390

395

400

405

410

Double Quartet No. 3

Adagio ♪=84

L. Spohr Op. 87

Quartet 1
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

Quartet 2
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

10

15

20

MM1149S 1998 Merton Music

Set by Kitty and Theo Wyatt using Sibelius 7.

Allegro ♩= 96

25

30

35

360

365

370

375

380

385

50

pizz.

arco

p

p

cresc.

cresc.

mf

f

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

55

f

f

sf

sf

pp

arco

pp

sf

sf

p

f

f

sf

pp

f

p

310

3 cres

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

315

f

f

f

f

f

320

tr

tr

f

f

f

f

325

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

220

225

230

235

240

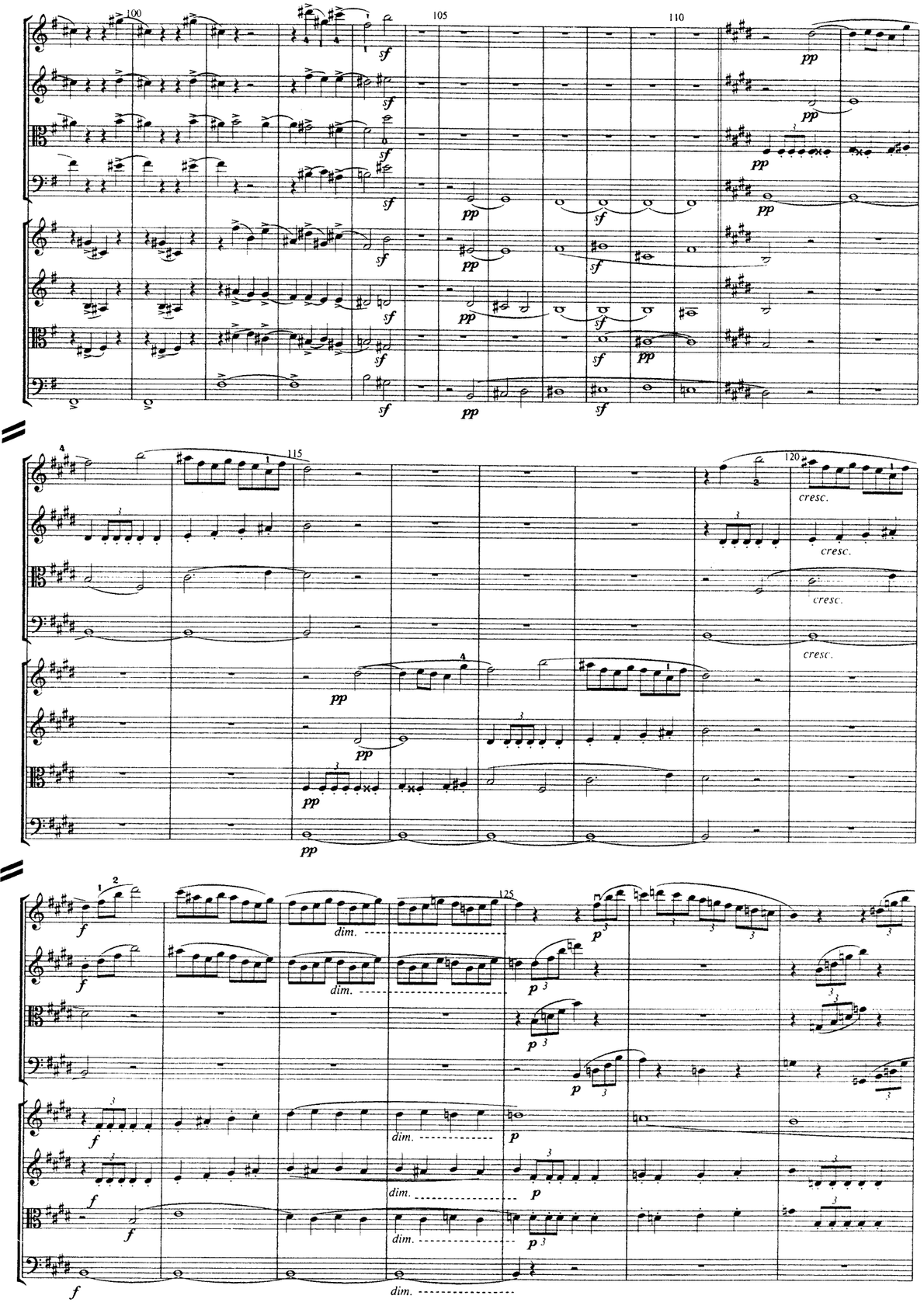
245

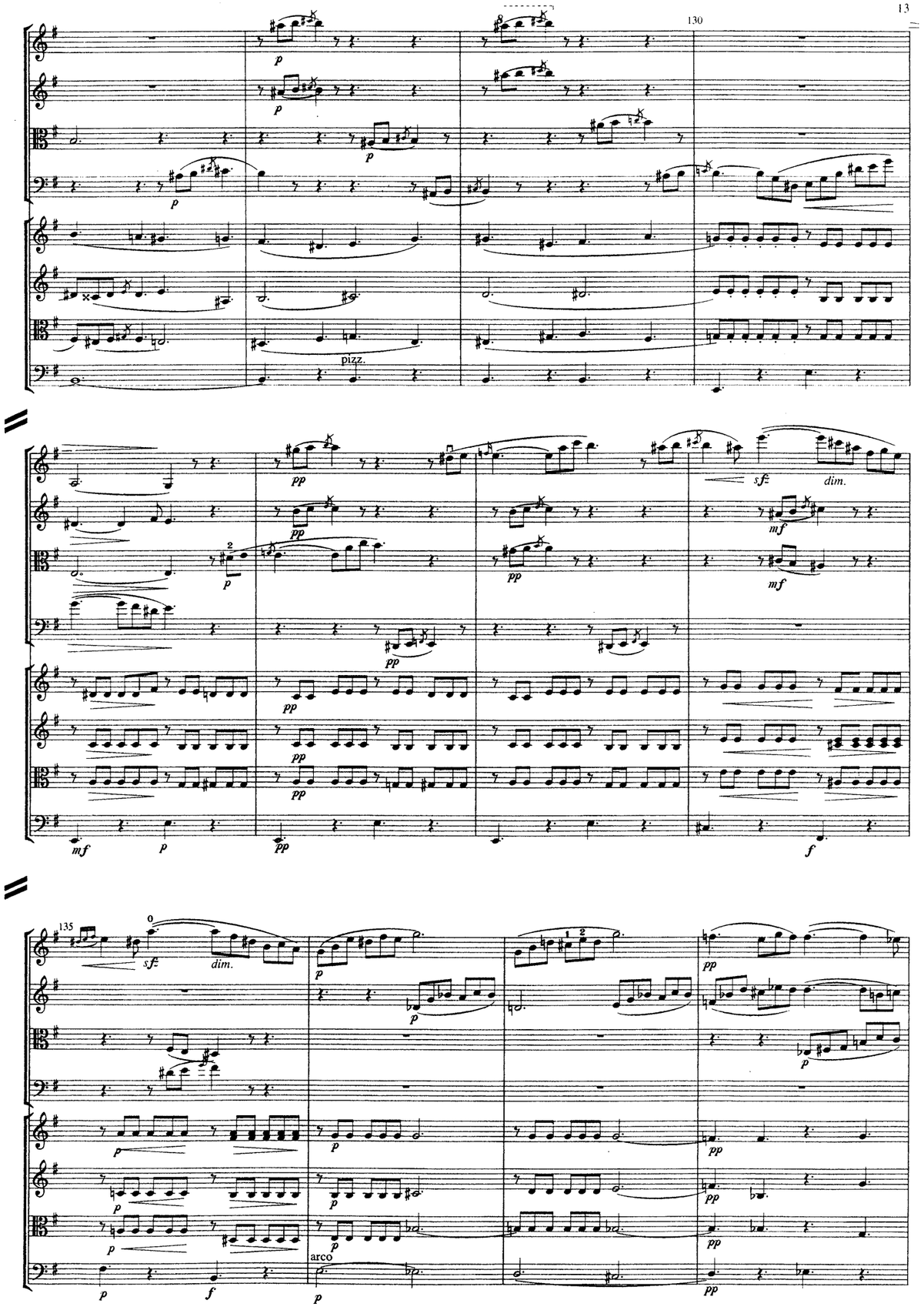
85

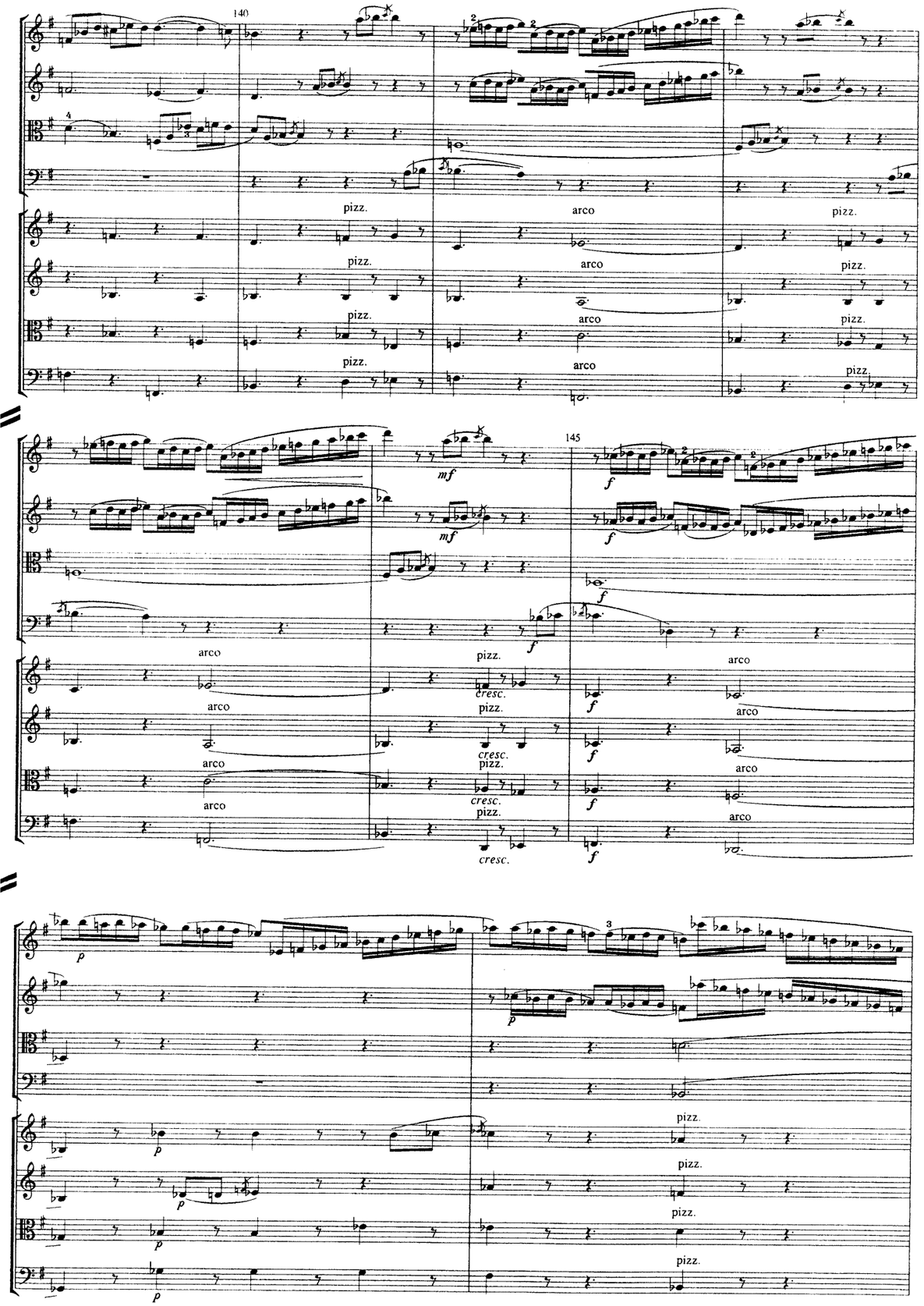
90

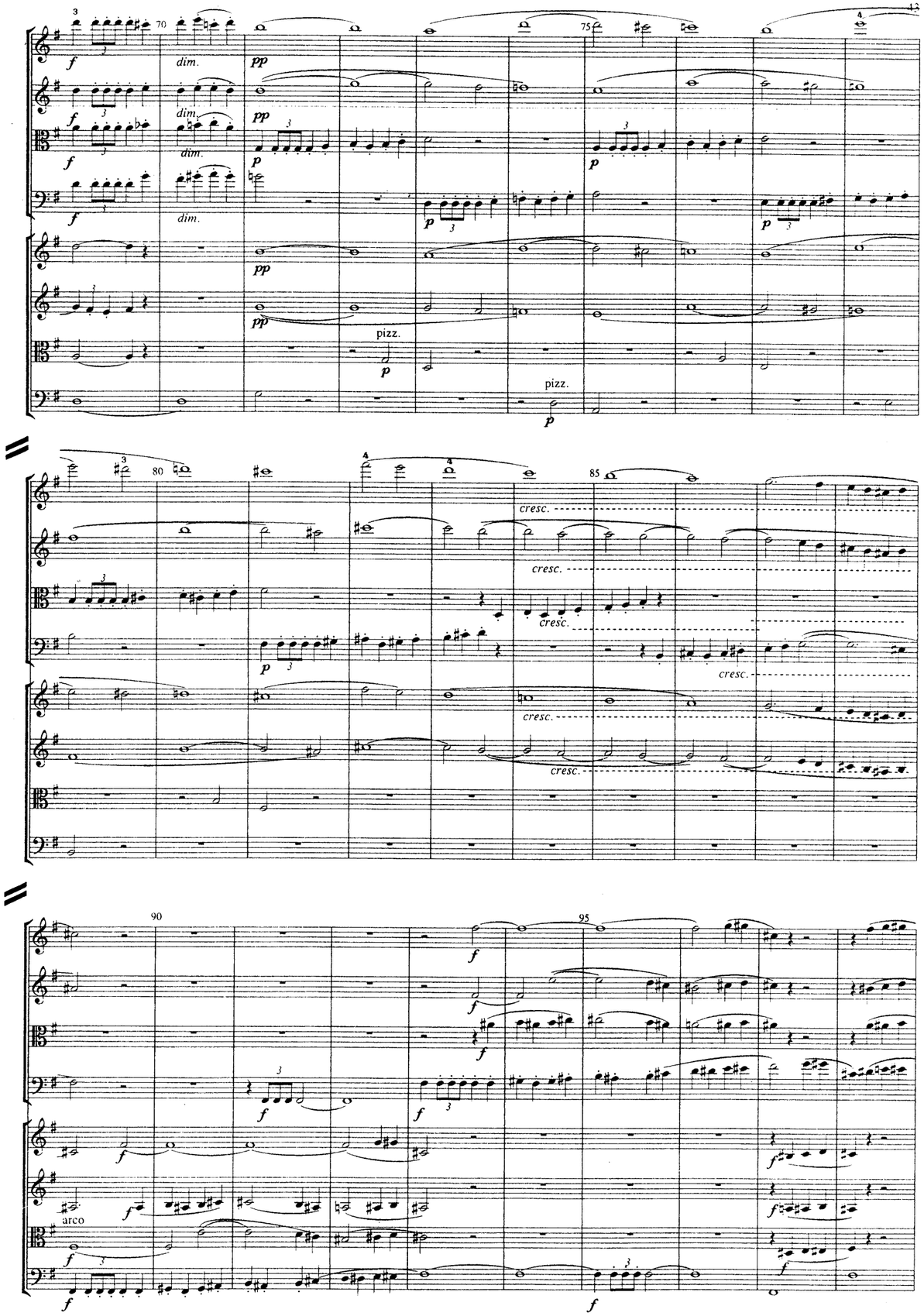
pizz.
arco
120
arco
p
arco
pizz.
arco
arco
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
125
f
f
f
p
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
f
f
f
f
arco
p
arco
p
arco
arco
p

130
135
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
f
f
f
f
f
f
140
tr
tr
145
tr
f
f
f
f
f


100
105
110
115
120
125
cresc.
dim.


130
135
pizz.
arco
dim.


140
pizz.
arco
145
mf
f
cresc.
p


70
75
80
85
90
95
dim.
pp
p
f
pizz.
cresc.
arco

40 45

pp ff sf dim.

50 55

sf p cresc. f dim.

60 65

p cresc. mf

arco pizz.

150

arco pizz.

cresc. f

155

pizz.

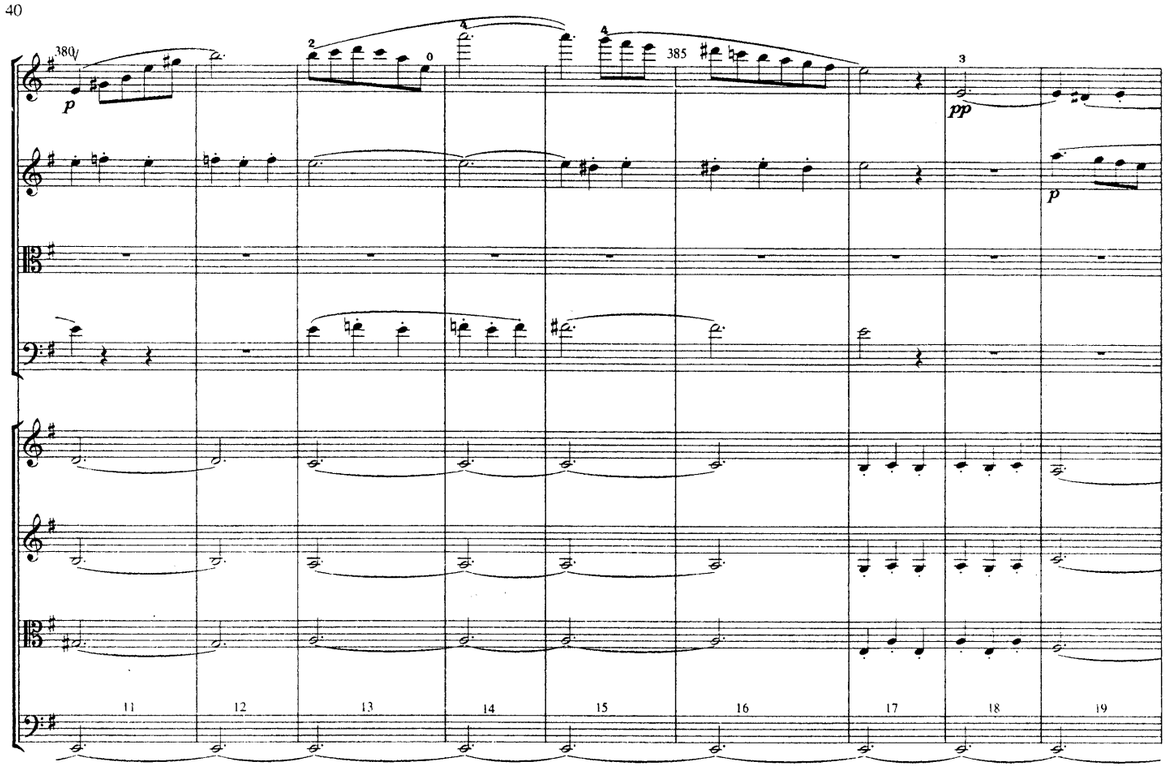
160

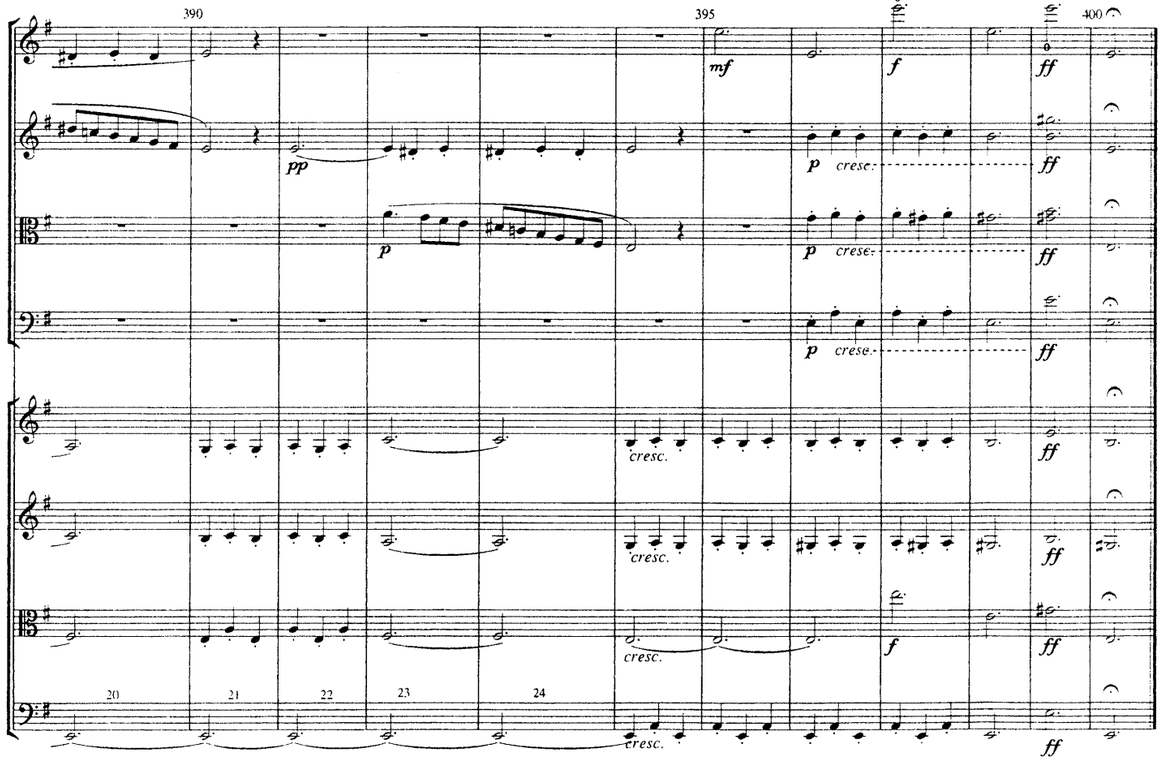
165

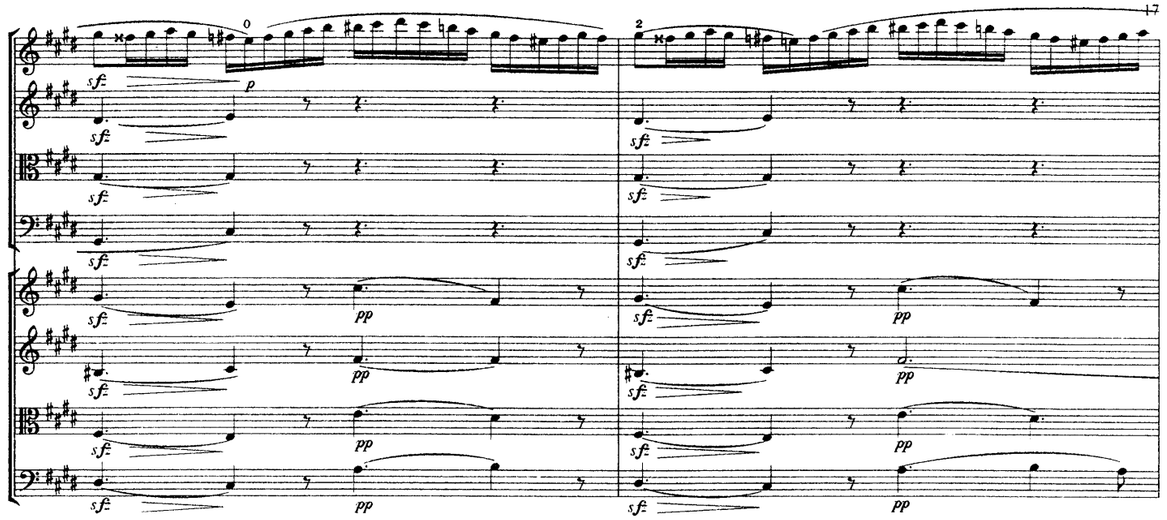
Finale

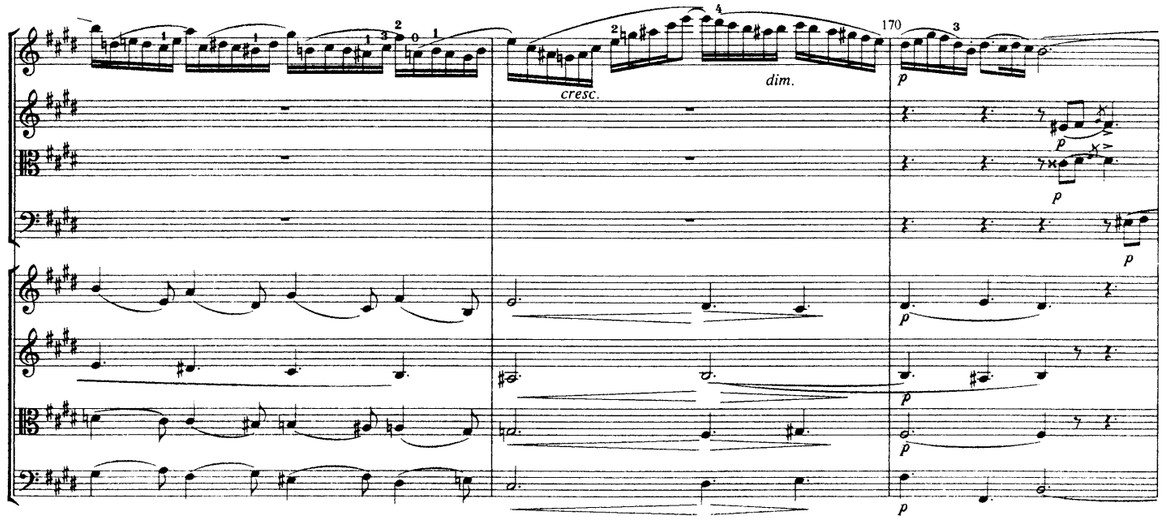
Allegro molto ♩ = 116

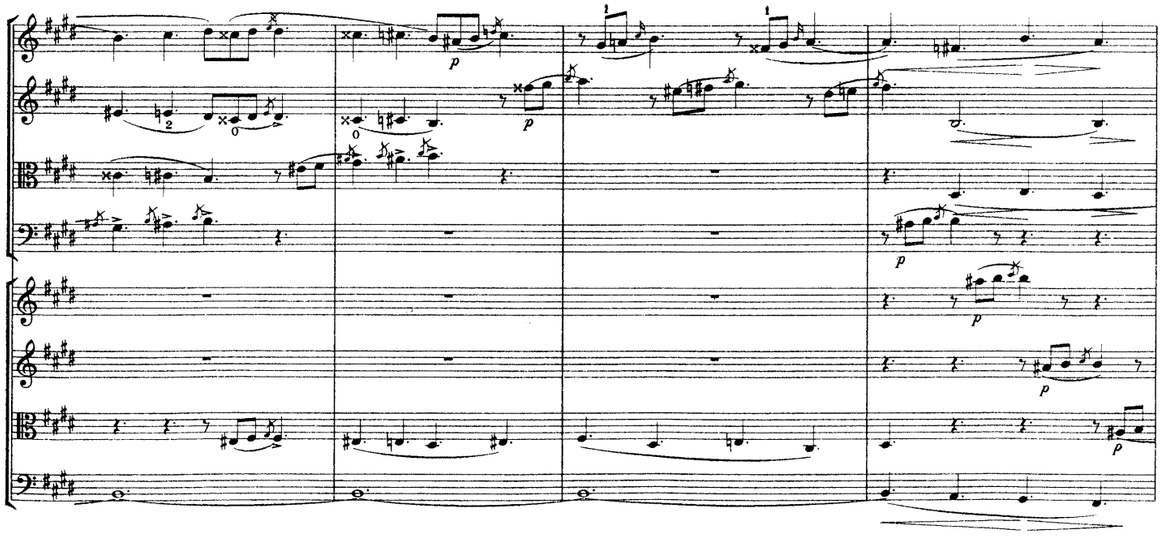
IV


380
385
p
pp
p
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19


390
395
400
pp
mf
f
ff
p
cresc.
20
21
22
23
24


sf
p
pp


cresc.
dim.
170
p


p

295 300 305

310 315 320

325 330 335

185

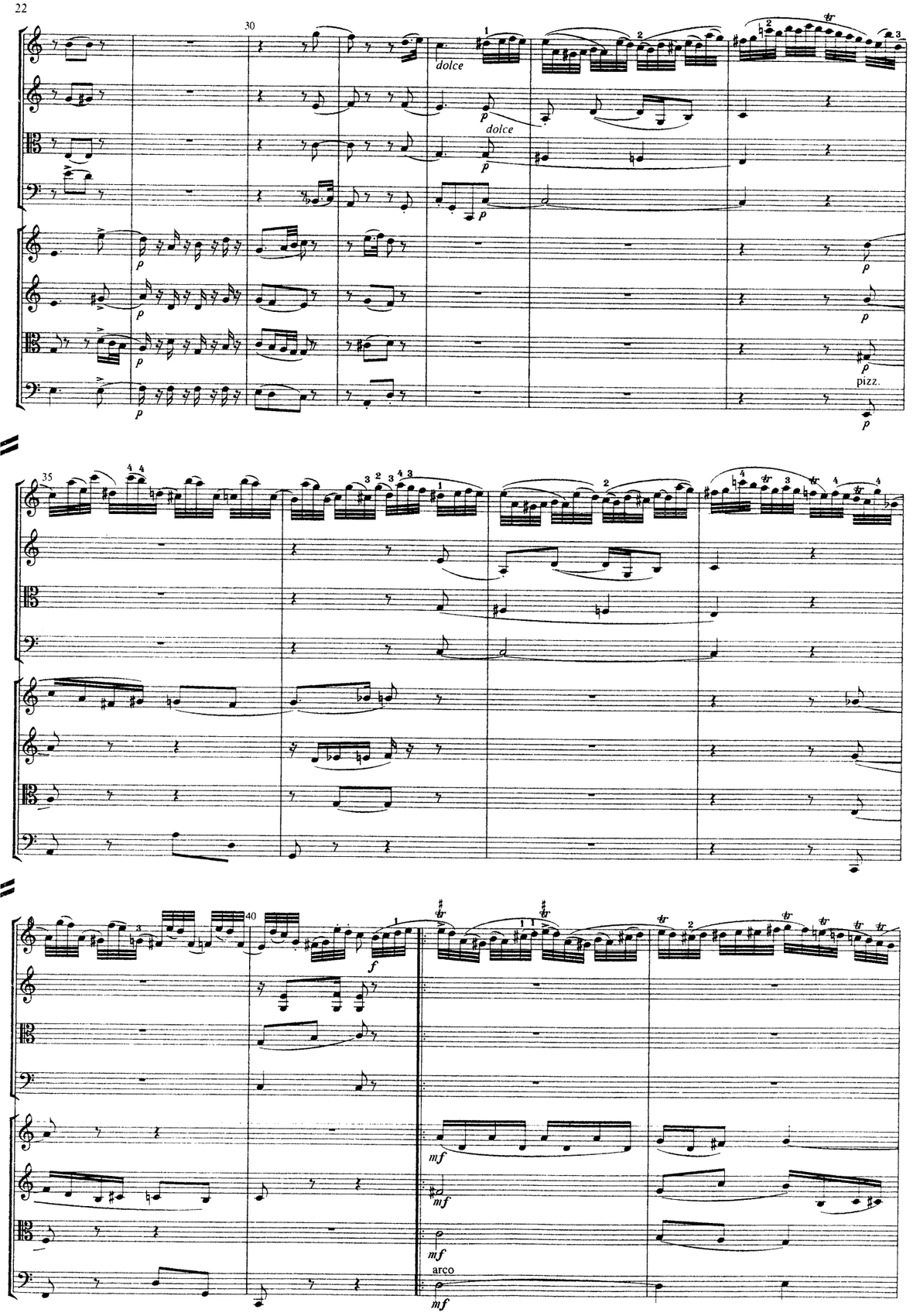
190

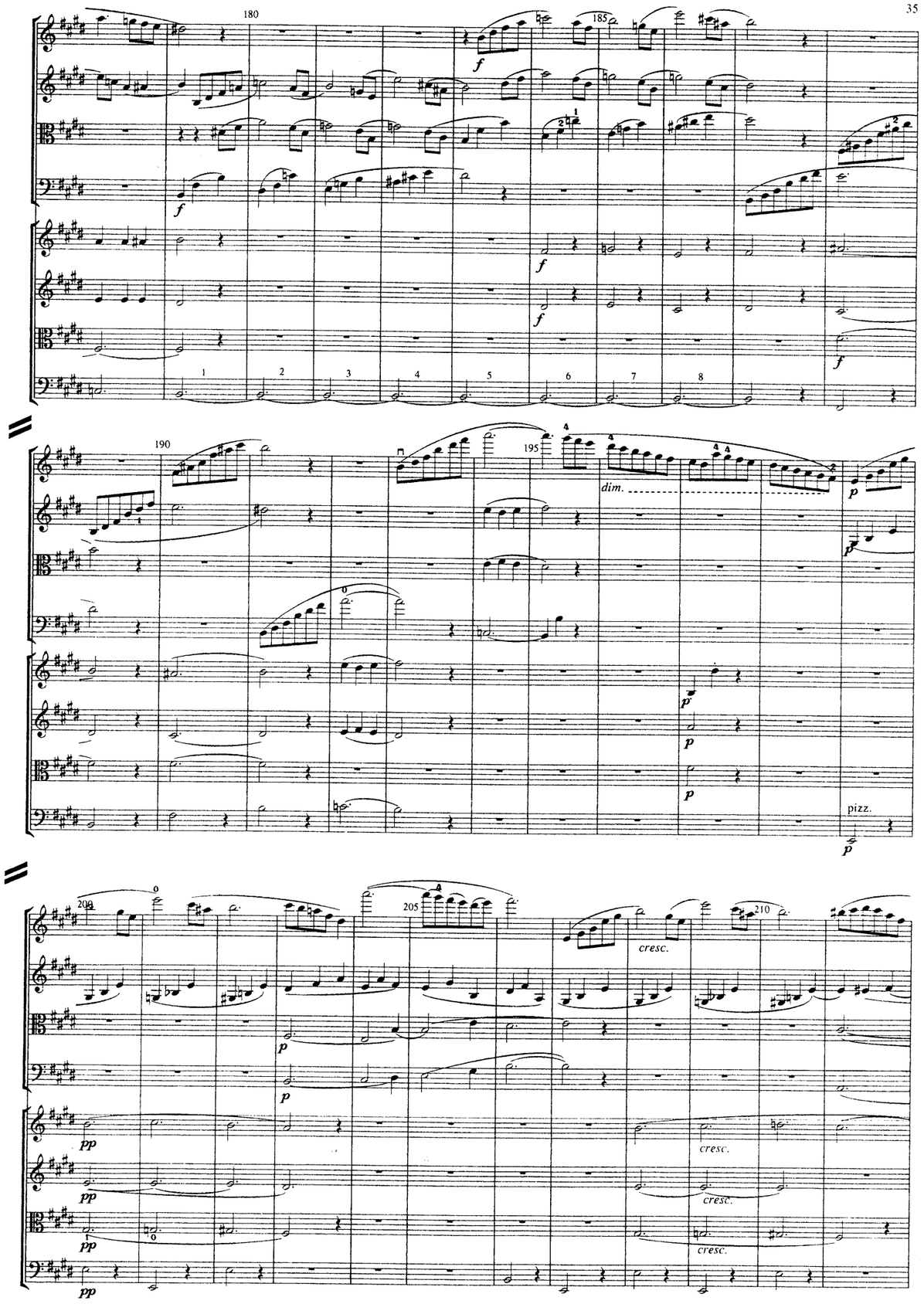
195

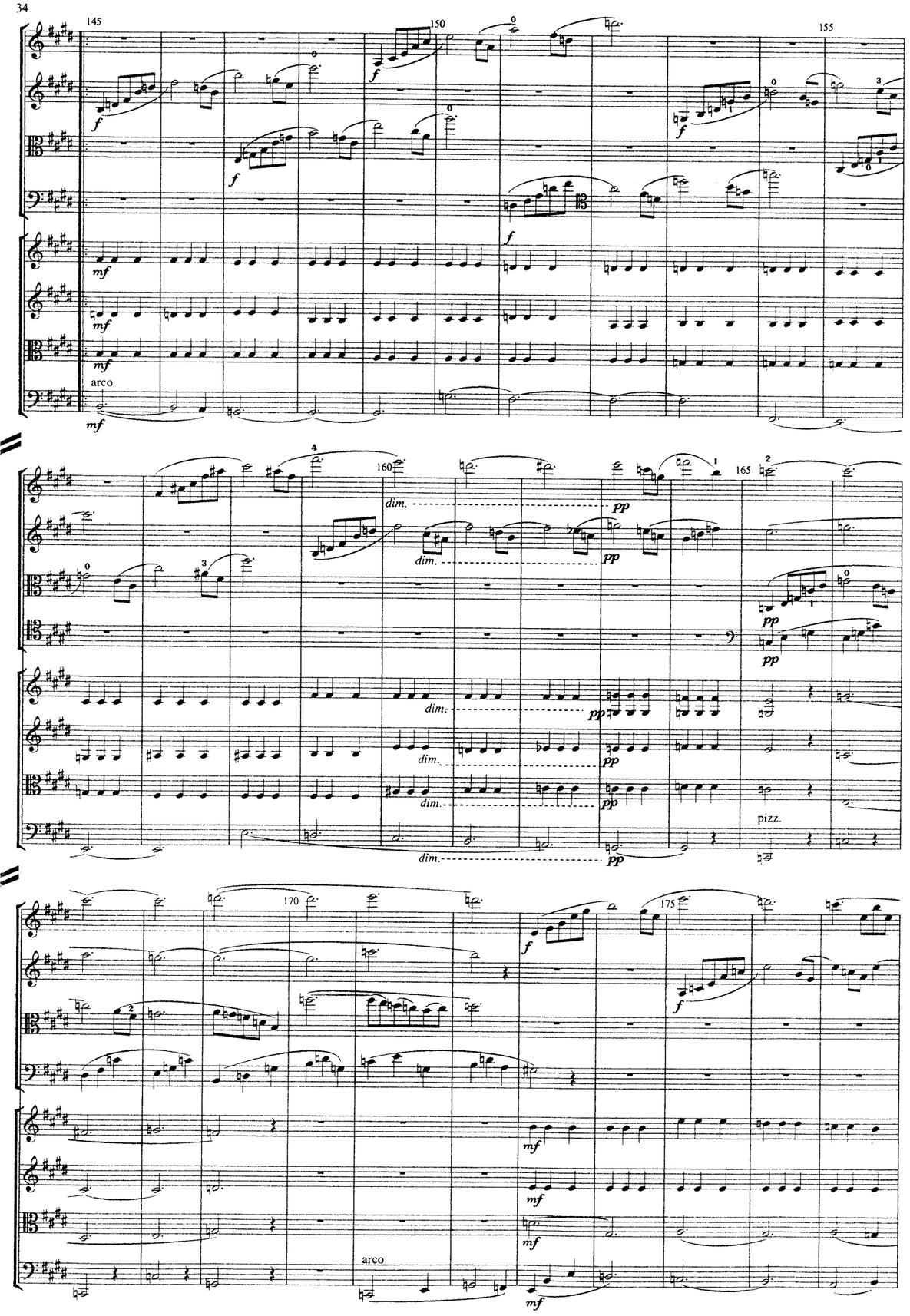
Andante con Variazioni ♪ = 92

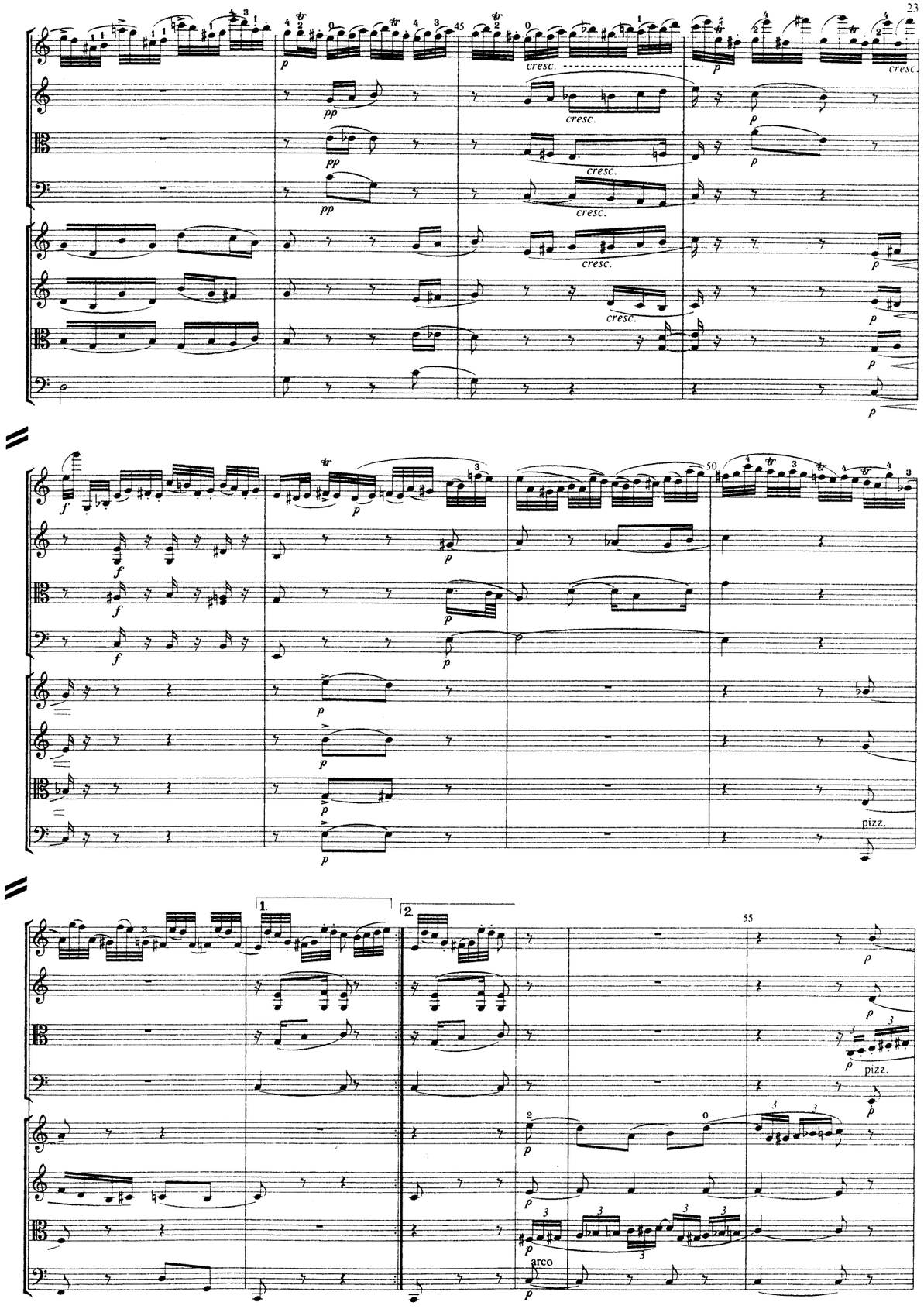
II

Scherzo Allegro


dolce
dolce
pizz.
arco


dim.
pizz.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.


145
150
155
160
165
170
175
arco
dim.
pizz.
arco


45
50
55
cresc.
pizz.
arco

arco

pizz.

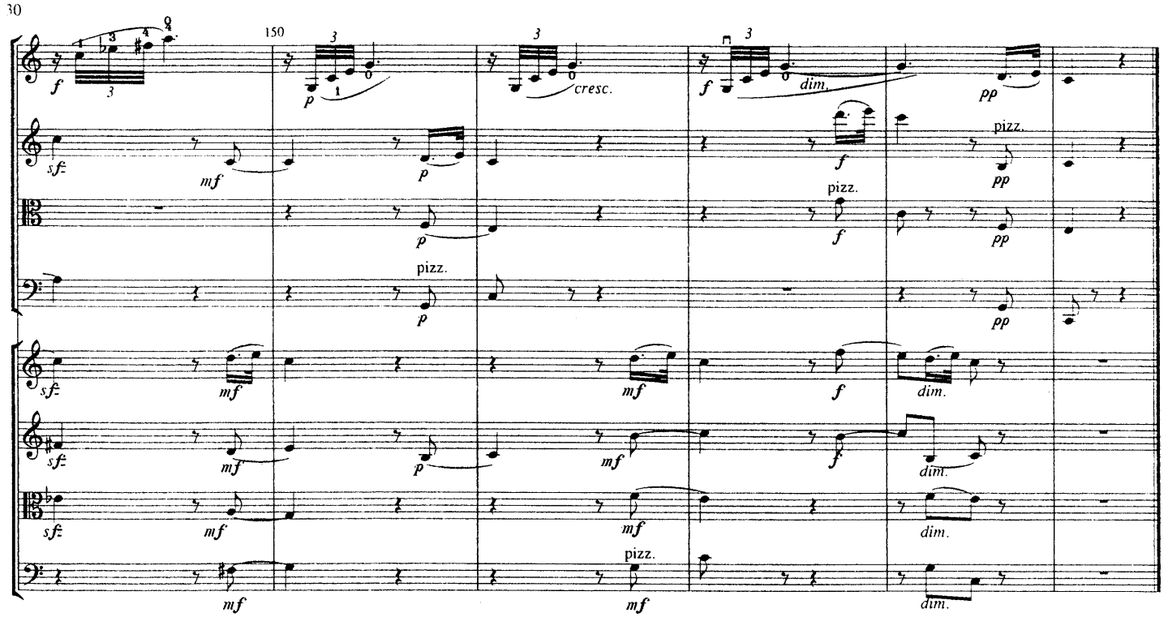
pizz.

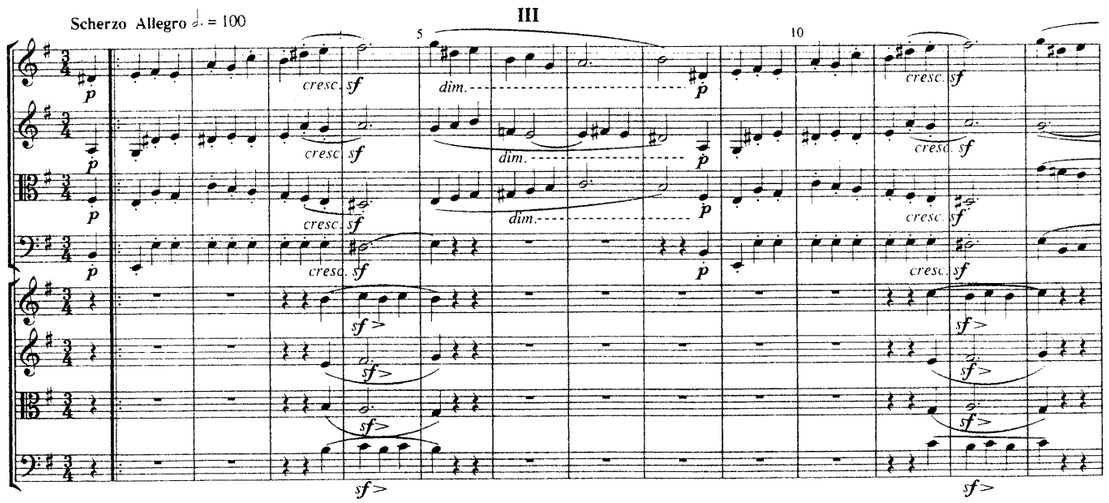
arco

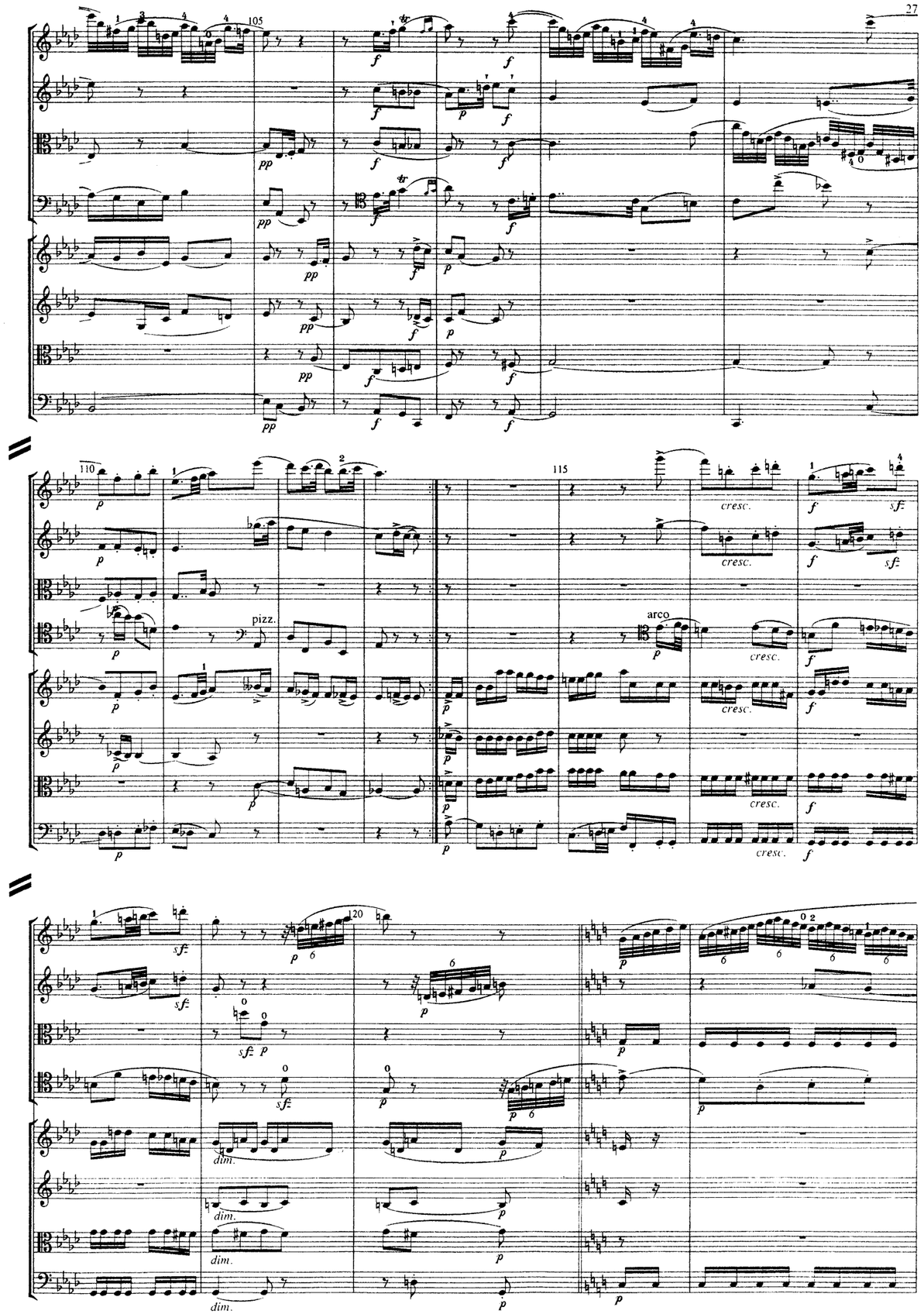
arco

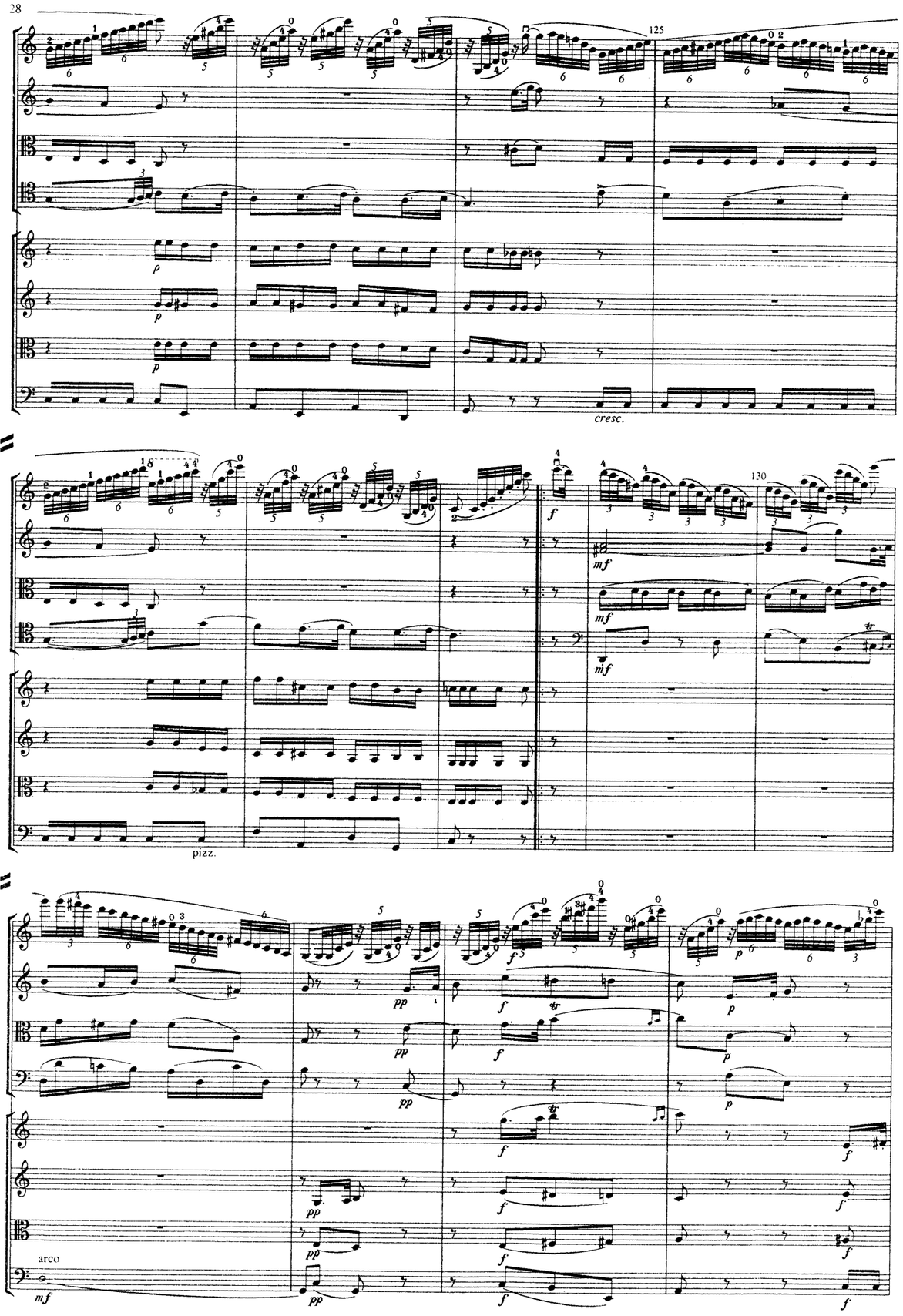
Trio

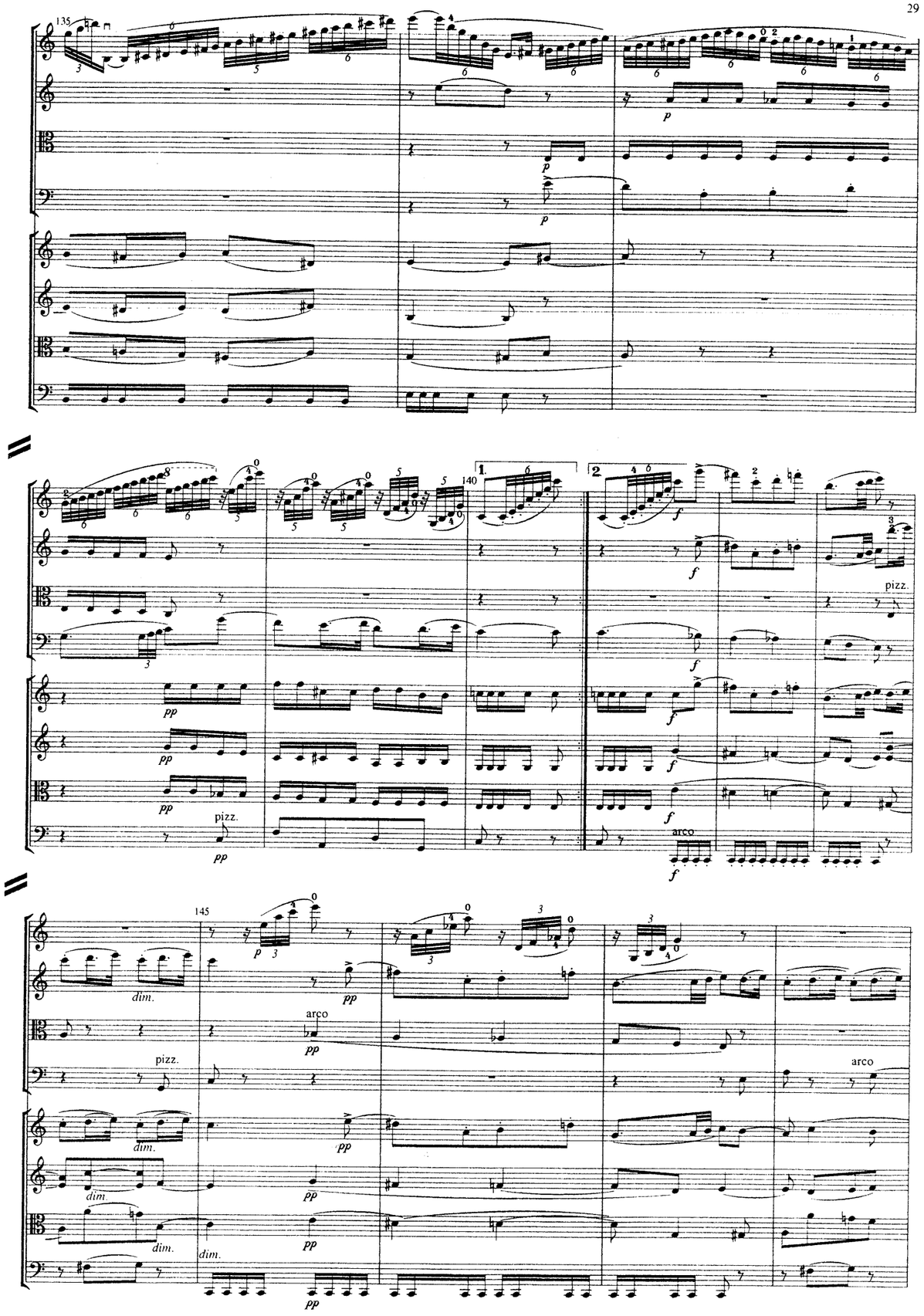
pizz.


150
cresc.
dim.
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
dim.
dim.
dim.
dim.


Scherzo Allegro ♩. = 100
III
5
10
cresc.
dim.
cresc.


105
110
115
pizz.
arco
cresc.
dim.
dim.
dim.
dim.


125
cresc.
130
pizz.
arco


135
140
pizz.
arco
145
dim.

Louis Spohr (1784 - 1859) was ranked as one of the great composers for much of the 19th century. He was born in Brunswick and as composer, violin virtuoso, conductor and teacher he was highly esteemed in every rôle. Throughout his life he was involved in chamber music, not only as composer but as performer and organiser of concerts. During his years at Kassel from 1822 he held weekly winter quartet parties until 1858, the year before his death.

His output of chamber music for string ensemble totals 48, made up of 36 quartets, seven quintets, a sextet and four double quartets, written for the same eight instruments as Mendelssohn's popular Octet. However, these double quartets are unique in the chamber music repertory for, as Spohr himself made clear, "Mendelssohn's Octet belongs to quite another kind of art in which the two quartets do not concert and interchange in double choir with each other but all eight instruments work together".

Spohr credited the violinist-composer Andreas Romberg (1767-1821) with the idea for such compositions "when we played a quartet together for the last time before his death". Spohr set to work on his first double quartet in March 1823; "I imagined how two quartet groups sitting close to each other should be made to play one piece of music and keep in reserve the eight-voice combination for the chief parts of the composition only. I was greatly impressed to find that its effect was far greater than that of simple quartets and quintets."

This first double quartet (D minor Op.65) proved immensely successful and a second (E flat Op.77) followed in December 1827, but the third composed during December 1832 and January 1833 is generally reckoned to be the finest of the four, and it is indeed among the very best of Spohr's works, being a particular favourite of the great German violinist Joseph Joachim. The final double quartet (G minor Op.136) dates from June 1847.

In late 1825 the English musician Sir George Smart visited Kassel, and on Sunday November 6th attended a performance of the first double quartet in Spohr's house. In his journal he noted the layout of the performers.

QUARTET I			QUARTET II		
Violin II		Viola	Viola		Violin II
Violin I	facing	Violoncello	Violoncello	facing	Violin I

Of course, this layout may not be ideal for all locations, especially larger ones such as churches or grand concert halls, and other formations may have to be adopted, but performers may be interested to try out Spohr's own placement.

[Continued on inside cover]

MERTON MUSIC

SPOHR

DOUBLE STRING QUARTET No.3

in E minor Op. 87

SCORE

From
THEO WYATT
8 Wilton Grove
London SW19 3QX England
Phone & Fax: 0181-540 2708
e-mail: mertonmusic@argonet.co.uk.

8010

The four movements explore a wide range of expression, with a magical slow introduction giving way to an Allegro which features a troubled melancholy of a Mendelssohnian cast. Next, a set of variations in C major brings to the fore the antiphonal rôle of the two quartets and a more outgoing atmosphere in the musical mood. The Scherzo mixes the lively elements usual in such movements with lyrical moments, and Spohr's melodic gifts are displayed in wonderful style in the Trio. Unlike many composers, Spohr rarely suffers from "the finale problem" and this is one of his best - a folk-like main theme, a menacing march and mysterious hints of a chorale blend together to round off a work of which The Times said in a review of 1847 "If Spohr had written nothing else besides this double quartet it would be sufficient to establish his fame as one of the greatest composers."

Keith Warsop
Chairman, Spohr Society of Great Britain

If you would like to know more about Spohr and his music, why not become a member of the Spohr Society. For details write to the Secretary, 123 Mount View Road, Sheffield S8 8PJ