STRING BASS TEACHING METHODS: ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION
OF TEN REPRESENTATIVE WORKS

by

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

In recent years music educators have become increasingly aware of problems relative to the pedagogical soundness of teaching methods books (tutors) available for the string bass. Numerous articles have been written in music periodicals and professional journals citing the need for more research in this area.

I. PURPOSE OF STUDY

**Statement of the problem.** It is the purpose of this study (1) to review the historical development of the string bass, (2) to define important relationships between musical usage and the evolution of string bass teaching methods, (3) to analyze ten string bass tutors according to selected criteria, (4) to report these findings and summarize them.

**Importance of the study.** The string bass provides the foundation for the string choir of a symphony orchestra. Moreover, this large, cumbersome instrument is an effective solo instrument and has also won a place in chamber music literature. One might expect string bass teaching materials to be as effective as teaching methods available for the other members of the string family; however, as many string teachers have found, this is not the case. Levenson has
pointed out that there is a dearth of teaching material for this instrument.\(^1\) The present study will attempt to point out the readily accessible string bass tutors which have found widespread acceptance through the years and, within the limited sphere of existing materials, purports to provide a sound foundation for serious students of the string bass.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

**Double Bass.** Also called bass viol, contrabass, or string bass (Fr. *contrebasse*; Ger. *Kontrabass*; It. *contrabasso*), this instrument is the largest member of the string choir serving in the orchestra somewhat in the capacity of a sixteen foot organ stop and frequently doubling the celli at the lower octave. The modern instrument has four strings tuned E₁ A₁ D G, notated an octave higher (E A d g). Some instruments have a fifth string tuned C₁. The upper limit for orchestral parts is a (notated a¹) although solo work extends the range of the instrument greatly by the use of harmonics and thumb positions.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE STRING BASS

The early history of the string bass is sought in evolution of the viols, of which there were two families. The viols were in great vogue throughout Europe and England during the late renaissance and baroque eras, from about 1450 through 1750. Sachs reports that viols in the sixteenth century belonged to two distinct families: 'leg viols' or viole da gamba, and 'arm viols' or viole da braccio. The first of these comprised those instruments the modern musician calls viols or gambas (now obsolete); the second family corresponded to the bowed instruments of our days, violin, viola, and cello. The family names refer to the playing position of the oldest members of both families, and the names were retained for all the members regardless of their sizes and playing positions.¹ For comparison of the physical characteristics of the viole da gamba and the viole da braccio families see Table I, page 4.

TABLE I

COMPARATIVE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF VIOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIOLE DA GAMBA</th>
<th>VIOLE DA BRACCIO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat back</td>
<td>Bulging back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back sloped off at the upper end</td>
<td>Back not sloped off at the upper end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep ribs</td>
<td>Shallow ribs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloping shoulders</td>
<td>Round shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edges of soundboard and back not projecting</td>
<td>Projecting edges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcing crossbars inside</td>
<td>A reinforcing longitudinal bassbar inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C or flame holes</td>
<td>F holes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad neck</td>
<td>Narrow neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gut frets tied on</td>
<td>No frets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six or seven thin strings</td>
<td>Four thick strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound-pale and flat</td>
<td>Sound-round and full</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the relationship between the modern string bass and the *viole da braccio* family has been firmly established, there also existed a very definite relationship between the double bass and the *viole da gamba* family. Bessaraboff says, the history of the evolution of the *viola da gamba* family and its musical usage can be divided into approximately three periods.

The first period, down to the beginning of the sixteenth century, saw the instruments gradually develop to a comparatively high degree of perfection. At the end of that period trios and quartets for viols were being composed.

The second period, the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, witnessed the final perfecting of the instruments. Music for the viols reached its highest expression in the works of English and Spanish composers. Probably the most popular usage was playing in groups, or in consort; in this regard it was common to speak of a "chest of viols." The "chest" usually contained six viols of varying sizes (generally two bass, two tenor, and two treble viols). This was a period of ensemble playing.

The third period, beginning approximately in the middle of the seventeenth century and continuing to the close of the life of the viols as active instruments was a period of gradual decline of ensemble playing and of the emergence of the *basse viola da gamba* as a virtuoso solo
instrument. In a certain sense it could be called the period of French violists and composers. In the second half of the eighteenth century viols were abandoned in favor of the once lowly violin.\(^2\)

The violone, was intermediate between the violoncello and the double bass. Under various names (Kammerbass, Halbbass), and in various accordatura, it is still in use, although it has been replaced by the double bass. Michael Praetorius pictures a violone under the name grosse bassgeige, it was woodcut (carved from one piece of wood), one hundred and twenty-five centimeters tall (four and one-half Brunswick feet), it had five strings with an accordatura of F\(_1\) C G d a.\(^3\)

The violoncello began its career as a bass viola da braccio. It was tuned either to C G d a or a tone lower. As a bass instrument, it was not expected to play solo parts; its role was to provide music with a solid foundation. Violoncellos up to the middle of the seventeenth century, and even beyond, were larger and broader than the later cello and probably had thicker strings. Like the gambas, they were bowed in a palm upward position.\(^4\)


\(^4\)Ibid., p. 363.
During the baroque era there emerged the instrument with which this study is concerned, the double bass. Sachs reports that the double bass existed in Germany as early as the sixteenth century. Michael Praetorius pictures such a gigantic gross-contra-bass Geige, two hundred and twenty-five centimeters (ninety inches) high, with five strings, the accordatura of which he does not indicate.5

As to the form, one can distinguish the German and the Italian model. The double bass of German makers approached the form of the viola da gamba; it had sloping shoulders, a flat back with a slanting upper part, deep ribs and sometimes even frets. It usually had five strings tuned by fourths, and even when it dropped the fifth string, it kept the tuning E₁ A₁ D G, and it is this tuning which became standard. The Italians, on the other hand, preferred a true violin form and even reduced the number of strings to three.6 This type of string bass is still in general use today by strolling musicians in Mexico.

The double bass is an instrument which throughout its long history never became completely stabilized, says Bessaraboff. This was true not only of its body design, but also of the number of its strings and its tunings. New

6Ibid., p. 363.
models are still being manufactured. Nor is the downward compass of the double bass definitely settled.

The three-stringed double basses were tuned either in fourths:

\[ \text{\text{\text{\text{F}}}} \]

or in fifths:

\[ \text{\text{\text{\text{I}}}} \]

The four-stringed double basses are tuned in fourths:

\[ \text{\text{\text{\text{I}}}} \]

This is the standard tuning of the double basses used today.\(^7\)

The number of strings used on basses varied from three to six during its devious evolution. Sachs reports that in the nineteenth century the fifth string was re-sorted to in order to extend the range of the double bass to C\(_1\) to agree with the cello, the instrument which the double bass was expected to double at the lower octave. As the fifth string increases the pressure on the bridge,

bass bar, and the soundboard, and also interferes with bowing, some players prefer certain mechanical contrivances created toward the end of the nineteenth century. These gadgets merely changed the pitch of the fourth string. This string is lengthened on a narrow extension of the fingerboard running parallel to the scroll. It produced E₁, in its usual length, and C₁, in its total length. Four keys for the left hand, arranged at the upper end of the fingerboard, worked metal stoppers that could lengthen the vibrating section of the string from E₁ to Eb₁, D₁, Db₁, or C₁.⁸

Since the viols were the forerunners of the double bass, it is a known fact that early bassists were first trained on instruments other than the type they later played. A review of early viol teaching methods discloses the type and quality of training available to students of the viols.

One of the earliest viol methods was Silvestro di Ganassi's *Regola Rubertina* (1542-43). Some of the major points in his method are as follows:

1. Changing mensural music to viol tablature. Contains evidence that any composition was the common property of all media by which it could be performed.

2. The tuning of the violone was identical with that of the lute (actually it is the tenor-alto viol which is tuned like the lute). The discant viol was tuned a fourth higher and the bass a fifth or a fourth deeper, but in all sizes the intervallic relationship of the six strings was the same.

3. In addition to tablature, Ganassì's comprehensive treatise deals with transposition, diminution, and the art of accompanying a song, as well as such basic matters as the correct way to hold the instrument, tuning and placement of the frets.
4. As many as six different ways of fingering a given passage are shown.

5. The bow was held between the thumb and middle finger, with the hand turned palm upward and outward, the index finger regulating the pressure.

6. Ganassi explains the harsher sound produced by bowing near the bridge, and the mesto quality that results from bowing near the fingerboard.

7. Additional advice is given on various ways of using the bow in order to attain effects appropriate to different types of pieces. All this signifies a highly developed technique of viol playing and the recognized obligations of the player as an interpreter.¹

Baroque harmony in Bukofzer's terms, depended upon a voice able to support chords, and, consequently, the bass line of composition received more attention than ever before. Indeed, the peculiar way in which the bass part was made to serve the new function was as characteristic of the baroque period as its name: thorough-bass or basso continuo. The baroque era begins and ends almost exactly with the thorough-bass era, from about 1550 through 1750.²


An unique type of solo viol performance, known as playing "divisions upon a ground," evolved in England in the early seventeenth century. This technique depended upon the performer's skill in improvising variations upon a given bass theme, the ground, generally in the presence of others, and Christopher Simpson lays great stress upon the individual's pride in revealing his skill at social gatherings. For this kind of music special instruments, known as division viols, were developed. They were small size bass instruments designed to facilitate rapid passage work. 3

With the ever increasing interest and development of opera throughout Europe and England, and the emergence of new forms and styles in music, a definite need arose for a bowed string instrument capable of producing the lowest sonorities within the range of practical needs. The major consideration was for an instrument capable of doubling the violoncello voice one octave lower. To meet this need the double bass was developed.

During the latter part of the baroque era, throughout the classic period and even extending somewhat into the nineteenth century, the orchestral use of the double bass was primarily that of doubling the cello at the lower octave. The two instruments usually played the same printed part.

An important influence on the evolution of the ad-

3Christopher Simpson, The Division Viol. New York: Modernized and revised. (G. Schirmer Inc.), 1955. p.27
vanced technique of double bass playing is revealed by Schauffler in the following anecdote: In 1799 Dragonetti, the first great bass virtuoso, visited Vienna. Beethoven was eager to make his acquaintance, and the great bassist was invited to call on the composer. Thinking to scare him, Beethoven proposed that they play his own G minor violoncello sonata. Dragonetti thereupon disposed of the nimble passage work with the greatest of ease, and the composer's delight grew until, when the Italian failed to stumble over the arpeggio hurdles in the rondo, Beethoven sprang up from the piano bench and enclosed man and bass in a bear hug which anticipated the comprehensive embraces of the Choral Symphony.

From this encounter Beethoven learned techniques which greatly influenced his thinking regarding the flexibility of the double bass. Thereafter, he scored separate orchestral parts for the double bass, thereby providing it with a new and more important role as an independent member of the string choir.

Not all composers held the same opinions in regard to the flexibility of the double bass, however, Berlioz, writing in 1850, said pessimistically:

It is a current mistake to write for the heaviest of all instruments passages of such rapidity that even

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the violoncellos would have trouble executing them well. Hence there results serious disadvantages: some double-bass players, too lazy or in fact incapable of tackling such difficulties, give up at once and try to simplify the passage. But each one simplifies it in a different manner, since they do not all have the same ideas regarding the harmonic importance of the different notes; this causes a horrible disorder and confusion. This buzzing chaos of strange sounds and ugly snarls is still further increased by the vain efforts of more zealous or more confident players to master the passage just as it is written.\footnote{Hector Berlioz. Treatise on Instrumentation. Enlarged and revised by Richard Strauss. Translated by Theodore Front. New York: (Edwin F. Kalmus), 1948, p. 112.}

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the string bass has emerged as a highly flexible instrument. It is currently used in the following ways: (1) as a solo instrument, (2) as an orchestral instrument, (3) in the symphonic band, (4) in instrumental ensembles and chamber groups, (5) as a dance band instrument.

The evolutionary trends in musical usage point toward ever increasing demands of musicianship and related skills, necessary for success as a bassist. Walter Piston, aptly expressed this view, when he said:

The dexterity of bass players has reached a very high degree of virtuosity. The scores of Mahler, Strauss, Ravel, Stravinsky, and other modern composers should be studied to observe the demands made upon the basses for agility of bowing and fingering, wide skips, and complex rhythms.\footnote{Walter Piston. Orchestration. New York: (W. W. Norton and Co., Inc.), 1955, p. 111.}
CHAPTER IV
PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN SELECTING CRITERIA FOR ANALYSIS

Many elements enter into the general makeup of a teaching method book. Therefore, in order to complete a critical analysis of ten representative string bass teaching methods the first procedure is that of selecting criteria from which comparisons, summarizations, and conclusions might be drawn. In the selection of criteria the following general factors will be considered: (1) the findings of educational psychologists concerning the learning processes that are applicable to this study, (2) the general scope of the ten methods selected for analysis, (3) those major points found after careful investigation to be present in varying degrees in the methods selected for analysis.

The degree to which any phase of the criteria enters into the makeup of an individual book is of course dependent upon its author's views concerning what he proposes the learner to gain from using his method and should be considered in the realm of variables.

Probably the first consideration of any book or teaching method is the general style and form, or format. To meet the needs of the learner the following factors will be considered: (1) charts, (2) a dictionary of terms, (3) general instructions, (4) a glossary of scales, (5) pictures, (6) rudiments, (7) signs.
The systems governing the use of fingers in bowed string instrument pedagogy are rather unique and somewhat complex procedures, however, over a period of years certain basic systems have evolved along nationalistic lines and as a result in string bass pedagogy the French, German, and Italian systems are recognized. The basic difference in these systems is generally considered the method in which the thumb and third finger is used. It is therefore important to include the following considerations in the evaluation criteria: (1) French, German, or Italian system of fingering, (2) the use of the thumb, (3) the use of the third finger.

The study of positions in string bass pedagogy is a relatively misunderstood concept. The position is generally considered to be the placement of the first finger in relation to playing of a given passage or sequence of notes. The concept of positions and fingering is closely related and there is a good deal of overlapping of ideas. String bass methodology recognizes different systems of position studies along nationalistic lines. There are two basic position systems: the so-called French and German systems. The former has eight positions and fourteen degrees, the latter has seven positions with six intermediate positions. Both systems employ a system of thumb positions in relation to advanced study. The following considerations will be incorporated into the criteria of this study: (1) system of fingering, (2) naming of positions, (3) se-
sequential arrangement of positions, (4) pedagogical arrangement.

Probably the most important single factor contributing toward success on a bowed string instrument is the mastery of bowing techniques. In string bass teaching, two basic styles, the French and German systems, are recognized. The former employs a bow similar to that of the violoncello and is held in a palm downward position. The latter system uses a larger bow and is held in a palm upward position. Within each basic style there are specific bowing skills such as (slurred-staccato bowing). It is therefore important that the following factors be considered: (1) bowing style, (2) specific bowing skills, (3) are the bowing skills integrated with other parts of the learning processes or are they introduced separately?

Etudes are generally included in string bass method books. In evaluating this phase of methodology the following points should be considered: (1) does the text include etudes? (2) to what degree are the etudes, if any, applicable in the general context in which they appear. For instance, if a section related to the development of the one-half position includes etudes, to what degree is this concept taken into consideration in the etude? (3) are the etudes included in a separate division of the text? (4) what is the musical value of the etudes in relation to melodic line, phrasing, rhythmic flow, and general considerations of the instrument?
The arrangement of lessons should be an important aspect of a teaching method, therefore, this phase will be included under the title of (1) order of each lesson.

The speed of a method book is in no way reflective of its value as a teaching method, however, teachers should be aware of the speed factor in order to assign lessons to meet the individual needs of students. The speed of each method will be considered in the following ways: (1) is it a fast method? (2) does it move at a moderate speed? (3) is it slow?

The order of skills represents an important phase of the pedagogical arrangement of a string bass method book. Moreover, the careful selection and arrangement of skills represents an important factor in the motivation of the learner.

Method books which originate in foreign countries may or may not have the literary portions translated. One traditional device for example, used by European publishers, with an eye focused on an international market, is to print a tri-lingual textual version, usually French, German, and English arranged in parallel columns. All too frequently, alas, the English translations are wholly inadequate and scarcely grammatical. In our evaluation the language (1), presence of translation (2), and quality of text (3), will be considered.
CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF TEN STRING BASS METHOD BOOKS

Methods are arranged in Bibliographical form.

METHOD #1.


I. Format:
   A. Charts: Position of harmonics.
   B. Dictionary of terms: Not as a separate unit, although a limited reference to terms is included in part I, and as needed throughout text.
   C. General instructions: Yes.
   D. Glossary of scales: Scales are contained in section on rudiments and include the following:
      1. Major.
      2. Harmonic minor.
      3. Melodic minor.
         a) This method employs the fixed do-solfeggio approach throughout.
   E. Pictures: The various types of bass bows and how they are held.
   F. Rudiments: A very comprehensive treatment of the rudiments of music.
   G. Signs: Bowing signs.
II. Fingering:
   A. System: Italian.
   B. Use of thumb: No reference.
   C. Use of third finger: The third finger is used in place of the second finger to depress strings in all portions of the fingerboard (this is in contrast to the German, American and some French methods where the third finger is used only to support the fourth finger in the lower positions and employs a transitional use of the third finger for playing harmonics and the thumb positions).

III. Positions:
   A. System: Italian.

IV. Bowing:
   A. Bowing Style: Italian, which seems to be according to the type bow used, modified German or French styles, and could very easily be the basis from which these styles originated.
   B. Specific skills:
      1. Legato.
      2. Staccato.
      3. Slurred.
   C. Integrated: Yes.

V. Etudes:
   A. Present: Yes.
B. Applicable: Yes.

C. Separate or integrated: Integrated in section I. Section II is written to meet the needs of the virtuoso player and etudes are in separate form.

VI. Order of each lesson:
A. Not written in relation to any order of lessons.

VII. Order of skills:
A. Not written in a way that would suggest any order to the learning of skills.

VIII. Speed: Fast.

IX. Language of text:
A. Presence of translations: No.
B. Quality of text: Generally good.
METHOD #2.

New York: (Carl Fischer), pp. 48.

I. Format:
A. Charts: None.
B. Dictionary of terms: None.
C. General instructions: One page containing the following information:
   1. The position of the player.
   2. How the bow is to be held.
   3. How the bow is to be drawn.
   4. The tuning of the double bass.
   5. The position of the left hand.
   7. Bowing marks and fingering marks.
D. Glossary of scales: None. However, scales are used in relation to other phases of text.
E. Pictures:
   1. Correct standing position of player.
   2. How to hold the bow and instrument while performing.
   3. Correct setting of fingers in the various positions.
   4. How to hold the bow (German and French styles).
F. Rudiments: Three pages of general rudiments of music.
G. Signs: Bowing and position signs.

II. Fingering:
A. System: Modified German.
B. Use of thumb: The thumb is placed between the second and third fingers of the left hand on the neck of the bass from the first half position through the third half position. In fourth position the thumb rests opposite the first finger. In fifth position the thumb rests across the back of the neck of the instrument, on the saddle. In sixth position the end of the thumb is braced against the side of the saddle in such a manner that the third finger when extended horizontally, can take the tones which are one octave above the open tones of the several strings.

C. Use of third finger: The third finger serves as a support to the fourth, and only comes into actual use in the sixth position, where it is used in place of the fourth finger, the latter not being long enough.

III. Positions:
A. System: Modified German.
B. Naming: The first half position, the first position, the second half position, etc.
C. Sequence: Positions are introduced in the following pattern:
   I. First half position, first position, second
position, third position, second half position, fourth position, third half position, fifth position, sixth position, fourth half position.

D. Pedagogical Arrangement:

1. Introduction of notes in positions on each string.

2. Following the introduction of a position exercises follow, usually on the G, D, and A strings, sometimes the E string is included.

IV. Bowing:

A. Bowing style: German and French.

B. Bowing skills: Regular, staccato, slurred, and slurred staccato. No reference is given in this tutor as to how these different bowings should be played.

C. Integrated: No.

V. Etudes:

A. Present: Yes.

B. Applicable: Yes.

C. Separate or integrated: Integrated.

D. Musical value: Good.

VI. Order of Each Lesson.

A. No formal lesson plan.

B. The only planned pedagogical arrangement is as follows:

1. Introduction of position followed by exercises.
2. The major scales with exercises.
3. Enharmonic scales.
4. Minor scales with exercises.
5. Interval studies in various major scales.
6. Chromatic scales.
7. Different bowings.
8. Pizzicato.

VII. Order of Skills:
   A. Not edited in relation to any order of skills.

VIII. Speed:
   A. Moderate.

IX. Language of Text:
   A. Quality of text: Generally good, explanations are clear and concise.
METHOD #3.


I. Format:
   A. Charts:
      1. Tuning chart showing relationship to a piano keyboard.
      2. Position charts.
   B. Dictionary of terms: None. Terms are explained when introduced in text.
   C. General instructions: None.
   D. Glossary of scales: None. However, scales are used in relation to position studies.
   E. Pictures:
      1. The string bass and its bow.
      2. Correct position while playing the string bass.
      3. How to hold the bow (German method).
      4. Incorrect way of holding the bow.
      5. Position of the hand at the fingerboard.
      6. Incorrect position of the hand on the fingerboard.
      7. Down bow (pull).
      8. Up bow (push).
   F. Rudiments: Introduced in text as needed. Very limited.
   G. Signs: Bowing and position signs.
II. **Fingering:**

A. **System:** German.

B. **Use of thumb:** No reference is given in this method relative to placement of the thumb. Student is cautioned: 'don't allow the thumb to choke the neck of the instrument when crossing from one string to the other'.

C. **Use of third finger:** No reference regarding use of the third finger.

III. **Positions:**

A. **System:** German.

B. **Naming:** The half position, the first position.

C. **Sequence:** Position is introduced on G or first string - followed by exercises designed to establish position. This sequence is transferred to the D, A, and E strings.

D. **Pedagogical arrangement:** Position studies are introduced in a logical systematic manner and are arranged in the following order:

1. Introduction of position on G or first string.
2. Study of note and rest values.
3. Exercises designed to establish position, intonation, and notes of position.
4. Easy studies in the different simple meters with piano accompaniment.
5. Legato studies.
7. Choral study.
10. Fragments from orchestra selections.
11. Melody.
13. Introduction of rudiments as needed.

IV. **Bowing:**

A. Bowing style: German

B. Bowing skills: Specific skills are introduced as follows: Legato, slurred, staccato, and slurred-staccato. Very little mention is made of the last three bowing skills listed.

C. Integrated: Only to the degree that simple legato bowing is used in the major portion of the text.

V. **Etudes:**

A. Present: Yes, to the degree that simple melodies are considered etudes.

B. Applicable: Yes.

C. Separate or integrated: Integrated.

D. Musical value: Good for beginning, younger students.

VI. **Order of Each Lesson.**

A. No formal lesson plan.

B. The method is designed toward the melodic, and position approach, and students are probably assigned lessons in relation to their interest and abilities.
VII. Order of Skills:
A. No particular order is given to skills, however, the following general and specific skills are contained in this method:
1. Exercises on open strings.
2. The down and up bow.
3. Crossing strings.
4. The pause.
5. Transposition.
6. The tie.
7. The dotted note.
8. Position studies.
10. Studies of note values.
11. The slur.
12. Bowing skills.

VIII. Speed:
A. Slow.

IX. Language of Text:
A. Quality of text: Easy reading, short concise statements. Designed to meet the needs of the beginning student.
METHOD #4.


I. Format:
   A. Charts: None.
   B. Dictionary of terms: None.
   C. General Instructions: None.
   D. Glossary of scales: None. However, scales are introduced in connection with position studies and lessons.
   E. Pictures: None.
   F. Rudiments: None.
   G. Signs: Bowing and position signs.

II. Fingering:
   A. System: German.
   B. Use of thumb: There is no reference in book in regard to the use of the thumb.
   C. Use of third finger: No reference in text regarding use of the third finger.

III. Positions:
   A. System: Modified German.
   B. Naming: Positions are graduated in semi-tones and are named as follows:
      1. The second position.
      2. The intermediate position between second and third.
3. The third position.

4. The intermediate position between third and fourth.

5. The fourth position.

C. Sequence: Introduced as listed above.

D. Pedagogical arrangement: Introduction of new position by finger placement on the G or first string, followed by short exercises using different note values and the use of accidentals to establish concept of pitch. This procedure is followed by placement of second finger, combination of first and second fingers, placement of fourth finger, combination of all notes of position on G string. This is followed by a scale encompassing newly introduced position and possibly other positions previously introduced. The next step is generally a combination of positions. This is followed by a familiar melody. A similar pattern is used to introduce positions on the D, A, and E strings.

IV. Bowing:

A. Bowing style: No reference.

B. Specific bowing skills: None.

C. Integrated: No.

V. Etudes:

A. Present: Yes.

B. Applicable: Yes.

C. Separate or integrated: Both.
D. Musical value: Contains fine excerpts from master-composers in the lessons as well as an appendix of orchestral bass parts.

VI. Order of Each Lesson:
A. No formal lesson plan.
B. The only possible order is derived from the position approach, and learning capacity of the student.

VII. Order of Skills:
A. Not edited in relation to any particular order of skills.

VIII. Speed:
Moderate to slow.

IX. Language of Text:
A. Quality of text: Good.
METHOD #5.


I. Format:
A. Charts: None.
B. Dictionary of terms: Not separate, terms are explained in section on rudiments of music, and as needed throughout text.
C. General instructions:
   1. The position of the player.
   2. Holding the bow.
   3. How the bow is to be drawn.
   4. The position of the left hand.
   5. Explanatory remarks concerning fingerings.
   7. Finger symbols.
D. Glossary of scales:
   1. Not as a separate unit.
   2. Scales are dispersed throughout text.
   3. Scales are introduced and followed by exercises in same key.
E. Pictures:
   1. Position of fingers on strings in first position.
   2. Placement of thumb on neck of bass in first position.
3. Holding the bow, German method.
4. Correct general standing position.
5. Placement of hand and thumb in fourth position.
6. Correct setting of all fingers in seventh position.
7. Holding the bow - French method.

F. Rudiments:

1. Contains four pages of rudiments encompassing the following:
   a) Rudiments of musical notation.
   b) Comparative table of the relative value of notes.
   c) Rests.
   d) Accidentals.
   e) Key signatures.
   f) Intervals.
   g) Scales.
   h) The slur and tie.
   i) The dot.
   j) The dynamics.
   k) Tempo.
   l) The apoggiatura, the mordent, and others.

G. Signs:

1. Used throughout tutor to denote (1) bowing marks, (2) semitones, (3) positions, etc.
II. **Fingering:**

A. **System:** German.

B. **Use of thumb:**

   1. Thumb placement from one-half position through three and one-half position is between the middle and fourth fingers.

C. **Use of third finger:**

   1. Third finger serves as support for fourth finger to sixth position, thereafter, used independently as well as in support of the fourth finger.

III. **Positions:**

A. **System:** Modified German.

B. **Naming:** Positions names are derived numerically starting with first position, with no intermediate positions.

C. **Sequence:** First through sixth position.

D. **Pedagogical arrangement:**

   1. Positions are introduced, followed by exercises on all strings.
   2. Exercises introduce all variations of notating accidentals.
   3. Contains a section of exercises on all strings in different positions.

IV. **Bowing:**

A. **Bowing Style:** Recommends German or French.
B. Bowing skills: Five specific bowing skills are introduced as follows:
1. Slurred.
2. Staccato.
3. Dotted notes.
4. Exercises in triplets.
5. Syncopated notes.

C. Integrated: Not in a manner usually referred to in educational procedure. Bowing styles are introduced in main body of text and in special sections, however, their use is more or less incidental in that they are used haphazardly in connection with exercises, etudes, or in excerpts from string bass symphonic, and solo literature.

V. Etudes:
A. Present: Yes.
B. Applicable: Yes.
C. Separate or integrated: Main body of text integrated. Separated in Appendix.
D. Musical Value: Varies from very dull to melodic, well phrased etudes of master composers.

VI. Order of Each Lesson:
A. No formal lesson plan.
B. The only planned pedagogical arrangement is perhaps following the introduction of a scale, various exercises are given in the same scale pattern (key).
VII. **Order of Skills:**

A. Skills are not organized in relation to any particular order, however, the following general and specific skills are contained in this method:

1. Exercises on open strings: the pause, the slur, harmonics, dynamics, exercises for the wrist, exercises in different positions, dotted notes, staccato bowings, the apoggiatura, the passing shake, the gruppetto or turn, the shake or trill, the tremlo, the pizzicato, slurred and triplet bowings.

VIII. **Speed:**

A. Moves at a moderate speed.

IX. **Language of Text:**

A. Quality of text: Explanations are clear to the reader and in general the quality is good.
**METHOD #6.**


I. Format:
   A. Charts: Very fine position charts.
   B. Dictionary of terms: None. However, new terms are explained as introduced in context with lessons.
   C. General instructions: Yes. Well organized.
   D. Glossary of scales: None.
   E. Pictures:
      1. Picture of string bass with names of parts.
      2. How to hold the instrument.
      3. How to hold the bow (French and German method).
      4. How to draw the bow.
      5. Correct position of the left hand.
   F. Rudiments: Two pages in preface.
   G. Signs: Bowing and position signs.

II. Fingering:
   A. System: German.
   B. Use of thumb: Rest thumb-tip on the outer side of the curve of the neck.
   C. Use of third finger: The third finger takes no active part in the first few positions, however, the third finger rests on the string between the second and fourth, reinforcing the naturally weak fourth finger.
III. Positions:
A. System: German.
B. Naming: The half, the first and the second position.
C. Sequence: Positions are introduced in the same sequence as listed above.
D. Pedagogical Arrangement: The following general pattern is used.
   1. Chart of positions.
   2. Introduction of new notes on the first or G string, followed by transfer to other strings.
   3. Range of positions.
   4. Exercises in positions.
   5. Scales in positions.

IV. Bowing:
A. Bowing style: Recommends French.
B. Bowing skills: Three specific bowing skills are introduced as follows:
   1. Legato or regular.
   2. Spiccato.
   3. Staccato.
C. Integrated: Partially.

V. Etudes:
A. Present: Yes.
B. Applicable: Yes.
C. Separate or integrated: Integrated.
D. Musical value: good.
VI. **Order of Each Lesson:**

A. **Lesson 1:**
   1. Anatomy of bass and bow.
   2. How they are held.
   3. How the tone is produced.

B. **Lesson 2:**
   1. Review of points learned in lesson 1.
   2. How to draw the bow on the various strings.

C. **Lesson 3:**
   1. Review of exercises of lesson 2.
   2. Emphasis on matters of relaxation, position, and movement of the arm and wrist.

D. **Lesson 4:**
   1. Review exercises.
   2. Combining different bowing speeds.

E. **Lesson 5:**
   1. Consideration of use of the left hand.
   2. The half position.

F. **Lesson 6:**
   1. Particular attention to proper shaping of the left hand.
   2. Introduction of slurred bowing.
   3. Staccato notes on one bow.

G. **Lesson 7:**
   1. Scales of the half position.
   2. Familiar melodies.
H. Lesson 8:
1. F-Major scale.
2. Familiar melodies.
3. Major factors studied to this point.

I. Lesson 9:
1. The first position.
2. Directions for advancing from the one-half to the first position.
3. Familiar melodies.

J. Lesson 10:
1. Review.
2. The double down-bow.
3. Increased tempos.

K. Lesson 11:
1. Shifting from half to first position and vice versa.
2. Preparatory exercises.
3. Chromatic exercises.

L. Lesson 12:
1. Preparatory exercise.
2. Scale of A Major.

M. Lesson 13:
1. Review of lessons nine through twelve.

N. Lesson 14:
1. The second position.

O. Lesson 15:
1. Shifting from first to second position and vice
versa.

2. C-Major scale.

P. Lesson 16

1. Comprehensive review of all exercises contained in lessons fourteen and fifteen.

2. Etudes.

Q. Lesson 17:

1. Introduction to playing in an orchestra.

R. Lesson 18:

1. The pizzacato.

2. The spicatto.

3. Octaves.

4. Easy solos.

VII. Order of skills:

A. Basic skills are introduced in the following sequence:

1. Bowing open strings.

2. Bow speed control.

3. Divisions of the bow.

4. Combining different bow speeds.

5. The waltz and march strokes.

6. Use of the left hand.

7. Positions.

8. Playing several notes on one bow stroke.

9. Staccato notes on one bow.

10. Shifting positions.
11. The pizzicato.

12. The spiccato, or springing bow.

13. Octaves.

VIII. Speed:

A. Moves rather slow.

IX. Language of Text:

A. Quality of text: Good style, easy reading.
METHOD #7.


I. Format:
A. Charts: None.
B. Dictionary of terms: Not as a unit. Terms are defined when introduced in text.
C. General Instructions: One page as follows:
   1. Holding and guiding the bow.
   2. Attacking the strings.
   3. Tuning the four and five string bass.
   4. Names of parts of the bow.
D. Glossary of Scales: Not as a separate unit, however, scales are used throughout method in connection with position studies or in general lesson considerations.
E. Pictures:
   1. Tablature indicating various divisions of the four and five string bass.
   2. Correct standing position.
   3. Correct playing position.
   4. Correct holding and position of bow (French method) while playing.
   5. Correct left hand finger positions.
F. Rudiments: None.
G. Signs:
   1. Bowing signs.

II. Fingering:
   A. System: French.
   B. Use of thumb: The thumb is not mentioned in lower positions, however pictures indicate thumb is placed opposite the second finger of the left hand and rests on the middle of the neck of the bass. Information is given concerning the placement of the thumb in seventh position and later in reference to fifth and sixth positions. Concerning the pizzicato, this method indicates that the end of the thumb, placed on the right side of the fingerboard should support the hand.
   C. Use of third finger: No reference is given concerning use of the third finger, however analysis of text indicates that in certain instances the third finger is used in the lower positions to depress notes. (This is the difference from american and german methods, and similar to Italian practice).

III. Positions:
   A. System: French.
   B. Naming:
      1. Positions are indicated by number and degree.
      2. Text includes studies from first position, second degree through eighth position, thirteenth degree.
3. No intermediate positions are indicated.

4. Degrees are measured in relation to the number of semitones from the open string.

C. Sequence:
   1. First position, second degree.
   2. First position, first and second degree.
   3. Second position, third and fourth degree.
   4. Third position, fourth and fifth degree.
   5. Fourth position, sixth and seventh degree.
   6. Fifth position, eighth and ninth degree.
   7. Sixth position, ninth and tenth degree.
   8. Sixth and seventh position, eleventh degree.
   9. Seventh position, twelfth degree.
  10. Eighth position, thirteenth degree.
  11. Recapitulatory studies from the first to the eighth position, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth degrees.

D. Pedagogical Arrangement:
   1. Introduction of position and degree on the G or first string followed by D string, A string, and E string.
   2. Exercises to establish position.
   3. Interval studies.
   4. Etude studies.
   5. Scales of position.

IV. Bowing:
   A. Bowing style: French.
B. Bowing Skills:
   1. Legato.
   2. Slurred legato.
   4. Staccato.
C. Integrated: Yes.

V. Etudes:
   A. Present: Yes.
   B. Applicable: Yes.
   C. Separate or Integrated: Integrated.
   D. Musical value: Excellent.

VI. Order of Each Lesson:
   A. Not edited in relation to lesson plan approach.

VII. Order of Skills:
   A. No definite plan relative to order of skills.

VIII. Speed:
   A. A fast method.
   B. Contains supplementary material of a sufficient grade and musical value to challenge the most serious student of the string bass.

IX. Language of Text:
   A. Evaluation of language: Trilingual edition. Original in French, translated into German and English. Translations are very complete and do complete justice to the original work.
   B. Quality of text: Very good.
METHOD #8.


I. Format:

A. Charts: Tuning chart.

B. Dictionary of terms: Not as a unit, however, terms are defined as introduced in text.

C. General Instructions: Short. One half page.

D. Glossary of scales: Not separate. However, all variations of Major, minor and chromatic scales are dispersed throughout tutor.

E. Pictures:

1. Double Bass, with names of parts.
2. First position setting of fingers.
3. First position setting of thumb on neck of bass.
4. Holding the bow (German method). Correct placement of all fingers.
5. Correct standing position demonstrating the general position of the player, his bow and position of bass while performing.
6. Fourth position placement of hand and thumb.
7. Seventh position setting of all fingers.
8. Holding the bow (French method, also known as the Bottesini method).

F. Rudiments: Preface contains some explanations of factors which may be called rudiments. Main section
of text contains rudiments in connection with lessons, these in turn are followed by exercises designed to establish the basic principle involved.

G. Signs: Explanation of bowing signs, explanation of signs for the positions, explanation of the signs for the fingers, explanatory remarks as to the most important signs of expression.

II. Fingering:
   A. System: German.
   B. Use of thumb: Placement between second and third fingers on neck of bass from one-half position through intermediate position between third and fourth positions. From the fourth position through the intermediate position between sixth and seventh positions, which to this time was placed along the middle of the neck of bass, gradually moves toward the left side of the neck. In seventh position the thumb is placed on left side of neck at a spot near the junction of the upper bout and neck of bass.
   C. Use of third finger: The third finger is used in support of the fourth finger to the seventh position. In seventh position the third finger is used independently.

III. Positions:
   A. System: German.
   B. Naming: The usual or half position, intermediate
positions, first through seventh positions.

C. Sequence: Introduced chromatically through seventh position.

D. Pedagogical arrangement: Introduction of position on first or G string, followed by exercises in same position on each separate string. Scales are introduced for ease of playing and understanding in relation to positions.

IV. Bowing:

A. Bowing style: German.

B. Bowing skills:
   1. Slurred legato.
   2. Staccato.
   3. Triplet.
   4. Slurred staccato.
   5. Tremolo.
   6. Col legno.
   7. Ponticello.
   8. The jumping bow (spiccato).

C. Integrated: Only to the degree that they occur in exercises, etudes, et.

V. Etudes:

A. Present: Yes.

B. Applicable: Yes.

C. Musical value: Excellent.

VI. Order of Each Lesson:

A. Not organized on lesson basis.
VII. **Order of Skills.**
   A. Not oriented with respect to any specific order of skills.

VIII. **Speed:**
   A. Fast.
   B. Supplementary material of sufficient grade and musical value to challenge the serious string bass student.

IX. **Language of Text:**
   B. Quality of text: Very good.

I. Format:
A. Charts: None.
B. Dictionary of terms: None.
C. General Instructions: A brief introduction to playing in the thumb position.
D. Glossary of Scales: Yes, and is organized as follows:
   1. Division VIII, encompassing pp. 40-55, relative to studies of scales and broken chords. Includes the following general scales and arpeggios:
      a) Major scales and arpeggios.
      b) Melodic and harmonic minor scales and arpeggios.
      c) Major, minor and diminished seventh arpeggios.
E. Pictures: None.
F. Rudiments: None.
G. Signs: A few in relation to symbols indicating the harmonics and tenor clef.

II. Fingering:
A. System: German.
B. Use of thumb: The author makes use of a different
term for each manner of setting thumb (in thumb positions); for instance, to indicate the thumb position producing the harmonics of flageolet tones, or for the firm setting of the thumb.

C. Use of third finger: The third finger is no longer so limited, it is, in fact, regularly used to finish scales and florid passages.

III. Positions:
   A. System: German.
   B. Naming: Thumb positions.
   C. Sequence: Introduction on G or first string, D string, combination G and D string, A string, G, D, and A strings, combination G, D, A, and E string, exercises in thumb position on all strings.
   D. Pedagogical arrangement: Arranged in divisions as follows: Division VI, the thumb position, Division VII, finger exercises and longer studies in the higher thumb positions. Division VIII, studies on scales and broken chords, Division IX on harmonics.

IV. Bowing:
   A. Bowing style: German.
   B. Bowing skills: Yes. Regular, slurred and staccato.
   C. Integrated: Yes.

V. Etudes:
   A. Present: Yes.
   B. Applicable: Yes
   C. Musical Value: Excellent.
VI. Order of Each Lesson:
   A. Not edited in relation to lesson plan.

VII. Order of Skills:
   A. Not edited in relation to any particular order of skills.

VIII. Speed:
   A. Fast.

IX. Language of Text:
   A. Presence of translation: German text with English translation.
   B. Quality of text: Very good.
METHOD #10.


I. Format:
   A. Charts: Very simple scale-like tuning chart.
   B. Dictionary of terms: None, however, terms are defined as introduced in text.
   C. General instructions: None.
   D. Glossary of scales: None, however, scales are introduced in connection with position studies.
   E. Pictures:
      1. Correct standing position of player.
      2. Proper sitting position of player.
      3. Positions for the left hand.
   F. Rudiments: Introduced in text as needed. Very limited.
   G. Signs: Includes explanations of bowing signs, and position signs.

II. Fingering:
   A. Method: German.
   B. Use of thumb: The thumb is placed between the second and third fingers of the left hand on neck of bass. Side of thumb is used in the seven and one-half position for playing first harmonics.
   C. Use of third finger: The third finger is used to
III. Positions:

A. System: German.

B. Naming: Positions are graduated in semi-tones in the following manner.

1. Using the G or first string as an example; placement of the first or index finger on the string determines the name of the position. For instance, placing the first finger on G# or Ab determines half position, likewise if the first finger depresses A the player is in first position.

C. Sequence: Positions are introduced as follows:

1. Open, one-half, first, second, two and one-half, third; three and one-half, fourth, fifth, sixth, six and one-half, seventh, and seven and one-half position.

D. Pedagogical arrangement: Positions are arranged in a logical, systematic order. The following pattern is used throughout the text:

1. Introduction of positions on the G or first string.
2. Chromatic exercises.
3. Introduction of accidentals in each position.
4. Sequential introduction of preceding instructions on each string.
5. Exercises for crossing strings.
7. Exercises for shifting positions.

IV. **Bowing:**

   A. **Bowing style:** German.

   B. **Bowing skills:** Three specific skills are introduced in the following sequence:

      1. Slurred.
      2. Jumping bowings (spiccato).

   C. **Integrated:** Only to the degree that slurred bowings are introduced in the main body of the text.

   Bowing exercises are a separate section, encompassing the last eight pages of the book.

V. **Etudes:**

   A. **Present:** Yes.

   B. **Applicable:** Yes.

   C. **Musical Value:** Questionable.

VI. **Order of Each Lesson:**

   A. Not organized according to any formal lesson plan.

VII. **Order of Skills:**

   A. Text is organized to accent position studies, rather than introducing specific skills.
VIII. **Speed:**
   A. Moves along at a fast pace.

IX. **Language of Text:**
   This American publication devotes only a small space to literary explanation.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary. A brief history of the string bass discloses the many divergent paths through which it has evolved. This transition from its early relationship to the viols to its present status as a highly standardized instrument has taken place over a period of roughly three hundred years. The only exception to this standardization is the contour of the main body of basses in relation to their national origin.

A review of musical usage points out the flexibility with which the string bass has met the needs throughout its evolution. After its emancipation from the role of a doubling instrument in the early nineteenth century the bass has been used as a solo instrument of virtuoso quality. The string bass is currently used in almost every conceivable combination of instrumental ensemble.

To meet the needs of the ever increasing demands made upon players, the need for pedagogically sound teaching methods becomes increasingly more important.

Ten string bass tutors were critically analyzed in accordance with selected criteria and are graphically summarized on the following five point rating scales. The ratings in terms of Arabic numerals are as follows:

5 - Superior, 4 - Excellent, 3 - Average, 2 - Below Average, 1 - Poor.
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Conclusions. In general string bass method books include very comprehensive teaching materials, however, the findings of this study point to a need for improved pedagogical procedures by authors. Some of the most apparent needs according to the criteria used in this study are as follows:

1. **Format**: Many of the important factors relative to the general makeup and style of method books have been omitted entirely or in part, or are limited to the degree that their effectiveness is reduced.

2. **Fingering**: A majority of the methods analyzed disclose very limited instructions regarding the use of fingers.

3. **Positions**: The most apparent deficiency in this area concerns the lack of standardization of naming positions. Generally, position studies are better organized than the other phases of the method books, but pedagogical arrangements should be made clearer.

4. **Bowing Styles**: Although bowing styles are one of the most important aspects of string bass performance, few methods stress this phase. There is a need for much improvement in this area, and especially so in relation to specific bowing skills.

5. **Etudes**: Generally the more comprehensive methods have included etudes and studies of superior quality.
However, there is a need for better arrangements and placement of etudes in relation to context of sections or portions of lesson. Etudes may be purchased in separate book forms for supplementary study.

6. **Order of Each Lesson:** One of the ten method books analyzed in this study contained a lesson plan approach. This points to a definite need for improvement in this area.

7. **Speed:** Except for a few rather slow methods designed for school class use, the speed of methods is adequate.

8. **Language of Text:** In general, the quality is good, however there is a definite need for more concise explanations of materials presented in string bass method books. Translations are generally good, however several foreign editions analyzed revealed a need for better translation.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS


B. PERIODICALS