The Gallipoli Manuscript

In the *Bilioteca Comunale* in the village of Gallipoli in southern Italy, a rare manuscript was recently discovered by the Italian harpsichordist Anna Maria Tuzzo.[1] This manuscript, of which the first pages and title page are lacking, contains forty-six compositions for keyboard instrument. The bass lines of these compositions have been identified as partimenti by the Neapolitan maestro Francesco Durante (1684–1755). Due to Durante's profound influence as a composition teacher, the partimenti of this maestro were disseminated all over Europe: no less than forty-seven manuscript sources of Durante's partimenti are known today (status: March 2017).[2]

The word *partimento* was commonly used during the seventeenth century as an equivalent for the word "part" in a collection of printed music. Already in the early seventeenth century, organ parts of printed collections of sacred music were commonly termed *partimento per l'organo*, in most cases showing a figured bass representing the lowest sounding voice of the composition. This type of bass line was also called *basso seguente*, meaning "following bass." In late seventeenth-century Rome several pedagogues, among them Durante's teacher Bernardo Pasquini (1637– 1710), began using partimento notation for educational purposes. Obviously, Pasquini and other teaching composers realized the potential of this kind of short-hand notation for students who wanted to learn keyboard improvisation. Partimento notation was not only an efficient tool to acquire fluency at the keyboard, it was also a highly effective notational tool to swiftly sketch the outline of a polyphonic composition, such as a ricercare or a fugue.

The partimenti in the Gallipoli Manuscript belong to the advanced set of Durante's partimenti, commonly entitled *Studj per cembalo con partimenti diversi*. Francesco Durante applied a two-fold curriculum, of which the first part contained easier figured exercises based on partimento rules, such as the rule for dealing with dissonant intervals. The second part of his curriculum applied the system of the so-called *moti del basso*, according to which the student practiced sequences of seconds (scales), thirds, fourths, fifth, etc., both in ascending and in descending motions. Interestingly, this two-fold system was similarly applied in counterpoint teaching. At the beginning of a course in counterpoint, students were invited to write exercises to learn to deal with partimento rules, successively leading to exercises based on bass motions (the *moti del basso*). Durante's application of these sequential patterns was artistically molded into a series of advanced partimento exercises, of which the first part applied ascending bass motions, and the second part applied descending bass motions.[3]

1 The Library call number of this manuscript is: I-GALc Fondo Vernole 16, olim, LE 2/3. For more information regarding the sources from the archives in Gallipoli see, Luisa Cosi, *Giardini stellati e cieli fioriti: Tradizione Sacra e produzione musicale a Gallipoli dal XVI al XIX secolo*. Biblioteca di Cultura Meridionale 2 (Lecce: Conte Editore, 1993).

2 For a complete list of sources of Durante's partimenti, see my article "Partimento Teaching according to Francesco Durante, Investigated through the Earliest Manuscript Sources," in: *Studies in Historical Improvisation: From 'Cantare super Librum' to Partimenti* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

3 For a more thorough explanation of the educational use of the bass motions, see: Peter van Tour, *Counterpoint and Partimento: Methods of teaching composition in Late Eighteenth-Century Naples* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2015), 129–168.

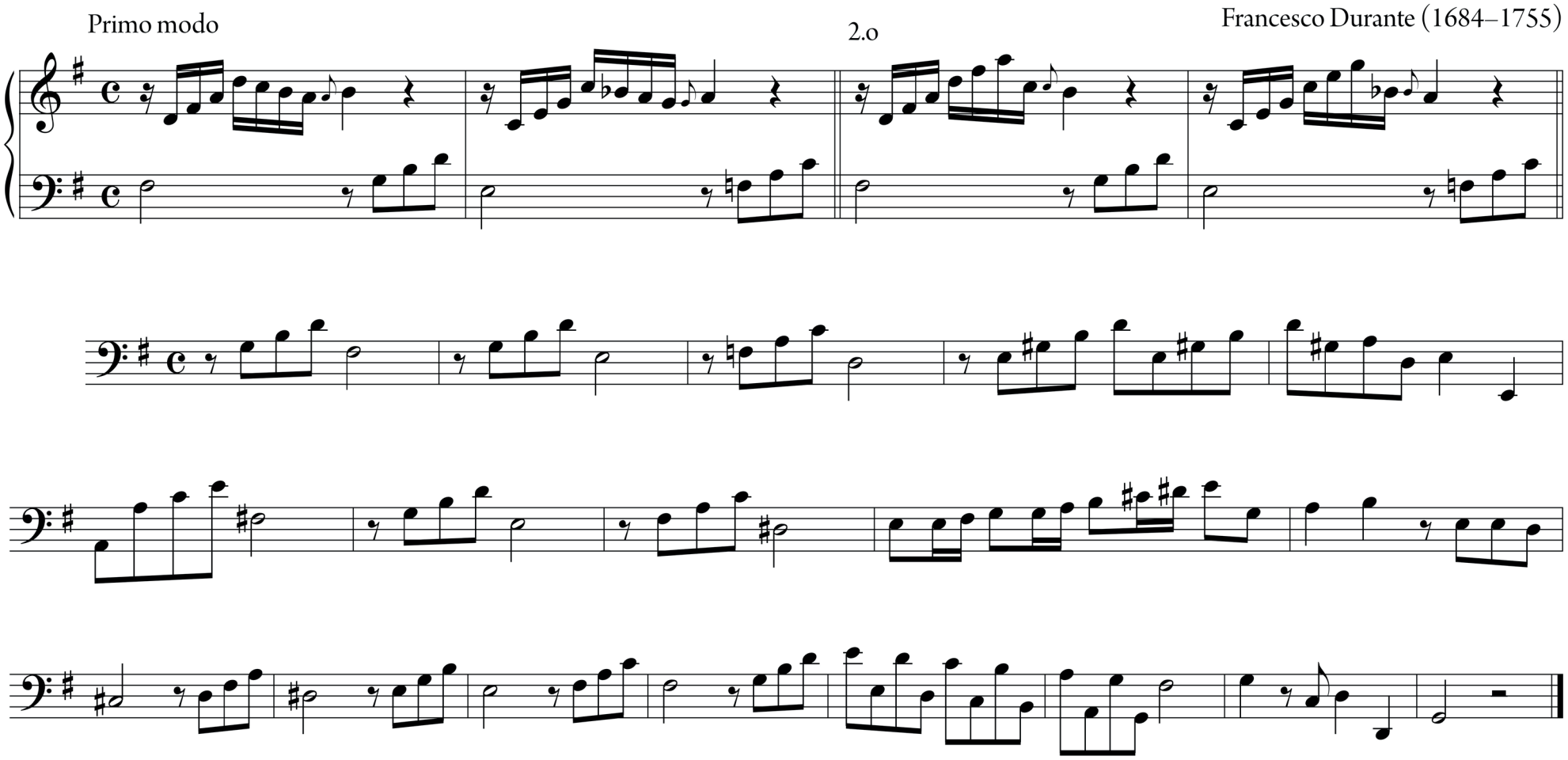

Figure 1: The first partimento exercise from Francesco Durante's advanced series of partimenti, *Studj per cembalo Del Sig.r Francesco Durante*, showing an unfigured bass line with two attached examples of right-hand figurations (I-Gl A.7b.48 [B-2-10], p. 1).

The common procedure with such partimento exercises was, that the student received an unfigured bass line, together with an example called *esempio*, *motivo*, *pensiero*, or also *primo modo*, *secondo modo*, etc., enabling the student to proceed with realizing the particular partimento exercise. These motives show various techniques of keyboard diminution, for which reason Durante's advanced exercises became known as *partimenti diminuiti*.

The Gallipoli Manuscript thus follows exactly this pedagogical approach. Interestingly, on page 44 of the Gallipoli manuscript, the scribe writes *"Fine del moto ascend.e"* ("end of the ascending bass motions"). After this point, the exercises proceed consequently with the descending bass motions. The Gallipoli Manuscript thus belongs to a type of partimento collection in which Durante collected his advanced partimenti, ordered according to an ascending and a descending series of bass motions.

The source

It has not been possible to clarify who the scribe was of the Gallipoli Manuscript (I-GALc Fondo Vernole 16). Two important maestri who were active as church musicians in Gallipoli in the late eighteenth century were, in fact, students of Francesco Durante in Naples: Nicola Caputi (1718–ca.1794), who studied at the *Conservatorio di Poveri di Jesu Christo* in the 1730s, and Giuseppe Chiriatti (1732–1812), who studied with Durante at the *Conservatorio di Sant'Onofrio* between ca. 1748 and 1753. Interestingly, the section of the *Biblioteca Comunale* in Gallipoli where this manuscript is preserved, the 'Fondo Vernole,' belonged to the descendants of the Chiriatti family and contains several scores that once belonged to Giuseppe Chiriatti.

Due to the lack of written material in the hand of Giuseppe Chiriatti, it may perhaps never become entirely clear whether Chiriatti produced these realizations during his studies in Naples around 1750, or whether they were written by an unknown student from Gallipoli some decade later. What is clear, however, is that these forty-six realizations give a unique picture of what a student may have played on the keyboard over the bass lines of Durante's partimenti, the *Studj per cembalo*.

A closer look at the structure of the Gallipoli Manuscript (I-GALc Fondo Vernole 16) reveals that the quires of this manuscript are bound together in an incorrect order of succession.[4] The correct place for the quires 10, 8 and 9, is between the quires five and six. This modern edition publishes the forty-six pieces in their original order.[5] The forty-six "authentic" realizations in this source belong to a very small and unique repertoire, as only a very small number of authentic partimento realizations have survived from the eighteenth century.[6]

Editorial method

In order to adapt this edition to modern keyboard players, C-clefs have been transcribed into either G- or F-clefs.

Beamings in Neapolitan eighteenth-century music may in some cases have a different meaning from what is commonly understood today. Beamings have in all cases been transcribed literally, without any alterations.

The bass part of the first piece, which has survived only in part, has been completed according to I-Gl A.7b.48 [B-2-10], p. 2, which I consider to be the most reliable source for Durante's *Studj per cembalo*. The right hand in this piece follows the Gallipoli Manuscript from the first measure that has survived, which is measure 15.
Titles (or tempo indications) have been transcribed according to the original source.

The direction of some stems has been changed to clarify the voice leading. This edition retains every accidental found in the original text of the Gallipoli Ms.

Peter van Tour

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4 Comparison with I-Nc MS. 1895 and I-Gl A.7b.48 [B-2-10] give indications that quire 10, 8, and 9 respectively (each new quire is indicated with a number in the right upper corner of the first recto folio of each quire) are today found in the wrong place.

5 By 'original order' is meant that the bass motions follow exactly the order of the manuscript sources of Durante's *Studj per cembalo*, such as I-Gl A.7b.48 [B-2-10], I-Vc B.14.8, and I-Nc M.S. 1895.

6 See chapter 15, "Authentic Realizations," in: Giorgio Sanguinetti, *The Art of Partimento* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 214–38.

The Gallipoli Manuscript

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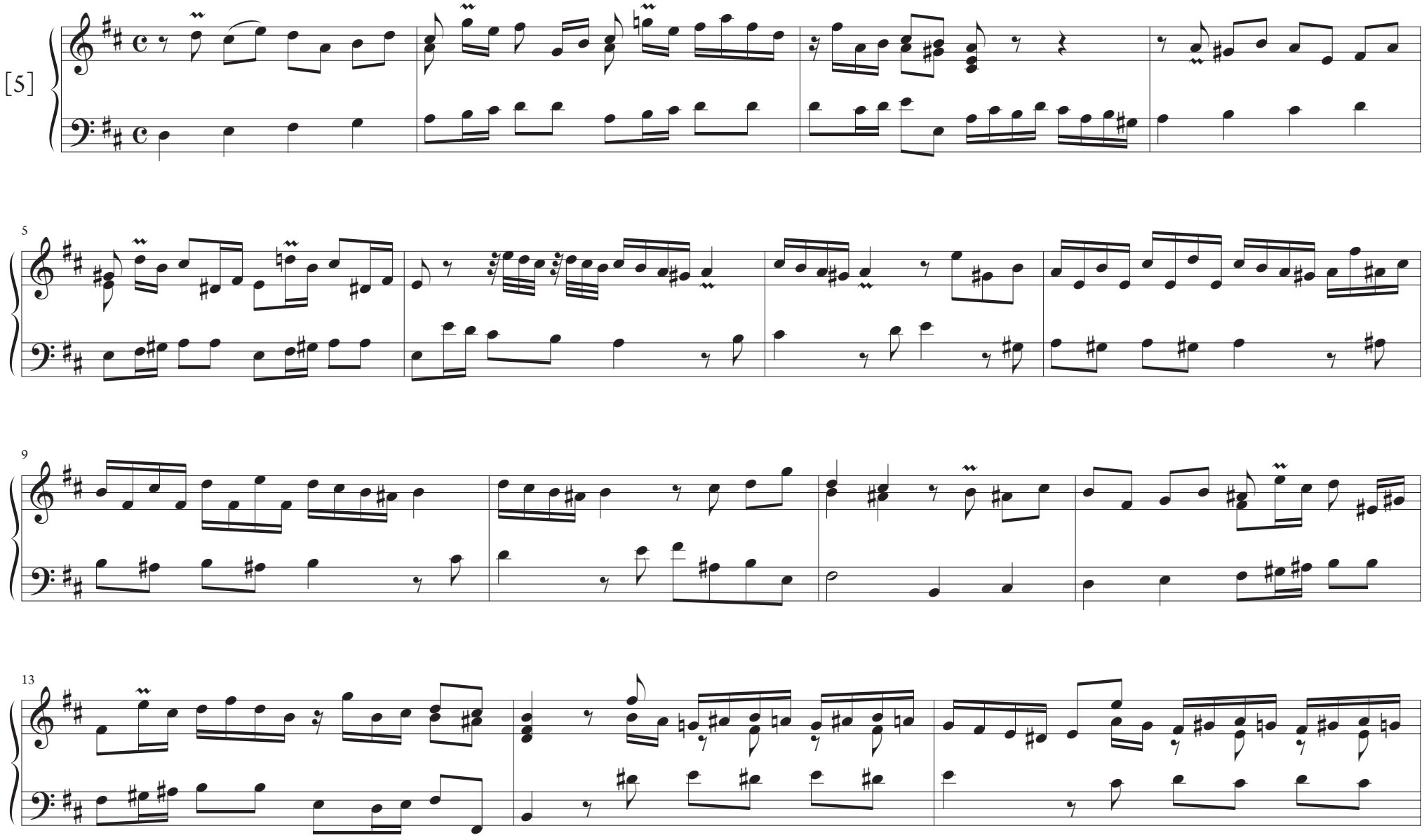
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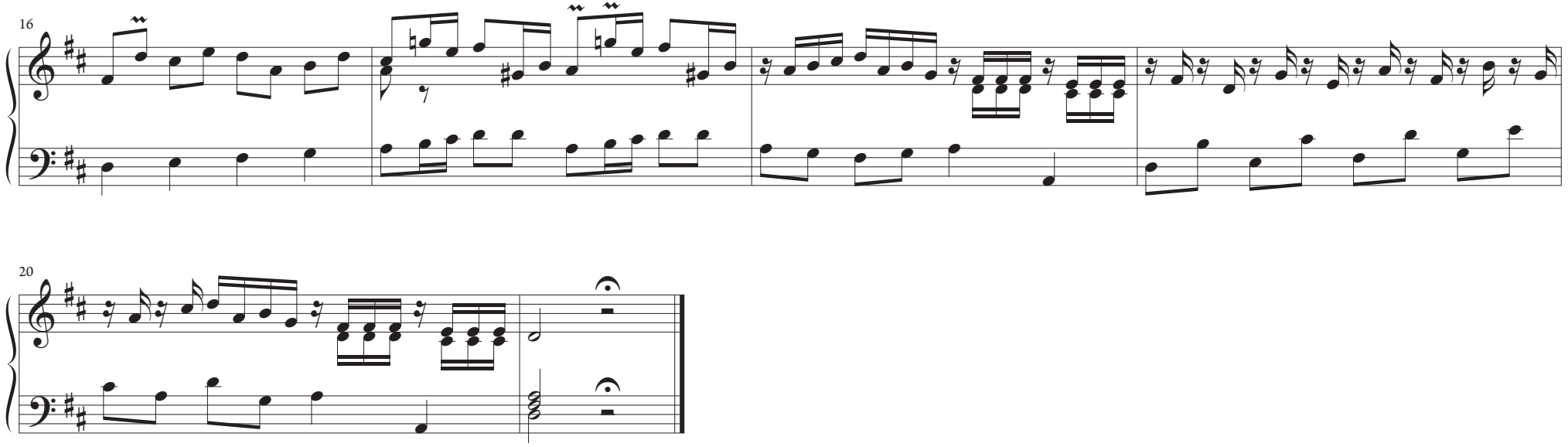
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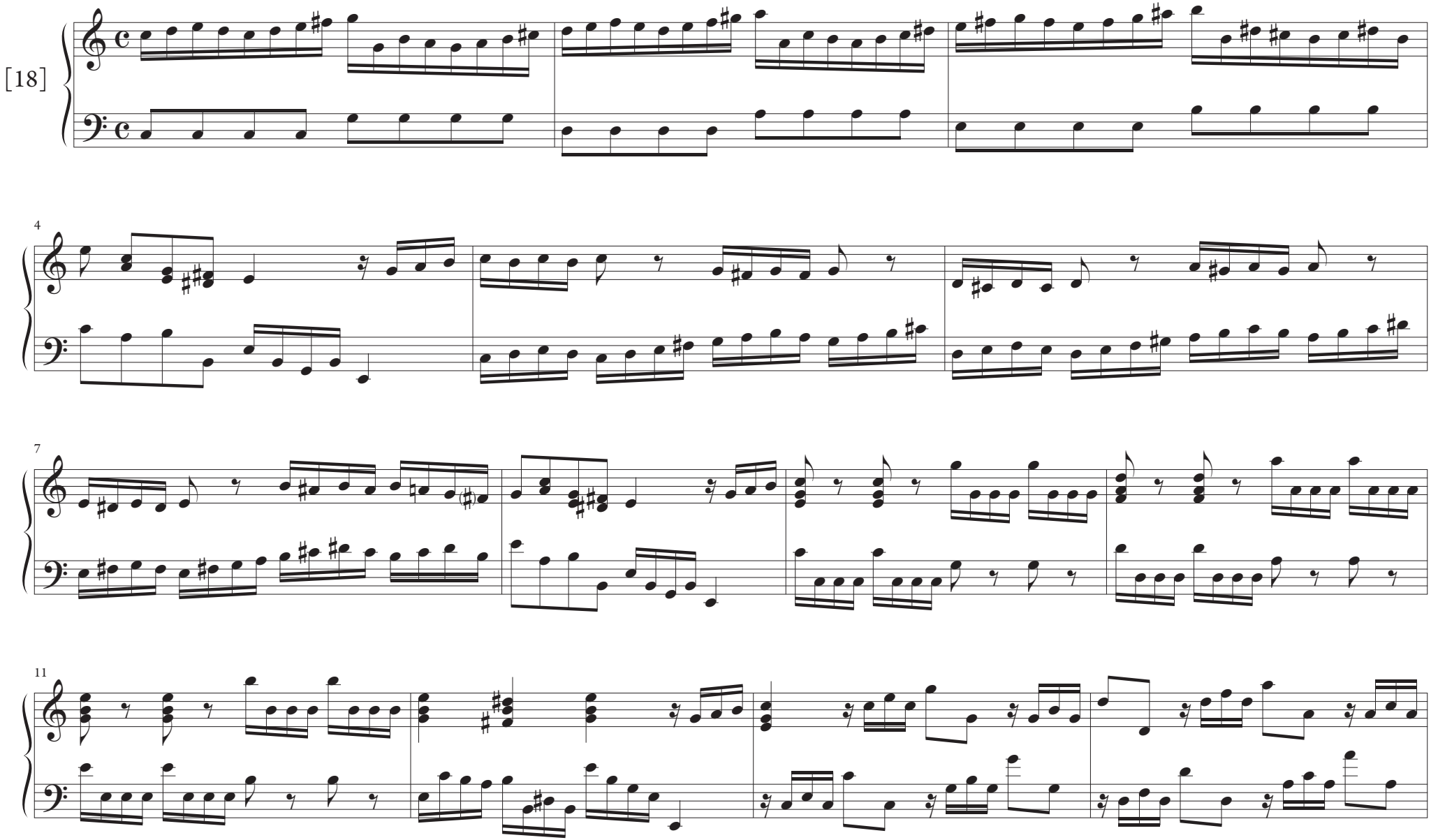
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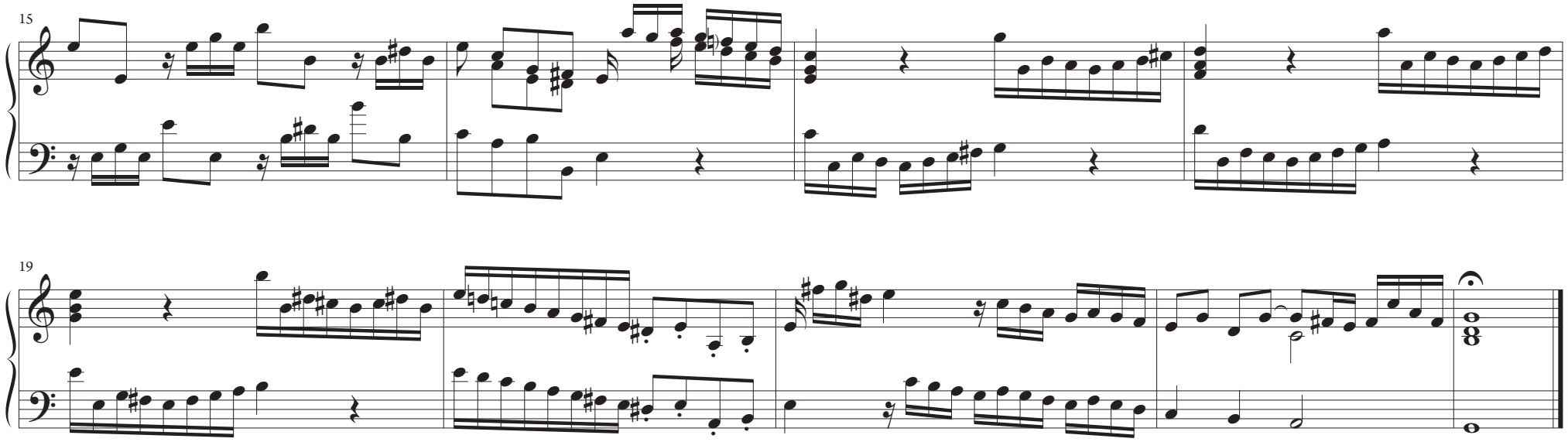
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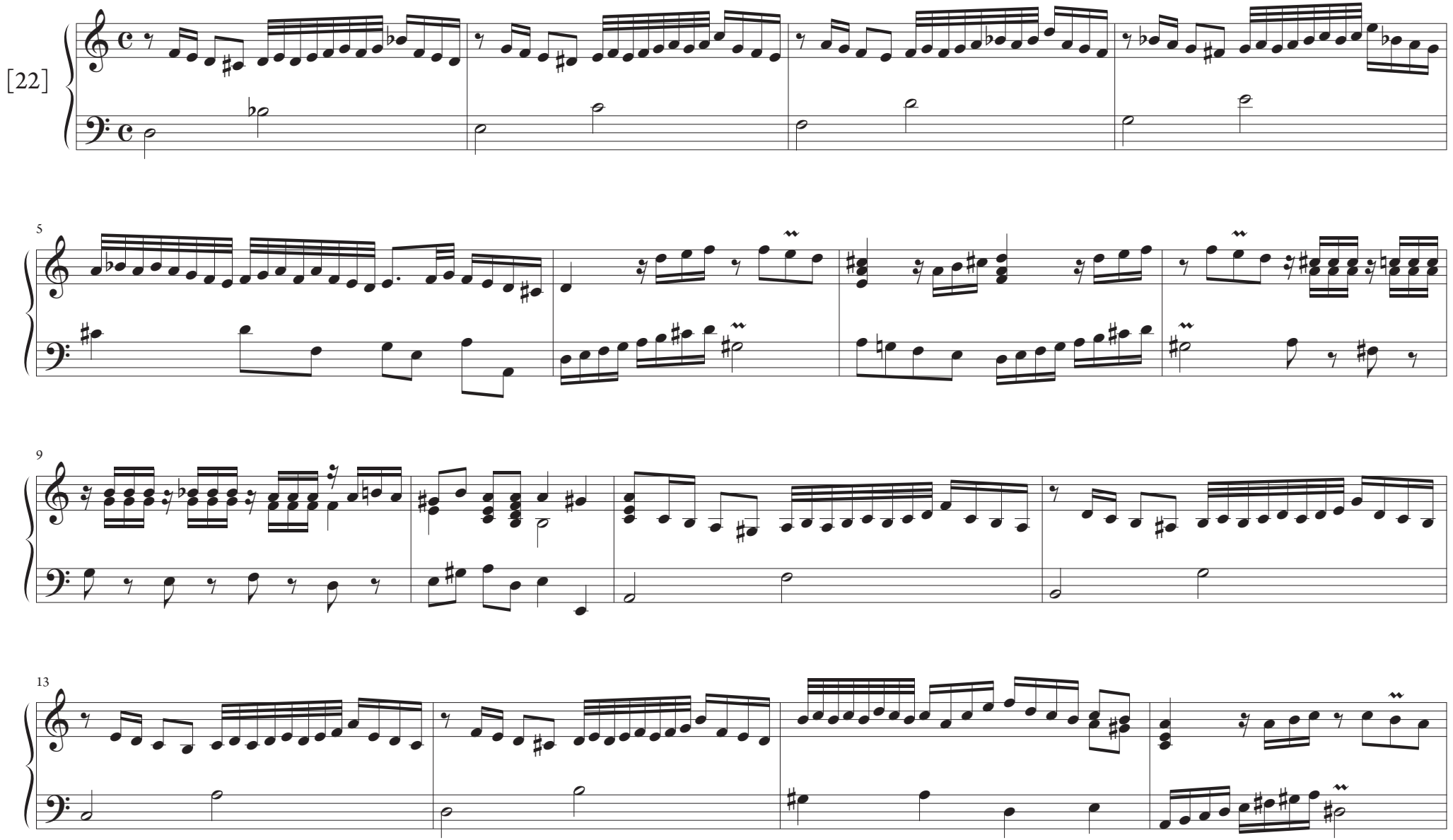
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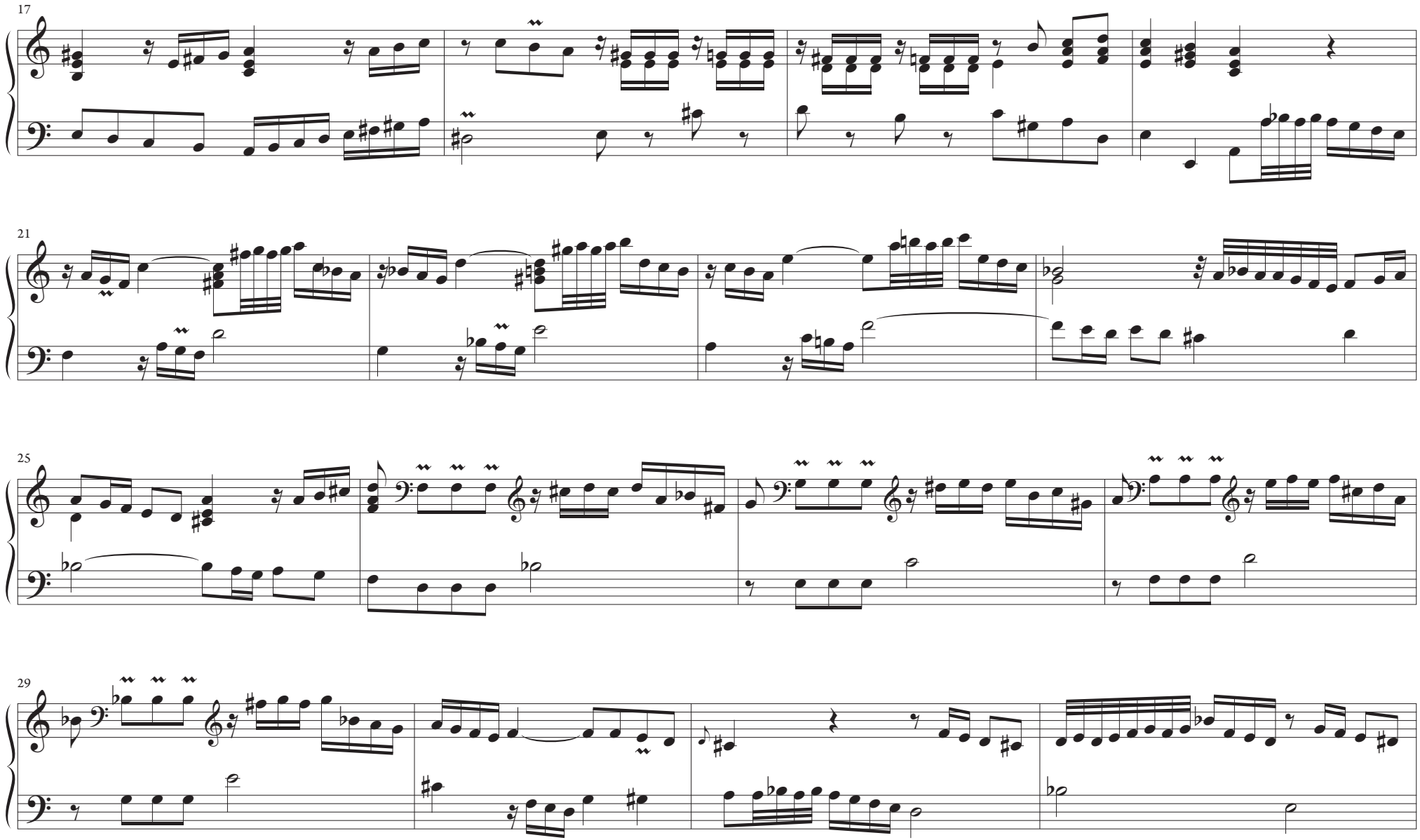
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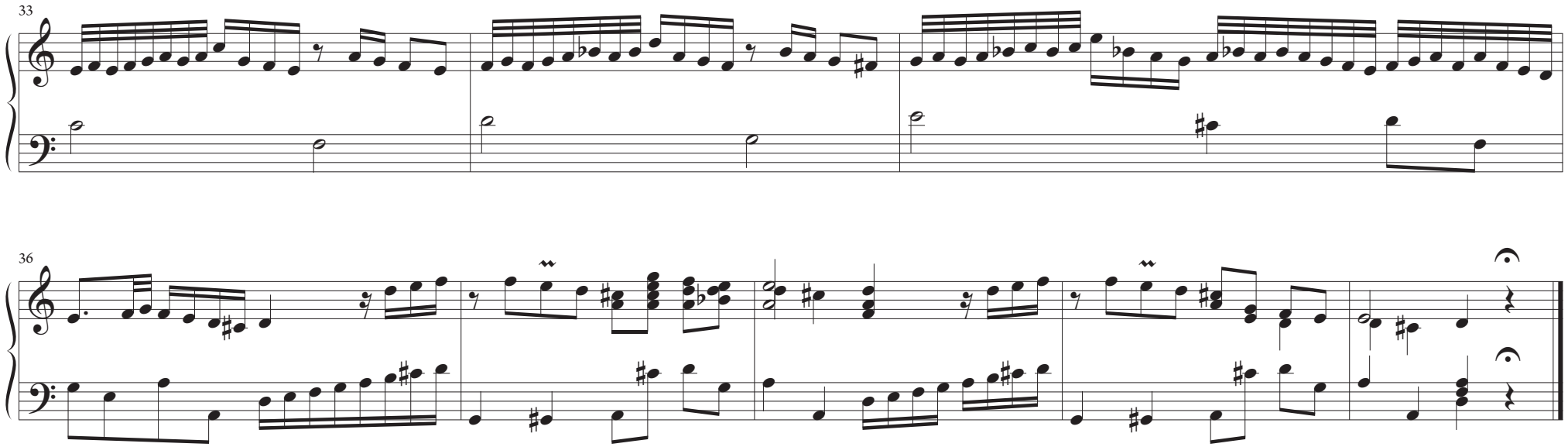
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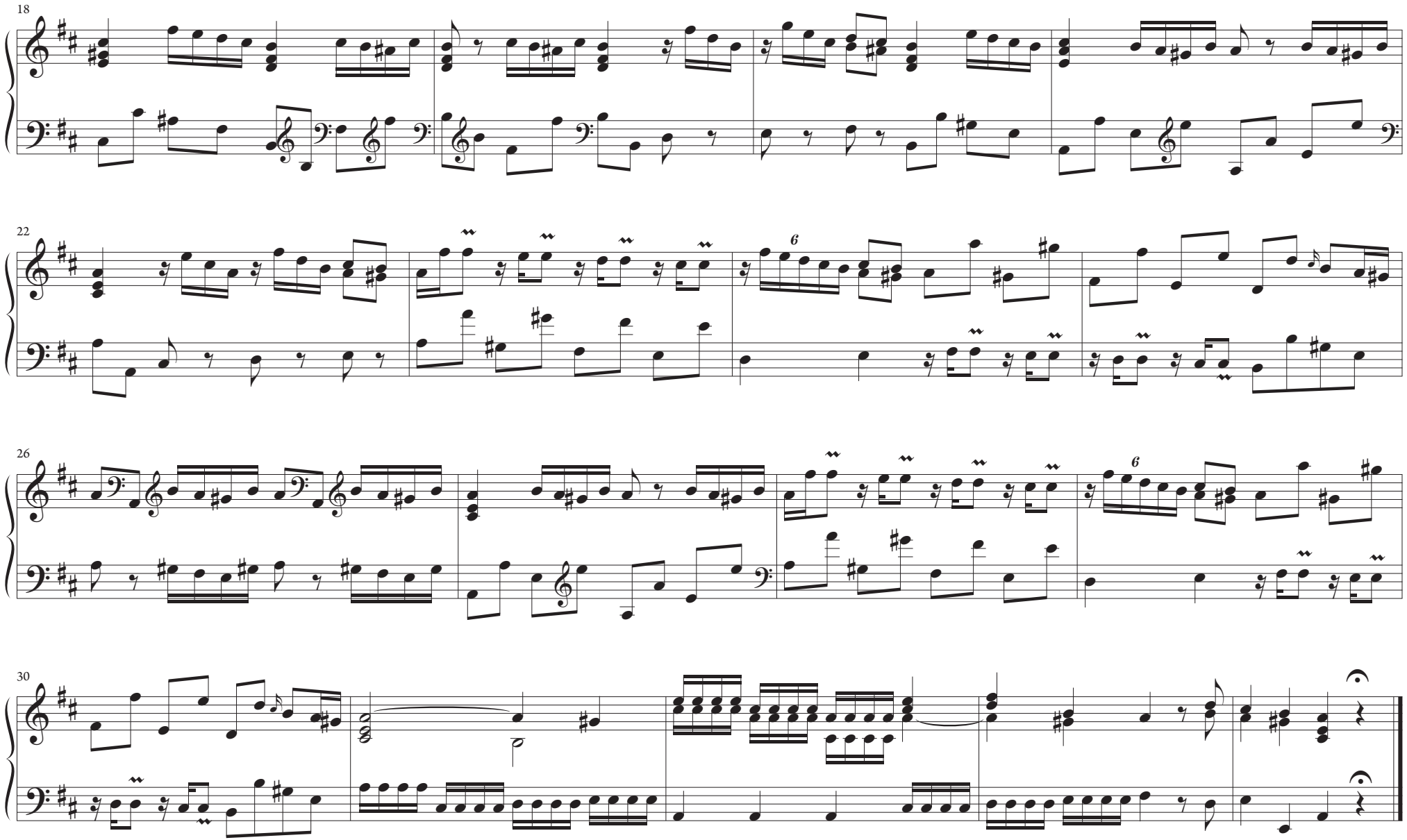

Fine del moto ascendente

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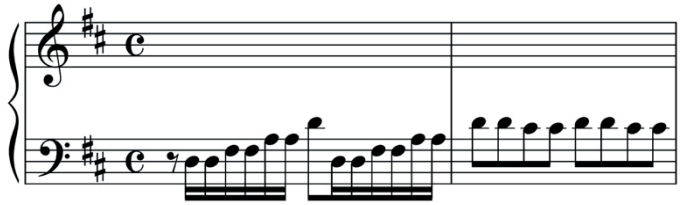
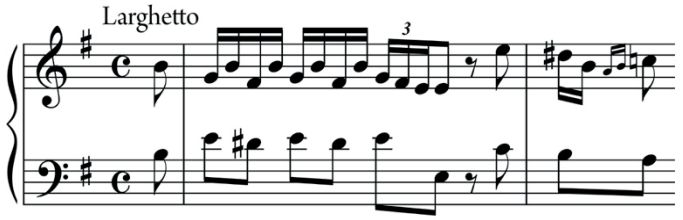
[1]  p. 8

[2] 

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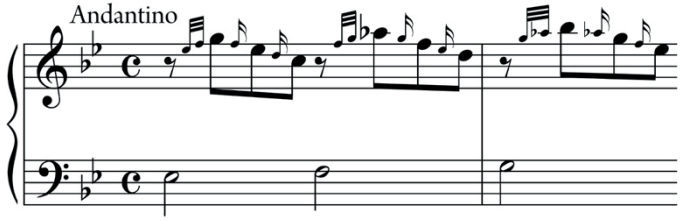
[3] 

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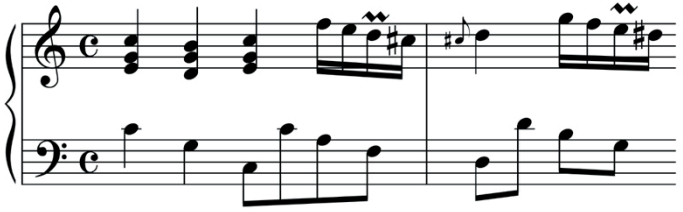
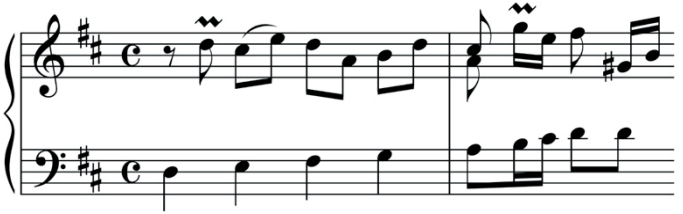
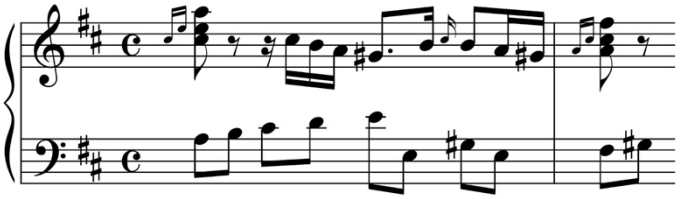
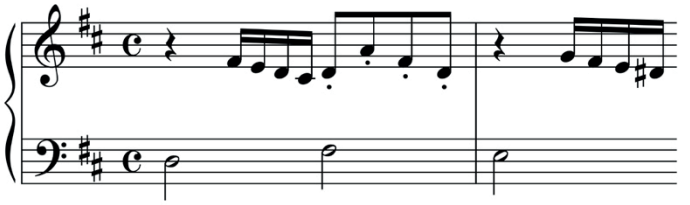
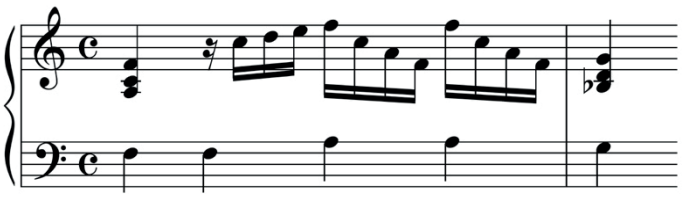
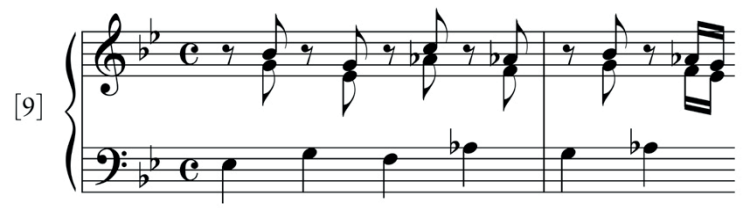
[4]  p. 14

[5]  p. 16

[6]  p. 18

[7]  p. 20

[8]  p. 22



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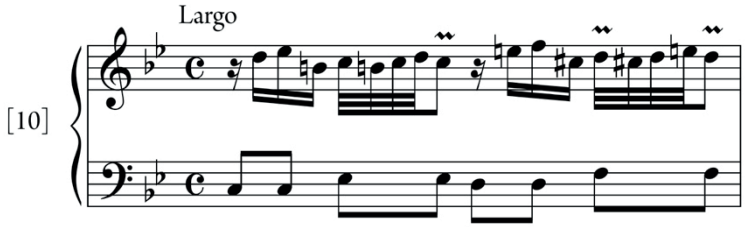

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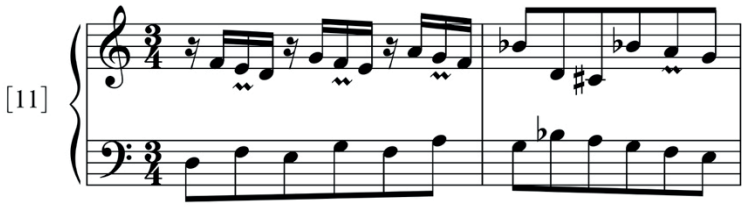

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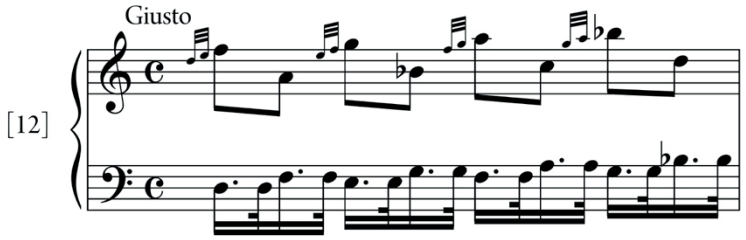

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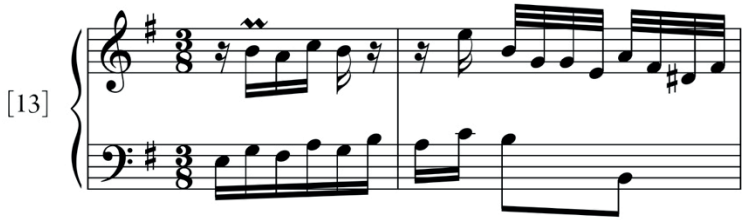

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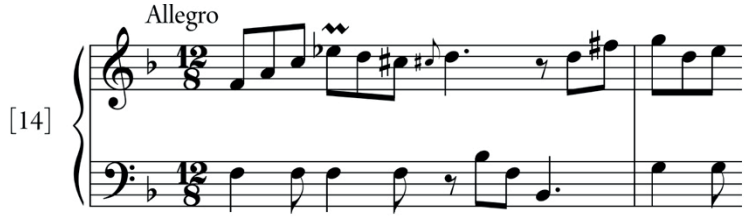

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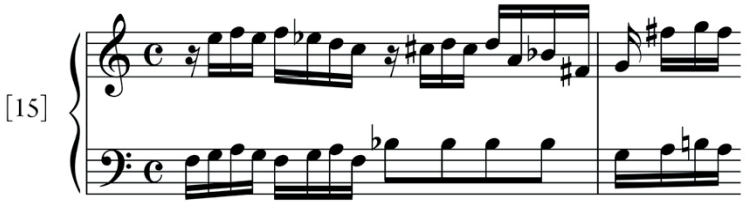

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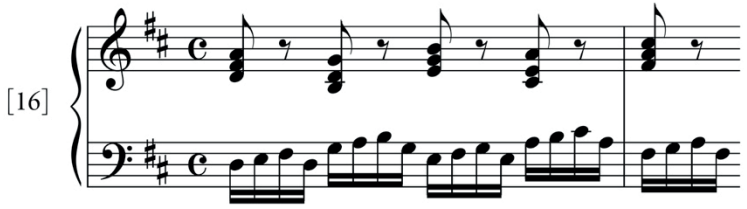

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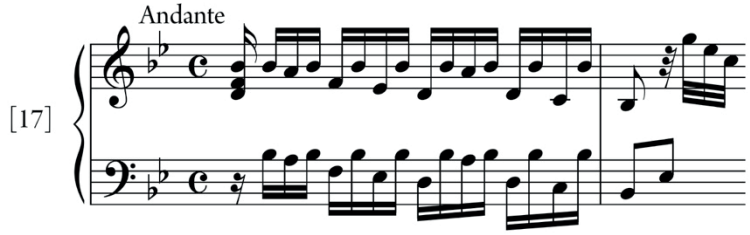

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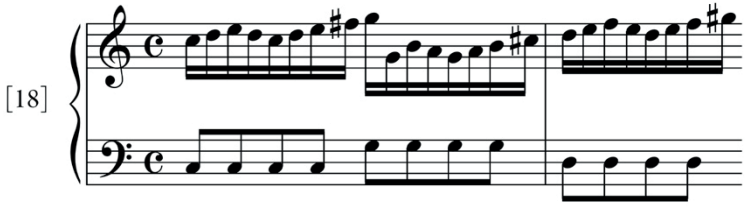

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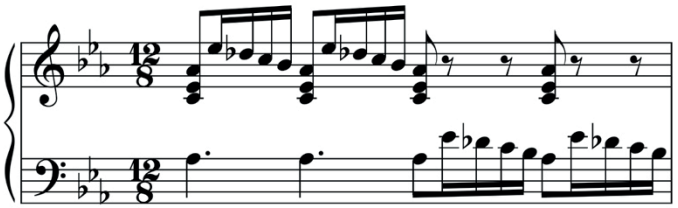

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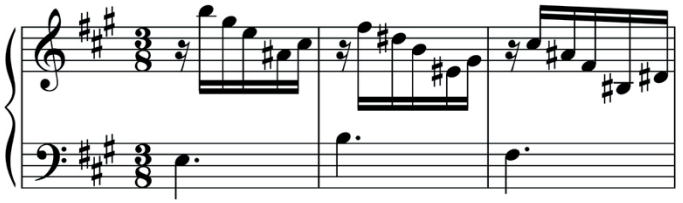

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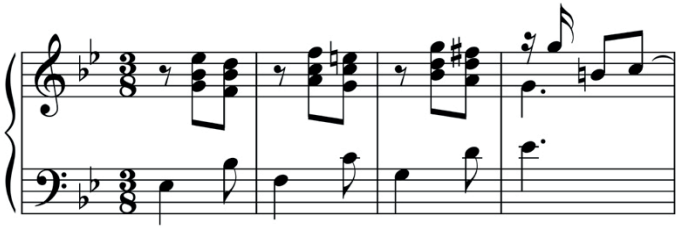

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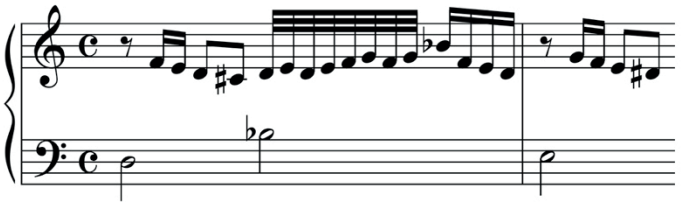

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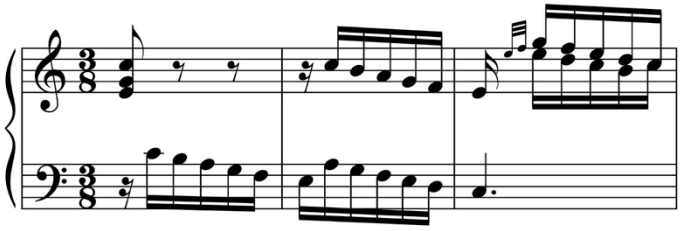

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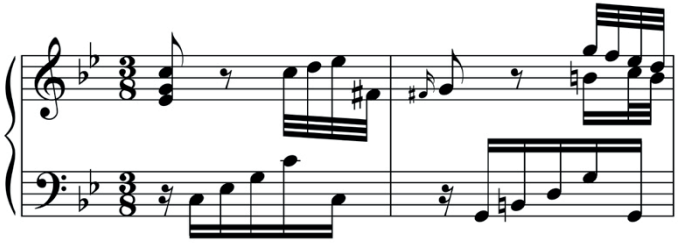

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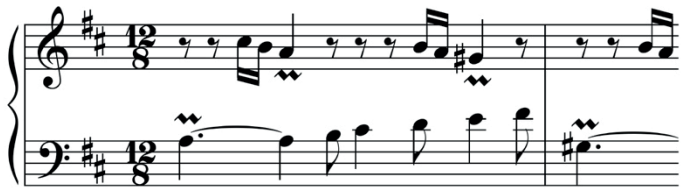

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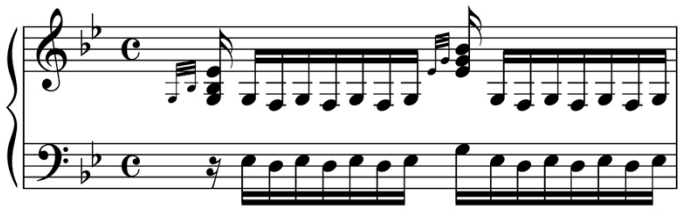

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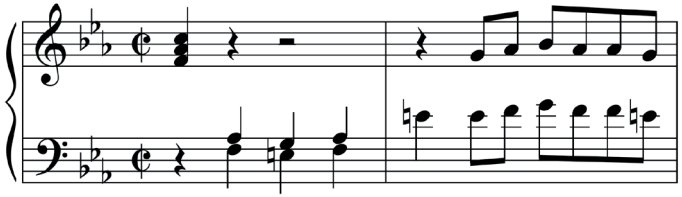

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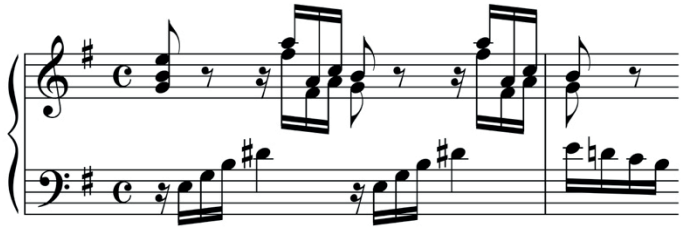

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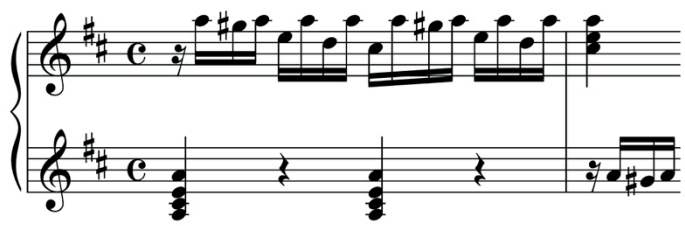

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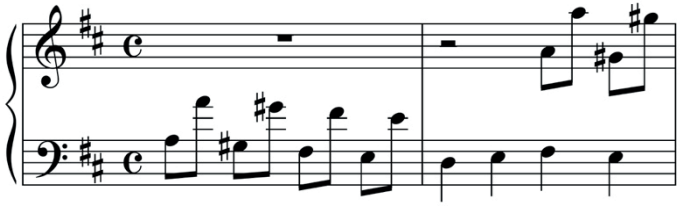

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For the partimento realizations 31–46
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