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Chordal Playing in the 17th-Century Violin Repertoire

In one of his articles Peter Allsop presents a persuasive argument that the few instances of multiple stops which occurred in Italian violin music of the early 17th century were caused by the limitations of the printing technology in use at the time, which had movable characters, making it impossible to join up notes into chords on a single stave.[1] He enumerates and describes the methods available for the notation of multiple stops using movable characters. In view of the absence of suitable manuscript sources, he ventures on a claim that multiple stops, *scordatura*, and range that required high positions must have been in use in the virtuoso violin repertoires of Italy, Germany and Austria well before the period suggested by the extant manuscripts and early copperplate prints.[2] In this article I shall endeavour to verify this view on the basis of an analysis of the available scores and statements made by the theoreticians of those times.

Prior to the first edition of the copperplate print *Sonate unarum fidium*, by Heinrich Schmelzer (Nuremberg, 1664), which contained

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[1] Peter ALLSOP 'Violinistic Virtuosity in the Seventeenth Century: Italian Supremacy or Austro-German Hegemony?' *Il Saggiatore Musicale*, III 1996, pp. 233–258.

[2] P. ALLSOP op. cit., p. 257.

music for solo violin, chordal playing was an extremely rare occurrence in the violin repertoire. However, while the earliest extant manuscripts with multiple stops go back to the 1640's, [3] the printed sources — produced with the use of the movable character technique — date from 1626.[4] In Carlo Farina's Dresden publications violin chords were effected by means of handwritten triple stops inscribed onto the *Capriccio stravagante* univocal melody line, while double stops were achieved through a quasi-tablature method with the use of characters for notes under which there would be a subscript figure denoting the required interval. A more advanced technology was applied in the Italian prints. In Biagio Marini's Venetian Op. 8 the multiple stops were rendered by means of a special character of two, three, or four notes in a vertical arrangement. Contrary to Allsop's supposition that Magni had used woodcut blocks in the printing of the Marini collection,[5] on careful examination the gaps and irregularities typical of the printing techniques of those times may be observed in the extant copies (cf. Facsimile No. 1).

Characters of this type were in use already a hundred years before Marini's times for organ music prints.[6] The collection of

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[3] Cf. the now lost works by Stephan Haw and Johannes Schop of ca 1640–46, published in Gustav BECKMANN's *Das Violinspiel in Deutschland vor 1700.* Leipzig, 1918, Anhang no 10 & 11; Thomas Balztar's suites for violin and basso continuo, ca 1656 (Ms. Mus. Sch. F. 573, Bodleian Library, Oxford) and the compositions of Davis Mell (Ms. 433, Christ Church, Oxford).

[4] Cf. Carlo FARINA *La Franzosina* from *Libro delle pavane, gagliarde.* Dresden 1626; *Capriccio stravagante* from *Ander Theil neuer Paduanen, Gagliarden.* Dresden 1627 and *La Desperata* from *Fünffter Theil neuer Pavanen, Gagliarden.* Dresden 1628; Ottavio Maria GRANDI *Sonata Seconda Per un Violino (from) Sonate per ogni sorte dii stroment*i. Venezia 1628, today exists only in fragments published in BECKMANN, op. cit., Anhang no 4; Biagio MARINI *Sonata in Ecco con tre Violini, Sonata Seconda Per il Violino d'Inuentione, Sonata Terza Per il Violino Solo Variata, Sonata Quarta Per sonar con due corde, Cappriccio, che due violini suonano quattro parti (and) Cappriccio Per Sonare il Violino con tre corde è modo di Lira* from *Sonate, symphonie, canzoni* Venezia 1629; Marco UCCELLINI 6 Correnti and *Toccata a due violini da sonarsi tutte due le parti con un violino solo* from *Ozio reggio...,* op. 7, Venezia 1660.

[5] P. ALLSOP op. cit., p. 244.

[6] Cf. Marcantonio DA BOLOGNA *Recerchari, motetti, canzoni, libro primo.* Venezia 1523 and Pierre ATTAINGNANT *Quatorze Gaillardes, neuf Pavannes, sept Branles et deux Basses Dances.* Paris 1531.

Facsimile No. 1: Biagio Marini, Excerpt from *Sonata quarta per il violino per sonar due corde* Op. 8 (1629), detail, bars 42–45

sonatas by Grandi published by Magni appears to have used a similar technology; unfortunately the violin part has not survived, and today all we have to rely on is Beckmann's record.[7] The double stops in the works of Uccellini, which were basically intended for performance by two violins separately, are today extant in records using two different staves, and may be performed *ad libitum* by a soloist. This form of printing should be treated as one of the examples of duet imitation in music for a soloist, rather than as an elegant means of avoiding the printing problems associated with movable type. This is also the practice followed by Biber in the final sonata of the collection *Sonatae, violino solo* (Nuremberg, 1681), which was also printed on two staves, despite the fact that all of this collection was printed using the copperplate engraving technique and that in the seven solo sonatas preceding the final one a consistent method for the notation of chords in one system only was applied. (cf. Facsimile No. 2).

Facsimile No. 2: Heinrch Biber, opening passage of *Sonata VIII* (1681)

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[7] G. BECKMANN, op. cit.

In view of the very large number of outstanding virtuosos and a solo repertoire which by 1664 amounted to around 150 published compositions (chiefly free sonatas), it could hardly be assumed that none of the Italian violinists would not have turned Farina's, Marini's, and Uccellini's experience in publishing to good use, or alternatively applied the methods prevalent in the publications for keyboard instruments.[8] There are no multiple stops recorded either in the violin tablatures, or in many of the Italian manuscripts.[9] If the absence of chordal playing had been caused by inadequate printing techniques, we could expect handwritten entries of multiple stops to occur among all the other notes for performance manually inscribed on some of the printed violin music, but there are no such inscriptions for multiple stops actually observed. Most of the violin and cello sonatas engraved by Buffagnotti in the late 17th century carry no multiple stops, either.[10] Even in the copperplate edition of the sonatas of Schmelzer, a composer very strongly

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[8] Woodcuts were generally used for keyboard publications. The leading master in this art was Andrea ANTICO, author of *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi. Libro primo*. Rome, 1517. Antico was also a precursor in the copperplate technique, as shown by his publication of *Motteti a 4 voci* (by Adriano WILLAERT, Venice, 1539). Simone V*EROVIO* used the metal plate technique in Rome in 1586–1608 to publish collections such as *Diletto spirituale* [...] *intagliate et stampate dal medesimo: con l'intavolatura del cimbalo et liuto*, and the two volumes of Claudio MERULO'S *Toccate d'intavolatura*. His method was adapted by Niccolo Borboni, who issued Frescobaldi's harpsichord works in 1615–1637.

[9] Cf. Gasparo ZANETTI *Il Scolaro* [...] *per imparar a suonare di violino*. Milan, 1645; *Canzona a Violino Solo*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Chig. Mus. Q. VIII 205, f. 28r — 29r (probably by Girolamo Frescobaldi). Marco UCCELLINI copy of *Sonate over canzoni da farsi a violino solo, & basso continuo*, op. 5. Venice, 1649, Ständische Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms mus. 60z; Aldebrando SUBISSATI *Il primo libro delle sonate di violino del Sig: Aldebrando Subissati Sonator Famosissimo ad usu Alessandri Barrellini Forosemproniensij* (1675–6); unmarked ms. in the Biblioteca Passionei, Fossombrone; Carl'Ambrogio LONATI *Sonata a Violino Solo col Basso Continuo*, Biblioteca Estense, Modena, Ms. Mus. F. 639, ca. 1686; Giuseppe COLOMBI *Sonate a Violino Solo e B. C.*, Biblioteca Estense, Modena, Ms. Mus. F. 1386, ca. 1673. Significantly, there is no chordal playing in most of the sinfonias by Stradella (cf. no 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, in *Alessandro Stradella Instrumental Music*. Ed. Eleanor F. McCRICKARD, Cologne, 1980.

[10] Cf. sonatas by A. Corelli, G. Predieri, C. Mazzolini and G. Jacchini in *Sonate a Violino e Violoncello di Varii Autori*. Bologna ca 1680; Giuseppe JACCHINI *Sonate a violino è violoncello et à violoncello solo per camera*, op. 1. Bologna ca 1695; *Sonate per camera a violino e violoncello di vari autori*. Bologna ca 1700.

influenced by Italian trends, very simple double stops appear only in the 10–bar adagio of *Sonata Tertia*. Another point worthy of consideration is the fact that in view of the alleged problems involved in the printing, until 1671[11] none of the violinists ever mentioned the problem in any of the prefaces to their publications, whereas there were numerous remarks devoted to the problems of conducting the bow, vibrato, and the appropriate attenuation of the sound:

Luigi Zenobi *Lettera a N. N.* Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Rome, Ms. R. 45, ca 1601, fol. 202v:

> Gli strumentisti da corde, come di Viola, e di gambe, e di Violino; hanno a conoscersi nella perfettione della arcata, nella bontà polso dell'istrumento, e delle corde varietà, ricchezza nella proprietà et isquisitezza de passaggi e nel tremolo, nello striscio, e nella facilità e securezza del lirare.
>
> Players of stringed instruments such as the viola [da braccio], the [viola] da gamba, and the violin, should be assessed on the perfection of their bowing, on the appropriate strength of the sound they produce from the various strings, on the richness of the proper and studied passages, on their vibrato, on the light staccato, and on the ease and sureness of their legato.

Agostino Agazzari *Del sonare sopra 'l basso con tutti li stromenti e dell'uso loro nel Conserto.* Siena, 1607, p. 16:

> Il violino richiede bei passaggi, distinti, e lunghi, scherzi, ripostine, e fuguette replicate in più luoghi, affettuosi accenti, arcate mute, gruppi, trilli, etc.
>
> The violin requires beautiful, long and distinct phrases, lively motifs, ripostas and imitations repeated in different registers, noiseless bowing, gruppos and trills, and accenting with feeling.

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[11]   The observation by Giovanni Maria Bononcini, from p. 18 of the *Violino* volume, *Arie Correnti, Sarabande*, Op. 4 (Bologna, 1671), quoted by Allsop, is dated from that year: "Non sono stampate le seguente suonate, intavolate colle note l'una contro l'altra in una rigata sola, come si scrivono, per mancanza di Carateri a proposito; ma volendole praticare con facilita maggiore si podranno rescrivere nel modo si sopra accennato, che cosi riusciranno più commode all'occhio". [The following sonatas have not been printed with the notes superimposed one over another on a single stave, for lack of the appropriate type-characters; but if we want to perform them more readily, they may be re-written in the above manner, which will make them more convenient for the eye.]

Francesco Rognoni *Selva de varii passagii*. Milan, 1620, Part II, p. 3:

> Le Viole da brazzo, particolarmente il violino, è instromento in sestesso, crudo, & aspro, se della soave archata non vien temprato, è radolcito...
>
> The violas-da-braccio, especially the violin, are instruments which in themselves are sharp and crude, unless they be softened and mollified with good bowing.

Giovanni Antonio Leoni Preface to *Sonate di violino a voce sola*. Rome 1652, p. 4:

> Scusa descreto Lettore il mio soverchio ardire, e credi, che se fosse possibile di trasmetter alle stampe con queste compositioni, anco quella puntuale aggiuntatezza, quella delicata intonatura, e spiritosa dolcezza, e pienezza d'Istromento, che si desidera in molti, che hoggiar temerartamente si spacciano per Sonatori.
>
> Prudent Reader, forgive my boldness and consider how it may be possible to add to these printed compositions some careful embellishments, a delicate intonation and inspired sweetness, the fullness of the instrument's sound as expected of those who today are daring enough to call themselves instrumentalists.

On examination of all of these early applications of multiple stops for performance by the Italian composers, we see clearly that chordal playing was associated with the rendering on the violin of the idiom of harmonic instruments, and with a variety of experiments. In Farina's *Cappricio stravagante* chord playing is an effect of the imitation on the violin of the guitar, the hurdy-gurdy, and the organ tremulant, as explicitly stated in the relevant instructions added by the composer. In his *Capriccio Per Sonare il Violino con tre corde* à modo di Lira, Op. 8, Marini, who wanted to facilitate the violinist's performance of the simple triple stops with no arpeggios, recommends having the G and D strings close to each other. Terms such as *capriccio* (caprice) and *stravagante* (extravagant) clearly indicate the exceptional nature of these works. Similarly the words *alcune Sonate Capriciose per Sonar due* è tre parti con il Violino Solo, con altre curiose & moderne inventioni [certain fanciful sonatas to be played as two or three parts by a single violin and some other curious new ideas] from the extended title of Marini's Opus 8 offer explicit evidence that for this composer chordal playing was quite an exceptional measure, intended to bring

a special effect. Marini never returned to it in the later collections which he wrote during his Italian period. His *Sonata Seconda Per il Violino d'Inventione Op. 8*, which calls for the tuning down of the E string by a minor third before a fast passage in parallel thirds, offers the best evidence for the fact that he treated chordal playing more as an experimental form rather than as an ordinary technique for performance. Since the passage involves a succession of minor and major thirds, in practice its performance requires extremely inconvenient and risky fingering if *scordatura* is to be used, and it is much easier to perform without the tuning down (cf. Facsimile No. 3).[12]

Apart from this instance, the few remaining cases of the application of chords and double stops by Farina, Marini, Grandi, and Uccellini, do not need very complex fingering; they make use of open strings, and are associated with slow sections with simple motifs.

If we look at the way Alessandro Stradella, Carlo Mannelli, Antonio Montanari, and Clemente Bernardino Rozzi used double and triple stops, and also at their occurrence in Corelli's Turin sonata, in relation to the examples which preceded them by half a century, we fail to observe the progress that might have been expected if the technique were being developed as eagerly in Italy as it was in Germany or Austria.[13] An advanced form of chordal playing does not appear until the manuscripts of Giuseppe Torelli, Carl'Ambrogio Lonati, and in Corelli's Opus 5, all dating back to approximately the same period when the German copperplate

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[12]   A faithful performance of this passage requires not only one-finger stopping and open-string playing on the $a2 — c^2$, $b^1 — d^2$, $d^2 - f^2$, and $e^2 — g^2$ thirds; but also, in a few cases, calls for the use of close positions with a second, third, or third and fourth finger (on the $c^2 — e^2$, $d^2 — f\#^2$ thirds, and on the $d^2 — e^2$ second); the use of a half-position for the $a^1 — c^2$ third; and an entrance into position III to achieve the $f^2 — a^2$ third. To perform this section without the need for new tuning of the instrument, it is enough to apply position II and to pull the fourth finger over the D string to achieve the b^1 third.

[13]   Cf. STRADELLA op. cit., *sinfonie* no 3, 4, 11 i 12; Carlo MANNELLI [*Sonata*] *Vigesima* à solo Del sig: r Carlo Mannelli and Arcangelo CORELLI [*Sonata*] *Del Sig: r Arcangelo Corelli* à solo, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria in Torino, ms Foà 11, ca 1676, pp. 125–130; MONTANARI *Sonata III* and ROZZI *Sonata VII* from *Sonate a Violino e Violoncello...* op. cit.

Facsimile No. 3, Biagio Marini, passage of *Sonata Seconda Per il Violino d'Inventione*, Op. 8 (1629), bars: 37–64

collections were being printed.[14] They employ double, triple, and quadruple stops, arpeggios, stops which call for complex fingering in different positions, rapid figuration in parallel thirds, and polyphonic playing. There is a noteworthy change in approach to the multiple stop technique to be observed in the works of Corelli. In his sonata published in Buffagnotti's copperplate anthology we encounter no multiple stops, and in the sonata in the *Fo*à 11 manuscript only on five of the notes in the *gigue* are there very

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[14] Cf. Giuseppe TORELLI *Sonata à Violino Solo Col Basso*. Archivo Musicale di San Petronio in Bologna, Ms. L. 3. T. [G. 60], ca 1682–96; Carl'Ambrogio LONATI *Die Violinsonaten. Mailand 1701* herausgegeben von Franz Giegling, Winterthur 1981; Arcangelo CORELLI *Sonate a Violino e Violone o Cimbalo op. 5*. Roma 1700.

simple thirds. The real mark of this violinist's artistry confirming his unprecedented world reputation does not come until 20 year later, in his Opus 5.

The reasons for which the Italian practice of violin playing for a long time avoided chordal playing seem to have been the outcome of the standards for style and performance adopted in the early 17th century. Already Gioseffo Zarlino was contrasting the monodic violin idiom to the chord-like nature of the lyre; Zenobi regarded the violin as a single-part instrument; while Agazzari thought of it as one of the ornamental instruments:

Zarlino *Sopplimenti musicali*. Venetia, 1588), p. 218:

> ... quelli [istrumenti] poi che sono senza tasti, sono di due maniere, com'è il violino prima, che si suona fregando le sue chorde separatamente l'una dall'altra con l'archetto, & con le dita premendole sopra 'l suo manicho, secondo che torna al proposito; nel qual numero si può porre la nostra lira, ch'al medesimo modo si sona, ma si fregano in essa con l'archetto in un tratto molte chorde con la destra, premendone insieme molte con la sinistra mano sopra il suo manico.

> ... those instruments which do not have a keyboard are of two kinds. The first consists of the violin, which is played by bowing a string one at a time and pressing the neck with the fingers; our lyre is a noteworthy example of the second kind, and it is best played when several strings are swept by the right hand all at once, while the left hand presses all of them simultaneously on the instrument's neck.

Zenobi, op. cit., p. 202:

> Hora, tutte, o la maggior quantità delli sopra scritti conditioni, deve havere medesimamente uno strumentista, che suoni, o Cornette, o Viola da Gamba, o Violino, o flauto, o fifaro, o simili d'una parte sola.

> Furthermore, all or most of the above conditions have to be satisfied by an instrumentalist who plays the cornetto, the viola da gamba, the violin, the flute, the pipes, or similar instruments for single parts.

Agazzari, op. cit., p. 2:

> Come ornamento sono quelli, che scherzando e contrapontegiando, rendono più aggradevole, e sonora l'armonia; cioe Leuto, Tiorba, Arpa, Lirone, Cetera, Spinetto, Chitarrina, Violino, Pandora, et altri simili.

> Those instruments serve as ornaments which make the harmony of lively motifs and counterpoints more pleasant and sonorous; they include instruments such as the lute, the theorbo, the harp, the lirone, the cither, the spinet, the guitar, the violin, the Pandora (bandore), and others like them.

p. 4:

> Medesimamente li stromenti di corde, alcuni contengono in loro perfetta armonia di parti (. .), et altri poca, ò niente, come Viola, Violino, Pandora etc. Noi per tanto tratteremo primamente di quei del p°. ordine, che sono fondamento, et hanno perfetta armonia, e nel 2do luogo diremo di quei, che servono per ornamento.
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> It is a similar matter with other string instruments; some have a perfect harmony of parts, but others, like the viola, the violin, or the pandora, have little or none of this. We shall first consider those of the first kind, which are the foundation and give an excellent harmony; and only then, in second place, the ones which serve an ornamental purpose[15].

The overwhelming majority of the Italian solo violin repertoire consisted of canzonas and sonatas in the *da chiesa* style, while the first examples of chordal playing belonged to the *da camera* works. In the sonata and canzona the *basso continuo* part was usually reserved for the organ, while the cornetto could be among those performing solo parts.[16] For such a model of performance, guaranteeing an appropriate harmonic realisation, it would have been unreasonable to expect the violinist (and all the more so the cornettist) to play the middle parts as well as the main melody, and moreover it would have contradicted the instrumental style of "monody". The method of phrasing itself, modelled on the recitative and the aria, and dominated by figures adopted from the then popular handbooks on diminution, made it impossible for even a proficient violinist to add his own counterpoints. On the other hand the *da camera* genres were characterised by a greater degree of flexibility for the ascription of the *basso continuo* part, though in most cases the preference was for a string instrument: the harpsichord, violone, lute, guitar, theorbo, or chitarrone.[17] Probably the rapid fading away of the sound characteristic of these instruments

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[15]   uderlined by P. W.

[16]   Cf. Innocentio VIVARINO 8 sonatas per Violino e Organo from *Il primo libro de motetti* Venezia 1620; Tomaso CECCHINO 7 sonatas per Violino o Cornetto e Organo from *Cinque messe a due voci* Venezia 1628; Biagio MARINI *Sonata per l'organo e Violino o Cornetto* op. 8, op. cit.

[17]   There are numerous valuable observations on the practical performance of sonatas *da camera* in Sandra MANGSEN 'The Trio Sonata in Pre-Corellian Prints: When Does 3 = 4?' *Performance & Practice Review* III, 1990, pp. 138–164.

encouraged violinists to adopt harmonic functions, just as was done in the unaccompanied repertoire.[18]

The most effective obstacle keeping Italian violinists from using multiple stops seems to have been their desire to match the art of the best opera singers. It was precisely because of its excellent potential for expression and technique, comparable with the qualities of the human voice, that the violin acquired the position of the indisputably most popular instrument in 17th-century Italy, as evidenced by the following opinions:

Giovanni Battista Doni, *Annotazioni sopra il Compendio de' Generi, e de' Modi della Musica*, Rome 1640, *Discorso Quinto sopra il Violino* p. 337:

> Frà tutti gl'Instrumenti Musicali meravigliosa veramente è la natura del Violino: poiche niuno ve n'hà [...] che meglio esprima la voce humana, non solo nel canto (nel che comunica pure con alcuni strumenti da fiato) mà nella fauella istessa: la quale imita cosi bene in quei velocissimi accenti, quando da perita mano vien maneggiato, ch'è cosa degna di stupor: & questa è sua particolarissima dote...
>
> Of all the instruments, the violin possesses a truly marvellous nature: everyone knows that (...) it imitates the human voice in an excellent manner, not only in singing, in which the violin is matched by some of the wind instruments, but also in speech. In the latter, when in the hands of an expert, the violin is quite amazing in its imitation of the voice in rapid accenting, and this is its most particular attribute.

Libreria bresciana [...] nuovamente aperta dal M. R. P. Maestro Leonardo Cozzando Servita Bresciano Brescia 1694, Part I, p. 58:

> Biagio Marini sonò eccellentemente bene di vari stromenti, ma in quello del Violino, che fù quasi sua professione, riuscì molto raro e singolare. Sonava con tanta eccellenza, che accoppiando alla dolcezza dell'armonia la quasi espressa naturalezza della parola, rendeva poco meno, che estatici gli uditori.
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> Biagio Marini played a variety of instruments beautifully; but he played the violin, his principal instrument, in a singularly exquisite way.

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[18] Cf. Giuseppe COLOMBI ciacconas and scordaturas for solo violin without b. c. from Biblioteca Estense, Ms. Mus. F. 283, ca 1673–1694; Heinrich BIBER final *Passacaglia* from *Zur Verherrlichung von 15 Mysterien aus dem Leben Mariae* Ms. Mus. Mss 4123 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, ca 1675; Johann Paulus WESTHOFF *Suite pour le violon seul sans basse* from *Mercure Galant* (January 1683) and 4 partitas for violin solo, Dresden 1696.

> Following the sweetness of the harmony of natural speech, his sound was so excellent that he could bring his listeners well-nigh to a state of ecstasy.

Francesco Geminiani *The Art of Playing on the Violin* London, 1781, *Preface*, p. 1:

> The Art of playing the Violin consists in giving that Instrument a Tone that shall in a manner rival the most perfect human Voice.

We may observe a fairly faithful imitation of the style of vocal monody in many of the solo sonatas by Uccellini, Giovanni Antonio Pandolfi Mealli, Pietro Degl'Antoni, Aldebrando Subissati, and Giovanni Bonaventura Viviani (cf. Examples No. 1 and No. 2).[19]

Example No. 1: Giovanni Antonio Pandolfi Mealli, opening passage of *Sonata Seconda 'La Cesta'*, op. 5 (1660)

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[19] Cf. M. UCCELLINI op. cit. ; Giovanni Antonio PANDOLFI MEALLI *Sonate* à Violino solo, per chiesa e camera, op. 3, *Sonate* à Violino solo, per chiesa e camera, op. 4 Innsbruck 1660; Pietro DEGL'ANTONI *Sonate a violino solo col basso continuo per l'organo*, op. 4. Bologna 1676; *Sonate a violino solo col basso continuo per l'organo*, op. 5. Bologna 1686; SUBISSATI op. cit. ; Giovanni Bonaventura VIVIANI *Capricci armonici, da chiesa, e da camera* à Violino solo, op. 4. Venezia 1673.

Example No. 2: Giovanni Bonaventura Viviani, opening passage of *Sinfonia Cantabile*, op. 3 (1660)

A larger number of instances of the use of multiple stopping in Italy as of the 1670's coincided not only with the introduction of the copperplate engraving technique in printing, but also with the considerable rise in popularity in this period of the sonata for violin and cello, both of the *da camera* as of the *da chiesa* type. The manuscripts of Giuseppe Colombi, Stradella and Torelli, as well as the copperplates of Montanari, Rozzi, and Corelli are all connected with the violin-cello or violin-harpsichord duo.[20] If we examine the

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[20] Cf. Giuseppe COLOMBI 22 books of suits, sonatas and variations *a Violino e Basso* from 1673–1694, Biblioteca Estense in Modena, Ms. Mus. E. 34, F. 272–287, G. 56–60; Alessandro STRADELLA *Sinfonie a Violino Solo* Ms. Mus. F. 210, F. 1129, Biblioteca Estense, Ms. Foà 11 Biblioteca Nazionale in Torino (both composers use chordal playing also in the *Basso* part which suggests using of cello); Giuseppe TORELLI *Concertino per Camera a Violino e Violoncello op. 4* Bologna ca 1690; sonatas of G. Torelli, A. Montanari, C. B. Rozzi and A. Corelli from *Sonate a Violino e Violoncello* op. cit. ; Tomaso PEGOLOTTI *Trattenimenti armonici da camera a violino solo e violoncello* Modena 1698; CORELLI op. 5, op. cit.

bass parts of these works, we shall not find any long-note, standing basses, which were typical of the of the early sonatas, but almost equivalent lines entering into imitations, dialogues, and motivic correspondences with the violin. Chordal playing often occurs in those passages of the violin part where the melody is carried by the bass part (cf. Example No. 3).

Example No. 3: Arcangelo Corelli, *Sonata V*, op. 5 (1700), bars 205–220

Thus the violin assumes the role of an accompaniment, supplying the missing elements of chords, and adding counterpoints in the fuguing passages. The cello receives a similar treatment; apart from conducting a lively bass line, it is also required to realise the harmonic, for which in general the notation tended to be figured, sometimes as a multiple stop (cf. Example No. 4).[21]

Although the monodic sonata for violin and organ was still practised until the 1680's,[22] in the last decade of the century it was totally supplanted by the sonata for violin and cello (or violone), or for the violin and harpsichord. Gradually as the violin started to assume new tasks, the melodic idiom used hitherto changed with it. The violin part was no longer a series of extended, often schematic and tiresome diminutions; now it was diversified with chords, fuguing, arpeggios, and rapid figuring with hidden polyphony. This

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[21]   David WATKIN 'Corelli's Op. 5 Sonatas: Violino e violone o cimbalo?, *Early Music* xxix 1996 No 4, pp. 645–663, cites a series of very interesting examples for the performance of the basso continuo by the cello on its own, from other works as well.

[22]   Cf. DEGL'ANTONII op. cit.; SUBISSATI op. cit.

Example No. 4: Carl'Ambrogio Lonati, opening passage of the second
movement of *Sonata II* (1701)

new type of virtuoso violin sonata, cultivated in the academies of
Bologna and Rome, would be dominant in the next century. The
departure from the close links with vocal expression which was
achieved in the academic sonatas was manifest also in the withdrawal
of the terminology used hitherto, *sonate a una voce*, and the distinct
labelling of the violin part *Violino*, not *Canto*, *Soprano*, or *Violino
over Cornetto*. Only the growing production of academic sonatas
forced the Italian music printers to apply more generally graphic
techniques which would faithfully reproduce not only the multiple
stops, but also a host of other, new and complicated bowing
techniques, arpeggios, and ornaments. In Germany and Austria the
breakthrough in printing had come well over a decade earlier,
probably because the pressure the violinists of those countries could
put on the printers was greater. The German virtuosos' interests
had for a long time already been focused on solo variation, which
almost by definition went to the extremities of the potential offered
by the violin technique.[23] In the light of the huge unpublished
legacy of solos left by Colombi, probably dating back to a period
contemporary to that of the German sources, the emergence of the

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[23]   The majority of the virtuoso works by BALTZAR (op. cit.), WESTHOFF (op. cit.),
and Johann Jacob WALTHER in *Scherzi da violino sol* Frankfurt, 1676, entails
variations on harmonic schemata with the application of the violin registers,
scordatura, and chordal and polyphonic playing.

new violin idiom appears almost simultaneous in Italy and Germany. Today it would be hard to say whether the Italian violinists came to appreciate the instrument's "harmonic" nature under the impact of the German virtuosos, or whether they made this discovery on their own as they freed their repertoire of its links with the vocal idiom. The majority of Colombi's works are variations and dances using chordal playing, scordatura, and high positions similar to the German examples. The attempt to introduce the new violin idiom in the *sonata da chiesa* is particularly interesting in view of the Italian context. While in the *Sonate a Violino Solo*, Mus. F. 280, alongside fully monodic sonatas there are also versions with double stops, in the *Sonate a Violino Solo col suo Basso Continuo*, Ms. Mus. E. 282, the multiple stop technique is used in all the pieces in a much more mature way, reminiscent of the later sonatas by Torelli, Lonati, Nicola Matteis, and Corelli.[24]

It can hardly be denied that there was a distinct relationship between the copperplate engraving technique of printing and the increase in the number of compositions in which chordal playing was used. The engraving method was far superior, simpler, and more faithful in rendering the nuances of the manuscript than printing using movable type. But it seems hardly credible that the best known Italian violinists should have patiently waited for a change in the technology of printing without successfully exerting an influence on the printers, who had been familiar with and practising the engraving techniques for centuries already.[25] Experience shows that an invention does not always come into universal use as soon as it is patented. It has to wait for a general demand for it to arise. As regards the copperplate engraving method of printing, there was no demand for it in the Italian violin music at least until the times of Corelli, since the general standard was monodic music.

Kraków, May 1999

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[24] These sonatas are discussed in detail in my article 'Carlo Ambrogio Lonati and Giuseppe Colombi: A New Attribution of the Biblioteca Estense Violin Sonatas', published in this volume.

[25] In Italy the metal-plate technique had been in use for engraving since at least 1477, when Ptolemy's *Geography* was published in Bologna. The first musical source to be published in this technique was *Intabolatura de leuto del divino Francesco da Milano novamente stampada* dated before 1536.