UNIT XV: DOMINANT NINTHS; NONDOMINANT NINTHS, ELEVENTHS, THIRTEENTHS

Dominant Ninths

The dominant with major or minor ninth occurs in music from the high Baroque forward. One can avoid many pointless arguments in the analysis of such music by recognizing that the important question is not whether a given chord is a "real V^9", but rather how are ninths in general treated in the style under discussion. We can distinguish, very roughly, four degrees of freedom in the treatment of the ninth, corresponding to an evolution from nonharmonic tone to member of the chord:

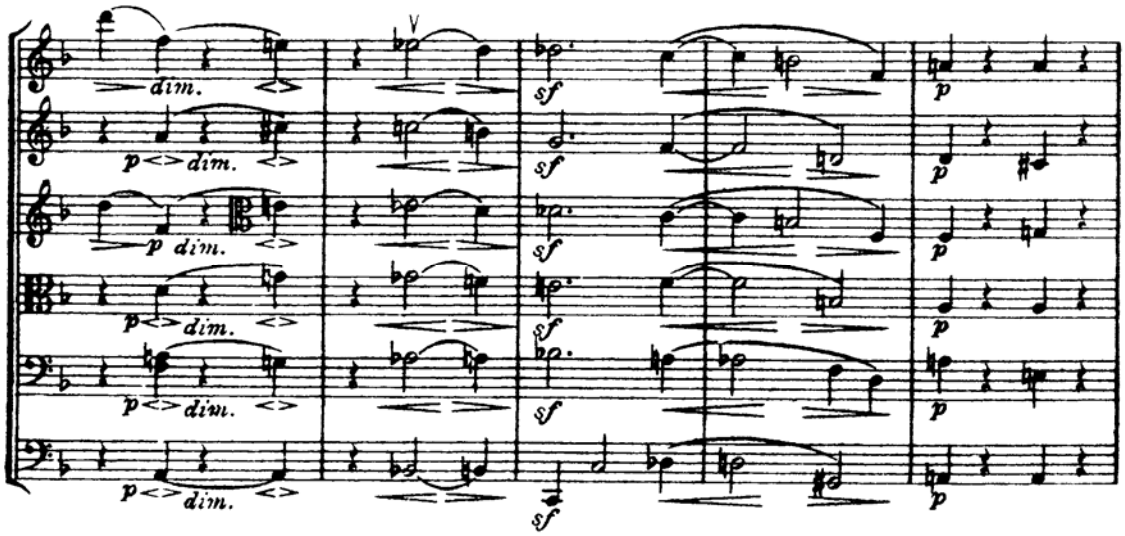
1. Treatment as one of the orthodox dissonances SP, PT, NT: EXX 1, 2, 6.

2. Treatment as a slow dissonance.

3. Treatment as an unprepared dissonance (AP): EXX 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 – or as an unresolved dissonance: EX 3; or as a free nonharmonic tone.

4. Finally and somewhat paradoxically, the most "harmonic" treatment of a 9^{th} (or 11^{th}, or a 13^{th}) is in an obtrusive inner voice: EXX 9, 10. There is a significant difference between an ostensibly dissonant pitch as an expressive melodic note in a prominent upper voice, and one buried in the midst of the texture, used solely for its harmonic color.

The inversions of the V^9 and the V^{-9} are figured V^7_6, V^5_4, V^3_2. The ninth of the chord is always written a full 9^{th} above the root, not a second. The "fourth inversion", with the 9^{th} in the bass, is virtually unknown, except for a famous passage in Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*:



The third of the chord is usually below the 9^{th}. The ninth usually resolves downward to the fifth of the tonic triad.

The V^{-9} (with the lowered 6°) is, like its $_{o}vii^{7}$ counterpart, used equally in major or minor contexts, while the V^{9} (with the major 6°) is found only in major key-areas.

Dominant ninths are employed as second dominants quite as readily as V^{7} chords.

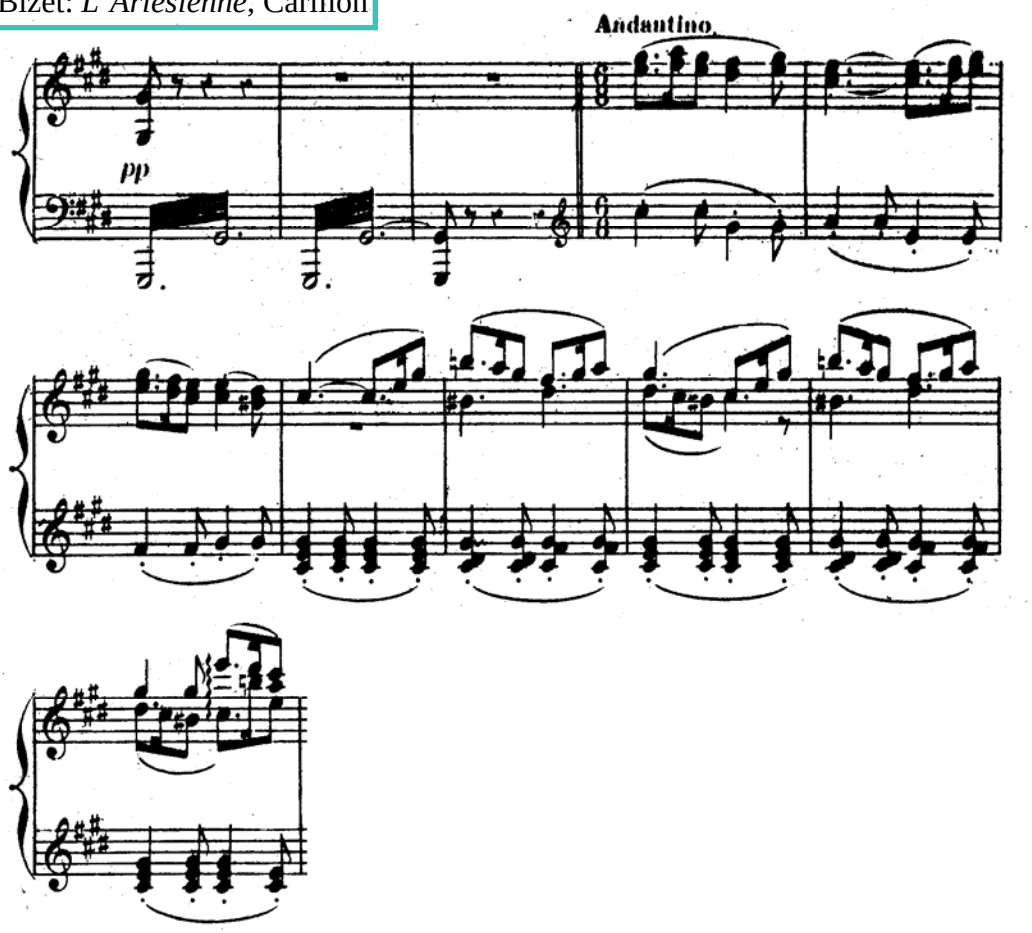
Nondominant Ninths, Elevenths, and Thirteenths

These chords show the same approximate stages of evolution as the dominant ninths: from treatment as an orthodox dissonance (EXX 11, 12, 15, 16, 22), or a "slow dissonance" (EX 13, 15, 18), to treatment as an unresolved or unprepared dissonance, still used in a prominent melodic voice for expressive purposes (EXX 14-17, 19- 21); until, finally, with the Impressionists and others in the later nineteenth century, the chords are used as sonorities for their own sake, and the ninth, 11^{th}, or 13^{th} is located unobtrusively in an inner part, with no special attention to its resolution: EXX 15, 22-25.

Nondominant Ninths

These require no special discussion. "+9" is the designation sometimes given to the kind of sonority found in EX 24, including the seventh of the chord and both its major and minor thirds – that is, both the raised and lowered 7° of the scale (in the case of a V). Such an effect was already written earlier in the nineteenth century:

Bizet: *L'Arlesienne*, Carillon

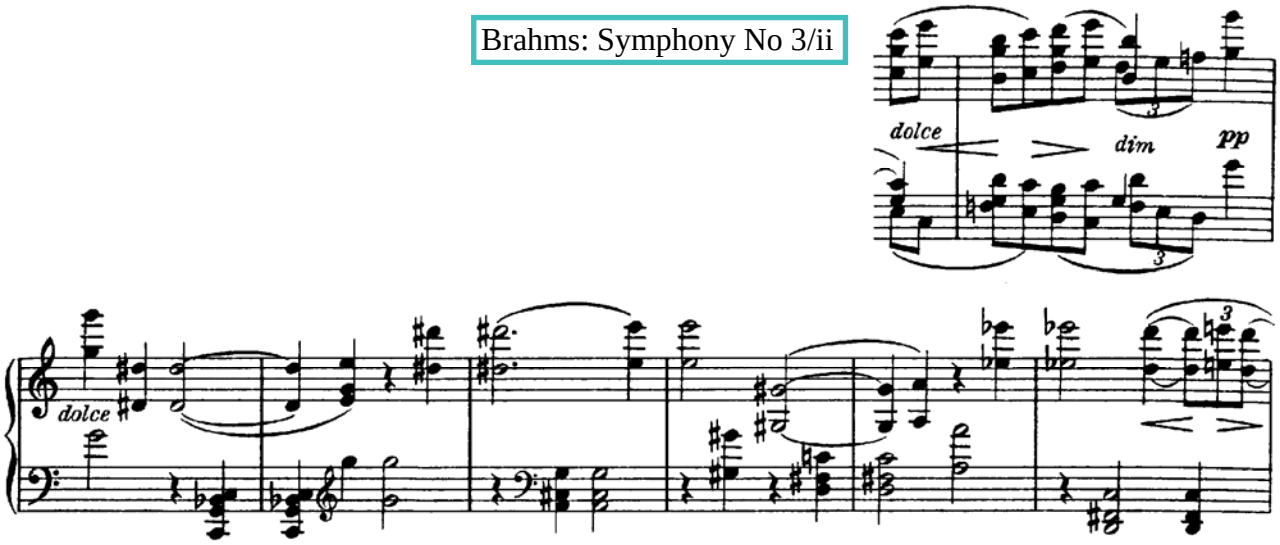


Eleventh Chords

are less often used than 9th- and 13th-chords. The fourth (11th) above the bass is likely to be felt as a dissonance requiring resolution, unless both 9th and 13th are present as well: EX 23. Often sonorities ostensibly 11th-chords are better considered appoggiatura-chords ("local pedals"), such as $\overset{\frown}{\text{IV}}$ – EX 18.
V

V^{+11} is the designation sometimes given to a chord of Fr^4_3 structure acting as a dominant ("with lowered fifth") rather than as an augmented sixth – i.e., resolving to a chord rooted a fifth below:

Brahms: Symphony No 3/ii

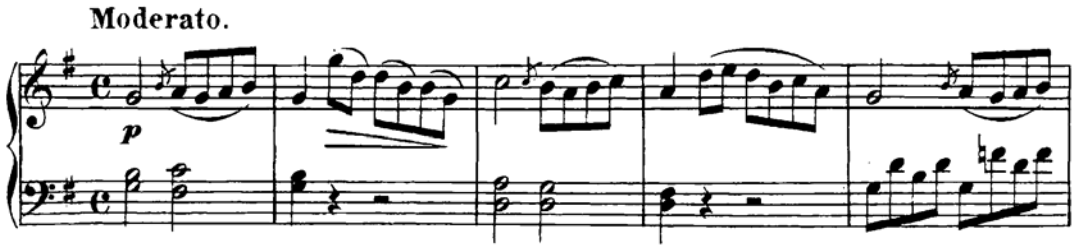


The lowered fifth of the chord may be written as a raised tonic or lowered 2°, depending upon its direction. The chord is enharmonically identical to a "Neapolitan French sixth", "NFr^4_3" (cf. Unit XVI), and the progression of such a chord to the tonic is a transposition of the progression Fr^4_3 -V.

Thirteenth Chords

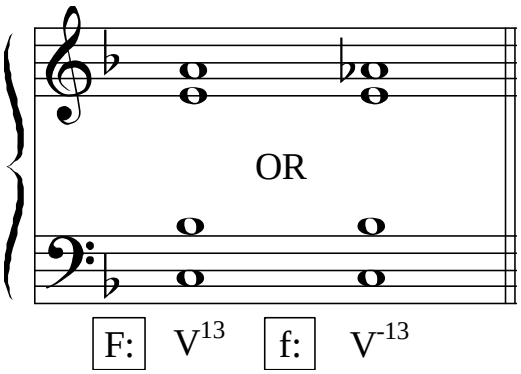
are somewhat more plausible chords than elevenths; the sixth is consonant with the bass, as the fourth is not. The 13th is nearly a consonant pitch in the Classic *echapée* figure:

Beethoven (?), Sonatine Anh 5 #1/i

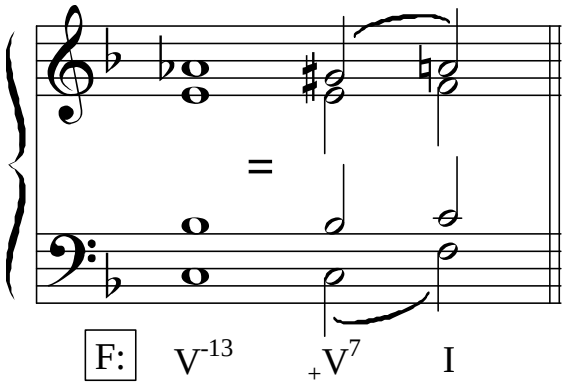


This figure is the precursor of the V^{13}: EXX 16, 20.

Ordinarily the fifth is omitted (it clashes with the 13th); the characteristic V^{13} structure is thus root, 3rd, 7th, and 13th:



The thirteenth, according to the mode, is raised or lowered (that is, a major or minor sixth above the bass). Notice that the V^{-13} (with lowered 6°) can be enharmonically equivalent to a $_{+}V^{7}$ (cf. Unit XVIII):

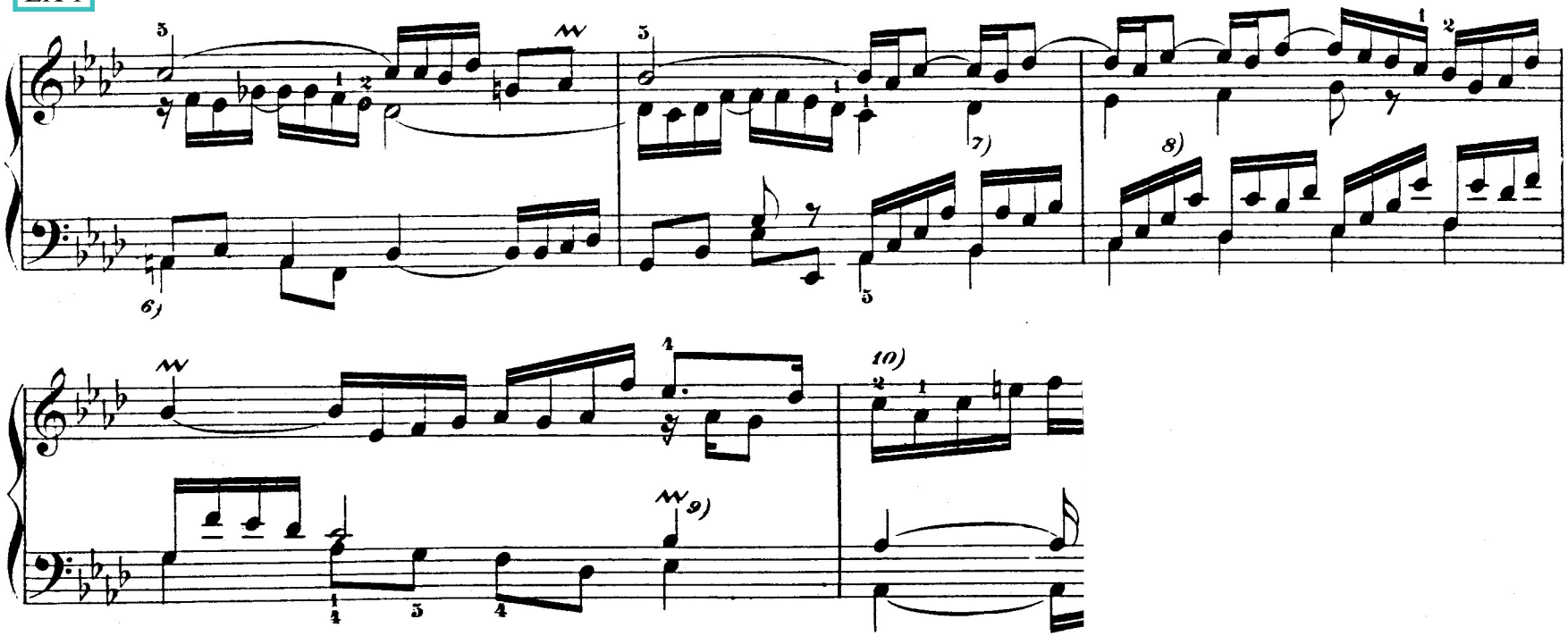


By later in the 19th century, 13ths are being used in root position as "chords with an added sixth" (e.g., EX 19), much as ii^{6}_{5} already in the 18th century is treated as a subdominant with an added sixth. "Genuine" 13ths, those with 7th, 9th, and 11th present, were exploited as well: EXX 23, 25.

Examples, Unit XV

EX 1

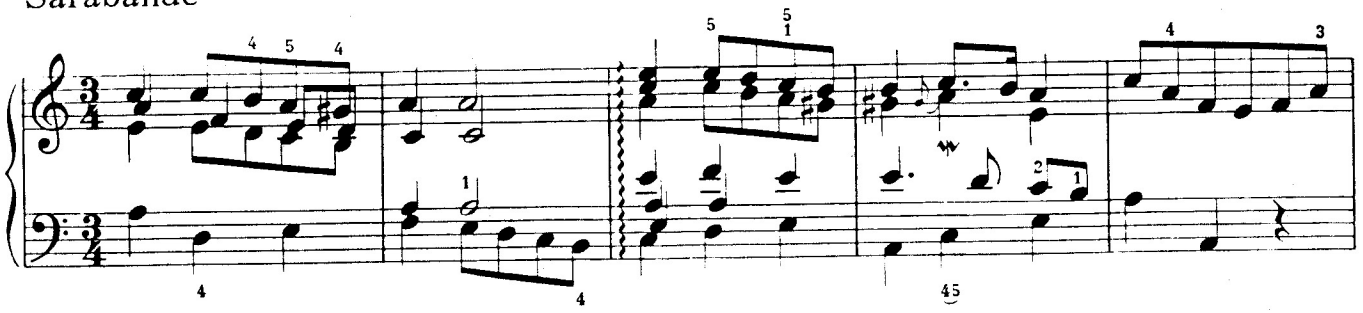
Bach, *WTC* I, Prelude XII



EX 2

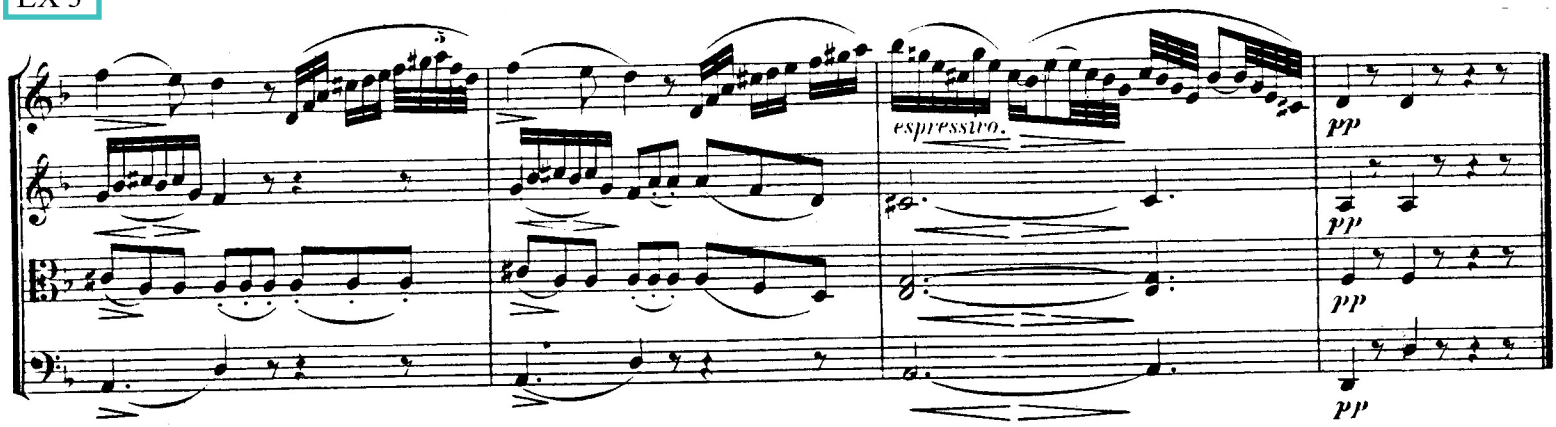
Sarabande

Bach, English Suite II



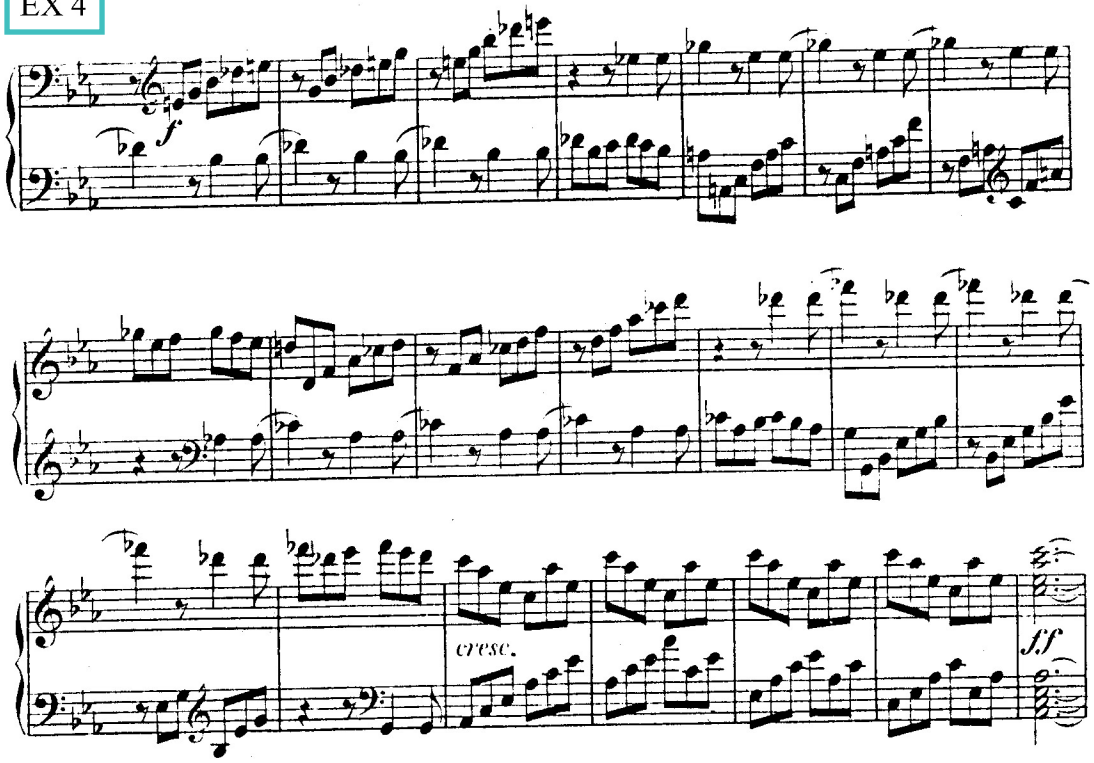
EX 3

Beethoven SQ Op 18 No 1/ii



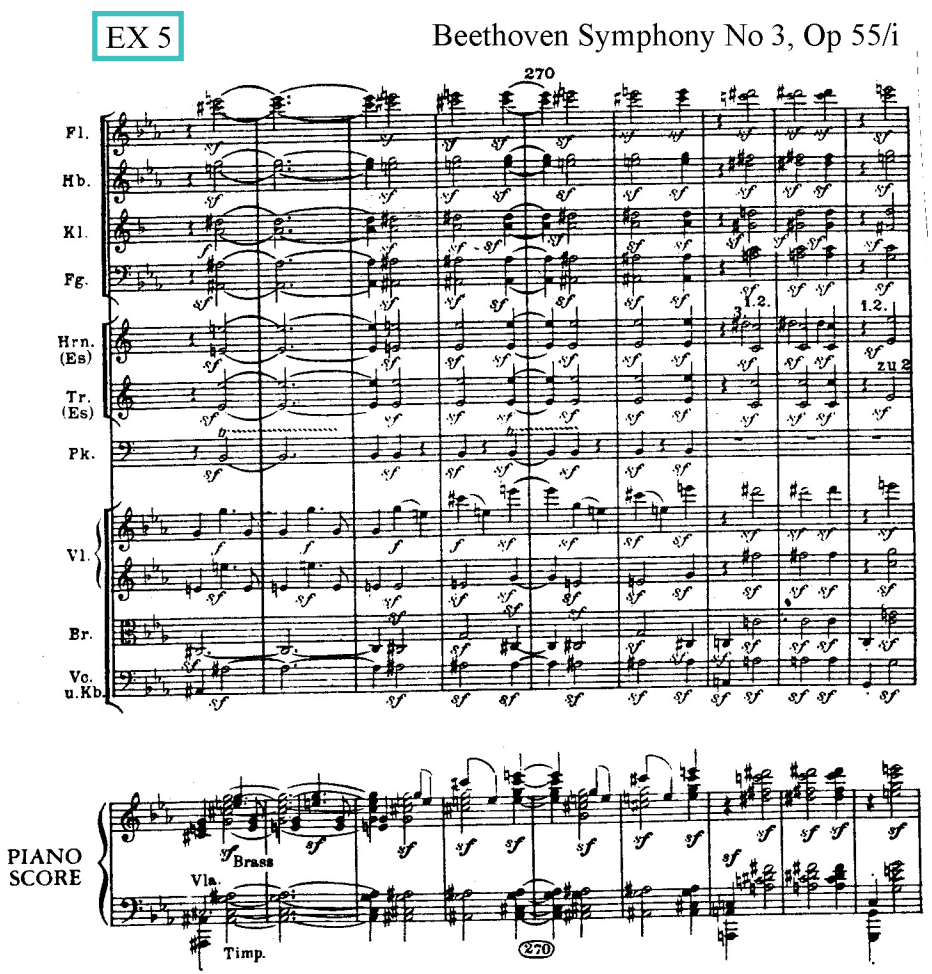
Beethoven Pf Son Op 31#3/iv

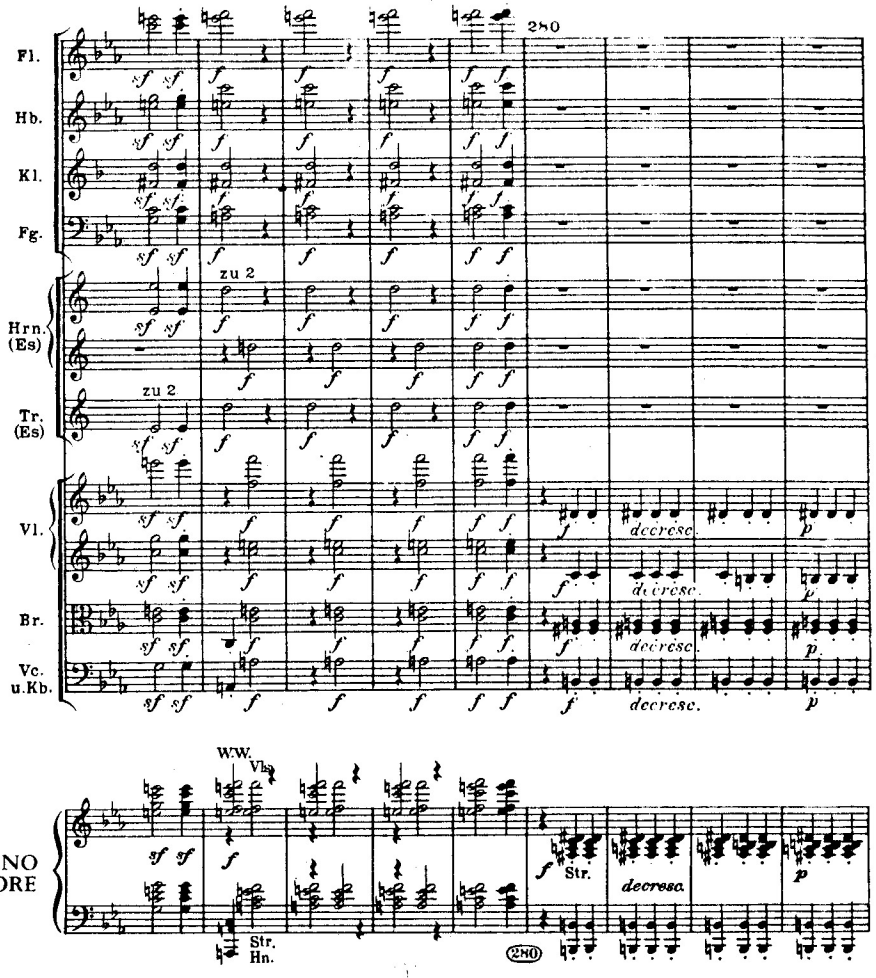
EX 4



EX 5

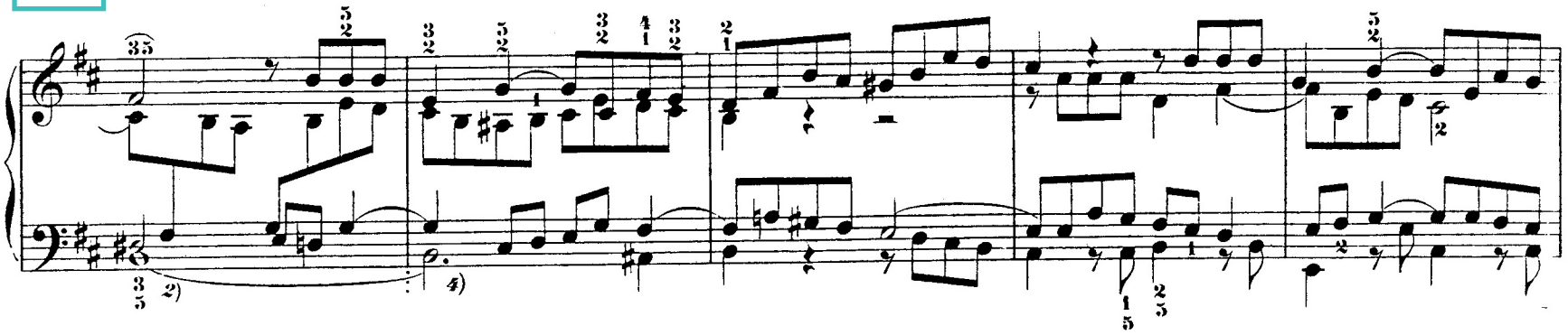
Beethoven Symphony No 3, Op 55/i





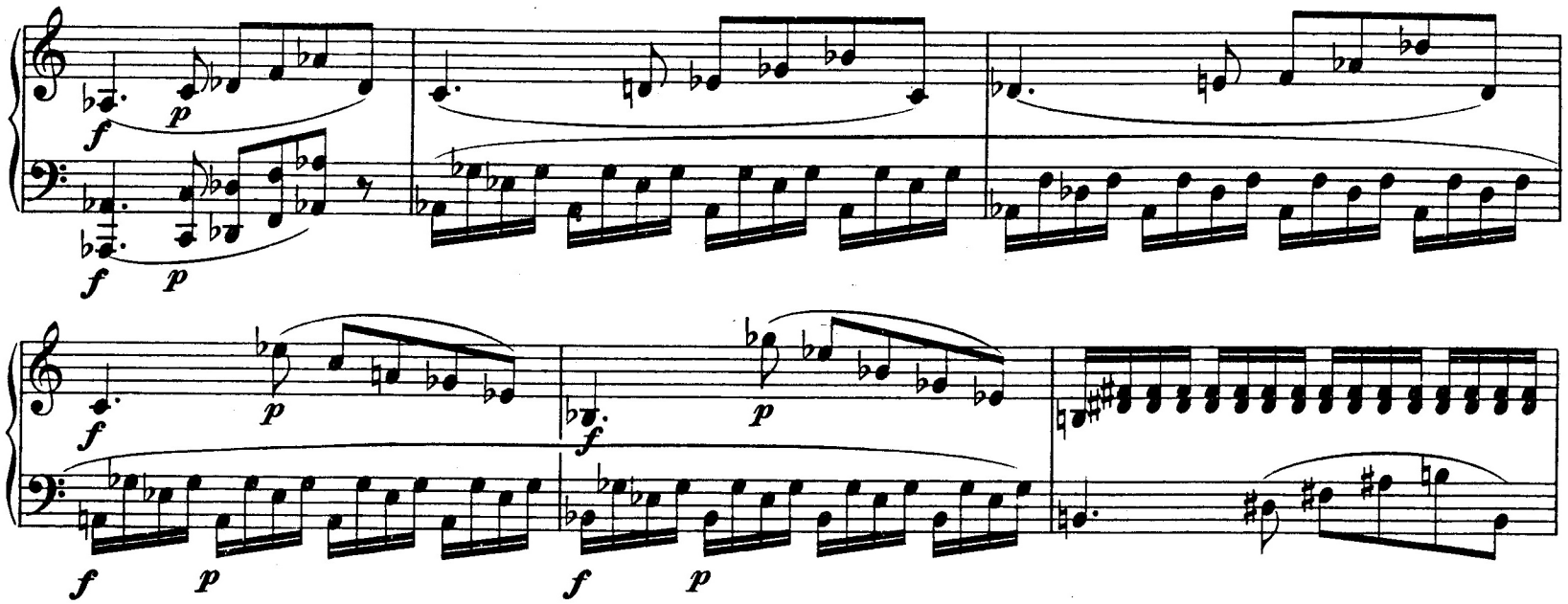
EX 6

Bach, WTC II, Fugue V



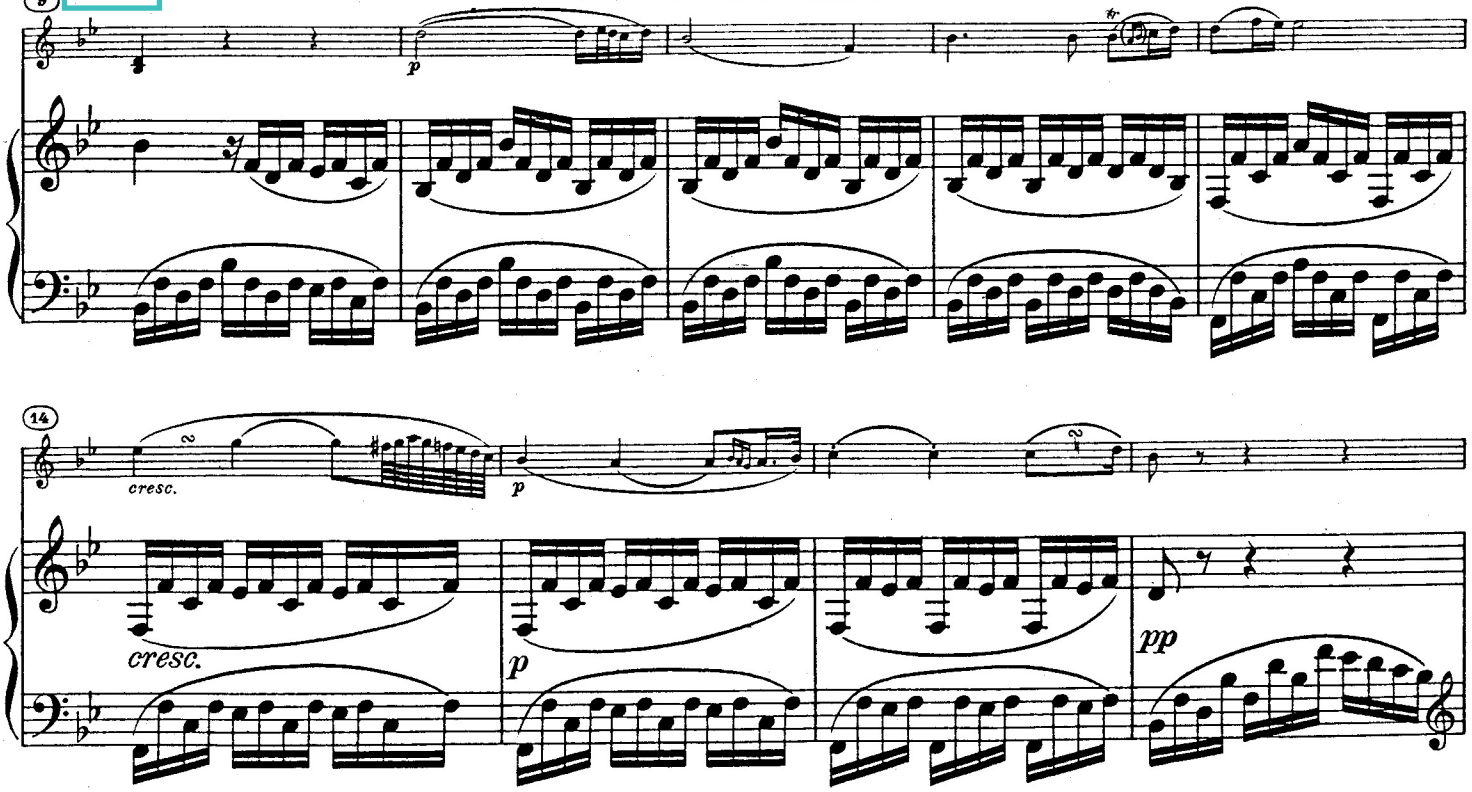
EX 7

Mozart, Pf Fantasia K.475



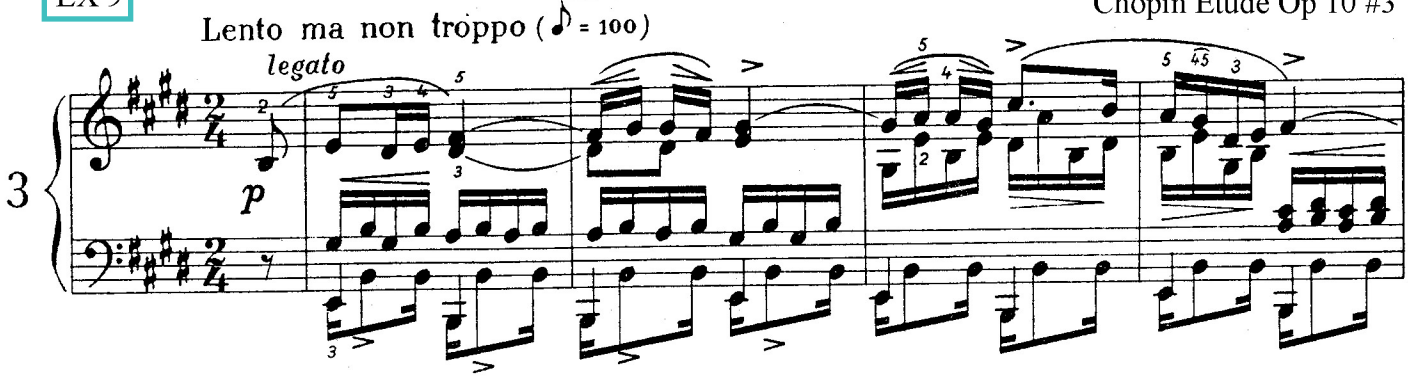
EX 8

Beethoven Violin Sonata Op 24/ii



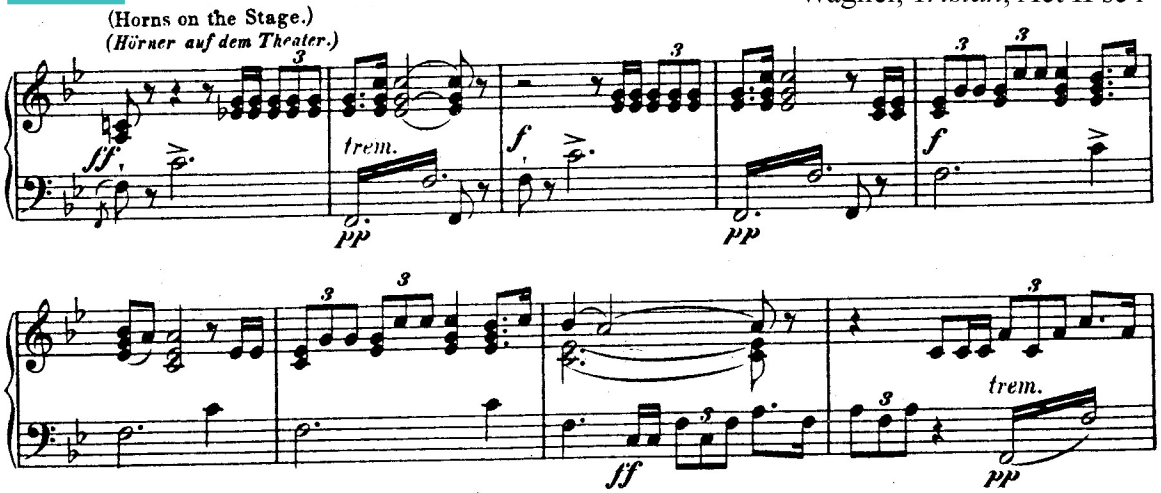
EX 9

Chopin Etude Op 10 #3



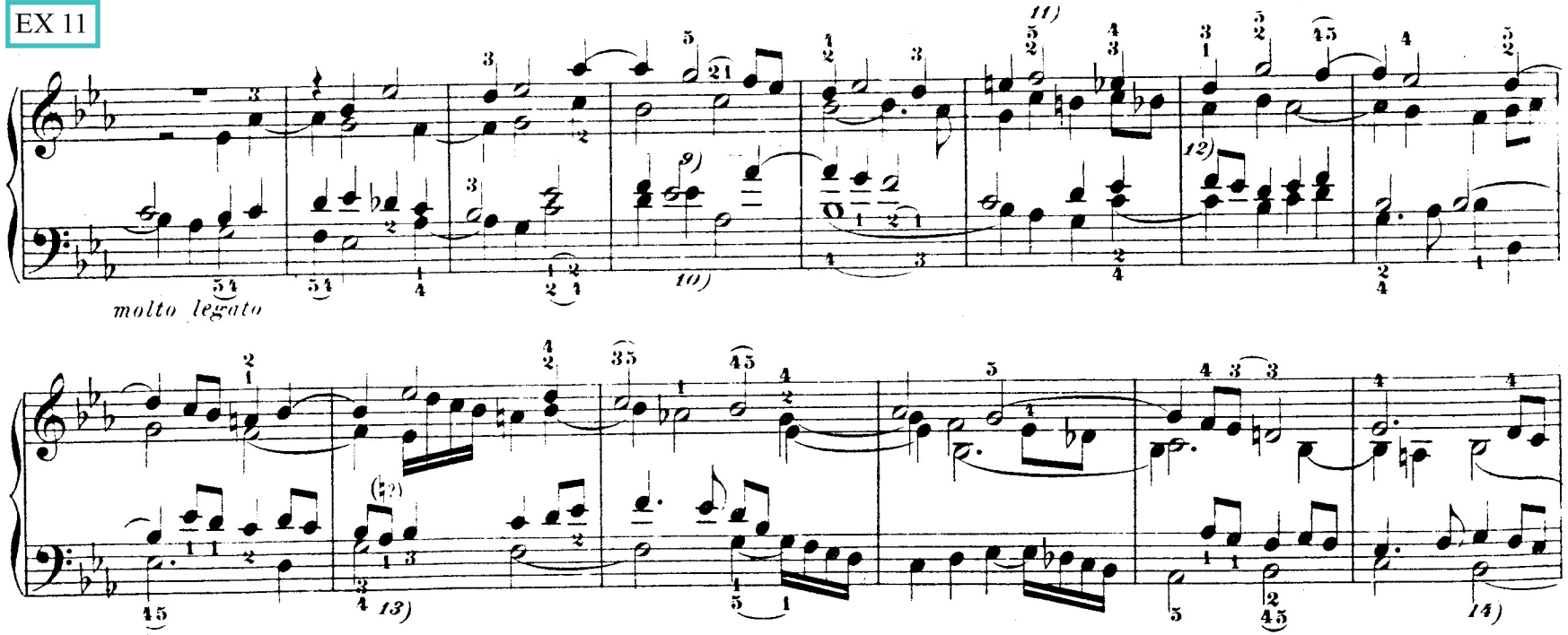
EX 10

Wagner, *Tristan*, Act II sc i



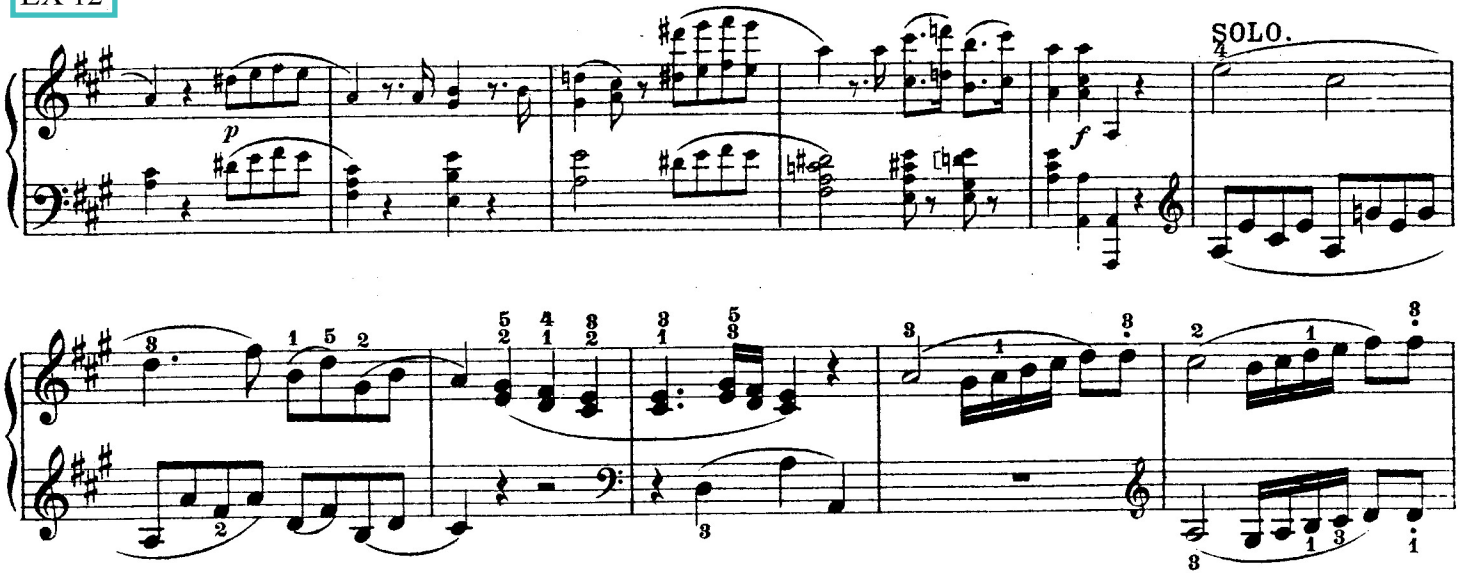
EX 11

Bach, WTC I, Prelude VII



EX 12

Mozart, Piano Concerto K.488/i



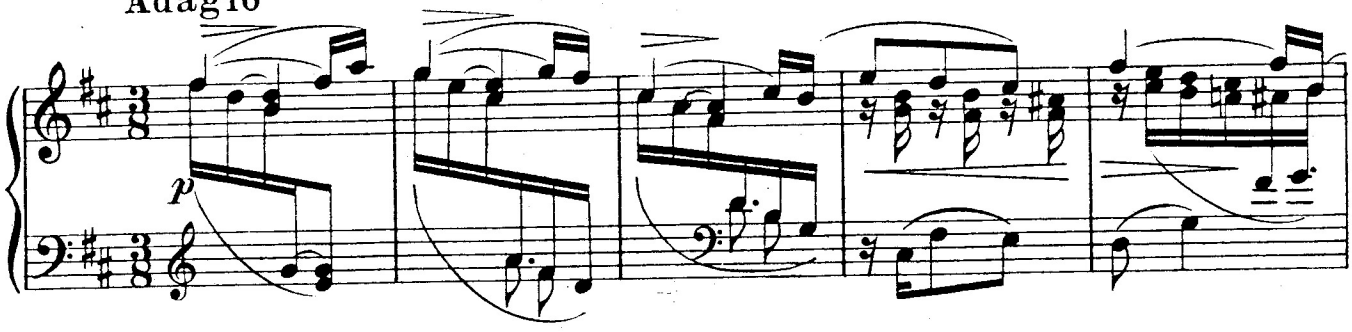
EX 13

Intermezzo

Johannes Brahms

Op. 119 Nº 1. *(1893)*

Adagio



EX 14

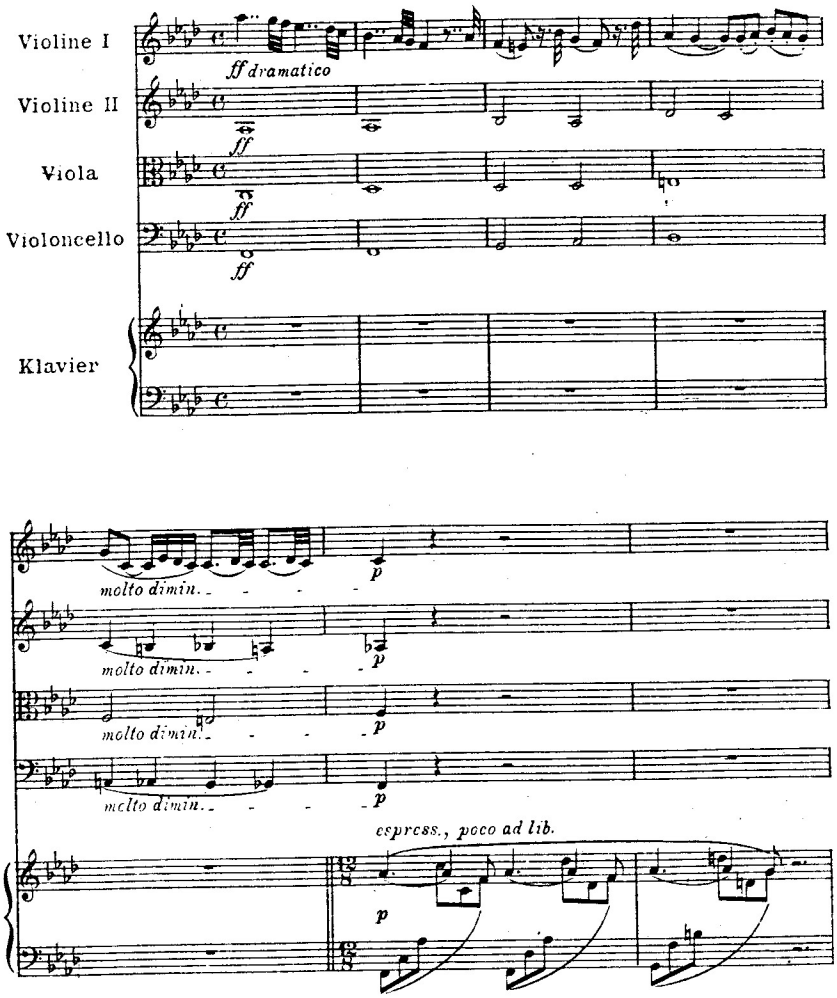
Quintet

I

César Franck

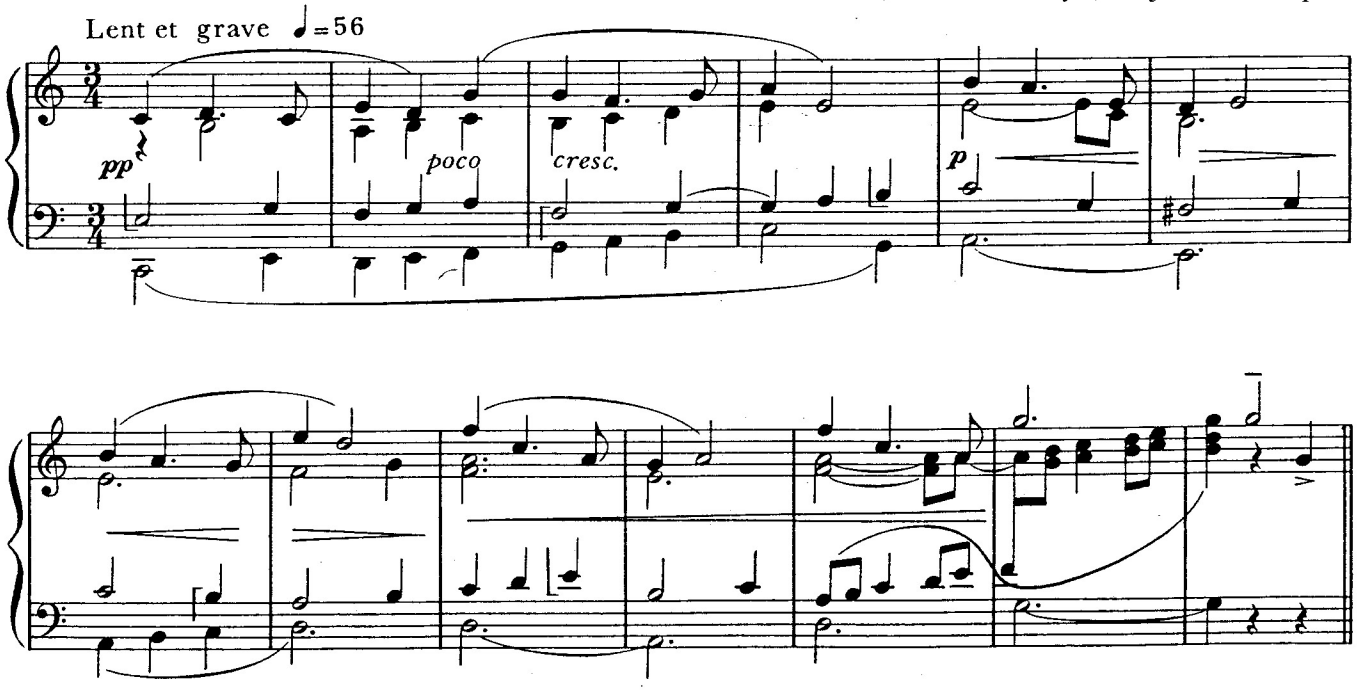
1882-1890

Molto moderato quasi lento



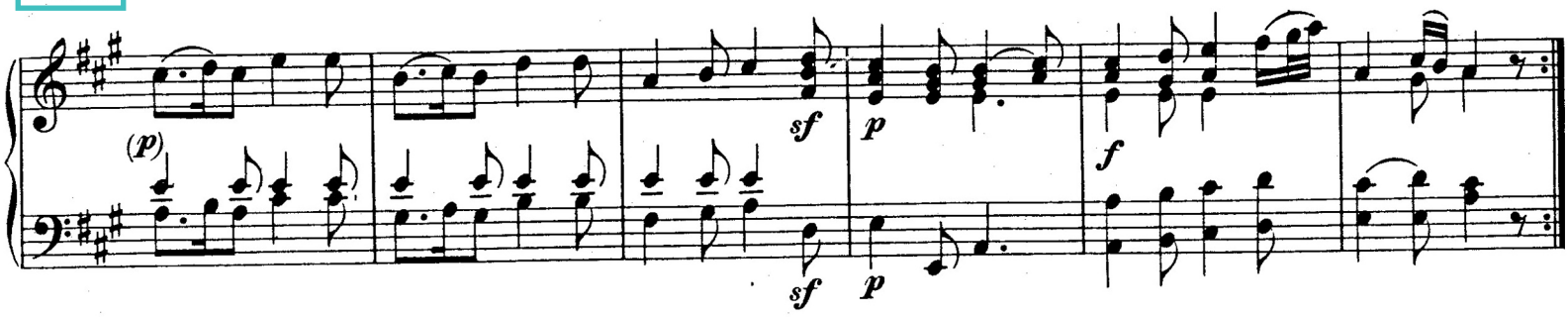
EX 15

Ravel, *Ma Mere l'Oye*, Le jardin féerique



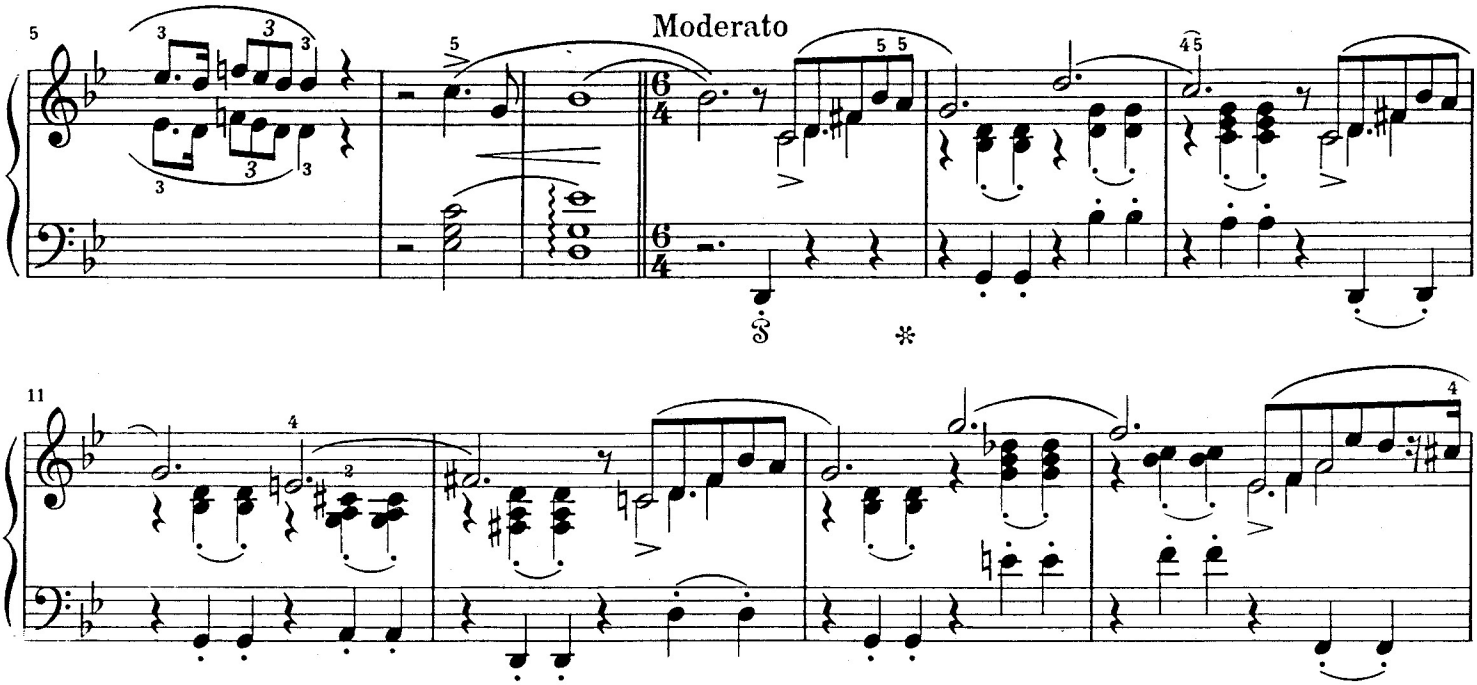
Mozart, Pf Son K.331/i

EX 16



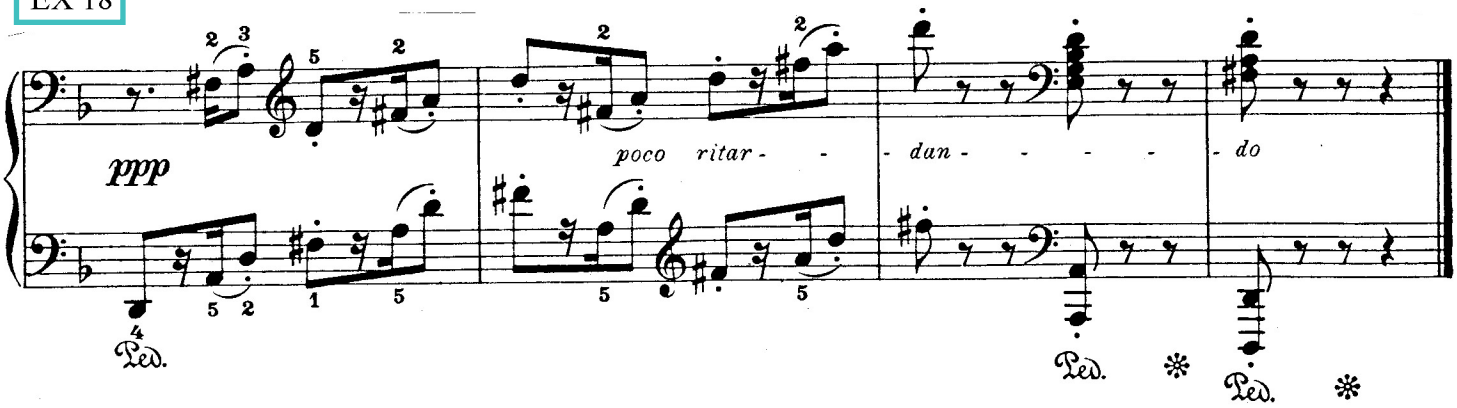
EX 17

Chopin, Ballade Op 23



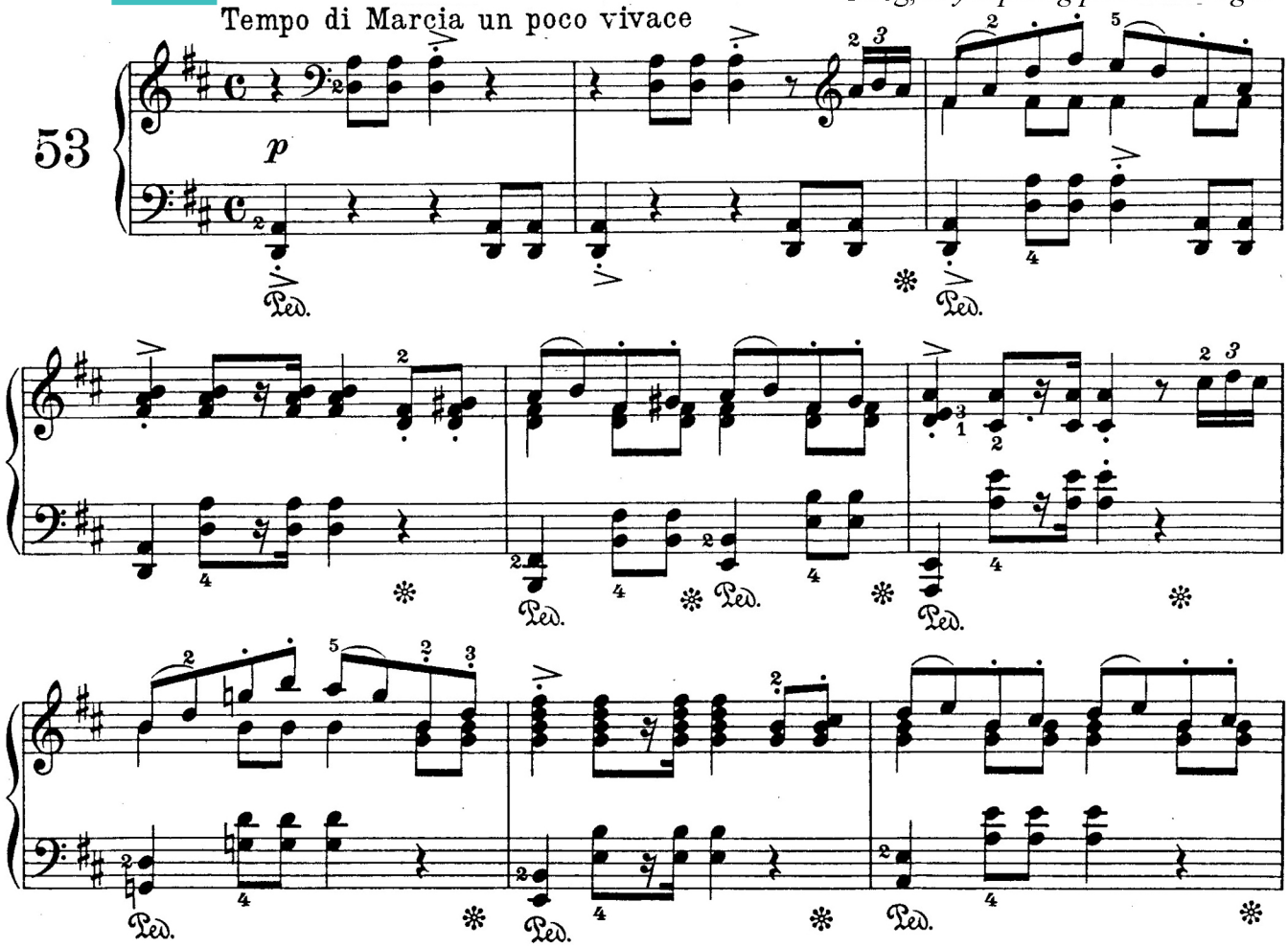
Grieg, *Liden Fugl*, Op 43 #4

EX 18



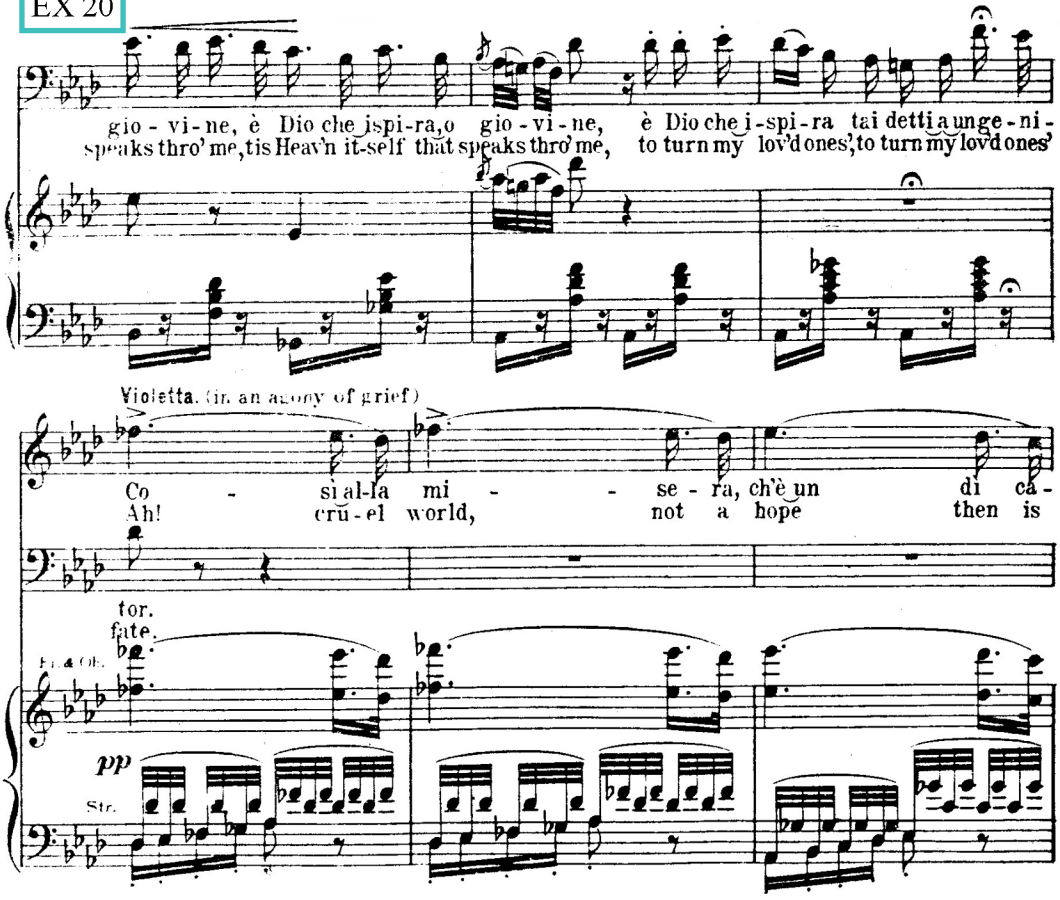
EX 19

Grieg, *Bryllupsdag på Troldhaugen*



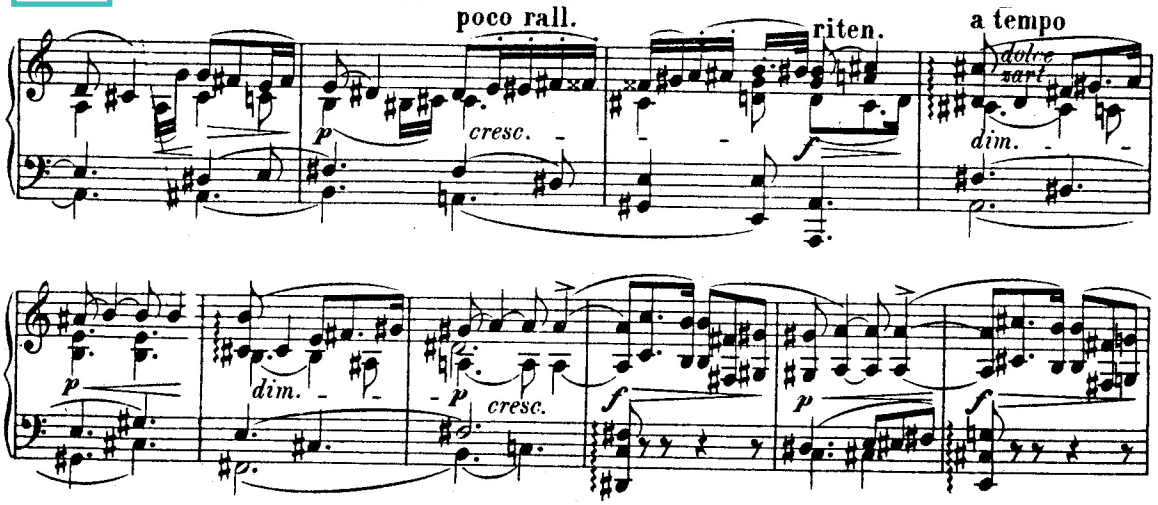
EX 20

Verdi, *La Traviata*, Act II #8



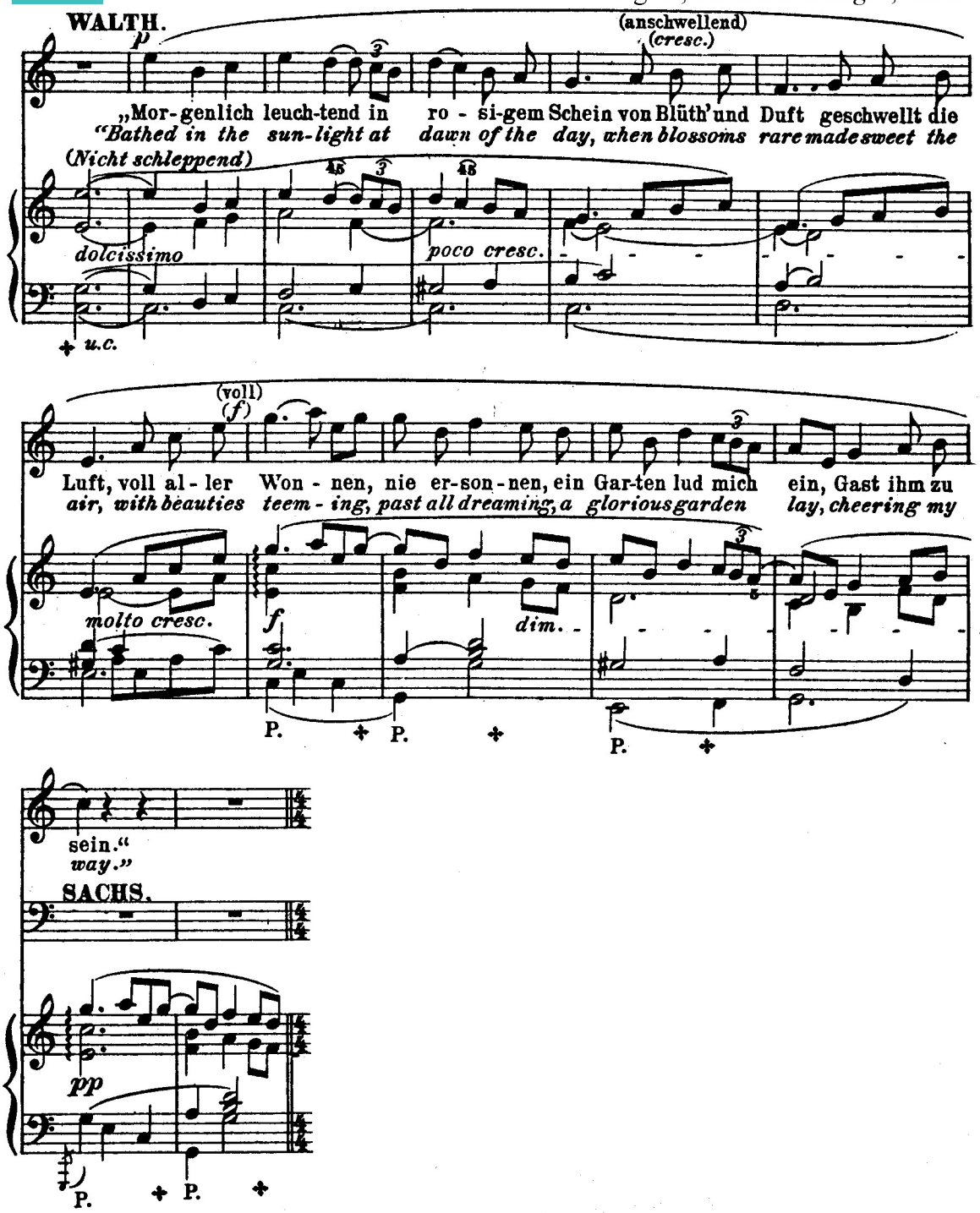
EX 21

Wagner, *Tristan*, Prelude



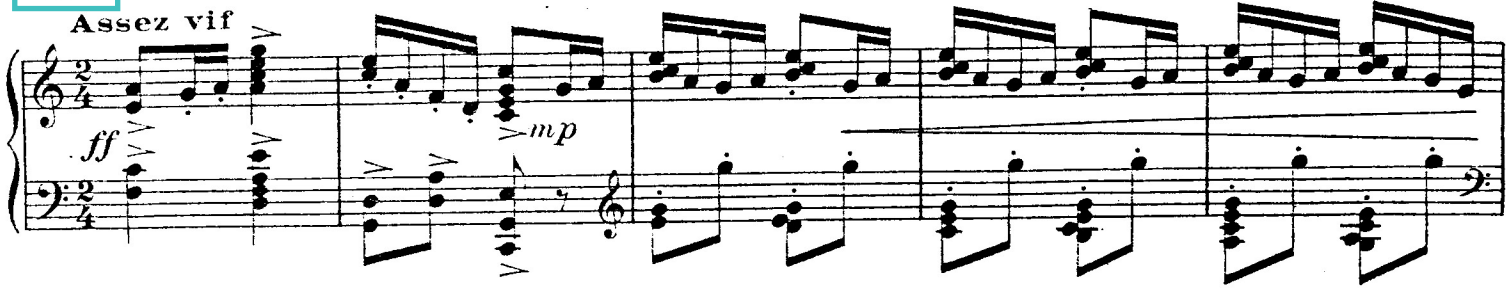
EX 22

Wagner, *Die Meistersinger*, Act III



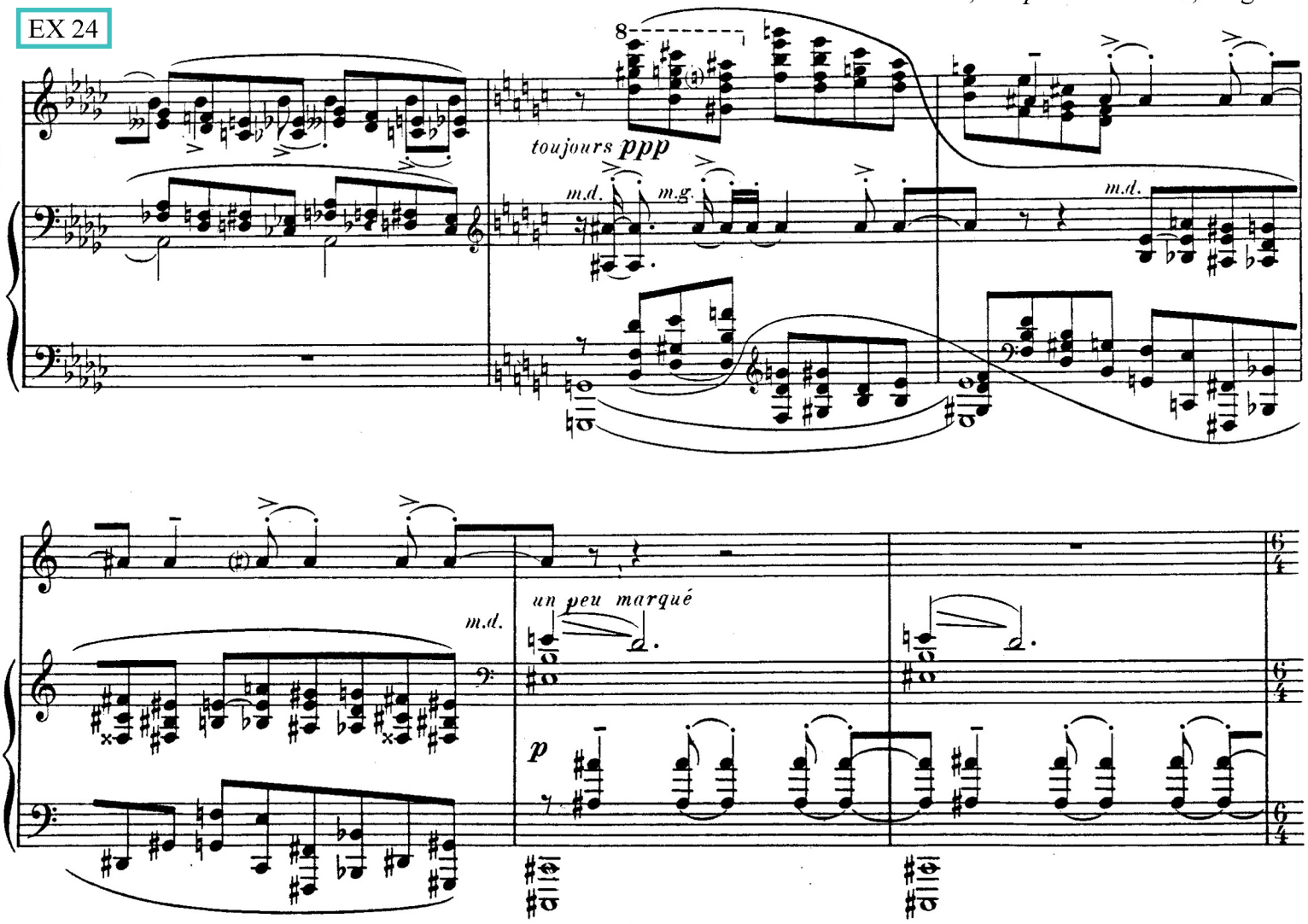
EX 23

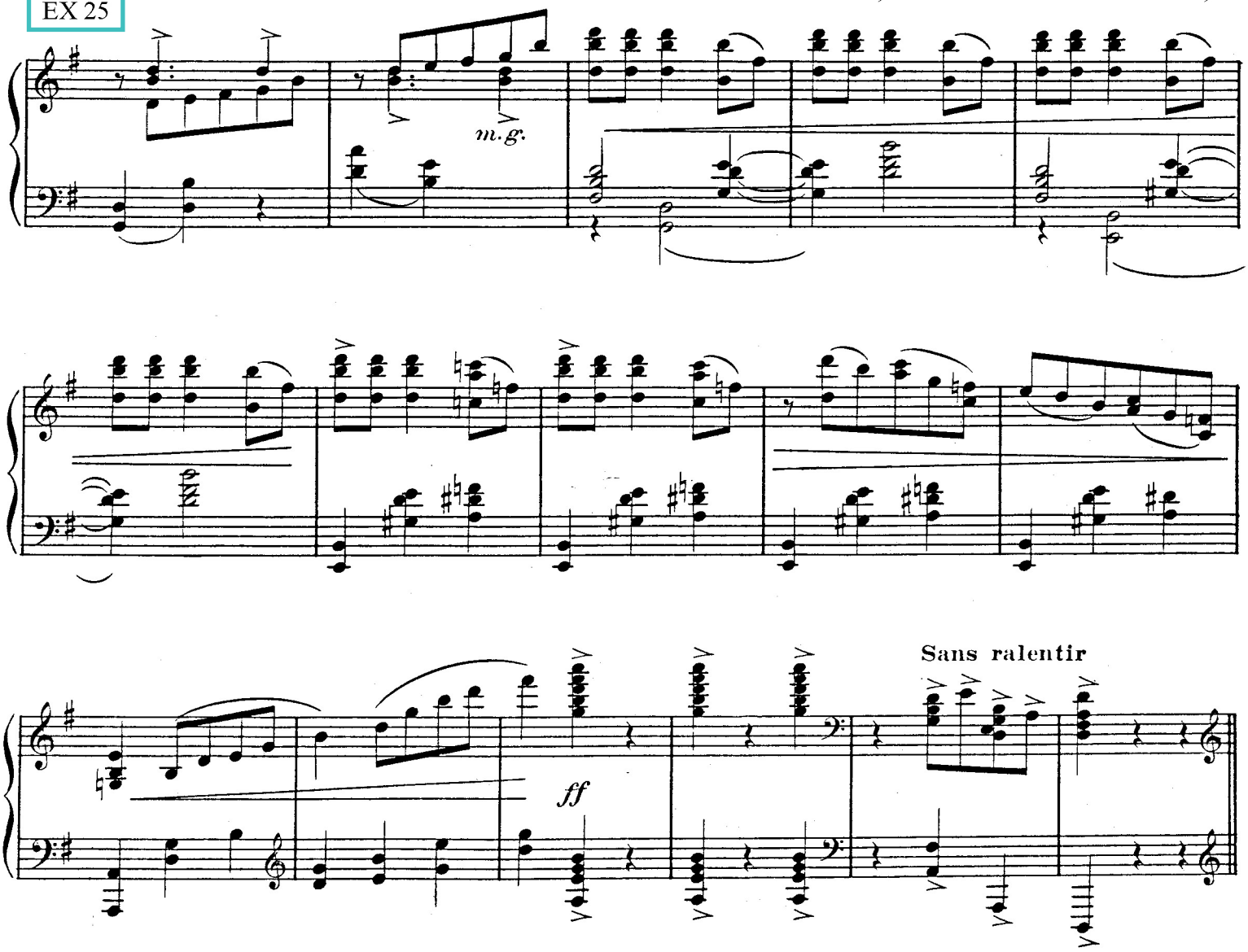
Ravel, Le Tombeau de Couperin, IV: Rigaudon



EX 24

Ravel, *Gaspard de la Nuit*, Le gibet



EX 25

Ravel, *Valses nobles et sentimentales*, I