

15th Century Italian Dance

There are three fifteenth century Italian dance masters from whom we have surviving manuscripts. These are Domenico, Cornazano, and Ebreo. Domenico was the first of the three, and both Ebreo and Cornazano were his students (many of the dances appearing in both Ebreo's and Cornazano's books were originally choreographed by Domenico, for example).

They divided their dances into two categories: Bassadanze and Balli. The distinctive feature of a bassadanza was that it should not involve any leaps or jumps (the literal translation of "bassadanza" is "low dance" -- meaning where the dancers stay low to the ground and do not leap into the air). Certainly the basse danze are less complex and by and large do not contain as many leaps and bounds as the balli, but there is only a very fine dividing line between the balli and the basse danze.

Before I begin with any of the dance choreographies, I will list the step descriptions for these dances, and some notes about dancing in the 15th century style.

The basic step descriptions will get you through the early dances -- La Spagna and Reale, which are basic bassedanze. Feel free to read just this first section and then skip onwards to the dancing. Later, you will want to come back and read more of the step descriptions and learn more of the complex dances, then read up on tempi, misura, and maniera, which are also described here.

This book lists only a handful of 15th C dances, and there are many more dances that can be done in an SCA setting that are not listed in this book.

Recently, all of these manuscripts have been translated into English (see the bibliography at the end of the book, in particular Sparti's translation of Ebreo and A. William Smith's 2 volume book), and it is an interesting exercise to reconstruct these dances from the translations (or transcriptions, if you read Italian) of the manuscripts -- this is more complex than reconstructing from Arbeau, but less complex than reconstructing from Caroso or Negri.

After you have learned a few of these dances, please feel free to start reconstructing these dances from the original sources. You are likely to learn a lot more about dancing doing that than in any other way. The 15th century manuscripts generally present much simpler dances than the 16th century books. They are relatively easy to reconstruct and easy to dance, while providing you as a dancer and a researcher with more challenging work than you will find in working through Arbeau or the Inns of Court.

There are several of these dances that have never or very rarely been reconstructed (because the transcriptions and translations have only recently been made available), and so it is useful work too!

Time and Social Setting

These dances were popular in Italy between about 1450 (perhaps earlier) and probably 1494 or later. During this time period, Italy became the center of the European renaissance. There were great innovators in both the arts and sciences, moderate and relatively unoppressive forms of government. This is despite the fact that Italy was fractured into a number of independent states at the time, all with their own forms of government, from empire to republic.

The French and the English were tied up in wars between themselves. The *reconquista* was in full swing in Spain, and most other European nations, even Russia, were tied up in internal affairs, which left Italy relatively peaceful until the French invasion of Charles VIII in 1494.

The Italian Wars

After 1494, until at least 1515, there were various wars in Italy which meant that too many people spent too much of their time shooting and stabbing at each other to do much in the way of dance. Certainly the artistic and scientific innovations were mostly achieved either side of this period.

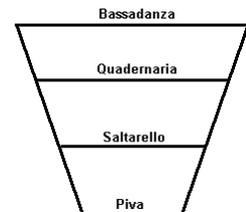
Italian culture didn't settle down into peaceful growth again until the mid to late 16th Century. This had left a gulf of somewhat over 100 years between these dances and those of Caroso and Negri. During this time Italy, and Italian culture, had changed fairly significantly.

Tempi and Misura

“Tempi and Misura” means “Time and Measure”, to an extent also meaning “time and motion” as well as many other things. -- these were considered to be the two most important aspects of all Italian dance.

Time sequences

The basics of understanding misura is the understanding of how the music related to the dance. In all Italian dances there were only four major time sequences used, these are shown on a diagram in Cornazano’s text which looks somewhat like this:



The diagram shows the relationship between the four misure, bassadanza, quadernaria, saltarello, and piva.

Measures

Bassedanza was considered to be the most important of the measures (“Bassedanza is the queen of measures”), while piva was considered to be the least important, or the most “common”. Bassedanza steps are the slowest and most elegant of the steps, while the piva steps are the fastest. Saltarello and quadernaria steps are obviously in their respective places somewhere between bassedanze and piva.

Tempi

The tempi relate to the misura in that the music relates to the dance -- the tempi (time) of the music corresponds to the steps or misura of the dance. Each of the 4 misure have their own tempi, as follows:

Bassedanza	6/4
Quadernaria	4/4
Saltarello	3/4
Piva	2/4

So music that is in 6/4 time will have bassedanze steps to it, music that is in 3/4 time will have saltarello steps to it, etc. Of course there are variations to the above sequences, for example you occasionally see Saltarello or Piva in 6/8 time or other minor differences but by and large the tempi listed above are the main ones used.

Step Descriptions

I will begin by describing the steps used in the Italian Basse Danze. More step descriptions for the 15th C Italian Balli will be given later on in this chapter.

The Italian Basse Danze contain many of the steps of the French and Burgundian basse dances, however, they were done slightly differently.

SL -- Single (sempio¹)

The sempio (single) step is just a single step forwards on the left foot, as shown in the picture. A sempio right is a single step forwards on the right foot.

Sempi are not closed.

There is some ornamentation in a sempio, basically I prefer to do the campeggiare (shoulder and hip movement) without the ondeggiare that is found in a doppio. So, the sempio looks just like the first step of a doppio.

Two sempio can be done in one bar of bassadanza, which means that they take three beats each, or slightly slower than the first step of a doppio (which would be done in two beats).



DL -- Double (doppio)

An Italian double (doppio) was done to a rising and falling movement, with the dancers rising onto their toes during the steps, and falling back to the flat of the feet at the end of the beat. This step takes 1 measure.

A doppio left in bassadanza time looks like this:

- Step forwards on the left foot (as shown above for the sempio).
- Step forwards on the right foot, bringing the right foot either level with, slightly in front of, or slightly behind the left foot.
- Step forwards again on the left foot.

Note that there is no close at the end of the step. Remember to start the next step with the right foot.

Since there are six beats in a bar of bassadanza time, each of the above actions will take two beats.

Remember to use lots of maniera (campeggiare and ondeggiare) while walking through the step: Bring your hip and shoulder forwards gracefully while making the first step, rise up to your toes on the second step (as shown in the picture), and lower on the third step. Be graceful about raising and lowering, try to rise and lower slowly rather than falling back on your heels like a sack of potatoes.



¹ Literally, "simple" or "simple step". Look for the quadernaria section in "Laltria Fia Guelmina" for an example of where this description does not apply.

Contrapasso	<p>Contrapassi are doubles that are done consecutively on the same foot . The first double is step left-right-left as a normal doppio, and then do a quick shift of weight onto the right foot.</p> <p>The next contrapasso will also begin on the left foot, so two or more contrapassi in a row will be done left, left, left, not like sempii or dopii which would be done left, right, left.</p> <p>The last contrapasso in a sequence is abbreviated, so that instead of finishing with a movement back on to the right foot, it simply omits the final step onto the left. So, two contrapassi in a row would be done as step left, step right, step left & back, step left, step right; still finishing with the left foot ready to lead the next step. Three of them would be done step left, step right, step left & back, step left, step right, step left & back, step left, step right.</p> <p>Contrapassi can also be done on the right foot, which are the same as described above but changing “left” for “right” throughout.</p> <p>Note that two of these steps are done in 1½ bars of music, and so the last movement back onto the left foot is done rather quickly, and the timing of the steps must be arranged carefully to match the music.</p> <p>Diana Cruickshank examines this contrapasso step in detail in an article in <i>Historical Dance</i>, 1992.</p>
Reprisa	<p>The Ripresa, the Italian equivalent of the French Reprise was done quite differently. Basically it looks like two singles, and takes 1 measure.</p>
RpB -- Ripresa Backwards	<p>Step backwards with the right foot, bending the knee slightly. Then join feet, stepping backwards with the left foot and rising onto the toes. Then repeat the same movements, stepping backwards onto the flat of the right foot, and then step backwards with the left foot, rising onto the toes again.²</p>
RpF -- Ripresa Forwards	<p>This step can be done forwards on the left or the right foot. It is similar to the riprese backwards, listed above, but done moving forwards.</p>
RpL -- Ripresa Left	<p>Step to the left with the left foot, bending at the knees very slightly and remaining on the flat of the feet. Then join feet, stepping left with the right foot, and rising onto the toes. Repeat the movement, stepping with the left foot and dipping, and then stepping with the right foot and rising. This riprese can also be done with the right foot, moving to the right.³</p>
RpT -- Ripresa Turning	<p>Place the left foot in front of the right foot, heel to toe, and bend at the knees. Then, rising on the toes, swivel in place through 180° over the right shoulder. The left foot will now be behind the right foot. Repeat the movement, placing the left foot in front of the right foot while bending at the knees, then rise and swivel again.</p>

2 The riprese in the 16th C Italian dances was done as a single movement, in much faster time (half the time of a single continenza), and always done sideways, never backwards or forwards. Many reconstructors have used the 16th C step as a rationale for insisting that the 15th C step of the same name was also a single step. I reject this on the basis of the steps in Pietosa -- two riprese forwards cover the same distance as two doubles (doppi) forwards, and hence fit better if they are two steps. Cornazano provides another clue here -- he states that the length of a riprese should be varied, and also makes a statement that could be interpreted that the step can be done in two movements.

3 I make the assumption that the sideways ripresa is done in the same number of movements as the forwards or backwards ripresa. There is possibly less justification for this. The steps should be much smaller than the forwards or backwards riprese (see my previous comment about Cornazano), especially in dances like La Spagna, Reale, and Pietosa, where the dancers are moving apart while holding hands.

RvL -- Riverenza L

The riverenza done in bassadanza time is done in a single bar, or six beats. Here is now to do a riverenza beginning on the left foot, in six beats:

- Push the left foot forwards, somewhat ahead of the right.
- Pause
- Bring the left foot backwards, to somewhere behind where it started.
- Bend both knees, keeping the body straight up and down, keeping the head upright and facing forwards, as shown in the picture.
- Begin rising off your knees, starting to straighten your knees and start coming back into place.
- Return to the upright position with the feet back where they started, straightening both knees and rising back into place.



A Riverenza on the right foot is done in the same way, except using the right foot.

CnL -- Continenza Left

This pair of steps is done in the same way as a stepping branle, done in the Burgundian Basse Danses. To do these as a pair of steps, the dancers take a single step to the left, join feet together, and then step back towards the right, joining feet together again. The steps are done in an Italian manner, with the same sort of rising and falling movements seen in the Italian Reprise. Each step takes the same time as a single step. Occasionally they are done right then left, although almost never singly.

CnR -- Continenza Right**CbL -- Cambiamento Left**

Simply, change weight onto the Left foot. A Cambiamento Right is a change of weight onto the Right foot. This step takes no time -- it should be done as part of the previous step. For example, a Single Left followed by a Cambiamento Right is done by stepping forwards on the left foot, closing feet with the right foot, then quickly shifting weight so that your weight is on the right foot.

MvL -- Meza Volta Left

A quick half turn, to the left, ending up facing in the opposite direction to the one you started. A Meza Volta Right is simply the same thing done turning to the Right.

VtL -- Volta tonda Left

This is a full turn, to the Left, ending up facing the way you started. A volta tonda Right is the same thing done turning to the right.

Perfect Dancing

Of course, there is a lot more to perfect dancing than just knowing all of the steps and timing. Domenico talks in his treatise about grace, maniera, and “fantasmata”, which is a “physical quickness which is controlled by the understanding of the misura”.

Cornazano also talks quite a bit about dance style. The important points that he raises include the following:

- Memoria (memory)** “Memoria entails that you must remember the steps that you intend to perform, displaying the principles of dancing.”
-
- Misura (measure)** “Misura is other than remembering the dance, that you must make your steps in orderly arrangement and in accordance with your musician”. Misura is the ability to be able to relate the knowledge of the steps to the timing of the music, and the ability to physically relate them together on the dance floor.
-
- Maniera (manner)** “Maniera is, besides remembering the dance and moving with misura, that you must give attention to the things that you are performing: campeggiano and ondeggiando with the torso, in accordance with the foot that moves. For instance when you move the right foot to perform a doppio, you must campeggiare on the left foot which remains on the ground, and somewhat turn the torso to that side, ondeggiare during the second short step and elevate suavely above that one, and with the same grace lower on the third step that completes the doppio.”
- The objective here is to keep the body moving with the feet. When moving forwards on the second beat of a doppio, raise your body up and turn your torso (hip and shoulder) towards the direction of movement. On the final beat of a doppio, lower the body again and straighten the shoulders.
- This achieves a very different style compared with the French and Burgundian dances, and also quite different to the 16th century Italian dances which use shoulder and body movement in a very different way.
-
- Aire** “Aire ... will cause you to be pleasureable to those who watch you. Above all, you must perform with a happy countenance and cheerfully.”
-
- Diversita di cose** “Diversita di cose is being able to perform different dances successively and never making one like the other, that is, execute [the steps] in various styles. That which has been done once, do not repeat it immediately -- but this section applies more to the man than to the woman.”
-

Compartimento di terreno

“Compartimento di terreno means ... that you must take extreme care in calculating the surface where you will perform the steps of the dance that you plan to execute. You must partition it well from your teacher’s advice and own experience.”

This means that you should be aware of how much space is available for you to dance in, and make sure that you divide that space up well between the steps that you have for the dance. If you have to cover a space of about 3 meters in 2 doubles, then you need to cover 1½ meters in each doppio. Similarly, when you are performing turns, circuits, and other figures on the dance floor, take the time to make sure you are using an appropriate amount of floor space for each sequence.

Of course all of this and more is only a part of being a good dancer -- but the rest of it is stuff you can’t learn from a book!

Bassa Danze

The earliest Italian dance manuscripts are amongst the oldest primary sources of basse dances (or bassa danze, as the Italians called them). Domenico, the earliest Italian dance master wrote a book in 1450 containing a number of basse danze. He was replaced in the 1455 - 1500 period by two of his students, Antonio Cornazano, and Guglielmo Ebreo. Cornazano wrote one fairly extensive text, which contains a number of dances in a similar style to (or copied from) Domenico. Guglielmo Ebreo wrote a much larger number (8, possibly more), smaller texts, of which the first one (fonds it. 973) is considered the main source, with the smaller volumes containing mostly dances extracted from it, or alterations to dances contained in it.

Guglielmo also wrote a manuscript under the name of "Giovanni Ambrosio". It has only recently been established that the two people (Guglielmo and Ambrosio) were the same, and it was thought for a long time that Ambrosio's work was a plagiarism of Guglielmo's. The confusion was partially caused by Guglielmo moving to Florence, changing his name, and converting from Judaism to Christianity at the same time.⁴

By Guglielmo's time as a dance master, the basse danze was starting to die out, and was being replaced (in Italy) by balli (elsewhere in Europe it was being replaced by the Pavane). The earliest manuscripts (Domenico, Cornazano) list more basse danze than balli, and the balli that they do list are quite simple. Guglielmo lists at least as many balli as basse danze, and by the time of Cesare Negri and Caroso (1580 - 1620), the basse danze had disappeared, to be replaced by a number of quite complex balli, containing long and difficult step sequences.

Even the earliest basse danze in Italy were meant as much for performance in front of an audience (often consisting of visiting Spanish dignitaries), as for dancing. The balli were meant almost exclusively as production pieces, and by the time of Negri and Caroso dancing as a form of entertainment was more common than it had been several hundred years earlier when dancing was (probably) almost exclusively done for fun.

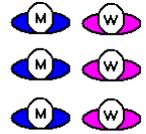
The simplest of the Italian basse danze (eg: La Spagna, Reale) were as simple, if not simpler, than the Burgundian and French basse dances, although they had a very different feel to them. The more complex of the basse danze only appear minimally different from the early balli, and have many more step types than the French and Burgundian dances.

When learning these dances for the first time, or teaching them to a group, it is probably better to learn them in the order that they are presented here. La Spagna and Reale may seem short and simple in comparison to the other dances in this book, but they do provide a good lesson in how the basic steps were done, and give the dancers a better understanding of how the dances of the period were done. The more complex basse danze presented here (Corona, Pietosa, Caterva, Patienza) are best learned after already gaining this background.

⁴ Probably not directly for reasons of religious persecution or prejudice, but more because the order of Knighthood that he hoped to join (and was granted admission to, like Domenico), was only open to Christians. Guglielmo obviously idolised Domenico, and wanted to emulate his feats as closely as possible in all matters.

La Spagna

This is a relatively simple Italian Bassa Danza. It is uncharacteristic in that it begins the dance, after the opening Riverenza and Continenzas, on the right foot instead of the left. The dance is done in a line of couples, as for a pavane, with the ladies on the right.



Part 1

1	RvR	Riverenza on the right foot.
2	CnR CnL	Two continenze, right then left.
3	SR SL	Two singles.
4 - 7	DR DL DR DL	Four doubles.
8	RpB	Reprise backwards.

Part 2

Note that the dance changes back to the left foot at this point.

9	SL SR	Two singles
10 - 11	DL DR	Two doubles

Drop hands, then turn to face your partner, and take their right hand in your right hand.⁵

12 - 13	RpL RpR	Move sideways to the left (away from your partner) then back towards your partner.
---------	---------	--

Turn back to face the front of the line, joining hands again.

Part 3

14	SL SR	Two singles
15 - 16	DL DR	Two doubles ⁶ .
17 - 18	RpT RpB	Drop hands for this sequence, ripresa turning, then a ripresa backwards.

⁵ This is my best guess based on doing this dance. This applies to all of these Bassa Danze with "turn and face, then riprese" sections in them like this (eg: Reale, Pietosa). It is quite a common theme in the basse danze and balli of the 15th Century, and I have also used this in the riprese - turn - riprese sections in a few of the balli.

⁶ "and one contra doppio turning backwards on the right foot". Your guess is as good as mine! I always dance the second doppio moving forwards to avoid confusion with the riprese to follow.

Reale

This is a basse danze for two, which could also be done by a line of couples. It is similar to La Spagna, being relatively simple and can be done to the same music (being 18 bars long). It begins without the introductory riverenza and continenze, and on the left foot, changing to the right foot after the first part. The dance appears in Guglielmo's "Dei Pratica seu Arte Tripudii", which is available in translation by Barbara Sparti. Guglielmo does not claim ownership of the dance, however, as he attributes it to Domenico. There are a number of dances in Guglielmo's work that he credits to Domenico in this manner.

Part 1	1	SL SR	Two singles
	2 - 5	DL DR DL DR	Four doubles, beginning with the left foot.
	6	RpL	Riprese to the left.
Part 2	7 - 8	SR SL DR	Two singles and a double, starting on the right foot. At the end of this sequence, turn to face your partner, taking right hands.
	9 - 10	RpL RpR	Riprese left then right. At the end of this sequence, turn to face the front again, taking hands.
Part 3	11 - 12	SL SR DL	Two singles and a double, starting on the left foot.
	13	RvR	Riverenza on the right foot.
Part 4	14	SRb SLb	Two singles going backwards, starting on the right foot. Turn to face your partner again, taking right hands.
	15 - 16	RpL RpR	Riprese left then right
	17 - 18	CnL CnR CnL CnR	Four continenze, starting on the left foot.

Corona

This is another of the basse danze by Domenico that is done by a line of couples. It is slightly more complex than La Spagna, although not greatly. There is no pattern to the dance, unfortunately -- Guglielmo describes it as a "challenging bassadanza, not for people who scribble on paper".

Part 1	1	SL SR CbL	2 singles, left then right, ending with the weight on the Left foot.
	2 - 3.5	Contrapasso R, Contrapasso R	2 (contrapassi) doubles on the right foot.
	3.5	DL CbR	double, cambiamento.
	4.5	DL SR	double, single.
	6	MvL SL	half turn left, single left, finish with a small hop.
	7	DR (turning)	double right turning back (completing the turn that began with the meza volta).
	8	RpL RpR	2 Riprese, left then right.
	Part 2	10	CbL Contrapasso R, Contrapasso R, MvR
11.5		DL DR CbL	2 doubles, finishing with the weight on the left foot.
13.5		MvR	Half turn right with a spring onto the right foot.
14		DL DR DL DR	4 quadernaria steps, in a circle to the right. This is done in bassadanza time, however.
18		RpL	Riprese left.
19		RpB (MvL)	Half turn left backwards while performing a reprise on the right foot.
20		CnL CnR	2 continenze, finish by jumping on the left foot..
Part 3	21	DR	
	23 - 24	RpFL (SR) RpFL	Riprese forwards on the left foot. At the end of the first ripresa take a small step leaping onto the right foot.
	25	VtR	Full turn to the right.
	27	RvL	Finish with a Riverenza on the left foot.

Pietosa

This is a bassa danza in a very similar style to Corona. This one is by Guglielmo Ebreo, from "Dei Pratica sue Arte Tripudii", translated by Barbara Sparti.

The dance is listed as "for two dancers", although it could be done by couples in a column.

Part 1	1	SL SR	2 singles, beginning on the left foot.
	2	DL	
	3	RpR	
	4	CnL CnR SL SR	Man only Lady only, walking in front of the man and finishing on his left side.
	5 - 6	RpL RpR	Turning to face each other and take each others' right hands.
	7	CnL CnR	Facing forwards once again.
	Repeat the above section, ending with a Riverenza	8	SL SR
9		DL	
10		RpR	
11		CnL CnR SL SR	Lady only Man only, walking in front of the lady and finishing back on her left side.
12 - 13		RpL RpR	This is done facing each other again.
14		CnL CnR	Facing forwards again.
15		RvL	Riverenza to finish this section.
Part 2 This section begins with a saltarello sequence.	16	SIL SIR	2 Saltarello steps.
	17	RvL MvL	Man only Lady only. The dancers are now facing in opposite directions.
	18 - 19	DL DR	Moving away from each other.
	20	MvL ⁷	Both dancers turn to face each other.
	21 - 22	RpL RpR	2 riprese
	23	RvL	Riverenza, facing each other
	Part 3 In the last section, the dancers riprese towards each other, moving forwards.	24 - 25	RpFL RpFR
26		RpL	Facing each other, taking hands, moving away to the left.
27		VtR	Full turn in place in 2 singles.
28		RpR	Back to face each other again.
29		RvL	Riverenza to each other on the closing bar.

⁷ In some reconstructions, the meza-volta is given as being done at the end of the second double, in "no time". Given Guglielmo's statements about timing of the meza-volta, and the matching of it with a riverenza earlier, I can't see any justification for this.

Caterva

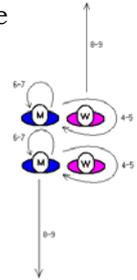
This is another of Guglielmo's Basse Danze, in a similar style to Corona and Pietosa. The source for this is Guglielmo's "Dei Pratica ..." manuscript. Guglielmo gives this as a dance for three people -- it could be done with 3 men, 3 ladies, or any combination.

Part 1	1	SL SR	Two singles, beginning with the left foot.
	2	CnL CnR	Two continenze, left then right.
	3	DL	Double left
	4	VtR	Full turn to the right using two singles.
	5	RpR	Riprese right.
	6	RvL	Riverenza left.
<hr/>			
Part 2	7	SL SR	Two singles
	8 - 9	DL DR	Double left
	10	RpR	Riprese right.
	11	RvL	Riverenza left.
	12 - 14	SIL SIR SIL SIR SIL SIR	6 saltarello steps forwards, moving one behind the other in single file.
15	RpL	Riprese. While doing this riprese, all take hands. The person at the front will fall back slightly, and the person at the back will fall forwards slightly, so that all 3 face the front in a line again.	
16 - 18	RpR RpR RpR	Three riprese portogalese on the right foot.	
19 - 21	RpL RpL RpL	Three riprese portogalese on the left foot.	
22	VtR	Full turn to the right using two singles.	
23	RpR	Ripresa right	
24	CnL CnL	Two continenze, both left.	
<hr/>			
Part 3	25 - 26	SIL SIR SIL SIR	Four saltarello steps forwards.
	27	MvR	Half turn
	28 - 29	RpL RpR	Two riprese, left then right
	30	RvL	Riverenza left to finish the section
	31 - 32	SIL SIR SIL SIR	As above
	33	MvR	
	34	RpL	
	35	VtR	Extra full turn using two singles goes in here after the first ripresa.
	36	RpR	
	37	RvL	Riverenza to end the dance.

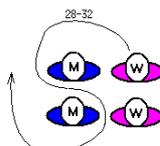
For this section, the dancers move into a single file, one behind the other.

Patienza

This is another of Guglielmo's Basse Danze, again from the same source. This is a dance for four people, two men and two ladies, in a line one behind the other, ladies on the right.



Part 1	1 - 2 3	SL SR DL RvL	Two singles and a double forwards Riverenza Left
Part 2	4 - 5 6 - 7	SL SR DL SR SL DR	Men only, dancing around the ladies. Men only, dancing in a small circle to end up where they started, but facing the other way.
Part 3	8 - 9 10 11 - 12 13	DL DR MvR RpL RpR RvL	Men and ladies moving away from each other. turn to face. Riprese left then right. Riverenza left.
Part 4			In this section, the line of men weaves through (and past) the line of ladies, back into the line again, then the ladies turn and they all join hands.
	14 - 17 18 19 - 20 21 22 - 23	SIL SIR SIL SIR MvR RpL RpR RvL DL DR	Lines weave through each other. Turn back to face again. Two riprese, left then right, ladies facing the men. Riverenza left. Double left then right so the lines join again.
Part 5	24	MvR	Ladies only, then all 4 take hands facing inwards to form a circle.
Part 6	25 - 26 27	RpL RpR CnL CnR	Two riprese, left then right, around the circle. Two continenze, left then right, around the circle.

28 - 32	SL SR DL DR DL DR	Ladies do a "hey" with 2 singles and 4 doubles to end up on the wrong side of the men.	
33 - 34	RpL RpR	Two riprese, left then right, around the circle.	
35	CnL CnR	Two continenze, left then right, around the circle.	
36 - 39	SL SR DL DR DL DR	Men do a "hey" with 2 singles and 4 doubles to end up in their original places (before beat 28).	

The same ripresa/volta-tunda/ripresa/riverenza sequence used to end the dance in Pietosa and Caterva is used here.

Part 7

40	RpL	Ripresa left
41	VtR	Volta tunda
42	RpR	Ripresa right
43	RvL	Riverenza

More Step Descriptions

All of the steps I have shown so far are bassedanze steps, that is they are all in 6/4 time. A doppio is done to one misura of bassedanza time, in other words in one measure or bar of 6/4 time.

Some of the steps that are to follow are in other misure. Saltarello steps are done in saltarello time, therefore in one bar (3 beats) of 3/4 time. Piva steps are done in 2 beats, of (usually quite fast) piva, or 2/4 time, and so on.

Many of the steps can be done in any time -- for example the ballo "Pizochara" has several reprise done in 2/4 (piva) time, while in other dances reprise are done in 6/4 bassedanza time.

Here are some of the steps that are done in the balli that are not usually done in bassadanza time. This is not an exhaustive list of course⁸, but it shows the basic steps that go towards building up the balli and more complex bassa danze.

PvL -- Piva (Left)

The "piva" step is the main step done in piva time. The dance descriptions of the time often say things like "do sixteen tempi of piva" which means to do sixteen piva steps in sixteen bars of piva time, the step being implied by a measure.

Here is how to do a piva step, beginning on the left foot:

- Step forwards on the left foot
- Step quickly forwards on the right foot, bringing the right foot either level with, slightly in front of, or slightly behind the left foot.
- Step forwards again on the left foot.

Note that the above three actions are done in two beats. The second action is done quickly on the second beat, and the third step forwards happens just after the beat. The count is "ONE and TWO, ONE and TWO", etc.

The piva step looks like a very fast doppio step, which is exactly how the manuscripts describe it to be done.

To commence the next piva step, step forwards on the right foot, past the left foot, as if starting the first step of the sequence, and continue from there.

⁸ If you really do want an exhaustive list, you have to get a copy of D.R. Wilson's book, *The Steps Used in Court Dancing in 15th Century Italy*.

SIL -- Saltarello (Left)

A saltarello step is done in 3 beats (one measure of saltarello, or 3/4 time):

- Step forwards on the left foot.
- Make a quick "lilt" onto the right foot (in effect moving the weight of the step backwards), then step forwards on the left foot.
- Hop forwards on the left foot, leaving the right foot raised to commence the next step.

Note that this is only one of many interpretations of this step, and there are other arrangements of the steps (hop-step-lilt-step) that are also found. The manuscripts of the period are not sufficiently clear on the description of this step for a "proof" of one method or another to be found.

Saltarello Todescho

A "saltarello todescho" step is done in 4 beats (1 bar of 4/4 quadernaria time), beginning on the left foot as follows:

- Step forwards on the left foot
- Step forwards on the right foot, bringing the right foot either level with, slightly in front of, or slightly behind the left foot.
- Step forwards again on the left foot.
- Hop forwards on the left foot, leaving the right foot raised to commence the next step

This should be done evenly spaced across the four beats of the bar, one action per beat.

Note the similarity to the piva step. There is no rushing of the right foot step as there was in the piva step, however, and there is a hop at the end.

To commence the next step, begin on the right foot. Remember that all steps are done in a strict left, right, left sequence.

Every Step Is Derived From A Doppio

Every one of the above steps is derived from a doppio. Look back at the description of a bassadanza doppio, I have included a diagram.

Note how the (left) doppio step begins with a step forwards on the left foot, continuing with a shorter step forwards on the right foot and a rise onto your toes, and then another step forwards on the left foot.



A piva step is just this step done more quickly, in 2 beats rather than 6.

Saltarello and Saltarello Todescho

A saltarello step is very simply the doppio step, with a hop at the end, all done in 3 beats. Or, if you prefer, it is a piva step with a hop at the end.

A saltarello todescho step is the same as a saltarello step, but done in 4 beats. Or, if you prefer, a slowed down piva step with a hop at the end. Or, just a saltarello step done more slowly.

In this way every step and time of 15th C Italian dance relates to every other step and time.

M -- Movimento

This is basically a small rising motion. Nothing else specific is known about it, so I treat it as a small rise onto the balls of the feet, and down again, in half of a bar.

I use the movimento as a place for improvisation in many of my reconstructions.

Balli

The 15th century dances borrowed the majority of their steps from the basse danze, although the balli showed in general a greater variation in types of steps and tempi than the basse danze did.

In fact, this appears to be about the only dividing line between the basse danze and the balli -- although the term "bassa danza" should indicate that the entire dance was done in bassadanza (6/4) time (which is the case for all of the Burgundian basse dances), in fact only the simplest basse danze are done entirely in 6/4 and some of them have saltarello sequences, piva sequences, and quadernaria sequences throughout them. The "default" misura for bassa danza is, however, 6/4, and for every bassa danza the vast majority of the steps are done in that time.

For the balli, there is no "default" time, and in all cases the music or the choreographic descriptions in the text need to be consulted fairly carefully in order to determine in what tempo each section of the ballo is done.

Petit Vriens

Petit Vriens is a fairly simple dance from Domenico. It is for three people -- it can be done with a man and two ladies or two men and one lady. The music has been notated by Monica Cellio in fairly quick 6/8 time, which means that one Piva takes one bar of the music, while a doppio takes two bars (or one bar of 6/4).

Part 1 (Piva)	1 - 16	Pv x 16	Start with sixteen tempi of Piva, leading in and around the hall.
Part 2 (Piva)	17 - 20	Pv x 4	The front person leads forwards with four pive.
	21 - 24	Pv x 4	The second person follows.
	25 - 28	Pv x 4	The third person follows.
Part 3 (Piva)	29 - 30	DL	The first person goes forwards with a double on the left foot.
	31 - 32	DL	The second person follows.
	33 - 34	DL	The third person follows.
	35 - 36	RvL	The first person turns to face the second person, and does a riverenza on the left foot.
	37 - 38	RvL	The second person turns to face the first person, and does a riverenza on the left foot.
	39 - 40	RvL	The third person moves around to form the third point of a triangle with the other two people, faces the second person and does a riverenza. They all finish by doing a quick riverenza together.
Part 4 (Piva)	41 - 42	DLb	They all walk backwards with a double on the left foot.
	43 - 44	DR	They all walk forwards back to meet with a double on the right foot.
	45 - 46	RpL	They all move to the left with a ripresa.
	47 - 48	RpR VtL	They all move to the right with a ripresa, and finish with a volta tunda around to the left.

Amoroso

This is another simple dance that is entirely in piva time like Petit Vriens.

There are two sequences to remember in this dance. They are sequence "A", which goes step-step-piva-step-step-step, and sequence "B" which goes piva-piva-piva-step. Every verse is a combination of these sequences

Part 1	1 – 12	Pv x 12	12 Piva steps, travelling around the room.
Part 2	1	SL SR	The man does sequence A moving forwards, starting with two singles, leaving the lady.
	2	PvL	The man continues with a piva forwards.
	3 – 4	SR SL SR	The man finishes sequence A with three singles forwards.
Part 3	5	SL SR	The lady catches up to the man with the same sequence.
	6	PvL	
	7 – 8	SR SL SR	
Part 3	1 – 3	PvL PvR PvL	The man leaves the lady with sequence B, starting with 3 piva steps.
	4	SR	The man continues sequence B with a single step.
Part 3	1 – 3	PvL PvR PvL	The lady catches up to the man with the same sequence.
	4	SR	
Part 4	1	SL SR	The man does sequence A moving forwards, starting with two singles, leaving the lady.
	2	PvL	The man continues with a piva forwards.
	3 – 4	SR SL SR	The man finishes sequence A with three singles forwards. On the last single he turns around to face the lady.
	5	RvL	The man and lady riverenza to each other.
	6 – 8	PvL PvR PvL	The man returns to lady with sequence B, starting with 3 piva steps.
	9	SR	The man continues sequence B with a single step, ending up facing forwards once again.
	1	SL SR	The lady leaves the man with sequence A

2	PvL	
3 – 4	SR SL SR	
5	RvL	The man and lady riverenza to each other.
6 – 8	PvL PvR PvL	The lady returns to the man with sequence B.
9	SR	

Repeat

Although the original source does not say to repeat this dance, it can be repeated with the lady going first in each of the parts, and the man going second.

Anello

This is one of Domenico's dances, appearing also in Guglielmo's text. It is a dance for two couples, one behind the other. The name of this dance means "ring", and most of the dance is done with the dancers in a circle. It also bears many resemblances to some of the 4 person English Country dances of the 17th century.

The dance is almost entirely in quadernaria time (4/4), and most of the steps are saltarello todescho.

Part 1: Saltarello Todescho (4/4)	1 - 8	SIL SIR SIL SIR SIL SIR SIL SIR	8 saltarello steps forwards, starting on the left foot. At the end of the last step, form into a square, all facing inwards.
	<hr/>		
Part 2: Saltarello Todescho (4/4)	9	M	Men do a small rising "movimento".
		M	Ladies reply.
	10 - 11	SIL SIR MvR	The men change places with two saltarello steps, then turn to face each other again.
	12	M M	Ladies do a movimento, then the men reply.
	13 - 14	SIL SIR MvR	Ladies change places in the same way as the men (1 - 12 above).
<hr/>			
Part 3: Saltarello Todescho (4/4)	15	M M	Men do a movimento and the ladies reply.
	16	VtL	Men all turn in place.
	17	M M	Ladies do a movimento and the men reply.
	18	VtL	Ladies all turn in place
<hr/>			
Part 4: Piva (2/4)	19 - 22	PvL PvR PvL PvR	Men dance around the ladies and change places, starting on the left foot, and going behind the ladies.
	23 - 26	PvL PvR PvL PvR	Ladies repeat the above.
<hr/>			
Part 5: Saltarello Todescho (4/4)	27	M M	Men and ladies do a movimento, one after the other.
	28	M M	Men and ladies do a movimento, one after the other.
	29 - 30	RpR	The leading couple turns back into place using a reprise on the right foot.

The dance repeats from the start. The ladies go first on the second time through the dance.

Gelosia (Giloxia)

This is a dance for three couples. This is by Domenico, but appears as different versions with some minor changes in the later Guglielmo MSS.

Part 1: Saltarello Todescho

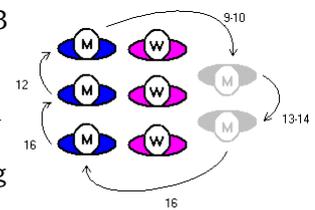
1 - 8 SIL SIR x 4 8 saltarelli.⁹

Part 2:

The leading man progresses down the line to the last lady, as the other two men move up the line. This section is also in 4/4.

9 - 10 DL DL DL

First man does 3 contrapassi¹⁰ in the time of two doubles, around his lady and ending up facing the second lady.



11 RvL / SIL

First man does a riverenza to the second lady, touching hands, while the second man moves up the line to the place vacated by the first man.

12 - 13 DL DL DL

First man does 3 contrapassi¹¹ in the time of two doubles, to finish facing the third lady.

14 RvL

First man does a riverenza to the third lady, touching hands.

15 SIL

Third man moves up the line to the place vacated by the second man, while the first man goes around behind the third lady to the place vacated by the third man

Part 3:

16 - 19 PvL PvR PvL PvR All take 4 piva steps forwards.

Part 4:

20 VtL

First couple take a full turn in place, and end up facing each other.

Each couple turns in place, one at a time.

21 VtL

Second couple.

22 VtL

Third couple.

Part 5:

23 - 24 SL SR SL

Men and ladies take hands, and change places in three singles.

25 - 26 SR SL SR

Repeat, so that everybody goes back to their place, finishing by turning to face forwards again.

⁹ Guglielmo's 973 MS shows 8 tempi, another Guglielmo MS and Domenico both show 6. Domenico's music shows 8 tempi.

¹⁰ See the comments in "Caterva" regarding these steps.

¹¹ See the comments in "Caterva" regarding these steps. In this case, Guglielmo has two doubles instead of three contrapassi, and no riverenza.

The first man has now become the third man, while the second has become the first, and the third has become the second. The dance should then be repeated twice more, so that everyone regains their original partners.

Later versions of this dance in Guglielmo have the dance repeated once with the ladies taking the part of the men.

Rostiboli Gioioso

This dance is somewhat more complex than, say, Petit Vriens or La Spagna, but it is still much simpler than other dances in the 15th Century repertoire.

The dance appears in various different versions in the 15th Century manuscripts. This version is for 2 people, one man and one lady.

The dance combines bassadanza and saltarello with a short piva section at the end.

One More Bassadanza Step: Volta del Gioioso

The volta del gioioso is a step that is relatively uncommon. It is in fact a sequence of three steps taken over two bars of bassadanza. It appears in this dance as well as a few other dances in the repertoire.

The step starts with two singles, right then left, then ends with a ripresa on the right foot.

The first single is done stepping with the right foot across the body, and turning slightly over the left shoulder. The second single is done with the left foot, stepping back and around, completing approximately a half turn or a bit more (perhaps closer to two-thirds).

The step finishes with a ripresa on the right foot. Begin by stepping across with the right foot, continuing the turn to almost a full turn and putting your weight onto your right foot. Complete the ripresa by closing with the left foot, stepping away with the right foot, and close again with the left foot.

The full effect is to have done a full turn over the left shoulder starting on the right foot, and ending up slightly to the right of where you started (because of the ripresa).

Part 1 – Bassadanza

The dance starts with the couple standing side by side and holding hands.

1 – 2	RpL RpR	Ripresa left then right. At the end of this, drop hands.
3 – 5	SL SR DL DR	The man moves forwards, away from the lady, doing a single left, single right, doppio left and a doppio right. At the end of the last doppio he should turn to face the lady.
6 – 7	RpL RpR	Both the man and the lady are now facing each other some distance apart. They do a ripresa left then a ripresa right.
8 – 10	SL SR DL DR	The man does a single left, single right, doppio left, then doppio right, to return to the lady. At the end of the last doppio he turns to face forwards again so that the dancers are back in their starting position.

Repeat

This section is repeated, with the lady doing the steps that the man has just done.

11 – 12	RpL RpR	Ripresa left then right. At the end of this, drop hands.
13 – 15	SL SR DL DR	The lady does a single left, single right, doppio left, doppio right, moving forwards away from the man. Finish by turning to face.
16 – 17	RpL RpR	Both the man and the lady are now facing each other some distance apart. They do a ripresa left then a ripresa right.
18 – 20	SL SR DL DR	The lady returns to the man with the same steps as before ... single left, single right, doppio left, doppio right. End up back in the starting position again.

Note the pattern that occurs right throughout this section: Two riprese, two singles, two doppii. The next section alters this pattern very slightly.

Part 2: Bassadanza

The man and the lady start this section in the same place that they started the first section. In this part of the dance they will progress around the dance floor.

21 - 22	RpL RpR	Ripresa left then right.
23 – 26	SL SR DL DR DL	Both dancers move forwards with two singles (left then right) then three doppii (left, right, left). Finish by dropping hands.
27	VgR	Volta del Gioioso, end up back in the starting position holding hands again.

We repeat the above section.

28 - 29	RpL RpR	Ripresa left then right.
30 - 33	SL SR DL DR DL	Both dancers move forwards with two singles (left then right) then three doppii (left, right, left). Finish by dropping hands.
34	VgR	Volta del Gioioso, end up back in the starting position holding hands again.

Part 3: Saltarello

This is a simple saltarello section, with the dancers moving about the floor as they will.

35 – 50	Sl x 16	16 bars of saltarello steps, dancers progress around the floor as they will. Use some improvisation here!
---------	---------	---

Part 4: Piva

The dance finishes with a short flirty piva section.

51	M	Man does a movimento
52	M	Lady does a movimento
53 – 54	DL	Man does a doppio on the left foot, moving away from the lady.
55	M	Lady does a movimento.
56	M	Man does a movimento.
57 – 58	DL	Lady does a movimento on the left foot, moving towards the man.

The above section is then repeated to conclude the dance.

59	M	Man does a movimento
60	M	Lady does a movimento
61 – 62	DL	Man does a doppio on the left foot, moving away from the lady.
63	M	Lady does a movimento.
64	M	Man does a movimento.
65 – 66	DL	Lady does a movimento on the left foot, moving towards the man.

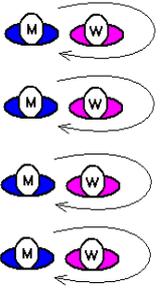
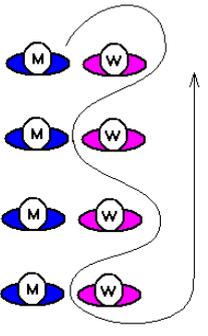
Repeat

The dance is then repeated from the beginning. On the second repeat of the dance the lady does everything first in all sections of the dance. Eg: in part I, the lady moves away and back to the man first, and the man goes second; in part IV the lady starts with the first movimento and the pattern continues from there.

Pizochara

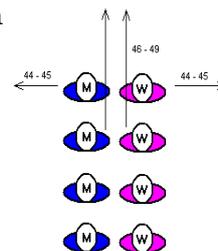
Pizochara (by Domenico) resembles any of the 17th century English Country Dances as much as it resembles any other Italian dance. I chose it because it shows the best overall resemblance between some of the Italian dances and country dances. This style of dance has been called "Italian country dance" by some writers because of the similarity.

Start the dance with 4 couples longways, facing the front. Allow approximately 3 steps between each couple.

Part 1 (Piva)	1 - 12	PvL PvR x 6	12 Piva steps -- first couple lead the dancers anywhere they will, and the rest follow.	
	13 - 16	PvL PvR PvL PvR	4 Piva steps -- each man passes in front of his own lady, around her, and then returns to place, as in the diagram.	
	17 - 20	PvL PvR PvL PvR	Ladies do the same.	
Part 2 (Bassadanza)	21	RvR	All Riverenza on the right foot.	
	22 - 33	SS D x 11	The men do a hey consisting of 2 singles and 11 doubles, returning to finish on the opposite side of their partner, as in the diagram.	
	34	RpL	Riprese Left	
Part 3 (Saltarello)	35 - 43	Sl x 9	The ladies do a hey consisting of 9 saltarello steps, in the same way as the men in Part II.	
Part 4 (Piva)	44 - 45	Men: RpL RpL Ladies: RpR RpR	The front man does a reprise to the left The front lady does a reprise to the right	

46 - 49 PvL PvR PvL PvR

The other couples then do 4 piva steps forwards, so that the second couple is now the front couple.



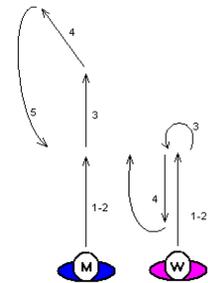
50 - 61 Repeat

Repeat this part 3 more times, so that the last couple ends up as the first couple.

The dance then repeats. The new front couple will still be holding hands, and lead off Part A, while the other couples Piva forwards and together so that they regain their partner's hand during Part A.

L'altria Fia Guielmina

This is another of the balli from Domenico's text, it is the second of two dances called "Fia Guielmina". It is a very different dance to some of the other balli, as you will see. It is a set dance for two people, a man and a lady, who begin the dance standing side by side.



Part 1 (Quadernaria):

1	SL SR SL CnR CnL	Stepping very quickly
2	SR SL SR CnL CnR	Stepping quickly again
3	SL SR	Man moving forwards, lady turning MvL
4	RpL	Riprese "in gallone", with the hip forwards
5	SR SL SR	Done turning to the right, back into place. The man finishes with a MvR
6 - 9	As for 1 - 4 above.	
10	SR SL SR	Done turning to the right, back into place. The man finishes with a VtR, to end up facing the lady.

Part 2 (Bassa danza):

11	SL SR	Turn around each other, so the man faces the back and the lady faces the front.
12	RvL	Riverenza on the left foot.

Part 3 (Bassa danza):

13	SL SR	The dancers are now facing opposite directions, moving away from each other.
14 - 15	DL DR	Two doubles walking apart.
16	RpL MvL	Riprese, then turn to face each other.
17	RpR MvR	Riprese, then turn away from each other.
18	DL	Another double, walking apart.
19	DR MvR	Finish moving away from each other, then turn to face.
20	RvL	Riverenza, facing each other. The dancers will now be some distance apart.

Part 4 (Quadernaria)

21	DL	Lady only, moving back forwards towards the man.
22	DL	Man only, moving forwards towards the lady.
23	DL	Lady only

24	SL	Man only
	SL	Lady only
25	VtL	Man does a full turn in three single steps, finishing with a small jump (saltetto).

Part 5 (Piva):

26 - 28	VtL	Lady does a slower and larger turn, doing three piva steps (PvL PvR PvL), to finish facing the man. When she does so, the man does another small jump.
29	PvR	Both moving towards each other
30	SL	slower single.
31	M	The lady makes a "movimento".
32	PvR PvL	Circling to each others right hand side.
33	SR	Single right, then resume place to start the dance again.

The dance can stop after one repetition, or can be repeated from the start.

Prexonera

Prexonera (or Presoniera) is a dance by Domenico. It first appeared in his manuscript *De Arte Saltandi et Choreas Ducti*, in approximately 1450. It was learned and written up in a slightly different form by Guglielmo in *De Pratica seu Arte Tripudii*.

The title of the dance means “Prisoner”. The dance is for two people, one man and one lady. In this dance the lady and man take turns in capturing each other and holding each other prisoner. I take the opinion that the dance would most probably have been done as a performance dance -- the actions of the dancers are a play as much as they are a dance.

I have attempted to reconstruct the dance in a slightly different manner to the way in which most dance reconstructions are done. Rather than following the master’s instructions to the letter, I have deliberately mis-reconstructed the dance in the manner that it could possibly have been done by a pair of young dance students of the time.

Improvisation was still used fairly heavily in dancing in the 15th Century -- Domenico and Cornazano both offer chapters on body movement and manner, but also indicate that variations of their mannerisms were in common practice at the time they are writing (partly, in admonishing the reader against these manners that are in error, the masters admit that they are in common practice).

In this reconstruction, I have taken Domenico’s description of the dance, which basically includes feet movement only, and added some body and hand movements that emphasise the play-acting nature of the dance. I have enhanced the third figure of the dance, which would otherwise be a straightforward piva sequence with the dancers moving side by side, into a game of cat-and-mouse, or more correctly, captor and prisoner.

In doing this, the dancers appear to be acting in a manner to be against some of Guglielmo’s teachings -- in particular his “Rules for Women”¹². Perhaps the more experienced (and older, and more demure) dancers of Guglielmo’s class would not have done the dance in this fashion, but some of the younger participants just might.

The result is, I hope, a dance that although it disobeys some of the instructions laid out by Guglielmo and Domenico, is a feasible interpretation of how the dance could have been done as an entertainment piece in the period.

Figure 1

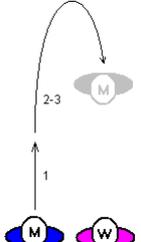
This opening sequence, in 6/4 time (bassadanza) is a reasonably straight forwards bassa danza section, done moving forwards into the center of the dance floor.

(A) 1	CnL CnR	The dancers start by facing forwards, to the presence. They then do two continenze, left then right.
2 - 3	SL SR SL	Three singles, left, right, left
4	DR	Double Right
5	RvL	Riverenza on the left foot
6 - 10	CnL CnR SL SR SL DR RvL	Repeat the above to the repeat of the music.

12 Guglielmo, “De Pratica seu Arte Tripudii”, translated by Barbara Sparti (Oxford: OUP, 1993).

Figure 2

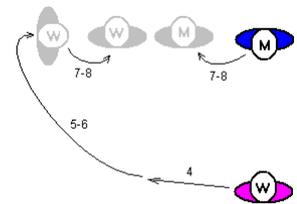
In this section, the dancers move away from each other and then back towards each other, in bassadanza time.

(B) 1	SL SR	The man alone moves forwards, with a single left then right	
2 - 3	DcL DcL pause	Two contrapassi, or doubles on the same foot, on the left, in 1½ tempi, turning around to face the lady. The man should remain a short distance away from the lady. Finish with a half tempo pause.	

This section of the dance contains an element of acting. The dancers should shy away from each other as they do the singles, and then move in a more lively manner back towards their prisoner (or captor) as they do the contrapassi.

In the first three bars of the above section, the man walks forwards to end up in front of, and facing, the lady.

In the next three bars, the lady walks around to the improper side of the man, as shown in the diagram.



4 - 6	SR SL DcR DcR Pause	The lady sets off away from the man, moving away from him to the left with two singles, and then turning back towards him with two contrapassi. The lady should finish a short distance away from the man.	
7	SL SR	The dancers step towards each other with two singles.	
8	CnL CnR	The dancers then do two continenze, turning to finish facing forwards again, but improper.	
B (9 - 16)	Repeat	Repeat bars 1 - 8 above, this time with the lady moving first. The couple should end up proper once again.	

Figure 3

This is a piva sequence. The true nature of the dance is revealed here, as the man (on the first time through the dance, the lady on the second time through), takes his "captive" almost forcefully across the dance floor.

1 (8)	PvL PvR PvL PvR PvL PvR PvL PvR	The dancers do 8 piva steps travelling forwards. At the start of the sequence, the man grabs the lady by the hand, and leads her forwards, the lady following behind.	
-------	------------------------------------	---	--

Figure 4

In this figure the dance stays in piva time. The captive-captor relationship continues through this sequence, as the man and the lady play a small capture-and-escape game on the dance floor.

1 - 2	M M	The man makes a movimento, and the lady replies with another. The man should make a leaping movement at the lady (who he has just lead at a piva pace across the floor), in order to entrap her. The lady darts just as quickly away from him.
3 - 4	4 Passitti	The dancers make 4 passitti, or “little steps”, on the right foot. The lady, having leapt away from the man’s “entrapment” now leads him on a chase across the floor. The dancers skip lightly on their right feet as the lady leads the man around.
5 - 6	M M	The lady makes a movimento, and the man replies with another. This is a repeat of the first two bars, with the lady leaping towards the man, and then the man leaping away.
7 - 8	4 Passitti	The dancers make 4 passitti. This time, it is the man that leads the lady on a short chase.

Figure 5

As is often the case with Domenico’s balli, the dance concludes with a saltarello sequence.

1 (3)	SIL SIR SIL SIR	The dancers now conclude the dance with four saltarelli, starting on the left foot, moving towards each other to take hands again.
-------	-----------------	--

The dance can be repeated from the start, with the lady taking the man’s place, and the man taking the lady’s place.

Voltati in Ça Rosina

This is another relatively simple dance, this time from Guglielmo (Giovanni Ambrosio). It is for a man between two ladies. You can have heaps of fun play acting in this one, especially the second playing of Part 1.

Part 1 (Quadernaria)

The music for Part I is 8 bars of quadernaria played 3 times.

First playing

1 - 2	DL DR	Two doubles in quadernaria time (saltarello todescho)
3 - 4	DL DR (Vt)	Two doubles, making a full turn (volta tunda).
5 - 6	SL SR DL	The man leaves the ladies with two singles and a double, moving forwards.
7 - 8	SL SR DL (Mv)	The ladies move forwards alongside the man with two singles and a double. At the end of this the man turns to face the other way.

Second Playing

1 - 2	SIL SIR	They move apart with two saltarello todescho steps.
3 - 4	(Mv) RpL RpR	They turn to face each other and do a ripresa to the left and one to the right. At this point they should be in a triangle formation facing in to the middle.
5 - 6	DL DR (Vt)	Each makes a full turn with two doubles, turning over the left shoulder.
7 - 8	CnL CnR CnL CnR	Each does four continenze, beginning with the left foot.

Third Playing

1 - 2	SL SR DL	Each moves forwards towards the others with two singles and a double.
3	DRb	Each moves backwards with one double on the right foot.
4	DL (Vt)	Each does a full turn in one double, beginning on the left foot.
5	RpR	Reprise to the right.
6	RvL	Riverenza on the left foot, going low (to the ground).
7 - 8	CnL CnR CnL CnR	Four continenze, beginning with the left foot.

Part 2 (Piva)

1 - 8	Pv x 8	The man does four tempi of piva around the first lady, then around the second lady (in a kind of a hey for three), then back to his place.
-------	--------	--

Sobria

This is a dance for 5 men and one lady, in 3 couples. The lady is in the middle couple. The reconstruction is by Rachael Zavodnyik.

Part 1 (Saltarello)	1	Movimento	Movimento – this should probably be done as a quick riverenza.
	2 – 15	SIL SIR x 7	Everyone does 14 saltarelli forwards.
Part 2 (Piva)	1 – 4	Rp x 4	The two male couples do 4 riprese to form a square, while the middle couple stands still.
	5 – 7	Pv x 3	The man and lady in the middle couple circle each other with 3 piva steps, while the other couples stand still.
	8 – 9	Pv x 2	The lady alone does 2 piva to finish in the center of the square, while her partner stands still.
	10	Mv	The lady performs a meza volta, to finish facing the back of her partner.
Part 3 (Bassadanza)	1	DR	First male couple perform a doppio towards the woman on the right foot.
	2	RvL	First male couple and woman perform a riverenza on the left foot
	3	Touch	First male couple move as if to touch the lady's hand at the same time and the woman draws back a little indignant, and all three turn their backs on each other.
	4	Mv	The men perform a meza volta with a salteto (small jump).
	5 – 6	DL Posada Vt	They return to their places with a doppio on the right foot ending with a posada facing one another, and the woman performs a volta while they are performing the doppio.
	7	DR	Second male couple perform a doppio towards the woman on the right foot.
	8	RvL	Second male couple and woman perform a riverenza on the left foot
	9	Touch	Second male couple move as if to touch the lady's hand at the same time and the woman draws back a little indignant, and all three turn their backs on each other.
	10	Mv	The men perform a meza volta with a salteto (small jump).
	11 - 12	DL Posada Vt	They return to their places with a doppio on the right foot ending with a posada facing one another, and the woman performs a volta while they are performing the doppio.

Part 4 (Piva)	1	SL SR	man and woman approaching each other perform 2 sempio beginning on the left
	2	DL	continuing doppio
	3	Rv	they perform a small fast riverentia touching hands
	4-5	DR	they return to their places with a doppio beginning on the right
	6	Mv	the woman faces towards the couple at the rear and the man faces forward

Part 5 (Bassadanza) This section is indicated in quadenaria in the Domenico da Piacenza manuscript. However the music that we have has no quadernaria section.	1-2	SIL SIR SIR	The first male couple perform three saltarellos toward each other (at the end of the second they have changed places and at the end of the third they are behind the woman's back side by side). Whilst standing side by side the one on the left signals to the one on the right and the one on the right signals back that he doesn't want to do it.
	3	Mv Mv	the woman senses the hand movements (movimento) and performs a meza volta (this means she is now facing the back) scowling and the men turn their backs on one another at the same time
	4	Salto SIR	the men perform a salto and swap places with each other in a tempo of salterello beginning on the right foot
	5	Mv Posa	they perform a meza volta and a possa and stop.

Part 6 (Piva) ??

There are no steps indicated for this section in Domenico. A repeat of the first piva section where the man and woman are dancing alone could be put in here unless other music is found. Thought about dividing the Piva to fit in with Bazza Danza ie to get a 6/6 bar split to do the two male couple (repeated) sections, however, looking at the available music, the steps will not fit adequately.

These steps could be modified (as the woman is now a considerable distance from her partner, and facing in the opposite direction - they could do similar steps yet at a distance. Looking at the dance that is described as the opposite of Sobria (Mercanzia), this dance is performed three times so that each of the men gets a chance to 'woo' (?) the lady. Since Sobria is supposed to reflect 'the sensible' lady, it would seem to be consistent (given this particular arrangement) that she long to be back in the company of her original suitor. Since the four other men try to continually undermine her efforts...

	1	SL SR	man and woman approaching each other perform 2 sempio beginning on the left
	2	DL	continuing doppio
	3	Rv	they perform a small fast riverentia touching hands
	4-5	DR	they return to their places with a doppio beginning on the right
	6	Mv	the woman faces towards the couple at the rear and the man faces forward

Part 7 (Bassadanza) This is a repeat of part 5, with the second male couple acting.	1-2	SIL SIR SIR	The second male couple perform three saltarellos toward each other (at the end of the second they have changed places and at the end of the third they are behind the woman's back side by side). Whilst standing side by side the one on the left signals to the one on the right and the one on the right signals back that he doesn't want to do it.
	3	Mv Mv	The lady senses the hand movements (movimento) and performs a meza volta (this means she is now facing the back) scowling and the men turn their backs on one another at the same time
	4	Salto SIR	the men perform a salto and swap places with each other in a tempo of salterello beginning on the right foot
	5	Mv Posa	they perform a meza volta and a possa and stop.
Part 8 (Saltarello)	1-8	SIL SIR x 4	The lady, now standing at the back of the formation (facing back), and the man now standing at the front of the formation perform at the same time. The lady from the back moves to her right in an "S" formation, and the man, from the front moves to his right in an "S" formation (should move opposite to each other) for 8 measures of saltarello. They should both end up in the middle of the for man square formation.
	9-10	SIL SIR	The lady now performs a voltatonda, circling around herself to 2 tempi of saltarello. The man now saltarellos back to his place at the front (outside the square formation) in 2 tempi of saltarello.
Part 9 (Piva)	1-3	PvL PvR PvL	Four men each exchanges places with their partner in 3 measures of piva
	4	SR Vt	They perform a sempio when they have arrived The man at the front performs a voltatonda in piva at the same time as the others are performing a sempio

5 – 8 Pv x 4

four men

The two at the front swap places with the two at the back

man alone

The man in the middle goes to the middle of the circle to collect the lady in 4 tempi of piva

lady

Performs a voltatonda whilst waiting to be collected in the middle.

9 – 12 Pv x 4

four men

4 repress towards each other in 4 tempi of piva.

man and lady together

The man and the lady in the middle go out of the now closing in square in 4 tempi of piva for fear of being trapped.
