The beginnings of unaccompanied literature for the violoncello

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THE BEGINNINGS OF UNACCOMPANIED LITERATURE
FOR THE VIOLONCELLO

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PREFACE

An examination will be made, in this study, of the earliest examples of unaccompanied music for the violoncello. Although the Six Suites of Johann Sebastian Bach are the greatest, and the first major, contribution to this literature, there are two sets of pieces in the genre which antedate the suites by almost three decades. These were the work of Domenico Gabrielli (1659-90) and his contemporary G. B. Degli Antonii (1648-1720), and they appear to be the first violoncello compositions of any type, to which scholarly references exist. Not only do these works have considerable intrinsic interest, but they are important as the beginning of an unaccompanied literature for violoncello: a literature which, though small, has attracted the efforts of distinguished composers, particularly in the twentieth century. The Gabrielli and Antonii pieces, moreover, may well have exerted an influence upon Bach.

Manfred Bukofzer suggests that "with Gabrielli, the literature for unaccompanied cello took its first strides in some remarkable compositions which stand stylistically, like those of Antonii, on the borderline of middle and late baroque periods."1

Microfilms have been secured for both sets of pieces, and constitute the source material of this document: the Eleven Ricerc-

cari (and one canon for two violoncelli) by Gabrielli, in the autograph of 1689, from the Biblioteca Estense, Modena; and Twelve Ricercate (opus one), by Degli Antonii, dating from 1687, from the Biblioteca Musicale Martini, Bologna. The Gabrielli manuscript is in modern notation; a reproduction of the entire work appears in Appendix A. Antonii's Ricercate are printed in a notation midway between late mensural and modern; I have been able to transcribe, in their entirety, ten of the twelve pieces; a photographic reproduction of these transcriptions appears as Appendix B. The sources, unfortunately, were too blurred for the reconstruction of ricercars No. 2 and No. 8, but it was possible to reproduce portions for analysis.

Both sets of ricercars are generally unknown: no modern edition of either exists. The Antonii ricercars were published in Bologna; the edition of 1687 is the only extant source. But the Gabrielli unaccompanied ricercars have never been published, with the exception of No. 7, which appears as example 228 in Arnold Schering's *Geschichte der Musik in Beispielen*. Consequently, neither set of pieces has been available to present-day cellists, either for study or performance purposes. Pedagogically, as I shall take pains to show, this has been a loss which can now be rectified.

My document will explore the formal characteristics of these pieces, the technical problems they present to the performer, and questions of style. A comparison of the two composers will be made. Of the eleven ricercars by Gabrielli, seven are for unaccompanied violoncello, the remaining four for violoncello and
basso continuo.¹ This study will offer an analysis of all these, as well as the twelve Antonii ricercars.

Following the comparison of Gabrielli and Antonii, and the discussion of problems of technique and performance, a juxtaposition will be made of the ricercars of both composers and the preludes of the Bach suites. The preludes bear a greater resemblance to the writing of Bach's two predecessors in this genre than do the dance movements of the suites, and will yield the most fruitful comparison. The ricercars exemplify devices employed by Bach, particularly in the securing of polyphonic effects in writing for a single instrument (as the name "ricercar" suggests) through the use of double stops, alternation of registers, and other means which my paper will examine.

A further chapter will consider the significance of the ricercars in their historical setting: these earliest pieces will be compared, stylistically, with other violoncello works of that era.

¹Vatielli, Guerrini, and Ludwig Landshoff have made free use of portions of the last four (No.'s 8-11) in manufacturing "sonatas" for violoncello and piano.
The search for information concerning Domenico Gabrielli and Giovanni Battista (Pietro) Degli Antonii does not yield a very rich harvest. Certain facts, however, are well-established. The two men were contemporaries in late seventeenth-century Bologna, and were active in the musical life there, as composers and executants. Gabrielli was a skilled cellist, called by his countrymen "Minghin dal Violoncel" - "minghin" being, in Bolognese dialect, a diminutive of Domenico. Degli Antonii was organist and choirmaster in various churches in Bologna.

Though it is by no means plentiful, there is more documentation on Gabrielli than on Antonii. Study of these sources reveals, as will shortly be seen, a common origin for the most recent references, in the investigations of Ludwig Landshoff.

The first mention, in English, of Gabrielli appears to have been made by Edmund Van Der Straeten, who published, in 1915, his History of the Violoncello:

Gabrieli [sic] was a composer of great repute. Fétis enumerates eight operas of his which were written for Bologna and Venice. Besides these he wrote church music and 'Balletti, gighe, correnti e Sarabande a due Violini e Violoncello
con Basso continuo,’ op. 1....For some time he held the post of maestro di capella at the Church of St. Petronio, at Bologna, and afterwards entered the service of Cardinal Paufili at Rome.¹

Then, and this is of particular interest in connection with the present study, Van Der Straeten goes on to say:

At one time he was apparently in the service of the Duke of Parma, at Modena, where the manuscript of some solos of his composition has been preserved. An exact copy of this interesting, and perhaps oldest, monument of violoncello literature was presented to the author by the well-known musical historian, the late Count Luigi Francesco Valdrighi, of Modena, who had access to the Museo Estense containing the original autograph, among countless musical and historical treasures.²

It is that "perhaps oldest monument" of Gabrielli's - dated two years later than the Antonii ricercars - that we are investigating. I have pointed out that of the eleven ricercars, seven are unaccompanied, while No.'s 8-11 are supplied with continuo. Ludwig Landshoff, in 1930, brought out "two sonatas" which he constructed from the four ricercars with continuo. There are some interpolations of which the original gives no hint. Landshoff supplies a preface to his edition, which is a good source of information on Gabrielli. Curiously, however, he makes no mention whatever of the unaccompanied pieces. His preface, translated into English, appears in Appendix A, following the photostats.

Eugenio Albini, in 1937, published an article entitled "Domenico Gabrielli, il Corelli del Violoncello", in Rivista musicale italiana. Although references to this article occur frequently in bibliographies, Albini tells us very little. Landshoff, to whom he refers effusively several times, is obviously his principal source of information: and Albini, like Landshoff, does not refer to the unaccompanied ricercars. The Albini account is flowery; he makes extravagant claims. Landshoff’s remarks are more terse and scholarly. Nevertheless, both writers refer to technical difficulties which the evidence of the score does not justify. The music, as a matter of fact, makes few technical demands.

What facts concerning Gabrielli emerge from a comparison of sources? Three different birth dates are suggested: 1640 (Van Der Straeten), 1655 (Grove’s Dictionary), and 1659 (Schering, Landshoff, Albini). All biographers agree that he died in 1690.

Gabrielli was elected to membership in the Accademia Filarmonica of Bologna in 1676, and became its president in 1683. This was the same organization that Corelli joined in 1670; Landshoff goes so far as to say that Corelli was strongly influenced by Gabrielli and the Bolognese School. Gabrielli played in the orchestra of San Petronio, Bologna, from 1680 to 1687. His period of service with the Duke of Parma, at Modena, to which Van Der Straeten refers, no doubt accounts for the presence of his manuscript in that city.

For a man who lived only thirty-one years, Gabrielli was a somewhat prolific composer. In addition to his music for
violoncello and violin, he wrote solo cantatas and motets for contralto, three oratorios, and twelve operas, most of which have been preserved in Venice and Modena.1

What is known of Antonii, who lived from 1648 to 1720, can be stated briefly. Like Gabrielli he was born in Bologna, and died there. He served as maestro di cappella in Bologna churches, was a member of the Accademia Filarmonica, and acted as its president for six terms between 1676 and 1718. In 1703, according to Grove's Dictionary, he married the famous singer Maddalena Musi. Undoubtedly Antonii knew Gabrielli well. His writing a set of ricercate for his opus one suggests an admiration of the other, who, if we are to believe that he exerted an influence on Corelli, may very well have molded Antonii's style to some extent.

Antonii is credited with two books of masses for two sopranos with continuo, one book of motets, one of chamber and church cantatas, three oratorios, three operas, organ pieces, church sonatas for violin with continuo, op. 5, and two books of dances (gighe, correnti, etc.).2

In the biographical accounts of Antonii, there is disagreement concerning his name. Apel gives but a single "i" to Antonii, and offers "Giambattista" as his first name; Bukofzer and Grove give "Pietro." Fortunately, the title page of the 1687 edition will settle this: he is identified as Gio. Battista Degli Antonii, organist in S. Giacomo Maggiore and member of the Accademia Filarmonica.

CHAPTER TWO

ELEVEN RICERCARS BY GABRIELLI

(Numbers 1-7: Unaccompanied)

The first Gabrielli ricercar is the simplest in structure of the seven unaccompanied ones: yet in its reiteration of strong rhythmic patterns, its use of sequences, and its distinct sectional character, it presages the more complex use, by succeeding ricercars, of the same devices. The forthright opening in quarter units suggests the dignity long associated with ricercar themes:

Ex. 1 (meas. 1-6)

After a ten-bar episode relieved by sequences of descending eighth-note patterns, the original material reappears, thus abbreviated:

Ex. 2 (meas. 17-19)

There is no further reiteration of the opening bars. The first ricercar, shortest of the seven, falls into four distinct
sections, each ending with a strong cadence in G minor. A new rhythmic - and sequential - pattern is established for each. The second portion begins:

Ex. 3 (meas. 26-31)

And the third:

Ex. 4 (meas. 40-45)

In Chapter Five it will be maintained that these ricercars exhibit features associated with various types of compositions belonging to the genre: "etude" ricercars as well as imitative, monothematic ricercars which were to culminate in the fugue.

There is little in Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 1 to suggest the complexities of fugal writing. Yet imitation is clearly present: not only in melodic and rhythmic sequences, but in the rudimentary two-voiced effect provided in such passages as this (Cf. Ex. 3, above):

Ex. 5 (meas. 27-28)
A more pronounced alternation of registers, to be observed in later examples, will look forward to the clear two-voiced polyphony for a single instrument, which found its most masterful treatment in Bach’s suites for violoncello and partitas for violin.

Discussion of harmony, in single-line writing, must necessarily be of implied harmony. Only No.’s 6 and 7 of Gabrielli’s unaccompanied ricercars make use of double stops, and there is no sustained use of them there. The direction of the composer’s harmonic thought is, nevertheless, usually clear.

The first ricercar is in G minor, though it carries a signature of one flat, the second being added as an accidental throughout. This is not surprising, in a work written at a time when our major-minor tonality was in process of being established. Even Bach sometimes adopted a similar procedure. There is, in the ricercar, a strong tonic-dominant polarity, particularly at cadence points:

Ex. 6 (meas. 38-40) (meas. 53-54)

Indeed, of the four major cadences, two may be harmonized with IV-V-I, two with I₆-V-I. All harmonic implications can be realized through the use of the triadic material of G minor (with raised third of vi, meas. 42), and no modulations are called for.

Ricercar No. 2 is in common time, with a contrasting mid-
dle section in triple meter; this, as will be seen, is a frequent structural principle in these pieces. No. 2 is a more protracted (277 measures) ricercar than the first; it is strongly sectional, with introduction of new material in each portion. There is no thematic unity, no recurrence of themes, though some of the episodic rhythmic patterns are repeated. The ricercar opens:

Ex. 7 (meas. 1-2)

In measure 7 a distinctly new motive is inaugurated:

Ex. 8 (meas. 7-9)

This one is as short-lived as the first, and so the ricercar proceeds. The only constant element is the secure A minor tonality (with excursions into C Major), reaffirmed by frequent authentic cadences. Its title indeed seems justified in the sense that the composer "searches out" various melodic and rhythmic possibilities. Two examples, from the intermediate section in triple meter, will illustrate typical sequential patterns, often carried out with mechanical and relentless persistence:
The second ricercar, nevertheless, makes a distinct advance over the first in its suggestion of two-voice polyphony. Here is the most striking instance, in which a dialogue is clearly intended through alternation of registers of the instrument:

Ex. 11 (meas. 128-129)

This ricercar is also noteworthy for the presence of slurs throughout the concluding max $\frac{12}{6}$ section. Gabrielli used them only here and in portions of the seventh ricercar; otherwise no departure from detache bowing is indicated.

Ex. 12 (meas. 210-211)

Ricercar No. 3 marks a significant advance over the earlier two, structurally. Again there is distinct sectional ar-
chitecture and plentiful episodic material, but the ricercar is monothematic: there are four statements of the unaltered theme, separated by episodes, and two melodically and rhythmically altered versions in related keys. There is also a rudimentary second theme which is imitated. The ricercar is in D Major, and opens with a stalwart theme:

Ex. 13 (meas. 1-2)

The subsidiary, "second-theme" material follows soon after:

Ex. 14a (meas. 6-7)

This secondary material reappears in measure 14, altered in this way:

Ex. 14b (meas. 14-16)

There is a well-defined modulation to A Major in measures 9-10, and the theme is restated in the dominant, at the beginning of the second section:

Ex. 15 (meas. 10-11)
One of the rhythmic imitations of the suggested second theme (cf. ex. 14) appears in measures 18-20 (and again in measures 24-25), and strengthens the unity of the piece:

Ex. 16 (meas. 18-20)

A third statement of the theme occurs in measure 30, once more in D Major:

Ex. 17

This is followed by free episodic material. In measures 48-49, and 52-53, respectively, these variants appear:

Ex. 18

Ex. 19

The final statement is a reaffirmation of the unaltered theme in D Major, after which the ricercar closes with a powerful cadence. Observe the rhythmic displacement:
Ricercar No. 4 departs radically from the pattern of No. 3. There is no well-defined thematic material and certainly no thematic unity: consequently it is looser in structure than its predecessor. In some respects, however, this ricercar is also more complex than No. 3. Though "sections" can be marked off, it is less easy to do so, for there is more flow to the music; cadences are not emphasized. In a word, the ricercar is more subtle; it is more of a free fantasy. There is a considerable increase in chromaticism, which induces a sense of shifting tonality, particularly since this ricercar, which is in E-flat Major, carries a signature of only two flats, and Gabrielli seems to have been careless in indicating the necessary A-flats. The player is duty-bound to supply a few of the missing ones, but others remain questionable.

The compass of the ricercar, to be sure, remains conservative, as in all early music for violoncello, in contrast to
that for viola da gamba. But within that range Gabrielli appears to have made an increasing exploration of tonal and rhythmic possibilities. The fourth ricercar, specifically, employs much alternation of arpeggiated chords with passage work, alternation of eighth, sixteenth, and quarter-note values, and introduces rhythmic advances as well. Rhythmic and melodic patterns in sequence still abound, as in the opening bars:

Ex. 21 (meas. 1-3)

Great rhythmic complexity is achieved in this ricercar through the use of the hemiola, a common device in the Baroque, marking the shifts, within a composition, from \( \frac{3}{2} \) to \( \frac{6}{4} \) meter, and vice versa. Thus, Gabrielli gives a temporary pulse of \( \frac{3}{2} \) in contrast to the established \( \frac{6}{4} \) meter:

Ex. 22 (meas. 7-9)
In order to maintain the vitality of the composition, however, the performer must make the new quarter unit of the hemiola equivalent to the eighth of the preceding section. Otherwise, there will be a musically frustrating break in momentum every time the device is used.

Measure 24 initiates a two-voice interplay that almost seems to require some such dynamic scheme of contrast as that indicated in the example. At any rate, the existence of two distinct levels should not violate the stylistic integrity of the performance, and would serve to stress the polyphony:

Ex. 23 (meas. 24-26)

As an instance of the chromaticism alluded to, measures 29-33 are notable:

Ex. 24

Despite the chromaticism of Ricercar No. 4, the implied harmony is strongly tonal, centering around E-flat Major, with
modulations to the keys of the dominant (and G minor), subdominant, and C minor.

Finally, there are passages such as these, inspired perhaps by the performing artist's exuberance, and suggesting also the brilliance of keyboard toccatas:

Ex. 25 (meas. 55-56)

Ricercar No. 5 is a concentrated study in arpeggiated chord successions, requiring leaps of wide intervals. Relentless eighth-note figurations are interrupted by a cadenza in sixteenths, which move quickly from C Major to A minor, E minor, B minor, F-sharp minor, C-sharp minor, and thence to G Major and back to C (cf. ex. 28). The process of modulating from a given tonal center to its dominant key is thus deliberately cultivated. Aside from these devices—harmonic progression by means of arpeggiated chords and modulatory sixteenth passages—illustrated in the ensuing examples, the ricercar appears to be a study in string-crossing dexterity and intervallic pitch discrimination.

The ricercar begins, as though anticipating Prelude I of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier:

Ex. 26 (meas. 1-4)
The piece continues in this fashion, moving back to C Major, to A minor, another suggestion of G Major, then a strong affirmation of C Major just before the cadenza. In the course of this, further fragmentary dialogue appears:

Ex. 27 (meas. 17-18)

The portion which I have chosen to call a cadenza appears in the last section of the ricercar, and its heightened chromaticism has the effect of increasing tension: a device much used by Bach and other Baroque composers at climactic points:

Ex. 28 (meas. 27-41)
The interest in Ricercar No. 5, then, is in harmonic interplay and key relationships. There is nothing which could be called, properly, a theme. In this respect the piece resembles those idiomatic ricercars for lute which were simply études or preludes: a style transferred in France from lute to keyboard. The Bach preludes to the violoncello suites might properly be regarded as ricercars, from this point of view: an idea that will be brought up again, and pursued further, in Chapter Six.

It begins to appear that each ricercar may develop organically in its own way: "search out" possibilities of a particular kind, work out a problem according to an organization, or concept, that may be unique. The explorations in ricercars 4 and 5 did not uncover any thematic or structural
Ricercar No. 6 has little structural interest, and no well-defined thematic material. There are no recapitulations, and the work is highly sectional. It begins in common time:

Ex. 29 (meas. 1-2)

The sixteenth passages continue, with just the brief suggestion, at three points, of new rhythmic patterns, to measure 38, where Gabrielli shifts to triple meter for the remainder of the ricercar. This piece seems to hold less interest than some of the earlier ones: it has less musical strength and variety. In one respect, however, it represents a technical advance: that is, in its use of double stops. Enough of these appear to suggest that they may be the raison d'être for No. 6. By a happy (for my purposes) economy Gabrielli combines his first double stops with a polyphonic dialogue:

Ex. 30 (meas. 38-41)
It would seem, in example 31, that Gabrielli the cellist is abetting the composer:

Ex. 31 (meas. 43-44)

Yet the double-stopped third, on the second eighth in measure 43, requiring a shift to third position, does not argue that idiomatic considerations were uppermost in the composer's mind: nor does the following succession of double and triple stops reflect such preoccupation. The bracketed chords cannot be played at all, unless they are broken:

Ex. 32 (meas. 67-69)

Gabrielli does, however, take advantage of the excellent pedal tone afforded by the D string, in the final bars of the piece; and his choice of sixths is gratifying to the player and useful from the standpoint of sonority:

Ex. 33 (meas. 86-95)
Although the effect here is harmonic rather than linear, two voices are present. The use of double stops is one of the chief means of achieving polyphony on a single stringed instrument.\footnote{1}

There are no harmonic complexities in Ricercar No. 6. Its key is G Major, though no signature is carried. The F-sharp is supplied as an accidental throughout.

After close scrutiny, one understands why Ricercar No. 7 was chosen by Schering for inclusion in his anthology, though this example merits the epithet "puzzling" which Apel bestows on the ricercar as a genre. Again, there is a loose, sectional structure, without thematic development or unity. But there is more contrast between sections, in Ricercar No. 7, than there was in its predecessors, and more rhythmic interest and vitality. Some of the sections fall into larger groupings which virtually assume the proportions of movements. No tempo indications, of course, are given. The broad beginning of No. 7, however, puts one in mind of the opening grave of a sonata da chiesa:

Ex. 34 (meas. 1-10)
Intuition then dictates that the following measure (# 11) should initiate an allegro moderato:

Ex. 35 (meas. 11-13)

This is followed by a number of two-measure free variations (rhythmic and melodic) upon that material, before the allegro—which would last, according to my calculations, to the change of meter in measure 68—loses itself in episodes of almost rhapsodic character.

The failure to develop and reiterate material is what seems to typify these sectional ricercars and gives them a loose, improvisatory character. In this example, too, the incessant repetition of certain patterns becomes tedious; but, in general, No. 7 is sustained by its energetic, exuberant quality.

Once again there is polyphonic dialogue, made unmistakable this time by clef changes which correspond to the alternation of voices:

Ex. 36 (meas. 28-30)
Double stops and broken chords over three and four strings appear near the end of the common-meter section:

Ex. 37 (meas. 60-61)

This is one of several excursions to neighboring tonalities, after which a strong cadence occurs in the original D minor key. In this instance, too, the B-flat appears, not in the signature, but as an accidental.

The section in triple meter, initiated in bar 68, continues until the last three measures are reached, when common meter again intrudes, suggesting a brief concluding grave, reminiscent of the style of the opening:

Ex. 38 (meas. 92-94)

The major portion of Ricercar No. 7 is made up of the section which I designated "allegro moderato", extending from the eleventh to the sixty-seventh measure. The concluding section, from the change of meter in bar 68, has the effect of a coda.
Like all Gabrielli's ricercars, excepting the remarkable No. 3, the last of the unaccompanied set is structurally amorphous. In the variety of rhythmic and technical devices employed, however, No. 7 is one of the richest. In all seven, one detects a joy in the comparatively new-found key relationships; there is a "seeking-out" of possibilities, a curious play(sometimes protracted and aimless)in this recently acquired frame of reference, with modal recollections. And we know well what was found: our major-minor tonalities had been discovered, and were now being made secure.

The Ricercars with Continuo, No.'s 8-11

Ricercars 8 through 11 are supplied with figured bass. In their instrumental style, and in technical demands, they are quite similar to the unaccompanied ones. They are considerably shorter than Ricercars 1 through 7: No. 8 contains 17 measures only; No. 9, nine measures; No. 10 is the longest, with 58 measures; No. 11, made up of two repeated sections of 12 and 16 measures, respectively, is unique in its clear binary structure.

In the accompanied ricercars, for the first time, Gabrielli gives explicit tempo indications; and in Ricercar 11(meas. 11)he inserts "piano", the only dynamic mark of the entire set of pieces. Other significant features, of a formal nature, become apparent when the last four ricercars are examined one by one. No. 8 appears here in its entirety:

Ex. 39
It is remarkable that this single composition contains three tempo indications. The first entry (meas. 1) is Grave; since the second (meas. 14) is Adagio, it seems probable that an Allegro should intervene: and the character of the music—beginning with the sixteenth-note figuration in the fourth bar—also recommends this. If we allow this fourth indication, we get a succession of slow-fast-slow-fast tempos: the suggestion of a *sonata da chiesa* in miniature.

In the harmonic vocabulary there is nothing explicitly called for that has not been implied in the unaccompanied examples. There is the strong play of the tonic-dominant relationship, and unequivocal authentic cadences. A new feature, however, is the imitation between the violoncello and keyboard (meas. 10-12), in ascending sequences.

Ricercar No. 9 appears to be unfinished; Gabrielli breaks it off in this fashion, at the beginning of the tenth bar:

Ex. 40 (meas. 9-10)

![Image of musical notation]

Its main point seems to be the exploitation of the opening rhythmic figure of dotted eighth and sixteenth, which recurs eight times during the nine measures:

1 See Appendix A for the Canon for Two Violoncelli by Gabrielli. The second violoncello enters in measure 2.
There is another aspect of No. 9 which deserves special notice. The use of triple stops which can only be played (on a normally tuned instrument) if rolled, was observed among the unaccompanied ricercars. Such a chord appears in the opening measure (ex. 41) quoted above. We get the same difficulty, multiplied, in measures 7 and 8:

Ex. 42

In view of this, it seems to me that No. 9 was intended for a C-C-D-G tuning, since that would make it possible to play the triple stops in a single stroke, at a faster tempo, and would make the performance considerably easier. The use of scordatura was common (Bach's use of the very tuning I have suggested for this example, in his Fifth Suite, is a well-known instance), and it may be that composers sometimes neg-
lected to indicate a different tuning in their scores. Since
Gabrielli was an accomplished cellist, this neglect would be
easily understandable. The second beat of measure 8 cannot
be played with rhythmic accuracy (if the lowest note is to be
sustained) unless the scordatura is used.

Ricercar No. 10 is much more complex, formally and har-
monically, than 8 and 9, which confined their modulations to
the key of the dominant. No. 10, also in G Major, moves suc-
cessively to E minor, B minor, A minor, back to G Major, again
to B minor, and to G Major once more, within the space of
twelve measures. The result, melodically, is a more concen-
trated chromaticism than we have been accustomed to in Gabri-
elli, as this example shows:

Ex. 43

Note also the sequential use of double stops in measures 7
and 8.
A new motive appears at the upbeat to measure 17, in the violoncello, and this is imitated in the continuo:

Ex. 44

The first section ends vigorously on a II-V-I cadence in G Major. Gabrielli then indicates a Largo, and a change of meter to $\frac{3}{4}$. This is a sustained cantilena of thirty-one measures, predominantly in E minor; its only connection with the preceding section is that they stand in a fast-slow movement relationship.\(^1\) The opening bars of the Largo give imita-

\(^{1}\) Landshoff, in what he calls Sonata I in G Major, by Gabrielli, has used Ricercar No. 8 as the first movement; he has joined No. 9 and the first section of No. 10 to form the second; the concluding section of No. 10 - the Largo - constitutes his third movement. For the fourth movement, Landshoff uses a fast theme of gigue-like character; it bears no relation to Gabrielli's final ricercar, though No. 11 is also in 12/8, marked "presto", and in G Major.

Francesco Vatielli has also edited this "sonata", using the same sequence of movements. Both he and Landshoff (not jointly, however) have edited a second "sonata", in A Major, by Gabrielli, which was not derived from the Modena manuscript.

The treatment of Ricercars 8, 9, and 10 has been free, as the preceding account has indicated: editing has been excessive, with liberal use of ritards, crescendos, diminuendos, and trills. There are melodic alterations in the violoncello part and actual editorial invention between the first and second "movements". Nevertheless, the resulting work is of interest and value, and the harmonic realization is a good one. Figured bass indications have been retained, and are considerably more numerous than in the Modena manuscript, which at least suggests the possibility that Vatielli and Landshoff may have had access to other versions
tion between violoncello and continuo:

Ex. 45 (meas. 28-30)

The final cadence of No. 10 is on the dominant chord of E minor, and creates an expectancy which is only resolved if Ricercar 11, in G Major, is then played. In approaching the close of No. 10, Gabrielli shifts to $\frac{6}{4}$ in the penultimate measure, thus insuring the effect of a ritard:

Ex. 46 (meas. 56-58)

of the pieces, in a form more closely approximating their "sonatas". The existence of an A-Major work is further argument for this, and would account for these scholars' ignorance of the unaccompanied ricercars. I have already remarked on the curious fact that neither Albini nor Landshoff alludes to them.
Ricercar No. 11, marked Presto, is a gigue in $\frac{12}{8}$ meter. It maintains the same rhythmic character throughout, but there is no thematic reiteration. Like all Gabrielli's ricercars, this one is sectional, and the "development" never goes beyond the repetition of sequential patterns through several measures. In its rhythmic pulse, however, and its two-sectional structure, No. 11 resembles the gigue as we find it in Bach. Harmonically, if offers what we expect: modulations to the keys of the dominant, the super-tonic, as well as the relative minor and its dominant key.

Though recurring material is rare in these pieces, an interesting parallel is observable between passages of Ricercars 10 and 11:

Ex. 47a Ricercar No. 10 (meas. 6-8)

Ex. 47b Ricercar No. 11 (meas. 5-7)
It seems plausible to think that Gabrielli may have intended these final ricercars, with continuo, to stand as one unit. In the first seven ricercars, unaccompanied, each one is distinguished from its predecessor by a change of key. Ricercars 8 through 11, in contrast, are all in G Major. Individually they are short; if played successively, they make up a substantial piece of contrasting short movements, which have something of the character of a Baroque suite. The "movements", to be sure, lack the clearer structure of later suites: yet the Largo of Ricercar No. 10, and No. 11 in toto could be taken as early prototypes of such movements.

The four ricercars just examined appear to be the earliest writing for violoncello and continuo of which there is record. Because of this significance, they will be referred to once more in Chapter Seven, where the general style of this emerging genre is discussed.
CHAPTER THREE

TWELVE RICERCARS BY DEGLI ANTONII

The first of Antonii's ricercars is an unbroken succession of eighth notes. The piece is entirely detached; it is clearly in D minor, though it carries no signature: B-flat is added throughout as an accidental, and C-sharp as well, except in the modulatory sections to F Major, or in sequential patterns where an accidental would destroy the uniform progression. Its structure is loose, discursive. This motivic reiteration is typical:

Ex. 1 (meas. 26-29)

The \( \frac{4}{4} \) meter is unrelieved throughout. Indeed, the ricercar could be said to have no features of special interest but for one circumstance which, in Antonii's case, will be significant. The two opening bars are restated at the interval of the fifth: "subject" and "answer" being separated by a bridge of three eighths:

Ex. 2 (meas. 1-5)
The first two bars, moreover, reappear as the conclusion of the ricercar. Except for this ascending pattern in measures 10-13, there is no further use of this thematic material:

Ex. 3 (meas. 10-13)

In Ricercar No. 2, the composer's "cyclic" use of the opening material proceeds apace. Here is the beginning:

Ex. 4 (meas. 1-2)

An intermediate section, in 9/8, gives it this modification:

Ex. 5

And the return to common meter offers a further rhythmic change:
This ricercar, too, is in D minor, and without signature.

Ricercar No. 3 is in F Major, and carries its signature throughout. Like its predecessors, it is almost formless in its protracted succession of eighth notes, tirelessly offering sequences, and moving briefly into closely related keys. But again, Antonii gives signs of "searching out" — though in a rudimentary way — some vestiges of thematic unity. The initial theme (which one might well fail to recognize as a theme at all!) is rather long and undistinguished:

Ex. 7 (meas. 1-4)

Curiously, however, this material appears again, unchanged, in measures 60-63; and once more — the first two bars only (in measures 108-109) — shortly before the end of the piece. Otherwise, there is no thematic purpose evident; the writing is too amorphous even to be described as sectional; and a slight stretch of the imagination is required to see an incipient polyphony in passages such as these:
The fourth ricercar, however, offers a slight advance.
Again the key is F Major. The theme, embracing three and a half measures, is lacking in melodic interest or rhythmic vitality:

Ex. 9 (meas. 1-4)

Nevertheless, the composer repeats it in measures 26–29. The surprise comes in measure 40, where a shift to $\frac{12}{8}$, with a rhythmic modification of the "theme", immediately gives a greater energy:

Ex. 10 (meas. 40-45)

Observe how, in measures 44-45 above, the second portion of
the theme is brought down a fifth. In measures 57-59, Antonii "answers" measure 40 at the fifth:

Ex. 11 (meas. 57-59)

This exploration of tonic-dominant relationships carries a special interest in view of the ricercar's role as one of the precursors of the fugue.

Finally, after a return to common meter, and a rather aimless wandering of eighth notes through twenty-five bars in F Major, the theme is restated in its original form before the final cadence.

Ricercar No. 5 is in A minor. It is in common time - there are no changes of meter - and it offers an unrelieved succession of detached eighths from its inception through 105 bars to the final whole note. The theme requires six bars:

Ex. 12 (meas. 1-6)

This exact succession of notes appears twice more: in meas-
ures 36-41 (unchanged), and in 75-79 with this elision:

Ex. 13 (meas. 75-79)

There is no further use of this material except in bars 13-14, where a fragment of the theme is answered in the octave below, initiating a polyphonic dialogue which is soon broken off:

Ex. 14 (meas. 13-14)

There is also this exchange, two bars later, but again with no context of thematic development:

Ex. 15

Although G-sharp is indicated freely, the general sense of tonality is more tentative in this ricercar than in the previous ones. The interplay of major and minor gives it greater ambiguity, as these measures attest:
In the sixth ricercar, also in A minor, the tonality is more definite. The ricercar is divided, by contrasting meters, into distinct sections: \( 4, 6, 4, 6, 12, 4 \). There is thematic reiteration, still very fragmentary, but tightened through the use of a short rhythmic motive:

Ex. 17 (meas. 1-3)

The rhythmic pattern marked in blue appears several times. The first \( \frac{6}{4} \) section introduces a new theme, which is repeated before the return of the common meter:

Ex. 18 (meas. 25-26)

In the second \( \frac{6}{4} \) section, however, the first seven notes of the ricercar undergo this alteration:

Ex. 19 (meas. 56)
And that is all. In the ensuing $\frac{12}{8}$, the entire opening measure is transmogrified as follows, but in the second bar:

Ex. 20 (meas. 78-79)

Truly, one must "search out" the thematic underpinning. But of the author's quest for such a basis, there can be no doubt. The final $\frac{4}{4}$ of the ricercar reaffirms the opening measures an octave lower (for the first bar):

Ex. 21 (meas. 93-94)

In measure 96 Antonii gives a "tonal" answer at the fifth:

Ex 22 (meas. 96)

This is repeated in measure 104, and is the last appearance of the motive before the final cadence in measure 112. The composer's use of a more incisive rhythmic figure has given No. 6 more vitality than its predecessors; the recapitulations, obviously deliberate, still give a rather haphazard effect: the thematic treatment seems essentially improvisatory, rather than ordered.
Any expectation of steady evolution in the composer's mastery of form is frustrated by Ricercar No. 7, which has no theme at all, and consequently no melodic reiteration. It is an unbroken succession of eightths from beginning to the final half note, and it suggests no sectional "groupings" whatever. What is its raison d'être?

Antonii's preoccupation in Ricercar No. 7 is tonal, rather than formal. A study of these pieces already has aroused the suspicion—a point to be enlarged on in subsequent chapters—that exploitation of one device (often exhaustive) is usually characteristic of these ricercars. In this sense, they are truly "studies"; and the "subject matter" for seeking out is variable.

The seventh ricercar, without signature, is in F minor. Antonii, with a proliferation of accidentals, gives the impression of extreme tonal ambiguity:

Ex. 23 (meas. 28-34)

A lack of explicit tonality (or what seems at times a tonal ambivalence) persists until the last two bars:
In Ricercar No. 8 Antonini returns to a definite theme, which he reiterates: but so casually, and incompletely, that it might well escape observation. Here is that theme:

Ex. 25 ( meas. 1-3)

Two measures later it reappears, a fourth higher, then returns to the original statement in the second half of bar seven; note the rhythmic displacement that occurs at that point:

Ex. 26 ( meas. 5-9)
There is no recurrence of the material until measures 33-34, when we have this, which once more reveals Antonii’s propensity for imitation at the fifth:

Ex. 27 (meas. 33-34)

A considerable portion of the score that follows is illegible, so that the measure numbers – not to mention the notes themselves – are lost. The opening measure of a \( \frac{12}{8} \) section is decipherable, but it introduces new material. After the return to \( \frac{4}{4} \), there is the reappearance, four bars before the end, of the first measure of the theme, followed by rhythmic figures derived from the second measure of that original statement:

Ex. 28
Ricercar No. 9 presents another hiatus, thematically: it is almost as undistinguished, melodically, as No. 7. In C Major throughout (except for one tentative modulation to G Major), with continuous eighths, it seems little more than a cellist's solfege. Yet the first two measures, curiously, are answered at the interval of the fifth in measures 4 and 5, revealing an urge toward imitation seldom missing, altogether, in Antonii:

Ex. 29 (meas. 1-2) (meas. 4-5)

It was remarked that ricercars, characteristically, attack a single problem. No. 9 is distinguished by an abundance of clef changes, as this passage illustrates:

Ex. 30 (meas. 35-37)

Obviously, these changes go beyond the fundamental requirement of keeping the notes within the lines and spaces. Whether such an exercise is of utility primarily to the composer or to the performer is a question for a later chapter.

The three final ricercars are of special interest. In them, Antonii introduces greater rhythmic and melodic variety.
Imitation, too, is more pronounced. The opening bars of Ricercar No. 10 indicate the increased vitality which is characteristic of all three. Note the alternations at the fifth. The key of the entire piece is G minor; Antonini supplies the second flat as an accidental.

Ex. 31 (meas. 1-8)

The next appearance of the motive carries this change:

Ex. 32 (meas. 25-28)

In measure 45 there is a second variant with rhythmic displacement of the imitation at the fifth:

Ex. 33 (meas. 45-47)

The intermediate $\frac{1}{8}$ section makes extensive use of the opening material.
And there is yet another appearance, in bar 74. The concluding section does not contain it, but introduces a one-bar motive constructed from elements in the original theme, of which it is an elision, and this, brought in three times, is also imitated rhythmically:

Ex. 35 (meas. 79-80)

With Ricercar No. 11 Antonii moves to G Major, supplying the F-sharp as an accidental. The theme seems disproportionately long, and its boundaries appear arbitrary; yet Antonii imitates it precisely. There are eight complete statements of the theme in this ricercar. The first three and one-half bars give this material:

Ex. 36 (meas. 1-4)
The "answer" begins in bar 8:

Ex. 37

The next appearance is again on G, but an octave lower for the first bar; and so the alternations proceed, separated by material of loose, improvisatory character. In the 12\textsuperscript{8} variant, the theme is still presented in toto:

Ex. 38 (meas. 28-31)

This, too, is restated on G.

Now appears the concluding 4\textsuperscript{4}, introducing a device peculiar to this ricercar: the rhythmic imitation of the theme, with different melodic material:

Ex. 39 (meas. 53)
The theme itself, however, makes three more complete entrances — a total of eight for the ricercar — before the end of the piece.

Antonii's final ricercar, No. 12, reverts to the earlier eighth-note succession, and undergoes no change of meter. But in this instance, because of the stalwart character of the theme, and the consonance of the march of eighth notes with that theme, the effect is one of greater tightness and strength. The key is D Major, and the signature is given. Here is the militant opening statement:

Ex. 40 (meas. 1-4)

The answer, a total one, begins in bar 11:

Ex. 41 (meas. 11-14)

The alternation of statements beginning on D and A continues through seven complete appearances of the theme. These
statements are separated from one another by passages which might, anticipating a later terminology, be called episodes. This "free" material, however, forms no distinctive patterns; there is nothing suggesting the character of secondary themes or motives. Nor (and this is true of all the ricercars in which imitation is employed) is any formal symmetry discernible in the lengths of the sections between statements of the theme. In Ricercar No. 12, for example, the duration of "episodes" separating the seven theme appearances is $6\frac{1}{2}$, $12$, $19\frac{1}{2}$, $14$, $20\frac{1}{2}$, $14$, and $8$ measures. More important, there is no homogeneity between what transpires in one such "episode" and what goes on in another.

In one instance only, Antonii uses a portion of thematic material in such an episode:

Ex. 42 (meas. 41-43)

The alternation of registers, for polyphonic purposes, is not a device Antonii made much use of. Ricercar No. 12, however, gives a good example of it:

Ex. 43 (meas. 76-79)

Ricercar No. 12, finally, is unique in its assured tonali-
ty. There are no modulations, no accidentals in the course of its one hundred eighteen bars.
CHAPTER FOUR

A COMPARISON OF THE GABRIELLI AND ANTONII STYLES

To set the stage for the comparison that follows, it will be worthwhile to repeat a few facts given earlier. Both Gabrielli and Antonii were active in the musical life of Bologna; they were contemporaries, though Antonii survived Gabrielli by thirty years. Gabrielli, a well-known cellist, was, like Antonii, a member of the Accademia Filarmonica; both he and Antonii, an organist, served as presidents of that society. Their activities, as noted maestri di cappella in various Bologna churches, were parallel for a number of years. Undoubtedly they were friends, and probably exerted strong influence on one another, particularly in the production of the earliest unaccompanied literature for violoncello.

Even a cursory examination of this production shows the similarities in the two sets of ricercars. But there are differences as well, some of them curious; and a closer study not only strengthens the obvious affinities but suggests that the disparities, also, are more profound.

Both men wrote in a variety of forms - opera, oratorio, cantata - and by no means restricted themselves to works for their own instruments. It will not be necessary, therefore, to look upon Gabrielli as a seventeenth-century counterpart of David Popper. At the same time, Gabrielli's proficiency
as a cellist gave him a decided advantage over Antonii, in writing for violoncello. Beyond this obvious benefit, however, there is no evidence — musically — that he was writing as a cellist rather than as a composer. On the contrary, a comparison of the first ricercar of Gabrielli with that of Antonii suggests that the former composer — a younger man by seven years — was the more mature, the more musically sophisticated of the two. Here are excerpts from each:

Ex. 1a (meas. 1-8)  

Gabrielli

Ex. 1b (meas. 1-5)  

Antonii

With Gabrielli, the tonality is more secure. He gains an initial artistic advantage by starting on the second beat, rather than the first; he interrupts the quarter progression in bar 3. Rhythmic variety is achieved in this way throughout the ricercar. In bar 12 Gabrielli initiates an alterna-
In the Antonii Ricercar No. 1 (and in No.'s 3, 5, 7, 9, and 12), on the other hand, there is an unrelieved succession of eighth notes from beginning to end.

Before the comparison proceeds further, it should be noted that Gabrielli's ricercars, in the autograph of 1689, appeared near the end of his life; most of his other works, in all categories, had already been written. Landshoff describes Gabrielli as a composer who matured early. Antonii's ricercars, however, printed in 1687, were his opus one; this is strange, since he was by then forty years old. His principal output occurred between 1687 and his death in 1720.

Although this is necessarily conjecture, it seems not unlikely that Antonii undertook the writing of his ricercars at Gabrielli's instigation, or under his influence; it is plausible to think he may have admired the other as musician and composer, in which case his production of a set of ricercars for violoncello might be regarded as a graceful compliment to his fellow-member of the Accademia. In any event, these little pieces were obviously, for Antonii, exercises in composition, regardless of what other purposes they may have served.

Each man's knowledge of the other's work may be assumed.
Granting this, the two sets of pieces should represent a good sampling of the contemporary practice, both from the composer's and the instrumentalist's point of view. Keeping these two aspects in mind, it should be useful to emphasize, at this point, what Antonii's and Gabrielli's works had in common.

First, all questions of idiomatic writing aside, they are not display pieces. Even granting the differences between the two men in the technical demands they make, the requirements, for the performer, are modest. Only the most accessible range of the violoncello is employed: it is seldom necessary to leave first position, and at no time does the upper limit exceed one octave above the open A-string. Within this restricted compass, however, considerable exploration takes place: a "seeking out" of tonality through scale and arpeggiated passages - and these, to press a point, are never formidable. Performance problems will be dealt with in the next chapter; the subject matter of that chapter may be further anticipated to the extent of pointing out that both sets of ricercars are in the detache style of the period: only rarely does Gabrielli indicate slurs, and Antonii does not do so at all.

Secondly, the two sets of pieces are alike in their repetition of set patterns. Examples could be multiplied easily; the following quotations, however, are typical of this device as both composers used it.

Ex. 3a Gabrielli: Ricercar No. 2 (meas. 102-104)
Moreover, in the use of such patterns, the exploitation of a rhythmic or melodic device may be the point of departure for an entire section. Thus, in Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 7, this figure appears:

Ex. 4a (meas. 12-13)

and so on. Similarly, in Ricercar No. 8, Antonii offers this:

Ex. 4b

Thirdly, both composers tend to provide structural variety by means of one or more changes of meter within the piece: a change from common meter to \( \frac{3}{2} \) or \( \frac{6}{4} \) or to the sicilienne effect of a \( \frac{12}{8} \) is usual, followed by a return to the original meter. Antonii uses this structural device in ricercars 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11; and Gabrielli in 2, 6, 7. (What appears, in this tabulation, as a lack of diversity in Gabrielli, is deceptive: he achieves greater rhythmic variety, as a matter of fact,
than Antonii, by means of varied figures within a given meter.)

Fourthly, instances of two-voice polyphony, emphasized through alternation of registers, occur in both sets of ricercars. The best example of this device in Antonii (quoted in Chapter Three, ex. 14) occurs in his fifth ricercar:

Ex. 5a (meas. 13-14)

An analogous dialogue appears in Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 7.

Ex. 5b (meas. 55-56)

With both composers, the fragmentary use of this device is important, perhaps, more for what it presages of later practice than for its significance in the ricercar.

The essential resemblances have now been pointed out. Their very points of contact, however, emphasize certain contrasts. It was suggested that these ricercars provided for the composers (and as ear training for cellists, if nothing more) tonal explorations within a limited instrumental compass; and as a corollary to such a claim, it must be acknowledged that a kind of harmonic framework is implied. In virtually
every instance, Gabrielli's grasp of major-minor tonality seems more secure than Antonii's; he is more deft in the handling of key signatures and accidentals; cadences are more frequent, less ambiguous; modulations to related keys are well-defined. The stronger tonal framework imparts a more cohesive character to the melodic and rhythmic sequences cited as their second point in common; the effect of these sequences is tighter, more purposeful in Gabrielli. With him, such figures are repeated - sometimes it seems ad infinitum - at greater length: the result, if often less than inspired, is more logical, more sustained. There is a rudimentary development of material here, though it builds only by accretion.

Proceeding to the third point of the comparison, it must be stated that Gabrielli is considerably more adventurous in his use of rhythm than Antonii. Not only does he have a wider gamut than Antonii's within a single ricercar, but he uses certain devices that Antonii never calls on at all. For example, there is not a single instance of syncopation in the twelve Antonii ricercars. Yet in the first Gabrielli ricercar the effect is suggested not only in the subtlety of the opening bar, but more explicitly in measures 43-45:

Ex. 6

In Ricercar No. 2 (Gabrielli) the device is at once recognized:
Antonii's nearest approach to this rhythmic mode occurs in Ricercar No. 8:

Ex. 8

It was remarked, in the fourth point of similarity, that Antonii and Gabrielli both suggested a two-voice polyphony through their use of alternating figures. Although the use of this device, as stated earlier, is fragmentary in both sets of pieces, it occurs more frequently in Gabrielli. Examples in the Antonii ricercars are hard to find.

In regard to polyphony, there remains a technical (and musical) device found in Gabrielli which does not appear in Antonii at all. Here we may frankly admit Gabrielli's advantage as a cellist: yet even he prescribes double stops only sparingly, as indicated in Chapter Two. And though double stops do, necessarily, give a two-voice effect during their sporadic appearances, to say that Gabrielli used them for polyphonic writing would be an exaggeration. Nevertheless, they were indicative of possibilities that Bach was to exploit, especially in the violin partitas.
So far it appears that Gabrielli, in the comparison with Antonii, has received all the laurels; he is credited with greater melodic and rhythmic variety, more motivic vitality, a secure grasp of tonality, a more systematic carrying-out of the possibilities of various devices, and a more cohesive sectional structure. The evidence for all this is in the scores. What sovereignty, if any, remains for Antonii?

He excels in one significant aspect of his work: and from the point of view of that superiority the very amorphous character of his pieces, structurally, may be a positive advantage. Gabrielli, it must be remembered, in the sectional structure of his ricercars, has the habit of starting something new every few bars: there are no unifying devices among sections, no attempts to hold on to a theme, to bring it back—except in Ricercar No. 3, where he goes even beyond Antonii, by developing secondary material.

In Antonii, on the other hand, a tendency toward cyclical treatment is evident from the first. His search for thematic unity is apparent in all his ricercars except No. 7 (which can hardly be said to have a theme) and No. 9 (which nevertheless answers the opening two bars at the interval of the fifth). In general, his technique of imitation gains in power as he proceeds, so that ricercars 10, 11, and 12 are the strongest. This suggests that his opus one was, in fact, largely an exercise in composition, and that he was more concerned than was Gabrielli with the development of musical ideas.
It is the ascendancy of the idea, sensed so strongly in the music of Bach, that determines form and indeed gives it integrity. The ricercars of Antonii in many ways are cruder than Gabrielli's; they offer less scope to the performer; as compositions they are surely less "finished". But they are, much more than Gabrielli's pieces, embryonic fugues. In this respect they are forward looking, they point to unrealized possibilities.

It will be seen in Chapter Six how Bach drew on the contributions of both men to create a synthesis, in his six suites for violoncello, that can hardly fail to meet the requirements not only of the music-maker, but of the questing musical intellect as well.
CHAPTER FIVE

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Willi Apel, in an attempt to give meaning to the elusive term ricercar, distinguishes several types. The term itself, he suggests, can perhaps "be best understood as the equivalent of our term 'study', either contrapuntal or technical."\(^1\) He sets up, on this basis, two main categories for classification: the varieties of imitative ricercar illustrating the contrapuntal genre, and the non-imitative ricercar the technical. In the latter category he includes ricercars for lute, certain examples for organ, and ricercars for viols—all of which bear resemblances to the prelude and the toccata.

Professor Apel, in discussing the ricercars for viola, refers to the material of the present study: "Theoretical writers such as Ganassi...and Diego Ortiz...use the term ricercar for instructive pieces designed to demonstrate the skillful playing of the viola da gamba. Ganassi's pieces are interesting for the extensive use of double stops..., while those by Ortiz serve to illustrate the art of variation and ornamentation. Clearly to the same category belong 17th-cen-

tury ricercars for violoncello solo (without accompaniment), much in the character of a concert etude, by Giambattista degli Antonii and by Domenico Gabrielli.\(^1\)

Elsewhere, Professor Abel assigns these pieces to the "same category as Bach's celebrated six suites for cello solo."\(^2\) The two assignments are perhaps not mutually exclusive. If the resemblance between the ricercars and Bach's preludes to the suites is sufficiently demonstrated in Chapter Six of this study - and the question must be answered on the basis of evidence presented there - it remains to examine the statement that Antonii's and Gabrielli's pieces are "clearly" concert etudes.

They cannot, in my opinion, be so construed: not, at any rate, without serious qualification. Before marshalling objections, it will be pertinent to quote Henry Mishkin, who refers both to Antonii and Gabrielli as members of the Bologna School of instrumental composers. In describing the character of this school, he says "the stylistic contributions of these men were in the direction of a disciplined formalism, an elegance of expression, and a pervasive lyricism. These characteristics, combined with their deliberate avoidance of virtuosity\(^3\), were in reaction to the technical exuberance of

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 644. Italics mine.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 814. Article on "Violoncello."
\(^3\)Italics mine.
the string composers of the early Baroque, Biagio Marini, Carlo Farina, Marco Uccellini (and their German successors Rosenmüller, Walther, Biber), who early developed such extreme features of violin playing as col legno, scordatura, sul ponticello, use of double and triple stops, and of higher positions (5th and 6th). The Bologna School thus constitutes a lyrical interlude between the virtuoso experimentation of the early Baroque and the bravura style of the later Baroque (Vivaldi, Tartini, Handel).¹

It must be kept in mind, of course, that the violoncello, in contrast to the viola da gamba, had virtually no literature in the late seventeenth century: we are, indeed, examining the beginning of its solo literature. Unlike the gamba, it had no tradition of technical fluency, having been used primarily, throughout the early Baroque, for continuo parts. Even allowing for this disparity, however, it is difficult to view the ricercars under discussion as concert études. The "deliberate avoidance of virtuosity" which Mishkin ascribes to the Bologna School seems to describe these pieces very well.

I have already pointed out that the compass of the ricercars is rarely beyond first position; there is no attempt to suggest intricacies of bowing.² Double stops are used, even


²It is important to note, in this connection, that both violoncello and bow, in the time of Gabrielli and Antonii, were "unstandardized"; there was no fixed length for the neck of the 'cello: positions, as we now know them, had not been established. The bow was a much cruder instrument than it has since become, antedating even the refinements of Tartini, while the significant advances of Francois Tourte (1747-1833), who perfected the "modern bow", lay a century ahead.
by the cellist Gabrielli in only two of his pieces, and by Antonii not at all. There is nothing in the character of the ricercars to hint at extreme speed of execution: an allegro moderato would appear to be the norm. There is no exploitation of variation and ornamentation, such as characterize the gamba ricercars of Ortiz. No trills are called for. Furthermore, in substantiation of Mishkin’s claim, such special effects as col legno, scordatura, and sul ponticello are eschewed.

This is not to say, however, that the ricercars have nothing of the character of studies. "Concert études", however, would surely overstate their role. If the modest requirements of cellists of that period are acknowledged, it must be admitted that these pieces exemplify, abundantly, the kind of technical problems, or stylistic cliches, that practical musicians were likely to encounter in the contemporary ensemble music. The point has already been touched upon that the ricercars no doubt served, as well, as exercises in composition for Antonii and Gabrielli.

It must be acknowledged, too, that the artistic quality of these ricercars is hardly sufficient to render them suitable, in toto, for concert performance in our time. The tendency toward stereotyped sixteenth passages and repeated patterns, evident in both sets of pieces, does indeed suggest exercises - and to some degree experiments - in style. The significance of these exercises from the point of view of musical
structure has been examined, affording a contrast between Gabrielli's concern for the autonomy of short, unrelated sections, within an explicit tonal framework, and Antonii's quest for thematic unity within a more ambiguous formal and tonal scaffolding.

Accepting Apel's term "study" as applicable to both the imitative and non-imitative ricercar, it is necessary to protest the relegation of these violoncello pieces exclusively to the latter category. Examples of imitation, though fragmentary, are unmistakable. It is true that no examples of the polythematic ricercar occur; only Ricercar No. 3 of the Gabrielli has features of the monothematic imitative type. But it was seen in Antonii that his use of thematic material does move toward fugal procedure, and his ricercars, like those of the late examples for lute, do have features of the imitative ricercar. Had Antonii's ricercars been as idiomatic, and as polyphonic as Gabrielli's, the resemblance would have been closer still; but the strength of one was the weakness of the other.

With this stipulation, that the violoncello ricercars have significant features of imitation, presenting the earliest documented use of the instrument for polyphonic writing, it will be feasible to proceed, now, to an examination of these pieces as studies in style. Their historical importance, from this point, may be taken for granted.
For the cellist of the twentieth century, however, the interest in these ricercars is not merely a documentary one. Since the pieces are unequal in quality, and some of them too protracted for performance without judicious cutting, the problem may be resolved, in deference to the listener and justice to the composers, by choosing the finest examples, which have considerable audience appeal. The content of this music is readily accessible. Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 7, selected by Schering for his anthology, has already been received enthusiastically in public performances.

But considered even as studies, the ricercars have an inherent advantage over the etude-genre that was to develop in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in that they incorporated musical purposes. From this point of view - acknowledging, of course, the great difference in their worth - they may be compared to Bach's two and three-voice inventions, which were written for instructional purposes, but did not, by virtue of that fact, cease to be music.

When it is recalled that Francesco Geminiani, born in 1687 - the year Antonii's ricercars appeared - was to produce the first "method" for violin, the function of such pieces as these ricercars for instrumental students can be better appreciated. That these very works might well serve a similar purpose in the twentieth century will be argued in Chapter Eight.

What, then, is the instrumental "style" which these unique violoncello pieces of the Bologna School have preserved?
Essentially, it is a broad style, straightforward, calling for detaché bowing as its prime mode of execution. It is an "unprecious" style; pyrotechnics is not indigenous to it, nor would the miniaturist's ideal of intricate bowings or delicately shaded color effects be appropriate. Dynamic contrasts should be on the distinct levels which characterized Baroque practice.

In late seventeenth-century Italy the score was not(to borrow Frederick Dorian's designation) "binding." Throughout the Antonii and Gabrielli sources, there are no dynamic indications, nor directives in tempo, with the exception of those instances in the Gabrielli continuo-ricercars, cited in Chapter Two(especially pp. 23-25). The Antonii ricercars have no slurs in the score; Gabrielli employs slurs only in portions of ricercars 2, 7, 10, 11.

It would be simple minded to propose that these ricercars be played without nuance, without bowing changes or dynamic contrast: to ask that they be played, in short, unmusically, because the score gives no explicit directions in such areas. Obviously, the player in 1690 Bologna was expected to contribute something more than a mechanical grinding-out of the notes. But he had an advantage we lack, in approaching the same pieces: the tradition he was nurtured in. Where he, with a sure conditioning, could safely use the score as a point of departure, the twentieth-century player must ferret out elements of the earlier tradition as best he can, and exercise some reserve in his claims.
Certain principles, however, are clear. Only thirty years separate these ricercars from the Bach chamber works of the Göthen period. Stylistic criteria have gradually evolved through the efforts of modern scholarship, which govern, in a general way, the playing of the violin partitas and the violoncello suites; these yardsticks would surely be applicable, in equal measure, to works of the Bologna School, with which Bach was acquainted. The main service that research has performed, in this area, is to rescue Bach and his contemporaries from the over-editing, and over-Romanticizing, of nineteenth-century practice.

Specifically, it is a mistake to impose slurs indiscriminately, transforming what is essentially a detaché style into the phraseology of another period, in which legato concepts predominate. While this does not mean that the player may not supply, at his discretion, a few slurs in the performance of these ricercars, the requirement is that he use them sparingly.

Gabrielli himself gives confirmation of this by the fact that he does supply a few slurs. Since he indicated them where they were needed, the implication that they are not needed elsewhere is stronger than it would be had he used (like Antonii) no slurs at all. His first indication of slurs occurs in the 12 section of Ricercar No. 2.

Ex. 1 (meas. 207-210)
Note the varying of the pattern. Following this, slurs are omitted for some time, then introduced again near the end. It seems probable that he intended their use throughout the final section of the ricercar.

His next use of slurs is in the final unaccompanied ricercar, No. 7. Here, the slurring of one figure in sixteenths suggests the use of slurs also for the analogous sixteenths in measures 5 and 7.

Ex. 2 (meas. 5-8)

Again, the slurs in measures 16 and 17 (ex. 3a) and 44-46 (ex. 3b) seem reminders of what may well have been common practice for figurations of these kinds:

Ex. 3a (meas. 16-17)
But assuming that the ricercars - both sets - are played, for the most part, with separate bow strokes, it is clear that the chief purpose achieved, for bow technique, is dexterity in the detache style. This is bowing of the most fundamental kind: the basic stroke. Yet this very style, curiously, is much neglected in twentieth-century violoncello study. Violinists, thanks to hours of Kreutzer, suffer less from this lack. But cellists are now trained in legato bowings almost exclusively. This one-sided development results in lack of endurance for swift separate strokes, and consequent tension and stiffness in the right arm.

What of left hand technique in the ricercars? Its exploitation, though no spectacular demands are made, is equally relentless. The curious fact may be noted that nowhere in these ricercars does a rest appear; so the playing of a particularly long example, such as Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 2, may be a test of the cellist's endurance. There are numerous chromatic changes: Antonini's ricercars, especially, offer adventures in tonality which are a challenge to pure intonation.
Although the pieces can be played almost entirely in the first position, shifts to other positions on the lower three strings would enhance their value as études considerably. If they are to be of help to the modern cellist, judicious fingering should be supplied: with such editing, works of this kind may be expected to supplant some of the pedagogical material which lacks the musical interest of these pieces. It would be the responsibility of the editor, moreover, to prescribe appropriate dynamic levels. The opening eight bars of Antonii's Ricercar No. 10, for example, lends itself to this reading:

Ex. 4 (meas. 1-8)

Or, the two-voiced effect of this passage from Gabrielli's third ricercar may be enhanced by dynamic contrast corresponding to the change of register:

Ex. 5 (meas. 10-12)

The slurs, too, are editorial interpolations.

Such attention to phrasing, if done with some degree of
taste and good judgment, would increase, for the student, the musical value of these pieces, without violating stylistic canons.

The demands on left hand technique, made by these ricercars, are twofold: dexterity in scale passages, and skill in playing arpeggios. In figures making use of wide skips, the problem of fluent string crossing is also involved. Four of Antonii’s ricercars (5, 7, 9, 12) exploit wide skips consistently, the octave jump being characteristic. No. 9 provides a good instance:

Ex. 6a (meas. 1, 4)

But the octave study par excellence is provided by Gabrielli, in his second ricercar:

Ex. 6b (meas. 122-124)

Gabrielli’s fifth ricercar, largely a study in arpeggios, extends the boundaries:

Ex. 7 (meas. 19-21)
It is obvious, in both composers, that a number of passages were intended to develop fluency in reading, particularly in rapid adjustment from one clef to another. These measures from Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 6 have many such changes in a small space: it is a clef study.

Ex. 8 (meas. 5-8)

Such a procedure is not adopted for utility of notation, but to provide drill in clef changes. Similarly, in Ricercar No. 9, Antonii offers this succession of clefs:
There is one further aspect of instrumental writing to be dealt with: exploitation of rhythmic patterns. This is an amplification of the comparison between Antonii and Gabrielli made in Chapter Four (cf. examples 4a, 4b). A study of such devices reveals a kind of naivete in the repetition of newly-found patterns: a joy in repetition that may go stale from overstatement. Gabrielli's patterns are more protracted, and also more complex, than Antonii's. Whether by intention or accident, most of Antonii's rhythmic subtleties are crowded into one ricercar: No. 8. Here for the first time he introduces a dotted sixteenth-thirty-second figure:

Ex. 10a (meas. 13-16)

This is analogous to Gabrielli's pattern in Ricercar No. 7, quoted once before:
Incidentally, the hiatus which Antonii injects into the pattern (ex. 10a, measures 14, 15), with the abrupt loss of momentum, would not occur in Gabrielli.

Rhythmic patterns are, to be sure, only another aspect of sectional repetition according to formula: a device which Gabrielli used, if anything, to excess. Instances of syncopation (Chapter Four, examples 6, 7, 8) have been pointed out earlier. These, too, with Gabrielli, are strongly patterned.

The catalog ends here. There seems good reason for viewing these ricercars as studies, provided the term study is not narrowly defined.
CHAPTER SIX

A COMPARISON OF THE BOLOGNA RICERCARS AND BACH'S PRELUDES TO
THE VIOLONCELLO SUITES

It must be made clear from the outset of this chapter that the juxtaposition of Antonii's and Gabrielli's ricercars, and the preludes (from the six suites) by Bach for violoncello alone, is to be a comparison on technical grounds alone: that is to say, the means of production, as manifested in all three composers, will be studied. This will yield certain startling affinities.

There is no direct evidence that Bach was acquainted with the violoncello works of the two Bolognese composers, but in view of his wide acquaintance with Italian music, it seems likely that he may have known them. He was familiar with the works of Corelli, who, according to Mishkin, was "the most illustrious proponent of the Bologna style, although not a member proper of the school, who studied and worked at Bologna from 1666 till 1671, becoming a member of the famous Accademia Filarmonica of Bologna in 1670."¹ As we have seen, both Antonii and Gabrielli were members of the Accademia.

Bach's violoncello suites were composed while he was in residence at Cöthen (1717-1723), probably about 1720. Approx-

¹Mishkin, loc. cit., p. 91.
mately thirty years, therefore, separate the suites from the Bolognese ricercars. The manuscript (in the autograph of Anna Magdalena Bach, the earliest extant copy) resembles that of Gabrielli in the absence of directions to guide the performer: there are no dynamic marks, and no specific tempo indications. Undoubtedly the character of the various dances was expected to suggest the correct tempo. Bach is considerably more generous than Gabrielli, however, in the use of slurs, though the style remains essentially detached (certainly more non-legato than the readings usually heard in the twentieth century); and he indicates trills quite frequently, staccato notes occasionally. His use of double stops, though sporadic, is much more frequent than that of his "predecessors" in Bologna.

While the technical demands (to say nothing of the musical ones) are appreciably greater than in the ricercars, this is not music of virtuoso display, but music of idea. Bach, with the sovereignty of genius, turns virtuoso means to his musical purposes; he had no need, like the Bolognese, to adopt an attitude either of indulgence or forbearance. There is ample opportunity for exuberant performance, for the joy of the dance.

But the suites employ the middle and lower registers of the violoncello only, not exceeding the interval of an octave above the open A-string. The exception is Suite VI, which was written for a 5-string violoncello ("E" being the additional string, a fifth above the "A"). It is now customary to perform the sixth suite on the ordinary 4-string violoncello, and this accounts for its high tessitura and harsh demands on the
Each suite has six movements, of which the first is a prelude, and the remainder stylized dance forms. The preludes offer the greatest contrasts, providing, as they do, most scope for the composer's imagination; they are essentially free fantasias, yet each preserves a thematic unity, and employs imitation. In implied polyphony, the use of repeated patterns, as well as in their technical demands, these preludes are reminiscent of Gabrielli; in their thematic reiteration they are closer to Antonii. By coincidence (or perhaps, more fortuitously, by organic analogy) Apel's description of the late ricercar for lute might just as well have been written of the Bach preludes: "The lute ricercar more and more approaches the style of the imitative ricercar, apparently owing to an increased ability of the lute players who by then regarded the polyphonic style as idiomatic to their instrument."¹

Indeed, the preludes of the Bach suites have as much claim, structurally, to the title "ricercar" as do the Antonii and Gabrielli examples. For this reason (and also because they display Bach's art in a concentrated way, and offer considerable contrast with one another), I will examine the preludes of the suites, only, in the comparative study which follows.

The comparison is abetted by the fact that the preludes employ all the styles, or devices, found in the works of the earlier men. There is a Bach counterpart for virtually every

¹ Apel, op. cit., p. 644.
one of the Gabrielli ricercars, with its characteristic techniques given a heightened musical setting. The great Prelude No. 5, however, is in no way prefigured in Gabrielli; in this instance, Antonii supplies a stronger precursor, to be noted near the end of the chapter. We shall proceed prelude by prelude.

The first Bach violoncello suite is in G Major. The prelude opens with a motif in sixteenths (this rhythmic basis serves for the entire piece):

Ex. 1 (meas. 1-2)

In measure 8 the motif reappears in E minor; after brief entrances in which it is altered melodically, there is new material leading to its final statement in inverted form.

Gabrielli opens Ricercar No. 6 with an analogous figure, which is not, however, reiterated:

Ex. 2 (meas. 1-2)

This forms the rhythmic basis of the long first section.
Measures 15-17 give this figuration,

Ex. 3

which finds its apotheosis in the first Bach prelude:

Ex. 4 (meas. 32-34)

Note the double stems with which Bach emphasizes the two-voice character afforded by the "pedal" A.

Antonii's Ricercar No. 3 bears less motivic resemblance to the prelude, in that it is in eighth notes throughout; but it is in similar detache style and the opening three-bar theme is restated completely about midway through the piece, and in shortened form near the end. This thematic reiteration is characteristic of all the Bach preludes, and as we have seen, of most of Antonii's ricercars. Gabrielli uses this device only in his third ricercar. Here is Antonii's theme:
Observe, in examples, 3, 4, and 5, the uniformity of range.

The prelude to Suite II, in D minor, is of a brooding, introspective character.

Ex. 6 (meas. 1-3)

Various portions of Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 7, notably the beginning and the close, anticipate its spirit. The key is also D minor. The measures which follow were chosen for their close resemblance to the Bach:

Ex. 7 (meas. 63-64)

Antonii's Ricercar No. 8, also in D minor, suggests,
too, the character of the Bach prelude. (Again, Antonii presages the practice of Bach by bringing back his theme during the course of the piece.)

Ex. 8 (meas. 1-2)

The third Bach prelude begins and ends with the C Major scale:

Ex. 9 (meas. 1-2)

Though Gabrielli and Antonii provide scales in plenty, we cannot expect the same mysterious alchemy at their hands. Nevertheless, in Ricercar No. 2, Gabrielli offers an honest tone row in C Major:

Ex. 10 (meas. 113-115)

A juxtaposition of measure 17 in the Bach prelude and measure 201 in the Gabrielli ricercar will show how closely related, technically, the two idioms are. This is a signifi-
cant resemblance, which the musical gulf separating them
(when they are in context) cannot nullify:

Ex. 11a (Bach)

Ex. 11b (Gabrielli)

Similarly, the two final bars of Antonii's Ricercar No. 10,
taken in isolation, might easily be ascribed to Bach:

Ex. 12 (meas. 95-96)

There is here, likewise, tonal definition comparable to Bach's.
Antonii achieved this most successfully at final cadences, as
at the end of Ricercar No. 4, which is emphatic in the same way
as Bach's C Major prelude:

Ex. 13 (meas. 94-96)
The fourth prelude is largely in arpeggiated eighth notes, to which Bach assigns no slur. After the halfway point, marked by a fermata, a slurred sixteenth passage enters; it is a quasi-cadenza. The character of the prelude becomes more rhapsodic from this point on; it is increasingly chromatic: the tension builds as eighth and sixteenth figures alternate, leading to a restatement of the opening bars, followed by a three-measure coda. This is, in my opinion, the most mysterious, probably the most Romantic, of the preludes. These are the opening bars:

Ex. 14 (meas. 1-3)

The plan of Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 5, in C Major, is remarkably close to Bach; it is essentially a succession of eighth arpeggios, with a cadenza-like intermediate section. As in Bach's fourth prelude, the arpeggios outline triads, but in a faster harmonic rhythm:

Ex. 15 (meas. 1-3)

Although the structural affinity is greatest between the fifth ricercar and Bach's fourth prelude, the most striking sim-
similarities in instrumental writing occur between passages of the fourth ricercar (also by Gabrielli), which is in the key of E-flat, and the same Bach prelude. This is borne out not so much in a measure-by-measure correspondence, as in the related character of extended sections, in which eighth or quarter-note declamation alternates with sixteenth passages.

The chromaticism is pronounced in both works. The last twelve measures of each piece are given. First, the Gabrielli (Ricercar No. 4):

Ex. 16 (meas. 59-70)
To press a point, it is the similarity of the technical demands, and the style of instrumental writing, that are significant in this comparison. Already, the evidence suggests that Bach may have been acquainted with the ricercars, and the accumulated evidence of this chapter will point strongly to that possibility. Once more, what is sought to support such a claim is not a measure-by-measure duplication. Bach had no need to borrow, in that wise, from Gabrielli. Moreover, in the extended example just quoted from the Bologna cellist, there is no thematic material which Bach has drawn on for his
prelude: in tonal organization, symmetry of phrase, reiteration of pedal tones—indeed, in virtually every way, the latter marks an advance over the ricercar. Yet the remarkable similarity persists, and it is even possible, in instances such as those quoted below, to find a closer similarity, extending over as many as three bars:

Ex. 18a (meas. 34-35) Gabrielli: Ricercar 4

Ex. 18b (meas. 38-40) Bach: Prelude IV

Antonii, too, anticipated the general character of the fourth prelude in the opening of his Ricercar No. 4, with its arpeggio figure:

Ex. 19a (meas. 1)

And once again, imitating this a fourth lower, he approaches the Bach practice:

Ex. 19b (meas. 4)
But he then abandons the motif for the remainder of the ricercar.

It is Antonii who provides the only near precursor of Bach's Prelude V, the C minor. Antonii cannot be said, in Ricercar No. 11, to have written a fugue, because, in contrast to Bach, he has little clearly-implied polyphony. Nevertheless, he employs fugal procedures, and there are seven complete statements of his theme; it is long and unwieldy. A portion will serve present purposes:

Ex. 20 (meas. 1-2)

The fugal theme of Prelude V is this:

Ex. 21

Antonii often goes immediately into the imitation of his opening measures; in this instance, however, he brings in the answer — as does Bach — in the eighth bar; Bach's answer is at the fifth above, Antonii's at the fourth below. His third statement (an octave below the original one) is in the eighteenth bar; Bach's — also at the octave below — in the
twenty-first. There are sequences in the Antonii of clear polyphonic intent, such as these:

Ex. 22 (meas. 14-16)

The measures of this example occur in the "episode" between the second and third statements. Note the rhythmic motive of an eighth followed by two sixteenths, taken from the theme. Antonii makes further use of it. Just before the sixth statement, it becomes

Ex. 23 (meas. 60-63)

There has been much reference throughout this paper to the technique of writing polyphony for a single instrument. Antonii and Gabrielli have given us no more than glimpses of the possibilities of such a procedure. If successful writing in this genre is to be found anywhere, it will surely be found in Bach: and where better than in a fugue for a single violoncello?
Here, indeed, is the concentration of that skill. Out of many possible samplings, these measures have been chosen:

Ex. 24 (Bach Prelude V; Alexanian edition, p. 53)

This poses an impossible standard for the earlier men. If we take a more fragmentary dialogue, which Bach often employs, his predecessors will be at less of a disadvantage. These measures are from Prelude III:

Ex. 25 (meas. 7-10 — Alexanian p. 122)

Here may be juxtaposed measures 19-20 from Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 6:

Ex. 26a
And measure 29 (I have interpolated treble clef for clarity):

Ex. 26b

Two of the strongest ricercars - Gabrielli's No. 3 and Antonii's No. 12, both in D Major - bear a close resemblance to Bach's prelude to the sixth suite: not only in structure, but in the thematic character. Again, Bach's music is much more unified: the opening eleven bars are imitated in toto, starting on the dominant, in the succeeding eleven; the following entrances are imitated less exactly, less lengthily; material derived from the "exposition" forms the basis of the prelude's "episodes". The first two measures of the strong opening motif will serve for purposes of comparison:

Ex. 27

The second entrance is at the fifth and proceeds in A Major; succeeding announcements are in E minor, G Major, and the last two (repeating the first two bars only) in A and D. There are thus six entrances of the fundamental motive, though material from the eleven-bar unit is introduced throughout, in a variety of keys.

Antonii's theme appears seven times, and Gabrielli's six,
the latter with two melodic and rhythmic distortions. What is of special interest, however, is the fact that both composers introduce their "answers" in the eleventh bar, and, like Bach's, in the dominant! Let us see both themes:

Ex. 28a (meas. 1-4)  Antonii

Ex. 28b (meas. 1-2)  Gabrielli

In their third statements, both composers return to the tonic. In his fourth, Gabrielli uses B minor, with both melodic and rhythmic alterations (cf. Chapter II, ex. 18), and in the fifth statement, F-sharp minor (cf. Chapter II, ex. 19). His last statement, near the conclusion, is again in the tonic.

Antonii proceeds again, in the fourth statement, to an entrance on the dominant, returning to the tonic on the fifth entrance, then dominant and tonic again, respectively, on the sixth and seventh appearances. The alternation has been consistent throughout, and he makes no changes in the material. The description of alternate entrances as in the "dominant" must be qualified, however, because the contrasting statement, on A, is always elided, and the last nine eighths are identical with those of the original "subject":
Although Antonii's "episodes" are long thematic wildernesses, for the most part, he does, in one of them, draw on elements of the theme for three bars(cf. Chapter III, ex. 42). There is frequent use, however, in Ricercar No. 12, of the three-eighth figure on a single tone:

Ex. 30 (meas. 101-102)

The twelfth ricercar, as pointed out in Chapter III(ex. 43), also contains some of Antonii's best writing of a polyphonic character.

It is curious that Gabrielli, in his single excursion into the ricercar with thematic reiteration, went somewhat beyond Antonii. The analysis of his third ricercar, in Chapter II, points out the existence of secondary material(almost a second subject)which Gabrielli uses several times, rhythmically and melodically, in this way strengthening the unity of the ricercar. Although the No. 12 was cited as one of Antonii's best, it must be regarded as inferior to the Gabrielli No. 3 in structure, as well as in rhythmic and thematic interest.
It is a fascinating study in musical evolution to take these three D Major examples - the Antonii No. 12, Gabrielli No. 3, and Bach Prelude VI - and examine them in that order, hear them played in that order. Obviously, all three pieces might be called ricercars, by any of the criteria we have examined. Again, it is difficult to believe that Bach was not acquainted with this music: particularly the Gabrielli. Since it may be said, without sacrilege, that Bach came to fulfill rather than to destroy, it seems plausible that in the obscure area of unaccompanied violoncello literature, as in so many other realms, he took what earlier men had begun, and brought it to completion. If so, the evolution of the genre was rapid: 1687 to 1720. This was not the end, since Peger (who imagined he was carrying forward the style of Bach in his own three suites for unaccompanied violoncello, op. 131c), Kodaly, Hindemith, and many others have added to the repertory. Yet the Bach suites remain the peak, and have provided the inspiration for further efforts in this medium. This has been clearly recognized for some time. What has not heretofore been acknowledged is the thesis of this chapter: that certain ingredients of the six suites were being assembled in seventeenth-century Bologna, by Degli Antonii and Domenico Gabrielli.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE RICERCARS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The eighteenth century was a rich period for violoncello literature: Locatelli, Sammartini, and Boccherini were among the prominent composers who contributed sonatas, while the concerto literature was inaugurated, early in the century, by Jacchini, Monn, and Leo, and was to reach its peak in C. P. E. Bach and Haydn.

In contrast, the seventeenth century produced very few works for the instrument. The Gabrielli and Antonii ricercars, we have seen, were the first solo pieces for unaccompanied violoncello. The last four Gabrielli ricercars,¹ moreover, signal the beginning of a violoncello literature with keyboard accompaniment. Since 1687 was the date of publication of the Antonii ricercars, and 1689 the year of the Gabrielli autograph, it seems that no further works for the instrument were destined to appear until the turn of the century: even the earliest of the "staples" in the violoncello repertory belong to the eighteenth century. Van Der Straeten does, indeed, refer to twelve sonatas by Domenico Galli, which appeared in 1691 (in Trattenimento musicale sopra il violoncello a solo), and which he describes as being "of a very primitive character, and for the greater part very uninteresting."² Of

¹The analysis of these, No.'s 8–11, appears in the last portion of Chapter Two.

²Van Der Straeten, op. cit., p. 139. Grove's Dictionary also carries an entry on Galli: the source appears to be Van Der Straeten. Neither author gives a clue to the whereabouts of this music.
the period under discussion, Van Der Straeten has this to say: "Until the middle of the seventeenth century the violoncello only served as a simple bass in the orchestra. In chamber music, where the bass viol held its sway, it was not admitted. During the second part it gradually crept in as a solo instrument in obligato accompaniments of arias in some Italian operas."¹

We may question Van Der Straeten's claim that the violoncello was so rigorously excluded from seventeenth-century chamber music. The title page of a composition by B. Fontana, published in Brescia in 1641, reads: "les sonate a 1, 2, 3, par violino, cornetto, fagatto, chitaronrahne, violoncino et simile altro instrumento."² Homer Ulrich refers to eighteen sonate a due e tre, op. 2, by Giovanni Legrenzi (c. 1625-1690), published in 1655; the thirteenth of the set, "La Valvasona", called for two violins and violoncello.³ Even earlier than this, however, the violoncello may well have been assigned, on occasion, to the continuo. But in the second half of the seventeenth century there can be little doubt of its growing importance. In Corelli's forty-eight church and chamber sonatas (through opus 4) for two violins, bass, and continuo, written before 1700, there is surely no need to assume a doctrinaire exclusion of the violoncello. Similarly, in trio sonatas of

¹Ibid., pp. 373-374.
Purcell and early Handel, the utility of the violoncello for continuo performance may frequently have been realized, even though the instrument was not specifically called for.

Bologna seems to have accorded the violoncello consistent recognition: Giovanni Battista Borri, of that city, published "Sinfonie a tre, due violini e violoncello con il basso per l'organo" in 1688. These, however, are chamber music, as are the twelve sonatas "a 2 violini e violoncello" by Domenico della Bella, and Giuseppe Jacchini's Concerti...con violoncello obligato, op. 4(1701). The Antonii and Gabrielli scores remain unique for their period.

A comparison of the Gabrielli continuo-ricercars with the unaccompanied ones has been made, and the solo ricercars of both Antonii and Gabrielli have been juxtaposed with the preludes of the Bach violoncello suites, the only other works of somewhat similar design that the period offers.

Further comparison can only be made with early examples of sonatas for violoncello and continuo, which date from the beginning of the eighteenth century. The continuo ricercars of Gabrielli, being closest to these stylistically, will be used primarily for the comparison, although quotations from his and Antonii's solo ricercars will also be made when feasible. It is pertinent to note that the first composers of

2Apel, op. cit., p. 805.
3Ibid., p. 804.
violoncello sonatas were producing their work several decades after the appearance of the Bologna ricercars. Jacopo Basse-vi Cervetto (1682-1783), for example, published his Solos for a Violoncello with a Thorough Bass for the Harpsichord in England between 1747 and 1749. 1,2

For purposes of this study I have chosen works of five composers: Henry Eccles (1670-1742), Francois Francoeur (1698-1787), Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739), Gio. Batt. Sammartini (c. 1700-1770), and Giuseppe Valentini (c. 1660 —). It will be seen that they are approximately contemporary with one another, and that their work falls into the first half of the eighteenth century. Their sonatas are representative of the

1 Ibid., p. 805.
2 Giovanni Battista Bononcini (1670 — c. 1748, according to Läng; 1665 — after 1748, Apel; c. 1668 —- Pétis), who wrote a sonata for violoncello and continuo in A minor, may be an exception; the date of the sonata is not known, but many of his early works were published in Bologna, the city of his birth, between 1684 and 1691. It seems likely that he came under the influence of Antonio and Gabrieli. Bononcini himself was active early in his career as a cellist, playing for a time at the court of Emperor Leopold. In Vienna his interest in opera was aroused and it was this development which was to lead to his celebrated controversy with Handel.

Miss Kennard, in her thesis on the early violoncello sonata in Italy, cites the second movement of the Bononcini Sonata (an allegro) as a very early use of the da capo aria form in an instrumental composition; if her ascription of this to Handel's influence is correct, the sonata belongs to a later period of Bononcini's life and, like the other works considered, followed the ricercars by several decades: "Bononcini's use of it may have been occasioned by his rivalry with Handel who employed it so commonly. As a ternary form, no matter how elementary, it is significant here as a turning away from the binary form which prevailed in the Suite, and as a preparation for the sonata form which was developed from the simple ternary idea." (Kennard, op. cit., p. 29)
writing of that period: moreover, by virtue of musical worth, they belong to the cellist's repertoire and may be heard today in recital. These five composers represent a certain homogeneity of style: and though, indisputably, they mark an "advance" over the Bologna writing of 1690, a logical connection may be observed. Such relationship is less apparent in the more celebrated Locatelli (1693-1764), who, though a pupil of Corelli, wrote in a virtuoso style with a high tessitura. And Tartini (1692-1770), though contemporary, like Locatelli, with the five composers chosen, wrote works for viola da gamba (which cellists have appropriated) in a highly ornamented, virtuosic style, as did Boccherini (1743-1805), who belonged to the second half of the century. These characteristics, we have seen, were foreign to the Bologna School.

Let us return, then, to Gabrielli and Ricercar No. 10. The second portion, in $\frac{3}{4}$, inaugurates a Largo.

Ex. 1 (meas. 28-30)

Of the early eighteenth century composers for violoncello, Marcello is closest to the character of Gabrielli, both in technical demands, which are modest (he seldom goes
beyond fourth position), and in melodic and harmonic style. Here, for comparison with example 1, is the opening of his Sonata in G minor. The movement is Adagio.

Ex. 2 (meas. 1-4)

Even here, however, the presence of trills in the relatively simple idiom of Marcello marks a significant change from Gabrielli's practice. Imitation, moreover, which is hinted at in Gabrielli and then abandoned, is deliberately pursued by Marcello, as in the Gigue which closes the G minor Sonata:

Ex. 3 (meas. 1-9)
Gabrielli, in similar vein, gives this figuration in Ricercar II, marked Presto. Note the simplicity of the continuo in comparison with Ex. 3.

Ex. 4 (meas. 5-8)

In the second movement of the Marcello G minor Sonata, an Allegro, a sequential figure appears in the violoncello part, of the kind that has proved to be typical of the Bologna ricercars:

Ex. 5 (meas. 8-9)

Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 7 provides the closest analogous passage:
Ex. 6 (meas. 16-18)

The most pronounced similarities always occur in melodic sequences, within a given harmonic framework, whether implicit (as in the case of the unaccompanied ricercars) or clearly indicated. A comparison of measures from Antonii's Ricercar No. 10, and a portion of the second movement of Eccles's Sonata in G minor will illustrate the point:

Ex. 7a Antonii (meas. 1-4)

Ex. 7b Eccles (Courante, meas. 30-34)

In example 7a, the Antonii begins in G minor, enters the dominant briefly in the second bar and returns to the tonic; in the third bar we have the choice of a brief excursion into the relative major through its dominant seventh,
or of using IV-I, with no change of harmony leading into bar 5.

Eccles (7b) reverses the procedure; even without the continuo (which confirms it) we see B-flat major tonic proceeding to the dominant chord and returning, while in the next two bars we enter G minor through its dominant seventh. But this is not the full lesson, for Antonii is more ambiguous, harmonically; Eccles is clear, and the phrasing itself is balanced, rhythmically symmetrical. Ex. 7b represents a more developed idiom.

So far as the harmonic material itself is concerned, it is the same for the two eras: triads and seventh chords on every degree, with a preponderance of the principal triads, and the supertonic as the most frequent representative of the secondary ones. It is in the more logical organization of the harmonic material that the generations following Antonii and Gabrielli are superior: this organization is one of the factors related to the formal structure of the sonatas, and of the melodic phrases that occur within that structure. This will be touched upon once more at the conclusion of the chapter. Gabrielli's harmonic sense is more highly developed than Antonii's, closer to eighteenth century idioms, and his melodies—especially when patterned in sequences—suggest the harmonic basis more strongly. A passage from Ricercar No. 10, with continuo, is offered in support of this point:

Ex. 8 (meas. 12-15)
The cadenza which closes the first movement of the Sammartini Sonata in G Major is built on virtually the same harmonic material:

Ex. 9 (meas. 86-94)

The effect of the Gabrielli is still improvisatory, however, while in the Sammartini we are clearly aware of an eight-measure phrase. The accompanied ricercars, though they are tending in the direction of formal balance, have not attained it.
Formally, the ricercars are most forward-looking in the 128 sections of a sicilienne character, and in the lively passages in duple meter, suggesting gigues. Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 11 is the strongest example of the latter type:

Ex. 10 (meas. 1-5)

The beginning of the Gigue (movement 5) in the Fontecour Sonata in F Major will show how this character was retained in later works:

Ex. 11 (meas. 1-8)
Like Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 11, Francoeur's Gigue is in binary form, with repeated sections. But Francoeur, unlike Gabrielli, employs motivic repetition. With the early eighteenth-century composers, chord progression became increasingly rational; and this systematic scheme began to accommodate a modulatory technique, to closely related keys, which was sometimes highly chromatic, as in the opening Grave of the Valentini E Major Sonata:

Ex. 12 (meas. 14-20)
But the disparity between this writing and that of Gabrielli need not be exaggerated. In Ricercar No. 10 we encounter a clear prefiguring of such chromaticism:

Ex. 13 (meas. 8-11)

Many instances have been cited, both in Antonii and Gabrielli, of "formula" writing: the repetition, sometimes at length, of melodic-rhythmic sequences. This device was incorporated in
eighteenth century practice, but was more surely controlled within the formal architecture. Here is an example of such practice from the second movement (Allegro) of the Valentini Sonata:

Ex. 14 (meas. 4-7)

Note the higher tessitura. Valentini was a violinist; the technical requirements of this sonata are considerable, approaching those of Locatelli. Of the five composers being considered, all use a compass extending as high as C'' or beyond: even Marcello, whose single excursion beyond fourth position occurs in the second movement (Allegro) of his F Major Sonata:

Ex. 15 (meas. 20-24)

Here, too, is sequential writing. But an example more characteristic both of Marcello and his Bologna predecessors occurs
in the final Allegro of the same sonata:

Ex. 16 (meas. 36-42)

Again, however - in the composer closest to the practice of Antonii and Gabrielli - the ornamentation reflects a different, and later, milieu. Yet note the resemblance to the preceding three examples, in these measures from Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 2:

Ex. 17 (meas. 105-108)

Or in this excerpt from Antonii's Ricercar No. 10:

Ex. 18 (meas. 19-20)

In both men, what is missing is the more secure harmonic and formal frame of reference which later practice was to pro-
vide. The "drive" assured by a fixed destination within a well-defined musical architecture, is absent in Antonii and Gabrielli. Even in the preludes to the Bach suites, which the ricercars resemble most closely, there is the unity imposed by strong organization: and the preludes, though "free" in a sense, always exhibit the force of direction their author provided. There are "spots" of such purpose in the Bolognese ricercars, but no consistent technique had been developed; the works are embryonic.

What are the features of the early eighteenth century style, which Antonii and Gabrielli fitfully anticipated? It is beyond the scope of this study to undertake a formal analysis of the early sonatas for violoncello and continuo; such an examination, moreover, even if entered into exhaustively, would be a duplication of existing studies. But it will be useful, for purposes of our comparison, to review briefly the salient characteristics of the sonatas. The works of the five composers already touched upon in this chapter will serve.

The sonatas vary in number of movements from three to five, generally alternating slow and fast movements, though this does not occur in every instance; a change of pace does take place, however, as between the second and third movements of the Francoeur Sonata, where an Allegro Vivo succeeds to a Tempo di Gavotta. A clear distinction between church and chamber sonatas cannot be maintained: only the two Marcello works adhere to a slow-fast-slow-fast pattern; the Eccles, which also has four movements of alternating tempos, indicates Courante
for the second movement, Sarabande for the third, and Gigue for the fourth. The Valentini, in five contrasting movements like the Francoeur, also introduces a Gavotte after the first Allegro. The Francoeur ends with a Gigue; the Valentini, with a swift movement in triple meter, of scherzo character. The Sammartini has three movements in the fast-slow-fast pattern. The cohesive influence of the dance can be seen even in movements not explicitly labelled.

The movements of these sonatas (excepting the Gavottes, and the first Allegro of the Valentini, which are ternary; excepting also a number of the Largos, which might be called arias senza da capo) are in binary form with repeated sections. The binary movements, whether in fast or slow tempo, modulate, characteristically, to the key of the dominant (or the relative major) at the end of the first section. Other modulations are to closely related keys.

How do Antonii and Gabrielli fit into this picture? They are precursors, to be sure, in one sense; they recorded and perhaps perpetuated a particular kind of instrumental technique. Obviously, neither of them wrote sonatas, despite the manipulation Gabrielli's continuo-ricercars have gone through. His eleventh ricercar, indeed, may be looked upon as a Gigue; and sections of the earlier ricercars show a similar character. It might not be an act of impiety, moreover, to call the Largo of Gabrielli's Ricercar No. 10 a Sarabande, particularly since the stress normally falls, throughout, on the second beat. But
the ricercars do not reflect, either in Antonii or Gabrielli, a strong influence of the dance. They are not suites; they might be called Preludes, for reasons already discussed, but that is another matter.

Gabrielli, as the first to write for violoncello and continuo, was more than a precursor. The last four ricercars inaugurated a new literature. If there is anything to the speculation that Vatielli and Landshoff may have had access to sources other than the manuscript in the Bibliotheca Estense, Modena, as the basis for their Sonatas in G and A Major, attributed to Gabrielli, then Gabrielli's influence on his contemporaries, and on the evolving genre, may have been greater than we supposed. We have seen that Ricercars 8, 9, and 10 were incorporated in the G Major "Sonata." In any case, Gabrielli marks - with Antonii - the beginning of the violoncello repertory.

This being so, all stylistic innovations came somewhat later. On the evidence of the Bologna ricercars themselves, this is plausible, even were the dates not known. For the somewhat rudimentary pieces of Antonii and Gabrielli - with their absence of ornament, their still transitional harmony, their formal ambiguity, and their modest technical demands - are only pointing the way toward the stylistic elegance and refinement of a developed art.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION.

PEDAGOGICAL USE OF THE RICERCARS

It has been the purpose of this study to make a thorough examination of the earliest known pieces for unaccompanied violoncello: the ricercars of Degli Antonii and Domenico Gabrielli. To provide the proper setting, biographical material concerning both composers was presented in Chapter One, from the sparse information available. An attempt was then made to relate the composers themselves to the musical practice of the late seventeenth century in Italy, and in particular to the Bologna School with which both men were prominently identified. References to the practices of this school were also made in succeeding chapters.

Analyses of the ricercars of Gabrielli and Antonii, respectively, were undertaken in Chapters Two and Three, and a comparison of their styles in Chapter Four. Following this, problems of performance practice – instrumental technique, tempo and phrasing, dynamics – were dealt with in the context of Baroque style, and the question of the function of these ricercars was raised. Then the works of both men were compared, from the standpoint of idiomatic writing, to the six preludes to the unaccompanied violoncello suites of Bach. The argument of that chapter, for which the examples served as evidence, was that Bach was familiar with the works of Gabrielli and possibly of
Antonii as well. There can be no doubt of his knowledge of the instrumental style which the ricercars exemplify, and the close similarity between specific works appears to be more than coincidence. Finally, in Chapter Seven, there was a discussion of the Antonii and Gabrielli works in their relation to other early compositions for violoncello.

We found, in the examination of the ricercars, that while they can hardly be said to make virtuoso technical demands, in the modern sense, they were nevertheless adequate to the needs of cellists of that time. Within that framework, Gabrielli's requirements were more stringent than Antonii's: he made greater use of sixteenth and thirty-second note passages; he provided more variety of rhythmic figuration. Both composers were addicted to the use of melodic and rhythmic sequences, but Gabrielli carried such figures through more consistently than Antonii, within a loose sectional structure. Tonally, Gabrielli's ricercars have clearer definition than Antonii's: cadences are more frequent, more positive, and modulatory passages are less ambiguous. Antonii, on the other hand, less inclined to sectional construction, is clearly in quest of thematic unity, and a cyclical treatment of themes is evident in most of his ricercars. Yet Gabrielli, in his single attempt at this type of writing - Ricercar No. 3 - surpasses Antonii in development of material; there is the strong suggestion of a counter-subject, and elements of both themes are used in "episodes" throughout the ricercar.

So much for summary. The interest which these pieces hold
for the modern student is pronounced on three levels: the historical, the technical, and the musical. The concern of this paper has been, primarily, with the first two. But the question of their musical worth must also be raised.

It seems evident that in these ricercars, no lost masterpieces have been resurrected. Nevertheless, they have musical interest. They are of unequal value, some being intrinsically more energetic and forceful than others. Again, more of Gabrielli's than Antonii's ricercars recommend themselves from this point of view. It is the musical, combined with the technical, interest of the strongest specimens that should now command the attention of violoncello pedagogy. And this brings us to an important consideration, hinted at earlier, but not yet fully discussed: the possible utility of these pieces to the present-day student and teacher.

There is, to be sure, no dearth of violoncello "methods". There is a great dearth, however, of actual music for students of limited technique. Those who have the physical and spiritual stamina to survive the discipline of numberless exercises may find themselves ultimately in touch with Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms; but, from this writer's point of view, they will be impotent unless they have somehow contrived - along with their etudes - to play music from the very beginning.

The problem, of course, is how to supply musical nourishment in the early stages of study, while a dependable technique is being acquired. Some attempt has been made in recent years,
both through transcriptions and original works, to meet the needs of players who are building a technique. But the teacher still has too little literature to draw on for that crucial period of development.

It is here that the Antonii and Gabrielli ricercars may serve a good purpose. More interesting, musically, than exercises, they nevertheless accomplish the same aims: yet the best ones are suitable for recital use. Moreover, and this is a strong recommendation, they are excellent preparation for the study of Bach, as Chapter Six makes clear. Too often, the student is catapulted without preparation into the six suites, where he may struggle, bewildered, for years in the attempt to evoke music from an unfamiliar idiom. Through the playing of some of the ricercars, he may be led gradually, logically, to Bach.

The détaché style of bowing, characteristic of the Baroque, has been discussed in some detail. Cellists, it was pointed out, generally neglect practice in this style. The Antonii and Gabrielli ricercars offer a concentrated course in détaché bowing: and this is a discipline which even the various methods do not supply in sufficient measure.

But there is the danger that this essential feature may be "edited out"; the passion for legato has already, in so many instances, altered the character of Baroque music. It is therefore recommended that slurs be added sparingly to the Antonii and Gabrielli scores. This is especially important if the ricercars are to serve as preparation for playing Bach.
One other feature commends the ricercars to pedagogy: they are concentrated in the lower register of the violoncello. A thorough perusal of as many as six of the ricercars, chosen from both composers, cannot fail to impart considerable fluency to the left hand within that compass, at the same time that bow dexterity is being furthered.
APPENDIX A

THE GABRIELLI RICERCARS: REPRODUCTION OF
THE COMPOSER'S AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT (1689)

Ludwig Landshoff: Preface from Domenico
Gabrielli: Two Sonatas for Violoncello
Gabrielli Domenico = Stolzner =

Cicrari per Violoncello solo, con un canone a due Violoncelli e
altri Cicrari per s. t. o. e B. C.

In tutto, per 11.

Gabrielli en detto Tingarn

dal Vincenzeel.
Ricercare di primo  "a dì 15 Gennaio 1610"
Canon à due Violoncelli, uno entra una battuta dop to P. Salmo
Quercy 6.0
Domenico Gabrielli, born in Bologna in 1659, called by his countrymen "Minghin dal Violoncel"\(^1\), belongs, as do Pergolesi, Mozart, and Schubert, to the ranks of those geniuses who matured early; they fulfilled their artistic mission even though Death removed the quill from their hand at an age at which the creative spirit usually first succeeds in freeing itself from models and becomes conscious of its own style. When he was only thirty years old Gabrielli had to give up his professional activity completely, and hardly a year later, on July 10, 1690, his sickly body succumbed to the long, severe illness. Despite the short period of a decade which was granted him for his work, he bequeathed to the world a rich and very personal collection of works: nine operas written for Bologna, Modena, Venice, and Turin, much vocal church music (with and without instrumental accompaniment), orchestral concertos, solo cantatas, short dance suites for violin and basso continuo, and a number of compositions for cello. With the latter the cello began its career as a solo instrument, being liberated finally from the servile position in which

\(^{1}\) A diminutive of Domenico in the Bolognese dialect.
it was held for a century, as support for the bass along with the harpsichord. For the first time it was made the peer of the violin and the viola. However, this is not the reason for a republication of Gabrielli's two sonatas for cello, despite the degree to which the sureness of these first steps upon untrodden earth surprises and commands admiration. The contribution of the sonatas which makes their revival seem essential and necessary is more properly that, along with their melodic beauty, closed form and consistent harmonic development, they already have grasped clearly the particular and essential character of the cello; they capture its multiple possibilities and its whole wealth of expression: the sweetness(schmelzen, i.e. "to smelt") and splendor of the high levels as well as the sonorous tone and pithy fullness, which the low strings are able to deliver, the suitability of the instrument for the vocal presentation of a broadly flowing cantilena and, of equal importance, its capacity for richly-figured, lively-moving play. Gabrielli thus prepared a solid foundation for future development, which also determined the general contours of the development once and for all, indeed, to a large extent anticipated it. Gabrielli thereby accomplished for the cello an achievement similar to a later one in the related field of violin by Corelli with his twelve sonatas of the famous opus 5(1700). (He was strongly influenced by Gabrielli and the Bolognese School.) In addition, Gabrielli, who was himself a
Landshoff's Preface,  # 3

master cellist, refined the technique of playing the instrument to the level of virtuosity, so that his compositions for cello present even the accomplished player of today a challenge not easy to master, but therefore more rewarding. For these reasons, certainly, and also in view of our scant holdings of valuable cello literature, the two sonatas will be a contribution welcomed by the cello's present-day "connoisseurs and amateurs".

The text of the present edition was produced from a careful contemporary manuscript. Except for the realization of the continuo, all of my additions regarding the notation of dynamics and articulation, ornamentation and directions for tempo, etc., are distinguished by lighter type from the ones contained in the manuscript. To aid those who are not familiar with the seventeenth-century manner of writing music in understanding the notation of the bass, it should be remarked that in the manuscript the first sonata in G Major is written without the notation of a sharp in the signature, and the second sonata in A Major has only two sharps indicated.

When performing the accompaniment with a harpsichord of 16' register, one should disregard the doubled octaves of the bass which are written in with small notes. In this case, however, following the practice of Baroque times, one should not fail to have the original continuo played by a singing string bass, a second cello or even, preferably, by a viola da gamba.

---Translated by James M. McGlathery
Phillips Andover Academy
APPENDIX B

THE ANTONII RICERCARS

(transcribed by Gordon Epperson)
Photograph of the first page of Antonii's Ricercar No. 10 (edition of 1687)
Ricercar No. 3
RICERCAR NO. 6
Ricercar No. 9
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**Music**


