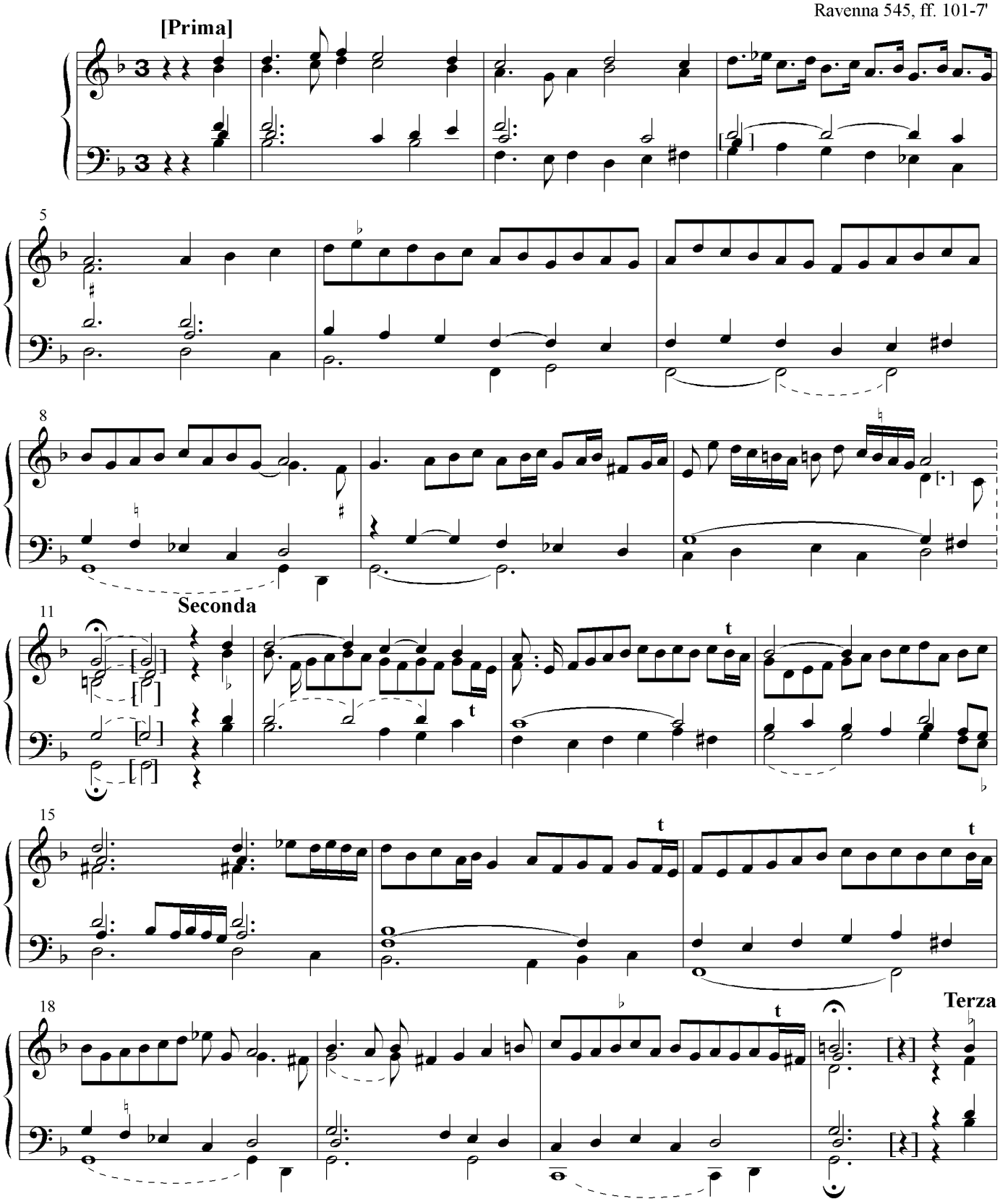
Romanesche

Ercole Pasquini, from
Ravenna 545, ff. 101-7'



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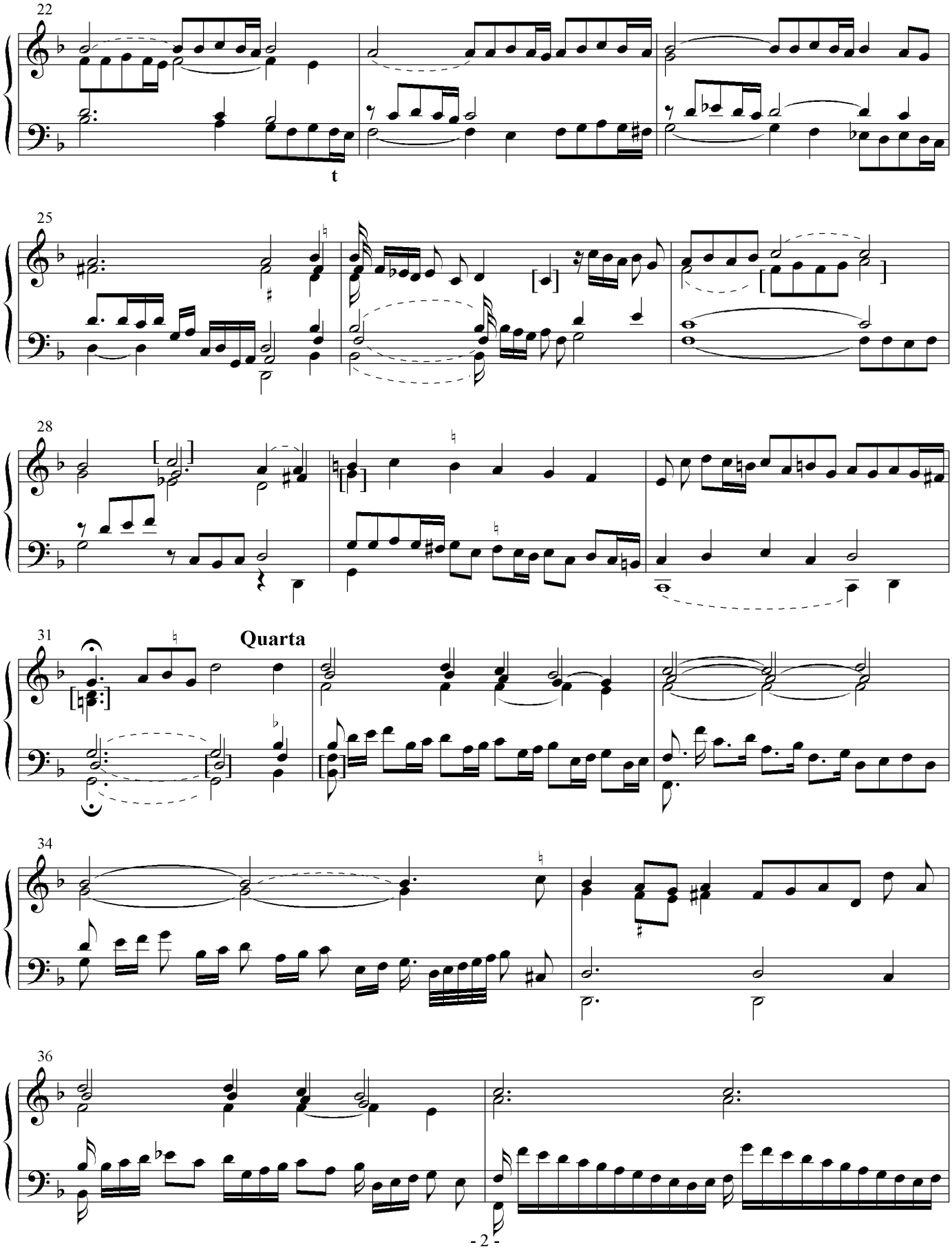
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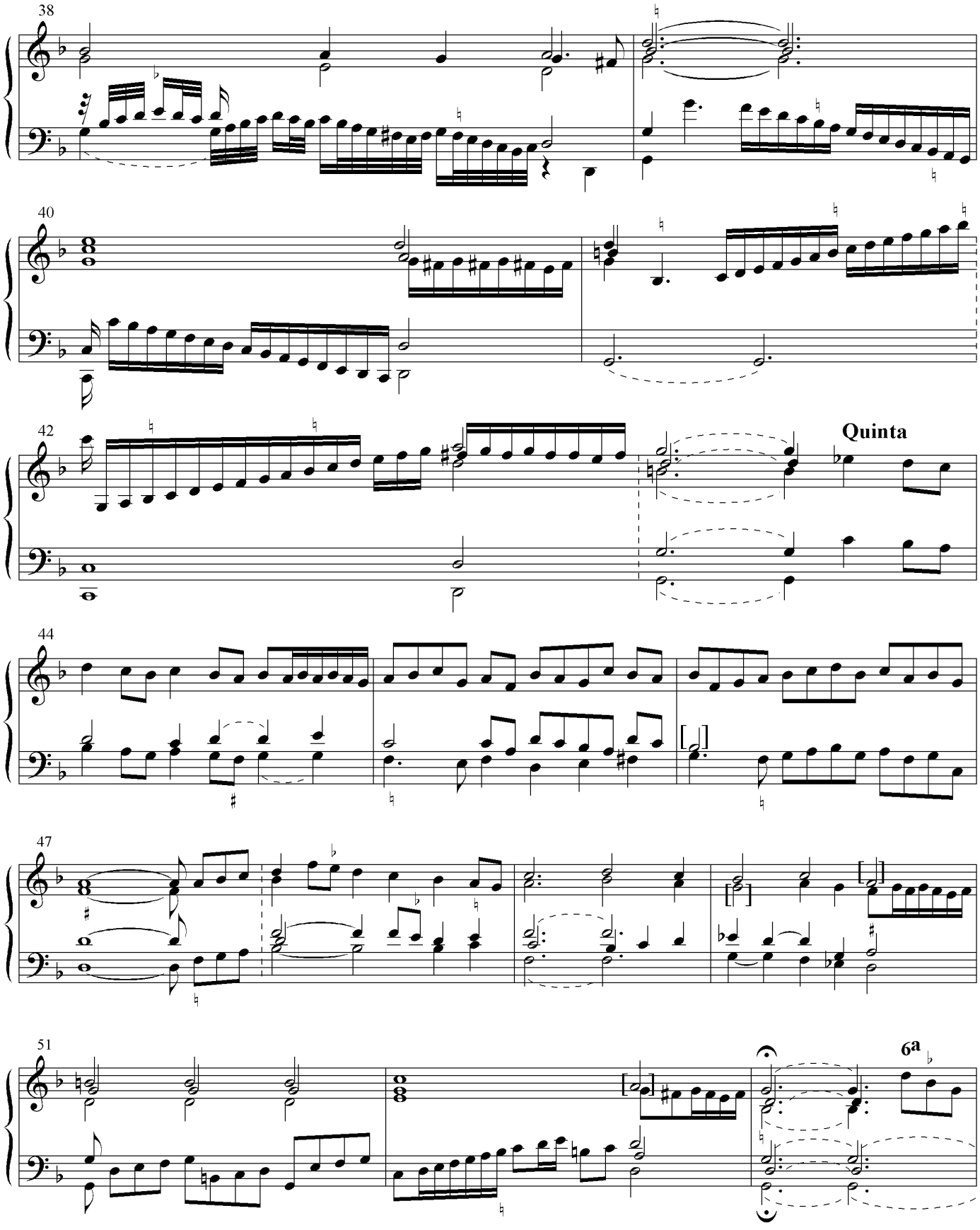
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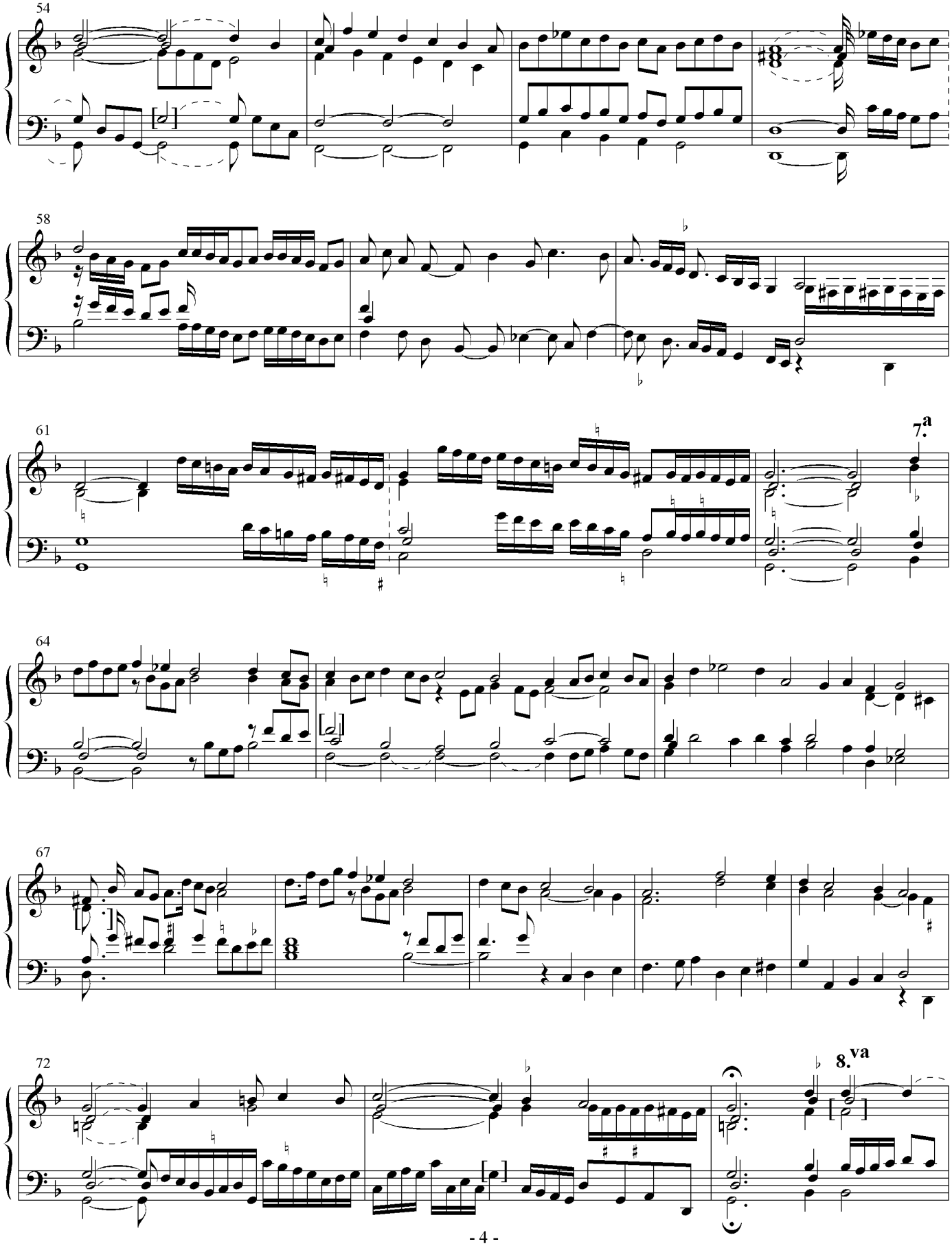
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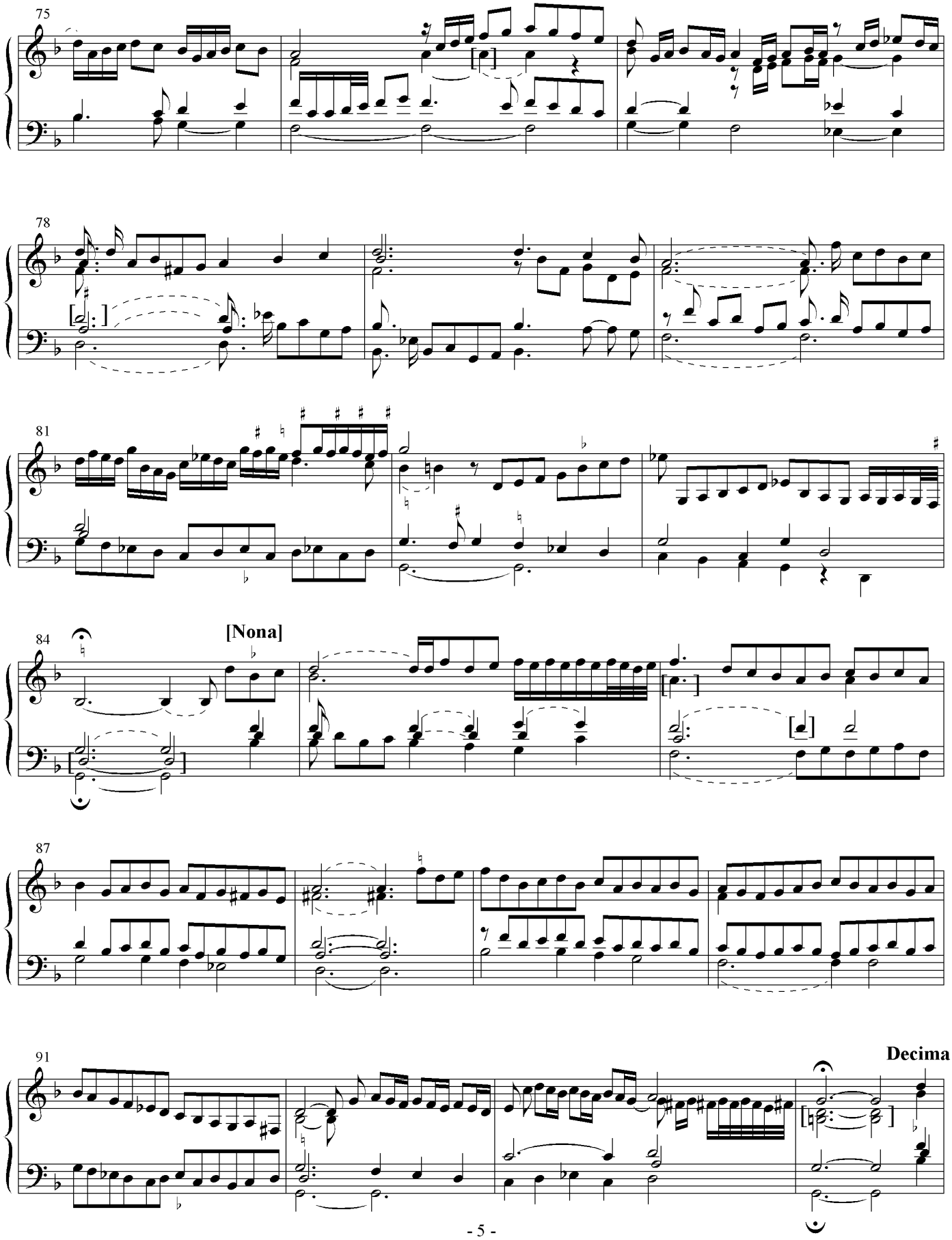
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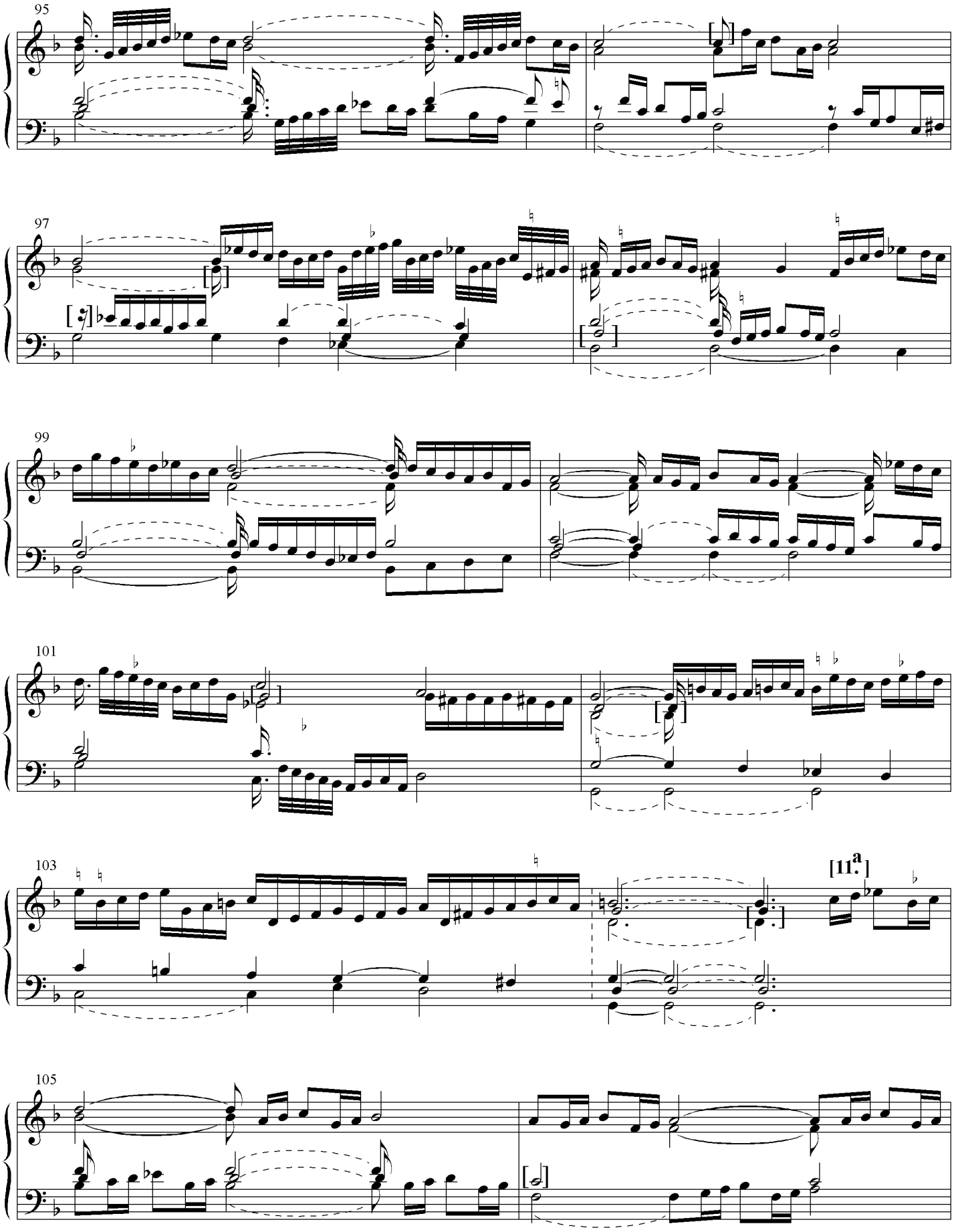
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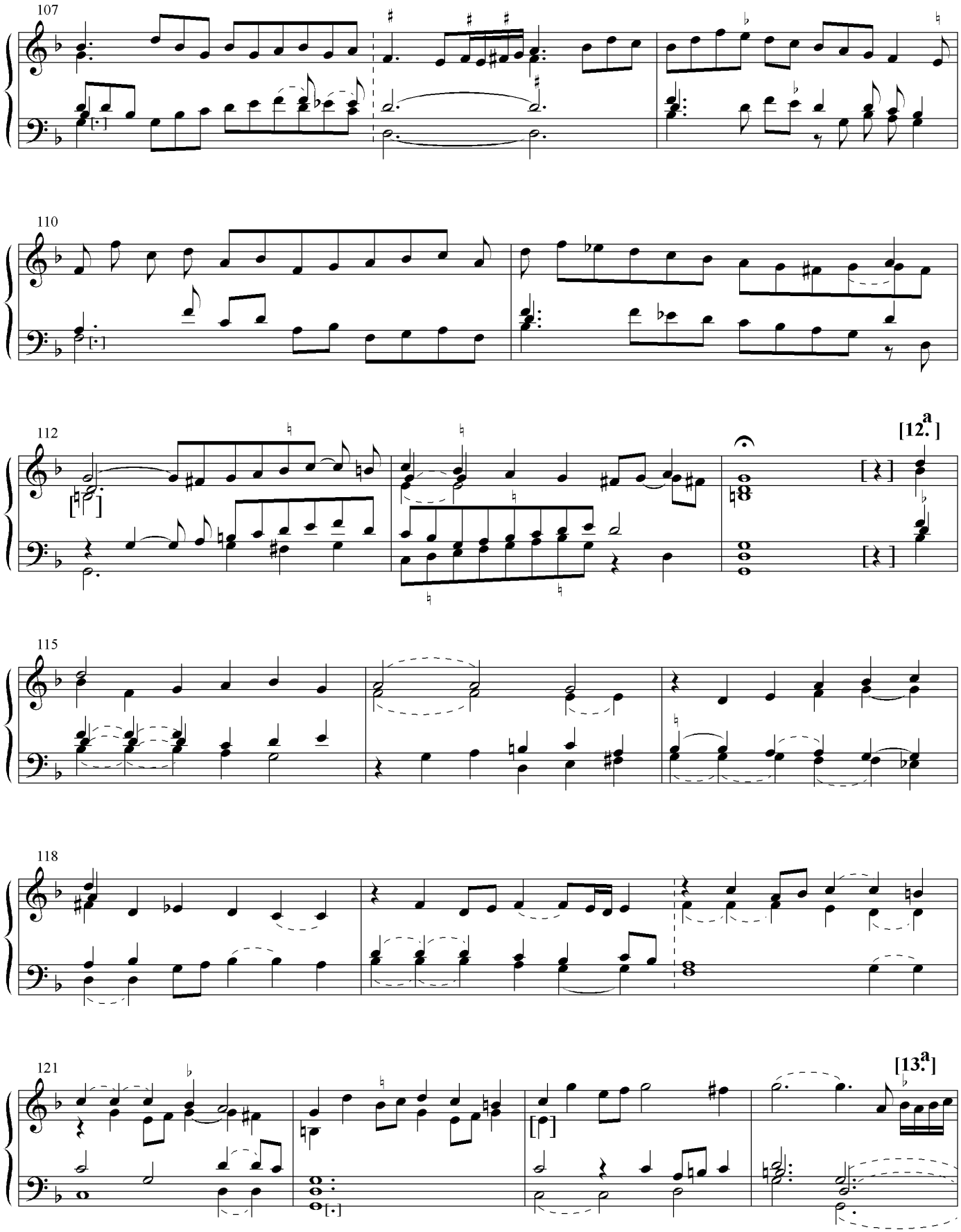
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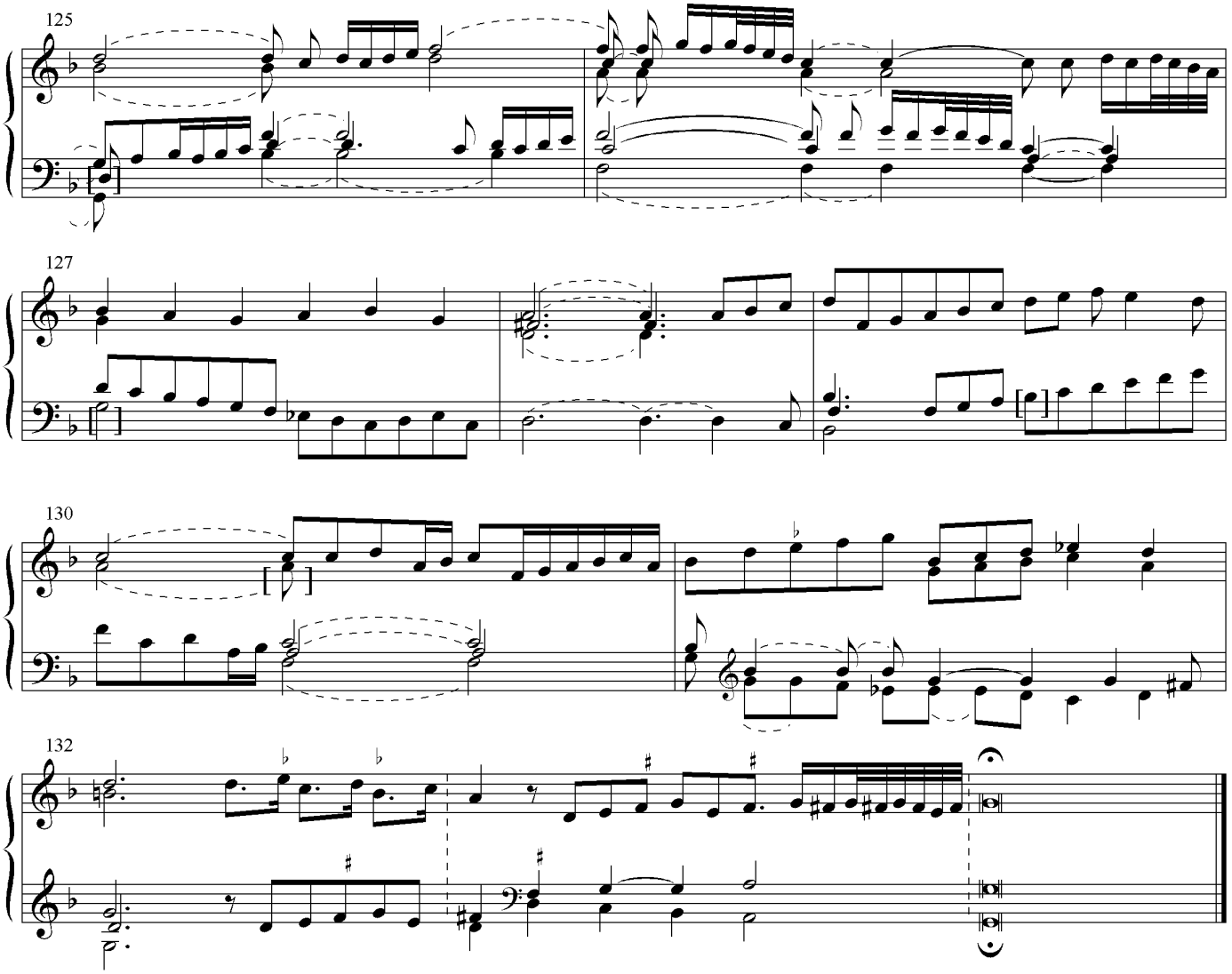
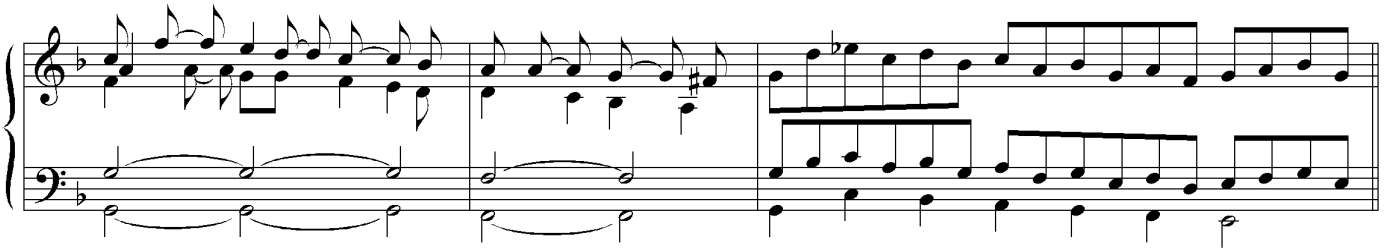
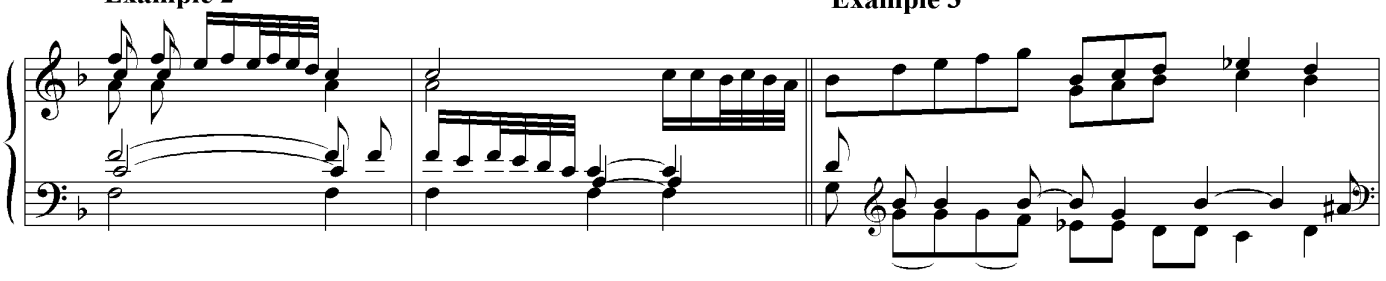
[13.a]



Example 1

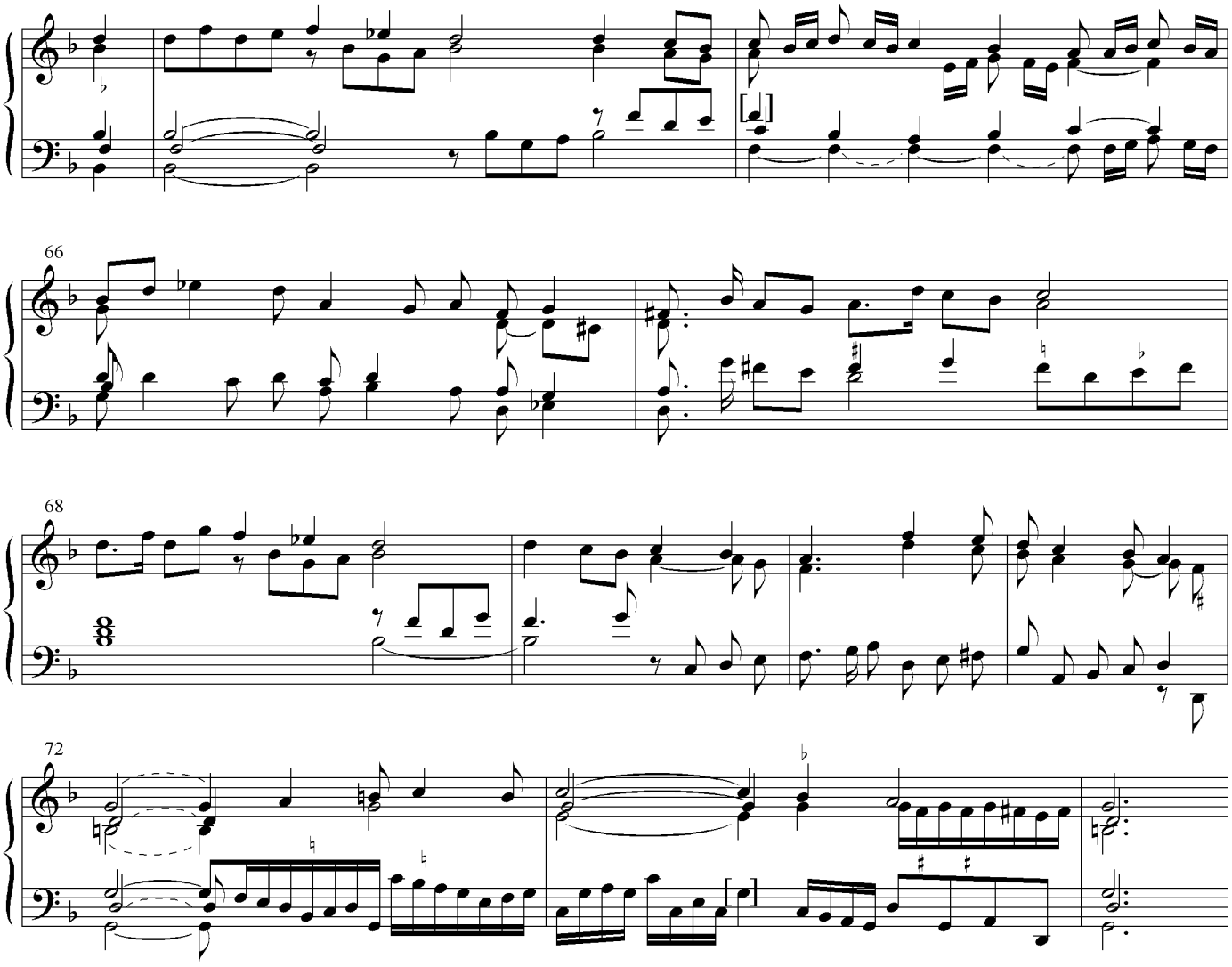


Example 2



Example 3

Partita 7 with modified note values (see commentary)



Ercole Pasquini: Romanesche

The sole source for Ercole Pasquini's variations on the Romanesca is the manuscript Ravenna, Biblioteca Comunale Classense, MS Classense 545, seen here in the facsimile edition by Alexander Silbiger (*17th Century Keyboard Music: Sources Central to the Keyboard Art of the Baroque*, vol. 12, New York: Kondon, 1987). The source actually contains two sets of variations on this traditional late-Renaissance ostinato or *aria*. A pair of settings or *partite* on folios 109–110 bears the original heading "Gagliarda" which has been crossed out and replaced, possibly by the same hand but at a later date, by "Romanescha d'Hercol." The first of the settings of the same ostinato published by Frescobaldi follows immediately as "Romanesca di G.G."

The much larger set of variations edited here falls earlier but in the same section of the manuscript (which is devoted to dances and variations) on folios 101–107v. All of the musical entries in the manuscript are probably in the same hand, as Silbiger noted in the introduction to his edition (p. v). This has been confirmed by Christine Jeanneret, who has, however, shown that the unique calligraphic title page is also in the same hand (*L'œuvre en filigrane: Une étude philologique des manuscrits de musique pour clavier à Rome au XVII^e siècle*, diss., Geneva, 2005, online at https://www.unige.ch/lettres/armus/files/1114/1564/0645/These_Jeanneret.pdf). Entitled *Libro di fra Gioseffo da Ravenna,* the manuscript is of uncertain origin. If it belonged to the Benedictine priest and later abbot Giuseppe Rasino, as suggested by Silbiger and Jeanneret, he would have had to obtain it prior to ordination at Ravenna in 1634. Whether he was also copyist of the manuscript is impossible to determine, although Jeanneret dates it to 1630–40.

The sources for Pasquini's music are mostly *unica*, and most appear to have been hastily and inaccurately written. The Romanesca variations are no exception; although Jeanneret asserts that the copyist was "remarquablement adroit et commet relativement peu d'erreurs" (p. 255), in fact the "Romanesche" contain numerous textual problems. I discussed some of these, as well as other problems of interpretation, in "Some Problems of Text, Attribution, and Performance in Early Italian Baroque Keyboard Music" (*Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music* 4.1, 1998, online at http://sscm-jscm.org/v4/no1/schulenberg.html). The piece has been previously edited by W. Richard Shindle (*Ercole Pasquini: Collected Keyboard Works,* Corpus of Early Keyboard Music, vol. 12, Neuhausen-Stuttgart: American Institute of Musicology, 1966). It is not included in a partial edition of the source by Silvia Rambaldi and Barbara Cipollone (*Libro di fra Gioseffo da Ravenna (Manoscritto I-RAc MS Classense 545),* Bologna: Bardi, 1999).

The textual problems encountered in this and other works of Pasquini are best explained by positing that the composer never prepared or made available pristine fair copies of his keyboard music. It is even possible that the composer never wrote out certain pieces, which were disseminated by aural tradition and written down imprecisely at some later point. But this seems unlikely in the case of lengthy compositions such as the present one; it is hard to imagine such a piece never having been committed to paper in some form by the composer. Apograph manuscripts such as the source for the present edition were most likely copied from composing drafts or sketches in which essential accidentals and even notes (such as the inner voices of chords) were often omitted, certain passages cancelled or rewritten in ways that were not easily legible, and many note values written imprecisely or not strictly correctly. In the present case, the entire piece, or at least certain passages, might have been written in double the note values and using a different number of lines in each stave as compared with the existing copy. Such features in the lost autograph would explain many of the numerous inconsequential readings of the surviving manuscript with regard to pitch and rhythm. Some of these readings could be interpreted to mean that the composer deliberately left certain details of the notation indeterminate, in order to encourage freedom of performance. Certainly there are many passages containing parallel fifths and other departures from theoretically correct voice leading which suggest that the composer exercised a certain *sprezzatura* with regard to traditional counterpoint—an instance of what Cesare Monteverdi called the *seconda pratica*. But although the piece must reflect a tradition of improvised variations on this and other ostinato bass lines, the majority of the problematical passages in the ms are most likely to be plain misreadings by an uncomprehending copyist, as in the senseless text given for the sixth *partita*, which includes an extra measure and garbled rhythms (see Example 1 in the score and the entry below for m. 60).

It is also possible that the composition was not entirely finished, at least as notated in the exemplar used by this copyist. The seventh *partita* contains extra beats over several notes of the ostinato bass, and although this may have been part of the tradition of improvised *Romanesche*—Frescobaldi's variations on the same ostinato include extra beats on bass notes at several points—the basic unit of metrical pulse seems to shift several times within this same *partita*. A correction and the irregular placement of bar lines at this point (see entry below for m. 65) are indications in the manuscript that the original notation was indecisive. Possibly measures 65–66 and the closing portion of this varation, which is in *corrente* rhythm (from the latter part of m. 69 through m. 71), should be played in half the note values of the source, like a number of shorter passages whose notation is clearly inconsistent with the rest of the score. A version of Partita 7 with rhythms adjusted accordingly appears at the end of the score as an appendix (after several examples, which are cited in the following list of readings). It remains possible, however, that the composer expected performers to vary the tempo in the course of a variation such as this, with results that lay somewhere between the extremes indicated by the two versions shown here. A possible interpretation can be heard in a recording of a performance by the editor at http://4hlxx40786q1osp7b1b814j8co.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/david-schulenberg/files/2015/08/pasquini_ercole_romanesca.mp3.

This edition replaces the notation of the source on staves of 5 and 7 lines, respectively, with modern notation and clefs. The direction of stems upward or downward follows modern conventions, but the distribution of notes between the staves strictly follows the source. Small note values are beamed as in the manuscript, and all accidentals found in the latter are reproduced, with editorial additions appearing above or below notes. Notes and rests added editorially are in brackets; editorial ties and bar lines are dotted. The source indicates a few ornaments through the letter "t" (probably meaning *tremolo* or *tremoletto*), usually followed by a dot; the edition omits the dot. There are no slurs and the only accidentals in the source are sharps and flats, which probably are meant to apply only to the immediately following note. Listed below are additional apparent errors in the source that have not been adopted in the edition.

Readings

m.	reading
4	l.h., bottom voice, notes 4–5: + a, g (with flat)
6	l.h., lower voice, note 2: A not F
10	r.h., lower voice: first note obscured by blot, orig. possibly e'
16	r.h.: "t" on note 11 (g') not 12
21	r.h., final chord: b'/d'' not f'/b'
22	l.h., lower voice: "t" on note 5 (g) not f
26	all notes and rest double these values
32	l.h., upper voice: note 5 (b) + d'
33	l.h.: notes 7–8 originally omited and notes 9–12 written a third too high, then blotted out
36	l.h.: notes 10–12 (e–d–e) originally written a third too high, then blotted out
38	l.h.: first half of measure written in double these values, with the exception of the initial g (lower voice) and the fourth c' (the seven notes in that figure are all 16ths)
42	r.h.: the second group of 16ths (e''–f''–g'') comprises four notes, ending with an additional a''
43	both staves: the second chord is a half, not a quarter, and the last three notes are half these values (8th–16th–16th, not quarter, 8th–8th)
44	r.h., note 7 (b'): 16th not 8th
45	l.h., note 2 (e): + g
47	both staves: a single chord (dotted whole), not whole tied to 8th
52	r.h., middle voice: note 2 (g') 16th not 8th
53	r.h.: 1st chord a third too high; middle note in 2d chord e' not d'
55	in the ms this appears as two measures (see ex. 1)

56 r.h. (note 1): g’ not b’
58 r.h., upper voice: notes 6–7 (g’–a’) originally 16ths, beam crossed out
60 l.h.: note 3 (d) dotted quarter, not dotted 8th; note 7 (G) dotted quarter, not quarter; last two notes and rest double these values
62 final *groppo* in both staves, first note (a, f#’): 8th not 16; entire *groppo* a 3d too high in lower stave
64 r.h., upper voice: note 5 (f’) entirely blotted out, reading conjectural
65 notated as three measures of 2/2
r.h.: at least one lower voice blotted out, probably was bass part erroneously entered on this stave
73 bar line after the first third of the measure
76 bar line after the first third of the measure
77 notated as three measures of 2/2, with an unusually heavy bar line after the first third of the measure
78 notated as two measures of 3/4
79 notated as two measures of 3/4
r.h., first chord: bottom note g’ not f’
84 r.h.: each b + g
85 r.h.: dot, if present, is on d’’ not b’; notes 11–12: 32ds not 16ths
89 l.h., upper voice: f’ (8th) in place of rest on downbeat
90 upper voices in second half of measure = those of m. 89, bass reads f, f, f (quarters); reading of edition is conjectural
92 bar line after first half of measure
93 bar line after first half of measure
r.h., upper voice, note 1: c’ not e’
r.h., lower voice: double these values; note 3: f’ not g’
96 l.h., lower voice, last note: half not quarter
97 bar line after first third of measure
r.h., last third of measure: double these values
l.h., upper voice: d’ (quarter) above note 2 in lower voice
98 bar line after first half of measure, but in the lower stave the first two thirds of the measure precede the bar line, and a superfluous d (quarter) prior to the last note (c) in the lower voice is crossed out
99 bar line after first third of measure
101 r.h., upper voice, notes 2–9: written one step lower; in place of note 10 is a heavy blot, probably the result of an attempted correction (c’’ is conjectural)
l.h., notes 3–7: half these values (16ths not 32ds)
103 bar line before last third of measure
r.h., notes 8–16: readings are partly conjectural due to apparent writing over corrections or ink bleeding through from reverse side of paper
110 r.h., last note: originally a third lower, crossed out
111 r.h., first note: originally a third lower, crossed out
112 l.h., upper voice: initial rest omitted, note 1 (g) directly above G in lower voice
113 r.h., middle voice: first note (g’) apparently half not quarter
125 bar line after first half of measure
126 bar line after first half of measure, which is inconsequential (see Example 2)
r.h., upper voice: second half of measure conjectural, ms reads c’’ (half), c’’–c’’–b’–c’’–b’–a’ (16th–16th–32d–32d–32d–32d)
l.h., upper voice, notes 4–9: entire group one step lower
131 r.h., lower voice, last note: b’ not a’
l.h.: extra 8th in measure and other discrepancies (see Example 3)
132 bar line after first half of measure