Aspects of Schubert's compositional style as displayed in selected Piano Sonatas

University of Cape Town

February 2004

Pieter Rooi

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

University of Cape Town

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Music at the University of Cape Town.

University of Cape Town

INDEX

1. Introduction: Musical Style and its Elements 1

1.1 Style in the context of musical elements 3

1.1.1 Harmony 3

1.1.2 Melody 4

1.1.3 Rhythm 5

1.1.4 Form 5

1.1.5 Texture 6

2. Franz Schubert (1797-1828) 7

2.1 Historical background 7

2.2 Schubert and Beethoven 18

2.3 Schubert's Piano Sonatas 28

2.3.1 Form: Sonata Form 28

2.3.1.1 Exposition 28

2.3.1.2 Development 44

2.3.1.3 Recapitualtion 53

2.3.2 Melody 60

2.3.2.1 First note centered, songful and smooth 61

2.3.2.2 Scalewise 66

2.3.2.3 Chordal 68

2.3.2.4 Larger Skips 70

2.3.3 Harmony 77

University of Cape Town

2.3.3.1 Harmonic colour 77

2.3.3 2 Modulation 82

2.3.4 Rhythm 85

2.3.5 Texture 102

3. Summary 112

4. Bibliography

University of Cape Town

1. Introduction : Musical Style and its Elements

Style is "a particular kind, sort or type, as with reference to form, appearance or character."[1] The term also denotes "mode of expression, manner of discourse."[2] For the aesthetician, style has to do with surface or appearance; for the historian it is a distinguishing and ordering concept.[3] In the discussion of music the term raises special difficulties: it may be used to denote music characteristic of an individual composer, of an epoch, of a geographical centre or location, or of a society or social function.[4] This fact is responsible for considerable confusion in discussions of the nature of style.[5] Musical style, according to Meyer, is governed by constraints in the same way that an individual's style of writing or speaking results in large part from grammatical, lexical and syntactical choices made within the constraints of the language and dialect he has learned to use but does not himself create.[6] Constraints, or limitations, governing musical style are therefore not necessarily newly invented, but are learned and adopted as part of the historical or cultural circumstances of individuals or groups.[7] Aspects like epoch, geographical location, social conditions, etc thus play a significant role in the shaping and conditioning of musical style. These conditioners of style will be discussed in detail later.

University of Cape Town

[1] "Style" in Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary. New York: Random House, 1989
[2] Pascall, Robert. "Style " in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians XXXIV. London: Macmillan, 2001.
[3] Pascall, 638
[4] Pascall, 638
[5] Meyer, Leonard B. Style and Music. Theory, History and Ideology. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989, 13
[6] Meyer, 3
[7] Meyer, 3

Taking a purely musical view then, the style of a single composition manifests itself in characteristic usages of musical elements and procedures.[8] On another level, a distinguishing style can be perceived in a group of pieces from the repeated uses of similar compositional choices.[9] Further, a composer's style as a whole can be described in terms of consistent preferences in his use of musical elements and procedures. Even more broadly, common features among different composers may characterize a whole school, movement, or epoch and as these compositional choices become increasingly general, their application to any one composer decreases.[10] Singular features replicated in any one work or group of works, however, cannot by themselves provide the keys to the understanding of a composer's style. For example, one can list and count traits – say, the frequency of *sforzandi* in Beethoven's music or of dotted rhythms in Schumann's music, but if nothing is known about their functions (expressive, structural, etc), it will be impossible to explain why they are there and how their presence is related to other features observed.[11] Such traits may even serve as fairly reliable pointers to Beethoven's or Schumann's style, yet contribute little, if anything, to our understanding of how the style functions.[12] Providing understanding and insight at such depths, is the province of style analysis.[13]

Texture, Harmony, Melody, Rhythm and Form – all of these elements may not be present in all styles and types of music. For example, harmony is not an element in the style of Gregorian chant, even though, with the advent of *organum*, the sounding of simultaneous

[8] La Rue, Jan. Guidelines for Style Analysis. New York, Norton, 1970, ix
[9] La Rue, ix
[10] La Rue, ix
[11] Meyer, 11

University of Cape Town

pitches created intervallic relationships that are at the very least, protoharmonies.[14] Nevertheless, harmony is an important element of most musical styles, and it would be entirely justified to examine the nature of style in the context of harmony and the other musical elements under discussion. In other words, in order to gain insight into the characteristic ways in which a composer uses musical elements for presenting style, it would be fitting to understand how Harmony, Melody, Rhythm, Texture and Form are related to musical style in general.

University of Cape Town

1.1 Style in the context of musical elements

1.1.1 Harmony

According to Pascall, Harmony as a vehicle for style is usually an indicator of historical position and its procedures must be considered in the light of changing conventions[15] These conventions assist to a fair extent with the task of style analysis – it makes for a much more thorough evaluation of conventional, progressive and regressive tendencies in any composer's harmonic style, identifying what is common and what is original in his use of chords, progressions and modulations.[16] Harmonic effect, in and of itself, cannot be assigned a single, inherent stylistic value, for harmony makes its impact by relationships that may vary strongly between eras, schools or composers.[17] For example, a diatonic passing tone that is recognized as definitely dissonant in Mozart's harmonic convention may very well be the most consonant procedure in a passage by Richard

---

[12] Meyer, 11
[13] Meyer, 37
[14] Meyer, 17
[15] Pascall, 638
[16] La Rue, 39
[17] La Rue, 40

Wagner: the conventions have changed.[18] Musical analysis of a specific style (of a school, or composer) should therefore be adjusted to differing conventions.[19]

1.1.2 Melody

While harmony has to do with the vertical aspects of pitch, melody is the horizontal aspect.[20] It is possible to consider Melody as the essential condition of most musical styles, guided by form, supported by harmony and articulated by texture and rhythm.[21] Although this statement may seem too simplistic, there could be no doubt whatsoever that the generative themes of a tonal composition does represent a very large part of the musical statement and impact.[22] For Pascall, Melody is a "prime connective feature in the continuum of audible time, and as such is an important and form-carrying stylistic phenomenon".[23] Any consideration of Melody must also involve an awareness of Rhythm – another horizontal aspect.[24] Arpeggiated melodies, like in the Baroque period, could also strongly suggest their own harmony, being in the form of a "broken" chord.[25]

University of Cape Town

[18] La Rue, 40
[19] La Rue, 44
[20] Winold, A; Delone, R, Christ, W. Introduction to Music. Processes and style. New York: Harper, 1976, 10
[21] Pascall, 639
[22] Pascall, 639
[23] Pascall, 639
[24] Winold, Delone, Christ, 11
[25] Pascall, 639

1.1.3 Rhythm

Rhythm is an integral part of harmonic, melodic, textural and formal considerations.[26] The strong tendency of listeners to respond to this element of music is revealed in the tapping of their foot or in other gestures in time to the beats or pulses of the music.[27] In doing this, the listener is actually showing an awareness of the "background" of the rhythmic complex. This situation could be likened to seeing the foreground figures of a picture against some form of background.[28] In the rhythmic aspect of musical style, dance and music are very close and the influence of dance on music is an important topic of discussion. Rhythmic styles may favour regularity of pulse, as in much pre-Renaissance and dance music, or it may be displayed in the exhilaration of development to and from points of climax, as in much nineteenth-century music.[29]

1.1.4 Form

Each musical composition has its own form, which controls, relates and contains all its details.[30] Form is therefore a phenomenon of style, and a study of form in the broadest sense would be the study of music itself, as Eduard Hanslick, the nineteenth-century esthetician implied in his motto: "Music is form moving in sound"[31]

Forms may also be the result of stylistic prescriptions – it was specific traits of the musical language in the last decade of the eighteenth-century that promoted the

University of Cape Town

[26] Pascall, 639
[27] Winold, Delone, Christ, 19
[28] Winold, Delone, Christ, 19
[29] Pascall, 639
[30] Pascall, 638
[31] Winold, Delone, Christ, 13

development and conspicuousy of Sonata form.[32] (This matter will be discussed in later chapters). Forms suggest, comprehend, relate to, and evolve out of specific styles.[33]

1.1.5 Texture

La Rue's definition of texture is "particular, momentarily, combinations of sounds"[34] Texture in music does indeed refer to the way individual elements of sound are combined to form a musical fabric, just as texture in cloth refers to the way individual threads of material are woven together to form a fabric.[35] A good composer will use textural possibilities to condition and foster the quality of his musical statement.[36] Just like form, texture is a means of presenting style, and indeed, textural traits have given rise to stylistic names such as monophonic style (one melody sounded on its own unaccompanied) polyphonic style (also contrapuntal style: two or more melodic lines sounded simultaneously) and homophonic style (one main melody sounded with accompanying parts).[37]

These elements of the musical language which present style were united in unique blends for unique expressive purposes by unique composers, in different times in history. The expressive purpose may be related to social function, geographical location, epoch and other historical factors, which may have served to shape or condition a composer's musical style.[38] These conditioning factors will now be viewed in Schubert's context.

University of Cape Town

---

[32] Pascall, 638
[33] Pascall, 638
[34] La Rue, 27
[35] Winold, Delone, Christ, 12
[36] Pascall, 639
[37] Pascall, 639; Winold, Delone, Christ, 12
[38] Pascall, 640

2. Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

2.1 Historical background

The French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars were responsible for a sequence of events which led to one of the great climaxes in the history of music.[39] The theory and practice of music underwent far-reaching changes:

The relationship of the composer to society underwent a distinct change at about 1800.[40] Up to the end of the eighteenth century the arts had operated nearly exclusively within the patronage system.[41] The most important employers were the Church and the Court.[42] As in the other arts, in music the composer was free within the outlines of his commission. Michelangelo was under the employment of the Medici family, dukes of Florence, and Molière, the French dramatist, depended strongly on his ability to produce satirical comedies that could not be too offensive to Louis XIV[43]. Likewise, Monteverdi was very careful to remind his critics that his innovations had by no means aroused the displeasure of his employer, the Duke of Mantua.[44] So composers were previously not revolutionary-minded: they actually considered themselves servants of powerful social institutions and of the times into which they had been born.[45] Alterations in the nature of European life of the late eighteenth century, however brought an end to the patronage

University of Cape Town

[39] King, Hyatt. A. "General Musical Conditions" in Abraham, G. ed. The Age of Beethoven. London: Oxford University Press, 1982, 1
[40] Einstein, A. Music in the Romantic Era. London: Dent, 1947, 10
[41] Plantinga, L. Romantic Music. A History of Musical Style in the Nineteenth Century Europe. New York: Norton, 1984, 5
[42] Einstein, 10
[43] Plantinga, 5
[44] Einstein, 10
[45] Einstein, 11

system.[46] Composers were now free to create independently: Beethoven left the court at Bonn for Vienna in 1792 and Mozart's quarrels with his employer, the Archbishop Colloredo of Salzburg came to an end when the composer resigned in 1781[47], but not because of changes in the political atmosphere, as shown by the fact that he spent his life in Vienna pleading for a court position.

In terms of their social status, distinguished musicians were now regarded very highly.[48] To illustrate this point, it is recorded that Clementi, after the death of his first wife, embarked on a three year period of wandering over Europe and was (according to his friend, William Gardiner) permitted by Napoleon to pass through the whole seat of war.[49] This is remarkable if one considers the fact that Mozart in 1781, had been placed below the valets of the Archbishop of Salzburg's household.[50] Further, it says a lot about the Viennese nobility that they could tolerate Beethoven's unashamed self-assertiveness, as well as ensure him of some kind of financial security, without expecting any returns.[51]

With this new social status and freedom, the musician began to emerge as the independent, versatile artist. This independence is echoed in the focus on the individual as present everywhere in Romanticism.[52] The great virtuoso performers of the nineteenth-century, like Paganini and Liszt, were dominating, heroic individuals. They were soloists, as opposed to the characteristic eighteenth-century virtuoso, the operatic

[46] Plantinga, 11
[47] Plantinga, 11
[48] King, 10
[49] King, 10
[50] King, 10
[51] King, 10

University of Cape Town

singer, who was the most prominent member of a group.[53] Also, the best vocal music of that century is for solo voice, not chorus.[54] This idea of the composer as a prophet, a lone, heroic figure fighting against his environment (like Berlioz), also served to impart to the music a quality of excitement, an emotional tension.[55] Individualism is further reflected in the number of popular biographies of Romantic composers and performers such as Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, etc.[56] There is no "typical" Romantic symphony, piano work, art song or composer.[57] The romantic artist was therefore, a potent, enabling force, and "through his vision or dream-world,....would give the rest of humanity a privileged insight into reality."[58]

Nevertheless, it is also in this period more than any other that the phenomenon of the unsociable artist, one who is separate from his fellowman and withdraws within himself to seek inspiration, is most conspicuous.[59]

One of the tensions of the Romantic era was that together with the emancipation of the creative artist and his isolation from society, there should be an increasing awareness of nationalistic values.[60] Nationalism, a progressively influential force on the life and culture of nineteenth-century Europe, decreed that one's most important loyalties were owed not to a dynastic government or even to a religious group, but to an ethnically

University of Cape Town

---

[52] Grout, Donald Jay & Palesca, Claude. A History of Western Music. 5th Edition. New York: Norton, 1996, 555
[53] Grout & Palesca, 555
[54] Grout, 555
[55] Grout, 555
[56] Longyear, Rey M. Nineteenth Century Romanticism in Music. Englewood-Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1973, 3
[57] Longyear, 3
[58] Samson, Jim. "Romanticism" in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians XXI. London: Macmillan, 2001, 598
[59] Grout, 554
[60] Einstein, 18

homogenous people.[61] Not that this was a new idea – even before 1800 the historical evolution had taken place in national currents.[62] For example, the fifteenth century, with its art of polyphony is usually referred to as Burgundian.[63]

Early in the nineteenth century a new pride in local history, customs and love started to replace the classicism and Francophilea that had ruled European culture since the seventeenth century.[64] In music, nationalism was displayed in a new enthusiasm for folk song and dance, for the special musical idioms that used to characterize a people group.[65] These native musical traits were often quite consciously adopted by composers and incorporated into the traditional genres of art music, resulting in "nationalist" versions of a general style, like Brahms' *Liebeslieder Walzer* or Chopin's Waltzes, Schumann's *Davidsbündler Tanze*.[66]

In Germany a very good example of these trends can be seen in the cultivation of the waltz in Vienna, Austria. Having its origins in a variety of peasant dances collectively known as *Ländler* or *Deutsche*, this dance was performed from village squares and surrounding regions to the shining ballroom floors of the Imperial city.[67] The aristocratic *allemandes*, *courantes* and especially the stately and formal *minuets* of Bourbon France and Georgian England became completely out of vogue.[68] In the first twenty years of the nineteenth century the waltz spread like wildfire throughout Europe to become the most

[61] Plantinga, 341
[62] Einstein, 18
[63] Einstein, 18
[64] Plantinga, 342
[65] Plantinga, 342
[66] Plantinga, 342
[67] Plantinga, 342

University of Cape Town

loved of all ballroom dances.[69] In terms of song, in every German speaking part of Europe, the collection and publication of old national melodies, whether sung by peasant, soldier or student, quickly became as sacred a task as the creation of new ones.[70] National song became the instrument of political purpose. Weber's appropriation of the patriotic *Männerchor* style in *Der Freischütz* and his cycle *Leyer und Schwert* (1814) long proved capable of arousing strong patriotic emotions.[71]

In Great Britain this nationalistic tendency appeared in musical print first.[72] In 1793 already, George Thomson in Edinburgh began the publication of a long series of editions of Scottish, Welsh and Irish melodies.[73] To enhance the attractiveness of there collections, be enlisted at different times the services of Beethoven, Weber, Haydn, Hummel and Pleyel to provide accompaniments with violin and cello *ad libitum*.[74] Also, William Whyte's rival volumes (Edinburg, 1806-1807) and James and William Power's series of Moore's Irish Melodies (Dublin, 1807-1834), contributed much to a growth in musical self-consciousness in the British Isles.[75] In France, nationalism found expression rather in the writing of new melodies, instead of the old ones. Among these, Rouger de Lisle's *La Marseillaise* exhibits fiery patriotism.[76] Romanticism appealed to many nations until it went to extremes, one of which was the provincialism of Vienna.

University of Cape Town

---

[68] Kinkeldy, O. "Schubert. Dance Composer" The Musical Quarterly XIV/4, 610
[69] Plantinga, 342
[70] King, 4
[71] Einstein, 19, King, 4
[72] King, 4
[73] King, 4
[74] King, 4
[75] King, 4
[76] King, 4

The early nineteenth century artist had to work in an environment of rapid political change.[77] In this atmosphere of oppression, it seemed natural for the oppressed to seek an escape through the arts, especially music.[78] However, this escapism proved to be more of a comfortable opiate than a sublimation.[79] This limitation in musical taste was an important manifestation of provincialism and the so-called *Biedermeier*-culture, which was the ruin of progressive musical life and general culture in Germany, England and France for many years.[80] The Biedermeier culture favoured a lifestyle founded on peaceful domestic harmony by contrast with the turmoil of the Napoleonic years.[81] It stood for a devotion to sentimental lyricism and middle-class dignity, living wholeheartedly in the present.[82] Provincialism as a symptom of the Biedermeier culture can be seen most clearly in the musical life and culture of early nineteenth century Vienna.[83] The Vienna where Schubert was born, lived, moved and had his being, was a polyglot city and more than a fifth of its population were Hungarians, Czechs, Italians, Croatians, Poles, Germans, Turks, Greeks and other nationalities.[84] In fact, as early as 1802, the number of foreigners in Vienna amounted to about forty thousand[85], many of which made up the number of lackeys, sycophants, mistresses, and soldiery of foreign individuals, sent on errands.[86]

University of Cape Town

---

[77] Newman, William, S. The Sonata since Beethoven. Chapel-Hill. University of North Carolina Press, 1969, 167
[78] Newman, 167
[79] Newman, 168
[80] King, 3
[81] Yates, W.E. "Biedermeier" in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. London. Macmillan, 2001, 557
[82] King, 3
[83] Newman, 167
[84] Brown, M.J.E. "Schubert" in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians XXII London: Macmillan, 2001, 656
[85] Deutsch, O E Schubert A Documentary biography, London: Dent, 1946, xxvi

The Viennese gave themselves up to *Gemutlichkeit* – to staring at fireworks, at the worshippers in St. Stephen's or at the important individuals to be met in the streets and shops, to singing and dancing, to drinking or love-making or coffee-house discussions.[87] Vienna in these times had eight-four coffeehouses – the meeting places most liked by men.[88] If they were not given to any of these common pleasures, then they were giving parties devoted to music and romantic verses.[89] This was the romanticized Vienna and idealized environment to which Schubert and his circle (the "Schubertiads") themselves escaped.[90]

In the comfortable house of the lawyers, merchants and civil servants were held these musical evenings, often weekly, to which numbers of guests were invited and at which songs, chamber music, pianoforte duets, etc. were performed.[91] The atmosphere of these Viennese musical evenings is forever unveiled in Schubert's *Moments Musicaux*, *Impromptus*, the vast amount of sociable piano duets, the dance-music and especially in the songs which poured almost constantly from his pen.[92] Publishers discovered the commercial value of this music with the *bourgeoisie* home musicians, for whom the new pianoforte fostered the social ideal and status of the drawing room.[93] It was from these middle-classes that Schubert came and for whose immediate emotional needs he wrote.[94]

University of Cape Town

---

[86] Hutchings, Arthur. Schubert. London: Dent, 1961, 3
[87] Hutchings, 3
[88] Deutsch, xxvii
[89] Hutchings, 3
[90] Hutchings, 3
[91] Brown, M.J.E. Schubert. A Critical Biography London: Macmillan, 1958, 9
[92] Hutchings, 1
[93] Hutchings, 1
[94] Hutchings, 1

Apart from music making and dancing, the Viennese had two other loves: poetry and drama.[95] Beethoven's *Leonore*, although the first opera to be seen by the royal visitors, did not survive the frivolous morals of the Austrian theatre.[96] The occupation of Vienna by the French in 1805 contributed much to the withdrawal of Beethoven's opera after three performances.[97]

During the Biedermeier period in Vienna, the *Karntnertor Theater* and the *Theater an der Wien* were completely taken over by French and especially Italian opera.[98] Spontini's *Vestale* followed *Leonore* in 1814 at the *Theater an der Wien* and it was followed by Rossini's operas *Tancredi*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Otello*.[99] Italian opera was so much the rage, that between 1816 and 1825, 25 Rossini operas were performed in Vienna.[100] Domenico Barbaja, the leader of the Rossini mania, controlled La Scala in Milan, San Carlo in Naples as well as the most important theatres in Vienna, the *Karntnertor Theater* and the *Theater an der Wien*.[101] This seems more than enough explanation why German operas by Beethoven, Schubert and other found little lasting favour with Viennese audiences.[102] Comedy, satire and pantomine had their place in the Leopoldstadt Theatre. This genre displays another innovation in opera, (although comedy elements were already present in the popular German singspiel, before 1789) partly because of the harsh realities of the time – the escapist element of fantasy.[103] Ferdinand Raimund's magic farces (a

[95] Hutchings, 6
[96] Hutchings, 6
[97] King, 1
[98] Hutchings, 7
[99] Hutchings, 7
[100] Yates, 558
[101] King, 7
[102] King, 7
[103] King, 3

University of Cape Town

play full of ridiculous situations to produce laughter) were extremely popular.[104] Apparently every poor home in Vienna hummed or sang his song *Bruderlein fein* from the play *The Girl from Fairyland.*[105] Those with superior literary tastes could treat themselves to the grandiose language of Schiller, at the *Burg Theater*, a national theatre devoted to German plays and German translators.[106]

This was Schubert's Vienna, its way of life and moral turpitude and artistic needs being the subject of conversations in taverns and coffee houses or in artistic homes.[107]Nevertheless, the newfound freedom of the composer was purchased at a high prize: that of personal poverty and privation.[108] In becoming independent, the artist was compelled to fight for the bare necessities of life. Mozart, in his later years was constantly pressed for money; Beethoven, though more fortunate in his independence, was forced to accept the charity of private subscriptions, and Schubert, for all his generous industry, never earned enough to stay afloat.[109] Every now and again Schubert did earn a handful of ducats by writing on commission, but even with Beethoven this did not occur too frequently and with Schubert they were extremely rare.[110] In this regard Beethoven had the advantage of being a public virtuoso, (who could earn extra by playing concerts) while Schubert was "a player of far less brilliant caliber"[111]

University of Cape Town

---

[104] Hutchings, 7
[105] Hutchings, 7
[106] Hutchings, 6
[107] Hutchings, 7
[108] Hadow, W.H. "The Viennese Period". The Oxford History of Music V. London: Milford, 1931,15
[109] Hadow, 16
[110] Hadow, 17
[111] Dale, Kathleen "The Piano Music" in Abraham G. Schubert. A symposium. London: Drummond 1946, 112

Although Vienna's palates were mainly for the entertaining side of music, Schubert was not completely scorned in her musical life.[112] He composed feverishly and a larger amount of his popular music – variations, marches, waltzes, and other dances were published in his lifetime.[113] Some of his more serious compositions were also published. The Piano Sonatas in A minor, D 845, published early in 1826, D major, D 850, published in April 1826, and G major, D894, published in April 1827, a String Quartet in A minor, D 804, published in 1824, and a Pianoforte Trio, D 929 in E-flat major, published in 1828 [114] The songs published in Schubert's lifetime were not only those in a lighter mood like *Die Forelle*, *Der Alpenjager* and *Heidenroslein*, but also the ones by which his later fame prospered, the dramatic, the profound ones such *as Gretchen am Spinnrade*, *An Schwager Kronos*, The Harper's songs from Goethe's (Wilhelm Meister[115]) and the cycles, *Die Schöne Müllerin* and *Die Winterreise*.

A discussion of Schubert's Piano Sonatas would be incomplete without considering the role of the pianoforte in early nineteenth-century musical life, which became the focal instrument of musical Romanticism.[116] It provided the most immediate and universal answer to the Romantic penchant for sheer sound as an aesthetic phenomenon in itself.[117] It could "sing" as Schubert was delighted to realize.[118] Although Schubert learned the

[112] Brown, Critical Biography, 12
[113] Brown, Critical Biography, 12
[114] Brown, M.J.E. Essays on Schubert London: Macmillan, 1966, 197
[115] Brown, Critical Biography, 12
[116] Newman, 87
[117] Newman, 87
[118] Deutsch, 436

University of Cape Town

violin before he studied the pianoforte, it was the pianoforte to which, whether as soloist, accompanist or duettist he daily returned for his own and his friends' enjoyment.[119]

In Schubert's time the pianoforte was clearly the favourite instrument of the growing middle-class.[120] Every family had one and in fact, Deutsch reports that the banker von Greymuller, who had many daughters, had no less than five pianofortes.[121] The grandiose spirit of Napoleon also had to be translated to music. In music the mighty image of Beethoven appeared – inspired, untidy (with uncombed hair), improvising heavenly harmonics on his battered piano; deaf, but unstoppable.[122]

The piano became the perfect Romantic instrument, and the public demanded virtuosos who could tame it, sing on it and inspire them to heights unknown.[123] Paganini's superhuman virtuosity on the violin was soon to become absorbed into the versatile genius of the greatest pianistic phenomenon of the time – Franz Liszt, who was often called the Napoleon of the Piano.[124] This immense popularity of the pianoforte as well as the emphasis on virtuosity promoted the composition of multitudes of etudes and brilliant piano pieces which display the pianist's technical prowess. Examples of these pieces are Czerny's *The Art of Finger Dexterity* opus 749 and Moscheles's twenty-four Etudes, Opus 70. Liszt's *Douze Etudes d' exécution transcendante* and Chopin's 24 Etudes,

University of Cape Town

[119] Dale, 111
[120] Dubal, David. The Art of the Piano. Its Performers', Literature and Recordings. New York: Summit Books, 1989, 18
[121] Deutsch, xxviii
[122] Dubal, 18
[123] Dubal, 19
[124] Dubal, 19

however, stand as landmarks to Romanticism and to the miraculous exploration of piano mechanism.[125]

2.2 Schubert and Beethoven

Schubert donned the cloak of a rich and active musical inheritance, using it in the development of his own personal style. He could not, living in the city that witnessed the work of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, ignore his immediate past or escape his present. However, among all Schubert's stylistic models, Beethoven seems to have exerted a strong and significant influence upon the young Schubert. The relationship between the two composers has received considerable attention in literature.[126]

Schubert admired Beethoven. It is received that Schubert, being a pupil at the Stadtconvikt in Josephstadt, had once played Beethoven's first symphonies in the school orchestra, and because so enthusiastic about his older contemporary that from then he never failed in his high esteem of the master.[127] Apart from their different creative personalities they both lived in the same city, in two separate worlds.[128] Schubert, all his life, together with his friends (without which he could not live) "wandered out into the beautiful outskirts of Vienna, whistling his songs, or celebrated "Schubertiads" in the home of one or another among them."[129] Beethoven, on the other had, was a lonely man.

University of Cape Town

---

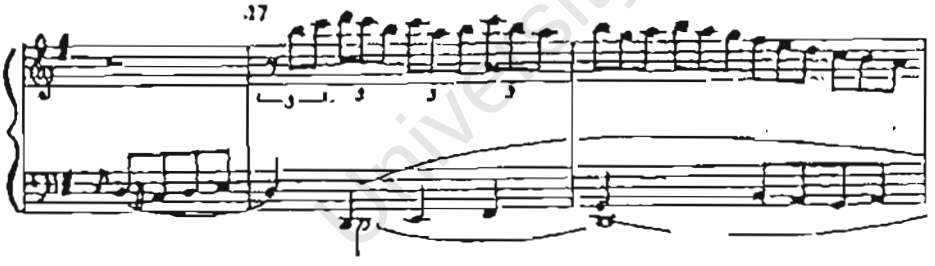
[125] Dubal, 351
[126] Nohl, Walther. "Beethoven's and Schubert's personal relations." The Musical Quarterly XIV/4, 554 / Nettheim,Nigel "How the young Schubert borrowed from Beethoven." The Musical Times cxxxii/2, 330 / Rosen, Charles. The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven. New York: Faber & Faber, 1976, 456
[127] Nohl, 555
[128] Nohl, 553
[129] Nohl, 553

He avoided his fellowmen for all he would have liked to be with them, hurrying along in his long promenades, while new and tremendous creations boiled within him.[130]

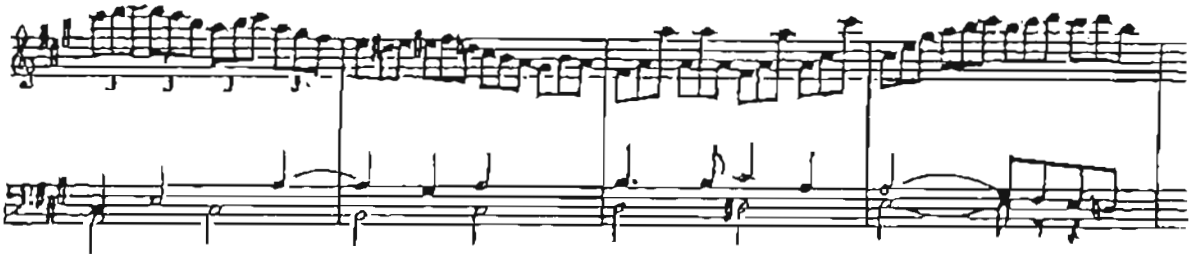
Yet, to the upcoming Schubert, Beethoven was an overpowering model. Schubert knew much of Beethoven's music well, including the piano sonatas as soon as they appeared.[131] In fact, Rosen feels that the nature of Schubert's dependence on classical models can be seen clearly in the last movement of the late Sonata in A, D.959, which is related to the Rondo finale of Beethoven's Sonata in G, op. 31 no. 1.[132] Rosen points out that in both works, after 16 bars the theme is immediately replayed with the melody in the left hand and a new triplet figure in the right hand:

Mus. ex. 1a

Beethoven: Sonata in G op 31 no 1, Third Movement, bars 17-18



Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, Allegretto, bars 17-20



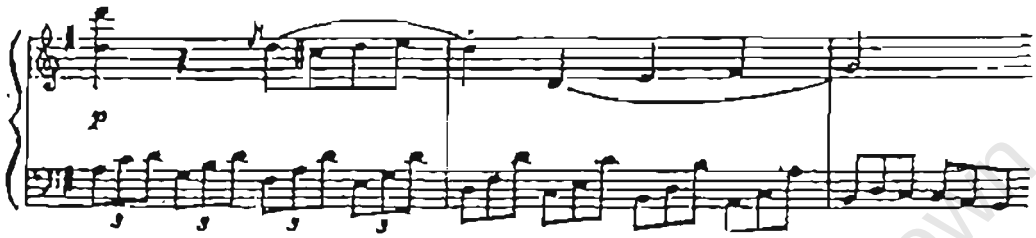
[130] Nohl, 553
[131] Newman, 192

University of Cape Town

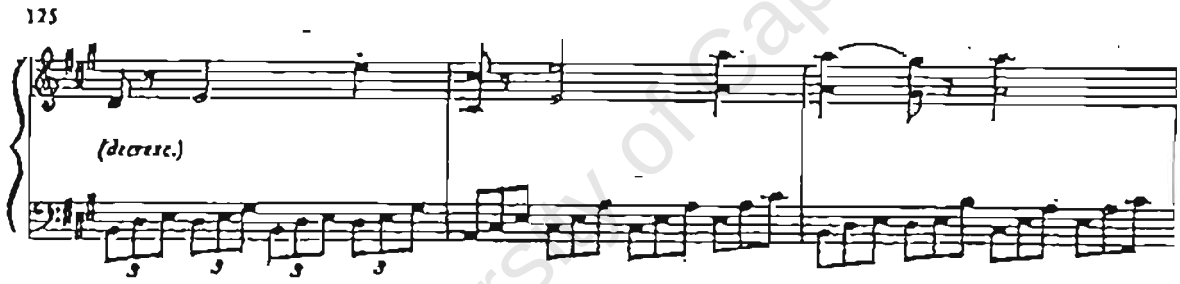
This new triplet rhythm is transferred to the left hand for the recapitulation of the 1st theme:

Mus. ex. 1c

Beethoven: Sonata in G, op 31 no 1, Third Movement, bars 66-68



Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, Fourth Movement, bars 125-127



University of Cape Town

Anton Diabelli, having composed a waltz, had requested a number of contemporary composers to write a variation on it. Beethoven was among the invitees. It is recorded that Beethoven did not like the theme and called Diabelli's tune a *Schusterfleck* (Cobbler's patch).[133] Beethoven, however, grew interested in the piece and wrote thirty-three variations on the waltz. This was published in 1821. Other composers also wrote variations on Diabelli's theme and in 1824, Beethoven's variations and that of other

[132] Rosen, 456
[133] Scott, Marion M. Beethoven. London Dent, 1965, 147

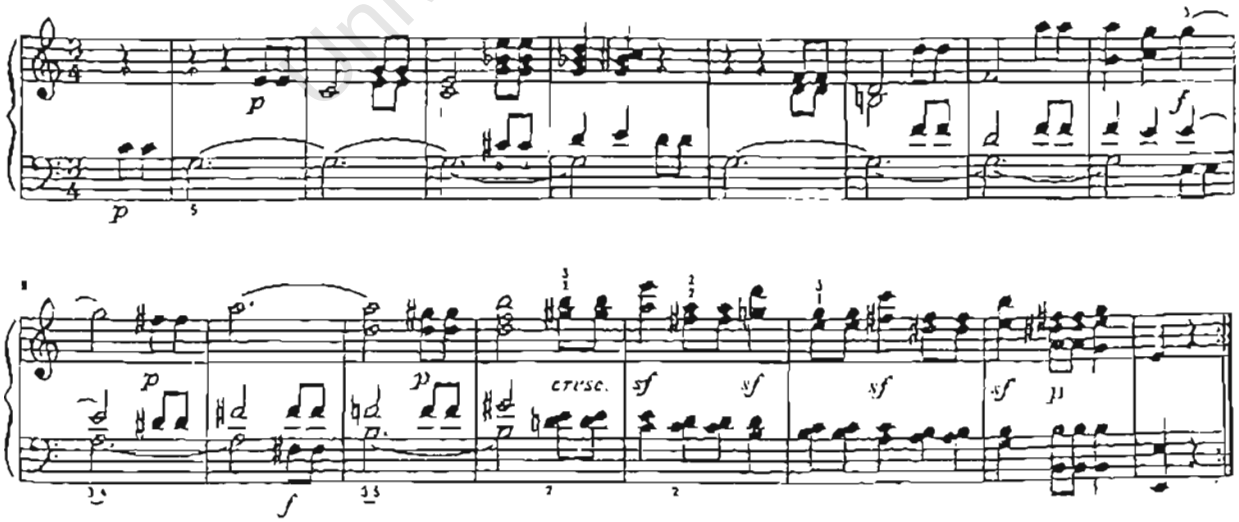
composers were published as a whole.[134] The second part of t his collection contained Schubert's single variation together with the single variations of 49 other composers. Brown writes:

> it is not too much to suppose that Schubert had been playing Beethoven's celebrated "33 Variations" from this big publication, and that the work inspired his own interest in variation-form during these years when he wrote his best work in the form.[135]

However, it is not entirely justified to suppose that Schubert, who was "incapable of playing through his own *Wanderer fantasie*[136], would have been able to play through Beethoven's monumental Diabelli Variations, a work that, apart from interpretive insight of a very high order, requires much virtuosity in most of its variations. It is fascinating though, to see the influence of the fifth "Diabelli" variation on the "Scherzo" of Schubert's Sonata in A minor, D.845.[137]

Mus. ex. 2a

Beethoven: Diabelli Variations op 120, Var. 5, bars 1-16

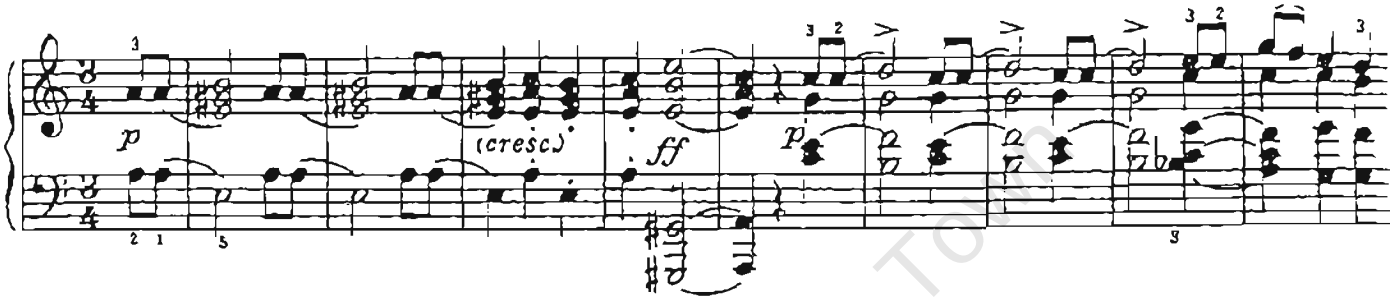


[134] Brown, Critical Biography, 189
[135] Brown, Critical Biography, 190
[136] Samaroff, Olga. "The piano music of Schubert" The Musical Quarterly xiv/4, 599
[137] Brown, Critical Biography, 189

University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 2b

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 845, Third Movement (Scherzo), bars 1-9

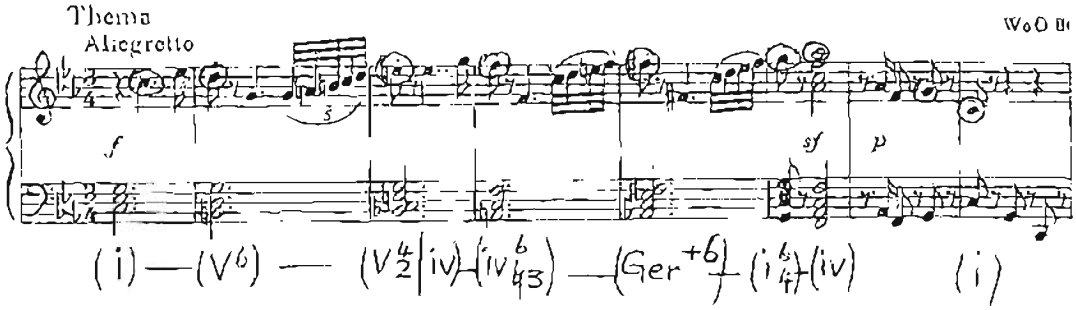


Not only are both these examples marked *Allegro vivace*, but also the rhythm and scherzo-character of both are identical.

One of the most transparent references to Beethoven in all of Schubert is to be found in the first movement of the latter's Piano Sonata in C minor (1828), D. 958.[138] The opening of the Schubert work is a "virtual" quotation of the theme of Beethoven's 32 Variations in C minor, WoO80:

Mus. ex. 3a

Beethoven: 32 Variations in C minor, WoO80, Theme, bars 1-8

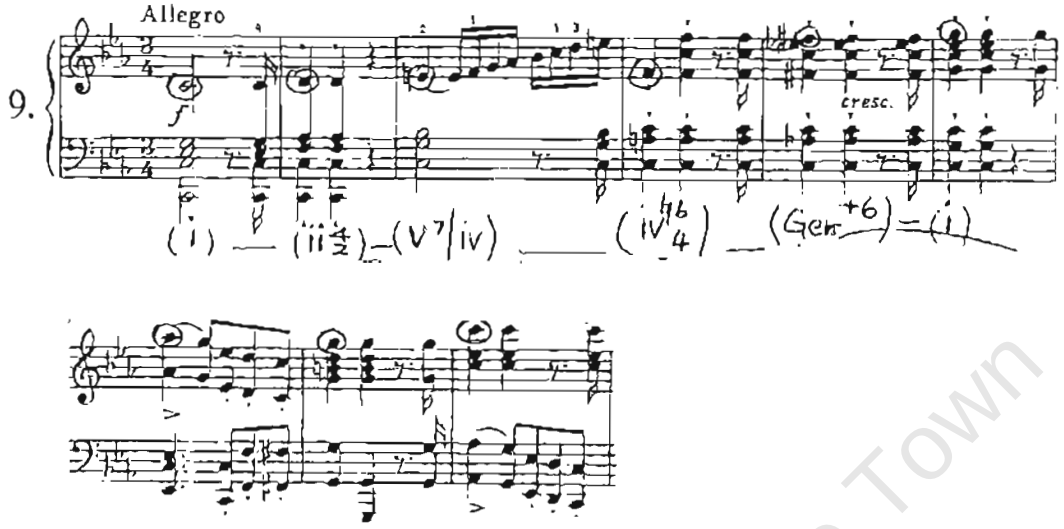


[138] Fisk, Charles. "Schubert recollects himself: The Piano Sonata in C minor, D. 958". The Musical Quarterly Lxxxiv / 4, 635

University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 3b

Schubert: Sonata in C minor, D. 958. First Movement, bars 1-12



These two examples show striking similarities in harmonic progression, and rhythm. These Beethoven variations, though without opus number, were published in 1807. It is therefore very unlikely that Schubert did not know them.[139] Furthermore the slow movement of this Schubert Sonata is an Adagio in A^{b} major echoing Beethoven's two early C minor sonatas (both with Adagios in A^{b} major) op. 10 no. 1 and op. 13 ("Pathetique").

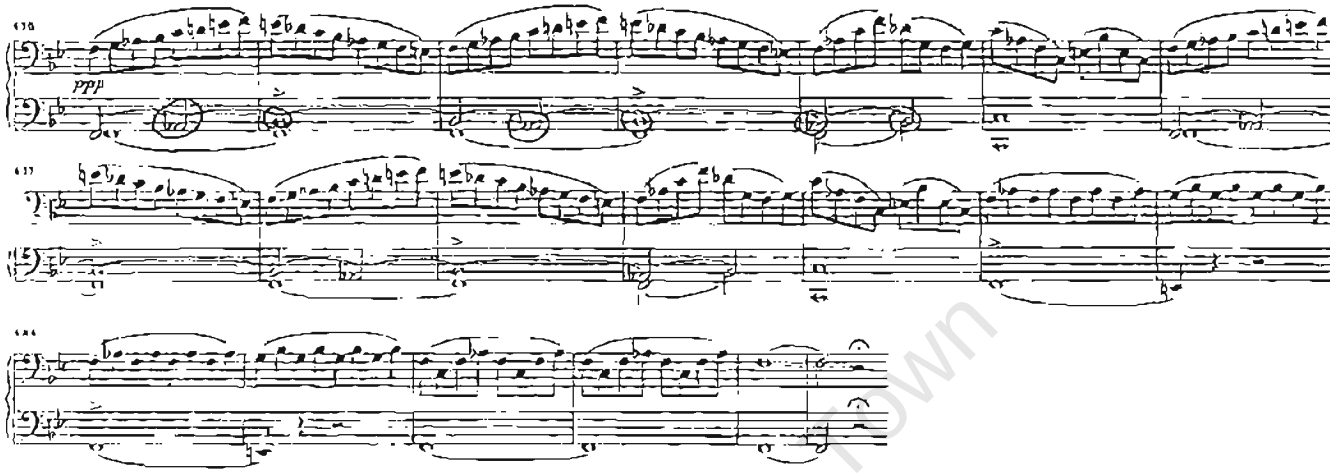
Nettheim refers to another but less obvious case of reference to Beethoven in a Schubert work. This occurs in the *secondo* of Schubert's Fantasie for Piano four hands, D. 48 of 1813, written when he was only 16, and Beethoven's *Appassionata*, op. 57 of 1805[140]:

[139] Fisk, 653
[140] Nettheim, 330-331

University of Cape Town

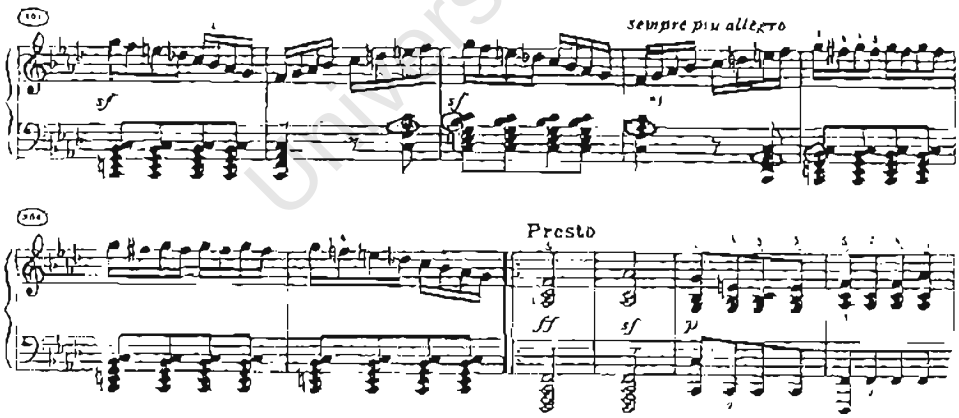
Mus. ex. 4a

Schubert: Fantasie in B♭ (four hands), D. 48, First Movement, bars 470-489



Mus. ex. 4b

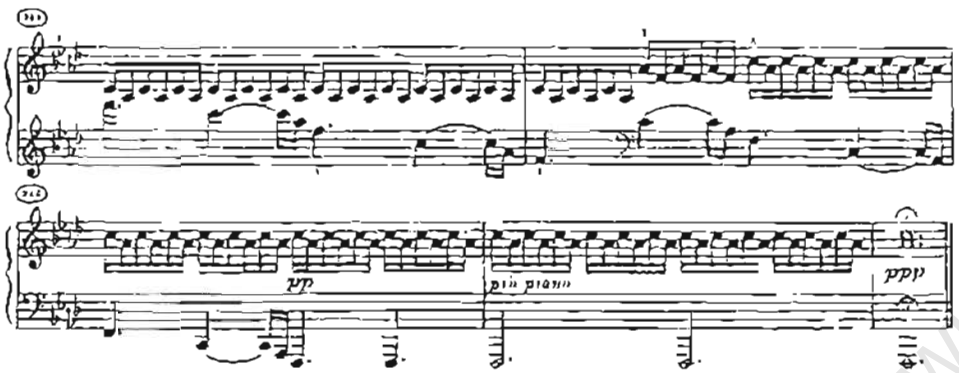
Beethoven: Sonata in F minor, op. 57, Third Movement, bars 301-307



University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 4c

Beethoven: Sonata in F minor, op.57, First Movement, bars 258-262

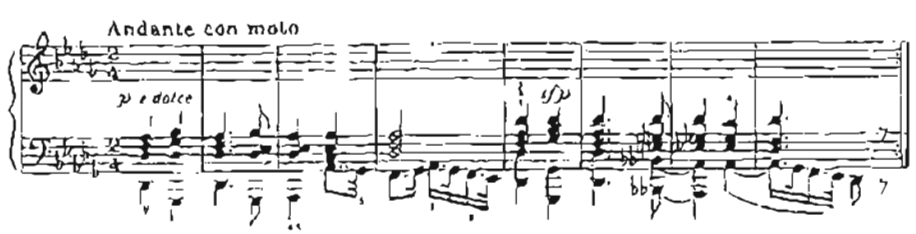


Schubert's bars 470-489 follow Beethoven's third movement in bars 301-307 and first movement, bars 258-262, Beethoven's scale passages in F minor, in the left hand minor movements between the notes, A^{b} and B^{b} (see examples), in the tremolo-like figuration (with pedal-point) that ends both composers' first movements, as well as in the dynamic level of *pianissimo* with a fermata in the last bar.

Having ended his first movement in F minor, Beethoven began his second movement in $D^{\#}$ major, and Schubert followed suit:

Mus. ex. 4d

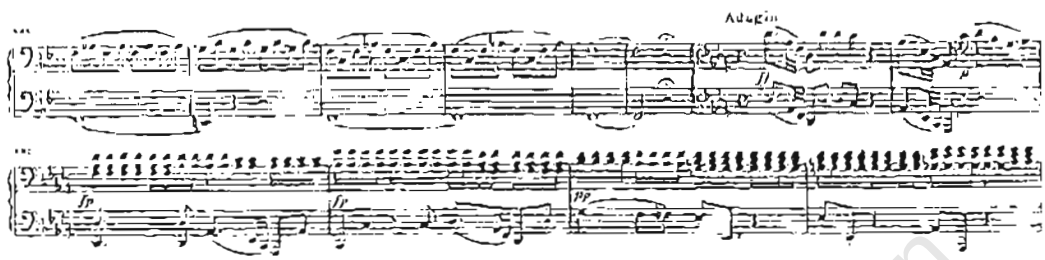
Beethoven: Sonata in F minor, op. 57, Second Movement, bars 1-8



University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 4e

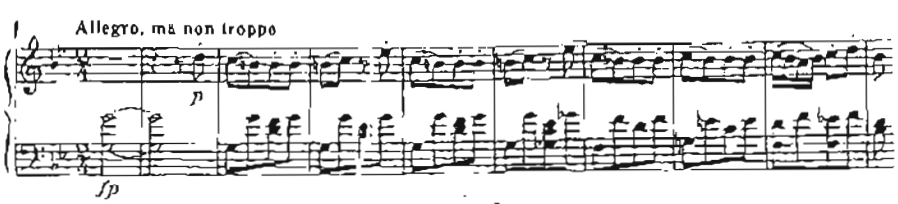
Schubert: Fantasie in B♭ (four hands), D. 48, Second Movement, bars 490-495



In the finale of Schubert's *Sonata in B♭, D. 960*, there is a specific gesture of homage to Beethoven.[141] This dancelike movement starts of mysteriously with a long-held octave G, the major sixth interval of the tonic, B♭. The movement starts off with a passage in C minor, which delays the entry of the tonic until bar 10. This harmonic procedure is similar to the opening theme (also dancelike) of the finale of Beethoven's *String Quartet op. 130* in the same key. In the Beethoven work it also takes 9 bars to get to the tonic, B♭:

Mus. ex. 5a

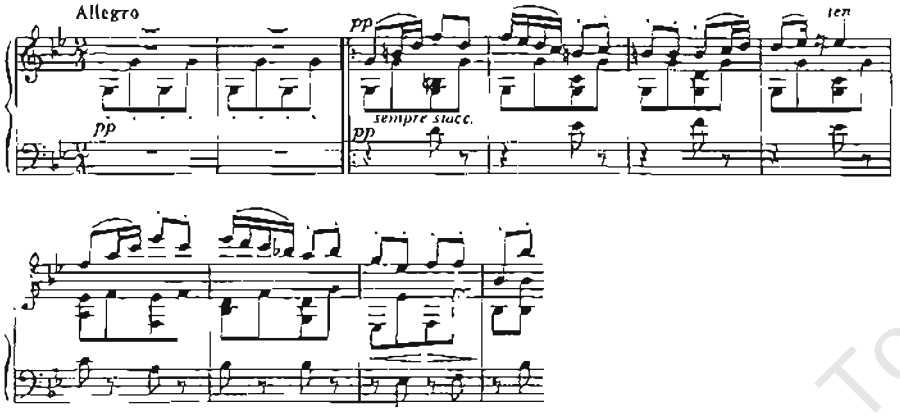
Schubert: Piano Sonata in B♭, D. 960, Fourth Movement, bars 1-10



University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 5b

Beethoven: String Quartet in B^{b} Op. 130, Fourth Movement, bars 1-10 (Piano Reduction)



Despite all these derivative points of style, Schubert was from the beginning a very unique personality with unique gifts. Although he borrowed freely from the traditions of Beethoven and others, he simultaneously cultivated strategies to enhance his own expressive style.

University of Cape Town

[141] Plantinga, 105-106

2.3 Schubert's Piano Sonatas

2.3.1 Form: Sonata Form

2.3.1.1 Exposition

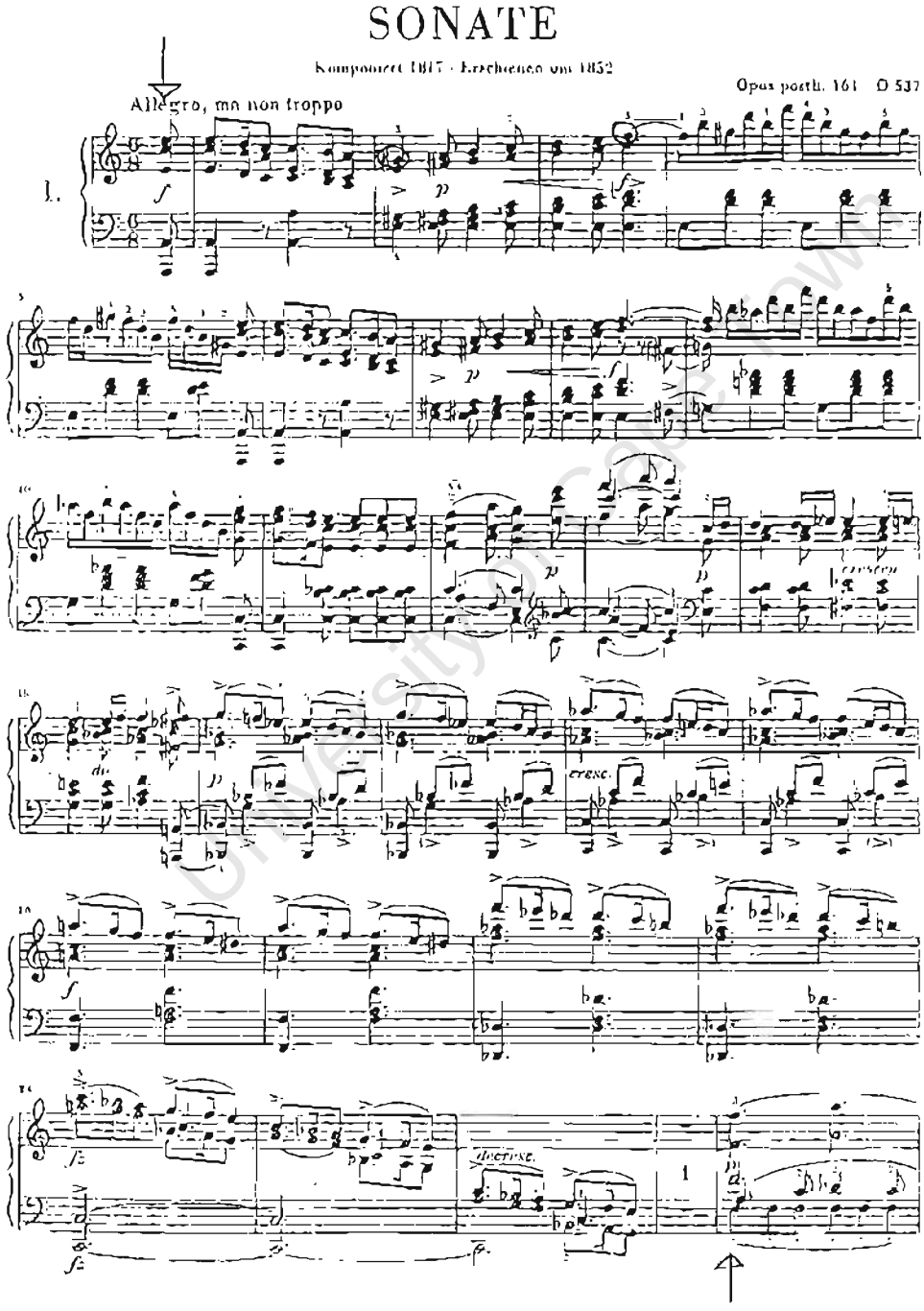
One of the most characteristic features of Schubert's freedom in treating the key-organisation of classical sonata form, is his frequent deviation from the orthodox key sequence.[142] In the exposition he alters the conventional antithesis of tonic and dominant (or if in case of a minor tonic, the relative major) as the respective keys for the first and second subjects, by introducing the second subject in other related keys, as the following examples will illustrate[143]: In the Sonata in A minor, D. 537. First Movement, the second subject is introduced in the submediant (VI, bar 28) instead of the relative major:

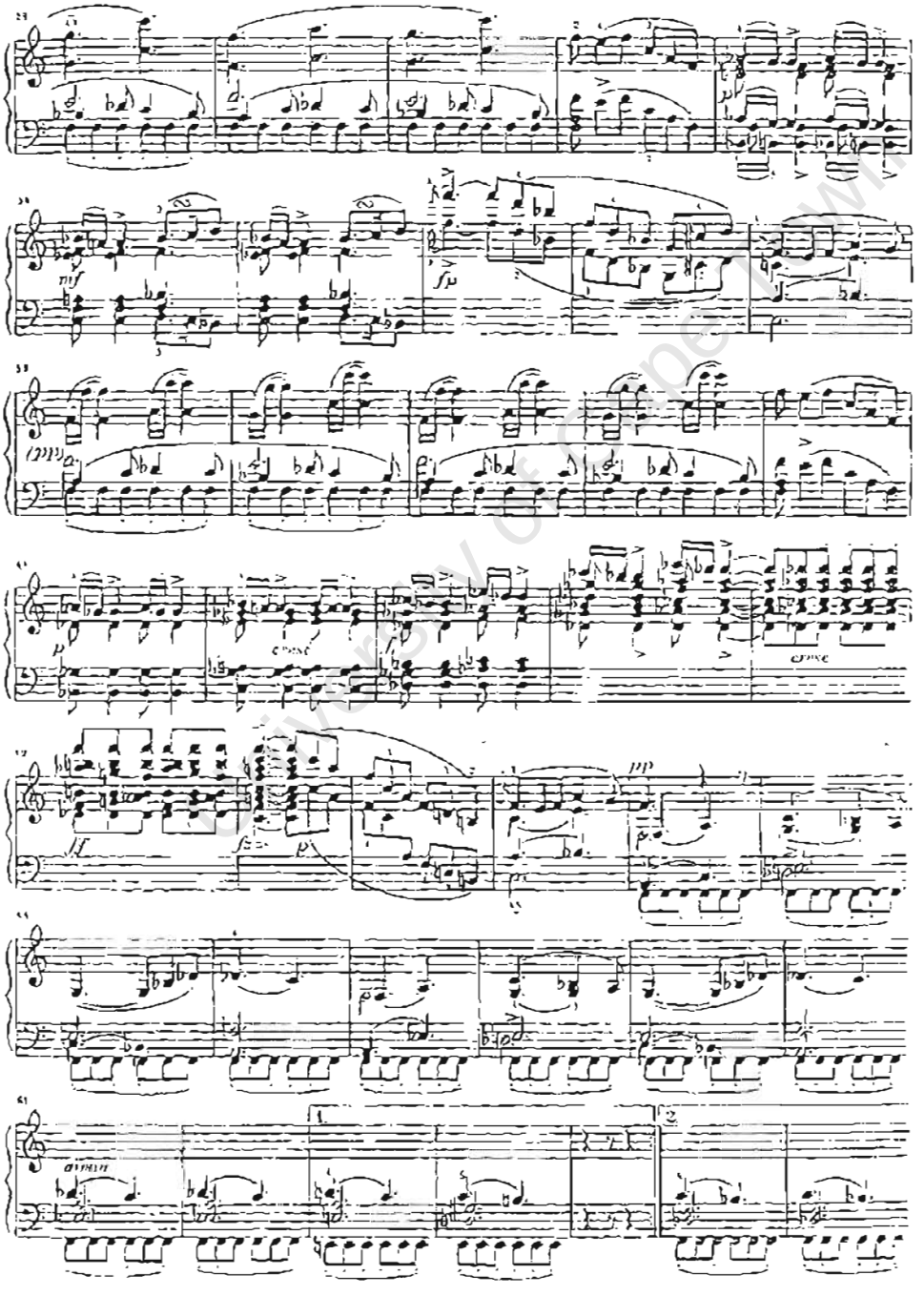
University of Cape Town

[142] Carner, Mosco. "The Orchestral Music" in Abraham, G. Schubert: A symposium London: Drummond, 1946, 30
[143] Carner, 80

Mus. ex. 6a

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, bars 1-42

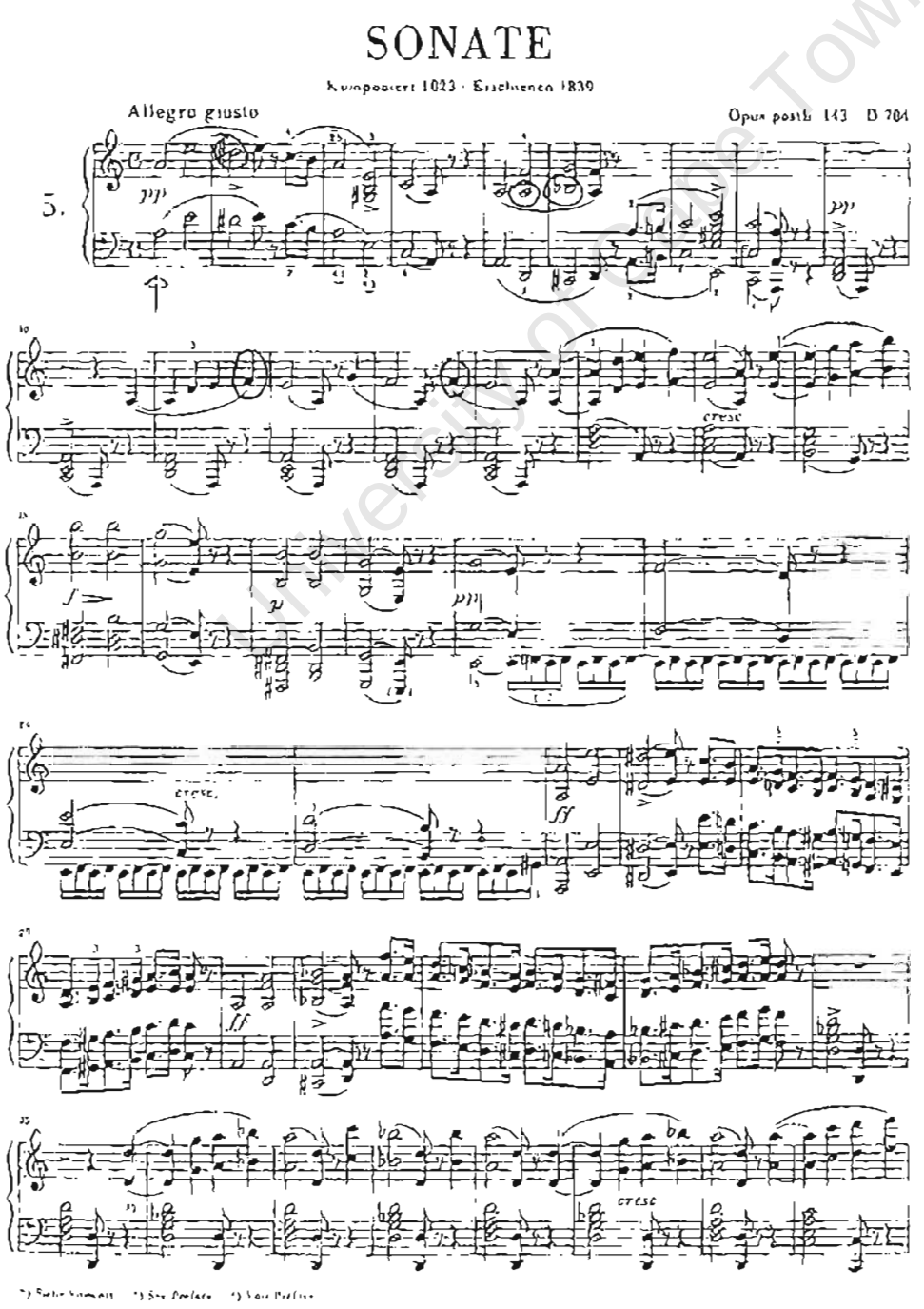




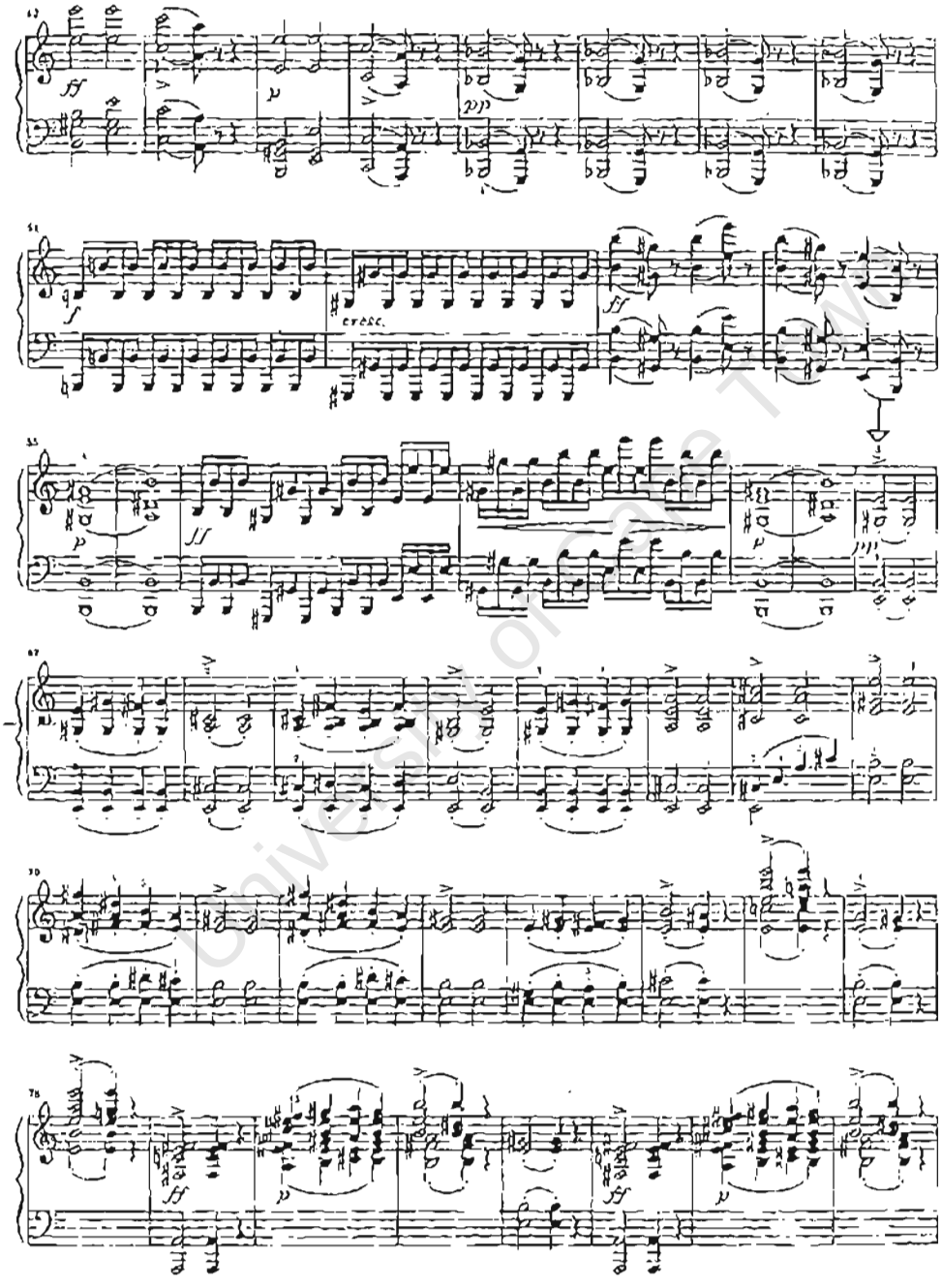
In another A minor Sonata, D. 784, First Movement, the second subject appears in the dominant (E major, bar 61) instead of the relative major (C major)

Mus. ex. 6b

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 784, First Movement, bars 1-85



University of Cape Town



University of Cape Town

In the third movement of this same sonata (D. 784) Schubert seems to offer two "expositions", the first with 79 bars and the second with 80 bars. In the first "exposition" he introduces the second subject in the submediants (F major, bar 51) and in the second "exposition" he uses the conventional key, the relative major (C major, bar 131) for the second subject "as if to make amends for breaking the classical rule"[144]

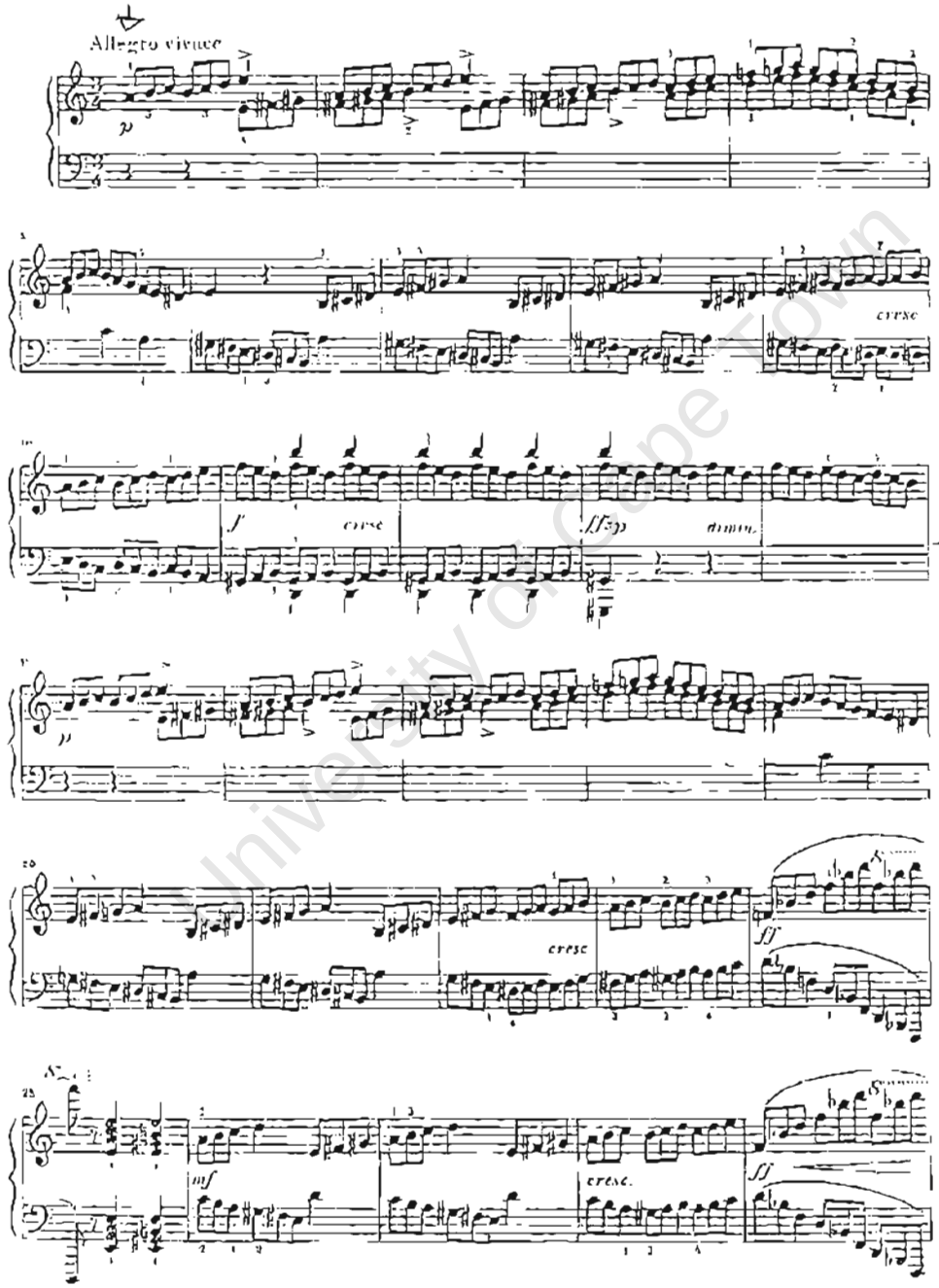
The "first" exposition is from bar 1-79 and the "second" is from bar 80-159. Schubert here uses three keys before starting from bar 160-198) A minor – F major – A minor – C major.

University of Cape Town

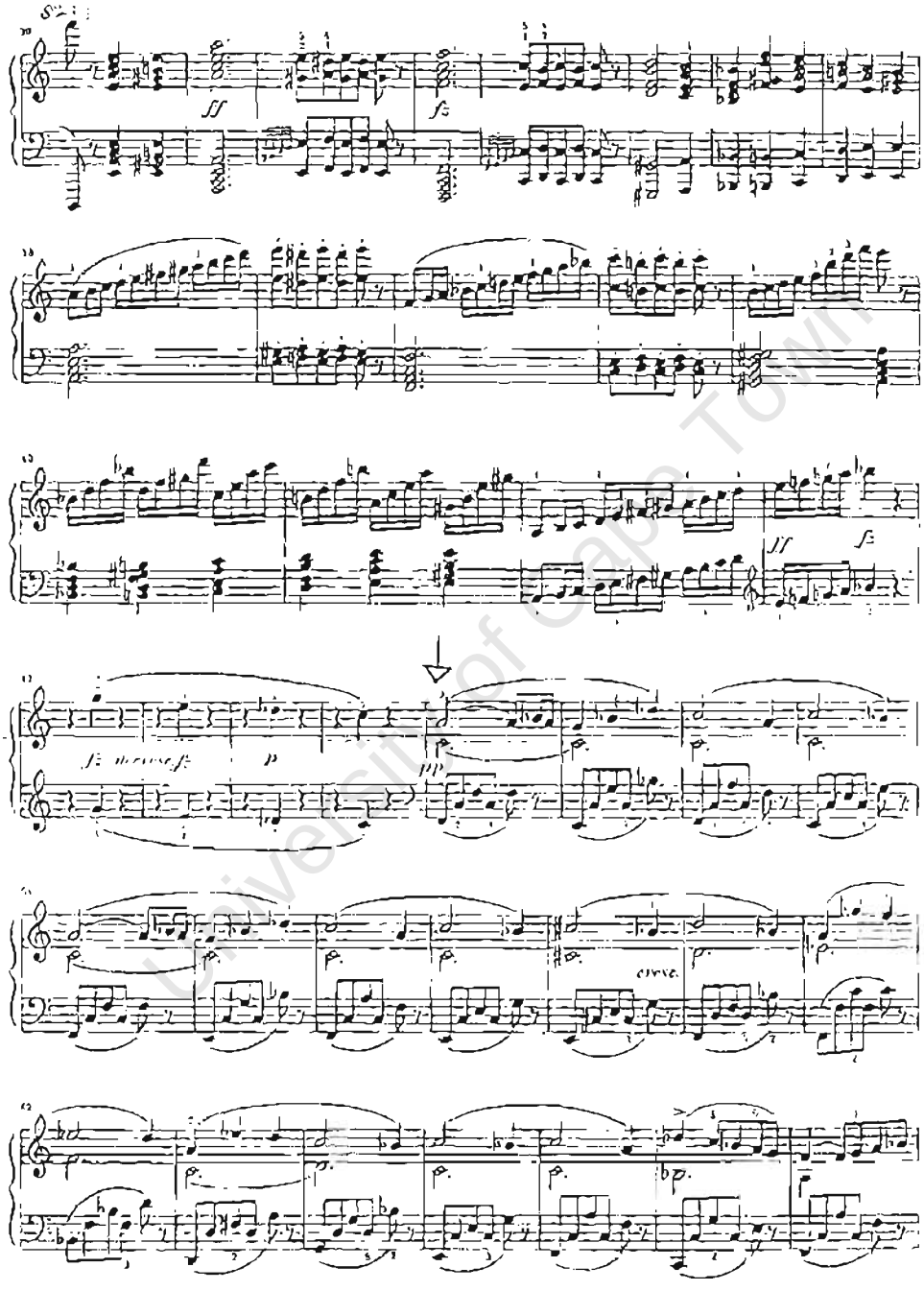
[144] Camer, 30

Mus. ex. 7

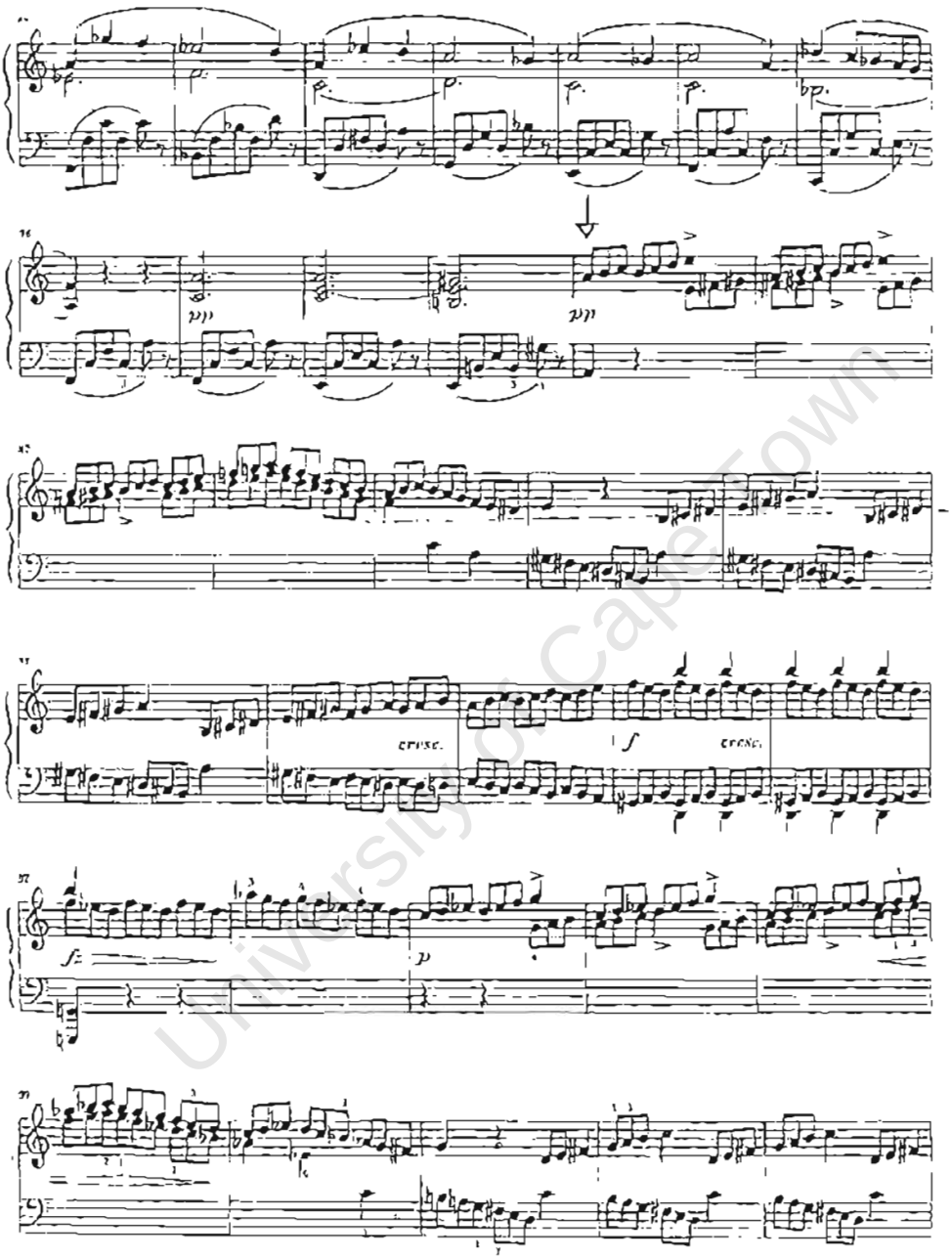
Schubert: Sonata in A minor, d. 784, Third Movement, bars 1-185



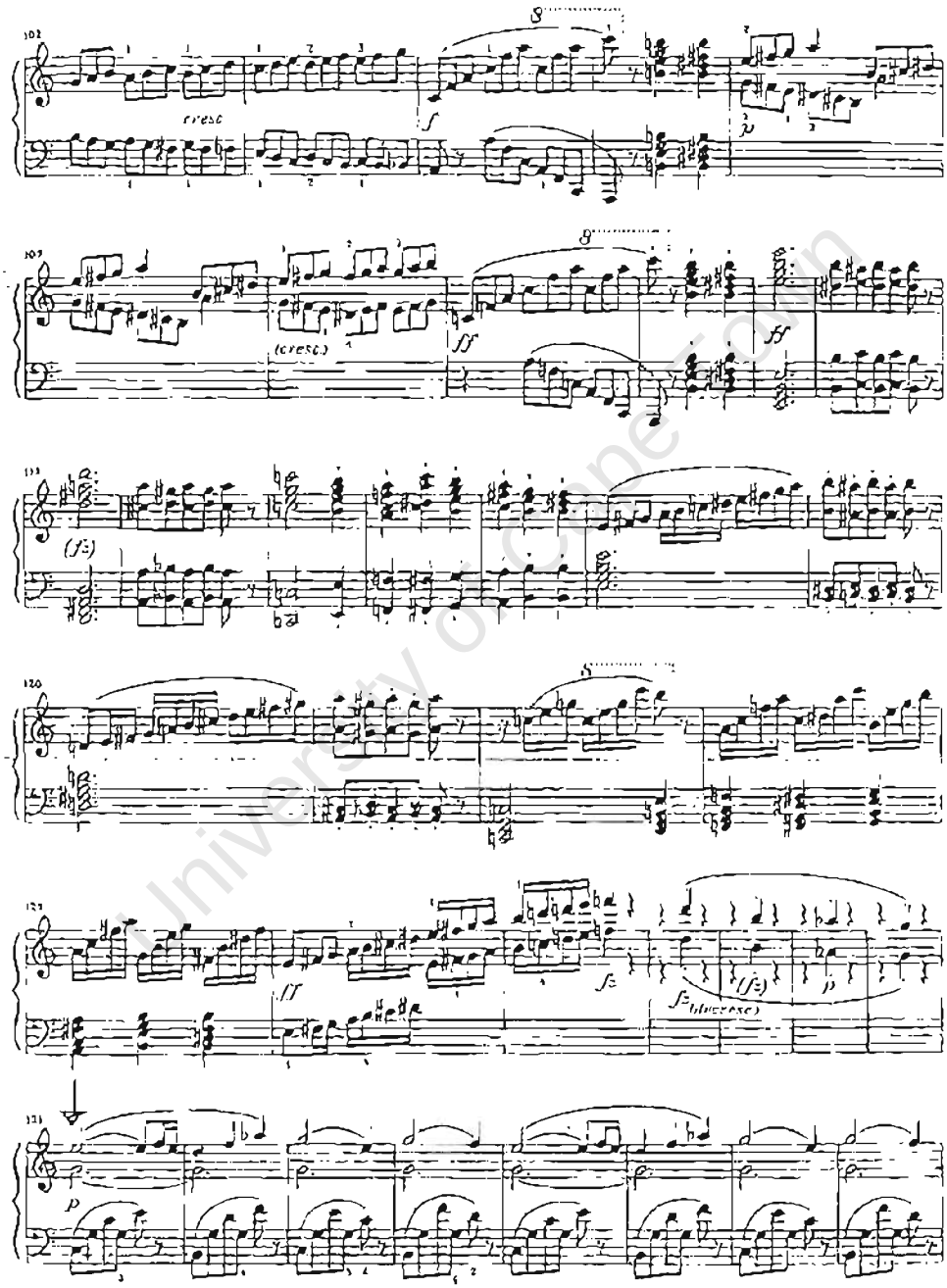
University of Cape Town



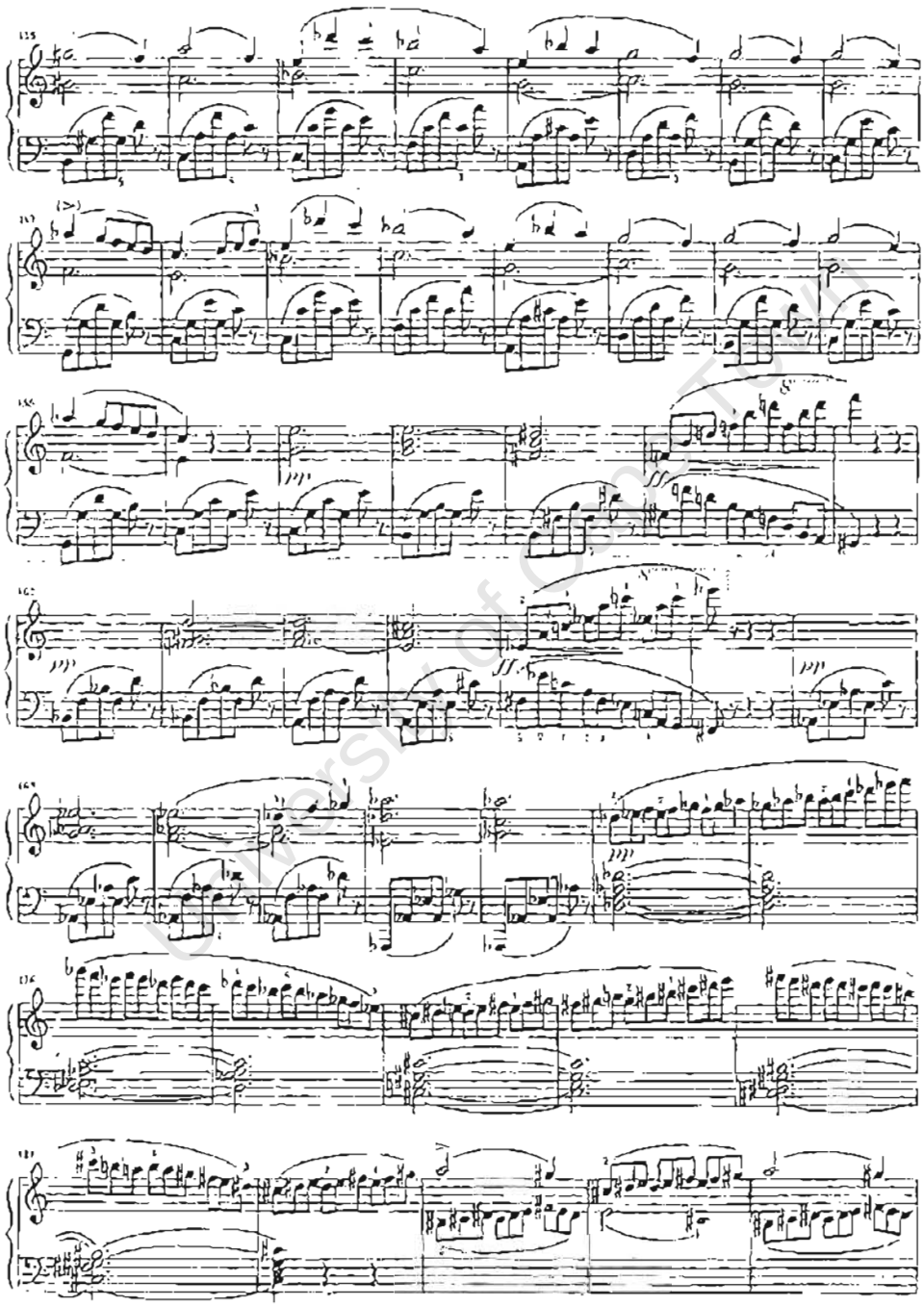
University of Cape Town



University of Cape Town



University of Cologne



Rosen states that the best example of Schubert's handling of the three-key exposition is to be found in the first movement of the last piano sonata in $B^{\flat}$, D. 960[145]. The structure is as follows[146]:

Theme 1:	A	:	$B^{\flat}$ major	=>	bars 1-18
	B	:	$G^{\flat}$ major	=>	bars 19-35
	A	:	$B^{\flat}$ major	=>	bars 36-47
Second Group		:	$F^{\#}$ minor	=>	bars 48-57
		:	F major	=>	bars 74-79

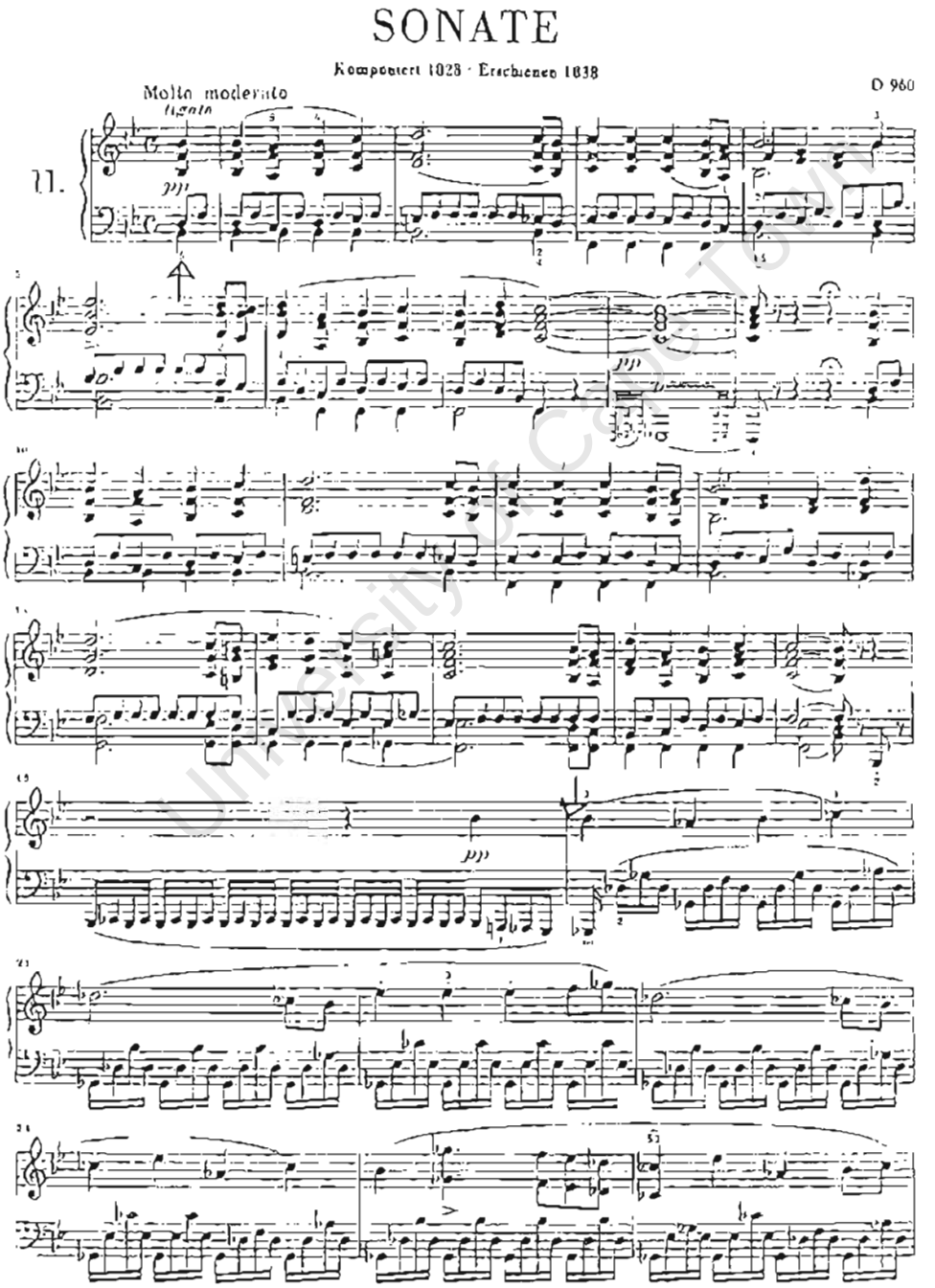
The second key ($F^{\#}$ minor) is prepared by enharmonic modulation: a diminished seventh chord in the key of C minor (the supertonic in $B^{\flat}$ major [bar 46 / i-iii]) becomes vii^{o7} in $F^{\#}$ minor ($E^{\#}$ - $G^{\#}$ - B – D), followed by V^7 in $F^{\#}$ minor ($C^{\#}$ - $E^{\#}$ - $G^{\#}$ - B), which leads to i.

University of Cape Town

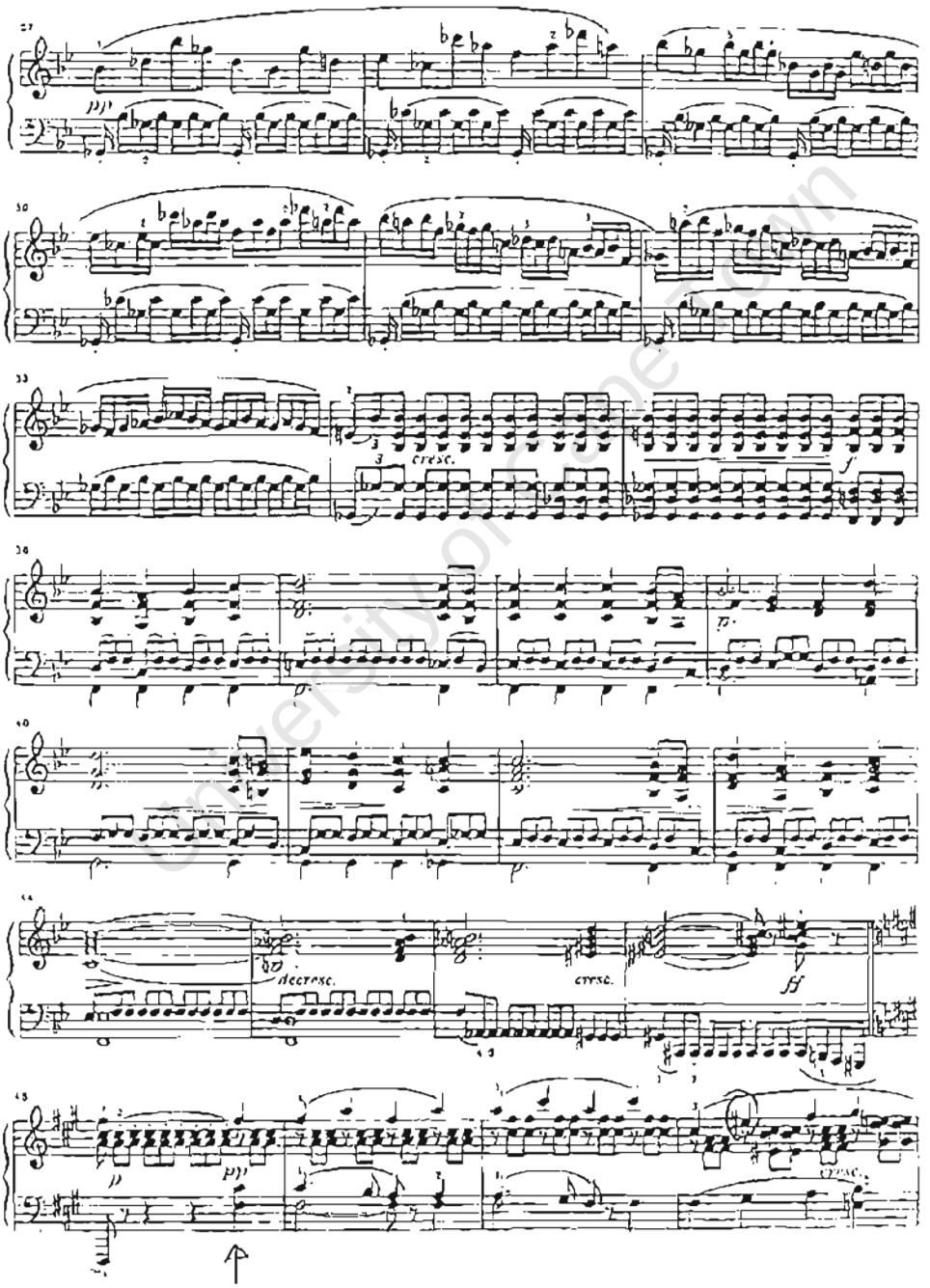
[145] Rosen, Charles. Sonata Forms. New York: Norton, 1980, 246
[146] Rosen, 246

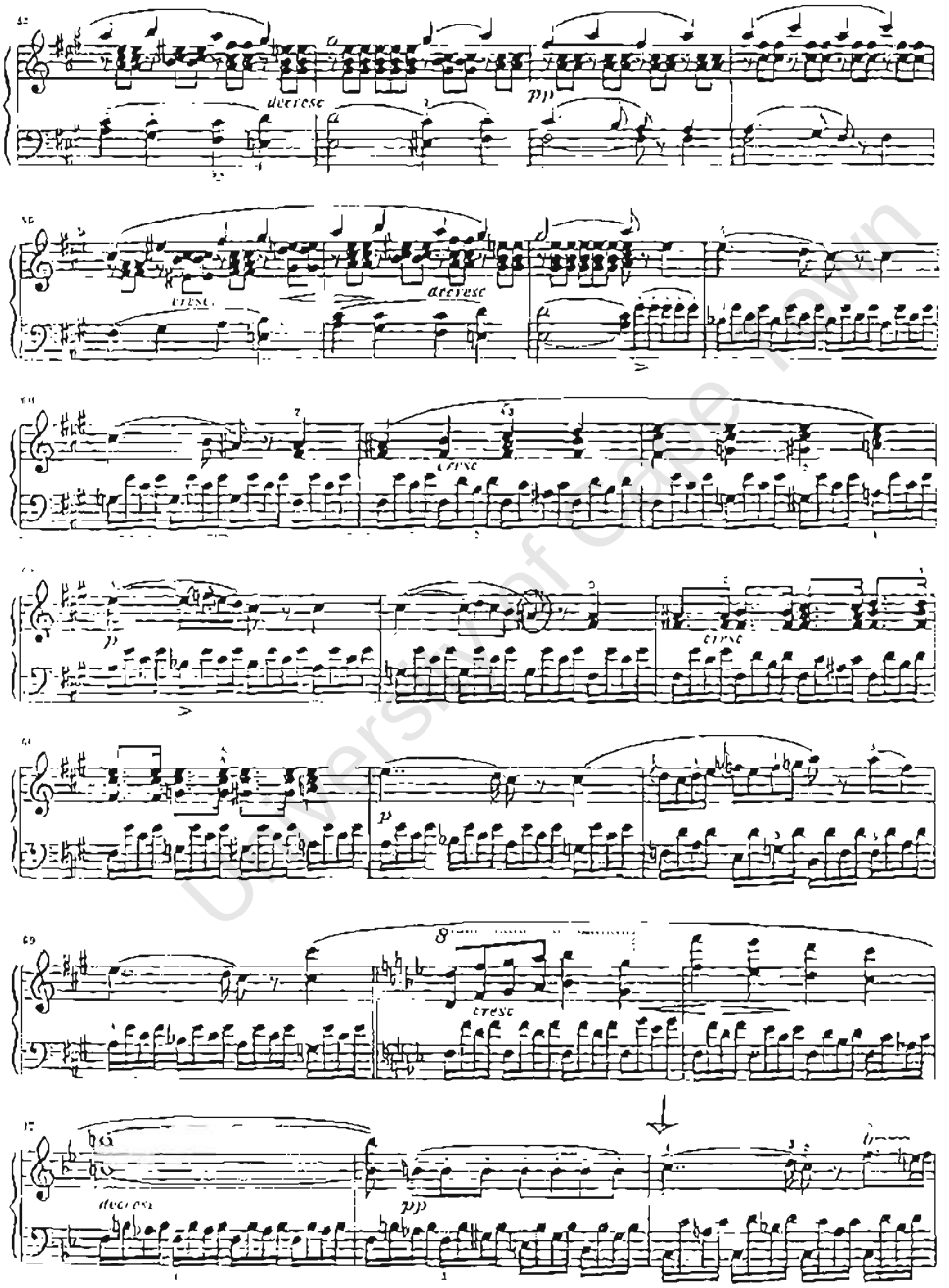
Mus. ex. 8

Schubert: Sonata in B^{b}, D. 960, First Movement, bars 1-102

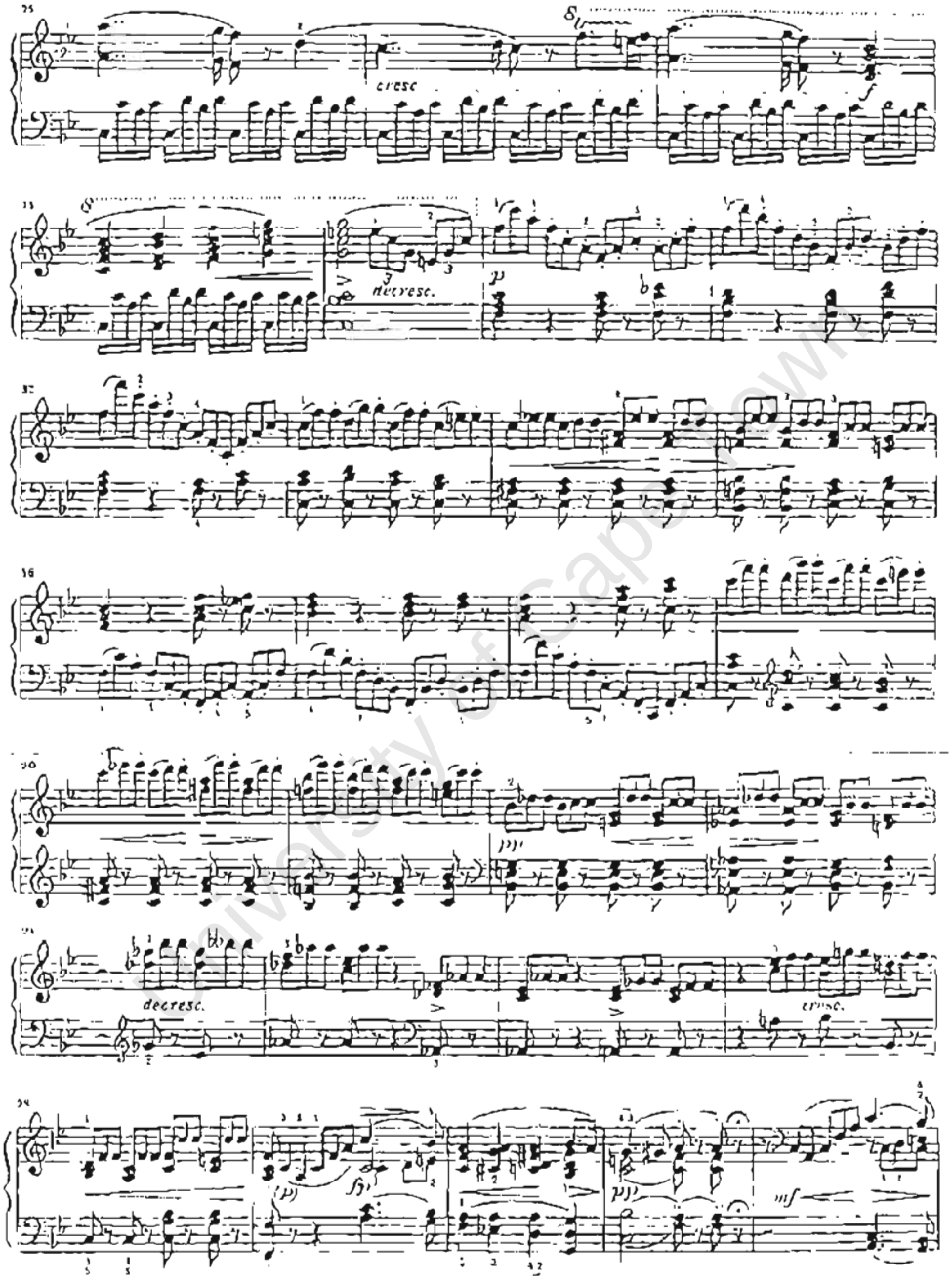


University of Cape Town


cresc.
decresc.
cresc.
ff
cresc.



University of Cape Town


cresc
decresc.
decresc.
cresc.

2.3.1.2 Development

Pauly likens the necessity of development of a musical theme to the potential for growth inherent in a single seed[147]. In the development the composer works with a theme, or part of a theme from the exposition[148]. It is also in this part of sonata form that the most distant and rapid modulations are to be found[149].

Rosen points out two examples from Schubert's late piano sonatas which illustrates the composer's unique treatment of the development section[150]. First is the beginning of the development of the Sonata in A major, D. 959, First Movement:

The development starts off with a variant of the second part of the second subject of the exposition which appeared first in bar 121. Now this part of the second subject is introduced in C major in bar 131, the beginning of a series of static five-bar phrases:[151]

Bars	131-135	:	C major	=>	B major
	136-140	:	B major	=>	C major
	141-145	:	C major	=>	B major
	146-150	:	B major	=>	C major
	151-155	:	C major	=>	B minor
	156-160	:	B minor	=>	C major
	161-165	:	C minor		
	166-167	:	(echo of last 2 bars)		

[147] Pauly, R.G. Music in the Classic Period. New Jersey: Englewood, 1973, 38
[148] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 2
[149] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 2
[150] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 289

University of Cape Town

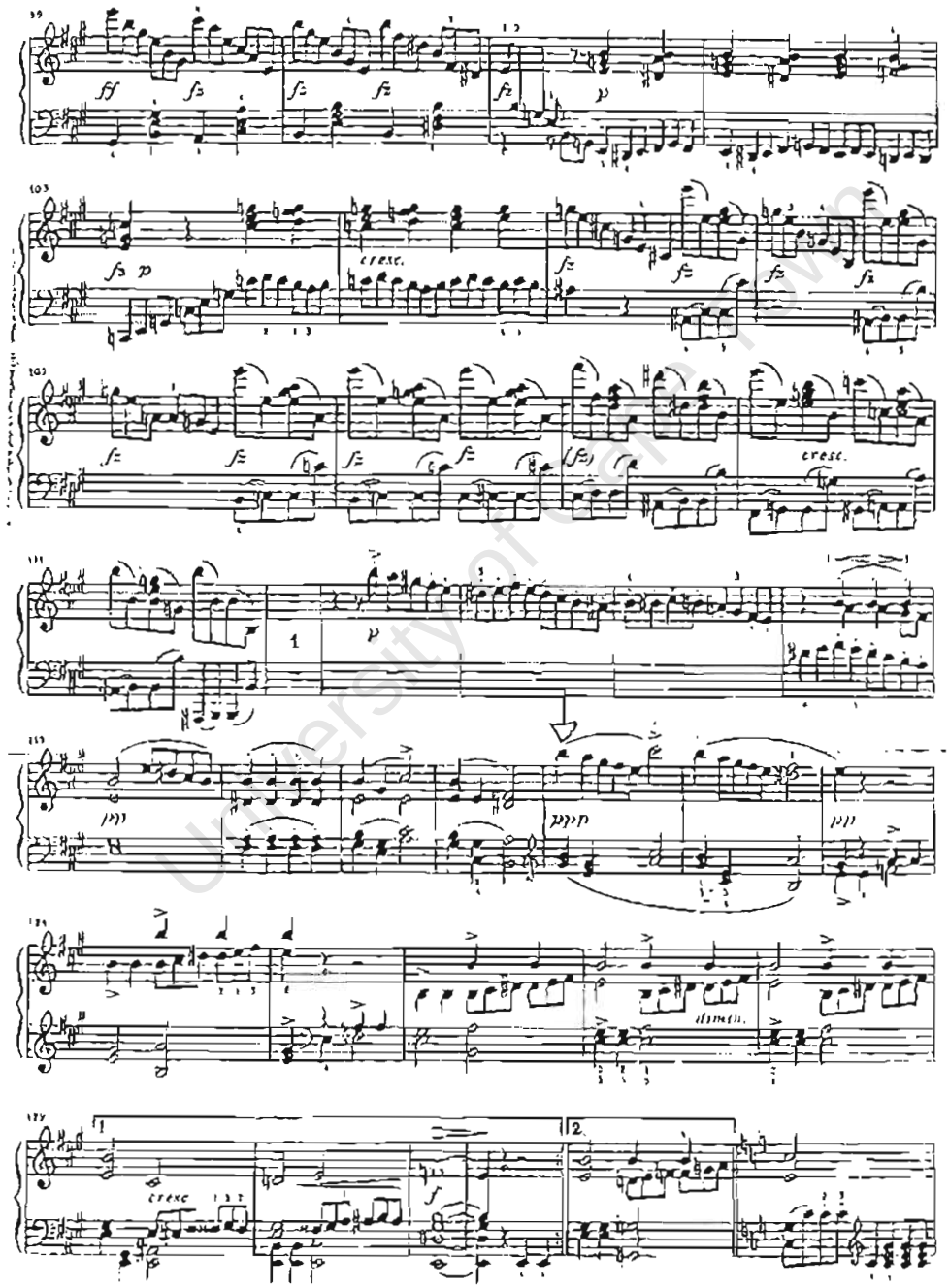
The harmony of these five-bar periods is a "false" development: the absence of genuine harmonic movement creates a tangible tension, but is not the tension of the conventional classical development which ends with the preparation for the return of the tonic[152]. The only conventional preparation for the return of the tonic is the dominant pedal starting from bar 184 until the tonic in reached in bar 98 with the return of the first subject. The oscillation between tonal levels in this "development" is an example of Schubert's inclination to use his developments to "write new melodies with the motifs of the exposition"[153].

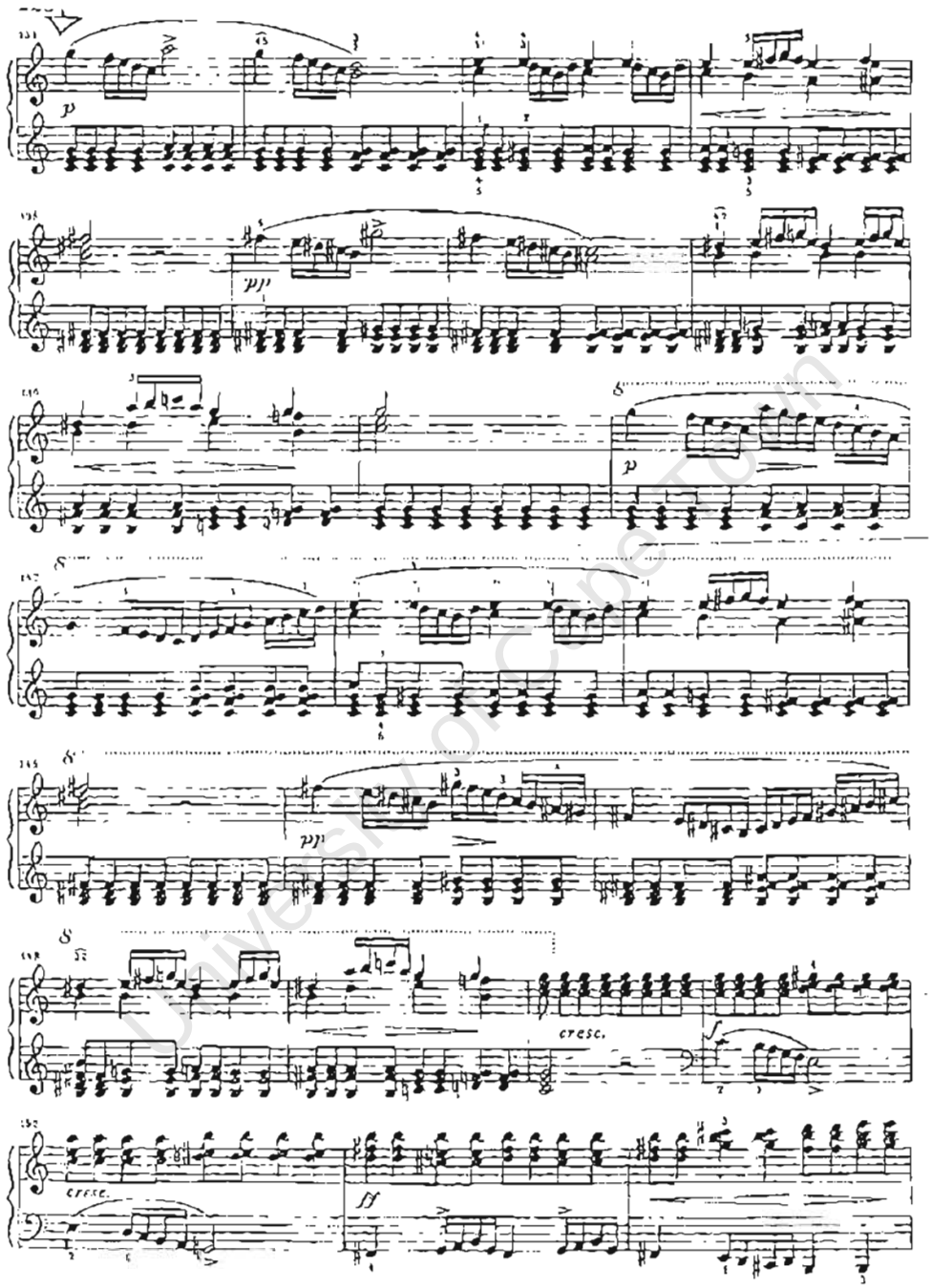
University of Cape Town

[151] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 289
[152] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 289
[153] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 288

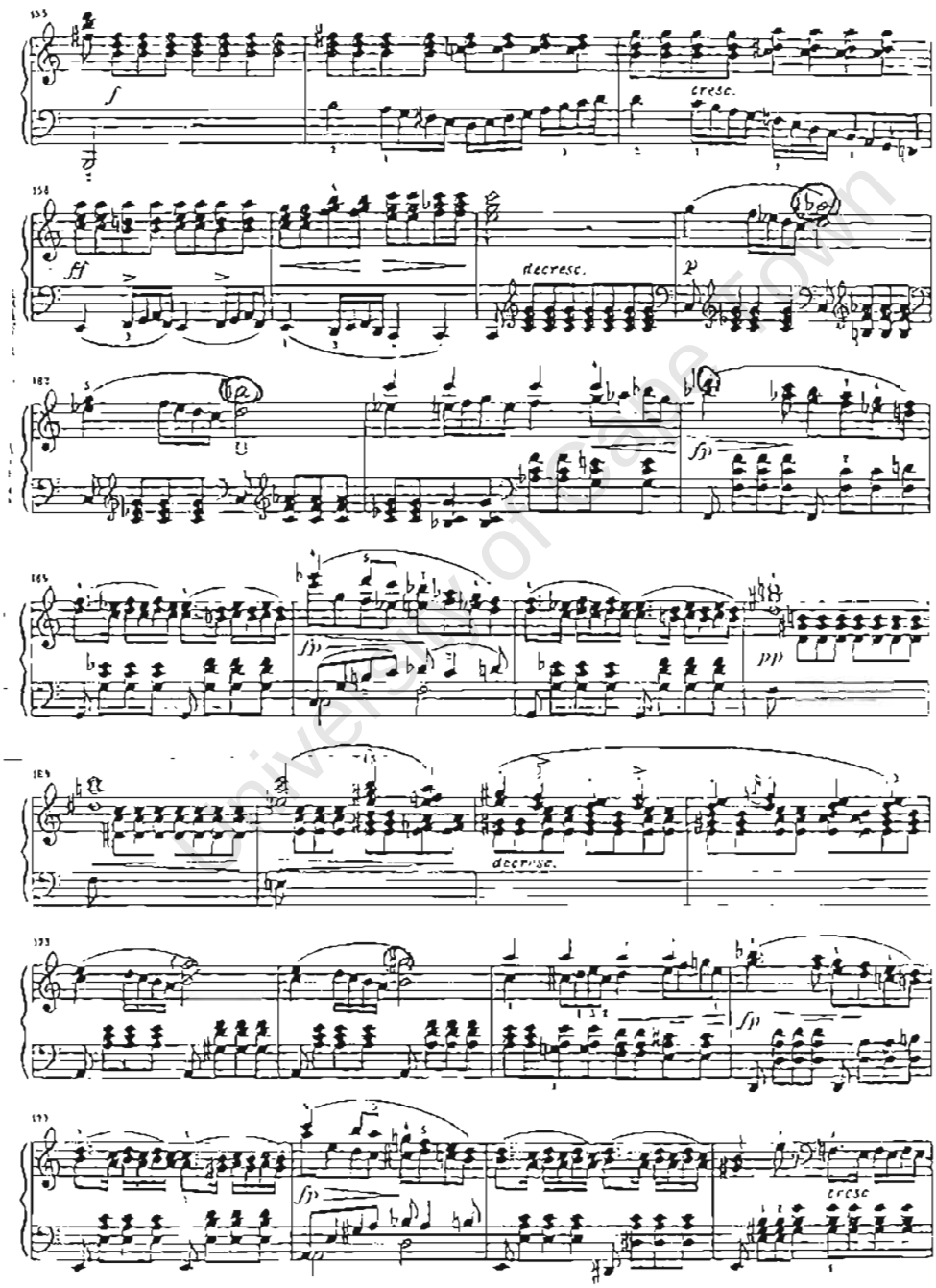
Mus. ex. 9a

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, First Movement, bars 99-209

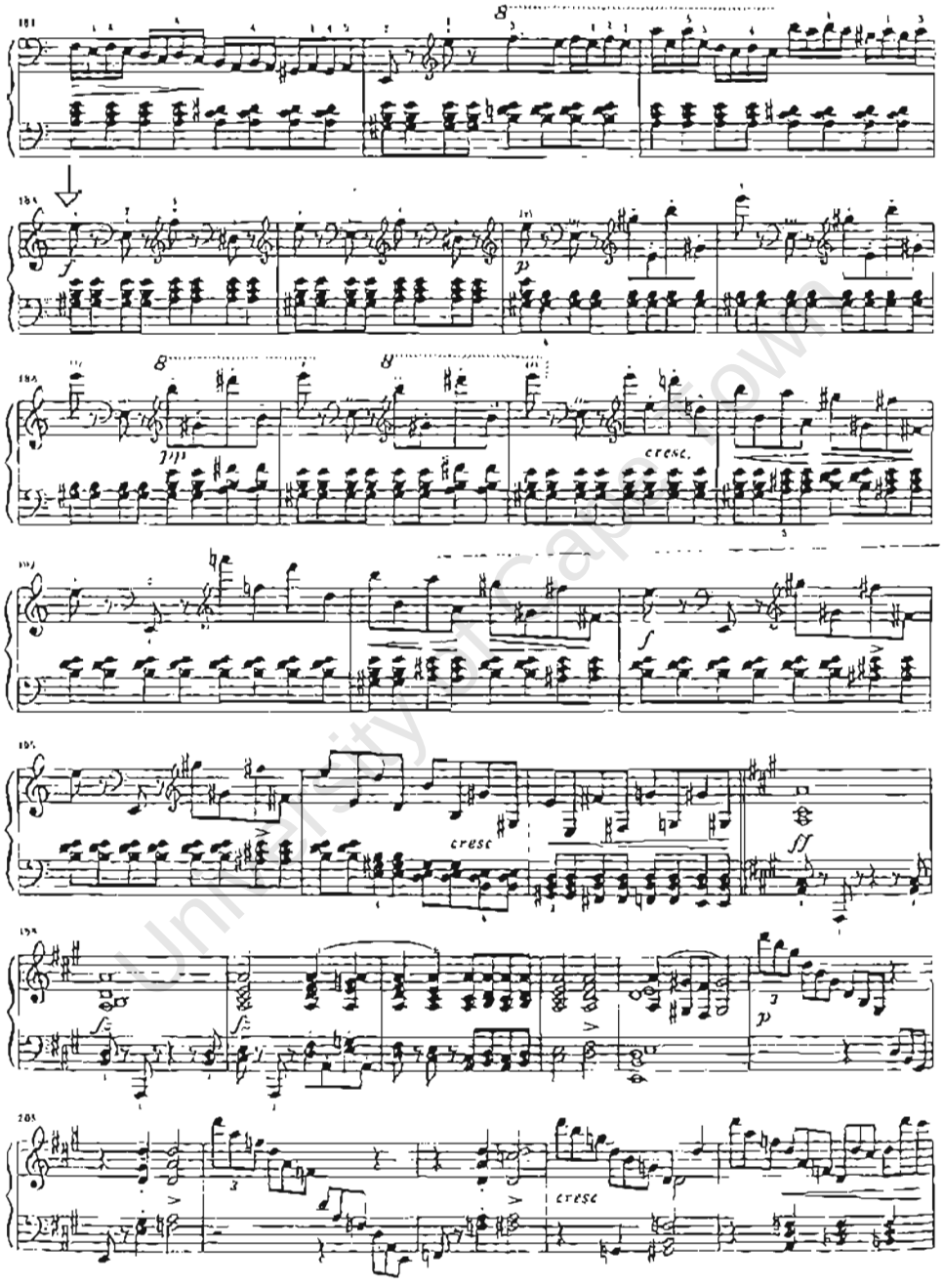




University of Cape Town



University of Cape Town



University of Cape Town

The development section of the Sonata in Bb, D. 960, First Movement, is even more deliberate: Here the stasis acts as the actual preparation for the tonic return at the end of the development.[154]. The oscillation is between Bb major and D minor, and the dominant, F major, is at first introduced in such a way that it does not sound like a dominant: bars 177 and 183. In bar 193, the tonic is introduced only as an alternative colour (*ppp*).[155] The preparation for the tonic return only begins in bar 203, with the *fp*.

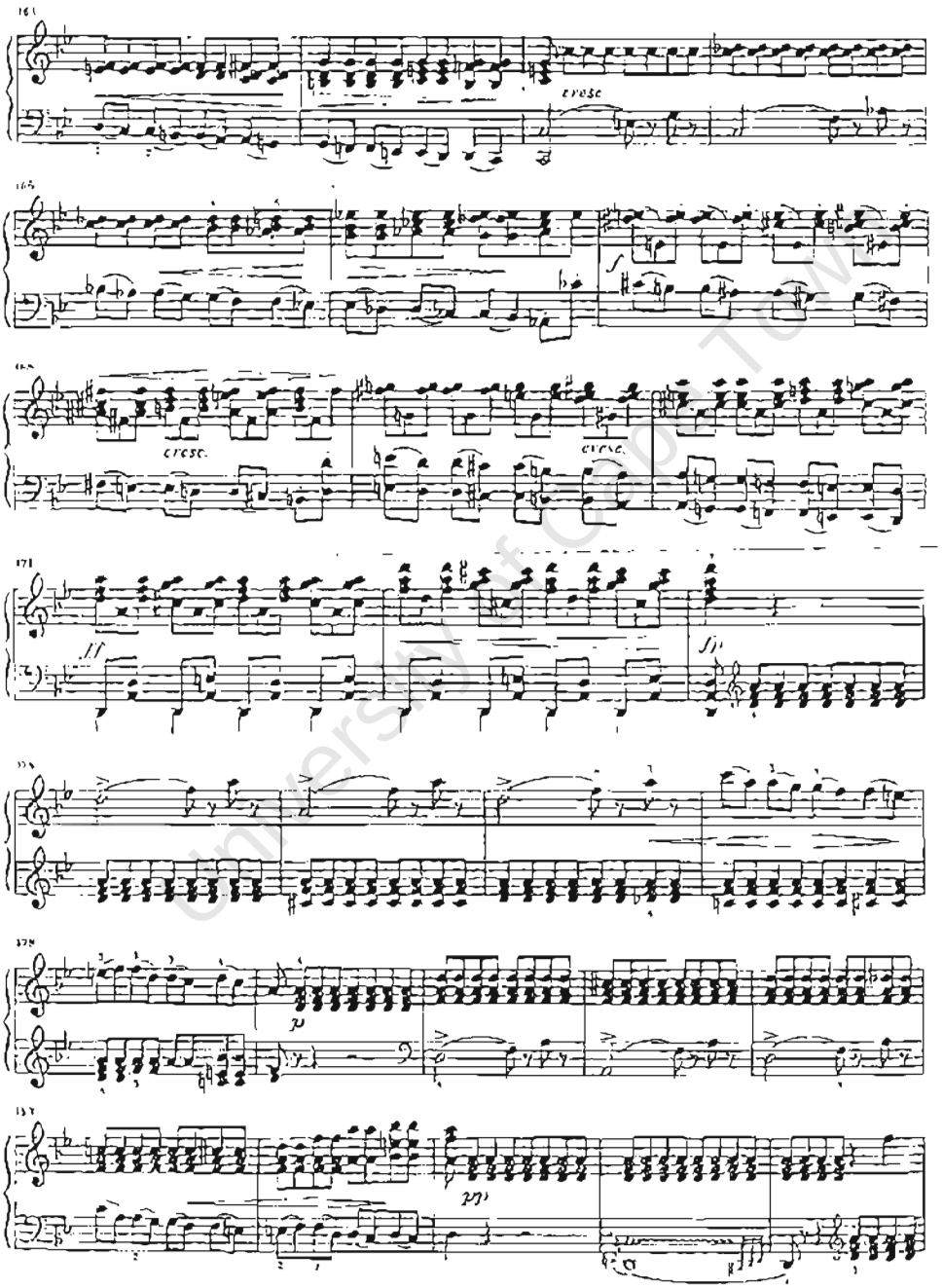
Bars	173-177	:	D minor	=>	F major
	179-183	:	D minor	=>	F major
	185-193	:	D minor	=>	B^b major
	193-198	:	B^b major	=>	D minor
	198-203	:	D minor	=>	V^7

University of Cape Town

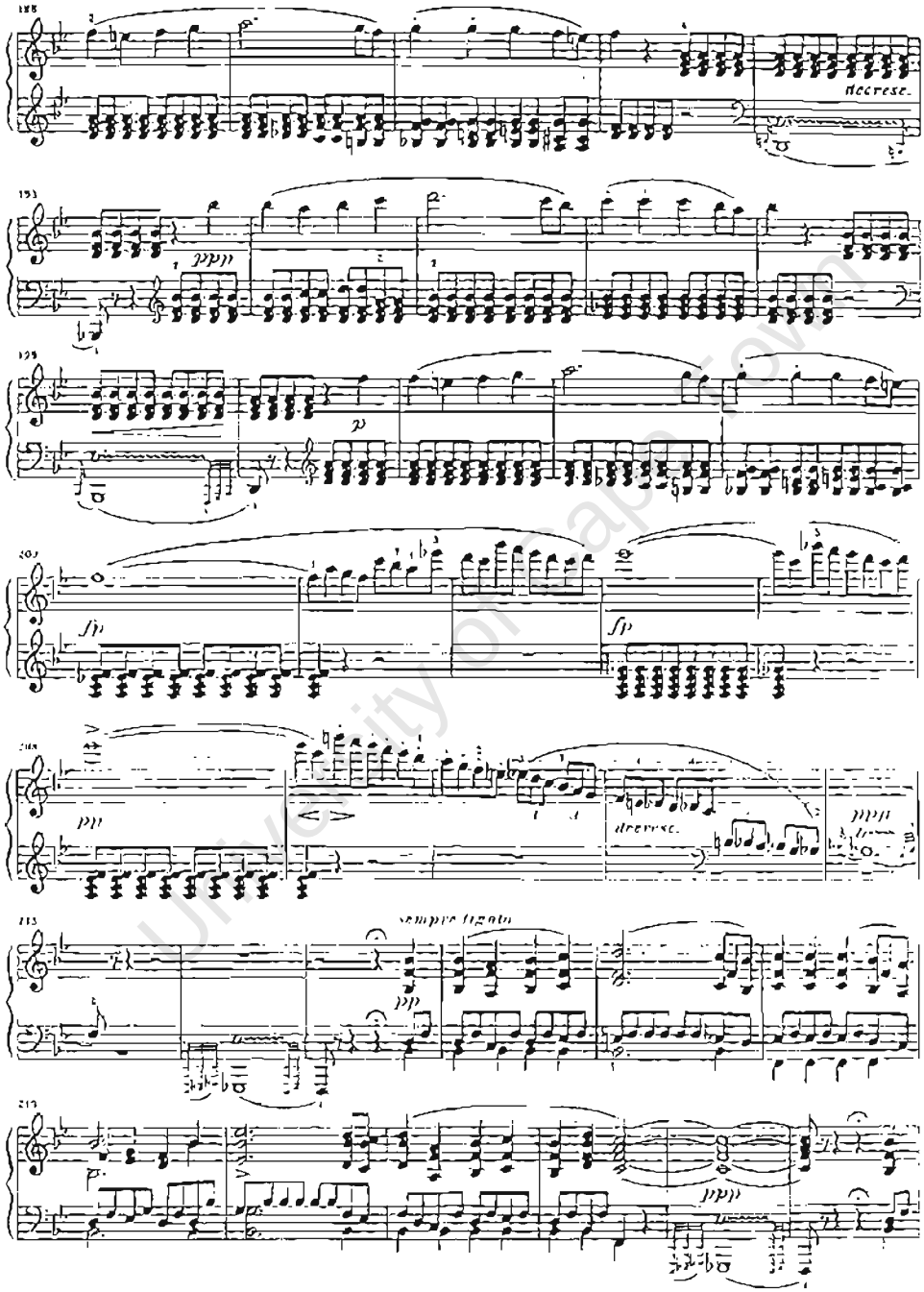
[154] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 289
[155] Rosen, Sonata Forms, 289

Mus. ex. 9b

Schubert: Sonata in Bb, D. 960, First Movement, bars (161-224)



University of Cape Town



University of Cape Town

2.3 1.3 Recapitulation

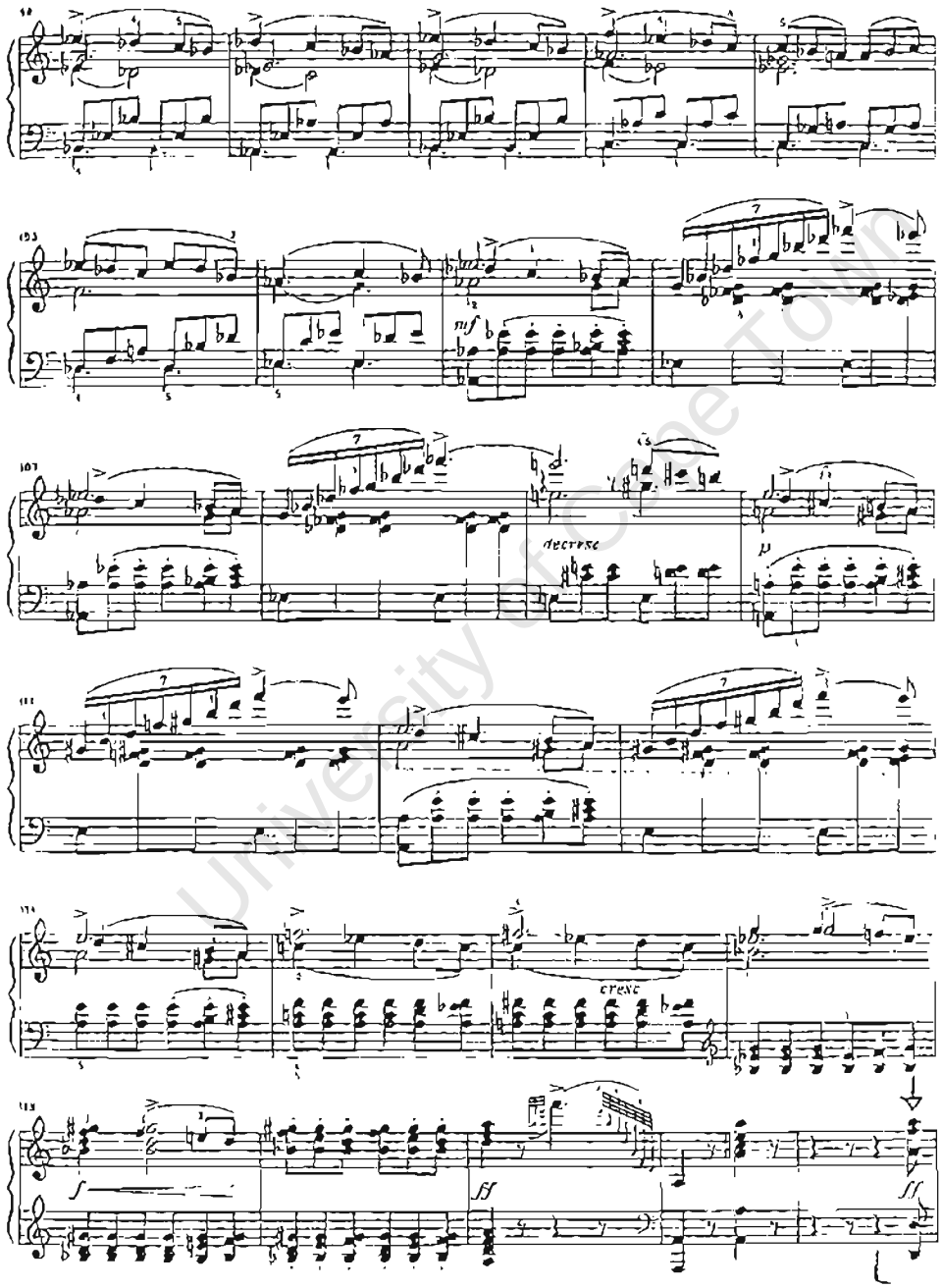
The standard classical recapitulation introduced all the themes of the exposition in the tonic. Schubert, however, sometimes obscures the tonic key at the entry of the recapitulation by introducing the first subject in some related key.[156] In the piano sonatas, Schubert was particularly fond of the subdominant for this purpose: In the recapitulation of the Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, Schubert introduces the first subject in the subdominant (D minor, bar 122). The first subject appears in the tonic only at the end of the movement (bar 187).

University of Cape Town

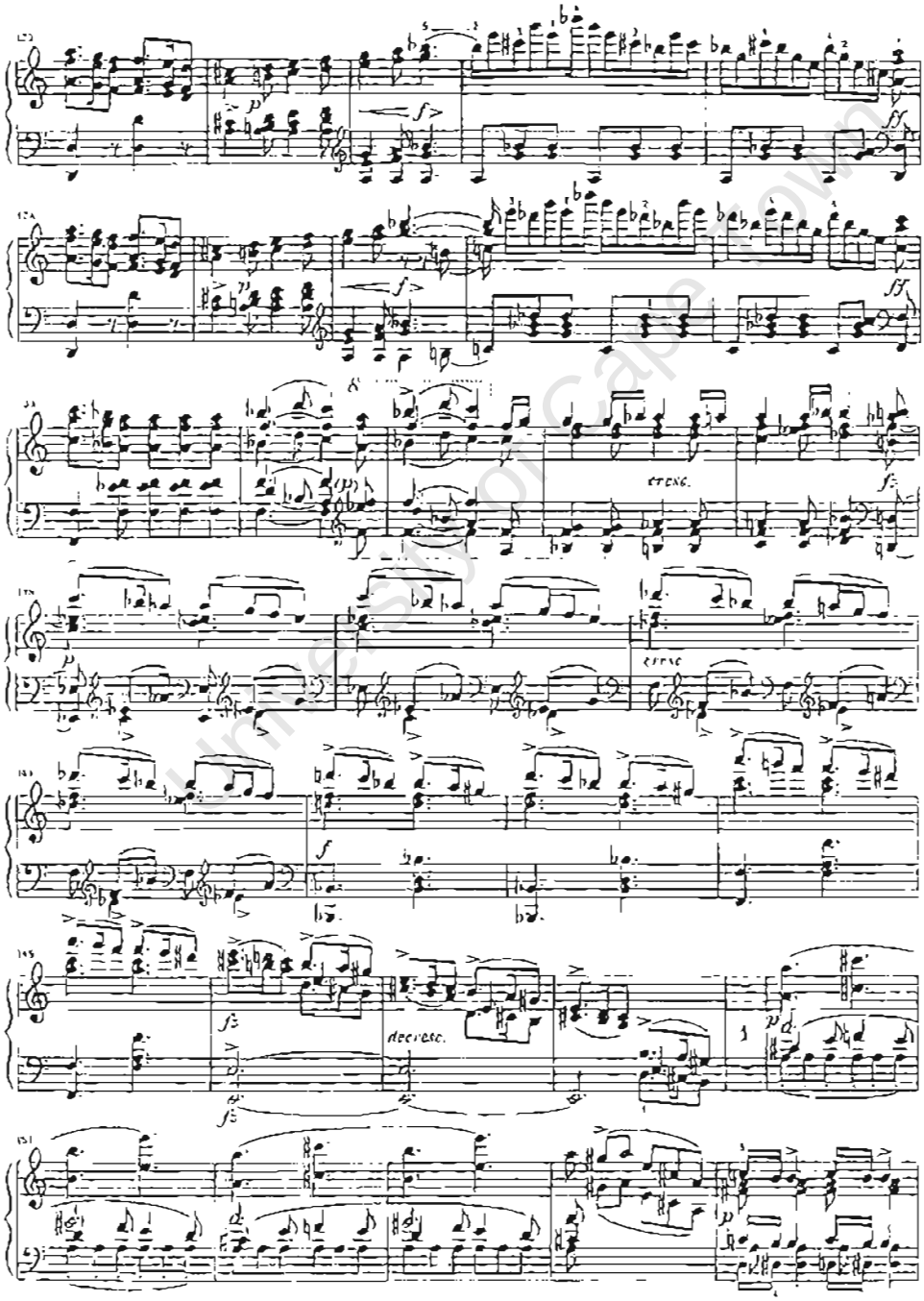
[156] Carner, 30

Mus. ex. 10a

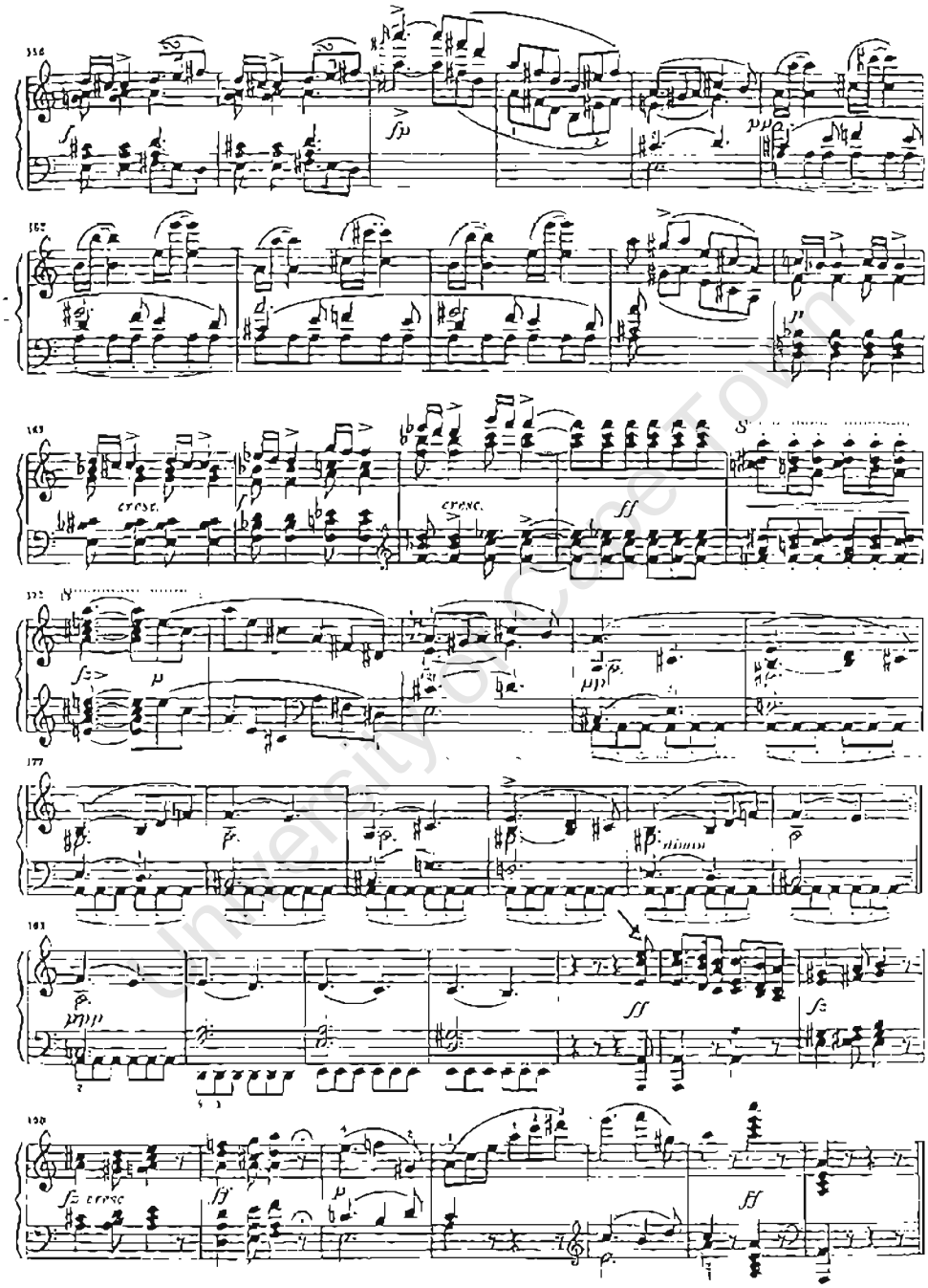
Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, bars 98-196



University of Cape Town



University of Cape Town

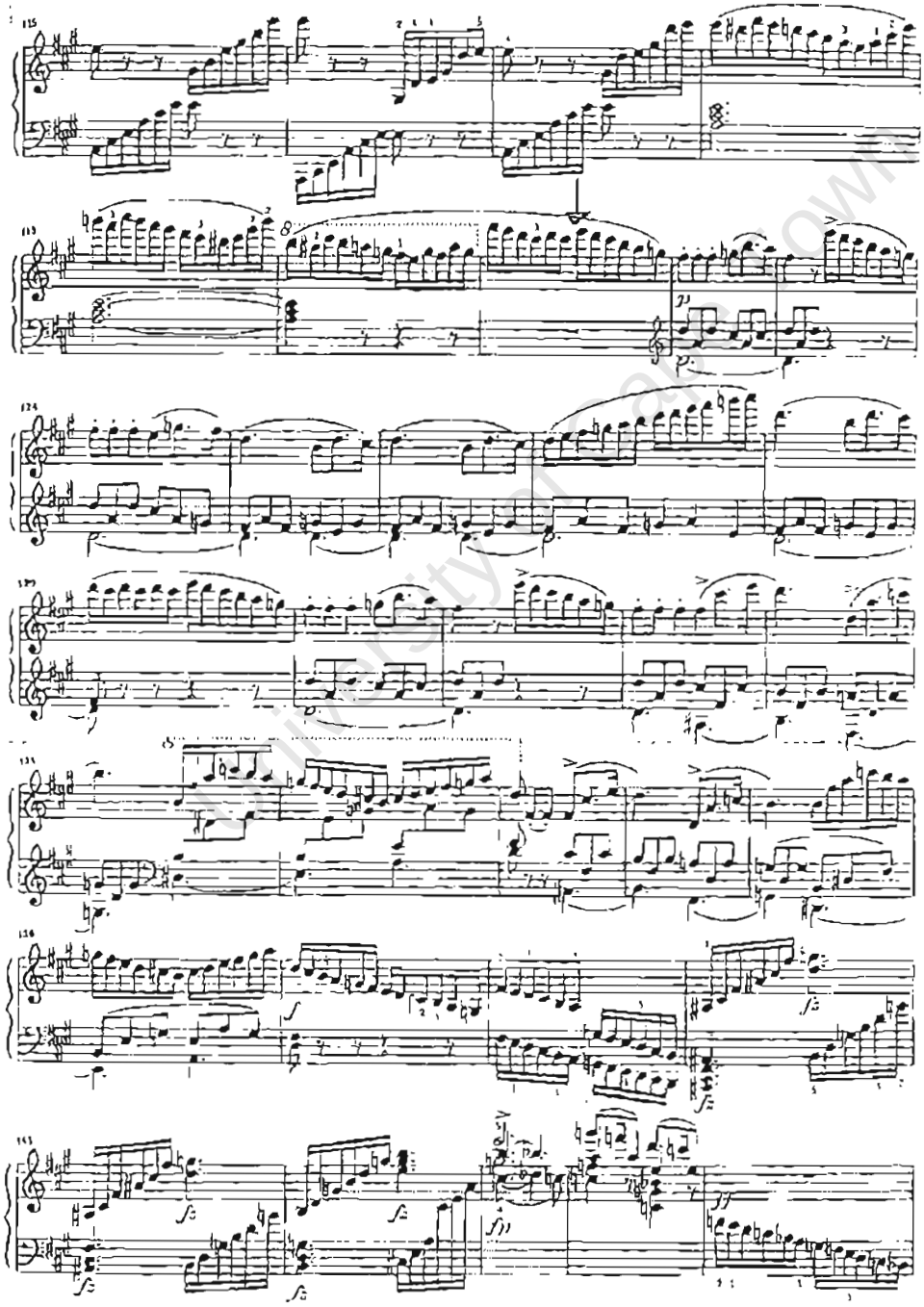


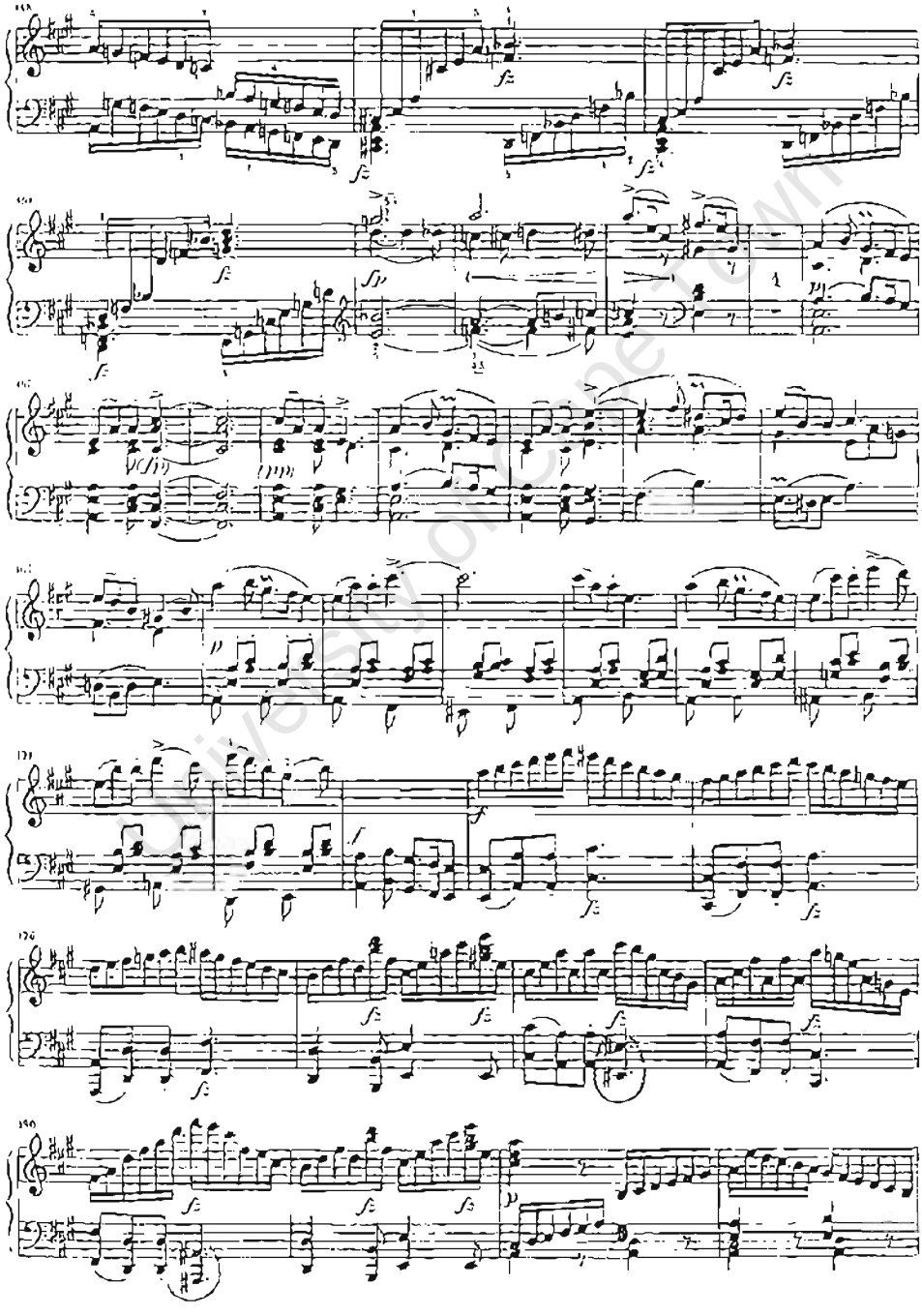
University of Cape Town

Another example of this practice is the Sonata in A, D.664, Third Movement. The first subject in this recapitulation appears in the subdominant (D major, bar 121). Once again, Schubert only brings the first subject in the tonic, close to the end (bar 205).

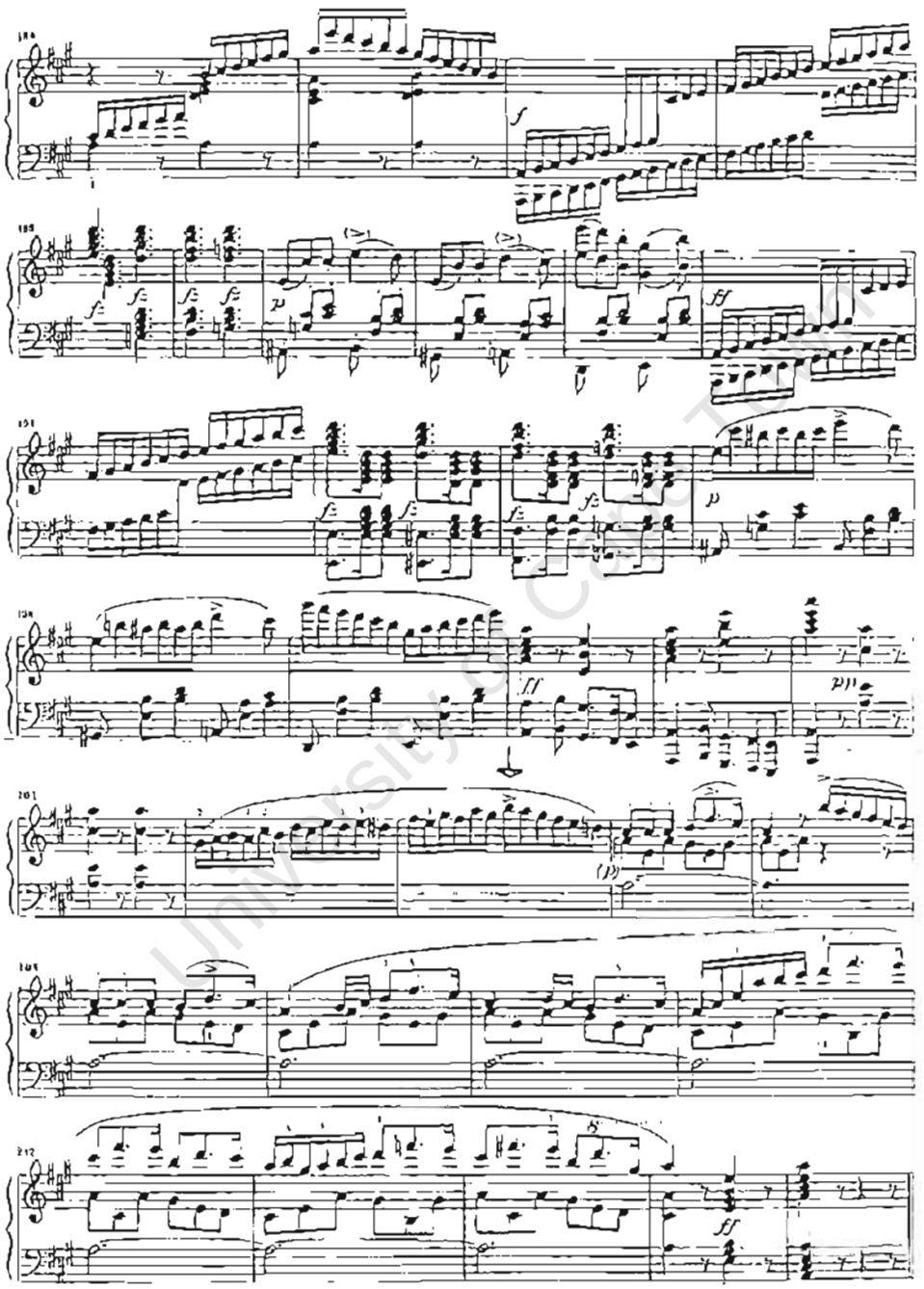
Mus. ex. 10b

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 664, Third Movement, bars 115-216





University of Cape Town



2.3.2 Melody

Schubert's melodic bent have often been given the blame for his unconventional treatment of form.[157] Brown explains:

> Schubert wished to feel intensely and to express to the utmost of his powers, the present moment in his music: not for its significance as a link with what has gone and what is to come, but for its momentary effect as sound...[158]

Schubert sees his melodic ideas as self-contained units, and not as melodic material that will prove its worth by development. He sees his melodies as *tunes* and not as *themes*.[159] There are "beautiful" melodies in Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, but with them it is mostly an element of contrast.[160] With Schubert, on the other hand, "beautiful" melody is an end in itself, and Brown feels that "it is one of the primary factors of greatness in his music".[161] What mattered to Schubert was the indivisibility, cohesion and wholeness of a melody, implying that it does not need "development".[162] This is not to say that he was unable to invent themes with possibilities for development and growth – it was just not his first consideration. Schubert's concern was that of "vocal" melody as a basis for musical thought.[163]

Szabolcsi writes:

> Schubert's melodies add a new element. They make instruments sound vocal, and blur the dividing line. Their deepest magic lies in the fact that they constantly hover between embodied and disembodied sound , that they can fit voices as well as instruments; fit into a closed or an open form.[164]

---

[157] Carner, 29 / Longyear, 107 / Dale, 133
[158] Brown, Critical Biography, 196
[159] Carner, 29
[160] Einstein, 91
[161] Brown, Critical Biography, 212
[162] Carner, 29
[163] Brown, Critical Biography, 212
[164] Szabolcsi, B. A History of Melody London. Barrie & Rochliff, 1965, 149

University of Cape Town

Schubert's melodies can be devided on the basis of patterning into four types, all of which can be detected in his piano sonatas.[165] First, is the smooth, songful, contemplative type which keeps centering on and turning around the initial note, then scalewise and chordal melodies followed by melodies with larger skips.[166] Some of these do tend to overlap, occasionally.

2.3.2.1 First note centered, songful and smooth

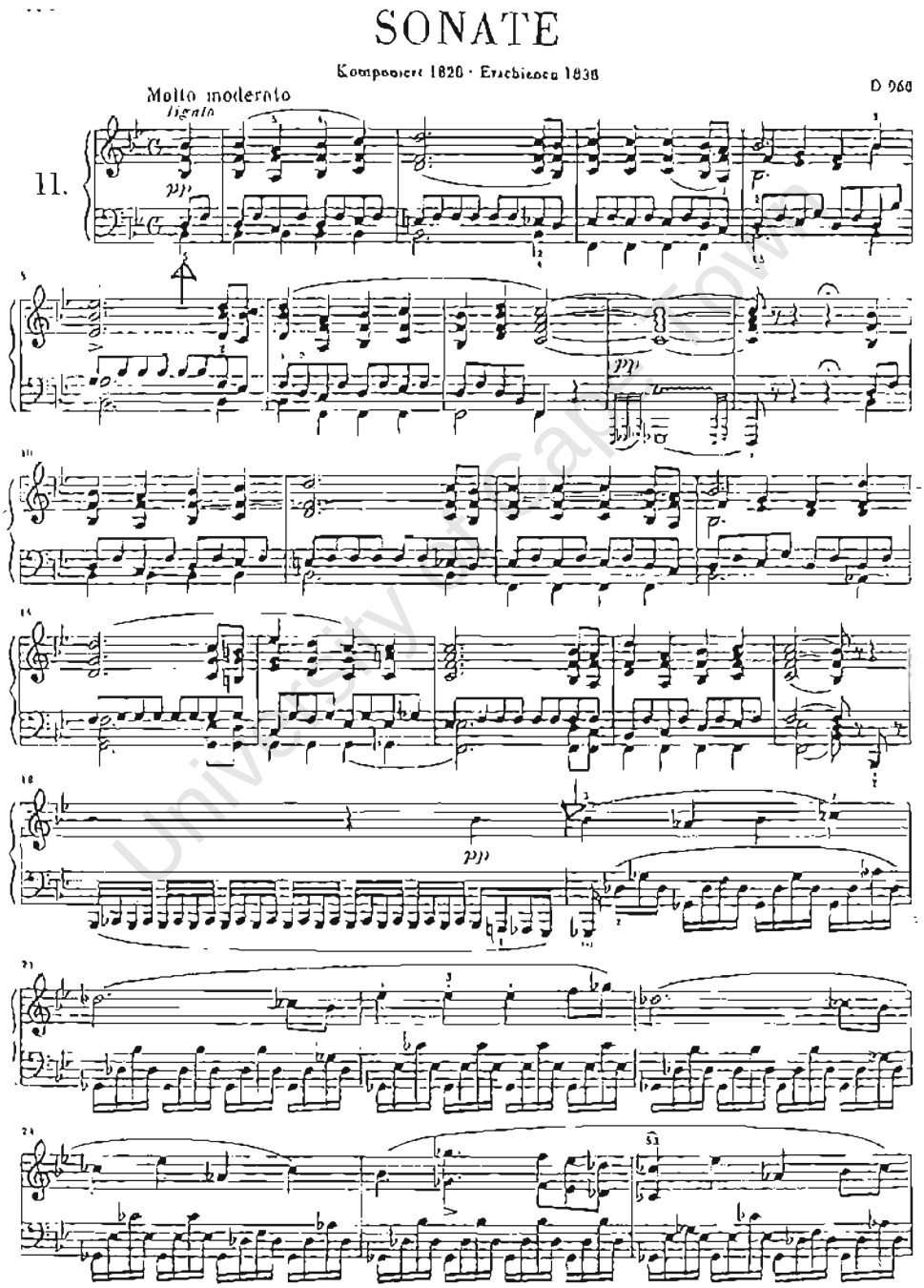
Schubert was particularly fond of this type of melody. His rich melodic invention stood him in good stead when it came to writing these broad, sustained melodies.[167] This type also best resembles the composer's Lieder.[168] A few outstanding examples of this type:

University of Cape Town

[165] Newman, 114
[166] Newman, 114
[167] Carner, 31
[168] Newman, 114

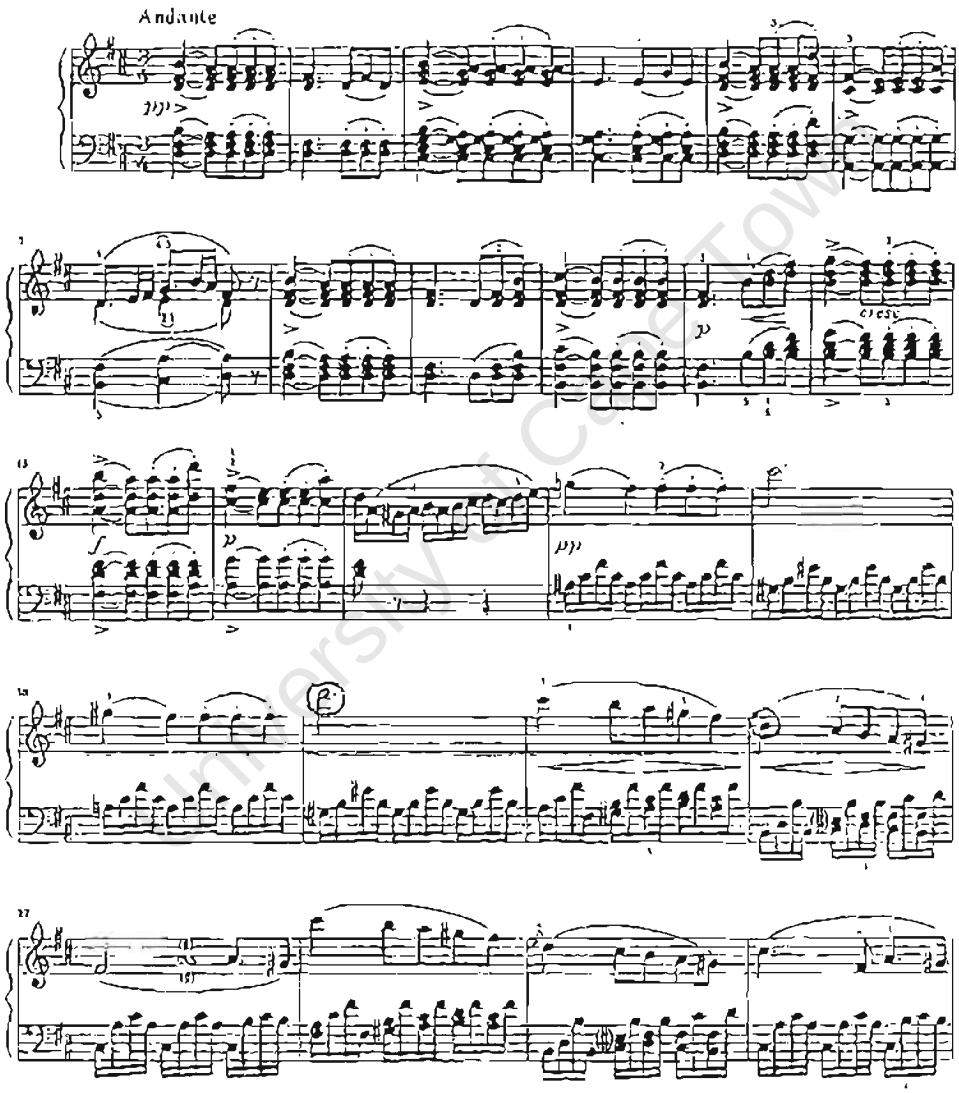
Mus. ex. 11a

Schubert: Sonata in B♭, D. 960, First Movement, bars 1-8, bars 20-26



Mus. ex. 11b

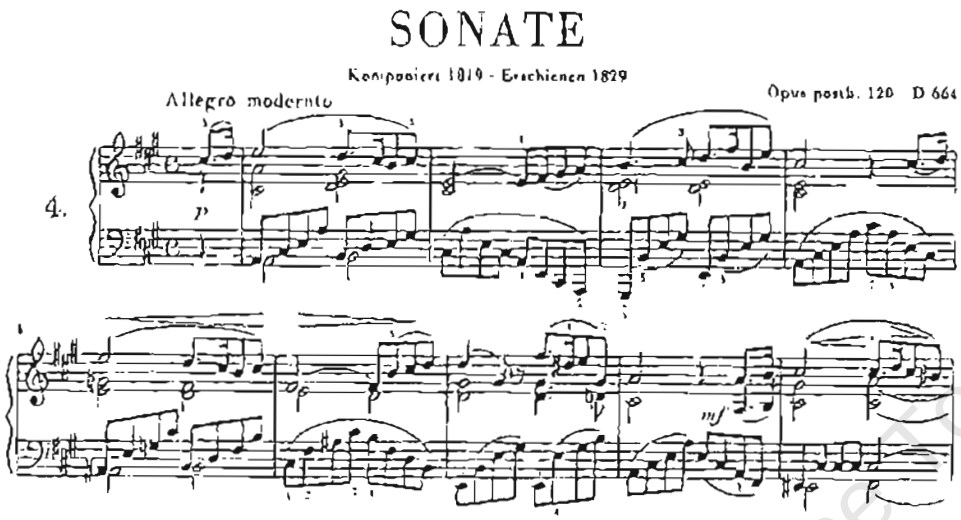
Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 664, Second movement, bars 1-7, bars 16-25



University of Cape Town

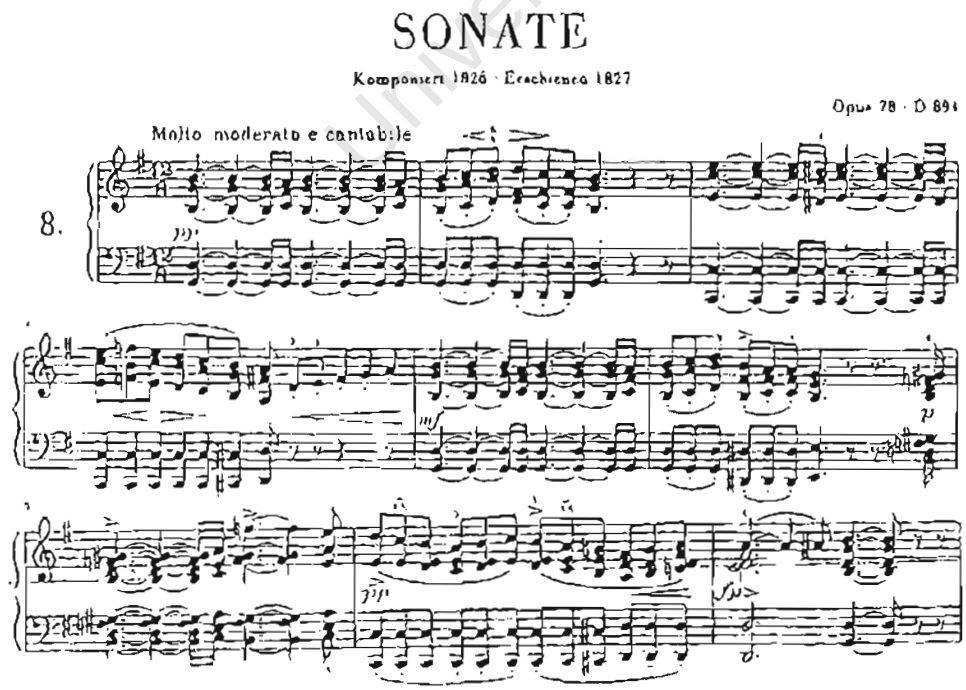
Mus. ex. 11c

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 664, First Movement, bars 1-8



Mus. ex. 11d

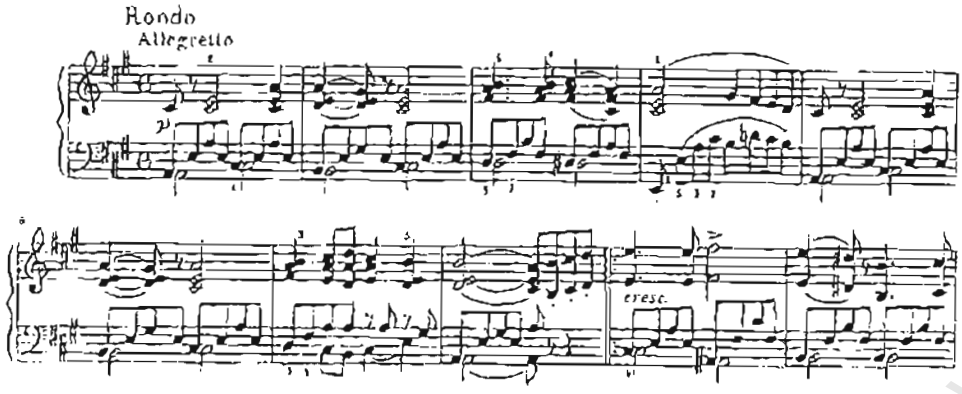
Schubert: Sonata in G, D. 894, First Movement, bars 1-9



University of Cape Town

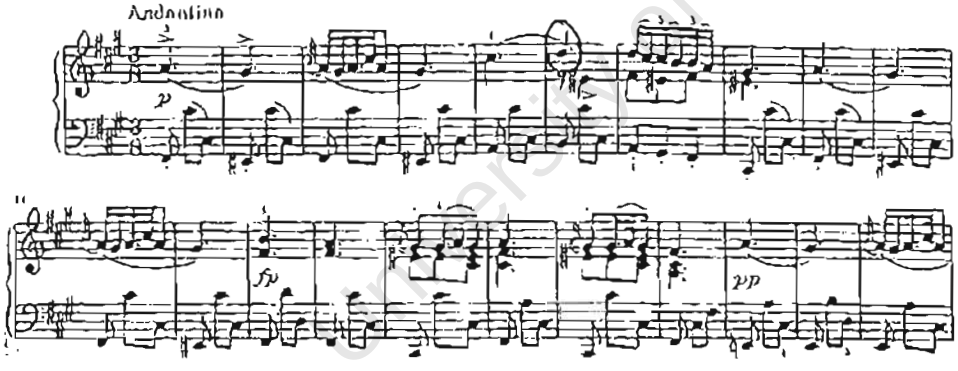
Mus. ex. 11e

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, Fourth Movement, bars 1-8



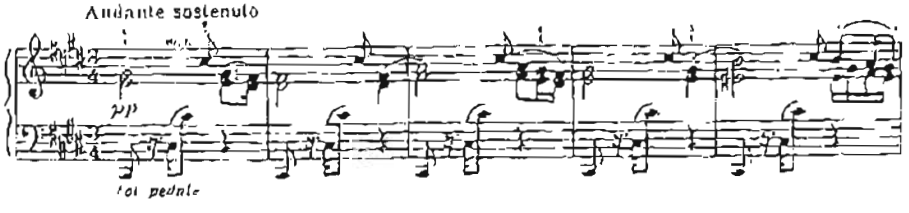
Mus. ex. 11f

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, Second Movement, bars 1-18



Mus. ex. 11g

Schubert: Sonata in Bb, D. 959, Second Movement, bars 1-5

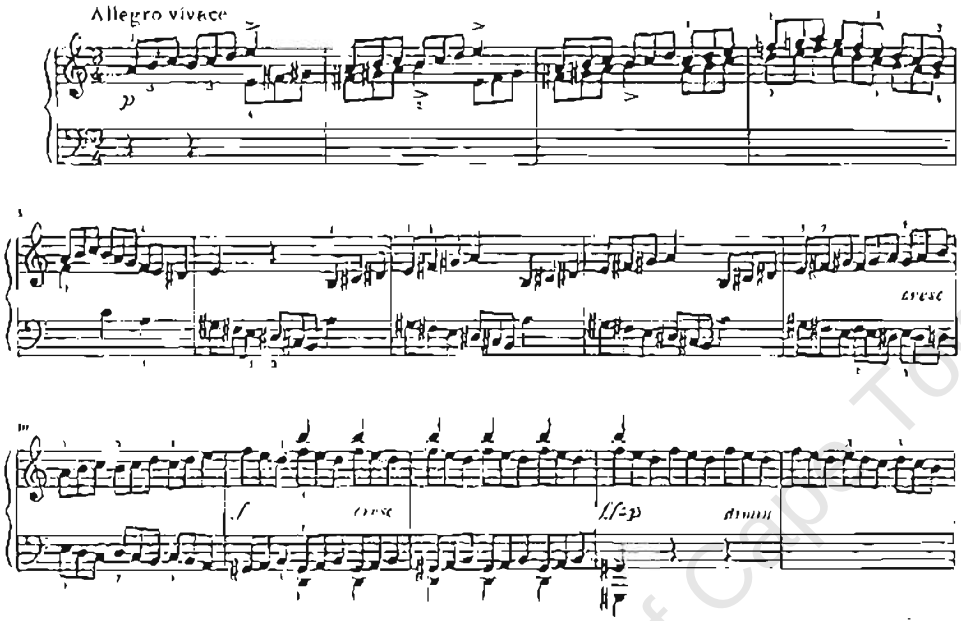


University of Cape Town

2.3.2.2 Scalewise

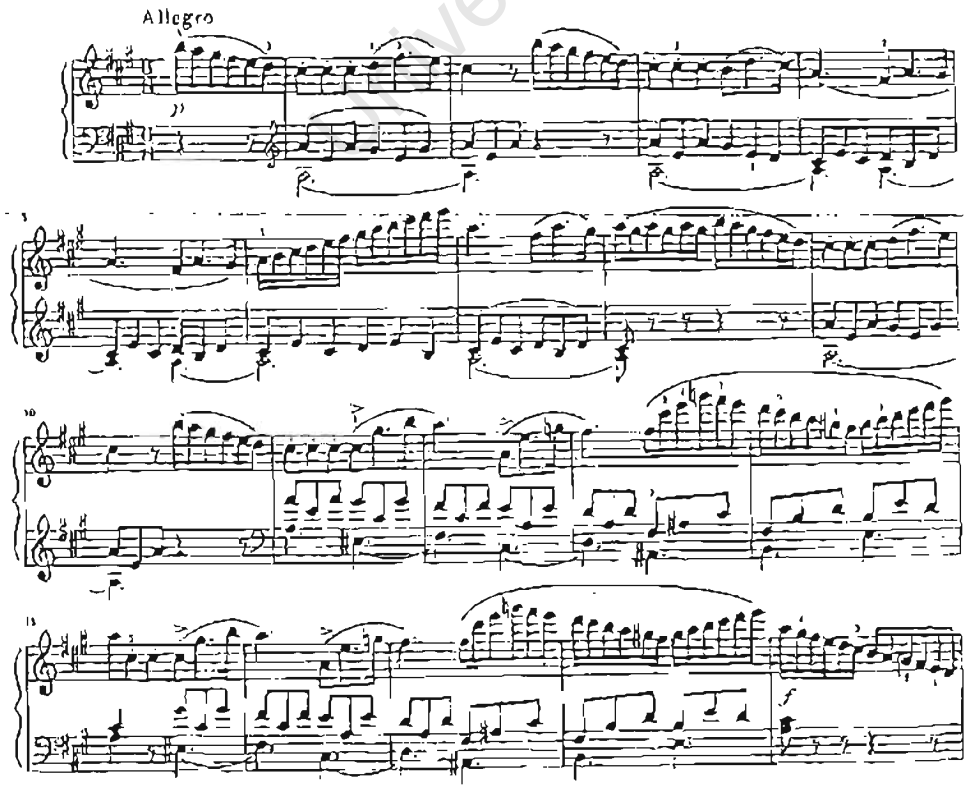
Mus. ex. 12a

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 784, Third Movement, bars 1-14



Mus. ex. 12b

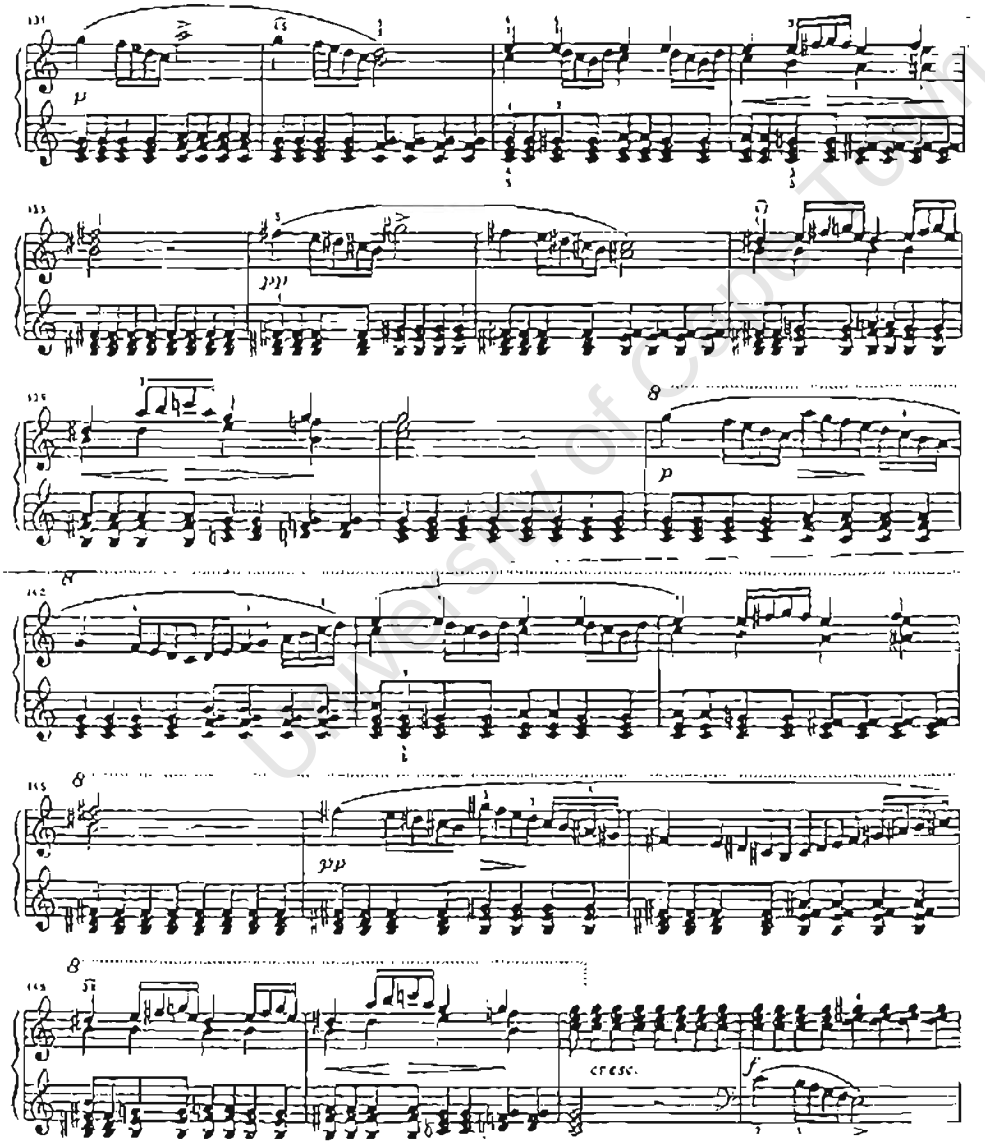
Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 664, Third Movement, bars 1-19



University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 12c

Schubert: Sonata in A, D.959, First Movement, bars 131-149

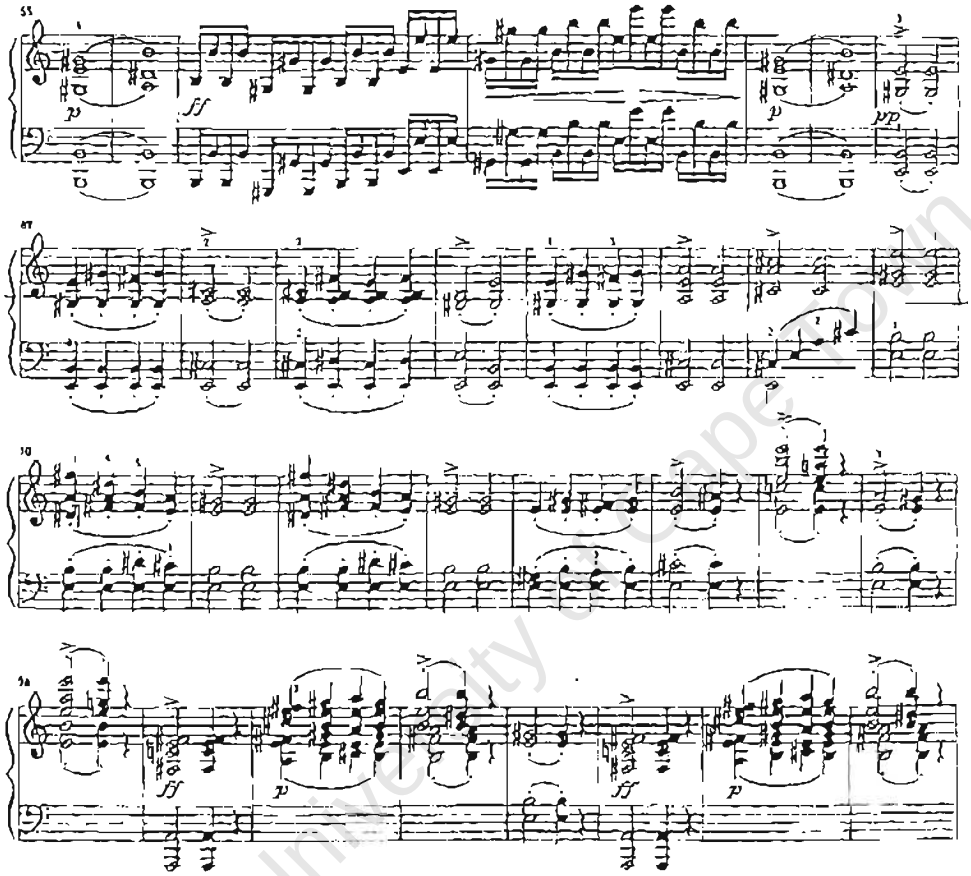


University of Cape Town

2.3.2.3 Chordal

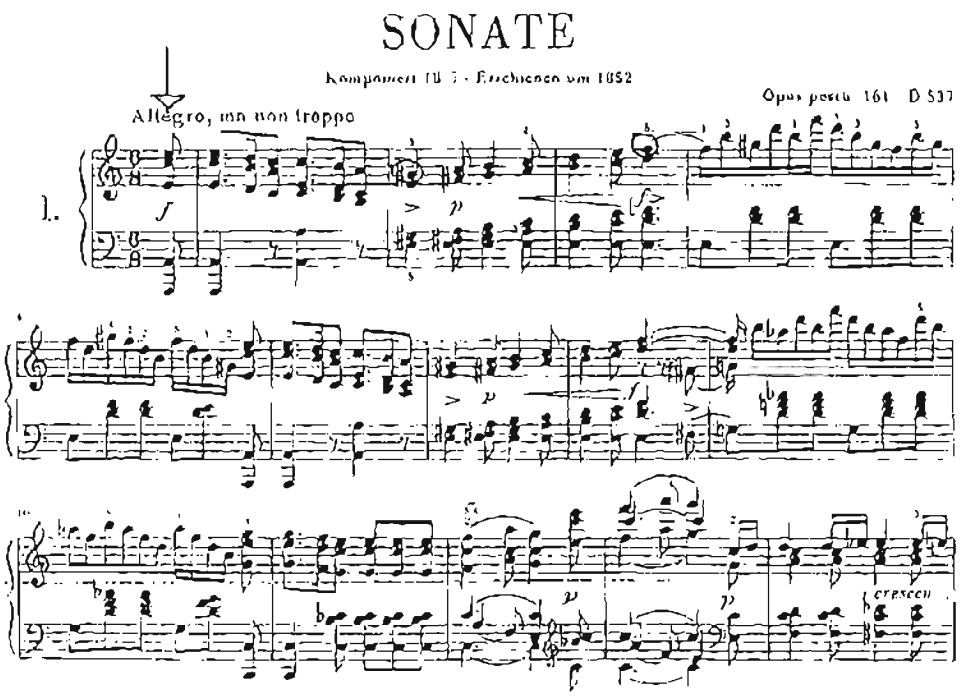
Mus. ex. 13a

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 784, First Movement, bars 61-85



Mus. ex. 13b

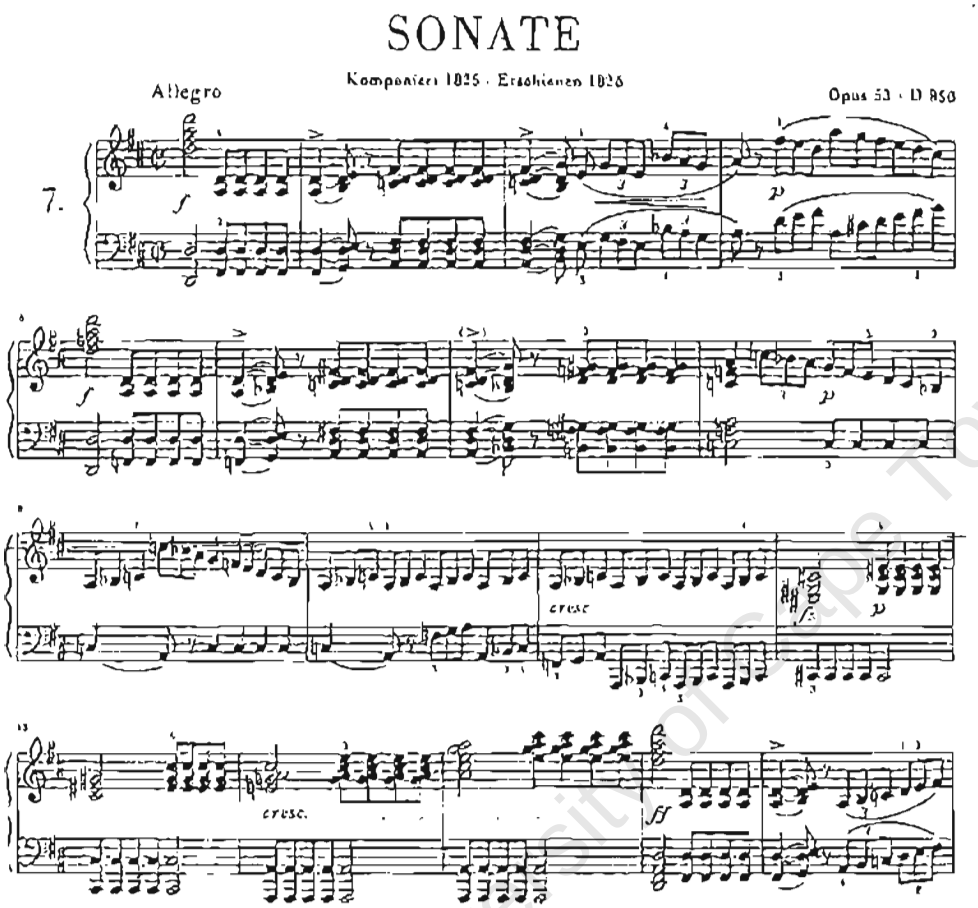
Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, bars 1-13



University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 13c

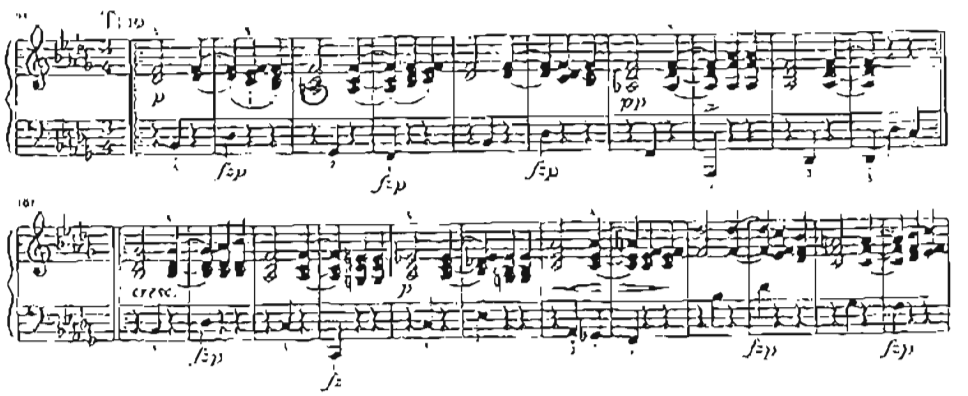
Schubert: Sonata in D, D. 850, First Movement, bars 1-8, bars 12-16



University of Cape Town

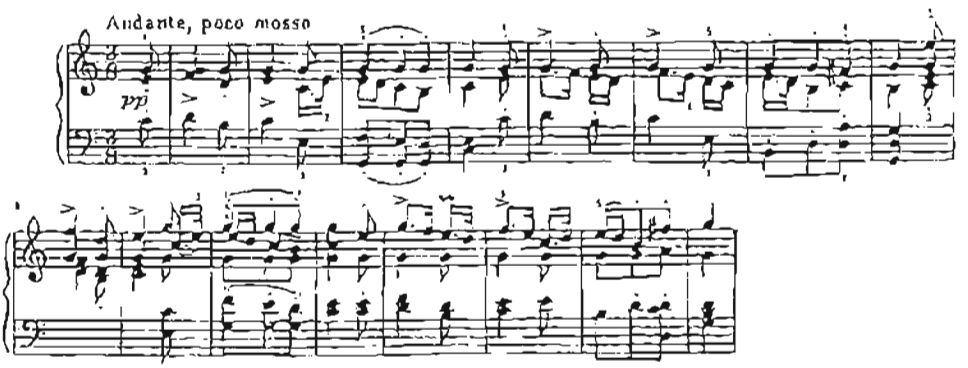
Mus. ex. 13d

Schubert: Sonata in B♭, D. 960, Fourth Movement, bars 91-112



Mus. ex. 13e

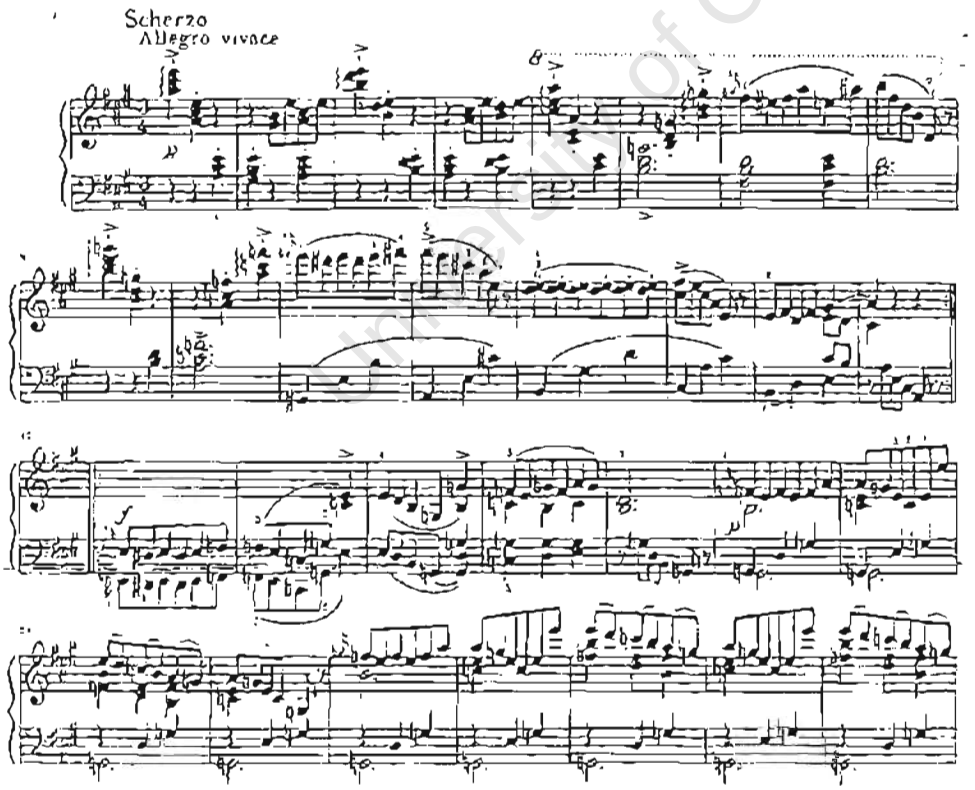
Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 845, Second Movement, bars 1-16



2.3.2.4 Larger skips

Mus. ex. 14a

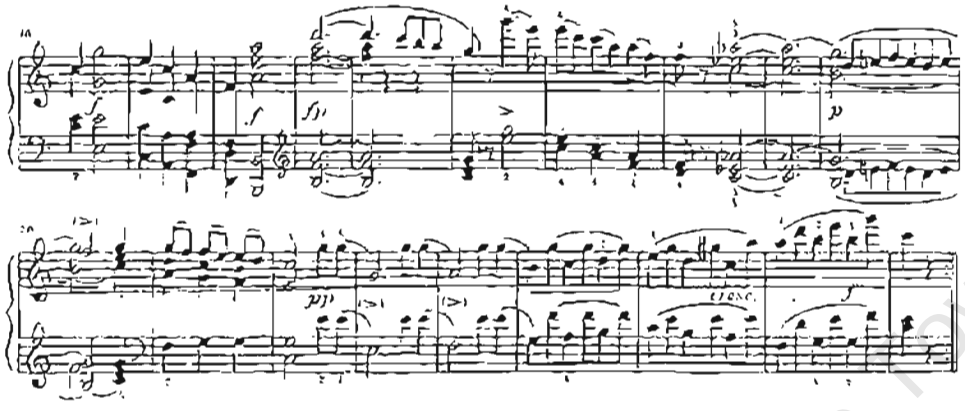
Schubert: Sonata in A, D.959, Third Movement, bars 1-16, bars 17-30



University of Cape Town

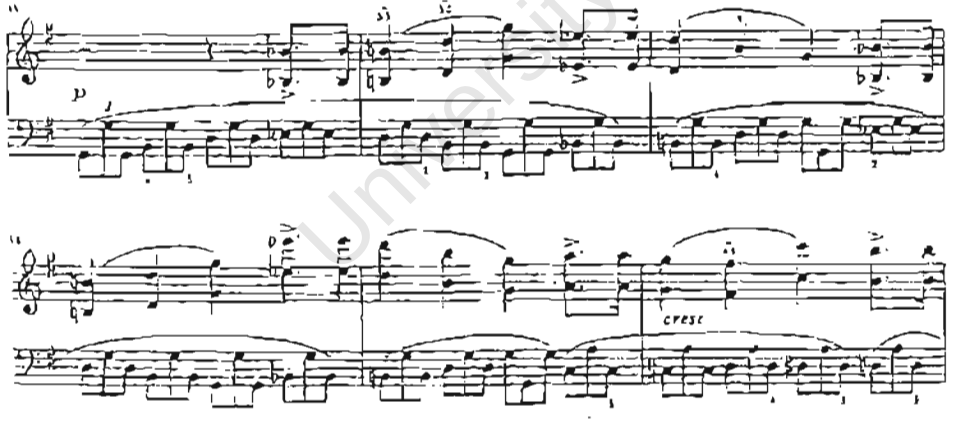
Mus. ex. 14b

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 845, Third Movement, bars 10-28



Mus. ex. 14c

Schubert: Sonata in B, D. 575, First Movement, bars 15-20



University of Cape Town

The charm of Schubert's melody, in the last resort, defies analysis. Certain features in his melodic style, however has to be mentioned for their frequency and for Schubert's fondness thereof:

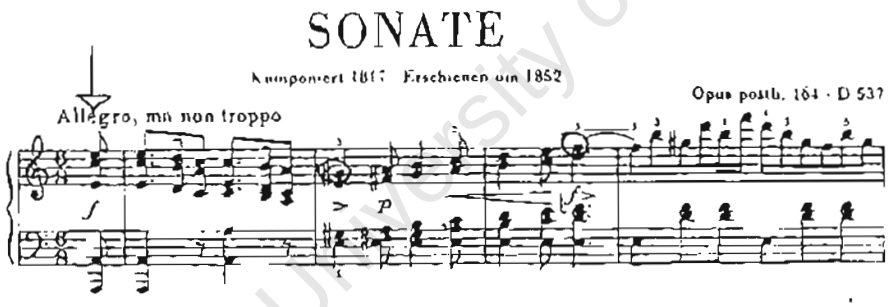
a) Melodic use of the minor mode

This aspect, according to Brown, is a strongly characteristic "fingerpoint" in Schubert's melodic style.[169] It consists of a peculiarity to decorate the dominant and tonic notes of the key with semitones above and below it.[170] These chromatic notes "stand out like indices of the minor scale for Schubert", for his use of them in his melodies soon spread though his instrumental textures.[171] Schubert made regular use of this techniqne in his piano sonatas:

The A minor Sonata, D. 537, First Movement opens with a chordal melody, descending in stepwise manner from the dominant note (E) to the semitone ($G^{\#}$) below the tonic and ascends from this note to the semitone (F) above the dominant note.

Mus. ex. 15a

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, bars 1-4



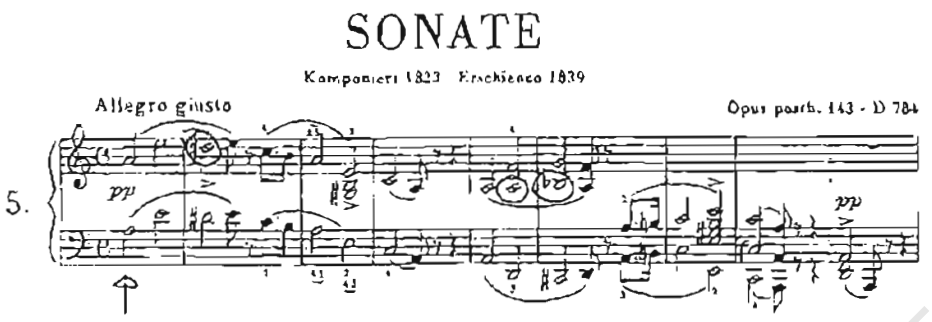
At the beginning of the A minor Sonata, D. 784, First Movement, Schubert adorns the dominant note (E) with the semitone just below it ($D^{\#}$). The semitone ($B^{\flat}$) above the tonic note appears in the middle voice in bar 6, where this $B^{\flat}$ also the semitone above the dominant note (A) in the key of D minor.

[169] Brown, Critical Biography, 215
[170] Brown, Critical Biography, 215

University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 15b

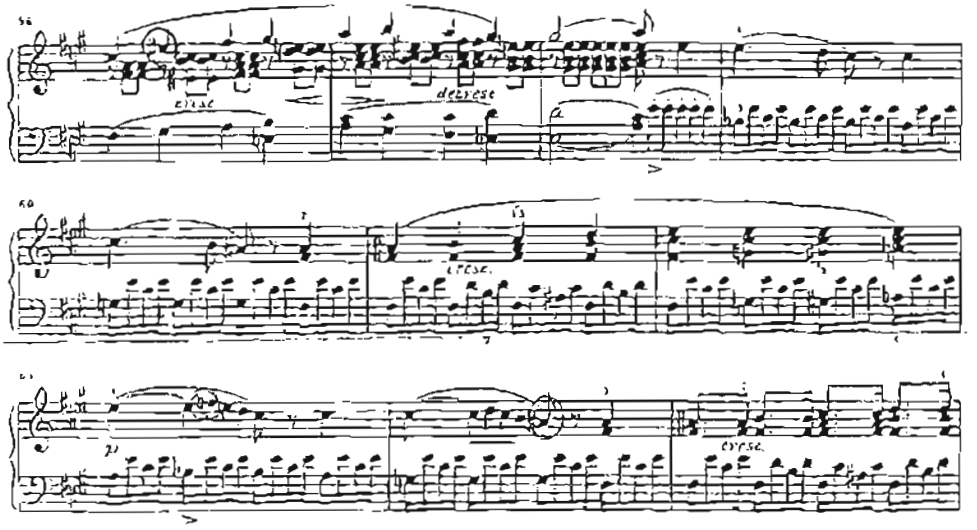
Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 784, First Movement, bars 1-9



In the first theme of the second subject of the exposition of the Sonata in Bb, D. 960, First Movement, Schubert uses the semitone ($E^{\#}$, bar 56) below the tonic ($F^{\#}$). More subtly, in bars 60 and 64 of this exposition, the note $A^{\#}$ is a lower semitone adornment of the tonic note (B) of the suggested key of B minor in the bars 60-62. The F in bar 63 is the semitone just below the dominant note ($F^{\#}$) of the tonic (B) in the suggested key of B minor.

Mus. ex. 15c

Schubert: Sonata in $B^{\flat}$, D. 960, First Movement, bar 56-65



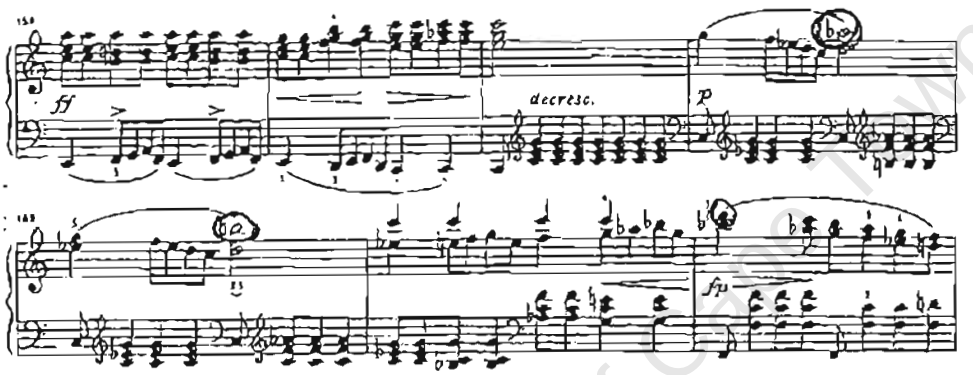
[121] Brown, Critical Biography, 215

University of Cape Town

In bar 161 of the development section of the Sonata in A, D 959, the key is C minor. The note Ab is the upper semitone of the dominant note (G), and in bar 162 the B is the semitone below the tonic note (C). In bar 164, the upper semitone (Db) of the tonic (c) appears in the chord iv^6_4/iv.

Mus. ex. 15d

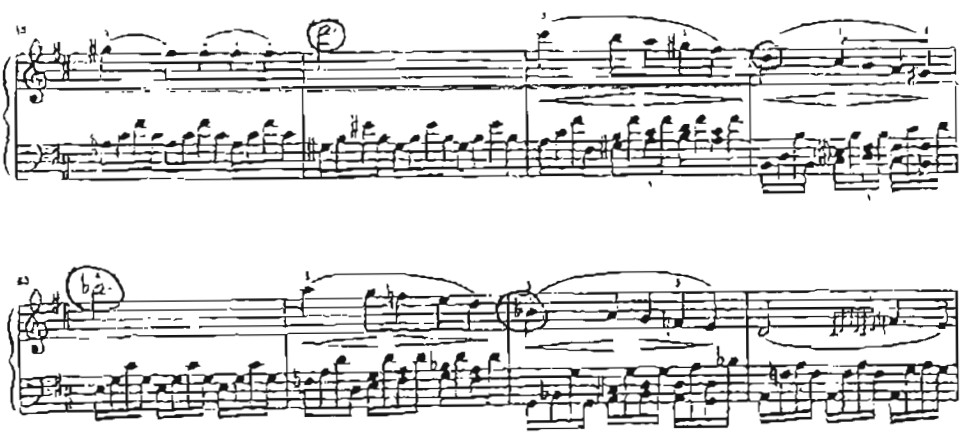
Schubert: Sonata in A, D.959, First Movement, bars 158-164



In the second movement of the early A major Sonata, D. 664, the D's in bars 19 and 21 are the upper semitones of the dominant note (A).

Mus. ex. 15 (e)

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 664, Second Movement, bars 18-21, bars 63-65



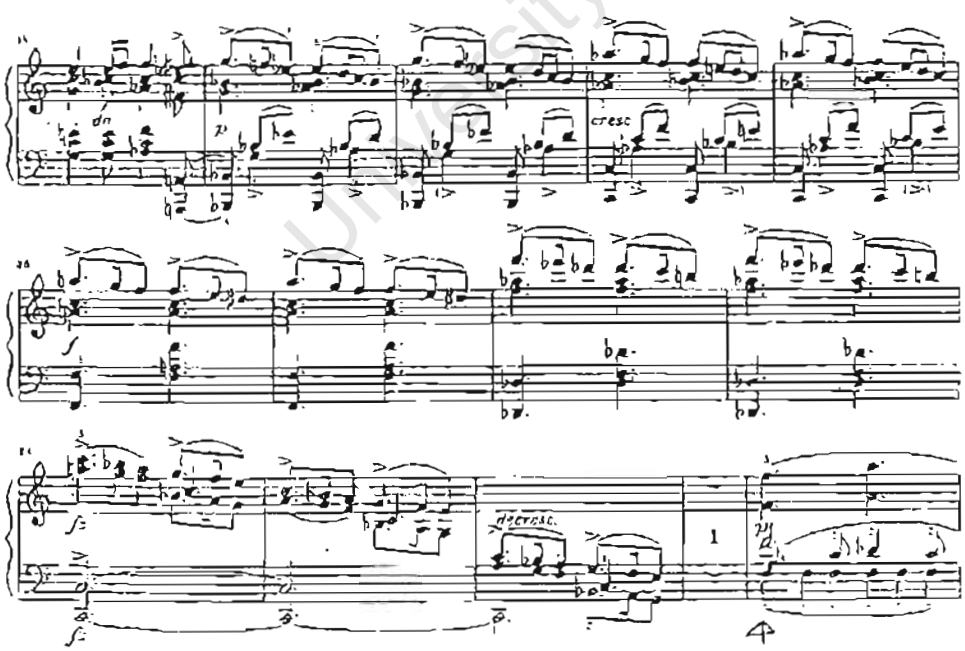
University of Cape Town

b. Sequences

Sequences in Schubert's melodies have, as a rule, an harmonic basis. In other words the phrase moves from one harmonic progression to another according to the scheme in Schubert's mind.[172] He achieved extraordinary effects by taking his sequences on this harmonic basis: In the Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, Schubert employs the sequence, as a preparation for the second subject: In bars 15-16 it appears in $E^{\flat}$, in bars 17-18 in F minor, in bars 20-21 in F major, in bar 22-23 in $D^{\flat}$ major, alternated by the German augmented sixth chord and in bar 24-26 it appears in F major: I^{6}_{4}, alternated by V^{7}, leading into the second subject in F major.

Mus. ex. 16a

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, bars 15-28



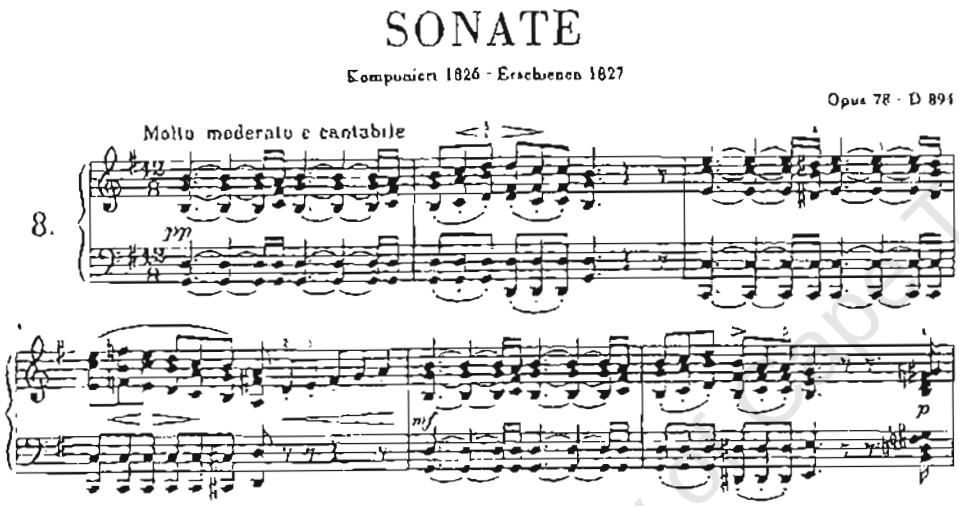
[172] Brown, Critical Biography, 218

University of Cape Town

A very beautiful example of Schubert's use of sequence is the opening bars of the Sonata in G, D. 894, First Movement. The first subject appears in the tonic from bars 1-2; then in the subdominant, bars 3-4.

Mus. ex. 16b

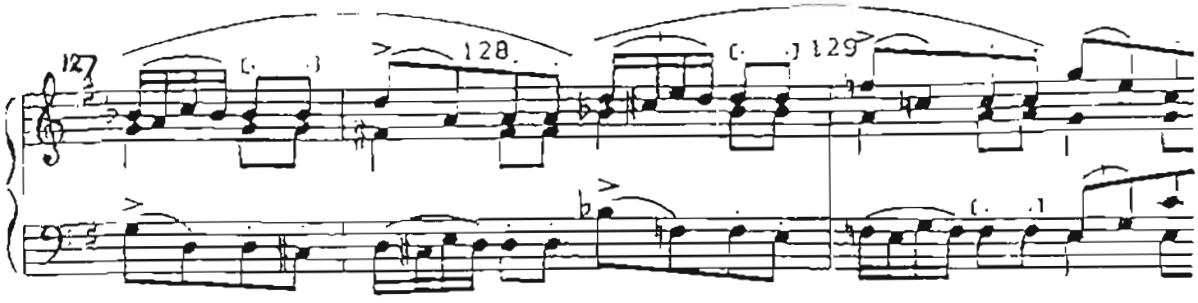
Schubert: Sonata in G, D. 894, First Movement, bars 1-4



In the last movement of the D major Sonata, D. 850, Schubert employs the sequence in both hands:

Mus. ex. 16c

Schubert: Sonata in D, D. 850, Fourth Movement, bars 127-129



University of Cape Town

2.3.3 Harmony

Alfred Einstein wrote:

> Schubert's harmonic achievement was epoch making not only in the historical sense, in that he was the protagonist of what we call the "Romantic" Movement, but also because the living expression of harmony belongs to the very essence of the man himself.[173]

This new harmonic palette is, according to Plantinga, the aspect that marks Schubert's most personal compositional style.[174] Schubert's harmonic language can be evaluated by considering two of it's most characteristic traits: colour and modulation.[175]

2.3.3.1 Harmonic Colour

Certain chords in previous ages had colouristic characteristics, but they existed only in certain contexts such as the poignant Neopolitan sixth. Schubert takes this one step further in his instrumental music to give certain chords an intrinsic colour that goes beyond their function in the harmonic context. Schubert piano music is filled with many examples of colouristic harmony:[176]

a) The chromatic mediant as an interpolation in the final cadence

Schubert sometimes used the mediant chord in a major key in the final cadence.[177] Such a case occurs in the first movement of the Sonata in D, D. 850. The progression consists of the mediant major triad in D major (F# A# C#, bar 263) followed by the dominant seventh (A C# E G. bar 264). Schubert here uses the mediant chord as an element of

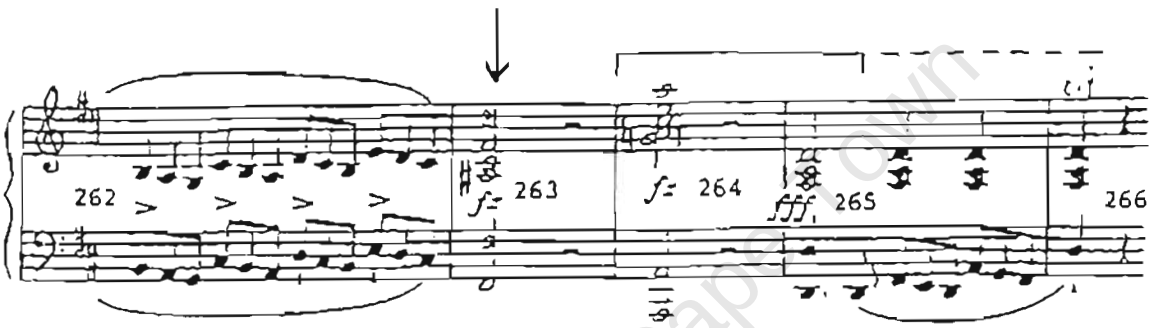
[173] Einstein, 132
[174] Plantinga, 91
[175] Longyear, 106

University of Cape Town

surprise; in its overall function it substitutes for the usual supertonic or subdominant chord.

Mus. ex. 17a

Schubert: Sonata in D, D. 850, First Movement, bars 262-266



University of Cape Town

b) **The flattened sixth chord (bVI)**

Chromatic third-related chord progressions with the bVI major triad appears prominently in the Sonata in B, D. 575, First Movement.[178] The progression bVI in G major appears four times in bars 15-19 of this work. The flattened sixth chord functions here as a colouristic substitute of the subdominant chord.

---

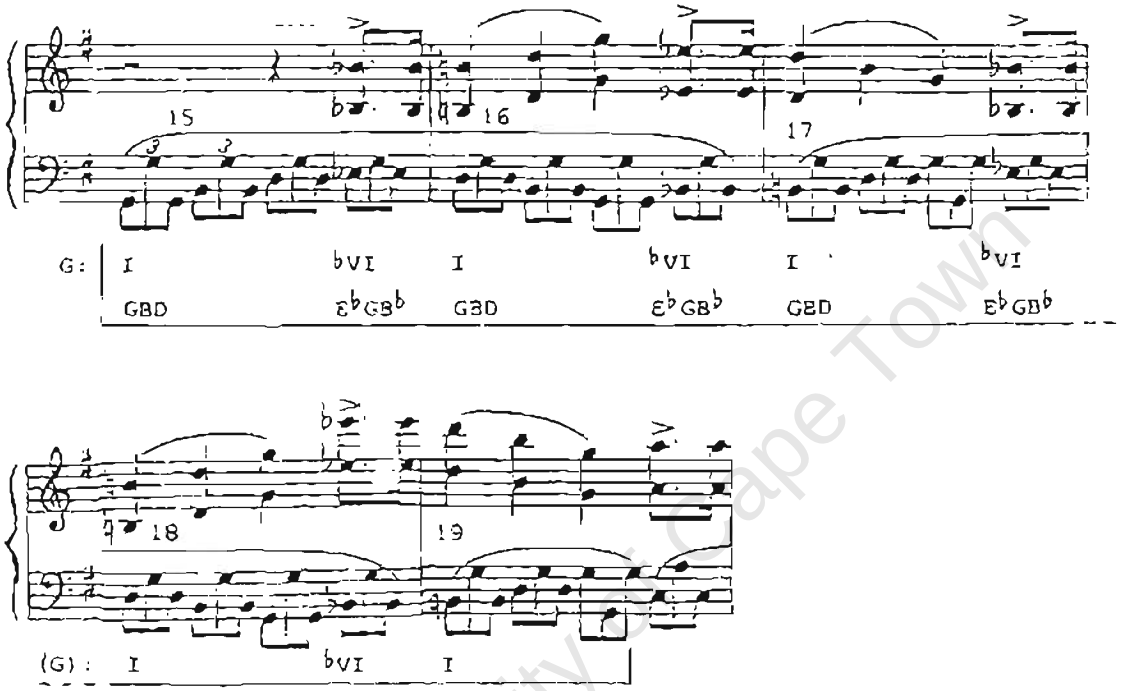
[176] Mathlener, René. Chromatiese en Skynbare tertsverwantskappe in die tonal-harmoniese sintaksis van Franz Schubert (1797-1828) se solo klavierwerke. MMus dissertation, Pretoria: UNISA, 1990, 191

[177] Mathlener, 191

[178] Mathlener, 202

Mus. ex. 17b

Schubert: Sonata in B, D. 575, First Movement, bars 15-19



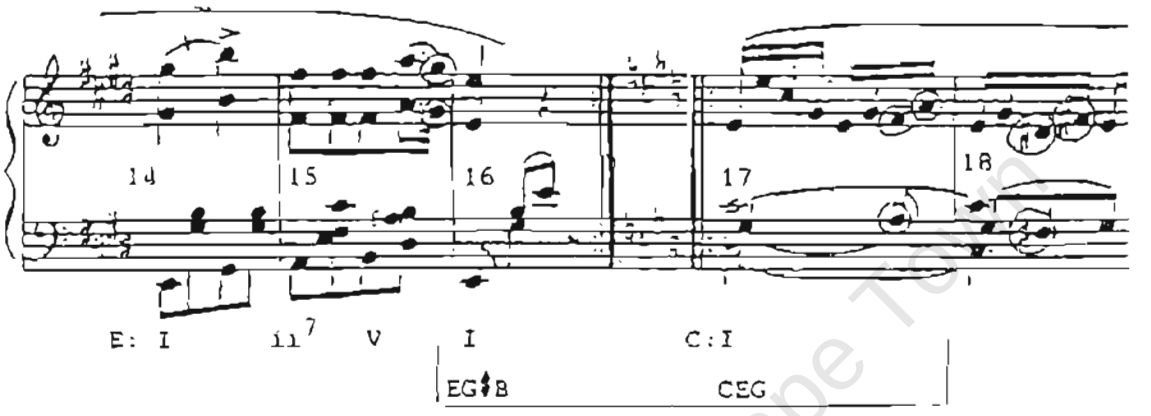
University of Cape Town

c) At structural joints

In the Sonata in A minor, D. 537, second movement, the element of surprise takes place between the tonic chords of E major (bar 14, E G# B) and C major (bar 17, C E G). These chords are the last chord of the theme and the first chord of the first episode of the next section, respectively. The chord progression as well as the keys are third related: The roots move down major third, E to C.

Mus. ex. 17c

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 537, Second Movement, bars 14-18

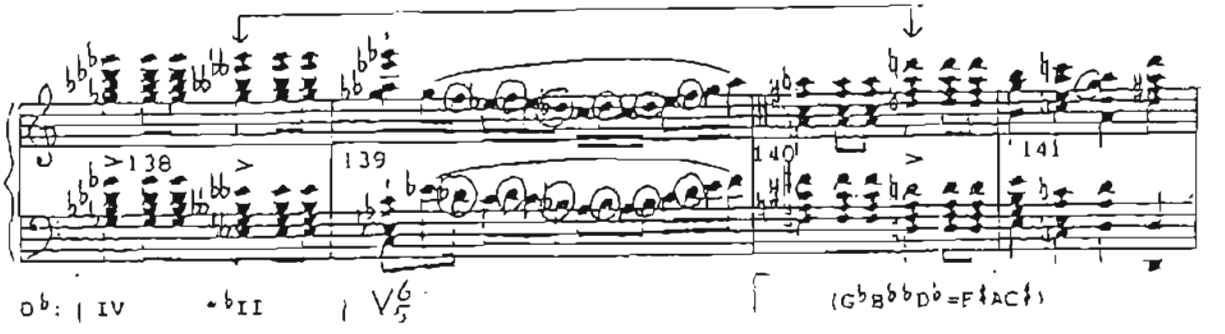


d) The Neapolitan chord

Schubert sometimes used the Neapolitan chord (the triad on the flattened supertonic) preceded by the subdominant triad and followed by the dominant, (IV – bII-V) for colouristic purposes. In this progression Db: IV-bII-V^{b7}, the Neapolitan sixth (bII) is enharmonically equivalent to the dominant of G major, D $F^{\natural}$ A.

Mus. ex. 17d

Schubert: Wanderer-Fantasie, D. 760, bars 138-141



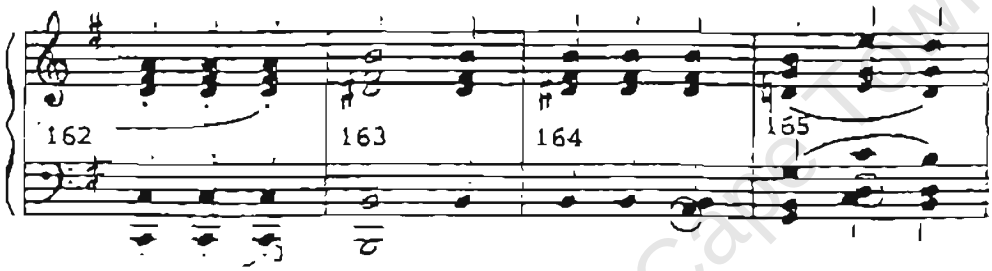
University of Cape Town

e) **Chromatic mediant interpolation**

In the Sonata in D, D. 850, Third Movement, Schubert lengthens the document function by interpolating a chromatic mediant (bars 163-164) after the dominant (bar 162), followed by the tonic (bar 165)

Mus. ex. 17e

Schubert: Sonata in D, D. 850, Third Movement, bars 162-165

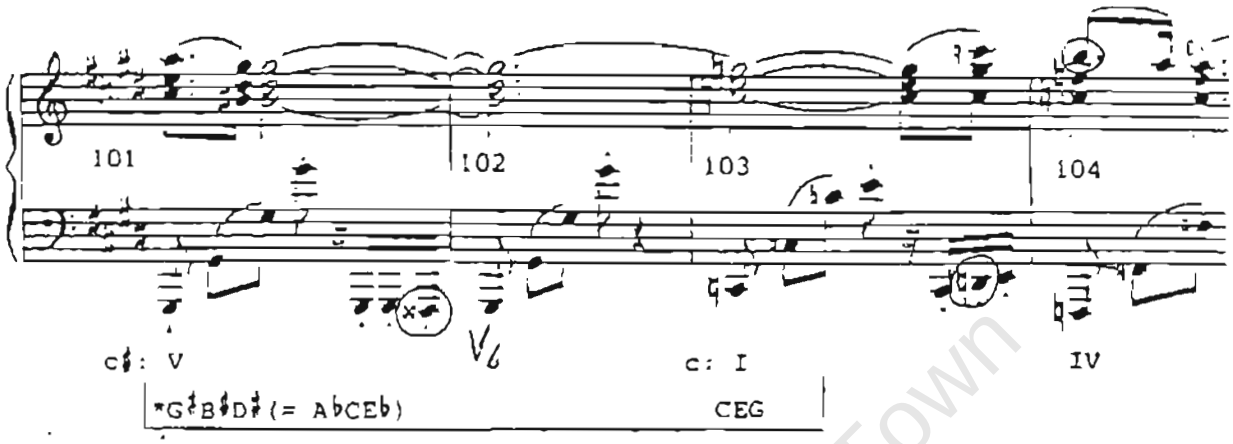


University of Cape Town

f) Schubert's Sonata in Bb, D. 960, second movement, contains an example of one of his most colourful harmonic surprises. The dominant triad in C♯ minor (bar 101 G♯ B♯D♯) is sustained for the whole of bar 102. In the next bar (103) Schubert moves to the tonic triad in C major (C E G). For this progression the root of chord (G♯ B♯ D♯), G♯, moves up a major third to C, the root of C major in bar 103. Further, the fifth in G♯ major chord, the G♯, moves a semitone down to G in bar 103. Enharmonic alteration takes place between the B♯ and C in bar 103, the only common note between the two chords.

Mus. ex. 17f

Schubert: Sonata in Bb, D. 960, Second Movement, bars 101-104



2.3.3.2 Modulation

a) Modulating progressions with three chords

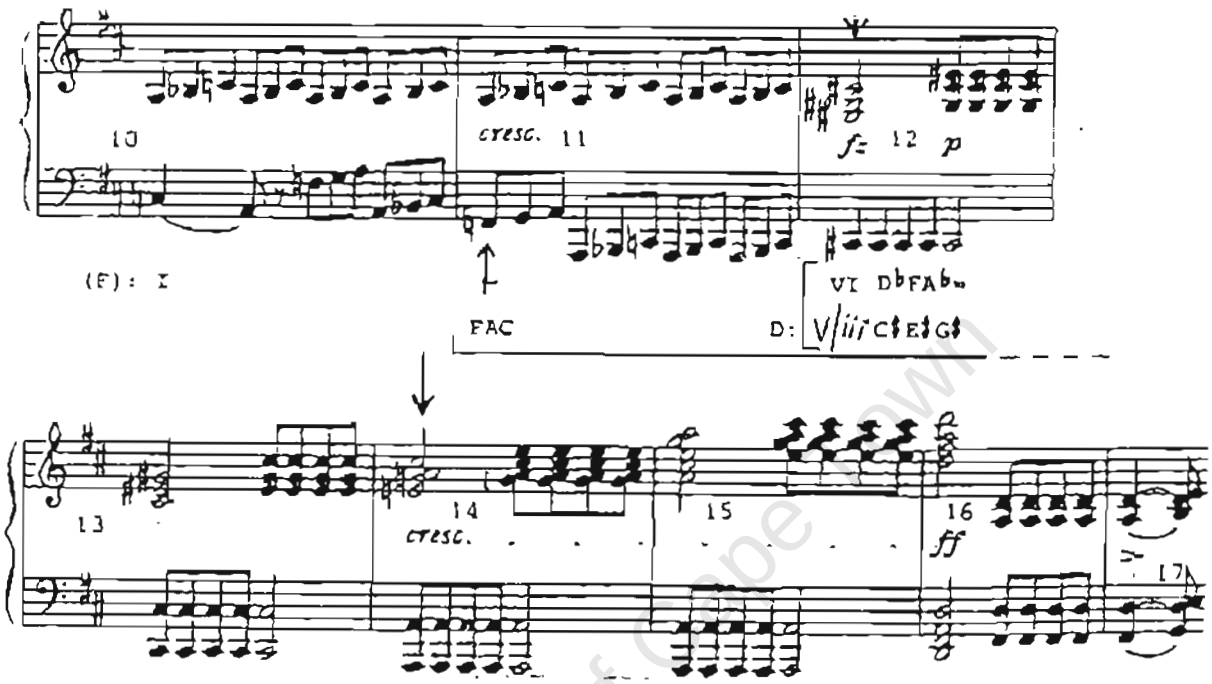
In the first movement of Schubert's Sonata in D, D. 850, a key-change takes place from F major (flattened mediant major in D major) back to the tonic via two chords. The progession looks like this:

F: I (F A C, bar 11) – bVI ($D^{\flat}$ F $A^{\flat}$, bar 12) which is enharmonically equal to D: V / III ($C^{\#}$ $E^{\#}$ $G^{\#}$, bar 12) – V^7 (A $C^{\#}$ E G, bar 14). In this progression it is notable that the root note of the three chords is a major third lower than the preceding one (A - $C^{\#}$ - F). This is an excellent example of how Schubert was able to manipulate key relationships by delaying expected key changes before settling into the anticipated key.[179]

University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 18a

Schubert: Sonata in D. D. 850, First Movement, bars 10-16



University of Cape Town

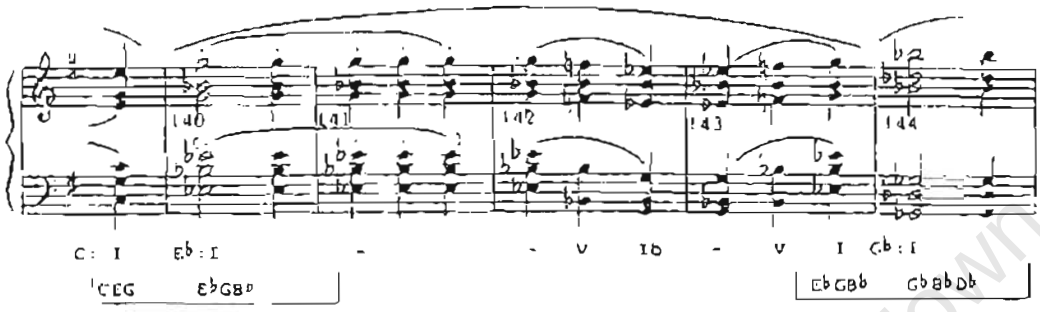
b) Modulation to keys a minor third apart

In the Trio of the Scherzo from the Sonata in D, D. 850 the chromatic third-related keys of G major, $E^{\flat}$ major and $G^{\flat}$ major are established at the transitions of successive four-bar sequences. Each time the new key is minor third higher than the previous one. To get to the original key, two more of there progressions would have been needed, that is, $G^{\flat}$ – A, A – C.

[179] Hughes, W. "Franz Schubert's Piano Music". Clavier XXXVI / 1, 12

Mus. ex. 18b

Schubert: Sonata in D. D 850, Third Movement, bars 139-144

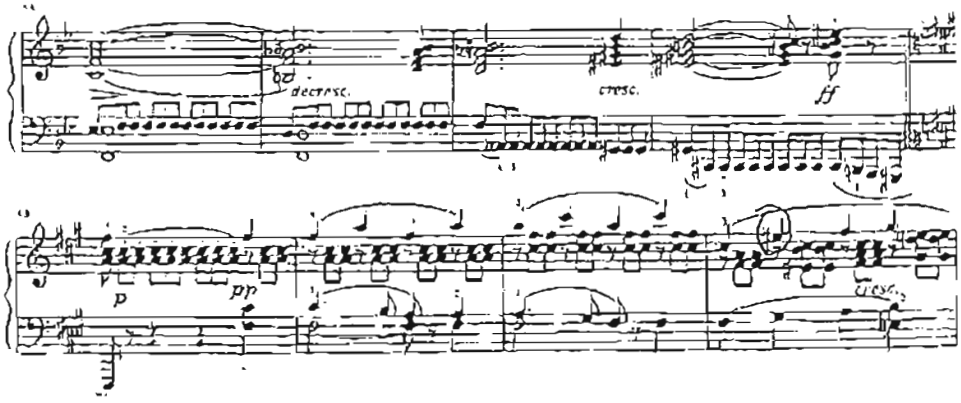


c) **Modulation by Enharmonic alteration**

In the first movement of the Sonata in Bb, D. 960, Schubert makes use of an enharmonic alteration in order to modulate. The alteration takes place from the diminished seventh chord in C minor (the supertonic in Bb major, Ab B D F, bar 46 / I) to the diminished seventh chord in F# minor (G# B D E#, bar 46 / IV). The latter chord changes to the dominant seventh chord in F# minor (C# E# G# B), followed by the tonic in the new key, F# minor (F# A C#).

Mus. ex. 18c

Schubert: Sonata in Bb, D. 960, First movement, bars 44-48



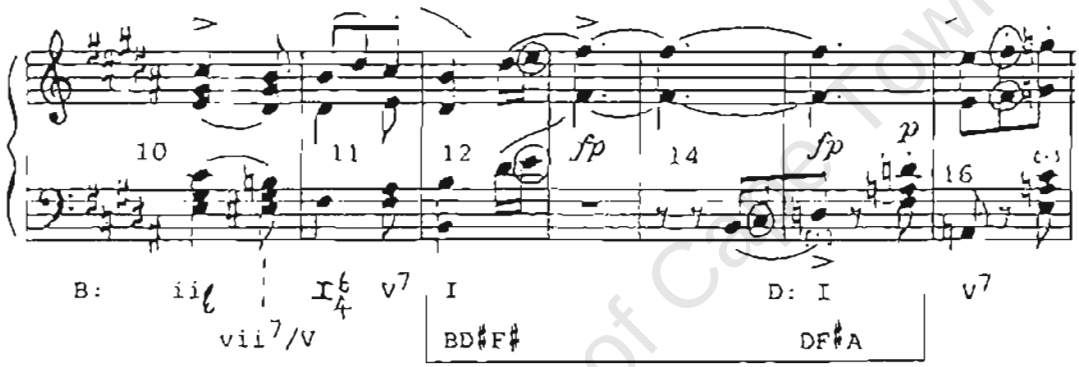
University of Cape Town

d) Link-note modulation

The modulation between the tonic triads of B major (B $D^{\#}$ $F^{\#}$, bar 12) and D major (D $F^{\#}$ A, bar 15) in the Fourth Movement of the Sonata in B, D. 575 happens between chromatic third-related *keys*. The octave $F^{\#}$ acts as a "link" note. This note undergoes reinterpretation as the third of D major chord.

Mus. ex. 18d

Schubert: Sonata in B, D. 575, Fourth Movement, bars 10-16



University of Cape Town

2.3.4 Rhythm

According to Newman, Schubert's rhythmic style is largely that of the early Romantic exaggeration of Classic means, which took the form of obstinately persistent patterns.[180] He concludes, that even though Schubert had preferred to use a variety of rhythmic patterns, he still saw to it that each pattern was given a thorough workout.[181]

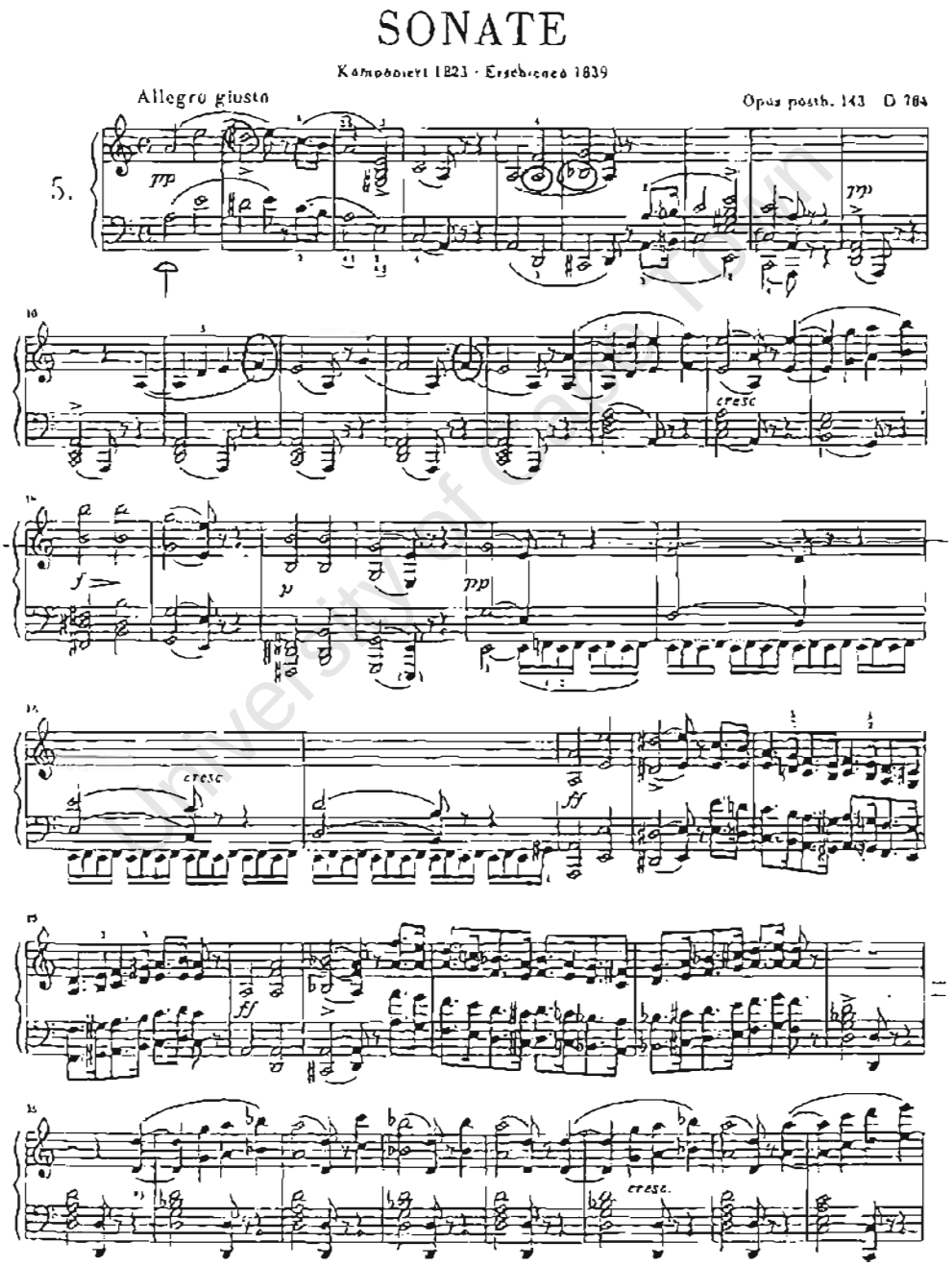
In the Sonata in A minor, D. 784, first movement, the pair of somber, strong-weak minims repeats relentlessly in almost every bar, always starting on the first beat and

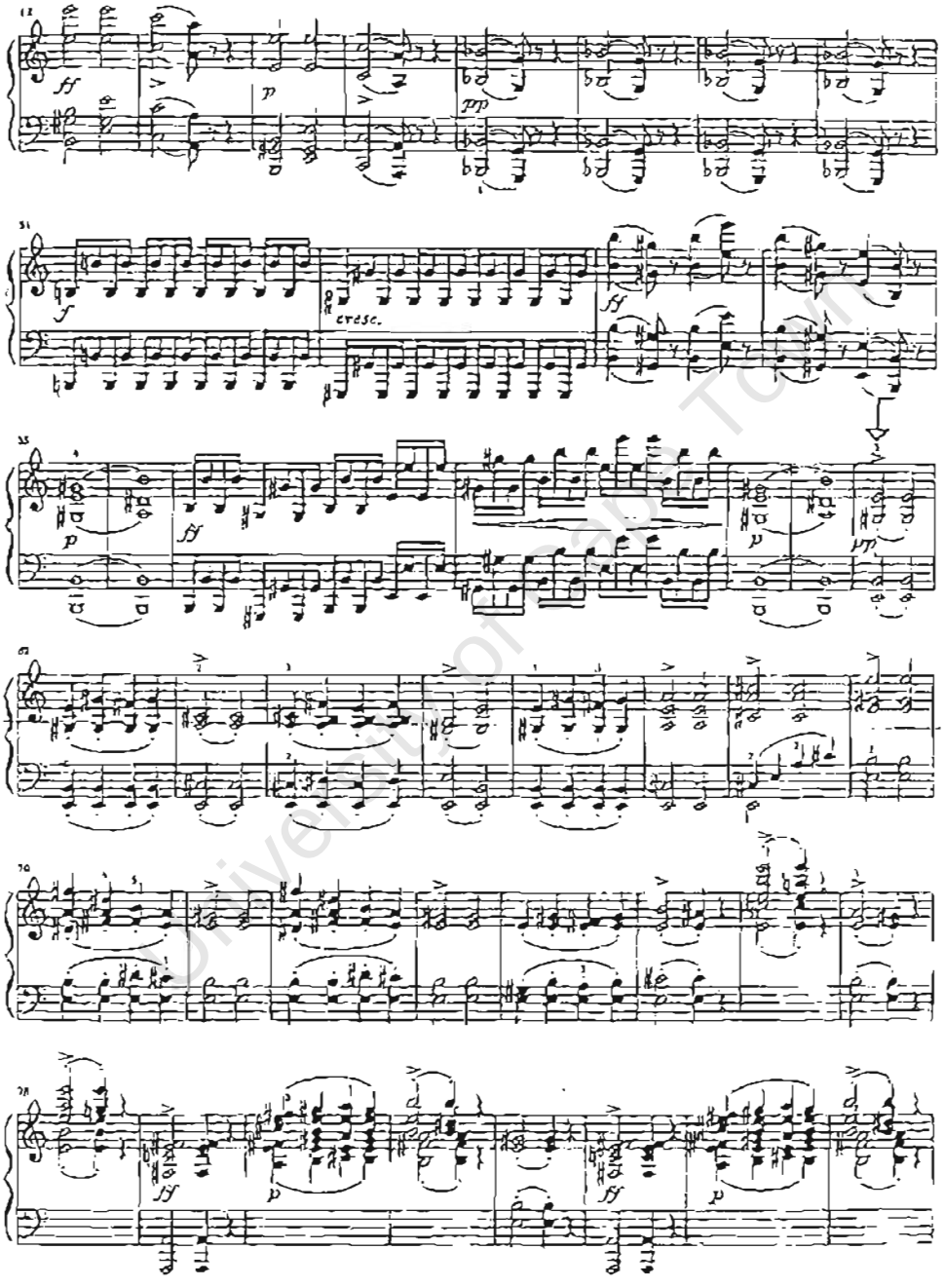
[180] Newman, 116
[181] Newman, 117

relieved only by the occasional dotted, rhythmic pattern (bars 27-29; 31-33) and broken octaves (bars 51-52; 57-58).

Mus. ex. 19a

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 784, First Movement, bars 1-85

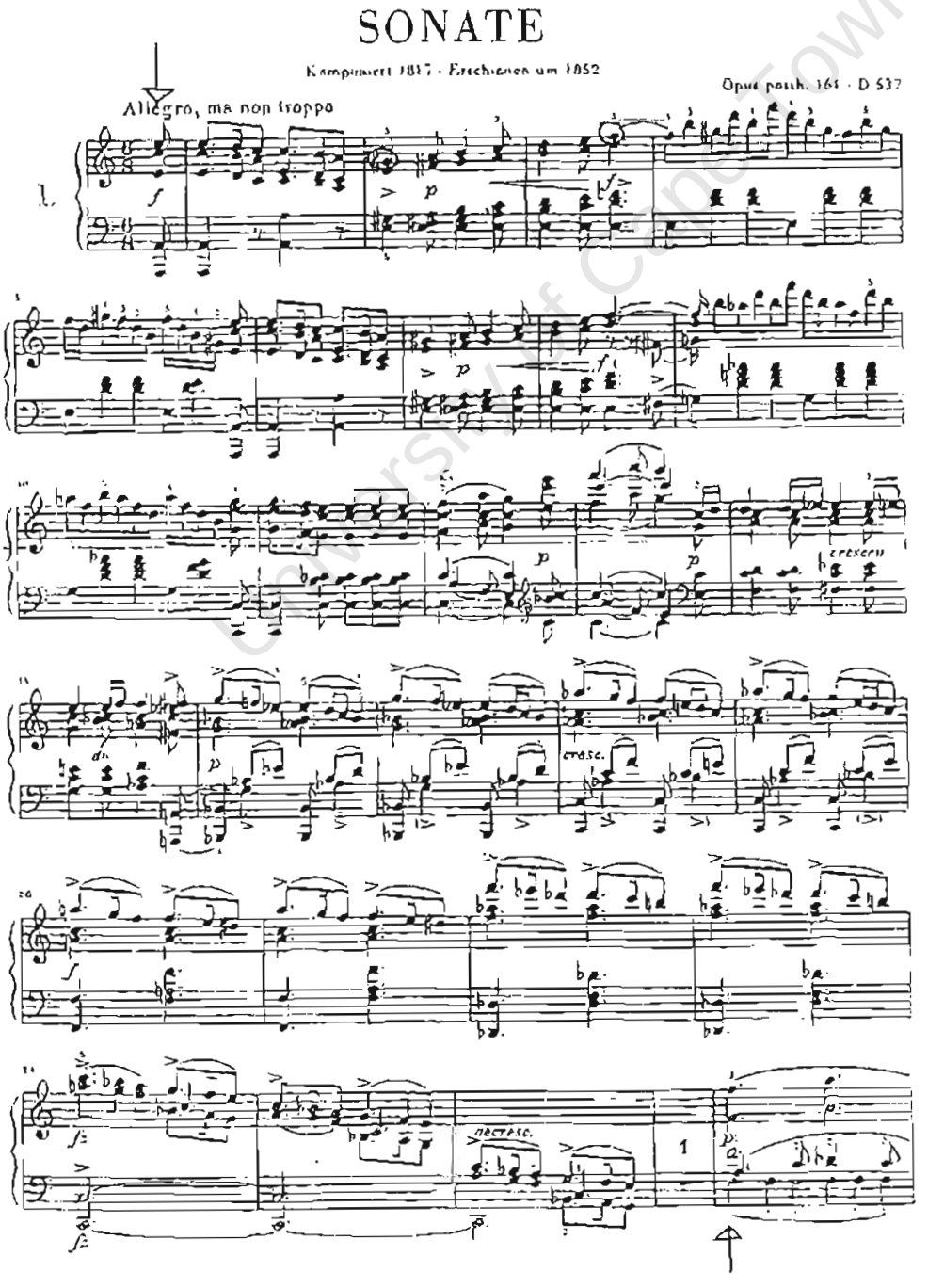



cresc.

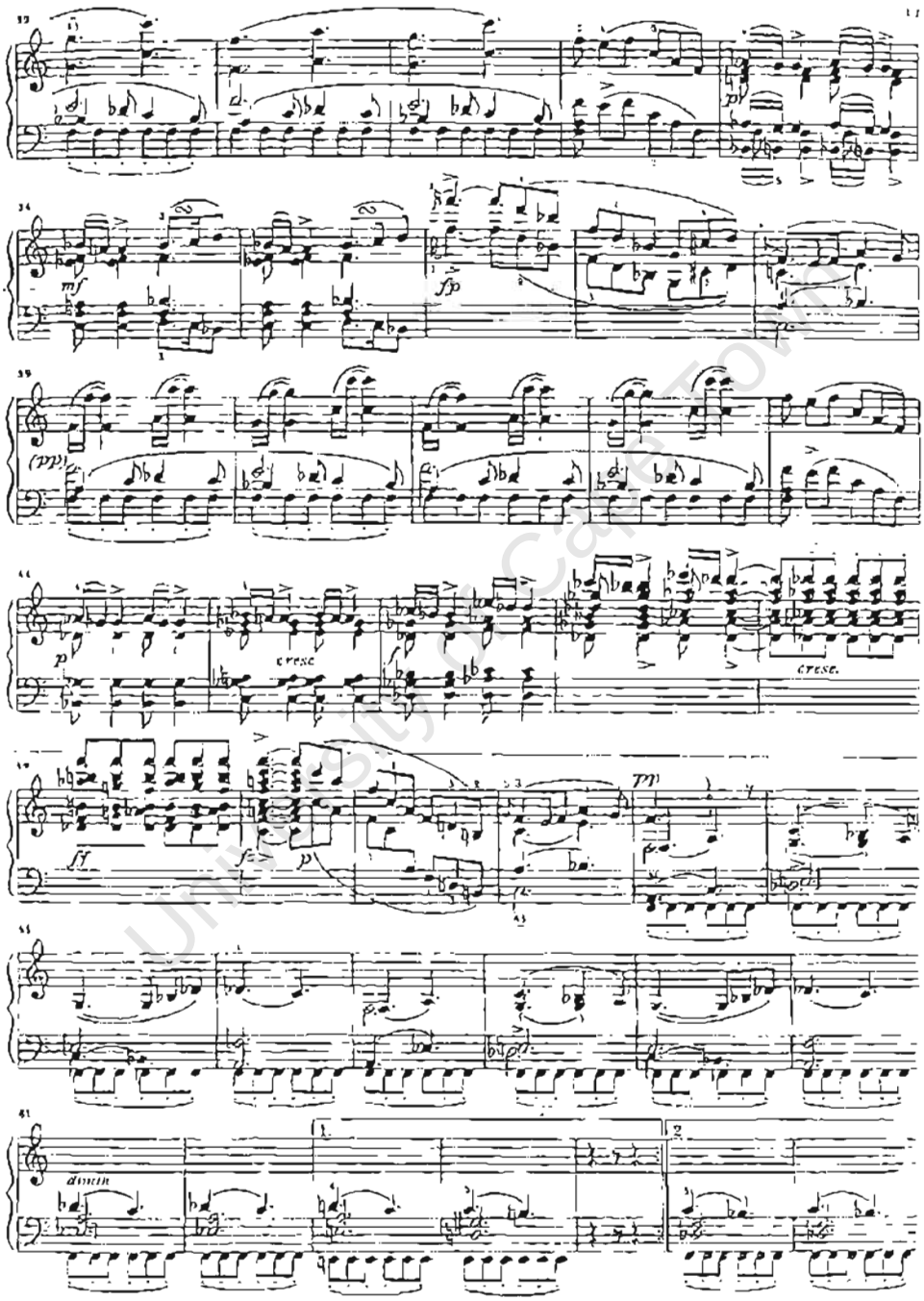
In the first movement of the early A minor Sonata, D. 537, Schubert uses such typical patterns in 6/8 time as a quarter-and 8th note (bar 2-3) two 16th-notes leading into a quarter-note (bars 14-15) and a pair of dotted quarternotes (bars 28-31). The biggest rhythmic contrasts are the hemiola shifts (bars 97-101) and the arpeggiando septimoles (bars 106; 108; 111; 113).

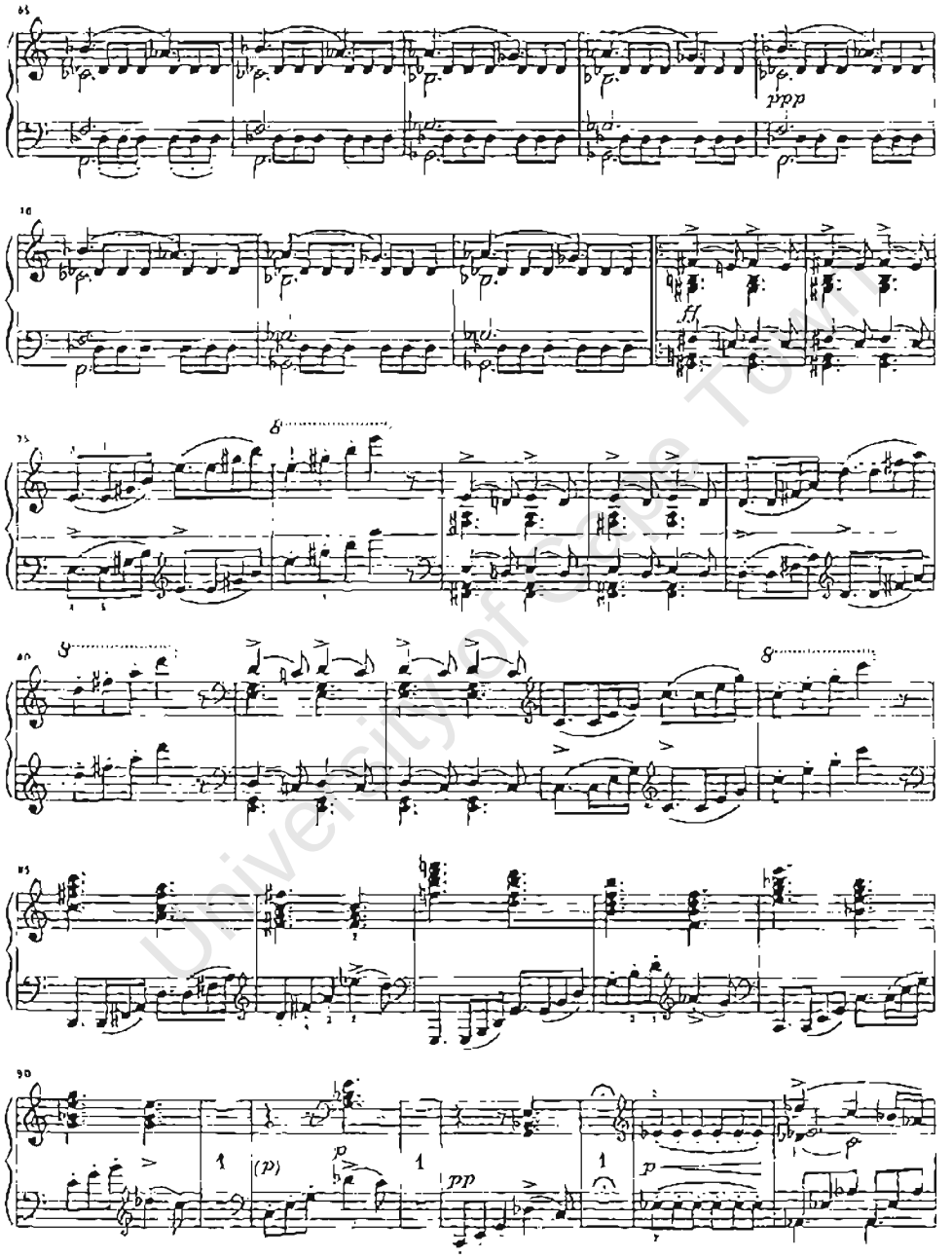
Mus. ex. 19b

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 537, First Movement, bars 1-122

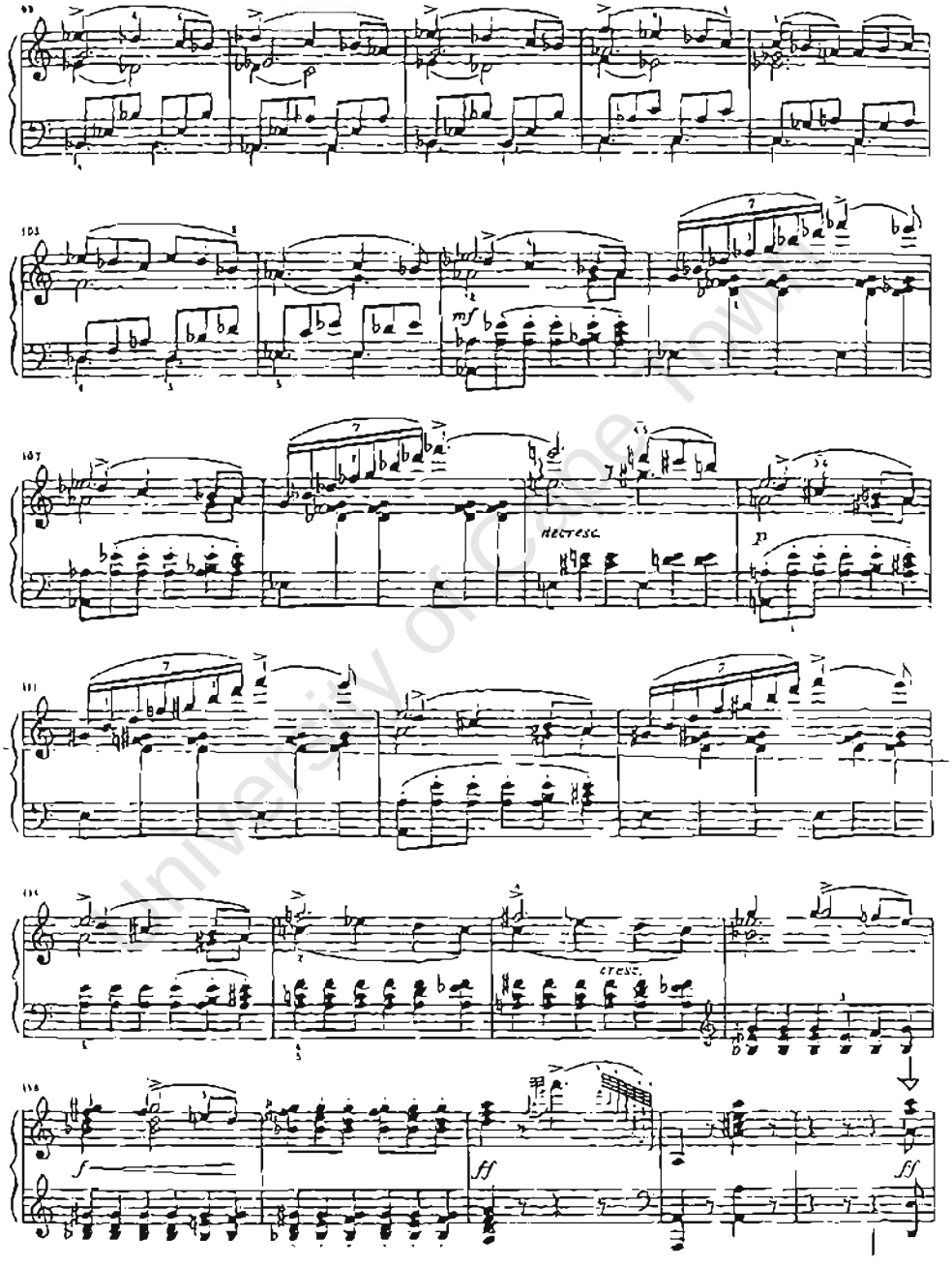


University of Cape Town


cresc.
cresc.
dimin.



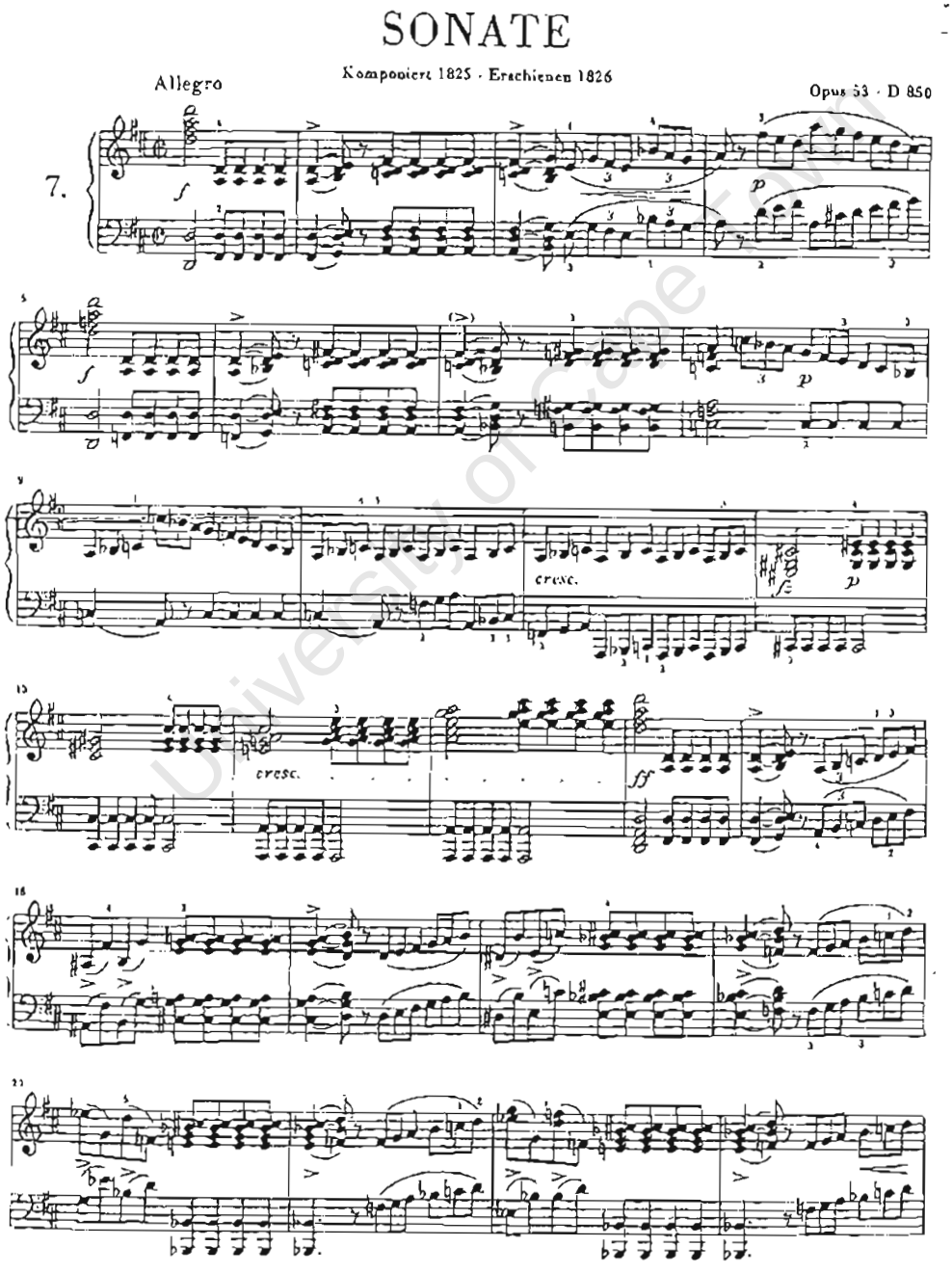
University of Cape Town


mf
DECRESC.
p
CRESC.
f
ff
ff

Schubert's persistence in rhythmic patterns can be seen elsewhere in the Sonata in D, D. 850 First Movement. The whole of bars 1-25 consist of mainly repeated chords and triplets (of which Schubert was fond),

Mus. ex. 19c

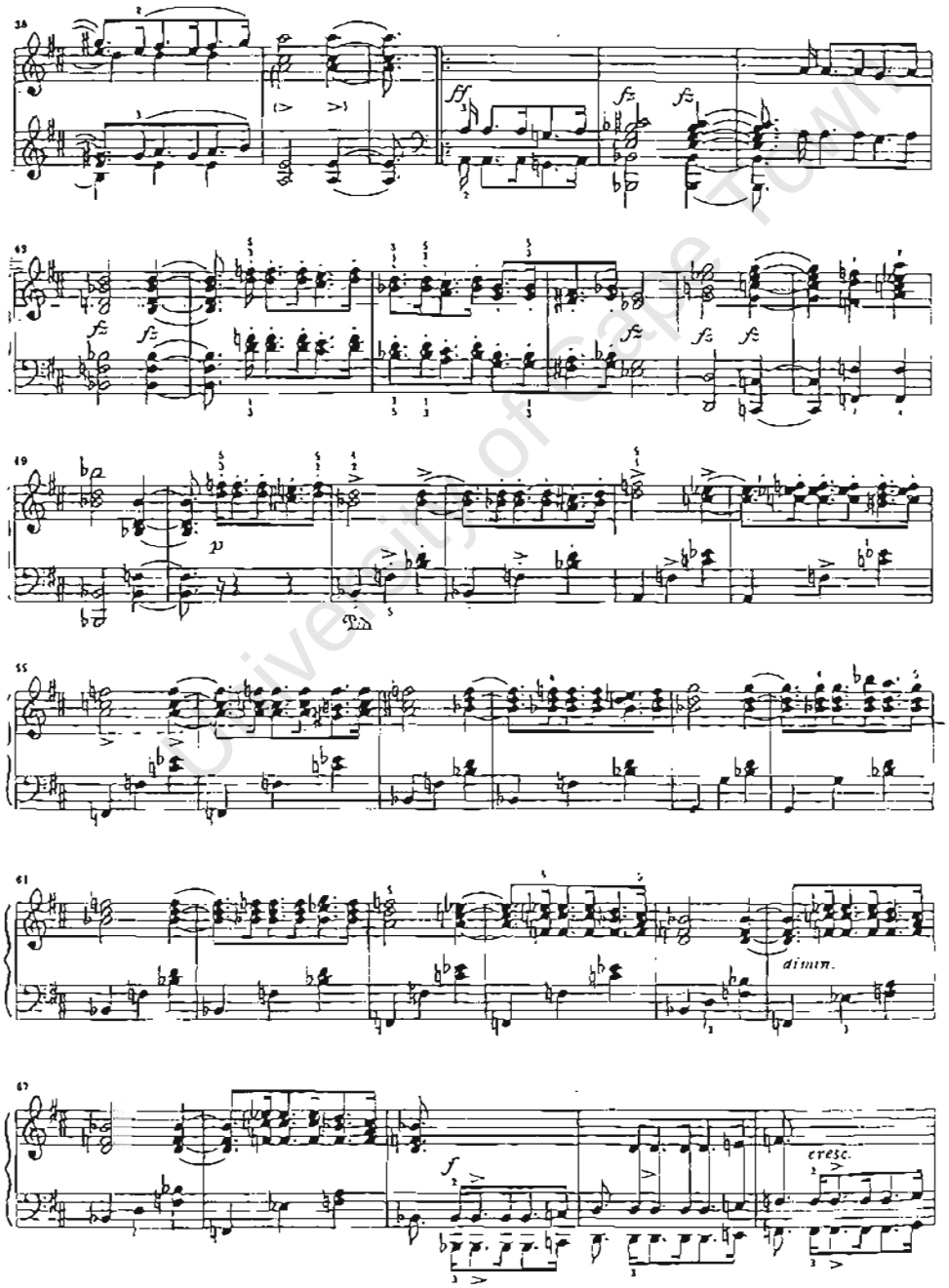
Schubert: Sonata in D, D.. 850, First Movement, bars 1-25



The third movement of this same sonata (D. 850) illustrates Schubert's marked fondness for dotted rhythms.

Mus. ex. 19d

Schubert: Sonata in D, D. 850, Third Movement, bars 40-71

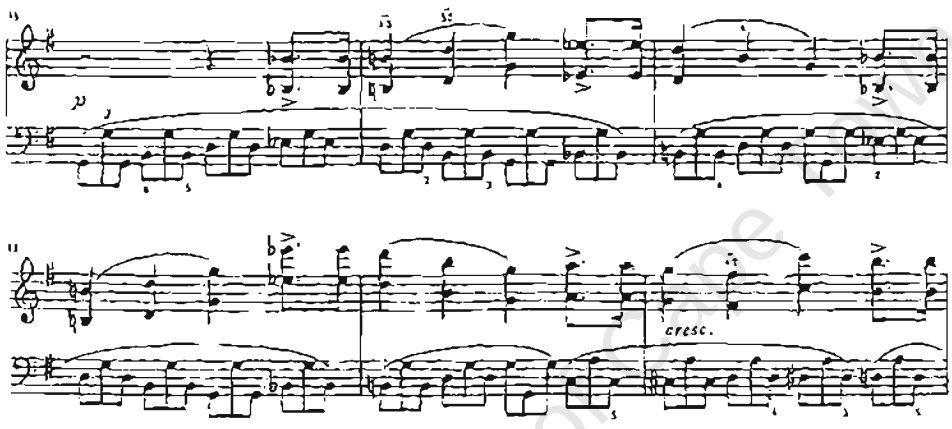


University of Cape Town

Schubert's propensity for dotted groups and for triplets is illustrated in the following example where the composer combines the two patterns: left hand, triplets, right hand, dotted rhythms.

Mus. ex. 19c

Schubert: Sonata in B, D. 575, First Movement, bars 15-20



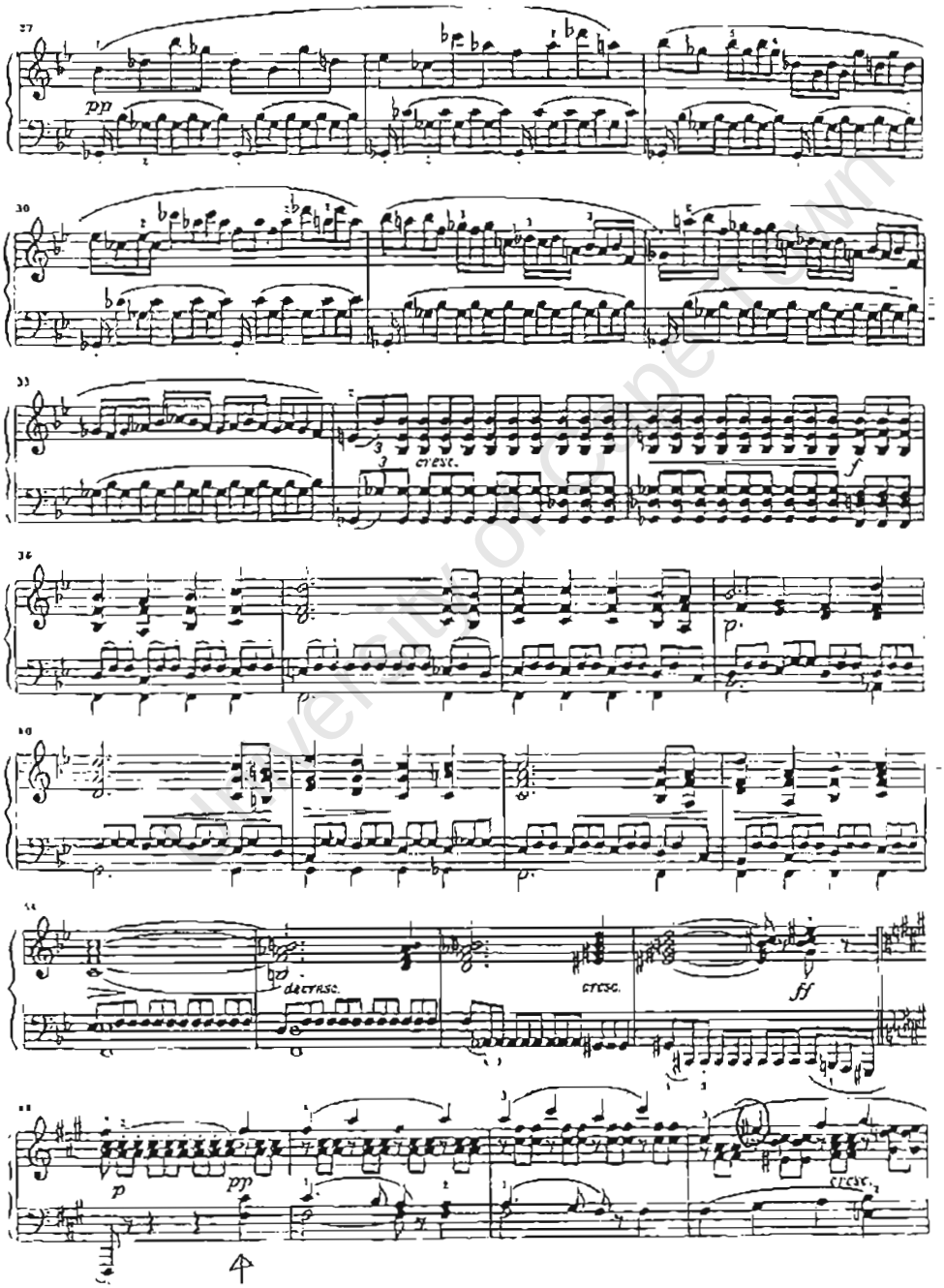
Like features of Schubert's rhythmic style can also be traced in his more lyrical moments: The last appearance of the first theme before the second subject in the Sonata in $B^{\flat}$, D. 960, First Movement, is prepared by two bars of chord triplets (bars 34-35) which serves as a "bridge". From bars 36-47 the left hand plays triplets and this is transferred to the right hand for the second subject (bar 48).

Then dotted notes appear in the right hand (bars 65-66) and double dotted notes from bars 74-77. From bars 79-98, Schubert resorts to triplets again.

University of Cape Town

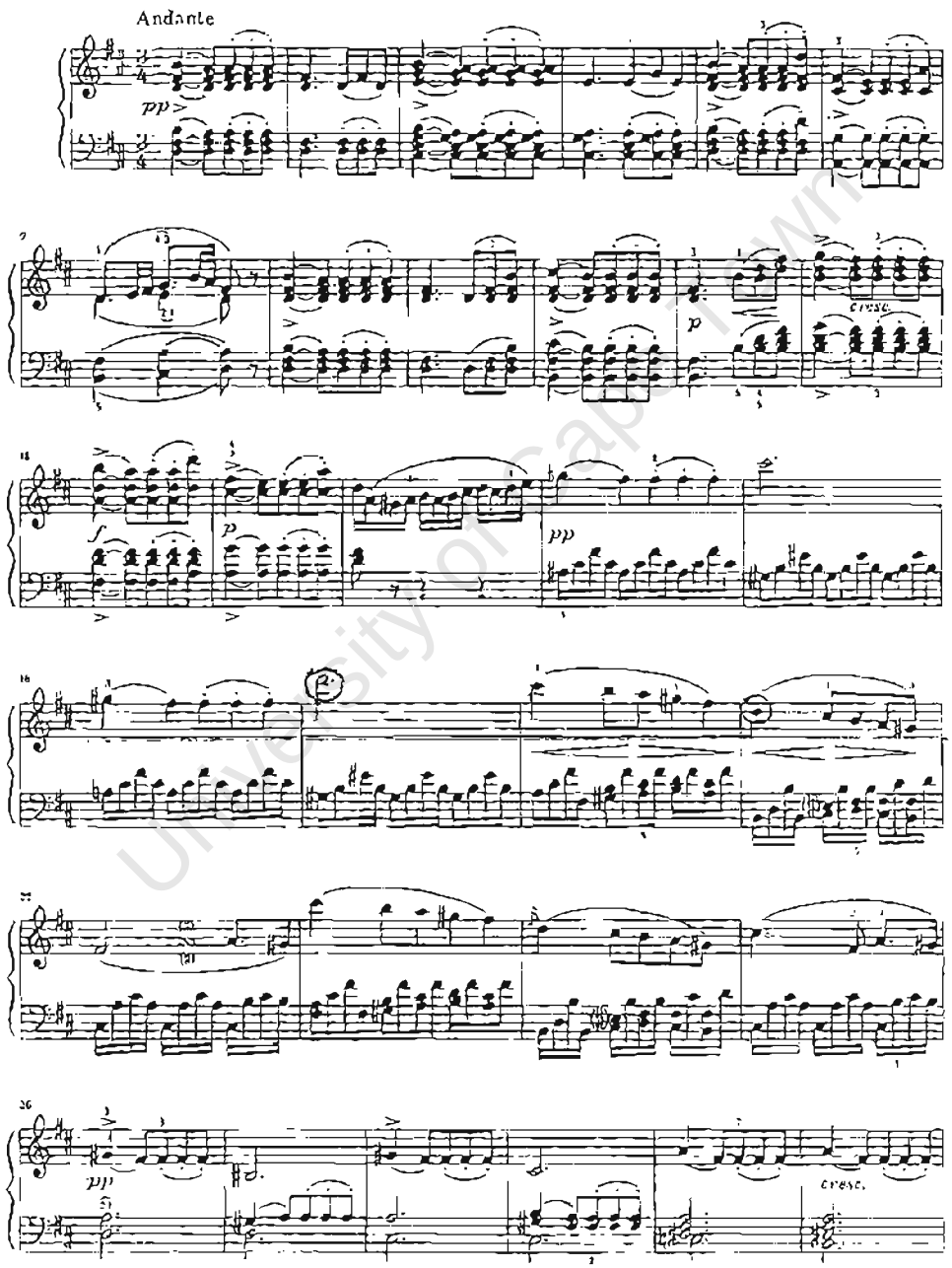
Mus. ex. 19f

Schubert: Sonata in Bb, D. 960, First Movement, bars 27-102



Mus. ex. 19h

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 664, Second Movement, bars 1-31

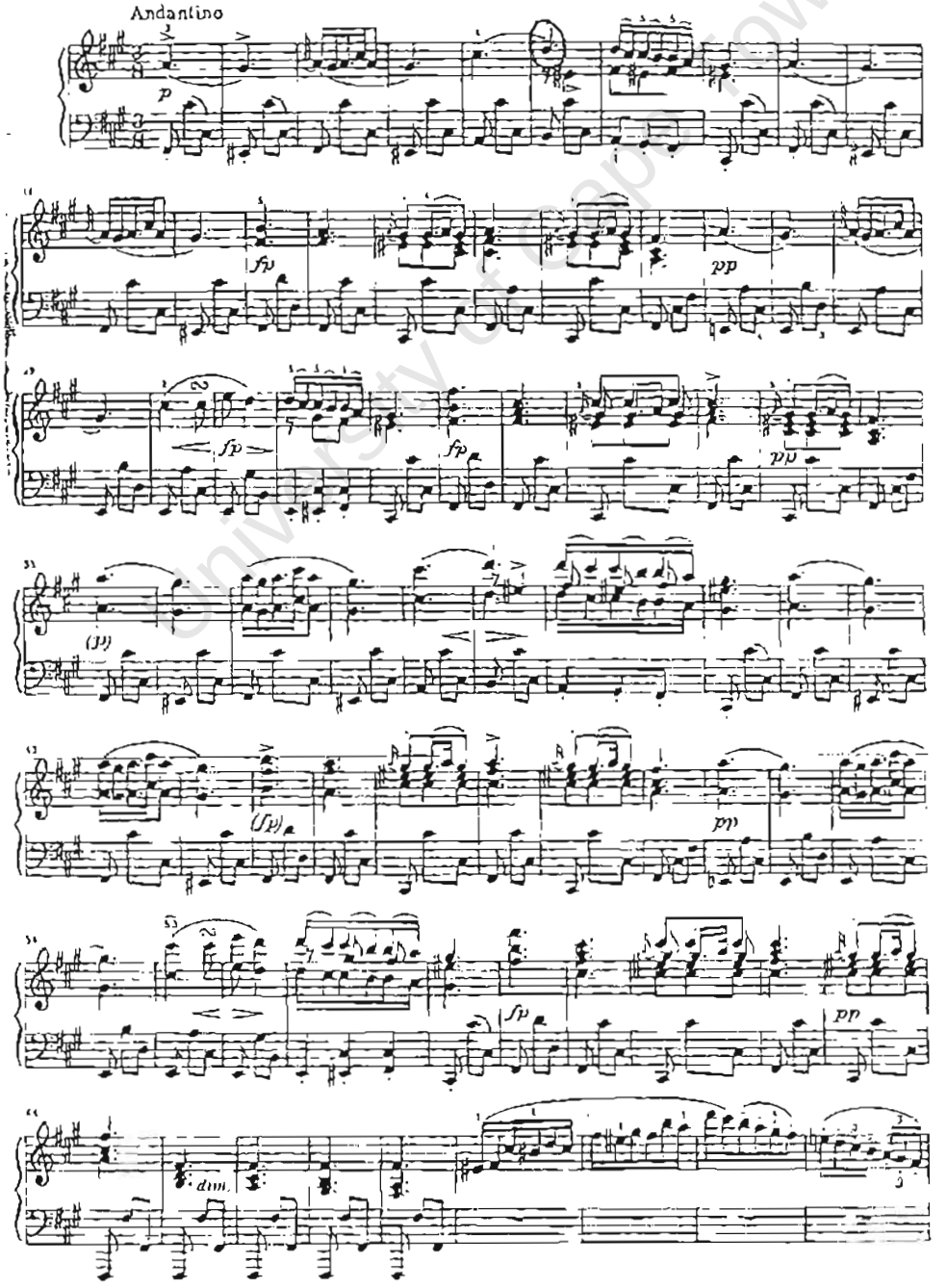


University of Cape Town

The slow movement of the late A major Sonata, D. 959, also employs one rhythmic pattern for long:

Mus. ex. 19i

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, Second Movement, bars 1-68



University of Cape Town

2.3.5 Texture

With regard to textural changes, the sound is richer in the early Romantic Piano Sonata than in the Classical Sonata.[183] There are more notes in the scoring and more use of the pedal to multiply their resonance. Four of five – rather than two-or three-part writing became the norm.[184] Sometimes the added parts appear in chord doublings, or in octave doublings in either hand, or melodic line reinforced by thirds and sixths.[185] Further, the pitch range itself expanded both up and down, which is especially due to the expanding range of the fast developing pianoforte.[186] Schubert's piano sonatas show various ways in which he applied textural possibilities in his music:

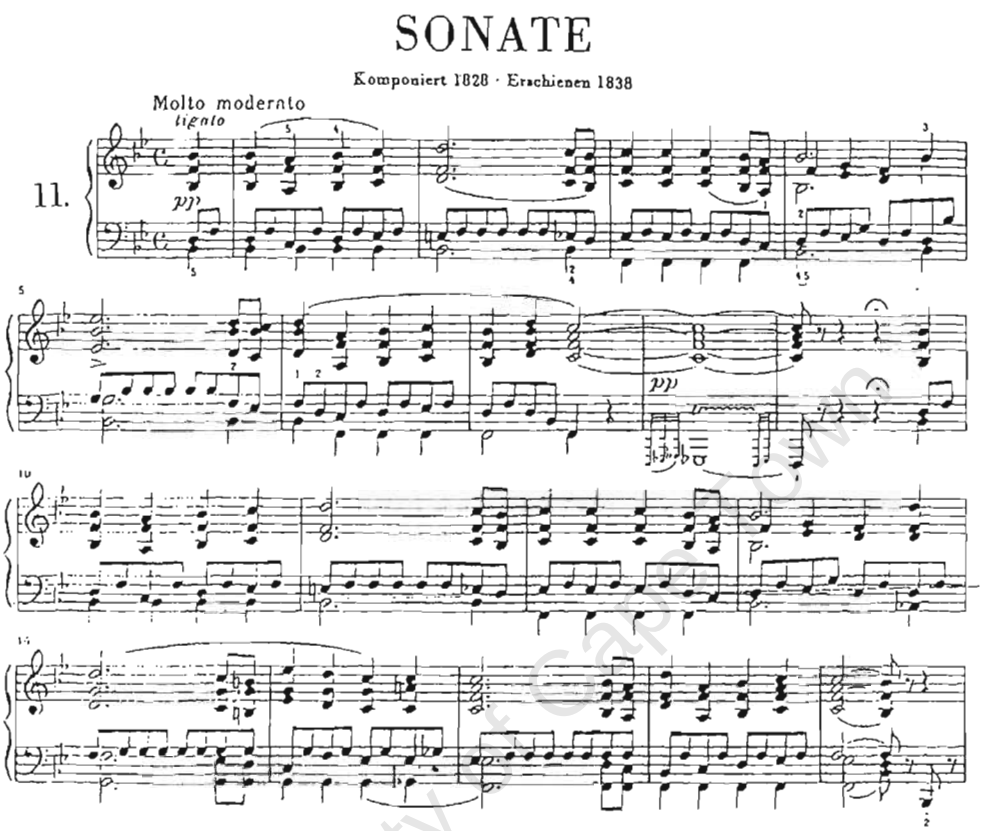
Schubert's Piano Sonata in B^{b}, D. 960, First Movement, starts with a theme that captures the Romantic piano sound very well: octave-plus-sixth doubling of the melody throughout the entire texture creates sonorities of special resonance and warmth:

University of Cape Town

[183] Newman, 122
[184] Newman, 122
[185] Newman, 122
[186] Newman, 121

Mus. ex. 20a

Schubert: Sonata in Bb, D. 960, First Movement, bars 1-18

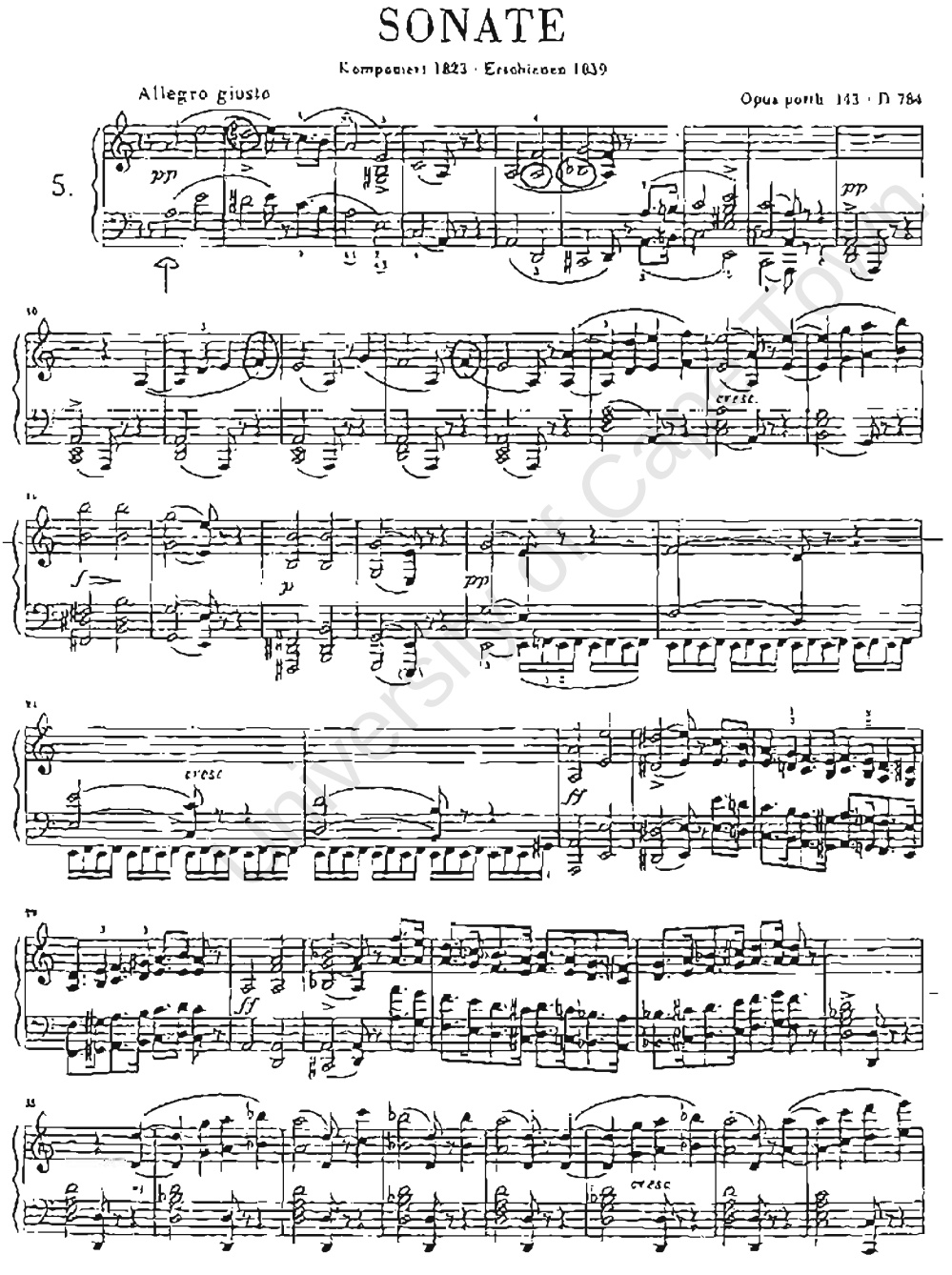


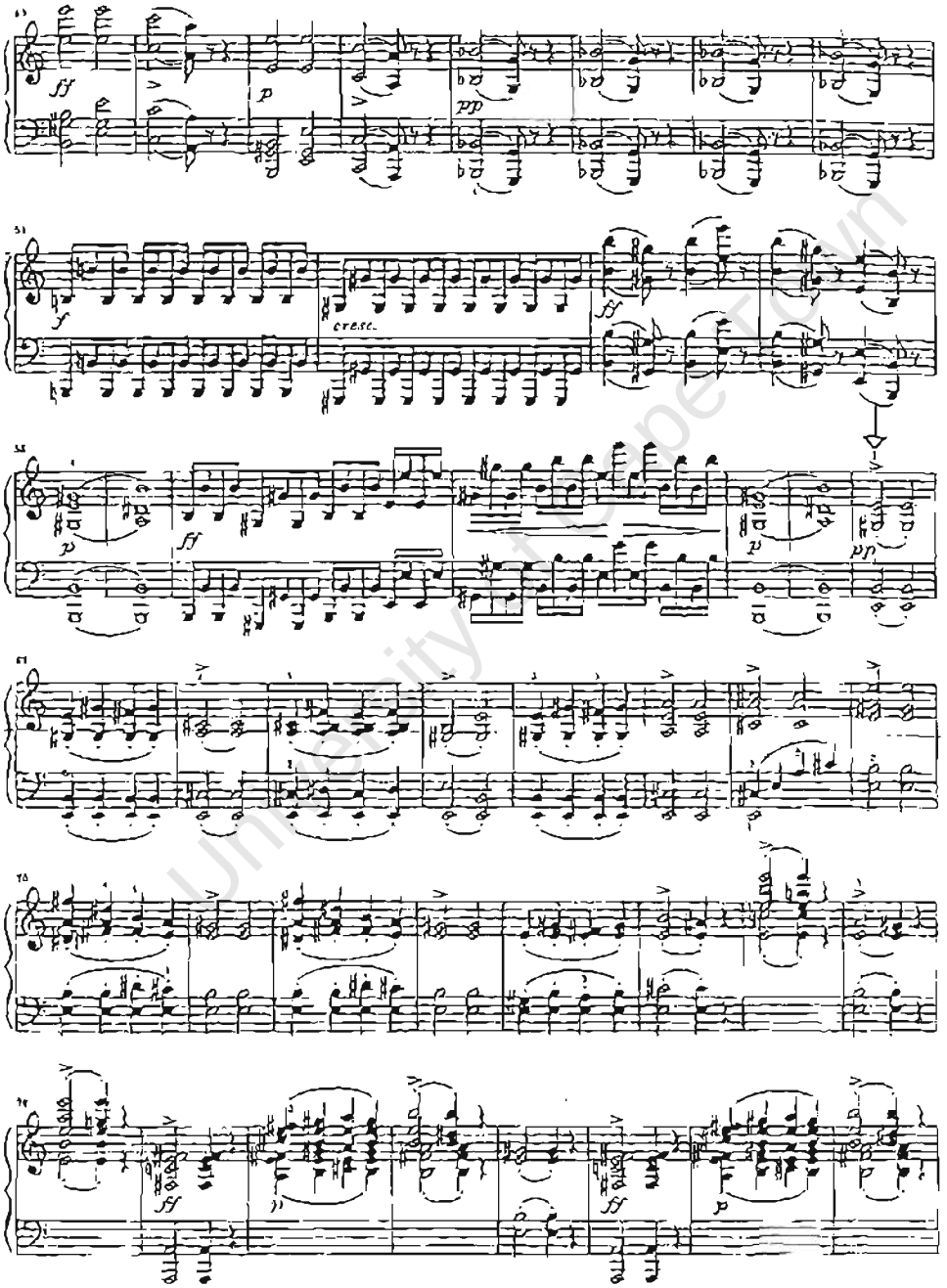
The first movement of the A minor Sonata, D. 784 contains excellent examples of how Schubert use textural possibilities.[187]From the pianissimo opening bars in unison octaves (bars 1-5) through melodic fragments rising above deep-set chords (bars 10-25) to the sudden fortissimo outburst (bar 26) when the same ideas emerge in a full panoply of harmonies. The piano writing is remarkably clear: the open spacing of the chords, the wide distance between the parts for each hand, the spareness of texture. There is not one superfluous note. Even the passages in broken octaves for both hands have melodic contour (bars 51-52; 57-58).

[187] Dale, 142

Mus. ex. 20b

Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 784, First Movement, bars 1-85



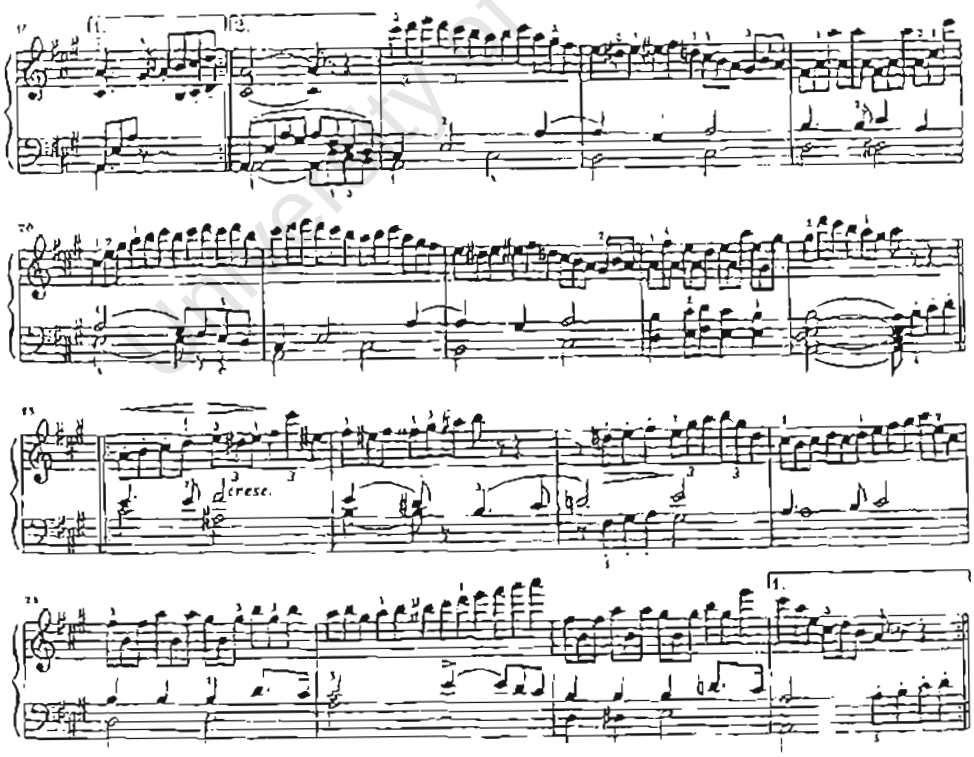


University of Cape Town

Sometimes the added parts are introduced in the appearance of a tenor melody with its bass below and arpeggiations above, like in the last movement from Schubert's A major Sonata, D. 959.

Mus. 20c

Schubert: Sonata in A, D.959, Fourth Movement, bars 18-32

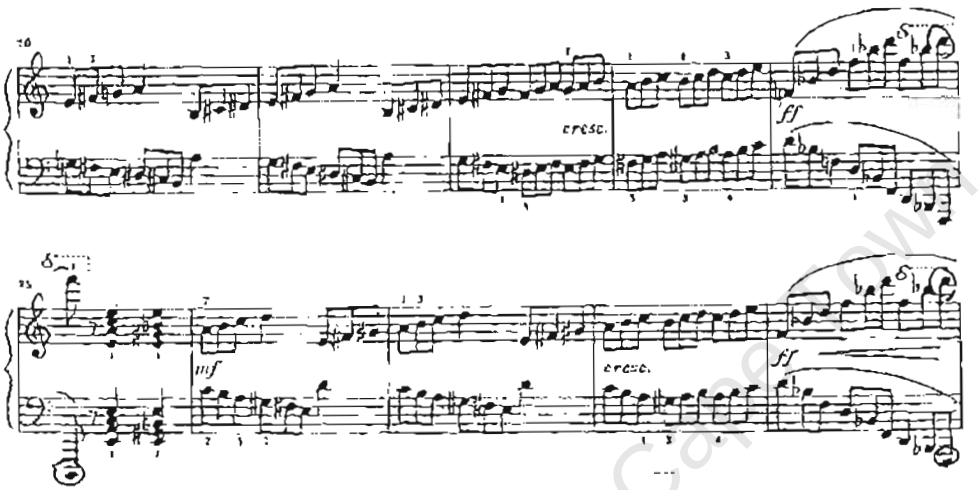


University of Cape Town

Schubert also made extensive use of the new highs and lows:

Mus. ex. 20d

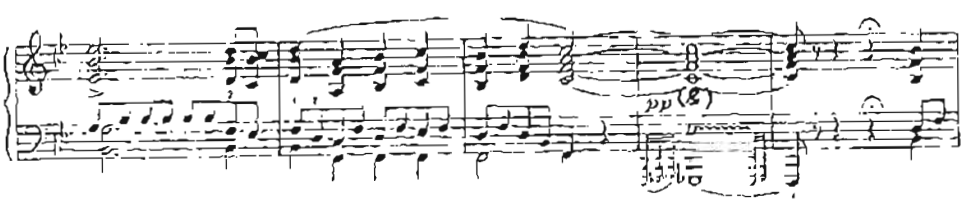
Schubert: Sonata in A minor, D. 784, Third Movement, bars 24-25, 29



The "mystical" trill on contra-$G^{\flat}$ in his D. 960, First Movement

Mus. ex. 20e

Schubert: Sonata in Bb, D. 960, First Movement, bar 8

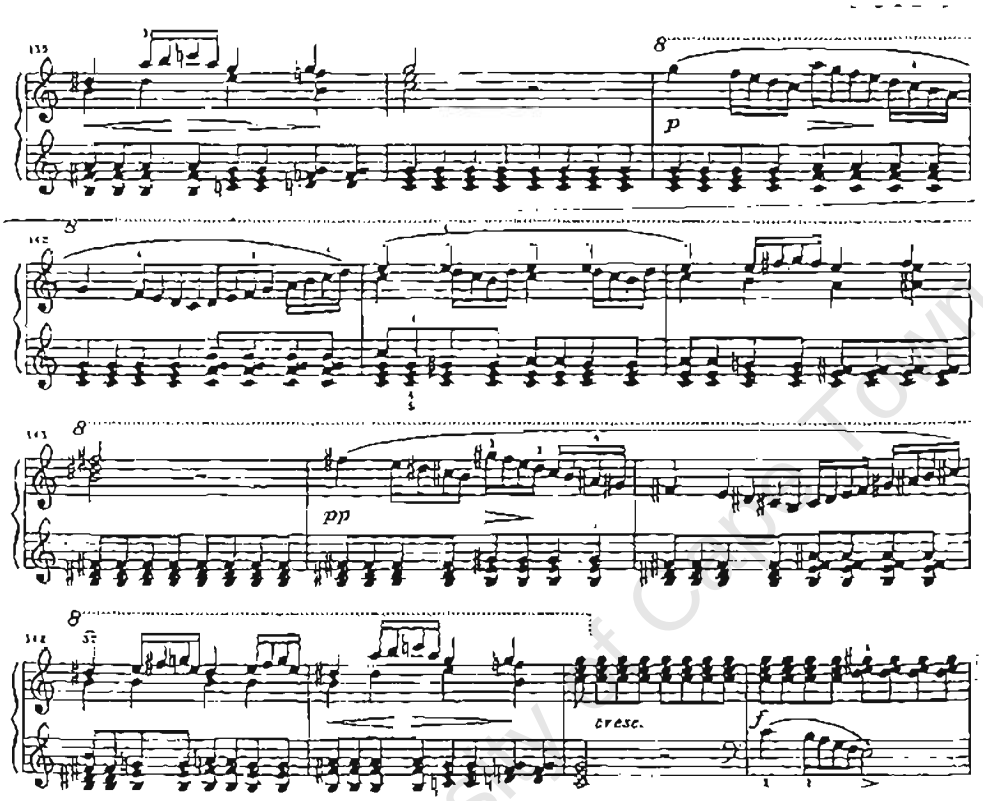


University of Cape Town

The lengthy scale passages in a high register in D. 959.

Mus. ex. 20f

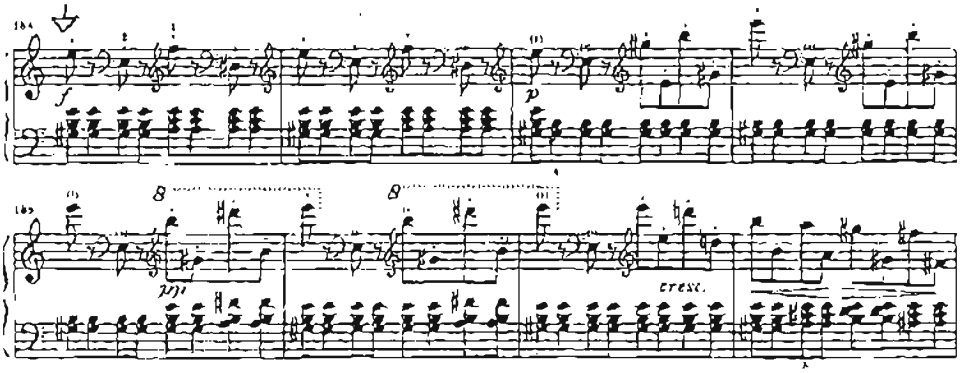
Schubert: Sonata in A, D.959, First Movement, bars 141-149



There is the very difficult staccato skips in the right hand of the same work.

Mus. ex. 20g

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, First Movement, bars 186-190

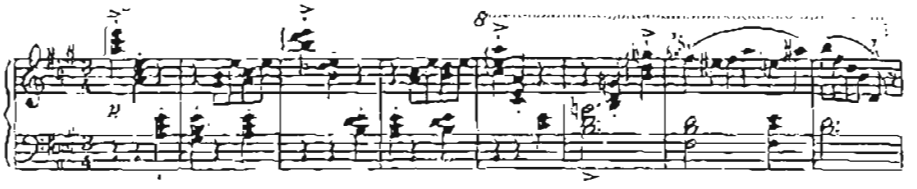


University of Cape Town

The high chord skips in the same work, D. 959

Mus. ex. 20h

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 959, Third Movement, bars 1-6



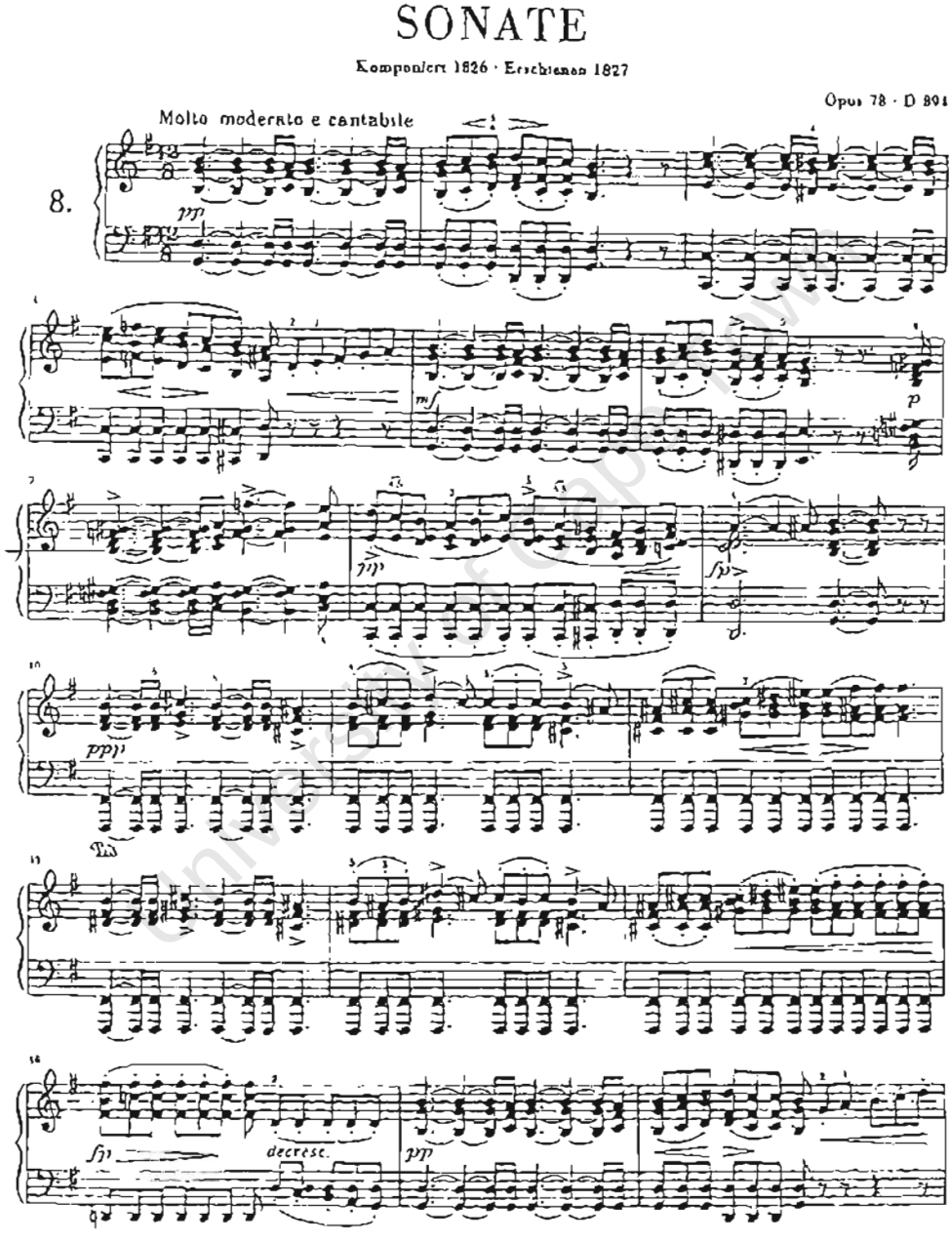
Other chord doublings which enhance the sonorities are to be found in other sonatas:

The opening theme of Schubert's G major Sonata, D. 894 is couched in sixth-plus-third doubling which creates a rich sound.

University of Cape Town

Mus. ex. 20i

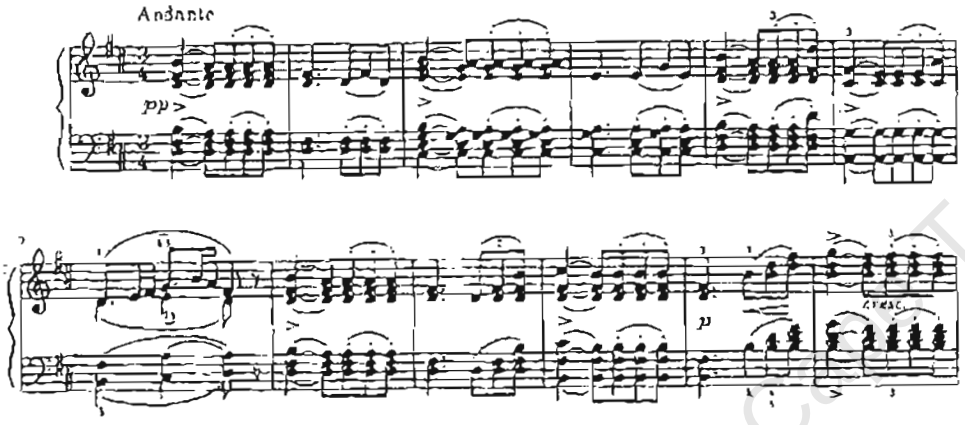
Schubert: Sonata in G, D. 894, First Movement, bars 1–18



The added colour in the octave doubling of the melody of Schubert's D.664, Second Movement, bars 1-12, has special harmonic appeal.

Mus. ex. 20j

Schubert: Sonata in A, D. 664, Second Movement, bars 1-12



University of Cape Town

3. SUMMARY

In this study on aspects of Schubert's compositional style as illustrated in selected Piano Sonatas, the following became evident:

- Schubert's treatment of Sonata **Form** is largely that of the eighteenth century: the conception of the Sonata as a four-movement structure with one or more movement in sonata form. Schubert adhered to the 3-part structure of sonata form: exposition – development-recapitulation, but adapted each part in terms of key-relationships and thematic treatment to accommodate his preferance for harmonic colour and melodic appeal.

- His uses of melody is displayed in a variety of types. Four types, on the basis of patterning can be discerned in the sonatas: (1) Vocal Melodies which center and turn around the initial note (2) Scalewise melodies (3) Chordal, and (4) Melodies with larger skips. He has a propensity for the melodic use of the minor mode often approaching the tonic and dominant notes from their lower and upper semitones, and the use of sequences. Schubert's melodic bent contributes greatly to his unconventional treatment of form.

- Schubert's harmony is displayed in his usage of chords largely for the sake of colour, and modulation, and less for their function in the harmonic context. Chromatic third relationships are a prominent means to this end in Schubert's piano sonatas.

University of Cape Town

- Schubert's Rhythm is to a great extent that of his own time: the persistent rhythm patterns of the early Romantic era. He is fond of dotted rhythms and triplets. Whatever rhythmic pattern Schubert used, he was consistent in them and would "insert" rhythmic devices to bring contrast for a while.

- Schubert's piano texture makes much of the possibilities of the newly developed pianoforte with its increased range of lower lows and higher highs. Many of his most resonant and vocal melodies in the piano sonatas are couched in octave, sixth, and third doublings in order to enrich the piano sound.

University of Cape Town

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Brown, Maurice J. E. Essays on Schubert. London: Macmillan, 1966

2. Brown, Maurice J. E. Schubert. A Critical Biography. London: Macmillan, 1958

3. Brown, Maurice J. E. "Schubert". The New Grove Dicionary of Music and Musicians XXII. London: Macmillan, 1958

4. Camer, Mosco. "The Orchestral Music" in Schubert. A Symposium. Abraham, Gerald. London: Drummond, 1946

5. Dale, Kathleen. "The Piano Music" in Abraham G. Schubert: A Symposium. London: Drummond, 1946

6. Deutsch, Otto E. Schubert. A Documentary Biography. London: Dent, 1957

7. Dubal, David. The Art of the Piano. Its Performers, Literature and Recordings New York: Summit Books, 1989

8. Einstein, Alfred. Music in the Romantic Era. London: Dent, 1947

9. Fisk, Charles. "Schubert recollects himself: The Piano Sonata in C minor, D. 958". The Musical Quarterly LXXXIV/4, 635

10. Grout, Donald Joy & Palisca, Claude. A History of Western Music. 5th Edition. New York: Norton, 1996

11. Hadow, William H. "The Viennese Period". The Oxford History of Music V. London: Milford, 1931

12. Hughes, Walden. "Franz Schubert's Piano Music". Clavier 1:10-13 (1997)

13. Hutchings, Arthur. Schubert. London: Dent, 1961

14. King, Hyatt A. "General Musical Conditions" in Abraham, G. ed. The Age of Beethoven. London: Oxford University Press, 1982

15. Kinkeldy, Otto. "Schubert: Dance Composer". The Musical Quarterly. XIV/4, 610

16. La Rue, Jan. Guidelines for Style Analysis. New York: Norton, 1970

17. Longyear, Rey M. Nineteenth Century Romanticism in Music. Englewood-Cliff: Prentice-Hall, 1973

University of Cape Town

18. Mathlener, René W. Chromatiese en skynbare tertsverwantskappe in die tonaal-harmoniese sintaksis van Franz Schubert (1797-1828) se solo klavierwerke. Mmus dissertation (unpublished). Pretoria: UNISA, 1990

19. Meyer, Leonard B. Style and Music. Theory, History and Ideology. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989

20. Nettheim, Nigel. "How the young Schubert borrowed from Beethoven." The Musical Times CXXXII/1776:330-331 (1991)

21. Newman, William S. The Sonata since Beethoven. Chapel-Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969.

22. Nohl, Walther. "Beethoven's and Schubert's personal relations". The Musical Quarterly xiv/4:553-562 (1928)

23. Pascall, Robert. "Style" in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. XXXIV. London: Macmillan, 2001

24. Pauly, R.G. Music in the Classic Period. New Jersey: Englewood, 1973

25. Plantinga, Leon. Romantic Music: A history of musical style in the nineteenth century. New York: Norton, 1984

26. Rosen, Charles. Sonata Forms. New York: Norton, 1980

27. Rosen, Charles. The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven. New York: Faber & Faber, 1976

28. Samaroff, Olga. "The Piano Music of Schubert". The Musical Quarterly XIV/4:596-609 (1928)

29. Samson, Jim. "Romanticism" in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians XXI, London: Macmillan, 2001

30. Scott, Marion M. Beethoven. London: Dent, 1965

31. Szabolcsi, Bence. A History of Melody. London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1965

32. Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary. New York: Random House, 1989

33. Winold, A; Delone, R; Christ, W. Introduction to Music. Processes and Style. New York: Harper, 1976

34. Yates, W.E. "Biedermeier" in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. London: Macmillan, 2001

University of Cape Town