Theories of Ancestry:

**Bow Theory**

Ravanastron

**Sound-chest Theory**

Greek Kithara
A Third Theory: Three Parents

• Three main instruments:
  1. Rebec
  2. Lira da braccio
  3. Viola da braccio

Thesis: Rather than trying to trace the violin back to a single instrument, the purpose of this presentation is to show the ancestry of the violin as taking elements from multiple instruments, and specifically a combination of the three immediate precursors, or parents, known as the rebec, lira da braccio, and viola da braccio.
Immediate Parent #1: Rebec
Precursors to the Rebec

Pear-shaped Lira
- Bridge
- Sound-holes
- Tailpiece
- fingerboard

Bowed-Rebab
- Slender design
- Arched bow
- Peg-box with lateral pegs
Rebec

Purpose
• Favorite among the lower class
• Village dances, outdoors

Other features/characteristics
• Slender, pear-shaped design
• Bridge to allow each string to be played separately
• Overhand bow-hold
• Shrill tone
Immediate Parent #2:
Lira da Braccio
Precursor to the Lira da Braccio: Oval Fiddle

Features of the Oval Fiddle:

• Also called “vielles”
• Two-footed bridge
• Tailpiece
• Fingerboard separate from the body
• C-shaped sound-holes
• 4 melody strings; 1 drone string
Lira da Braccio

Other Features:
• Sound post
• Purfling
• Lack of frets
• Arched back and belly
• Drone strings

Purpose:
• Polyphonic chordal music
Immediate Parent #3: Viola da Braccio
Viola da Braccio:
Combination of the Rebec and Lira da braccio

Features:
• Scroll; pegs
• lack of drone strings
• Triple-bout structure
• Tuning in 5ths
• Slightly bulky size
• Lacked bass bars and linings
• Back-to-back C-holes

Purpose:
• Tuneful melodies
• Singing tone
• Virtuosic playing