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BACH'S SUITES FOR SOLO CELLO (BWV 1007–1012) AND THE TEXTUAL GEOGRAPHIES OF MODERNITY

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Abstract

This thesis examines the textual history of Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012). There is no autograph manuscript in Bach's hand. The Suites gained their popularity via four different manuscript copies, each suggesting a different reading. Established research paradigms assume the existence of a single, 'correct' model of this music, prioritising the composer's authority. This project challenges this perspective by valuing the Suites as an open and flexible text. Instead of searching for an authoritative source, bearing the truth, I focus on the ability of music to adapt to different audiences in order to communicate with them.

The main goal of this study is to explain the abundance of interpretive readings in the extant sources of the Suites. I base my findings on the idea of expressive variety in music, which I trace as an aesthetic norm within professional music circles in Bach's time. Variety in expression gives the performer freedom to reshape the composer's original idea by adapting it to the context of the performance. A fundamental aspect of this understanding is to view music as a process that is flexible enough to go beyond its written texts. Central to my discussion is the expressive irregularity in Anna Magdalena Bach's reading of the Suites, aiming for discovering as many expressive variants of a single melodic model as possible.

The theoretical foundation of this study is deeper understanding of the contexts of music making in Bach's time. I understand the variety of aesthetic conventions of this era as outcomes of specific cultural and social needs. I view these through the theoretical framework of the historical geographer Miles Ogborn. Ogborn understands history as a compilation of differences and not as a linear development. The interpretive variants in the extant sources of the Suites reflect a communication of different models of modernity, shared within different communities of listeners. I view the sources of the Suites as important documents of a diversity of cultural contexts for communicating Bach's musical ideas.

The main contribution of this thesis is to provoke an alternative understanding of Bach's music: as a process of creative thinking and not as a fixed historical artefact. I view the composer's original idea as an open text, inviting its consumers to develop it further in order to discover new meanings. This flexibility of music to adapt to various contexts in order to respond to a diversity of aesthetic needs, cultural traditions and learned expectations, builds a bridge between Bach's music and present-day audiences. It also serves as a basis to explain irregular or amorphous music such as Anna Magdalena's scripts.

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List of Bibliographical Abbreviations

BDoc *Bach-Dokumente*, edited by Werner Neumann and Hans-Joachim Schulze, 4 vols. (Leipzig and Kassel, 1963, 1969, 1972, 1978)

BJb *Bach Jahrbuch*

BWV [Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis], *Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke Johann Sebastian Bachs*, Leipzig, 1950; rev. and enl. ed., Wiesbaden, 1990.

MGG *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*

NBA *Neue Bach-Ausgabe*, (Leipzig and Kassel, 1954 –) Complete critical edition of Bach's compositions

NBR *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, revised and enlarged by Christoph Wolff (W. W. Norton and Company, 1998)

Declaration of Authorship

I, Nadya Markovska, declare that this thesis entitled
Bach's Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012) and the Textual Geographies of Modernity
and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- none of this work has been published before submission

Signed:

Date: June 2016

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To study history means submitting to chaos and nevertheless retaining faith in order and meaning. It is a very serious task, young man, and possibly a tragic one.

Hermann Hesse, The Glass Bead Game, (1943)

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Prologue

On a cold winter evening a few years after their relocation from Cöthen to Leipzig, Anna Magdalena Bach (née Wilcke) found a quiet moment to sit down at the table to finish copying a manuscript her husband Johann Sebastian asked her for.[1] The transition from life in Cöthen to the busy working conditions in Leipzig was difficult for both. Bach held now the posts of *Thomaskantor* and, from March 1729, he was director of the Collegium Musicum in one of the most reputable cultural centres in Germany. However prestigious and financially promising, the position was mixed with new artistic challenges and feelings of frustration and bitterness.[2] Similarly, Anna Magdalena now faced the challenge of combining motherhood with professional activity. An accomplished chamber musician herself, she had been employed as a court singer by Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, earning nearly as much as her future husband.[3] After her marriage to Johann Sebastian in 1721 she had to combine her professional skills with the demands of her family life. In the course of their marriage, Anna gave birth to 13 children over a period of 19 years, of whom only six survived to adulthood. At the same time she took care of her four stepchildren from Bach's first wife Maria Barbara. She was pregnant most of the time, and suffered the grief of losing children young. Along with her parental duties, however, she acted as one of Bach's personal assistants by helping him to transcribe the music he needed as cantor and as

1. The following reconstruction of what might have happened in Bach's household is entirely imaginative. As we have no clear evidence, however, it remains a possible speculation.

2. See Bach's letter to his school friend Georg Erdman of 28 Oct. 1730; Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, revised and enlarged by Christoph Wolff (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), no. 152, 151–152.

3. Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 205.

Kapellmeister in the major churches in Leipzig.[4] As an accomplished singer she continued to perform in Leipzig, either within the Collegium Musicum or in domestic concerts.[5]

That evening, after she put her children to bed, she finished a copy of Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012) on which she had worked conscientiously for days. The suites were part of a larger manuscript copy also containing Bach's Six Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin (BWV 1001–1006). They were intended to be sold via the chamber musician Georg Heinrich Ludwig Schwanenberger (1699–1774), who worked as a professional violinist at the court Kapelle of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. Since 1727 Schwanenberger was resident in Leipzig and was one of Bach's students of composition and figured bass.[6] For a moment Anna remembered music making at the court of Cöthen, surrounded by the finest musical virtuosos of the time.[7] The unconditional support of Prince Leopold, in combination with the excellent music ensemble he employed, had provided her

4. When Bach accepted his position as a cantor and *Kapellmeister* in Leipzig he was in charge of the music in four churches: the two main city churches *Thomaskirche* (or St. Thomas's) and *Nikolaikirche* (St. Nicholas's); as well as Neue Kirche (the New Church) and Peterskirche (St Peter's Church). Four times of the year he was required to lead the service in the university church Paulinerkirche (St. Paul's). For more details see Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 251–252.

5. In a letter to Georg Erdman, Bach writes that all of his children 'are all born musicians and I can form an ensemble both *vocaliter* and *instrumentaliter* within my family, particularly since my present wife sings a good, clear soprano, and my eldest daughter, too, joins in not badly'; see David and Mendel, *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, no. 152, 151–152; about Anna's close friendship with Bose's family see Hans-Joachim Schulze, "Anna Magdalena Bachs 'Herzens Freündin' — Neues über die Beziechungen zwischen den Familien Bach und Bose," *Bach Jahrbuch* (1997): 151–153.

6. On a separate title page of this double set manuscript he added in his handwriting the names of the composer and of the copyist. His title reads: *Pars 1.* | *Violino Solo* | *Composée* | *par* | *Sr. Jean Seb: Bach.* | *Pars 2.* | *Violoncello Solo.* | *Senza Basso.* | *composée* | *par* | *Sr. J. S. Bach.* | *Maitre de la Chapelle* | *et* | *Directeur de la Musique* | *a* | *Leipsic.* | *ecrite par Madame* | *Bachen. Son Epouse.*; see Hans Eppstein *Kritischer Bericht* of the edition of the Cello Suites in NBA *Sechs Suiten für Violoncello Sollo* VI/2, (Kassel, 1990); About Schwanenberger's role as a disseminator of Bach's music see Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 375.

7. Among the members of the Cöthen Kapelle were Joseph Spiess (violin), Martin Friedrich Marcus (violin), Carl Bernhard Lienicke (cello), Johann Ludwig Rose (oboe), who were previously employed by King Friedrich I of Prussia.

husband with the best working conditions so far. The time he had in Cöthen gave him freedom to experiment with his creative thought and to try out how far he could go with the seemingly unlimited potential of instrumental music. Anna recalled the luxury of enjoying the appreciation and the sophisticated taste of an educated patron and also of some of the best trained professional musicians of the time. She remembered Bach improvising on his viola and discussing with her and with the court's string players the numerous possible variants of a single melodic element. She was amazed to hear how a simple arpeggiated figure could bring forth so many expressive possibilities.

The point of such 'jam sessions' was not so much the discovery of the most ingenious compositional ideas. The focus, instead, was on the potential of bow technique to provide a variety of expressive nuance in the act of performance.[8] She listened to many combinations of expected and unexpected, even counterintuitive alternatives which a four-stringed instrument could produce and tried to record them immediately. Thinking back, she realised that at the centre of this laboratory of abstraction was not the discovery of a polished musical idea but the pleasure of the creative game between composer and performer. It was the process of discovering and engaging with the musical idea in such a way as to lead to new expressive variants. It was a masterful game of imagination.

8. This idea has been suggested in work on Bach's Cello Suites by Anner Bylsma. See Anner Bylsma, *Bach, The Fencing Master: Reading Aloud From the First Three Cello Suites*, 2nd edition, 2001 (Amsterdam: Bylsma Fencing Mail, 1998); Anner Bylsma, *Bach and the Happy Few: About Mrs. Anna Magdalena Bach's Autograph Copy of the 4th, 5th and 6th Cello Suites* (Amsterdam: The Fencing Mail, 2014). Bylsma, not necessarily writing for an academic audience, follows Anna's written articulation and argues that it is intentionally varied. He claims that each slur has its own meaning and can be justified. His main argument is that Anna's interpretation of the Suites reflects a preference for expressive variety which has faded away in later aesthetic tastes.

Introduction

The story of Bach's Suites for Solo Cello has fired the imagination of generations of performers, composers, and scholars. Its transmission in the form of manuscripts or, later on, printed editions, reflects a flexibility to change according to the purpose of the participants of the process of music making (performers, editors and scholars). The central elements in the reconstruction I have just presented are Anna Magdalena's varied articulation marks. If one follows them literally, they can be difficult to execute as they demand from the performer meticulous control of the bow. This immediately poses the question: what cello virtuoso of the time could have managed to play these? From this perspective, it is easy to condemn her articulation as illogical. Dismissing it, however, as 'displaced to the right' or 'done in haste' by an inexperienced or overworked copyist would close a valuable perspective on understanding Bach's compositional process.

In my reconstruction, Anna recalled the creative freedom to experiment via the means of improvisation in which Johann Sebastian was unsurpassable. Could this be an attempt to think abstractly in sound? If so, music is an open text inviting further interpretation and reinvention.[1] But why, then, did she not leave the text without any articulation marks and

1. The idea of viewing a piece of art as an open work originates in Umberto Eco's book on semiotics. See Umberto Eco, "The poetics of the open work," in *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 47–66. According to him, an open work is a rich interpretive cooperation between the author's initial ideas and their addressees (readers, performers, audience). It offers a wide range of interpretive proposals, inviting its receivers for their own interpretation. It is flexible to accommodate different interpretations that can be adapted to a variety of contexts and consumers' needs (with various levels of understanding). The role of the reader in this interpretation process is critical for deriving valuable meanings from the text. In this sense, the performer, in a piece of (instrumental) music, is the link between the composer's written instructions and the performer's own interpretation of his/hers ideas. The critical point in Eco's definition is that an open text offers 'a fresh perspective for itself' when every time

ask the performers to figure them out themselves?[2] Or, if we condemn the slurs as mistaken: why did she take the time and the resources (ink and paper) to write out 'inconsistent' slurs for more than forty pages of neatly copied music, most probably prepared to be disseminated?

It might have been easier for us to choose which version, if one had an original primary source (ideally, the composer's autograph score). In 1726, more or less at the same time of Anna's copy (source A), the 21-year-old Thuringian organist Johann Peter Kellner prepared another copy of Bach's Suites for Solo Cello (source B). Kellner's version shows a different reading of the music. Despite its messy layout, suggesting lack of time or experience, his articulation marks bring up different meanings and interpretation.[3] Who should we trust now: Bach's wife who had worked and lived in the social environment that bred the creation of the Cello Suites (at Cöthen's court), or a professionally trained young organist who, eager to learn from the inventive mastery of J. S. Bach, transcribed his ideas with different purposes in mind? So far, the circulation of the Cello Suites presents us with two different readings (known as sources A and B), neither of which are free of mistakes. Their mystery, however, does not stop here. In the second half of the eighteenth century, well after Bach's death, two additional manuscript copies appeared: sources C and D. They too, in the light of this discussion, suggest another two different readings. In terms of the written slurs, both of them reflect consistency and standardisation but neither corresponds literally to any of the earlier two copies.

revisited.

2. This is the case with the manuscript of the Flute Partita in a minor (BWV 1013) which has been bound in the same manuscript with Bach's score autograph of his Violin Sonatas and Partitas (BWV 1001–1006).

3. I discuss the text-critical problems of the manuscripts in chapter four.

One way of solving the problem is to trace the origin of Bach's lost fair copy and to see how these manuscripts relate to each other by drawing genealogical trees, ideally, backed up with objective logical evidence.[4] The foundation of this approach is the assumption of a universally valid 'true' reading of the music which could be credited only to the composer's lost autograph. In other words, if we work backwards towards Bach's fair copy, we will have the authoritative reference to judge the discrepancies between all the extant sources. Until then we are doomed to keep searching and comparing sources and historical documents in the search of 'truth', leaving the mystery of this music unsolved.

I propose to look at the problem from an alternative perspective. It seems that each of these manuscripts had its own function and value at their particular time of genesis: Anna Magdalena's copy was to be disseminated in circles of professional musicians, Kellner probably copied it either for his own interest or for pedagogical purpose. The later two copies were adapted to match the aesthetic conventions of the late eighteenth century. All four, as we, twenty-first-century listeners know them, imply different goals and offer a range of experiences for their receivers. Could we then talk about a single 'true' reading? The gist of this alternative perspective is to understand music as a versatile process that offers opportunities for communicating new meanings and values. At its centre is the idea of variety as a continuous process of rethinking the initial idea. The resulting new reinterpretations are often diverse and contentious. The motivation for such versatility was, I will argue here, communication: satisfying certain cultural or aesthetic needs in a particular time, place, and type of audience.[5]

4. Bettina Schwemer and Douglas Woodfull-Harris, *Johann Sebastian Bach. 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso BWV 1007-1012*, Scholarly Critical Performing Edition. Text Volume (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2000).

5. This perspective is a central tenet of 'Reception Theory' in the field of literary studies. The theory emerged in the 1960s in the works of Hans Robert Jauss and peaked in the 1970s and 1980s in the academic circles of

In the case of Bach's Suites for Solo Cello, these two possible methods of approaching the manuscripts appear as extreme opposites. The latter views the music as an open text inviting further interpretation. The former chooses to trace the composer's initial version and to accept it as the most valuable 'true' reading. The classical method of deriving such a reading is a close comparison with the autograph score of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin (BWV 1001–1006), which Bach provided with detailed articulation marks. Curiously, Kellner and Anna Magdalena's extant copies of these introduce similar inconsistencies as in the case of the Cello Suites.[6] Because of the authority of the composer's original score, however, they are considered today as marginal: every modern player refers to Bach's manuscript as 'the' source of truth. Researchers, however, know that producing a textual version of a musical idea did not stop Bach from revising and recomposing it.[7] This process of 'recycling', as Laurence Dreyfus has referred to it, has two implications for my research. It either leads to mature versions that are superior to what came before.[8] Or, alternatively, this process of recycling is a window into Bach's ability to

literary criticism. Its most significant point is to recognise the role of the reader in the process of meaning construction. The theory emphasises the interactive communication between the text and its receiver. Among the factors that can shape the interpretation of a work of art, it recognises the reader's cultural background, as well as the economic, political and social changes of their time as crucial in constructing and communicating meanings. This suggests that with the changing socio-cultural circumstances as well as readership, the meaning of a piece of work is also a subject of change. see Robert Holub, *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (London, New York: Methuen, 1984); see also Raman Selden, Peter Widdowson, and Peter Brooker, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, 4th ed. (London: Prentice Hall, 1997); about the theory of interpretation see Wolfgang Iser, *The Range of Interpretation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

6. See the critical discussion of Schwemer and Woodfull-Harris, *Johann Sebastian Bach. 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso BWV 1007-1012*; see also NBA VI/2 and the critical commentary of NBA KB VI/2, NBA KB VI/1 (*Works for Solo Violin*); about Kellner's manuscript copies of the Cello Suites and the Violin Sonatas and Partitas see Russel Stinson, "J. P. Kellner's Copy of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo," *Early Music*, no. 13 (1985): 199–211.

7. Andrew Talle, "A Print of *Clavierübung I* from J. S. Bach's Personal Library," in *About Bach*, ed. Gregory Butler, George B. Stauffer, and Marry Dalton Greer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 157–169.

8. This viewpoint led the research methods in Bach scholarship in the first half of the twentieth century to understand the continuous variants of similar musical ideas of Bach as compositional progress. For a detailed critique of this approach see Laurence Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard

explore the potential of his musical ideas as fully as possible. The former viewpoint suggests a progressive (linear) flow of Bach's compositional thought towards perfection. The latter results in multiplicity of equally valid variants which could have been stimulated by specific goals, socio-cultural conditions, or aesthetic needs. Each one of them must have had its context and purpose.

In search of 'the truth' — the crux of the argument

The conundrum of Bach's Cello Suites has long been a subject of musicological controversy. Its central concern is the empty space of the composer's missing autograph score.[9] The general understanding of this fact today is one of a loss. If the manuscript were available, it would provide the authoritative reference against which to adjust our understanding of the music. In other words, what we miss is an authoritative text to act as a back-up reference. In the context of established musicological methods, this document would provide documentary evidence and with that a level of certainty of knowledge. At the heart of this approach is the assumption that the musical 'work' exists in a single version only — the one that the composer had in mind and is reflected by its physical representation

University Press, 1996), 219–244.

9. This question mark in Bach scholarship continues to attract the attention of scholars. Researcher Martin Jarvis has taken the authorship of the Cello Suites as his major research perspective of understanding this music and, in a more broader sense, Bach's life. In 2007 he claimed that the composer of the Suites is not Johann Sebastian but Anna Magdalena. See Martin Jarvis, "Did Johann Sebastian Bach write the Six Cello Suites?" (PhD diss., Charles Darwin University, 2007). His hypothesis elicited responses by acclaimed Bach specialists who harshly disagreed. For most detailed account of the dispute see Ruth Tatlow, "A Missed Opportunity: Reflections on *Written by Mrs Bach*," *Understanding Bach*, no. 10 (2015): 141–157, `http://bachnetwork.co.uk/ub10/ub10-tatlow-wbmb.pdf`. See my literature review below.

(the musical score).[10] This suggests that our task should be to try to reconstruct it with the intention of fixing its further performances within the framework of the composer's instructions. Bearing in mind that music is a sonic art and exists through the process of performance, does this textual method assume that the composer also had one single performance in mind, which we should aim to reproduce as well?

What could be the foundation of this perspective? Why is it so important for us to find a unitary truth? Is it to establish some sort of a standard which would fix Bach's idea into a universal shape, generally accepted as 'correct'? By doing this, it would put performance interpretations into a fixed box and would limit the performer's freedom of interpretation.[11] This would definitely prove some historical or theoretical hypotheses as true but would dismiss other perspectives as valid as well. And finally, what if the truth we discover does not please us and would that matter? The answers to these questions would say a lot about our aesthetic values. They would also reveal the cultural needs of our own time. Seen from this perspective, the variety of expressive readings of Bach's Suites for Solo Cello, as

10. The debate whether the musical work is a physical object (the score), an event, characterised by its performance or it is an abstract almost illusory phenomenon existing in the composer's mind only, has a long history in musicology. For a more philosophical discussion see Jerrold Levinson, "What a Musical Work Is," *The Journal of Philosophy* 77, no. 1 (1980): 5–28; Jerrold Levinson, *Music, Art and Metaphysics: Essays in Philosophical Aesthetics*, 2nd edt. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); about the object-event dichotomy see Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 1–18; Jose Bowen, "Finding Music in Musicology: Performance History and Musical Works," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 424–451; About the influence of the 'work concept' on the act of performance see Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); about the idea of fidelity to the composer's intentions and the early music movement see John Butt, *Playing with History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

11. Richard Taruskin sees in such perspective of compiling knowledge a dangerous limitation: 'the demand that performers be subject to ordinary scientific or scholarly standards of accountability places not only onerous but irrelevant limitations on their freedom [. . .] and places arbitrary obstacles in the performer's path that can frustrate the goal of performance [. . .] that of pleasing the audience in the here and now'. See Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 22-23.

transmitted by the four extant manuscript copies, makes the task impossible to solve. The most important piece of the puzzle (the fair manuscript copy) is missing. There should be an alternative way to understand this abundance of interpretive readings.

If one looks at the problem from a different angle, by leaving aside learned expectations and habitual practices of how music from this period should behave, one might see the enigma of the Cello Suites in a different light. What if the composer's initial idea could be adapted according to different contexts, purposes and why not different types of audiences? At least this is what we can trace in all the subsequent copies and printed editions up to our historical time. Each one of them reflects a different expressive variant by adjusting the articulation marks according to various editorial criteria or aesthetic conventions.

Instead of fixing a piece of music into a single exemplary, 'correct' reading, I suggest to look at it as a flexible process of generating new musical ideas, where each variant could be different every time we revisit it, offering different experiences for its listeners. This interpretive flexibility enables the recognition of a broader aesthetic context. It reflects the simultaneous existence of a diversity of aesthetic spaces with different levels of musical comprehension. The unusually varied articulation marks Anna Magdalena wrote in her copy suggest not only that her version was designed for a highly skilled professional solo performer who was also experienced in improvisation. It also points to a specific type of audience with its own needs and creative aspirations. I believe this was the circle of highly trained professional solo players who were able to demonstrate and appreciate the highest level of improvisational mastery.

In this project I do not privilege the composer. I rather take 'the composition' as a starting

point for unending source of elaborations and variants which are bound by particular historical and cultural norms. Established musicological approaches reflect an opposite understanding. Their main reference to 'truth' is the composer's original score, against which we are expected to compare all the subsequent sources (copies and printed editions) of the same composition. In this project, therefore, I challenge methodologies in which the autograph source receives an almost biblical status, against which the variant sources are deemed secondary. In the case of Bach's Cello Suites, we have the reverse situation. The original is missing, hence there is no authoritative text. All we have are variants.[12]

This presents the opportunity to look at the problem from an alternative perspective, unprejudiced by authorities or traditions. Instead of searching for a general point of reference, one can understand the music as a multifaceted process of adapting an idea according to its function in a specific context. This suggests that all the adaptations and interpretations reflect specific social or cultural conditions. In this sense, the missing autograph score is not a loss or empty space as it cannot encapsulate the composer's idea into one reception model only. Instead, it can be understood in multiple ways. The variety of interpretive readings points to a variety of audiences with different expectations and reception understanding.

So far we have the dilemma of choosing between two modes of understanding. Either we keep searching for the ideal composer's version which, once discovered, would provide the solid documentary evidence for the true ('authentic') interpretation of the music. Or, alternatively, we could understand music as a flexible space for new interpretations that can

12. I use the word 'variant' here in the sense of interpretation of an abstract idea that brings up a specific meaning. In this context, I discuss the different readings of the Cello Suites as different alternative variants of Bach's initial musical invention. Each reading communicates different nuances of a meaning.

be shaped according to the goals and needs of current audiences. Choosing the former, we accept the only 'correct' way of understanding a piece of music to be the composer's initial idea in the form of its written text. All subsequent variants appear as imperfect readings that could potentially obscure it. Although this mode of thinking promises a degree of certainty, it also appears as highly selective. Through the 'one-truth-only' attitude it could be understood as an ongoing search for the reconstruction of the original version that Bach had in mind.

The alternative side of the dilemma is to understand the existence of the work (in this case of the Cello Suites) as an abstract idea in flux: constantly adapting according to different circumstances and contexts. Seen from this perspective, the written-out sources do not lock the composer's idea into a fixed meaning but appear as alternative interpretations with a specific merit and purpose, reflecting the existence of multiple aesthetic needs. This understanding approaches the problem from the opposite end. It does not view the existence of the work as autonomous or predominantly based on documentary evidence, but as reflecting various interpretations throughout time.[13] It presents the composition as a living organism that can transform into a plurality of forms of performances to communicate different meanings to different audiences. In this sense, a musical work is a flexible entity that accrues variety of values and meanings over time.[14] As Richard Taruskin has argued, exactly this freedom to adapt to the needs of its consumers according to place and context, validates a work's existence.[15]

13. Roland Jackson, "Performance Practice and its Critics — the Debate Goes On," *Performance Practice Review* 4, no. 2 (1991): 112–115.

14. About the musicological debates on the work concept see note 10.

15. Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*, 16–47.

What we have here is a much deeper conceptual problem of musicology as a discipline. Do we have the freedom to interprete the meaning of a piece of music freely or we have to base our judgements for meaning and value on facts and/or reason? The positivistic trends in the field of Bach studies from the mid-twentieth century made factual evidence their main concern.[16] The examination of handwriting, types of paper, and watermarks were the main sources for extracting information about Bach's music. In this framework, the case of the Cello Suites was unsolvable, a task fraught with danger. Without the composer's autograph as a reliable source, the positivistic approach cannot provide any factual evidence about this music. Paradoxically, the search for a unified 'true' reading brings a multiplicity of contradictory solutions.

After the first printed edition of the suites in 1824 (Source E) all the subsequent printed editions suggest different ways of articulation, hence different readings. Each of them pretends to be clearer and/or closer to the original ('authentic') work, basing its editorial decisions on documentary evidence, which, however, is read in the light of accepted aesthetic conventions. Each one of them 'corrects' a previous variant and presents a more unified, consistent version of the music. What such editorial interventions are, reflects general standards of taste of a particular time. The outcome of this accumulating abundance of expressive readings today is the impossibility of reaching a consensus on one standardised 'correct' reading.

Through the circulation of their written sources from copyist to copyist (or editor to editor),

16. Arthur Mendel, "Recent Developments in Bach Scholarship," *Musical Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (1960): 283–300; Arthur Mendel, "Evidence and Explanation," in *Report of the Eight Congress of the International Musicological Society, New York, 1961*, vol. 2 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962), 2–18; Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985).

the Cello Suites have accrued a variety of cultural values and meanings over time. To choose a single interpretation as 'correct' is to claim that the cultural values and needs of one specific time are more valuable than those of another. In her recent article 'Memoirs of a Musical Object, Supposedly Written by Itself: It-Narrative and Eighteenth-Century Marketing', Emily Green shows that a music manuscript from the past does not remain locked into a single interpretation throughout history.[17] By letting an eighteenth-century music manuscript be a subject and speak itself, she demonstrates that it accumulates a variety of meanings in the course of its migration from owner to owner. As a result of the interactions with its consumers over time, it conveys multiplicity of changeable experiences and interpretation perspectives to its future recipients.

Anna Magdalena's fragmented articulation might seem unusual in comparison with our general conventions of writing out music. Her version, however, could be a valuable trace of the existence of a limited, specialised audience that valued experimenting with the potential of musical ideas. The goal of such experimentation might have been the creative process of discovering as many variants as possible. We can trace similar principles in rhetorical practices of her time. Contrary to the understanding today that in the context of music, rhetoric was either a device for generating structure or a tool for decorating the surface, recent research suggests that Bach contemporaries understood rhetoric as an inventive process, the central goal of which was mastery of the creative potential of variations and extemporisation.[18]

17. Emily H. Green, "Memoirs of a Musical Object, Supposedly Written by Itself: It-Narrative and Eighteenth-Century Marketing," *Current Musicology*, no. 95 (2013): 193–213.

18. See Bettina Varwig, "One More Time: J. S. Bach and Seventeenth-Century Traditions of Rhetoric," *Eighteenth Century Music* 5, no. 2 (2008): 179–208. I discuss this issue in the section about the Cello Suites as an open text in chapter four.

Objectives of the thesis

The central claim of this dissertation is that compositional and expressive variety in J. S. Bach's music is relevant to discussions about his music. Using Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012) as a case study, I argue that this music and the textual problems around it must be understood in the socio-cultural aesthetic context of the early eighteenth century. The contradictory readings of the Suite's manuscript sources and the ongoing editorial disagreement about them have taught me to view the situation from a different perspective. The theoretical foundation of my discussion is understanding of the context of music making in this historical period that I view as a multifaceted process of adapting and communicating meanings and values to a diversity of audiences. In a wider sense, this led me to understand Bach's time not as a unilinear historical development but, following historical geographer of modernity Miles Ogborn, as a multi-levelled temporality consisting of different geographical 'spaces of modernity'.[19] I thus understand the aesthetic conventions as outcomes of specific cultural or social needs. I view the abundance of interpretive variances as evidence of the heterogeneous characteristics of this historical time. Scholars in the field of social and anthropological studies have already discussed this idea. They view history as 'uncontemporaneous' compilation of differences.[20]

19. I borrow this term from Miles Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780* (New York, London: Guilford Press, 1998), ch. 1, 1–38.

20. See for instance Christopher Pinney, "Things Happen: Or, From Which Moment Does That Object Come?" In *Materiality*, ed. Daniel Miller (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2005), 256–272. The historiographer Reinhard Koselleck discusses similar ideas about understanding history as multiple processes of 'acceleration' or 'deceleration'; see also Hayden White, "Foreword," in *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts by Reinhard Koselleck*, Translated by Todd Samuel Presner and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), i–xiv. For an extensive bibliographical discussion on this concept see Georgina Born, "For a Relational Musicology: Music and Interdisciplinarity, Beyond the Practice Turn," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 135, no. 2 (2010): 205–243.

I relate this flexibility in musical expressiveness to the traditions of improvisation and rhetoric which were ubiquitous at the time. As explained by Erasmus of Rotterdam in the sixteenth century, an essential principle for becoming proficient in the art of public speaking was to master the 'abundant' style by using a nuanced and varied language.[21] In the context of music, I associate this level of creativity with the traditions of improvisation in which Bach was highly acclaimed.

My central interest in the Six Suites for Solo Cello is the parameter of articulation. I view it as the key to understanding audible expressive ideas on the music's surface. This leads me to discussions about the importance of melody, focusing on Johann Mattheson's ideas of music as *Klang-Rede* (sound steps). The goal of my enquiry is to explore the idea of melodic variants as a primary representation of the notion of variety. By relating them to the influence of rhetorical expressive processes on music as articulated in Bach's time, I concentrate on the surface elaboration of music as independent of harmonic structural progressions. Viewed this way, amorphous looking music (such as Anna Magdalena's manuscript copies of Bach's Cello Suites and the Violin Sonatas and Partitas, as well) seems to make more sense. I make my claims in opposition to established research approaches and performance standards, in order to retrieve these scripts from criticism as mistaken or illogical.

The main contribution of my work is to understand Bach's music in multiple aesthetic spaces. Each of them emerged from specific aesthetic or social needs and followed a set of conventions shared in a community. An important outcome of the rapid socio-cultural

21. Varwig, "One More Time: J. S. Bach and Seventeenth-Century Traditions of Rhetoric"; Bettina Varwig, "'Mutato Semper Habitu': Heinrich Schütz and the Culture of Rhetoric," *Music and Letters* 90, no. 2 (2009): 215–239.

transformations in the first half of the eighteenth century in Central Europe is the formation of a diversity of audiences, sharing similar tastes, expectations and understandings of music. I understand these communities of listeners as representing different cultural spaces or geographies of aesthetic appreciation of music: spaces for communicating modernity. They were relevant for a specific cultural context and place.[22] Crucial for this compilation of differences is how they clash, interact and, as a result, adapt to each other, evolving into new, different meanings or understandings. Seen from this perspective, the conundrum of Bach's Cello Suites could be explained as a continuous adaptation to the aesthetic requirements of different times and places. In this sense, searching for a unified, standardised version of them leads to a dead end. Instead, I argue that seeking a 'right answer' cannot point in a right or wrong direction. Such a search 'is clearly dependent on the sort of narrative one adopts to explain it', to cite John Butt.[23] In such multiplicity of readings, I see a possibility to make a bridge between music from the past with our own time. The principles of creative flexibility and reinterpretation could be a firm foundation for establishing a dialogue between the past and the present, resulting in new, meaningful experiences of a familiar repertoire.

22. In this sense, the aesthetic needs of church organists were different from those of the aristocratic patrons or general theatre goers, although, in principle, each of these three categories could share the aesthetic taste of the other two. The most important issue in my argument is that members of professional music circles had completely different approach to music thinking than those of the general eighteenth-century music lover.

23. John Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 5.

Chapter plan

In Chapter One 'Changing Views of J. S. Bach as a Composer (1900–2013)' I outline the various approches in Bach scholarship since its establishment in the late nineteenth century. If, in the early twentieth century, it seemed that there was 'correct' Bach scholarship, a century later there are many ways to understand his music. I argue that the institutional power of a few scholars played a crucial role in forming images of Bach's music. I also examine performance practice as a decisive element in the processes of interpretation. If in the early twentieth century the 'correct' way to play Bach was to follow strict metronomic tempi with machine-like exactness, the Historically Informed Performance (HIP) movement from the middle of the century acted as a counter-balance by concentrating on the expressive intensity of the music, focusing on local details and surface decorations. The clash between these two modes of understanding led to an important aesthetic split, which, I argue, characterises our own historical time. I trace a similar aesthetic split by examining written critical accounts about music in Bach's time.

In this first chapter I explore a diversity of images of Bach and the motives of their formation. Depending on the research perspective, each of them has its point. This poses the question whether we should choose one as the'right' image of Bach or we should reject all of them and continue to search for the 'real' one. The latest trend in understanding Bach is to look at his music not as a static product but as a continuous changing process.[24] Taking the diversity of research approaches to Bach's music, in the final section of I survey various

24. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*; Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*.

research approaches to Bach's Cello Suites and discuss their impact of shaping understandings of this music. My aim is to use this variety of research perspectives as a way to explain history as a multidimensional process dependent on the conditions of specific contexts and places. I see it as an important characteristic of the complexity of our historical time. Like Bach, who constantly reworked his compositions, we should rethink our learned habitual practices in order to adapt them to our own cultural needs. Therefore, I reexamine socio-cultural trends of the early eighteenth century and account for them as the environment that led to the emergence of a diversity of cultural spaces. This leads to contradicting ways of viewing Bach's music.

Chapter two, 'Changing Geographies of Rhetoric on the Border Between Two Centuries', outlines the main characteristics of the social and cultural context in early eighteenth-century Europe. I discuss the formation of phenomena such as the public sphere and the emergence of a new wealthy urban class as a result of the rapid development of business and trade. The voice of the public acted as 'a medium through which a private person can reason in public' and with that to express a variety of opinions about aesthetic tastes, culture, politics, and education.[25] This predisposed a shift from the absolute power of ruling monarchs to the newly formed bourgeois class. Such powerful social and political mechanisms had a strong influence in shaping the cultural and aesthetic tastes, practices, and education of the time. An expanding thirst for higher education led to reforms in university curricula and increasing interests in the art of speaking. All of this was understood as a shortcut to the circles of polite society.[26] The principles of classical rhetoric as a powerful

25. Timothy C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 8.
26. Thomas M. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 203–212.

tool to influence wide audiences and to demonstrate high levels of education and diplomacy played an important role in the formation of this social space. The ability to communicate actively in public and to promote new ideas about matters of culture, taste, and education established the mechanism that governed new ways of thinking.[27]

In the early eighteenth century, competing aesthetic models about music divided the art into opposite aesthetic spaces. One claimed music as a mimetic art. It emerged from the rationalist idea that music's purpose was to imitate and to have a clear meaning. It favoured vocal over instrumental music. The second was introduced by Johann Mattheson (1680–1764), the first music journalist, who understood music to be an art based on wide expressive power to persuade and influence the feelings. His sensualist view of music welcomed instrumental music as equal to the vocal genres. The crucial difference between these models was their aesthetic foundation. These two powerful aesthetic models served as the foundation of different musicological perspectives later on. According to the research aim, different characteristic features of them could become evidence for justifying a variety of specific research points.

In chapter three, 'Johann Mattheson and the Notion of Variety in Music', I show that social changes at the beginning of the eighteenth century encouraged increased interest in all the arts within the non-aristocratic classes. In respect to music, this rapid and widespread interest in the arts triggered changes in aesthetic taste and values. I discuss a characteristic for the time aesthetic conflict between rationalist and sensualist perspectives of understanding music in the public space in Germany which produced irrreversible outcomes that released instrumental music from its inferior position to the vocal genres and even

27. Ibid., 188–234.

superseded them. Central to this aesthetic clash are two diametrically different perspectives of musical thinking. The interaction between them influenced the formation of two separate perspectives of finding meaning in music in the first decades of the eighteenth century. These two alternative points, however, also summarise different ways of aesthetic thinking that coexisted simultaneously. They tried to explain music either as a didactic art whose main function was to represent the natural by imitating it; or as an interpretive process, borrowing from the flexibility of rhetorical principles. The first one continued to understand music as subordinate to language. The latter model, viewed music as a process of creative unfolding. It gave artists the freedom to interpret and consequently to enhance the natural. It let them express their own view of artistic thinking by using music's (expressive) potential as a way for intellectual perfection. This interpretive freedom suggests a close relationship with improvisation and, more generally, with rhetorical principles, both of which had an immense influence on eighteenth-century music-theoretical thought.

In music, Johann Mattheson was the pioneer. He sensed a growing gap between traditional music education and the new cultural trends of his time. In his endeavour to adjust the traditions to the new cultural needs, he argued that the origin of music was foremost in expressing the feelings and the passions, in the so-called sensualism, and not in strict theoretical rules. Thus, everybody could feel and enjoy music regardless of musical training or practical experience. Such a point of view caused numerous polemic debates and confrontations in eighteenth-century Germany. Mattheson's polemic ideas sharpened the interpretive and more subjective aspect of music. This paved its way for becoming an autonomous art, not needing external means in order to be explained or clarified. Out of this conflict towards the end of the century crystallised (at least) two simultaneous aesthetic

streams: the mimetic and the sensualistic models of music. These opposing views of music represented the most significant feature of early eighteenth-century aesthetic trends. While they existed simultaneously, their ideas were shared to a greater or lesser extent within different intellectual communities.

In this chapter I discuss some of the influential polemic debates about musical taste of the time and examine a selection of viewpoints of some of the major thinkers (such as Johann Mattheson, Johann Heinrich Buttstett, Charles Batteux, Johann Adolf Scheibe). Although defending two completely different points about music, Mattheson and Scheibe agreed in their polemics about the specific differences and function of the musical styles and genres of their time. Their accounts reveal a plurality of styles, genres, and performance practices that co-existed in the first decades of the eighteenth century. Both describe chamber and solo music as characterised by the use of unique freedom and variety of sounds and affects (which made this style a reserved area for professionals and master musicians). In relation to the idea of varied sounds and affects, I focus on the historical accounts of Mattheson and Scheibe and relate their views to the function of chamber and solo music, namely to give pleasure and enjoyment.

In chapter four I concentrate on J. S. Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012). After a discussion of the extant sources, I outline the text-critical problem that surrounds them. Since Bach's autograph score is lost, the music has reached us via four different manuscript copies (sources A, B, C and D). Each of them suggests a different reading of the music. The variety in the articulation marks found in the copies are at the centre of an intense controversy. Researchers in the field of performance practice and music history suggest that compositional and expressive variety was used as a means to attract and sustain

the listener's attention in early eighteenth-century music.[28] This led me to evaluate the copy made by Anna Magdalena Bach (source A) as a possibly reliable source. The variety of articulation marks in Anna's copy reminds me of a laboratory in search of as many variants as possible of the same or similar motif. This is a game of creativity in which improvisation, performance, and composition are intertwined. In this sense, Anna's version of the Suites suggests an open text inviting the reader to contribute further to their meaningful realisations. This has, as I will show, much to do with the flexibility of the rhetorical principles to adapt to a situation or audiences and to explore a given theme as fully as possible. The assumption that Anna's articulation signs are not misplaced could reveal a new perspective on the Suites' performance. The freedom to explore has the potential to provoke, I argue, even more creative variants of Bach's musical idea in our historical time, bridging them between then and now. The central point of this understanding is the creative potential of the idea of repetition. Through the sensual mode of thinking one can revisit the already stated musical idea from a different angle and explore its potential to reinvent and further develop it.

I argue that this intellectual challenge allows the principles of rhetoric to persuade the audience. Such an abstract intellectual game of variances could be accommodated only in the instrumental genres where the poetic text does not attach meaning to a specific message. The lack of fixed linguistic reference points offers the opportunity to explore and experiment with musical tools. I think this level of flexibility is an important starting point not only in

28. David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965); Nikolaus Harnoncourt, *Baroque Music Today: Music as Speech: Ways to New Understanding of Music*, Published in German, 1982. Translated by Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1988); James Webster, "The Triumph of Variability: Haydn's Articulation Markings in the Autograph of Sonata no. 49 in E flat," in *Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven: Studies in the Music of the Classical Period: Essays in Honour of Alan Tyson*, ed. Sieghard Brandenburg (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 33–64.

the compositional process but also in the act of performance and reception as well. The implied rich potential of meanings in a piece of music could be revealed only through the active communication between a performer and the audience.

To a great extent the problematic side of many pieces of music from the period and before (including many of Bach's works) comes from our own perspectives. I point out that if one thinks about Bach's music from the perspective of perfect formal structures, unsystematic and amorphous-looking examples, like Anna Magdalena's manuscript, do not make much sense. If, however, we change the angle and look at the music as a free process of thinking, her varied articulation marks become meaningful. This expressive variety suggests multiplicity of meanings derived from the same musical idea (invention).

Chapter 1

Changing Views of J. S. Bach as a Composer (1900–2013)

Bach's name is one of the biggest in music history. Everyone acquainted with his music has touched on the originality of his musical mind and has sensed his often puzzling and unpredictable musical ideas. The time distance of more than 300 years and the ongoing research quests, however, have not answered the question what makes Bach's music exceptional not only in his own time but also unsurpassable in the later epochs. Scholarly investigations continue to raise more questions about Bach than provide answers. Why do scholars and performers still keep finding more unexplored ways to understand his music?

In this chapter I outline a diversity of changing views about Bach's music that have been actively articulated in the last few decades. Since the establishment of Bach scholarship as an academic discipline, scholars have been searching for meaning and value of his music. Not surprisingly, different generations of Bach scholars discuss a variety of often contradicting meanings. The goal of my discussion is to outline the complexity of the unending arguments about Bach as a composer and the meanings of his music that we have inherited so far. Central to my argument is the idea of understanding history as a compilation of interpretive discussions that, however, say more about the aesthetic trends, the interests,

and the beliefs of scholars and their circles rather than of the historical facts per se.

Within the context of different ideologies that were popular in a specific time and place, scholars have understood Bach's music through the practices of their own time. I explain the resulting versatility of views about the composer through the theoretical framework of Miles Ogborn, in which Bach becomes a composer of changing 'geographies of modernities'. Different generations of Bach scholars have interpreted the same historical evidence through the newest (leading) research trends in their own circles and times, reaching different conclusions. For example, in the framework of positivistic thinking from the mid-twentieth century, Bach was a paragon of scientific precision. A few decades later, he was a rebellion who disagreed with the aesthetic trends of his own time.[1] The point of departure of every research enquiry is the historical evidence about Bach we have available today. Depending on the research perspective and the ideological inclination of the scholar, those historical facts have received different historical interpretations, adapting unsuspected meanings to Bach's music. Through the idea of viewing Bach as a composer of changing principles of modernity, I revisit eighteenth-century controversies about Bach. I discuss them as case studies that have been interpreted in a variety of ways throughout the twentieth century. The key point in my argument is to show that although this variety of views aimed at revealing 'the truth', they rather reflect a diversity of contexts of interpretive discussions, articulated in different moments throughout the twentieth century.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century the portrait of Johann Sebastian Bach has never been more colourful. It has been changing from generation to generation. If we look back

1. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*; David Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

and try to outline the major responses to his music, we are confronted with an enormous body of controversial disputes raising both issues for and against his originality. A rich variety of methods challenges us with numerous perspectives. As Christoph Wolff has argued, these methods can be categorised into two main research fields — basic research (*Grundlagenforschung*) and interpretive scholarship.[2] Both categories, however, should not be viewed as two opposing research strategies but as complementary perspectives. Archival documents on their own do not represent historical facts. Rather, they must be placed into a historical context and be interpreted further.

This variety of methods is responsible for the multiplicity of Bach images today. The same archival material has been constantly discussed and construed from different perspectives by different researchers. Among the factors that shaped the researchers' viewpoints, I believe, are their background, knowledge, trends of their time, and the degree of their willingness to see relevance in alternative perspectives. In order to understand the multiple images of Bach better, it is necessary to outline the existing state of Bach studies.

1.1 Bach's image as shaped by scholarly perspectives

The list of different views of Bach's music is substantial. For some critics, the secret of Bach's music has always been a clear succession of mathematical sequences and logical

2. Christoph Wolff, "Images of Bach in the perspective of basic research and interpretative scholarship," *The Journal of Musicology* 22, no. 4 (2005): 503–520.

symmetries.[3] For others, Bach led the way to the next stylistic wave — the 'classical' style.[4] I do not aim to outline every possible individual research perspective in detail. However various or contrasting they might be, they all share a common principle. Every perspective carries with it the implication of its own truth and exclusivity.

Researchers have always been looking for a unified, 'true' image of Bach. For some, he was a genius working in seclusion, neither understood nor recognised by his audience.[5] For others, he was a reactionary conservative who refused to follow the fashionable aesthetic principles of his time. For yet others, he was 'progressive' by 'letting himself to be influenced by the latest taste',[6] or even a revolutionary social critic who aimed to demonstrate that new aesthetic conventions were leading into a dangerous direction.[7] These perspectives have been argued from the historical materials that researchers had available, refracted through the prism of their own time. Some scholars from East Germany in the 1960s, for instance, stressed Bach's 'secular inclination'. Clearly, such a viewpoint was dictated by political ideology.[8]

3. For a detailed discussion about this understanding of Bach's music see Ruth Tatlow, *Bach and the Riddle of the Number Alphabet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Ruth Tatlow, "Theoretical Hope: A Vision for the Application of Historically Informed Theory," *Understanding Bach* 8 (2013): 33–60, `http://www.bachnetwork.co.uk/ub8/UB8_Tatlow.pdf`; and Ruth Tatlow, *Bach's Numbers: Compositional Proportion and Significance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

4. Heinrich Besseler, "Bach als Wegbereiter," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 12 (1955): 1–39.

5. This trend begins from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century historical accounts about Bach in the writings of Nikolaus Forkel, Philipp Spitta and, later on, Albert Schweitzer. It spreads almost unchanged to the middle of the twentieth century.

6. Robert L. Marshall, "Bach the Progressive: Observations on his Later Works," *The Musical Quarterly* 62, no. 3 (1976): 313–357.

7. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*; Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*.

8. In 1962 Friedrich Blume published a paper titled "Umrisse eines neuen Bach-Bildes: Vortrag für das Bachfest der Internationalen Bach-Gesellschaft in Mainz, 1. juni 1962; Vorabdruck" in *Musica* 16: 169–176. It was also published in 1963, translated as Friedrich Blume, "Outlines of a new picture of Bach," *Music and Letters* 44, no. 3 (1963): 214–227. Blume claimed that Bach's image as a church musician was mistaken and his art was directed mainly towards secular music. This elicited an immediate scholarly protest. See Alfred Dürr, "Zum Wandel des Bach-Bildes: zu Friedrich Blumes Mainzer Vortrag," *Musik und Kirche* 21 (1962): 232–236;

The burning question at the beginning of the twenty-first century is how (or whether) all these different images of Bach can come together.[9] Do we really know his music? Should we expect to have a consensus about a single image of Bach based on archival documents or scholarly arguments, or is it wiser to accept the miscellaneous amalgam of distinctive characteristics? Or, do we still need to keep searching for a uniform, true biographical interpretation to find the evidence that suits our own perspective point?

If Bach scholars in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries could not do this, what is our chance to find such evidence in the twenty-first century? Take, for example, Robert Marshall's attempt to apply Freudian analysis as a biographical approach to Bach.[10] This perspective has allowed similar attempts with the biographies of Mozart and Beethoven by Maynard Solomon.[11] I think, such a psycho-biographical approach is a possible biographical method, despite the danger of interpretive misreadings that it might bring.[12] In my view, the rich variety of research perspectives, methods, and well defended scholarly conclusions is an advantage. We are in a position to grasp the immense dimensions and the originality of Bach as a composer, which are much more colourful and diverse than one single perspective

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and reprinted Alfred Dürr, "Neue Bach Forschung," *Musica* 20 (1966): 49–53; Friedrich Smend, "Was bleibt? Zu Friedrich Blumes Bach-Bild," *Der Kirchenmusiker* 13 (1962): 178–188. A later critical respond is Hans-Joachim Schulze, "Zur Kritik des Bach-Bildes im 20. Jahrhundert," in *Bach in Leipzig—Bach und Leipzig. Konferenzbericht Leipzig 2000*, ed. Ulrich Leisinger, Leipziger Beiträge zur Bach-Forschung 5 (Hildesheim: Olms, 2002), 13–25. For detailed bibliographical references about this debate see Daniel R. Melamed and Michael Marissen, *An Introduction to Bach Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

9. George B. Stauffer, "Beyond Bach the Monument, Who was Bach the Man?" *New York Times* (April 2, 2000).

10. Robert L. Marshall, "Toward a Twenty-First-Century Bach Biography," *The Musical Quarterly* 84, no. 3 (2000): 497–525.

11. Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven*, 2nd revised ed. 2001 (New York: Shirmer Trade Books, 1998); Maynard Solomon, *Mozart: A Life* (New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 1995).

12. Unlike the rich correspondence of Mozart with his family, Bach did not leave many personal writings and letters. The paucity of documental evidence about his childhood, personal and domestic life leave us only speculate about his personality and family conditions.

can account for.

The widening distance from romantic tastes and practices and the growing multiplicity of interpretive theses about Bach's music gradually prepare audiences of today to accept concepts as flexibility and variability as core features of Bach's understanding of the art of music. Such features would lead many twenty-first-century music lovers to welcome the idea that music for Bach was a continuous process of creative thinking rather than a fixed activity. His work does not always need to bear the labels of specific musical genre, neatly categorised and classified by contemporaneous aesthetic thought. Regarding the question of style and musical genre in Bach's music, Laurence Dreyfus's discussion of the *Sonata for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord* in G minor (BWV 1029) identifies the problematic issue of stylistic categorisation. This piece reflects an ingenious blend of sonata and concerto elements.[13] Its ambiguity arises from the mismatch between its structure and the convention of these genres. It is neither sonata, nor concerto. Dreyfus argues that Bach not only decided to explore this new genre, but also decided to mix two national styles — the French dance-like tradition in the sarabanda in the harpsichord part and Italian sonata virtuosity in the viola da gamba part.[14] Such a stylistic blend seems somehow German.[15] According to

13. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 103–133.

14. Ibid., 118–119.

15. In the first decades of the eighteenth century two leading musical styles dominated in Europe — Italian instrumental virtuosity and dance French music. German musicians commonly blended elements of both with German national music into the so-called 'mixed taste' *vermischte Geschmack*. Details of the cultivation of this new style were not discussed fully in print before the middle of the century with the publication of Quantz's *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (1752). The cultivation of the 'mixed taste' in Germany, however, was a common practice before his treatise. A sound example is Fux's trio *Concentus musico-instrumentalis* (1701), where the genres of Italian Giga and French entrée are superimposed. Since 1713 Johann Mattheson talked about the unification of the Italian and the French musical styles in Germany. About Bach's use of the *vermischte Geschmack* see Ulrich Siegele, "Bachs vermischter Geschmack," in *Bach und die Stile: Bericht über das 2. Dortmunder Bach-Symposion 1998*, ed. Klaus Hofmann Martin Geck (Dortmund: Klangfarben Musikverlag, 1999), 9–17.

one of the most active music critics in early eighteenth-century Germany, Johann Scheibe, there was a middle point: sonatas in the style of concerto.[16] Scheibe writes:

> One might ask whether it would not be possible to combine the most beautiful [qualities] of these three nations [Italy, France and Germany] and apply them in one single piece? I answer, following the example of several masters, that this indeed is possible. The Italian sets great store by the agreeableness and sensual elaboration of the melody (and consequently also to taste); the Frenchman loves a sprightly and piercing free spirit; the German is particular about good and thorough workmanship and harmony. Thus, whoever unites these three pieces with one another must produce a perfectly beautiful work.[17]

In the gamba sonata (BWV1029), Bach plays with the identities of both leading national styles in such a way that they affect each other and blend in a way that the gap between hitherto 'foreign' components is inaudible.[18] This process of creative thinking allowed its musical material to be rethought and reworked again and again in search of as many solutions that challenge the initial musical idea. In Dreyfus's words, this is 'a mode of understanding that results in something new by attempting to explain the old'.[19] This way of understanding Bach's musical processes leads to the perspective of seeing a multiplicity of musical realisations with an equal value (like different features of a complex multi-functional system) and not as a unified means to reach the most mature and well

16. I discuss Scheibe's role in the music-theoretical scene in Germany below.
17. Johann Adolph Scheibe, "Compendium musices," in *Die deutsche Kompostionslehre des 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Peter Benary, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1960), 78; quoted by Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 132.
18. Ibid., 121–122.
19. Ibid., 133.

developed compositional solution or idea.

As Dreyfus discusses, seeking compositional progress seems irrelevant for Bach's musical thought. The idea that composition is the search for only one solution to a 'problem' is anachronistic for his music. Bach never indicated any preference to a later version of a composition as 'better' or with better quality than an earlier one. It appears that he accepted them all as equal. A curious example is the case of the controversial variants of the printed editions of *Clavierübung I* which Bach annotated himself. According to historical evidence, Bach saw seven printed editions while he was in Leipzig. He used to keep a few of these exemplars for himself and kept adding corrections and small changes to the music. So far, scholars have been able to identify Bach's personal copies by examining the annotations and the history of the manuscripts. Five of these annotated copies have competed for the honour of being 'Bach's Handexemplar'. Today they are located in various libraries in Europe: British Library, Berlin, Paris, Washington, Vienna. The corrections in all of them offer five different readings of the *Gigue* from *Partita III*. A recent examination suggests that Bach never wanted to produce a definitive, fixed version of his music. He probably accepted all the variants of his works and did not reject the earlier versions. An indicative example of this hypothesis is that in 1748 he gave his thirteen-year-old son Johann Christian the *Partita III* as a present in its early initial variant. This shows that Bach did not dismiss it as less important. According to Andrew Talle, this is an instance of the flexibility of early eighteenth-century music and its interpretation. Composers did not strive to produce one definitive fixed piece of music but constantly revised and amended their initial ideas.[20]

20. Talle, "A Print of *Clavierübung I* from J. S. Bach's Personal Library," 157–168.

1.2 Bach studies and the ideas of modernity

In order to understand the various reception issues of Bach's music I would like to outline some further traditions of Bach scholarship. My chronological starting point is Johann Adolf Scheibe's famous critique of Bach's compositional style. In 1737 Scheibe, a former student of the composer, published a statement in his periodical *Critische Musicus* (no. 6), publicly accusing Bach of being old-fashioned and not following the modern requirements of good taste, calling his music 'turgid and confused' (*schwülstig und verworren*).[21] With his criticism he started a heated verbal war, which went beyond discussions of compositional style or music complexity. In my view, the polemics that followed were a manifestation of the aesthetic changes of Bach's historical time.[22]

Central in this controversy was the changing role of the composer. Their skills now had to be measured against general aesthetic trends of taste and level of education.[23] A successful music practitioner had to be able to discuss and actively participate in public discussions about music and must have broad philosophical and critical skills. Scheibe's main critique in his attack to Bach was that:

> This great man has not sufficiently studied the sciences/humanities (*Wissenschaften*) which actually are required of a learned composer. How can a man who has not studied

21. Johann Adolf Scheibe, *Critischer Musikus: neue vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage*, First published Leipzig: Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf, 1745 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970), 62; reprinted and translated in Werner Neumann and Hans-Joachim Schulze, eds., *Bach-Documente*, 4 volumes (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1963–1978), vol. II, 317; and in David and Mendel, *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, no. 343, 338.

22. See chapter two.

23. Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 94–95.

> philosophy and is incapable of investigating and recognising the forces of nature and reason be without fault in his musical work? How can he attain all the advantages which are necessary for the cultivation of good taste when he has hardly troubled himself with critical observations, investigations, and with the rules which are as necessary to music as they are to rhetoric and poetics. Without them it is impossible to compose movingly and expressively.[24]

The dispute between Scheibe and Bach's defender Johann Abraham Birnbaum received contradictory interpretations in twentieth-century musicological understandings. A long lasting impression in Bach studies of Scheibe's attack is the understanding that it was founded on his personal resentment against Bach. In 1729 Scheibe applied for an organist post at St. Thomas's. Bach, who was in the jury, turned his application down and picked Johann Gottlieb Görner in preference to him. Thus one could understand Scheibe's action as motivated by envy and resentment. This interpretation has been in circulation in Bach scholarship since Philipp Spitta's biography of Bach.[25] According to George Buelow, it misrepresented Scheibe's significance and disparaged his credibility as music theorist and critic.[26] An alternative understanding of Scheibe's criticism is to place it in the context of its historical time and to view it as a manifestation of new aesthetic trends in music. This perspective goes beyond any personal vendettas and judges Scheibe on the basis of his writings on music.[27]

24. Johann Adolf Scheibe,'Rechtfertigung der Gegen Bach Erhobenen Vorwürfe'. (Hamburg, 1738); reprinted in Neumann and Schulze, *Bach-Documente*, vol. II, 316.

25. Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach: His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany, 1685–1750*, First published 1873–1880 in 3 volumes. Translated in English by Clara Bell and J. A. Fuller-Maitland (New York: Dover Publications, 1992), vol. 2, 211-212. The same interpretation of the dispute appears in David and Mendel, *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, 337.

26. George J. Buelow, "Scheibe, Johann Adolf," in *Grove Music Online*, accessed on 6 Dec. 2014; http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/24777.

27. Immanuel Willheim, "Johann Adolph Scheibe: German Musical Thought in Transition" (PhD diss. Uni-

Whatever Scheibe's motives were, they produced heated public discussions. I see these as an illustration of the rapid change of aesthetic ideas in the first decades of the eighteenth century. In his attack on Bach, Scheibe voiced the quickly spreading ideas of simplicity, clarity, and unity in music. An important condition of such aesthetic ideas was that a composition or a performance of a music composition should be created, acknowledging the listener. Its leading principle was communication with the *galant* audience, disregarding the taste or preferences of the composer. Johann Mattheson's writings on music support this listener-oriented trend. In his *Die canonische Anatomie*, Mattheson explains that the aesthetic trend in music was oriented mainly towards the audience and less towards the composer's artistic values:

> It is true, and I have previously experienced it myself, that quick progress with ... artistic pieces (*Kunst-Stücke*) [i.e., canons and the like] can engross a sensible composer so that he can sincerely and secretly delight in his own work. But through this self-love we are unwittingly led gradually away from the true purpose of music, until we hardly think of others at all, although it is our goal to delight them. Really we should follow not our own inclinations, but those of the listener. I have often composed something that seemed to me trifling, but unexpectedly attained great favour. I made a mental note of this, and wrote more of the same, although it had little merit when judged according to its artistry.[28]

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versity of Illinois, Urbana, 1963), 284; see also George J. Buelow, "In Defence of J. A. Scheibe against J. S. Bach," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 101 (1974-1975): 85–100; and Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 94–99; about more recent discussion of the dispute see Michael Maul, "Johann Adolph Scheibes Bach-Kritik. Hintergründe und Schauplätze einer musikalischen Kontroverse," *Bach Jahrbuch* (2010): 153–195.

28. Johann Mattheson. *Die canonsche Anatomie*, *Critica Musica I*, (1722–1725), 346; trans. by Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 94; Mattheson's diverse views on music received contrasting scholarly interpretations. Depending on the scholar's perspective he has been categorised as French rationalist, as a rep-

A few years later, Bach's friend Johann David Heinichen also underlined in his *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (1728) the importance of music's intelligibility to the general audience: '[the essence] of a good composer of taste consists once and for all in the art of making his music, as a matter of course, popular and pleasing to the reasonable world'.[29] The most important message in all these open discussions was that 'the success of a piece of music was to be based not on the verdict of musicians alone but, more importantly, on the response of the *galant homme*, the retreat to the safety of professional elitism was no longer possible.'[30]

The emergence of a new urban class at the beginning of the century was a powerful socio-cultural mechanism that introduced new aesthetic and cultural norms.[31] Its quick growth established a new type of listener (the *galant homme*) as an important consumer of culture. As a result, this caused a split of aesthetic tastes as well as audiences (eg. amateurs and professionals). Its connection with music was complex, involving various ideological

resentative of the British pragmatism in Germany, or as path-breaking sensualist. In the changing socio-cultural context then, Mattheson saw a gap between the growing demands for amateur music making and the highly trained music experts. Striving to fill it in, he contradicted the traditions and argued that music is foremost an intuitive sensation that only once it is perceived can be intellectually explained. He advocated the importance of performance practice in addition to music theory, addressing his first writings to the *galant homme* (music amateurs). Ernest Harriss's essay "Johann Mattheson's Historical Significance: Conflicting Viewpoints" in *New Mattheson Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 1983). ed. G. Buelow and H. Joachim Marx gives a detailed annotated bibliography of the secondary literature on Mattheson. Bellamy Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1981) examines his sensualistic attitude to music. Laurenz Lütteken discusses the influence of the English pragmatism on Mattheson in Laurenz Lütteken, "Matthesons Orchesterschriften und der englische Sensualismus," *Musik Forschung* 60 (2007): 203–213. About Mattheson's views of music erudition see Karsten Mackensen and Oliver Wiener, *Johann Mattheson und Lorenz Christoph Mizlers Konzeptionen musikalischer Wissenschaft. De Eruditione musica (1732) und Dissertatio quod musica scientia sit et pars eruditionis philosophicae (1734/1736)* (Mainz: Are Musik Verlag, 2011).

29. Johann David Heinichen, *Der General-Bass in der Composition*, Dresden: Heinichen, 1728 (reprinted Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1969), 23; quoted by Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 94.

30. Ibid., 98.

31. See my discussion in chapter two.

perspectives. The rationalist standpoint of seeking cognitive clarity in all aspects of intellectual activity was a strong catalyst for understanding the arts and the possible meanings they communicate.[32] It would be simplistic to view the influence of such rationalist ideas as a means to replace previous aesthetic values in music, clearing the way for the modern. This, I argue, was one of many repercussions of the social changes on the arts.

I think that searching for a 'single-valid' aesthetic model in early eighteenth-century music is too selective. By making a restrictive choice for a viewpoint against which to examine the music from this historical time, we exclude other valuable alternatives. I believe that this historical time accommodated multiple aesthetic frameworks that were active within specific cultural milieus and conditions. Miles Ogborn understands the concept of modernity not as a singular idea but as a manifold concept, producing a diversity of understandings. The kernel of his approach is to view the cultural needs of different groups of people as forming a variety of geographical spaces for communication of ideas and cultural values.[33] These geographical locations, however, were not restricted to geographical borders or maps. They were determined by the intellectual needs under a specific cultural context and place and produced a variety of understandings, depending on economical, personal, cultural, or political situations. In this sense, modernity is not an antithesis of tradition or a means of progress. It is a more complex understanding of the changing social, political, and economic world.

Seen from this angle, the idea of modernity is not a single event that comes to replace the

32. See chapter two
33. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*, 16–19.

old with the new. It is a compilation of multiple processes dependent on the contingencies of times and places. Modernity, in this sense, is a multidimensional compilation of differences and contradictions. Ogborn proposes to understand the concept through contextualisation of its outcomes. This often leads to a multiple forms of modernity — each with an equal weight and right of existence.[34] This could explain cultural or ideological differences on a national and international level in terms of sociological and cultural processes. Such context-dependent processes, however, can be used as a powerful differentiation between cultures, places, social levels, or even individuals. In Ogborn's words: 'Modernity, as a mode of understanding history, was and is a way of making powerful differentiations between localities, regions, nations and vast areas of the globe.'[35]

In this sense, history is not a progressive flow of only one universally valid truth but is a constellation of different principles and understandings, shared within a community. This multidimensional framework matches well with the polemical discussions about music in the early eighteenth-century public space in Germany. The different aesthetic models of music, as products of the various intellectual and/or geographical spaces, allow for art to be interpreted from different, often contradictory perspectives.[36] How Bach's music can be oriented in this maze of varied philosophical understandings becomes pivotal to understanding his critical reception later on.

34. In his study of Bach's Passions, John Butt expresses similar ideas. See Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*.

35. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*, 20.

36. In chapter two I discuss two contradictory aesthetic spaces in music: the neoclassical model and the sensualistic ideas in Bach's time.

1.2.1 Bach scholarship in the first half of the twentieth century

The early twentieth-century trends in the field followed the footsteps of the work of the two pioneers in Bach studies: Nikolaus Forkel and Philipp Spitta. Forkel's biography of Bach (1802) transmitted valuable information that he collected from Bach's sons and students. Spitta's scholarly writings (from 1873 onwards) provided a thorough biography of Bach by following the historiographic model of outlining a chronological description of the composer's progress. Following his own sense of history, he assumed that Bach's greatest works (such as his *Passions*) must have come at his greatest maturity in the 1740s. His most important contribution (that was to influence Bach scholarship later on) was to point out Bach's manuscript sources as the only true sources to study his music. This will be echoed in the second half of the twentieth century with the rise of the HIP movement. Spitta's statement, however, that Bach was a culmination of an era after which begins something radically different, hints towards the belief that Bach followed the old traditional conventions which were superseded by the new *galant* style. Hence, Spitta's chosen mode of thinking was towards the view of Bach the conservative. His interest in Bach's scripts opened new ways in Bach's studies, which in the postwar activity in the field led researchers to concentrate mainly on examination of primary sources.

The leading research centres at the time were Tübingen and Göttingen in Germany and Princeton in the US. Teams of scholars headed by Arthur Mendel, Alfred Dürr, and Georg von Dadelsen worked primarily on source problems such as paper types and scribal hands. Starting from Spitta's message, these teams made the important step to overturn his chronology. By providing factual evidence, they proved that Spitta's chronology was

wrong.[37]

Mendel and his colleagues in Germany would not have made their advances without their positivistic commitment to finding logical and convincing 'proof' of a hypothesis or a fact. Although they did achieve many new insights on Bach's music, they also fell into the trap of bending these new insights in the name of their own beliefs — to find out unquestionable (solid) evidence. The goal was to turn musicology into a more scientific discipline, namely 'to boost musicology's claim as a 'hard' discipline, which ironically, rendered an important part of Spitta's research redundant'.[38] As Thomas Irvine outlines, such types of scientific tendencies in academic circles were destined to serve political and ideological goals than the rather idealistic chimera of revealing the truth in history. Thus, as a reaction to such positivistic work as Mendel's, in the mid-60s a polemic dispute arose in musicology about whether history can actually be represented by 'true' facts or it is only a matter of subjective interpretation.[39]

Such scholarly disputes inevitably guided the directions of historical research at the time. Mendel's words, however, that the best research is the one that produces only temporary outcomes was a result of his positivist thinking. This scholarly orientation towards searching for unquestionable evidence of progress and creative development was underpinned by an ideology of progress. Thus, it is not surprising that humanist disciplines (such as musicology) felt themselves compelled to adopt positivistic positions and to make the search for 'stylistic progress' their primary goal. As Dreyfus has commented, while this concept of progress in historiography helped to capture an important moment in history that emerged in

37. Mendel, "Recent Developments in Bach Scholarship."
38. Thomas Irvine, "The Foundations of Mozart Scholarship," *Current Musicology*, no. 81 (Spring 2006): 29.
39. Ibid., 30.

the dispute between Scheibe and Birnbaum, it also contributed to a fundamental misreading of Bach's music.[40]

The consequences of Scheibe's aesthetic debate for post-war Bach scholarship prompted a rather short-sided, dualistic view of Bach's music. Bach was seen either as a conservative and reactionary, looking back to the past and ignoring the new trends in music or, respectively as a highly progressive musical genius who was already living in the future foreseeing the artistic search of the next generation of composers. Both positions are rather extreme and 'contain germs of insight [...] as if Bach somehow lived his life to contribute to a much later story about how 'Baroque' music was superseded by 'the Classical style" or even worse as if the eighteenth century existed only to prepare the arriving of the classic style and the following it romantic era.[41] By favouring principles of thematic consistency, formal structure, or coherence in expression as aesthetically 'correct', positivist Bach scholarship both adopted a tenet of the interpretative school, whose work they had discredited, and placed Bach's music into a fixed box of understanding, emphasising only one feature and dismissing others. Numerous modern printed editions of Bach's music illustrate this view.

40. Underlying such features as aesthetically important, positivistic research methods as well as the strive of finding compositional progress as a sign of maturity shaped the apprehension of Bach's music from a certain perspective — on stylistic appearances and progress. Since Spitta's publication the majority of the musicological publications have been based on this foundation. Aspects of variety and flexibility of his music as a way of communication with different types of audiences seem to have been ignored or little investigated in the first half of the twentieth century.

41. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 219–221.

1.2.2 Changing views about Bach in the second half of the twentieth century

The idea of stylistic development in Bach scholarship continued to thrive during the second half of the twentieth century. Robert Marshall in an article from 1976 judged Bach's compositional thought not as conservative (as Scheibe had claimed) but as 'progressive'. He argued that he let himself be 'influenced by the latest developments in musical fashion', which he reflected in his latest compositions.[42] Marshall's aim was to show the (universal) validity of the idea of progress as an important component of the growth of an artist.

Twenty years later, in 1996 Dreyfus argued that such an approach to Bach's music is not only naive and simplistic but also anachronistic.[43] The outcomes of the established musicological methods of enquiry, for him, cross-examine Bach's music by striving to provide logical explanations. Their main methods used analytical principles that were, however, formulated much later than Bach's time. By doing this, he argues, there is the danger to bend characteristic features of Bach's music in order to fit them within a certain type of analytical, theoretical, or aesthetic principle. Marshall's point is a good example of his critical viewpoint.

Instead of trying to fit examples of early music within paradigms of later theoretical principles (which were created to explain the music from their own time), Dreyfus proposes to look at Bach's music not through the lens of the historiographic 'progress syndrome' but through the idea of music as a process. In this way, instead of searching for a fully

42. Marshall, "Bach the Progressive: Observations on his Later Works," 355.
43. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*.

developed unified models of fixed forms (and in many cases not exactly finding any of such kind), he sees a new perspective of understanding Bach's music. He looks at it as a constantly changing process that 'rethinks its own material' from a different angle.[44] He demonstrates that the richness of Bach's music comes from his individualistic compositional approach to explore and to experiment with a single musical idea (invention) in order to exhaust its potential as fully as possible. In the process of this exploration the artist could discover a multitude of contrasting musical perspectives.

This is exactly the point where Bach's genius diverts from the new aesthetic conditions of his time. Instead of restricting himself to follow one aesthetic framework (such as the mimetic model or the *galant* style), Bach used his compositional skills to demonstrate the rich inventive potential of music to communicate with different audiences. In this case, music becomes not a source of knowledge based on reason or representative entertainment but a continuing process of thinking. Building on Dreyfus's argument, I would suggest that it is almost as if Bach's music is an intellectual game in which the composer explores its potential in order to reach a variety of equally valuable (and often diametrically opposed) answers to the same question.

Seen from this angle, Dreyfus argues, well-rooted views on Bach as either conservative or progressive are founded on very unstable ground. Both positions are anachronistic and influenced by ideological principles. He demonstrates that Bach was neither an 'old fogey' nor a suffering nonconformist, who foresees future musical practices. He sees him as a down-to-earth critic of his own time who strived to prove that music is much richer and wider to be squeezed into a single mode of understanding (eg. the rationalistic mould of

44. Ibid.

linguistic principles and cognitively clear messages).

A curious question is: what prevented Bach scholarship to grasp such an important characteristic of his music earlier? The foundations of music history and, more specifically, the foundations of Bach studies established one particular form of reception of eighteenth-century thought. Thus the search for progress and stylistic evolution (as a means for logical explanation) for scholars then was a 'natural' course of enquiry. It seems, however, that the strong ideological allegiance of Bach research to the goal of finding unquestionable evidence or facts led to a general misreading of Bach's music. Exactly this kind of thirst for knowledge boosted the scientific disciplines and is still guiding our contemporary principles for successful research. It seems that in the multitude of aesthetic models of music in the early eighteenth century, some characteristic perspectives about music vanished. Music's versatility as a form of enquiry to rethink the same material and ideas faded away. In this sense, Bach's individualistic compositional thought was a culmination of an era. Although it was never imitated fully, it served as an inspiration to generations of musicians in later eras. The aim of this thesis is to reclaim some of this versatility.

1.3 Understanding Bach in the twenty-first century

The history of Bach studies presents us with a bouquet of different understandings of his music. Each of them reflects either the researcher's subjective point of enquiry or an ideological principle of a particular time. The lack of clear factual information about Bach's

own aesthetic preferences and the rich variety of passionately defended research views about his music do not help much. The main difficulty has to do with a tightly entangled mixture between the roots of already established research approaches in Bach studies and our inevitably growing distance from his historical time. The most we can do is to understand the cultural conditions in which Bach worked and the meanings his music might have communicated to the variety of musical communities.

Some recent contributions to Bach studies already follow this idea. Dreyfus convincingly demonstrates that Bach was well grounded in his own time and had a clearly different opinion about the aesthetic trends about music by deliberately 'composing against the grain'.[45] Six years later David Yearsley supported his position, stating that Bach was a critic of his time who did not blindly follow current aesthetic trends. For him 'the internal dialogue of a piece is ... much more than a mere display of an ingenuity or an unhinged aesthetic diatribe: it is critical music *par excellence*'.[46] Despite the scarce factual information about Bach, it is clear that he was well informed about the latest trends in intellectual life of his time. His high position as a capellmeister in *Thomaskirche* in one of the biggest cultural centres in Germany and the academic environment in which his family lived must have kept him informed about the newest aesthetic publications and debates.

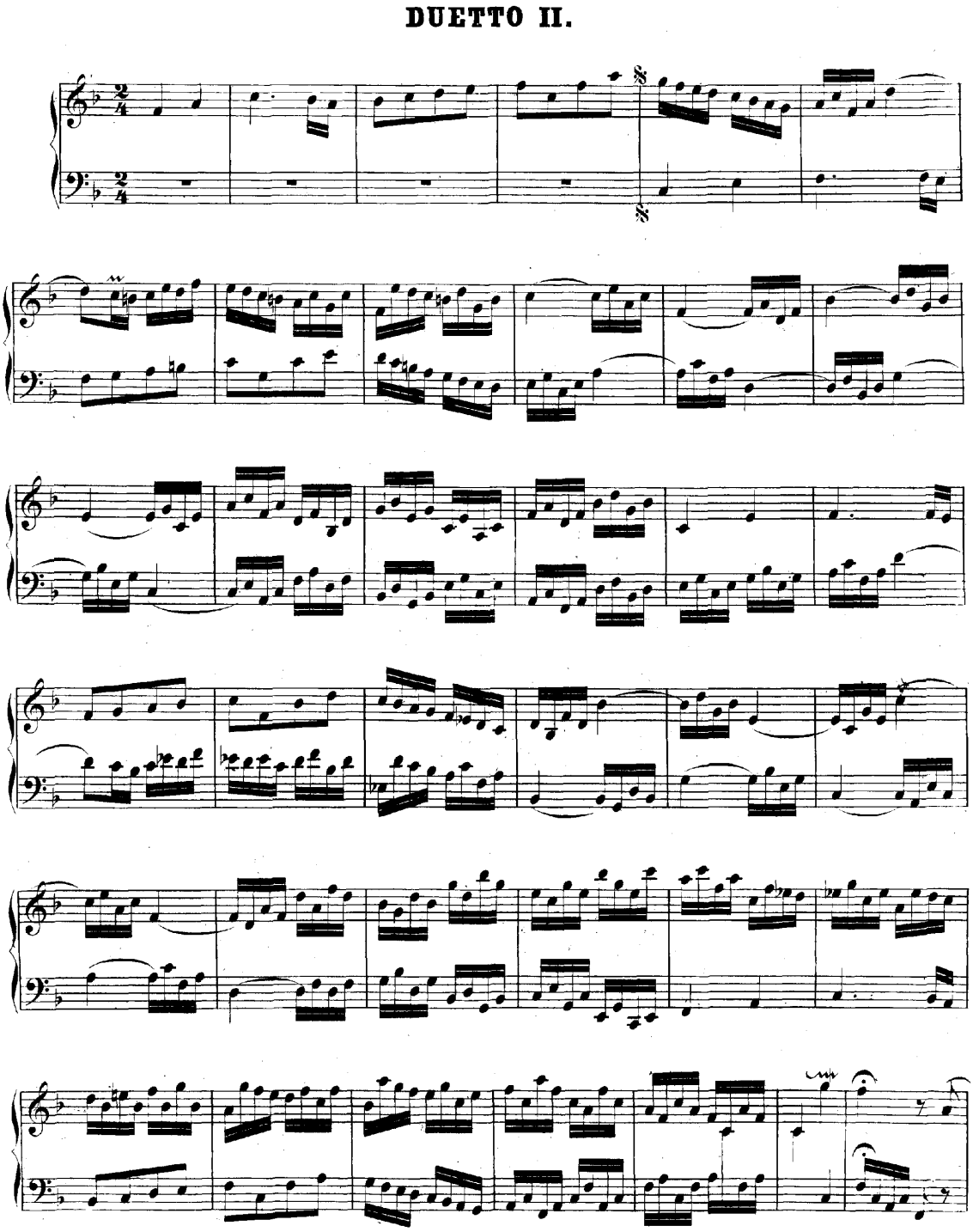
Despite Scheibe's accusation of being old-fashioned or ignoring the new standards of good taste, many examples of his music reflect some of the 'modern' principles of the time such as clear harmonic structures, more consonances, easy to follow melodic lines, and tasteful surface articulation. Exactly these 'new' features in his music gave the foundation to

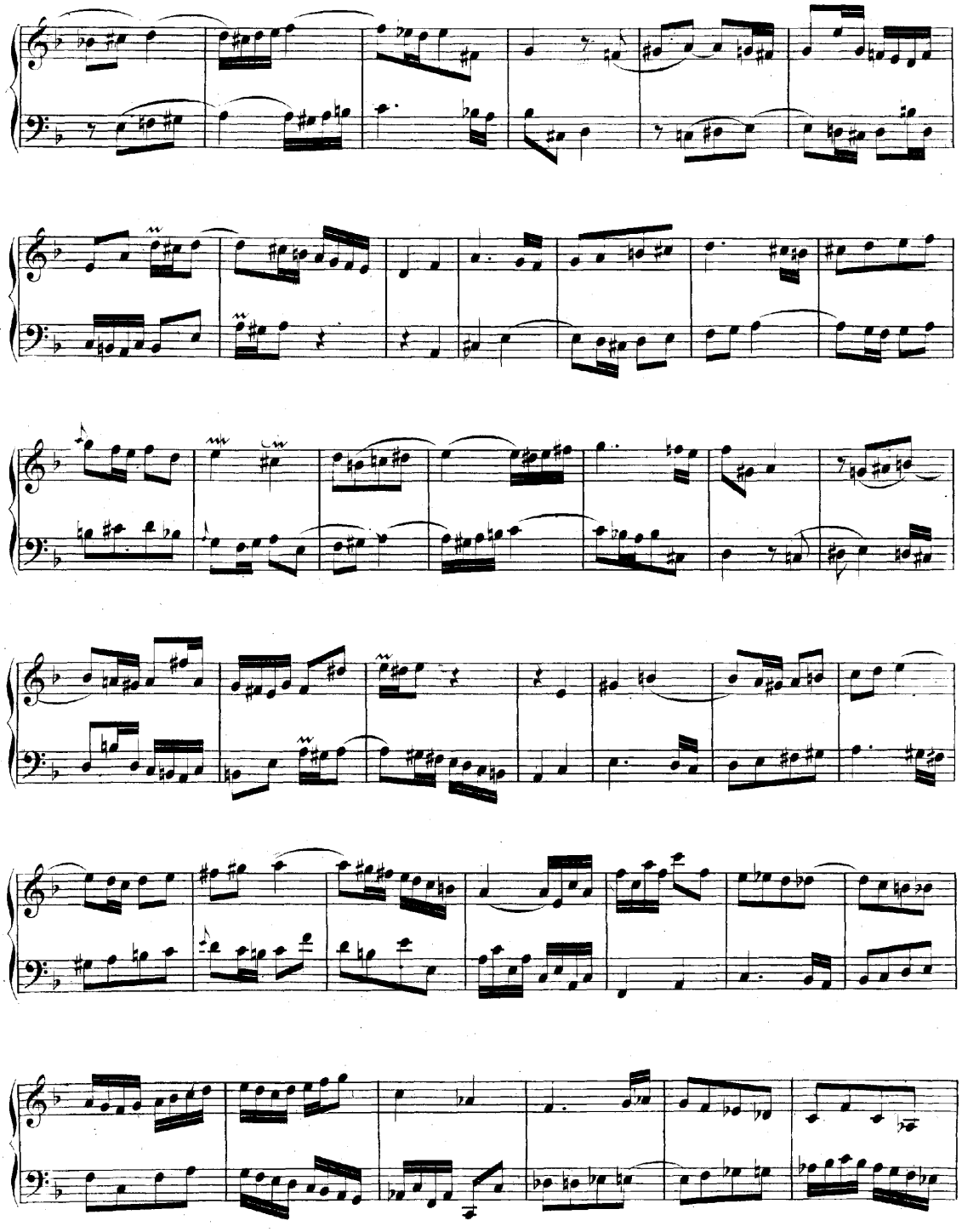
45. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 33–58.
46. Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*.

musicologists to see him as 'progressive'.[47] Bach, however, used such 'new' principles in his music to confront his critics and to juxtapose them to the 'old' ones which they so easily rejected. An example of this is the Duetto in F major from *Clavier Übung III* (BWV 803). The piece has symmetrical structure of three main sections (ABA). Each of them consisted of an equal length (A section with the repeat 74 bars, B section 75 bars), which perfectly follows the guidelines for 'naturalness'. The striking feature at stake here is the screaming contrast between the sections. Yearsley views such a striking juxtaposition as an opposition to the new aesthetic trends or, even a counter attack to Scheibe's criticism. Without challenging harmonic progressions or dissonant intervals, the first section follows all rules of 'naturalness' and clarity (according to Scheibe's standards). The middle section, however, rejects everything that can be associated with nature. The subject begins with jarring augmented intervals. Challenging chromaticism and numerous accidentals, 'artificial' contrapuntal techniques and 'unnatural' difficult intervals saturate the middle section. After the return of section A, the easy comprehension of the 'naturalness' has already a different effect. The initial rustic pastoral character of the music does not bring the pleasure of easy listening any more but, by its sharp contrast with the 'unnatural' in the previous section, urges the audience to be critical. In Yearsley's words: 'The singing pastoral mode has been so thoroughly compromised that on its return there is a palpable torpor in the perpetual consonance, a shallowness in the lively conversational idiom, a predictability in the clear projection of key and affect. The piece's sprightliness now seems coy, its pleasantness more like a mockingly undemanding pleasantries.'[48]

Whether this was the way Bach wanted to express his opinion about music or just wanted to

47. Marshall, "Bach the Progressive: Observations on his Later Works."
48. Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 109.


DUETTO II.



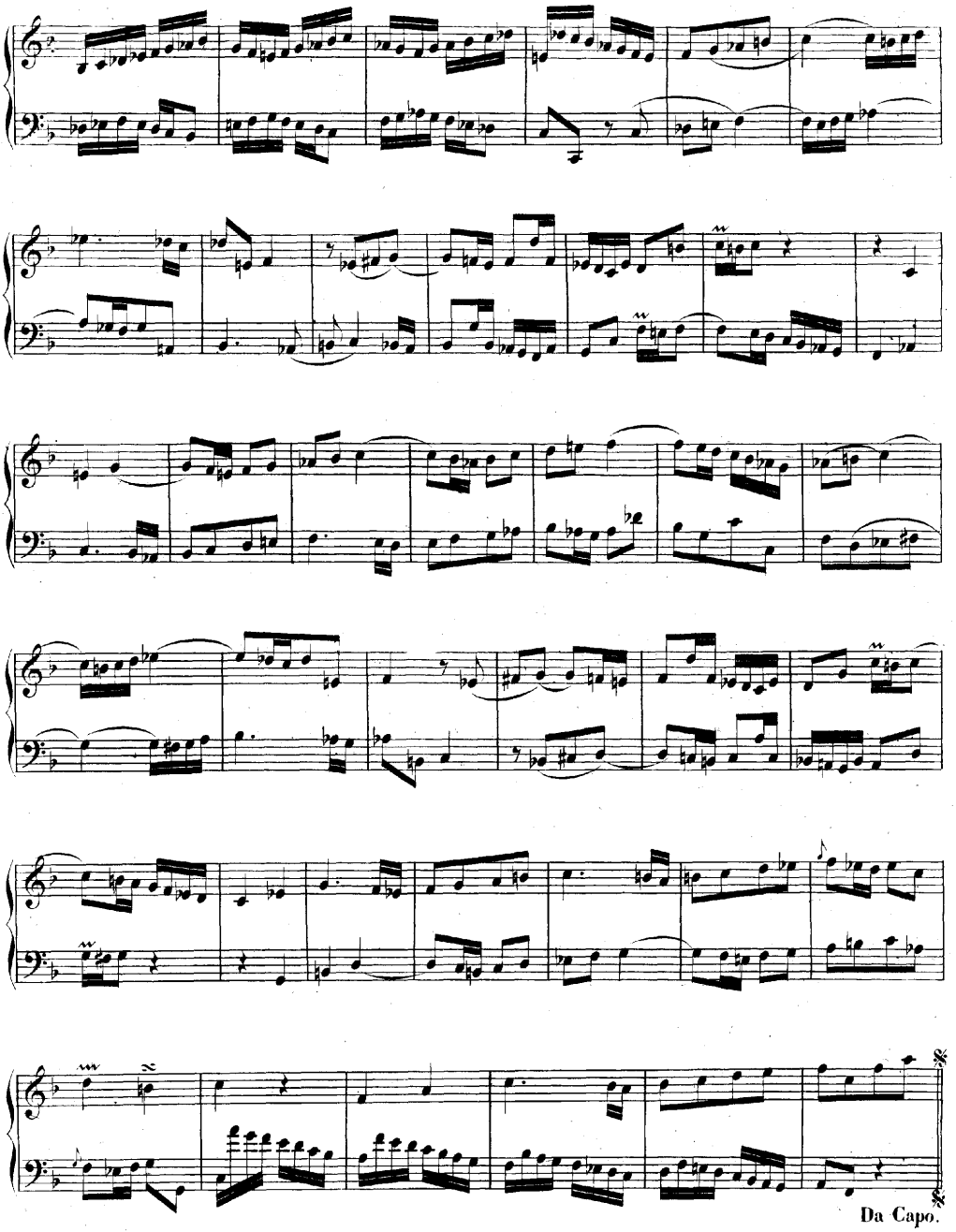


Figure 1.1: J.S.Bach, *Duetto in F* (BWV 803)

prove that the new aesthetic principles are leading into a wrong direction must remain a matter of interpretation. Such examples, however, demonstrate that he was fully aware of the changing aesthetic conditions around him. He deliberately used new aesthetic principles to show that music offers many possibilities for different artistic realisations. Yearsley supports Dreyfus's position that Bach was in opposition to the new aesthetic standards. I would suggest, however, a subtly different perspective of understanding. This music example could be read as a demonstration of music's flexibility to accommodate more than one aesthetic mode of music appreciation. In other words, the piece can fit different geographies of modernity by stimulating understanding of alternative modes of thinking: clear, symmetrical structures opposed to instability, dissonances, and artistic thinking.

Bach was a music master with an unending ability of inventive thinking. As I argued above, his location in Leipzig challenged him with creating music for a rich variety of audiences and tastes. The striking contrast in the Duetto could be a way to blend a diversity of tastes and with this to stimulate active communication, as opposed to passive listening. Bach scholars so far have viewed his music through a single ideological perspective: conservative, perspective, critic of his time. The difficulty is that the versatility of his music is so rich that there will always be supporting evidence for either position.

I see in Bach's works an endeavour to demonstrate the wealth of intellectual creativity in music. He brought it out in a multitude of ideas, streaming from his initial musical invention. This illustrates not only the creativity of a master but also Bach's awareness of the potential of the initial idea to bring forth different musical realisations. Most curious is the perspective of seeing each of them as reflecting principles of different aesthetic models, hence the preferences of different communities of listeners. The numerous reworkings and

endless editing he kept doing, were not striving towards a single mature version of his idea but different realisations of its possible creative potential. In many cases, he hints in his music at more than one valid musical conclusion that must be regarded as 'true'. In his latest book *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions* (2010), John Butt emphasised that exactly this intense versatility of Bach's music can stimulate and generate active transformative processes of understanding his music. The crucial aspect of his thesis is that a most significant feature of Bach's music is its approach to communicate multiplicity of (often contrasting) meanings, attitudes, and understanding. Similarly to Dreyfus's stance, for Butt the extraordinary of Bach's music is not the cultural content or fixed, standardised meanings but its continual 'interplay of various elements, [...], that makes this music a 'hook', with the potential for resonating with, reconciling, or tempering a broad range of meaning and belief'.[49]

I believe this versatile inventive thought was one of the causes for the critical response to his music. Bach made full use of the resources of the changing geographies around him. Instead of using music to enhance literary texts or as a rhythmic background for entertaining dances, Bach hints at an abstract process of dynamic and continuous thinking. The pleasure of this intellectual richness is in the process itself and not in the contemplation of the unified whole in a final product.

The longer the time between ourselves and Bach, the more our understanding of his music will change. This is something positive. By distancing ourselves from the Romantic *Bach-Bild* either as a genius, unrecognised in his time, or as the composer of 'old-fashioned' music (according to Scheibe) we have the chance to view his music from a different angle. I

49. Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*, 21.

see this as a possibility to discover a new, alternative way of understanding: as a continuously evolving intellectual mechanism. Whether a general audience will be convinced by such interpretive variety or, alternatively, it will be welcomed only by a small number of 'selected' listeners (the so-called specialists) depend on personal preferences and taste.

1.4 HIP as a research approach: variability, multiplicity and postmodernity

Scholarly approaches to Bach's study have always been based on historical and/or analytical methods. The former deals with archival documents and their contextualisation; the latter, with ideas about music and how the composer's creative thought functioned. Both fields, however, rely on working with texts (literary or musical) and do not take into account such parameters as expression and performance technique as potential ways of understanding. In the second half of the twentieth century, the rise of Historically Informed Performance (HIP) appeared to fill in this gap, and offered a new dimension for understanding Bach's music in particular.

Today, we can already trace a historically informed performing tradition of Bach's music. It began in the 1970s with the work of Nikolaus Harnoncourt (1929–2016) and Gustav Leonhardt (1928–2012), in which performers used period instruments and applied period performance techniques. Many questions regarding historical instruments, expression, and technique have been asked and many answers have been offered. They remain, however,

matters of controversy and ongoing research.[50] The approaches of the two competing fields in Bach scholarship (source studies and HIP practice) seem to work at cross purposes.[51] The joined collaboration between source studies and the findings of HIP movement would offer a fruitful perspective in understanding Bach's compositional thought — not as a result of compositional progress but as a multifaceted amalgam of exploring and interpreting the creative potential of a single musical thought.[52] Even with the latest performing parameters of the HIP movement the lack of clear instructions and theoretical explanations makes this task frustratingly difficult. The manuscript scores remain open for interpretations and creative exploration of the already given material. Even if the performers are convinced in their hearing of the music, the difficulty remains in its reception by the twenty-first-century music lovers. Yet the interpretive ideas that HIP offered also contributed to alternative understanding of Bach. The diversity of performance approaches to his music (varying from jazz arrangements to purely period performances) demonstrate in practice that music is what we hear and not always its textual representation on the page.

Whether we hear it in the concert hall or in our head by looking at a score, the result is an interpretation upon which we make our judgements. The rich variety of performing viewpoints suggests that an alternative interpretation is the same as a new way to listen and understand. This mode of thinking might be called postmodernist. The essence of the postmodernist movement, as defined by Jean François Lyotard, is a general distrust of grand

50. Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*.
51. Ibid., 3–47.
52. The last recording of the cellist Pieter Wispelwey of Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV1007–1012) is an example of this trend. Wispelwey uses a period instrument with the unusual for us low tuning of 392Hz. He prepared his recording with the assistance of two of the well respected Bach scholars today — Laurence Dreyfus and John Butt (both of them also performers themselves). See Peter Wispelwey "Johann Sebastian Bach 6 Suites for Cello Solo", (Mechelen, Belgium, Evil Penguin Records Classic, (EPRC 0012), 2012).

theories and ideas of universality in the realm of the sciences and the arts.[53] The rich diversity of ideas in Bach's music and scores free of performance indications, suggest more than one 'correct' way of performance.

Standing relatively far from the influence of Romanticism and living in the era of HIP, present day listeners have the chance to 'discover' new ways to interpret Bach's music. The romantic way of performing Bach is not, however, to be rejected as 'wrong'. Quite the opposite — it is one of the many valid approaches to his music that has been promoted, taught, and performed extensively in the last few decades. In this sense, postmodernist ideas mean that the 'one-solution-only' model is crumbling away. Departing from master narratives, a postmodernist advocates alternative perspectives of understanding knowledge: by viewing it as a live interpretive process of exploration.

One such interpretative approach in music was first stated by James Webster in 1998.[54] Webster examines Joseph Haydn's performance markings in the manuscript score of his Sonata no. 49 in E flat (Hob. XVI:49). The problematic issue in Haydn's manuscript is variant articulation markings in analogous passages in the exposition and the recapitulation of the sonata. Webster argues that such expressive variability is not a result of negligence but is intentional. He compares the score autograph with two 'first-rate' modern editions of the piece (*Joseph Haydn Werke* and *Wiener Urtext*). The *Joseph Haydn Werke* edition is close to the autograph with no regularised performance markings. The *Wiener Urtext* editor adds markings by analogy such as regularised beams, stems, and slurs. Webster finds this

53. Jean François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, English translation by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, Original title *La Condition Postmoderne: Rapport sur le Savoir*. Les Editions de Minuit, 1979 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiv–xxv.

54. Webster, "The Triumph of Variability: Haydn's Articulation Markings in the Autograph of Sonata no. 49 in E flat."

problematic and discusses three conditions that editors face — 'incompleteness', 'ambiguity', and 'inconsistency'.

Most twentieth-century performers and scholars expect clear performance indications. Many eighteenth-century music manuscripts, however, either include fewer performance markings or leave the text open. This mismatch between customs and expectations causes editors to assume that the music text is 'incomplete'. The term assumes that something that should be present is lacking. The conditions of 'incompleteness' arises in two main cases: a) when the composer or the scribe did not include a marking, thought by today's standards as necessary (such as dynamic indications); b) when they used a type of marking but not 'often enough'. Such are the cases when the composer asserts a certain marking earlier but does not supply it when a similar figure returns later on.

Webster discusses the notion of ambiguity on the basis of two aspects — not clearly deciphered signs (especially ornaments) and an ambiguous position of slurs. According to him, this notational ambiguity implies the possibility of more than one interpretation. The aspect of inconsistency is well known from situations where similar figures are written with different markings or lack of any markings at all. It asks the question — should such passages be played in the same way? Many editors treat 'inconsistency' as resultant from accidental errors of haste and in many cases equalise and regularise them.

Webster concludes that 'incompleteness', 'ambiguity', and 'inconsistency' in composers' manuscript scores might actually be markers of expressive variety. 'No sign has an absolute meaning that we can be certain or which never varies. [...] The text is open-ended', he

states.[55] Instead of describing such passages in negative terms (ambiguity, inconsistency etc.), he proposes the term 'variability'. Instead of mistakes, he sees them as different variants (be they minor or more substantial) of the same model.

J. S. Bach left few performance indications in many of his manuscripts. Such documents seem to invite performers to contribute their own interpretation (based on their mastery, taste, and understanding). This openness is one of the major challenges facing Bach interpretation today. By consulting an autograph of Bach's music and comparing it with its subsequent copies or even printed editions, scholars and performers might be puzzled by the irregularly indicated performance marks (ornamentation symbols or articulation). This is even more distinct when the score is for a solo instrument or a chamber ensemble.

This suggests two implications. Either Bach wanted to leave the text open by hinting at expressive variances. Or he was in a hurry and made careless mistakes, which his copyists had to 'fix' in the copying process. On the basis of both hypotheses is the expectation of regularity and consistency in the text. The idea that such irregular variety might be intentional sounds striking to some present-day music scholars and performers. I believe the reason is the tradition of literalistic faith in the text, emerging as such much later than Bach's time, in which we have been shaped as performers and listeners. My main perspective in this thesis is to investigate the role of variety as an important feature of Bach's music. It opens a much broader perspective of thinking that goes outside of the accepted standards and can accommodate amorphous looking as well as structurally or stylistically coherent works. A classic example of this problem are the four different readings of the

55. Webster, "The Triumph of Variability: Haydn's Articulation Markings in the Autograph of Sonata no. 49 in E flat," 61.

manuscript copies of his Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012).

1.5 Bach's Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012) and the Search for 'Truth'

Bach's Suites for Solo Cello are among the most popular masterpieces in the canon of Western music. Composed in the 1720s, despite of the missing composer's original, this music has been transmitted and performed in the last three centuries with enduring success. It is only after the discovery of the four primary sources (A, B, C and D) when musicologists began preoccupied with revealing Bach's 'true', original ideas of this music. Performers and scholars in the last two centuries aimed for discovering the formula that would explain the popularity of the Cello Suites either by providing 'the ideal' performance edition or by identifying the composer's initial musical idea. The result today is more than 100 performing editions, each suggesting a different version, claiming to reflect the true (authentic) idea that Bach had in mind. Central to this search is the authority of the composer, providing 'the' only reference point for originality. The outcome of this perspective is that in the presence of the composer's score autograph, all additional variants, copies, and re-workings appear with secondary value. This is the case of Bach's violin solos, which many scholars use as an important reference for studying the Cello Suites. Along with the composer's autograph score, the music survived in a few other manuscript copies, two of them, like the Cello Suites, in the handwritings of Anna Magdalena Bach and Johann Peter Kellner. In the existence of the composer's authority, however, these are

deemed with secondary importance.[56]

A search for stable facts based on provable evidence and logic has determined the course of research investigation of the Suites. The majority of scholarly writings aim at identifying the traces of the composer's lost original. A classical approach is a comparison of the differences in the written texts in the four primary sources. Many scholars and editors draw genealogical trees of possible connections between them in order to identify the composer's original. This is the guiding thread in Hans Eppstein's critical report of his edition of the Cello Suites which is part of *Neue Bachs Ausgabe* — one of the most respected complete modern editions of Bach's music so far. It is an authoritative reference for many scholars and performers of today. In his report Eppstein describes the differences and similarities between the primary sources of the Cello Suites.[57] His investigation traces shared copied errors between the sources. This approach originates from a method in classical philology known as 'the principle of common error' where the editor compares discrepancies between different sources in order to trace the ancestor (master) source. By outlining similarities in the written texts, they draw conclusions whether the copies have the same ancestor or not.[58]

In his critical report Eppstein concludes that the two early copies (Anna's and Kellner's scripts, Sources A and B) have been copied from two different autographs, now lost. The

56. See the study of Joel Lester, *Bach's Works for Solo Violin: Style, Structure, Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 20, where Lester comments that Kellner's copy was either copied from an earlier draft of Bach or might be a reflection of Kellner's attempt to simplify Bach's musical idea. About Kellner's manuscript copies of Bach's music, see Stinson, "J. P. Kellner's Copy of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo" and Russel Stinson, *The Bach Manuscripts of Johann Peter Kellner and His Circle: A Case Study in Reception History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989).

57. See "Sechs Suiten für Violoncello Solo: BWV 10071012"; *NBA, KB VI*, vol. 2, (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1990), 18–26.

58. James Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music: History, Method and Practice* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 65.

other two scripts (Sources C and D), according to him, share similar errors that differ from the texts of the two early sources and hence must have stemmed from yet another source. In his genealogical connections between the sources, Eppstein accepts Anna's copy as the closest to Bach's original. Anna's manuscript has been generally acknowledged in musicological circles as reliable still from the late nineteenth century. Alfred Dörfel was the first to recognise its significance in 1879.[59] Many editors after his first completed edition of Bach's works continuously referred to her copy as the source that must be the closest to Bach's lost original.[60]

More recent editors follow Eppstein's approach and continue to trace the genealogical hierarchy between the sources in order to identify a single 'correct' model of the music. Ideally, this should be the composer's final version. In their critical performance edition from 2000, Bettina Schwemer and Douglas Woodfull-Harris also take Anna's script as 'the principal source'.[61] The most important aspect of this trust in her script, however, are the written-out pitches and rhythm. Although there are some pitch and rhythmical differences between the sources, in their general appearance, the texts are similar. Various editors have interpreted those differences either as alternative variances or as mistakes. The diversity of suggested readings of the Suites in all the sources, however, is mainly suggested by the variety of articulation and not merely by textual differences. The most problematic issue in Anna's script is her irregularly written slurs. Like many other scholars, Schwemer and

59. See Dörffel's editions "6 Suiten für Violoncello" in *J. S. Bachs Kammermusik*, vol. 6; "Solowerke für Violine" and "Solowerke für Violoncello," vol. 27/1, part of *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe*, (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1879), vol. 30.

60. See Zoltán Szabó, "Precarious presumptions and the "Minority Report": Revisiting the Primary Sources of the Bach Cello Suites," *Bach* 45, no. 2 (2014): 1–33.

61. Schwemer and Woodfull-Harris, *Johann Sebastian Bach. 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso BWV 1007-1012*, 6.

Woodfull-Harris dismiss Anna's articulation as being inconsistent, careless, and done in a hurry.[62]

In his latest publications from 2014 and 2015, the performer and scholar Zoltán Szabó questions this general trust to Anna's copy. According to his research, it is not Anna's but Kellner's copy (Source B) that is closer to Bach's lost autograph.[63] Following Eppstein's approach and relying on his training and experience as a performer, Szabó takes 'common logic' as his main criterion. He compares the differences in notated pitches and rhythm between the primary sources of the Suites. Leaving the articulation issue aside, he identifies either copying mistakes or alternative variants. Szabó's course of investigation, however, does not differ from established research practices. Central to his approach is again the identification of a single exemplary model of this music. In his earlier article from 2014, he draws a genealogical tree of the extant sources of the Suites and, like Epstein, concludes that Anna's and Kellner's scripts have been copied from two different autographs.[64] Hence, both of them are'authentic'. In his comparison, however, he labels Anna's script as copied from an earlier composer's draft of the Suites and Kellner's copy as resultant from a revised version of Johann Sebastian himself.[65] With this he suggests a more subtle hierarchy of authority, based on the idea of compositional progress: the latest revision of a musical idea is more mature, reflecting the composer's preferred version.[66]

62. Schwemer and Woodfull-Harris, *Johann Sebastian Bach. 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso BWV 1007-1012*, 6.

63. Szabó, "Precarious presumptions and the "Minority Report": Revisiting the Primary Sources of the Bach Cello Suites"; Zoltán Szabó, "Remaining Silhouettes of Lost Bach Manuscripts? Re-evaluating J. P. Kellner's Copy of J. S. Bach's Solo String Compositions," *Understanding Bach* 10 (2015): 71–83, `http://bachnetwork.co.uk/ub10/ub10-szabo.pdf`.

64. Szabó, "Precarious presumptions and the "Minority Report": Revisiting the Primary Sources of the Bach Cello Suites," 23–24.

65. Ibid., 26.

66. In support to his argument Szabó states that Kellner's reading of the suites is more interesting, mirroring

Central to Szabó's research approach is the expectation of revealing clear principles of logic and continuity. Possibly this is the reason that he left the articulation issue outside his investigation. As he comments, the slur applications in the sources and also in the following numerous printed editions is so divergent that is impossible to trace any kind of logic. According to him, Anna's treatment of articulation is misplaced and 'consistently imprecise', calling it 'incorrect and lacking any musical insight'.[67] In justifying his chosen research method, he even asserts that issues of articulation marks are auxiliary and less important than the notated text. He claims that 'a misplaced slur will modify the interpretation and the technical execution of a passage, but is likely to remain undetected by most listeners.' In comparison, 'altered pitch and duration would be immediately obvious to all with relatively trained ears'.[68]

Choosing a single performing model of this music as exemplary is problematic. It automatically labels other interpretative readings as secondary or even 'wrong'. Condemning Anna's irregular slurs as impractical or 'lacking musical insight', casts doubts on her script as a reliable (or even 'original') document. In other words, the irregularity of the slurs in her script does not respond to expectations of logic and consistency, accepted to be common for Bach's music. In this context, her reading appears 'error-ridden' and impractical, which closes a possible way for exploring how this music could be played.

Searching for provable evidence about Anna's scripts, in his article from 2007 Yo Tomita

a composer's revision from a later date. His strongest supporting evidence is that Bach rarely chose a simplified version of an earlier work after revising it. See Szabó, "Remaining Silhouettes of Lost Bach Manuscripts? Re-evaluating J. P. Kellner's Copy of J. S. Bach's Solo String Compositions," 74.

67. Szabó, "Precarious presumptions and the "Minority Report": Revisiting the Primary Sources of the Bach Cello Suites," 5 and 29.

68. Ibid., 13.

examines the role of Anna Magdalena as Bach's copyist from the perspective of source studies. He compares Anna's copied music with the handwriting of other scribes from Bach's circle. Unable to see consistency and common logic in her scripts, he discredits Anna Magdalena as a reliable copyist. Most problematic in her copies is that they differ greatly in quality. Some reflect lack of experience, other are, however, neat and done with care. On the basis of this discrepancy Tomita concludes that Anna was inexperienced and 'overworked scribe' who lacked the competence of a skilled copyist.[69]

An interesting case is the provocative opinion of the Australian researcher Martin Jarvis. Jarvis took the issue of authorship as most important for establishing an authoritative reference point. Departing from established ways of analysing handwriting, he used the rather new and little explored in musicological contexts approach of applying forensic techniques of handwriting analysis. In his interpretation of the results, he claimed that not Johann Sebastian but Anna Magdalena was the composer of the Cello Suites.[70] He announced his findings first to the media in 2006, which might have triggered Tomita's publication in 2007. An year later, in 2008, Jarvis presented his results to the Bach community, whose reaction was suspicion and disbelief.[71] The latest documentary movie *Written by Mrs Bach* (2014) based on Jarvis's book with the same title caused heated discussions in musicology circles, resulting in defensive reactions in the community of Bach scholars.[72] Jarvis's 'findings' are clearly untenable. They lack substantial historical evidence

69. Yo Tomita, "Anna Magdalena Bach as Bach's Copyist," *Understanding Bach*, no. 2 (2007): 59–76, `http://www.bachnetwork.co.uk/ub2/tomita.pdf`.

70. Jarvis, "Did Johann Sebastian Bach write the Six Cello Suites?"; Martin Jarvis, *Written by Mrs Bach* (Pymble, N. S. W.: Harper Collins Publishers, 2011).

71. See the report from the *Third Johann Sebastian Bach Dialogue Meeting*, 2008: http://www.bachnetwork.co.uk/dialogue-meetings/dialogue-meeting-2008/ .

72. Tatlow, "A Missed Opportunity: Reflections on *Written by Mrs Bach*."

and depend too much on speculation. This is not surprising, given the scarce physical evidence we have about the Suites. However different Jarvis's findings about the Suites are, they do not differ much from the striving of identifying a single exemplary model to represent the 'true', 'authentic' version of this music. The core aspect of his approach is the question of authorship. It is either Johann Sebastian or Anna Magdalena that should bear the responsibility for providing 'the original', 'correct' version of the Suites.

Apart from historical and source studies examinations, the Cello Suites have also been a subject of analytical examinations. In his study from 2007 Allen Winold took the formal-structural approach of investigation as central to understanding this music.[73] Winold's starting point is Forkel's idea of 1802 about order, continuity, and proportion in Bach's music. The kernel of his method is to trace connections between different units (melodic and rhythmical motifs) based on similarity. His main goal is to identify structurally important points of importance (salient aspects of unification), which, according to him, not only determine musical form but also would be helpful for music's interpretation. In most of his conclusions, these are individual pitches that act as salient points of structural unification. Winold draws his conclusions on two major aspects: thorough roman numerals harmonic analysis and categorising melodic patterns based on principles of similarity. Similarly to the majority of research approches to the Cello Suites so far, Winold concentrates on pitch and rhythmical analysis of the written-out text and does not take into account articulation, bowing, ornaments, and performance practice issues. He relies on Bettina Schwemer and Douglas Woodfull-Harris's historical conclusions and accepts Anna Magdalena's manuscript copy as principal. Similarly to the majority of research opinions,

73. Allen Winold, *Bach's Cello Suites: Analyses and Explorations*, vol. 2 vols. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007).

Winold follows the assumption that Anna's slurs are mistaken and, hence unreliable.

Winold's research goal is to explain the general compositional idea of the Suites as it has reached us in its written-out texts. Central to his approach is analysis of the implied harmony, which to a great extent determines the formal structure of the individual movements. Starting from roman numeral harmonic analysis, Winold makes statistical melodic and formal connections regarding structure and symmetry. Important problematic issue of the cello suites is the great variety of expressive readings which is transmitted by flexibility of articulation. By eliminating articulation issues, however, which is the main aspect of research (and performance) disagreement and in many cases interferes with the implied harmony, he accentuate the formal-structural perspective of understanding this music as decisive for the formation of an interpretive model of the Suites. From this viewpoint, the aim of his examination is not different from the majority. It takes the text as a starting point and by proving strong connections between other works of Bach, its aim is to trace features of universality.

Winold's study is an important step in understanding Bach's compositional idea. His approach, however, focusses on selected aspects of the written-out text (on the provable, and certain data), which follows positivistic trends in the field of focusing on the visual and the provable — the text. This perspective puts forward the idea of a single 'right' solution to the puzzle. Without placing the music into its historical contexts, it appears that Bach's musical idea is locked into a fixed framework of 'correct' mode of thinking. Excluding articulation issues, however, Winold bypasses the controversiality of the question of interpretation of this music.

The eminent Dutch cellist Anner Bylsma is among the few to examine the Cello Suites from the perspective of how this music could be played. In his two publications *Bach, The Fencing Master: Reading Aloud From the First Three Cello Suites* (1998) and *Bach and the Happy Few: About Mrs. Anna Magdalena Bach's Autograph Copy of the 4th, 5th and 6th Cello Suites* (2014) Bylsma follows unconditionally Anna's slurs. He takes them as a proof for a sophisticated way of musical thinking, trying never to repeat the same bowing.[74] Based on his experience as a cellist (convincingly backed up by his two recordings), he claims that the variety of her articulation is intentional and that each slur has a meaning and can be justified. Crucial for this stand is that Bylsma does not seek to isolate an authoritative reading that worths preserving and reproducing. He examines Anna's script with the open mind of a passionate experimenter without seeking evidence for or against known performing formulas. Central to his approach is the question how the Suites could be played. He does not assert, however, that this should be the only correct way of performing them. His main idea is that Anna's articulation mirrors a sophisticated preference for expressive thinking that was typical for master performers, which faded away in later aesthetic tastes. Bylsma's writings are intriguing and thought-provoking. He, however, does not address them to academic audiences and does not provide solid historical background to support his stand. Yet, his two recordings of the Suites, along his analyses, prove that Anna's interpretational variety is performable with the right technique and performance approach.

In his doctoral thesis the performer and scholar John Lutterman examines the Cello Suites from a similar perspective.[75] Unable to select an authoritative text, he views the Suites as

74. Bylsma, *Bach, The Fencing Master: Reading Aloud From the First Three Cello Suites*; Bylsma, *Bach and the Happy Few: About Mrs. Anna Magdalena Bach's Autograph Copy of the 4th, 5th and 6th Cello Suites*.

75. John Kenneth Lutterman, "Works in Progress: J. S. Bach's Suites for Solo Cello as Artifacts of Improvisatory Practices" (PhD diss., University of California, 2006).

artefacts of unwritten improvisatory practices, of which Bach was unsurpassable master. By surveying influential improvisation treatises up to Bach's time, Lutterman places the Suites in the context of a thorough study of improvisation practices in Europe that Bach must have inherited and further developed. His investigation gives an essential scholarly foundation to understand the Cello Suites as a versatile process that is flexible enough to change according to the context of performance. Lutterman's and Bylsma's writings outline an alternative approach to the Cello Suites. Central to both studies is the possibility of going beyond the written-out text in order to explore an important feature of Bach's music: its flexibility to change in order to communicate with different audiences.

In this study I see the 'idiosyncrasy' of Bach's musical ideas as a subtle reflection of the existence of various aesthetic modes of music appreciation. Bach's location, in the centre of a changing intellectual space of modernity, in Leipzig confronted him with composing music for a diversity of audiences. Evaluating published accounts of aesthetic standards in Bach's time and comparing them against selected compositions of Bach, would provide a biased judgement of his music. Instead of searching for solid evidence of aesthetic categorisations, I view his music as flexible enough to adapt in order to communicate with a particular audience and its needs. The most we can do is to understand how his music functioned in the cultural environment in which he lived and worked. In order to do this, we need to reexamine it from the context of its own cultural milieu without letting later historical tastes and practices interfere with our judgements.

Chapter 2

Changing Geographies of Rhetoric on the Border Between Two Centuries

Scholars often describe the period between the late seventeenth and the late eighteenth centuries as a turning point in the cultural and political development of European countries.[1] Economic transformations such as intense competition between trade markets and banks in nearly every country in Western and Central Europe enabled large groups of middle-class people to achieve new prosperity, turning them into a new urban wealthy class. These changes led to a shift of power from traditional aristocratic elites towards trade centres with influential economic and cultural demands (such as Berlin, Hamburg, Leipzig, Frankfurt am Main, London and Paris), which began to weaken the power of privileged classes.[2] The new social order threatened the old ruling system with social disorganisation. The newly formed wealthy non-aristocratic class began to impair the absolutist authority of the ruling monarchs in Europe not by force and riots but by the desire to blend with polite society through

1. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*; Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*; James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

2. For a more detailed account of this process see Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 223–226; Carol K. Baron, ed., *Bach's Changing World: Voices in the Community* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 1–34.

acquiring refined manners, cultural taste, and good education. All these qualities were traditionally considered as aristocratic privileges. The decisive turning point was viewing culture as a powerful political instrument to dissolve authoritarian power of the monarchies.

A crucial novelty of the time was a high demand for communication. The newly formed urban class gave rise to the emergence of a new communication platform: the space of the 'public sphere', establishing the voice of the public.[3] Its members competed for power with the aristocracy not by using force but by acquiring polite manners, cultural accomplishment, and public speaking skills.[4] A thirst for communication and cultivating knowledge paved the way for the thriving of business, economy, and politics through the means of culture and education. Depending on the social context and the specific needs within a community, its

3. The phenomenon of the public sphere is notorious for its complexity. The first examination of its role in the socio-cultural development in West Europe appeared in Jürgen Habermas, *Structurwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, first published in German, 1962, Translated as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* by Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989). For a discussion of Habermas's concept of the public sphere, a good place to begin is Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992). For a historiographical discussion of Habermas and a detailed bibliographical list of writings dealing with his theory see Harold Mah, "Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians," *Journal of Modern History* 72, no. 1 (2000): 151–175; Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, 1–16; see also Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 5–14. Insightful critical analyses of Habermas's theoretical model can also be found in Dena Goodman, "Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime," *History and Theory* 31 (1992): 1–20, Margaret Jacob, "The Mental Landscape of the Public Sphere: A European Perspective," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 28 (1994): 95–113, Anthony J. La Vopa, "Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe," *Journal of Modern History* 64, no. 1 (1992): 79–116. On Habermas's chronology of German contexts see also Andreas Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit: Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994). About more recent discussion of Habermas and the public sphere see Christian J. Emden and David Midgley, eds., *Changing Perceptions of the Public sphere* (USA: Berghahn Books, 2012), Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002).

4. Peter H. Wilson, *Absolutism in Central Europe*, Historical Connections Series (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), Hamish M. Scott, "The Consolidation of Noble Power in Europe," in *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New York/London: Longman, 1995), 1–52, Baron, *Bach's Changing World: Voices in the Community*, 1–34; see also Ulrich Siegele, "Bach and the Domestic Politics of Electora Saxony," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bach*, ed. John Butt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 17–34.

members shared and disseminated a variety of different cultural values, practices, and experiences. As a result, there emerged a plurality of communities, sharing similar needs, understandings and practices, relevant within their own boundaries of place and time. Bach's Germany was not an exception of these trends. The historical geographer Miles Ogborn calls them 'spaces of modernity'.[5]

Miles Ogborn's theoretical framework explains history not as a linear progressive flow but as a constellation of geographical spaces in which knowledge, customs, and routines were understood, practiced, and disseminated in many different ways. The initial impulse for developing such a diversity of attitudes is the variety of needs and experiences within the networks of people that shared them. This approach demonstrates the existence of different social and cultural environments with specific contextual conditions and also implies different histories: each suggesting different perspectives, experiences, solutions as well as variety of networks of people and their needs. The crucial point in Ogborn's theoretical perspective is that each of these histories, disregarding influence, power, or popularity, has an interesting lesson to teach.

Likewise, Ogborn understands modernity as a multiplicity of socio-cultural processes that could both shape and be shaped by different political, social, or cultural networks. In his understanding, modernity cannot be reduced to a single definition and temporality. It is a constellation of multiple categories of meanings and cultural values active within specific cultural conditions. The most valuable point in this perspective is that this variety of different approaches to life acts as stimulus for establishing new relationships and connections with other networks. Within this sense of modernity, the outcomes of such

5. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*.

differences are continuities of different ways of transmitting knowledge, practices, and values that come in use within various networks of people. The impact of this multiplicity of spaces onto music (and the arts in general) was the emergence of different modes of conceiving and valuing music, which closely reflected the aesthetic needs and tastes of particular audiences. From this perspective the different manuscript copies of Bach's Suites for Solo Cello appear as reflections of the needs of different communities of listeners. Anna Magdalena's varied expressive reading could be a hint of different way of thinking within a specific community of listeners. In what follows I argue that this was the community of professionally trained master musicians.

The increasing need for communication in the first half of the eighteenth century stimulated the prominence of the practice of rhetoric, which influenced almost every aspect of intellectual thought of the time. In this chapter I examine the socio-cultural milieu in which Bach lived and worked in early eighteenth-century Germany. My aims are to outline its main aesthetic trends. I begin with an examination of the broad social and political changes in West and Central Europe that triggered the emergence of the public sphere as a powerful force, shaping many aspects of public life. The need for communication fostered an increasing rate of publications of views about different social matters in the first decades of the eighteenth century. These provided the foundation on which artistic styles, tastes, and values changed. Numerous published accounts in this period about the cultural needs of communities of audiences served as the main catalyst of aesthetic transformations in the arts (including music) in the first half of the century.

Within this intensity of social transformations rhetoric became an important tool for achieving success. This aspect of understanding rhetoric, however, was different from the

norms of classical rhetoric. The ability to speak affectively and effectively in public and to influence large audiences was a symbol of erudition, sophisticated education, and power.[6] Apart from the social impact of rhetoric, its principles bonded well with music and music's potential to move the emotions. The final rhetorical stage (delivery) was regarded as especially powerful. There the speakers could demonstrate their ability to influence and move the audience. This interest in the delivery stage gave rise to the practice of performance in music as a decisive final ingredient of its goal — to move and emotionally engage the audience.

In this chapter I examine transformations of rhetorical practices from the concept of self-advancement in Bach's time. I discuss contexts of aesthetic changes that had a strong impact on music. As a result of music-critical discussions in Bach's time, an aesthetic clash emerged between music practices from the seventeenth century and the cultural needs of the newly formed public sphere. Splitting into two opposing aesthetic idioms, the conflict evolved into two polar different understandings of music, what one could call, the neoclassical and the sensualistic model. As I discuss below, such splits are characteristic for the intensive socio-political transformations of the time. They resulted in the co-existence of multiple models of understanding and sharing knowledge, which makes possible to trace a multitude of historical narratives.

6. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 111–118; see also Dietmar Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century," in *Performing Knowledge, 1750–1850*, ed. Sean B. Franzel Mary Hellen Dupree (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 60.

2.1 Variety in the public sphere

Bach lived in a turbulent time of social and cultural changes. Rapid economic development and exponentially increasing exchange of information in the first half of the eighteenth century appear as the two most important causes that prompted cultural change throughout Europe. In Blanning's opinion, the main characteristic of this era was the collision between the absolutist power of the ruling monarchs and the voice of the newly formed public sphere.[7] The public sphere emerged as a virtual matrix in which private individuals could express and communicate in public a variety of opinions about matters related to aesthetic taste, education, and politics. The term suggests that this cultural space was open to everybody from the public, regardless of class and rank. Paradoxically, however open this space might seem, it was limited to those who were literate.[8] Indeed, the heterogeneous community in the public platform of communication was socially liberated as its members varied from clergymen to not a small percentage of aristocrats. It, however, was of a highly meritocratic nature as all the members who took part in it, needed to be not only literate but also highly educated. The essence of this cultural space was the need for communication and sharing ideas in public (or outside the court), which quickly started to influence political

7. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 103–135.

8. For a detailed account of the literacy rate in Germany in the eighteenth century see Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire: The Peace of Westphalia to the Dissolution of the Reich 1648–1806*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 270–286 and 517–527; Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 111-117. See also Rab Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education 1500–1800*, 2nd edition, First published 2002 by Pearson Education Ltd. (New York: Routledge, 2014); Harvey J. Graff, *The Legacies of Literacy: Continuities and Contradictions in Western Culture and Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 182–189; James Van Horn Melton, *Absolutism and the Eighteenth-Century Origins of Compulsory Schooling in Prussia and Austria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 145–170; Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and the Downfall of Prussia, 1600–1947* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 183–246.

and/or strategic decisions and to gain more and more power in society.[9] Those who moved through this socially diverse public space discussed a variety of political and cultural issues. Through public communication the voice of the public gained more and more political power in the first decades of the century. Individual members of the public (and groups of individuals with shared agendas) used the act of 'publicity as a principle of control'.[10] This is crucially important: the public voice (consisted of individuals disregarding rank and social position), and not only noble patrons, now had the power to judge aesthetic values, current tastes, and fashions. In this light, '... 'public opinion' came to be recognised as the ultimate arbiter in matters of taste and politics.' [11]

The voice of the public quickly became an authority to dictate or judge cultural and aesthetic values. Its primary means of power was the opportunity to communicate and reason in public a variety of opinions about culture, politics, and education. An important outcome of its growing power was the formation of journalistic criticism which could influence the expectations and taste of the educated reader. Some of the results of such rivalry for power found their representation in the birth of numerous cultural phenomena whose traditions are still thriving in the twenty-first century. These include public libraries, periodicals, and newspapers, as well as journalism and criticism as professional activities. Questions about the causes of such rapid political and social changes in the eighteenth century have produced an enormous body of literature.[12] It also played an essential role in the formation of open

9. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 3–14; see also Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1989); Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750*, 258–274, 628–663.

10. Cited in Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 9.

11. Ibid., 2; Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, 1–16.

12. Timothy Blanning provides a detailed bibliographical list of the literature related with the political and cultural changes in the eighteenth century; see Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old*

public debates about cultural values in the form of polemic discussions. An important aspect, however, is not so much its capacity to determine aesthetic criteria as its facility to support or discourage a chosen aesthetic trend.

The essence of the social reorganisation in the early eighteenth century is the replacement of the representational function of culture (associated with the absolute power of the monarchs until the late seventeenth century), turning it into a publicly accessible commodity. Previously a privilege of monarchs, the Church, or the nobility, such representational power intensified and polarised in the first decades of the eighteenth century. This resulted in diametrical differentiation between public and private spheres. Jürgen Habermas was the first to discuss this influential idea in his Habilitation *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (1962).[13] In his work he stresses the strong political function of culture. Central to his ideas is the relationship between public and private from the middle ages to the present. These separations Habermas defines as 'objectivization of the institutions of public power'.[14]

According to Habermas, culture was a main context for this shift in power relations between aristocratic and non-aristocratic circles. The act of rebellion consisted of the claim that aesthetic judgment was a privilege anybody could enjoy. The more widespread the production and circulation of cultural objects became, the more likely those who made these objects were to declare their independence from aristocratic patronage. Consequences included the formation of reading societies, the rise of commissioning agents and publishers as a replacement of the noble patrons, and, in the musical sphere, the publication of

Regime Europe 1660–1789; on discussions about philosophical trends in Europe in the eighteenth century see Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750*.

13. Translated as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* by Thomas Burger (Cambridge, 1989).

14. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*, 8.

numerous treatises on performance practice, directed mainly towards non-professionals.

Indeed, one of the strongest manifestations of this replacement of one instance of control (patronage) by another (the public sphere) — as Timothy Blanning and others have argued — was in the field of music. Until the eighteenth century, music was associated with the authority of the Church or aristocrats. In the course of time, it became accessible to everybody who could pay and 'liberated the composer and performer from the thraldom of representation', offering them the choice of working as freelance professionals and not as skilful servants of a patron.[15] Aristocratic patronage, however, continued to play an important role in European music history long after the eighteenth century along with the rise of those new opportunities for cultural activity.

Regarding public utterances about music, one of the most characteristic features of the time was that the art became gradually more audience-oriented and attentive to the expectations and the taste of the listeners. The widening interest in music and the growing power of the public voice led to the expectation that professional musicians be proficient not only in the art of music but also that they participate actively in aesthetic debates about the arts, rhetoric, and taste.[16]

An influential outcome of the need for communication within the public sphere were polemic public debates. They acted as a catalyst for the growing interest in easily accessible education and culture including interest in the fine arts (music and painting). They often took place in the newly created social space of the coffeehouse. People went there to

15. See Ibid., 9–10. In this respect, artists who sought careers as freelance individuals began to experience the drawbacks of the freedom they had. Now they did not have the (financial) security they did under the noble patronage.

16. Scheibe's critique of Bach was a direct outcome of this 'modern' trend.

socialise by trading news and gossiping about the world. The coffeehouses stimulated exchange of information by providing easy access to periodicals and space for discussions. They served as social centres where members of the public sphere, regardless of class, rank or status, could meet. In connection to this social mix Montesquieu commented: 'it is an advantage of the coffeehouse that one can sit the entire day as well as night among people from all classes.'[17] Here were the places where new ideas about politics, aesthetic values, taste, and culture were nurtured and developed.[18] Theodor Johann Quistorp (1722–1776), a German intellectual and friend of the Leipzig-based critic and professor of rhetoric Johann Christoph Gottsched, commented in 1743:

> A coffeehouse is like a political stock exchange, where the most gallant and wittiest heads of every estate come together. They engage in wide-ranging and edifying talk, issue well-founded judgments on matters concerning the political and the scholarly world, converse sagaciously about the most secret news from all courts and states, and unveil the most hidden truths.[19]

With the emergence of the new rich urban class, the need for acquiring good quality higher

17. Quoted in Ulla Heise, *Kaffee und Kaffeehaus: eine Kulturgeschichte* (Hildesheim: Olms Presse, 1987), 127 and in Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, 247.

18. The bibliographical list of references about the role and the function of the coffeehouses is long. A good introduction to the topic with further bibliographic references is Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, ch. 7, 226–251; see also William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); about a detailed account of the history of the coffeehouses see Markman Ellis, *The Coffee House: A Cultural History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2002); Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2005); Peter Albrecht, "Coffee-Drinking as a Symbol of Social Change in Continental Europe in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 18 (1988): 91–103.

19. Quoted in Hans Erich Bödecker. "Das Kaffeehaus als Institution aufklärischer Geselligkeit", in Étienne François, ed. *Sociabiliteét société bourgeoise en France, en Allemagne, et en Suisse, 1750–1850*. (Paris, 1986), 73. Cited also in Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, 243.

education and polite manners grew. Interest in communication and languages sharpened the desire for acquiring skills in public speaking, to have manners, knowledge, and to be regarded as accomplished, regardless of the class in which one was born. The changes in the social scheme of the time presented a peculiar mixture of both challenge (for the rulers in power) and an opportunity for self-advancement (for the individuals of the public sphere). Members of the new social protocol recognised the ability to influence audiences by skilfully prepared and delivered speeches as a quality that could lead to promotion in the social hierarchy. The need to be a skilful speaker was an atribute for educated people who sought careers in academic and diplomatic circles. As a result, the study of poetry, philosophy, and theology intensified in university curricula and turned into a tool of training 'skilled speakers able to take part in public life and operate in 'polite company".[20] The art of rhetoric and the ability to speak well in public received special interest. This hunger for orators made a large quantity of works in classical rhetoric such as Quintilian's *De institutione oratoria* and Cicero's *De Oratore* to be translated, published, and easily accessible in Western Europe during this period.[21]

The voice of the public and the desire to blend with polite society, are the two social factors that brought back the interest in rhetoric after a period of hostility in the seventeenth century.[22] This interest in rhetoric, however, was not a return to the norms and formal rules

20. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, 210.

21. About the dissemination of Quintilian's treatise through Europe see Donald C. Stewart, "The Legacy of Quintilian," *English Education* 11, no. 2 (1979): 103–117.

22. Seventeenth-century intellectuals such as Francis Bacon and René Descartes criticised the art of rhetoric for being impractical and purposeless. The source for this belief was the rationalist trend for logic, clarity, and simplicity. By the end of the seventeenth century, this mode of thinking decreased the interest in rhetorical practices and focused on clear and more direct scientific approach without 'unnecessary' decorations and ornaments. Many intellectuals shared Bacon's and Descartes's distrust to rhetoric and pleaded for straightforward, uncomplicated, and intelligible language, giving 'proofs and not arguments'. Their goal was to explain truths about life through experiments and clear self-evident proofs. The rise of the public sphere in the early eighteenth

of classical rhetoric. While it continued to be taught as a school and university subject, an important aspect of this revival of rhetorical practices in the eighteenth century was that it adapted elements of classical rhetoric to contemporary models of logical and rationalist thinking.[23]

2.1.1 Leipzig as an economic and cultural centre in Bach's time

After the thirty-years war in the seventeenth century, Germany was a conglomeration of numerous small principalities and independent states. In this post-war period of uncertainty, which roughly coincided with Bach's lifetime, the country was not an exception from the trends of political and social transformations of the time. Economic growth leading to the emergence of new social class and public sphere were as strong as in other European countries (eg. France and Great Britain). The cultural and political contexts in Leipzig where Bach spent the last 27 years of his life, is representative for the transformations and their impact on daily life and intellectual thought that took place in Europe.

Leipzig in Bach's time was one of the most prosperous commercial centers in Germany. Its location on the crossroads of different European trade routes proved to be strategic for its economic success. The city's elite consisted of wealthy merchants. Many of them took part

century, however, gradually brought back the interest in classical rhetoric. See Stephanie D. Vial, *The Art of Musical Phrasing in the Eighteenth Century* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2008), 40–43; Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, 167–171 and 188–225; see also Dietmar Till, "Models of writing Histories of Rhetoric," in *Metamorphoses of Rhetoric: Classical Rhetoric in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Otto Fischer and Ann Öhrberg (Uppsala: Afdelningen för retorik vid Litteraturvetenskapliga institutionen, 2011), 11–24 and Dietmar Till, *Transformationen der Rhetorik: Untersuchung zum Wandel der Rhetoriktheorie im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2004).

23. Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century"; Till, "Models of writing Histories of Rhetoric."

in the city council which was the city's main ruling institution. Living in such a cosmopolitan place, their main goal was to protect its multicultural profile. Apart from being a trade center, Leipzig was also one of the leading intellectual locations in Germany. By the end of the seventeenth century it was an important publishing centre in Central Europe. The Leipzig university was the headquarters of many intellectuals who addressed their publications to the literate communities of the city. The city was a famous book trade location in Europe, accommodating a high number of publishers, booksellers, and printing agencies.

While under the absolutist regime of the Saxon monarch August the Great, Leipzig retained its economic success and cultivated a diversity of social life. Its political and economic policies followed the modern trends of the time and promoted social and economic advancement. Religious, political, and philosophical tolerance under the reign of August the Great accommodated multifaceted intellectual and cultural diversity not only in Leipzig but also in Saxony. In the spirit of the social changes of the time, Leipzig was exposed to a diversity of ideas, opinions, and criticism. Its commercial prosperity allowed its residents to have the leisure to enjoy and support the arts. The cosmopolitan population of the city fostered a multiplicity of audiences, each with its own needs, understandings, and preferences.

The resultant intellectual climate of the city was complex and fragmented. It accommodated a multiplicity of ideas, values, and beliefs that cannot be summed into a single model of historical narrative. The most significant in this political climate in Leipzig was the emerging new urban class of merchants which competed with the power of nobility.[24] This

24. Wilson, *Absolutism in Central Europe*, 13.

opened new opportunities of the time and established political sciences and opening of more administrative and bureaucratic positions as marks of personal and social success.[25] A short way of entering circles of administrative governance, which also led to reaching higher positions on the new social hierarchy, was through higher education. Cameralism or the science of statecraft was a newly established university subject not only in Leipzig university but in many other universities in Central Europe.[26] University curricula focused on training merchants as well as administrative workers or lawyers of family businesses. Erudition in political sciences, philosophy, and public speaking became highly valuable and established subjects like rhetoric, philosophy and logic as central to university training.

A significant difference in this historical time was that ambition and trade could replace inherited privilege and by acquiring good education and manners every individual could climb up the new social hierarchy.[27] Rhetorical practices were a useful means for reaching this goal. This, however, was not the normative rhetoric of the ancient classics, traditionally taught as a school subject, and concentrating mostly on grammar and imitation of classical authors. In this climate of change school- and university-level education needed a reform.

Central in the education reform was the replacement of Latin with German as an official language of instruction. A key figure in this educational shift in Germany was the seventeenth-century teacher and writer Christian Weise. Weise was a graduate from the Leipzig university. He had the analytical acumen to foresee the impacts of the

25. Mark Walker, *German Home Towns: Community, State, and General Estate, 1640 – 1871* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 111.

26. Baron, *Bach's Changing World: Voices in the Community*, 9.

27. On the issue about inherited versus acquired privilege and social status and the socio-political changes in Bach's Germany see Ibid., 61; see also James Sheehan, *German History 1770–1866* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 132.

socio-political changes of the time. He gained high popularity among the broad literate population in Saxony because he addressed his writings to the general audience and not only to academic circles. His main goal was to prepare university students for government services by actively encouraging social and economic advancement. Weise's educational reform was practically oriented and concentrated on teaching statesmanship, political skills, and manners. His school curriculum emphasised the importance of rhetoric and logic and, most of all, promoted German language. Important for him was to give instructions on good communication, public speaking, and self-assurance.[28] Among the established intellectuals who followed his teaching scheme was Gottfried Lange, a mayor in Leipzig during Bach's tenure who gave Bach his full support.

Important for Weise's success was that he turned rhetoric into a tool for achieving social advancement.[29] In his work he skilfully adapted principles of classical rhetoric to current contexts of socio-political needs and purposes.[30] It is important to note that despite of the expressed criticism and doubt of rhetoric's purposes, teaching and practice of rhetoric on German ground never ceased. It, however, was not the normative classical rhetoric that focussed on imitation and text production. Weise's understanding of rhetoric was an example of an important shift throughout the seventeenth century in rhetorical education: from theoretical instructions to more practice-oriented applications.

28. Baron, *Bach's Changing World: Voices in the Community*, 15.

29. Hans-Gert Roloff, "Christian Weises Lebensweg," in *Christian Weise: Gedenken anlässlich seines 350 Geburtstages* (Zittau: Christia-Weise-Bibliothek, 1993), 17–19.

30. Weise's rhetorical writings are *Der politische Redne* (Political speaker), 1677 had two revisions: in 1684 *New Erläuterten politische Redner* and in 1687 *Institutiones Oratoriae*, giving systematic instructions in rhetoric.

2.2 Multiplicity of rhetorical models

The principles of classical rhetoric and its ability to influence the audience originated from the ancient Greeks and were later on developed by the Romans. From Antiquity throughout the Enlightenment they have continuously been closely related to music.[31] Today, we link the art of speaking with the names of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. The most often referred rhetorical treatise in music is Quintillian's *De institutione* which provides the most comprehensive description of the art. The essence of Quintilian's understanding of rhetoric is to reveal truths about complicated matters by means of argumentation and conversation and not by presenting proofs and experimental results (as will be dictated much later in the seventeenth century). His understanding reflects not only the persuasive aspect of the art but also a requirement of the orator's good intentions.[32] This had much greater significance in the process of instructing a good orator than simply the skill of being virtuoso in using the power of language. Among the multitude of rhetorical concepts in eighteenth-century societies, was the idea of seeing mastery of rhetorical skills as a necessary condition in order to have 'a positive role in society'.[33]

The general understanding of rhetoric today has compiled a variety of interpretations. Researchers from the early twentieth century did not restrict their understanding to viewing it as only choosing the 'right' words. They interpreted rhetoric as a structure generation tool

31. See an overview of the relationship between music and rhetoric in Vial, *The Art of Musical Phrasing in the Eighteenth Century*, 32–59.

32. Good intentions as a way of expressing moral truths rather than mere desire for power.

33. Vial, *The Art of Musical Phrasing in the Eighteenth Century*, 33; see also Judy Tarling, *The Weapons of Rhetoric: A Guide for Musicians and Audiences* (St. Albans: Corda Music, 2004); Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*.

responsible for the style and form of the speech as well.[34] As Quintilian explains, an oration has a five-part hierarchy:

1. *inventio* — the stage of finding an idea

2. *dispositio* — the stage of finding the proper order and arranging the initial ideas of the argument

3. *elocutio* — regarding the style of the language according to the purpose of the prepared speech

4. *memoria* — memory, needed for memorising the order of the ideas and words

5. *pronuntiatio* — delivery or the presentation of the speech by using appropriate intonation and gestures

In the view of those who codified the principles of rhetoric, only the last stage of this five-fold division concentrates on the act of performance. Its central feature deals with the speaker's behaviour on stage, as well as with their voice intonation. Quintilian describes it as involving mainly gestures and body language, which plays an important role in the delivery of meaning and also entertaining the audience. All these elements played a crucial role to influence and (emotionally) engage the audience. The purpose of an oration was not merely to give information about something new (as in a lecture, for example, or a conversation which was a fashionable literary genre in eighteenth-century cultural life) but

34. About a discussion of the influence of rhetoric on music and the research understandings of its principles from the establishment of musicology as an academic discipline see Mark Evan Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Rhetoric of the Oration* (Cambridge, USA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 53–88.

to influence large numbers of people. This was to be achieved by grabbing their attention, and by entertaining them to give them the pleasure of presenting a well structured and well delivered, even theatrical speech on a particular topic. The ability of music to affect large audiences corresponded well with the main goal of the art of public speaking. This linked the principles of both arts in an intertwined relationship. As Brian Vickers asserts, Quintilian himself made the connection between both arts by stating that they both 'know how to adapt form to feeling, find the appropriate expressions from emotions'.[35]

With skills such as masterful command of language, gestures, and tone of voice a good speaker could influence and emotionally engage the audience.[36] The focus on nonverbal aspects of the art (such as body language and voice intonation) opened in the first half of the eighteenth century the opportunity of forming a different understanding of rhetorical practice. It co-existed parallel with normative teaching of classical rhetoric and is a sound representation of a growing multiplicity of ideas and intellectual thought in this historical time. Due to a clash between demands of modern life and conservative methods of teaching classical rhetoric, the art of speaking transformed from a matter of enquiry into a matter of elegant aesthetic appearance. These new rhetorical trends were different from the principles of classical rhetoric.[37] They focused on the superficial level of the idea of looking good, which was to be achieved by making good impressions through the ability of speaking well in public.[38] The aim to acquire learned manners, elegance, and mastery of rhetorical skills seem to concentrate mainly on the last stage of Quintilian's five-fold system (*pronunciatio*).

35. Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 372; Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century"; see also George Barth, *The Pianist as Orator: Beethoven and the Transformation of the Keyboard Style* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992).
36. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, 211–216.
37. Till, "Models of writing Histories of Rhetoric," 65.
38. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, 224.

These skills, together with the desire to 'look good', were necessary elements for achieving accomplishment and a way to reach polite society.[39]

As Dietmar Till comments, up to seventeenth century, classical rhetoric was mainly an educational subject and was distributed entirely in Latin, focusing mainly on text production.[40] In the German speaking territories, the socio-political changes at the beginning of the eighteenth century affected rhetorical practices in two ways: 1) by replacing traditional teaching practices in Latin with German and 2) by concentrating on reading and text reception instead of imitation of classical authors and text production.[41] This shift could be traced in the vernacular rhetoric of Wolfgang Ratke already in the seventeenth century, as well as in the practically oriented educational programs in the aristocratic academies (*Ritterakademien*) and nobility education in Bach's time.[42]

Similar rhetorical shifts happened also at the Halle University. The professor of law Christian Thomasius promoted in his work practicality of educational content rather than focusing on traditionally taught content in Latin.[43] Central to his work is theory of emotions and *decorum*, which focused on the content (*res*) than on the linguistic form (*verba*). Similar to Weise, he claimed that the norms of classical rhetoric were too pedantic and inflexible and did not follow the five-fold rhetorical model in his teaching. Regarding the implementation of German as an official language of instruction and communication, the role of Johann Gottsched was significant. Gottsched was one of the main protagonists in the

39. This was especially strong in Great Britain as reflected by the so called Elocution Movement. See Ibid., 213–216.
40. Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century," 57–60.
41. Ibid., 60.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., 61–62.

discussions about educational reforms. His mission was to standardise German as a national language and to rationalise the school curricula. This perspective of understanding rhetoric reflects an important clash with philosophy. Understandings of philosophy focused on discovering truths through application of reason and logic. Rhetorical eloquence, however, concentrated mainly on the act of persuasion. It did not aim at discovering truths but at elucidating chosen topics, assuming them to be true.[44]

An opponent of this rhetorical model in Germany was the German philosopher Christian Wolff. He used the rational basis of mathematics as a tool for understanding philosophy. Through his followers his ideas stretched to rhetoric, poetics, and later on, aesthetics.[45] Active followers of this rationalist position in Germany were Johann Andreas Fabricius, Friedrich Andreas Hallbauer, Johann Christoph Gottsched as well as Gottfried Polycarp Müller, Johann Jakob Schatz, and Daniel Peucer.[46] A supporter of reason and logic, Hallbauer agreed with Weise on the point of implementation of the normative rules of rhetoric as a school subject. He found classical rhetoric pedantic because it followed traditional laws without using rational thinking.[47]

Multiplicity of ideas about the usefulness of rhetoric was characteristic also outside Germany. One of the most influential publications of this new historical time — the era of 'rhetoric for the public sphere' — was *Traité de l'éloquence* (1728) of the French

44. Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century," 69–70; Patrik McCreless, "Music and Rhetoric," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 848

45. Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century," 67.

46. Gunter E. Grimm, *Literatur und Gelehrtentum in Deutschland. Untersuchungen zum Wandel ihres Verhältnisses vom Humanismus bis zur Frühaufklärung* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1983), 576–578.

47. Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century."

philosopher Claude Buffier.[48] Although Buffier's work is not well known today, his ideas were influential in the eighteenth century and were translated into English, Spanish, German, and Polish. In his understanding of rhetoric he concentrated on the ability of the speaker to influence the emotions of the audience. Buffier's aim was to attract the attention of the audience through the use of expressive language. The main difference from Quintilian's rhetoric is that Buffier put an accent on the final stage of the process, on the act of delivery.[49]

The essence of Buffier's rhetoric is: 'forget all the rules and taxonomies, and concentrate on the real end basic means of eloquence — moving the soul by vivid expression.'[50] The focus of his treatise was not on the use of scientifically concise and plain language, based on proofs and experiments. He concentrated on highly affective talks that led to emotional engagement of the audience. The means to achieve such engagement was by the use of varied and expressive language. According to Buffier the use of figures in a persuasive speech helps the orator to express his ideas in different ways according to the type of audience.[51]

Buffier understood the use of varied expressive language not only as the means that clarifies an orator's initial ideas but also that develops them and makes them understandable by different audiences. He 'demonstrates ... how useful it is for achieving a kind of presence or vivacity in the mind (soul) of the auditor, particularly in its version as repetition, which far

48. A good starting point about Buffier's work in English is Kathleen Sonia Wilkins, *A Study of the Works of Claude Buffier. Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 66 (Genève: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1969).

49. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, 224.

50. Ibid., 196.

51. Buffier, however, reduces the number of figures to just six or seven which he finds of universal usage. One of such universally used figures in rhetoric is the *exposition* where the orator states his ideas and introduces the topic to the audience. His view of the role of the exposition in the rhetorical talk was new and original at the time. Claude Buffier *Traité*, 334, cited in Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, 195.

from causing *ennui* in the soul is the secret of producing an impression or *sentiment* [understanding] in it.'[52]

2.2.1 Aspects of musical eloquence in early eighteenth-century Germany

Although not explicitly prescribed by eighteenth-century composers, one can trace a similar variety in music expression. The notated music in many music manuscripts suggest rich expressive variety in the form of interpretive flexibility. Composers did not lock their ideas into a specific expressive framework by writing out precise performance instructions. They left this final interpretive stage open to be developed further according to the performer's creative thought, taste, or technical ability. In many cases music scores include different suggestions of the same or similar melodic motif or passage.[53] I see this freedom to think creatively as a strong connection of shared trust between composers and performers.

Many writers on music of the time referred to a close link between music and rhetoric in their publications. Among the most frequently cited authors today are Johann Joseph Quantz, C. P. E. Bach, and Leopold Mozart. All three compared music performance with an orator's speech.[54] In his famous treatise Quantz asserts:

52. Claude Buffier. *Traité*, 334, cited in Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, 195.

53. This level of expressive flexibility appears in the score as varied, ambiguous, or 'missing' articulation marks. See Webster, "The Triumph of Variability: Haydn's Articulation Markings in the Autograph of Sonata no. 49 in E flat."

54. Johann Joachim Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*, translated and edited by Edward R. Reilly (London: Faber and Faber, 1966); Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments. translated and edited by William J. Mitchell, Vol. 1, Berlin: C. F. Henning, 1753; vol.2, Berlin: G. L. Winter, 1762; Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, translated by Editha Knocker as *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing*; 2nd ed., London: Oxford University Press, 1951 (Augsburg: In Verlag des Verfassers, 1756).

> Musical execution may be compared with the delivery of an orator. The orator and the musician have, at bottom, the same aim in regard to both the preparation and the final execution of their productions, namely to make themselves masters of the hearts of their listeners, to arouse or still their passions, and to transport them now to this sentiment, now to that. Thus it is advantageous to both if each has some knowledge on the duties of the other.[55]

This statement is a valuable document of the guiding aesthetic conventions in music of his time. By emphasising a close connection between both arts, Quantz outlines an important aesthetic trend in music circles: flexibility to adapt to different contexts that practicing musicians had in the process of communication with their listeners. The essence of his stance is the importance of music's final goal: to influence the listener's passions by expressive communication. I view it as an influence from the general context of the public sphere. Given the intensity of the socio-political transformations in the first decades of the eighteenth century, I assume that the large quantity of influential publications about music is not only a representation of the learned background of their authors. It is also a result of the formation of a new public opinion.

Johann Mattheson was the first early eighteenth-century music writer who attempted to give a formal theoretical explanation of the compositional process in music through the principles of rhetoric.[56] His ideas display compositional processes as consisting of Quintilian's five rhetorical stages.[57] This formal outline would play an important role in the

55. Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*, 119.

56. I discuss Mattheson's role as a critic in more detail in chapter three.

57. Johann Mattheson, *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister*, A revised translation with critical commentary by Ernest C. Harriss, first published Hamburg: Herold, 1739 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981).

scholarly approaches later on as a yardstick for explaining music's value. Mattheson's writings, however, could be easily misunderstood if seen through later musicological frameworks and theories.[58] Many scholars saw in his theoretical account a rather pedantic theory towards using rhetorical stages as instructions for providing a formal structure-formula of a musical composition.[59]

If one reexamines Mattheson's polemic writings from the context of its time, however, they reveal a different perspective of music understanding. Instead of reading a degree of pedantic or authoritarian literal instructions, they outline an aesthetic theoretical framework of the compositional process, in which the initial idea (the *inventio*) is continuously varied throughout the piece. As a result, this creative variety breeds new ideas. This is the kernel of oratory: to persuade and to move the audience. Mattheson, however, saw even greater opportunities in music than in rhetoric:

> The ways and the means of elaboration and application are not nearly so diverse and varying in rhetoric as in music, where one can vary things much more frequently, even though the theme seems to remain the same to some degree. A musical oration has a great deal more liberty and incompatible surroundings than a different [i.e. verbal] kind of oration; hence in a melody there might be something similar among the exordium, the narratio, and the propositio, so long as they are made different from one another by keys, by being made higher or lower, or by similar marks of distinction (of which ordinary rhetoric is ignorant).[60]

58. Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Rhetoric of the Oration*, 80–86.

59. Rolf Dammann, *Der Musikbegriff im deutschen Barock* (Cologne: Arno Volk, 1967), 126 speaks of Mattheson's theory as 'dogmatisches Aufbauschema'; Nancy Baker, "Heinrich Koch and the Theory of Melody," *Journal of Music Theory* 20, no. 1 (1976): 3 comments about his theory that 'the reader learns a good deal more about oratory than he does about the musical structure of a composition'.

60. From Mattheson's *Vorrede* to his *Capelmeister*, 25–26, in Ernest C. Harriss's edition, (1981), 63.

Contrastingly, general understandings of rhetoric today associates its processes with music either as a structure-generating tool or as a surface device, responsible for the decorative figurations. Recent studies of the essence of rhetoric, however, suggest that it had much deeper intellectual and philosophical function. Its goals were to stimulate interpretive and creative thinking and to persuade. Instead of form-generating compositional device its central principles were primarily founded on the idea of repetition and its variations. Its main goal was to stimulate inventive creativity. Mattheson saw the use of repetitions in music to be an inexhaustible stimulus of the imagination:

> [...] repetitions in [music] are not to be judged according to common standards of speech [...] but simply with regard to melody, which dons an almost new garb with each emphatic repetition [...] be it through transformed pitches [...] through decoration, embellishment, ornamentation, etc.[61]

One of the most influential rhetorical treatises in Bach's time was the work of the sixteenth-century professor of rhetoric Erasmus of Rotterdam, *De Copia* (1512). Erasmus described the ability to create variations as critical for mastering the art of rhetoric:[62]

> Exercise in expressing oneself in different ways will be of considerable importance in general for the acquisition of style. [...] Variety is so powerful in every sphere that there is absolutely nothing, however brilliant, which is not dimmed if not commended by variety [...] [Boredom] can easily be avoided by someone who has it at his fingertips to

61. Mattheson, *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister*, 377.

62. Bettina Varwig gives a detailed account of the influence and the transmission of Erasmus's ideas up to the eighteenth century in Varwig, "One More Time: J. S. Bach and Seventeenth-Century Traditions of Rhetoric"; Varwig, "'Mutato Semper Habitu': Heinrich Schütz and the Culture of Rhetoric."

> turn one idea into more shapes than Proteus himself is supposed to have turned into.[63]

Instead of concentrating on the five-fold principles as a structure-generating device, Erasmus emphasised the importance of mastering the *abundant style*. He explains it as the same idea expressed in many different ways with a variety of nuanced connotations. Speakers who have mastered the art of rhetoric should, in addition to expressing different nuances, be able to adapt a speech to the ability of the audience to understand and hence to affect and influence.[64]

We can trace Erasmus's ideas in many later rhetorical and music-theoretical treatises. Mattheson is not the only eighteenth-century writer to have such ideas of music. Friedrich Erhard Niedt concentrates on the technique of finding as many variants of the same simple figured bass idea and developing them into different dance genres in his compositional treatise *Handleitung zur Variation* (1706). Johann David Heinichen too considers in his *Neu erfundene und Gründliche Anweisung zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Basses* (1711) the ability of creating variations as central for the composer and states that a bad composer is the one who is not capable of 'writing down twenty different versions of a single formula', which clearly echoes the influence of Erasmus.[65] In his *Anfangsgründe zur musikalischen Setzkunst* (1752), Joseph Riepel describes similar techniques of expansion and rethinking the old material in a new way, pointing a diversity of functions that different variants potentially could bring.[66] In this alternative understanding, rhetoric is not a structure generating tool at all. It focuses instead on stimulating creativity and interpretive thinking,

63. Desiderius Erasmus, "Collected Works of Erasmus: Literary and Educational Writings," in, 2. ed. Craig R. Thompson, vol. 28, translated and edited by Betty I. Knott (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 302.

64. This perspective of understanding rhetoric resonates with Buffier's rhetorical model. See my discussion above.

65. Johann David Heinichen, *Neu erfundene und gründliche Anweisung zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Basses*, Hamburg: Benjamin Schiller, 1711 (reprinted Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2000), 11.

66. Seen from a different perspective, Riepel's compositional procedures lead to another influential source of creativity, those of the combinatorial mathematical permutations (*ars combinatoria*). This provides an important link between the seemingly remote domains of rhetoric (as verbal art) and mathematics (as representing transparent clarity and logic).

aiming at discovering numerous variants of the initial idea.

Mattheson based his opinion of music on subjective and abstract thinking, ranking music among theology, history, literature, and rhetoric. Such a viewpoint presumes that music's interpretive (unpredictable) nature would be difficult to tame within the ideological boundaries of paradigms and theoretical standardisations. Probably this is the reason why Mattheson did not leave a full systematic description of his theory. I think his concept of a large-scale form was not to pour musical ideas into the mould of a ready-made structure. He must have acknowledged the creative capacity of linking musical ideas, from which he derived his theoretical viewpoint. In this process of elaboration emerged the closely intertwined and hierarchically inseparable rhetorical stages of *inventio* and *elaboratio*.

In this light, the primacy of musical ideas was not their specific structural placement in the composition but their versatility and flexibility for further elaboration. This outlines a different aesthetic connotation of music. Its formal structure appears as a technical mechanism to guide the listener in the process of an 'intelligible unfolding' of the composition.[67] Paradoxically, the process of elaboration becomes also the generator of the highly valued striving for unity within the composition. Compositional techniques borrowed from rhetoric procedures to elaborate an idea in such a way that it gives birth to other different ideas. However remote from each other they might be, they originated from an initial musical thought. I believe this is the core of the passionately discussed concept of unity in music.

Coherence in music, in the context of Mattheson's understanding, was not to be understood from the point of view of the 'thematic' structure of the piece. Rather, borrowing from rhetoric, it is the manner in which ideas follow each other. In this sense, coherence is not to express only one main idea throughout the entire piece. It focuses on deriving a variety of musical ideas from a single

67. Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Rhetoric of the Oration*, 181–191.

source — the initial musical invention (Hauptsatz).[68] Therefore, the formal structure of a piece of music is a result of the succession of musical thoughts and not the other way around. In his study *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Rhetoric of the Oration* (1991), Mark Evan Bonds examines the concept of unity in early-eighteenth-century music from the formal-structural perspective. He argues that the diversity of variants in the *inventio* stage of the process should have equal structural weight. The central claim of his view is that they cannot be ordered hierarchically by giving primacy of the initial idea as 'main' and all the other as secondary.[69] Thus, the process of inventing and constant elaborating are the creative forces in a musical composition.[70]

Mattheson believed that the starting point of the compositional process is melody and not theoretical rules of chordal progressions. He kept and promoted this view of music throughout his whole life. In 1737 he published his *Kern melodischer Wissenschaft*, in which he explains his theory of melody as the fundamental element in music. This immediately placed him in opposition to Jean-Philippe Rameau's theory of harmony.[71] Mattheson's insistence on the importance of melody in music is

68. Ibid., 110.

69. Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Rhetoric of the Oration*, 82–110.

70. Some academic discussions of J. S. Bach take this idea as central and examine his music from the perspective of musical persuasion. See Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*; John Butt reaches similar conclusions about Bach's use of articulation marks in John Butt, *Bach Interpretation: Articulation Marks in Primary Sources of J. S. Bach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); see Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*. Bettina Varwig applies the same idea onto the first movement of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto* (BWV 1048) in Varwig, "One More Time: J. S. Bach and Seventeenth-Century Traditions of Rhetoric."

71. In 1722 the French music theorist and composer Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683–1764) published his *Traité de l'harmonie* (Treatise of Harmony) in Paris, which was to become one of the most influential music-theoretical works in the history of music. At the basis of Rameau's theory was the search for 'universal principles' of music that can explain and standardise music as rational knowledge. Rameau believed that the foundation of music was harmony. He built his theory on the idea of the triad and its inversion. He believed that melody was a secondary result of harmonic progressions. This caused major controversies at the time of the publication of his ideas and provoked heated polemic debates. Johann Mattheson was one of his major opponents in Germany. Primacy of melody over harmony was Mattheson's main argument against Rameau's theory. A good starting point about the controversy about melody versus harmony and about Rameau's theoretical ideas is Joel Lester, *Compositional Theory in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 127–174. See also Thomas Christensen, *Jean-Philippe Rameau: The Science of Music Theory in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) Towards the end of the eighteenth century, another influential

comparable with the stage of *inventio* (finding a topic) in the rhetorical process. Melody, in Mattheson's sense, was the initial invention that could be reshaped, developed, and revisited over and over again. In this process of elaboration and interpretive thinking, it seems that melody is indeed the main source of building up a musical persuasion. It has all the necessary elements that could potentially breed further variants which would lead to other new ideas.[72] A short melodic model could provide a good starting point. It consisted of many other elements of music such as implied harmonic progressions, rhythmical patterns, and ornamentation that could fruitfully provide further elaborations. Each of them can be a subject of a single variant. Such are variants playing with pitch, rhythm, or harmony. In this sense, Mattheson's plea to give primacy to melody over harmony makes sense as harmony was only one of the elements that could provide further variants. The parameter of articulation, as discussed by Joseph Riepel and also by Leopold Mozart, is also an inexhaustible source of variations.[73]

Within the framework of rhetorical creativity, or, in Erasmus's terms, mastering 'the abundant style', the art of speaking was founded on repetition and its variations. So do the new doctrines of variety in music. In order to avoid stating the same idea again in the same way, skilful orators knew how to adapt to the audience and to express their ideas in such a way to affect their listeners. Music's rich expressive potential could easily accommodate such an open flexibility to maintaining the listener's attention. Buffier's as well as Erasmus's understanding could be the evidence that can explain

eighteenth-century music theorist and a student of J. S. Bach, Johann Philipp Kirnberger quoted from a letter of C. P. E. Bach: 'You can proclaim loudly that my foundations and those of my late father are anti-Rameau.' See Johann Philipp Kirnberger, *Die Kunst des reinen Satzes in der Music*, Translated by David Beach and Jurgen Thym as *The Art of Strict Musical Composition*, first published 1771 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), vol.2, 188.

72. See for instance Friedrich Andreas Hallbauer, *Anweisung zur verbesserten teutschen Oratorie*, First publication Jena: J. B. Hartung, 1725 (Kronberg: Scriptor, 1974), 271–272. See also the study of literary hermeneutics of Robert Scott Leventhal, *The Disciplines of Interpretation: Lessing, Herder, Schlegel and Hermeneutics in Germany, 1750-1800* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 57–58.

73. See chapter four; Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*; Joseph Riepel, *Anfangsgründe zur musicalischen Setzkunst. 3. Gründliche Erklärung der Tonordnung* (Frankfurt: Christian Ulrich Wagner, 1757).

'inconsistently' written expresion markings of the same or similar melodic passages in a musical work (such as articulation or ornaments) as varied repetitions of the composer's initial idea. By using versions of the same ideas, the orator achieves not only a high level of attentiveness but also lays the foundation for better understanding of his own ideas.

Buffier and Mattheson were making very similar arguments. I would suggest that to understand Buffier's programme is to understand Mattheson's. Both are documents of the emerging public sphere. The essence of Mattheson's understanding of music is that its goal is to touch emotionally and thus to affect the listener. In an argument that parallels Buffier, Mattheson states that writing beautiful music does not depend on following strict rules. This does not differ much from Weise's and Thomasius's practically oriented rhetorical model. The only judgement for Mattheson comes from the ear. Everything is variable according to the aesthetic taste of both composer and performer. Before I discuss his role on the music-theoretical stage, however, I would like to examine aspects of aesthetic changes in the arts in the first half of the eighteenth century.

2.3 Aesthetic ideas about music in Bach's time

In Ogborn's theoretical framework, the eighteenth century bursted into a space that held within it a multitude of different equally valid truths about life. They formed a complex compilation of multiple closely dependent contexts and conditions of a particular situation.[74] In this climate of change, people could and did develop a variety of understandings and viewpoints. Manifold political and social transformations made possible reformed and renegotiated relationships between existing traditions and new social needs. This interaction between the old and the new made early eighteenth-century Germany a geography of modernity, a space where rethinking the old in order to the new became a

74. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*, 1–38.

specific cultural feature. According to John Butt, modernity 'is most productive when it interacts with traditions that persist in the societies it affects or which it, in turn, discovers in other cultures'.[75] The socio-cultural changes in Europe in the first decades of the eighteenth century strongly affected the arts.[76] Their influence on aesthetic thoughts about music resulted in a complex split into different contrasting models of the art. I view them as influential, competing geographical spaces of aesthetic taste. Each of them promoted different principles of what is valuable and meaningful in music.

One influential mode of understanding music compelled it to conform to rationalist theories of representation.[77] Such theories considered music to have a universal value and to represent universal standards of truth. Central tenets of this conceptual understanding were ideas of logic and transparant clarity, represented in music by the neoclassical mimetic theory. The principles of mimesis required music to imitate and represent the natural.[78] Supporters of these new conventions for good taste expected music to be free from 'too much' art (eg. contrapuntal techniques, according to Mattheson and Scheibe) and to be simple and easily comprehended by anyone.[79] In this framework, the doctrine of the affects (*Affektenlehre*), which Mattheson eagerly supported in his writings, was an attempt to explain emotional (the intuitive and the inaudible) states in music as clearly as possible. It aimed to give explicit instructions to composers and objective explanation to listeners. Its collection of figures (signs) was a mechanical system to signify different emotional states which were to be imitated.

The influence of rationalist ideology for clear and visual evidence and the quickly expanding newly

75. Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*, 6.

76. Timothy Blanning gives a detailed examination of the cultural changes in Europe in this period in Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789*.

77. I base this discussion on David Wellbery, *Lessing's Laocoon: Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 43–48; quoted by Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 240–241.

78. Rationalist views of searching for a single principle that explains the function of the arts culminated in the writings of the French philosopher Charles Batteux. In Germany they were disseminated by the writings of Johann Christoph Gottsched. See my discussion in chapter three.

79. See chapter three below for a detailed discussion.

social urban class fostered the formation of the new *galant* style in music.[80] This new taste opposed the complexity of the contrapuntal techniques of seventeenth-century musical traditions by criticising them as unnatural and difficult to comprehend. Mattheson's polemic writings reflect this trend. Especially bitter are his remarks that exercising canonic techniques might be very industrious and time consuming but does not garantee artistically pleasing results.[81] Other eighteenth-century writers on music (such as Johann David Heinichen and Johann Joachim Quantz) also link this new aesthetic trend in music with the *galant* style. The price to be paid for the aesthetic substitution was to smoothen musical context towards unity and consistency, with which Bach could not entirely comply.[82] In the eyes of the early eighteenth-century German intelligentsia (represented by writers such as Gottsched, Scheibe, Mizler, Mattheson, to name a few) Bach's music was not modern, but too complicated for its affects to be perceived by the general audience.

Mattheson's statement in *Critica musica* expressed listener-oriented aesthetic ideas of music, which outlined another geographical space. Its primary goal was to please and to accommodate the general taste of the public. In his first theoretical work *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre* (1713) he declared that music should be adapted according to the understanding of the wider audience. He directed this work to such a wider audience, aiming to instruct:

80. The *galant* style in music arrose in the first half of the eighteenth century. It was characterised with simple and lighthearted melody with light accompaniment. The *galant* style was often contrasted with contrapuntal techniques. See Chappell White, *From Vivaldi to Viotti: A History of the Early Classical Violin Concerto* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992), xiv; Daniel Heartz and Bruce Alan Brown. "Galant." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/10512.

81. Johann Mattheson "Die canonsche Anatomie", in *Critica Musica* I (1722–1725), 346. For a detailed discussion of the aesthetic disputes about nature versus art see also John Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). About the aesthetic conflict between rationalist theory and instrumental practice in music in eighteenth-century Germany see Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 115–142.

82. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*; Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 93–127.

> How a gentleman (*galant homme*) may acquire a perfect understanding of the loftiness and dignity of noble music, form his taste accordingly and understand the terminology, and argue skilfully about this excellent science.[83]

Mattheson held the idea that music must please mainly the listeners and must be written according to the understanding of the public. In this framework, the composer had to follow certain rules of propriety. Seen from this angle, art was a form of entertainment that is flexible enough to be adapted to the needs of different audiences. I argue that the basis of this concept has its roots in the flexibility of rhetoric to persuade. Mattheson's views reveal an alternative philosophical basis of music — the sensualistic view. In this perspective, the sensual appears to be another way of perceiving the world. Michel Foucault would call this a form of *episteme*.[84] It encouraged the formation of a third aesthetic model in music, which was yet to appear in the second half of the century with the ideas of Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's aesthetics.

Although this third aesthetic model appeared much later in the century, as described in literary theory,[85] I trace some of its features in some music practices in the first half of the century. Its central characteristic was subjectivity of artistic interpretation which was free from any kind of representation or rules of propriety. The freedom of the artistic imagination as an aesthetic basis, sought to experiment and expand further artistic ideas in order to find meaning and intention. The improvisation traditions in Bach's time combine artistic freedom, intuitive thinking, and flexibility to adapt according to a specific context. I believe this was a reserved area for masters and learned connoisseurs as it required specialised knowledge and skills in music for both practicing and

83. '[...] wie ein Galant Homme einen vollcommenen Begriff von der Hoheit und Würde der edlen Musik erlangen / seinen Gout darnach formieren / die Terminos technicos verstehen und geschiktlich von dieser vortrefflichen Wissenschaft raisonieren möge.'; *Neu-eröffnete Orchestre*, title page, translation by David Yearsley, quoted in Ibid., 94.

84. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, First published in 1966 titled *Les mots et les choses: Une archéologie des sciences humaines* (London: Routledge, 2002).

85. Wellbery, *Lessing's Laocoon: Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason*, 43–48.

understanding. The seventeenth-century polymath Athanasius Kircher described features of the so-called *stylus phantasticus* in his *Musurgia unversalis* (1650) as related to improvisation and characterised by free and unrestrained method of composition. Johann Mattheson redefined it almost a century later in his *Der Vollkommene Capelmeister* (1739) as a free flow of composer's fantasy which is closely related to the process of performance, unrestrained by structure.[86]

But in Bach's time a music practitioner of his status had to make choices in order to keep up with the new trends. It is curious to note that Bach did not fit entirely in neither of these three aesthetic models (rationalist mimetic theory, listener orientation, and the free interpretive mode of artistic thinking). As Dreyfus discusses, his music shares elements of all three together: '[...] while Bach's musical practice shares something of a representational stance toward its signified objects, also embodies as a nurturing source a hermeneutic approach which molds, shapes, and transforms musical meanings in ways that are ultimately unacceptable to any primarily mimetic theory.'[87] In many cases Bach combines in his music features of rationalist clarity and galant simplicity in an ingenious game of creativity.

2.3.1 The neoclassical opposed to the sensualistic aesthetic models of music

Rationalist mode of thinking served as a basis for the so-called neoclassical aesthetic model of the arts. It elevated simplicity and clarity as its highest aesthetic values and insisted on intelligible meaning, purpose, and clear logic. Within the arts, these rational views were characterised by

86. For a detailed discussion and a survey of the primary and secondary sources of *stylus phantasticus* see Paul Collins, *The Stylus Phantsticus and Free Keyboard Music of the North German Baroque* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

87. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 242.

persistent requirements for simplicity above all, and for clear intelligible content without unnecessary ornaments. These requirements served as a basis for explaining the practical purpose of the arts. Ideas about the pragmatic function of all arts were articulated in the late seventeenth and in the first decades of the eighteenth centuries in France and formed an influential rationalist mode of understanding meaning and value. French intellectuals emphasised their rational aspects and promoted a delivery of a clear moral message to the mind as its central virtue.[88] In the early eighteenth-century setting this idea found its representation in the principles of imitation of nature.[89]

French rationalist ideas about the arts combined principles of clarity, intelligibility, and simplicity as a representation of the natural and culminated in the theoretical work of the French philosopher Charles Batteux (1713–1780), *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe* (1746). Determined to find a theory that can explain the beautiful in all the fine arts, Batteux based his ideas mainly on the concept of imitation.[90] He derived his principles mostly from literature and poetry and claimed that they were the same for all fine arts. Elevating the verbal model as a leading principle, he insisted that music must imitate speech and that each sound should reinforce the unity of the whole. He based his theory on the idea of coherence and criticised the use of contrasting ideas. On the other hand, however, literal repetitions were considered redundant and tedious.[91] In music, his theoretical view elevated the poetic texts in the vocal genres, leaving instrumental music in a subordinate position.

Batteux did not exclude music from the category of the arts. According to him, it, like the other arts, must explain its content as clearly as possible and every tone must have an intelligible meaning. Possible cognitive confusions, according to his theory, could arise in moments of sudden change,

88. Bellamy Hosler's discussion of the French ideas about the arts gives a helpful list of bibliographical references to primary and secondary sources on the topic. see Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 31–68.
89. Ibid., 43–45.
90. Ibid., 62.
91. Ibid., 129.

contrasts, and expressive variety. Paradoxically, the emerging highly expressive Italian instrumental style at the beginning of the eighteenth century used exactly these features. Its international popularity contradicted the neoclassical aesthetic model and became a subject of severe critiques. According to the neoclassical ideology, without the aid of language music alone could not clearly convey intelligible messages to the mind. In this sense, musical sounds could not convey any comprehensible meaning, which made the art seem inferior. It elevated verbal arts such as literature, poetry, and drama as superior as they had the ability to communicate directly with the general audience through the facility of language.

In sum, the neoclassical model of the arts was centered on three main conceptual ideas:

- imitation of nature as an empirical source for moral truths,
- the role of the poetic text as the main means to express such truths
- recognition of the role of gesture as a visual representation of communicating moral messages

Applied to music, such requirements of unified and clear-cut content regarded vocal genres and dance music as having clear cognitive meaning. The former relied on the poetic text as the medium for transmitting cognitively clear messages. The latter recognised the role of gestures as a means of communication. The most problematic in this aesthetic theory is the assumption that it provides a general aesthetic foundation for all music genres. Purely instrumental music, in this light, appeared highly problematic.

As I discuss in the next chapter, instrumental practices of the time (especially strong in Italy and Germany) suggested that music was somehow different from the other arts and could not quite match the neoclassical requirements. Based entirely on verbal principles, such a theoretical model presented

a dilemma that music should either be excluded from the category of the arts or it should be adjusted to rationalist principles about clarity and logic.

Batteux's ideas were highly influential within European intellectual circles. One of his devoted followers was the German literary critic Johann Christoph Gottsched. Gottsched was professor of poetry and rhetoric in Leipzig from 1723 until the end of his life. He promoted Batteux's ideas in Germany, going even further. Holding a firm rationalist position, he accepted linguistic principles as the only means towards clarity and intelligibility. Adopting the idea of intellectual cognition of the arts, he insisted that music, as one of the arts, should have a plot.[92] In order to fulfil its function, it should follow principles of simplicity, clarity, and conveying meaning via the help of words.[93] Although he had no background or training in music, he insisted that music should be based on verbal principles and should be purified from 'unnecessary' repetitions, ornamentation, and contrasts. Transforming Batteux's theory, he attacked instrumental music as unintelligible and even meaningless, calling it *unverstendliche Misch-Masch*. He stated that music must always be related to poetry as only the words could make it understandable for the mind.[94]

It is possible that Gottsched directed his hostility to music towards the Italian instrumental style of the time, which seemed to him and other observers to suffer from incoherence because of its constant variety in texture and expression. In the verbal model of the arts, indeed, all these properties were

92. Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 117.

93. The main goal of Gottsched's works (*Versuch einer kritischen Dichtkunst für die Deutschen* (1730) and *Grundlegung einer deutschen Sprachkunst* (1748)) was to purify the German language and to establish German literary and spoken standards. About Gottsched's influence see Eric A. Blackall, *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language, 1700–1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), ch. 4 and 5. See also Philip Mitchell, *Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700–1766): Harbinger of German Classicism*, Studies in German literature, linguistics and culture (Columbia: Camden House, 1995); for an extensive, up-to-date discussion of Gottsched's role in early-eighteenth-century Germany and bibliographical references to secondary literature see Eric Achermann, ed., *Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700–1766): Philosophie, Poetik und Wissenschaft* (Hawthorne, New York: Akademie Verlag, 2014).

94. Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 115–142.

'unintelligible'.[95] His main plea followed Batteux's theory that music must have cognitive meaning. By advocating unity and coherence as markers of intelligibility of music, Gottsched, however, transformed Batteux's ideas in order to use them against aspects of instrumental music such as virtuosity or compositional complexities (eg. contrapuntal techniques).[96]

Despite Gottsched's opinionated criticism, it seems that German thinkers and music practitioners had reservations of viewing music from the rationalist perspective. According to Bellamy Hosler, the reason lies in the strong traditions of Luther's attitude to music. Luther regarded music as 'a gift from God' and described it as the only art that had the uncanny, *mystical* power to influence the human soul.

> The noble art of music is according to the word of God the greatest treasure on earth. It regulates mind and mood, heart and humor. If you want to make the sad person happy, or tame a wild, brazen man so that he becomes gentle, or give a timid person courage, make an arrogant one meek and the like, what can better serve that end than this sovereign, precious, worthy and noble art?[97]

Luther accepted unconditionally its potential to affect human emotions and even to transform one's personality without searching for a logical (scientific) explanation. This 'mysterious' ability of music to play with sentiments without the aid of language was not to be explained until the late eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries with the rise of the philosophical branch of

95. Ibid., 2–4.

96. Ibid., 128–129.

97. 'Die edle Musica ist nach Gottes Wort der höchste Schatz auf Erden. Sie regiert alle Gedanken, Sinn, Hertz und Mut. Willst du einen Betrübten fröhlich machten, einen frechten, wilden Menschen zäumen, dass er gelinde werde, einem Zaghaftigen einen Mut machen, einen Hoffärtigen demutigen und dergleichen, wass kan besser dazu dienen denn diese hohe, teure, werte und edle Kunst?' From the foreword to *Symphoniae jucundae* (Wittenburg, 1538), quoted in Karl Anton, *Luther und die Musik*, 3rd ed. (Zwickau: J. Herrmann, 1928), 51–52.

Aesthetics.[98] Exactly this difficulty in finding a scientific, proof-based explanation of how music works, made it different from the other arts.

Generations of professional musicians in Germany adopted his attitude to the art. Deeply rooted in the principles of their music, it seems that they could not easily substitute it with the rules of Batteux's verbal model.[99] This unconditional belief in the expressive power of music evolved in the course of the eighteenth century into the opposite to the neoclassical model, the doctrine of the sensualism.

To summarise, the complex blend of changing socio-political settings, the open space of the public voice, and a variety of national traditions in the first decades of the eighteenth century resulted in the co-existence of two diametrically different aesthetic views about music. The strong influence of rationalist ideas on music focused on imitation of nature and promoted simplicity, clarity, and didactic transparency of all arts. These demands were the basis of the so-called neoclassical model. Among its promoters, the loudest voices were those of Charles Batteux and Johann Christoph Gottsched, who accepted verbal principles to be the fundamentals of all arts. They advocated clear unified content and coherence of ideas.[100] According to its ideological framework, in order to have intelligible content, music should imitate nature. It must have a unified, clear-cut content, should be

98. Till, "The Fate of Rhetoric in the "Long" Eighteenth Century," 72–74. For a discussion of the aesthetic disputes about instrumental music in eighteenth-century Germany see Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 69–114.

99. Joel Lester reaches similar conclusions about the status of modal theory in the early eighteenth century. Its principles followed entirely linear progressions, which had to step down to the realisation of the new chordal harmonic principles and the major-minor system. According to him, despite of its downfall in the rest of Europe, German-speaking composers continued to use modal principles until the mid-eighteenth century. In a more global picture, this made German theory 'out of line with the evolution of the major-minor thinking elsewhere on the continent'. Lester argues that the reason for this disparity is religious. He discusses the sharp difference between the catholic and the protestant traditions as reflected in music theoretical writings. The Protestant plainchant still lived within the modal traditions while the catholic music practice applied the new major-minor system. See Joel Lester, *Between Keys and Modes: German Theory 1592–1802*, Harmonologia series, no.3 (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press, 1989), 47–60.

100. For a discussion of this aesthetic confrontation see Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 31–68.

free from artificialities (such as the complexity of the canonic contrapuntal techniques) in order to be understandable to everyone. This elevated vocal music as superior to the instrumental genres because of the poetic texts as a verbal medium.

Although very influential throughout whole Europe, the neoclassical ideas clashed on German ground with some cultural traditions. These traditions were closely related with the Lutheran unconditional acceptance of music to move and arouse the passions. This represented the other side of the aesthetic dispute — the sensualistic view about music or the idea that music has power to influence the emotions without the aid of words. Its supporters regarded music on the basis of its sensuous influence. Music's direct sensuality proved to be different from the other arts simply because it did not rely on visual representations but affected the soul by aural perception. Johann Mattheson was the first to promote the sensualistic view about music in Germany.[101] He accepted music on the basis of its ability to move and did not require any didactic content. The only aspect that counted as content was the emotional affect on the audience. This released instrumental music from its inferior position to the vocal genres.[102] Instrumental music, according to Mattheson, had the same goal as vocal music: to arouse the emotions. If the listener is moved, music has content. According to Bellamy Hosler, Mattheson's most important achievement was to attain 'a responsiveness to instrumental music independent of any cognition of represented content — a trust in the affective power of music.'[103]

The popularity of the highly expressive Italian instrumental music justified this idea in practice. It did not require any unified content and consisted of a great deal of contrasts and imaginative

101. In his first publication *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre* of 1713 Mattheson challenges many of the established musical traditions in Germany. Addressing his first treatise to the general audience and the amateurs, he expressed the idea that music originates primarily in the feelings and only after that can be explained: 'for nothing is known which is not first sensed' (*nam nihil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuit in sensu*). See Johann Mattheson, *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre*, Hamburg: Schillers Erben, 1713. Reprinted by Laaber, 2002, 3-4.
102. See my discussion in chapter three.
103. Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 85 and 69–114.

(unexpected) variety. I have traced its representation in highly expressive Italian instrumental music practices, which did not follow the neoclassical conditions for structural coherence or unified content. Instead, it relied on numerous contrasts and imaginative (unexpected) variety. This specific feature of Italian instrumental music gained its high popularity in the early eighteenth century. It was a source of awe and at the same time of severe criticism.[104] The conflict between the creative freedom of the Italian instrumental idiom and the neoclassical plea for simplicity and cognitive transparency in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is representative of the aesthetic clash between these two modes of understanding music. I see this conflict between reason and imagination as the antitheses of a unitary meaning versus interpretational multiplicity of a musical idea. The contradicting point of departure in both cases was the attitude towards instrumental music. The former model perceived it as meaningless as there was no poetic text to bring the required clear messages. The latter recognised it as the creative realm of finding its full expressive potential. These two contradicting theories were a subject of heated disputes in early eighteenth-century Germany.

2.3.2 The aesthetic split as refracted through Bach scholarship

With his sharp attack on Bach, Scheibe expressed the rationalist call for transparant clarity and logic implying it to be 'the' valid new standard in music. This marked a confrontation between the new conditions and the previous traditions. It appears that his critique might have been misinterpreted in the early years of Bach scholarship as an attempt to impose a single standard in music as 'correct'. Instead, his attack was a sound condition of one of the 'modern' aesthetic spaces: the rationalist understanding of music. It reflected an emerging phenomenon in the early eighteenth century — that allowed a critic (an individual from the public sphere) to rebuke a composer for not following the dictates of a trend. With this he sparked a heated historical debate.

104. Ibid., 1–30.

The aim of music periodicals in the early eighteenth century, such as Scheibe's *Critischer Musikus* and Mizler's *Neu eröffnete musikalische Bibliothek* was to discuss the work of leading music theorists and practitioners. Individual issues of these periodicals contained many polemic disputes about aesthetic and theoretical problems of music. The controversy between Bach and Scheibe formed part of this newly emerging practice. Another controversial aesthetic clash was publicly debated between Johann Mattheson and Johann Heinrich Buttsted.[105] Scheibe and Mizler themselves, in the role of editors of two of the leading music periodicals in Leipzig, also had public arguments. Scheibe, refusing to accept that mathematical rules and methods of inquiry are the only way to explain the beauty of music, confronted Mizler, who promoted the opposing idea that music is based on scientific (mathematical) principles and represents a scientific discipline.[106] The novelty of the time was that the work of a music practitioner could be publicly discussed and judged by experts and amateurs alike. Hence, the value of a musical composition was a subject of judgement not only of professionals but also of the opinion of the so called *galant homme*.

An important outcome of the Scheibe's attack in Bach scholarship is the opinion that Bach was seen in his time as a conservative composer who did not pay attention to the modern aesthetic tastes of his day, as someone who remained in the past and 'behind the times'. It appears that Scheibe was not alone in holding such an extreme position. Many of Bach's critics, colleagues, friends and even members of his family (eg. his sons) had reservations about his music. Even some of his defenders never truly resisted Scheibe's criticism. In 1740 Lorenz Christoph Mizler (1711–1778) published a statement in his periodical *Neu eröffnete musikalische Bibliothek* in Bach's defence. Stating, however, that although Bach follows a taste dating from 25 years ago and that he is capable of writing music according to the modern taste only if he wishes to, he does not fully oppose Scheibe's conviction that he is behind the times:

105. I discuss the clash between Mattheson and Buttsted in chapter three.
106. See below.

> If at times Herr Bach writes the inner parts more fully than other composers, he has taken as his model the music of twenty or twenty-five years ago. He can write otherwise, however, when he wishes to. Anyone who heard the music performed by students at the Easter Fair in Leipzig last year [...] which was composed by the Capellmeister Bach, must admit that it was written entirely in accordance with the latest taste and was approved by anyone. So well does the Capellmeister know how to suit himself to his audience.[107]

Mizler was one of the active members of the public sphere in Germany. He pursued polymathic interests in theology and philosophy at Leipzig University between 1731 and 1734 and thereafter Erfurt University (where he was awarded doctorate in medicine in 1747). In Leipzig he also studied music composition and had interactions with J. S. Bach. Mizler participated in polemic discussions about music through his journal *Die Neu eröffnete musikalische Bibliothek*, which he published monthly between 1739 and 1754. It served as a corresponding critical platform of his *Society of Musical Sciences* (*Die Correspondierende Societät der musikalischen Wissenschaften*), which he founded in 1738 in Leipzig. In 1747 Bach became one of its twenty members. Its purpose was to form an active group of scholars sharing similar beliefs. Mizler viewed music as a science based on mathematical principles and reason and promoted the study of music theory as its essential basis. His position represented one side of the polemic dispute about music. At the other side stood Mattheson and later on Scheibe who believed that the beauty of music cannot be expressed with mathematical rules only. This position promoted the sensualistic views about music.[108]

Two years before Mizler, in 1738, the professor of classics at the University of Göttingen, Johann

107. Lorenz Mizler, *Musikalische Bibliothek, Sechster Teil* (Leipzig, 1738), 43–44; cited in *BDok* II, 336; and reprinted in *NBR* no. 346, 349–350.

108. Mackensen and Wiener, *Johann Mattheson und Lorenz Christoph Mizlers Konzeptionen musikalischer Wissenschaft. De Eruditione musica (1732) und Dissertatio quod musica scientia sit et pars eruditionis philosophicae (1734/1736)*.

Matthias Gesner (1691–1761) also published a statement in Bach's defence. The emphasis of his praise of Bach's mastery, however, was mainly on his virtuosity skills as an organ player, leaving the kernel of Scheibe's accusation uncommented.[109] As Dreyfus comments, Gesner seemed 'either indifferent to whether Bach composed 'behind the times' or believed that his brilliance as a music director compensated in full the justifiable charge of compositional backwardness'.[110]

This historical debate is a sound representation of the competing imperatives within the intellectual geographies of early eighteenth-century Germany, under which the status of the composer also changed. It was no longer enough to demonstrate musical proficiency by mastering the requisite musical tools. As Scheibe states in his second polemic statement of the dispute, the composer was now expected to participate actively in public discussions about music as well.[111] In this new perspective the image of the composer as the music master only, became outmoded.

In the context of this critique and the changing requirements of taste, Bach's music appears problematic. This was, I argue, one of many possible perspectives of understanding music in his time. The rich diversity of ideas and most of all the potential of their interpretation in Bach's music seem to go well beyond requirements of transparent clarity, simplicity, and compliance to general standards. Instead of writing literary accounts, complaints, or expressing publicly concerns about musical issues, however, Bach expressed his views through his music only, leaving it open for interpretation. As if he wanted to demonstrate that music had much wider potential to feed creativity than to be domesticated by linguistic principles or beliefs for universal standards.[112]

109. This statement appeared in a form of a footnote in a critical commentary of an edition of Quintilian's rhetoric. See *Bach Documente II*. ed. Werner Neumann and Hans-Joachim Schulze, 331–332; also reprinted in *Bach Reader* (1966), ed. Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. 2nd ed., 231.
110. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 221.
111. This is one of the main issues in Scheibe's second polemic statement. See quoted above Scheibe "Rechtfertigung der Gegen Bach Erhobenen Vorwürfe", (Hamburg, 1738); reprinted in Neumann and Schulze, *Bach-Documente*, vol. 2, 316
112. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*, 219–244.

The individuality of his compositional thought stands out in comparison with that of his contemporaries. Looking from the perspective of Bach scholarship, the difficulty of classifying his compositions, according to specific criteria, made them seem 'problematic' or not belonging to his historical time; as if indeed he 'composed against the grain'.[113] Dreyfus has viewed Bach as a musical critic who preceded his time and composed music against established standards of taste in his time. He has interpreted his *Memorandum* to the Leipzig Town Council from 1730 as a manifestation of a protest against the regimentation of the musical market. This, however, does not mean that Bach worked in isolation, unaware of the popular aesthetic trends. His music was a complex blend of different national, stylistic, and aesthetic features.

I suggest to see his music not as mirroring (or disagreeing) with aesthetic models but as flexible enough to adapt to the multiplicity of changing 'spaces of modernity' in the cosmopolitan community in which he lived. This means that because of his position as a cantor in one of the most 'modern' intellectual centres in Germany, he was capable of great variation in his skills to invent and to create. I view the process of constant editing and reworking of his music not as a striving towards the discovery of the perfect state of his musical idea. Rather, he must have seen numerous ways of developing it in order to meet either the needs of some community of listeners, or his own desire to create. I believe the key to understand this rich creative potential is to go beyond the boundaries of any standards, genres, or styles and to look at music as a process of interpretive thinking. Its flexibility to adapt offers freedom to experiment with music's expressive capacity. Instead of following the standards of a specific aesthetic model, it appears that Bach found them restrictive and sought a way to go beyond their accepted borderlines. Scholarly approaches of classifying his compositions according to stylistic or analytical criteria appear selective by favouring some features as meaningful and dismissing others as erred. In order to grasp the originality of his musical thought, I believe, we need to view his works within the various contexts of their creation — within the varied

113. Ibid., 33–58.

geographies of their modernity.

Chapter 3

Johann Mattheson and the Notion of Variety in Music

Change is also pleasant, since change is in the order of nature; for perpetual sameness creates an excess of the normal condition.[1]

Aristotle

The first decades of the eighteenth century were marked by swift social changes in Western Europe. A characteristic result of them was the increased interest in the arts among the non-aristocratic classes. In this chapter I focus on the growing interest in music and the changing aesthetic criteria of musical tastes and values. Central to my discussion are the ideas of Johann Mattheson (1680–1764), the first acclaimed music journalist. As discussed in chapter two, the emergence of the new social class and its high interests in culture fostered plurality of cultural tastes and values. This triggered a conflict with established approaches in music education. Mattheson must have sensed a growing gap between them and aimed to fill it in. In his endeavour to adapt the new aesthetic tastes with the music traditions, he pleaded that music does not originate in strict theoretical rules but in its sensual ability to influence the emotions. Asserting in public that the only judge in music is the ear, he promoted the idea that everyone can appreciate music regardless of training and music education. This opinion

1. Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, I.xi.20, 1371a trans. John Henry Freese, (Loeb Classical Library, 1926).

provoked many polemical discussions about the aesthetic foundation of music. Mattheson's ideas accepted music on the basis of its affective potential. This made possible to judge both vocal and instrumental music on the basis of their expressive power alone.

In this chapter I examine the polemical confrontations about musical taste of the time. Apart from Mattheson's standpoint, I discuss the viewpoints of some of the most active intellectuals in Germany such as Johann Adolf Scheibe. Central to my discussion is the conflict between Johann Mattheson and Johann Heinrich Buttstett. Their opinions about music are important documents of the clash between established traditions of music understanding and the new aesthetic trends in the early eighteenth century. In the second half of the chapter, I concentrate on the concept of interpretive variety and its role in the conditions of instrumental music. I examine the standpoints of Mattheson and Scheibe and relate them to the function of chamber and solo music, which was mainly to please, entertain, and stimulate creative thought.

3.1 Polemic debates about music in Germany

Among the early eighteenth-century European countries in Central Europe, Germany stands out as the location of the most heated polemic debates about musical taste and value. Following the fashionable thirst for publicity within the newly formed public sphere, these discussions resulted in the publications of numerous periodicals, reflecting a variety of issues about musical taste.[2] In my examination I have isolated two main opposing polemic positions about musical understanding:

- the seventeenth-century traditions of learned counterpoint are sufficient for reaching music proficiency;

2. See chapter two.

- Mattheson's claim that music originates in the senses.

In 1713 Johann Mattheson wrote his first theoretical treatise: *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre*. With its publication he expressed the revolutionary view that there are no rules that can teach one how to perform music tastefully or how to please the ear. He believed that the final goal of music depended entirely on the act of performance, affirming that the ear was the only factor that could judge a musical performance as worthy. The essence of his belief is that 'music should not appeal to the eye but only through the ear to the senses, or the passions'.[3] Music for Mattheson was 'the window to the soul'. He was convinced that only through the ear (through hearing music), could music achieve certain emotional affects upon the listeners. In this sense, the theoretical rules come as a by-product of the whole process of music making. This bold standpoint caused heated polemical discussions in Germany, which left significant marks in the aesthetic views about music in the coming generations of musicians and listeners.

More than 30 years later the Italian composer, theorist, and virtuoso violinist, Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762), an avid disseminator of the traditions of Italian violin performance practice in Europe, shared Mattheson's opinion.[4] Only a master performer could affect and emotionally influence the listeners. Speaking about good taste, Geminiani implies that only through the act of performance, music can be judged as tasteful. In 1749 he wrote:

> Even in common speech a difference in tone gives the same word a different meaning.

3. Beekman Cannon, *Johann Mattheson: Spectator in Music*, Yale Studies in the history of music, vol. 1 (New Haven: Archon Books, [1947] 1968), 7.

4. Francesco Geminiani studied violin under the guidance of Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713) and disseminated Corelli's tradition in violin performance practice in Europe. In 1711 he moved from Naples to London, working as a virtuoso violinist, where he remained until the end of his life. In 1751 he published his treatise *The Art of Playing on the Violin* in London which quickly became popular. Today it is known as the best summary of the eighteenth-century Italian instrumental performance practice. See Francesco Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin*, edited by David D. Boyden (London: Oxford University Press, 1751).

> And with regard to musical Performances, Experience has shown that the Imagination of the Hearer is in general so much at the Disposal of the Master that by the help of Variations, Movements, Intervals and Modulation he may almost stamp what Impression on the Mind he pleases.[5]

With this statement Geminiani shared Mattheson's understanding that musical erudition comes through the act of performance.[6]

Johann Mattheson was a gifted intellectual with a solid and broad education whose thinking went far beyond those of his contemporaries. Having been trained as a singer in his youth and gaining his initial impressions about music from the operatic genres, he remained closely related to the operatic stage throughout his life.[7] The diversity of styles, keys, and rhythms he encountered there widened his musical perspective and showed him the broad expressive potential of music. The combination between his music expertise and the cosmopolitan experience he received as a secretary of the British ambassador John Wich in Hamburg proved to be rewarding for his journalistic talent and penetrating mind.[8] The position of a diplomat gave him easy access to many international literary sources and cultural influences. Especially strong was the impact of British pragmatism which broadened his perspectives as a thinker and influenced his understanding of music.[9] Possibly this was the source that formed his views of music as possessing a natural sensual power that can be sensed by everyone, disregarding level of education or learned abilities.

5. Francesco Geminiani, *A Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick* (London, 1749), 3–4.

6. Mackensen and Wiener, *Johann Mattheson und Lorenz Christoph Mizlers Konzeptionen musikalischer Wissenschaft. De Eruditione musica (1732) und Dissertatio quod musica scientia sit et pars eruditionis philosophicae (1734/1736)*, vii–x.

7. Johann Mattheson. *Die drei Orchestre-Schriften: Das Neu-Eröffnete orchestre; Das Beschützte Orchestre; Das Forschende Orchestre.* Introductory essay (German and English) to the facsimile reprint by Dietrich Bartel, (Laaber-Verlag, 2003); George J. Buelow, "Mattheson, Johann," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, accessed January 8, 2015, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18097.

8. Cannon, *Johann Mattheson: Spectator in Music*, 9.

9. Lütteken, "Matthesons Orchesterschriften und der englische Sensualismus."

Having been raised as a devoted Lutheran and also as professional musician, Mattheson believed that music is the highest of the arts and can only be placed next to theology. Mattheson, like Luther, understood the ability of music to interfere with the feelings as a natural gift of God and defended the idea that music is an inseparable combination of composing and performing:

> Music is the science and the art of cleverly arranging, correctly combining and delightfully performing both artful and pleasant sounds, so that the glory of God and all virtues are furthered through their euphony.[10]

Aware of the 'modern' trends in the public space, Mattheson saw an opportunity to demonstrate his innovative ideas, which could have been a step to secure a high position in the new social hierarchy of the time. As an active participant of this public space, Mattheson was surely well informed about philosophical ideas about the arts of the time. Following the revived interest in rhetoric[11], he based his ideas of music on the act of performance as the aspect responsible for the expression of the affects. He constructed his theoretical perspective on the immediate ability of music to communicate intuitively. This was, for him, the 'natural' principle in music. His fundamental goal was to establish a musical practice concentrated primarily on principles of rhetoric and grammar. For Mattheson, like for the masterful speaker, the freedom to interpret, by using varied sounds and figures, was of crucial importance for 'communicating pleasure to the soul and to man's reason'.[12]

Mattheson's ideas provoked heated polemic controversy in musical circles in early eighteenth-century Germany. His perspective sharply opposed the highly specialised (intellectual)

10. 'Die Music sey eine Wissenschaft und Kunst, geschickte und angenehme Klänge, klüglich zu stellen, richtig an an einander zu fügen, und lieblich heraus zu bringen, damit durch ihren Wollaut Gottes Ehre und alle Tugenden befördert werden.', *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister* (1739); quoted and translated by Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 72.

11. See chapter two.

12. Cannon, *Johann Mattheson: Spectator in Music*, 5–11.

understanding of the art and placed the beginning of the sensualistic views of music. The traditions of the former came from seventeenth-century music theory. They built up their aesthetic principles on contrapuntal techniques and their mathematical complexity. This intellectual approach to the art, however, made music comprehensible for elitist circles of learned or highly specialised individuals. Mattheson probably foresaw the danger of creating a gap between continuously widening audiences and their aesthetic needs and learned music practitioners.

Mattheson claimed that music originates in the senses and not in mathematical reasoning and strict contrapuntal rules. He harshly criticised the latter and pleaded for simplicity and clarity as a way to be close to Nature. He found the most natural representation of music in melody alone. Without rejecting it, however, he did not accept strict counterpoint as the only means through which music should achieve its purpose. In his writings Mattheson attacked canonic permutations as being artificial and taking too much time to satisfy the stated rules. His main argument against them was that in the end, such efforts could not guarantee the production of pleasant music despite being theoretically correct. The important point in his argument is that only practitioners and connoisseurs could appreciate the resulting musical complexity. A crucial component of Mattheson's stance is that he views music-theoretical rules not as determining music's value but as a result of the sensation of music, as a strive to provide a logical (scientific) explanation. This led him to see the practice of performance as crucial for reaching its goal: to touch the listener's heart.[13] Seen within the social context of his time, Mattheson's ideas of music are evidence of the newly expressed needs of the public sphere.

The opposite side of the dispute was the belief that interval proportions and theoretical rules determine music as science. This idea originated in ancient Greece and was transmitted through the

13. Promoting the idea that music originates first in the senses and after that it is intellectualised and explained by labels and rules, Mattheson anticipates the sensualist stand of a much later generations of musicians — the romantics.

Renaissance up to the eighteenth century.[14] Its followers understood the art as closely related with religion and afterlife. It is possible to trace their point of departure in the fundamentals of theological traditions and the relationship between cosmic motion and music as a representation of God's heavenly order. This powerful metaphor was the model of understanding strict counterpoint as a realisation of God's perfect order on Earth. Many seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century composers and music theorists relied firmly on the foundation established by seventeenth-century thinkers such as Athansius Kircher (1601–1680), Andreas Werkmeister (1645–1706), Georg Österreich (1664–1735), Heinrich Bockemeyer (1679–1751), and later Johann Adolf Scheibe (1708–1776) and Lorenz Christoph Mizler (1711–1778).

Among the most influential was Kircher's book *Musurgia universalis* (1650). The frontispiece of the book depicts the perfect order created by God in Heaven. It illustrates strict counterpoint as an earthly image of God's order, represented by the heavenly perpetual 36-voice canon sung by nine choirs of angels (Fig. 3.1).[15] The best means that could express this order, according to Kircher, were the intellectual permutations of the canonic techniques. Many important music theorists of the time articulated this metaphor and promoted the mastery of learned counterpoint and its unending combinations as a striving towards God's heavenly order.[16]

While Mattheson never rejected these theological roots, his ideas outlined a different perspective. Mastery of contrapuntal technique was a way to reaching eternity. Mattheson's point of departure was not eternity in the afterlife but the nature of human personality and the human sentiments. The controversy that followed was a result of the clash between his resistance to established music

14. David Yearsley gives an informative summary and a further bibliographical references of these music-theoretical practices. See Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 18–25.

15. Athanasius Kircher *Musurgia universalis*, Hildesheim, 1970, (1650); trans. Andreas Hirsch, *Germaniae redonatus: sive artis magnae de consono et dissono ars minor*, (Schwäbisch Hall, 1662).

16. See Georg Österreich, Untitled manuscript, Mus.ms.theor.1038, fol.35r., Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin; Heinrich Bokemeyer in *Critica Musica*, ed. Johann Mattheson. vol. I, 325. David Yearsley gives an informative summary of this understanding in Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint*, 20–25.

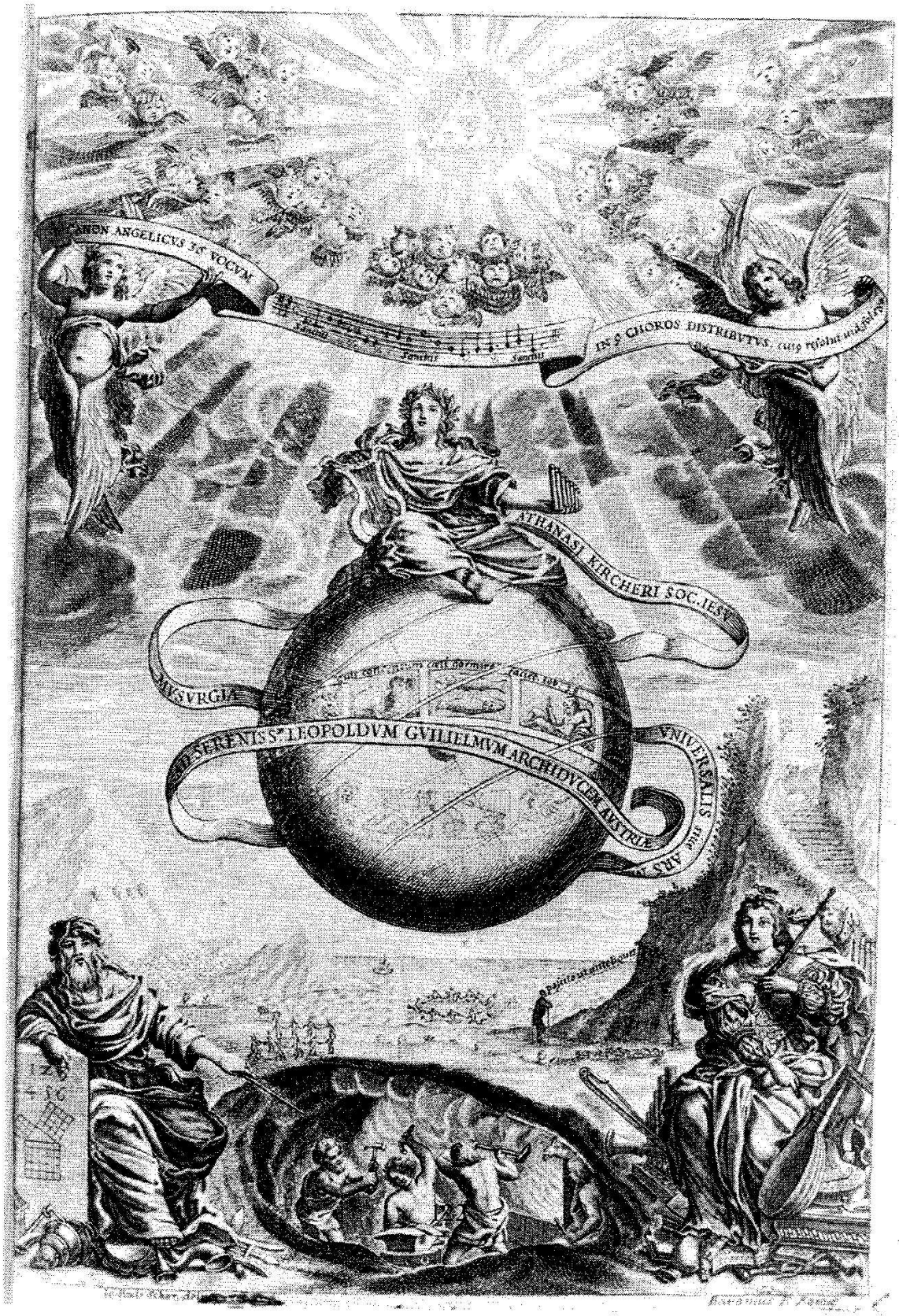


Figure 3.1: Athanasius Kircher, frontispiece of *Musurgia universalis* (1650)

traditions and the inability of his contemporaries to see further than the boundaries of the already established practices.

Mattheson's viewpoints could be summarised as follows:

- the primary perception and hence understanding of music is through its physical sound and the ear (*das Gehör*) and not theory alone;
- as a human construct, music is closely dependent on the act of performance and all theoretical rules come only as a secondary tool which again is relative to the ear;
- all of these rules are guidelines and must not be used as recipes for writing music as 'only through listening music penetrates the human soul'

By turning the tables, Mattheson advocated the importance of sensation of actual sound and with this the role of musical performance. He pleaded that music is what was heard and not what was written in the score.[17]

One of Mattheson's fiercest antagonists was the church organist and composer Johann Heinrich Buttstett (1666–1727). Buttstett supported established ideas of music education, inherited from the seventeenth century. His book *Ut, mi, sol, re, fa, la, tota musica et harmonia aeterna* (1716) was a response to Mattheson's first theoretical work *Das neu eröffnete Orchestre* (1713). It is an account of the traditional German thought about the aesthetic characteristics and function of music. His opposition to Mattheson's 'heretical' ideas described opposite criteria for good taste: that music is

17. Looking from this angle, the dispute about music's status in the first decades of the eighteenth century is not dissimilar to a more recent musicological question: Is the musical score a physical object representing music, and if not what is actually music?; see Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*, 37–42, 173–197, Thomas Binkley, "The Work is not the Performance," in *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. David Fallows Tess Knighton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 36–43.

based entirely on interval proportions and mathematical ratios. As was to be expected, Buttstett referred to the Renaissance idea that music originates and is dependent on the motions of the planets and that it can be understood only through the mathematical ratios of the intervals. Resorting to established learned authorities from the seventeenth century, he related them to religious teachings about God's creation of the world and referred to Kircher's allegorical ideas.

> God has created and made the whole world in harmony / the entire heaven stands in harmonious proportions, as witnessed by learned Kircher [...] and other authors / of whom (including the words of the one [author] of the *Orchestre* / that harmony is eternal / in the first chapter as I already pointed out. Although we are assured / that Heaven and Earth will cease to be / there is not a single word to be found in the Holy Scriptures that harmony will cease to be: rather the opposite is to be argued from c.9 Apoc.5.[18]

Music, for Buttstett, was a divine gift that only those who have thorough knowledge in theology, mathematics, and music theory can understand and judge. It required studious and detailed education, which made it a discipline designed for the noble, learned elite.

Himself a thoroughly trained music practitioner, Buttstett defended a long established understanding of the purpose of music. At the time of intensive social transformations, however, such a traditionalist position must have appeared conservative. Buttstett's insistence on thorough training in music theory could not match the quickly growing needs for culture and broader education in the first

18. 'Gott hat die gantze Welt harmonicé erschaffen und gemacht / das gantze Himmels Heer stehet in harmonischen Proportionibus, wie solches des gelehrten Kircheri [...] und andere Authores bezeugen / wo von ein und anderes (auch die im Orchestre befindlichen Worte / daß die Harmonia ab aeterno in aeternum sey / im ersten Cap. h.p. allbereit angeführet habe. Ob wir nun gleich ex Sacris versichert sind / daß Himmel und Erden vergehen werden / so findet man doch nicht ein Wörtgen in Sacris Literis daß die Harmonie auch vergehen soll: sondern es ist vielmehr das Contrarium daraus zu erweisen c. 9. Apoc. 5.' Johann Heinrich Buttstett, *Ut, mi, sol, re, fa, la, tota musica et harmonia aeterna, oder, Neu-eröffnetes, altes, wahres, eintziges und ewiges Fundamentum Musices entgegen gesetzt dem Neu-eröffneten Orchestre, und in zweene Partes eingetheilet* (Erfurt: Otto Werthern, 1716), part 2, capit. VI, no. 6, 174.

decades of the eighteenth century. This was a prerequisite for an expanding gap between the high art and the widening audience which was increasingly becoming its main consumer.

At the time of these changes and in contrast to Buttstett, Mattheson saw the need of a reform in the field of music and a possibility of expanding the music market in music circles. His mission aimed to adapt music to the changing socio-cultural situation in Germany. Reversing music's established fundamentals and elevating the sensual as its main tenet, he found a way to adjust music's principles to a new growing social context. This could minimise the opened space between increasing demands in cultural refinement (expressed with high interest in music tuition) and the complexity of the contrapuntal traditions.

Buttstett, however, saw the first sign of a decline in music, in Mattheson's idea. Buttstett was convinced that uneducated people could not comprehend music as an art and should not have the power to judge it. He went even further to suggest that an uneducated audience should become first noble..[19] By rejecting Mattheson's idea, Buttstett infers that performance practice does not (or should not) have an effect on music itself. He did not accept the idea that senses and emotions should be leading factors in its understanding. From his perspective, the elevation of the act of performance, as relevant for the final goal of music, was leading to a decline. Musical understanding for him was entirely embedded within the industrious study of music theory. He was convinced that the main reason for its decline was that it was not properly studied:

> Therefore, the main cause of the decline of music is that it [music] is considered to be suitable only as a subject for minstrels, and not any more as a subject of study, as it is the most admirable [within the arts], and in no other study such curiosities occur as in the theoretical study of music.[20]

19. Ibid., 73.
20. 'Demnach ist die Haupt-Ursach des Verfalls der Music, daß solche nur für ein Spielmanns-Wesen und

> actually the decline of music be, [...] that it is not considered to be an object of study.[21]

The aesthetic controversy in music in those public debates was not limited to aspects of theory versus practice. The complexity of the polemics became even more entangled with the much greater collision between ideas of whether music is a sensual abstraction or if it has a rationalised scientific core. The clash between the rationalist demands on simplicity and intelligibility and the newly formed aesthetic values (based on Mattheson's sensualist ideas) added another dimension to the debates. This had an impact on the intense aesthetic changes in music during the first decades of the century and strongly affected the status and the value of instrumental music.

Mattheson's attitude towards music was that 'all music expresses the passions'. For him the goal of music was to affect listener's emotions, through a singing tone: 'Alles muss gehörig singen'.[22] As an avid admirer of the Italian instrumental idiom, he recognised the wide expressive potential of instrumental music and accepted it as having the same standards as the vocal genres as far as it arouses the passions. This view eventually freed the instrumental genres from the neoclassical requirements for didactic content and intelligible transparency.[23]

Mattheson must have sensed the incompatibility of music with the rationalist ideas for cognitive clarity. In his writings, he attempted to demonstrate that composers can evoke the affects in music by relying on mechanical rules and at the same time having freedom for creative thinking. With this, he demonstrated that music theory and practice should always be understood as two inseparable parts of

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nicht mehr für ein Studium gehalten wird, da sie doch das admirableste ist, und in keinem Studio solche Curiosa vorkommen als in dem Studio Musico Theoretico.' Buttstett, *Ut, mi, sol, re, fa, la, tota musica et harmonia aeterna, oder, Neu-eröffnetes, altes, wahres, eintziges und ewiges Fundamentum Musices entgegen gesetzt dem Neu-eröffneten Orchestre, und in zweene Partes eingetheilet*, 11

21. 'eigentlich der Verfall der Music sey, [...] weil sie vor kein Studium gehalten wird.' Ibid., 16.

22. Mattheson, *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister*.

23. Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics*; Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*.

a coherent whole. In *Das neu eröffnete Orchestre* (1713), Mattheson gives a list of 'rules' which the *galant homme* must know in order to understand good music. Among them are requirements to recognise *cantabile* melodies in both vocal and instrumental music; to have knowledge in the rules of the art of rhetoric and to be able to apply them in music; but most importantly, to aim at diversity (*Abwechslung*). He concludes that this is the decisive characteristic of music that makes it penetrate the soul, have effects upon the listener, and give aesthetic delight (*Ergötzung*).[24] I see in this a diplomatic attempt to connect the generalising ideas of the neoclassical model and his own views of music as an art.

As a highly educated member of the public sphere with a professional background in music, Mattheson could easily sense a similarity between rhetoric and music in their affective capacity. The act of musical performance is the final stage of the process of music making. It is comparable to the last stage of oration (the delivery). Similar to the orator, the musical performer could demonstrate his ability to interpret the composer's ideas in such a way that they touch the listener's heart. Just like the communication between an orator and his audience, the performer transmits the composer's ideas by adapting them to the type of audience. This is an important consequence of the formation of the new public space. It stemmed from the need in communication, through the desire to advance in a new social etiquette and evolved into a formation of an aesthetic stream in the most abstract among the fine arts — music.

Mattheson never separated performance practice from music theory. For him musical erudition was an inseparable combination of both. The rich potential of interpretive variances in the art of music, played an important role to keep the sensualist model open and versatile. This is probably why Mattheson did not compile a comprehensive scientific systematisation of music (*Musik Wissenschaft*). He must have realised that instead of locking music into a standardised framework, it is much more

24. Mattheson, *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre*, 105–107.

important to leave the process open in order to accommodate spontaneous, varied interpretations of the initial musical idea which, however, can be realised only in the act of performance.

3.2 Variety in music — an aesthetic norm or a meaningless eccentricity

> *The fine arts animate the whole man. They do not hinder learning, rather they make it more human. They penetrate the heart and make the mind more pliant, agile, and more active.*[25]
>
> *Georg Friedrich Meier*

At the heart of the music-critical discussions at the beginning of the eighteenth century was a conflict between the rationalist view of the arts and the sensualistic ideas of music. The point of departure was the prevailing rationalist thought and the concomitant aesthetic ideology of the neoclassical model, which considered the arts to be (ideally) based on principles of language.[26]

As discussed in chapter two, the advocates of the neoclassical theoretical model of the arts expected and required from music that it communicates some moral wisdom to the audience by providing a clear-cut intelligible content. The sensualistic ideas, however, recognised its expressive potential to affect the emotions without the need to be verbally explained and were directed mainly towards sound expression and rhetorical affects. The main differences between these opposing attitudes to

25. 'Die schöne Wissenschaften beleben den ganzen Menschen. Sie hindern die Gelehrsamkeit nicht, sondern machen sie menschlicher. Sie durchweichen das Herz, und machen den Geist beugsamer, gelenker, and reitzender', Georg Friedrich Meier (1748–1750). *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften*; vol. 1, 25; cited and translated by Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 91.

26. See chapter two.

music consolidate into what were and are known as the French and the Italian schools. The most striking conceptual difference between them was their attitude towards instrumental music. The rationalist model elevated vocal music as superior and considered instrumental music as ambiguous and confusing because of the absence of verbal content. Respectively, the sensualistic ideas were guided only by the emotional affect of music and its ability to move.

Italian instrumental practice was famous for its expressive freedom and diversity of ideas. The French were respected for their deep affection for dance music, resulting from the belief that music should imitate nature. In contrast, the Italians did not restrict themselves to this mimetic theory and experimented with the expressive potential of the sounds. This experimentation broadened their creativity and abstract musical thinking and culminated in the most popular instrumental genre of the time: the sonata, a genre that was in turn the subject of numerous severe critiques and complaints from the followers of the rationalist mimetic model.[27]

The Italian violin sonata was notorious for its bold and unpredictable use of thematic and affective contrasts, for the combination of playful and comic elements and mixtures of variety of different sound-colours and expressive nuances (further supported by the use of varied bowing).[28] In this respect, Italian instrumental music did not correspond to the mimetic theory about all arts (culminating in the theoretical work of Batteux) and was considered as confusing for the mind, and hence meaningless. Contrary to rationalist ideas to base the meaning and the function of the arts on reason, Italian (and later on some German) musicians emphasised on the emotional and creative aspects of music.[29]

27. Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 4–8.

28. Research studies trace the origins of the early eighteenth-century Italian instrumental style in the *opera buffa* traditions. It emerged as a result of the combination of 'short, catchy, tuneful ideas of a light-hearted, comic even frivolous character' with strong thematic and affective contrasts. Such features opposed the seriousness and the complexity of music of the time. See Ibid., xi.

29. Ibid., 69–142.

From the perspective of the neoclassical ideas, Italian instrumental style lacked unified and clearly comprehensible content. Virtuoso features such as quick technical passages, variety of sounds, and affective contrasts were condemned by the rationalists as unacceptable and incomprehensible for their vision of good taste. A special subject of severe criticism was the variety of textures, sudden change of character and affects as well as the frequent play with audience expectations. Many critics attacked all of this as anti-musical and unnatural because it did not offer any unified content that could bind into a coherent whole. Rationalists such as Gottsched described such virtuoso features as 'incomprehensible mishmash', 'ear-tickling jingle-jangle' or 'nothing but acrobatics'.[30]

In contrast, French music was an example for a 'coherent' performance because each piece expressed only one affect.[31] In the same spirit, Johann Joachim Quantz stated in his autobiography that his trip from Italy to France was comparable with a travel 'out of variety into unity'.[32] In his journal *Critica Musica*, Mattheson stated that French music was clear and explainable and has a purpose and direction.[33] The French aimed to achieve ease and lightness. Their music was unified and originated in nature, which predisposed it to be easy to comprehend. The Italians were on the opposite side of the spectrum. Their music was far from unified, contained many dissonances and variety of different affects. Despite being dispersed and quite dissonant, however, Mattheson found Italian music to be 'the most gentle and inventive', praising it for expressing the most interesting affects.[34]

30. Bellamy Hosler gives a good summary of the rationalists' view of the Italian instrumental music in Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 28–29.

31. Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, Introduction.

32. Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, "Aus dem Mannigfaltigkeit in die Einförmigkeit; Herrn Johann Quantzens Lebenslauf, von ihm selbst entworfen," in *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Schützens Witwe, 1754–1755), 237.

33. Johann Mattheson, *Critica Musica.d.i.Grundrichtige Untersuch- und Beurtheilung / Vieler / theils vorgefassten / theils einfaltigen Meinungen / Argumenten und Einwurffe / so in alten un neuen / gedruckten und ungedruckten / Musicalischen Schrifften zu finden. Zur muglichsten Ausrautung aller Groben Irrthumer / und zur Beforderung eines bessern Wachsthums der reinen harmonischen Wissenschafft / in verschiedene Theile abgefasset / und Stuckweise heraus gegeben Von Mattheson*, Hamburg: Selbstverlag, St. 1-8, 1722; St. 9-12, 1723. Reprinted: Amsterdam, 1964; Laaber, 2003, 116.

34. Ibid., vol. II, 121–146.

The reason why Italian variety was so heavily criticised by rationalists was the absence of meaningful content (a plot). According to neoclassical standards, features such as lighthearted character, expressive freedom, variety of contrasts, and striking novelties made music seem unserious and incoherent. In Gottsched's words, it was 'labyrinths of tones expressing nothing', or 'body without mind'.[35] According to Gottsched, the aim of this music was not to imitate passions or real objects but only to amaze or to arouse the so-called *Verwunderung* (wonderment).

The concepts of contrast, novelty, and variety in music were central themes in the aesthetic debates in eighteenth-century Germany. They formed the foundation of numerous complaints against Italian instrumental practice. The vast amount of passionate responses and opinions on the musical-critical stage, however, attested also to its popularity and great success. The most puzzling ingredient in this aesthetic clash was the lack of a clearly defined theoretical outline that could justify the practical aesthetic search of the Italians. It seems that the content of their music relied entirely on fluid sensual appeal and aural delight.

In contrast to such severe complaints about the distinct variety in Italian music, some German writers approved its creative search and accepted specific features as sensually appealing. Central to their discussions were the concepts of 'pleasant alteration' (pleasant contrasts, *Abwechslung*) or pleasant surprises, a play with listeners' expectation, and the effect of the so called 'wonderment' (*Verwunderung*).[36] It is striking that some of the music practitioners and avid followers of the neoclassical principles in Germany (among them Georg Muffat, Friedrich Marpurg, also Johann Joachim Quantz, and Leopold Mozart, but most of all Adolf Scheibe) described all of these 'anti-rationalist' properties of music as the absolutely necessary ingredients for achieving the goal of

35. Johann Christoph Gottsched, *Auszug aus des Herrn Batteux schönen Künsten aus dem einzigen Grundsatze der Nachahmung hergeleitet: zum Gebrauch seiner Vorlesungen mit verschiedenen Zuzätzen und Anmerkungen erläutert* (Leipzig: Leipzig, 1754), 201.

36. Leopold Mozart speaks about *lieblich Abwechslung* (charming alternation) or *beliebte Abwechslung* (pleasant alternation); see Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, 33, 83 and 110.

music — to move and affect.

Quantz understood the use of varied contrasts not only as a necessity but also as a means to engage and stimulate listener's attention and interest:

> One does not reflect on the fact that pleasantness of music consists not in uniformity or consistency, but in diversity. If it were possible for all players to play in uniform loudness, or for all singers to sing according to a uniform taste, then the greatest part of pleasure and of music would not be felt, because of the lack of pleasant contrast.[37]

He even considered the mixture of variety of musical ideas as an essential component of music in general:

> The disposition of each listener [must] find nourishment in [the sonata]. Its character throughout must be neither pure songfulness nor pure liveliness. Just as each movement must be very different from the others, each movement must within itself have a good admixture of agreeable and brilliant ideas. For after all the most beautiful song can put one to sleep if nothing else is to be found from beginning to end; and constant liveliness or sheer difficulty causes wonderment to be sure, but neither one is particularly moving. Rather the composer should include such an admixture of different ideas, not only in a solo but even more so in all musical pieces. When a composer knows how to hit upon this proper balance and consequently knows how to move the passions of the listener, then one can rightfully say that he has attained a high degree of good taste and that he has found, so to speak, the philosophers' stone of musical wisdom.[38]

37. Johann Joachim Quantz, *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen*. (Berlin, 1752); translated by Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 18.
38. Johann Joachim Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*, (Berlin, 1752); Ibid., 19.

From the rationalist perspective the use of great contrasts and variety of expression were perceived as something that lacks coherence and unity and also had no intelligible meaning. From the sensualistic viewpoint, however, such incoherent and frequent changes were effective means to capture the listener attention. Mattheson saw in the expressive variety of the Italians a means to satisfy many different types of listeners. In *Critica musica* he writes that 'one [human] soul is not enough' to grasp everything that this music offers:

> One must multiply his personality and become more than one, so he can observe and feel at the same time three to four things that are all equally beautiful.[39]

He was among the first to recognise the wide expressive potential of instrumental music and was especially fond of the creativity of the Italian instrumental style. In *Critica musica* he ranked the expressive qualities of Italian music higher than French music and described it as possessing incomparable gentility and liveliness (*Zärlichkeit und Lebhaftigkeit*).[40] According to him, Italian musicians produced beautiful and polished sound as their spirit was inventive without limitation (*ihr Geist ist an Erfindungen unerschöpflich*).[41]

Contrast was an important ingredient of music to attract, retain, and stimulate the listener's interest. Seen from this perspective, the Italian 'incoherence' of musical ideas, 'whimsical' ornamentation, and virtuosity was a model for unification of distinctly different ideas. This is the turning point in the

39. 'Man müsste seine Person vermehren / und mehr als einer werden können, wenn man auf einmahl und zu gleiher Zeit / drei biss vier Dinge / die alle gleich schön sind / beobachten und empfinden wollte.', Mattheson, *Critica Musica.d.i.Grundrichtige Untersuch- und Beurtheilung / Vieler / theils vorgefassten / theils einfaltigen Meinungen / Argumenten und Einwurffe / so in alten un neuen / gedruckten und ungedruckten / Musicalischen Schrifften zu finden. Zur muglichsten Ausrautung aller Groben Irrthumer / und zur Beforderung eines bessern Wachsthums der reinen harmonischen Wissenschafft / in verschiedene Theile abgefasset / und Stuckweise heraus gegeben Von Mattheson*, St. II, 133.

40. Ibid., 121.

41. Ibid.

conflict between the rationalist and the sensual. As Hosler comments, 'it appears that what was perceived as cognitively clear was sensually, or aurally, boring; and what was sensually pleasant and stimulating was perceived as cognitively confusing'.[42]

Playing with the expectations of the audience was another aspect of the Italian instrumental idiom of which German writers approved. Mattheson even accepted it as natural and wrote in his *Vollkommene Capelmeister*:

> The ear likes perhaps nothing more than when a delightful theme, with which it is already acquainted, so pleasantly returns; especially when it has been cleverly displaced and then appears in a spot when one would almost never have expected it. This is nature; and all sensual delights naturally have just about this same quality.[43]

An interesting case is the voice of another active member of the public sphere — Johann Adolf Scheibe (1708–1776). Scheibe, initially trained as musician, was Gottsched's student and an avid follower of his rationalist theories. His academic education, however, clashed (to some extent) with his musical background. In his views about music he combined the rationalist ideas for simplicity and meaningful content with the belief of music's 'mystical' power to influence the emotions. His early journalistic writings were in unison with the neoclassical requirements for simple melodies, coherent and unified structure, and a clear intelligible content. Like Gottsched, he stated that a melody was suitable only when it is unified or consistent with a single musical idea.[44]

Although Scheibe insisted on clear understanding in music (the neoclassical criteria), he confessed that the pleasure that variety of musical ideas, sound-colours, and harmony bring, was high. As a

42. Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 20.
43. Johann Mattheson, *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister*, (1739), 2. 4. 31, cited and translated by Bellamy Hosler. See Ibid.
44. Scheibe, *Critischer Musikus: neue vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage*, 196.

professionally trained musician, he must have sensed that the nature of music was somehow different from the visual and literary arts and could not be suited to the general principles of the mimetic theory. Although there was no formal aesthetic theory to go with Mattheson's sensualistic ideas, Scheibe probably sensed that strict adherence to rationalist principles could impact the creative freedom of performers. At some point, he disagreed with them and stated that after all 'perhaps the variety is not unpleasant.'[45] It is most striking that all these controversial characteristics became compulsory elements for good taste when he discussed the goal of chamber and solo music. Scheibe even recommended them for the sake of retaining listener's attention and reaching pleasant surprises. Here we encounter another curious discrepancy — the use of unexpected surprises in a coherent and intelligible didactic content.

Both Mattheson and Scheibe discussed features of the abundance of musical styles in their time. Both of them confessed that the solo and chamber genres were the most demanding for performance due to the freedom of sound nuances and varied affects. Seen from another perspective, the use of variety in performance was a demonstration of composer's creativity and performer's proficiency. Scheibe concluded that such expressive variety was a challenge for performers and composers alike.[46] According to him, a composer 'should show his strength by including the method of weakening the melody by using variety or change in the music. He must also let all the freedom be heard'.[47] Solo and chamber genres seem to be in the category of music for master musicians. Among all instrumental genres, they were described in critical publications as a special area for professional musicians and connoisseurs who listened attentively and could follow all varied contrasts and gestures.

45. 'Vielleicht ist die Abwechslung nicht unangenehmt', Ibid., 294.
46. Ibid., 398.
47. 'Er soll seine Stärke zeigen, die er in der Auszierung einer Melodie, in der methode, oder Singart und in deren Veränderungen besißt. Er hat also alle Freiheit, sich mit dem größten Nachdrücke hören zu lassen.', Ibid., 399.

Despite the attempt of the neoclassical model to tame such expressive principles, freedom of creative thinking found its way in the form of varied sounds and play of expectations with the audience. Although such musical ideas were difficult to connect to each other, trained music practitioners felt their value. First Mattheson (and after him Scheibe) suggested that they are essential ingredients that kept the attention of the listener alert, and hence kept the level of pleasure and enjoyment higher.

The first attempt to provide a formal theoretical explanation about the use of variety in the arts, however, appeared much later in the century, in the work of Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–1762). Baumgarten understood variety in the arts as a representation of creativity of the human mind. He focused on the process of finding the most variants of an idea as a way to reach perfection of the mind. Influenced by Leibnitz, Baumgarten understood perfection of the human mind via the agility of contrasting statements. He saw processes of generating as many contrasting ideas as possible to be most fruitful for reaching human perfection. I relate his ideas to aspects of Erasmus's rhetorical techniques of mastering the abundant style of speaking.[48] Baumgarten understood the function of the arts from the sensualistic perspective. Although he founded his theory on the basis of literature, his students Georg Friedrich Meier and Christian Gottfried Krause related his ideas to music.[49] In the context of music, the concepts of variety, change, and contrast play an essential role in this process of intensity.[50] Although without a clearly formulated theoretical basis, these features must have been in the mind of the active music practitioners still in Bach's time.

It is most curious how intellectuals like Scheibe who began their career believing in the transparency and intelligibility of the mimetic theory, later on realised that this cannot be practically applied to the

48. See my discussion of Erasmus of Rotterdam in chapter two.

49. See Georg Friedrich Meier, Hans-Joachim Kertscher, and Günter Schenk, *Frühe Schriften zur Ästhetischen Erziehung der Deutschen in 3 Teilen*, 3 vols. (Halle: Hallescher Verlag, 1999–2002); see also Georg Friedrich Meier, *Georg Friedrich Meiers theoretische Lehre der Gemüthsbewegungen Überhaupt* (Halle: Carl Hermann Hemmerde, 1744); Riccardo Pozzo, "Meier, Georg Friedrich: About Logic, Aesthetics and Rhetoric in German Enlightenment Philosophy," *AGORA — Papeles de Filosofia* 22, no. 2 (2003): 131–141.

50. Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 86–113.

art of music. Both Mattheson and Scheibe agreed when talking about the quality and purpose of chamber music that its goals were to arouse the passions and to give pleasure in the process of music making (*Leidenschaften und Gemüthsbewegung*):

> In the chamber style, primarily in the cantatas, which are conceived in this style, there is a common property to be noted, which one finds almost continuously and in every affect and passion, and consequently in all types of good style, ...[51]

> The final goal of the chamber style is primarily to delight and hearten the listener. It is therefore used for magnificence, for pleasure, and for laughter.[52]

Gradually, Scheibe recognised the role of varied expressive nuances in musical execution and even advised composers to enrich and excite the emotions by using them. He instructed his readers that a good way to stimulate the passions (and also to attract attention) is by using variety (*Abwechslung*), surprise, and play with expectations.

> He [the composer] must always show himself. Yet he [his musical idea] can also be interrupted by a pleasant and unexpected diversity, which, however, must be very ingenious.[53]

51. 'In dem Kammerstyl, vornehmlich aber in den Cantaten, die darnach abgefaßet werden, ist eine allgemeine Eigendschaft zu merken, die man fast durchgehends und bey allen Gemüthsbewegungen und Leidenschaften, und folglich auch in allen Arten der guten Schreibarten, [...]', Scheibe, *Critischer Musikus: neue vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage*, 396; my translation.

52. 'Der Endzweck des Kammerstyls ist aber vornehmlich, die Zuhörer zu ergetzen und aufzumuntern. Er wird also zur Pracht, zur Lust und zum Lachen gebraucht.', Ibid., 379.

53. 'Er muss sich immer zeigen. Doch kann er auch durch eine angenehme und unerwartete Abwechslung, die aber sehr sinnreich sein muss, unterbrochen werden.', Ibid., 397.

His opinion about the expressive quality of Italian music parallels those of Mattheson. Scheibe goes even further by claiming that by using variety, the listener has the chance to hear 'unexpected beauty'(*unerwartete Schönheiten*) and wonder (*Verwunderung*).[54] Regarding chamber genres and cantatas with one instrument, he not only approved the application of variety and change but also recommended it:

> in this way one also obtains through the same usage, some opportunity to apply unexpected variations and ingenious ideas, and to connect these in a good way with the main musical idea.[55]

In the multitude of existing musical styles in the first decades of the eighteenth century it appears that each musical style had its own 'innate' characteristics and specific standards according to its purpose and function. Mattheson's list in *Das beschutzte Orchestre* (1717) described different qualities for the different styles. Features such as *Abwechslung* (variety), expectation-play and *Verwunderung* (wonderment), (and more generally: expressive freedom and variety of content) were typical for purely instrumental music. Mattheson required that instrumental music included not only singing tone typical of vocal genres (*cantilena*) but also elaboration and above all expressive freedom, associated with virtuosity. Combined with the variety of contrasting ideas and play with listeners' expectation, these were compulsory characteristics for touching the passions. The instrumental genres, after all, were not obliged to follow any plot and were not restricted by the framework of a poetic text. These two factors predisposed the distinct level of freedom that made chamber and solo music different.

54. Scheibe, *Critischer Musikus: neue vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage*, 399. For a detailed discussion of the effect of variety and play with listeners' expectation in the cultural context of eighteenth-century music reception see Matthew Riley, *Musical Listening in the German Enlightenment: Attention, Wonder and Astonishment* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

55. 'so wird man auch durch desselben Anwendung manche Gelegenheit erhalten, unvermuthete Veränderungen und sinnreiche Einfälle anzubringen, und sie auf gute Art mit dem Hauptsaße zu verbinden.', Scheibe, *Critischer Musikus: neue vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage*, 406.

Scheibe asserted that theatrical, church, and chamber styles had completely different purposes. According to its function and goal, each style has its specific aesthetic requirement. The chamber style is the only one that required unlimited freedom of (varied) sounds and ideas:

> [...] the high art of composition in church, theatre and chamber styles require a distinct difference [between them]. From this one can recognise that whilst the intrinsic nature of good compositions remains the same, yet the (outward) performance of the same however, according to their character, and according to the custom of musical compositions, must be subject to a differentiation. And this differentiation is so certain, so noticeable and palpable, that it may never be ignored, but rather without exception is always to be observed, should one not wish to contravene the natural and intrinsic characteristics of sacred, theatrical, and other musical compositions.[56]

Regarding quality aspects of chamber music and the exceeding use of variety, Scheibe points out its unusual freedom, confessing that the beauty of this music is undeniable: 'it is indisputably true that such cantatas possess specific beauty which one cannot find in other styles'.[57]

Eighteenth-century writers on music acknowledged variety and play of expectation with the audience as most interesting and gentle. These aspects of musical performance, however, were notoriously difficult due to constant search for variances on the musical surface. The lack of guiding rules offered

56. '[...]; als die hohe Schreibart im Kirchen- im Theater- und im Kammerstyl einen merklichen Unterschied erfordern. Man siehet aber bereits aus diesem, daß das innere Wesen der guten Schreibarten zwar allemal unverändert bleibt, der äußerliche Vortrag derselben aber, nach der Beschaffenheit, und nach dem Gebrauche musikalischer Stücke nothwendiger Weise einer Veränderung unterworfen sein muß. Und diese Veränderung ist so gewiß, so merklich und so handgreiflich, daß sie niemals zu übergehen, sondern ohne Ausnahme, allemal zu beobachten ist, wenn man nicht wieder die natürlichen und wesentlichen Eigenschaften geistlicher, theatralischer, und andere Musikstücke verstoßen will.' Ibid., 391.

57. 'Inzwischen ist es unstreitig wahr, daß diese Cantaten ganz besondere Schönheit besißen, die man in keinen andern Singestücken finden.' Ibid., 400.

complete freedom to the composers' creative thought. They could also have acted as a mere test for the talent and the skills of the performers. It is not surprising that this expressive freedom thrived in the chamber genres, which were a reserved area for masters. Although it was most common for instrumental music, Scheibe traces its influence in some vocal pieces such as the recitatives in some cantatas.[58]

In sum, writers on both sides of the divide I have described here strove to standardise the aesthetic conventions about all arts as a way to reach the manners and intellectual heritage of polite society. Paradoxically, instead of a levelling of aesthetic tastes, the result was a split into a variety of aesthetic spaces — each with its preferred audience and conditions. I would call these modern geographies of taste. In music this was the clash between neoclassical ideas and the popularity of Italian instrumental practices. The sensualistic view of music was radically different from the ideas of the neoclassical model. Instead of imitating nature and aiming for simple intelligible structures, its supporters saw art not as a source of knowledge but as a mechanism governed by the senses. Contrast and variety (together with the unexpected, the surprising) were the means that kept and heightened the attentiveness of listener's mind.[59]

According to eighteenth-century accounts on music, expressive and compositional variety were more suitable for instrumental rather than for vocal genres. In his second theoretical publication *Das beschutzte Orchestre* (1717), Mattheson, much earlier than Scheibe's *Critischer Musikus* (1745), argued that the freedom of instrumental music represented musician's (composer and most importantly the performer) creativity.[60] Its aim was to challenge the imagination and to please the

58. Scheibe, *Critischer Musikus: neue vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage*, 433–437.

59. Baumgarten saw the sensual to be much stronger than reason. For him the senses concentrate on desire, which he found to be much more powerful. See Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views of Instrumental Music in 18th-century Germany*, 90–91.

60. The highest achievement, in this respect, was Italian instrumental music of the time which Mattheson respected highly.

connoisseurs' taste for variety. It searched for expressive nuances that could explain the same idea in a different way. I view this as a direct reflection of rhetorical processes in a musical context.

Mastering expressive and powerful language empowered a speaker to explain ideas in many different ways. It was a tool that let the speaker adapt to (and communicate with) different types of audience.[61] Likewise, chamber music and music for solo instruments was the perfect environment for such oratorical eloquence with sounds. The number of the performers was reduced, which offered greater freedom for expression. Mattheson and Scheibe discussed the unrestrained freedom that a chamber and a solo player had. In this sense, playing an unaccompanied instrument offers the freedom to experiment and explore without disturbing the smoothness of performance and without having to comply with other players.

The focus of many music-theoretical writings of the time was mastering the compositional process. Many of their authors in Germany pointed out the ability to create numerous variants (variations) as highly valuable. The ability to improvise (or to find the limits of your creative potential) was of crucial importance as a means to adapt to the audience. Friedrich Erhard Niedt (1674–1717) and David Heinichen (1683–1729) emphasised in their treatises the importance of the composer's creative thought and the inherent versatility in music.[62] Both stated that the skills to create variations was an essential compositional technique in early eighteenth century. It was specifically characteristic for the North German school. This is another powerful connection between music and rhetorical creativity.[63] As Mattheson and Scheibe commented, solo and chamber musicians of the

61. See chapter two.

62. Friedrich Erhard Niedt, *Handleitung zur Variation* (Hamburg: B. Schillern, 1706) and Heinichen, *Neu erfundene und gründliche Anweisung zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Basses*.

63. Together with rhetoric, law, and theology, music was an important subject of the university curricula in Germany. Both Niedt and Heinichen received training as lawyers and were learned in the the art of rhetoric. see George J. Buelow, "Niedt, Friedrich Erhard," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, accessed January 19, 2015, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19920; George J. Buelow, "Heinichen, Johann David," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, accessed January 19, 2015, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/12688.

time enjoyed the freedom to reinterpret further composer's ideas in the act of performance. To be able to improvise in this process of creative thinking was an especially valuable skill.

Although less discussed in the publications of the time, it seems that the role of performance was pivotal for testing the composer's ideas in practice and also for influencing (affecting) the audience. Performers were advised to use their imagination and mastery in order to enhance and adapt the music to any type of audience. Important parameters for successful performances are the various expressive devises in music such as ornaments, articulation, dynamics. These, however, composers hardly marked on the page. Performers were free to decide themselves what and how to perform. Likewise the thorough bass player had the freedom to adapt the accompaniment according to ensemble, texture, abilities or experience, a master performer could choose how to vary the sound and the expressive nuances of the music. This is a possible explanation why many scores of the time were left without fixed performance indications. They served as open texts, inviting the performers to contribute with their interpretation. In this sense, the score manuscript is not fixed but is a dynamic source, acting only as a guide for further unfolding.

It is not surprising that writers on music persistently compared music practitioners with music orators whose purpose was to please the audience with ingenious and entertaining music extemporisation. The numerous possibilities of execution were impossible to be described in an instruction manual. Instead, performers had to search for and experiment with new expressive tools. Is this not encouraging an active process of creative thinking which is highly individualistic every time a performer applies it in practice? Conversely, writing out all the performance details encapsulates the music into the frame of one particular version.[64] I think, this 'open-endedness' cannot be united with a rational geography of rules and regulations. Similarly, many music theorists such as Joseph Riepel

64. In the case of Bach's Cello Suites, it is an unwritten rule that every cellist has his/her own preferred bowing variants. Despite the edition instructions they use, they rewrite the articulation marks according to their preferences or habits of practice. The same is valid for many conductors who in their first rehearsals with the orchestra insist on marking many performance details.

saw in music 'an inexhaustible sea' that could not be limited to a list of instructions.[65] They emphasised the flexibility of the performer's taste and abilities and kept their instructions to the level of abstract suggestions, leaving room for further interpretive thinking.

Johann Friedrich Agricola's translation of Tosi's singing treatise *Opinioni de'cantori antichi e moderni* (1723) appeared in Germany in 1757. He instructed that graces in music should be applied with imagination and invention. He expected the singers to discover themselves additional applications of graces as a supplement to the composer's indications. I see in Agricola's ideas a strong influence from the principles of rhetoric to extemporise and adapt to the moment. He stated that a master performer should come up with endless possibilities of

> [...] infinite number of graces by the means whereof his mind will be so opened, that the most hidden treasures of the Art, and most remote from his Imagination, will voluntarily present themselves; so that unless pride blinds him, or study becomes tiresome to him, or his memory fails him, he will increase his store of embellishments in a Stile which will be entirely his own: The principal Aim of one that strives to gain the highest Applause.[66]

Echoing Tosi, one of Agricola's main concerns in the treatise is the focus on variety in expression. It was to be done by mastering the use of ornamentation and graces. Slurs, according to him, not only show various technical and structural functions (such as breathing, supporting the text, or enhancing harmony). Some of their main roles were to mark an ornament, to point out a special effect in music, or a freer tempo. The use of the slur, according to Agricola's account, had also an improvisatory connotation.

65. Joseph Riepel, *Anfangsgründe zur musicalischen Setzkunst. 1. Rhythmopoeia oder von der Tactordnung* (Regensburg und Wien: Emerich Felix Baders Buchladen, 1752).

66. Julianne C. Baird, ed., *Introduction to the Art of Singing by Johann Friedrich Agricola*, 2006th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 182–183.

In order to provide melodic variety, he considers five essential and five nonessential qualities of music. The essential qualities he lists are knowledge of harmony, invention, observance of the rhythm, judgement, and taste. The appoggiatura, the various graces, portamento of the voice, and the slur he lists as the nonessential elements in music. They were, however, responsible for a varied musical expression. It is indicative that they all refer to the role of melodic figurations.[67]

Articulation is an important characteristic of the audible shape of a particular musical idea. It is a powerful mechanism that can reshape and change completely its melodic contour. Without the framework of the vocal text, the application of articulation variety in instrumental music is even more imaginative and abstract. Performers have the freedom to discover endless expressive possibilities and to use them in specific musical contexts. The lack of precise articulation indications or, alternatively, the variety of different ways of articulation of the same idea suggests an important aesthetic perspective. The eighteenth-century performer had the freedom to play with a musical idea by providing alternative interpretations. Somewhere in this game they also had the chance to demonstrate their technical and musical mastery. While Tosi-Agricola's treatise discussed the application of articulation from vocal perspectives, Joseph Riepel and Leopold Mozart demonstrated its even greater distinctive role as an audible parameter in instrumental music, allowing the performer to express significantly different readings of the same music.[68]

Joseph Riepel gives a striking account in this direction. He instructs young violinists to discover and master all possible slurring possibilities of a melodic pattern (which determines the way of bowing). He advises to begin learning the violin by reversing the usual down-bow on the strong beat with an up-bow and to spend a couple of years learning violin that way. Learning to manage the 'wrong' bowing, according to him, would provide a good basis for better bow and hand control. A possible

67. Baird, *Introduction to the Art of Singing by Johann Friedrich Agricola*.

68. Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*; Riepel, *Anfangsgründe zur musicalischen Setzkunst. 3. Gründliche Erklärung der Tonordnung*.

explanation for such contradictory instructions lies in the field of material culture in music, which connects the texts with the function and the expressive potential of the musical instruments. Compared to the modern Tourte bow, the up-bows of the baroque one are much lighter than the down-bows. By practicing with reversed bowing, the young violinist (and also cellist, according to Riepel) gets used to equalising the natural lightness of the bow in regard to the metrical pulse. Such an exercise trains to control not only the bowing technique (lightens the downbows, and, respectively, accents the upbows) when the violinist plays with the 'natural' way of bowing. It also trains the arm and the mind of the player to be used to playing everything:

> This exercise doesn't just facilitate [the use of] the bow, a violinist should necessarily on occasion have the upside down bowings to hand.[69]

Figure 3.2 illustrates the unusual expressive irregularity Riepel discusses in his treatise. Leopold Mozart gives a similar account in his *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (1756) where he views articulation as an expressive device for giving a variety of colours to the melody (Fig. 3.3). Anna Magdalena's irregular slurs date from three decades earlier than Riepel's and L. Mozart's bowing instructions and seem to reflect the same principles of thinking. (Fig. 3.4). These examples contradict the highly popular 'rule of the downbow'.[70] Corelli's famous pupil Francesco Geminiani decisively condemned it and advised players to explore and to practise with all bow combinations.[71]

69. 'Diese Übung erleichtert nicht nur allein den Bogen, sondern ein Violinist muß die verkehrten Striche nothwendig auch gelegenheitlich bey der Hand Haben'. Riepel, *Anfangsgründe zur musicalischen Setzkunst. 3. Gründliche Erklärung der Tonordnung*, 16.

70. The rule of the 'down-bow' was more typical for French dance music. It required the string player to play all metrically strong beats on the 'naturally' heavier down-stroke of the bow. For an extensive discussion about the application of the Rule of the Down-Bow and its controversy in the eighteenth century see Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761*, 400-403.

71. Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin*.

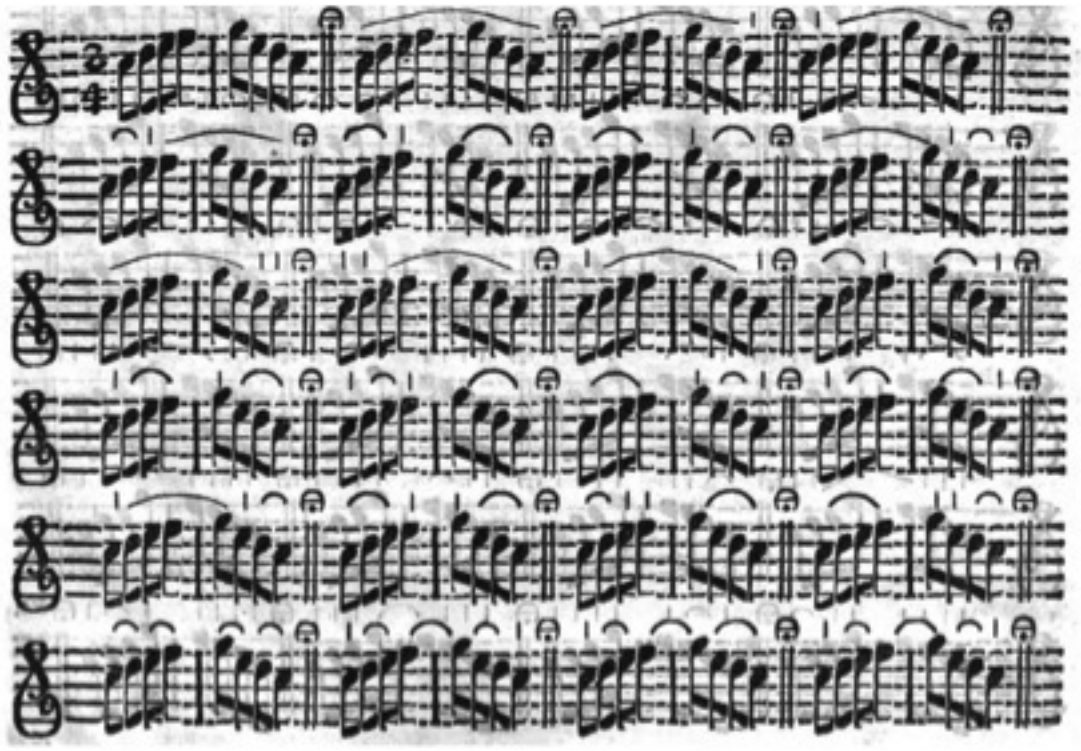


Figure 3.2: Joseph Riepel, *Gründliche Erklärung der Tonordnung* (1757)

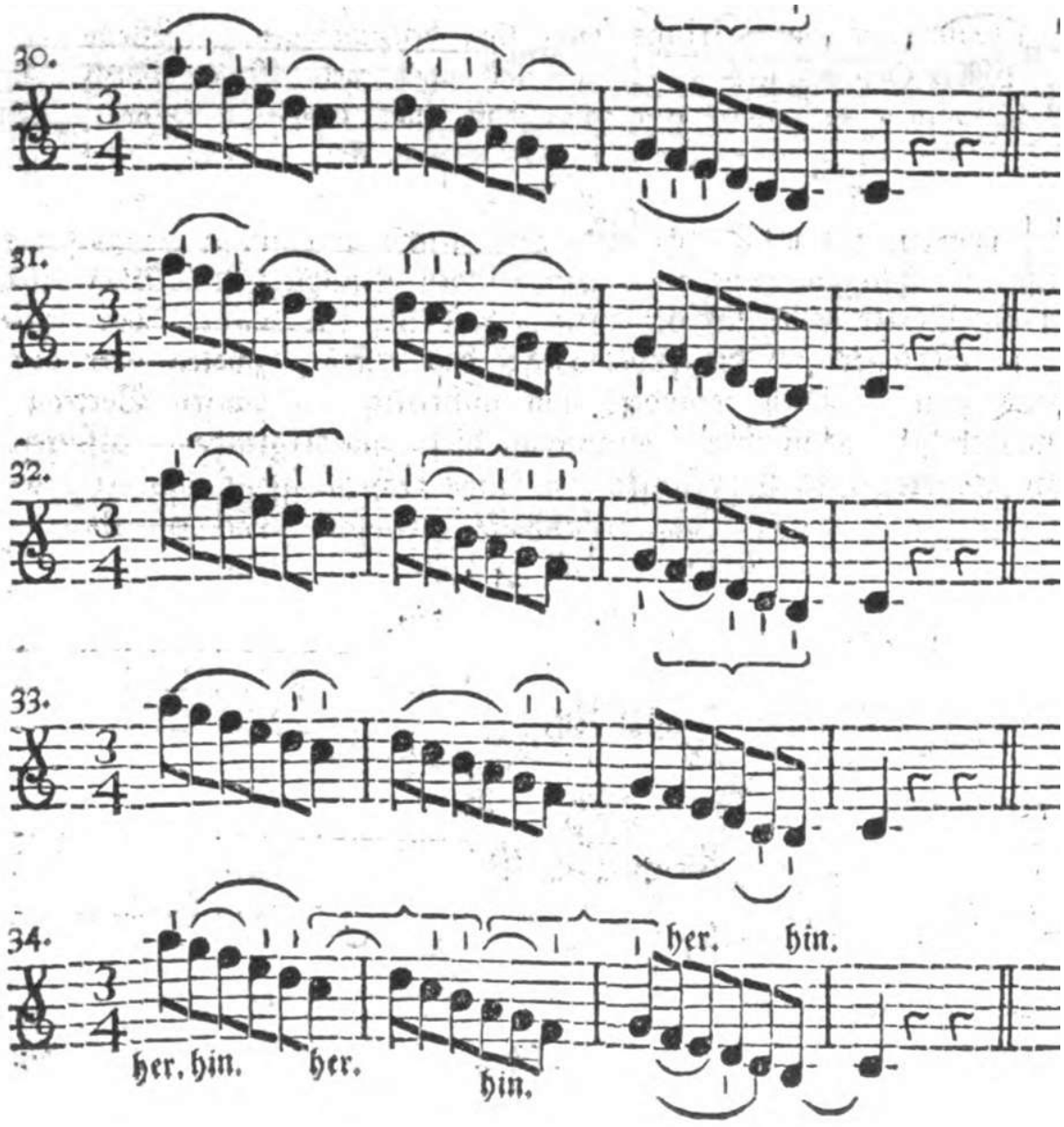


Figure 3.3: Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (1756), Des siebenten Hauptstücks, erster Abschnitt, no. 30–34, 134.

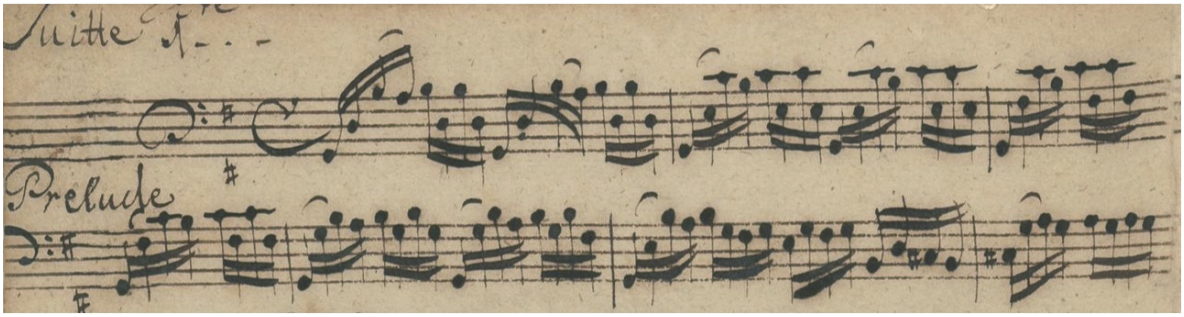


Figure 3.4: Source A ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV 1007), g major, Anna Magdalena Bach, b. 1–6.

Instances of such expressive versatility in eighteenth-century music suggest that in some circles at least articulation was subject to a process of constant rethinking and change. Recognition of this 'interpretive geography' should inspire us to consider this music beyond its textual representation. I view these processes as representations of the intellectual pleasure of discovering the creative potential of a musical idea. They are another way of communicating knowledge.

Chapter 4

The Six Suites for Solo Cello of J. S. Bach (BWV 1007–1012): A Case Study

[...] the most corrected copies are commonly the least correct.

Francis Bacon[1]

Central to my research is the idea of variability in all aspects of music. Taking Bach's set of Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello as a case study, in this chapter I argue that variability in interpretive thinking in music is highly dependent on the purpose or function of its readings. Of crucial importance for understanding interpretive variances is to place each reading in the cultural context of its existence. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Cello Suites are among the most popular examples of Bach's compositional mastery. Yet, they are notorious enigmas, transmitted through four different manuscript copies, none of them in the hand of Johann Sebastian. Each of these copies offers a different interpretive reading and none of them has the authority of an exemplary model that has to be preserved and reproduced. In this lack of a definitive interpretive model I see a window for deriving a new understanding of Bach's music: Bach's original idea remains open, continuing to challenge the creative thinking of generations ahead.

1. Sir Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, (1605), book 6, ch. 4, edited by Joseph Devey, M.A. (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1901); accessed on 13/04/2015. `http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/1433#Bacon_0414_904`.

CHAPTER 4. THE SIX SUITES FOR SOLO CELLO OF J. S. BACH (BWV 1007–1012): A CASE STUDY

This chapter examines the ambiguous status of Bach's Cello Suites and the controversy of their transmission within the canon of Western classical music. After outlining the historical background of this music, I argue that each of its extant interpretive readings is a valuable document of a multiplicity of aesthetic conventions. I also view them as evidence for different ways of communication with a diversity of audiences. Depending on the listeners' expectations, performers' skills, and conventions of aesthetic taste, the score representation of each of these various readings becomes a subject of a dynamic and highly creative, interpretive process of adapting its core to the current moment and audience.

Instead of selecting one of these models as exemplary, which would automatically reject the rest as 'wrong', I look at this musicological conundrum from a different point of view: as a broad spectrum of historical perspectives, offering multiple possibilities for interpreting the same musical idea. I focus on the readings of the two earlier sources and particularly attend to Anna Magdalena's copy. Her unstandardised articulation marks are the main reason that scholars consider her copy unreliable. Instead of searching for fixed models for performance and interpretation, I view her varied articulation marks as a hint for alternative to our musical thinking. Its goal is not to make a fixed product of aesthetic appreciation. Rather, it is the pleasure of going through the process of rediscovering more than one way of interpreting a single musical idea.

The chapter offers a new framework of understanding, viewing Anna's copy not as a fixed model of how the suites should be played but as a process of interpretive thinking that is flexible to adapt to a variety of audiences and their aesthetic needs. My aim is to justify her reading as one of many possible ways to read and explore this music. I believe this perspective was ubiquitous in Bach's time. As an act of thinking creatively, improvisation is a flexible communication between practitioners and consumers, in which aspects of aesthetic needs, taste, and/or technical abilities of both performers and listeners form the main setting for aesthetic appreciation. I discuss these aspects

in the second half of the chapter.

4.1 Historical background

It is believed that the Six Suites for Solo Cello were written around 1720. In the period between 1717 and 1723, J. S. Bach lived and worked in Cöthen as court *Kapellmeister* under the patronage of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. Cöthen was a small town with a small chamber ensemble. This ensemble consisted, however, of some of the finest chamber music virtuosos of the time, for whom Bach wrote some of his most technically demanding instrumental works. The Prince was a calvinist, which left little room for concert music in church. Bach, therefore, had to concentrate mainly on instrumental chamber music.[2] Nevertheless, music was largely accepted as a common way of entertainment in the court. Although we lack specific evidence about the court's musical life, the amount of the surviving music manuscripts suggests that musical evenings and chamber concerts were organised on a regular or daily basis.[3] As a member of the high aristocratic echelons, Prince Leopold had a wide educational background and was well acquainted with the diversity of musical styles in Europe.

Leopold received his formal education between 1707 and 1710 in one of the most distinguished schools for young princes in Germany: the *Ritterakademie* in Berlin. After his graduation, he undertook a two-year tour around Europe, travelling through many cultural centres in the

2. The Genevan theologian John Calvin (1509–1564) was the founder of a branch of the Protestant church, known as Calvinism. In his religious practices he prohibited instrumental and polyphonic music from the church congregational singing. German as well as Dutch regions that accepted the Calvinist observance did not employ music to God's glory, which was a diametrically opposite traditions to those regions that followed Luther's religious teaching. The sounds in the Calvinist church were restricted only to unaccompanied unison singing of texts from the Bible. For an extensive view on Calvin's treatment of music in the church see Charles Garside, *The Origins of Calvins Theology of Music: 1536-1543*, vol. 69, 4 (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 1979).

3. For more general information about the court of Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen see Ernst König, "Die Hofkapelle des Fürsten Leopold zu Anhalt-Köthen," *Bach Jahrbuch* (1959): 160–167.

Netherlands, England, France, and Italy. During his tour, he visited among others Florence, Venice, Rome, Vienna, Prague, Leipzig, Dresden, Amsterdam and the Hague. All of these cities were famous for their cultural heritage and traditions where he must have collected a significant amount of published music. Among his tutors was Johann David Heinichen, one of the most prominent music theorists of the time. The composer and writer on music Johann Adam Hiller reported in 1769 that 'Prince Leopold was a great connoisseur and champion of music; he himself played the violin not badly and sang a good bass.'[4]

As a court *Kapellmeister* in Cöthen Bach enjoyed near perfect working conditions: a supportive patron with strong musical background, an elite instrumental ensemble, and a prestigious reputation as a court official. As director, Bach had the opportunity to hire the finest virtuosos who were skilled enough to perform challenging music.[5] The patronage of Prince Leopold, his competence in music and sophisticated cosmopolitan artistic taste provided the ideal environment for Bach to create some of his most original musical works. Among them are the keyboard set of 15 Inventions and 15 Sinfonias (BWV 772–801), Well-Tempered Clavier (BWV 846–869), the Six Brandenburg Concertos (BWV 1046–1051), the Six Partitas and Sonatas for Solo Violin (BWV 1001–1006), the Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello (BWV 1007–1012) and many other well known solo and ensemble compositions.[6] According to Christoph Wolff, such conditions 'encouraged him to pursue

4. See Hiller's account as reprinted in Johann Adam Hiller, *Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Musikgelehrten und Tonkünstler neuerer Zeit* (Leipzig: Dyk, 1784), 135; about a discussion of the prince's diary, kept during his travels in Europe see Rudolf Bunge, "Johann Sebastian Bachs Kapelle zu Köthen und deren nachgelassene Instrumente," *Bach Jahrbuch* (1905): 19; and Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 191–192.

5. For a list of visiting musicians in 1718 and 1719 and their payments see David and Mendel, *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, no. 76, 86; see also Werner Neumann and Hans-Joachim Schulze, eds. *Fremdschriftliche und gedruckte Dokumente zur Lebensgeschichte Johann Sebastian Bachs, 1685–1750. Bach-Dokumente* II, (1969), nos. 86, 99, 108, 277. The most detailed discussion of the financial situation in the court is given in Günther Hoppe, "Köthener politische ökonomische, und höfische Verhältnisse als Schaffensbedingungen Bachs," *Cöthener Bach Hefte*, no. 4 (1986): 12–62.

6. For information about the financial conditions and music expenses in the Cöthen's court see Friedrich Smend, *Bach in Köthen*, Translated and revised by Stephen Daw, 1985 (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), 34.

'the musical contest for superiority" further.[7]

The high level of technical difficulty in Bach's music is characteristic of both the instrumental and vocal music from this period. Most of his vocal compositions are for a solo singer or often for two singers consisting of dialogues (eg. BWV 66a, BWV 134a) and reflect features of virtuosity and technical mastery. Their instrumental parts are not accompaniments to the vocal parts and have the same or similar quality.[8] The surviving instrumental music from this period matches this high musical standard. The two sets of solo unaccompanied string music, the Six Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin (BWV 1001–1006) and the Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012), are cogent examples of Bach's creative genius to write dense contrapuntal music without bass accompaniment and to achieve 'the maximum effect with a minimum of instrumental 'tools".[9]

The combination of such working conditions, skilled music professionals, and Bach's inventive mind made for a fruitful environment, stimulating the sharing of a distinct aesthetic taste and ideas — those of connoisseurs and highly trained music virtuosos. Free from following norms or music standards, accepted as 'modern' by wider audiences, Bach might have been encouraged to write music to serve the aesthetic sophistication of the specialised, highly trained listeners in Cöthen court. His compositions from this period are distinct with their high standards. This is suggestive of the artistic search not only of the composer himself but also of those of the receivers who enjoyed it. In the sense of Miles Ogborn's ideas about geographies of modernity, the Cöthen court could have formed a space in which trained music specialists could share and appreciate aesthetic tastes in music that might appear too abstract in other cultural circumstances.[10]

7. Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 188.
8. Ibid., 198.
9. Ibid., 232.
10. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*.

4.2 Bach's Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012) — the text-critical problem

The Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello (BWV 1007–1012) are among the most famous pieces in the canon of Western music. Despite their reputation as a compulsory repertoire among cellists today, the suites are notorious for their enigmatic origin. Their story begins with a question mark, pointing out that Bach's autograph score has never been found. This keeps the exact year of the composition of this music unclear. Instead, the Suites survived in a small number of manuscript copies throughout Bach's life and around 70 years after his death until the publication of their first printed edition in 1824. Only four of these copies, known as Sources A, B, C and D, have reached us today. Each of them was prepared by a different copyist in the course of the eighteenth century who, however, had no direct connection between each other.

The textual transmission of this music is complex because of the variety of interpretive readings, suggested by the four manuscript copies. Additional information about the Cello Suites can be inferred also from their first printed edition published in Paris by Janet et Cotelle in 1824, known as Source E. Researchers assume that besides these four copies, three further sources existed which are now lost: Sources X, F and G. According to research findings, they might have been the reference points from which Anna Magdalena and Kellner prepared their copies.[11] The only autograph score of the Cello Suites in Bach's hand, we have today, is his own transcription of Suite 5 for lute (BWV 995), which is known as Source H and is located in the Royal Library in Brussels (Bibliotheque Royale Brüssel, II. 4085).

11. In the following discussion about the surviving sources I rely on Hans Uppstein's *Kritischer Bericht*, part of *Neue Bach Ausgabe* (NBA), VI/2, (Kassel, 1990); and on Schwemer and Woodfull-Harris, *Johann Sebastian Bach. 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso BWV 1007-1012*.

- Source A: *6* | *Suites A* | *Violoncello Solo* | *Senza* | *Basso* | *composees* | *par* | *Sr. J. S. Bach.* | *Maitre de la Chapelle*, ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269) was copied by Bach's second wife Anna Magdalena (1701–1760). It was part of a larger manuscript which included also the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin (BWV 1001–1006). According to source studies, this copy dates between ca. 1727 and 1731. Its neat writing and careful layout, without obvious messy corrections or mistakes, suggests that Anna prepared it with the intention to be given or sold to performers. The most striking characteristic of the copy is the inconsistently written and, at first glance, irregular articulation marks. Fig. 4.1–4.4 illustrate the diversity of interpretive readings of the *Prelude* in g major from Suite 1 (BWV 1007) as given in all the four manuscripts and also in the first printed edition.

- Source B: *Sechs Suonaten* | *Pour le Viola de Baßo.* | *par Jean Sebastian* | *Bach:* | *pos.* | *Johann Peter Kellner*, ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 804) (Fig. 4.2) was prepared by Johann Peter Kellner in 1726. Kellner (1705–1772) was an active organist in Gräfenroda (Thuringia, Germany) and personal acquaintance of Bach. Although it is not clear whether Kellner was one of Bach's students, he served as one of his main copyists.[12] Chronologically, Kellner's copy of the Cello Suites is the closest source to the autograph. Like Anna's, it was also part of a larger manuscript with other copies of Bach's music, also including the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin. It, however, contains numerous errors such as mistaken notes, rhythms, duplications or omissions of bars. The written-out articulation is also irregular but does not correspond to the irregularity in source A. It is not known whether Kellner could play a string instrument and for what reason he was interested in the Cello Suites. The messy look of the copy and the numerous corrections and mistakes suggest the possibility that Kellner copied the Suites either from purely compositional interest and not to perform them, or to use them with pedagogical purpose as an exercise for transcriptions for organ or harpsichord, as was the *Kapellmeisters'*

12. Many of Kellner's copies (mainly for keyboard or organ) represent the earliest or only sources of some of Bach's compositions that reached our time.

practice of the time.[13]

Sources C and D date from the second half of the eighteenth century. In comparison with the two earlier sources they show a highly standardised scheme of application of articulation marks.

- Source C: *Suiten und Preludien für das Violoncello von Joh. Seb. Bach*, ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 289) (Fig. 4.3) was also part of a larger manuscript from a collection of 14 volumes of instrumental works by Bach, owned by the Hamburg organist, printer, and music dealer Johann Christoph Westphal. According to source studies, the copy was prepared by two anonymous copyists in the second half of the eighteenth century.

- Source D: *6. Suite | a | Violoncello solo. | Del Sigl: Joh: Seb: Bach*, ((A-Wn), Mus. Hs. 5007) (Fig. 4.4) was copied by another anonymous copyist. It was found in Vienna and is still located in the National library there. The only information we have about this copy is that it was prepared in the late eighteenth century and was offered for sale in 1799 by Johann Traeg in Vienna.

  Although I do not discuss the interpretive reading of the Suites in the first printed edition (Source E), I juxtapose a short excerpt of the *Prelude* from Suite 1 (BWV 1007) from it to the manuscript copies as an illustration of the interpretive flexibility of this music (Fig. 4.5).

- Source E: *Six Sonates ou Etudes Pour le Violoncelle Solo Composees par J. Sebastien Bach. Oeuvre Posthume. Prix 12.F A Paris, Chez Janet et Cotelle.*, ((S-Skma), Platten-Nr.:1497).[14]

Although a few more editions followed the first printed edition after 1824, the Suites gained their

13. About Kellner's copies of Bach's works for solo string instruments see Stinson, "J. P. Kellner's Copy of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo"; and Stinson, *The Bach Manuscripts of Johann Peter Kellner and His Circle: A Case Study in Reception History*.

14. This example is a transcription of the articulation marks from the first printed edition, which I have formatted myself.

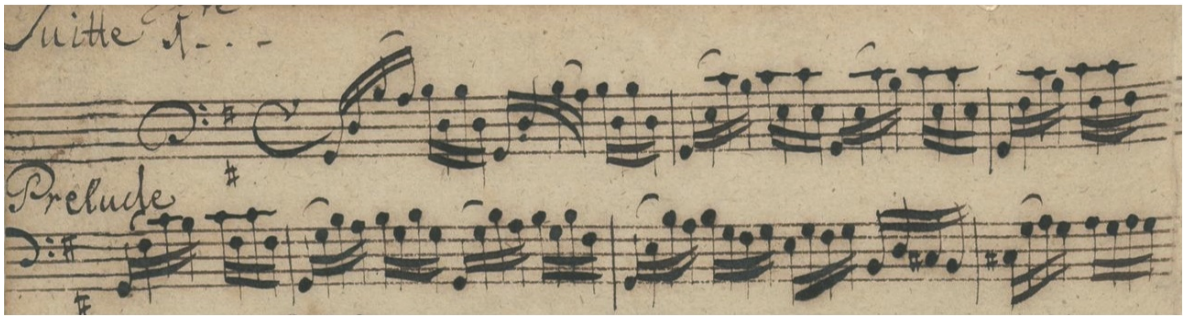


Figure 4.1: Source A ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV1007), g major, b. 1–5; copied by Anna Magdalena Bach.
(© Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin — Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv)

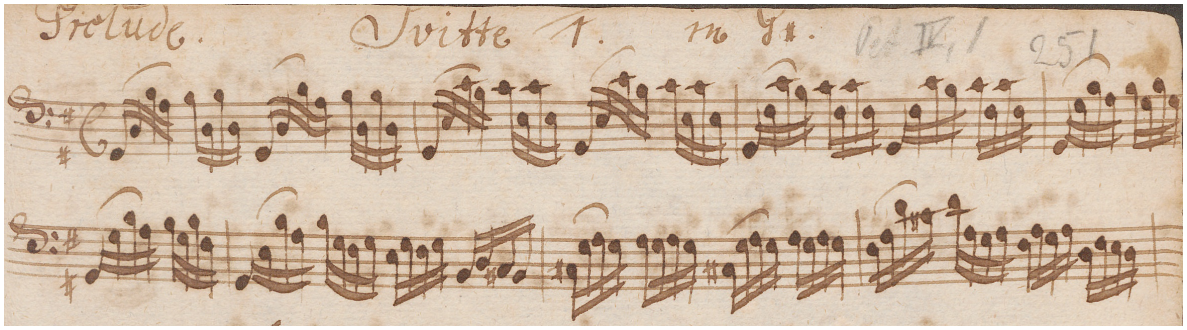


Figure 4.2: Source B ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 804), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV1007), g major, b. 1–7; copied by J. P. Kellner.
(© Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin — Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv)

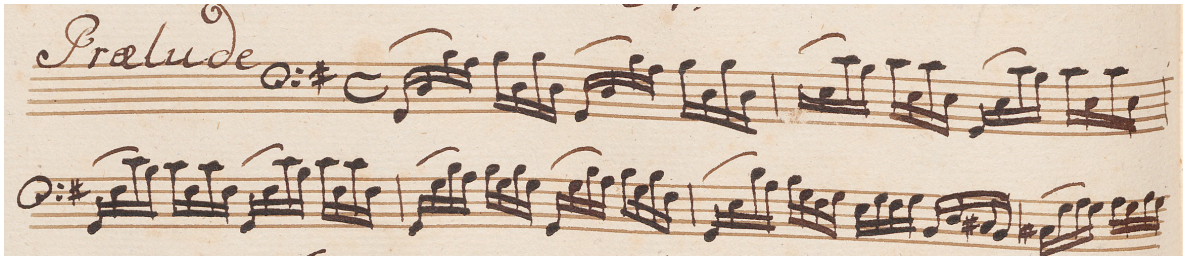


Figure 4.3: Source C ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 289), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV1007), g major, b. 1–5.
(© Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin — Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv)

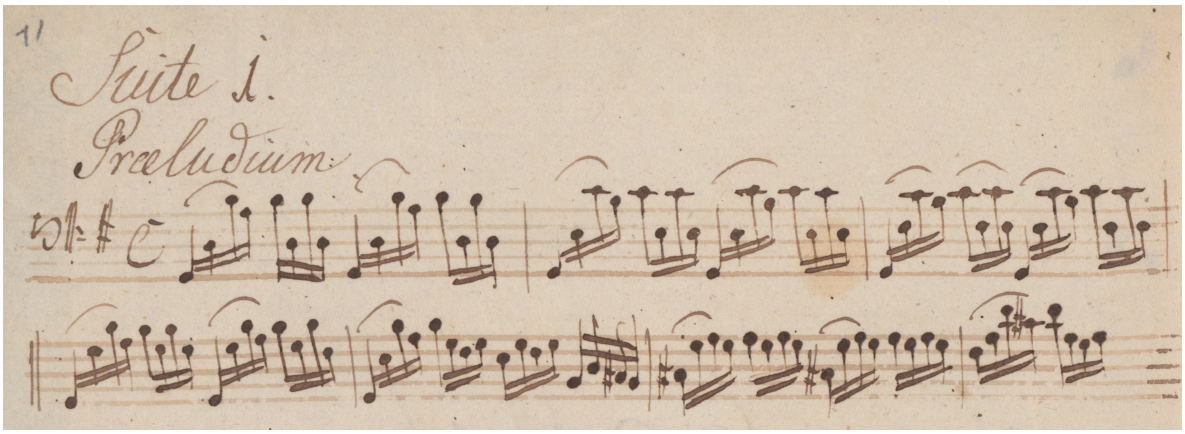


Figure 4.4: Source D ((A-Wn), Mus. Hs. 5007), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV1007), g major, b. 1–6.
(©Österreichische Nationalbibliothek-Musiksammlung)

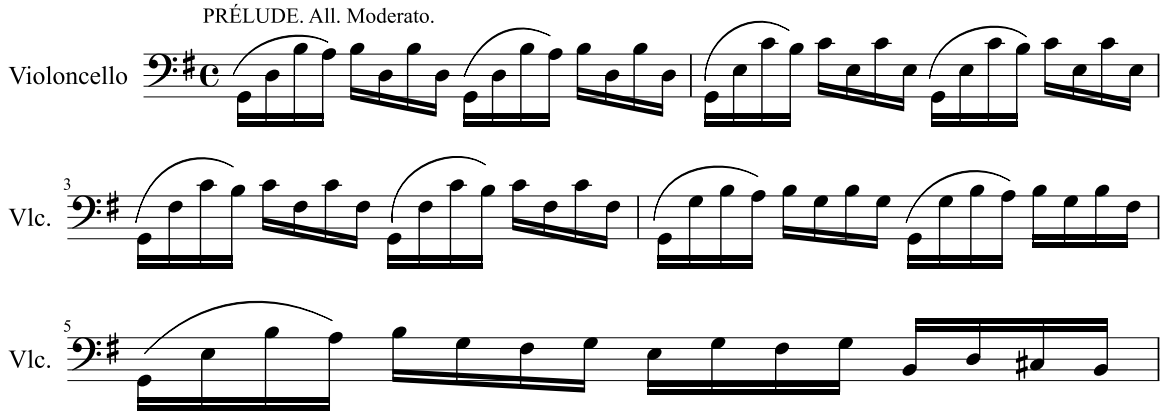


Figure 4.5: Source E ((S-Skma), Platten-Nr.:1497), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV1007), g major, b. 1–5

high popularity only in the early twentieth century. In the 1890s one of the greatest cellists of the twentieth century, Pablo Casals (1876–1973), then only 13 years old, discovered them in an antiquarian shop in Barcelona. Casals was the one who frequently performed them in public and the first to prepare a recording between 1936 and 1939. The edition he discovered, however, was not based directly on any of the manuscripts listed above. It was probably a printed edition of the Suites in circulation at the time.[15] Although it was Casals who popularised this music in the twentieth century, it appears that the Suites have been known and performed before the 1900s. The two printed editions of the German cellist Friedrich Wilhelm Grützmacher (1832–1903) account for their dissemination in the late nineteenth century.

Grützmacher was an active performer and music teacher in mid-nineteenth-century Germany. Besides music performance, his activities also included a few editorial publications of early music, such as music by Boccherini, Geminiani, and Bach. Today Grützmacher is famous for his two editions of Bach's Cello Suites. In the first (ca. 1866) he rearranged the music by including significant changes in the notated text such as added articulation signs, accentuation, chords, ornaments as well as whole new passages, which were standard practices then. This illustrates his goal to adjust the music according to the contemporaneous conventions of taste and performance practice of his time. In the second edition, dating from 1900, however, he restored these changes.[16]

After Casals's frequent public performances in the first decades of the twentieth century, the Suites gradually became a compulsory part of the cello repertoire. The interest in them that followed

15. See Robert Baldock, *Pablo Casals* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992); see also Herbert L. Kirk, *Pablo Casals: A Biography* (London: Hutchinson, 1974); Pablo Casals as told to Albert E. Kahn, *Joys and Sorrows: Reflections by Pablo Casals* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970); and Julian Lloyd Weber, ed., *Songs of the Birds: Sayings and Impressions of Pablo Casals* (London: Robson Books, 1985).

16. Lynda MacGregor, "Grützmacher, Friedrich," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, accessed January 12, 2015, `http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/11877`; see also Robert von Zahn, "Grützmacher," in *MGG*, vol. 8, Personenteil Bände (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2002), 131–133.

throughout the twentieth century led to the subsequent discovery of the four manuscript copies. Their most distinguishable feature is the striking discrepancies in the written-out articulation in each source. Comparing the suggested slur articulation in each source, one can trace a trend. The copyists of the earliest sources approached articulation idiosyncratically. The later copyists worked towards a more standardised interpretation. In the former case, the articulation marks are short and varied as if resembling irregular speech. In the later copies, they are smoother, regular, and longer, reflecting a convention for singing tone and long legato phrases, which is more typical for the conventions of later historical times (eg. nineteenth and early twentieth centuries).[17]

This rich diversity of readings would challenge the positivistic approach from the 1950s of collecting, categorising, and ordering knowledge by searching for a single, universally valid principle. The missing authority of the composer's manuscript in this case brings a lot of uncertainty. The aim of the positivists was to prove, by using logic and factual evidence, which was the composer's 'true' version of a musical composition. The consequence of this process of logic and proven facts is to preserve this musical idea intact, accepting it as the composer's 'correct' version. In the case of the Cello Suites this vision appears almost impossible. Given how scarce physical evidence of this music is, identifying an exemplary ('correct') model, is a task fraught with danger. This might be the reason why not many scholars have attempted to provide answers to this musicological conundrum.

17. In terms of historicising the performance practices from the eighteenth century onwards, George Barth gives an interesting account in his book *The Pianist as Orator: Beethoven and the Transformation of the Keyboard Style*. He identifies the beginning of the aesthetic shift from a detached to smoother performance preference around the middle of the eighteenth century. Beethoven first introduced continuous (long) *legato* phrases in his piano music, which his student Carl Czerny used as a norm and applied generously in his activity as an editor. Barth asserts that after the mid-eighteenth century music, performance became smoother and more homogenised. The main impulse for this aesthetic change, according to him, was the advancement of science and the idea of mechanical reproduction in music. The discovery of the metronome together with the improvement of the music instruments paved the way towards establishing a preference of more mechanical uniformity. With this, rhetorical subtleness in music started to fade away and 'not only subtle differentiations between the parts of the beat began to be overlooked but the characteristic shapes of the various meters began to be homogenised'. See Barth, *The Pianist as Orator: Beethoven and the Transformation of the Keyboard Style*, 20.

Musicologists generally consider Anna's manuscript of the Cello Suites as the most reliable in all the extant sources. Because of the irregularity of her articulation instructions, however, the manuscript has gained the fame of being done in haste and continues to provoke controversy among scholars and performers.[18] In an article from 2007, Yo Tomita undertakes an attempt to re-evaluate Anna's role as one of Bach's copyists. Relying on existing research findings and documental evidence, he views her work proceeding from the assumption that she was an 'overworked' and 'inexperienced' copyist. Tomita illustrates his evaluation of Anna's copies on the basis of his interpretation of historical evidence: by evaluating handwriting and comparison with other copyists. Similar to previous studies on her manuscripts, the direction of his perspective is to find the shortest way to reconstruct Bach's 'original' (and singular) musical idea. With all the variants by the composer himself (in the cases when his score autographs survived), however, and Anna's even more diverse versions of them, Tomita concludes that 'the reconstruction of her model is an almost impossible task.'[19] He rightly states that in order to understand her role as a copyist, it is important to consider the context in which Anna worked on a copy, its specific purpose, and function. Her copies of Bach's Violin Sonatas and the Cello Suites were for sale. This means that she must have copied them with more care than other copies or performing parts she prepared for Bach.[20] Bearing in mind Anna's proficiency as a

18. Richard Efrati, *Treatise on the Execution and Interpretation of the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin and the Suites for Solo Cello by Johann Sebastian Bach* (Zürich: Atlantis Musikbuch Verlag, 1979); Tomita, "Anna Magdalena Bach as Bach's Copyist"; Szabó, "Precarious presumptions and the "Minority Report": Revisiting the Primary Sources of the Bach Cello Suites." Although Bettina Schwemer and Douglas Woodfull-Harris as editors of the Cello Suites accept her copy as reliable, they are also suspicious about her varied articulation; see Schwemer and Woodfull-Harris, *Johann Sebastian Bach. 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso BWV 1007-1012*.

19. Tomita, "Anna Magdalena Bach as Bach's Copyist," 69.

20. Apart from the Cello Suites and the Violin Sonatas and Partitas, Anna Magdalena prepared a few more complete manuscript copies for her husband. Among them are Sonata for Violin in G (BWV 1021), which was a joint copy with her husband: Bach provided the title, the movement headings and the continuo figures and she copied the text; Ouverture in c (BWV 831a) — an extension to Bach's Six Partitas (BWV 825–830), which he published in 1731 as *Clavierübung* I. Anna's copy of this work appears also as an early version of the French ouverture of B minor (BWV 831), published in 1731 as part of the *Clavierübung* II together with Bach's Italian concerto (BWV 971). Besides these manuscripts, she was the copyist of a few more parts of instrumental as well as vocal compositions of Johann Sebastian such as parts of *Well-Tempered Clavier* I and II as well as parts of *Clavierbuchlein for Anna Magdalena Bach*. For an extensive list of her work see Tomita, "Anna Magdalena

chamber musician in Cöthen court and her close connection with J. S. Bach, I believe her reading reflects alternative to our aesthetic standards.

Our knowledge of the musical practices in this historical time relies mainly on the written sources we have now. Many of these (written music as well as instruction performance practice treatises) address the less-educated music lover.[21] Eighteenth-century critics, however, such as Scheibe and Mattheson, believed that solo and chamber music was a reserved area for the masters who had the skills and the freedom to interprete the music according to the occasion and their good taste. This implies a different level of thinking — a different cultural geography — within professional music circles. The expressive versatility, characteristic for these genres, could not be fixed on the page as a skilled chamber virtuoso could have rethought it differently every time they revisited the musical text.

In his study of Johann Pisendel's orchestral practices in Dresden during the 1720s, Kai Köpp identifies characteristic differences between orchestra and solo string players.[22] The orchestra musicians, according to Köpp, had not only different instruments but were also trained to aim for a more unified sound.[23] In contrast, the solo and chamber players had much finer instruments and used

Bach as Bach's Copyist," 75–76.

21. Johann Mattheson addressed his first theoretical publications to the amateurs as well as the professional music practitioners. See Mattheson, *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre*. The later treatises of performance practice, too, aimed to give instruction on how to appreciate and make good music. See Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*.

22. Johann Georg Pisendel (1687–1755) was a prominent virtuoso violinist in the early eighteenth century. He worked as a concert master of the Dresden Court Orchestra and was well connected in the music circles in Germany. Among his personal friends were Georg Philipp Telemann, Jan Zelenka, and J. S. Bach. He was also a close friend with Vivaldi with whom he often performed while he was abroad. Pisendel was fond of the Italian style of violin playing of which he was an avid promotor in Germany. Among Pisendel's students were Franz Benda and Johann Gottlieb Graun who worked as violin virtuosos in the court of Frederic the Great from 1732 onwards.

23. Kai Köpp examines various historical documents about orchestra performance practices in Dresden's court in the first decades of the eighteenth century where Pisendel was the leading music figure. Köpp argues that the capellmeisters strived at more unified style of playing, which was co-ordinated between them and the orchestra players. Drawing on various sources from the music literature of the time, Köpp observes a discrimination between orchestra and solo musicians. The Italian style of playing, although known as highly expressive and rich in varied sound nuances, was not suitable (popular) for orchestral practices. It was more acceptable for

a different bow grip and type of strings. Speaking about string practices, J. J. Quantz describes in his treatise *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (1752) two different types of cellos: one for solo or chamber music and another for orchestra playing.[24] Most curiously, Köpp stresses that such masters were unsuitable for orchestra playing as they could not follow the instructions for unified bowing and sound.[25]

Such a differentiation suggests the existence of more than one scheme of musical thinking: as 'multiple aesthetic spaces', existing simultaneously. The high level of unpredictable expressive variety was not to be fixed in the form of instructive notes on the page. This freedom of expressive thinking was for the highly skilled practitioners (the masters) and must have originated in a different kind of motivation. These are rooted, I suggest, in the processes of improvisation and experiment, which I have already traced to contemporary rhetorical principles. Instead of aiming at symmetrical structures with clear and coherent cognitive content, this mode of music thinking focused on the option of gaining pleasure in a game of reinterpreting a given idea in a new way. Following Ogborn's understanding of history as a multidimensional 'compilation of differences', such seeming idiosyncratic variety might be a representation of some 'modern' practices of music specialisation.

This view contradicts neoclassical ideas of uniform, smooth, and coherent execution as well as for the need for orchestral uniformity. The editors of the majority of modern printed editions of the Cello Suites, however, promote exactly this mode of thinking. With their smoother and standardised interpretation, those editions have shaped the interpretive tastes of generations of players and listeners. This makes it difficult to look at the music with a fresh (unprejudiced) mind, without being

solo and chamber performers. According to Köpp, the main duty of the capellmeisters then was to enforce consistency within their orchestras. See Kai Köpp, *Johann Georg Pisendel (1687–1755) und die Anfänge der neuzeitlichen Orchesterleitung* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2005), 248.

24. Johann Joachim Quantz, *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin: Johann Friedrich Voss, 1752), 212.

25. Köpp, *Johann Georg Pisendel (1687–1755) und die Anfänge der neuzeitlichen Orchesterleitung*, 273–278.

influenced by the authority of 'accepted models' of interpretation. I see such a standardised mode of thinking as a limitation that prevents recognition of a contradictory reading as a valid variant.

The expected articulation formula today is to prescribe similar slur application to similar rhythmic figures. In the g major *Prelude* from Suite 1 (BWV 1007), many editors of current printed editions of the Suites follow the pattern of the first three semiquavers of the arpeggiated figure slurred together and executed in the same way (with down-bow on the strong metrical beat) throughout the whole movement (Fig. 4.6). This regularised pattern of articulation has been in circulation since the late eighteenth-century, as sources C and D reflect, and continued to be disseminated in the following printed editions.

Anna's copy might be a proof of such processes of inventive musical thinking. It offers an opportunity to take this music out of the 'accepted box' and to rethink it in a new way. The irregularity of her slurs points towards the idea of exploring variants of musical meaning in the process of its unfolding and not in the final product. It resembles an experimental laboratory, aiming to explore the potential of bow technique in search for varied sound-colours and nuanced expressions. One can trace similar goals in the increased interest in rhetorical processes in the early eighteenth century, focusing on the importance of mastering the abundant style of speaking.[26] By comparing a performer with an orator, many eighteenth-century music-theoretical accounts emphasise the importance of the relationship of music with the flexibility of improvisation and rhetoric to adapt to a more dynamic mode of thinking. Musical pronunciation (the act of performance) becomes equivalent to rhetoric's final stage — the *pronunciatio* (delivery). Similarly, it can be flexibly varied in order to entertain and/or clarify the musical ideas according to the artistic context in a specific moment and place. This points to a crucially significant aspect of music as an art: its potential to generate numerous variants of a single idea. We know that the expressive

26. See my discussion of Erasmus of Rotterdam in chapter two.

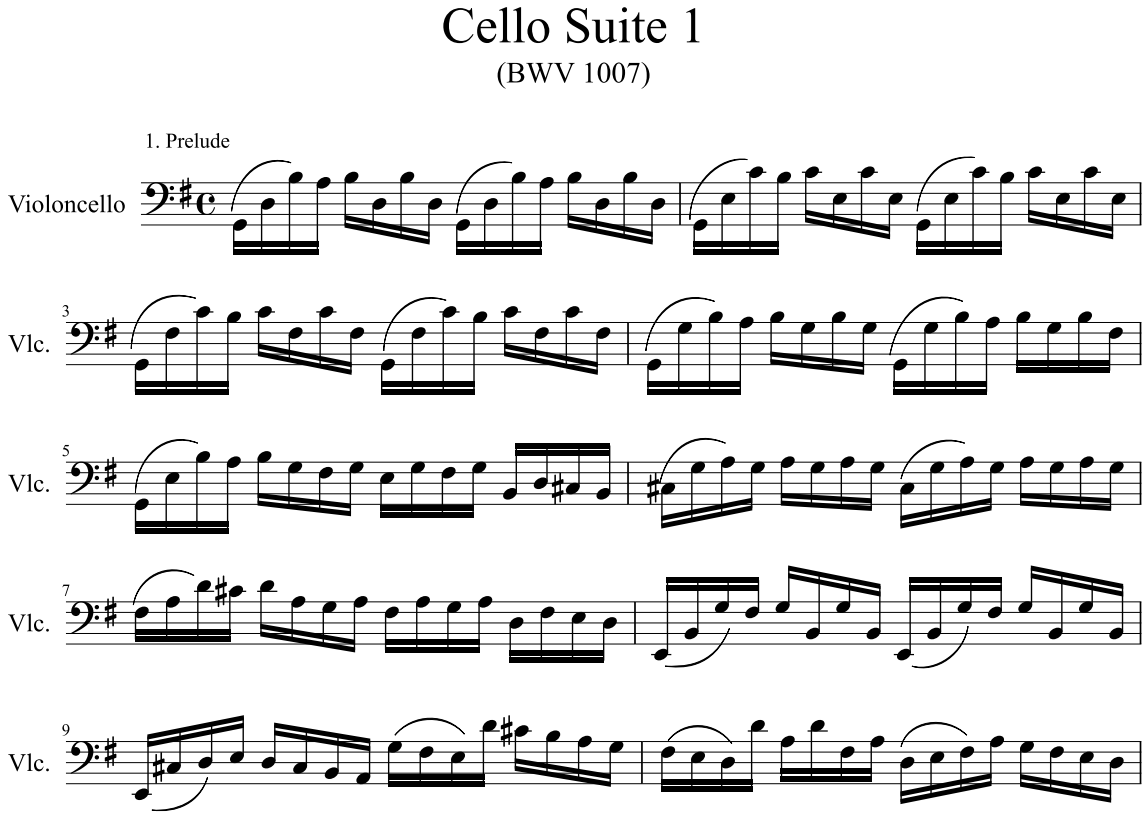


Figure 4.6: *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV 1007), g major, *Neue Bach Ausgabe*

spectrum of the baroque bow differs greatly to that of the modern Tourte bow.[27] The naturally louder stroke at the frog leads to a smoother *diminuendo* towards the lighter and softer tone at the bow tip and the other way around — moving from the tip towards the frog leads to a natural *crescendo*.[28] This makes the difference between up- and downbow on a historical instrument much more distinct, allowing a broader spectrum of sound-colours and expressive nuances.

The central principle of Anna's articulation, in my view, is a diversity of expressive nuances through mastering bow techniques. If a melodic or a rhythmic pattern repeats, this does not mean that the bow should follow the same pattern by analogy. Instead, the articulation reverses and brings out new tone colours of the same sequence of sounds. The resulting 'irregularity' does not comply with the notion of singing tone and unified legato playing. Although a singing tone in music was Mattheson's main requirement, his writings also aimed to explain music as speech in tones (*Klangrede*), attaching it to rhetoric.[29] Seen from this angle, Anna's articulation marks make the music speak to the audience by demonstrating an abundant speech of expressive variety. Her reading of the *Courante* from Suite 1 (BWV 1007) displays an attempt to include all possible slur variants of a rhythmically identical pattern of six semiquavers (Fig. 4.7). If she wanted to prescribe identical bowing to similar motifs, she could have written them out as she did in the *Courante* from Suite 6 (bars 12, 13 and 14) (Fig. 4.8), as well as in the *Prelude* from Suite 3 (Fig. 4.9).

27. In his extensive study of the history of violin and its technique, David Boyden states that in comparison with the modern bow, violinists can achieve more with the old (Baroque) bow. In the cases of articulation of more technical passages or repeated notes 'the old bow produces a natural articulation, especially on the upper third of the bow.' According to him, the old-style bow is much lighter and shorter than the Tourte bow, which requires a different balance. Obviously, it must have been designed to suit the aesthetic needs of older music, which consists of much shorter articulation than that in music from the late eighteenth century onwards. Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761*, 497-498.

28. Geminiani describes this dynamical effect on a stringed instrument as *messa di voce* or *swelling*. See Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin*; see also Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761*.

29. Mattheson, *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister*.

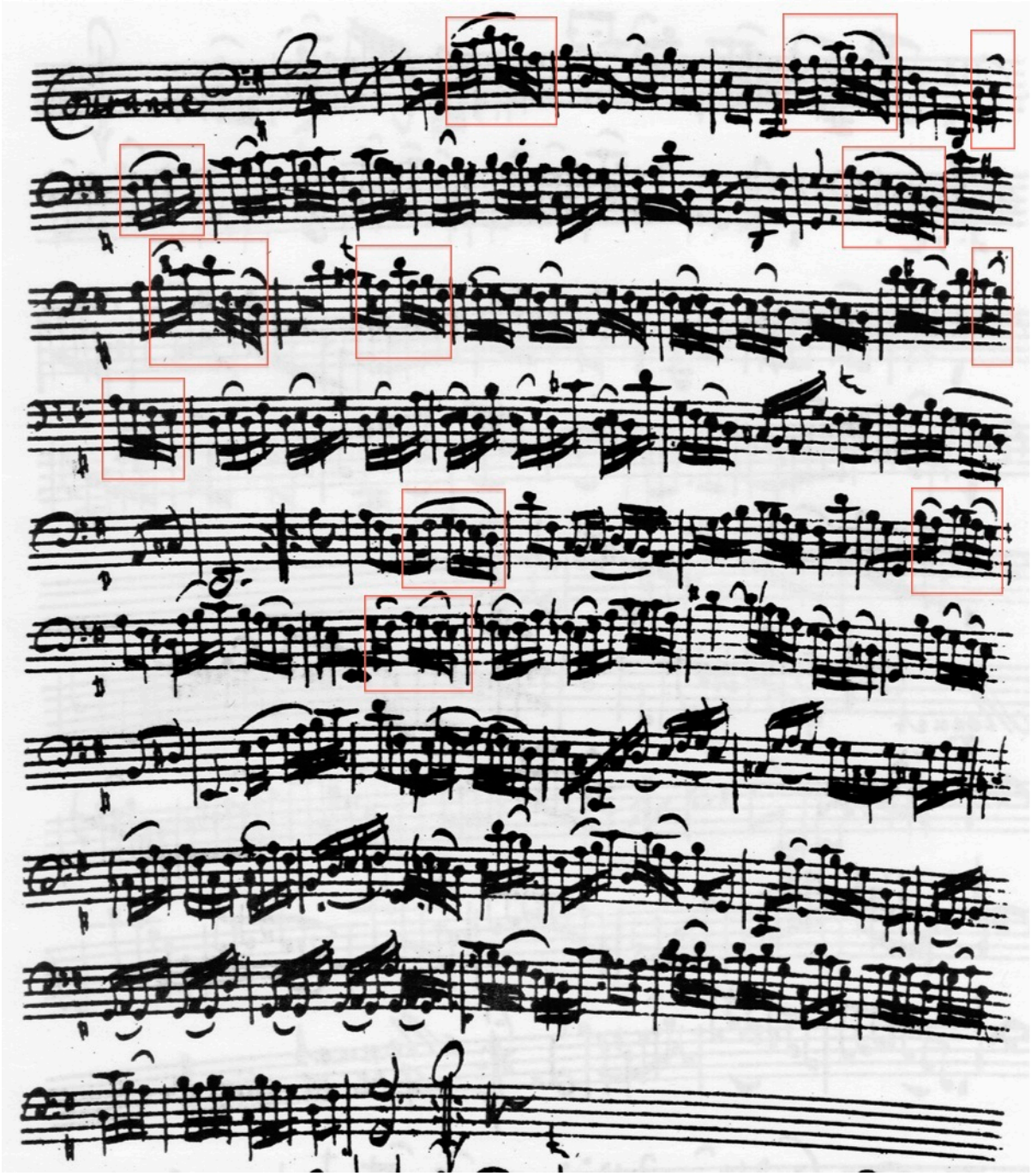


Figure 4.7: Source A ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269), *Courante*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV 1007), g major, Anna Magdalena Bach.
(© Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin — Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv)

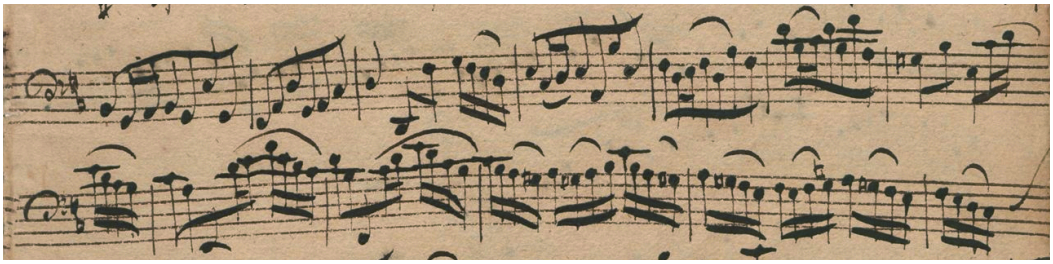


Figure 4.8: Source A ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269), *Courante*, Cello Suite 6 (BWV 1012), d major, Anna Magdalena Bach, b. 6–17.

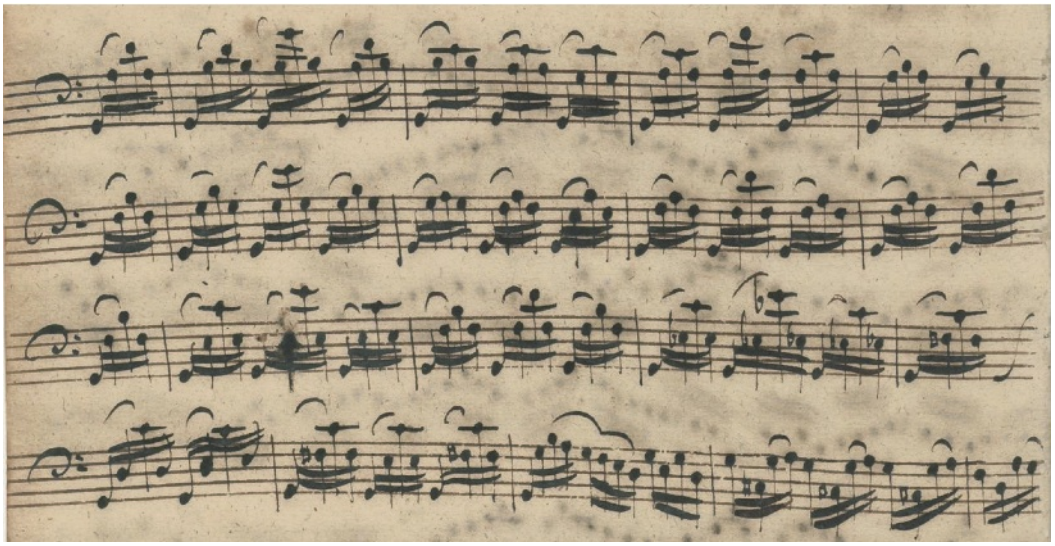


Figure 4.9: Source A ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 3 (BWV 1009), c major, Anna Magdalena Bach, b. 60–65.

Such an abundant variability of expressive thinking is striking as it seems to be uncommon in the textual transmission of other music from this time. This is what makes many scholars suspicious of its reliability and/or practical application. The copyists of the other sources suggest more standardised use of articulation, producing three different interpretive readings of the same music. Condemning Anna's interpretation as irrelevant is a convenient way to support selective standards for

meaning and value established in the early twentieth century. Their principles of structure, symmetry, and consistency as the value bearers in music, however, were elevated as such much later than Bach's time — in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The kernel of the conundrum of Bach's Cello Suites is a complex blend of different understandings of how music 'should' function. The resultant diversity of interpretive variants (as transmitted by the manuscript sources as well as the subsequent printed editions) is evidence of continuously changing aesthetic conventions throughout history. This makes the task of searching for a single model of interpretation as the 'true' one, illusory. What was 'modern' or beautiful in the past might not be perceived as such today. In terms of historical time and aesthetic conventions, it is reasonable to accept the two earlier sources (sources A and B) as closest to Bach's lost fair copy. The other sources, however, should not be judged as unimportant. Each of these manuscripts should be taken seriously in the process of examining the music as each of them sheds light on the aesthetic conventions and taste in their own time of creation. As the music philosopher Lydia Goehr argues, it is not the music artefacts (eg. scores and recordings) that we judge but our own expectations of a particular music.[30] It is not surprising, then, that the aesthetic taste of audiences and performers have also been in a continuous process of change, determined by aesthetic conventions, music instrumentarium, or the economic market.

4.3 Source comparison

A comparison between all the sources makes the articulation in the Cello Suites complicated. The written slurs in each of them differ enormously from the other sources and neither of them is free of mistakes. The most carefully written is source C, giving the impression that the copyist wanted to

30. Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*, 253.

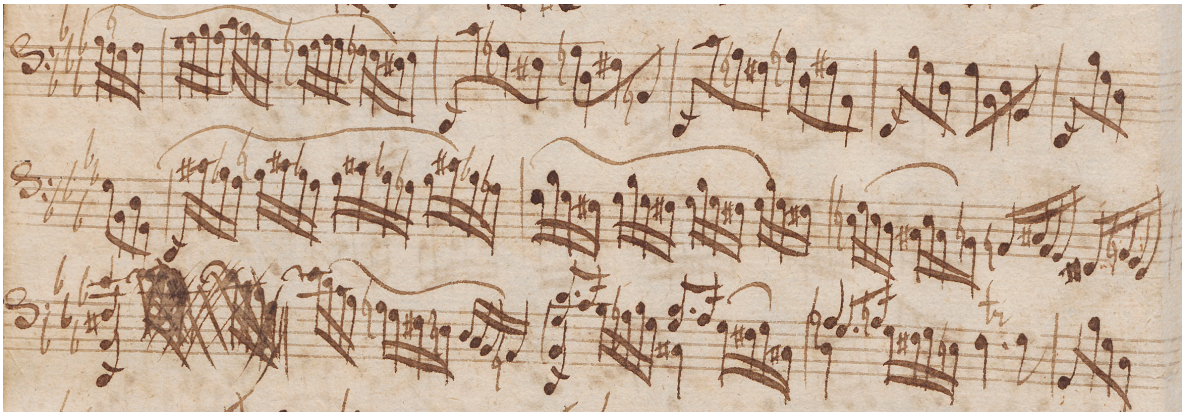


Figure 4.10: Source B ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 804), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 4 (BWV 1010), a flat major, J. P. Kellner, b. 50–61.

prescribe analogous articulation for the identical passages. This is also the case in the first printed edition (source E). The articulation in both sources, however, is not identical and follows different patterns. By prescribing consistency in identical passages, their copyists adapt the music to the tastes and practices of the late eighteenth century.

Although closer to Bach's time, sources A and B are not free of errors either. The earliest source (B) (1726) is imprecise and contains errors and corrections of notes and rhythms. According to Russel Stinson, such carelessness is typical for Kellner as copyist (Fig. 4.10).[31] The most problematic is Suite 5 (BWV 1011) where Kellner decided to omit the prescribed *scordatura* and to copy it in concert pitch. While errors such as mistaken notes or rhythms can be ascribed to haste or carelessness, the omission of whole movements and numerous pitch mistakes in the process of transposition is more problematic. In Suite 5, Kellner omits the entire movement of the *Sarabande*. Further, the *Gigue* movement contains only nine bars altogether. Similarly to source A, the articulation is inconsistent. Most interestingly, however, it does not follow the slur patterns in source A. Another peculiarity of Kellner's copy is his addition of a few details that could not have been

31. Stinson, "J. P. Kellner's Copy of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo."

written by Bach, such as added tempo and dynamic prescriptions in some of the movements.[32] In the manuscript title he refers not to suites but to the modern genre of that time, *Suonaten*, composed not for cello but for *viola de baßo*. With this instrument title composers usually referred to *viola da gamba*. It is not clear, however, which instrument Kellner had in mind as the bass viols traditionally had six strings tuned in fourths with a major third in the middle strings (D–G–C–E–A–D). This tuning makes the music of the suites unsuitable for *viola da gamba*.

Despite the few occasional mistakes in pitch notation, the clear and neat layout of source A suggests that its copyist (Anna Magdalena) was a diligent person who handled the job with care. In some cases the written articulation marks are difficult to read because their placements are too high above or below the text. Despite this, the tidy presentation of the copy infers that Anna's intentions were to provide a performer's script. We can only speculate whether Bach composed the suites for a specific performer in mind. If the music was composed for the Cöthen *Kapelle*, then the names of Christian Ferdinand Abel (viola da gamba) and Carl Bernhard Lienicke (violoncello) stand out as the possible first performers.[33]

If we place the music of the suites in the context of their historical time, I argue, Anna's irregular articulation does not seem unusual. Many public discussions about aesthetic tastes and practices of the time identified the variety of sound nuances and affects as most desirable.[34] As I discussed in the previous chapters, chamber and solo music had the greatest freedom of expression and was regarded as music for masters. Despite the few notational mistakes, I believe Source A presents a variant that Bach might have valued. The neat layout of the manuscript, on the one hand, suggests a clear performer's copy. The diversity of articulations, on the other, reflects the desire for variety in expression as a characteristic aesthetic convention of the time.[35]

32. Kellner prescribes the *Prelude* from Suite 3 to be played *Presto* and the *Allemande* from Suite 4 *Adagio*.
33. Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 193.
34. See chapter three.
35. Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761*; Harnoncourt, *Baroque Music Today:*

4.4 Varieties of consistency: Mrs Bach's reading of the Prelude from Cello Suite in G major (BWV 1007)

Performers and musicologists have for a long time considered Anna's irregular slurs to be displaced to the right or carelessly thrown in the score without a particular meaning.[36] Such viewpoints question not only her reliability as a copyist but also her musical expertise.[37] Contrary to this belief, more recent research points out that she was a highly skilled practitioner, working as professional singer in the court of Prince Leopold. Her rank as chamber musician brought her a high salary paid by the princely court; she earned nearly as much as Johann Sebastian. It seems that Bach relied on her in emergency cases to help him with transcribing and copying several of his compositions.[38] If one assumes the irregular slurs in the manuscript as articulation accepted by Bach and not as a result of ignorant copying, this will provide the key to the highly valued interpretational variety that Mattheson and Scheibe described. It will also, perhaps, signal the presence of a special aesthetic space around the Bachs, conveyed to us by Anna Magdalena's copy.

Anna's reading outlines a process in which a given musical idea transforms into other audible shapes and models by systematically changing the articulation pattern. The goal in her reading, I argue, is

Music as Speech: Ways to New Understanding of Music; Webster, "The Triumph of Variability: Haydn's Articulation Markings in the Autograph of Sonata no. 49 in E flat."

36. See my literature review about the Cello Suites in chapter one; see also the rather dismissive opinion of the distinguished cellist and musicologist Dimitry Markevitch http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/Articles/markevitch.htm

37. Tomita, "Anna Magdalena Bach as Bach's Copyist."

38. The fact that Bach never asked his first wife Maria Barbara to help him with copying but he did rely on Anna Magdalena says that he trusted her as a competent practitioner. see Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 395. For a discussion about the status of Anna's manuscript copies of Bach's music see Tomita, "Anna Magdalena Bach as Bach's Copyist"; see also Georg von Dadelsen, *Bemerkungen zur Handschrift Johann Sebastian Bachs, seiner Familie und seines Kreises*, Tübinger Bach-Studien 1. (Hohner-Verlag Trossingen, 1957), 34–37.

experimenting with the initial idea in order to explore and exhaust its expressive potential. This is an intellectual game of creativity and reinvention in order to discover as many expressive variants as possible. In this sense, Anna's script resembles a process of musical oration in which a given idea smoothly morphs from one model into another. It transforms into various audible patterns, accounting for a multitude of variants. Anna's reading is comparable with the famous artwork *Metamorphosis* (1939–1940) of the Dutch artist M. C. Escher (Fig. 4.11).

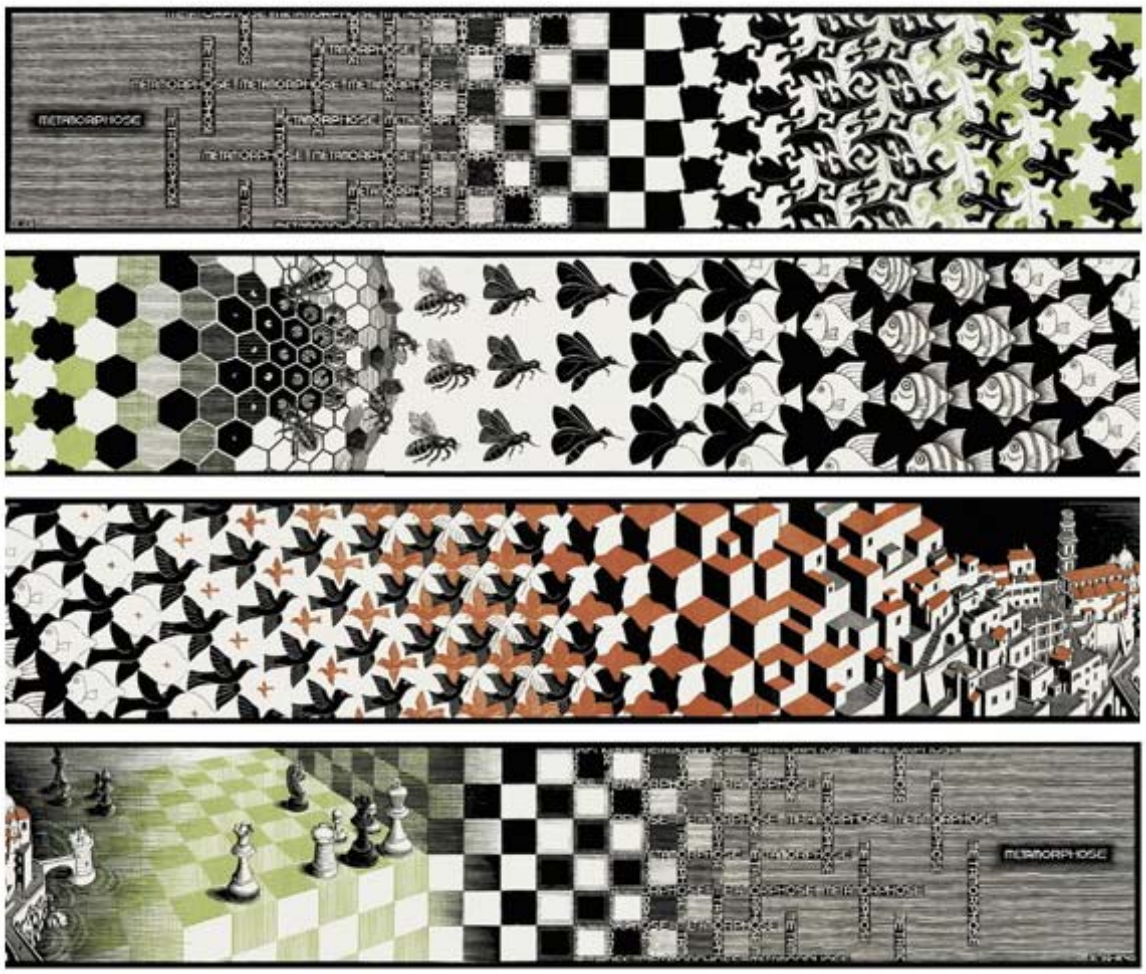
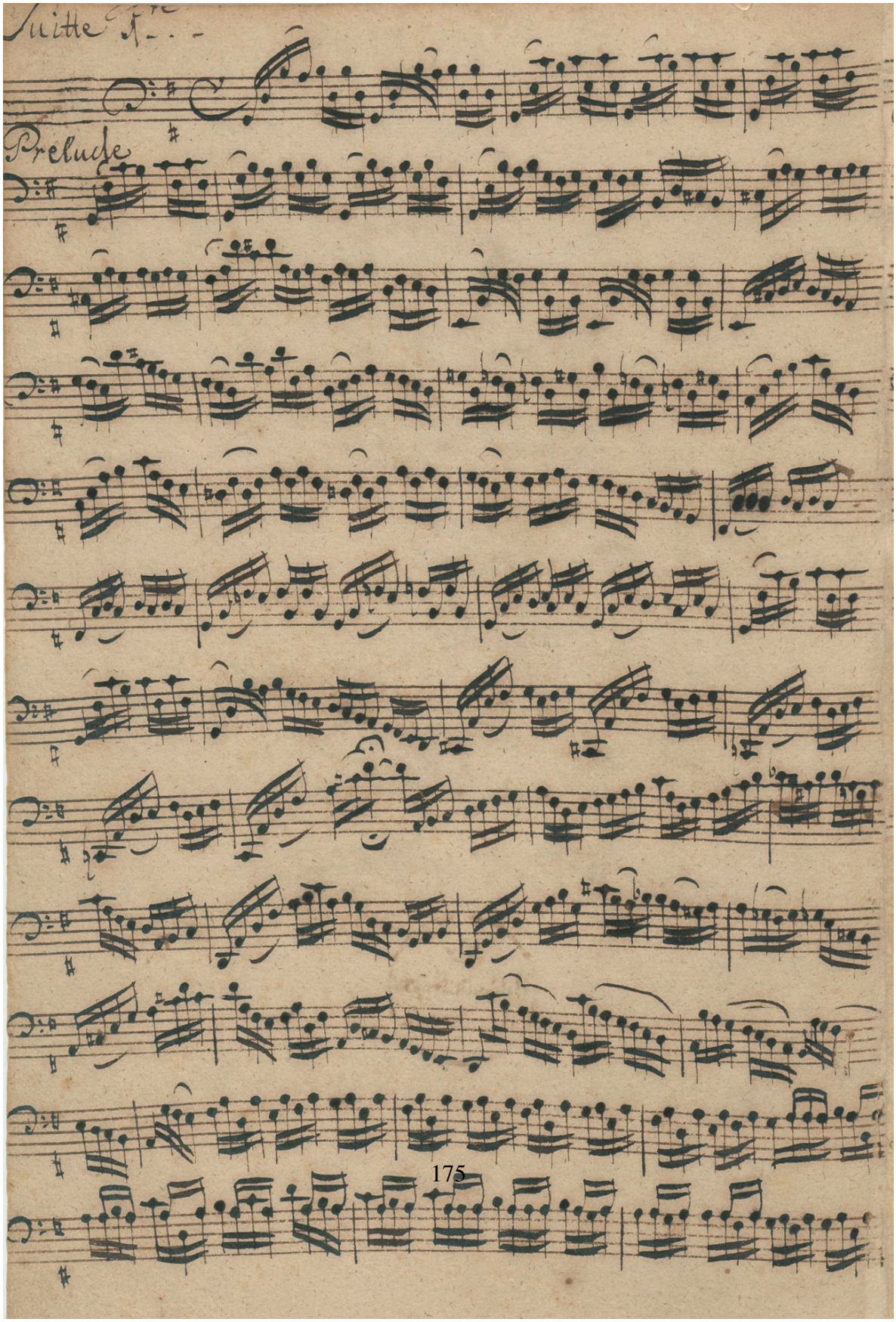


Figure 4.11: M. C. Escher, *Metamorphosis II*, (1939–1940)

Escher's work unfolds from left to right. Using a simple grid of the word *metamorphose* as a model, he smoothly transforms it into a variety of other images. Tessellating the grid, he turns it into a chess board which in turn becomes a mosaic of reptiles, honeycombs, insects, fish, birds, and a tessellation of blocks with red tops. This pattern then transforms into a three-dimensional image of a town on the coast. Escher links a building from the town with a tower in the water by a bridge and the water turns into mosaic patterns resembling the same chessboard from the beginning. Gradually, the board transforms into a checkred wall pattern which returns back to the initial grid of the word *metamorphose*. At the basis of Escher's artwork is the idea of repetition. Repeating a pattern by introducing small alterations gradually transforms it into a new shape or an image. It is important to note that every new image in his *Metamorphosis* is a symmetrical (unaltered) representation of real objects.

Anna's reading of the Prelude from Suite 1 (BWV 1007) outlines similar tessellation techniques but in a musical context, unfolding in time. The mosaic background of the Prelude is a continuous rhythmical pulse of semiquavers. It remains unaltered throughout the whole piece (Fig. 4.12). Experimenting with articulation, Anna uses it as a tool for shaping this rhythmical uniformity into a variety of audible models. Like in Escher's work, the structure of the Prelude is symmetrical. It consists of 42 bars which, if we follow the harmonic outline, could be subdivided into smaller, also symmetrical, units of two, four, six, or eight bars (see Table 1). It is, however, not the structure at stake here. It is the process of transforming its symmetrical proportions into other new ideas through the means of articulation.

The first four bars of the Prelude outline a pattern of an arpeggiated chord, repeating twice within the same bar (Fig. 4.13). Systematically varying the articulation, it transforms into various audible models, each with a different sound nuance. Similar to Escher's *Metamorphosis*, after changing into many audible shapes through the piece, it returns at the end of the piece in its initial form.


Suitte I.re
Prelude

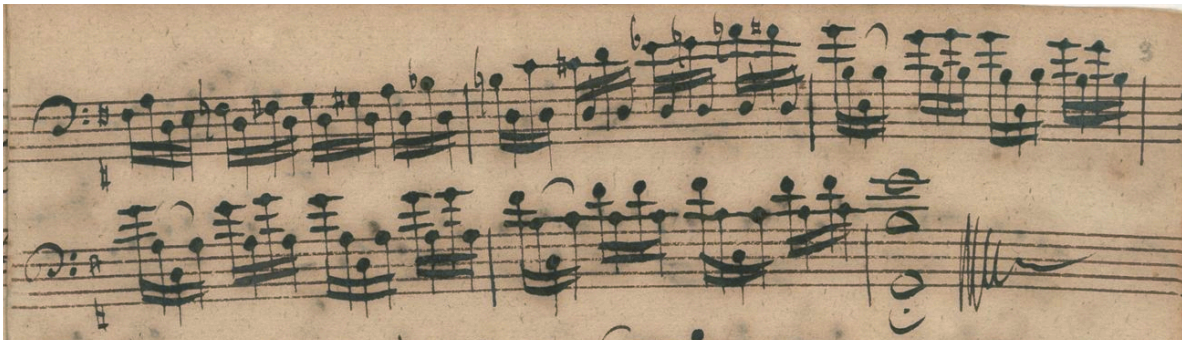


Figure 4.12: Source A ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV 1007), g major, A. M. Bach.

In bar 1 Anna slurs the last two semiquavers of the first and third beats. This seeming regularity, however, does not mean that the performer should play both slurred groupings in the same way. If a performer uses individual bow strokes on every note, the slurred groups in this bar require two different bow strokes: the first time on a downbow and the second time on an upbow. The seeming repetition, thus, brings out two different sound colours. Exactly this variety in articulation has led one of the great cellists of our time, Anner Bylsma, to exclaim 'The same motive twice in a row does not automatically mean twice the same bowing'.[39]

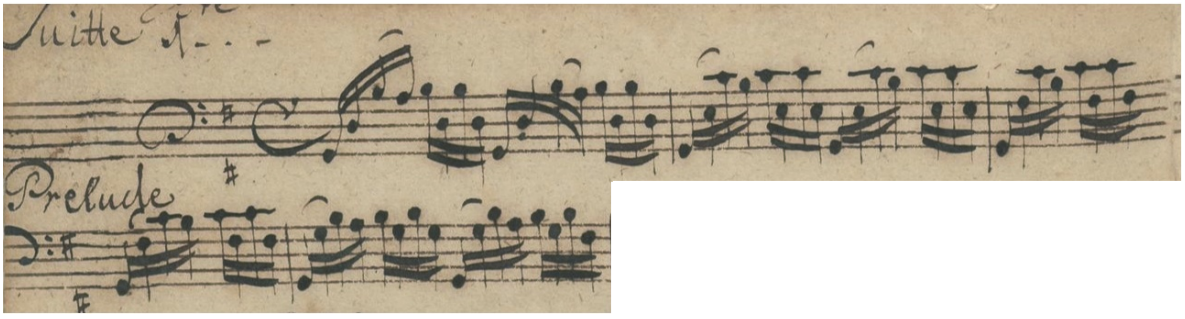


Figure 4.13: Source A ((D-B), Mus. ms. Bach P 269), *Prelude*, Cello Suite 1 (BWV 1007), g major, Anna Magdalena Bach, b. 1–4.

39. Bylsma, *Bach, The Fencing Master: Reading Aloud From the First Three Cello Suites*, 137; see also http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/Articles/bylsma.htm

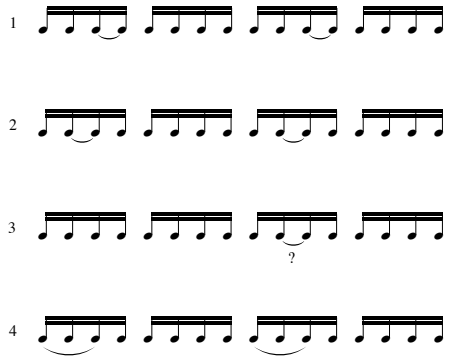


Figure 4.14: Source A, articulation analysis, bars 1–4

In bar 2 Anna has shifted the slurs to the second and the third semiquavers of the same metrical beats of the bar. The next bar is problematic: either Anna has missed a slur in the first beat or the slurred group on the second half of the bar is a mistake. The forth bar suggests yet another configuration: to join the three metrically strong semiquavers into a single bow stroke in both metrically strong beats (Fig. 4.14).[40]

In the next four bars the arpeggiated motif transforms into a different melodic pattern (Fig. 4.15):

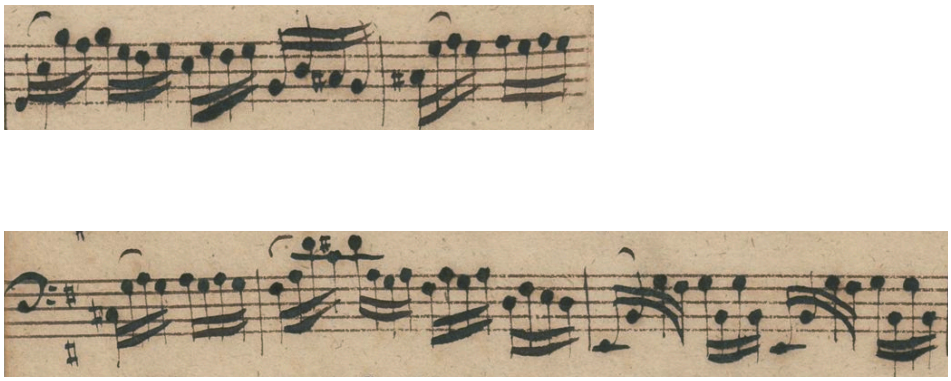


Figure 4.15: Source A, Prelude g major, bars 5–8

40. This is the model many editors have chosen as a standard to regularise the whole Prelude.

The first beat of bar five continues the slurred arpeggio from bar four. This time, however, it evolves into a descending cascade, outlining an e minor chord spread along the whole bar. In the following bar the symmetry of the arpeggiated pattern, halving the bar, returns. The slurs are regular, joining two identical groups of semiquavers in the two strong beats of the bar. Similarly as before, both slurs suggest different bow strokes. These two bars form a longer pattern, taking their entire length. The other two bars consolidate it on principles of repetition and similarity (Fig. 4.16):

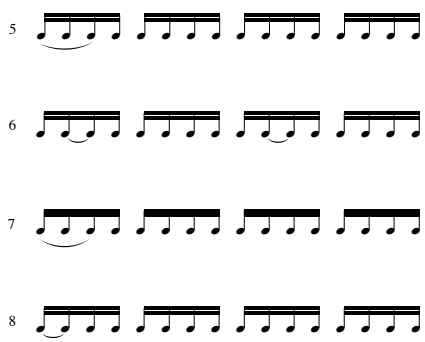


Figure 4.16: Source A, Prelude g major, articulation analysis, bars 5–8

In terms of articulation, bar seven is similar to bar five. The melodic contour in bar eight equals that in bar six. Playing with listeners' expectation, the articulation is no longer identical, indicating a new transformation.

Bars 9 and 10 act as a link towards a new pattern. Although the articulation is regular, the melodic contour distorts its symmetry (Fig. 4.17 en 4.18):

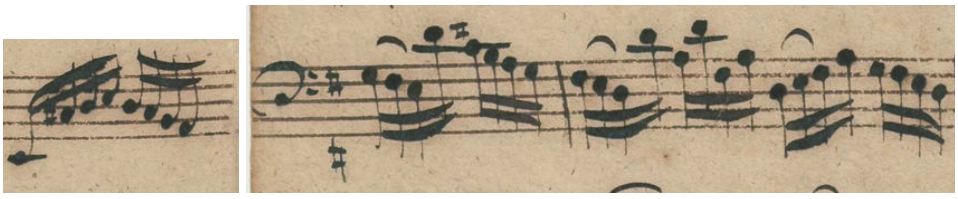


Figure 4.17: Source A, Prelude, bars 9–10

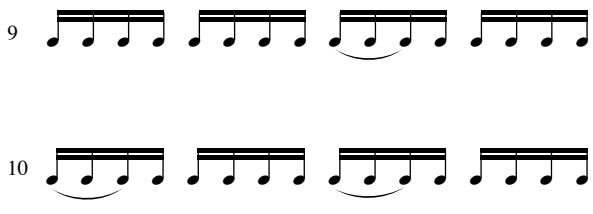


Figure 4.18: Source A, Prelude, articulation analysis, bars 9–10

Bars 11–14 extract even more variants from the initial pattern. In all the four bars Bach follows the chordal pattern halving the bar symmetrically. In bar 12, however, Anna breaks the symmetry. Slurring second and third semiquavers in the second half of the bar instead of the first three, she suggests a different articulation model (Fig. 4.19). This exploration game intensifies even more in the next two bars. Bar 13 is a melodically reversed image of the melodic pattern from bar 11. The articulation, however, is different and is unsymmetrical.

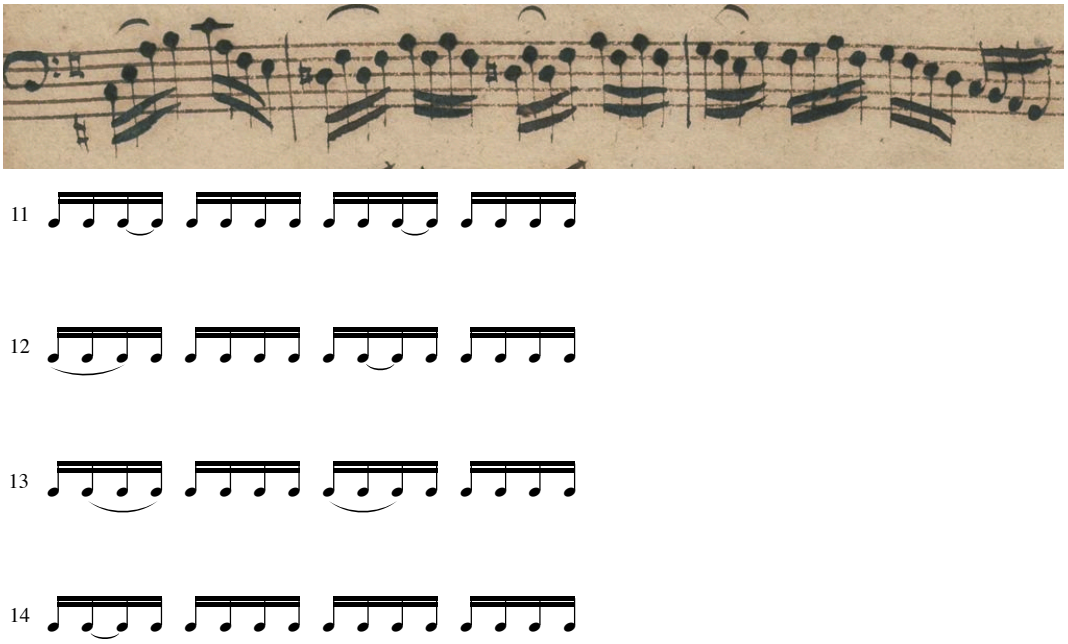


Figure 4.19: Source A, Prelude, articulation analysis, bars 11–14

The following four bars counteract with consistency in both melody and articulation. Leaving the bass note detached and slurring the rest of the arpeggio, Anna wrote identical slurring of the initial arpeggiated motif in bars 15–17. In bar 18, she breaks the slur regularity although the arpeggio pattern remains unchanged (Fig. 4.20 and Fig. 4.21).

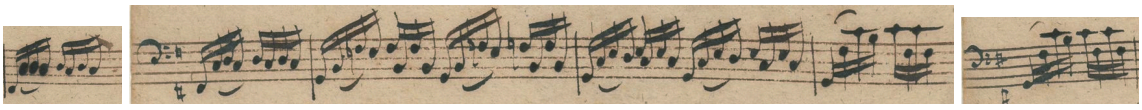


Figure 4.20: Source A, Prelude, bars 15–18

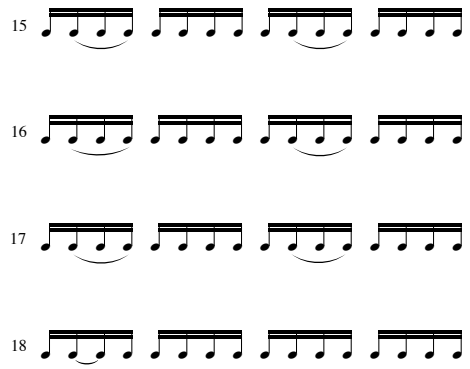
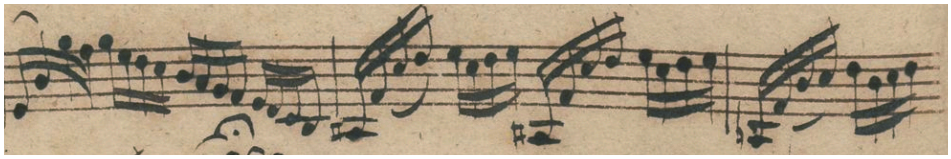


Figure 4.21: Source A, Prelude, articulation analysis, bars 15–18

In the following four bars Bach continues to explore the expressive potential of the arpeggiated pattern. The arpeggio in bar 19 dissolves into a descending scale. Appart from the first two semiquavers of the arpeggio, each of the following semiquavers comes on a separate bow stroke. In bars 20 and 21 the arpeggio pattern returns. Similarly to an earlier variant, Anna leaves the bass detached from the following it three slurred notes. Bar 22 breaks the slur consistency and leads to a cadenza-like virtuoso passage, which spreads in the next 2 and a half bars (from the middle of bar 22 to bar 24). The cadenza consists of three scalar groups implying a sequence. In this passage, Anna does not provide articulation suggestions, implying that each note should be played on a separate bow stroke (Fig. 4.22).



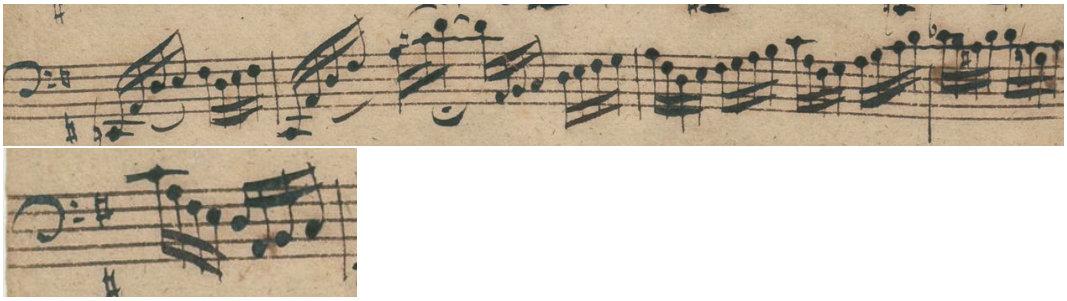


Figure 4.22: Source A, bars 19–24

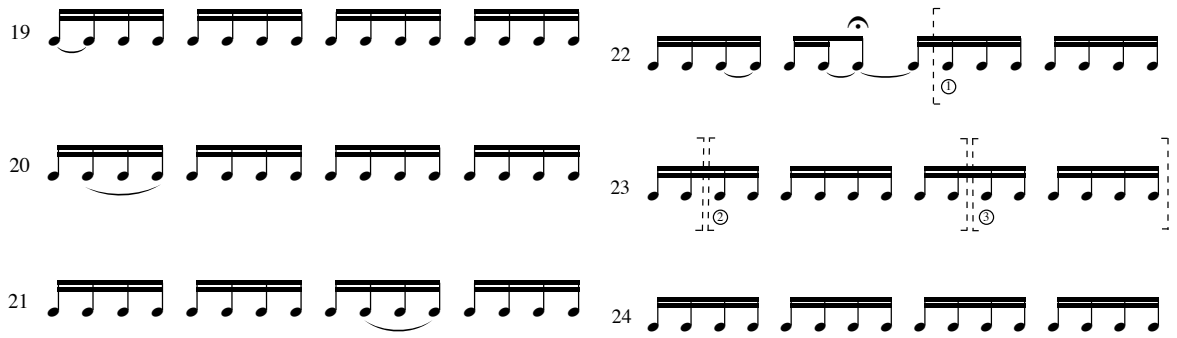


Figure 4.23: Source A, Prelude, articulation analysis, bars 19–24

The length and the metrical position of the scales, however, are irregular (Fig. 4.23). The first group, containing nine pitches, begins straight after the fermata, on the second semiquaver of the third beat. The second group is shifted with one semiquaver to the right on the expense of its length of eight pitches. Similar to the second sequence, the third group preserves its metrical placement on a weak beat. Bach, however, shortens its length even more to six pitches. The main source of creativity in this passage is playing with meter. The cadenza passage ends in bar 24. Bach restores the regular metrical pulse, linking it with the rest of the musical extemporisation.

From a structural perspective, the length of this passage is six bars (bars 19–24). To keep the even proportion of structure Bach adds a passage with the same length of six bars and similar virtuoso

features. Bar 25 returns the initial chordal motif once again with the already used articulation pattern of a detached bass and a slurred group of three chordal notes (Fig. 4.24).

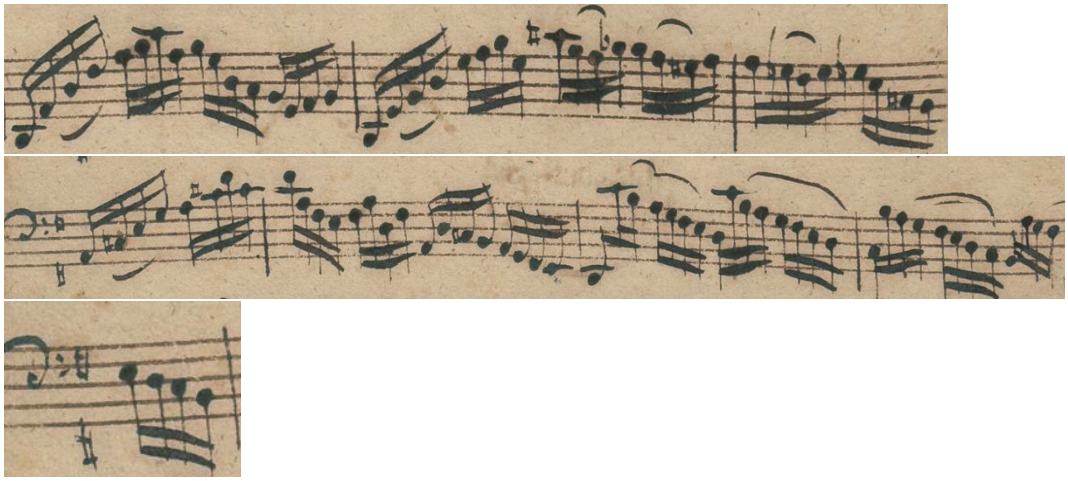


Figure 4.24: Source A, bars 25–30

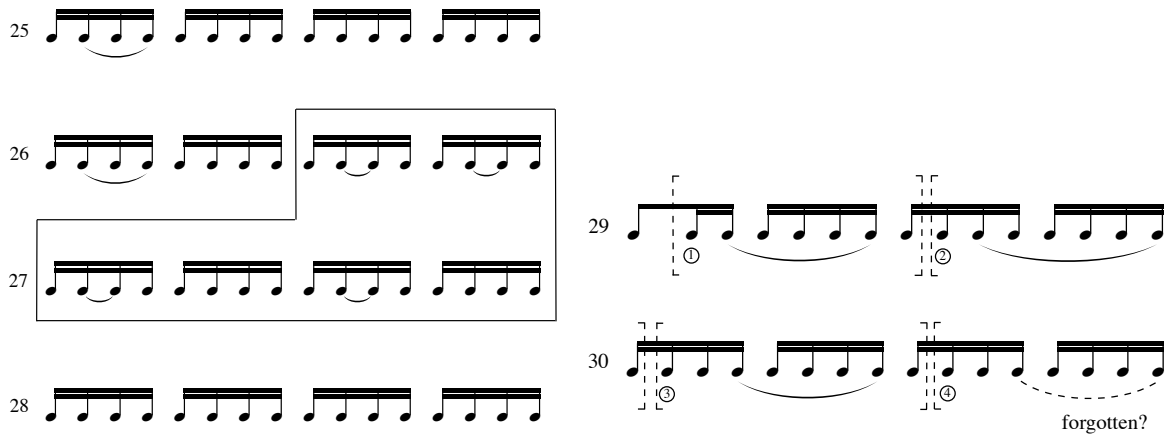


Figure 4.25: Source A, articulation analysis, bars 25–30

The same articulation repeats on the strongest beat of the following bar 26 (Fig. 4.25). The music that follows introduces a new melodic pattern with yet different articulation — on the beat level. In

the middle of bar 26 Bach writes descending sequences of four semiquavers, to which Anna Magdalena gives identical articulation. Similarly, the slurred groups require reversed bow strokes. Anna leaves bar 28 unslurred probably because it prepares the entry of another two bars of irregularity. Similar to bars 23 and 24, bars 29 and 30 resemble a cadenza, consisting of sequences of four descending scalar passages (Fig. 4.25). The scales are irregular. Apart from the length of the first scalar passage, the other three are equally long (8 notes each), beginning on an identical metrical position. This time the irregularity comes from the articulation. Anna's slurs reshape the consistently written descending sequences, making them sound different from each other. It appears that Anna might have forgotten a slur in the last scalar passage in bar 30.

In the next eight bars Bach transformed the arpeggiated pattern into a toccata technique passage with implied polyphony. He did not add any slurred patterns (Fig. 4.26).

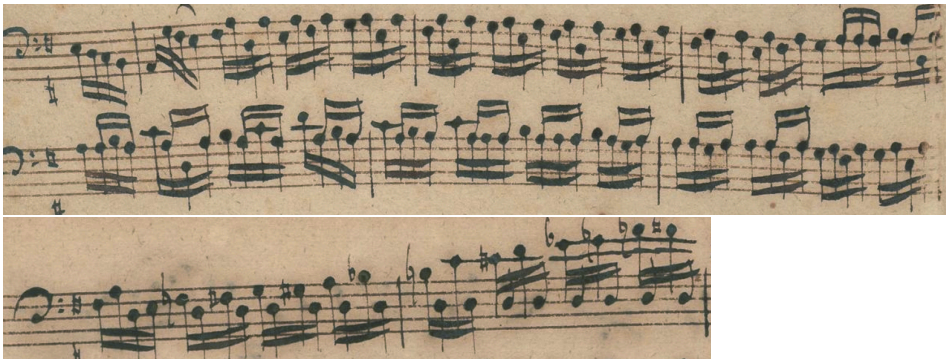


Figure 4.26: Source A, bars 31–38

The initial arpeggio pattern returns once again in the final four bars of the Prelude. This time, however, Bach inverts it. In terms of articulation, Anna has slurred the strongest beat in all the four bars in an identical way: first semiquaver is detached and the other three notes of the group joined in a single bow stroke (Fig. 4.27 and Fig. 4.28).

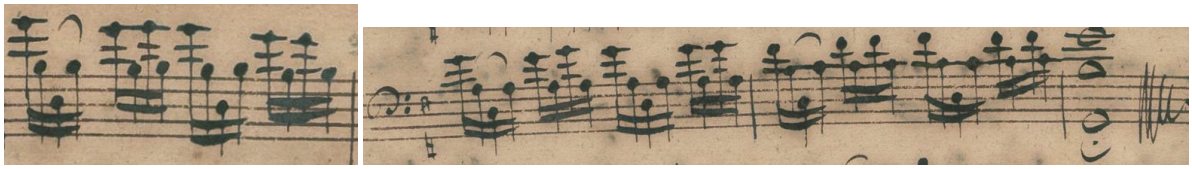


Figure 4.27: Source A, bars 39–42

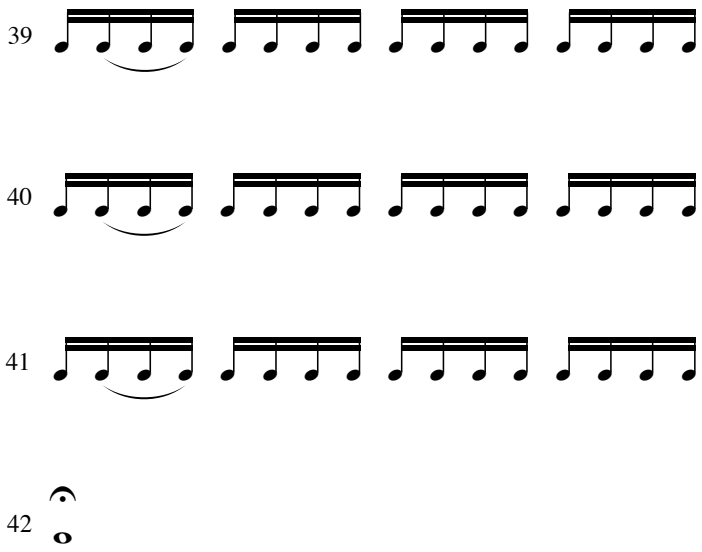


Figure 4.28: Source A, articulation analysis bars 39–42

The variety of patterns I have just discussed unfolds on the surface of the music. They do not affect the structural organisation of the piece. The implied harmony and the length of the Prelude show a symmetrical structure with even proportions (see Table 1). On the top of this symmetrical balance is an intensive process of unending inventive thinking and continuous transformations.

4 bars (b. 1–4)	+	4 bars (b. 5–8)	(= 8 bars)
2 bars (b. 9–10)			(= 2 bars)
4 bars (b. 11–14)	+	4 bars (b. 15–18)	(= 8 bars)
6 bars 4+2 (b. 19–24)	+	6 bars 4+2 (b. 25–30)	(= 12 bars)
8 bars toccata technique passage (b. 31–38)	+	4 bars (b. 39–42)	(= 12 bars)

Table 4.1: The structure of the Prelude in g major (BWV 1007) is symmetrical with even proportions.

4.5 The cello suites as open texts

> *Things do not last through inertia: they are made to last through intensive human creative efforts. Making things stick, then, is most definitely flagged up here as a practice, a process in itself.*[41]
>
> *Karin Barber*

Anna Magdalena's manuscript copy of the Cello Suites stands out as a paradox. Her articulation markings appear to be 'confusing' and ambiguous, unsystematic, inconsistent or 'displaced to the right'. All these negative terms have produced even more hostility by condemning the source as

41. Karin Barber, "Improvisation and the art of making things stick," in *Creativity and Cultural Improvisation*, ed. Elizabeth Hallam and Tim Ingold (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007), 28.

wrong, 'erred', unreliable and even incompetent.[42] The basis of this skepticism seems to be 'the text' alone. This is hardly surprising as mainstream research practices in musicology (since its establishment as a discipline in the early twentieth century) approached music from the past as a historical (or analytical) documentary, relying entirely on written texts. Their central reference point was the musical score, which had to be preserved intact and unaltered in the manner of museum artefacts.[43]

In ideal cases, the composer's manuscript copies are the authorities that set standards of stylistic, performance, or analytical reference. Being faithful to the composer's intention determined what the 'true' reading of the music 'should be'. This might seem secure in those cases when together with numerous copied manuscripts also survived the composer's fair copy, as is the case with Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin (BWV 1001–1006). Although Kellner's and Anna's copies of them survived alongside Bach's score autograph, their relevance as 'reliable' sources is subordinate to the composer's authority. We cannot say the same for the Cello Suites. Without the authority of the composer the comparative reference point is missing, which introduces a higher degree of uncertainty. The discrepancies between all the sources make it impossible to decide which one is the closest to the version that Bach would have liked, hence to find the 'true' model against which we should judge the rest. A classic research solution is to compare the texts with the fair copy of the Violin Sonatas and Partitas and/or to regularise all similar figures and motifs by analogy.

With the growing interest towards ethnomusicology, anthropology, and 'other' narratives and musics (eg. jazz and folklore music) at the beginning of the twenty-first century, one can no longer locate the central values of the musical work in the historical literary mode of inquiry. More and more researchers strive to go beyond the established boundaries of the 'classical' methods of musicology.

42. See above.

43. See Lydia Goehr's discussion about the *work concept* in musicology. Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*.

This is especially strong in the fields of medieval and early music studies.[44] Many scholars argue that the only way to understand music is to place it in the cultural context that created and valued it.[45] After Lydia Goehr's study, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (1994), where she examines the formation of the concept of 'musical work', more and more music scholars started to oppose its hegemony. Their point of departure is not the written texts but the socio-cultural contexts in which they were created. In this framework the text becomes a variable characteristic of the composer's original idea. It can change in order to satisfy the aesthetic criteria of a specific community in a specific place and time. Decisive conditions in this process are properties of performance practices, which in the formal-structural model of music's value were deemed with secondary importance as surface level decorations. Capacity of performance to provide various expressive versions of the written text, however, gradually gains prominence in musicology as a valuable research approach to understanding music.

Central to this perspective is the idea of seeing music as a performative act. Its most important message is that music's meaning is a subject of interpretation that cannot be preserved intact for further generations. The score is no longer a 'sacred' source of authoritative reference. It is an open text, inviting the receivers of its ideas (performers and listeners) to contribute with their own interpretive thinking. In this respect, performance is the responsible stage for bringing distinctive interpretations alive, which are often different every time the performer revisits the musical text. I see this to be especially valuable for introducing alternative readings of well known music works, such as those from the 'classical music canon'. Parameters such as ornamentation and articulation suddenly become of crucial importance. They act as a step beyond the written musical text and open new

44. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *The Modern Invention of Medieval Music: Scholarship, Ideology, Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

45. Susan McClary, "The Blasphemy of talking Politics during Bach Year," in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception*, ed. Richard Lepperd and Susan McClary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 13–62; Born, "For a Relational Musicology: Music and Interdisciplinarity, Beyond the Practice Turn"; Rebecca Herissone, *Musical Creativity in Restoration England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

dimensions for finding different meanings in already familiar music. In this regard Kofi Agawu comments:

> The work of interpretation demands, however, that once we move beyond this material level, compositions be reconfigured as open texts, conceptually boundless fields, texts whose necessary but in a sense mundane temporal boundaries are not necessarily coterminous with their 'sense' boundaries.[46]

Similarly, Carolyn Abbate claims that music as a performative art reaches its new interpretational discoveries only through the aspects of performance.[47] A music composition can reveal its diversity of meanings only in an active communication between performers and audience. After all, the final interpretational judgement, the one that reflects the most valuable meanings of the work, is that of the audience. As Agawu stated,'the final authority for any interpretation rests on present understanding'.[48]

The increased interest in improvisation studies in recent years shifts the perspective from the rather static idea of 'classical' music as a finished product towards the idea of music as a continuous process of interpretation.[49] By seeking a dialogue between different musical perspectives, it seems researchers unintentionally go back to the rhetorical idea of understanding music as a process of interpretation. Music is too broad and contingent on the subjectivity of time, people, traditions, and socio-cultural contexts to be fixed in a set of never changing (absolute) principles. It is, like a rhetorical speech, an interpretive process of change.

46. Kofi Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*, Oxford Studies in Music Theory (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 24.

47. Carolyn Abbate, "Music – Drastic or Gnostic," *Critical Inquiry* 30, no. 3 (2004): 505–536.

48. Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*, 4.

49. Roger Moseley, "Entextualization and the Improvised Past," *Music Theory Online* 19, no. 2 (2013), `http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.13.19.2/mto.13.19.2.moseley.html`.

Viewing music as a process through which each time we revisit a musical composition, offers many opportunities to discover new ways of understanding it, hence new implied meanings. This also becomes a bridge between our contemporary needs as consumers and music that has been composed centuries ago. This perspective focusses on the act and not on an end product. More and more scholars today see in the act of musical performance an invaluable opportunity to find a fruitful bond between research methodologies and the interpretational freedom inherent in the art.[50] Kofi Agawu pleads that just like the performer, music analysts should break up the boundaries of 'accepted' theoretical models of music and should continuously 'reinvent the wheel'.[51] He compares the process of analysis in music with an act of performance. Researchers have the freedom to rediscover new (meaningful) aspects of the same music, every time they revisit it.[52]

In this search for new meanings in music, however, one should be aware not to substitute an old value ideal with a new one. A sound example is the illusory quest for 'authenticity' in the Early Music movement in the last few decades. It imposed other norms and standards against which we were supposed to measure value. The 'authenticity' wave tried to replace the old with new standards by introducing other restrictions and boundaries.[53] Richard Taruskin's sharp critique in this controversy

50. Abbate, "Music – Drastic or Gnostic."

51. Kofi Agawu, "How we got out of analysis, and how to get back in again," *Music Analysis* 23, no. 2/3 (2004): 275.

52. Kofi Agawu expresses a major concern about current music-analytical trends. Institutional standards of the modern academy have enforced them to have a primarily positivistic nature. According to him, music analysis should not be different from the act of performance. This is in contradiction to current analytical practices. In the majority of analytical methods, the analysts strive to find new facts and connections in order to demonstrate their contribution to new knowledge. Agawu sees in this a danger of intellectual misunderstanding. Like the performers, analysts should be free to discover new ways of understanding a composition. Instead of seeking new relationships and connections with already known theories, Agawu proposes a different, more creative, way of analytical approach: to focus on the experience of the act of analysis, which like a musical performance 'resists verbal summary'; ibid.

53. A good introduction to the topic is Nicholas Kenyon, ed., *Authenticity and Early Music: A Symposium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988). This collection of different views about the topic includes essays by Richard Taruskin, Will Crutchfield, Howard Mayer Brown, Robert Morgan, Gary Tomlinson and Philip Brett. It presents different problematic issues of the Early Music movement, outlining its historical origins (Brown), arguing about the importance of the performer (Crutchfield), or its relationship with the present (Morgan).

warned that searching for 'authentic' practices or conventions is chimerical. Researchers and performers of today no longer pursue it as a goal. The most important problematic issue is that these attitudes to music grounded their views on fixed standards for value and meaning. Any traces of deviations from them are likely to be either excluded or made to fit into their aesthetic framework.

I view the case of Bach's Cello Suites as an example of this textual trend. The editors of many modern editions follow one or another template for consistency, which, however, does not exist in either of the early sources of the music. A classical editorial practice is to base their decisions on general analytical principles, accepted to be characteristic for early eighteenth-century music. Their central point of departure is the role of harmony and meter as providing the main structural framework for music's unfolding. In this theoretical perspective parameters like articulation, ornamentation, or dynamics have a secondary function only to support or emphasise them.[54] Anna's irregular articulation marks in many cases contradict the implied harmony and often challenge the metrical pulse. Her reading is also in conflict with the expected application of articulation principles today. Indeed, if one looks at it through the prism of the 'one-truth-only' model of music, it looks erratic and illogical. It misses expected order and consistency. Instead of taking harmony and formal structure as the bearers of musical value, I suggest to view Anna's reading of the Cello Suites as an open text that communicates more than one mode of thinking. It invites for further interpretations and stimulates the listener (and also the performer) to go beyond the written text to discover its other

Especially relevant to my study is Brett's discussion about 'definitive text' and 'author's intentions' as criteria for text editing. See also Taruskin's critical stance in Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*, 31–37; and Laurence Dreyfus, "Early Music Defended against its Devotees: A Theory in Historical Performance in the twentieth century," *The Musical Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (1983): 297–322. A more recent extensive critical study on this topic is Butt, *Playing with History*. Butt's polemical discussion sums up earlier viewpoints on the 'early music debate'. Developing their ideas, he suggests a number of powerful ideas about its inexhaustible artistic and intellectual potential, connecting them with the ideas of modernism and postmodernism.

54. See Winold, *Bach's Cello Suites: Analyses and Explorations*. Winold examines each movement of the Cello Suites from the perspective of its formal structure. He bases his analyses on the role of harmony as implied by the melody. His analytical approach relies on pitch and rhythmical analysis, without taking account of articulation and ornamentation.

implied meanings.[55] Recent research in music directs its interests into a similar direction.[56] As demonstrated in the previous section, her articulation implies a search for various ways of stating the same idea differently by exploring the expressive potential of bow technique. I relate this to musical improvisation and rhetorical principles to extemporise the initial idea.

This perspective clashes with previously established trends for seeking coherence and consistency. The Cello Suites so far exist in numerous editions. The majority of them suggest regularised articulation, applied by analogy to the same or similar passages. The diversity of consistency models these printed editions offer, however, are many. Their common characteristic is the decision of their editors to follow a principle of uniformity within the larger structure of the composition. If I turn the table, however, I view the missing authority of the composer's version not as a regret or an obstacle but as opening new perspectives of understanding. Without the most essential ingredient in the traditions of *Werktreue* — the composer's word — one has the chance to rediscover a whole new dimension of music's nature: its flexibility to adapt to different contexts and audiences.

Contrary to the ideal of searching for a single model of the composer's initial idea, bearing 'the truth', I look at each of the sources of the Cello Suites as one of many versions the composer might have chosen to reflect on paper. I have seen them as different variants of the composer's idea. Changing aesthetic and cultural circumstances through their long life have enriched, adapted, or developed them further with new meanings and cultural values.[57] Because a compositional fair copy is missing, the Suites cannot be collated within fixed boundaries of authoritative evidence. Instead,

55. For a full theoretical account on the idea of open and closed texts see Eco, "The poetics of the open work."

56. See the recent publications of John Butt about the influence of the concept of modernism in Bach studies Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*; John Butt, "The Postmodern Mindset, Musicology and the Future of Bach Scholarship," *Understanding Bach*, no. 1 (2006): 9–18, `http://www.bachnetwork.co.uk/ub1/butt.pdf`; also Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*.

57. Green, "Memoirs of a Musical Object, Supposedly Written by Itself: It-Narrative and Eighteenth-Century Marketing."

their text remains open and flexible for rethinking. The instances of extant variant manuscript copies together with the composer's score autograph are indicative.

4.6 About the aesthetic basis of improvisation in music

The immense role of improvisation practices in Bach's time must surely have influenced Bach's compositional thought. Although it might appear Bach was pedantically concerned with writing out details, the majority of them still remain hidden from us. Irregularities in tempo, inconsistent embellishments and performance markings (articulation), cadenzas or amorphous structures demonstrate not only improvisational traditions but also musical preferences. Despite its high value in professional music circles, however, composers rarely wrote out improvised music. C. P. E. Bach found this to be dangerous because in the hands of unexperienced or not well trained music lovers (amateurs), the music might be misunderstood.[58] C. P. E Bach, however, did it much later in his life by writing out his *Free Fantasias*. According to his testimony to the music historian Johann Nikolaus Forkel, he wanted to be remembered as a great *Fantast*.[59]

This strong improvisatory traditions in Bach's time time point out a mismatch with our understanding of his music. An influential image of Bach, as established by early twentieth-century studies, presents him as a master of strict counterpoint and carefully thought mathematical structures.[60] This perspective relies mainly on text-critical trends in musicology, taking the literal reliance on the text as their starting point. In contrast, he had the reputation in the early eighteenth century mainly as an

58. David Schulenberg, "Composition and Improvisation in the School of J. S. Bach," in *Bach Perspectives*, ed. Russel Stinson, vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 1–42.

59. See Ernst Suchalla, ed., *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Briefe und Dokumente*, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), "Letter of 15 October 1782", no. 123.

60. Tatlow, "Theoretical Hope: A Vision for the Application of Historically Informed Theory"; Tatlow, *Bach's Numbers: Compositional Proportion and Significance*.

unsurpassable improviser and master organist.[61] The pivot point between both portraits is the historical perspective through which we understand and judge his music.

Bach and his sons were eager score collectors, constant revisors, and editors of their own music. The results of their changing creative thought is a rich diversity of musical extemporisation of their own musical ideas. As Dreyfus points out, it is anachronistic to see all the revisions that Bach made as striving towards one most mature musical work.[62] The idea of the musical work then was hardly understood in the sense that we understand it today. Rather, this is an example of projecting later and more familiar modes of thinking onto earlier historical practices or traditions. Recent research inquiries, however, lean towards viewing much of the music from this historical time as intellectual processes of finding 'ingenious' musical solutions rather than perfect rational structures.[63]

Given that eighteenth-century traditions in music were much more aural than our own today, it is likely that a vast amount of the composed music was never written out. Professional composers and performers from the rank of Bach were judged mainly on their improvisational skills. Is it feasible then to assume that written-down music had a different connotation? It was no longer a spontaneous creative invention of the improviser. Instead, it became an idealised visual representation of the composer's idea that was polished and cleaned from the imperfections of voice leading or contrapuntal 'forbidden' rules.[64] Such a perspective is alarming for those who follow text-critical principles in musicological practices.

Paradoxically, the majority of research methods in Early Music rely entirely on documentary and textual (visual) evidence such as written scores, manuscripts, and printed editions of the composer's

61. See my discussion in chapter one.
62. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*.
63. Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention*; Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*; Varwig, "One More Time: J. S. Bach and Seventeenth-Century Traditions of Rhetoric"; Moseley, "Entextualization and the Improvised Past."
64. Schulenberg, "Composition and Improvisation in the School of J. S. Bach."

ideas. Researchers in this area are not able to defend their hypotheses without demonstrating solid factual ground upon which they are built. This conflict between our understanding of musical rational structures and almost unpredictable stylisation of ornaments and improvisational irregularity in early eighteenth-century music, as I have discussed it here, raises questions about the completeness of our understanding of the aesthetic conventions of that era.

The ability to improvise was a crucial aspect of musical mastery in the professional circles in Bach's time. Unpredictability seems to be its most respected characteristic. Given the inexhaustible potential of music performance, I believe that performers' goal was comparable to that of the orators: to think aloud, to extemporise on a given theme, and to be flexible enough to adapt to the context (and the audience). For Quintilian it was a performing art (just like violin playing or ballet dancing). As such it had the flexibility to adapt to the context. This suggests that orators did not rely on fixed standards, rules or formulas in order to be 'successful'.

> The practicing orator, on his feet in a law court, needs above all a clear grasp of the immediate situation, and lacking this, knowledge of the most elaborate rules is 'dumb science'; ... the ability that matters most is to be able to address the actual situation, with a readiness to abandon fixed ideas and prepared scripts according to the needs at the moment.[65]

This aspect of flexibility is crucial for the act of musical performance. At this stage, the possibility of expressive variants is unlimited. Many music theorists of the time discussed the theoretical and structural basis of the compositional process, leaving the stage of performance open for further interpretations. This implies a greater chance of resultant imperfections, which they never commented in writing. Exactly this aspect of expected irregularity Bach probably meant when

65. A quotation from Quintilian's *Institutioni Oratoriae*, cited by Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 41.

replying to Frederick the Great in 1747. Bach apologised to the king for his failure in Berlin 'to give his subject [the theme of the *Musical Offering*] the treatment that it deserved.'[66] This could mean that he apologised for not having published a fugue that 'lacked the irregularities that inevitably must have occurred in improvisation.'[67] According to David Schulenberg, such pure instances were more typical for the written music than for the improvised:

> But all written compositions, including those originating in improvisation, contain a certain amount of rationalisation. Thus we cannot assume that improvised pieces attained the pure voice leading and rational architecture found in virtually all written ones from the Bach circle. On the other hand we should not assume the contrary, that improvised pieces necessarily sounded 'improvisatory' in the usual sense of the word.[68]

From this, one can conclude that what was written out was actually not the initial spontaneous musical idea. Once the composer marked it on paper, it was regularised and rationalised.

A central point of the dichotomy between 'spontaneity' and 'deliberation' in music is the aesthetic justification of improvisation. Searching for an explanation of its aesthetics becomes a pivot point of interdisciplinary connections of music with other areas of knowledge. Andy Hamilton discusses improvisation as a humanistic activity exactly because of its imperfect nature. He contrasts it with the 'aesthetics of perfection', represented by written-out compositions.[69]

> Improvisation is doomed, it seems, to offer a pale imitation of the perfection attained by composed music. Errors will creep in, not only in form but also in execution; the

66. See the discussion of Schulenberg, "Composition and Improvisation in the School of J. S. Bach," 5; see also *BD 1*, no. 173 and *NBR*, no. 245, 226.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Andy Hamilton, *Aesthetics and Music* (London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007), 195–196.

> improvisor, if sincerely attempts to be creative will push himself into areas of expression which his technique may be unable to handle. Too often the finished product will show moments of rare beauty intermixed with technical mistakes and aimless passages.[70]

This juxtaposition draws attention to a duality between subjectivity in the process of performance and the idea of timelessness of the work's score representation. Hamilton's point resonates with anthropological, cultural, and ethnomusicological studies that investigate the role of textuality and oral history as powerful enough factors to shape societies.[71] He views improvisation and composition as two sides of the same coin. The 'imperfect' side concentrates on the process of spontaneity, defined by the act of improvisation. Its central virtue is to go beyond the text and to be in constant change through which it has the ability to transmit musical ideas directly without the mediation of notation. Its aesthetic motivation is:

> Don't look forward to a finished and complete entity. The idea must always be kept in a state of flux. An error may only be an unintentional rightness. Polishing is not at all the important thing; instead strive for a rough go-ahead energy. Do not be afraid of being wrong; just be afraid of being uninteresting.[72]

The side of 'perfection', in contrast, emphasises the permanent existence of the work by locking it within the boundaries of textual products. It undermines the variable and the uncertain, constituted in

70. Ted Gioia, *The Imperfect Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 66; cited in Hamilton, *Aesthetics and Music*, 192.

71. Karin Barber, *The Anthropology of Texts, Persons and Publics: Oral and Written Culture in Africa and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

72. T. Carl Whitmer, *The Art of Improvisation: A Handbook for principles and methods for organists, pianists, teachers and all who desire to develop extempore playing, based upon melodic approach* (New York: M. Witmark & sons, Dept. of standard and educational publications, 1934), quoted by Hamilton, *Aesthetics and Music*, 202.

the empirical and the performative. Both aspects, I believe, share common features. On the one hand, improvisation is a reminiscence of spontaneous composition. The sonic reproduction of the written text of a composition, on the other, resembles the process of improvisation. Depending on their culture, tradition, personality, and audience, performers (might) interpret it differently every time. The act of performance insists on making decisions and choices that have not been specified in the text such as dynamics, ornamentation, nuances of timing, and expression. As Nicholas Cook states 'in each case the art of performance inhabits a zone of free and yet musically significant choice that is established in and around the notated work'.[73]

4.7 Anna's reading as evidence of musical creativity: the game of bowing and how/whom it affects

Anna Magdalena was an experienced and highly valued performer. Whether she was an experienced copyist, however, is a different issue. An interesting question is: what was the role of an experienced copyist? Was it to copy literally a notated musical idea in order to disseminate it further or to transcribe it on paper in order to polish it up to perfection by negotiating structural, voice leading, or ornamental issues? The former implies a mechanical reproduction of the composer's fair copy without attempts to any revisions. The latter suggests proficiency in composition and performance alike. Anna's neat music writing suggests that she was a careful scribe. It is not clear, however, whether she was trained in the art of composition.

Depending on the side from which we are looking, the variety of slurs that she applied to the music

73. Nicholas Cook, "Between Process and Product: Music and/as Performance," *Music Theory Online* 7, no. 2 (2001), http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.01.7.2/mto.01.7.2.cook.html.

could be either copied faithfully from the composer's score or carelessly thrown in a hurry. This second view has been prevalent in the discussions I have surveyed here. The challenge in the alternative assumption is to accept the slurs as intentional. I think both positions are unstable as there is no proof for either of them. Seen from the textually based perspective, the authority of the composer is missing, leaving us with (at least) four different readings of the music. Alternatively, the idea that her articulation is intentional is also difficult to prove, as there is no clear evidence for such practices.

I do not see this as an unanswerable question but as an opportunity for new insights into the music from this period. These could act as a bridge between Bach's time and our cultural needs today. Searching for 'the truth', in this case, is chimerical. Following literally the written out performance instructions, would lock the potential of expressive possibilities into a single version only. My perspective is to look at the score as expressing many other ways of interpretation that happen to be written out, leaving the other alternatives still to be discovered. I view Anna's articulation as a rich well of meaningful variants, stemming from one another and stimulating the creative thought for new expressive ideas. As a professional singer Anna was surely experienced in providing engaging musical performances. She and her husband were participants in their own geography of modernity.

Many theorists and writers on music of the time discussed this rich expressive potential of music. Many of them confessed that its versatility makes it impossible to provide clear guidance and instructions how to compose or express music. I point out, however, that the target of the majority of the instruction treatises and publications of the time were mainly amateurs or beginners. Professional music practitioners exchanged knowledge either orally or by mastering the art of improvisation. Written music must have had a different function then. It was either a pedagogical tool or a way to preserve the composer's original idea.

David Schulenberg looks at Bach's manuscripts from the perspective of an idealised version of his

initial ideas. They were polished and refined to a state of perfection which could never be achieved in a spontaneous act of improvisation.[74] The professional copyists on whom Bach relied, were often some of his students or colleagues who were all learned in the art of composition. The written-out copies they produced must have been handled with the idea of following some standards of such idealisation. In this sense, Anna Magdalena appears as unexperienced copyist. She did not regularise or stylise the music but wrote out her spontaneous interpretive response as a performer. Her articulation resembles impulses of creativity in a process of unrestrained thinking where the performer focuses on the search of expressive possibilities than on providing a polished and regularised musical whole.

Although rare, such instances of expressive irregularities in Bach's music indicate different perspectives of understanding it. The element of spontaneity here, so typical for improvisation, focuses on the creative and the abstract. The improvisation skills, performers and composers strove to master, seem to go beyond the fixed boundaries of the text. This is a possible reason why improvised music was hardly written out in its raw version. In this sense, Anna's inconsistently marked manuscript copy must have violated the unwritten principle of not fixing on the page the flexibility of improvisation. The aural freedom to experiment, adapt, and consequently evolve in something else, playing at the same time with listener's expectations is not the same when the details of an interpretive reading are fully written out.[75]

74. Schulenberg, "Composition and Improvisation in the School of J. S. Bach," 38.

75. As David Schulenberg argues, it is difficult to find literal examples of such spontaneous irregularity in the written-out music because once the musical idea was notated, it was polished and perfected. Nevertheless, examples of interrupted choruses or arias by recitatives in cantatas such as the tenor aria *Die schäumenden Wellen* in cantata (BWV 81), cadenza-like passages, jarring modulatory episodes, or harmonic progressions such as those in Chromatic Fantasy (BWV 903) hint towards some intertwined improvisatory elements in Bach's written music. Ibid.

4.8 Conclusion

From the structure-oriented perspective of music, amorphous-looking music passages appear as errors of haste, which many editors would immediately 'correct' in order to conform with some general aesthetic principles. Through the prism of the 'work concept' such an abstract perception of music looks out of place. If, however, one substitutes it with aspects of rhetorical variability, I believe 'weird' and amorphous-looking musical structures would make more sense. I think the answers to such questions do not point at any eternal (absolute) truth. They speak about specific cultural beliefs of a particular historical time and community. They become evidence of people — the consumers of a composition or musical style and are bound to be different in other cultural conditions even if the work in question is the same. This outlines a much deeper problem, concerning methods of musicology as an academic discipline. Instead of searching for a single (true) answer, it is worth trying to think of music as a much wider realm of human activity that goes beyond the boundaries of single-meaning concepts, clear structures, or factual knowledge. Many eighteenth-century writers on music hint at a much more elusive essence of the art than the need of demonstrating principles of order or clarity. According to them, a characteristic way of understanding music was to look at it as an unfolding process, based on interpretive thinking. It is comparable with an intellectual game that is independent from verbal or representational boundaries. The formal structure of the composition had a rather mechanical role of providing guidance in this process of intelligible unfolding.

Intentional or accidental, Anna's reading of the Cello Suites could be a key for a different perspective of understanding Bach's music. The variety of articulations she suggests, stimulates the artist's creative thought and keeps the listener's attention alert. This turns performance into a live mechanism of continual change. The idea of such flexibility is powerful. It could act as a bridge between Bach's music then and our own reception needs today. By adapting the music, we establish

hybrid connections between the past and the present and continue to keep Bach's ideas alive and meaningful for our multi-cultural modernity contexts in the twenty-first century. The interaction between different spaces of modernity sets the platform for new meanings as 'modernity's geographies are shifting ones [...], they are also geographies that stress the hybrid connections between places and spaces as well as grounding institutions, experiences, and practices in particular locations. They are the points where arguments begin rather than where they end.'[76]

The search for meaning in music continues to shape current research trends in musicology. Variety of research perspectives today outlines the contradicting grounds of the discipline. In the opening of their *Rethinking Music* (1999), Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist address how fragile the borders of what we know about music have become. More than a decade later, their call for 'accommodation between established methodologies and new horizons' is still open.[77] In order to understand this web of meanings in music we need to consider a wide spectrum of perspectives at once and try to understand how they might collaborate between the written text of the music (its physical representation), its interpretation, and its current perception. Still in 1987 Jean-Jaques Nattiez identified these three aspects as the generator of musical meaning.[78] The outcomes of their collaboration, however, can never provide a fixed theory of meaning. Its contingency on time and aesthetic conventions is likely to offer new perspectives each time we strive to reexamine a work of music. The challenge is to accommodate current interpretations, views, and conclusions to already established research methods and intellectual constructs.

76. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*, 28.
77. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist, eds., *Rethinking Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), x.
78. Jean-Jaques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*, Translated by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990. First published in 1987).

Conclusions

Meaning is never fixed and reading is always re-reading.[1]

Janet Wolff

My primary goal in this research project has been to suggest an answer to the musicological riddle of Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012). Without an authoritative autograph score as a reference point and the existence of four different manuscript copies as their only sources of transmission, the Suites have been a subject of controversy and speculations in the last few decades. Central to the debates is the contradicting articulation in the extant sources of the music. The classical approach of finding an explanation assumes the existence of a single, 'correct' way of reading this music, which is usually associated with the version of the composer's written-out manuscript. This approach aimed for reconstructing the composer's version of the music. The guiding thread in this act of reconstruction is to preserve a particular reading intact, treating it as a precious historical artefact. The foundation of this research approach is an identification of a single source that could be justified as an authoritative reference, bearing the 'true' (authentic) version of the composer's original idea. Paradoxically, this search for a unified solution has resulted in an even greater multitude of readings of the Cello Suites throughout history. In the form of different printed editions, each of them is claiming to be 'the right' one. A crucial point in this search for truth is that each of those readings must have been valued in its own time and context of construction. Hence, each of them must have served the role of a 'truth-bearer' but in the context of specific aesthetic conventions and audiences.

A diversity of aesthetic needs and changing attitudes and expectations of different audiences

1. Janet Wolff, "The ideology of autonomous art," in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception*, ed. Richard Lepperd and Susan McClary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 8.

throughout history made me look at the conundrum of Bach's Cello Suites from a different angle. Instead of searching for 'the' most reliable text, I have decided to view these readings as representations of the aesthetic needs of their respective listeners. This has set the more general perspective of my enquiry: an examination of the aesthetic conventions in which those readings originated. In other words, my project has made a virtue of the abundance of sometimes contradictory interpretations. This led me to view the primary sources of the Suites not as 'right' or 'wrong', but as evidence of different aesthetic tastes and preferences. This is in contradiction to the classical approach of looking for a single answer to the conundrum, which I find self-limiting. Judging an interpretive version as 'correct' or 'mistaken' implies favouring a single version and automatically rejecting the rest. With the latter perspective I have chosen to think about dealing not with errors (or mistaken texts) but with different variants (interpretations) of the same idea. The more general guiding thread of this project has thus been the idea of variability in music, which I have traced as an aesthetic norm within professional circles of music practitioners in the early eighteenth century.

According to early eighteenth-century historical accounts, variety in composition and musical expression was one of the most valuable qualities of music.[2] I have traced its use in music as a close reflection of the strong influence of rhetoric which was ubiquitous in Bach's time. Connections between both arts date still from Plato's time. Many intellectuals throughout history associated music with rhetorical principles and discussed it in their writings (eg. Athanasius Kircher and Wolfgang Caspar Printz). Bach's contemporary Johann Mattheson, however, was the first music theorist who attempted to provide a formal theory of music, basing it on rhetorical procedures. Mattheson, like many other intellectuals from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, saw a close relationship between both arts. Within the music-theoretical discussions of the time, he provided the earliest and most developed account of the relationship of music with rhetoric. He even recognised in music much greater opportunities for exploring the potential of variety than in rhetoric. His most creditable

2. See chapter three.

achievement in music history is to recognise instrumental music with an equal status to vocal genres.

The kernel of the close relationship between both arts was not so much clarity of form and structure. It was mastering the ability to communicate with a variety of audiences. Crucial for reaching full command of public speaking, was the ability to adapt to the listeners' expectations in order to convince them about new ideas. The central goal of many rhetorical treatises of the eighteenth century and before was to encourage their speakers to take account of their audiences. Among the most popular and widely disseminated rhetorical books in Bach's time was the sixteenth-century writing *De Copia* (1512) by the professor of rhetoric Erasmus of Rotterdam. Central to his ideas was mastering the abundant style of speaking. It was reaching proficiency in expressing the same initial idea in differently nuanced ways in order to adapt it to various contexts. I have traced his ideas in many music-theoretical treatises from the early eighteenth century, as well as in published accounts on music, and in samples of music. In this thesis, I have revisited rhetoric's strong influence on music by examining a selection of music-theoretical publications in Bach's time. Contrary to the generally spread ideas of its formal-structural impact on music today, recent research shows that rhetoric was understood as a process of thinking rather than as an instruction toolbox. This perspective made me reconsider the compositional theory of music of the most active music critic in Bach's time, Johann Mattheson.

The essence of Mattheson's theory was firmly rooted in the rhetorical processes of continuous elaboration. Later trends in musicology, however, have understood his theory as an attempt to emphasise the importance of structure in music. I believe that such an interpretation of his stance is a consequence of the scholarly practices in the early twentieth century. The guiding research trends then were under the influence of reason, logic, and provable (visual) evidence as its fundamental principles. As Mark Evan Bonds has commented, the responses to a historical event or to an analytical approach reflect the 'interpretor's extension of an already existing field of interest' and

previous experience.[3]

The idea of musical variety has been a subject of research discussions in the context of compositional processes. The usual point of departure is a motivic and pitch analysis of the written out text.[4] The role of rhetoric in Bach's time elevated the importance of good appearance, and focussed on the final stage of the rhetorical process (delivery). This aspect must have also affected musical expression, execution, and performance practice. This aspect of rhetorical variety in music, however, has not yet been explored in depth due to the lack of substantial textual evidence. Expressive variety suggests having freedom to interpret during the act of performance. Hence, composers rarely marked expressive instructions on the page. Indeed, this was the task of the performer to demonstrate a mastery of creative thinking. Although rare, however, hints of expressive variety appear in performance practice treatises and also in music manuscript copies such as those of Anna Magdalena Bach.

In this thesis I have focused on the two earliest manuscript copies of the Cello Suites (sources A and B). Anna Magdalena's reading (source A) has been of a particular interest to my discussion because it reveals a rich source of expressive variety. Although Anna Magdalena is generally recognised in the musicological circles as a competent music practitioner, the irregular slurs she wrote in her copy have raised suspicion about their practical execution. Many scholars reject her asymmetrical variety as erratic, mistaken, or done in a hurry.[5] This has also cast doubts upon Anna's competency as copyist. Yet, as the cellist Anner Bylsma has argued, her readings are certainly performable with the

3. Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Rhetoric of the Oration*, 182.

4. See the discussion of Varwig, "One More Time: J. S. Bach and Seventeenth-Century Traditions of Rhetoric."

5. Efrati, *Treatise on the Execution and Interpretation of the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin and the Suites for Solo Cello by Johann Sebastian Bach*, Tomita, "Anna Magdalena Bach as Bach's Copyist," Schwemer and Woodfull-Harris, *Johann Sebastian Bach. 6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso BWV 1007-1012*, Szabó, "Precarious presumptions and the "Minority Report": Revisiting the Primary Sources of the Bach Cello Suites," David Ledbetter, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2009); see also Dimitry Markevitch http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/Articles/markevitch.htm.

right technique and performance approach.[6] A generally accepted solution to the instability of this interpretive freedom is to regularise her slurs by unifying them on the principle of analogy. I see this act of standardisation as typical of its time of practice (the twentieth century), but not as a historically plausible approach for the early eighteenth century.

The motivation for this process of standardisation is deeply rooted in changing understandings of music's value. An influential model of thinking about Bach's music from the mid-twentieth century is the presumption of a single reading of this music that should be universally valid for different generations and historical times. In the framework of the 'one-truth-only' view, the composer's score autograph has the authority of providing this exemplary reading. In the case of the Cello Suites, however, such a manuscript never came into view, which made the case a fragile subject of musicological study. The missing composer's fair copy has left the Suites open for further artistic interpretation in the absence of 'convincing' and 'visible' evidence of an authoritative model. I see this as an advantage that allows shaping the music according to different aesthetic conventions and tastes.

Music is a consequence of the social practices in which it originated and was appreciated. Studying it as an isolated historical artefact, detached from its cultural context, limits one's interpretation perspectives within a fixed box of 'accepted' expectations. This approach assumes a general standard for the music from a given historical period. Numerous polemical confrontations in music history, from very early times to present, discussed on what basis to justify the existence of such a general standard: should music be considered as autonomous, independent from its cultural conditions; or it is a humanised, socially grounded construct?

My perspective in this dissertation has been in favour of the latter. I have looked at the different

6. Bylsma, *Bach, The Fencing Master: Reading Aloud From the First Three Cello Suites*; Bylsma, *Bach and the Happy Few: About Mrs. Anna Magdalena Bach's Autograph Copy of the 4th, 5th and 6th Cello Suites*.

readings of the Cello Suites as outcomes of their own time of constructing. From this standpoint, they become sources, revealing the aesthetic taste of a specific type of audience. I have not searched for a single-valid, 'true' reading of Bach's composition. Instead, I understand this music as an open text that is not locked into the parameters of an 'exemplary' reading or performance instructions but is flexible to adapt to the needs and the expectations of a specific audience. I have not prioritised the authority of the composer. Instead, I have taken the composition as a source for unending elaborations and variants as a way to communicate the aesthetic needs of different types of listeners. This suggests that there is more than one 'right' and 'meaningful' reading of the Suites.

I have taken this lack of a fixed model of thinking as an asset and have based my discussion on the idea of understanding history as a compilation of differences. The background of my perspective is the theoretical approach of the historical geographer of modernity Miles Ogborn. Ogborn understands history as multidimensional processes, depending on the contingency of different cultural conditions and aesthetic needs at a particular time and place.[7] The essence of his theory is to study the plurality of resulting differences by contextualising them and understanding the social spaces in which they existed. The most valuable part of his theory is that the interaction between different models of shared values and meanings could be understood as different ways of communicating knowledge. What meaning does Anna's reading then conveys? What kind of audience could have appreciated her unusually asymmetrical interpretation? Answering these questions would provide a valuable understanding of the aesthetic foundation and the reception of the Cello Suites.

Recent research trends in Bach studies explore the perspective of understanding Bach's music as a process of rethinking its own material rather than as a linear construction. Laurence Dreyfus has suggested this viewpoint in his exemplary study *Bach and the Patterns of Invention* (1996).[8] He

7. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780.*
8. Bettina Varwig also gives an interesting perspective of understanding Bach's music as a circular process.

promoted the idea that the foremost compositional principle for Bach was the ability to obtain thematic variety from an initial musical idea which he calls 'an invention'. Dreyfus does not support the methods of stylistic progress and formal-structural value as sufficient for understanding Bach's music.[9] The most important quality of an invention (an initial musical thought) is to be flexible enough to evolve into other shapes in order to bring forth other musical ideas. Dreyfus calls this a process of musical recycling. He sees music as a live organism that can adapt to a variety of cultural contexts and aesthetic conventions. I see in Dreyfus's view a direct association with Erasmus's ideas. I have related this perspective of thinking with the expressive flexibility in the act of performance where music parameters such as ornamentation and articulation provide unending source of creative inspiration. The flexibility of music to adapt is its greatest and at the same time most vulnerable feature.

Research conclusions: an outline

A central point in this thesis has been to raise an awareness of an existing wide range of perspectives in understanding history. Once the historian has chosen the type of historical narrative, the resulting interpretation might outline contradicting but yet relevant viewpoints.[10] My aim has been to revisit established understandings of Bach's music from a different angle in order to explain the diversity of values they have received throughout history. My general point of departure has been understanding

See Bettina Varwig, "Metaphors of Time and Modernity in Bach," *The Journal of Musicology* 29, no. 2 (2012): 154–190.

9. Instead of following established research methods of stylistic progress and formal-structural value of Bach's music, he promoted the idea that the foremost compositional principle for Bach was the ability to obtain thematic variety from an initial musical idea (invention). This was the main principle of mastering the art of rhetoric in Erasmus's teaching.

10. For a theoretical justification of this approach of understanding history see Hayden White, "Interpretation in History," *New Literary History* 4, no. 2 (1973): 281–314.

CONCLUSIONS

Bach's music as an open text that invites its readers (performers, listeners, and also scholars) to contribute further to the transmission of its multiple meanings and aesthetic values. The changing views of Bach's compositions in the last two centuries are evidence of the flexibility of his music to communicate with different audiences, and to continue to inspire future generations of listeners.

In the first chapter of this thesis I have examined the changing images of Johann Sebastian Bach as they appear in scholarly publications from the establishment of musicology as an academic discipline in the early twentieth century to the beginning of the new millenium. The chapter presents a historical outline of variety of views of Bach's music and its changing understandings, refracted through contemporaneous research practices, historical, or even political conditions. Many established approaches of understanding Bach stem from research interpretations of historical documents (manuscripts, treatises, and published accounts). Researchers accepted them as evidence of the aesthetic conditions of Bach's time. Through them they tried to understand various aspects of Bach's compositional processes. The aim of this first chapter has been to outline the multiplicity of historical images of Bach, viewed through the lens of various research perspectives.

The main goal of chapter two has been to examine the historical changes in Bach's time in order to sharpen the cultual contexts in which Bach's music was a subject of discussions. Central to my argument has been the emergence of the public sphere as a communication space where private individuals could discuss various issues in public. The renewed interest in principles of classical rhetoric played a crucial role in this social space. Contrary to rhetorical traditions from Antiquity, however, the eighteenth-century intellectual thought assigned a new role to the rhetorical processes. Mastering the art of public speaking was understood as a shortcut to the higher levels of the newly established social hierarchy. Using the flexibility of Erasmus's mastery of persuasion, the new role of rhetoric concentrated on mastering variety of expressive speaking in public. This new aspect of rhetorical thinking proved to be influential, affecting the fields of the arts and most of all music.

In chapter three, I have examined the role of Johann Mattheson as the first professional music journalist. His main contribution to music history was to accept music's value on the basis of its ability to affect the emotions. His ideas placed the foundation of the sensualistic model of understanding music, which paved the way for the much later romantic mode of music expression. Mattheson did not require any transparant content or cognitively clear messages from a composition in order to judge it as meaningful. The most important outcome of his opinion was to ascribe to instrumental music an equal value to the vocal genres. Mattheson's mission was to theorise the mastery of rhetorical variety in the context of music. In his writings he described chamber and solo instrumental genres as the highest stage of demonstrating musical mastery. In the context of the principles of rhetorical thinking, solo and chamber music was comparable with giving a rhetorical speech in sounds where the orators (the performers) had the freedom to adapt to their audience in order to affect and influence it.

In chapter four I have placed Bach's Suites for Solo Cello in the context of the social transformations from the first half of the eighteenth century. I have discussed the ambiguity of their textual transmission as documental evidence, addressing the needs of different communities of Bach's listeners. I have viewed the variety of readings of the Suites not as historical artefacts, but as representations of aesthetic expectations, preferences, and needs that were possibly characteristic for a variety of audiences. Central to my discussion has been the idea of variety which I understand as characteristic not only for the compositional process but also for the act of 'unwritten' performance interpretations. My aim has been to explore the latter as the means that gives performers freedom to rethink and further develop the composer's idea or, respectively, adapt it to listeners' expectations. Expressive variety is the starting point of exploring the interpretive freedom of music, which I have traced in the strong improvisation traditions in Bach's time. My goal has been to explore melodic variants as a primary representation of the notion of variety. In my discussion of the Suites, I have viewed the diversity of articulation variants in the manuscript sources as a means to communicate

with a specific type of audience. Anna's reading is the most varied and controversial. Being a highly distinguished chamber musician herself (the highest rank in the hierarchy of professional musicians in Bach's time), she must have addressed the aesthetic needs of a highly specialised (and hence, limited) circle of professional music practitioners of the time.

An important objective of my study has been to emphasise a consideration of a broad spectrum of alternative perspectives when understanding Bach's music. This, I believe, opens a new dimension of rethinking our connections with his music today (at the beginning of the twenty-first century). The variety of interpretive readings of the Suites is valuable evidence of the aesthetic preferences of different communities of Bach's listeners. It also suggests open possibilities of new ways of understanding Bach. The basis of this open range of perspectives is the need for revisiting their common ground — the historical sources — from a different angle. Reinterpreting them in the context of our current understanding of music would suggest new ways of establishing connections with ideas from the past. Such interpretive flexibility opens the opportunity to reinterpret Bach's music according to contemporary aesthetic needs and preferences today, without having to comply with established interpretive models and practices as authorities. This would stimulate adapting music to current artistic thinking and tastes; and, as Roger Moseley has suggested, to rediscover 'new pleasures in familiar repertoire'.[11]

Another impact of the idea of music's flexibility affects current historical understandings of Bach's world. If applied to the music-critical situation in his time, the idea of rethinking history led me to look at the aesthetic conventions then from a different angle. The search for unified, standardised guidelines (accepted to be 'correct' for the music from this historical time) might have offered clear models of understanding music a few decades ago. These standardised modes of thinking, however, appear today highly selective, undermining some practices in favour of others. Music that does not

11. Moseley, "Entextualization and the Improvised Past."

correspond to an established aesthetic framework is likely either to be excluded as mistaken or to be 'corrected' in order to make it comply with chosen standards. Anna Magdalena's reading of the Cello Suites has been included in the latter category. The few notational mistakes in her text did not prevent music scholars from recognising her copy as 'reliable'. Many of them, however, have dismissed her articulation marks as careless or impractical. I am convinced that understanding the cultural context of music practices would allow one to see deviations from any general expectations. Within a specific cultural context, any musical practice becomes an alternative way of thinking, and not containing occasional errors that need to be corrected. Therefore, music reflects the cultural needs of groups of people, sharing similar aesthetic preferences. This perspective implies a much more sophisticated historical understanding of this period by recognising and valuing the multitude of existing differences.

Historical conclusions

I have based my historical perspective on the theoretical framework of Miles Ogborn. Ogborn understands history not as a homogeneous stream of events but as a multidimensional compilation of differences.[12] Similar perspectives of thinking are guiding recent research trends in the domains of cultural and anthropological studies, and also in ethnomusicology.[13] A crucial aspect of this stance is the choice of a historical perspective through which one learns about facts and events from the past. Depending on the historical viewpoint (and their skills and experience), a historian's understanding of history can outline different interpretations.

12. Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*, 17–28.

13. The professor of anthropology Karin Barber has studied the role of the written and oral texts in the cultural life of African societies to shape and transmit meanings. By exploring textuality from different angles, Barber outlines important connections between texts and material culture. For more information see Barber, *The Anthropology of Texts, Persons and Publics: Oral and Written Culture in Africa and Beyond*.

Recent approaches in Bach studies articulate similar ideas about understanding Bach.[14] The maze of multiple perspectives of understanding music in the current stage of musicology opens possibilities to find explanation of music that has been excluded from the canon. Existing norms of what is 'right' or 'authentic', or characteristic for the music from this period make Anna Magdalena's copies of the Cello Suites and of the Violin Sonatas appear mistaken. Instead of condemning them as amorphous-looking samples of music, however, I have suggested that if placed in the context of their creation, they become evidence of the search for new aesthetic experience of a highly specialised community of listeners. The variety of aesthetic trends in Bach's Germany outlines the existence of a complex mixture of national styles, cultural traditions, and aesthetic preferences. The numerous music-theoretical discussions of the time, reflect the articulation of different simultaneously existing aesthetic tastes. This diversity of needs becomes evidence of multiplicity of audiences and their own expectations. No matter how different their approaches are, they share a similar starting point: the search for music's meaning. The most valuable in this search is a diversity of outcomes and practical applications in the act of musical performance. Ogborn emphasises that the most fruitful, from a historical viewpoint, is the interaction between these differences, their relationships, conflicts, and/or accommodation to each other.

Through the idea of explaining history from multiple perspectives, I have viewed the case of Bach's Cello Suites as a key for deriving a new understanding of Bach's music. If a piece of art can accommodate multiple meanings, and is flexible enough to adapt to the aesthetic needs of different audiences, its life is much longer. By being able to communicate different meanings, an open musical text becomes a valuable source of deriving new ideas for future generations of listeners. The work can also take a different path from the author's original artistic impulse. In the process of continuous interactions between the work and its consumers, it compiles a variety of meanings, experiences and

14. Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*.

functions throughout its existence.[15] The four early copyists of the Suites have reflected this element of rediscovery and reinvention of Bach's original idea. Instead of seeking evidence that could establish an exemplary reading of the Suites, I have suggested to go beyond textual evidence and to look at the Suites from the perspective of music as a communication means. The diversity of interpretive readings manifests a variety of meanings, directed towards a variety of audiences. This suggests that if we, the twenty-first-century audience of Bach's music, have the freedom and the flexibility to reinvent and reinterpret this music, we might be able to discover new experiences in this already familiar repertoire.

Methodological conclusions

My point of departure in this project has been the belief that Bach's music is too broad to be fixed into a single stereotype. The various perspectives of understanding his music so far depend on current cultural and aesthetic values. In the process of their 'migration' from copyist to copyist (or editor to editor), Bach's Suites for Solo Cello have been adapted to the expectations (needs) of their specific consumers (performers, listeners, or students). If the content of a music manuscript source has been received differently by different audiences, then it could be interpreted successfully in multiple ways.[16] Therefore, the content of the different sources of the Cello Suites (in this amount the numerous printed editions as well) offers a variety of interpretive visions. The diversity of readings, based on the extant written sources of the music (sources A, B, C, and D), suggests that we should view this music as an open text, inviting the readers to contribute with their aesthetic taste and interpretive thinking. In this way, we can derive new meanings of Bach's initial idea that are

15. Green, "Memoirs of a Musical Object, Supposedly Written by Itself: It-Narrative and Eighteenth-Century Marketing."
16. Ibid.

appropriate to the audience's needs.

The four manuscript copies of Bach's Cello Suites offer four different versions of the same idea. In this diversity of readings, I have seen evidence of expressive freedom granted to the performer. The fact that the composer's fair copy is missing is, therefore, favourable because there is no authoritative reference to indicate an exemplary performance model. Understanding music as an open text contradicts the idea of studying the 'music itself' as it appears on the page, and outside of any cultural contexts. Rather, multiplicity of alternative approaches invites performers to apply creative thinking in search for effective communication with different audiences. This makes performer's role crucial. Music is an open space where its meaning and aesthetic significance is a result of dual efforts between the composer and the performer. It is flexible enough to be adjusted to specific contexts and aesthetic conventions.

Ideas for further research

The unpredictability of Anna's slurs imply a process of exploring the potential of a musical idea, in which the idea is the basis for generating numerous variants. I have traced this concept to Erasmus's understanding of rhetoric and have related it to the popularity of improvisation practices in Bach's time. Anna's copy justifies this abstract level of flexible musical thinking. This perspective opens a whole new dimension of rethinking other music from this historical period. In assessing my narrative, I should indicate that I was unable to apply the idea of interpretive improvisation to all editions of the Cello Suites, nor I have explored other solo music from this time. This is an area for future study. Instead of trying to preserve and to reconstruct historical performance practices, variety in expression suggests going beyond the written text and exploring it further. Anna's manuscript copy suggests a sophisticated use of articulation. The next step in this direction is to take her

suggestion and apply it to other solo compositions of the time.

The idea of understanding this music as a process of creative thinking opens different opportunities for further research enquiries. The Cello Suites are among the most popular compositions of Johann Sebastian today. The enigmatic origin of this music and the idea of identifying a single 'right' exemplary version have resulted in a rich collection of modern printed editions: each of them, offering a different reading. A long-waiting examination of the history of this music's performance practice would give valuable insight into the aesthetic tastes and reception of Bach's ideas throughout history. A comparison between different editions of the Suites would give a rich survey of aesthetic trends and, most importantly, of the values that these trends have ascribed to the sources of this music. Such an investigation could not only outline the changing identity of the Cello Suites, but would also trace the aesthetic transformations in the last two centuries. This could also serve as a basis for a sociological survey, exploring the cultural needs of a particular community of Bach's listeners.

Another burning question awaiting further research is the role of Anna Magdalena as a copyist. Established research approaches in Bach studies view her copies as erred, impractical, and irrelevant. The open-text perspective of music I have suggested in the thesis, however, places her work under different spotlight. This could be a starting point into a detailed investigation of the musical life of Anna Magdalena Bach. In a broader sense, this perspective could be stretched as a study of the musical contributions and/or limitations of the women of Bach's household.

A third direction for further research comes from the idea of interpretive (expressive) freedom in this music. I have suggested to understand it as a flexible process for discovering new meanings rather than aiming for constructing static products. Recognised principles of compiling knowledge in our age of objectivity are to apply logic, clarity, and visual justification. The perspective of understanding music as a flexible and versatile process, I have suggested, appear abstract and without a stable

theoretical ground. I have demonstrated that radical practices of transmitting musical knowledge existed as alternatives to the rational ones. They, however, never received enough scholarly attention in order to be analysed, explained, and hence understood. From an analytical viewpoint, established music-analytical methods seem to be unprepared for such unpredictability. The aspect of variability in performance and composition as well, and its relationship with improvisation and rhetorical processes require new analytical tools to explore its implications.

I have concentrated in my work on the philosophical aspects of this perspective and have not included detailed analytical discussions. Developing a more precise analytical investigation would be a step further to consolidate this idea of music as an individualistic process of thinking. I believe a good starting point is the approach of 'paradigmatic analysis', which Nicolas Ruwet developed in the 1960s. This analytic method does not concentrate on the formal-structural aspects of a musical piece but focusses on the idea of equivalence and repetition. Kofi Agawu has applied these analytical methods as a branch of musical semiotics in samples of nineteenth-century music.[17] Considering the idea of viewing rhetorical thinking as versatile processes, I believe this could bring new insight into earlier music — an idea to which previous scholarship has not been applied.

The relationship between variability in music expression and contingency of improvisation processes relies on principles of repetition and their potential for generating variance. Instead of understanding it as a structural phenomenon, it would be feasible to approach it as an algorithmic process determined by sequences of changes. As Roger Moseley has suggested, if we cease looking for an'authenticity' model and historically imagined idealisation, the contingency of improvisation processes in Bach's era could lead us to a more fruitful act of simulation in which we can adapt and discover new 'insights into the configuration of today's musical world'.[18]

17. Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*.
18. Moseley, "Entextualization and the Improvised Past."

Epilogue

The idea of understanding music as an art that can accommodate vast interpretational freedom is both promising and fragile. The canon of Western music is especially problematic. It has stiffened through the mechanism of established interpretational models and institutional authority. As a result, it is often difficult to accept an alternative interpretation of a composition without having to judge it according to familiar models. By integrating the advantages of interpretive freedom with different perspectives of research enquiries, I see a fruitful opportunity to reexamine not only well known music but also musical artefacts that have been considered as enigmatic or impossible to join a chosen aesthetic or theoretical standard.

The riddle of Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007–1012) is notorious in music history. The Suites' enigmatic existence have combined contradicting interpretations with enormous popularity. This musicological puzzle is still waiting to be resolved. I think the key to unlocking it is in our own perspective of thinking. With loosening the dominance of established ('traditional') musicological approaches to music as 'the right course of research'[19] and recognising the act of performance as a valuable research tool, I think, prepares us to see alternative ways of understanding it. Viewing the Cello Suites not as a historical artefact that should be preserved intact but as a process of continuous intellectual discourse that mirrors the cultural and aesthetic needs of varieties of audiences, becomes a valuable source of new understandings. Through this perspective, I have explained the long artistic existence of Bach's Suites for Solo Cello. In this thesis I have suggested to look at the seeming 'disorder' of Anna Magdalena's articulation not from the perspective of the visual, textual transmission of the composer's ideas. From this angle, it is indeed asymmetrical, illogical, or even impractical as the priority search is the logical coherence of the text. I have suggested instead to view

19. Margaret Bent, "Fact and Value in Contemporary Scholarship," *The Musical Times* 127, no. 1716 (1986): 85–89.

her reading as an intellectual laboratory for exploring the wide interpretational potential of its musical ideas. By presenting a sample of their unending realisations, she provides some of the scarce, written out evidence of rhetorical extemporisation in music.

The contradicting articulation marks in the manuscript copies of the Suites suggest different readings of the same idea. Seen through the perspective of the 'one-truth-only approach', the missing composer's score autograph and the lack of clear evidence about the origin of the music has proved to be unresolvable. If, however, one examines it through the idea of music as accommodating multiplicity of equally relevant meanings, the enigma of the Suites becomes a key to new understanding of Bach's music. The missing authority of the composer's manuscript score, on the one hand, does not seal the music into the framework of the ideas of *Werktreue*. The variety of interpretational readings in the extant sources, on the other, represents a physical proof (in the form of written texts) of its continuous rethinking, adapting, and interpreting. Central to this process of recycling is a search for musical meaning that could suit specific conventions, tastes, and societies. On this account, Bach's music could be easily linked to our time by adapting his ideas to our current way of interpretation, needs, and creative thinking. In the case of the Cello Suites, the lack of assertive (written) evidence has not fixed the music into any established performing formulas. Instead, the music is freely moulded according to performers' abilities, imagination, instrumental restrictions, or aesthetic conventions.

The idea of viewing music from the past as an ongoing creative process is powerful. It has the potential to generate new connections with other historical periods. By doing this, it presents the opportunity to discover new meanings and new expressive ideas in already well-known repertoire.[20] Expressive variety suggests a multiplicity of interpretations that do not fix music into one 'correct' model, representing 'the truth'. I have shown that it is difficult to attach Bach's Suites for Solo Cello

20. Moseley, "Entextualization and the Improvised Past."

to a chosen category of truth. A more fruitful approach in understanding this music is to look at it from the perspective of an open text that is flexible to adapt to times, places, and people. With the multitude of cultural contexts, traditions, and aesthetic needs at the beginning of the twenty-first century, imposing on a single reading as 'correct' appears to be restrictive and authoritarian. What we need to do, is to continue revisiting Bach's music. The guiding impulse for this continuous act of rethinking should be the pleasure of discovering new ways of interpreting his musical ideas, and not a search for identifying an exemplary interpretive model of a composition. By adapting it to current interests and tastes, Bach's music continues to live and appeal to audiences with different expectations and aesthetic needs.

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