Primo e Secondo
Libro di Toccate del Sig.
Cavagl.re Alessandro Scarlatti.

ARCHIVUM MUSICUM

Collana di testi rari

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STUDIO PER EDIZIONI SCELTE

ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI

PRIMO E SECONDO LIBRO DI TOCCATE

NAPOLI, s.d.

FIRENZE
1981

Delle varie fonti manoscritte inerenti la musica per tastiera di Alessandro Scarlatti quella che raccoglie le dieci *Toccate* qui riprodotte è certamente la più organica e interessante. Redatta con una certa accuratezza dal copista ufficiale dello Scarlatti, probabilmente in previsione di una edizione a stampa mai realizzata, essa è difficilmente databile. Certamente posteriore al 1716 fu la copiatura, dato che il titolo di Cavaliere fu concesso allo Scarlatti da Clemente XI in quell'anno, ma è difficile dire in quale arco di tempo le *Toccate* siano state composte. L'unica data esistente, non nel manoscritto napoletano ma in quello della collezione Higgs, è infatti il 1723 che suggella le variazioni sulla Follia. Alessandro morì però nel 1725 quasi completamente inattivo e il Quantz, rendendogli visita in quell'anno, ebbe l'impressione che egli suonasse sapientemente ma senza la bravura del figlio Domenico, mentre le *Toccate* e la *Follia* in particolare, al di là dell'imbarazzante paragone, testimoniano una notevolissima abilità strumentale, probabilmente attenuatasi col passar degli anni. Il clima culturale che pervade la raccolta sembrerebbe inoltre essere quello fiorentino e romano alimentato soprattutto da Ferdinando de Medici e dal cardinale Ottoboni. La loro politica culturale fece sì che all'inizio del XVIII secolo operassero fianco a fianco compositori quali Bernardo Pasquini, Arcangelo Corelli, Giovanni Maria Casini, Domenico Zipoli, Azzolino della Ciaja, Georg Friederich Haendel e Domenico Scarlatti. Un clima culturale estremamente vivo e attento alle innovazioni, del quale ci restano copiose testimonianze, tra cui la preziosa *memoria* datata 13 febbraio 1708 di Giovanni Maria Casini che dice tra l'altro: « Dopo varij ragionamenti sulle musiche.. ci portammo a parlar di come si possa rendere su gli strumenti il parlar del cuore, or con delicato tocco d'angelo, or con violenta irruzione di passioni. E si parlava ancor d'ogn'istrumento di tasto e di sue limitatezze. Si disse che il Cembalo non completa tutto l'esprimere di sentimento umano. Poi si andò tutti a veder gl'istrumenti del Ser.mo Sig. Principe e Bartolo Cristofori in spiegazioni si lasciava andare, in spezial modo per quelli nuovi ».

Nella *memoria* si fa inoltre cenno alla bellezza dell'*organo grande* del Duomo di Firenze, che anche Alessandro ricorda con emozione proprio in una lettera al Casini. E sono gli anni in cui il Della Ciaja, sia a Roma che a Pisa, si dedica alla progettazione di un grande organo dalle lussureggianti possibilità foniche, mentre nel campo degli strumenti a tastiera "profani" si sperimentano i *gravecembali col piano e il forte* cui allude il Casini e si costruiscono clavicembali sempre più grandi e sonori (nell'inventario del cardinale Ottoboni su quattordici strumenti otto hanno *l'ottava stesa* e sei han-

no tre registri). Nell'ambito compositivo le tendenze di quegli anni sembrano essere essenzialmente due. Accanto ad uno stile pacato e lineare, più tardi intimistico e galante, ricco di sfumature come il tenue suono dei nuovi strumenti a martelletti, stile praticato dallo Zipoli (che dall'insegnamento di Alessandro « scapò per acuta differenza ») dal Giustini e dal Platti, esiste infatti uno stile più estroso ed esuberante. In quest'ultimo, praticato da Alessandro e Domenico Scarlatti e da Azzolino della Ciaja, la componente virtuosistica, che viene esaltata dalle caratteristiche timbriche dell'organo e del cembalo italiani, assurge ad elemento espressivo e strutturante. Entrambe le tendenze affondano comunque le loro radici nella lezione frescobaldiana, anche se filtrata dalla produzione di Bernardo Pasquini, cioè si rifanno ad una maniera compositiva strettamente legata alla teoria degli affetti e in cui l'intervento interpretativo rimane determinante.

A nostro avviso quindi una rivalutazione delle Toccate di Alessandro Scarlatti può venire non tanto da una più accurata "lettura a tavolino" quanto dalla capacità degli interpreti di praticare tutti quegli artifici espressivi cui lo schematismo del testo rimanda. Operazione delicata e complessa poiché le Toccate sono le opere tarde di un compositore che vedeva la propria fama sempre più insidiata dalle giovani generazioni e richiedono quindi la coesistenza di prassi esecutive antiche e tipicamente italiane con altre comuni all'intera cultura europea del primo Settecento. Esemplare in questo senso è la diteggiatura della prima Toccata che, riportata nei vari manoscritti per favorire « il nobile portamento delle mani », rivela una non casuale commistione di vecchie e nuove tendenze. Nella loro vera o falsa modestia preziose rimangono dunque le parole che Alessandro stesso scrisse a Ferdinando de Medici: « L'armonia delle mie note non è mai bastante, per se stessa, ad apportare un'ombra di diletto, se la forza della Poesia, e la virtù degli Attori, non gliene diano la Sembianza ».

Il presente facsimile è tratto dal ms. 34. 6. 31 che si trova nella Biblioteca del Conservatorio di Napoli e che contiene anche nove composizioni di Domenico Zipoli e tre di autore non identificato.

LAURA ALVINI

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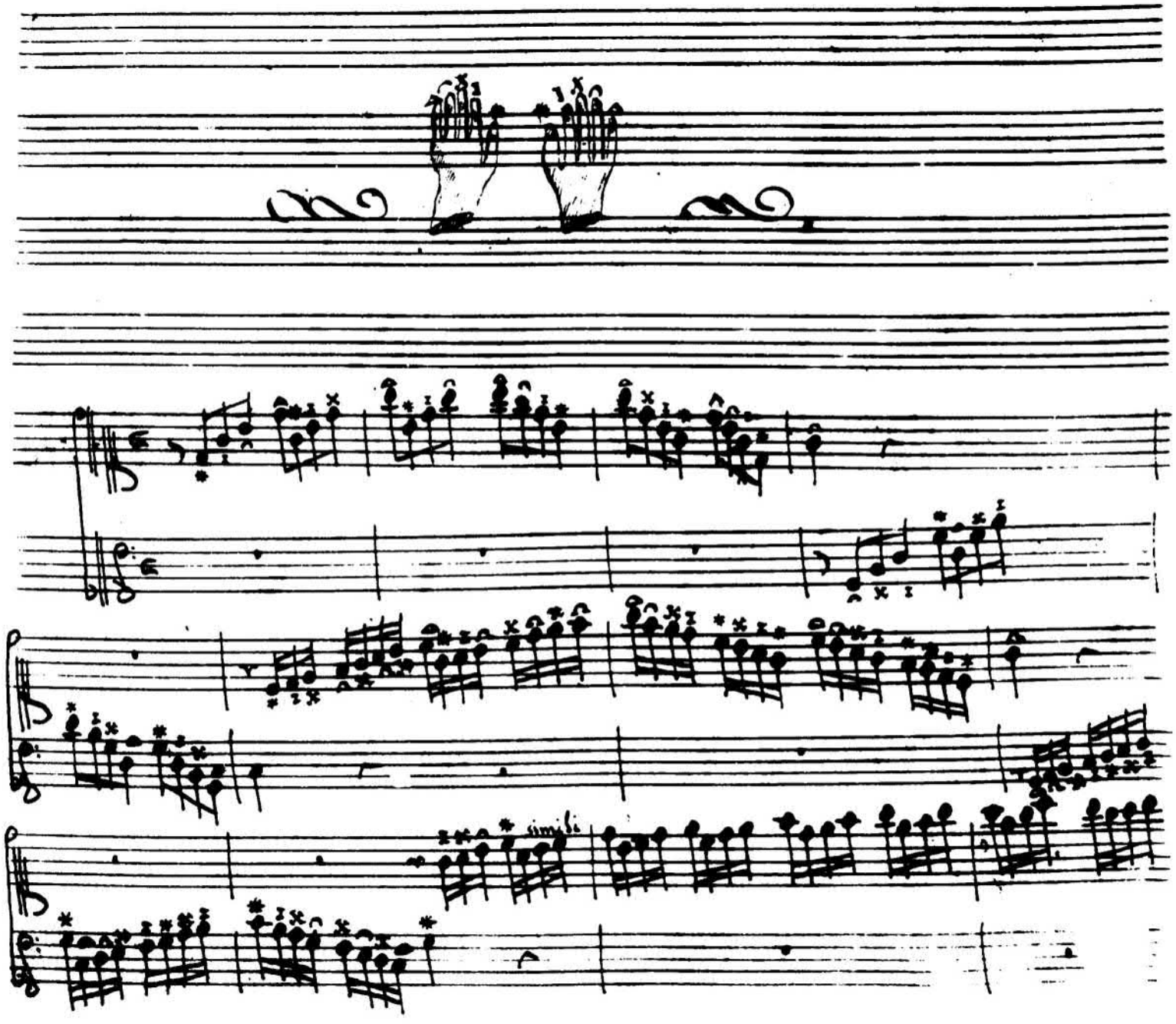
Primo e Second.o Libro di Toccate del Sig.r Cavagl.re Alessandro Scarlatti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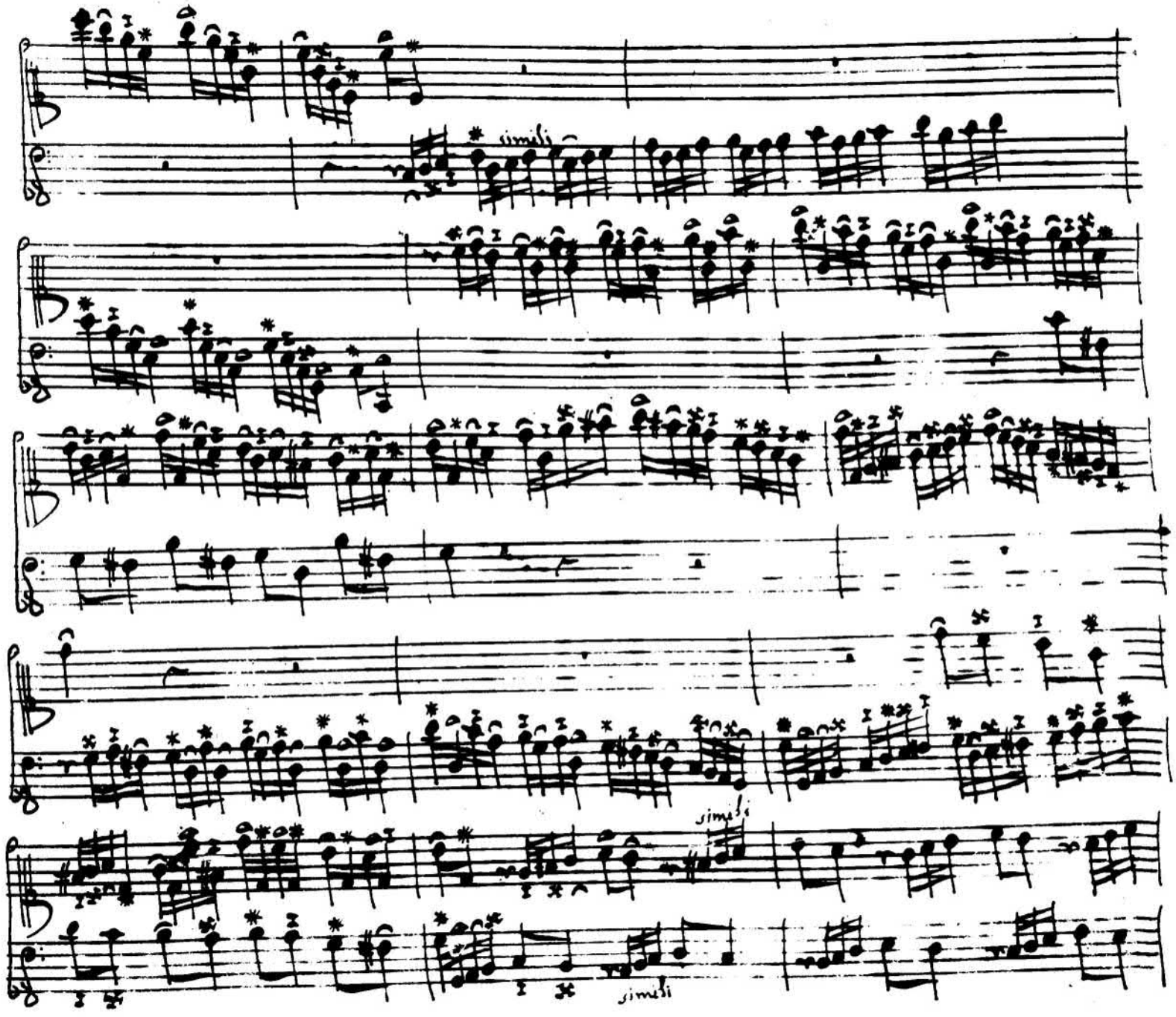
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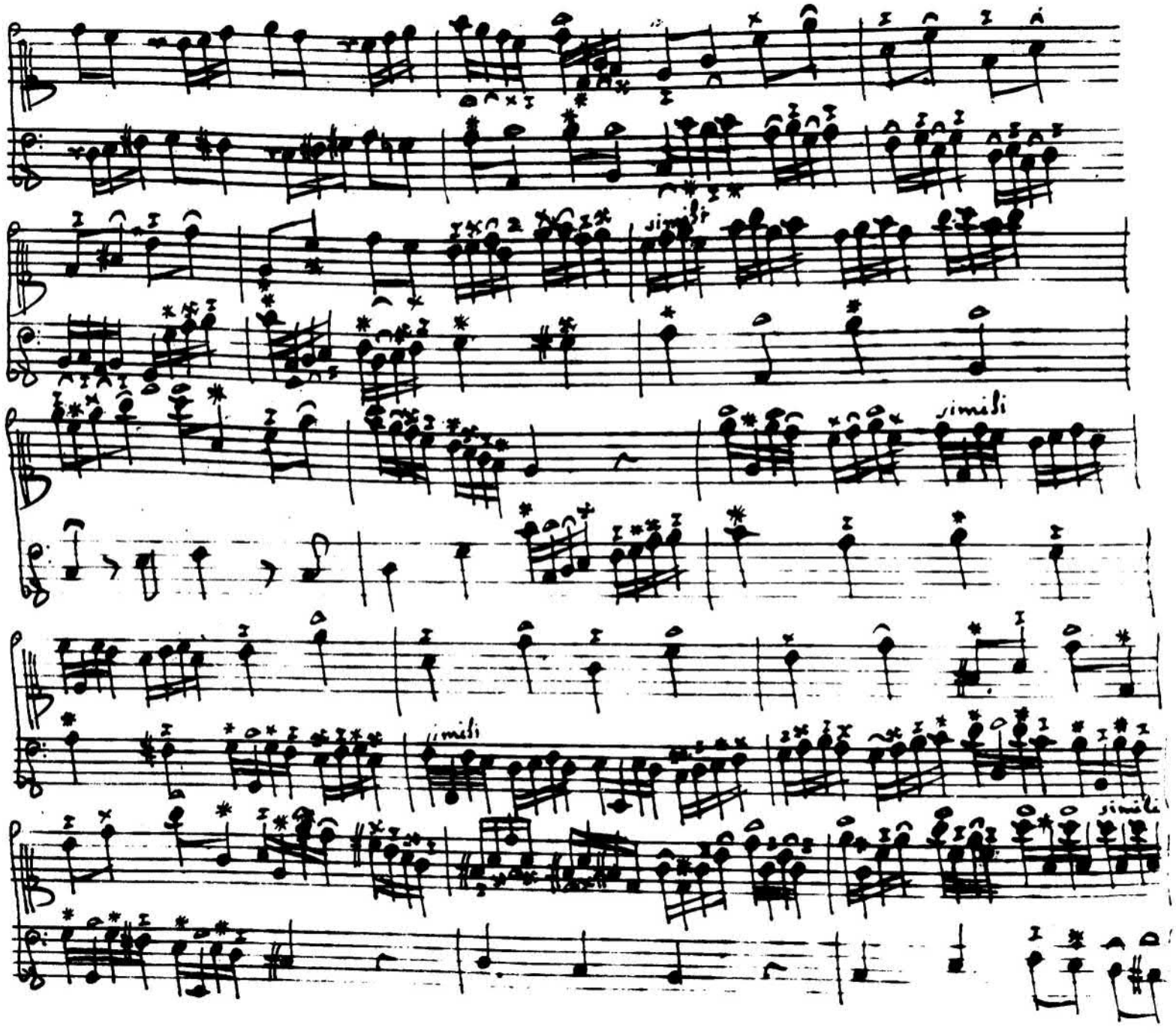
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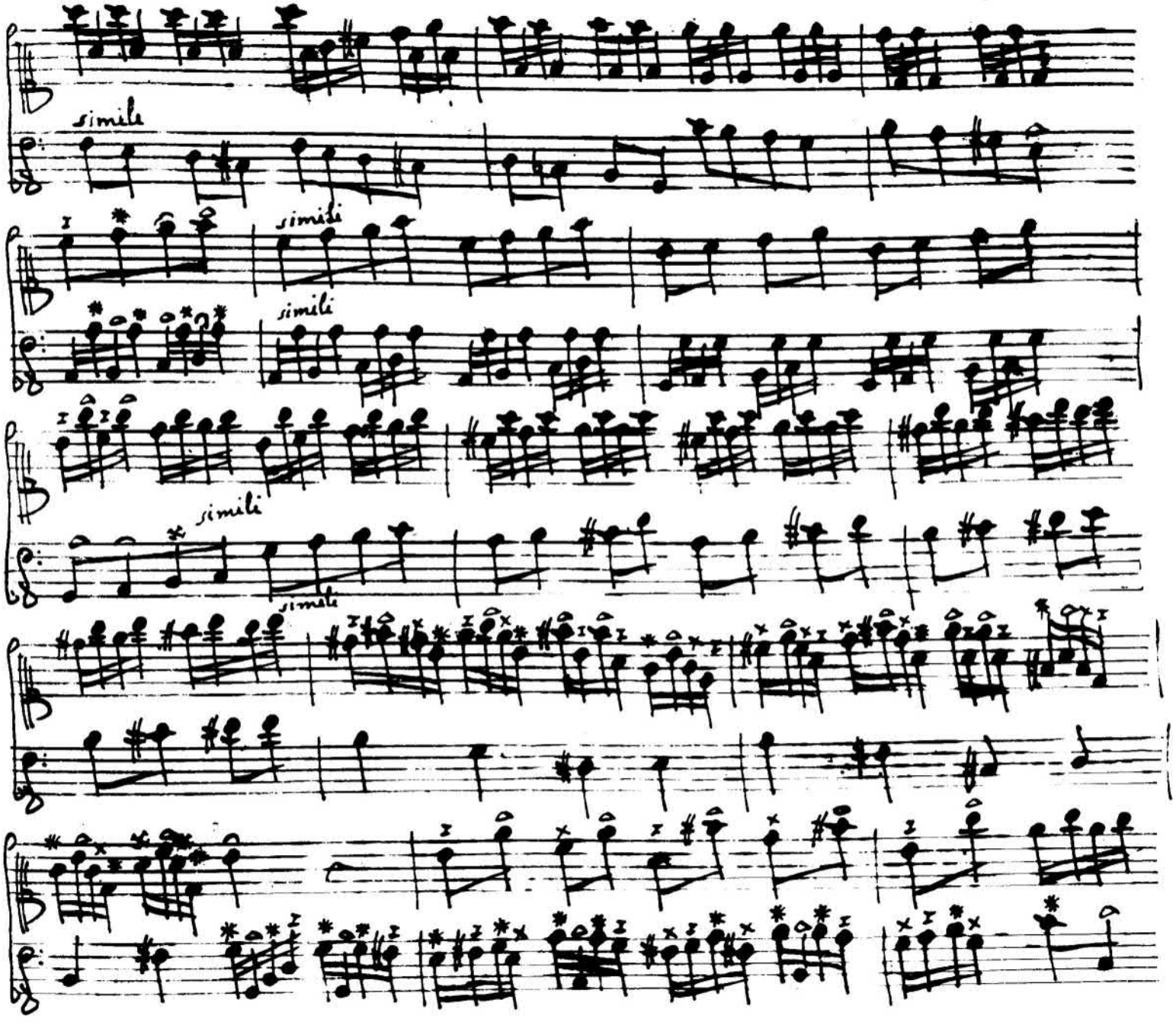
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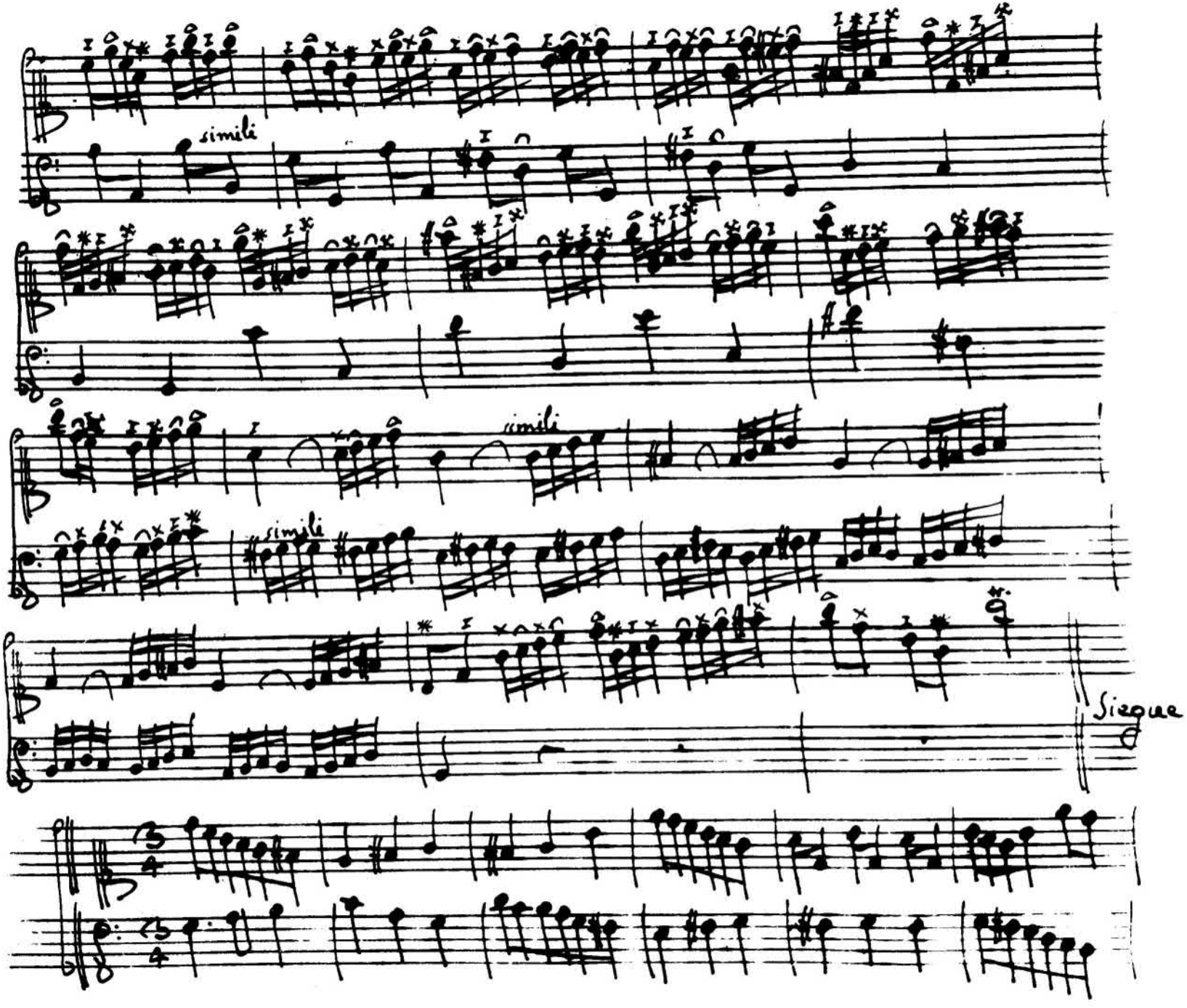
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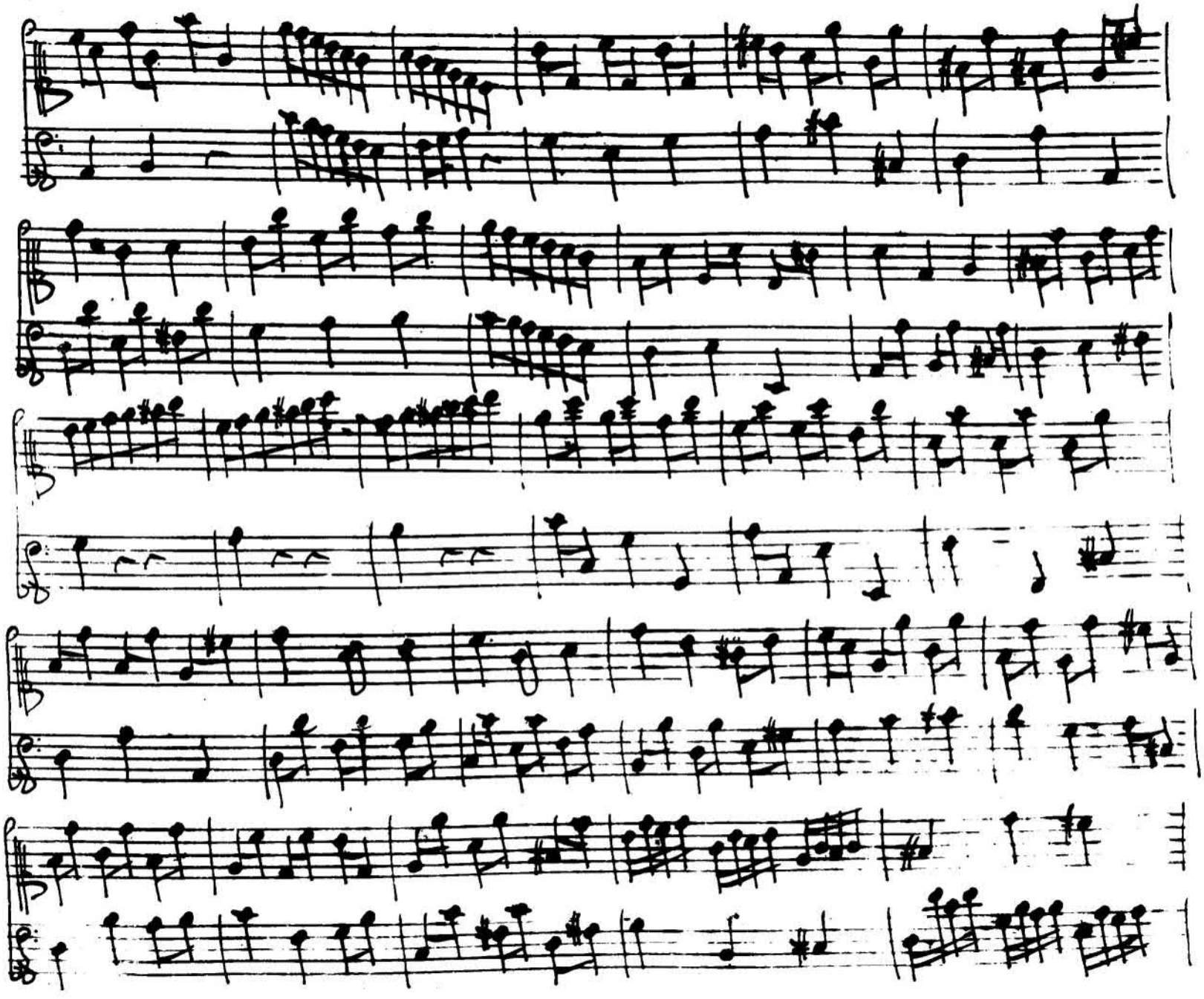

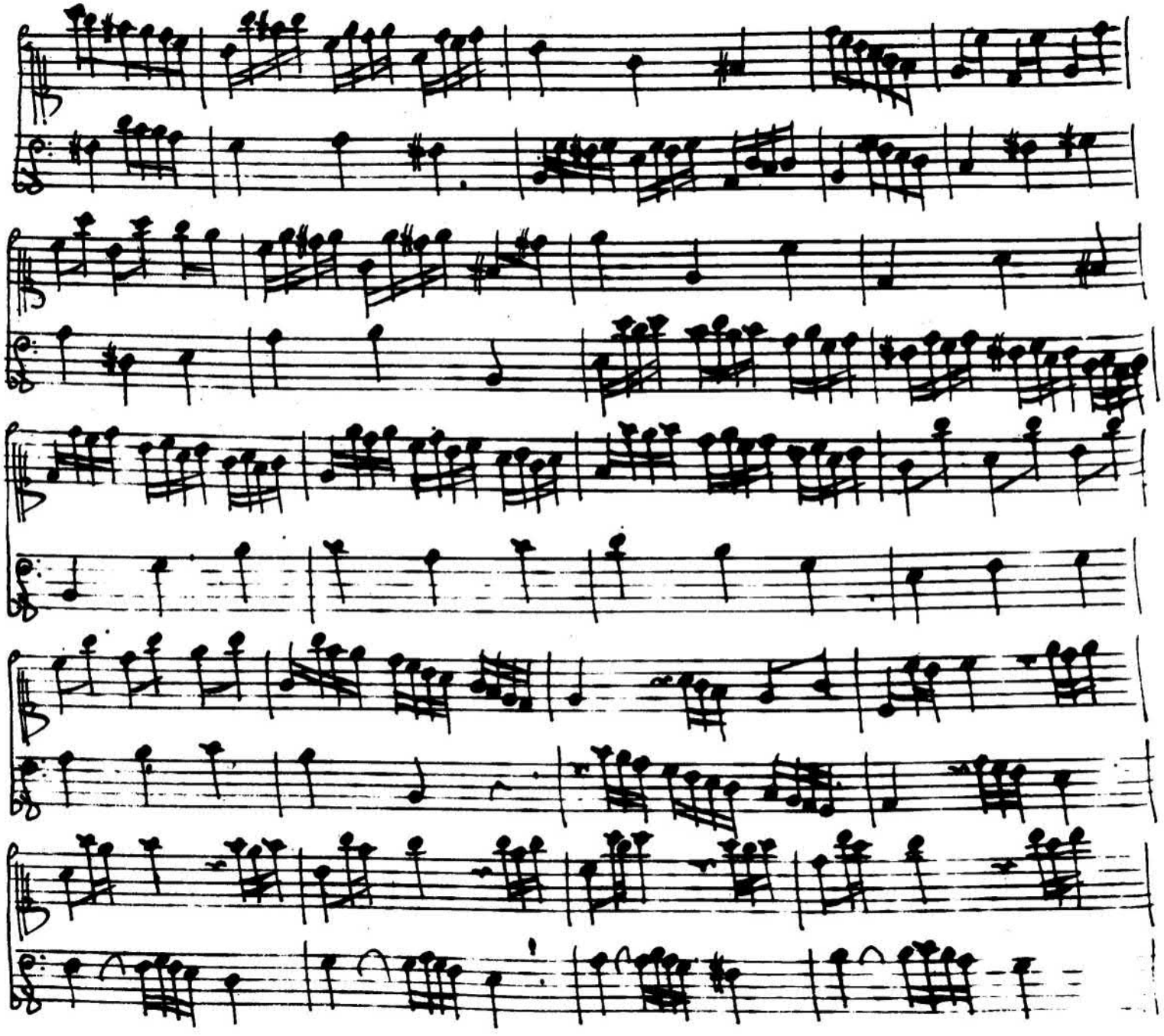

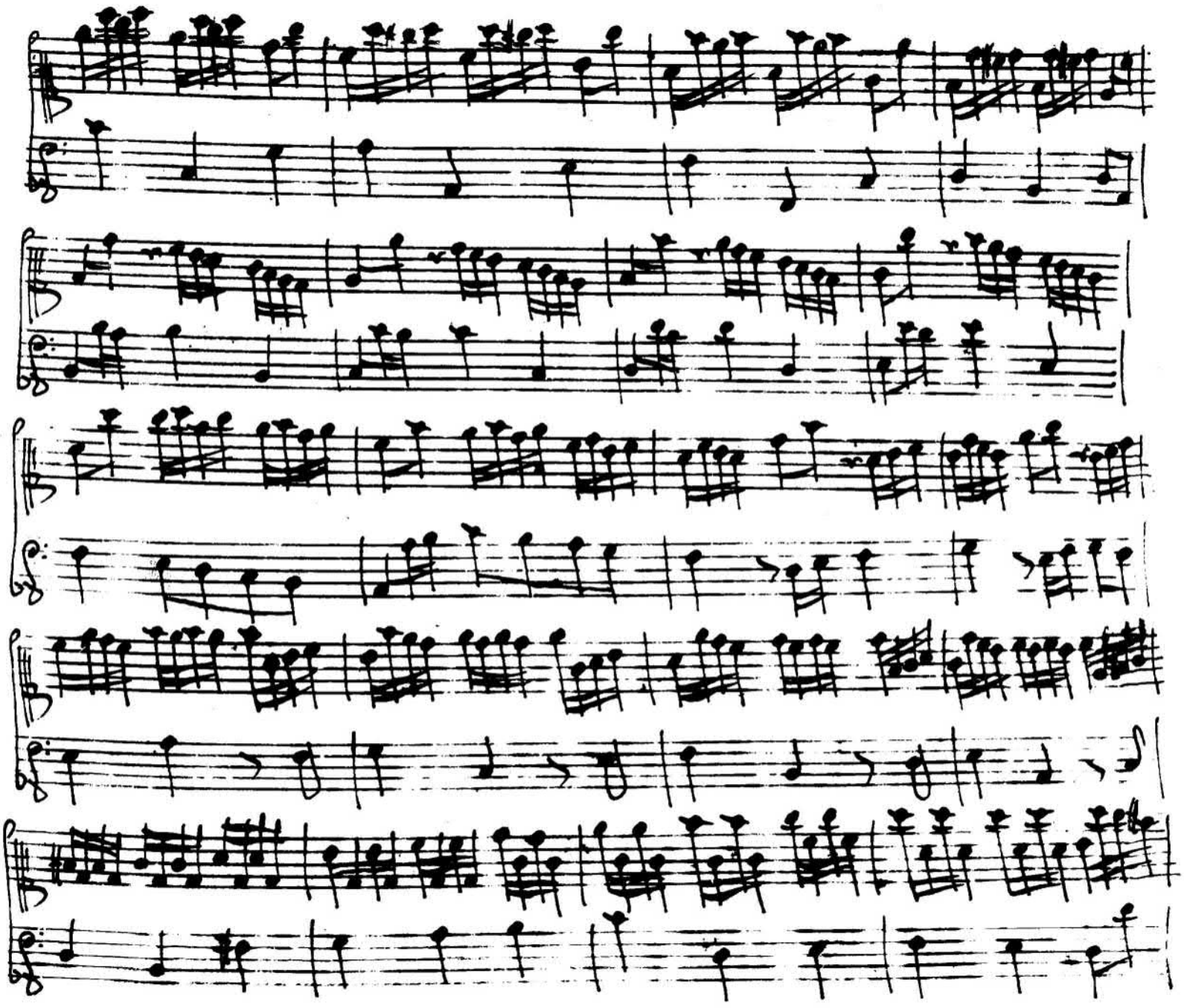

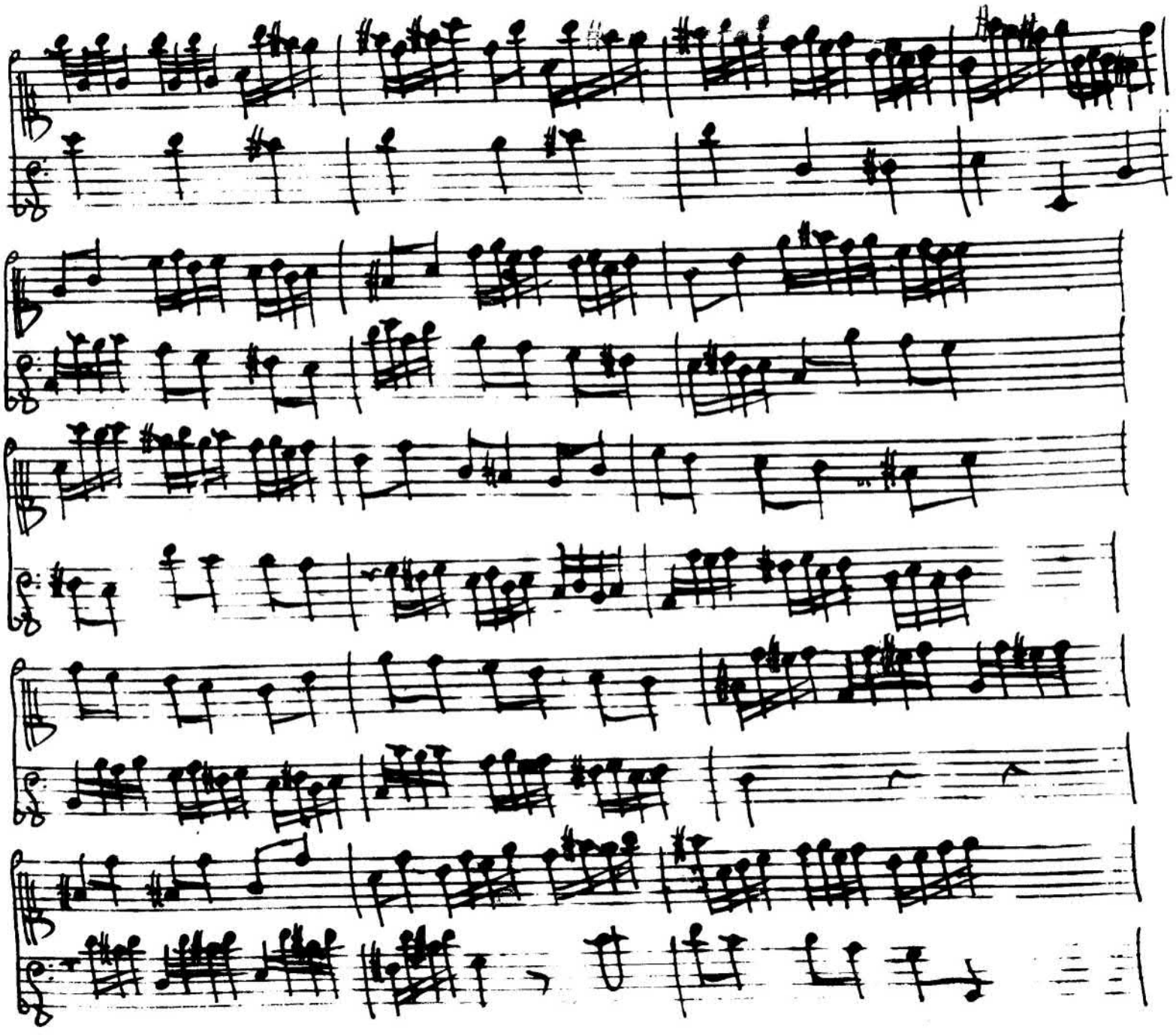

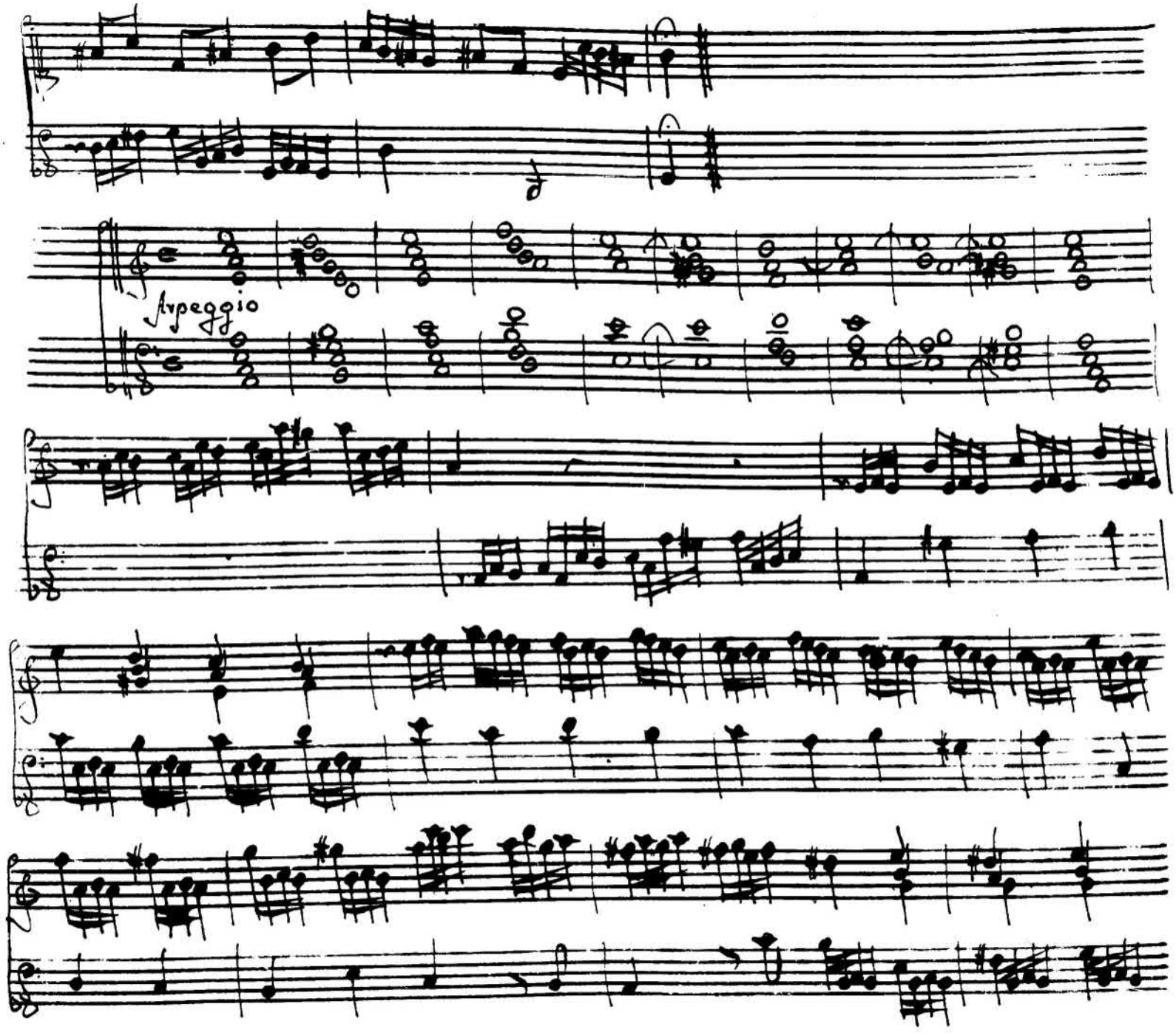
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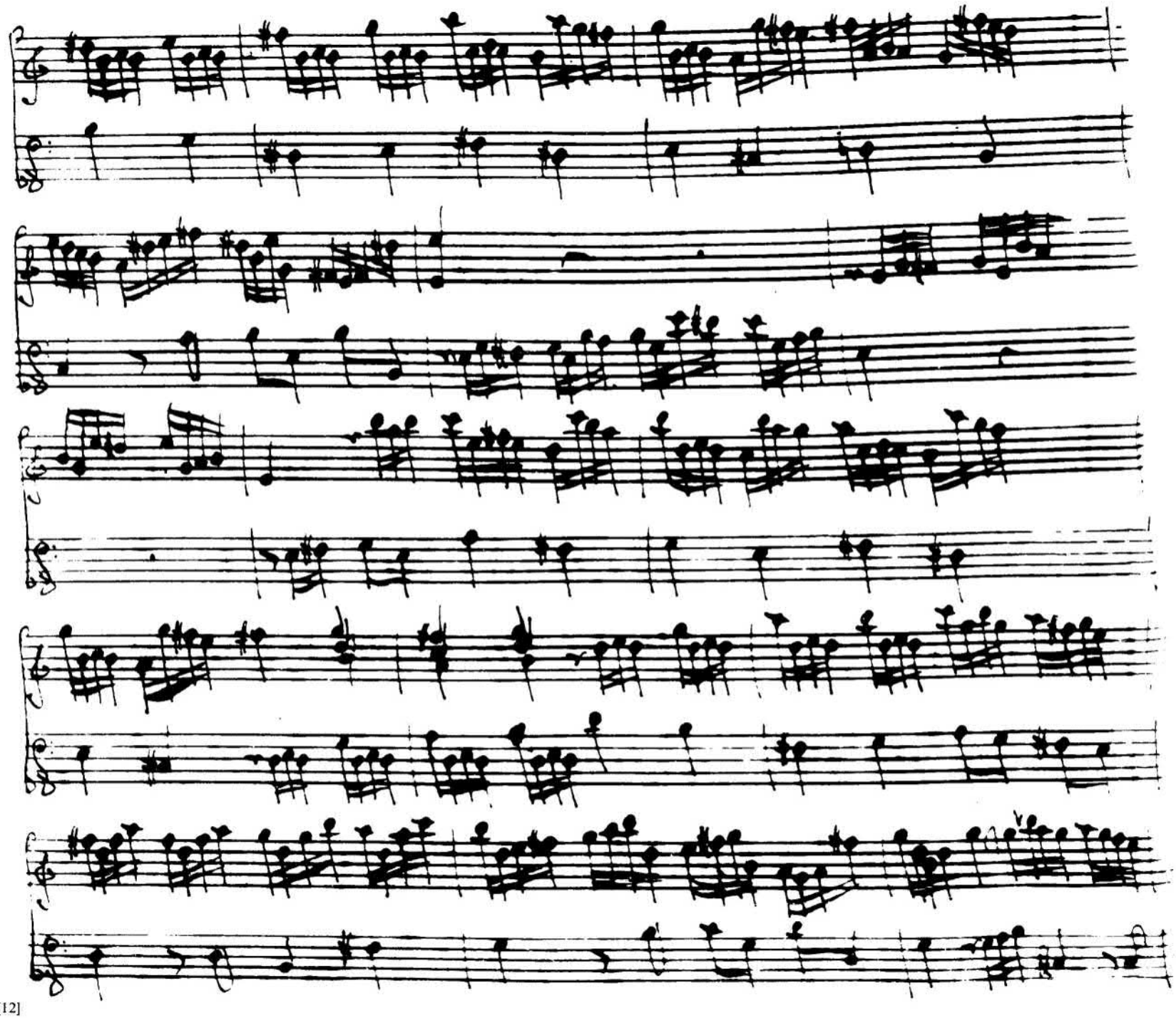

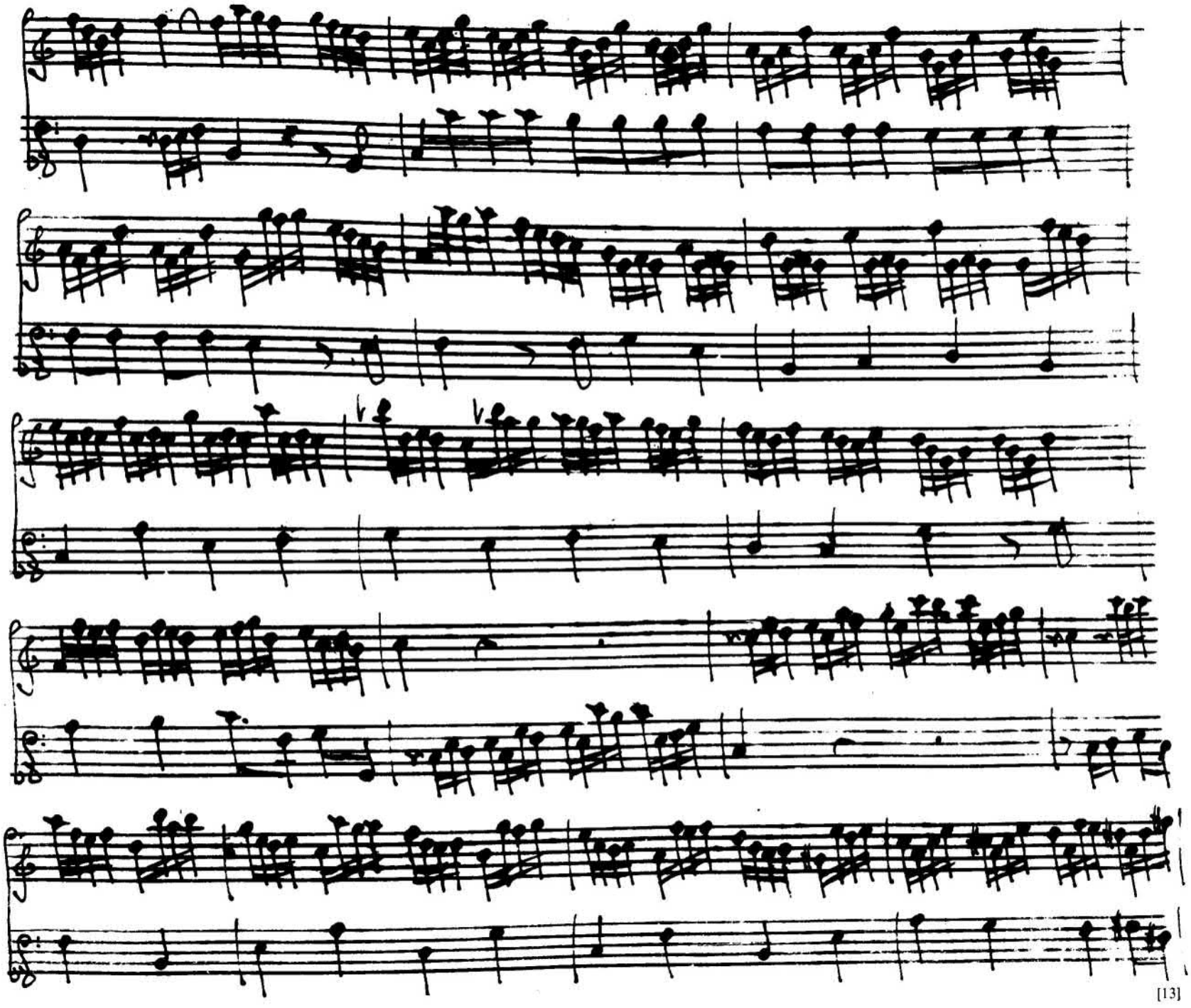

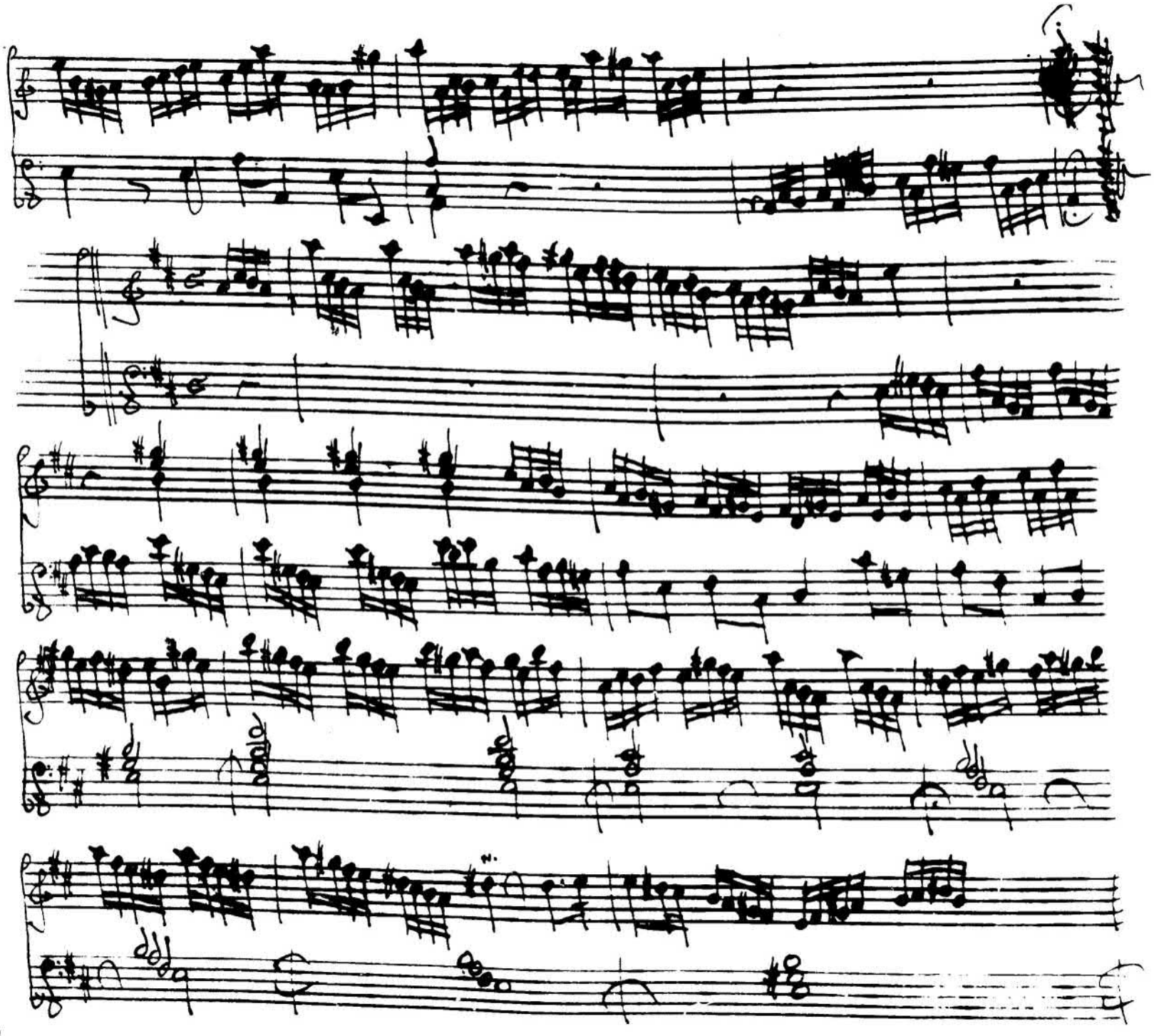

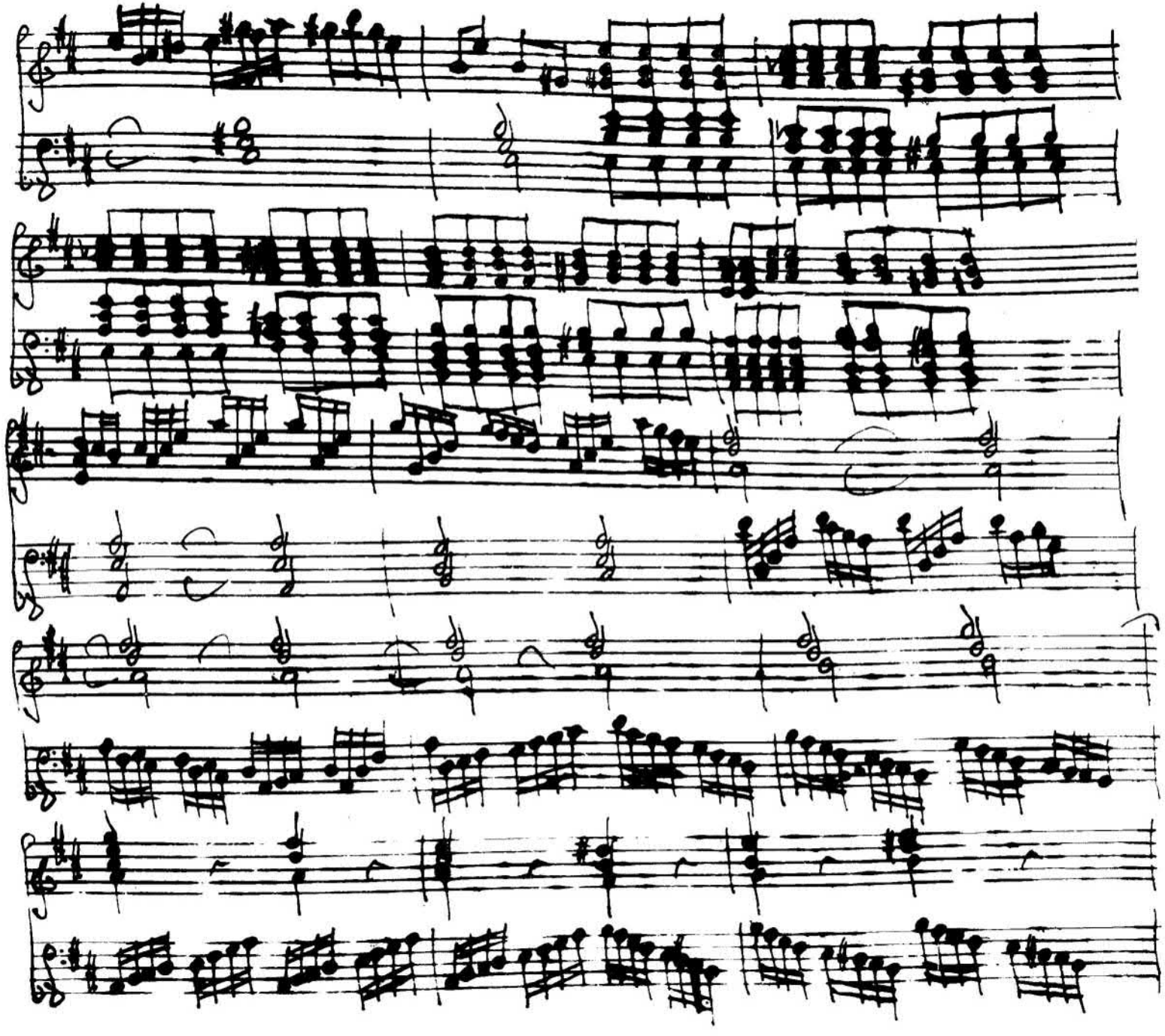

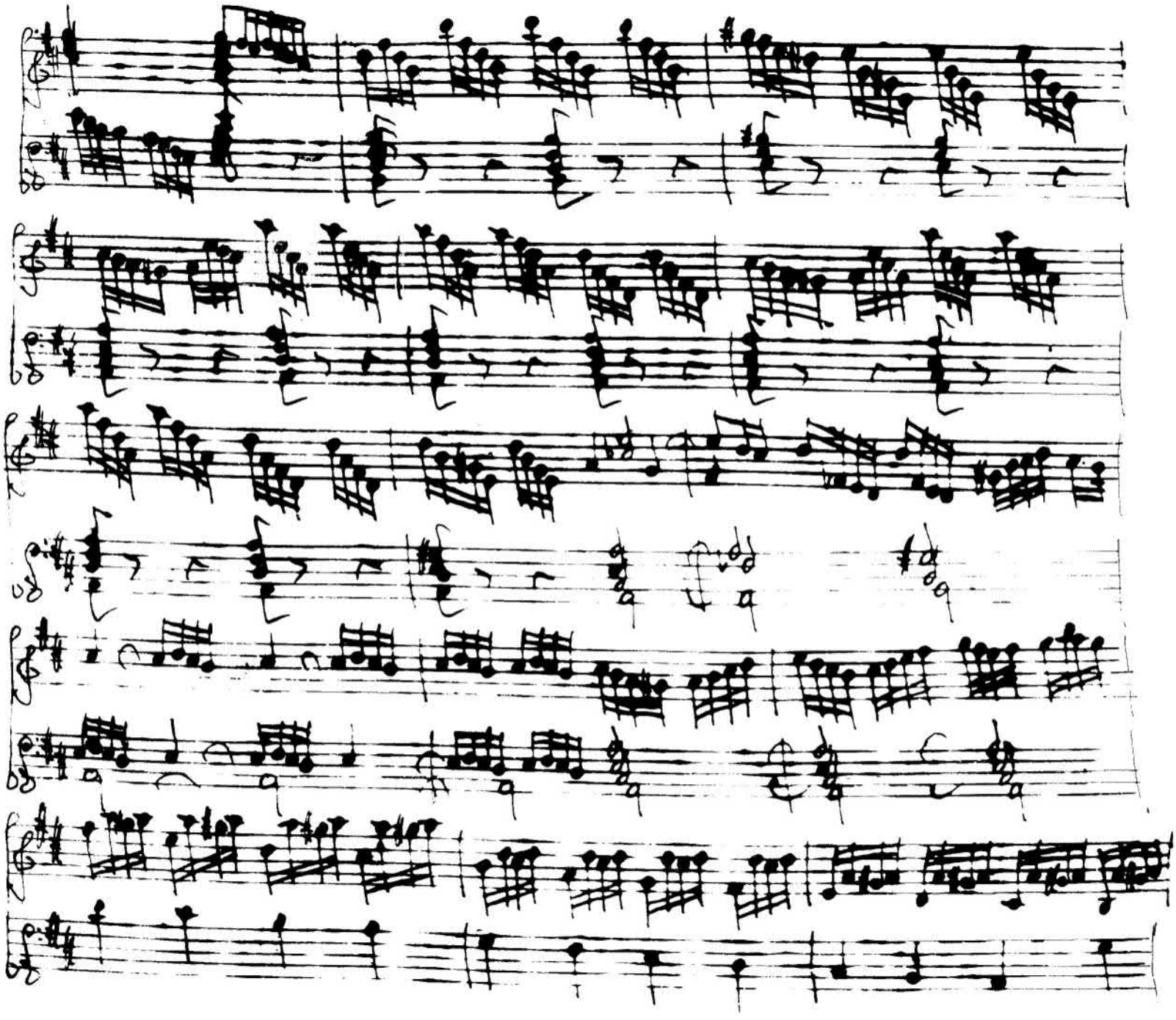

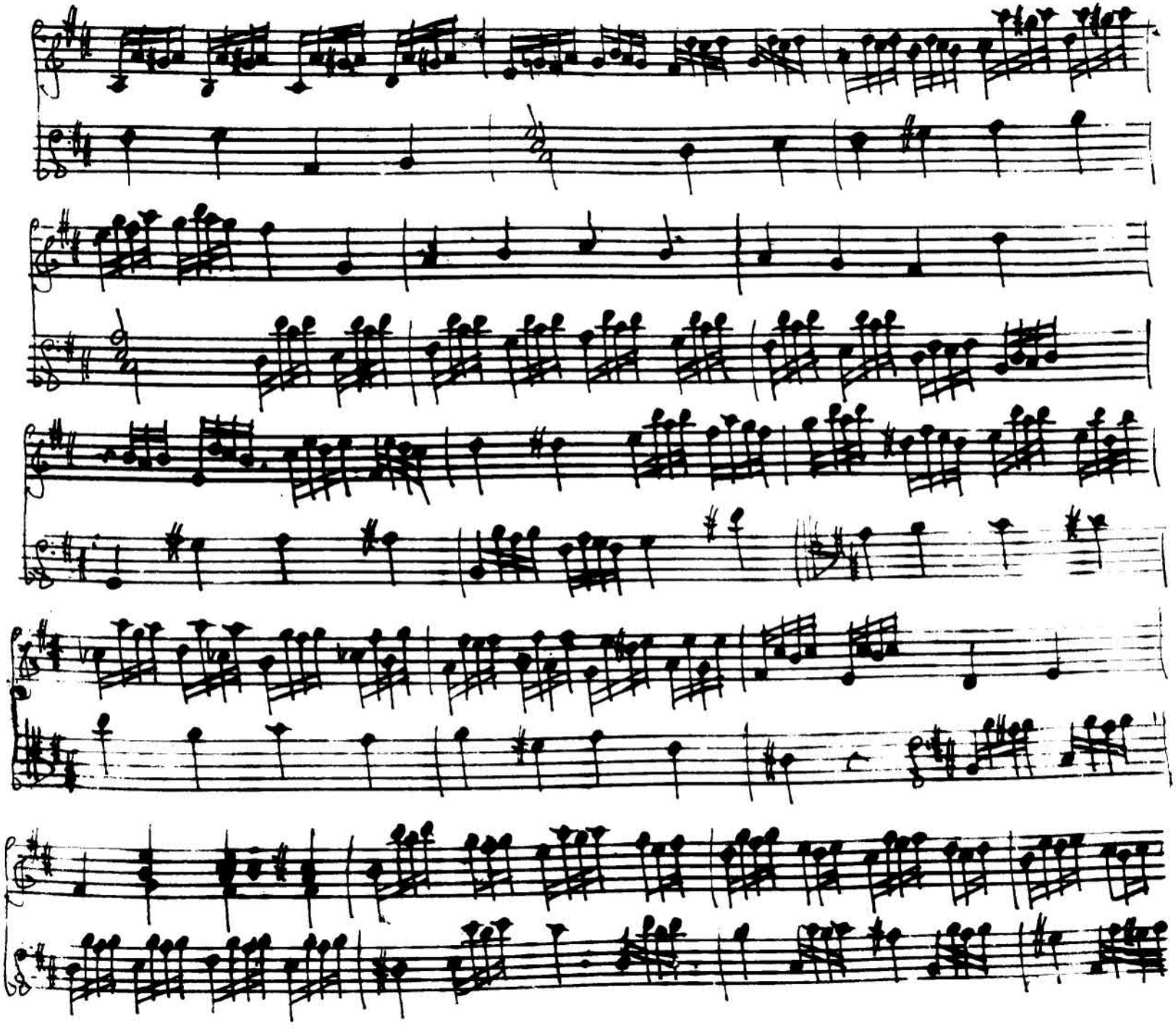

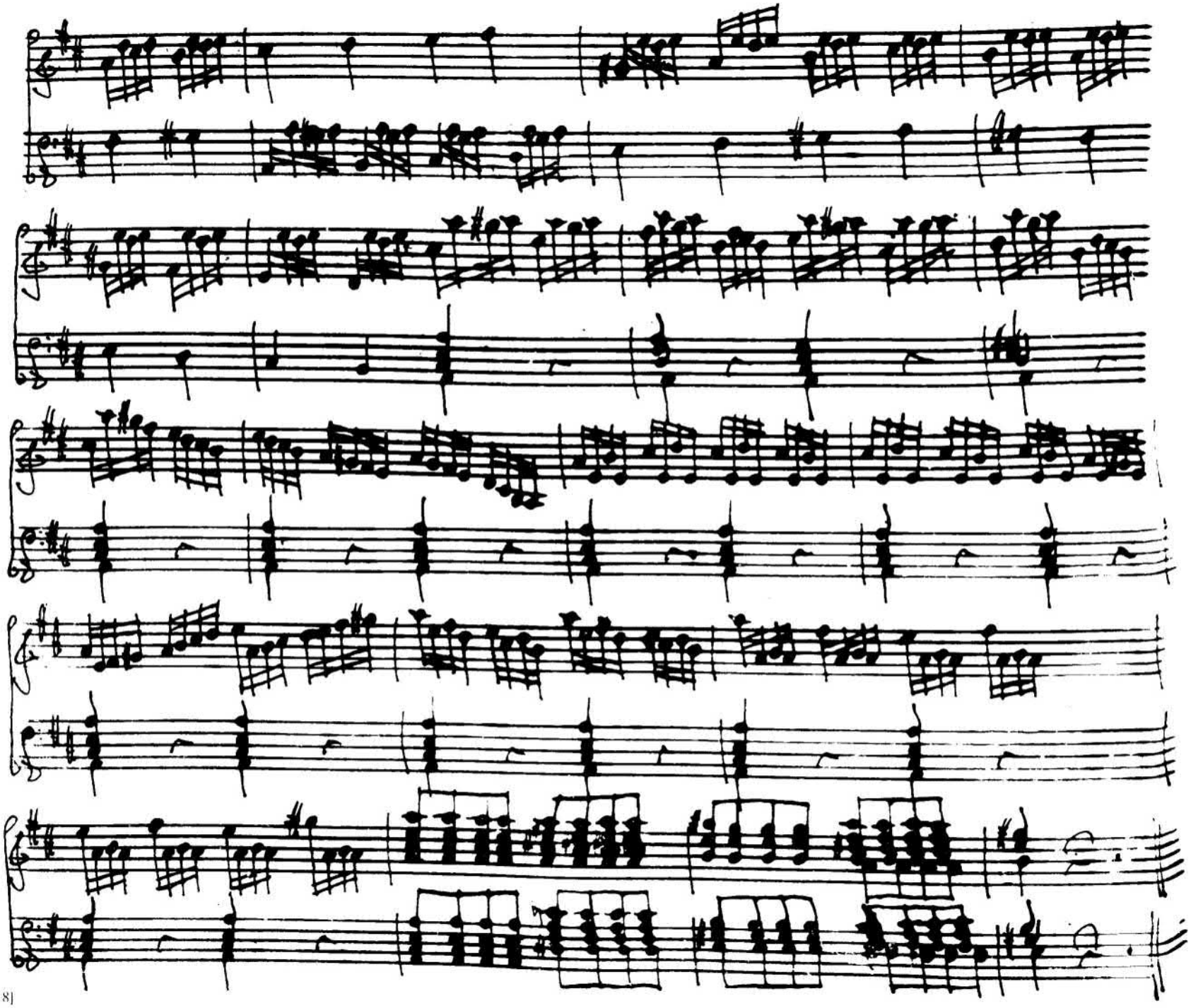

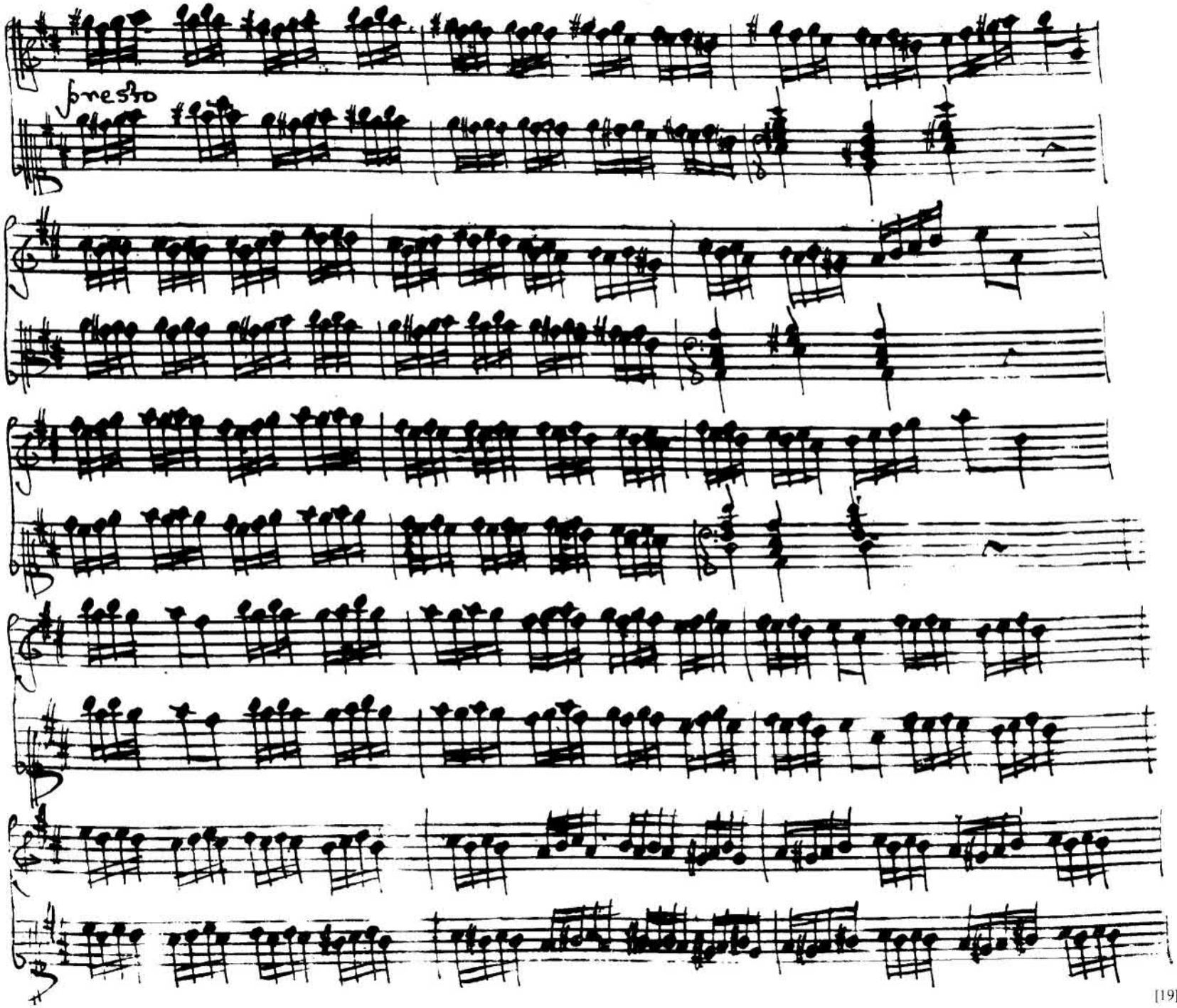
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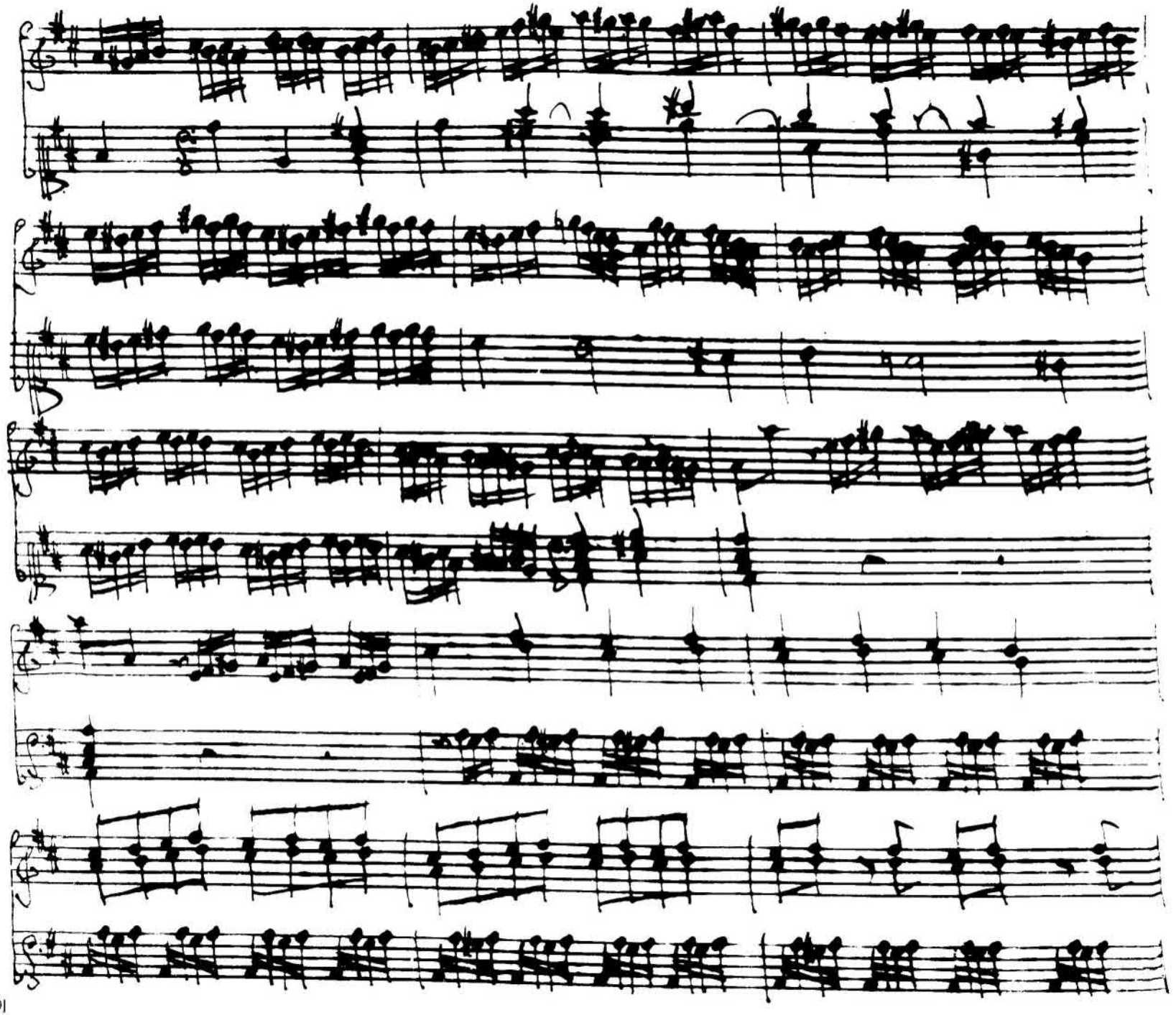

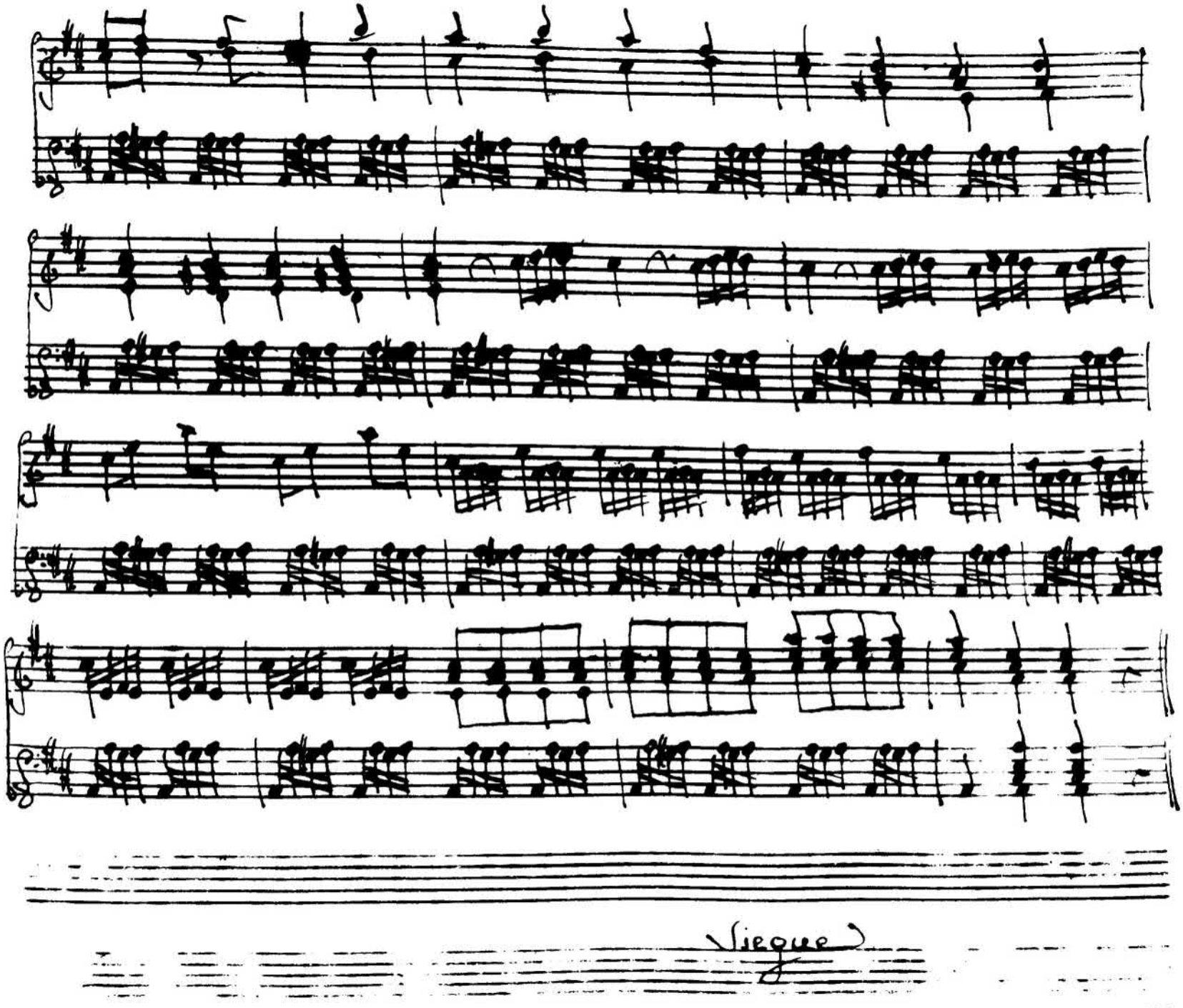
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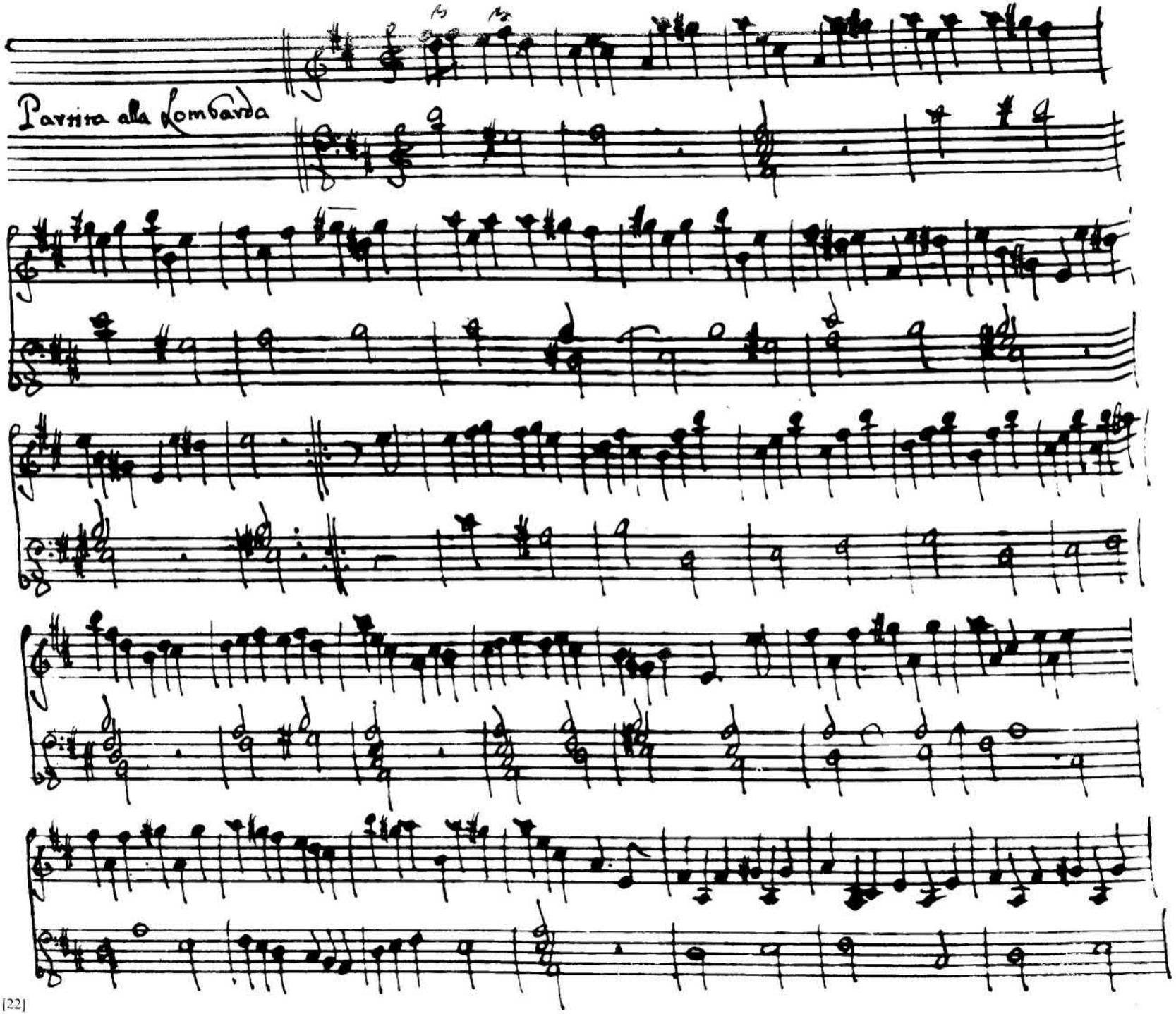
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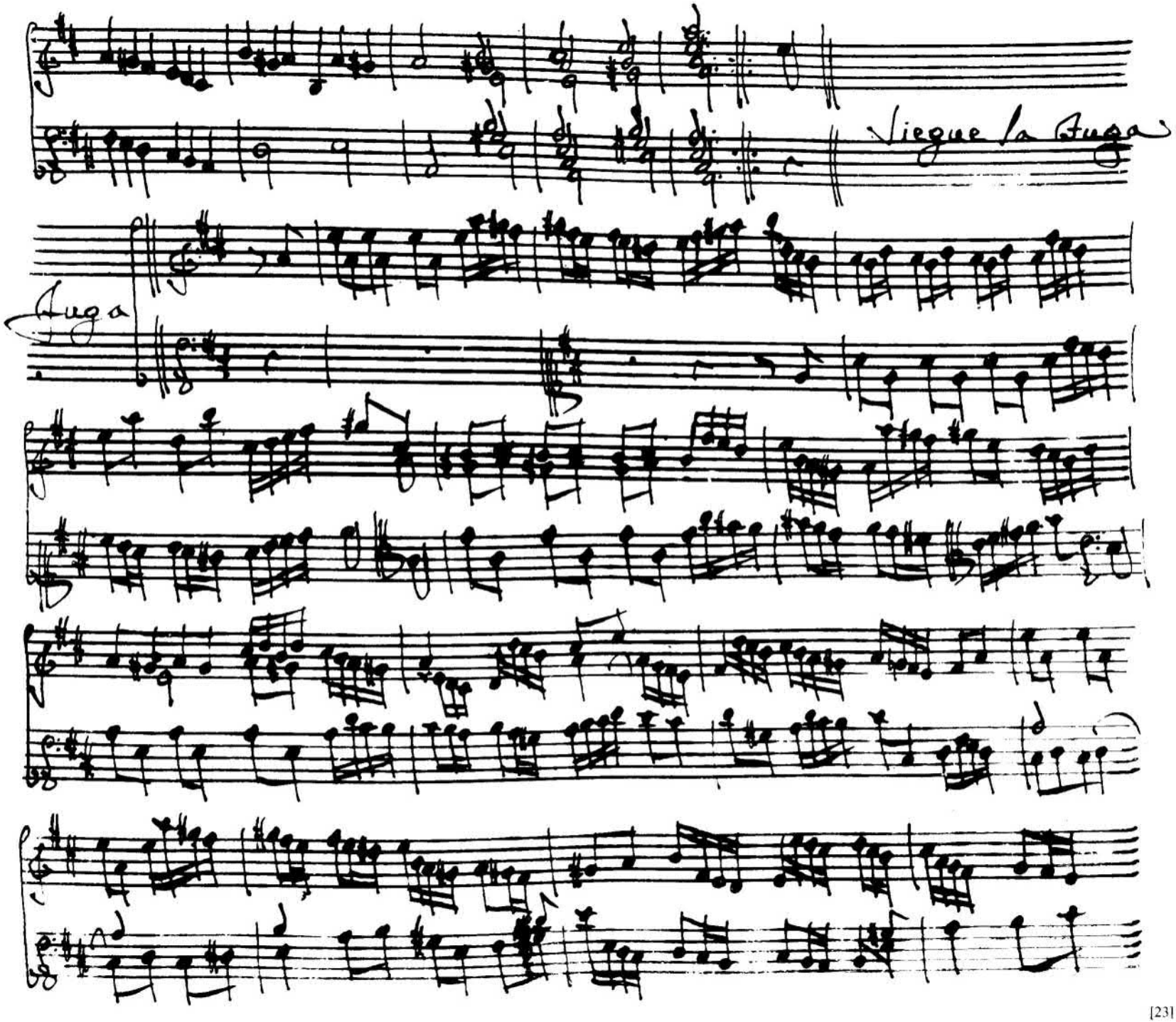
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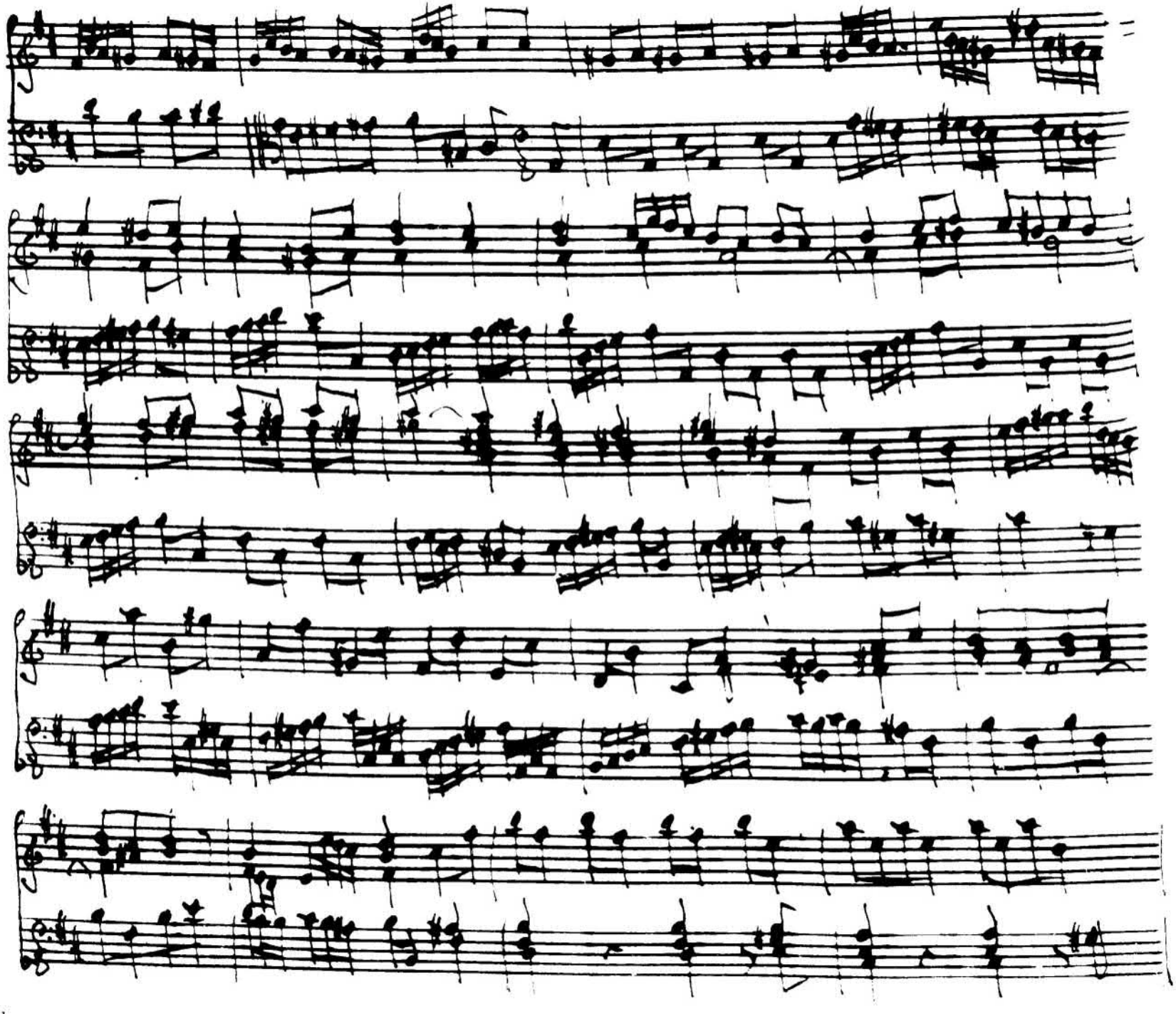

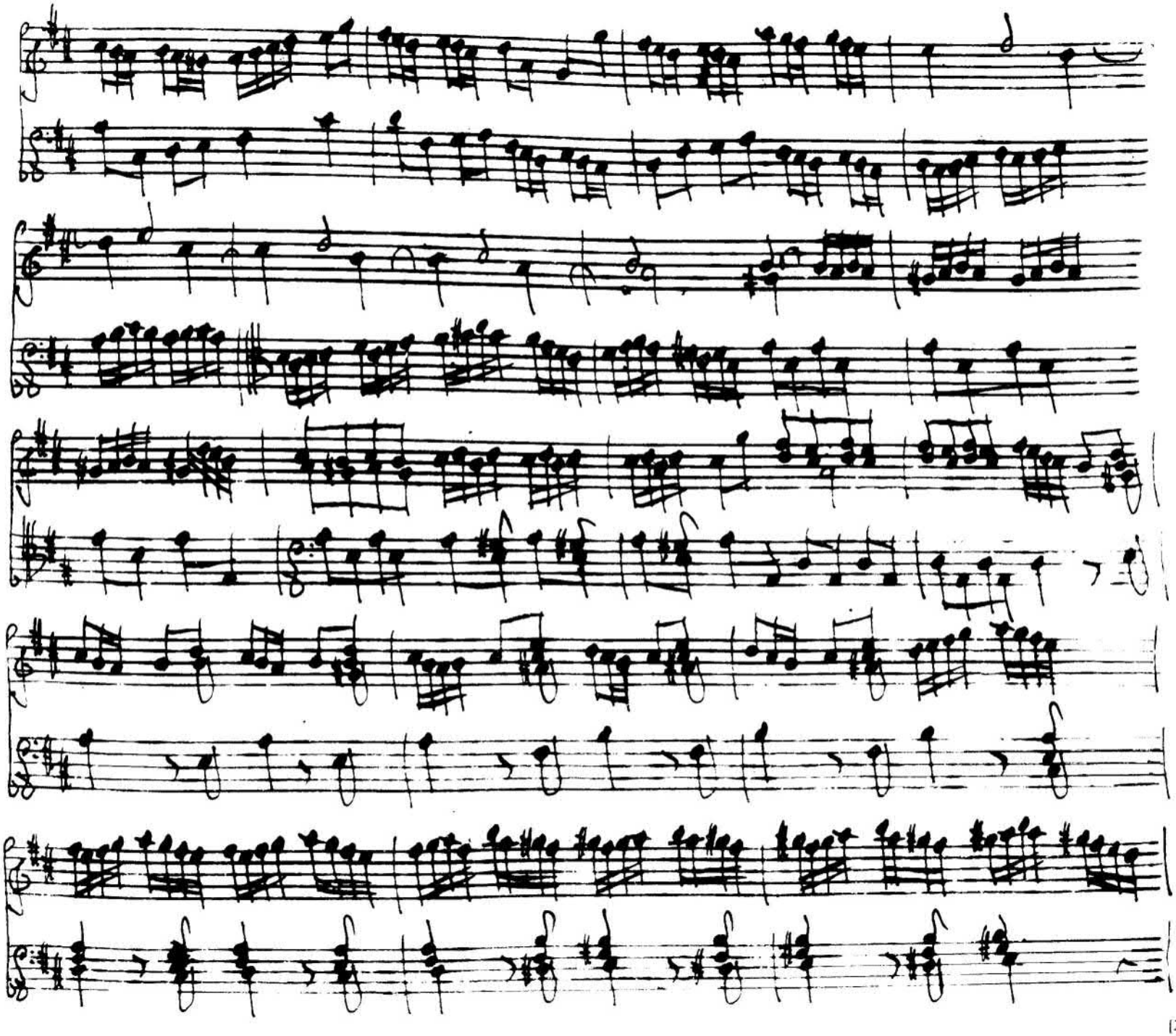

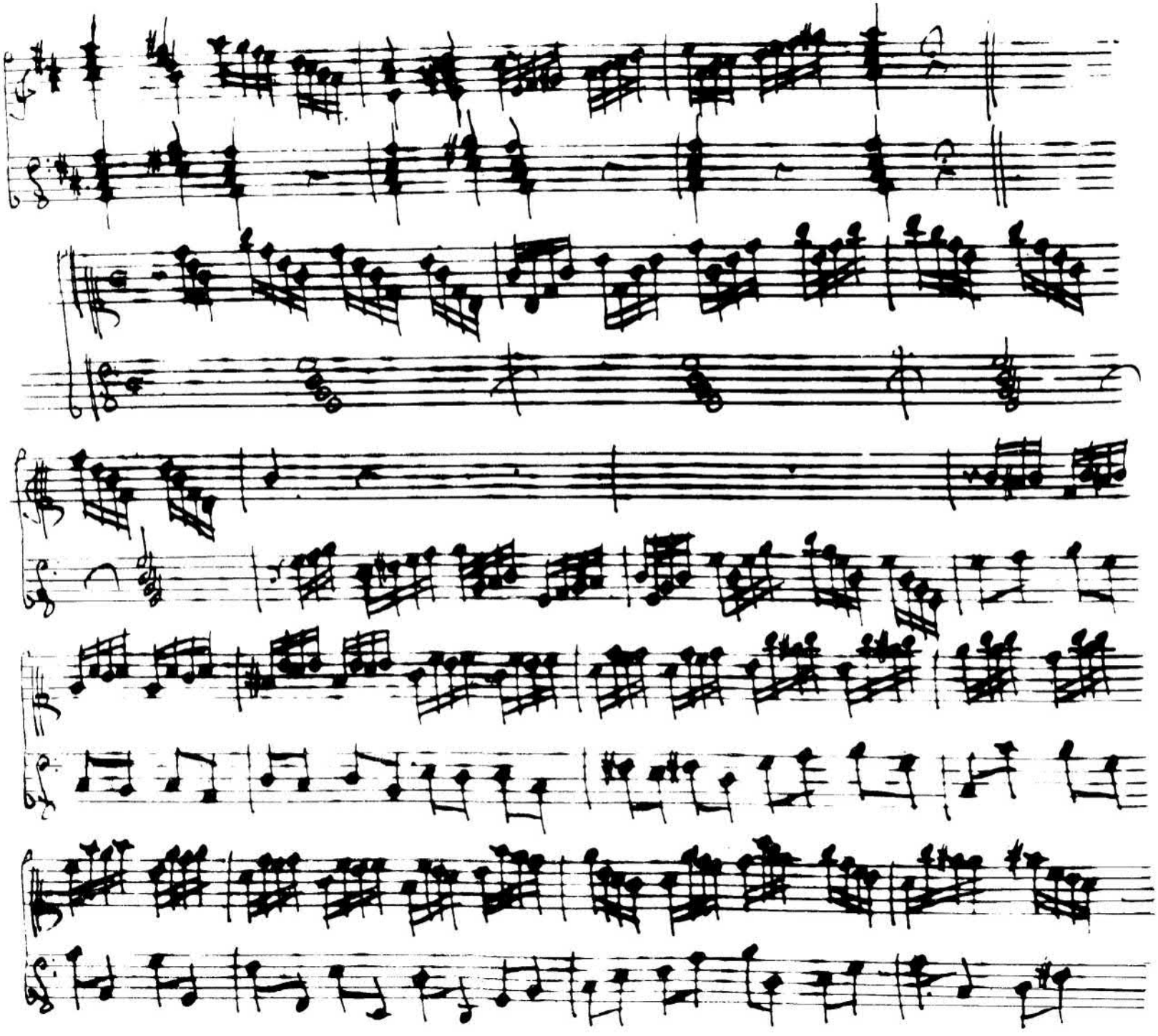

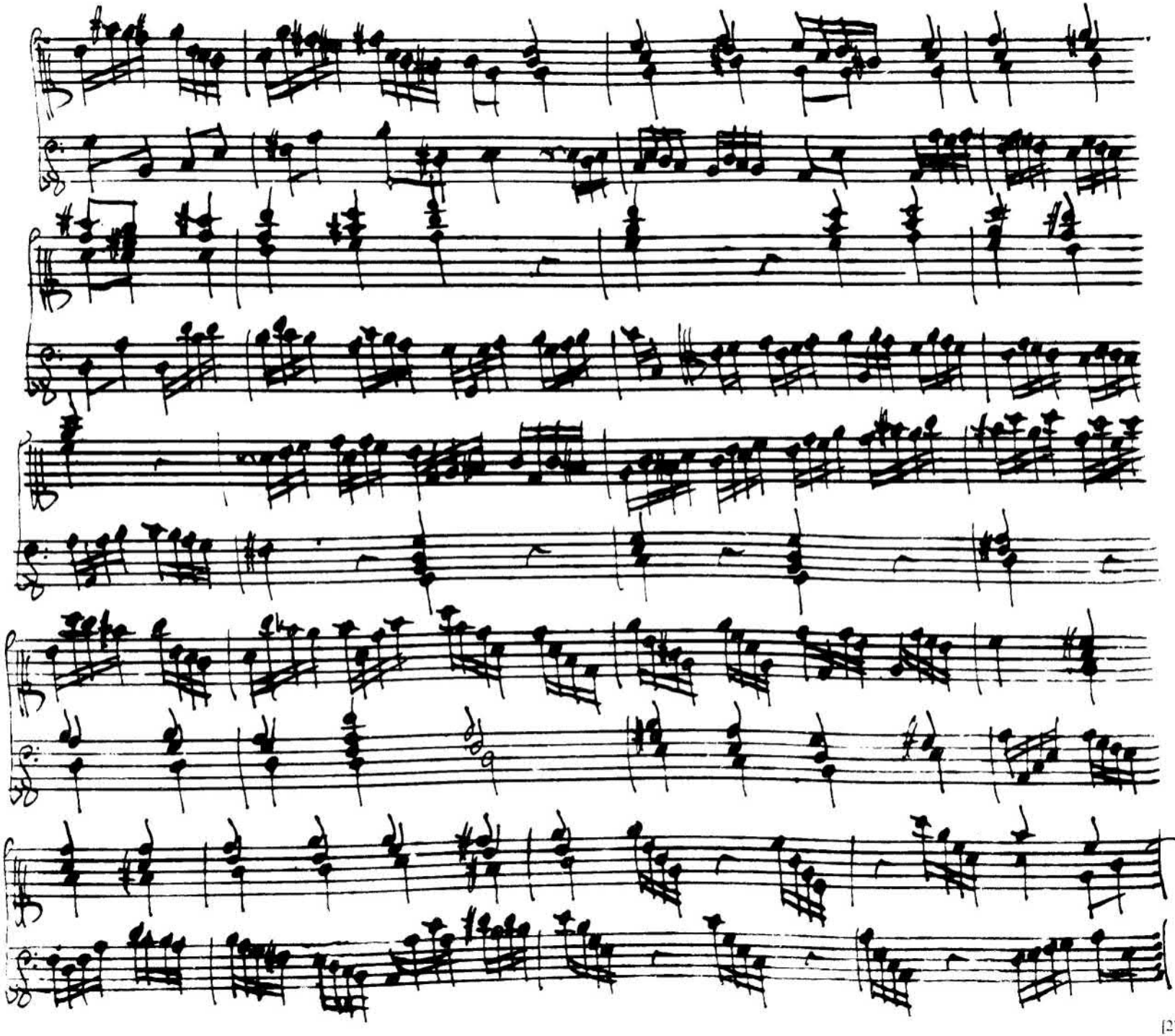

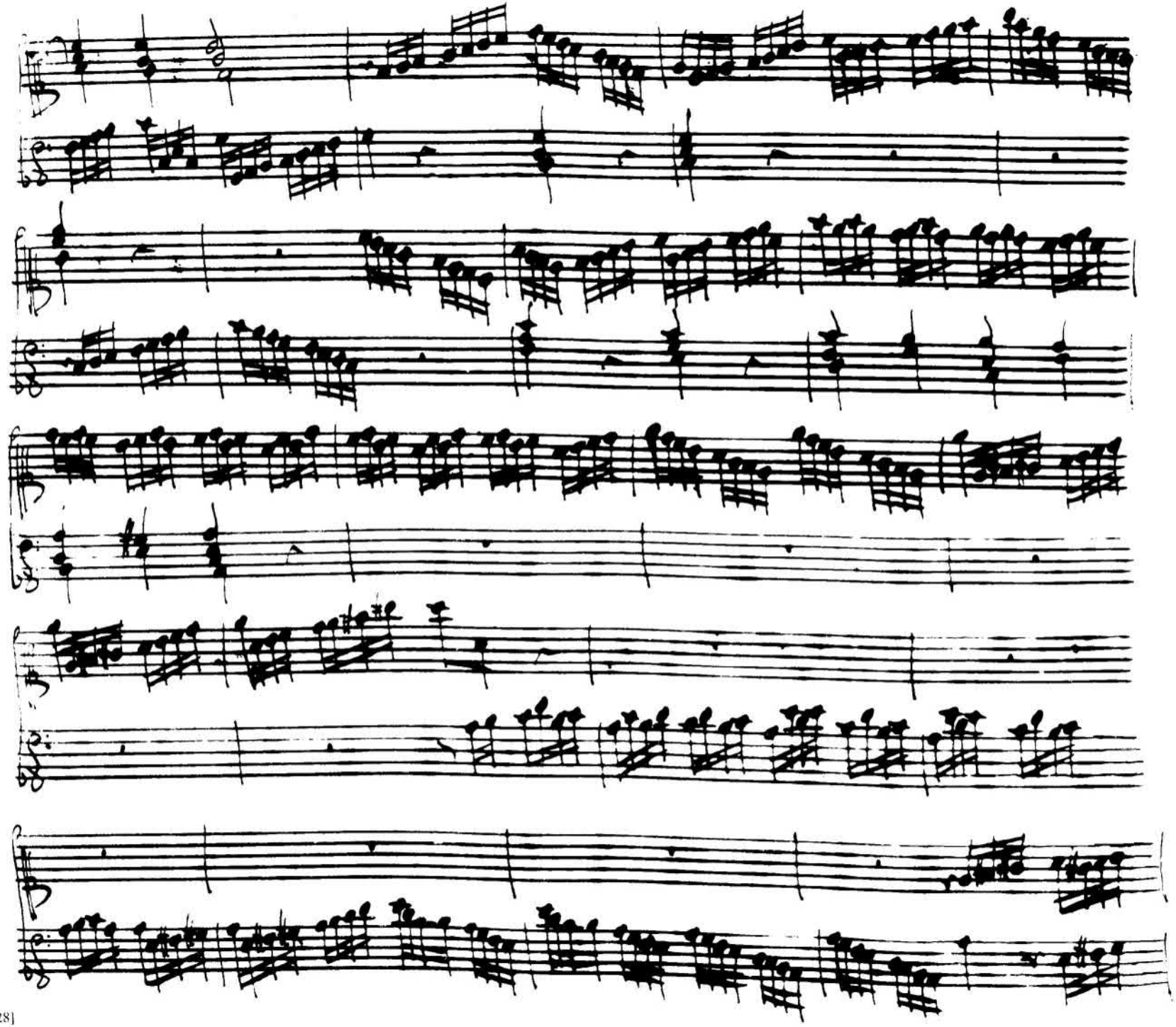

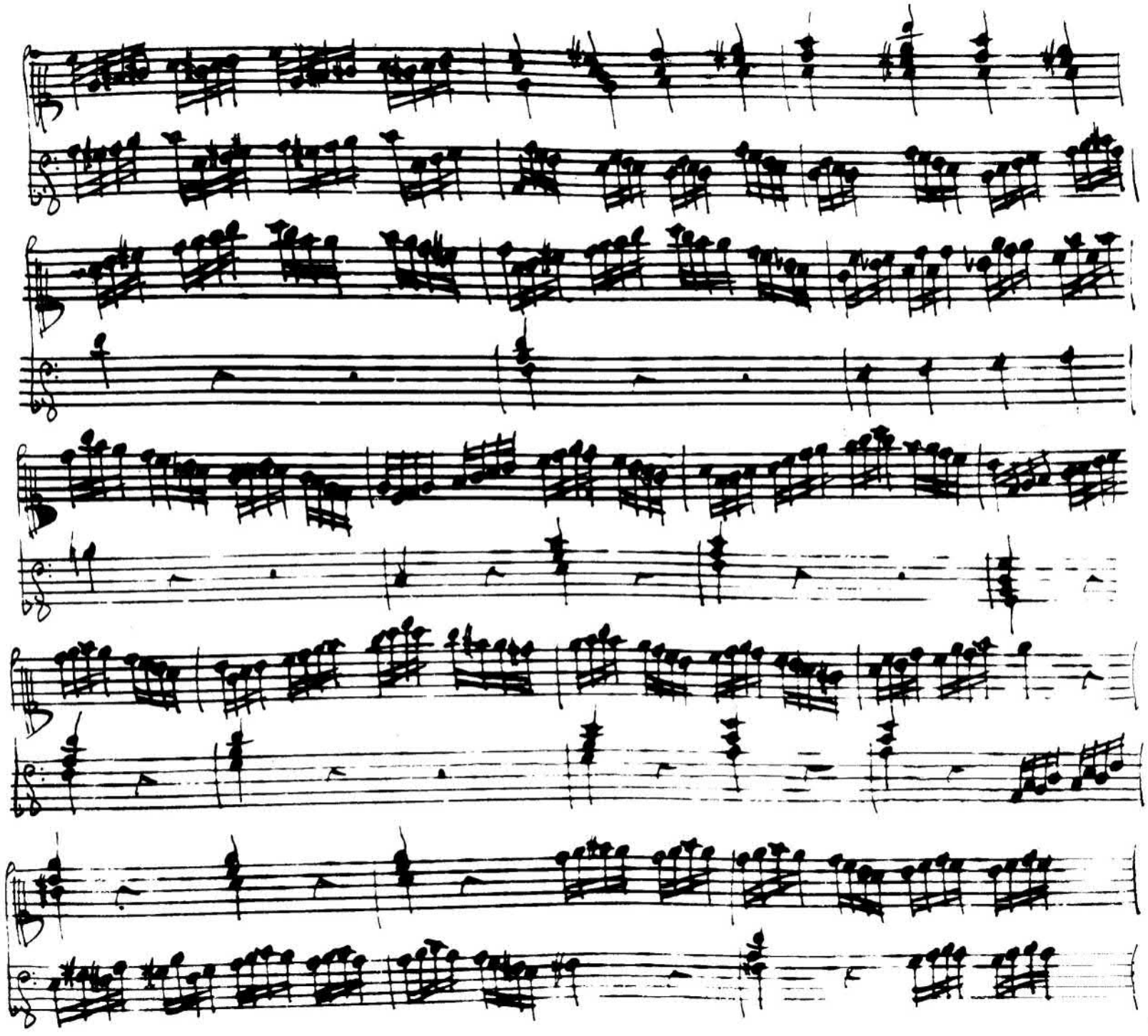

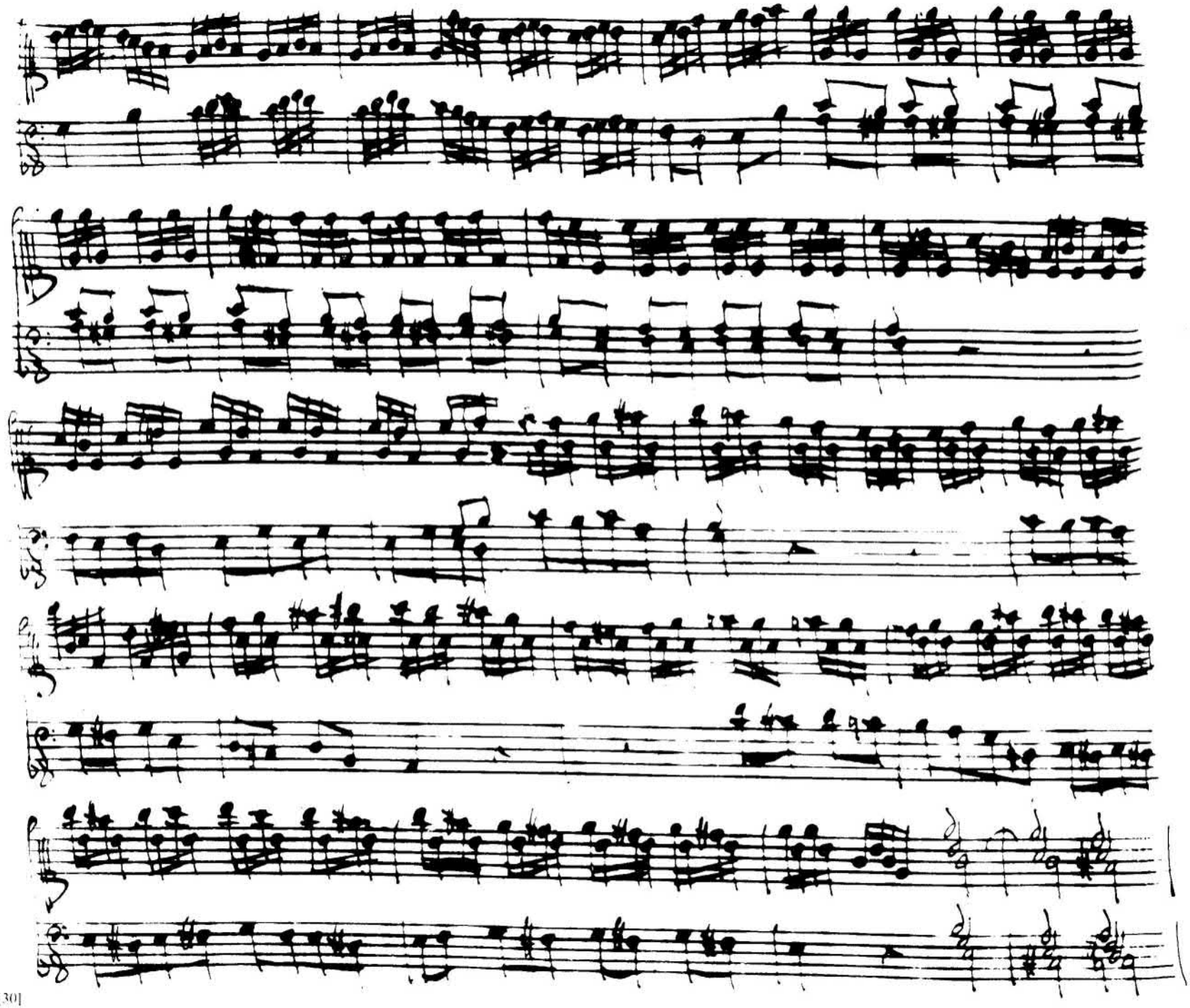

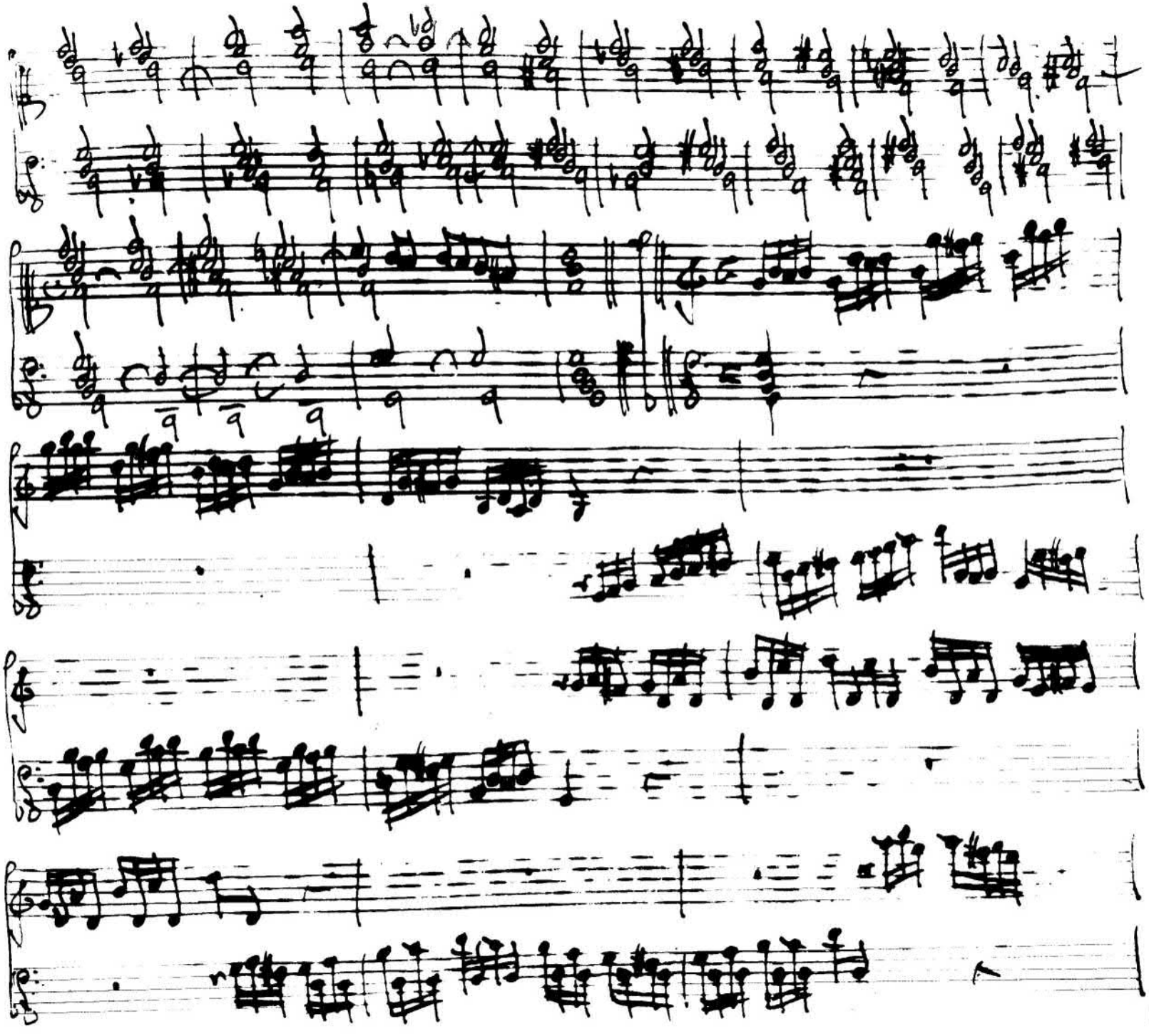

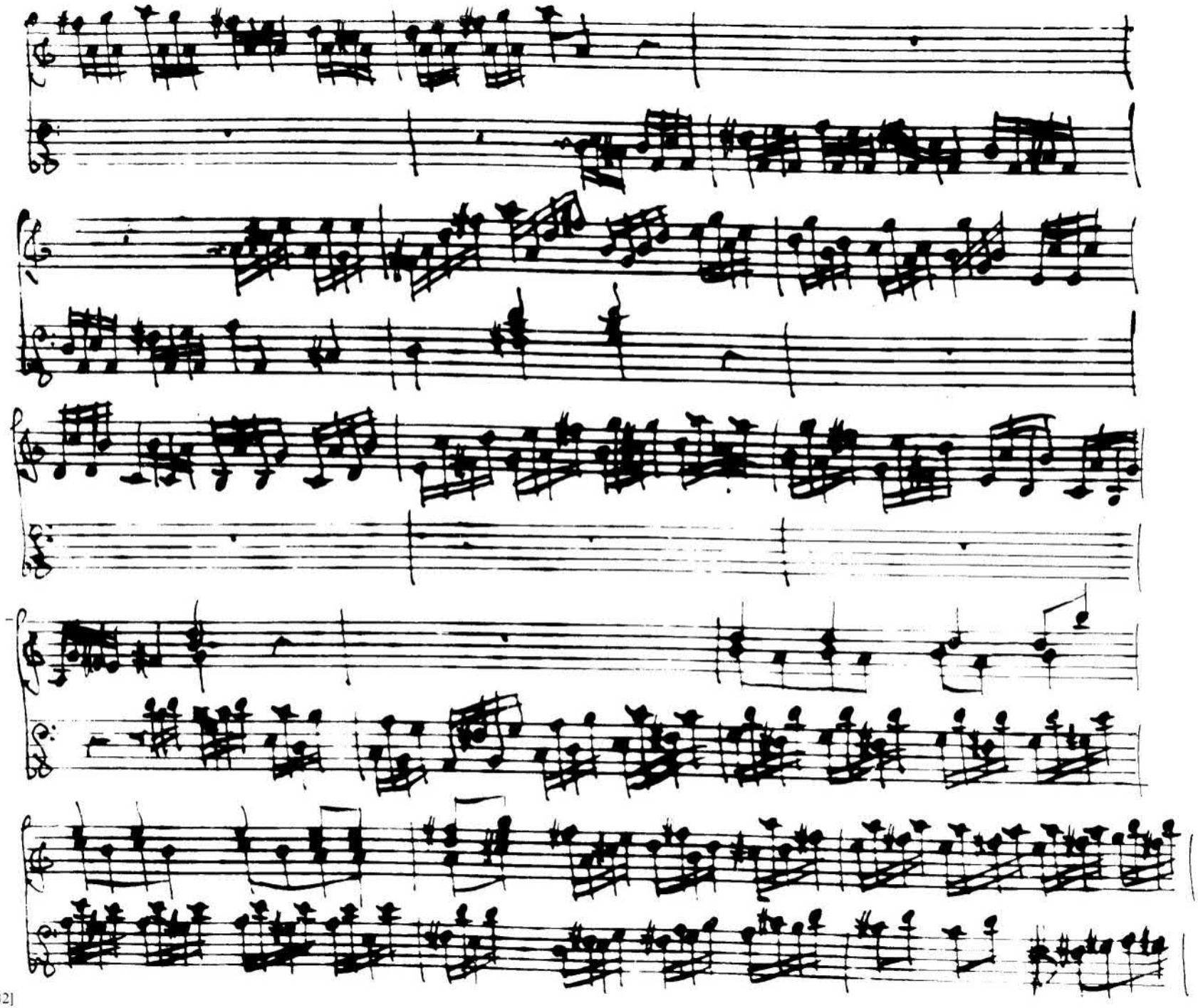

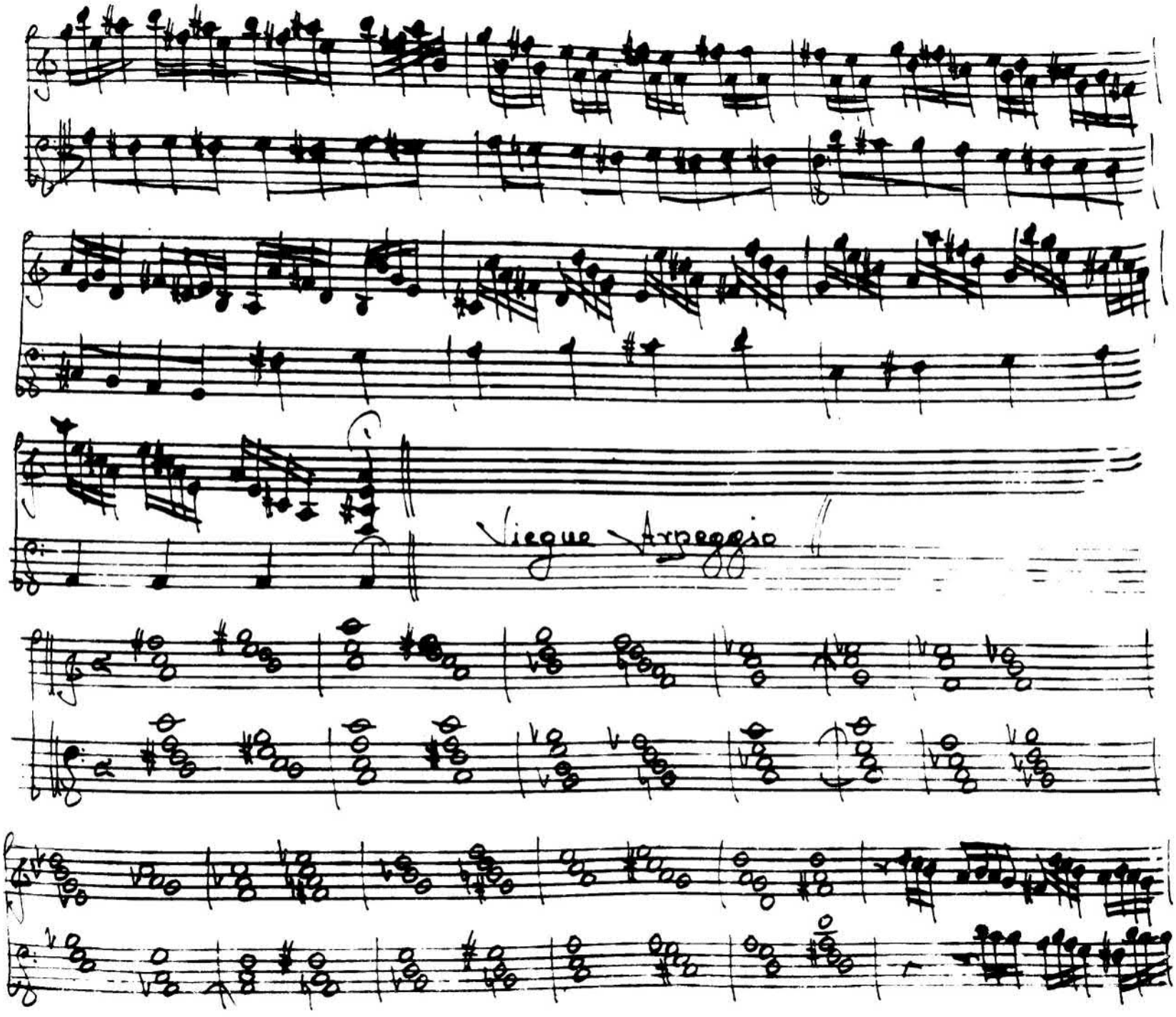
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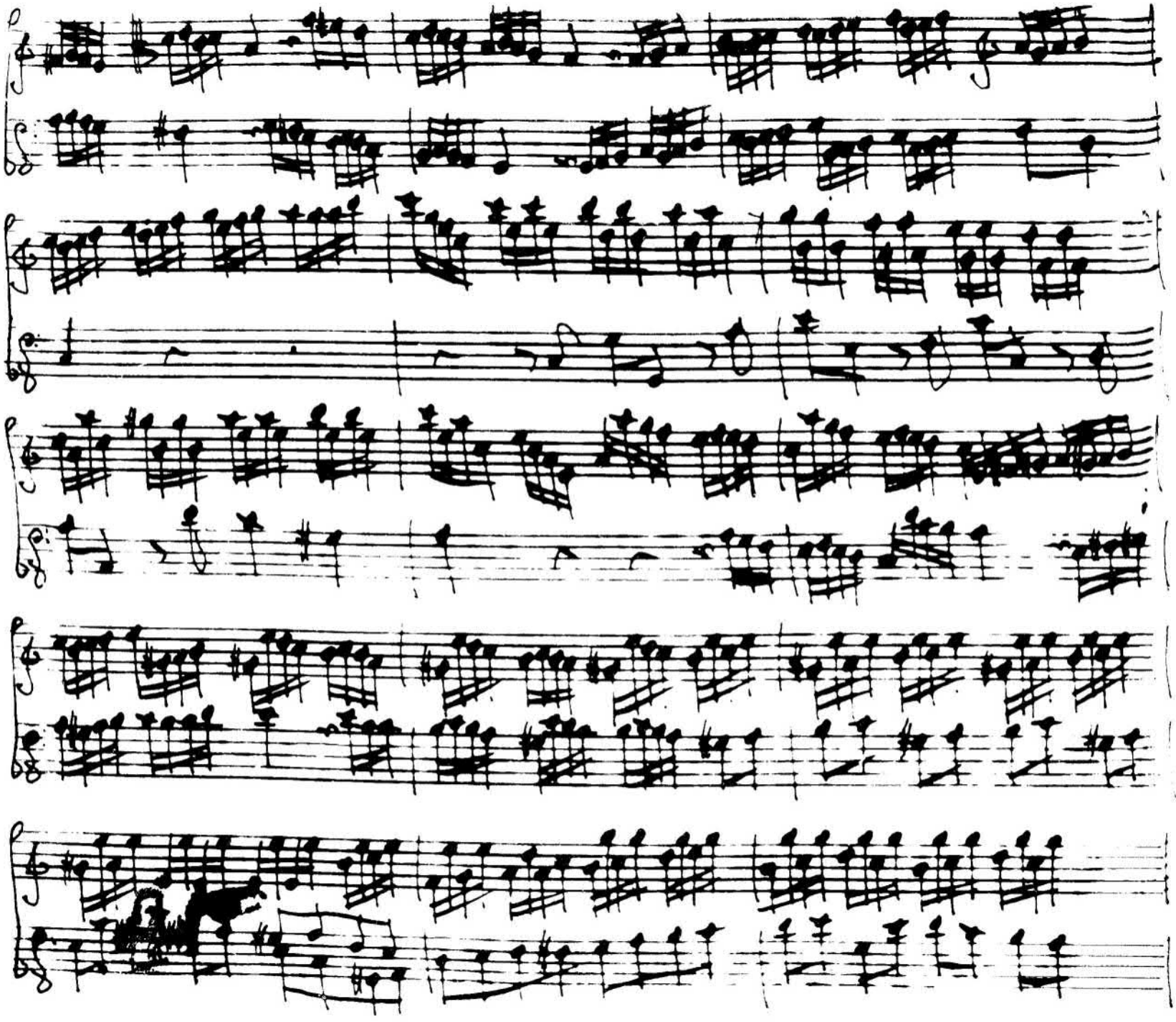

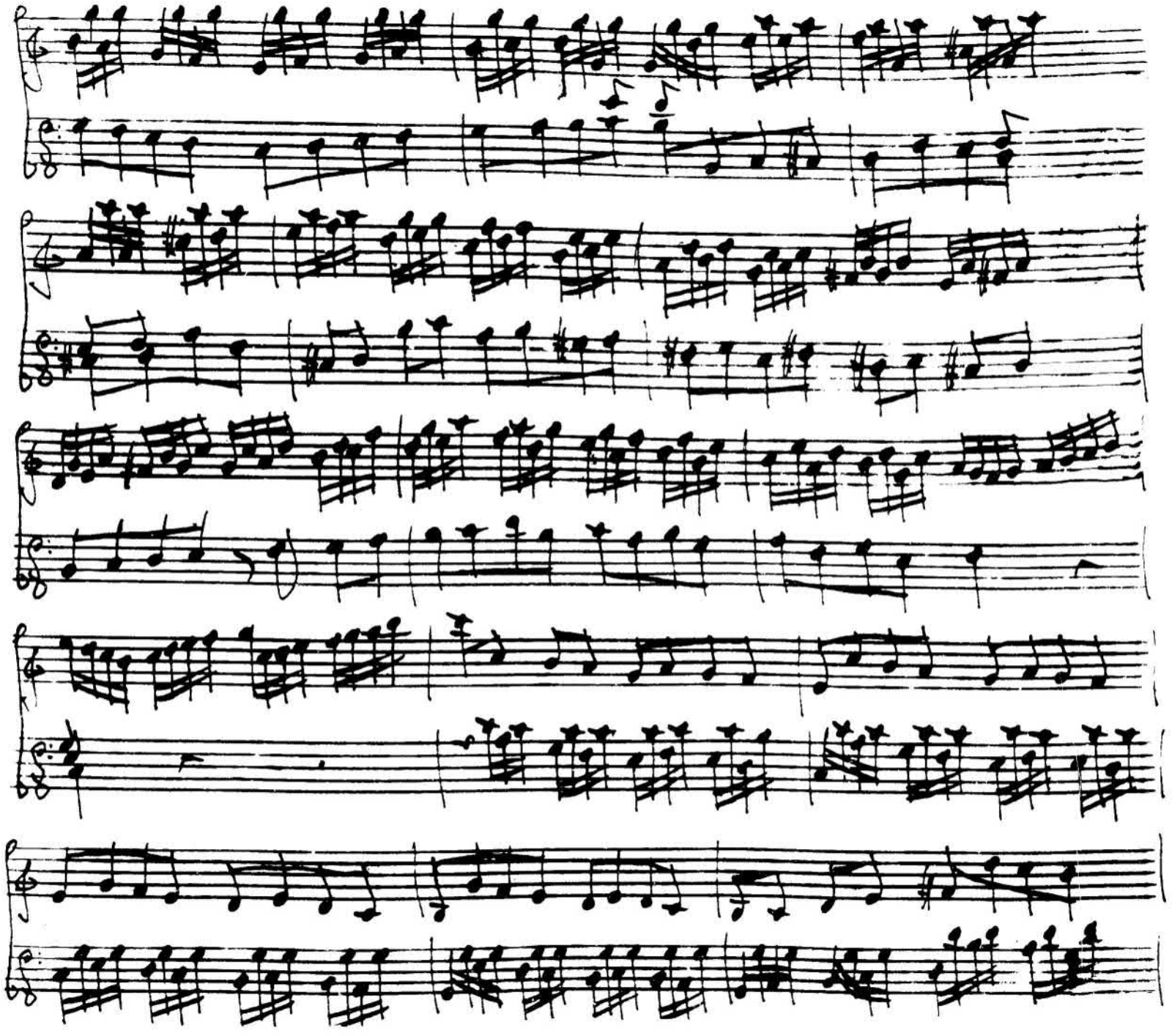

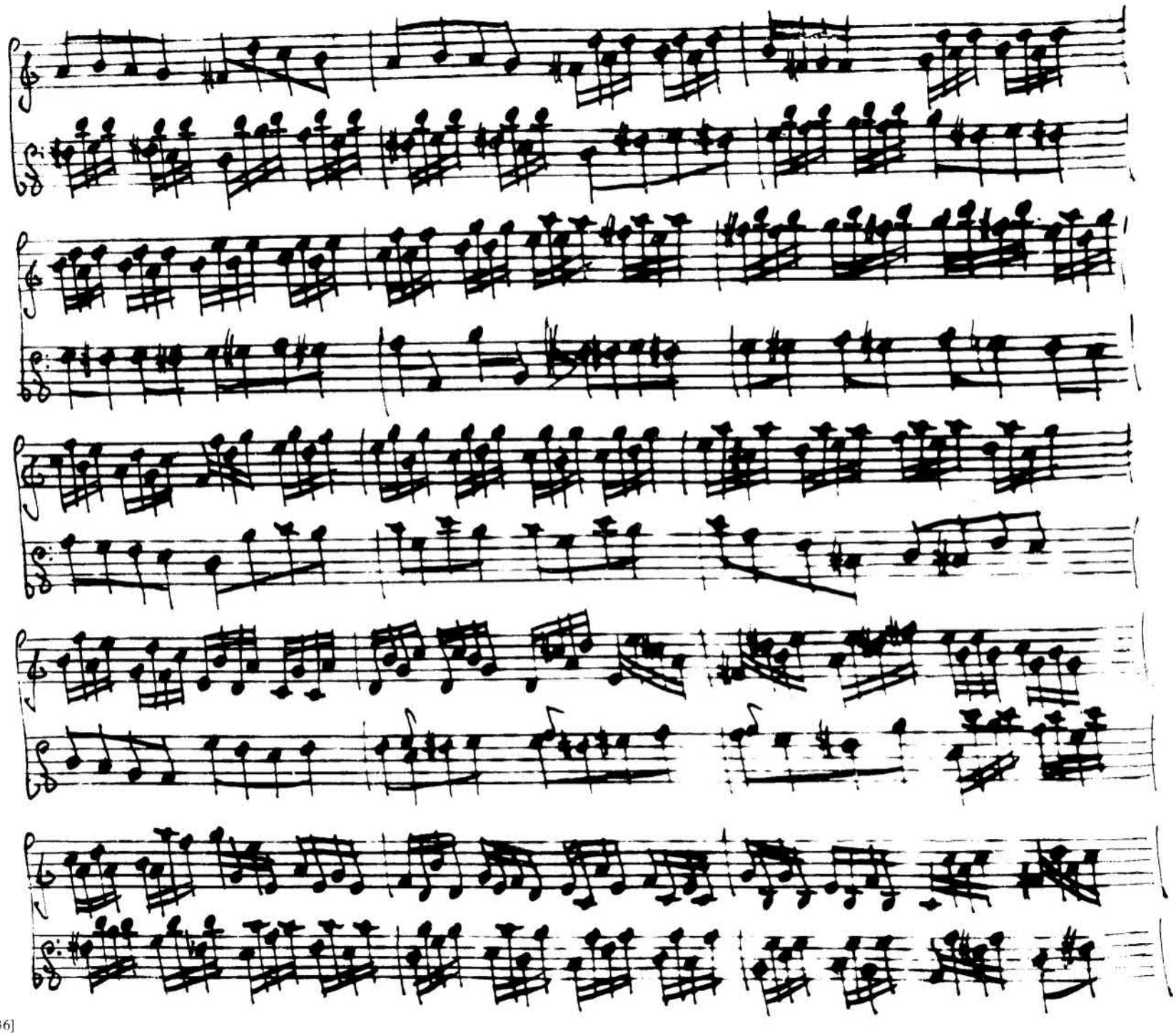

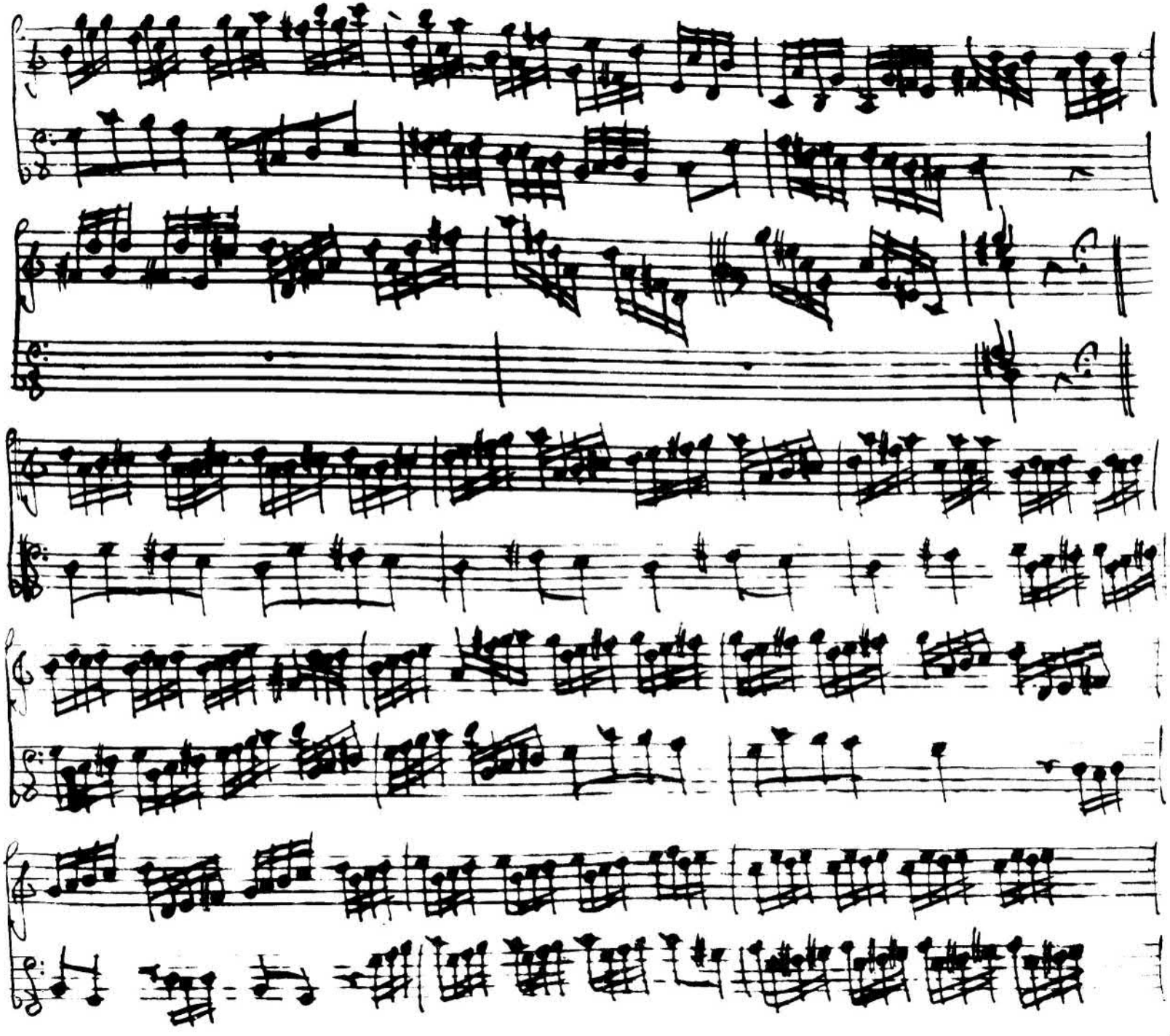

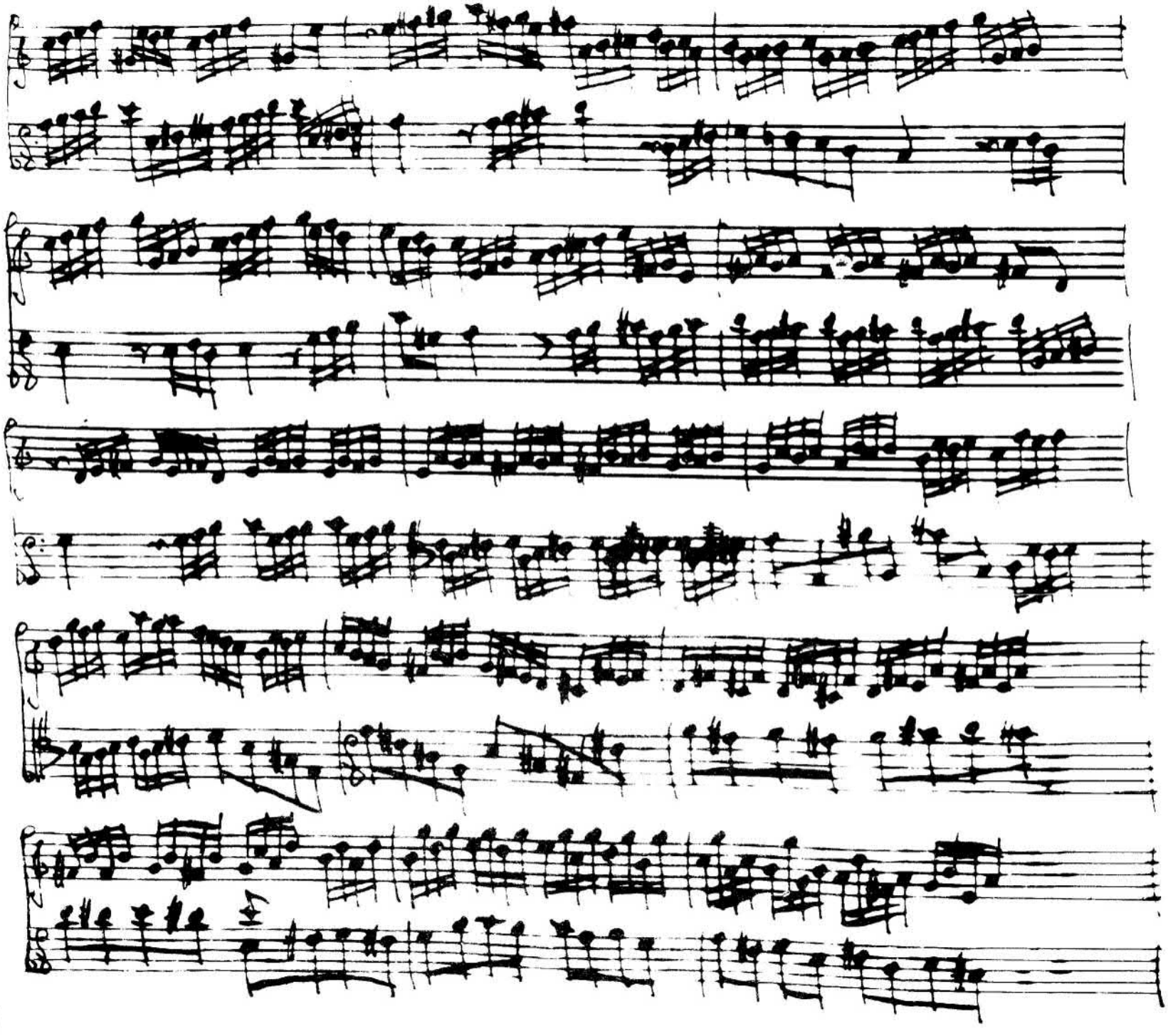

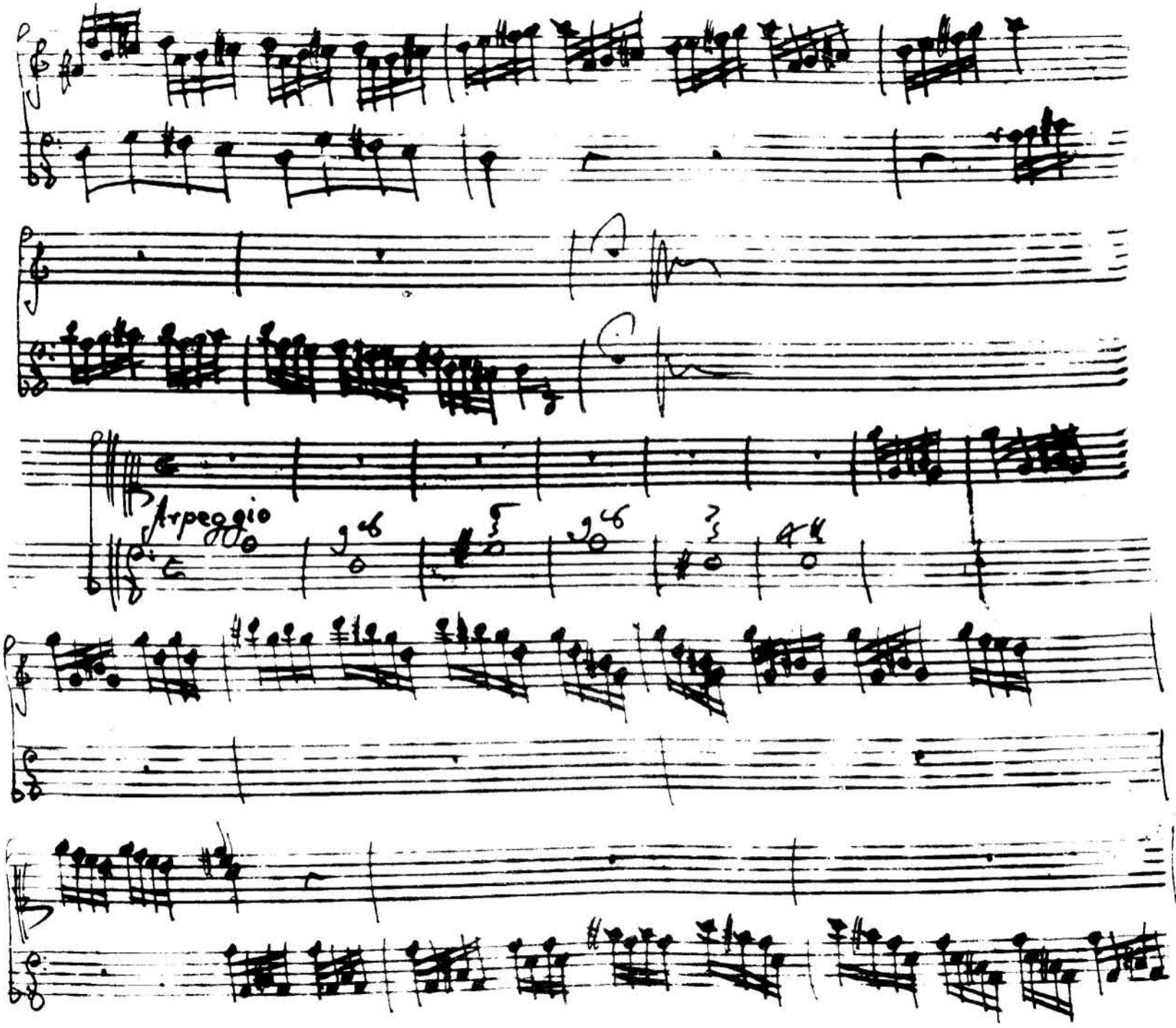
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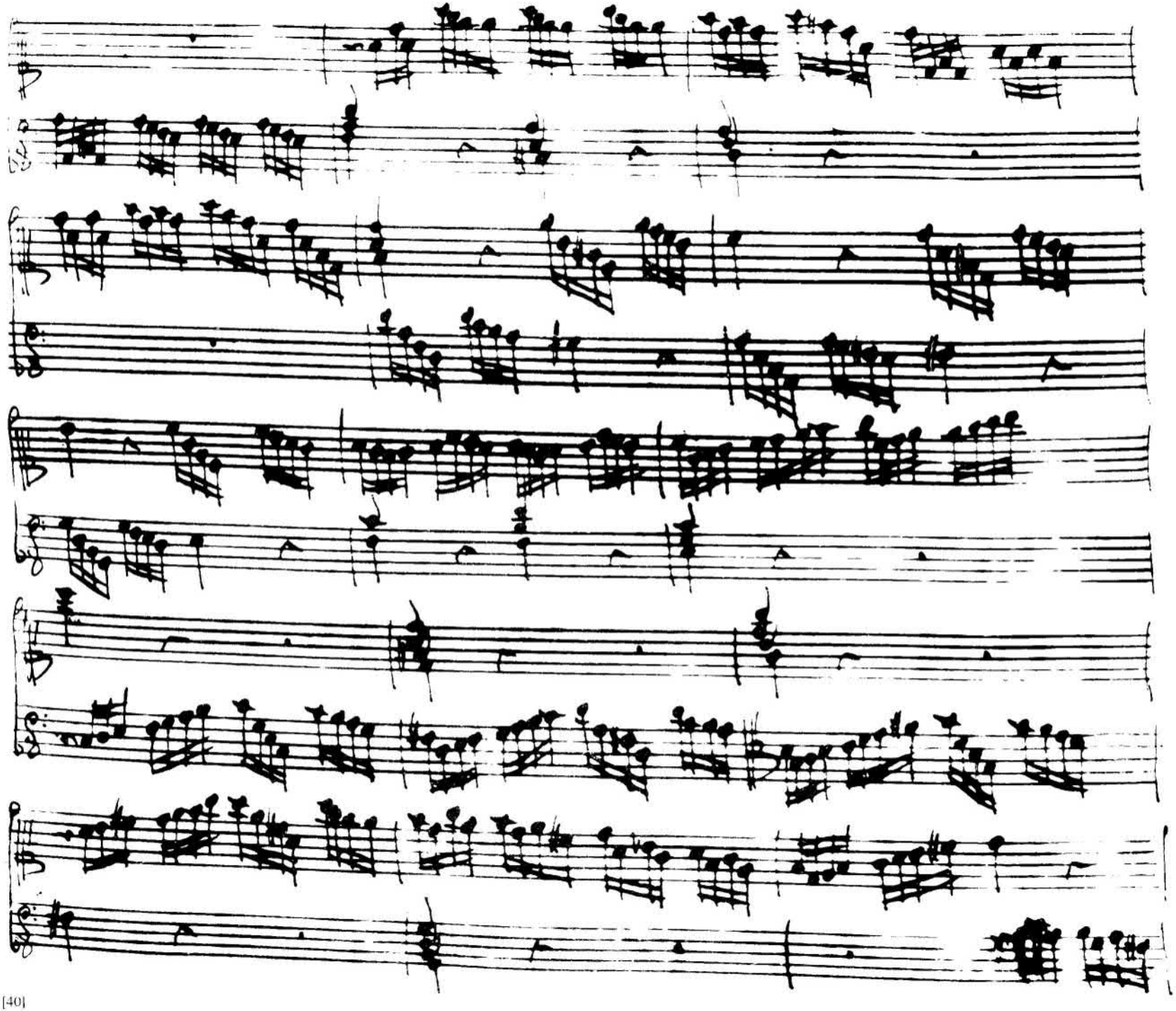

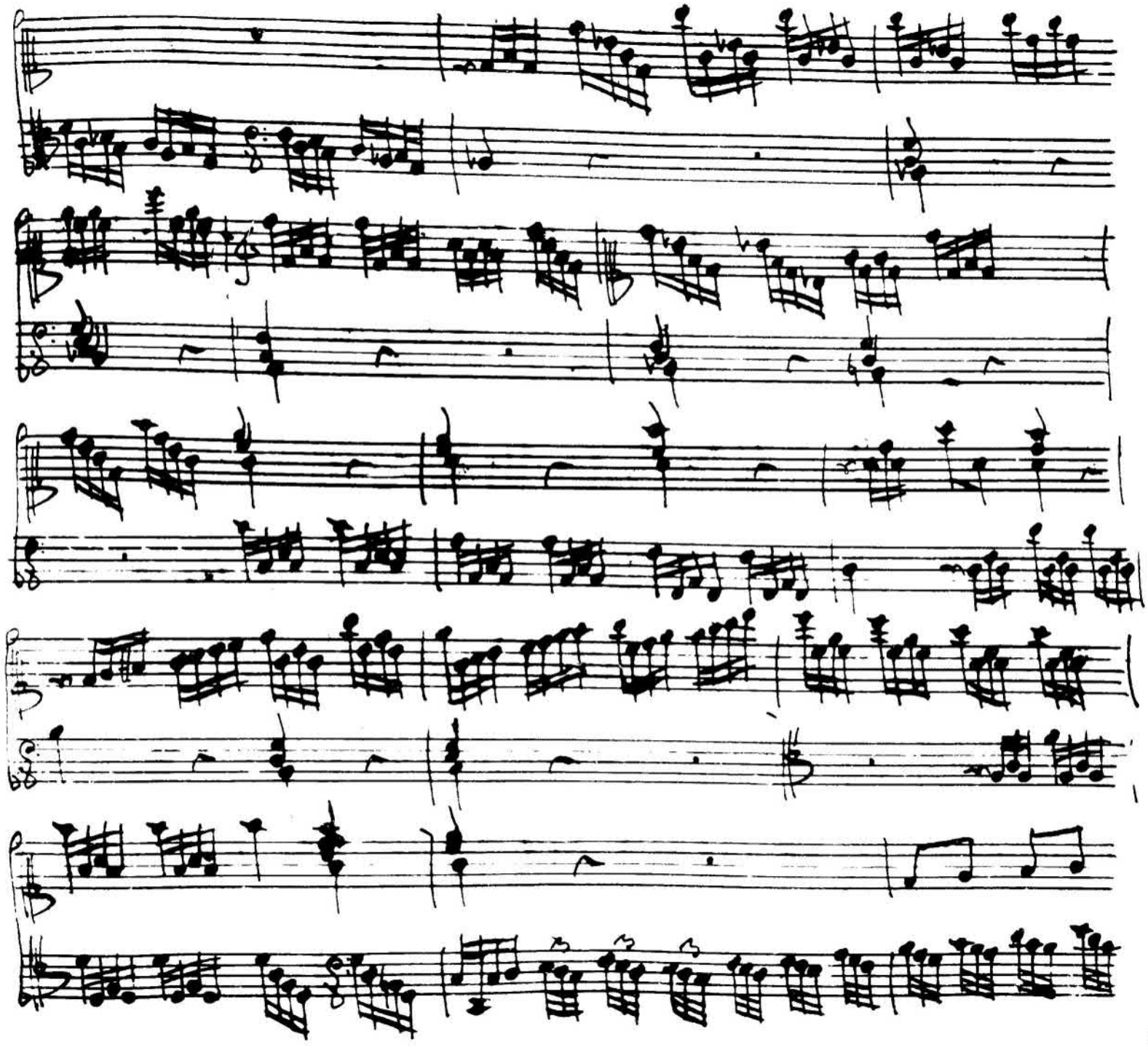

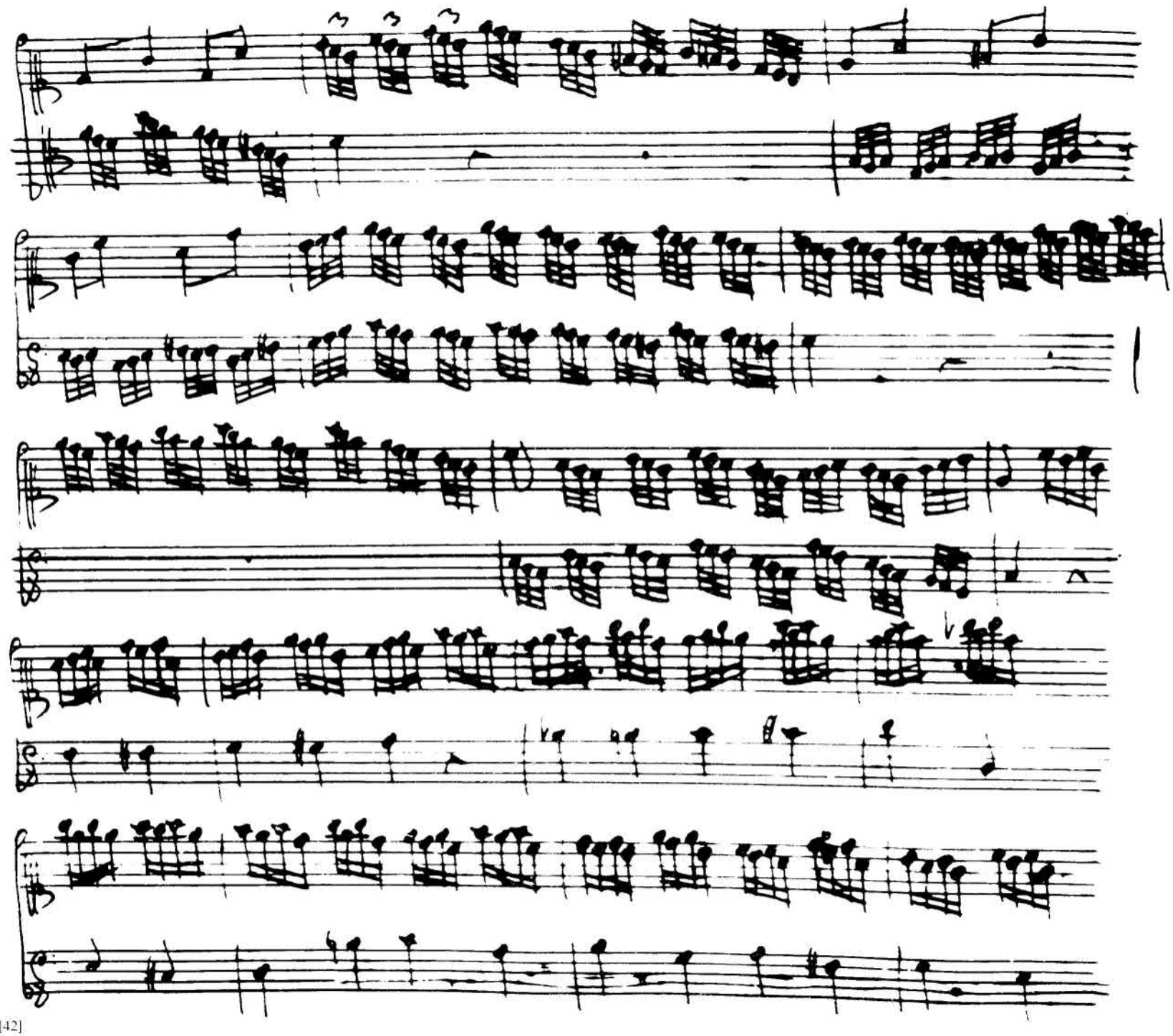

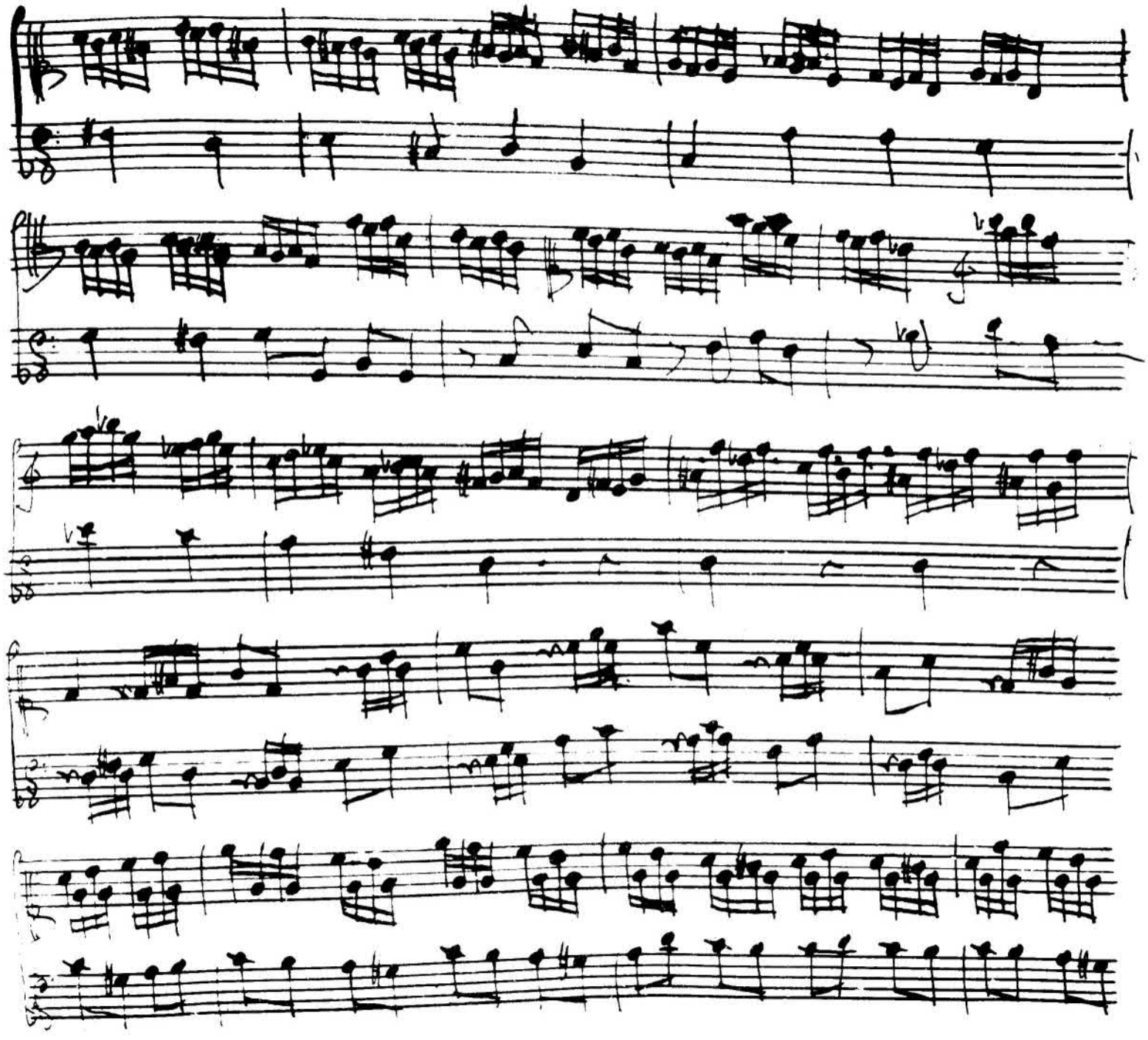

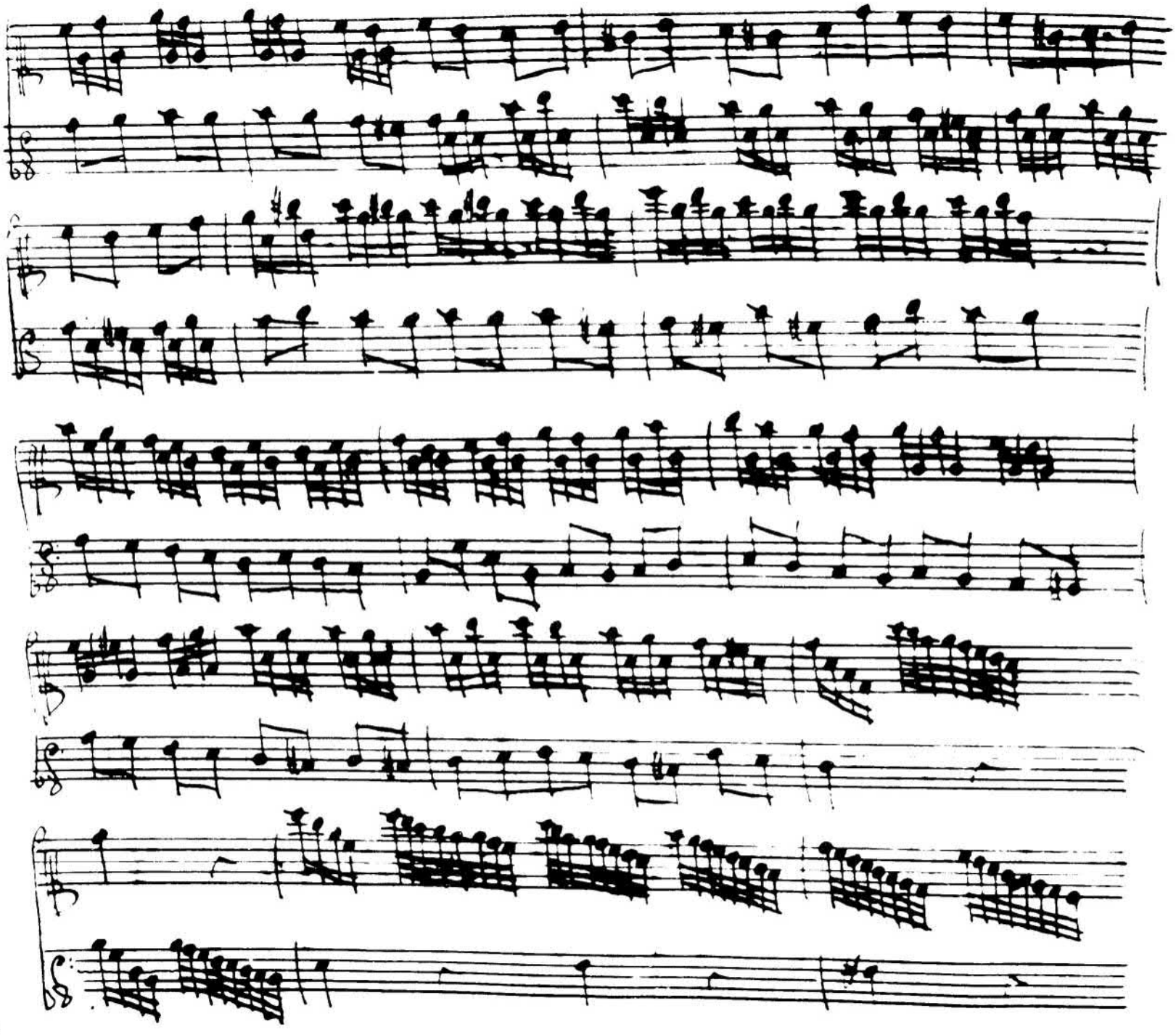

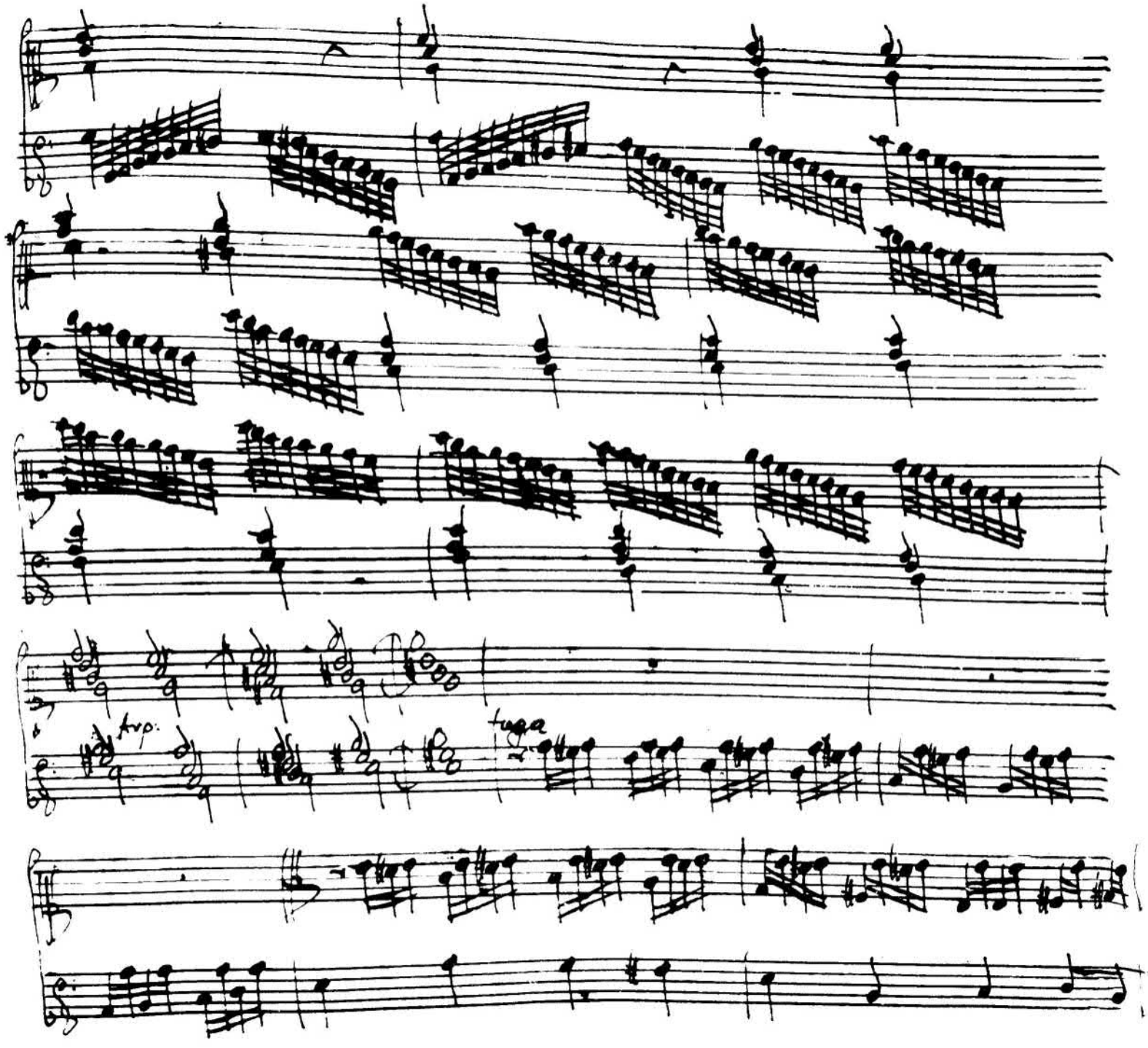
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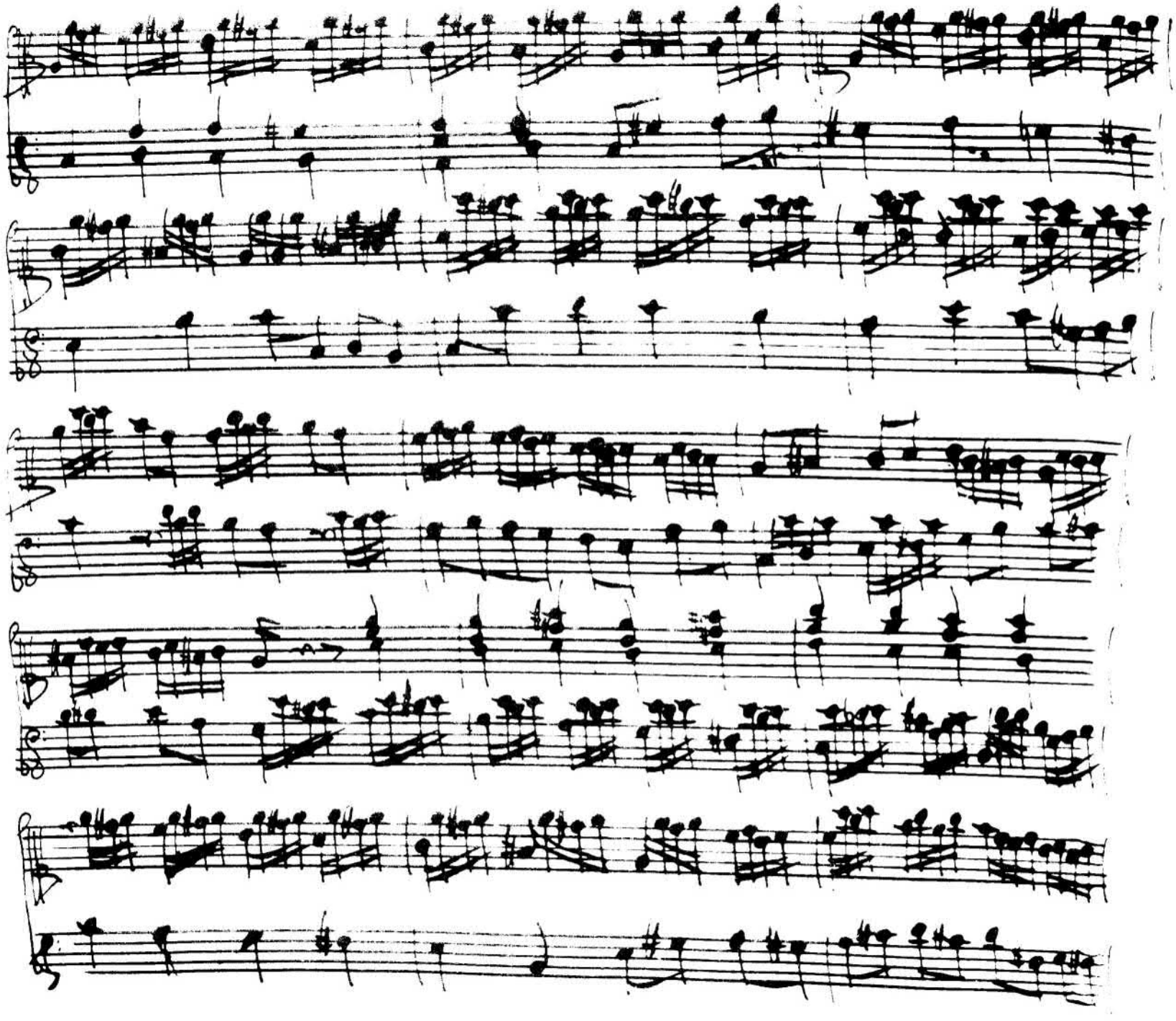

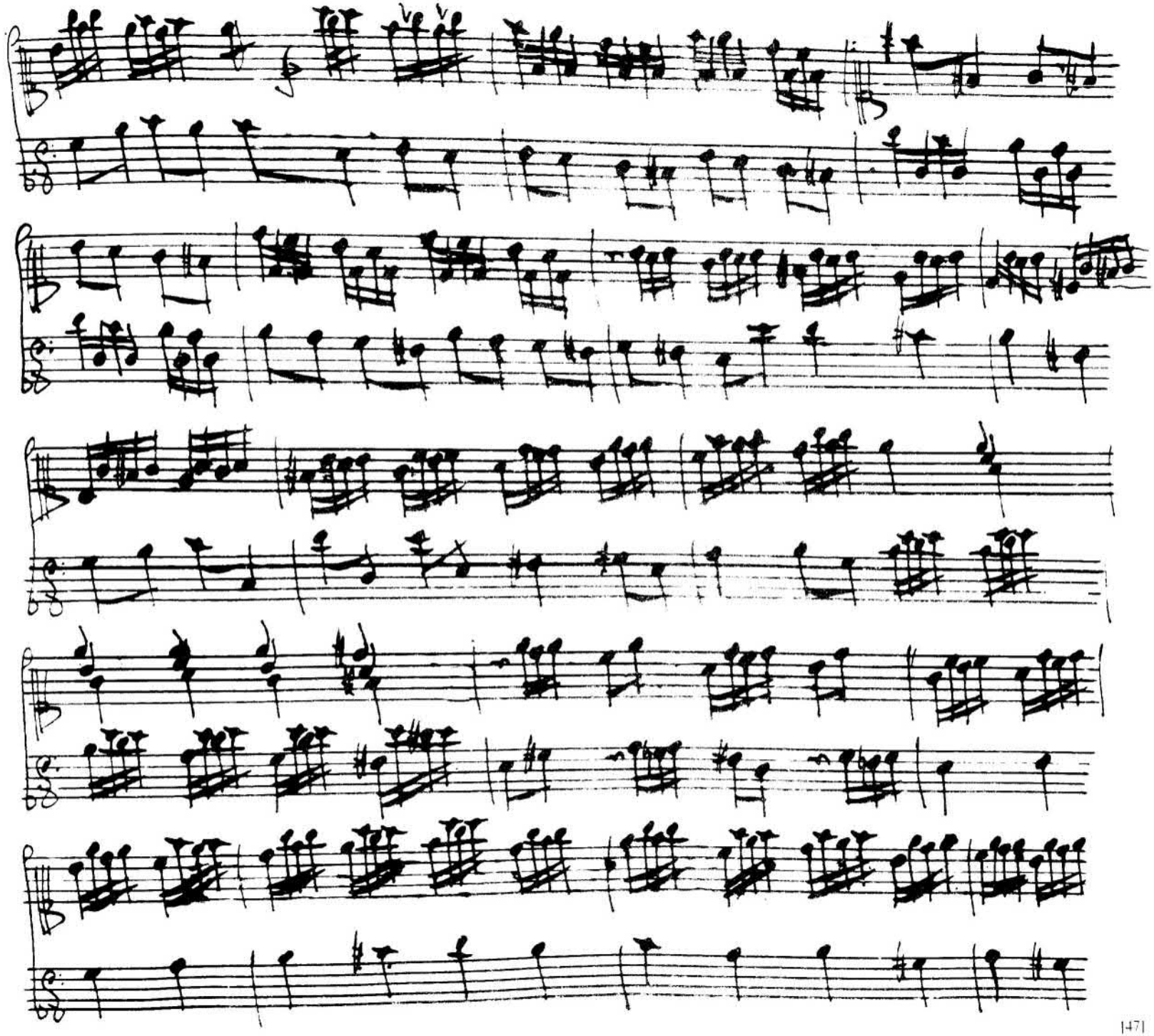

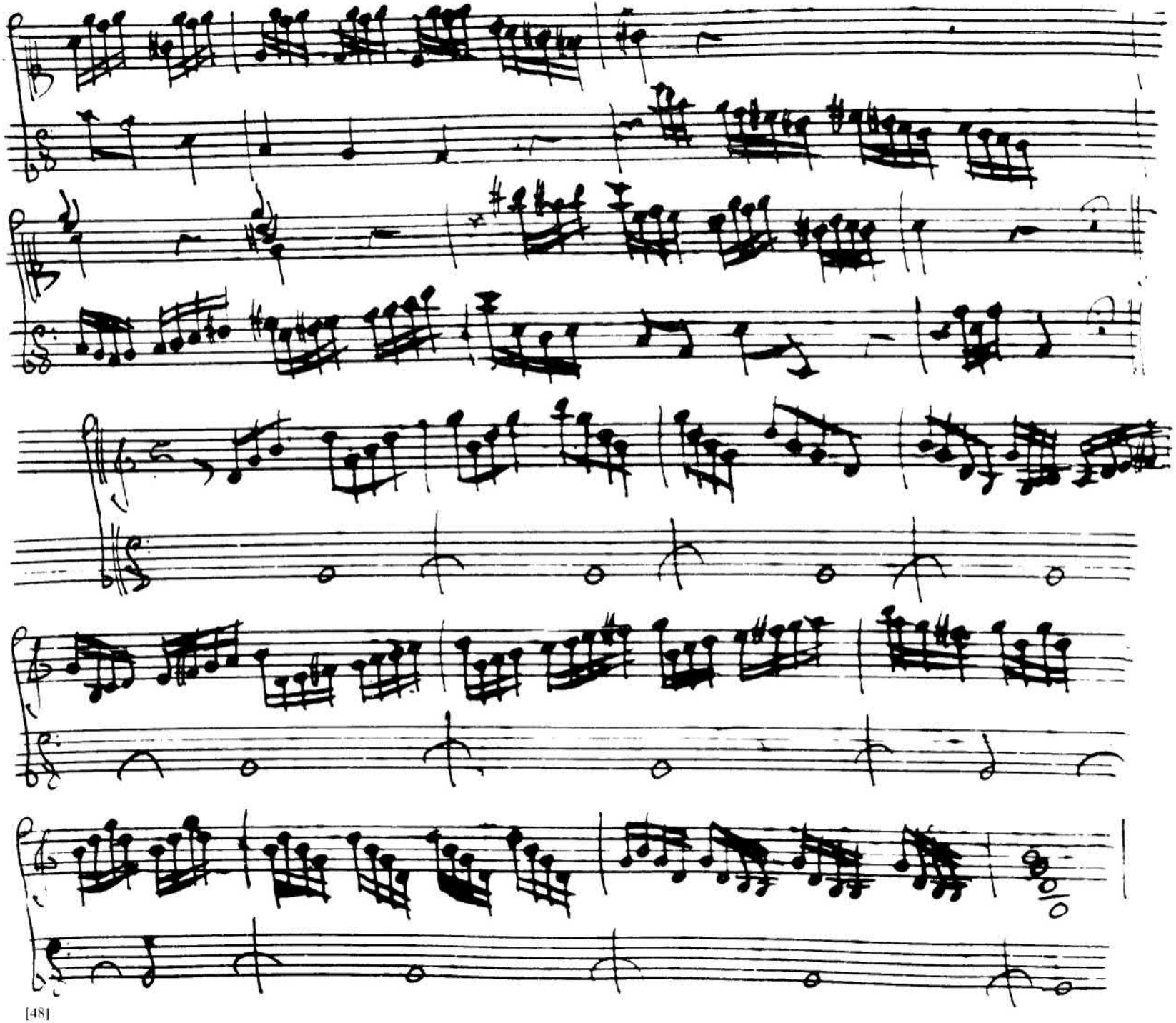

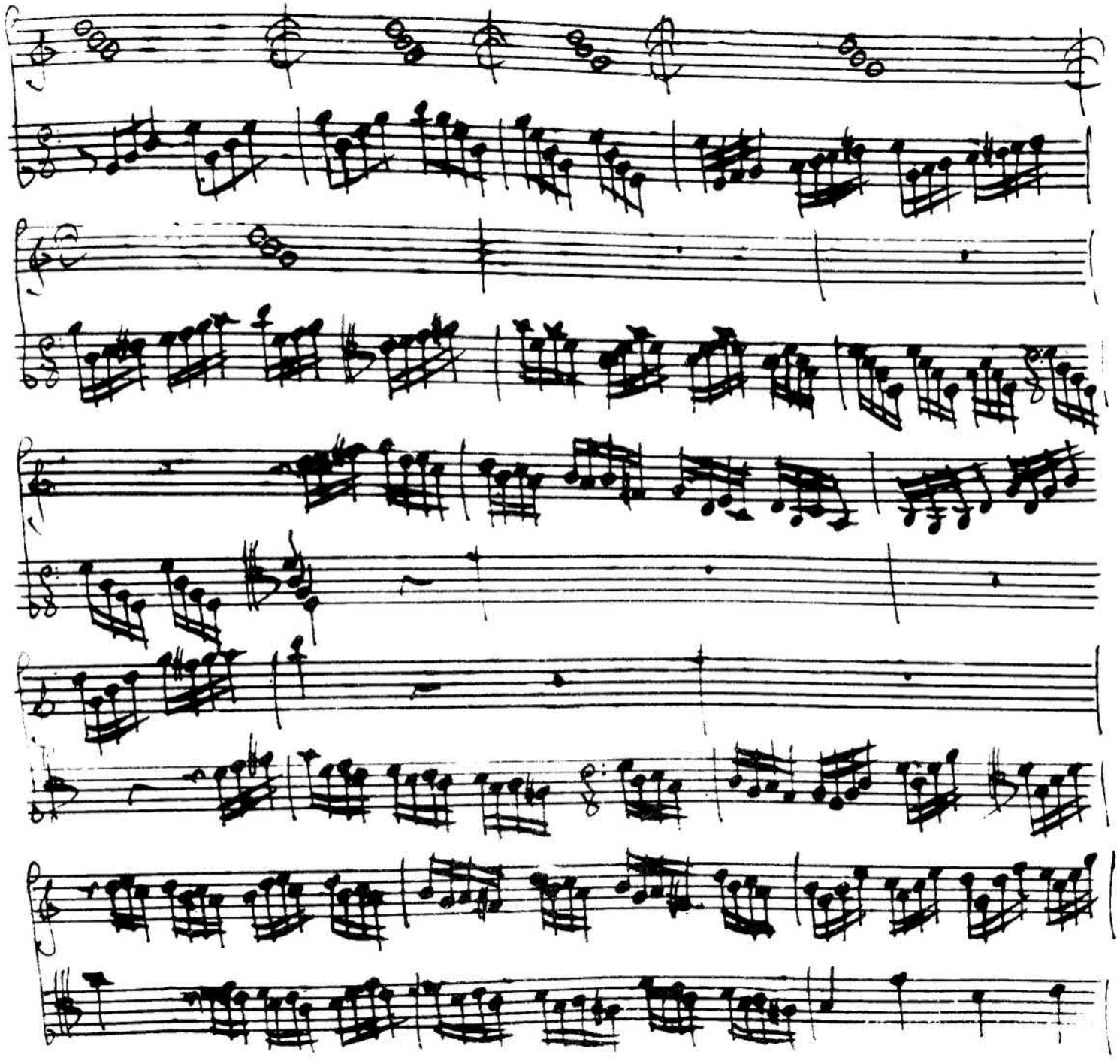

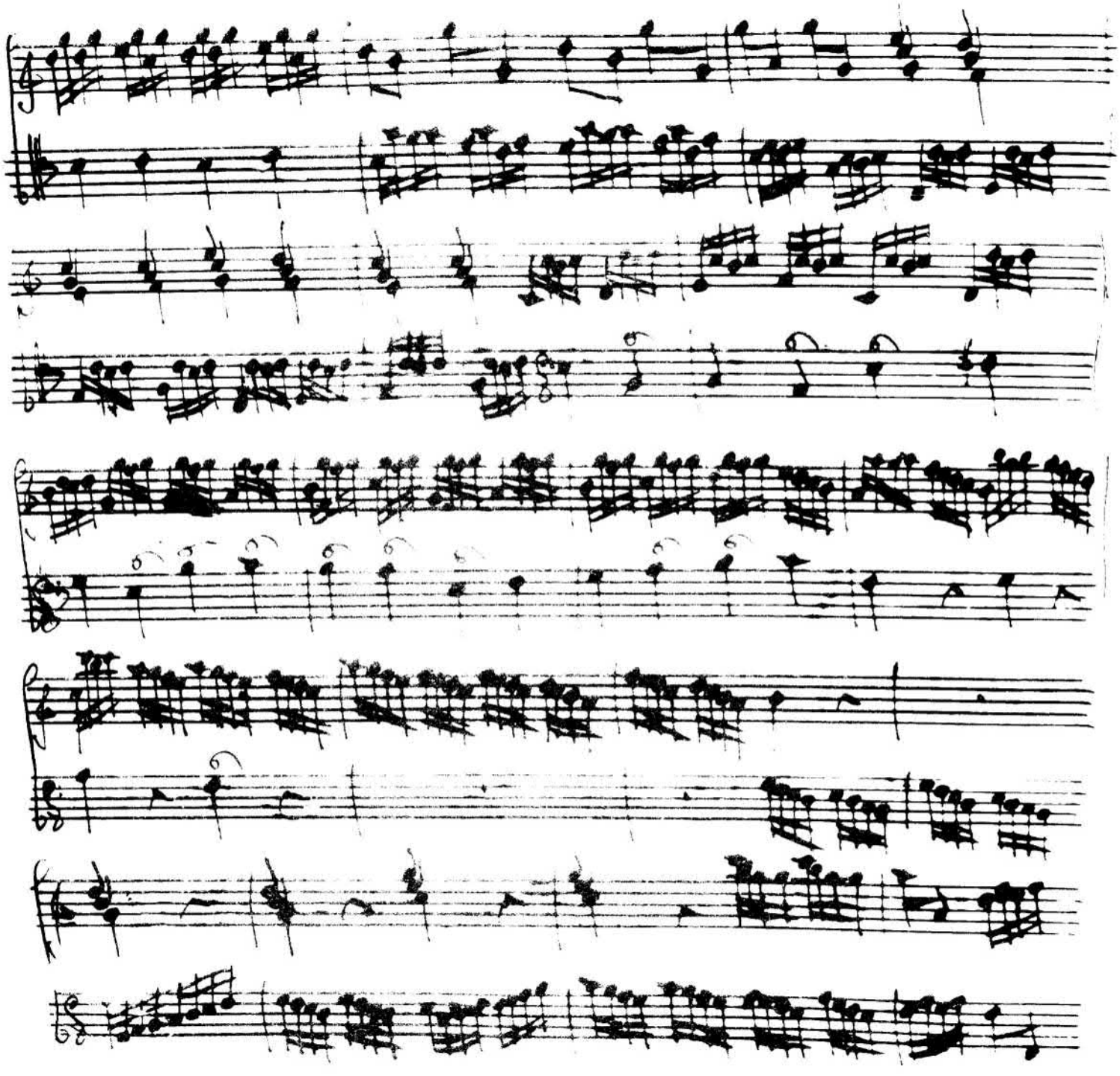

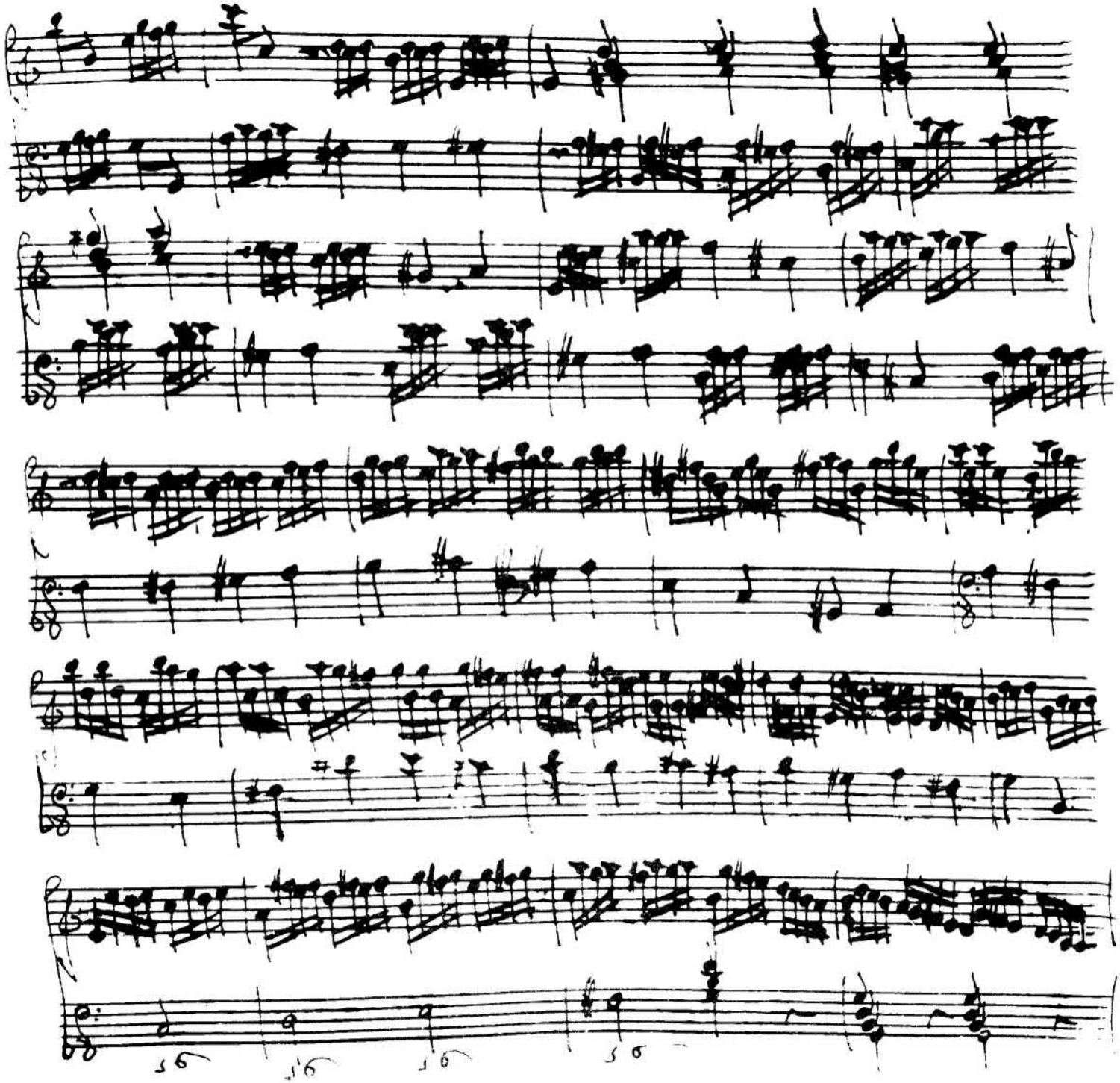

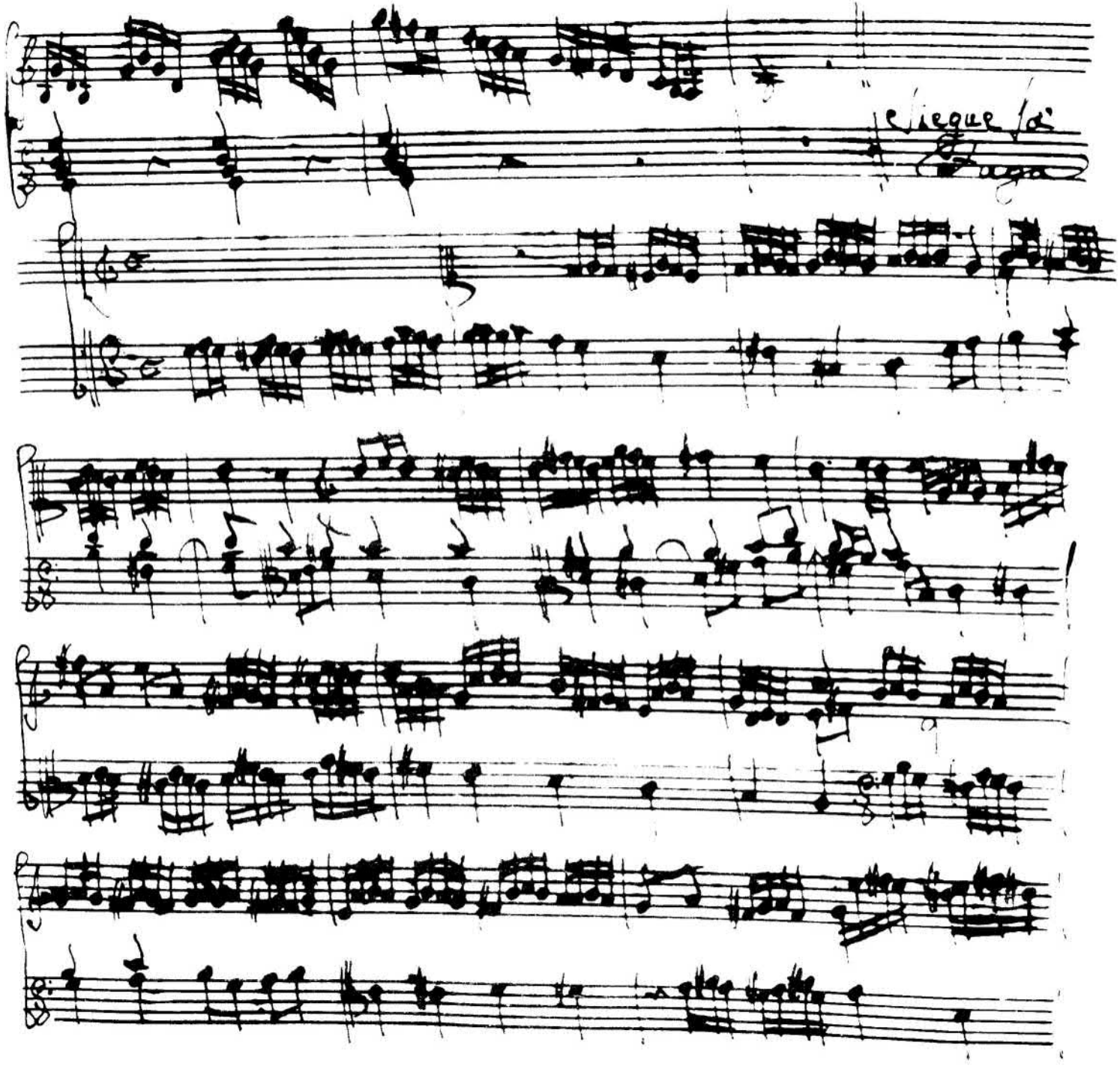
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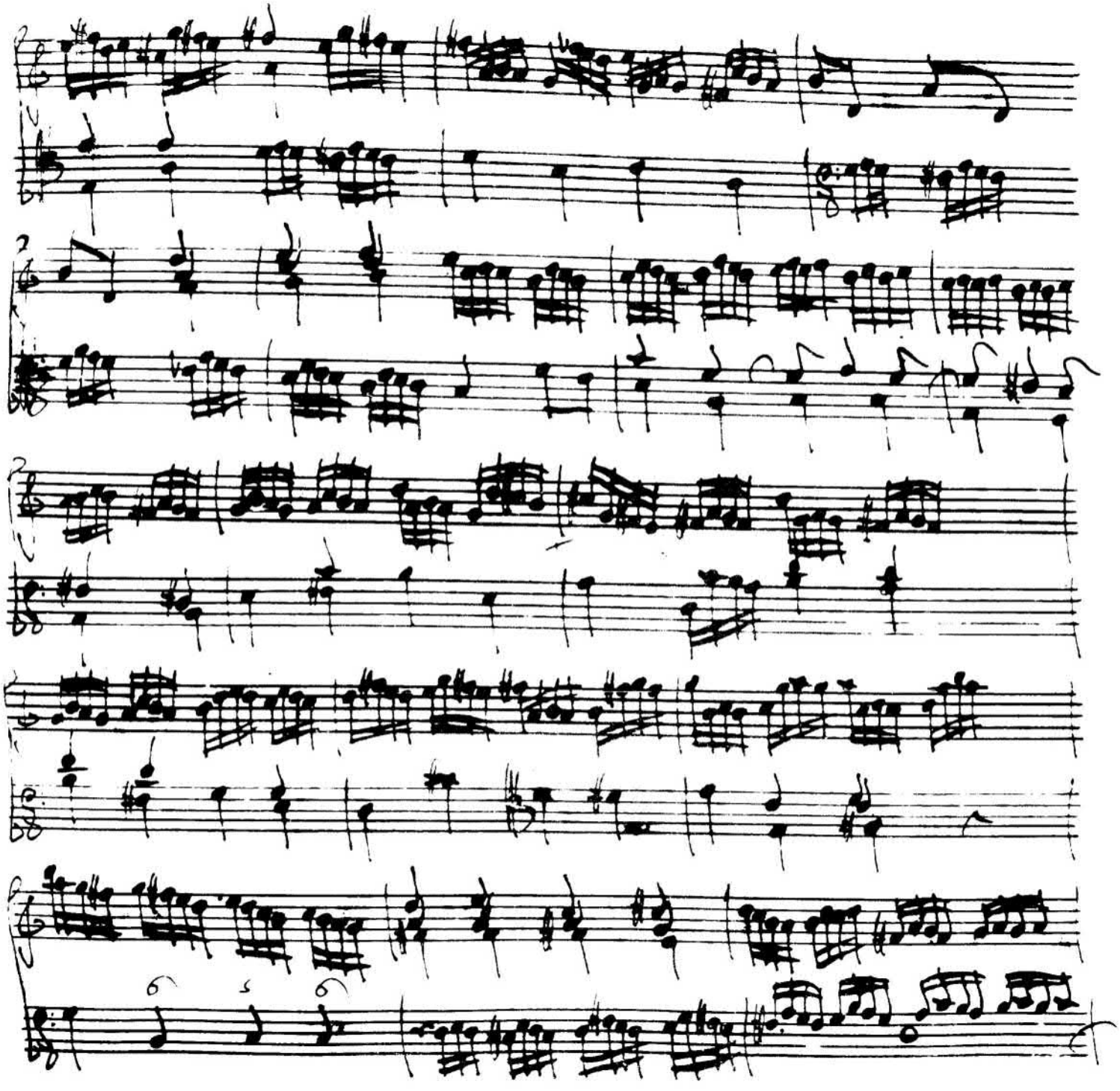
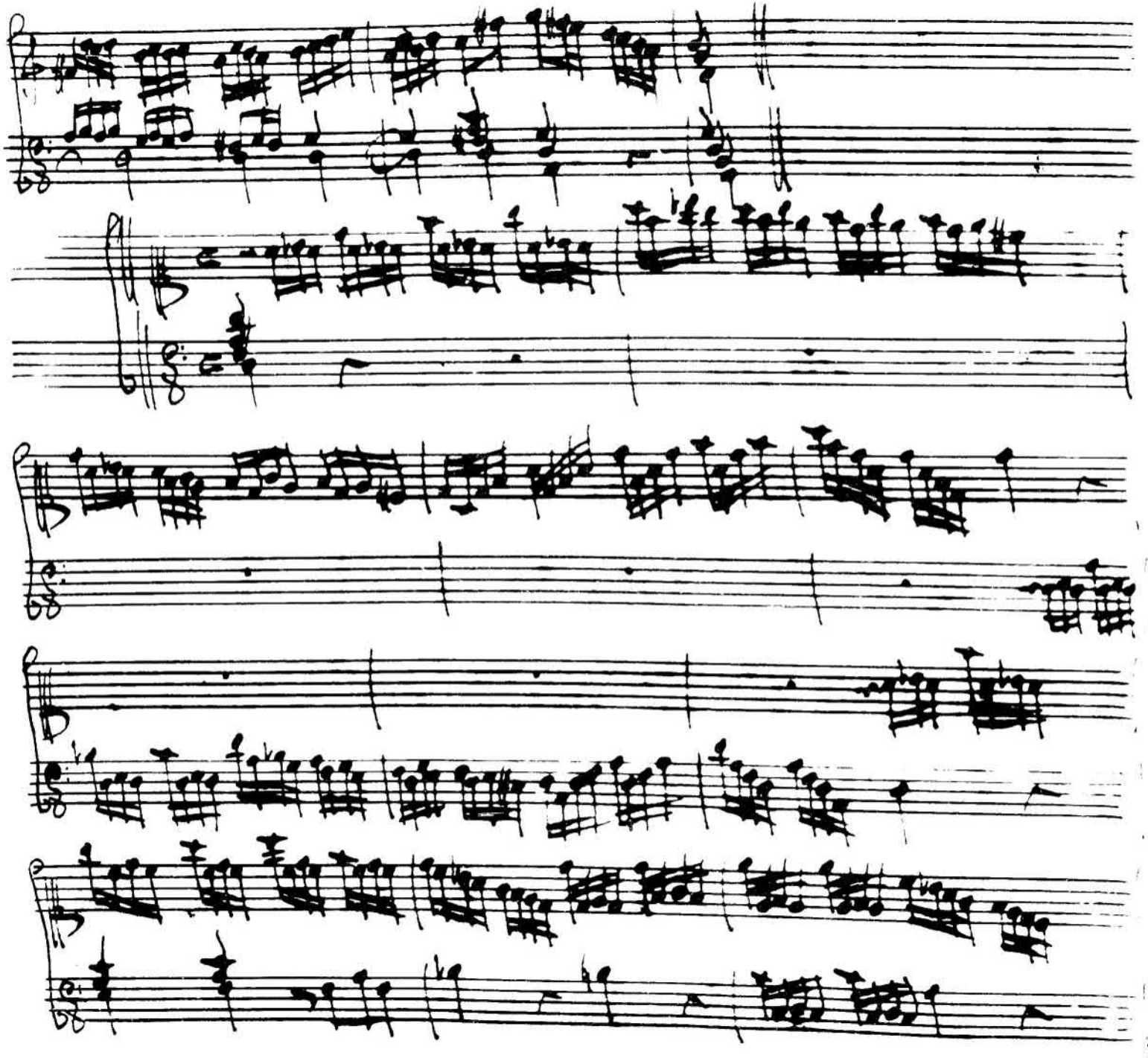
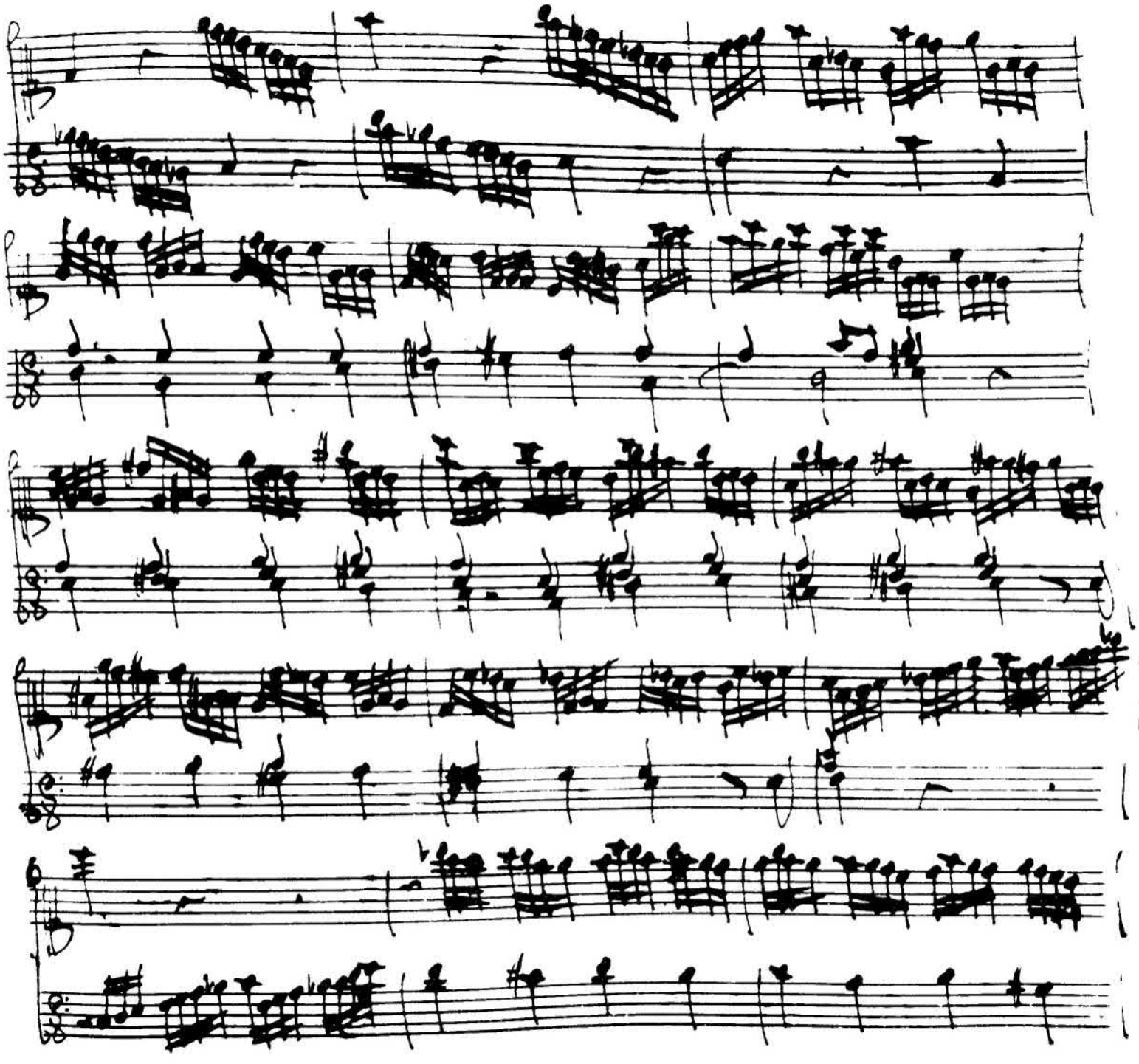
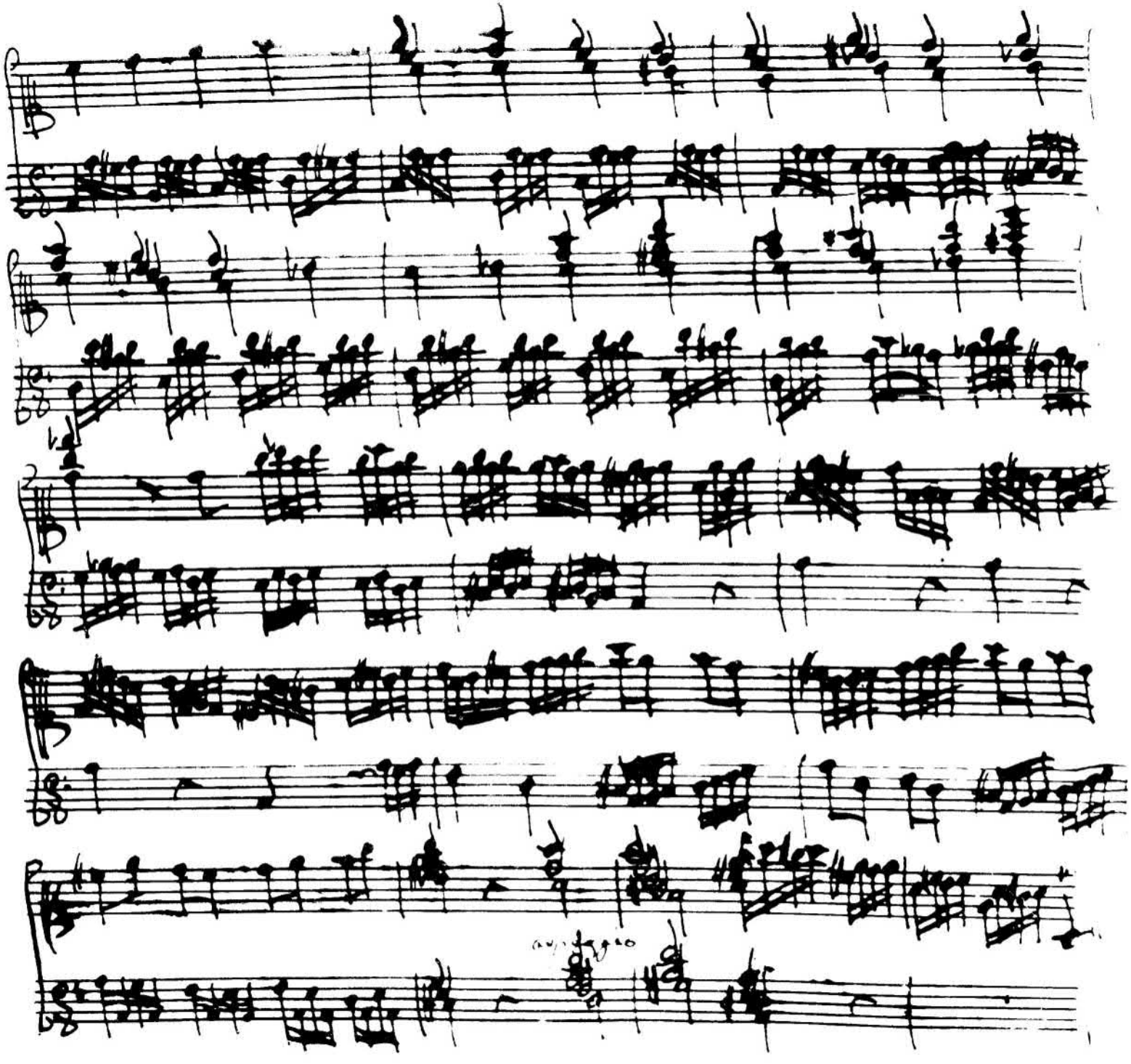
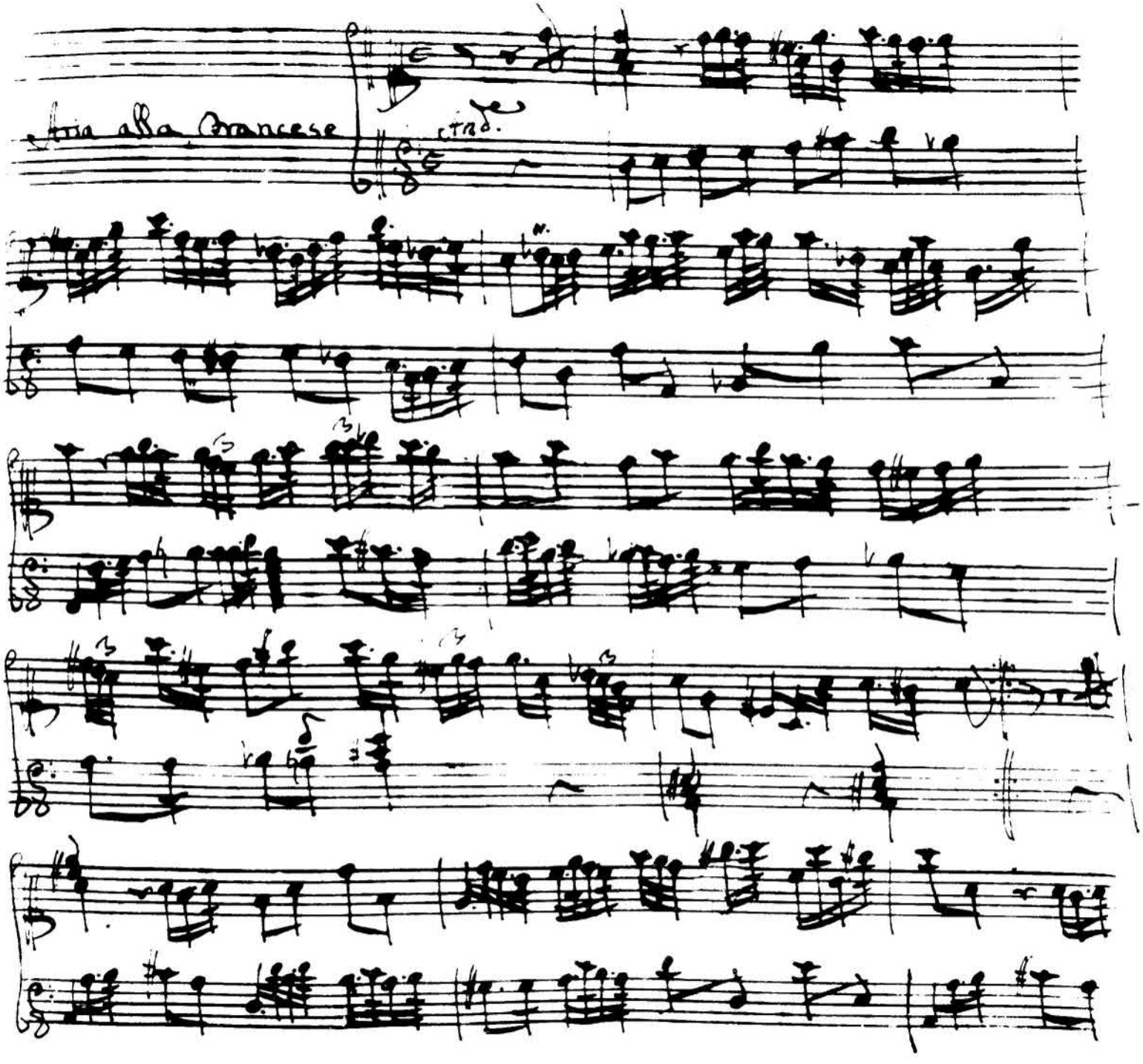
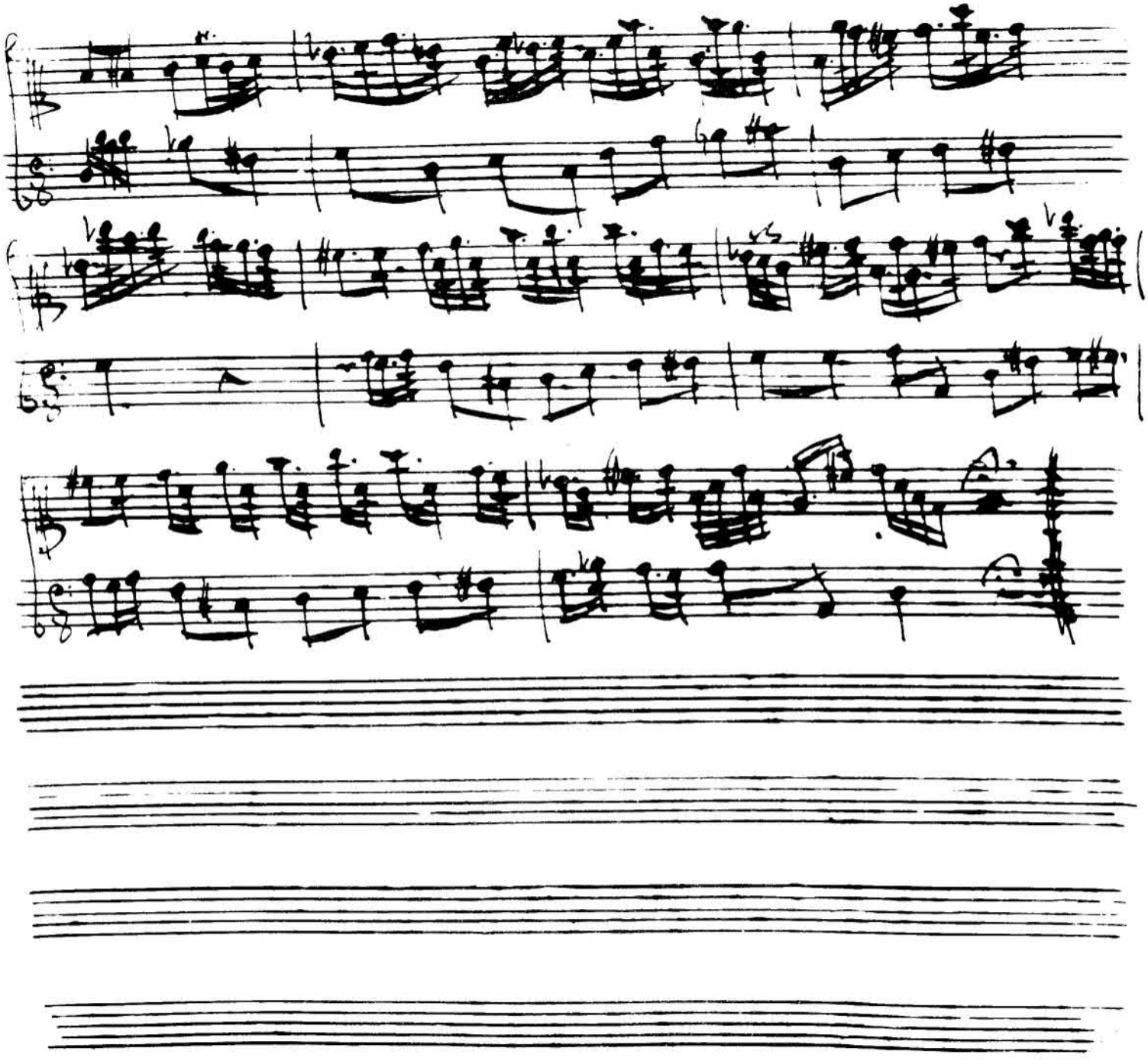


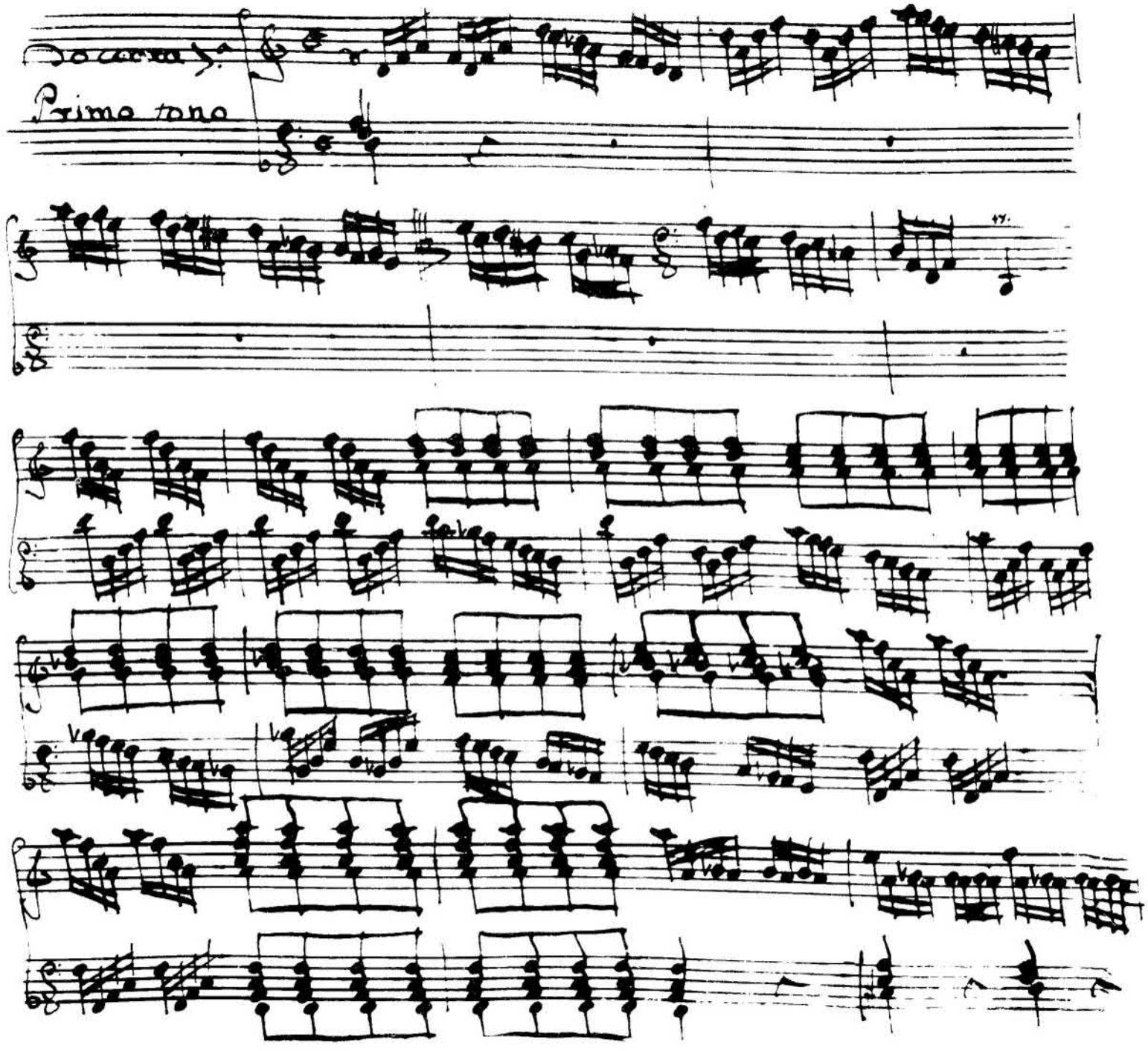


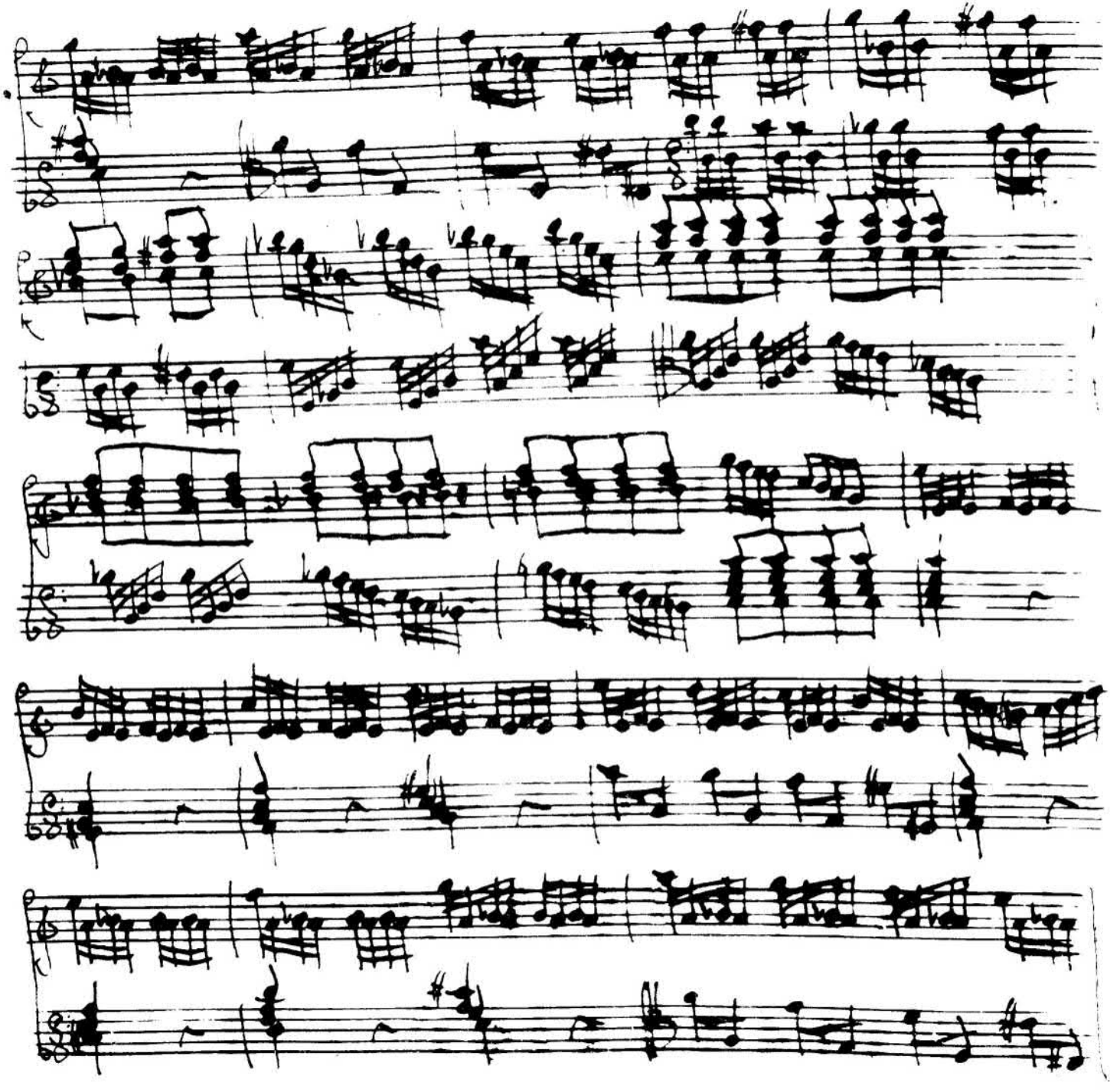


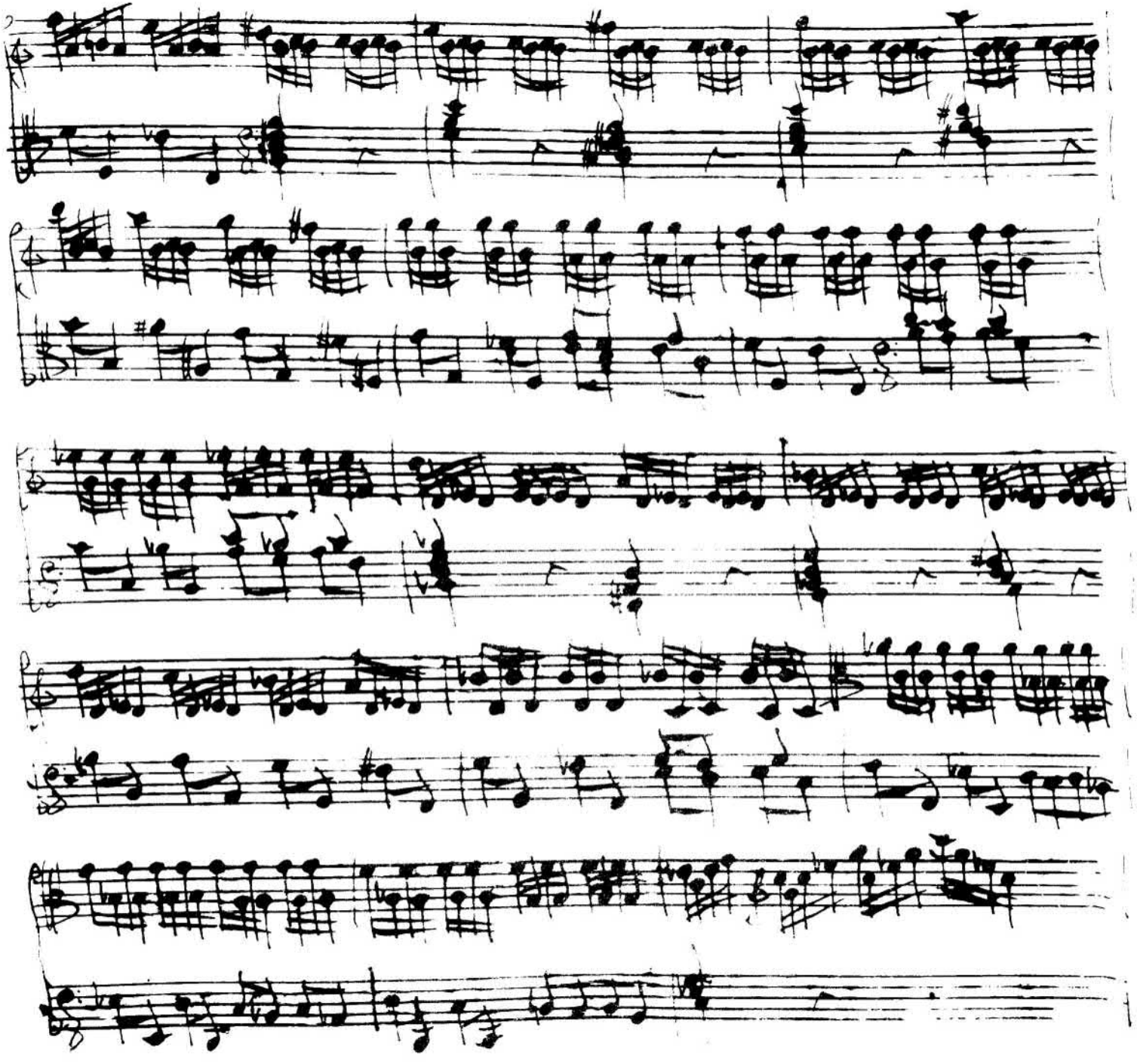


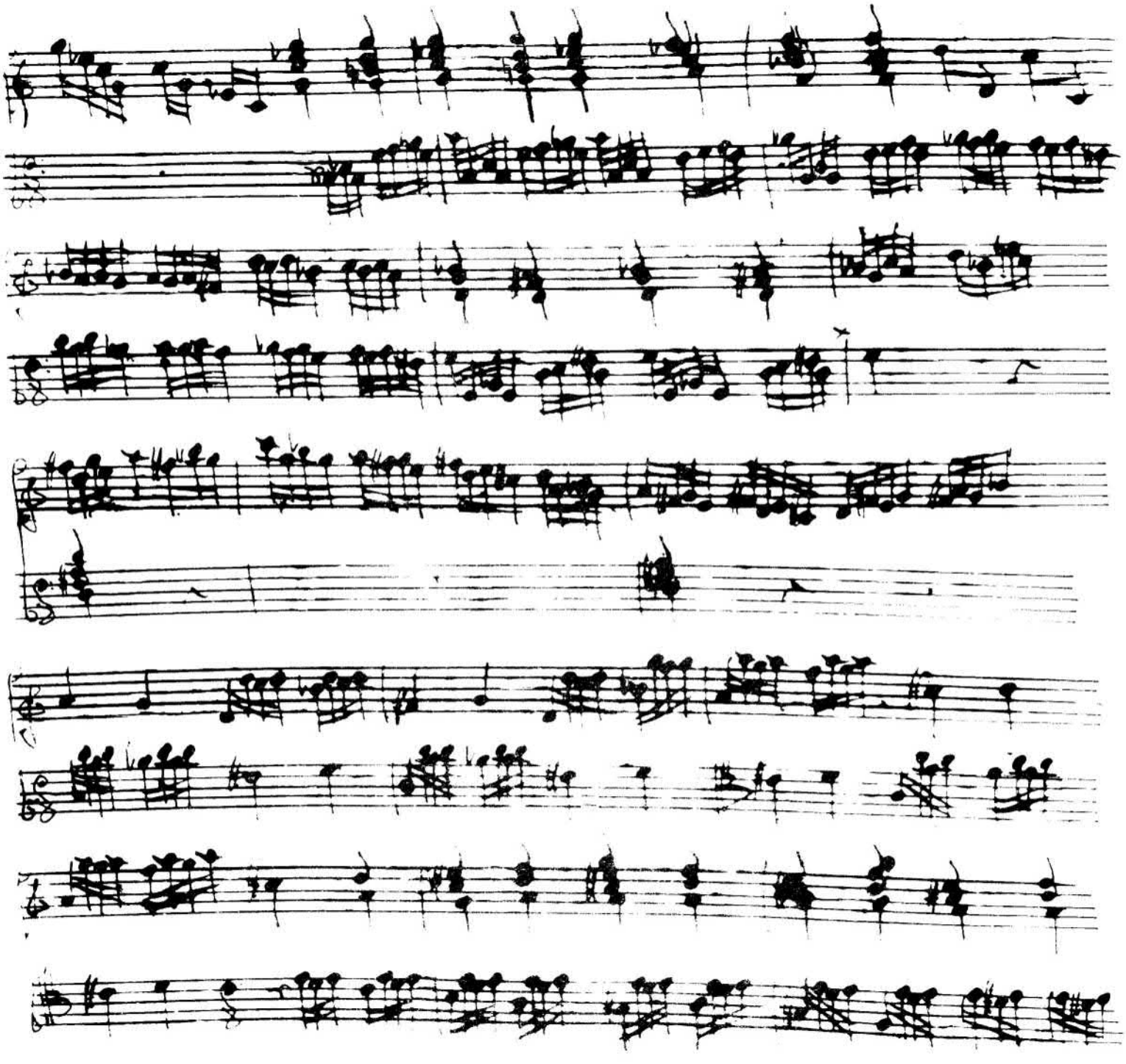

Aria alla Francese

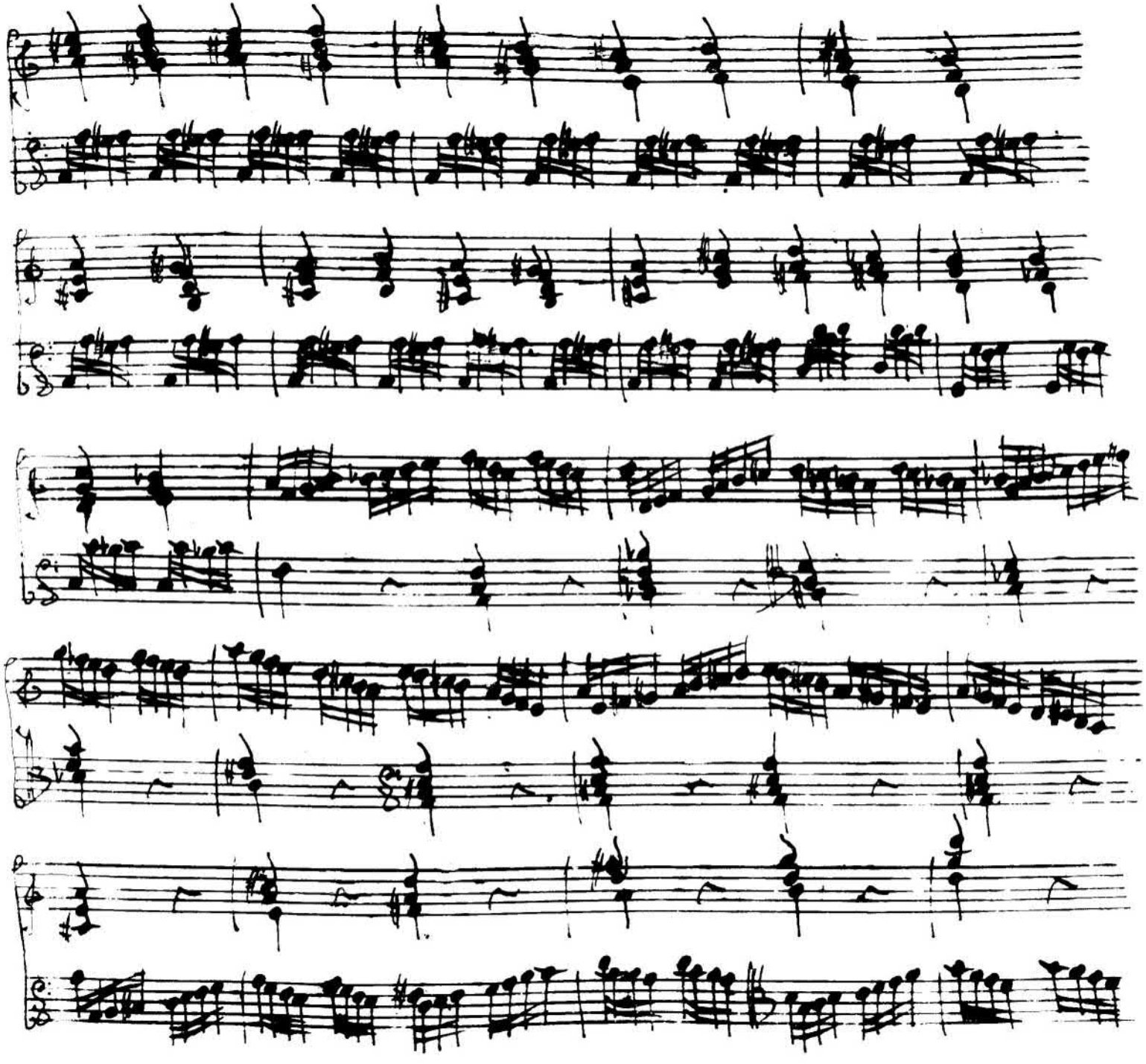


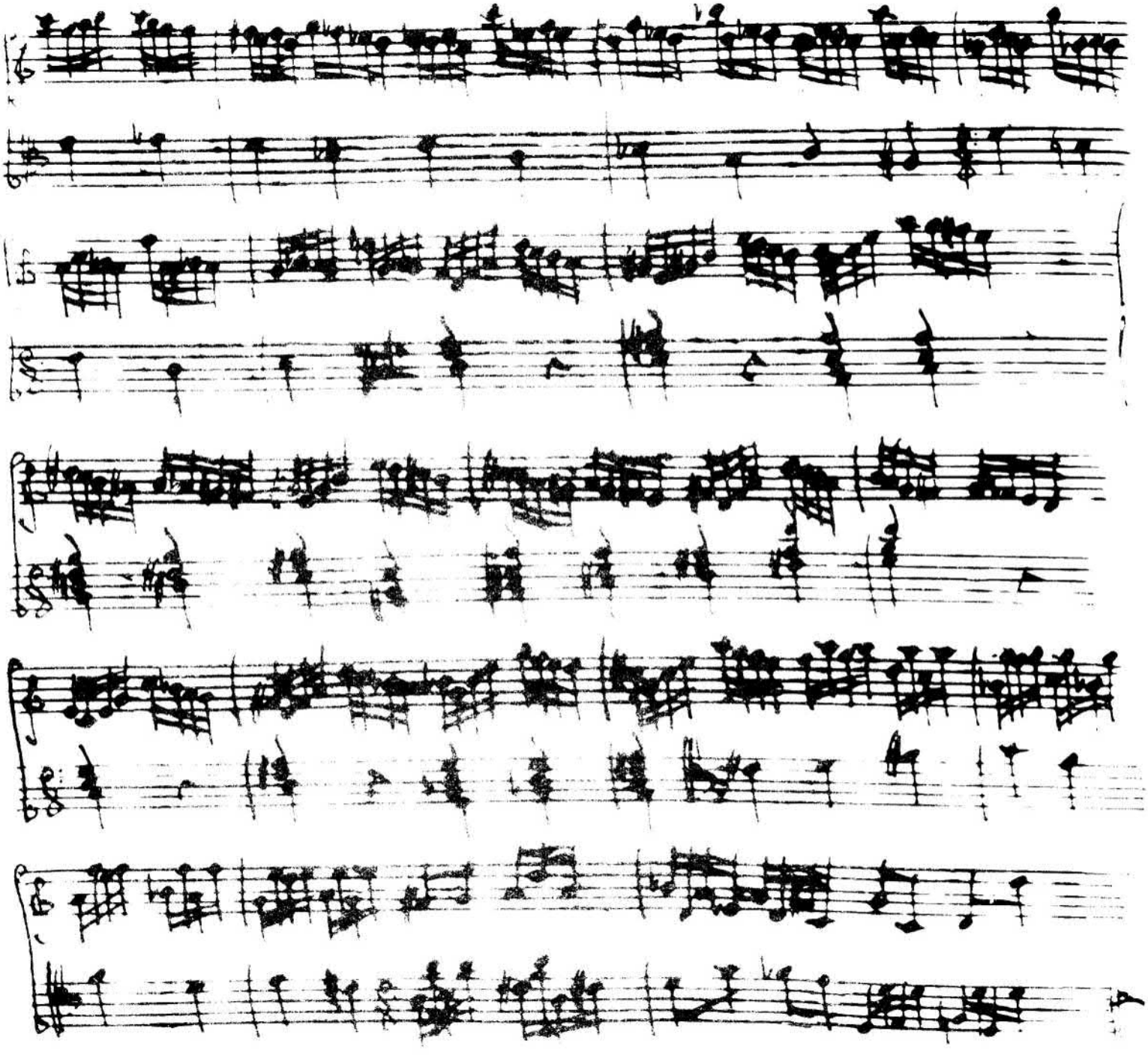

Toccata 3a
Primo tono

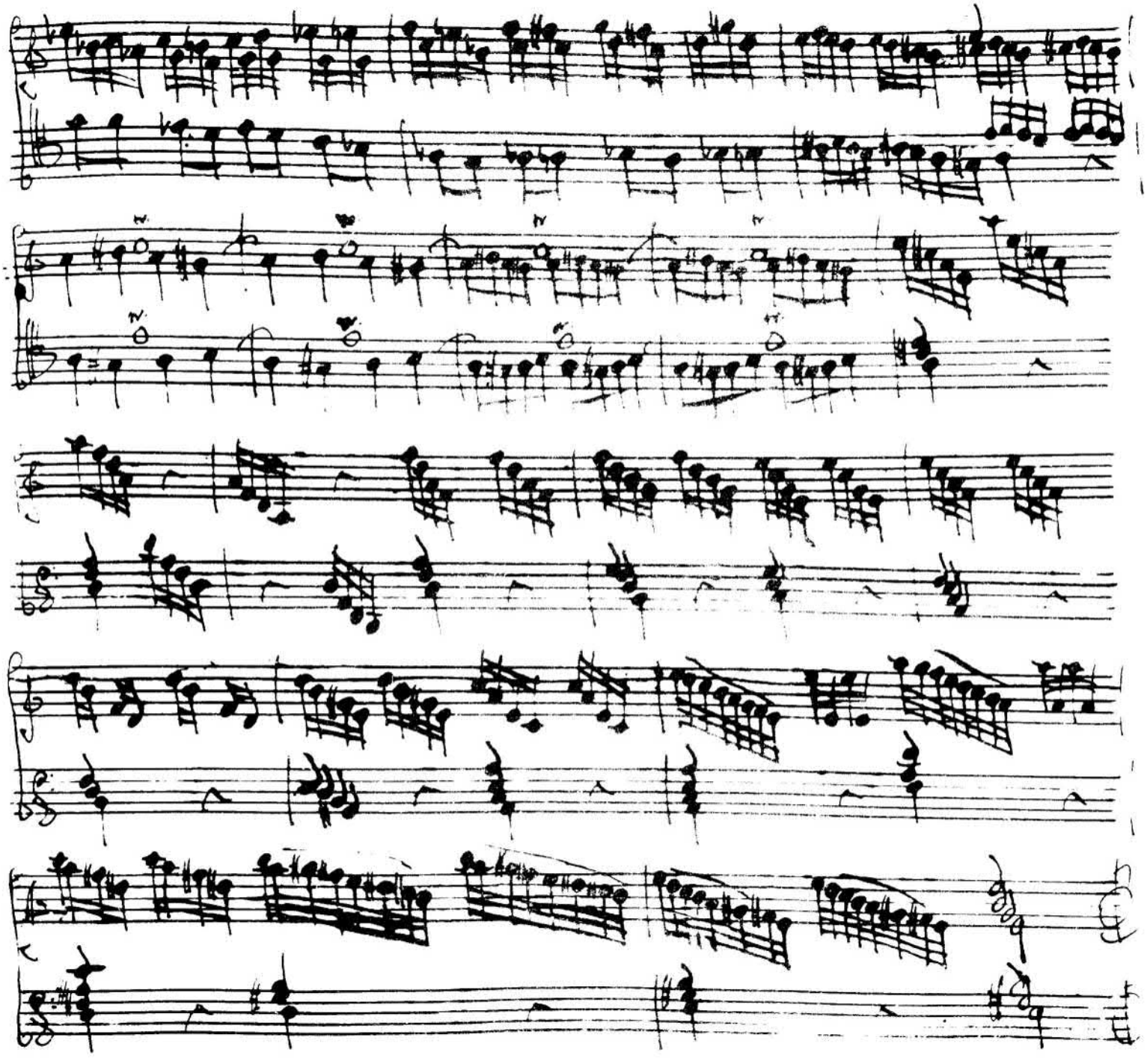


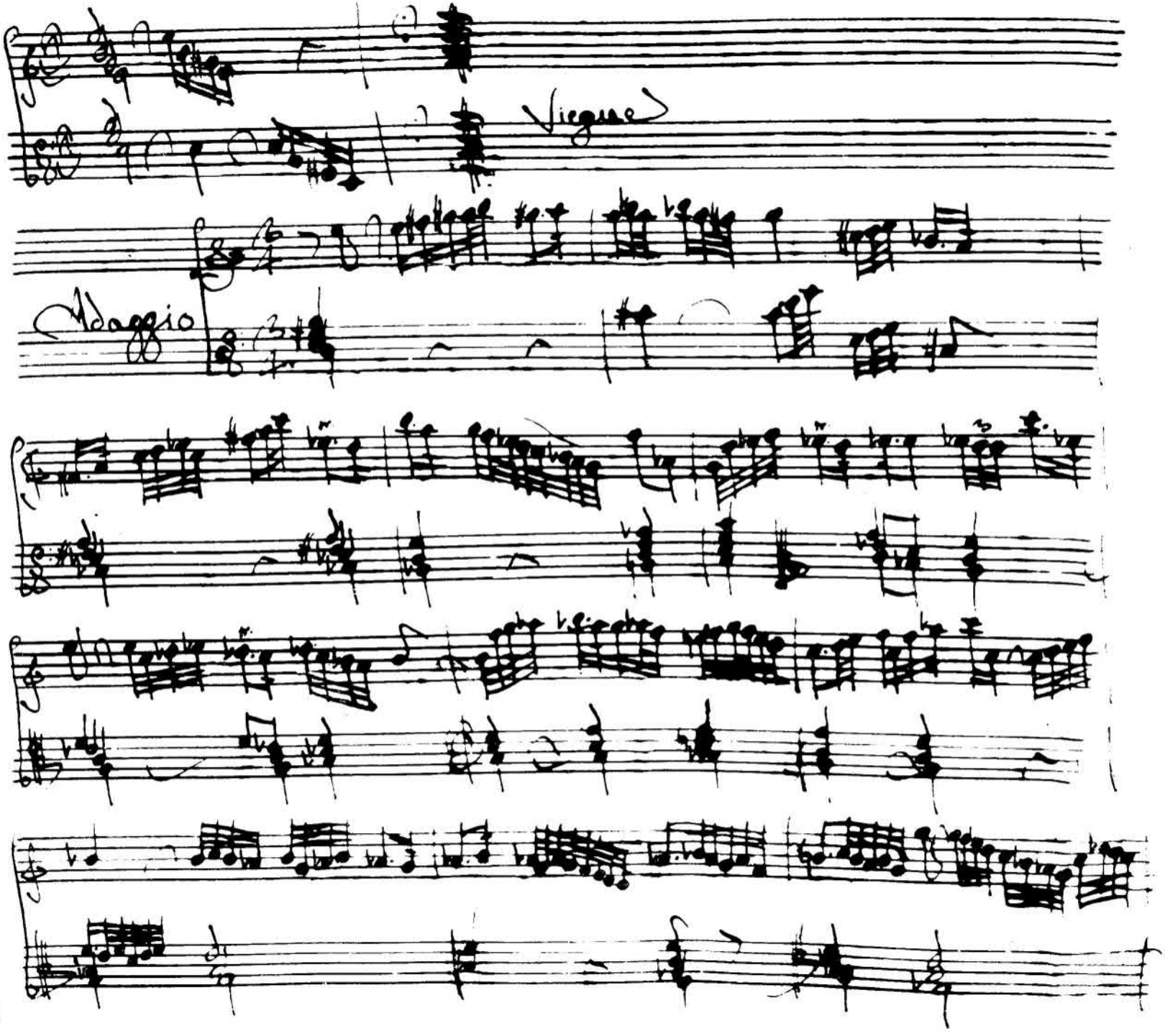


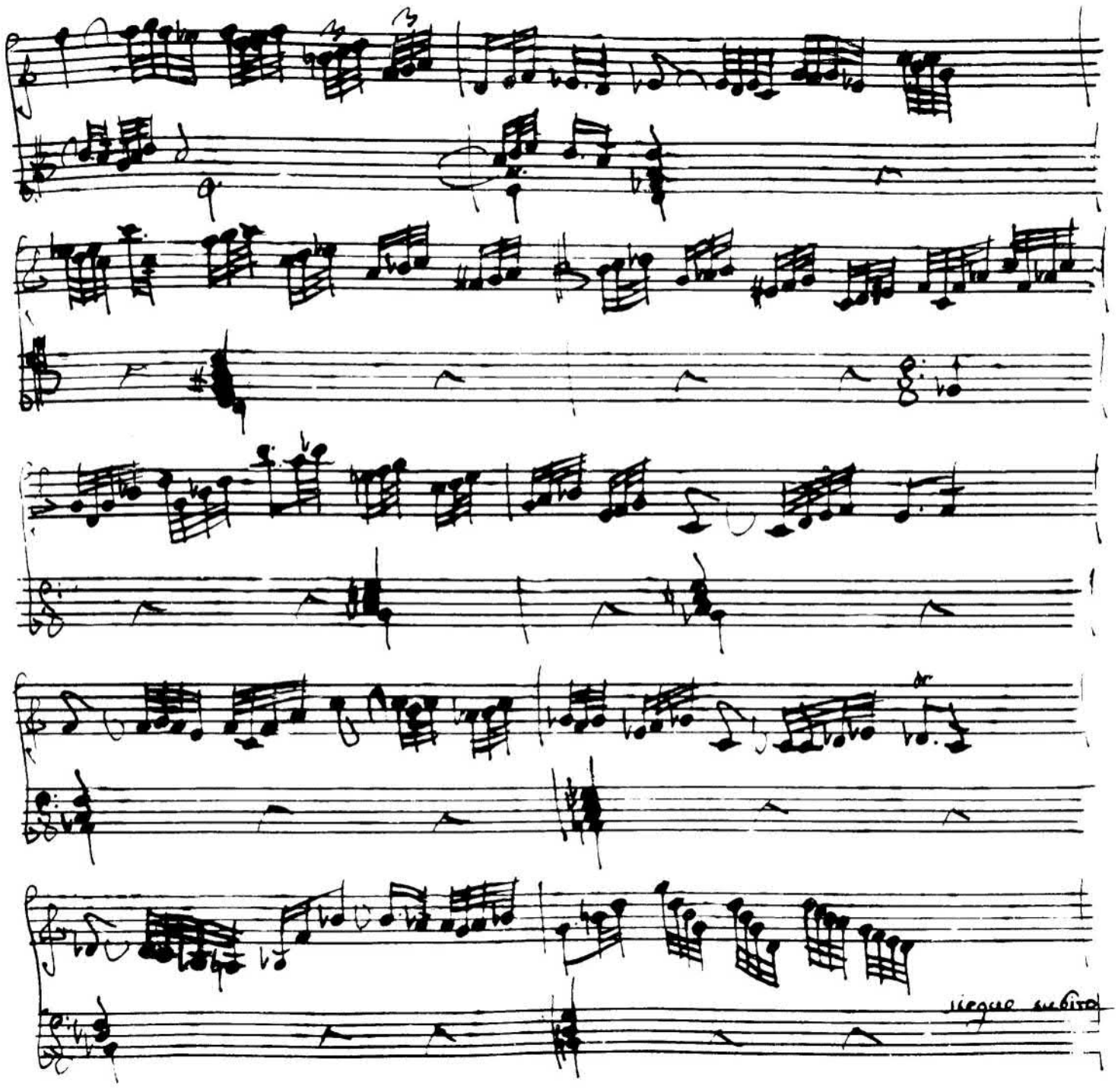


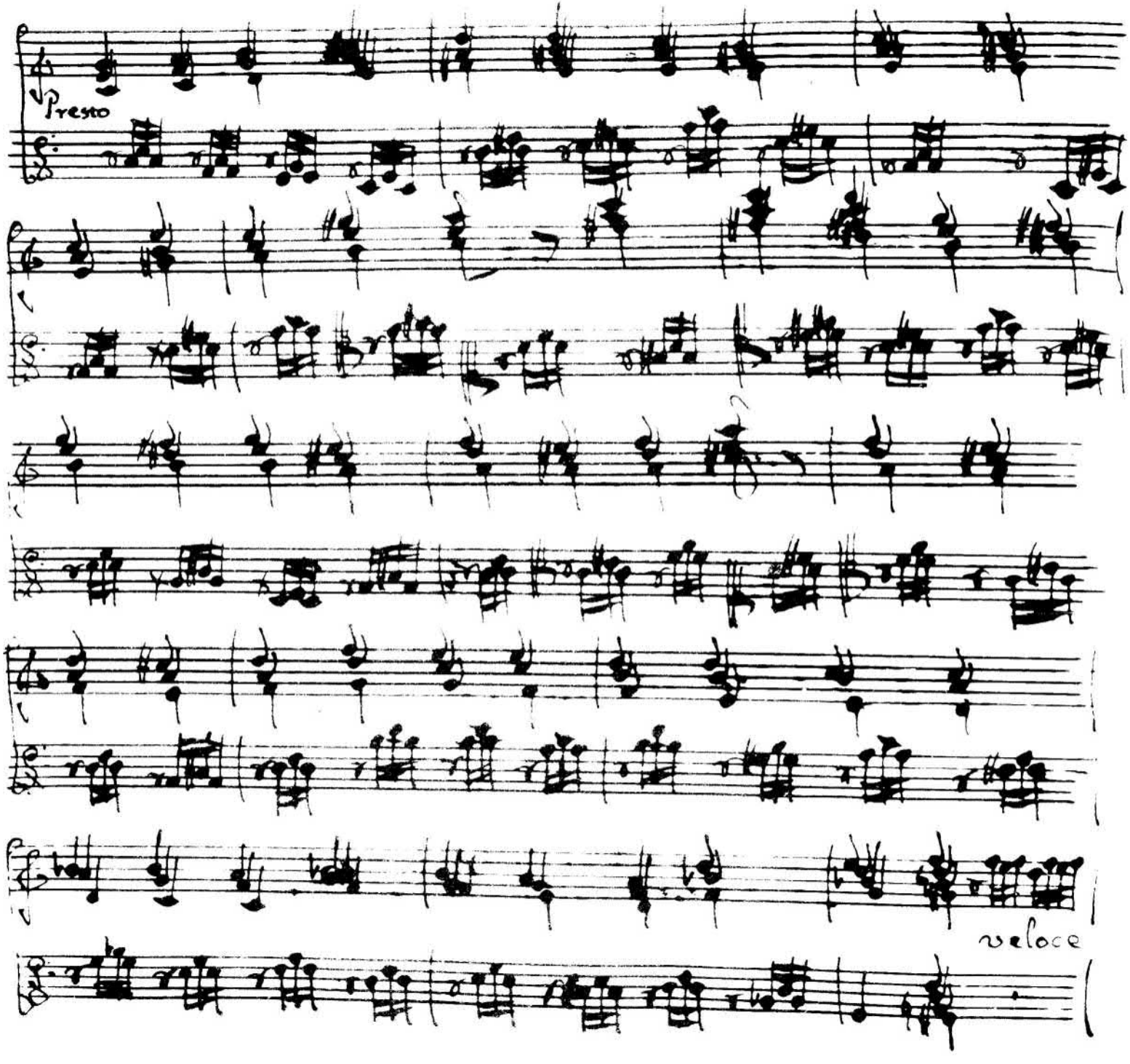







Vivace
Adagio


segue subito


Presto
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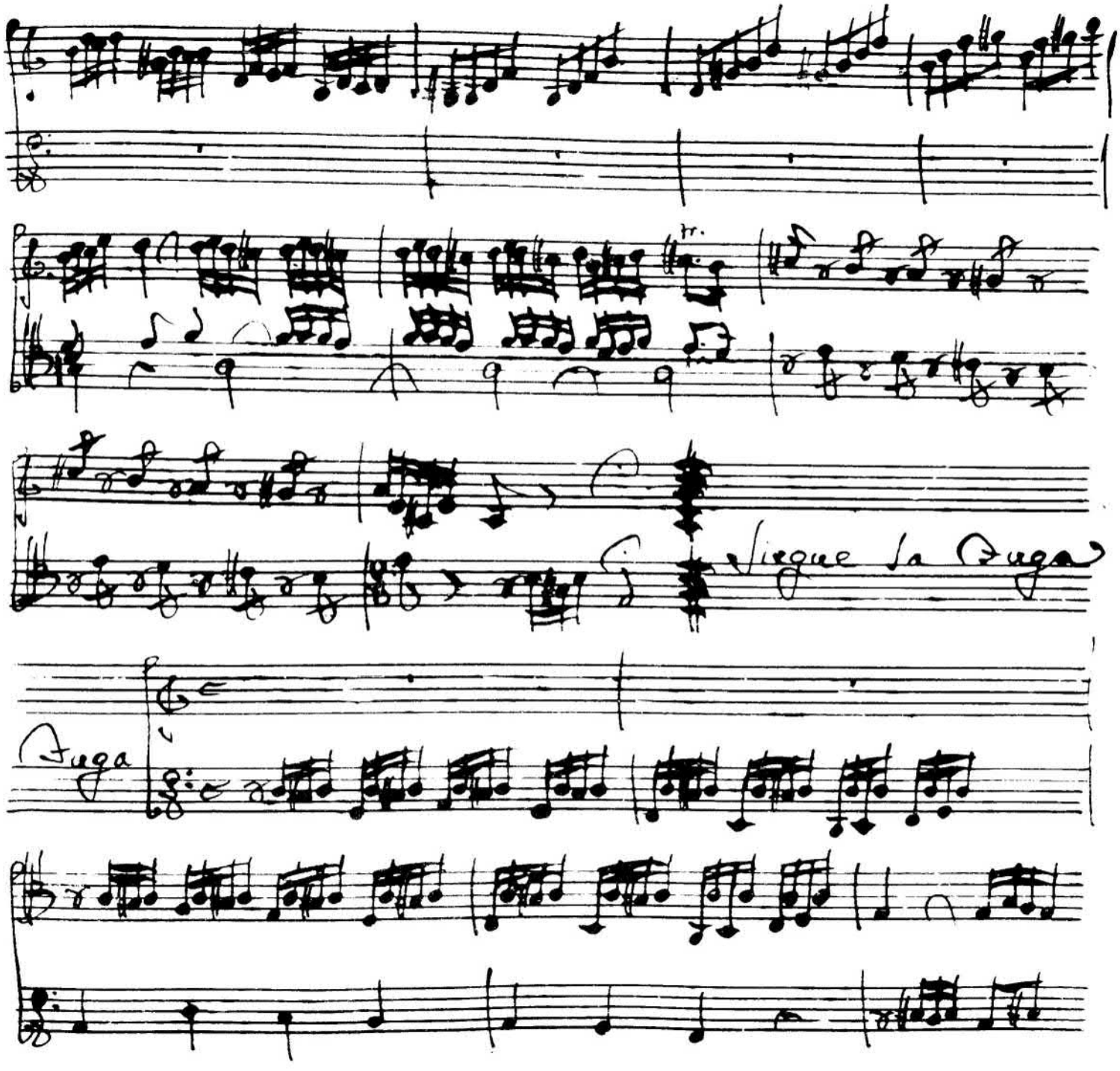
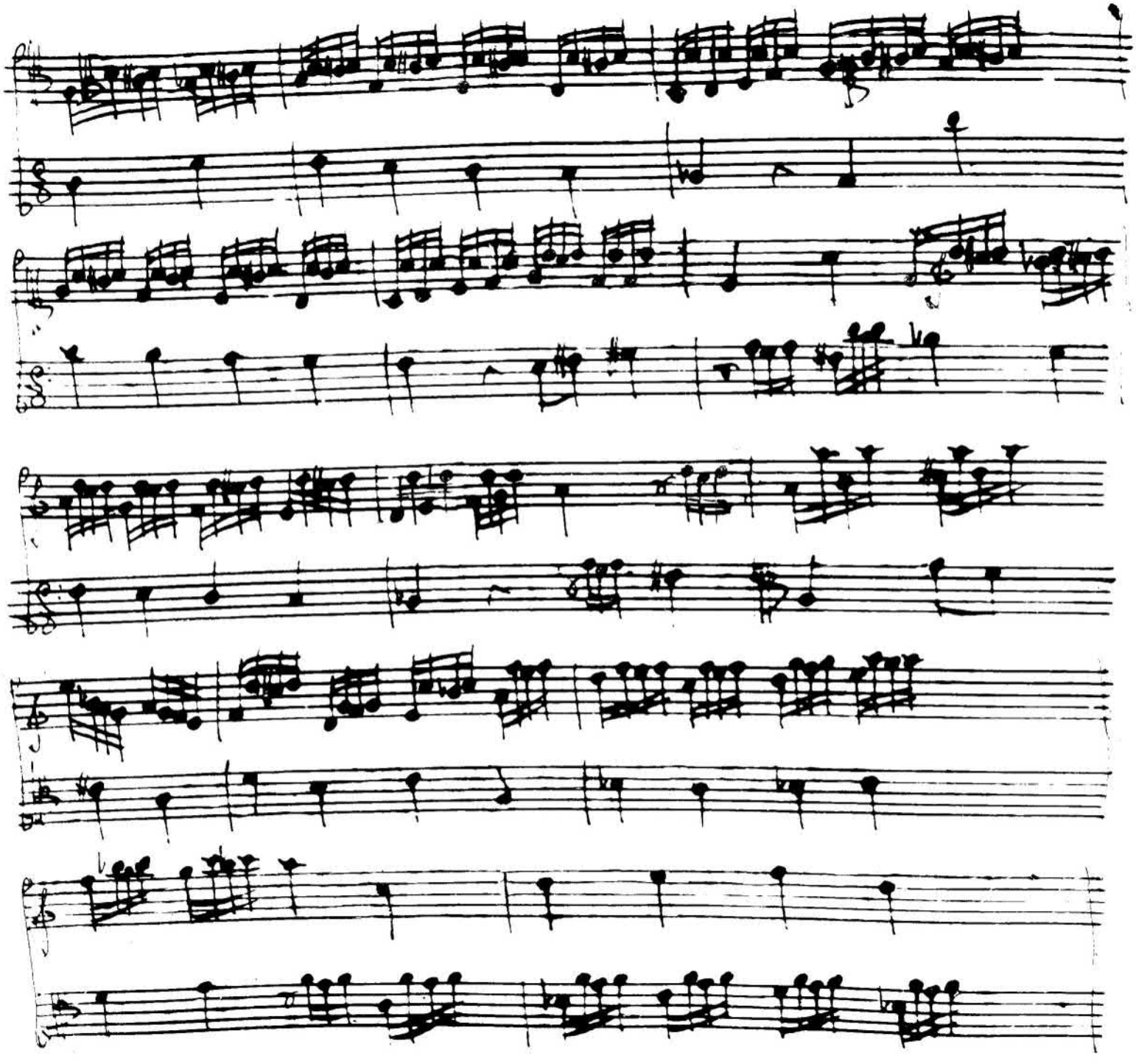
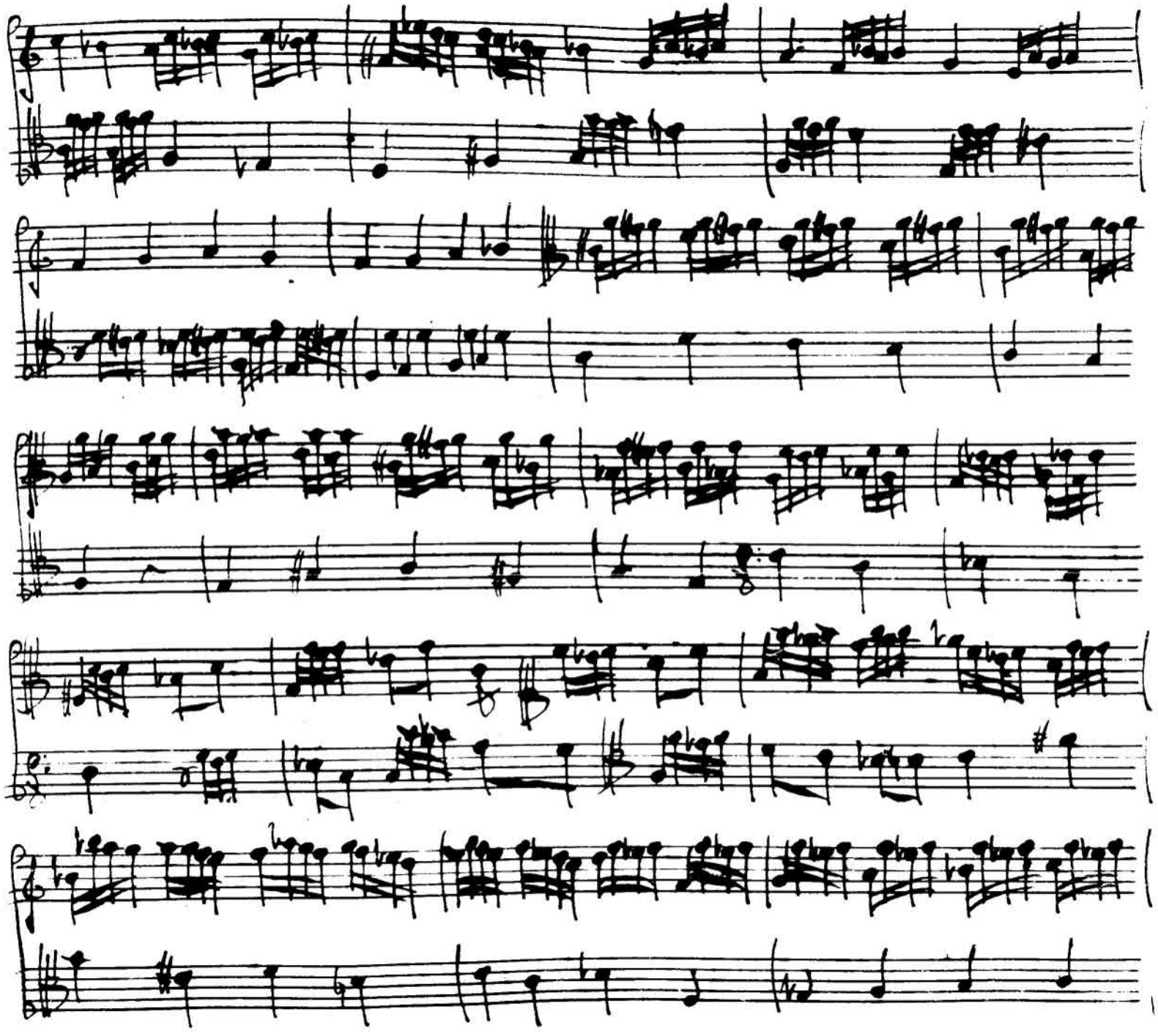
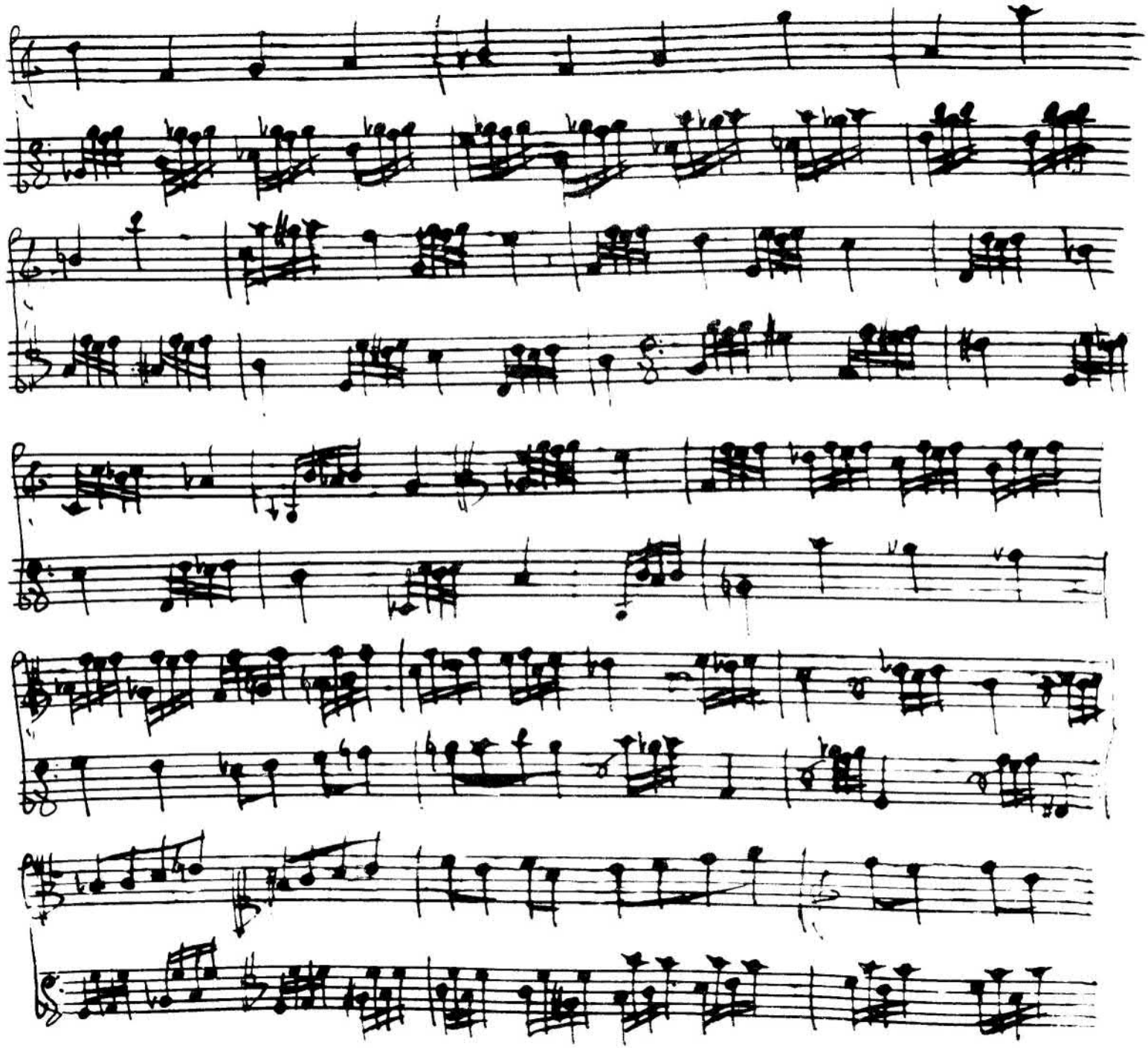
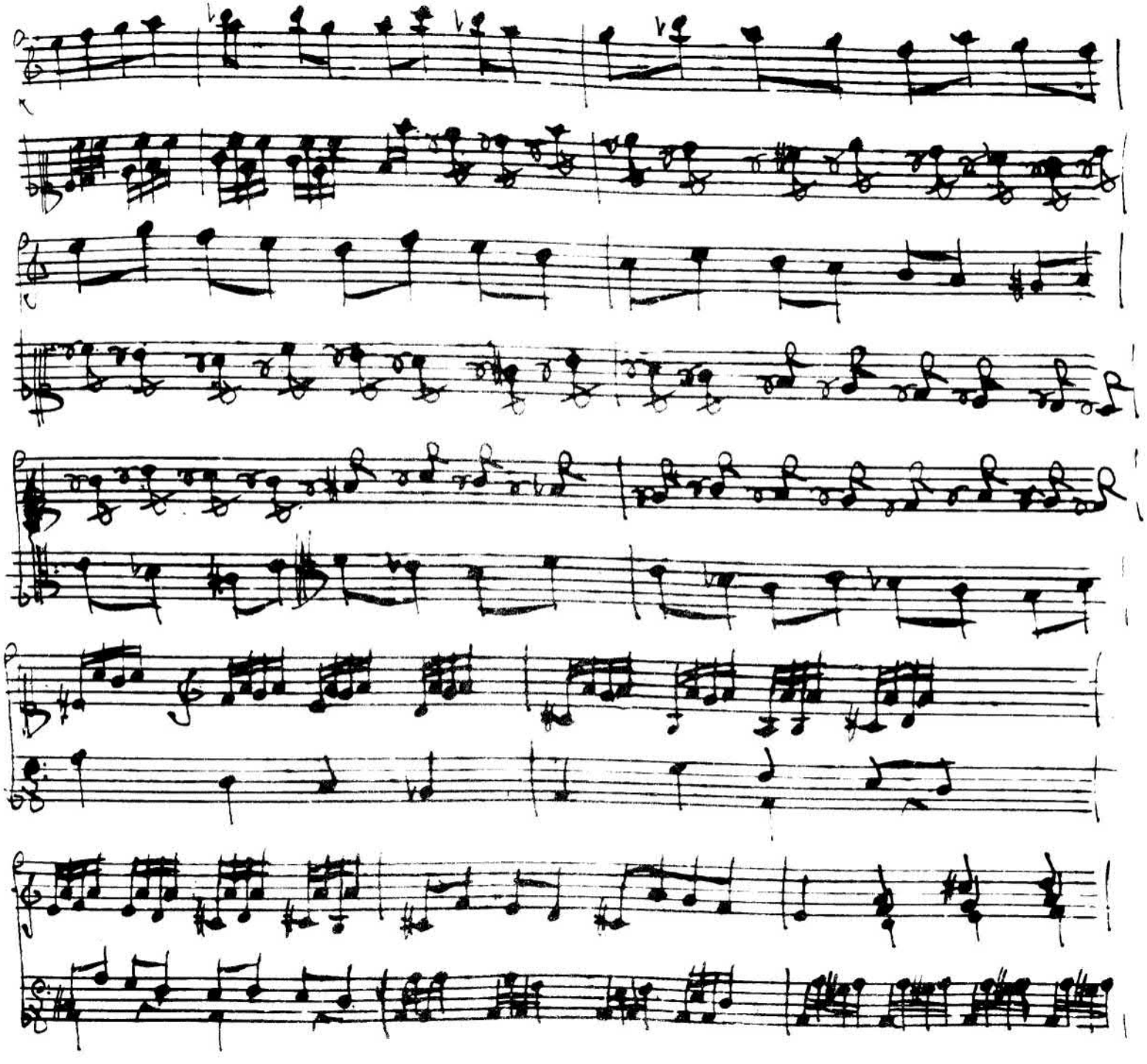
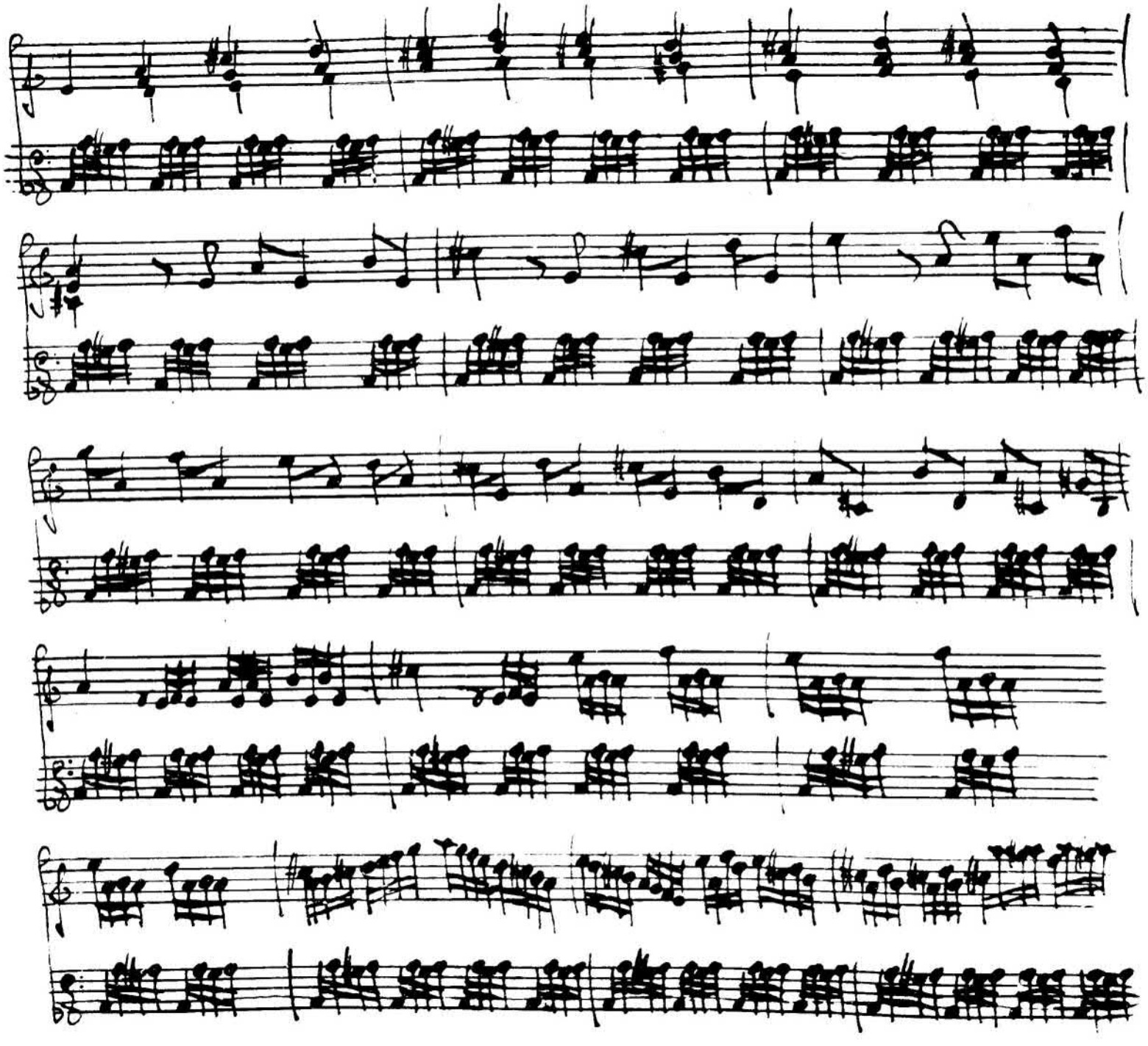

Sigue la Fuga
Fuga

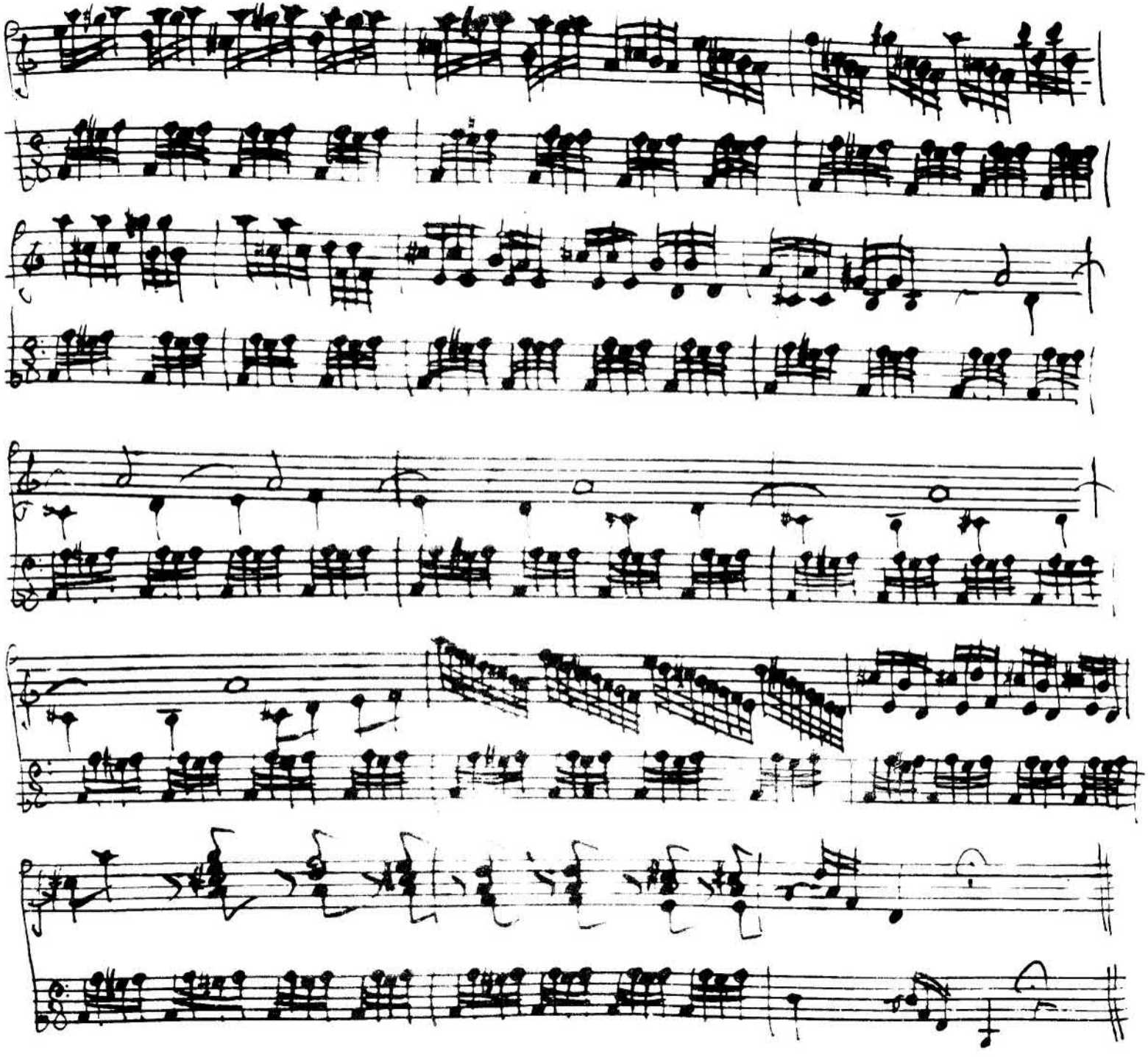


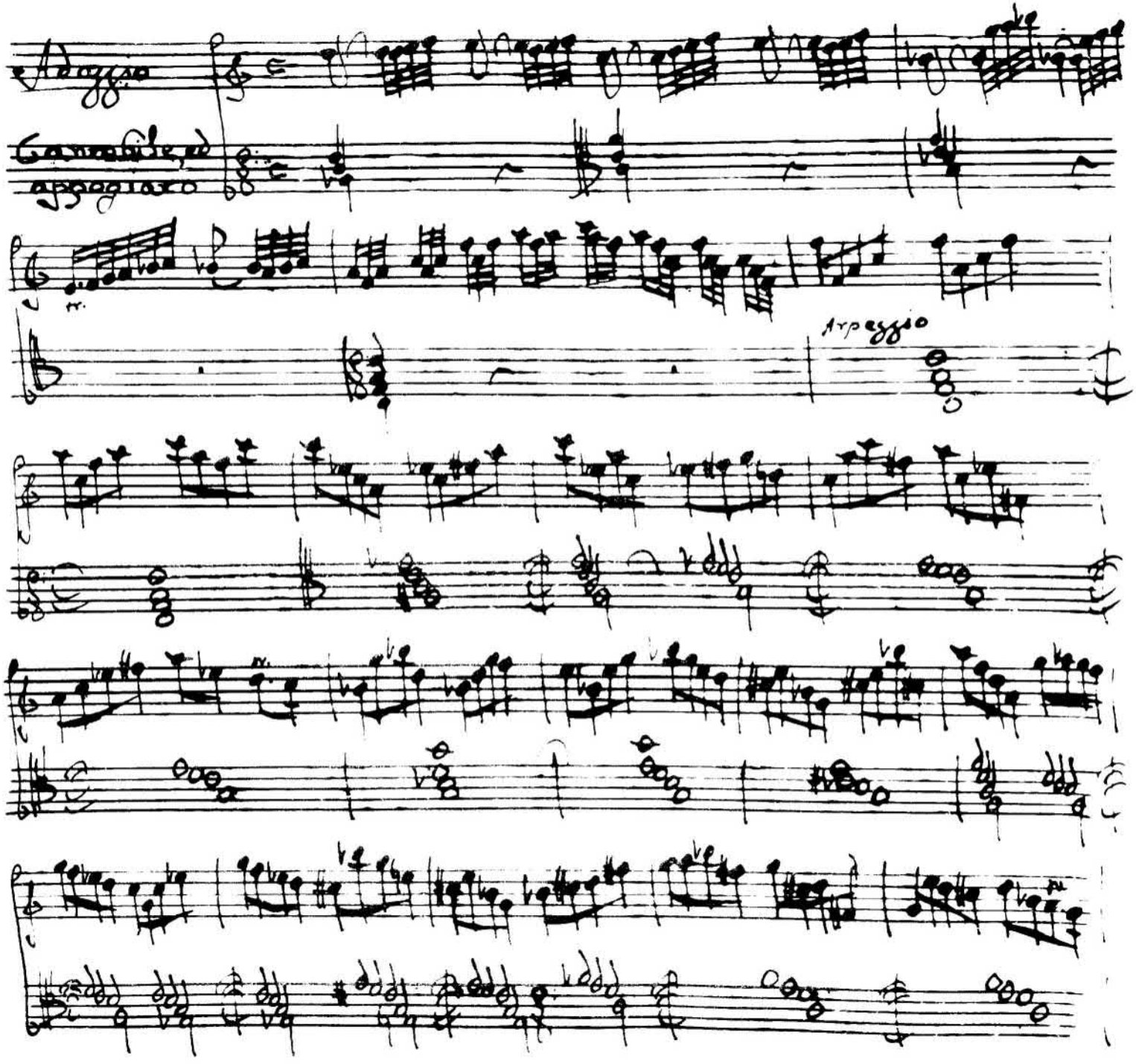


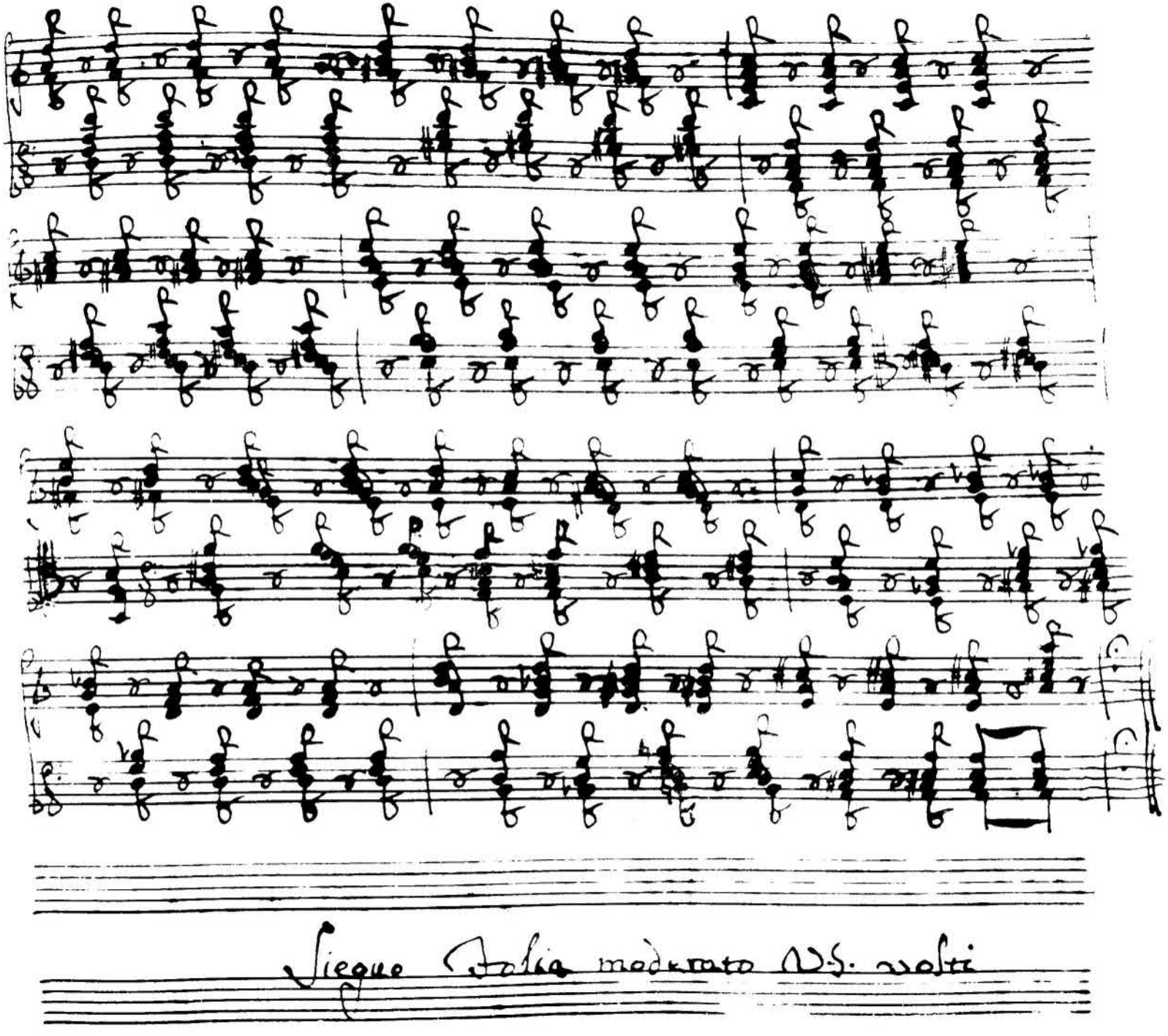


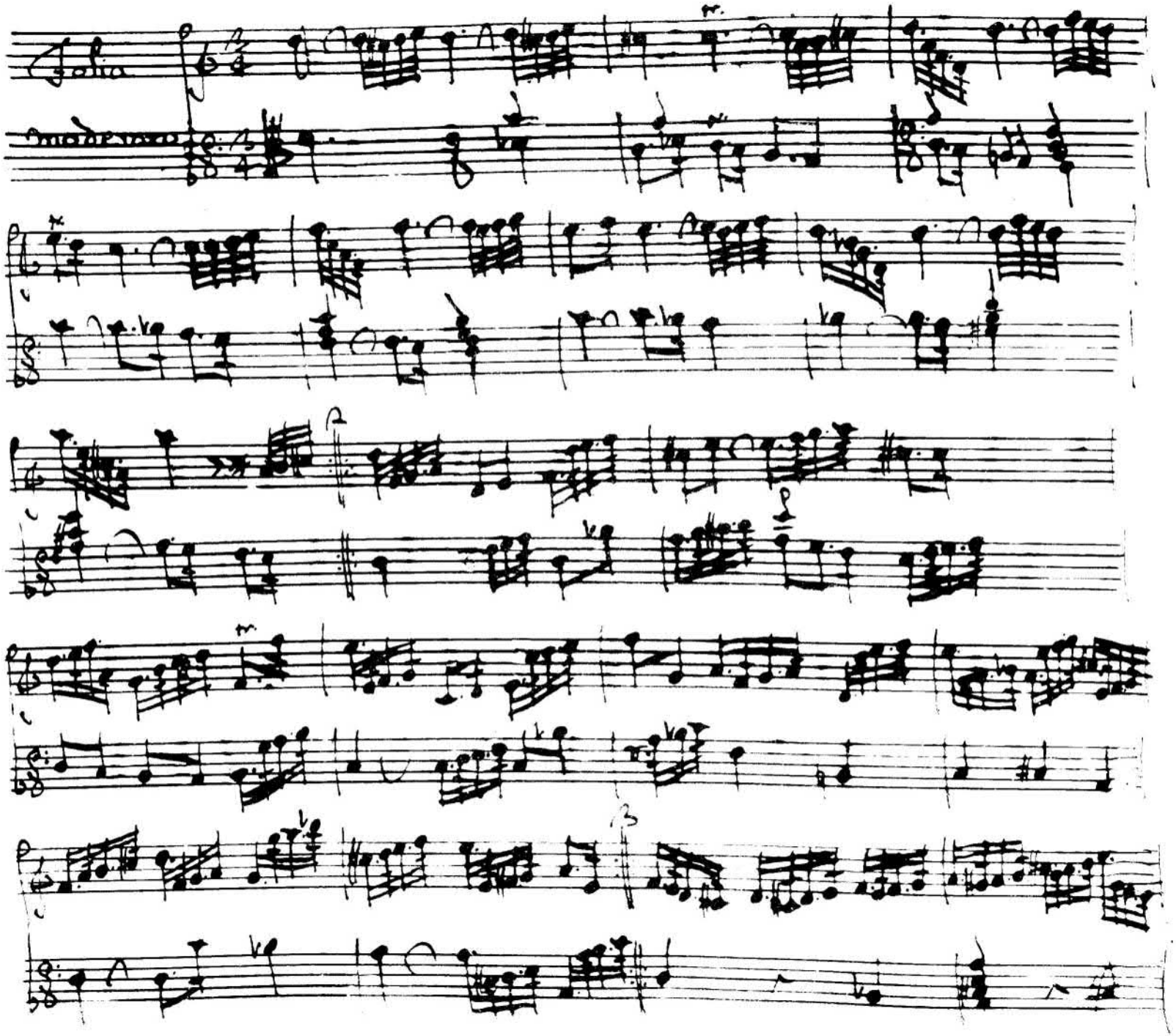


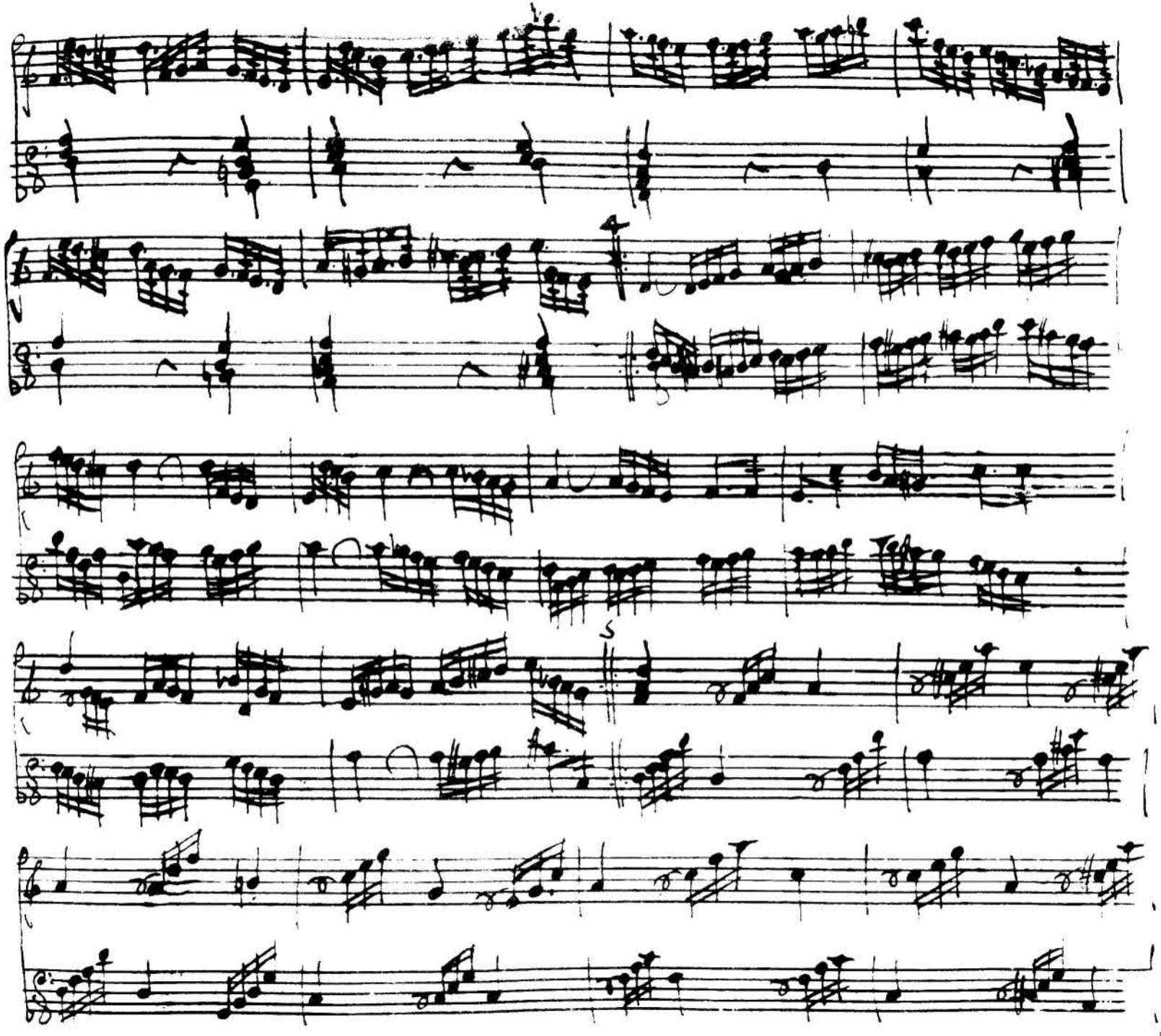


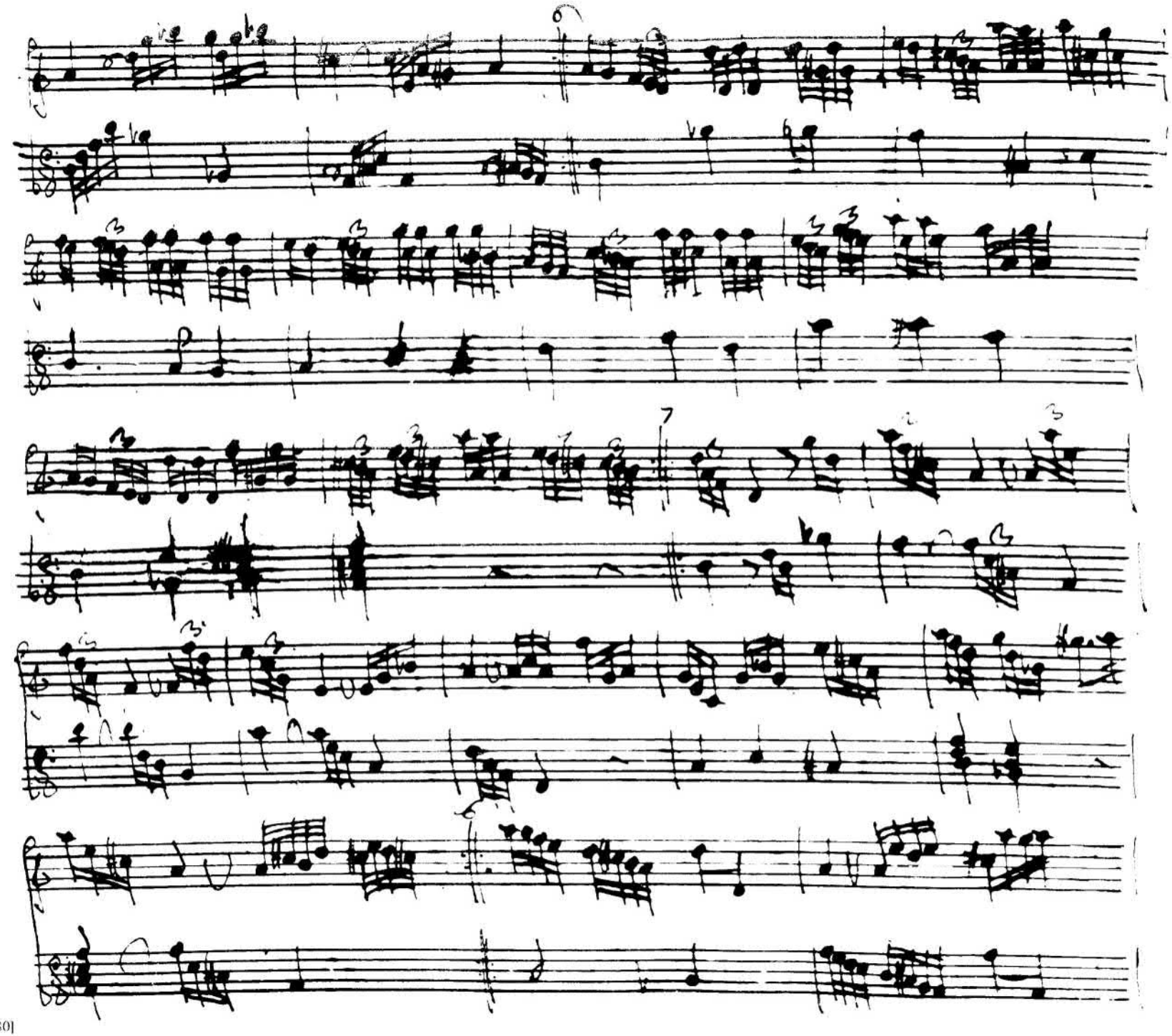


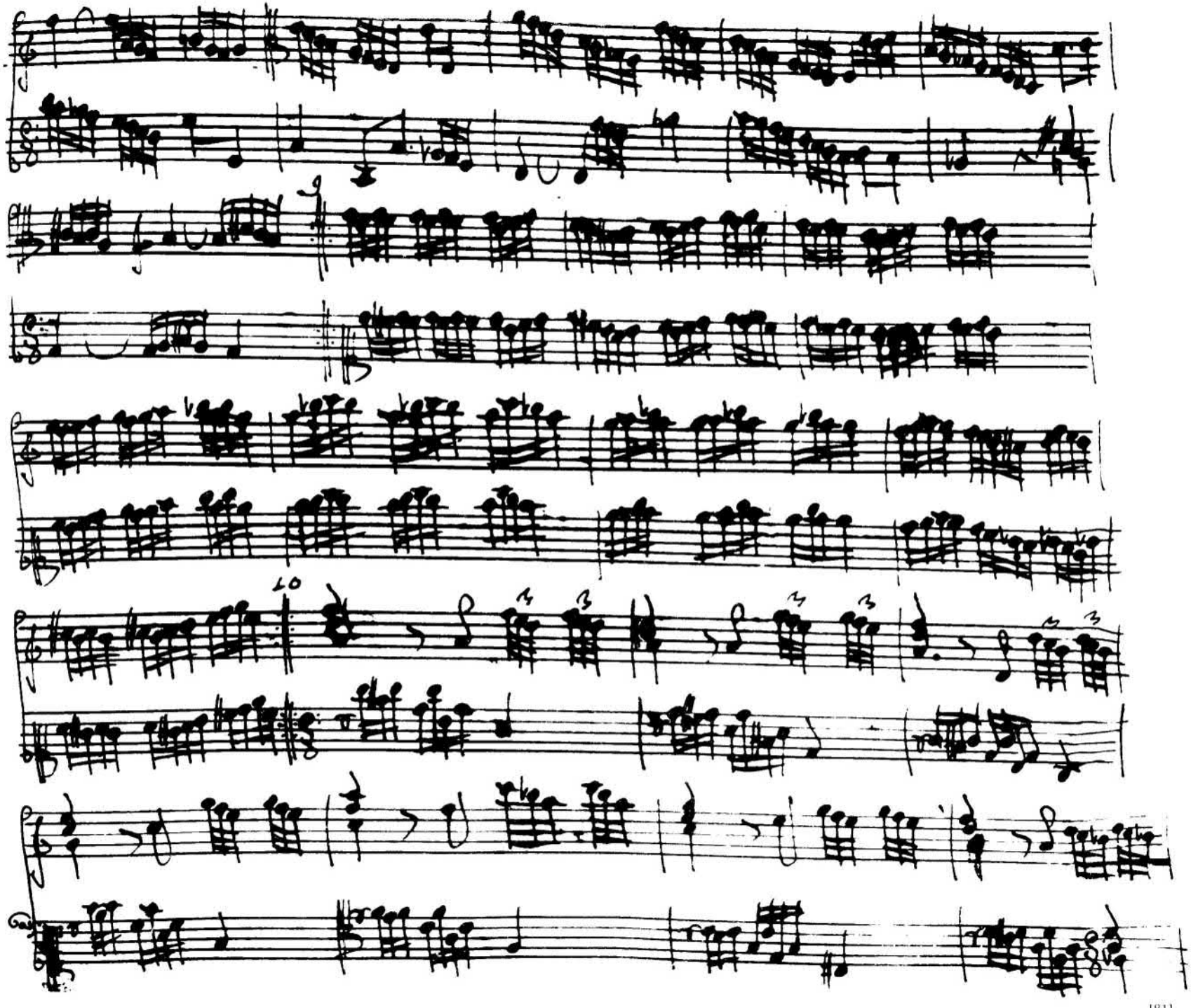

Adagio
Cembalo
aggiato
Arpeggio

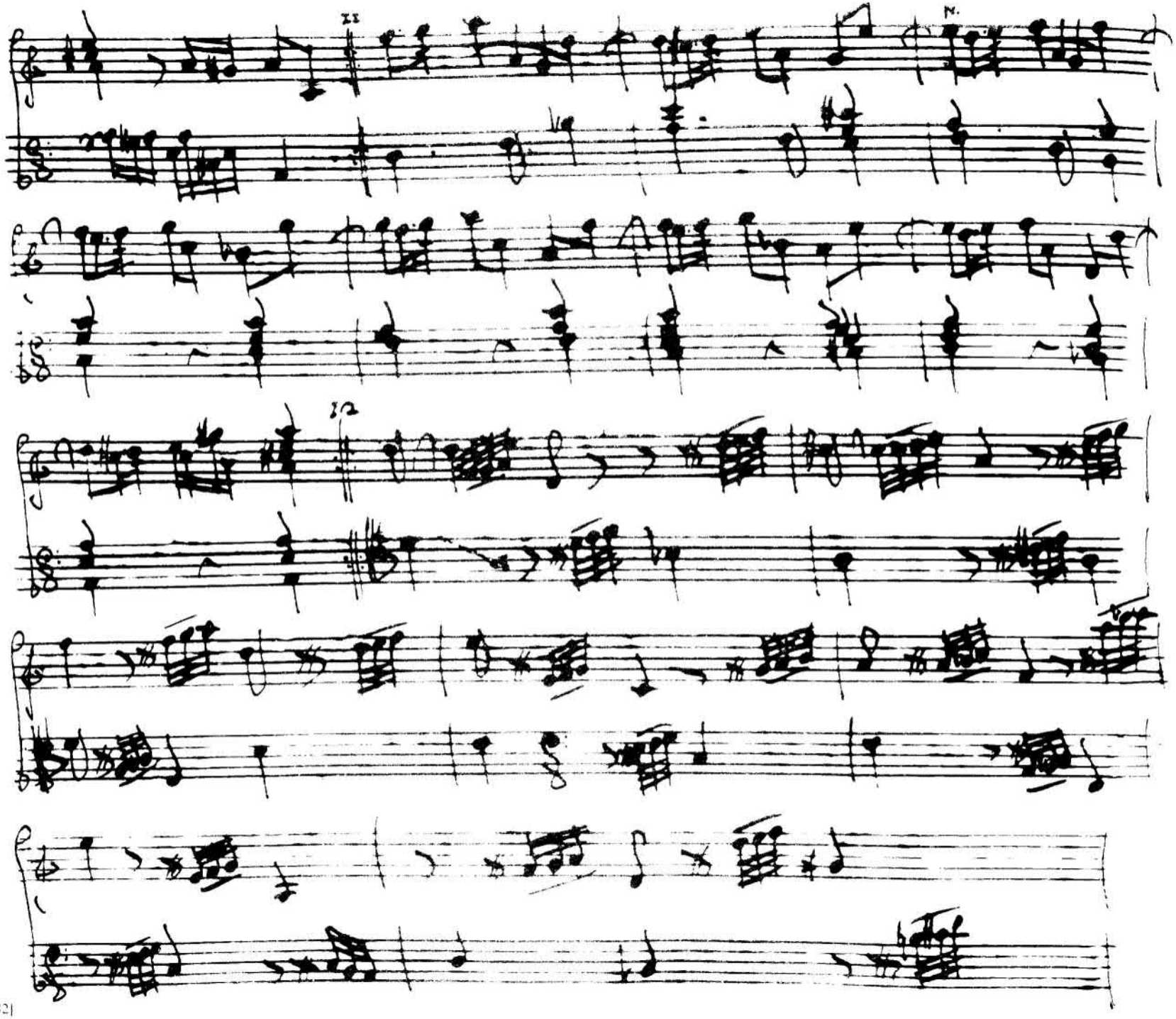

Segue Italia modernato V.S. volti

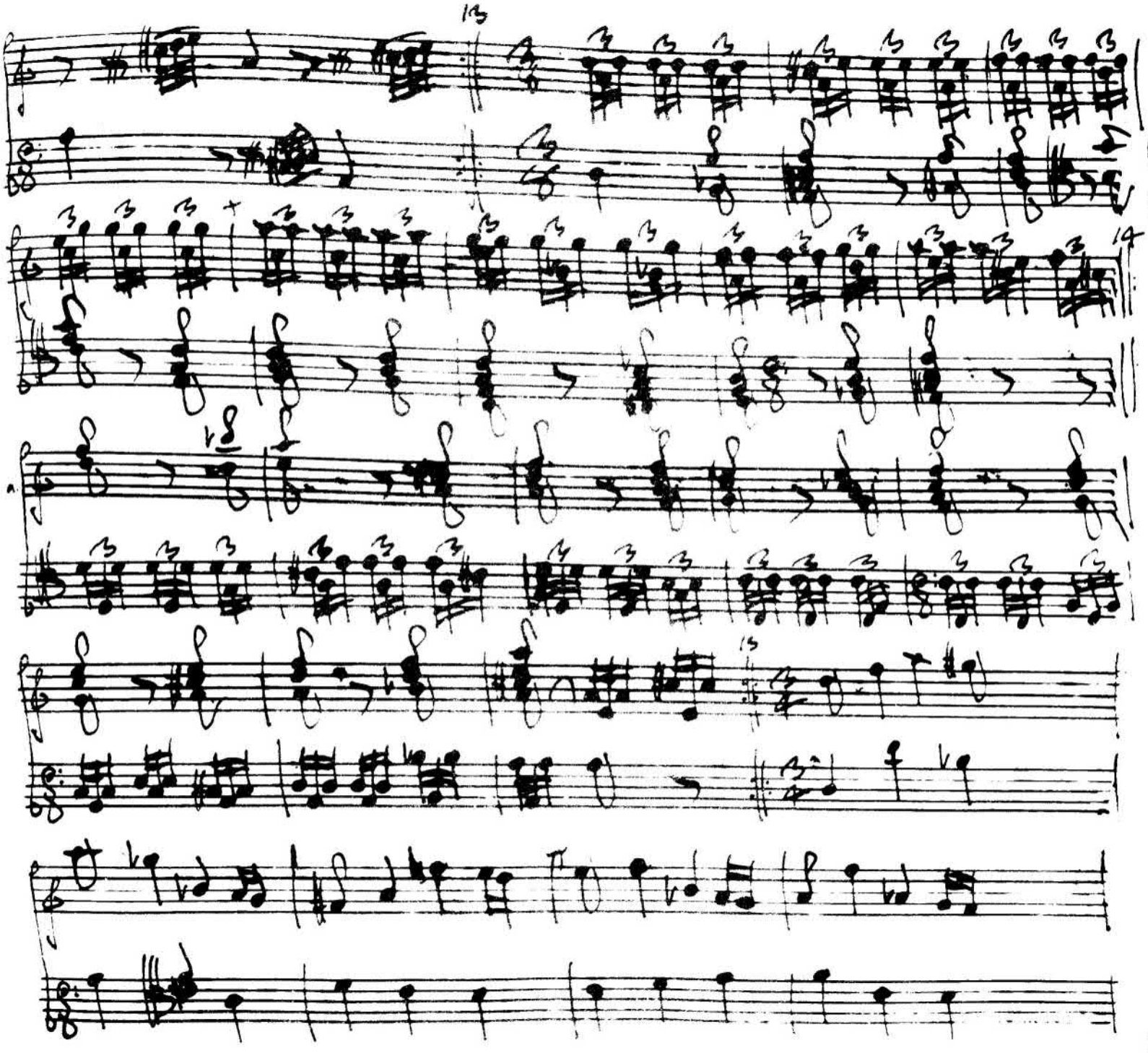


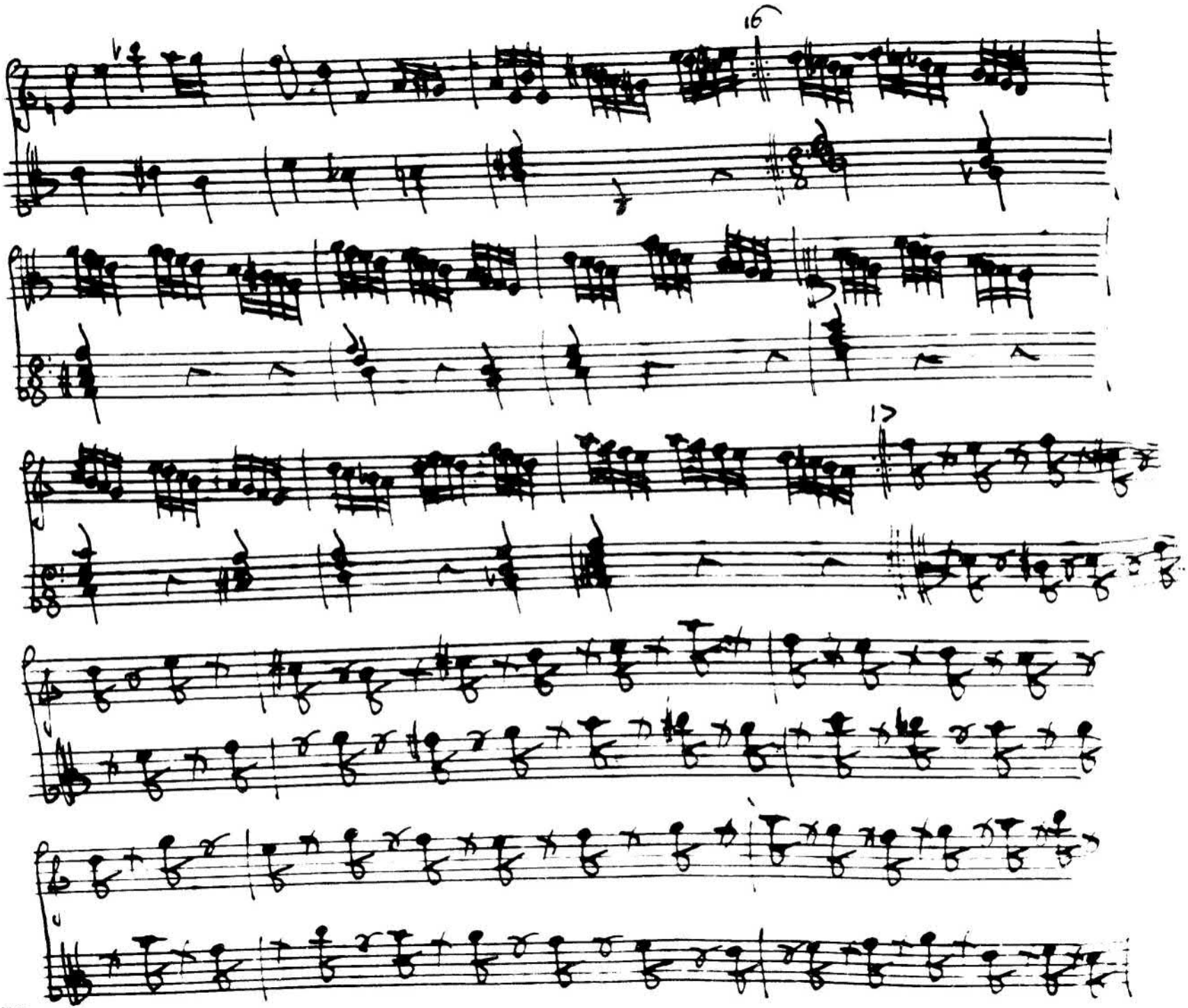








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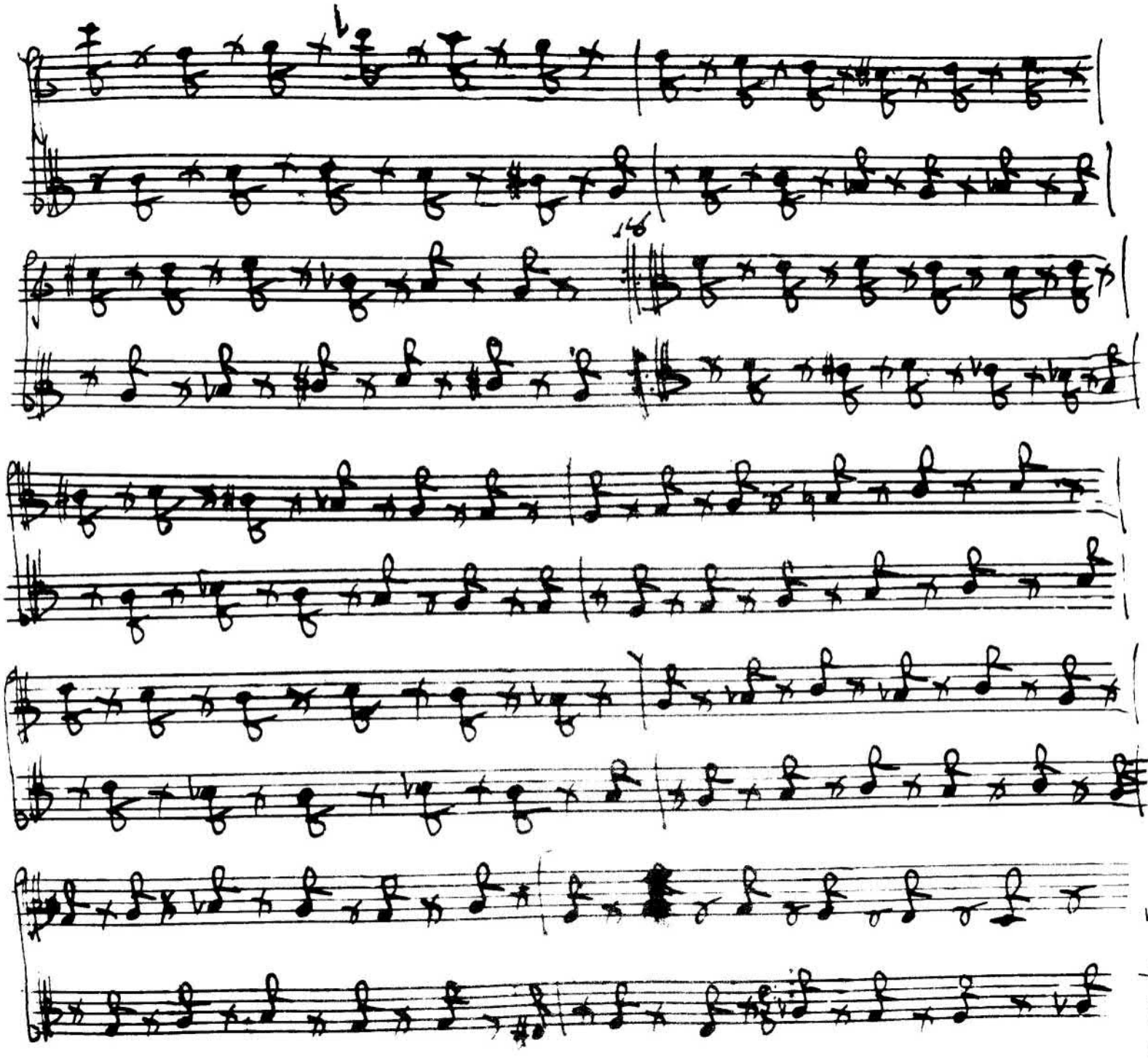

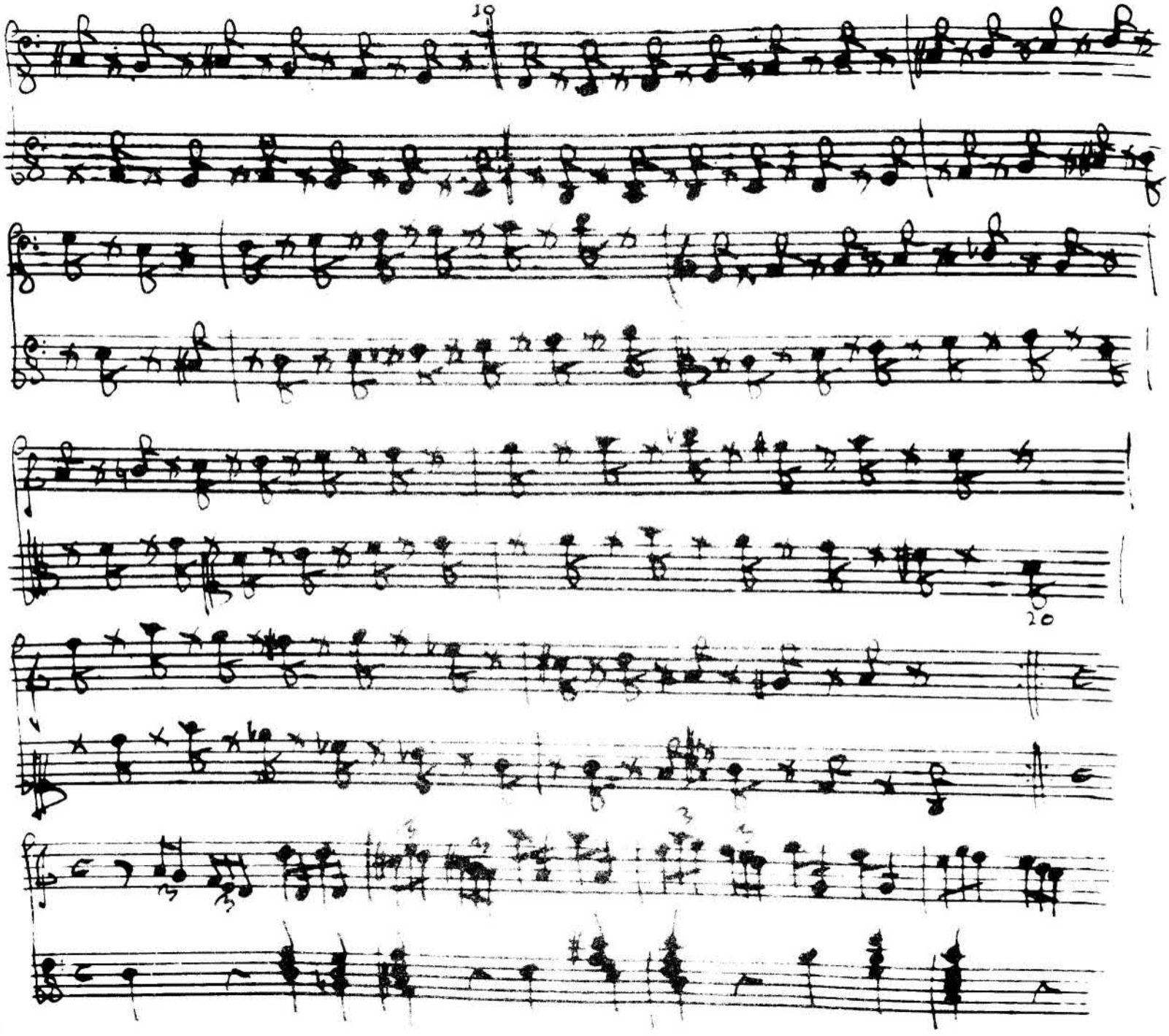
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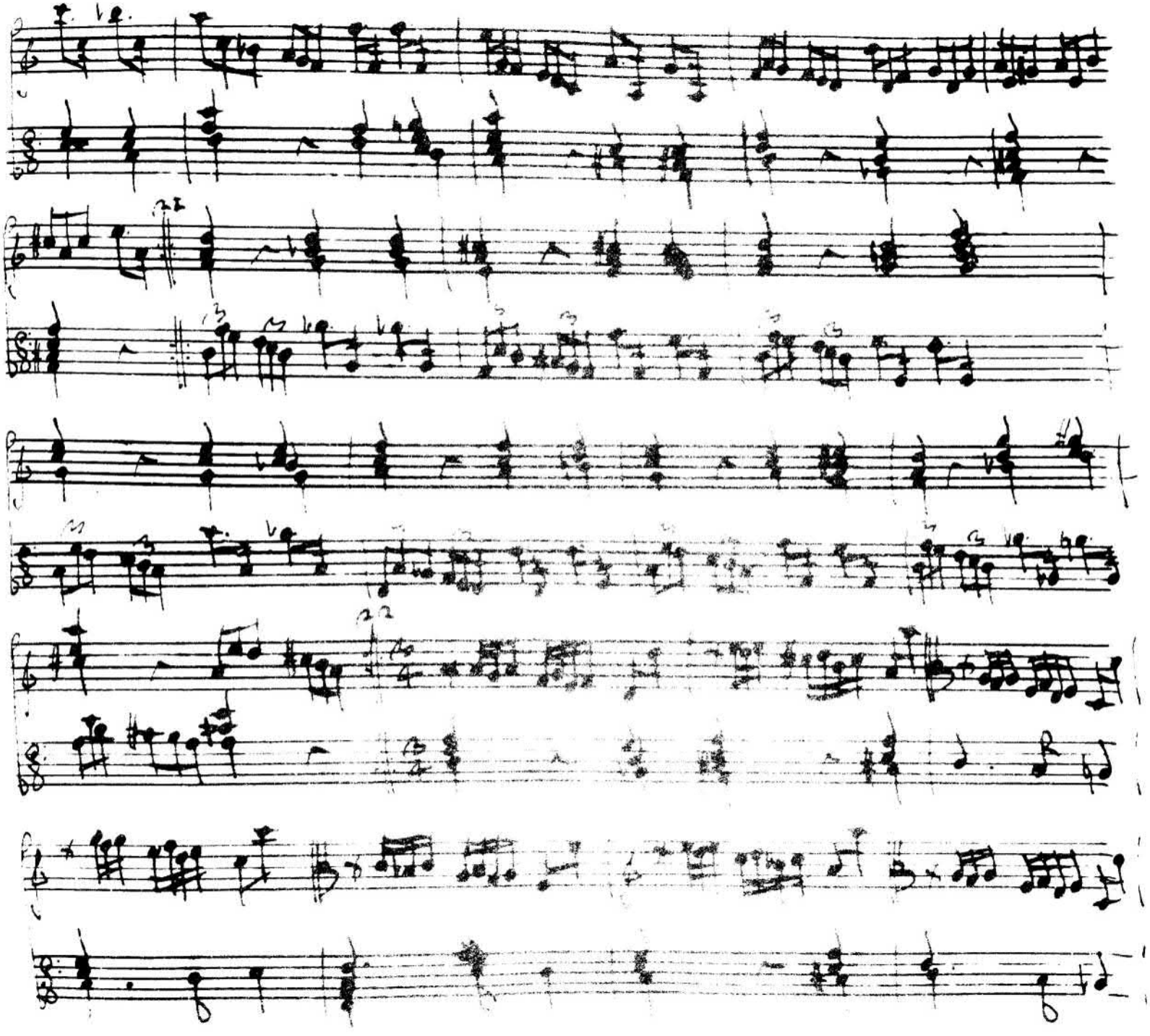

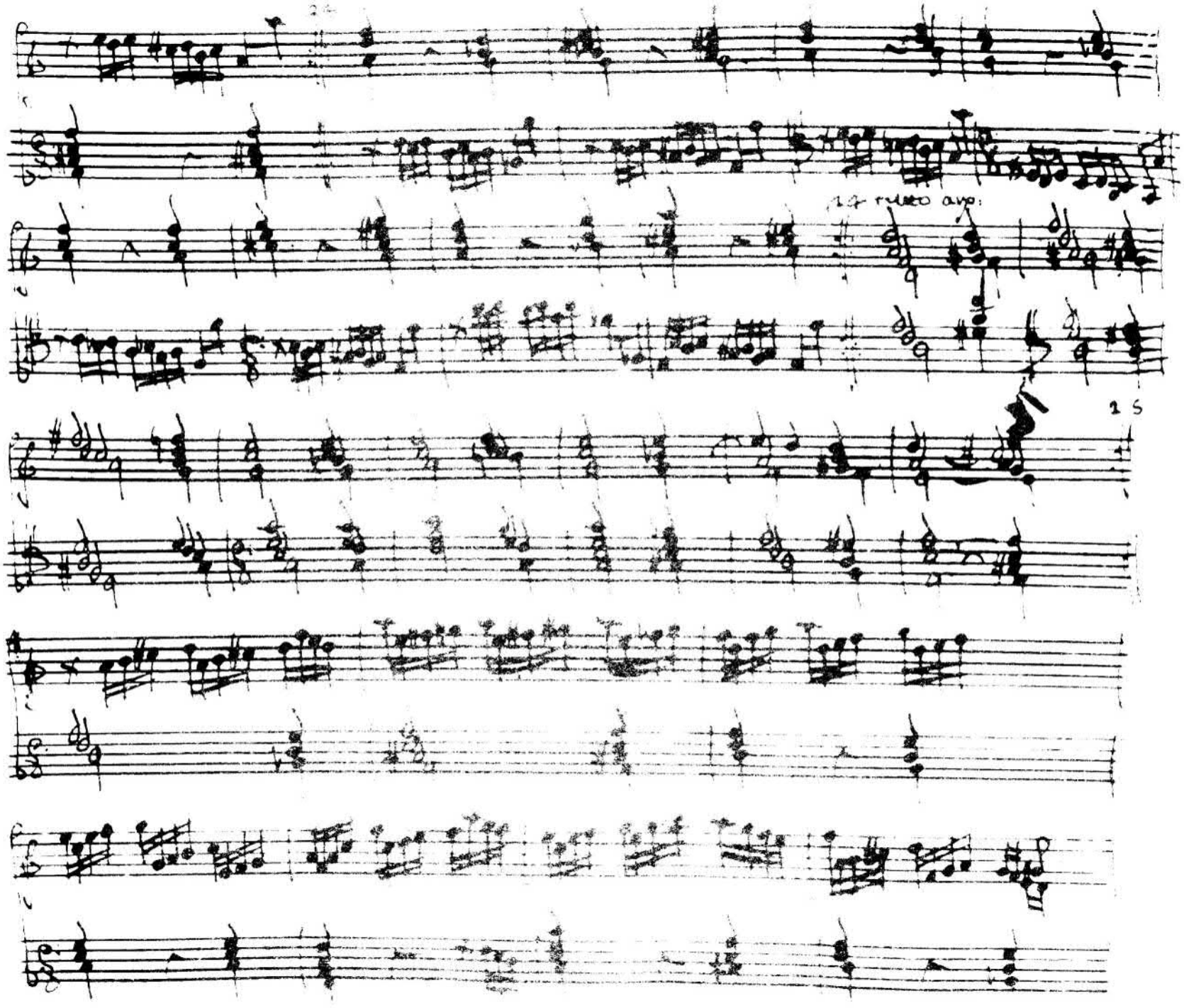
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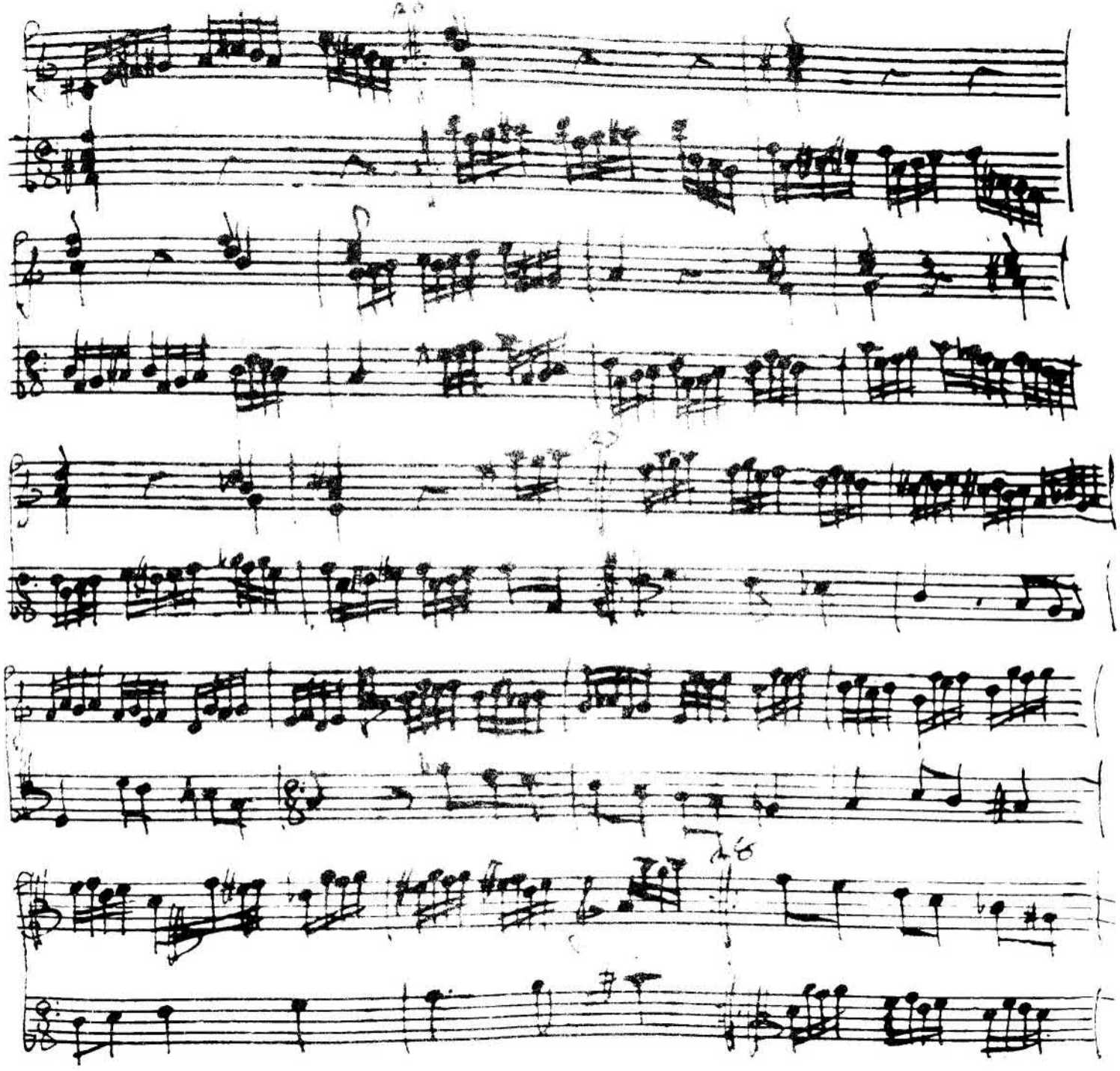

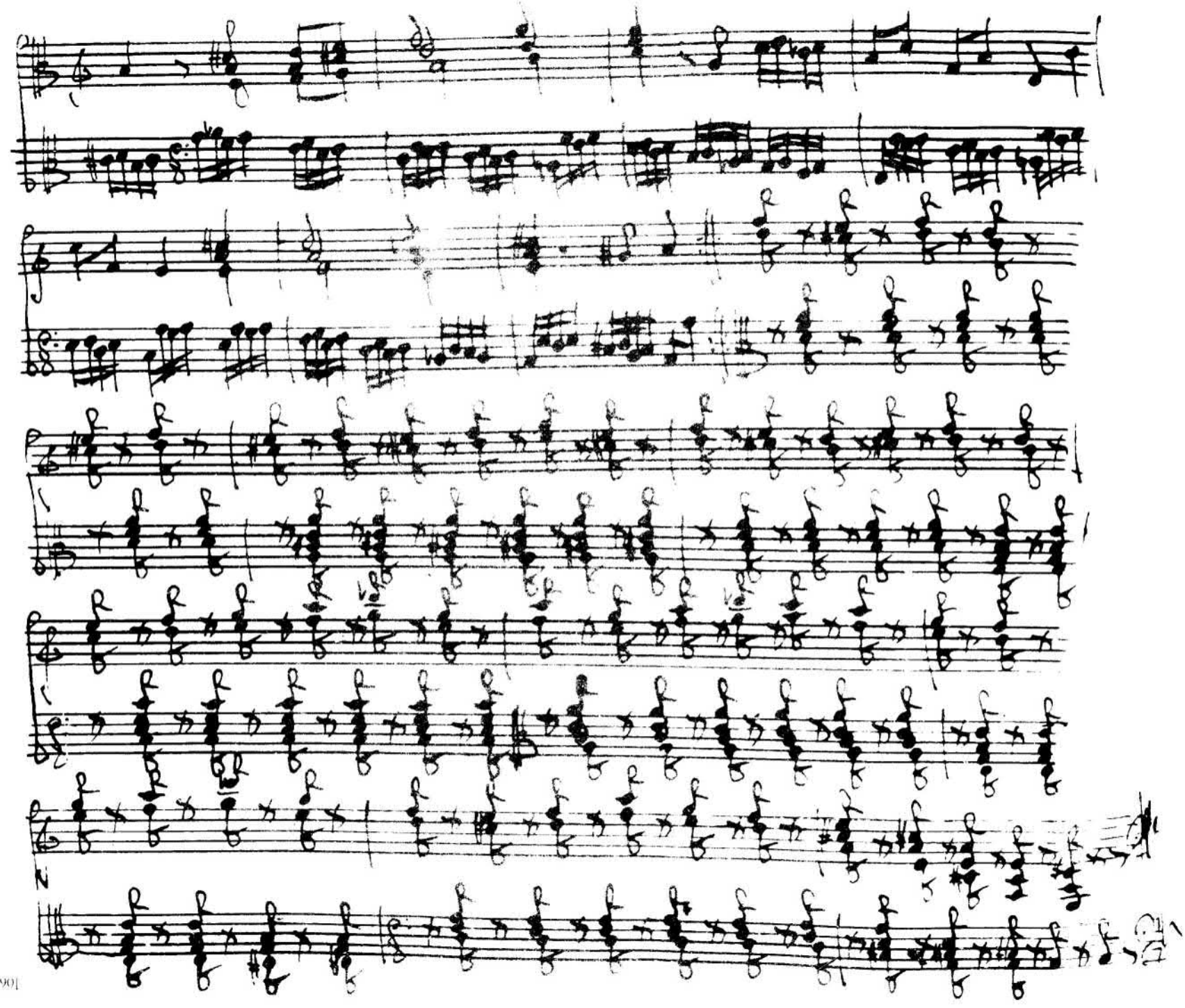

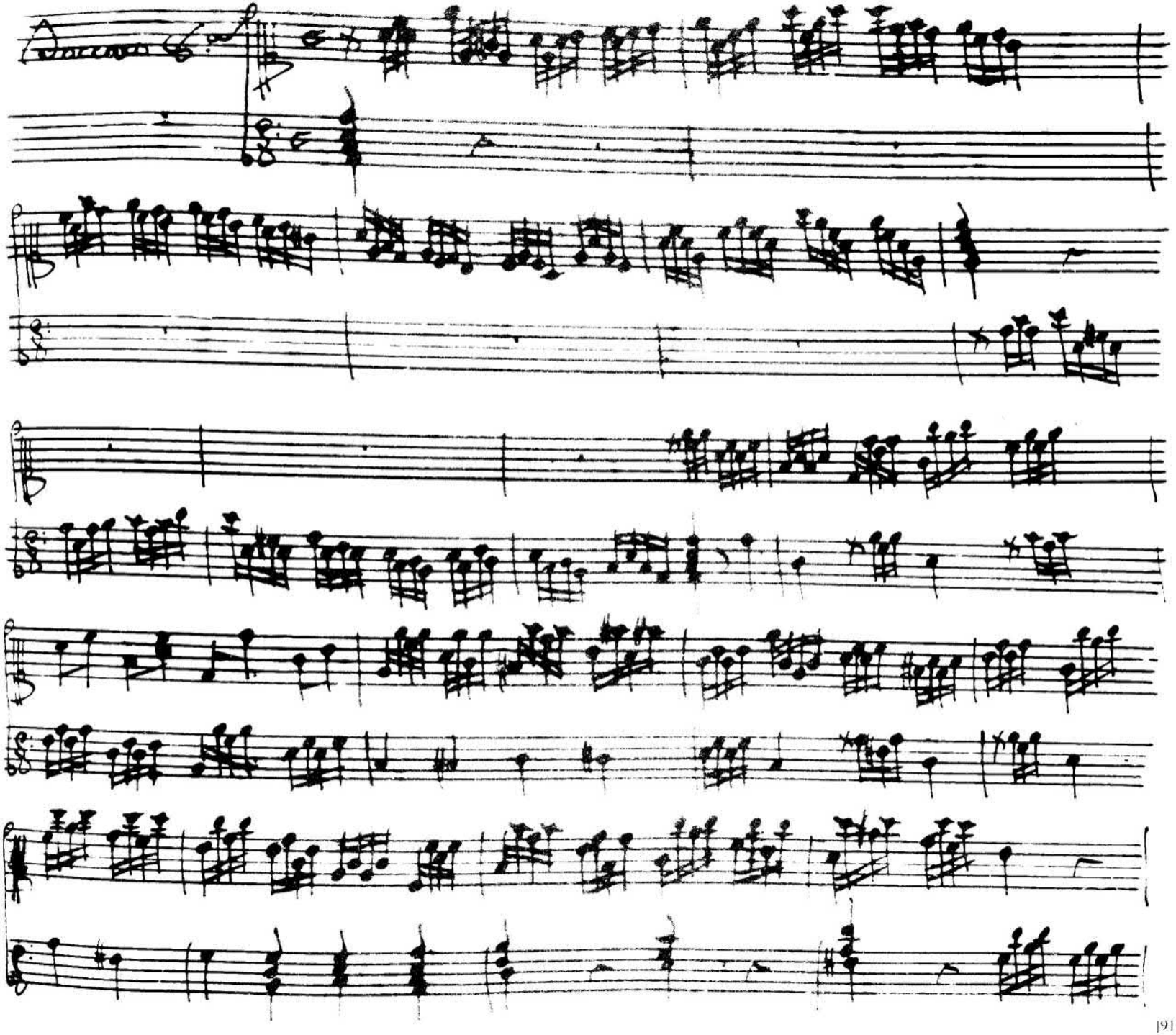

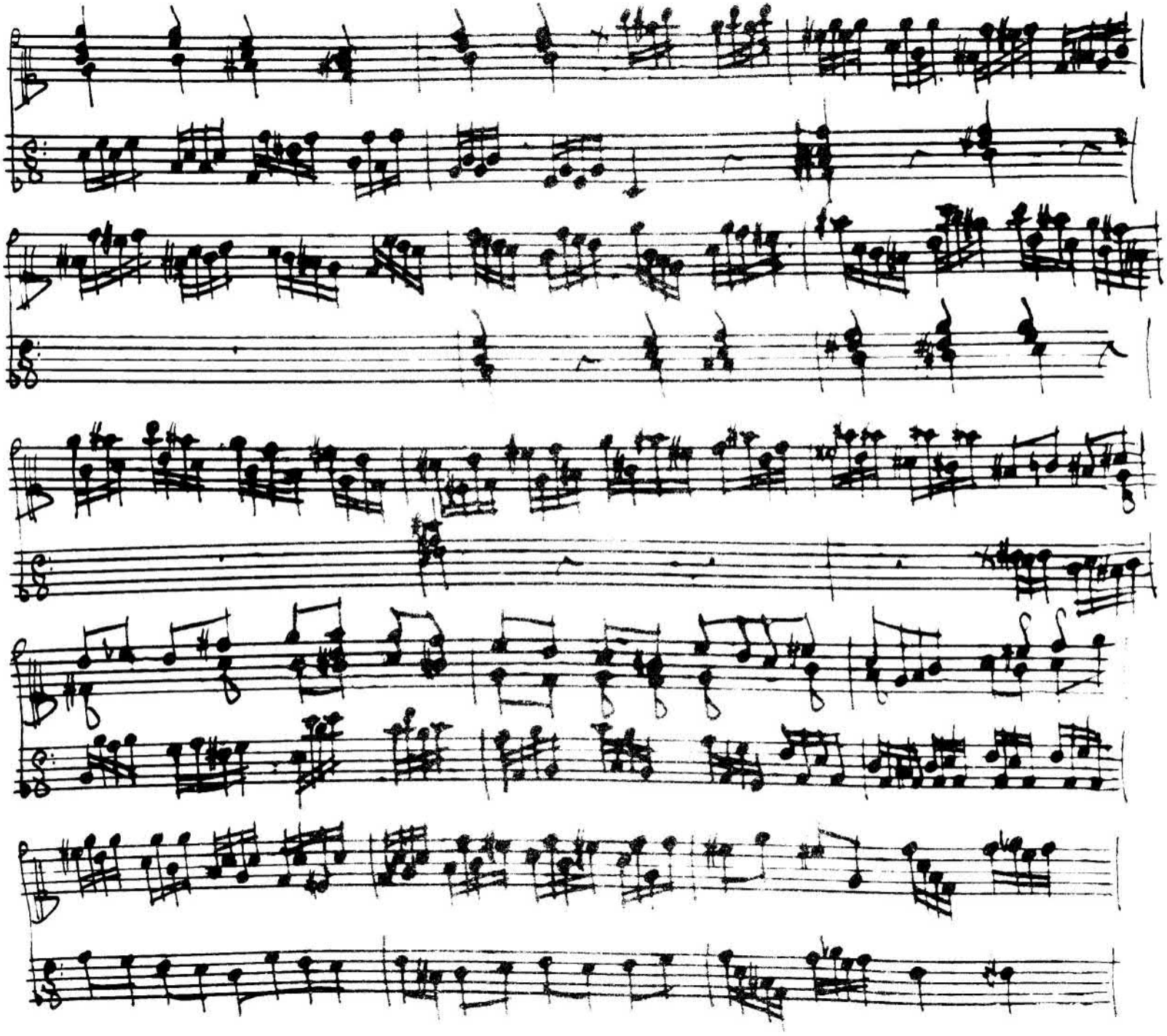

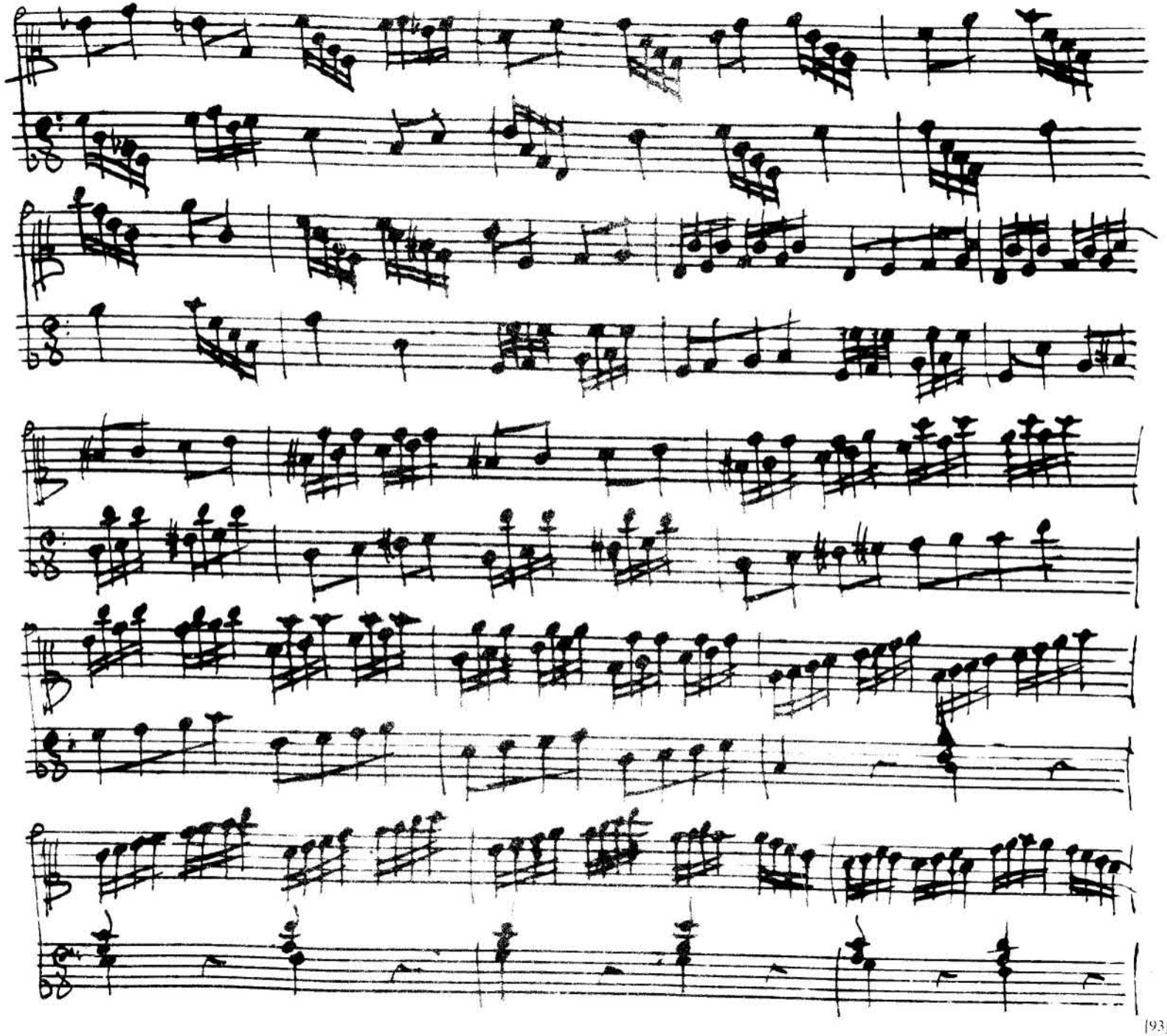

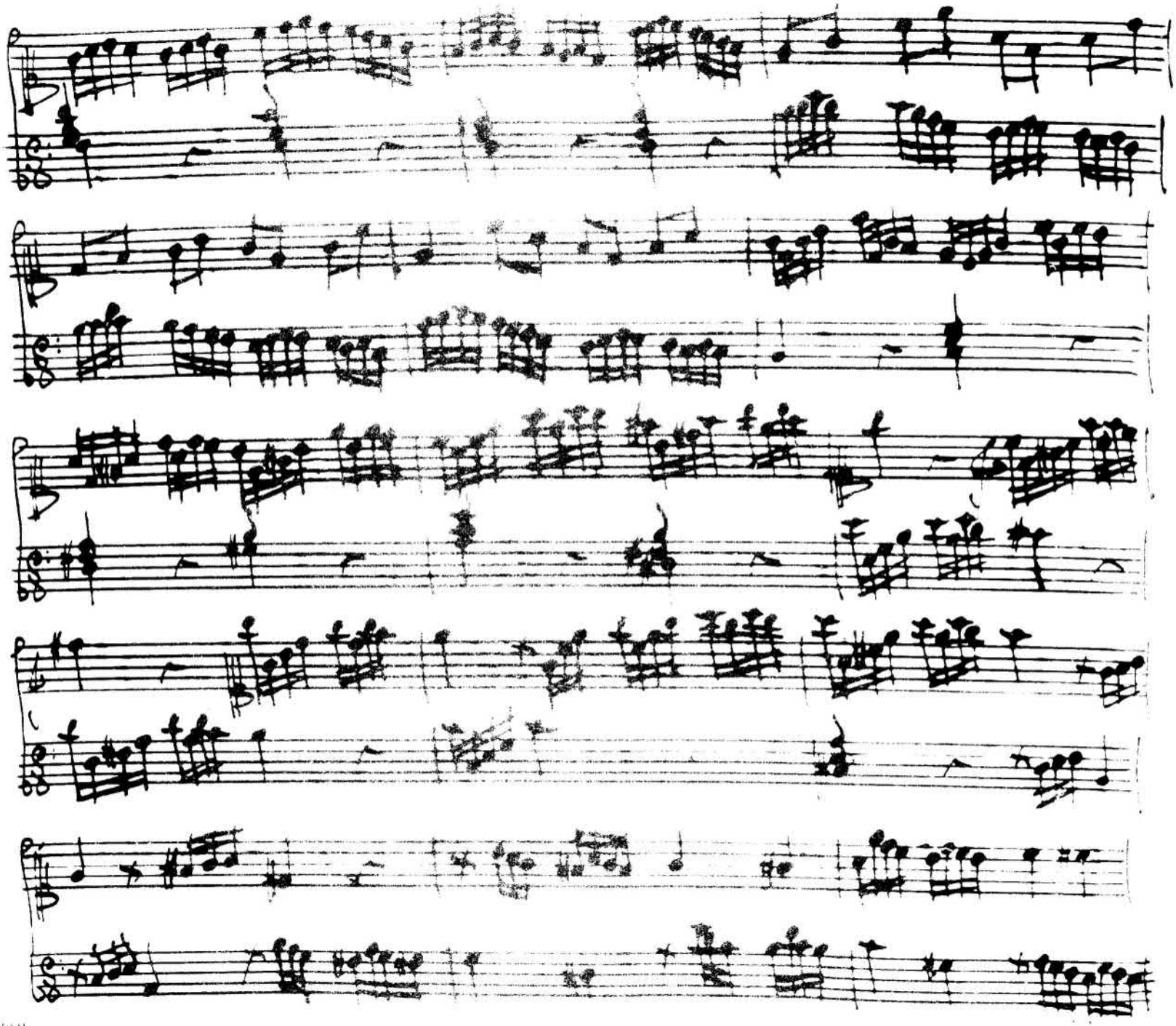

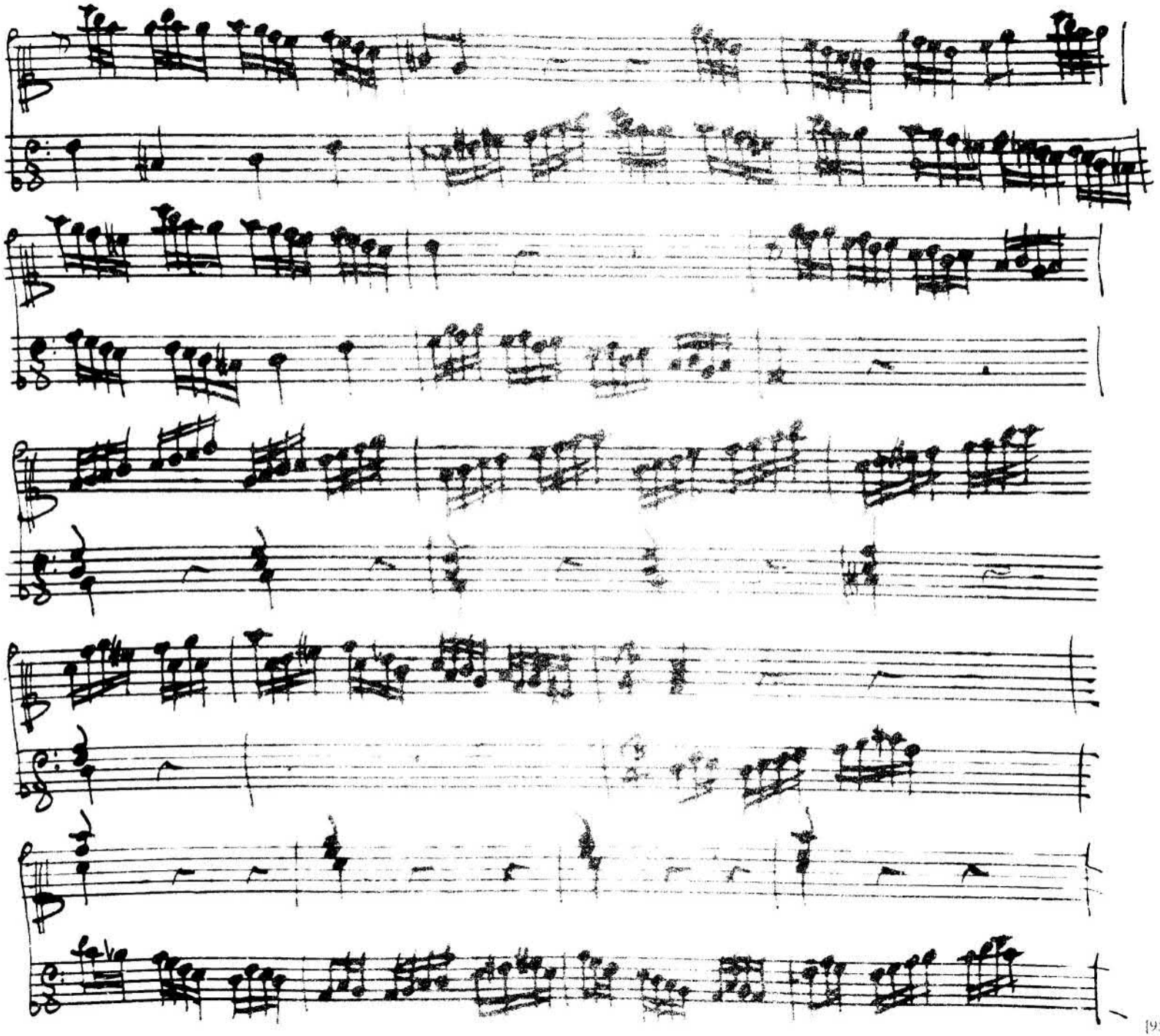

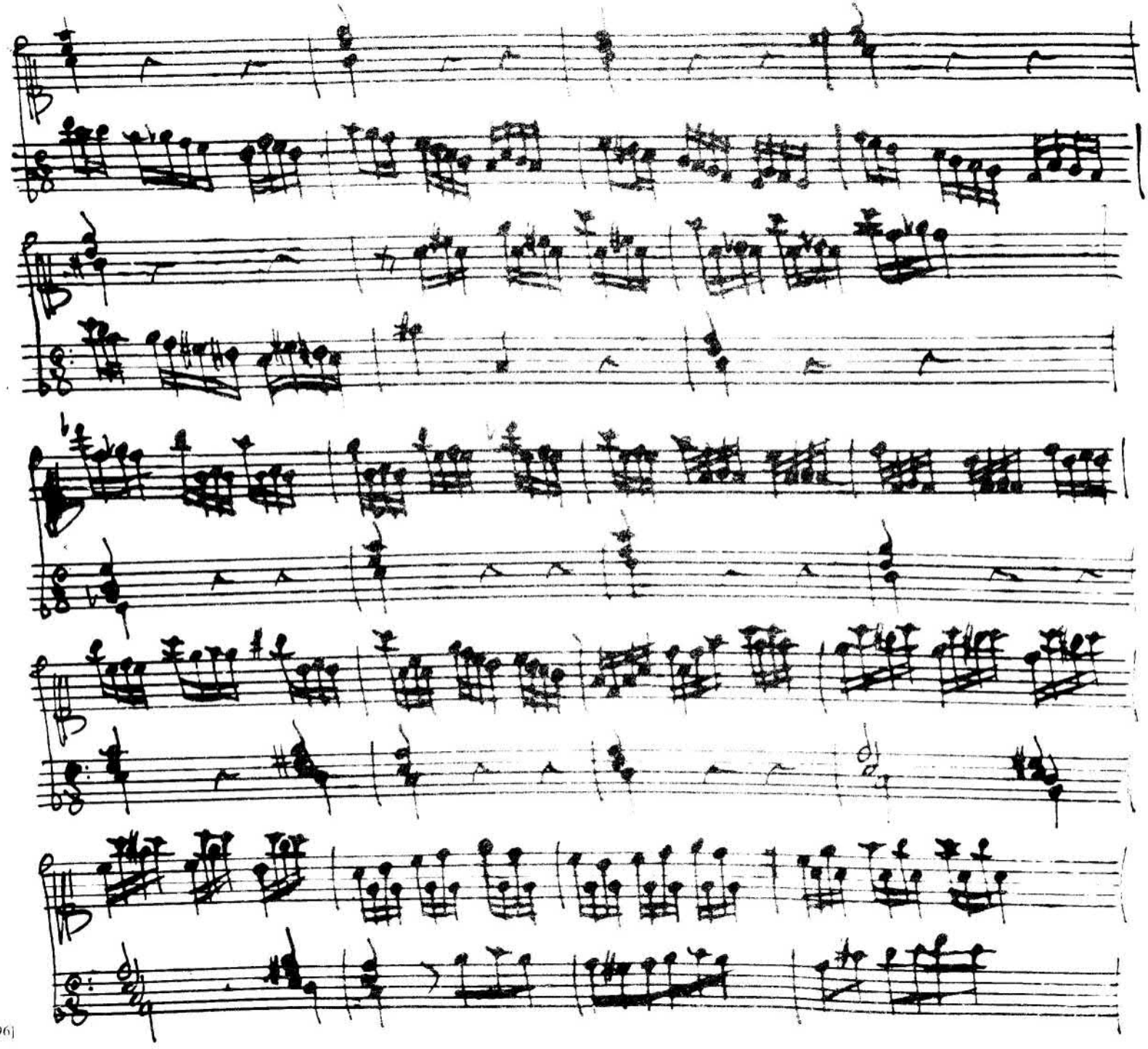

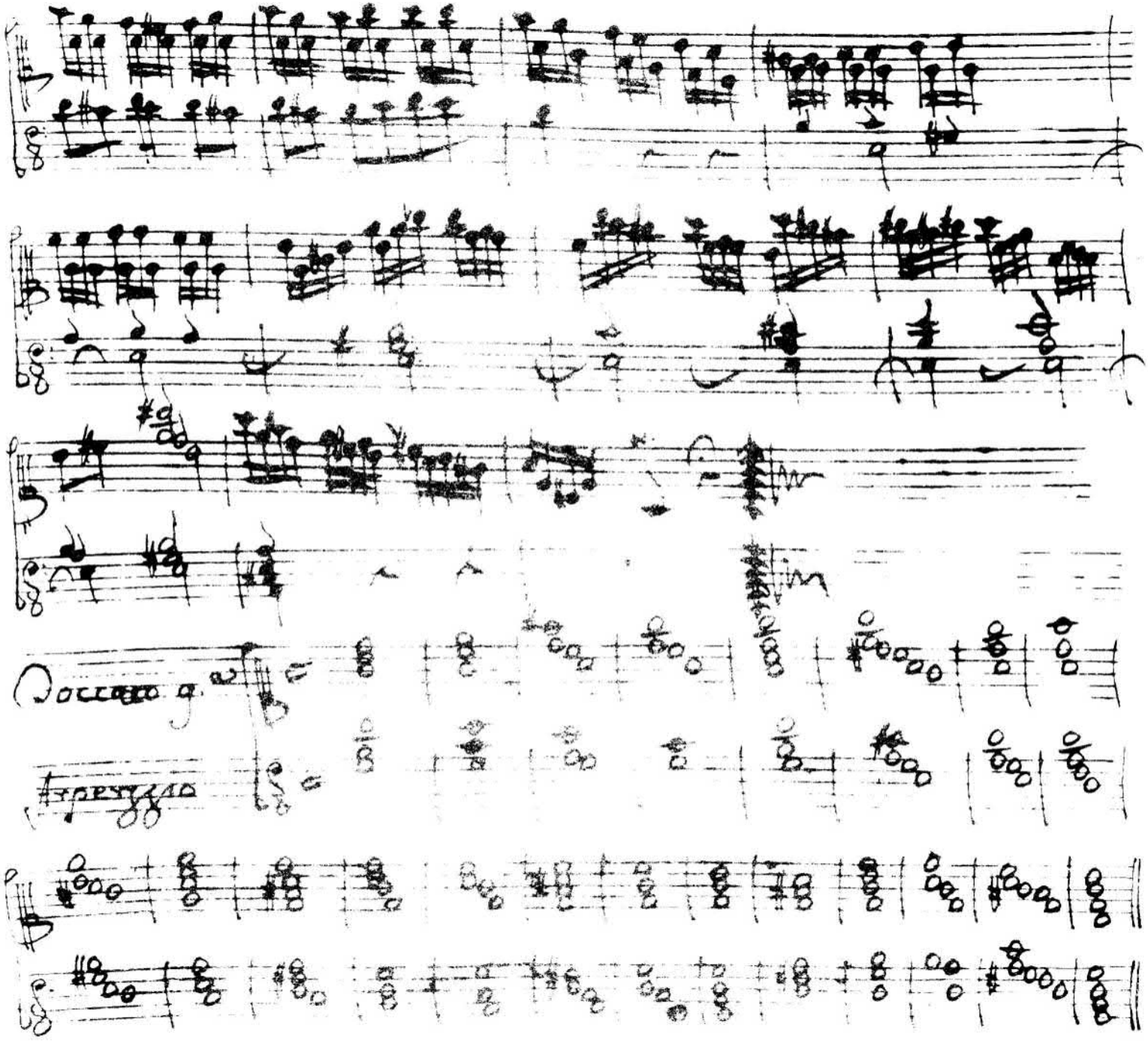

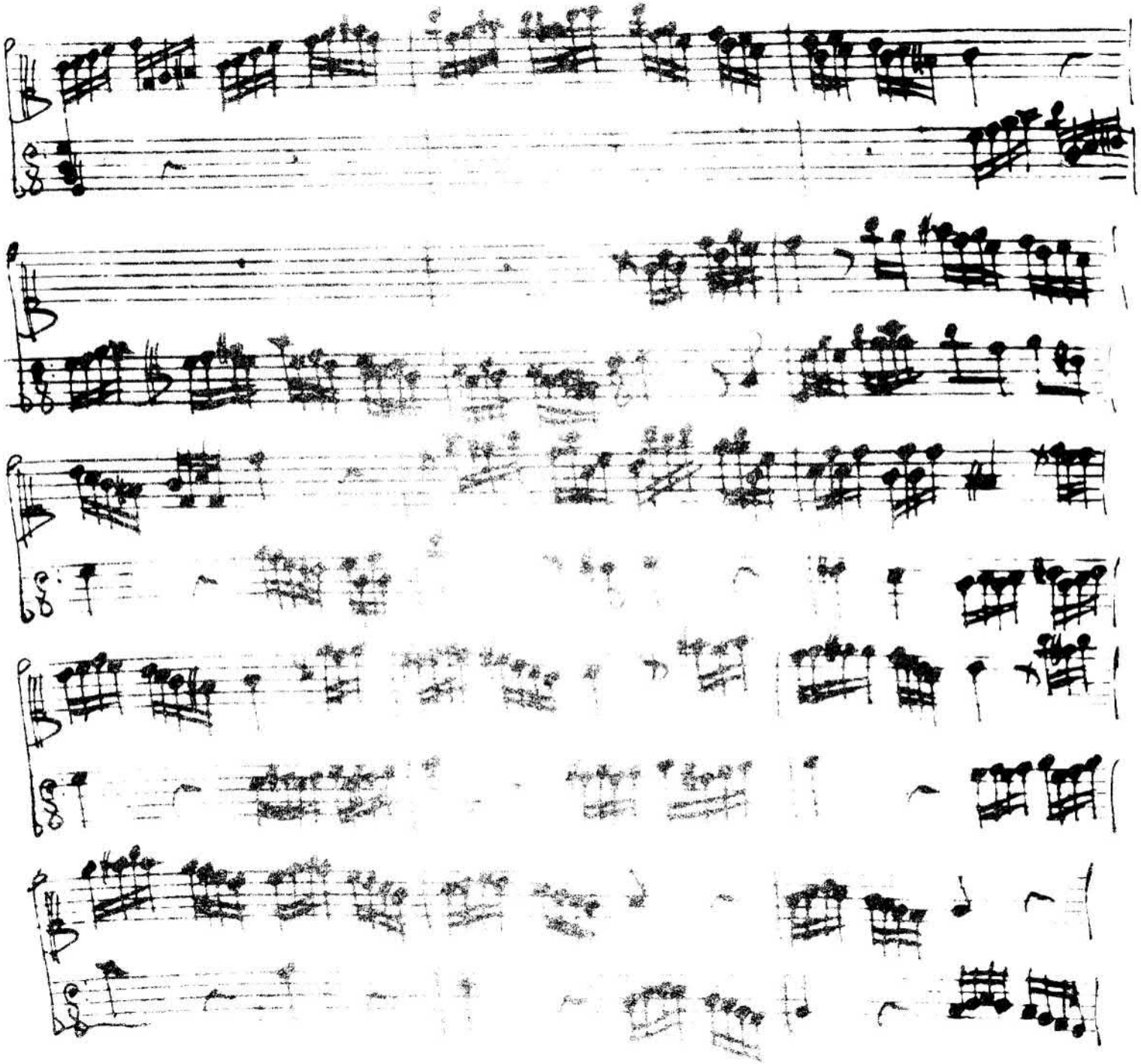

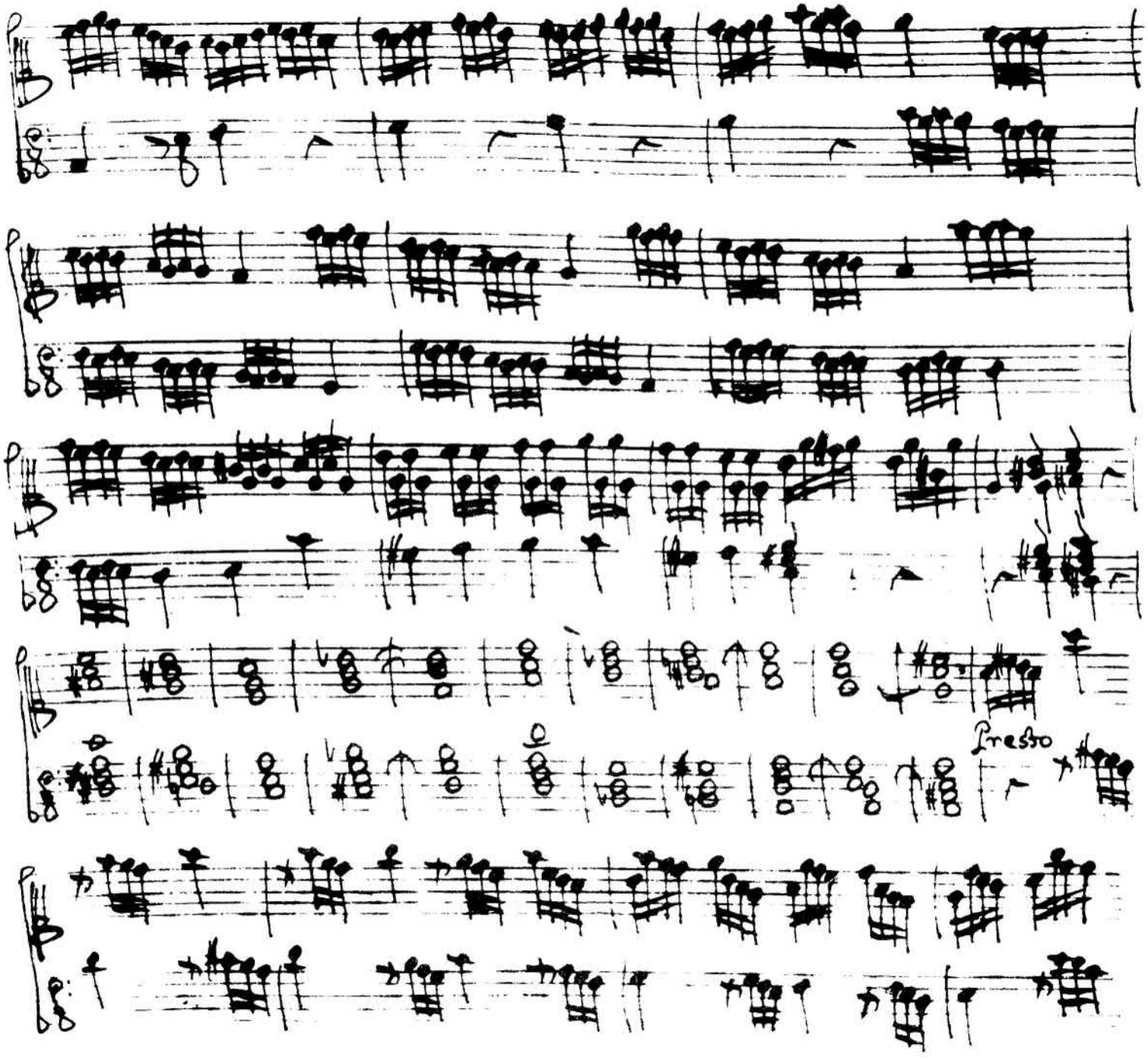
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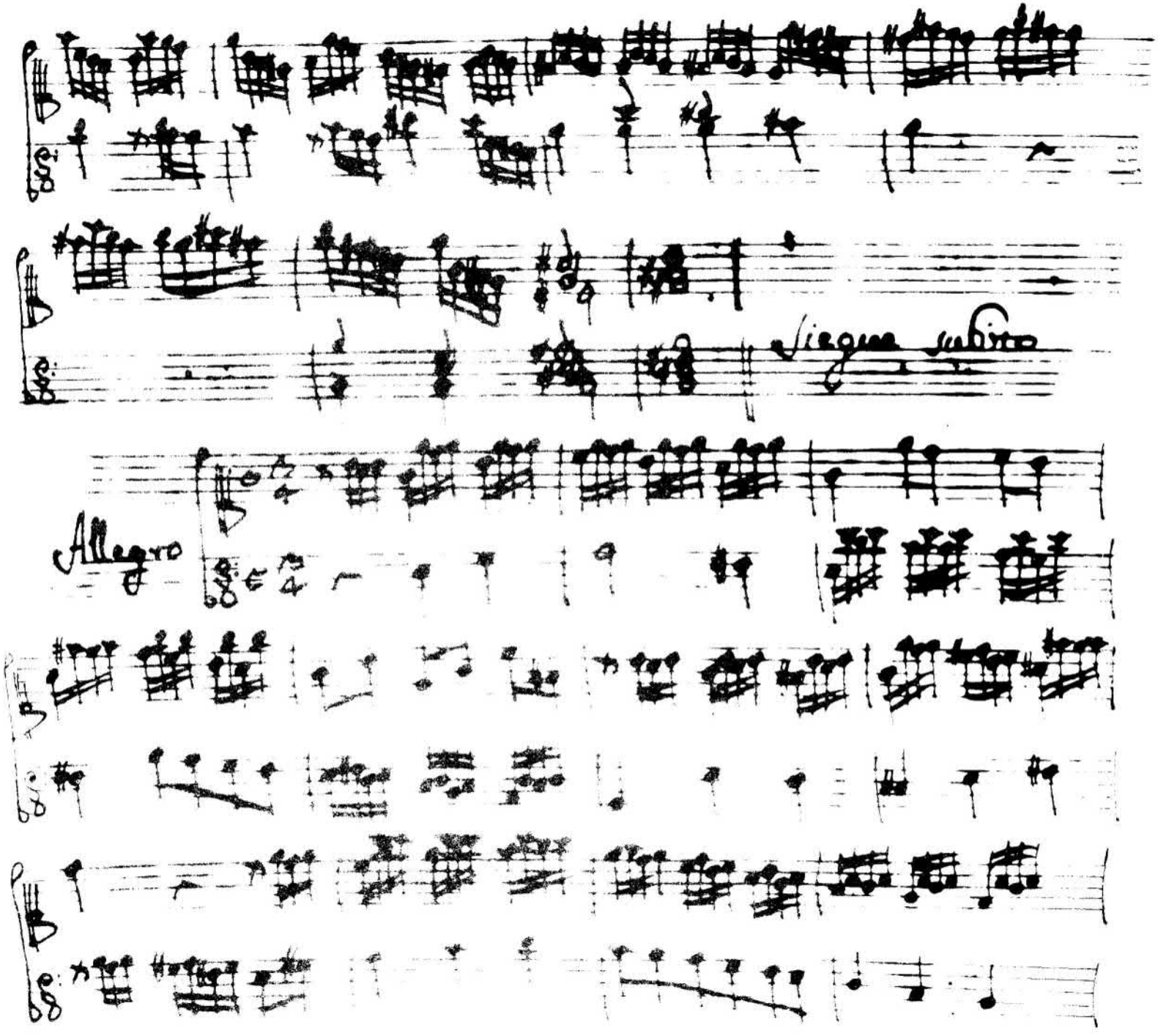
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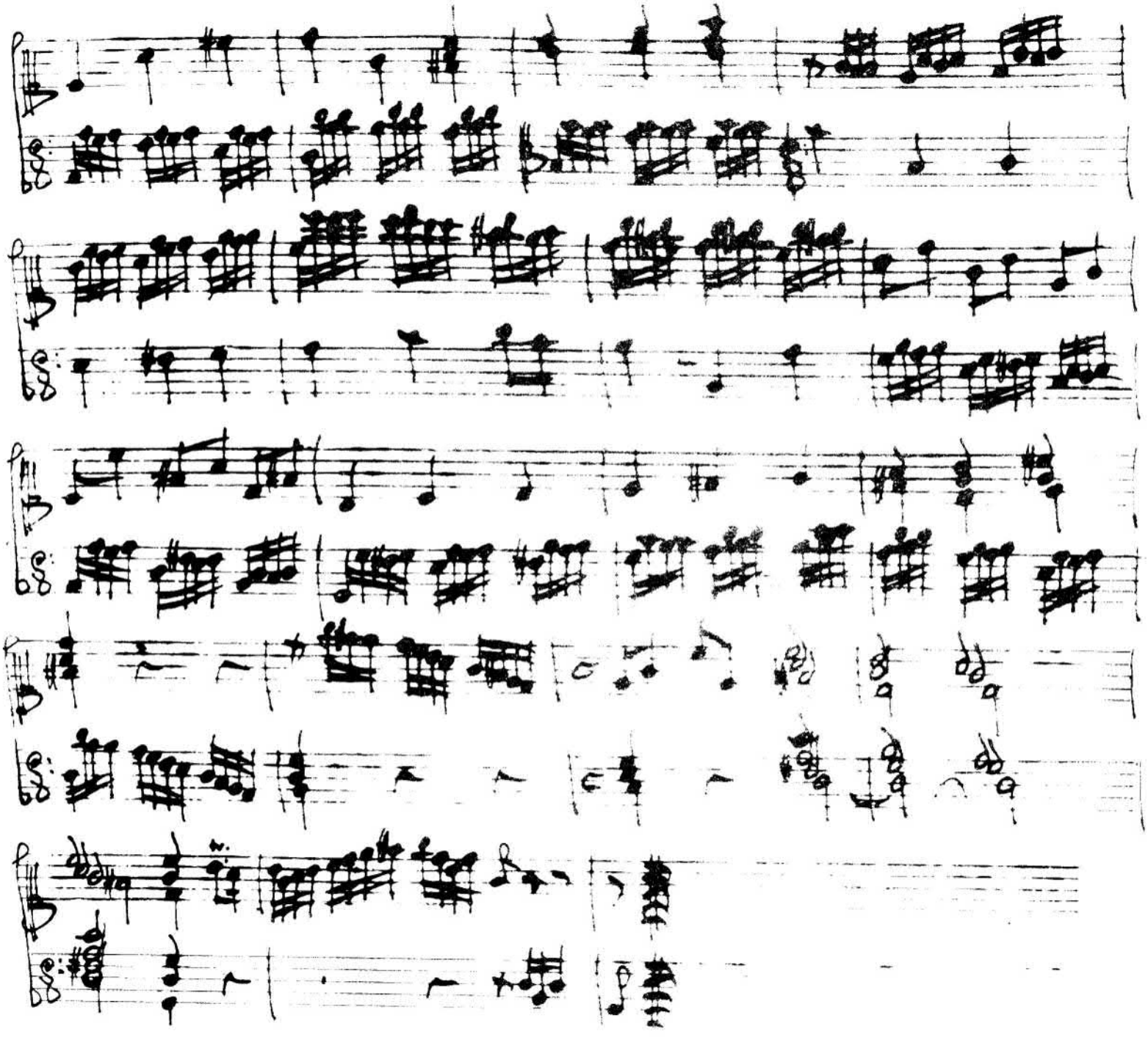

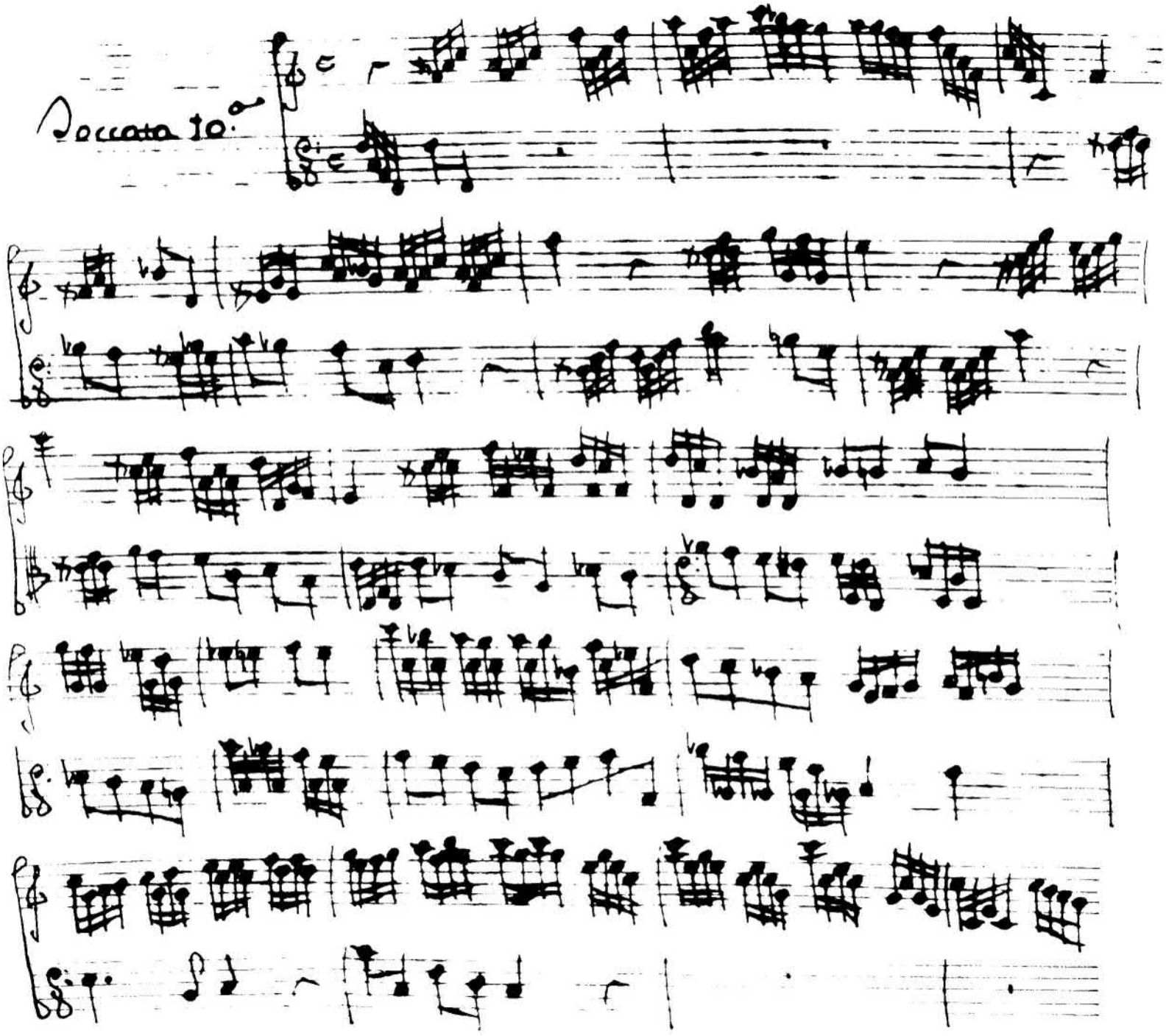
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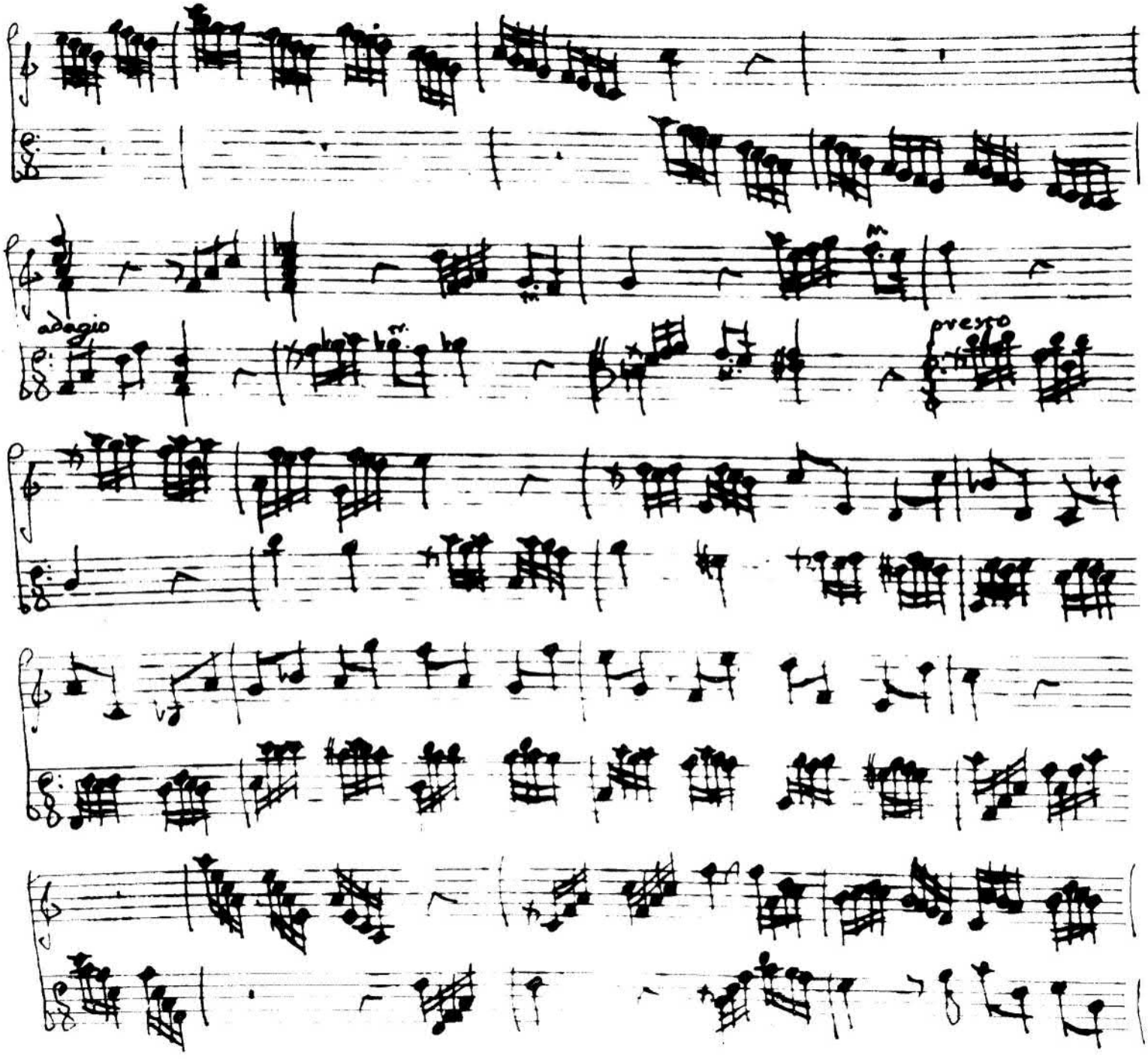
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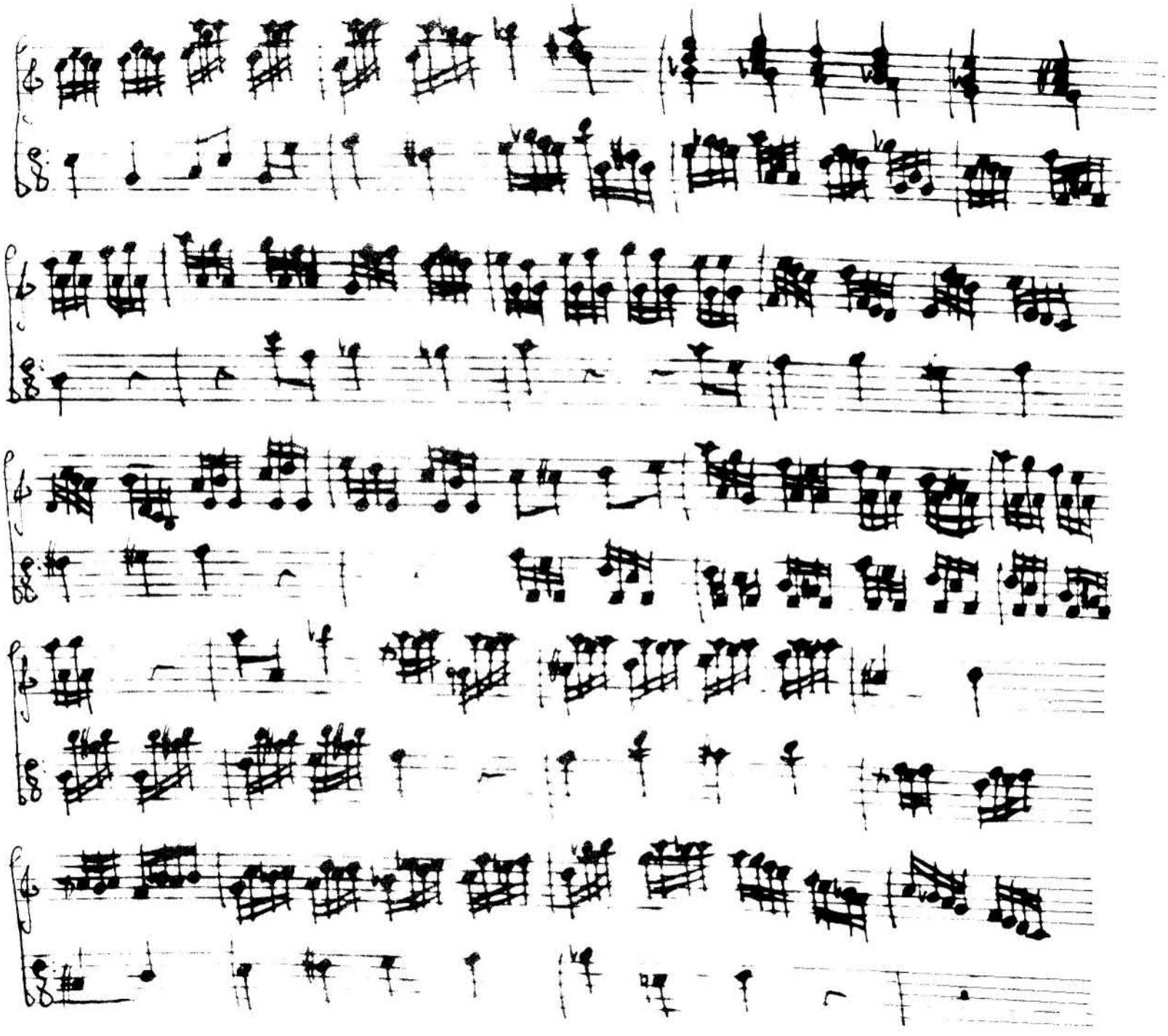

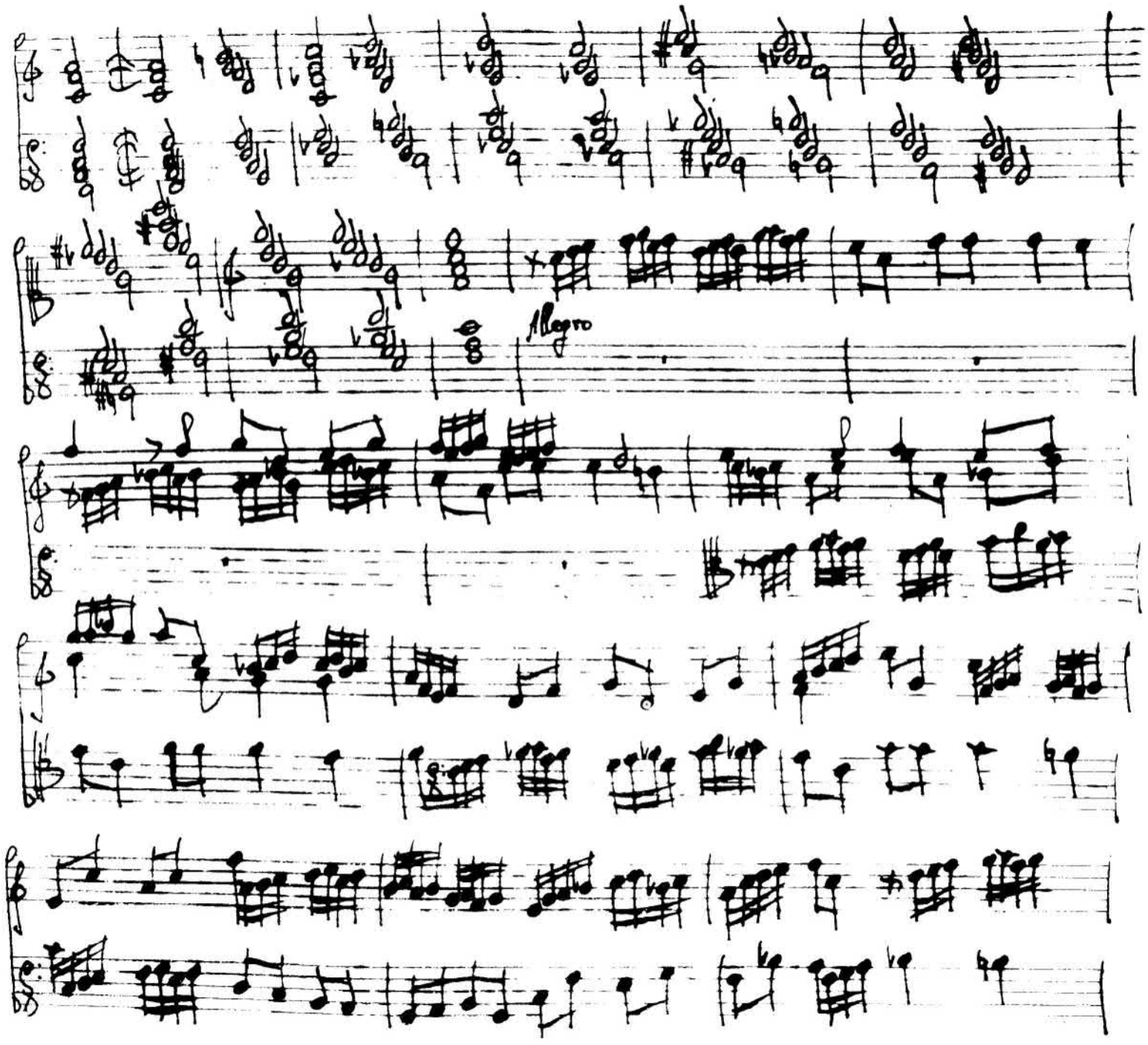
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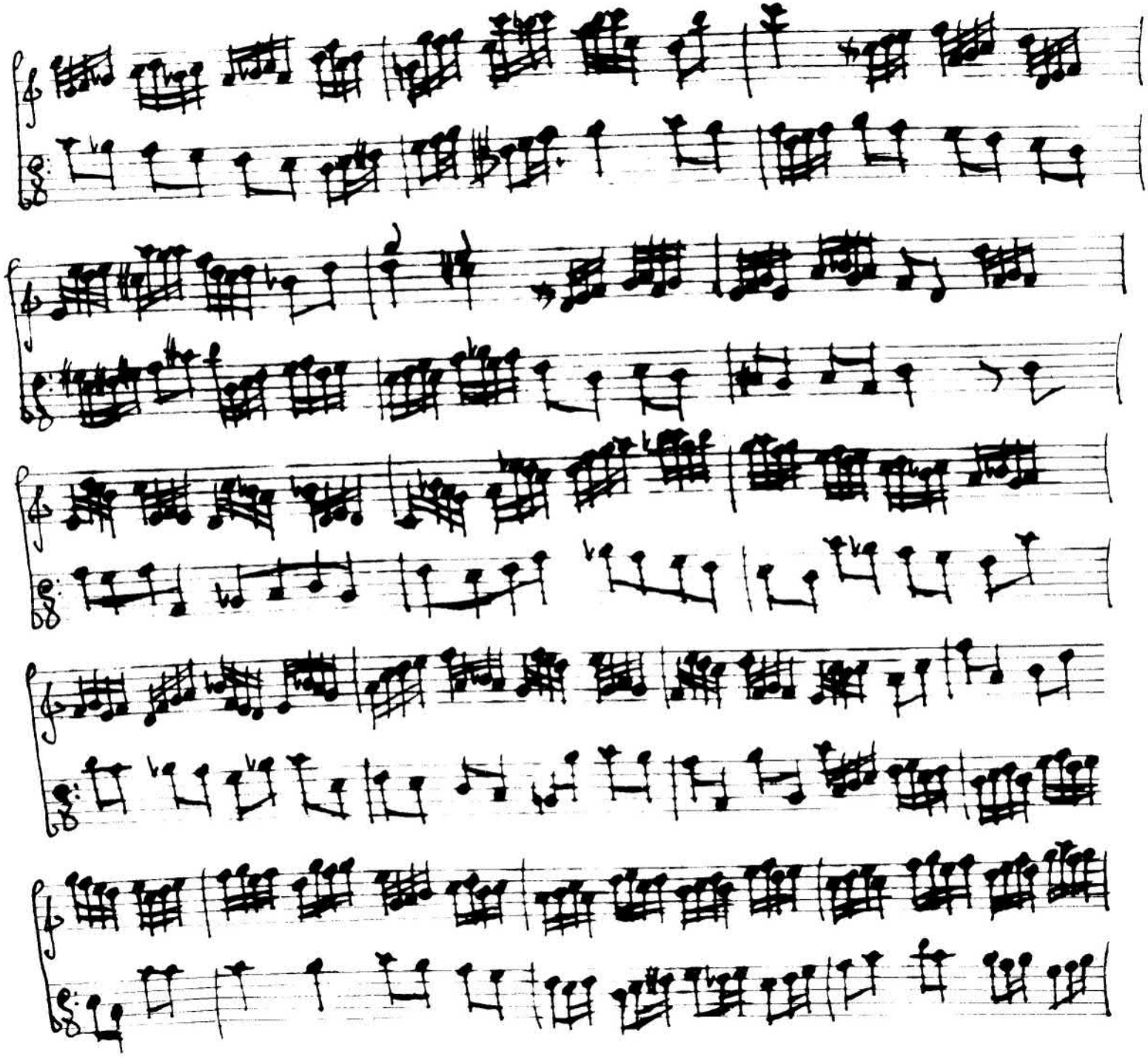

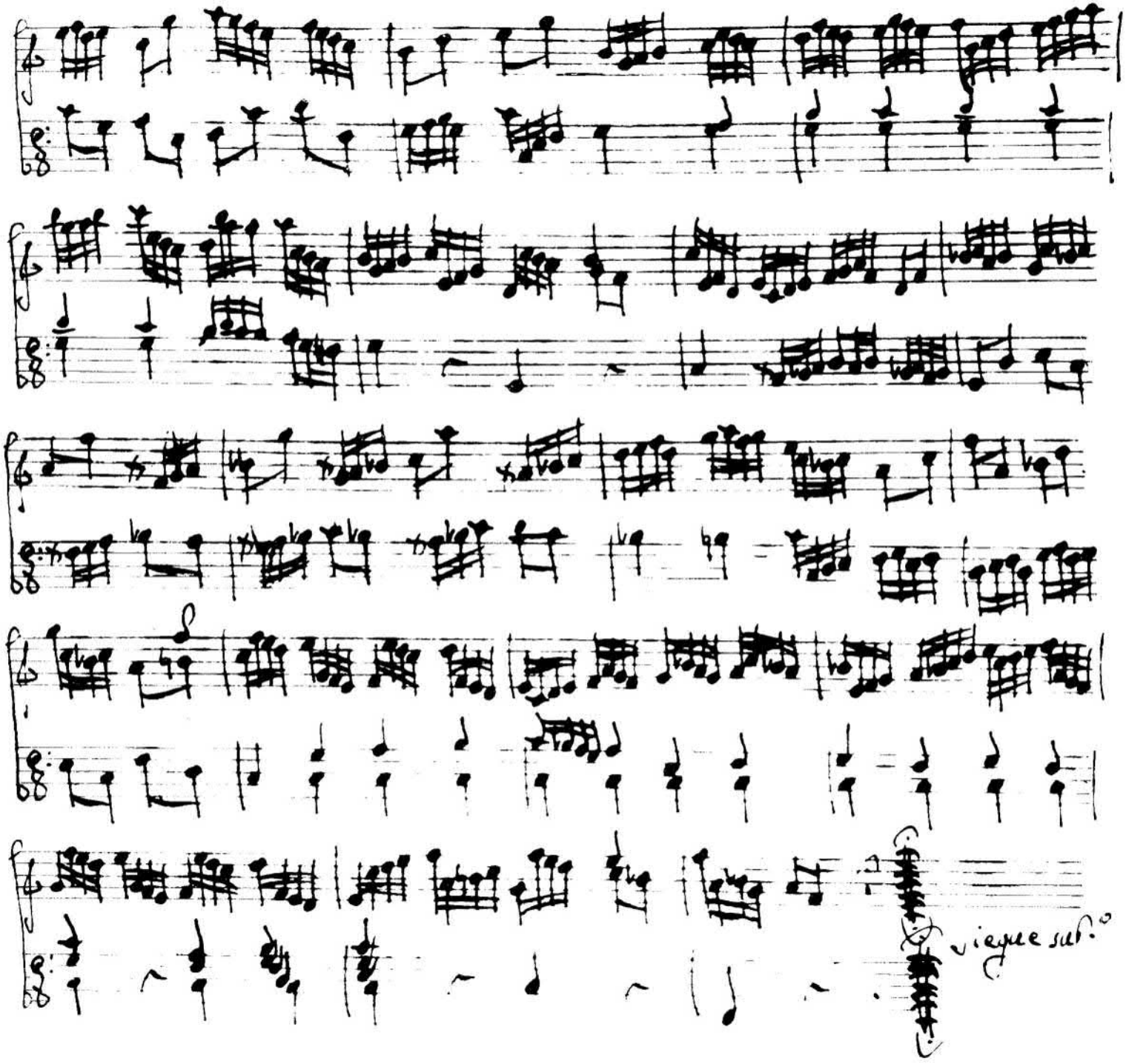
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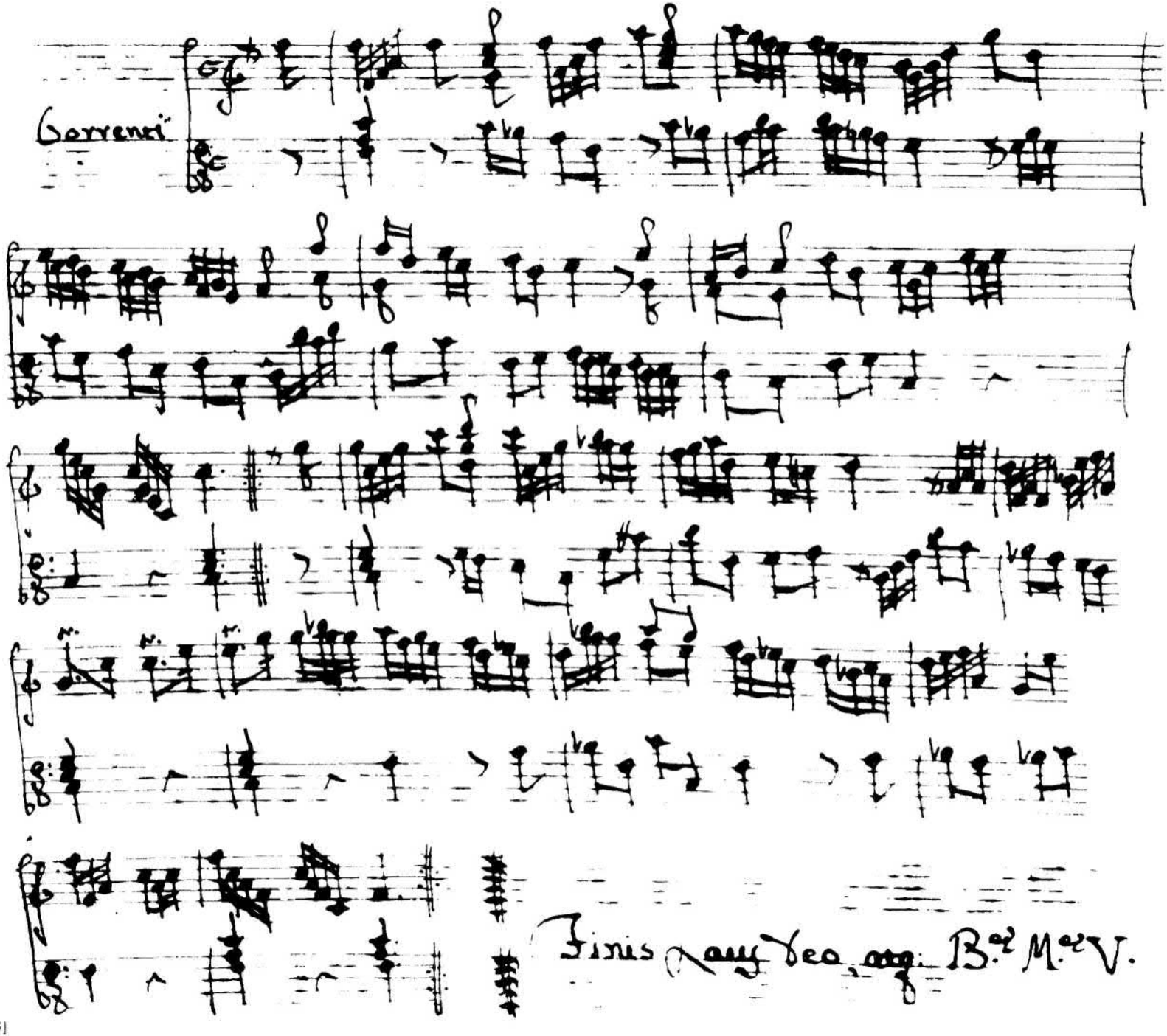
Gerrem

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