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# Elements of Dance in the Work of J. S. Bach (English)

SUMMARY

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A significant portion of Bach's body of repertoire is rooted in dance music, with nearly 200 identified compositions or segments of suites characterized by dance rhythms. These works are designed for both orchestral groups and solo instruments, including the harpsichord, violin, or cello. In recent decades, the examination of these compositions has garnered attention among scholars of Baroque music. For the first time in history, perhaps, musicians and dancers have collaborated, merging their artistic insights to explore the dance elements inherent in J. S. Bach's oeuvre. As a result, the historical interplay between dance and music has emerged as a topic of considerable interest from both musicological and choreographic perspectives.

Numerous compositions attributed to Bach, despite lacking explicit titles that denote the Baroque dances prevalent during that era, are fundamentally rooted in the structural and rhythmic elements typical of such dances. Johann Philipp Kirnberger, a student of J. S. Bach, underscores the significance of engaging with the dance repertoire in the study of these works:

*In order to acquire the knowledge necessary for a correct performance, the artist must play the pieces with dance character. Each of them has its own rhythm, its own character and typical accents; thus they are easy to recognize, and by learning them the artist gets accustomed to distinguish all the rhythms and to perform them with their characteristic elements, so that later in longer pieces it will be easy for us to recognize them. In this way the musician also learns to perform each piece with the appropriate character, because each dance piece has its own rhythm and character.* (Kirnberger, J. P. - *Receuil d'Airs de danses caractéristiques, pour servir de modèle aux jeunes compositeurs, et d'exercice à ceux qui touchent le clavecin*, 1788, Jean Julien Hummel Berlin, pag. 1-2, [https://ks15.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/1/18/IMSLP364102-PMLP587944-kirnberger\\_Recueil\\_d'airs\\_de\\_danses\\_caractéristiques.pdf](https://ks15.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/1/18/IMSLP364102-PMLP587944-kirnberger_Recueil_d'airs_de_danses_caractéristiques.pdf)).

In 1685, the year of J. S. Bach's birth, Germany was in the process of recuperating from the devastation of the Thirty Years' War. This era of social and economic revitalization characterized Bach's entire life. Conversely, France implemented policies that fostered the arts during this time, leading to a vibrant cultural scene. Consequently, the arts, particularly French dance and etiquette, emerged as a standard of excellence in the post-war landscape across various European nations, including Germany. Thus, in Germany, French dance came to symbolize affluence and refined sophistication, representing an aspiration during this period of recovery.

During the lifetime of J. S. Bach, it was customary for the various German courts to employ their own dance masters. The courts of Weimar and Köthen, in particular, hired professional dancers to instruct the aristocracy in the French dance style. Notable musicians of the 18th century often began their careers as dance instructors; among them were Pantaleon Hebenstreit, who later served as *Cammer-Musicus* at the Dresden court, and Jean-Baptiste Woulmier, who became the concertmaster of the Dresdner Kapelle in 1709. The life stories and artistic trajectories of these musicians indicate that performing dance music was a significant aspect of their duties at court.

The period during which the young Johann Sebastian resided in Lüneburg as a student at the *Michaelisschule* holds significant relevance regarding the French influence on his development. It was in this environment that he encountered French artistic traditions, cultural practices, and social customs for the first time.

The educational program at this institution encompassed the standard subjects prevalent during the period, including theology, philosophy, ethics, politics, history, mathematics, physics, and French. Furthermore, the *Michaelisschule* serves as a cornerstone of the French tradition, offering additional activities such as fencing, equestrianism, and ballroom dancing. Consequently, the curriculum is tailored to reflect an aristocratic ethos and the expectations associated with such a lifestyle. Within this framework, Johann Sebastian not only acquires proficiency in the French language, which is the medium of instruction, but also engages with French customs and social etiquette.

In Lüneburg, Johann Sebastian will encounter Georg Böhm, a pivotal figure in his life, who will significantly influence the trajectory of his musical development.

Böhm's musical compositions that had a significant impact on Johann Sebastian Bach are featured in two volumes compiled by Johann Christoph Bach in the early 18th century: the *Andreas-Bach-Buch* and the *Möllersche Handschrift*. These collections encompass 64 pieces by various composers from the 17th and 18th centuries, which Johann Sebastian encountered during his formative years. The diversity and richness of the musical literature presented in these volumes illustrate the breadth of musical language that Johann Sebastian absorbed in his youth, exposing him to the styles of composers from different regions, including Dietrich Buxtehude, Johann Adam Reinken, Johann Kuhnau, Jean-Baptiste Lully, Tommaso Albinoni, and Agostino Steffani. Notably, several of Georg Böhm's prominent works are included in these collections. Additionally, the volumes feature compositions by French composers such as Nicolas Le Bègue, whose *Pièces de clavessin*, and suites by François Dieupart are also present. It is highly probable that Böhm, through these early studies, fostered in Bach a lasting enthusiasm for dance music and a particular appreciation for French musical aesthetics.

This doctoral dissertation originated from a deep personal fascination with the keyboard repertoire of J. S. Bach. Over the years, I, like many musicians, have encountered similar challenges regarding interpretation. That is, because Bach's manuscripts offer minimal guidance on aspects such as tempo, dynamics, and articulation, rendering the exploration and mastery of this repertoire a highly intricate and extensive endeavor. While elements like tempo, dynamics, and articulation are integral to the daily practice routine of any musician, they acquire distinct significance within the context of baroque music. Regarding the interpretative dimension of Bach's repertoire, it is noteworthy that no two recordings of the same composition adhere to identical interpretative principles. Despite their differences, each interpretation possesses its own system and rationale, often leading to contrasting yet logically coherent approaches. At such moments, this raises a pertinent question: can we identify a consistent set of principles to guide us in formulating an interpretative framework?

Similar challenges are evident within Bach's dance repertoire, albeit to a more pronounced extent, as a significant number of musicians lack familiarity with the structural intricacies of various Baroque dances, their metrical characteristics, and the distinctive choreographic elements associated thereto. It is my assertion that a thorough examination and understanding of these components is essential for establishing a coherent, articulate, and historically accurate musical framework.

Simultaneously, I have had the immense privilege of working alongside esteemed ballet companies and dancers from various regions across the globe. While I have yet to produce any baroque works, I have observed, throughout the rehearsal process, several shared characteristics between the realms of music and choreography. These observations range from fundamental aspects such as the metrical framework of a composition and the rationale behind pauses, to the nuances of musical phrasing that enhance the accompanying choreographic movements.

The theme of this doctoral thesis emerges from the intersection of my personal interest in exploring the interpretative dimensions of Bach's repertoire and the insights acquired through collaborative experiences with ballet companies. Consequently, the focus of this research is on the incorporation of dance elements within the compositions of J. S. Bach.

This thesis addresses a wide-ranging subject matter by encompassing both musical and choreographic research **domains**. The primary **objective** of this work is to integrate the various historical and artistic dimensions associated with these fields. It is posited that a comprehensive awareness of the existing historical data and resources will significantly enrich the interpretative framework, rendering it more nuanced and informed.

One of the primary **objectives** of this study is to establish a systematic approach to musical interpretation, drawing from the often precarious notations found in the manuscripts of composer J. S. Bach. Musicians who seek to explore the piano compositions within Bach's body of work will encounter a multitude of profound musical challenges from the very beginning. These challenges arise from three key factors: first, the manuscripts and scores that lack sufficient musical annotations; second, the diverse and frequently conflicting advice provided by instructors; and third, the plethora of audio and video resources available, which complicates the pianist's ability to formulate a coherent interpretative strategy.

Another **objective** of this thesis is to enhance understanding and explore the structural components of Baroque dances and their associated step systems. In this regard, it is essential to clarify that while I address both musical and choreographic aspects, the focus of this work is rooted in a musician's perspective rather than that of a dancer. Consequently, the objective of this thesis is to expand the knowledge base from a musical interpretative standpoint. Throughout my musical career, I have approached the realm of dance music within the Bachian repertoire exclusively from a musical viewpoint, rather than through the lens of choreography or historical interpretative art.

The final **objective** is to enhance the understanding of historical performance art in relation to the *mainstream* performance practices. As previously noted, aspects such as tempo, dynamics, and articulation are integral to the daily activities of musicians. However, within the realm of Bachian performance art, these elements possess a significantly deeper and more intricate dimension compared to the performance of other repertoires, which often feature numerous annotations in manuscripts or other significant historical documents. Consequently, there are primarily two interpretative approaches to the Bachian repertoire: the classical (or *mainstream*) interpretation and the historical interpretation. These approaches diverge on multiple levels, particularly regarding sound aesthetics, with each approach embodying its own distinct universe and philosophical framework. In this discussion, I also highlight the limitations and specific characteristics of the

instruments available to J. S. Bach, for which he composed a substantial portion of his keyboard repertoire.

As far as **research methodology** is concerned, my doctoral studies over the past few years have been significantly influenced by a diverse array of scientific and academic literature, alongside the practical experiences of prominent contemporary musicians, including classical performers, harpsichordists, and baroque violinists. Furthermore, the artistic collaborations I have established with dancers and choreographers from esteemed institutions such as the Vienna State Ballet, Hamburg Ballett, New York City Ballet, and Semperoper in Dresden have provided me with a fresh and invaluable perspective on the choreographic dimensions of my research.

From both a musical and pianistic perspective, significant sources of inspiration have included engagement in a variety of workshops, concerts, recitals, master classes, and dialogues with diverse artists. Furthermore, the acquisition of musical knowledge and information has consistently undergone rigorous scientific and academic validation. In this regard, I refer to research platforms such as Jstor, Oxford Academic, and the Journal of the American Musicological Society, along with numerous scholarly publications and media resources cited in the bibliography.

The framework of the study commenced with an in-depth examination of the French and English Suites, as well as the Partitas composed by J. S. Bach. This methodology was informed by a dual focus: a rigorous pianistic technique and an exploration of historical performance practices, particularly in relation to the use of period instruments. Furthermore, this investigation was conducted through both practical engagement and scholarly analysis, drawing upon the academic resources accessible on the aforementioned platforms.

The subsequent phase involved immersing myself in the specialized vocabulary pertinent to the field of dance, with a particular emphasis on Baroque dance. I would like to highlight several key texts that were instrumental in this process: Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne's *"Dance and the Music of J. S. Bach"* (Indiana University Press, 2001), Anthony Burton's *"A Performer's Guide to Music of the Baroque Period"* (Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 2001), Karl Heinz Taubert's *"Barock-Tänze. Geschichte – Wesen – Form"* (Pan Verlag, 1986), and Margit Legler, Andreas Helm, and Reinhold Kubik's *"Barocke Tänze und ihre musikalische Umsetzung"* (Hollitzer, 2024), among others.

The final significant research component of this thesis involved an examination and engagement with various media resources aimed at enhancing the historical interpretive approach. In this regard, I also took part in workshops and discussions with musicians from ensembles including the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin (Stephan Mai, Midori Seiler) and the Hochschule für Musik Weimar (Prof. Bernhard Klapproth).

**The doctoral dissertation is organized into five chapters**, with each chapter addressing distinct historical or interpretative dimensions as outlined in the preceding discussion.

Chapter I, **"The Political Context and International Artistic Influences in 17th-Century Germany,"** examines the turbulent era of this century within the broader scope of European history. Subchapter 1.1, titled **'Introduction – Political Climate,'** outlines the political and religious turmoil that ignited an unprecedented conflagration across Europe. This conflict not only resulted in

significant loss and destruction but also catalyzed a transformative shift in musical expression and manifestation. The origins of the Thirty Years' War are debated, with various perspectives attributing its causes to political, economic, or religious factors, all of which influenced the cultural environment of the time. Although the war had a European dimension, its most severe repercussions were felt in the German territories, where the population endured the brunt of this catastrophic event. Regarding the decline of Germany as a consequence of the war, two primary interpretations exist: one posits that the war was the principal cause of this decline, while the other views it as a manifestation of pre-existing instability. However, such debates may overlook critical nuances. At the onset of the conflict, Germany was not a unified economic or political entity but rather a collection of fragmented units. Consequently, the impact of the war varied significantly across different regions, with some areas experiencing total devastation.

The subsequent **subchapter 1.2**, titled **"The Italian Influence"**, explores the integration of Italian musical styles within the German cultural landscape during the recovery phase following the Thirty Years' War. The war had drastically diminished the population from approximately 13.7 million to 7.5 million, leading to the devastation of entire communities, significant agricultural disruption, and the collapse of trade and industry, leaving Germany in a state of profound vulnerability. In this context, the German cultural sector, weary from prolonged conflict, became increasingly open to the influences of other European cultural movements. The German language began to incorporate elements from both French and Italian; French, in particular, emerged as a marker of sophistication and refinement, a status that persisted into the reign of King Frederick the Great a century later. Nobility sought to emulate the elegance and charm associated with the French court of King Louis XIV, the grandeur of the Palace of Versailles, and the sophisticated international dealings of the Italian aristocracy. It was within this milieu that Italian opera made its entrance into the German cultural sphere, alongside other foreign cultural imports. Initially, the impact was most pronounced in the southern regions of Germany, particularly where imperial influence was strong. Vienna emerged as the primary center for Italian opera north of the Alps, where numerous musicians and artists contributed to the cultural landscape with Italian works well into the era of Mozart. However, Vienna was not the sole center of Italian opera in the 17th century; cities such as Salzburg, Innsbruck, Regensburg, Prague, Dresden, and Hanover also became significant hubs for the Italian tradition.

The efforts of German musicians and poets to rejuvenate the cultural landscape are elaborated upon in **subchapter 1.3**, titled **"Political-religious climate in northern Germany and the establishment of the Hamburg Opera."** The liberal atmosphere of northern Germany facilitated the founding of the first opera in Hamburg in 1678, marking it as the inaugural European institution of its kind established outside of Italy. Initially, the artistic endeavors were rather cautious, with creators focusing predominantly on religious themes intended to impart Christian teachings to the audience. As time progressed, French cultural influences began to inspire German writers, who adapted French texts to align with German artistic conventions or translated *librettos* from French poets like Quinault. Ultimately, the Hamburg Opera played a pivotal role in initiating the German artistic movement, leading to the establishment of similar institutions in cities such as Leipzig and Wolfenbüttel by the late 17th and early 18th centuries. However, by the end of the 18th century, these institutions faced suspension, remaining inactive for the subsequent century. The reasons for this decline were multifaceted: firstly, the controversial and often inappropriate subjects chosen by poets provoked backlash from both the public and the Church; secondly, there was a notable lack of

original German texts that could resonate with and inspire society during a period of restoration, resulting in a reliance on translated Italian *librettos* that neglected the German cultural essence; and thirdly, the rapid proliferation of Italian fashion and culture contributed to a stagnation in the development of German opera.

**Subchapter 1.4, titled "Stylistic Aspects of the German Baroque Opera,"** examines the development of German opera and its incorporation of elements from the Italian tradition. Initially, the stylistic characteristics of German opera closely mirrored those of contemporary Italian works, suggesting that at this stage, German opera can be viewed as an extension of the Venetian style, largely preserving the Italian aesthetic. Unlike their French counterparts, who, beginning with Jean-Baptiste Lully, successfully established a distinct national identity, German composers had yet to achieve a similar nationalistic expression. A closer examination reveals that the emerging German identity can be discerned in its approach to vocal music. The German repertoire exhibits a pronounced emphasis on harmonic structure and musical density, with a robust concept of figured bass serving as the foundation for the integration of vocal elements. This results in a cohesive and unified sound, where both vocal and orchestral components are afforded equal significance. In contrast, the Italian repertoire assigns a different role to vocality, characterized by a lighter and more ethereal writing style. The distinction between vocal lines and orchestral accompaniment is pronounced, with Italian composers prioritizing the melodic line of the voice, which is then supported by the orchestra. Agostino Steffani stands out as an exception, as his compositional style exemplifies a harmonious blend of these two divergent aesthetic traditions.

**Subchapter 1.5., "Political consequences and artistic and religious manifestation".** The essence of German baroque music is fundamentally shaped by the prevailing political and religious circumstances of the time. The intricate nature of these circumstances blurs the lines between political and religious influences. In 1555, the German administrative entities made efforts to foster a peaceful coexistence between the Lutheran and Catholic factions. However, the Calvinist aggression towards Catholics and the events in Prague heralded the onset of the Thirty Years' War. The interplay of economic, political, and religious tensions within the German context provides a backdrop for composers to articulate their artistic visions through sacred music. Despite the turmoil instigated by the Thirty Years' War, which resulted in a stagnation of the artistic and musical landscape, the domain of religious music began to emerge, with composers such as Thomas Selle and Heinrich Schütz drawing inspiration from this tumultuous environment.

**Subchapter 1.6, titled "J. S. Bach and the French Style,"** explores not only the years the composer spent as a student at Michaelisschule but also his initial exposure to dance music and French artistic traditions. Unlike G. F. Handel, who travelled extensively, J. S. Bach remained more attuned to the evolving international artistic and musical movements in Germany during his lifetime. During Bach's formative years, numerous foreign composers resided in Germany, allowing local musicians to engage with their art and compositional techniques without the need for travel abroad. The period spent in Lüneburg is particularly significant for the young Johann Sebastian, as it marked his first encounters with French art, traditions, and instrumental music, along with its distinctive interpretative style. Due to the limited documentation on this subject in treatises or other writings, the timeline of these events remains largely speculative. However, existing accounts suggest that Johann Sebastian was introduced to French music through the orchestra of Duke Georg Wilhelm of

Celle, which predominantly comprised French musicians and consisted of 16 members. Thomas de la Selle, a member of this orchestra and a dance instructor at *Michaelisschule*, likely facilitated Bach's visit to Celle, thereby exposing him to the cultural milieu of the Duke's court. Although the French musical style was no longer a novelty at that time, it represented an entirely new realm for the young Bach. Given the substantial number of works he later produced in the French style, it is evident that these new musical influences profoundly affected him.

The specific repertoire of this orchestra remains undocumented and largely unknown. The assertion that Johann Sebastian Bach engaged with French compositions at the court of Duke Georg Wilhelm is primarily speculative. However, it is well established that French orchestral music, including dance music and suites, constituted a significant part of the prevalent repertoire in northern Germany. Johann Fischer, who had spent five years in Paris absorbing the musical style of Jean-Baptiste Lully, briefly resided in Lüneburg in 1701. During this time, he composed and dedicated the work "*Musicalische Composition über die Welt berühmte Lüneburger Sultze*" to the *Michaelisschule*. It is highly plausible that the young Bach, as a member of the school choir, would have performed this piece. Numerous German musicians, including Bach's mentor Georg Böhm, were directly influenced by French music. From its inception within the German cultural context, French music was characterized by its secular orientation, often associated with social events, operas, and dances.

**Chapter 2, titled "Principles of Interpretation of the Music of J. S. Bach,"** represents the most extensive section of this thesis and addresses the critical factors essential for interpreting Bach's works. These factors are often subjects of considerable debate, largely due to the minimal guidance provided by Bach in his manuscripts. The chapter begins by examining the materials and information available in Bach's manuscripts, ultimately leading to conclusions that establish a coherent framework regarding aesthetics and sound production in relation to the specific instruments for which the repertoire was originally composed. It also explores aspects related to dynamics and ensemble playing. These significant themes are organized into the following subchapters.

**Subchapter 2.1, "Particularities of J.S. Bach's Manuscripts,"** The interpretative approaches of distinguished musicians exhibit considerable diversity, often leading to seemingly contradictory musical concepts. Pianists frequently encounter challenges regarding tempo, articulation, dynamics, and, fundamentally, the characteristics of the instrument itself. Moreover, it is notably challenging to identify two musical editions that address these matters from a uniform standpoint. Some educators assert that a genuine interpretative style is achieved by eliminating dynamic markings such as *crescendo* or *decrescendo*, restricting the use of the pedal, and adhering strictly to rhythmic and metronomic tempo. Conversely, other musicians actively seek opportunities for romantic expression, employing techniques rooted in *rubato*. Concurrently, from a musicological perspective, there remains a lack of consensus regarding Bach's authentic musical intentions, despite extensive research and discussion on this subject by prominent international musicologists in recent decades.

The ambiguity surrounding Johann Sebastian Bach's music can be attributed to the composer himself. In his keyboard compositions, Bach provided minimal information in his scores, offering scant guidance regarding tempo, dynamics, and phrasing. This lack of detail should not be interpreted as a matter of convenience or negligence on Bach's part. Rather, he adhered to the compositional norms of his time, which were similarly reflected in the works of his contemporaries. Consequently,



two primary inferences can be drawn: firstly, these musicians likely assumed that performers possessed a foundational understanding to navigate these interpretive aspects; secondly, the compositions may have embodied implicit conventions or unwritten rules that musicians were expected to follow in their interpretations.

The initial conclusion presented here is not unprecedented. The limited resources regarding interpretative practices in musical treatises from this era indicate the existence of an unwritten code that was transmitted orally across generations. Regrettably, the period of eighty years following Bach's death in 1750, culminating in Mendelssohn's revival of the *St. Matthew Passion* in 1829, was long enough to obliterate much of the understanding surrounding Baroque music and its interpretative principles. It was not until the early nineteenth century, particularly in the 1830s, that Mendelssohn's renewed interest in Bach's compositions began to resurrect this nearly forgotten realm. During this time, numerous historians, musicologists, and artists endeavored to gradually reconstruct the interpretative laws and conventions of the past. Nonetheless, the ongoing confusion surrounding contemporary interpretations of Bach's works indicates that the contributions from various generations of scholars have yet to produce adequate results in reestablishing the fundamental principles that should guide the performance of Bach's keyboard music.

Philipp Spitta's observation regarding Bach's artistic approach is notably eloquent. In the course of instructing one of his students on a series of improvisational guidelines derived from figured bass, J. S. Bach pauses the dictation to assert that *the remaining concepts are more effectively conveyed through verbal explanation* (Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Leipzig, 1873-1880, vol. II. Appendix, page 952).

The emergence of a purported secret code, exclusive to musicians of the seventeenth century, can be attributed to a phenomenon that Bach could not have foreseen. This represents a significant transformation within the *instrumentarium* family of the clavature. Within a few decades, the pianoforte would replace the harpsichord and clavichord—both of which were the instruments for which Bach composed numerous works. When we briefly return to the twenty-first century and reflect on this historical context, our contemporary musical perspective on such a fundamental issue appears almost ludicrous.

The prevailing perspective among contemporary concert pianists, who regard the modern piano as the sole instrument for interpreting Bach's works, coupled with the reluctance of many to critically examine the fundamental characteristics of the instrument, underscores significant deficiencies within the current educational framework. When one considers the nature of sound production from this vantage point, it becomes evident that the inquiries posed earlier—indicative of the healthy musical instincts present in emerging musicians—will be recontextualized. This reexamination will lead to a fresh understanding of musical elements such as tempo, dynamics, articulation, and phrasing, imbuing them with new meanings and subtleties. Furthermore, modern musicians may find themselves compelled to relinquish established conventions acquired throughout their training, thereby entering a novel musical realm governed by *rules of good conduct* that are markedly different from those familiar to us in the twentieth century.

Before concluding that the modern piano is inherently suitable for performing Bach's works, it is essential to investigate the two instruments referenced earlier. A thorough understanding of the

sound production characteristics of the harpsichord and clavichord will illuminate many of the critical insights required for this assessment.

A significant number of musical compositions were originally created for various keyboard instruments, including the harpsichord, clavichord, virgin, spinet, and fortepiano. Composers typically wrote these pieces without explicitly indicating a specific instrument. In the case of J. S. Bach, his sophisticated compositional techniques provide performers with valuable insights into the intended instrument for each work. Nevertheless, the unexpected adaptation of Bach's repertoire for the modern piano has obscured these subtleties for an extended period. Understanding the original instrument is essential for a comprehensive grasp of the music's meaning and tonal qualities, as this knowledge often clarifies many uncertainties. However, identifying the correct instrument is not the sole challenge. While aspects such as dynamics may be addressed, issues related to tempo and phrasing often remain ambiguous.

**Subchapter 2.2, titled "J. S. Bach's Keyboard Instruments,"** addresses the phenomenon of sound production through the lens of the specific instruments for which Bach composed his oeuvre. Given that his works were primarily intended for the harpsichord and the clavichord, it is essential to examine and analyze each instrument in detail, including their operational mechanisms. Understanding these functional characteristics, along with the materials employed in their construction, significantly influences interpretative approaches and alters the perception of the musical score. Consequently, markings found in manuscripts, such as fermatas and extended pauses, transcend mere interpretative cues; they are intricately linked to the management of registers on the harpsichord and the alteration of its settings. This subchapter provides a distinct examination of both the harpsichord (2.2.1) and the clavichord (2.2.2).

**Subchapter 2.3, titled "Dynamics,"** begins by examining a limited number of scenarios identified in the manuscripts, from which it draws insights regarding various approaches to managing this aspect. Additionally, this subchapter addresses the issue of dynamic planning through the lens of adapting the Bachian repertoire, originally composed for instruments such as the harpsichord and clavichord, to contemporary instruments. It explores the principles of terraced dynamics alongside those referred to as mini dynamics within this framework. Following the examination of the relevant instruments and their dynamic capabilities, the subchapter proceeds to analyze the French overture in BWV 831, focusing specifically on the dynamic aspects: **2.3.1. "Dynamics in dance works from J. S. Bach's oeuvre."**

**Subchapter 2.4, "Articulation."** By the conclusion of the seventeenth century, the musical tradition relied fundamentally on direct interactions between composers and performers, as well as between teachers and students. As a result, the skill level of performers was significantly more sophisticated than in subsequent centuries, with a balanced emphasis on interpretive artistry, improvisation, and the elaboration of figured bass, among other elements. In the context of J. S. Bach's compositions for keyboard instruments, the scenario is particularly distinctive. These works were crafted for his immediate circle of musicians, notably his sons. Consequently, any notational guidance within the scores would have been redundant, as these musicians were already well-versed in both the Baroque style and Bach's unique interpretative approach.

The concept of articulation emerges as one of the most perplexing and ambiguous elements among the issues introduced at the chapter's outset. When examining the keyboard compositions within the Bachian repertoire, this dimension can be regarded, without overstatement, as a *terra incognita*, given the scarcity of original materials derived from the manuscripts. Frequently, these sources not only fail to offer clear and easily applicable guidelines but, as noted by Erwin Bodky, *...Bach exhibits a remarkable inclination to alter the articulation upon the repetition of the same motif* (Erwin Bodky – *The Interpretation of Bach's Keyboard Works*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1960, pp. 216-218).

In section 2.4.1, titled **"Types of Articulation,"** I provide a comprehensive examination of the various articulations present in manuscripts. This analysis serves as a foundation for drawing significant conclusions regarding the articulation framework within the Bachian repertoire. The section encompasses several categories: **"Rhythmic Articulation"** (2.4.1.1), **"Range Articulation"** (2.4.1.2), **"Polyphonic Articulation"** (2.4.1.3), **"Motivated Articulation"** (2.4.1.4), and **"Article by Digitation"** (2.4.1.5). Following this detailed exploration, section 2.4.2, **"Article in Dance Works of J. S. Bach,"** builds upon the principles established through the analysis of these articulations. It is important to note that the principles applied to dance compositions remain consistent with those used in the broader repertoire. However, the primary distinction between the core repertoire and the dance works lies in the specific rhythmic formulas and structures unique to each dance. These elements can be accentuated through appropriate articulation. Given that articulation possesses the capacity to significantly alter a musical motif, it is imperative for performers to conduct a thorough analysis of each dance's structures in order to select the most suitable type of articulation.

2.4.2.1. **"Bourée,"** 2.4.2.2. **"Gavotte,"** 2.4.2.3. **"Menuet,"** 2.4.2.4. **"Sarabanda,"** 2.4.2.5. **"Courante,"** and 2.4.2.6. **"Gigue"** represent distinct sections designed for the precise articulation of each respective dance form.

**Subchapter 2.5, titled "Tempo,"** mirrors the structure and methodology of the preceding subchapter. The initial section addresses overarching concerns related to tempo within the entirety of Bach's repertoire (2.5.1., **"Indications in manuscripts regarding tempo"**). It is no longer surprising that the tempo indications found in manuscripts offer limited information. Such indications appear sporadically, with the thesis noting 36 tempo markings across Bach's keyboard works. In contrast, the *"Matthew's Passions"* contains merely five tempo indications throughout the entire composition, while The Mass in B minor works present a total of 12. In his cantatas, Bach provides approximately 150 tempo indications, which encompass around 1,500 individual parts, sections, or pieces.

2.5.2. **"The Relationship between Affekt and Tempo – Affective Theory."** The determination of tempo is intricately linked to the concept of *Affekt*. This connection suggests that a suitable tempo can only be determined when both the elements of articulation and the *Affekts* are aligned with the specific musical context. In essence, it is often necessary to concurrently analyze and modify all three components.

Although there are relatively few written sources in this regard, they are extremely eloquent. C. P. E. Bach writes in the chapter of his essay on interpretative art: *In general, the will of allegros is expressed through detached notes, and the tenderness of adagios through broad, linked notes. The interpreter must take into account that these characteristic features of allegros and adagios must be*

taken into account even when a composition does not contain such indications, as well as when the interpreter has not yet acquired an adequate understanding of the *Affekt* of a work (C. P. E. Bach - *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, Berlin 1753, p. 149).

In Section 2.5.3, titled "Distribution of Measures in Works for Keyboard Instruments," a comprehensive enumeration of the various types of measures encountered within the keyboard repertoire is presented, along with their respective distributions. The subsections include 2.5.3.1 "Measure C," 2.5.3.2 "Measure 2/4," 2.5.3.3 "Measure *alla breve*," 2.5.3.4 "Measure 3/4," 2.5.3.5 "Measures 3/2 and 6/4," 2.5.3.6 "Measure 3/8," 2.5.3.7 "Measure 6/8," 2.5.3.8 "Measure 9/8," 2.5.3.9 "Measure 12/8," and 2.5.3.10 "Measures 9/16, 12/16, 24/16." Each subsection is dedicated to a specific type of measure, providing an analysis of its unique characteristics and correlating the identified *Affekts* with the appropriate tempos for each context.

Subchapter 2.5.4, "Tempo in the Dance Works of J. S. Bach." As previously discussed in the relevant sections, the topic of tempo presents considerable complexity. Prominent musicologists who have explored this subject have inevitably encountered the challenge of lacking definitive scientific evidence to validate or invalidate a specific tempo. A distinctive feature of the approach to Bach's repertoire lies in the capacity to interpret nuances and often to foresee the most suitable interpretative style. This observation is particularly pertinent to the dance compositions of J. S. Bach. In this context, performers are confronted not merely with straightforward inquiries about tempo or articulation; rather, broader considerations emerge, such as the coherence and interrelation of tempo across various dances within a suite, as well as the unique characteristics inherent to each dance. From this perspective, the role of tempo and the emphasis on the metric structure are crucial in shaping the interpretative framework.

2.5.4.1. "Dances in measure C", 2.5.4.2. "Dances in measure *alla breve*", 2.5.4.3. "Dances in measure 3/4", 2.5.4.4. "Dances in measure 3/2", 2.5.4.5. "Dances in measure 6/4", 2.5.4.6. "Dances in measure 3/8", 2.5.4.7. "Dances in measure 6/8", 2.5.4.8. "Dances in measure 12/8", 2.5.4.9. "Dances in measures 9/16 and 12/16" represent sections that explore the various tempo possibilities, taking into account the distinctive characteristics and nuances of each dance in relation to the concept of *Affekt*.

Chapter 3, titled "Dances Characteristic of J.S. Bach's Creation," examines the principal and prevalent dances found in the English and French Suites, as well as the Partitas for keyboard instruments. This chapter encompasses both musical and choreographic dimensions, offering a dual analysis of each dance. Additionally, it addresses pertinent historical factors that contributed to the development of this particular dance form.

Subchapter 3.1, titled "J. S. Bach and the Dance Music," examines the significance of dance music within Bach's body of work, highlighting key events in the composer's life that influenced his engagement with this genre.

Subchapter 3.2, titled "Metrical and Rhythmic Structures in Baroque Dances," provides an in-depth examination of the metric and rhythmic dimensions present in the baroque dances under consideration. It addresses the levels of meter, pulse, and subdivision that characterize these dances.

Additionally, the concepts of arsis and thesis, which are fundamental to the understanding of baroque dance phrasing, are introduced. These concepts denote the varying degrees of prominence within a phrase, highlighting the interplay between less dominant and more dominant elements. The chapter also discusses the specific units of steps utilized in these dances, which will subsequently be analyzed from both a musical perspective and this unique viewpoint. This approach establishes connections and parallels between the choreographic and musical components. The remainder of the chapter is structured into sections that focus on each individual dance, organized as follows:

3.3. "Bourée – choreographic aspects", 3.3.1. "Bourée in the creation of J. S. Bach", 3.4. "Gavotta – choreographic aspects", 3.4.1. "Gavotta in the creation of J. S. Bach", 3.5. "Menuet – choreographic aspects", 3.5.1. "Menuet in the creation of J. S. Bach", 3.6. "Sarabanda – choreographic aspects", 3.6.1. "Sarabanda in the creation of J. S. Bach", 3.7. "Couranta – choreographic aspects", 3.7.1. "Couranta in the creation of J. S. Bach", 3.8. "Gigue – general aspects", 3.8.1. "French Giga", 3.8.2. "Giga I", 3.8.3. "Giga II", 3.9. "Allemande", 3.10 "Passepied".

Chapter 4, titled "Informed Historical Interpretative Art. Interpretative Parameters," seeks to explore the myriad historical factors that shape the interpretative philosophy surrounding the Bachian repertoire. Engaging in historical interpretative art encompasses far more than merely adhering to specific musical guidelines outlined in treatises. A significant advantage of the contemporary era is the availability of extensive historical data and a wealth of media resources. It is crucial to emphasize that discussions of perfection or absolute musical rules in the context of historical performance are misguided; thus, it is essential for theoretical information to be analyzed and evaluated with careful discernment. Similar to general interpretative art, the key to success lies in the performer's ability to harmonize a comprehensive understanding of theoretical concepts with a refined sense of musical taste and intelligence.

To effectively present a musical work, it is essential for the interpreter to possess a thorough understanding of the historical context and the circumstances surrounding its creation. The artistic periods of previous centuries not only imply distinct harmonic frameworks but also encompass various modes of expression. As time progressed and musical art evolved, intuition became increasingly complemented by a heightened awareness and a more comprehensive knowledge of foundational artistic sources. In contemporary musical practice, historical interpretative art has become an integral aspect of both theoretical discourse and practical application. The use of historical instruments has become a standard requirement in most performances that focus on early or baroque music, resulting in significant advancements in instrumental technique. This evolution has prompted not only the exploration of optimal instrumental components (such as strings and wind instrument accessories) but also a deeper investigation into the interpretative styles characteristic of early and baroque music.

In subchapter 4.1, titled "Stage of Development of Historical Interpretative Art," the discussion centers on the concept of early music throughout history and the varying perspectives of composers across different generations regarding this notion. As early as the 18th century, there emerged a necessity to adapt early music to align with contemporary auditory experiences. This challenge of reinterpreting a composite repertoire originally designed for outdated instruments to

suit modern instruments is a recurring theme encountered by numerous composers from various historical periods. Section 4.1.1, "Interpretative Art from W. A. Mozart to the Twentieth Century," addresses the relatively barren period spanning the 18th to the 20th centuries, while section 4.1.2, "The Artistic Climate in the Twentieth Century," explores the stylistic trends prevalent in contemporary music.

In 1950, the bicentennial of composer Johann Sebastian Bach's death was commemorated, marking a paramount moment that elicited numerous reactions and circumstances that shaped the realm of historical interpretative art. On this occasion, Austrian composer Paul Hindemith pleads for the restoration of the Bach era instruments and stylistics in full: *We can be sure that Bach was very satisfied with the means of expression at his disposal, and if we want to perform his music according to his intentions, he said, we should restore the conditions of that time* (Paul Hindemith, Johann Sebastian Bach, New Haven, 1952, p. 16).

The foundational premise posits that a composer seamlessly assimilates into the cultural milieu of their time, such that their compositions align with the prevailing stylistic norms and largely reflect their artistic intentions. Hindemith's reverence for the authenticity and originality of early music significantly impacted Nikolaus Harnoncourt, who, more than any other figure in the subsequent two decades, dedicated himself to the practice of historical interpretation in music.

In the 1960s, Harnoncourt was pioneering orchestral recordings utilizing Baroque instruments, and his numerous writings from this era significantly influenced the historical performance movement, establishing it as a prominent trend. His contributions also highlight the importance of linking early music with its authentic interpretative contexts. On a stylistic note, he asserts that each musical genre and historical period prior to 1800 possessed a distinct ethos, which necessitated varied interpretative approaches. Specifically regarding Baroque music, Harnoncourt underscores the significance of rhetorical and emotional elements, while simultaneously contending that advancements in instrument design and the development of modern instruments should not be viewed as progress. (Nikolaus Harnoncourt, *Baroque Music Today: Music as Speech*, he said, Portland, Oregon, Helm 1988, p. 111-112b).

In 1951, Adorno critically examined the field of historical interpretative art, adopting a notably cynical perspective. He sought to reinstate stylistic conditions that align with the aesthetics of early music, positing that only modern or progressive interpretations could elevate the understanding of Bach's music to its authentic essence. This assertion emerged during a period when the movement of historical interpretation was nascent, coinciding with a significant reconstruction and restoration phase in West Germany. Within this framework, Adorno remarked: *The Neoreligious Bach is impoverished, reduced and deprived of the specific musical content that formed the basis of his prestige. He suffers from the fate that his fervent protectors are in the least willing to admit: he is transformed into a neutralized cultural monument, where aesthetic success blends obscurely with a truth that has lost its intrinsic substance. They turned him into a composer for organ festivals in well-preserved Baroque cities, into an ideology* (Theodor W. Adorno, *Bach Defended against his Devotees*, Cambridge, Mass. 1981, p. 136) *or the mechanical creaks of continuo instruments and obsolete school choirs pay no homage to sacred sobriety, but to malicious failure; and the thought that baroque ragged and hoarse organs are capable of capturing the long waves of stoning, large fugues is pure superstition. Bach's music is separated from the general level of his era by an astronomical*

*distance. Its eloquence comes only when it is freed from the realm of resentment and obscurantism, the subjectless triumph over subjectivism. They say Bach, they refer to Telemann and secretly agree with the regression of musical consciousness which, even without them, remains a constant threat under the pressure of the cultural industry* (Theodor W. Adorno, *Bach Defended against his Devotees*, Cambridge, Mass. 1981, page 145).

Whether it be progress or irreversibility, there exists a pronounced tension between modernism, epitomized by the Second Vienna School and Adorno, and any form of cultural restoration, including historical interpretive art. Hindemith and Adorno exemplify the divergent perspectives on historical interpretive art, illustrating how this movement, in its post-war incarnation, occupies a dual position within and beyond the realm of modernist culture.

Subchapter 4.2, titled "Sources of Inspiration / Theoretical Information," comprises several sections. Section 4.2.1, "Theoretical Instrumental Treatises," explores a range of recognized resources available to performers. These include historical archives, literary references, instrument collections, journals, critiques in the press, as well as media sources, including audio and video materials. The aim of this section is to facilitate the development of a historically informed interpretative approach.

**4.2.2. "Instrumentarium."** The instrumentarium serves as a crucial element that revives historical compositions, allowing us to engage with the authentic sound envisioned by the composer. The dissemination of information and scientific findings in specialized journals has facilitated the emergence of a new trend focused on the restoration of ancient instruments. However, this process carries the inherent risk of damaging the original artifacts, necessitating a careful evaluation of the benefits of restoration against potential harm. Consequently, many museums and institutions have opted for a conservative approach, ensuring that their instruments are maintained in meticulously monitored environments. The preservation of these rare items has proven invaluable for contemporary manufacturers. Reproductions provide many advantages of restoration while safeguarding the integrity of unique specimens, and advancements in twenty-first-century technology have enabled these reproductions to closely resemble the original instruments. Engaging with historical instruments and conducting research on them enhances our understanding of specific components, such as the reeds or strings utilized in the seventeenth century. This analysis sheds light on the sound production, texture, temperament, intonation, tempo, and clarity that these instruments could achieve. Such insights are undeniably significant and cannot be fully captured through other written sources.

**4.2.3.** The emergence of "musical journalism" can be traced back to the early eighteenth century. Subsequently, in the nineteenth century, a surge in public interest and engagement with the arts led to the establishment of notable publications such as the *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, *Fetis Revue musicale*, and *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. Concurrently, the practice of journalism facilitated the dissemination of letters from prominent composers like Mozart, C.P.E. Bach, and Haydn, which provided invaluable insights into the musical landscape and performance styles of the time. These letters often served to elucidate the intentions behind specific compositions.

Additionally, musical almanacs, travel narratives, and autobiographies also contribute to this rich tapestry of literary sources related to music.

**4.2.4. "Theoretical Treatises."** Throughout history, a multitude of theoretical music treatises have been produced, primarily aimed at scholars, with the purpose of elucidating the aesthetics of compositional rules, detailing existing musical instruments, or exploring both theoretical and practical dimensions of music. These works serve to mitigate errors and enhance interpretive clarity. Notably, certain treatises, such as those authored by Praetorius, Mersenne, and Adlung, offer essential insights into tuning and intonation. Additionally, the nineteenth century witnessed a rise in the popularity of orchestration treatises, exemplified by Hector Berlioz's *Grand Traité d'Instrumentation et d'Orchestration modernes*.

**4.3. "Components and Parameters of the Interpretative Plan"** addresses all topics discussed in this thesis from a historical viewpoint and their significance within the broader context.

**4.3.1. National Characteristic Style.** The elements derived from historical information sources, along with other components that constitute an interpretative framework, have undergone significant development and transformation over the past centuries. The phases of this evolution play a crucial role in shaping the interpretative concept, and it is this trajectory that distinguishes Baroque stylistics from modern interpretative approaches. This section examines the three major interpretative currents of the 17th and 18th centuries: German, Italian, and French interpretative styles.

**4.3.2. The Articulation.** The emergence of articulation signs in musical notation occurred relatively late in the evolution of this system. Prior to the seventeenth century, such signs were exceedingly uncommon, and aside from ornamental markings, they remained infrequent throughout the Baroque era. This scarcity permitted performers to interpret phrases in alignment with the stylistic conventions of the time. Even by the late eighteenth century, when more modern and abstract articulation signs began to appear with greater regularity, their usage was often inconsistent and their meanings frequently ambiguous. For an extended period, articulation was largely overlooked, acknowledged only in a general sense without a thorough exploration of its underlying principles or contexts. However, in recent decades, driven by research and movements in historical performance practice, articulation has garnered renewed scholarly interest. The awareness of Baroque stylistic nuances among musicians in the 1970s and 1980s prompted a more comprehensive examination of this topic, leading to the identification of overarching principles that connect seemingly isolated elements, thereby imbuing simple notational symbols, such as slurs and staccato marks (links or stacc points), with enriched interpretations.

**4.3.3. Melodic and Dynamic Inflection.** In examining the dynamics preferred by numerous performers of Baroque music, it appears that a predominant choice has been the use of terraced dynamics. While this inclination may occasionally be perceived as one-dimensional or overly simplistic, it is supported by several arguments. Primarily, the scarcity of dynamic markings within the Baroque repertoire serves as a foundation for this preference. Furthermore, Baroque composers predominantly employed only *forte* and *piano* markings, with a notable absence of indications for gradually *growing or decreasing* dynamic changes. This practice encourages an interpretive approach that emphasizes dynamic contrasts across larger sections of the compositions. However, this



method often neglects the nuanced shaping of melodic lines through what might be termed "mini dynamics." Although the concept of echo is prevalent in Baroque music, interpretations frequently overlook the original intent of dynamic markings, which was to delineate or outline the structural framework of a piece, thereby accentuating its sections along with their associated character or dynamics. From the standpoint of the contemporary concert pianist, this interpretive strategy can prove advantageous, particularly given the distinct sound aesthetics of the piano in contrast to those of the harpsichord or church organ. In this context, a piano performance characterized by broad, terraced – *secco* – dynamic sections and a relatively dry sound is likely to be perceived as more authentic than one dominated by dynamic *crescendos* and *decrescendos*.

**4.3.4. Tempo.** Tempo represents a crucial and highly variable component of the interpretative framework. The selection of tempo exerts a direct and immediate impact on various interpretative dimensions, including the character of the piece, as well as technical and expressive elements, articulation, and more. These factors will significantly affect the auditory experience that the listener ultimately perceives.

Prior to Maelzel's invention of the metronome in 1815, various efforts were made to create a reliable means of measuring time. These included correlating tempo with the human pulse, which averages around 80 beats per minute, or with the rhythm of walking. However, none of these approaches yielded definitive results. In the 18th century, new terminologies emerged in Italian and French that aimed to provide a framework for time orientation, yet these also fell short of achieving the necessary precision.

Dance steps can only be performed accurately within specific speed ranges, which implies that the precise tempos for particular dances must be inferred from the practical reconstruction of those dances, utilizing contemporary dance treatises as references. However, this approach is fraught with significant limitations, as the steps and figures of dances—and consequently their tempos—exhibited considerable variation across different historical periods and geographical locations. For instance, one can observe the rapid English *sarabanda* of the seventeenth century in contrast to the more moderate Italian version and the slower French *sarabanda*. Additionally, "stylized" dances frequently underwent substantial alterations in their instrumental interpretations. A case in point is the *Allemandes* in Corelli's trio sonatas, which are labeled with varying terms such as *presto*, *allegro*, *largo*, and *adagio*. Similarly, the *Sarabandas* in the *Sonate da Camera* Op. 2 and Op. 4 (published in 1685 and 1694, respectively) display a range of tempo markings. Composers like Bach and Handel often assigned a single title to a piece, leaving it to the performers to determine its tempo and expressive character.

It is evident that in discussions concerning tempo within a generalist framework, the arguments predominantly hinge on the concept of musical mastery and the effective conveyance of a piece's character. Consequently, tempo should not be regarded as an abstract notion or a definitive factor; rather, it is contingent upon the specific musical genre and context, necessitating its subordination to other elements of the score and the interpretative process.

**4.3.5. The Ornamentation.** Ornamentation has been a focal point of discussion within the realm of interpretive art. It holds significant relevance in theoretical discourse from both the Baroque period and contemporary times. The principles governing ornamentation and its application exhibit a

considerable degree of flexibility. Nevertheless, from a practical standpoint, there exists a multitude of inconsistencies and ambiguities regarding the accuracy or authenticity of ornamental practices, as the established rules of execution cannot be universally applied across all contexts. A particularly problematic scenario arises when interpreters adopt ornamental guidelines from authors such as Quantz, Leopold Mozart, or C. P. E. Bach, treating them as universally applicable principles without considering the specific characteristics of the era or style pertinent to the work in question.

Chapter 5, titled "**Competitive Interpretative Analysis**," presents a complex examination of a selected musical piece and its performers. The decision to analyze a work from the Bach repertoire posed several challenges. Primarily, the objective was to choose a composition that encompasses a variety of dance forms discussed in earlier chapters while also incorporating sections that do not directly reference Baroque dance traditions. In this context, the French Overture emerged as an exemplary choice, featuring an expansive introduction and concluding with the *Echo* section. From a dynamic and sound production perspective, this work holds significant relevance, as it is one of the few instances in Bach's oeuvre where the composer provides explicit indications regarding dynamics and registration. In selecting the interpretations for this analysis, I aimed to include performances on both the modern piano and the harpsichord to examine how the choice of instrument influences interpretative decisions. The three pianists chosen for this comparative study—Andras Schiff, Glenn Gould, and Rosalyn Tureck—each represent distinct interpretative approaches. Glenn Gould is renowned as a quintessential figure in Bach performance, celebrated for his innovative interpretations and distinctive personality. Andras Schiff, whom I had the privilege of knowing personally and who mentored me during a workshop, stands out as one of the most intellectually engaged musicians of the 21st century, possessing an exceptional understanding of musical manuscripts. He also embodies a charismatic presence, striking a remarkable balance between intellectual rigor and artistic expression. Among the three pianists analyzed, Schiff is the most mainstream, a factor that is crucial to this examination. Rosalyn Tureck, considered a true Bach specialist of his time, is for the contemporary musician a rather unknown name. His musical approach is unique and fascinating, and his unmistakable sound. Therefore, broadly speaking, the profiles of the three pianists are extremely clearly outlined and different.

After several years of investigation for this doctoral thesis, I contend that **the findings and conclusions** we have arrived at represent the inception of a journey from multiple perspectives. Primarily, I examine intricate elements from two distinct artistic domains: music and dance. While both art forms are routinely showcased on stages globally, the simultaneous academic exploration of these two disciplines remains uncommon. I propose that the study of the composite dance repertoire associated with J. S. Bach's keyboard works provides an optimal framework for theorizing and investigating the interplay between musical and choreographic components. The specific research **outcomes and contributions** are as follows:

- The implementation of metric and rhythmic organizational frameworks of a choreographic nature within the examined repertoire of Baroque music.
- Establishing a framework that considers both choreographic and musical metric and rhythmic dimensions from the initial stages of repertoire exploration.

- Analyzing the pianistic repertoire through a comprehensive interpretative lens that incorporates contemporary interpretative practices, *mainstream* approaches, and principles of historically informed performance.
- Evaluating the repertoire from the standpoint of sound production across various historical instruments, rather than solely through the lens of modern instruments.
- Developing explicit guidelines derived from manuscripts concerning dynamics, articulation, and tempo, applicable to a majority of works for J. S. Bach's keyboard instruments.
- Proposing diverse interpretative options related to dynamics, articulation, and tempo in Bach's dance compositions, along with their justification, to highlight both the inherent musical trajectory and the significant choreographic characteristics.
- Examining a pivotal work by Bach through various interpretative lenses, thereby fostering an awareness and synthesis of all elements explored from an interpretive standpoint.
- Ultimately, the culmination of an academic paper that consolidates insights from various research domains into a cohesive and accessible document.

**The relevance** of the findings becomes apparent within the musical framework, particularly as the Bachian repertoire is explored in greater depth. Drawing from the conclusions of this thesis, the performer is equipped to examine the works of Bach from various viewpoints from the outset. This thesis aims to emphasize the most critical interpretative, historical, and choreographic dimensions, enabling the interpreter to engage with the material from a comprehensive, authentic, and historically informed standpoint.