THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE | MELBOURNE CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

University of Melbourne Symphonic Ensembles
2026 Auditions: Harp

Please prepare all excerpts as instructed, however please note you may not be asked to perform all excerpts.

1. **BORODIN** *Prince Igor* 'Polovtsian Dances' *Page 1 – 2*
   Fig. A to 15 bars after B

Take care to arpeggiate every chord in the section from Fig. A to Fig. B with full finger articulation. Listen to recordings to gain a clearer understanding of the harp's role in this excerpt.

2. **MAHLER** *Symphony No. 5* *Page 3 - 14*
   Movement 4. 'Adagietto'

A clean copy of the part is provided (pg 3 - 5). Advice is provided by the former Chicago Symphony Principal Harpist Sarah Bullen in her book, *Principal Harp: A Guidebook for the Orchestral Harpist*, and her edited excerpt (pg 6 - 9). The full score of this movement will help your preparation (pg 10 - 14). Listen to recordings!

3. **STRAVINSKY** *Petrushka* (1947) *Page 15 - 17*
   Fig. 59 to Fig. 63 from the First Tableau, the magic trick (pg 15)
   Fig. 143 to Fig. 147 from the Third Tableau, the waltz (pg 16)
   Fig. 209 to 213 from the Fourth Tableau, the Gypsy women dance (pg 17)

Jacinta Dennett's fingerings and pedalling of each excerpt are provided.
Watching the ballet can enhance your preparation. Here's a link to a 1976 Ballet Russe production on YouTube, https://youtu.be/NBaKgjmGxbU?si=_I7vr54ejGAwqyiy
The three excerpts are found here: 7'50"–9'50", 22'–22'30" and 31'–31'16".

4. **STRAUSS** *Don Juan* *Page 19 - 28*
   Fig. E to Fig. F (pg 19 - 20)
   Fig. M to 4 bars after N, please note, this section is in two beats per bar (minim = 76) (pg 21 - 22)

In Beatrice Schroeder Rose's (1922–2014) book *The Harp in Orchestra: A Reference Book for Harpists, Teachers, Composers and Conductors*, the former Houston Symphony's Principal Harpist writes:
If a harpist is to find fault in the creative genius of Strauss, it would be for his unrealistic use of the harp in an enormous orchestration and the inhuman demands made on the player. I have never been completely satisfied searching for solutions to some of Strauss' harp writing. The aim must be to bring out, as much as possible, the parts which are important, and to use enharmonic notes to ease the pedal work, which in many instances is overwhelming.

Edited parts, using enharmonics to reduce the pedalling, from former Cleveland Symphony's principal harpist, Alice Chalifoux (1908–2008) are provided. The full score for the section beginning at Fig. M is provided to assist your preparation for the audition (pg 23 - 28).

DANCES
FROM THE OPERA
PRINCE IGOR.

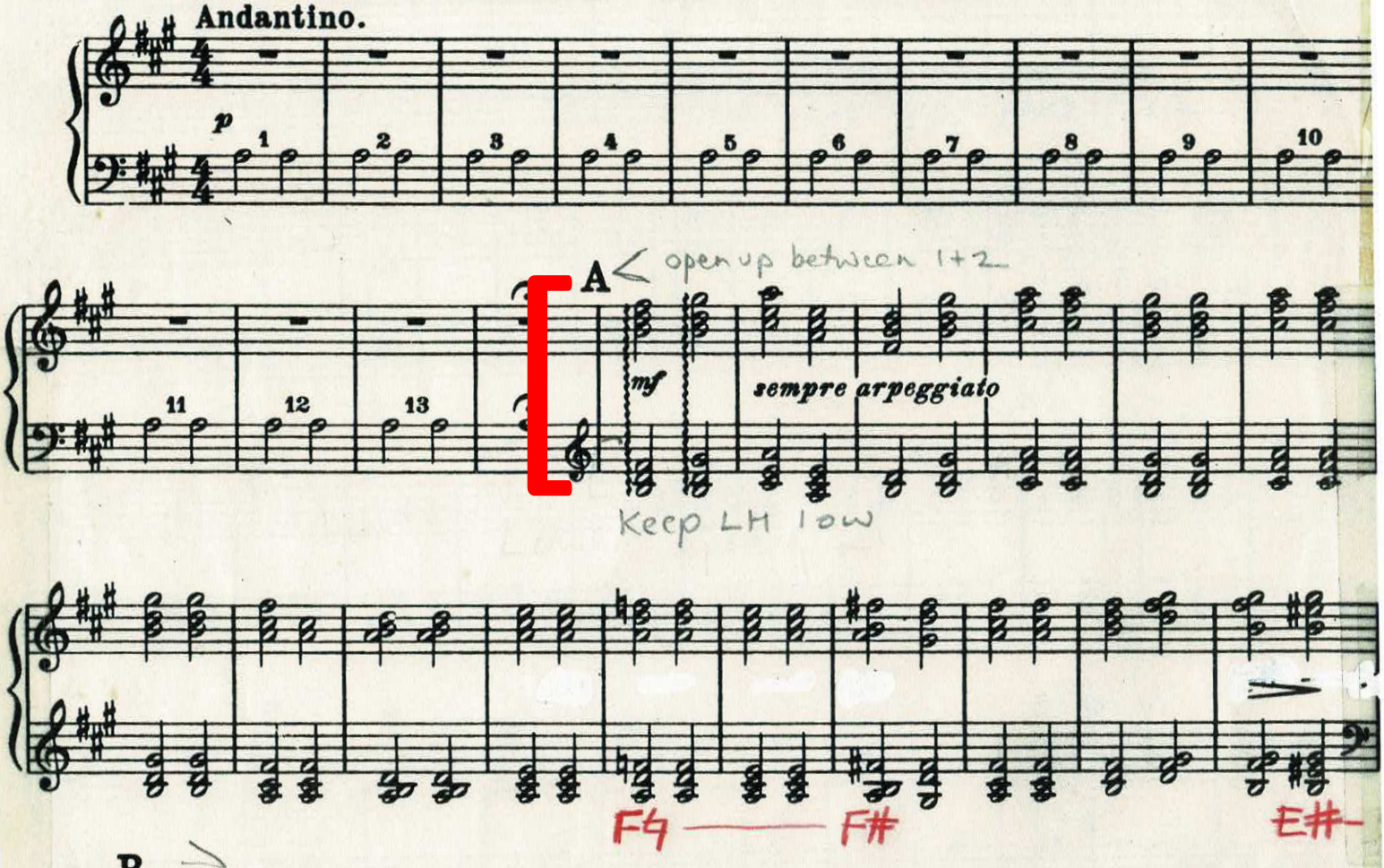
1. DANSE DES JEUNES FILLES POLOVTSIENNES.
TACET.

Harp.

A. BORODINE.
Edited by Charles Woodhouse.

2. DANSE POLOVTSIENNE.

Introduction.
Andantino.



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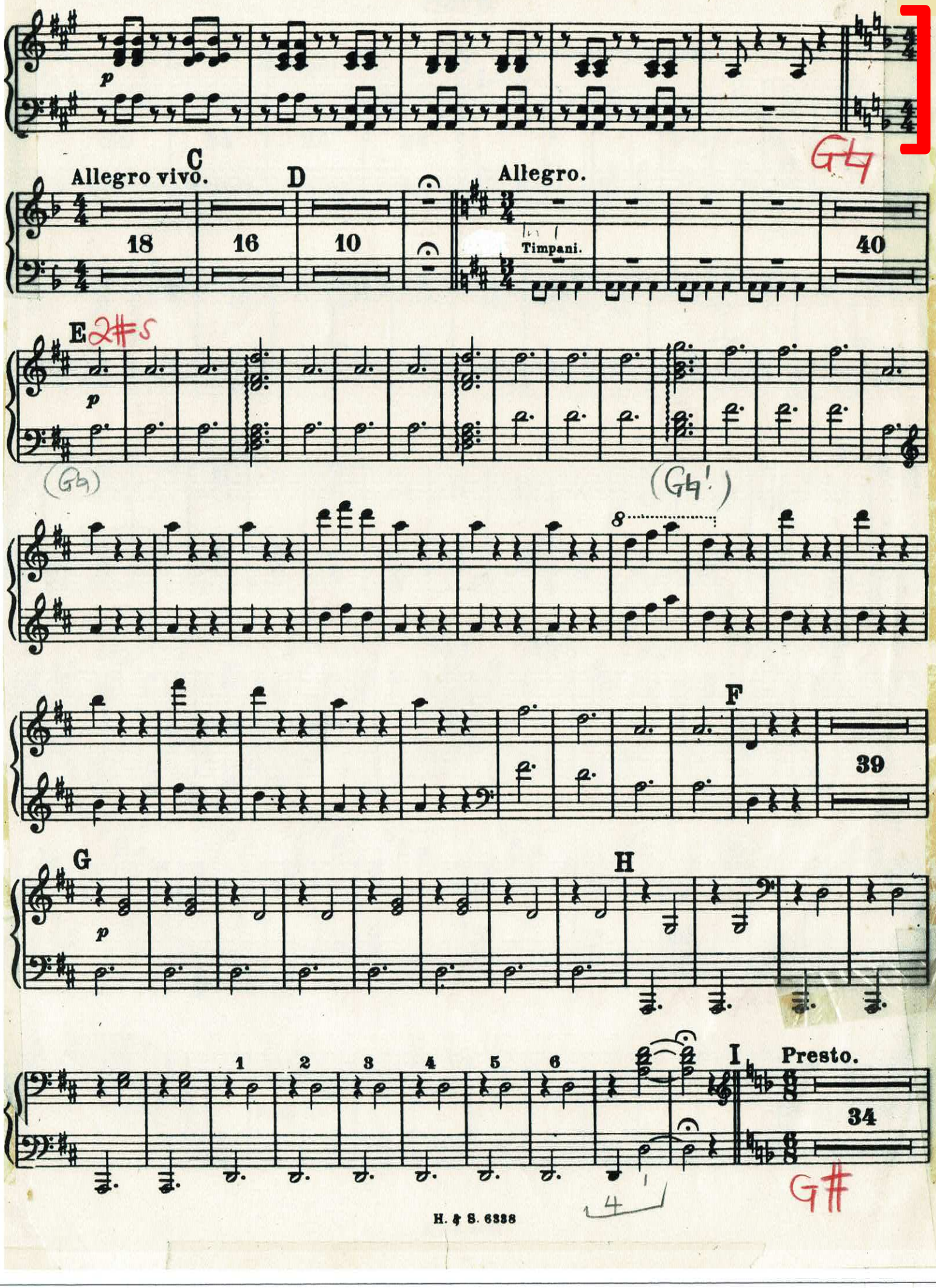
H. & S. 6338

Printed in England

Harp.


p
G4
C
Allegro vivo.
18
D
16
10
Allegro.
Timpani.
40
E
2#s
p
(G4)
(G4!)
8
F
39
G
p
H
1
2
3
4
5
6
I
Presto.
34
G#
4
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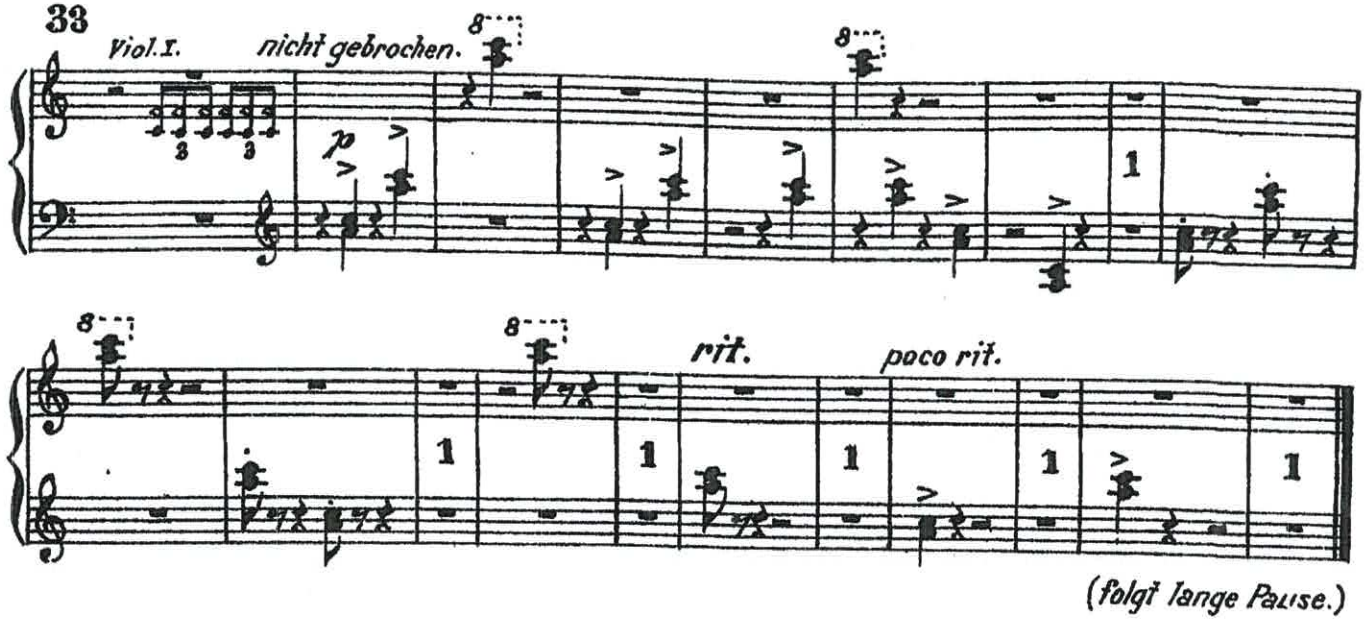
MAHLER : 5ym No. 5, mvt 3

Harfe.

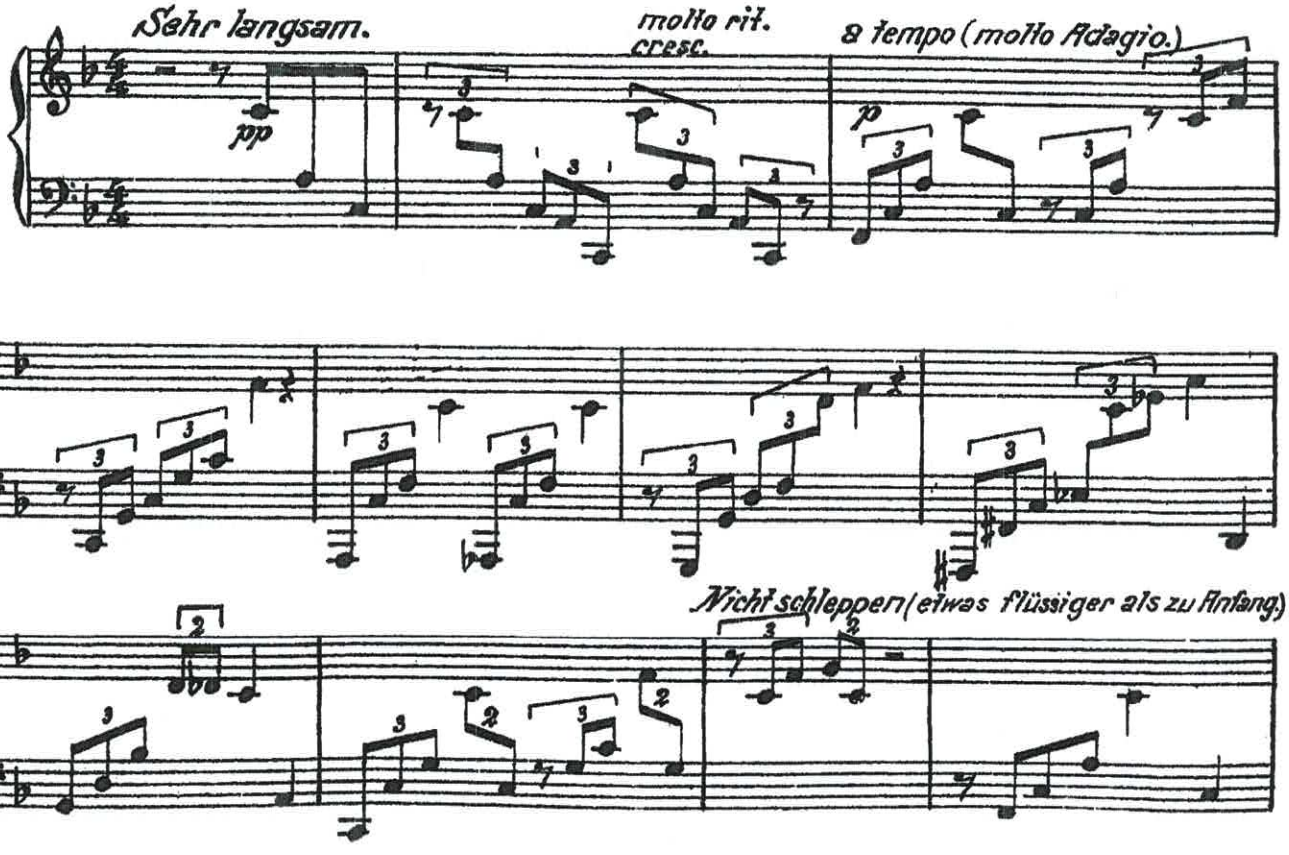


(folgt lange Pause.)

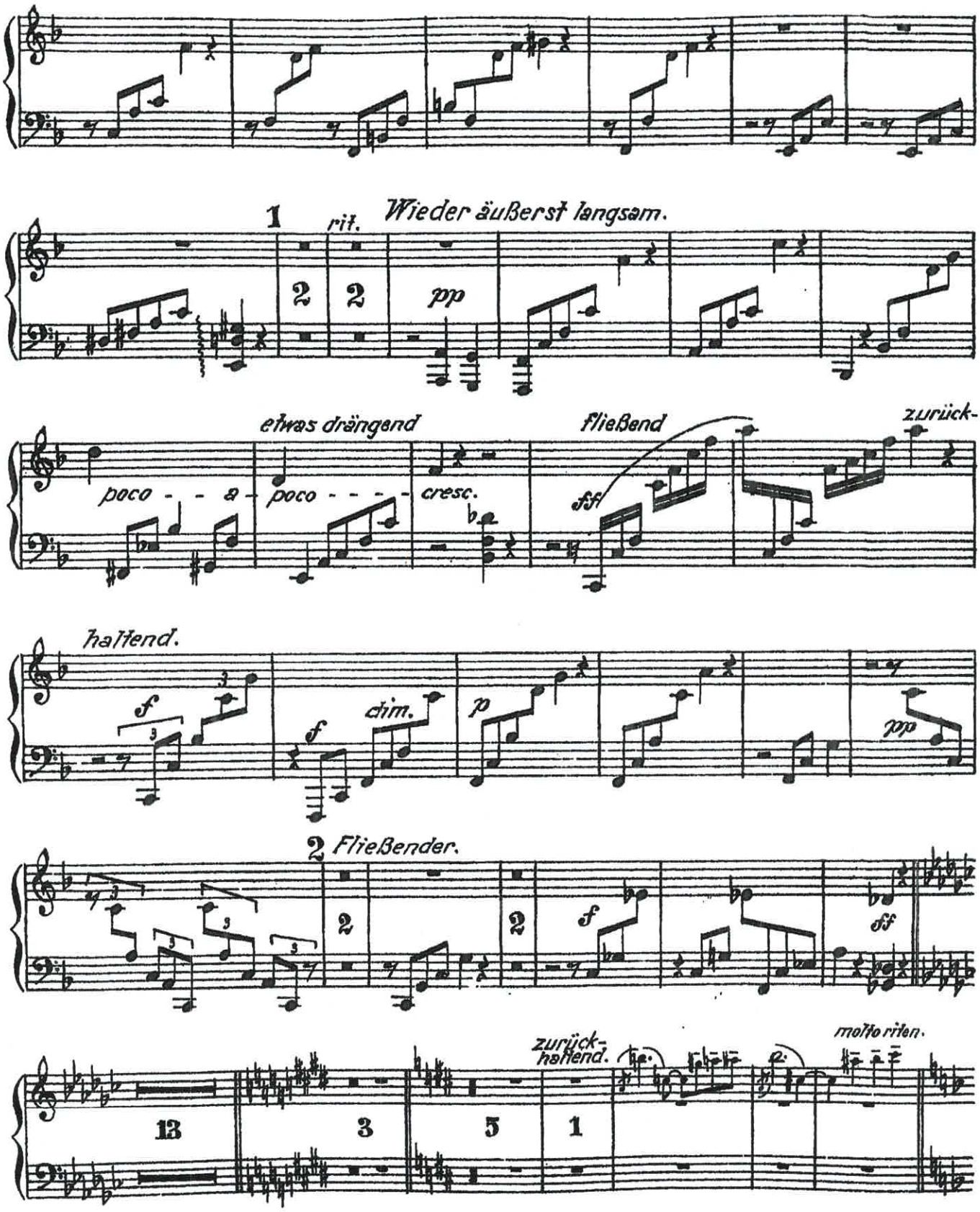
II. tacet.

III.

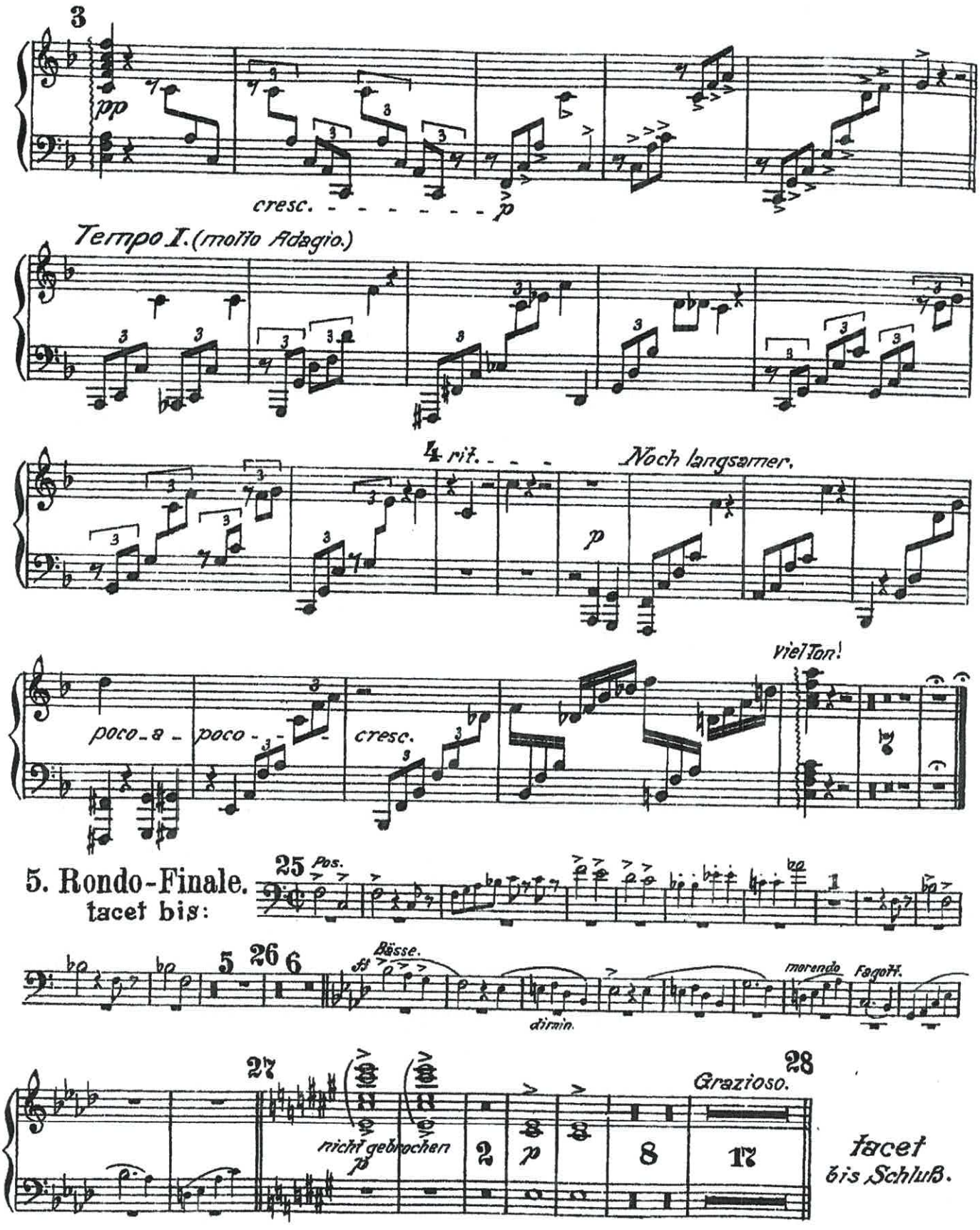
4. Adagietto.



Harfe.


1
rit.
Wieder äußerst langsam.
pp
etwas drängend
poco - - a - poco - - - - -
cresc.
fff
fließend
zurück-
haltend.
sf
f
dim.
p
pp
2 Fließender.
f
ff
zurück-
haltend.
molto riten.
13
3
5
1

Harfe.


3
pp
cresc.
p
Tempo I. (molto Adagio.)
4 rit.
Noch langsamer.
p
poco a poco
cresc.
viel Ton!
5. Rondo-Finale.
tacet bis:
25
Pos.
5
26
6
ff
Bässe.
dimin.
morendo
Fagott.
27
28
Grazioso.
nicht gebrochen
p
2
p
8
17
tacet
bis Schluß.

Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 5

4. Adagietto

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911), an Austrian conductor and composer, wrote important harp parts in each of his nine completed symphonies. Before Mahler, orchestral composers used the harp mostly for accompaniment and, occasionally, cadenzas. Mahler's writing exploited the coloristic possibilities of the harp more fully than his predecessors. He often treated the harp like a double bass or tympani, using the rich sonorities of the lower register to carry the entire orchestra for lengthy sections of his music. The fourth movement of his 5th symphony is an example of this technique. The movement is scored for harp and strings. The harp part is accompanimental and plays mostly in the lower register. Although this movement looks simple, problems with ensemble can make it quite difficult. All of the voices are interdependent, and the player should understand how they fit together. Even when playing this excerpt as a solo in an audition, the harpist must demonstrate an awareness of the ensemble.

As always, it is important first to establish comfortable fingerings. In choosing your fingerings, keep in mind that you must maintain good eye contact with the conductor. In the first two bars, I recommend "anchoring" the thumb on middle "C." This gives you the freedom to watch the conductor constantly.

Muffling is a key element in keeping this movement clean and buzz free. Of course the whole point of muffling is to eliminate, not add to, the sound. A muffling technique which I have found essential to this piece is the sliding left-hand muffle. For example, in the last beat of bar 2, do not muffle where the last rest indicates. Instead, let the "C" ring through the bar line and muffle the "C" as you replace for the "F." The same concept applies in bar 5. Open the left hand to place the low "A" on the first beat with your 4th finger, and muffle the wires which are still vibrating. This should all be achieved in one motion.

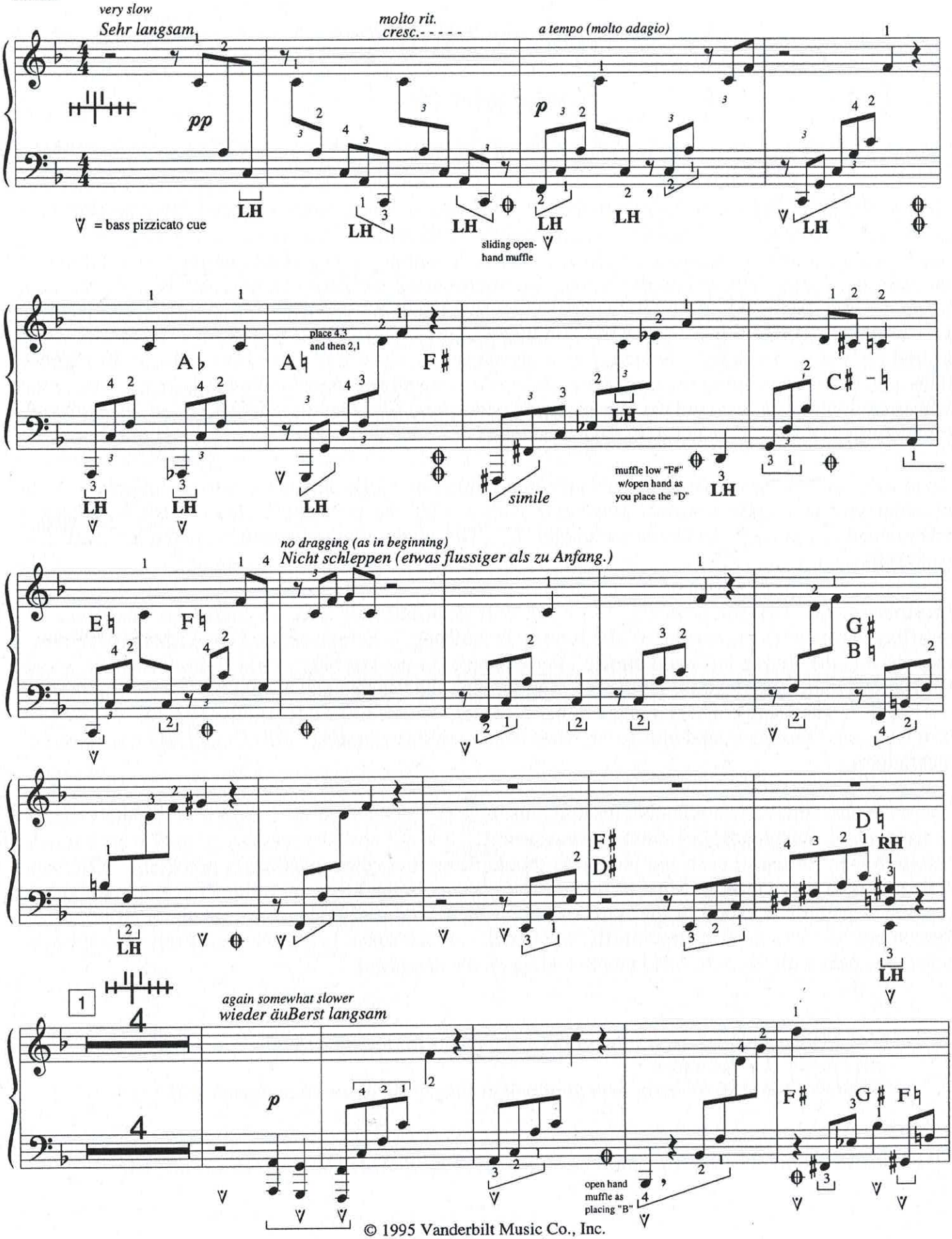
There are also times when a double handed muffle is needed as in measure 4. This muffle should be used while changing pedals during rest measures. It is not always necessary to muffle each time a rest is shown. Musical taste and judgment should determine when muffling is necessary. The main objective is to play cleanly. Most of the muffling occurs in the lower register of the harp. Be aware that the harp will resonate in the wire strings even if you are playing only in the octaves above. Remember, the less obvious the muffle, the better. At rehearsal [3] , the chord roll should begin before the beat with the right-hand thumb ending on the downbeat.

Be aware of Mahler's request in several of his symphonies for the following:

MEDIATOR---use a pick

RESONANZTISCH---play with your nail or play close to the soundboard (P.D.L.T.)

***Please note; only the first ten measures of this piece are included on the Instructional CD.



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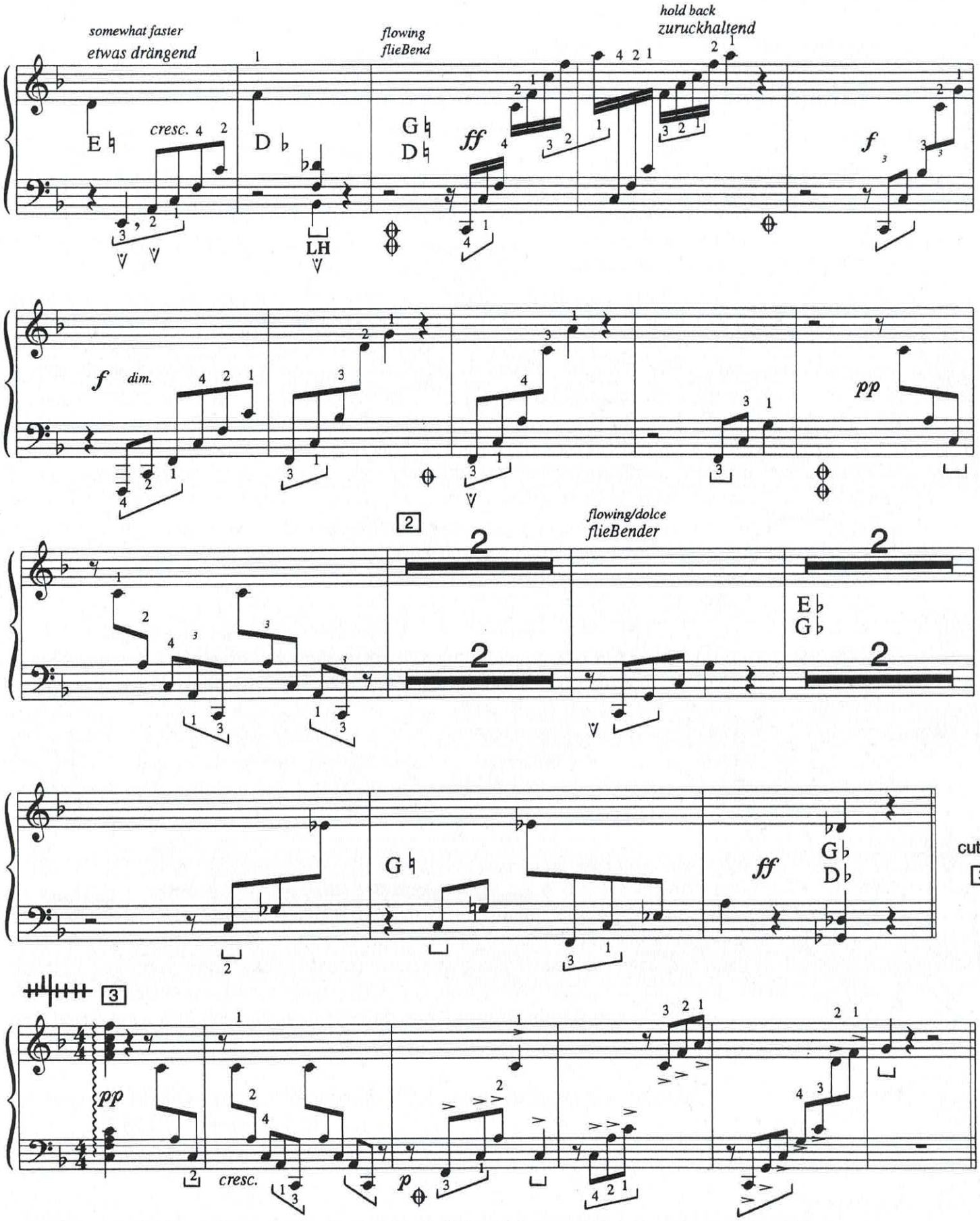
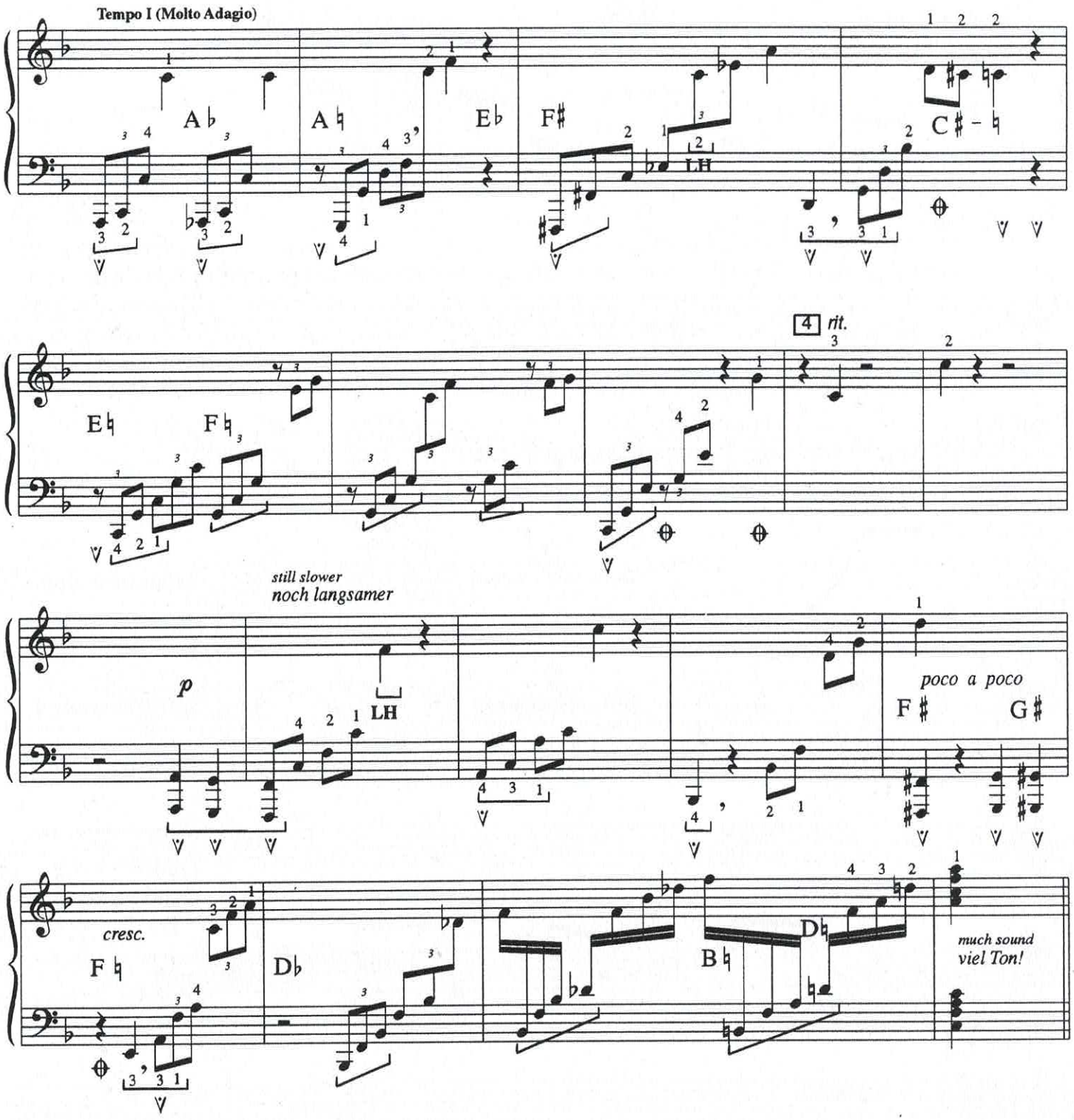
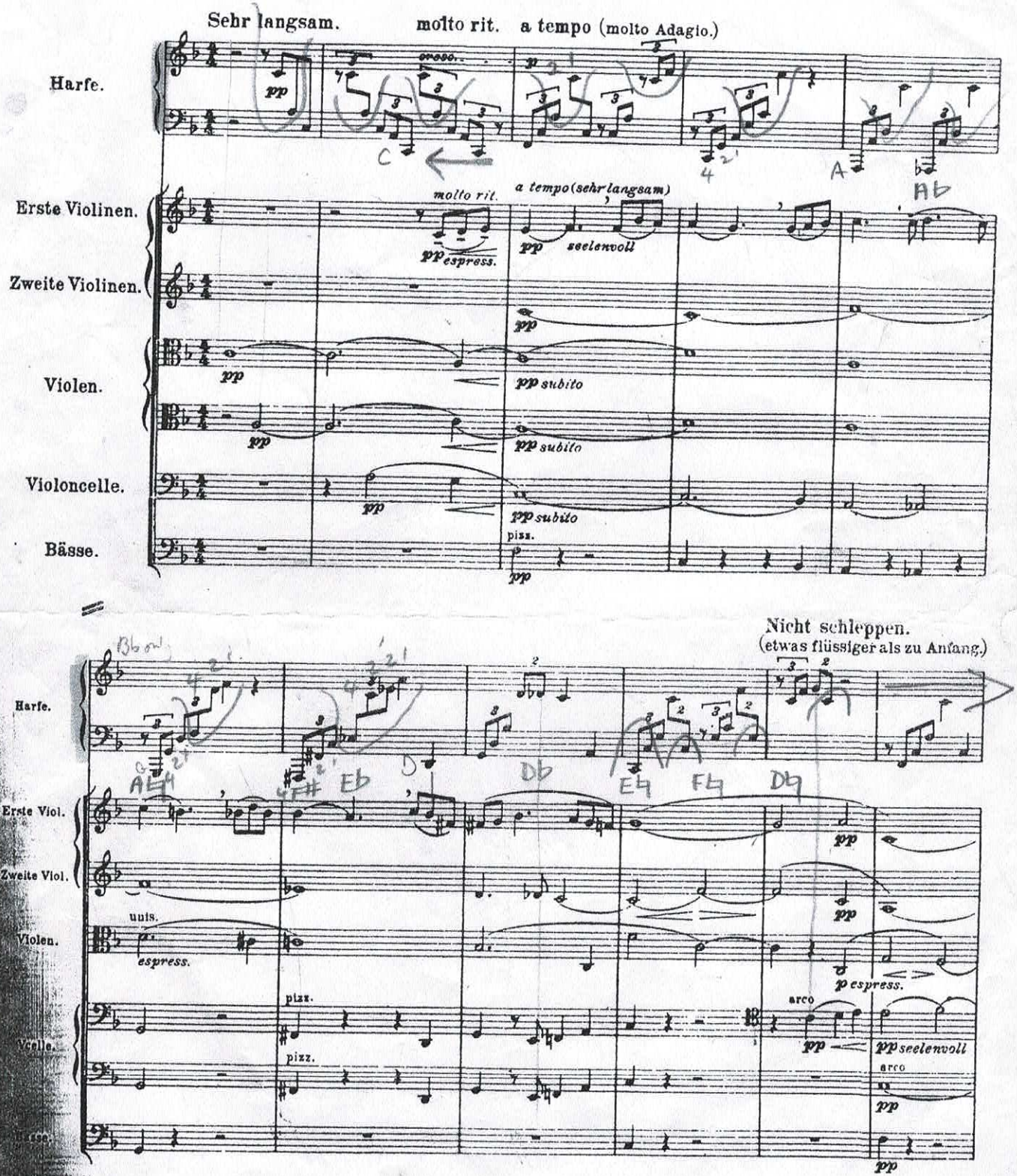

somewhat faster
etwas drängend
cresc.
flowing
flieBend
hold back
zuruckhaltend
LH
dim.
pp
flowing/dolce
flieBender
cut t
cresc.

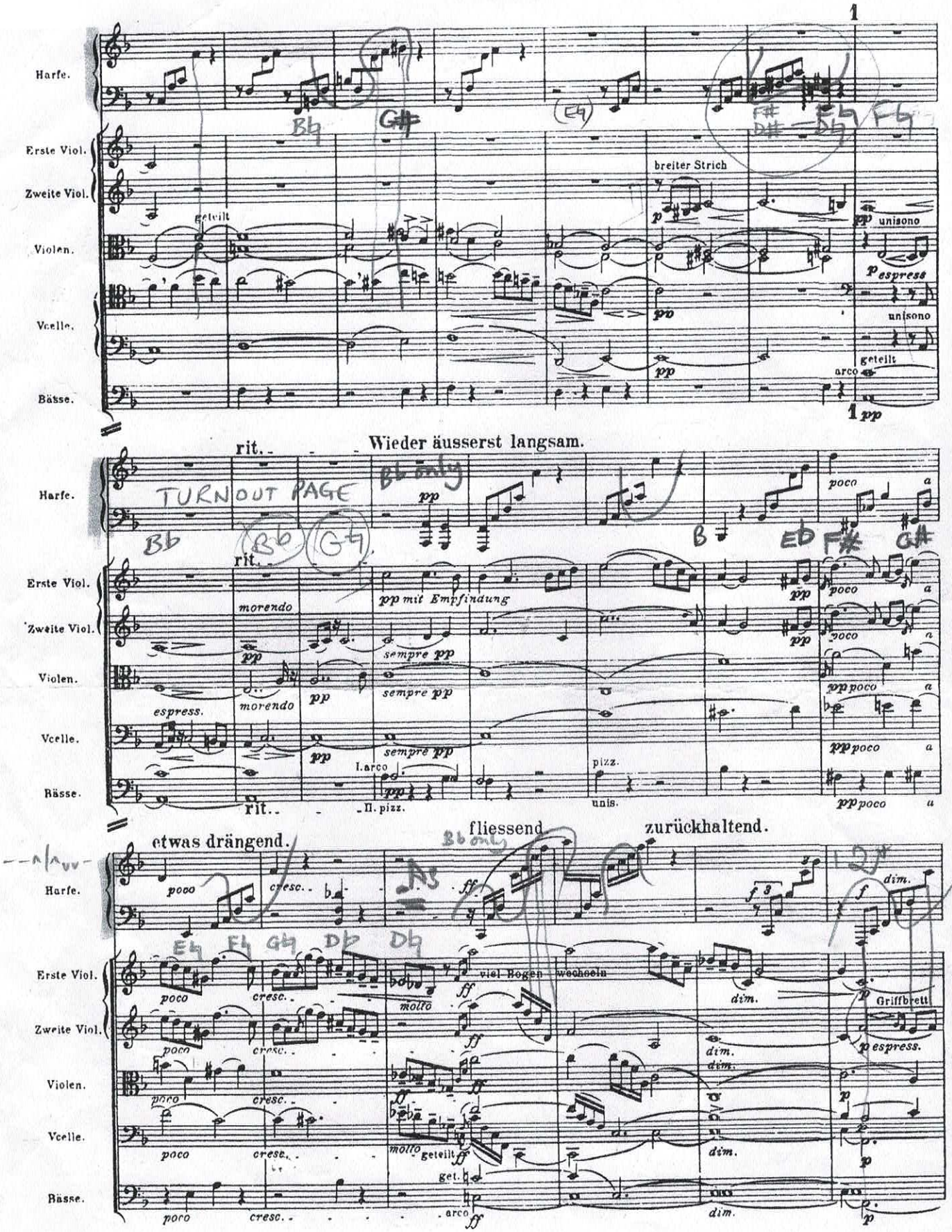

Tempo I (Molto Adagio)
A♭
A♮
E♭
F♯
LH
C♯ - ♮
4 rit.
E♮
F♮
still slower
noch langsamer
p
LH
poco a poco
F♯
G♯
cresc.
F♮
D♭
B♮
D♮
much sound
viel Ton!

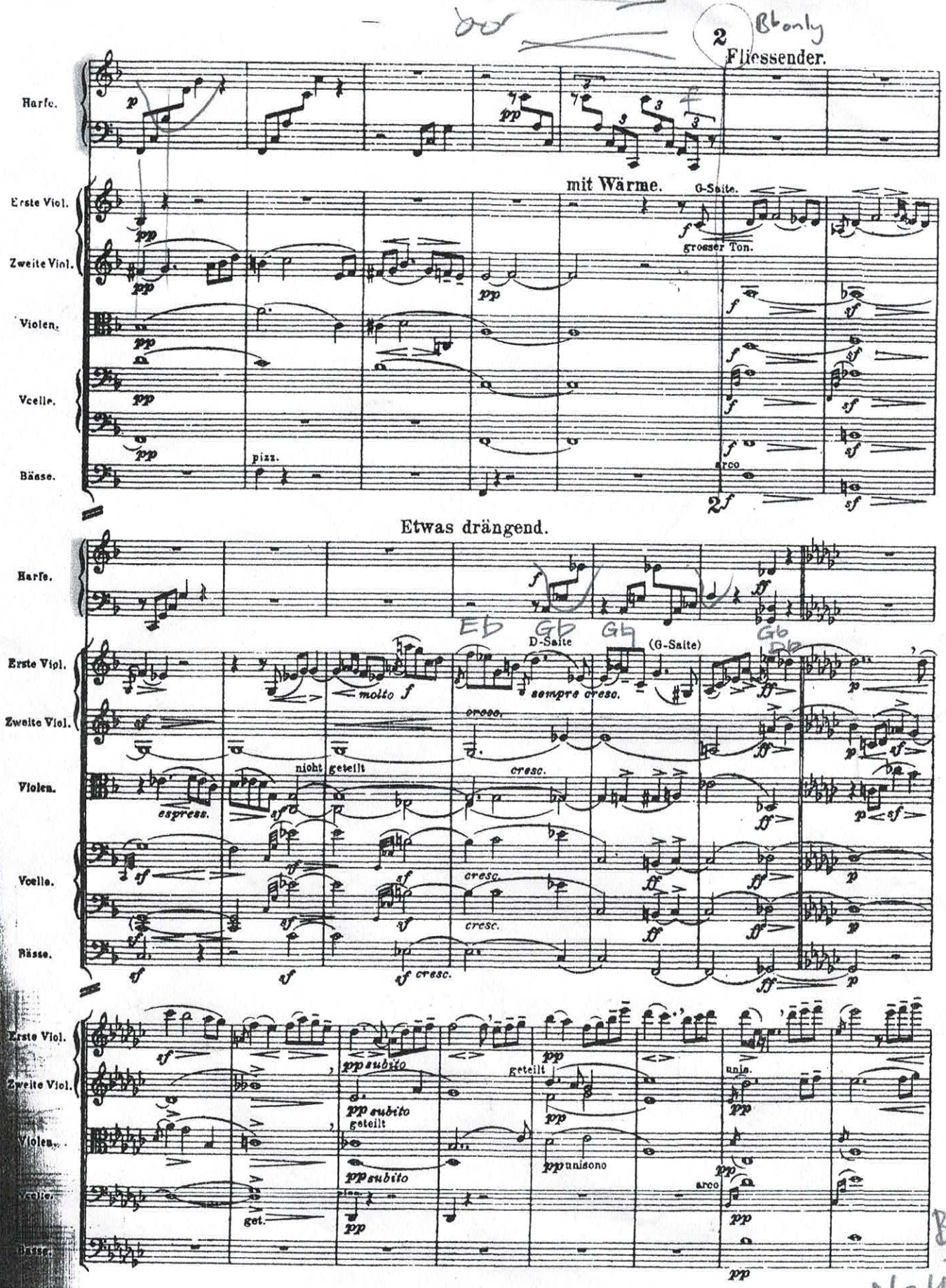
Mahler Symph 5

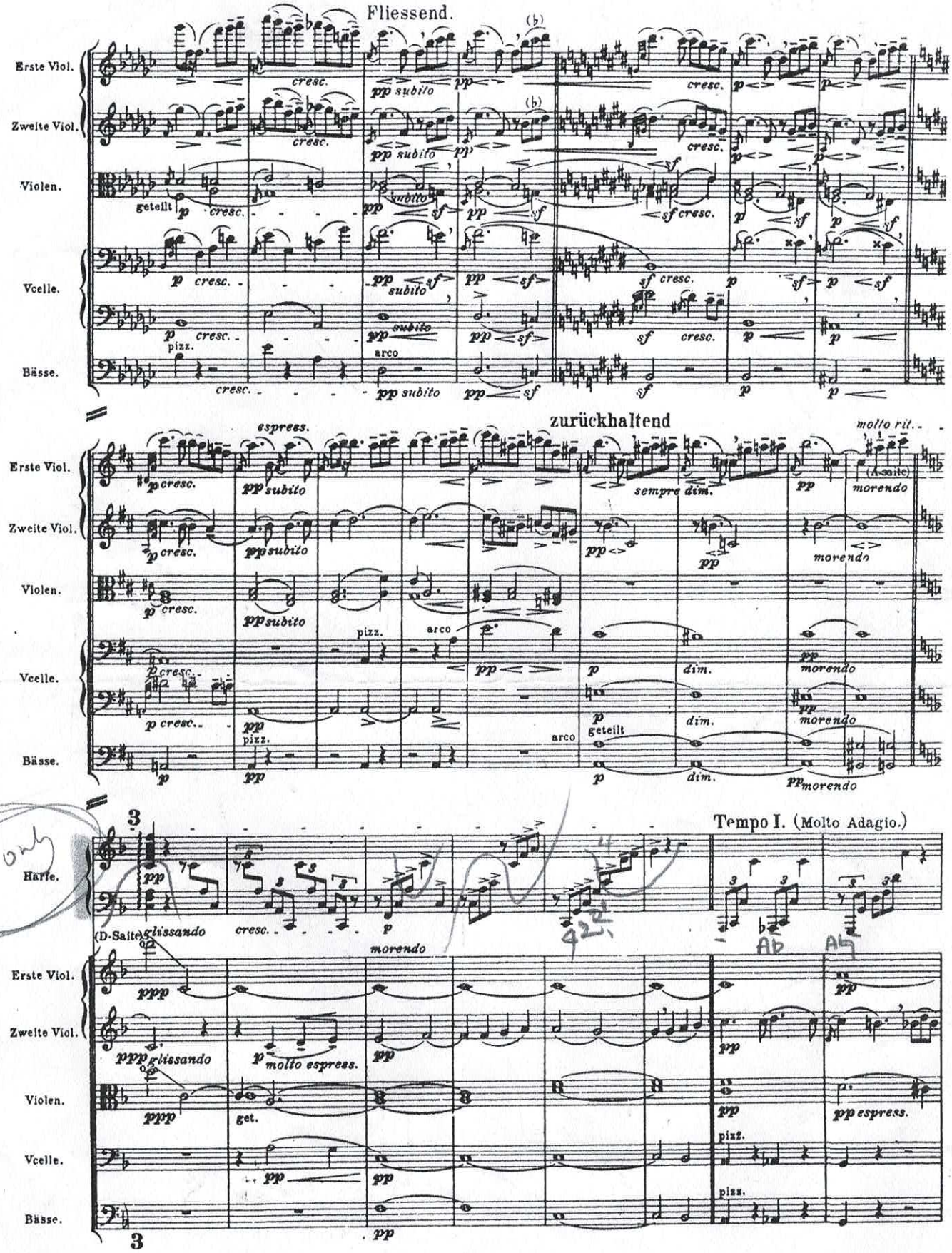
III.

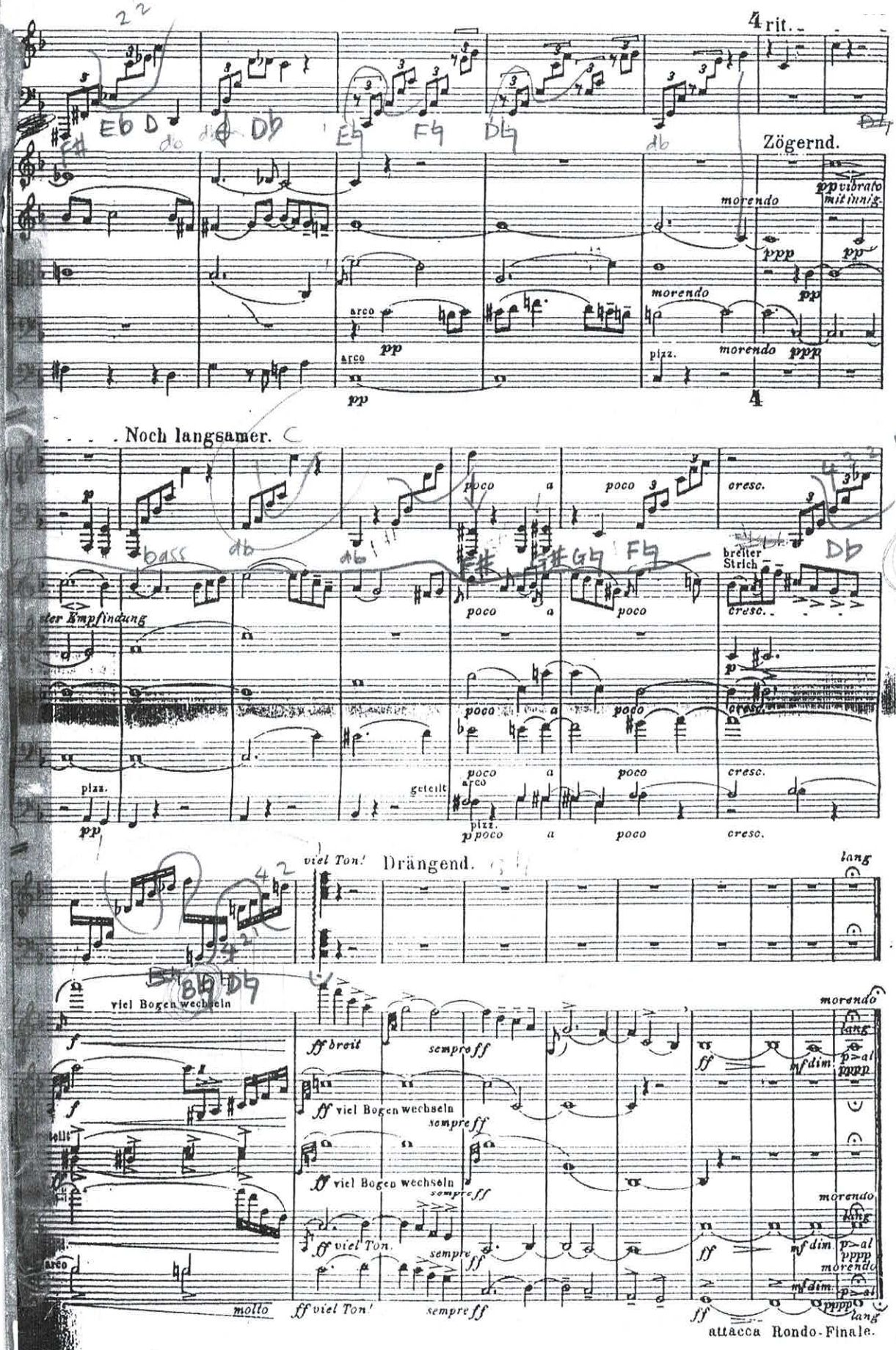
4. Adagietto.




1
Harfe.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
geteilt
breiter Strich
unisono
espresse
arco
rit.
Wieder äusserst langsam.
TURN OUT PAGE
B♭ only
morendo
sempre pp
espress.
I. arco
II. pizz.
pizz.
unis.
etwas drängend.
fliessend
zurückhaltend.
viel Bogen wechseln
molto
Griffbrett
espress.
dim.
cresc.
poco


2
Fliessender.
Harfe.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
mit Wärme.
G-Saite.
grosser Ton.
pizz.
arco
Etwas drängend.
D-Saite
(G-Saite)
molto f
sempre cresc.
cresc.
nicht geteilt
espress.
pp subito
geteilt
unis.
pp unisono
get.
Back to Bb on
NO HURRY

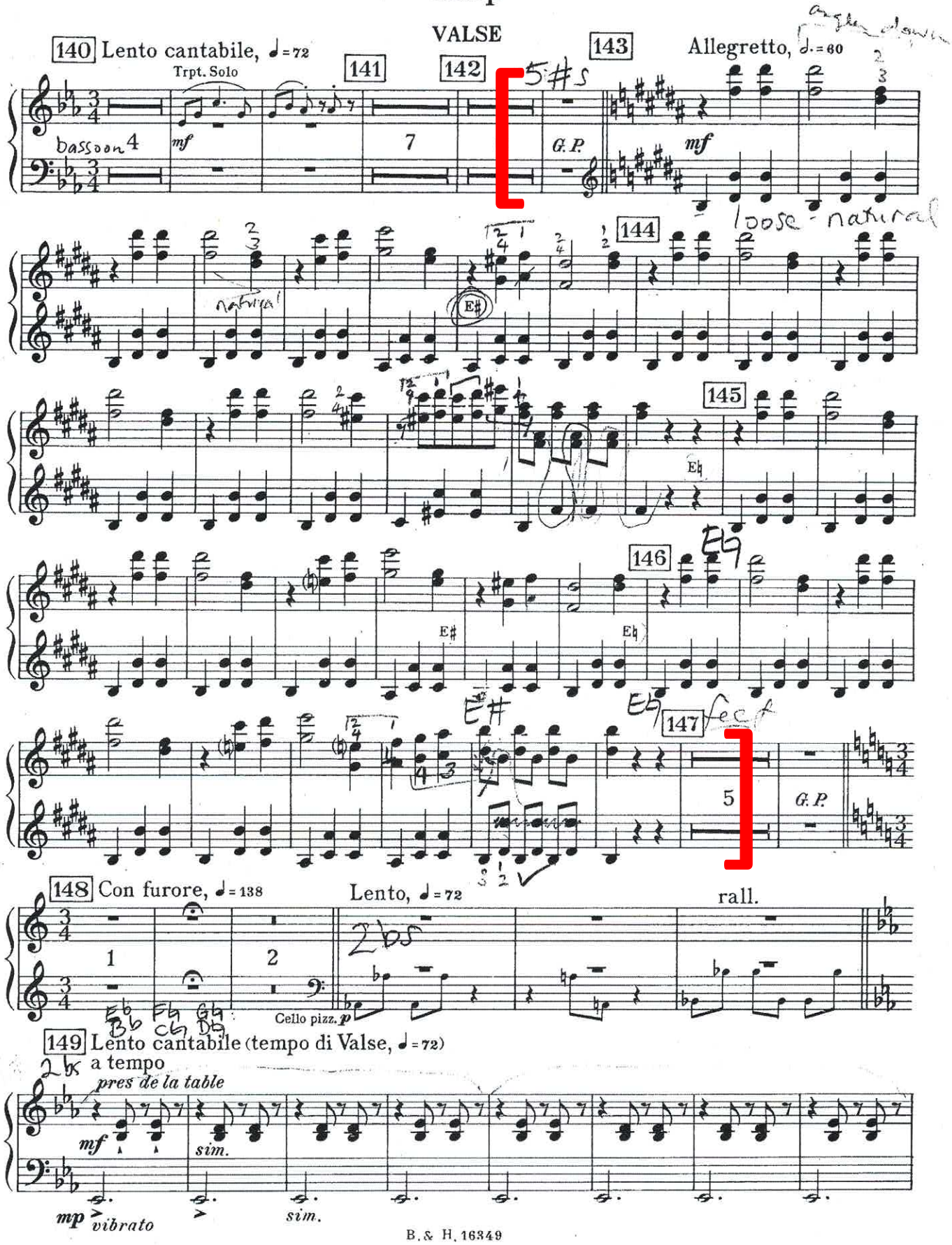

Fliessend.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
zurückhaltend
espress.
molto rit.
sempre dim.
morendo
pizz.
arco
geteilt
Harfe.
Tempo I. (Molto Adagio.)
(D-Saite)
glissando
molto espress.
get.
pizz.


4 rit.
Zögernd.
morendo
pp vibrato mit innig.
ppp
pp
arco
pizz.
Noch langsamer.
poco a poco
cresc.
breiter Strich
ster Empfindung
geteilt
viel Ton!
Drängend.
lang
viel Bogen wechseln
ff breit
sempre ff
mf dim.
p>al
pppp
molto
attacca Rondo-Finale.

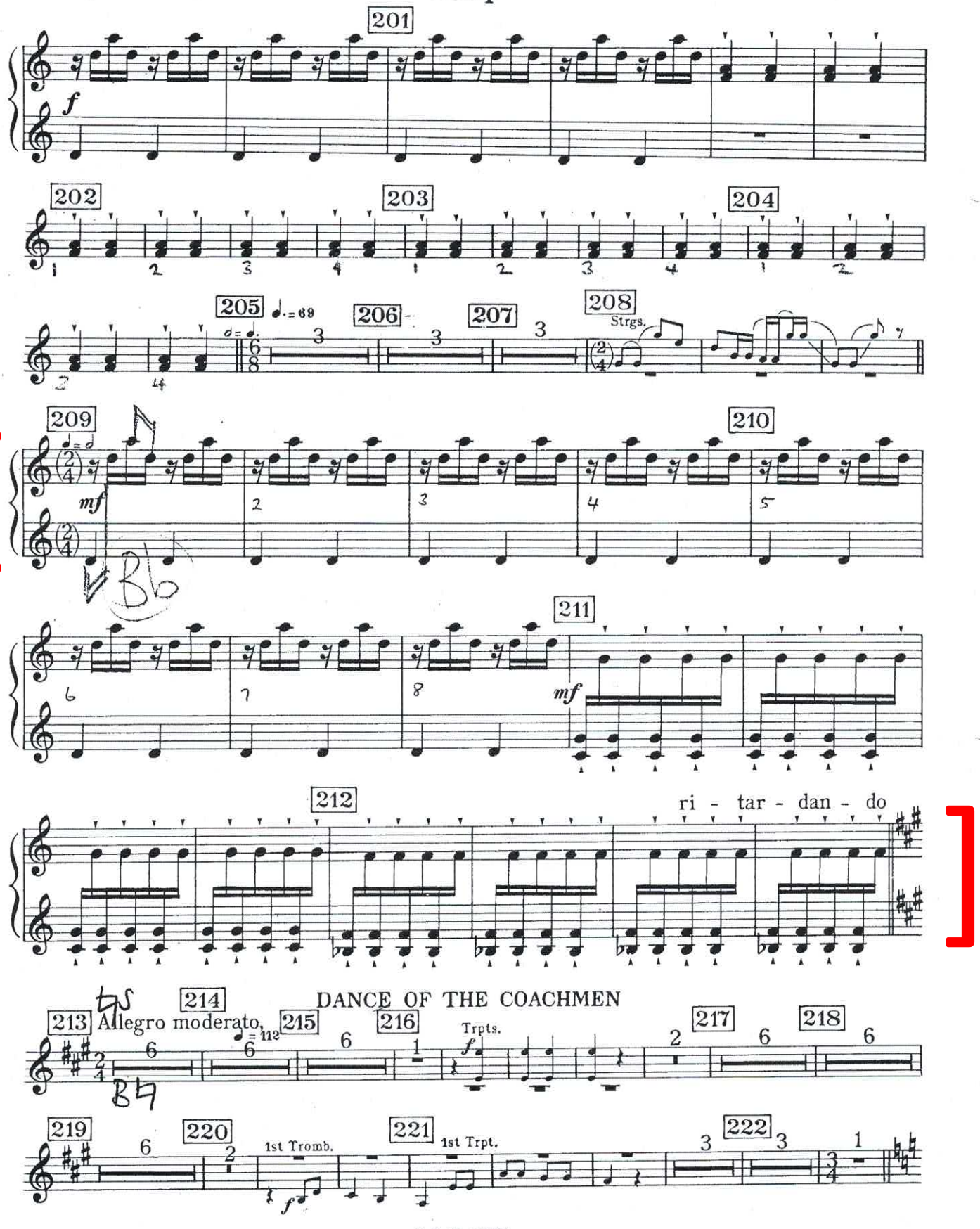
Harp
55
ff
gliss.
56
57
sff
58
Lento,
59
60
Poco più mosso
Fl. Cad.
Fl.
61
a tempo
no cond.
sf
mf
sim.
62
mf marc.
63
f
V.S.

Harp

VALSE


140 Lento cantabile, ♩=72
Trpt. Solo
141
142
143
Allegretto, ♩.=60
G.P.
144
145
146
147
148 Con furore, ♩=138
Lento, ♩=72
rall.
Cello pizz.
149 Lento cantabile (tempo di Valse, ♩=72)
a tempo
pres de la table
sim.
vibrato

Harp


201
f
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
Strgs.
209
mf
210
211
mf
212
ri - tar - dan - do
213
Allegro moderato,
214
DANCE OF THE COACHMEN
215
216
Trpts.
f
217
218
219
220
1st Tromb.
f
221
1st Trpt.
222

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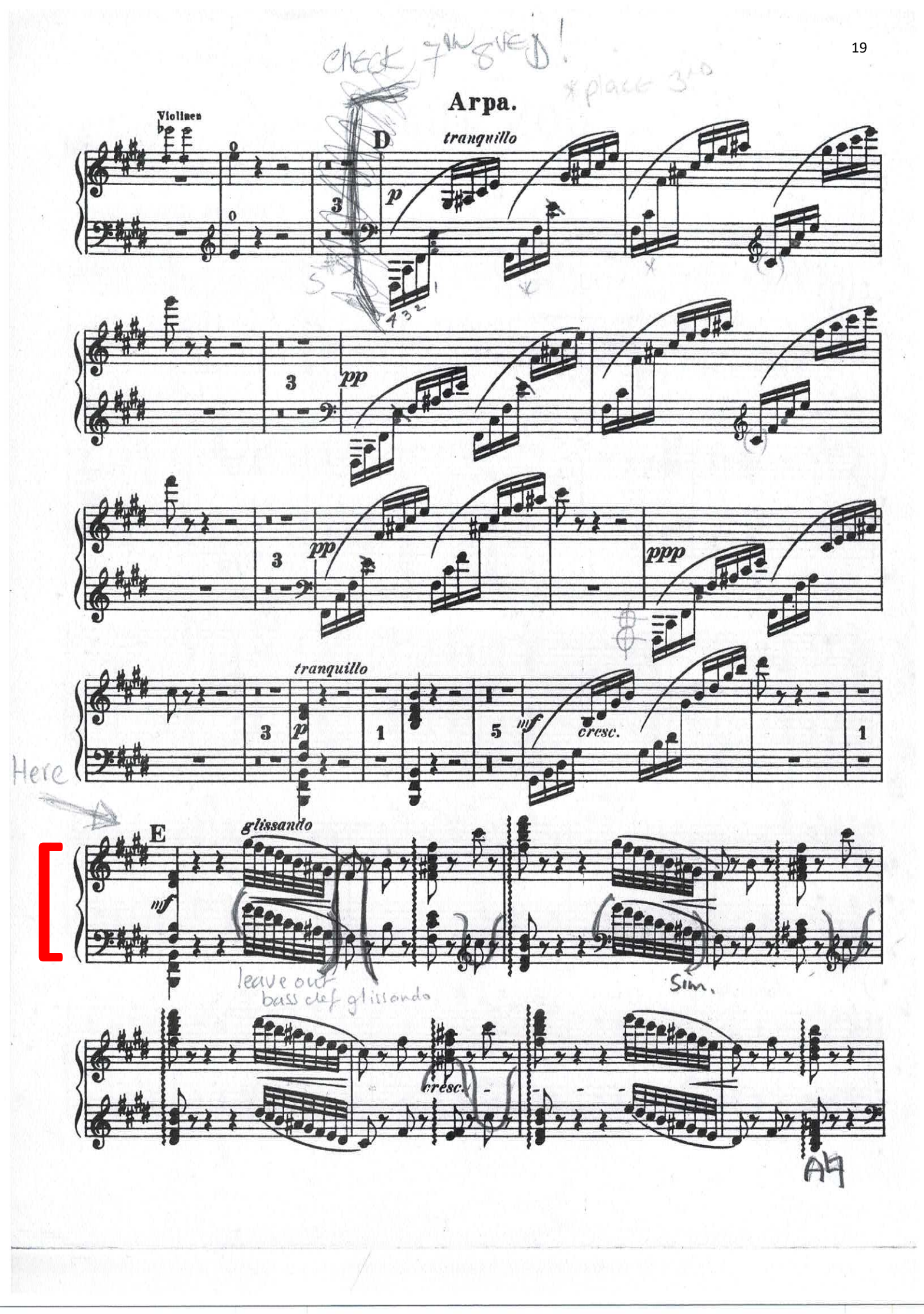
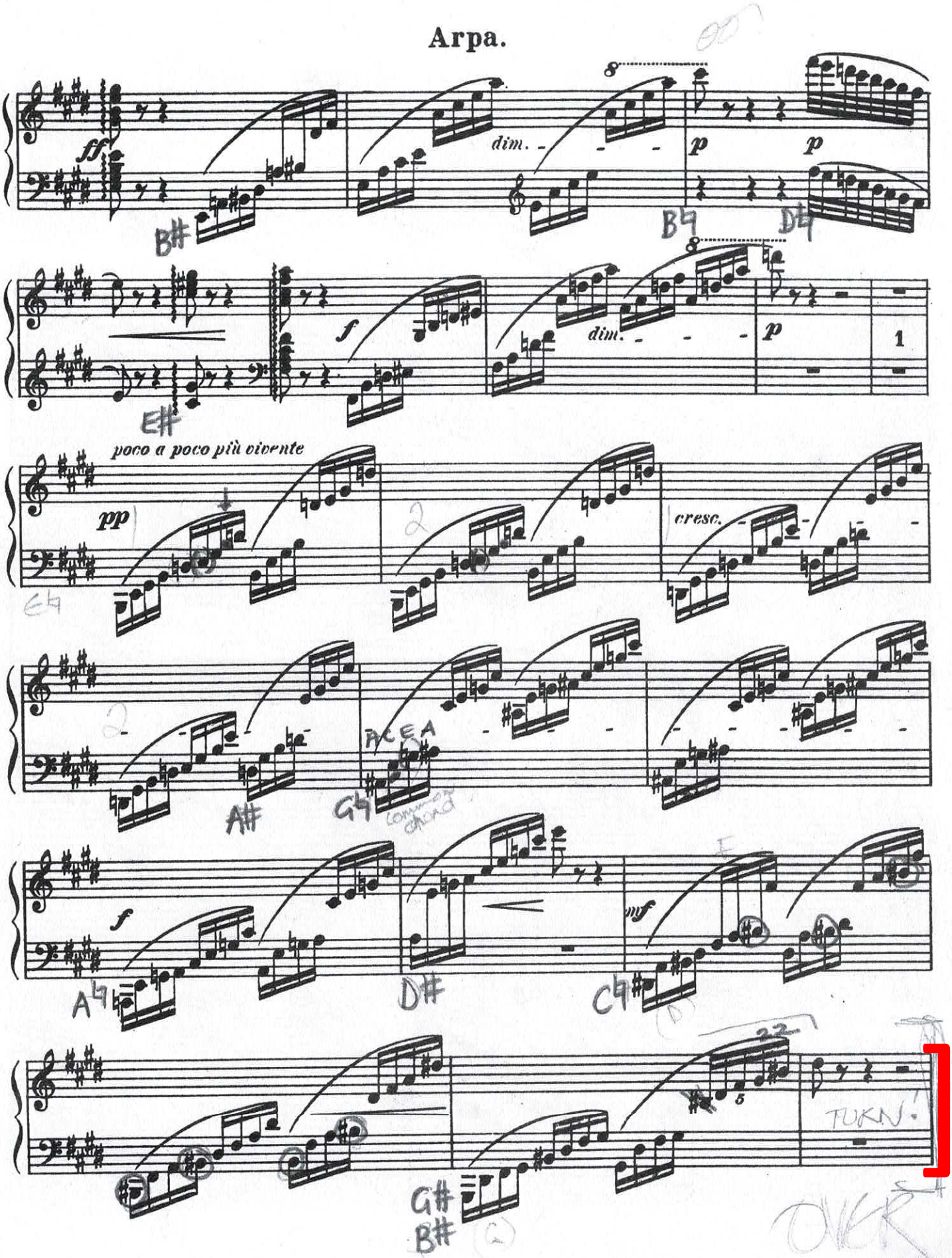
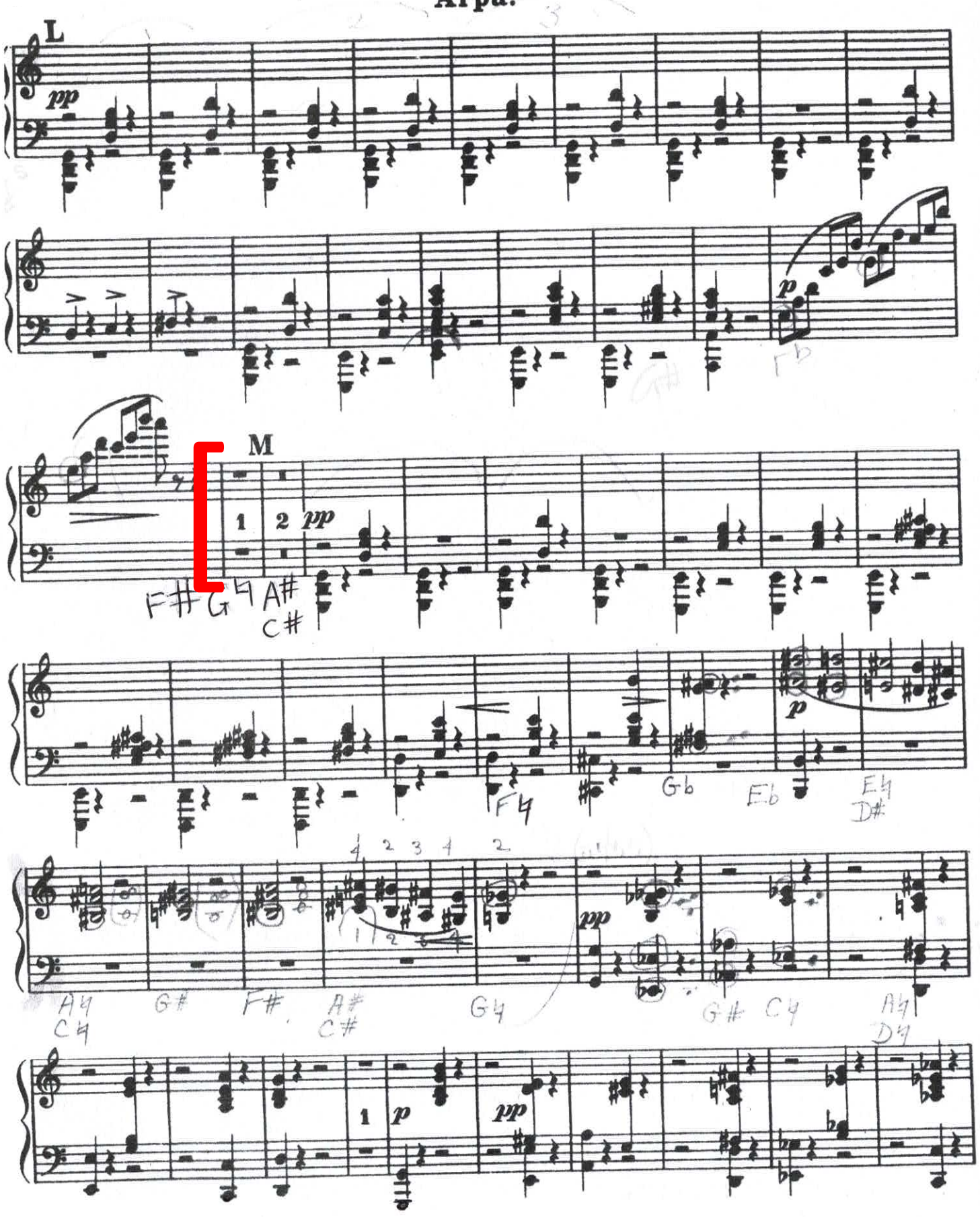
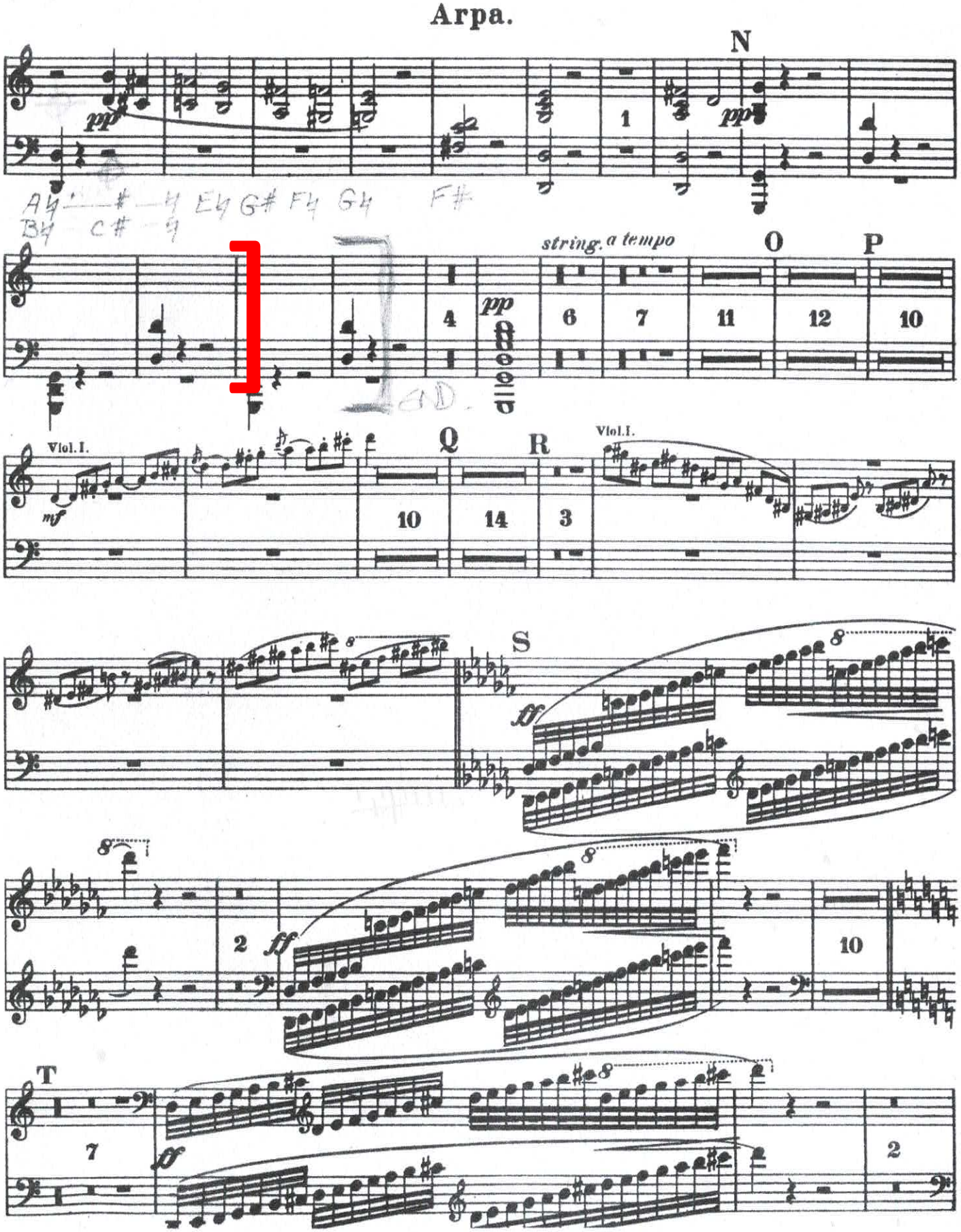

Arpa.
Violinen
D
tranquillo
p
pp
ppp
tranquillo
mf
cresc.
Here
E
glissando
leave out
bass clef glissando
Sim.
cresc.


Arpa.
ff
dim.
p
p
f
dim.
p
1
poco a poco più vivente
pp
cresc.
2
2
f
mf
TUKN.

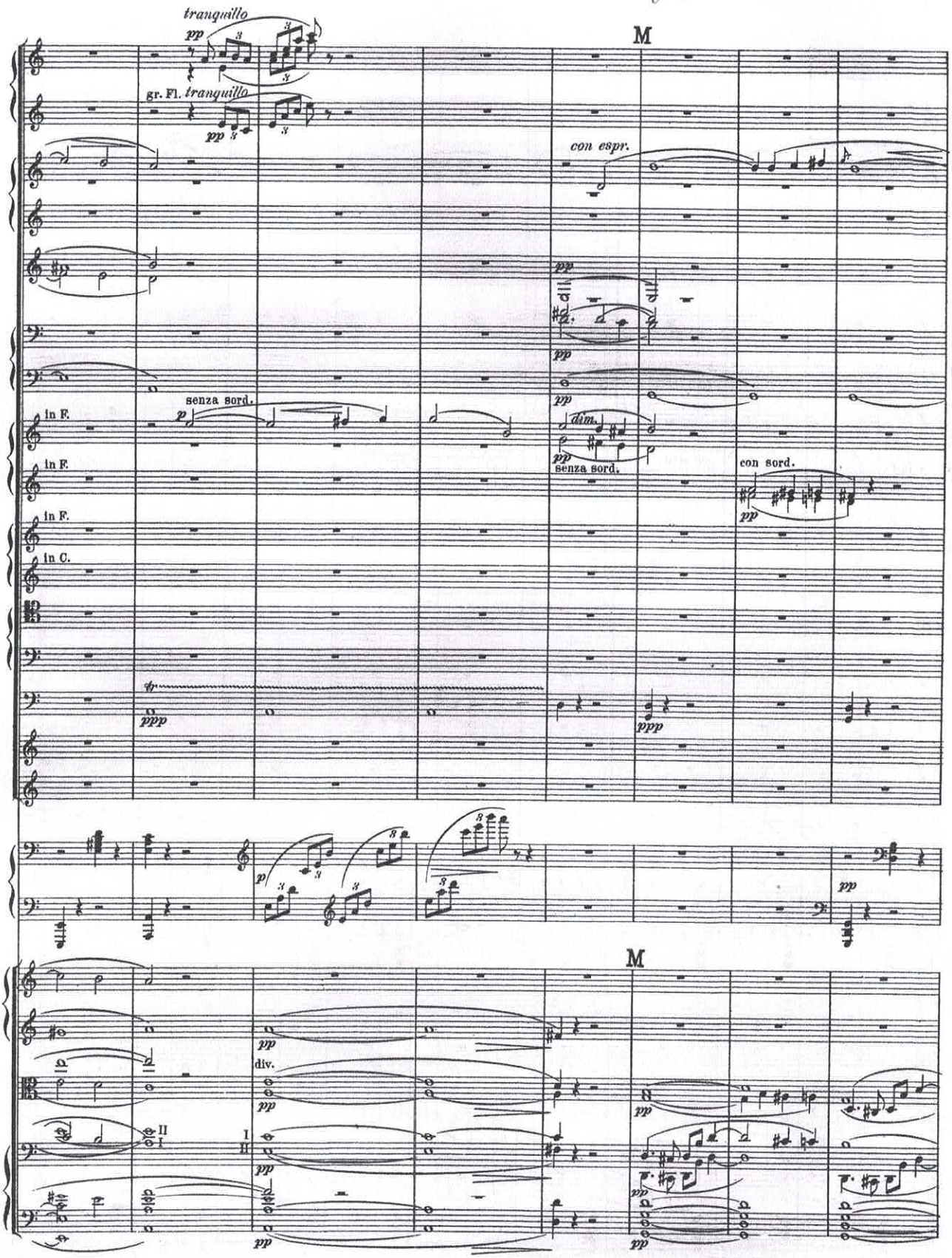
In 2 very fast!

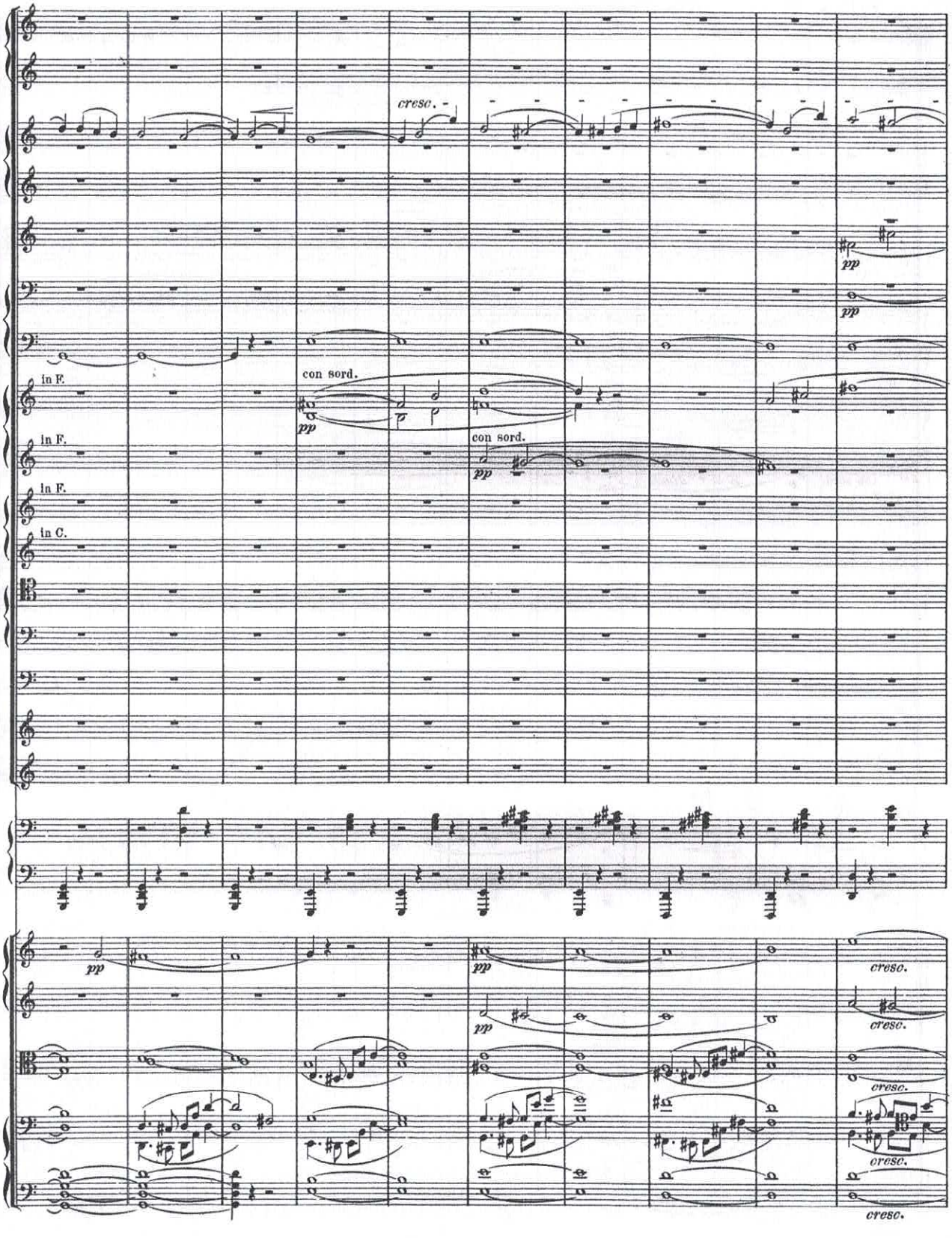
L.H mute as R.H plays

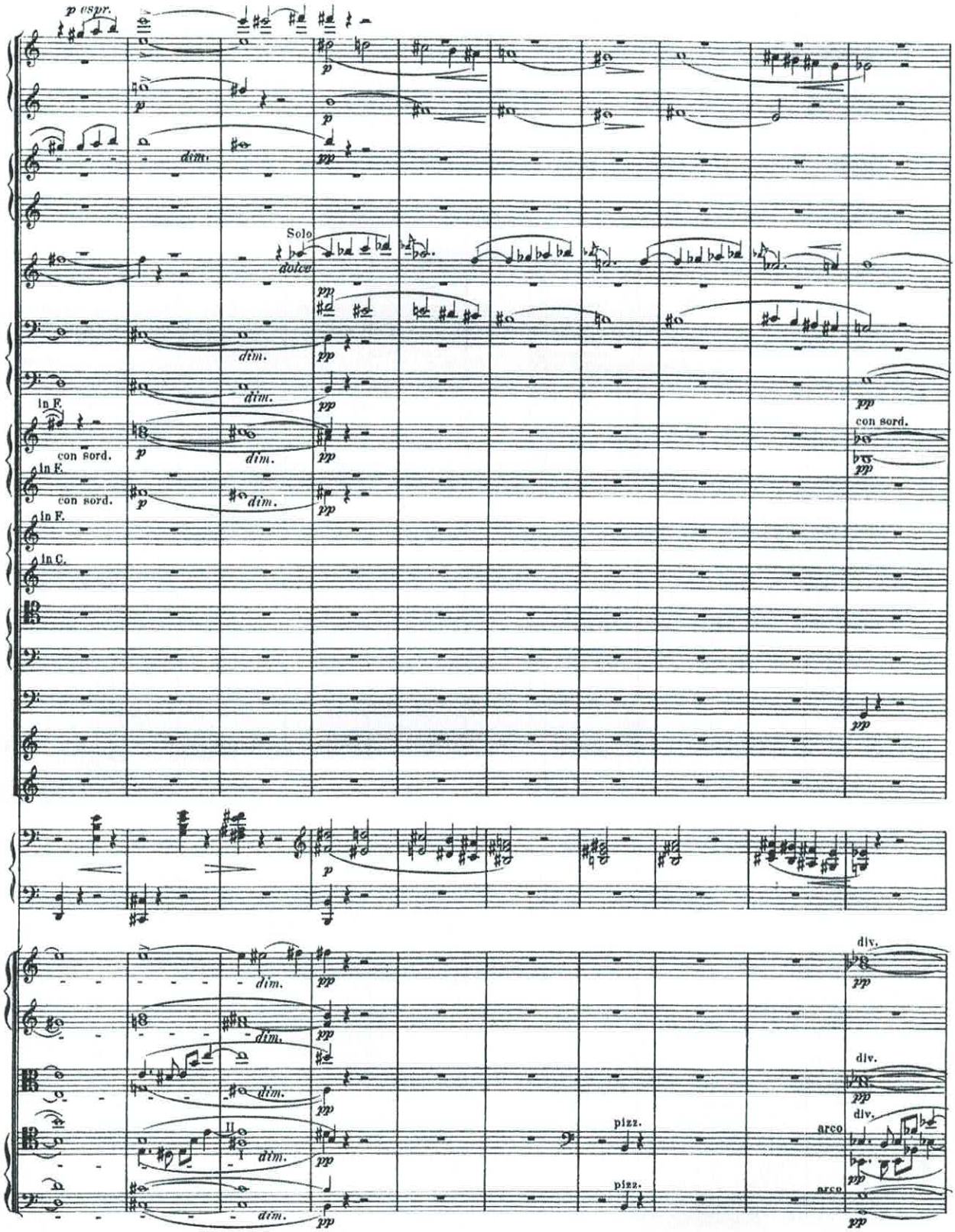


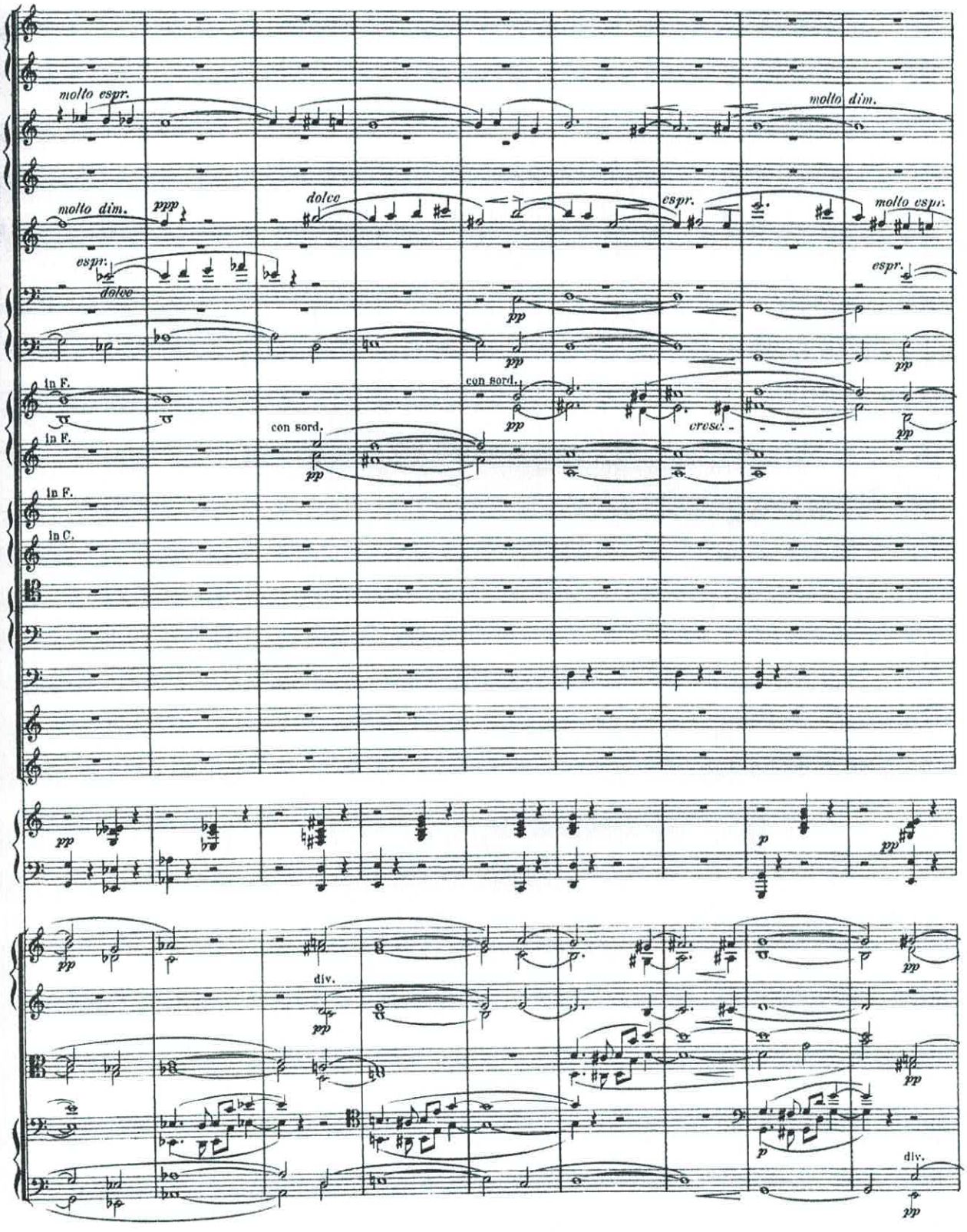

Arpa.
N
pp
1
pp
A4 C# E4 G# F4 G4 F#
B4
string. a tempo
O
P
4
pp
6
7
11
12
10
Viol. I.
mf
Q
R
Viol. I.
10
14
3
S
ff
8
2
ff
10
T
7
ff
2

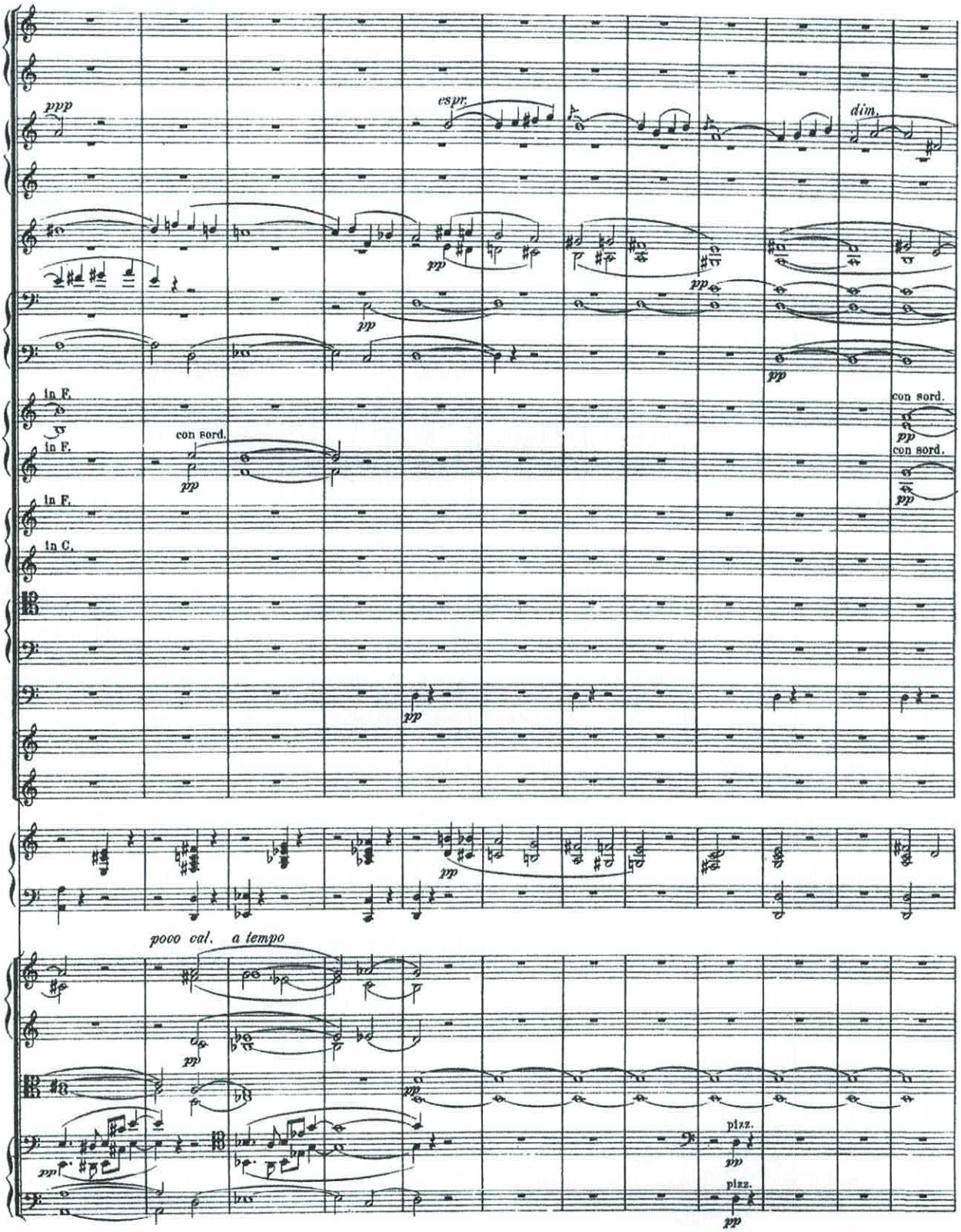
8'21"

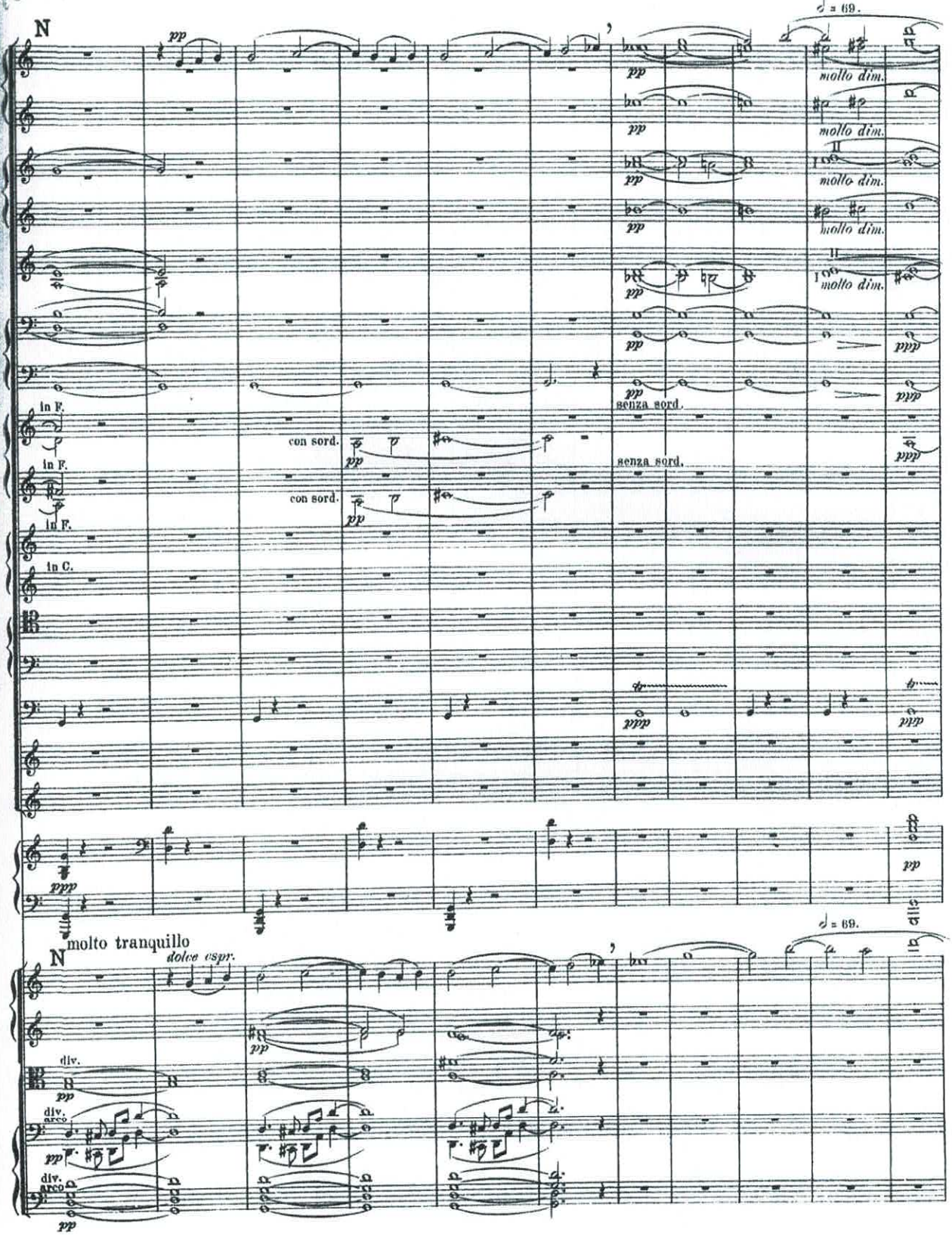

tranquillo
pp
M
gr. Fl. tranquillo
pp
con espr.
pp
dim.
pp
senza sord.
p
in F.
in F.
in F.
in C.
con sord.
pp
ppp
ppp
p
pp
M
pp
div.
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp


cresc.
pp
pp
in F.
con sord.
pp
in F.
con sord.
pp
in F.
in C.
pp
pp
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.


p espr.
Solo
dolce
dim.
pp
In F.
con sord.
In C.
div.
pizz.
arco


molto espr.
molto dim.
molto dim.
ppp
dolce
espr.
molto espr.
espr.
dolce
espr.
pp
pp
pp
in F.
con sord.
pp
cresc.
pp
in F.
con sord.
pp
in F.
in C.
pp
p
pp
pp
div.
pp
pp
pp
p
div.
pp


ppp
espr.
dim.
pp
in F.
con sord.
in C.
poco cal. a tempo
pizz.


N
molto tranquillo
dolce espr.
molto dim.
senza sord.
con sord.
in F.
in C.
div.
arco