THE VISION OF LIFE

A Symphonic Poem

Words and Music

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Cardiff Musical Festival - September 26, 1907
Revised for 1914 Norwich Festival which was cancelled due to start of World War I

FLUTE 1

Cover Image: "Spirit of the Summit" by Frederic Leighton, 1894

IN THE UNITED STATES

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ENGLISH HERITAGE
MUSIC SERIES

The “renaissance” in English music is generally agreed to have started in the late Victorian period, beginning roughly in 1880. Public demand for major works in support of the annual choral festivals held throughout England at that time was considerable which led to the creation of many large scale works for orchestra with soloists and chorus.

Although a number of those works were engraved, printed and are regularly performed today, performance scores for a considerable number of compositions, both large-scale and more intimate works, are not available. These works were either never engraved or were engraved and printed but are no longer available in the publishers’ catalogues. While the existence of these works is documented in biographies of the composers, the ability to study and, most importantly, to perform these compositions is not possible.

Changes in the International copyright laws, coupled with changing musical tastes, played a pivotal role in creating this void. As a result, music publishers lost the ability to generate revenue from the sale/rental of such music. In 1964, holograph and copyist scores from both Novello and from publishers it represented were offered to the British Library and the Royal College of Music Library (see The RCM Novello Library – The Musical Times, Feb. 1983 by Jeremy Dibble).

These autograph full score manuscripts along with copies of engraved vocal scores, widely available through various online library sources, are now the only resources available for studying and performing these works.

The English Heritage Music Series has been created to ensure that these compositions are preserved, are accessible for scholarly research and, most importantly, are available for performance by future generations. Its mission is to:

- Source non-engraved/out-of-print English composer compositions that are in the U.S. public domain
- Preserve these compositions through the preparation of performance scores using notation software
- Provide open Internet access to the scores to facilitate study, performance and sharing of performance material (program notes, audio, reviews, etc.)

In preparing the English Heritage Music Series editions, every effort has been made to adhere strictly to the notation contained in the manuscripts. Because of the passage of time and its effect on the condition of the manuscript, the absence of clear information often times by the composer in notating divided instruments, and with emendations in the composer and other hands resulting from use of the manuscript in performance, there were numerous circumstances which required interpretation and decisions for notes, accidentals, dynamics, articulations and tempi. Should questions arise in the use of these editions, the composers’ autograph manuscripts and the Novello vocal scores should be consulted for clarification.

Matthew W. Mehaffey
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Source Information

Autograph Manuscript:	Royal College of Music Library MS 4213
Vocal Score:	Novello Original Octavo Edition No. 12565
Royal College of Music Library	Jonathan Frank, Ass’t. Librarian - jonathan.frank@rcm.ac.uk
Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation	David Fielding - dhcfielding@charter.net

Reference Material and Software

Notation Software: Dorico Version 5.1.21.2225 (1-16-2025) *Audio Software:* Note Performer 4
Graphic Software: Affinity Photo 2 *Document Software:* Affinity Publisher 2
Music Notation Reference: Behind Bars by Elaine Gould, Faber Music © 2011

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PARRY AND "THE VISION OF LIFE"

Sir Edward Elgar (May 18, 1909)

"I hope you are well and that you are writing. I am so delighted we are to have *Job* in Hereford Cathedral. Your Cardiff 'Vision' was, I conclude, too strong for the Church, but I hope we may have it soon. It's really strong bracing stuff , and, like your Odes, some of us love it and love you for giving us these things."

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, p. 66

"During the first half of this year (1914) he gave much time to the revision of the score of his Vision of Life with a view to its performance at Norwich—an expectation frustrated by the War."

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, pp. 157-158

"Hubert Parry's ethical idealism was animated by a truly Christian spirit. The great aim of his later years was to impress on all people the need of enlarging their sphere of Religion; to consecrate his art to the service of humanity. 'Religion', he wrote in one of his notebooks, 'includes Art as well as definite devotional exercises', and again: 'Art is a form of devotion. Everything that endeavours to beautify and make lovable the surroundings and the ideas of man is part of devotional religion. It is devotion to the beautiful aspect of things—the things which minister to spiritual well-being, to truth.'
Thus it came about, as Mrs. Ponsonby writes, that 'when he spoke of some remarkable human being or act, or of Bach, or the sea, or architecture, or the country, one felt that to him the sphere of Religion was indeed without bounds. The beliefs which informs the message that he endeavoured to give to the world in his later works, and especially in The Vision of Life, is best defined in his own words, quoted by Miss Daymond in the memorial number of the Royal College Magazine:

> *There is, as it were, a limitless, unflagging, living series of variations on a great subject—and that subject is the progress towards the highest good of the race . . . . Th e highest optimism is the belief that as man has already succeeded in controlling his destiny, and the resources of the little corner of the world with which he is concerned, by slow degrees better and better, so he will go on doing it in the future. Th is is no hope of a comfortable easy-going Utopia, but a reality of constant effort towards the development of the consciousness that the guarantee of Life is the fruitful expenditure of energy.*

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, p. 224

"The Vision of Life, brought out in 1907 and revised in 1914, is notable as an exposition of his philosophy of life, as an expansion of the gospel of brotherhood and love . . . . it also commands admiration by its dignity and felicity of phrase and the skill with which rhymed passages are introduced to lend emphasis to a scheme of free verse. Traces are not wanting in vocabulary of the influence exerted by his familiarity with the Bible, and in the metre and use of alliteration with the old chronicles and Sagas and the libretti of Wagner. But, as it has been said of his music, so may it be repeated of this his most ambitious poem, that there is scarcely a passage that is not plainly and unmistakably Parry."

Hamilton Harty

"I have a personal theory—probably all wrong—that Parry was too broad and great a man to be a really first-rate genius as a musician. After all, to be a universally interested man, as he was, is better than to be a more or less narrow musician, and I can't think of any great composer whose absorption in his art did not make him a little deaf and blind to the rest of the world and its problems."

Other Sources

C. Hubert H. Parry—His Life and Music by Jeremy Dibble, Oxford University Press, © 1992, pp. 420-423
An Imperishable Heritage: British Choral Music from Parry to Dyson by Stephen Town, Ashgate Publishing Company, ©2012, pp. 1-36
Parry before Jerusalem—Studies of His Life and Music by Bernard Benoliel, Ashgate Publishing Company, © 1997

Flute 1

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato

8

1–8

pp

8

11–18

arco
Vc.

3

21

1

p

4

27–30

31

f *cresc.*

2

3

34–36

f

3

3

38

ff

2

40–41

f

3

44

rit.

48

mf

3

3

3

3

50–52

sostenuto

3

53–55

4

3

56–58

Cl. 1

3

60

Solo

65

mf *cresc.*

5

ff

f

4

68–71

72

6 **Lento**

p *p* *pp*

a tempo

rit.

3

79–81

pp

88

Lento **7**

ff

5

92–96

99

ff

Allegro moderato

8

104–111

112

f *ff*

118

8

5

120–124

ff

127

ff *sf*

9

5

134–138

Home - less and house - less, in caves and in clefts, We hid from the ter - ror of tem - pest and

S. 1

146

sempre dim. **largamente**

tor - rent

154

Lento

8

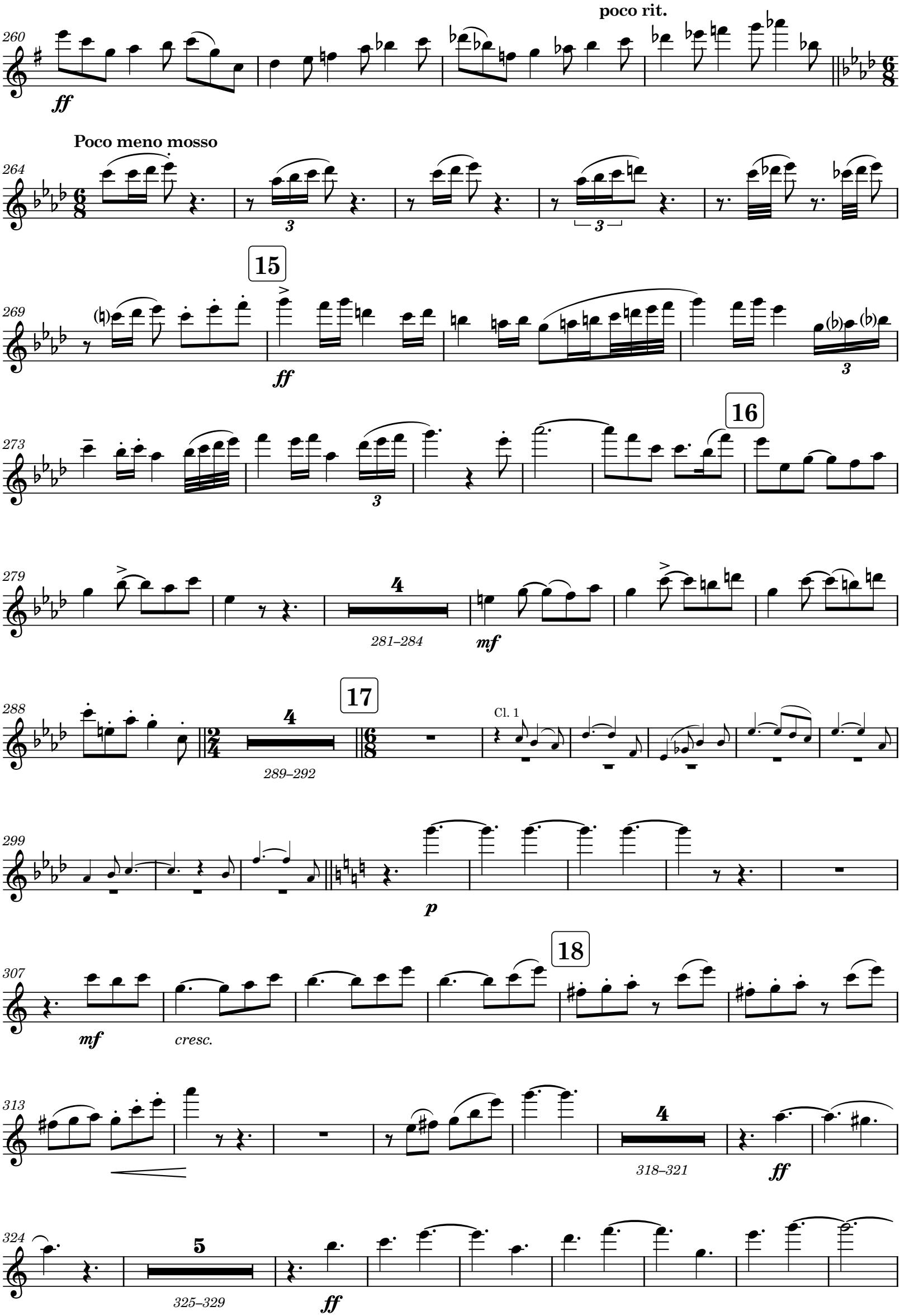
155–162

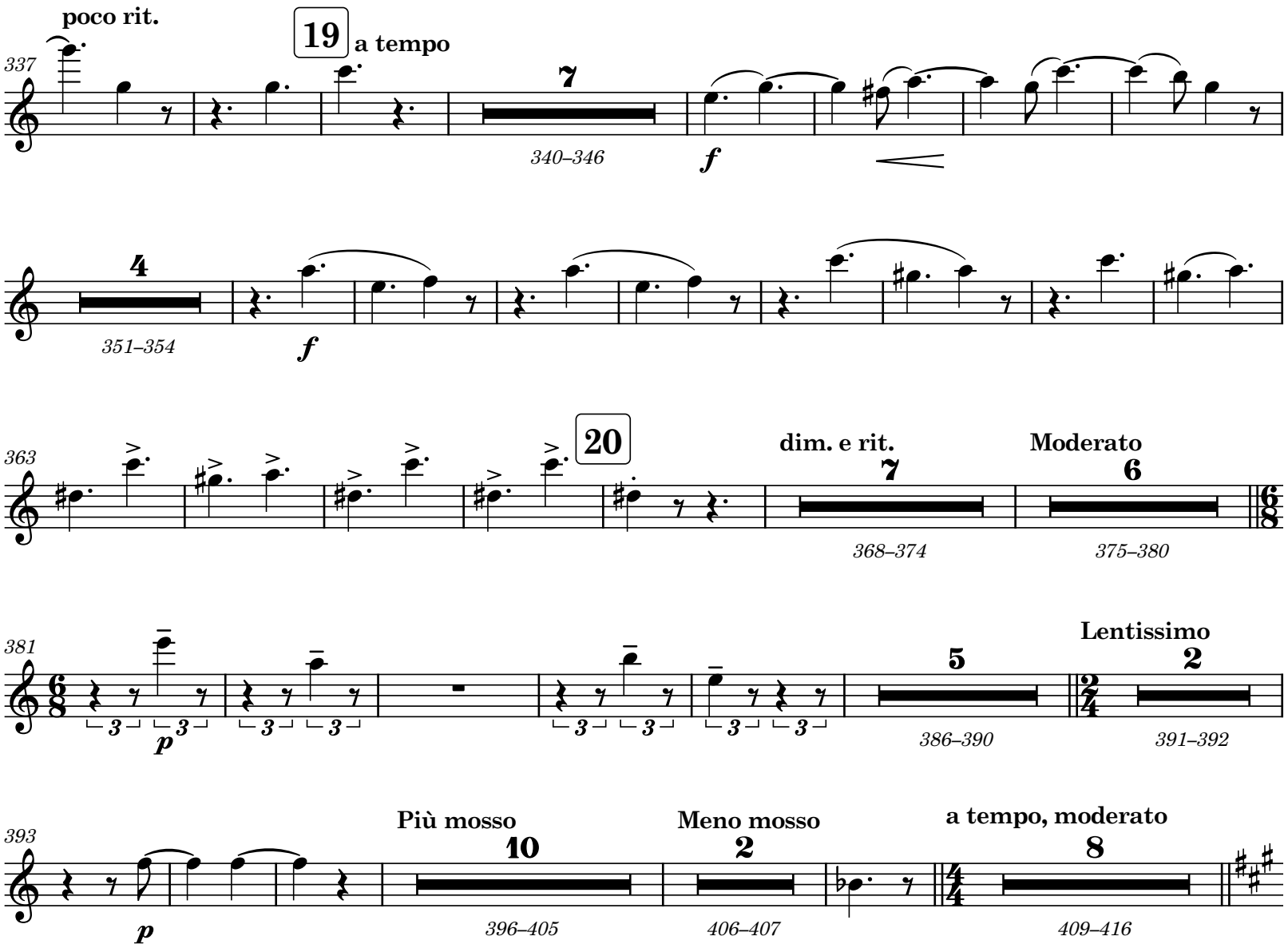
p

B. Cl. 8ba

168 rit. 10 a tempo sostenuto Più mosso
p
176 tranquillo 11 agitato
6
179–184
p
3
186–188
189 rit. molto rit. a tempo
2
191–192
pp
p
197 poco animando 12 animato
pp
allargando rit. . Allegro
3 2 3
203–205 206–207 210–212
f

215 animato 13
8
222–229
230
f
14
f
238
3
241–243
f
246
2
250–251
252
f
5
255–259


poco rit.
Poco meno mosso
15
16
17
18
Cl. 1
cresc.
281–284
289–292
318–321
325–329


poco rit.
19
a tempo
337
7
340–346
f
4
351–354
f
363
20
dim. e rit.
7
368–374
Moderato
6
375–380
381
p
5
386–390
Lentissimo
2
391–392
393
p
Più mosso
10
396–405
Meno mosso
2
406–407
a tempo, moderato
8
409–416

Allegro

21

4

417–420

C. A.

f

426

429

432

435

22

439

f

cresc.

ff

443

23

2

447–448

animando

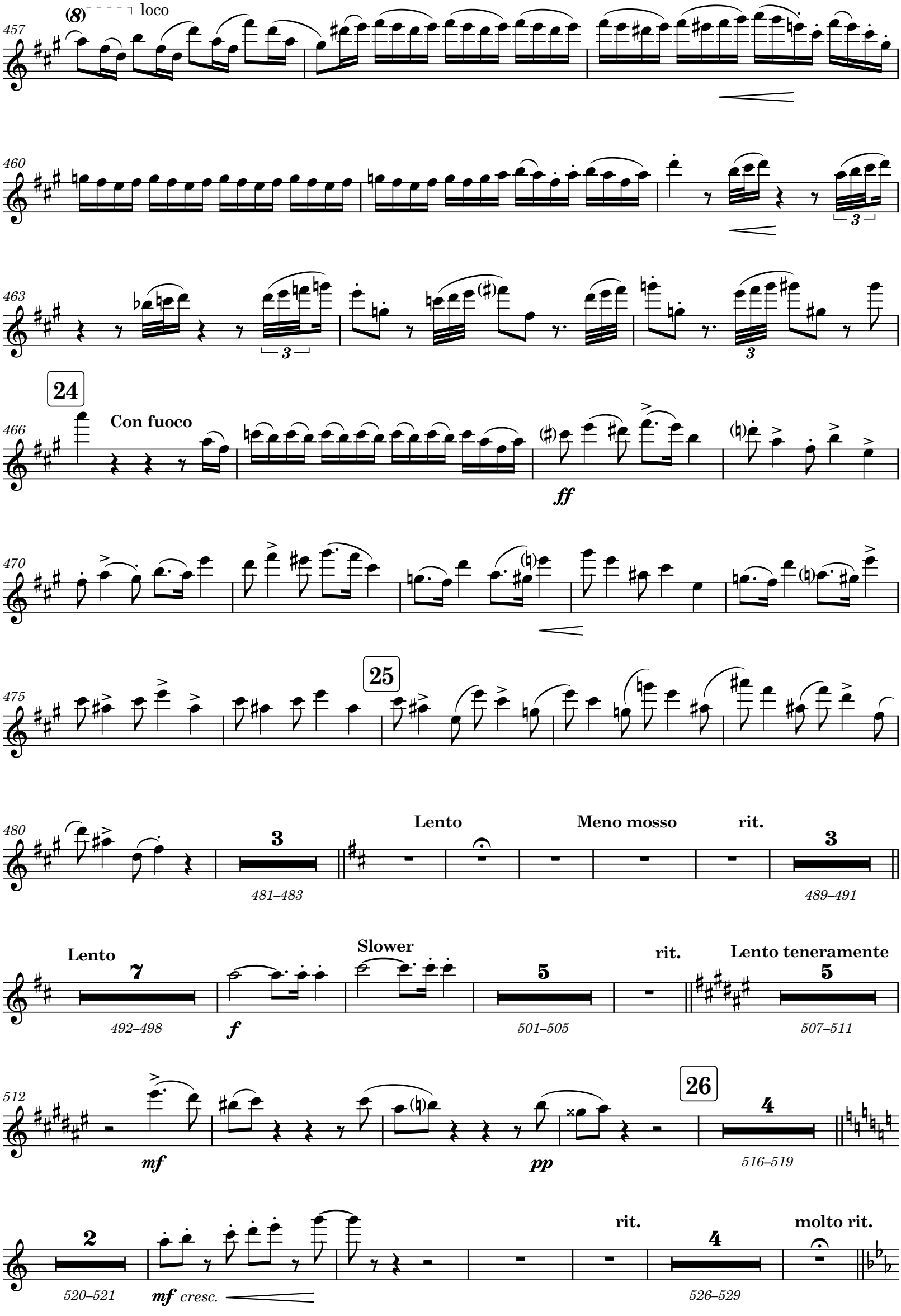
449

452

allargando

454

8va


(8)
loco
24
Con fuoco
ff
25
Lento
Meno mosso
rit.
481–483
489–491
Lento
Slower
rit.
Lento teneramente
492–498
f
501–505
507–511
mf
pp
26
516–519
rit.
molto rit.
520–521
mf cresc.
526–529

27 Lento 28 animato poco agitato Colla voce rit. molto rit.

8 10 4 3

531–538 539–548 549–552 553–555

29 a tempo, tranquillo rit. Lento maestoso 30

7 5 3

558–564 566–570 571–573

C. A.

576 31 allargando Tranquillo

4 5

579–582 583–587

mf

poco rit. 32 a tempo

589 2

590–591

p

597

p dim. p

604

poco cresc.

33

p

610 34

3

612–614

mf cresc.

619

allargando

f <

rit. a tempo

627 5

630–634

Lento 4

635–638

p

641

647
dim. e rit.
35
a tempo
6
649–654
allargando
rit.
659
a tempo
36
2
660–661
poco agitato
4
663–666
37
4
667–670
4
671–674
a tempo
5
675–679
animando
7
680–686
Ob. 2
animando
ff
694
38
sf
3
3
700–702
f
705
Più mosso, allegro feroce
8
708–715

716

39

f *ff*

723

731

40

3

738

ff

746

Vivacissimo

754

allargando.....

a tempo

761

767

774

41

sf

781

f

788
Allargando
a tempo
ff
7
794–800
rit.
3
801–803
[Silent] Lento
3
805–807
Ob. 1
mf
815
Puì mosso
822
animando
42
829
agitato
animando
Allegro
f
840
43
Allegro
8va
848
(8)
856
animato
2
rit.
2
863–864
865–866
Moderato
3
868–870
sempre cresc.
5
873–877
878
rit.
a tempo
animato
3
881–883
44
allargando
8
885–892

893 agitato animando

Cl. 1

900 poco allargando

906 Allegro poco rit. rit. 45 Agitato dolente

mf 907–908 910–913 mf

916 poco animando molto rit.

f

Lento Più lento Moderato Moderato con anima 46

922–927 930–932 933–948 949–951

952 rit. a tempo largamente

954–956 Cl. 1 Ob. 1

963 rit. a tempo allargando 47 a tempo

f cresc. 970–971

972 rit a tempo - tranquillo

977–987

988 poco rit. 48 a tempo - tranquillo

Cl. 1 mf

49 poco animando

998–1001 f 1006–1012 1013–1014

1015
Ob. 1
50
mf
5
1025–1029
p
1036
Solenne
2
1037–1038
allargando rit.
cresc.
51
Tempo giusto
f
1043
1049
3
1050–1052
ff
rit.
52
1057
allargando
sf
meno mosso
3
1063–1065
Allegro
3
1066–1068
poco agitato
2
1069–1070
2
1071–1072
3
f
3
1075–1077
meno mosso
5
1078–1082
poco animando
1083
Ob. 1
tutti
rit.
Lento
Cl. 1
53 più mosso
1089
4
1090–1093
f
2
1095–1096
Allegro agitato
4
1097–1100

1101 **agitato accelerando** *f*

54 **a tempo**

Più lento (colla voce) *mf*

1107 *dim.*

rit.

Andante

7

1110–1116

rit.

55 **a tempo - tranquillo**

6

1118–1123

5

1124–1128

allargando.....

Cl. 1

animando

1133 *f*

56

animando

3

1137–1139

1140 *mf*

allargando

f

57 **a tempo**

f

1145

1149

58 **Moderato tranquillo**

5

1150–1154

7

1155–1161

Cl. 1

1165 **poco rit.**

a tempo

dolce

1171 *p*

59

mf cresc.

1177 **allargando**

Poco meno mosso

f

f

1184
3
Tranquillo
1185–1187
9
poco rit.
1188–1196
Allegro - animando
C. A.
1201
cresc. sempre
f
60
5
1206–1210
1211
allaargando
f
cresc.
a tempo
ff
1216
61
2
1218–1219
3
1220–1222
3
1224–1226
1227
62
f
sf
7
1232–1238
1239
63
ff
sf
1246
agitato, vivace
cresc. molto
lunga
Lento tranquillo
3
1252–1254
molto rit.
64
2
1255–1256
11
1257–1267
a tempo
poco rit.
65
4
1269–1272
2
1273–1274
Ob. 1
1277
66
rit.
poco animando
mf
67
1283
poco rit.
f
Poco animando, espressivo
4
1285–1288
4
1289–1292

1293 **animando**

mf *cresc.*

68

1299

f

2

1301–1302

69

7

1303–1309

70

mf

1312

mf

2

1317–1318

71

1319

animato

2

1325–1326

animando

sempre cresc. ed animando

mf *cresc.*

72

1332

cresc.

f

1338

4

1340–1343

73

4

1345–1348

1350

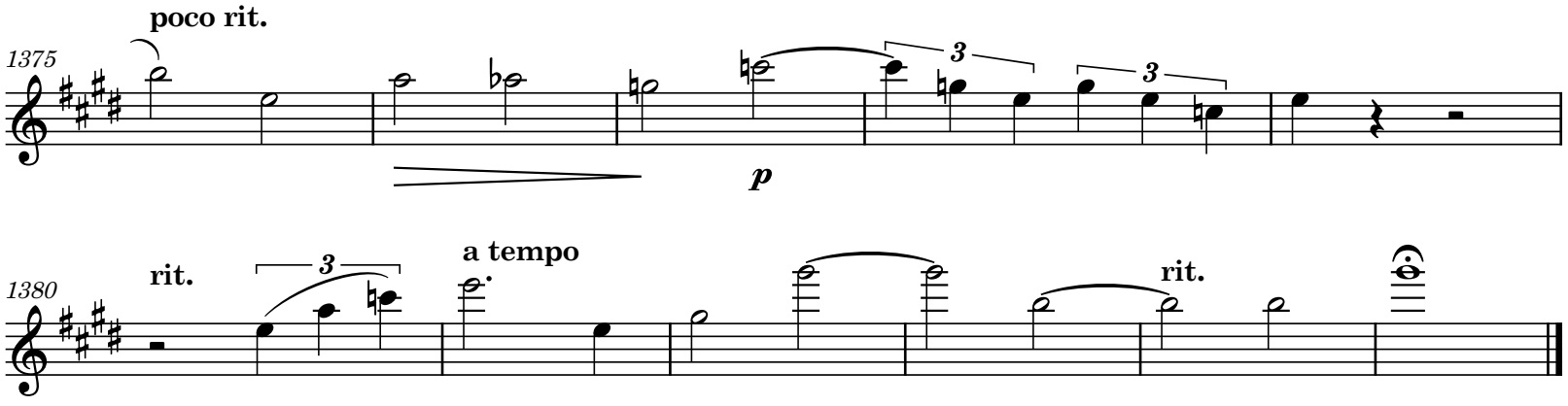
1356

rit.

9

1362–1370

mf


poco rit.
1375
3
3
p
rit.
3
a tempo
1380
rit.

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