper, there are four by Nicolas Bertrand made between 1701 and 1715, and one by the guitar maker Jean Baptiste Voboam dated 1719. The remaining five are somewhat problematic, either because they are signed by otherwise unknown makers or because they show stylistic features more typical of the mid-eighteenth century. Even discounting these, one gets the impression of an incrementing production.

By 1725, the year of Nicolas Bertrand's death and a year after Marc's publication, it seems that the pardessus was quickly supplanting the dessus. The death inventory of Bertrand's workshop lists only 10 dessus, but 19 pardessus, with 8 more under construc-

⁷¹ See François Lesure, "Marin Marais. Sa Carrière. Sa famille," *Revue Belge de Musicologie / Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Muziekwetenschap* 7, no. 2/4 (1953): 135.

⁷² The Violist database, started by Peter Tourin and continued by Thomas G. MacCracken, is now accessible online at vdgsa.org/pgs/viols/viols.html.

tion and “in the white.”⁷³ An additional item lists “15 pieces both pardessus and dessus.” If this total is divided evenly between the two groups, it would bring the total of pardessus to about 34 for only 18 dessus.

This is a surprisingly quick rise for an instrument first invented forty years previously, and a precipitous decline for the treble viol, an instrument that had existed in Europe in one form and another for over a century and a half. Yet the musical forces suggested above seem to have been inexorable, and it took only the inventive skill of Michel Collichon to bring them into a concrete form whose fundamental design would last as long as viols continued to be played in France.

⁷³ Sylvette Milliot, “Inventaire Après Décès de Nicolas Bertrand,” in *Documents inédits sur les luthiers parisiens du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Société française de musicologie, 1970), 127–31.

A QUESTION OF WOOD: MICHEL COLLICHON'S 1683 SEVEN-STRING VIOL

Shem Mackey

Abstract

Michel Collichon, seventeenth-century viol maker, spent his working life in Paris at a time when technological advance was enabling fundamental changes in musical instrument design and construction. The invention of the silver-wound string in mid-century made possible the development of the seven-string bass viol. His instrument from 1683 is the earliest-known surviving seven-string viol. It is made from a tropical hardwood, and is one of three Collichon viols referred to as “the mahogany viols.” This article examines the construction of this viol and specific characteristics of the wood grain, leading to identification of the wood as *Cedrela odorata*.

The Collichon family of instrument makers were prominent in Parisian musical society during the reign of Louis XIV, the Sun King (in fact, Nicolas Collichon was “maitre faiseur d’instruments de la musique du roi”). They were known to such luminaries of the viol as Jean Rousseau, who wrote in 1687 in *Traité de la Viole*:

When I was learning from Sainte Colombe I was housed with the *bonhomme* Collichon, luthier, who at that time lived at Rue de la Harpe where the author of the libel [Demachy] used to come very often...¹

Rousseau was most likely referring to Nicolas Collichon (b. ?, died between 1690 and 1695), and it would seem that his house/workshop was a popular rendezvous for players at this time, situated as it was in an area of Paris with an extended community of instrument makers and players.² Nicolas Collichon was a pros-

¹ François Lesure, “Une querelle sur le jeu de la viole en 1688: J. Rousseau contre Demachy,” *Revue de Musicologie* 46, no. 122 (December 1960): 187.

² Corinne Vaast, “Michel Collichon: Repères Biographiques,” *Musique-Images-Instruments* 2 (1996): 53–57. Many previous writers incorrectly took the *bonhomme* to be Michel, not Nicolas.

perous man, the proprietor of five properties in Paris including some lands in Villepinte, all assets that his children eventually inherited. He was also tenant or owner of the shop on Pont Saint-Michel on the corner of the Rue de la Harpe.³ He had five children: François, the eldest, was a musician for the City of Paris; there were three sisters named Marguerite, Charlotte, and Jeanne (little is known of the sisters apart from a marriage contract of the last on 12 August 1661); the second child, Michel, was born in 1641 and lived a comparatively short life, dying at age fifty-three in 1694.

While no instruments by Nicolas Collichon have survived, his son Michel is the maker of six surviving bass viols, a treble, and two pardessus. Michel Collichon lodged on Rue Jean Pain Mollet, and according to research by Corinne Vaast, it is likely that at some point he had a workshop on the Pont Saint-Michel, either close to that of his father or most probably they shared the same premises.

The invention of the seven-string viol was credited to Sainte Colombe by Jean Rousseau, who wrote in 1687 that

we also ought to thank M de Sainte Colombe for having added a seventh string to the viol whose range thereby grew by a fourth. It was he as well who fostered the use in France of strings threaded with silver and he has a continuing passion to find anything that may add perfection to that instrument.⁴

The earliest surviving seven-string viols are those by Michel Collichon, and the oldest example is dated 1683. The seven-string viol was reliant on the invention of the silver-covered string, which did not emerge until the 1660s.⁵

³ Vaast, "Repères Biographiques." 54.

⁴ Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole* (Paris, 1687), 24.

⁵ John Playford, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Music* (London, 4/1664), 46. The first explicit mention dates from 1659: "Goretsky hath an Invention of Lute strings covered with Sylver wyer, or strings which make [sic] a most admirable Musick, being of Goretsky's Invention," Samuel Hartlib, "Ephemerides, 1659" (manuscript). See Oliver Webber, "Real Gut Strings: Some New Experiments in Historical Stringing," in *The Italian Viola da Gamba: Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Viola da Gamba*, ed. Susan Orlando (Solignac: Edition Ensemble Baroque de Limoges, 2002), 169.

Collichon's Body of Work

Among the nine surviving viols of Michel Collichon (see Table 1), made between the years 1683 and 1693, there is a distinct and obvious consistency of style, construction, and craftsmanship that leaves no doubt as to their common origin. All contain handwritten labels with the same trademark flourish in the signature.

Table 1. Extant viols of Michel Collichon

<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Present location</i>
Bass	1683	Paris, Musée de la Musique
Pardessus	1686	Private collection
Bass	1687	Milan, Castello Sforzesco
Bass	1688	Private collection
Bass	1689	Bochum, Stadbücherei
Treble	169-	Private collection
Bass	1691	Private collection
Pardessus	undated	Nuremberg, Germanische Nationalmuseum
Bass	1693	Genève, Musée des Instruments

Collichon employed a wide variety of woods in the assembly of these viols, including cherry, walnut, ash, and service wood, but the most intriguing of all are the three earliest bass viols, dated 1683, 1687, and 1688. The bodies of these are constructed entirely from a Central American hardwood. The viol from 1683 is particularly interesting. It is badly worm-eaten in parts, missing its original tailpiece, bridge, and pegs, and preserved in a largely disassembled state. However, from a maker/researcher point of view it remains in remarkably original and pure condition and provides a wealth of information on the construction of a Collichon viol.

Construction of the 1683 Viol

The back is slab-cut in one piece and shows a distinctive “cathedral” figure running along the length. Thicknesses range from 3.2 to 5.0 mm with no consistently obvious thinning along the

edges. The soundpost plate is cut from quarter-sawn, wide-grained, spruce and is lightly beveled around its edges. There is no obvious curvature on the plate or back. The “break” or fold is reinforced by five shaped cleats fashioned from the same wood as the body and supported by glued linen strips (Figure 1). There is a small plugged hole at the base of the neck heel, common on Collichon’s instruments and connected in some way to his method of construction or assembly (Figure 2).

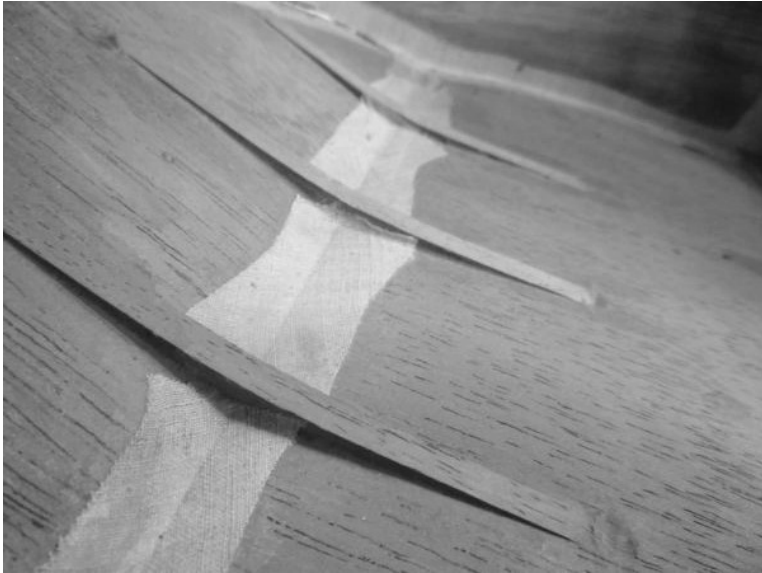


Figure 1. Reinforcements to the break on the inner back.

The ribs are between 1.0 and 2.7 mm thick and retain some tool marks on the interior. There is evidence of a rasp or toothed plane being used after the ribs were assembled (Figure 3). There are also what appear to be extensive burn marks on the rib interiors, in particular on the upper and lower bouts. (This wood will develop a black stain when in contact with water and ferrous metal, e.g. a bending iron.) The C-bouts are reinforced with a single strip of linen and show cracking where the curve is at its tightest. The corner joints are mitered and again reinforced with linen. All back and rib joints are similarly reinforced (Figure 4). The linen is placed on all joints square and parallel to the fibers (no attempt has been



Figure 2. Plugged hole on the back.



Figure 3. Tool marks on the inside of the ribs.

made to present it on a bias cut). There is a handwritten label that reads “Michel Collichon / A Paris 1683” (Figure 5). The end block is cut from a piece of pine with grain direction parallel to the rib, with boldly cut bevels tapering to point towards the back (Figure 6). There is no separate top block; as is consistent with other Collichon viols, the neck includes an extension into the instrument that serves as a top block. (Nicholas Ber-



Figure 4. Burn marks and linen reinforcement on the ribs.



Figure 5. Collichon's label.

trand used the same method in his viols.) The interior of the block portion shows the characteristic strokes of a gouge used to remove the wood. The upper linings, also made from the same material as the body, are rough-cut and left full and square with no tapering and are fitted over the linen corner reinforcement. The viol retains its original hook-bar, which seems to be made from ebony.

The front is made from five longitudinal pieces of wood, which were bent before being glued together and finally shaped.⁶ The joints are reinforced with strips of linen, glued longitudinally. (Parchment, or a combination of linen and parchment, is used in other Collichon instruments.)

The bass bar is cut from spruce and is slab-cut, i.e. with the growth rings parallel to the table. As is common in Collichon's instruments,⁷ the bar is fitted at an unusually oblique angle across the inside of the front but is, in fact, simply placed equidistant from the extreme right edge of the soundboard in the upper and lower bouts. It is planed flat along its length, with a simple rounded top edge. The ends of the bass bar are secured by glued linen patches. (See Figure 7.)

⁶Shem Mackey, "Making a Viol Soundboard," *The Strad* (March 2008): 70–73.

⁷The "Kessler" seven-string bass viol dated 1691, the treble, and the two pardessus share the same, original bass bar alignment.



Figure 6. Pine end block.

The thickness of the front varies from 2.2 to over 4 mm, and where it is at its thinnest, just below the bridge, there are signs of distortion and sinking of the arch. There are two very small holes, at extreme ends of the soundboard, that were almost certainly caused by the insertion of pins to align the front on the rib structure during marking out and assembly, as there is a visible corresponding hole in the top block. The bottom block has a thick residue of glue and wood particles, making it impossible to see. The upper surface of the top block has a very slight convex curve that corresponds with a similar curve in the soundboard. There is a single solid line of ebony purfling on the front, approximately 1.5 mm thick (Figure 8). On the outside of the front approximately 375 mm from the neck joint there is a very noticeable pinhole. This feature can also be seen clearly on the seven-string viol by Collichon that was formerly in the Kessler collection; on that instrument, which is larger, it is 392 mm from the neck.⁸

⁸Dietrich M. Kessler, "A Seven-String Bass Viol by Michel Colichon," *Chelys* 19 (1990): 55–62.



Figure 7. Interior of the front.

These holes may relate to the layout of the C-holes or possibly the position of the bridge. In the case of the viol formerly in the Kessler collection the extremes of existing bridge feet marks cover a total of 60 mm, but in this instrument the range is 20 mm, between 360 and 380 mm from the neck joint.

The soundholes are cut with well-rounded upper and lower holes and an elegantly sweeping connecting arm. There is a deep



Figure 8. Exterior of the front with purfling.

beveling on the inner edges of the soundholes that gives the impression of lightness when viewed from the outside (Figure 9). On the inside of the front, the marks of a thumb plane can be seen very distinctly, with long sweeping cuts made by a curved blade plainly visible. These tool marks in particular give the impression that Collichon was working in a very immediate, fast but controlled, manner.



Figure 9. Interior of the C-hole.

The neck is likely made from service wood (*Sorbus torminalis*). The wood is a dense hardwood of reddish color with characteristics similar to those of pearwood, and although no scientific identification has been made, it is a logical deduction considering that service wood has been identified as the neck material in four of Collichon's other surviving instruments.⁹ There has been considerable worm damage, which has resulted in the neck breaking into three pieces: the pegbox/scroll, the neck shaft, and the heel/block extension. The neck is exceptionally thin, 9 mm at its thinnest point. In cross-section, the neck and fingerboard present an almond shape. The fingerboard is made from slab-sawn larch and is veneered with what appears to be ebony. The pegbox is topped with an exquisitely carved cherub with closely folded wings and a head of tight curls (Figure 10).

⁹Tilman Muthesius, "Michel Collichon, Facteur de Violons Parisien," *Musique-Images-Instruments* 2 (1996): 40–52.

A Question of Wood



Figure 10. Carved head.

The wood used to construct this viol is *Cedrela odorata*. In the past, it has been variously misidentified. This 1683 viol and its siblings dated 1687 and 1688 have generally been referred to as “the mahogany viols.” The wood from which they are made is superficially mahogany-like in appearance, and at a pre-informed glance it would appear to be mahogany. The results of a xylology analysis at the Natural History

Museum in Paris in the 1990s declared it to be broadleaved mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*). But a closer examination shows that there are characteristics of the wood in the Collichon viols that are markedly different from those of broadleaved mahogany.

The wood in all three viols is very plain, straight-grained with extremely long open resin-filled pores. The back of the 1683 viol is one piece of evenly grained wood without a single distinguishing feature (Figure 11). Most obviously, it lacks the interlocking grain that is a common feature of broadleaved mahogany. Indeed, there is no interlocking grain to be seen on any of these three viols. While this in itself does not provide proof either way, there is a quality to the appearance of this wood that convinces me that it is not *S. macrophylla* but *C. odorata*.

When I examined the 1683 instrument, I took some photographs of the wood at 30× magnification. While there is little visible difference in the transverse sections of *C. odorata* and *S. macrophylla*, the tangential cut shows the configuration of the medullary rays and the essential difference between these two woods. Figure 12 shows an area on the inside of the front of the instrument where the wood is cut almost precisely on a tangential



Figure 11. Outer view of the back.

cut. Though there is a thin coating of glue to the left of the photograph, it very clearly shows non-storied medullary rays running horizontally across the full width of the picture. “Non-storied” rays are essentially randomly scattered rays; while the direction of the rays is consistent, there is no pattern to the layout. Compare this with Figure 13, showing a tangential cut on a piece of *S*.



Figure 12. Medullary rays of wood in the 1683 viol.

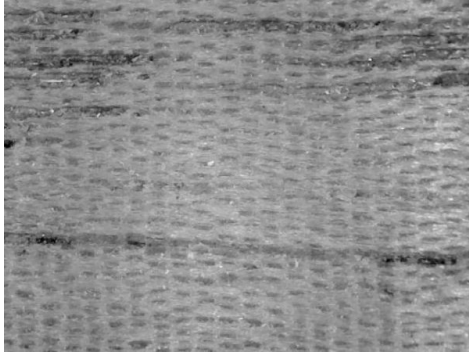


Figure 13. Medullary rays of *Swietenia macrophylla* (broadleaved mahogany).

macrophylla at the same magnification. The rays are also running horizontally, but most significantly, they are very clearly arranged into even, vertical columns—that is, they are storied rays. There is a clear difference between these two woods, non-storied medullary rays being a key feature of *C. odorata* while storied rays are typical of *S. macrophylla*.

Cedrela odorata, or Spanish cedar, is native to tropical America and in particular the West Indies, producing an important hardwood that is alternatively known as Havana cedar, West Indian cedar, bastard Barbados cedar, swamp cedar, and cedrela. The tree is not a cedar in the botanical sense, as it belongs to the mahogany family (Meliaceae),¹⁰ but the wood does possess a fragrant scent similar to that of true cedar. Though it belongs to the Meliaceae family it is not of the genus *Swietenia*, which is the mahogany used in high-class cabinet work and furniture. Spanish cedar was first introduced to Europe in the seventeenth century from the French colonies in the West Indies. Some early records identify cabinet pieces as made of “cedar or mahogany”; it would appear that this

¹⁰ To appreciate the difference that the taxonomic subdivision can make, consider that oak belongs to the Fagaceae (beech) family, but is of the genus *Quercus* (oak).

form of identification was employed only where differences could not be established between spanish cedar and the more valuable mahoganies.¹¹ Spanish cedar is available in exceptionally wide sections, and its appearance and scent are known to anyone who has handled a cigar box, from which the additional names of cigar-box cedar and, more properly, cigar-box mahogany have been derived. It has a reddish mahogany color and a moderately coarse, uneven texture. The grain is usually straight, but occasionally irregular, though never so interlocked as in the more valuable mahoganies. Despite a rather brittle nature, the wood is easily worked and was traditionally used for drawer linings, trays, and casing work. It is commonly used for guitar necks, in organ building, and more recently as backs, sides, and soundboards for guitars.¹² The mean density is 0.46 g/cm³.

C. odorata has long been associated with the instruments of Collichon. It occurs in two other of his viols and, in each case, has been scientifically identified. The former Kessler collection viol dated 1691 has a bottom block made from *C. odorata*,¹³ and the wedges by the neck block are from the same wood. The pardessus by Collichon in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg has "reinforcements in the back made from Cedrela."¹⁴ The use of *C. odorata* in those instruments lends additional weight to the identification of *C. odorata* as the wood used in the 1683 viol.

C. odorata was still relatively unknown in France at that time, being principally worked in the colonies. We can only guess at why Collichon decided to use it. Perhaps the usual wood for instrument making came at premium price and effort, whereas this Spanish cedar probably came off a ship on his doorstep. He may have received a single plank of this wood, and used it to produce

¹¹ F. Lewis Hinckley, *Directory of the Historic Cabinet Woods* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1960).

¹² C.F. Martin & Co. produces a guitar with back and sides of Spanish cedar, the OMC Fingerstyle I. Spanish cedar is increasingly used by individual makers to construct guitar bodies and soundboards.

¹³ Analyzed at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London for Dietrich Kessler. Noted on the technical drawing of the 1691 viol by Stephen Barber.

¹⁴ Muthesius, "Michel Collichon," 54.

prototypes, making as many complete instruments as possible from it, then using the remaining “offcuts” as construction parts on the other viols mentioned above, all of which were made later than the complete Spanish cedar viols.

Following my investigation, the Musée de la Musique has accepted that the 1683 Collichon viol in their possession is made from *Cedrela odorata* and not *Swietenia macrophyla* as previously thought.

RECENT RESEARCH ON THE VIOL

Ian Woodfield

This bibliography is intended as a concise guide to recent research related to the viol. It lists books, articles, dissertations, selected reviews, published papers, and major scholarly editions of music. Research on any aspect of the viol (and related instruments such as the baryton) will qualify for inclusion. A sign of the changing times, this list incorporates an increasing number of on-line citations. Suggestions for additional entries in any language would be most welcome. They should be sent to Ian Woodfield, School of Creative Arts, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast BT7 1NN, Northern Ireland, or e-mailed to <i.woodfield@qub.ac.uk>.

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REVIEW

Catharina Meints Caldwell, with John Pringle and Thomas G. MacCracken. *The Caldwell Collection of Viols: A Life Together in the Pursuit of Beauty*. Hudson, NY: Music Word Media Group, 2012. ix, 147 pp. ISBN 9781937330187, includes two audio CDs. \$54.

The book is available in the print version reviewed here, and in an electronic version for Apple iPad (ISBN 9781937330064, version 1.01, requires iOS 4.0 or later, downloadable from the iTunes Store).

Private collections of musical instruments often have an ephemeral life. Brought together with passion by one generation, they are all-too-frequently dispersed in the next, the scattered instruments finding their separate ways to new owners. Scarcely any of the great nineteenth- or early-twentieth-century collections of bowed stringed instruments still exist, the exceptions being those that, like the Hill instruments in the Ashmolean Museum, were donated to public institutions. Even here, the instruments pass from the private hand into a more general form of ownership. I think it was in full consciousness of this life cycle, and certainly with an elegiac wish to create a remembrance of things past, that Catharina Meints Caldwell decided to catalog the remarkable collection of historical viols that she and her late husband Professor James B. Caldwell assembled over the course of four decades. The resulting work, *The Caldwell Collection of Viols: A Life Together in the Pursuit of Beauty*, is eminently successful from an organological standpoint and is fully worthy of the instruments it documents. It will be of real value to scholars, players, makers, and anyone else seriously interested in the history of the viola da gamba. More unusually, it also documents the creation of the Caldwell Collection itself, instrument by instrument, and paints an autobiographical portrait of the Caldwells as collectors, with their passion for acquisition, the excitement of the hunt, and the numerous triumphs, disappointments, and comic frustrations they experienced along the way.

The Caldwell Collection is of the first rank in size and quality, and is eminently worthy of this effort of documentation. It consists of eighteen antique viols dating from the late sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, as well as several important historical cellos and an eighteenth-century English portrait of the virtuoso viol player Friedrich Abel. The viol collection proper includes instruments by such famous makers as Nicolas Bertrand, Gregorius Karp, Barak Norman, John Rose, Joachim Tielke, and William Turner. As a whole, it offers excellent examples of almost every important school of North European viol making.

The catalog is a collaborative work by three authors and covers the formation of the collection, the instruments themselves, and the instrument makers, in a series of individual contributions. This material is well integrated, however, with the instruments serving as the focal point of discussion. The principal author, Catharina Meints Caldwell, has long been known as a fine performer and teacher on the viola da gamba, and was, for many decades, a cellist with the Cleveland Orchestra. Her contribution is a substantial and engaging reminiscence covering the creation of the collection and the provenance, acquisition, and restoration of each instrument. The detailed catalog entries for each individual instrument were contributed by the well-known viol maker John Pringle, who, among other eminent qualifications, has studied and documented as many antique viols as anyone in the field. The catalog also contains essays covering the life and work of each maker written by the distinguished scholar Thomas MacCracken, who also served as an editorial consultant for the entire book.

All the instruments are illustrated with large, high-quality color photographs showing front, back, and side views, as well as many details of heads, soundholes, and decoration. These are supplemented by some older photographs (mostly black and white) of the interiors of various instruments, taken during past restorations, which will be of particular interest to scholars and makers. The volume also reproduces a series of interesting documents pertaining to the formation of the collection: these include Hill certificates and other expert appraisals, bills of sale, restoration documentation, and personal memorabilia. Those interested in the stringed instrument trade per se and viols in particular will find

themselves poring over the selection of letters and certificates from such notable figures as Desmond Hill, Rembert Wurlitzer, Michael Heale, and Günther Hellwig.

Each instrument in the Caldwell Collection has been restored to playability, something that was always central to the couple's philosophy. Meints has taken this to its logical conclusion and provided a sensitively performed recording of each instrument on a double CD set included as an integral part of the catalog.

Certainly, the most unconventional part of *The Caldwell Collection of Viols* is the material describing the creation of the collection and the acquisition and restoration of each instrument. These lively and well-written sections make up a substantial part of the book and provide valuable information on the provenance and original condition of the instruments. For anyone who has met either of the Caldwells personally, and this is now surely a majority of all those on the planet with a serious interest in the viol, these sections also provide a spirited memorial for James Caldwell, whose death in 2006 took from the scene one of the most intelligent, energetic, and generous proponents of the viola da gamba. Anyone who knew Professor Caldwell will find some of the flavor of his enthusiastic and entertaining persona captured in these sections.

Even for the reader with little interest in the personalities, these sections document a type of collector whose era may well be passing. As antique musical instruments become ever more astronomically expensive and more of them move permanently into public collections and trusts, the formation of this type of collection by practical musicians who are primarily inspired by musical considerations will become next to impossible. In future, I think this book will be read, in part, as an interesting cultural document pertaining to a vanished breed of collector.

The catalog is far more than a reminiscence, however, and the entries dedicated to each viol provide solid organological substance. The descriptions of each instrument follow a standard outline and give a good summary of the overall appearance, size, and physical details of construction. These dense write-ups cover the type, appearance, and cut of the woods used for all parts of the instrument, the type of belly construction (whether bent-stave or

hollowed-out, including the number of staves and wood growth characteristics), the style and treatment of the soundholes, the appearance and state of the head and pegbox, the type of purfling used, the look and characteristics of the varnish, and Spanishation on which parts of the instrument are original and which are restorations. The principal dimensions of each instrument are given in tabular form. This is a level of detail that will be very useful to scholars, makers, and connoisseurs, and far surpasses that found in many well-respected catalogs from the violin world.

The essays covering the viol makers represented in the collection (and in one case, speculation on an anonymous maker) serve to put the descriptions of the individual instruments into a broader perspective. In the case of well-researched makers such as the two John Roses, Barak Norman, or Joachim Tielke, Thomas MacCracken's essays provide a good summary of the current state of research and pull together information from a wide variety of sources in several languages. For some less well-known makers such as the enigmatic Taylor, the essays offer data that, to my knowledge at least, has not published previously and that add to the general body of information on the viol in print.

Maker attributions—the assignment of instruments to particular makers based on expert opinion—are a vital part of any catalog and are central to the interpretation of any collection of musical instruments. Attributions are also a difficult and potentially sensitive area, especially in the private sphere where collectors, for reasons of ego, may cling tenaciously to inflated ideas of their holdings. Thankfully, I found the Caldwell catalog to be very honest with its attributions. Of the eighteen viols covered, there was not a single instrument that seemed to have been elevated by force of wishful thinking into something it was not. In a few somewhat problematic cases, like that of a treble viol attributed to Turner, I found the catalog quite explicit about the problems surrounding the attributions while defending their integrity. This candor is all the more notable because the the Caldwells were unquestionably “romantic” collectors who passionately believed in the artistic significance of each great maker and of the self-evidently unique qualities of each maker's viols. Any possible tension between this almost metaphysical conviction and the scholar's need for physical evidence is

nicely resolved by giving separate voices to the Caldwells as collectors and to the catalog entries themselves. The two early viols described with some circumspection as possibly by the famous English maker John Rose illustrate this nicely.

These two viols are arguably the most historically important instruments in the collection. Both probably date from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and are almost certainly English. The first, a very large bass in classic viol shape with C holes, a bent-stave belly, and a very unusual slab-cut yew back, is quite plain. The other, a smaller bass with a festooned outline, bent-stave belly, flaming-sword soundholes, and extravagant inlay work, is highly ornate. Both viols have in abundance that beauty of conception and effortless control of form that only the finest luthiers of any period have achieved. The Caldwells were always personally convinced that both viols were the work of the English maker John Rose. These attributions were based on the style, period, and high quality of both instruments, a partly legible ticket in the plainer viol, and the general similarity of the festooned viol to an instrument attributed to Rose in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

In the account of the acquisition of both viols, and of a separate viol head also possibly by Rose (which the Caldwells had purchased, bizarrely enough, years before and almost by chance, along with a Tielke viol), Meints makes a strong case for the attribution, arguing in effect that, given that both are first-rate English viols from around 1600, there is not much else that they could be. She also suggests that the separate head, which is stylistically very close to the head of a viol in the Hart House Collection in Toronto also attributable to Rose, is precisely the missing head of the festooned viol. It is almost as though fate willed the head to be re-joined to the viol for which it was originally cut and on which it now sits. Yet, in the catalog entries for both viols, the tone is much more cautious, and indeed there are problems with the attributions to consider. For starters, there are two makers named John Rose, father and son, whose relative dates are unknown but whose work spanned the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods, a time for which we know next to nothing about other English makers. The partially mutilated ticket in the plainer viol seems to read "John"

and gives a date of 1584, but we cannot read the rest. The festooned viol is generally similar in appearance to the Ashmolean viol but is certainly not a match, and the Ashmolean viol itself lacks a firm attribution to either Rose. The sober verdict expressed in the catalog text is that the plain viol is a “Bass viol labeled John [Rose?], 1584.” The festooned viol is cataloged as a “Bass viol attributed to John Rose, London, c. 1600.” The description of this viol notes the similarity of its beautiful head to that on the Toronto viol and simply states that it “may not be original to the instrument.” The overall effect is to give voice to the collectors’ passion and conviction regarding these two important viols, yet keep the scholarly record straight as far as the relative strength of the attribution. I find this restraint impressive, and can think of more than one catalog from a public museum whose authors have succumbed to the sort of wishful thinking that this work has resisted.

Beginning in 1968 with their first acquisition, a Johann Hasert viol of 1726, the Caldwells always felt that their collection should be playable and played on, by themselves and others. The catalog states this modestly, but generations of colleagues, students, and researchers (including myself) can testify to the enormous generosity with which the Caldwells have made their collection accessible for study. A necessary side effect of the wish to have a playable collection is that they have had to deal with a variety of instrument restorers, both good and bad. Some of the most interesting anecdotes in the catalog concern restoration, and these should serve as cautionary tales for anyone who owns an antique viol, as more than a few are truly hair-raising. People who have worked on the Caldwell instruments range from the world-class conservator Tilman Muthesius, who painstakingly restored and documented the Gregorius Karp viol of c. 1700, to a local woodworker in an Iowa City garage from whose well-intentioned clutches Meints snatched a 1691 Tielke in mid-butcherly. Other low points include a Chicago restorer who allowed a Barak Norman to sit in an unhumidified workshop, causing countless cracks, and an Oberlin luthier who, unmasked, put large, unsightly, and unnecessary peg bushings in a pristine seventeenth-century pegbox. These culprits remain mercifully unnamed, but even well-respected craftsmen such as Michael Heale undertook changes that would now be con-

sidered out of bounds, shading the light top of an antique viol to match the darker back and replacing an original soundpost plate deemed too thin. Today, the fundamentals of instrument conservation—to wit, the preservation of all original parts, the reversibility of all changes made by the conservator, and scrupulous documentation of all work—are better understood. For owners of antique instruments, the lesson to be drawn from the Caldwell stories is clear: employ only the most reliable restorers who understand these principles, and be clear from the start about your intentions regarding what and what not to do.

The book is also a portrait of an earlier time when almost no one knew anything much about the viola da gamba and a tiny handful of serious investigators were laying the groundwork that we take for granted today. With so little information available, collecting instruments was difficult and fraught with pitfalls, a situation Meints paints honestly and with humor. A case in point was the couple's chance introduction to a Tielke viol from about 1685, owned by an affable society lady from the Philadelphia Main Line who had tried unsuccessfully to donate it to a music school. The Caldwells were able to arrange the purchase of the instrument for a small sum but had never seen even a photo of a Tielke instrument and had no idea what they had bought beyond the fact that it appeared to be an antique viol. They took the instrument to the legendary violin dealer and restorer Jacques Français, who could not identify the maker either but gravely informed them that the beautiful arched and decorated back, so characteristic of Tielke's work, could not possibly be original because all viols have flat backs. He advised the Caldwells to have a new one made during restoration and it was only an encounter with another Tielke viol in Basel through August Wenzinger, followed by a frantic trans-Atlantic call to their restorer (no easy feat in 1968), that saved the original back.

As a result of the Caldwells' willingness to wrestle with the thorny problems of restoration, all of the instruments in the collection are playable. The two-disc recording included with the catalog and beautifully performed by Meints does an excellent job of documenting the unique sonority of each. By way of prelude, Meints performs slow ascending and descending scales through all

the registers of each instrument, and follows with one or more well-chosen pieces from the period and region of each instrument's construction. The selections are widely varied, and unless the reader is particularly well versed in the gamba repertoire, the discs will probably introduce some new and attractive music including relatively late pieces by such composers as Abel, Barrière, and Heudelinne. I found myself listening to the discs many times, as much for the pleasure of the fine performances and eclectic program as for the sound of the antique viols.

In a written commentary to the audio recording, Meints discusses her perception of the characteristic sound of each instrument, covering both strengths and weaknesses. The musician's insight is invaluable here, and both players and makers will profit from her observations on the qualities of sound of each viol and their attendant musical potential. Meints is a fine player and has played each instrument regularly for years or decades. The performances go far beyond anything that the idea of a demonstration recording might convey, and the side-by-side documentation of the sound of such a wide-ranging group of historical viols is unique to this catalog.

In the final analysis, Meints and her co-authors have aimed extremely high with *The Caldwell Collection of Viols* and have succeeded well. It would have been far easier merely to have produced a memoir, or a conventional catalog, or even an audio recording, but any of these would have been far less interesting. As it is, the book is a worthy document, not only of the instruments and their makers, but also of the collection per se and the intense, almost obsessive interest shared by Meints and her husband over decades that brought it into being. In this context, it is worth considering the book's subtitle, "A life together in the pursuit of beauty." In an era when a word like "beauty" has been critiqued and deconstructed from every possible angle regarding its semiotic and metatextual content, its unspoken historical and cultural biases, its sociopolitical significance and so on, it is refreshing to hear it used in a strong, prescriptive way by someone who has made the creation of a collection of musical instruments based on this idea a significant part of her life's work. Whatever the future

holds for this collection, the catalog itself will provide a valuable and enduring monument to its current state.

Thomas Fitz-Hugh Mace

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Yukimi Kambe plays viola da gamba and Baroque violin, and is the founder of the Yukimi Kambe Viol Consort. She graduated from Ferris Junior College of Music and the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis and also studied at the Koninklijk Conservatorium voor Muziek (The Hague). Her teachers included Toshinari Ohashi, Hannelore Mueller, and Wieland Kuijken. She is a lecturer at the Kunitachi College of Music (Tokyo) and at Ferris University College of Music (formerly Ferris Junior College of Music, Yokohama). She was president of the Viola da Gamba Society of Japan in 1983–84.

Thomas Fitz-Hugh Mace is a full-time maker of viols and Baroque violins. He concentrated on early music as an undergraduate at Oberlin College and went on to study musical instrument conservation and organology at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg under Friedeman Hellwig and John Henry van der Meer. He also has a master's degree in historical musicology from Columbia University, where he studied with Richard Taruskin. In his work as a maker, he strives to use historical techniques to make precise copies of antique instruments that look and sound as the originals would have when new.

Shem Mackey has been making musical instruments for over twenty years. He trained at the London College of Furniture, specializing in early bowed instruments. He is a founding member of the British Violin Making Association and founding editor of its newsletter. His research into instrument construction has been published in *The Strad*, *Early Music*, and various publications of the BVMA and Viola da Gamba Society. He is much sought after as a maker and teacher, and has built instruments for many prominent performers throughout the world. He has recently completed a master's degree at London Metropolitan University with original research into viol construction, and is programme tutor in viol making at West Dean College, West Sussex. U.K.

Ian Woodfield received his bachelor's degree from Nottingham University and his master's and doctorate from King's College, University of London. He was Herschel Fellow at Bath University in 1976–77. In 1978 he was appointed to the music faculty of Queen's University Belfast, where he is now Director of the School of Music. His first book, *The Celebrated Quarrel Between Thomas Linley (Senior) and William Herschel: An Episode in the Musical Life of 18th-Century Bath*, was published by the University of Bath in 1977. He has also contributed articles and reviews to *Early Music* and the *Proceedings of the Royal Music Association*. His book *The Early History of the Viol* (published by Cambridge University Press in 1984) is now a classic on the subject. He delivered two lectures at the 1994 VdGSA Conclave. He has recently published two books: *Music of the Raj* (Oxford University Press, 2000) and *Opera and Drama in Eighteenth-Century London* (OUP, 2001).