# *Interpretation Of Johann Sebastian Bach's Solo Violin Sonatas (BWV1004) For the Classical Guitar*

How French & Italian influences, musical rhetoric and bass-oriented thinking influences the interpretation and transcription of the Violin Partita Nr.2 for the classical guitar.

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Performing Arts/Master's in Music – Classical Guitar

Master Paper

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Academic year 2022-2023

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# Preface

With great pleasure, I present this master's paper, which is the result of my research in Johann Sebastian Bach's *Violin Partita in D minor (BWV1004)*. This paper is the culmination of my efforts to systemize the transcription and interpretation process in Bach's music for the classical guitar and it is my privilege to introduce it to the academic community. As musicologists and performers are becoming more aware of the historical practices of the 18th century, a sort of 'pandora's box' has been opened, and since then the question of how Bach's music should be interpreted became a more complicated matter with many schools of interpretation. Performers are becoming more influenced by researchers, and researchers are working more closely together with performers than ever before. This paper aims to achieve a synergy between understanding foreign influences, thinking of the musical language from the point of bass, and rhetorical symbolism. I would like to thank my promotor Anne Pustlauk for guiding me along the way, helping me out with the sources, understanding of the dances, and historical performance practices. My professor in Hungary, Andras Csaki for inspiring me as an artist and from whom I learned a lot about the different styles of possibilities in interpretation that could be applied practically on the guitar. Márta Ábrahám for showing me her years of work and analysis on the *Ciaccona*. Lastly, I would like to thank the University of A.P. Royal Conservatory in Belgium for giving me a framework to work out the academic paper, and the Franz Liszt Academy in Hungary for allowing me to study abroad in Budapest to improve my personal, artistic, and research qualities.

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# Introduction

*"The love of our little Johann Sebastian (1685-1750) for music was uncommonly great even at this tender age. In a short time, he had fully mastered all the pieces his brother had voluntarily given him to learn. But his brother possessed a book of clavier pieces by the most influential masters of the day Fröberger, Kerl, Pachelbel, and this, despite all his pleading and for who knows what reason, had denied him. His zeal to improve himself thereby allowed him to practice the following innocent deceit. This book was kept in a cabinet whose doors consisted only of grillwork. Now, with his little hands, he could reach through the grillwork and roll the book up (for it had only a paper cover); accordingly, he would fetch the book out a night, when everyone had gone to bed and, since he was not even possessed of a light, copy it by moonlight. In six months, time, he had these spoils in his own hands. Secretly and with extraordinary eagerness he was trying to put it to use, when his brother, to his great dismay, found out about it, and without mercy took away from him the copy he had made with such pains."* (Wolff C. , 2000, p. 102)

This quote came from Carl Philip Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) in his father's obituary. The family name Bach carries a strong association with music and I was surprised to find out that Veit Bach (1550-1619), the founder of the Bach family tree, was a Lutheran baker who fled to Hungary temporarily to avoid religious persecution, which coincidently happens to be the country where I'm currently residing and writing this thesis.[1] (Wolff C. , 2000, p. 93)

The son and grandson of Veit Bach, Johannes Bach I (1550 or 1580 – 1626) and Christoph Bach (1642-1703) were both town musicians and J.S. Bach's father Johann Ambrosius Bach (1645-1695) was a respected violinist, directing the town musicians in Eisenach.

[1] According to Charles Sanford Terry, the person that translated Forkel's book about J.S. Bach (History, Art, and Work): Veit Bach took his name from St. Vitus, patron saint of the church of Wechmar. "This fact goes against Forkel's original statement that his original domicile was in Hungary. The Bach's were settled in Wechmar as early as circ. 1520. Veit migrated thence to Hungary… and returned to Wechmar during the beginning of the Counter-Reformation under the Emperor Rudolph n. (1576- 1612), and died at Wechmar, March 8, 1619. See Spitta, i. 4. Apart from church and town registers, laboriously consulted by Spitta in tracing the Bach genealogy, we owe our knowledge of it to an MS. drawn up by Bach in 1735 which is now in the Berlin Royal Library after being successively in the possession of Carl Philipp Emmanuel, Forkel, and G. Polchau, the Hamburg teacher of music." (Terry, 1920, p. 49)

At this '*tender'* age J.S. Bach must have been immersed in a long musical tradition and natural talent, *'eagerness to learn'* combined with surroundings would have allowed him to develop his musical skills naturally at a very young age. I used this quote to highlight one of the important themes of this thesis, namely the fact that J.S. Bach was already exposed to a rich musical tradition and influences around Europe, more specifically composers from Italy (Pachelbel, Vivaldi), France (Lully, Couperin), and Germany (Buxtehude, Fröberger) without ever leaving the country where he was born from. These influences were thus present at a very early age throughout his life, succeeding to synthesize the national styles resulting in influences that are not just on a superficial level but on the opposite, are deeply interwoven into his musical language. With Bach being such a fascinating and important musical figure of the 18th century, it's not a surprise to find out that musicologists and musicians have tried to unravel the historical and musical mysteries concerning the composer's personal life and music, while simultaneously also taking on the challenge of what to do with founded research, raising questions on how to integrate it into a personal artistic identity. This search for a synthesis between personal interpretative identity and acquired knowledge through research is a very realistic challenge that all performers with an awareness of the 18th-century historic performance practices are going through. The mountain of a task is even more dauntingly apparent in Bach's complex musical language, which has been passionately researched having literally thousands of journals and literature to be found, influencing the music being performed for more than three centuries across the globe. I believe that if a performer is to rely solely on forming interpretation through conventional teaching and educational methods in the 21st century, then this by itself very often cannot be adequate anymore to form a convincing artistic interpretation, thus a period in personal research is desired and needed.

This research has been an integral part in forming my interpretation encompassing the idea and inception of transcription from the original violin score, historical background, analysis, all the way into a finished score that is ready to be used for performance. My research will have two parts, but the scope of this thesis focuses on the first part which is going to explore the musical language of Bach, more specifically found in his secular *sonatas* and *partitas* from the period when he was residing in Köthen active as a *Kapellmeister* (director of music). This part discusses fundamental building blocks that make up his musical language and are more specifically of extra-important interest in the *partitas* and *sonatas*. Because of the vast output of the composer's total oeuvre, only the mentioned secular works are going to be relevant, but different examples from the outside can be taken to demonstrate an idea further. Because of the scope of a master thesis, three musical topics are going to be explored briefly, these are *basso continuo*, French & Italian elements, and the use of rhetorical devices. I consider these to be one of the fundamental building blocks and therefore, are going to be explored further and brought into context. Bach's genius lies in not what, but the way he brings all these fundamental elements into cohesion, shaping his unique musical language. Because *basso continuo* and counterpoint are such an integral part of the Baroque era and consequently in Bach's own music, more on this topic will be elaborated, and the analytic tool Thoroughbass Reductional Analysis or in shorthand TRA will be applied. The main idea or function of TRA is to reduce voices to fundamental chords with figured bass, not only considering vertical harmony found in Roman numeral analysis but also the contrapuntal relationship between the voices as well. Although Bach wrote extremely well bringing out the full potential of the violin, there are some compromises because of the instrument's inherent restricted polyphonic capabilities. The question then becomes to know what those are and how a different instrument like the guitar could transgress these limitations. It was clear that Bach was able to bring the most out of the instruments and the guitar is not the violin,

working better as a *basso continuo* instrument, and making polyphonic playing more feasible at the same time. This way voices (especially in the bass) can be expressed more which should be taken advantage of, giving the guitar the best chances to be explored to its fullest potential. All the elements mentioned such as *basso continuo*, French & Italian elements, and rhetorical devices in the first part will then be applied to form a basis for interpretation giving direction for writing out a convincing transcription. The second part allows more freedom to experiment, making alterations to the score, and suit the performer's interpretation, thus becoming more practice-oriented. This adaption of the score for the guitar is not only beneficial for the instrument but also reflects on how a performer thinks and processes the work for their personal goal and in forming conclusions. I would like to conclude this introduction by admitting that it is very hard, if not impossible, for anyone to completely agree on how the music of J.S. Bach should be ultimately performed on any instrument for that matter. I do strongly believe however that combining scholarly work with artistic goals for performance is by itself a worthwhile achievement.

# Chapter I: Bach in the Context of the 21st Century

In the fast-pacing world of the last century, where all sorts of breakthroughs are happing around the world at any time. It's quite hard to comprehend that Bach wrote the *sonatas* and *partitas* almost three centuries ago and that his musical impact is still being felt to this very day. Naturally, in time and human development, it becomes increasingly difficult throughout history to relate to such a distant past and to have a true understanding of the music with its own surrounding practices of that very different era, especially when considering that the music that was being played, was very often also performed by the composer himself and performance practices that were evident enough at the time, are not in the 21st century. Thus, these things are what I believe, must be relearned to the most degree realistically possible. An accurate and precise understanding of performances based on the information found in manuscripts and treatises from the 17th and early 18th centuries is impossible in giving us the full realization of how his music was performed (inherently limited by music notation) compared to what an audio or video recording of a performance can do. Hereby is our understanding of this era limited by the ink on paper and the teaching traditions passed throughout the centuries and generations. The ambiguity of interpretation does offer the performer a lot of freedom to set the music to his or her individual preferences, but the only way of being able to be musically free and convincing is to understand the musical language of that era and by knowing that there is a layer of understanding, observation that is not so readily apparent that plays such an important role in interpretation. So, if a performer understands the fundamental structure and principles, then this can allow him or her to be more independent from the sheet music, and musical spontaneity typically characterized by the Baroque era can then be felt and realized. Understanding how and where rhetorical devices are applied can give helpful suggestions in performance that blooms into unique ideas and interpretations. This is also for transcribing important because it makes it so that the transcription

doesn’t have to try to compete with the instrument it was originally written for and is not something bound by. It is well documented that Bach composed without the need for an instrument for which it was composed. He also insisted his students practice the act of composing on a desk without instruments and only rely on their ears and aural imagination to write music. (Wolff C. , 2000, pp. 484-485) This ‘absolute’ sense of musical composition style in Bach allowed him to write music that sounds in its most musical form without the need to rely on the idiomatic characteristics of an instrument to base composition. This leads to a musical format and modularity that is more ready to be transcribed and performed on a variety of instruments. Although Bach composed in this absolute sense, he was also a very good violist, and he knew the lute and indirectly the guitar to some degree. (Ledbetter, 2019, p. 14) This makes the task of transcription, the responsibility of the performer of that said instrument, who should bring out the potential just as Bach did himself for the violin, organ, keyboard.

# Chapter II: Performance Practices Through the Centuries and Bach Revival

Through centuries of development after the 18th century, the way Bach's music was interpreted was very different. One of the first important waves of Bach revival, happened in the early Romantic period by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) because he revitalized historical interest and performed the music of the composer in the 19th century at a time when performing music from a past generation was considered something uncommon or out of style.[2] (Todd, 2003, p. 20) Although Mendelssohn was very much a pioneer when it comes to the revival of the music of Bach, the way the solo violin works were performed was quite different than what the performance practices were in the early 18th century.[3] The idea of performing solo repertoire in a concert without accompaniment for the violin in the 19th century was not common in the classical music scene and was considered something anachronistic even. That's why the *Ciaccona BWV1004* (originally for solo violin), became an arrangement and performed as a duo with the piano by Mendelssohn in the form of chamber music. Much before the interest in historically informed practice reached the guitar, already by the end of the 19th century, the first seeds of interest in historically informed performance, or short HIP, were apparent in the form of modern publications by Dann Reuter's, *Musical Ornamentation* (London 1893-1895), which was followed by Landowska's *La Musique Ancienne* (1921)

[2] According to Friedrich Blume and Piero Weiss: "One principle remained inviolable: no matter how much Bach's compositions might be tailored to suit the 19th century's technical performance needs, all tampering with the substance of the compositions or the texts, with the expression or the language of Bach, was henceforth ruled out. Thus, Mendelssohn becomes the pivotal figure in the Romantic appreciation of Bach, and his work marks the historical moment of final adoption. With that adoption, neither the older rationalistic conception nor the historical interest disappeared; but both were surmounted by an enthusiastic devotion that saw in Bach more than the embodiment of eternal laws, saw in him the subtle interpreter and promoter of "rare states of the soul" (Schumann) and for this reason became faithful to the letter of his work." (Blume & Weiss, 1964, pp. 290–306)

[3] Kirnberger, a student of Bach held the idea that the music of the unaccompanied violin is complete and perfect as it is and are not to be improved on and any attempt could not be done without mistakes. (Sevier, 1981, pp. 11-19)

and Dolmetsch's *Interpretation of The Music in the 17 And 18th Century Music* (1915). Roughly in the early 20th century for the guitar, Bach revival developed first when a Spanish guitarist and composer Francisco Tarrega (1852-1909) arranged works like the *Coro Crucifixus* from the *Mass in B Minor (BWV 232)* and the *Fugue in G minor* from the *Six Violin Sonatas for the Unaccompanied Violin.* The primary aim here was that Tarrega, who was besides being a composer, and accomplished pianist, likely perceived that the guitar didn't have much repertoire composed by the very big elite group of classical composers and took this as a chance to bring the guitar closer to a level that could be compared to the piano.[4]

The second guitarist, Andres Segovia (1893-1976) decided to arrange and perform the *Ciaccona* from the *Six Violin Sonatas for Unaccompanied Violin*. For the first time in a broader public, a big enthusiasm had given to the guitar, and Bach on the guitar was brought publicly to the same heights as other musicians that also transcribed this piece like Ferrucio Busoni (1866-1924) did for piano and Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977) for orchestra. According to Segovia, the guitar suffered in the early 20th century from a poor classical repertoire, especially compared to the popularity of the piano on the concert stage. Segovia contributes this to three factors: the association of the guitar with the flamenco tradition, the instrument's difficulty for a composer to write for, and often lack projection and power to fill a concert stage in the way a piano was capable of. (Segovia, 1967)

Somehow the guitar did manage to break through, and the exotic sounds of the instrument persuaded a sizable audience all over the world. This way the music of Bach got arranged and performed by Segovia and his contemporaries. Segovia's fame led to a lot of inspired young guitarists and composers who 'stand on the shoulders' of Segovia. Although the guitarist pushed Bach's repertoire into the classical mainstream. The Romantic idiom and style

[4] According to Graham wade, many works written by Bach are not very suitable for the guitar. Yet the music and the composers output still plays a dominating feature of any guitarist studying seriously. (Wade, 1985, p. 5)

of playing became outdated in the eyes of the HIP community and among several guitarists. A need for developing a perhaps more objective historically informed performance practice was growing to be more pertinent. After Segovia, the historically informed performance practice occupied the 'old music' scene in 1960 with conductors such as Nicolaus Harnoncourt (1929-2017) in Austria, Gustav Leonhardt (1928-2012) in the Netherlands, and then later led by John Eliot Gardiner (1943) in England, Ton Koopman (1944) in the Netherlands, and Philip van Herreweghe (1947) in Belgium, amongst others. The first influences in HIP also started to blossom on the guitar when the British guitarist Julian Bream (1933-2020) who actively considered himself part of the HIP community, even studying and performing the lute, also recorded the *Ciaccona* on the guitar.[5] This time the performance was different, the big fast singing vibrato, rubato, and tone colours were holden back in favour of the music being more sober and minimal. Bream for example used three different editions to transcribe the *Fuge* in BWV1001, but because this performance practice style for the guitar was still in very early development, a natural progression to HIP playing on guitar only blossomed and matured later, branching off from the modern performance practices.[6] This moving away from the Romantic idiom in the early 20th century seen in Andres Segovia, makes up for free space and ideas for research into Baroque music revitalizing a different approach to playing. Of course, there is a lot of variety and schools of performance practices in the 20th century. For example in Germany, the musical scene suffered at the time of World War II off oppression, although the country had many orchestras and ensemble groups performing in churches and concerts, it saw less radical development and growth compared to its neighbouring countries which were more progressive and experimental.[7] (Baumgartner,

[5] According to Britannica in 1961 Bream organized the Julian Bream Consort, one of the first groups to specialize in early ensemble music. The Consort is composed of violin, alto flute, bass viol, pandora, cittern, and lute. (Brittanica, sd)

[6] (Julian Bream Masterclass 1978: J.S.Bach Fugue in A minor , 1978)

[7] According to Baumgartner: "The reasons for this lag, however, are not always obvious. Performers in the former German Democratic Republic stated emphatically that they neither had access to good historical

2002, p. 6) The Netherlands invested in this period a lot in period instruments and had a lot of success in HIP recordings. England was very active in the research and hybrid scholar-performers like John Butt (1960) brought excellent research contributions to the European Bach scene. (Baumgartner, 2002, p. 9) Although each country and region had its performance practices and tendencies, in general, the main performance practices can somewhat be chronologically related and look as followed:

| **20th Century Romantic idiom** | **Modern idiom** | **Rhetoric or HIP Movement** |
|---|---|---|
| Fast and wide *vibrato*, makes the fundamental quality of sound | Faithful to the score with minimal changes | *Vibrato* used to decorate and ornament a note |
| Use of higher positional playing and carrying the note: *portamento* | Preferring consistency in colours of sound and timbre | More of a speaking sound with less higher position changes |
| Imitation of the voice as being paramount with emphasis on all the notes | Use of modern instruments and bows | Research into older performing practices and use of period instruments |
| Larger ensemble and orchestras[8] | | Preference for smaller ensemble groups and venues e.g., Joshua Rifkin |
| Main dominance in Germany | | Developed around Germany in the Netherlands, Belgium, England, and France |

instruments nor were able to stay adequately informed of the developments in Western Europe.1° Several interpreters in the "old" Federal Republic of Germany, however, explained the lag as follows: in the 1950s, Germany was recovering from the devastation of World War II, and the ensuing spirit of humility extended even into such areas as the interpretation of Bach's music. Instead of following the radical approaches of musicians in the Netherlands and in Britain (i.e., Gustav Leonhardt and Trevor Pinnock), they decided to be conservative and retain the same approach they had before World War II—the Romantic tradition embodied in musicians such as Gunther Ramin and Karl Richter." This continued for some twenty years, and it was not until Reinhard Goebel entered the scene in the 1970s that the German Romantic tradition began to be questioned." (Baumgartner, 2002, p. 6)

[8] With smaller or larger ensemble groups, 20th-century romantic composers were writing much bigger orchestra pieces that influenced the music of J.S. Bach, later, orchestration in Bach's music become reduced to a more intimate, personal sounding, and historically accurate representation.

Another difference in Bach interpretation comes from the change in the approach of the bass. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries most performers were interpreting Bach's music in a with emphasis on the melody and prioritizing it over the bass.[9] However now these days we know that bass played a fundamental role from which the melody originates. According to Bach the bass is a generator of harmony and melody and should thus be not neglected but be taken care of with attention. (Bell & Fuller-Maitland, 1951, p. 318)

[9] Joaquin Moser's edition of the adagio from the G-minor sonata. Moser emphasizes focusing on the melody instead of the bass and even changes the values of the notes in the bass to highlight the melody more.

# Chapter III: The French Dance and Italian Influences

## Historical context

Although Bach never travelled outside of Germany, the musical landscape and influences were quite international with both French and Italian composers working in the courts in Germany at the time. The German influences are rightfully assumed to be the fundamental building blocks in the harmonic and contrapuntal musical language of Bach from composers and organists like Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707) and Johann Adam Reincken (1643-1722). There is a famous anecdote of Bach walking from Arnstadt to Lübeck staying there for about three months to listen to Buxtehude's performances. (Snyder, 1989, p. 6) Buxtehude's particular influence on Bach was the development of the complex contrapuntal language and its influence on church music. Reincken played an influence on Bach, to whom Bach dedicated BWV 965, which is an adaption of Reincken's first *sonata* from the *Hortus Musicus*. This chapter and thesis in general however focus on the secular instrumental works written in the Köthen period from 1717 to 1723, where he wrote his most influential works such as the *Orchestral Suites, Cello Suites, Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin,* and the *Brandenburg Concertos*. Because of the secular and instrumental nature of the works, Bach was not bound to the German language and was able to bring Italian and French influences very naturally. The 16$^{th}$ and 17$^{th}$ centuries already saw many dances coming in and going out of fashion and saw changes from the Renaissance into the Baroque era. By the time J.S. Bach starts to write for the keyboard, lute, and other instrumental dances, these dances became stylized and compared to court dances, were not intended to be danced on. Bach brought just like the art of fugue, the dance suites to consummation, which means to bring something to its fullest potential, and true masterpieces were realized in this period. The

stylistic dances around the period of 1650 and 1750 were performed for social gatherings that were meant to be listened to, but they still do inherit the spirit and character of the dance.

It's thus important to clarify that a keyboard suite played on the harpsichord, didn't function the same as the piano did to accompany dancers later in the 20th century, court dances were performed with strings or small ensemble orchestras and dance classes, a type of violin, the pochette (pocket fiddle), was used. (Lee, 2018, p. 9)

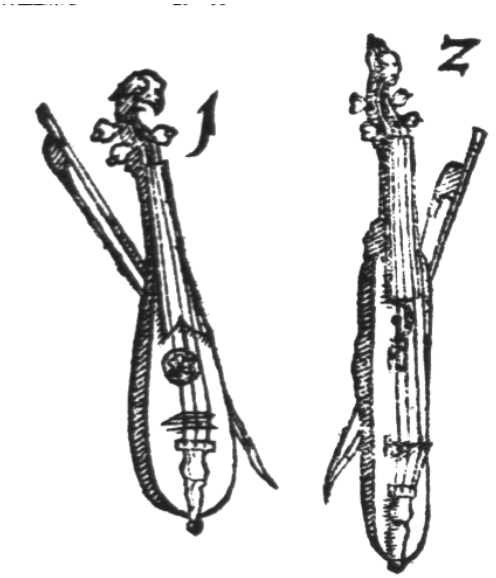


Figure 1: A Rebec and a 'boat shaped' Sardino pochette.

## French Court Influences, Inégalité and Overdotting

The court dance in the 17th and 18th centuries played an important role in the higher layers of the social hierarchies and later in the middle classes throughout Europe, this is even more the case in France where dance masters were working at the court of Louis XIV, and had a major influence in the development and promotion from the second half of the 17th century resulting in what we know as the formation of the '*belle dance'* style. (Little, 1975, p. 5)

King Louis XIV at the time was a very accomplished dancer who gave the dance art form its prosperity while in Germany the decentralized states were lacking a cohesive identity and ultimately being in competition with each other.[10] The king of France would organize events such as ballets and dress up in costumes for his entertainment. On certain occasions, usually around Christmas and Lent, the King would commission at least one ballet, and this became an interdisciplinary project where costume designers, dancers, singers, and poets had to work together. Aristocrats in the circle of Louis XIV danced as well but instead of in costumes, it was in formal wear. While dances nowadays are seen as spontaneous events for personal entertainment, the dances at the court then were carefully choreographed, memorized, and planned with the help of courtiers and dance masters and every actor that played a part in the performance, had to go through a dance master or choreographer. This eventually brought the dance tradition and form to a new height compared to the other dances in Europe at the time.[11] The *belle dance* can be typically characterized by its use of complex arm movements in coordination with the foot, the turnout of legs and feet, and a rise to mark the beginning of the step. These dances were further elaborated into the French ballet and have historically traced back to the 15th and 16th centuries in South Europe, more specifically around the regions of Italy, and migrated to the north towards France, where it became the epicentre in Europe in the mid-17th century. It is generally accepted that the ballet was developed and

[10] According to Meredeth Little: "The dominant form of aristocratic dance in the middle and late years of the baroque era was the style forged under the French King Louis XIV. When he came to power in 1661, he vowed to make France the most magnificent and powerful country in the world. In carrying out this aim he politicized all activities of his court; religious, social, and cultural events were all organized so as to enhance the King's personal prestige and thus bring glory to France. Dance was an important part of this scheme, and it occurred at court in two forms: ceremonial balls and ball." (Little, 1975, p. 2)

[11] According to Daniel McCarthy: "French dancing reached the height of its cultural standing in the courts of Louis XIII and his son Louis XIV. Louis XIV, also known as the "sun king," had a profound love lor dance and was an adept performer of ballet. during his reign Louis XIV danced over 80 roles in over 40 ballets. he was also a patron of the arts and employed many great artists, including the composer and Jean-Baptiste Lully, who would become the most influential French composer in the seventeenth century." " (Mccarthy, 2012, p. 22)

codified in France, then spread not only to Germany but to England, Scotland, Spain, Portugal, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Sweden, Russia, and the European colonies in North and South America. The demand for the French dance form became very desirable in other German courts and cities and these peaks of interest were already documented as early as 1620 when a German baroque composer and dance master Gabriel Möhlich (c. 1590 – 1640) was sent to Paris for training in this French style of dance. In England during the reign of King Charles II, the King dispatched Pelham Humphrey, a young 15-year-old English composer at the time to Paris to acquire the latest musical practices in the year 1662. (Dennison, 1974, pp. 553–555) The two biggest courts for dance in Germany were Dresden under the rule of Augustus I (1694-1733), and Frederick II (1740-1786) in Berlin. When Friedrich August I became reign at only 24 years old, he promoted the French style of dance culture even further and Dresden became at the time one of the most elaborate and expensively kept courts in Europe next to Paris. (Little, 1975, p. 3) The King attracted many illustrious performers and composers which must have motivated Bach to come to Dresden often. Italian actors were sent away in favour of French singers and groups handpicked by the King. French dancing masters like Louis Guillaume Pécour (1653-1729), Claude Balon (1661-1746), Louis Dupré (1684-1770), and Marie Sallé (1707-1756) contributed significantly to the German courthouse. These French influences are to be seen in opera as well, although most theatre productions had Italian titles, between the opera and the ending, there were French dances. These dances must have had an impact on Bach as well, although there is no definitive proof of the composer attending the performance of Johann Adolf Hasse's opera Cleofide in September 1731, he knew the composer's abilities and must have undoubtedly seen these dances.[12] This French influence of the serious and noble dance brought grace and

[12] The following years found Hasse dividing his time between Venice, Dresden, and the Hapsburg capital of Vienna. and Bach's son heard Hasse's first Dresden opera Cleofide of 1731, while his wife sang his works for the royalties of Vienna, Saxony, and Holstein. (Hansell, 2001, p. 3)

a sense of pride back to Germany, trying to recover from thirty years of war and consequently, ballets in the French style were produced throughout the 17th century in Germany. The French dances influenced not only the dancers in Europe and around the world but also composers like Bach who would use the dance types and conventions to write stylistic dances in matching spirit such as the *Overture in French Style in B Minor BWV831* and *French Keyboard Suite Nr.1,* featuring a very typical classical French suite.

The French overture style that is seen in his works like the *Overture in B Minor*, can be integrated into the opening of the *Ciaccona (BWV1004),* opening the discussion of overdotting and inégalité. The use of overdotting is still in question to this date and has many varieties of opinions, as some say that overdotting is a natural and inherent part of the French style in Bach's music, influences he directly took from composers like Couperin, d'Anglebert, Lully and that the use of overdotting gradually become standard practice in the *overture* style openings. Conductors like Ton Koopman and Elliot Gardner argue against the idea of overdotting as being an inherent part of Bach's musical style and state that the use of it should be used in careful moderation because the practice of overdotting can result in a mechanical, less expressive style that is born out of habit not inherent to the composer's intentions. The question of overdotting is indeed nuanced in that the former side doesn't necessarily deny the use but merely suggests that it should be used in moderation or with great thought. Does this imply that they think that Bach used it rather as a device that serves to enhance the music in a characteristically French way?[13]

French composers like d'Anglebert were known to be meticulous in notating the ornamentation in systemized ways but still, when it comes to the performance of regular notes, the case

[13] Matthew Dirst proposed in his book: Bach's French Overtures and the Politics of Overdotting the idea that overdotting could be used as a way to bring certain characteristics of nationality. The use of overdotting can produce a more or less 'French' sound.

becomes quite not as straightforward of a matter for interpretation, just like the French language itself, there are many rules of speech that cannot be as easily understood.[14]

The Italian counterpart is clearer in language, words are spoken as they were written, and for interpretation, this results in a more straightforward approach. The French invention of *inégalité* carries a hierarchical structure where some notes are distributed differently than others and thus are to be highlighted more, resulting in musical notation not being interpreted literally (phonetic). The French must have used overdotting and *inégalité* as foundational elements in their music, especially given in the limited expressive possibilities of the French baroque keyboard music.[15] The second important aspect to discuss is Bach's own methodology of writing down the music and notation style. The composer's writing must have seen development and seen changes toward more detailed instruction where he would use smaller note values to allow for more precision.[16] In this evolution the question became not if, but when, and where Bach meant to use overdotting in his earlier works as well as in his later works. The act of extending the note values longer was not only seen in French music but also in Germany through the composer and traverso player Johann Joachim Quantz (1697- 1773) and his treatises on 18th-century performance practices, where he is promoting overdotting as well under the name *Ungleichheit*. The relation between overdotting and *inégalité* is inseparable because overdotting can be seen as *inégalité* thought of as vertically rather than horizontally since it's implied more rhythmically instead of melodically. However, these

[14] According to Raguenet: "Italian language is much more naturally adapted to music than French. Their vowels are all sonorous. Italian music generally makes choice of the vowel: a, which, being clearer and more distinct than any of the rest, expresses the beauty of the cadence and division to a better advantage. Italian music is language-wise more easily to understand. (Raguenet, 1946, p. 416)

[15] Although things like multiple manual keyboards existed and could bring out dynamics, the instruments were still limited in expressive possibilities and were looking for other ways to add expression.

[16] According to Dirst: "In terms of notation, Bach's style also evolved over time. He was a meticulous notator and his scores are renowned for their clarity and precision. In his early works, he used a variety of notation techniques, including figured bass and short score, but as his music became more complex, he began to use more detailed notation to ensure that performers could accurately interpret his intentions. For example, in his later works, he frequently used multiple staves and detailed dynamic and articulation markings to convey his musical ideas more precisely." (Dirst, 1997, p. 35)

practices before Bach does leave us with some more precision to be desired, and detailed writing in Bach's later works is appreciated, giving us more to work with. His care for detail and unusual attention to writing out notation in his later works was quite uncommon among composers at the time, even criticized for it by his contemporaries. This tendency has also been observed in Bach's ornamentation. French influence in Bach's music has always been a sensitive part politically since that Germany tried many times to form its own identity and saw Bach as its cultural culmination and praised him as a god-like musical figure that shouldn't be contaminated by the French and others. Indeed, French music was of significance in 18th-century Germany but throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, this French influence became a difficult subject politically because of the First and Second World Wars. Both political events highlighted the nationalistic tendencies of Bach's performance in Germany and while the country was looking to form its own identity, it disregarded the foreign influences and stripped itself in my opinion to an inferior version. It's where 'Frenchness' was disregarded in German circles and replaced with big romantic gestures. After the political turmoil in the last World War II, Germany was plagued by another problem: that is the secularization and dismantling of religion from the state. By the time Germany was ready to change its attitude towards the music in the second half of the 20th century, its neighbouring countries like the Netherlands and England were not burdened by its historical past and already were far ahead of historically informed performance practices.[17]

[17] British interpreters were aware of the lag of German performers, blaming this on the historical and religious burden associated with Bach's music in Germany. (Baumgartner, 2002, p. 19)

## Italian Influences and Basso Continuo

Italy did play a significant role in shaping baroque period music. This is done approximately in a couple of ways: the introduction of the instrumental *sonata* as we know it today, the opera, and *basso continuo*. Music was composed without the need for it to be functional in any way but to please the listener and for the abstract enjoyment itself. The *sonata* had two categories: *sonata de chiesa*, which has a religious origin by being performed in churches and ceremonies, and *sonata de camera*, which is its secular counterpart. Another notable factor is in the development of the instruments themselves, the violin, and other stringed instruments that were not standardized as we know them today. The Italians commonly used thicker strings, while also tuning the concert A pitch significantly higher than its French counterpart that used thinner strings with a lower concert A pitch which caused the instruments to project less, as a result, Italian performances were thus documented to be generally louder than French performances.[18] (Mccarthy, 2012, p. 7)

The Italian bows are longer to suit their esthetical musical language and led to the performer being able to articulate less clearly and precisely compared to the French bow but has at the same time had other lyrical qualities. The French way of playing has similarities with the German and other lowlands where they would incorporate a downbow on a strong beat, and an upbow on a weaker beat, in contrast with the Italian ways of bowing technique that were reflecting their own performances practices of the time. (Mccarthy, 2012, p. 8)

The third influence finds itself in the harmonic language, although generalizations of regional compositional styles of composers can give an imprecise and inaccurate representation, Italians like Pachelbel (1653–1706), and Vivaldi (1678 – 1741) wrote harmonically in a

[18] According to Raguenet: “Italians have the same advantage over us in respect of the instruments and the performers as they have in regard of the singers and their voices. Italian violins are mounted with strings much larger than French violins; bows are longer, and they can make their instrument sound loud”. (Raguenet, 1946, p. 431)

way that was less dissonant compared to their French counterparts but used more diminutions (especially the case of vocal music) with clear cadential structures driving the music forward and adding new heights of expression. Other earlier Italian baroque composers like Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1647) used a lot of emphasis on dissonant notes, counterpoint, and chromatism in their keyboard works that inspired J.S. Bach to expand upon and develop further in his works. In some of the primary sources, it's clear as well that Italians would use fewer markings that explain how ornamentations should be performed specifically compared to French music, who showed careful attention to the choice of these elements like the table of ornaments by d'Anglebert found in figure 2.

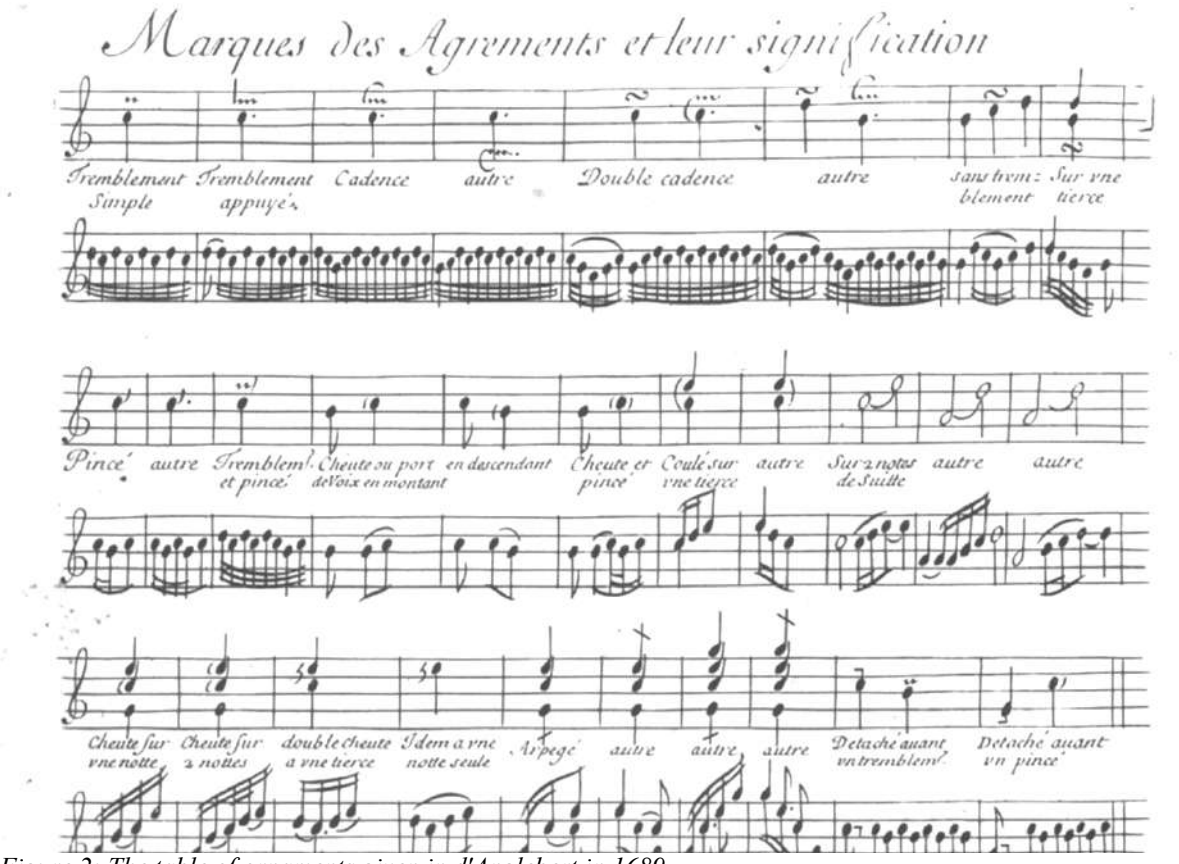

*Figure 2: The table of ornaments given in d'Anglebert in 1689.*

The French tend to write out ornamentation in various creative ways and although sometimes with their specific means, the desire to be precise is not as ready to be observed with the Italians, who would leave these things open for performers to decide and fit to their tastes. This trend of being less bound by rules and certain conventions is also seen in Italian

dance, although there is no clear distinction between Italian and French dance because they both were influenced by each other, Italian dance is more athletic and virtuosic with less strictness and an emphasis on using the upper body and hands compared to the French. The way the French thought about music and dance was thus seen as quite different from the Italians. They saw the importance of connecting not only the heart but also the mind intellectually and with reason, not being overly dramatic or thrilling than needed, resulting in a very characteristically elegant style. The Italians on the other side were quite virtuosic and spontaneous, less bound by systemization and rules, and this made their music and dance up to a highly expressive, virtuosic, and spontaneous art form.[19] At last, there is *basso continuo*, playing a significant part in the baroque and being the key defining feature; the origins of *basso continuo* came from performance practices of the 17th century when at the time an organist was tasked to fill in missing vocal parts, sometimes the missing parts can add up to become quite complicated to perform so a musical shorthand was used, and instead, the missing parts were reduced to only the harmonic structure and from there it was up to the organist or *basso continuo* player to make a texture. *Basso continuo* goes hand in hand with the development and transformation from the first practice or *stile antico*, which focused on the polyphonic musical style to the second practice, *stile moderno* which emphasizes musical clarity and generally having the freedom to be more expressive, less bound by rules in counterpoint set in the renaissance by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525 – 1594) and

[19] According to Raguenet: "The Italians study music once completely and attain it to the greatest perfection; the French learn it by halves, and so making themselves never Master of It, they are bound always to be students and when any new piece is to be presented in France, our singers are forced to rehearse it over and over before they can make themselves perfect. How many times must we practice an opera before it's fit to be performed; this man begins too soon, that too slow; one sings out of time, another out of time; in the meantime, the composer labors with hand and voice and screws his body into a thousand contortions and finds all little enough to his purpose. Whereas the Italians are so perfect and, if I may use the expression, so infallible, that with them a whole opera is performed with the greatest exactness without so much as beating time or knowing who has the direction of the music. To this exactness they join all the embellishments an air is capable of; they run a hundred or more divisions in it; they in a manner play with it and teach their throats to echo in a ravishing manner, whereas we hardly know what an echo in music means." (Raguenet, 1946, p. 428)

Gioseffo Zarlino (c. 1517 –1590). This led eventually to the abandonment of those strict rules in consonances such as the preparation of dissonance, embracing the idea of musical imperfection, and emphasis on using musical rhetoric to convey emotions.[20] Towards the end of the Baroque, *stile moderno* was integrated into the highly polyphonic and contrapuntal music of Bach. This synthesis of the old Palestrina style, with the second practice, brought Baroque music to its consummation. Italy was the major influence in the Baroque because it was the epicentre from which Renaissance polyphonic thinking of the 16th century gradually shifted to creating music from the point of the bass on which the other voices can be constructed. The impact of this development in *basso continuo* led to the second practice and an art form of its own with J.S. Bach bringing it to its consummation. The *basso continuo* gave just enough information to the performer that allowed for flexibility and freedom, but it was up to the performer to work out a part and could make it as elaborative as desired. The information given thus not only works as a musical shorthand but also allows for complex ideas such as imitation and counterthemes to develop. Later, musicologists associated the Baroque era of music with 'the age of continuo'. (Mccarthy, 2012, p. 1) Because *basso continuo* reflected the composer and performer's ability to work in a contrapuntal and monodic style. This played such an important role in the music of the Baroque era and the music of Bach, that this topic will be further elaborated on and explained further in this thesis.

## Influences of Italian and French Music

A lot of examples can be found showing that Bach synthesized two different stylistic elements together and was able to be involved in the court where he was exposed to those

[20] According to Marco Scacchi in his *Breve discorso sopra la musica moderna* written in 1649 states that the *prima pratica* is when harmony dominates the word and the *seconda pratica* is when the word dominates the harmony. (Palisca & Szweykowski, 2001)

influences. Thus, a lot of the Italian and French music languages are both present in his compositional style and bring them to light in a way that complements each other. For example, the invention of the French two-section form overture appearing in the operatic overtures of Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632- 1687), is seen in the opening of BWV 831 with its original name being *Ouvertüre nach Französischer Art,* published as the second half of the *Clavier-Übung II* in 1735 (paired with the Italian Concerto), and a suite in *B minor* for a two-manual harpsichord. Italian influences can be observed as early as in his childhood when Bach got his hands on the music of Italian composers like Pachelbel and helped his older brother Johann Christoph Bach copy out the full volumes by hand. The typical flowing rhythmical figures found in the *Giga* and the *Corrente*, having multiple meters are typical examples of Italian influences. Meanwhile, French influences can be observed with *inégalité*, overdotting, French dance, and overture forms. Bach copied Vivaldi's *L'Estro armonico (1711)* which is a collection of twelve concertos for one, two, or four violins when he was learning composition. He transcribed six concertos from this set and arranged *Concertos nr. 3, 9,* and *12* for keyboard (BWV 978, 972, and 976), *Concertos nos. 8* and *11* for *organ* (BWV593 and 596), and *Concerto no. 10* for four harpsichords and strings (BWV1065). He also transcribed and transposed *Concerto in D Major from Grosso Mogul (RV208)* for organ *(BWV594*). The formal structure, harmonic plans, and, possibly, melodic contours of these Vivaldi's concertos later became some of the major characteristics of Bach's compositions. Bach's virtuosic tendencies and naming conventions of instrumental works like the *Allemanda*, *Corrente*, *Sarabanda*, *Giga*, and *Ciaccona* in the D minor partita (BWV1004) are Italianized, and their influences are not difficult to recognize, at the same time great attention and care are given, and the way the music was composed in a way that was never too melodic or dramatic than it needed to be which is typically French. The way French music was ornamented was quite different compared to the Italian one, having a predetermined set of patterns they use to

embellish a passage which they try to execute to perfection while Italians are much freer, influenced by the diminution style of ornamentation, and are less precise and dogmatic compared to the French, but at the same time, Italian music and language allowed for the music to be highly virtuosic, interesting, and spontaneous. When it comes to the music of Bach and his instrumental works, he is known to work out the ornamentation in the Italian diminution style found in the *G minor sonata* but writing the embellishments down and setting it permanently on ink, which is a typical French mannerism. A piece that would highlight these French and Italian influences is the *Ciaccona* from the solo violin partitas (BWV1004). This piece embodies both the French and Italian elements well because it has flowing rhythms, a French overture style with dotted rhythms, fast virtuosic scalar passages, and at the same time worked-out diminutions and ornamentations. This perfect synthesis of the French and Italian styles is brought together into forming the language of the music of his compositions. The practice by Bach to write the French dances in Italianized names does lead to a major question of what the composer meant by it and how the Italianized dances should be interpreted. Although it's clear that French dance was influential in shaping the music in the 18$^{th}$ century, not enough sources are readily apparent about the relevance of Italian dance. Bach would mix the labelling of the names as can be observed in his French suites of works where he uses the term *Courante* although the characteristics of the dance would be typically the Italian *Corrente* and vice versa. Therefore, the terms should not be relied on as the describing characteristics of dance but instead, a deeper look into the music and understanding of structure itself becomes more important.

# Chapter IV: The Baroque Violin Suites

The surviving autograph manuscript of the *sonatas* and *partitas* originated from the period 1717 and 1723 when Bach was serving Leopold van Anhalt-Köthen, the ruler of the principality of Anhalt-Köthen at the time. The reputation of Bach was already well known, and the prince was a musically educated man that was aware of the composer's reputation when they met, giving Bach consequently the position as the Kapellmeister of the court. (Wolff & Emery, Johann Sebastian Bach, 2001, p. 13) This wasn't however immediately in effect because Bach couldn't leave his post in Weimar as concertmaster as easily as he would have wanted and had to stay until 2 December 1717, four months after he signed the contract with the prince on the 7th of August. The predecessors in the solo violin repertoire and genre could be accredited to Johan Paul van Westhoff (1656-1705) and his *Six Suites for Solo Violin* composed in c. 1696. Van Westhoff served as a court musician in Dresden from 1674 to 1697 and in Weimar from 1699 until he died in 1705. The *Six Suites* are approximately 45 minutes in total duration and are much shorter compared to the almost two hours performance duration of Bach's *Sonatas and Partitas*. The solo violin genre was growing at the time and other composers like Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1644 -1704), Johann Joseph Vilsmayr (1663-1722), and Johann Georg Pisendel (1688-1687) were actively composing solo violin works as well.

In Bach's solo violin repertoire, there can be two types of works distinguished, namely the first three *sonatas* which are composed in the *sonata de chiesa* form. This type of sonata has four movements that are slow, fast, slow, and fast again. The second movement has a fugue and there are rarely dance types to be found here such as the *Sicilienne*. The names of the pieces also imply the tempo at which they could be performed, for example in the second *sonata* these are the *grave* (slow), *fugue* (somewhat fast), *andante* (slow), and *allegro* (fast).

The second type is the three partitas composed in the *sonata de camera* form which have an open structure usually consisting of four core dances, namely the *Allemande, Courante, Sarabande,* and *Gigue*. In practice, however, they can have varied amounts of movements and other gallantry dances like the *Loure*, *Gavotte*, and *Rondeau*. This can make a suite have as many as seven dances with added *doubles,* to five, found in the second D minor partita which has the last movement the *Ciaccona*, be significantly longer. In this thesis, the dances of the *partitas* are going to be compared and analysed, therefore an efficient and simple labelling of the pieces will be made. An Allemande from the first violin *partita* will be labelled as an *Allemanda* 1 and a *Gigue* from the third partita will be a *Gigue* 3. All three dances have somewhat of a connection with each other but are simultaneously quite distinct, in that they don't have a dance or piece that is mutually found in all three *partitas,* although the *sonata de chiesa* has a *Fugue* as an exception that can be found in all three of the *sonatas*. The *Corrente* can be found in *partita* 1 and *partita* 2 but not in *partita* 3 and the *Gigue* is in *partita* 2 and *partita* 3 but not in 1, which has a *double* instead. The second *partita in D minor* has five movements. It has the least number of dances but is at the same time the longest with the famous one-part movement the *Ciaccona*. Performances of this suite usually range between 20 and 30 minutes and the *Ciaccona* by itself already takes 13 to 16 minutes to perform. The *D minor partita* has a standard French form consisting of *Allemanda*, *Corrente*, *Sarabanda*, and *Giga* but ends on a *Ciaccona* instead of the usual ending on a *Giga*. Although it may be unfamiliar with a *Ciaccon*a ending as a dance suite, it was not uncommon. Both Marais and Purcell were known to end some of their suites with a *chaconne*, and it was common for French operas to conclude with a *chaconne*.[21] It is however noticeable that the *Ciaccona* by itself balances out the other four core dances, none of the other dances

[21] Suite à 3 in C major (Marais, Marin), Henry Purcell's chaconne from the King Arthur suite named: *Grande Dance,* performed at the end of the act, etc.

from the *sonatas* and *partitas* have a performance duration longer than 10 minutes and the 256-measure *Ciaccona* takes about the same time to perform as the other four dances combined.

# Chapter V: The Dance Types in the D Minor Partita

## Allemanda

The *Allemande* or *Allemanda* (as in the stylized Italian version) is a dance in 4/4 meter usually starting with an upbeat and a beat level on the quarter note. The *Allemanda* is one of the core dances in a French classical dance suite. It's part of the *sonata de camera* and usually serves as a prelude to the other three or more dances. Because of the prelude-like character, recognizing certain dance elements that are consistently describing the *Allemanda* type in general, is rather difficult. Nevertheless, the tempo of the dance should be moderate and somewhat serious without an emphasis on a specific beat of the measure, but the fourth beat can be interpreted as having a 'swinging' motion that should take more time. (Lee, 2018, p. 26) This skewing of the fourth beat creates dynamic tension toward the upcoming first beat of the next measure. The *Allemanda* has a binary form, just like the *Corrente, Sarabanda,* and *Gigue*, meaning it has two parts where the first modulates up to the dominant and after the repeat, continues to the B section where more elaborate modulations can happen and eventually finds their way back to the tonic. These sections are expected to be repeated and the use of spontaneous ornamentation and diminution can add variety and interest to the listener and performer. Although the *Allemanda* has a prelude-like character mentioned before, and they can be allowed some rhythmic freedom, certain rhythmic elements are typically shared between *Allemanda* 2 and *Allemanda* 1 in Bach's music. *Allemanda* 2 has a consistent flow of $16^{th}$ notes that are set against sixteenth triplets and in both *Allemanda's* the triplets are seen as unusual, as they don't fit inside the measure because they are to be performed slower than their theoretical value, giving the feeling of the dance slowing itself down. This can be even more exaggerated if it's on the fourth beat to emphasize the previously mentioned 'swinging' feeling. The French way of *inégalité* playing is very natural in

*Allemanda* 2 because of the consistent flow of regular sixteenth notes which gives direction to the phrasing, and the rhythmic figures of *Allemanda* 1 allow for overdotting to happen very naturally. Overdotting doesn't happen on connected legato phrases but rather on phrases without slur or bow marks. Although the *Allemanda* is a core dance in the suite, not so much researched literature and sources of its origins and dance characteristics are to be found on this specific dance type compared to the others, except the *Giga* that's in the last dance of the BWV1004 which is not a usual *Gigue* type. More on this will be elaborated on when the *Gigue* is going to be discussed in this chapter.

## Corrente and courante

The Italian *Corrente* is the counterpart of the *French Courante* and by the time Bach composed in either *Courante* or *Corrente* style, these two dance types became quite distinctive from each other. The *French Courante* developed further through the reign of King Louis IVX and was characterized as a noble and elegant dance that the king was known to perform well and associated himself with.[22] The tempo of the *Courante* is usually slower than the *Corrente* and with more grace to its Italian counterpart which departed away and developed independently in Italy under the influence of composers like Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713). The Italian *Corrente* is less harmonically deceptive with simpler cadences and is rather less complicated to make the dance playable for faster performances. The dance meter is in three with a beat level on the crotchet and has usually an upbeat. The rhetoric feeling of the *Corrente* 2 is rather light, joyful, and brisk which contrasts with the dances like the *Allemanda* 2 and the *Sarabanda* 2.

[22] According to Rameau translated to English by John Essex: "The Courant was formerly very much in Fashion, and as it is a very solemn Dance, and gives a more grand and noble Air than other Dances, .... Lewis the Fourteenth was pleased to prefer it; ... Indeed, he danced it better than any of his Court, and with an extraordinary Grace. But what gives a greater Proof of his Attachment and Delight in this Dance, is, that notwithstanding the weighty Affairs he had upon his Hands, he set apart some Hours for this Diversion for upwards of two and twenty years that Monsieur Beauchamp had the Honour to instruct him in this noble Exercise." (Essex, 1728)

The *Corrente* in Bach's repertoire is only to be found in solo instrumental repertoire and most of the works come from his years in Köthen between the years 1717 and 1723.[23] The dance can be found on the keyboard, string instruments like the cello and violin, and as an exception for the flute (BWV1013).

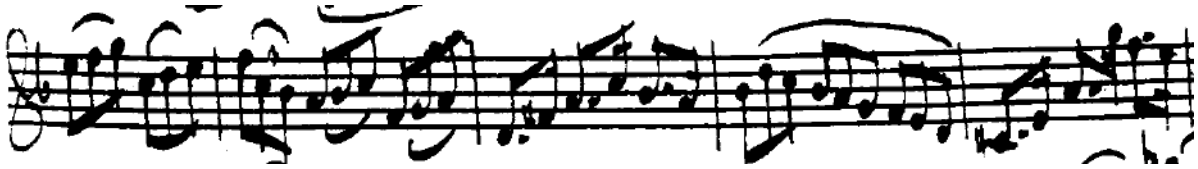

*Figure 3: Corrente, showing the contrast between two meters.*

The *Corrente* 2 is to be performed in a moderately fast tempo and two meters are mixed. This mixing of the meter is more felt through the constantly flowing triplets that are contrasted against the dotted eight notes, which can be either performed inside of the metric feel of the triplets to create a smooth continuation or be taken as literal values (overdotting) that interrupt the flow and create tension that propels the musical direction forward. Because *Corrente* 2 is an Italian *Corrente*, legato bow marks are used frequently. There is less room for *inégalité* playing with the overdotting on the triplet figures, but simultaneously overdotting is encouraged as a contrast against the triplets, thus creating an interesting contrast between the two French and Italian musical elements.

## Sarabanda

The *Sarabanda* is also one of the core dances in the *sonata de camera.* Its origins and perception have very much changed by the time it became relevant in the Baroque Era and characterized the dance suites of the 18th century. The Spanish term for the dance is the *zarabanda* which is said to be performed on a five-course guitar using energetic rasqueado patterns which are performed by strumming the strings with the right hand in a fast motion. The *zarabanda* made use of castanets and had a somewhat erotic reputation through its lyrical

[23] Bach was actively composing many instrumental works besides the sonatas and partitas like the Brandenburg Concertos, Orchestral Suites and Cello Suites while working for Prince Leopold van Anhalt-Köthen at the time.

content and racy choreography. The *Sarabanda* as we know it today is a dance that doesn't have clear evidence of its origins but seems to be originated from the areas of the New World and Spain. The dance was associated with vulgarity not suited for the nobility and the sophisticated higher classes, considered a dance for the lower-class people, and even banned from being performed at some point. However, due to the high popularity of the *sarabanda* dance and the surrounding myths, it influenced itself up the social hierarchy, eventually tamed and adopted by the nobility. The dance went from being fast and energetic to being slower and grave, with more tender-like qualities. The *sarabanda* is closely connected to the *ciaccona* which was also originally associated with vulgarity and lower classes. Eventually, the *ciaccona* took the old *sarabanda's* popularity over in becoming a very popular dance.[24] (Palfrey & Akbarov, 2015, p. 177)

The metric form of the *Sarabanda* is quite old and simple. The phrases are usually symmetrical and in four or eight measures with a balanced arsis and thesis. The *Sarabanda* is in 3/4 meter with an emphasis on the second beat which is quite often a dotted quarter note. Although the typical *Sarabanda* is quite slow. The Italianized version of the dance in BWV1004 is quite virtuosic with a lot of space for ornamentation that is appropriate. Bach writes the diminutions and ornamentations out which can be changed or varied depending on the performer's taste and to keep the music interesting in the repeating section. The use of *inégalité* can be appropriate as well because the tempo, emphasis on the second beat, and phrasing should be something that needs to be taken into consideration.

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[24] The zarabanda and chacona originated in the New World when European expatriates, savage natives, and their mixed offspring created fast-tempo, highly sexualized triple-meter dances which, in Spain and New Spain they called the zarabanda and chacona. These dances made their way to Europe, where they were censured by royal decrees and the Catholic Church, which ensured their lasting popularity. As the dances' popularity increased, royal courts began to incorporate the dances into their gatherings. The dances, for practical, social, and political reasons had to be toned down to please both the royals and religious authorities. Hence, composers created the slow and magnificent sarabandes and chaconnes of the High Baroque era. (Palfrey & Akbarov, 2015, p. 178)

## The Giga and French Gigue Types

The Italian *Gigas* compared to the French Gigue is a more complicated matter because the dances don't have a clear choreographic influence and are closer to being solely instrumental. According to Meredeth Little and Natalie Jenne, the *Gigue* and *Gigas* can be categorized into three different types namely the *French Gigue* and the *Giga* I, *Giga* II. The *Gigas* are both Italian dances and are characterized as being lively and of a faster tempo than the *French Gigue*. The *Giga* that is present in the D minor partita (BWV 1004) is the former last type, Italian, and can be subcategorized as *Giga* II according to Little and Jenne. Before going over the characteristic of the latter *Giga*, a brief overview of the other *Gigue* dances is going to be described.

### *French Gigue*

*"The most distinctive feature of the French Gigue is the lilt which is produced when groups of two or four of these figures are used in a balanced fashion and are characterized as being lively and spritely. The French Gigue is to be performed medium fast, having an inconsistent balanced phrase structure compared to the Sarabande, and a more complex texture with more counterpoint"* (Jenne & Little, 2001, p. 150)

This type of *French Gigue*, in general, can be found for example in the *Gigue de Roland* composed by Jean Baptiste Lully which became a popular dance in the early 18th century as well as a favourite in current revivals of French Court social dancing, serving as an excellent characterization to this type of dance. The piece is quite short, but the hopping or *sautillant* rhythms occur almost continuously, in one voice or the other. Another example of the *French Gigue* can be found by Bach's contemporary George Friedrich Handel (1685-1759) who composed a classical French style of dance suite for harpsichord in B flat major (HWV 440). There the *Gigue* serves as the ending of the suite with almost explicitly only using the sautillant rhythms throughout its duration as well.

### *The Giga type I and II*

According to Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Giga* types I and II are quite complicated types of dances, and characteristics of what makes a *French Gigue* are not to be found here, thus a distinction has been made and can also be further subdivided into *Giga* I and II. They can be characterized by their metric structure, tempo, and overall character.

This is what Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne say about the type:

*"Giga I" refers to Baroque pieces entitled "Gigue" or "Giga" (or related terms) in whose metric structure tripleness appears on the lowest level of rhythm. Giga I is the only Baroque dance type that consistently has triple groupings at the lowest metric level. Portions of pieces by Buxtehude and Handel… clearly illustrate the tripleness of Giga I in two different notations, even though the Buxtehude Gigue has two beats per measure and the Handel Gigue has four. Another characteristic of Giga I is that the texture is normally contrapuntal, imitative, and sometimes fugal… it can also be homophonic…. The cadential structure of Giga I is sharply different from that of most other Baroque dances. Important cadences appear only at the end of each strain, with interior cadences either avoided or run through in a relentless sense of forward motion. This results in long pieces that can accumulate great energy and are aesthetically far removed from Baroque dances with predictable cadences."*
(Jenne & Little, 2001, p. 153)

*Giga* I and *Giga* II also have several characteristics not shared with *French Gigues*. In general, *Gigas* are longer and more complex pieces than *French Gigues*. The previously mentioned *French Gigues* by Lully and Handel have indeed only a performance duration of about two minutes while the *Giga* II is double the length with a faster tempo. Texturally, it's possible to find fugues or quasi-fugal procedures, usually with the subject inverted in the second strain. Both *Gigas* appear under a large variety of time signatures with the *Giga* 2 (BWV1004) being in 12/8 meter.

TABLE V

A Comparison of Gigue Types

| Characteristic | French gigue | Giga I | Giga II |
|---|---|---|---|
| Unpredictable phrase length | X | X | X |
| Balanced phrasing in some pieces, especially at the beginning of strains | X | X | X |
| Beats organized differently in each piece | X | X | X |
| Lively or joyful affect | X | X | X |
| Imitative texture in most pieces | X | X | X |
| Either one or two beats per measure | X | X | X |
| Moderate tempo | X | | X |
| Slower tempo (with "illusion of fast") | | X | |
| Some ornamentation | X | | X |
| Little ornamentation | | X | |
| Tripleness on pulse level | X | | X |
| Tripleness on tap level | | X | |
| Harmonic change within triple groups (2 + 1) | X | | X |
| No harmonic change within triple groups | | X | |
| Varied groupings by slurs | X | | X |
| Almost all slurs over three-note groupings | | X | |
| Large variety of time signatures | | X | X |
| Few or no internal cadences | | X | X |
| Occasional internal cadences | X | | |
| Some fugues or quasi-fugues | | X | X |
| No fugues or quasi-fugues | X | | |
| Little or no use of "sautillant" figure | | X | X |
| "Sautillant" figure used almost constantly | X | | |

Figure 4: An overview of the Giga types by Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne.

Both the *French Gigue* and *Giga* I have characteristics unique to themselves. The *French Gigue* features the mentioned *sautillant* figures, *Giga* I alone has tripleness on the tap level, no harmonic change within triple groups, slurs covering ternary figures only, and a slower tempo with an illusion of quickness because of tempo. On the other hand, *Giga* II has no characteristics that do not occur either in *Giga* I or *French Gigue*, and *Giga* II is possibly a younger relative and born out of the *Giga* I and *French Gigue* type. The *French Gigue* has the predictable sautillant rhythm that allows it to be closely connected to an actual dance form whilst the *Giga* type according to Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne are more complex and abstract pieces overall. The *Giga* in Partita II for solo violin (BWV 1004) is thus quite a

complicated *Giga*. It has irregular phrasings and unpredictable cadences that obscure the phrasing a bit and with far modulations. But usually, the phrases consist of arpeggios or scales with a consistent rhythmic sequential pattern that can help in finding out the phrasing structure. It also has dynamic markings such as *piano* and *forte* that aids the constant flow of 16th notes in facilitating the phrasings. The change in harmony happens on the beat level of the dotted quarter note in 12/8 with occasional harmony changes inside the beat that can occur at the end of phrases; Bach indicates consistently that the first beat should be slurred through bow marks. The *Giga* in BWV1004 is quite long compared to the *Courante* and *Sarabande* in the suite.

## The Ciaccona and chaccone

The structure of chaconnes is quite different from that of the other Baroque dances in the French classical suite like the *Allemande*, *Courante*, and *Gigue*. Whereas the other dances use the AABB or bipartite form, the *Ciaccona* has a structure of continuous variations on a four-measure tetrachord. By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, some French and German composers were writing long, complex, emotionally charged pieces in the *Ciaccona*.[25] With no natural limitation as to length, they could be much freer to invent elaborate compositions using a wide variety of techniques within the same piece, including strong contrasts in instrumentation, dynamic level, texture, ground bass pattern, mode and key, repetition scheme, melody, harmony, rhythm, and occasionally even meter. It is difficult to list the identifying characteristics of *chaconnes* because there are so many exceptions. For example, most *chaconnes* are in triple meter, but several do occur in duple meter, and it is not

[25] Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706): Two chaconnes (in C major, D major) for organ, from Hexachordum Apollinis (1699); four more (in D major, D minor, F major, F minor) for organ (undated)
Henry Purcell (1659–1695): Chaconne from the semi-opera Prophetess, or The History of Dioclesian (1690); two more from the semi-opera King Arthur, or The British Worthy (1691); another from the semi-opera The Fairy-Queen (1692)
Robert de Visée (1655–1732/33): Two chaconnes (in F major, G major) for guitar from Livre de guittarre, dédié au roi (1682); another in G minor, from Livre de pieces pour la guittarre, dédié au roi (1686)

uncommon to find a temporary shift to a duple meter within a long piece.[26] The continuous variation of the dance is based on a four-measure phrase with an identifiable or fixed-bass pattern. However, in many pieces the fixed-bass changes as the piece progress, and occasionally one finds an eight-measure pattern. In the *Ciaccona* of the BWV1004 in the opening variations, the phrases are performed in couples, but in some, the opening phrase or phrases form a discrete section in the music that recurs in the middle and at the very end, binding the whole piece together. The history of the *ciaccona* has been explored in depth by musicologist Richard Hudson, whose articles in *New Grove* discuss their connections with guitar music, song, and dance in Spain and Italy in the early seventeenth century. In Italy, the *ciaccona* can be found in the *Nuova Inventione D'intavolatura* by Girolamo Montesardo (fl. 1606 – c. 1620) with a chaconne bass line in three keys (G major, C major, F major) for the guitar. Márta Ábrahám also did a throughout analysis of the *Ciaccona* from the BWV1004, finding many symbolic and rhetorical meanings within the piece.[27]

[26] Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706): Two chaconnes (in C major, D major) for organ
[27] Márta Ábrahám wrote a Chaconne handbook, specifically on the BWV1004. The handbook has been only recently published in the beginning of 2023 and discusses many rhetorical devices Bach used to infuse musical symbolism in his music.

This is what has been said about the history of the *Ciaccona* in France according to Meredeth Little and Natalie Jenne:

*"French composers adopted the Ciaccona into theatrical presentations as early as 1658 (Jean-Baptiste Lully's Alcidiane), and at least one chaconne in most French theatrical works of the late seventeenth century and well into the eighteenth. Ciaccona's do have preserved choreographies in the form of Feuillet dance notation and fourteen of these chaconnes can offer insight into the character and quality of movement of these dances. Most of the chaconnes were created for theatrical use, chiefly by Louis- Guillaume Pécour, ballet master and choreographer of the Paris opera from 1687 to 1729. The chaconnes are more numerous and varied; they include two ball dances for court celebrations of the English king or queen and three solo entries for a male Harlequin, complete with information on head and arm gestures and rules for moving the hat. The additional illustration in the Harlequin dances was necessary since these gestures were not part of the standard repertoire of movements in the French noble style but represent a kind of character dancing. Many chaconnes are quite long, some over one hundred measures. The form of both music and dance usually consists of a gradual, persistent increase in complexity, finally coming to a high point and then diminishing to a quiet ending."* (Jenne & Little, 2001, p. 200)

The *Sarabanda* and *Ciaccona* share connections and similarities, they both have an identical metric structure that is based on a four-measure phrase and a similar tempo, although the *Ciaccona* might be performed with a lighter character. There is also the typical syncopation on the second beat that can be found in the *Sarabanda* 2 rhythm and in the *Ciaccona* such as in the BWV1004. Jacques Ozanam, author of one of the earliest French dictionaries to include music, stated that the two dances were quite closely related through the bass. I would even go further to show that all five dances are connected through the bass. In Denis Gaultier's *La Rhetorique des Dieux* (1664-72) dances are often entitled *Chaconne ou Sarabande*, meaning either: *Ciaccona* or *Sarabanda*, which makes the definitions of the individual dances less concrete and more ambiguous, but essentially, they are different in form.

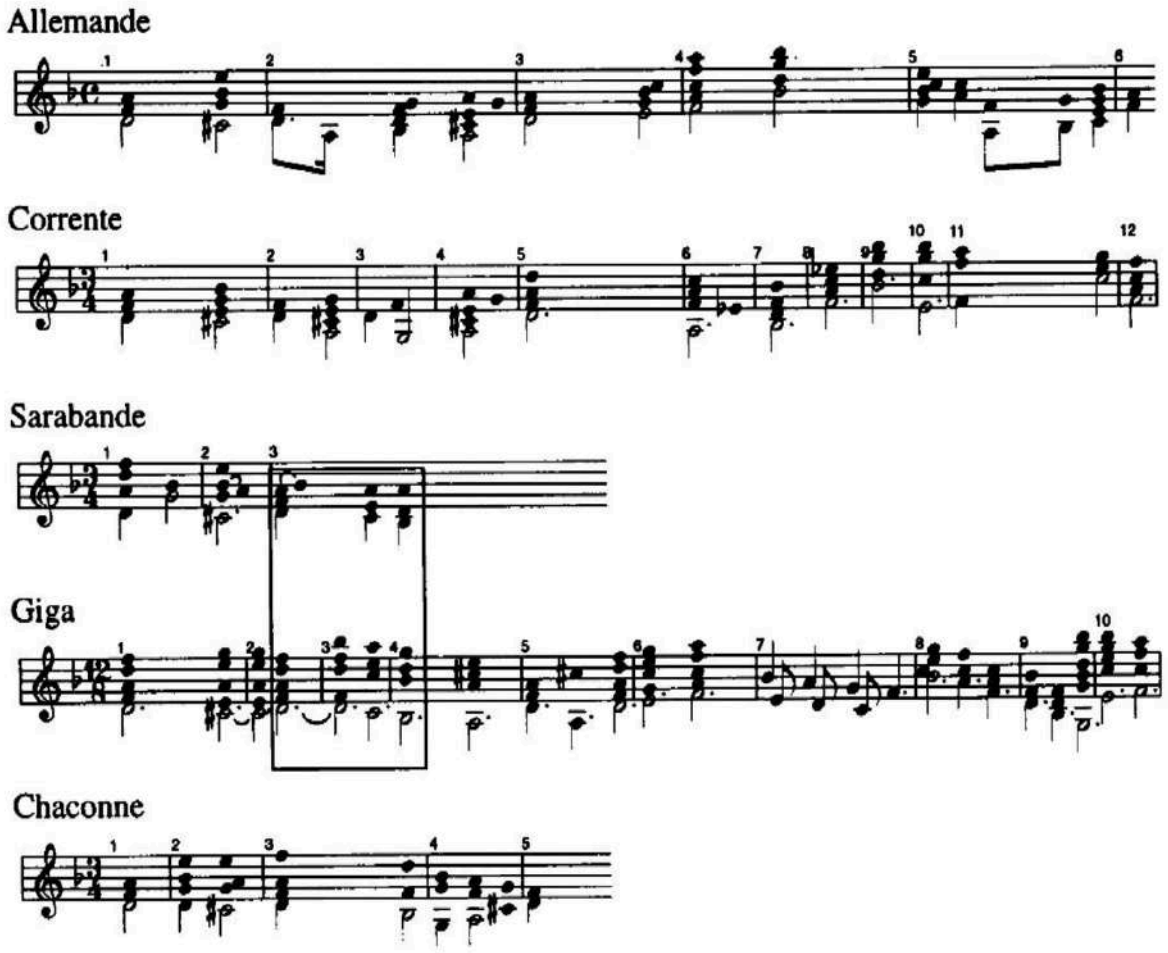


Figure 5: Shenkerian analysis, shows the connection between the dances in the bass found by J. Lester.

# Chapter VI: Thorough Bass and Compound Melody

## Background

Thoroughbass, *basso continuo*, or figured bass is a method of reducing harmonic information from a score to Arabic numerals with only a written bass line. Although it is seen nowadays that figured bass and thoroughbass are synonymous, they are in fact, not. A figured bass implies that harmony can be added on top of the bassline, but that doesn't necessarily make the bass part continuous, and a continuous bass part doesn't always have to be figured. *Basso continuo* practices came from the need to have a consistent bassline throughout a piece when at the time of the Renaissance, composers like Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina wrote in a way that sometimes the lowest voice could disappear suddenly, but when the voice would be absent, the organ filled the space before letting the voice re-enter later and this is true *basso continuo*.[28] Figured *Basso continuo* essentially works by looking at Arabic numerals such as a 6 next to a bass, informing the performer that the regular 5 or root position of the harmony should be replaced by the first inversion of a chord in this case. Thus, the numbering gives away the inversions of the chords on which it can be built up from the bassline. Often when there would be a modulation, accidentals, non-harmonic tones, adjusted leading notes, or chord extensions, then these would be corrected and notated above or below the bassline. *Basso continuo* was not only a tradition very much in use in the 17th and 18th centuries, but it was also truly engrained and foundational of the style in the period. It gave the performer freedom to improvise an accompaniment figure on top of the

[28] According to Marla Hammel: "The true *bassus continuus* (the earliest examples of which were not yet known by that name and were unfigured) undoubtedly had its principal origin in the polyphonic music of the Church. If a vocal bass of a composition of several voices were to be figured and used as the basis for an organ accompaniment, it would cease whenever the vocal bass was not being sung; the accompaniment could not, then, be a true 'thorough bass.' However, if, during the pauses of the vocal bass (and, perhaps, other parts as well), a bass were to be supplied on the organ, the result would be a continuous part - a genuine *bassus continuus*." (Hammel, 1977, p. 4)

bassline and functioned as research in its role in composition, teaching, and performance practice in the Baroque period.[29] The topic of *basso continuo* in this thesis does raise two interesting topics for discussion; how the bass line defines and set the polyphonic voice structure permanently, can there be some way of flexibility with the bassline for transcription, and second: if a transcription goes further as to reharmonizing the bass line with a different lower voice, in how far does this impact the structure harmonically and melodically? I will answer this briefly later by using the next figure as an example and continue with it in the next chapter. But I believe this to be a very interesting and relatively unexplored area of research waiting to be explored much further in the future.

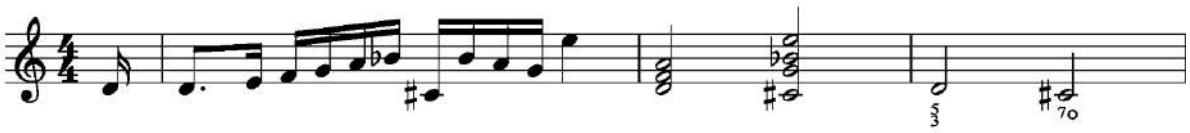

*Figure 6: Reduction of the opening measure of the Allemanda (BWV 1004) reduced to TRA and then figured bass.*

## Compound Melody and Thorough Bass Reductive Analysis

Although the solo violin works don't have a *basso continuo* line, the effect of implied polyphony in the music is subtle through Bach's use of compound melodies. Meaning multiple voices are collapsed into one line, usually in two or three voices and up to four in some parts of fugues, for example. This is done to facilitate ease and an idiomatic way of playing and reading the music for the performer. On the other hand, the use of a collapsed or compound melody makes the polyphonic structure less clear, and the polyphony is implied or suggested because the voices are interdependent are incomplete by themselves. Fortunately, the guitar

[29] According to at translated quote from J.S. Bach: "Figured-bass is the whole foundation of the music, and is played with both hands in such a manner that the left hand plays the notes written down, while the right adds in consonances or dissonances, the result being an agreeable harmony to the glory of God and justifiable gratification of the senses; for the sole end and aim of general-bass, like that of all music, should be nothing else than God's glory and pleasant recreations. Where this object is not kept in view there can be no true music, but an infernal scraping and bawling." (Bell & Fuller-Maitland, 1951, p. 318)

has many more polyphonic possibilities than the violin, and this opens the potential for different possibilities in writing out the compound melody more idiomatically for the guitar while also offering benefits for analysis and a deeper understanding of the voices. When a compound melody line is analysed thoroughly, new possibilities arise, and a basic polyphonic structure and voices can be expanded more individually.

*Figure 7: Three different realizations of opening measure in the Allemande (BWV 1004).*

It is thus important to address that the solo violin works are not unaccompanied by literal definition but rather self-accompanied through Bach's clever use of implied polyphonic structure.[30] This expansion or insight in the interwoven voices can be fundamental to understanding a *basso continuo* structure and creating one to help fill the missing consistency in the continuation of voices in the lowest register. Because of this, adding bass notes to fill in the voice structure can happen only convincingly by not only analysing the harmonic movement but also the contrapuntal relationship as well. It is up to the performer to make decisions that complete the voices for transcription. Although care is needed to be taken when it comes to the choices that enhance the counterpoint and harmonic structure, by the end, the performer is responsible and free to a certain degree to choose according to their taste and might need to make compromises for idiomatic playing as well, thus not forming objective but subjective conclusions with a logical pattern.

[30] According to Leonard Jason: "There is no continuo part, the accompaniment is skillfully woven into the solo texture. Moreover, Stanley Ritchie affirms that 'there is no such thing as "unaccompanied" Bach. (Ritchie, 2016) Even though the bass holds a fundamental role in providing clarity and intelligibility to the harmony and structure of music, solo performers may underestimate its importance by focusing mainly on the melody. Additionally, this lack of focus on the bass part can cause problematic issues concerning how music is conveyed in terms of dynamics and expression". (Jason, 2022, p. 34)

Even though consistency in the voices as individual parts is missing because of the nature and polyphonic limitations of the violin, the original bassline carries enough information and functions as an important anchor to the piece harmonically. The deducted bassline from the compound melody does by itself offer enough information but for *basso continuo* or transcription for the guitar, a consideration of filling in the missing parts can be needed or at least desired where possible. A Shenkerian method of analysis that is certainly useful in understanding the structure of the bass is Thoroughbass Reductional Analysis or TRA. The use of TRA can underline a hierarchical structure and visual representation of the bass. Joel Lester did a Shenkerian analysis relevant to the dances in the D-minor Partita (see figure 5) but there is still certainly room for applying this method of analysis in Bach's works more deeply. A further deep dive can bring out new discoveries and insights for interpretation but in the scope of this paper, not enough of this type of analysis is done justice and I encourage anyone to examine and explore this topic of research further. In Figure 8 there is an example of how TRA can be beneficial in understanding not only the harmony but also the relationship between the bass and the other voices. This is the 19th variation of the *Ciaccona* and is known to have unusual harmonies with many dissonant chords. If one were to use Rameau's type of harmonic understanding and analysis,[31] that is, assigning functions to the vertical scale degrees, then the harmonic progression would not make sense because the rules of functional harmony as we know are continuously broken, and if one was to write the progressions down, then too many alternations would have the need to be written to the point that it would confuse anybody. Instead, in my opinion the analysis can be better done by

[31] According to Schulenberg: "Two theories of composition, representing two distinctive attitudes toward harmony, were first articulated in the early decades of the eighteenth century. Both assume the priority of harmony in a general sense to other elements of music, but for Rameau this was harmony in a sense somewhat like the modern one of functional chord progression, while for the Germans it was harmony as the harmonic/contrapuntal *Satz* that Schenker would later rediscover as the basis of composition (and analysis)". (Schulenberg, 1984, pp. 131-132)

reducing the original melody to its harmonic content and then writing a bass part with the numbering of the intervals above to indicate the harmony, hence becoming a Shenkerian model.

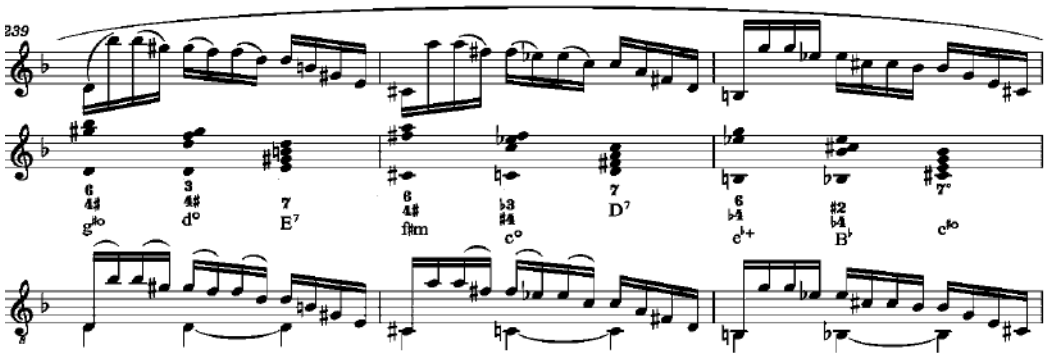


*Figure 8: The original violin, with TRA analysis, to transcription for the guitar.*

Instead of exclusively thinking in tertiary chords and normal inversions with alternations, it can in some circumstances be appropriate to have a different approach by using intervals, these can be found in the third measure on the second beat in the figure above and clarifies the analysis of the harmony of an otherwise complicated endeavour. Thinking from the point of the bass and the interval on top makes for a clear view of the pattern progressions and its sequential structure as well, reflecting both in the bass and in the original melodic contour and thus giving a very clear, structured overview of how *basso continuo* can be realized in complex harmonies. I preferred to add a counter-voice in the transcription by focusing on the first and second beat in the bass and extending the second until the end of the measure connecting the third beat. To find the bass note on the last beat, the last of the 16$^{th}$ note, which is the lowest note of the chord in non-inversion (usually a dominant 7), is taken. This way the *Ciaccona* rhythm is hinted at but with a logical bass progression going from the tonic to the dominant chromatically, which is also commonly characteristically found throughout the other variations. The chromatic variation of the bass theme is something that will be discussed later in Chapter VII.

## Bass-oriented phrasing, Harmony, and Other Means

Because of the polyphonic limitations of the violin, a different way of writing out the voices such as through compound melody was created and used in Bach's solo violin music. The goal was to make the polyphonic lines playable and apparent but also used as a musical shorthand that removes unnecessary rests that clutter the score and hinder readability.

*Figure 9: The opening measure of the allemanda, a scale going to a fully diminished seventh chord with the bass in counterpoint.*

This way of writing does ask the question, of where certain voices end and others start. Fortunately, there are about four ways of figuring this out. The first is by observing Bach's use of phrasing, slurs, and articulation marks, these bring the notes together into groups that are seen as a single voice with usually stepwise motion and close intervals. This gets balanced through a larger intervallic leap that suggests then an entering of a different voice.

A second way of finding out the implied polyphony is by looking at Bach's transcriptions of his works. An analysis of the other works can help understand how Bach would fill in the harmony and bassline to use an instrument's full harmonic and polyphonic potential. Bach had a well-known tradition to rewrite certain compositions into different works and he most likely did this because he had to prepare new works regularly to the point where it would be seen as acceptable for him to recycle the works into new works. One example is the prelude from the *E major partita (BWV1006)* for the solo violin works. This piece has been transcribed and orchestrated for a *Cantata (BWV 29*). He also transcribed the piece to the lute or lute-harpsichord *(BWV 1006a)* and the *Sinfonia* which opens the second part of the *BWV 1729 Cantata: Herr Gott, Beherrscher Aller Dinge, BWV 120a.* Bach arranged the *Fifth Cello Suite* for *the Lute Suite in G Minor*, BWV 995 as well.

The third way of understanding compound melody writing is through the sustaining of notes that spell out a chord to fill the harmony accordingly. This tradition was used on keyboard instruments like the harpsichord in the Baroque times. The performer would keep the keys pushed into until a chord is played to achieve a full and richer sonority and the voices are thus kept until the harmonic progression changes underneath or above in the case of the bass.

*Figure 10: The third measure of the Allemande, a half-diminished second degree or dominant seventh that resolves to F major.*

This certain choice of sustaining specific notes longer than their theoretical length creates a dimension of polyphony that is very difficult or impossible to do on a violin but is very idiomatic with the use of open strings on the guitar. In the *Allemanda* of the *Partita in D minor* there is a half-diminished E minor chord that resolves to F major. This tension is quite weak and can be enhanced by adding a C in the bass, creating a much stronger dominant.

The last way of understanding compound melody is by rhetorical affects. Bach uses these devices or tools to provoke certain musical gestures and emotions. These gestures can manifest in different ways, like large intervals to provoke joy and small intervals to communicate lament or sadness. These traditions date back to the Renaissance when composers like Palestrina and Zarlino effectively used it in their own compositions, for example, by using musical modes or gestures like *suspirato* to provoke a certain feeling in the music, the mind and

*Figure 11: Notice how the phrasing marks in Bach's original score emphasize this 'sigh' effect, while the copy made by Anna Magdalena Bach does not.*

command the listeners passions. The next chapter will further elaborate on this topic of rhetorical affect.

# Chapter VII: Structure and Rhetorical devices found in the Ciaccona (BWV1004).

I would like to close this thesis with the chapter on rhetoric and how it is used throughout the composition of Bach's music. It is important to be aware that Bach used rhetorical devices to add a dimension of expressiveness and depth to his musical language. Whether it was a conscious or unconscious choice, we might not know for certain, but Bach lived at times closer to Classical antiquity and the Renaissance when the art of rhetoric and speech was more commonly thought of in schools as a subject next to others like Latin and mathematics. Thus, Bach had an education in rhetoric and naturally became very skilled in it from a very early age and even taught the subject of rhetoric in the Thomasschule when he lived as a cantor in Leipzig, composing and teaching music. (Laurin, 2012, p. 34) Rhetorics in music are expressive devices used to provoke a certain emotive state from the audience or listener. The use of rhetoric in music was in its fullest form in the second practice or *stile moderno* with Claudio Monteverdi who sought to break away from the limitations of strict polyphonic rules in the Renaissance period like the preparations of the dissonance promoted by Zarlino and Palestrina. This very much changed in the Baroque period with Monteverdi whose approach to dissonance was different and integrated it as an inherent part of the human condition.[32] Dissonance should be able to exist in music to promote those certain feelings of uneasiness, sadness, and anger in music, just like the other emotions and according to the second practice, only then will the music be able to express itself to its fullest. While Zarlino used the technique of intervals as rhetoric to provoke certain emotions, Monteverdi didn't

[32] According to Laurin about the music of Zarlino: "By using strange intervals (at that time for example a major sixth or a seventh were considered quite adventurous) or accidentals one can express pain or surprise. Also, he says, rhythm can be used according to the needs of the text. If Zarlino was quite conservative in how the music should be "altered" in an emotional way, Monteverdi had gone beyond any role that the counterpoint had established in the past, to bring the theory of affetti to its full consequences." (Laurin, 2012, p. 17)

limit himself and expanded the musical scope, including breaking some of the rules established by Palestrina and Zarlino.[33] This chapter will introduce a few common and important rhetorical devices that I found in the *D Minor Partita*, specifically in the *Ciaccona*. The understanding of Bach's application of rhetorical devices not only brings more awareness to a composer's symbolic gestures but also works as a bigger overall musical structure holding such a large one-movement piece together. The *Ciaccona* is by far Bach's longest and most famous movement from the solo *sonatas* and *partitas*. It is unusual that its structure has never been extended to this level and length in history yet. But it is however a very scalable dance, the use of four measure form that repeats itself in one key allows the composer to work without hindrance in a structure. The *Ciaccona* essentially works as a French overture that continues into 64 variations of four measures, having pairs or couples elaborating on each other, totalling around 256 measures. The choice of numbering the variations by me is four plus four measures of introduction and the variations starting on the ninth measure. This ends the piece on variation 64 being only one measure on note D. The alternative numbering system starts the variation on the fifth measure on the second beat and the last variation 64 is the one before the closing. The start and end of the variations are sometimes alternating between the first, second, and third beat resulting in each variation not necessarily starting on the first beat of the measure. The structure is in its essence quite simple, and one can dissect the piece into its smaller four-measure structures. In general, the *Ciaccona* is structured very clearly, and a hierarchical order can be detected; on the highest level, the *Ciaccona* situates

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Monteverdi fired back in the introduction to his fifth book of madrigals in 1605 against Artusi about his compositional technique. There Monteverdi laid out a proposal of dividing music into two distinct styles: *prima prattica* and seconda prattica. He defined *prima prattica*, or first practice, as the perfection of 16th century counterpoint, following the rules and forms that made were promoted by the earlier Franco-Flemish Renaissance composers and later Palestrina and Zarlino. For him, this style keeps the principles of harmony, associating the music to the divine. However, Monteverdi desired for freedom to express his humanity within music and found out that he wanted to compose in connection and reasonings of nature, realizing meanwhile that his method didn't have the musical requirements established from the past anymore. His *seconda prattica*, or second practice, allows for these rules of counterpoint and melody to be broken if the drama, emotion, or the text demanded it. (Goehr, 1981, p. 4)

itself as being in the latter half of the whole partita, at the mid-level the *Ciaccona* that can be observed in three parts, which are minor-major and back to minor. The first part is in minor being half, 33 variations of the whole duration. The major part has 19 variations, and 12 variations conclude the last minor part. Excluding the first eight measures of the overture (+2), the major part is roughly 60 percent of the first part and approximately 30 to 40 percent longer than the last minor part. The structure in the lowest level can be the organization of four measures per variation being 64 in total.

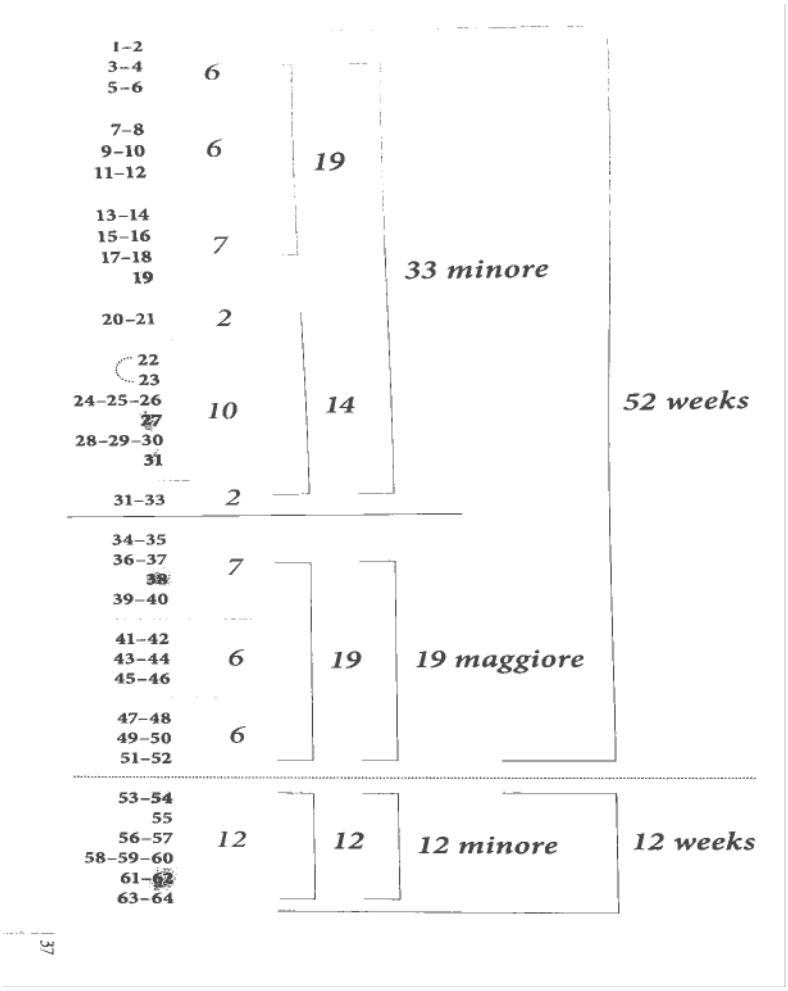


Figure 10: Structural overview of the Ciaccona, made by Márta Ábrahám.

The progression of a *ciaccona* is very often assumed to be one based on the bass notes although that is true in a more general discussion, Bach very often breaks these rules, and is not worth generalizing in this context of his works. In my opinion, it's more fitting to see this as a French overture-style opening continuing in a four-measure variation form with chords that are always going to the dominant and back to the tonic. According to Márta Ábrahám, there are four detectable variants of the bass theme found: the chromatic variant, variant with third-sixth, augmented second, and at last, the variant with substitute notes. Surprisingly the original bass theme (diatonic half-scale to the dominant) is not to be found throughout the whole piece, only the variants, and it's possible that variants are combined, intensifying the contrapuntal texture and tension. (Abraham, 2023, pp. 16-18) Thus, the bass line is not always descending and following one specific pattern over again, if that was the case, then it might have resulted in the music becoming less interesting due to its large scale and size. Instead, the harmony has the function of leading to a dominant creating harmonic tension in a very sophisticated way, and resolving back to where a new variation starts, elaborating on the previous variation, or starting a completely new idea. This reduces the idea to one of tension and relaxation to its most basic form and allows for an exceptional amount of freedom and variation but with a clear underlying structure that binds everything together.

The rhetorical words come from Latin and Greek and are used to describe a certain state and affect. In this chapter, I will explore a few of them and demonstrate the ideas. Rhetoric can be a wide topic covering much more than the elements that are going to be discussed in this chapter. Márta Ábrahám for example has a comprehensive analysis of the *Ciaccona* and found many more rhetorical gestures, like the use of number theory, mathematical ratios, and even dodecaphonic elements. I'm sure that someone can spend more time finding other

rhetorical elements in Bach's other pieces, but my research in Rhetoric focuses on figures, and I used Dr. Anna Paradiso Laurin's research to apply them in the *Ciaccona*.[34]

## Suspiratio

Bach uses the *suspiratio* technique very commonly in his works, *suspiratio* means a sigh, and these elements can be found all over the place in the *Ciaccona,* such as the last measure of the 10th variation. A sigh can be detected in music by looking at the phrasing and bow marks.

Figure 11: Variation 10, Suspiratio.

Here Bach breaks the phrases with a leading note resolving in by a tone or more commonly the semi-tone, when this happens, Bach sharpens the fourth degree to the dominant and thus creates two leading notes, one to the tonic, and one to the dominant which consequently resolves into the next measure in D minor, allowing for the next variation to start.

## Catabasis

This term originates from the idea of the underground and the underworld. It is where one lands in the deepest and lowest parts of a story. This rhetorical affect can be found in several places, but one clear example is to be found in variation 17 where the note values are becoming very short, the music accelerates heightening the dramatic effect and the notes have and downward direction as if they are falling. The phrasing here is quite *legato* as if gravity is taking its effect on the music. Variations 17 and 18 share a connection through Bach's clever

[34] Dr. Anna Paradiso Laurin did her research on Rhetoric, focusing on the historical origins, importance and how it's role influenced the Antiquity period to the Renaissance in Italy and Baroque, other countries highlighting its role in the seconda prattica in music. (Laurin, 2012, p. 34)

use of inversion. The phrasing changes in the 19th variation to become less *legato* with the omission of slurs and the direction changing to an upwards motion as if to indicate the struggle to rise and work hard against gravity, thus a contrast between *legato* and *non-legato*[35] can be an appropriate gesture for interpretation.[36]

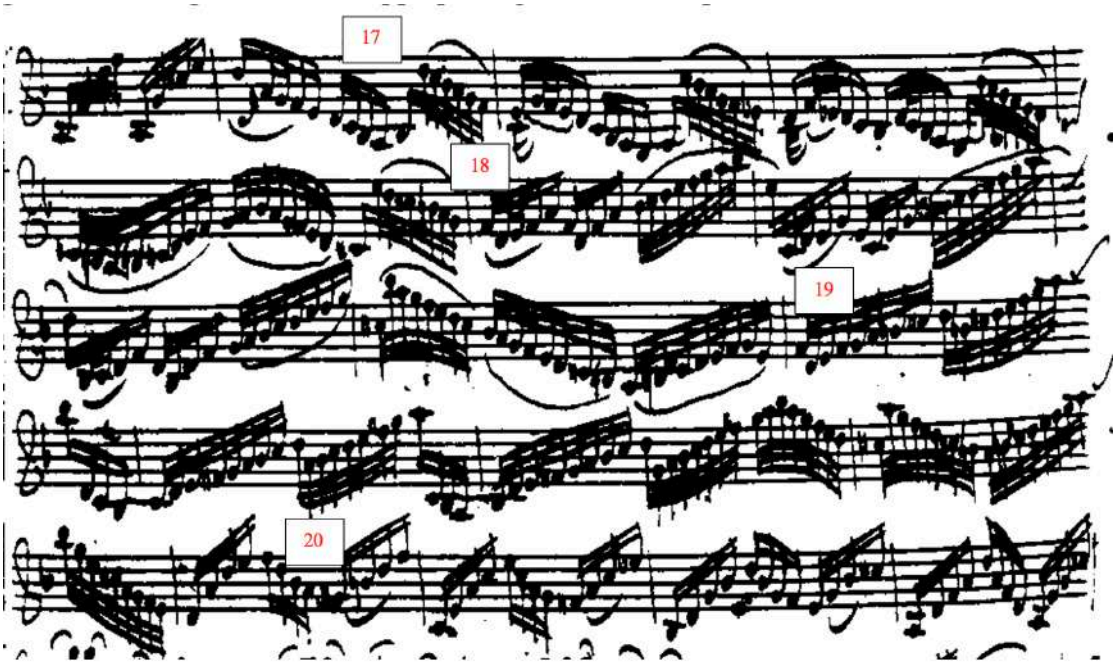


Figure 12: Variation 17, an example of catabasis.

## Anabasis

This is the opposite of *catabasis* and is used to imply the meaning of rising. *Anabasis* happens from the 20th variations where a build-up happens towards the highest note so far, an E. The phrasing is quite short, being one beat (quaver) containing four notes, however, this gives the variation a lot of 'kinetic' energy as if to gain momentum to overcome the gravitational forces, and ends the variation ends gracefully with an arpeggio section.

[35] The difference of *legato*, *non-legato* can be highlighted on the guitar by choosing to play *apoyando* on the 19th variation in contrast against variation 18 using *tirando*.
[36] See Sato's recording of the Ciaccona, he applies the legato, non-legato gestures in the variations very effectively as well.

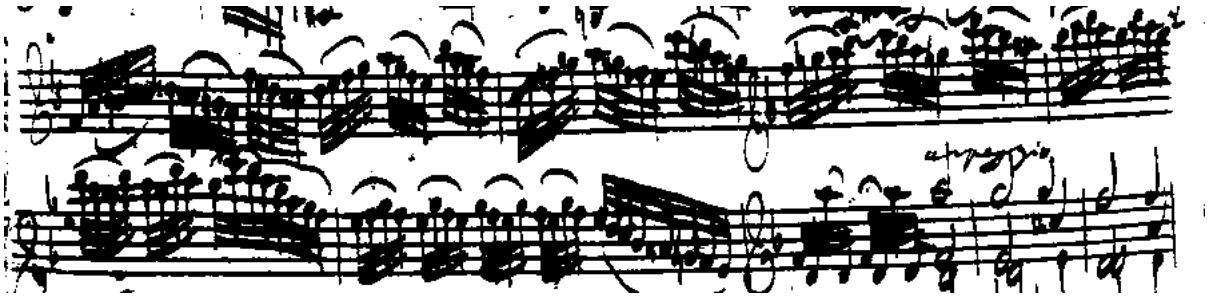

Figure 13: Variation 20, Anabasis.

## Climax

Although the music has a couple of high points, the clearest example of a *climax* is at the end of the first D minor section. Here the phrasing is done very *legato* as to distort the articulation of the notes in contrast with a responding counter-voice in the bass going down to the lowest note in the violin register, rising back up to the tonic of the next variation, which is the re-entering of the overture theme, and eventually closing this section in D minor.

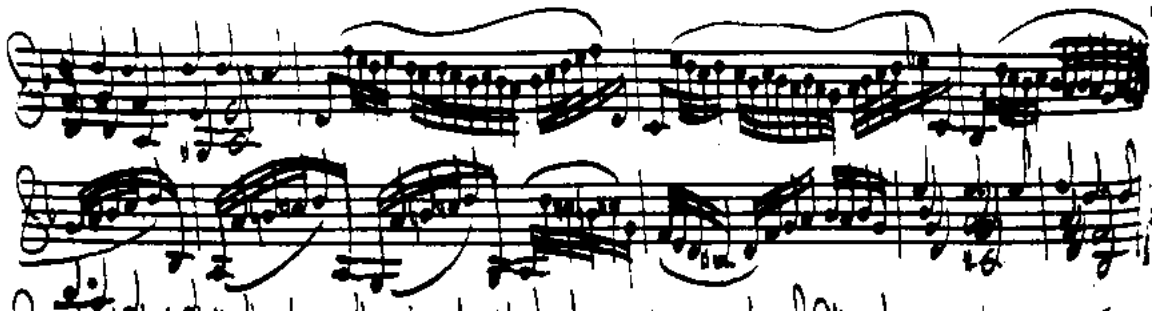

Figure 14: At the end of the first section, the Climax.

## Polyptoton

A *polyptoton* means a repetition of notes that are happening in different registers. In a musical context, this happens very clearly in variation 39 and culminates until 43. The repetition happens eight times with four notes on the highest soprano register; the next variation switches to the middle voice in the same pattern and the last one happens in the bass four

times in four measures again. The rhythmical pattern intensifies and develops the ideas in variation 42 until it closes and starts a new idea in 43.

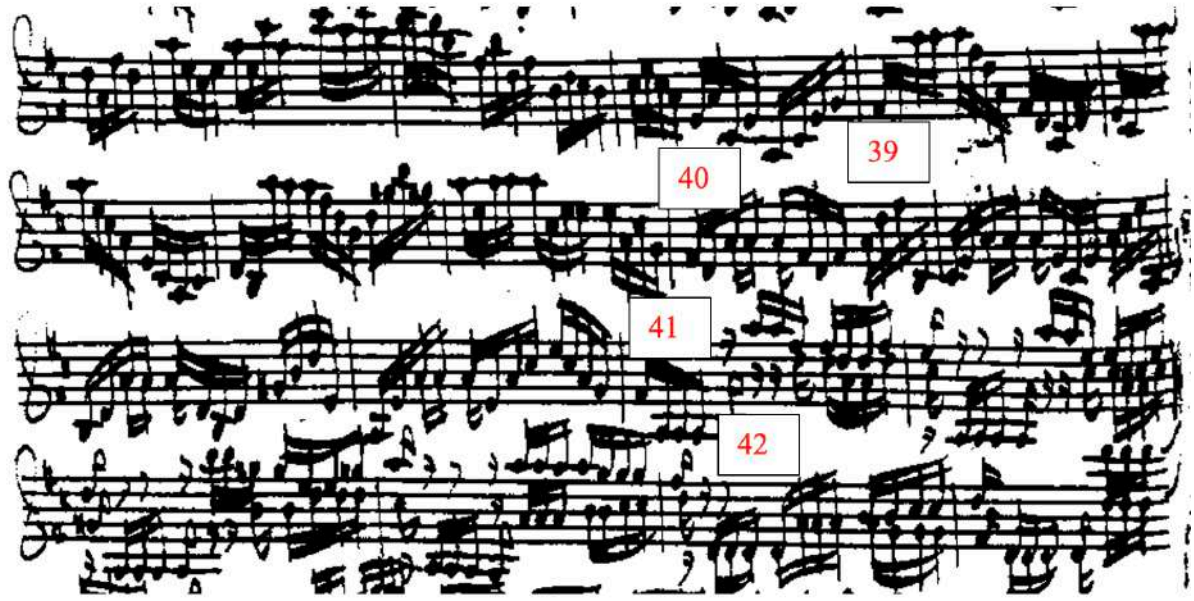


Figure 15: Variation 39-43, Polyptoton.

## Parrhesia

A *parrhesia* is quite uncommon but can be readily observed in the *Ciaccona*, it is a dissonant or unusual interval that causes harshness to the listener because of its unusual nature. The *parrhesia* can be found in variation 43 on the third measure with a C natural and B natural clashing against each other, being only a semitone away. The choice of the same register makes it very dissonant and implies an important emphasis to be brought out. Here the performer should linger a bit longer to highlight the unusualness and create a tension that is otherwise quite rare in the major section in the middle of the whole piece.

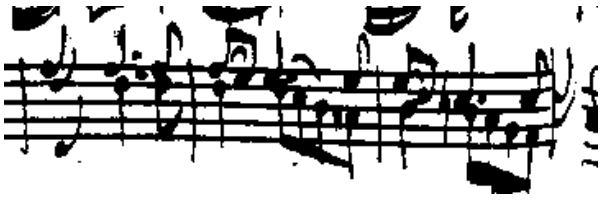

Figure 16: Variation 43, Parrhesia.

## Paraprosdokian

A *Paraprosdokian* is a surprising affect, it functions as an unexpected turn of events and in this case, marks the change to minor from the major section that happens abruptly in variation 47. This has a meaningful effect here because it highlights the contrast between the major to the minor as if the music wants to go from light to dark again. In my opinion, the turning point to the minor tonality could be a symbolization of grief and the permanent realization of losing someone dear to the heart, and that the memories are all one has left, in general, this realization and feeling is universal and when it comes, the next phase of the grieving process kicks in, which reflects in the music.

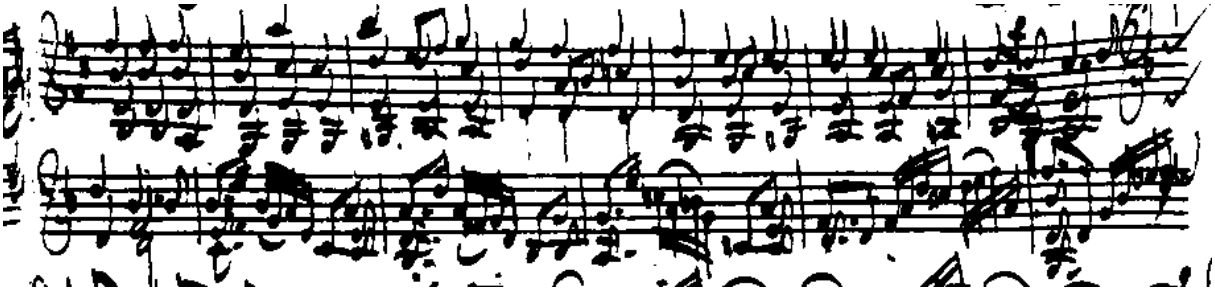

Figure 17: Variation 47, Paraprosdokian.

## Passus Duriusculus

A literal translation: a hard passage, applies here by using chromaticism against the note A, which keeps repeating. The note A is not only the dominant note of D minor, but it could symbolically also play a significant role as being the first letter of the name Anna Maria Barbara Bach. Unfortunately, more on this could be researched and until objective proof could be found, I use this to form my own opinion and interpretation. Chromaticism has often been applied in music longer before Bach's time and here it happens in variation 58. The highlighting of the chromatic passage against note A is quite striking and makes this variation one of the saddest and most lamentatious ones.

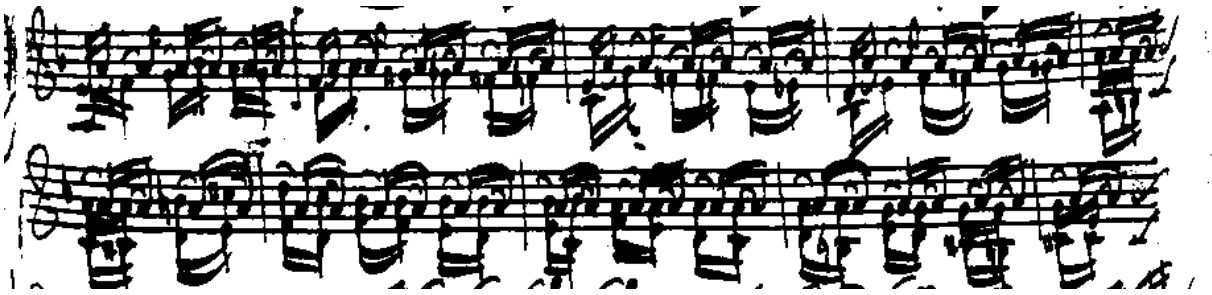

Figure 18: Variation 58, passus duriusculus.

## Aposiophesis

An *Aposiophesis* is a dramatic affect used where there is a stop and silence in the music that lingers a bit longer than one would expect and increases the tension. This can be applied and be found on the last variations of 62, where after a long slurred scalar passage it returns to the tonic note D. The phrasing ends here following a rest, where afterward the theme is repeated in its original form for the third and last time with an added cadential extension to finish the whole movement of the piece eventually converging to the note D and ending on one measure after variation 63.

Figure 19: Variation 62, Aposiophesis.

Usually, guitarists, compared to violinists, play the scale relatively slow because of the guitar's technical limitations in speed. Whilst the violin can use a long bow slur to play the scale, this matter is more complicated on the guitar. In a musical sense, the speed of execution is necessary because of the large build-up in tension, and this almost three-octave scale in D melodic minor works as a summarization of all the variations before. The music is freed from the chains of time, falling on just one note with a slight pause. The music restarts again

with the theme for the last time and closes the piece again on the note D, which must be kept as long as possible.

A solution for the scale for guitarists can be using left-hand slurs, hammering on the second and first string, and not plucking them, which can allow for an easier and faster scale execution that sounds natural and *legato*.

# Conclusion

*Basso continuo* allows the performer to understand the harmony and melodic contours while showing how phrasing and articulation can be directed. An understanding of how French and Italian elements played such an important role in the musical and artistic scene in Germany and Europe in general, allowed Bach to be influenced by it even though he never left Germany. Lastly, discovering Bach's use of rhetoric and symbolism can help to bring deepness and richness to the music by giving an overarching meaning to the musical content. I believe that these three elements are the main building blocks that make up the musical language of J.S. Bach. This bringing together of different approaches to the music of Bach enriches the performer with the knowledge to overcome most barriers in performance practice without limiting itself to the idea that historical performance practice can only be achieved through period instruments. I believe that HIP should not exclude the use of modern instruments to have a historically informed practice, on the contrary, in some cases, modern instruments are technically better and more practical in concert halls with real advantages over period instruments. For transcription, all these discussed topics can be useful, and 'food for thought' by being useful guidance in interpretation. If a musician decides to take upon the act of transcribing seriously to his or her instrument, then careful attention must be taken to the alteration of the original and the very act of alteration should be done with a clear and explainable reason and intent because otherwise, it could lead to a realization that is of lesser quality than the original. Nevertheless, the act of transcription is never a perfect process, and the musician should always try to become more knowledgeable by reading and skilled by trying.

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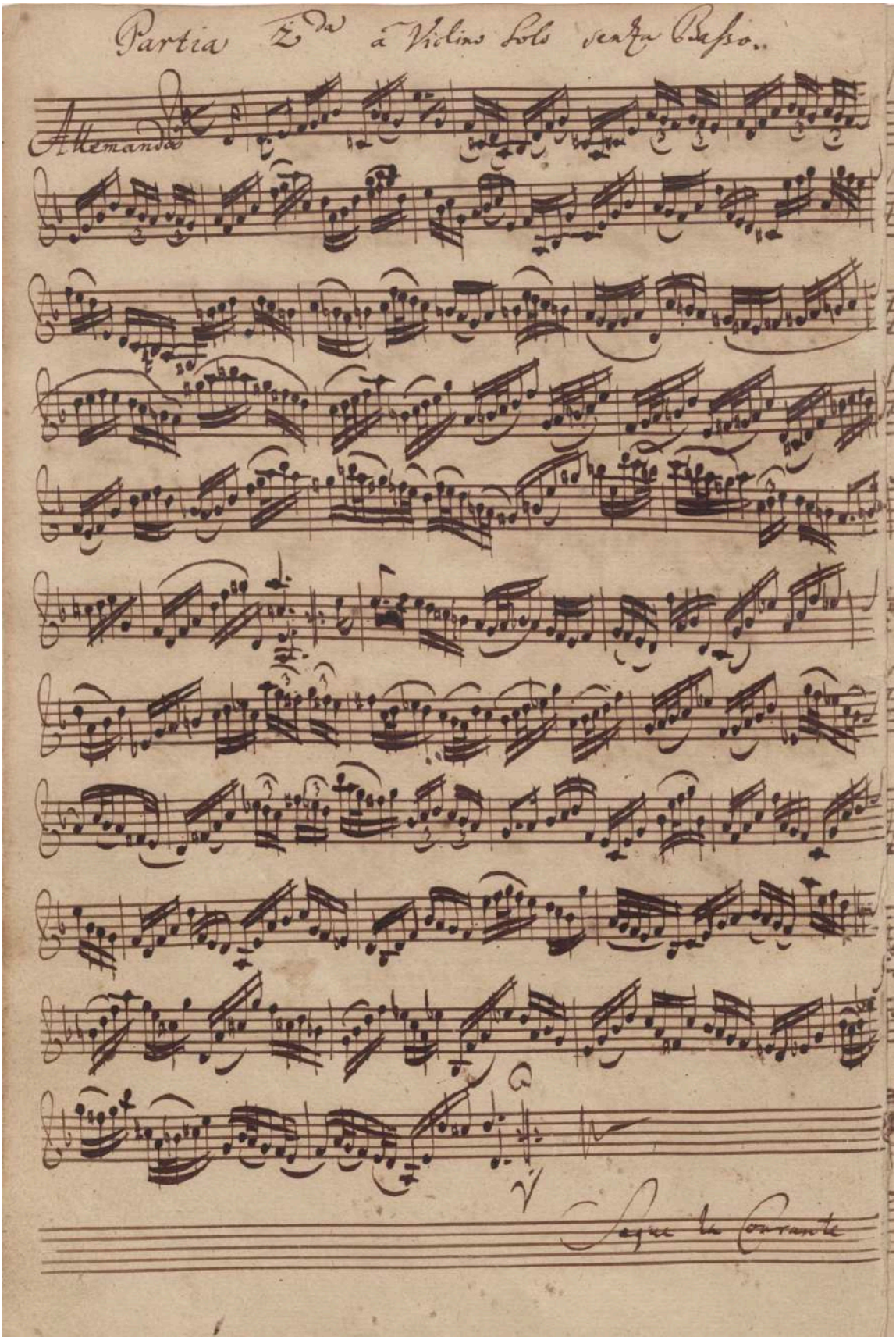
# List of Figures

# Appendix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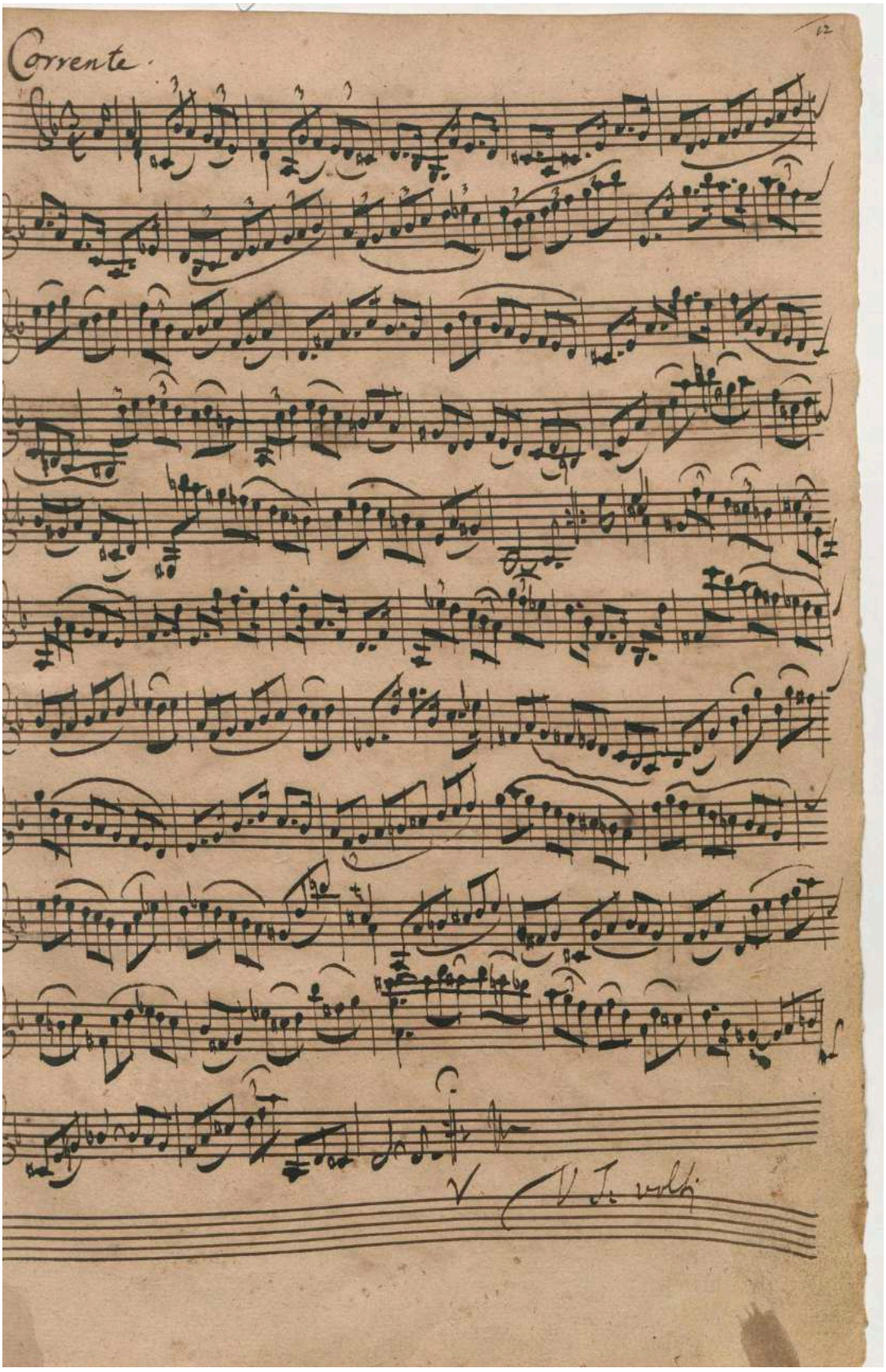
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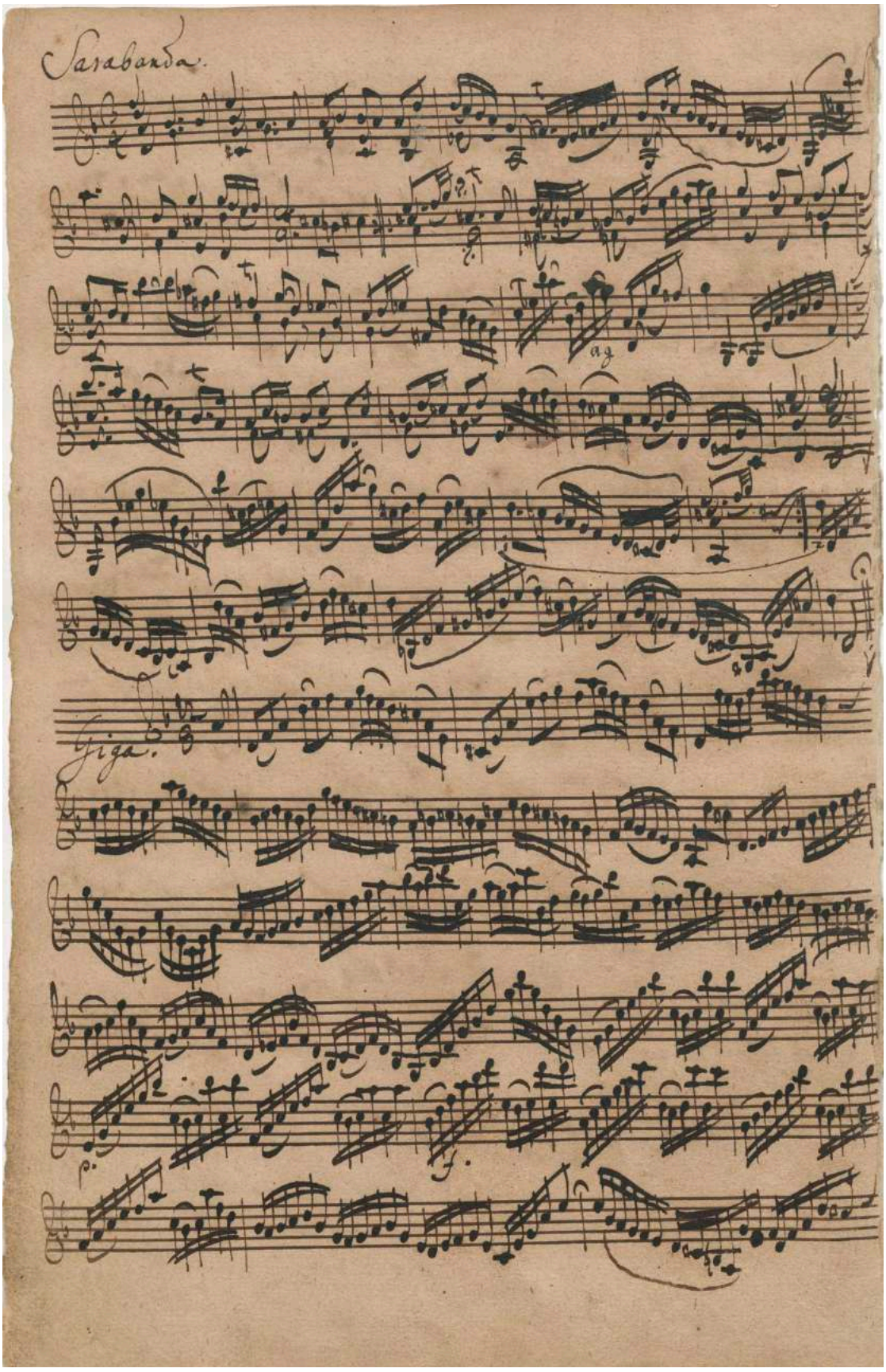
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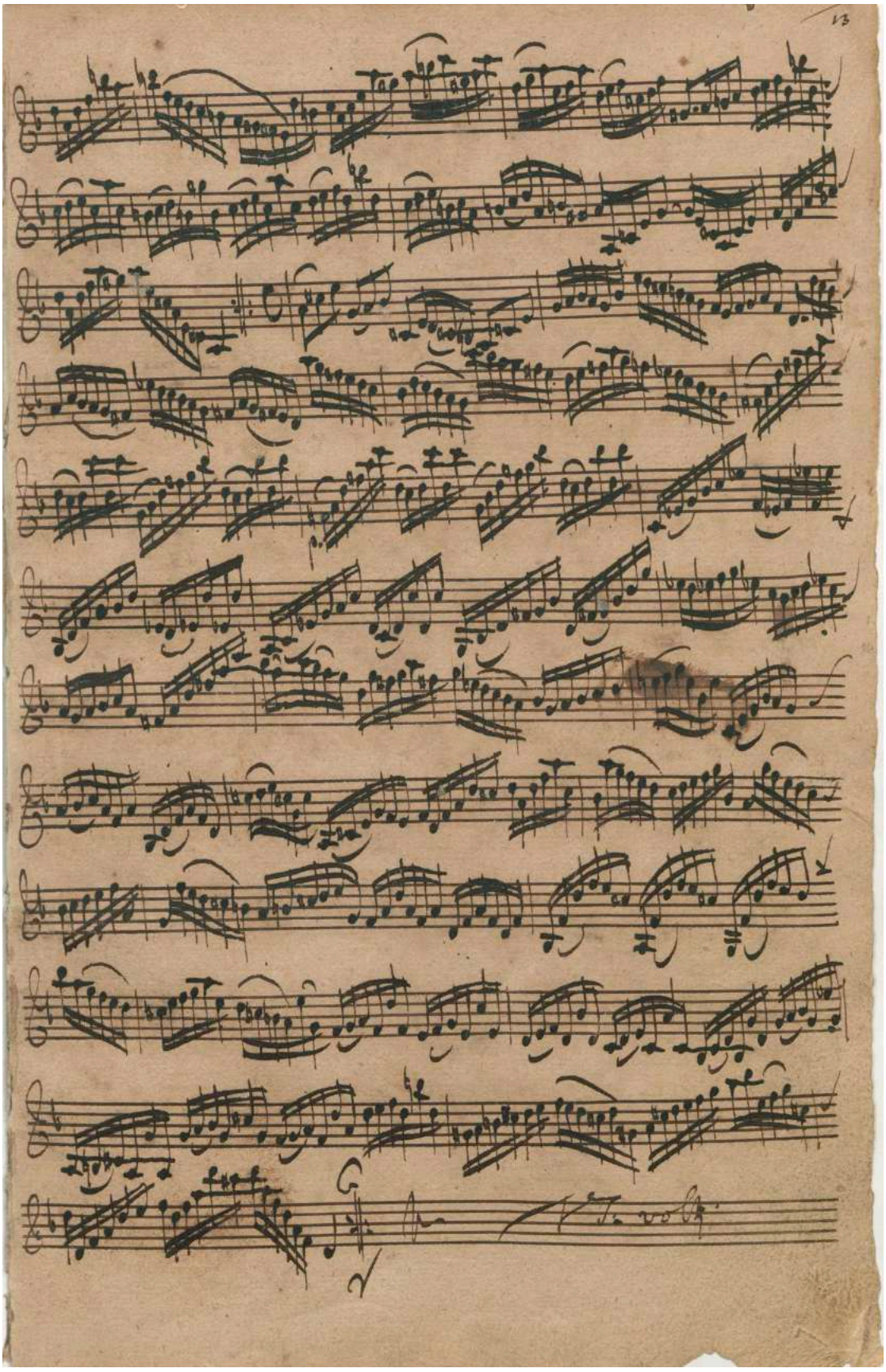

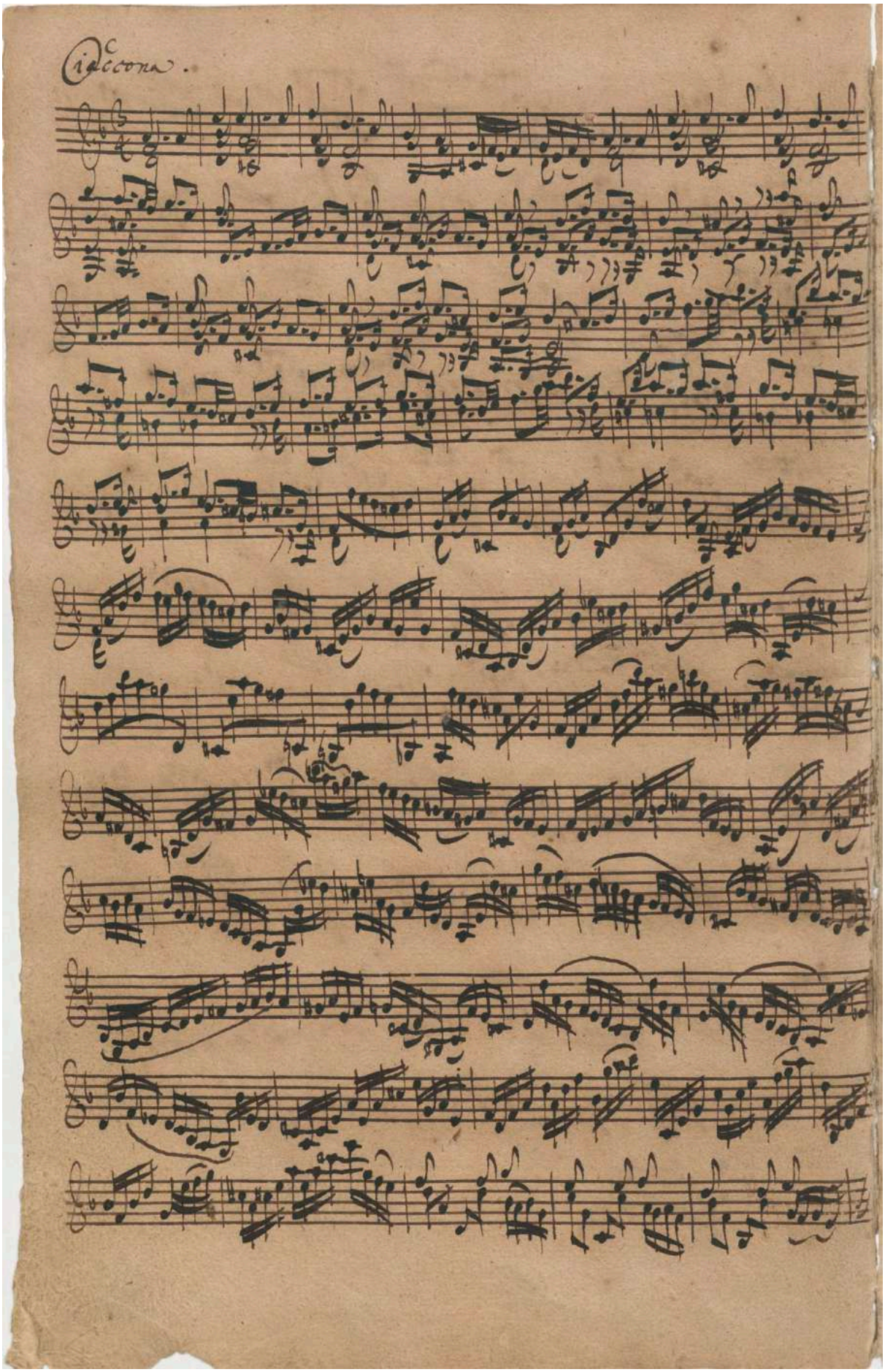
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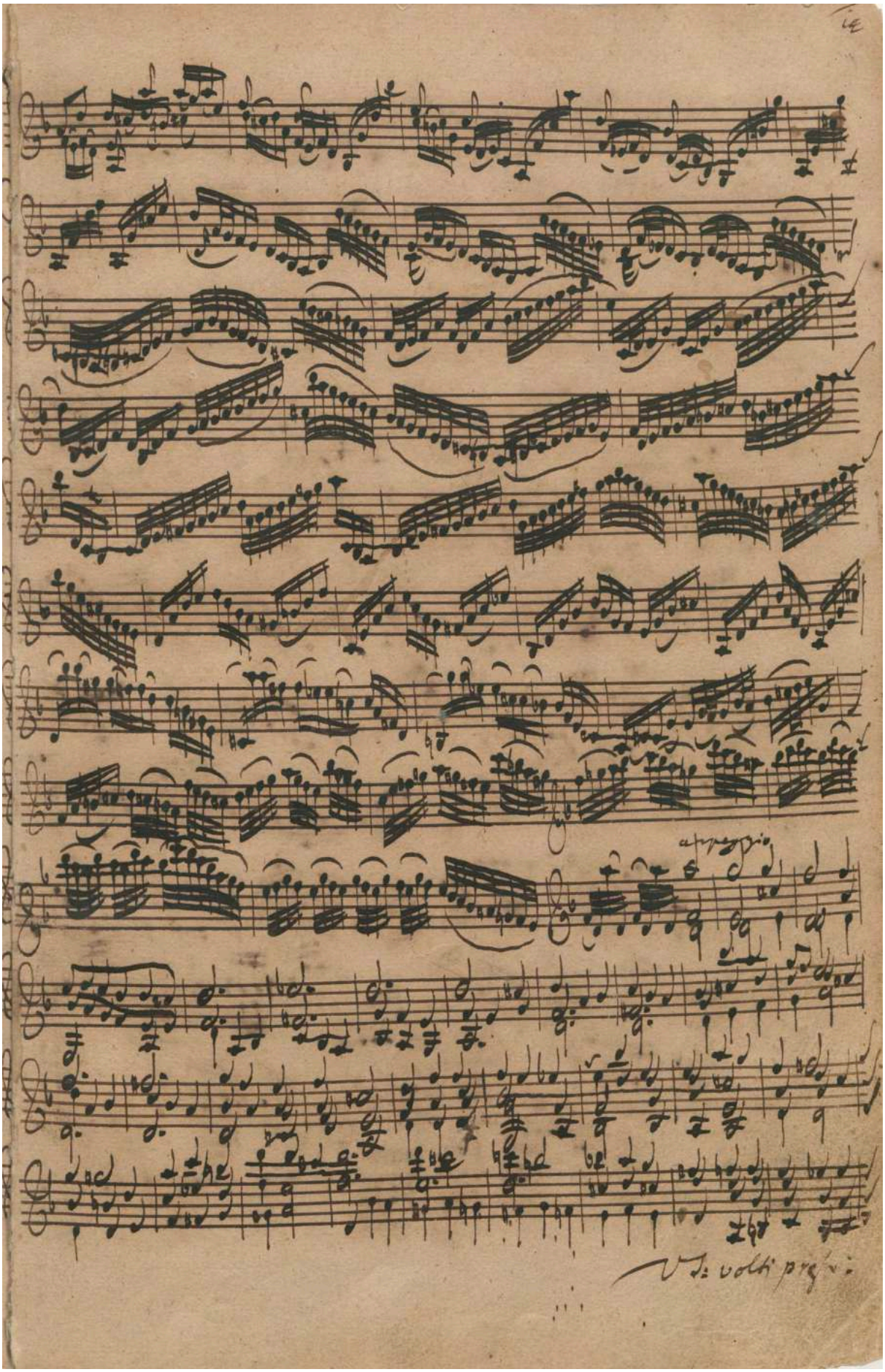
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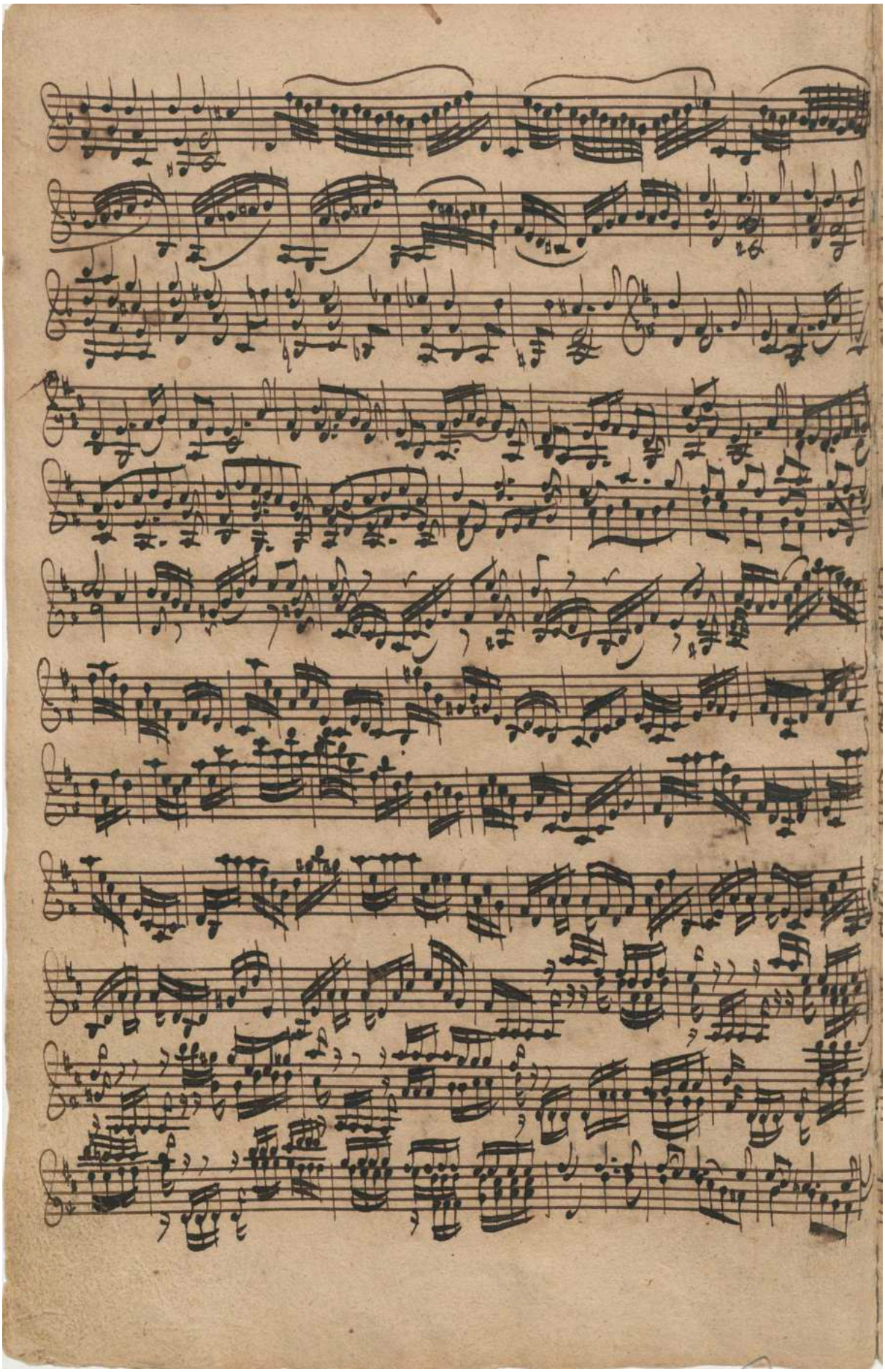

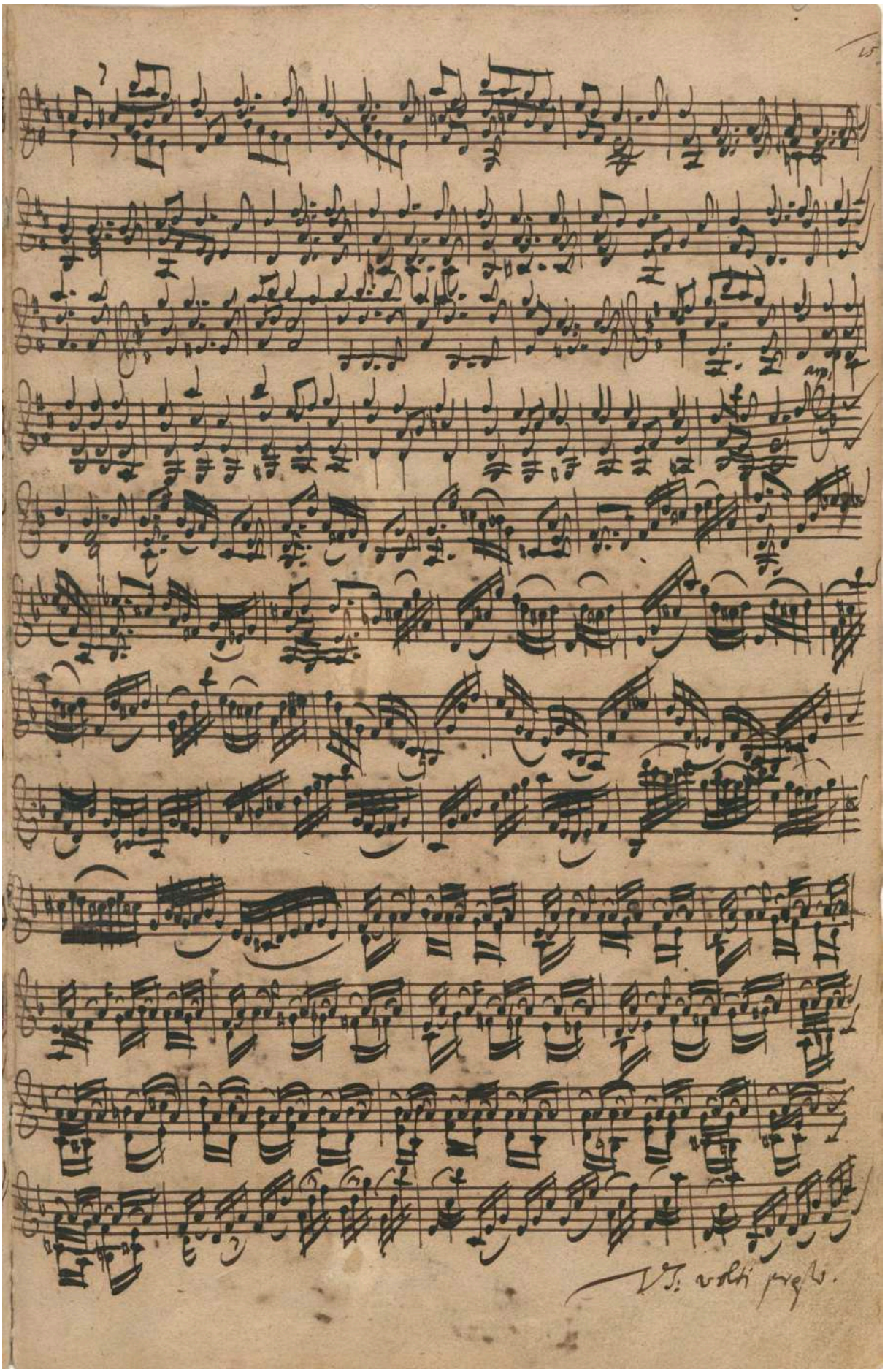

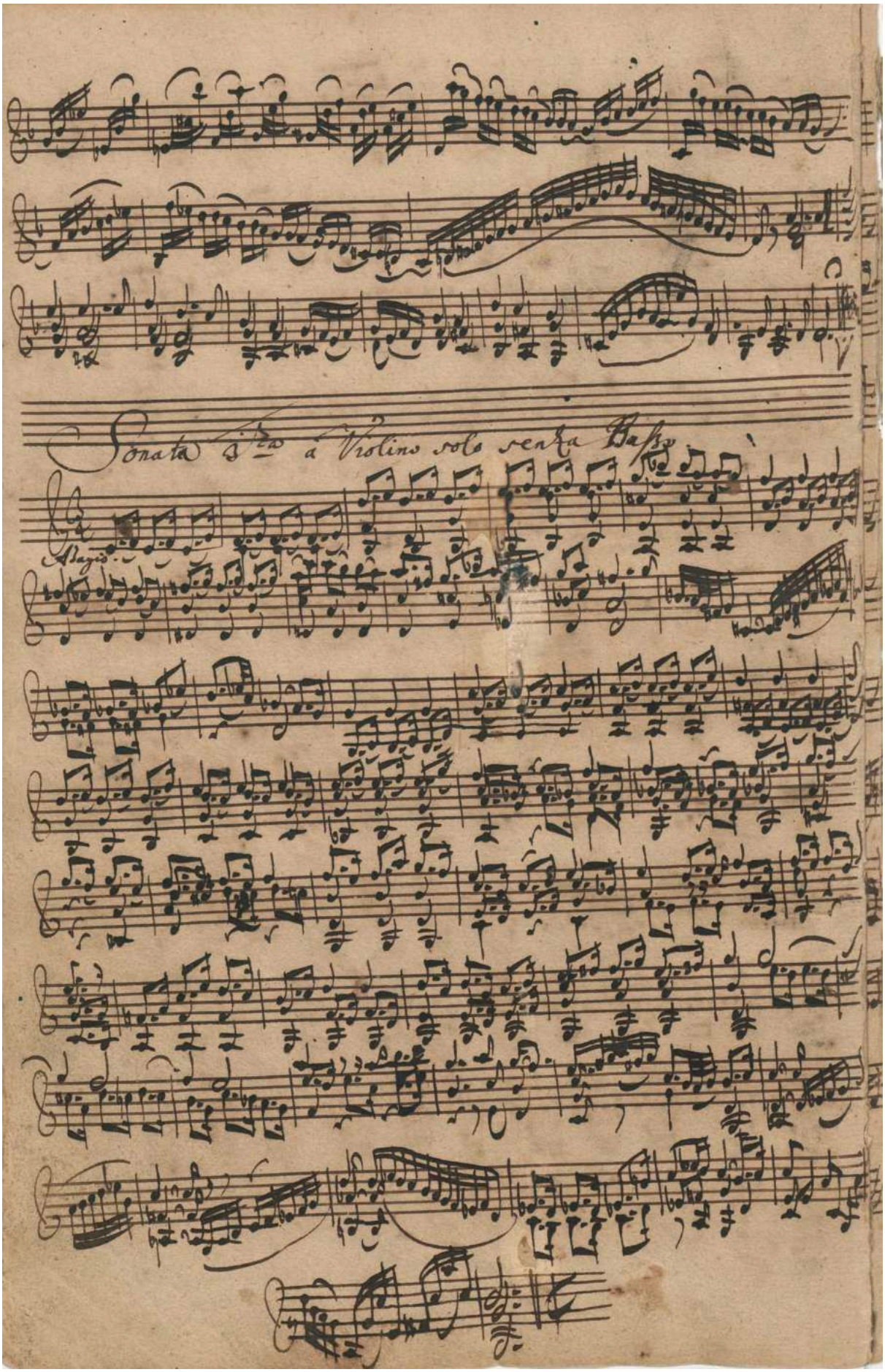
Sonata 5ta a Violino solo senza Basso
Allegro

# Transcribed works for the guitar (BWV1004)