© Copyright by

Pierre-Alain Chevalier

May 2014

SONATA DEFORMATIONS IN MENDELSSOHN'S CONCERT OVERTURES: A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

_____

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the

Moores School of Music

University of Houston

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

_____

By

Pierre-Alain Chevalier

May 2014

SONATA DEFORMATIONS IN MENDELSSOHN'S CONCERT OVERTURES:

A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

_____

Pierre-Alain A. Chevalier

APPROVED:

_____

Andrew Davis, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

_____

Jeffrey Sposato, Ph.D.

_____

Franz Anton Krager

_____

Robert Mayes

_____

John W. Roberts, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
Department of English

SONATA DEFORMATIONS IN MENDELSSOHN'S CONCERT OVERTURES:
A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

An Abstract of a Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the

Moores School of Music

University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

By

Pierre-Alain Chevalier

May 2014

Abstract

This study examines four of Felix Mendelssohn's concert overtures utilizing structuralist and non-structuralist analytical approaches with the aim of identifying each work's unique musical narrative. The structuralist methodology is drawn from James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy's Sonata Theory, which is grounded in the subdiscipline of genre theory. The non-structuralist or semiotic methodology is drawn chiefly from Robert Hatten's work. As well, each of the overtures is influenced by programmatic sources; these influences will be considered with regard to their significance in each work, but will not function as the fundamental basis for the narrative interpretation. Ultimately, I will seek to account for Mendelssohn's highly rich structural and semiotic language, through which he conveys meaning in his music. The analyses themselves suggest a particular proclivity on Mendelssohn's part for S-space deformations as a means of communicating narrative meaning in the sonata form.

The opening chapter explains my methodological approach and addresses current trends in the literature. The chapters that follow are devoted to four overtures, respectively: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, op. 21; *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, op. 27; *The Hebrides*, op. 26; and *The Fair Melusine*, op. 32. Chapter 6 addresses, in brief, the possibility for future application of this bipartite approach in other Mendelssohn works and briefly discusses relevant correlations found in the two posthumously published overtures: the Trumpet Overture, op. 101 and the *Ruy Blas* Overture, op. 95.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Andrew Davis for introducing me to Sonata Theory, encouraging me to take on this project, and guiding me through the research and writing process. I also thank Jeffrey Sposato for his contribution to the work; his thoughtful comments were indispensable during the revision process. I would like to thank James Hepokoski for his guidance in the early stages of my analysis of *The Hebrides* Overture; that analytical work formed the basis of my interpretation of the piece. Thanks are also owed to Franz Anton Krager and Robert Mayes for their guidance and encouragement. As well, I owe gratitude to Aaminah Durrani, John Snyder, and Timothy Koozin; their thoughtful teaching contributed significantly to my appreciation of narrative analysis in music. Finally, I thank my family, especially my wife, who has supported me unconditionally: I love you dearly.

Contents

List of Figures and Examples viii

1. Slow Introduction 1

2. *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Op. 21 11

Character Themes and the Introduction-Coda Frame 13

S-Space Deformations 21

The "Dream Theme" 29

3. *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage,* Op. 27 34

Inspiration and Influence: Beethoven, Goethe, and Marx 35

Prosperous Voyage: Beyond Goethe's Story 39

S-Space Deformations 42

4. *The Hebrides,* Op. 26 51

Exposition: Harmonic Conflict 54

Exposition: The S^c Space 59

Recapitulation 60

Imitative Interpolations 62

Recapitulation: S^c Space 64

Minor-Mode: Negative or Positive? 66

5. *The Fair Melusine,* Op. 32 70

Formal Overview 72

Exposition: Major- and Minor-Mode Juxtaposition 73

Exposition: S^c Space 75

Recapitulation: Structural Modal Mixture and ESC Failure 76

6. Closing Zone 80

Trumpet Overture, Op. 101 81

Ruy Blas Overture, Op. 95 84

Appendix 89

Bibliography 156

List of Figures and Examples

Figure 3.1. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Meeres Stille* and *Glückliche Fahrt*. 37

Figure 1.1. Sonata structure. 90

Figure 2.1. *AMND* structure. 91

Example 2.1a. *AMND* module #1 and #2. 92

Example 2.1b. *AMND*, op. 61 no. 6. 93

Example 2.1c. *AMND,* op. 61 Finale. 93

Example 2.2. *AMND* module #3 and #4. 94

Example 2.3. *AMND* module #7. 96

Example 2.4. *AMND* module #8. 97

Example 2.5. *AMND* module #10 and EEC. 98

Example 2.6. *AMND* $P^{3.2}$ fanfare in woodwinds. 101

Example 2.7. *AMND* module #20 to module #21. 102

Example 2.8. *AMND* P theme transvalued in coda. 106

Figure 3.2. *CSPV* formal structure (development omitted) 108

Example 3.1. *CSPV* water topic m. 149. 109

Example 3.2. *CSPV* development: harmonic swell. 110

Example 3.3. *CSPV* exposition: m. 205 fermata and post S space. 111

Figure 3.3. *CSPV* trimodular block. 116

Example 3.4. *CSPV* exposition: MC failure and TR as TM^1. 117

Example 3.5. *CSPV* recapitulation: TM^1, ESC, and decisive C rhetoric. 118

Example 3.6. Haney's *CSPV* recapitulation: S and ESC. 121

Figure 4.1. *Hebrides* formal structure (development omitted). 123

Example 4.1. *Hebrides* $P^{1.1}$ and $P^{1.2}$. 124

Example 4.2. *Hebrides* exposition: "MC effect," MC, and CF. 127

Example 4.3. *Hebrides* exposition: S space. 129

Example 4.4. *Hebrides* exposition: S *dolce* and crescendo module. 131

Example 4.5. *Hebrides* m. 77 IAC. 132

Example 4.6. *Hebrides* recapitulation: $P^{1.1}$ and $P^{1.2}$. 133

Example 4.7. *Hebrides* recapitulation: MC, S, *dolce*, and interpolation. 136

Example 4.8. *Hebrides* end of recapitulation. 139

Figure 4.2. *Hebrides* S^c battlefield overlap. 143

Example 4.9. *Hebrides* final bars. 144

Figure 5.1. *Melusine* structure. 145

Example 5.1. Melusine theme. 146

Example 5.2. *Melusine* Raimund theme. 147

Example 5.3. *Melusine* "forbidden-love" theme. 149

Example 5.4. *Melusine* exposition: S^c Space. 151

Example 5.5. *Melusine* recapitulation: minor S. 152

Example 5.6. *Melusine* ESC failure. 154

to

Papi Mike

1. Slow Introduction

Mendelssohn's Musical Narrative

Reading musical narrativity through formal analysis is a highly effective method for extracting musical meaning from, and therefore interpreting, musical works for theoretical study and performance. By combining existing structuralist and non-structuralist or semiotic approaches to music analysis and interpretation, I aim to develop in this document a methodological framework for interpreting four concert overtures by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, op. 21; *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, op. 27; *The Hebrides*, op. 26; and *The Fair Melusine*, op. 32.[1] Taking programmatic influences into consideration, I will seek to identify a unique narrative trajectory for each work, grounded in a reading of form, tonal structure, and topical allusions. For the structuralist methodology, I

[1] Mendelssohn's *Ruy Blas* Overture, op. 95 (post.) and the Trumpet Overture, op. 101 (post.) will be discussed in brief in Chapter 6.

will draw specifically on James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy's recent book, *Elements of Sonata Theory*. For the non-structuralist methodology, I will draw on recent work in musical semiotics, especially that of Robert Hatten.

Hepokoski and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory* is an approach to understanding Classical sonata form based on the authors' study of hundreds of sonata-form movements.[2] The approach is rooted in the subdiscipline known as genre theory, in which a reader of a given text (whether a piece of music, a work of literature, or some other) approaches that text within a set of realistic expectations for what might be encountered, especially with regard to form and rhetoric.[3] The expectations themselves are derived from quantifiable observations about other works in the same generic category; departures from those expectations are interpreted as *deformations,* which invite hermeneutic interpretation.[4] With regard to Mendelssohn's concert overtures, as with any concert overture in the late-eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, the formal category against which the works should be measured is the sonata form. Hepokoski and Darcy's Sonata Theory provides a point of departure for interpreting Mendelssohn's own unique treatment of the genre, which is at once heavily informed by the Classical sonata tradition as well as by early-nineteenth-century Romantic aesthetic tendencies.

---

[2] James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[3] "Genre theory is a complex and contested constellation of interests. It comprises many things at once: theories of how genres may be said to exist at all; speculations on the way that they are formed and how and for which social purposes they are sustained; studies of the ramifications of the proposal that individual works can exemplify, illustrate, or contend with the genres; more current reinterpretations of genres as social contracts, social relations, or Bourdieuian "position-takings" (*prises de position*) in a contested cultural field; and so on." Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 604–605 (quotation from 604).

[4] In this context the word *deformation* has no negative subtext: "While we do intend 'deformation' to imply a strain and distortion of the norm—the composer's application of uncommon creative force toward the production of a singular aesthetic effect—we do not use this term in its looser, more colloquial sense, one that can connote a negative assessment of aesthetic defectiveness, imperfection, or ugliness." Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 614.

Sonata Theory categorizes sonata forms according to five types. Of the five types, the "type 3 sonata" is the most common and most widely used sonata-form type. Overtures of the Classical and Romantic periods were generally constructed using this format, and Mendelssohn's were no exception. A type-3 sonata structure comprises three large parts: an exposition, development, and recapitulation. The exposition presents the musical material of the work and generally ends in the key of the dominant (in major-mode sonatas) or relative major (in minor-mode sonatas). The development treats the material presented in the exposition and usually modulates through several keys before ending on a prolongation of the dominant, in the home key. The recapitulation repeats the material originally sounded in the exposition, but does so without modulating to the dominant such that all the material is sounded in the key of the tonic.

The exposition itself divides into two smaller parts articulated mainly by tonality: a primary key area (P) and a secondary key area (S). The P is followed by transitional material (TR) that leads to what in Sonata Theory is regarded as a *Medial Caesura* (MC). As Hepokoski and Darcy explain, "The *medial caesura* is the brief, rhetorically reinforced break or gap that serves to divide an exposition into two parts, tonic and dominant."[5] In the Sonata-Theory view, furthermore, the main purpose of the secondary key area (S) is to secure a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in the secondary key. This is one of the most important points of arrival in the entire sonata structure; again Hepokoski and Darcy: "It is toward the accomplishing of this PAC, marking the end of S-space, that we understand all of the preceding music to have been aiming."[6] The S theme in both exposition and recapitulation has this terminal PAC as its goal. In the exposition, the tonal goal is the dominant; in the

[5] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 24.
[6] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 120.

recapitulation, the goal is the tonic. In the exposition, the terminal PAC is called the *Essential Expositional Closure* (EEC) because it functions to secure the local tonality and thus complete the exposition's tonal structure; in the recapitulation the analogous PAC is called the *Essential Structural Closure* (ESC). It bears reiterating that the main purpose of the secondary key area in any sonata is to achieve this PAC: for an S to conclude without achieving a PAC is highly deformational and therefore demands interpretation. This layout of themes and key cadential goals—abbreviated P, TR, MC, S, EEC (in the exposition) or ESC (in the recapitulation)—is known as a *rotation*, where rotation refers to an ordering of material that will normatively occur in the same order within the exposition and recapitulation (see figure 1.1).

In combination with the above formal method, I will incorporate other techniques drawn from the current musical semiotics literature. Musical semiotics is a subject too vast and complex to be summarized here, therefore I will explicate each specific technique as needed. My interpretive approach will draw mainly on recent work of Robert Hatten, especially his concept of *markedness* (the imbalance of meaning in two oppositional terms or signs) and *shifts of level of discourse* (which he characterizes as discursive shifts in music that are analogous to shifts in, for example, tense or voice in literature).[7]

Precedents for a bipartite structuralist-nonstructuralist approach to the interpretation of musical narrative exist in the current secondary literature. Michael Klein's article "Chopin's Fourth Ballade as Musical Narrative," for example, employs a similar approach, taking a more abstract view of "musical narrative as an emplotment of expressive states

[7] Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Hatten, "On Narrativity in Music: Expressive Genres and Levels of Discourse in Beethoven," *Indiana Theory Review* 12 (1991): 75–98.

rather than a sequence of actors and their actions."[8] In doing so, he addresses the interpretation of musical analogues for time and tense, especially the past tense, which, as he writes, is "often deemed crucial to narrative forms," but also often thought to be impossible to achieve in music.[9]

My analyses will also touch on the programmatic influences for each work. Generally, programmatic works are used less often as subjects of the kind of musical-narrative analysis I have in mind specifically because their narrative meaning is overt; its discovery requires less interpretation of abstract musical details, and its status as narrative music per se is usually not in question. However, Mendelssohn's concert overtures, while programmatic, were not written as direct musical translations of a literary program and therefore leave much to be discovered within an interpretation of the music, its rhetoric, and its structure. Others have commented on this specific feature of these pieces. For example, William Pelto, referring to *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, writes that "The work does not … evolve in a line-by-line evocation of the text, as might a vocal setting."[10] Thomas Grey similarly writes that "we understand that these are 'concert' overtures, that is, independent compositions in overture form; they are overtures 'about' certain figures or themes rather than functional theatrical preambles 'to' a specific play or opera."[11] And Grey further elaborates on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, op. 21:

> But in composing an overture "to" a play that was nonetheless not necessarily, or even primarily, intended to accompany a performance of that play,

---

[8] Michael Klein, "Chopin's Fourth Ballade as Musical Narrative," *Music Theory Spectrum* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 23.

[9] Klein, "Chopin's Fourth Ballade," 23.

[10] William Pelto, "Musical Structure and Extramusical Meaning in the Concert Overtures of Felix Mendelssohn" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1993), 129.

[11] Thomas S. Grey, "The Orchestral Music," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, ed. Douglas Seaton (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 460.

> Mendelssohn was making more pointed claims for the power of the music to convey something essential about the drama, to embody it or characterize it in musical terms.[12]

Support for such a conception of Mendelssohn's overtures as narrative, but not specifically programmatic in the traditional sense, also exists in the composer's own correspondence. In a letter to his publishers at Breitkopf & Härtel concerning the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture, he wrote "To set forth the ideas for the composition in the programme is not possible for me, for this succession of ideas *is* my overture."[13] He similarly stated in a letter to Marc-André Souchay that "What any music I love expresses to me, is not thought too *indefinite* to be put into words, but on the contrary, too *definite*."[14] Thus Mendelssohn believed that music itself, absolutely and separately from programmatic connotations, could express more detailed ideas than could verbal language. This idea likely developed out of Adolf Bernhard Marx's concept of "characteristic music" and his desire to test the expressive capabilities of purely instrumental music; the two were close friends during the time in which Mendelssohn composed these overtures and Marx's critique of, for example, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture led the young Mendelssohn to completely redraft the work.[15] Such a view of music as a communicative medium invites listeners to assume that there lies within Mendelssohn's works a great deal of musical meaning, whether or not the works outline a specific program. In such readings, an associated literary program

---

[12] Grey, "The Orchestral Music," 461.

[13] Mendelssohn to Breitkopf & Härtel, February 15, 1833, in *Briefe an Deutsche Verleger,* ed. R Elvers (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1968), 25–26, cited and translated in R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 72.

[14] Felix Mendelssohn to Marc-André Souchay, Berlin, October 15, 1842, in Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, eds., *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*, trans. Lady Wallace (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1864), 276.

[15] R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 12–13, 69.

may also serve as a reference that facilitates the narrative interpretation of a piece, even though the narrative may or may not conform in all aspects to the details of the written program. Three of the four overtures examined here are based on literary programs. Thus we have a situation where, as with any reading of any text, it would be unwise to ignore the written inspiration completely, but it would be equally unwise to force the narrative to conform to the literary backdrop against which the work was composed. *The Hebrides* Overture, which has no direct literary program, is programmatically based on the visual imagery of the Hebrides islands. Thus formulating a musical narrative reading of this overture demands a nuanced comparison of the abstract musical components against its more ambiguous imagery-based program.

With regard to precedents for the use of Hepokoski and Darcy's Sonata Theory in an interpretation of Mendelssohn's overtures, Joel Haney is the only author who has taken an approach similar to the one I am proposing here. His thorough and insightful analysis of *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, op. 27, hinges, like my own, on identifying non-normative aspects of the sonata form and then interpreting those aspects for their potential expressive meaning.[16] For example, he identifies the piece's "failure" to secure its normative EEC in the exposition; he also suggests that the overture "exceeds both the breadth and eventfulness of its literary counterpart, leaving us with a musical surplus that invites an explanation."[17] But Haney's analysis leaves room for expansion: for example, my own view will be that Sonata Theory's concept of the *trimodular block* (a complex formal technique

[16] Haney examines *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* based on James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, "The Medial Caesura and Its Role in the Eighteenth-Century Sonata Exposition," *Music Theory Spectrum* 19 (1997): 115–54; This article was published in 1997 and, therefore, does not address certain aspects of Hepokoski and Darcy's theoretical approach found in *Elements of Sonata Theory* (published in 2006).

[17] Joel Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space in Mendelssohn's *Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt*," *19th-Century Music* 28, no. 2 (2004): 114.

that involves two MCs and, therefore, two S themes), which Haney does not address, is useful for interpreting the *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* exposition and thus is critical for an interpretation of formal structure and meaning in the piece as a whole.[18] Furthermore, Haney states that "the many twists and turns of Mendelssohn's *Glückliche Fahrt,* identified above in its divergences from sonata-form smooth sailing, contribute to a highly nuanced retelling of Goethe's second poem rather than a translation,"[19] but he stops short of proposing a large-scale view of the narrative trajectory in the work as a whole. Thus in some ways, Haney's "musical surplus" that "invites explanation" remains open to being addressed by another analyst.

Numerous other sources on Mendelssohn's overtures exist, but none of these employ a Sonata-Theory-based interpretive approach. Douglas Seaton, who writes that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* comprises a "relatively straightforward sonata form,"[20] focuses on Mendelssohn's use of themes to represent specific characters from Shakespeare's play—which is an important aspect of the piece's form and meaning that I will also discuss in Chapter 2. But his statement that the overture's structure is "straightforward" leaves room for expansion: it overlooks, for instance, that the piece's main thematic material, which is often considered part of the first thematic group, does not appear in the recapitulation until after the secondary theme. Thus the order of thematic material in the piece's recapitulation deviates from the order presented in the exposition; this deviation invites a hermeneutic reading.

William Pelto surveys Mendelssohn's concert overtures with a focus on programmatic references and structure. Like Seaton, he focuses on the thematic units within

[18] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 170–177.
[19] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 128.
[20] Douglas Seaton, "Symphony and Overture," in *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn,* ed. Peter Mercer-Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 98.

A Midsummer Night's Dream, demonstrating the way in which themes refer to specific characters within the play and how those themes function within the context of the sonata form. He provides examples of themes imbued with extramusical (poetic) as well as formal functions simultaneously in *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage,* at the same time acknowledging certain peculiarities in the formal structure but not relating the abnormalities to any kind of potential musical meaning. He also refers to the piece's formal ambiguity in claiming that "Such confusion and uncertainty … suggests the imprecision of formal terminology, implying a degree of ambiguity surrounding the formal placement of Mendelssohn's themes."[21] I propose that a Sonata-Theory-based analysis will supply the precision necessary to address these issues.

The 2012 posthumous publication of Erez Rapoport's 2004 dissertation, which thoroughly and insightfully "investigates Mendelssohn's flexible treatment of formal junctures at various levels of tonal structure and form," also does not address the issue of musical meaning.[22] His approach is theoretical in the purest sense: his study encompasses analyses of over fifty Mendelssohn works, focusing on formal junctures as they illuminate Mendelssohn's proclivity for understated or unarticulated transitions between units of the traditional forms.[23]

The definitive biographer of Mendelssohn, R. Larry Todd, has identified the concert overtures as "among Mendelssohn's most progressive efforts."[24] In his book *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, Todd discusses the origins, influences, programmatic aspects,

---

[21] Pelto, "Musical Structure and Extramusical Meaning," 227.

[22] Erez Rapoport, "The Smoothing-Over of Formal Junctures as a Style Element in Mendelssohn's Instrumental Music," Abstract (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2004), iv.

[23] Rapoport, *Mendelssohn's Instrumental Music: Structure and Style* (Hillsdale, New York: Pendragon Press, 2012).

[24] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 52.

orchestration, and reception of the first three—and the most well-known—of the overtures. In doing so, Todd addresses many of the most significant aspects of these pieces' forms. Among his contributions is the observation that Mendelssohn was one of the first to use thematic transformation; he also characterizes "Mendelssohn's conception of form" as an "organic process," and he comments on the cyclic or framing nature of the overtures' endings, which he regards as "subdued references to their openings."[25] In the end, Todd's view is that "Mendelssohn founded all three overtures upon the traditional principles of sonata form, yet in each case he modified the structural plan to fit the programmatic requirements of the specific subject-matter."[26] But even Todd's analysis leaves room for additional expansion. For example, where Todd hears "adjustments to the conventional sonata-form design,"[27] I hear a structure in dialogue with the norms of Classical sonata form, with specific, limited deformations to that form that signify musical meaning. Certainly Mendelssohn can be understood as having altered the sonata to accommodate programmatic content, as Todd suggests; but another way of productively understanding the meaning of the "adjustments" in and of themselves is to measure them against the expected norms of the genre. This is a central point in my own approach: Mendelssohn *used* conventional formal structures not only to accommodate the associated programmatic narrative, but, going further, to create a unique musical narrative in each piece—one that may or may not be logically similar or related to the narrative in the literary program. Though I will emphasize in my approach the commonality among the structural and expressive procedures that appear throughout the various overtures, I intend for my methodology to make evident Mendelssohn's ingenuity in composing each work as a unique, original masterpiece.

[25] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 53.
[26] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 52.
[27] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 58.

2. *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Op. 21

Unrequited Love and the "Dream Theme"

As mentioned in Chapter 1, R. Larry Todd has suggested that Mendelssohn modified the traditional formal structures of his overtures "to fit the programmatic requirements of the specific subject-matter, as if to permit the extra-musical elements to vie with formal considerations."[28] In the case of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture (*AMND*), the extra-musical elements in question are the characters from Shakespeare's drama. The themes within the overture, which I have separated into discrete musical modules in figure 2.1, represent the specific characters, or groups of characters, within the story. These characters are signified through topical allusions in the music (where musical *topics* are *styles* or *stylistic references* employed by composers and widely understood by stylistically competent

[28] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 52.

listening audiences as to their expressive significance).[29] The various themes are then assigned positions within the sonata structure—P, S, and others. As a result, the narrative is conveyed through the overture's structure; significant events within the form correlate with specific aspects of the program and are presented simultaneously with the characters' themes to which the narrative corresponds. That is to say, the narrative is conveyed through formal *deformations*—departures from sonata expectations—that, when measured against the conventional norms of the genre and compared to the characters' roles within the play, convey specific narrative meaning. Furthermore, although the themes are presented loosely in chronological order (the themes appear in the approximate order in which the characters appear in the play), the three-part sonata structure naturally prevents a direct chronological mapping onto the play's plot; this eliminates the possibility for a direct scene-by-scene retelling of Shakespeare's play. Rather, Mendelssohn calls upon formal deformations to convey specific portions of the plot. Thus the piece is organized such that it conveys characters using topical allusions within each character-assigned theme and conveys the large-scale narrative via formal deformations. Specifically, Mendelssohn employs deformations within the S spaces of the exposition and recapitulation—a hallmark of his style in general as I will discuss below and in subsequent chapters—and he alters the rotational format of the recapitulation, omitting a key thematic component from the P space and repurposing other modules.

In so doing, his narrative conveys the unrequited love between Helena and Demetrius, and Demetrius and Hermia, by deferring the expected S closure in both the exposition and

[29] For more on topic theory, see, for example, Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military, and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); and Monelle, *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

recapitulation; absence of closure in the sonata structure correlates directly with an absence of mutual love. Furthermore, Mendelssohn supports this narrative by transporting the listener into and out of Shakespeare's fairyland dream world by creating what are known in musical semiotics as shifts in level of discourse; these correlate with similar discursive shifts that are present in Shakespeare's play.

Character Themes and the Introduction-Coda Frame

With regard to characters and their musical representation, Mendelssohn has left behind clues about how the characters from the play are represented musically in the overture. In a letter to Breitkopt & Härtel in February 1833, he begrudgingly explained the piece's program:

> I believe it will suffice to remember how the rulers of the elves, Oberon and Titania, constantly appear with all their train in the piece, now here, now there; then comes Prince Theseus of Athens and joins a hunting party in the forest with his wife; then the two pairs of tender lovers, who lose and find themselves; finally the troop of clumsy, coarse tradesmen, who ply their ponderous amusements; then again the elves …. When, at the end, all is well resolved, and the protagonists leave fortuitously and happily, then the elves return, and bless the house, and disappear as the morning appears. So ends the play, and my overture too.[30]

Although Mendelssohn does not specifically indicate which musical themes correspond to which characters, the implications become clear when examining the themes' topical

[30] Mendelssohn to Breitkopf & Härtel, February 15, 1833, in *Briefe an Deutsche Verleger*, 25–26, cited and translated in Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 72.

allusions and the order in which Mendelssohn presents the characters. (Throughout the following analysis it will be necessary to refer to figure 2.1. In figure 2.1 the overture has been divided into 26 sections, or *modules*. Each is numbered for simple reference and marked with measure numbers.) Furthermore, although Mendelssohn composed the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture, op. 21, as a stand-alone work in 1826, the thematic material within the incidental music, which was composed seventeen years later as op. 61 to accompany Shakespeare's play, directly indicates to whom or what the musical themes in the overture refer. Understanding each theme's character association is the first step in developing a narrative interpretation. (Note that although the music of the op. 21 overture is included in the op. 61 incidental music, for ease of discussion in this document, "op. 61" will refer only to the incidental music that follows the overture, and not to the overture portion of that work.)

Despite the fact that Mendelssohn did not address the overture's opening four-chord harmonic progression in his letter, thematic module #1 in figure 2.1, it appears in two of the movements of the incidental music; therefore we can infer its meaning by examining the dramatic events that surround it in the later work. Before module #1 appears in no. 6, for instance, Oberon places a magical potion on Titania's eyelids while she sleeps; the potion will cause her, upon waking, to fall in love with the first person or creature she sees. Humorously, the first person she sees after waking is Bottom, and she falls madly in love with him. In this instance, thematic module #1 is used ironically (see examples 2.1a and 2.1b in Appendix). In this passage, the progression's first harmony, a major third sounded in the flutes (E–G-sharp), is presented exactly as it appears in the introduction of the overture, op. 21. However, the second chord, which in op. 21 is a B-major triad, is sounded in op. 61

instead as a G-dominant-seventh, which accompanies Titania waking to Bottom's poor singing. The third chord in op. 61 matches the third chord from op. 21, but the final chord, again sounded while Bottom is singing, is a C-sharp-diminished-seventh in place of op. 21's E-major triad.

This ironic presentation of the introductory module in op. 61 no. 6 tells us much about the module itself, especially when compared with its unaltered presentation at the opening and closing of the Finale movement of the incidental music (see example 2.1c). The four-chord progression starts the Finale while Oberon and Titania, speaking over the sustained harmonies, use their magical powers to return everything in fairyland to normal, as it was before the story began. Likewise, Puck recites the final lines of the play over the final presentation of the four-chord theme. Thus, the op. 61 Finale is framed with the module #1 progression in a similar manner as the op. 21 overture. And, on an even larger scale, module #1 frames the entire op. 61 (which, as mentioned above, includes the overture).

The use of the four-chord progression as a framing device in the overture's introduction and coda suggests an expressive meaning. Hepokoski and Darcy have proposed, in reference to *AMND* and other works, that, "Whenever we find an introduction-coda frame the interior sonata seems subordinated to the outward container. The introduction and coda represent the higher reality, under whose more immediate mode of existence—or under whose embracing auspices—the sonata form proper is laid out as a contingent process, a demonstration of an artifice that unfolds only under the authority of the prior existence of the frame."[31] William Pelto has suggested a slightly different perspective, one in which "We

[31] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 305.

understand the motto [module #1] as representing Shakespeare's other world."[32] He elaborates:

> Employing the chordal motto as the work's closing gesture (mm. 682–86), Mendelssohn continues to demonstrate analogous structural and extramusical functions. Structurally, it balances the introduction. More important, it prevents a conclusive, climactic cadence, suggesting that more is to come, namely the other movements of Opus 61. These, of course, were not written until sixteen years later, so one must also focus on the motto's meaning solely within the overture itself. Its inconclusive ending suggests that the actors in Shakespeare's fantasy world retain their influence over the entire dramatic context of the work. The other world itself continues on dreamlike.[33]

Thus Pelto interprets the "motto" as a representation of the fairyland in which the dream occurs, while Hepokoski and Darcy would likely interpret it as a musical frame which itself represents a "higher reality" and contains within it the fairyland story. Although on the surface these two descriptions might seem at odds, they are likely best understood as two perspectives on a very similar narrative phenomenon, as well as on Mendelssohn's use of the framing device.

Todd's perspective strikes a balance between the views of Hepokoski and Darcy, and Pelto. In response to Frederick Niecks' suggestion that the chords represent the "magic formula that opens to us the realm of fairyland," Todd says the chords "are the agent of metamorphosis that transports us from the realm of reality to the unencumbered realm of the

[32] Pelto, "Musical Structure and Extramusical Meaning," 89.
[33] Pelto, "Musical Structure and Extramusical Meaning," 288.

imagination."[34] This interpretation likely draws on the dramatic events that surround the chords' presentation within the incidental music; in all instances in which the material is sounded in the incidental music, a magical force is at work in the drama: Oberon puts Titania under a love spell, Oberon and Titania use magic to return fairyland to normal, and Puck magically transports the audience out of the dream world. Moreover, the harmonies alone imbue a magical quality through their beauty and ambiguity. The stark and tonally ambiguous nature of the opening major-third interval in the flutes (will it be E major or C-sharp minor?) and the expanding vertical texture of the progression evokes a sense of mystic wonder, as well as a kind of simple pastoralism. Moreover, as Todd suggests, the functional positions of the subdominant and dominant are reversed (dominant in m. 2, minor sub-dominant in m. 3), creating a functionally backward harmonic progression.[35] And the subdominant harmony in m. 3 is borrowed from the parallel minor. Thus the restful E-major triad that follows, with full winds and horns in mm. 4 and 5, accentuates the magical-pastoral quality in that the resolution is understated; the progression has concluded without the tension of a dominant chord: the listener is left floating, suspended, their minds allowed to drift into and out of the fairyland dream.

Thus, I suggest that the module #1 progression represents a magical force which, acting as a structural introduction-coda frame, separates the action of the fairyland story within the sonata space from the outside, "real" world of the audience—a metaphorical curtain that separates the audience from the play. Similarly to Pelto, I also suggest that the

[34] Frederick Niecks, *Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries: a Contribution to the History of Musical Expression* (New York: H. W. Gray, 1907), 173; Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 73.
[35] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 73.

progression's "inconclusive ending" indicates that the characters continue on in their dream world, apart from us—our view of them obscured, but they continue on.[36]

This type of shift, as it were, from the "real" world into the dream world or vice versa could be characterized as what Robert Hatten has called a *shift of level of discourse*. This is related to Hatten's assertion that musical narratives, much like dramatic and literary narratives, are capable of signifying various levels of discourse.[37] For an example, we can refer to the dramatic narrative of the play. Puck is the narrator of the story; he speaks to the audience directly, as if he is above or outside the action of the play itself. But he is also a character *within* the drama. Thus in the course of the play he moves between one level of discourse, the fictional Shakespearian story, to another level of discourse, the real world of the audience. This same type of shift in discursive level may be found in musical structures as well. The module #1 theme could be understood in this way. After all, Puck's most significant soliloquys, which are at the opening and closing of the play, parallel the progression's position within the overture and the incidental music. This is not to say that the theme directly corresponds to Puck-as-narrator, but, rather, signifies the shift in the level of discourse that occurs when Puck, who is first presented as a narrator, enters the fairyland and becomes a character in the play. Furthermore, the layered narrative structure within the drama itself—Theseus and Hippolyta are nobles of the "real" world, Oberon and Titania are magical monarchs of the fairyland—naturally invites other shifts in level of discourse throughout Mendelssohn's musical treatment, as I will discuss presently.

Module #2 (P^1 in figure 2.1) represents Puck himself, as well as the fairies. The quick, light, and playfully persistent eighth-note line suggests the fairies' flight through the

[36] Pelto, "Musical Structure and Extramusical Meaning," 288.

[37] Robert Hatten, "On Narrativity in Music: Expressive Genres and Levels of Discourse in Beethoven," *Indiana Theory Review* 12 (1991): 75–98.

forest (see example 2.1a). Concrete evidence for this correlation can be found in the incidental music op. 61, where this theme is presented while Puck or the fairies are acting or dancing (see op. 61 no. 8 m. 22ff and no. 12 mm. 26–29). In op. 21 this music is in the key of E minor—which is a surprise given the E-major tonality predicted by the introduction. Though it is uncharacteristic, even deformational, for a P theme to be presented in the tonic minor within a major-mode sonata movement, the tonal structure of the rest of the work otherwise adheres to the norms of a major-mode sonata movement and, although the minor mode generally implies a certain negative quality or an opposing force (opposed to the major) within a Classical sonata form, the minor-mode P^1 module does not appear to imply negativity. (In the common-practice sonata tradition, normatively, major and minor modes function expressively as binary signs for positive and negative; I will discuss this point in more detail in the context of my analysis of *The Hebrides* Overture in Chapter 4.) Rather, it seems most likely that Mendelssohn borrowed from the parallel minor for P^1 for atmospheric effect; the quality of the music in this module is mystical, flighty, or perhaps mischievous, which is due in large part to the mode; but ultimately there is little evidence that the theme should be understood as overtly negative.[38]

Module #3 (P^2) is in two parts: a dramatic, sweeping descending-ascending line—the grandiosity of which implies heroism—then transforms into a horn-call fanfare (see example 2.2). While op. 61 does not contain this P^2 theme in its entirety, the two components of the theme do appear separately in that piece. The horn-call topic appears at the end of no. 8 in op. 61, where the horn-call actually represents hunting horns. Present in this hunting scene are Theseus (Duke of Athens) and Hippolyta (betrothed to Theseus). Furthermore,

[38] For more on Mendelssohn's use of the minor mode, see also the discussions in Chapters 4 and 5 on the *The Hebrides* Overture and *The Fair Melusine* Overture respectively.

Mendelssohn, in his letter to his publisher mentioned above, described the presence of a theme which corresponds to Theseus and Hippolyta. Given that he addresses the characters in his letter in the same order that the themes are presented in the exposition of the overture, and given the direct character association in op. 61 no. 8, it is reasonable to assume that this theme signifies Theseus and Hippolyta. However, the "heroic" portion of the theme appears at the very end of the finale of op. 61—as well as the end of op. 21, in m. 662ff—and is transformed there into a slower, lyrical, more delicate presentation that suggests a deeper narrative significance on which I will comment in more detail presently.

Modules #4 (see example 2.2), #5, and #6, which constitute the TR portion of the expositional rotation, do not correspond to characters, or in fact to anything specific from the story, but are best understood as purely musical components of the sonata structure. The context in which module #4 appears in the recapitulation is particularly interesting and will be discussed in more detail below.

Modules #7, #8, and #9 represent the four young lovers in the *AMND* story (see examples 2.3 and 2.4). Although these themes do not appear in op. 61, the *dolce* melodies in these three modules are clearly of a romantic nature; the simple, flowing melodic contour is accompanied by slow moving harmonies that invoke a pastoral topic. Furthermore, the multiple themes in these modules, which are motivically interconnected, could be seen to represent the individual perspectives of each of the young lovers. And, given Mendelssohn's description of the themes in his letter to his publishers and the process of elimination, it is natural to assume that these modules signify the four young lovers. That is, there are four overlaid and interconnected plots within the play: the magical world of Oberon, Titania, and Puck has been portrayed via modules #1 and #2; Theseus and Hippolyta appear in module

#3; Quince's gang of goofy thespians appears in module #10, as explained below; thus the four young lovers are left for modules #7, #8, and #9. In terms of the sonata structure, each of the lovers' modules can be considered part of a single, larger "S module." I have divided them into smaller modules here due to their immanent structural divisions, divisions which themselves inform a narrative interpretation. Later in the overture Mendelssohn signifies the conflict between the young lovers within the S space by deferring the S cadence (EEC/ESC).

Module #10 ($S^{1.3}$), as mentioned, clearly represents Quince's merry gang of thespians, particularly Bottom. The simple harmony, dance-like patterns, and obvious braying of Bottom represented in the sudden melodic descent of a ninth and later a tenth, all allude to the humorous display of these underprepared, simpleminded actors (see example 2.5). Module #10 can also be found in op. 61, no. 11, titled "A Dance of Clowns," where this number follows directly from the absurd tragedy the thespians present to the Duke and his bride—the play within the play in Shakespeare's original, after which the performers dance for their royal audience.

S-Space Deformations

The first significant structural deformation I will examine appears in the S-space modules in both the exposition and the recapitulation. This deformation involves the S theme and its associated terminal cadence. To reiterate, according to Sonata Theory, the goal of the S theme is to produce the perfect authentic cadence known as the Essential Expositional Closure (EEC) in the exposition, or the Essential Structural Closure (ESC) in the recapitulation. In the case of *AMND*, the EEC/ESC is predicted but then deferred several times, mainly via a sustained harmonic and rhetorical buildup, before the cadence is finally achieved. In deferring the cadence in this fashion, Mendelssohn does not allow the S theme

to achieve its EEC/ESC goal without some trials and tribulations; thus the music suggests a narrative in which the four young lovers are presented with a great deal of conflict and confusion before managing to resolve their many romantic problems (which together comprise a complicated mess of unrequited loves).

In fact, this generally deformational treatment of the S space proves to be a hallmark of Mendelssohn's sonata practice. Investigation of his concert overtures shows that he had a tendency to employ S-space deformations in order to convey narrative meaning. All three of the other overtures discussed in this document—*Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, *The Hebrides*, and *The Fair Melusine*—incorporate similar S-space deformations, in which the EEC/ESC is deferred or, in some cases, actually omitted entirely. While the manner in which Mendelssohn constructs the specific S-space deformations within each work is unique, his overall narrative approach—and his use of S-space deformations as part of that approach—is similar in all of them.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that in a Sonata Theory view, the EEC not only concludes the S space, but, it also initiates the rotation's Closing zone (C). In the Classical sonata, Closing material is expected to be contrasting, is often P-based, and functions to conclude the expositional or recapitulatory rotation by securing and reinforcing the cadence that was just achieved by S. Hepokoski and Darcy write:

> C will customarily contain material that provides an immediate contrast with the preceding S material.[39]
>
> In ambiguous EEC situations or situations of possible EEC deferral the existence of a decisive P-based-C can serve as compelling additional evidence of the beginning of the "extras" or postcadential "accessory ideas" of the

[39] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 181.

> closing zone …. While the forte P-based C will usually be immediately preceded by what we should take to be an EEC, this principle cannot be regarded as absolute.[40]

It is rare, as Hepokoski and Darcy explain in the paragraph above, for C-like material to present itself without being preceded by a "proper" EEC. However, this is exactly what occurs in *AMND*. The S space begins in m. 130, with module #7.[41] The main melodic component of the theme, module #8, or $S^{1.1}$, achieves a cadence in m. 154 which dovetails into a repetition of the $S^{1.1}$ sentence structure. The harmony in this new phrase (m. 154ff) implies a progression toward another cadence (one which would close the S space), but the theme proves unable to achieve this cadence, dissolving instead into a dominant-to-tonic resolution without the necessary structural features to indicate a cadence (m. 166). For example, as the harmony resolves in m. 166, the melody continues beyond it, propelled by a non-chord tone on the downbeat of m. 166. In essence, there is a deferral of the intended PAC goal at this moment—the young lovers struggle with unrequited love. There follow immediately fanfare figures in the woodwinds which are derived from the string rhythms in mm. 77–97, which I have labeled $P^{3.2}$ (see example 2.6). It would seem that these three measures (mm. 166–168), based on the criteria for C-themes outlined above, should be regarded as the beginning of the Closing zone: C generally provides a contrast with the preceding S, is often forte, and is frequently derived from P. However, S-based material ($S^{1.2}$ in m. 168ff) immediately follows the two-bar $P^{3.2}$ fanfare (m. 166.) and, as Hepokoski and Darcy explain, "As a general principle S is not finished until its thematic material is

[40] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 185.

[41] Hepokoski and Darcy (*Elements of Sonata Theory,* 145) interpret these eight measures as an $S^{1.0}$ theme. In Sonata Theory, $S^{1.0}$ themes constitute pre-S modules that reside within the S space.

relinquished."[42] In other words, as long as S-based thematic material is present we cannot consider a section to be part of the Closing zone, and thus the S goal—the moment of narrative resolution—is deferred. Thus, because $S^{1.2}$ follows the initial P-based woodwind fanfare in m. 168, module #9 should not be regarded as part of the Closing zone, but, rather, as an additional module in the S space. The fanfare and $S^{1.2}$ theme repeat in m. 174, extending the S space even further. This time a B pedal supports an elaboration of the $S^{1.2}$ theme, which increases in intensity as it drives toward the anticipated PAC in B major (mm. 176–194). However, this elaborated and intensified $S^{1.2}$ theme again fails to secure a decisive V:PAC (PAC in the dominant key) EEC, giving way to module #10 in m. 194 (marked $S^{1.3}$ and "Dance of the Clowns" in figure 2.1, see example 2.5). Thus, up to m. 194, we are still decisively within the S space; the S has not yet achieved a V:PAC EEC—the young lovers have yet to resolve their problems.

The "Dance of the Clowns" theme that follows, on the other hand, explicitly provides contrasting musical material. Thus this section (module #10) could reasonably be considered part of the Closing zone of the exposition, given the criteria above. The problem is that the foregoing S material prior never achieved its requisite EEC. To accept a reading in which the "Dance of the Clowns" nevertheless functions as the rotation's C module thus suggests a failed-EEC interpretation—a highly deformational and significant narrative choice in which the rotation fails to achieve its most important goal, the EEC. This would imply a failure of the narrative conflict—a failure of the young lovers to resolve their web of problems.[43]

Other options must be considered before accepting such a reading. Looking directly ahead, a viable EEC occurs after the "Dance of the Clowns" in m. 222 (see example 2.5).

---

[42] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 181.

[43] See Chapters 3 and 5 for instances in which Mendelssohn employs the failed-EEC/ESC deformation in the service of the narrative.

Following this PAC in B major, material derived from the horn-call topic heard in P^2 is presented in dramatic fashion. Recall that P-based-C material is a common indicator of a Closing zone. Thus it might make sense to place the EEC in m. 222, given the presence of a PAC and the contrasting P-based material that follows. Furthermore, following this P^2 closing zone, the development begins in m. 250 with P^1-based material—a normative developmental opening in a Classical sonata. At the same time, it is worth noting that despite the fact that the EEC may be present, the cadence itself is still understated—as if striving to meet the generic expectations in the sonata form but doing so with the least amount of pomp possible. Such a reading is warranted especially if one compares the exposition's putative EEC with the recapitulation's ESC, which is staged very differently (as I will discuss presently).

Assuming m. 222 constitutes an EEC (and putting aside for now its understated nature), how would one interpret module #9 and the "Dance of the Clowns," structurally and narratively? While these modules are clearly pre-EEC, they are not unmistakably S either—recall that the $P^{3.2}$ fanfare in mm. 166 and 174 and the "Dance of the Clowns" theme both meet the normative expectations of C rhetoric in the sonata. This presents a quandary for which Hepokoski and Darcy have devised a particular category of functional sonata space: the "S^c space." The S^c space is a theme which is rhetorically "C," and which is normally contained within a module following the expected or predicted location of the EEC. The S^c space would be understood as terminating at the arrival of the "real" EEC. An S^c space is often formed when S breaks down without producing its requisite PAC; at the moment of the breakdown—the moment where one understands the cadence as having failed—a theme based on C rhetoric steps in as if to take on the burden of producing the EEC. Hepokoski and

Darcy explain: "Thus S^c means 'an S-theme, literally pre-EEC, in the style of a preplanned C-theme.'"[44] This formation is dependent, furthermore, on the notion that:

> [C is] capable of forging ahead on its own in the absence of an EEC. On the one hand, this contradicts the definition of C as postcadential (post-EEC): at least within the eighteenth-century norm nothing should exist conceptually as C until the EEC has been secured. On the other hand, one can imagine situations, especially after 1800, in which a composer might have intended to portray just such an S-breakdown …. The curious thing about such themes is that they seem to bestride both the S- and C-concepts. They are emphatically precedential, pre-EEC (the essence of S-space), and yet, in part because of the block-like layout of the exposition, one suspects that they are simultaneously implying the onset of what "should" be a C-idea.[45]

Aside from S^c-space considerations, Hepokoski and Darcy also suggest that "P-material—especially its incipit—can intervene to take control of the drive to the PAC."[46] This formation, which is not given a designation in Sonata Theory, bestrides the S^c-space deformation and may also provide a viable option for interpreting the function of the $P^{3.2}$ fanfare material. In fact, in reading the Sonata Theory description of both types of deformations, it can be difficult to differentiate between them; ultimately, though, the differentiation itself is less critical than identifying the significance of the deformation in question. That being said it seems that the S^c-space anomaly is a deformation on a grander scale than the other P-based interruption; the S^c space uses C-based rhetoric, which is often forte-P-based material, to step-in for the failing S space to achieve the EEC/ESC; whereas

[44] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 191.
[45] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 190–191.
[46] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 140.

the other P-based interruption generally consumes a smaller space and utilizes only a small portion of the P theme, an incipit or other motivic germ. One might then label the $P^{3.2}$ fanfare (m. 166) as a deformation of the second (unlabeled) type, while the "Dance of the Clowns" (module #10) would more strictly meet the requirements of an S^c-space deformation. Ultimately, the designations themselves carry little value, whatever they are called, if their narrative outcome is not considered. With this in mind, I would suggest that these S-space deformations within the exposition support the narrative implications of the EEC deferral, thus underscoring the idea of unrequited love.

The parallel S-space deformation within the recapitulation sheds further light on this matter. Perhaps the most important aspect of the recapitulation is that it reorders the modules of the rotation in a way that seems to convey several important narrative ideas. The first of these involves the omission of the P^2 theme, and this leads to the second, which is a restructuring of the P^3 material so that it intrudes into the S space (m. 542ff). This restructuring of the P^3 material, furthermore, functions to expand the S^c space and thus it further intensifies the narrative significance of the S^c module. As mentioned, the P^3 material itself (module #4) contains no topical associations and implies no reference to Mendelssohn's incidental music, op. 61, and therefore the module should be understood as serving a structural rather than an extra-musical associational function. In the exposition, P^3 also can be regarded as initiating the transition (that as, as linking to TR) from the primary key area to the medial caesura (MC). In the recapitulation, however, P^3 appears only after the "Dance of the Clowns" ($S^{1.3}$), well into the S space (m. 542, module #21). In this instance, moreover, the "Dance of the Clowns" does not conclude with a PAC as it did in the exposition (at m. 222). Instead, this time the P^3 material enters and postpones the tonal resolution past module

#21 for another 44 measures, from m. 542 to 586 (see example 2.7). Within the middle portion of module #21 (mm. 566–577), $S^{1.1}$-based material (drawn from mm. 146–154) enters and drives toward the anticipated ESC, building the tension by means of a repeated cadential progression that does not resolve (mm. 574 and 578). Upon finally achieving the anticipated I:PAC (PAC in the tonic key) ESC in m. 586, the dramatic P^2 material solidifies the arrival of the Closing zone, as it did in the exposition. The result is that here in the recapitulation, the S^c space is extended, through the repurposed P^3 space (module #21). Not only does this further intensify the tonal conflict prior to the ESC by delaying its arrival, but the cadence itself is substantially more convincing rhetorically than the EEC in m. 222. The cadential 6/4 chord in m. 582, the B pedal in the low strings in m. 582–583, the A-sharp-diminished-seventh (vii^{o7}/V) in m. 583, the rapid harmonic motion in mm. 584–585, and the tutti E-major triad in m. 586 overwhelmingly solidify and intensify the ESC resolution. Therefore, the "Dance of the Clowns" and module #21, together, form the S^c space of the recapitulation—an expanded and more elaborate formation that finds, rhetorically, more decisive closure.

Thus in both the exposition and the recapitulation, Mendelssohn has deferred the EEC/ESC in order to prolong the tonal conflict and delay the expected PAC resolution. The reason for doing so is clear when one compares Shakespeare's original story. As mentioned, the S-space material represents the young lovers in the *AMND* story. Therefore one may correlate the tonal conflict produced by deferring the EEC/ESC with the unrequited love between Helena and Demetrius, and Demetrius and Hermia, as well as, probably, with the confusion (or romantic chaos) that ensues after Puck applies the love potion to the incorrect lover's eyes. The understated conclusion in the exposition (m. 222) could be understood as

Mendelssohn's attempt to formally close the exposition without giving the narrative the necessary security, or pomp, required to fully resolve the narrative conflict. Conversely, by reordering the thematic material in the recapitulation, Mendelssohn is able to unreservedly proclaim the ESC (m. 586) as a declaration of the final resolution: the lovers have found the correct partner and all is well. Thus in the end, by utilizing the S^c space deformation along with the identifiable thematic associations among characters in the story, Mendelssohn has succeeded in conveying a musical narrative that clearly maps onto Shakespeare's program.

The "Dream Theme"

The second structural deformation I would like to examine involves Mendelssohn's treatment of the P^2 material (module #3). Explaining this module's narrative role within the overture requires the application of two theoretical concepts: the first is the idea of *markedness* as employed by Robert Hatten; the second—itself related to Hatten's markedness—is the idea of *transvaluation,* as employed by Byron Almén. Markedness derives from linguistic theory and involves the natural imbalance in a logical or meaningful opposition between two terms; the concept is explained by Hatten as follows: "Difference implies opposition, but the oppositions that are characterized by markedness are typically *asymmetrical*: one term is marked (with respect to some value or feature), and the opposing term (or field) is unmarked. The marked term is more narrowly defined and distributed, and, significantly, it has a correspondingly narrower realm of meaning than the unmarked term."[47] Applied to music, when musical themes appear in opposition to another, one of them may signify a more specific, and potentially more significant, expressive meaning in the narrative.

[47] Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 11.

This is a useful concept for interpreting Mendelssohn's P^2 theme in *AMND*, which is the theme that dramatically proclaims the E-major tonality at its entrance (m. 62) using a characteristic heroic topic that contrasts what comes before, the E-minor Puck theme (P^1). That is, in this case the minor-mode—which would generally be understood as marked in opposition to the major mode—would be understood as expressively neutral, as it symbolizes the magical fairyland of Puck and his fairies—suggesting that this magical fairyland has always been and always will be. (Consider in this regard P^1's presence throughout the entire composition, notably in the development and the coda.) Into this world the P^2 theme enters, as if the characters Theseus and Hippolyta (and all their human counterparts) are brought in to displace the magical world thus constructed. The concurrent shift to E major at the P^2 theme then becomes the new tonal home, functioning as the home tonic within the sonata form. This implies that from the outset, the P^2 theme is expressively marked.

In this context, Mendelssohn's restructuring of the recapitulation takes on even more meaning than before. Unexpectedly, the P^2 theme is omitted from the recapitulation's P space (m. 394ff). This means that in the recapitulation, the P^1 theme, still in E minor, takes on the role of the rotation's principal P theme in P^2's absence. Even with the tonal shift, the rotation carries on as if the piece is still in E major, arriving at a I:HC MC in m. 442 and then proceeding with an E-major S in m. 450ff. This striking omission of P^2 in retrospect calls into question the function of P^2 within the overture: we can understand it as having exerted the influence of the major mode, influence which continues to linger in the recapitulation; but we can understand its literal presence as having been supplanted by P^1. The absence of P^2 in the recapitulation is confounding. Perhaps the omission makes the recapitulation's P^2-based C all the more satisfying and significant—that is, as an anticipatory build up to P^2, already

established as expressively marked. Or perhaps, by omission, Mendelssohn exploits the markedness of P^2 by thwarting expectations and, in essence, preventing the theme from taking on a more normative, unmarked function.

Regardless of one's interpretation, the most significant moment associated with the P^2 theme occurs in the coda. There P^2 returns (at m. 662ff) in a slow, lyrical, rhythmically altered, and more delicate presentation that eases the listener into the final bars, the coda's portion of the introduction-coda frame (see example 2.8). It is here that the P^2 theme is *transvalued;* generally an element in the narrative (a theme, an idea, etc.) is considered transvalued if it is altered in an observable way that gives it a new hierarchical value (or rank) relative to other components of the narrative. The hierarchy of any component is established through marked opposition: for example, the P^2 theme acquires a "higher" rank (and enhanced narrative significance) when it is placed in marked opposition to the E-minor Puck theme in the exposition—which is unmarked, representing the status quo. The alteration of function of the P^2 theme in the coda makes it transvalued, in that it acquires a new rank within the narrative interpretation.

Transvaluation may elevate or diminish a narrative component's rank, generally denoting greater or lesser narrative significance.[48] In this specific instance I propose that the transvalued P^2 in the coda changes rank, shifting from a characterization of Theseus and Hippolyta in the sonata space proper to, now, what can be regarded as a higher narrative level in the coda. Hatten would suggest that the theme has shifted onto a higher level of discourse.[49] Already Theseus and Hippolyta themselves could be understood as representing a higher narrative level than the other characters in the drama; the noble court is a dramatic

[48] Byron Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 50–54.

[49] Hatten, "On Narrativity in Music."

construct within the play that serves as a framework within which the various plots take place. The fairyland narrative serves to bridge the real world of the observer with the drama, but that world is also directly connected with the specific plots in the drama—that is, Oberon, Titania, and Puck interfere with the other stories. On the other hand, Theseus and Hippolyta's story serves a structural function; their role in the drama is to bring all of the other stories together, providing a common ground on which the plots involving the fairyland, the young lovers, and the goofy thespians may all unfold. This all implies that the P^2 theme represents a higher level of discourse analogous to what the human Theseus and Hippolyta represent within the story—and that level of discourse may be more closely connected to the audience. This is musically signified by P^2's marked presentation in the exposition.

When P^2 is transvalued in the coda, it ascends to a higher narrative level, one which, although a part of the fairyland, is actually more closely connected with the world of the audience. In Mendelssohn's incidental music op. 61, the transvalued P^2 appears in the Finale as Oberon blesses the "house"; this episode precedes the final iteration of the introduction-coda frame, which signifies, as mentioned, the separation between fairyland and the real world of the observer. Here Puck recites his final soliloquy, explaining that the whole play was only a dream.[50] This P^2 "blessing," paralleled in the overture op. 21 (m. 662), can be regarded as initiating the audience's separation from the dream world: Oberon's magic spell is wearing off. Just before the level of discourse shifts completely out of the dream world, with the conclusion of the introduction-coda frame, P^2 steps in as a reminiscence of the

[50] The final lines of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Act V, read as follows: "If we shadows have offended,/Think but this, and all is mended,/That you have but slumber'd here/While these visions did appear./And this weak and idle theme,/No more yielding but a dream,/Gentles, do not reprehend:/if you pardon, we will mend:/And, as I am an honest Puck,/If we have unearned luck/Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,/We will make amends ere long;/Else the Puck a liar call;/So, good night unto you all./Give me your hands, if we be friends,/And Robin shall restore amends."

dream that has just passed. Perhaps we should interpret P^2 as signifying the portion of the dream we, the audience, remember after waking. Its final presentation in the coda, after all, suggests a sense of nostalgia, reminiscent of the heroic presentation of the original P^2 and C, but it also maintains a tenderness similar to the feeling one has while drifting in or out of sleep.

Thus, I suggest that P^2, expressively marked as it is in the exposition, represents a shift in level of discourse within the musical-narrative structure of Mendelssohn's overture that is felt most prominently when the theme is transvalued in the coda; there, as a result of its increased rank, the theme transcends from the level of the dramatic narrative to the real world of the observer. Therefore, I propose that P^2 represents the "dream" that is *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* and that the theme is an overarching representation of the play itself and the last sonorous image one remembers after waking, as it were—indeed, the "dream theme." Simply put, this individual theme, in its multiple forms, musically embodies the spirit of the entire overture.

3. *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage,* Op. 27

The Trimodular Block and a Nautical Course Correction

Influenced by Adolf Bernhard Marx's programmatic ideologies and Ludwig van Beethoven's contemporary choral-orchestral setting of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's poems *Calm Sea* and *Prosperous Voyage*, Mendelssohn took it upon himself to create a purely musical setting of the poems, one without text. Unlike the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, the thematic content of the *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* Overture (*CSPV*) does not directly correlate with specific elements of its poetic program. Recall William Pelto's statement, mentioned in Chapter 1, that *CSPV* "does not … evolve in a line-by-line evocation of the text, as might a vocal setting."[51] Instead Mendelssohn managed to create a setting that includes narrative content otherwise absent from the poetry. In other words,

[51] Pelto, "Musical Structure and Extramusical Meaning," 129.

Mendelssohn uses purely instrumental forces to paint a detailed picture of the story that Goethe's poetry only implies. He accomplishes this by employing musical topics and structural deformations—where the latter occur, as in *AMND,* mainly in the secondary key areas (S-spaces) of both the exposition and recapitulation. These strategies work together to vividly convey a complete narrative that intensifies and enhances the poetic program on which the work was based. The musical narrative maps onto the poetic program in the following ways: a protagonist, likely a sailor in a ship, drifts off course (in the exposition, with its *trimodular block,* multiple competing S themes, and failed EEC) into a storm (in the development), then finds its way (recapitulation), and arrives safely back at harbor (in the coda).

Inspiration and Influence: Beethoven, Goethe, and Marx

It is not a coincidence that Mendelssohn chose to compose *CSPV* at this point in his career or in the manner that he did. Beethoven, Goethe, and Marx were influential figures in his musical life and each played a role in the genesis of this overture. Although Mendelssohn had not met Beethoven, he had studied his works and likely was familiar with Beethoven's cantata on *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* (published six years before Mendelssohn began his overture), given his associations with both Goethe and Marx (as will be discussed presently).[52] Furthermore, Mendelssohn's overture is similar to Beethoven's one-movement choral-vocal setting in several ways, including its structure. Fanny Hensel explained to Karl Klingemann in 1828 that Mendelssohn "wanted to avoid an overture with introduction, and

[52] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 20.

the whole consists of two separate tableaux," perhaps in tribute to Beethoven.[53] However, Mendelssohn himself, in a letter to Adolf Fredrik Lindblad almost two years later, described *Meeresstille* as an "introduction."[54] Thus Mendelssohn pays tribute to Beethoven while maintaining his individuality by blurring the lines between a unified introduction-plus-allegro setting and a structure in which two separate tableaux are presented continuously. Moreover, as Todd (among others) has pointed out, additional similarities exist: both the Beethoven and the Mendelssohn are in the key of D major, for example, and begin with a pedal point.[55]

It should also come as no surprise that Mendelssohn would choose to set Goethe's work: as a close family friend and someone Mendelssohn greatly admired, Goethe was often the inspiration for Mendelssohn's music, not to mention one of Mendelssohn's greatest supporters and mentors. However, as Todd suggests, it is "Quite likely [Adolf Bernhard] Marx" was the one who "encouraged Felix to 'set' the poems without text, as part of the theorist's agendum to test music's capacity to express substantive ideas."[56] As a theorist, Marx was particularly interested in music's communicative ability. His influence on Mendelssohn was strong and his ideas about music theory were put in practice by Mendelssohn: recall Mendelssohn's statement that "What any music I love expresses to me, is not thought too *indefinite* to be put into words, but on the contrary, too *definite*."[57] Although Marx challenged the composer's first version of *AMND* (which Mendelssohn

---

[53] Fanny Hensel to Karl Klingemann, June 18, 1828, in Sebastian Hensel, *The Mendelssohn Family (1729–1847) from Letters and Journals*, trans. Carl Klingemann (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882), 1:161.

[54] Mendelssohn to Adolf Fredrick Lindblad, April 11, 1830, in L. Dahlgren, *Bref till Adolf Fredrik Lindblad från Mendelssohn, … och andra* (Stockholm: A. Bonnier, 1913), 31, cited and translated in Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 21.

[55] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 44–47.

[56] R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 184.

[57] Eduard Devrient, *My Recollections of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and His Letters to Me*, trans. Natalia MacFarren (London: Bentley, 1869), 35–36, cited in Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 69; and Mendelssohn to Marc-André Souchay, Berlin, October 15, 1842, in Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, eds., *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*, 276.

supposedly destroyed), Marx likely instigated the creation of a text-free *CSPV*, as Todd has postulated. This alone gives us reason to analyze the overture for narrative meaning; Mendelssohn, it would seem, believed that he could, and purposefully chose to, convey a poetic program without text.

Taking Marx's ideas a step further, Mendelssohn incorporated into his musical narrative that which Goethe only implied in his poetry. Consider that the poems together do not tell one coherent narrative. The first, *Calm Sea*, describes a calm sea before a storm. The second, *Prosperous Voyage*, describes the sighting of land as the storm dissipates. The storm itself is never directly mentioned, but only implied by the poetry. The original poems are given in figure 3.1.

Meeres Stille	Calm Sea
Tiefe Stille herrscht im Wasser,	Deep stillness rules the water,
Ohne Regung ruht das Meer,	Without motion rests the sea,
Und bekümmert sieht der Schiffer	And troubled, the sailor beholds
Glatte Fläche rings umher.	A smooth expanse all about.
Keine Luft von keiner Seite!	No breeze from any direction!
Todesstille fürchterlich!	Horrid death-stillness!
In der ungeheuern Weite	In the tremendous breadth
Reget keine Welle sich.	Not a wave is roused.
Glückliche Fahrt	Prosperous Voyage
Die Nebel zerreißen,	The mists rip open,
Der Himmel ist helle	The heavens are brilliant
Und Aeolus löset	And Aeolus loosens
Das ängstliche Band.	The anxious bonds.
Es säuseln die Winde,	The winds rustle,
Es rührt sich der Schiffer.	The sailor stirs.
Geschwinde! Geschwinde!	Swiftly! Swiftly!
Es theilt sich die Welle,	The waves draw apart,
Es naht sich die Ferne;	The distance comes near;
Schon seh' ich das Land!	Already I see land!

Figure 3.1. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Meeres Stille* and *Glückliche Fahrt*, from *Gedichte: Erster Theil* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1815), 43.

The consecutive appearance of the poems in Goethe's publication implies a connection between the two poems and a composite narrative that the reader may infer, even while it is not literally described. This is possible because when reading poetry one can freely reinterpret time; a reader can move freely back and forth between poems, reread passages, and make inferences, perhaps imagining events that may have occurred between two related poems; this is true because the gap between the two poems has no explicit temporal value (the reader cannot tell how long the gap lasts, in a literal sense).[58] In music, the situation is somewhat different: although a composer might suggest temporal motion or stasis through harmonic rhythm or other techniques, a listener is still subject to real time as it passes while the music unfolds. Mendelssohn appears to have understood this issue; that is, he understood that, in order to create a musical narrative which included the implied narrative of Goethe's poems (including the storm) he needed to do more than simply set the poetic text as Beethoven had done. The result is that Mendelssohn's overture, unlike Beethoven's cantata, explicitly fills in the reference to the storm that the listener must otherwise imagine. (Beethoven's work instead jumps headlong into the *Prosperous Voyage,* leaving the storm musically unrepresented, as in Goethe's original.)

Others have addressed this apparent surplus of narrative ideas in Mendelssohn's overture. R. Larry Todd focuses on the coda, writing that "The coda [to *CSPV*] depicts the triumphant ending of the journey, a scene conceived by Felix (Goethe's poem ends with just the sighting of land): the dropping of anchor, cannonades from the shore greeting the vessel, and joyous fanfares performed by three trumpets."[59] Mendelssohn's coda clearly provides an addition to the original Goethe narrative; thus it is puzzling why Todd does not address the

[58] Todd eloquently addresses this issue in more detail in *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 75–76.
[59] Todd, *A Life in Music*, 190.

storm in Mendelssohn's development section which I would argue is an equally important, if not more significant, narrative component of the piece. I will address this issue in the analysis that follows.

Prosperous Voyage: Beyond Goethe's Story

On the largest scale, the overture can be divided into two parts: the introduction and the allegro—Fanny Hensel's two "tableaux." The introduction correlates with Goethe's *Calm Sea,* and the allegro programmatically sets the remainder of the narrative, including, but not limited to, Goethe's *Prosperous Voyage*. This division is clear, because Mendelssohn subtitled each section accordingly. The sonata-form proper, the *Prosperous Voyage*, divides into the standard three-part structure with added coda. As we might expect, given Goethe's poem, the exposition centers on a topically heroic musical theme which likely represents a protagonist (perhaps a sailor) in a strikingly positive circumstance (see figure 3.2). Mendelssohn introduces this protagonist—signified by a boisterous and jovial P theme which itself appears in m. 99—by prolonging first the harmonic tension from the end of the slow introduction through fifty exciting measures (mm. 49 to 99). Following the P in mm. 99–128, a P-based, dissolving-consequent-type transition begins in m. 129. The TR itself includes a new theme, now in A-major, which begins in m. 149 ($TR^{1.3}$). The MC arrives in m. 169 and caesura fill (CF) subsequently suspends the harmony for sixteen measures (the stable dominant harmony, a root-position E-dominant-seventh, arrives in m. 183). The secondary theme begins in m. 185, now firmly in A-major. A fermata in m. 205 suspends the harmonic motion, delaying the anticipated cadence that arrives in m. 209; a large consequent module then continues the S theme from this point.

As one might expect in a seafaring-themed composition, water topics appear throughout. A repeated, arpeggiated eighth-note pattern (m. 149ff) in the second violins and violas could signify water or, more specifically, might signify the ocean on which the voyage takes place (see example 3.1). Another similar repeated eighth-note descending figure (m. 223ff) signifies water again, and also serves to texturally intensify the static harmony sounded in the woodwinds. The exposition subsequently concludes with a plagal cadence in the secondary key at m. 255 (more on this point presently), and a water topic reemerges in m. 259 to passively and statically serve as a transition to the development; thus the music seems to "drift" into the development in much the same way a ship might drift, perhaps even drift off course. The aqueous motif passes between voices, first between flute and clarinet, and then from second violin through cello, before material based on the $TR^{1.3}$ theme from the exposition initiates the development (at m. 271).

The development is Mendelssohn's own representation of the storm that is only implied in Goethe's original poems. In m. 287 the first of many harmonic swells, over a B^9 chord, announces the coming storm, signifying perhaps the first ocean swell against the boat (see example 3.2). The subsequent repeated swells, which alternate with turbulent eighth-note water motifs (mm. 295, 303, 311, 317, etc.), continue to increase the dissonance and the tonal conflict, probably representing the growing size and danger of the swells. The pinnacle of the storm appears to be at m. 367: here the harmony remains static but the rhythm and orchestration are both decidedly active and dramatic, with harsh piccolo octave leaps, triple-versus-duple rhythmic conflict, and *sforzando* G-minor triads alternating between the woodwinds and strings. Much as an actual storm might do, the development dissipates

gradually into the recapitulation, and the hero resumes his adventure (at m. 401), now safe from the gale.

The recapitulation then signifies the protagonist on his voyage, similar to the exposition, but now this is the portion of the voyage that occurs *after* the storm has passed. Although Goethe's *Prosperous Voyage* poem similarly depicts the time following the storm, Mendelssohn created a narrative in which we experience more of the protagonist's adventure; Mendelssohn's allegro incorporates a depiction of the voyage before, during, and after the storm. Because of the generic structure of the sonata form (exposition, development, recapitulation) Mendelssohn is able to naturally depict a tripartite musical narrative surrounding the storm (before, during, and after), even while also staying true to Goethe's poetic vision (which, again, only portrays the prosperous voyage that follows the storm and leaves the storm implied). Mendelssohn's recapitulation opens with a condensed P theme in m. 401. The $TR^{1.3}$ theme from the exposition, now in D major, appears next, in a thoroughly expanded form (mm. 417–457); via several extra phrases and emphatic cadential gestures (mm. 448 & 457), this TR theme achieves a PAC in m. 457. Augmented P-based material follows (m. 457ff) and initiates declamatory musical gestures that signal the beginning of the coda.

As Todd and others have suggested, the coda—the beginning of which is indicated in the score by the double bar in m. 482—can also be considered part of Mendelssohn's programmatic surplus. This is because the overwhelming finality of the timpani in the moments preceding the double bar, the maestoso D-major scales in the orchestra (m. 482ff), and the S-based trumpet fanfare topic (m. 501ff) all signify the ship's arrival at port—an arrival marked with overwhelmingly positive finality and welcoming herald trumpets. This is

an addition to Goethe, whose *Prosperous Voyage* concludes at the sighting of land and only implies the protagonist's safe arrival.

S-Space Deformations

Within the exposition and recapitulation Mendelssohn applies sonata deformations—most prominently within the S spaces—that further the musical narrative suggested by the topical references described above. Most importantly, these strategies together suggest a narrative in which the protagonist drifts, or perhaps is thrown, off the course of his "prosperous voyage" (in the exposition) into a tempest (the development), then eventually finds safe passage (the recapitulation) and is welcomed by heralds as he brings his ship safely to harbor (in the coda). Joel Haney has addressed some of these S-space deformations in his examination of the exposition, which he has analyzed by drawing on Hepokoski and Darcy's Sonata Theory. As I discussed in Chapter 1, Haney suggests that the overture "exceeds both the breadth and eventfulness of its literary counterpart, leaving us with a musical surplus," where the surplus "invites an explanation."[60] But Haney's analysis, as mentioned, stops short of proposing a large-scale view of the piece's complete narrative trajectory as it relates to the program. In the analysis that follows, I offer a narrative reading of the piece that accounts for Mendelssohn's "surplus" by drawing on aspects of Haney's analysis, my own Sonata-Theory analysis, and aspects of the topical narrative that I have suggested above.

S-Space Deformations: Exposition

The sailor begins to drift off course in the exposition, which is signified using two principle strategies that suggest a musical "losing of one's way": deformational treatment of

[60] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 115.

the medial caesura; and a similarly deformational treatment of the structural cadence, the EEC. In Haney's analysis the expositional transition (TR) spans mm. 129–169 and ends with a deformational medial caesura in mm. 169–185. Beginning in m. 141, the transition begins to modulate, as would be expected, from the home key of D major to the secondary key of A major; but, as Haney suggests, "Mendelssohn's immediate canceling of the G♯ of mm. 153–56 with a metrically emphatic G♮ in the bass at mm. 162 and 164 creates the local effect of the original tonic's resistance to TR's modulatory activity."[61] This leads to a first-inversion dominant chord in place of the expected root-position harmony at the medial caesura, and, as a result, Haney suggests that "Mendelssohn's TR displays a pointed inability to produce the normatively strong root-position MC-effect …. Almost withdrawing, the passage subsides to a benign, shimmering backdrop—a 'medial caesura deformation'—from which S emerges at m. 185."[62] The S space itself then produces no normative V:PAC, which Haney interprets as a "poetically compelling *failure* to secure the normative EEC."[63] Haney suggests two potential motivations for this failure: first, the fermata in m. 205 has the effect of halting the ongoing harmonic motion toward the EEC; and, second, beginning in m. 235, a V7 of V reestablishes S's tonal goal, but the goal is promptly confused by a repeated brass fanfare that emphasizes the pitches A and D. The latter results in a putative EEC, but one that is articulated with a plagal cadence in m. 255 rather than the more normative PAC (see example 3.3). Haney explains the effect of the repeated fanfare:

> At m. 243, Mendelssohn answers … with a barrage of brass and timpani flourishes outlining A–D. The metrical stress of this tattoo initially creates the

[61] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 119.
[62] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 119.
[63] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 119–120.

> impression of dominant-to-tonic motion in D major—the initial tonic sonority intruding, once again, into the surrounding A-major context. The figure abruptly reverses its tonal identity, though, by falling back to A at mm. 247 and 251 and finally settling there, as a tonic, at m. 255.[64]

Haney's analysis of the exposition is compelling, but, as mentioned, he stops short of relating the narrative directly to Goethe's program. I would suggest that the structural EEC failure represents the moment that the protagonist drifts off course into the development's storm. Such a reading is underscored by the fact that the structure of the S space is in dialogue with a strategy Hepokoski and Darcy call a *trimodular block* (see figure 3.3). The trimodular block is a strategy for organizing S space that at once imbues the S theme with extra expressive meaning and allows for the presence of multiple S themes—which in this case may correlate with the protagonist's searching for the correct nautical course. The trimodular block in *CSPV* ultimately has the effect of intensifying the exposition's narrative "failure"—embodied in the absence of an EEC—because it results in the presentation of not one but two potential S candidates, both of which fail to achieve their obligatory terminal cadence and thus ultimately fail to prevent the programmatic ship from being pulled off its course. I suggest that the third module within the TR space—the A-major material beginning in m. 149—is the first of two proposed S-theme "candidates." The strongest evidence for such a reading appears in the recapitulation, where this same material is treated very much like an S theme, even to the extent that it secures resolute tonal closure with a I:PAC in m. 457. Thus, if we regard the A-major material at m. 149 in the exposition as a potential S

[64] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 121.

theme, it follows that the exposition may be interpreted as if it is in dialogue with the trimodular-block strategy.

A normative, Classical trimodular block (or TMB) is generally articulated with the help of a second MC within the rotation's S space. According to Hepokoski and Darcy, "It is not uncommon to encounter the setup and execution of a second, additional medial caesura before the EEC. This can occur in a variety of contexts, but the invariable impression is that of apparent double medial caesuras, and, concomitantly, the effect of two separate launches of new themes (pre-EEC themes) following those MCs. Depending on the circumstances at hand, the second new theme can seem to be something of a second S."[65] The TMB format thus normatively comprises three modules: TM^1, TM^2, and TM^3. TM^1 refers to the material which follows the first MC effect, which is regarded as the first potential S theme. TM^2 is the second transitional module, in which the second MC appears. TM^3 is the second potential S theme, which often leads to the expected EEC.[66]

At first glance it would seem that the *CSPV* exposition could not contain the requisite double medial caesuras. Haney's analysis identifies only one, and there is no other obvious candidate. But Hepokoski and Darcy address this issue:

> In fact, there may be no unequivocal MC effect at all preceding TM^1, which "bites" too early on a falsely offered caesura-lure or other moment of articulation. In such instances the "first MC" is only apparent. It can exist only as a mild glimmer of possibility, if that, which the succeeding module

[65] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 171.
[66] Hepokoski and Darcy, 170–177.

abruptly, and inappropriately, chooses to use as a launching pad for an S-like theme (that turns out to be TM^1).[67]

In *CSPV*, the dominant lock identified by Haney (mm.145–148) may well manifest the phenomenon described; thus the A-major $TR^{1.3}$ theme (TM^1) that follows "bites" too early to allow the MC to sufficiently form (see example 3.4). In effect, then, we have an MC failure at m. 145. Subsequently, TM^1 proceeds to further assert its desire for S consideration with an imperfect authentic cadence in A-major in m. 157 (perhaps a weak attempt at an EEC?), at the onset of the consequent phrase.

The remainder of the exposition is essentially as Haney describes it, but can be viewed within a trimodular-block context. Thus, we can assign a TM^2 function to Haney's deformational MC in m. 169 that uses a first-inversion dominant in place of the expected root-position V^7/V. It is worth noting that a root-position V^7/V, which Haney does not address, does appear in the finale two bars of the module (mm. 183–184) and could be considered a more viable MC (or TM^2) option. This is likely not an oversight on Haney's part but rather an attempt to draw added attention to the lack of "strength and decisive articulation" sounded in the preceding sixteen bars.[68] Thus we can assign a TM^2 function to the entire dominant-infused module (mm. 169–84) despite the presence of the root-position dominant in m. 183. Definitive S material, or TM^3, follows at m. 185. As we have seen, though this TM^3 is more characteristically "S" than its TM^1 counterpart—with respect to both its lyrical, dolce, cantabile melody as well as its overall position within the rotation—it *also* fails to produce the definitive EEC. Thus we have a "double" failure to find cadential resolution in the key of the dominant—neither TM^1 nor TM^3 achieve a PAC in A major—

[67] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 175.
[68] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 119.

which we can understand as an ominous harbinger of the storm that awaits the protagonist in the coming development.

The commonality of the TMB strategy in the Classical and Romantic repertoire gives us ample reason to examine Mendelssohn's TM^1 as something more than simply a TR theme that fails to achieve the normative MC, as Haney suggests. I would suggest that had TM^3 concluded with a decisive EEC and, likewise, had TM^3 served as the only S theme in the recapitulation, Haney's analysis would be more plausible. But, as mentioned, the role of the expositional TM^1 material in the recapitulation is unequivocally that of an S theme. Retrospectively, then, any analysis is obligated to reevaluate the theme at m. 149 as one with greater narrative significance than its apparent placement with the TR might suggest. Thus the trimodular-block interpretation, in which we consider m. 149 with regard to its potential for S-theme status, enhances the narrative suggested by the topical signifiers as well as by Goethe's implied program; the ship loses its way and drifts off course, into a storm.

S-Space Deformations: Recapitulation

The recapitulation (which begins at m. 401) does not adhere to the rotational structure established in the exposition; the ship now avoids its nautical drift and adheres to the correct course, as it were. Mendelssohn condenses the P space from 48 measures in the exposition to 16 measures in the recapitulation; these 16 bars include the same MC failure that appeared just prior to the expositional TM^1 module. The abbreviation of the P space is itself not an unexpected practice; this is common practice in both Classical and Romantic sonata forms. The real surprise here is that Mendelssohn has expanded the TM^1 theme from 19 measures in the exposition to 40 measures in the recapitulation (mm. 417–457).

This time, as mentioned above, the TM^1 theme is given legitimate S-theme-like treatment; this is, in fact, the correct course for which the protagonist was searching earlier. The two-part, 8-bar phrase is sounded three times in the recapitulation as opposed to two times in the exposition; in the exposition the phrase is cut short as the harmony suggests a weakening of the expected tonal goal, whereas in the recapitulation all harmonies in the thoroughly expanded module drive unambiguously toward the tonic. One could postulate, furthermore, that mm. 445 and 453 initiate cadential progressions toward the tonic, which arrives emphatically with a PAC in m. 457 (see example 3.5). Measure 457 is a viable ESC candidate, assuming this TM^1 module is afforded full S-theme status. The cadence is followed immediately by quintessential C material at mm. 457ff—material that expands upon the heroic P theme sounded in the woodwinds and that asserts an overbearing bludgeoning of "D major as tonic" by the timpani (mm. 465–482). The material seems to overemphasize the finality of the cadence in m. 457, and it leads decisively to the coda in m. 482. Thus if we accept TM^1's authority as an S theme in the recapitulation, we also must conclude that the overture's entire sonata-space proper comes to a close without ever sounding the expositional S theme, TM^3. This is a striking omission from the rotational layout; the ship's journey is far less circuitous in the recapitulation.

Haney proposes a different reading of the recapitulation and coda, one which might suggest that the ship is "saved" and guided safely back to the port in the extra-structural coda rather than in the recapitulation itself. He argues that "The traditional interpretation of much of the *Glückliche Fahrt*'s conclusion as coda, especially after the common-time Allegro maestoso at m. 482, doubtless draws support from the local harmonic stability and

overwhelmingly affirmative rhetoric that prevails after m. 457."[69] He argues further that although m. 482 has commonly been interpreted as the coda, it cannot be a coda because "However confidently anticipated, the moment of essential structural closure remains as yet a promise."[70] Such an interpretation is made possible by the fact that Haney has not awarded the TM^1 module the necessary S-theme "authority" to assert the ESC. His argument is certainly not unwarranted, given the abbreviated repetition of the weak MC failure prior to the TM^1 theme (mm. 413–416); Haney is most likely interpreting this module as an elaboration of the $TR^{1.3}$ module, which would follow logically from his analysis of the exposition (in which he did not read a trimodular block structure). Such a reading leads to one in which we must interpret a highly equivocal, deformational recapitulatory rotation in which the coda (m. 482) substitutes for the normative tonal conclusion of the S-space. Haney resolves this problem with an interesting reading of the final trumpet fanfare (mm. 501–511), which topically signifies the heralds welcoming the ship into port (see example 3.6). Haney identifies the fermata in m. 495 as a functional MC, interpreting it as an "MC-analogue." He finds support for his reading in the bass which, in mm. 493–95, sounds a descending scale pattern similar to the one that appeared in the exposition just prior to the MC in m. 169.[71] He then suggests that the trumpet fanfare that follows in m. 501 "projects … the profile of the S-remainder from the exposition, mm. 209–14, transforming what had been poignant resignation into exuberant resolve."[72] This fanfare-S proceeds to a I:PAC in m. 511, which Haney regards as the recapitulation's ESC. Thus his interpretation extends the recapitulatory

[69] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 127.
[70] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 127.
[71] In addition, although the fermata is a rhetorically compelling caesura of sorts, the harmony at the fermata does not necessarily justify a medial caesura interpretation—hence Haney's "MC-analogue" description. Ultimately, similar to the exposition, no authoritative MC appears within the recapitulation.
[72] Haney, "Navigating Sonata Space," 127.

rotation all the way through to the final bars of the overture, including what would otherwise be interpreted as the coda. Thus the coda saves the sonata from failure; the ship has been guided into port, literally at the last possible moment.

I acknowledge the evidence in support of Haney's reading, even while I also assert that the PAC following the TM^1 theme (m. 457) is not to be ignored. The recapitulation is thus best understood as not falling cleanly into a single S-space deformational category. In the end, regardless of how one chooses to interpret the location of the ESC (either in m. 457 or m. 511), what is clear is that Mendelssohn conveys an overwhelming sense of positive tonal closure for the piece by allowing both of the S candidates from the exposition (TM^1 and TM^3) to achieve tonal closure in the recapitulation.

Ultimately, what matters most is how this positive closure maps onto a narrative interpretation. In the exposition, TM^1 (m. 149) was presented for S consideration, but this material was discarded in favor of TM^3 (m. 185), a more characteristic S theme. Narratively speaking, we might interpret this as signifying the protagonist's choice to abandon one decision (TM^1) in favor of another (TM^3), where the latter ultimately leads to failure (signified in the EEC-failure) and results in his ship being thrown off course and into a storm. In the recapitulation, however, TM^1 was fully validated as an S theme; thus the protagonist decides to stick with his first decision which, in the end, has an emphatically positive result: a nautical heading toward land. It follows logically that the coda is decidedly positive, with a transformed and complete TM^3 now functioning to herald the ship's safe arrival into port. In the end, the entire sonata-form movement conveys a complete musical narrative—one that is based on but not limited to Goethe's implied poetic program.

4. *The Hebrides,* Op. 26

The S^c Space as Tonal Battlefield

Evidence suggests that *The Hebrides* Overture op. 26 does not draw its programmatic influence from a specific literary source. During the summer of 1829, Mendelssohn and his friend Karl Klingemann toured Scotland. On August 7 Felix famously sketched the ruins of Dunollie Castle and the surrounding islands from Oban, a city on mainland Scotland which overlooks two of the Hebrides islands, Mull and Morven. Later the same day he rendered the opening motive of the overture in piano reduction in a letter to his family in which he suggested that the music might help them understand his experience.[73] Mendelssohn's program at that time was not initially based on any specific literary source, but on his overall impressions of the Hebrides: visual, physical, and visceral. Todd describes Mendelssohn's August 7 musical sketch as follows: "Indulging in romantic tone painting at its purest, he

[73] Todd, *A Life in Music*, 215.

recorded synaesthetic experiences: the images of the Oban drawing became sonorous; the orchestra, a palette of softly mottled hues and shades, to capture the unforgettable Scottish sea- and landscapes."[74]

It is worth noting in this context that publishers later retitled the overture *Fingals Höhle* (*Fingal's Cave*), but Mendelssohn and Klingemann did not visit Fingal's Cave on Staffa island until August 8, 1829, a day after Mendelssohn's musical sketch was completed. Mendelssohn did, however, change the name of the overture on several occasions, and for its premiere with the Philharmonic Society almost three years later in 1832 it was titled *Overture to the Isles of Fingal*—apparently alluding to the cave itself. Though it is likely that Fingal's Cave and the Ossianic legend associated with it—one of the Ossianic epic poems introduces the hero Fingal—played a part in the composer's overall impressions of the Hebrides Islands and therefore the overture itself, it was clearly not the central element of his program at the onset in 1829. In fact, though Klingemann corresponded about his experience at the cave, there is no record of Mendelssohn's own impressions of it. However, as Todd suggests, the time between the first sketch of the overture and its completion (including the revisions) allowed other influences to take root: "Finally, in April 1835, the score of the overture … appeared with the title *Die Fingals-Höhle*. By then, the composer's initial impressions of the Hebrides, specifically of Mull and Morven, had been supplanted by the romantic appeal of the cave and the Ossianic poems."[75]

Thus, given the available evidence, it does not appear that any sole literary source (or any other specific type of program) served as the basis for the program of Mendelssohn's overture. In fact, of the four overtures discussed in this document, *The Hebrides* is the only

[74] Todd, *A Life in Music*, 215.
[75] Todd, *The Hebrides and Other Overtures*, 37.

overture without a direct literary reference. The interpretive challenge is to envision the overture's musical narrative as an abstract narrative involving the opposition of expressive states rather than specific characters, actions, or events. Such a narrative in this case is created via semi-exclusive musical means; an interpretation must then lean on, for potential insight, visual imagery and what Todd refers to as Mendelssohn's "synaesthetic experiences" of the Hebrides. In the end, we can say that *The Hebrides* is "about" two opposing forces in conflict with one another. These forces, or characters, are represented tonally and thematically, specifically by the primary and secondary key areas and their thematic content (P and S). Mendelsohn conveys the conflict in the music by creating harmonic conflict on the smallest scale and on local structural levels (that is, B-minor and D-major harmonies are consistently sounded in juxtaposition, as if in battle); by employing the deformational S^c space, which intensifies tonal conflict on a larger level; and by incorporating extra-structural, interpolated musical material ("interruptions") that redirects the narrative and influences the outcome of the conflict. In addition, although minor-mode sonatas are normally conceived generically as representing a negative force (minor P) opposing a positive force (major S), I find no obvious negative quality of the B-minor theme independently; rather, the theme is only perceived as negative with respect to its conflict with the D-major S theme.[76] This is not necessarily in opposition with the idea that, as Hepokoski and Darcy write, "we refer to major and minor as binary signs of the positive and the negative."[77] Simply put, it is the conflict between the narrative characters themselves which draws out the "negative" quality from P.

[76] Note that within minor-mode sonata-form norms it is also possible for S to be in the key of the minor dominant. Such a structure, however, would not juxtapose major and minor modes. Refer to chapter 14 of Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, for further discussion of generic norms in minor-mode sonata movements.

[77] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 308.

Exposition: Harmonic Conflict

Mendelssohn begins the overture (at the $P^{1.1}$ theme) with harmonies likely meant to be awe-inspiring, which together convey a sense of tonal ambiguity (see example 4.1). In so doing he avoids direct harmonic conflict in the first few bars of the piece, but also intentionally avoids firmly securing a cadence in the key of the tonic, B minor. The tonic is only passively asserted by a plagal cadence in m. 9. Furthermore, even though the first harmony one hears in the piece is B minor (mm. 1–2), none of the harmonies in the first seven measures function necessarily or exclusively in B minor. The opening B-minor triad is followed by a D-major triad (mm. 3–4), an F-sharp-minor triad (mm. 5–6), and a B-major triad, where the latter leads to the plagal cadence (mm. 8–9). Foreshadowing the harmonic conflict to come, this haunting progression immediately juxtaposes B minor and D major in mm. 1–4, where D major is the eventual secondary key area (the key of S). Thus, although B minor seems relatively secure by m. 9, at m. 4 it remains unclear what tonal trajectory the opening theme might take. Moving forward, a repetition of the progression begins at m. 9, but the repetition is altered in m. 13; this time, the F-sharp-minor harmony becomes an F-sharp-major triad (i:V) and supports an embellished version of one of the P motives ($P^{1.2}$). Accelerated harmonic motion leads to an elegant i:PAC at m. 16, which gracefully and firmly secures (at least momentarily) B minor, finally, as the tonic. Thus, while obviously there is no large-scale harmonic conflict present within the opening sixteen bars, there is a clear juxtaposition of B minor and D major, as if B minor is forced to assert itself from the outset against a portentous D-major threat.

The next source of interest in the piece's harmonic language arises at the medial caesura at m. 43 (see example 4.2). This is a i:HC MC; that is, this is an MC in the key of the

tonic, rather than an MC in the key of the relative major—which itself would normatively be initiated by a III:HC MC and which is the first-level-default option in a minor-mode sonata exposition.[78] According to Sonata Theory, the i:HC MC is a second-level default option in minor-mode-sonatas; even so, such MCs, according to Hepokoski and Darcy, "are relatively rare" due to certain harmonic idiosyncrasies presented by such an MC.[79] That is, the shift that occurs when a i:HC MC gives way to an S theme in the key of the relative major is more jarring than the analogous shift that occurs when a major-mode sonata's I:HC MC shifts to an S in the key of the dominant. Thus we should not understand Mendelssohn's choice of a i:HC MC in place of the more normative III:HC MC as expressively neutral. Furthermore, Mendelssohn intensifies this MC gesture by anticipating it with an identical "MC-effect" four bars earlier, in m. 39. The caesura fill (CF) that follows the MC in m. 43 is then forced to bridge the harmonic gap to the relative major, and the CF modulates from the i:HC MC in m. 43 to the D-major S in m. 47.[80] The modulation comprises a repetition of the previous descending clarinet and bassoon line, a suspension of a dominant-seventh harmony above a pedal A in the trumpets, and three reinforcing hammer-blows in the trumpets themselves, where these hammer blows constitute a moment that could stand in as the MC in its own right. By composing out the medial caesura in such a fashion, Mendelssohn has in essence emphasized the latent tonal conflict between B minor and D major by juxtaposing two potential MC options. It is as if the i:HC MC is trying with all of its might to produce the S theme, even repeating itself (in mm. 39 and 43), but it is ultimately unsuccessful. The

[78] A v:HC in sonatas with a minor-dominant S-space is also considered a first-level default. Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 26.

[79] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 26.

[80] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 27.

"proper" III:HC MC harmony then steps in at m. 45, as if to say, in contrast with its predecessor, "No! That will not do, *I* am the answer!

Consistent with Mendelssohn's strategies in *AMND* and *CSPV*, the majority of the narrative conflict in *The Hebrides* occurs within the sonata's S space. The ten-measure S theme in D major (beginning at m. 47) is lyrical and full of sweeping, romantic gestures, many of them emphasized by the < *sf* > gestures in the cellos. The harmonic language is again of central interest: in the S theme it subversively underemphasizes the governing D-major tonality. For example, although S opens unambiguously in D major (m. 47), a B-major (VI) triad follows in m. 48 and functions as the dominant of E minor, which itself is realized immediately, in the following bar.[81] However, the E minor triad (supertonic in D major) does not progress to a subdominant or a dominant, as one might have expected were Mendelssohn to have sought to firmly secure D major as tonic. Instead, on the third beat of m. 49 the harmony moves to a C-major triad via a mediant relationship with E minor; this C-major triad then has a plagal relationship to the G-major triad that follows in m. 50. In turn, G major, subdominant in D major, prolongs the plagal motion in mm. 53–55. Thus the C-major harmony can be regarded as a secondary subdominant—subdominant of the subdominant—and can be understood as initiating the effect of "double plagal" motion (see example 4.3). The plagal trajectory in these measures, even while it is not explicitly combative or harmonically confrontational, can be understood as deflating the D-major-as-tonic energy. The tonicization of B-minor in m. 53, on the other hand, momentarily but more aggressively destabilizes D major: an F-sharp-major triad surges with longing in m. 52 and functions as dominant of the B-minor triad that follows in m. 53. This tonicization of B

[81] It is worth noting the importance of the E-minor triad in this work. Because of its dual pre-dominant functionality, as iv in B minor and ii in D major, Mendelssohn often uses E minor as a bridge between both keys. G major, VI in B minor and IV in D major, functions in a similar capacity.

minor, placed conspicuously here in the middle of the ten-bar S theme, overtly undermines the key of the S theme, in that an element of P (specifically its B-minor tonic triad) injects itself forcibly into the S space.

In spite of this subversive attempt by a vestige of the P material to thwart the S-goal—a PAC in D-major—S manages to muster the requisite III:PAC in mm. 56–57. But this cadence does not qualify as the EEC, because it initiates a repetition of the S theme, this time in the violins. Recall the Sonata Theory principle that if S material returns following a PAC, then any presumption that this PAC functions as an EEC must be abandoned and the S space is understood as remaining open: "As a general principle S is not finished until its thematic material is relinquished."[82] Thus one must look ahead for a viable EEC.

The second S thematic module (m. 57) closes with a thrice-repeated attempt to produce a cadence in mm. 67–69; I shall refer to this material as the S *dolce* theme. (Note that a *dolce* marking is indicated for the first and second violins.) But in fact no cadence is achieved (see example 4.4). The F-sharp to G motion in the double-bass in these bars appears to signal an impending cadence, but momentum instead wanes and the bass slips away to E-sharp in m. 70 (the most obvious function of which is part of a V of V in B minor). Even though one should expect that this theme will eventually lead to a PAC in D major, material drawn from the P theme explicitly intrudes in m. 70 before such a cadence is allowed to take place. This is, again, highly unusual: it would not be surprising to find P material within a closing zone, but in the absence of a viable EEC to initiate the C, we are forced to examine this P material in another way.[83]

---

[82] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 181.

[83] Recall from Chapter 2: "C will customarily contain material that provides an immediate contrast with the preceding S material." Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 181. Also: "In ambiguous EEC situations or situations of possible EEC deferral the existence of a decisive P-based-C can serve as

The P module that intrudes in mm.70–76 is deformational largely because of the implied tonicization of B minor within the S space. As before, Mendelssohn conveys the central conflict within the narrative via conflict in the harmonic structure. In this case, he also complicates the S goal—the III:PAC EEC—using P material that tonicizes B-minor; it is as if P covertly enters the S space in order to thwart the S goal. From here, the P module leads with a grand crescendo into m. 77 (see example 4.5). A D-major imperfect authentic cadence fights against the B-minor P-based interruption, as if attempting to pronounce the strength of D major: the gesture can be understood as signifying "I will win this battle!" Rhetorically, the contents of this section are layered: the violins and flutes sound a P-derived martial motive in D major (as if P remains rhetorically active within the D-major context); the horns and trumpets sound a fanfare which I will refer to as $C^{1.1}$; and the remaining woodwinds sound a different fanfare-like motive, $C^{1.2}$. D-major clearly governs the tonality at this point, even though it is not altogether firm due to a turbulent cello and bass sixteenth-note figure (mm. 77–83) and tutti thrashing accents (mm. 80 and 84). Perhaps the turbulence represents the reluctance of B minor to relinquish its power; the augmented-sixth chord in m. 84 underscores such a reading by tonicizing B minor. A long overdue III:PAC in m. 89, gives way to the $C^{1.1}$ module, which dominates the texture for the remainder of the exposition (mm. 89–95) and solidifies D major's victory.

---

compelling additional evidence of the beginning of the 'extras' or postcadential 'accessory ideas' of the closing zone … While the forte P-based C will usually be immediately preceded by what we should take to be an EEC, this principle cannot be regarded as absolute." Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 185.

Exposition: The S^{c} Space

Ultimately it seems plausible to regard the m. 89 III:PAC as the EEC because it meets Sonata Theory criteria for such a formal function: it follows the S space and is itself followed by what would widely be considered tonally affirmative, closing rhetoric. The interpretive problem thus lies less in the position of the EEC itself and more in the space prior to it, the space in which the EEC was deferred. That is, how can we make functional or expressive sense of mm. 70–89; what purpose does this material serve, and what does it mean, in terms of Mendelssohn's larger narrative objectives?

Given what we know so far about the expositional format in *The Hebrides* as well as about the Sonata Theory guidelines for the deformational space known as the "S^{c}," as discussed above in Chapter 2, it seems plausible to invoke the S^{c}-space category to interpret the function of mm. 70–89. The beginning of the S *dolce* theme (m. 67), with the initiation of F-sharp-to-G bass motion and resultant dominant to tonic harmonic motion, should likely be understood as the "expected" position of the EEC and therefore the initial moment of EEC deferral. It is at this point, specifically mm. 67–69, that S abruptly relinquishes its thematic authority in favor of P-based material (in m. 70) without producing the EEC. There follows at m. 77 another more definitive EEC-attempt, an IAC, followed by forte, P-based thematic material that is in direct contrast with the preceding S theme. This material is best regarded as serving a closing function, in a sonata-formal sense: recall that contrasting, forte, P-based material often serves as C.[84]

However, the P-based material in m. 70 is not decisively C—it is neither *forte* nor starkly contrasting with the preceding S material—and, therefore, its function within the S space remains ambiguous. Hepokoski and Darcy have proposed a concept that would allow

[84] See Chapter 2 and Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory,* 185.

for a possible categorization of this seven-bar module: "Sometimes a composer will announce the launching of C with an energy-gaining crescendo, beginning with a bustling *piano* and building up to and finally discharging onto a *forte*, one either marking the peak of the crescendo-module itself or beginning a new module."[85] Based on this description, we can refer to the P-based material in m. 70 as a *crescendo-module,* one that functions to build into the following definitive C-like module, or S^c space, in m. 77.

By deferring the EEC, Mendelssohn has postponed the S-goal and created a tonally ambiguous space in which P and S elements are in direct conflict. In other words, the S^c space itself can be viewed as a central, decisive plain on the "tonal battlefield" in which the opposing forces duel. The S^c space is particularly suited for this in that its formal function bestrides both S and C, all the while maintaining harmonic intensity by delaying the expected EEC. Figure 4.1 shows the battlefield on which P and S fight for dominance. At m. 70 P weakly intrudes into the S space; a strong D major theme follows in m. 77, foreshadowing eventual victory; minor-mode P makes its last attempt to overtake major-mode S at the augmented-sixth chord in B minor in m. 84; and finally D major claims victory with the III:PAC EEC in m. 89. $C^{1.1}$ material ensues.

Recapitulation

From the outset, it is clear that the recapitulation comprises a recomposed version of the exposition. The thematic modules and the rotational order of their presentation have been preserved (unlike, for example, in *AMND* and *The Fair Melusine*), but the material has been significantly condensed. Drawing a direct comparison between the recapitulation and its expositional precedent, note that the exposition comprises 69 bars from the beginning to the

[85] Hepokoski and Darcy, 186.

onset of the S^c space, while the equivalent space in the recapitulation comprises only 37 measures. This is not an unusual practice in the Romantic sonata, but in this case it does serve to immediately heighten the harmonic conflict to a level beyond what we experienced at the opening of the exposition.

In the exposition P presented itself as a mystical, tonally ambiguous, and awe-inspiring entity. It was not until m. 13 that P asserted its tonal dominance with a normative dominant. On the other hand, in m. 182 a new motive based on the P theme outlines F-sharp-major to B-minor motion, in effect stressing the B-minor tonality as early as the third bar of the recapitulation. As if in response, D major enters immediately and echoes this new P material in the clarinets and brass (mm. 184–187). Thus where Mendelssohn employed vague harmonies at the opening of the overture to underscore tonal ambiguity, in the recapitulation B minor and D major appear to be in conflict from the outset (see example 4.6). $P^{1.2}$ then intervenes in m. 188, as if on behalf of the weakening $P^{1.1}$, but, unlike in the exposition, P is unable to secure a cadence on B minor. From here P unravels into a newly composed TR (m. 194), which itself concludes with a dominant lock in the key of the tonic (mm. 198–99) that at once bolsters the weakening B minor and leads subversively to a tonic-*major* presentation of S, via a I:HC MC in m. 200 (analogous to the i:HC at m. 72 in the exposition, now repurposed for the major-mode recapitulatory tonal trajectory). There follows a beautiful rendition of S, presented by the clarinets in duet, which spins out into the S *dolce* (mm. 211–216)—itself elaborated and extended with the assistance of a repetition in the violas in m. 215 (see example 4.7).

Imitative Interpolations

So far the recapitulation's narrative seems to be implying a weakening of P, surrendering its minor modality to the tonic major. This would imply the presence of a tonal problem that the sonata would be expected to overcome. In that spirit, immediately following the conclusion of S, something unexpected occurs: a newly composed *Animato* module (mm. 217–225), one that has never appeared thus far in the entire overture, is inserted into the recapitulation. This interpolated module intrudes into the recapitulatory rotation, stepping in from the outside as if interrupting the sonata's forward flow in the service of redirecting, or correcting, the course of the narrative.

This *Animato* material has an imitative, contrapuntal texture which could be a reference to the *learned* style, as shown in example 4.7. The learned style is a topic that suggests references to the church and the sacred; to the high style; and to music of the Baroque and Renaissance periods. The interpolation of imitative material here in *The Hebrides'* recapitulation, where such material appears nowhere else in the piece, is a striking stylistic gesture that should be understood as marked with respect to its expressive meaning. Ultimately, this marked imitative gesture redirects the tonal trajectory of the recapitulation and, if we hear this module as a learned-style topic, it can be interpreted as Mendelssohn's shifting the level of discourse beyond the "earthly," tonal conflict of the sonata and its primary narrative to a higher narrative level that invokes the presence of the sacred or perhaps a supernatural force. The narrative consequences of such an interpretation are clear: perhaps the hand of divine intervention reaches into the story to set the protagonist upon his correct path. In a purely tonal sense, the meaning is something along the lines of "No, you shall be B minor!" Indeed, the interpolation builds toward a i:IAC in m. 226, at which point P

material, in all its B-minor glory, finally declares its sovereignty.[86] However one chooses to label this interpolated module stylistically, narratively it seems to represent a powerful force which interrupts the sonata space from the outside and unequivocally redirects the narrative trajectory.

The key of D major, camouflaged within P-based material, takes a final stand against the rejuvenated B minor in m. 234, but this time the key is met with a devastating blow from yet another imitative interpolation (now mm. 237–243). This time the interpolation employs material derived from P and functions similarly to a fugal episode, forcefully and decisively modulating away from the D-major downbeat in m. 237 (see example 4.8). Observe especially the bass, which outlines chromatic motion upward toward B minor in mm. 237–239, through F-sharp, G, G-sharp, and A. In anticipation of the B minor that is to come, the bass falls back to F-sharp in m. 240, a move that leads promptly to an F-sharp-dominant 6/5 in m. 241. At the same time, the first violins taunt the vanquished D major, sounding staccato eighth-notes in alternation with a satirically slurred F-sharp triad (mm. 241–243). D major, desperate to win the losing battle, heaves several final blows in a blind stupor; the woodwinds reach for a D-major triad but succeed only in finding the pitch D (m. 244). D is then pulled downward to B, the gesture is repeated (m. 246), and in the end the woodwinds fall permanently; D major finally submits to B-minor with a i:PAC in m. 248, where this cadence definitively closes the overture's tonal structure as the ESC.

[86] See Chapter 2 for a definition of what Hatten calls the *shift in level of discourse.* See also Hatten, "On Narrativity in Music."

Recapitulation: S^c Space

As in the exposition, the material which precedes the ESC can be interpreted as an S^c-space battlefield. S in m. 202 is situated to achieve tonal resolution in the newly presented tonic major. However, the recapitulation follows the rotational layout established by the exposition, and P material (m. 226) in the tonic minor enters and forestalls the expected tonic-major ESC. A i:IAC in m. 226 deflects the S-space goal in much the same way that the material in m. 70 anticipated the S-space goal in the exposition, and a deformational S^c space (mm. 226–248) follows on the heels of the S *dolce* cadential attempts (mm. 211–216) leading up to the definitive ESC (in m. 248). The m. 226 i:IAC is probably best regarded as an initial, failed ESC—one that is followed by decidedly C-like material and one that initiates the S^c space in which the final B-minor–D-major battle is waged.

It is clear that, as in many sonatas, the tonal trajectory in the exposition is the opposite of the recapitulation: in this case, a D-major S is the victor in the exposition, while the B-minor P wins in the recapitulation. However, *The Hebrides* presents an interesting situation, expressively, in that comparing the recapitulatory S^c space to the S^c in the exposition, one finds that equivalent modules in one rotation serve opposite narrative functions in the other. Before explaining this point in more detail, it is important to emphasize that the two interpolated imitative modules in the recapitulation should be understood as intruding from the outside upon the normative sonata space and, therefore, have no formal analogs in the exposition. Consequently, the S^c space should be regarded as including m. 226 through the i:PAC ESC in m. 248, and as not including the second imitative interpolation in mm. 237–43.

As in the exposition (see m. 70), P material appears following the conclusion of S in the recapitulation (m. 226). But unlike the parallel section in the exposition, in which the P-

based material began *piano* and served as a crescendo-module, the recapitulatory statement of the equivalent material is declamatory and emphatic. As in the exposition (m. 77), furthermore, D major makes a stand in the recapitulation with material (m. 234) based on the expositional P and $C^{1.2}$ modules. But in the recapitulation, significantly, $C^{1.1}$ material—which was present at the analogous moment in the exposition—has been omitted. Perhaps this omission of the $C^{1.1}$ material emphasizes the lack of true finality in this moment and at the same time suggests the impending recapitulatory defeat of D major. From here, as we have seen, D major succumbs to the second interpolation (m. 237–243), which redirects the tonal trajectory back toward B minor; the woodwinds strive wildly for D in mm. 234–37 but are unsuccessful. This portion of the recapitulation may be analogous to the German-Augmented Sixth in the exposition, at m. 84, and the implications are significant: B minor's hopeless attempt to win the rotational battle in the exposition has now become D major's hopeless attempt to win the war over the recapitulation. A i:PAC follows in m. 248 and functions as the sonata's ESC, from which $C^{1.1}$ material follows. The m. 248 ESC clearly parallels the EEC in m. 89, in which the $C^{1.1}$ module articulated the triumph of D major.

Thus the S^c spaces in both the exposition and the recapitulation should be understood as suspending tonal resolution in order to prolong the duel between P and S (see figure 4.2). In the exposition S is the victor, while in the recapitulation P is the victor; the recapitulation thus comprises an "inside-out" version of the exposition, as James Hepokoski has astutely observed.[87] The narrative overflows with conflict. The most significant among all of Mendelssohn's strategies for conveying such a tale are the deferred EEC and the related S^c space.

[87] James Hepokoski, personal e-mail message to the author, April 4, 2012.

Minor-Mode: Negative or Positive?

As in my analyses of *AMND* and *CSPV*, other aspects of the work must be considered in order to develop a complete narrative interpretation. In the case of *The Hebrides*, the use of mode proves to be a significant issue that invites expressive interpretation. Although, the B-minor P is ultimately victorious, the true expressive meaning of this victory has yet to be established, for one main reason: no direct literary program is associated with the overture. Because of this—because of the lack of specific programmatic associations for the overture's themes, motifs, and other musical elements—the minor-mode "victory" in the recapitulation is ambiguous with respect to its programmatic meaning. This leaves open the question: Should we understand the victory of B-minor as expressively positive, or expressively negative? The question touches on the meanings of major and minor within the common-practice sonata tradition. Many, including Robert Hatten and Hepokoski and Darcy, have pointed out that, within the common-practice tradition, "on the most general level we refer to major and minor as binary signs of the positive and the negative"; and, furthermore, "We remain content to regard these affective properties as the product of social custom, as cultural matters or tacit agreements within interpretive communities, agreements that were reinforced over many years."[88] Thus one might be inclined to interpret a negative narrative expressive outcome in this overture. However, I would suggest that the final measures of the overture do not imply any overarching sense of negativity; rather, Mendelssohn has defied modal conventions in favor of a distinctly personal treatment of the minor mode.

This unconventional treatment of mode appears to be characteristic of Mendelssohn's music. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the E-major *AMND* overture contains a great deal of E-

[88] Hepokoski and Darcy, 307–308. See also Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

minor material: the opening, four-chord introduction loosely establishes an E-major tonality; the woodwinds sustain a long fermata on E-major in m. 5, but the string echo that follows it is altered to E-minor; the strings then scurry through a passage in E minor that has a playful quality (which I interpreted earlier as not at all negative), which refers to Puck and his dancing nymphs. The effect is magical.

It appears as if Mendelssohn's use of the minor mode in both *AMND* and *The Hebrides* is similar; the minor mode in *The Hebrides* assumes similarly non-negative characteristics. I find that the B-minor tonality is best regarded as representing a powerful, mystical character, one who is not necessarily negative. That is to say, in all of my experience with *The Hebrides*, in analyses, rehearsals, performances, continuous study, and repeated listenings, I have never found the work to be overtly negative. The overture's opening, with its ambiguous and awe-inspiring harmonies, instead invites a mystical interpretation of B minor, very similar to the somewhat mystical quality of the E minor at the opening of *AMND*. It is not until the P theme begins to be embellished in response to the threat from an intruding D major (beginning in m. 13) that any aggressive or more negatively inflected quality of the B minor can be heard. And even this aggression, while resolute, is understated: in fact it is not until D major pronounces its opposition to B minor in m. 77 that the P theme loses its mystical character and begins to take on a self-defensive quality, as if on instinct, like a wild animal that is not necessarily aggressive but will become so if provoked.

Similarly, the overture's closing bars, where D major surrenders to B minor, are not particularly negative either. Here it is as if the P theme is finally able to return to the serene, mystical state with which it was imbued in the piece's opening measures (see example 4.9). The flute and clarinet, in contrary motion at m. 266, seem to float apart, without any clear

sign of consternation. In fact, even the mode-defining third of the B-minor triad (the D) is omitted in the final pizzicatos; of course the modality is not in question, but the lack of emphasis on the third of the chord and the docile woodwind closing gestures support the notion that the P material is not intrinsically hostile, but rather peaceful. Ultimately these closing measures seem to invite listeners to feel a sense of calm, in many ways a return to the subdued serenity and awe of the piece's mystical opening.

Much of this is consistent with what we know about Mendelssohn's inspiration for the work, which was based in nature—in particular the Hebrides islands, Dunnollie Castle, and perhaps Fingal's Cave itself. As Todd has written, "Reading the overture as a musical landscape painting gained currency early on and remains attractive. The juxtaposition of Felix's 1829 drawing of Dunollie Castle and musical sketch of the opening … reveal the composer as a musical draughtsman translating Hebridean scenery into sonorous images."[89] Thus the overture could be heard as a tone painting intended to evoke pictorial imagery, as if rendering the very image of Dunnollie Castel—or a sketch of the ocean, seagulls, trees, and the islands of Mull and Morven—as a synesthetic experience.

Thus while it is an impossible task to determine a single programmatic inspiration for the piece, it is still possible to draw reasonable conclusions about what Mendelssohn may have "meant" when he composed the piece. Such conclusions are based on Mendelssohn's obvious pleasure and enthrallment with the Hebrides' natural beauty, combined with a nuanced interpretation of the abstract musical narrative, which itself plays out, as discussed above, mainly in the tonal and thematic conflict between the B-minor P and the D-major S. Perhaps P might correlate with nature or, more specifically, the sea. In contrast, S would correlate with humankind, perhaps represented specifically by a sailor, as in *CSPV*. In such a

[89] Todd, *A Life in Music*, 261.

context, the S^c space, so crucial to the piece's meaning, might represent the presence of humankind in nature; nature itself—the Hebrides and Mendelssohn's experience of them—remains beautiful but also powerful and dangerous. Such a struggle can be seen clearly within the space of the overture's exposition: the S^c space may connote a storm, building through a crescendo (m. 70) to its climax (mm. 77–89), the waves crashing against the ship as the sailor battles the wind. Humankind then establishes its victory with the martial $C^{1.1}$ fanfare, which bleeds into the development, in which the sailor slowly succumbs to the ocean's returning power. In the recapitulation, on the other hand, the interpolations in the S^c space seem to redirect the narrative toward the B-minor force; it follows that the tonic-major S module's relief might be understood as foreboding (mm. 202ff)—like the calm before the storm in *CSPV*—and that a divine, seemingly supernatural force has given a sublime, unfathomable strength to the sea. Such interpretations ultimately lead to a master narrative in which the piece connotes a natural force overcoming humankind's intrusion. The outcome is one in which humankind survives, if only barely sustaining its breath before the sea decides that its victory is certain and relents.

5. *The Fair Melusine,* Op. 32

A Mésalliance and Structural Modal-Mixture

Mendelssohn's *Overture to the Tale of the Beautiful Melusine*, or simply *The Fair Melusine,* op. 32, was inspired by Conradin Kreutzer's operatic setting of the Melusine legend. Mendelssohn wrote to his sister Fanny, "The overture (I mean Kreuzer's) was encored, and I disliked it exceedingly, and the whole opera quite as much … this inspired me with the wish to write an overture which the people might not *encore*, but the value of which would be more intrinsic."[90] When Fanny asked which Melusine story she should use for comparison with his overture Mendelssohn retorted:

> I must fly into a passion. Oh! Fanny, you ask me *what* legend you are to read? How many are there, pray? and how many do I know? and don't you know the

[90] Mendelssohn to Fanny Hensel, Dusseldorf, April 7, 1834, in Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, eds., *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*, 32–33.

> story of the "lovely Melusina?" and would it not be better for me to hide myself, and to creep into all sorts of instrumental music without any title, when my own sister (my wolf sister!) does not appreciate such a title? Or did you really never hear of this beautiful fish?[91]

The point of this letter, although it gets somewhat obscured by Felix's familial banter, was that the musical narrative of the overture was not a direct setting of any single version of the Melusine story; rather, his setting tells the story in general terms, in a way that parallels the basic features of most, if not all, of the Melusine legends of the time. Robert Schumann underscored this point: "In order to understand the overture it is not necessary to read the long-spun-out, though very imaginative tale by Tieck."[92] Schumann suggests that one only need know the major events and characters of the story's basic plot.

That plot involves a mermaid, Melusine, who is turned into a human by a magic spell. In order to maintain her human form she must periodically return to her aquatic state, but she must keep her mermaid appearance secret. When her husband Raimund, a heroic knight, breaks his promise to give her privacy and walks in to view her as a mermaid, the spell is broken and Melusine is forced to return to the sea. In Franz Grillparzer's tragic libretto, which was the basis for Kreutzer's opera, the story ends with the death of both Raimund and Melusine.

According to Schumann, when asked what the overture was about, Mendelssohn replied, "Hm, a *mésalliance*."[93] *Mésalliance* derives from the French for "misalliance," meaning "a marriage with a person of inferior social position." An analysis of the overture's

---

[91] Mendelssohn to Fanny Hensel, Dusseldorf, April 7, 1834, in Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, eds., *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*, 32–33.

[92] Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, ed. Konrad Wolff, trans. Paul Rosenfeld (New York: Norton, 1946), 202

[93] Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, 202.

structure suggests that *mésalliance* comprises the central expressive idea in Mendelssohn's musical rendering of the tale. He conveys this idea through a misalliance of a major- and a minor-mode sonata. That is, Mendelssohn created a sonata-form movement which draws on elements of both major- and minor-mode sonata types, overlaying aspects of both types in much the same way that a composer might borrow harmonies from parallel modalities. Thus the piece can be understood to comprise modal mixture on a structural level. In employing such a strategy, Mendelssohn juxtaposed, or married, aspects of major- and minor-mode sonatas that are ordinarily not thought of as belonging together in the same movement—thus the *mésalliance*. To convey the tragic outcome that logically follows from such a marriage, Mendelssohn again uses his preferred strategy of employing deformations within the sonata's S space. The most prominent of these in this case is the failure of the sonata to achieve the ESC in the recapitulation, thus capturing the sense of an unsuccessful, tragic ending using a sonata-structural strategy.

Formal Overview

As an overview of the piece's formal organization, consider the following: the overture begins with an F-major theme at m. 1 with woodwinds dominating the texture; F-minor material follows in m. 49 with thicker orchestration; at m. 108 new material in A-flat major is presented by the strings almost exclusively; and tutti material, similar to the m. 49 F-minor material but now in A-flat major, enters at m. 144 and closes the exposition with a PAC in m. 156 in A-flat major. The opening F-major theme likely represents Melusine herself (see example 5.1). Topically speaking, the theme refers to water, especially in the clarinet material in mm. 1–2, material which is also used as an accompanimental figure in the strings whenever this theme is presented elsewhere in the piece. The F-minor theme from m.

49 likely represents Raimund: this theme is highly contrasting with the preceding Melusine theme, it is in the parallel minor mode, it employs thicker orchestration, it is significantly louder, and it is rhythmically aggressive (see example 5.2). The latter especially gives the impression of a faster tempo, even though the tempo remains constant. After their separate presentation in the form of these F-major and F-minor themes, Melusine and Raimund then come together in example 5.3 in the lyrical, angst-ridden A-flat-major theme (m. 108) that likely represents their love. I will call this the "forbidden-love" theme, as shown in figure 5.1.

The recapitulation begins in F-major (m. 264), again with the Melusine theme; the A-flat-major forbidden-love theme appears in D-flat major in m. 290 and modulates to F minor in m. 306; as in the exposition, tutti material based on the F-minor theme follows in m. 319, although this time the material is expanded and concludes in m. 360 without a cadence. The coda (beginning at m. 361) uses the Melusine theme almost exclusively, again in F major; a PAC in m. 387 secures the key of F major and is repeated; and the entire piece concludes with string pizzicatos and winds sustaining an F-major triad (mm. 405–406).

Exposition: Major- and Minor-Mode Juxtaposition

The central interpretive challenge in *Melusine* is to determine how the structural organization surveyed above maps onto a normative sonata form and what implications this mapping might have for an interpretation of how he rendered the Melusine tale in music. My narrative reading of the piece—the *mésalliance*—focuses on three deformational aspects of its structure: the modal mixture on a structural level; the rotational format in the recapitulation, in which some of the rotational modules are either omitted or repurposed; and

the non-resolving or "failed" recapitulation, in which the S theme fails to achieve the normative ESC.

In the broadest sense the overture can be regarded as a major-mode sonata, because it begins and ends in F major. However, a major-mode-sonata interpretation suggests a highly problematic S space in the exposition. Recall that the F-major theme is followed by the parallel-minor Raimund theme (m. 49) and then by an A-flat-major theme (m. 108). But neither F-minor nor A-flat-major serve as an "acceptable" secondary key (key of S) in an F-major sonata-form exposition. Hepokoski and Darcy suggest a possible interpretive solution for this quandary, interpreting the F-major Melusine theme (m. 1) as an introduction and not the P theme.[94] In such a reading the exposition's thematic and tonal construction makes better sense: the F-major Melusine introduction submits, at the start of the exposition proper (m. 49), to the F-minor Raimund theme, which functions as P. The A-flat-major theme then functions as S, where the key is now a fully normative choice in what has been interpreted as a minor-mode sonata exposition. Supporting such an interpretation is the illusion of a faster tempo at the Raimund theme, which itself makes the Melusine theme sound like a slow introduction.

But it is important to understand that a decision to interpret the overture as a minor-mode sonata form will occur retroactively, after the onset of the "true" P theme in F minor (m. 49). One could, listening chronologically and in real time, conceivably interpret the opening Melusine theme as P and therefore assume that the piece is a major-mode sonata movement. When the F-minor theme begins in m. 49, one reevaluates this assumption and reassigns the themes' functions within the sonata rotation. This leads to a reinterpretation of the overture's mode. Thus Mendelssohn begins signifying the *mésalliance* on which he

[94] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 305.

claimed that the entire piece was based right from the first fifty bars, in the piece's problematic modal structure.

Exposition: S^c Space

Although the exposition closes with a PAC in A-flat-major (m. 156)—one of the expected EEC options for an F-minor sonata exposition—the means by which the cadence is achieved is deformational and contributes to a less-than-positive narrative outcome. At first, the S appears to be "on course;" the first phrase in the S theme (m. 108ff) concludes with an A-flat-major cadence in m. 123. However, the second phrase in the S theme (at m. 124ff), although it melodically parallels the first S phrase, proves unable to achieve a cadence and thus fails to secure the expected EEC. In m. 132 the phrase spins out (in an example of *fortspinnung* rhetoric), elaborating on the material in an attempt to achieve the PAC; but P-based material gradually arrogates the texture (m. 138ff) until, in m. 144, no sign of the original A-flat-major theme remains. In other words, the forbidden-love theme breaks down, unable to secure the necessary EEC, and the combative Raimund theme (now in A-flat-major) steps in at m. 144 (at the tutti) to take on the S-theme burden (see example 5.4).

As a result, the module seems to suggest the presence of an S^c-space deformation (mm. 144–156): the tutti P-based material in fact functions as quintessential closing-zone rhetoric, which emphatically steps in to take on the S-theme burden and achieve the expected III:PAC EEC in m. 156. Narratively, this might symbolize a positive outcome that is artificially produced, as if the outcome is forced, rather than organically achieved, by the early-onset C theme. Thus the structure suggests that the love between Melusine and Raimund is not strong enough to bring about a positive narrative outcome; their love will not overcome the *mésalliance.* Thus ultimately, although we achieve the necessary III:PAC EEC,

the S^c space may represent the harbinger of a *mésalliance* failure that is even more fully realized later, in the recapitulation.

Recapitulation: Structural Modal Mixture and ESC Failure

While the minor-mode-sonata interpretation causes some aspects of the exposition to make better sense, it also renders the tonal structure of the recapitulation more confounding. The central problem is that the F-minor P theme from the exposition—the Raimund theme—is omitted from the recapitulation's P-space.[95] In its place the introductory Melusine theme in F major is forced to take on the burden of P in the recapitulation, thus suggesting a rhetorical "restart" (a backing up and starting over from the beginning, as it were) and another attempt at a major-mode-sonata structure with a positive narrative outcome. This F-major P theme is then followed by an S theme in the major mode—not the normative tonic major but rather a highly deformational flat submediant, D-flat major. The choice of D-flat major as the key of S in the recapitulation can be interpreted as another form of sonata "failure," this time a failure of the recapitulation to present the entire rotational format in the tonic key—one of its expected tasks. The choice of the flat submediant, furthermore, is expressively charged: Susan McClary suggests that the submediant stands for "Never Never Land in the economy of nineteenth-century musical imagery …. The submediant often substitutes for the too-conventional, too-rational dominant as the second key area. As a major-key area within a minor-key hierarchy, it variously radiates hope, escape, or nostalgia for a lost arcadia."[96] Such expressive correlations are well suited for the situation at hand, in which the forbidden-love S theme is presented in a key that stands for that which is unattainable—an Arcadian

[95] Recall here the omission of the P^2 module in the recapitulation of *AMND*.

[96] Susan McClary, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 123.

dream. Moreover, as one might expect in such circumstances, the D-flat-major S proves unable to achieve the requisite ESC and, at the onset of the S theme repetition, submits to the tonic minor in m. 306 as example 5.5 shows.

It seems, then, that in the recapitulation the tonic minor interrupts the S space and upsets the possibility of the positive, major-mode outcome that appears to have been proposed in the recapitulation's first half. Thus we return to a minor-mode-sonata to conclude the sonata-space proper, where the return to the minor mode suggests a negative narrative outcome—the failure of the *mésalliance*. Thus from the very beginning, the overture conveys a program of *mésalliance*: it begins as if in the major mode, shifts course along the way (in the exposition) to the minor mode, recaptures the major mode in the recapitulation, and finally thwarts the major mode in the recapitulatory S, ending in the tonic minor.

Mendelssohn even takes the failed *mésalliance* narrative one step further by omitting the requisite ESC altogether. The specific manner in which the ESC fails even suggests a greater narrative urgency as the protagonists—Raimund in particular—strive, but fail, to solidify the F-minor tonal goal. Here again the role of the S^c space is crucial to the meaning. In a fashion similar to what happened in the exposition at m. 144, P-based closing-zone material initiates an S^c space in the recapitulation at m. 319. This S^c space, despite extensive elaboration, ultimately proves unable to produce the ESC and instead resigns with emphatic *sforzando* sighing gestures in the final measures before the coda (mm. 356–360). These are clearly the doomed lovers' final angst-ridden cries as shown in example 5.6. This is an example of what Hepokoski and Darcy refer to as a "failed" recapitulation:

> Since the main generic requirement of a recapitulation is to secure the ESC with a satisfactory I:PAC at the end of S, any recapitulation that falls short of this obligation, leaving the rhetorical recapitulation tonally or cadentially open, is problematic. Such a "failed" recapitulation is a strong expressive gesture—a deformation—and the expected cadence, and tonal closure for the piece, is deferred beyond sonata-space into a coda …. The hermeneutic burden of the analyst is to explore the inner logic of this inadequacy. Merely to claim that all turns out well because a resolution is eventually secured in the coda is to miss the point. It is more compelling to suggest that the closure in the coda only reflects on what did not happen in the preceding sonata.[97]

Mendelssohn does present PACs well into the coda space—cadences that function as an "after-the-fact corrective," as Hepokoski and Darcy would suggest.[98] The F-major Melusine theme also returns in the coda, once again confusing the modal structure of the work. This reversion to the major mode does not, however, suggest a positive reversal of a negative narrative outcome: rather, a failed recapitulation implies a failure of the narrative goal, in this case representing the failure of Melusine and Raimund's marriage. Perhaps the return of the F-major Melusine theme in the coda signifies that she is once again alone and free to travel the sea; the conflict is over and their *mésalliance* has ended.

Other structural anomalies within this piece underscore the "failed" narrative outcome. A brief S-theme-based motivic interjection within the coda (mm. 364–366) suggests one final attempt at tonal closure and narrative resolution—but this is too little, too late; a four-bar interpolated D-flat-major passage (mm. 260–263) in the final measures of the

[97] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 245–246.
[98] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 246.

development recalls, perhaps, the moment in which Raimund discovers Melusine's secret, breaking the spell and leading to the subsequent tragic trajectory; and the equivocation among formal functions (introduction, P, or S?) among the modules in the exposition and recapitulation is bolstered, in part, by the absence of a normative MC in either rotation. In the end, the superimposed major- and minor-mode sonata structures, the S^c-space deformations, and the failed recapitulation express the *mésalliance* fundamental to the Melusine story; in the end Mendelssohn's overture is an adventurous work that conveys a complex musical narrative through the language of music.

6. Closing Zone

Opp. 95 and 101

Mendelssohn's overtures are masterpieces of programmaticism, formal structure, and musical narrative. He manipulated the sonata form of each overture he composed to meet his expressive needs, employing deformations that conveyed narrative meaning. One consistent strategy appears throughout these pieces: S-space deformations. This study has found that the technique is central to Mendelssohn's musical-narrative expression. My analyses have also found other trends within these works: minor-mode and major-mode juxtapositions (in *AMND, Hebrides,* and *Melusine*); interpolations of new thematic material or omissions of existing thematic material (in all four overtures); and, not least of all, the use of the introduction-coda frame (in *AMND* and *Melusine*). Each of these techniques contributes to an interpretation of narrative and expressive meaning in these overtures. But S-space deformations remain at the forefront of Mendelssohn's strategies, so much so that his

proclivity within these overtures for such deformations warrants examination of his treatment of the S themes within others of his sonata-form movements.

As a point of departure, I suggest that we use Mendelssohn's posthumously published concert overtures, opp. 101 and 95. The composition of the first of these, the Trumpet Overture op. 101, preceded the other overtures discussed in this document. Composed in 1826, Eduard Devrient suggests that "Felix did not look upon it as fit for publication."[99] Thus the work, although performed frequently during Mendelssohn's early career, is not widely known. Regardless, in examining this overture there is evidence that the young composer might have been using the work as a testing ground, employing various deformational strategies that were later elaborated upon in his published overtures. The second, the *Ruy Blas* Overture op. 95, was written at the request of the Leipzig Theater's pension fund to accompany a play of the same name by Victor Hugo. It was the last concert overture Mendelssohn composed (1839). There is evidence within this work that Mendelssohn continued to employ his preferred deformational strategies even into the late 1830s.

Trumpet Overture, Op. 101

While *The Hebrides* was inspired by the natural beauty surrounding the Hebrides islands, op. 101 was not inspired by a known program of any type. Devrient claimed that, as a result of the musical content—specifically, the "recurring trumpet-call" in the brass and woodwinds throughout—the work was given an after-the-fact title, the Trumpet Overture.[100] It was originally given the abstract titled Overture in C major. Therefore, developing a

[99] Eduard Devrient, *My Recollections of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and His Letters to Me*, trans. Natalia MacFarren (London: Bentley, 1869), 22.

[100] Devrient, *My Recollections*, 22.

narrative reading of this work—a task that will be left for another analyst—requires an interpretation based on musical evidence alone.

It appears that the deformations within the Trumpet Overture's structure are precursors to those found in opp. 21, 26, 27, and 32, all of which were composed in the years that followed. Like *AMND* and *Melusine*, Mendelssohn utilized the introduction-coda frame in op. 101. In a similar manner as *Melusine,* furthermore, the introduction is not in a slow tempo, but, rather, resembles what is known in Sonata Theory as a P^0 theme—a theme that is within the P space but precedes the actual P theme proper.[101] Unlike *AMND,* however, in which this same introduction material appears at the beginning of the recapitulation, in the Trumpet Overture this module only returns following the ESC (m. 396). Thus it seems to serve the structural function of an introduction-coda frame as Hepokoski and Darcy describe it, where the frame surrounds the sonata proper and separates the inner workings of the sonata narrative from what we can perceive as an outside, higher level of "reality."

Similar to *CSPV*, in the Trumpet Overture Mendelssohn presents a deformational MC effect in m. 67, where the apparent MC occurs over a first-inversion dominant and initiates a trimodular-block structure beginning in m. 71. In this instance the initial TM^1 module is clearly in G major, but ends with a half cadence in m. 87; this half cadence seems to function as the exposition's normative MC, and it appears to initiate the piece's definitive S theme—a lyrical, dolce, and *piano* theme that begins at m. 88. This theme then achieves an understated EEC in m. 110, and the EEC initiates a P-based C. As we have seen, the P-based C is a common choice in Mendelssohn's later overtures. The understated EEC in this piece is similar, furthermore, to the understated cadence in the exposition of *AMND* (see m. 222 in *AMND*).

[101] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 86.

Once again paralleling *CSPV,* in the Trumpet Overture's recapitulation the trimodular-block formation does not appear. Where there was an MC effect in the exposition, in the recapitulation forward musical motion in C major pushes through directly to the TM^1 theme (beginning in m. 315), which this time functions as the recapitulation's TR module. While the layout is similar to *CSPV* in its broadest outlines, the details are somewhat different: in *CSPV,* the TM^1 module functioned not as the TR in the recapitulation but rather as the S theme, and it successfully achieved the requisite ESC (m. 457 in *CSPV*).

In the Trumpet Overture, the recapitulation's MC occurs in m. 327. The S theme (TM^3 from the exposition) emerges in m. 328; but this time, in the location at which one expects to find the ESC (analogous to m. 110 in the exposition), material from the development intrudes and interrupts the recapitulatory S space. The interruption recalls *The Hebrides,* which contained its own interpolations within the S space of its recapitulation. There, however, the interpolated material was newly composed, whereas in op. 101, the material is drawn from the development. (A similar S-space interpolation that uses musical material drawn from the existing sonata space appears in the *Ruy Blas* Overture, as I will discuss presently.) When this interpolated material appeared in the development of op. 101 (m. 248ff), it utilized the fanfare from the introduction as well as persistent pedal points to initiate a dominant lock in m. 278, which, in turn, led dramatically into the recapitulation. When the same material appears again to interrupt the recapitulation, the fanfare rhetoric remains the same, but the harmony changes. This time, by way of mediant motion in mm. 370–373 Mendelssohn emphasizes the key of the submediant, A major, for several bars. The presence of the submediant suggests a parallel with the *Melusine* overture, in which Mendelssohn used the key to present a musical image of an Arcadian dream—a dream of

something that was otherwise impossible in the narrative proper.[102] Ultimately, the Trumpet Overture's interpolation leads to a repetition of the S theme (see m. 380), during which dominant harmony leads dramatically to the ESC in m. 396. As mentioned, a coda follows the ESC in m. 396 and concludes the work.

Given these events, one might argue that, knowing that the Overture in C major remained unpublished throughout Mendelssohn's lifetime, it served as a trial composition of sorts; recall Devrient's claim that Mendelssohn considered the work unfit to be published. In any case, it seems reasonable to suggest at least that the techniques employed within this overture were fully realized in the later overtures.

Ruy Blas Overture, Op. 95

When asked by the Leipzig Theater's pension fund in 1839 to compose an overture to Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas*, Mendelssohn initially declined. Assuming that the time allotted was insufficient for him to complete the work, the theater management apologized and asked Mendelssohn to complete the overture for the following year. Perhaps as a point of pride, Mendelssohn immediately began composing the overture and completed it in less than three days. His original aversion to writing the overture was, in fact, due to his disgust with Hugo's play; he thought it was "detestable" and did not wish for the overture to be associated with *Ruy Blas*.[103] As he wrote to his mother in 1839, "Few of my works have caused me more amusing excitement. It is to be repeated, by desire, at the next concert, but I mean to call it,

[102] See discussion in Chapter 5 and Susan McClary, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 123.

[103] Mendelssohn to his mother, Leipzig, March 18, 1839, in Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, eds., *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*, 154.

not the overture to 'Ruy Blas,' but to the Theatrical Pension Fund."[104] Todd (among others) has suggested various parallels between the overture's thematic content and Hugo's play, but, in the end, it seems improbable that Mendelssohn would have been so amused by an overture that was programmatically based on a story he detested. Another possibility, one that is suggested by Mendelssohn's preferred title, is that the overture's program, as Thomas Grey has written, "captured the spirit of Hugo's crass historical cloak-and-dagger melodrama … in a perfectly straight-faced 'parody' of a melodramatic overture in the modern Franco-Italian idiom."[105] In any case, notwithstanding any specific programmatic perspectives, a preliminary examination of the work suggests that analysis of the music alone (in terms of structure, topics, etc.), in purely abstract terms, invites interesting narrative interpretations. Furthermore, the techniques employed in this work resemble those Mendelssohn used in his previously composed overtures.

In all of his overtures, Mendelssohn utilized musical topics to convey a musical narrative. *Ruy Blas* is no exception. As Todd points out, for example, the slow, four-bar hymn topic that begins the overture (mm. 1–4) signifies the high style or, as Todd calls it, an "elevated style."[106] Such a topical association is underscored by the orchestration, in which trombones play a significant role; homophonic trombones were often used to signify the sacred and music of the church. Perhaps we should assume that Mendelssohn employed the high style at the opening of the work in order to suggest the influence of a sacred character on the narrative that follows.

---

[104] Mendelssohn to his mother, Leipzig, March 18, 1839, in Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, eds., *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*, 155.

[105] Thomas Grey, "The Orchestral Music," 488.

[106] Todd, *A Life in Music*, 374.

Similar to *AMND*, *CSPV*, and *Melusine*, in *Ruy Blas* Mendelssohn used multiple themes within the primary and secondary key areas. In the exposition, P^1 begins in C minor in m. 32 and concludes with a PAC in m. 64. At this point a new C-minor theme, P^2, follows and dramatically builds into TR (m. 72) which concludes with an MC in m. 92. The S is in E-flat major (III). S comprises a lyrical, aria-like theme in the cellos, clarinets, and bassoons, with an accompanimental pizzicato figure in the strings (mm. 101ff). An IAC in m. 140 concludes $S^{1.1}$. $S^{1.2}$ follows and suggests a heroic topic, proceeding all the way to an EEC in m. 172. A P^2-based C, still in E-flat major, concludes the exposition.

Although the presence of multiple themes within a key area is not deformational, the way in which Mendelssohn utilizes individual themes within the overall sonata structure often is. That is, Mendelssohn omits or moves around thematic modules within the sonata form in a way that invites a narrative interpretation. An example of such a strategy appears in op. 95's recapitulation. Here there are two deformations that recall Mendelssohn's earlier works. The first appears in the primary key area: the space that follows the opening of the $P^{1.1}$ theme (mm. 246ff) is condensed in typical fashion for a recapitulation, but the P^2 theme is completely omitted from the recapitulatory rotation; recall the omission of the E-major, heroic P^2 in the recapitulation of *AMND* and the similar omission of the F-minor Raimund theme from the recapitulation in *Melusine*. In P^2's absence, P^1 dissolves into a TR and produces an MC in m. 261. The second deformation occurs within the S space, in which the ESC is delayed by musical material that is interpolated into the recapitulatory rotation. That is, where one should expect to find the ESC following $S^{1.2}$ (given the precedent established in the exposition), instead the harmony begins to unravel (in m. 333) and $P^{1.1}$-based material in C minor intrudes into the S space (in m. 340). The strategy resembles the S-space

interruption in the Trumpet Overture, in that the interpolated material is derived from another of the sonata-space modules from outside the S theme (in this case $P^{1.1}$), yet it also parallels *The Hebrides* Overture in the sense that it comprises a minor-mode interpolation intervening within a major-mode S, all within the recapitulation of a minor-mode sonata. Unlike in *The Hebrides,* though, the interpolated material does not overcome the major-mode trajectory of the S; the $S^{1.2}$ theme returns with force in m. 366 and secures the ESC in C major in m. 388. This S-space deformation as it is employed here again invites interpretation: perhaps the C-minor interpolation, for example, represents a negative force which tries in vain to thwart the positive C-major goal by interrupting the S space. In any case, again it is clear that the strategies employed in *Ruy Blas* resemble some of those also seen in the earlier overtures.

* * * * * *

The structural parallels between Mendelssohn's overtures published during and after his lifetime suggest the presence of a wider compositional practice in which he utilized structural, topical, and deformational techniques to convey narrative in music. In particular, his consistent use of S-space deformations in the concert overtures is compelling and warrants further study of Mendelssohn's other sonata-form movements. A logical next step, in addition to exploring further the two posthumously published works, might be to examine the overtures to *St. Paul*, *Elijah*, and *Christus*, or the overtures to Mendelssohn's stage works. From here, the symphonies, especially those which bear programmatic titles, could offer further insight. Furthermore, it is also plausible that a study of Mendelssohn's other work, regardless the genre, that utilizes an interpretive approach similar to the one I have employed here may result in compelling interpretations. An application of Sonata Theory would be indispensable for the sonata-form movements, but other appropriate strategies

could also be used to interpret Mendelssohn's non-sonata works. Furthermore, other narrative approaches, such as those of Byron Almén and Ero Terasti, could also result in a reimagined view of Mendelssohn's musical narratives, perhaps even within the concert overtures discussed in this document.

Ultimately, analyzing music with the intent to identify meaning and narrative has profoundly influenced my ability to extract musical meaning from, and therefore interpret, the works I study and perform. The great composers, like Mendelssohn, were not restricted by convention in a way that stifled their creativity, but rather, they approached their work with an understanding of the normative conventions of the time and then used those conventions in the service of expressive meaning. Interpreting musical narrative allows us to acknowledge these conventions, and, in so doing, allows us to better understand the music and its impact on listeners.

Appendix

Figure 1.1. Sonata structure.

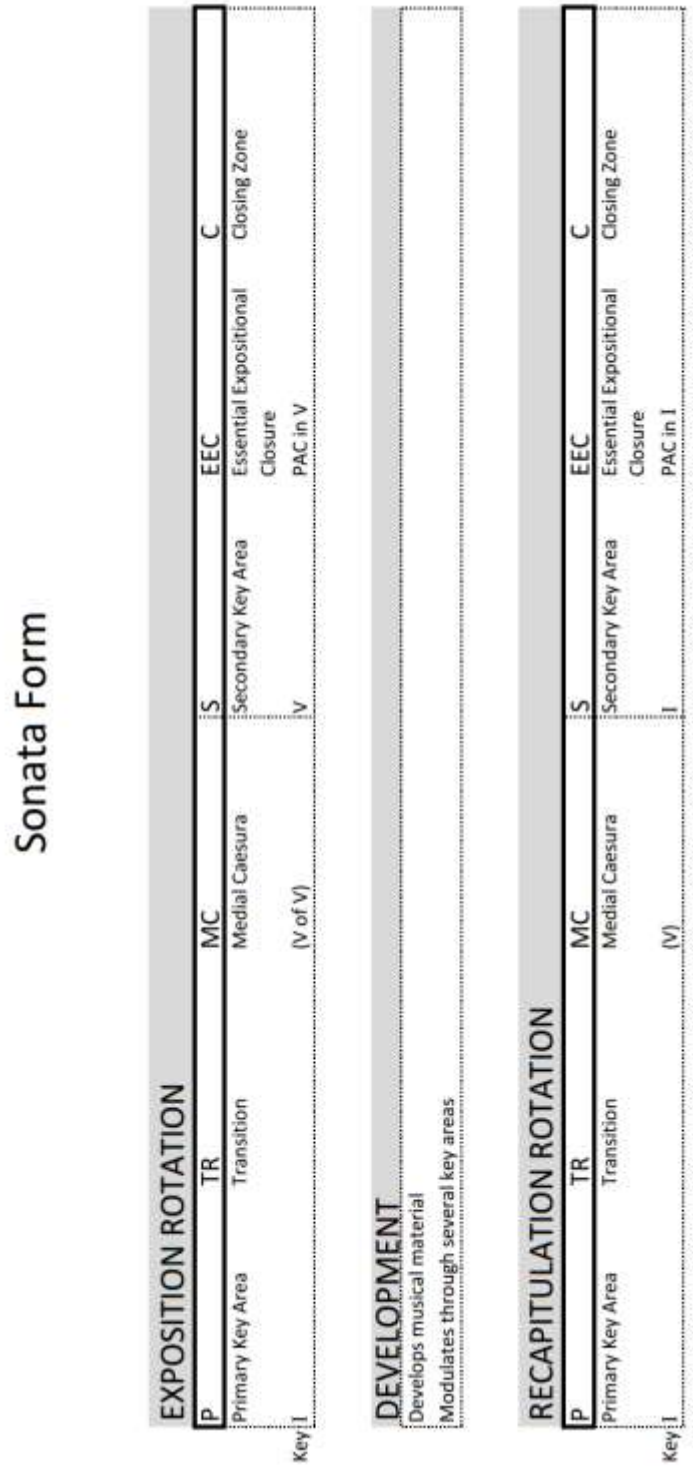
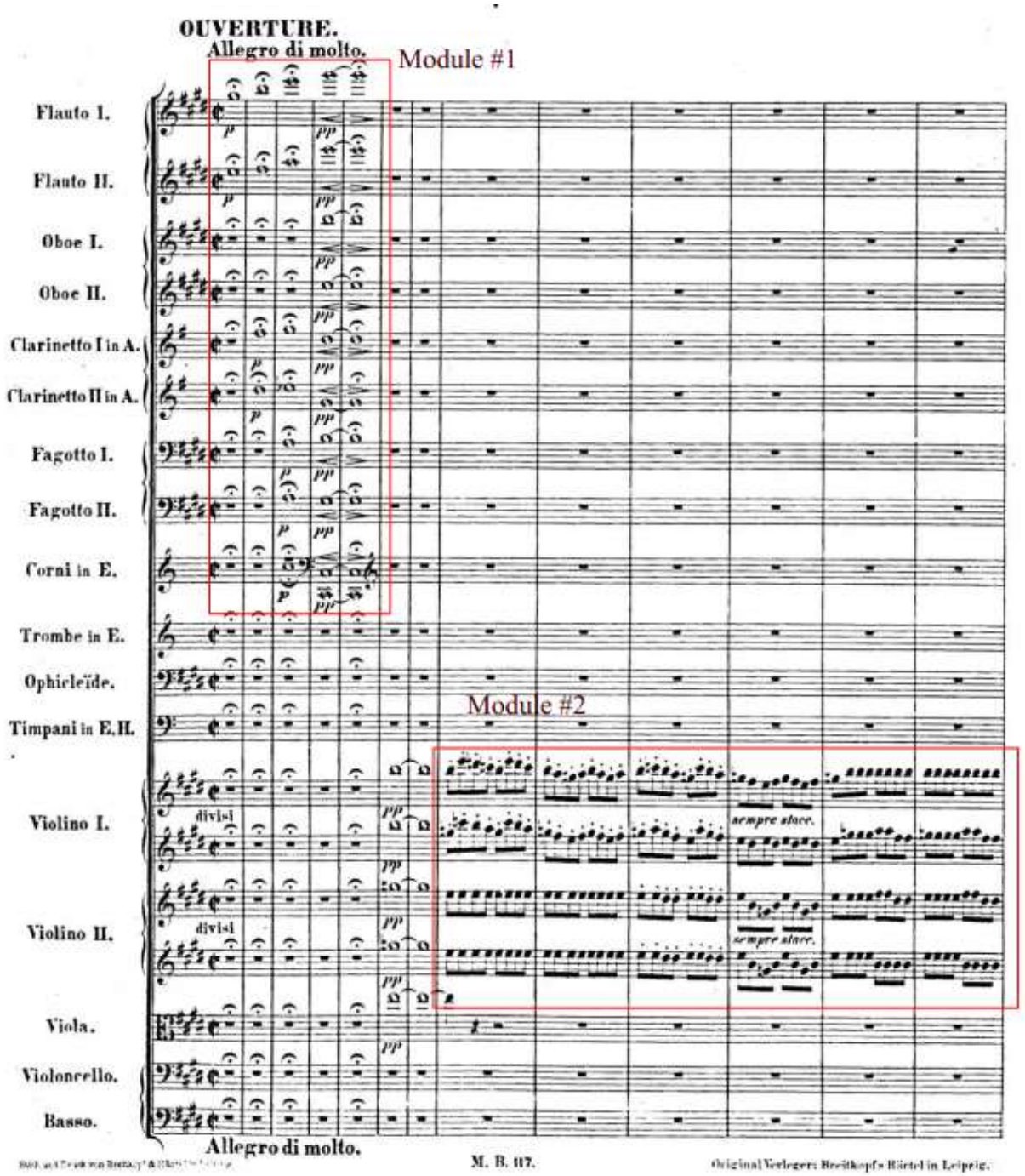


Figure 2.1. ***AMND*** **structure.**

Example 2.1a. ***AMND*** **module #1 and #2.**

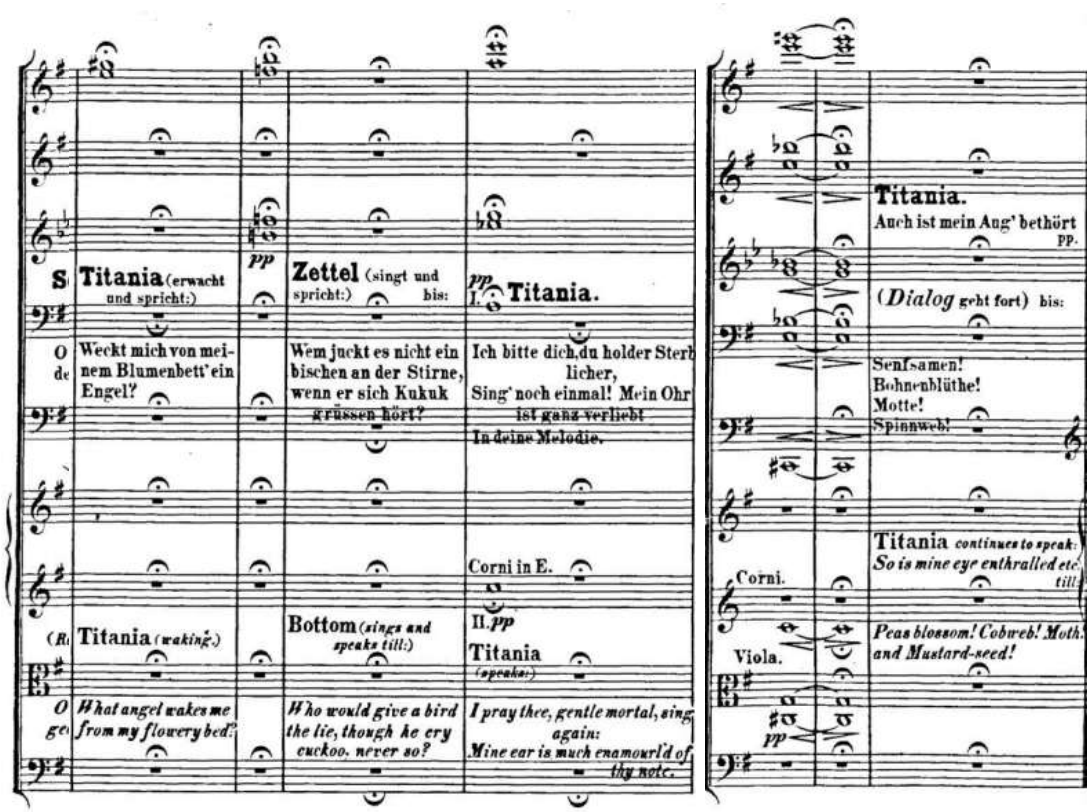


107

E: I V iv I i

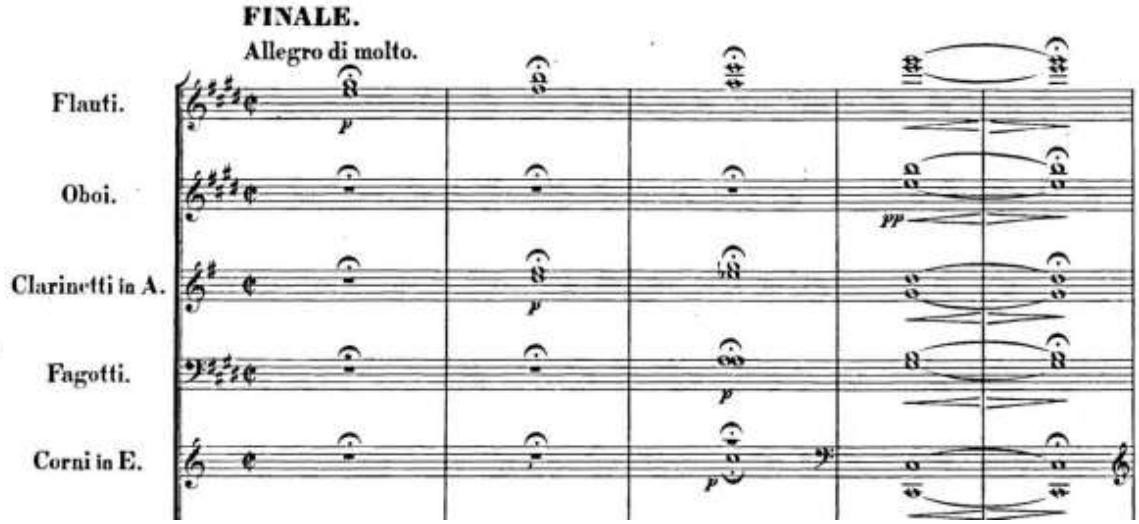
[107] Felix Mendelssohn, *Musik zu Sommernachtstraum von Shakespeare*, op. 61, Series 15 no. 117 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz (Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1877).

Example 2.1b. ***AMND*****, op. 61 no. 6.**



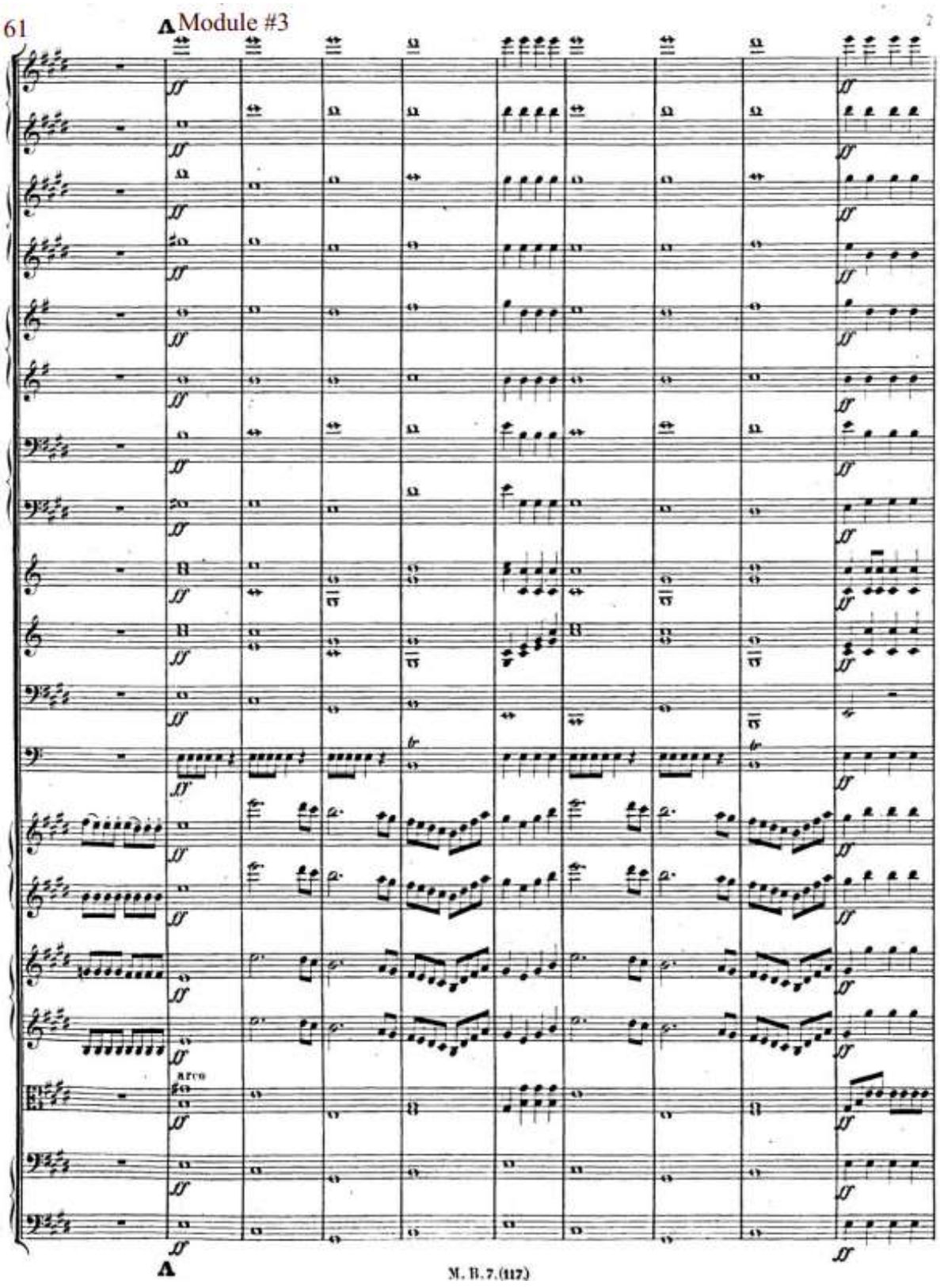
E: I G^7 (V sub.) iv $C\sharp^{o7}$ (I sub.)

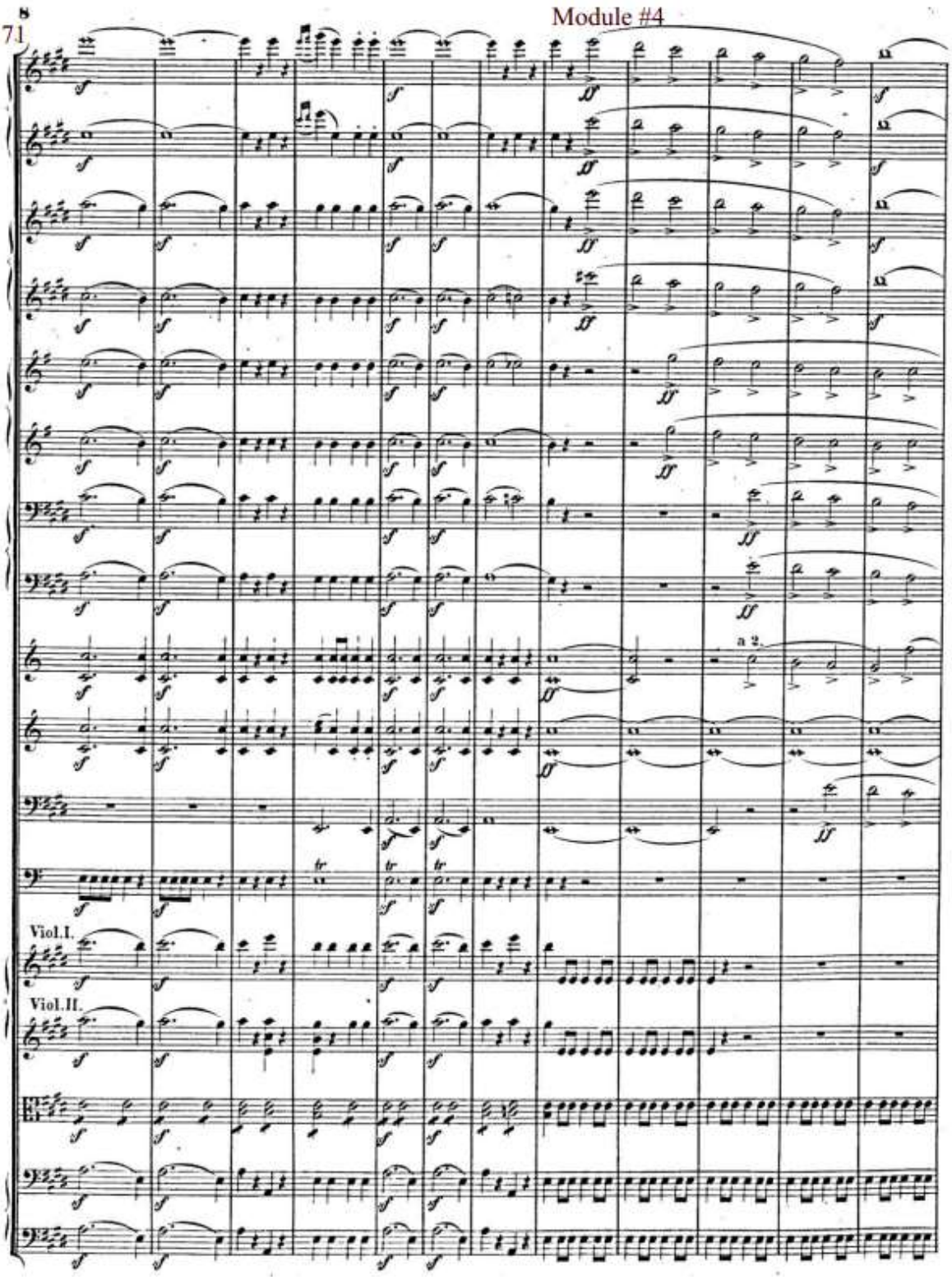
Example 2.1c. ***AMND,*** **op. 61 Finale.**



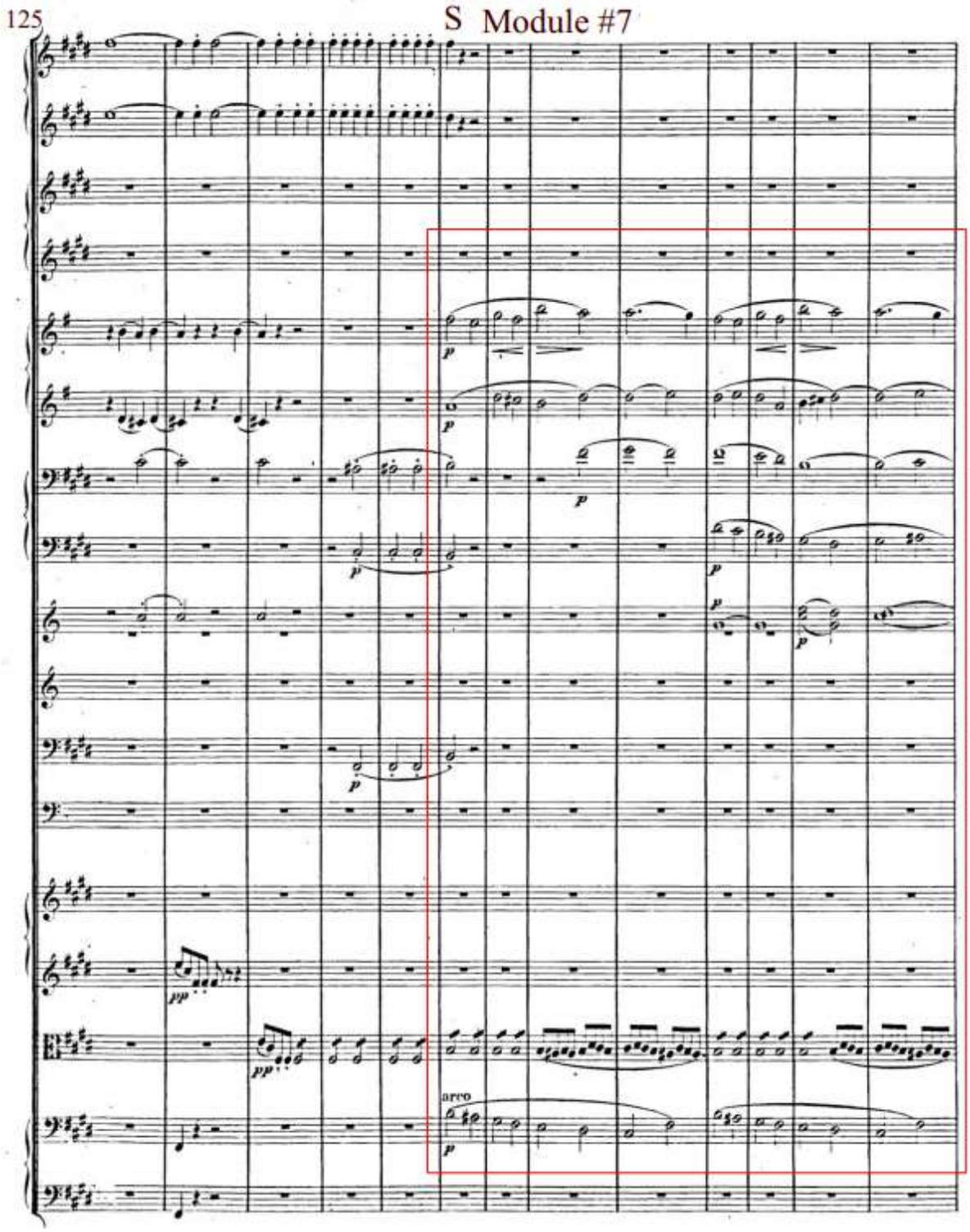
E: I V iv I

Example 2.2. ***AMND*** **module #3 and #4.**

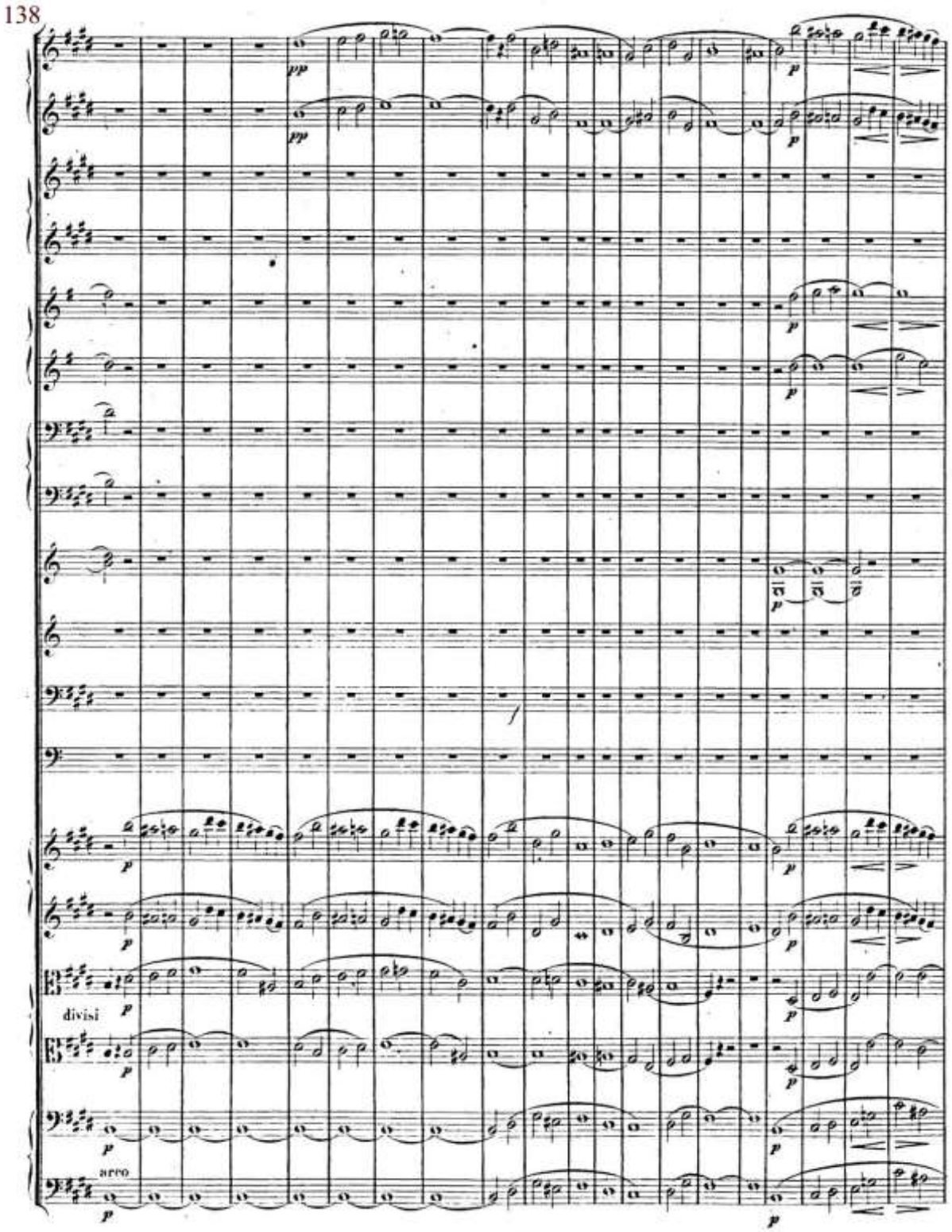



8
71
a 2.
Viol.I.
Viol.II.

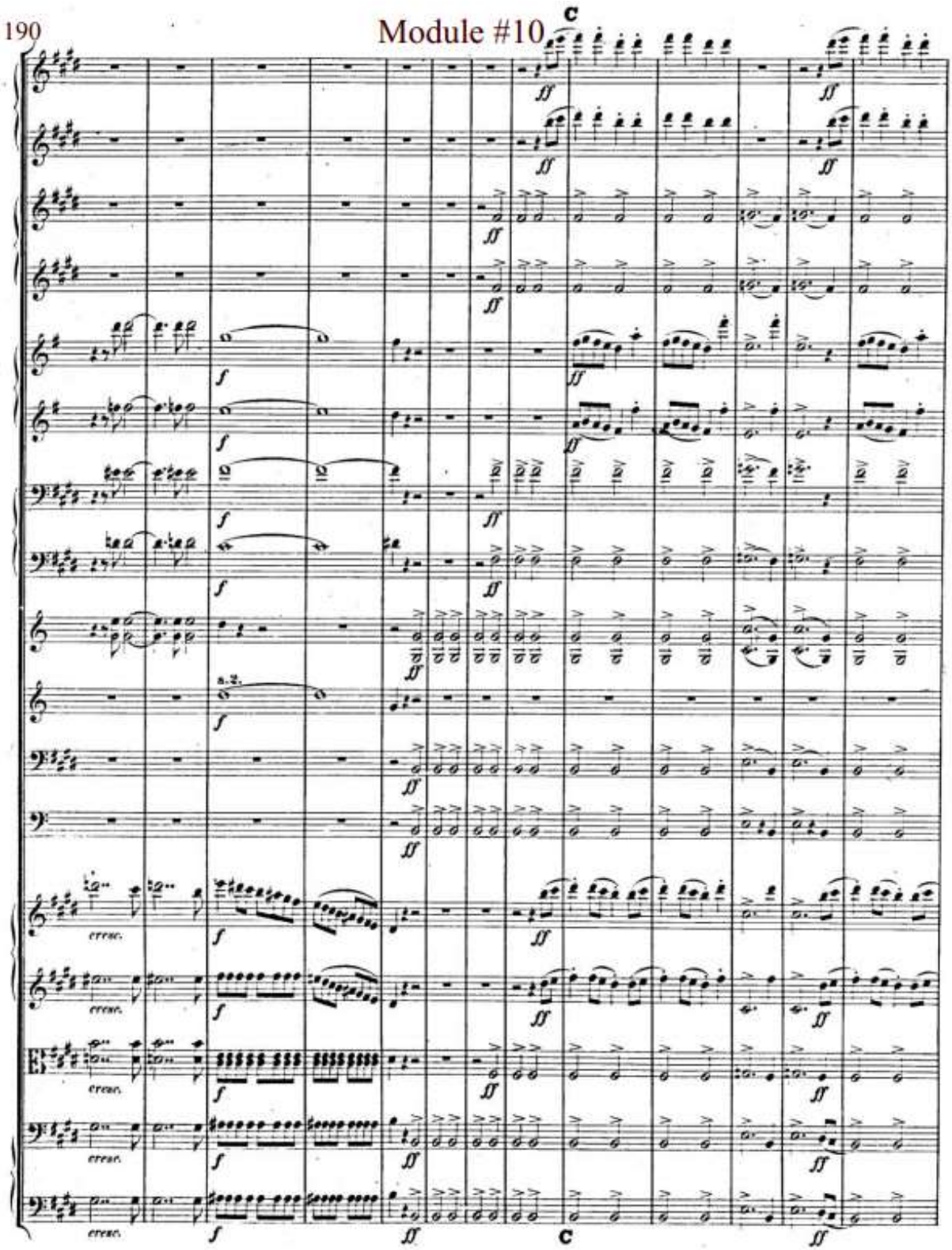
Example 2.3. ***AMND*** **module #7.**

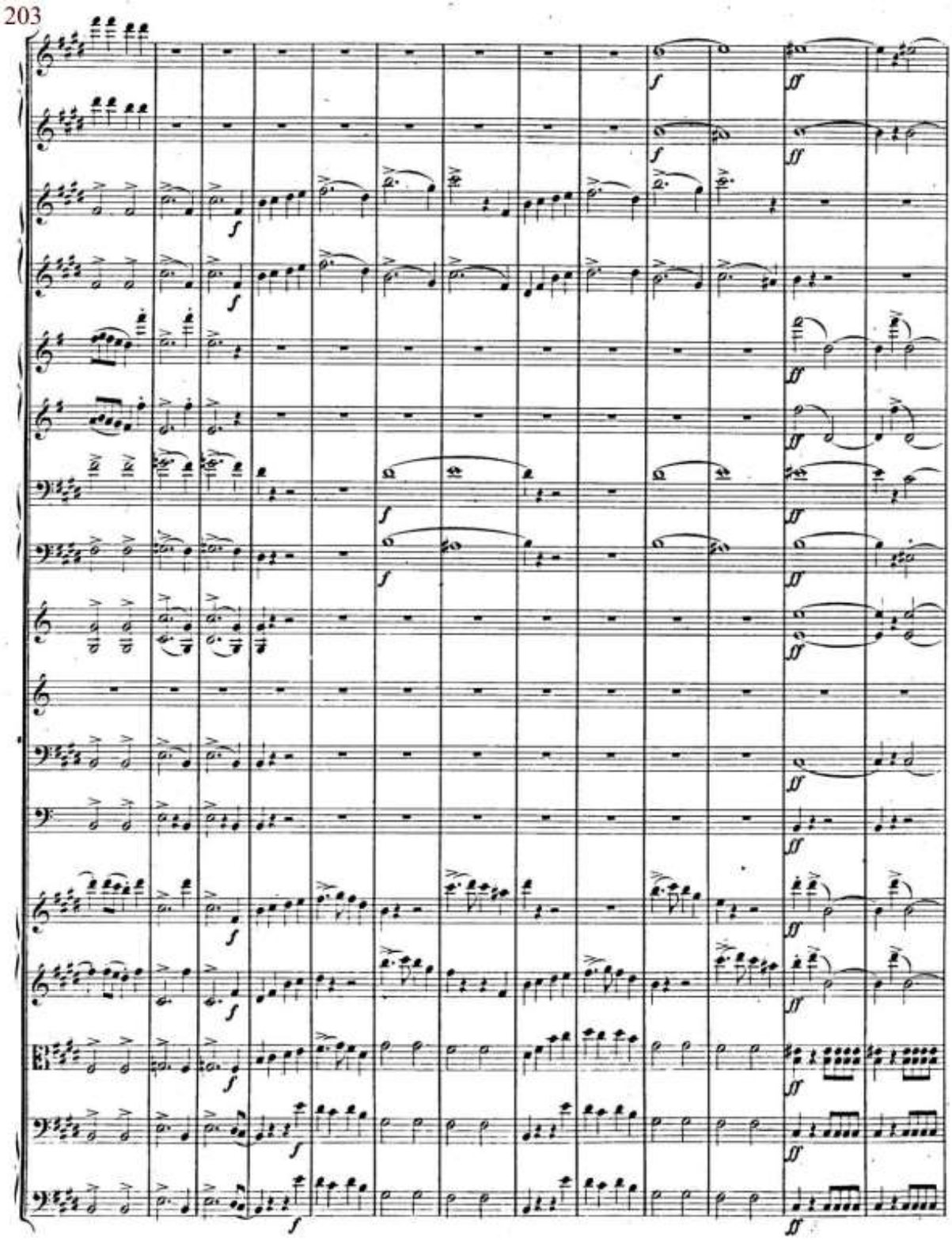


Example 2.4. ***AMND*** **module #8.**



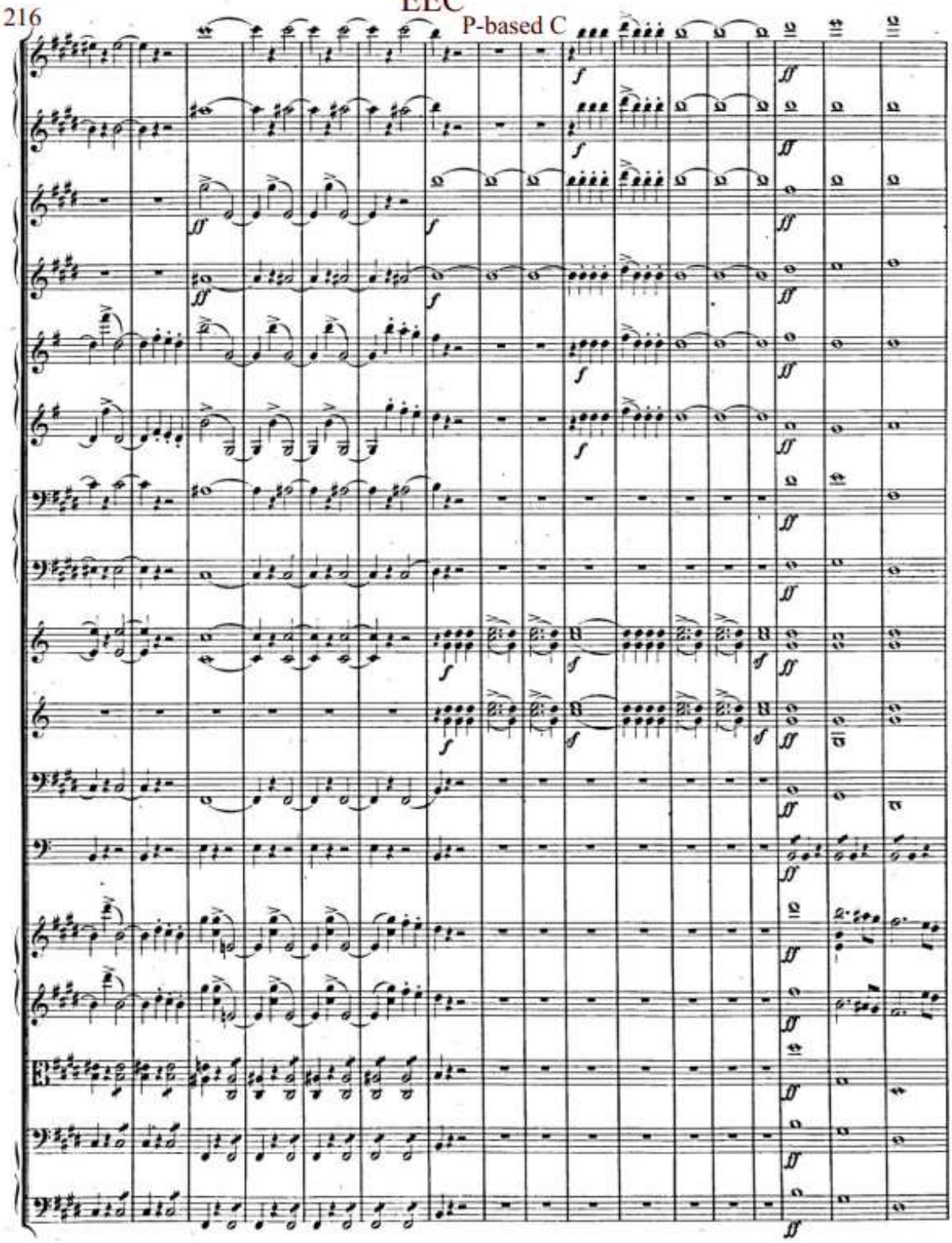
Example 2.5. ***AMND*** **module #10 and EEC.**



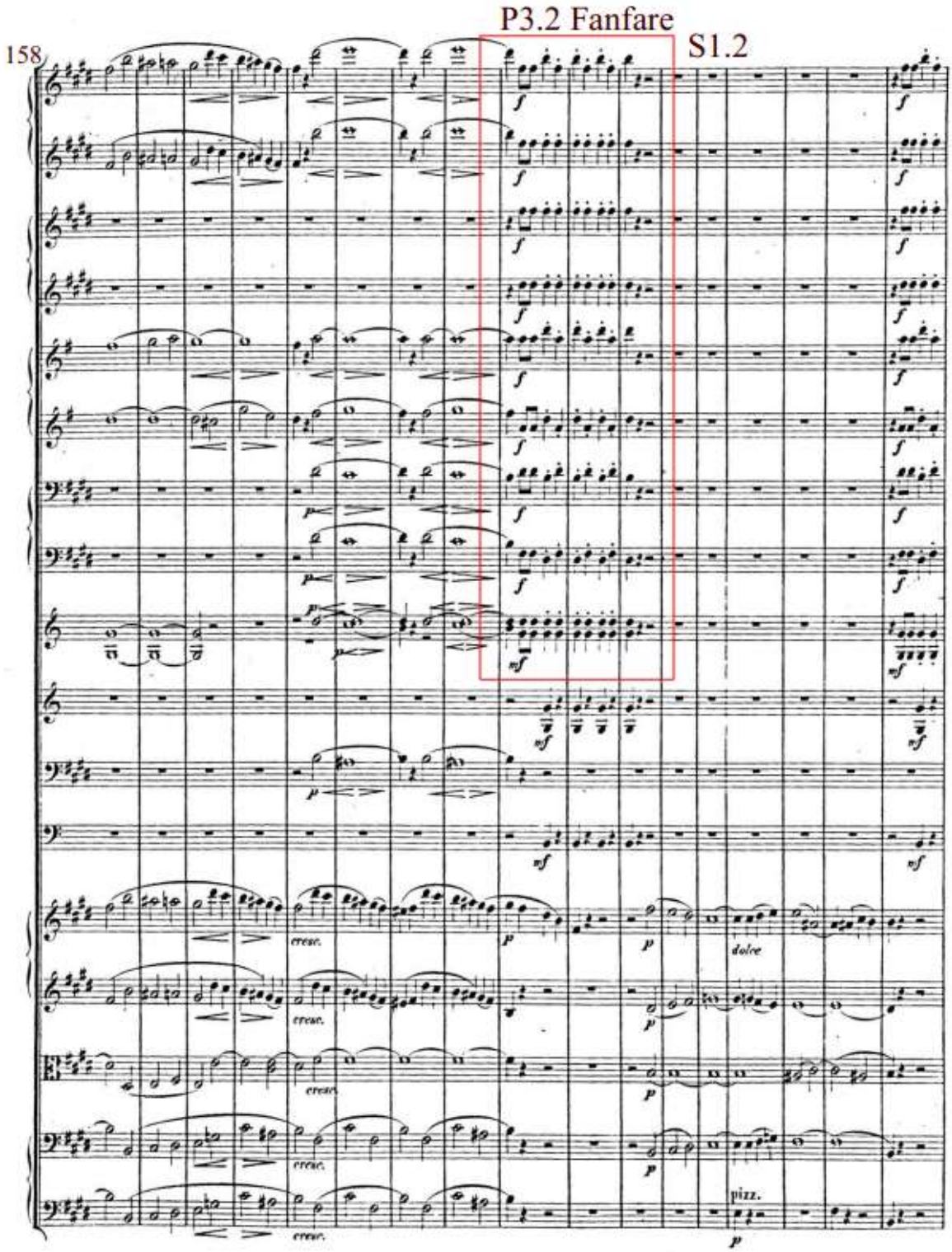

203

EEC

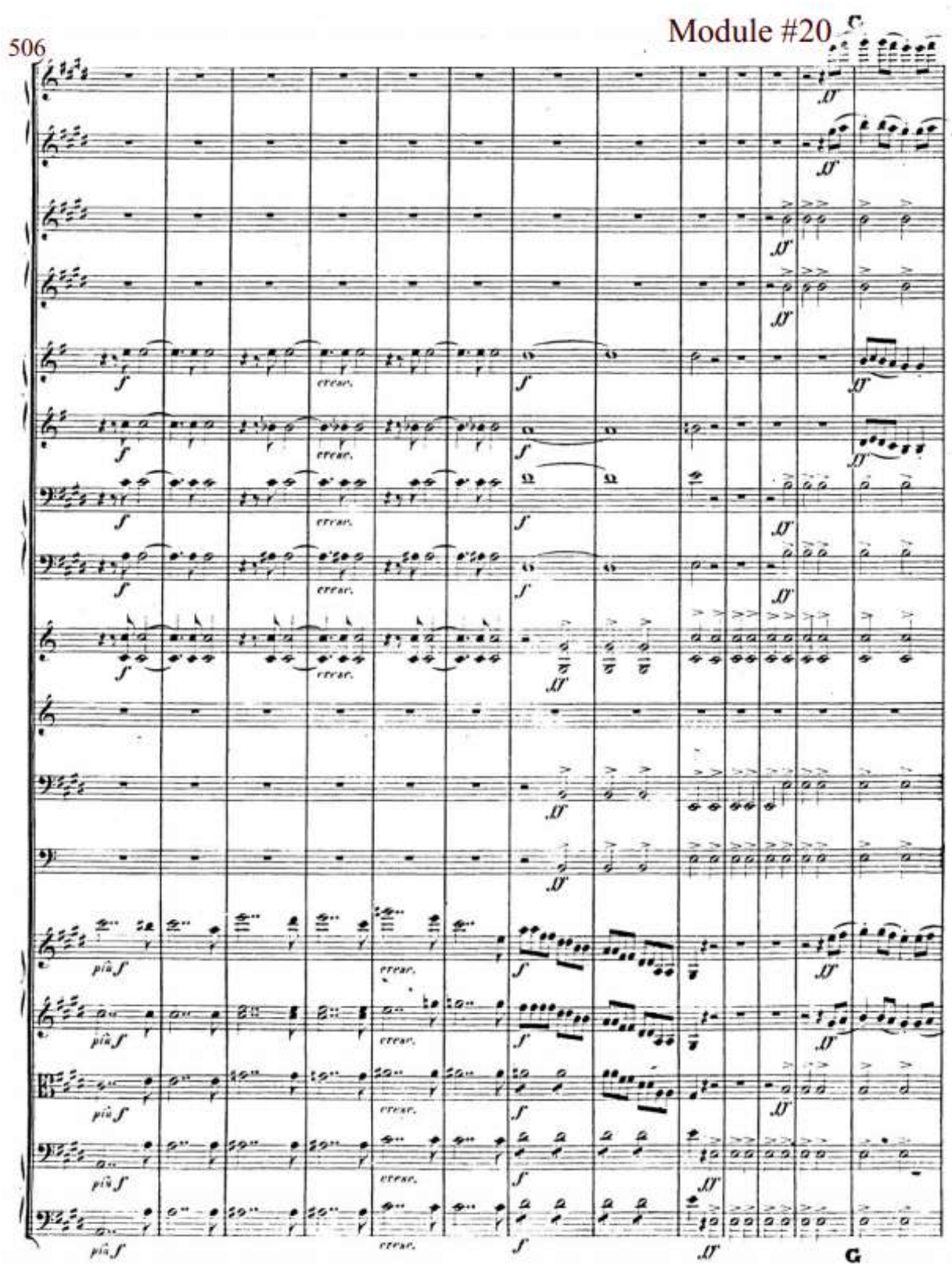
P-based C

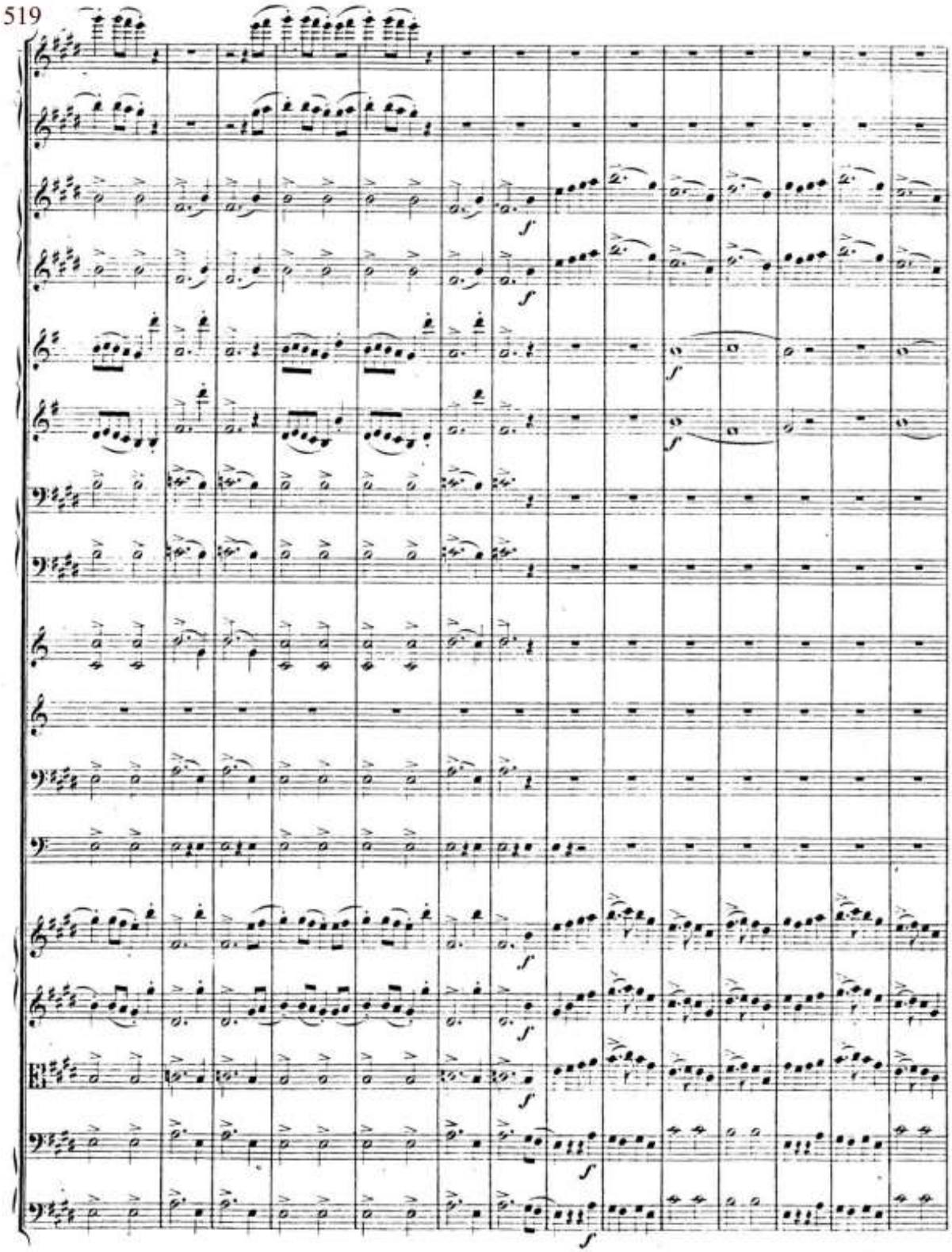


Example 2.6. *AMND* P$^{3.2}$ fanfare in woodwinds.

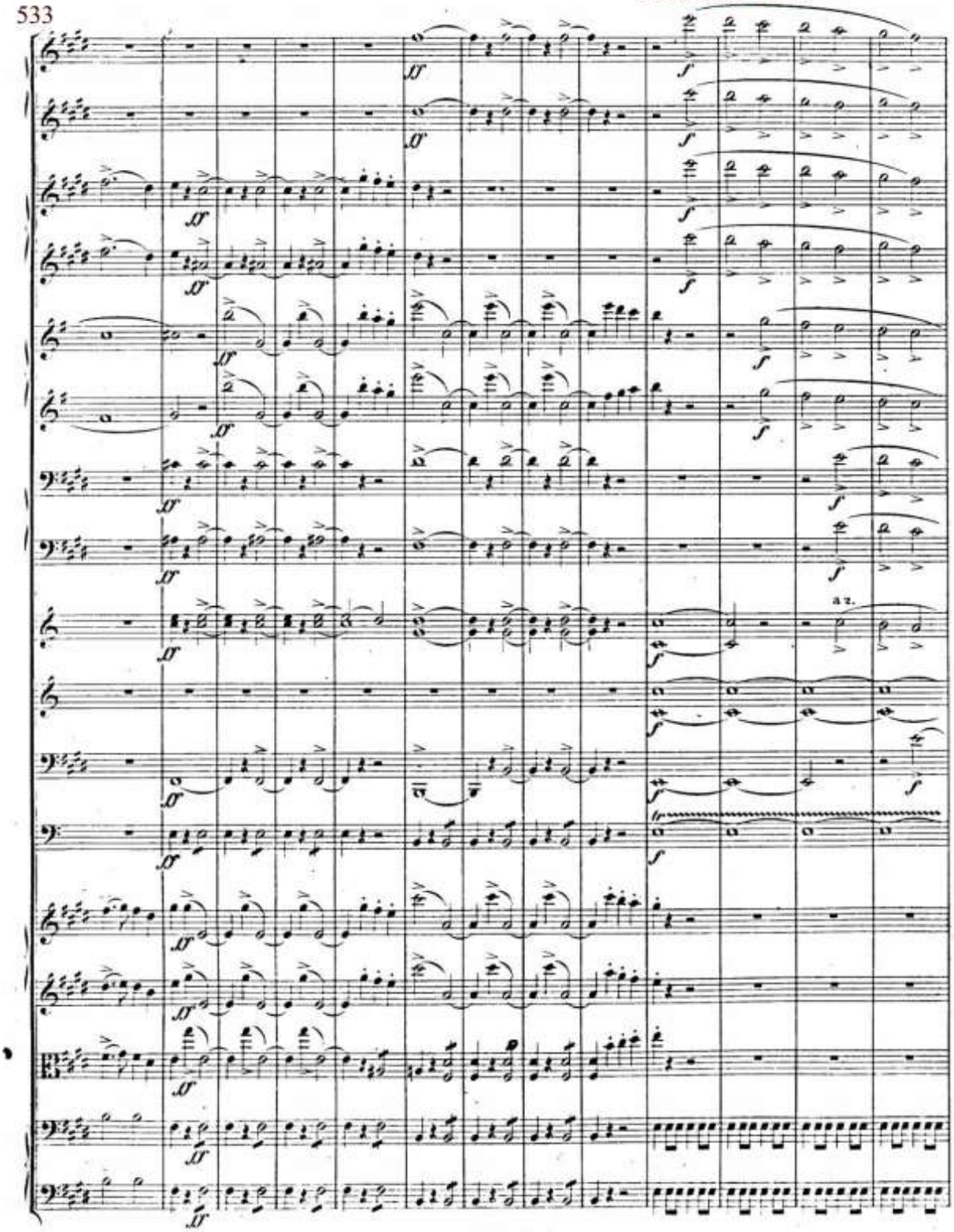


Example 2.7. ***AMND*** **module #20 to module #21.**

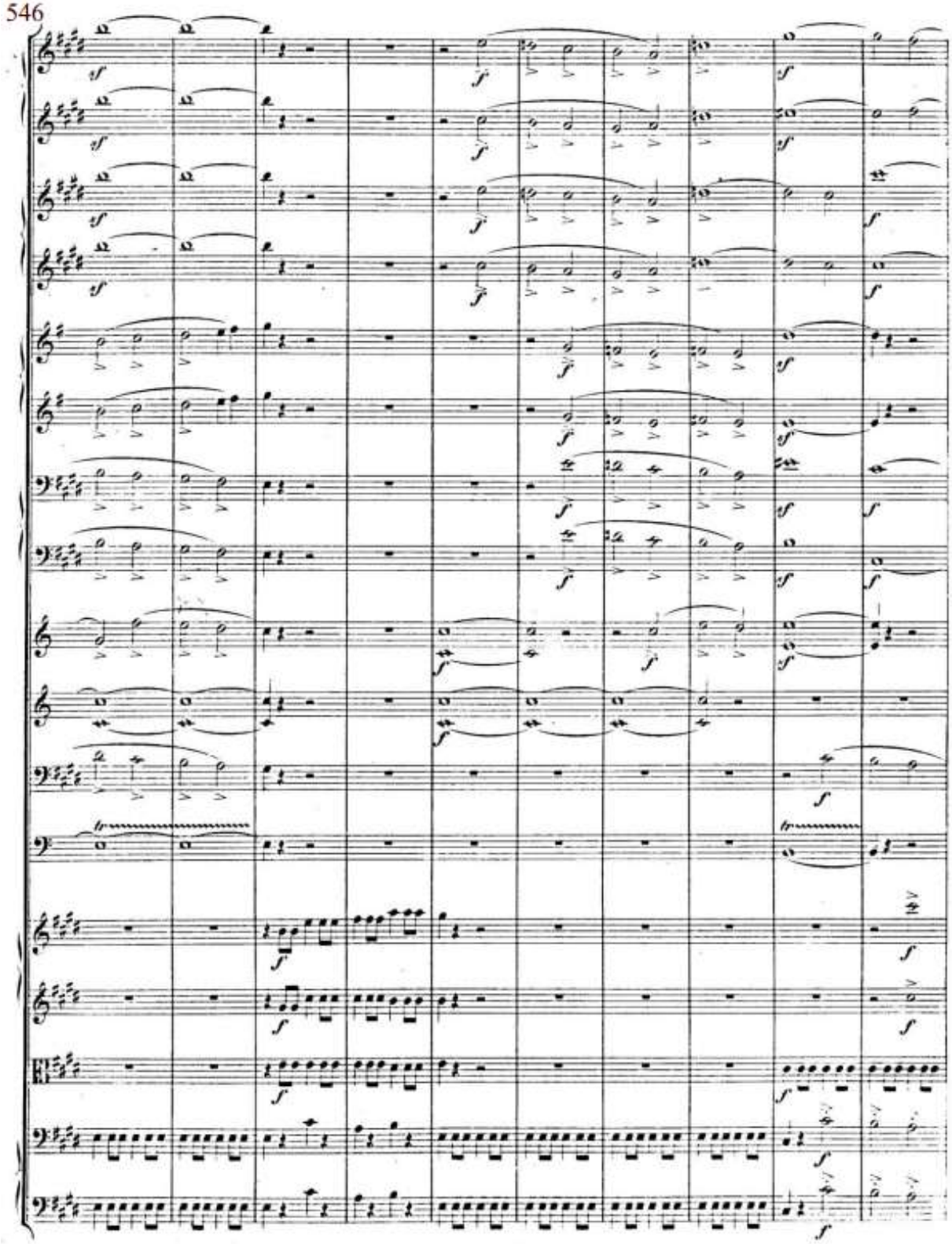



519

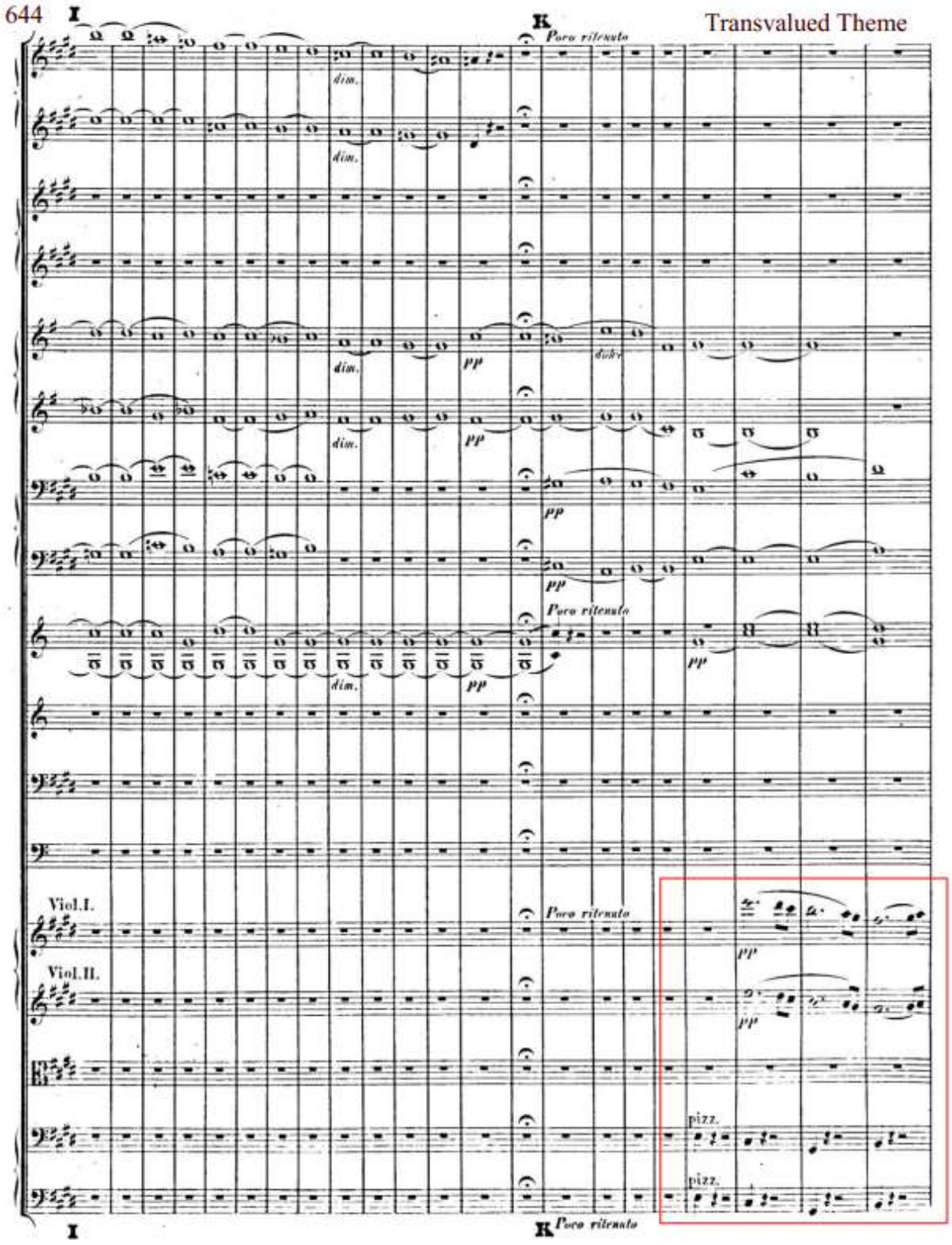
Module #21



546



Example 2.8. ***AMND*** **P theme transvalued in coda.**



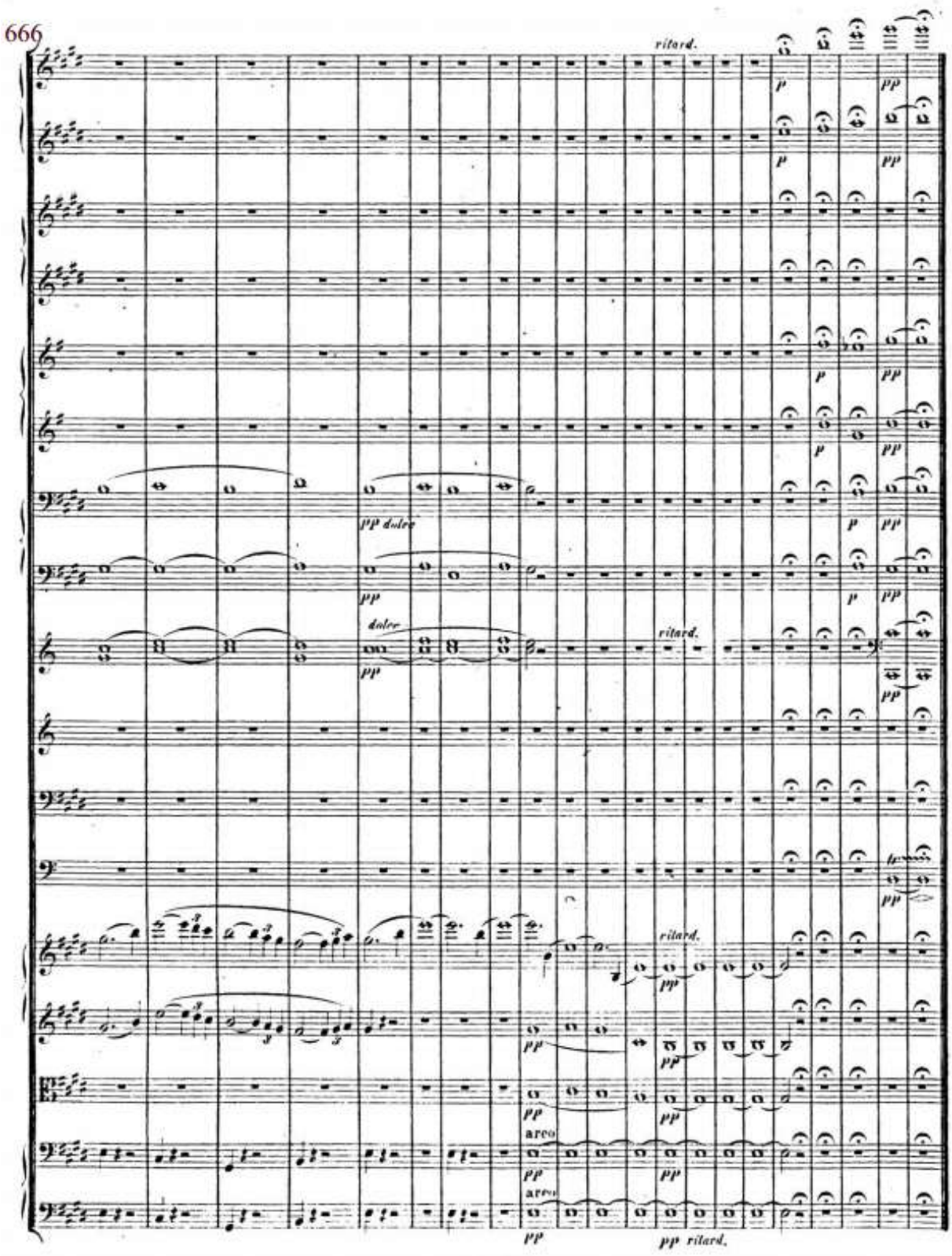
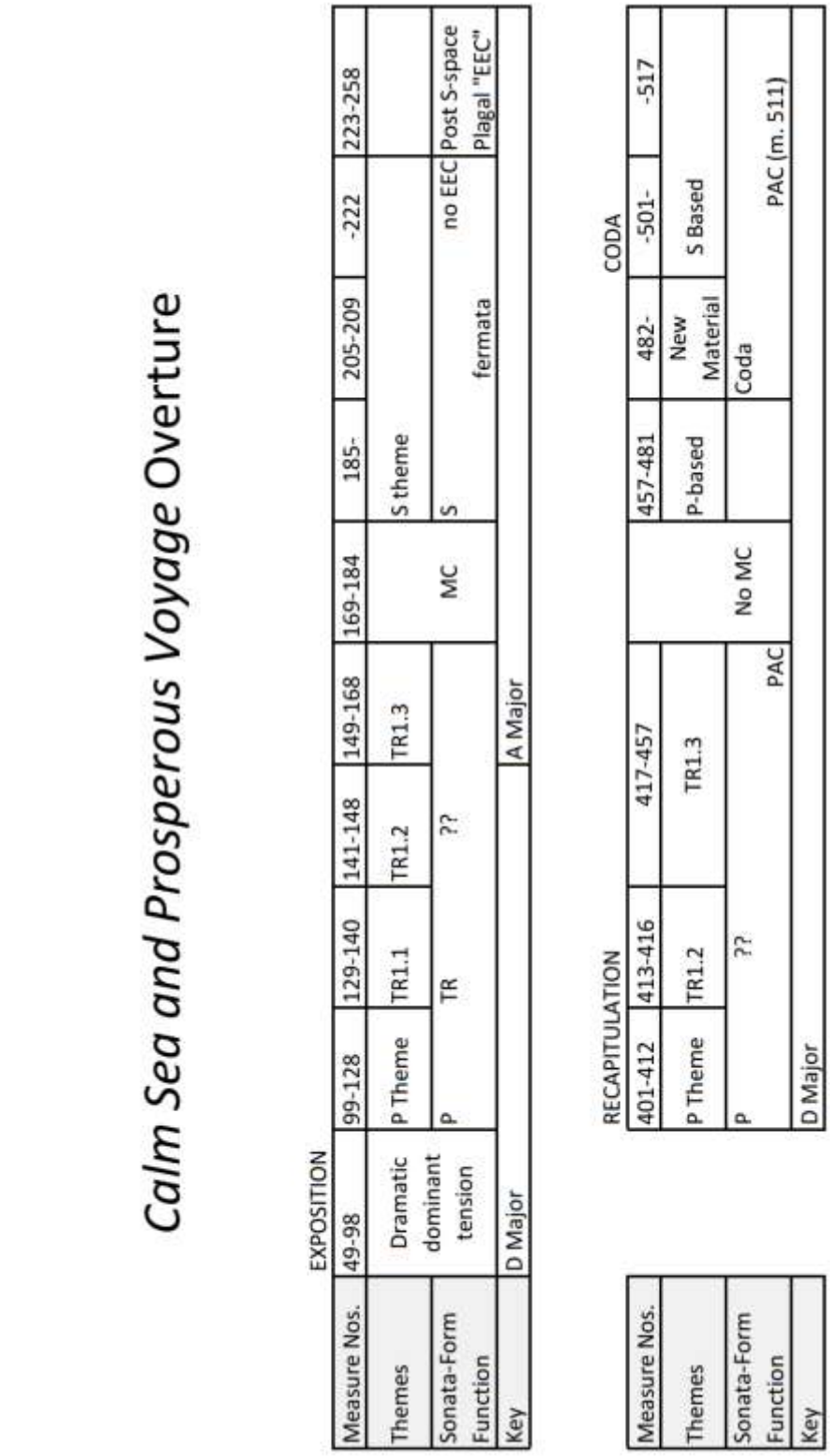
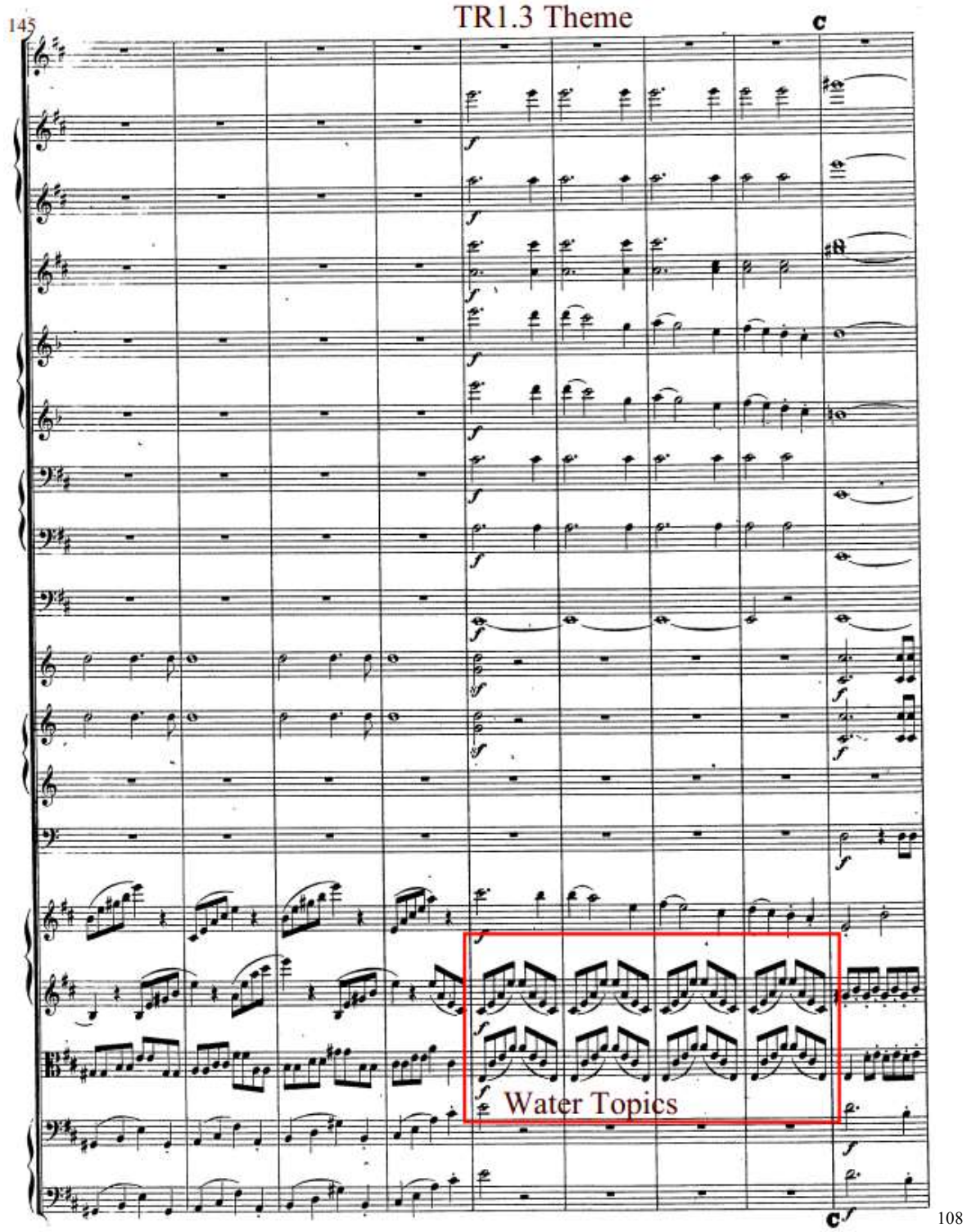

666
ritard.
pp dolce
dolce
ritard.
ritard.
arco
arco
pp ritard.

Figure 3.2. ***CSPV*** **formal structure (development omitted)**

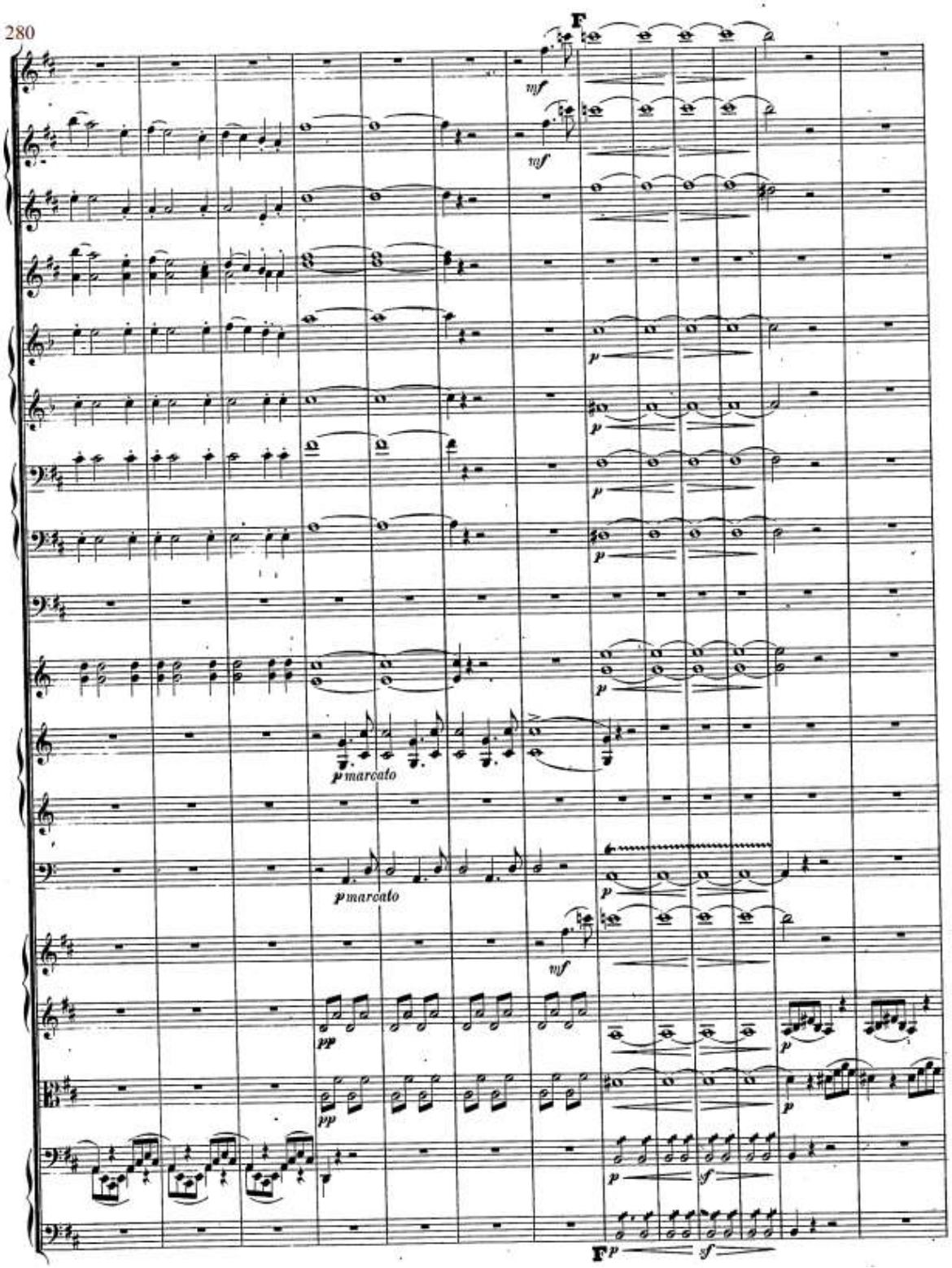


Example 3.1. *CSPV* water topic m. 149.

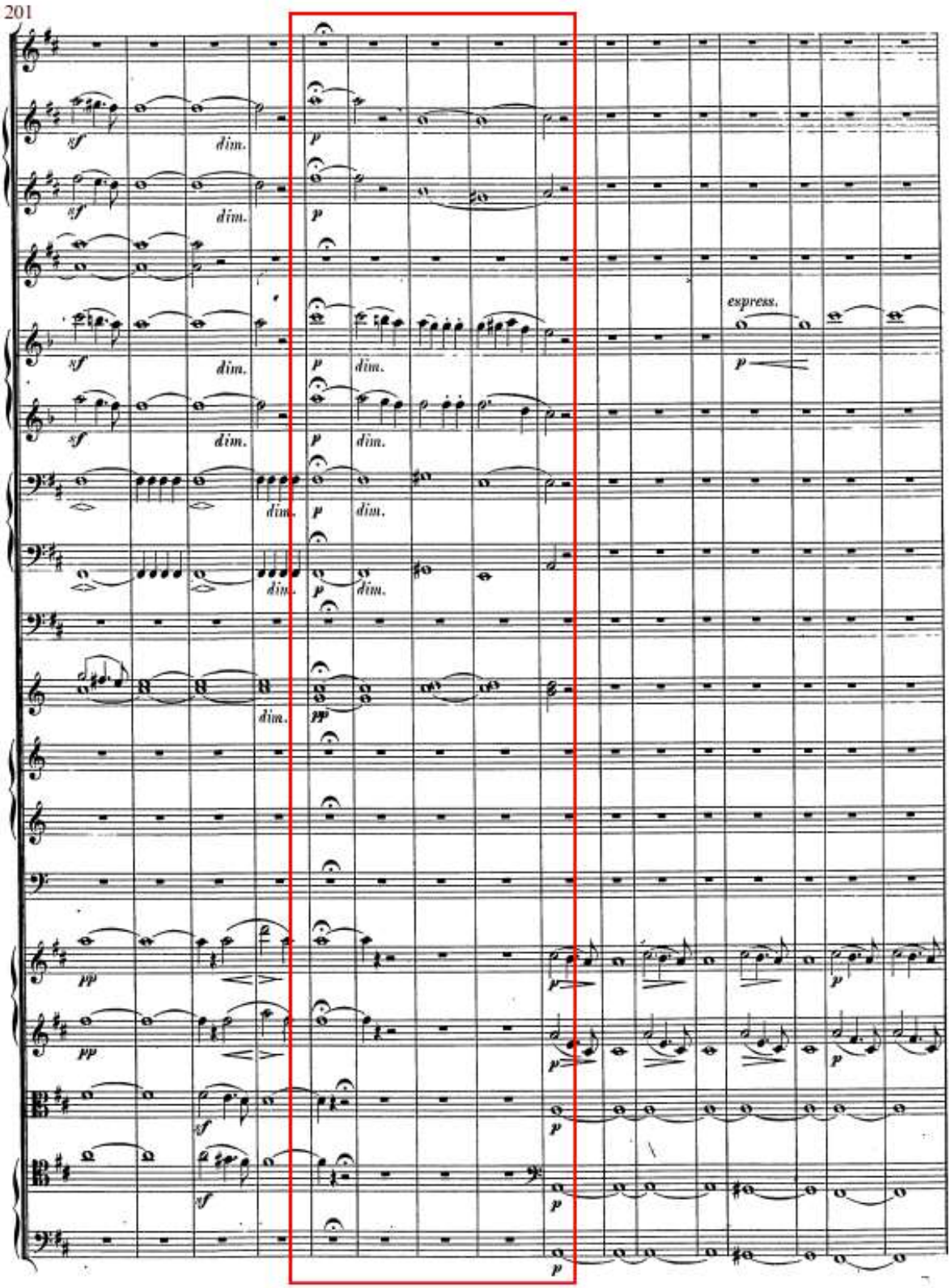


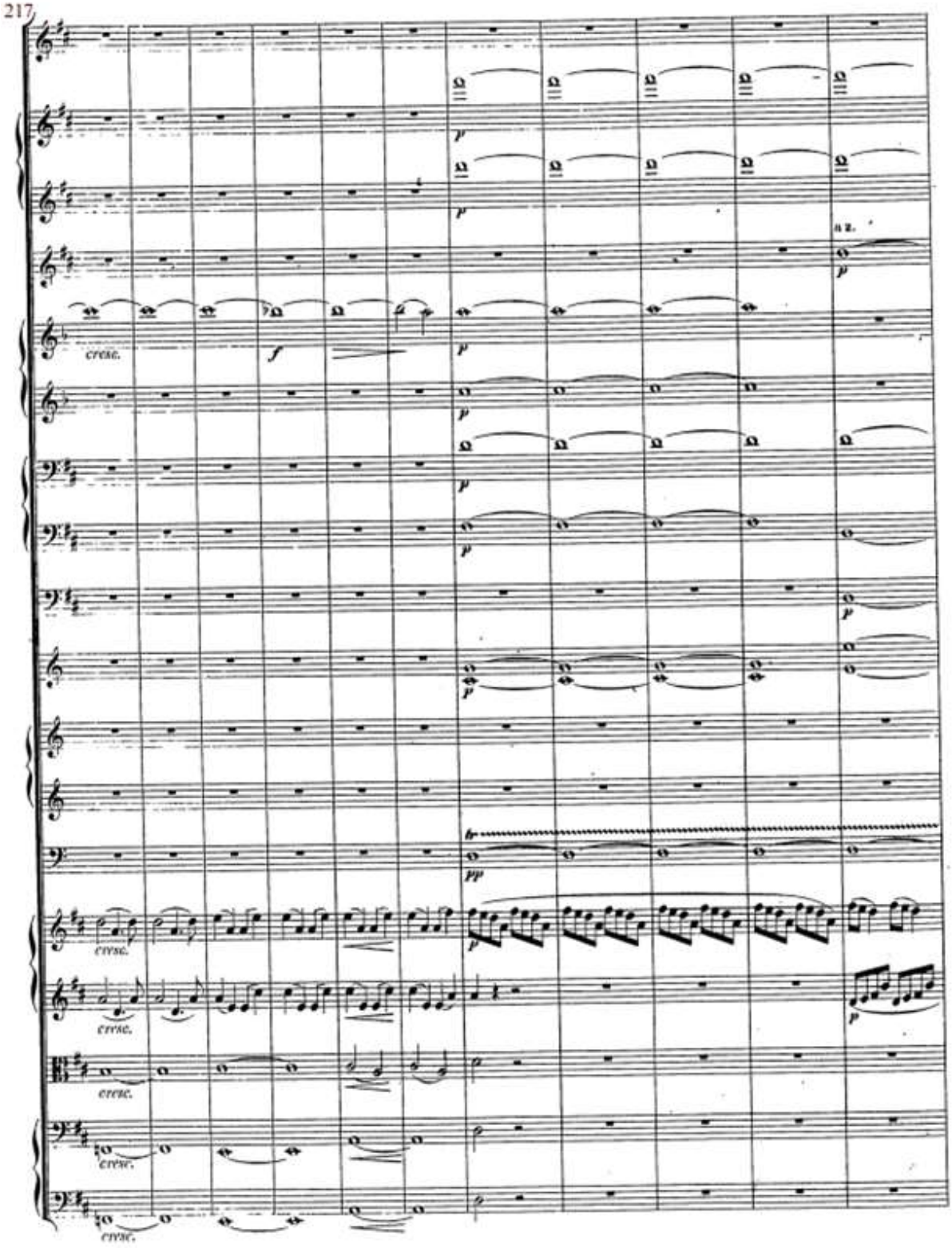
[108] Felix Mendelssohn, *Ouvertüre Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt*, op. 27, Series 2 no. 9 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz (Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1877).

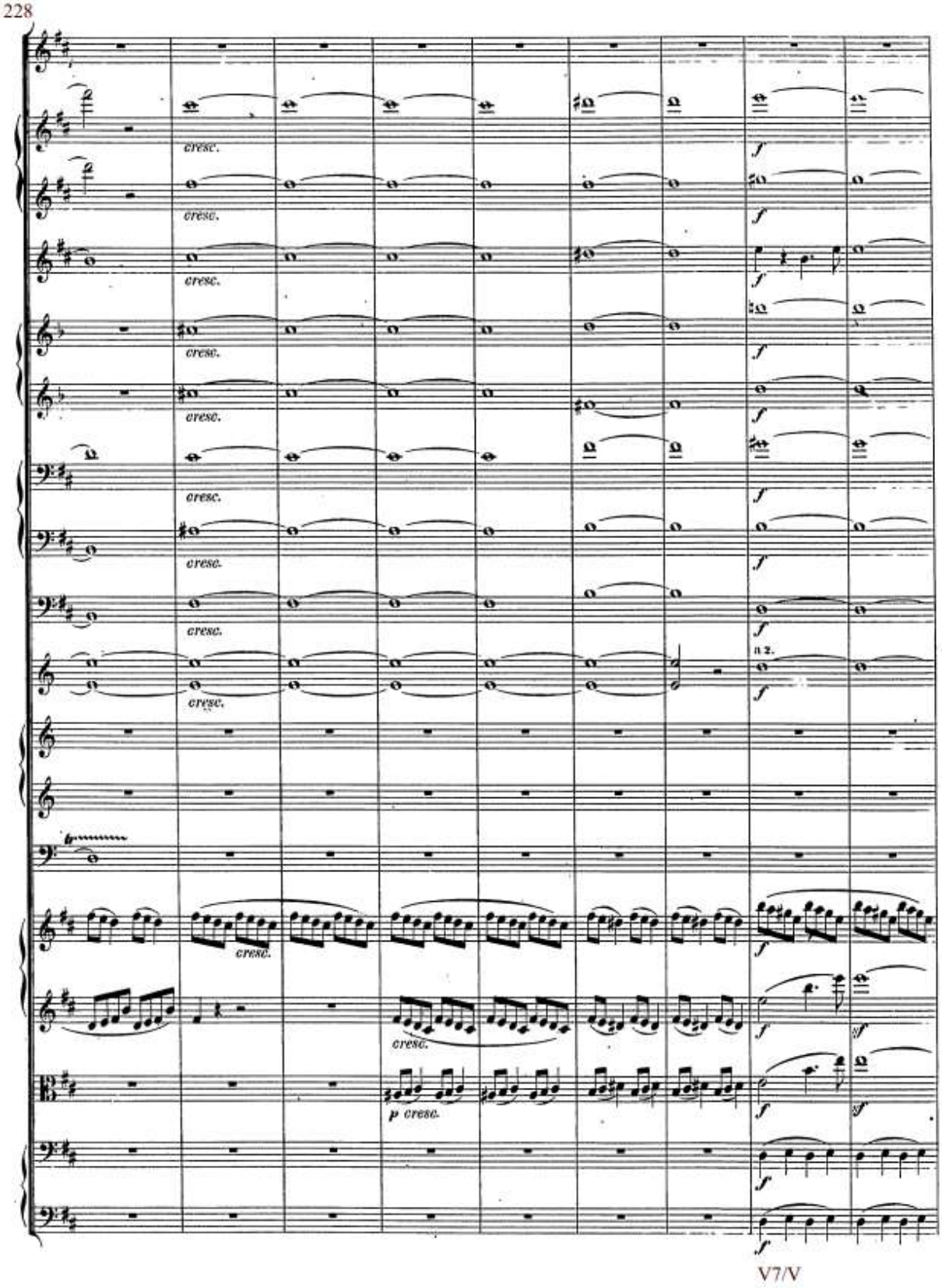
Example 3.2. *CSPV* development: harmonic swell.

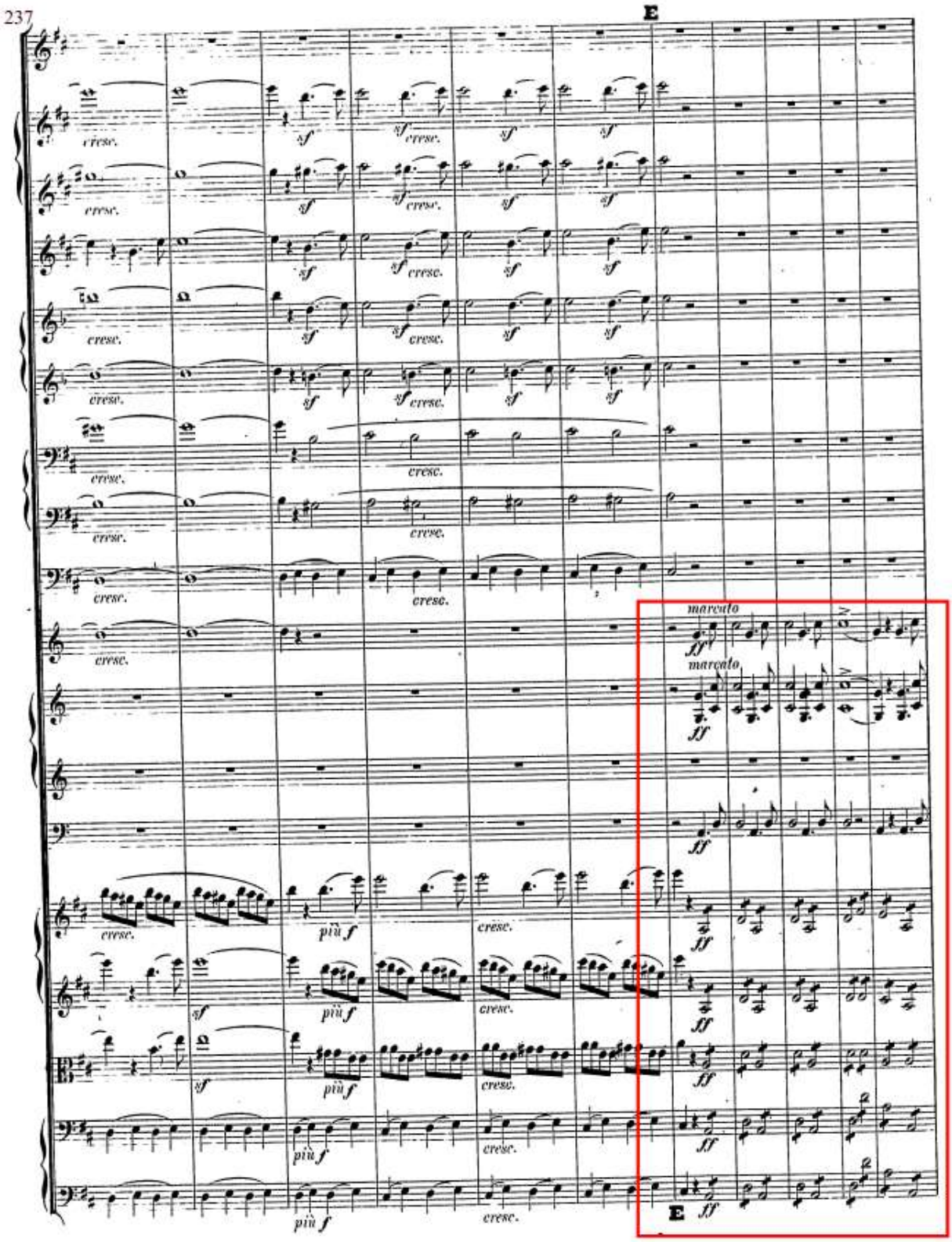


Example 3.3. ***CSPV*** **exposition: m. 205 fermata and post S space.**




217
cresc.
a 2.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.


228
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
a 2.
cresc.
cresc.
p cresc.
V7/V


237
E
cresc.
sf
marcato
ff
più f
E

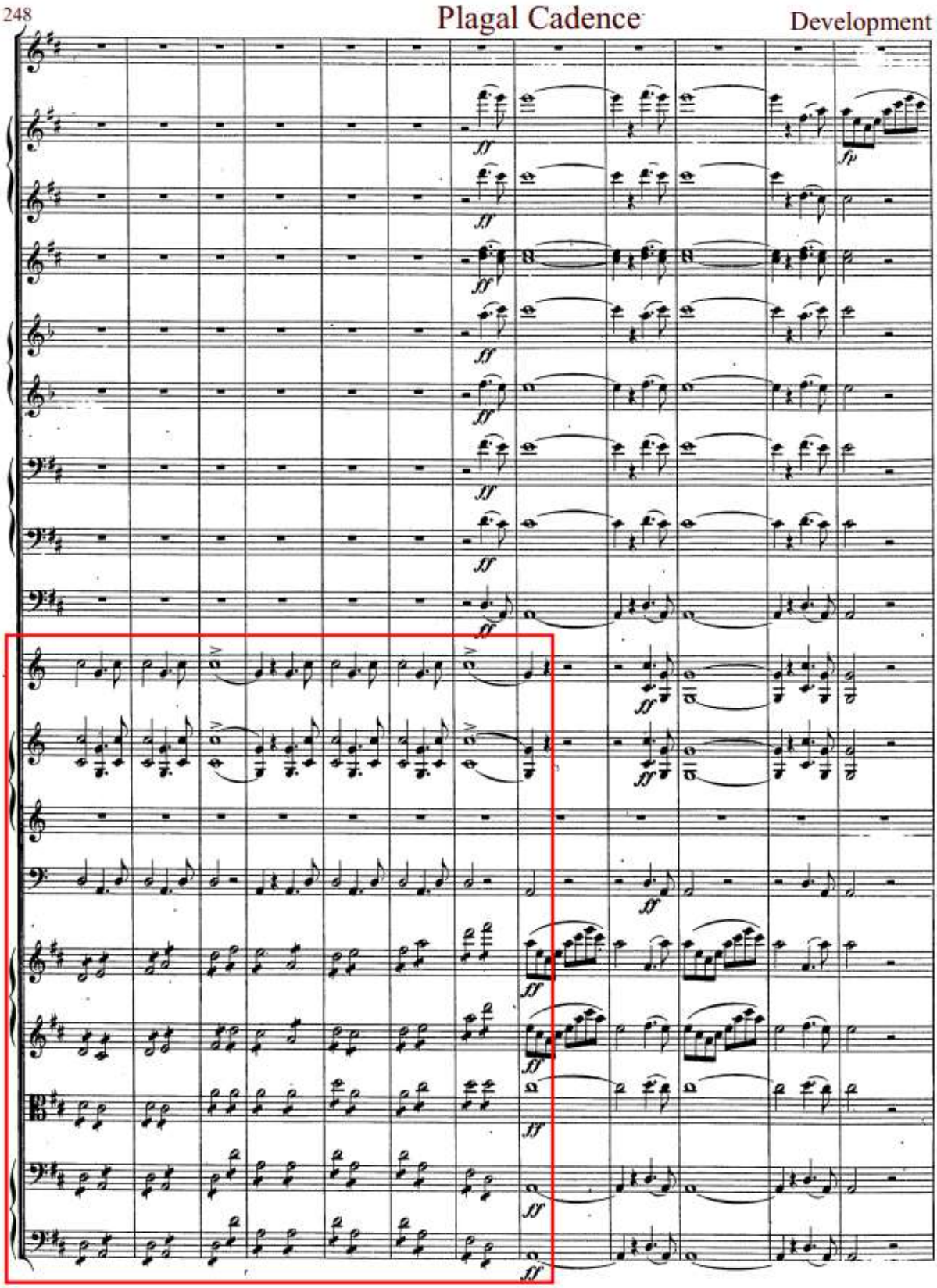

248
Plagal Cadence
Development

Figure 3.3. ***CSPV*** **trimodular block.**

Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage Overture

Trimodular Block Formation

EXPOSITION

Measure Nos.	49-98	99-128	129-140	141-148	149-168	169-184	185-	205-209	-222	223-258
Themes	Dramatic dominant tension	P Theme	TR1.1	TR1.2	TR1.3	MC	S Theme			
Sonata-Form Function		P	TR	MC Failure	TM^1	TM^2	TM^3	fermata	no EEC	Post S-space Plagal "EEC"
Key	D Major				A Major					

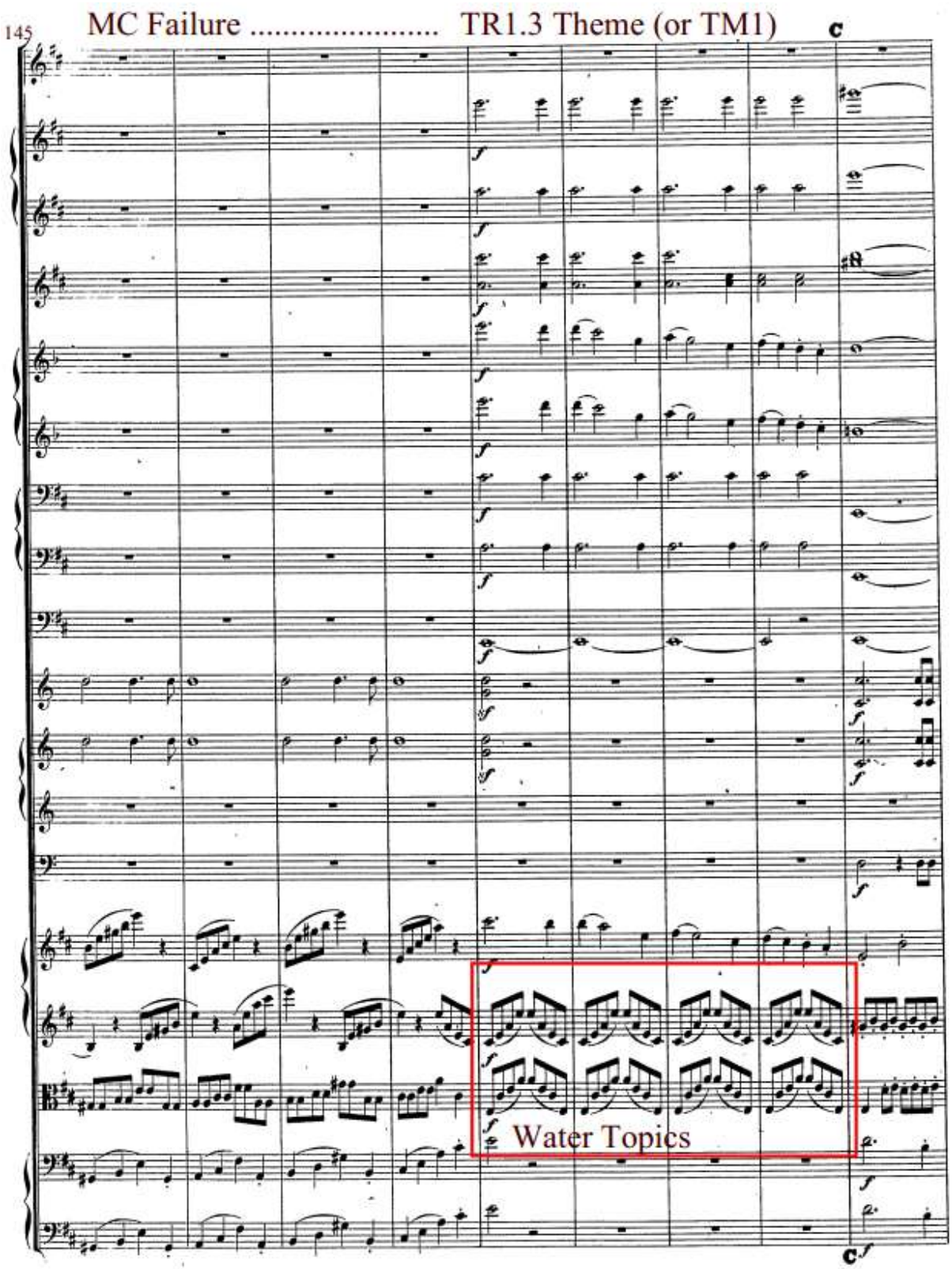
Trimodular Block

CODA

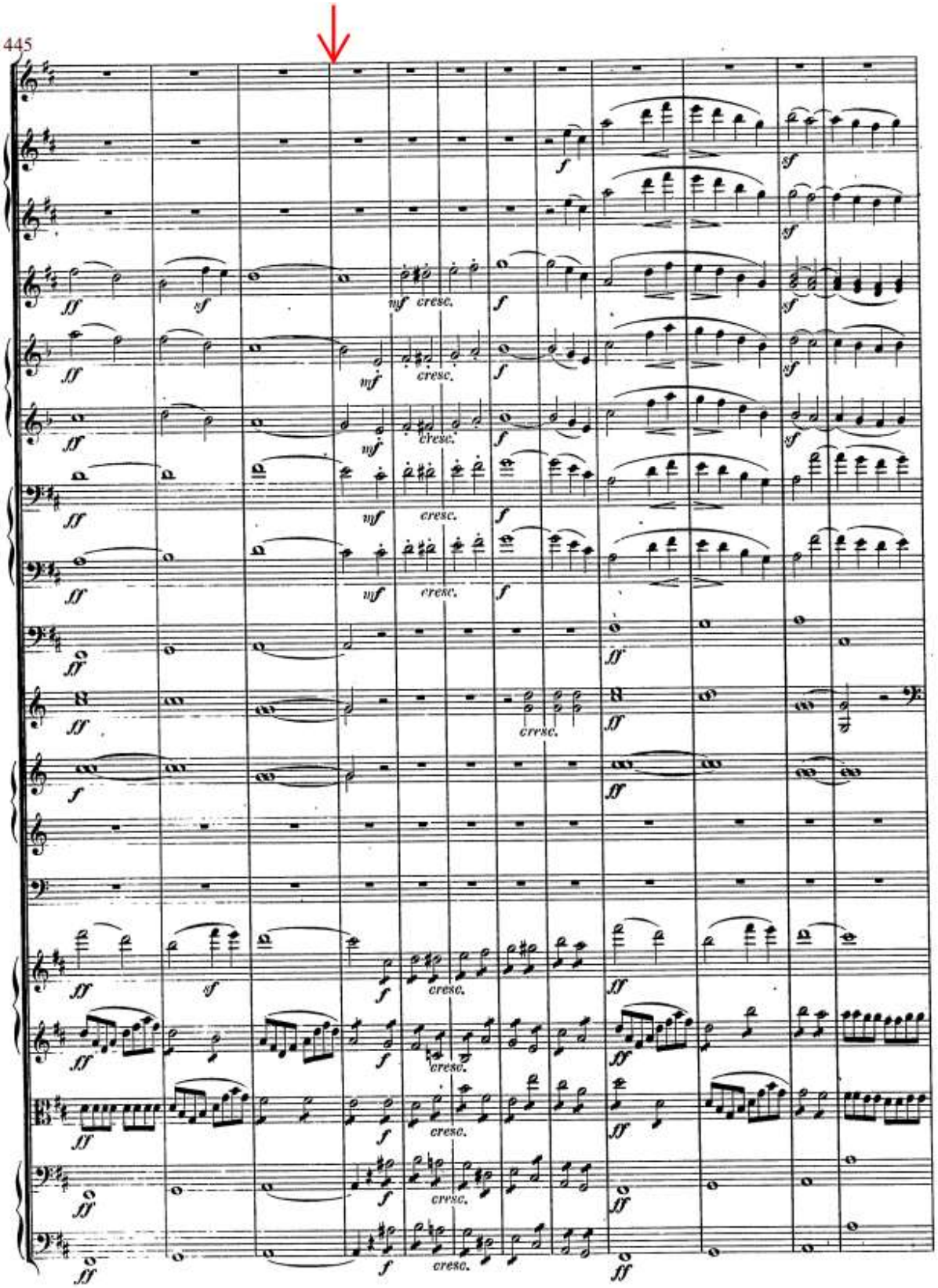
RECAPITULATION

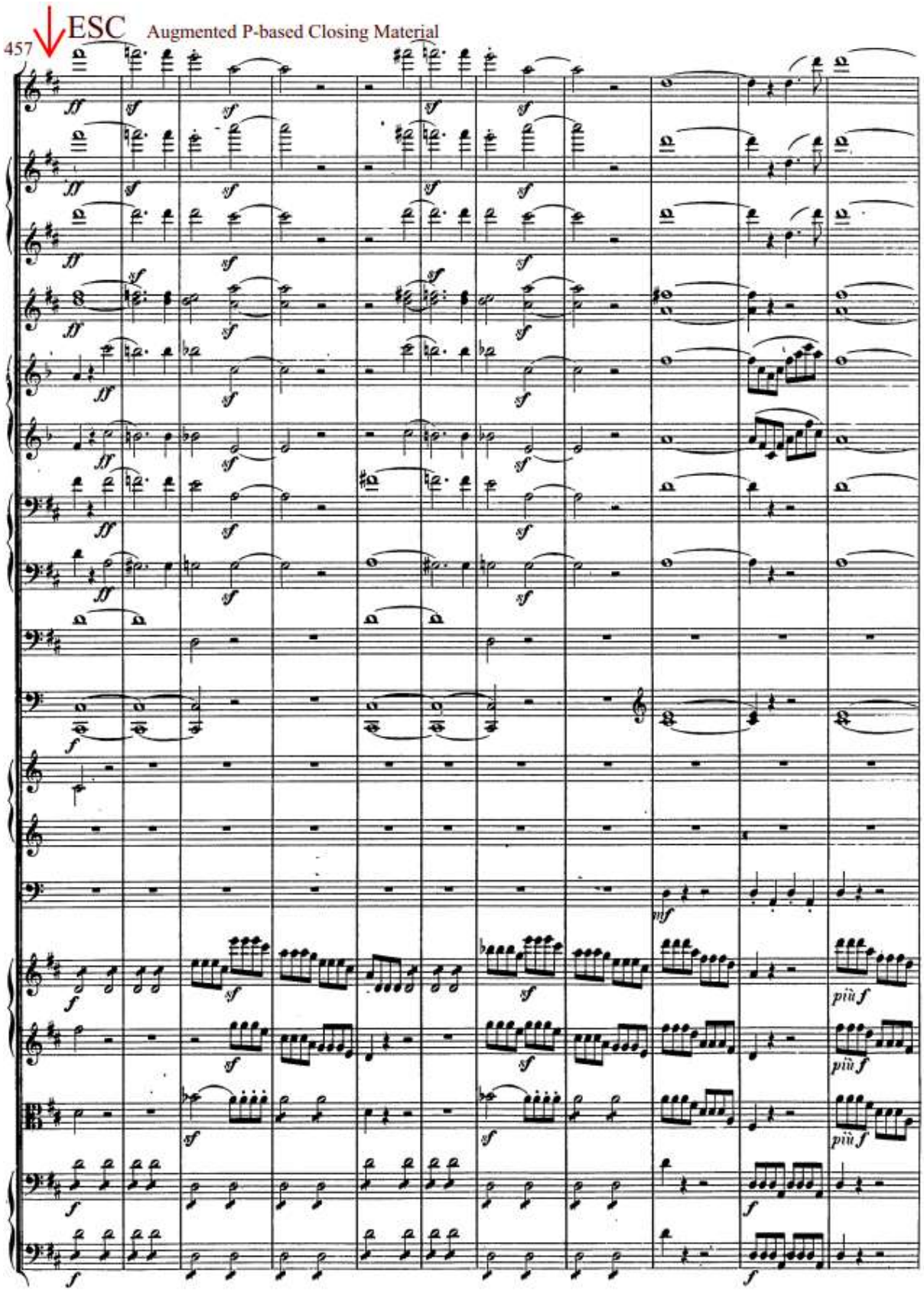
Measure Nos.	401-412	413-416	417-457		457-481	482-	-501-	-517
Themes	P Theme	TR1.2	TM^1 Theme		P-based	New Material	TM^3 Based	
Sonata-Form Function	P	MC Failure	S ESC	No MC	C	Coda	PAC (m. 511)	
Key	D Major							

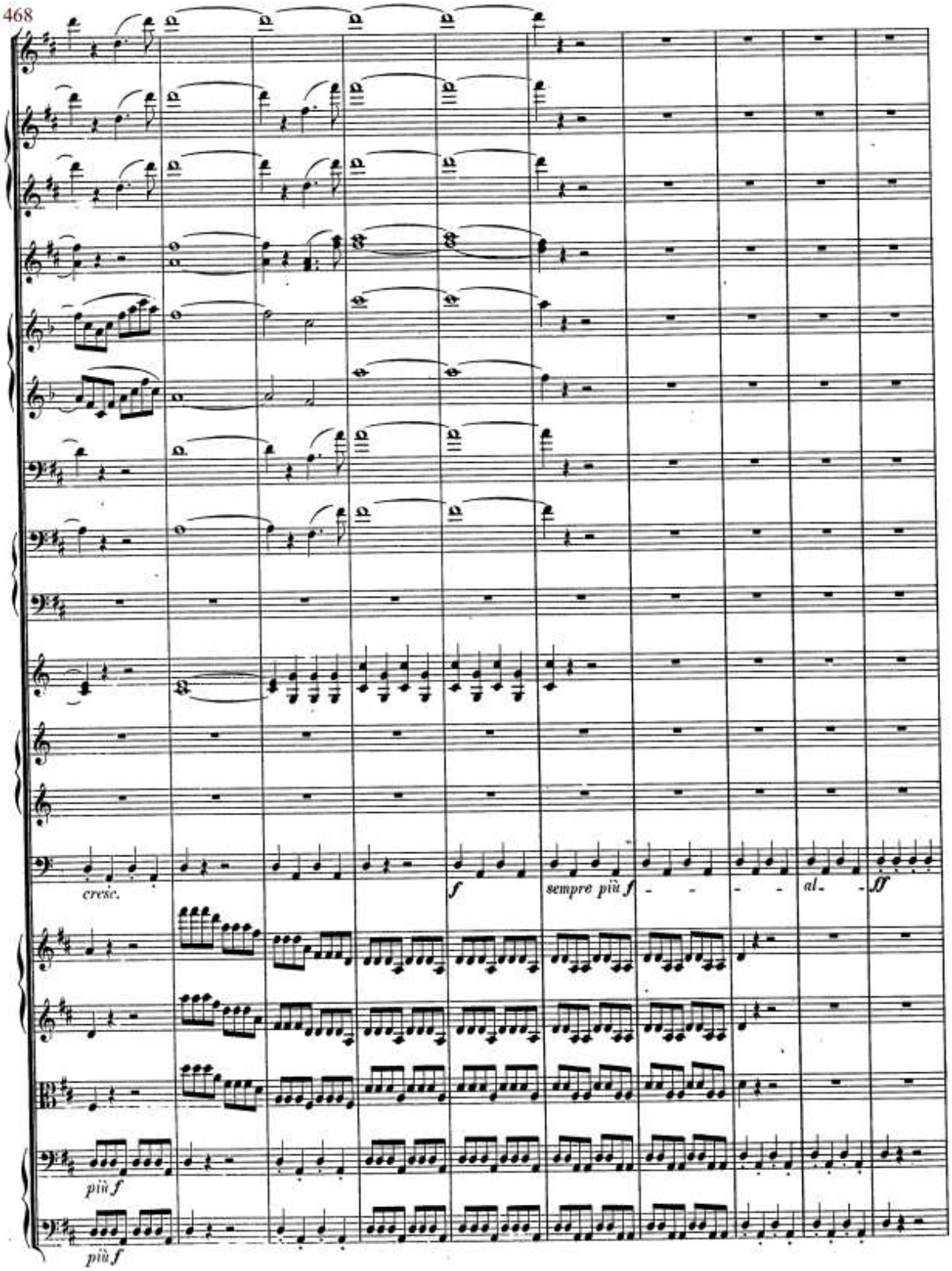
Example 3.4. ***CSPV*** **exposition: MC failure and TR as TM[1].**



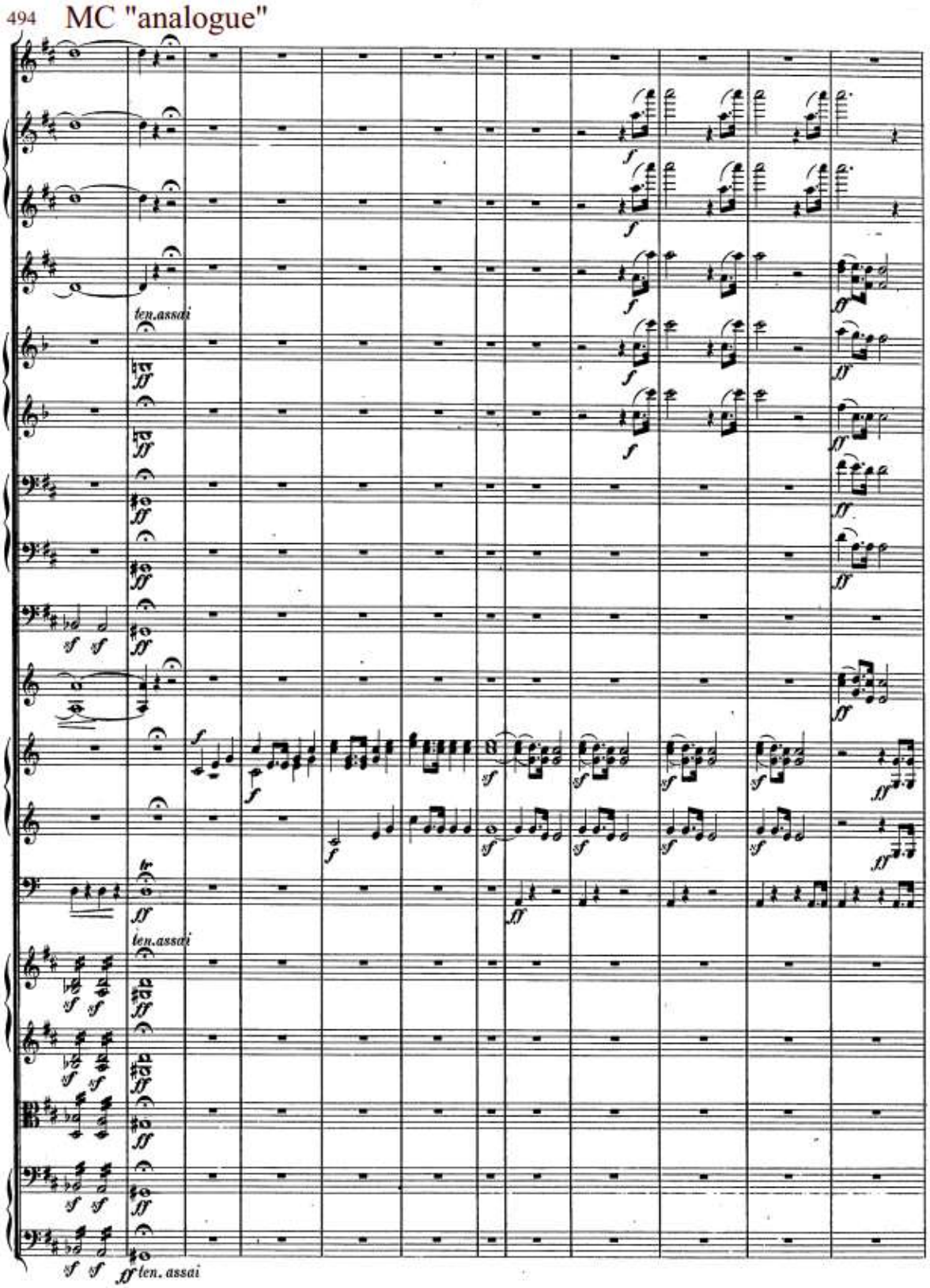
Example 3.5. ***CSPV*** **recapitulation: TM[1] cadential progressions, ESC, and decisive C rhetoric.**




457
ESC
Augmented P-based Closing Material


468
cresc.
f
sempre più f
al
ff
più f
più f

Example 3.6. Haney's *CSPV* recapitulation: S and ESC.



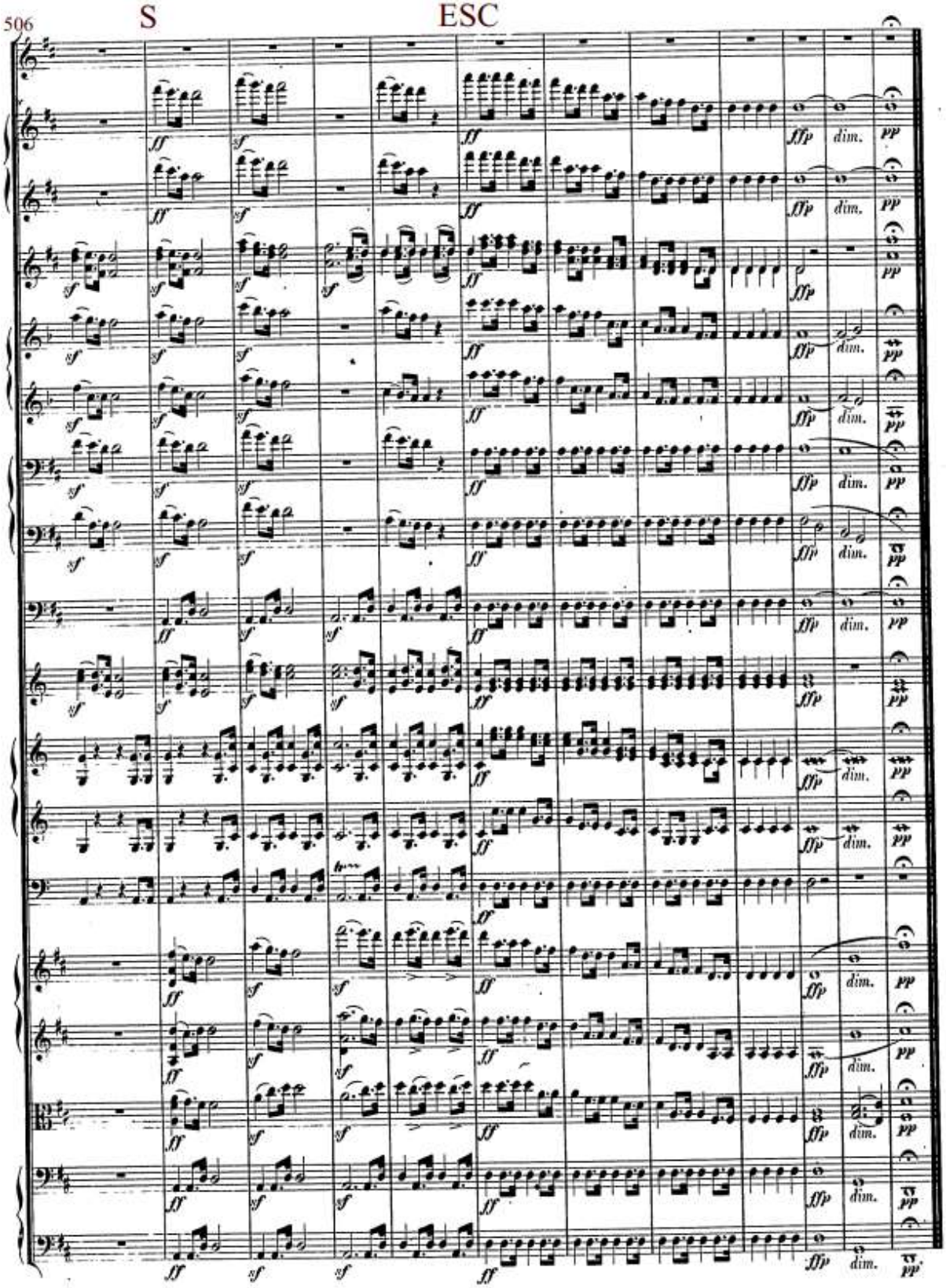
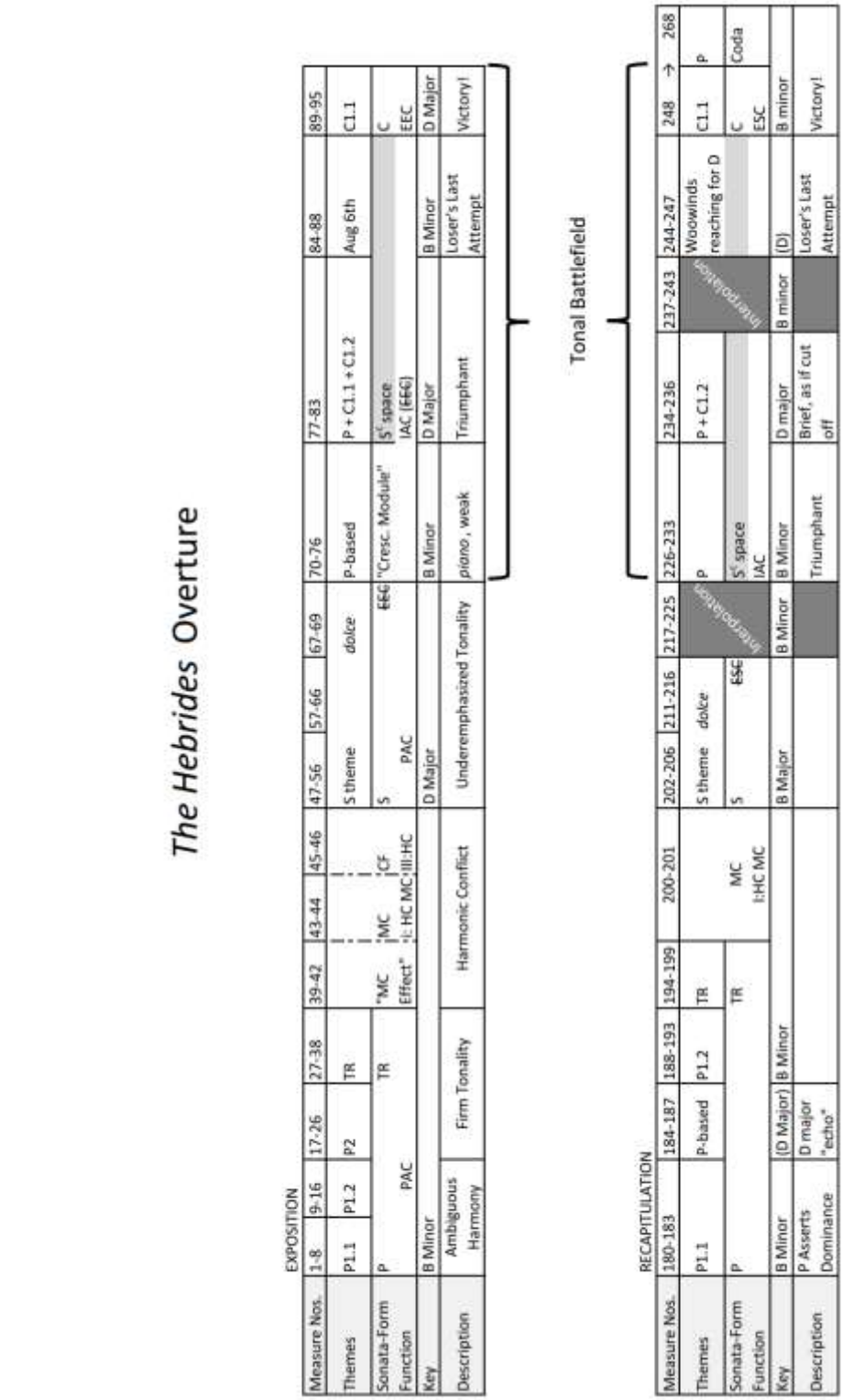
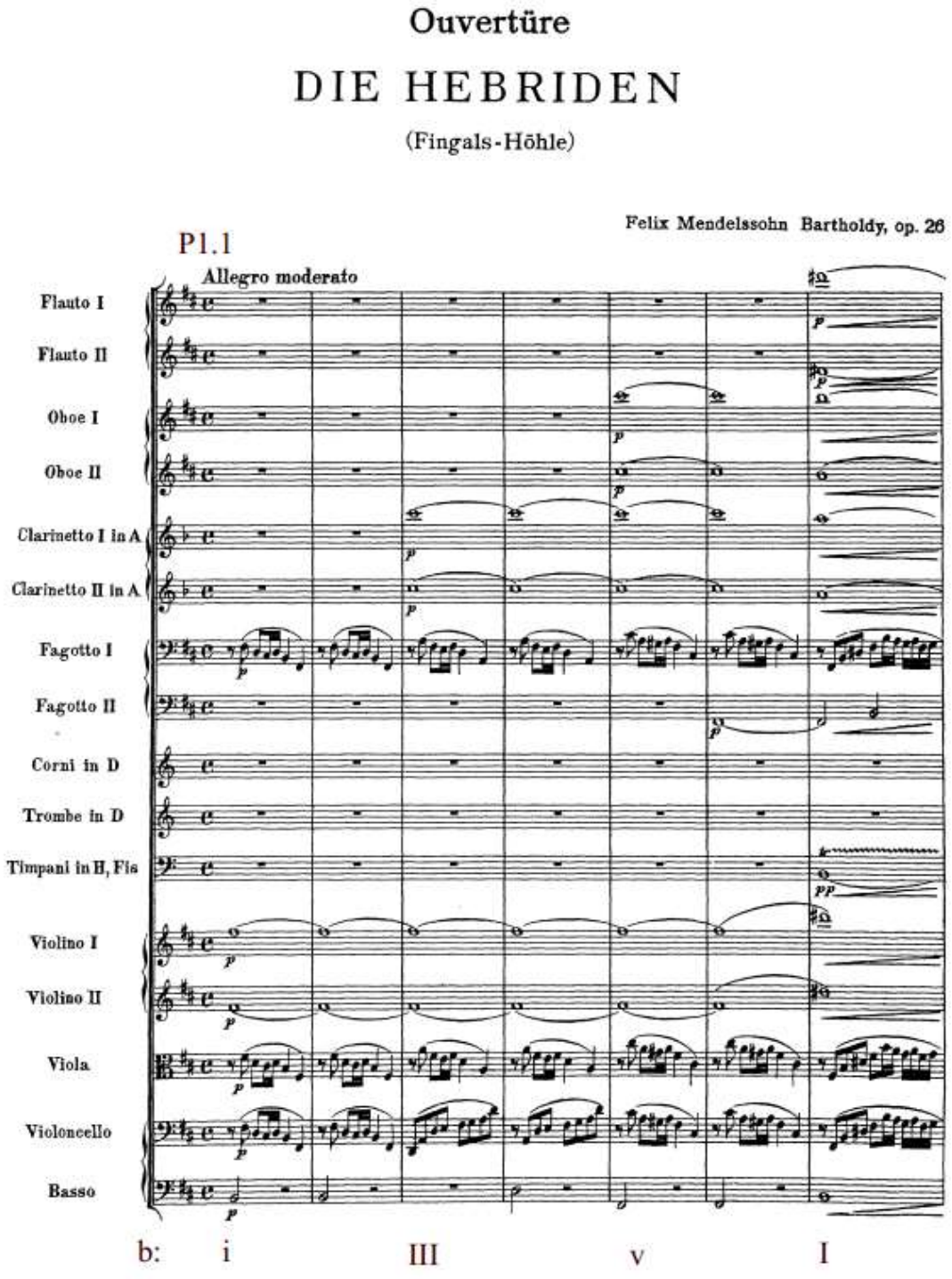

506
S
ESC

Figure 4.1. *Hebrides* formal structure (development omitted).

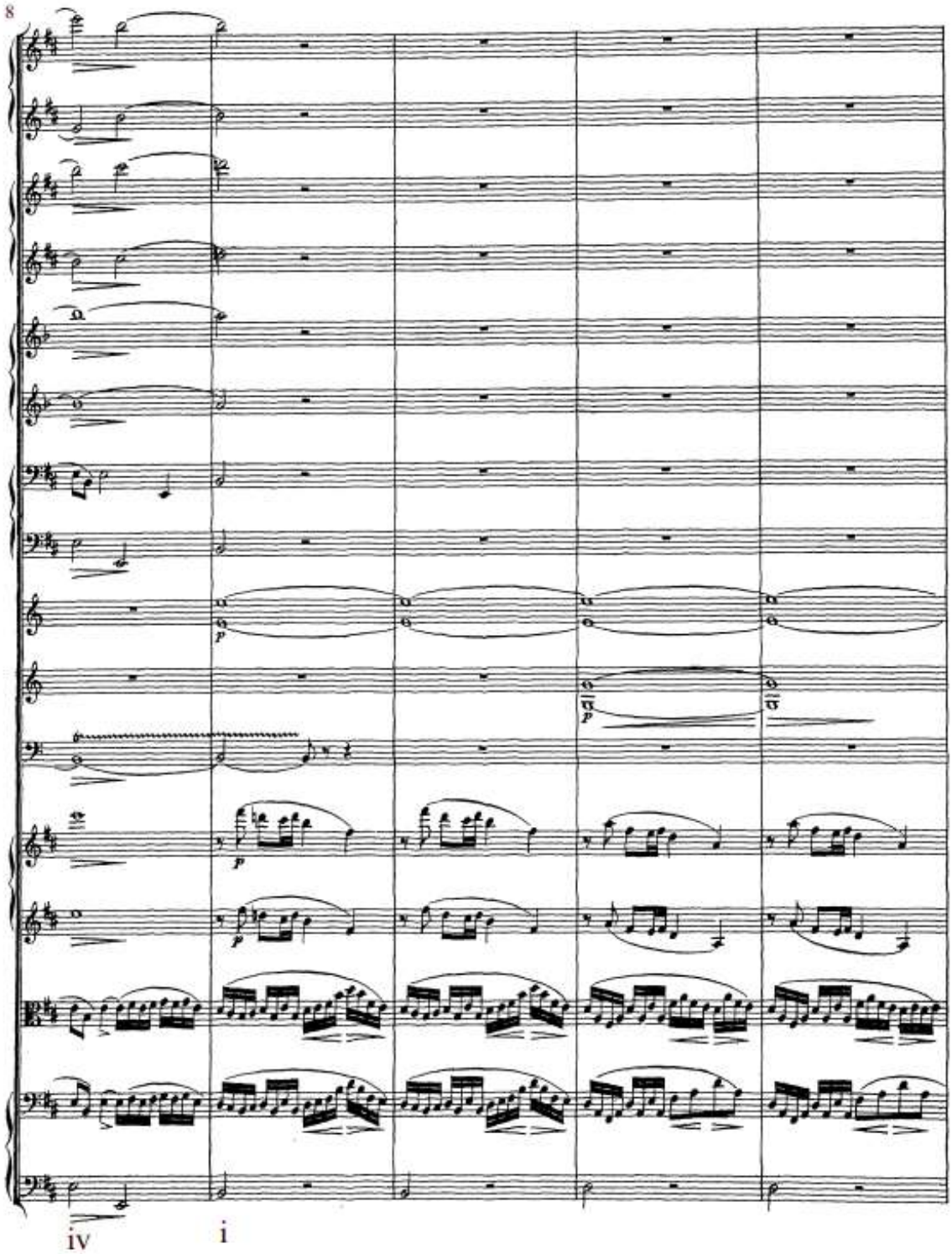


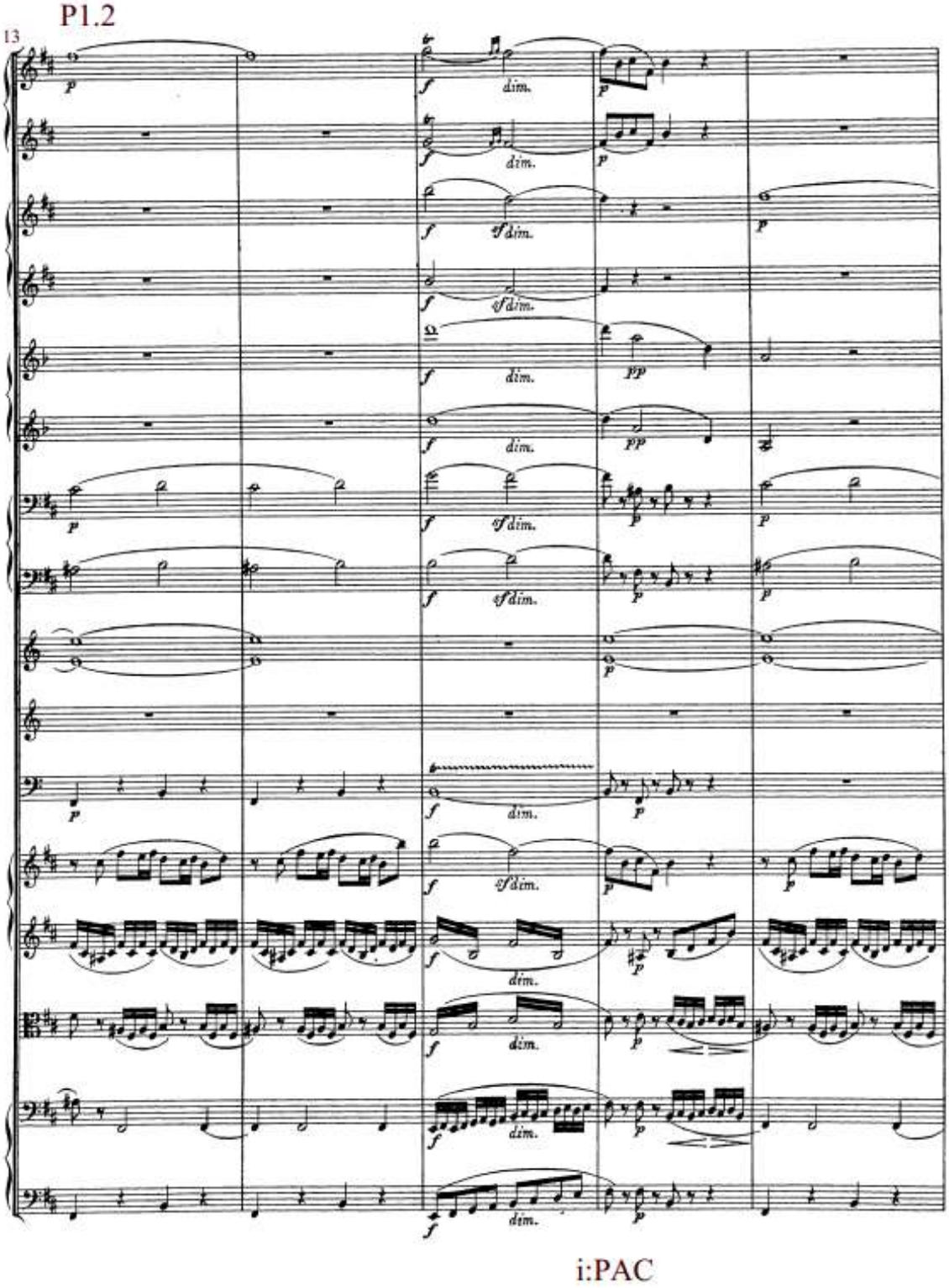
Example 4.1. ***Hebrides*** **$P^{1.1}$ and $P^{1.2}$.**



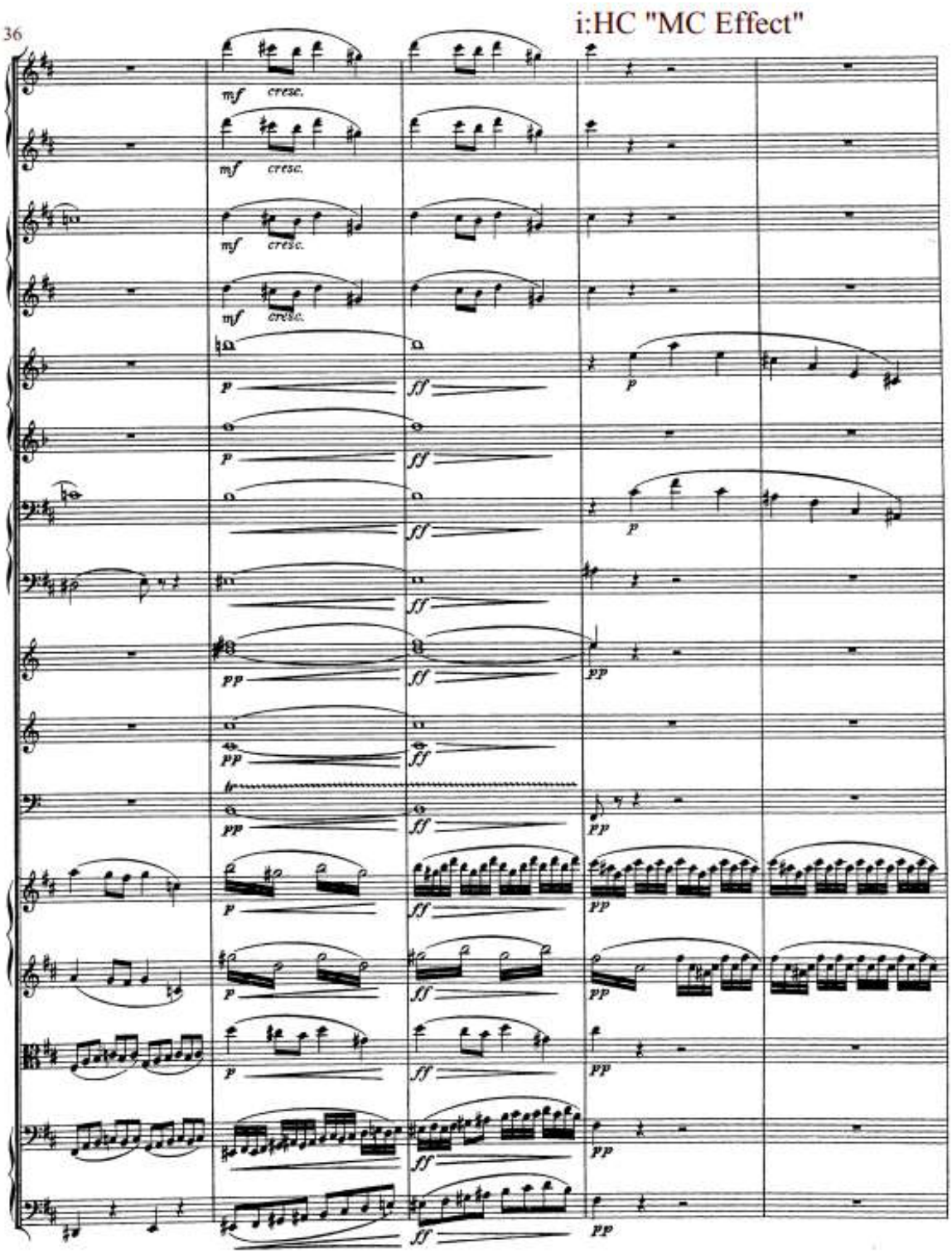
[109]

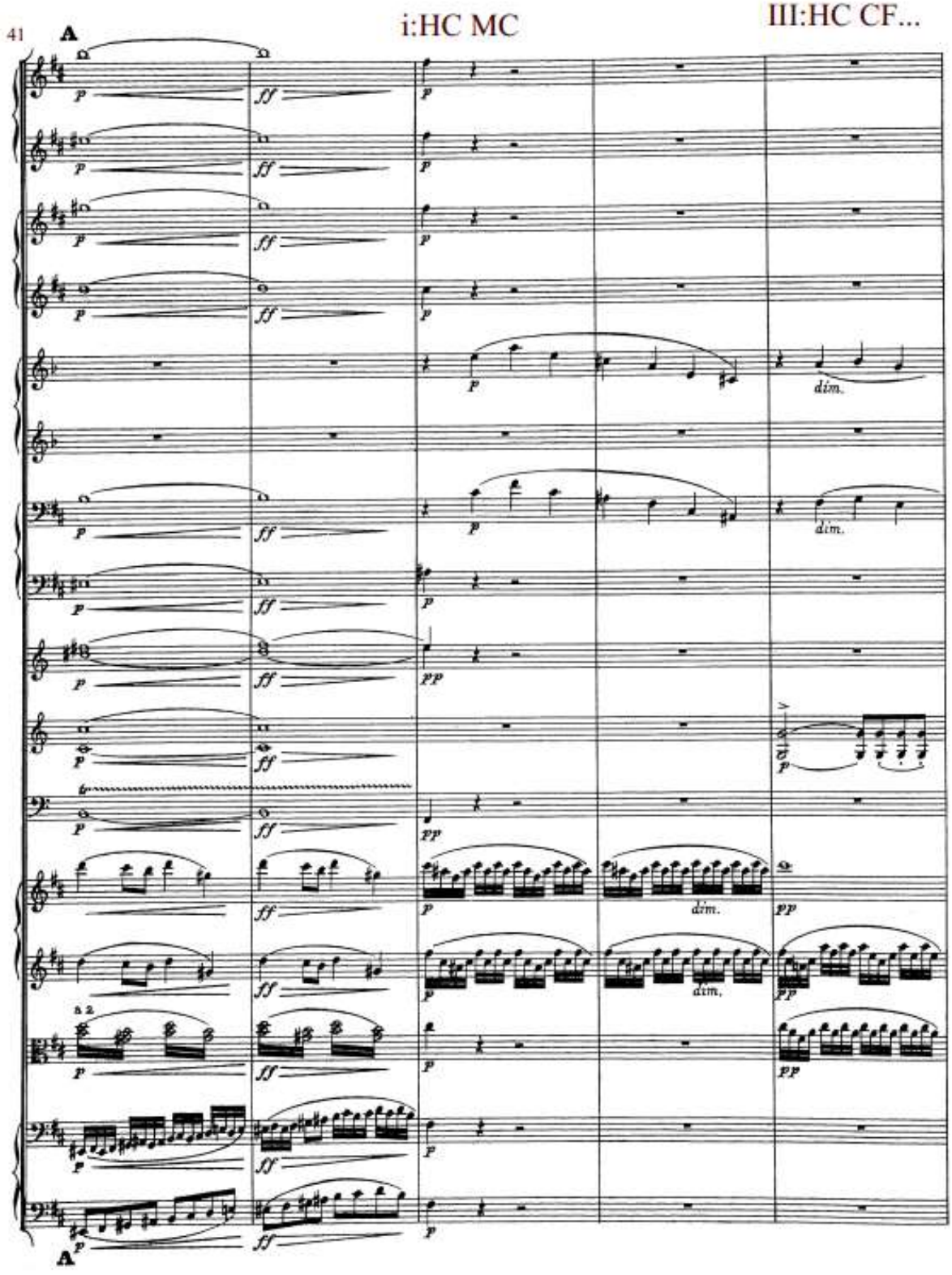
[109] Felix Mendelssohn, *Ouvertüre Die Hebriden (Die Fingalshöhle)*, op. 26, Series 2 no. 8 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz (Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1874).


8
iv
i

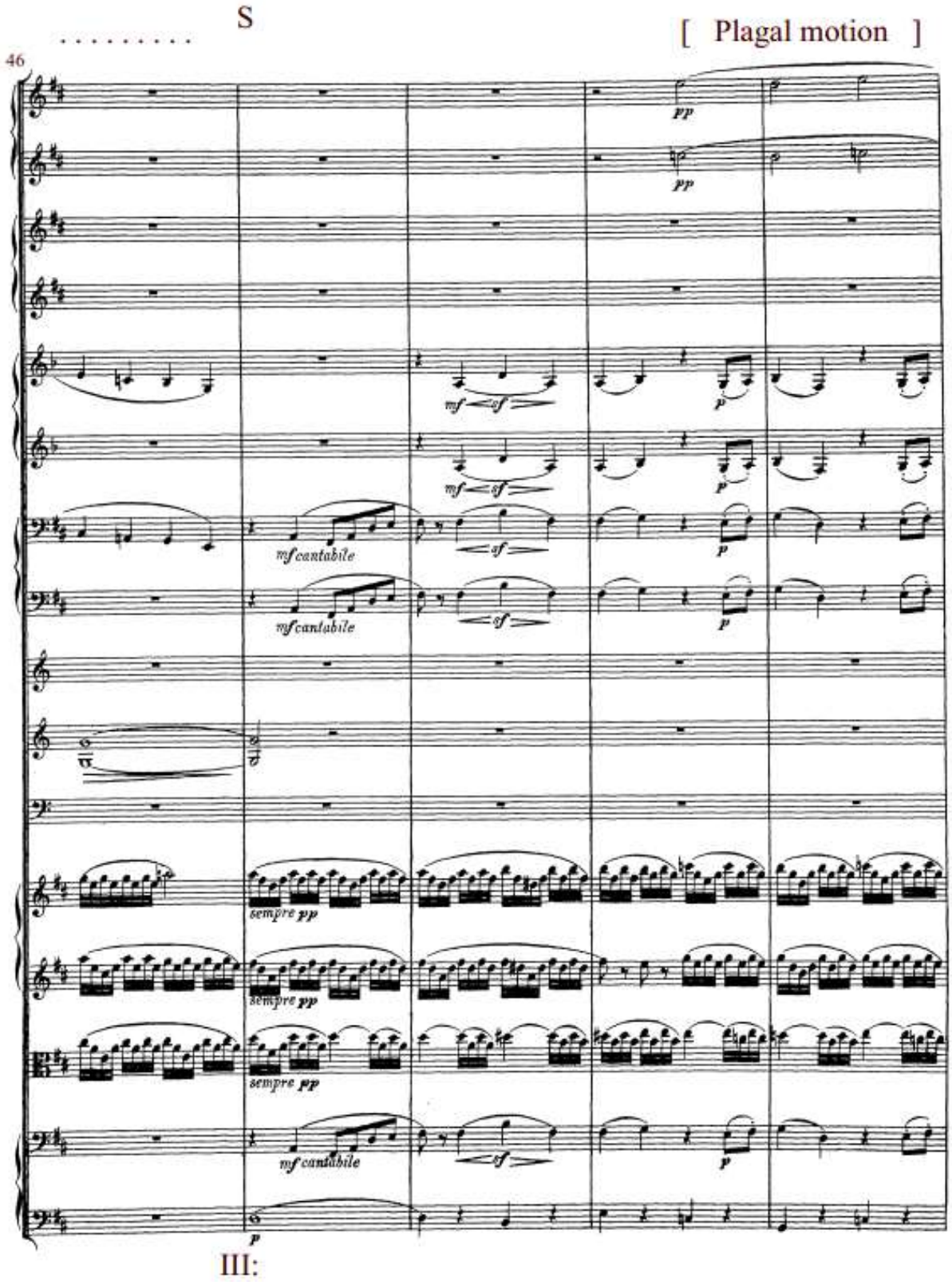

P1.2
13
i:PAC

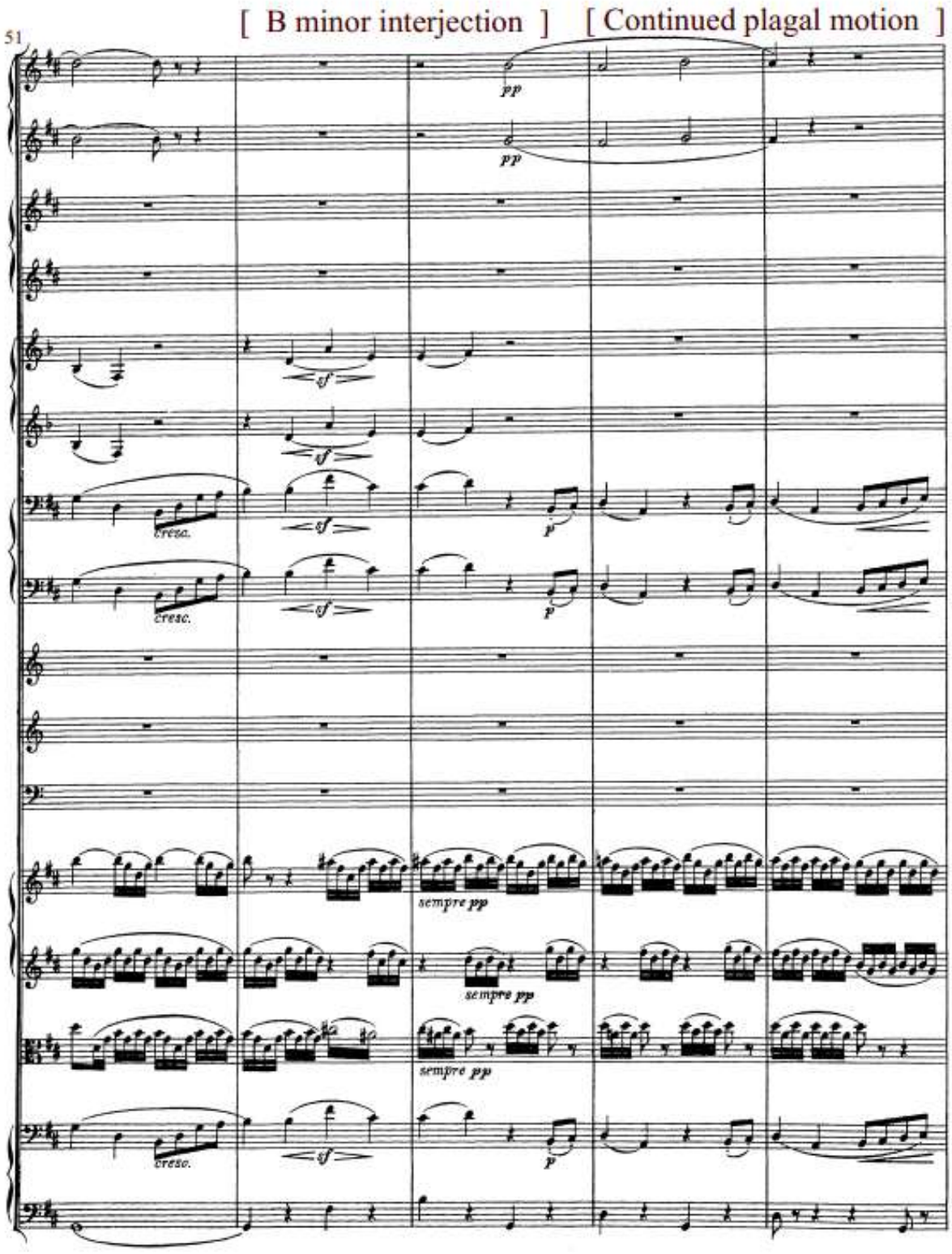
Example 4.2. *Hebrides* exposition: "MC effect," MC, and CF.



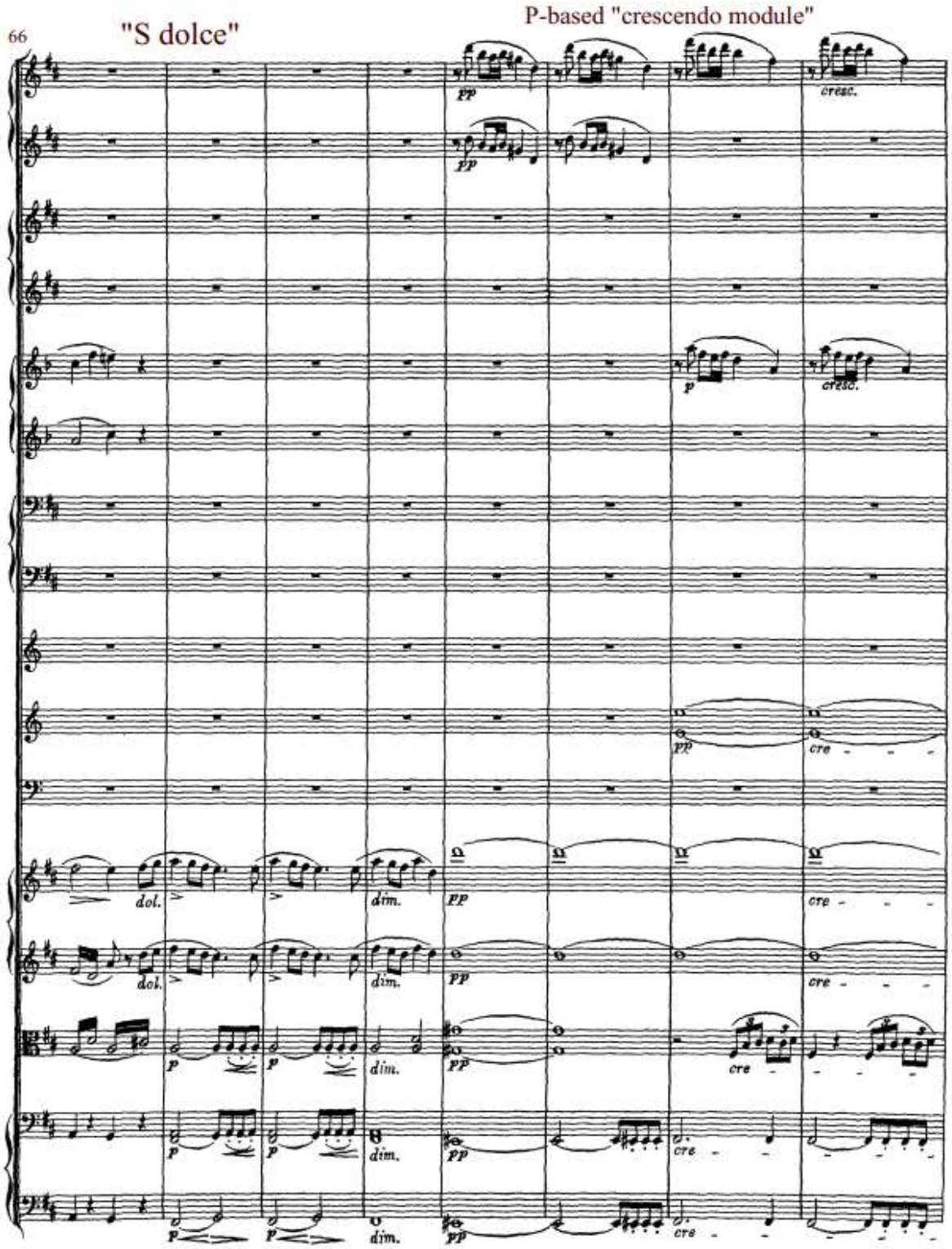

41
A
i:HC MC
III:HC CF...
dim.
dim.
dim.
dim.
a 2
A

Example 4.3. *Hebrides* exposition: S space.

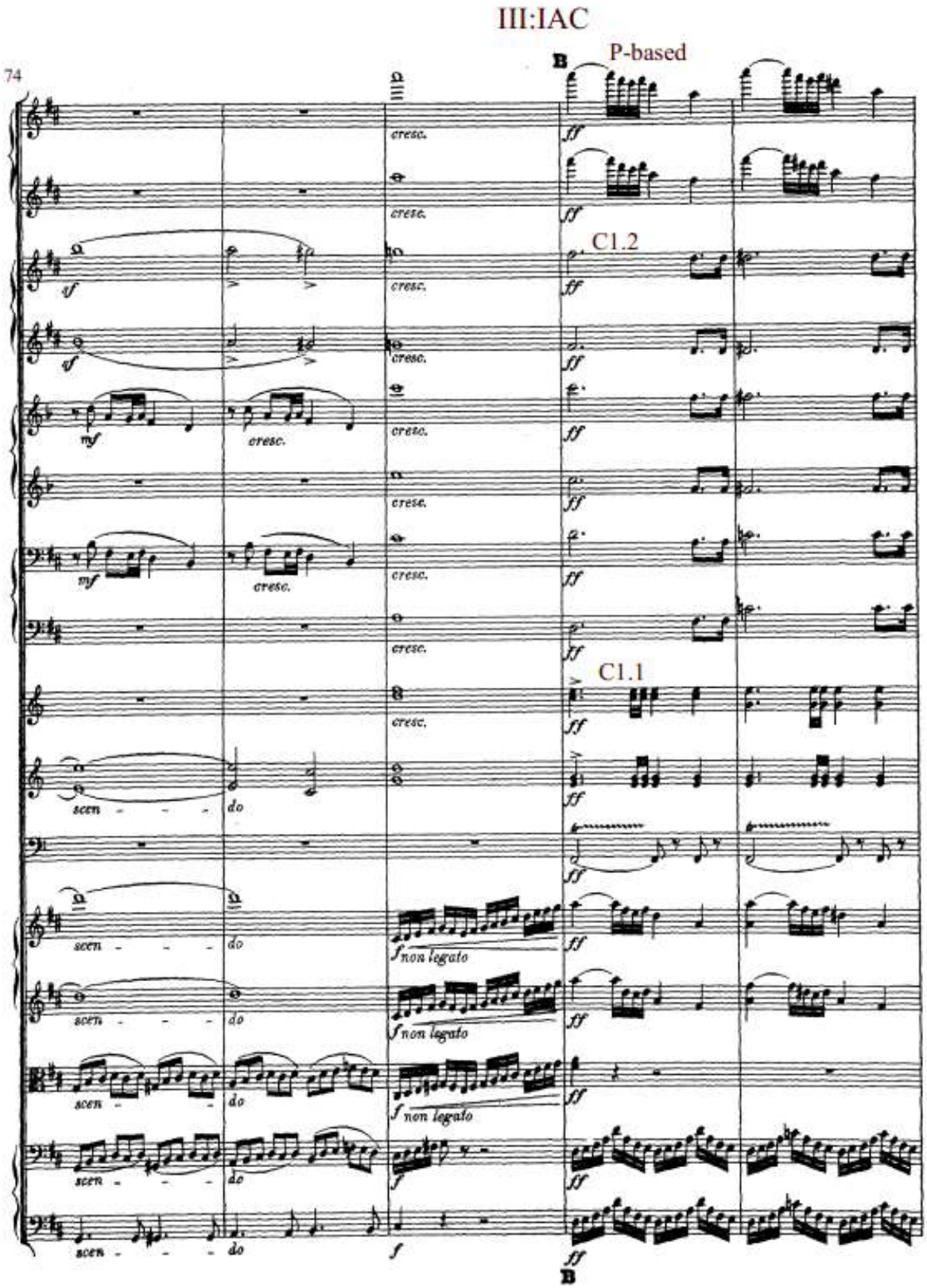



[B minor interjection]
[Continued plagal motion]
51
pp
pp
sf
sf
cresc.
sf
p
cresc.
sf
p
sempre pp
sempre pp
sempre pp
cresc.
sf
p

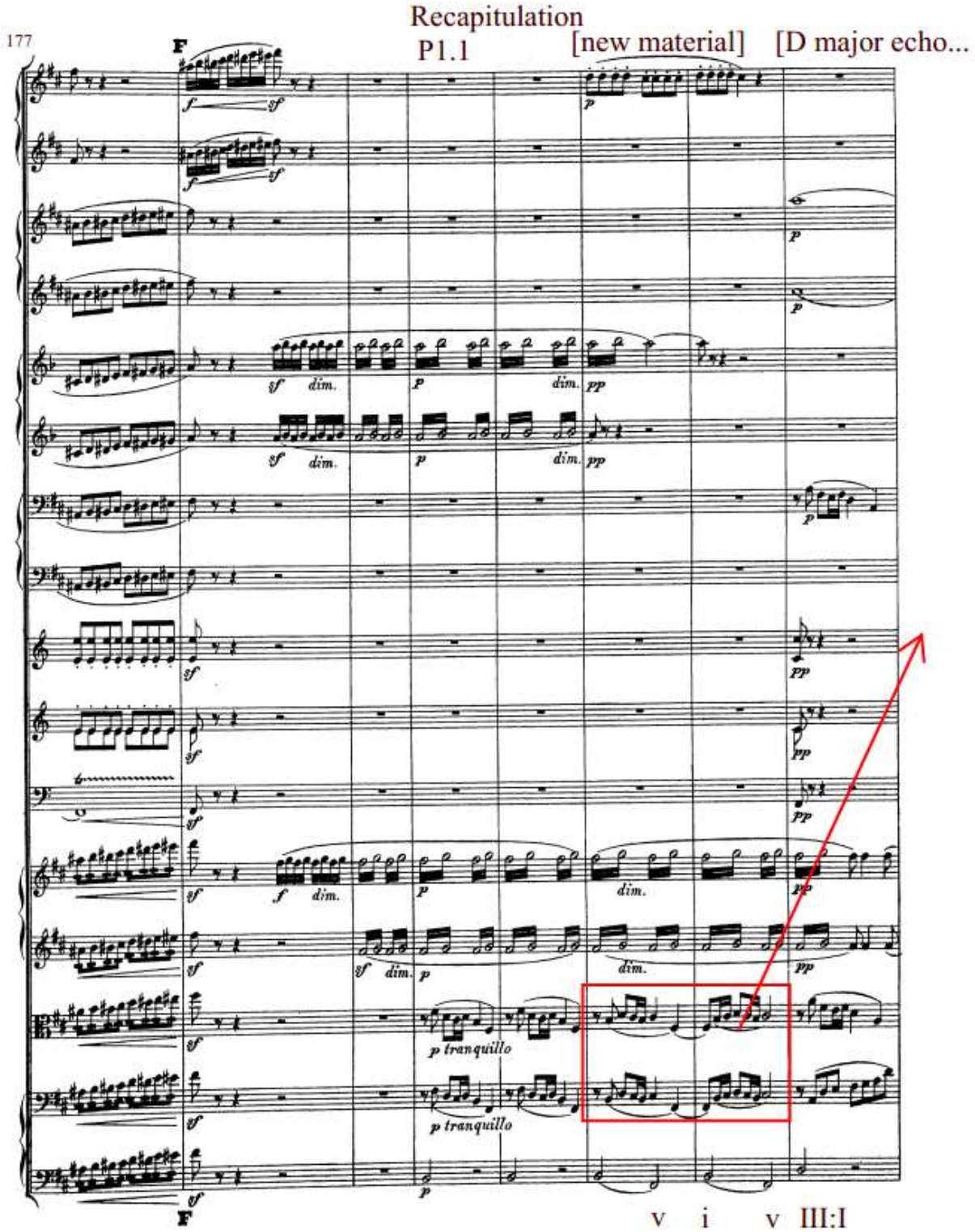
Example 4.4. *Hebrides* exposition: S *dolce* and crescendo module.

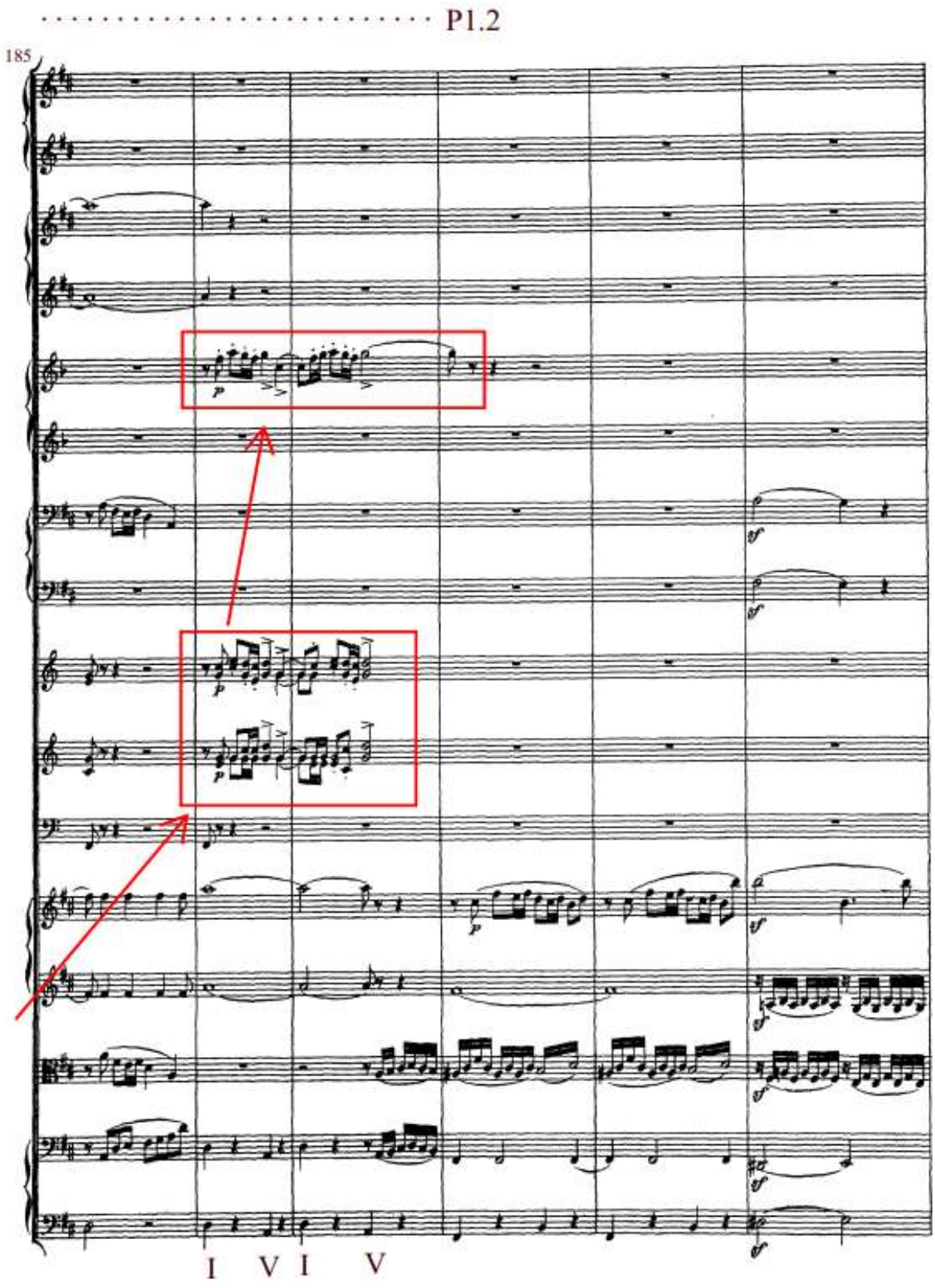


Example 4.5. ***Hebrides*** **m. 77 IAC.**



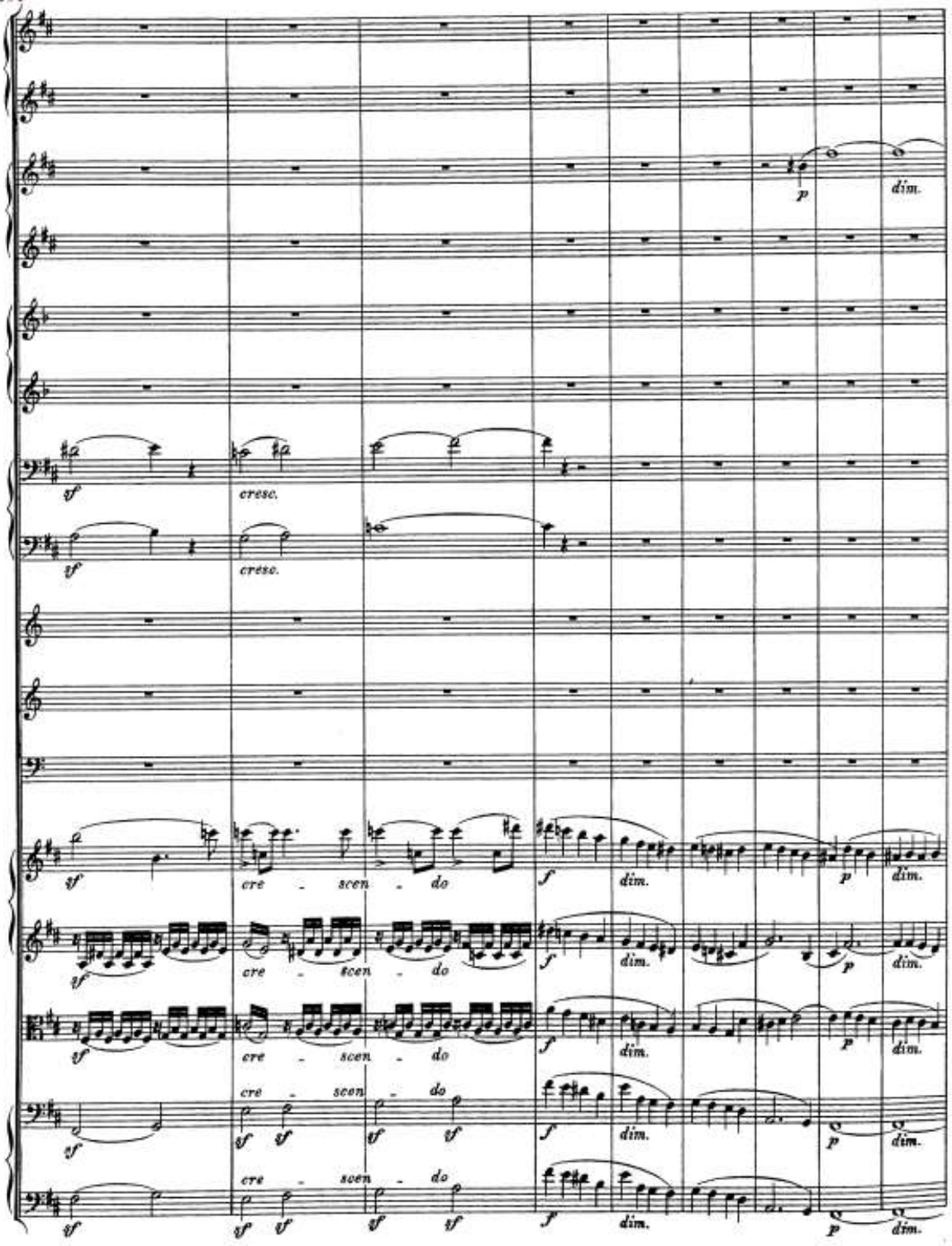
Example 4.6. *Hebrides* recapitulation: $P^{1.1}$ and $P^{1.2}$.



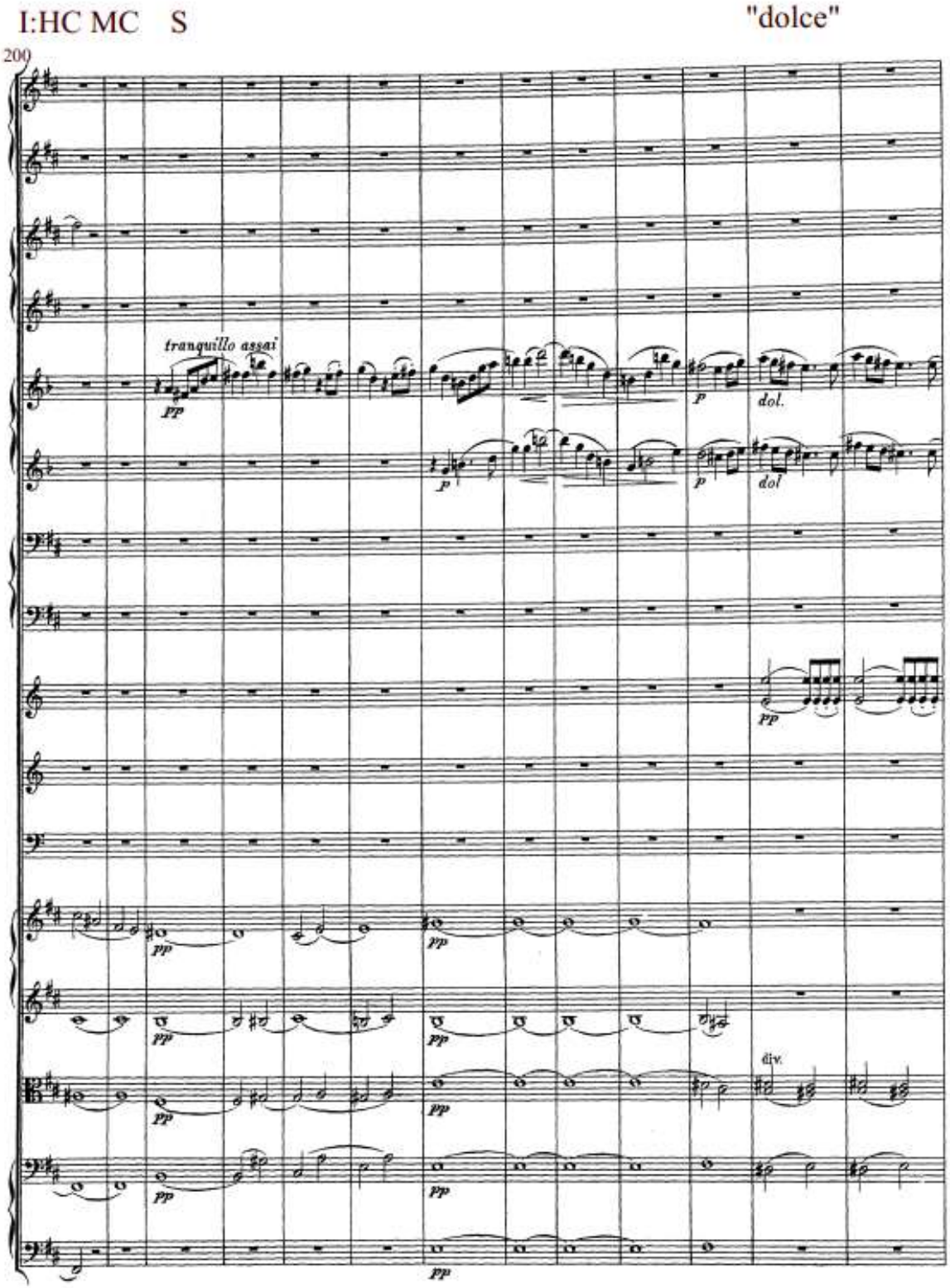

P1.2
185
I V I V

TR

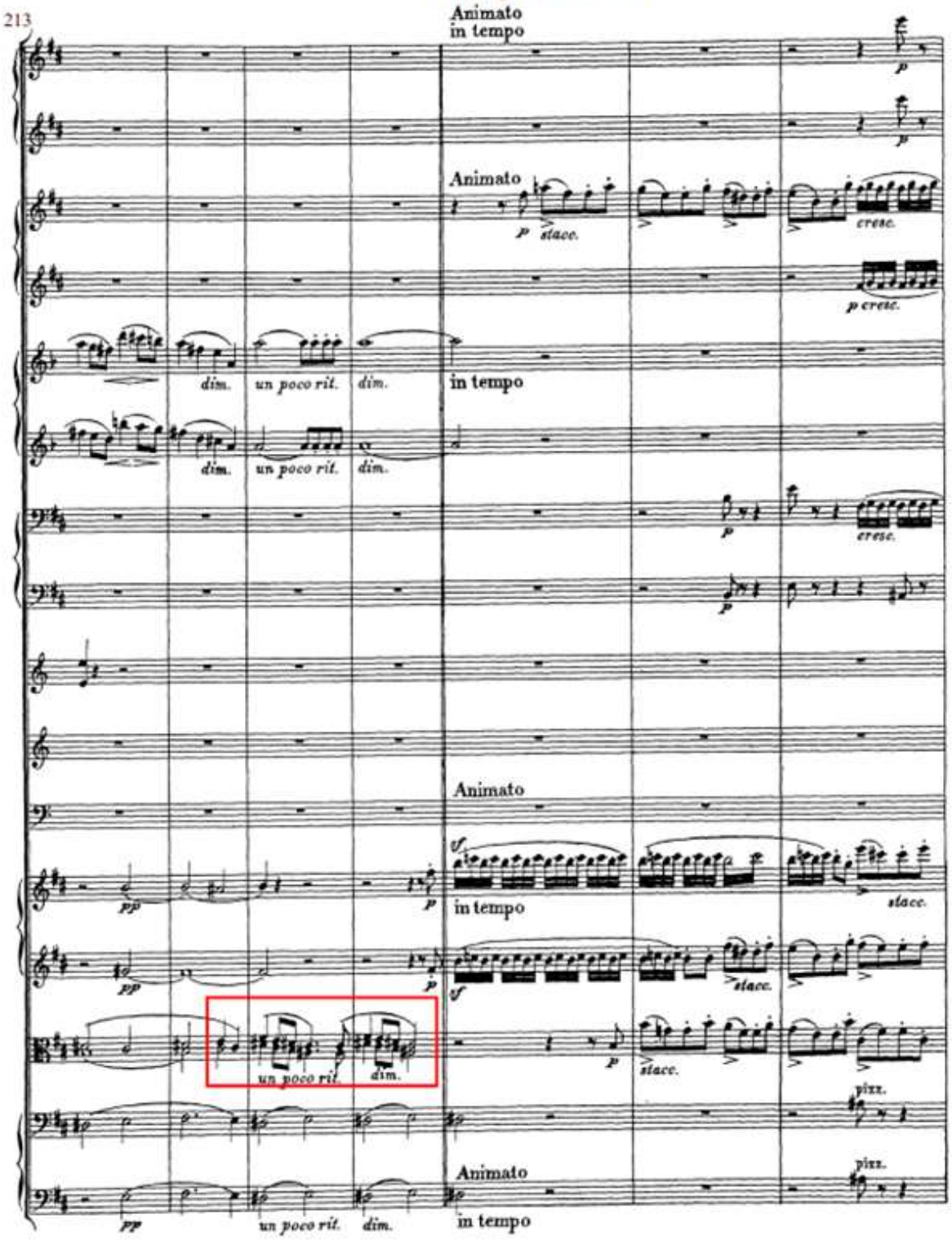
191

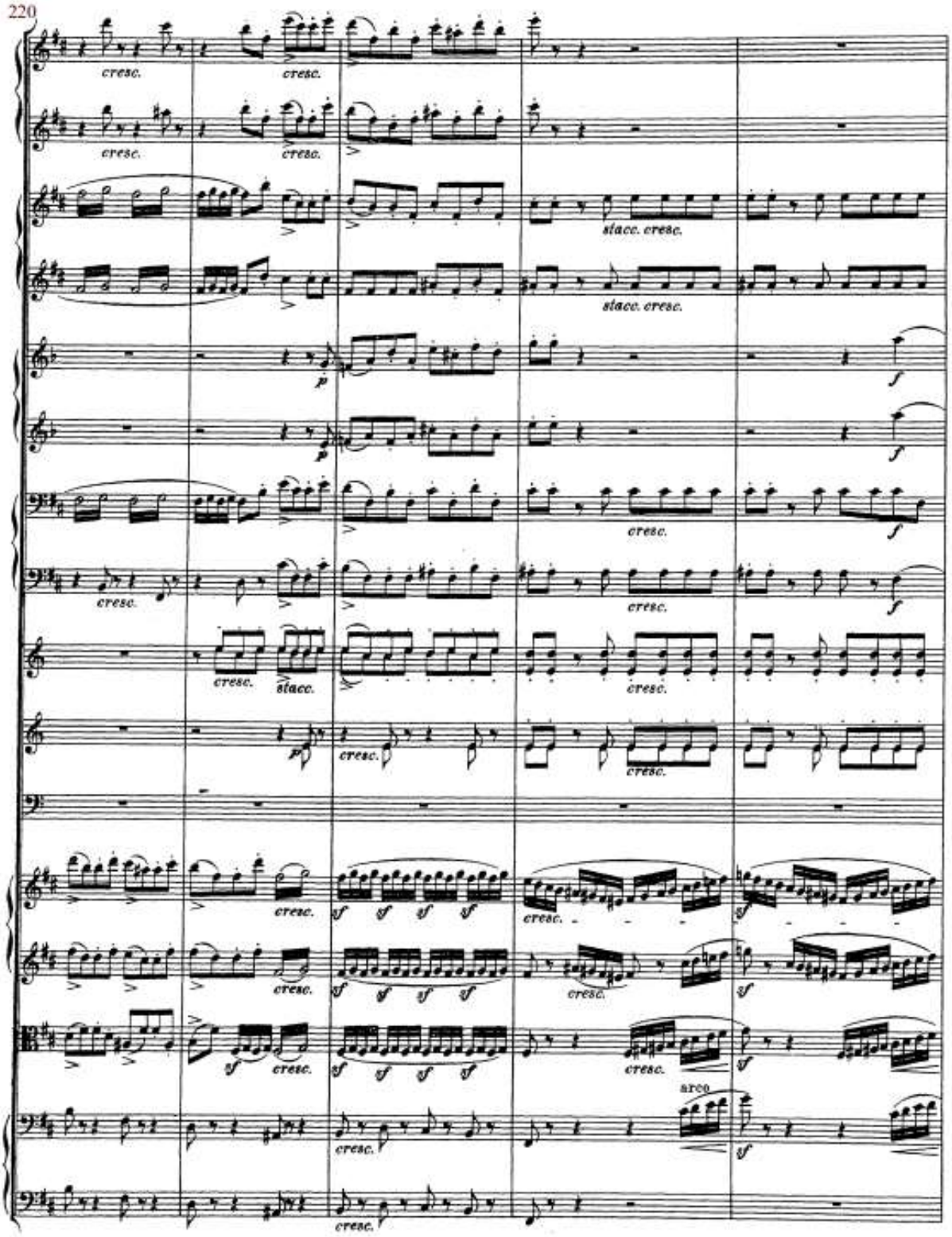

cresc.
cresc.
cre - scen - do
cre - scen - do
cre - scen - do
cre - scen - do
cre - scen - do
dim.

Example 4.7. *Hebrides* recapitulation: MC, S, *dolce*, and interpolation.

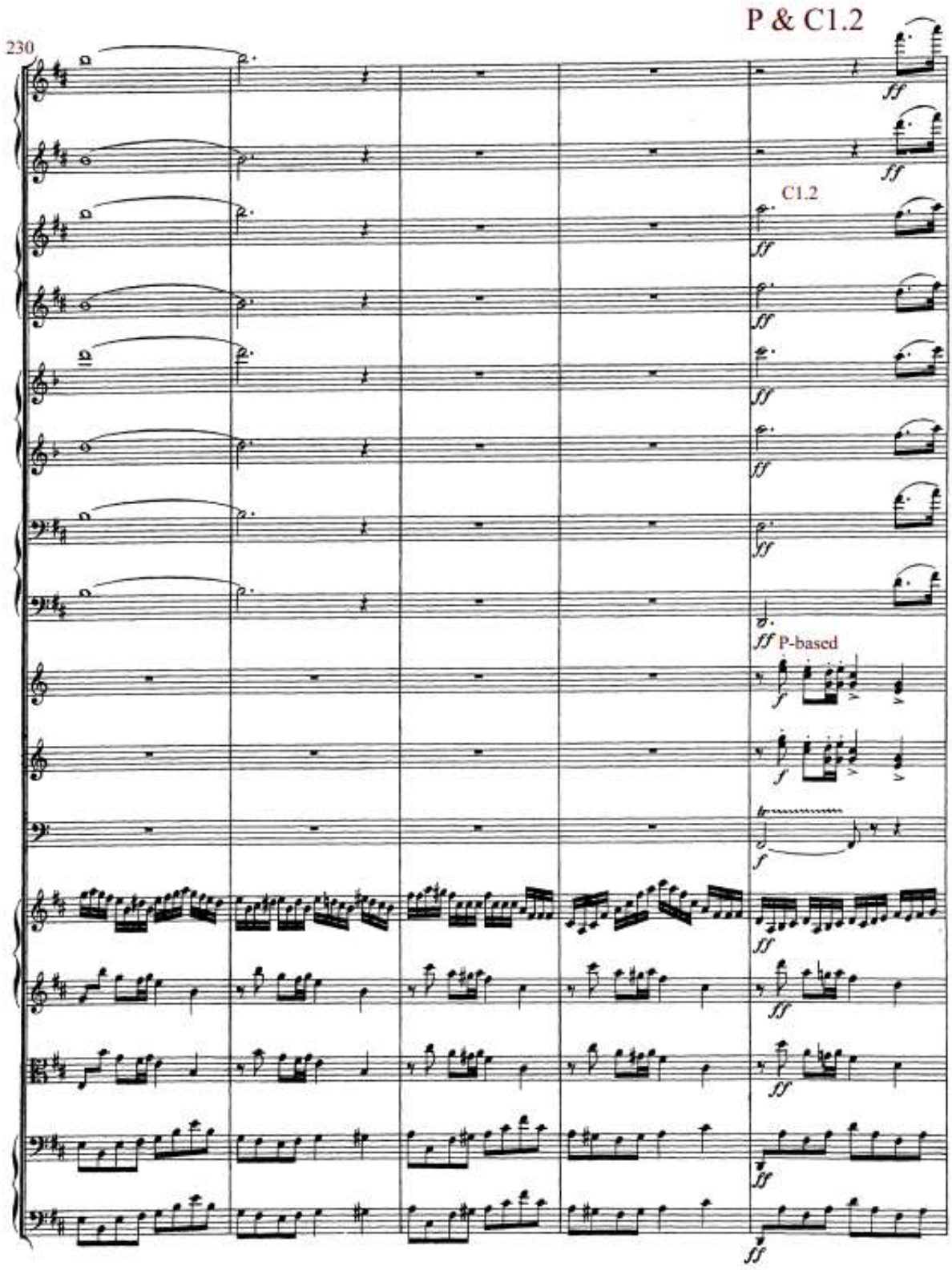


Interpolation #1

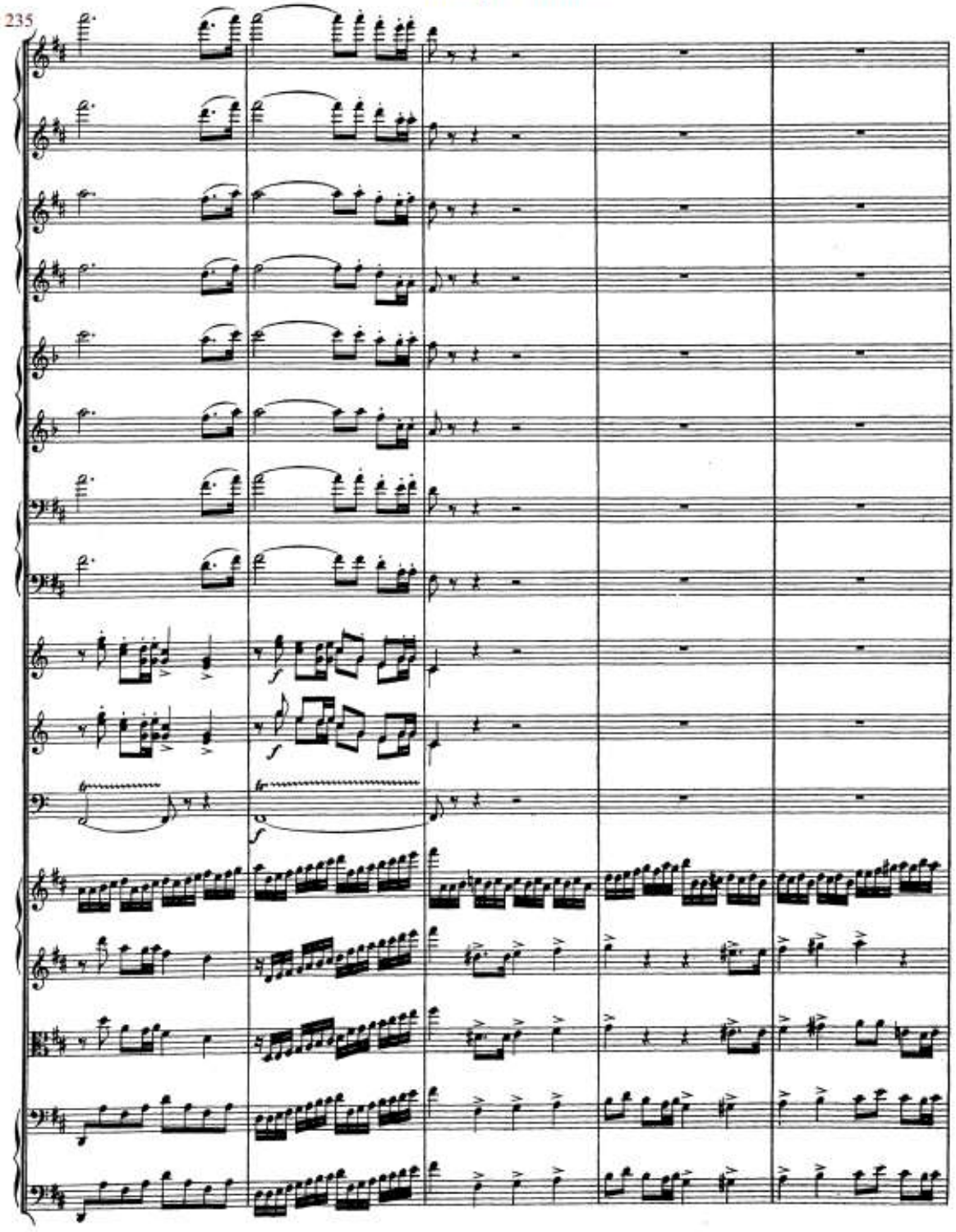



220
cresc.
stacc. cresc.
arco

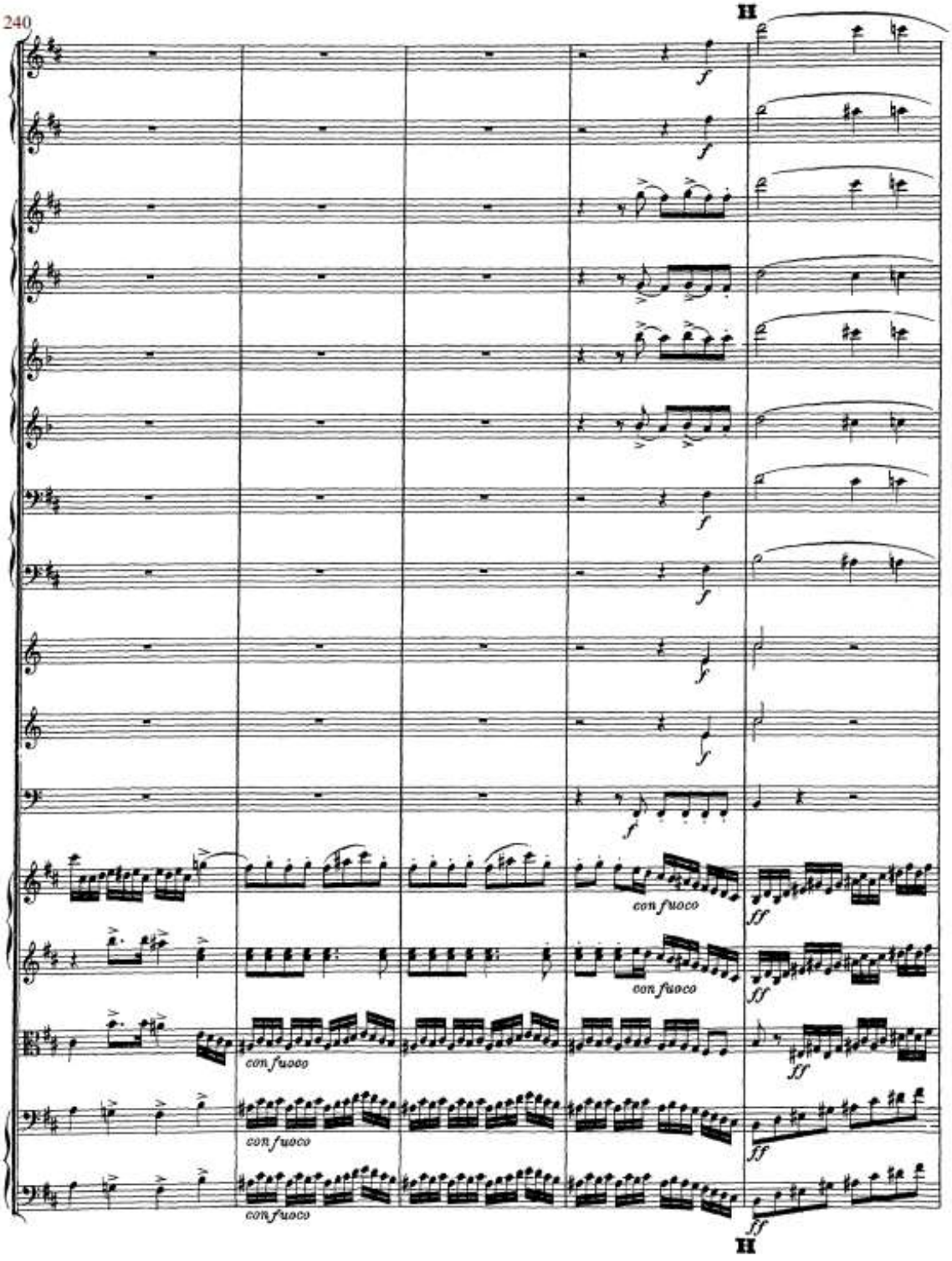
Example 4.8. ***Hebrides*** **end of recapitulation.**



Interpolation #2



Woodwinds reach for D major



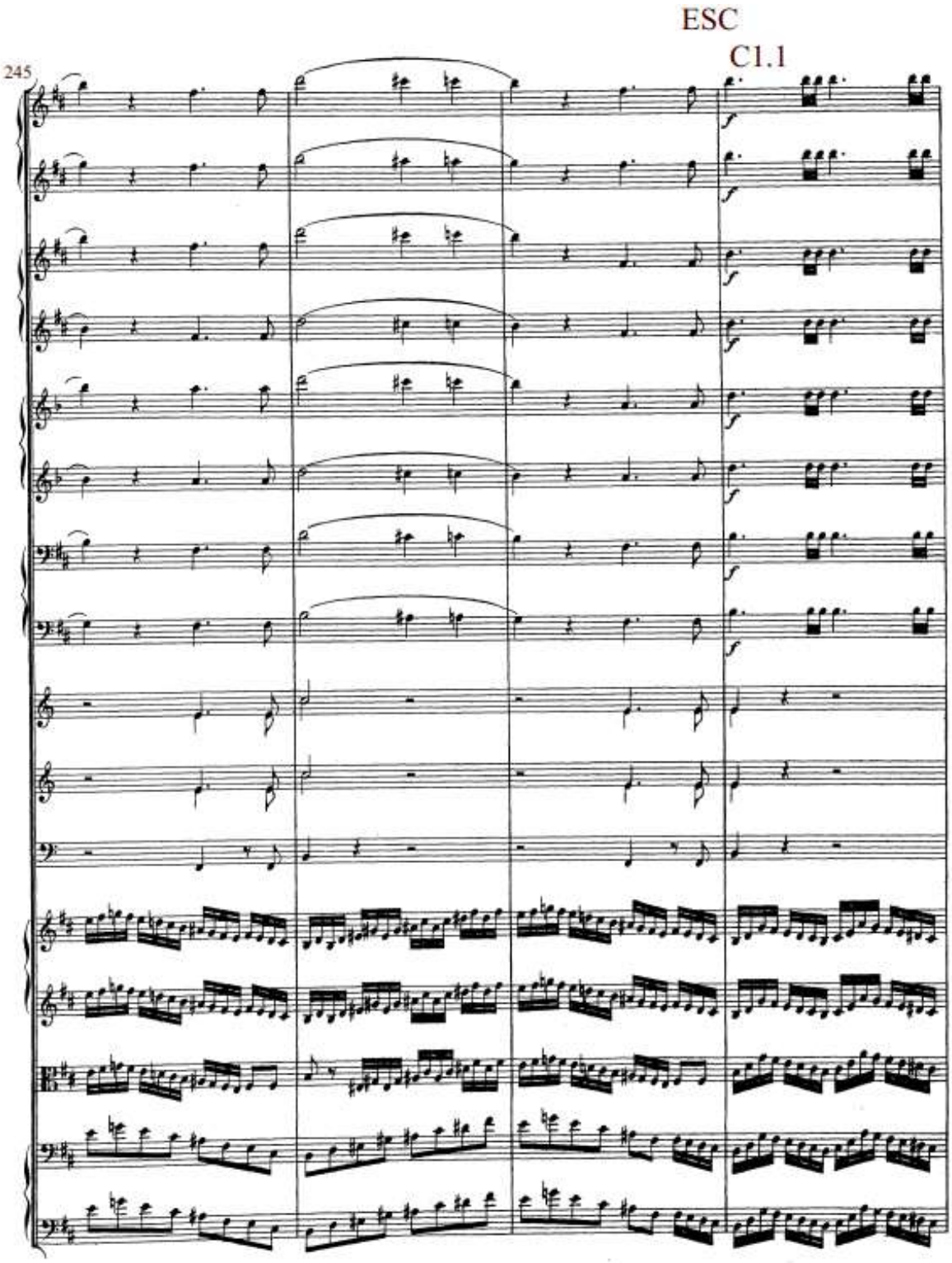
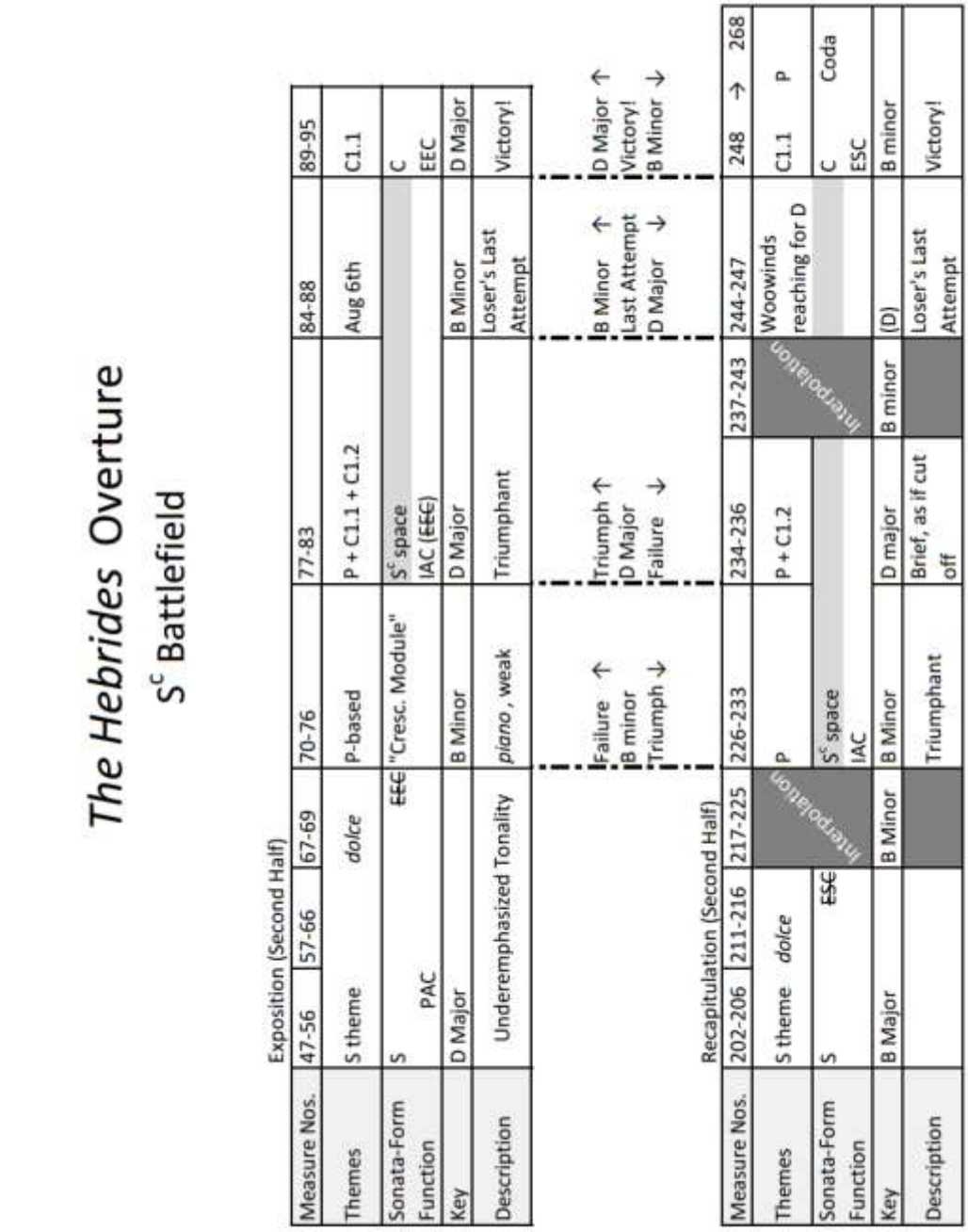

ESC
C1.1
245

Figure 4.2. *Hebrides* S^c battlefield overlap.



Example 4.9. ***Hebrides*** **final bars.**

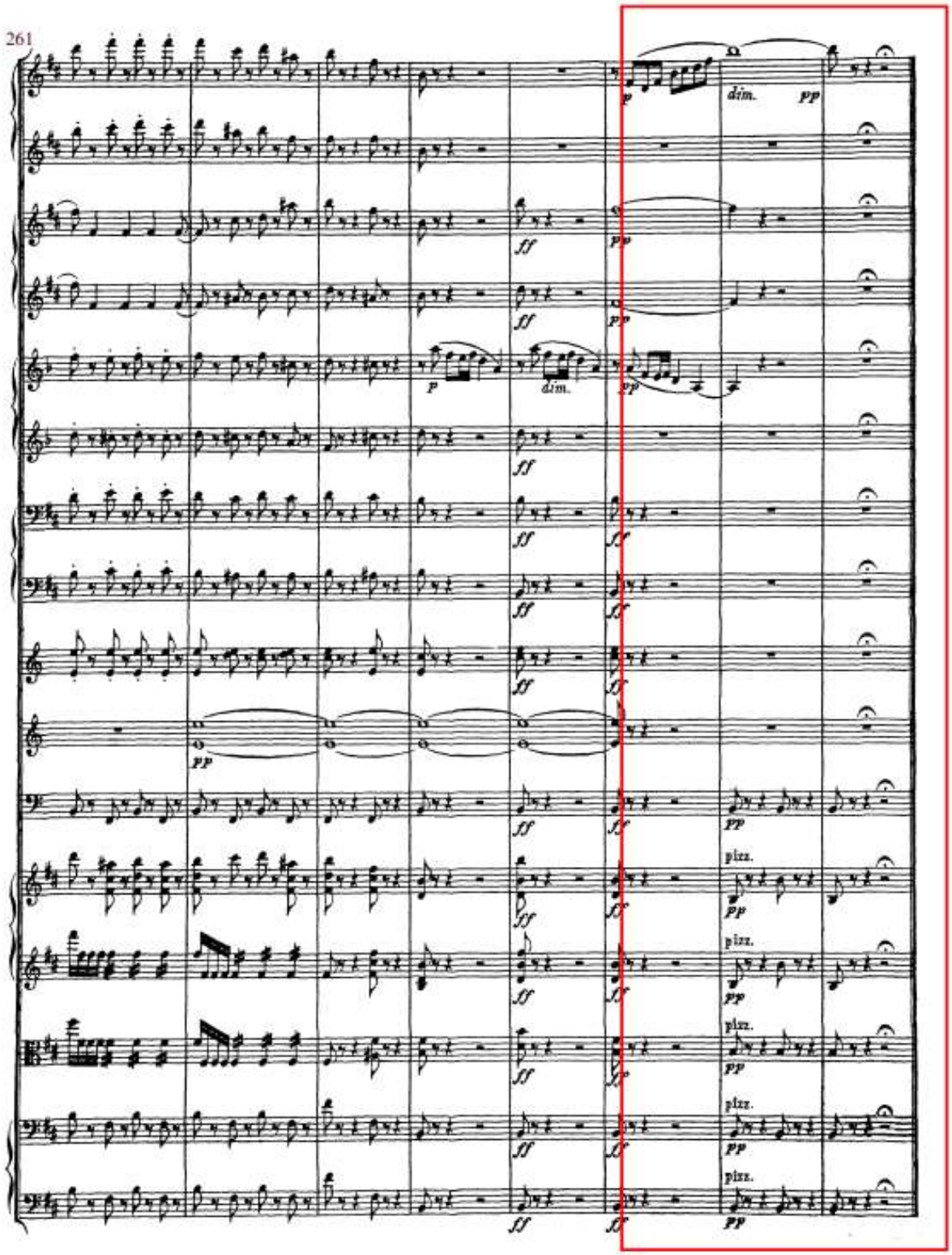
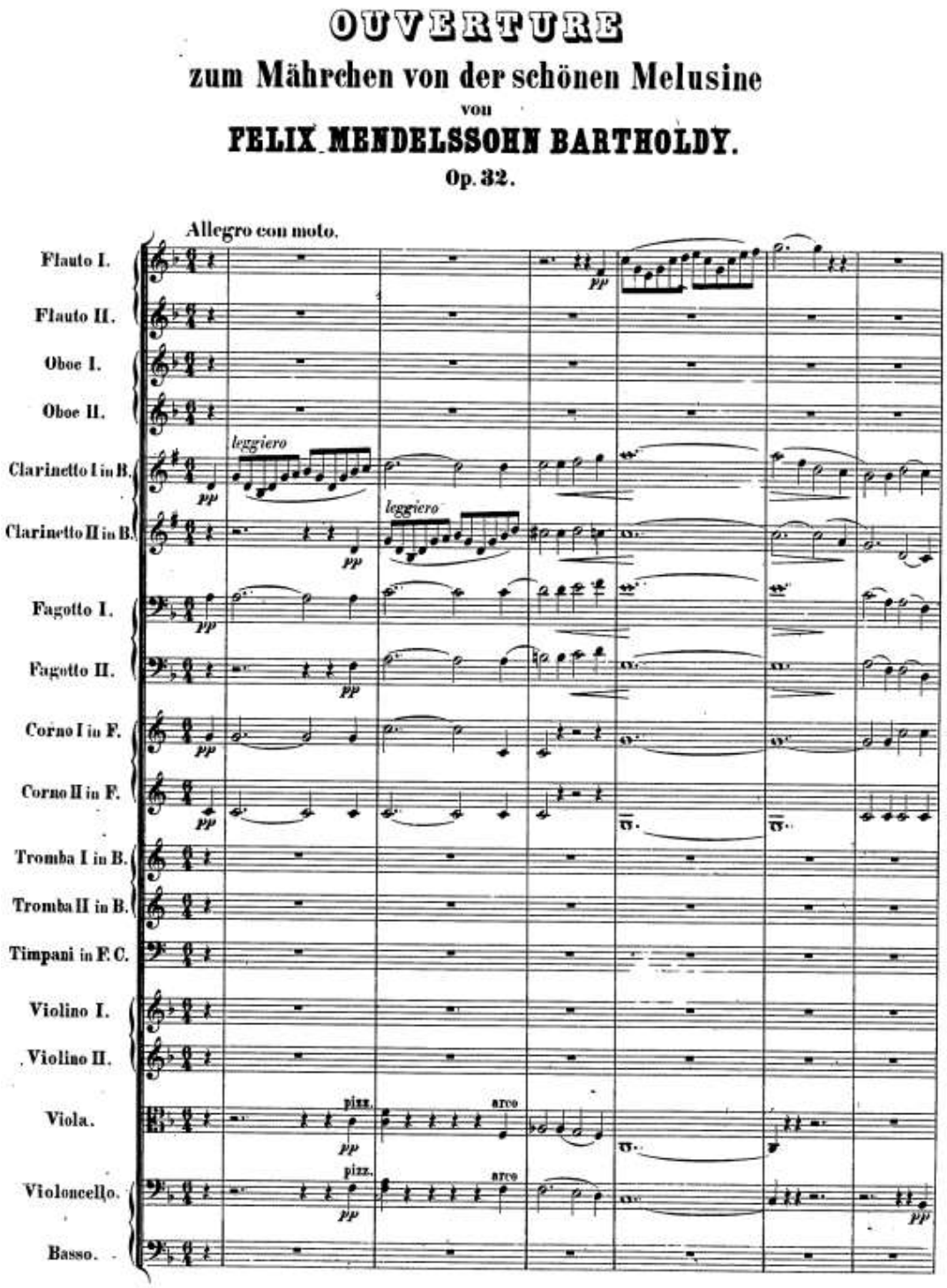


Figure 5.1. ***Melusine*** **structure.**

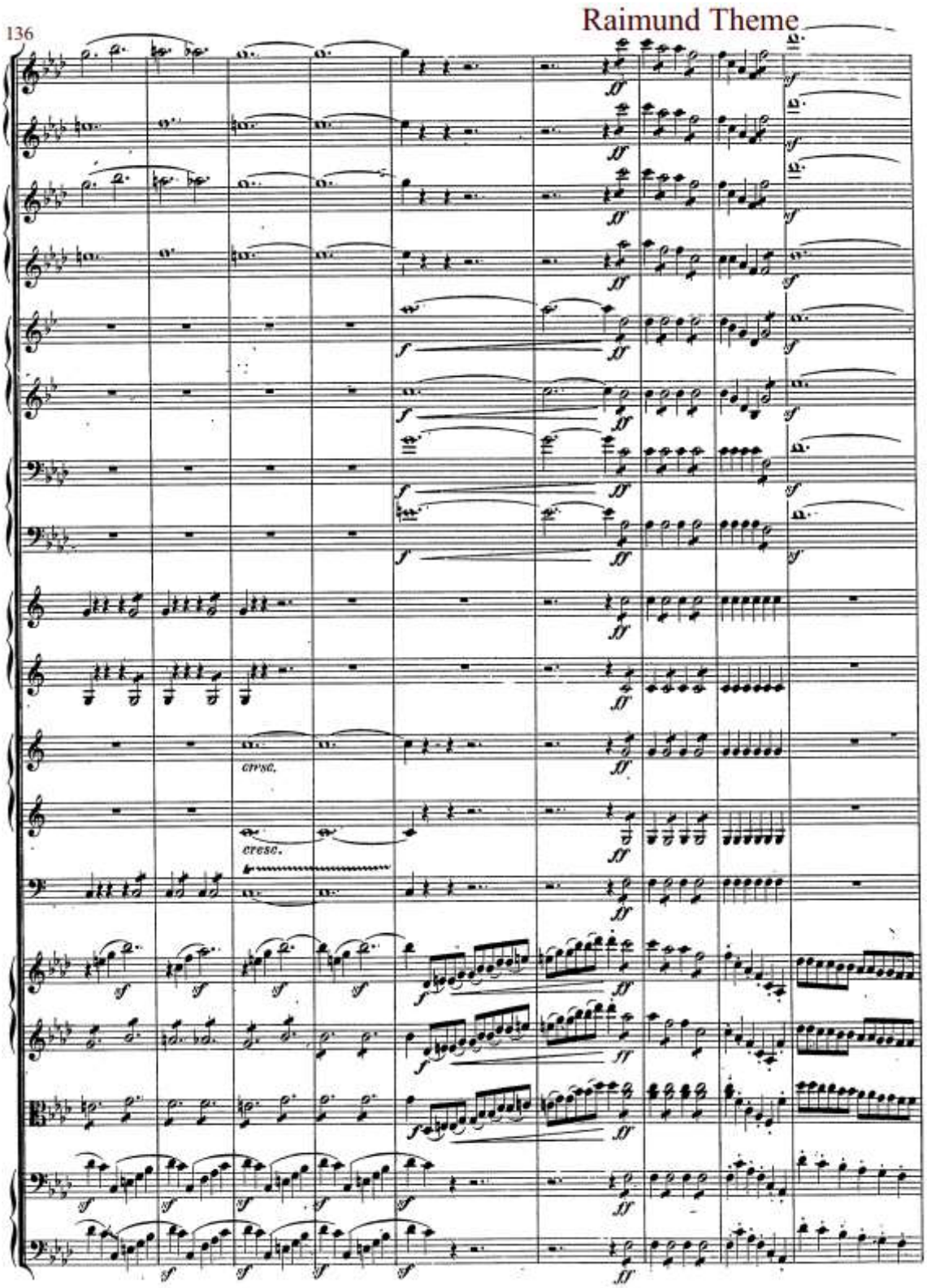
Example 5.1. Melusine theme.

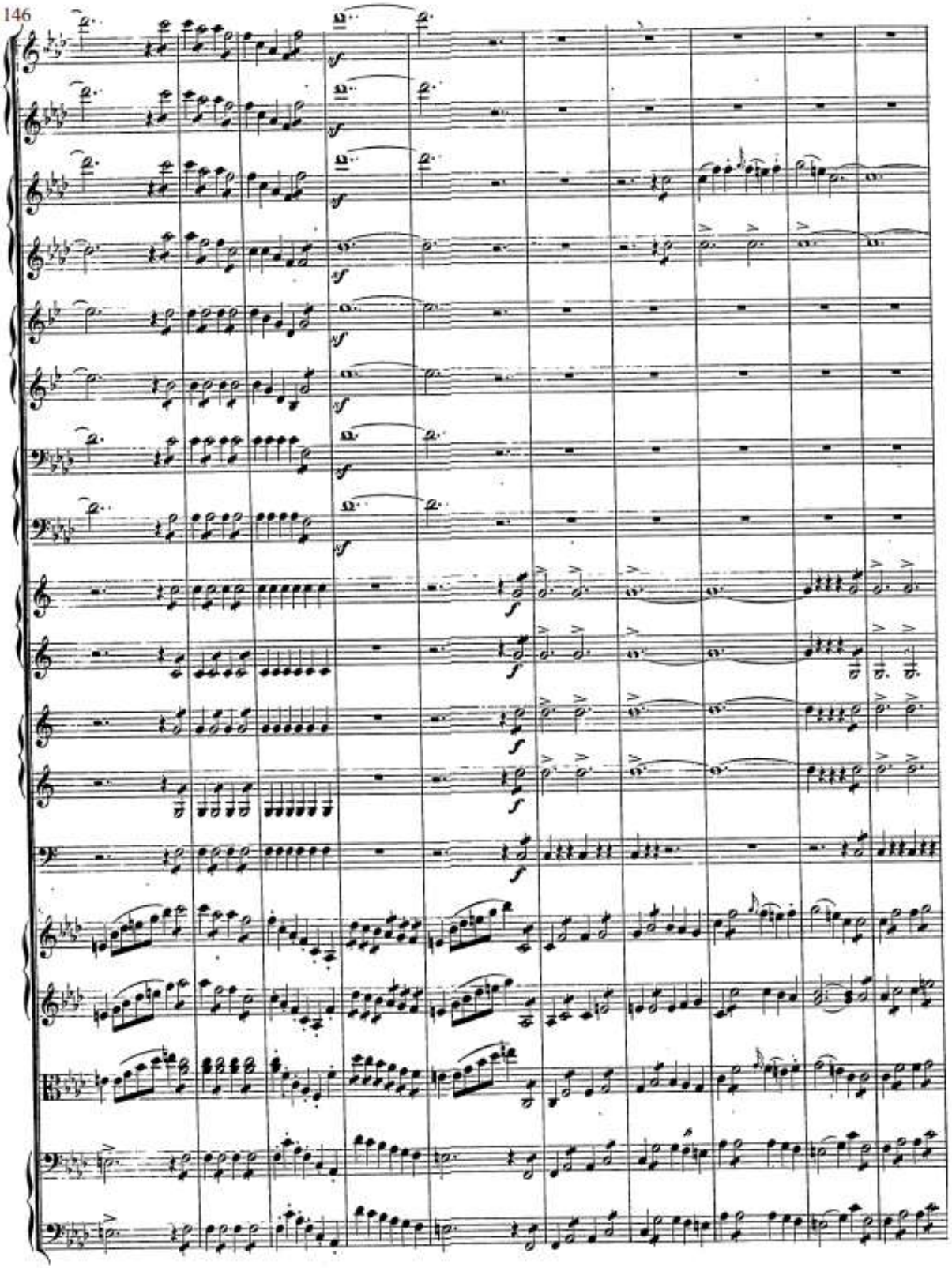


110

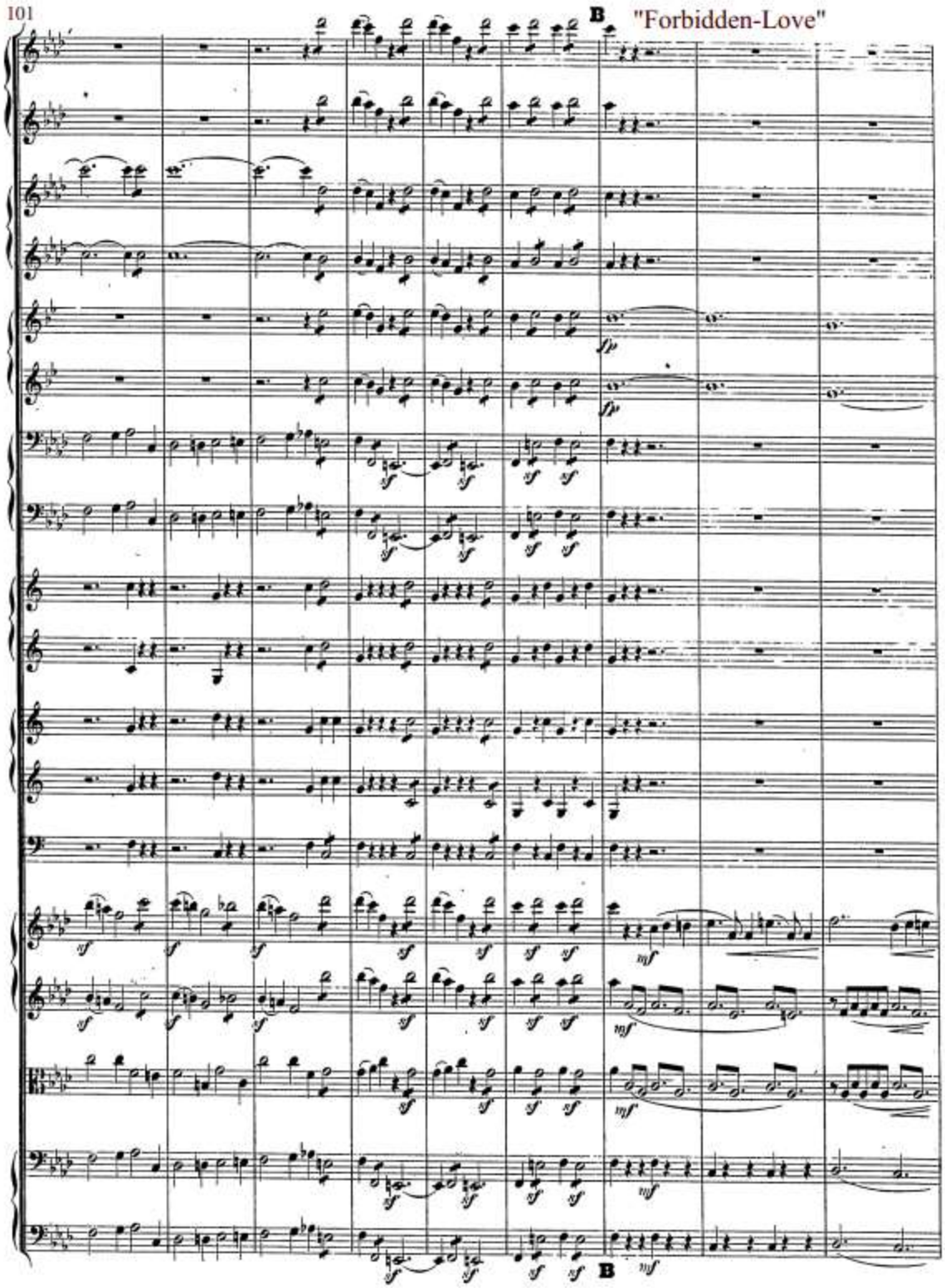
[110] Felix Mendelssohn, *Ouvertüre zum Mährchen von der Schönen Melusine*, op. 32, Series 2 no. 10 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz (Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1877).

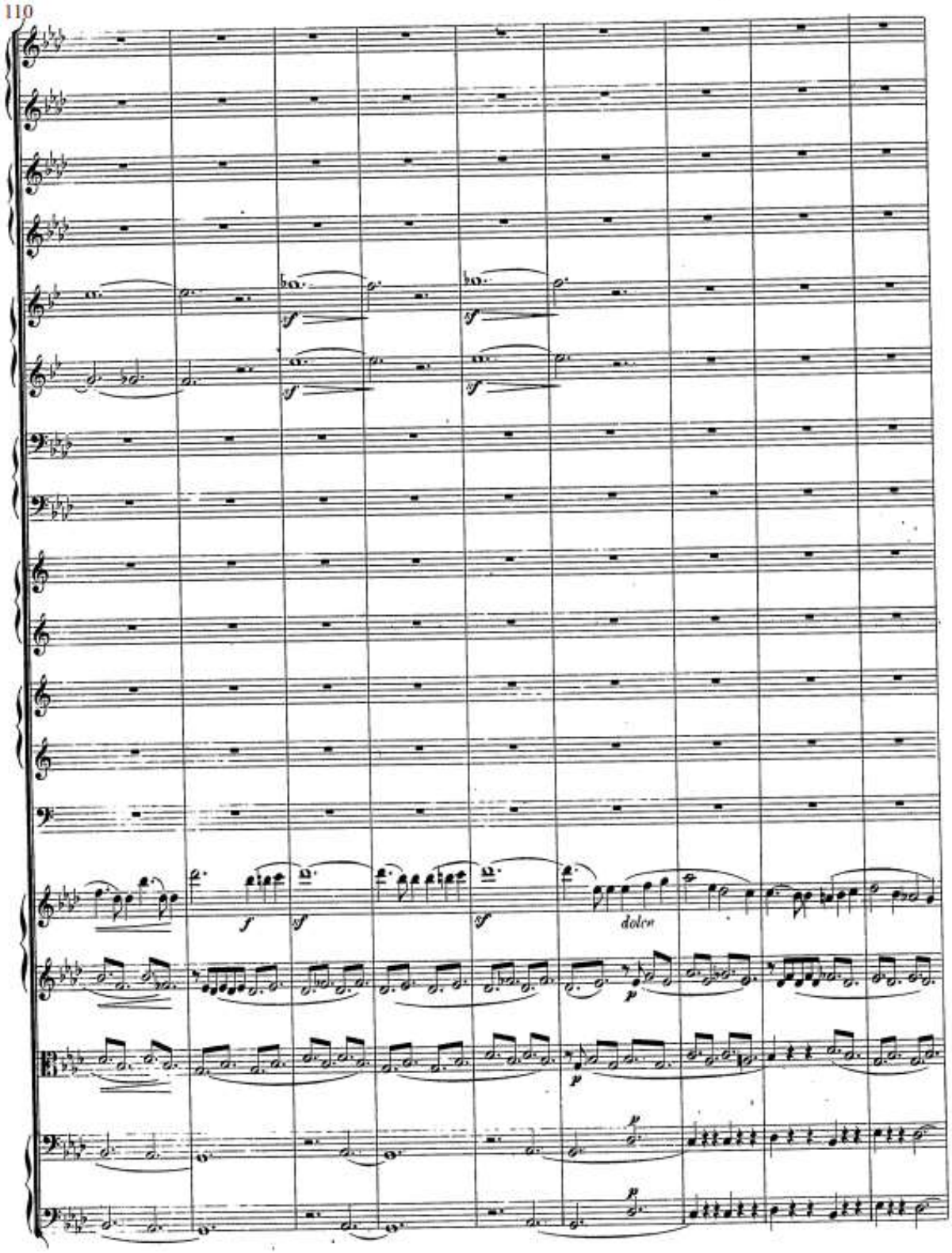
Example 5.2. ***Melusine*** **Raimund theme.**



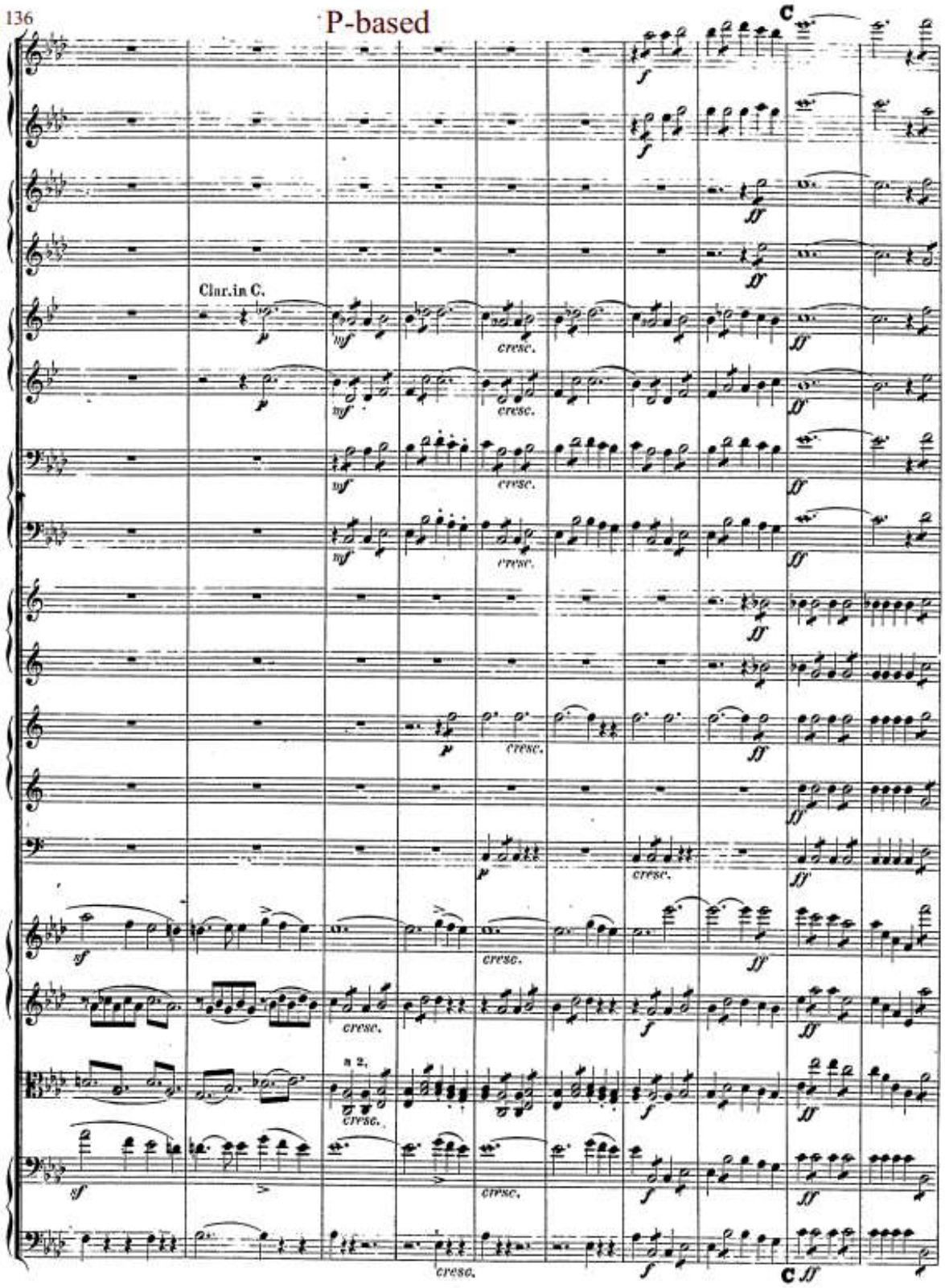

146

Example 5.3. ***Melusine*** **"forbidden-love" theme.**

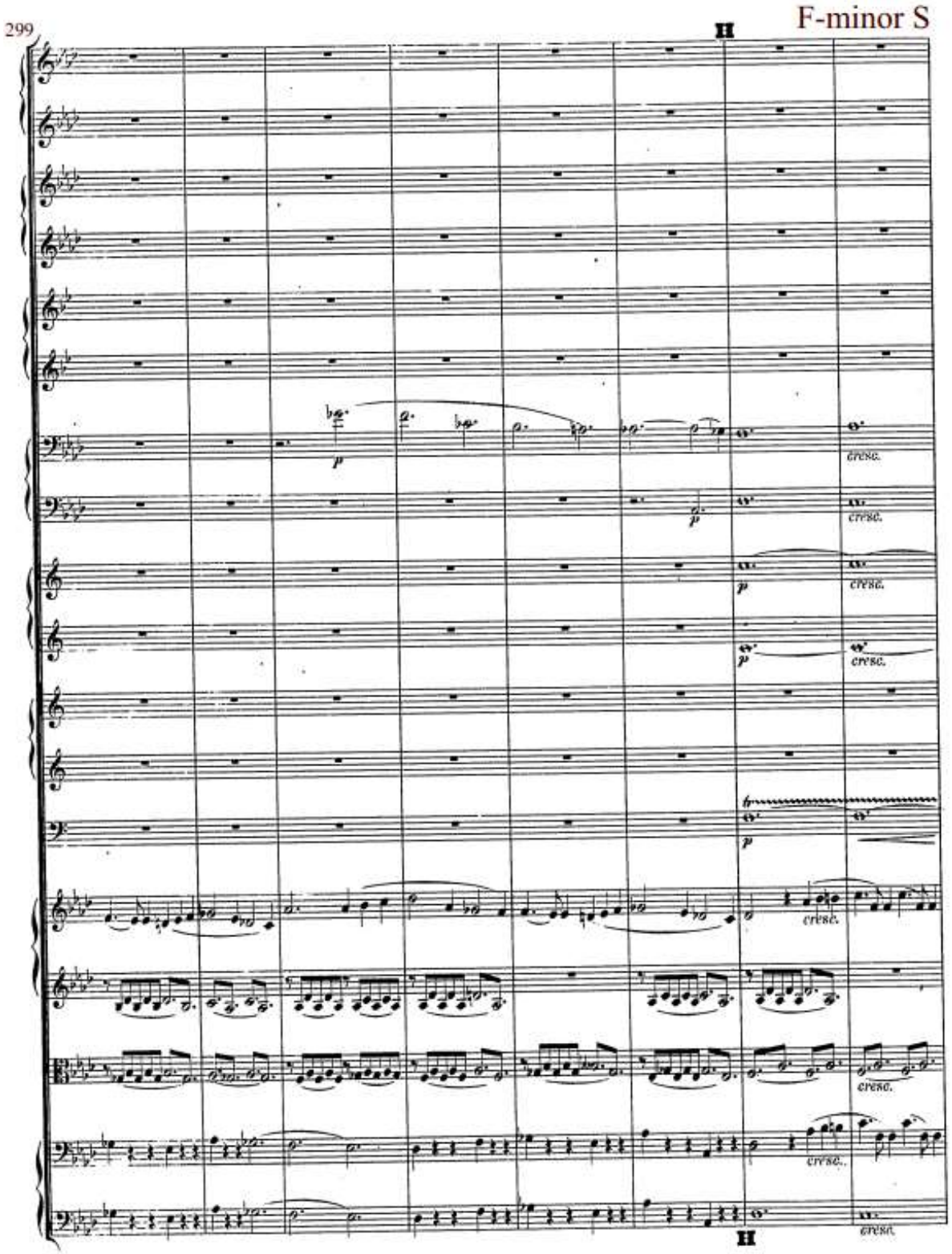


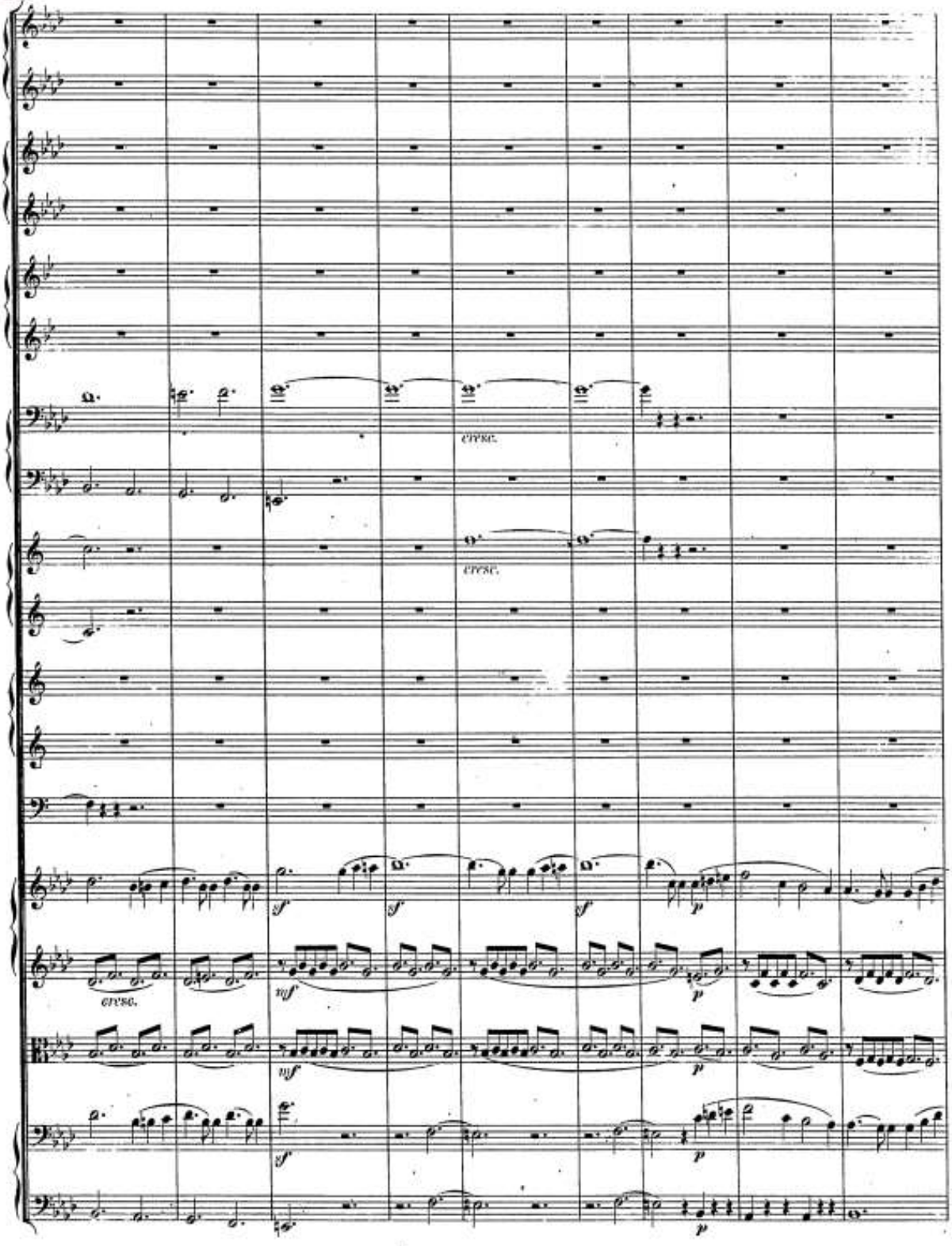

110
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
f
dolce
p
p
p
p

Example 5.4. ***Melusine*** **exposition: S^{c} Space.**

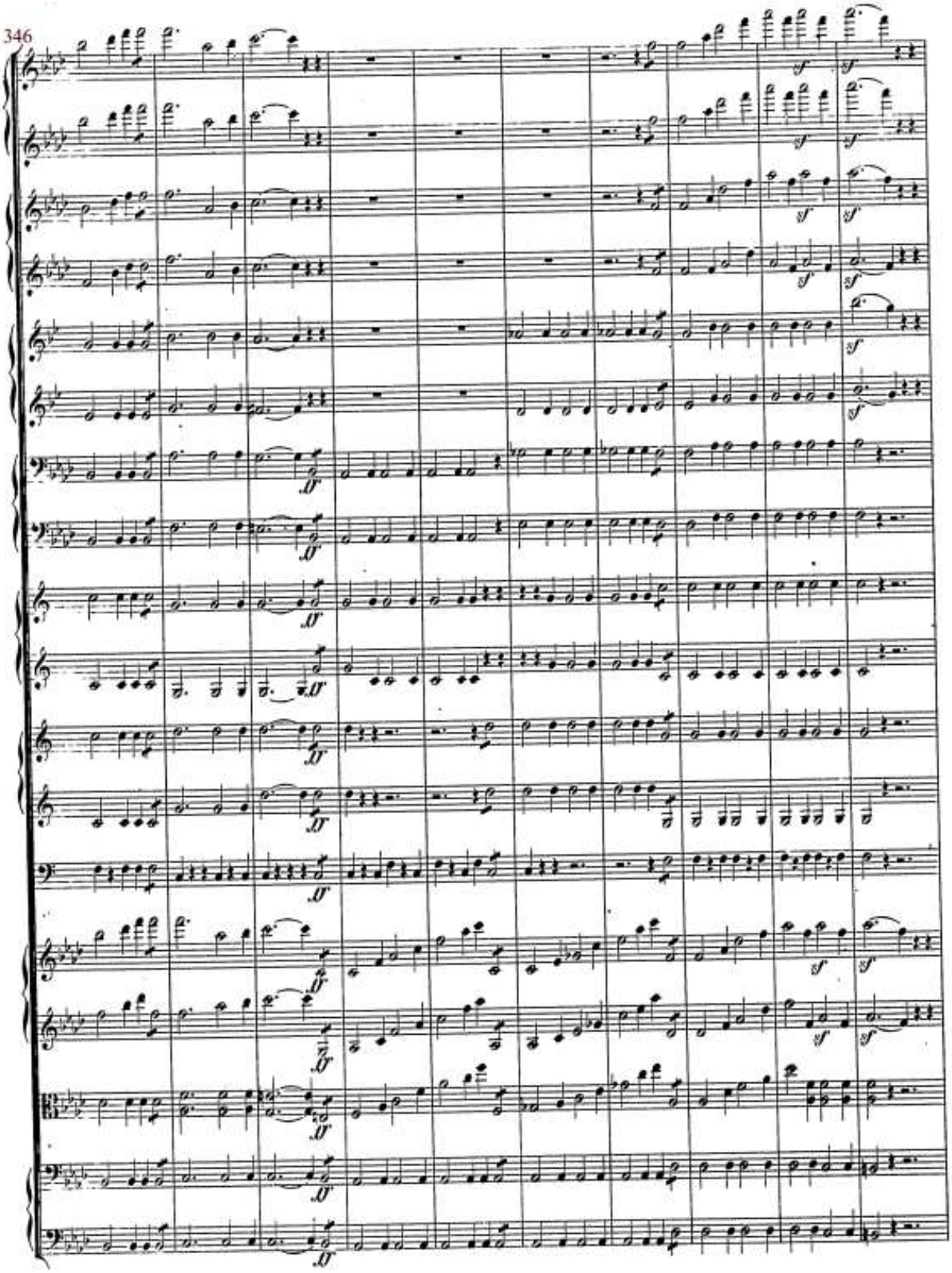


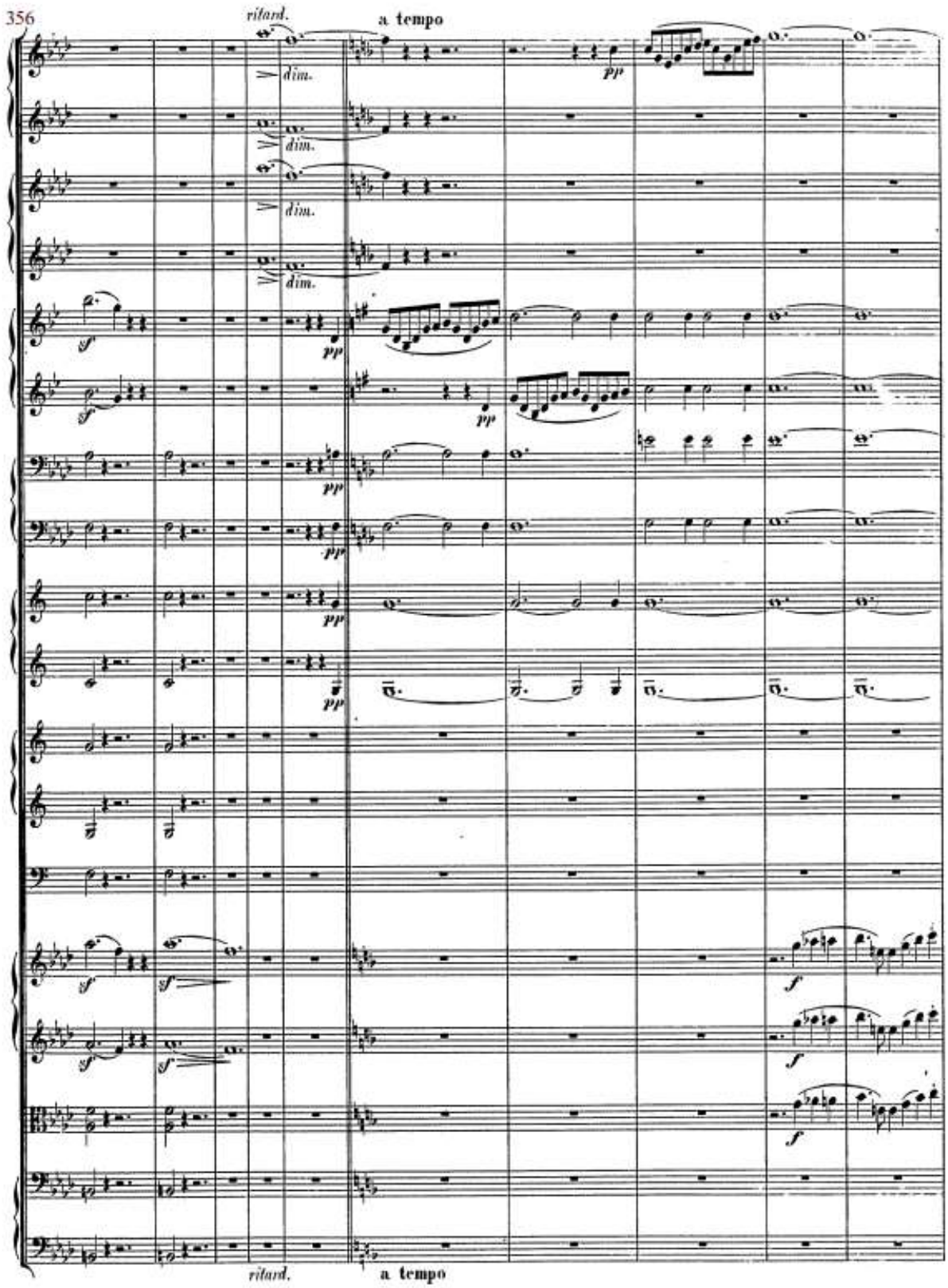
Example 5.5. ***Melusine*** **recapitulation: minor S.**




cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
sf
sf
sf
p
mf
mf
p
sf
p
p

Example 5.6. ***Melusine*** **ESC failure.**




356
ritard.
a tempo
dim.
dim.
dim.
dim.
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
f
f
f
f
f
f
f
f
ritard.
a tempo

Bibliography

Almén, Byron. *A Theory of Musical Narrative*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008.

Devrient, Eduard. *My Recollections of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and His Letters to Me*. Translated by Natalia MacFarren. London: Bentley, 1869.

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Gedichte: Erster Theil*. Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1815.

Grey, Thomas S. "The Orchestral Music." In *The Mendelssohn Companion*, edited by Douglas Seaton, 395–550. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001.

Haney, Joel. "Navigating Sonata Space in Mendelssohn's *Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt*." *19th-Century Music* 28, no. 2 (2004): 108–132.

Hatten, Robert. *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

_____. *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

_____. "On Narrativity in Music: Expressive Genres and Levels of Discourse in Beethoven." *Indiana Theory Review* 12 (1991): 75–98.

Hensel, Sebastian. *The Mendelssohn Family (1729–1847) from Letters and Journals*. Translated by Carl Klingemann. 2 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882.

Hepokoski, James, and Warren Darcy. *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

_____. "The Medial Caesura and Its Role in the Eighteenth-Century Sonata Exposition." *Music Theory Spectrum* 19 (1997): 115–54.

Klein, Michael. "Chopin's Fourth Ballade as Musical Narrative." *Music Theory Spectrum* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 23–56.

McClary, Susan. *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, eds. *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*. Translated by Lady Wallace. London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1864.

Mendelssohn, Felix. *Ouvertüre zum Mährchen von der Schönen Melusine*, op. 32. Series 2 no. 10 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz. Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1877.

_____. *Ouvertüre Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt*, op. 27. Series 2 no. 9 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz. Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1877.

_____. *Ouvertüre Die Hebriden (Die Fingalshöhle)*, op. 26. Series 2 no. 8 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz. Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1874.

_____. *Musik zu Sommernachtstraum von Shakespeare*, op. 61. Series 15 no. 117 of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Werke*, edited by Julius Rietz. Leipzig: Breitkopft & Härtel, 1874–1877.

Niecks, Frederick. *Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries: A Contribution to the History of Musical Expression*. New York: H. W. Gray, 1907.

Pelto, William. "Musical Structure and Extramusical Meaning in the Concert Overtures of Felix Mendelssohn." Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1993.

Rapoport, Erez. *Mendelssohn's Instrumental Music: Structure and Style*. Hillsdale, New York: Pendragon Press, 2012.

_____. "The Smoothing-Over of Formal Junctures as a Style Element in Mendelssohn's Instrumental Music." Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2004.

Schumann, Robert. *On Music and Musicians*. Edited by Konrad Wolff, translated by Paul Rosenfeld. New York: Norton, 1946.

Seaton, Douglas. "Symphony and Overture." In *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn,* edited by Peter Mercer-Taylor, 91–111. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Todd, R. Larry. *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Todd, R. Larry. *Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.