# IRREGULAR PHRASE STRUCTURE IN THE MINUET AND TRIOS FROM TWO HAYDN SYMPHONIES

by

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IRENE SUE SKONBERG

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Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

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Approved by:

Thomas B. Skonberg

Major Professor

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CONTENTS

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION . . . . . 1

II. THE MINUET AND TRIO FORM . . . . . 4

III. THE MINUET AND TRIO FROM THE OXFORD SYMPHONY . . . . . 6

IV. THE MINUET AND TRIO FROM THE SURPRISE SYMPHONY . . . . . 21

V. A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE MATERIAL DISCUSSED . . . . . 40

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . 41

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

If one scans the phrase-forms of a number of classic minuet and trio forms, one is impressed by the irregularity of phrase lengths within what is generally considered a regular "four-square" dance form. This irregularity occurs especially in the minuet and trio forms of a number of the late Haydn symphonies. The purpose of this study is to gain an insight on how this phrase irregularity is obtained.

Though irregular phrases occur in Mozartian minuet and trio forms, it was decided to limit the study of this feature to these forms as developed by Haydn. Since it was necessary to limit the scope of the study, representative movements were chosen from the Oxford Symphony, No. 92, and the Surprise Symphony, No. 94. The reasons for choosing these two representative movements are twofold:

1. Each is a late work.

2. Each shows a different aspect of treatment; the movement from the Oxford is highly irregular and the movement from the Surprise is generally more regular.

The procedure used for this study was as follows: retaining the measure bars, the bass and treble lines between important cadences were extracted from the complete texture and placed on a chart. The extent of each phrase was indicated and the number of measure bars in each counted. In order that the general contour of the lineal structure be further emphasized, both bass

and treble lines were reduced to their most fundamental forms. The phrase-forms were then studied according to how they float upon these basic lineal designs. (The hypothesis was that if a line is long, the phrase will necessarily be long enough to cover a particular phase of such a line.) The line, then, was being regarded as the basic form rather than the phrases it supports. Since length of line is the essential factor, and since the character of lines is largely determined by underlying chord progressions ending in cadences, harmonic rhythm is of the utmost importance, and the span of the phrase was supposed to be controlled accordingly.

Therefore, much of this phrase irregularity seems to be innate to the length and melodic contours of the musical lines between the important cadences. This is in contrast to a contrived phrase irregularity carried out through the recognized principles of phrase extension. It is true that instances of such contrived extension do occur in the minuet movements, but their study will not be emphasized.

For purposes of definition, the following symbols were devised for the plates to describe the character of the cadences:

↓-represents a perfect authentic cadence in the home key,

↓-represents a perfect authentic cadence in a key other than the home key,

↶-represents an important imperfect authentic cadence,

→-represents a semicadence or any form of continuing harmonic activity.

In addition to these, PAC refers to perfect authentic cadence within the written material.

When specific notes are referred to the following symbols are used:

| | |
|---|---|
| Great octave | C-B |
| Small octave | c-b |
| First octave | $c^1$-$b^1$ |
| Second octave | $c^2$-$b^2$ |
| Third octave | $c^3$-$b^3$ |

# CHAPTER II

## THE MINUET AND TRIO FORM

The minuet and trio form, derived from a dance form, retains an overall pattern of regularity. It is essentially a da capo type of composition; i.e., a ternary form, ABA, in which each part is complete within itself. "This design was used so frequently in the writing of minuets during the eighteenth century that it came to be known as the 'minuet-and-trio form.'"[1] This term will be used throughout the study with "minuet" referring to A and the "trio" to B.

Of course, the minuet and trio form had long lost its function as a dance form; it was being treated as a form with an aesthetic purpose. The rigidity of the functional form was loosened even to the point of a later development into the scherzo.

The typical minuet is in itself a small ternary form. Part I ends in a perfect authentic cadence in the key of the dominant, or if in minor, in the key of the relative major. Part II, often containing contrasting thematic material, is a transitive section ending in a half-cadence in the home key. Part III, a thematic restatement of Part I, pursues a harmonic course leading into a perfect authentic cadence in the home key. Occasionally a short coda follows. In general, the form can be diagrammed in this way:

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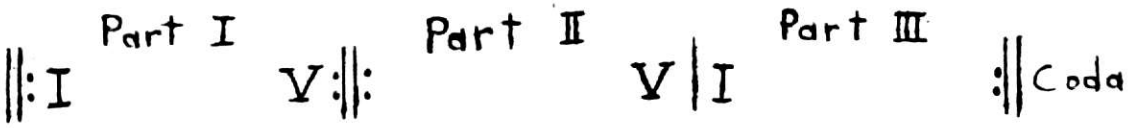
[1] Paul Fontaine, Basic Formal Structures in Music, p. 69.




It will be noticed that the repeat plan of its prototype, the old binary form, is retained.

The trio has the same formal plan as the minuet.

## CHAPTER III

## THE MINUET AND TRIO FROM THE OXFORD SYMPHONY

Albert E. Wier, in the preface to his anthology, The Symphonies of Haydn, Schubert and Mozart in Score gives the following account of the composition of the Oxford Symphony.[2]

> In the period from 1787 to 1790 Haydn composed some of his greatest works, including the six "Russian" string quartets, fifteen piano trios and twelve symphonies for which he received a commission from the "Concert Spirituel," an institution founded in 1725 by Philidor. These symphonies were divided into two sets of six each; one in the second set became known as the "Oxford" Symphony because it was performed in the Sheldonian Theatre on July 8, 1791, when Haydn was awarded the degree of Doctor of Music by Oxford University.

The analysis of the phrase structure is shown on Plates I through VII.

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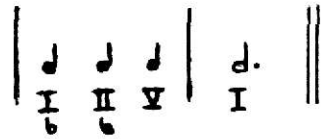
[2]Albert E. Wier, The Symphonies of Haydn, Schubert and Mozart in Score, p. 6.

Plate I, which shows the lineal structure of Part I of the minuet section, a line twelve measures long, is interrupted by a half-cadence in m. 6. The elongation of the phrase to six measures is because of the three small phases existing in this line. These are shown in Plate I, mm. 1-2, 3-4, and 5-6, respectively. In the second phase this scale form is sequenced in slightly different rhythm. In the third phase it is again sequenced. The upper line is over a lower line which is mainly in contrary motion. This section of the line reaches its cadence tone in the six-measure span. Because of the harmonic rhythm each phase is two measures long. In such a line moving on such a harmonic rhythm, it takes four measures to cover the whole scale-line from $d^3$ to $f^{\#2}$.

The second phrase, parallel with the first, continues the same harmonic rhythm for two of its phases. Its third phase is a cadence phase with the harmonic rhythm shown below.




In the second phase the movement between the two outer lines is similar until the cadence portion. This second phrase could have reached its cadence in four measures but the need to balance the length of the first phrase is strongly felt in this opening period.

Oxford

I

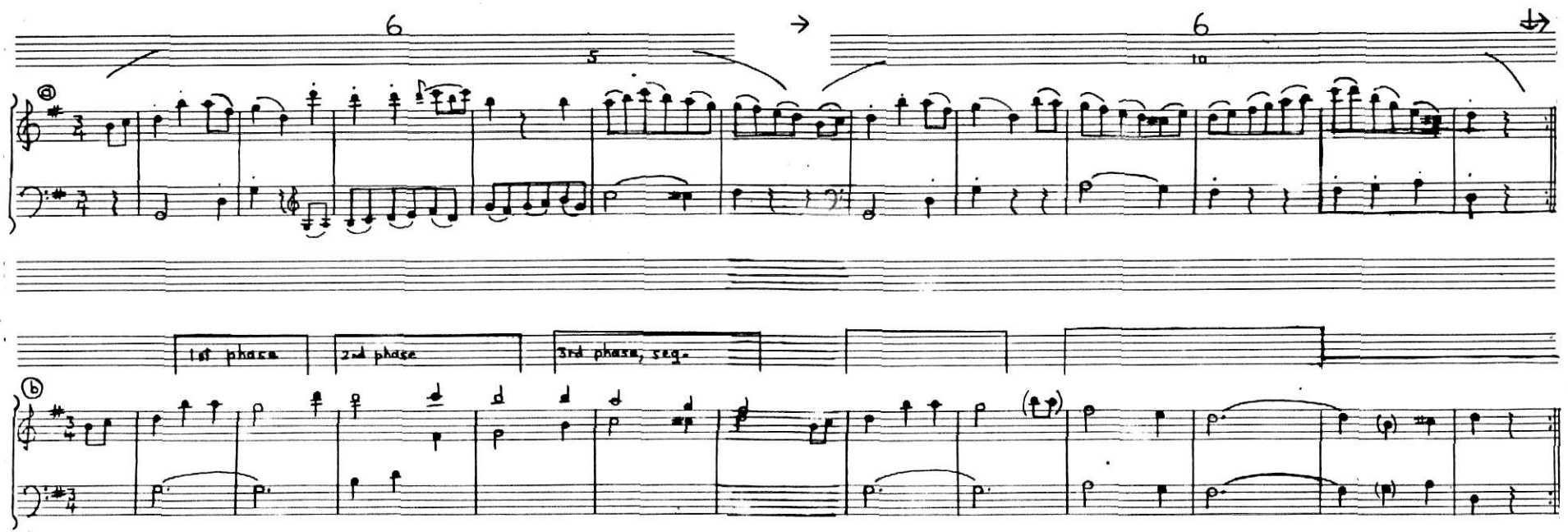
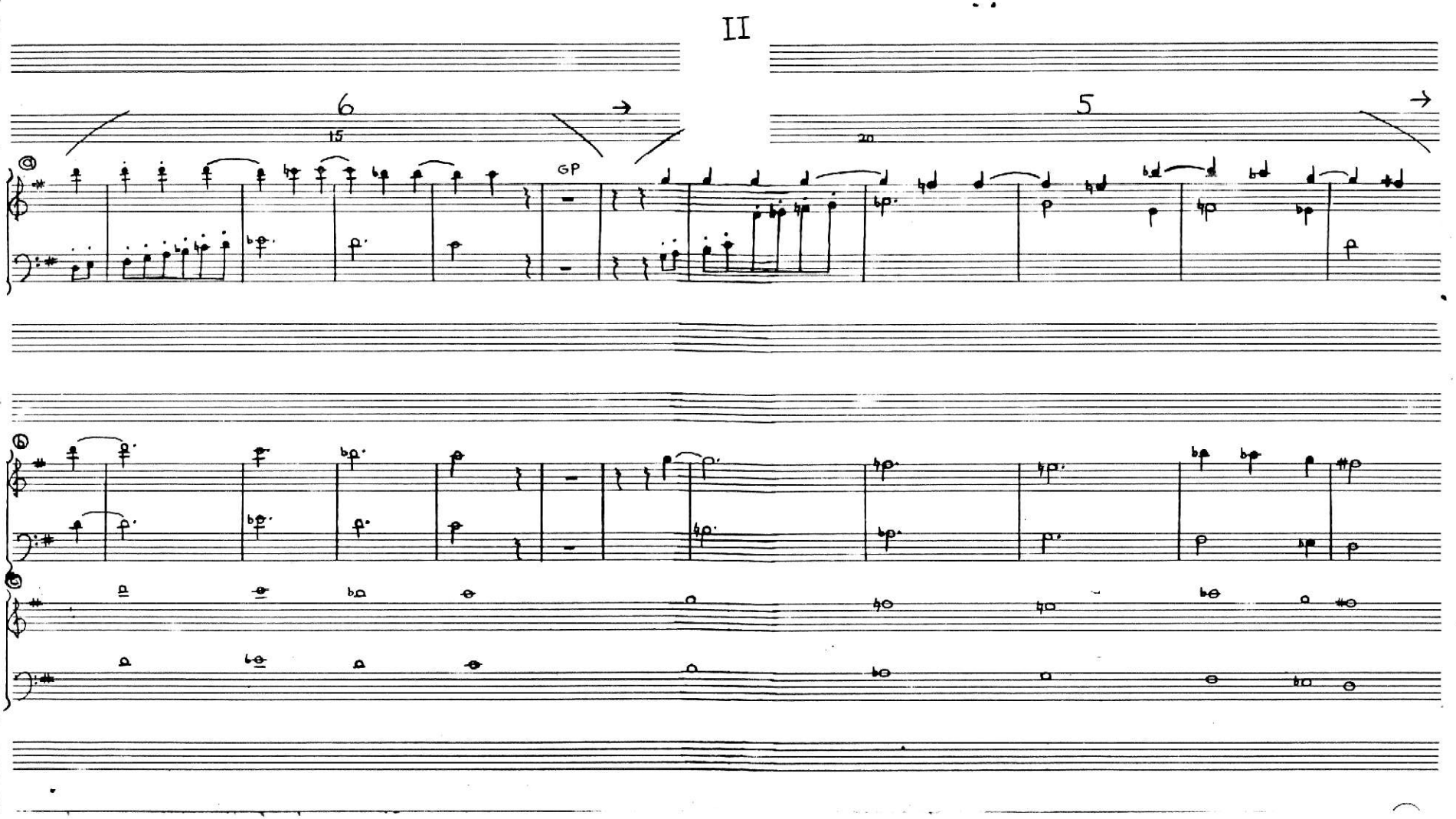


Plate II illustrates an eleven-measure line, mm. 13-23, ending in a semicadence. The scope of this line is seen in Score c by the descending bass line moving conjunctly from $e^{\flat 1}$ to d without cadential interruption. This line supports two phrases; the first, mm. 13-18 (including the G. P.), is a six-measure structure, and the second, mm. 19-23, a five-measure structure. The length of these phrases seems to be controlled by the continuous, expansive bassline and the harmonic rhythm of the chords it supports. Four-measure phrase structures would hardly fit on such an expansive plan.


II
6
15
GP
5
20

The line in Plate III is only nine measures in length. It terminates in m. 32 with a half-cadence in the key of G. The pedal-point bass in this line, consisting of d, supports the descending treble line. The destination of $d^2$ and the D major chord is reached early but extension occurs (the second phrase). The two phrases are connected by an elision. The second phrase (mm. 29-32) appears to be merely extension to balance the first phrase (mm. 24-29) or perhaps to reaffirm the dominant chord in preparation for the return to the opening subject.

# III

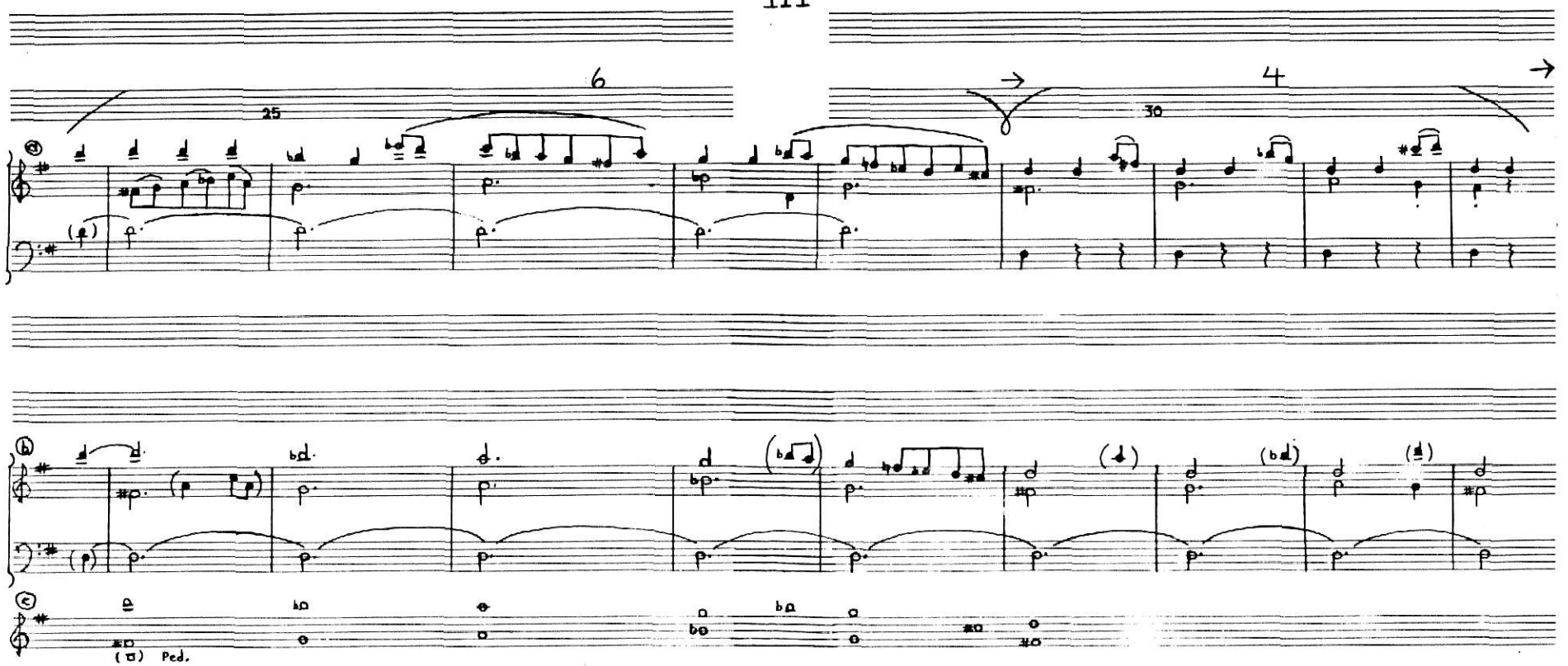


Plate IV completes Part II of the minuet section. Eighteen measures, mm. 33-50, with a closing PAC in G make up this line. As at the beginning, mm. 1-6, three phases make up the first phrase to elongate it to six measures; but a different direction is then taken. A long scalewise descending line plus extension follows (mm. 39-46). This is the second phrase, followed by the third phrase, mm. 47-50. Thus this third phrase is a regular, conventional four-measure codetta which is an anchor on G.

# IV

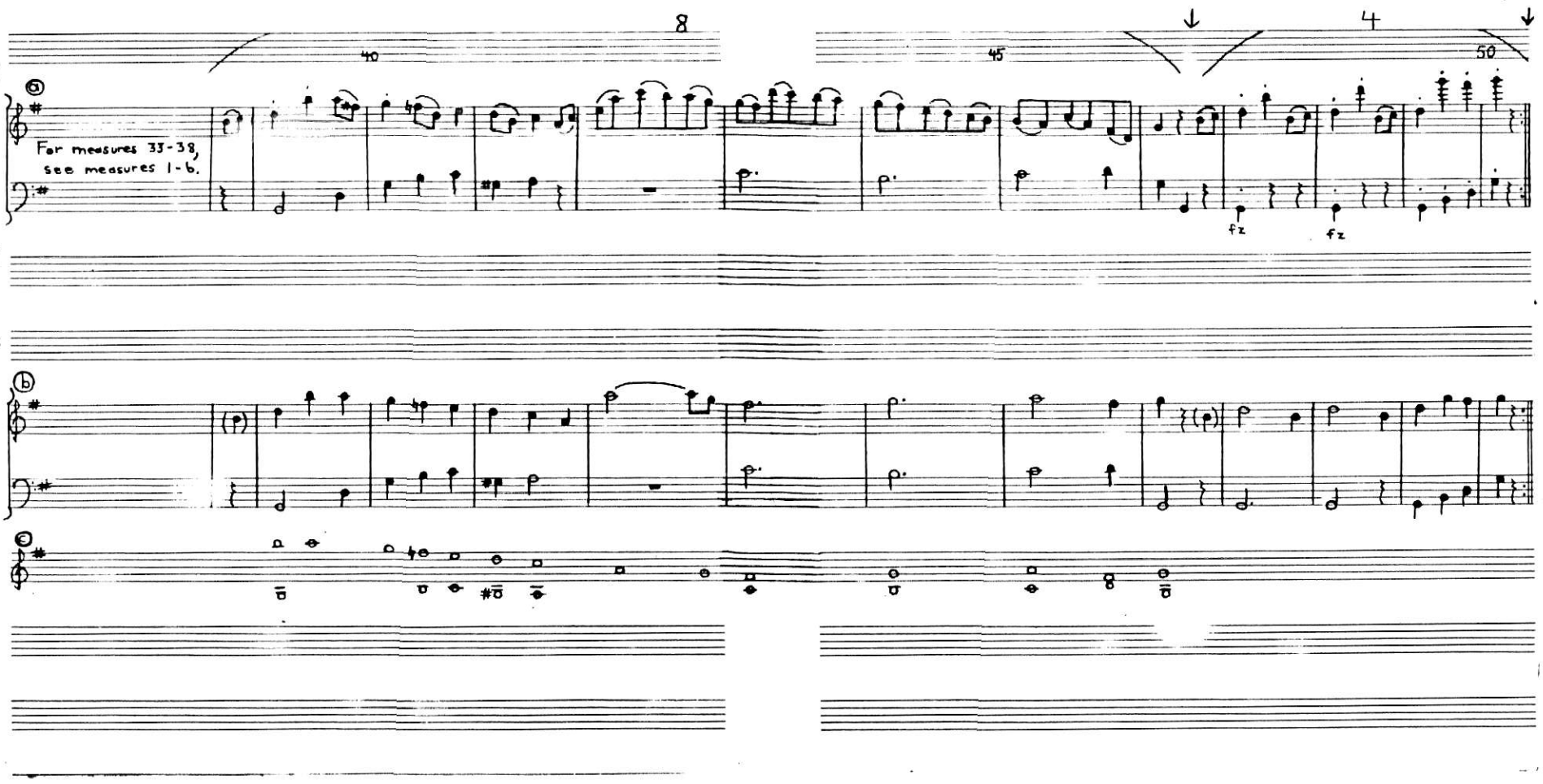
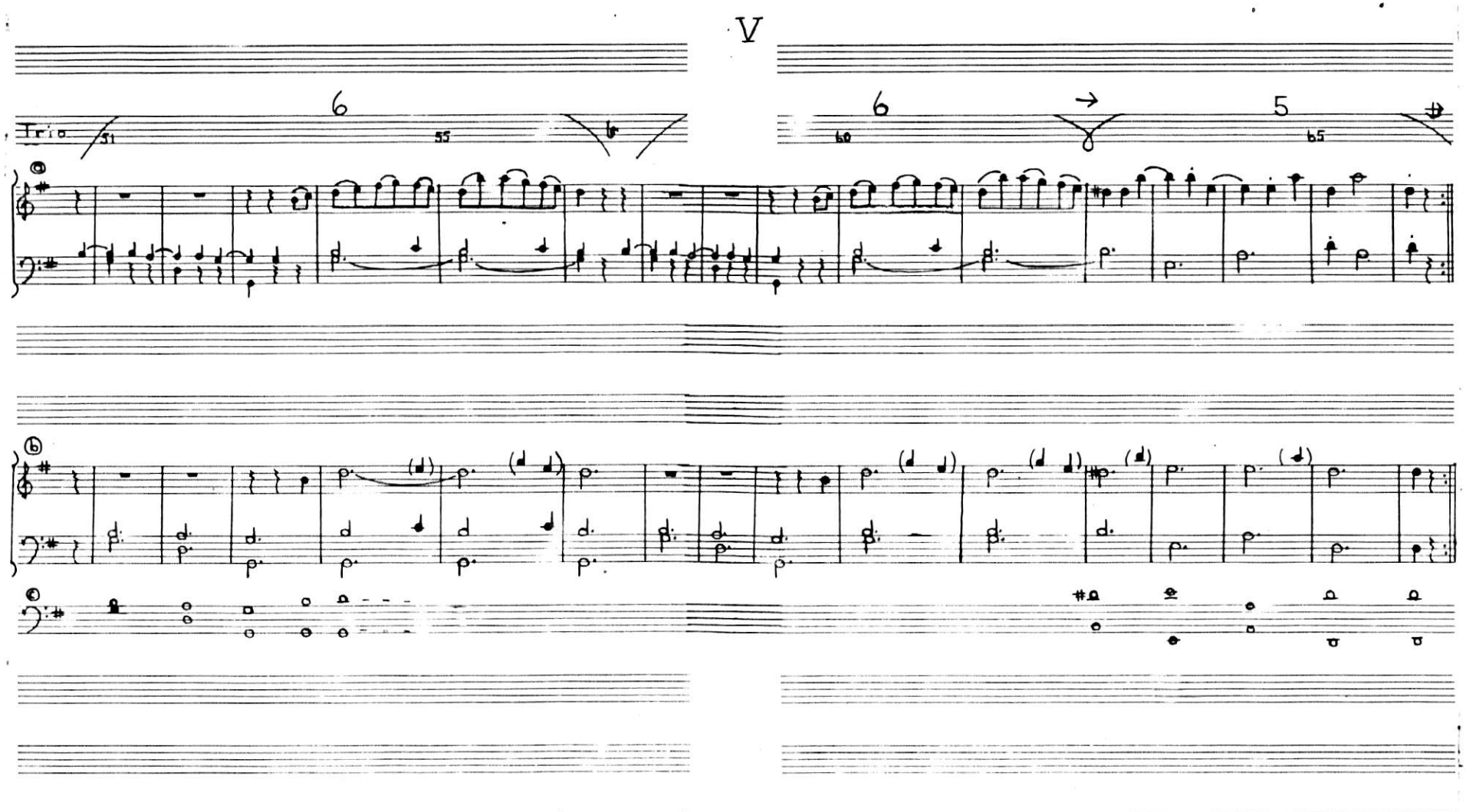


Plate V and the trio begins with a line of sixteen measures. This is Part I, and a PAC in D terminates it in m. 66. The key of G is strongly anchored until the last phrase when the modulation is achieved by sharping $d^2$ which then becomes the raised third of a VI chord in D major leading to movement around the chord classes to the I. This movement takes time.

The two motives of three measures each form the basis for the two irregular six-measure phrases in mm. 51-56 and mm. 57-62. The first motive in each case makes it very plain that G *major* is the key by using I-V-I progressions. The following motives are anchors on G. The third phrase is connected by an elision and, as mentioned before, proceeds to the key of the dominant with a VI-II-V-I chord progression. This five-measure phrase is irregular because it merely takes that much time to get there.


V
Trio
51
6
55
60
6
5
65

Nineteen measures make up Plate VI. A half-cadence in G ends this very long line. The crux seems to be the bass. It is a descending line which can be divided. The first section of the bass line, mm. 67-70, is a descending conjunct line, while the second phase, mm. 70-74 is a cadential portion with the repetition of the $\frac{6}{4}$-V formula. The two phases together support an eight-measure phrase structure exactly reflecting these two phases. The second section of the bass line, mm. 75-85, also falls into two phases. The first, mm. 75-81, is in descending conjunct motion, and the second, mm. 81-85, is cadential. Two closely integrated phrases, mm. 75-79 and mm. 79-85, seem to be supported by this bass. Phrase lengths again seem to be determined by the course of the bass and the harmonies it implies in the cadence regions.

# VI

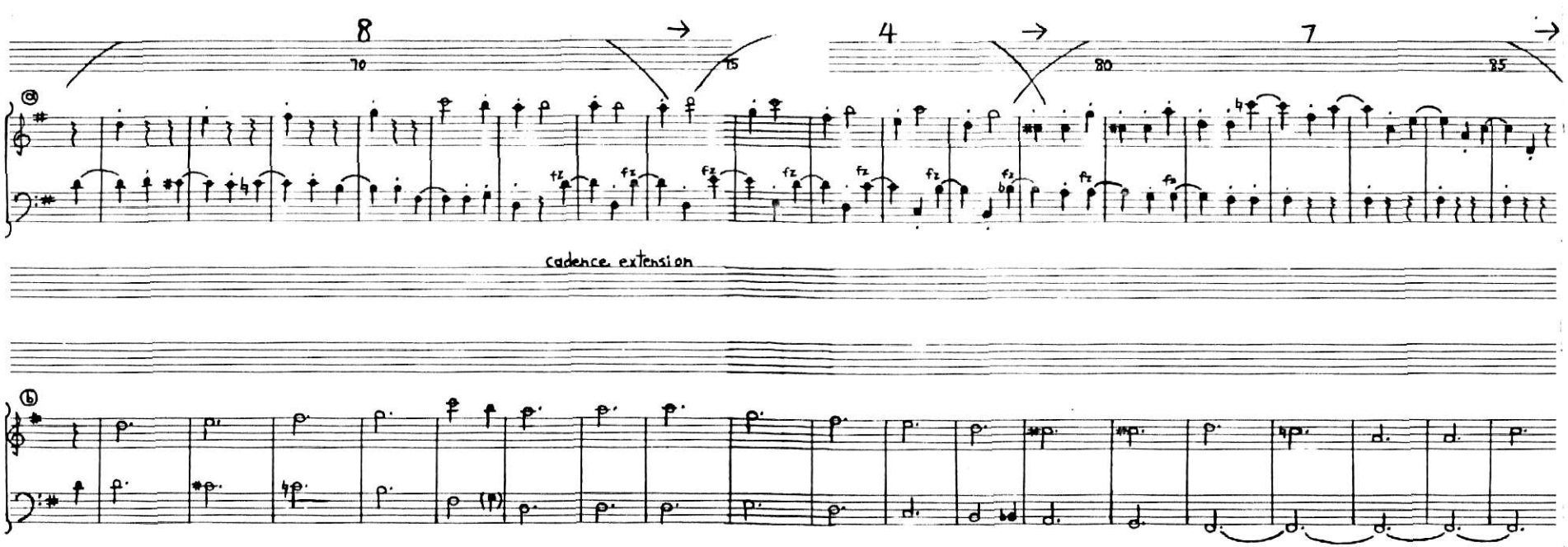
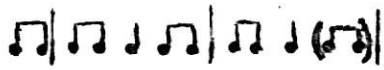
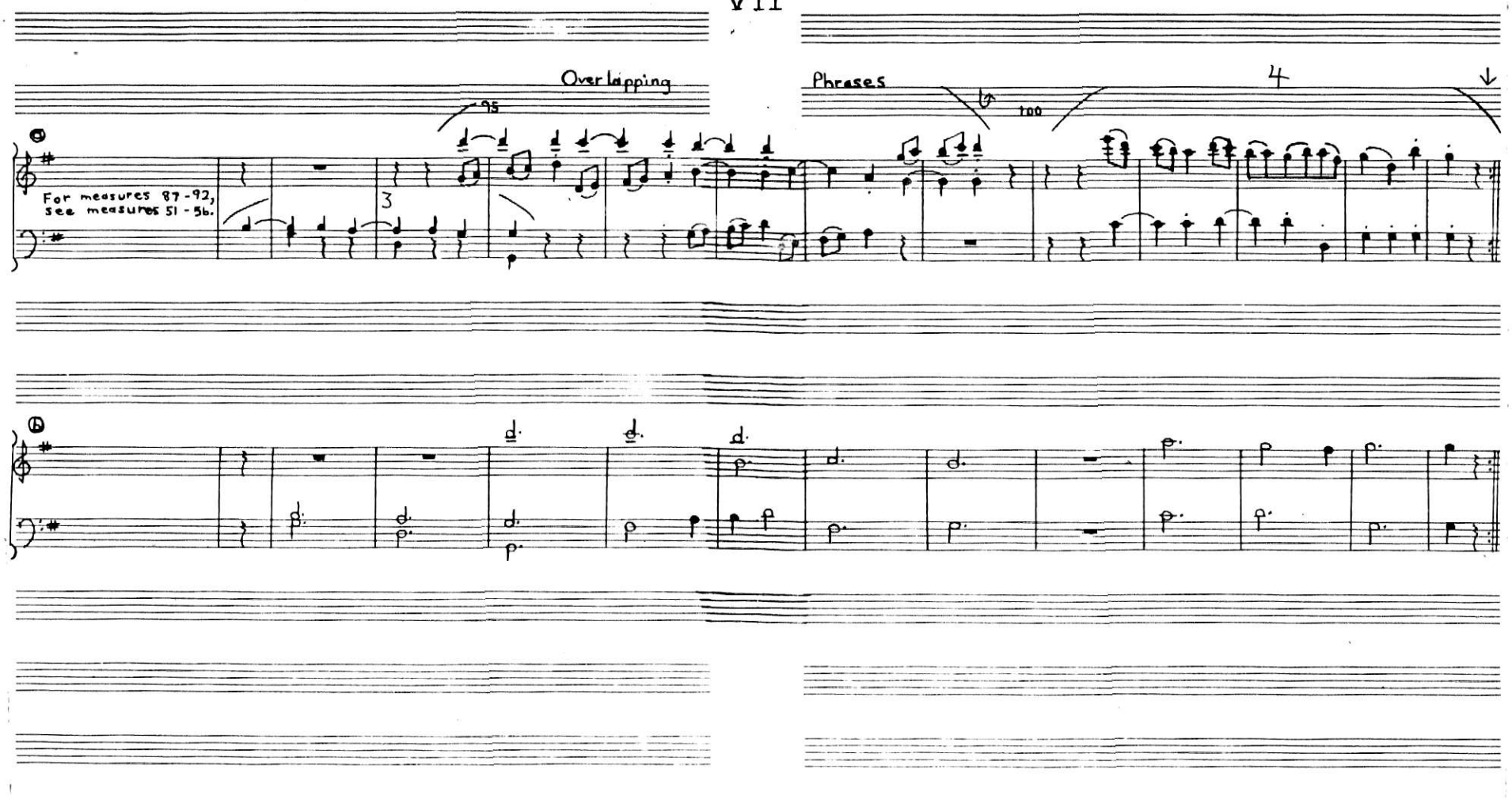


Plate VII, a line of eighteen measures, completes Part II of this trio section with a PAC in G major. The opening trio phrase of six measures, mm. 51-56, is repeated here in mm. 87-92. Instead of repeating the second phrase an unusual structure occurs. There is an overlap between two irregular phrases. The first is made up of three measures, mm. 93-95, and the second begins in the third beat of 94 and extends to m. 99. A running eighth-note figure,  , pervades this latter phrase and is passed to a lower note each time (except the last time it is stated).

The final phrase of four measures is again a conventional four-measure short coda.

# VII


Overlapping
Phrases
95
100
4
For measures 87-92, see measures 51-56.
3

# CHAPTER IV

## THE MINUET AND TRIO FROM THE SURPRISE SYMPHONY

Wier's remarks concerning this work are quoted below:

> Haydn's first visit to London began on New Year's Day 1791, and was crowned with such success that he remained there until June, 1792. He visited the English metropolis to fulfill a contract with Johann Salomon, an orchestra conductor, to compose six symphonies and conduct them at the piano. The success of the first six was so great that Haydn wrote another series, one of which was the "Surprise" Symphony presented here. It was first played in London on March 23, 1792, and its nickname "Surprise" is derived from the fact that the Andante contains an extraordinarily loud drum beat at the conclusion of the first pianissimo presentation of the principal theme.[3]

The analysis of the phrase structure is shown on Plates VIII through XVI.

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[3]Albert E. Wier, The Symphonies of Haydn, Schubert and Mozart in Score, p. 6.

Plate VIII shows a regular periodic structure of two four-measure phrases. The length of the first phrase is governed by the harmonic movement from tonic to dominant. Likewise, the second phrase moves from dominant back to the tonic and ends with a PAC in G major. Establishing the key seems to be the goal.

Surprise

# VIII

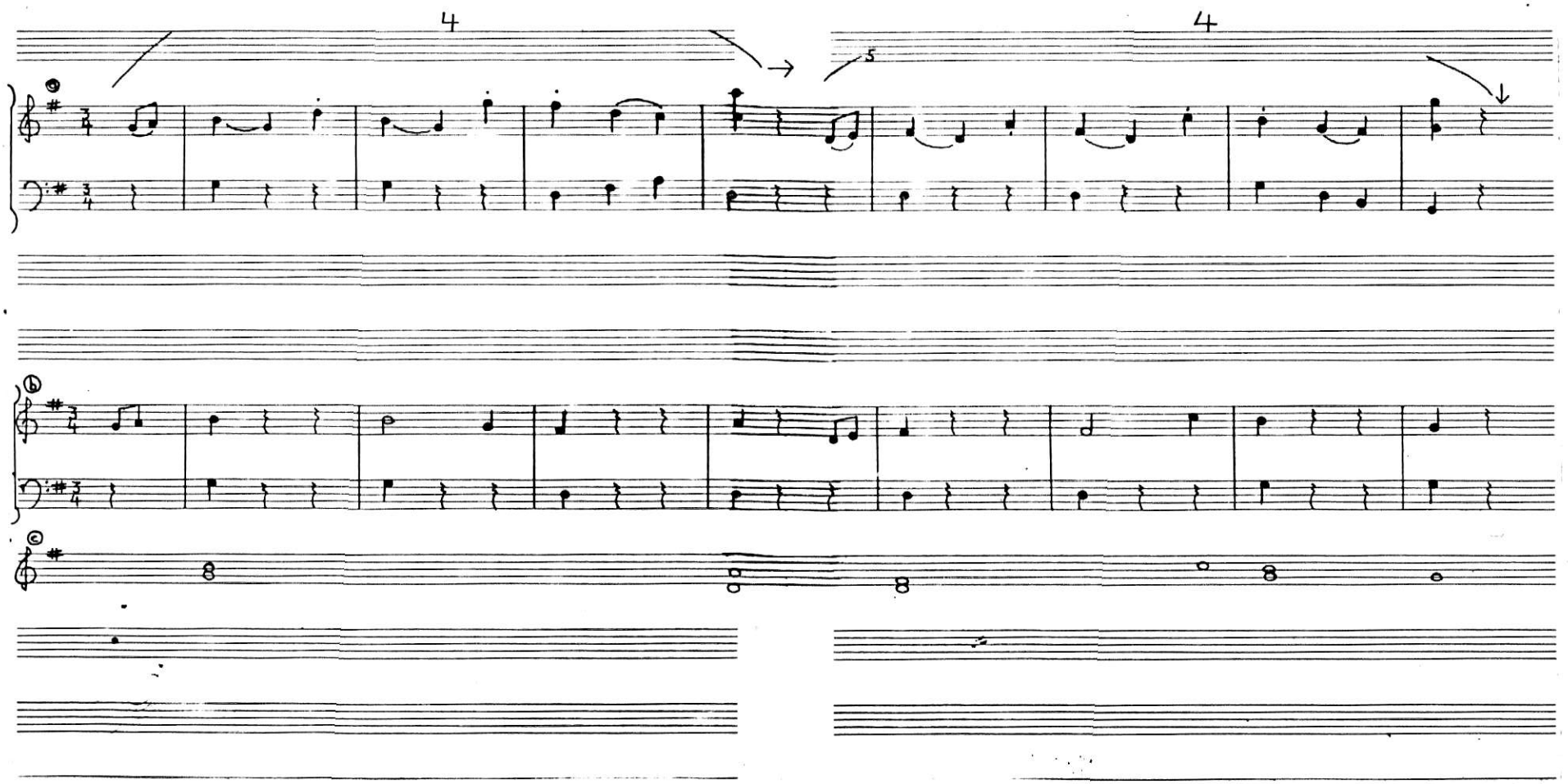


Plate IX is a bit more complex. Ten measures make up this line which ends Part I with a PAC in D major. Two phrases are found. The first one seems to be a regular four-measure phrase which contains an F natural ($f^{1}$), thus losing the leading tone (in the key of G major). A motive of two measures used in sequence brings in the new leading tone of $c^{\#1}$ in the second phrase. This phrase is irregular (six measures). The contour of the bass line, a-(d)-g-$f^{\#}$-A-d, does not allow a perfect cadence in the key of D major to develop until the fifth and sixth measures.

# IX

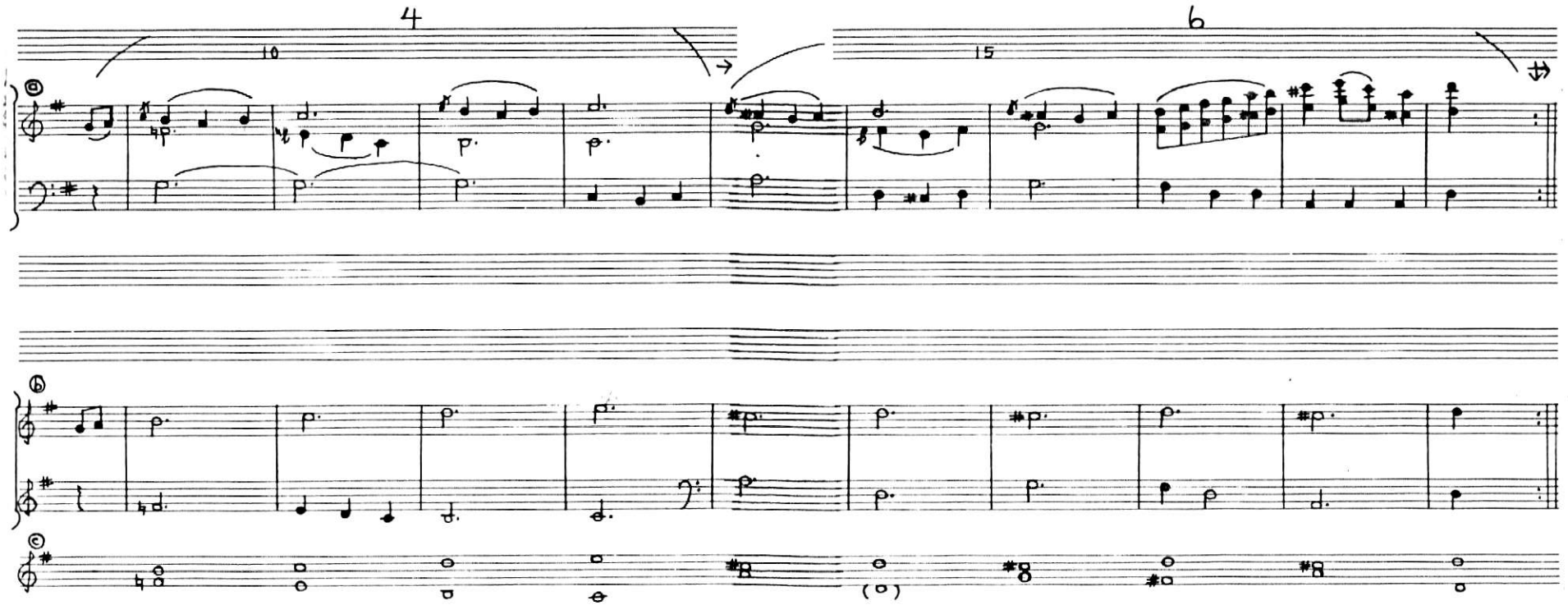
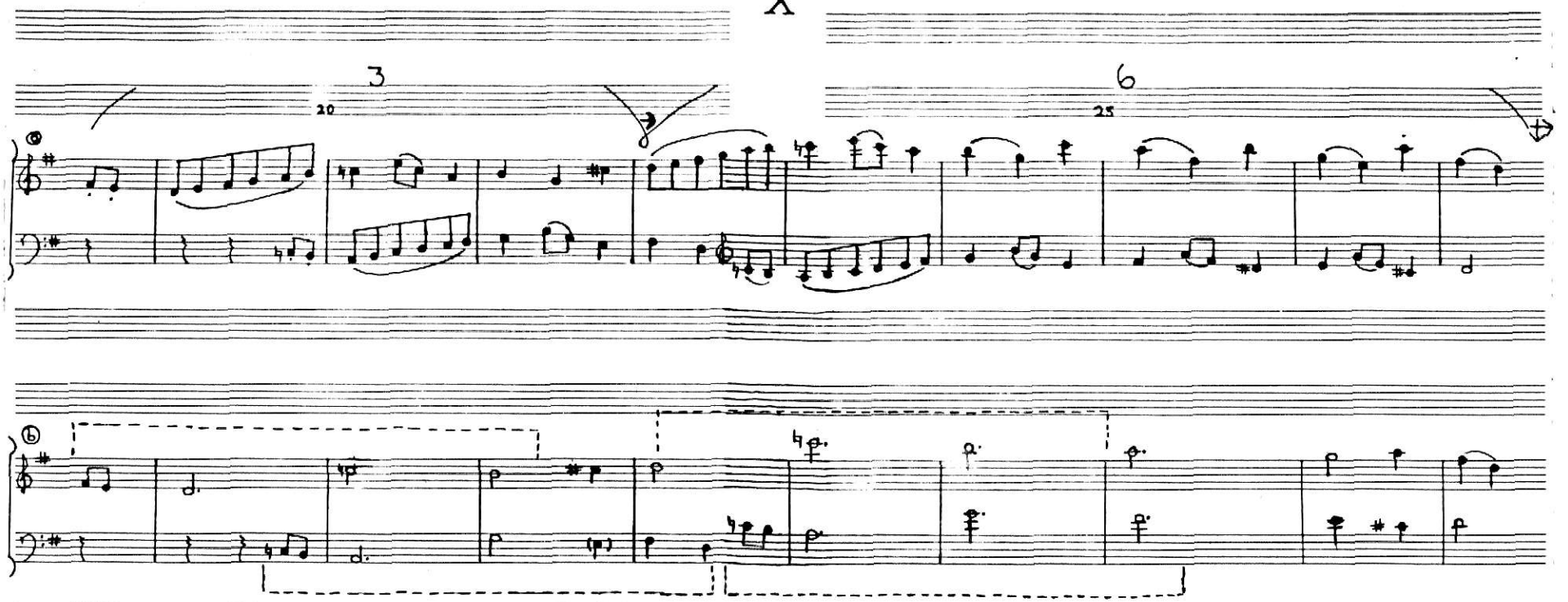


Plate X contains a passage of imitative counterpoint in which there are four overlapping statements of a four-measure motive. The treble line, reaching its high point in the fifth measure of the passage (m. 23), descends scalewise on a harmonic rhythm which allows no cadence until m. 27. Likewise the bass line, reaching its high point in m. 24, needs three more measure beats to complete its descent. Passages in imitative counterpoint are in general immune to the phrase regularity frequently found in purely homophonic passages.

# X



The next line of thirteen measures, Plate XI, modulates back to D major and ends in a D chord which is a half-cadence in G major. The two phrases are respectively eight and five measures in length. The first phrase, mm. 28-35, is built on a long treble line descending six measures from $c^2$ to $e^{\flat 1}$, and thence up to $f^{\#1}$. Moving on a regular harmonic rhythm, eight measures are needed to support this phase of the complete line. The second phrase consists of a simple modulation back to G major by way of a half-cadence at the end.

# XI

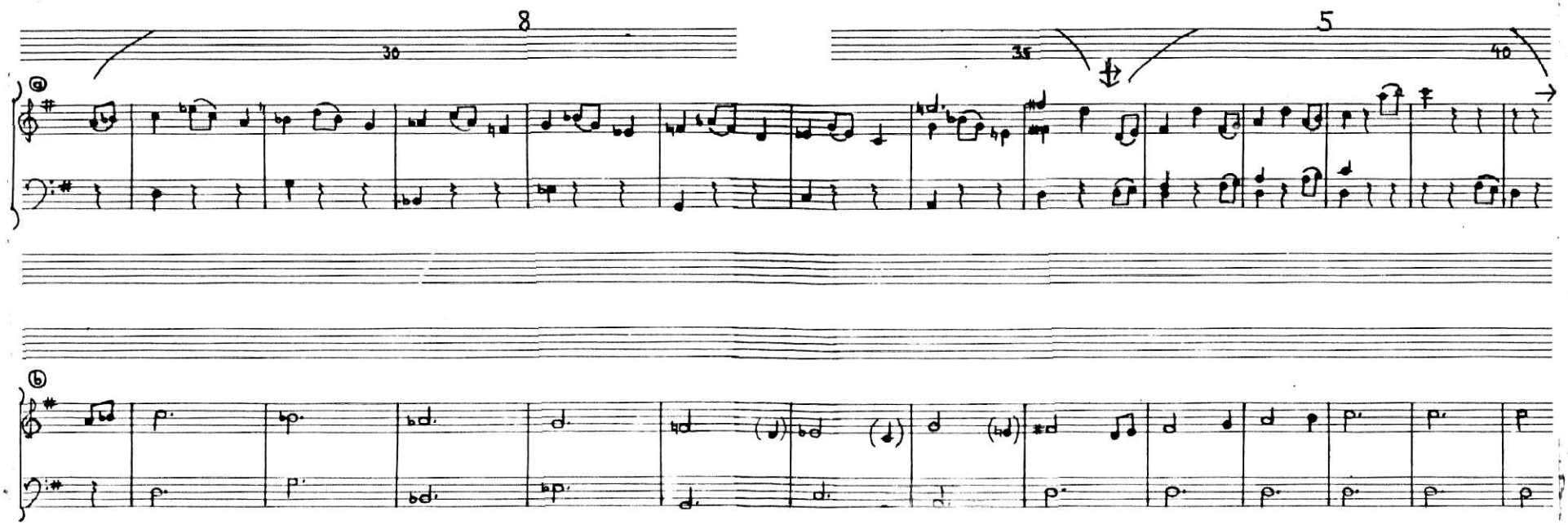


Plate XII contains a line of fourteen measures and its three phrases are terminated by a PAC in G major. The first one has already been discussed as it is the same as the opening phrase of the movement, mm. 1-4. The second, mm. 45-48, is nothing more than a $D^7$ ($V^7$) passage which anticipates the third six-measure phrase which is an anchor in G. The first four measures of this phrase are tonic and a V-I progression of two measures follows. This accounts for the irregularity here.

# XII

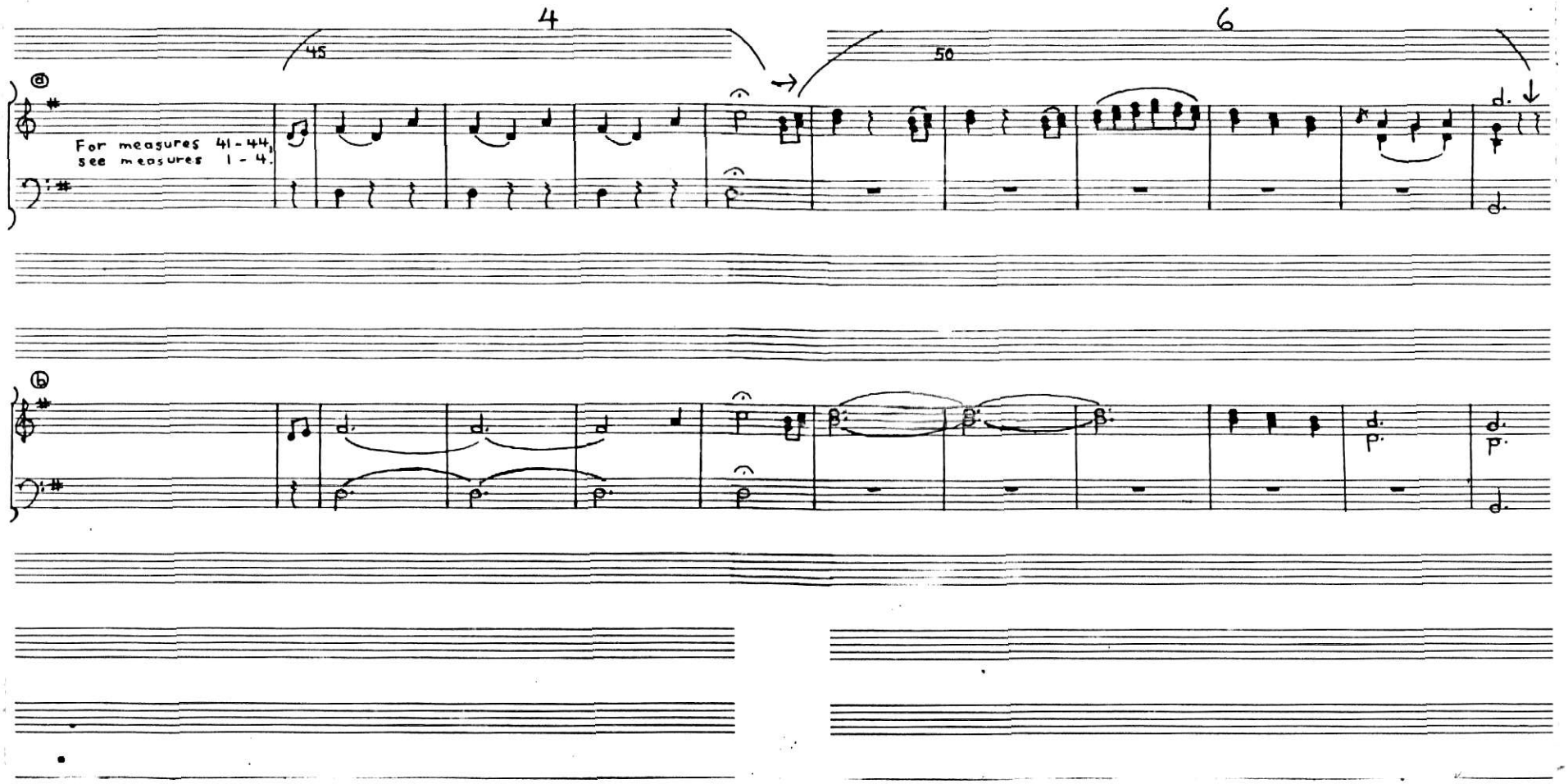


Plate XIII, a coda, is merely two repeated phrases over a pedal point on G.

# XIII

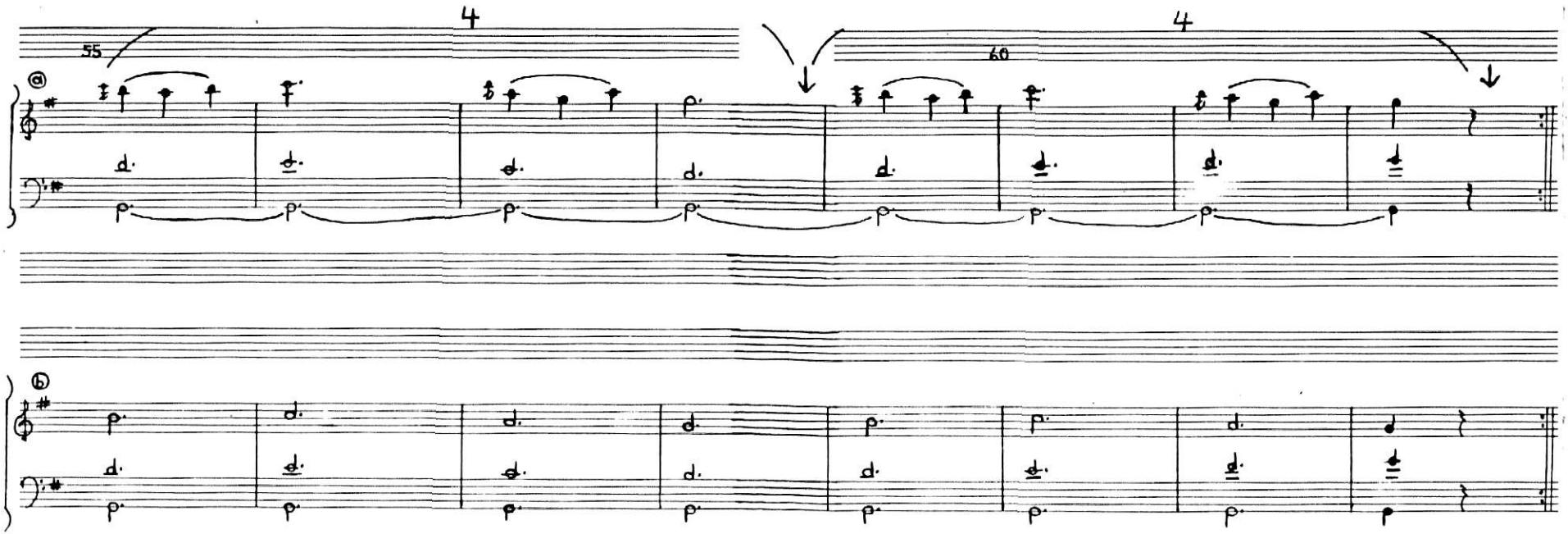
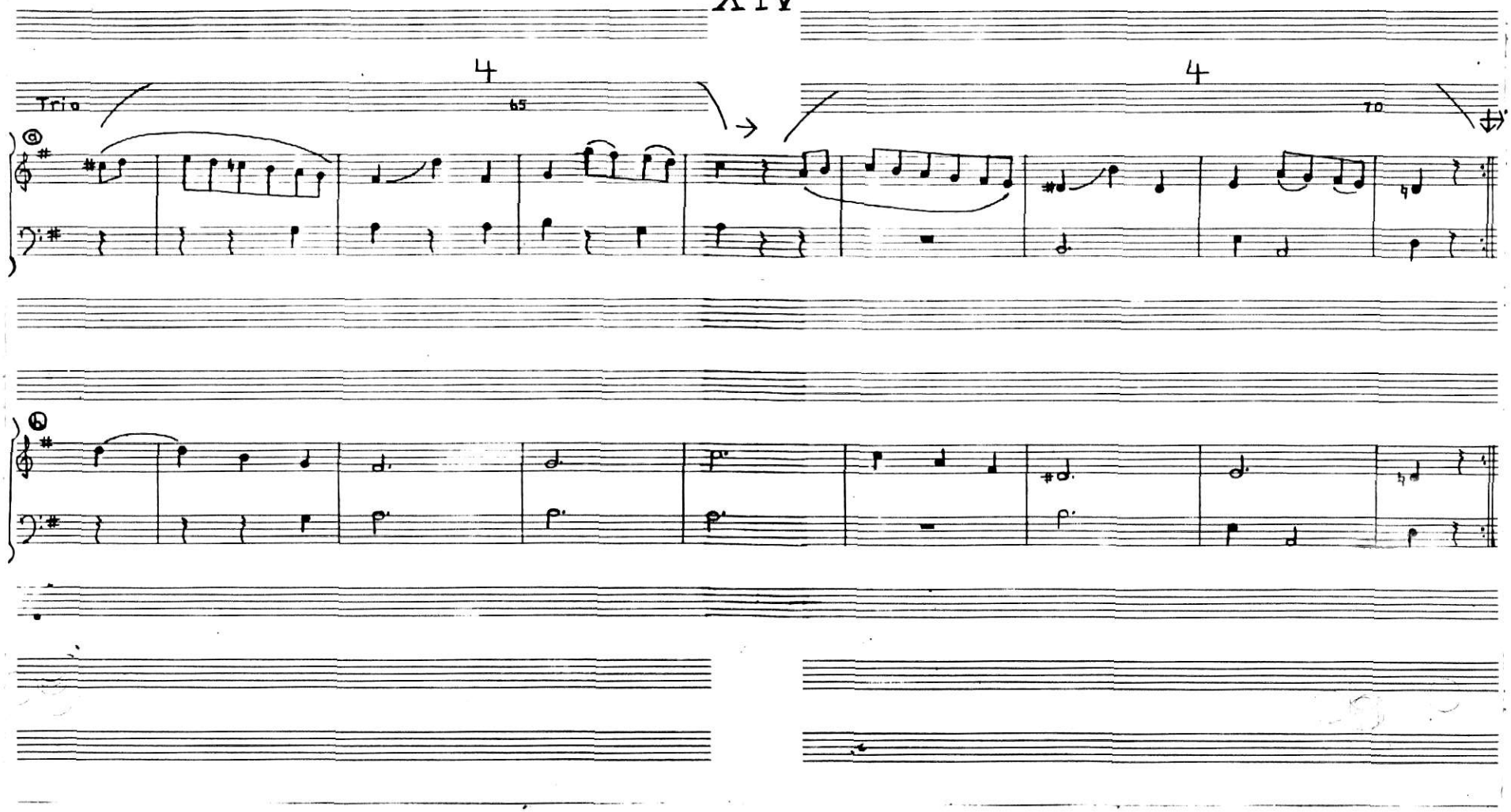


Plate XIV, the first period of the trio, (mm. 63-70), is built on a continuous treble line which supports two regular four-measure phrases.

# XIV



In Plate XV there are two irregular phrases, mm. 71-75 and 76-81, respectively. However, these irregularities result from common procedures of phrase extension rather than through any large expanse of the supporting lines. In the first phrase, a four-beat anacrusis introduces the phrase proper, which starts on the preliminary note to m. 72. The irregularity in the second phrase, mm. 76-81, results from two repetitions in mm. 80-81 of the material over the cadence chord in m. 79.

# XV

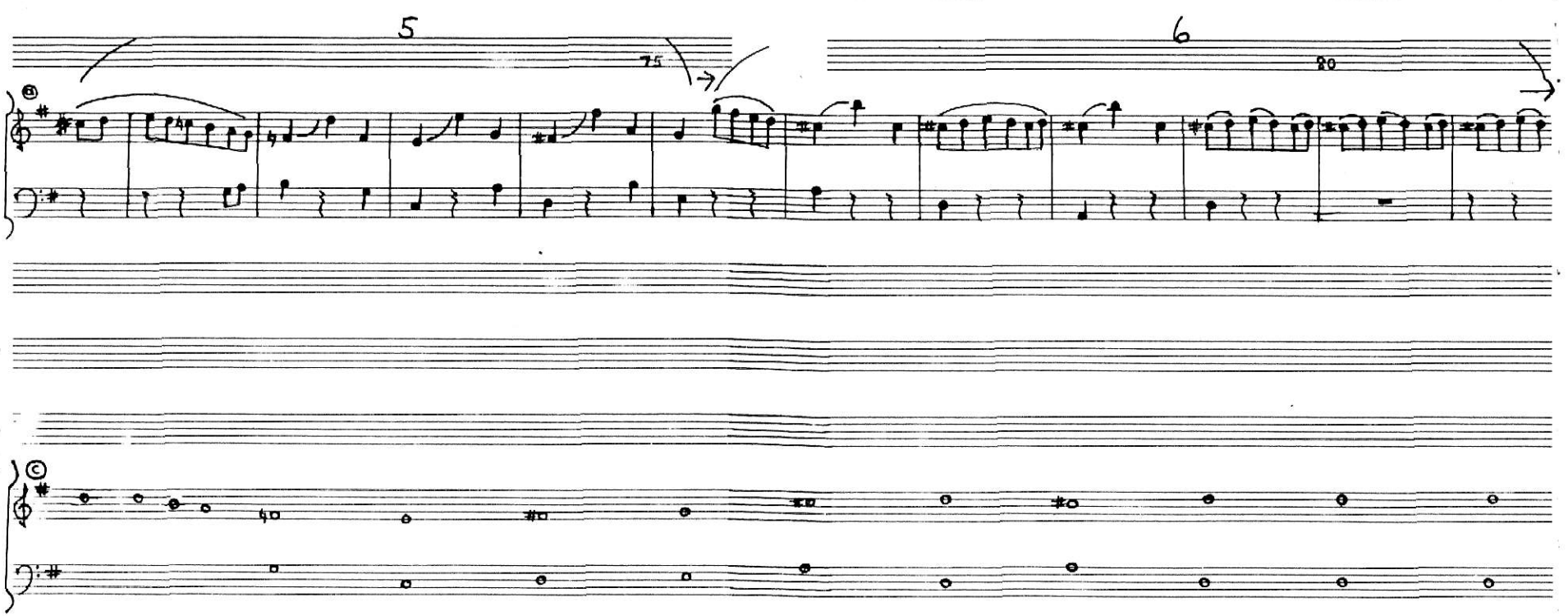
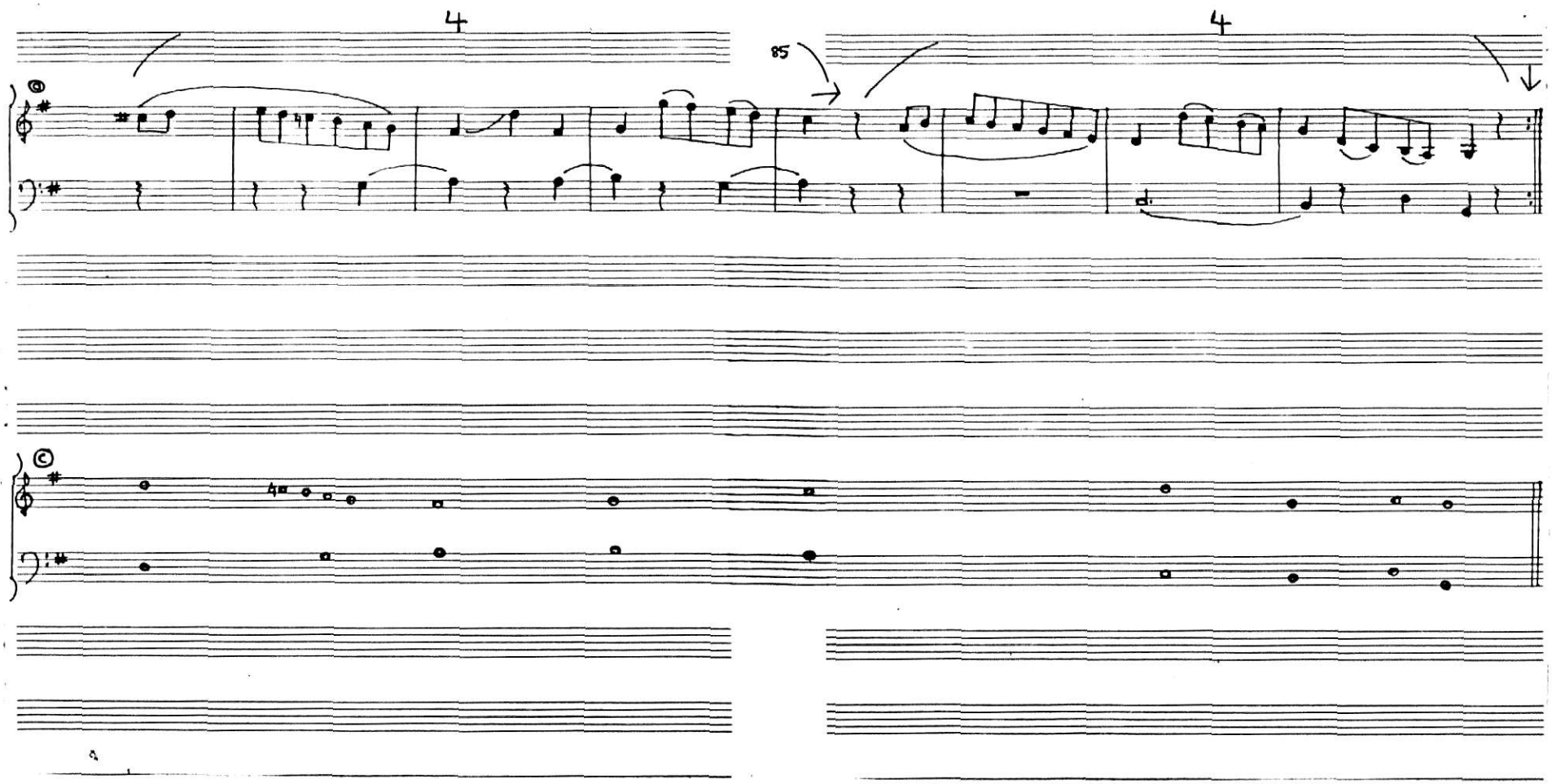


Plate XVI contains a periodic structure of two regular four-measure phrases.

# XVI



# CHAPTER V

## A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE MATERIAL DISCUSSED

This report has attempted to analyze the two minuet and trio movements in the specific manner already described.

The analysis shows that typical Classical minuet and trio movements are not always made up of "four-square" phrases. However, irregular phrase structure can and does occur without sacrificing the generally symmetrical Classical form.

These irregularities are not always so because of phrase extension, although extension does sometimes occur. The most important point in this report is that the reason in many cases for the phrase irregularity appears to be the long lines upon which the phrases are based.

Furthermore, in most cases the irregular phrases were longer than four measures. This seems to correspond to the general trend of lengthening and expanding the structures which was done to a greater extent later in the Romantic and Contemporary periods. The harmonic rhythm which was usually slower in the Classical period than the Baroque is a very important factor in these longer phrases.

In conclusion, it must be stated that even in the "predictable" Classical period no completely valid generalizations about music can be made.

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# IRREGULAR PHRASE STRUCTURE IN THE MINUET AND TRIOS FROM TWO HAYDN SYMPHONIES

by

IRENE SUE SKONBERG

B. S., Kansas State University, 1967

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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

1973

Classic minuet and trio movements contain many irregular phrase-lengths as well as conventional four-measure phrases. This irregularity occurs especially in the minuet and trio forms of a number of the late Haydn symphonies. The purpose of this study is to gain an insight on how this phrase irregularity is obtained. A very important point is that the reason in many cases for the phrase irregularity seems to be the long lines upon which the phrases are based.

The procedure used for this study was as follows: retaining the measure bars, the bass and treble lines between important cadences were extracted from the complete texture and placed on a chart. The extent of each phrase was indicated and the number of measure bars in each counted. In order that the general contour of the lineal structure be further emphasized, both bass and treble lines were reduced to their most fundamental forms. The phrase-forms were then studied according to how they float upon these basic lineal designs. (The hypothesis was that if a line is long, the phrase will necessarily be long enough to cover a particular phase of such a line.) The line, then, was being regarded as the basic form rather than the phrases it supports.

Therefore, much of this phrase irregularity seems to be innate to the length and melodic contours of the musical lines between the important cadences. This is in contrast to a contrived phrase irregularity carried out through the recognized principles of phrase extension. It is true that instances of such contrived extension do occur in the minuet and trio movements, but their study will not be emphasized.