TRANSCRIPTIONS OF FROTTOLE FOR INTERMEDIATE INSTRUMENTAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

by

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requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

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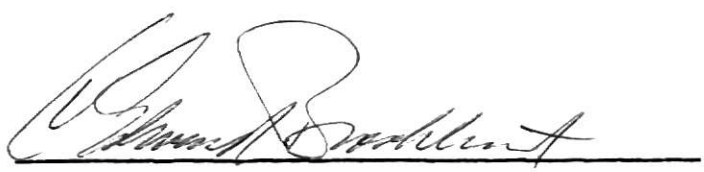
Approved by:



Major Professor

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THIS BOOK CONTAINS NUMEROUS PAGES WITH DIAGRAMS THAT ARE CROOKED COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE INFORMATION ON THE PAGE.

THIS IS AS RECEIVED FROM CUSTOMER.

INTRODUCTION

Chamber music in the public school system at the intermediate level has been considered an important part of the instrumental curriculum for several years. Colwell[1] points out that "the small chamber group presents the greatest musical challenge, the best training, the heaviest individual responsibility, and the highest musical pleasure of any activity." Research shows that the chamber music experience is beneficial to the total development of the instrumental student. Zorn[2] randomly divided a ninth grade band into two groups. One had chamber music experience twice a week while the other had section rehearsals of the band music. At the end of a 32-week period, the participants were evaluated through individual auditions. Those with the chamber music experience had improved slightly more, gained somewhat more knowledge of music, and developed a more positive attitude towards music.

Although chamber music experience is considered to be beneficial, many obstacles can stand in the way of implementing

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[1]Richard J. Colwell, The Teaching of Instrumental Music (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), p. 42

[2]Charles H. Benner, Teaching Performing Groups (Washington, D. C.: M.E.N.C., 1960), p. 9.

chamber groups in the curriculum. Finding literature suitable for the intermediate ensemble is a very important part of a successful chamber experience. In 1947, Morgan[3] addressed the problem of finding literature suitable for intermediate chamber ensembles, expressing concern that more was needed. Graded music reviews in current issues of the Instrumentalist magazine suggest that some attempts have been made to produce literature suitable for intermediate ensembles; that is, the selections are well scored, made interesting for intermediate students, are within the technical capabilities of young students, and ranges are well suited to the intermediate ensemble.

There are several criteria which must be met in choosing literature that will most benefit any instrumental program. Hall[4] suggests that: 1) music be clearly printed on good paper, 2) have interesting moving parts, 3) each part should be accessible but also, 4) somewhat of a challenge, and 5) have educational value.

Music available from the pre-classic era can be a valuable and plentiful resource of for additions to existing literature available for intermediate chamber ensembles.

I have chosen to transcribe late 15th-century and early 16th-century frottole from Die Mehrstimmige Italienische Laude Um 1500. The prevailing chordal and non-imitative polyphonic

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[3]Hazel Nohavec Morgan, ed., Music Education Source Book (Washington, D. C.: M.E.N.C., 1947), p. 83.

[4]Archie N. Jones, ed., Music Education in Action (Boston: Allyn Bacon, Inc., 1960), p. 294.

style and simple harmonic idiom of the frottole make them a valuable resource for additional literature. Many of the characteristics can be valuable for the training of ensemble techniques. The length of each frottole chosen is generally 20-25 measures which enables the ensemble to polish a selection without extreme endurance being required. The individual parts of the frottole are somewhat independent; however, movement is sometimes doubled in two voices adding a dimension of security within the ensemble. The rhythmic activity is held to a minimum with some of the frottole being almost entirely chordal.

The frottola, the secular song of late 15th and early 16th-century Italy, is believed to have flourished from around 1480-1530.[5] Between 1504 and 1514, eleven books of frottole were published by Petrucci. The most important composers represented were Marchetto Cara (c. 1470-1525) and Bartolomeo Tromboncino (c. 1470-1535). Both lived in Mantua, an important musical center of 16th-century Italy.

Written for four voices, the frottola has a cantus (soprano) which generally lies within the range of an octave and is rather conjunct. The altus (alto) and tenor span a wider range and can either be rhythmically active or move in the same note values as the cantus. This produces a sometimes homorhythmic, sometimes polyphonic, texture. The bassus (bass) rounds out the texture by also moving in both slow and rapid passages.

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[5]William F. Prizer,"Performance Practices in the Frottole," Journal of Early Music (1975), p. 227.

Frottole are usually short compositions with poetic texts in the form of the Italian formes fixes. In the original manuscripts, the text was complete only in the cantus. The bassus generally had too few notes to accomodate the text, while the altus and tenor contained too many. "Documentary evidence from Mantua, the center of frottole production, tends to confirm a solo practice rarely mentioning more than one singer."[6]

Frottole were performed several ways in the 1500's; however, it is certain that instruments were used in some performances. Because of the high degree of non-imitative polyphony, Prizer[7] suggests that "a mixed consort be used so that the individual lines can be heard more clearly." It is for this reason that I have chosen to score the transcriptions for brass, woodwind, and brass-woodwind combinations. The distinctive timbres of modern instruments should also assist in bringing out each of the individual lines.

The task of transcribing frottole was undertaken in order to add to existing literature for intermediate chamber ensembles and to tap the vast amounts of music from the past.

Care was taken that each transcription be technically accessible to the intermediate instrumental student. However, challenges are not completely ignored. The dotted-eighth note combination must be executed by members of the ensemble and fit into the otherwise homorhythmic texture.

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[6]Prizer, p. 227.

[7]Prizer, p. 231.

Dynamic markings, desired tempos, phrases and articulations have been clearly indicated. The ranges for each of the parts is given at the beginning of the conductor's score.

None of the ranges are extreme; however, a few times the student is expected to produce notes that might be a challenge. If the note given is difficult to produce at a soft volume level, the dynamic markings have been altered accordingly.

Dynamic markings also have been used as a means of indicating important moving parts, thus assisting the young student with the interpretation of his own part in relation to the other three. Since cadence points in the altus and tenor lines often overlap, the dynamic markings also overlap.

Transcriptions of the frottole were taken from a modern edition[8] with each part still written in moveable C clefs. Once the parts were transcribed into traditional G and F clefs, the parts had to be transposed to fit comfortable ranges of present day instruments.

Most of the frottole are in duple time with mensuration signs of either ¢ or C. "Many of the compositions, however, have a rhythmic logic that is opposed to the meter."[9] The phrases most often begin in a duple feeling moving to a hemiola-like rhythm in the middle of the phrase, ending with a feminine cadence.

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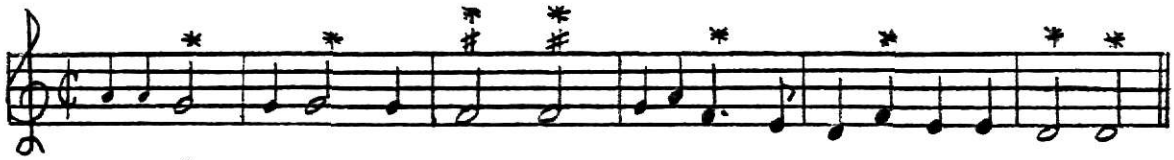
[8]Dr. Knud Jeppesen, Die Mehrstimmige Italienische Laude Um 1500 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1935).

[9]Prizer, p. 227.

Ex. 1. Marchetto Cara: "Io non compro piu speranza'
(Frottole, libro primo. Venice: Petrucci, 1504)[10]



(ex. 1: * = rhythmic stress)

The note values of the transcriptions have been reduced with the original half notes becoming quarter notes, quarter notes becoming eighth notes, etc. The whole note is much more familiar to intermediate students than the double whole-note (long) of the original manuscript. I felt the reduction of the note values to be beneficial in helping the young student interpret the music without added complication.

I have chosen to write most of the works in common time, altering the tempo to create the desired rhythmic flow. What the student will encounter through the rhythmic stress is a feeling of syncopation. It will be important for the student to keep the pulse of the underlying quarter note constant in his mind while playing each work. It would be helpful for the student to mark quarter note beats on dotted-quarter, half and whole notes in order to keep the rhythmic pulse flowing.

The revival and authentic performance of early music (pre-classic) has been an important movement in the field of music for several years. Most major universities have initiated

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[10]Prizer, p. 227.

Collegium Musicum groups to educate students in the performance practices of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods. The transcriptions made no attempt at authenticity, but are meant to bring this colorful music into the hands of young music students, giving them a link with the past. The titles of the works will seem foreign to young students; however, the original titles seemed appropriate.

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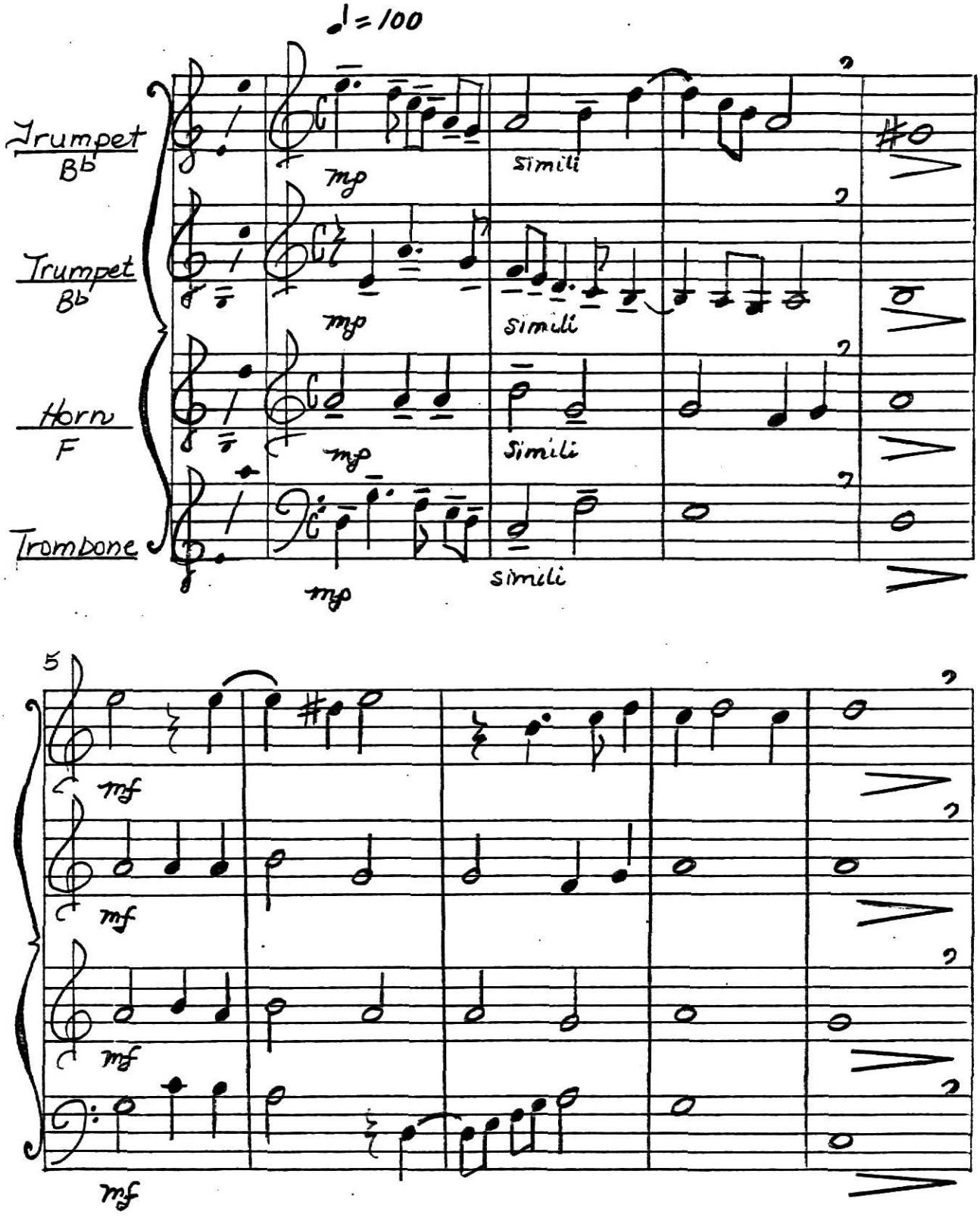
PART II

TRANSCRIPTIONS

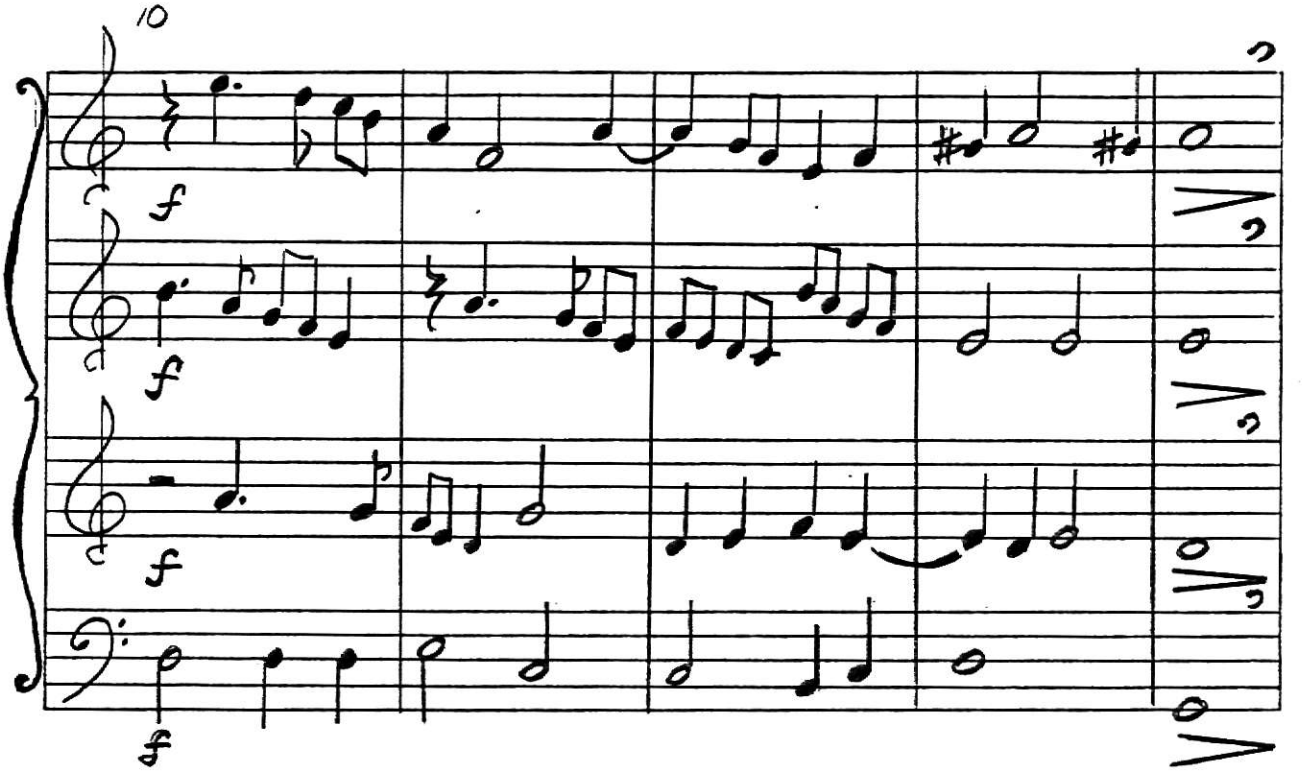
Tromboncino

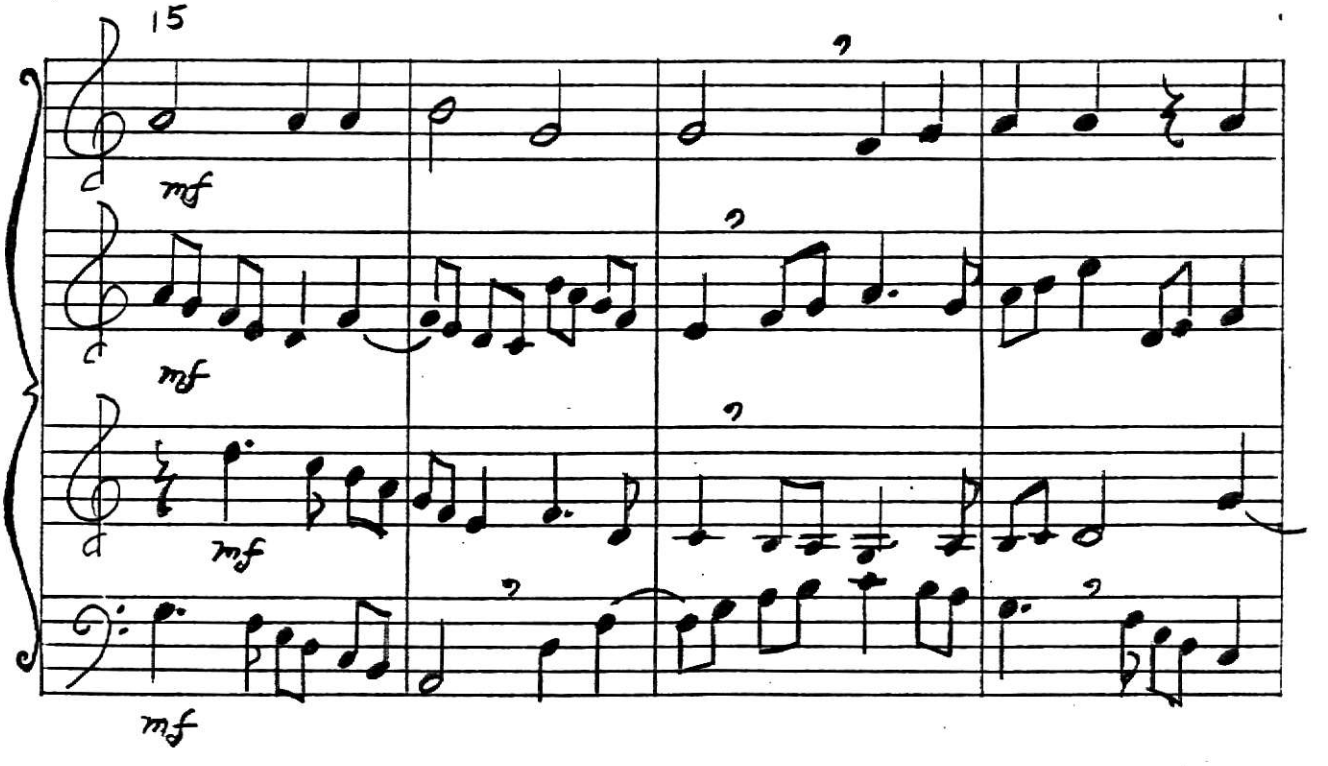
Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis

transcribed by W. Dekiske



Sancta Maria (cont)





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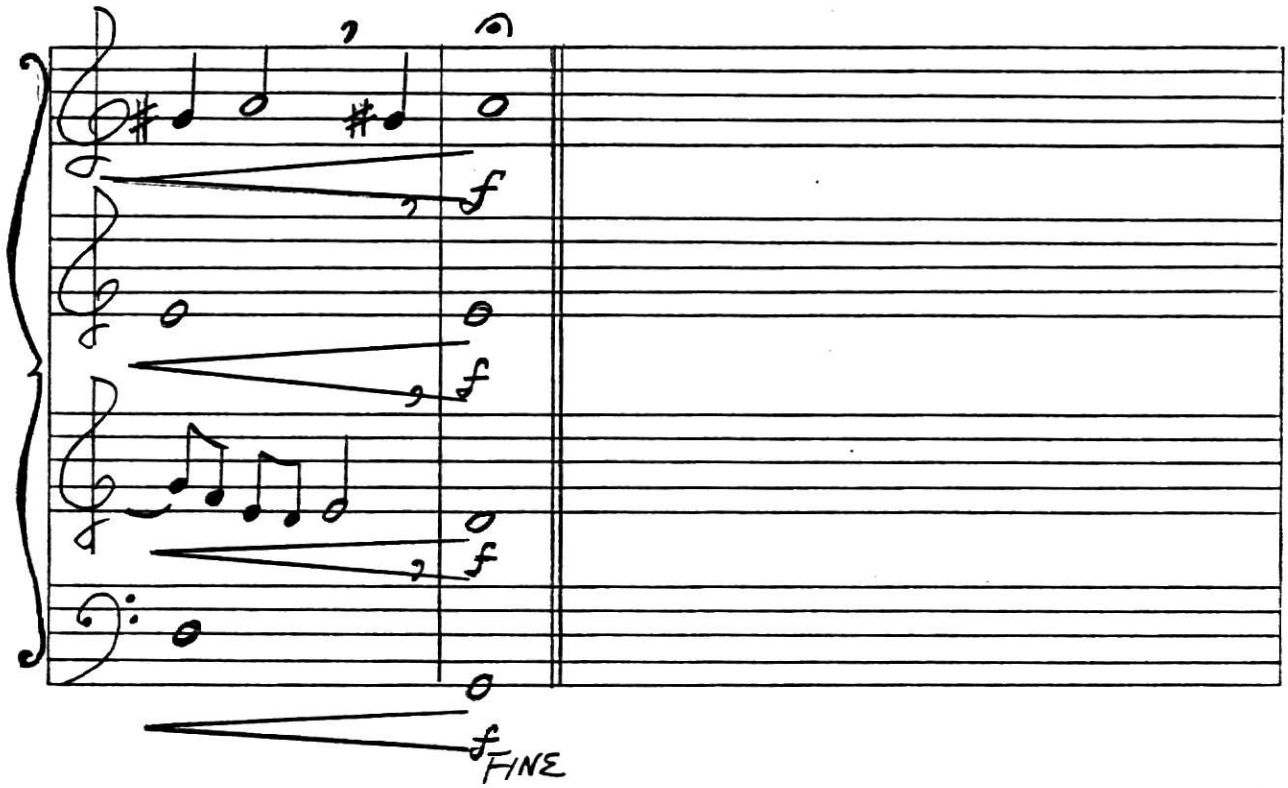
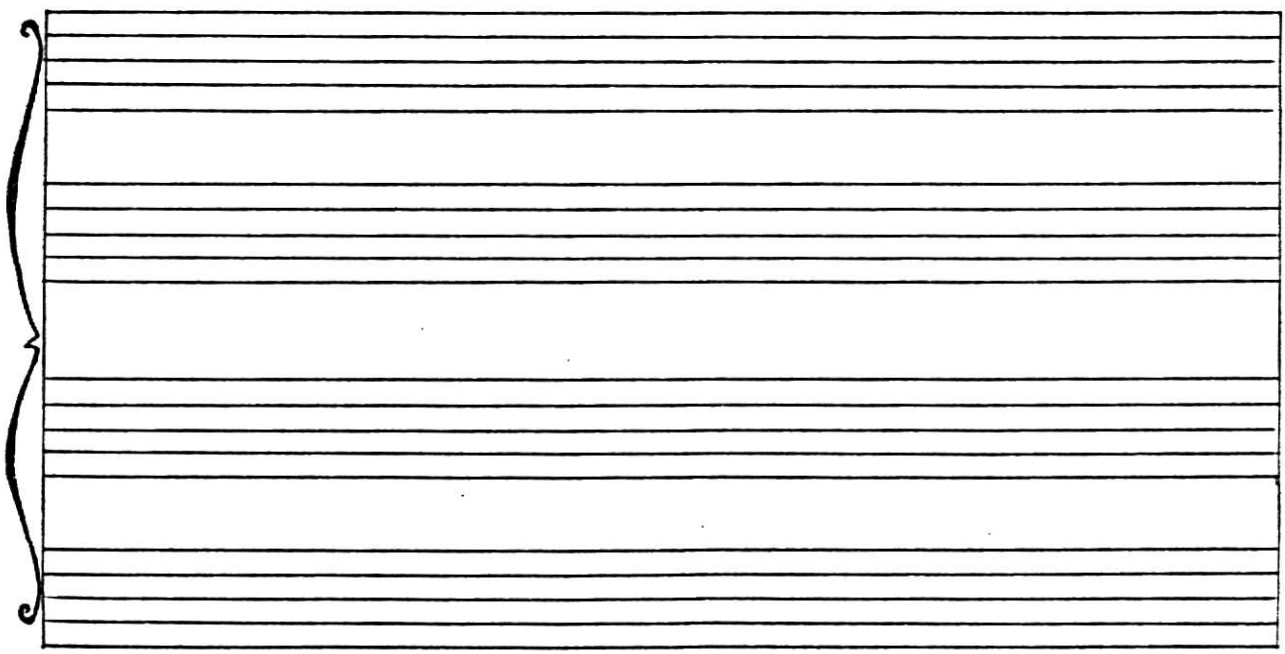
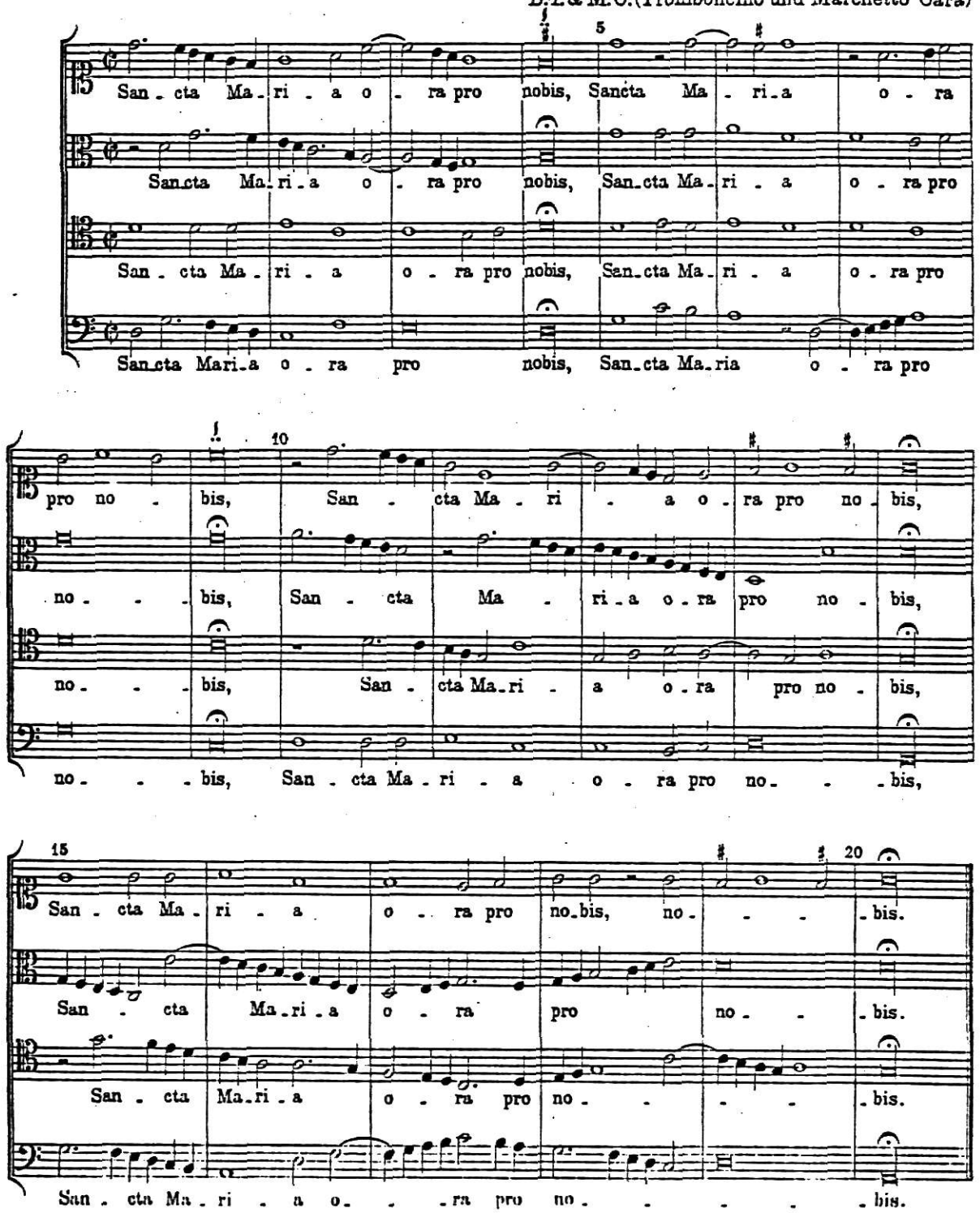




18. Sancta Maria ora pro nobis

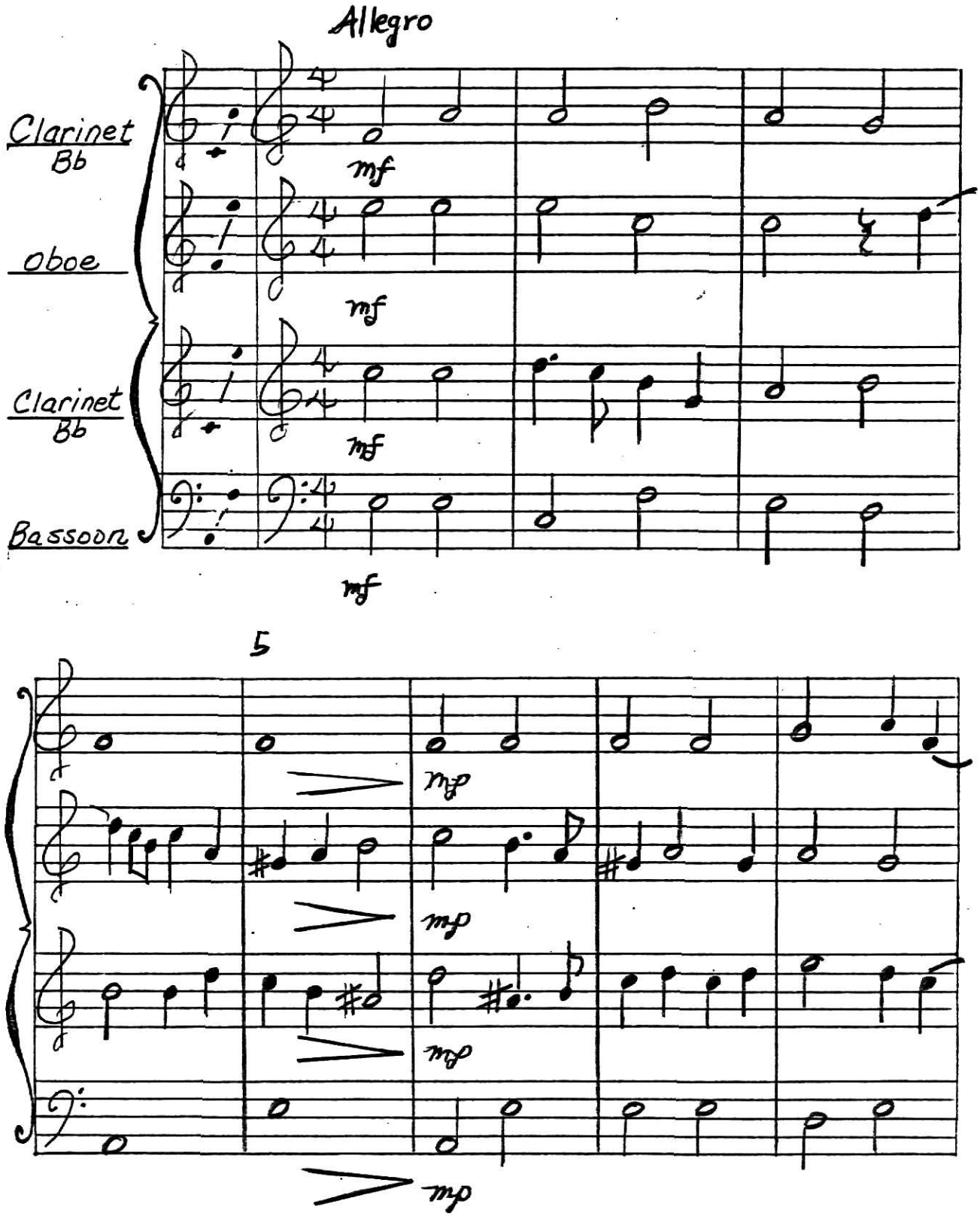
B.T. & M.C. (Tromboncino und Marchetto Cara)



D. Nicolo

Salve, croce, unica spene

transcribed by W. DeLisle



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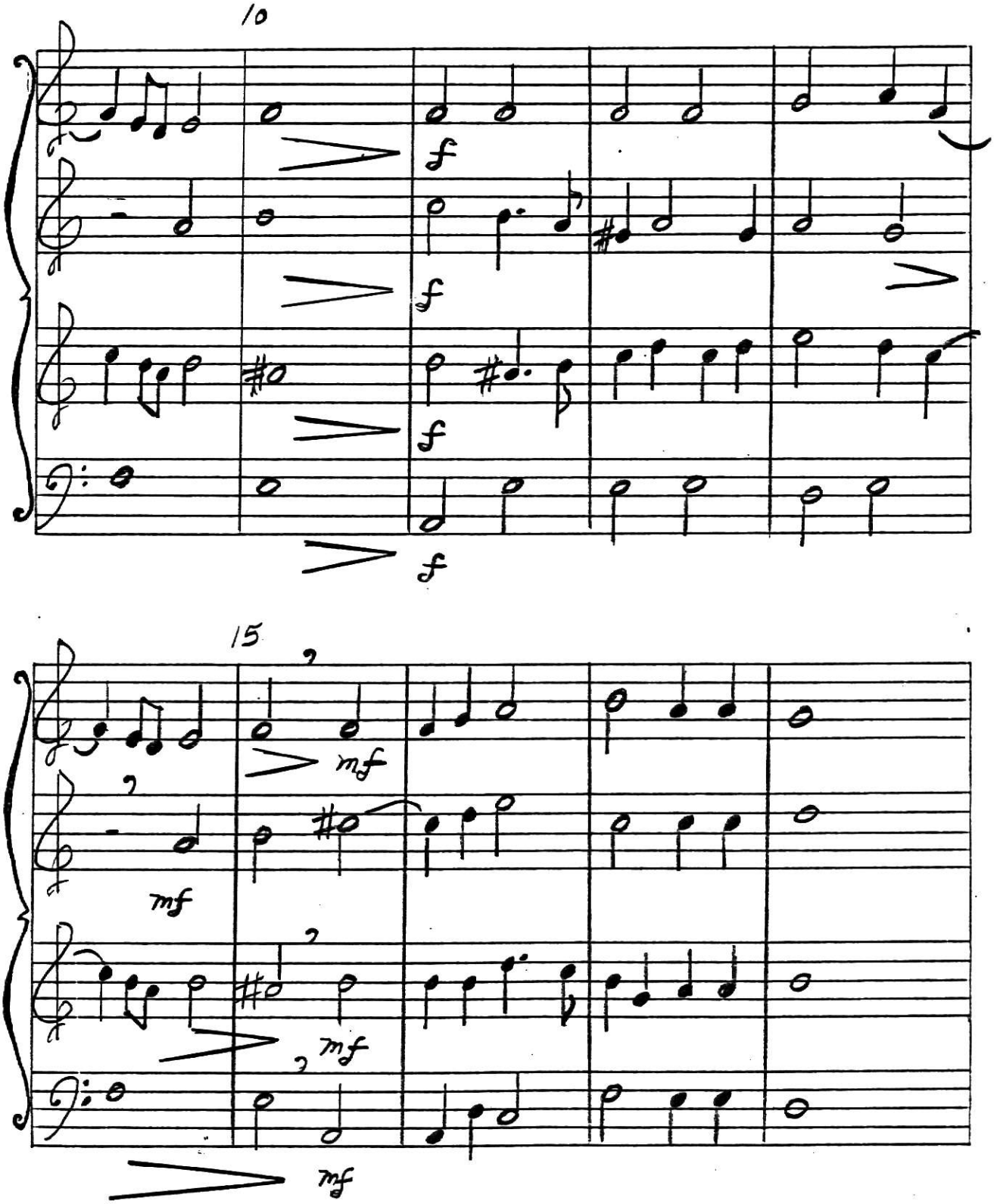

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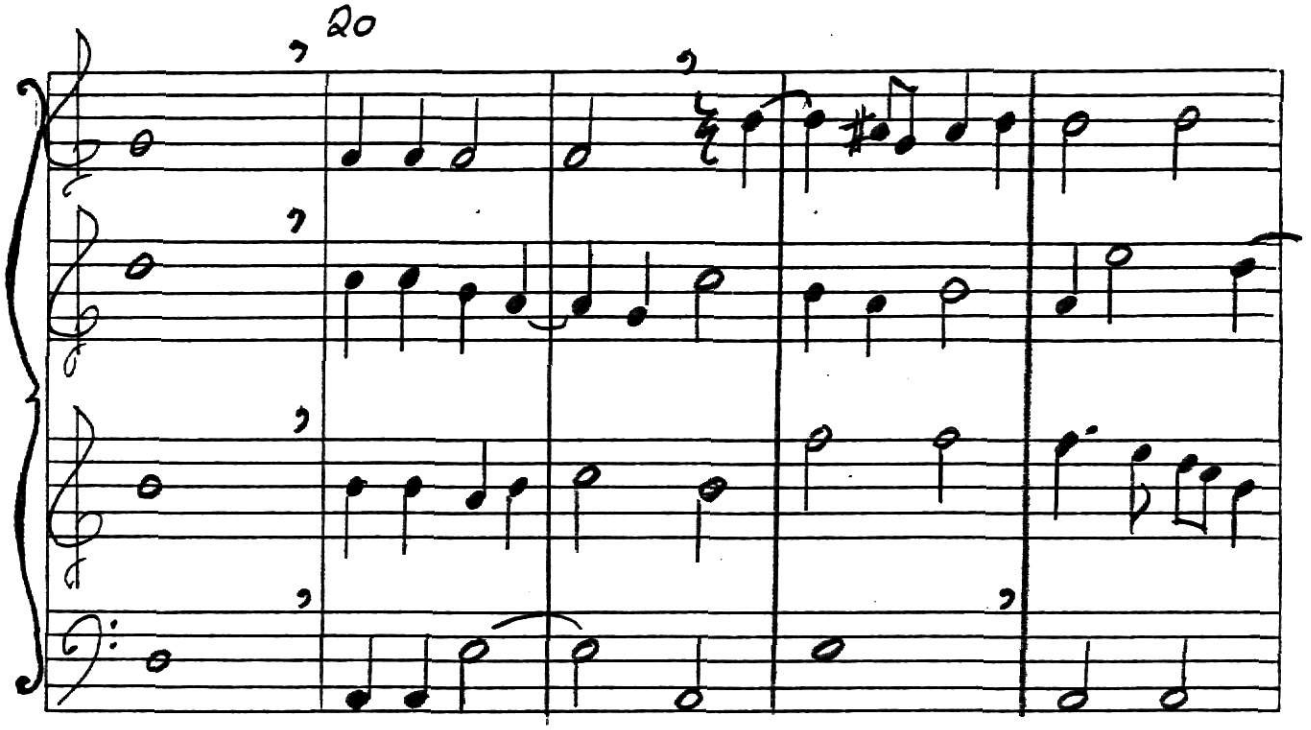

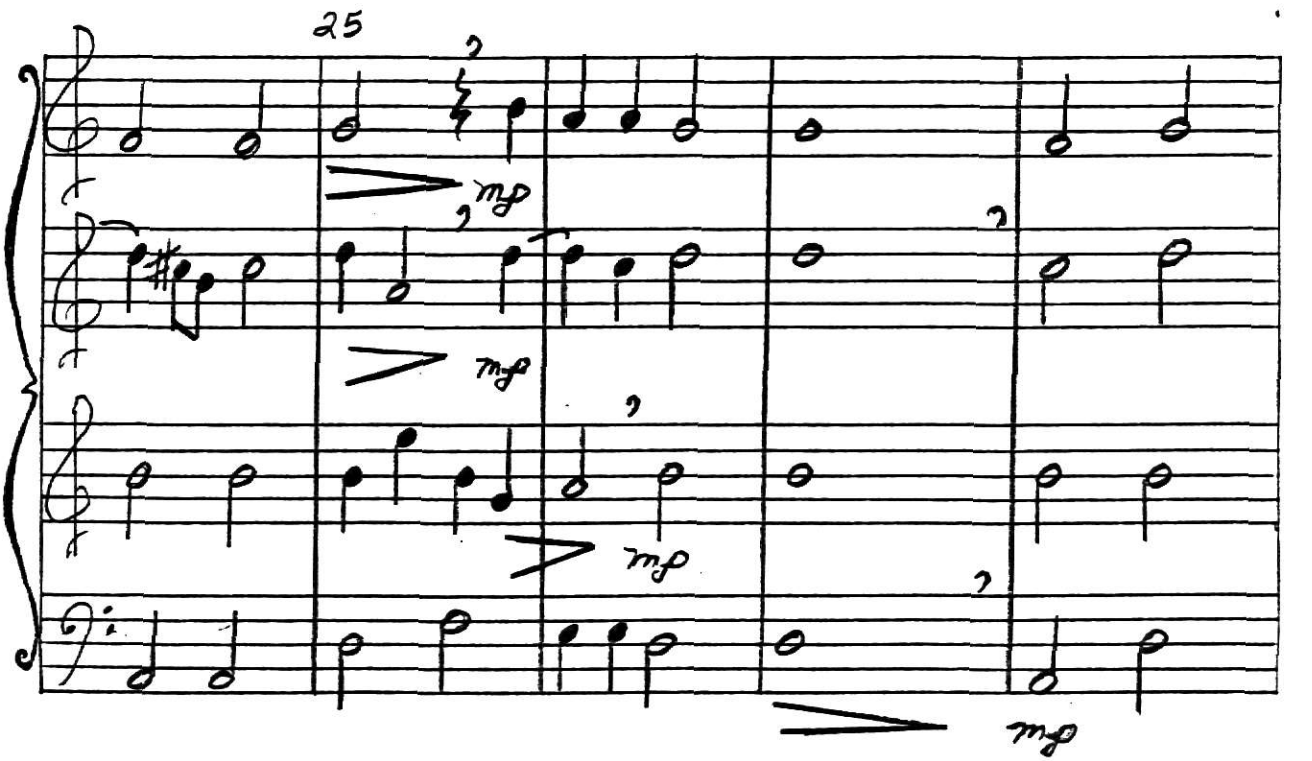

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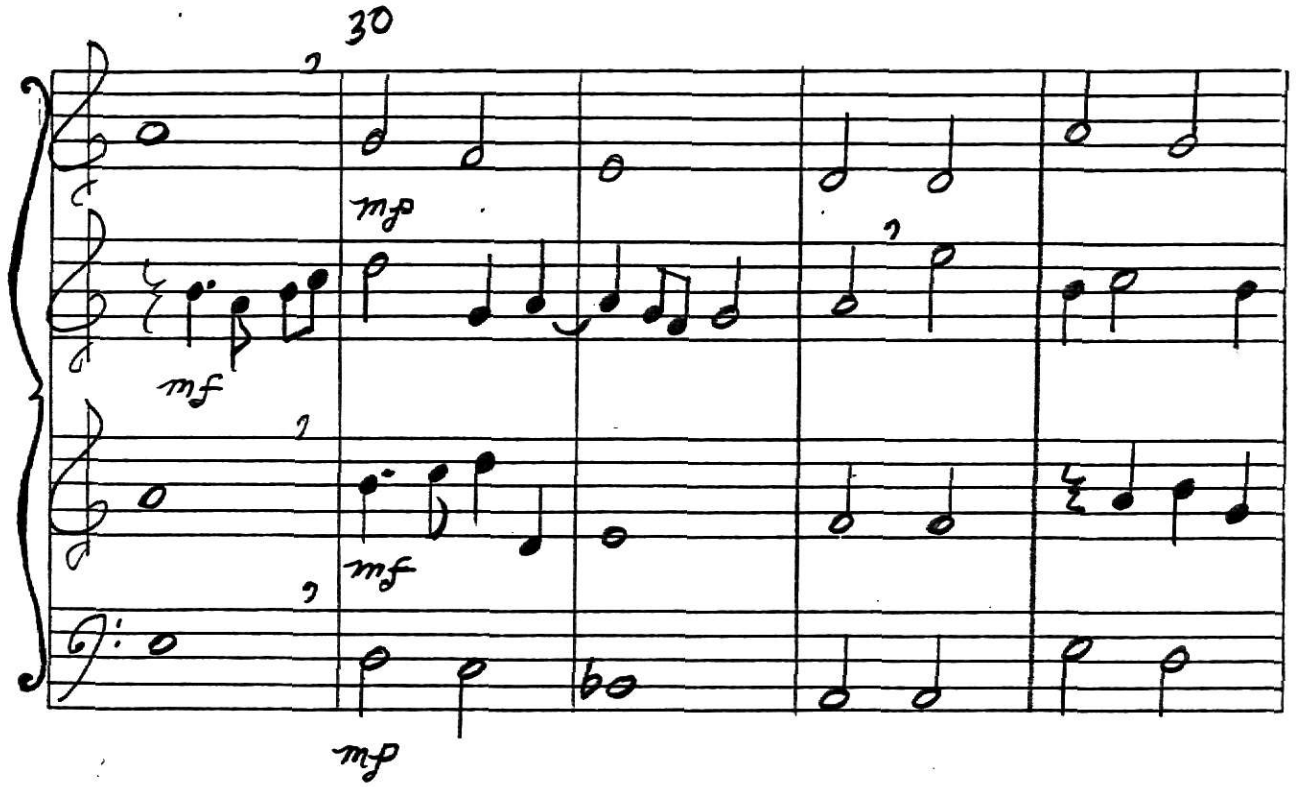
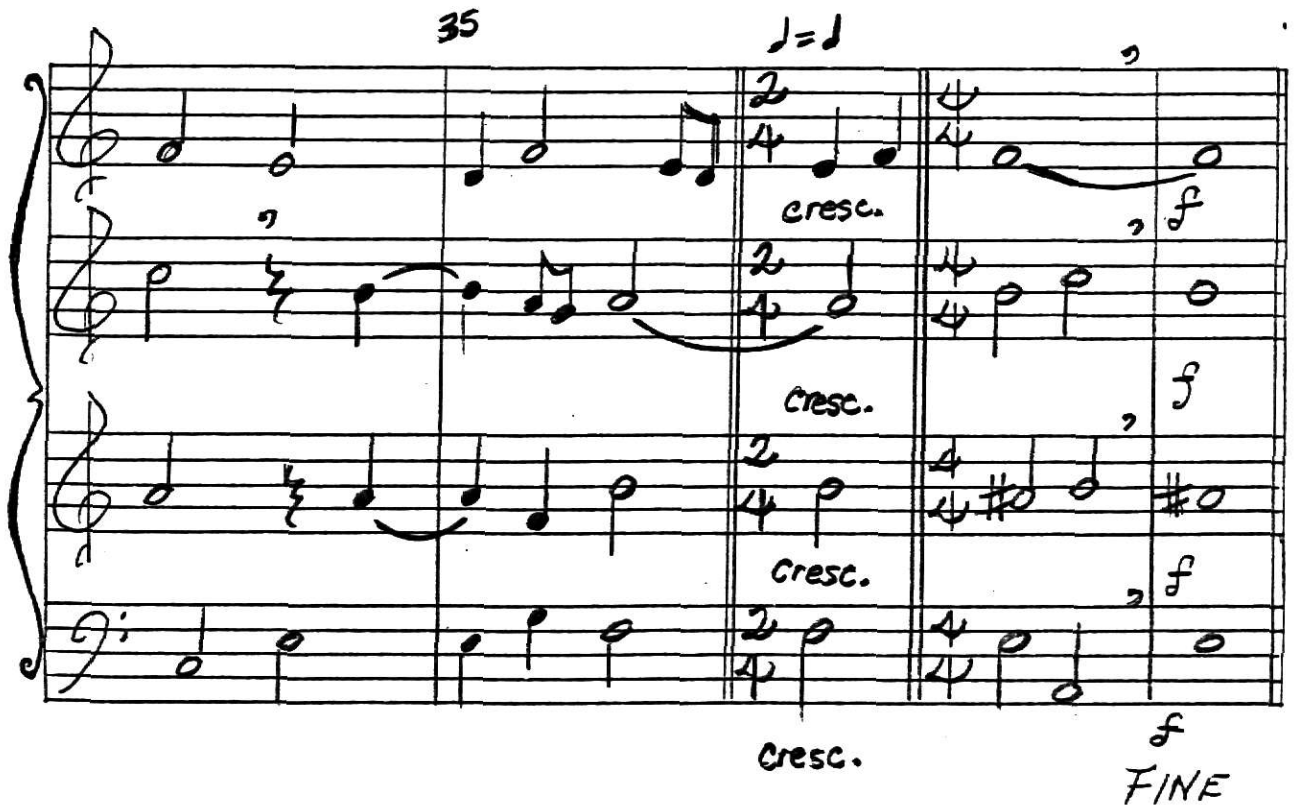
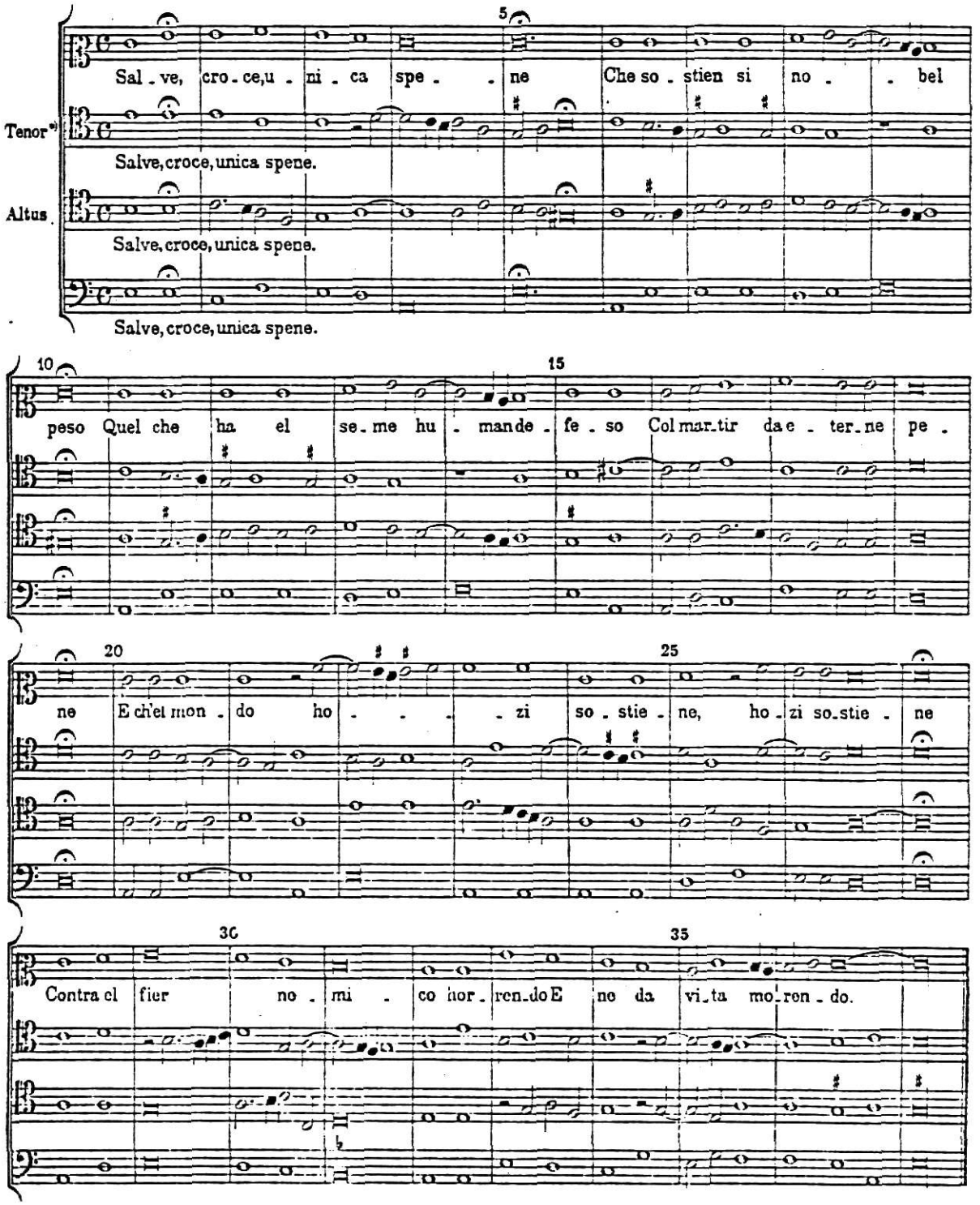




11. Salve, croce, unica spene

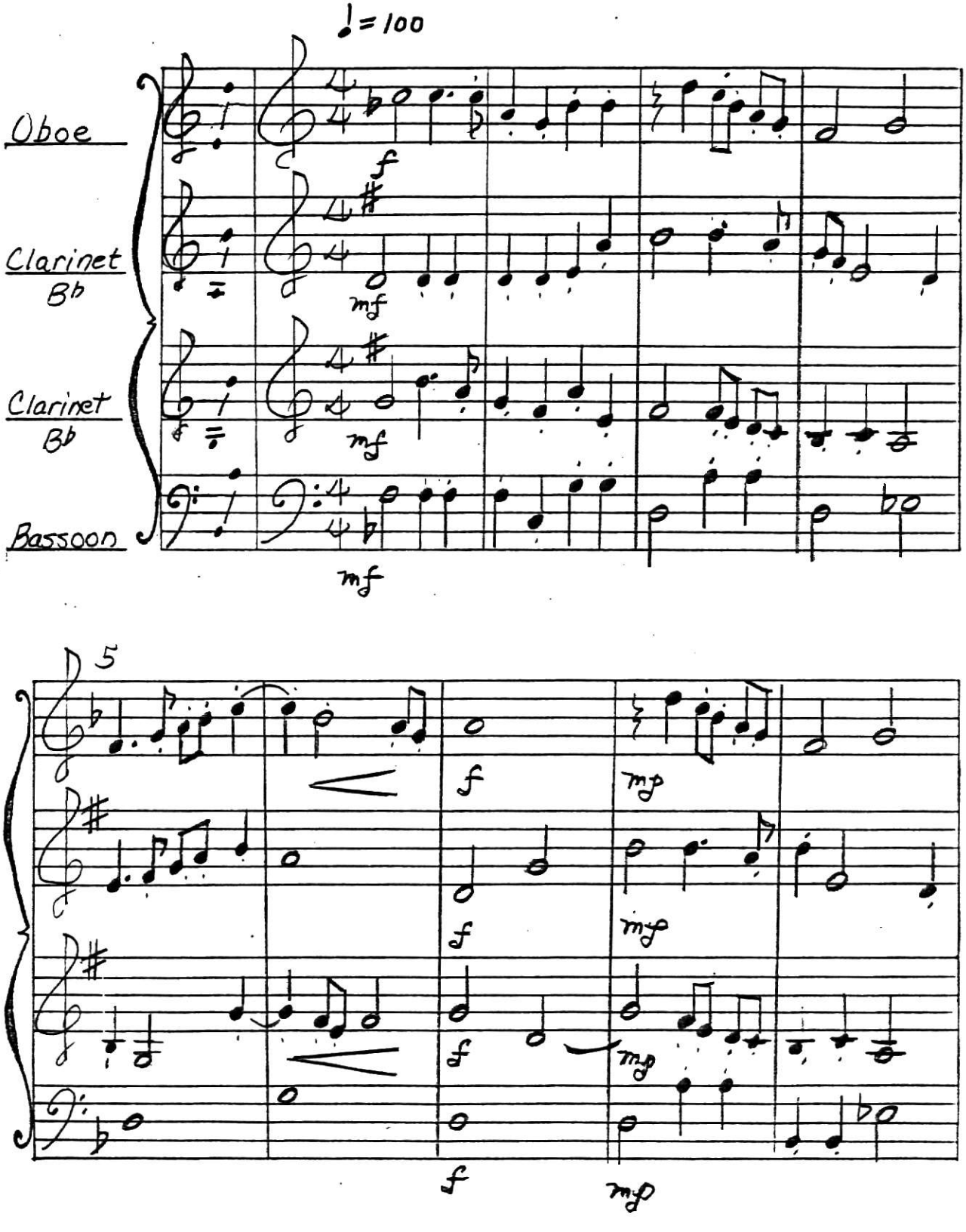
D. Nicolo



*) Wenn sonst nichts angegeben, ist die Reihenfolge der Stimmen von oben nach unten hier immer die gewöhnliche: Cantus, Alt, Tenor, Baß.

Vergine benedecta

transcribed by W. De Lisle



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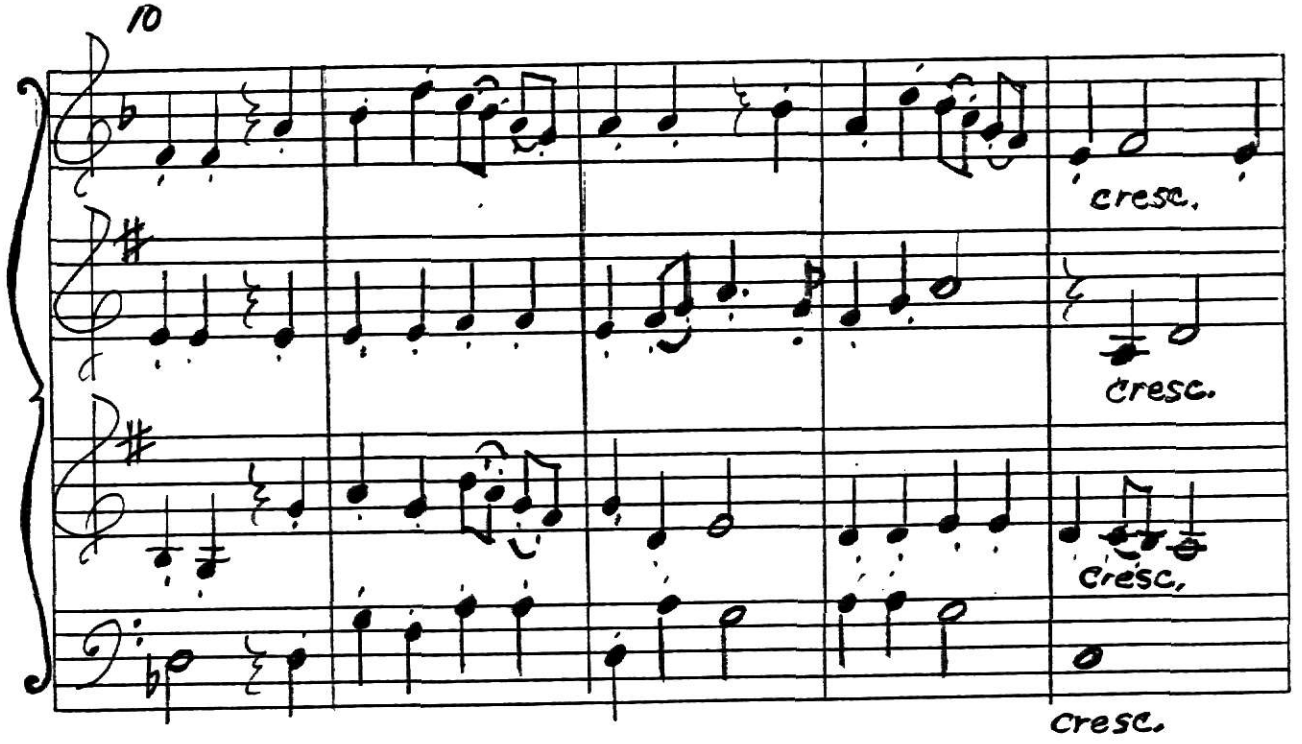
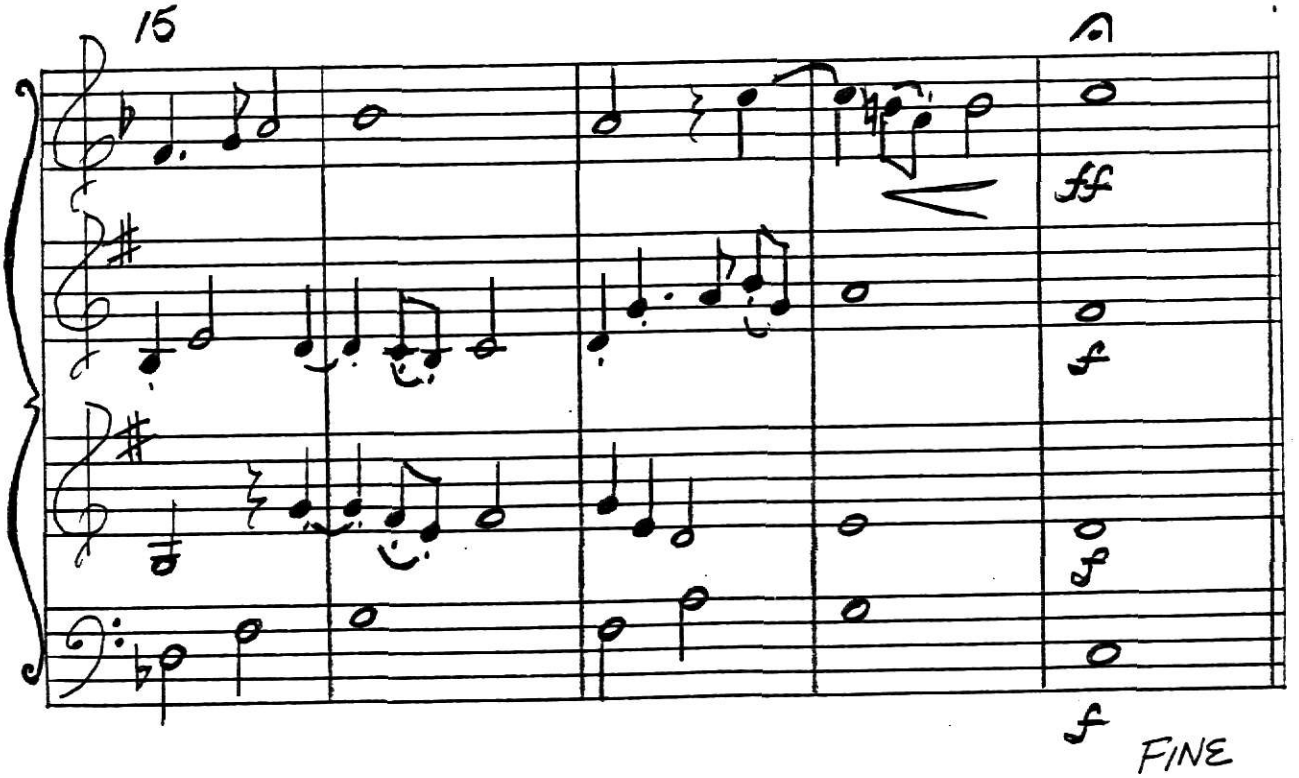
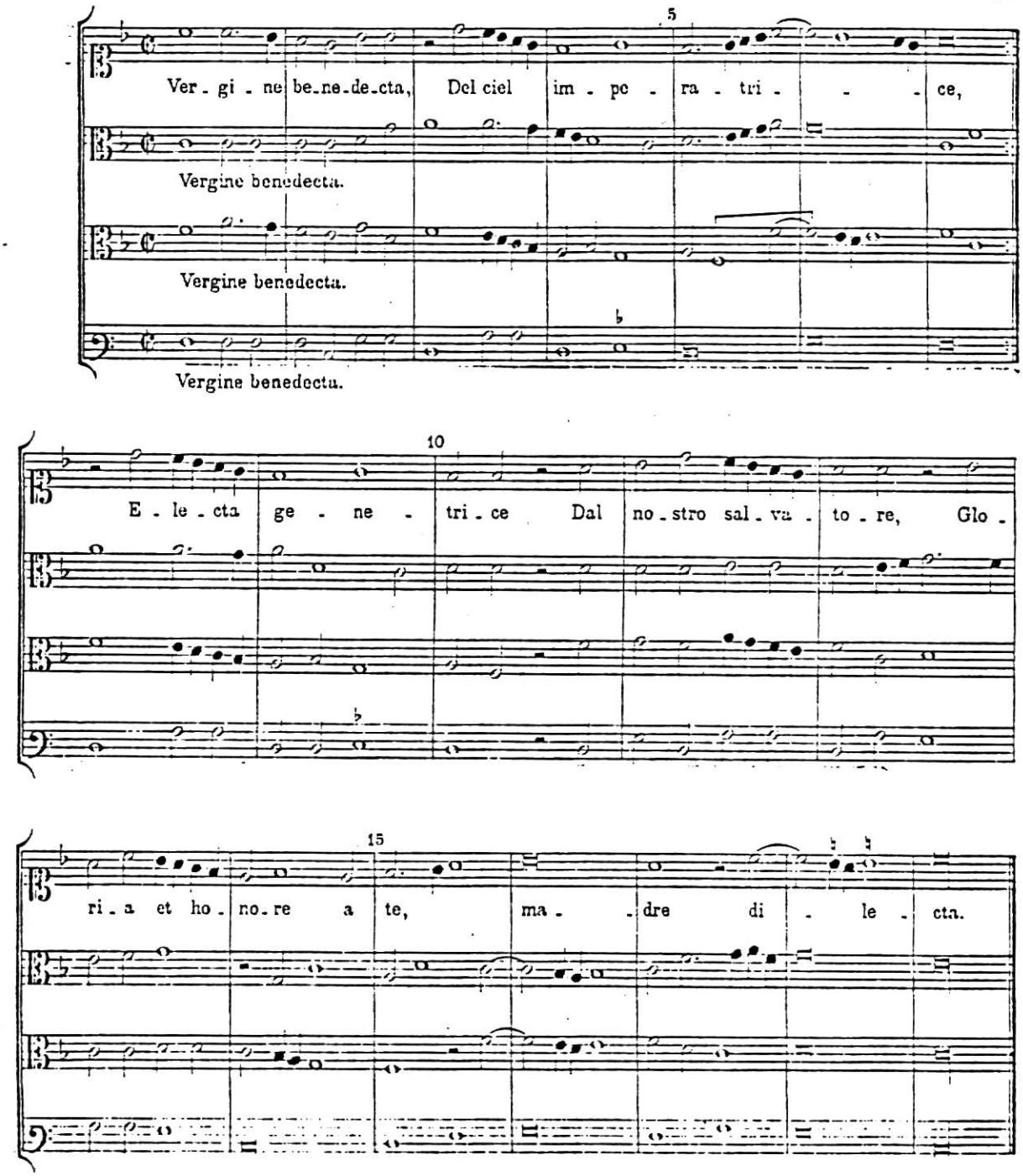




70. Vergine benedecta

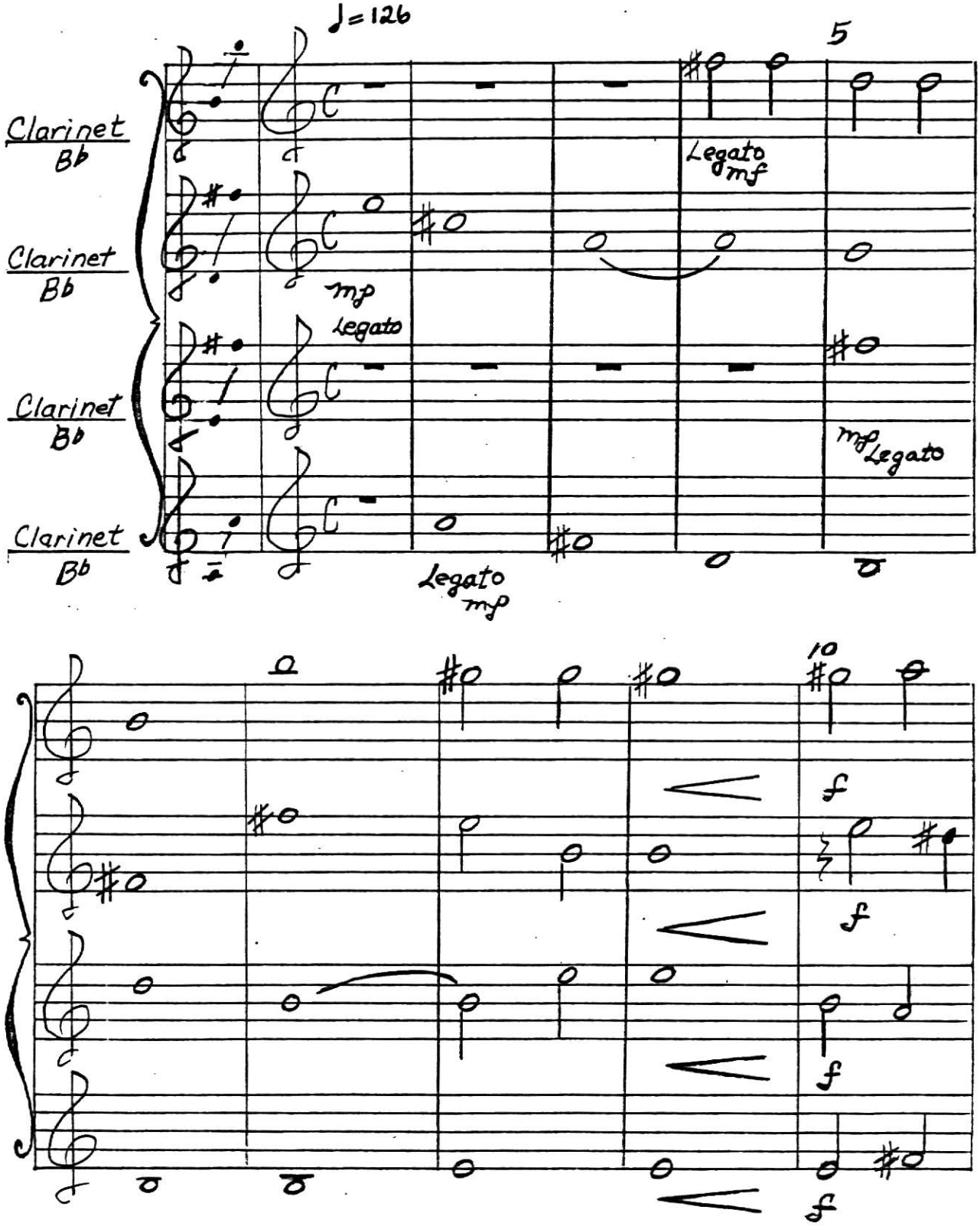
In. Dam.



Tromboncino

O Sacrum Convivium

transcribed by W. DeLisle



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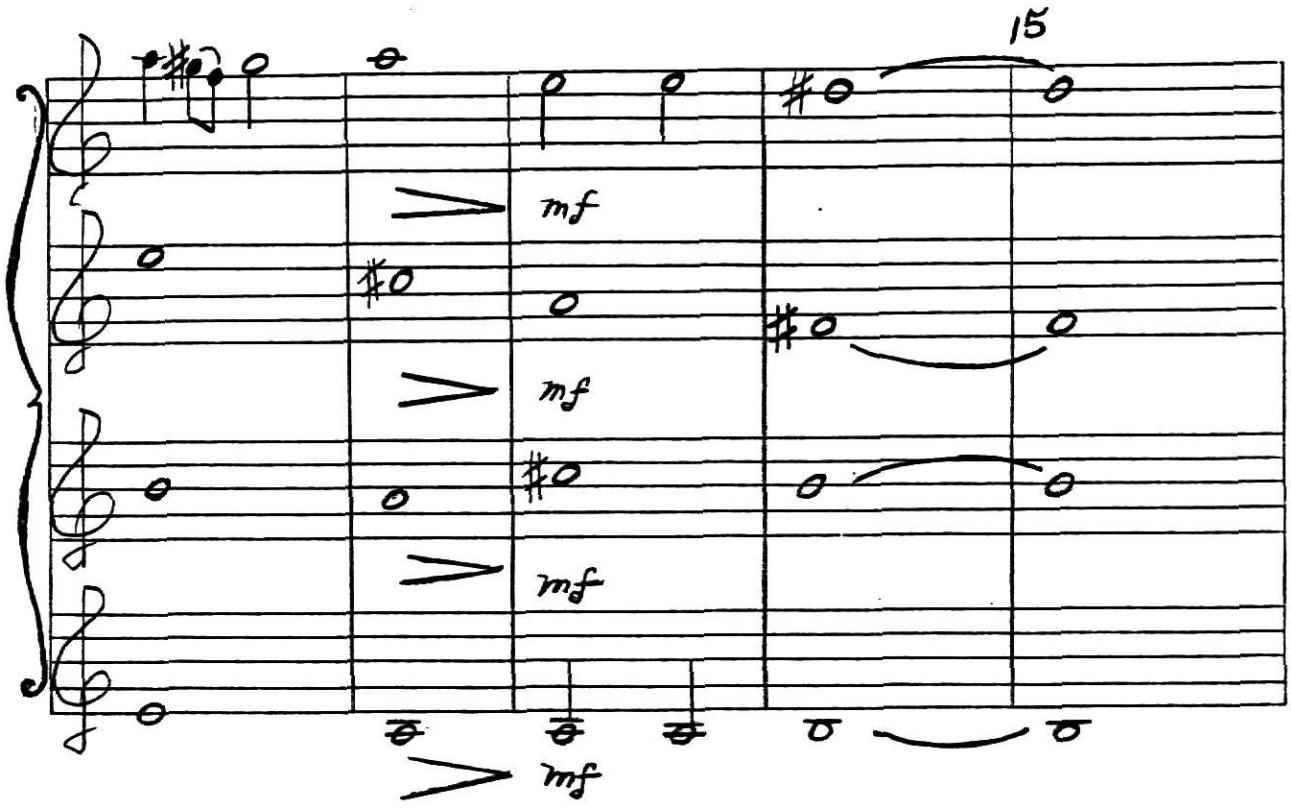

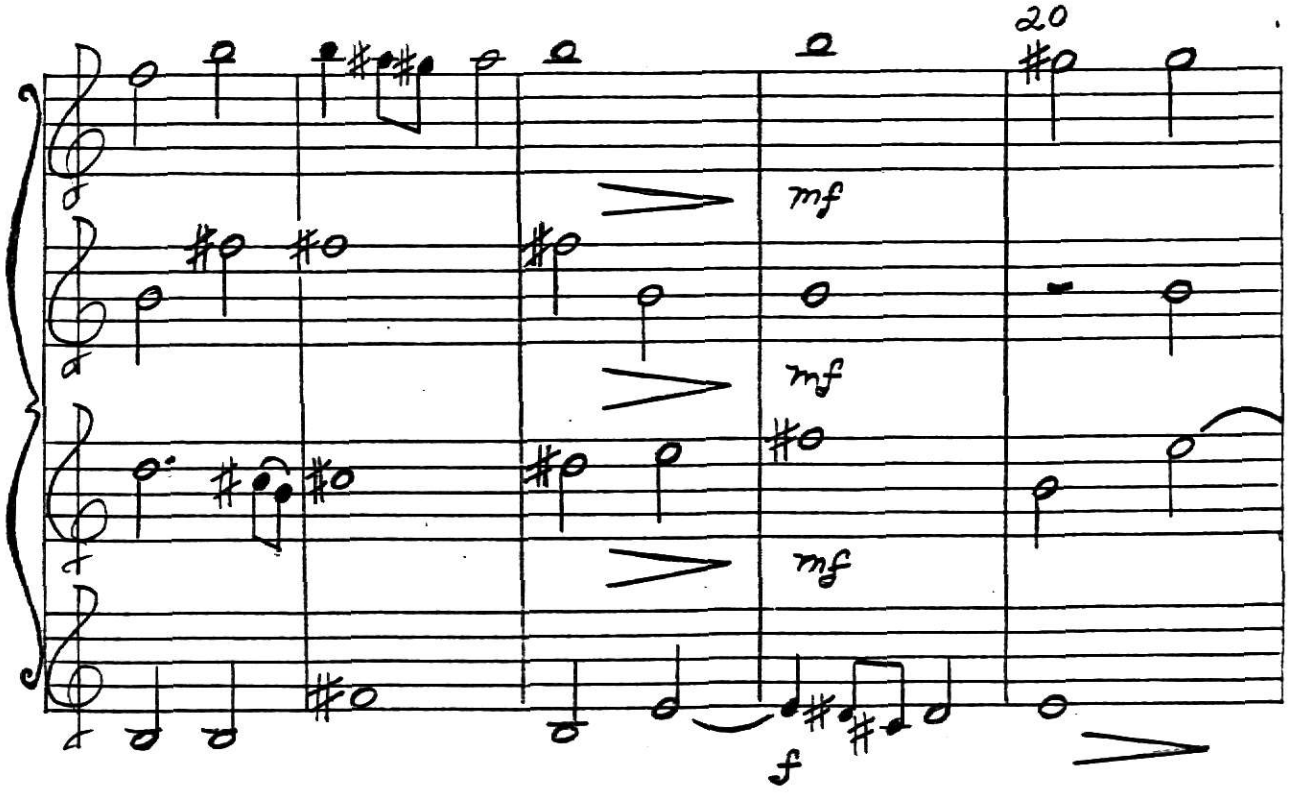

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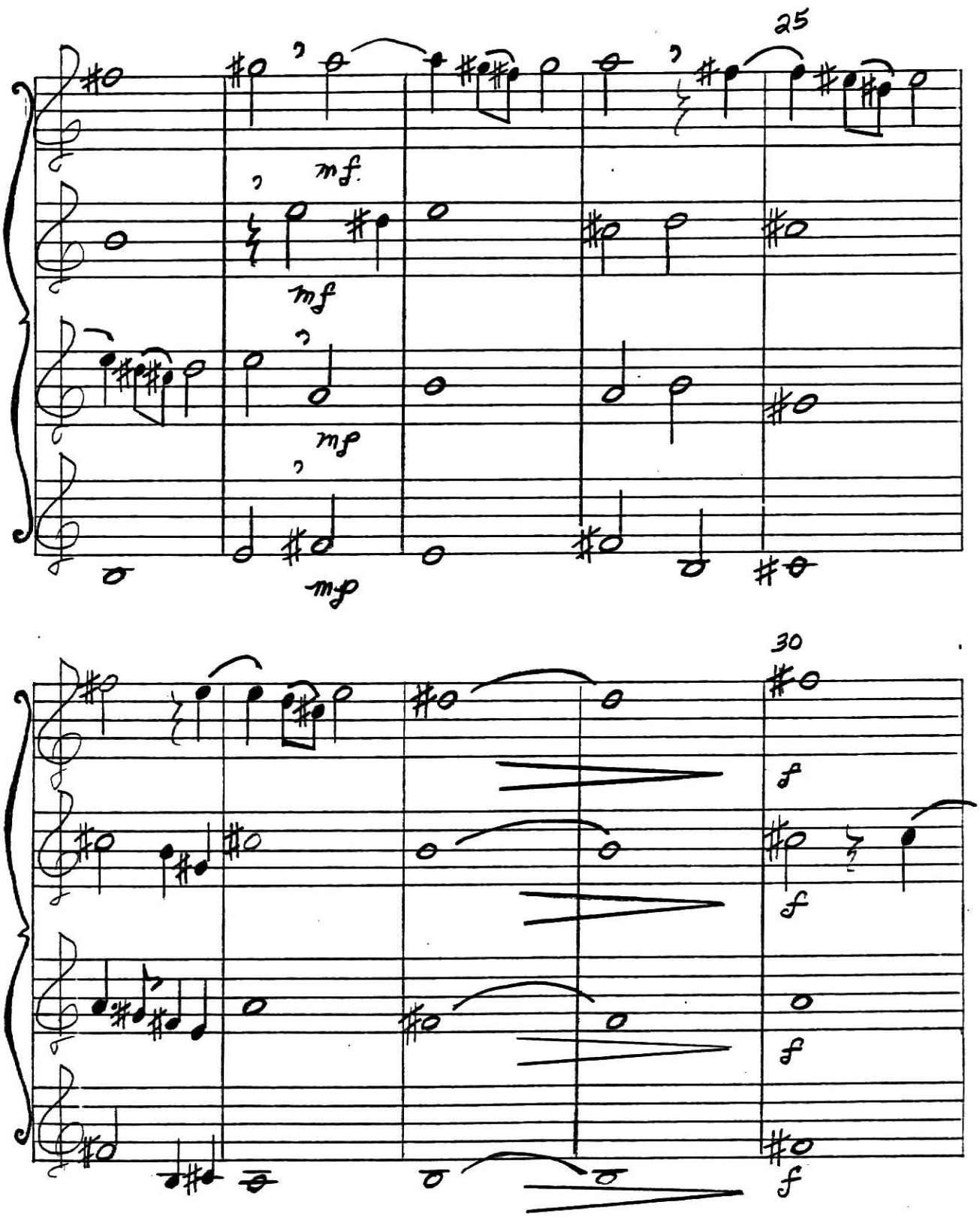

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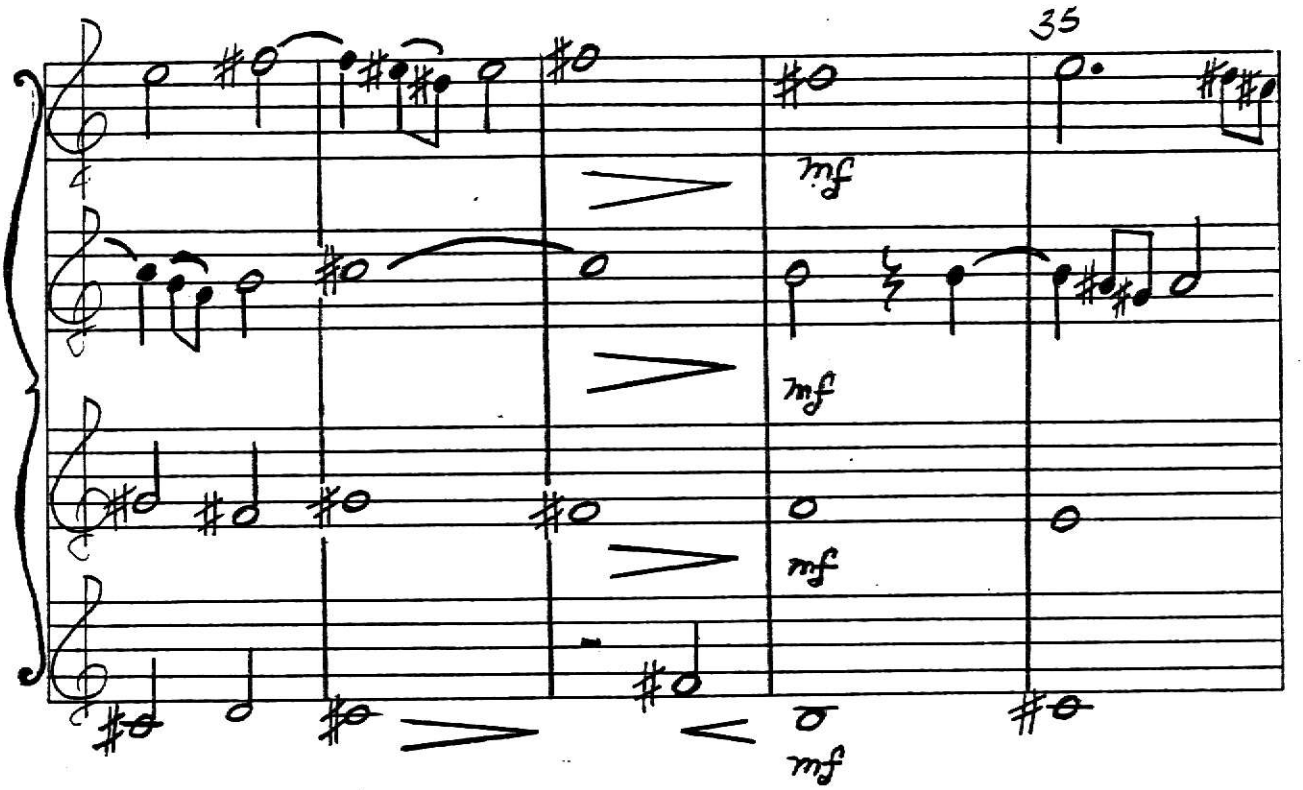

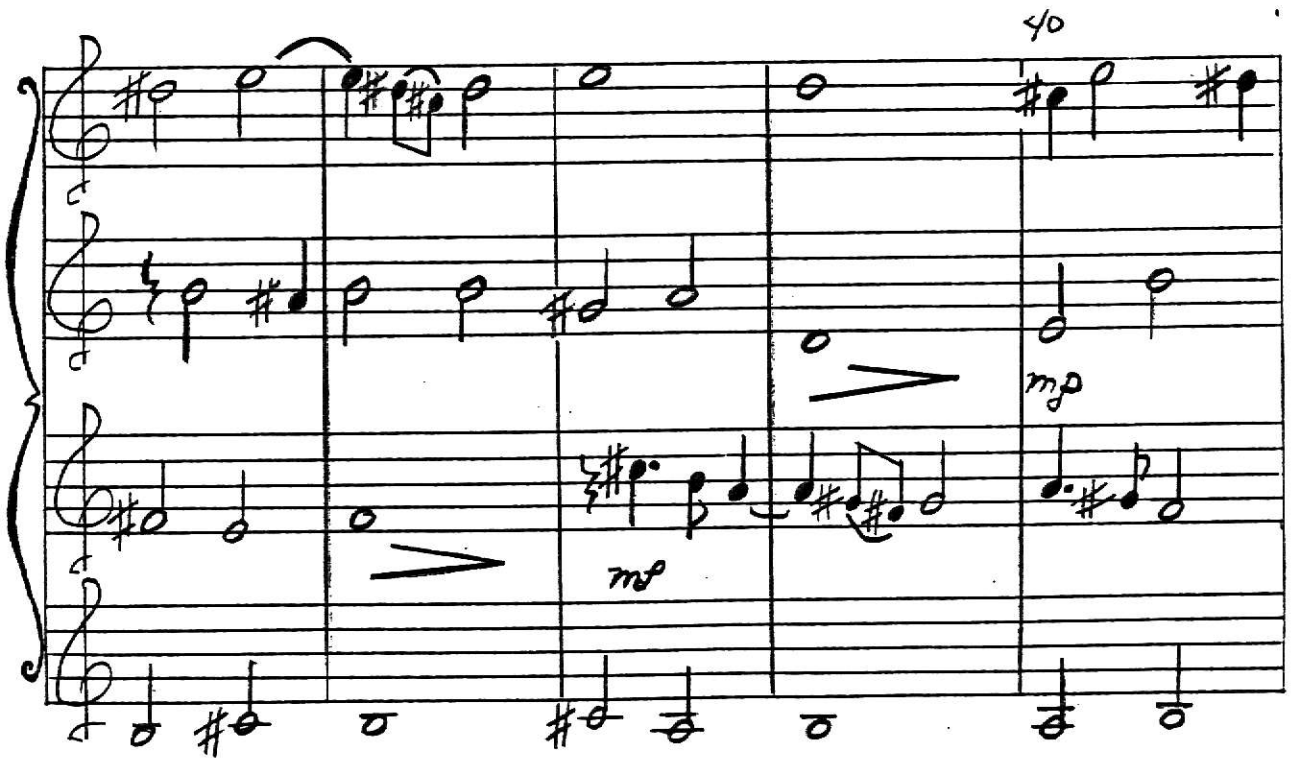

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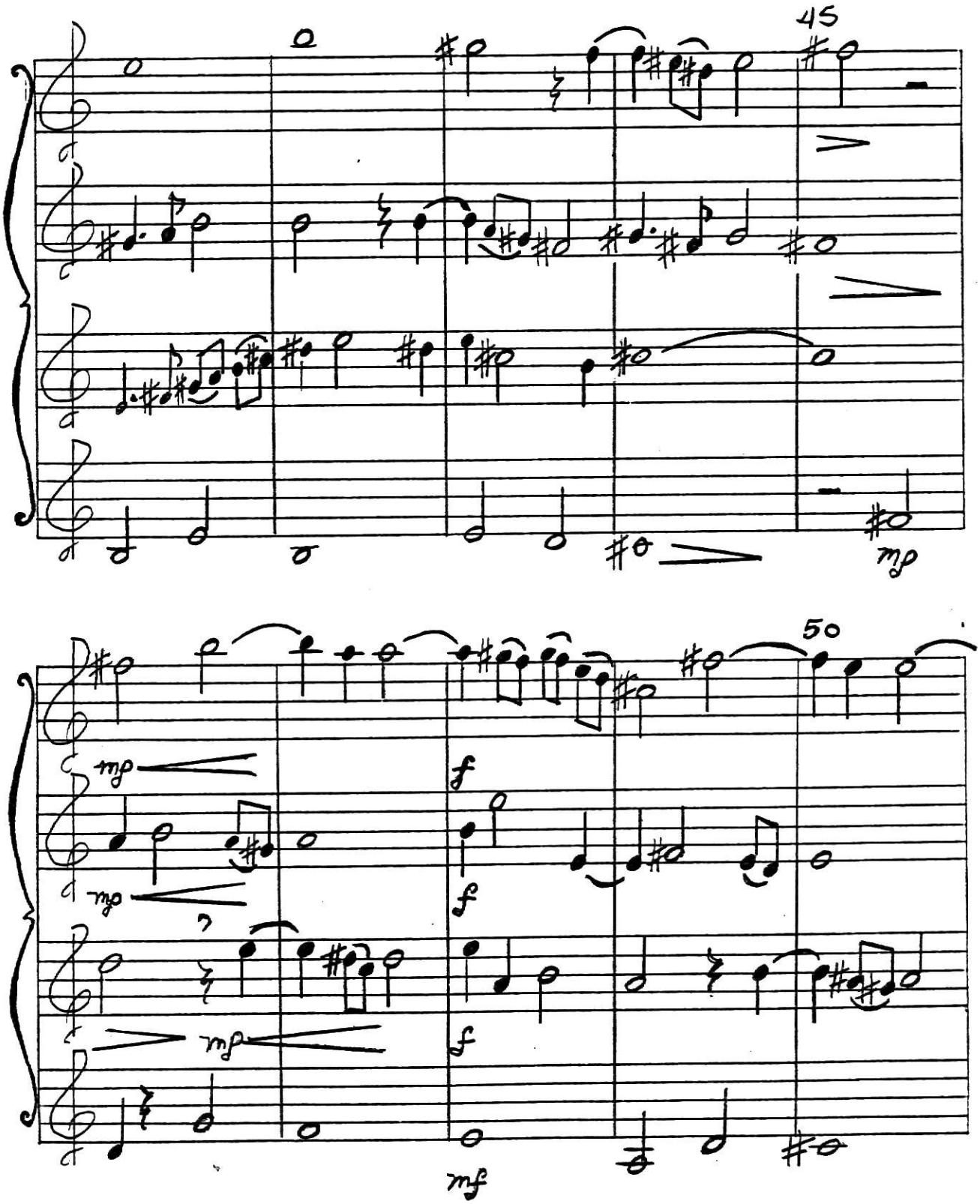

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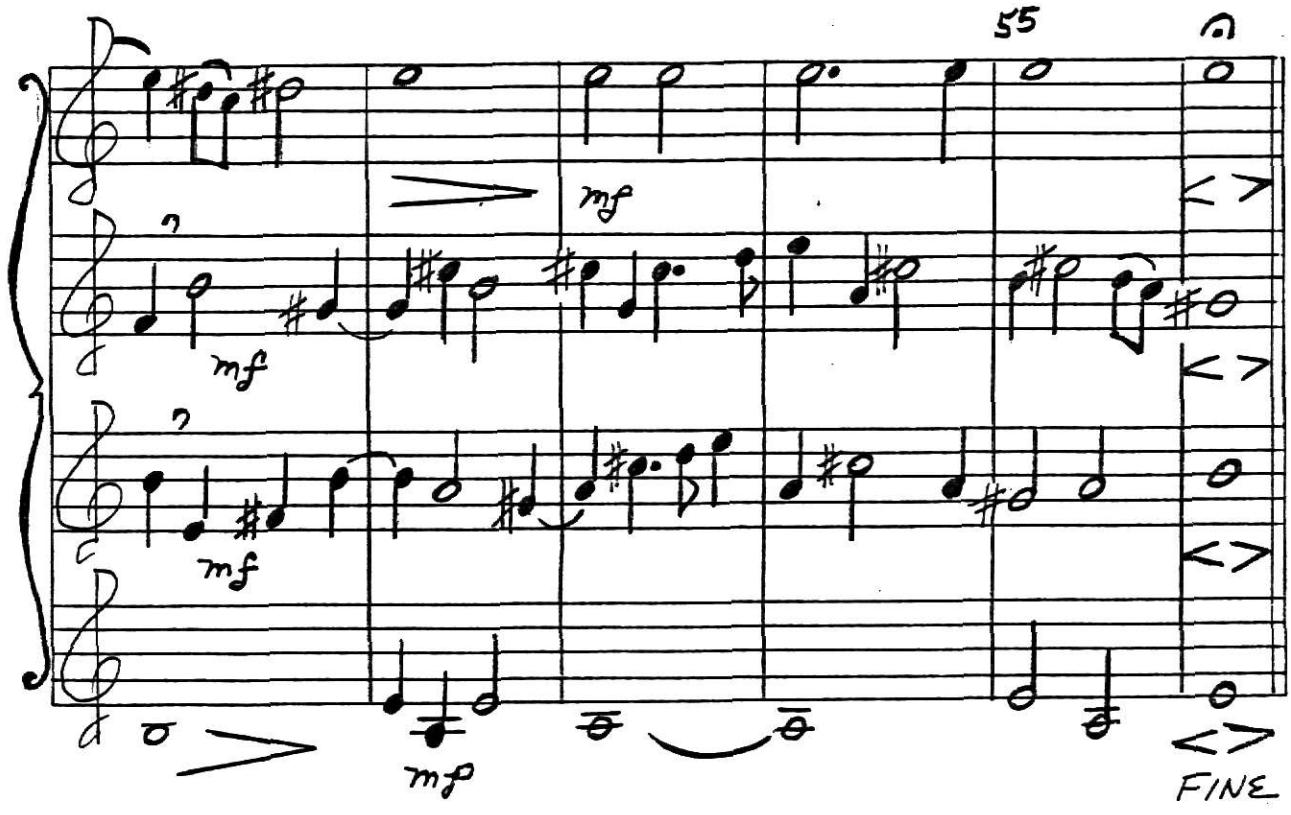
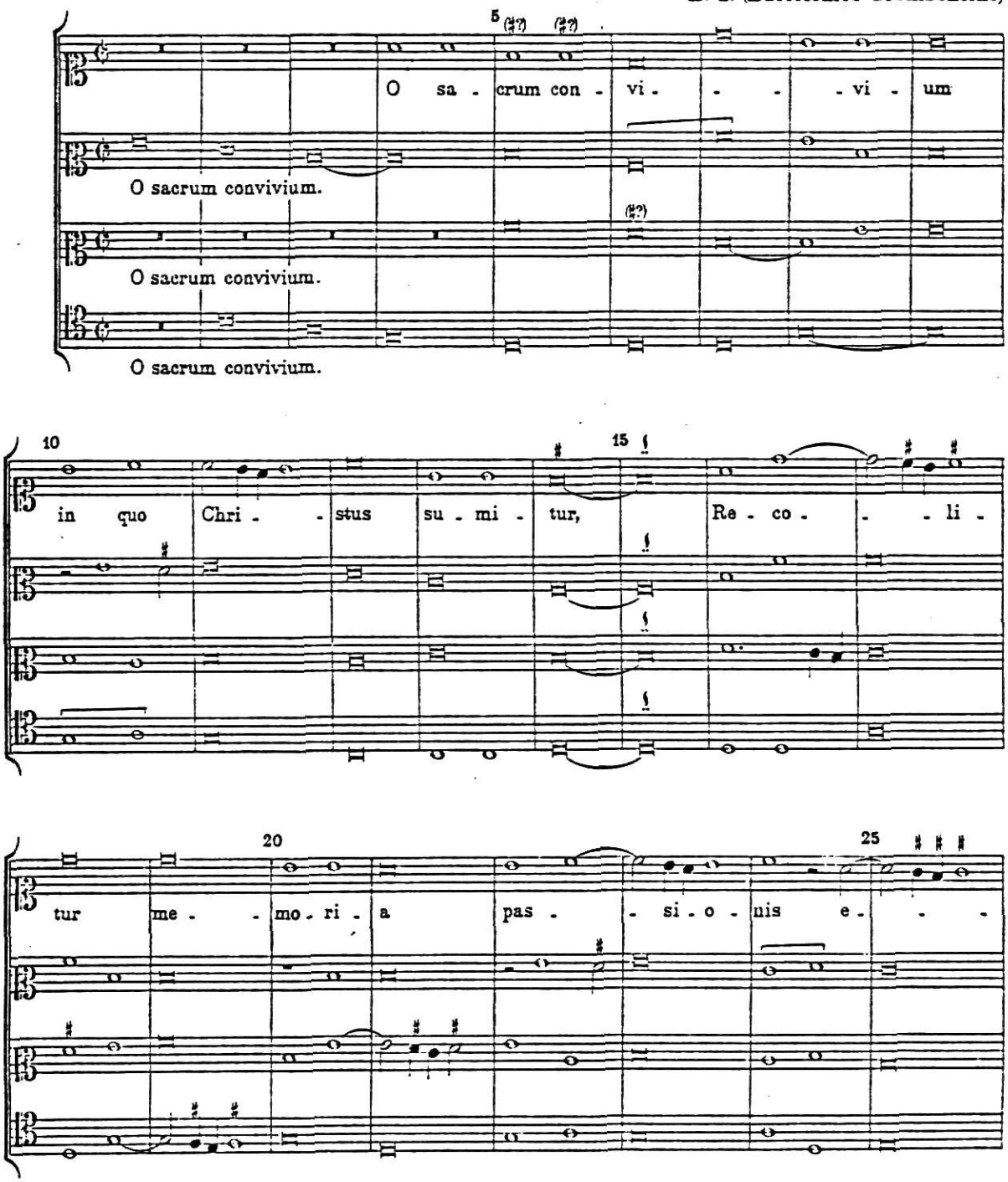
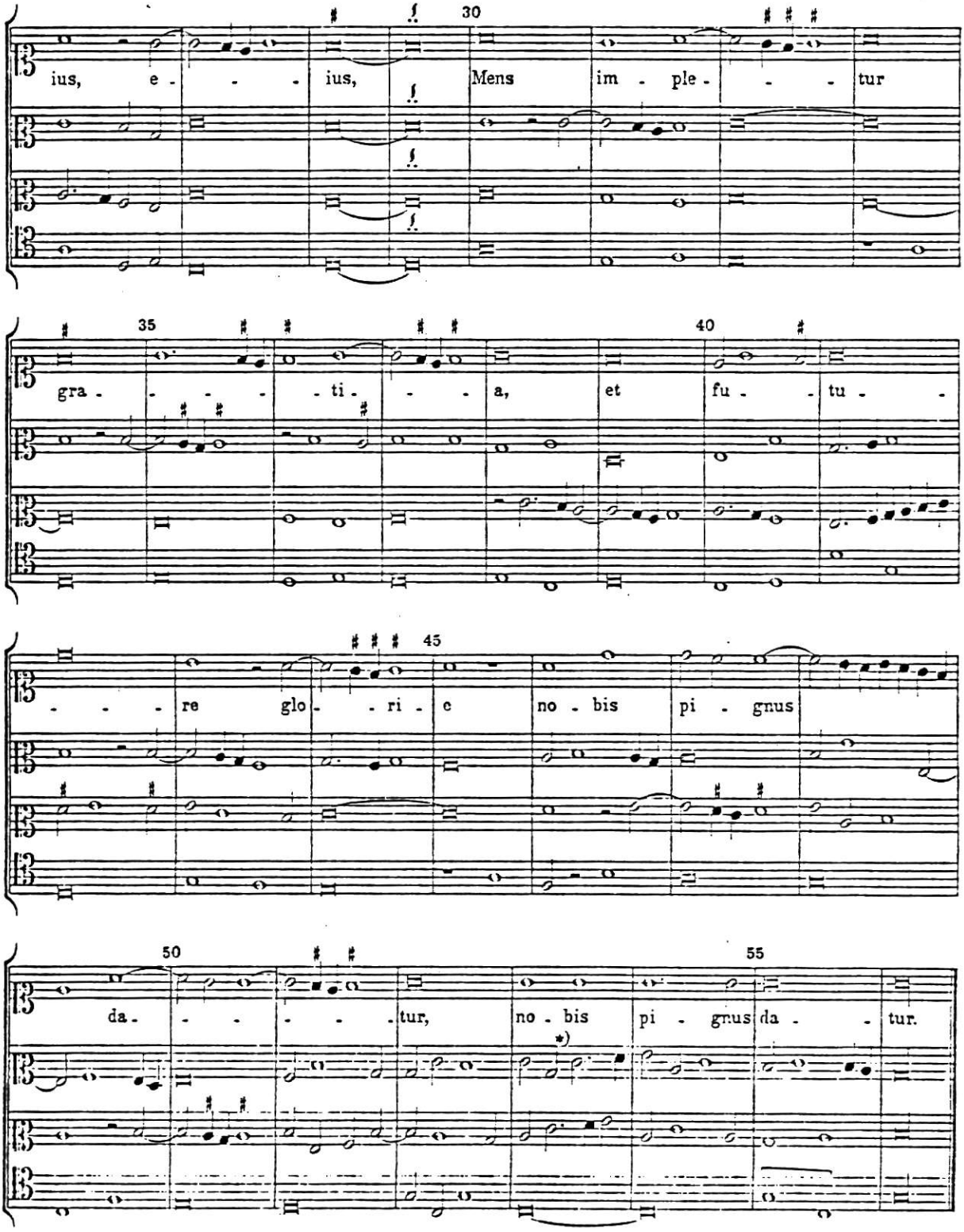


35. O sacrum convivium

B. T. (Bartolomeo Tromboncino)





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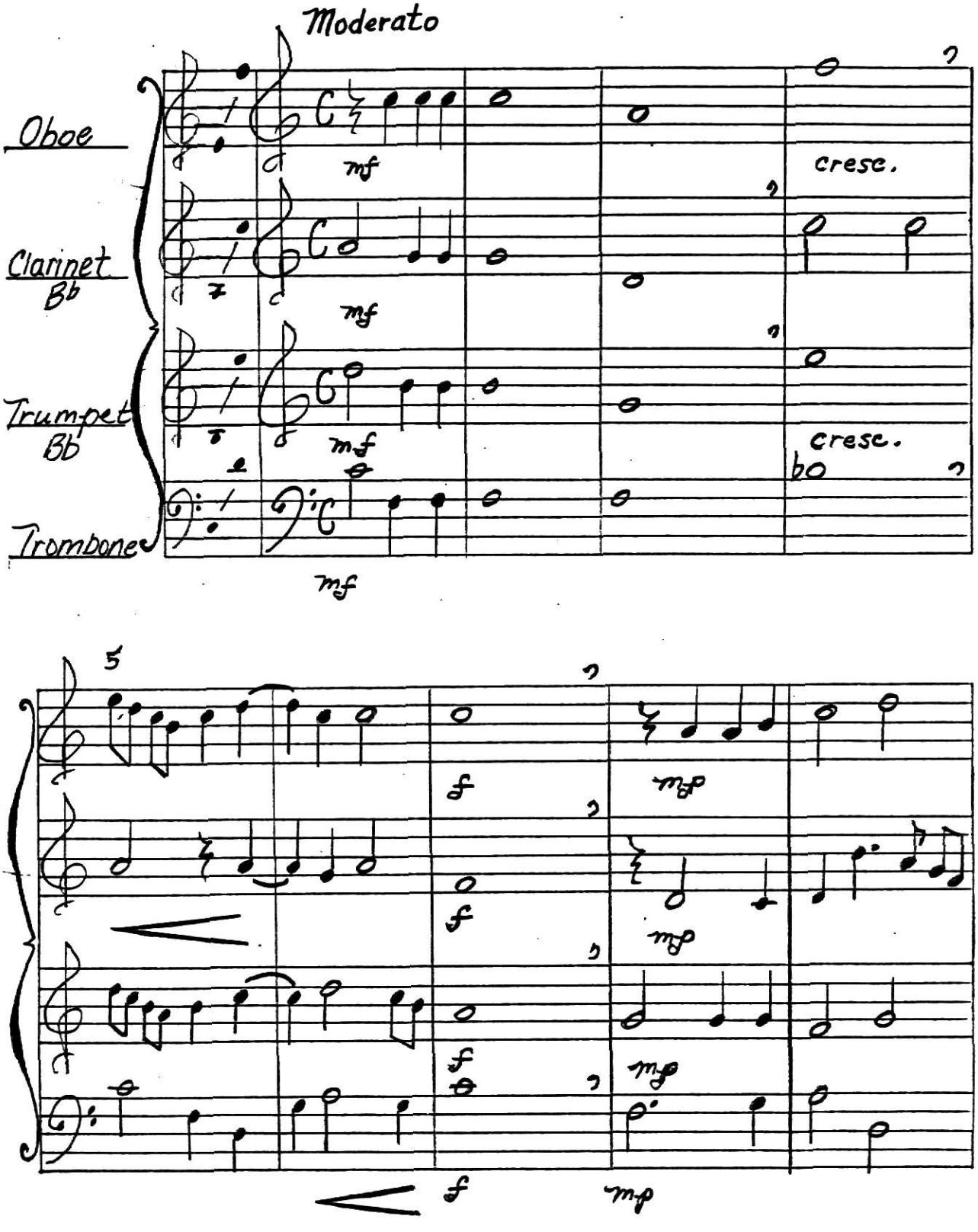
Trombonicino

Per quella croce

transcribed by W. DeLisle



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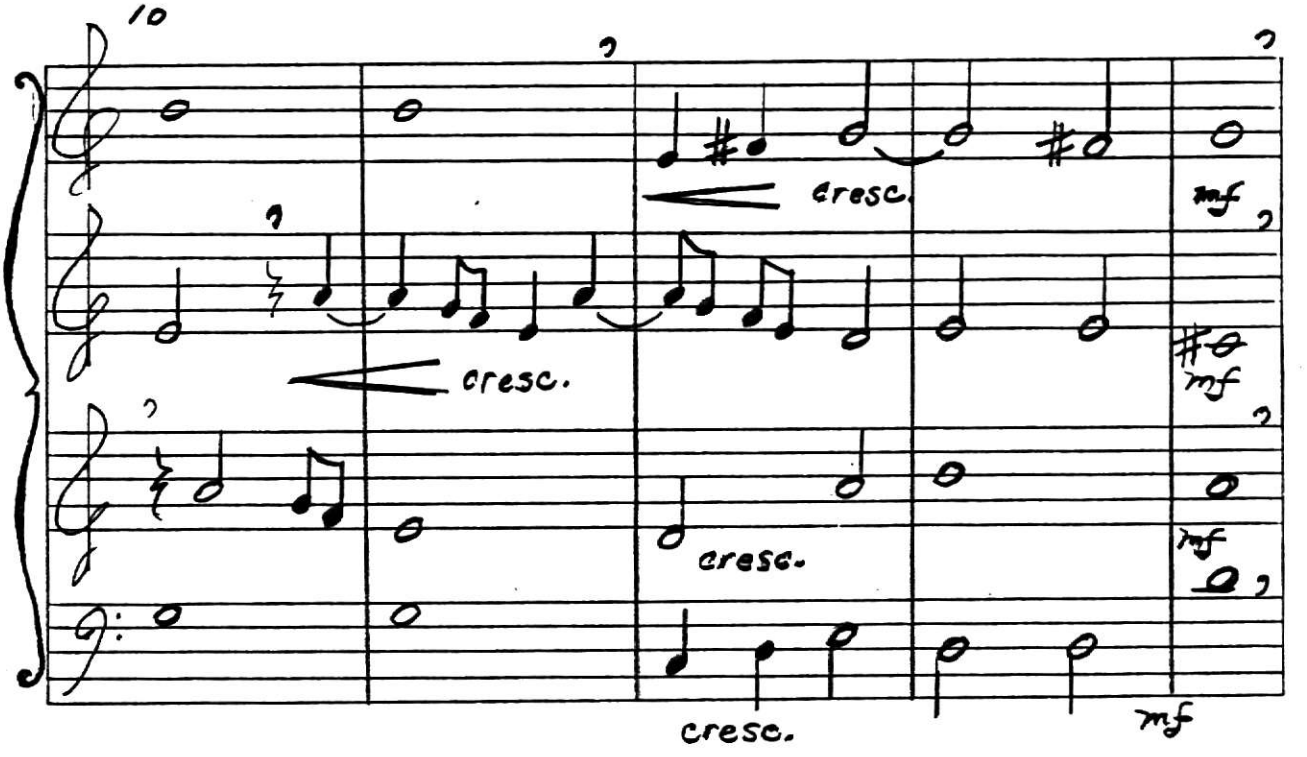

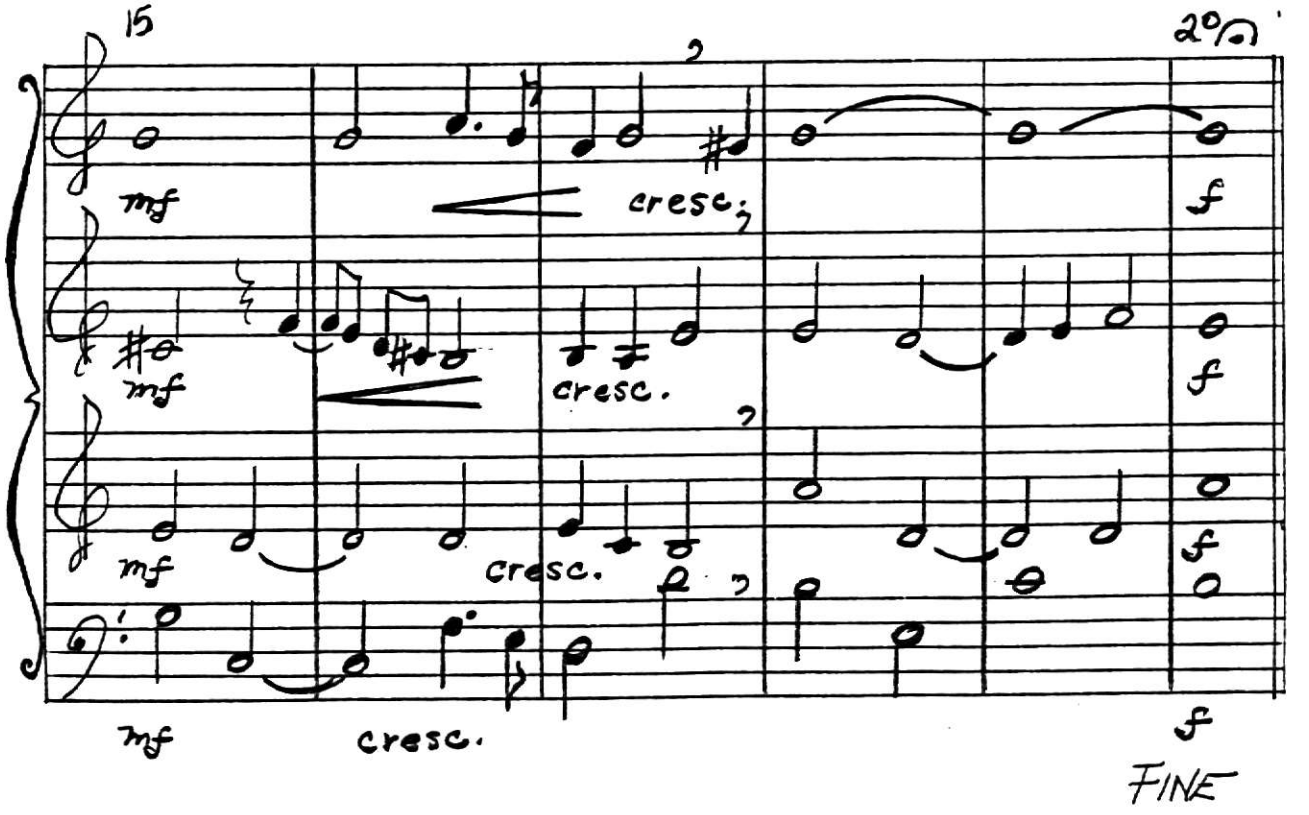

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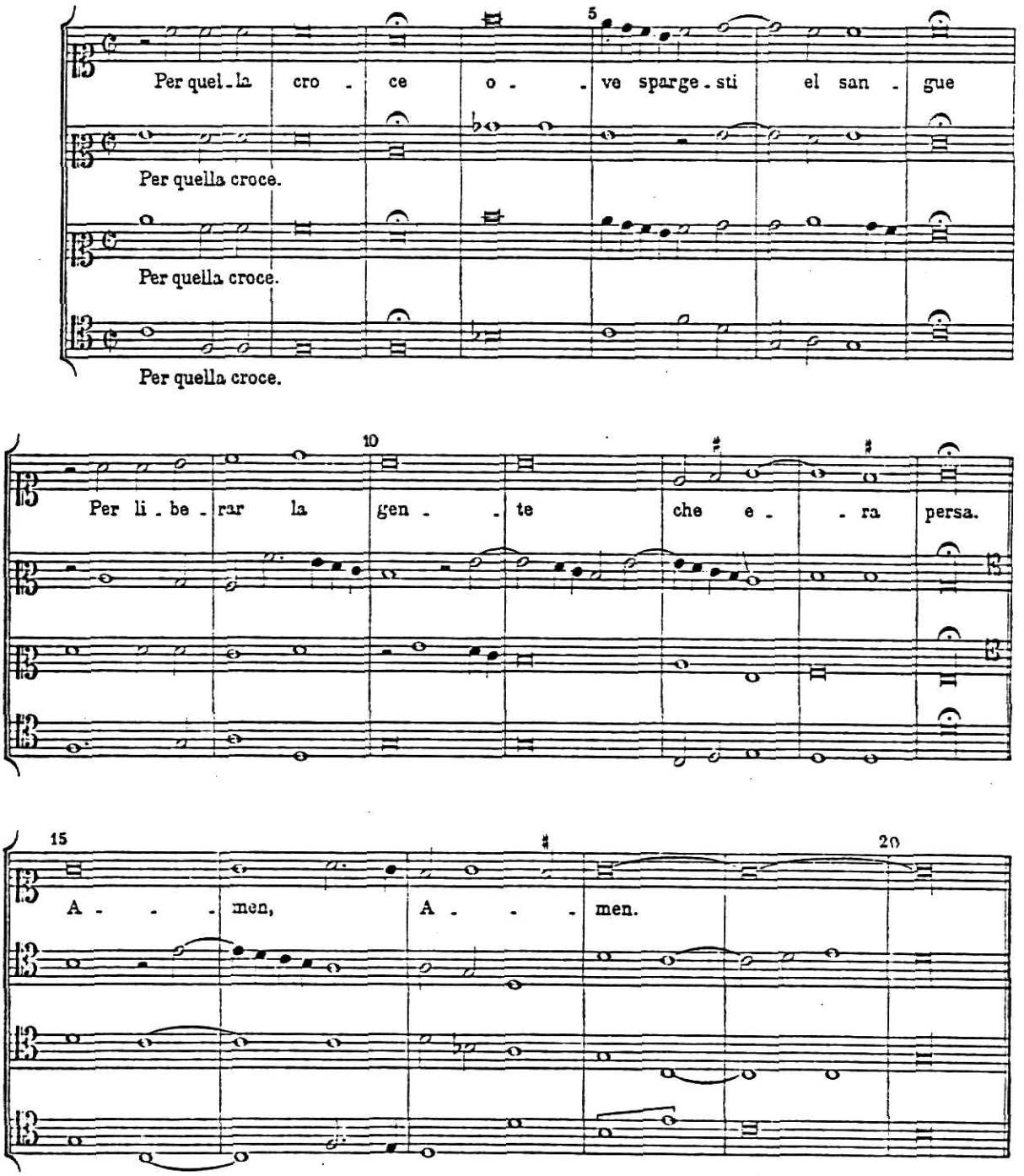
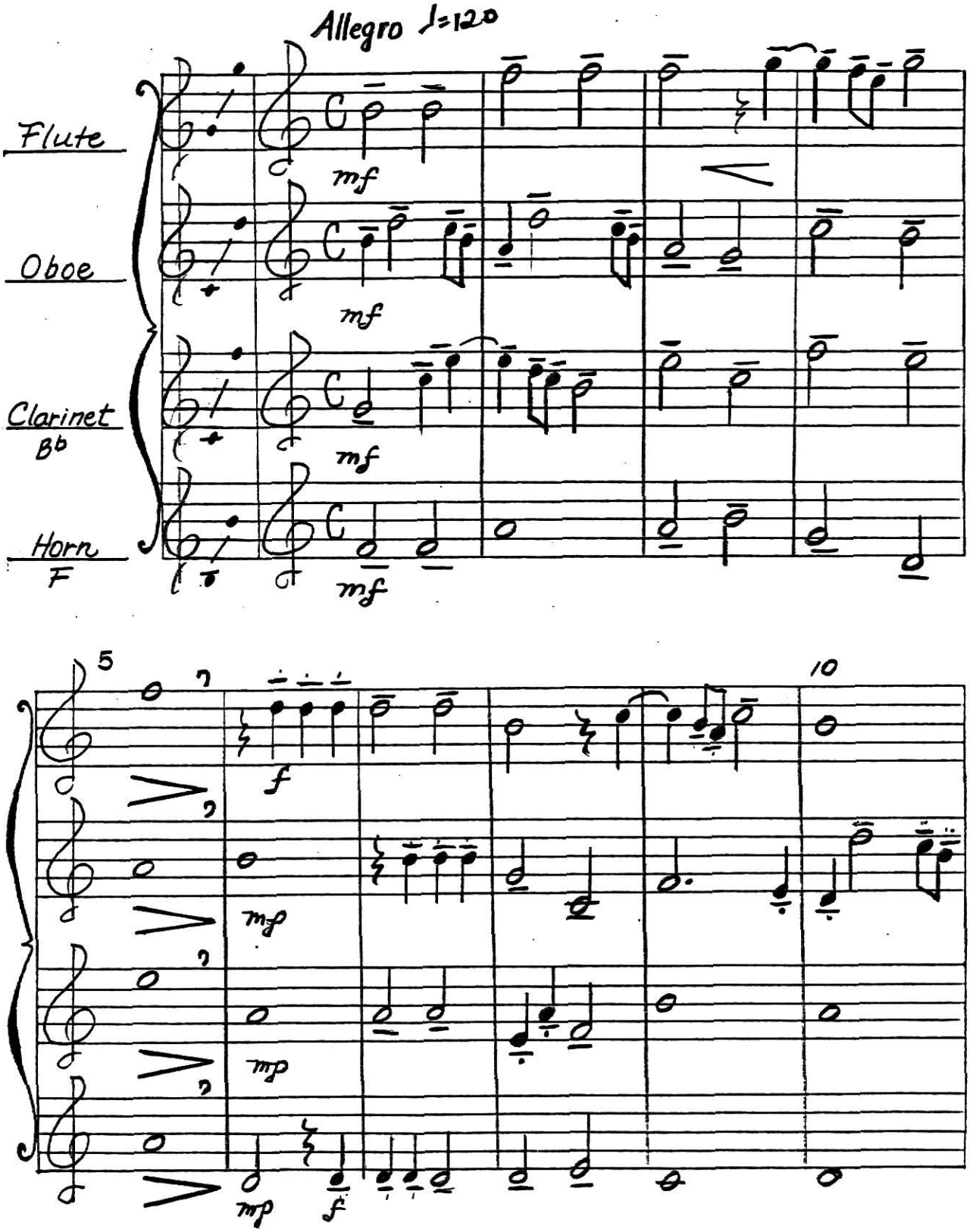
Tromboncino



Tromboncino

Adoramus te, Christe

transcribed by W. De Lisle



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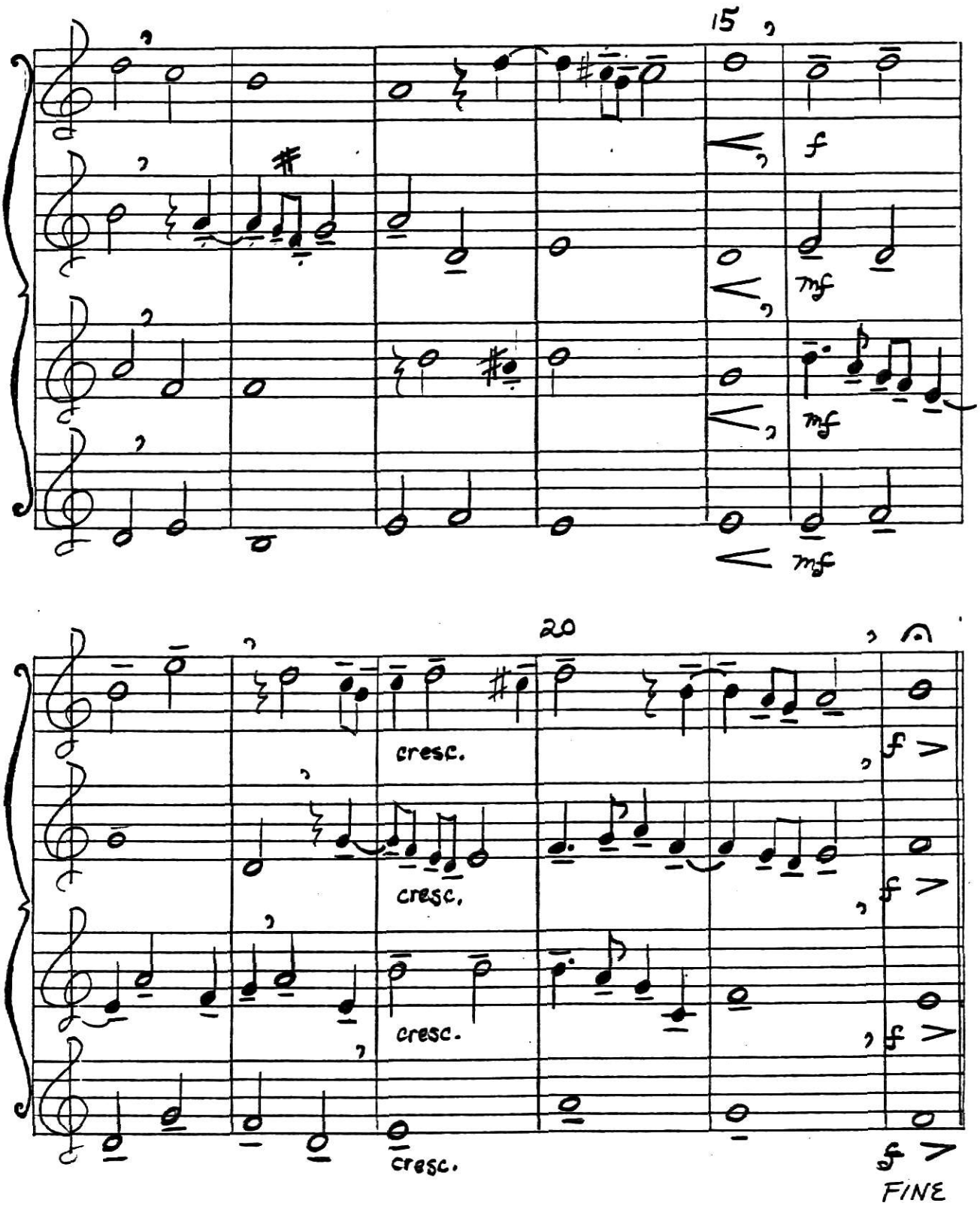
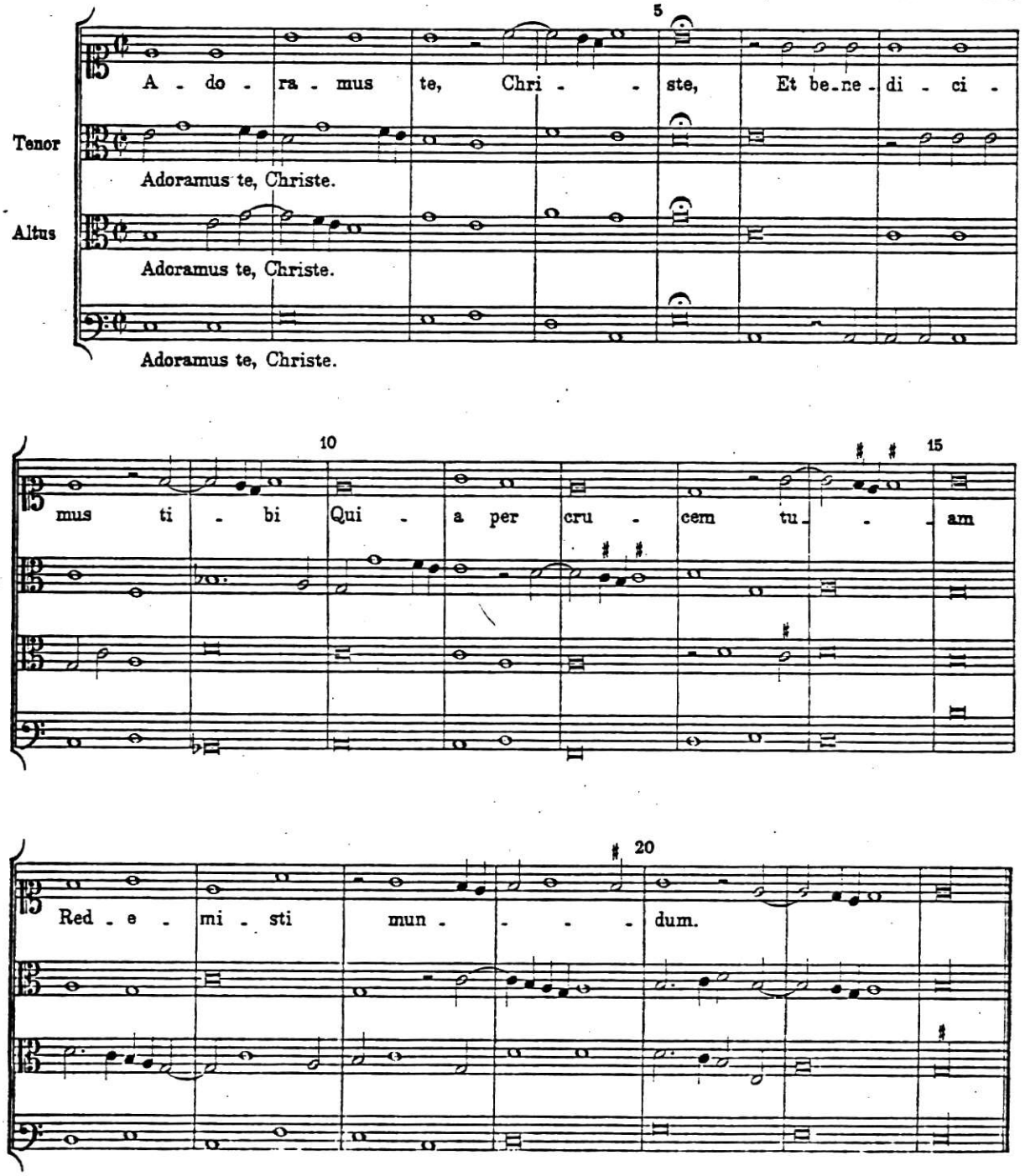


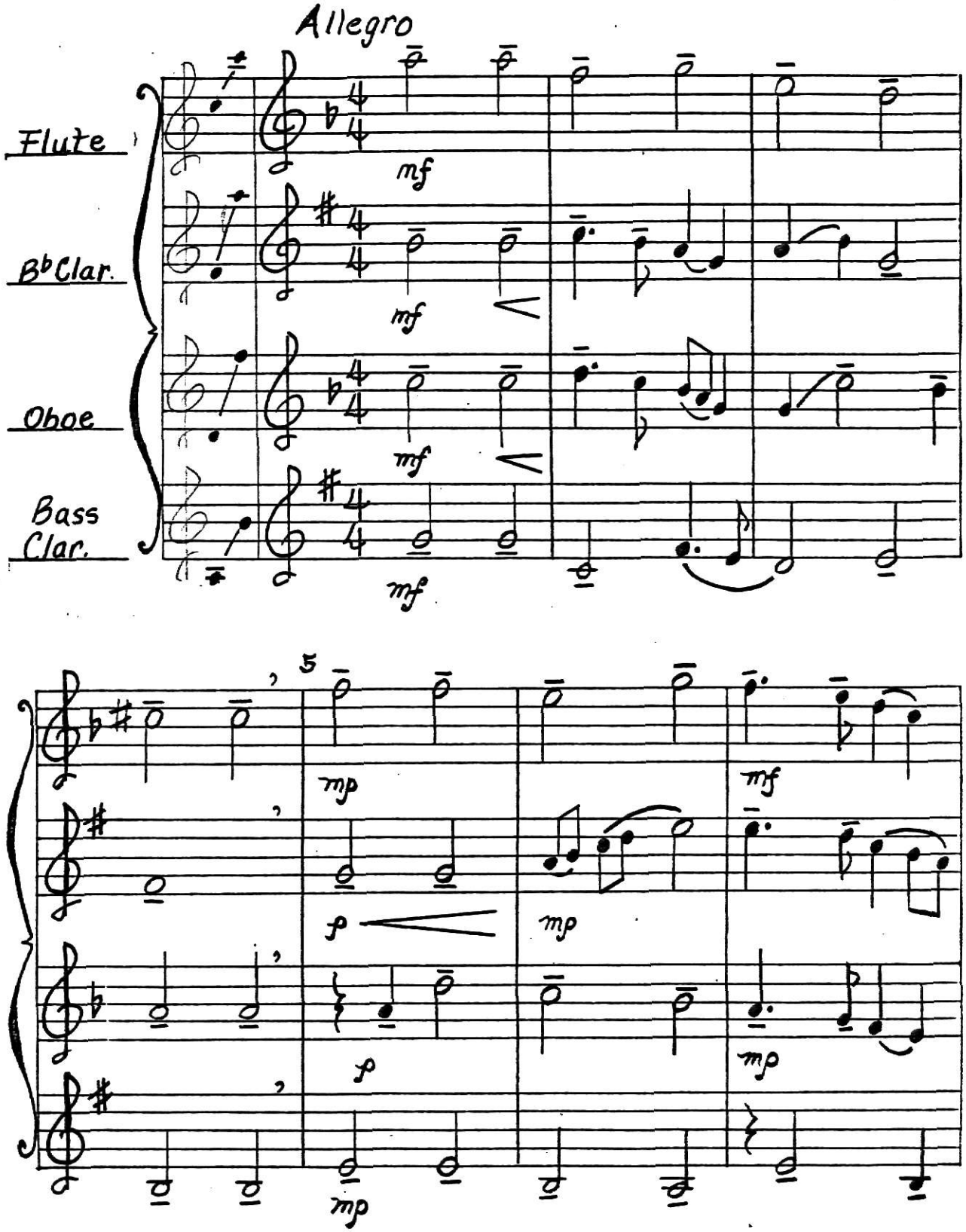
31. Adoramus te, Christe

B. T. (Bartolomeo Tromboncino)

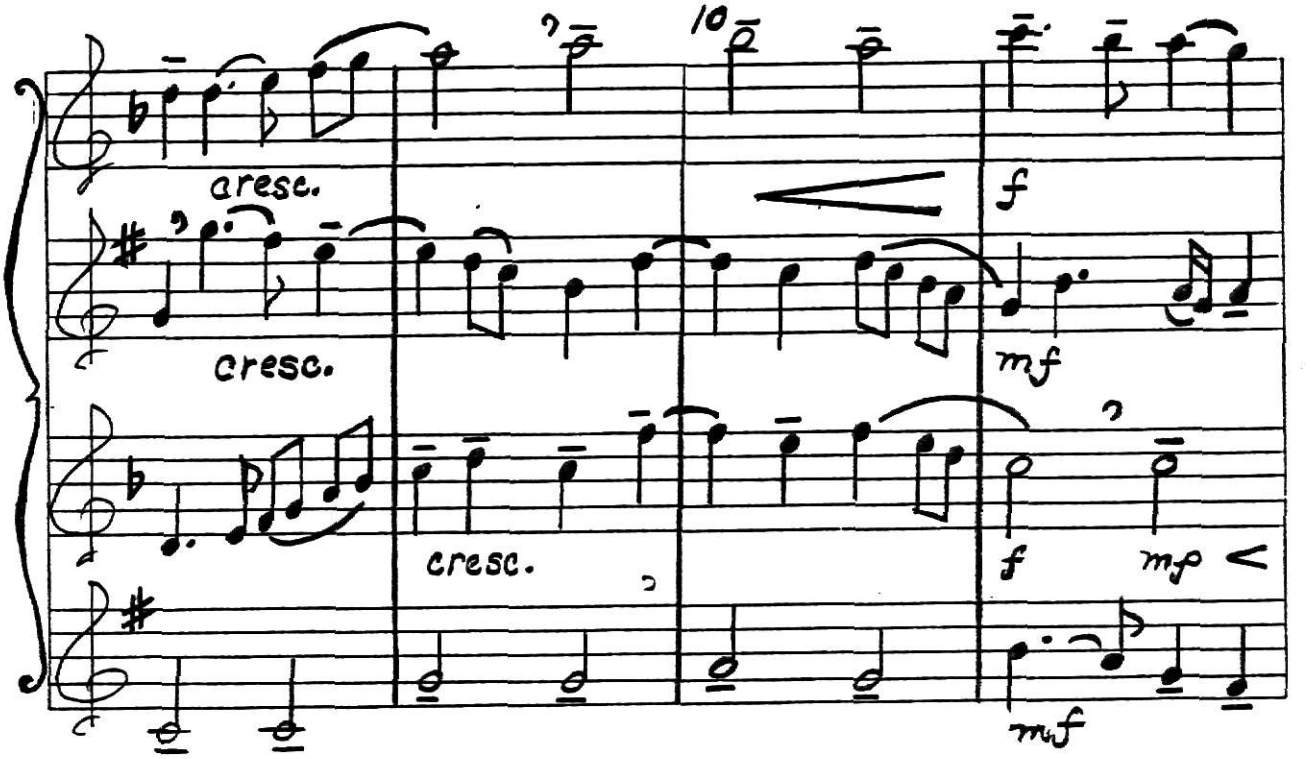


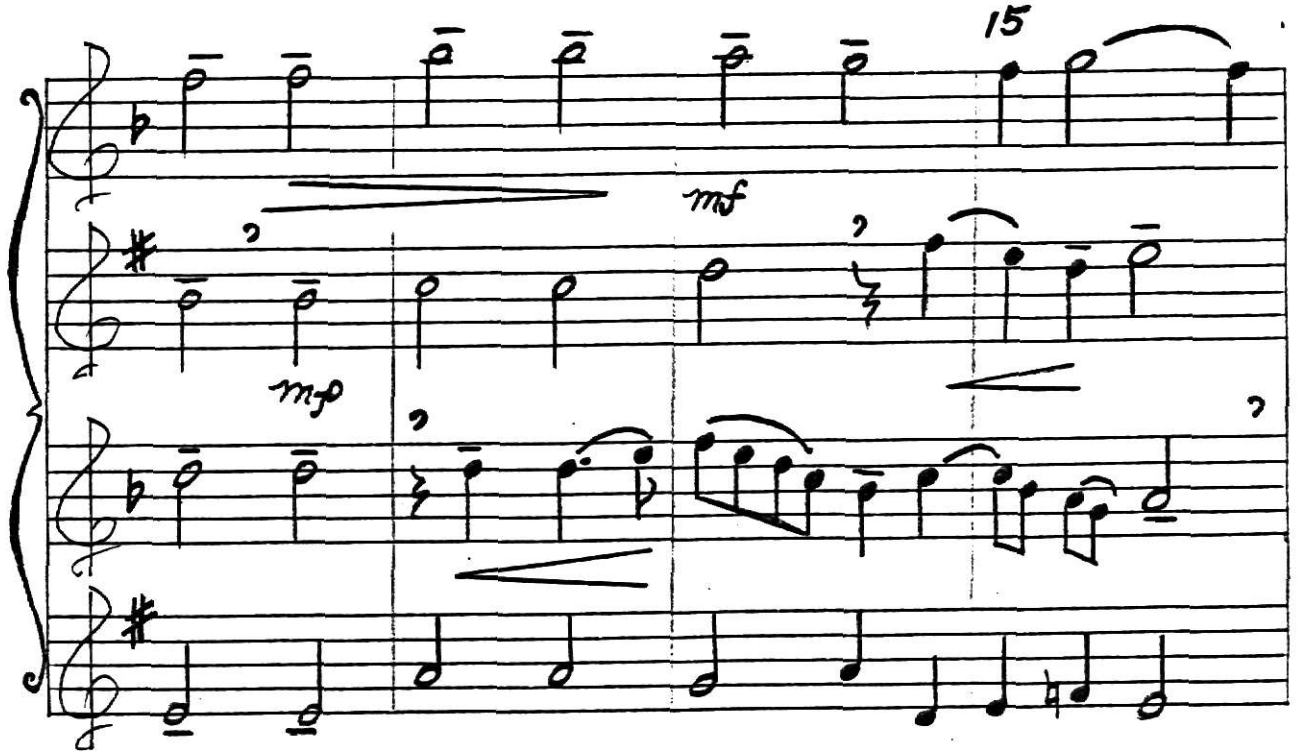
Salve, mundi salutare

transcribed by W. De Lisle

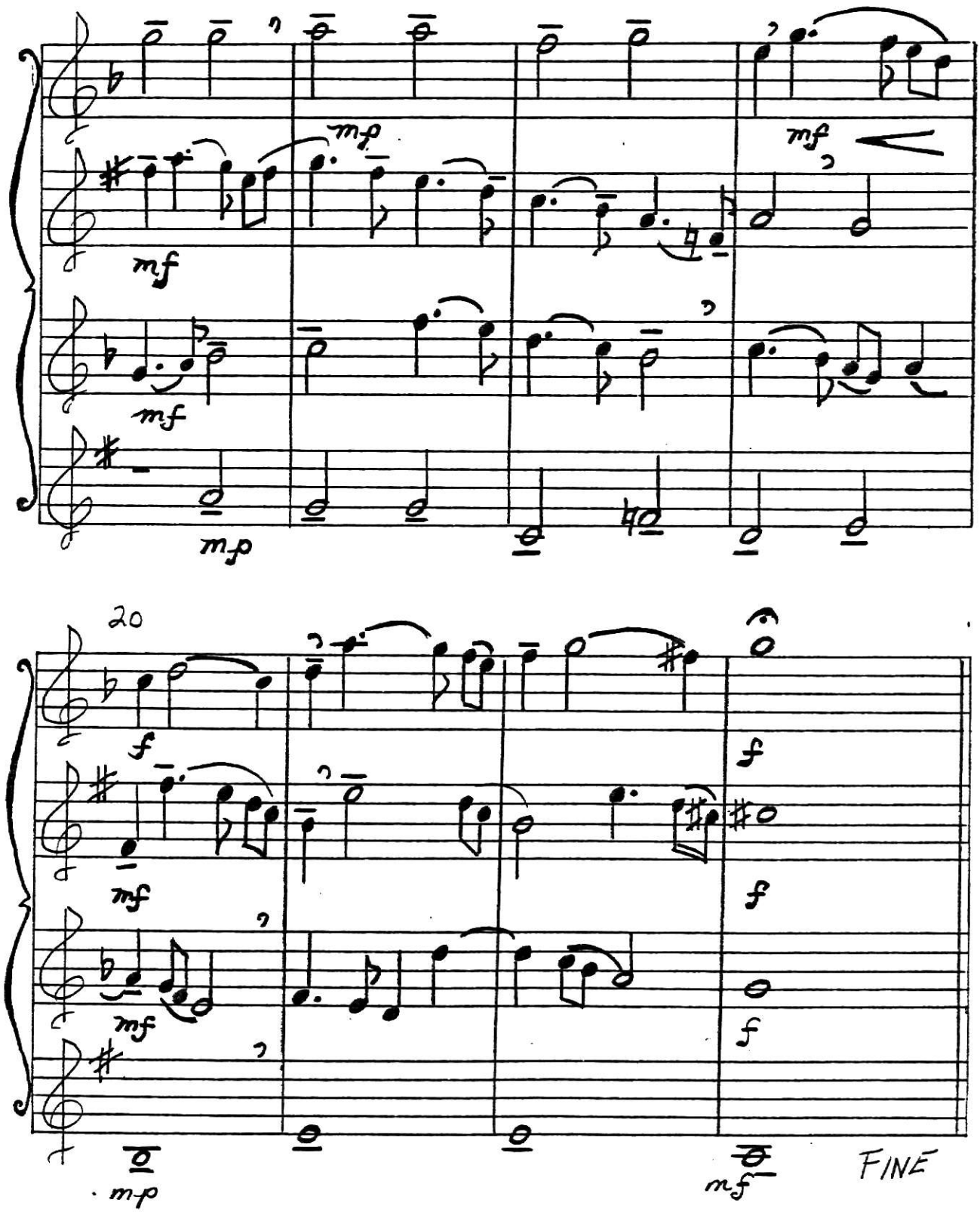


Salve, mundi (cont.)



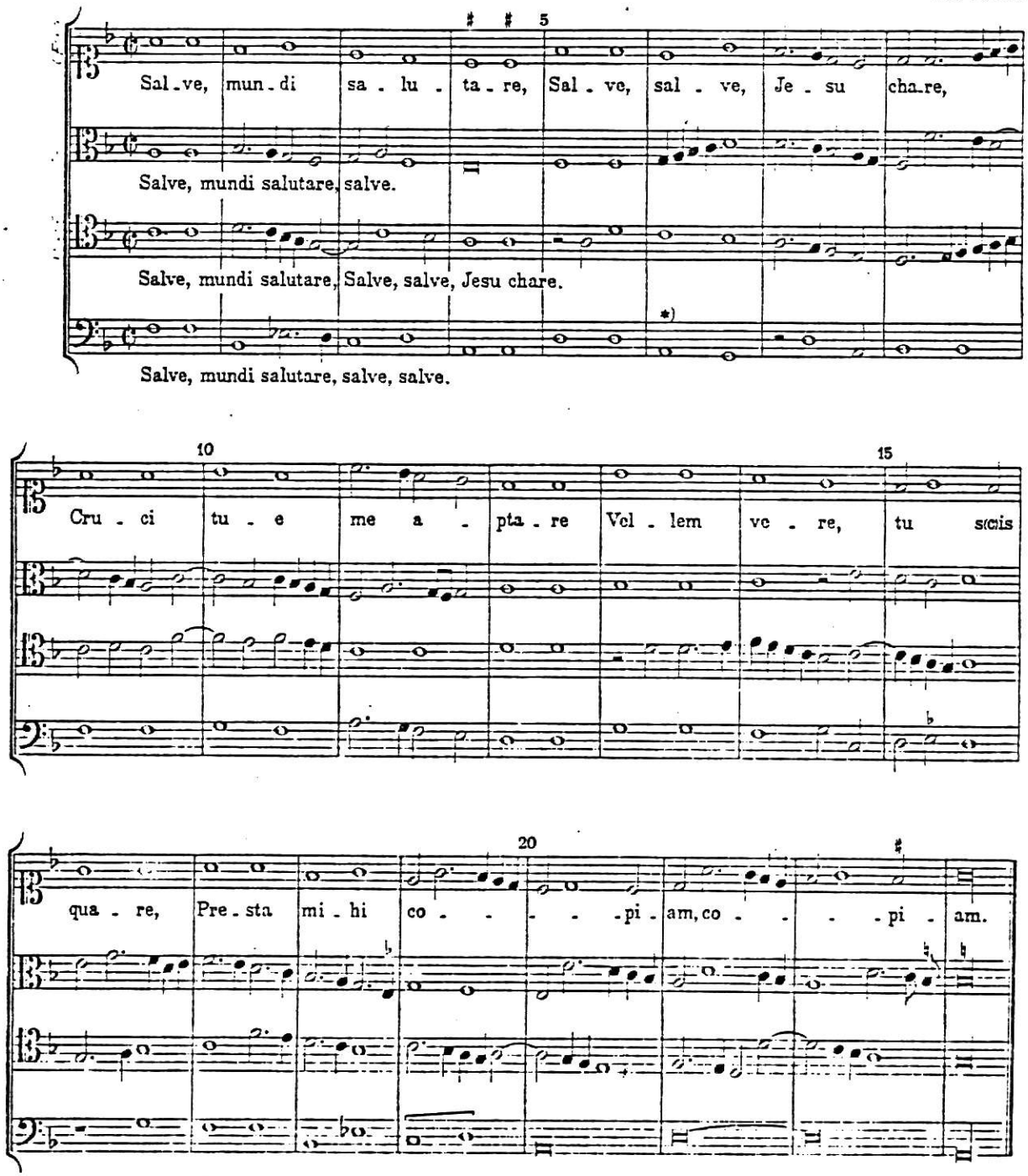


Salve mundi (cont.)



61. Salve, mundi salutare

In. Dam.

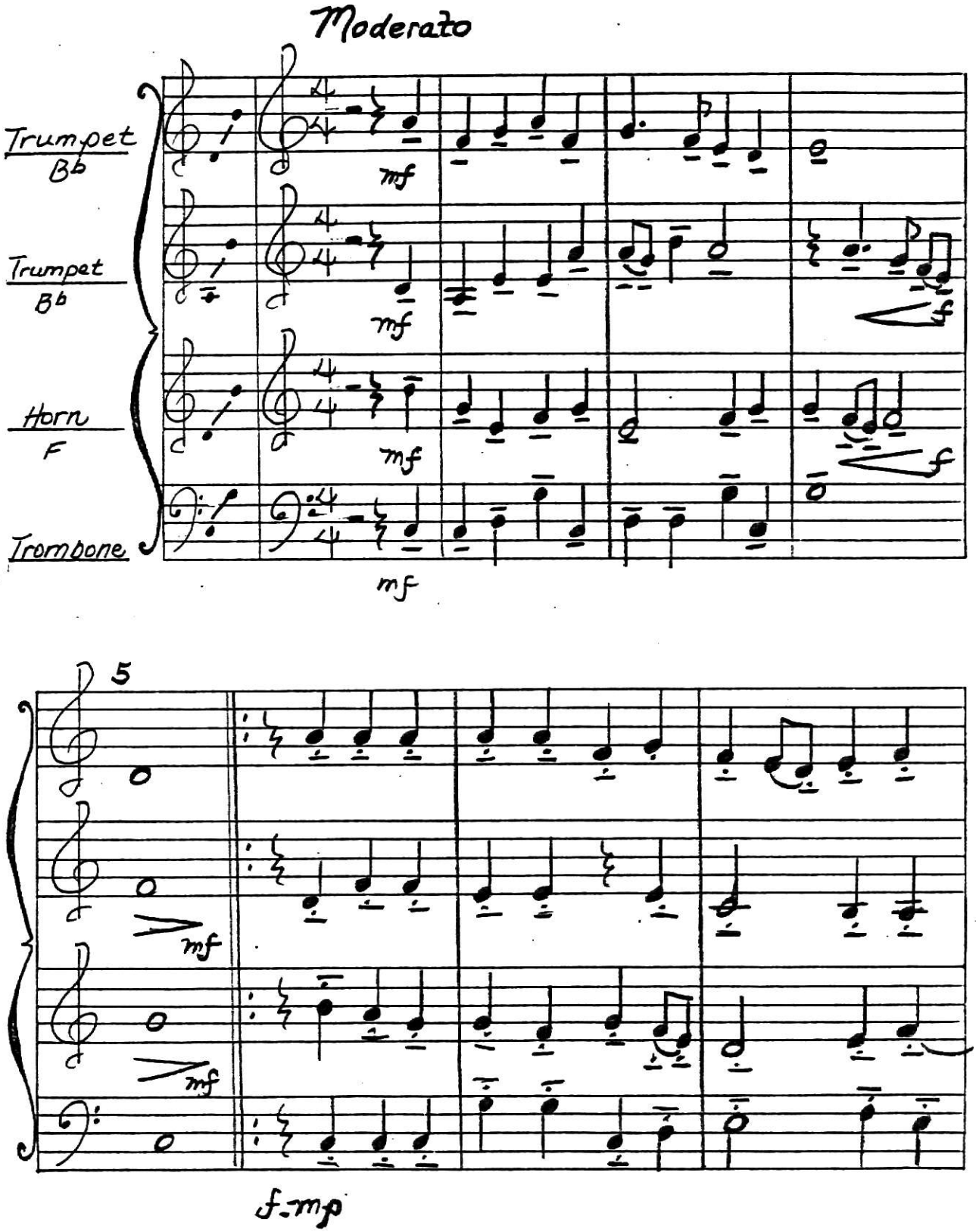


*) Originalgetreu.

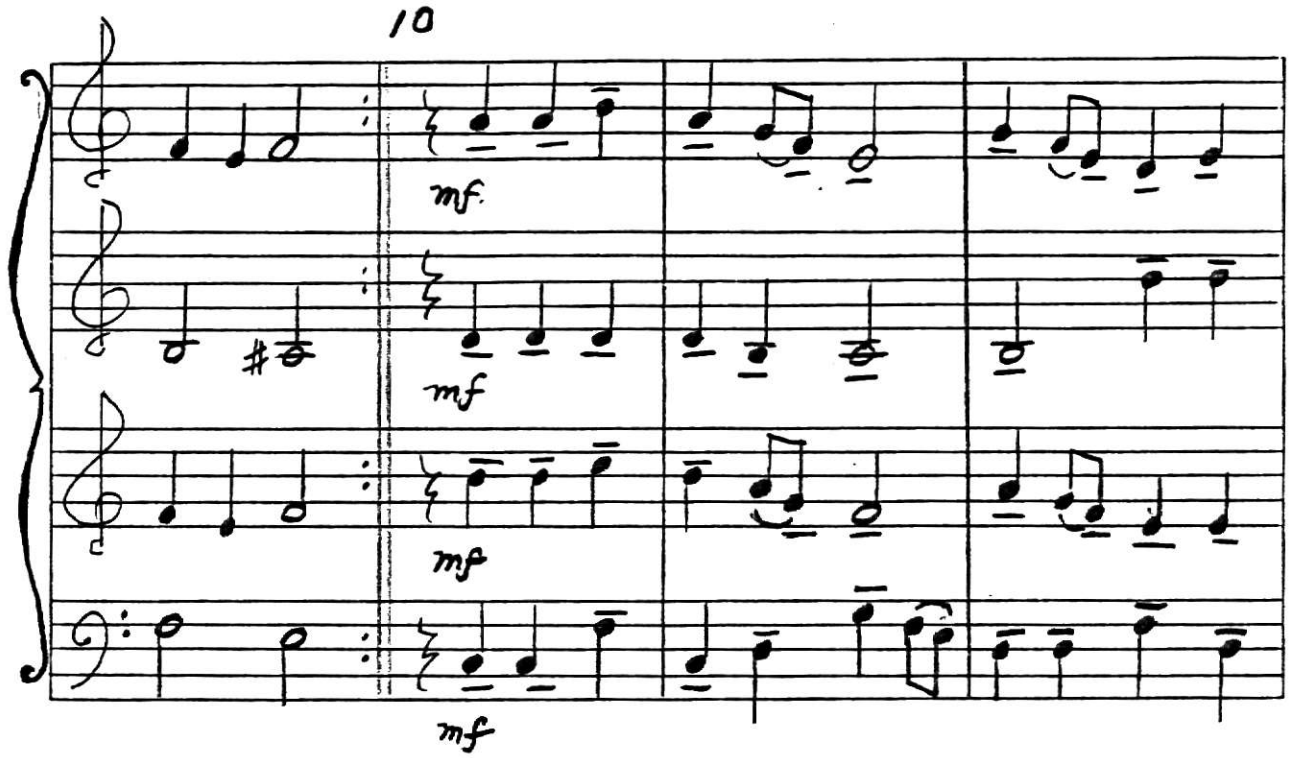
Tromboncino

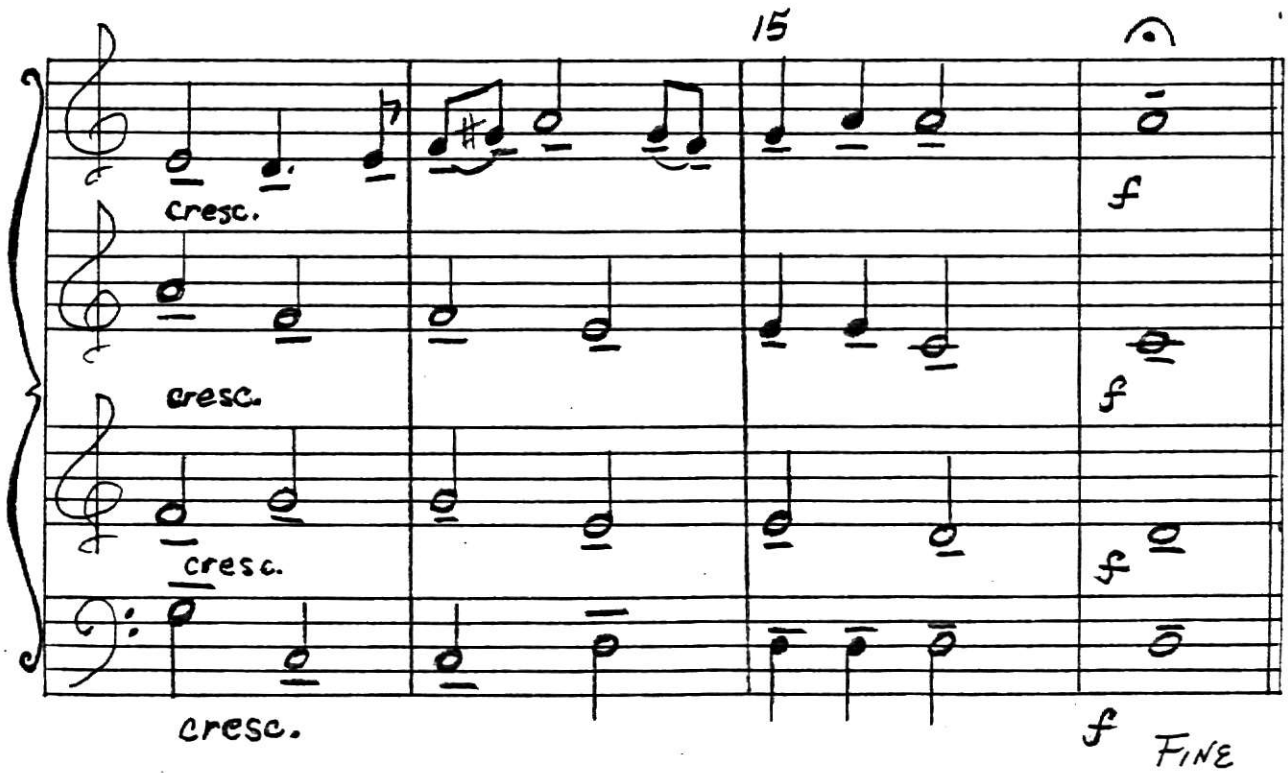
Arbor victorioso, arbor fecondo

transcribed by W. DeLisle

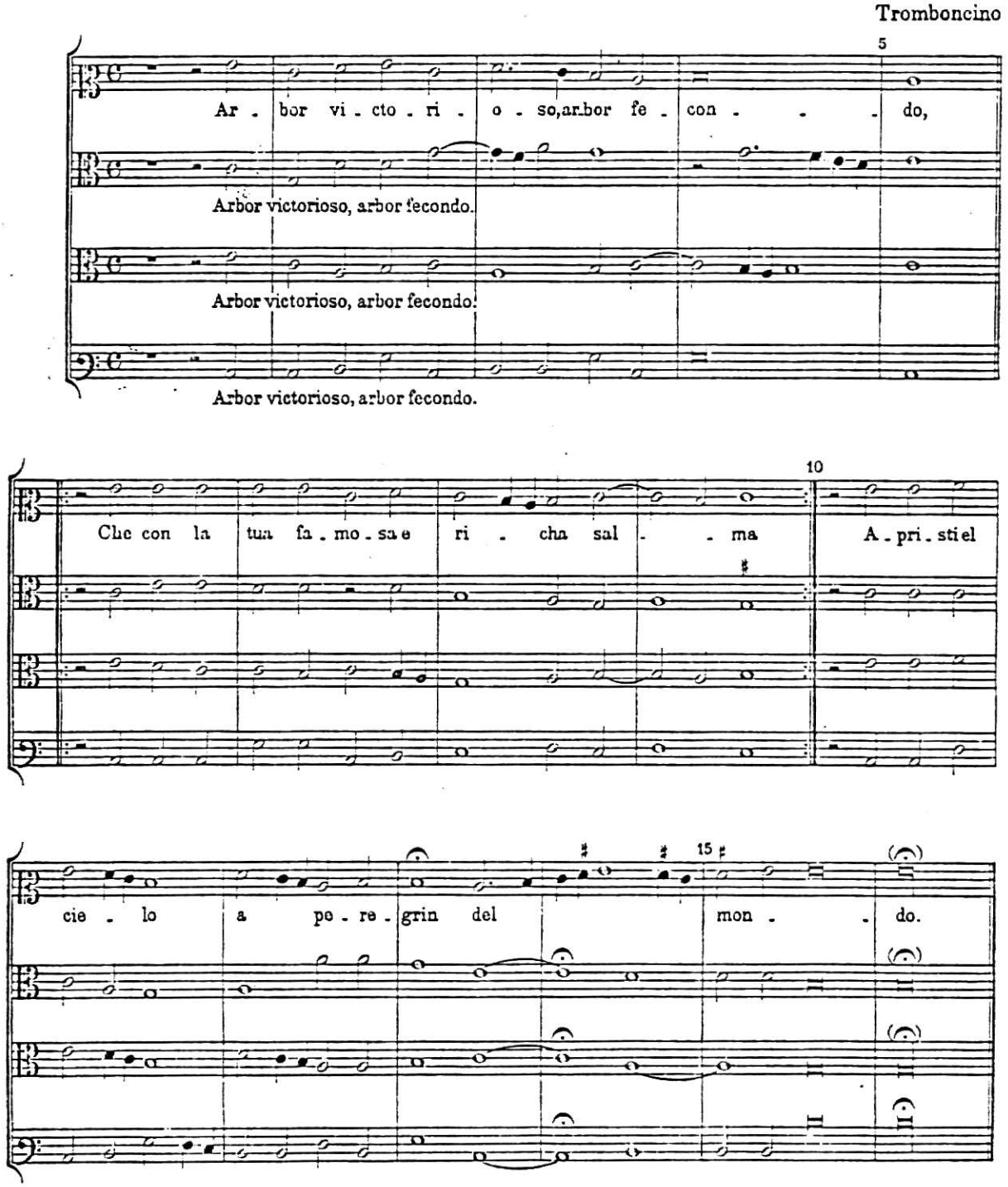


Arbor victorioso (cont.)





10. Arbor victorioso, arbor fecondo



TRANSCRIPTIONS OF FROTTOLE FOR INTERMEDIATE INSTRUMENTAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

by

WENDY M. DE LISLE

B.A., Marymount College, 1975

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1978

ABSTRACT

Chamber music experience for the instrumental student has long been considered beneficial. The author has chosen to transcribe late 15th-century and early 16th-century frottole for intermediate chamber ensembles. The transcriptions are intended as a contribution to existing literature for intermediate chamber ensembles and not as an historical edition. The works are scored for brass, woodwind and brass-woodwind combinations. The intermediate student should find most of the parts interesting and technically accessible.