

Count Cozio, Renzo Bacchetta, and Brandon Frazier: documentary realities and Chinese whispers

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2019

All the extant documents written by Il Conte Ignazio Alessandro Cozio di Salabue (1755-1840) are archived at the Biblioteca Statale in Cremona, Italy. The collection is housed in four deep box-files together with a large wrap-around folder which contains individual sheets of drawings, some labels, and other miscellaneous items. Within each box are approximately 25 card folders, each containing documents written by Count Cozio. Each folder begins with a typed sheet which provides details of the manuscript documents contained within, e.g.:

COZIO DI SALABUE, Ignazio Alessandro

“Descrizione del violino di Antonio Stradivari del Signor Antonio Rolla figlio del signor Alessandro, primo violino e compositore di musica a Bologna”.

Cartaceo, sec. XIX, mm 130x87, cc.2, bianca la c.2; scrittura di sola mano;
titolo a c.1 preceduto dalla data 1823-23 gennaio.

The first page of Count Cozio’s manuscript document has the following text:

1823. 23. g[...?] ¹

*Descrizione del Violino d’Ant^o Stradivari del Sig Antonio Rolla figlio del Sig Alessandro,
primo Violino e composit^e di musica a Bologna*

Both the typed sheet and the first page of the Count’s manuscript have been pencil-numbered by personnel at the Biblioteca Statale, in this case *ms. Cozio 17*.

Some of the typed sheets also identify the page number(s) in Renzo Bacchetta’s *Carteggio* publication of 1950² where a transcription of the manuscript document can be found, e.g.:

COZIO DI SALABUE, Ignazio Alessandro

“Nota de stromenti lasciati e consegnati agli [*sic*] 28 dicembre 1776 a Boch e Gravier,
ed ora ritirati.”

Cartaceo, ~~1776~~ *sec. XVIII*, mm.260x180, c.1; scrittura di una sola mano; titolo sul r.
Della c.1 preceduto da 21 giugno 1778. *Dalla data 21 giugno 1778* ³

Cfr. I.A.Cozio di Salabue, *Carteggio*, Milano 1950, p. 196.

The first page of Count Cozio’s manuscript has the following text:

*21 giugno 1778 Nota de stromenti lasciati e consegnati gli 28 xbre 1776 a Boch e Gravier,
ed ora ritirato*

Both the typed sheet and the first page of the Count’s manuscript have been pencil-numbered by personnel at the Biblioteca, in this case *ms. Cozio 49*.

¹ Count Cozio has written the date at the very top edge of his small sheet of paper; the paper-edge is torn and ragged and none of the letter-shapes which spell out the name of the month are complete; the month is probably *gennaio* or *giugno* but even the initial *g* is slightly uncertain.

² Cozio di Salabue, I. A., *Carteggio*, transcribed and edited Renzo Bacchetta; Antonio Cordani, Milano, 1950.

³ The texts shown in italics, as well as the strike-throughs, are handwritten inked corrections made to the typed information.

Although some of Count Cozio's manuscript documents have been treated for preservation, others, as far as one can tell, are in their original condition. With the passage of time many of the sheets of paper have been eaten away by the acid in both the paper itself and in the iron gall ink used by the Count; some sheets of paper consist more of holes than paper. Even where the paper has not been damaged the ink from one side of a sheet has often bled through to the other side, thus making the reading of either text problematic. In addition, Count Cozio's writings exhibit inconsistent spellings, non-standard grammar, an absence of punctuation, brief 'notes' rather than fully-formed sentences, and a very masculine and dramatic style of handwriting which becomes increasingly uninhibited as he gets older; there are many annotations penned in the margins (here the handwriting often becomes very cramped) together with 'squeezed-in' corrections in the main body of the texts. Despite all this, there are no insuperable problems in transcribing Cozio's texts – it is just that even a single page of writing will take some time to unravel, precisely and accurately, and thus be brought into the clear light of day.

When Renzo Bacchetta began his painstaking work of transcribing most – but not all – of Cozio's manuscripts, no numbering system had yet been applied to them. Bacchetta was obliged to make his own decisions as to how they might be arranged both by subject matter and by chronology. He divided his transcription into four sections: *Storiografia* (History), *Liutologia* (Technical aspects of making violins), *Catalogo* (the Count's descriptions and measurements of his instruments) and *Epistolario* (Correspondence). The first section – *Storiografia* – contains Bacchetta's transcriptions of Cozio manuscripts which date from 1816, and so, after the 1950 publication of *Carteggio*, those manuscripts were pencil-numbered by personnel at the Biblioteca according to Bacchetta's published sequence: *ms. Cozio 1, 2, 3*, etc. This procedure meant that other Cozio manuscripts, because they appear within Bacchetta's subsequent sections – *Liutologia*, *Catalogo*, and *Epistolario* – were pencil-identified with continuously incremented numbers even though the manuscripts might date from forty years earlier (c.1775-76).⁴ The Biblioteca pencil-numbering of Cozio's manuscripts runs from *1* to *93*.

Bacchetta's transcriptions are mostly faithful to the texts as written by Count Cozio but there are more than a few places where he 'corrects' the Count's 'mistakes' and changes spellings to modern versions, and where he does not understand the Count's text he simply omits that word or phrase from his transcription (often without indicating that such an omission has occurred). If, for the modern-day researcher, studying Count Cozio's original documents at the library in Cremona is not an option then Bacchetta's publication is useful but it can only ever be the originals which are entirely trustworthy (notwithstanding the interpretative difficulties which they present).

Most of the folders contain documents which are only a few pages in length, sometimes just a single sheet of paper. One folder, however, – actually a protective cardboard box purpose-made by the Library – contains a 300-page (150 folios) 'booklet', approximately A5 size, dating from 1816, which sets out all of the Count's measurements and descriptions of the instruments which he owned; this critically important manuscript is identified as *ms. Cozio 47*.

Around 2005 Brandon Frazier initiated a project to transcribe and translate Count Cozio's documents into English; the result was the self-published *Memoirs of a Violin Collector* (2007). In the *Preface* Frazier makes the following statements:

In this book, Cozio di Salabue's memoirs, correspondence, and explicit notes, which were taken from the handwritten manuscript now held in the Biblioteca Statale di Cremona, Italy, are being

⁴ See the two examples on p. 1 of this account: *ms. Cozio 17* (1823) and *ms. Cozio 49* (1778).

published. For almost all of this material, this is the first time in either English or contemporary Italian.

Great effort has been given to be faithful to the original text. This is even at the cost of showing Cozio's occasional vagueness, his change of opinion over time, and the gaps in his wording. This literal translation will provide the violin community with an important and permanent historical insight.

It is unclear why Frazier should refer to 'the handwritten manuscript' as if there is only one; equally curious is the claim that the translation is 'literal' and that 'great effort has been given to be faithful to the original text' since Frazier's English-language texts are usually *not* direct translations of what was written by Count Cozio.

Frazier's *Memoirs* publication contains four chapters – *Storia di Liuteria*, *Elementi di Liuteria*, *Epistolario*, and *Inventario di Strumenti*⁵ – in which the texts are presented in 'contemporary Italian'. At the start of these chapters the names of Frazier's assistants are shown as Marco Dell'Utri and Giovanna Maria Ferranti. It seems most unlikely that Dell'Utri and Ferranti created their 'contemporary' texts by laboriously working from the hundreds of pages of handwritten manuscripts which make up the Cozio archive in Cremona, especially when Bacchetta's *Carteggio* publication of 1950 already provided most of the solutions to the orthographical and calligraphical difficulties contained within the manuscripts. But, if Dell'Utri and Ferranti did indeed use Bacchetta as their textual source (instead of Cozio) they would have been unaware of situations where Bacchetta has omitted a word or phrase; these omissions, therefore, would have been carried forward into the 'contemporary Italian' texts and then into the translated-into-English texts.

The four 'contemporary Italian' chapters are matched by four chapters of translated-into-English text: *History of Violin Making*, *Terms of Violin Making*, *Correspondence*, and *Catalogue of Instruments*. The first two chapters are identified as having been 'translated by Brandon Frazier'; the third and fourth chapters were translated by Carolina Lo Nero, her translations then being 'revised by Brandon Frazier'; the evidence points towards the translations being of the 'contemporary Italian' texts. It will be appreciated that what Count Cozio wrote is likely to have been distorted by the sequential layers of transcription and translation – 'Chinese whispers'.

It might be wondered why a re-casting of Cozio's texts into contemporary Italian should even be necessary; the Count's language is not so far removed from modern Italian as to be impenetrable. Any Italian, with just a little effort, can read what the Count has written and therefore does not need a modernised version (*understanding* the Count's writings requires knowledge of the art of violin-making) and while it is acknowledged that Cozio's texts cannot be read by someone for whom English is their only language the same applies to the 'contemporary Italian' version. Perhaps these texts were created because there were issues of copyright which needed to be addressed; Renzo Bacchetta died in 1975.

Opposite Frazier's *Preface* there is a photographic illustration of the title page from Count Cozio's lengthy historical study of north-Italian *lutherie*, written in 1816 (*ms. Cozio I*); the caption describes the illustration as 'First page of Cozio's original manuscript'.

⁵ i.e. it is a structural copy of Bacchetta's *Carteggio*.

In 2017 a short monograph was published, privately, by the owner of a little-known but genuine Antonio Stradivari violin, dated 1724.⁶ In the monograph (p.11) the owner/author – Desmond Cecil – quotes from a document written by Count Cozio in January 1806:



Fig. 1a: Biblioteca Statale Cremona, Libreria Civica, ms. Cozio 46, title

The present writer's transcription of Count Cozio's title-text is:

1808. 16: Gennajo Milano Inventaro delli
instrummenti nella guardarob-
-ba alta di noce nel Gabinetto
Nella Cassetta forte coperta di bulgaro guarnita di ottone
fodrata di veluto in seta verdone

The 2017 monograph identifies the Count's 1806 document as being 'translated Frazier – see original Italian below'. The 'original Italian' (i.e. the Fig. 1a text) is provided through a photographic illustration of part of p.227 of Renzo Bacchetta's *Carteggio* publication where Bacchetta presents his transcription (with added punctuation and modern spelling) of the Count's title-text:

1808, 16 gennaio, Milano.
INVENTARIO delli instrummenti nella guardaroba alta di noce nel gabinetto:
Nella cassetta forte, coperta di bulgaro, guarnita di ottone, fodrata di veluto in seta verdone:

The 'contemporary Italian' version of Bacchetta's text (*Memoirs*, p.579):

Lista degli strumenti contenuti nel guardaroba alto di noce del gabinetto.
Nella custodia coperta di cuoio, guarnita d'ottone, foderata di velluto di seta verde:

Frazier's translated-into-English version (*Memoirs*, p.227):

List of the instruments placed in the walnut wardrobe in the cabinet.⁷
Inside the case⁸ covered in leather, brass decorated, and lined with silky green velvet:

It is clear that this translation is of the 'contemporary Italian' text.

Frazier's translated-into-English text can be compared with a translation by the present writer of Cozio's original title-text:

1808 16 January Milan
Inventory of the instruments in the tall walnut wardrobe in the closet
In the strong-box [a trunk?] covered in 'bulgaro' [a type of leather] trimmed with brass
lined with velvet – silky green.

⁶ Desmond Cecil, *A violin by Antonio Stradivari, 1724*.

⁷ *Gabinetto* translates as 'closet' – a small private room to which, probably, only Count Cozio had access. It is unlikely that a tall walnut wardrobe could have been fitted inside a cabinet.

⁸ The Italian word *custodia*, in addition to indicating 'custody' or 'protection' is also used to identify, specifically, a case for a musical instrument.

Below his *ms. Cozio 46* title-text (Fig. 1a) Count Cozio writes a description of a Stradivari violin dated 1716. This is then followed – on the same page – by a description of a 1724 Stradivari violin, i.e. the violin which Count Cozio would subsequently sell to Niccolò Paganini, in July 1817 (Fig. 1b).⁹

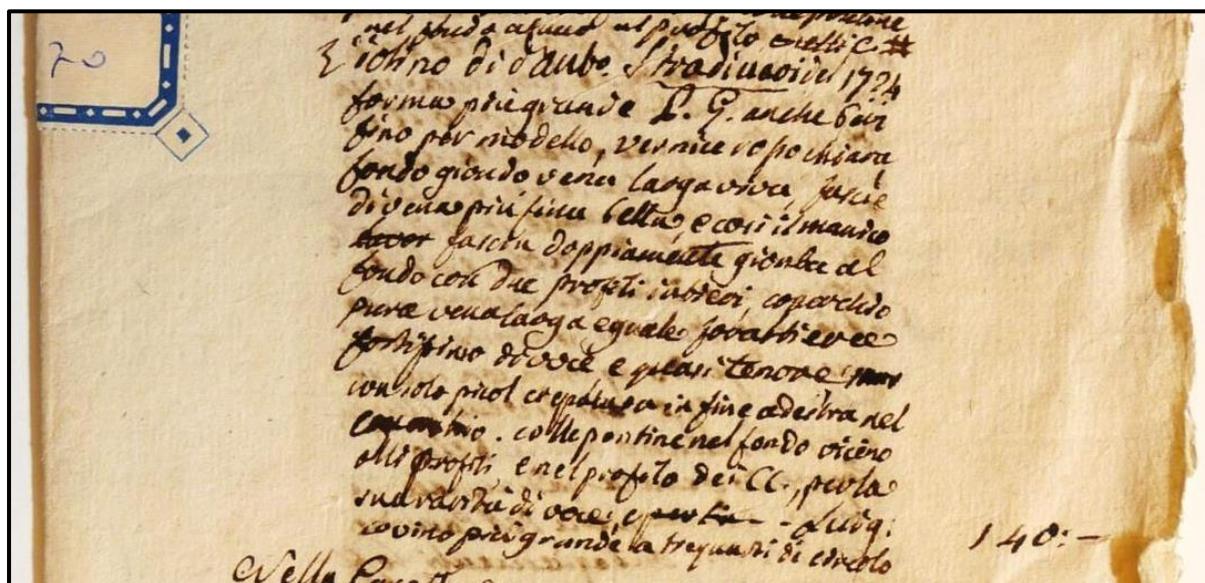


Fig. 1b: BScR, LC, *ms. Cozio 46*; descriptive text for the 1724 Stradivari/Cozio/Paganini violin

Present writer's transcription of the Fig. 1b descriptive text:

*Violino di d'Ant^o Stradiuari del 1724*¹⁰
*Forma più grande P.G.*¹¹ *anche b[...]*¹² *fino per modello, vernice rosso chiara,*
*fondo giondo, vena larga viva,*¹³ *fascie di vena piu fina bella, e così il manico*
fascia doppiamente gionta al fondo con due profili intieri,
coperchio pura vena larga eguale forastiere
fortissimo di voce, e quasi tenore,
con solo picol crepatura in fine a destra nel coperchio.
colle pontine nel fondo vicino alli profili, e nel profilo dei CC,
per la sua rarita di voce, e per fin[?] Luigi 140
covino più grande a tre quarti di circolo

Renzo Bacchetta's transcription of the Fig. 1b descriptive text (*Carteggio*, p.227):

Violino di Antonio Stradivari del 1724, forma più grande anche perfino¹⁴ per modello vernice rosso chiara, fondo gionto, vena larga viva, fascie di vena più fine bella e così il manico, fascia doppiamente gionta al fondo con due profili intieri, coperchio pure vena larga eguale forastiero, fortissimo di voce e `quasi tenore, con solo piccola crepatura in fondo a destra nel coperchio colle

⁹ In addition to the descriptive text which Count Cozio penned on 16 January 1808 he also wrote a description of the 1724 violin in 1774/75 (*ms. Cozio 41*) and another in April 1801 (*ms. Cozio 42*); see later. The Count provides measurements of the violin in a document dated 19 May 1816 (*ms. Cozio 47*). The Count's manuscripts demonstrate that he owned only one 1724 Stradivari violin. For full details see the present author's article *Fortissimo di voce, e quasi tenore* which is linked from www.themessiahviolin.uk.

¹⁰ The numerals 2 and 4 each has an inked dot underneath; this was Count Cozio's method of indicating that they were handwritten. According to the Hills (1902), Stradivari, post-1700, always handwrote the second, third, and fourth numerals of a year-date.

¹¹ Stradivari's *P.G.* mould (now lost) was larger than the *G* mould (Museo del Violino, Cremona); for full details see the present writer's article *The case of the missing mould* (*The Strad*, June 2018, pp. 54-58).

¹² Even though the first letter is clearly a 'b', Renzo Bacchetta offers *perfino*, which translates as 'even', as in 'everybody knew it, even him' (*lo sapevano tutti, perfino lui*).

¹³ In his writings Count Cozio uses the word *vena* ('vein', 'streak') with reference to both the 'flames' of a violin's maple back plate and the flames of the ribs (as in this quotation) as well as the longitudinal growth-ring 'grain' found in a spruce front plate.

¹⁴ Note that Bacchetta omits the source-mould designation *P.G.* (in front of the word *anche* in Cozio's manuscript).

pontine nel fondo vicino alli profili e nel profilo dei CC; per la sua rarità di voce luigi 140, covino più grande a tre quarti di circolo.

It is Bacchetta's transcribed text which is photographically illustrated on p.11 of the 2017 monograph.

The 'contemporary Italian' version of Bacchetta's text (*Memoirs*, p.580):

Violino di Antonio Stradivari del 1724. Forma più grande, anche più del suo modello.¹⁵ Vernice rossa chiara. Fondo in due pezzi con marezzatura¹⁶ larga evidente. Fasce e manico con marezzatura più sottile e bella. Fascia inferiore con doppia giunta e con due filetti. Tavola dello stesso legno straniero con venatura larga. Voce fortissimo, quasi da tenore. Presenta solo una piccola crepa nella tavola in basso a destra e dei chiodini di legno nel fondo vicino ai filetti e nei bordi delle CC. Per la sua rara voce vale 140 luigi. Nocetta più grande di tre quarti di cerchio.

Frazier's translated-into-English version (*Memoirs*, p.227):

Violin made by Antonio Stradivari in 1724.
Larger model, even larger than its template.¹⁷ Light-red varnish. Two-piece back with wide grain. The sides have finer grain, as well as the neck. The side is double joined at the back, with two complete purfling. The top also has wide even grain and [is] made of foreign [wood]. Very strong voice, almost tenor. There is only a small crack down on the right hand side of the top; pins on the back near the purfling, and in the C-bouts' edge. For its rare voice, [it is worth] 140 *luigi*. The button is larger, at three-quarters of a circle.

Only selected parts of Frazier's English text are reproduced in the 2017 monograph (p.11):

Larger model, even larger than its template. Light red varnish. Two piece back with wide grain. The sides have finer grain, as well as the neck. ... The top also has wide even grain and is made of foreign [wood]. Very strong voice, almost tenor ... For its rare voice, [it is worth] 140 *luigi*.¹⁸

The present writer's translation of the descriptive text written by Count Cozio (Fig. 1b):

Violin of the aforementioned Antonio Stradivari, of 1724.
[Derived from the] larger mould [which is marked with the letters] P.G., also [...?] for this model. The varnish is light red. The back plate is jointed, with wide bright vein[s] [i.e. flames], the ribs have narrower vein[s], beautiful, likewise the [wood of the] neck. The rib is double-jointed at the bottom [at the tail-piece end pin] with two strips of purfling inserted.¹⁹ The front plate also has wide and consistent vein[s] [i.e. growth rings]; foreign [wood]. Very strong of voice and like a viola.²⁰ With one small split at the [bottom] end, to the right in the top plate. With [top and bottom] locating pins in the back plate [positioned] adjacent to the purfling, and [additional pins positioned] within the purfling of the C-bouts. For its rarity of voice and [...?] [it is worth] 140 *Luigi*.²¹ The [back-plate/neck-foot] button is larger [than usual] at three-quarters of a circle.

¹⁵ Note that Dell'Utri and Ferranti have invented entirely new text (an invention which is not identified to the reader of *Memoirs*).

¹⁶ With respect to items made of wood the term *marezzatura* translates as 'veining' or 'grain'.

¹⁷ The Dell'Utri/Ferranti invented text now appears in translation.

¹⁸ Exact quotation.

¹⁹ Cutting the rib at the lower block and inserting a vertical strip of purfling (or two) is a task which is undertaken to restore the original curvature of the rib. Stradivari usually made the bottom rib in one piece.

²⁰ It is difficult to achieve a satisfactorily succinct translation of *e quasi tenore*. During the 19th century it was British violin-dealers and commentators who used the word *tenor* as a catch-all term, encompassing both the smaller/contralto and the larger/tenor size of viola. It seems that Count Cozio is identifying his 1724 violin as having a tonal quality which is reminiscent of a tenor-range male vocalist. The lowest note which can be sung by a tenor is the 'C' one octave below 'middle C'; the lowest note of the (contralto) viola is the same 'C'. Thus the viola replicates the two-octave range of a tenor vocalist. Note that in a document (*ms. Cozio 9*) Count Cozio comments that violins made around Stradivari's *P.G.* mould have a tone which 'approaches that of a viola': *ma si approssima a quella del Contralto*.

²¹ The *Luigi* was a 20-franc coin which was used when the 'kingdom of [northern] Italy' was ruled by the French at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The 2017 publication of Desmond Cecil's monograph was followed by an article written by John Dilworth and published in *The Strad*, the article providing an overview of the 1724 *Cecil* violin.²² Dilworth quotes Frazier's translated-into-English *Memoirs* p. 227 text (shown here on p.6) and adds:

Apart from the usual difficulties in interpreting Cozio's phraseology, what he writes is a fair description of the present [1724 *Cecil*] violin. [...] The prominently marked wide grain of the back which Cozio notes is the most obvious point of recognition.

Count Cozio's text (Fig. 1b on p.5) actually consists of a description of his 1724 *Paganini* violin.

The back plate of the *Cecil* violin is made from two pieces, these displaying narrow horizontal flames; the appearance of the flames might be appropriately described as 'mild', and/or 'soft'. In addition (and unusually) this back plate exhibits clearly-visible longitudinal lines, at right-angles to the flames. Count Cozio's identification of 'wide bright [flames]' relates to his 1724 *Paganini* violin; Cozio makes no mention of any longitudinal grain lines in that violin's back plate.

Count Cozio defines the flames on the ribs of his *Paganini* violin as being narrower than those on the back plate; photographs of the *Cecil* violin show that its rib-flames are wider. The Count also specifies the back-plate locating pins at the upper and lower blocks of his *Paganini* violin as being 'adjacent' to the purfling; photographs²³ of the *Cecil* violin show that both pins are partially covered by the inner portion of the purfling. The same photographs show no sign of any locating pins fitted within the purfling at the C-bouts of the back plate (as are identified by Count Cozio on his *Paganini* violin); this fundamental difference between the 1724 *Paganini* violin and the 1724 *Cecil* violin probably explains why the Count's comment regarding C-bout locating pins is not included as one of the selected phrases which are quoted in the Cecil monograph (see previous page of this account). The monograph also omits Cozio's text which describes the cutting and expansion of the rib at the bottom block of his *Paganini* violin: *fascia doppiamente gionta al fondo con due profili intieri*. In Desmond Cecil's monograph (p.14) it is stated that

The lower rib was evidently made in one piece, as is usual with Stradivari, but has since been cut and jointed.

In his *Strad* article Dilworth repeats this text and adds:

... cut and jointed, as Cozio seems to be describing in his notes, with a doubled row of purfling inserted at the lower block [...]. The purfling mentioned by Cozio is no longer present [...].

The resultant conundrum is: how can anyone know that two pieces of purfling were inserted into the rib at the bottom block of the *Cecil* violin if those two pieces are no longer present? In any case, Cozio is describing the purfling insertions which are found on a different violin.²⁴

At the end of his article in *The Strad* John Dilworth writes:

Cozio says in his notes of 1818 that this 1724 violin [the *Cecil*] has a 'stronger and more mature voice; overall it is a better instrument' than the yellow 1724 Stradivari (the *Sarasate*), which has a 'stronger, tenor voice'.²⁵

²² *An overlooked wonder*, November 2018, pp. 38-45

²³ *Cecil* poster published by *The Strad*, November 2018.

²⁴ The owner of the *Cecil* violin has generously informed the present author that the violin's bottom rib has a single strip of inserted purfling which is centred on the end-pin.

²⁵ Count Cozio never owned the 1724 Stradivari violin which is known today as the *Sarasate*.

Count Cozio's descriptive notes and measurements which relate to his 1724 *Paganini* violin (the notes to which Dilworth refers) were written on 29 May 1816, not 1818 (see *ms. Cozio 47*, folios 15r and 15v). The Count clearly writes in the margin of folio 15r:

N.B. questo violino l'ho venduto al Signor Proffessore Paganino

N.B. this violin I sold to Signor Professor Paganini

Count Cozio presents a series of comparisons between the physicality of the *Paganini* violin and the Stradivari violin dated 1716 which is described in the immediately preceding entry in *ms. Cozio 47* (folios 13v, 14r, 14v). The Count writes (folio 15v):

Questo ha la voce più forte, e da tenore. L'altro più matura e ben forte e più bello in totale

Renzo Bacchetta (*Carteggio*, p.243) transcribes this text exactly.

The 'contemporary Italian' re-casting of the Cozio/Bacchetta text (*Memoirs*, pp.589-90) is:

Questo ha la voce più forte e tenorile; l'altro più matura, molto forte ed è più bella nell'insieme.

This violin has the stronger, and most tenor, voice; the other is more mature, very sonorous, and is more beautiful on the whole.²⁶

Brandon Frazier's English translation (*Memoirs*, p.236) is:

The voice of this violin is stronger, a tenor; the other has instead a stronger and more mature voice, overall it is a better instrument.

The present writer's translation of Count Cozio's text:

This [the 1724 *Paganini* violin] has the stronger voice, viola-like.²⁷ The other [the 1716 violin] has a more mature and well-rounded sound, and is more beautiful overall.

The first description written by Count Cozio of his sole 1724 Stradivari violin, the document dating from late 1774 or early 1775 (*ms. Cozio 41*), is brief:

Fondo giunto, bosco di vena piuttosto larga e bella, il covino più rotondo, quasi al cerchio, il rizzo belle e col contorno nero, travagliate come l'antecedente ma la vernice più gialla di tutti. Il biglietto come gli altri anno 1724 e bolate.

[margin annotations] *2^{da}, il più forte,
si hà, venduto dal Cav Carlo Carli al celebre suonat^e Genovev
Paganini per Luigi cento ma da togliere cinque di sconto.*

Renzo Bacchetta's transcription (*Carteggio*, p.200):

Fondo giunto, bosco di vena piuttosto larga e bella, il covino più rotondo, quasi al cerchio, il rizzo belle e col contorno nero travagliato come l'antecedente, ma la vernice più gialla di tutti. Il biglietto come gli altri anno 1724 e bolato.

Il più forte, venduto dal Cavaliere Carlo Carli al celebre suonatore genovese Paganini per luigi 100 ma da togliere cinque di conto.

Bacchetta's text re-cast into 'contemporary Italian' (*Memoirs*, p.565):

Quello più forte di voce. Venduto dal cavaliere Carlo Carli al celebre musicista genovese Paganini per 100 luigi, ma cinque sono da togliere dal conto.

Fondo in due pezzi. Legno con marezzatura piuttosto larga e bella. Nocetta molto arrotondata, quasi circolare. Riccio ben lavorato e bordato di nero. Stessa manifattura dello strumento precedente, ma con vernice più gialla.²⁸ Etichetta uguale alle precedenti, bollata. Anno 1724.

²⁶ Present author's translation.

²⁷ cf. footnote 20.

²⁸ The Count's comment – *più gialla di tutti* – ought not to have been truncated.

The ‘contemporary Italian’ text translated into English (*Memoirs*, p.215):

The strongest. Sold by nobleman Carlo Carli to the famous Genoese musician Paganini for 100 luigi, five of them have to be taken off the bill.

One-piece back [*sic*], with wide even grain. The button is round, almost like a circle. The scroll is well carved and is outlined in black. This work is similar to the one mentioned above [1716 violin], but its yellow varnish is more intense than any other. Label as usual, with seal, 1724.

Present writer’s translation of Count Cozio’s 1774-75 text:

Jointed [two-piece] back plate, the wood having vein[s] [i.e. flames] which are rather wide and beautiful. The [neck-foot] button is more rounded [than is usual], almost a circle, the scroll is beautiful and with black edging. The workmanship is like the previous [violin within the Count’s sequence of descriptions – a 1716 violin]²⁹ but the varnish is the yellowest of all [i.e. amongst the twelve violins bought from Paolo Stradivari]. The label [in its appearance] is like the others, anno 1724, and stamped [i.e. with Stradivari’s monogram].

[margin annotations] Second [the second best, overall]; the strongest [in tone]. I have it. Sold by Signor Carlo Carli to the celebrated player from Genoa, Paganini, for one hundred *Luigi* [100 *Louis d’or* 20-franc coins] but deduct five as a discount.

The second description of the 1724 *Paganini* violin, written by Count Cozio on 8 April 1801 (*ms. Cozio 42*):

Vig¹⁰ stamp Bollo sudd.

Come sopra: anno 1724: fortissimo di voce, tonda e pastosa sebbene paja ancora interna, di forma più grande segnata, vernice rosso chiara tirante nel giallino: fondo fascie e manico di bellissima vena larga: e fondo in due pezzi così al solito del coperchio, che ha la vena più tosto larga. Di forma delle più grandi con panza corta al fondo ben tirata, ed al coperchio anche ben spianata: benissimo profilato, e di finissimo lavoro, ed ff ben fatte e scavate, con manico dato ind^o dal G. B. Guadagnini: intatto pero con una picol marca di fessura nel coper^o a destra vic^o al cordile: vale zni cento trenta.

[margin annotation] 1817 Luglio venduto al Signor Professore Niccolò Paganini di Genoa per mezzo del Signor Cavaliere Carlo Carli di Milano. zni 130

Renzo Bacchetta’s transcription (*Carteggio*, p.209) :

Viglietto stampato e bollo sudetto: come sopra: anno 1724; fortissimo di voce tonda e pastosa sebbene paia ancora interna, di forma più grande segnata; vernice [rosso]³⁰ chiara tirante nel giallino; fondo fascie e manico di bellissima vena larga e fondo in due pezzi così al solito del coperchio che ha la vena piuttosto larga. Di forma delle più grandi con pansa corta al fondo ben tirata ed al coperchio anche ben spianata. Benissimo profilato e di bellissimo lavoro e FF ben fatte e scavate con manico dato indietro dal G. B. Guadagnini. Intatto e ciò con una piccola marca di fessura nel coperchio a destra vicino al cordile. Vale *zecchini* 130.

1817 luglio; venduto al sig. Prof. Nicolò Paganini di Genova per mezzo del sig. Cav. Carlo Carli di Milano.

Bacchetta’s text re-cast into ‘contemporary Italian’ (*Memoirs*, p.569):

Luglio 1817. Venduto al professor Nicolò Paganini di Genova tramite il cav. Carlo Carli di Milano.

²⁹ ‘like the previous’: i.e. the workmanship seen on the 1724 violin is of the same (excellent?) quality as seen on the 1716 violin.

³⁰ Bacchetta has mis-read the Count’s handwriting and mistakenly transcribes *rosso* as *poco*.

Etichetta stampata con bollo come sopra: anno 1724. Di voce fortissima, piena e pastosa, sebbene sembri ancora chiusa. Forma più grande di quella utilizzata.³¹ Vernice piuttosto chiara³² tendente al giallo. Fondo, fasce e manico di legno bellissimo, con mazzatura larga. Fondo in due pezzi. Tavola in due pezzi con venatura piuttosto larga. Forma tra le più grandi. La bombatura del fondo è bassa e ben spianata; anche quella della tavola è ben spianata. Bellissima la filettatura. Ottimo lavoro in generale. FF ben disegnate e ben lavorate. Manico inclinato indietro da Gian Battista Guadagnini. Ben conservato, con una piccola rottura sulla tavola a destra, vicino alla cordiera. Vale 130 zecchini.

The ‘contemporary Italian’ text translated into English (*Memoirs*, p.215):

July 1817. Sold to Professor Nicolò Paganini of Genoa through Sir Carlo Carli of Milan. Printed label with seal as above: anno 1724. Round, strong and warm voice, but still internal. Larger than the usual model. Pale yellowish varnish. Back, sides and neck are made with beautiful open flame. Two-piece back, two-piece top with wide grain. Larger model, low arching both on the back and on the top. Good purfling work, and the F-holes are well made. The neck has been raised by G. B. Guadagnini. Intact, with a small crack on the right hand side of the top, near the tailpiece. It is worth 130 zecchini.

Present writer’s translation of Count Cozio’s 8 April 1801 text:

The label stamped as on the above-mentioned [a Stradivari violin dated 1730]. As above: anno 1724: very strong of voice, rounded and mellow, although both [tonal qualities] are still internal [not sounding freely?]; of larger type, marked [lettered in the pegbox?]; the varnish is light red shading into yellow. The back plate, the ribs, and the neck – all have the most beautiful wide flames. The back plate is in two pieces; likewise, as usual, the top plate, which has rather wide veins [growth rings]. [The violin] is of the larger type, with the cross-arching[?] on the back plate being well graduated, and the top plate is also well smoothed out. Excellent purfling of the finest workmanship, and the *f*-holes nicely made and [the wings] hollowed; with a neck which has been [raised, lengthened and] tilted backwards by G. B. Guadagnini. Undamaged; however there is one small fissure in the top plate, to the right, near the tailpiece. Value *zecchini* 130.

[margin annotation]: 1817 July: sold to Signor Professor Niccolò Paganini of Genoa through Signor Carlo Carli of Milan.

NB: Transcriptions and translations of the texts written by Count Cozio should be treated with caution.

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³¹ The significance of the Count’s *segnata* (in *di forma più grande segnata*) has been entirely lost as a result of the re-casting of Bacchetta’s transcription.

³² Not only has Bacchetta mis-transcribed Cozio’s *rosso as poco* but the ‘contemporary Italian’ text – derived from Bacchetta – exacerbates the error by presenting the phrase as *Vernice piuttosto chiara tendente al giallo* (‘the varnish is rather light, shading towards yellow’); cf. Frazier’s translated-into-English text: ‘Pale yellowish varnish’. Cf. the present author’s translation: ‘the varnish is light red shading into yellow.’