TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

THE MUSICAL KEY FOR TRANSCENDENCE OF THE PHENOMENAL WORLD

by

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To Professor George J. Buelow
Who first introduced me to the music
of Richard Wagner

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Chapter One: Wagner's Creative Process

> *I have very definite impressions while in that trance-like condition, which is the prerequisite of all true creative effort, I feel that I am one with this vibrating Force, that it is omniscient, and that I can draw upon it to an extent that is limited only by my own capacity to do so.*
>
> Richard Wagner from *Talks with Great Composers*[1]

> *Because music does not, like all the other arts, exhibit the* Ideas *or grades of the will's objectification, but directly the* will itself*, we can also explain that it acts directly on the will, i.e., the feelings, passions, and emotions of the hearer, so that it quickly raises these or even alters them.*
>
> Arthur Schopenhauer[2]

From personal accounts in Wagner's autobiography, *My Life,* we discover that he had a sensitive nature that fluidly connected music with visions, making the statement in the above quote, which he relayed later in life, quite natural to accept. Even as a child he could remember the joyful feeling:

> *…that hearing an orchestra play from close up remains with me as a voluptuous memory to this day: even the orchestra's tuning up excited me fantastically: I remember particularly that the striking of fifths on the violin struck me as a greeting from another world—which incidentally had a very literal meaning for me. When I was still scarcely beyond infancy the sound of these fifths had been associated with the ghosts and spirits that had always excited me.*[3]

It is clear how impressionable, excitable and imaginative Wagner was as he continues:

> *I remember in later years never passing by the small palace of Prince Anton at the end of the Ostallee in Dresden without a shudder: in this area I had heard at close quarters a violin being tuned, the sound appearing to emanate*

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[1] Arthur M. Abell, *Talks with Great Composers* (New York, Philosophical Library, 1955), 86.

[2] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. F. J. Payne, Vol. II, (New York, Dover Publications, Inc. 1958), 448.

[3] One wonders if this memory could have inspired the open fifths of the Dutchman's motive in *Der Fliegende Holländer*.

> *from the stone figures with which this palace is decorated and among which some are provided with musical instruments.*[4]

Wagner was not only influenced by the musical experiences that occurred to him from the outside world, but his composing was also inspired by dreams or daytime reveries (trance-like conditions). An astounding instance of this from his autobiography relays an experience he had in Italy while trying to find the peace and harmonious environment for creative work on the beginning of the *Ring*. He had contracted dysentery and then became seasick on a steamer trip to La Spezia. Having engaged a hotel that turned out to be located on a narrow and noisy street, Wagner passed a feverish and sleepless night. The next day he took a long walk in the nearby pine covered hills, but did not feel much better. Returning that afternoon, he stretched out on a hard couch awaiting sleep. It did not come. Instead, he fell into a trance-like reverie (Gray uses somnambulistic). Wagner felt himself sink into a rapidly flowing stream of water. Its rushing sound resolved itself into the musical sound of the Eb major chord undulating in persistent arpeggios which transformed themselves into melodic figurations of increasing motion. Awakening with terror from this trance, Wagner realized that the orchestral prelude to *Das Rheingold*, which had long been dormant within him, had been revealed to him. He was also aware from this experience that the strength of his composing would come from within himself and not from without.[5]

Clearly, with Wagner's fine-tuned sensibilities, the doorway between the informing characteristics of the deeper levels of his inner being and the experiences of the

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[4] Richard Wagner, *My Life*, trans. Andrew Gray, ed. Mary Whittall, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 29-30.

[5] Wagner, *My Life*, 498-99.

outer phenomenal world was especially fluid. As an avid reader of philosophy, Wagner's early creative projects were strongly influenced by the prominent philosophers Hegel and Feuerbach. But once Wagner encountered the revelatory work of Arthur Schopenhauer, a philosopher whose writings had fallen into quasi-obscurity for the past thirty years, Wagner's life, his understanding about the nature of reality, and the placement of man in the world would all radically change. Arthur Schopenhauer was a philosopher who even probed into the truth of music. Schopenhauer's ideas about music would be like a magic-wand passed on to Wagner from which to create powerful new worlds. With this new understanding, Wagner would not only create music that could "lift and alter" the sensibilities of the listening audience, as our opening quote claims, but he would be able to create a dramatic musical experience that would serve as the musical key for transcendence of the outer phenomenal world. Wagner's greatest example of this is in his musical masterpiece *Tristan und Isolde.*

In a letter to Mathilde Wesendonck dated December 1, 1858, while he was in the midst of working on *Tristan and Isolde*, Wagner wrote:

> *Of late I have been slowly reading friend Schopenhauer's chief work straight through again, and this time it has extraordinarily incited me to expansion and even-on some points- amendment of his system. The subject is uncommonly weighty, and perhaps it had to be reserved for my peculiar nature, precisely at this quite peculiar epoch in my life, to arrive at insights which could open to no other man. For it is a matter of demonstrating a path of salvation recognized by none of the philosophers, particularly not by Sch., -the pathway to complete pacification of the Will through love, and that no abstract love of mankind, but the love which actually blossoms from the soil of sexual love, i.e. from the affection between man and woman.*

Later in the same letter Wagner writes:

> *Quite analogously to this conception, I then arrive with greatest certainty at proving in Love a possibility of attaining to that exaltation above the instinct of*

> *the individual Will where, after complete subjection of this latter the racial Will comes to full consciousness of itself; which upon this height is necessarily tantamount to complete pacification.*

After Wagner's death, a fragment of the letter he was going to write to Schopenhauer about his idea, which has been traced back to the time of the letter above, was found and appeared in the Bayreuther Blätter in 1886:

> *It flatters me to suppose that you really have not yet discovered any explanation of this, as it tempts me to connect with such a point to submit to you a view whereby I think I can see to the beginnings of sexual love itself one path of salvation, to self-knowledge and self-denial of the Will, and that not merely of the Individual Will.*
>
> *You alone supply me with the terminology whereby my view may be imparted philosophically; and, in attempting to make my meaning clear, I rely on nothing but what I have learnt through yourself.....*[6]

Wagner never sent the letter.

What these letters tell us is that Wagner wanted to reveal a "pathway to salvation," the "pathway to complete pacification of the Will" (Schopenhauer's *Will and Representation*) and not just the individual will, but the "racial will" or mankind's will as it comes to "full consciousness of itself." Wagner felt that through the romantic love between a man and a woman he could demonstrate one path of salvation, self-knowledge and self-denial of the Will. Additionally, we learn that it is by studying Schopenhauer's philosophy, by digesting and applying his terminology that Wagner obtained the tools to make his "meaning clear." Through these passages, we have Wagner's whole plan for *Tristan*. By way of the music and through the drama of romantic love, Wagner wants to demonstrate the path to higher states of consciousness, to self-knowledge, to self-denial of the Will and perhaps to the complete pacification of the Will for humankind. Schopenhauer has

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[6]*Richard Wagner to Mathilde Wesendonck*, trans. W.A. Ellis (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 75-77.

given Wagner the means with his proclamation that Music is a direct copy of the Will.[7] Schopenhauer has also given Wagner the structure with the precepts of his philosophy about the nature of creation, the illusion of the phenomenal world, the mirroring principal of the phenomenal to the Will, the affirmation of the will-to-live and the denial of the will-to-live, pointing to salvation or transcendence.

Instinctively, Wagner understood that union through sexual love between a man and a woman is the union of polar opposites. The ability to shed all the barriers, resentments and apprehensions in order to reach the state of being able to lose oneself in another person through love, can bring about a recognition of Self in the other, and can also pave the way for higher levels of self-knowledge, higher levels of consciousness. In the end, this is what Wagner composed in *Tristan*.

To help us understand some of Schopenhauer's ideas with regard to the nature of the Will and Representation in addition to his thoughts about music, the diagram of the Pythagorean Lambdoma will be useful. Pythagoras, founder of the Greek Mystery Schools, is attributed with creating a table of harmonic values of the overtone series and the undertone series or the harmonic series and the subharmonic series. The diagram was found by a nineteenth century researcher Albert von Thimus from a neo-Pythagorean treatise by Iamblichus.[8]

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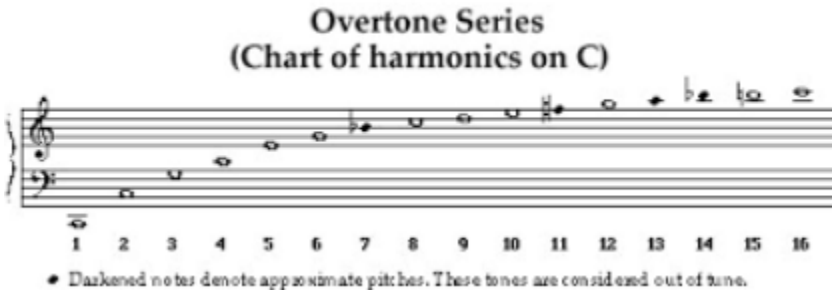
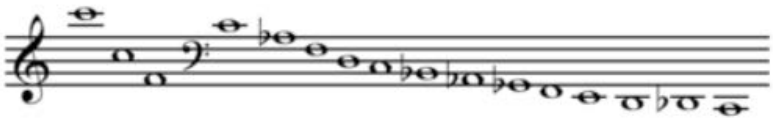
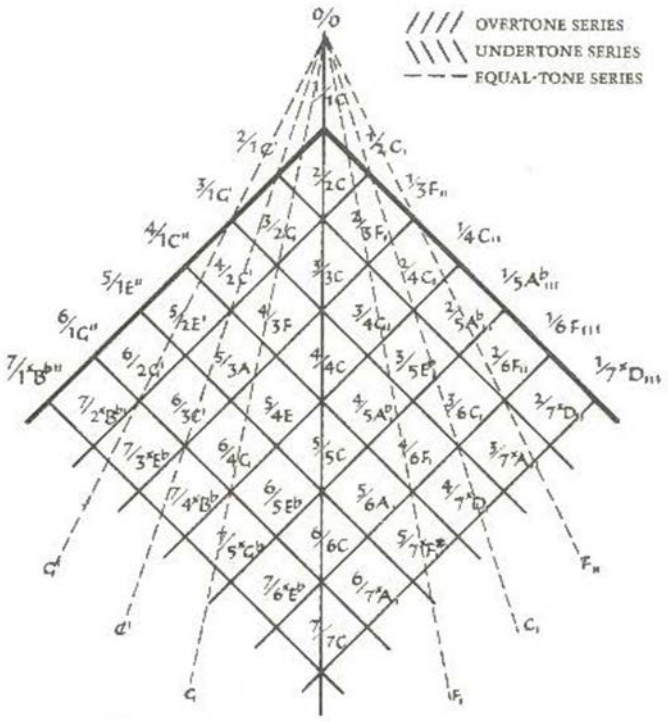
[7] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. F. J. Payne, vol. I (New York: Dover, 1969) 257.

[8] Joscelyn Godwin, *Harmonies of Heaven and Earth* (Rochester: Inner Traditions International, 1987) 190.



Subharmonic Series





The diagram begins with 1/1 (or unity) at its apex, along with a corresponding note or the note sounded from the full length of a monochord, c. The overtones,

displayed going down the right leg, are represented by the fractions and corresponding tones, derived from a monochord. The left leg displays the undertones which are represented by the multiples of 1/1, or integers, and their corresponding notes. The diagram is rendered with the full length of the monochord string sounding at c in mind. This diagram is an image of the Universe. It can be extended to mathematical infinity and would then contain every rational fraction and integer. Each of these, expressed by a numerator and a denominator is a product of the intersection of an overtone and an undertone row. The Lambdoma itself, then, represents the created physical or material world and the fractions or intervals, which are the intersection of the values of the overtone and undertone series, represent *values of being.*[9] If each intersection of values represents one of the beings of the Universe, then each being's manifested existence is dependent on the original primordial duality from the initial split of the Lambdoma. Schopenhauer's Will would be represented by the 1/1 nodal point on the Lambdoma, the placement of the Creator God or demiurge. The duality consciousness created by the two legs of the Lambdoma is overcome if we realize that each of the legs of the Lambdoma is not just a mirror image of each other, but the two are in fact reciprocals of one another. Therefore, if we were to draw a horizontal line connecting the two legs of the Lambdoma, say at 3/1 with 1/3 on its opposite leg, and multiplied these values, they would always equal 1 or unity. So the union of Tristan and Isolde corresponds to the 1/1 nodal point and yields knowledge of access to their origins or the 0/0 Absolute. The dotted lines on the Lambdoma are called equal tone lines. Throughout the matrix, we can see the 2/1 c, an octave above the fundamental 1/1, for instance, also recurs at 4/2c and

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[9] Rudolphe Haase, "Harmonies and Sacred Tradition," in *Cosmic Music*, ed. Joscelyn Godwin (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1989), 96.

6/3c. If we connect these values, as the dotted lines indicate, the lines will all converge at a point outside the Lambdoma at 0/0. This is just a natural phenomenon of the table. Clearly, though we can see the symbolism in the return to the Absolute 0/0. Isolde's transfiguration at the end of the opera is an equivalent ascension.[10] Schopenhauer claimed that the world could just as well be embodied music as embodied will. He also referred to the overtone series in his discussion of the parallel between the various grades of tone and the grades of the phenomenal world. This table which contains even more information than we have been able to discuss here is a clear validation of Schopenhauer's metaphysical ideas of music, not to mention Wagner's instinctive procedures revealed by it.

Clearly, the fate of the opera *Tristan* rests on Wagner's complete assimilation of Schopenhauer's philosophical ideas and his singular application of these ideas as a modus for composition. Wagner, in his capacity as the composer and poet of his dramas, was in a unique position to incorporate Schopenhauer's theories with a richness and power difficult for others to achieve. Thus, I will discuss Schopenhauer's theories of the nature

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[10] Hans Kayser, *Lehrbuch der Harmonik,* trans. David Toker, Preface and Introduction, Ph. D. dissertation, 2002. "In reference to the tonal content (of the Lambdoma), we have in these Partial- tone Coordinates, for the first time in the history of acoustics and music theory, a *system of tones,* which has been lacking in science until now. Now, since this system has its origin in the natural law of the overtone series and its group theoretical- structure (gruppentheoretische Form) also seems to be anchored in nature (for example in the development of the facets of crystals) and since, on the other hand all the tone-values contained in it correspond to psychic forms in our souls, as the "monochord verification" proves, we therefore have in this fundamental harmonical diagram that rare coincidence of the natural and the psycho-spiritual (Seelisches), of matter and spirit (Geist), which promises to convey different evidence than a merely logical formation or a merely psychological analysis of internal forms and experiences. (Footnote: Kayser is saying that the correct placement of the bridges on the monochord results in our hearing the correct interval which we identify as correct because it corresponds to an ideal archetype in our soul.) I have made a preliminary attempt at this self-orientation in my Pythagoras essay, and through these first harmonical analyses, it already became clear that many of the Pythagorean theorems, especially those that had, until now, been the most "obscure," are easily illuminated, indeed that even some theorems previously believed to be "Foreign" or "non-Greek"—as, for example, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls—can be read directly from the *Lambdoma.*"

of reality, the nature of music and of man in order to reveal how Wagner created the world of *Tristan and Isolde* through the lens of Schopenhauer's visions.

Chapter Two: The World according to Schopenhauer

The story of Tristan and Isolde has many versions and is very ancient. The first literary renderings appeared in the 12th century. Many versions of the story, however, were passed down orally through the art of bards and the jongleurs of baronial courts.[11] Wagner became acquainted with the legend of Tristan and Isolde during his study of mediaeval literature while residing in Dresden. He read the version by the German minnesinger Gottfried von Strassburg in the modern German rendering of Kurtz whose second edition was published in 1847.[12] So the legend had been fructifying in Wagner for several years before he first mentions it in a letter to Franz Liszt in Zurich dated December, 1854.

> *...the Valkyrie has exhausted me too much…I have now reached the second half of the last act….But since I have never in my life enjoyed the true happiness of love, I intend to erect a further monument to this most beautiful of dreams, a monument in which this love will be properly sated from beginning to end: I have planned in my head a* Tristan *and* Isolde, *the simplest, but most full-blooded musical conception; with the "black flag" which flutters at the end, I shall then cover myself over, in order-to die.*-[13]

It is in this same letter to Liszt dated December, 1854, that Wagner mentions his introduction to the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer:

> *I have now become preoccupied with a man who – albeit only in literary form- has entered my lonely life like a gift from heaven. It is Arthur Schopenhauer, the greatest philosopher since Kant…*[14]

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[11] Ernest Newman, *The Wagner Operas* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), 170.
[12] Ibid., 188.
[13] *Selected Letters of Richard Wagner*, trans. and edit. by Stewart Spencer and Barry Millington (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1988), 323-4.
[14] Ibid., 323.

The literary work Wagner is referring to is the seminal work of Schopenhauer entitled *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* or The World as Will and Representation. Wagner would go on to absorb most of Schopenhauer's works and become a real disciple of this philosopher spreading his enthusiasm to colleagues and friends such as Friedrich Nietzsche. *The World as Will and Representation* is built upon the foundation of, and is a reaction to, the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant's (1724-1804) treatise entitled *The Critique of Pure Reason*. In his *Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy* Schopenhauer states that "Kant's greatest merit is the distinction of the phenomenon from the thing-in-itself, based on the proof that between things and us there always stands the *intellect*, and that on this account they cannot be known according to what they may be in themselves."[15] Kant referred to objects as semblances or shadows that were dependent upon the faculty of the perceiving mechanism or the brain and upon our conditioning of logic and language or our modes of thinking. Additionally, he states that all experiences are conditioned by Time, Space and Causality which are forms of knowledge that precede (*a priori*) the phenomena.[16] Kant names the inscrutable metaphysical entity which appears through forms and phenomena as the "Ding- an-sich" or the "thing-in-itself."[17] Kant, operating in the 18th century, arrived at these concepts of the *a priori* forms of Time and Space and the knowledge that phenomena are only semblances or appearances through his pure reasoning and intuition alone.[18] It is the space/time phenomenon that

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[15] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. I, Appendix, 417-18.

[16] Joseph Campbell, *Mythos* III, Lecture 3, "Beyond Space and Time-The Romantic Philosophers" (Joseph Campbell Foundation, Acorn Media, 2011.) DVD.

[17] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. I, Introduction, vii.

[18] Amit Goswami, *The Self- Aware Universe* (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1993) The quantum physicist, Amit Goswami, describes the quantum paradox or the observer effect: a simple act of perception causes the wave-like behavior of matter to collapse down into a particle with the Space/Time continuum collapsing down with it. Goswami's reference to Consciousness as the ground of all Being is the equivalent to Kant's Ding-an Sich and therefore to Schopenhauer's Will.

causes objects and people to appear separate from each other and experiences to seem linear and enduring.[19]

About the time that Kant was publishing the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), a young Frenchman named Anquetil- Duparron enlisted in the French army so that he could partake of a trip to India during the Franco/British wars there. Returning to France, he brought with him a Persian translation of some of the Upanishads which he then translated into Latin and published under the title *Oupnek'hat.*[20] Arthur Schopenhauer read this treatise and realized that the Oriental ideas of transcendence and the concept of *Maya* were identical to Kantian metaphysics. Subsequently, Schopenhauer synthesized these two philosophies to the point of even using Oriental terms to describe some of the Kantian findings and then explicated this synthesis in Occidental language. This is the first time that a synthesis of the two philosophies of the Orient and the West was ever presented by a major European philosopher.[21]

Arthur Schopenhauer was born in Danzig in 1788. Showing outstanding mental capabilities at a very young age, he eventually studied the humanities, empirical sciences and philosophy at the Universities of Göttingen and Berlin. Moving to Dresden, Schopenhauer spent the years between 1813-1818 writing his seminal work *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung.* Schopenhauer was 30 years old when it was published.

Building upon Kant's theories, Schopenhauer believed that the Ding –an-sich could be known through the feeling nature of the individual human being. Schopenhauer

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[19]Joseph Campbell, *Mythos* III, Lecture 3, "Beyond Space and Time-The Romantic Philosophers" (Joseph Campbell Foundation, Acorn Media, 2011.) DVD.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

called the thing- in- itself the metaphysical Will. He described the Will as the innermost essence, the kernel, of every particular thing and also of the whole. "The Will appears in every blindly acting force of nature and also in the deliberate conduct of man…."[22] Schopenhauer's philosophy developed from a single thought: "the world is my representation." Schopenhauer understood that reality, as we experience it through perception, is really a process of cognition. Our cognition creates, immediately and automatically, a mental picture of the external world in all its rich detail. This mental picture is a re-presentation of information or data from our senses— a Vorstellung or an Image of the intellect. Schopenhauer claims that this is true for every living knowing being. So we understand:

> *It then becomes clear and certain to him (man) that he does not know a sun and an earth, but only an eye that sees a sun, a hand that feels an earth; that the world around him is there only as representation, in other words, only in reference to another thing, namely that which represents, and this is himself.*[23]

According to Schopenhauer, our knowing consciousness is divisible solely into subject and object. To be an object for the subject and to be a representation are one in the same. All our representations are objects for the subject and conversely, all objects of the subject are our representations.[24] Following this line of reasoning, Schopenhauer's philosophy closely resembles the oriental interpretation that the outer world is *Maya* or illusion, but one that is constructed by our own intellect and cognitive sensory capabilities. If this were put into more modern terms, we could think of the outer phenomenal world like a 3D holographic movie of our own creation and the principal

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[22] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation,* vol. I, 110.
[23] Ibid.,3.
[24] Ibid., vi.

"star" or character is the perceiver or subject themselves. We are the primary actors in our own movie. When we become manifest into the phenomenal world, our conscious mind focuses into the space/time continuum so thoroughly that we believe the movie is real and try to function within it. All objects seem separate from each other and the perceiver seems separate from all things and events. This is illusion.[25]

What Schopenhauer understood was that there was an underlying energy that manifested and unified all things. He called this underlying energy the Will. Joseph Campbell used the term Transcendent Energy Consciousness, which is helpful to us since the word Transcendent implies an energy that informs the phenomenal world, but also operates beyond it.[26] The outer world of representations appears as a mirror to the Will. In this mirror, the Will knows itself in increasing degrees or grades of distinction, the highest of which is man. Through the world as representation the Will obtains knowledge of its own willing. Therefore it is essential that the Will manifests in individuals and in time in order to objectify its real nature which is the will-to live.[27] The affirmation of the will-to live is, however, the basis of all man's suffering. Schopenhauer says that if the will-to-live were merely the self- preservation of a single individual, the

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[25]Carl G. Jung, "Visions/Life after Death," in *The Near Death Experience, A Reader*, compiled by Lee W. Bailey and Jenny Yates, (New York: Routledge, 1996), 110. In 1944, after a heart attack, Carl Jung had a Near Death Experience in which he consciously knew he was departing from the earth. He said he was profoundly disappointed at having to come back and so it took him about three weeks to recover. During that time, he had several dreams and visions. He said: "the aim of both these dreams is to effect a reversal of the relationship between ego consciousness and the unconscious (the deeper Self, the Will) and to represent the unconscious as the generator of the empirical personality. This reversal suggests that in the opinion of the "other side," (where he went in his NDE) our unconscious existence is the real one and our conscious world a kind of illusion, an apparent reality constructed for a specific purpose, like a dream which seems a reality as long as we are in it. It is clear that this state of affairs resembles very closely the Oriental conception of Maya."

[26] Joseph Campbell, *Mythos* II, Lecture 4, "The Way to Illumination" (Joseph Campbell Foundation, 1996, Acorn Media, 2007.) DVD.

[27] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. I, 275.

cares of that life would not be great. However, the will wills life absolutely and for all time by "exhibiting itself as the sexual impulse which has an endless series of generations in view."[28] The sexual impulse is the basic metaphor for all desiring. Once the object desired is obtained there is a brief period of satisfaction. Then this inner impulse of the will creates new desire. According to Schopenhauer, all willing springs from a sense of lack, from a feeling of deficiency and therefore from suffering.[29] Schopenhauer continues by claiming that "every individual makes himself the center of the world and considers his own existence and well-being before everything else….this is a disposition of egoism…everyone tries to snatch from another what he himself wants …often destroying another's whole happiness of life in order to increase by an insignificant amount his own well-being…This is the highest expression of egoism…"[30]

All of this can be turned, however, in the process that Schopenhauer describes as the denial of the will-to-live. When the will reaches complete self-knowledge, it finds itself again in everything. Thereby, through the practice of compassion, *Mitleid* (suffering with), it is possible to experience the "peace that is higher than all reason, that ocean- like calmness of the spirit, that deep tranquility, that unshakeable confidence and serenity….[31] Through Art we can, temporarily, experience this state. The purpose of Art is to transcend the image. The objectification of the Platonic Idea in Art speaks to the witnessing subject (the perceiver) so that the perceiver feels not just participation but an

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[28] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. II, 368.
[29] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and* Representation, vol. I, 196.
[30] Ibid., 332-33.
[31] Ibid., 411.

identification with the artwork: "This thou art." Temporarily then, a feeling of oneness is generated. Thought is suspended (stilled) and the perceiver (self) is lost or forgotten.

So that in the beholding of the artwork, the division of subject and the object are no longer distinguishable.[32] This portion of Schopenhauer's philosophy, the denial of the will- to- live, has often been misinterpreted as extinction into Nothingness. Schopenhauer himself states: *No will: no representation, no world.*[33] Instead of extinction into Nothingness however, Schopenhauer is describing the transcending of the phenomenal world, the *Maya,* or a state of No-thing-ness, No *self.* One is all.

The aim of the plastic arts, architecture, sculpture and painting is to stimulate knowledge of the Platonic Ideas, which are the objectification of the will, by depicting them through individual things or forms. Music, on the other hand, passes over the Ideas and is independent of the phenomenal world. Schopenhauer tells us that "music is as immediate an objectification and copy of the whole will as the world is and as the Ideas are. Music is a copy of the will itself."[34] Schopenhauer not only considers music to be superior to all the other arts, but he believes that it represents the very process of the Will at work—the process of cosmic manifestation— whereas the other arts represent the Will at second and third hand by depicting its productions (Michaelangelo's David, the Mona Lisa, Chartres Cathedral).[35]

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[32] Arthur Schopenhauer, "Music as Cosmic Will Revealed," in *Music, Magic, and Mysticism*, selected and annotated by Joscelyn Godwin (London: Routeledge and Kegan Paul) 212.

[33] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation,* vol. I, 411.

[34] Ibid., 257.

[35] Schopenhauer, "Music as Cosmic Will Revealed," in *Music, Magic and Mysticism*, compiled by Joscelyn Godwin, 212-13.

Because music is a copy of the will, it is the metaphysical to everything physical in the world. Music never expresses the phenomenon, but only the inner nature, the in-itself, of every phenomenon, the will itself.[36] Schopenhauer states that just as all the bodies and organizations of nature emerge in varying grades (mineral, plant, animal, man) from the mass of the planet, this is analogous to how the higher voices, the tenor, alto and soprano, automatically and simultaneously emerge into manifestation once there is the sounding of the deep-bass voice. In other words, once the deep-bass tone is sounded, automatically and simultaneously the octave, fifth, third etc., the overtones are sounded (harmonics). They just appear on their own. (This last point is very important to keep in mind when considering the opening three bars of the Prelude to Tristan and Isolde.) Schopenhauer advocates the upper triad being placed in the third octave above the fundamental bass because this extended harmony is much more powerful.[37] While the bass which moves in wide intervals and is sounded at a distance much below the higher voices is compared to inorganic nature, Schopenhauer assigns the melody with the highest grade of the will's objectification-the intellectual life and endeavors of man.[38] So melody relates the secret history of the intellectually enlightened will. Because music is a language of passion and feeling, the melody can portray every agitation and every effect. It does not do this by portraying this pleasure or that affliction of pain, sorrow or suffering, but by expressing joy, pain, sorrow, and merriment *themselves*.[39] Because music expresses the thing-in-itself to every phenomena, Schopenhauer declares:

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[36] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and* Representation, vol. I, 261-62.
[37] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Philosophical Writings*, ed. W. Schirmacher (New York: Continuum, 1994), 113.
[38] Schopenhauer, *The World is Will and Representation,* vol. I, 258.
[39] Ibid., 261.

We could just as well call the world embodied music as embodied will...[40]

Since music exhibits directly the will itself, it therefore acts directly upon the will, in other words, upon the feelings, passions and emotions of the listener in such a way as to raise these states or even alter them.[41] Having dubbed music as the highest of all the arts, Schopenhauer stresses that music achieves its ends entirely on its own resources without requiring the words of a song or the action of an opera; in fact, he believes that the words should be placed in a subordinate position and adapt themselves to the music.[42] Because music exhibits the will, it can render the most profound and secret information on the feeling expressed in the words or the action presented in the drama. Music relays their real and true nature and makes the listener acquainted with the innermost soul of events. Therefore music that is composed for the drama becomes the expression of the inner significance of the incidents, characters and words.[43] This idea of the superiority of the music and its capacity to express the innermost essence, the heart of the drama took hold of Wagner's imagination so deeply that it inspired him to alter his approach to composition and his whole philosophy toward art.[44]

Schopenhauer further explains that the metaphysical aspect of music connects to the physical by means of the coincidence of the vibrations between the tones. When two tones are sounded simultaneously the coincidence of their vibrations is every second, third or fourth vibration or at the octave, the fifth or the fourth and so on. Therefore, when the vibrations of two tones have a rational relation to one another that is expressible

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[40] Ibid., 263.
[41] Schopenhauer, *Philosophical Writings*, 114.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., 115.
[44] Jack M. Stein, *Richard Wagner and The Synthesis of the Arts* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960), 114.

in small numbers, they can be taken into our apprehension through the constantly recurring coincidence: they become blended, harmonious and a consonance. Conversely, if the vibratory coincidence between two tones is of an irrational relation, expressible in large numbers, they resist being taken into our apprehension and are referred to as a dissonance. Thus, what resists our apprehension, the dissonance, becomes the natural image of what resists our will; and alternatively, what easily adapts itself to our apprehension, namely the consonance or rational numerical relation of vibrations becomes the image of the satisfaction of the will. These two elements, the rational and irrational numerical relations of the vibrations, allows music to express innumerable variations, nuances, sequences—all the utterances of the human heart and therefore the will. The essential nature of the will is satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Thus all its finest shades and degrees can be faithfully portrayed by the invention of the melody. Additionally, because music portrays the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the will, Schopenhauer gives consideration to the effect of the suspension. A suspension is a dissonance that delays the much awaited consonance and thereby strengthens and intensifies the longing for it. Once obtained, the consonance brings about a greater satisfaction because of the delay. Wagner utilizes this principle throughout the first seventeen bars of the opening Prelude to Tristan and Isolde, but, in general, he tends to avoid fully prepared cadences throughout.[45] On this note, Schopenhauer tells us that the

[45]The Secret of Tristan and Isolde" *Philosophy* 343-4. Brian Magee believes that the practice of suspension, as suggested by Schopenhauer, was Wagner's "simple, but full blooded musical conception"(letter to Liszt, December, 1854) for the entire opera of *Tristan* Magee substantiates this saying that the Tristan chord, the most famous chord in the history of music, "contains not one dissonance, but two. When the first chord moves to the second chord one dissonance is resolved but not the other; indeed, a new dissonance is created. When the second chord moves to the third chord, the same thing happens, and again when the third moves to the fourth. And so it goes on all evening for more than four hours. Our perpetual longing for resolution of discord is at every moment partially satisfied, but partially frustrated." He continues by pointing out that the opera *Tristan* "is unique in our culture as the most consummate

complete cadence requires the preceding chord to be a seventh on the dominant because "the most deeply felt satisfaction and complete relief can follow only the most pressing desire."[46] So Schopenhauer compares music with the will in that music, generally, is a succession of chords more or less disquieting or inspiring desire followed with chords more quieting and satisfying, just as the life of the heart (the will) is a constant succession of greater or lesser disquietude through desire or fear and then followed by a sense of composure in many varied degrees.[47] In fact, Schopenhauer felt that, theoretically, there are only two fundamental chords: that of the dissonant seventh and that of the harmonious triad. All other chords, he claims, can be referred to these two. And since there are two universal and fundamental moods in the mind and heart of man, so there are two general keys, the minor and the major. Schopenhauer explains that when we hear music particularly in the minor, there is a feeling of pain, but it is not physically painful. On the contrary it is pleasant and familiar. Thus, Schopenhauer shows us how deeply rooted music is in the "real nature of things and of man."[48]

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example of a great creative artist directly transubstantiating ideas and suggestions-including specifically musical suggestions-from a great philosopher into a work of art."

[46] Schopenhauer, *Philosophical Writings,* 123.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

Chapter Three: Wagner's Understanding of Schopenhauer's Musical Ideas

The effect of Schopenhauer's philosophy on Richard Wagner's thinking, writing and composing was profound. Apparently, from the time he encountered it, *The World as Will and Representation* never left his side. By the summer of 1855, having only possessed the book for less than a year, Wagner had read it four times.[49] He also read *Parerega and Paralipomena.*[50] Accordingly, Wagner carried Schopenhauer's philosophy from the realm of theory into creative practice. It is his philosophy behind the drama *Tristan and Isolde,* an opera which culminates in the extinction of ego-consciousness or taking the Schopenhauerian and Buddhist view, it is a birth into the state beyond the limitations of individuality.[51] [52]

In his essay "Beethoven," published in 1870 for Beethoven's centennial, Wagner digresses for several pages into an elaboration of his understanding of Schopenhauer's philosophy and its application to music and the musician. Wagner, first of all reminds us that Schopenhauer believes that *Music itself is an Idea of the World*, in the sense of the Platonic Ideas.[53] Also, every individual has access to the inner essence

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[49] Campbell, *Mythos* III, Lecture 3, "Beyond Space and Time" (Joseph Campbell Foundation, 2011, Acorn Media) DVD.

[50] Stein, *Richard Wagner*, 113.

[51]Richard Wagner, "On Inspiration," in *Music, Magic and Mysticism*, selected and annotated by Joscelyn Godwin (London: Routeledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 237.

[52] (*The Essential Jung*, 229) The great psychoanalyst Carl Jung believed that "The goal toward which the individuation process is tending is "Wholeness" or "Integration": a condition in which all the different elements of the psyche, both conscious and unconscious, are welded together. The person who achieves this goal possesses "an attitude that is beyond the reach of emotional entanglements and violent shocks-a consciousness detached from the world." This is the description of Buddha Consciousness.

[53] Richard Wagner, "Beethoven," in Prose Works, vol. V, trans. W. A. Ellis (New York: Broude Brothers, 1896), 65.

of things, the thing-in–itself, through the Feeling nature which makes itself known to him as the Will. Thus Wagner informs us that an individual's consciousness has two sides: one that is the consciousness of *one's own self*, which is the will and is an inward facing consciousness; and the part that is the consciousness of other things, or primarily a *visual* knowledge of the outer world, the apprehension of objects. He claims that the more one side of the consciousness comes to the forefront, the more does the other side of consciousness retreat. These two sides of consciousness are beautifully typified in the opera *Tristan and Isolde* in the treatment of the experience of Night as opposed to the environment of Day. Wagner relays that it is from the inward facing consciousness that musical conception emerges.[54] Wagner draws upon Schopenhauer's writings of Clairvoyance and Dream theory to describe the fact that the inward-facing consciousness can "attain the actual power of sight where our waking daylight consciousness feels nothing but a vague impression of the midnight background of the will's emotions, so from out of this night *Tone* bursts forth upon the world of waking, a direct utterance of the Will."[55] [56]

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[54] Ibid., 67.

[55] Ibid., 68.

[56] Rudolph Steiner, "Music, the Astral World, and Devachan," in *Music, Magic and Mysticism*, comp. by Joscelyn Godwin (London: Routeledge and Kegan Paul), 251. Rudolph Steiner, Austrian scholar, lecturer, and founder of Anthroposophy, a world-wide movement devoted to the spiritual development of mankind agreed with Wagner and Schopenhauer about the high place given to music among the arts. He lectured that,"Music is the expression of the will of nature, while all the other arts are the expression of the idea of nature." As an extraordinarily gifted clairvoyant, Steiner was able to experience what he calls the three stages of consciousness: waking everyday consciousness, dream-filled sleep, and dreamless sleep as a fully conscious and intelligent medium in order to bring back knowledge of the "higher worlds." While dream-filled sleep he named the astral level, the third level of dreamless sleep he called Devachan. It is a level of consciousness of resounding tone that the unaware sleeper travels to after passing through the astral world of color and light. Steiner says that the Devachanic level of resounding tone is the primeval home of human beings. Steiner claims that the composer, "conjures a still higher world; he conjures the Devachanic world into the physical world. The melodies and harmonies that speak to us from the compositions of our great masters are faithful copies of the Devachanic world. Hence, it is understandable that the effects of music on the human soul are so direct, so powerful and so elemental." Wagner intuitively understood these conditions. With Schopenhauer's help, he was able to

Wagner proclaims that there is a *sound world* beside a *light world* which bears the same relation to the visible world as dreaming does to waking. Schopenhauer believes that ordinary dreams are the result of the action of the Dream-organ whose strongest excitation results in clairvoyance, and where direct contact is made with the metaphysical will. These clairvoyant visions and revelatory dreams are not easily transmissible to our waking consciousness. Therefore, they are interpreted to the brain in allegorical dreams which are perceived by our conscious mind just before waking. Wagner compares music with this allegorical dream because it is likewise a revelation of the will in terms that are perceptible to the waking consciousness.[57] Since the world of dreams comes to our vision through a special *inward* operation of the brain, Schopenhauer's Dream-organ, likewise, music enters the consciousness through a similar operation. Wagner gives us an example of waking from the most terrifying dream with a *scream*, the immediate expression of the anguished will, which enters the Sound- world first to manifest into the outer world. If this Scream is taken in all its diminutions down to the gentler cry of *longing* as the root element of every human message to the ear, and we recognize it as an immediate utterance of the will manifesting without, then we have naught to wonder about an art arising from this.[58] (In this statement, we have the underlying impetus for the initial statement in the cellos in the Prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*.) Wagner further supports this as an art by reminding us that we would not be able to understand the Essence of things if that same Essence was not found in our own self-consciousness. By our self-consciousness alone, we are able to understand the inner nature of things outside

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verbalize these states and also to, subsequently, use this knowledge as an underpinning for his composition of *Tristan.*

[57] Stein, *Richard Wagner*, 161-62.

[58] Wagner, "Beethoven" 69.

of us. Our initial delusion sprang from the *sight* or the visual aspect of the world around us, which in the "show of daylight" we took as something quite apart from us. First through the intellectual understanding of the Ideas, gradually and circuitously do we reach a stage of *undeception* where we no longer see things parceled off in time and space, but comprehend their inner character and identify that inner essence as one with our own.[59]

To demonstrate the difference between the visual arts and music, Wagner quotes a passage from Goethe's *Faust*: "A spectacle superb! But still, alas, a spectacle. Where seize I thee, o Nature infinite?" Wagner declares that the answer to this "cry" is in Music. In music, the world outside us speaks and its sounding message to our ear is the selfsame nature as the cry sent forth to it from the depths of our own inner heart. Since the rudiment of music is felt, not seen, by our deepest consciousness as the world's Idea, so that Idea reveals the oneness of the Will, the oneness of human beings and our unequivocal unity with Nature, which we also recognize through Sound. Therefore, in the musician, the individual will awakes as the Universal Will which recognizes itself in full self-consciousness. Wagner is demonstrating how the essence of music acts directly on the essence of the will whereas in the other arts the essence of the Idea must first pass through the stilled mind of the beholder for the deeper identification (I am that) to take place.[60] Wagner claims that the musician enters an hypnotic clairvoyance which renders him capable of an inner vision of "Tone" and then thrusts that "Tone" on the outer world. So for "a direct vision of itself, the Will creates a second organ of transmission—an organ

[59] Ibid., 69-70
[60] Wagner, "Beethoven," 71-72.

whose one side faces toward the inner vision whilst the other thrusts into the reappearing outer world with the sole direct message of "Tone." The Will cries out and in its counter-cry it knows itself once more. The cry and counter-cry becomes a comfort, an entrancing play with itself.[61] The counter-cry is the answer, the validation of the cry, the *mirror* for the cry. It is the process of *Will and Representation.* To impart the vision of his innermost dream the musician reaches out striking a compact with the waking world through the notions of Time and the rhythmic sequencing of his Tones. And with regard to Gesture, music speaks the inmost essence of Gesture in such a direct language that we understand the meaning of the Gesture without even really seeing it.[62] Wagner tells us that what sets Music apart is that "from her very first entry she withdraws us from any concern with things outside us—as pure Form set free from Matter—she shuts us off from the outer world to let us gaze upon the innermost essence of ourselves and all things."[63]

While asserting that music was a direct objectification of the essence of the universe, or the Will, Schopenhauer believed that it was not possible to communicate this will to our everyday waking consciousness in terms of the phenomenal world.[64] Wagner picked up the gauntlet and, using Schopenhauer's own theories, developed his ideal drama, "a dramatic music in organic connection with dramatic action (Wagner also terms it mimetic action to remove it from the realm of dialogue), as one in which the

[61] Ibid., 73.
[62] Ibid., 76.
[63] Ibid., 78.
[64] Stein, Richard Wagner, 159.

metaphysical will is communicated to our consciousness."[65] Wagner's answer to this challenge is his opera *Tristan and Isolde.*

As early as December of 1856, while he was writing the first act of *Siegfried*, Wagner sketched music which would later become part of *Tristan's* second act and part of the opening of the Prelude.[66] The music had been gestating in him for some time and was clamoring to come to the surface. After finishing the second act of *Siegfried* in August of 1857, Wagner began writing a Prose Sketch of *Tristan* in that same month.[67]

It is interesting to consider that the concert piece which is today referred to as the Prelude and Liebestod—this latter being the end of the opera—it was to the Prelude portion that Wagner gave the name of Liebestod and to the finale portion he gave the name Verklärung (Transfiguration). In his own program note on this concert arrangement, Wagner explained the Prelude (which he called at the time Liebestod) as a progression from "the timidest lament of inappeasable longing, the tenderest shudder, to the most terrible outpouring of an avowal of hopeless love" with the music "traversing all phases of the vain struggle against the inner ardor, until this, sinking back powerless upon itself, seems to be extinguished in death." The Verklärung he describes: "Yet, what Fate divided in life now springs into transfigured life in death: the gates of union are thrown open. Over Tristan's body the dying Isolde receives the blessed fulfilment of ardent longing, eternal union in measureless space, without barriers, without fetters, inseparable."[68] In this concert arrangement Wagner incorporates some music (a motive

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[65] Ibid.
[66] Newman, *The Wagner Operas*, 195-96.
[67] Ibid., 194-96.
[68] Ibid., 204-05.

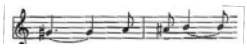
of ecstasy) from the opening scene of the second act. He ends the finale not in B major as the opera ends, but in A major, the relative major of the opening of the Prelude (A minor).[69] Since this concert arrangement was composed after the entire opera was written, we may consider that Verklärung (transfiguration) or Transcendence (of the phenomenal world) was really what Wagner was trying to communicate all along. In December 1859, he sent Mathilde Wesendonck his own ending to the concert version of the Prelude in piano score. He made it for some performances he was giving in Paris shortly thereafter. His program note written for these specific performances once again describes the "endless yearning…bliss and torment…insatiable longing…" but it is all "In vain! The exhausted heart sinks back, to pine away in a longing that can never attain its end since each attainment brings in its wake only renewed desire…., whence as the story tells, an ivy and a vine sprang of old in inseparable embrace over the graves of Tristan and Isolde?"[70] The statement "attainment brings in its wake only renewed desire" is none else but Schopenhauer's "what the will wills is always life, his Affirmation of the Will—to—live idea. In the literary story of Tristan and Isolde, there is a version that includes the ivy and the vine growing together, inseparably entwined, over their graves. Not only is the ivy and vine a symbol for the eternal union of the two souls, additionally, because the vine and the ivy are one plant-the ivy is an outgrowth of the vine-this metaphor suggests that Tristan and Isolde were always linked—always one soul—that became divided into the masculine and feminine counterparts when manifesting into the physical world. Wagner alludes to this somewhat with his use of the love potion and

[69] Ibid., 212.
[70] Newman, *The Wagner Operas*, 206.

during Isolde's narration of the Glance of Tristan in the first act—the glance that caused her to drop the sword and refrain from killing him.

Chapter Four: The Opening Prelude

In a letter to Mathilde Wesendonck dated Paris, March 3, 1860, Wagner gives us a clue to his intentions regarding the four note chromatic motive which first occurs in the second and third bars of the *Tristan* Prelude.

> *...Indeed it isn't possible, and everything's in vain! Then I feel too deplorably homeless and ask myself: Where dost thou (*Wagner, himself*), then, belong? A question I can answer with no country's name, no town's, no hamlet's; all, all are foreign to me, and wistfully I often look towards the land Nirvana. Nirvana in its turn, however, soon changes into Tristan; you know the Buddhist theory of the world's creation: A breath perturbs the heaven's translucence;*  *it swells, condenses, and at last the whole wide world stands forth, in prisoning solidity…*[71]

We remember that Schopenhauer declared that Music accurately represents the process of the Will at work—the process of cosmic manifestation.[72] He also stated:

> *I recognize in the deepest tones of harmony, in the ground bass the lowest grades of the will's objectification, inorganic nature, the mass of the planet. It is well known that all the high notes, light, tremulous, and dying away more rapidly, may be regarded as resulting from the simultaneous vibrations of the deep bass-note. With the sounding of the low note, the high notes always sound faintly at the same time, and it is a law of harmony that a bass-note may be accompanied only by those high notes that actually sound automatically and simultaneously with it through the accompanying vibrations*.[73]

With these two statements we can see that at the outset of the Prelude to *Tristan,* Wagner is creating Schopenhauer's very philosophy of the Will and Representation in the music.

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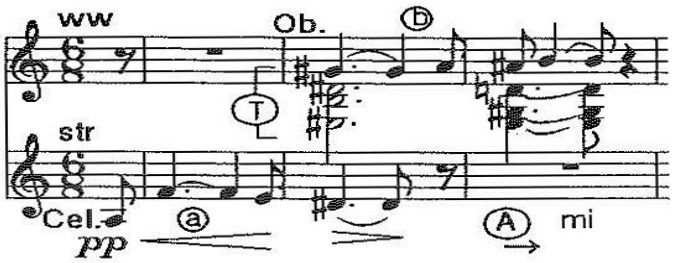
[71] *Richard Wagner to Mathilde Wesendonck*, trans. Wm. Ashton Ellis (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 213.

[72] Arthur Schopenhauer, "Music as Cosmic Will Revealed," Introduction by Joscelyn Godwin in *Music, Magic and Mysticism*, 212-13.

[73] Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. I, 238.

Upon a clean canvas of stillness, ordered in 6/8 time (duple and triple possible groupings, duality, trinity) we hear the first movement of the Will in the cellos (Schopenhauer's ground bass). Wagner places the cellos in their higher, more poignant register and their message is yearning, longing, striving— the will- to- live. The cello line (motive *a*, "Longing," Tristan) slowly crescendos to the downbeat of the second bar and then slowly fades. On the downbeat of the second bar a woodwind complex is heard, the upper voices which arrive because of the ground-bass. The decrescendo written in the cellos is also written for the upper voices so that immediately upon sounding, they are dying away, just as Schopenhauer indicates in the quote above. On the downbeat of the second bar a magical harmony appears (manifests, representation) in the upper voices (bassoons, English horn, clarinets, oboes) while the D# in the bass still sustains for a while. Flowing out of this "Tristan chord" on the downbeat of the second bar is the motive (motive b, Desire, Isolde) enclosed in the letter to Mathilde Wesendonck in which Wagner describes the Buddhist theory of the world's creation: "A breath perturbs the heaven's translucence… it swells, condenses, and at last the whole wide world stands forth, in prisoning solidity…" The magical sound of the chord on the downbeat of the second bar acts like a spirit trying to manifest as flesh on the skein of space/time and because it is part of the woodwind complex, not the cello line, we can say that it heralds the beginnings of manifestation into the phenomenal world of the movements of the Will within the cellos. In these opening three bars, Wagner is composing the very act of the Will manifesting as Representation (see full score page 1 of Prelude mm. 1-3).



Adapted from Roger North's Wagner's Subtle Art p. 16.

In his essay *On the Metaphysics of Music,* Schopenhauer states that *extended* harmony, where the bass remains at a distance (an octave or more) below the other parts is much more powerful and beautiful than that of close harmony. We can see in the opening three bars of the Prelude that Wagner utilizes this suggestion of extended harmony with profound effect.[74] Furthermore, Schopenhauer states that "in this rule we recognize the musical analogue of the fundamental disposition of nature, by virtue of which organic beings are much more closely related among themselves (the woodwind complex, the tenor, alto and soprano) than they are to the inanimate, inorganic mass of the mineral kingdom (the ground-bass, in this case, the cellos)." Clearly, Wagner is creating an entire world in these opening three bars.

The opening motive in the cellos, motive a, is in A minor and begins as a large leap of a minor 6th. Starting this leap with an eighth note pickup from the preceding bar, subtly heightens the feeling of yearning since the top of the interval lands on the downbeat of the first full bar, is extended for 5 beats and is intensified by a strong crescendo to the downbeat of the second bar. On the 6th beat of m.1, motive *a* descends chromatically to E which is a P5th relationship to the opening pickup of A, but we do not hear it as a consonance, rather as a passing tone. This is because of its short duration and

[74] Schopenhaur, *Philosophical Writings*, 113.

because it occurs on a weak part of the bar. In his discussion of *discord* and *reconciliation*, Schopenhauer says that a melody's return to a point of satisfaction, such as the dominant, subdominant or fundamental will only be completely reconciled if it corresponds simultaneously with the rhythmic necessity of being on the strong part of the bar or musical phrase.[75] Thus, whether intentionally or intuitively, Wagner is applying even this aspect of Schopenhauer's musical philosophy in his placement of dissonant and consonant intervals in motive *a*. On the downbeat of the second bar, the D# of the cellos is sustained for exactly the same duration as the first note of motive *b* in the oboes, as if motive *a* handed itself over to motive *b*. Motive *b* appears to be a simple four note rising chromatic motive, but, along with the woodwind grouping, important processes are occurring. The last two notes of *b* form an upward appoggiatura, thus stressing the penultimate note even though it is quite short. The last two notes of *b* also arrive with a dominant 7th chord forming a relationship which will have important uses throughout the opera. The first and longest note of *b* is the top note of the Tristan chord forming an important alliance with this harmony throughout.[76] The sonority (the Tristan chord) on the downbeat of the second bar suggests an F half diminished 7th chord enharmonically spelled. However, when the G# resolves to A, a Fr+6 is created, suggesting the key of A (minor).[77]

Other important relationships are revealed in the voice leading of these opening three bars. Referring to the example above, we see that the bass line of mm. 2-3 echoes the alto line of m. 1. The soprano line in mm. 2-3 represents an exact mirror of the alto

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[75] Schopenhauer, *Philosophical Writings,* 121-22.
[76] Roger North, *Wagner's Most Subtle Art,* (London: Self -Published, 1996), 8.
[77] Stefan Kostka and Dorothy Payne, *Tonal Harmony*, (Boston: McGraw –Hill, 2000), 461.

line in mm. 1-3. In other words, motive *b* is a mirror image of motive *a* without *a*'s opening leap. The tenor line mirrors in reverse the first and last pitches of the soprano line.[78] There can be no mistake that this mirroring was consciously employed by Wagner in the construction of these opening motives. We observe in Volume I of *The World as Will and Representation* that "the mirror to the will has appeared to it in the world as representation. In this mirror the will knows itself in increasing degrees of distinctness and completeness, the highest of which is man….As the will is the thing-in-itself, the inner content, the essence of the world, but life, the visible world, the phenomenon, is only the mirror of the will, this world will accompany the will as inseparably as a body is accompanied by its shadow; and if will exists, then life, the world, will exist."[79]

Because of the very slow tempo and the chromatic voice leading of the opening three bars of the Prelude, the harmonic direction is obscure. (Even though the full score is marked *Langsam* it is interesting to note Schopenhauer's opinion: "The *adagio* (as a musical form) in the minor key reaches the expression of the keenest pain, and becomes the most convulsive lament.")[80] After the first straining leap with the descending chromatic line of the cellos, motive *a,* the D# becomes the root of the Tristan chord, the magical veil between the unseen world of the will and the first "breath that perturbs the heaven's translucence…" the faint appearance in the physical world, motive *b*, the world of phenomenon. The segment ends on an E7 chord, reinforcing the A minor of the opening, but not resolving at all. Our expectations are suspended and then Wagner gives us silence for seven beats. The movement of the will creating something new takes time.

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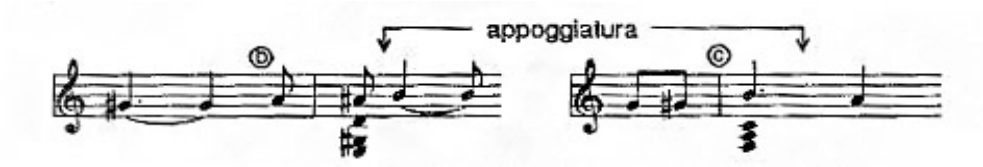
[78] Kostka and Payne, 461.
[79] Schopenhauer, vol. I, 275.
[80] Schopenhauer, vol. I, 261.

The second double phrase starts on the two notes that were common to the two chords of the first sequence, B and G#. After another statement of *a* at a higher pitch, and by way of another Tristan chord linking to *b*, the second double phrase ends on the dominant 7th of C, which is the relative major of the opening key of A minor. Ending the segment on the dominant continues the feeling of suspension and unfulfilled expectations. (The physical image, "representation" is not yet fully formed). Then, after a shorter silence (4 beats), the third double phrase starts on the two notes that were common to the two chords of the second double phrase, namely D and B. Here Wagner changes things slightly. To have his destination in E major instead of Eb, Wagner adds an additional chromatic note to motive *a*, (*a* +1) and also to motive *b*, (*b*+1). The third sequence ends on the dominant 7th of E which is the dominant of the opening key of A minor.[81] Although the dominant 7th on its own had long been enough for Wagner to establish a key,[82] the very slow tempo, the long pauses, the half cadences, the sequencing into higher registers, the separation of the strings from the woodwind group throughout gives the feeling of an aching suspended anticipation for some final consonance. This suspension, whether it is an actual musical suspension or a process of the long delay of expectations, as in these opening 10 bars, is, according to Schopenhauer, "an analogue of the satisfaction of the will that is enhanced through delay."[83] But Wagner finds new means to continue this delay by suspending the harmonic movement. In m. 12, preceded by a fermata in the previous measure, the second half of the double phrase, (*b* +1), is repeated an octave higher in the woodwinds. After another fermata, just the last two notes of the *b*

[81] North, 14.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Schopenhauer, *The Philosophical Writings*, 123.

motive are repeated in the cellos only, followed by two beats of rest. These last two notes of *b* are echoed in the higher octave of the upper three woodwinds (flute, oboe, and clarinet only) with no accompanying harmony. With the previous chord, the dominant 7th of the dominant, still unresolved in our minds, Wagner has built up tremendous tension. Thus, at m. 16, Wagner uses the dominant 7th of A minor under a third repeat of the last two notes of motive *b* and then attaches a new motive *c* to it in a drive toward a climactic cadence in the tonic key (A minor/major) which is immediately thwarted having been supplanted by a chord of the submediant, F. In an effort to avoid an authentic cadence, Wagner prepared the way for the introduction of a second group of themes which he dovetails in a classical manner using the common tone of A in m. 17 and proceeding in the very traditional relative major (C major). Special consideration needs to be given to motive *c*. Motive *b* has climbed upwards steadily and chromatically in the opening 16 measures. Apart from a very few examples, most of the voice leading has been by semitones. In m.16 motive *b*, which has been repeated in various forms from mm. 11-15, overshoots creating the interval of a minor 3rd which then falls a whole tone to tonic in m.17. Therefore, the falling whole tone in bar 17 is the first we have encountered and sounding at this climatic position carries and unutterable poignancy (the creation of the child from out of motive *b*). As the opera progresses it will become the upper appoggiatura that answers the penultimate lower appoggiatura already experienced many times in motive *b*.



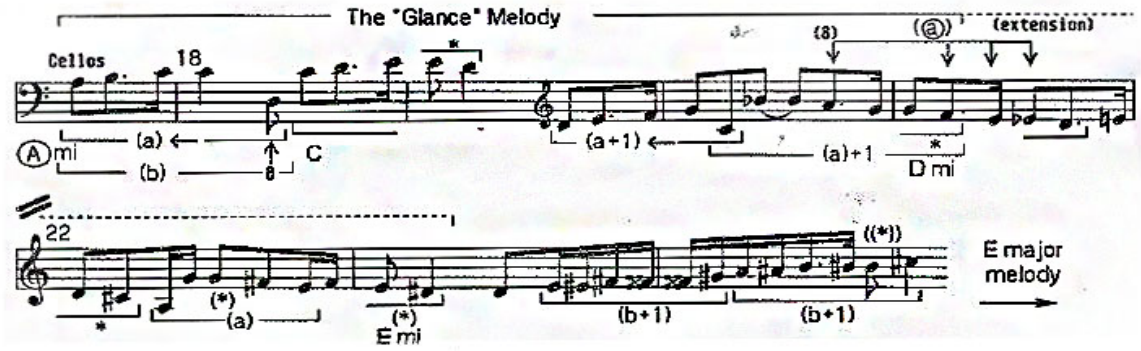
Adapted from Roger North Wagner's Subtle Art p.8

In the first 16 bars of the Prelude, there is a clear duality in the instrumentation. Each statement of motive *a*, in the tenor register of the cellos is answered by motive *b* in the soprano register of the woodwinds. The strings are not fully engaged with the woodwinds until bar 16 and the emergence of motive *c*. This selfsame duality was also represented in the principle of reciprocity of our opening Lambdoma. Without the movement of motive *a*, motive *b* would not emerge. Without the existence of motive *b*, motive *a* would not exist. Using reciprocal points on the Lambdoma: 2/1 lies opposite to 1/2. These taken together equal 1. Therefore in the outer world there is the appearance of duality and things look separate from each other. Only when the *appearance* of duality is transcended (through knowing, through higher levels of consciousness) do we begin to feel suffering subside and peace arrive. At bar 16, the strings are fully engaged with the woodwinds (the Will creates all things and the Will is in all things). Now the second half of Wagner's communication to Mathilde Wesendonck: *....the breath....it swells, condenses, and at last the whole wide world stands forth, in prisoning solidity....* begins to emerge in the music.

That "solidity" arrives in the form of two new themes echoing an introduction of the "second subject," a technique familiar to us from sonata form.[84] In this middle section, the themes are diatonic, each centering around a certain key, namely C major and E major, the music is continuous (no long rests), and there is an absence of the use of the Tristan chord. These themes are constructed from variations of motives *a* and *b* with motive *c* often used in the capacity of a link between the subsiding of one theme and the emerging of the other. The C major theme, beginning in bar 17, is called the "Glance"

[84] North, 5.

melody because it occurs in Act I during Isolde's narration to Brangaene of how, after discovering that Tristan was the murderer of her fiancé, Morold, the sword she raised to enact vengeance upon Tristan was stayed by Tristan's long, deep look into her eyes and into her soul at that precise moment. Curiously, we have from Schopenhauer: "This enticement (the affirmation of the will-to-live) itself can be objectively perceived in the reciprocal longing glances of two lovers; they are the purest expression of the will-to-live in its affirmation. How gentle and tender it is here! It wills well-being, and quiet enjoyment, and mild pleasures for itself, for others, for all."[85]

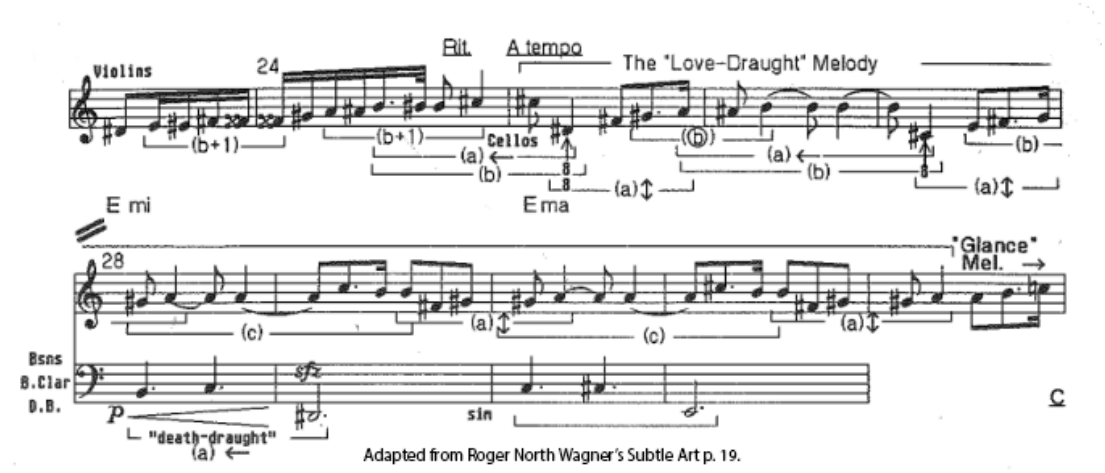


Adapted from Roger North Wagner's Subtle Art p. 17.

At bar 17, we hear the C major melody, the "glance" melody, for the first time taking off in the cellos which are accompanied by the lower woodwinds. The first 5 notes of this melody is comprised of a diatonic motive *b* with the final note D octave displaced. These same five notes are also a diatonic retrograde version of motive *a* with the minor 6th expanded to a 7th because of the change from chromatic intervals to diatonic. We remember from the opening that the chromatic voice leading of motives *a* and *b* were mirror images of each other. (The movement of the Will, motive *a*, produces a

[85] Schopenhauer, vol. II, 569.

representation, an image, motive *b*. Or, the longing of Tristan, motive *a*, produces the phenomenon longed for, Isolde, motive *b*.) Now the two motives are occurring simultaneously because Tristan and Isolde have connected through their gaze, two people, but one gaze. Wagner uses a dotted rhythm and a reiterated third note as a variation of this motive. In the second 5 notes of the glance melody there is the falling whole tone from bar 17 instead of the descending seventh. In bar 19-20, Wagner uses the third appearance of motive *a* from the opening paragraph, (*a* +1) in reverse order, with the 6th reduced to a 5th. Bar 22 has a decorated version of motive *a*. Then, within the chromatic scale of bars 22-23, motive *b* +1 is at work linking the extension of the glance melody to the upcoming E major melody known as the love-draught. In m. 24, motive *b*'s penultimate lower appoggiatura is present just as Wagner makes a tempo change: after the *rallentando* of the chromatic scale, he includes a *ritenuto* and then an *a tempo* in bar 25 to prepare the E major melody.



Here we have a retrograde version of motive *a* and motive *b* occurring simultaneously, but with a different rhythm. In bars 28-32, motive *c* is linked to an inversion of motive *a* where the leap is contracted to a 4th. The love draught melody occurs in Act I when

Brangäne holds up the bottle of the love potion. Isolde responds by opposing Brangäne and choosing the death potion instead. In bar 28, the bass clarinet, bassoons and double basses sound the death or "Fate" motive which is a retrograde version of motive *a*. It occurs a semitone higher in bars 30-31. This is a distinct leitmotive in the opera, one of the few. In this retrograde form, it suggests Schopenhauer's "denial of the will-to-live" as the only solution to escape the suffering caused by the endless circumambulation of desire, its satisfaction, then, the desiring again of the insatiable will. At bar 32, the E major melody gives way to another entry of the glance melody, this time in the upper voices of the oboes, clarinets and horns. It has been stated that these two themes could be regarded as the arsis and thesis of one melody.[86] Indeed, if we regard the "love draught" as the power of love itself, or desire and the "glance" as the act of connecting, the act of loving-something that takes place in the phenomenal world-one might possibly compose this experience in the manner of two themes, supplying and giving way to one another. On the other hand, in Wagner's essay on Beethoven, Wagner quotes Schopenhauer himself and shares this idea: "The more the one side of the aggregate consciousness comes to the front, the more does the other retreat."[87] Desire is a movement of the Will from within. The fulfillment of that desire, symbolized in the connecting "glance" (the connecting lovers) takes place in the phenomenal world. Only temporarily satiated, Desire returns. The need for fulfillment beckons, hence the treatment of these two melodies circumnavigating each other.

[86]North, 17.
[87] Wagner, "Beethoven," 67.

At bar 36 of the Prelude, Wagner introduces an interruption of the circling glance and love draught melodies with a short development, alternating between strings and woodwinds, as in the opening section (mm. 15-16). He creates a 5 note composite figure comprised of the first three diatonic notes of motive *a* in a dotted rhythm, a figure which is common to both of the C major and E major or second group melodies. To this he adds the last two notes of motive *b*. As in the opening, motive *b* is harmonized as a rising appoggiatura over a dominant 7th (bar 37). The beginning note of this composite motive is also the second note of motive *b* which turned the Tristan chord into and augmented 6th in our opening paragraph. This augmented 6th is therefore, the harmony Wagner chooses for the beginning of the motive during this midway interruption.[88] The composite motive is special because it is not only constructed from elements of both motives (Tristan and Isolde), but in its third sequencing it becomes identical with the beginning of the glance motive. In a letter to Mathilde Wesendonck dated December 19, 1859, Wagner sends a copy of his finish to the concert version of the Prelude, as a gift for her birthday. His accompanying letter says: "Ivy and vine you will recognize in the music, though, especially when you hear it on the orchestra, where strings and wind alternate with each other; it will come out quite beautifully…."[89] This does not imply that Wagner was trying to compose the ivy/vine image in this particular interruption, only that it may have been something of personal note between Mathilde and Wagner themselves.

Just as in the opening paragraph, motive *c*, at bar 43 links the interruption to the resumption of the alternating melodies with the E major melody resuming first. Once

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[88] Ibid., 19.
[89] *Richard Wagner to Mathilde Wesendonck*, 199.

again we have the *rallentando/a tempo* change at bars 44/45. Here the key signature has been changed to the parallel tonic major of A, but the music is in the dominant. Wagner is expanding the latter part of the E major melody and sequencing it higher in A major. The texture thickens, but is predominantly a woodwind reserve with double parts for flute, oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons while the cellos and basses contribute the Death or Fate motive in bars 48/49, and 50/51. At bar 55, we hear an entry of the glance melody in the violins, but in E major. Staggered entrances of the glance melody are heard throughout the winds but in C major, which is soon diverted as the glance melody is sequenced higher and higher. The entire orchestra is engaged as tension and excitement increases. With the relaxing of the descending line of the glance development, in bar 63, Wagner introduces a dominant pedal (E) in the bassoons, bass clarinets and double basses. Instead of just sequencing the passion, Wagner now streams the passion by morphing motive *a* into a rapidly rising upward scale passage in the violins with a descending triadic figure written in the rhythm of the glance. Attached to this triadic figure is the rising appoggiatura of motive *b*. This shiveringly sensuous rising scale expands into the 2nd violins and eventually spills into the violas; then, at bar 66 we hear motive *b* at its original pitch in the oboe. Motive *b* goes through its complete sequencing as at the opening with each statement starting a minor 3rd higher. Meanwhile the scaler passage is rising higher and higher in pitch reaching an octave and a half in length. At bar 73, in the woodwinds, the third statement of *b*+1 drives right into the *c* motive at bar 74 where, on its downbeat, the glance motive, at its original pitch, is heard in all the strings except the basses. At bar 77, the glance motive is worked into the strings in diminution while at the same time heard in counterpoint undiminished. The

key here in bars 77/78 is Bb minor. Having worked his way to Eb minor at bar 80, Wagner lays down the Tristan chord, a diatonic chord in this key, on the downbeat. Wagner will repeat the Tristan chord on the downbeats of the next four bars progressively louder and longer each time until bar 83. After the chord in bar 80, immediately motives *a* (cellos, horns) and *b* (trumpets) occur. Motive *a* begins with an Ab in this key, but otherwise they are at their original pitch. The two motives have the same overlap of their respective last and first notes, however, this time motive *a* is repeated *during* motive *b.* Both motives are in the same key of Eb minor instead of the opening harmonic progression of Tristan chord, augmented 6^{th}, dominant 7^{th}. In bars 81 and 82, the Tristan chord acts as a supertonic 7^{th} chord to the dominant. The roots drop by a 5^{th}, F to Bb. In bar 83, instead of moving on to motive *c*, Wagner sounds the Tristan chord again and by way of the descending strings, moving down on a broken Tristan chord, he moves to the tonic key of A minor. In bars 81 and 82, the two motives are repeated three times on the same pitches respectively, they are in the same key and occurring in the same bar with each other. Harmonizing them with a supertonic 7^{th} to a dominant minor 9^{th} to major 9^{th} allows Wagner to telescope the whole opening paragraph into two and a half bars here.[90] Bar 83 is the absolute climax of the entire Prelude. With the four times consecrated sounding of the Tristan chord, the lovers, riding on their transcendent rising passion become united souls in the highest ecstasy of their combined divinity.

Although we have heard recap material since bar 63, here at bars 83/84 is the true recapitulation. From a program note written by Wagner for his Paris concerts, he says:

[90] North, 25.

Its power spent, the heart sinks back to pine of its desire—desire without attainment; for each fruition sows the seeds of fresh desire, till in its final lassitude…[91]

The double phrase of the opening begins in recap in m. 82 with *a* stated in the cellos and *b* responding in the oboe, as it emerges from the *ff* Tristan chord in bar 83. Attached to *b* however, is the opening phrase of the glance melody with its falling diminished 7th. Motives *a* and *b* go through their sequential treatment, but at m. 89 motive *b* morphs into the composite figure from the earlier interruption occurring about halfway through the Prelude. To accommodate this, Wagner changes the Tristan chord on the downbeat to an augmented 6th chord in the second half of the bar. Now, with the instrumental duality of the opening restored, Wagner recapitulates the interruption as well. The sequencing to motive *c* in bars 93/94 is accompanied by a reminiscent chromatic scale consisting of two statements of motive *b* and echoing the treatment of bars 23/24 earlier in the Prelude. At bar 94, two statements of the glance melody with its falling 7th dialogue with the oboe before leading up to the expanded third phrase in the violas. The timpani hold on G. The whole section is leaning toward C minor. Motive *a* is heard, on a wind instrument for the first time, the English horn, in bar 100/101. The strings have dropped out. The double phrase repeats at 104-106 with an ominous timpani roll on G. In measure 106 the Prelude ends on a dominant 7th just as the opening double phrase did, but the key is C minor, a portend of things to come. Wagner's program note continues:

> *…till in its final lassitude the breaking eye beholds a glimmer of the highest bliss: it is the bliss of quitting life, of being no more, of last redemption into that wondrous realm from which we stray the farthest when we strive to enter*

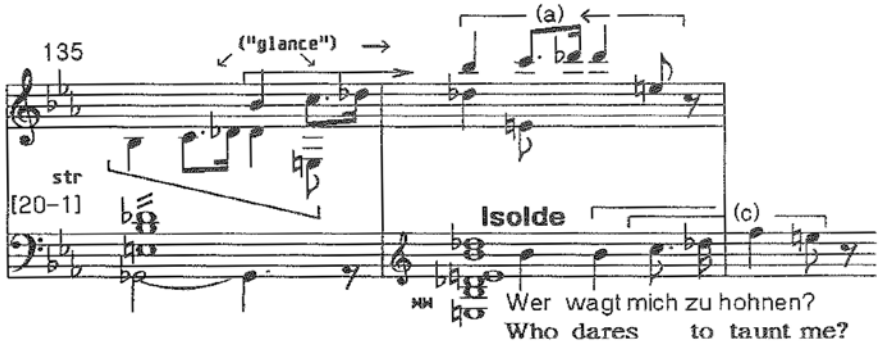
[91] Richard Wagner, "Prelude to Tristan und Isolde," concert program in Prose Works, vol. VIII, trans. by W. A. Ellis, (New York: Broude Brothers, 1966), 387.

it by fiercest force. Shall we call it Death? Or is it not Night's wonder-world……[92]

[92]Ibid.

Chapter Five: Liebestrank

From our very first acquaintance with Isolde at the beginning of Act I, she seems to be disturbed by that Glance, that gaze that happened so long ago in her home country of Ireland when she was using the healing arts her mother taught her to bring the sick



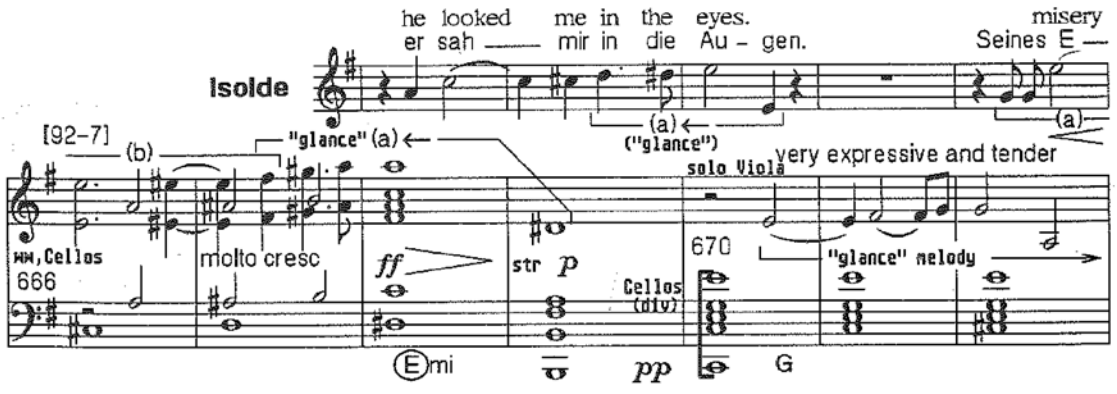
Adapted from Roger North's Wagner's Subtle Art p. 34.

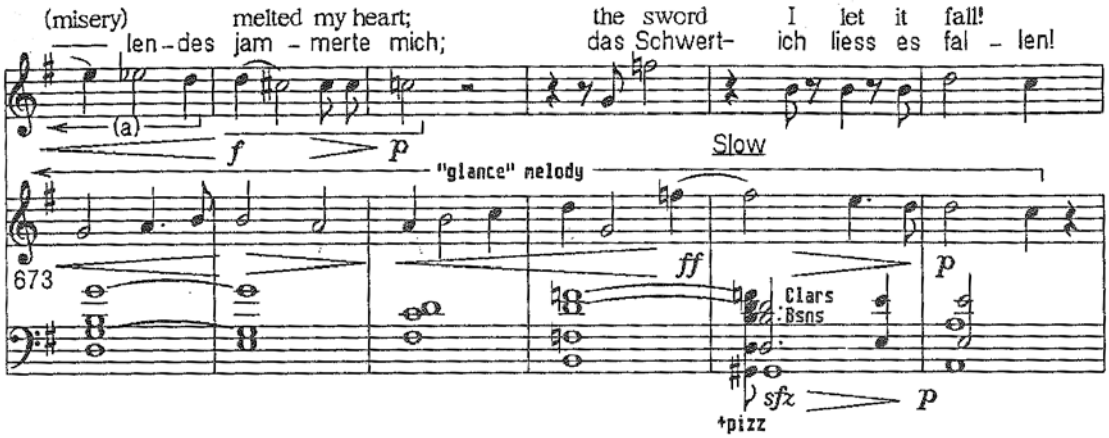
man "Tantris," back to the land of the living. Isolde had been awakened from her reverie, as she reclined among the cushions on her couch, by what she thought were the mocking words of the Sailor's song which opens the Act. From the orchestra we hear not one, but three utterances of the Glance motive first in the cellos, then the first and second violins. The fourth utterance is in the melodic pattern of Isolde's first question to Brangäne, "Who dares to mock me?" Isolde is agitated, even humiliated as the strings tell us in bars 137-139. Was she dreaming about that gaze, that long look into her soul from the sick man Tantris (Tristan) which caused her to drop the sword?

Isolde, in her more tempestuous key of C minor, asks her handmaiden Brangäne where they are. Brangäne reports in the calmer relative major Eb that they will reach land by nightfall. Incredibly, Isolde asks, "Which land?" Then it all begins to come back to her. She is on board ship, headed for Cornwall as tribute with added lands and a

dowry, a bride to a much older man, King Marke, whom she has never met and doesn't love. And the knight who is steering the ship is the very man whom she healed in Ireland, the knight who had slain her fiancé Morold and sent his severed head back to the Irish court as is the custom for the victorious. This is the price she has to pay for peace between their two nations. Furious, Isolde calls upon the wind on a flurry of motive b's (bar 200) scaling up the strings in the orchestra to brew a storm that would annihilate the ship and all on board. Disappointed in the end, she can only curse the feebleness of her mother's arts that will not allow her rule over Nature.

Isolde sends Brangäne to ask Tristan to come counsel with her. After much polite and evasive exchange, Tristan replies, "If I speak to your mistress, how can I steer the ship to "King Mark's Land?" Upon Brangäne's return, Isolde has already heard the message and mimics Tristans phrase, "zu Konig Markes Land," a place representing her doom and shame and Tristan's honor and heroism. With this additional blow, Isolde tells her sad story to Brangäne about how she knew Tristan before.





Adapted from Roger North's Wagner's Subtle Art pp.67-68.

A wounded man who called himself "Tantris" sought the healing aid of Isolde. Seeing the sword of the sick man, Isolde noticed there was a chip missing in the blade. She compared it with the piece of sword she had removed from Morold's head. When the pieces matched, Isolde knew that the wounded man, who called himself "Tantris," had murdered her fiancé. Isolde picked up "Tantris's" sword and wielded it high overhead when at the same moment, Tristan (Tantris in syllabic reversal) opened his eyes. He did not look at the sword, nor at Isolde's hand, but directly into her eyes. Here at bar 666, motive *b* in the cellos links into the glance melody with another statement of the glance in the vocal line at the words "in die Augen." Spilling out of this, at bar 670, a solo viola continues the full statement of the remainder of the glance melody. Isolde was overwhelmed with compassion for the wounded man and let the sword fall. Wagner shows us how helpless Isolde was by setting the words "ich liess es" with eighth note rests in between each utterance at bar 677.[93]

[93] Sandra Corse, *Wagner and the New Consciousness*, 107-30. During the discussion of the relationship between Die Walküre's Siegmund and Sieglinde in chapter four of her book, Corse states that "Glances" metaphorically suggest mutual recognition. Because of the storm and Siegmund's exhaustion, Siegmund and Sieglinde don't notice at first how much they look alike. When comparing stories of family

As the ship approaches Cornwall, Isolde asks that Tristan share with her a drink of atonement for past wrongs. Kurnewal, Tristan's manservant, delivers him. Isolde signals Brangäne to prepare the death draught. Through cajoling and a sweetly mocking tone, Isolde convinces Tristan, who knows full well what is in the drink, to take the cup. Beginning in bar 1728, Tristan sings an atonement vow, not to Isolde, but to his honor and his loyalty. Tristan sings a semi-tonal version of the revenge motive *c* heard in the horns, trumpets and first violins four bars earlier. Wagner uses tremolo strings in viola and second violins while the English horn and clarinet harmonize Tristan's melody. Tristan knows that he loves Isolde, but his love in not compatible with the circumstances in which they find themselves. He also knows that death is in the cup. He sings a welcome to it as a means to end his torment. On the words "Vergessens güt'ger Trank" we hear the "death- devoted" motive in the English horn and oboe beginning at 1743. Then to his own motive *a* he drinks. To a flurry of upward rising scales in the violins ending in the glance motive in octaves at bar 1751, Isolde rushes to wrest the goblet from

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and childhood, they realize that they are, in fact, twin brother and sister. The philosophers that Wagner was influenced by at the time of Walküre were Feuerbach and Hegel. Corse says, "For Hegel, the most important step in the progression of self-consciousness is the subject's ability to find and recognize itself in another, a recognition that allows the individual consciousness to see itself as free and autonomous because the Other, which is identical to itself, is free and autonomous." Therefore the device of twins is the perfect answer to demonstrate Hegel's sensibility. While Hegel is getting close, his philosophy becomes pale in the face of Schopenhauer's; namely, that the world is Will and Representation. Since we are all objectifications of the Will, just knowing this allows for the knowledge that the other person is also an objectification of the will. The essence of both-subject and object-is one. Therefore any barrier between subject and object, any sense of separation is illusion. The device of twins in Siegmund and Sieglinde is still artifice because, although it intimates a like quality between the two, the resemblance is only physical and superficial whereas between Tristan and Isolde the recognition becomes a deeper resonance, binding together, since they can see past the purely phenomenal. There are other similarities in the two couples. Both Siegmund and Tristan use a false name when they find themselves in unfamiliar circumstances. When they develop a certain amount of trust, they reveal their true name. Sieglinde was kidnapped and forced to marry into Hunding's clan where she describes herself as Hunding's property. Against her will, Isolde is aboard a ship leading her into the bondage of a loveless marriage for the sake of political peace. So, even with the relationship with Siegmund and Sieglinde, Wagner is instinctively dealing with transcendence of duality by way of the twins and through love. This theme appears to be deep seated in Wagner. In most of his operas, in many guises, it is there. One might suspect that this is the emergence of Wagner's personal need for his own life.

Tristan's hand. Half is hers she calls to the "betrayer." Then to an *a* motive on its original pitches, Isolde proclaims "I drink to you!" The key here is Eb minor. Wagner has gone back to the recap portion of the opening Prelude. Here the Tristan chord is a supertonic 7^{th} moving to a dominant 9^{th} (1751-2). At measure 1758 the time signature changes to 6/8, there is a change of key and we hear a full bar of the Tristan chord slurred into the motive *b* in bar1759 which, in turn, flows into the dominant 7^{th} of bar1760. The music has returned to bar 2 of the opening Prelude with the key of A minor. Instead of the silences of the opening Prelude, Wagner gives us a timpani trill followed by a chromatic descending tremolo scale in the cellos. At bar 1765, the violas also in tremolo give rise to motive *b* and at 1767 we are met with an ominous "death-devoted" from the bass clarinet. Beginning in bar 1771 we hear the second pairing of the opening sequence, motive *a* is in the cellos and *b* is in the clarinets. After more tremolo low strings, Wagner gives us a whimsical, wispy figure which is related to Friea's love theme in the winds and upper strings.[94] After a tremolo statement in the higher octave of the upper strings, the third pairing of the double phrase attends. Then, just as in bars 12-15 of the Prelude we hear the reiteration of motive *b* in the higher octave of the flutes and the repeat of the two note phrase followed by the emergence of motive *c* dovetailed by a full voluptuous statement of the glance in the violas and cellos at its original pitches. Languidly, Isolde sings Tristan's name and he sings Isolde's name. The magical return to the opening music of the Prelude was genius on Wagner's part. Despite its tonal mobility, it is so familiar to us now that it feels as if we have arrived home. These motives have been subjected to every mutation. They have been filled with anger, emasculated with

[94] North, 138.

sickness (leapless *a* of "sick Tristan"), spelled diatonically, semi-tonal versions, stretched and pulled into dotted rhythms and double dotted rhythms—just like Tristan and Isolde have been. Now, after drinking the love potion, and now that they are together, their motives have settled into their original linked position, orderly, voluptuous. They have arrived at their primeval home. Tristan asks, "What was this dream of honor?" Isolde asks, "What was this dream of disgrace?" Already their perception has shifted so that the world of "Day" (the phenomenal) is like a dream. Love has lifted their sensibilities and self-knowledge to a higher plane of consciousness so that they recognize the pettiness and falseness of these qualities and having no need for the things of "Day," they have begun to release them. That long gaze, which happened in Ireland, which caused each of them to connect to the Essence of the Other, and which inspired Isolde to compassion, for she not only healed Tristan's wounds, she also did not reveal his identity to the others who would surely have killed him, is already symbolic of their physical union, which is the union of souls, the union of their beings. Isolde had already made love with Tristan in that long gaze, which is why she was so despairing as she told her story to Brangäne on board that ship. Because the body is of the phenomenal world, it is really a barrier for the uniting of the Essence of Being. Tristan and Isolde knew this and it is partly why they chose to die together so that they could always *be* together in the noumenal, in the higher states of being.[95]

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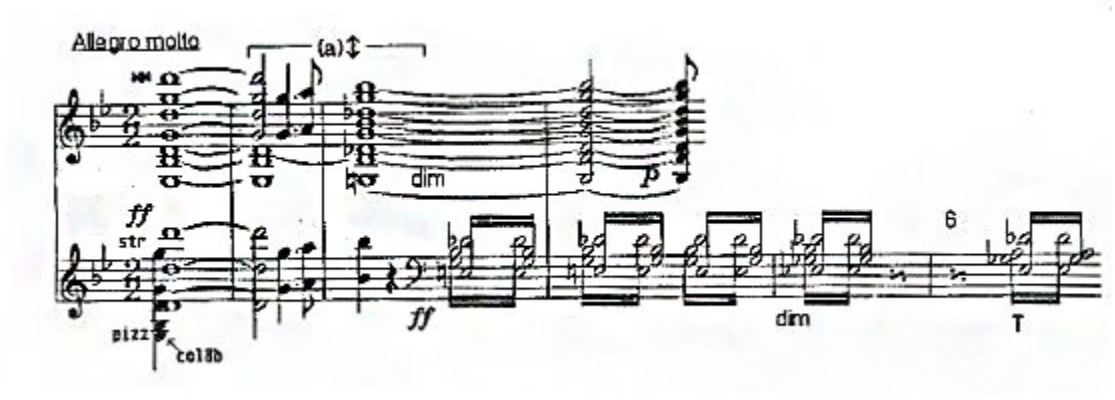
[95] Bryan Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 381. Bryan Magee tells us, "After drinking it (the love potion) the pair are astounded to find themselves not dying but swept away by the love they had repressed. They slake their longings to the utmost limits of possibility: but their desire for unity is impossible to fulfill in this world of differentiated phenomena; it is possible only in the noumenal realm, a world which is not this, the world of before birth and after death, outside space and time. So they find themselves longing for that as the only mode of being in which their love can achieve its end. Each finally embraces death not only as the cessation of an otherwise unfulfillable longing, but also as the loss of self-identity in an ultimate merging with the other.

Chapter Six: Night's Wonder World

From Wagner's Prose sketch for *Tristan*, psychological subtleties can help to clarify the atmosphere, behavior and destiny between the two lovers. After Tristan's first stay in Ireland, Isolde's home, and where she healed his battle wounds, Tristan returned victorious to Cornwall where he freely sang the praises of Isolde. Because of Tristan's fame and good fortune, and because he was to inherit King Marke's kingdom, members of his uncle King Marke's court were envious and jealous. The courtiers contrived to have King Marke, who vowed never to marry, wed Isolde on the basis that it would break an ages- old feud between the two kingdoms. Because of the still existent animosity between the countries and because he had already met Isolde, the scheming courtiers thought that Tristan should go to "woo" the bride for Marke. This turn of events was cunning because if King Marke married, his offspring would inherit the kingdom and Tristan would have to forfeit that good fortune. The prospect of bringing back the bride was dangerous, so the courtiers suggested that their noblest Hero, Tristan, should be appointed to the task. If Tristan refused this task, it would appear as if he were seeking for his own advantage (by remaining the person to inherit the kingdom). So, in this manner, for the sake of his honor and fame, Tristan renounced his heritage and was coerced into returning to Ireland.[96] Once she had been obtained, on the ship returning to Cornwall with her betrothal to King Marke looming, Isolde curses Tristan for causing her this fate. Isolde contrives to have Tristan drink with her what she believes to be the Death Potion. Secretly, however, Isolde's faithful handmaiden Brangäne, has substituted the Love Potion in Tristan and Isolde's goblet. Suddenly, all barriers, prejudices and

[96] Newman, *The Wagner Operas,* 248.

animosities are shed. Pretense gone, a deep, passionate and abiding love for each other immediately emerges. Their eyes and hearts have been opened.



Adapted from Roger North Wagner's Subtle Art p. 168

In Act II, Tristan and Isolde discuss the deceptions of Day. The Wagner's Prose sketch helps us to understand his intentions.

Is. And so you surrendered me to increase your honor and fame?

Tr. Accuse the Day that blinded me into reveling in arrogance!

Is. How can I accuse the Day, I who let it urge me on to death and revenge?

Tr. When you proferred me the Draught of Death, then dawned within me sublime Night….Hail to that Draught!...now there fell away from me everything that had been deluding me so long.

Is. Day took its revenge…you had to deliver me over to the King…How did I ever bear that?

Tr. Day could divide, but no more blind us…Fame and Honor--their falsehood became manifest in face of the profound secret that Night confided to us…Descend upon me, Love's own Night!....[97]

[97] *The Essential* Jung, While working with his patients, Carl Jung always had the conviction that there were no insoluble problems, "and experience justified me in so far as I have often seen patients simply outgrow a problem that had destroyed others. This "outgrowing," as I formerly called it, proved, on further investigation, to be a new level of consciousness…What, on a lower level, had led to the wildest conflicts and to panicky outbursts of emotion, from the higher level of personality, now looked like a storm in the valley seen from the mountain top. This does not mean that the storm is robbed of its reality, but instead of being in it, one is above it." Later Jung concludes that, "I had learned that all the greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally insoluble (a complete reversal of his original conviction). They must be so, for they express the necessary polarity inherent in every self-regulating

Let me forget that I live, blot out the world from my eyes!

When I find myself, how poor am I!

When I lost myself wholly, how rich I became!

When the world I see no more, then am I myself the world…

When sight is shattered I am ruler of the world![98]

The references to Day, here, are to the phenomenal world of appearances.[99] The phenomenal World is made known to us in a predominant way by *sight,* by our eyes. When we do not know this, we are deluded by appearances and feel disconnected and separate and alone. Tristan makes another important declaration: "when he finds himself, he is poor." This is a direct reference to the ego, the arrogance Tristan referred to earlier. Then he continues with: "when I lost myself, I became rich." Here, Tristan is referring to the shedding of the egocentric self. Once that was released, he experienced

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system. They can never be solved, but only outgrown." (The Essential Jung, from: Complete works, 13, pars. 16-18). Drinking the love potion helped Tristan and Isolde to achieve a higher state of consciousness. They not only recognized themselves in each other (the traces of which lay in the first glance in Ireland), but they began to understand how they had been deceiving themselves with all the temptations of "Day." Tristan says "Day could divide us, but no more blind us." Now, they possess the higher consciousness while in manifest form, so they can discern the delusions of "Day" while understanding the truth of "Night."

[98] Newman, 249.

[99] Carl G. Jung, "Visions/Life after Death," *The Near Death Experience, A Reader,* 106-107. After returning to his body from a Near Death Experience, Jung claims that during his recovery he was living in a strange rhythm. "By day I was usually depressed….Gloomily, I thought, "'Now I must go back to this drab world." "Toward evening, I would fall asleep…until about midnight. Then I would come to myself and be awake…but in an utterly transformed state. It was as if I were in an ecstasy. It felt as if I were floating in space, as though I were safe in the womb of the universe—in a tremendous void, but filled with the highest possible feeling of happiness, "'This is eternal bliss.'" I thought. "'This cannot be described, it is far too wonderful!'" Everything around me seemed enchanted.…Night after night I floated in a state of purest bliss…By the time morning drew near, I would feel: Now gray morning is coming again; now come the gray world with its boxes! …What a contrast the day was: I was tormented and on edge; everything irritated me, everything was too material, too crude and clumsy, terribly limited both spatially and spiritually. It was all an imprisonment… and yet it had a kind of hypnotic power, a cogency, as if it were reality itself, for all that, I had clearly perceived its emptiness…this life (everyday consciousness) is a segment of existence which is enacted in a three-dimensional boxlike universe especially set up for it." We see here that Jung also uses "Night" to describe the revisiting of his NDE state of bliss. Additionally, his description of Day which carries the phenomenal back into awareness, corresponds with the impressions that Tristan and Isolde have. These were quite literal experiences for Jung in the Near Death state. Wagner, on the other hand, is creating a work of art in which he intuitively uses these archetypal structures to differentiate states of Being along with their many associations of resonance and meaning.

the transcendent of the all- knowing; he stepped into his true self*: I myself am the world*. Night, here, refers to that transcendent state beyond the body, time and self which evidently was prompted by the love between them.

These sentiments above are sung in the opera's second act Night song, *O sink hernieder*. Wagner's musical setting of one of Mathilde Wesendonck's poems, *Träume,* provides the inspiration for the musical setting of the opening of this section.[100] The key is Ab major, both the song and the opera begin in 3/4 time. The song has repeated eighth notes in the accompaniment, but for the opera, Wagner does something magical by using a pulsating rhythm of alternate triplet eighth notes with a duple eighth note rhythm for the last beat. This gently pulsating figure played softly with dampened strings suggests exquisite intimacy and tenderness, the beating of the heart. Tristan's first phrase is on the notes of a broken Tristan chord F Ab Cb Eb. By providing the rhythmic device of a hemiola in Isolde's vocal line, Wagner creates motion and added rhythmic interest within the static texture of the strings.[101] Three measures of Tristan's text are compressed into two measures for Isolde. This hemiola rhythm alternates often in imitative counterpoint between the voices until bar 1134. On the word "Liebe" the lovers have a falling whole

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[100] Edward A. Lippman, "Wagner's Conception of the Dream," *The Journal of Musicology*, 61. Lippman explains Wagner's meaning of "Night" in contrast to "Day." "Night is conceived not as the time of dreams in the usual sense, but as a realm of direct contact with *Being* (italics mine); a realm that surrounds and underlies life, and is known in deep, dreamless sleep, in the experience of love, and especially in death, when human love is superseded by the bliss of union with the universe. Night is the dark country from which Tristan comes and to which he returns, but also the death--his mother's death--from which he is born, and the cosmic darkness from which he awoke. These larger meanings do not wait upon the conclusion of the opera to become manifest; they can be found throughout, both explicitly and implied, particularly in the love scenes. In the second act, Tristan lives in the world of night, which he previously awoke to, as he says only in dreaming. A supposed death-potion has now opened the door to this world, although his experience in it is really one of love; yet he longs for death, which he has come to equate with love, as an alternative to day." Lippman's statement: "a realm of direct contact with being; a realm that surrounds and underlies life" is equivalent to Schopenhauer's state known as the Will.

[101] North, 305.

tone (sink hernieder) in their respective vocal lines which is also heard in the strings and the upper flute. This occurs again at 1130/31 and 1132/33. The falling whole tone is derived from the opera's opening Prelude, bar 17, when motive *c* emerges from *b* giving the upper appoggiatura at the cadence that counterbalances *b*'s lower appoggiatura.

In the beginning, Isolde's vocal line fairly freely imitates the text of Tristan's line, but she always sings his same falling tone at the end of the phrase. The tonic pedal is sustained from bars 1121-1138, but at bars 1132/33 and 1136/37 dominant 7^{th} 9-8's are present expanding the F-Eb falling tone which answers the Eb-F of the opening of the Night Song in the orchestra and voice. At bar 1138, the "Day" motive appears, entering on Fb (E natural) as Tristan sings, "let's put out the last light." At bar 1150 the tonic pedal returns for several measures. In bar 1152 Wagner places a dominant 7^{th} above the tonic pedal, but instead of resolving in the next bar, Wagner inserts a chord built on Fb, the tone of the first entrance of the day motive in this scene, a flat submediant, which resolves to the tonic of 1154 with a plagal quality of sound.

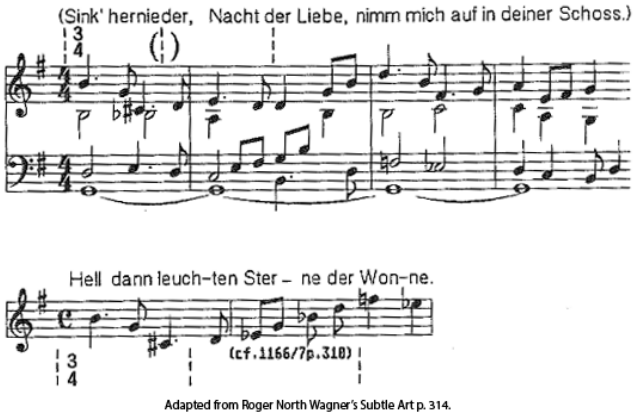
The melody in the voices from 1153-1156 is the falling semitone Fb-Eb. However, in bar 1155, Tristan's vocal line does not fall, but rises Fb-F natural over a Tristan 6-5 chord. Since the voices have been in unison at the beginning of each of the previous 5 bars, the dissonance at bar 1155 creates an opportunity for reconciliation at the first climax in bar 1158. Here the voices are in unison on the downbeat and the orchestra has the return of the exquisite falling whole tone harmony spread out over four bars. Because the voices move on to Db a diatonic original motive *a* with the initial upward

leap in the violins of 1157 can be heard.[102] At bar 1158, Wagner removes the tonic pedal allowing a full dominant major 9th sonority and a full cadence of the dominant in root position.

In the second half of the Night song, Wagner again employs the hemiola in the voices. At bar 1162, Isolde's vocal line is written in 3/4, but the first two measures could be combined as one measure of 3/2. Wagner doesn't do this because the third bar is in 3/4. He contracted what was two bars in the opening to a single 3/4 bar. This helps the stress of the rhyming scheme of the final words: Sonne, Wonne etc.[103] It should be noted that prior to *Tristan*, Wagner avoided end of phrase rhyme. He used a technique of alliteration called Stabreim. Because of the influence of Schopenhauer, Wagner adjusted his idea of the Gesamkunstwerk, shifting the supremacy in the artwork to the position of the music and the mimetic drama. The words, being concepts and part of the phenomenal world, were no longer the all- important fecunding Poetic Aim of the *Opera and Drama* theorizing. Returning to the second half of the Night Song, Wagner is careful to keep the orchestra in the 3/4 rhythm so that everything is ordered and stable for the hemiolas in the vocal line to glide and undulate smoothly over it. Once again, in bar 1163, Wagner uses the Fb-Eb falling tone to aid in the modulation to E natural the dominant of A major, shifting the key up a semitone. The words for Isolde at this point are: "hidden in our bosom is the Sun." So the light has shifted from the "Day" and the outer world into the light of joy that is within their hearts. In bar 1166, Tristan sings a broken Tristan chord on the words Sterne der Wonne. Beginning at 1174, the key rises semi-tonally every two

[102] North, 309.
[103] Ibid., 310-11.

bars. Additionally, at 1174 the orchestral harmonization of the voice now corresponds to the hemiola which has adjusted to one bar of 3/2. At 1174, the second beat of the 3/2 is harmonized with an augmented 6th chord. In bar 1175 the bass line moves from Bb to Gb on the second half of the second beat in a 3/4 bar in anticipation of the dominant 7th of Cb in bar1176. This type of harmonization continues to aid the rising modulation. At 1178-9 Wagner gives the singers the same 3/2 phrase but sets them a 3/4 bar apart in canon. Such careful detail and adjustment to the text in the passage from 1174-1183 seems to stem from the fact that the original idea for this melody came to Wagner much earlier and was sketched down along with the motive *b* on a scrap of paper dated December, 1856, which later found its way into one of his sketch books.[104] At that time, Wagner added the words to the opening of the Night song, undoubtedly thinking he would use it to begin this section.



Adapted from Roger North Wagner's Subtle Art p. 314.

The squareness of the melody written in 4/4, and the fact that it returns to the tonic after four bars would inspire the composer of continuous melody toward the inventiveness and beauty he finally created in this passage.

[104] North, 313-14.

The Ab key signature returns in bar 1184 where we have a dominant 7th of Eb. From bar 1165 the music has modulated up a 5th from Ab to its dominant. Here the day motive returns in anticipation of a second climax of the music. It begins in the oboe and then continues in stretto through the clarinets and horn. At bar 1189, timpani is added with an increasing accelerando. The lower and upper strings thin out with the second violins and violas carrying the ongoing pulsating figure to the climax. This could be because the words to the upcoming vocal line are of critical importance and Wagner wants to let them strongly emerge. The lovers declare a deep realization: "I myself am then the World." Roger North makes a very interesting point in that the lover's do not say, "We."[105] This is, of course, Schopenhauer coming front and center. The singers, having related in harmony up to now, become locked in unison on the word "Welt" in the climactic bar 1192. The earlier climax, at bar 1158, was harmonized by a dominant major 9/8 chord with an expanded falling whole tone in the orchestra. Here at the second climax one might expect a tonic harmonization in response. Wagner gives us more. The word "Welt" is accompanied by an original *ff* Tristan chord which also serves as a modified tonic. Perhaps its true purpose here is to sanctify and validate the noble realization of Tristan and Isolde who, depicted through the transmutation of the music, have climbed to a much higher state of understanding (consciousness) than when we first encountered them at the opera's beginning. Since Wagner is also the poet of his operas, it is interesting to note that later in this scene, Tristan and Isolde are singing together a

[105] Ibid,. 317. The reason for using I instead of We may be because it could be construed that achieving this level of consciousness required two persons together. Achieving higher levels of consciousness, however, is always a process of the Individual. Of course, many other persons and events can contribute to the realization, but the inner movement takes place in the singular personality. The life of the Buddha is a good example of this.

passage called "Ewige Nacht" (Eternal Night). In this passage they are asking Night to grant them death or never to awaken. Wagner writes:

In deinen Armen,
dir geweiht,
ur-heilig Erwarnen,
von Erwachens Not befreit!

In your arms,
consecrated to you,
sacred elemental quickening force,
free from the need of waking!

Here, Wagner is giving us his name for the Will, the force that Tristan and Isolde are consecrated to. We understand that they have shed so many of their delusions and have reached a state of consciousness that is One with the manifesting Ur-force. Thus, they can now also shed the phenomenal world itself.

From a letter to Mathilde Wesendonck dated Paris, Oct. 29, 1859, Wagner writes:

> *...the peculiar texture of my music, its texture in especial to that intensely touchy feeling which prompts me to mediate and knit together all the nodes of transition between extremes of mood. My subtlest and deepest art I now might call the art of* Transmutation*, for my whole artistic woof consists of such transitions: I have taken a dislike to the abrupt and harsh.....My greatest masterpiece in this art of subtlest and most gradual transition is assuredly the big scene in the second act of* Tristan and Isolde.[106]

Toward the end of the second Act, the lovers are discovered through Melot's scheming. Much confusion about misplaced loyalties results. Tristan asks Isolde if she will follow him into the land of "Night." She agrees, upon which response Tristan charges at Melot, letting his own sword drop as he encounters Melot's sword. Act three takes place at

[106] *Richard Wagner to Mathilde Wesendonck*, 184.

Tristan's castle in Brittany. Badly wounded Tristan awaits, along with his friend Kurnewal, the arrival of Isolde. Tristan lives just long enough to see Isolde and embrace her. Isolde falls unconscious and a skirmish develops between Kurnewal and King Marke's party. After a while, Isolde awakens and narrates the vision she sees of Tristan. She becomes transfigured and in the end dies on Tristan's body.

Chapter Seven: The Liebestod

The music of the Liebestod is actually a reprise of the *Sterbelied* music heard earlier in the second act. During the passage in the second act, the lovers ask to die so that they can live forever in their love. The key to the *Sterbelied* is Ab major. The time signature is 6/8 like the opening of the opera, however Wagner relies heavily on the duple portion of a 6/8 division. Tristan sings the whole first verse of the *Sterbelied* as a solo. After the first verse, Isolde joins in alternating phrases and in duet.

Similarly, the Liebestod begins in Ab major, but it is written in 4/4 time. All the strings in this opening are muted and each string section is divided to prepare for an extensive use of tremolo. The dynamic is *pp* or softer. Isolde begins by describing Tristan; she invites the others to see him, but they seem to be unable to. She describes his smiling face, his eyes and how he glows as he is rising upward and expanding toward the stars. Isolde is seeing his spirit. Her vocal line is more narrative and conversational with rests, often, at the beginnings of the bars. It is in the orchestra that Tristan's first verse melody from the *Sterbelied* is resounding, first in the woodwinds then the horns and strings. Wagner uses the trombones in the second and fourth bars. Trombones have many times been associated with death in the classical repertoire. So, as Isolde describes what she is seeing and feeling, Tristan is there also. His spirit is soaring in the orchestra.

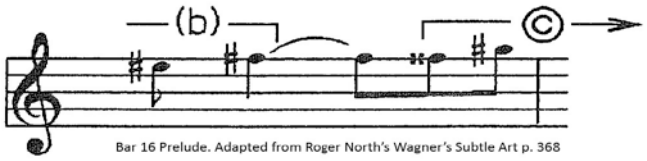
Here at bar 1621, in addition to being in Ab major, the initial leap of a minor 6^{th} and the chromatic descending line of the original motive *a* has contracted to a 4^{th} (a perfect $4^{th,}$ a consonance) and a diatonic descent. The opening *a* motive expressed longing and anguish. Now with the shedding of the "Day" and all that it represented,

with this death, suffering is dispelled.[107] Motive *b* has also undergone transformation. In bar 1622, it rests in the orchestra, the cellos and bass clarinet, but now it is diatonic and without its appoggiatura. So just as the suffering of motive *a* decreases, so the longing of motive *b* subsides.[108] There is also no Tristan chord in conjunction with these two motives here, but the mediant key relationships are retained as at the opening. In other words, at bar 1621 we have Ab, at 1623 Cb (B). In bar 1628, on the words "wie er leuchtet," Isolde is singing the same pitches and rhythm accompanied by the same harmony as Tristan sang in the Act II *Sterbelied* bars 1415-16. Tristan's words there are "in Lieb' emfangen," (in love enfolded).[109] Isolde is seeing Tristan as light. It is as if Tristan's ascending spirit is enfolding Isolde with his ever expanding love to help her in her own transcendence. Modulating to B major at bar 1632, Wagner employs the step and broken triad figure in the violas and violins. This figure is derived from the Torch motive, heard at the beginning of Act II.[110] Variants of the opening bar of the Liebestod can be heard in the woodwinds and cellos from 1633-38. At 1639, the clarinets have a decorated figure attached to the step and broken triad. This ornamented melody was heard in the vocal lines of the earlier *Sterbelied* accompanied by the "bliss" motive which is a derivative of motive *c*. At bar 1633 Isolde has a variant of the opening two bars. As she describes Tristan's sweet breath gently wafting from his lips (1641-44), "sanft entweht" is a variant of the fourth bar of the Liebestod at a higher pitch, but on the word "entweht," Wagner descends the octave instead of the previous interval of a fourth. Along with a return of the tremolos in the strings of bar 1646, motive c appears followed

[107] North, 342.
[108] North, 343.
[109] Ibid., 619.
[110] Ibid., 170.

by *b* in the next bar. From 1648-1652, the flutes and the violins double the voice an octave higher. Here Isolde is asking the people if they can hear that wonderful sound gently resounding, toning from him. It is sounding through her, soaring and echoing around her. As Isolde transcends from this plane she hears melody, sound and tone. We remember Rudolph Steiner's description of the Devachanic world that we visit in dreamless sleep. It is the world of sound, of resounding tone, our primordial home (see p. 39). Decorated with a trill and a mordent, the bliss motive arrives at bar 1663. We can hear its rejoicing in the upper woodwinds, the violins and the voice. A three note triplet is added to the beginning of the bliss motive in the voice. At 1666-7, the first and second violins have a repeated chromatic three note upward thrusting figure. Its repetitions and chromatic sequencing higher and higher greatly add to the tension and excitement leading up to the climax. It is derived from bars 16 and 17 of the opening Prelude. Looking back at the Prelude, in bar 12 there sounds a repeat of the *b* motive in its *b* +1 form only an octave higher than the previous statement in bar 10. In bars 14 and 15 we hear a repeat of the last two notes of the *b* motive in the regular octave and again an octave higher. Then in bar 16 we hear the last two notes again with chromatic rising notes added and leap of a minor 3rd to the note B which falls a whole tone to A the tonic note. In this span, motive *b* seems to be trying to reach beyond itself and finally does transcend, transmuting into a motive *c* which is the basis for the "bliss" motive, a motive so critical in the Liebestod. This whole process of a portion of *b* pushing through (birthing) a chromatic bridge to a higher state and transforming is the same process taking place, albeit with a more sophisticated and expanded implementation, in the three note upward thrusts in the upper strings of bars 1667 onward of the Liebestod, Interestingly, the seeds of all the intended

processes of the opera are built in to the presentation in a simpler, basic form in the Prelude.

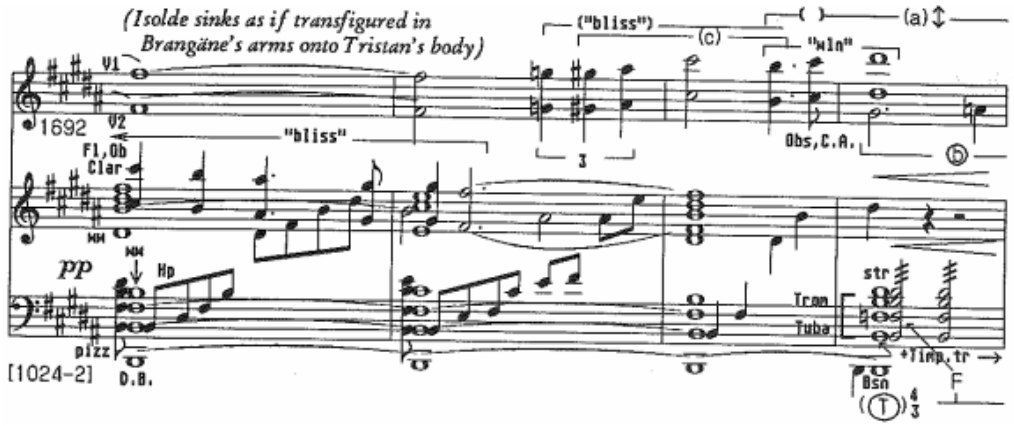


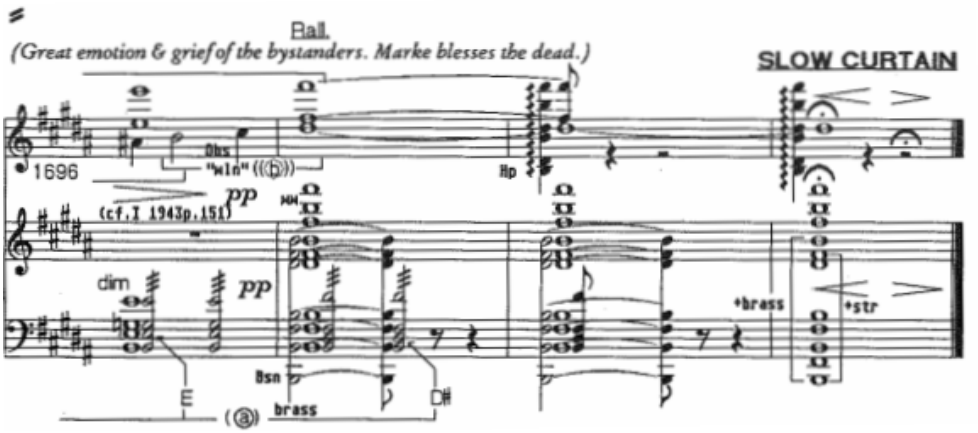
Bar 16 Prelude. Adapted from Roger North's Wagner's Subtle Art p. 368

Motive *c* has always been the reconciliation of *a* +*b*. And it is "bliss" derived from *c* with an added phrase from the "glance" that will carry Isolde through her transfiguration. The chromatic rising three note motive has pushed the tremolo strings to a point an octave higher than at the previous climax at 1663. At bar 1681, the "bliss" theme bursts upon us in the strings, flute, oboe and English horn with the accompanying words "in des Welt atem." Its note values are extended many times longer than previously. In 1683, Isolde sings the gentle version of the "day" motive on the words "wehendem All." Embedded with the notes is an enharmonic rendering of the "Wonderland of Night" motive on the notes B, C#, D#. So Night is reconciled with Day.[111] In 1681-2, "bliss" is harmonized from the subdominant to a root position tonic for the first time.[112] At bar 1685, the strings quiet down and descend in pitch into a broken triad figure while the high bliss is still sounding an octave apart in the flute and oboe and later the clarinet. The key is E major and Wagner rests in it for a while before moving to its minor in 1688-9. Finally the strings cease their tremolo in 1690 and the bliss motive of that bar is harmonized in a new way with a dominant/tonic/movement over a tonic pedal in the bass.

[111] North, 623.
[112] Ibid.

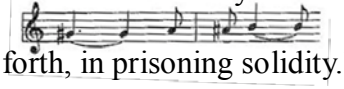
Now the music, quieter and simpler begins to recollect. At 1692 we hear the "bliss" motive in the flute, oboe and clarinet. At 1693 the bliss motive has been exhausted into rendering the simpler *c* motive in octaves the latter part of which links into an enharmonic statement of the "wonderland of night" motive also in octaves. On the downbeat of 1695, harmonized by a Tristan chord in the strings, low brass and bassoon, motive *b* can be heard in the oboes and English horn. With the thinner texture, the quieter orchestra and the lessening of chromatic movement the *b* motive, played on these reed-like instruments, stands out almost forebodingly. The end of motive *b* links into the "wonderland of night" motive whose D# is sustained on the oboe through till the end making an unusual effect over the rests written into the bass. The key of B major has been solidly established having heard 3 authentic cadences since bar 1690, however at bar 1696, Wagner harmonizes the appoggiatura of the motive *b* with an E minor chord creating a plagal cadence with the tonic chord of 1697. Over the span of the opera the tonic key has risen a whole tone from A minor to B major. While the music of the opera has also risen from deep anguish to unspeakable bliss and the intimation of transcendence.





Adapted from Roger North's Wagner's Subtle Art p. 626

Isolde's final soliloquy is completely experiential, the path of gaining knowledge more frequently employed in Eastern traditions. She is totally in the present moment. There is no commentary of past regrets or future dreams. The present moment is the gateway to the transcendent. It is also the only moment in which we can experience music. Her first comments are regarding the visual aspects of Tristan. She sees him smiling and luminous. (But, of course, Tristan is dead). Isolde is experiencing the transcendent. Wagner tells us in his essay on Beethoven, "Our each illusion hereanent had sprung from the mere *sight* of a world around us, a world that in the show of daylight (Day in the opera) we took for something quite apart from us." As Isolde continues her soliloquy she moves through the senses: she hears sounds echoing all around her, she smells the sweetest fragrances, she drinks and tastes of beauty all round her and with each one she lets go of all sensing to become one with the Welt Atem, the World's Breath. Here we should recall Wagner's letter of March 3, 1860 to Mathilde Wesendonck:

"…and wistfully I often look towards the land Nirvana. Nirvana in its turn, however, soon changes to Tristan; you know the Buddhist theory of the world's creation: A breath perturbs the heaven's translucence  it swells, condenses, and at last the whole wide world stands forth, in prisoning solidity."

Now, Isolde has reversed the whole process. By understanding the "deceptions of Day" and shedding herself of them through love and knowledge, she has purged herself and expanded herself into being the very World's Breath that created it all. Brilliantly, Wagner quotes this same motive in the postlude of the Liebestod on the very same instrument as its first utterance at the opera's beginning. Is this final quote on the oboe, linked into Tristan's Wonderland of Night, their combined ascension into the sparkling, starry Night of B major?[113]

From his first acquaintance with Schopenhauer's writings in the fall of 1854, Wagner enthusiastically assimilated the philosopher's brilliant ideas into his life and work. While Schopenhauer believed that full self-knowledge and a state of sustained peace could only be achieved by the denial of the Will-to –live through *Mitleid* or compassion, Wagner believed that this same self-knowledge and denial of the Will could be achieved through love, and more specifically through the sexual love between a man and a woman. By creating a world that adapted Schopenhauer's philosophy into a musical language, Wagner was determined to show in a work of art, namely *Tristan and Isolde,* that full self-knowledge could be achieved through love and not only this, but love could even enable transcendence of the phenomenal world. Wagner completely adopted Schopenhauer's assertion of the supremacy of music over the other arts. Since, according

[113] Lippman, 62-63. Lippman describes the ending of the opera. "The opera itself culminates in a kind of drowning or submergence, in which the individuality of consciousness is extinguished. But this death of individuality that is typified by night is thought of as an ideal of love, in which the individual senses are absorbed into a single unified sentience. A synesthetic universe is uncovered that is aromatic, kinesthetic, and sonorous, although significantly, not visual. Immersed in aromatic waves of sound, in the cosmic breath of the universe, the will is stilled, not momentarily, as in terrestrial love, but permanently." One might consider the idea that individuality is not extinguished, but expanded broader and broader to include all things within itself. In this way, because it is all things, it is not just one thing. The music at the end of the opera expands. Themes become many times broader and longer than their previous statements. Individuality expands to become universality. The need for ego- consciousness vaporizes in the face of this expanded knowledge and state of being.

to Schopenhauer, music is a copy of the Will, the life generating force of the Universe, Wagner understood the great power of music to create artistic worlds and move the depths of the soul (which is also the Will). Wagner realigned his own ideas about the synthesis of art around a two-fold focus, allowing music the supreme position along with mimetic action and relegating poetry to a subordinate position. The poetry served as a bridge to connect to the phenomenal world through the intellect, whereas music connected directly to the Will which is in all things.

Wagner demonstrated Schopenhauer's action that the world is Will and representation in the very opening bars of the Prelude. He utilized Schopenhauer's suggestion of the power of expanded harmony, since the acoustical reiterations of the fundamental tone will symbolically parallel all the grades of the phenomenal world. Wagner chose his working motives carefully and juxtaposed them so that Schopenhauer's idea of the mirroring effect of the phenomenal world to the Will would not only be demonstrated, but lived. Then Wagner set his opening musical prose sentence in a harmonic bath of a doubly dissonant Tristan chord and, allowing for various future possibilities, ended the phrase on an unresolved dominant seventh chord. By subsequently sequencing this entire structure with carefully crafted interruptions of silence, Wagner wove Schopenhauer's idea of the delay of suspension into his music and at the same time demonstrated the experience of the insatiable affirmation of the Will-to-live.

Using the device of a flashback through Isolde's narration to Brangäne, Wagner established a mystical connection between the lovers through the glance or the long gaze during Tristan's healing. However, things were brought to a crisis by having the lovers

mistakenly drink a Love potion when they were expecting to drink to their deaths. No forced annihilation is allowed here. After drinking the potion, Tristan and Isolde were able to shed every barrier, every resentment and to see clearly that the Will in the other was the same as the Will in oneself. The lovers could see the very essence of themselves in each other. In this way, they lost their sense of an individual identity, and became blended into a greater wholeness. This is Wagner's way of showing that the subject/object awareness, naturally experienced in the phenomenal world, had completely dissolved for Tristan and Isolde. Musically, he restates the opening bars of the Prelude to indicate a return to Essence, to their primal relationship.

Wagner separates the environment of the second act between the polar opposites of Day, representing the phenomenal world of deception and arrogance, and Night, representing the womb-like environment of the Will or Wagner's inward facing consciousness out of which the music comes. As the second act unfolds, the lovers increasingly experience states of undeception. They gain self-knowledge to the point where they can declare that "I myself am the World." Wagner has the lovers often singing in imitative counterpoint here. The use of the falling tone, which is the upper appoggiatura of the reconciliation motive in the opening prelude, throughout the love duet "O Sink Hernieder," alludes to the expanded awareness, the feeling of acceptance and increasing peace and harmoniousness of the lovers. The lovers realize they can only maintain this state of knowingness and bliss through death in the phenomenal world and life in the eternal "Night." So, they agree to eternal union through death.

As Isolde sings the Liebestod, Tristan's melody from the earlier *Sterbelied* is resounding in the orchestra. The wide and dissonant intervals of the first act have calmed

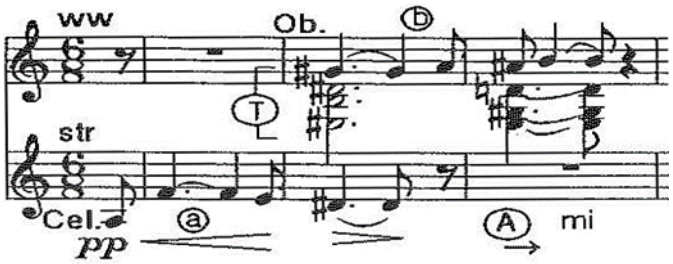
to more consonant intervals of the perfect fourth. The opening leap of Tristan's motive with its accompanying minor sixth is gone. Isolde is narrating what she sees, what she is experiencing with each of her senses. She is completely immersed in the present moment, a state of time that Schopenhauer claimed was the only time—all others being illusion. The orchestra becomes fully engaged and sequences higher and higher in the strings. The bliss motive which has been built from the reconciliation motive of the Prelude expands five times longer than its previous statements corresponding to the expansion of Isolde's soul. She sees Tristan's luminous body rising. She is surrounded by tones, colors and fragrances as she seems to transcend into the much awaited Night where Tristan moves to greet her.

By his devotion to and assimilation of Schopenhauer's philosophy, Wagner was able to create a new musical language that would serve to express this philosophy through a new work of art whose story personified Schopenhauer's very ideas of the nature of reality and of man. A creation built upon the work of two such great personas is rare. The result was revolutionary and epoch-making. Wagner said that he wanted to erect a monument to Love, this most beautiful of dreams. How much the world has benefited because he did.

Appendix A

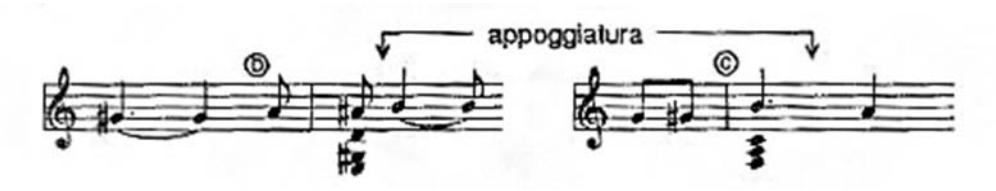
Musical Examples

1.



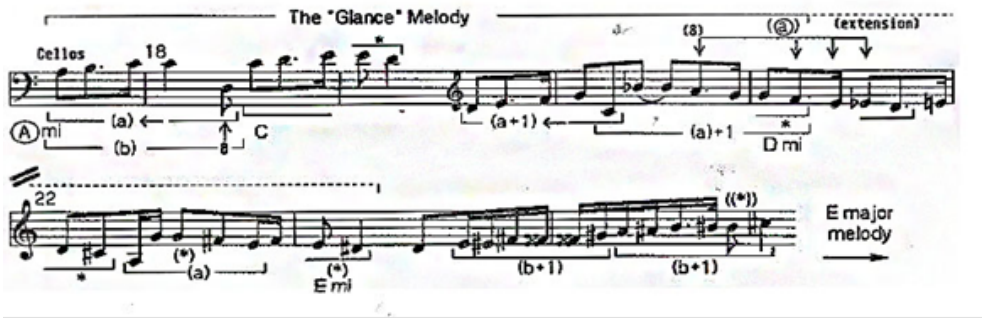
Adapted from Roger North's Wagner's Subtle Art p. 16.

2.



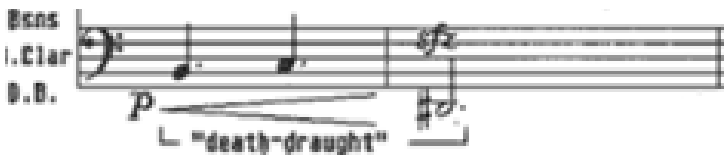
Adapted from Roger North Wagner's Subtle Art p.8

3.



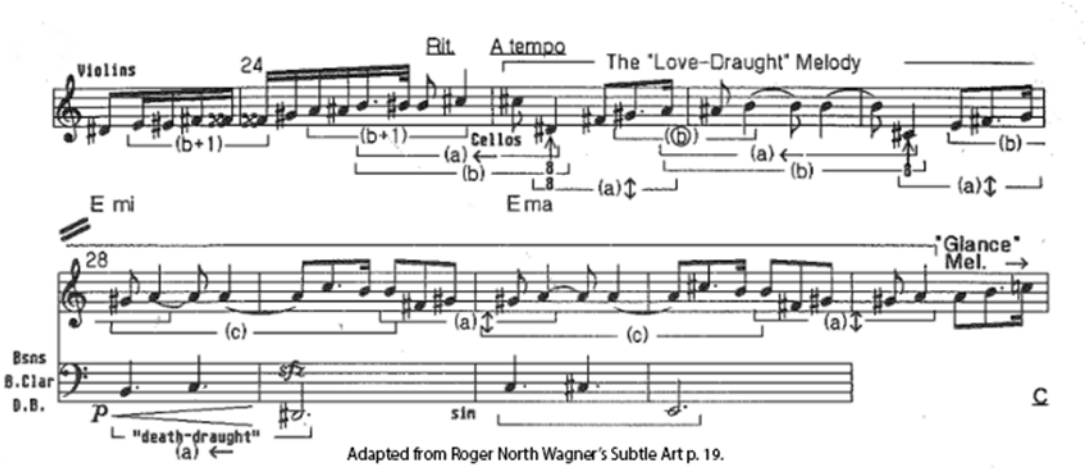
Adapted from Roger North Wagner's Subtle Art p. 17.

4.



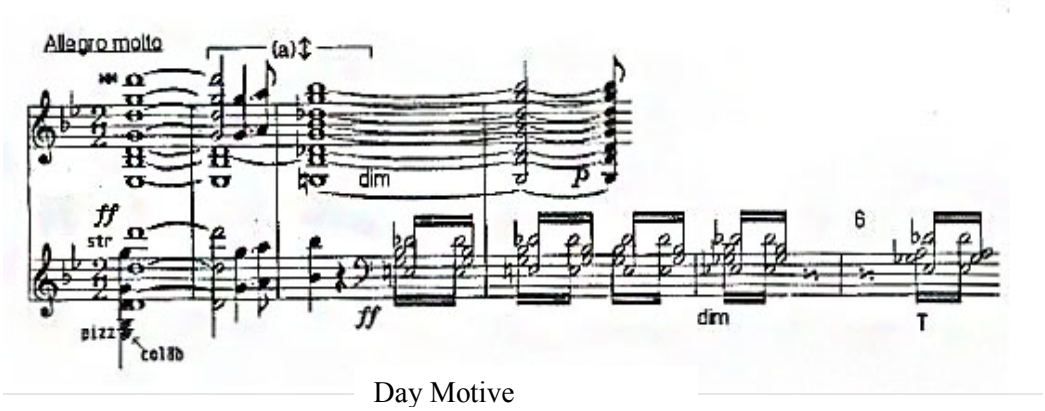
Death Motive

5.



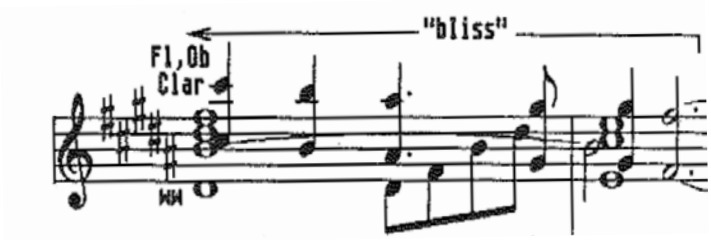
Adapted from Roger North Wagner's Subtle Art p. 19.

6.



Day Motive

7.



Appendix B

Musical Excerpts

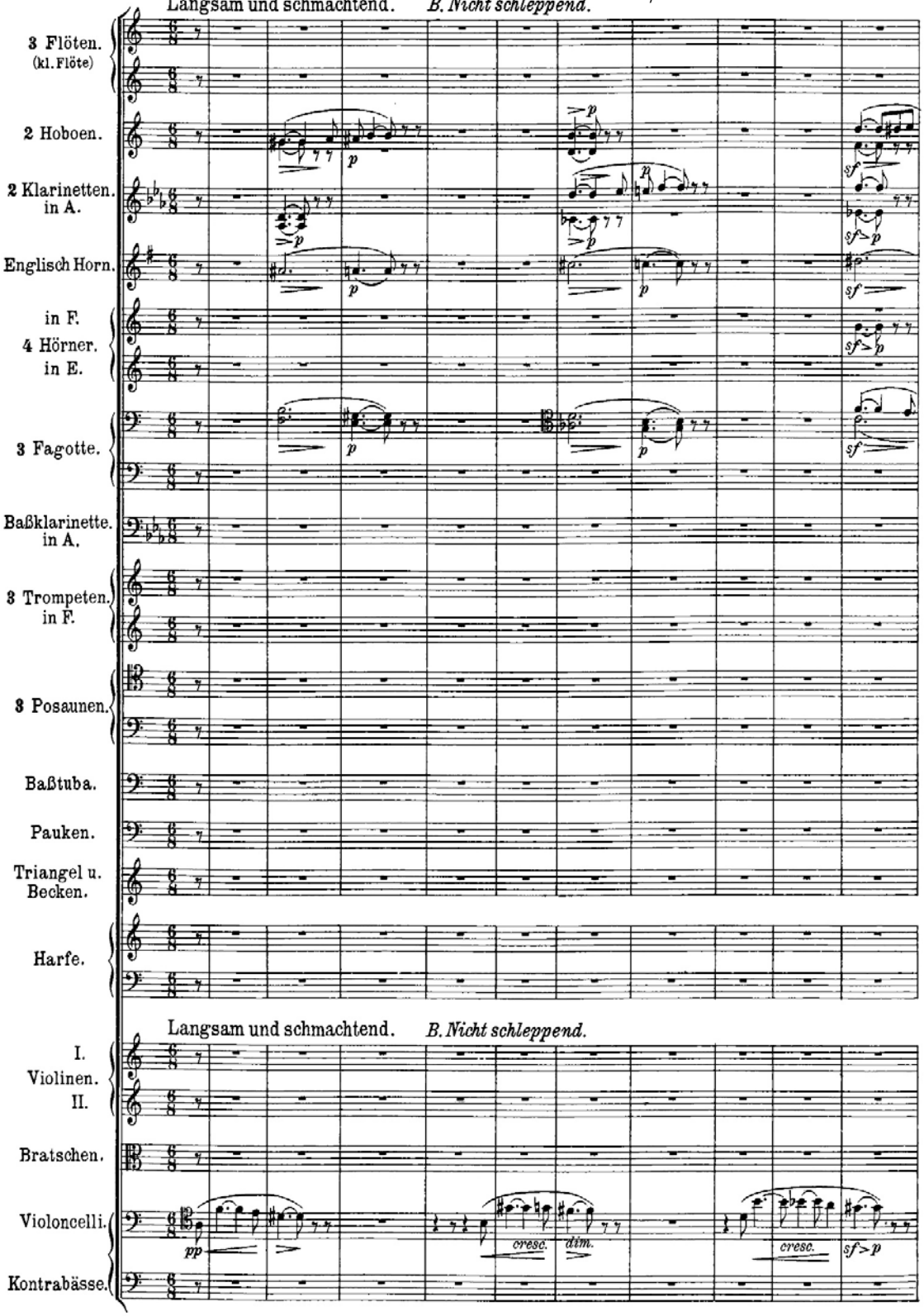
Tristan and Isolde
The Orchestral Prelude

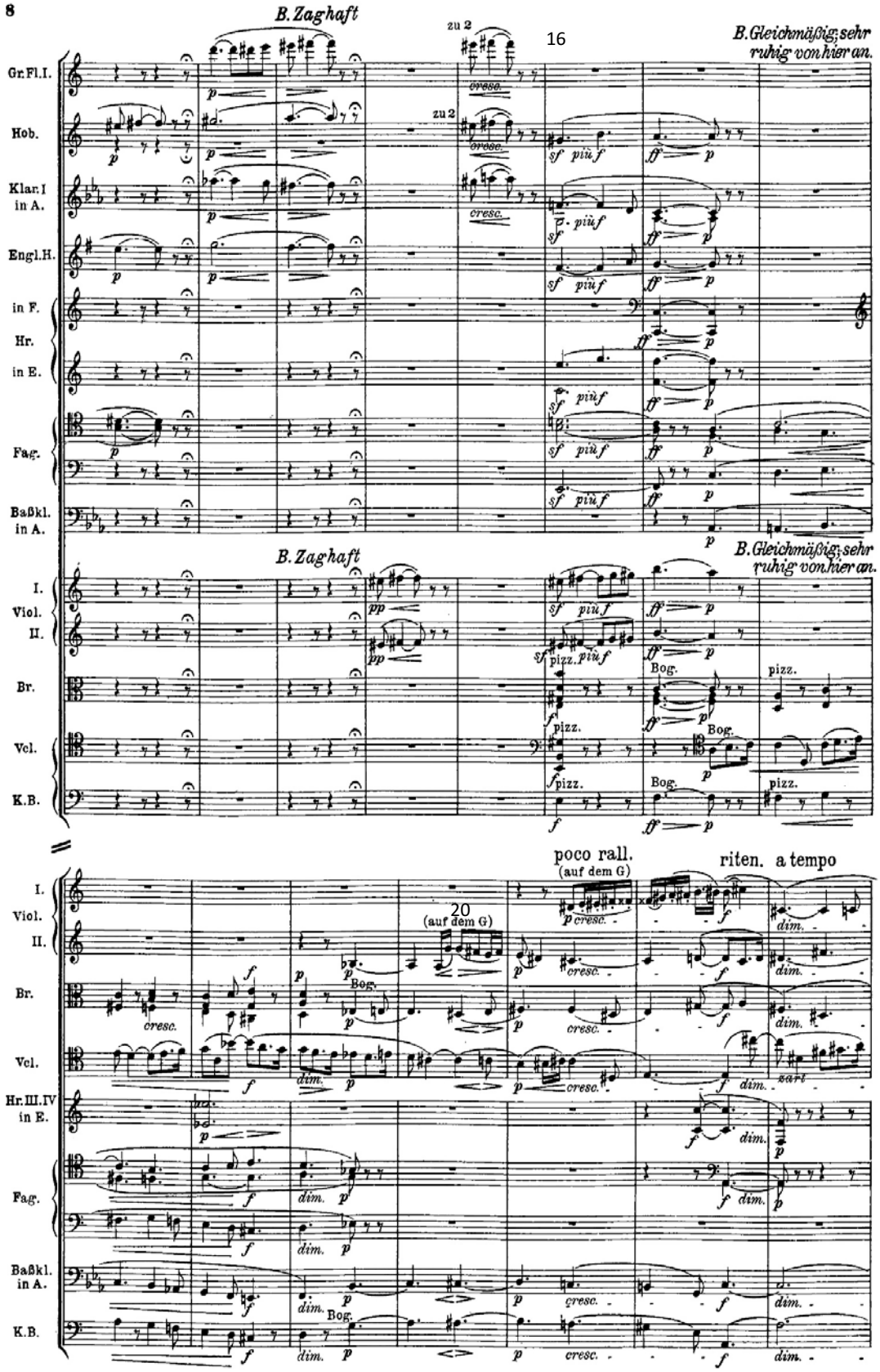
Erster Aufzug.

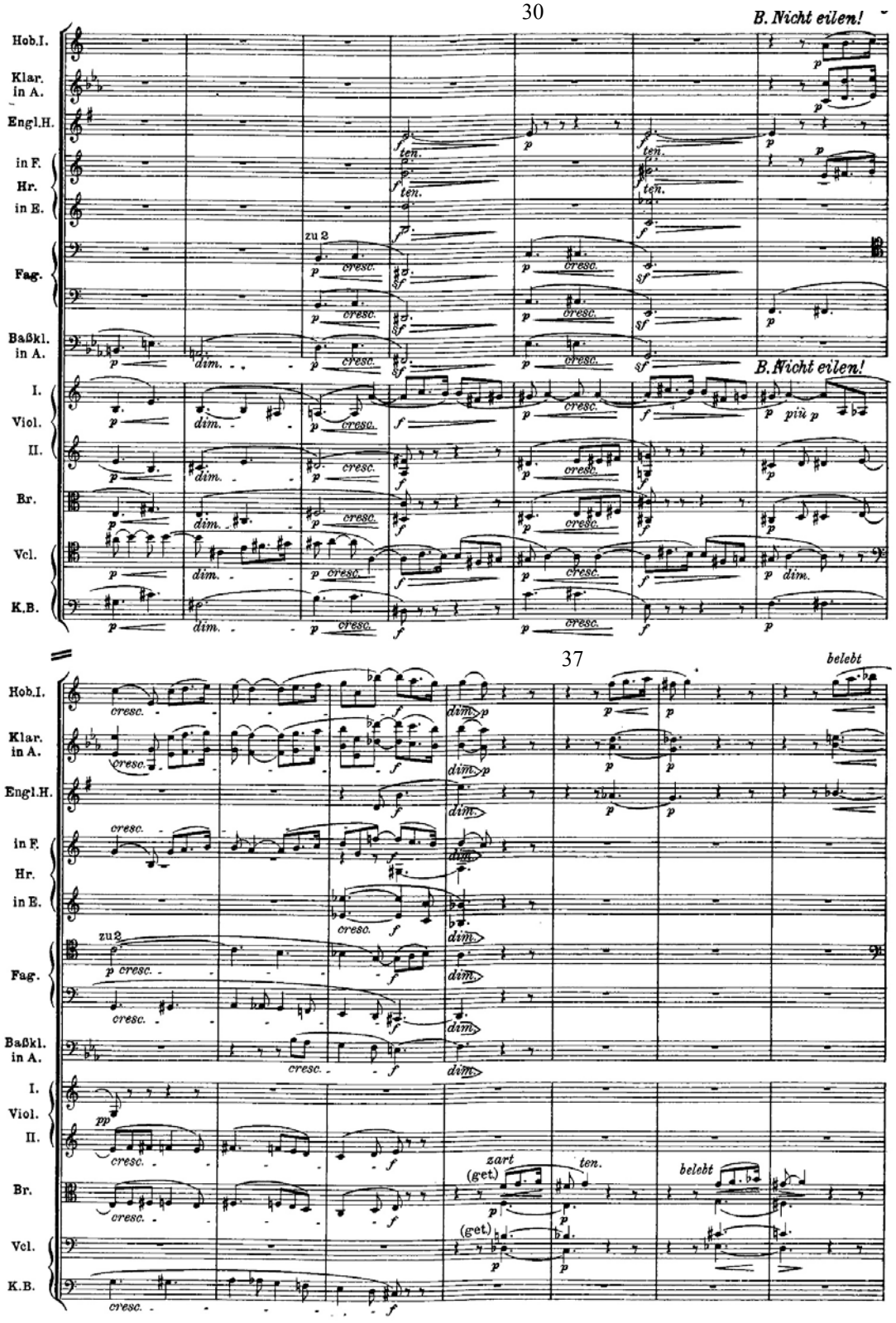
Einleitung.

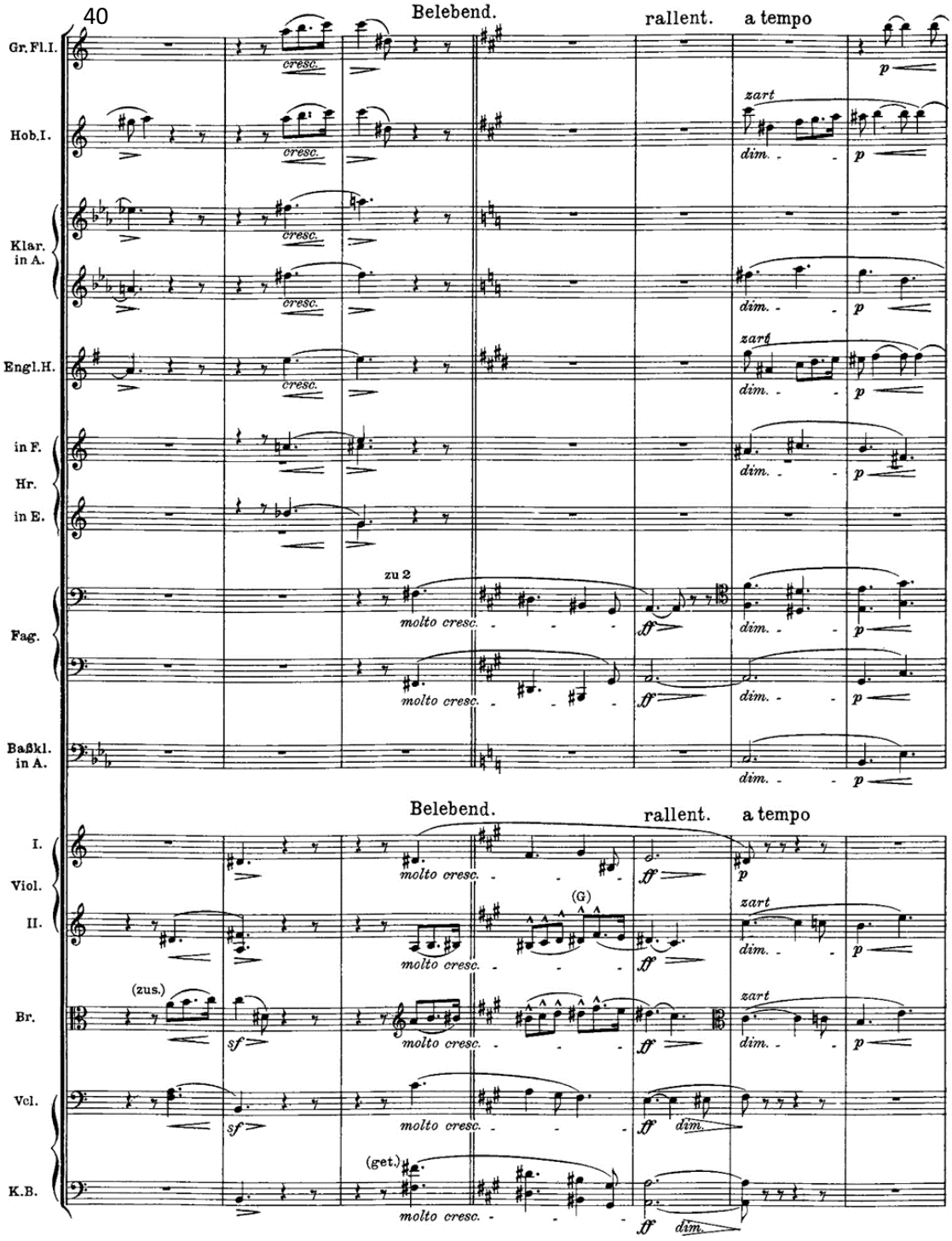
Richard Wagner.

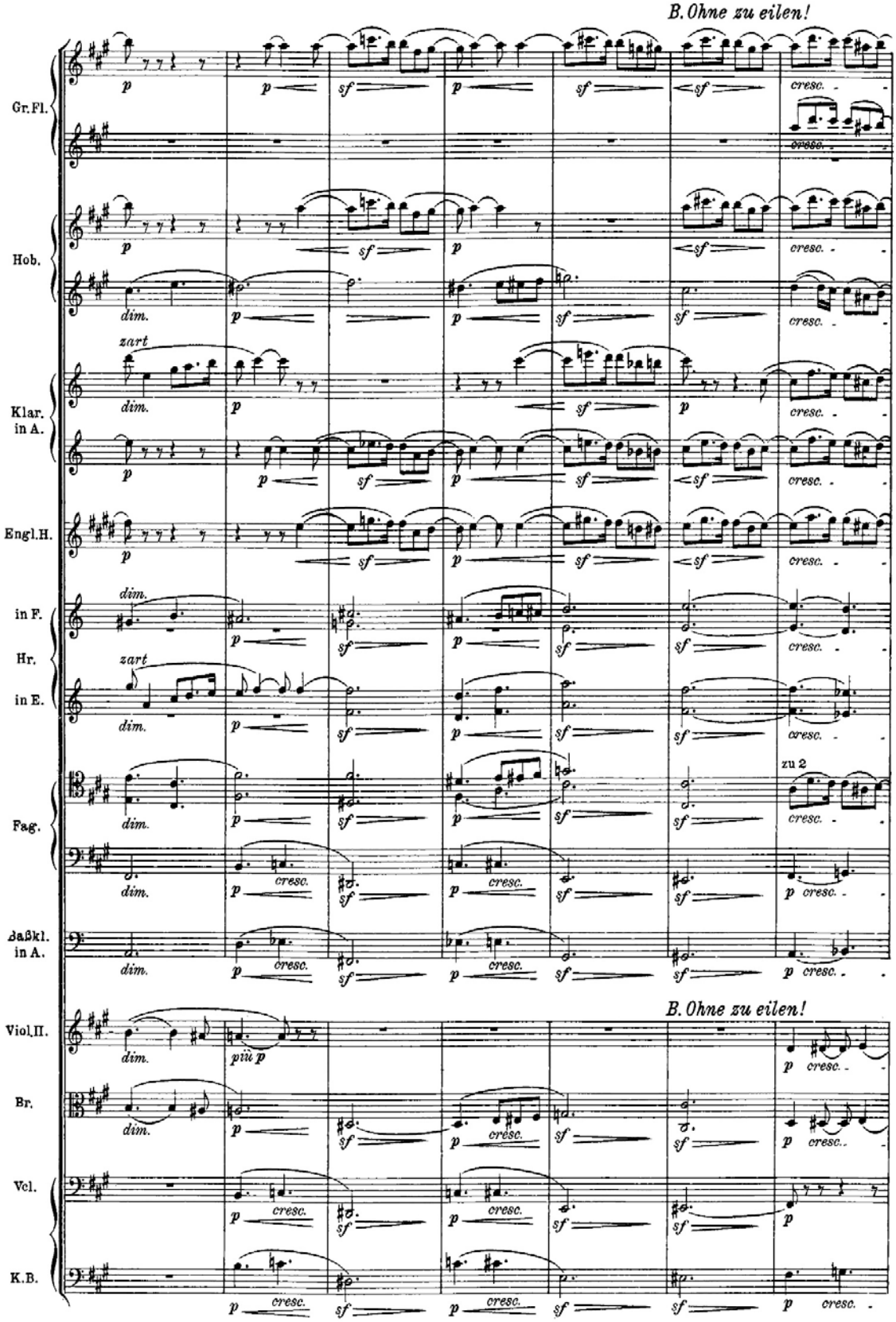
Langsam und schmachtend. *B. Nicht schleppend.* 7

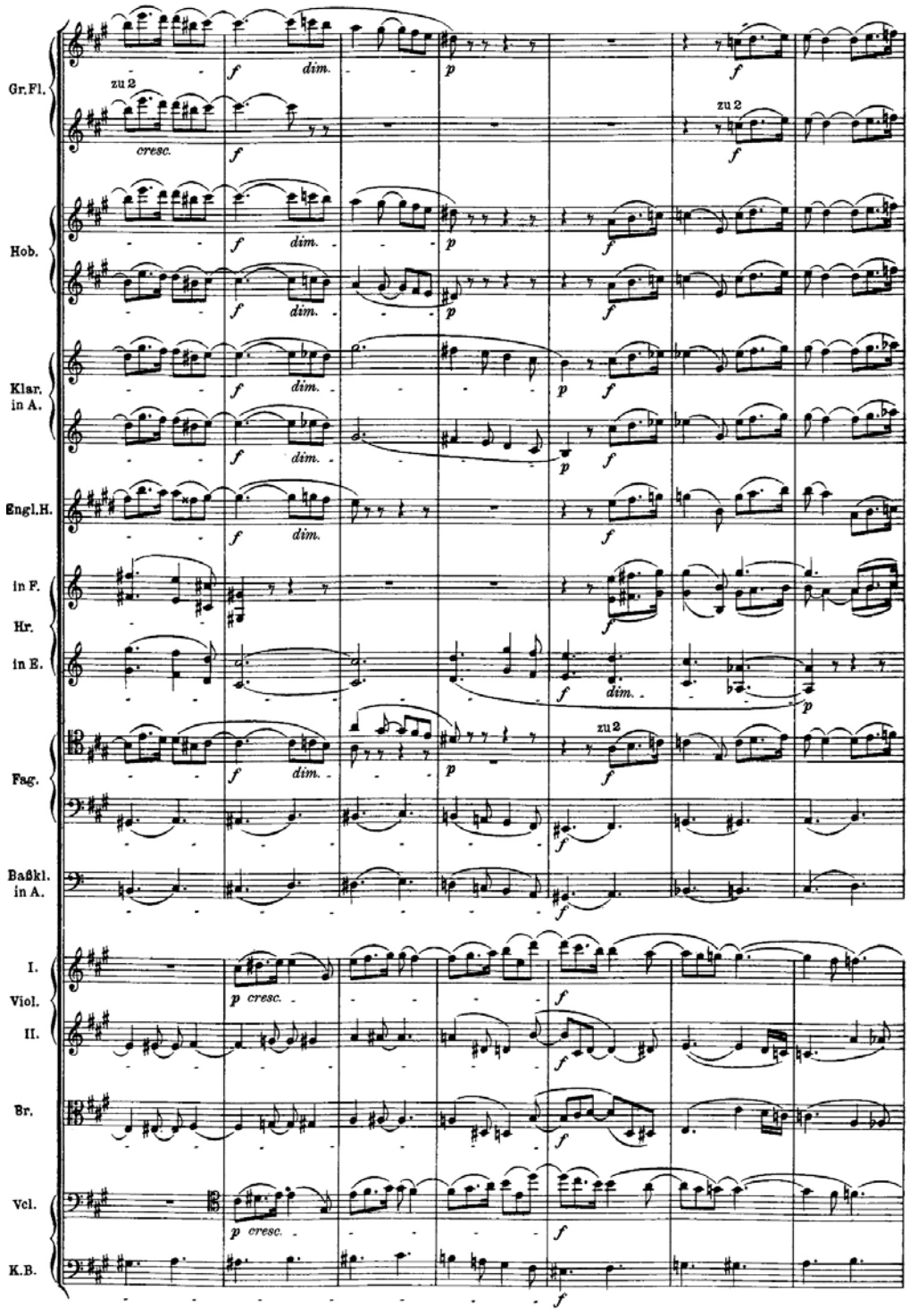


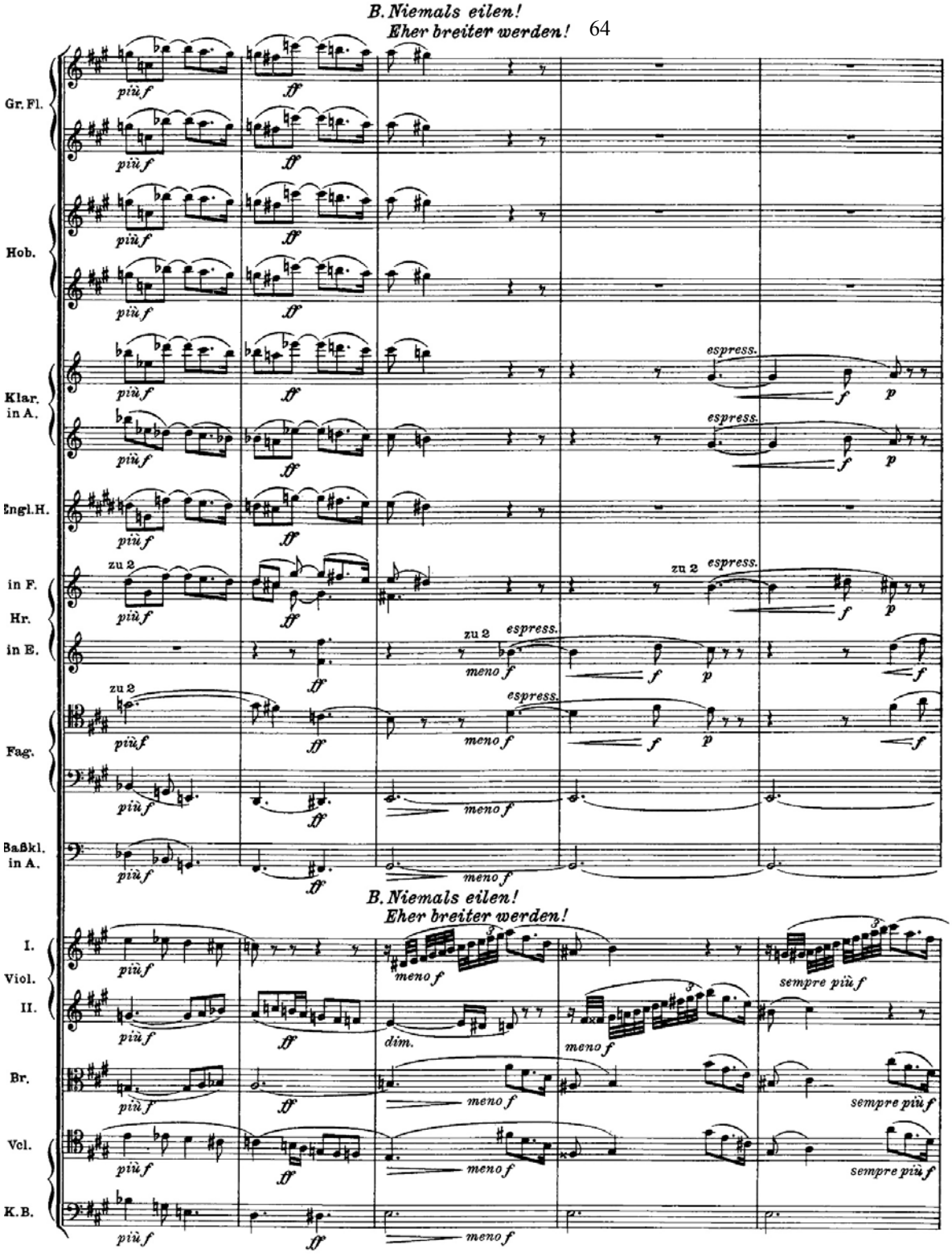

8
B. Zaghaft
16
B. Gleichmäßig; sehr ruhig von hier an.
Gr.Fl.I.
Hob.
Klar.I in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
zu 2
cresc.
sf più f
ff
p
pp
pizz.
Bog.
20
(auf dem G)
poco rall.
riten. a tempo
dim.
Hr.III.IV in E.

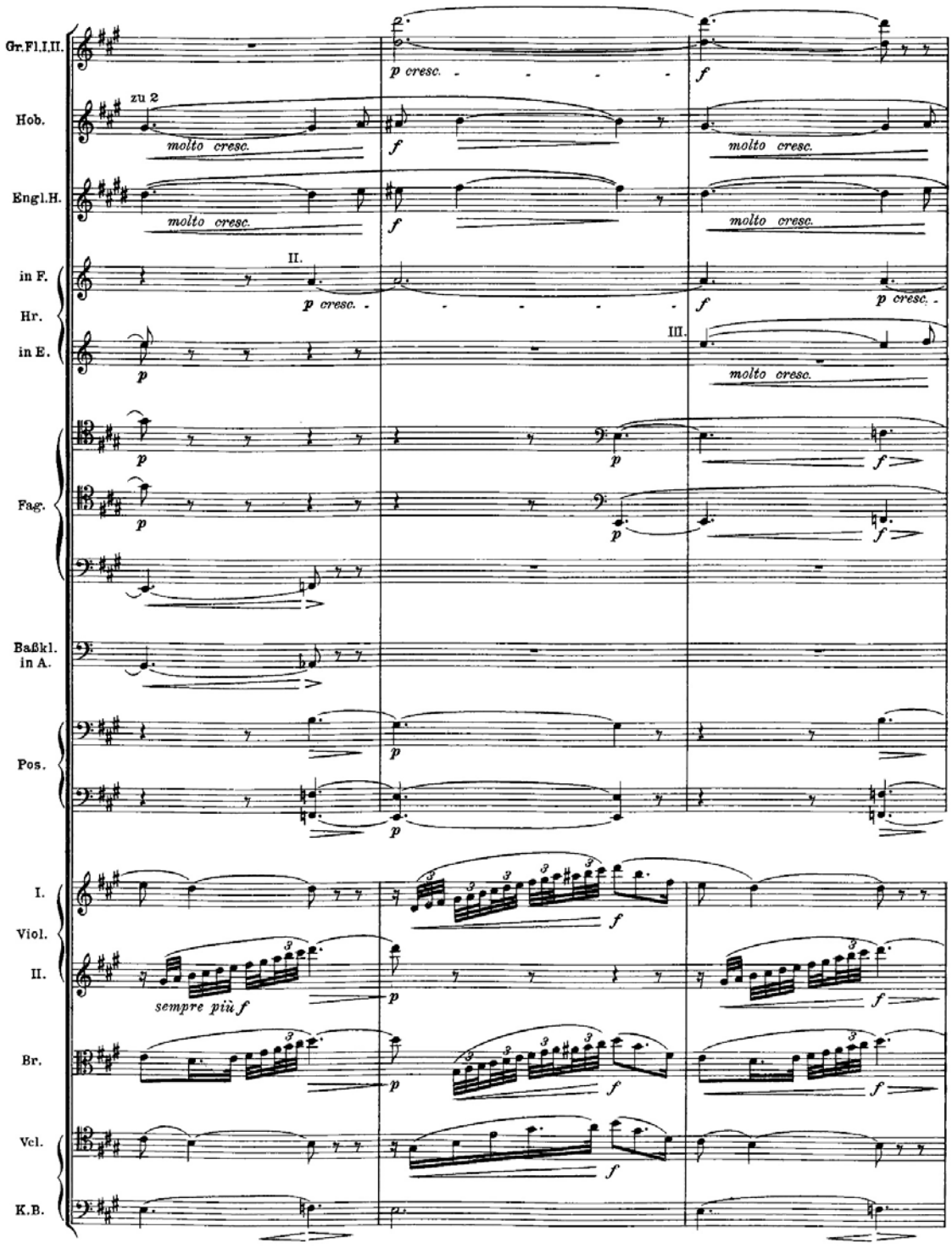

30
B. Nicht eilen!
Hob.I.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
zu 2
cresc.
dim.
ten.
B. Nicht eilen!
più p
37
belebt
zart
(get.)
pp

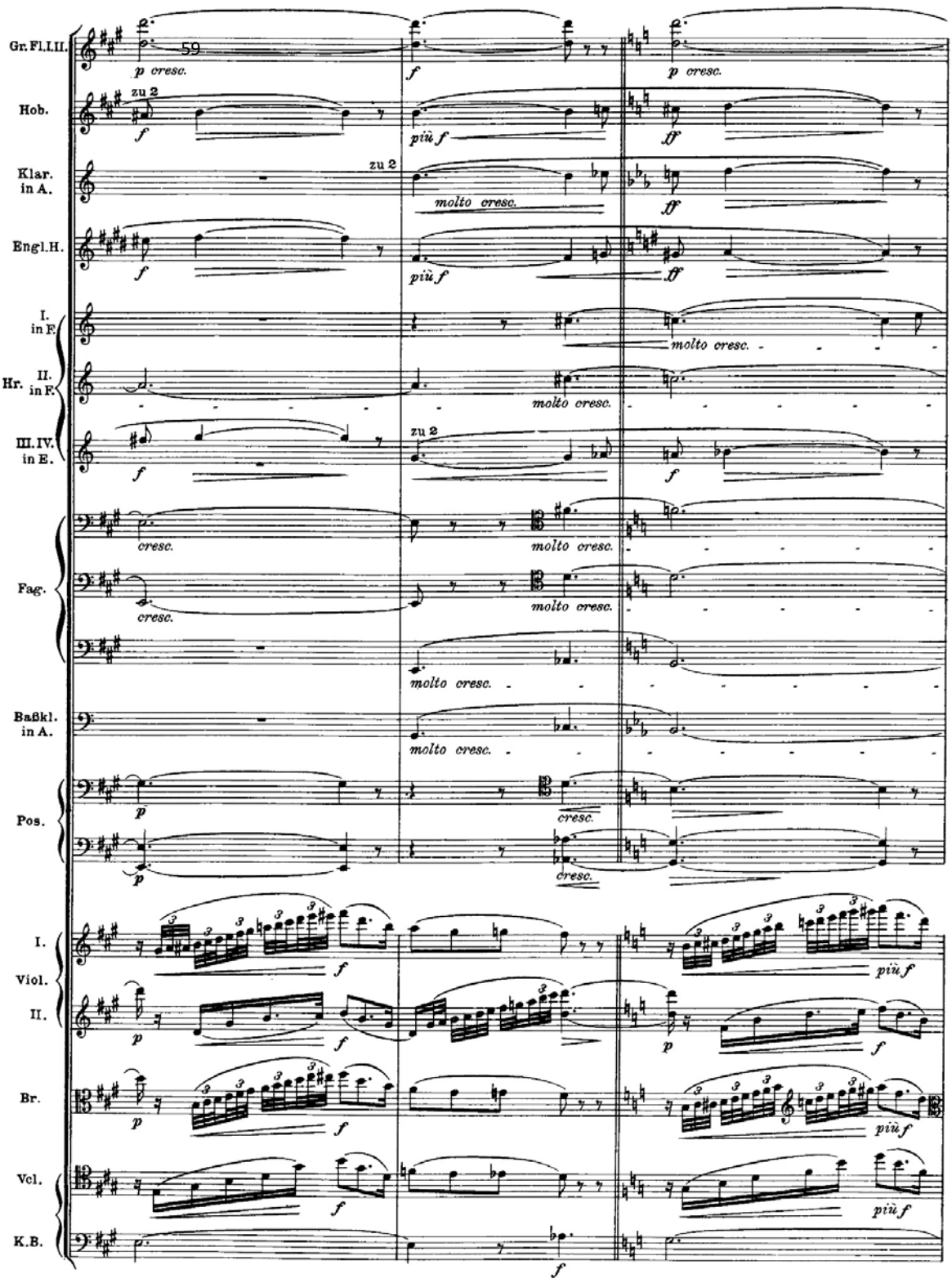

40
Belebend.
rallent.
a tempo
Gr.Fl.I.
Hob.I.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
cresc.
zart
dim.
p
zu 2
molto cresc.
ff
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
(G)
(zus.)
sf
(get.)
dim.

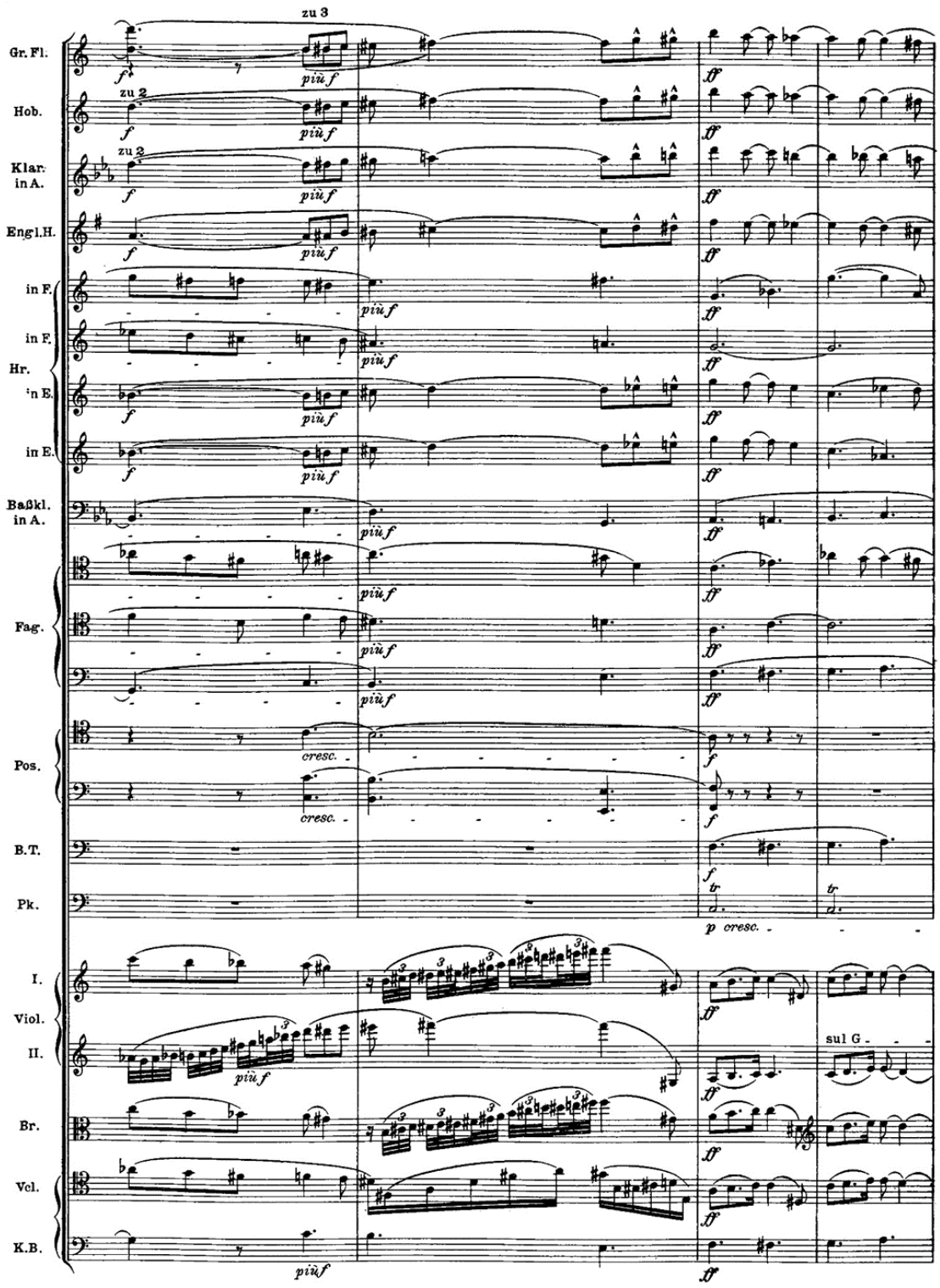

B. Ohne zu eilen!
Gr.Fl.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Viol.II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
zart
dim.
zu 2
più p
cresc.
B. Ohne zu eilen!

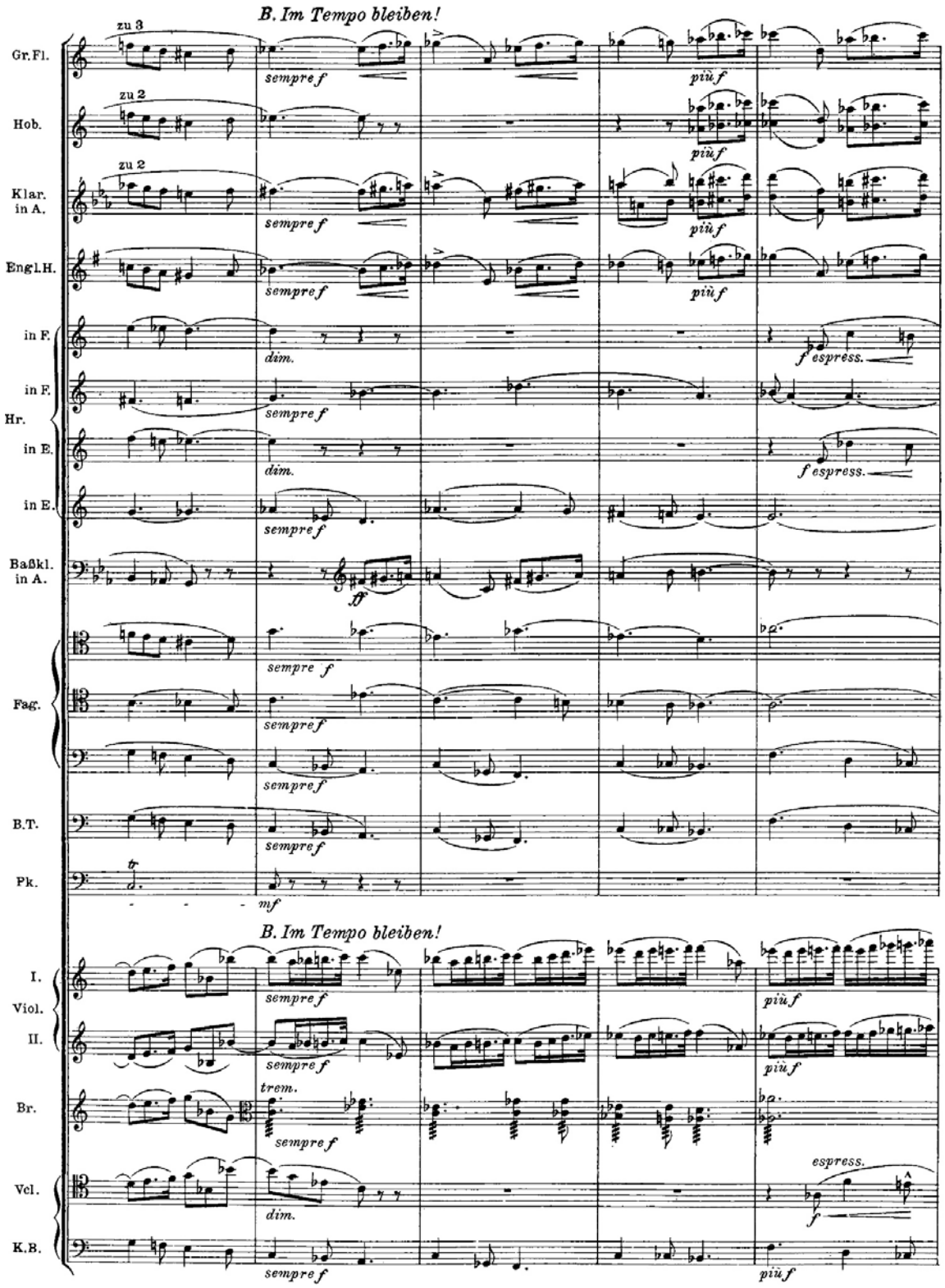

Gr.Fl.
zu 2
cresc.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
dim.
p cresc.

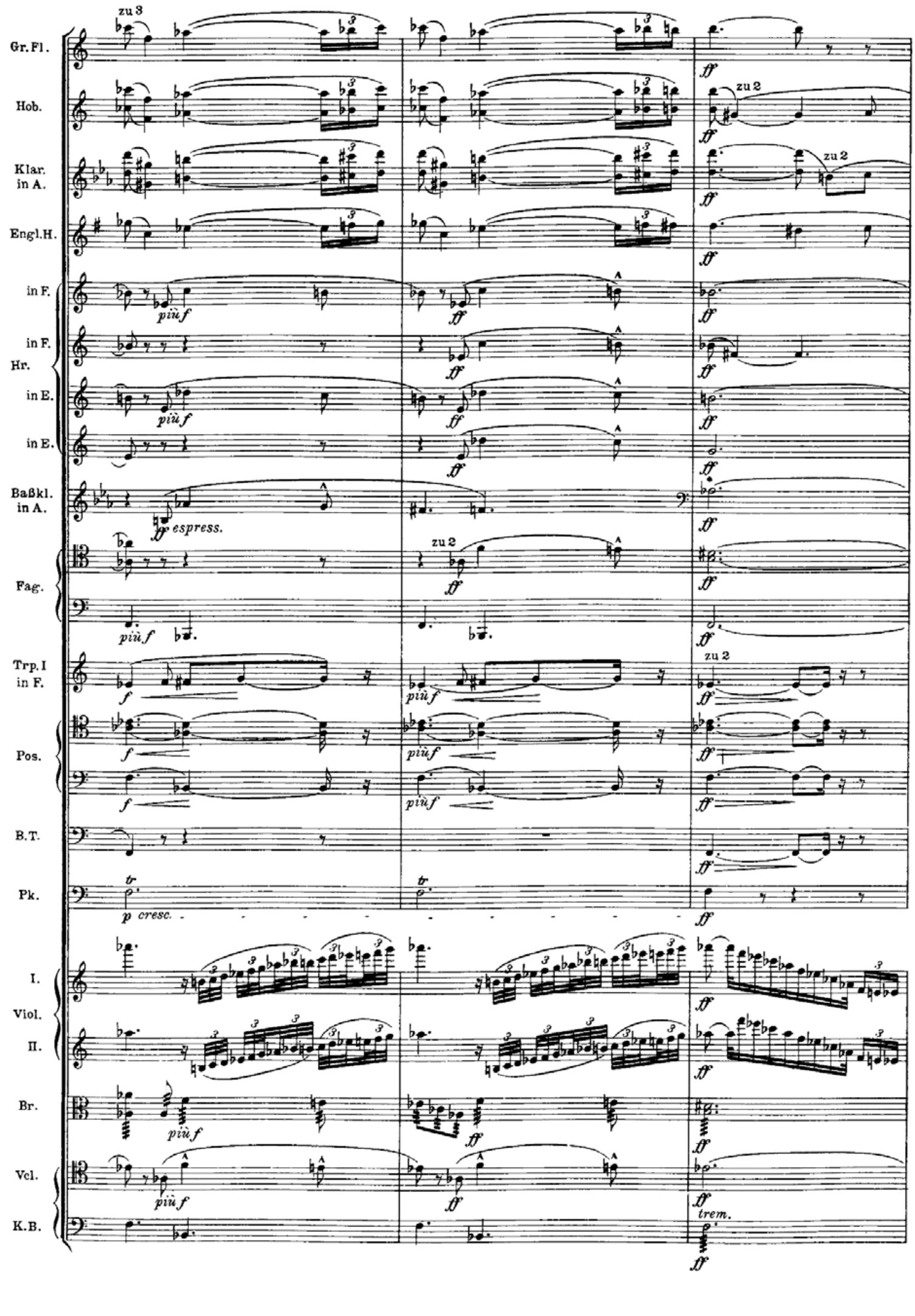

B. Niemals eilen!
Eher breiter werden!
64
Gr. Fl.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl. H.
in F. Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
più f
ff
espress.
zu 2
meno f
dim.
sempre più f
B. Niemals eilen!
Eher breiter werden!

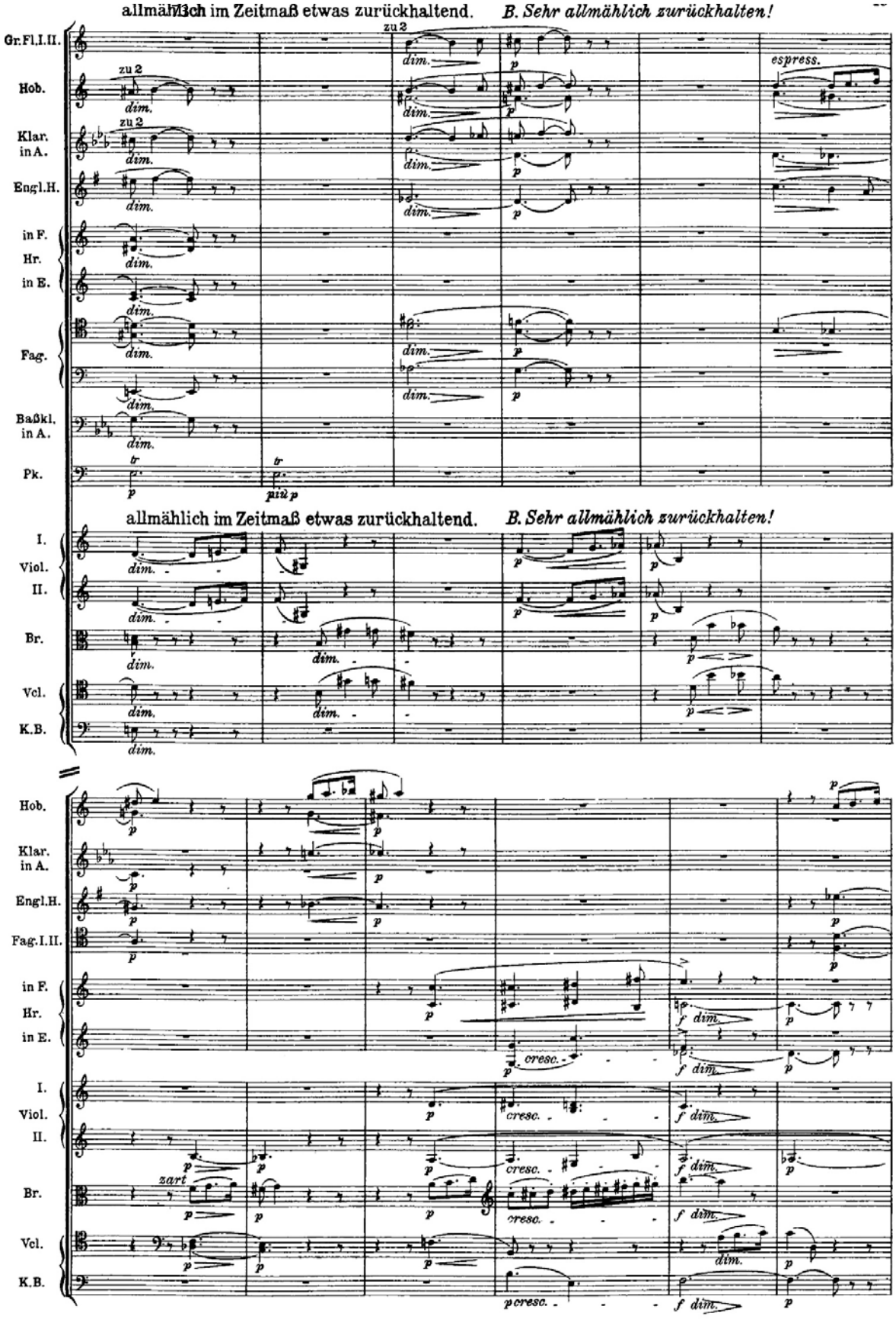

Gr.Fl.I,II.
Hob.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Pos.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
zu 2
molto cresc.
p cresc.
f
II.
III.
sempre più f

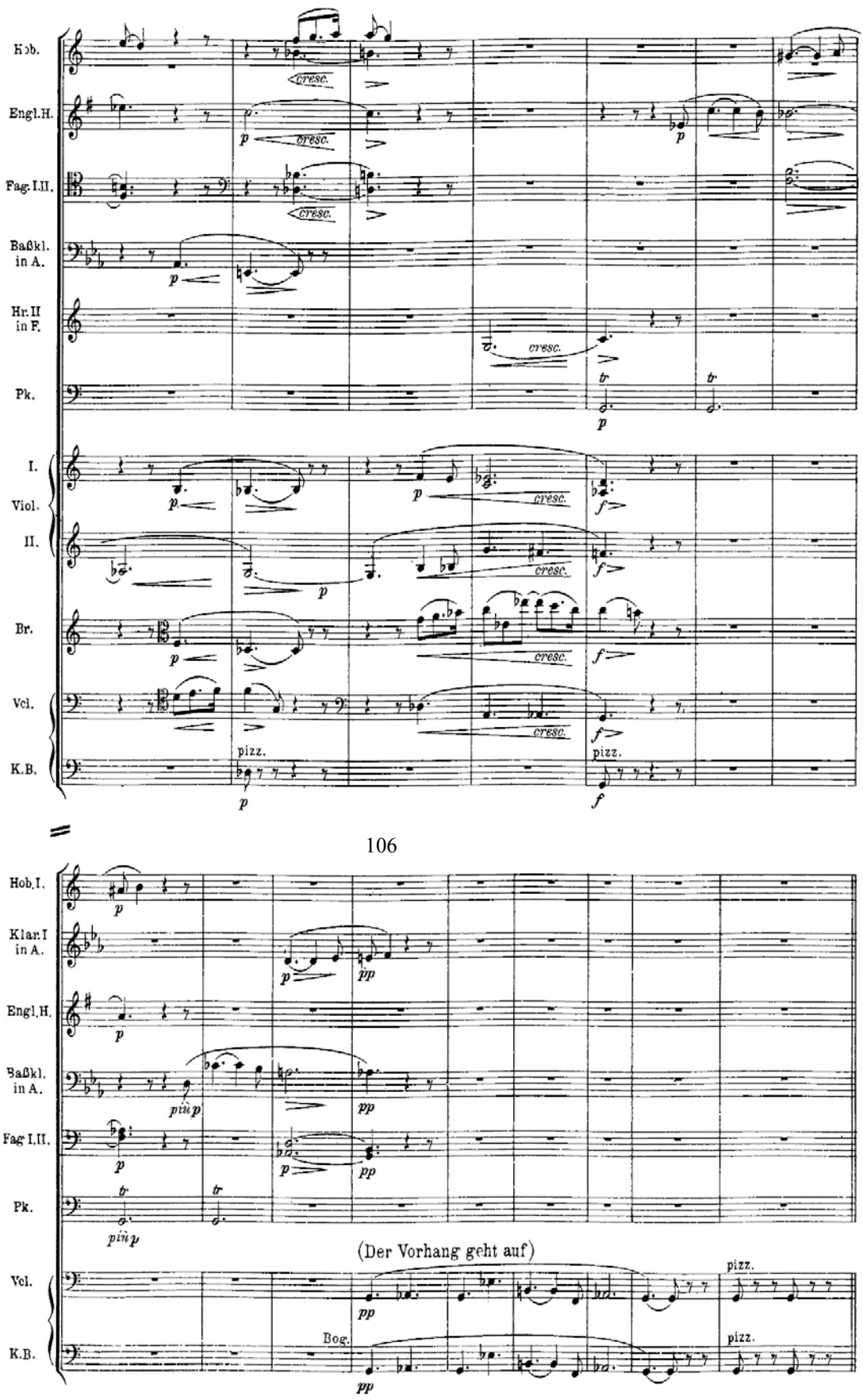

Gr.Fl.I.II.
59
p cresc.
f
p cresc.
Hob.
zu 2
f
più f
ff
Klar. in A.
zu 2
molto cresc.
ff
Engl.H.
f
più f
ff
I. in F.
molto cresc.
Hr. II. in F.
molto cresc.
III. IV. in E.
zu 2
f
f
cresc.
molto cresc.
Fag.
cresc.
molto cresc.
molto cresc.
Baßkl. in A.
molto cresc.
Pos.
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
I. Viol.
f
più f
II.
p
f
p
f
Br.
p
f
più f
Vcl.
f
più f
K.B.
f


zu 3
Gr. Fl.
Hob.
zu 2
Klar. in A.
zu 2
Engl.H.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
Baßkl. in A.
Fag.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
f
più f
ff
cresc.
p cresc.
tr
sul G

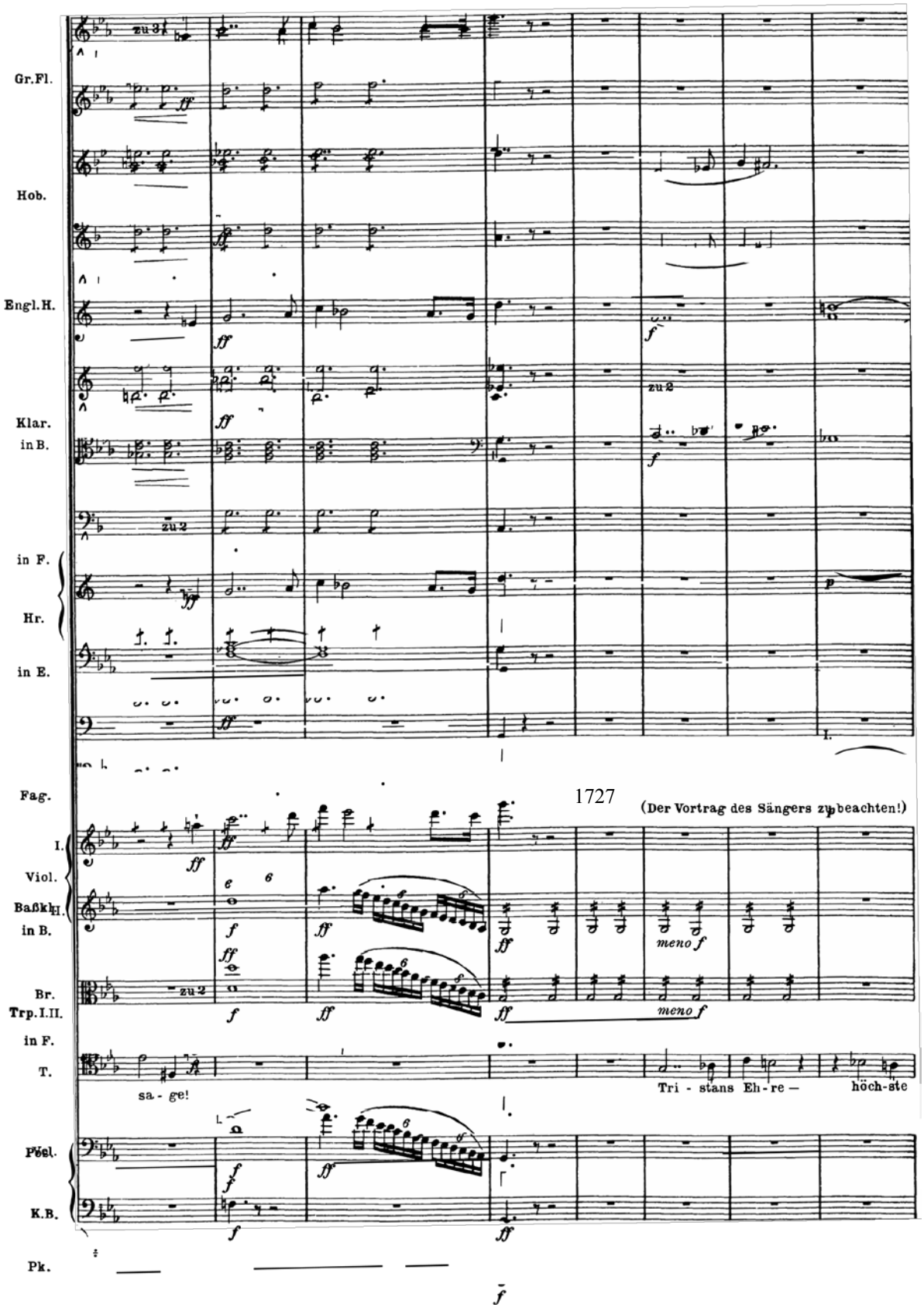

B. Im Tempo bleiben!
Gr.Fl.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
Baßkl. in A.
Fag.
B.T.
Pk.
B. Im Tempo bleiben!
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
zu 3
zu 2
zu 2
sempre f
più f
dim.
f espress.
ff
mf
tr
trem.
espress.

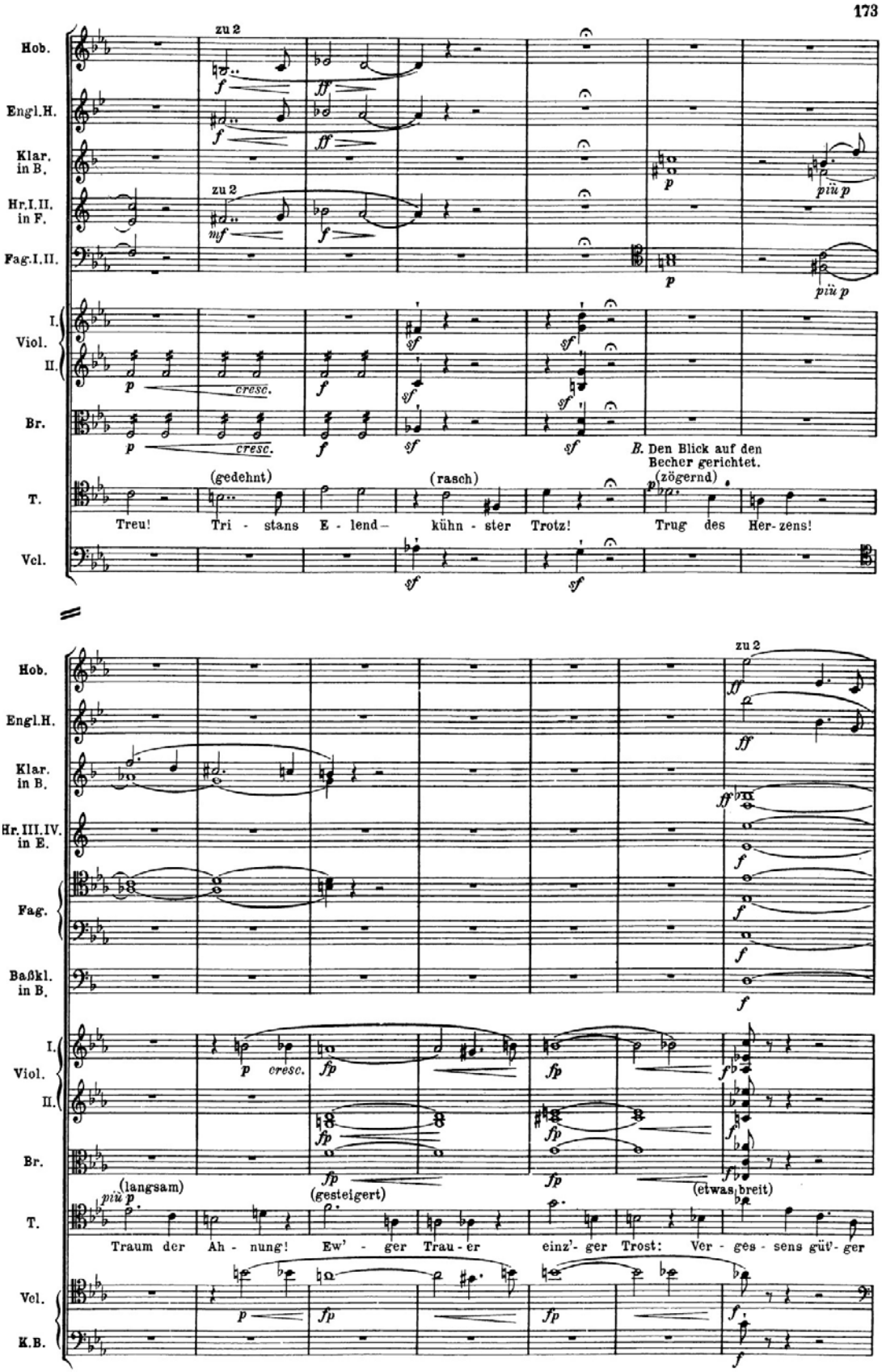

zu 3
Gr. Fl.
Hob.
zu 2
Klar. in A.
zu 2
Engl. H.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
più f
ff
Baßkl. in A.
espress.
zu 2
Fag.
Trp. I in F.
zu 2
Pos.
B. T.
Pk.
p cresc.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K. B.
trem.

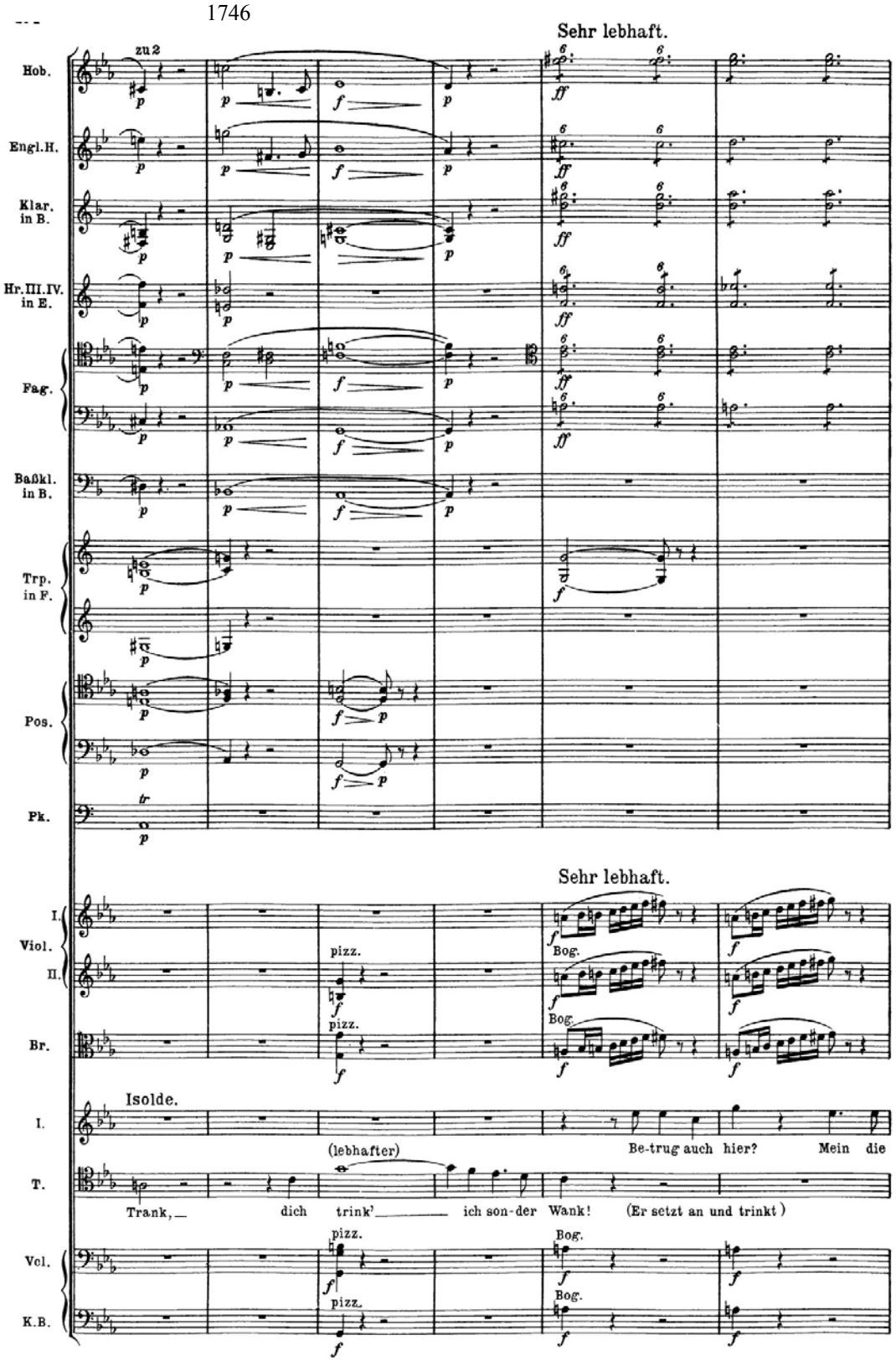

allmählich im Zeitmaß etwas zurückhaltend.
B. Sehr allmählich zurückhalten!
Gr.Fl.I.II.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F. Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Pk.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
Fag.I.II.
zu 2
dim.
espress.
tr
più p
zart
cresc.
f dim.
pcresc.

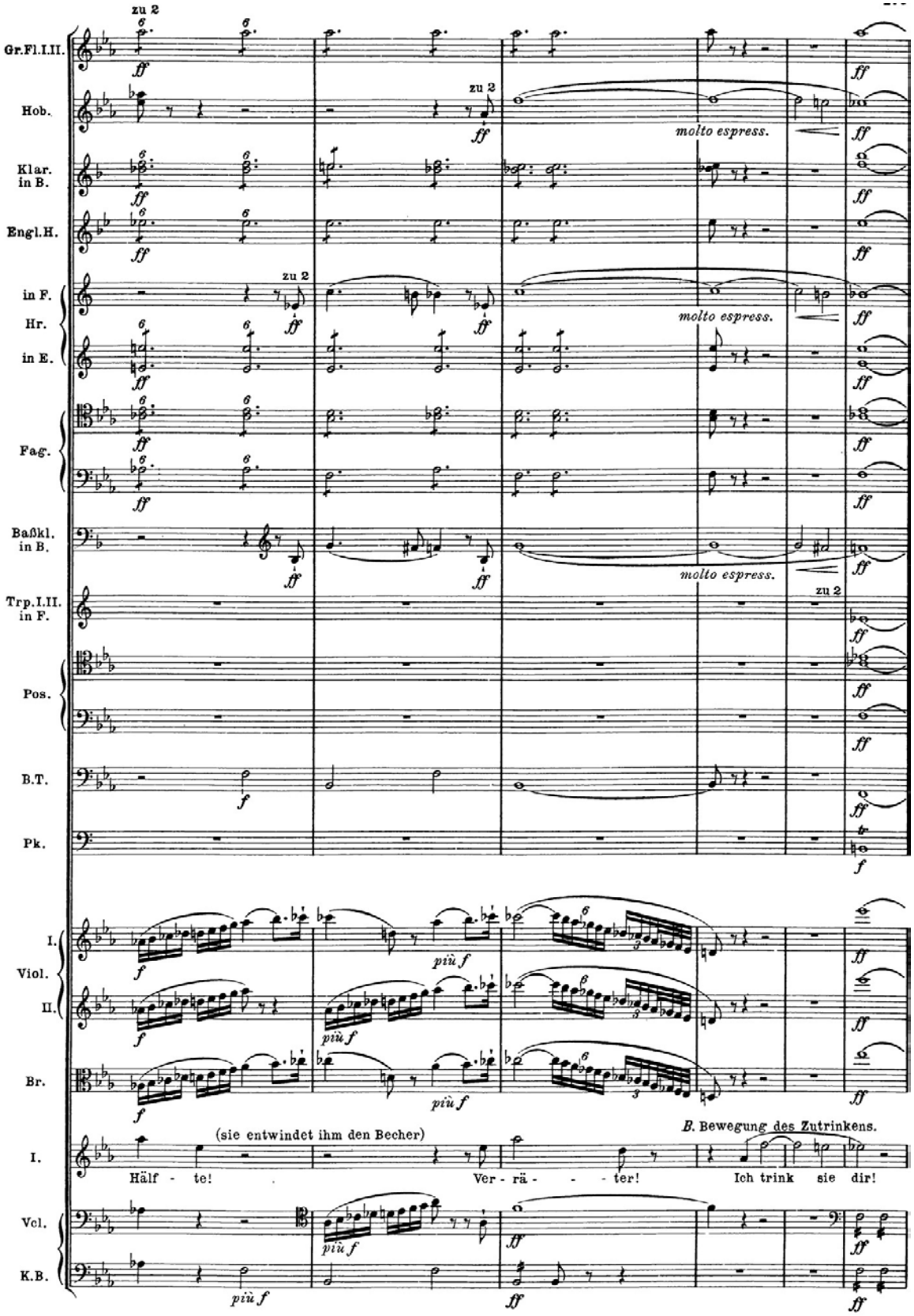

Hob.
Engl.H.
Fag.I.II.
Baßkl. in A.
Hr.II in F.
Pk.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
cresc.
pizz.
106
Hob.I.
Klar.I in A.
Engl.H.
Baßkl. in A.
Fag.I.II.
Pk.
più p
(Der Vorhang geht auf)
Vcl.
K.B.
Bog.
pizz.

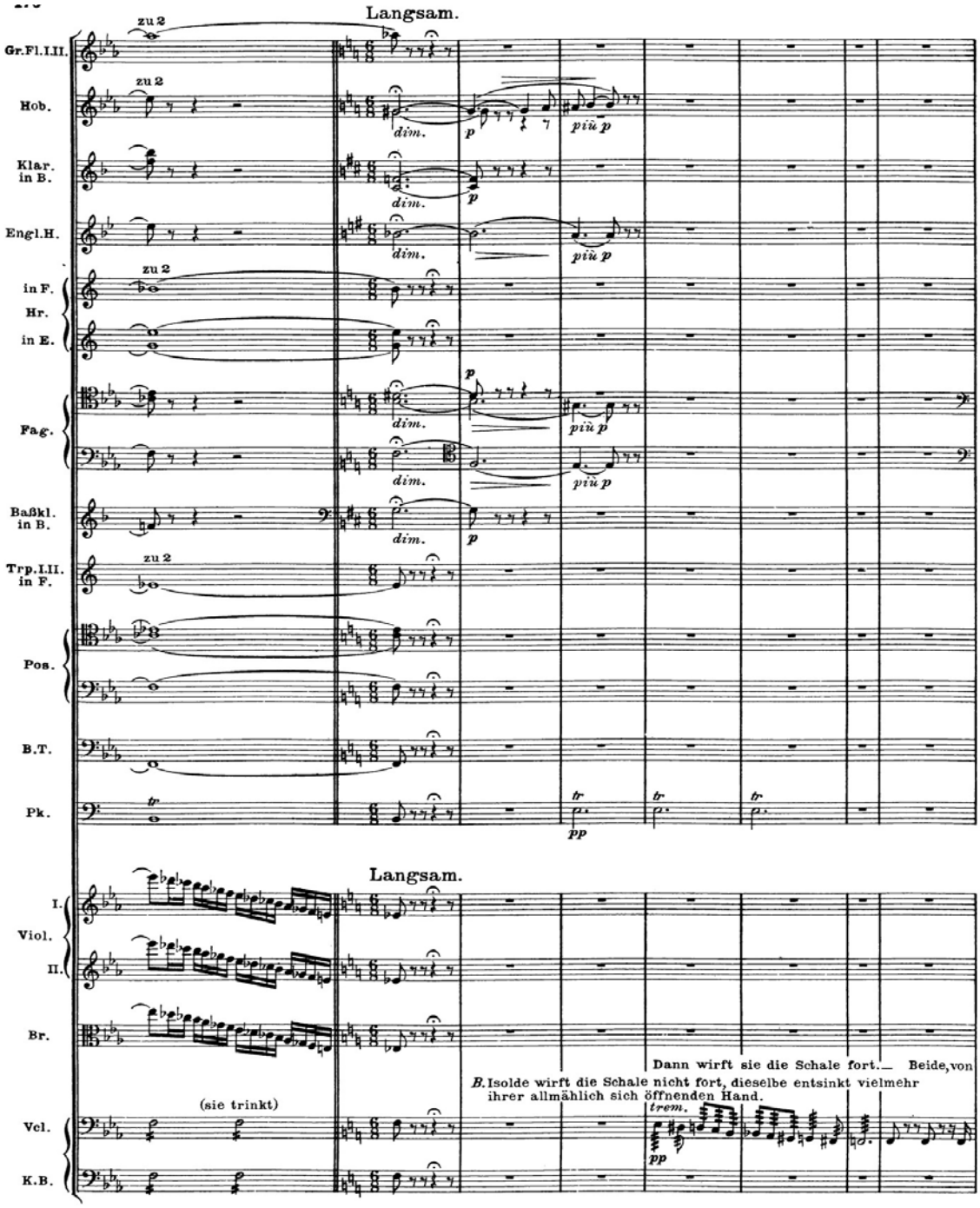
The Liebestrank

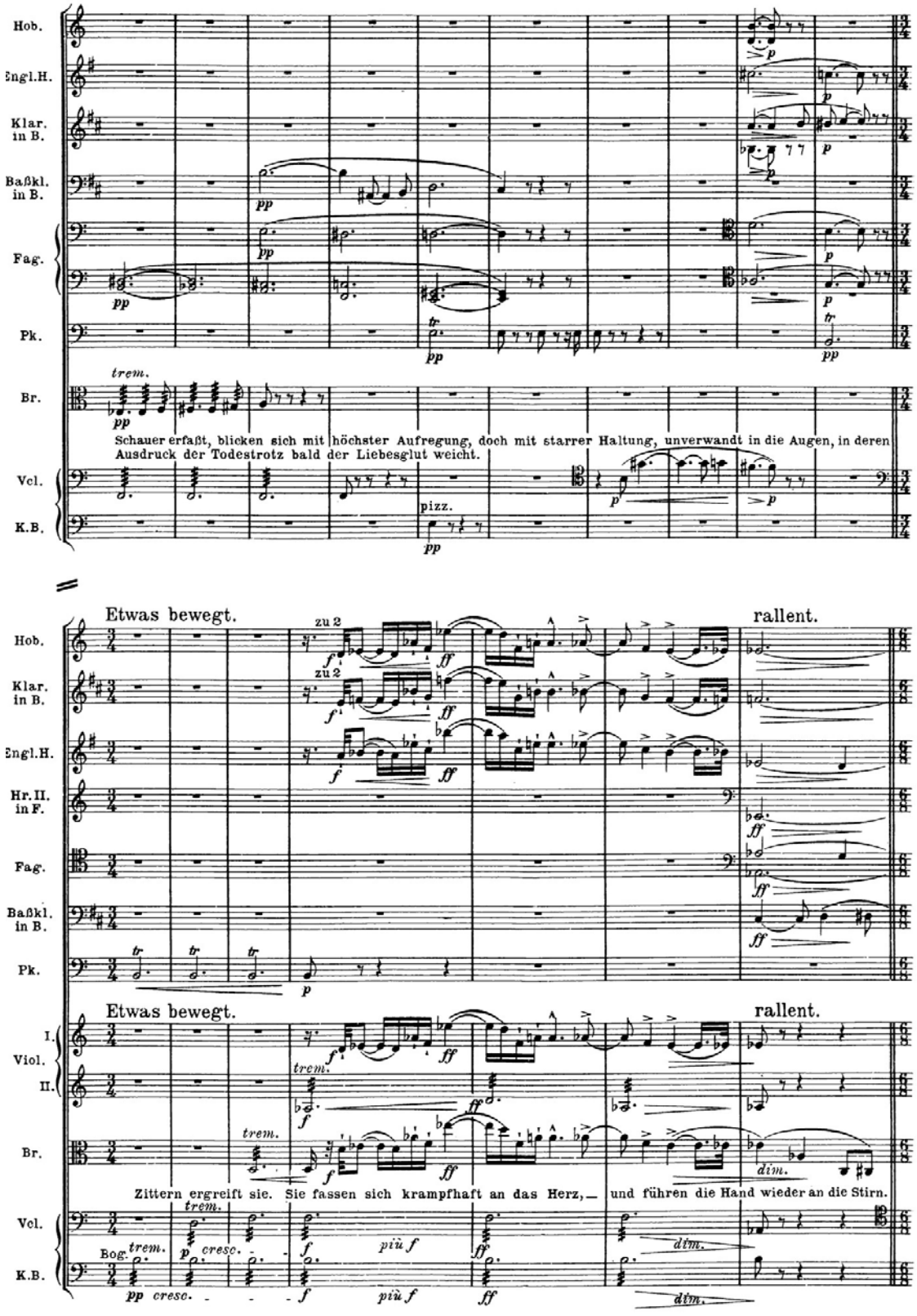

Gr.Fl.
Hob.
Engl.H.
Klar. in B.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
I. Viol.
Baßkl. in B.
Br.
Trp. I. II. in F.
T.
Pkl.
K.B.
Pk.
zu 3
zu 2
1727
(Der Vortrag des Sängers zu beachten!)
meno f
sa - ge!
Tri - stans Eh - re —
höch-ste

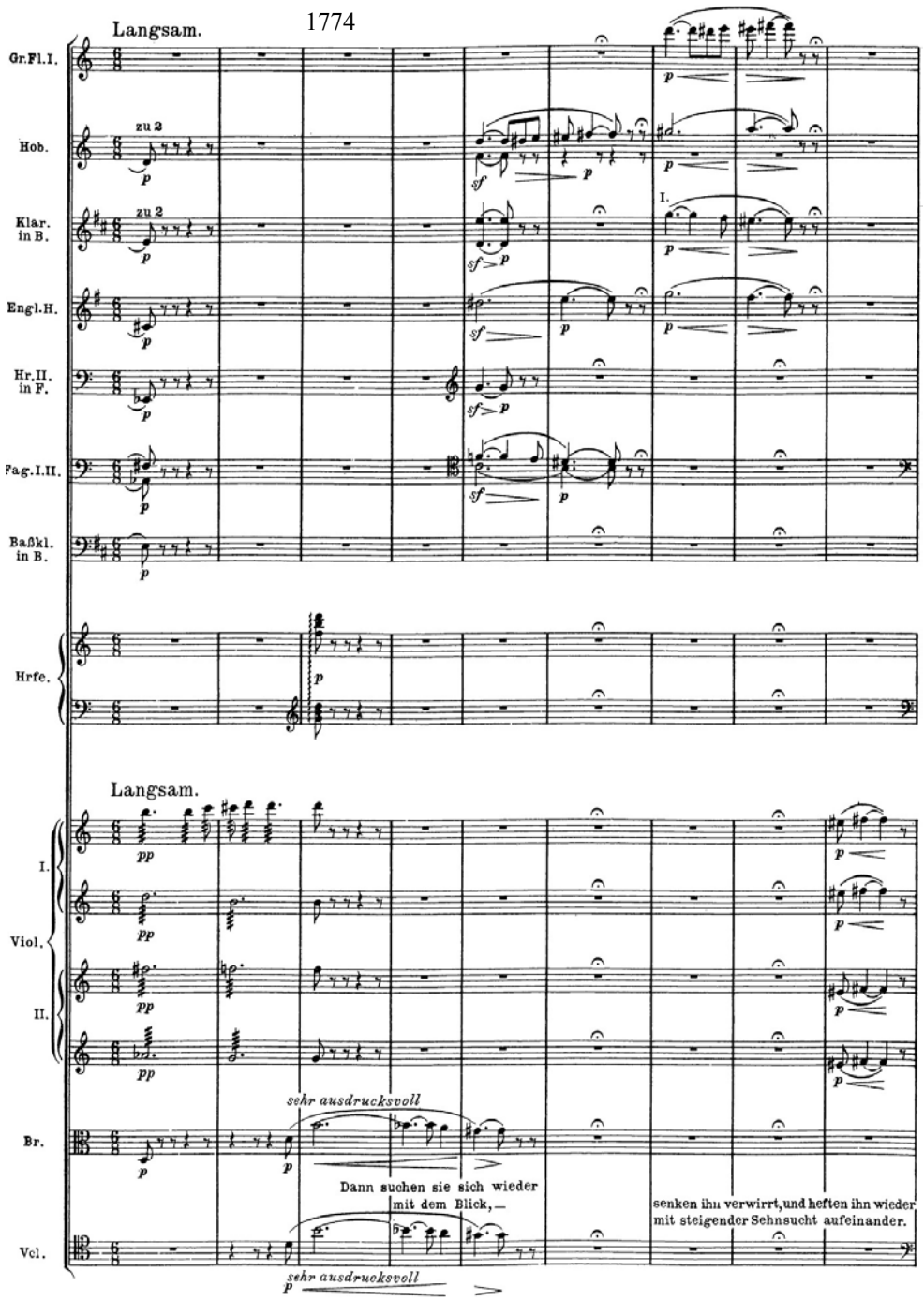

173
Hob.
Engl.H.
Klar. in B.
Hr.I.II. in F.
Fag.I.II.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
T.
Vcl.
zu 2
(gedehnt)
(rasch)
(zögernd)
B. Den Blick auf den Becher gerichtet.
Treu! Tri - stans E - lend – kühn - ster Trotz! Trug des Her-zens!
Hr.III.IV. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
K.B.
(langsam)
(gesteigert)
(etwas breit)
Traum der Ah - nung! Ew' - ger Trau - er einz'- ger Trost: Ver - ges - sens güt'- ger

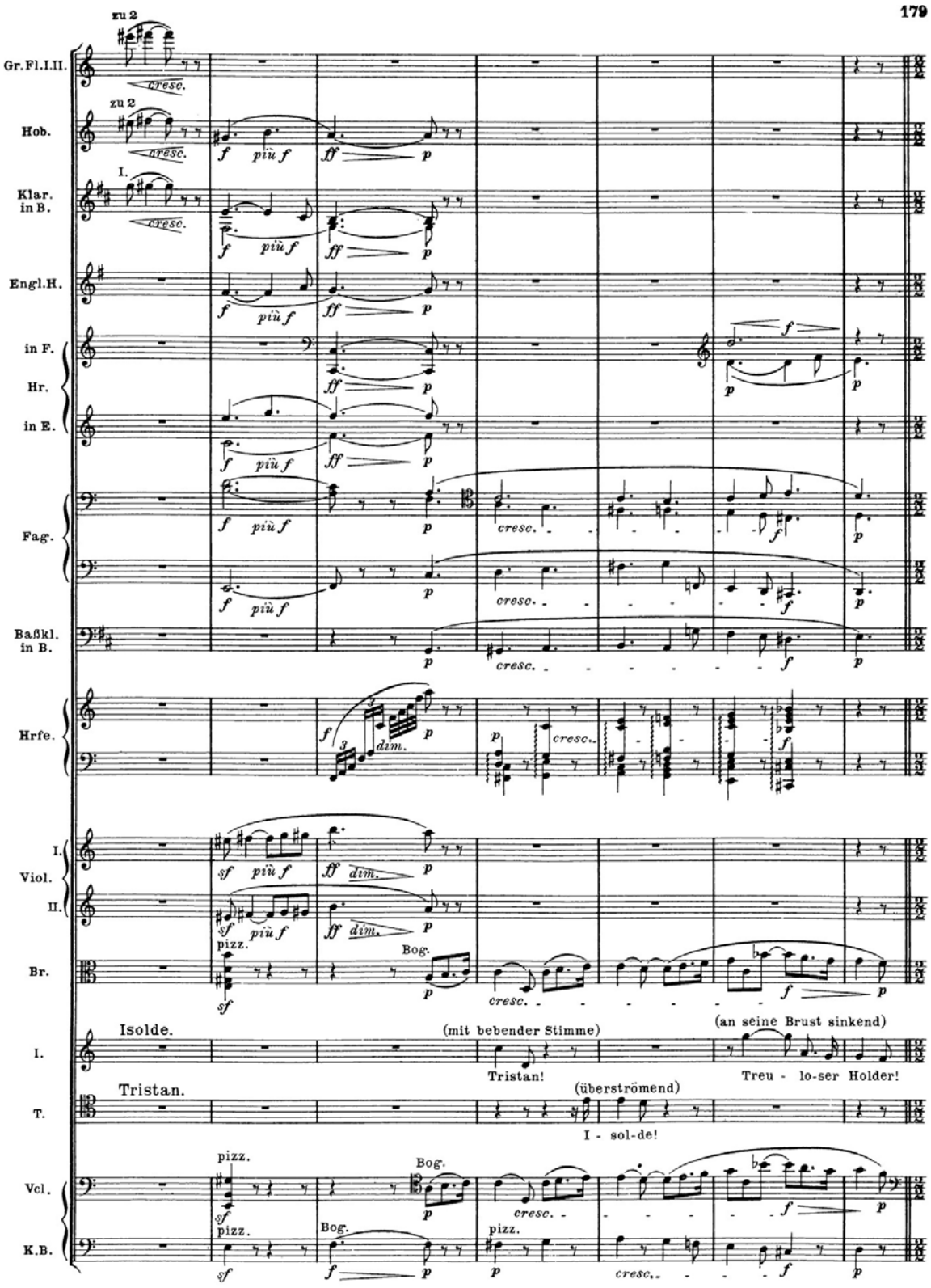

1746
Sehr lebhaft.
zu 2
Hob.
Engl.H.
Klar. in B.
Hr.III.IV. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Trp. in F.
Pos.
Pk.
Sehr lebhaft.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
pizz.
Bog.
Isolde.
I.
T.
(lebhafter)
Be-trug auch hier? Mein die
Trank, dich trink' ich son-der Wank! (Er setzt an und trinkt)
Vcl.
K.B.


Gr.Fl.I.II.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Trp.I.II. in F.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
zu 2
molto espress.
(sie entwindet ihm den Becher)
B. Bewegung des Zutrinkens.
Hälf - te!
Ver - rä - - - ter!
Ich trink sie dir!

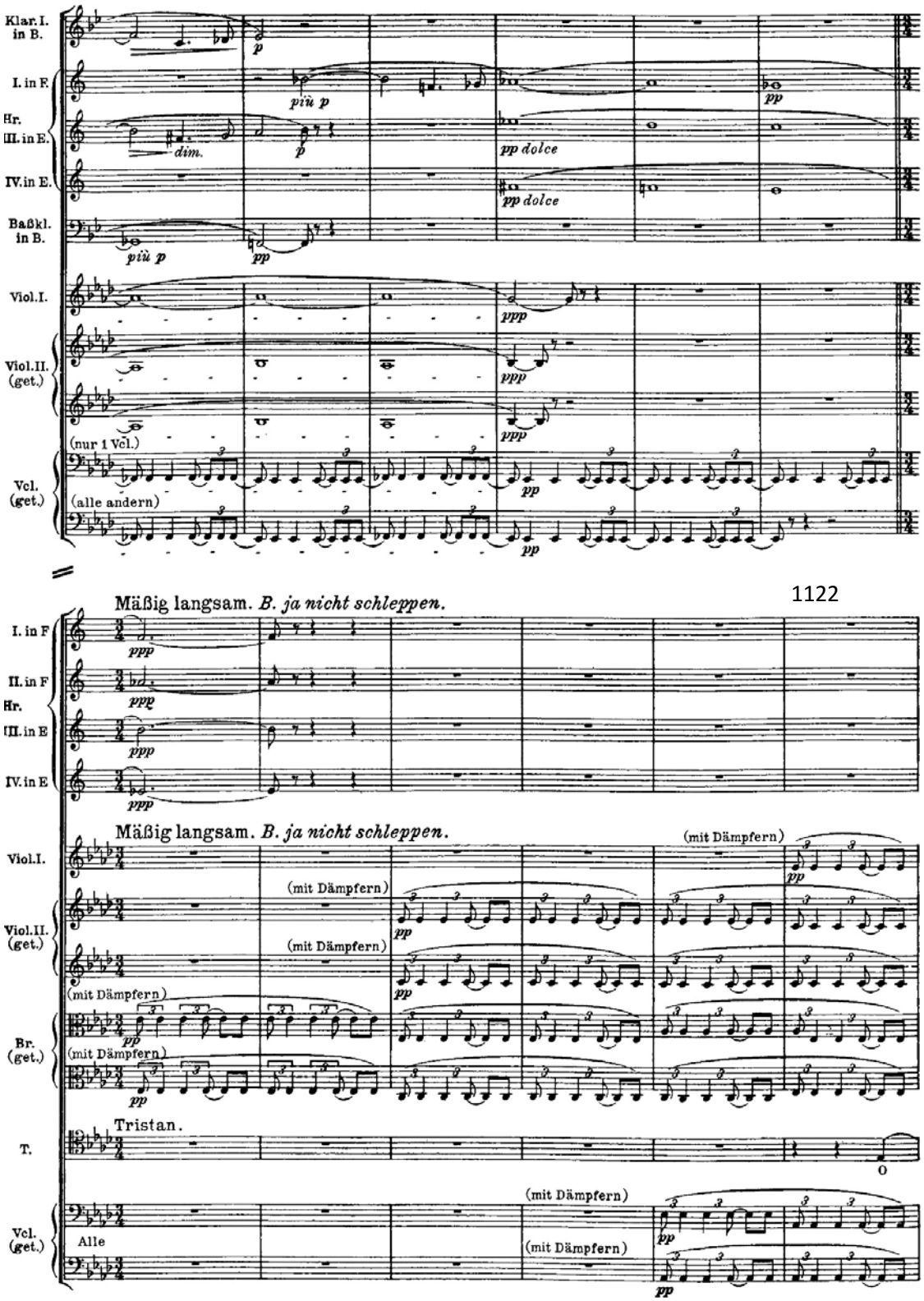

Langsam.
Gr.Fl.I.II.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
in F. Hr. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Trp.I.II. in F.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
zu 2
dim.
p
più p
pp
tr
Langsam.
I. Viol. II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
(sie trinkt)
B. Isolde wirft die Schale nicht fort, dieselbe entsinkt vielmehr ihrer allmählich sich öffnenden Hand.
Dann wirft sie die Schale fort.— Beide, von
trem.

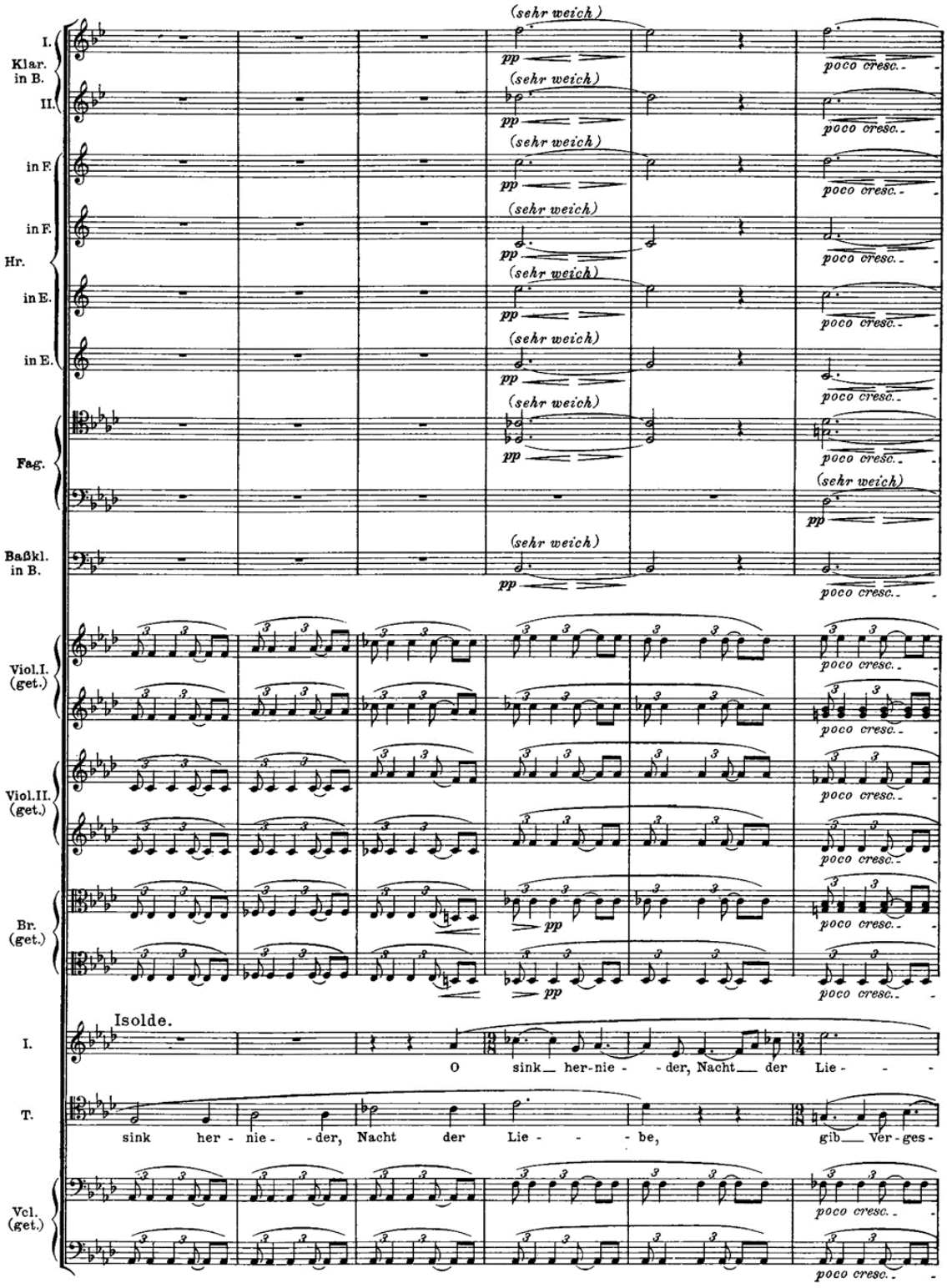

Hob.
Engl.H.
Klar. in B.
Baßkl. in B.
Fag.
Pk.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
trem.
Schauer erfaßt, blicken sich mit höchster Aufregung, doch mit starrer Haltung, unverwandt in die Augen, in deren Ausdruck der Todestrotz bald der Liebesglut weicht.
pizz.
Etwas bewegt.
rallent.
zu 2
Hr. II. in F.
I. Viol.
II.
Zittern ergreift sie. Sie fassen sich krampfhaft an das Herz, — und führen die Hand wieder an die Stirn.
Bog.
cresc.
più f
dim.

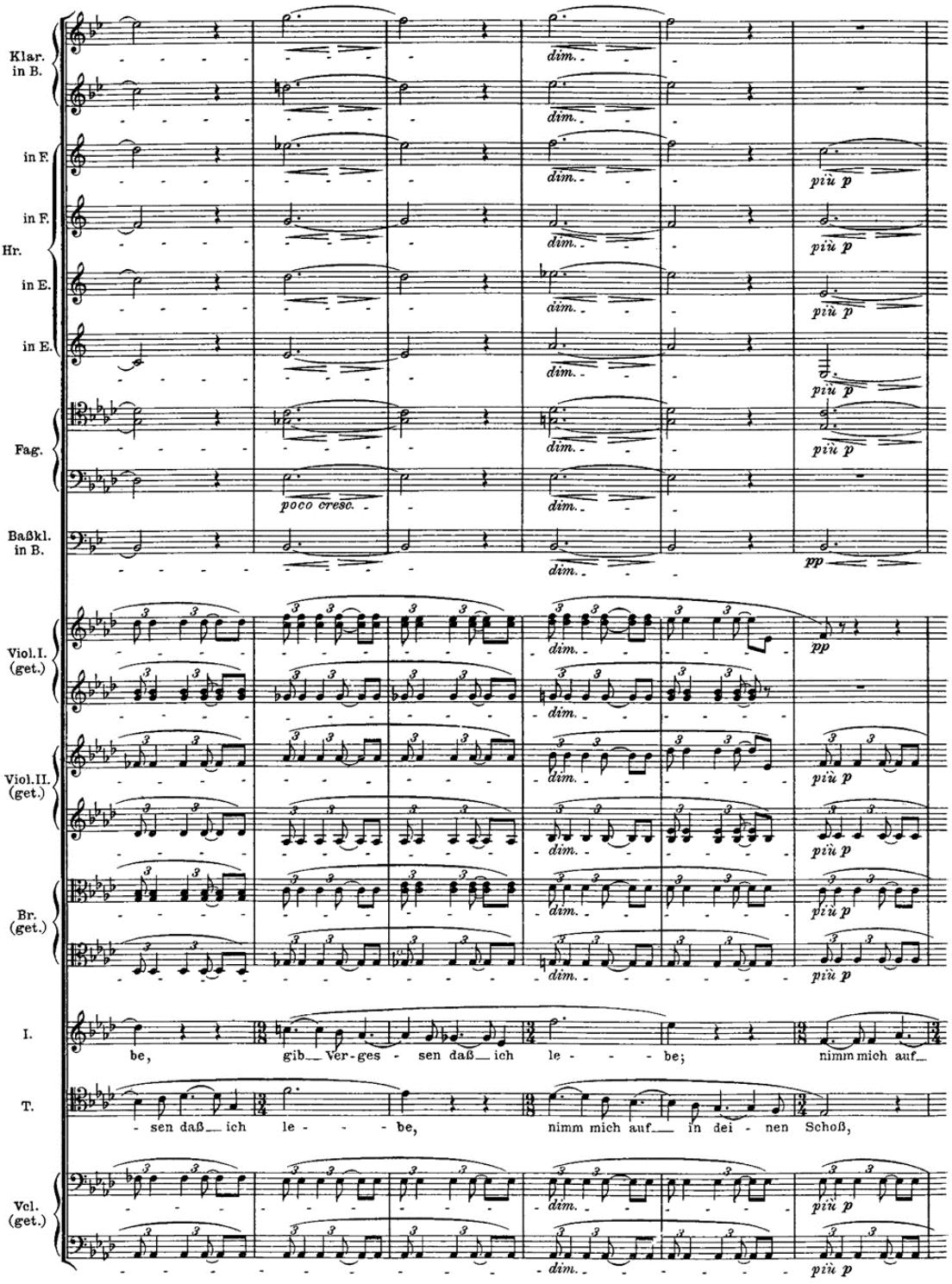

1774
Langsam.
Gr.Fl.I.
Hob.
zu 2
Klar. in B.
zu 2
Engl.H.
Hr.II. in F.
Fag.I.II.
Baßkl. in B.
Hrfe.
Langsam.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
sehr ausdrucksvoll
Dann suchen sie sich wieder mit dem Blick,—
senken ihn verwirrt, und heften ihn wieder mit steigender Sehnsucht aufeinander.
sehr ausdrucksvoll

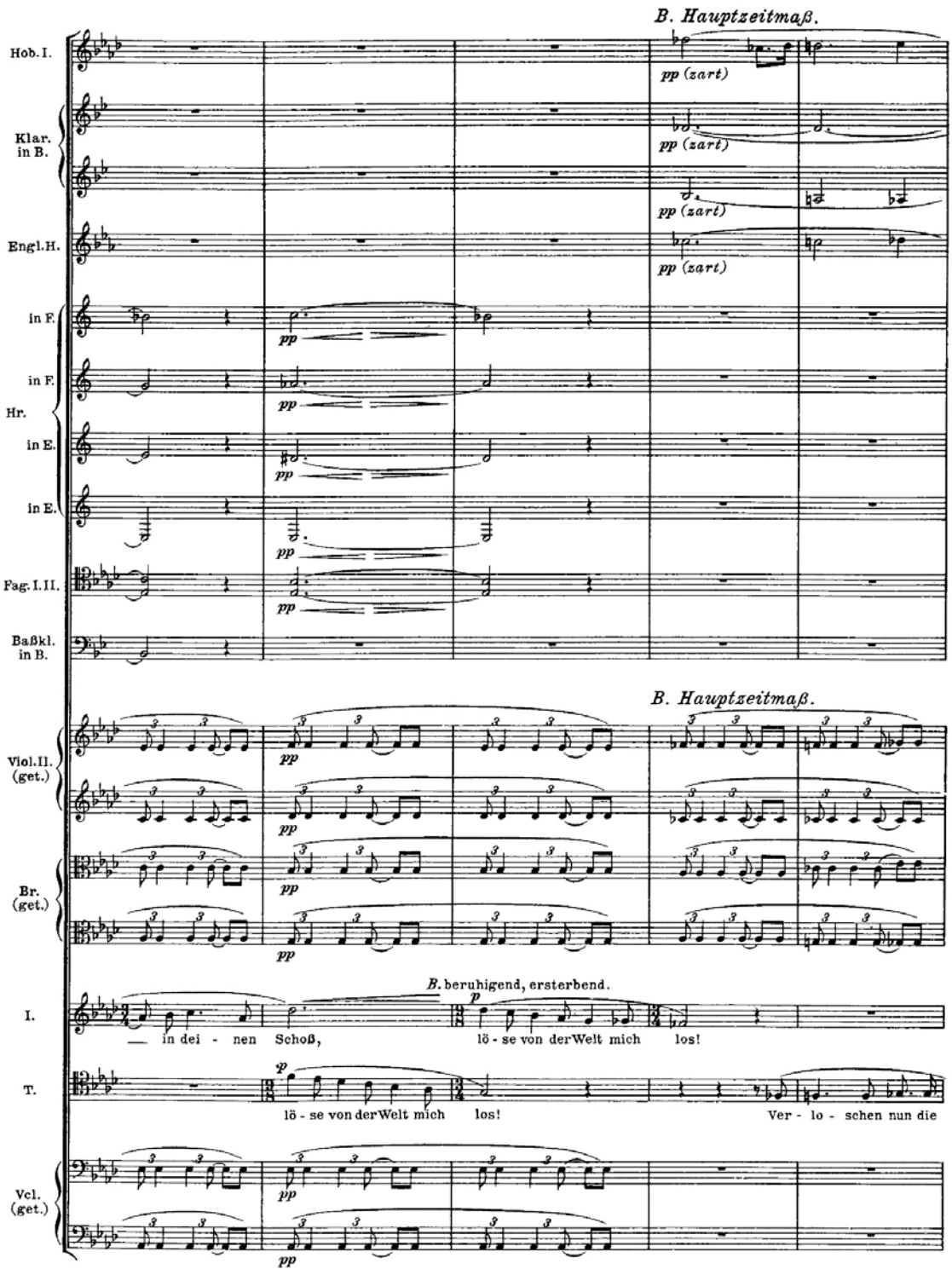

179
Gr.Fl.I.II.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
in F. Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Hrfe.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
T.
Vcl.
K.B.
zu 2
I.
cresc.
più f
ff
p
dim.
pizz.
Bog.
Isolde.
(mit bebender Stimme)
(an seine Brust sinkend)
Tristan!
Treu - lo-ser Holder!
Tristan.
(überströmend)
I - sol-de!

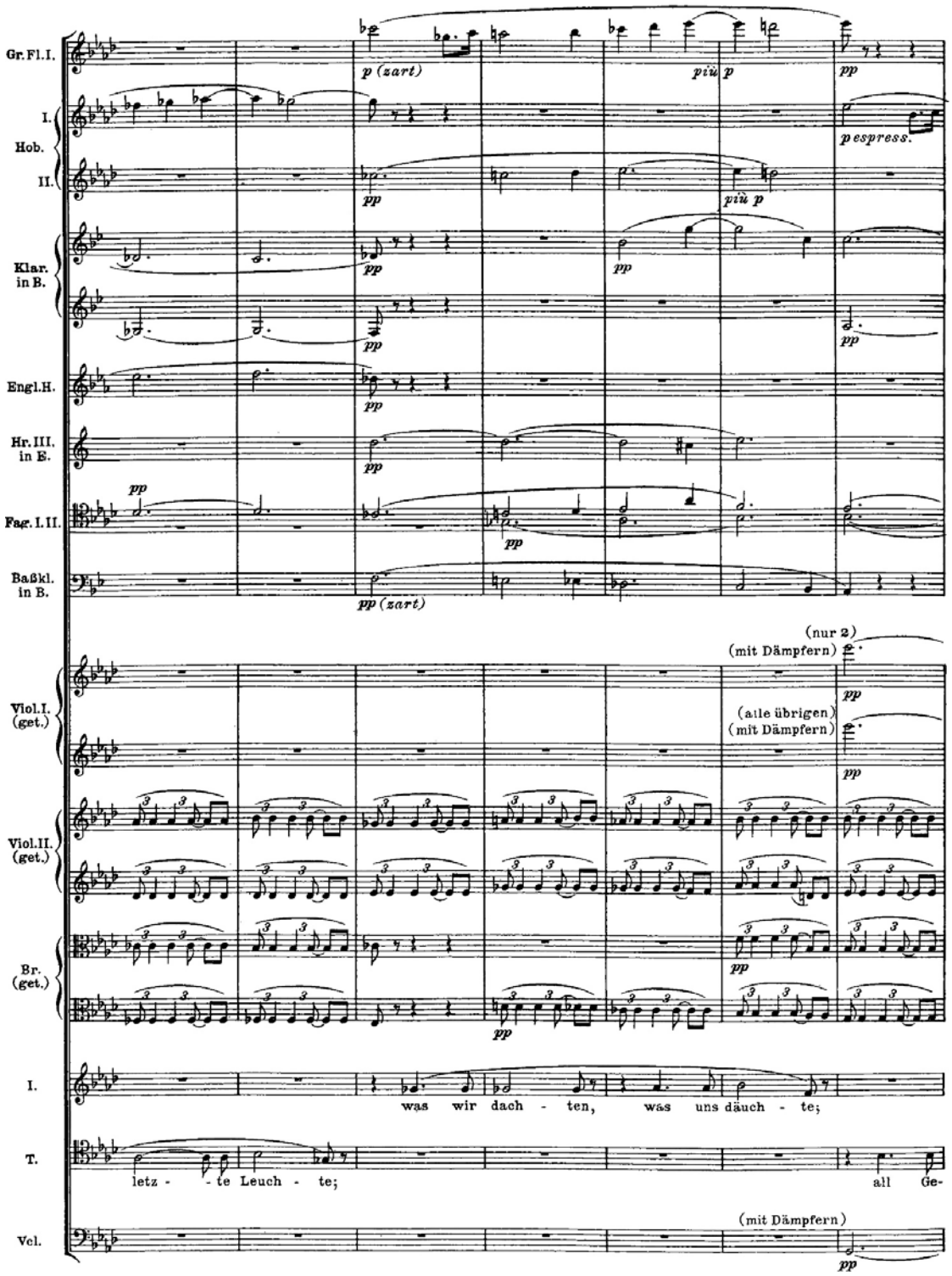
O Sink Hernieder

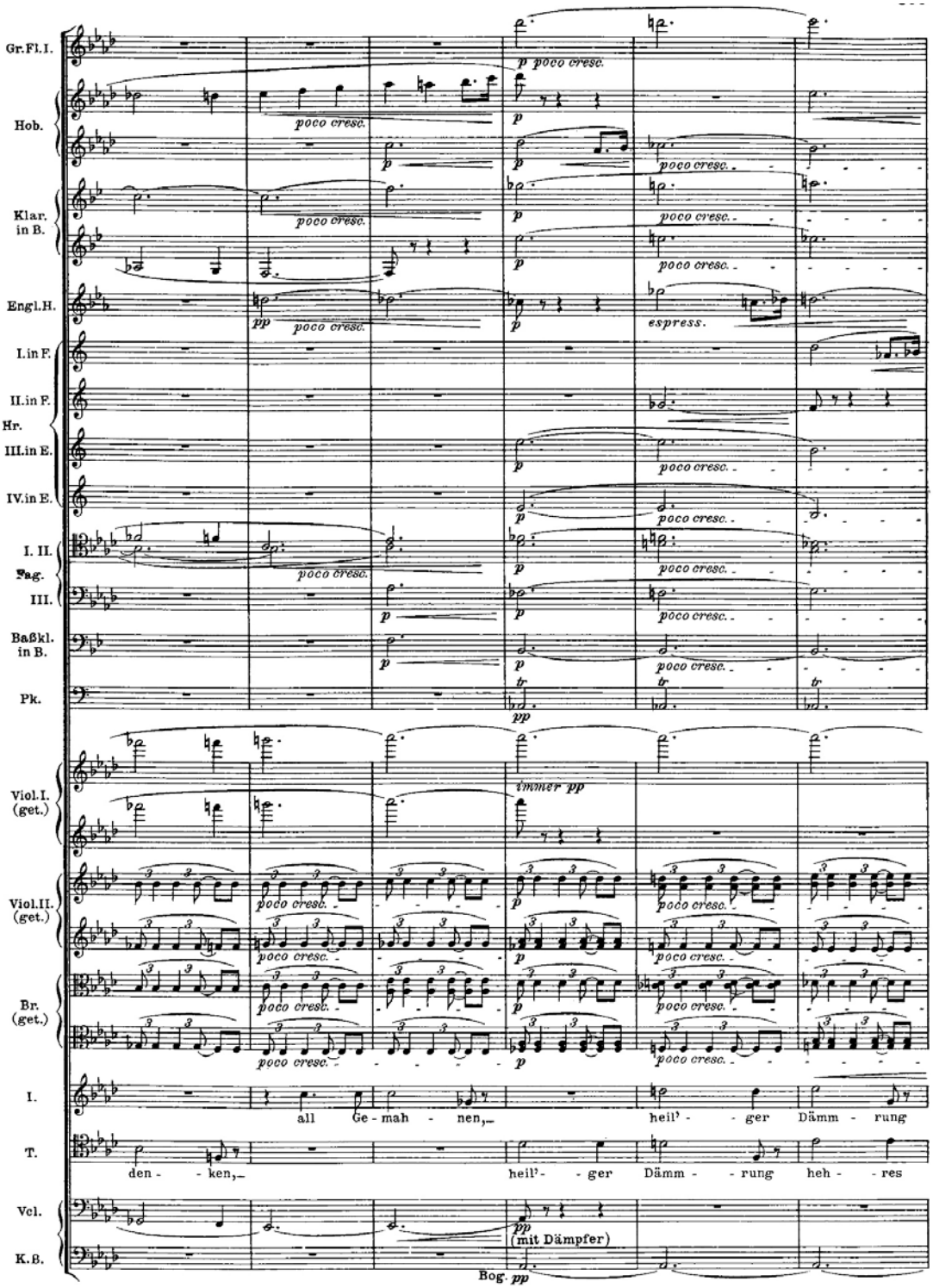

Klar. I. in B.
I. in F
Hr.
III. in E.
IV. in E.
Baßkl. in B.
Viol. I.
Viol. II. (get.)
(nur 1 Vcl.)
Vcl. (get.)
(alle andern)
più p
dim.
pp dolce
ppp
1122
Mäßig langsam. B. ja nicht schleppen.
II. in F
(mit Dämpfern)
Br. (get.)
Tristan.
T.
Alle

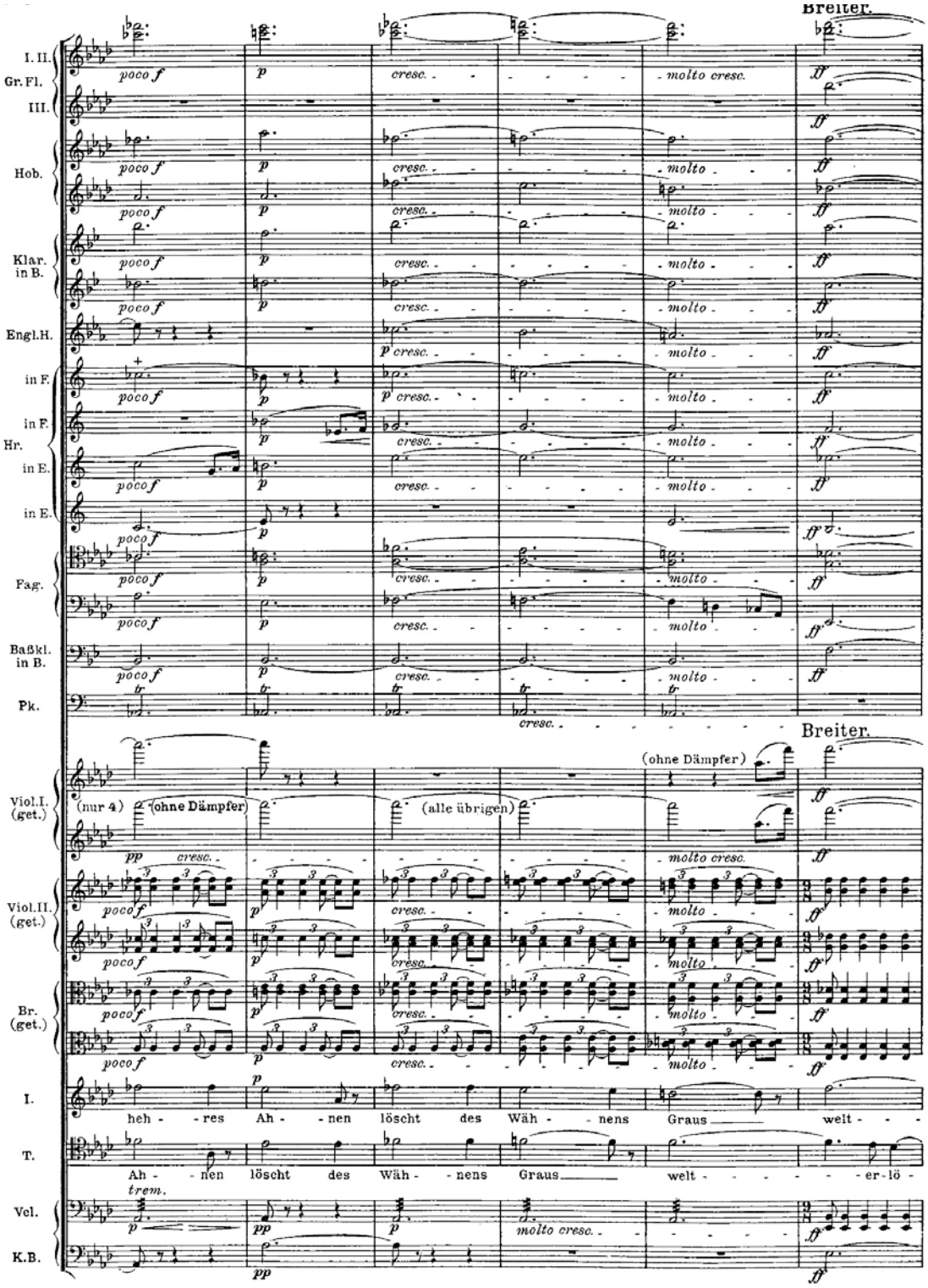

I.
Klar. in B.
II.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Viol.I. (get.)
Viol.II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
T.
Vcl. (get.)
(sehr weich)
pp
poco cresc.
Isolde.
O sink_ her-nie - - der, Nacht_ der Lie - - -
sink her - nie - - der, Nacht der Lie - - - be, gib_ Ver - ges -

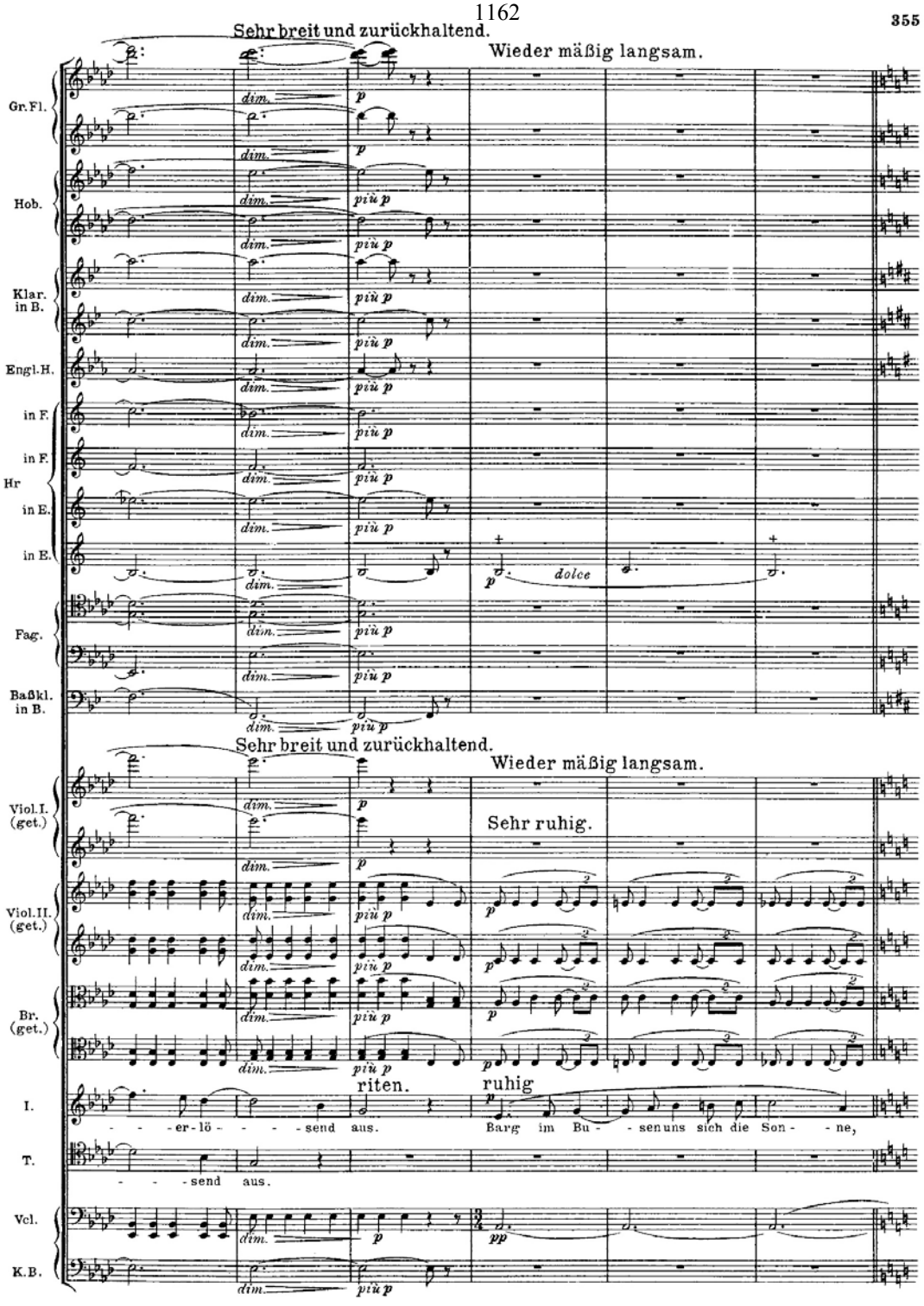

Klar. in B.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Viol. I. (get.)
Viol. II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
T.
Vcl. (get.)
dim.
poco cresc.
più p
pp
be, gib Ver-ges - sen daß ich le - - - be; nimm mich auf
- sen daß ich le - - - be, nimm mich auf in dei - nen Schoß,

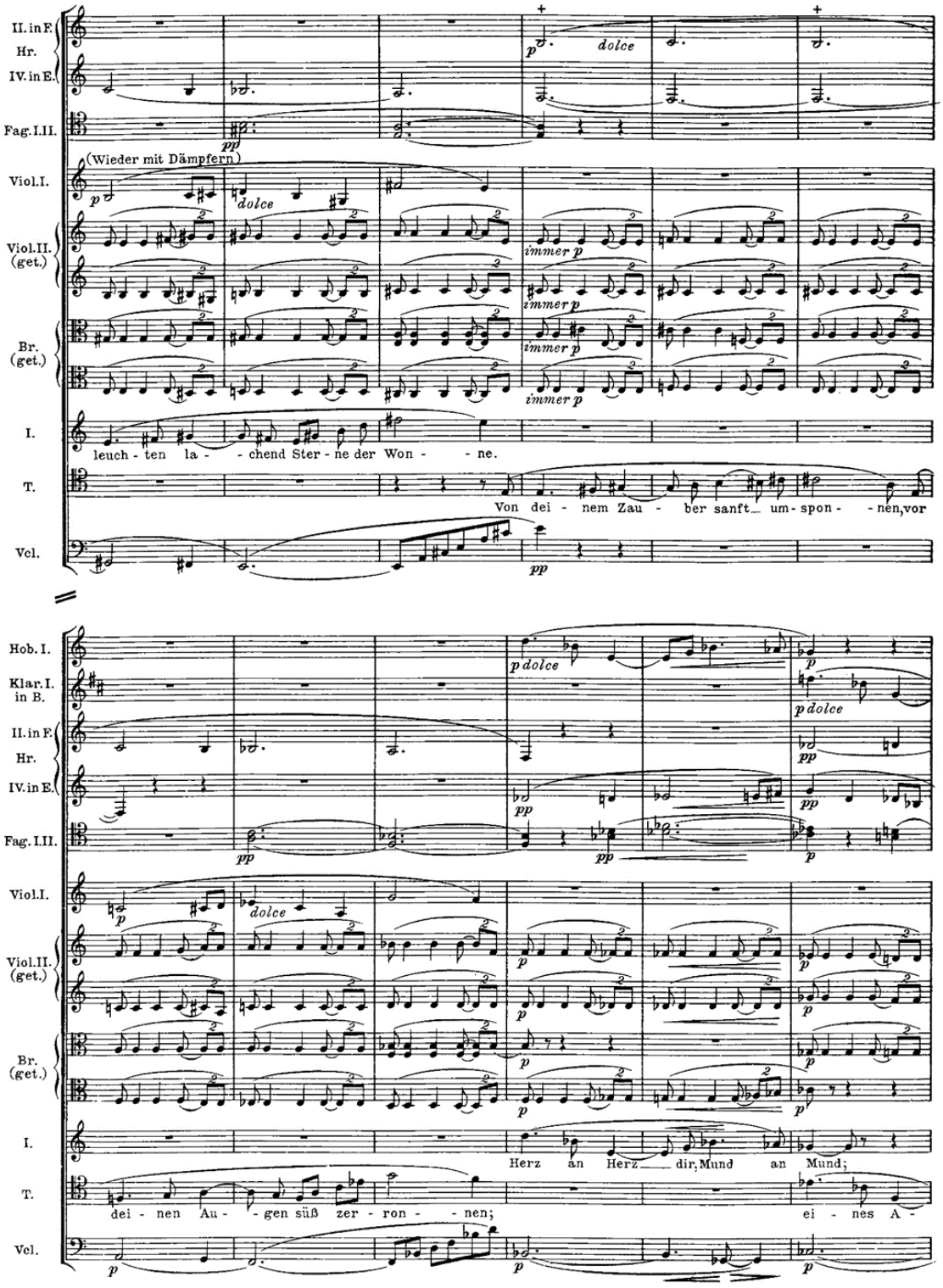

B. Hauptzeitmaß.
Hob. I.
Klar. in B.
Engl. H.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
Fag. I. II.
Baßkl. in B.
pp (zart)
pp
B. Hauptzeitmaß.
Viol. II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
B. beruhigend, ersterbend.
I.
T.
Vcl. (get.)
— in dei - nen Schoß,
lö - se von der Welt mich los!
lö - se von der Welt mich los!
Ver - lo - schen nun die

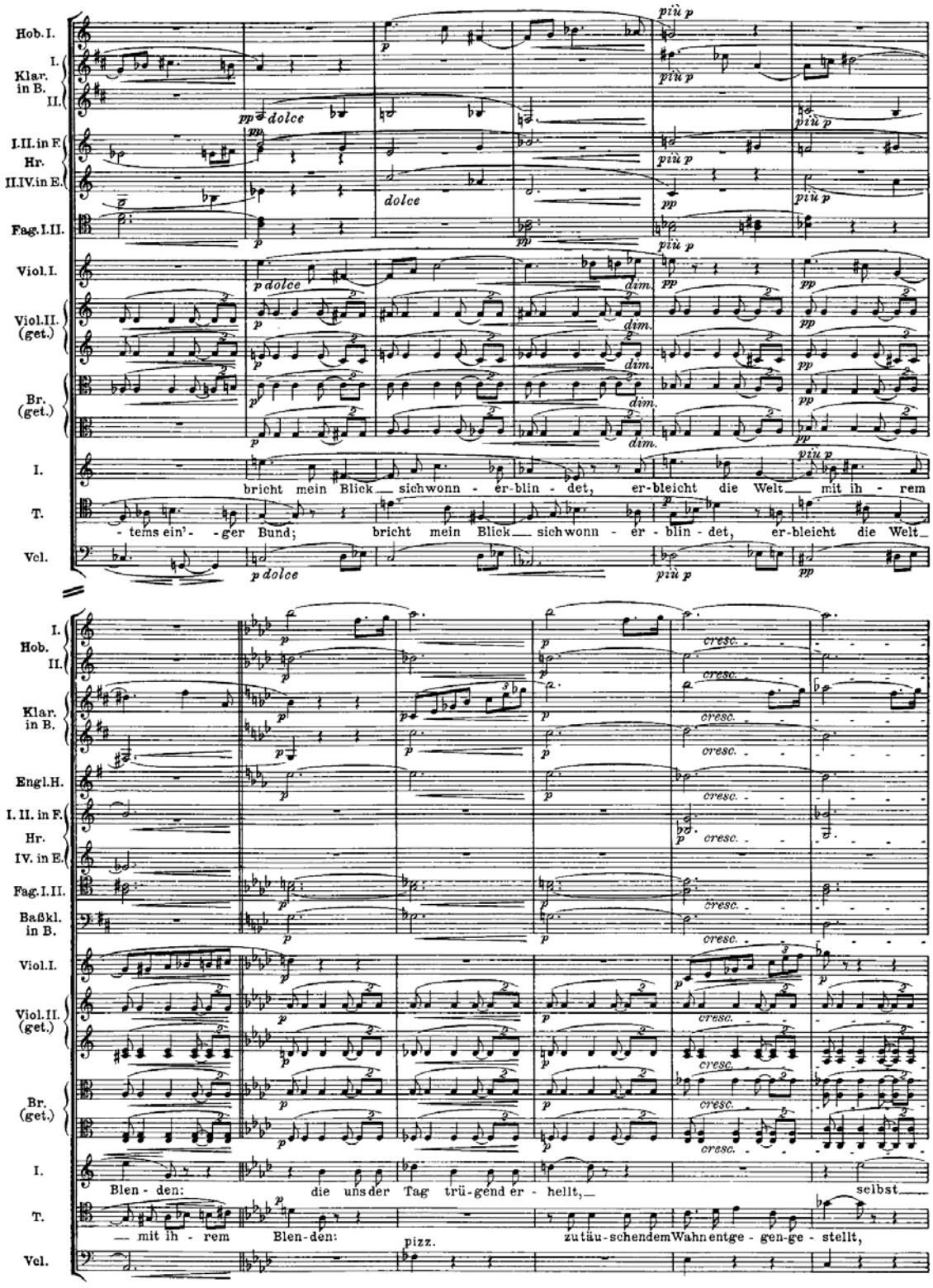

Gr. Fl. I.
p (zart)
più p
pp
p espress.
I.
Hob.
II.
più p
Klar. in B.
Engl. H.
Hr. III. in E.
Fag. I. II.
Baßkl. in B.
pp (zart)
(nur 2)
(mit Dämpfern)
Viol. I. (get.)
(alle übrigen)
(mit Dämpfern)
Viol. II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
was wir dach - ten, was uns däuch - te;
T.
letz - - te Leuch - te; all Ge-
Vcl.
(mit Dämpfern)

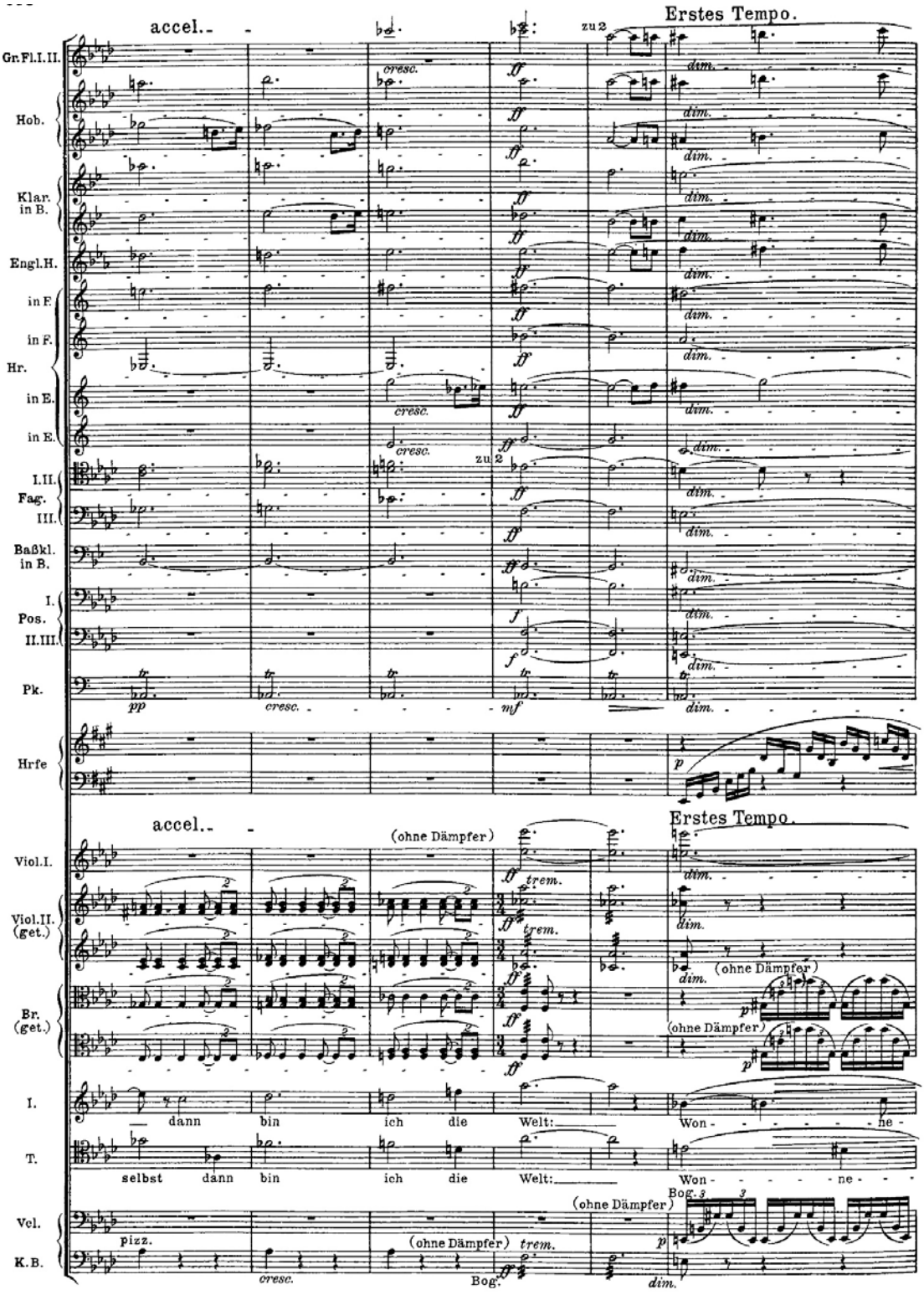

Gr.Fl.I.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
I.in F.
II.in F.
Hr.
III.in E.
IV.in E.
I. II.
Fag.
III.
Baßkl. in B.
Pk.
Viol.I. (get.)
Viol.II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
T.
Vcl.
K.B.
poco cresc.
p poco cresc.
espress.
immer pp
all Ge - mah - nen,
heil' - ger Dämm - rung
den - ken,
heil' - ger Dämm - rung heh - res
(mit Dämpfer)
Bog.

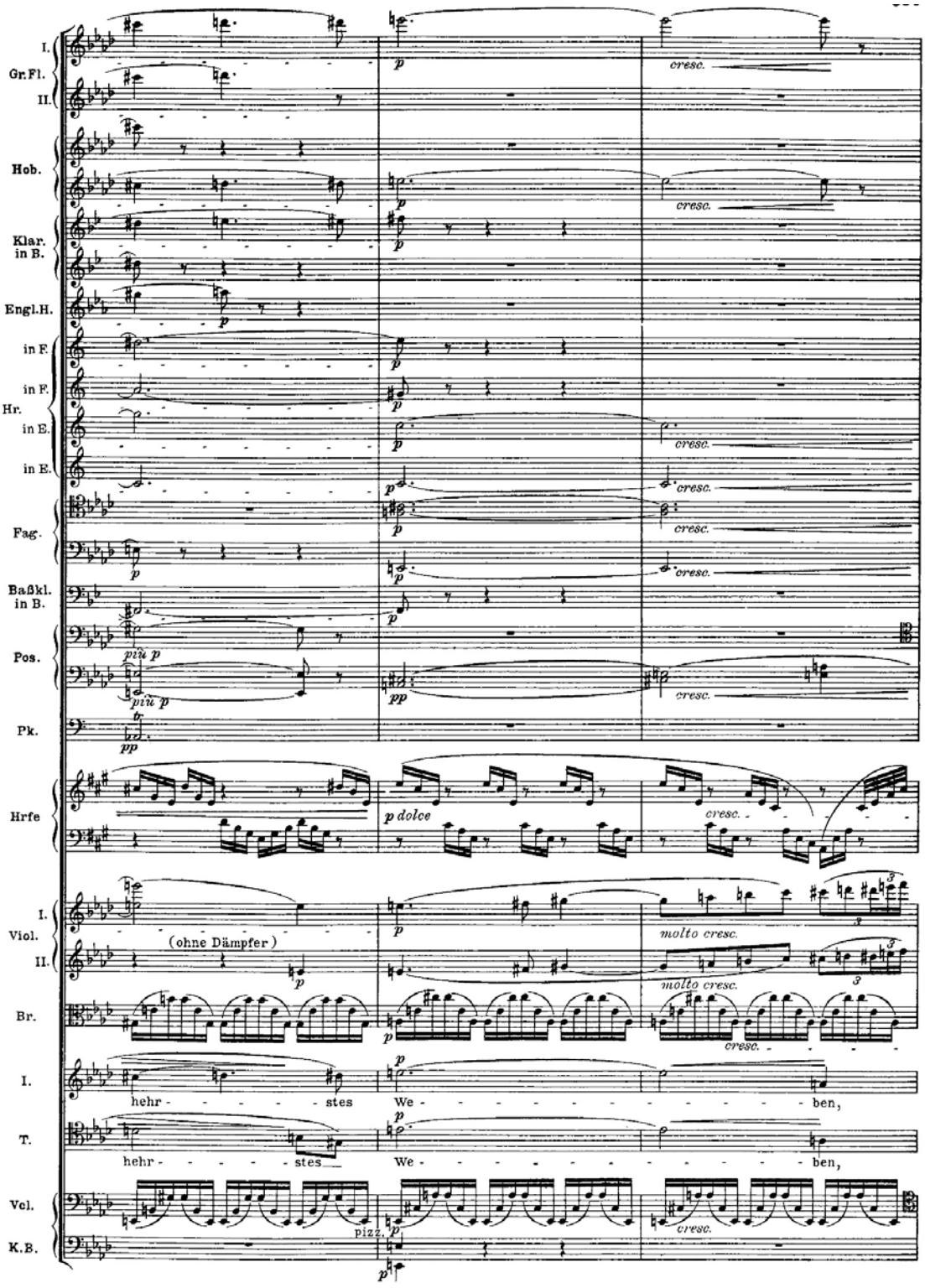

Breiter.
I. II.
Gr. Fl.
III.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Pk.
Breiter.
(ohne Dämpfer)
Viol.I. (get.)
(nur 4)
(ohne Dämpfer)
(alle übrigen)
Viol.II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
heh - - res Ah - - nen löscht des Wäh - - nens Graus welt - - -
T.
Ah - - nen löscht des Wäh - - nens Graus welt - - - - - er-lö -
Vel.
K.B.
trem.


Sehr breit und zurückhaltend.
Wieder mäßig langsam.
Gr.Fl.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
in F.
in F.
Hr
in E.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
dim.
più p
p
dolce
Sehr breit und zurückhaltend.
Wieder mäßig langsam.
Sehr ruhig.
Viol.I. (get.)
Viol.II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
riten.
ruhig
I.
T.
Vcl.
K.B.
- - - er-lö- - - send aus.
Barg im Bu- - sen uns sich die Son- - ne,
- - - send aus.
pp

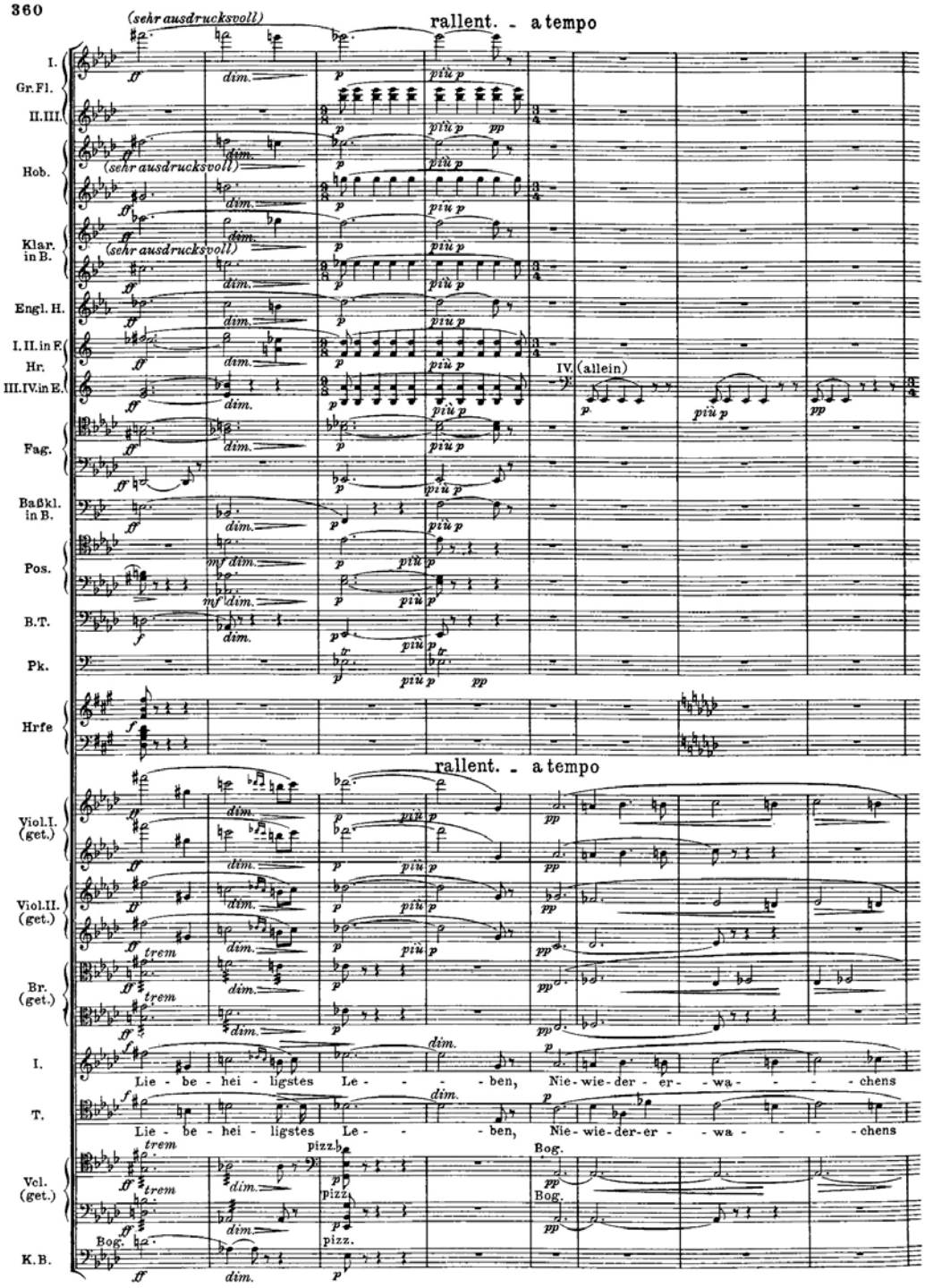

II. in F.
Hr.
IV. in E.
Fag. I. II.
(Wieder mit Dämpfern)
Viol. I.
Viol. II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
leuch - ten la - - chend Ster - ne der Won - - ne.
T.
Von dei - nem Zau - ber sanft um - spon - - nen, vor
Vcl.
Hob. I.
Klar. I. in B.
Herz an Herz dir, Mund an Mund;
dei - nen Au - - gen süß zer - ron - - nen;
ei - nes A -

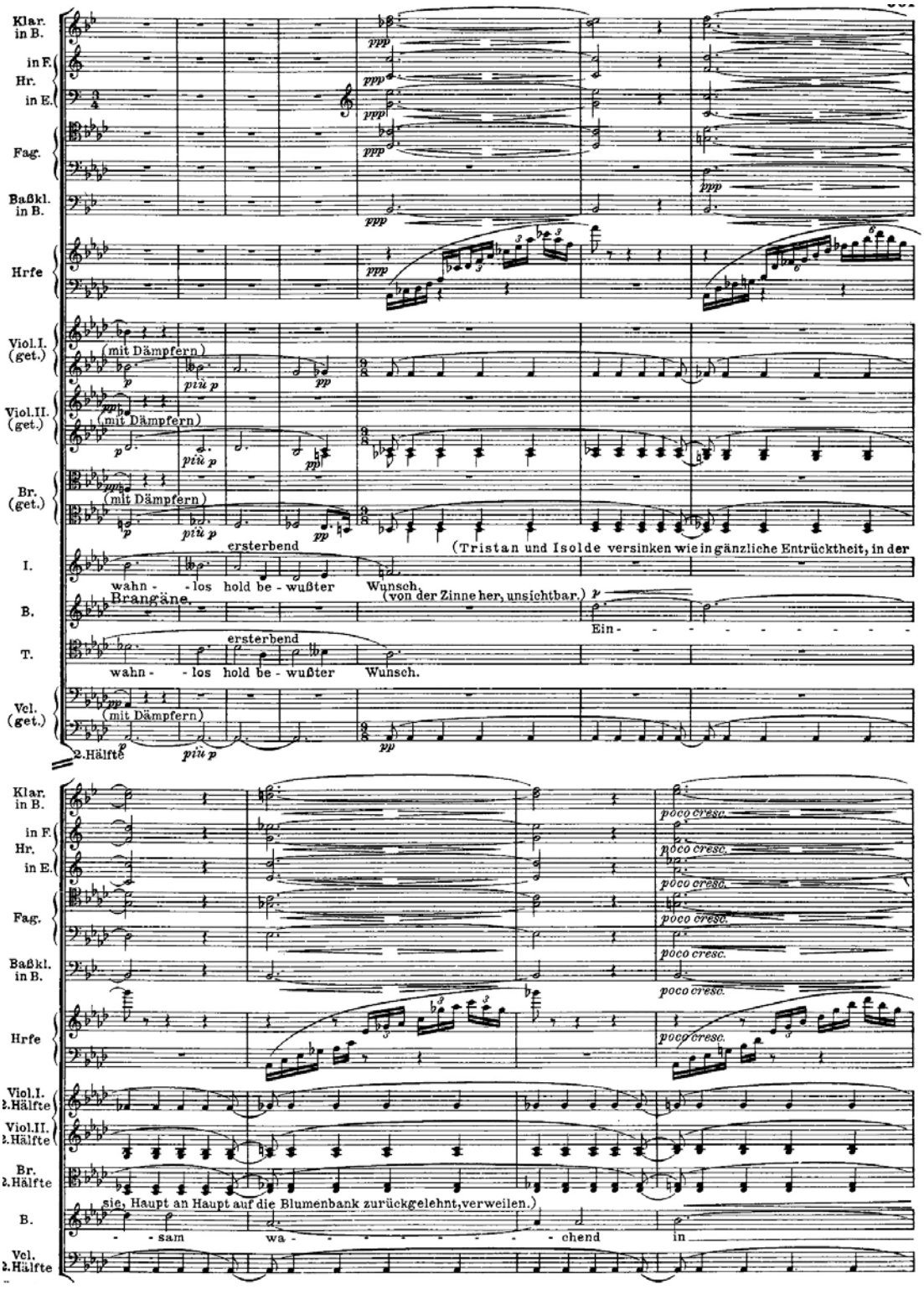

Hob. I.
I.
Klar. in B.
II.
I.II. in F.
Hr.
II.IV. in E.
Fag. I.II.
Viol. I.
Viol. II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
T.
Vcl.
bricht mein Blick sich wonn - er-blin - det, er-bleicht die Welt mit ih - rem
- tems ein'- -ger Bund; bricht mein Blick sich wonn - er - blin - det, er-bleicht die Welt
Engl. H.
Baßkl. in B.
Blen - den: die uns der Tag trü-gend er - hellt, selbst
— mit ih - rem Blen-den: pizz. zu täu-schendem Wahn entge - gen-ge - stellt,


accel.
Erstes Tempo.
zu 2
Gr.Fl.I.II.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
I.II.
Fag.
III.
Baßkl. in B.
I.
Pos.
II.III.
Pk.
Hrfe
(ohne Dämpfer)
Viol.I.
Viol.II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
T.
Vcl.
K.B.
pizz.
Bog.
dann bin ich die Welt:
selbst dann bin ich die Welt:
Won - - - - ne -

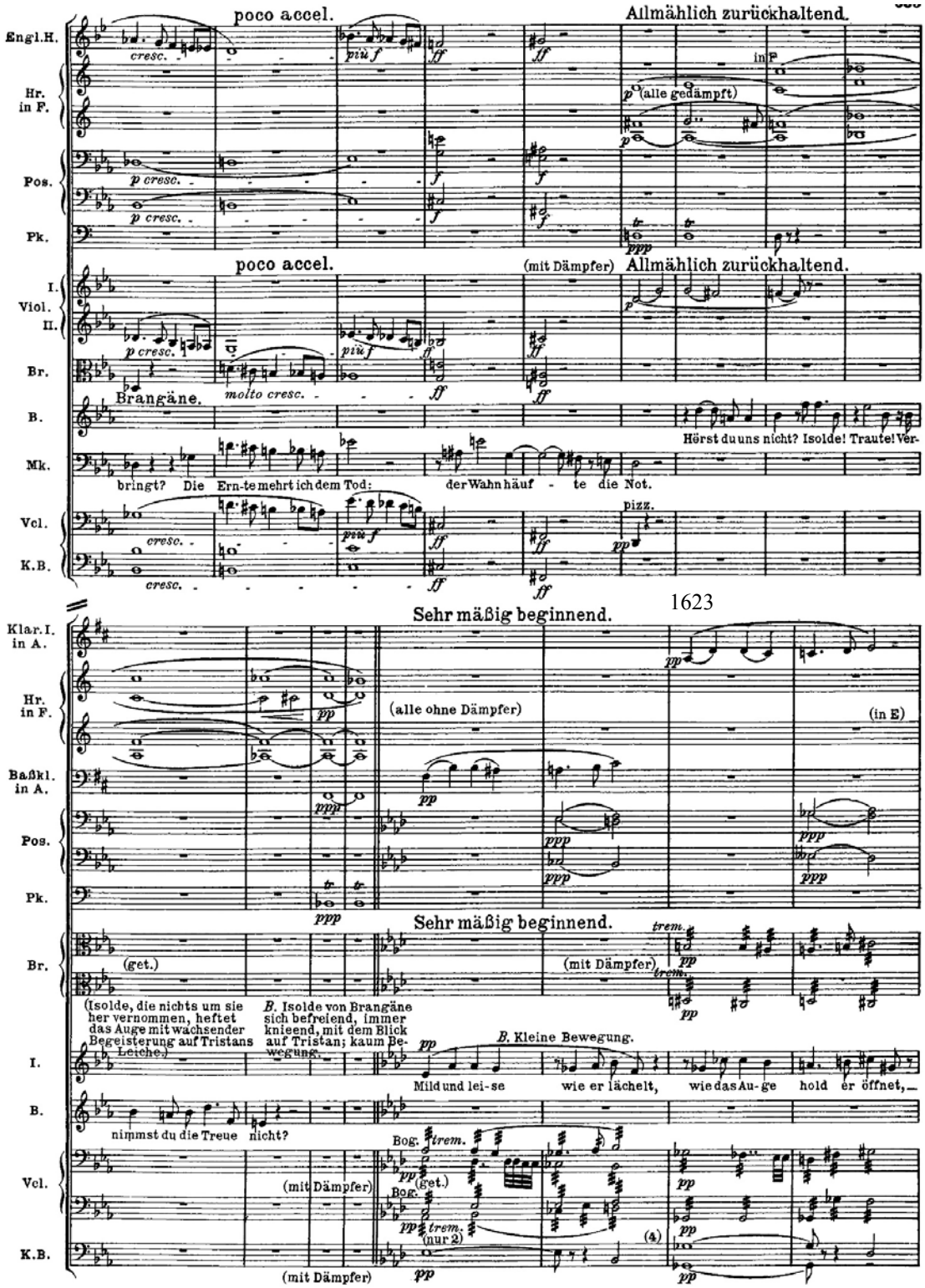

I.
Gr.Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl.H.
in F.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Pos.
Pk.
Hrfe
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
T.
Vcl.
K.B.
cresc.
p
più p
pp
p dolce
(ohne Dämpfer)
molto cresc.
hehr - - - - - stes
We - - - - - - - - - - - ben,
pizz.

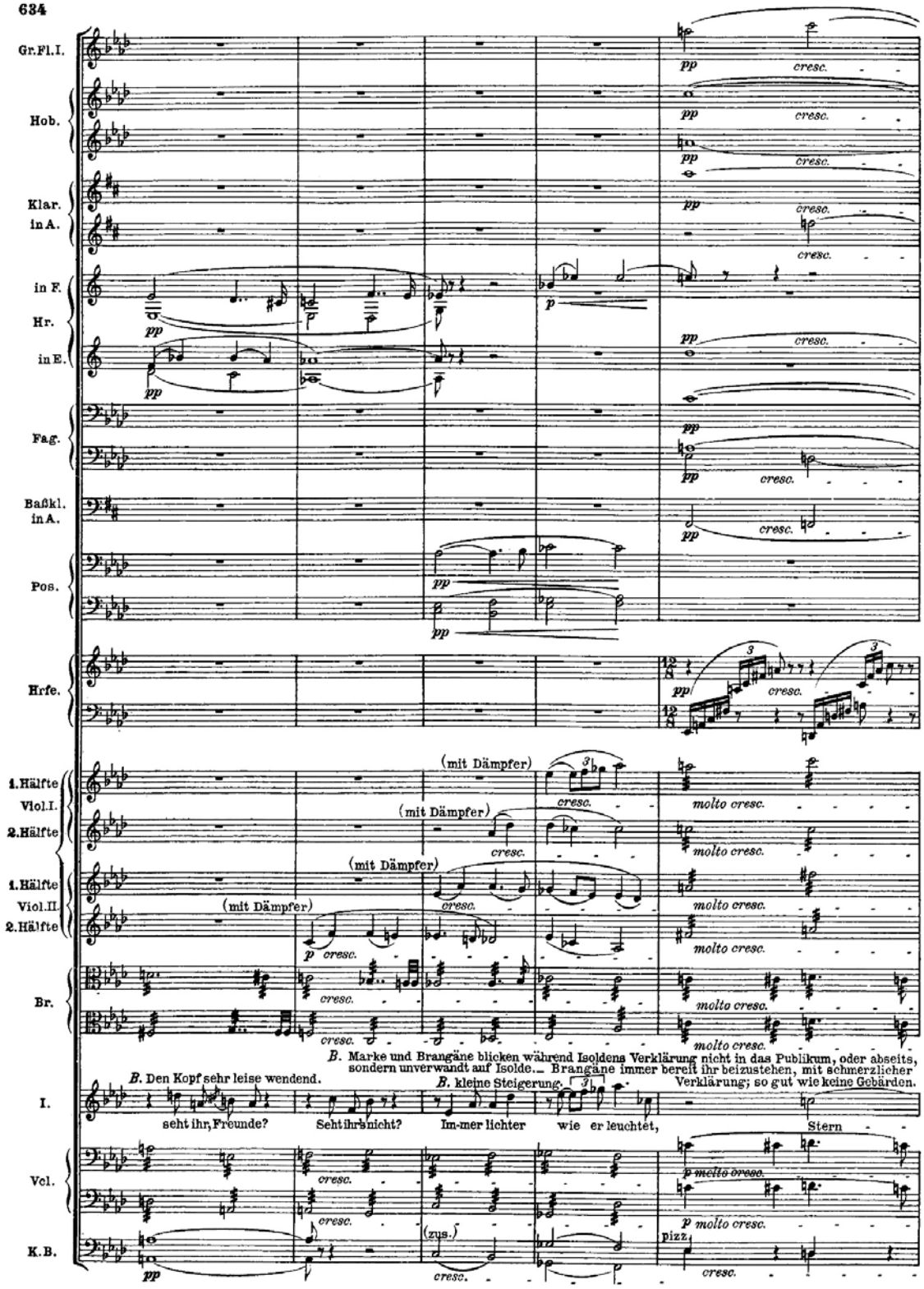
1198


360
(sehr ausdrucksvoll)
rallent. - a tempo
I.
Gr.Fl.
II.III.
Hob.
Klar. in B.
Engl. H.
I. II. in F.
Hr.
III. IV. in E.
IV. (allein)
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
Hrfe
Viol.I. (get.)
Viol.II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
Lie - be - hei - ligstes Le - - - - ben, Nie - wie - der - er - wa - - - - chens
T.
Vcl. (get.)
K.B.
pizz.
Bog.

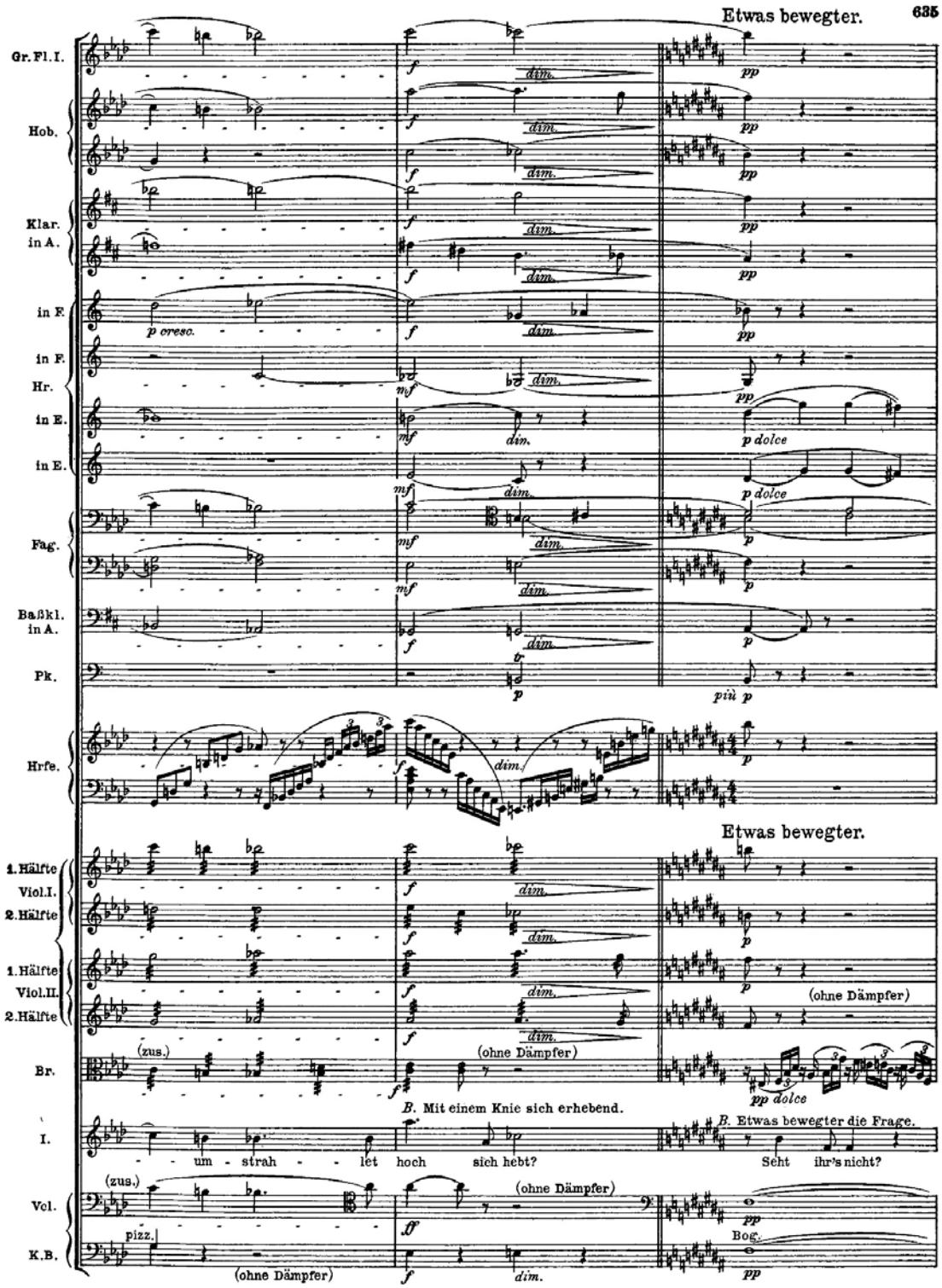

Klar. in B.
in F. Hr. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in B.
Hrfe
Viol.I. (get.)
Viol.II. (get.)
Br. (get.)
I.
B.
T.
Vcl. (get.)
(mit Dämpfern)
2.Hälfte
ersterbend
wahn - - los hold be - wußter Wunsch,
Brangäne.
(Tristan und Isolde versinken wie in gänzliche Entrücktheit, in der
(von der Zinne her, unsichtbar.)
Ein - - - - - - - - -
wahn - - los hold be - wußter Wunsch.
poco cresc.
sie, Haupt an Haupt auf die Blumenbank zurückgelehnt, verweilen.)
- - sam wa - - - - - - - chend in

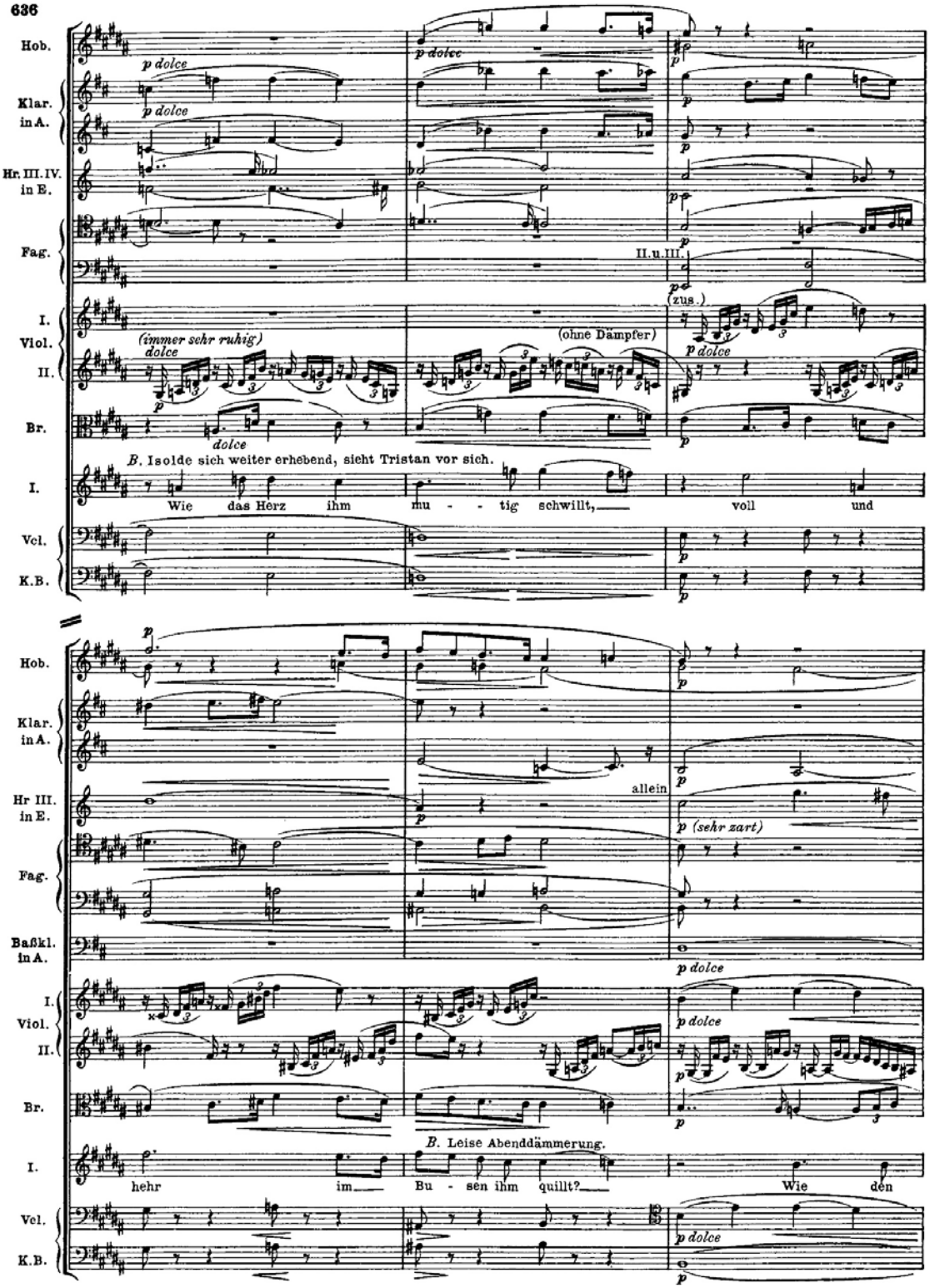
The Liebestod

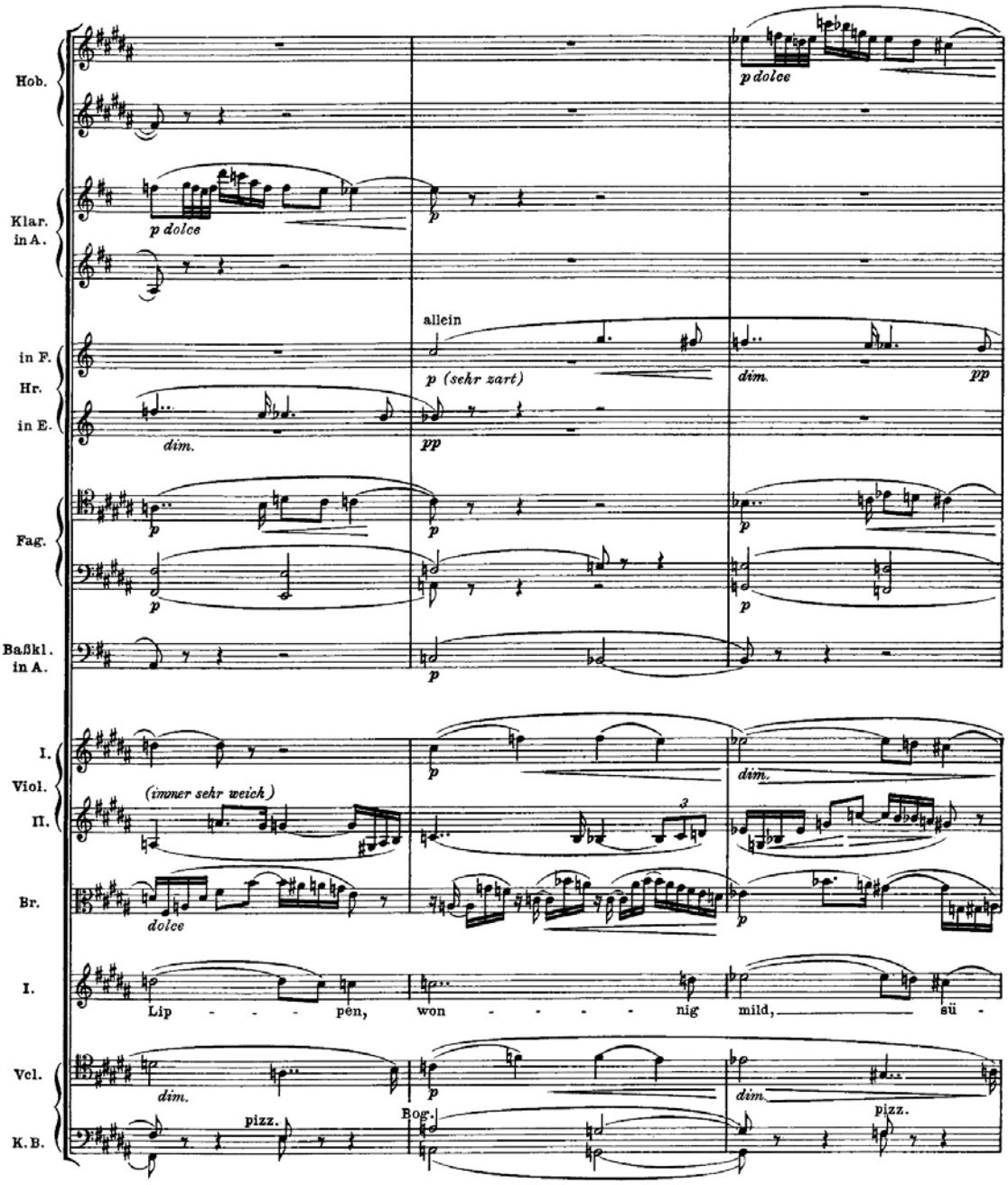

poco accel.
Allmählich zurückhaltend.
Engl.H.
Hr. in F.
Pos.
Pk.
in F
(alle gedämpft)
poco accel.
(mit Dämpfer)
Allmählich zurückhaltend.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
B.
Mk.
Vcl.
K.B.
Brangäne.
Hörst du uns nicht? Isolde! Traute! Ver-
bringt? Die Ern-te mehrt ich dem Tod:
der Wahn häuf - te die Not.
pizz.
1623
Sehr mäßig beginnend.
Klar. I. in A.
Hr. in F.
Baßkl. in A.
(alle ohne Dämpfer)
(in E)
Sehr mäßig beginnend.
(get.)
(mit Dämpfer)
(Isolde, die nichts um sie her vernommen, heftet das Auge mit wachsender Begeisterung auf Tristans Leiche.)
B. Isolde von Brangäne sich befreiend, immer knieend, mit dem Blick auf Tristan; kaum Bewegung.
B. Kleine Bewegung.
Mild und lei-se
wie er lächelt,
wie das Au-ge
hold er öffnet,
nimmst du die Treue nicht?
Bog.
(get.)
(nur 2)
(4)
(mit Dämpfer)

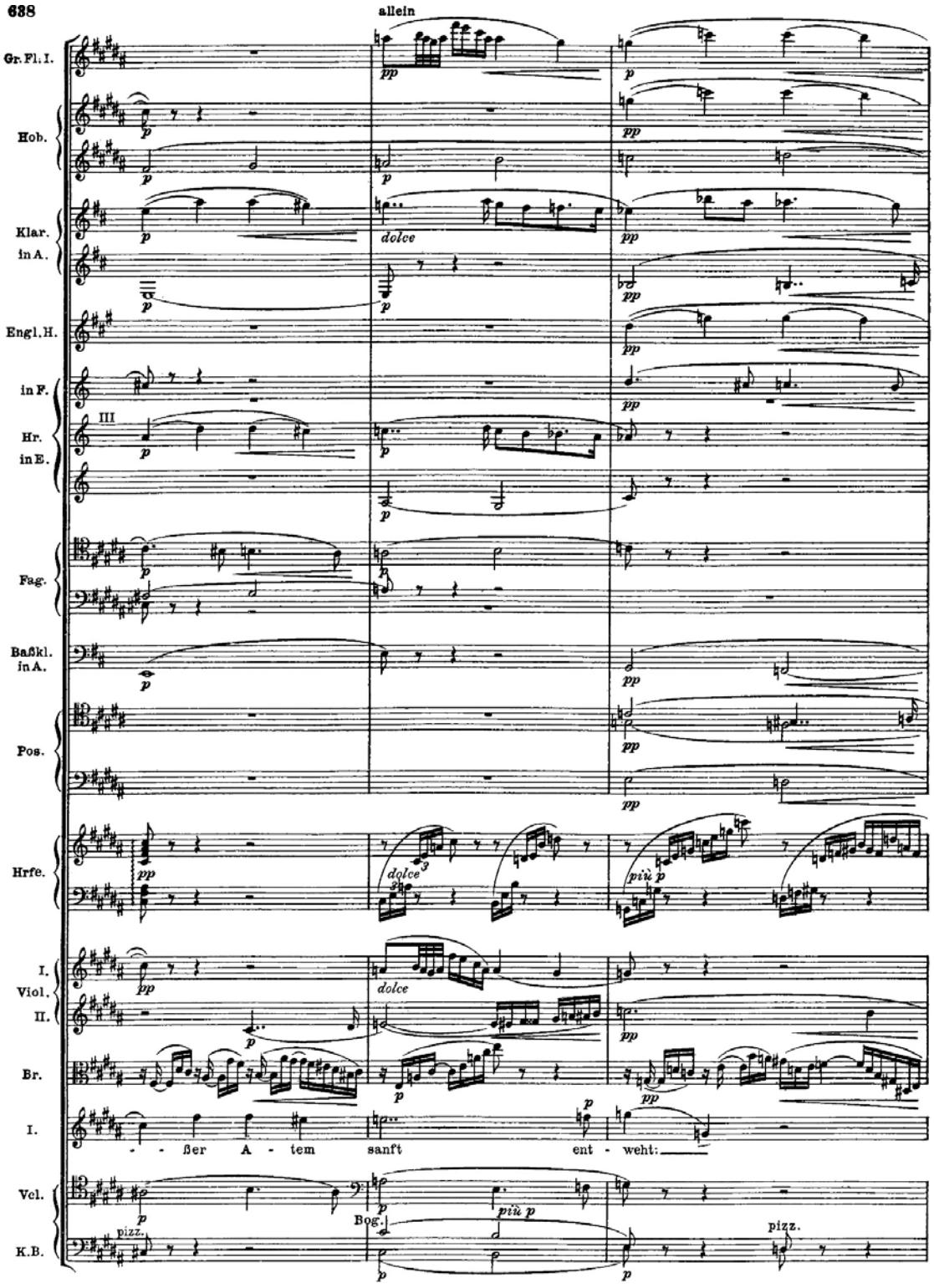

634
Gr.Fl.I.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Pos.
Hrfe.
1.Hälfte Viol.I.
2.Hälfte
1.Hälfte Viol.II.
2.Hälfte
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
(mit Dämpfer)
B. Den Kopf sehr leise wendend.
B. kleine Steigerung.
B. Marke und Brangäne blicken während Isoldens Verklärung nicht in das Publikum, oder abseits, sondern unverwandt auf Isolde. Brangäne immer bereit ihr beizustehen, mit schmerzlicher Verklärung; so gut wie keine Gebärden.
seht ihr, Freunde?
Seht ihr's nicht?
Im-mer lichter
wie er leuchtet,
Stern
(zus.)
pizz.

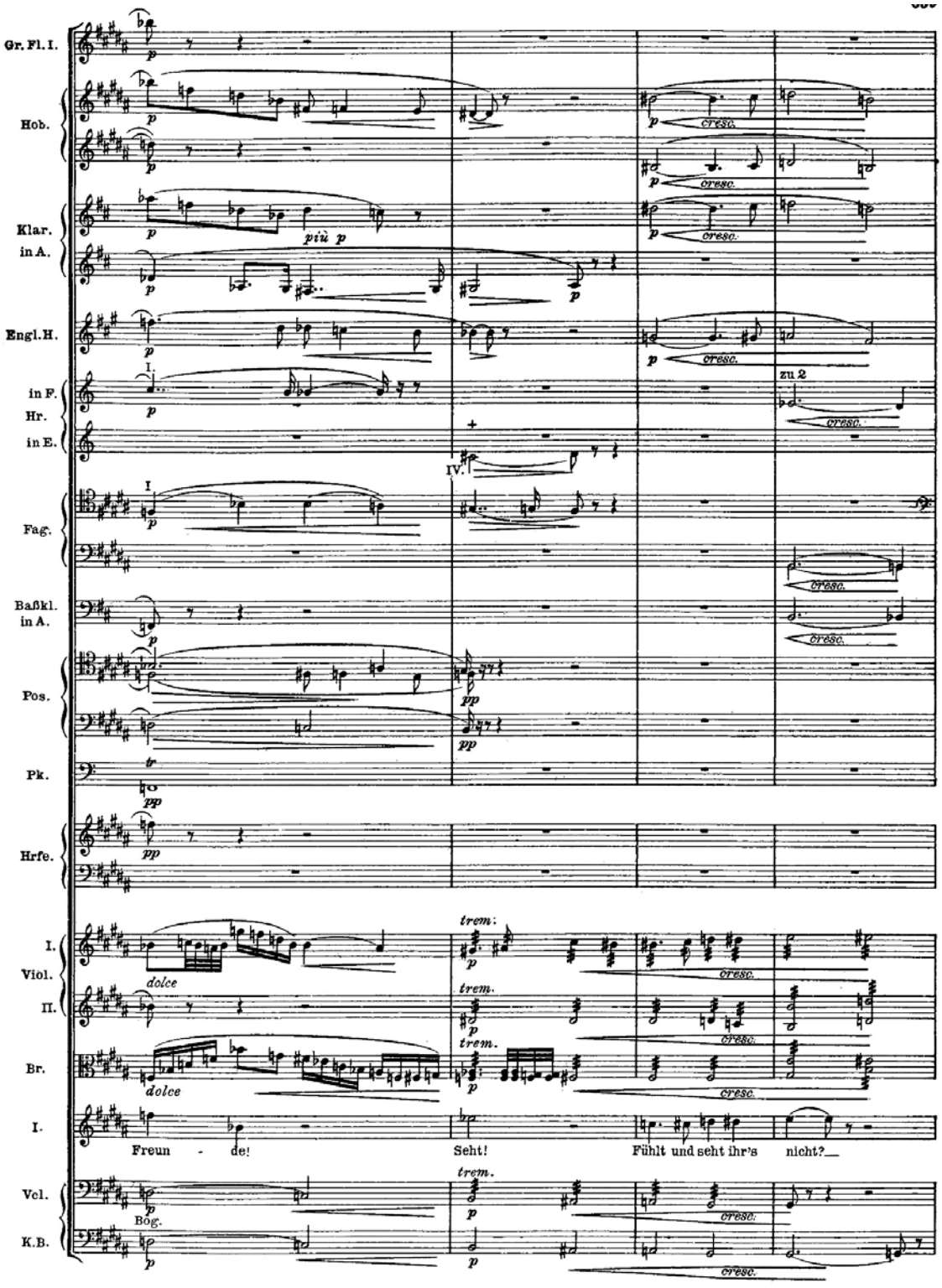
1632

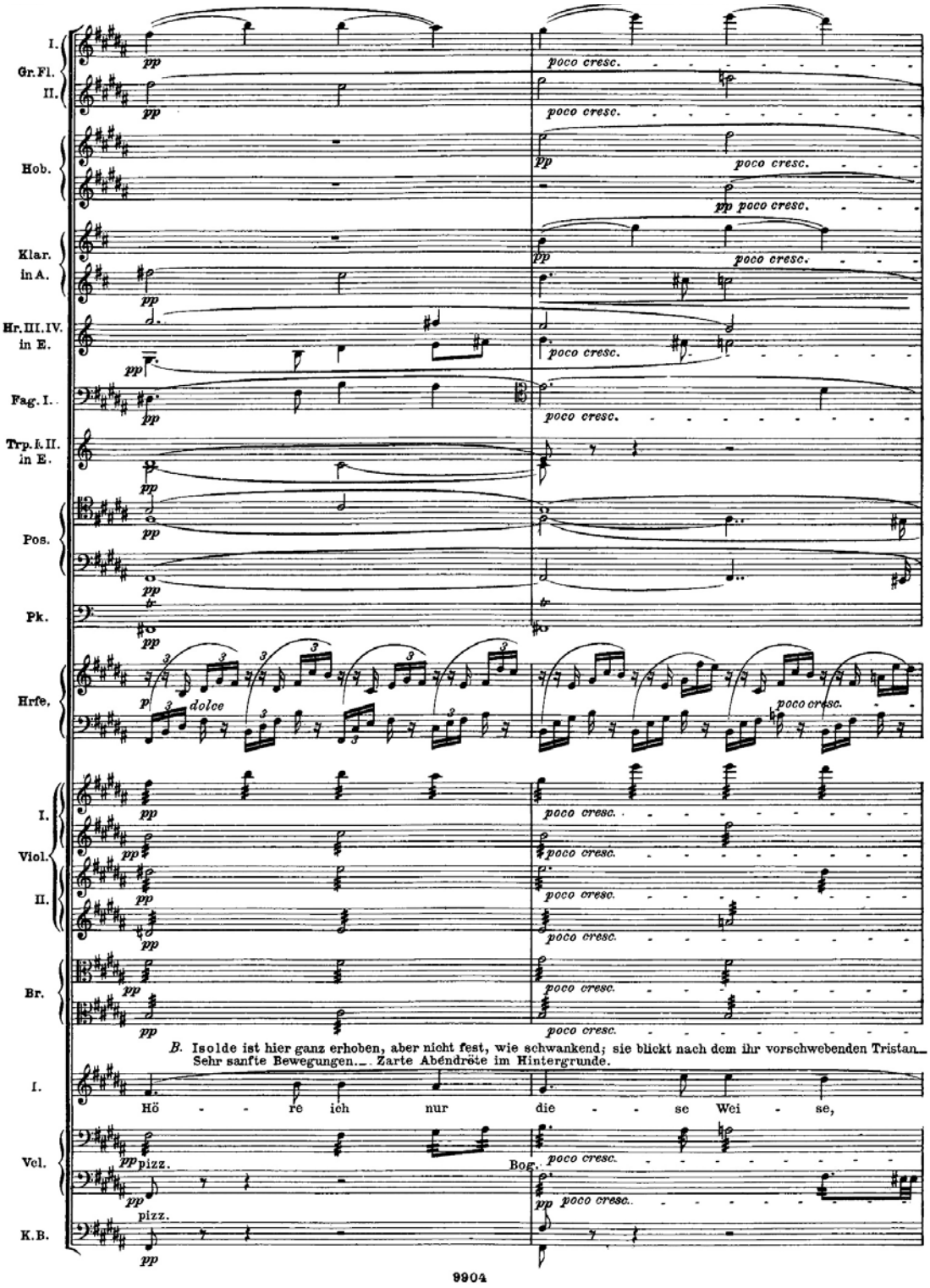

635
Etwas bewegter.
Gr. Fl. I.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Pk.
Hrfe.
1. Hälfte Viol. I. 2. Hälfte
1. Hälfte Viol. II. 2. Hälfte
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
(zus.)
(ohne Dämpfer)
B. Mit einem Knie sich erhebend.
B. Etwas bewegter die Frage.
um - strah - - let hoch sich hebt?
Seht ihr's nicht?
pizz.
Bog.

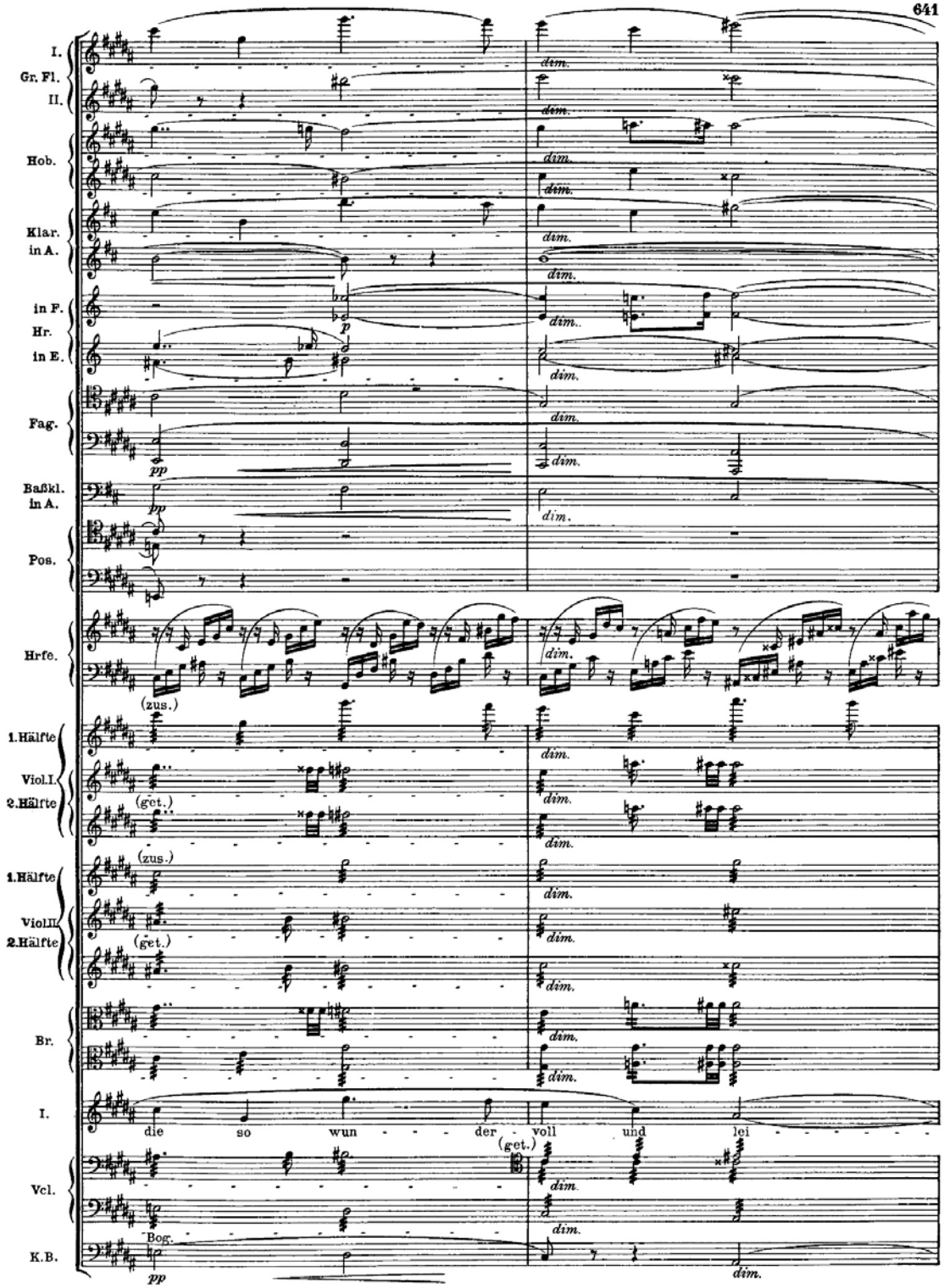

636
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Hr. III. IV. in E.
Fag.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
Vcl.
K.B.
p dolce
(immer sehr ruhig)
dolce
II. u. III.
(zus.)
(ohne Dämpfer)
B. Isolde sich weiter erhebend, sieht Tristan vor sich.
Wie das Herz ihm mu - - tig schwillt, voll und
Hr III. in E.
allein
p (sehr zart)
Baßkl. in A.
B. Leise Abenddämmerung.
hehr im Bu - sen ihm quillt? Wie den

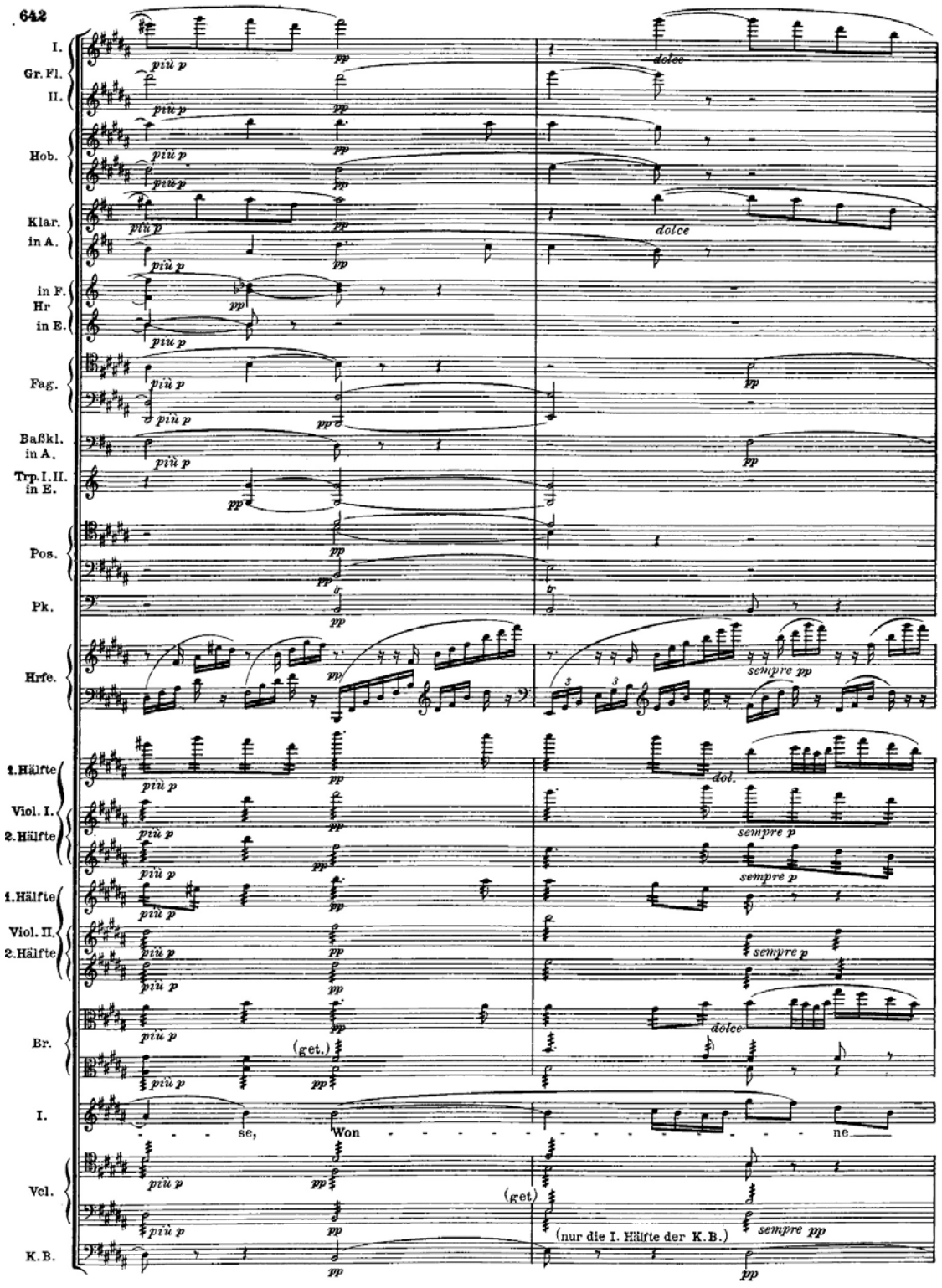

Hob.
Klar. in A.
in F. Hr. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
I. Viol. II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
p dolce
allein
p (sehr zart)
dim.
pp
(immer sehr weich)
dolce
Lip - - - pen, won - - - - - nig mild, sü -
pizz.
Bog.

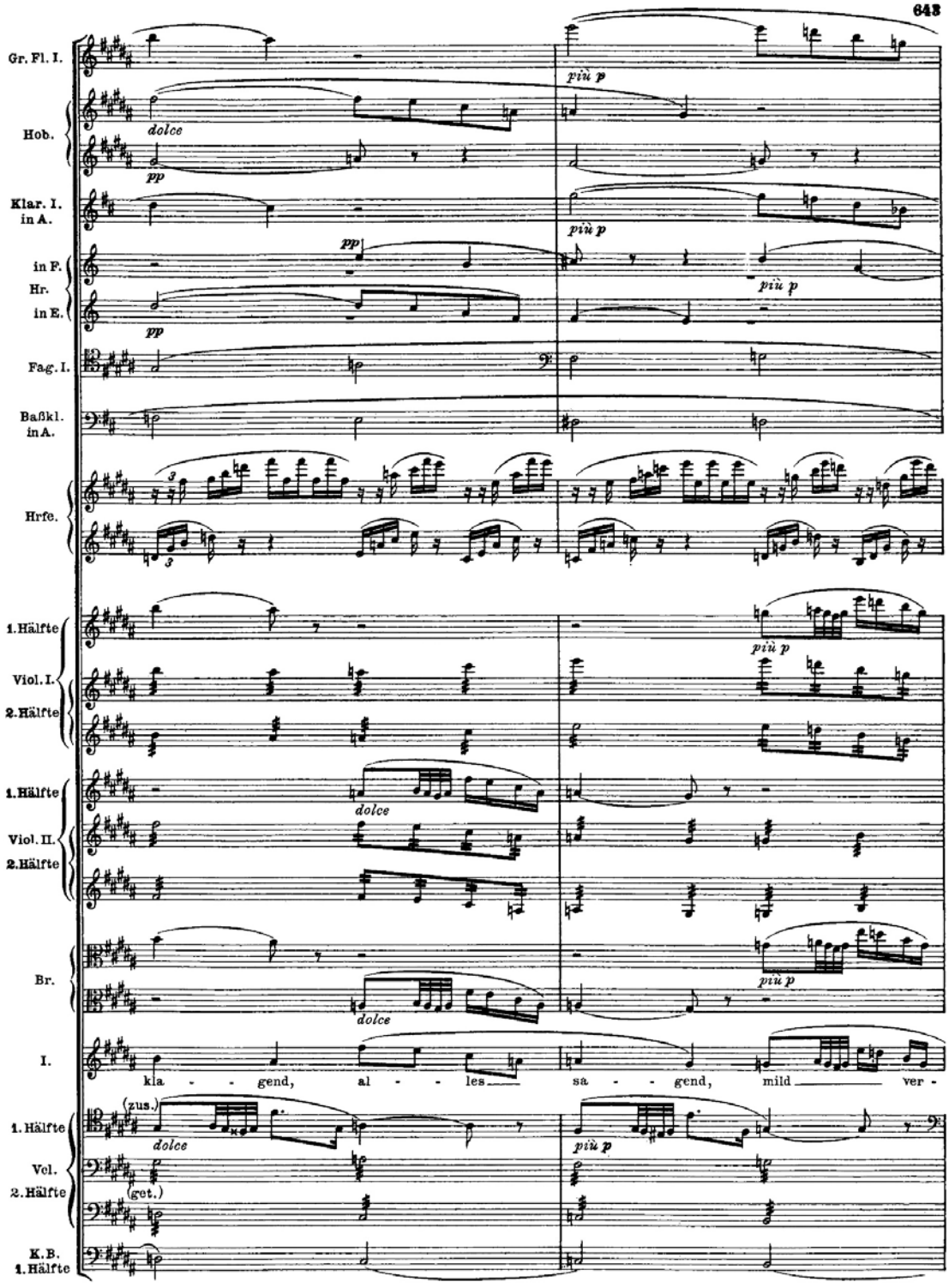

638
allein
Gr. Fl. I.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl. H.
in F.
Hr. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Pos.
Hrfe.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
dolce
più p
Bog.
pizz.
- - ßer A - tem sanft ent - weht:

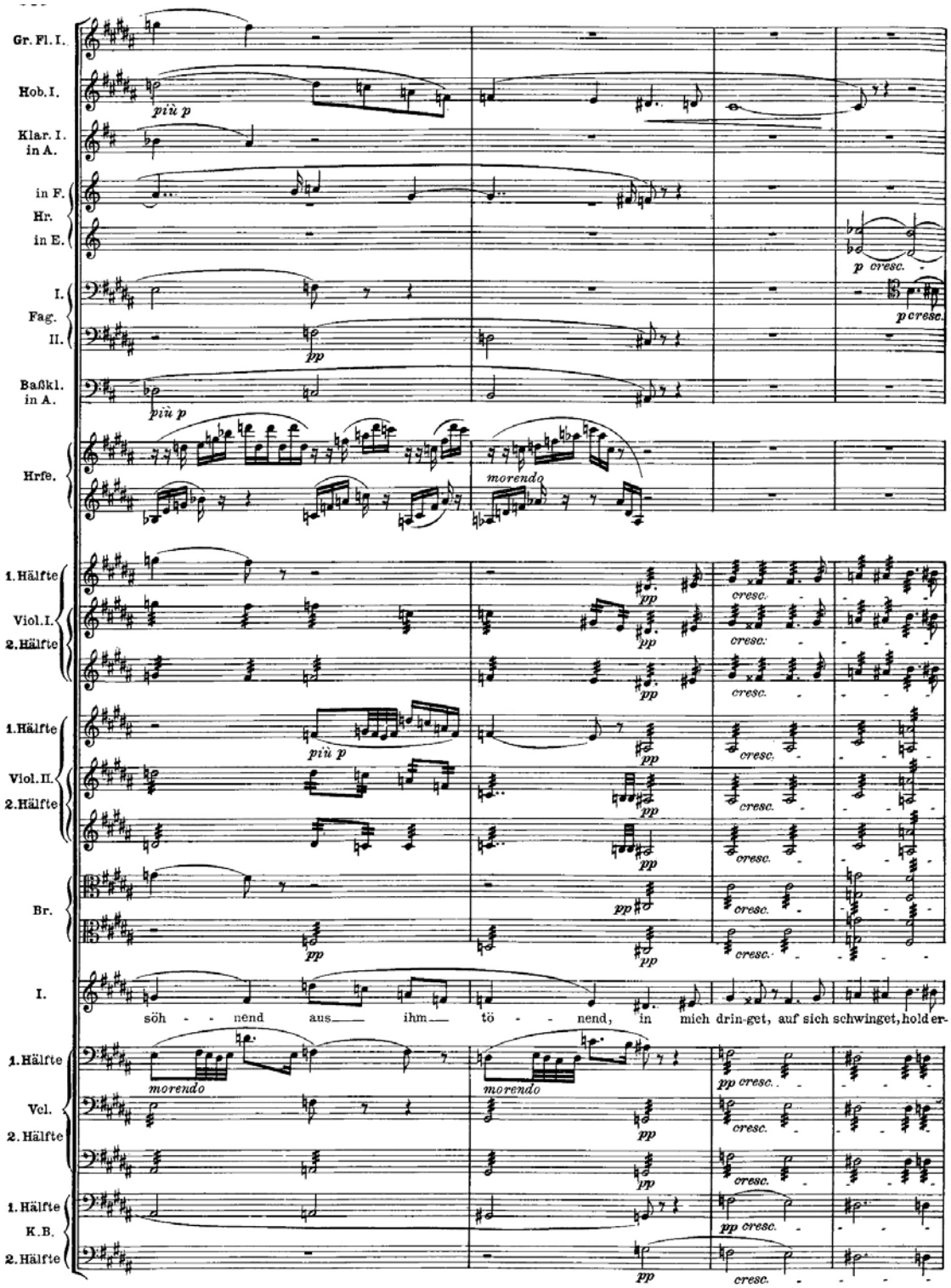

Gr. Fl. I.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl. H.
in F. Hr. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Pos.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I. Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
più p
cresc.
zu 2
IV.
dolce
trem.
Freun - de!
Seht!
Fühlt und seht ihr's nicht?
Bög.

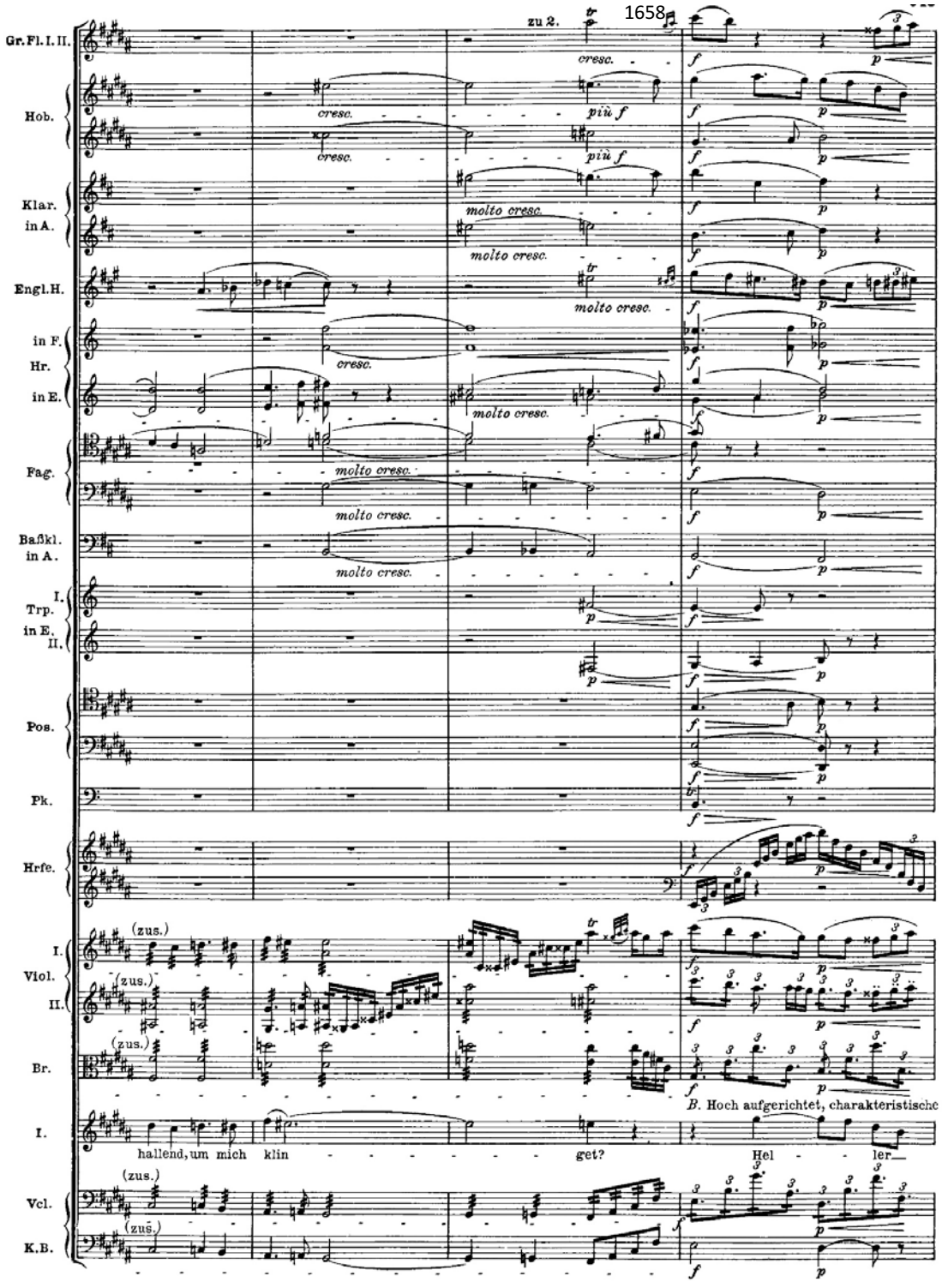

I.
Gr.Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Hr. III. IV. in E.
Fag. I.
Trp. I. II. in E.
Pos.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
Vel.
K.B.
pp
poco cresc.
dolce
B. Isolde ist hier ganz erhoben, aber nicht fest, wie schwankend; sie blickt nach dem ihr vorschwebenden Tristan.
Sehr sanfte Bewegungen. Zarte Abendröte im Hintergrunde.
Hö - re ich nur die - se Wei - se,
pizz.
Bog.
9904

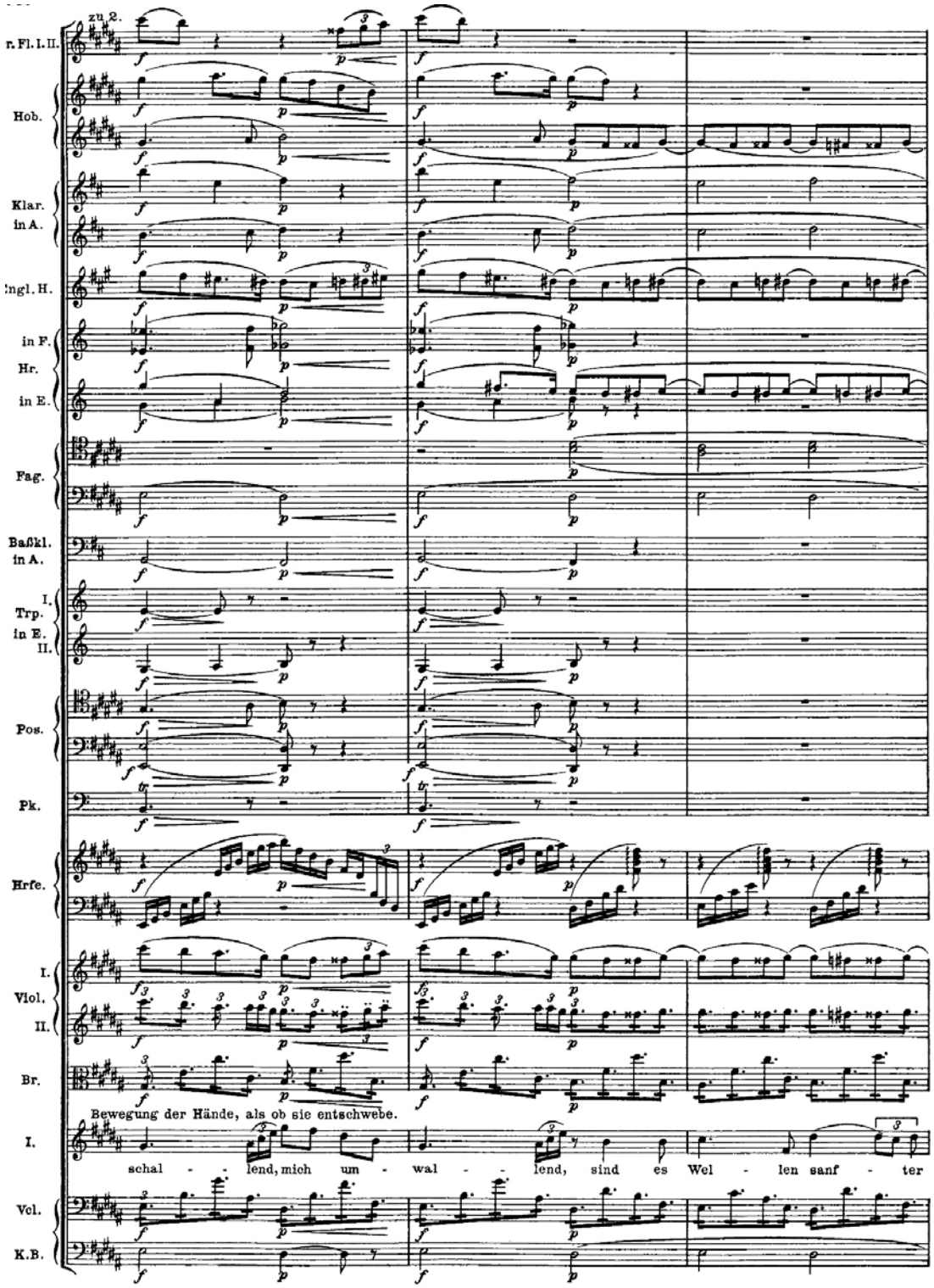

641
I.
Gr. Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar.
in A.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
Pos.
Hrfe.
(zus.)
1.Hälfte
Viol.I.
2.Hälfte
(get.)
(zus.)
1.Hälfte
Viol.II.
2.Hälfte
(get.)
Br.
I.
die so wun - der - voll und lei
(get.)
Vcl.
Bog.
K.B.
dim.
pp
p

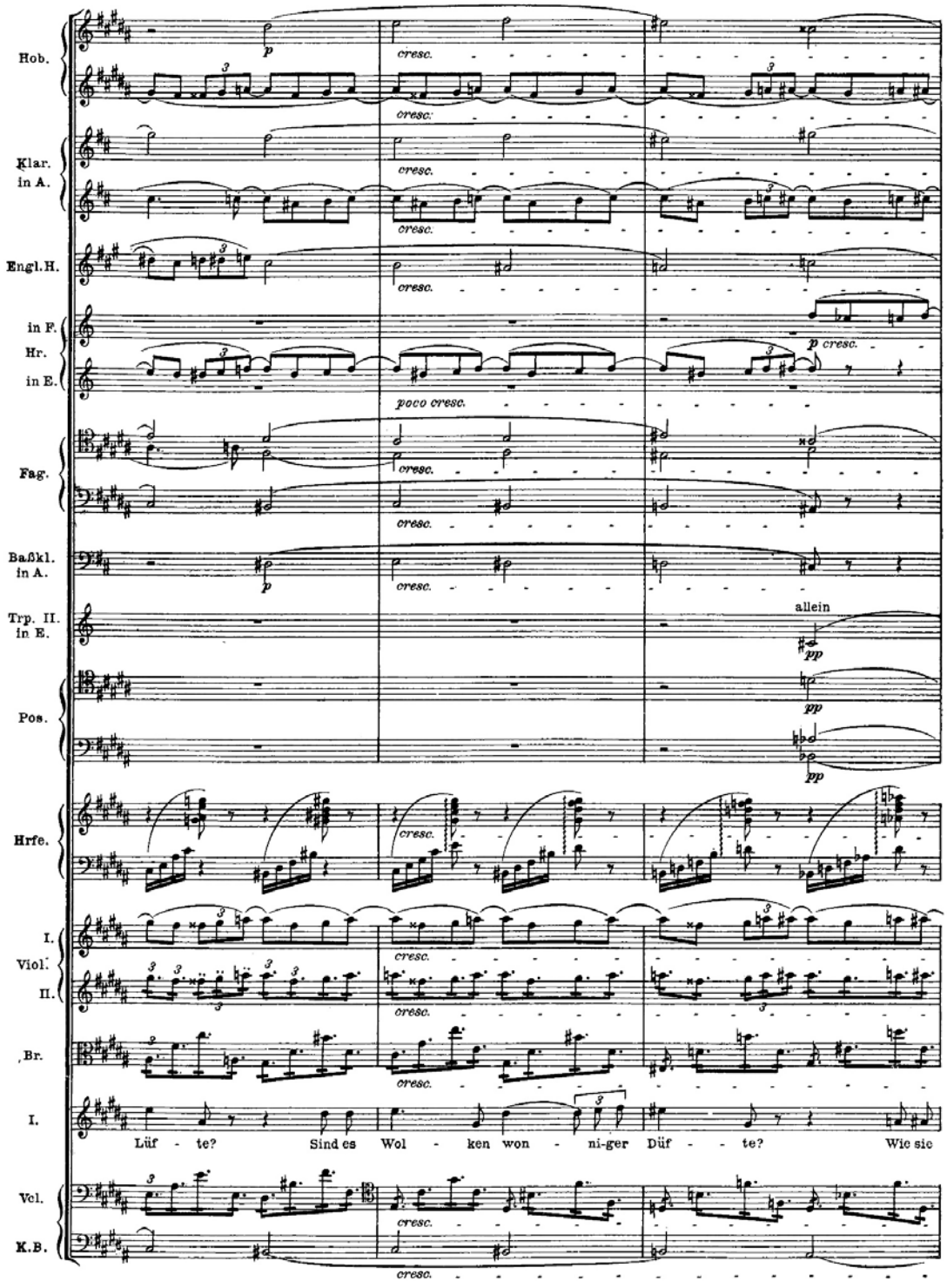

642
I.
Gr. Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
in F. Hr in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Trp. I. II. in E.
Pos.
Pk.
Hrfe.
1. Hälfte Viol. I. 2. Hälfte
1. Hälfte Viol. II. 2. Hälfte
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
più p
pp
dolce
sempre pp
sempre p
dol.
(get.)
se,
Won
ne
(get)
(nur die I. Hälfte der K.B.)

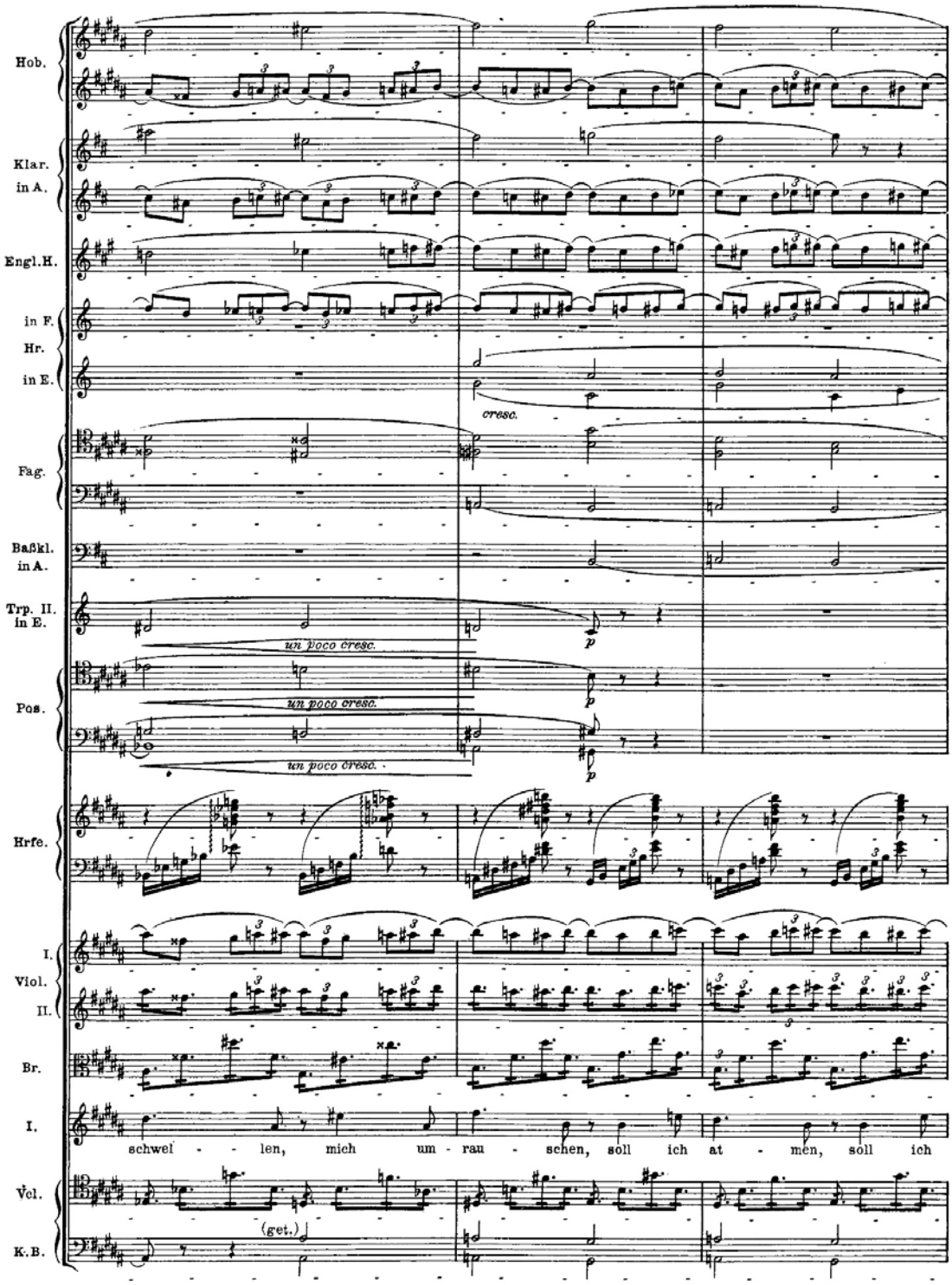

643
Gr. Fl. I.
Hob.
Klar. I. in A.
in F. Hr. in E.
Fag. I.
Baßkl. in A.
Hrfe.
1. Hälfte Viol. I. 2. Hälfte
1. Hälfte Viol. II. 2. Hälfte
Br.
I.
1. Hälfte Vcl. 2. Hälfte
K.B. 1. Hälfte
dolce
pp
più p
kla - - gend, al - - les sa - - gend, mild ver -
(zus.)
(get.)

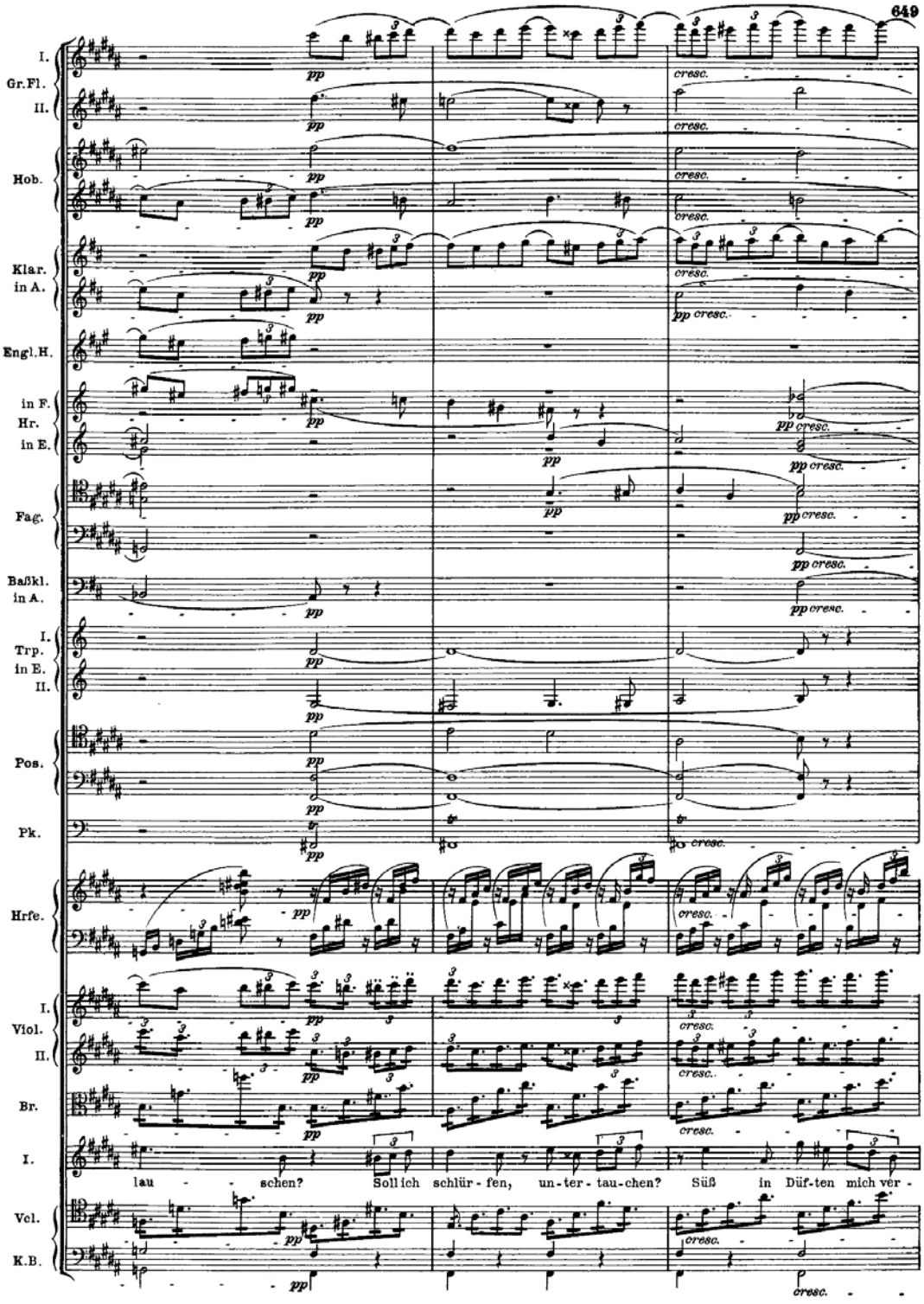

Gr. Fl. I.
Hob. I.
più p
Klar. I. in A.
in F. Hr. in E.
p cresc.
I. Fag. II.
pp
Baßkl. in A.
più p
Hrfe.
morendo
1. Hälfte Viol. I. 2. Hälfte
pp
cresc.
1. Hälfte Viol. II. 2. Hälfte
più p
Br.
I.
söh - - nend aus ihm tö - - nend, in mich drin-get, auf sich schwinget, hold er-
1. Hälfte Vcl. 2. Hälfte
morendo
pp cresc.
1. Hälfte K.B. 2. Hälfte

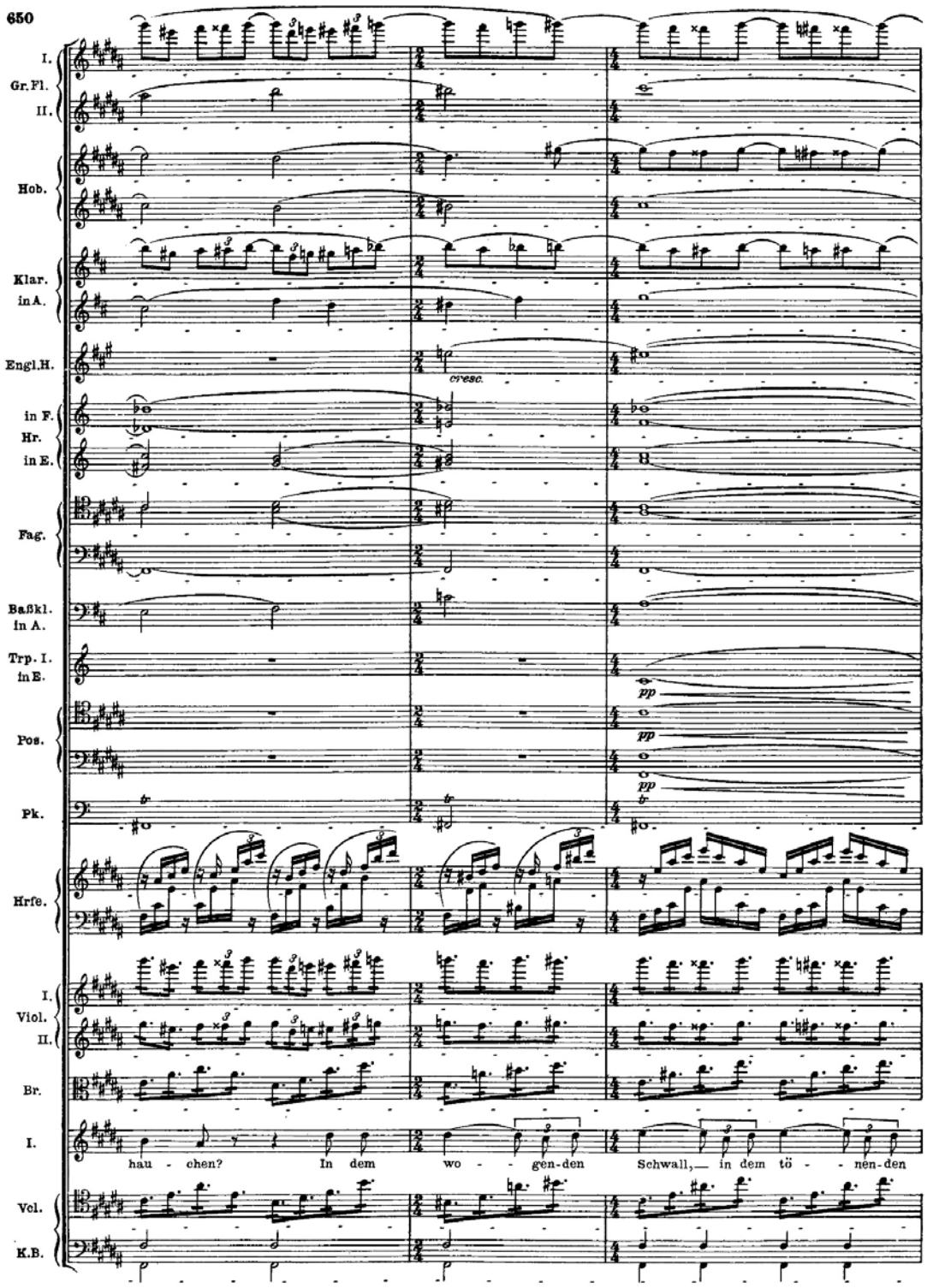

1658
zu 2.
Gr. Fl. I. II.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl. H.
in F. Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
I. Trp. in E. II.
Pos.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I. Viol. II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
cresc.
più f
molto cresc.
(zus.)
B. Hoch aufgerichtet, charakteristische
hallend, um mich klin get? Hel ler

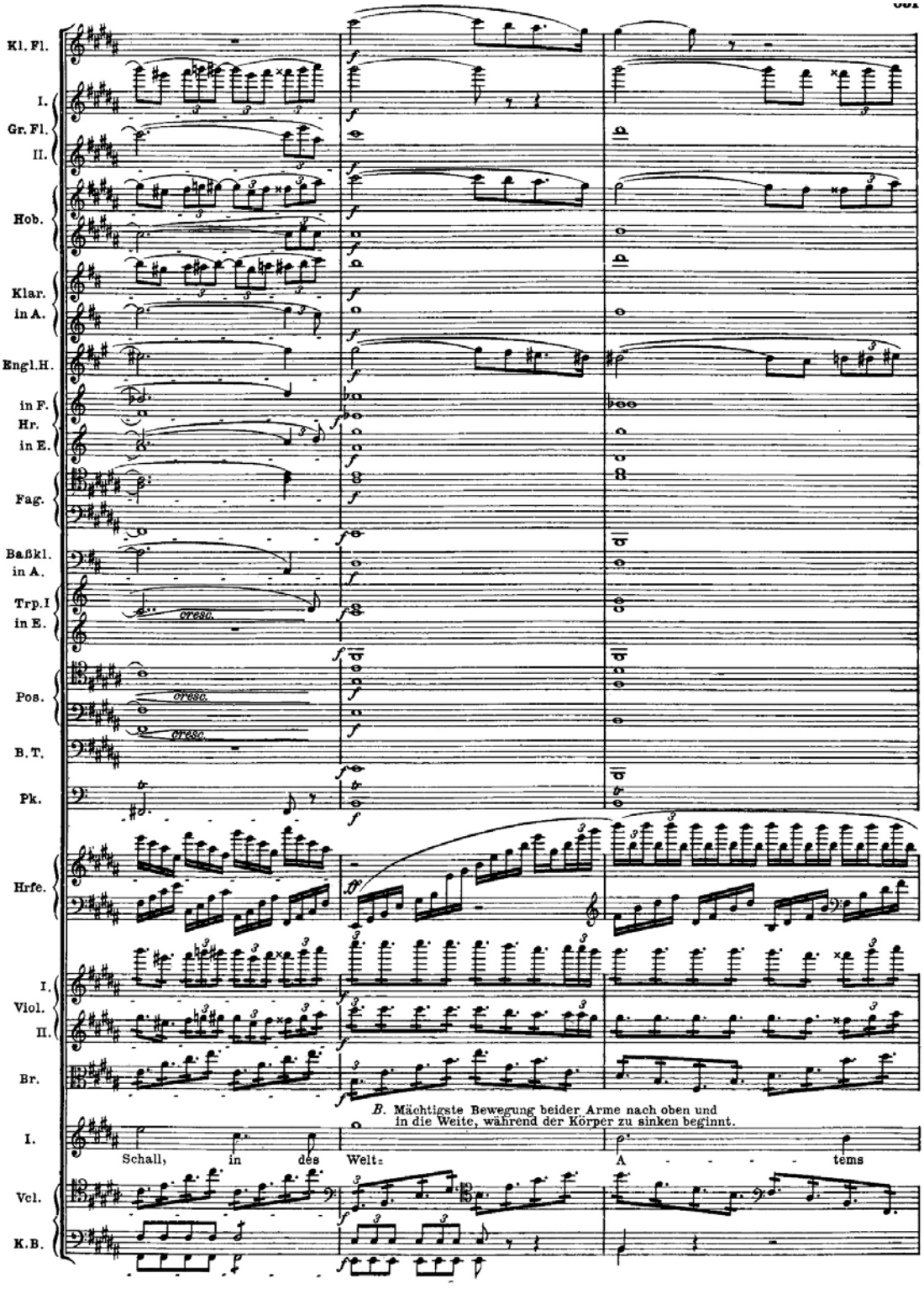

zu 2.
r. Fl. I. II.
Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl. H.
in F. Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
I. Trp. in E. II.
Pos.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I. Viol. II.
Br.
Bewegung der Hände, als ob sie entschwebe.
I.
schal - - lend, mich um - wal - - lend, sind es Wel - len sanf - ter
Vcl.
K.B.

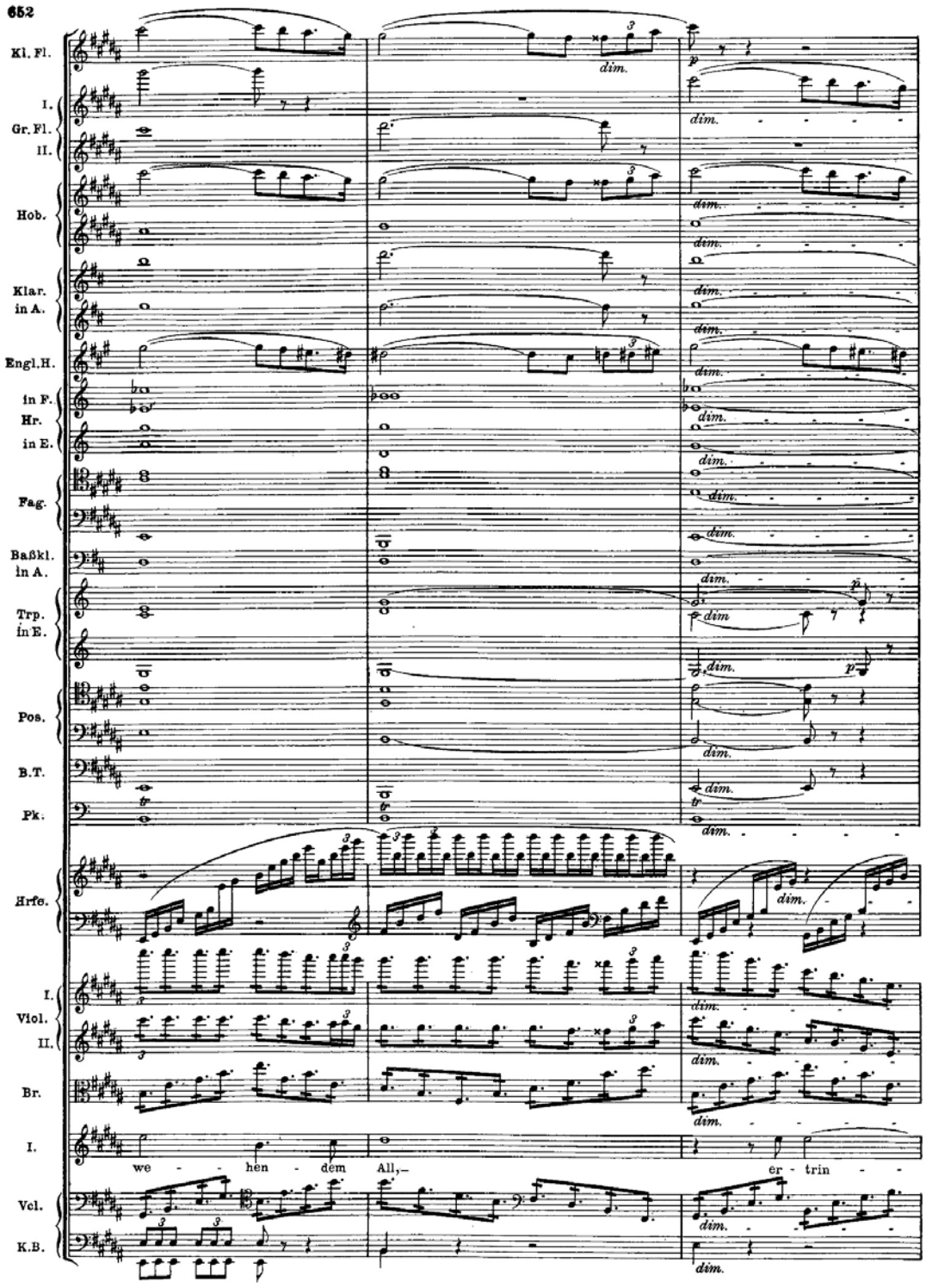

Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F. Hr. in E.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Trp. II. in E.
Pos.
Hrfe.
I. Viol. II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
cresc.
poco cresc.
allein
pp
Lüf - te? Sind es Wol - ken won - ni-ger Düf - - te? Wie sie

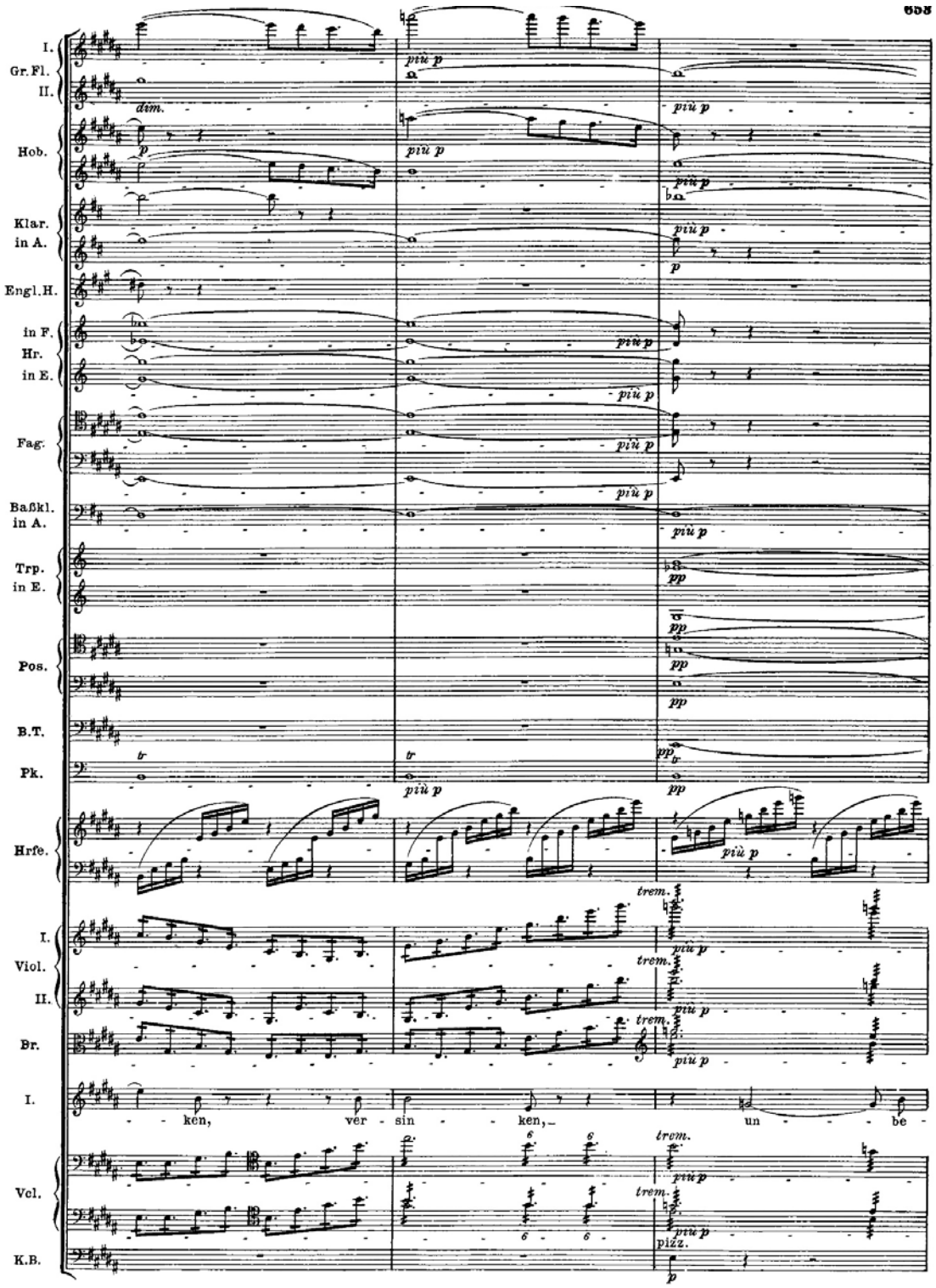

Hob.
Klar. in A.
Engl.H.
in F. Hr. in E.
cresc.
Fag.
Baßkl. in A.
Trp. II. in E.
un poco cresc.
p
Pos.
un poco cresc.
p
un poco cresc.
p
Hrfe.
I. Viol. II.
Br.
I.
schwel - - len, mich um - rau - schen, soll ich at - men, soll ich
Vcl.
(get.)
K.B.

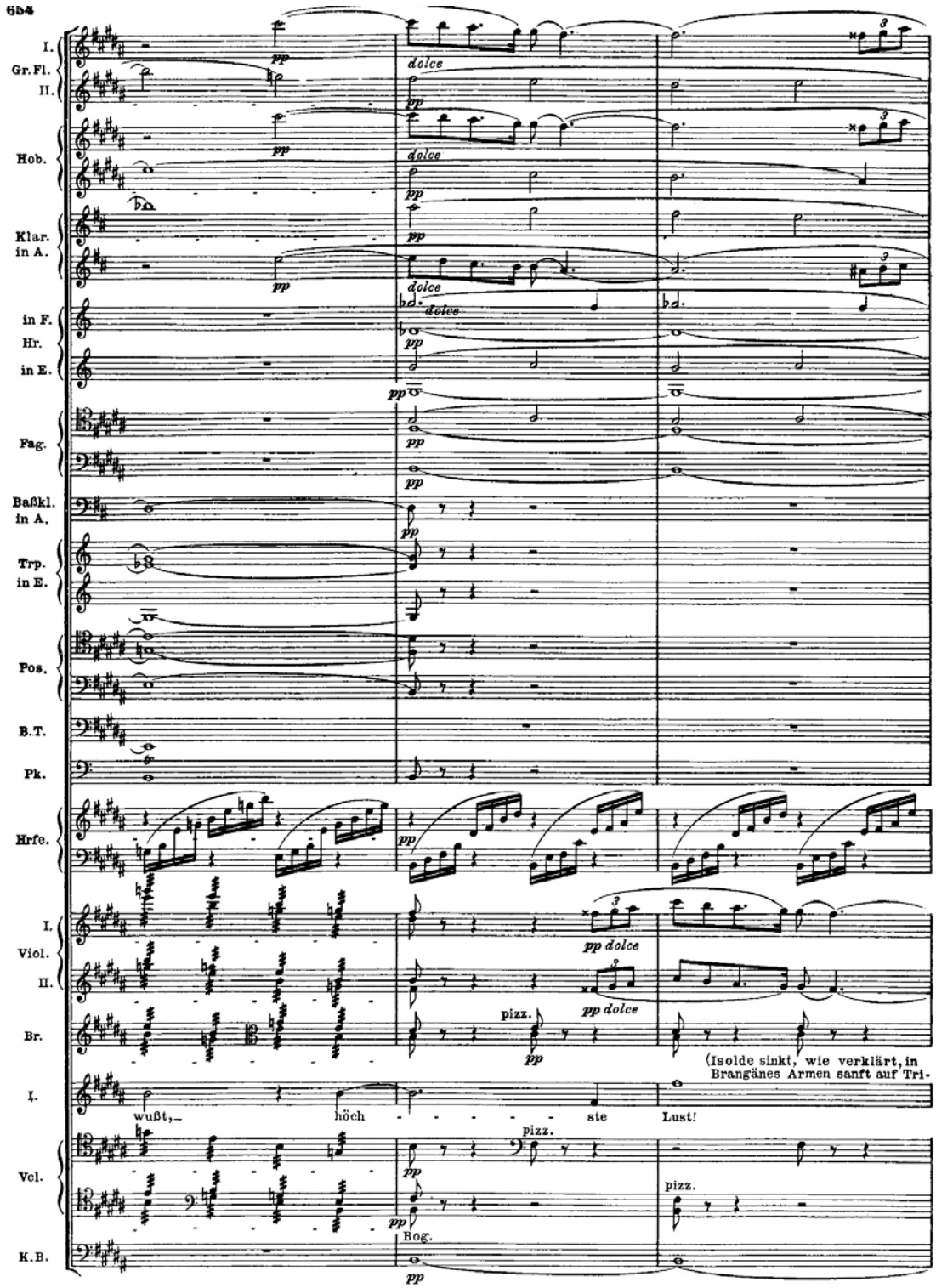

649
I.
Gr.Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar.
in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
I.
Trp.
in E.
II.
Pos.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
pp
cresc.
lau - schen? Soll ich schlür - fen, un - ter - tau - chen? Süß in Düf - ten mich ver -

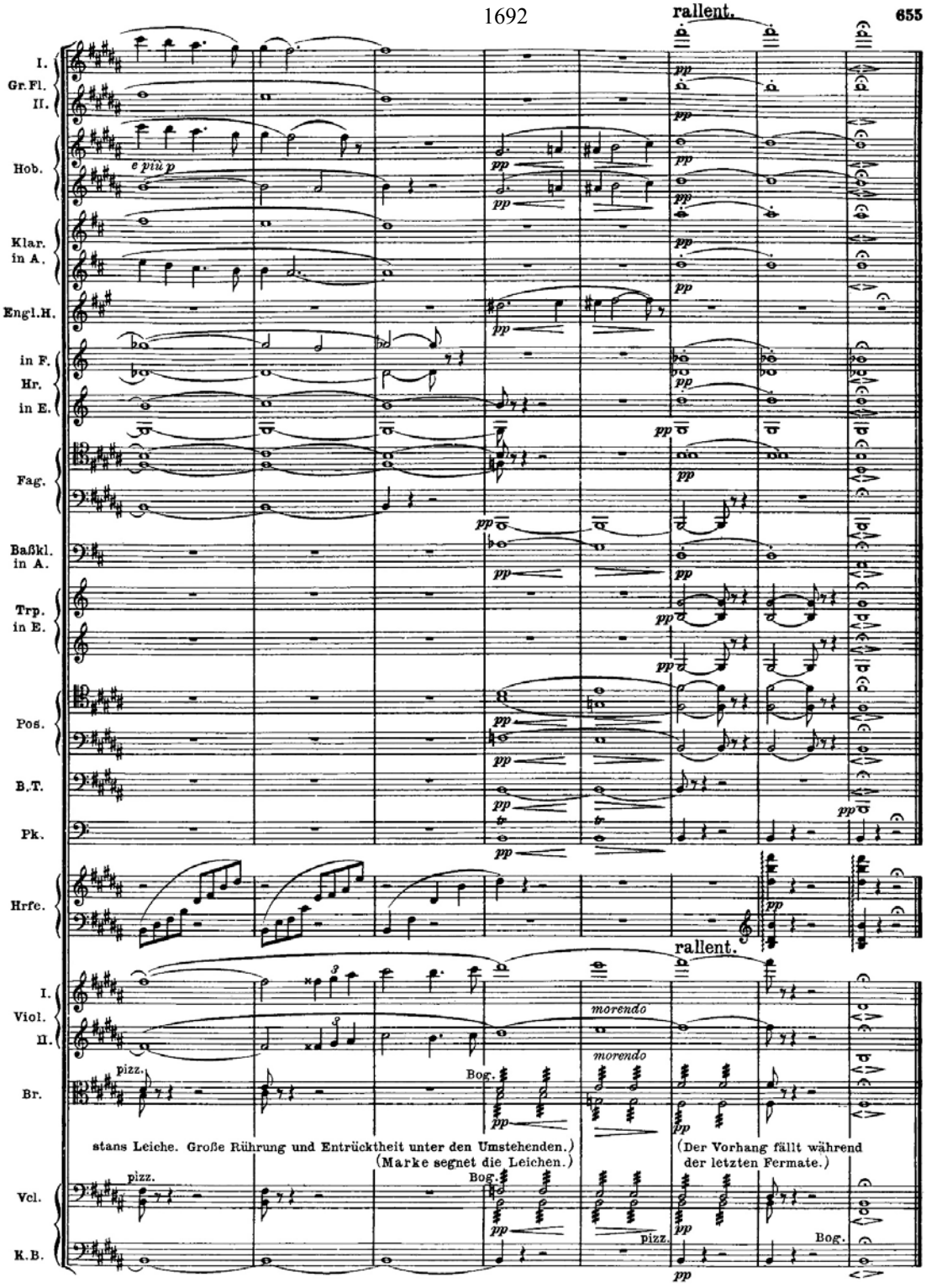

650
I.
Gr. Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar.
in A.
Engl. H.
cresc.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
Trp. I.
in E.
pp
Pos.
pp
Pk.
pp
Hrfe.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
hau - chen? In dem wo - - gen-den Schwall,— in dem tö - - nen-den
Vcl.
K.B.


Kl. Fl.
I.
Gr. Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar.
in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
Trp. I
in E.
cresc.
Pos.
cresc.
cresc.
B. T.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
B. Mächtigste Bewegung beider Arme nach oben und in die Weite, während der Körper zu sinken beginnt.
I.
Schall, in des Welt-
A - - - tems
Vcl.
K.B.


652
Kl. Fl.
I.
Gr. Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar.
in A.
Engl. H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
Trp.
in E.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
dim.
we - hen - dem All,-
er - trin -


I.
Gr.Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar.
in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
Trp.
in E.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
dim.
più p
pp
trem.
pizz.
ken, ver - sin - ken, un - be -


684
I.
Gr.Fl.
II.
Hob.
Klar.
in A.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
Trp.
in E.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
Hrfe.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
I.
Vcl.
K.B.
dolce
pp
pizz.
pp dolce
(Isolde sinkt, wie verklärt, in Brangänes Armen sanft auf Tri-
wußt,— höch - - - - - ste Lust!
Bog.


1692
rallent.
655
I.
Gr.Fl.
II.
Hob.
e più p
Klar.
in A.
Engl.H.
in F.
Hr.
in E.
Fag.
Baßkl.
in A.
Trp.
in E.
Pos.
B.T.
Pk.
Hrfe.
rallent.
I.
Viol.
II.
Br.
pizz.
Bog.
morendo
morendo
stans Leiche. Große Rührung und Entrücktheit unter den Umstehenden.)
(Marke segnet die Leichen.)
(Der Vorhang fällt während
der letzten Fermate.)
Vcl.
K.B.
pizz.
Bog.
pizz.
Bog.

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