SONATE PATHETIQUE

Op. 13

By

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

FORM ANALYSIS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY
By LOIS GUSE

FINGERING, PHRASING, PEDALING AND INTERPRETATION
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SONATE PATHETIQUE

Biographical Sketch—Ludwig Van Beethoven

Born at Bonn, Germany, December 16, 1770

Died in Vienna, March 26, 1827

Beethoven's early life was relatively dim, owing to the fact that his father, Johann, a man of dissipated habits, and a meagre income, was his sole inspiration and education. Not until he was nine, and until Johann had no more information to give, did Beethoven continue his study elsewhere. The lessons his father had given him on the piano were well learned, but now his musical gifts demanded more advanced attention. Christian Gottlob Neefe, organist of the court chapel, and an excellent clavierist, and pianist, was his first teacher. The main sources for his teaching were Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach's keyboard works, Johann Sebastian Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, and some North and South German keyboard music of that period, plus various theory works by Sorge, Marpurg, Kirnberger, and again, Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach.

In 1792 Beethoven met Haydn, who was passing through Bonn on his way to England, and was invited to come to Vienna for study purposes. For almost two years he worked eagerly, grasping everything Haydn could offer. There is no doubt that Beethoven was greatly indebted to Haydn, despite rumors of jealousy on the latter's part, and despite Beethoven's own opinion of being taught too little, partly justified because of Haydn's age, and because Haydn was too busy with his own doings to give his pupil enough attention. Beethoven many times produced a great deal more than Haydn had time to look at. So when Haydn started on another journey to England in 1794, Beethoven found a more conscientious teacher, Johann Albrechtsberger, famous theorist and composer. He was a model of accuracy, consistency, and discipline, and Beethoven bore these traits as patiently as a novice, although by now he was twenty-four years old and the possessor of a substantial skill in composition. Albrechtsberger's instruction included the following subjects: strict and free counterpoint, imitation, fugue, three categories of double counterpoint, double fugue, three-fold counterpoint and fugue, and finally, canon.

In Vienna, as in Bonn, Beethoven again found enthusiastic admirers, and the force of his character as well as his music so impressed them that he was soon considered to be on equal level by many of the aristocracy; in fact, many carried their admiration to such a point that Beethoven's coarseness, ill-temper, and rude behavior were borne with patience and tranquillity. Among these newly-founded friends was Karl Lichnowsky, one of the very few mentioned in the *Heiligenstadter Testament.* In a letter of August 24, 1804, to Breitkopf and Hartel, Beethoven called him one of his most faithful friends and patrons.

About the time of Beethoven's twenty-eighth birthday he began to experience deafness. A continual humming and buzzing in the ears was especially distressing to him, and it was inconceivable that he should lose his sense of hearing. After a long period of worrying and despair, he finally reached a state of quiet resignation and self-control. Yet at no period of his life, until the very day of his death, did Beethoven give up the hope of being cured. However, chronic stomach and intestinal trouble, which Beethoven suffered from as early as his thirtieth year, formed the basis for the illness, cirrhosis of the liver, of which he eventually died.

FORM: The first movement consists of a ten-measure introduction marked *Grave*, and a section marked *Allegro di Molto e con brio.* The movement is in sonata form; the first theme beginning with measure 11 and ending with measure 19. Measures 19-27 are a repetition of the first

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theme. A transition (measures 27-50) then leads to the second theme, beginning in e♭ minor, and ending in E♭ major. A closing section (measures 89-121) and a coda (measures 121-132a) complete the exposition, and the section is repeated.

The development section, following a four-measure segment of the *Grave* begins with measure 137 and ends with measure 195 where the recapitulation begins. The second theme occurs, unusually enough, in f minor and not until sixteen measures later does the theme occur in the tonic key, c minor. A closing section and a coda exactly identical to those of the exposition follow, also in the key of c minor (measures 253-294). A four-measure *Grave* section, departing from the diminished seventh chords at measures 293-294 precede the final eleven measures of the *Allegro molto.*

The second movement is a rondo, unusual for second movements at the time Beethoven wrote this. This proves how interested Beethoven was in showing the new possibilities of this form. It may be notated:

A	B	A	C	A	Coda
(meas. 1-16)	(meas. 17-28)	(meas. 29-36)	(meas. 37-50)	(meas. 51-66)	(meas. 66-73)

The third movement which is self-explanatory by its heading, is also in rondo form. It may be notated as following:

A	transition	B-1	B-2	B-3	transition
(meas. 1-17)	(meas. 18-24)	(meas. 25-33)	(meas. 33-43)	(meas. 43-51)	(meas. 51-61)
A	C	transition	A-extension	B-1	B-2
(meas. 61-78)	(meas. 79-106)	(meas. 107-120)	(meas. 120-134)	(meas. 134-143)	(meas.143-153)
B-3-extension	A-extension	Coda			
(meas. 153-170)	(meas. 171-182)	(meas. 182-210)			

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY: The *Grave* section which opens the first movement is one of deep solemnity, suggests an intensely serious mood, and when regarded in this spirit, provides a sharp contrast to the *Allegro molto* section which is of a more vigorous and dramatically bold character. The second movement, *Andante cantabile* is, as the marking indicates, leisurely paced, and of a lyrical nature. Think of longer phrases, a natural, flowing melodic line, moving in a calm and singing manner. The third movement is more gay, although the minor key suggests a certain melancholy carried over from the previous movements. The opening section carries a hint of defiance in its melodic statements, and delivers a marked contrast to the *tranquillo* section.

First Movement. The tremolo in measures 11-26 should receive the initial attention. Make certain the wrist is loose, and a balance is secured between the fingers, 5-1, 4-1. Practice slowly, listening for a steady action, and the difficulty of this task will soon diminish. When the vibrations feel comfortable enough, practice making the crescendo, and decrescendo in measures 15-17 in just the left hand. Pay close attention to outlining the lowest bass notes. The feeling of motion results from a continuously steady left hand, both in rhythm and in tone, not from a forced and hurried pace.

Grave. Keep the sixteenth-note in mind as the basis for a steady rhythmic background. In other words, count four sixteenth-notes to the first quarter-note, one-and-one-half sixteenth-notes to the next dotted-sixteenth, one-half a "count", or one-half a sixteenth to the thirty-second-note, and so on throughout the entire first section. This will have to be practiced mechanically at first, and slowly, until there is no doubt about the metrical placement of sixteenth-notes, thirty-second notes, and equally important, the rests.

Measures 50-51. Be sure the melodic line ends with the B♭ of the left hand in measure 51, not the A♮ of the right hand in measure 50. Then start the next phrase with the second beat of measure 51 without delaying the rhythmic flow. Consequently, the following measures are to be played just as much in time, even though the melodic line jumps from bass to treble clefs, repeatedly. At first, use a metronome to check your steadiness. If the right hand is unable to master the rhythm accurately after much practice, then the entire *Allegro molto* is too fast. Take a more comfortable tempo.

Measures 57-58. Take each pralltriller with the three fingers, 2-4-3. The melodic line should remain even.

Measures 93-112. Notice the staccato marks, accents, and dashes. Be meticulous about executing each one correctly.

Measures 167-170. Block each group of eighth-note figures in the right hand in order to hear the harmonic equivalent of a lush melodic texture. Notice that this same coloristic effect can be brought out when executed in a legatissimo manner, against a dry and lightly vibrating bass. Be careful about

using too much pedalling here. Just a touch of pedal on the first two eighth-notes of each group is sufficient. Or you may take no pedal at all. In either case, the smoothness of the psasage results from a true finger legato.

Measures 211 and 215. Observe the sudden piano with care. Try to sound these chords both times intently, producing neither a forced nor a shallow tone.

Measure 295. Immediately after the sound of the fortissimo chord ceases (measure 294), begin counting very strictly in sixteenth-notes at measure 295. The "sound" of the rests of the returning *Grave* are as eventful as the first c minor chord that opens the Sonata.

Second Movement. With the exeption of a few turns, the movement poses no special digital problem. The marking, *Adagio Cantabile,* is, however, an indication of another kind of problem—that of retaining a rhythmic and tonal control of both the individual and the combined voices. The tempo should be derived from measure 22. Express the triplet freely, not rigidly. The upper line must sound through as if it were one natural line. When this is felt, proceed to the very beginning taking the same tempo as in this measure. The metronome marking, an eighth-note equal to 60 is a good tempo.

Measure 8. Be sure each triplet takes up the full value of an eighth-note, and is evenly spaced.

Measure 9. Notice the addition of another voice in the bass register; also the melody is an octave higher. Don't make too little of this sudden heavier texture. Carry measure 11 out to its fullest expression.

Measure 20. The turn is executed right after the sixth sixteenth-note.

Measure 21. The turn is executed after the full value of the dotted eighth-note.

Measures 24, 27, 28. Treat the middle voice as it is phrased, simply, not affectedly.

Measure 25. Observe the ensuing rests. Silence is as much a part of the idea here as are the actual sounds of the notes.

Measures 37-38. A dialogue between the upper and lower voices occurs, first in a♭ minor (measures 37-44), then in E major (measures 45-50). Strive for unity through a consistently lyric treatment of these passages.

Measures 51-65. Treat the triplets as accompaniment, letting the upper line come though cantabile and legato, yet piano.

Third Movement. Keep the tempo throughout at a brisk pace, but do not consider just the actual metronomic speed in doing this. Except for *sfz* and *ff* markings, the character is one of lightness and buoyancy. Pay special attention to the left hand in measure 3 so that the harmonies do not sound "lumpy," especially as the right hand is played detached.

Measure 5. The ornament is played on the beat. In other words, both F's sound together, and the entire gruppetto sounds before the second eighth-note of the left hand. (Preferably, to avoid parallel octaves, at the outset, the gruppetto should be executed slightly after the first beat, enhancing the A♭ between the F and A♭ of the left hand. However, if the student finds this too difficult, he may feel justified in doing it the aforementioned way. Both are considered correct.)

Measure 14. The B♭ begins a phrase that ends with measure 17. Don't treat the last four chords as an after-thought.

Measure 33. There is no need to stifle the triplets. Regard them as a continuation of the melodic line.

Measure 79. Although we have now reached a highly contrasting section, don't make the mistake of slackening the tempo; it is marked *tranquillo* and *sostenuto,* yes, but this remains within the framework of the original tempo. Keep the underlying pulse the same as before, for in Beethoven's, as in many other composers works, it is this rhythmical consistency that lends unity to a composition.

Measure 185. Make no ritard, but go on to the first half of measure 188 without diminishing the forte.

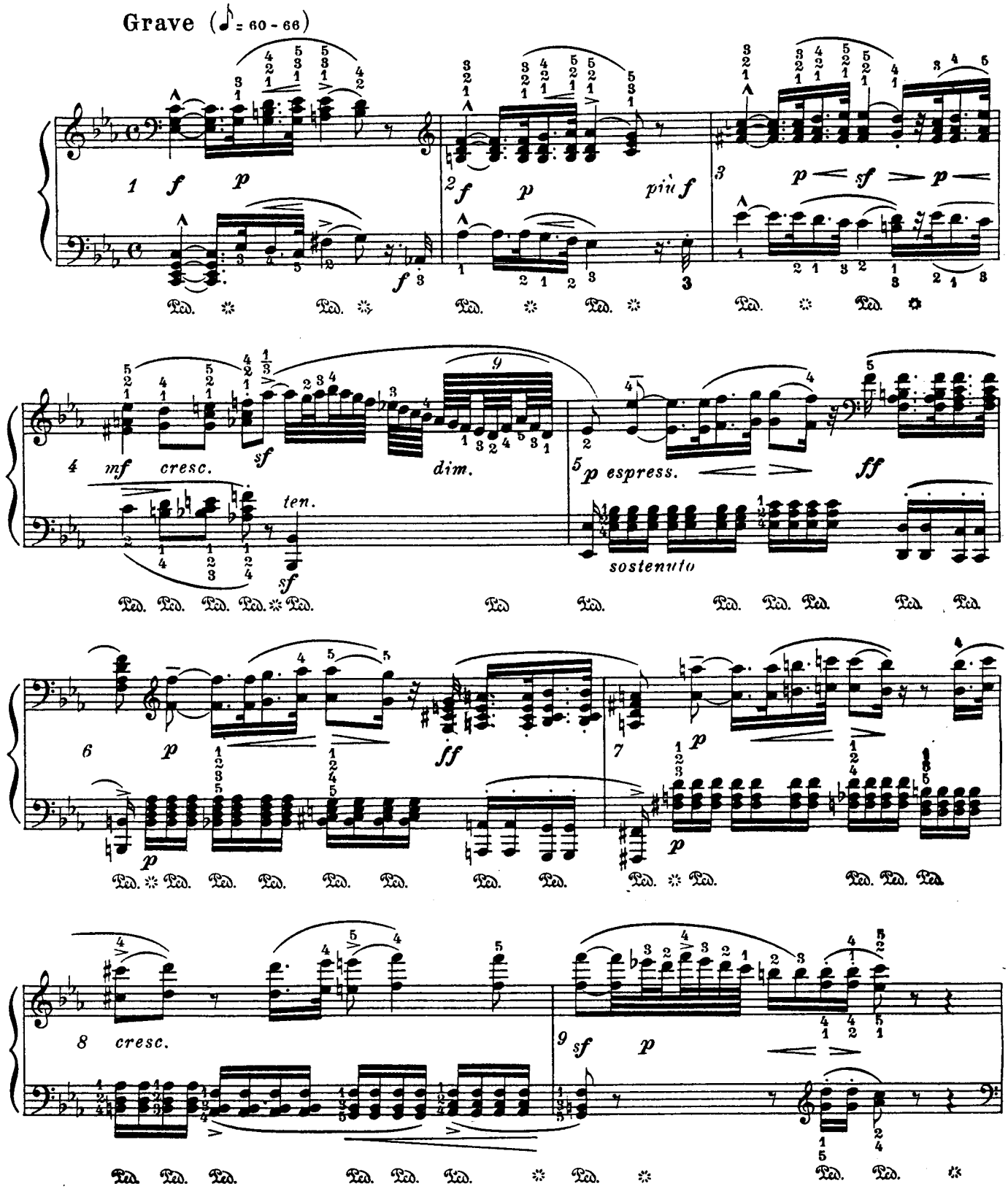
Measure 202. Again, here is a bit of contrast. Make this sound as if Beethoven wanted to give the impression of starting another development section in a new key. The contrast is confirmed after a surprising rush of triplets, telling you it was, after all. just a "false alarm."

Sonate Pathétique

To Prince Carl von Lichnowsky

Revised and edited by Leopold Godowsky

L. van BEETHOVEN, Op. 13



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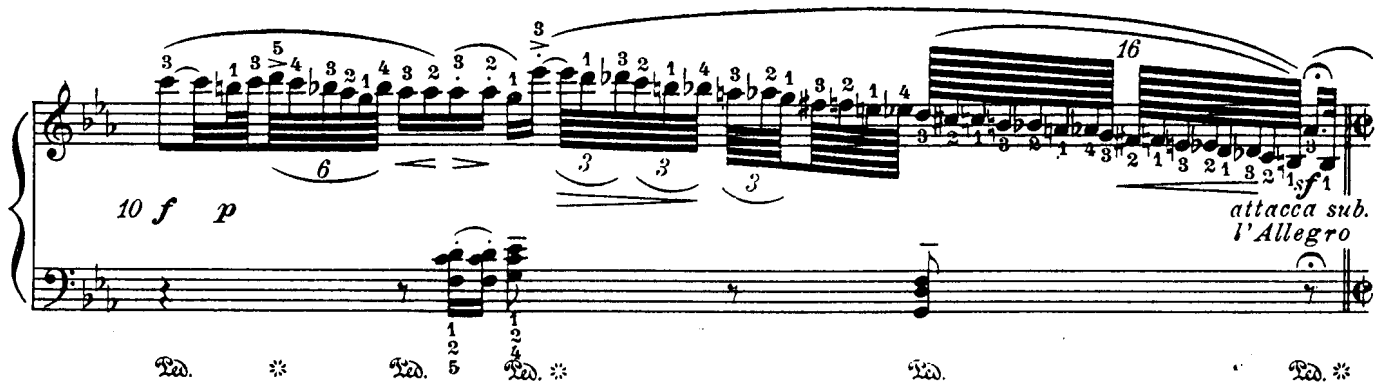
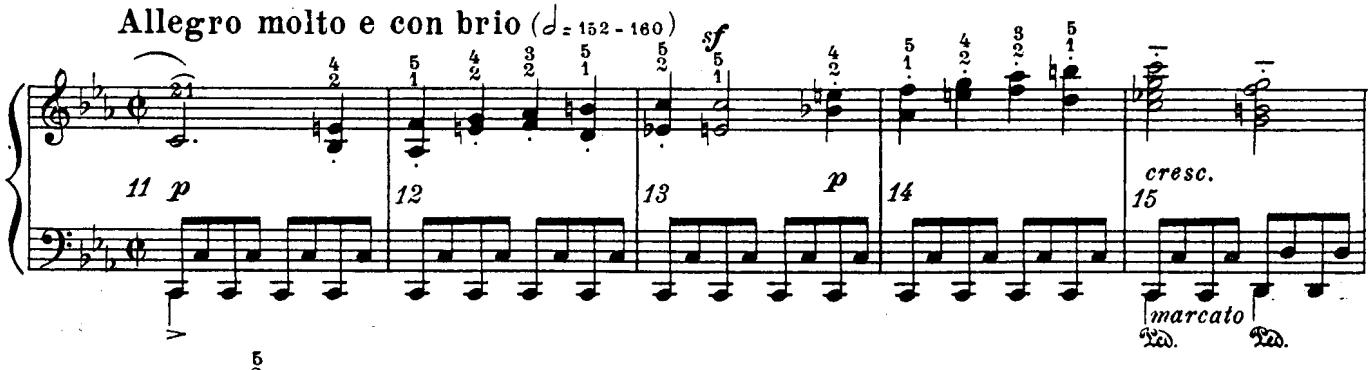
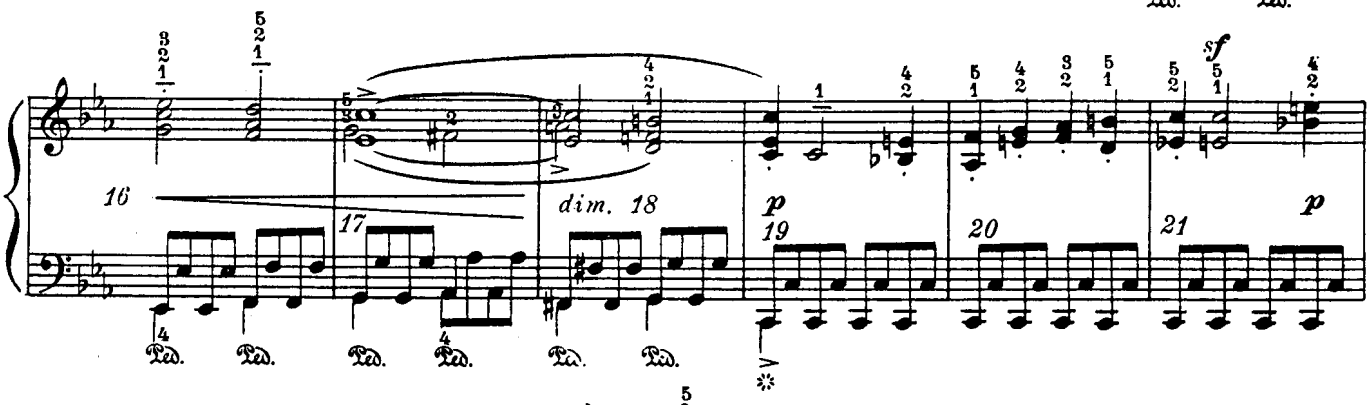
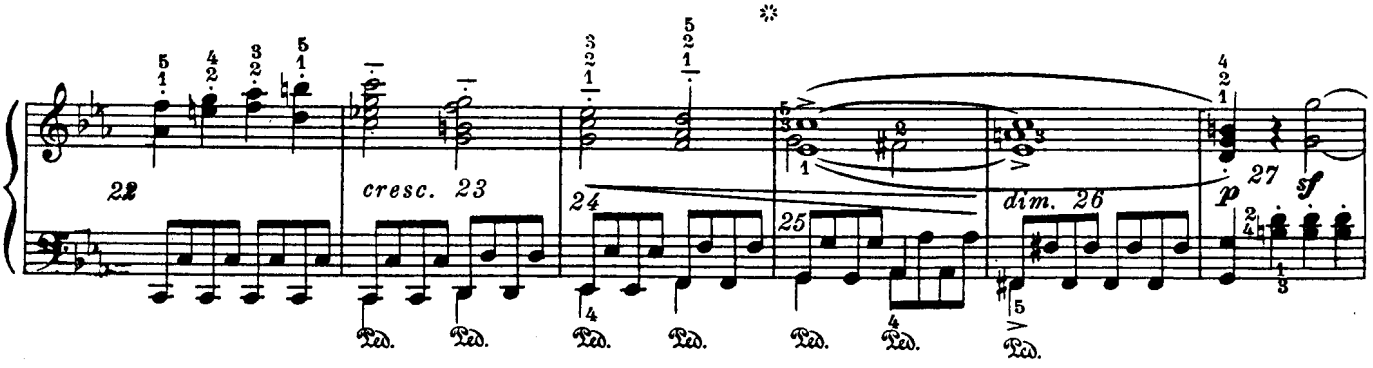
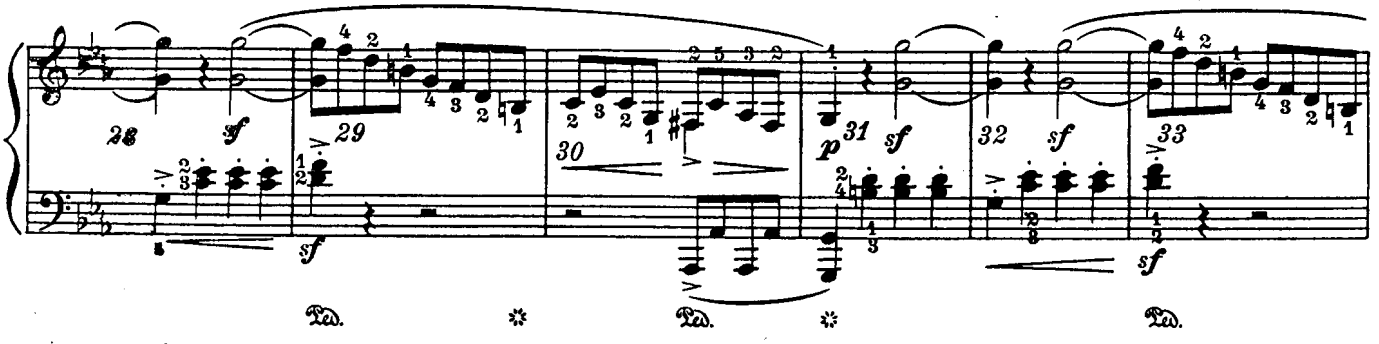
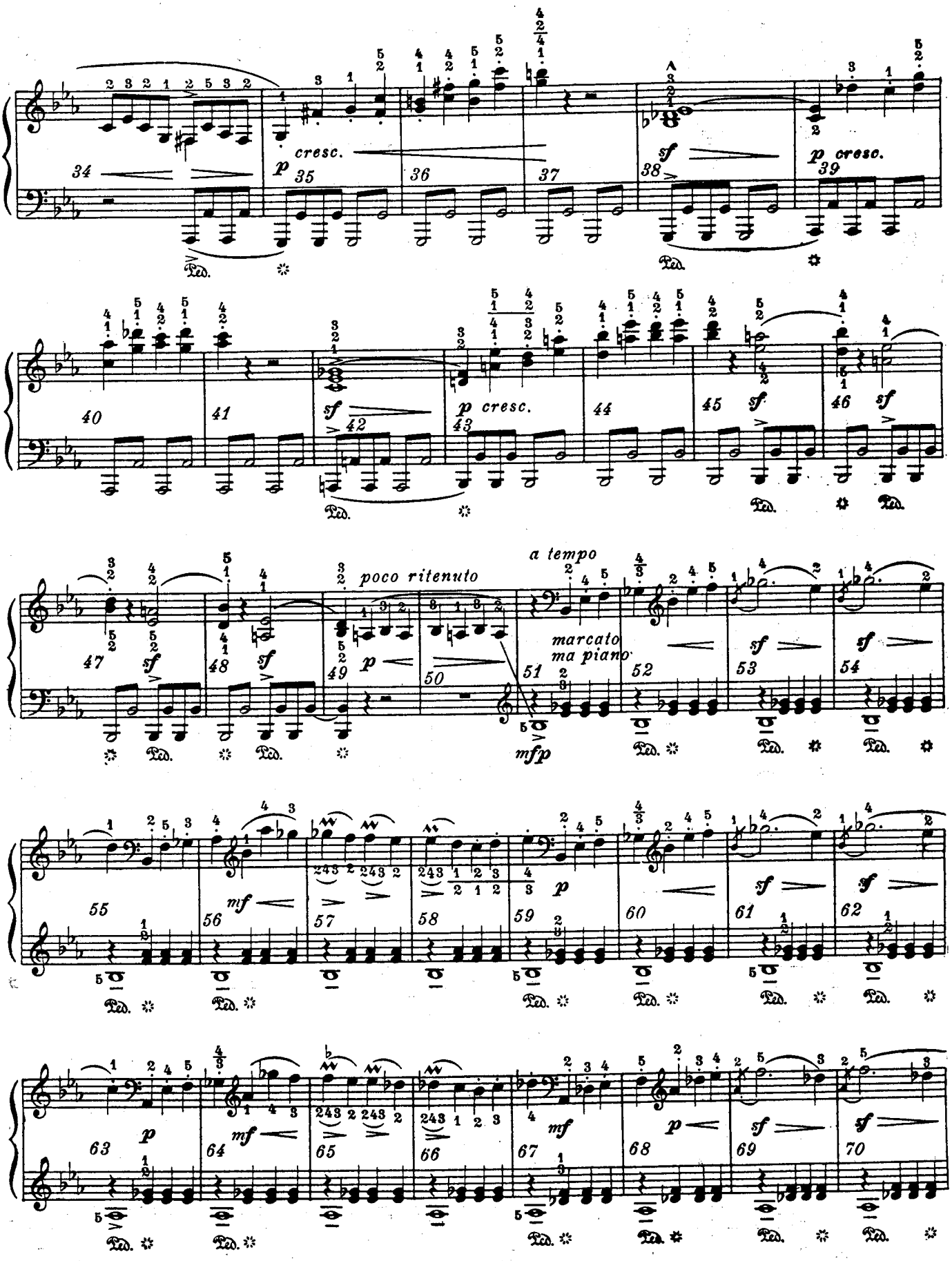

10 f p
attacca sub.
l'Allegro

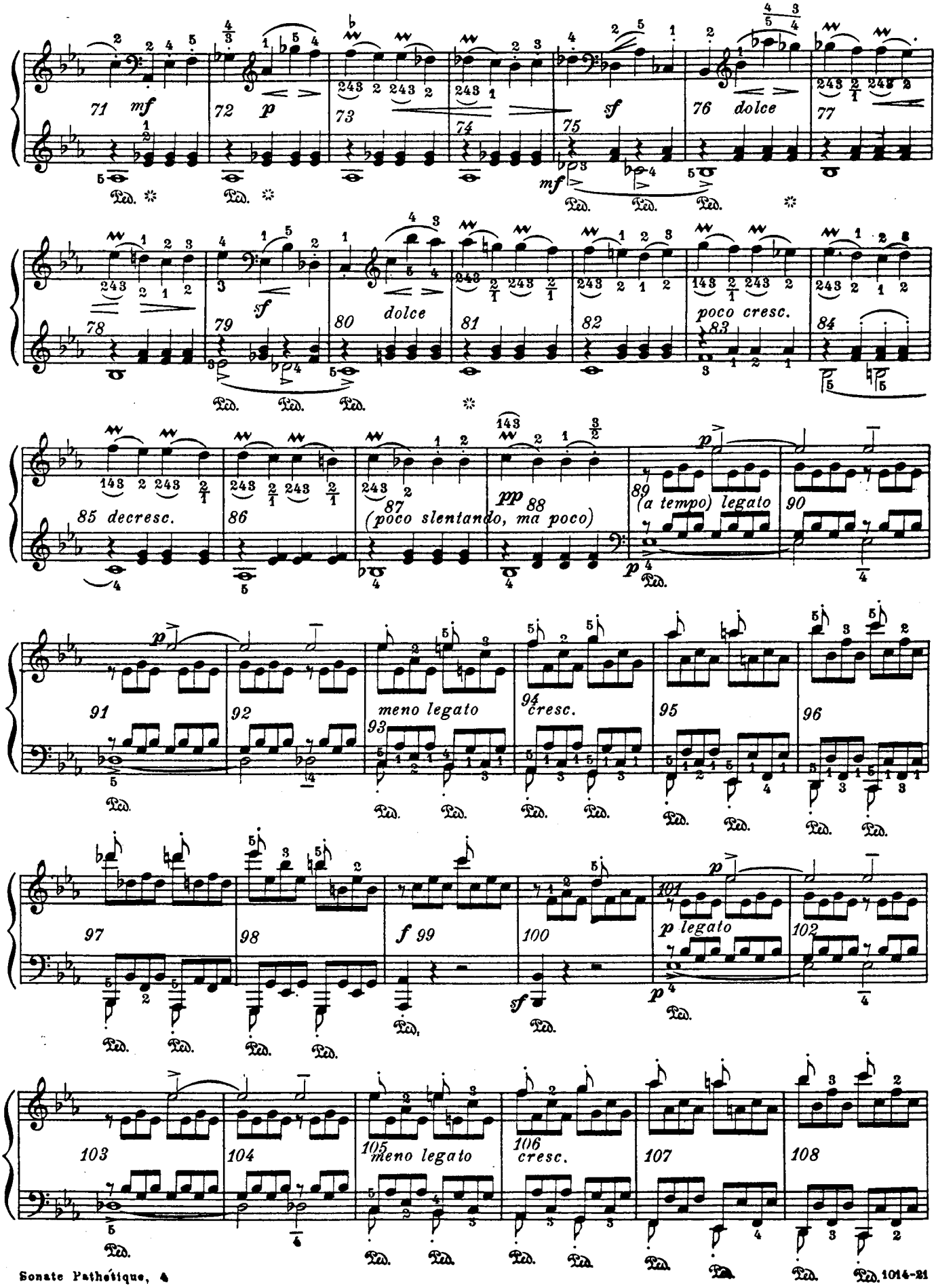

Allegro molto e con brio (♩= 152 - 160)
11 p
12
13
p
14
cresc.
15
marcato

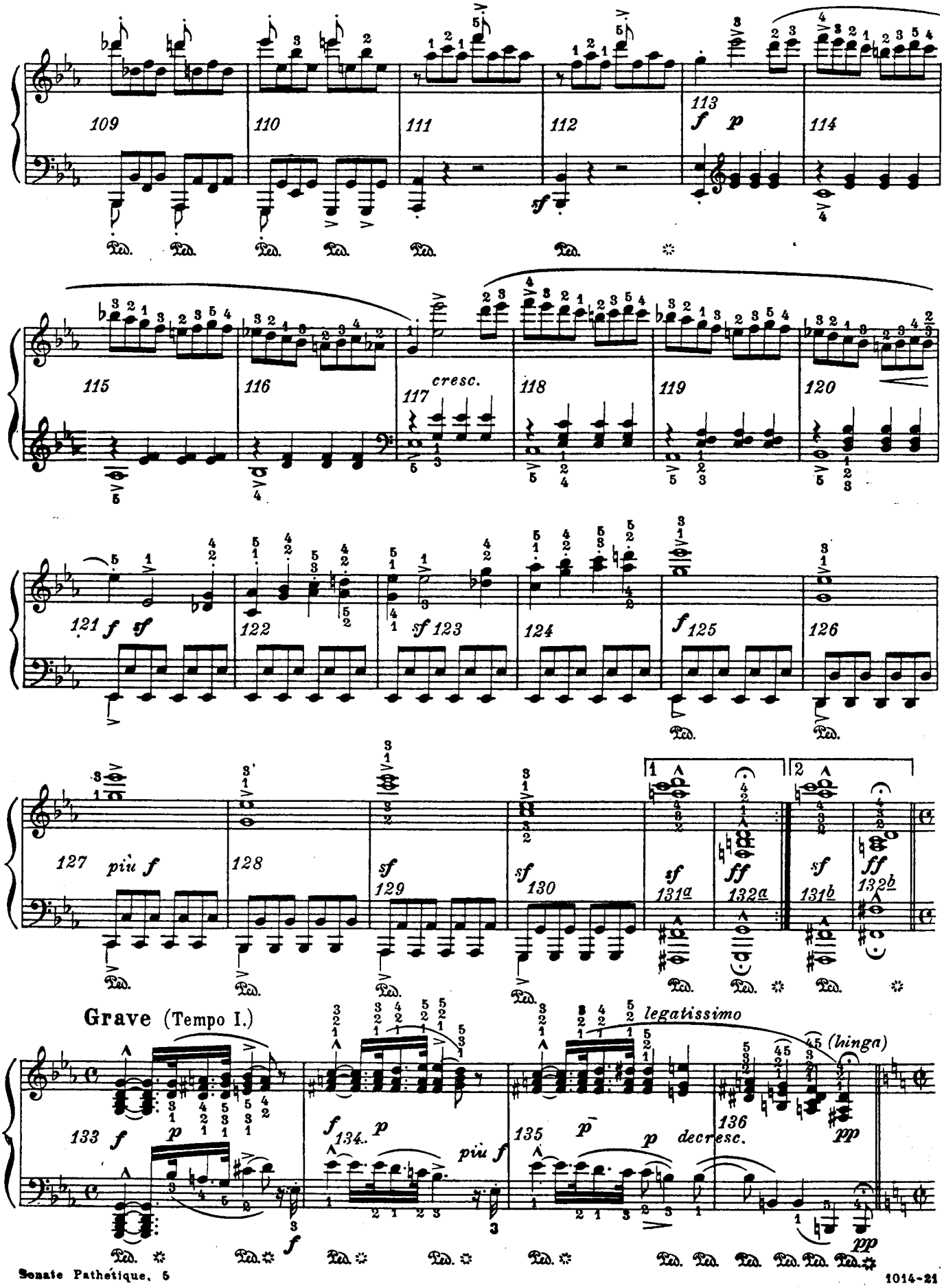

16
17
dim. 18
p
19
20
21
p

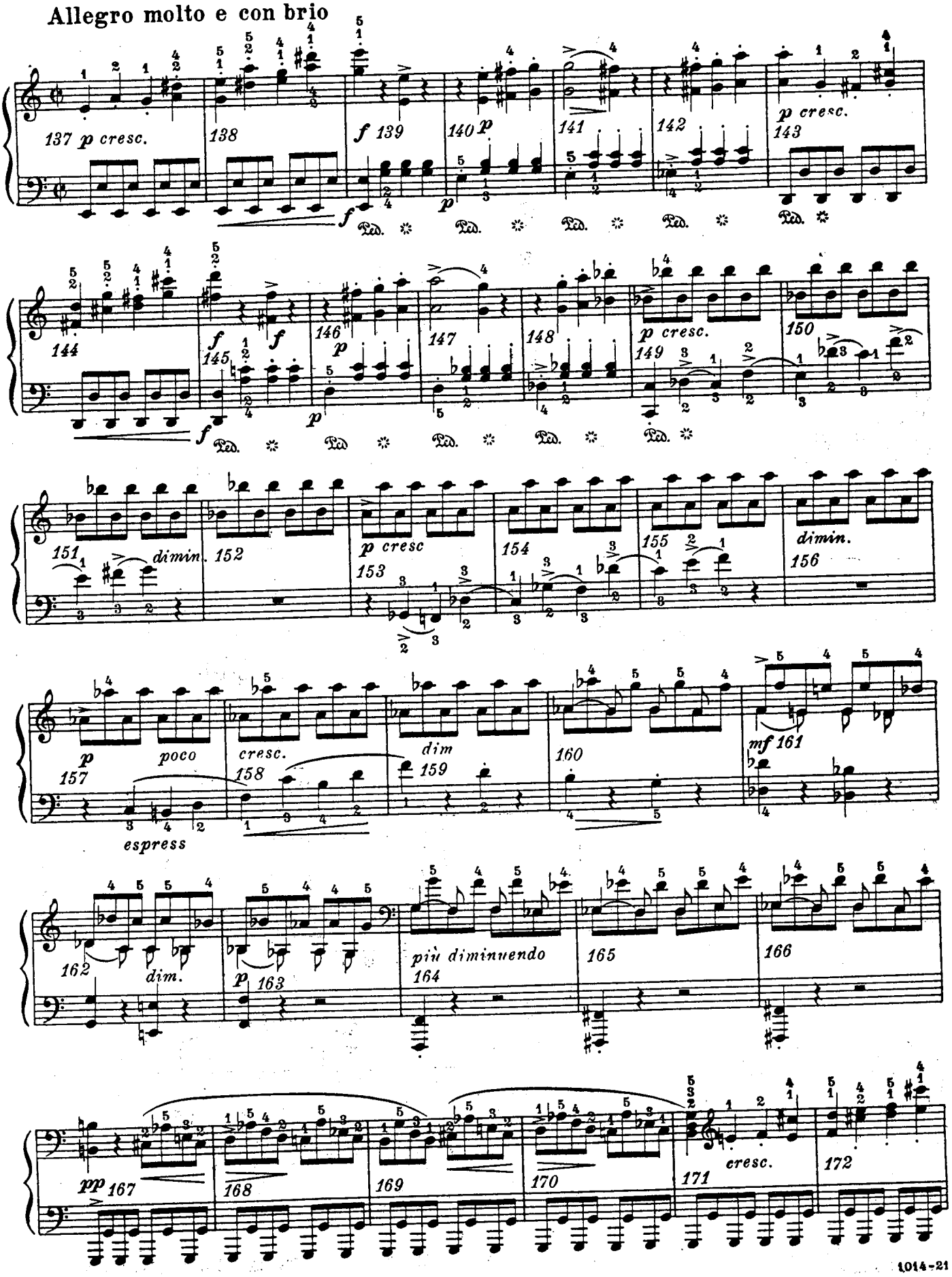

22
cresc. 23
24
25
dim. 26
27
p
sf

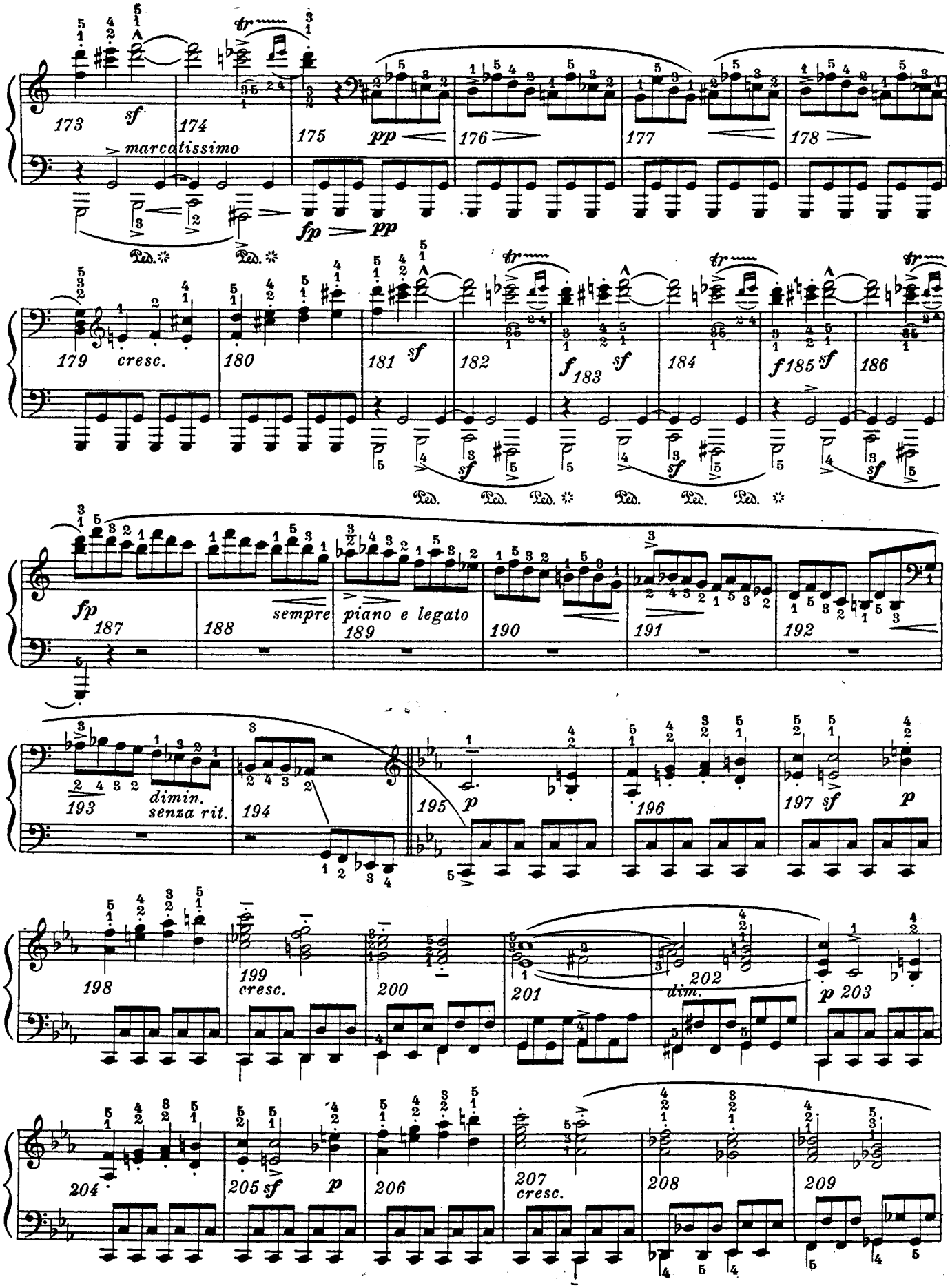

28
sf
29
sf
30
31
p
sf
32
sf
33
sf

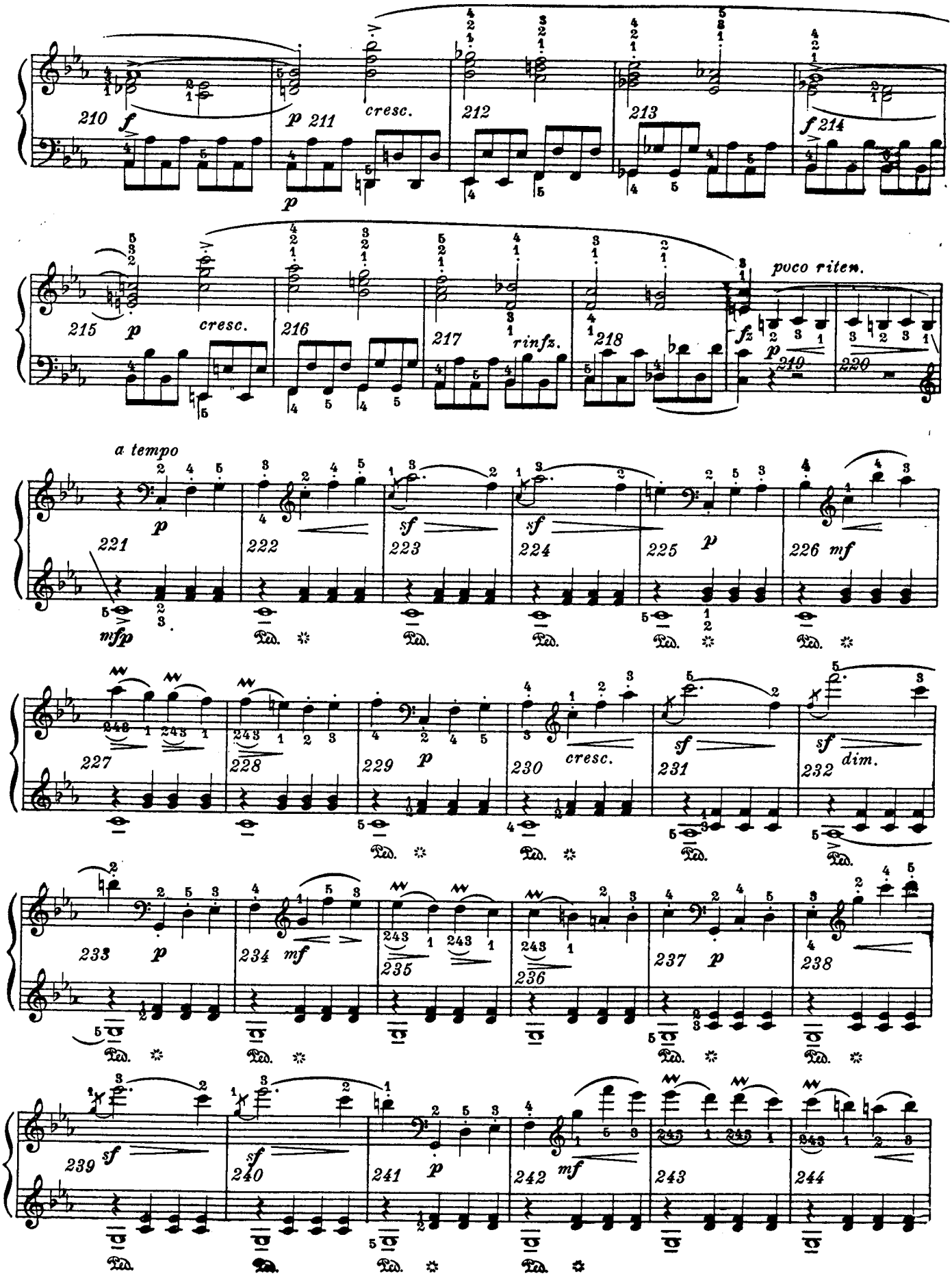

cresc.
p cresc.
poco ritenuto
a tempo
marcato
ma piano
mfp

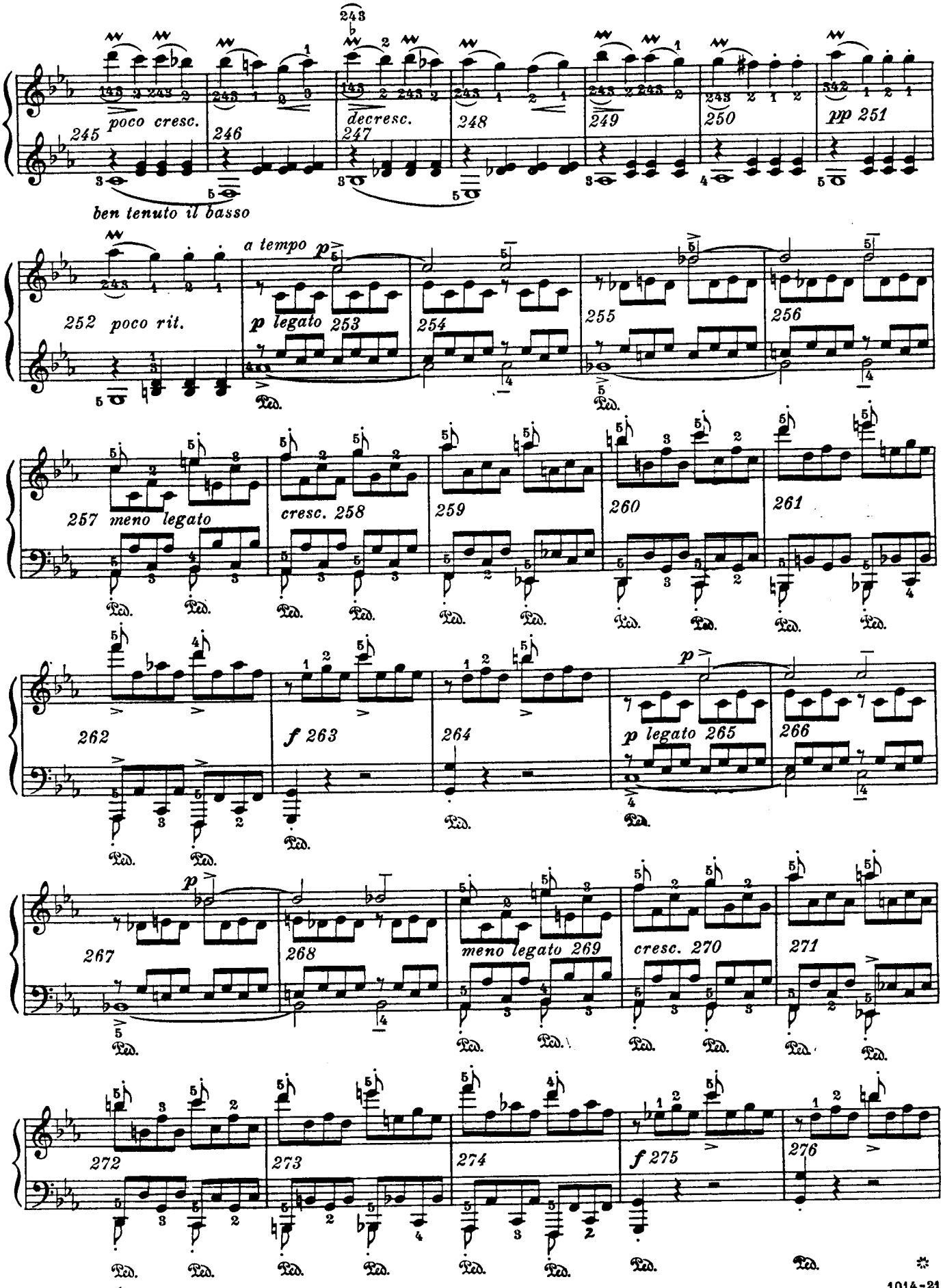

71 mf
72 p
73
74
75 sf
mf
76 dolce
77
78
79 sf
80 dolce
81
82
poco cresc.
83
84
85 decresc.
86
87 (poco slentando, ma poco)
pp 88
89 (a tempo) legato
90
91
92
meno legato
93
94 cresc.
95
96
97
98
f 99
100
sf
101 p legato
102
103
104
105 meno legato
106 cresc.
107
108
Ped.

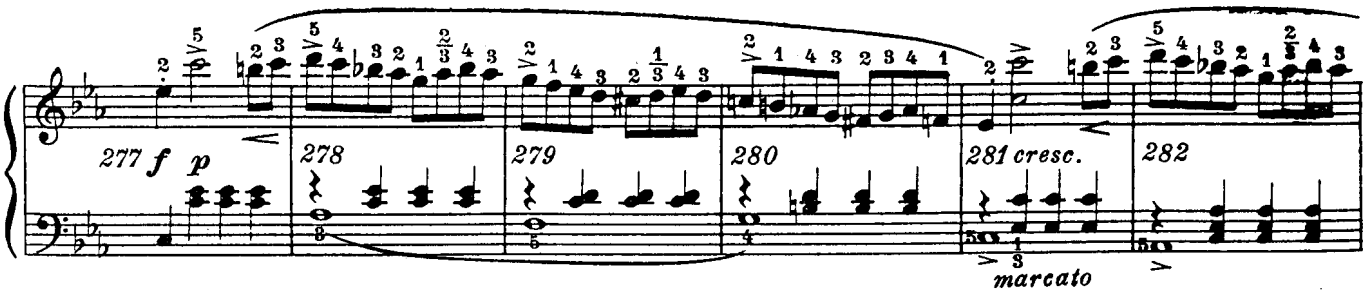

109
110
111
112
113
f p
114
115
116
cresc.
117
118
119
120
121 f sf
122
sf 123
124
f 125
126
127 più f
128
sf 129
sf 130
sf 131a
ff 132a
sf 131b
ff 132b
Grave (Tempo I.)
legatissimo
(linga)
133 f
p
f 134.
p
più f
135
p
p decresc.
136
pp
pp

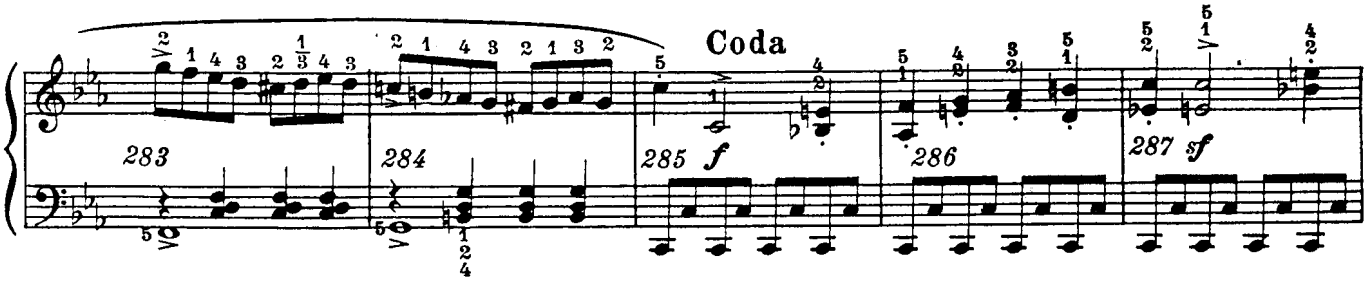

Allegro molto e con brio
137 p cresc.
138
f 139
140 p
141
142
p cresc.
143
Ped.
144
f
145
f
146
p
147
148
p cresc.
149
150
f
Ped.
151
dimin.
152
p cresc
153
154
155
dimin.
156
p
poco
157
cresc.
158
dim
159
160
mf 161
espress
162
dim.
p
163
più diminuendo
164
165
166
pp
167
168
169
170
cresc.
171
172

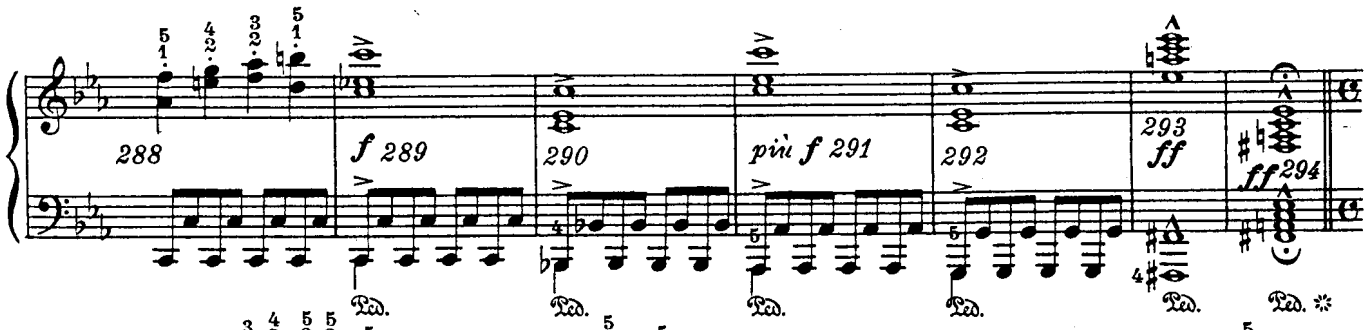

173
sf
174
marcatissimo
175
pp
176
177
178
fp
pp
Ped.
Ped.
179
cresc.
180
181
sf
182
f
183
sf
184
f
185
sf
186
sf
sf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
fp
187
188
sempre
piano e legato
189
190
191
192
193
dimin.
senza rit.
194
195
p
196
197
sf
p
198
199
cresc.
200
201
202
dim.
p
203
204
205
sf
p
206
207
cresc.
208
209

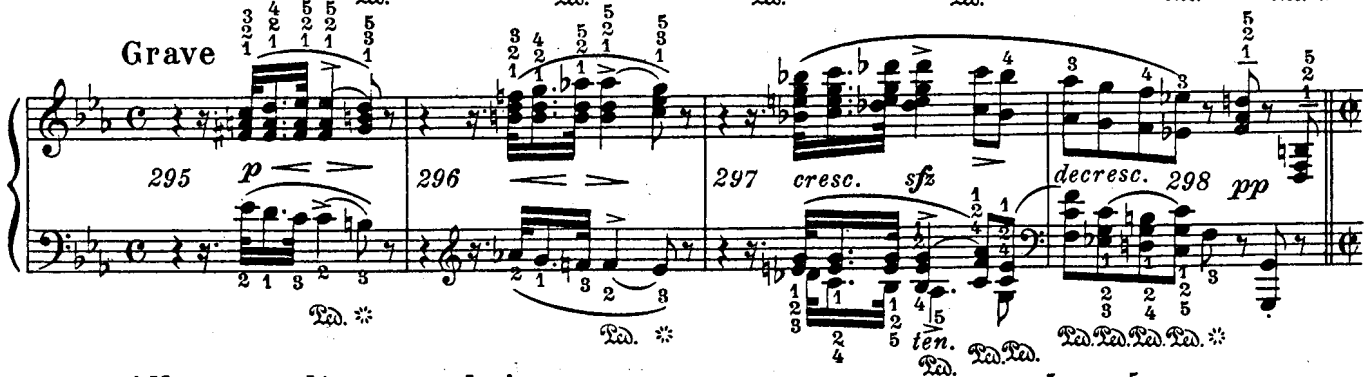

210 f
p 211
cresc.
212
213
f 214
215 p
cresc.
216
217
rinfz.
218
poco riten.
fz
p
219
220
a tempo
p
221
222
sf
223
sf
224
225 p
226 mf
mfp
227
228
229 p
230
cresc.
sf
231
sf
dim.
232
233 p
234 mf
235
236
237 p
238
sf
239
sf
240
241 p
242 mf
243
244

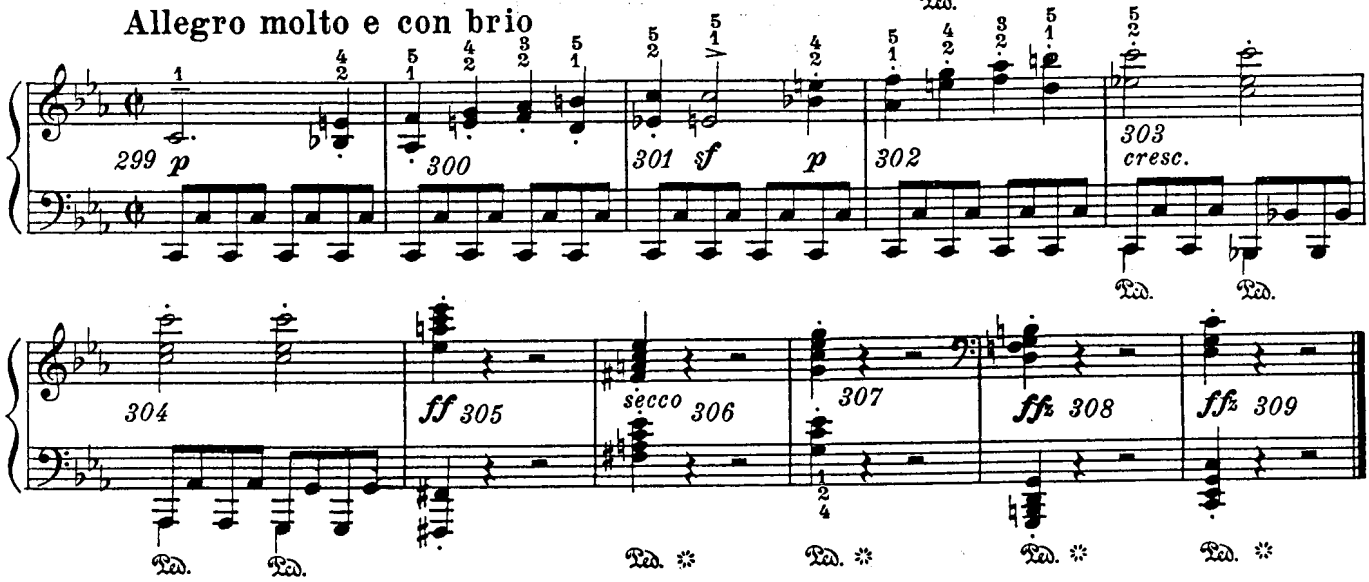

poco cresc.
decresc.
pp
ben tenuto il basso
a tempo
poco rit.
meno legato
cresc.
meno legato
cresc.

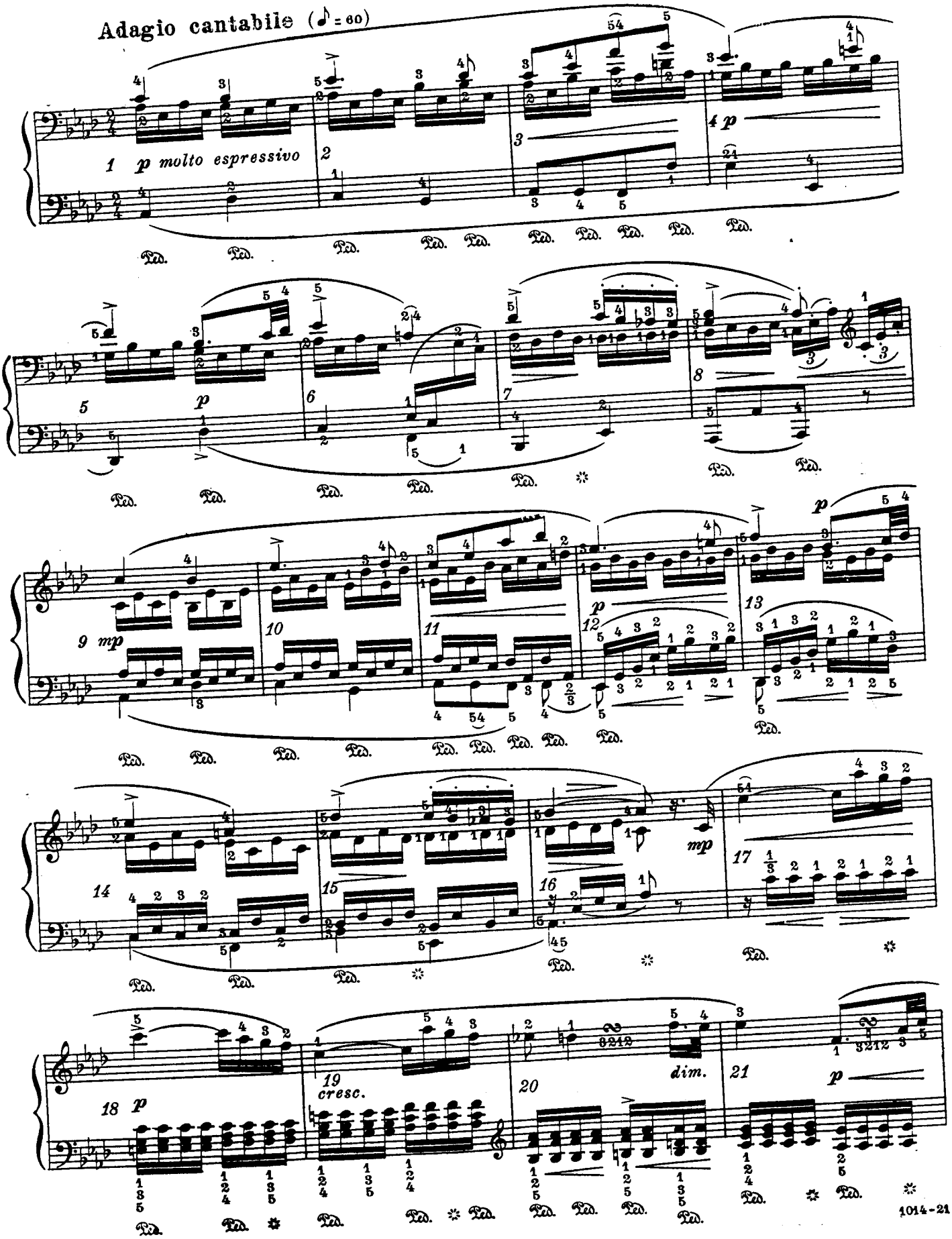

277 f p
278
279
280
281 cresc.
282
marcato

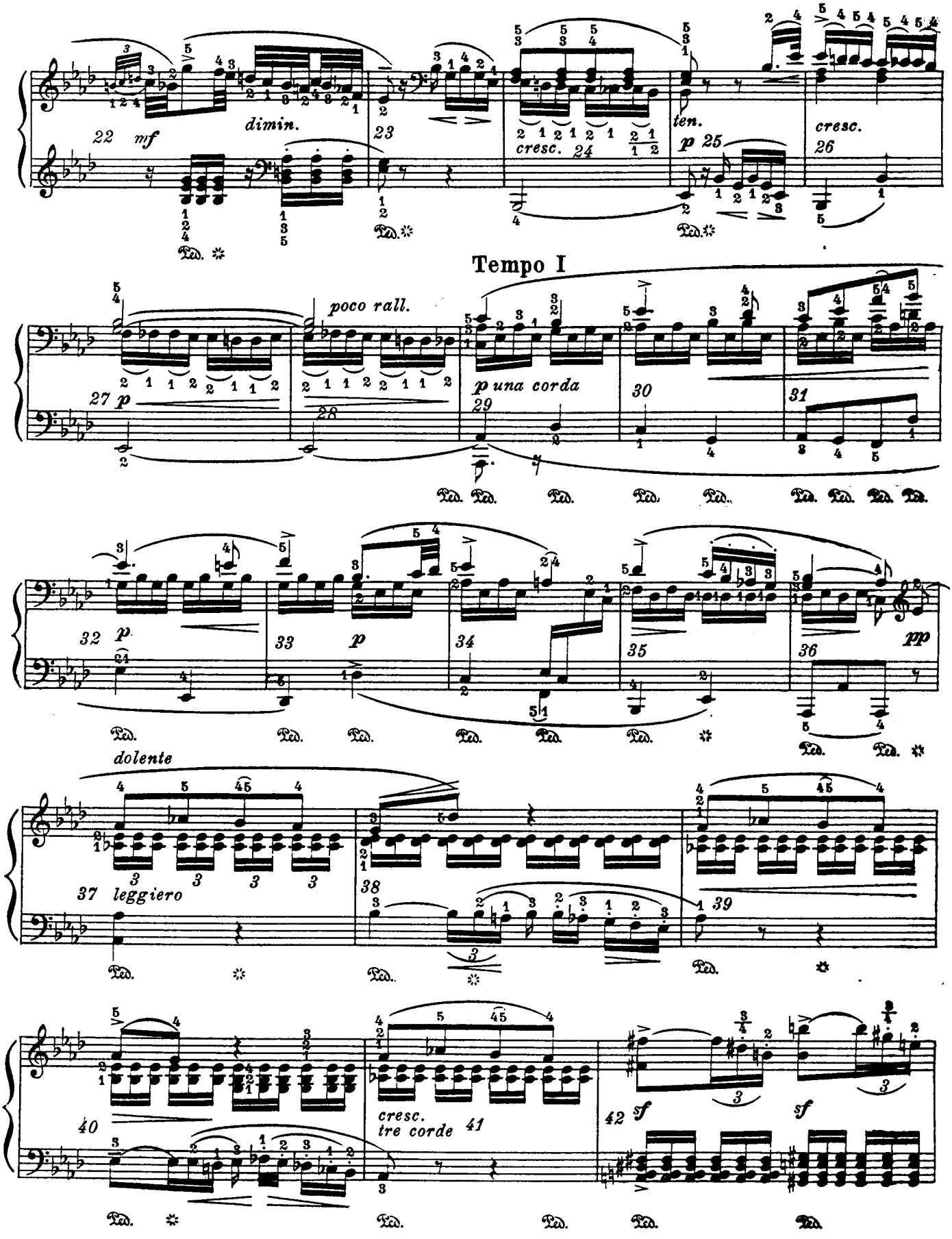

Coda
283
284
285 f
286
287 sf

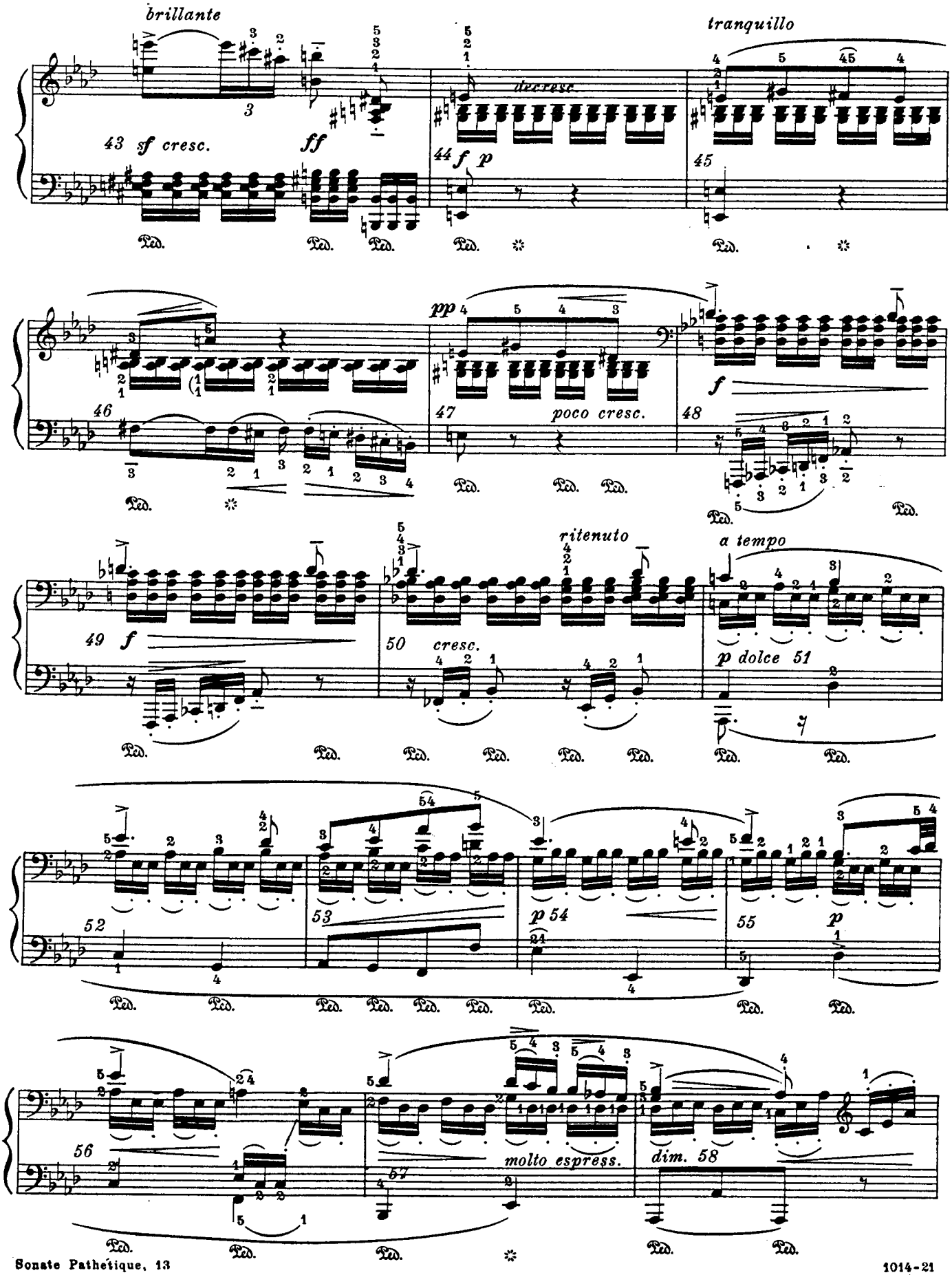

288
f 289
290
più f 291
292
293 ff
ff 294
Ped.

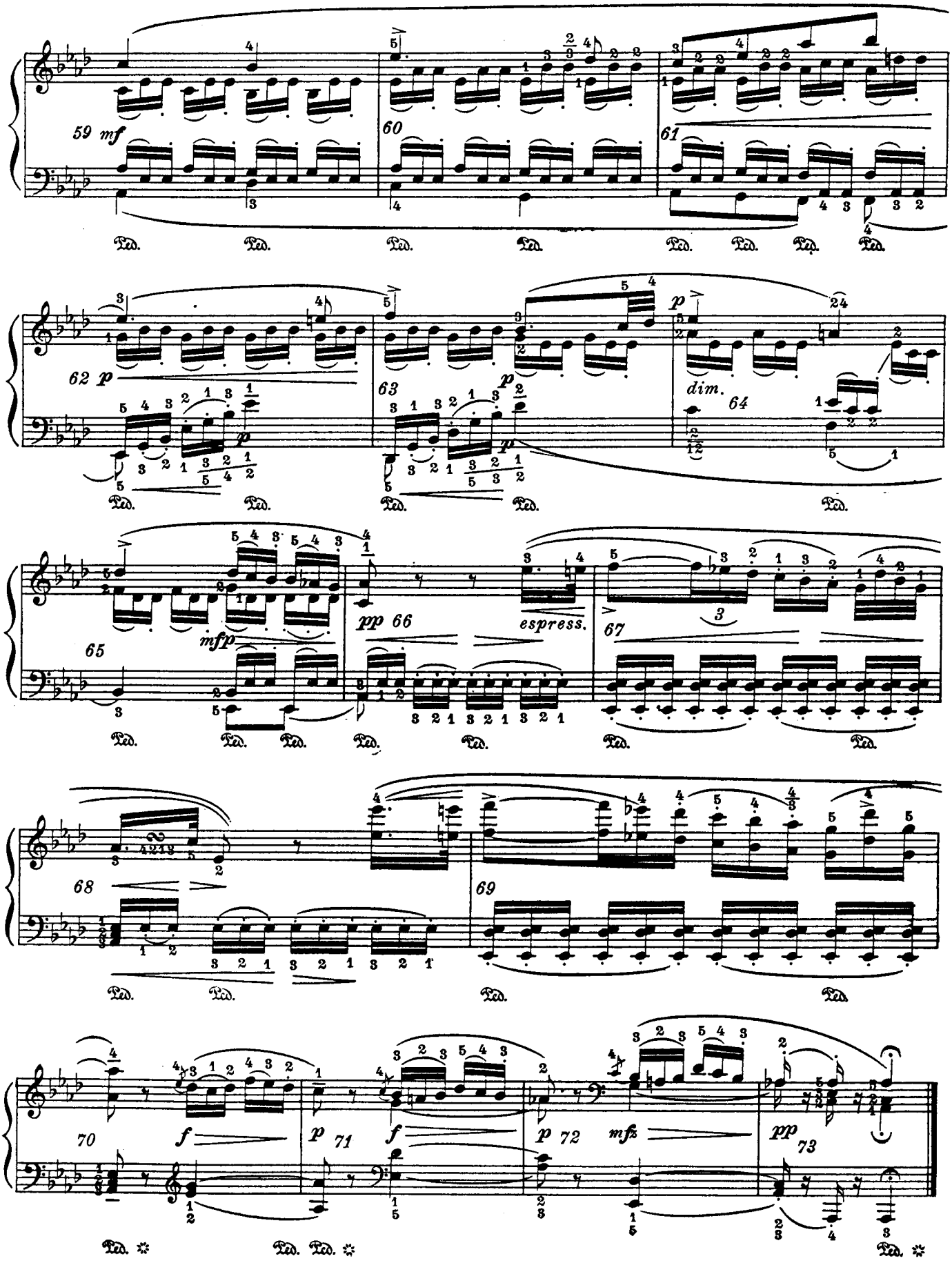

Grave
295 p
296
297 cresc. sfz
decresc. 298 pp
ten.
Ped.


Allegro molto e con brio
299 p
300
301 sf p
302
303 cresc.
304
ff 305
secco 306
307
ffz 308
ffz 309
Ped.


Adagio cantabile (♪ = 60)
1 p molto espressivo
2
3
4 p
5 p
6
7
8
9 mp
10
11
12 p
13
14
15
16
17
mp
18 p
19 cresc.
20
dim.
21 p
Ped.

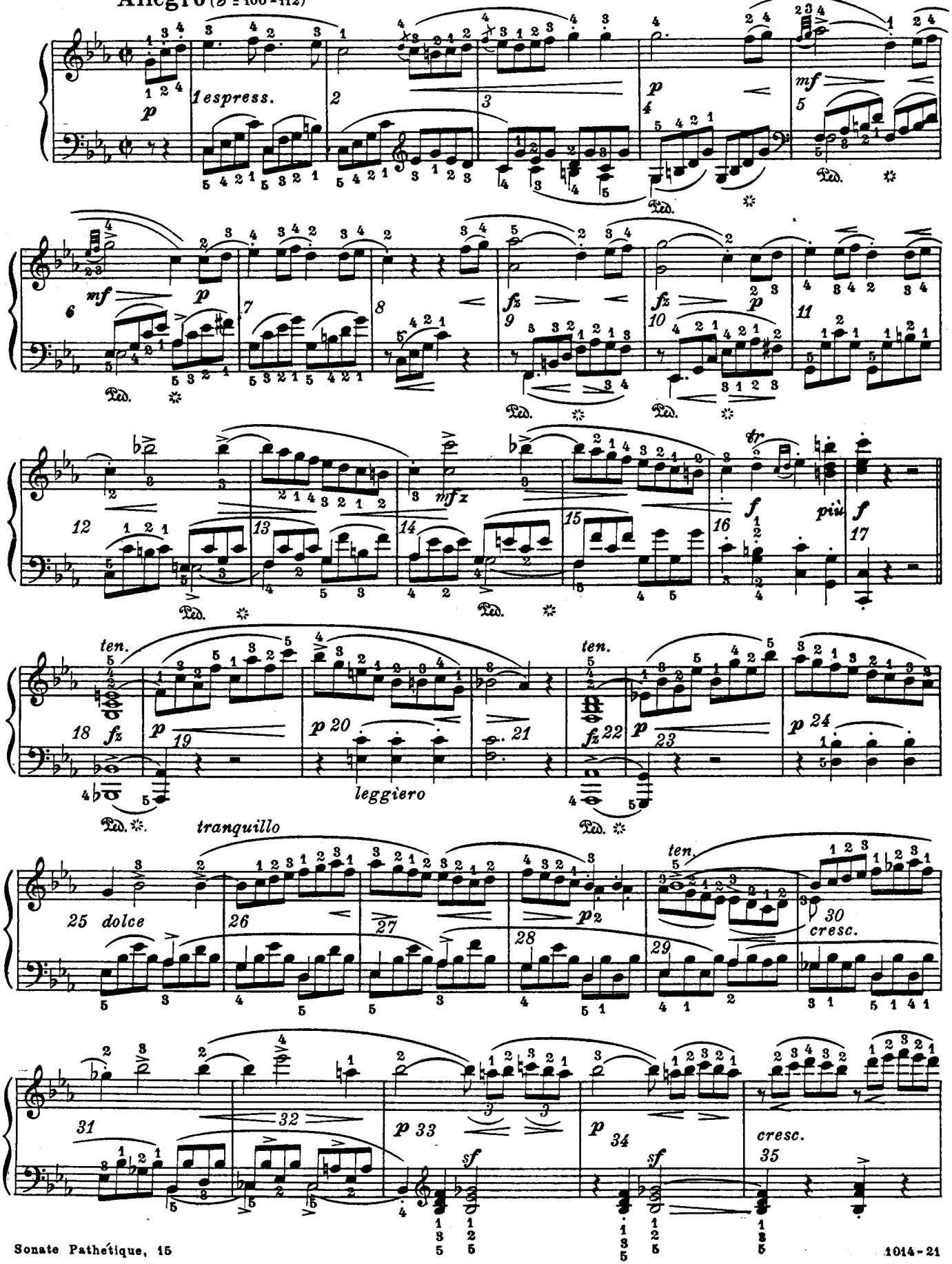

22 mf
dimin.
23
cresc. 24
ten.
p 25
cresc.
26
Tempo I
poco rall.
27 p
28
p una corda
29
30
31
32 p
33 p
34
35
36 pp
dolente
37 leggiero
38
39
40
cresc.
tre corde 41
42 sf
sf

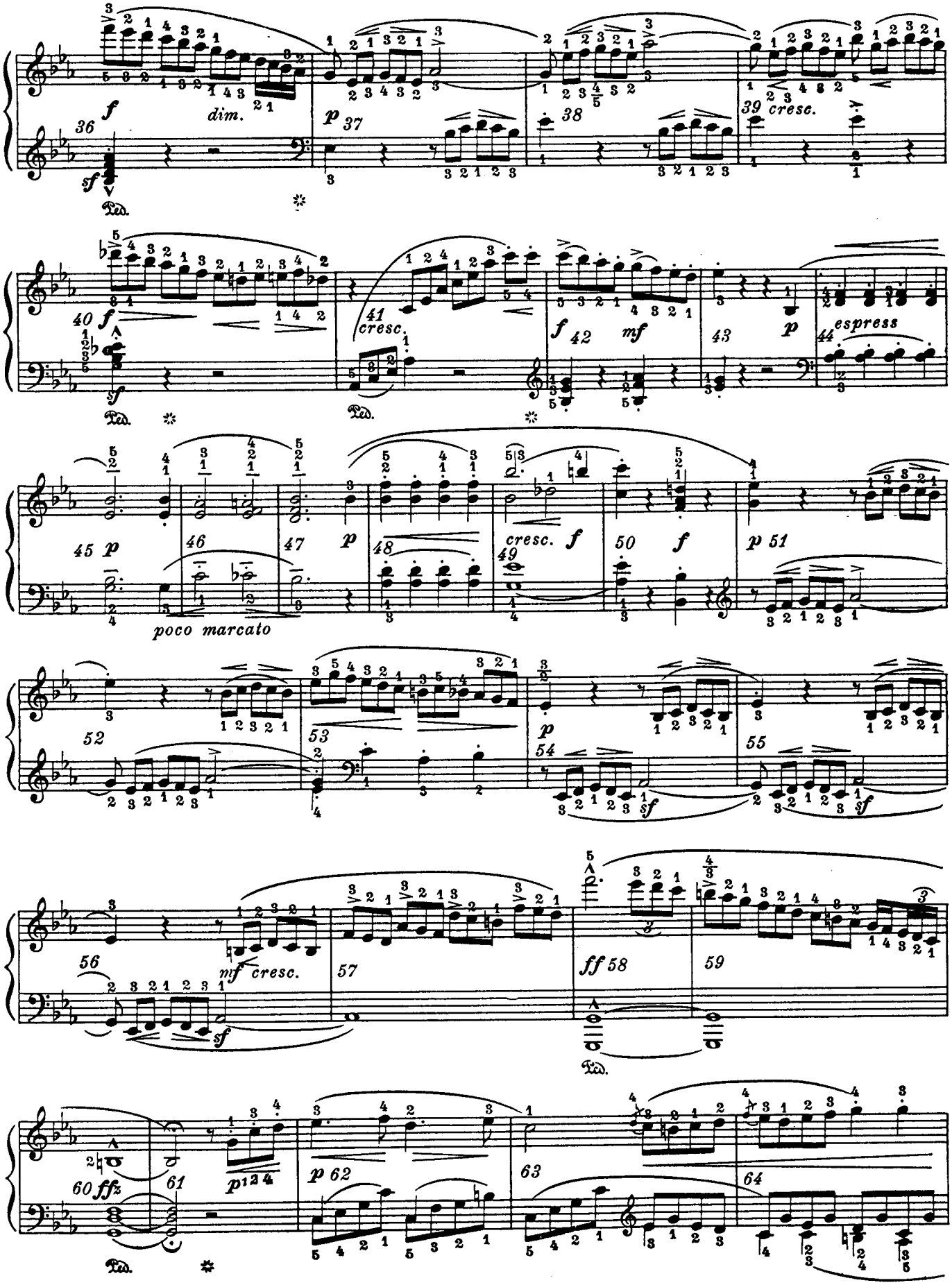

brillante
43 sf cresc.
ff
decresc.
44 f p
tranquillo
45
46
pp
47
poco cresc.
48
f
49 f
50 cresc.
ritenuto
a tempo
p dolce 51
52
53
p 54
55
p
56
molto espress.
dim. 58
Ped.

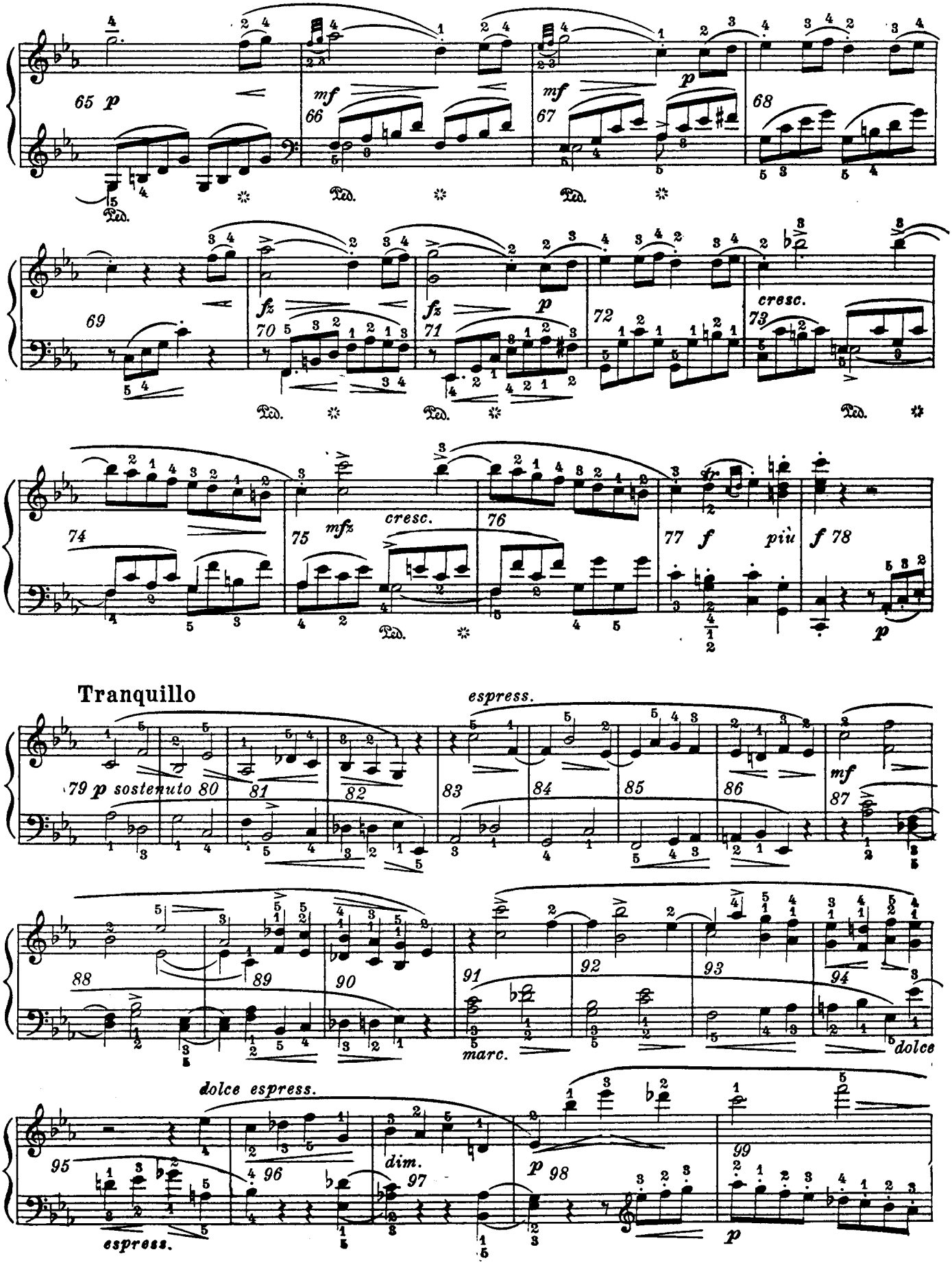

59 mf
60
61
62 p
63
dim.
64
65
mfp
pp 66
espress.
67
68
69
70
f
p 71
f
p 72
mfz
pp 73

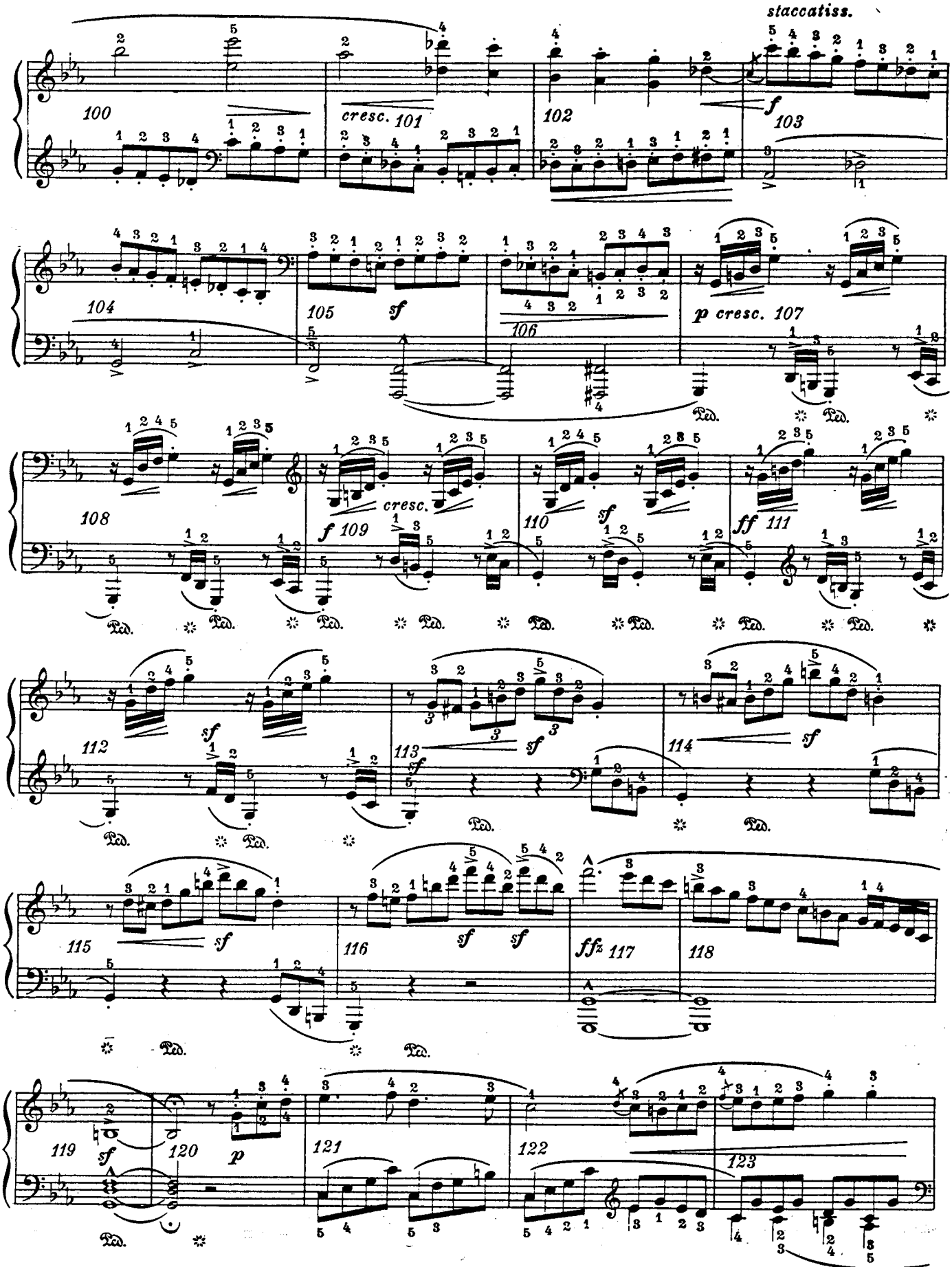
RONDO

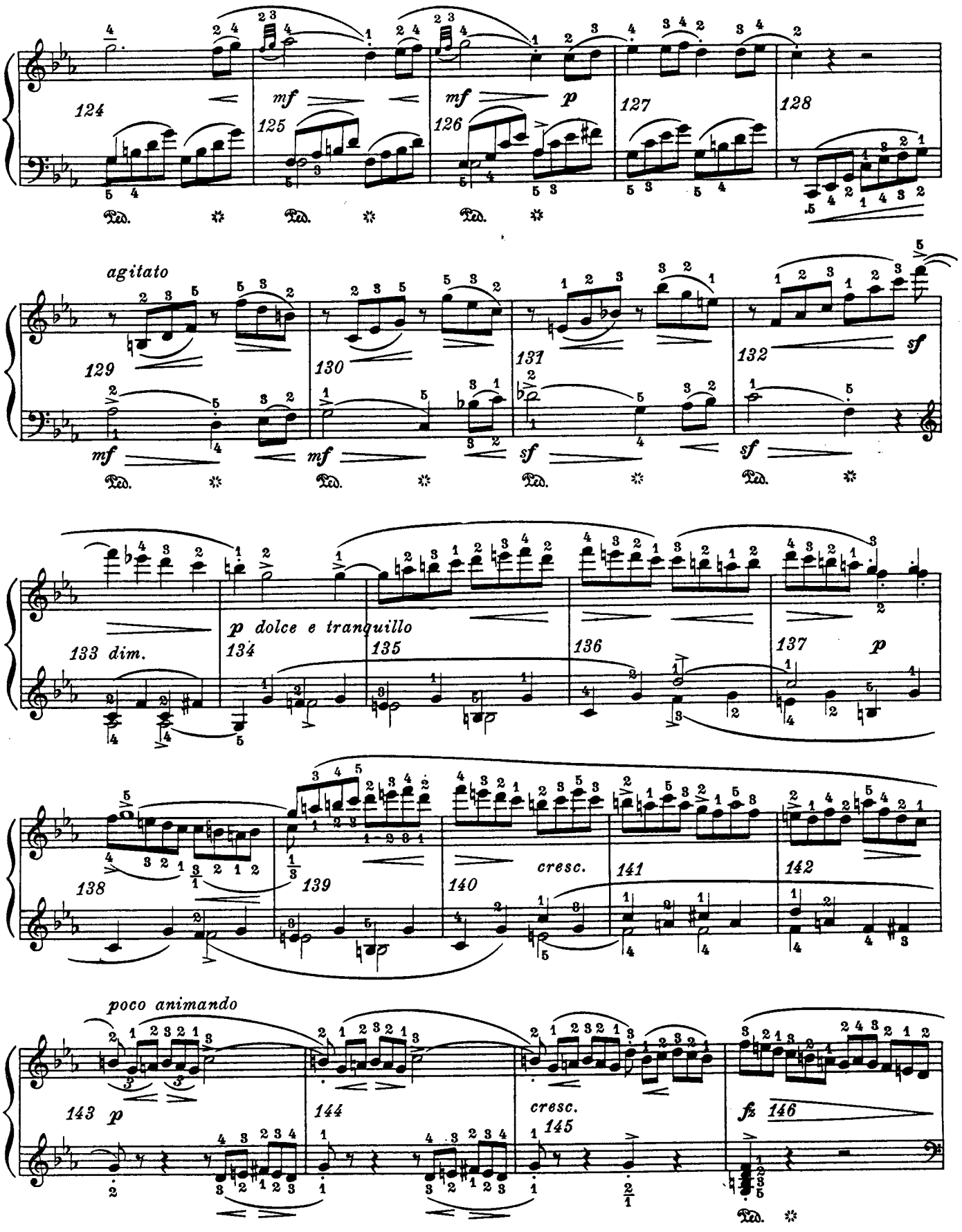
Allegro (♩ = 100 - 112)

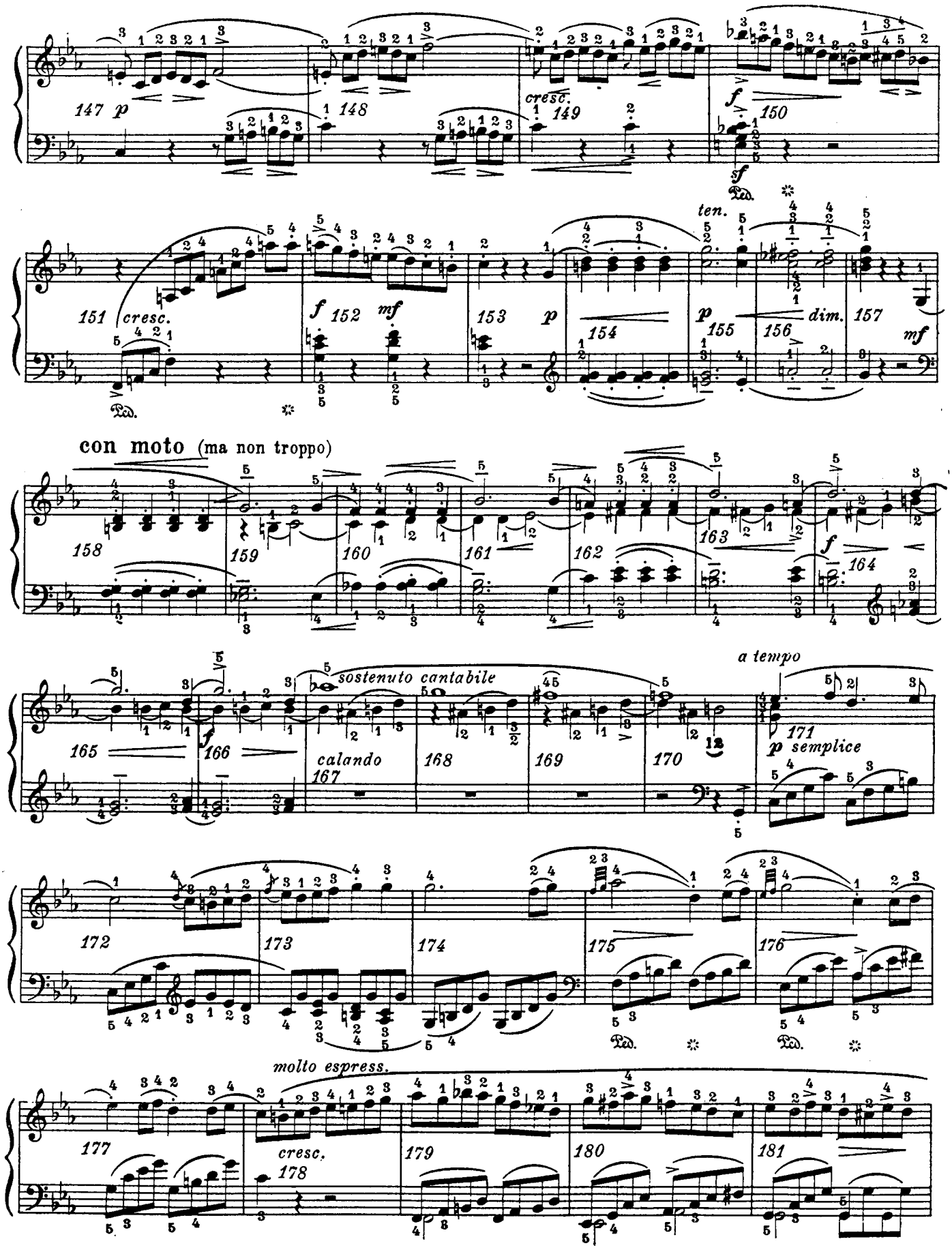


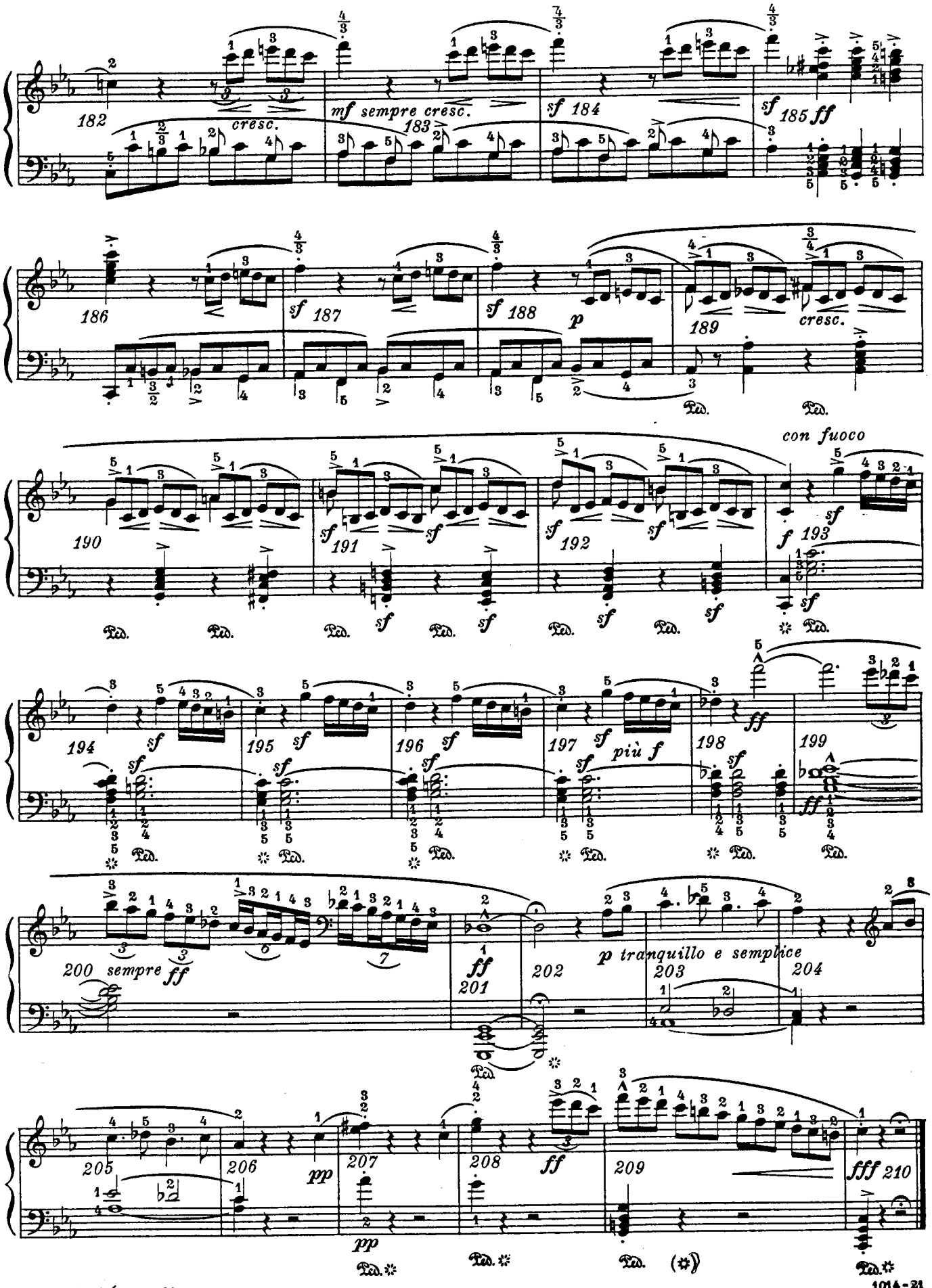

36 f dim. sf
37 p
38
39 cresc.
40 f sf
41 cresc.
42 f mf
43 p
44 espress
45 p
poco marcato
46
47 p
48
49 cresc. f
50 f
51 p
52
53
54 p sf
55 sf
56 mf cresc. sf
57
58 ff
59
60 fffz
61 p
62 p
63
64


Tranquillo
espress.
p sostenuto
marc.
dolce
dolce espress.
dim.
espress.


staccatiss.
100
cresc. 101
102
f 103
104
105 sf
106
p cresc. 107
108
cresc.
f 109
110 sf
ff 111
112 sf
113 sf
114 sf
115 sf
116 sf sf
ffz 117
118
119 sf
120 p
121
122
123


124
mf
125
mf
126
p
127
128
Ped.
agitato
129
mf
130
mf
131
sf
132
sf
p dolce e tranquillo
133 dim.
134
135
136
137
p
138
139
140
cresc.
141
142
poco animando
143 p
144
cresc.
145
fz
146


147 p
148
cresc.
149
f
150
sf
Ped.
ten.
151 cresc.
f 152 mf
153 p
154
p 155
156 dim.
157 mf
Ped.
con moto (ma non troppo)
158
159
160
161
162
163
f 164
a tempo
165
f 166
sostenuto cantabile
calando
167
168
169
170
171
p semplice
172
173
174
175
176
Ped.
Ped.
molto espress.
177
cresc.
178
179
180
181


182
cresc.
mf sempre cresc.
183
sf 184
sf 185 ff
186
sf 187
sf 188
p
189
cresc.
con fuoco
190
sf 191
sf 192
f 193
194
sf
195
196
197
più f
198
199
200 sempre ff
201
ff
202
p tranquillo e semplice
203
204
205
206
pp
207
pp
208
ff
209
fff 210