Six Trio Sonatas

Based on Concertos by

Arcangelo Corelli

(1653-1713)

Arranged for ATB recorders by R. D. Tennent

[There] then came over [from Italy to England] Corelly's first consort [his Op. 1 trio sonatas, 1681] that cleared the ground of all other sorts of musick whatsoever. By degrees the rest of his consorts, and at last the conciertos came, all of which are to musitians like the bread of life.

Roger North (London, 1726)

Mr. Prevost, a bookseller, received a large consignment of books from Amsterdam, and amongst them the concertos of Corelli, which had just then been published; upon looking at them he thought of [the violinist] Mr. Needler, and immediately went with them to his house, but being informed that Mr. Needler was then at the concert at Mr. Loeillet's, he went with them thither. Mr. Needler was transported with the sight of such a treasure; the books were immediately laid out, and he and the rest of the performers played the whole twelve concertos through, without rising from their seats.

General History of Music, Sir John Hawkins (London, 1776)

Although the universall Admiration of Corelli's Works have allmost equaliz'd his Meritt, yet there are many Gentlemen Lovers of Musick who want a true Taste of his perfections, his Compositions being for the Violin only, if so agreeable an Instrument as the Flute could be accomodated with the same benefitt, it would add to the Honor of the Composer, the Pleasure of the performer, and supply that Instrument's defect of good Musick, which has been so much of late Complain'd of. This thought was the only motive of the following Transposition …

John Walsh (London, 1720)

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FOREWORD

How can a *concerto grosso* be performed with just three recorders? The title page of Corelli's Opus 6, published posthumously in 1714, describes the work as follows:

> *Concerti Grossi con duoi Violini, e Violoncello di Concertino obligati, e duoi altri Violini, Viola, e Basso di Concerto Grosso, ad arbitrio, …*

i.e., two violins and cello are obligatory but additional strings (violins, viola and *basso*) are *optional*. Indeed, except for these optional parts, the works are stylistically similar to the forty-eight trio sonatas by Corelli published in Rome between 1681 and 1694 (Opp. 1–4) and it is quite possible that most of the material was initially composed for use in trio sonatas. In any case, it was certainly intended that the Opus 6 works could be performed as if they were trio sonatas.

But what about the use of recorders rather than strings? Many transcriptions of Corelli's sonatas and concertos were published in the 1700s for "flutes" (i.e., recorders) and other instruments, but these generally assumed a conventional *basso continuo*, typically cello and keyboard. However, there is evidence[1] that recorder ensembles existed at that time, though very little music was composed specifically for them in the baroque era. It is presumed that they played music originally written for other instruments. So it seems quite likely that recorder ensembles were playing Corelli trio sonatas (and maybe even concertos) in the 1700s, and it is not inauthentic to continue this tradition today.

Sonatas I to III here are based on Opus 6, No. 10, 11, and 9, respectively. These are three of the four *concerti da camera* (chamber concertos) in the set of twelve. Each consists of a suite of dance-based movements in the same or related keys, introduced by a stately prelude. Some of the dance movements are preceded by a short *adagio*; in No. 11 (Sonata II here), an *adagio* is extended by an *andante largo*.

Sonata IV is based on Opus 6, No. 6, one of the *concerti da chiesa* (church concertos), which are somewhat more weighty than the chamber concertos. Nevertheless, several movements are similar to the dance movements in the chamber concertos, though none are named as dances.

Sonata V is based on a *sinfonia* that Corelli composed as the overture for Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier's oratorio *Santa Beatrice d'Este*, performed in Rome and Modena in 1689. This work has been designated WoO[2] 1 in the Corelli catalogue published by musicologist Hans Joachim Marx. The *largo assai* movement was re-worked by Corelli as the *largo* in Opus 6, No. 6 (Sonata IV here).

Sonata VI is based on the third of six trio sonatas for two recorders and *basso continuo* published in London in 1720 by Walsh and Hare. These are arrangements of movements from Corelli's Opus 6 concertos and are thought to be pirated versions of arrangements by Johann Christian Schickhardt (ca. 1682–1762), a respected composer of music for wind instruments. Trio-sonata arrangements of Corelli's concertos by Schickhardt are known to have been published by Roger in Amsterdam in about 1714, but no copies of this publication are extant. This particular trio sonata was based on movements selected from No. 1 and No. 2 of Corelli's Opus 6 set.

The arrangements here are in the original keys, except for three movements of Sonata VI which, as in the sonata published by Walsh and Hare, have been transposed from D to F. A few octave transpositions were necessary to fit the ranges of the recorders and, in some of the movements, rapid string figurations were streamlined for performance on recorders.

Similar ATB recorder arrangements of trio sonatas by Corelli may be found in the following publications (both available in the U.S.A. from Magnamusic[3]):

Six trio sonatas arranged for ATB recorders, by Arcangelo Corelli, arranged by R. D. Tennent. Provincetown Bookshop Edition No. 40, Provincetown Bookshop, Provincetown, MA (1999). Sonatas from Op. 2.

Twelve trio sonatas arranged for ATB recorders, by Arcangelo Corelli, arranged by R. D. Tennent. In four volumes: AvP 114–17, The Avondale Press[4], Vancouver, BC (2007). Sonatas from Opp. 1, 3, and 4.

[1] http://www.recorderhomepage.net/families.html

[2] without opus number

[3] http://www.magnamusic.com

[4] http://www.theavondalepress.com

Six Trio Sonatas

for ATB recorders

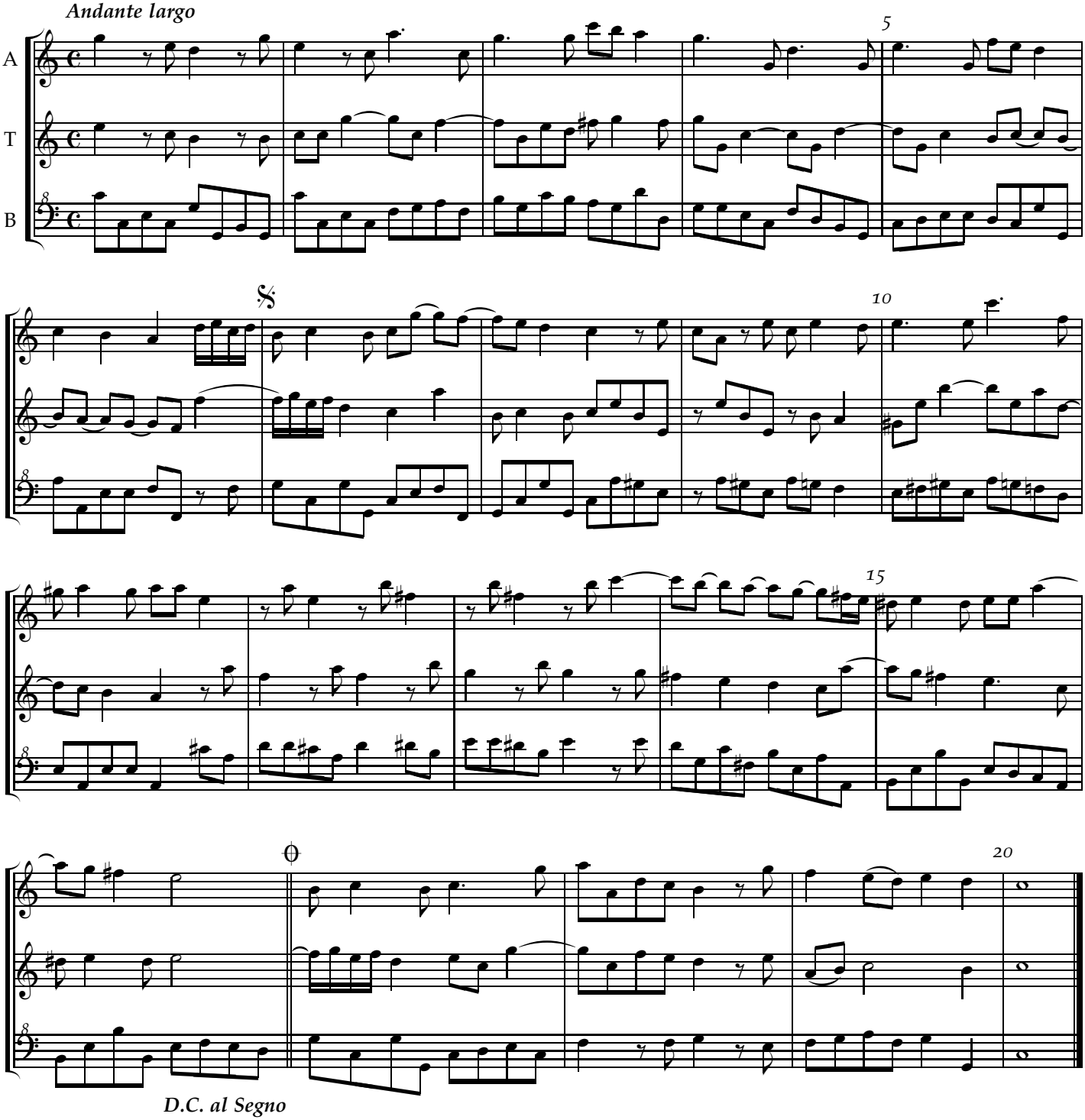
Arranged by R. D. Tennent

Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713)

Sonata I†

1. Preludio

Andante largo



†Opus 6, No. 10

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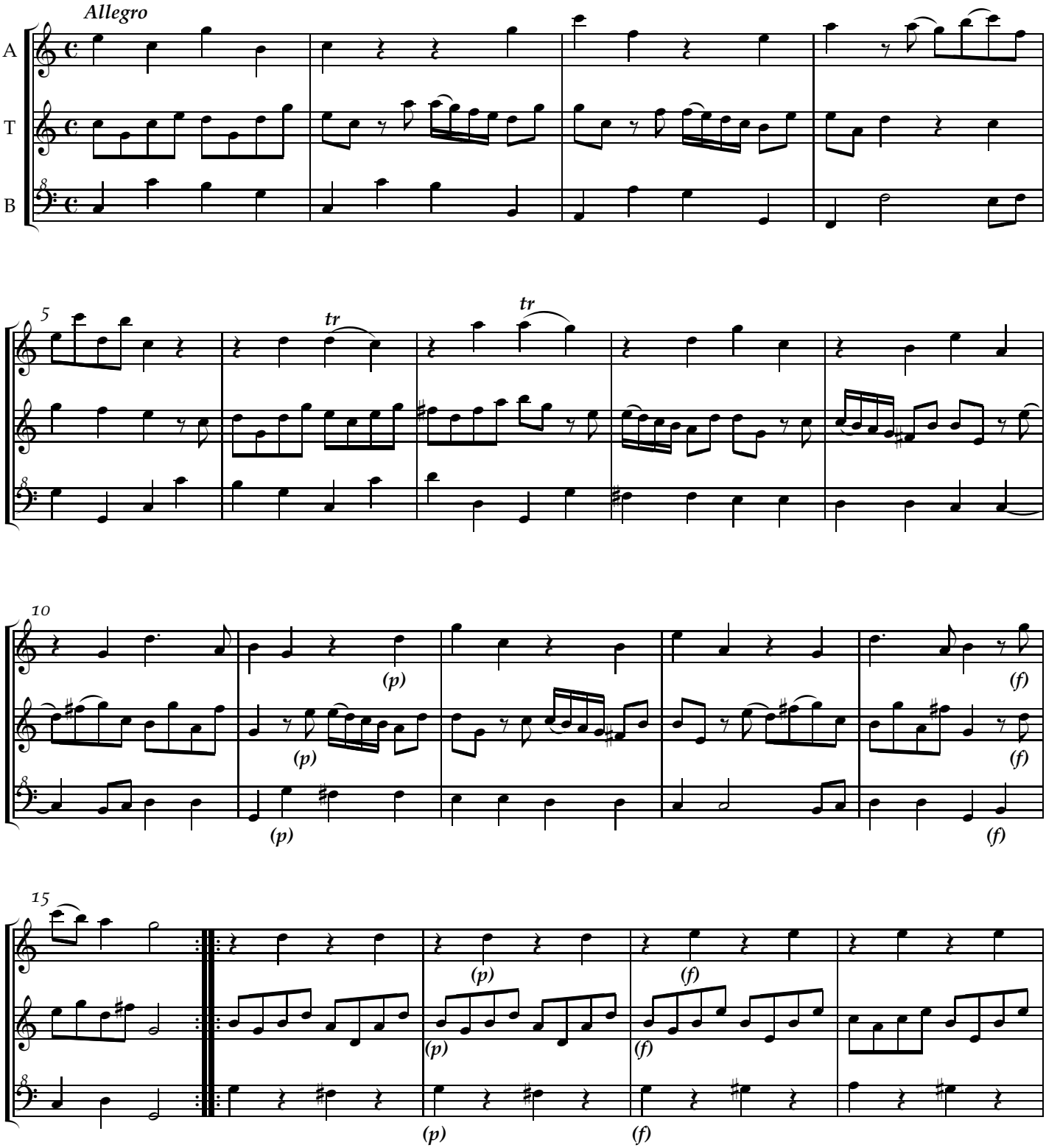
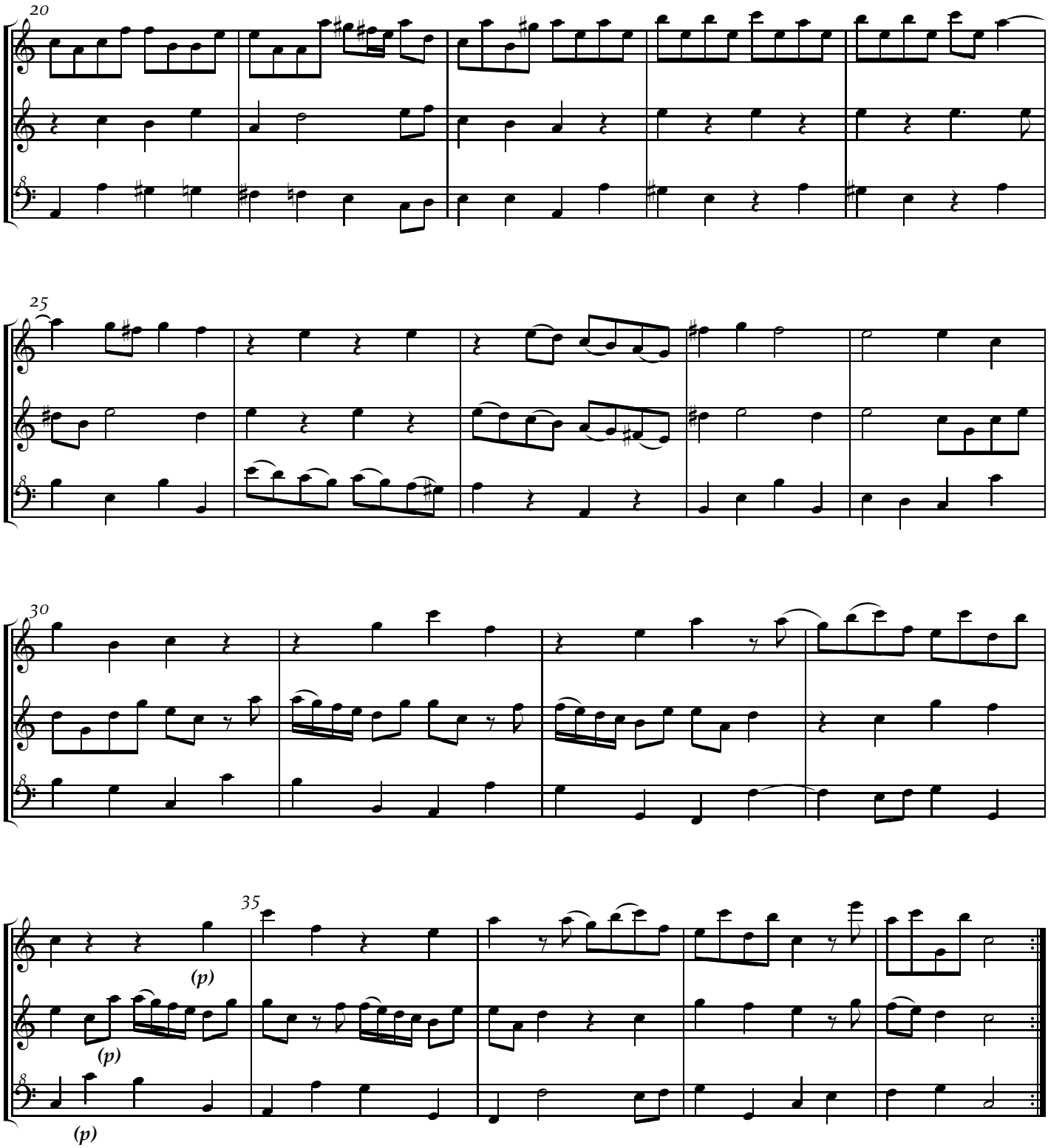
2. Allemanda

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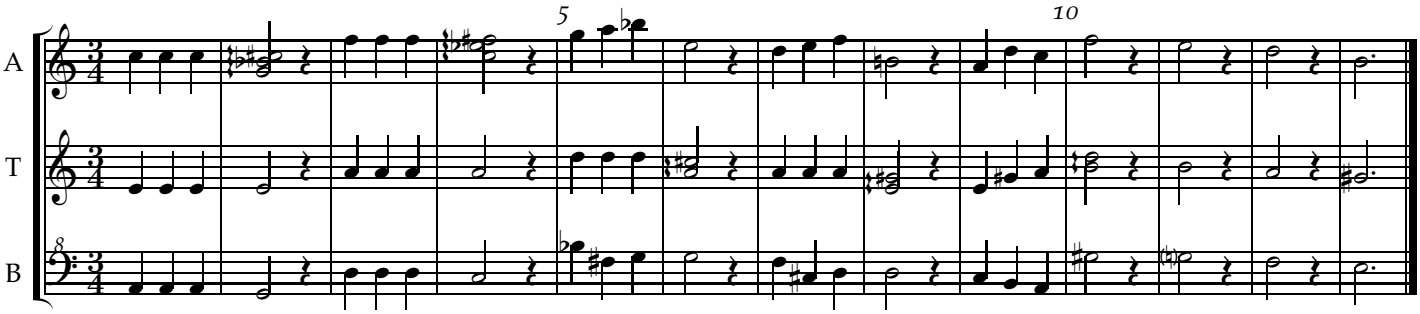
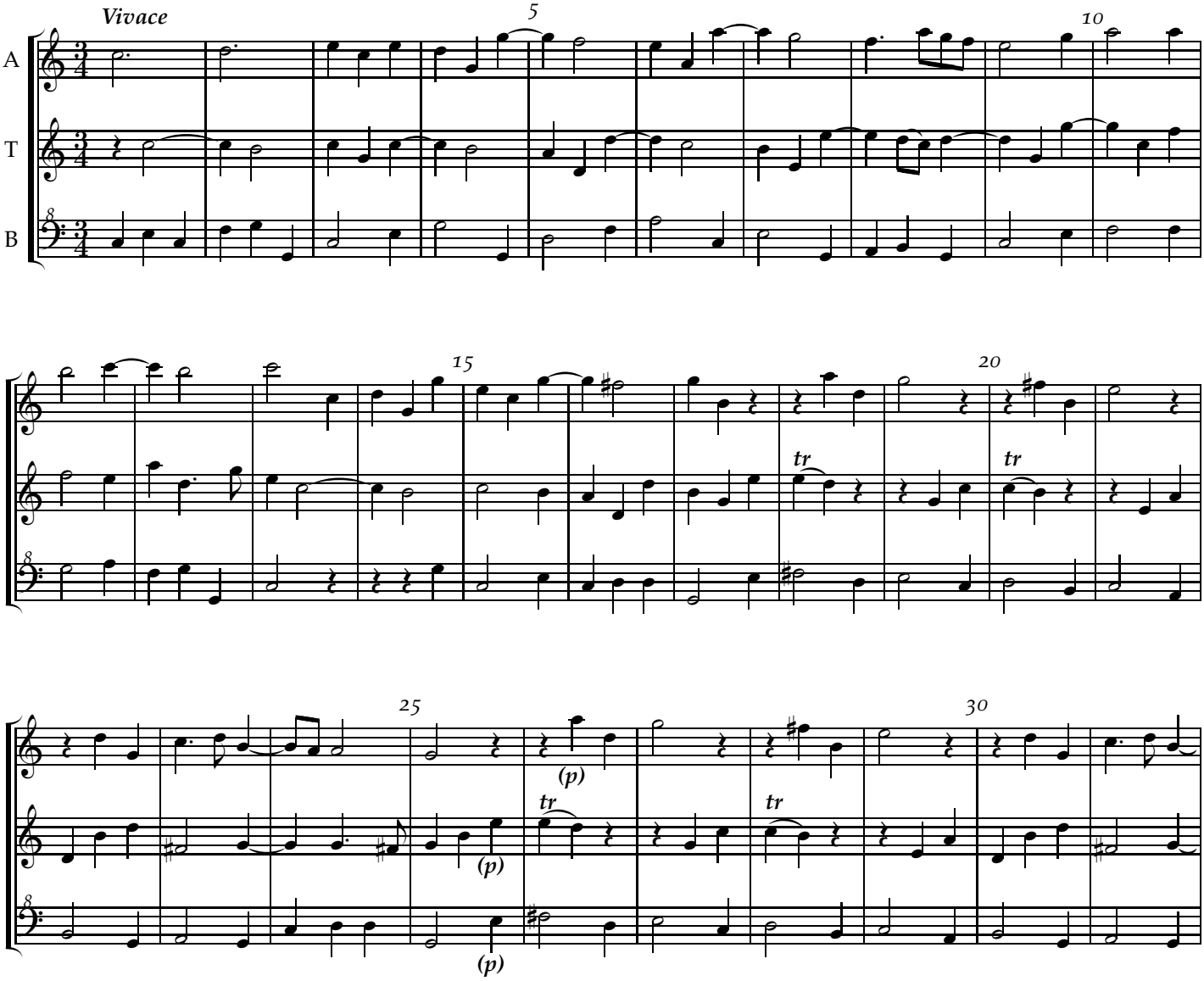
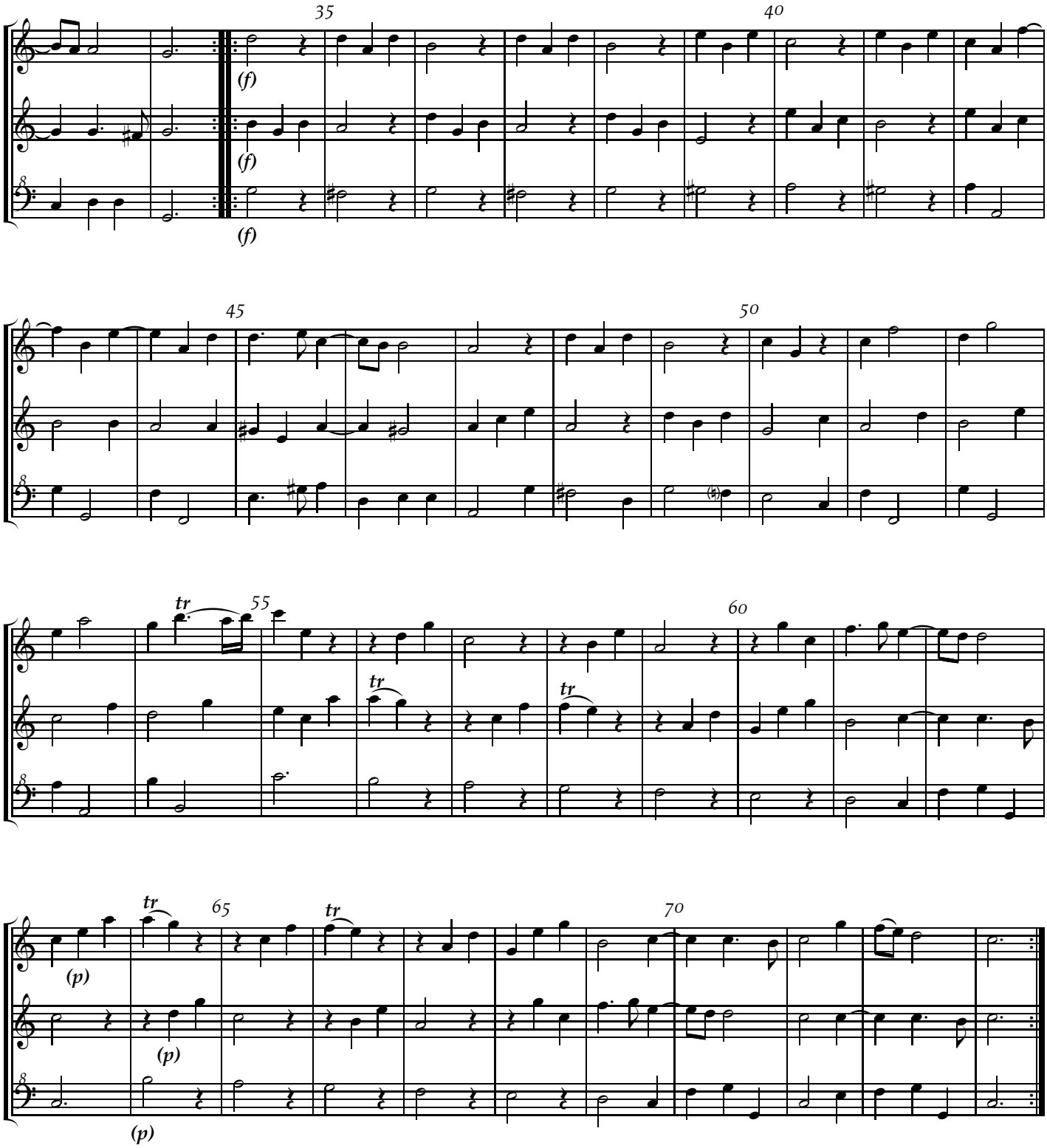
3. Adagio



4. Corrente

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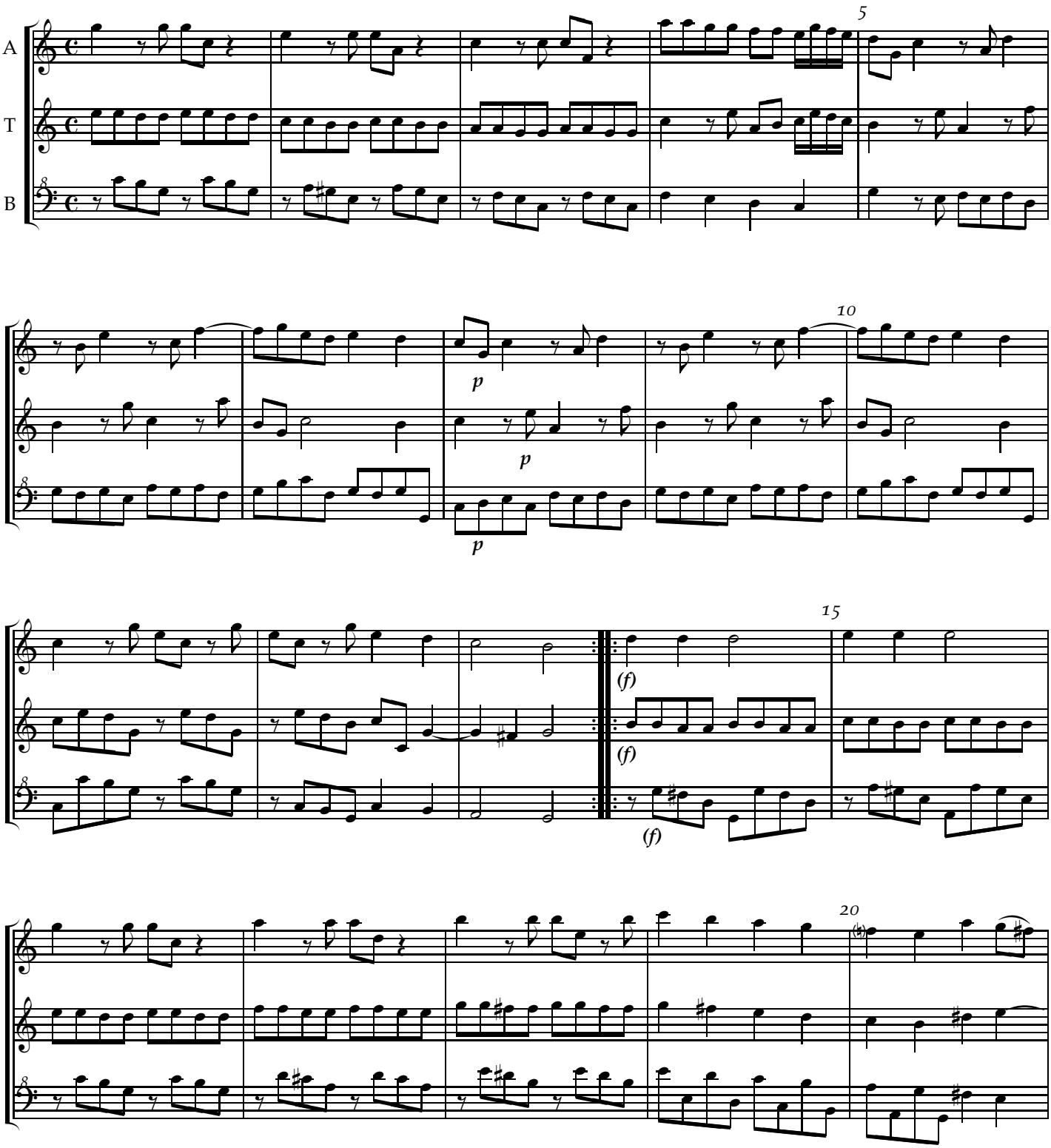
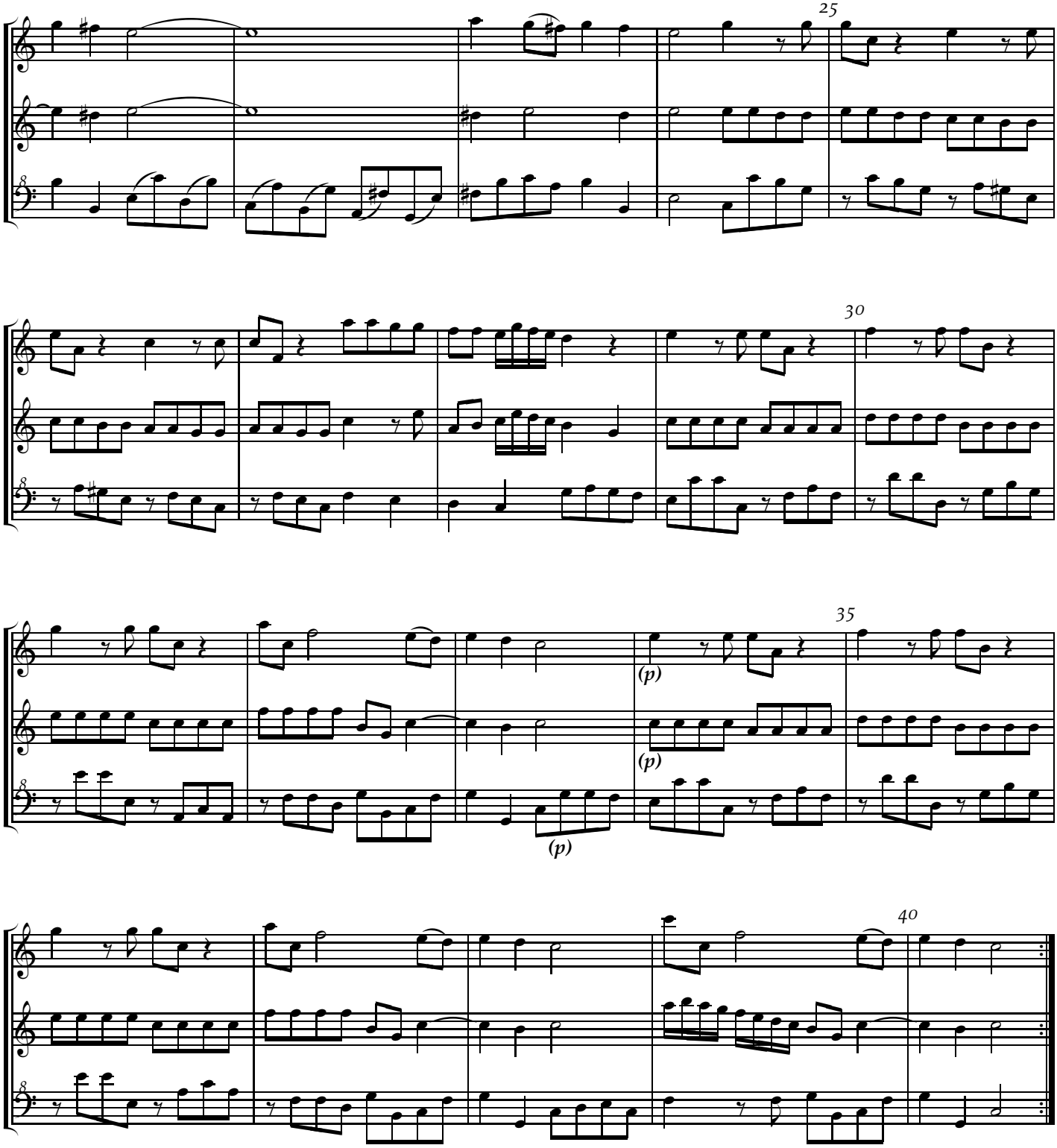
5. Allegro

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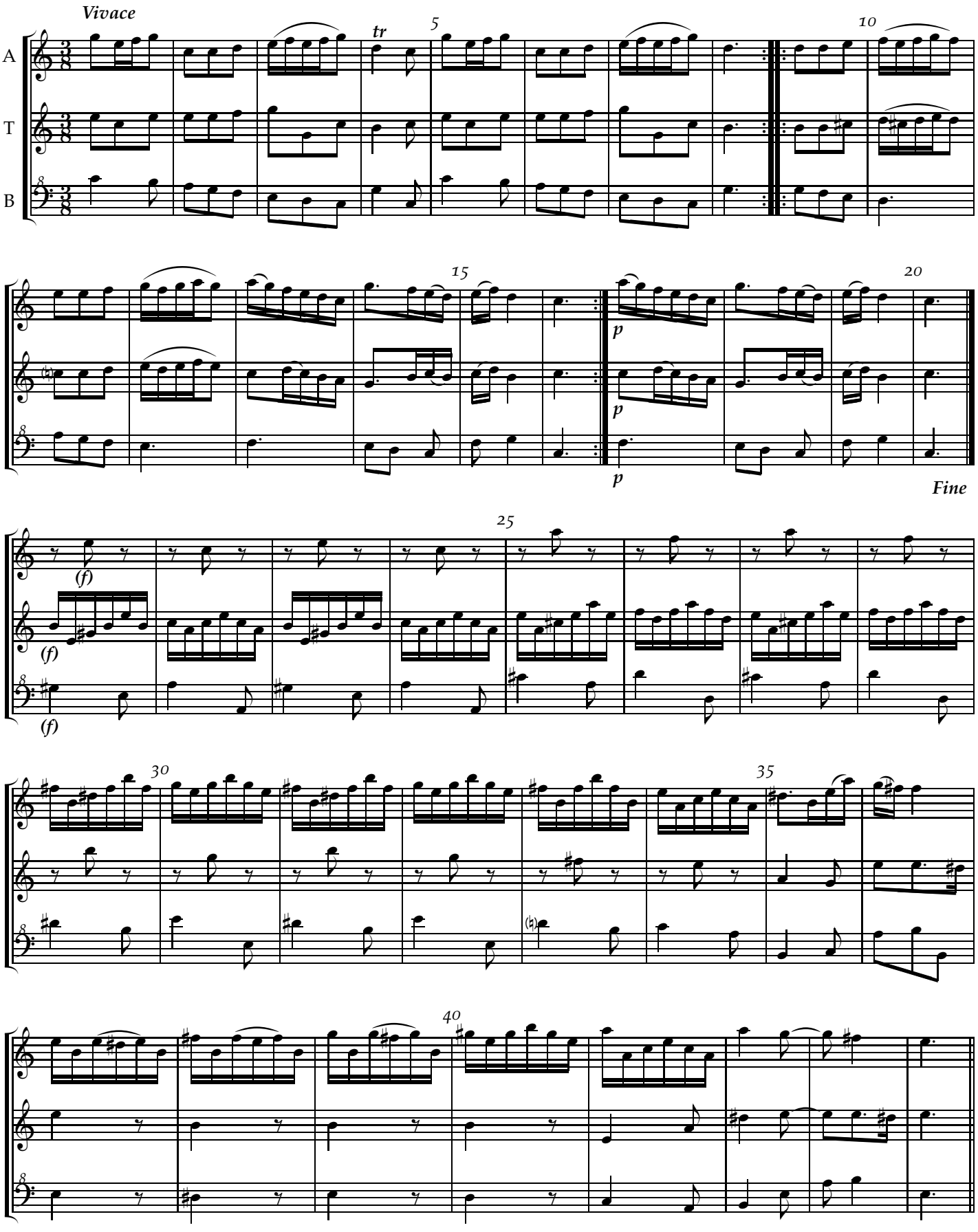
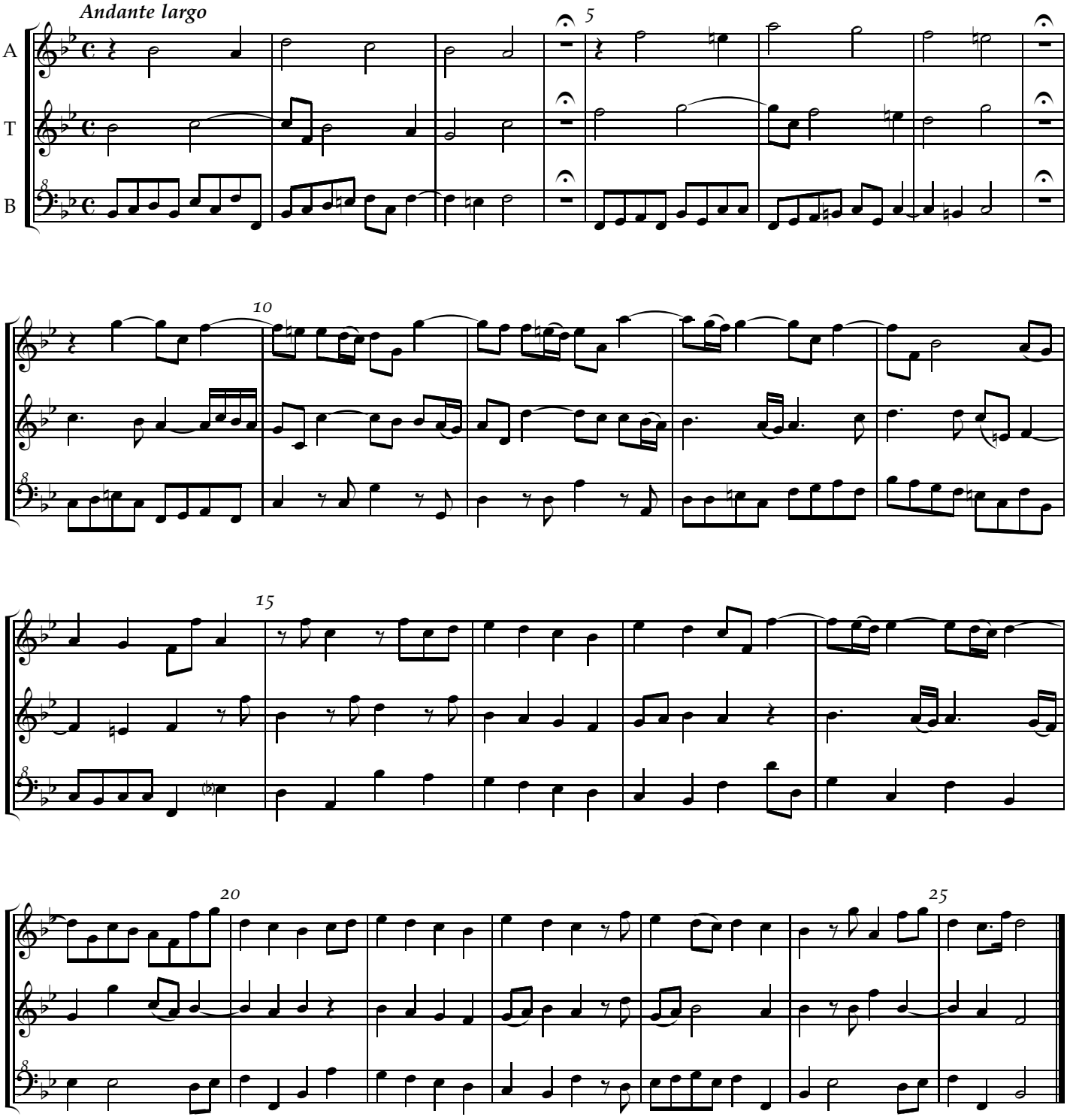
6. Minuetto



Sonata II†

1. Preludio



†Opus 6, No. 11

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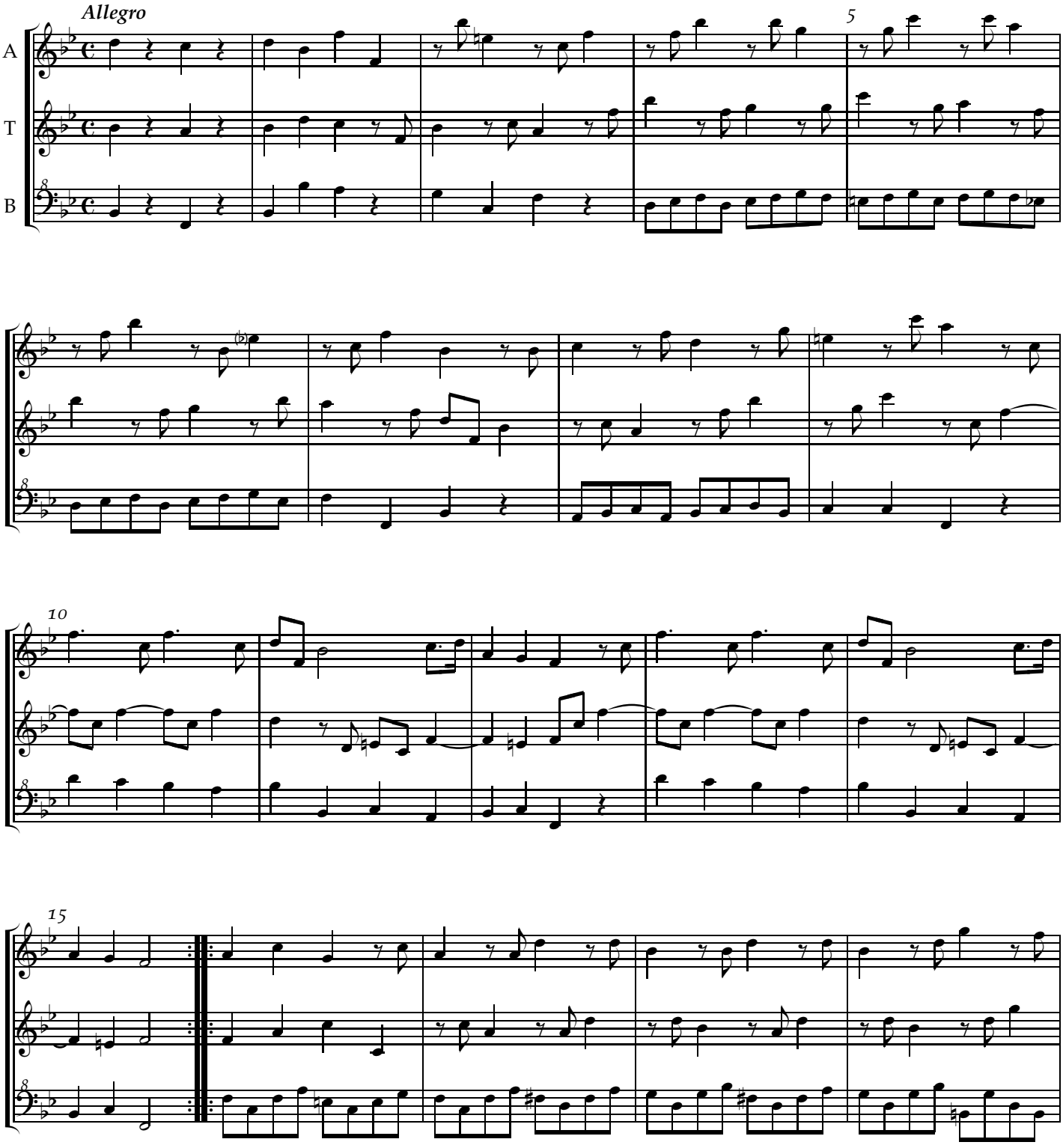

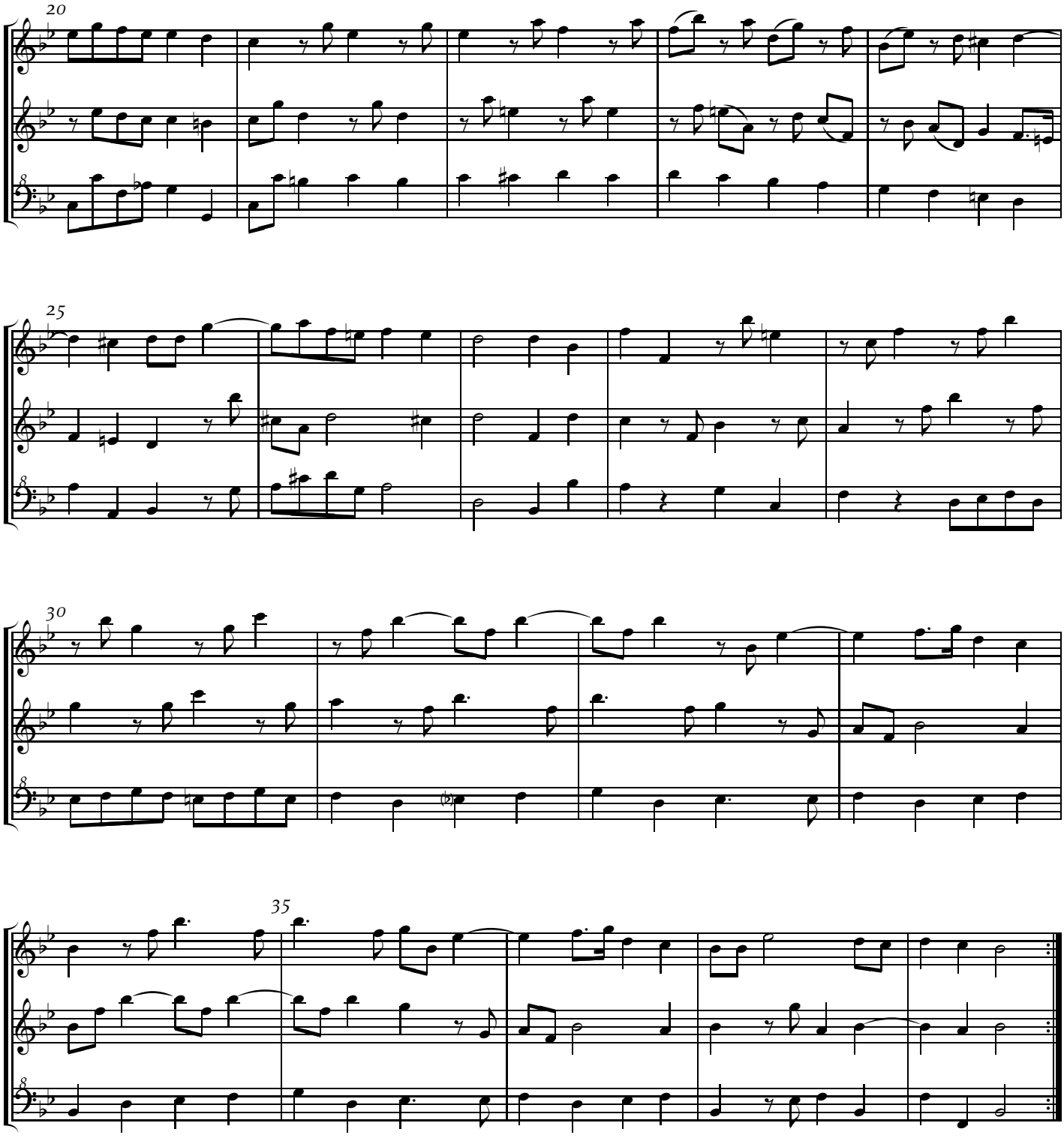
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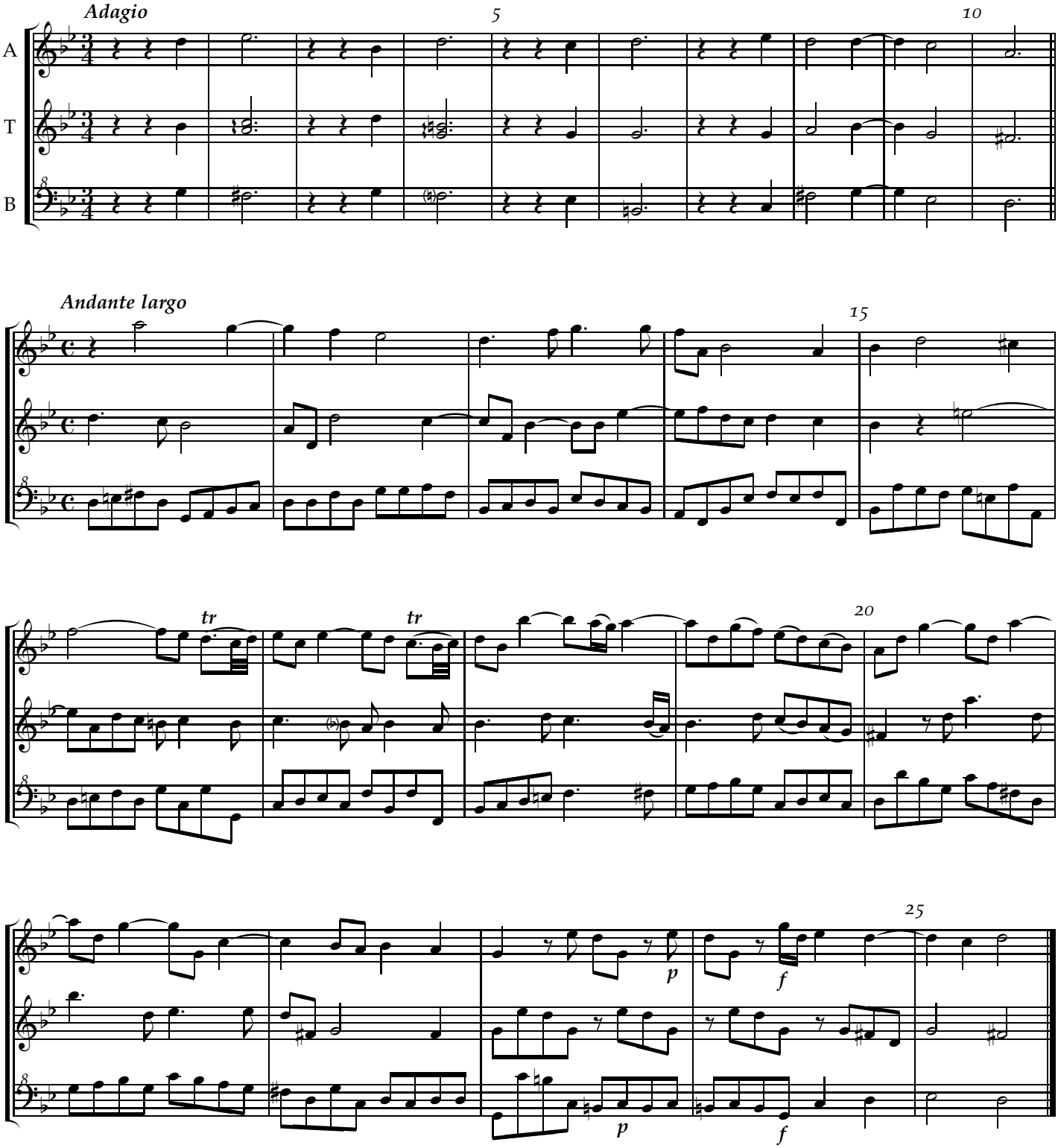
3. Adagio–Andante largo



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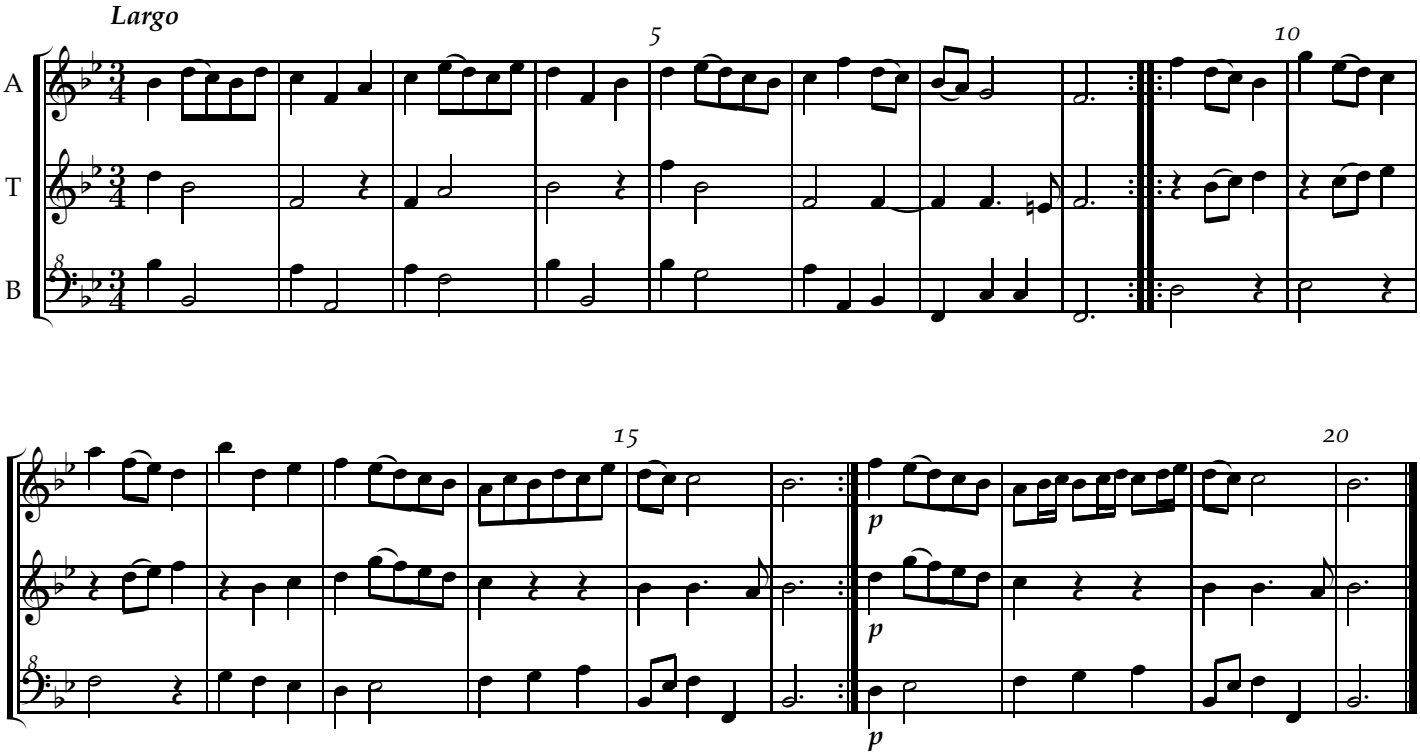

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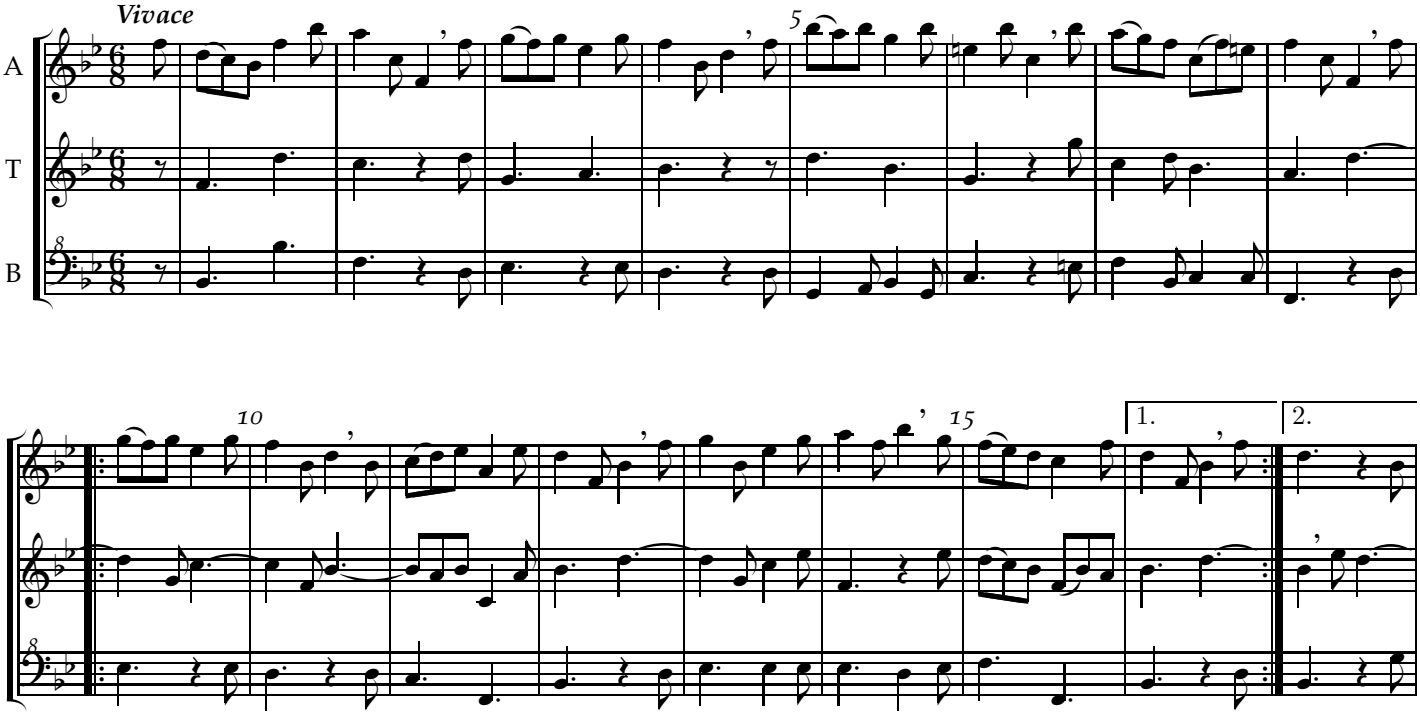

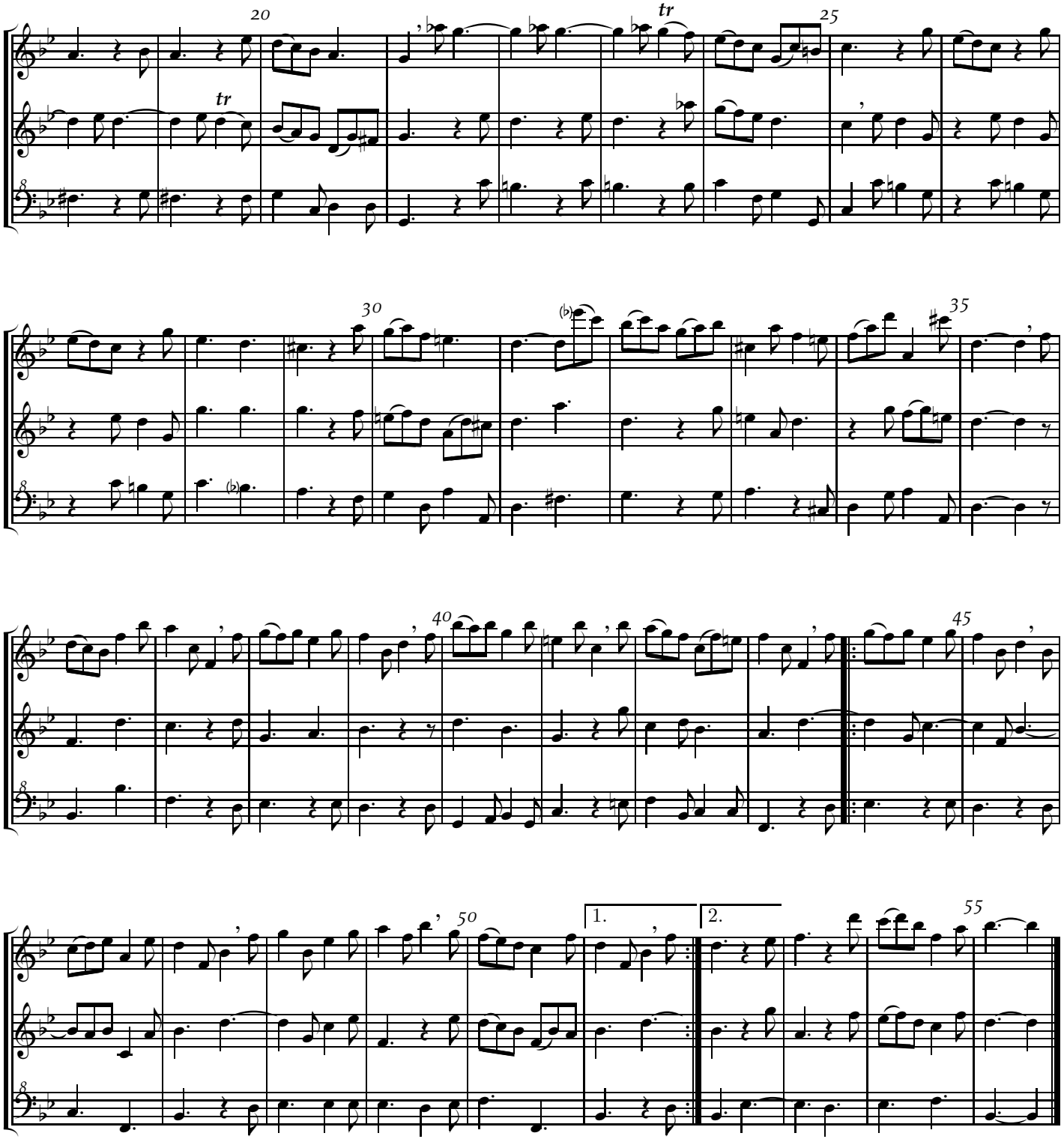
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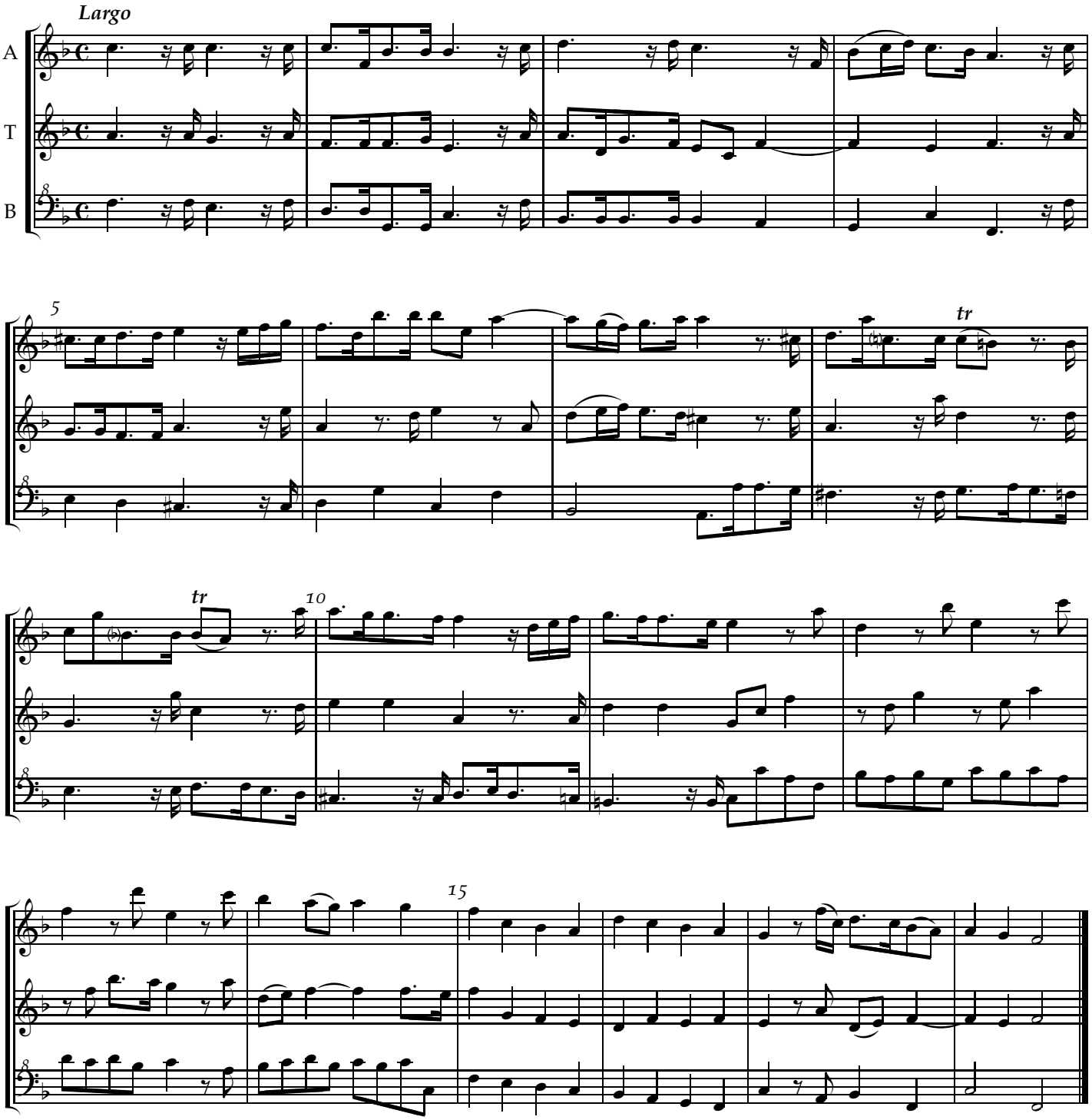
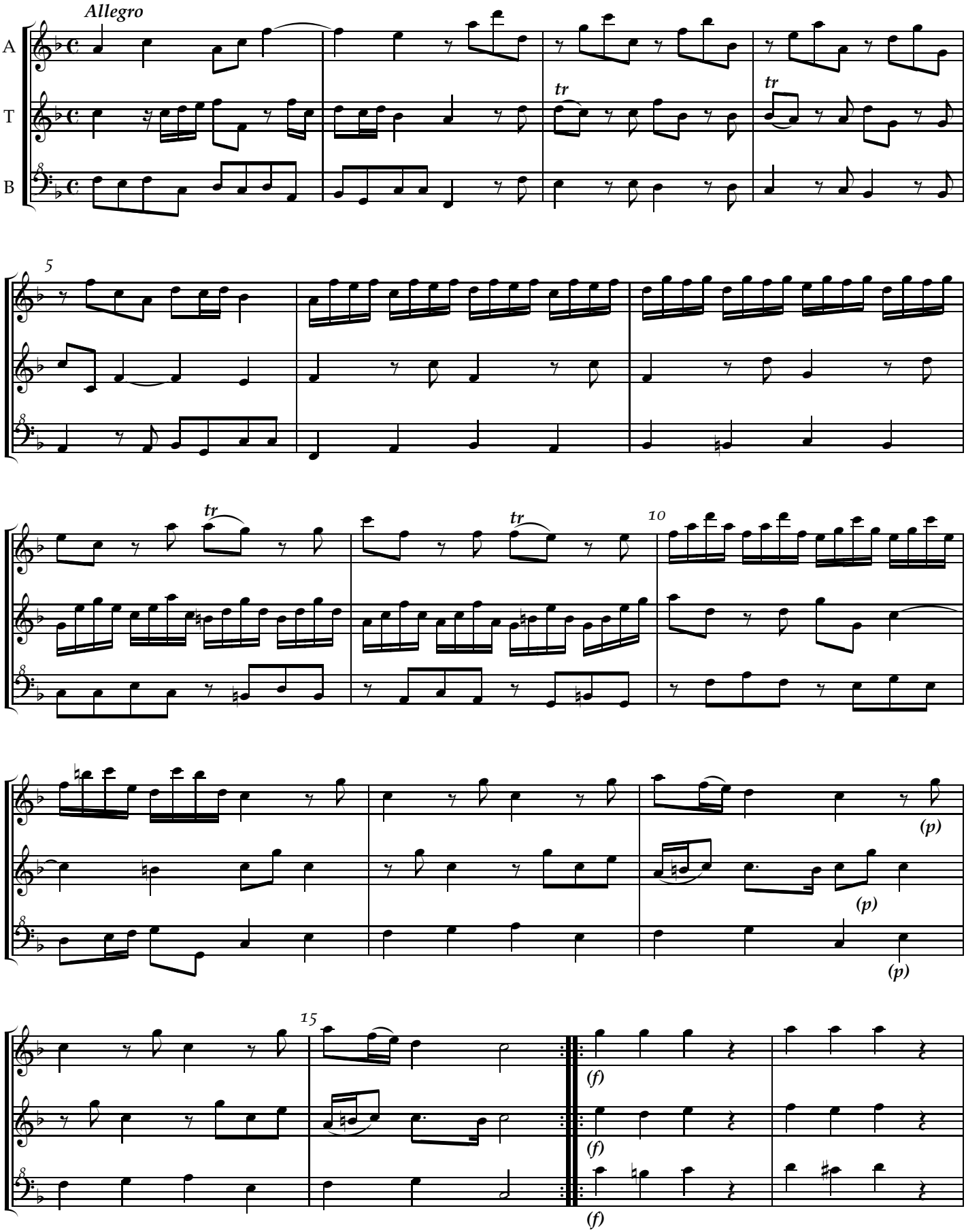
Sonata III†

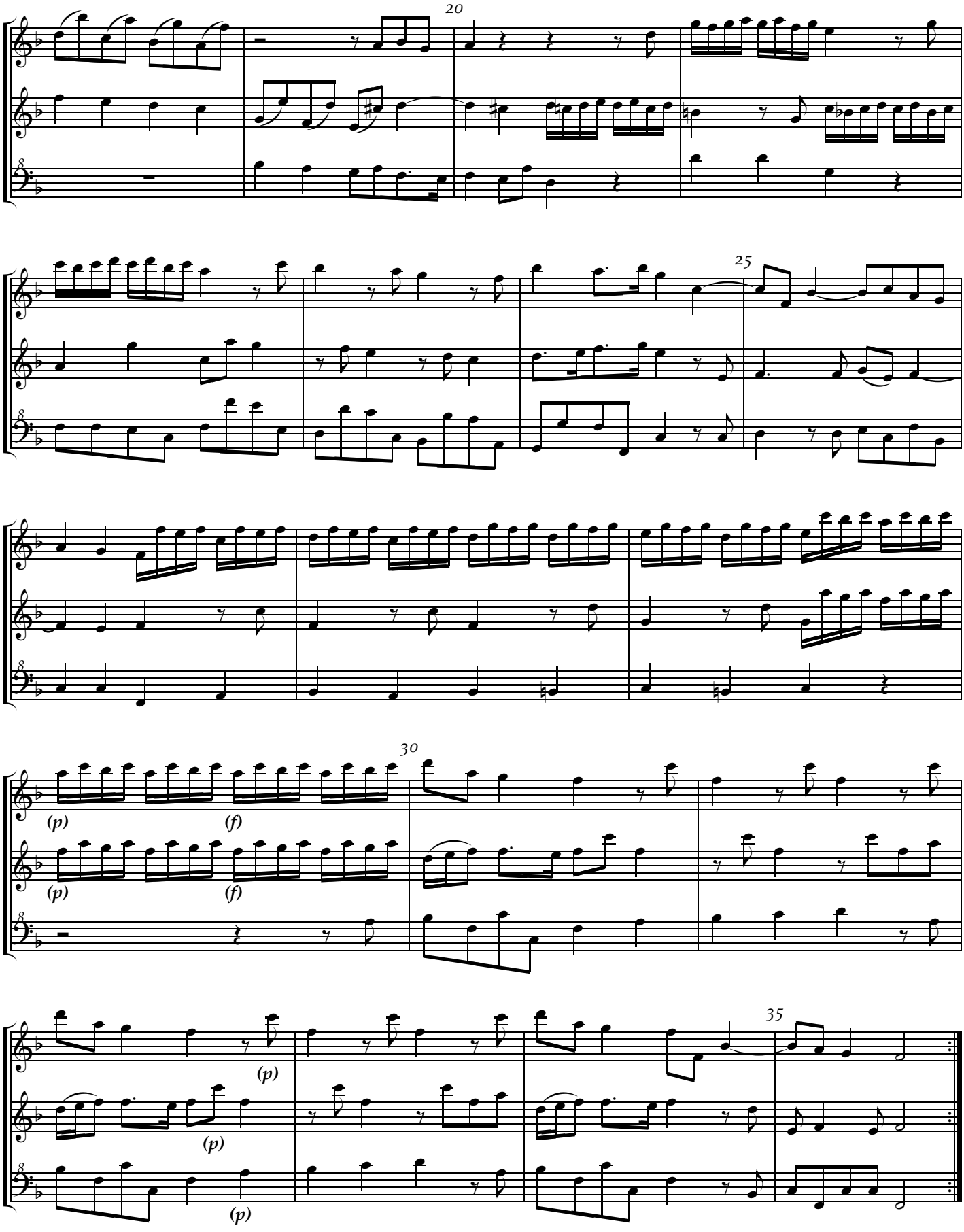
1. Preludio



†Opus 6, No. 9

2. Allemanda

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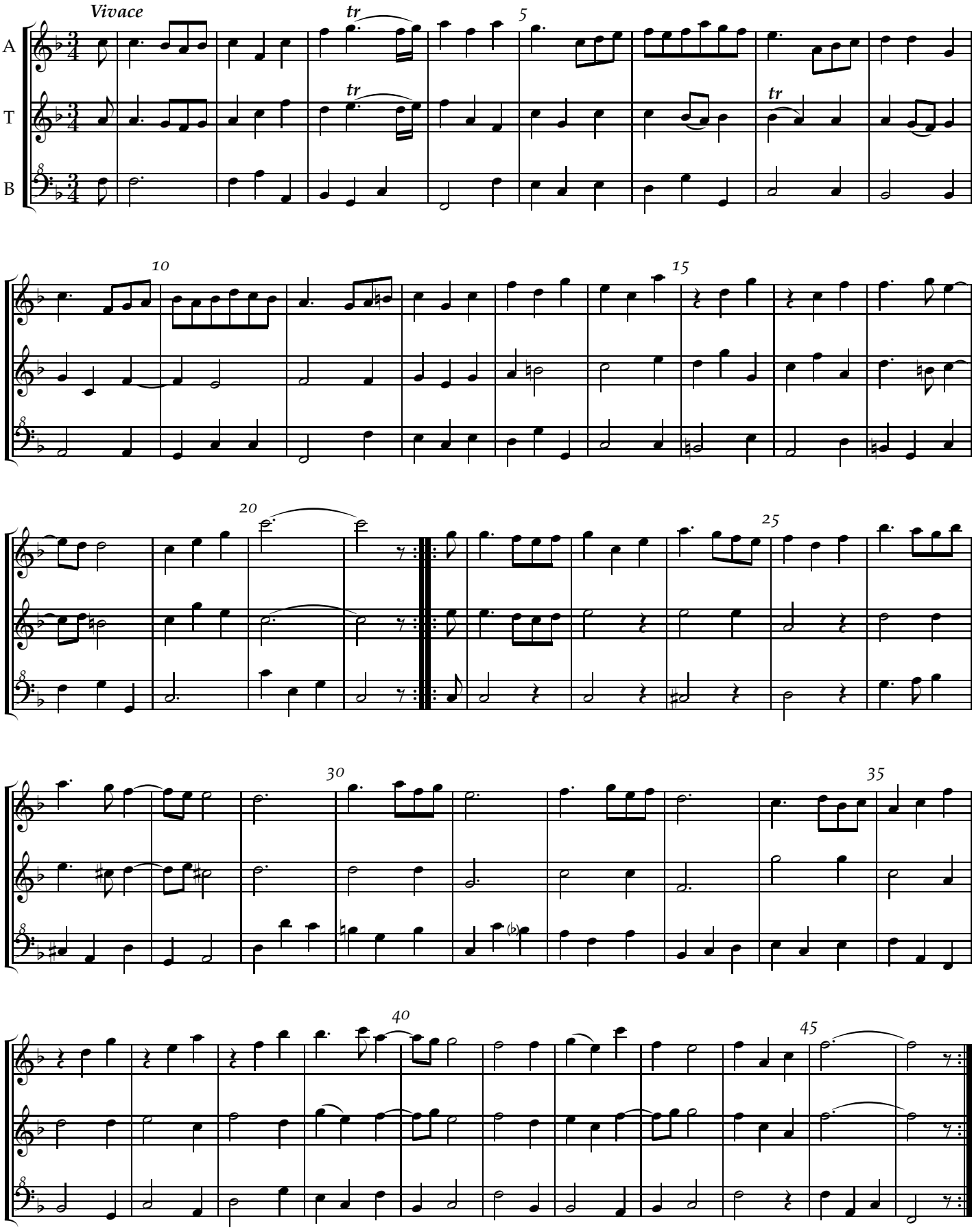
3. Corrente



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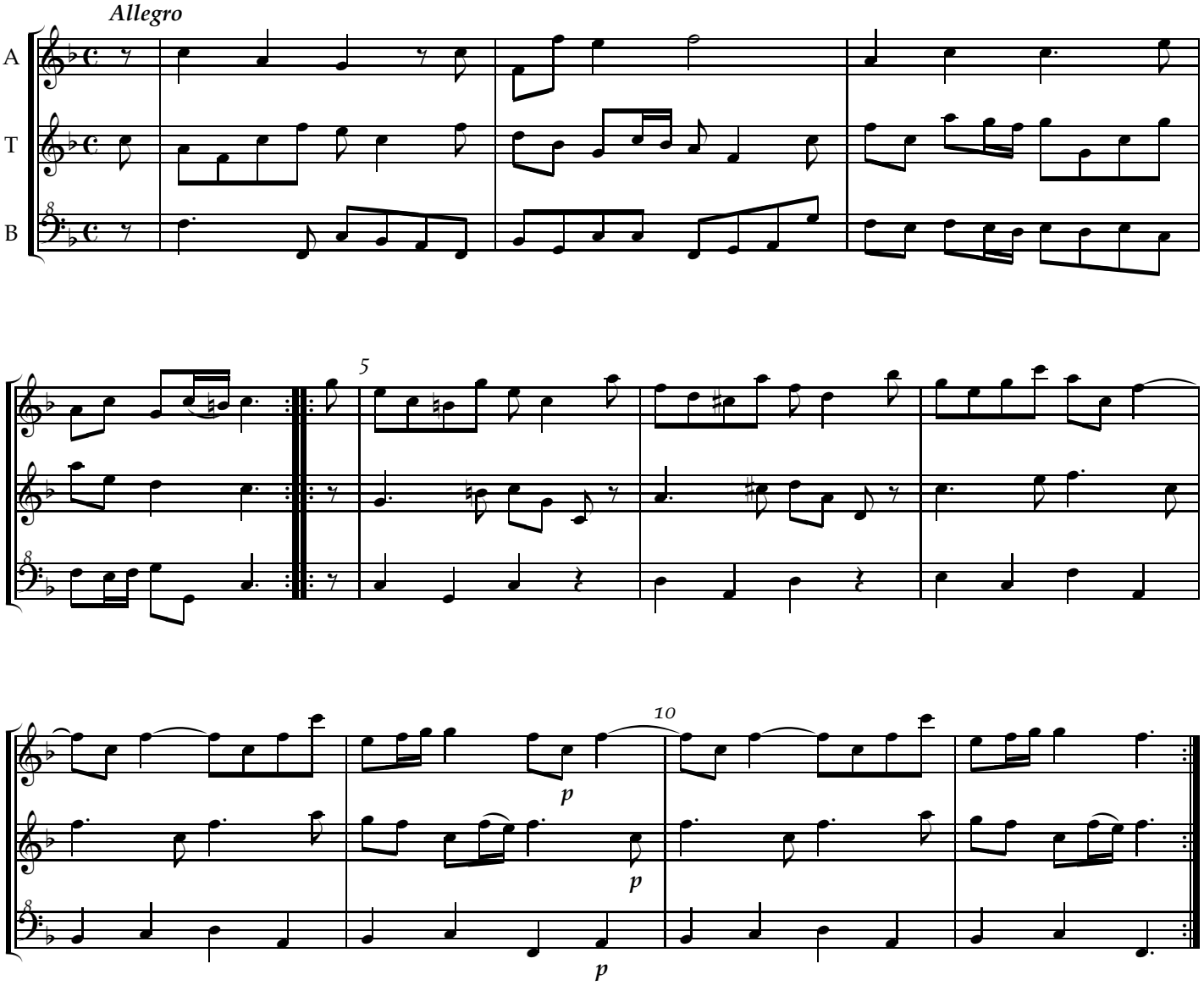
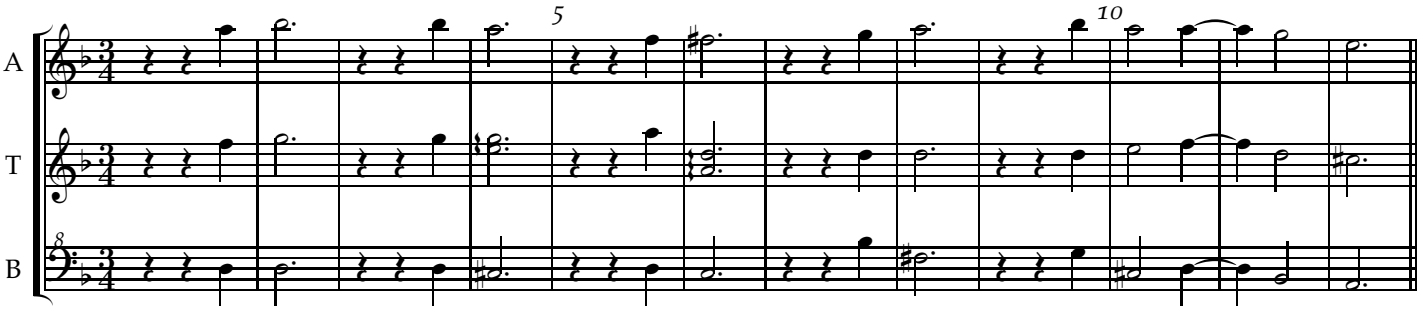
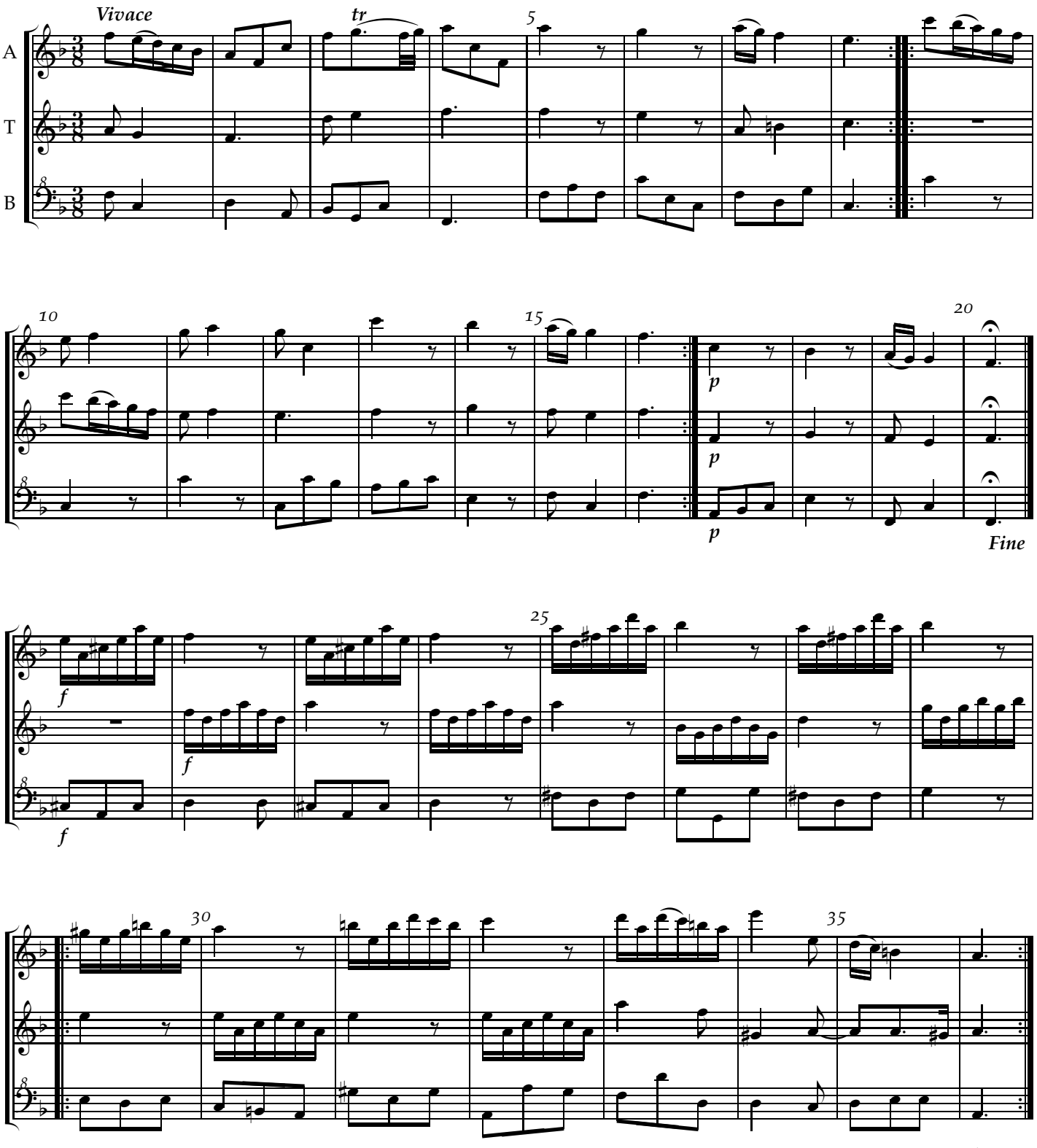


5. Adagio

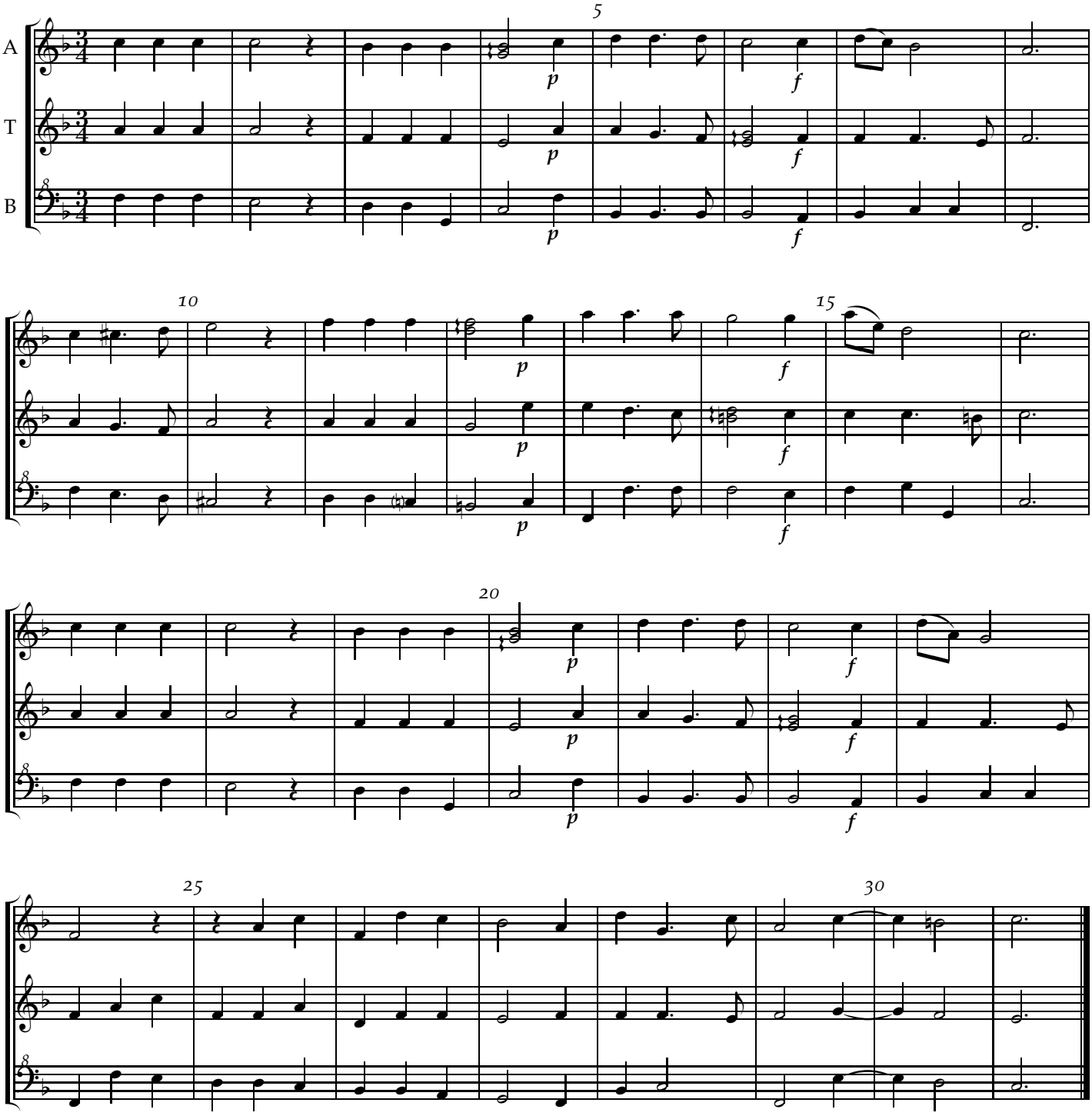


6. Minuetto



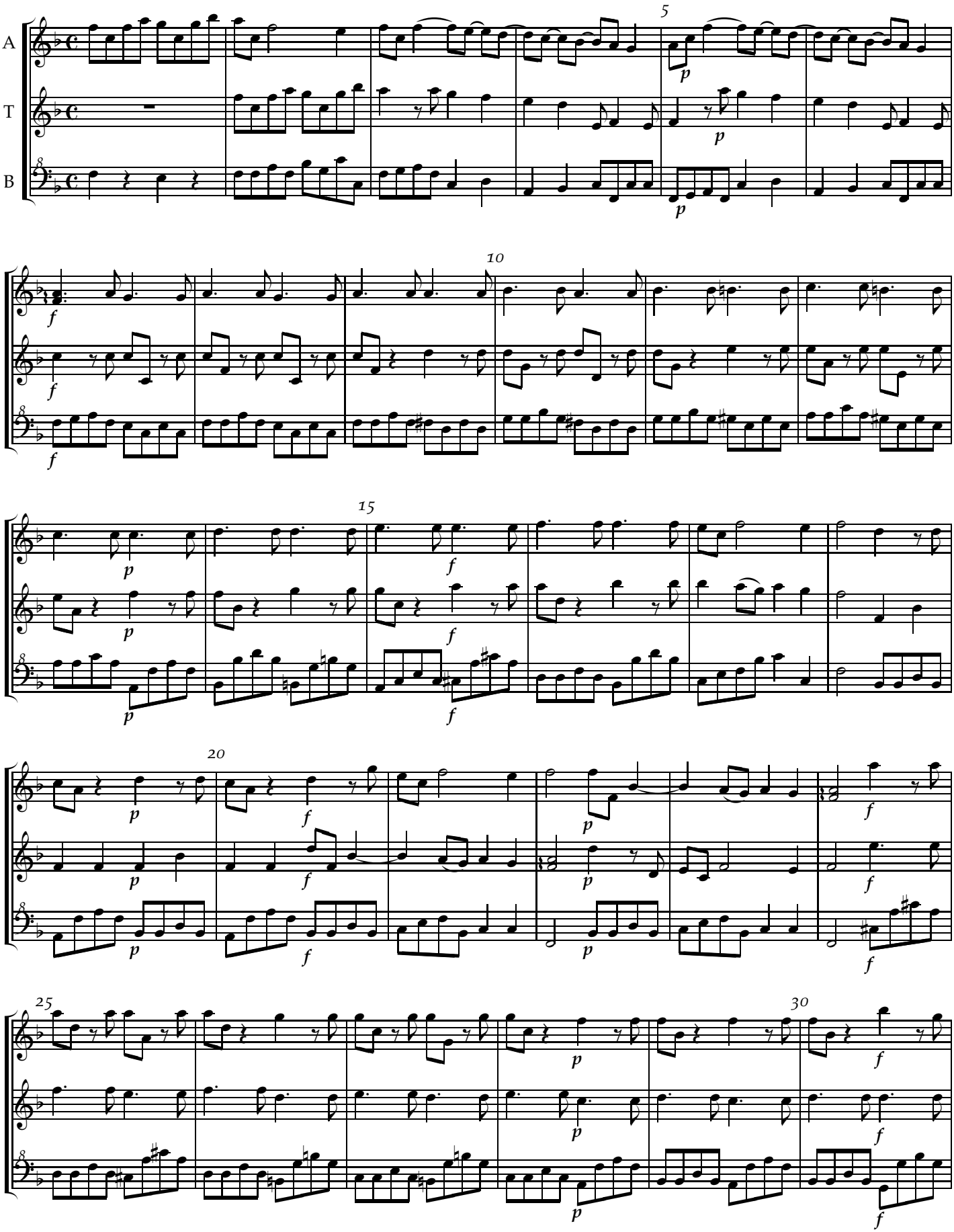
Sonata IV†

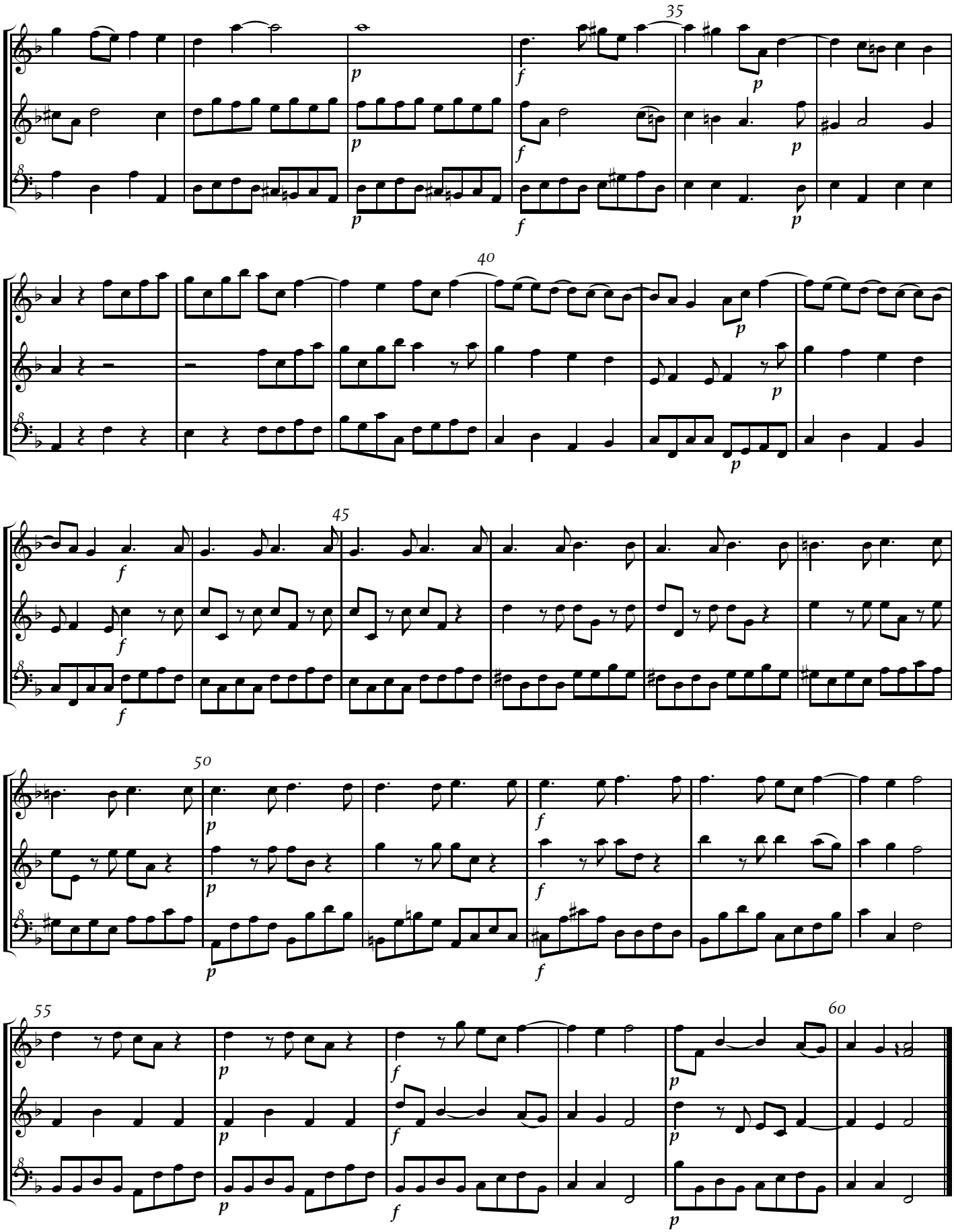
1. Adagio



†Opus 6, No. 6

2. Allegro

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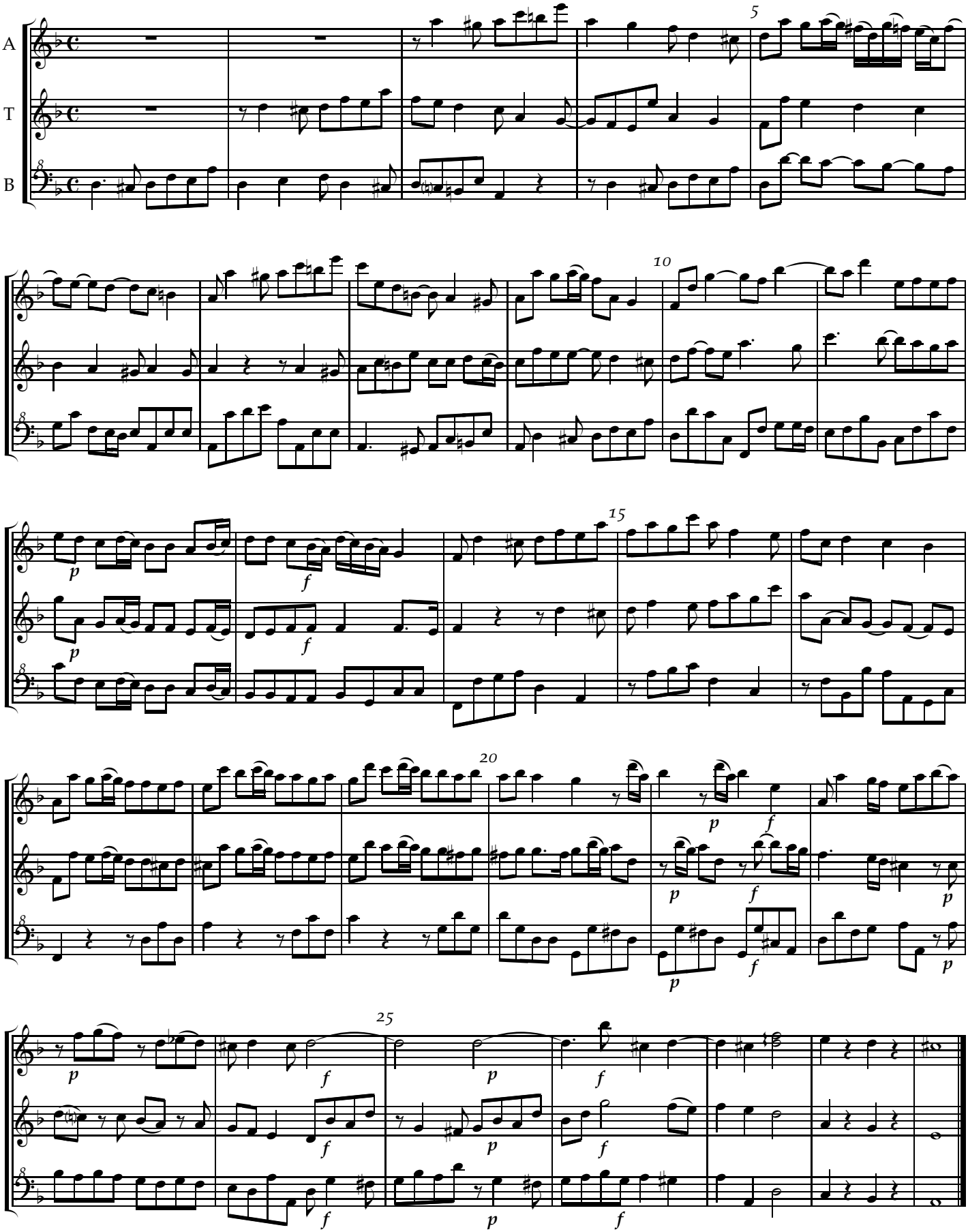
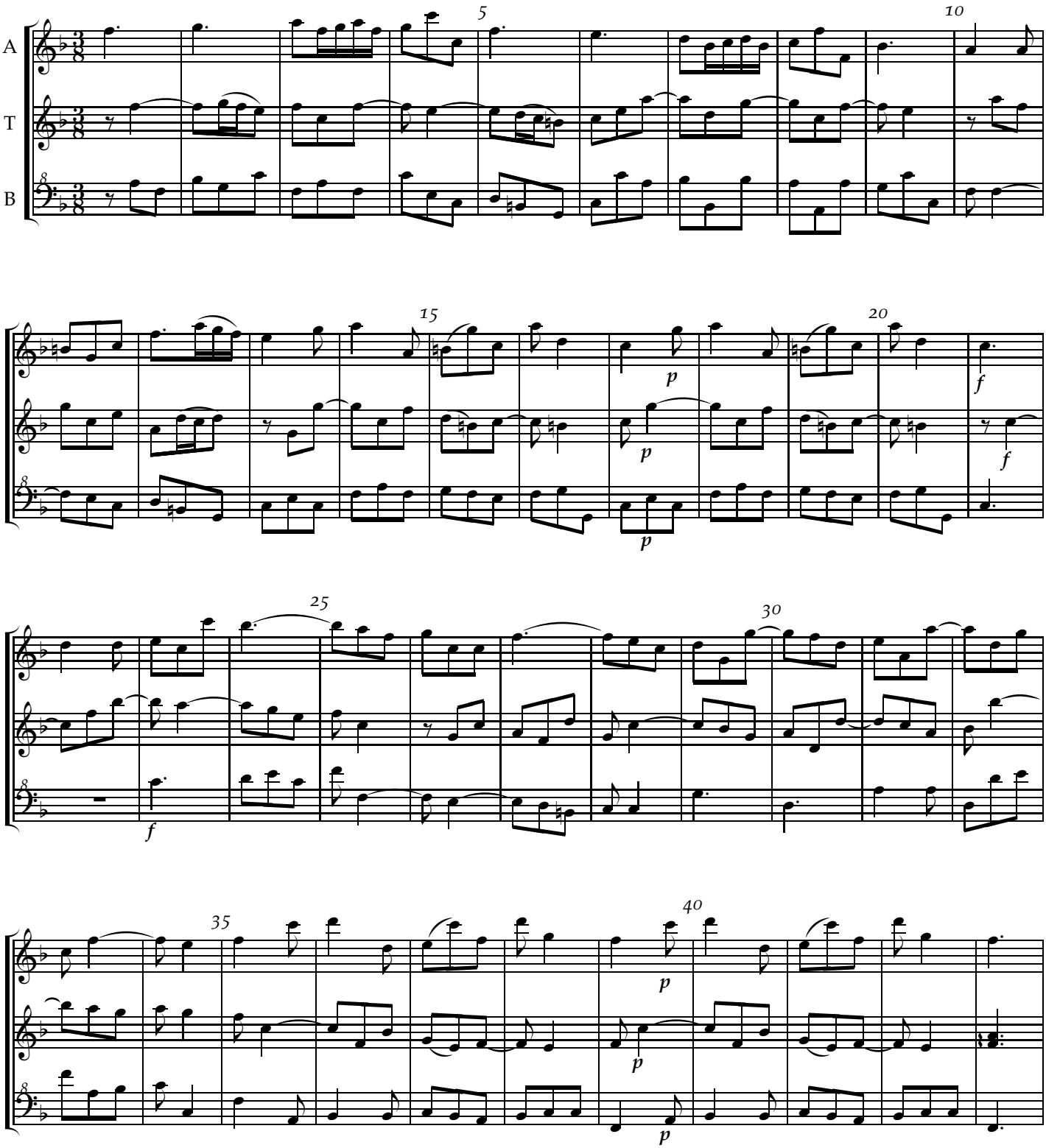
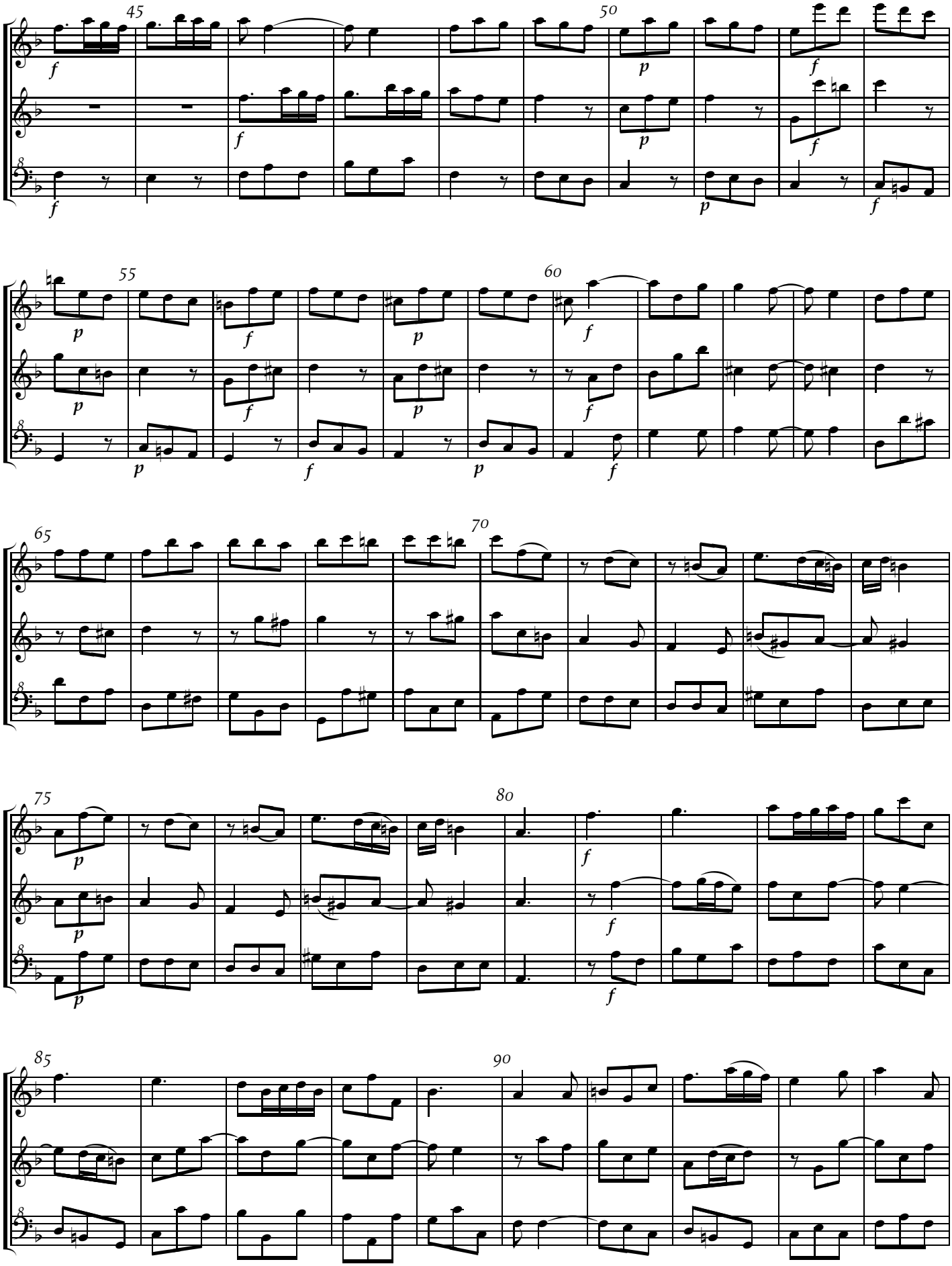
3. Largo



4. Vivace

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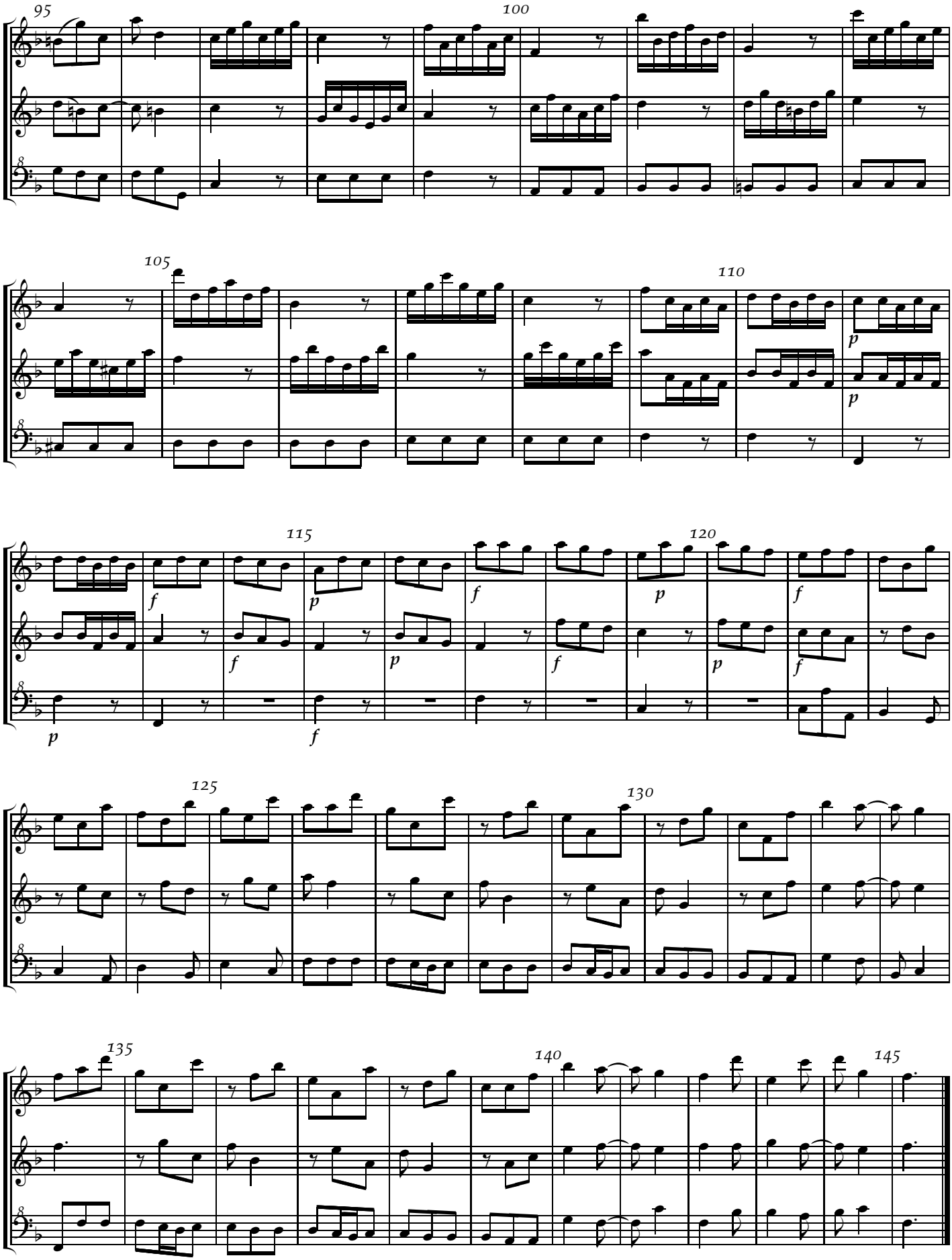
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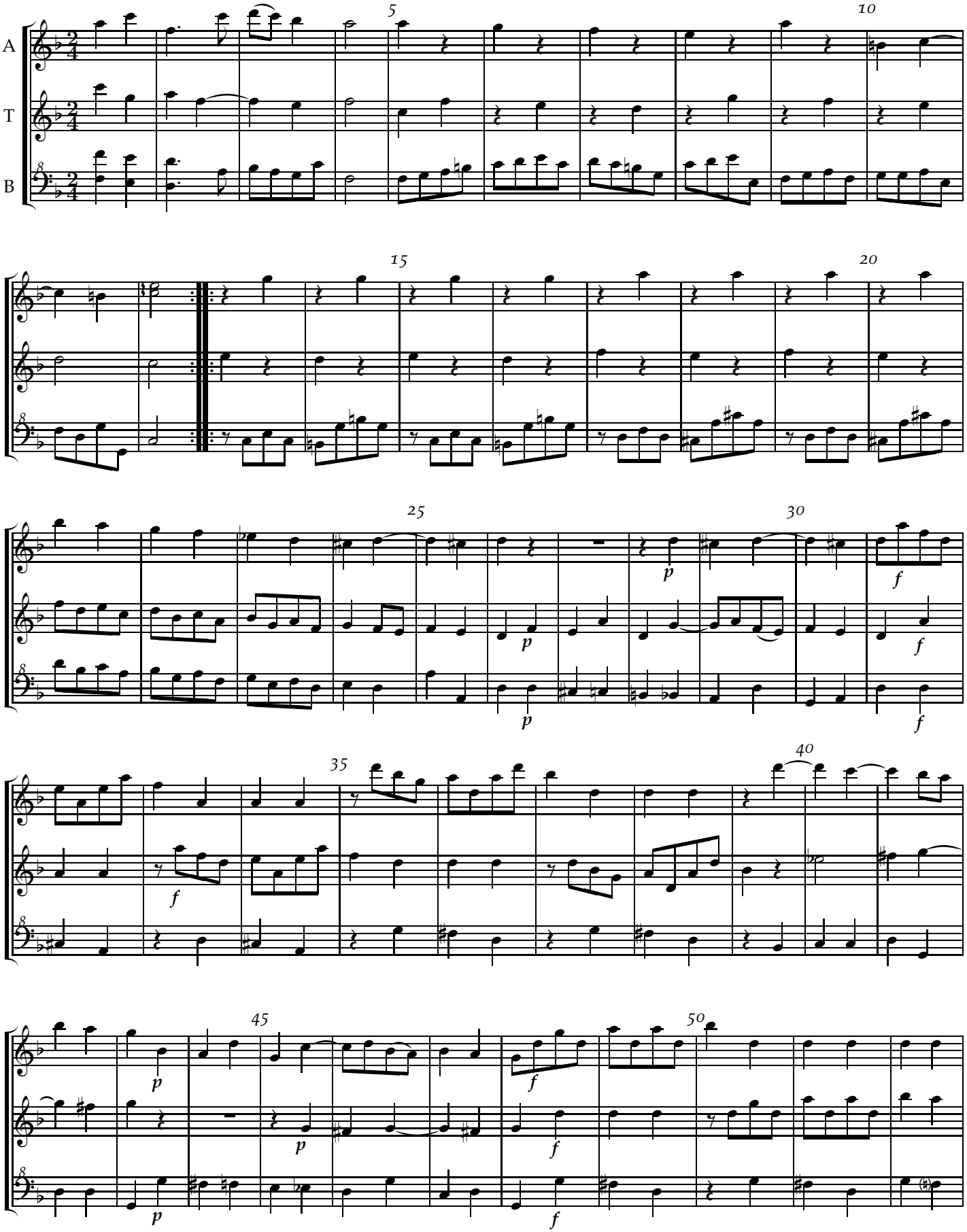
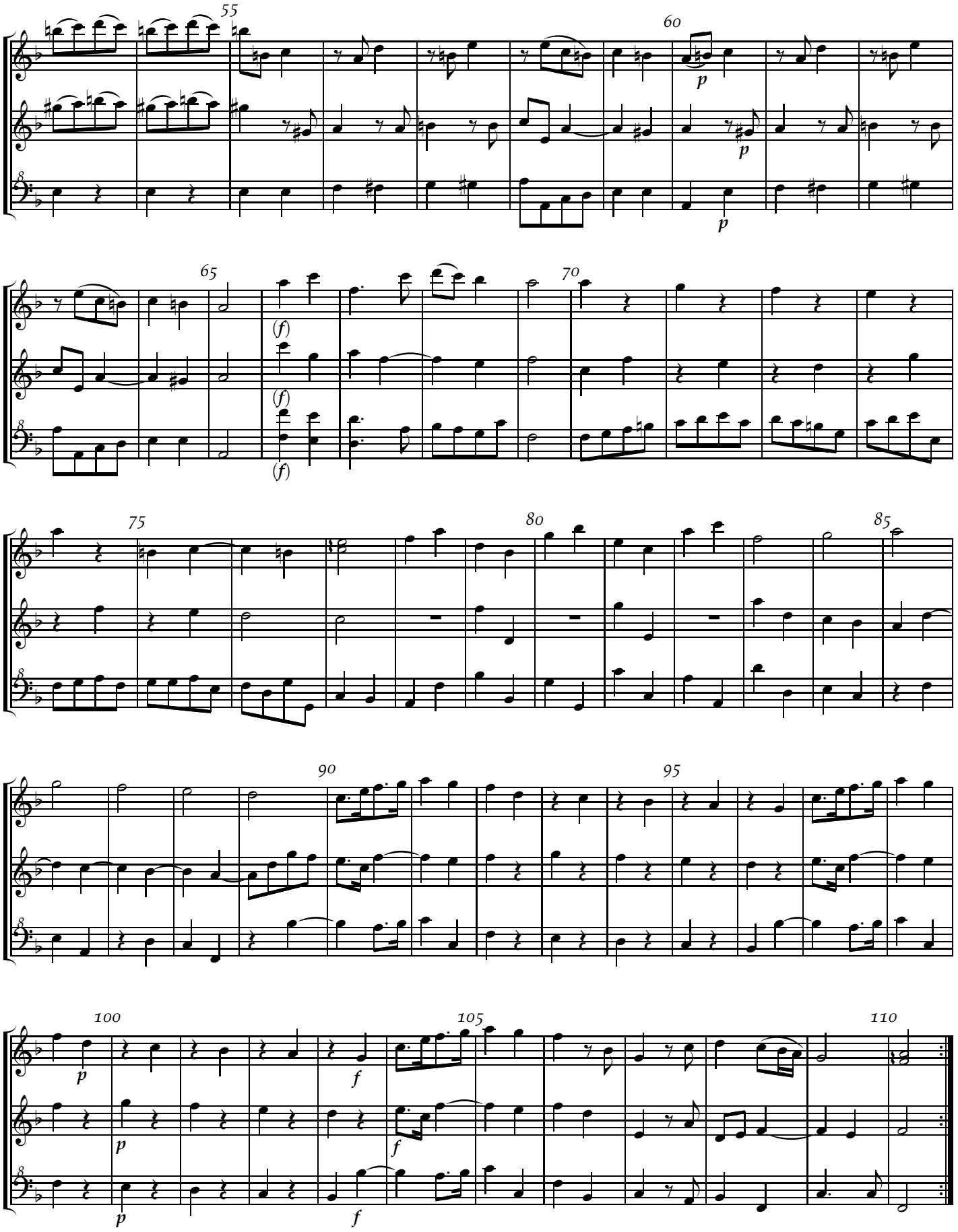
5. Allegro

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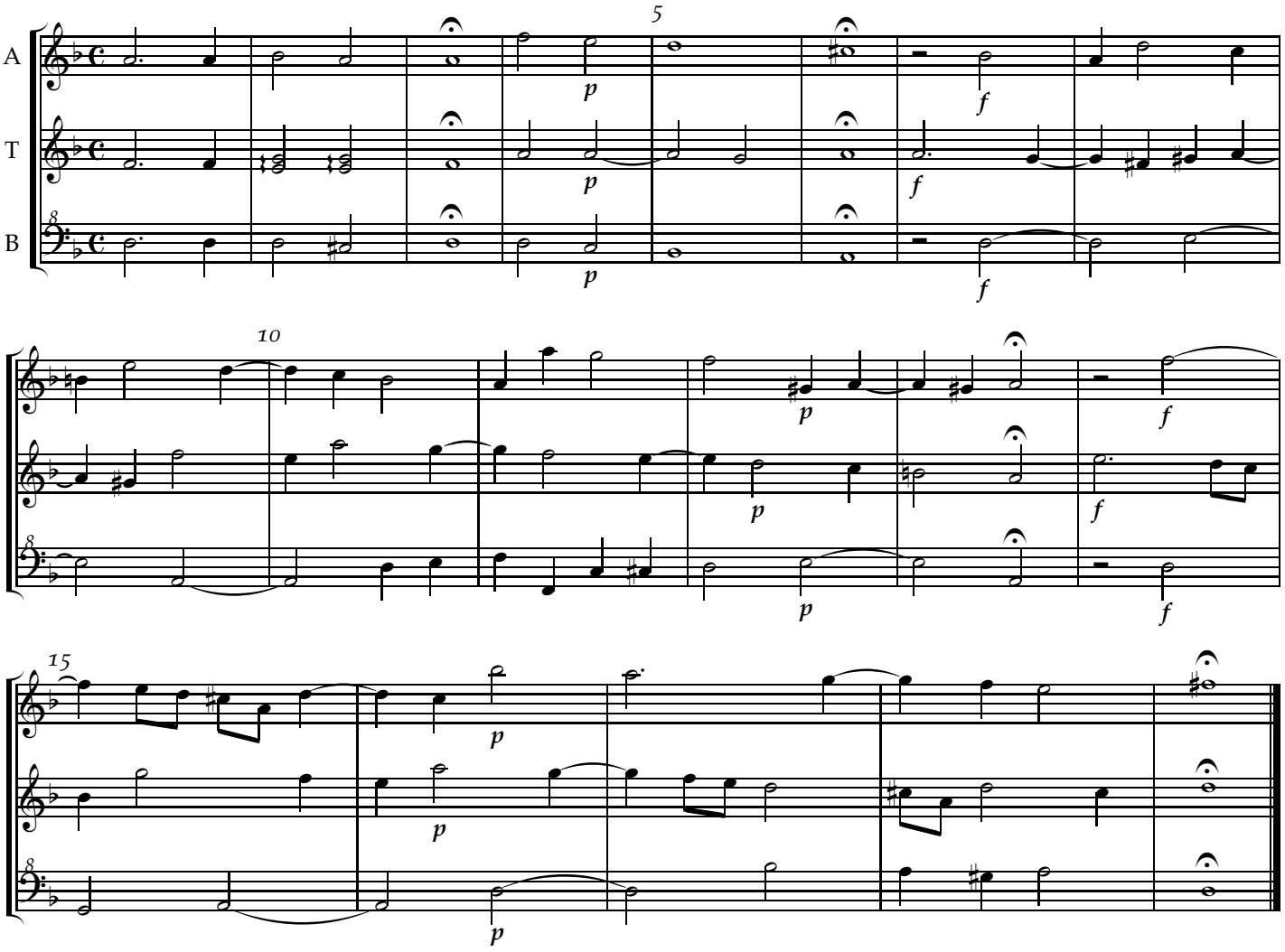
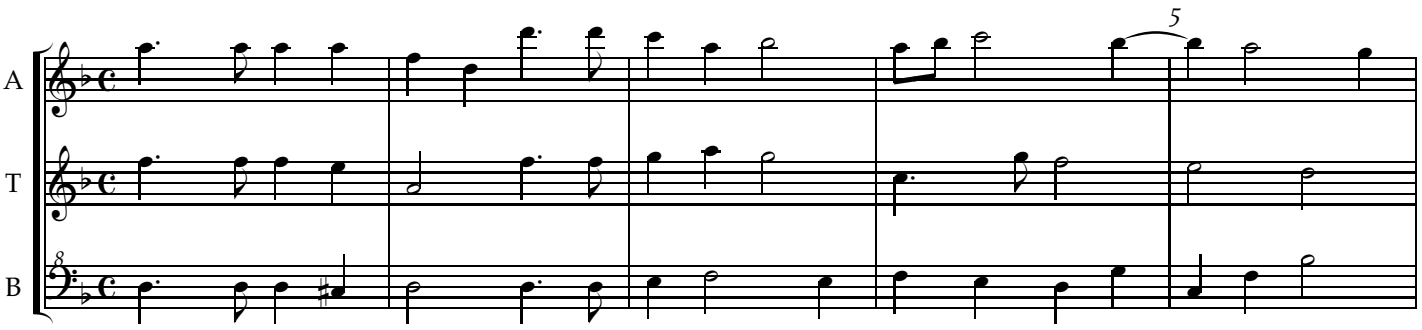
Sonata V†

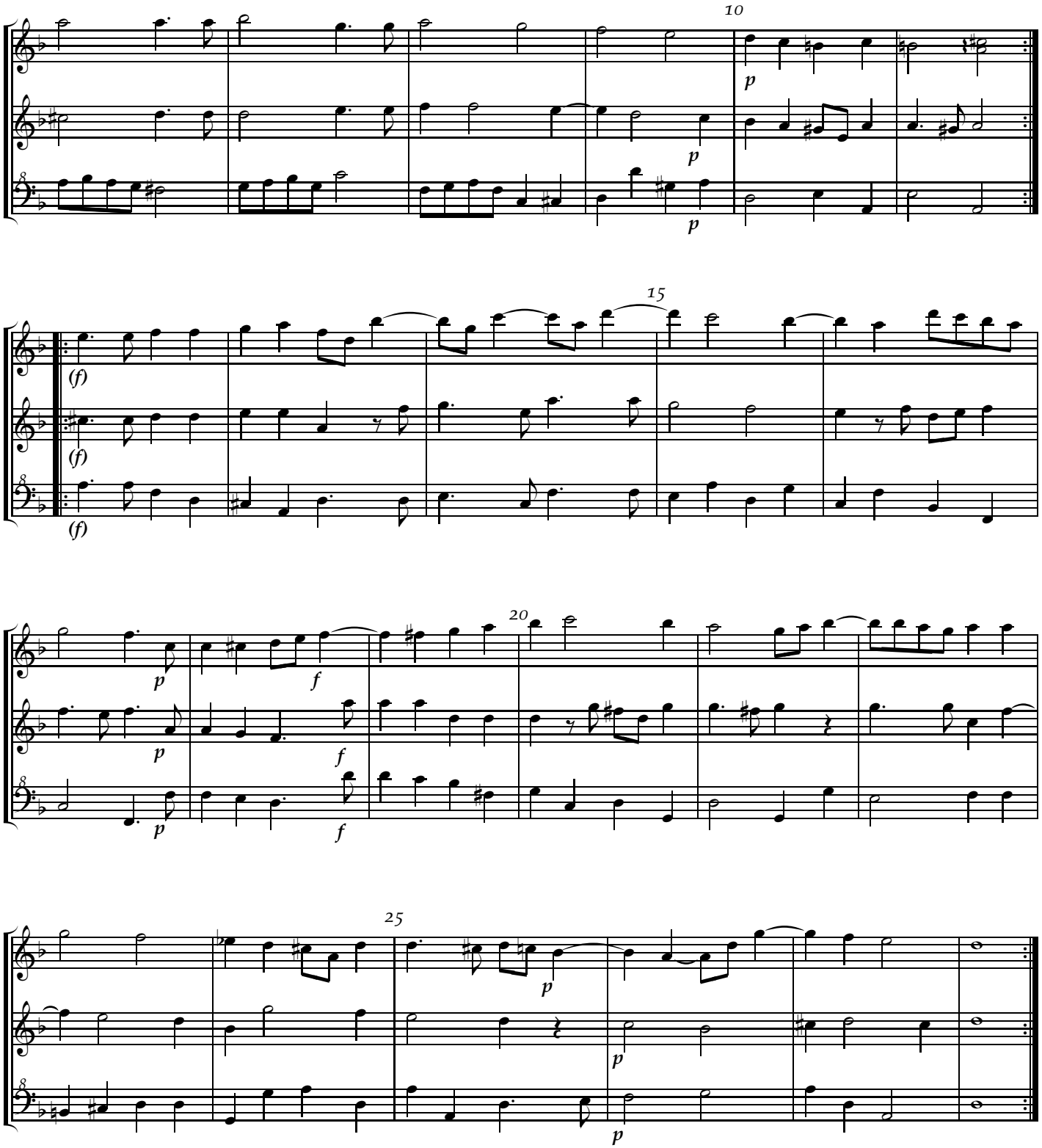
1. Grave



2. Allegro



†WoO 1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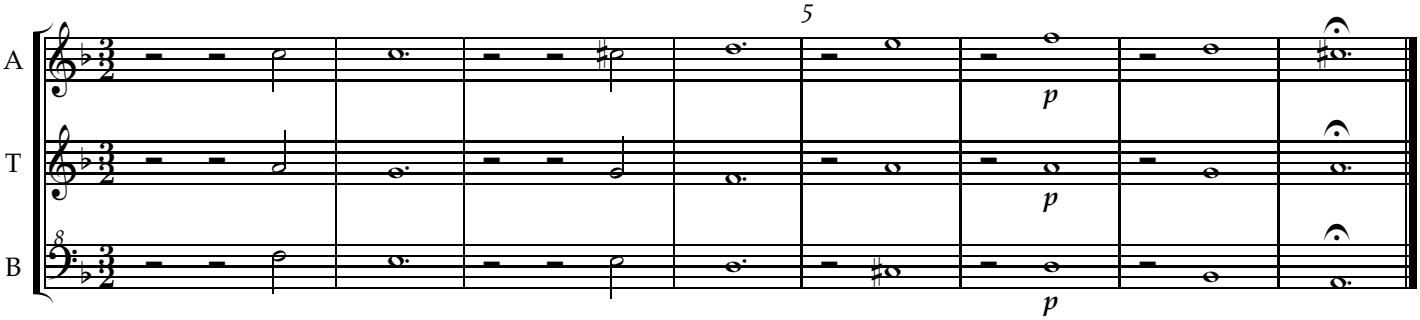
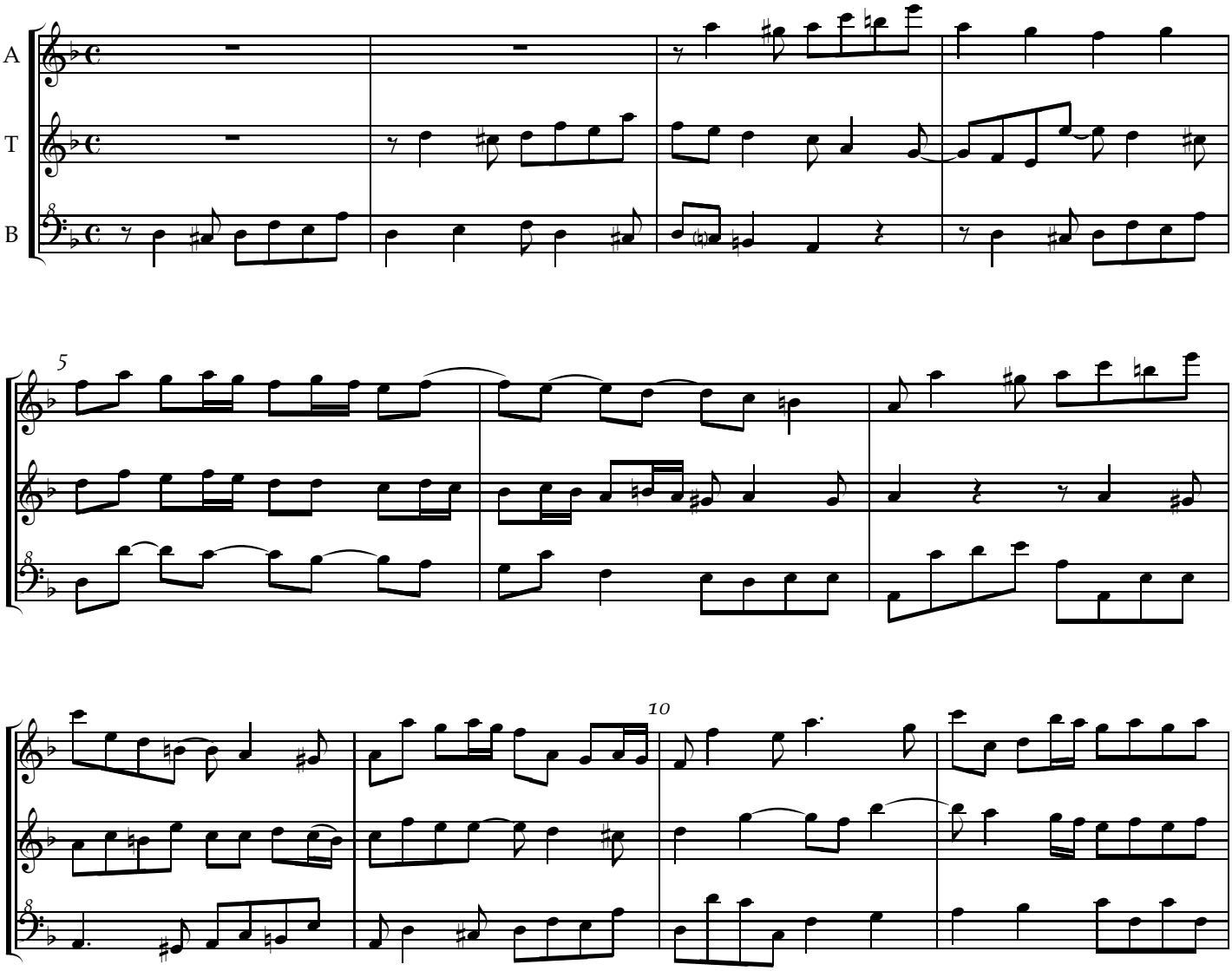
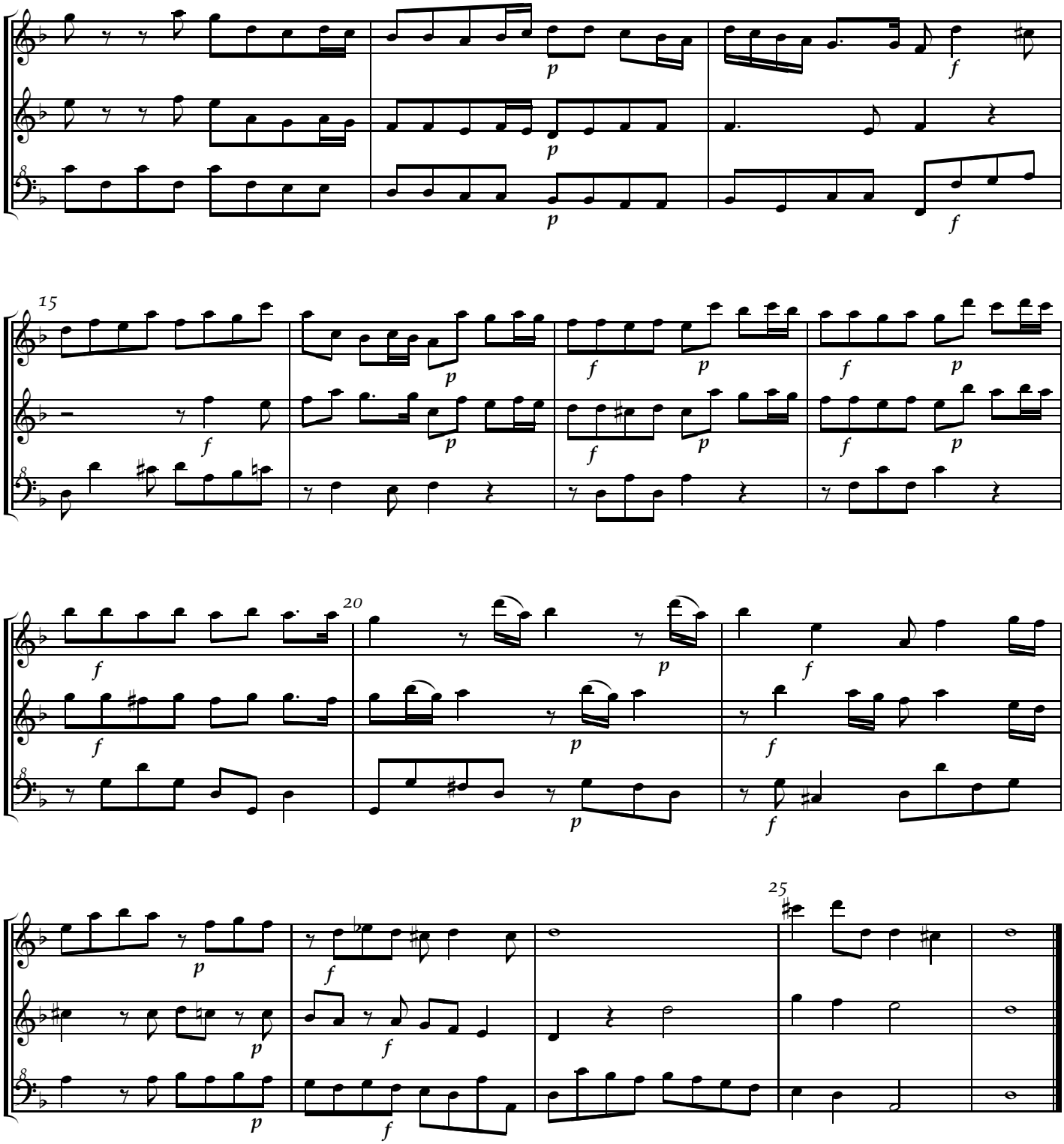
3. Adagio



4. Largo Assai†



†This movement was re-worked by Corelli to be the *largo* in Opus 6, No. 6 (Sonata IV here).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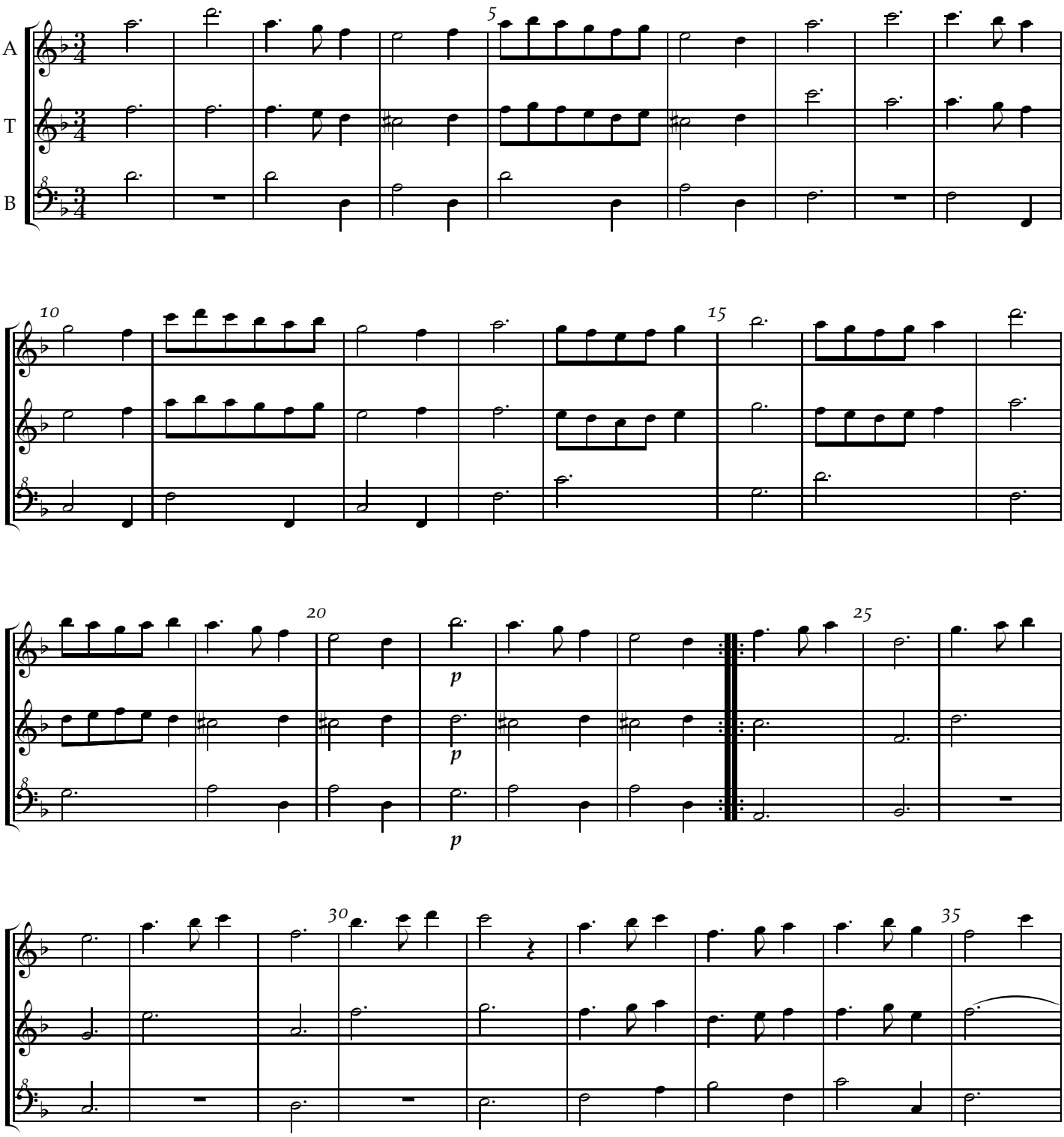
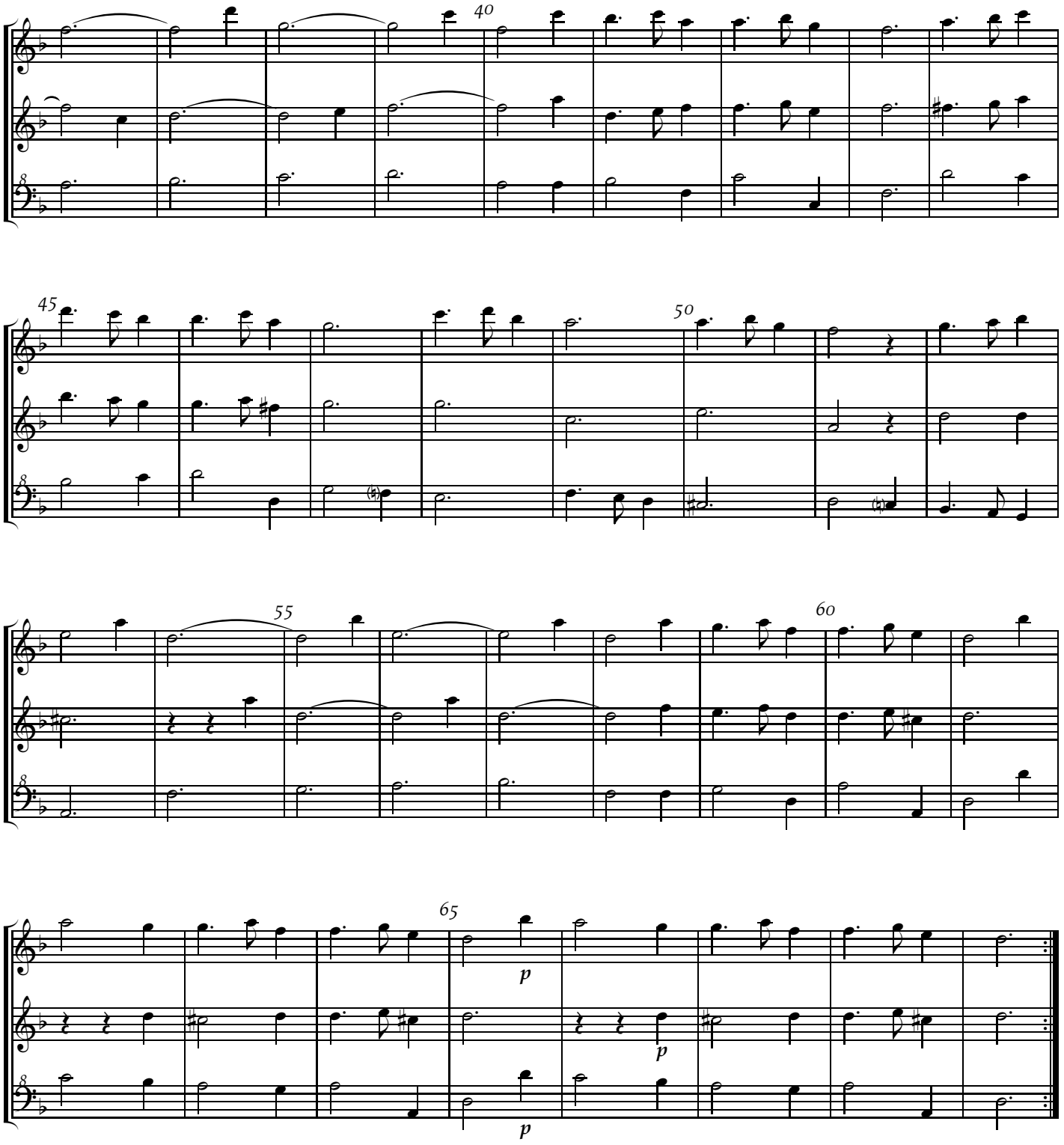
5. Vivace

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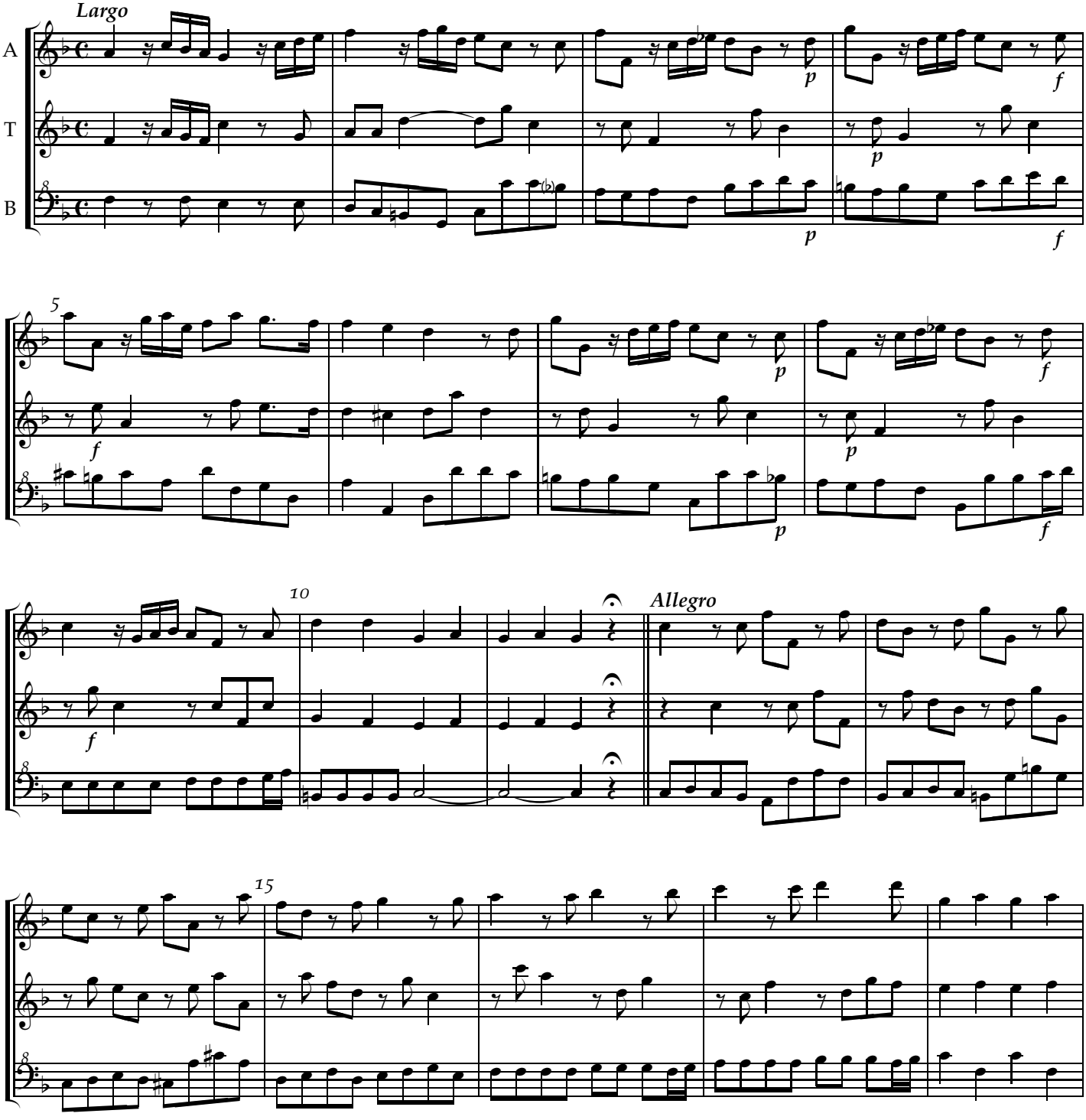
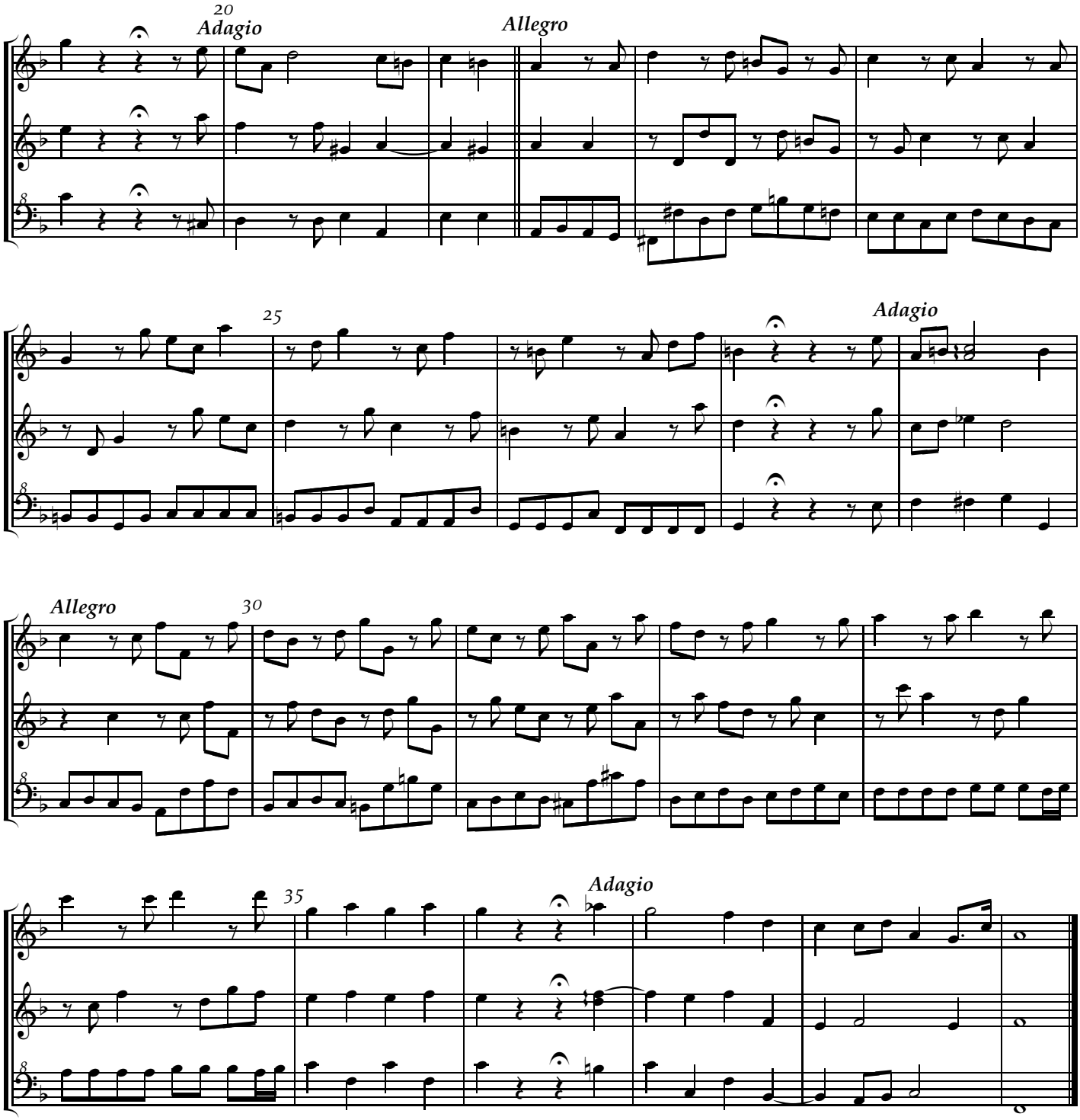
Sonata VI[†]

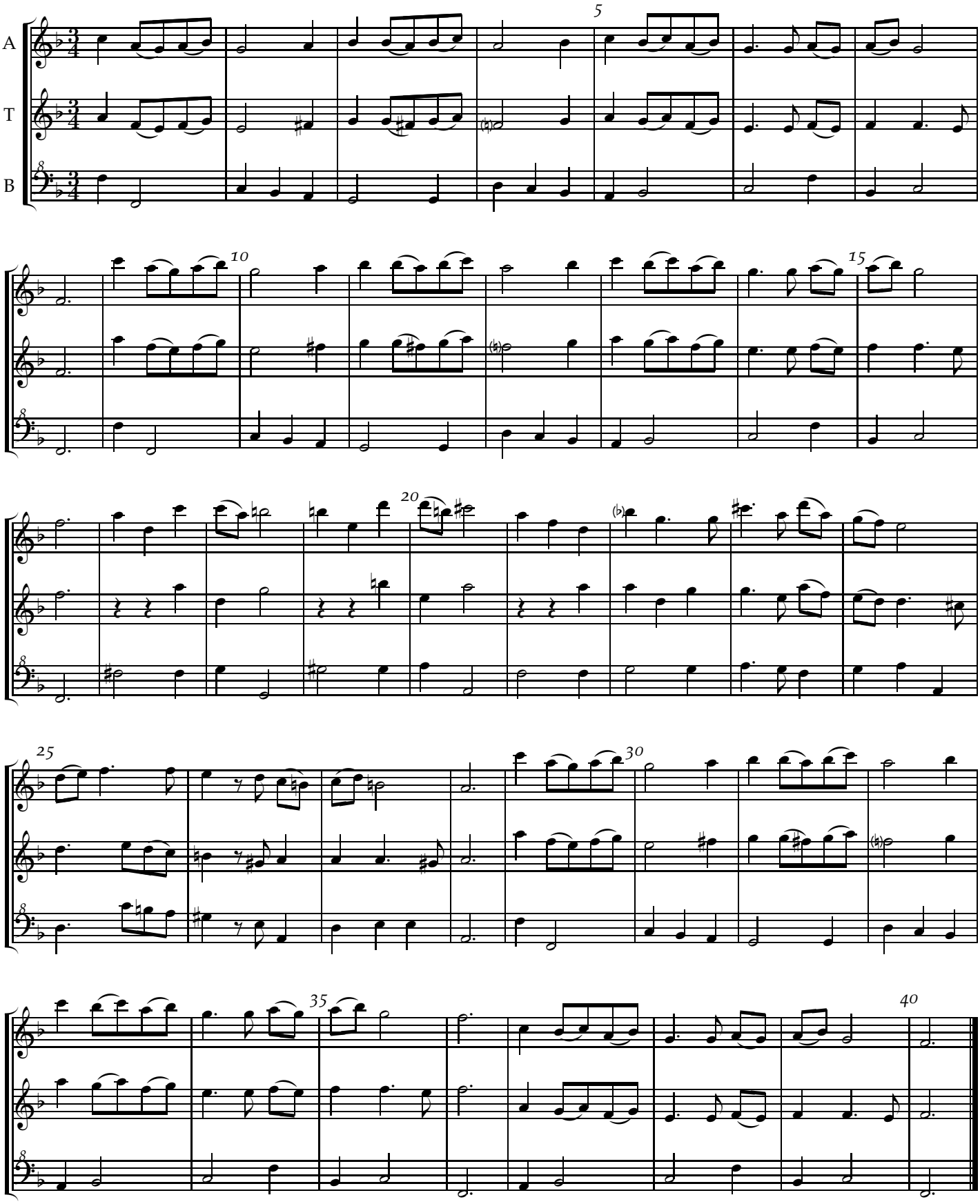
1. Largo–Allegro[‡]



[†]Sonata III published by Walsh and Hare, London 1720
[‡]from Corelli's Opus 6, No. 1 (transposed from D major)

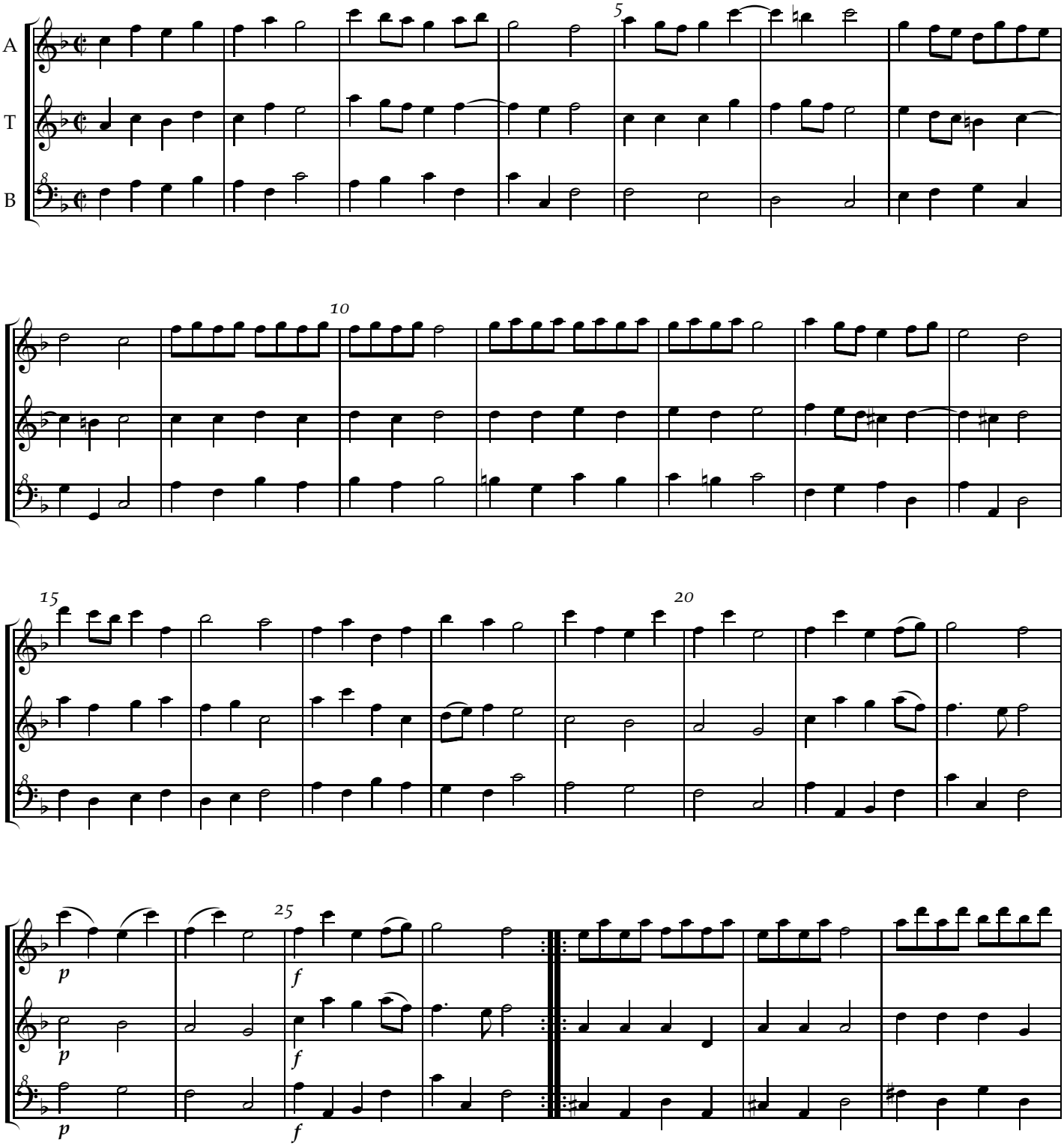

20
Adagio
Allegro
25
Adagio
Allegro
30
35
Adagio

2. Largo†

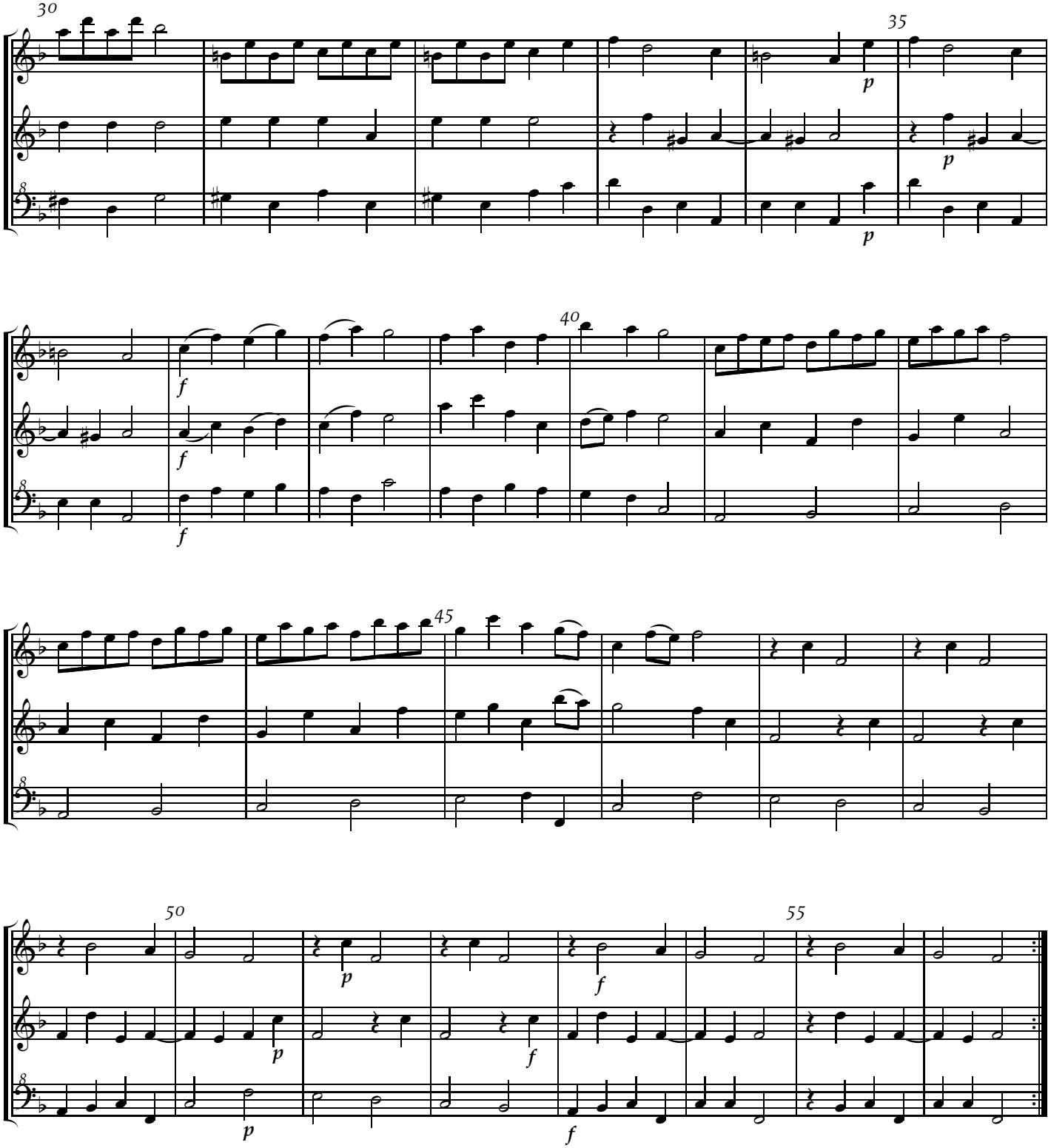


†from Corelli's Opus 6, No. 1 (transposed from D major)

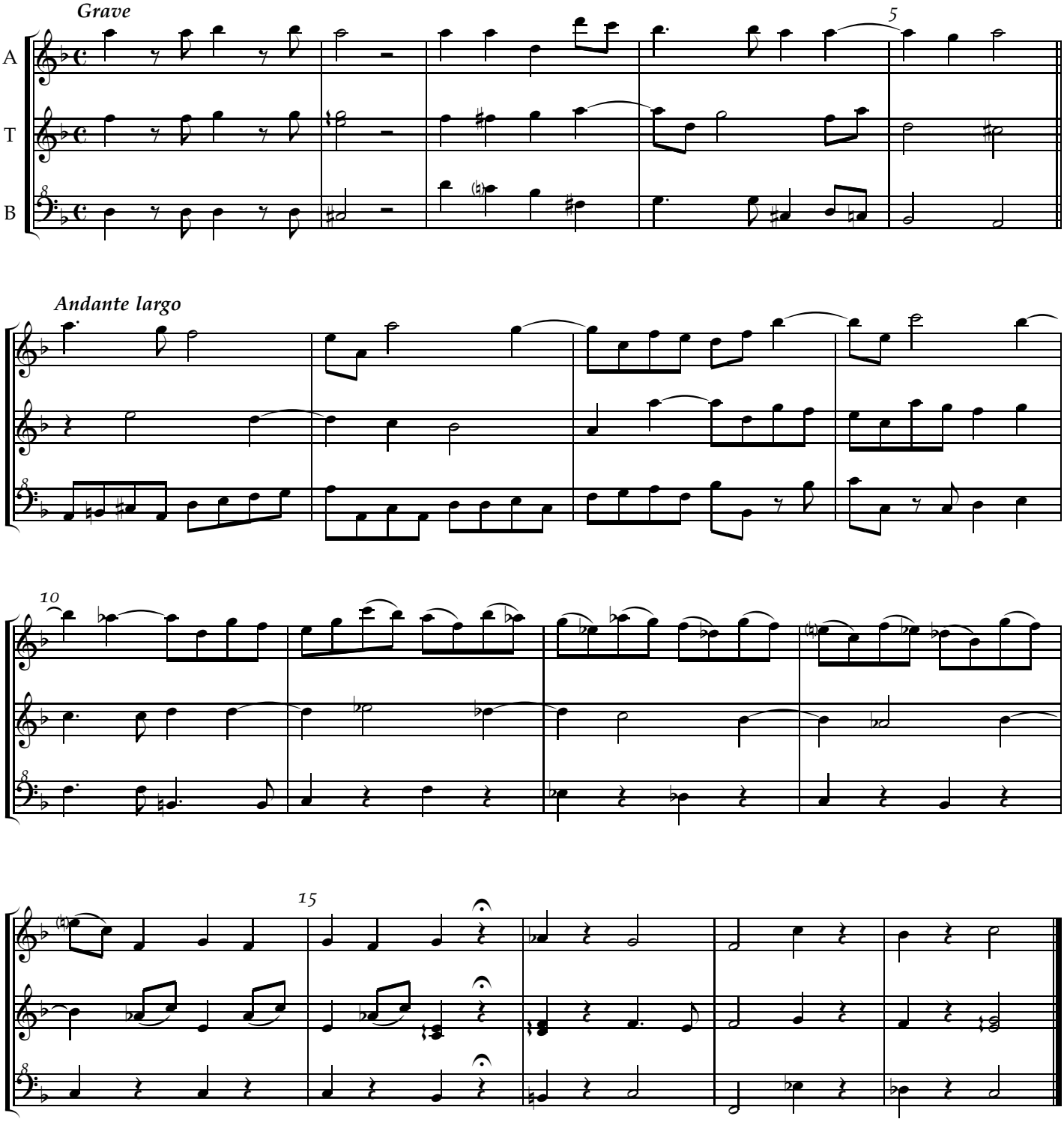
3. Allegro†



†from Corelli's Opus 6, No. 2

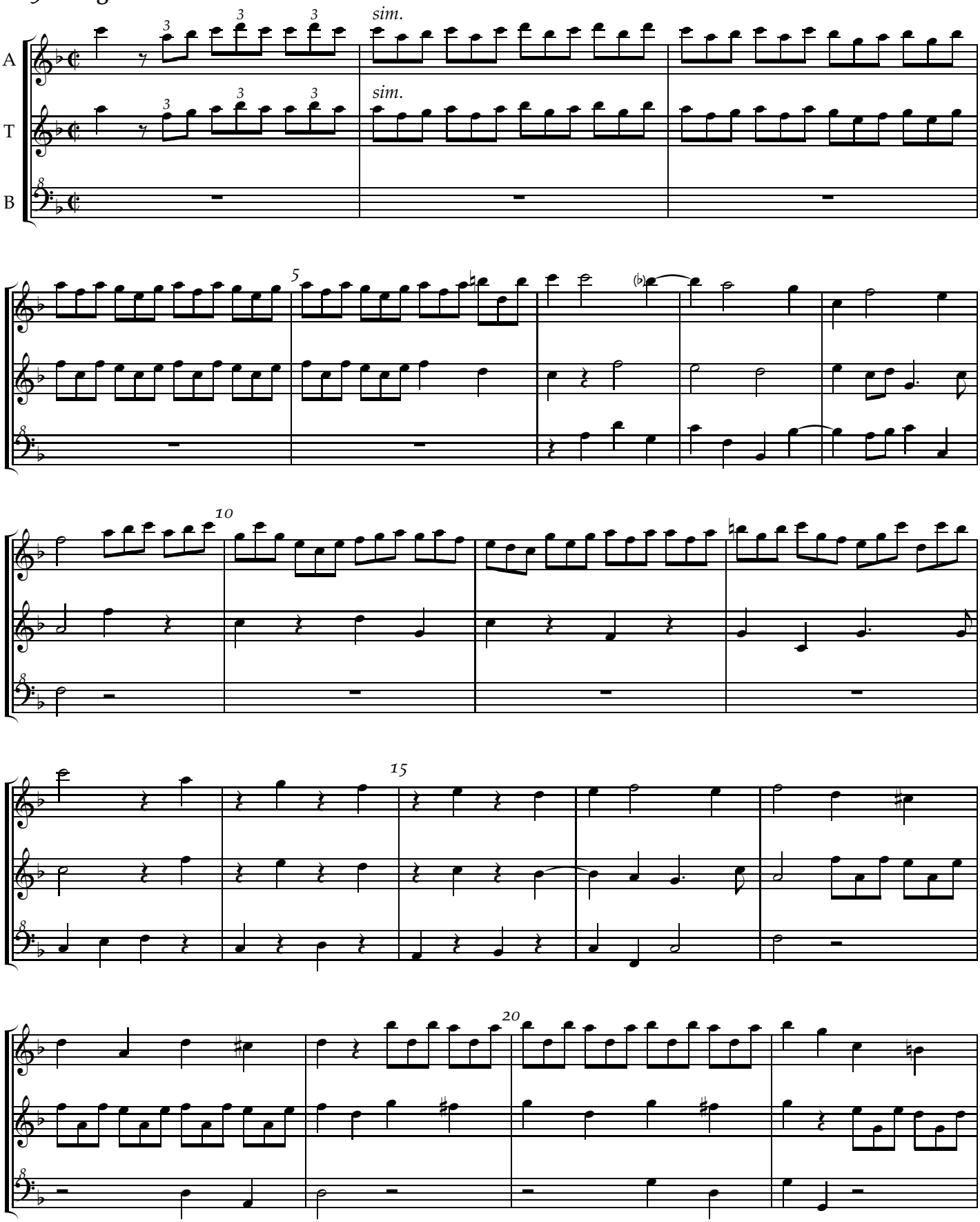

30
35
40
45
50
55
p
f

4. Grave–Andante Largo†

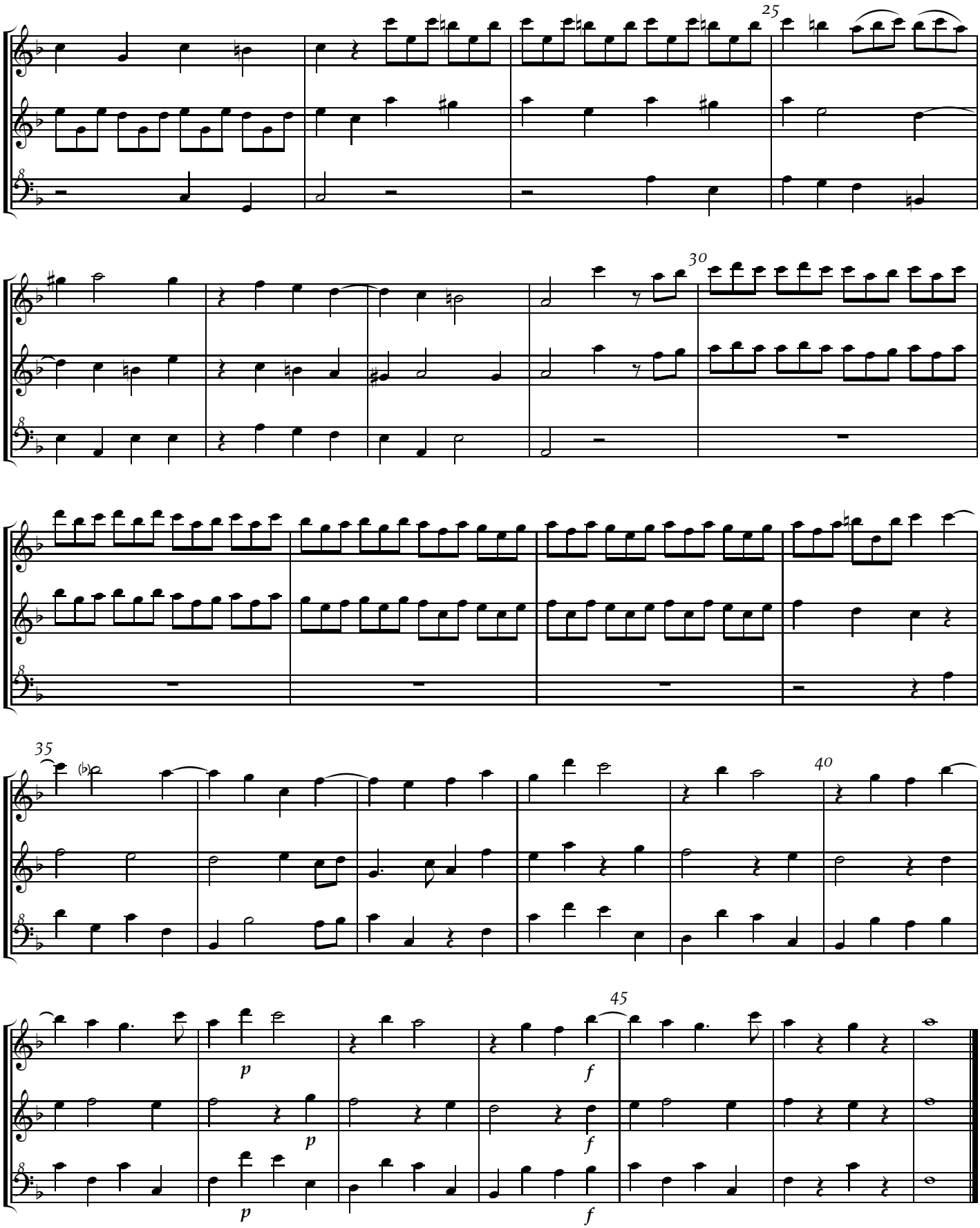


†from Corelli's Opus 6, No. 2

5. Allegro†



†from Corelli's Opus 6, No. 1 (transposed from D major)


25
30
35
40
45
p
f
p
f
p
f