Enriquez de Valdarrabano

7 Duets
from
" Silva de Sirenas "

edited by
Richard Darsie

Lute I

TREE EDITION

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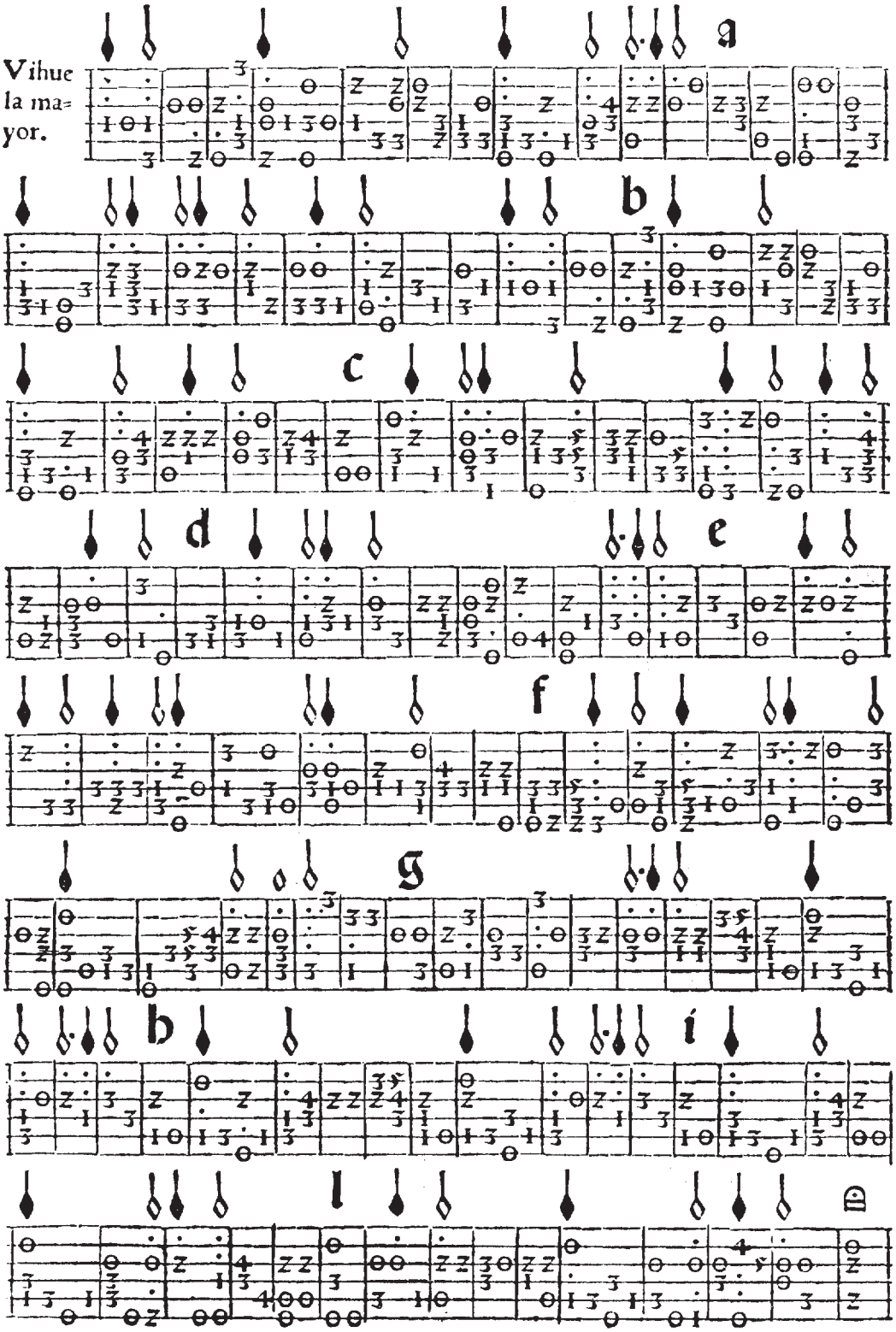
Albert Reyerman

Adriano. Para en dos vihuelas en quinta. Silua de sirenas.



ENRIQUEZ DE VALDERRABONA : 7 DUETS from SILVA DE SIRENAS

Introduction

Enriquez de Valderrábona ranks as one of the premier composers for the vihuela de mano in the 16th century Spain. In spite of this, almost no details of his life are known. His only known work, the source of the duets in the present edition, is his "LIBRO DE MUSICA DE VIHUELA, INTITULADO SILVA DE SIRENAS", published in Valladolid in 1547. SILVA DE SIRENAS is a giant collection of fantasias, sonetos, diferencias, and intabulations of vocal works both sacred and secular. "LIBRO IIII" of this work consists of the duets from which these are excerpted.

Enriquez' duets consist almost without exception of intabulations of vocal works by other composers; most of these are sacred works: motets and mass movements, or portions thereof. The composers represented are ones whose works are commonly found in other vihuela tablatures of the time: Josquin de Pres, Nicholas Gombert, Adrian Willaert, Jean Mouton, and Cristobal Morales.

Some Renaissance lutenist/composers, when arranging vocal works for instrumental performance, frequently use the original composition as a model on which they constructed elaborate virtuostic divisions. Others took the perhaps more difficult approach of attempting a faithfull transcription which preserved the rich polyphony of the model. Enriquez uses both of these approaches in SILVA DE SIRENAS. A number of his fantasias are recognizable parodies of vocal works but still very much his own instrumental compositions. His duets, however, exclusively represent the second approach, i.e., they attempt to reproduce vocal polyphony in an instrumental medium. John Milton notes in his Ph.D. dissertation ("The VIHUELA DE MANO and its Music", New York University, 1953) that this approach is more successful in Enriquez' duets than in the solo intabulations attempted by Enriquez and other vihuela composers.

Libro IIII of SILVA DE SIRENAS contains 16 duets, of which 7 are included in this edition. Of the 16 duets, only three are for instruments in unison. The rest require instruments of different tunings: three duets call for one instrument to be tuned "en la tercera menor" (a 3rd below the other instrument); four others are "para en dos vihuelas en quarta" (instruments tuned a major 4th apart) and the final six are "para en dos vihuelas en quinta" (instruments tuned a major 5th apart). Such a range of tunings is rare at any time in Renaissance lute music, and is the more remarkable given the relatively early age of this collection – the first half of the 16th century. These may in fact be the earliest duets for non-unison instruments in the entire repertoire. The use of such wide tuning intervals as a major 4th and a major 5th is made necessary by the large range between soprano and bass voice in the models for those pieces.

A final note of interest concerning the source publication: each FOLIA in Libro IIII has a number of large letters sporadically placed above the tablature. These letters serve as measure markers, the same letter appearing above corresponding measures in each duet part (see facsimile example). These were clearly intended as a practical aid for performers; they are replaced in this edition with the modern convenience of numbered measures.

In this edition, as mentioned earlier, seven duets are transcribed for lute duet in French tablature.Three of these are for lutes in unison (g' tuning: G-c-f-a-d'-g'). Four are for lutes tuned a major 4th apart (suggested tunings are G-c-f-a-d'-g' for the descant lute and D-G-c-e-d' for the bass lute).

There is a slight discrepance in the attribution of pice #2, the Morales mass movement. A comparison with the modern edition of Missa Mille Regres (Monumenta de la Música Española XI) shows that Enriquez did not arrange the "primera parte" but the final section of that Credo.

I believe that lutenists will find these duets satisfying to play; the hardest of them is only of moderate difficulty and they have a unique, full sound which sets them apart from the rest of the duet repertoire.

Davis, California, May 1987

Richard Darsie

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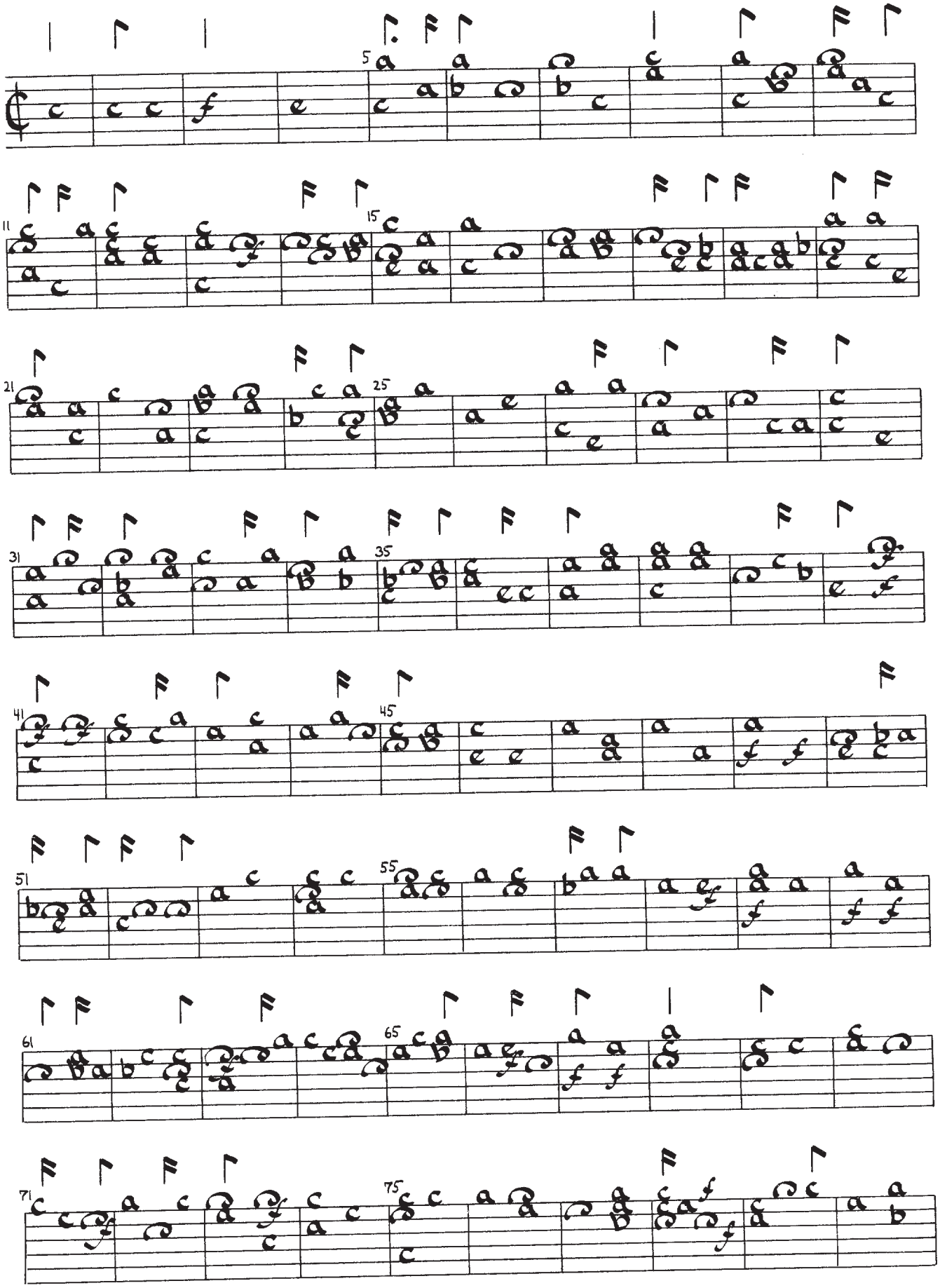
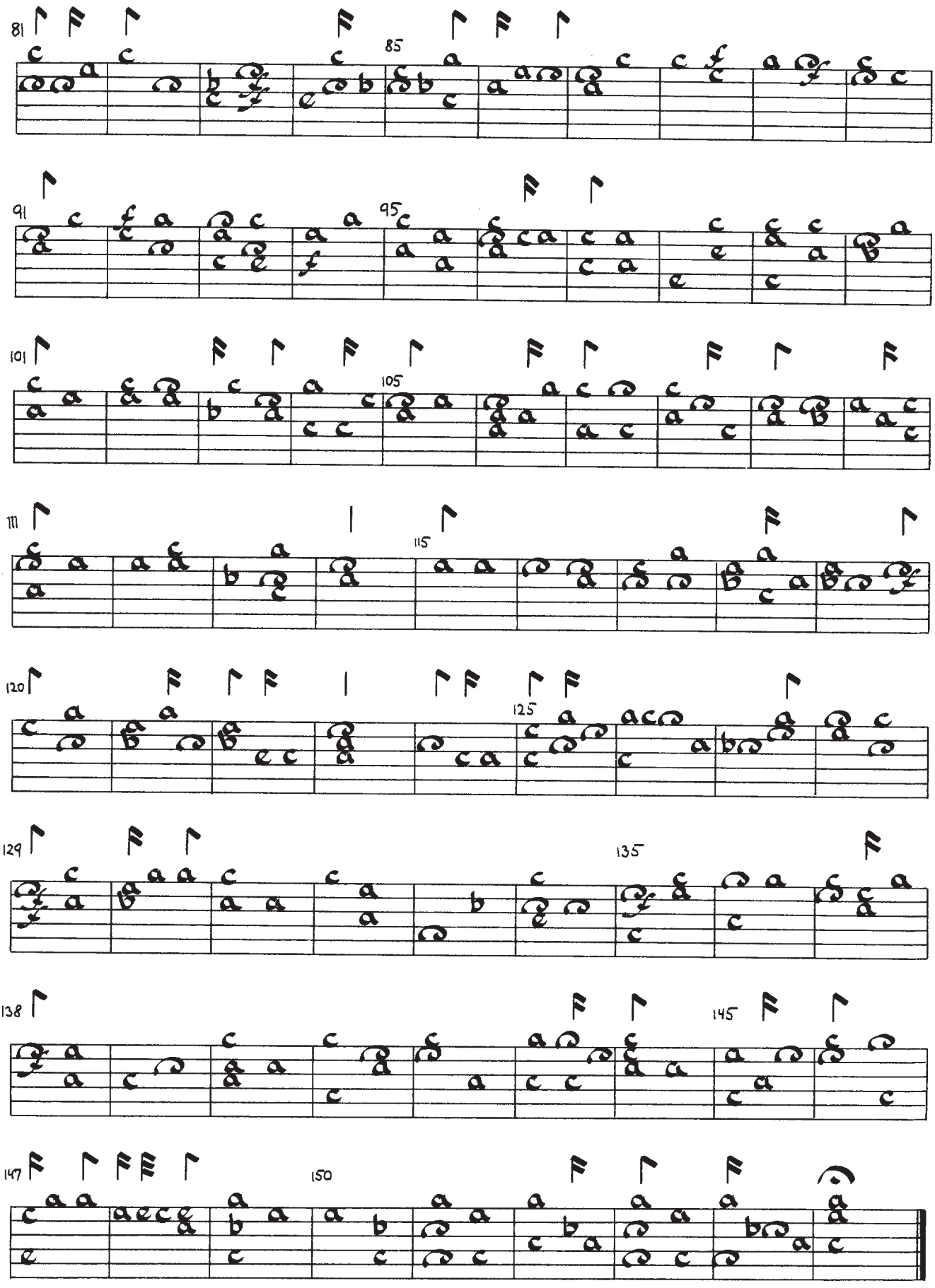
GOMBERT : ASSISTE PARATA

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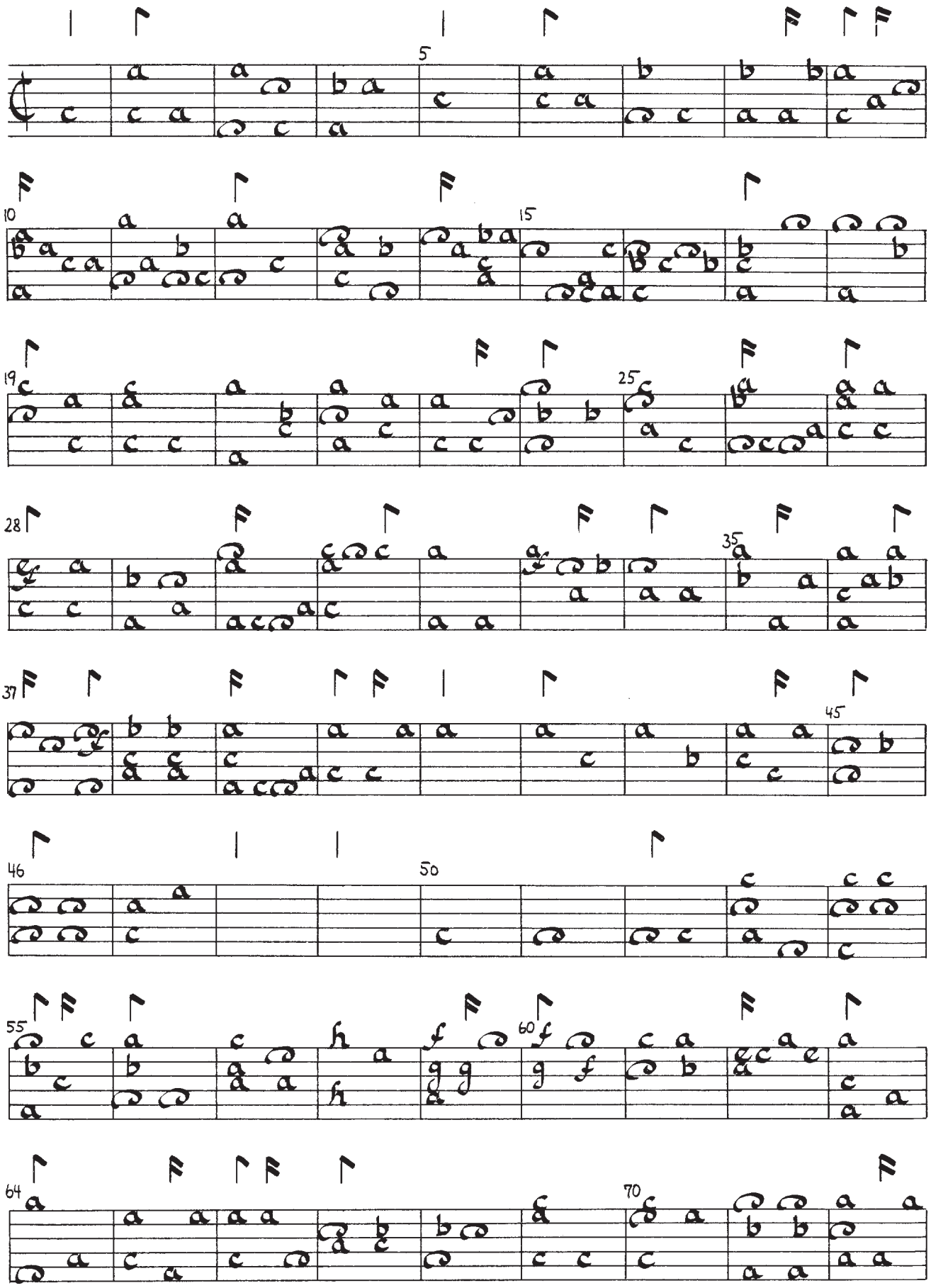

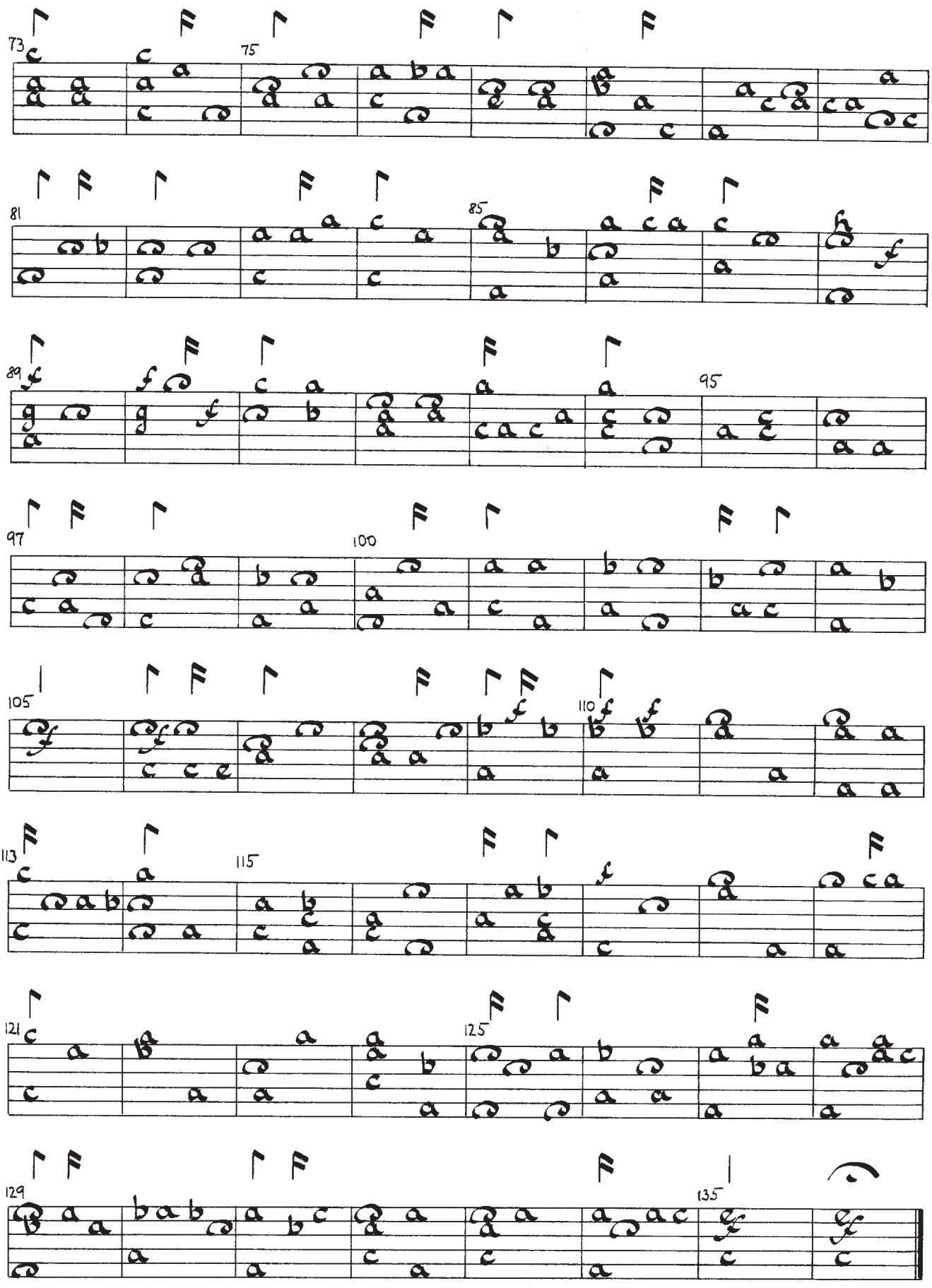
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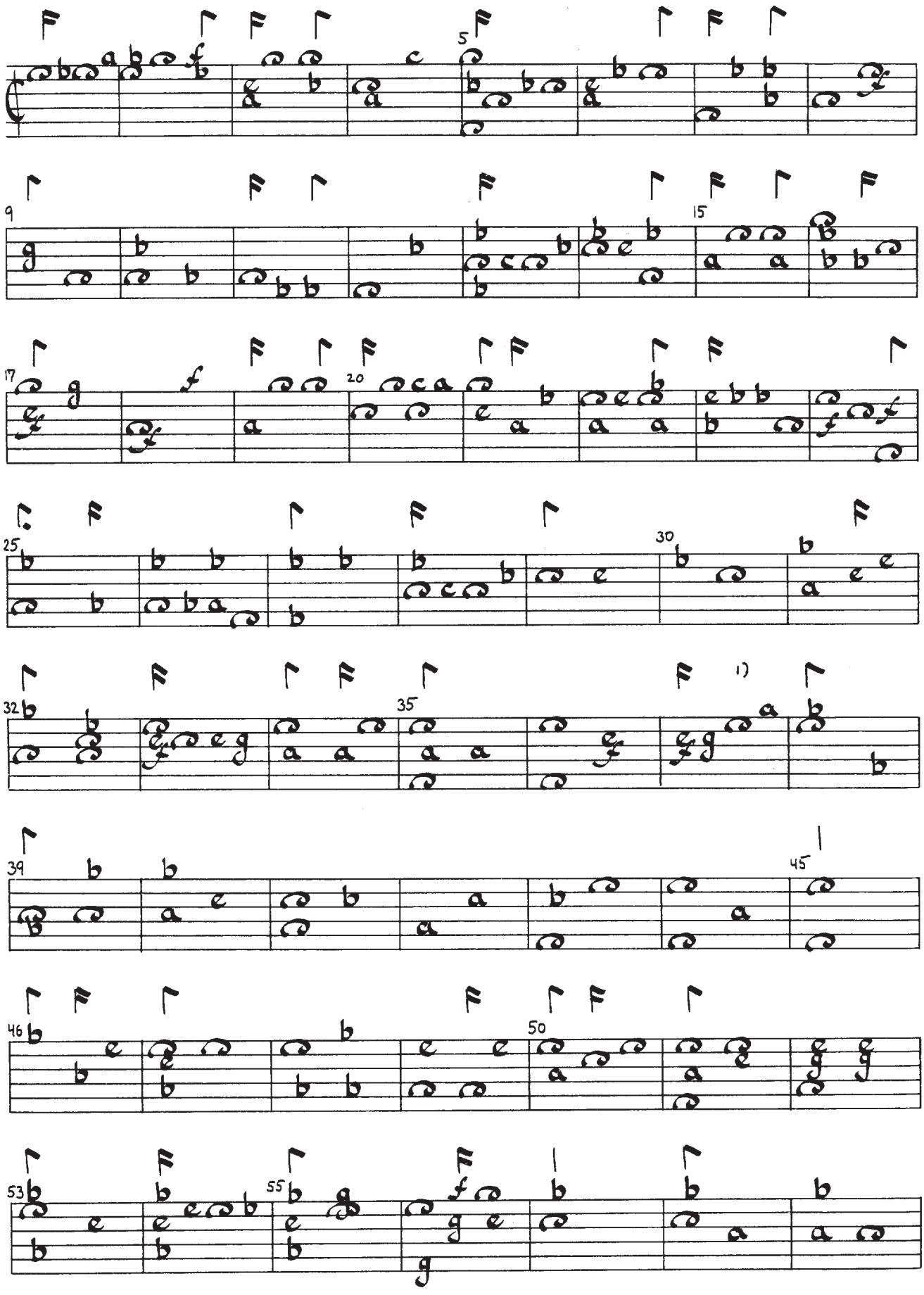

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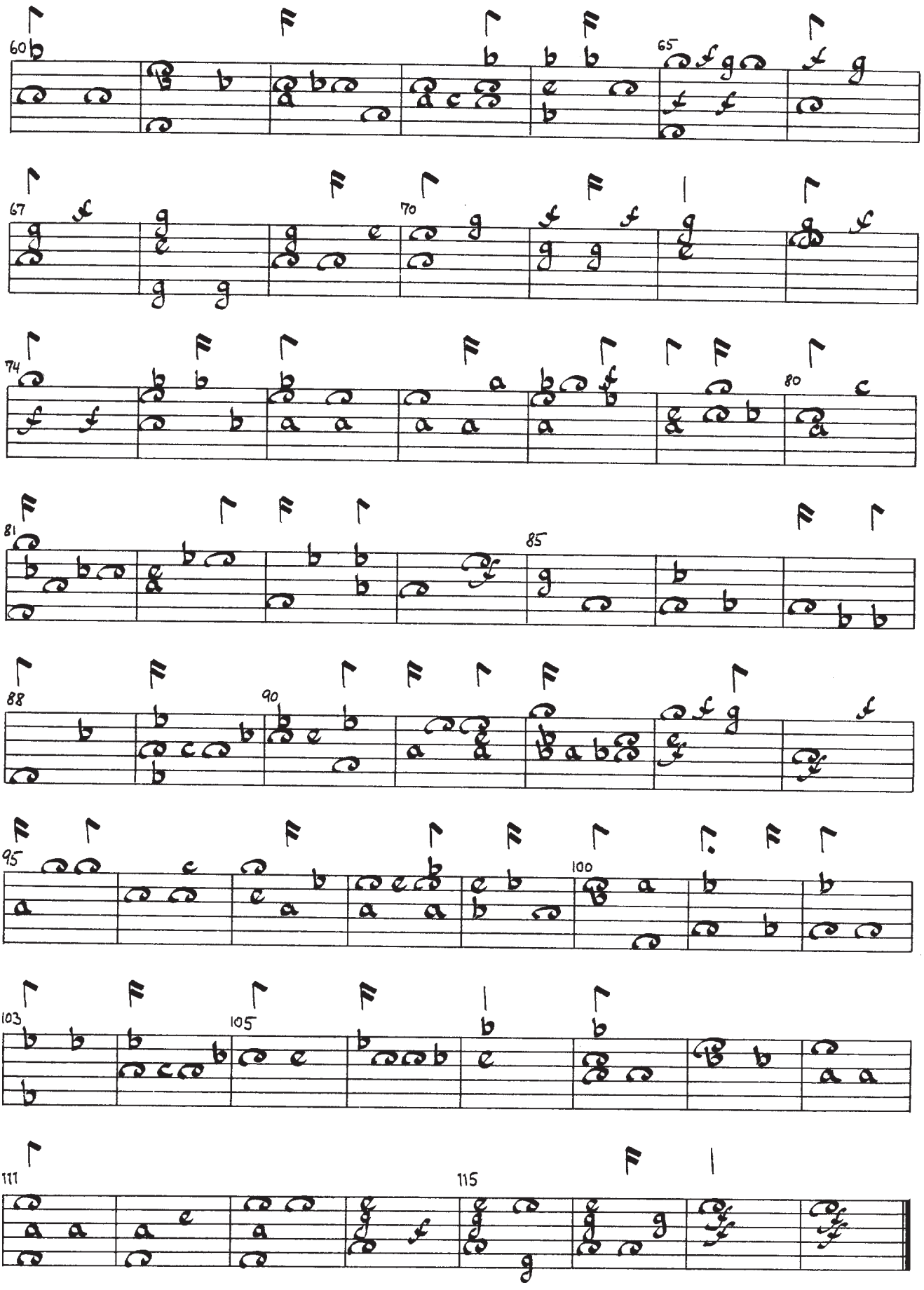
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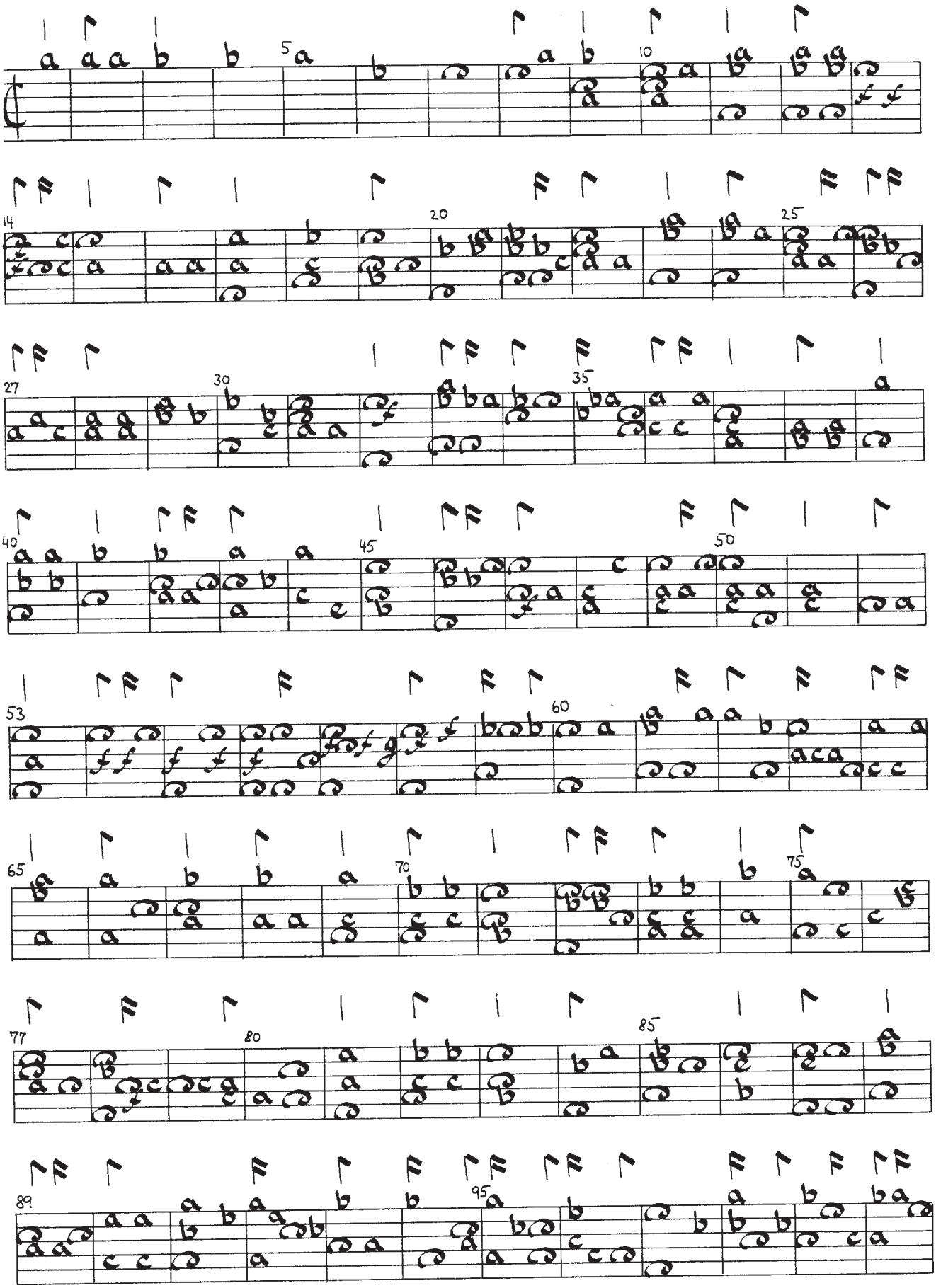
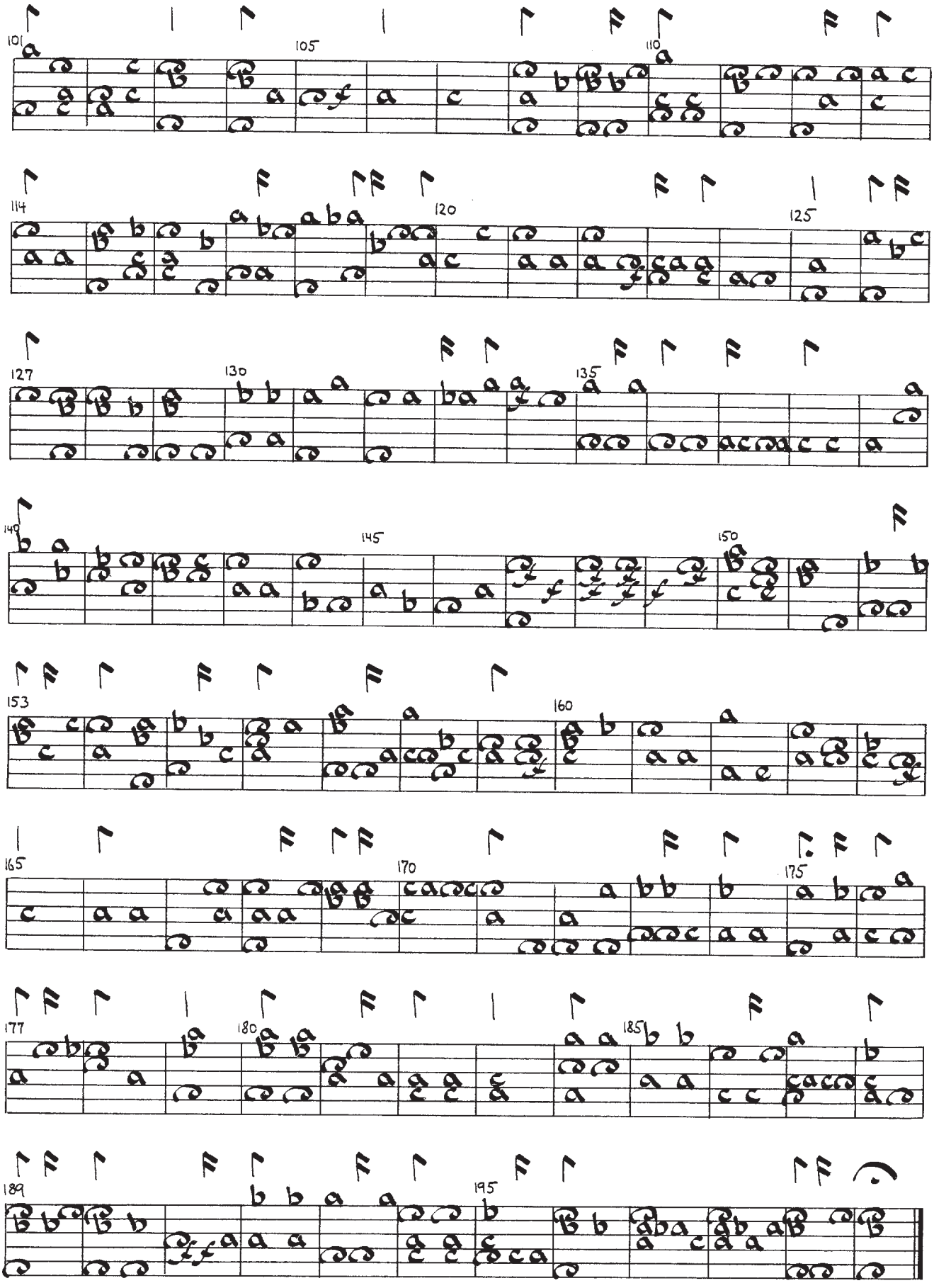
JOSQUIN : PRIMERA PARTE DEL CREDO DE
LA MISSA DE BEATA VIRGINE





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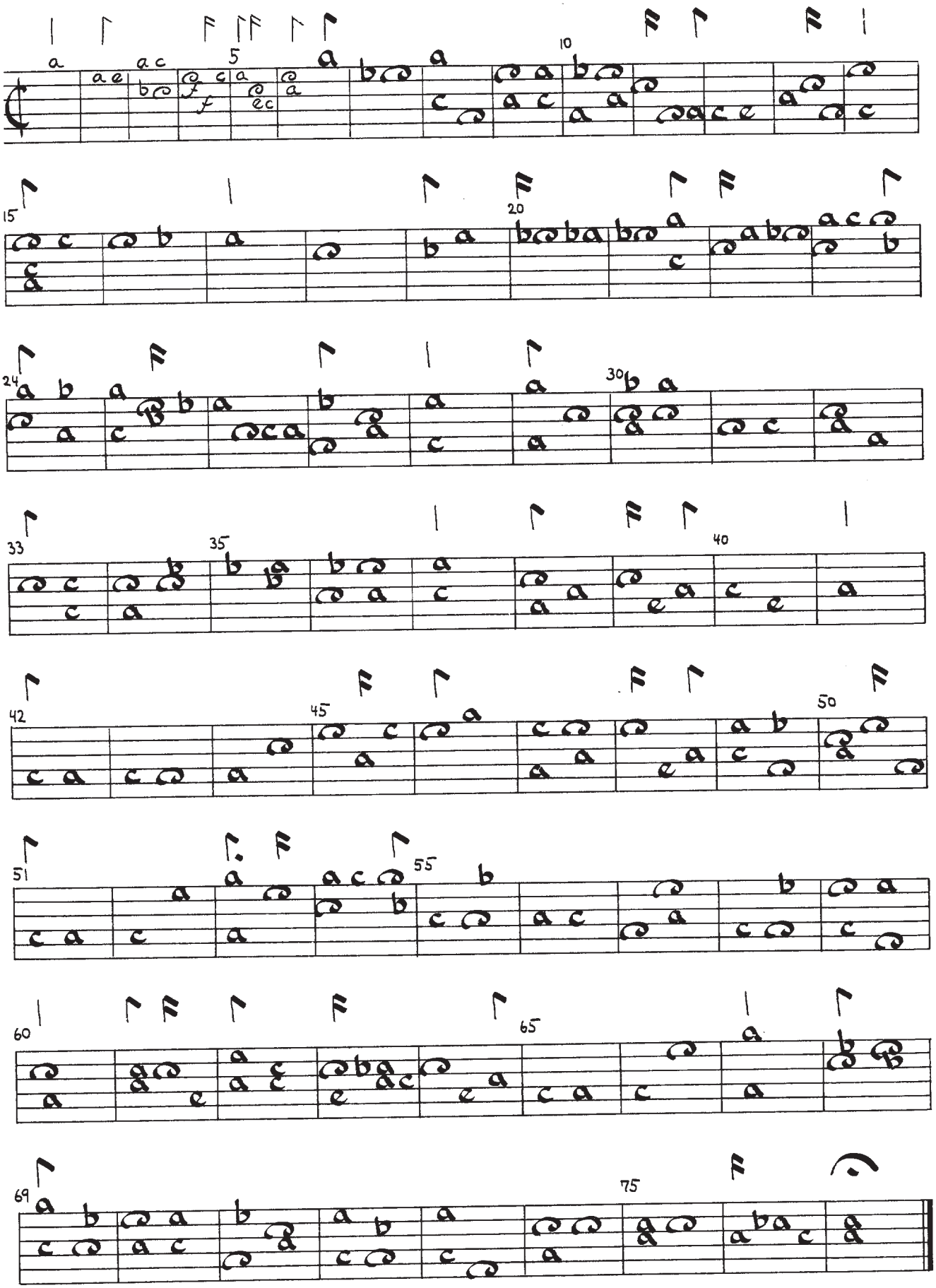
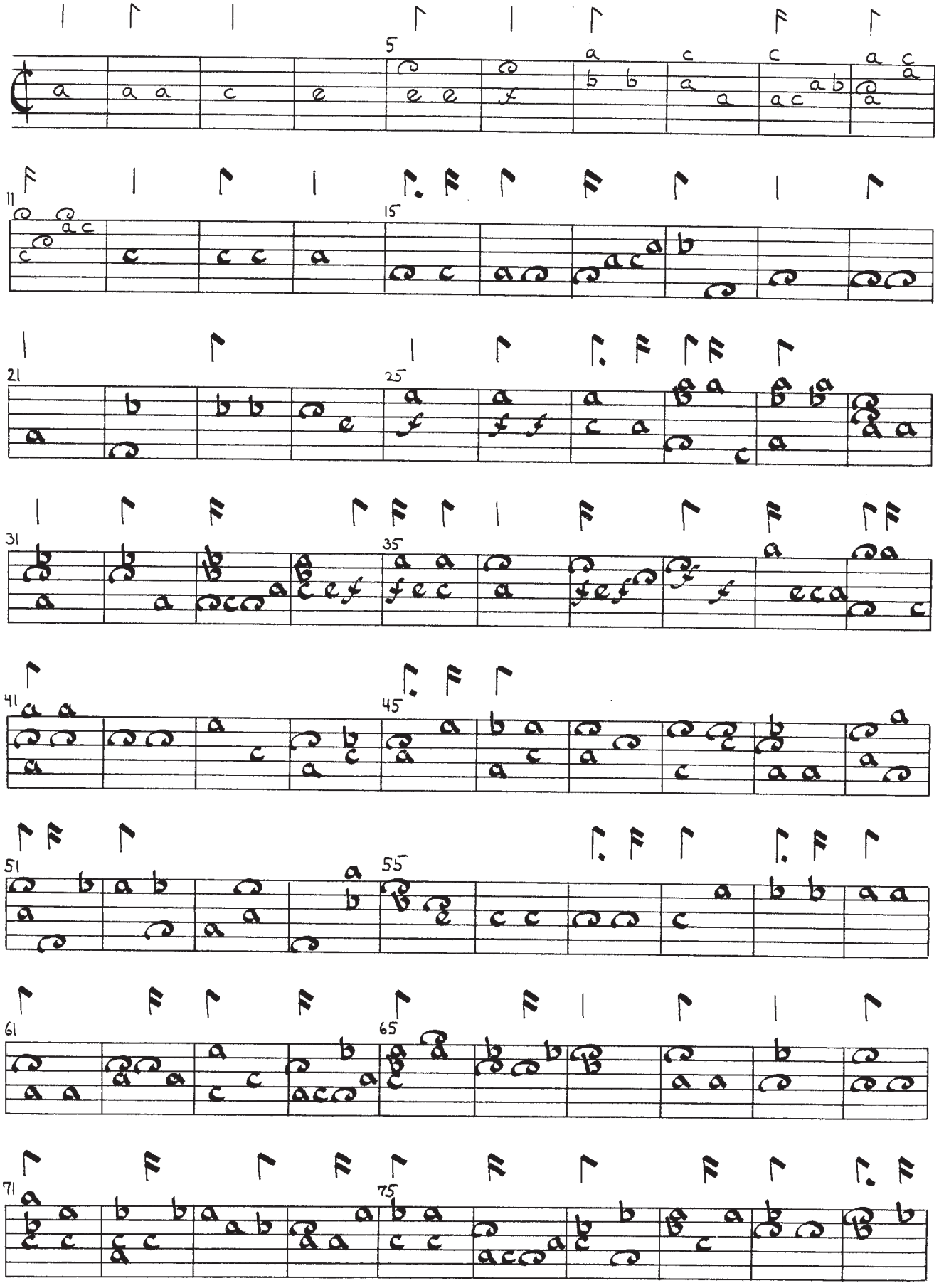
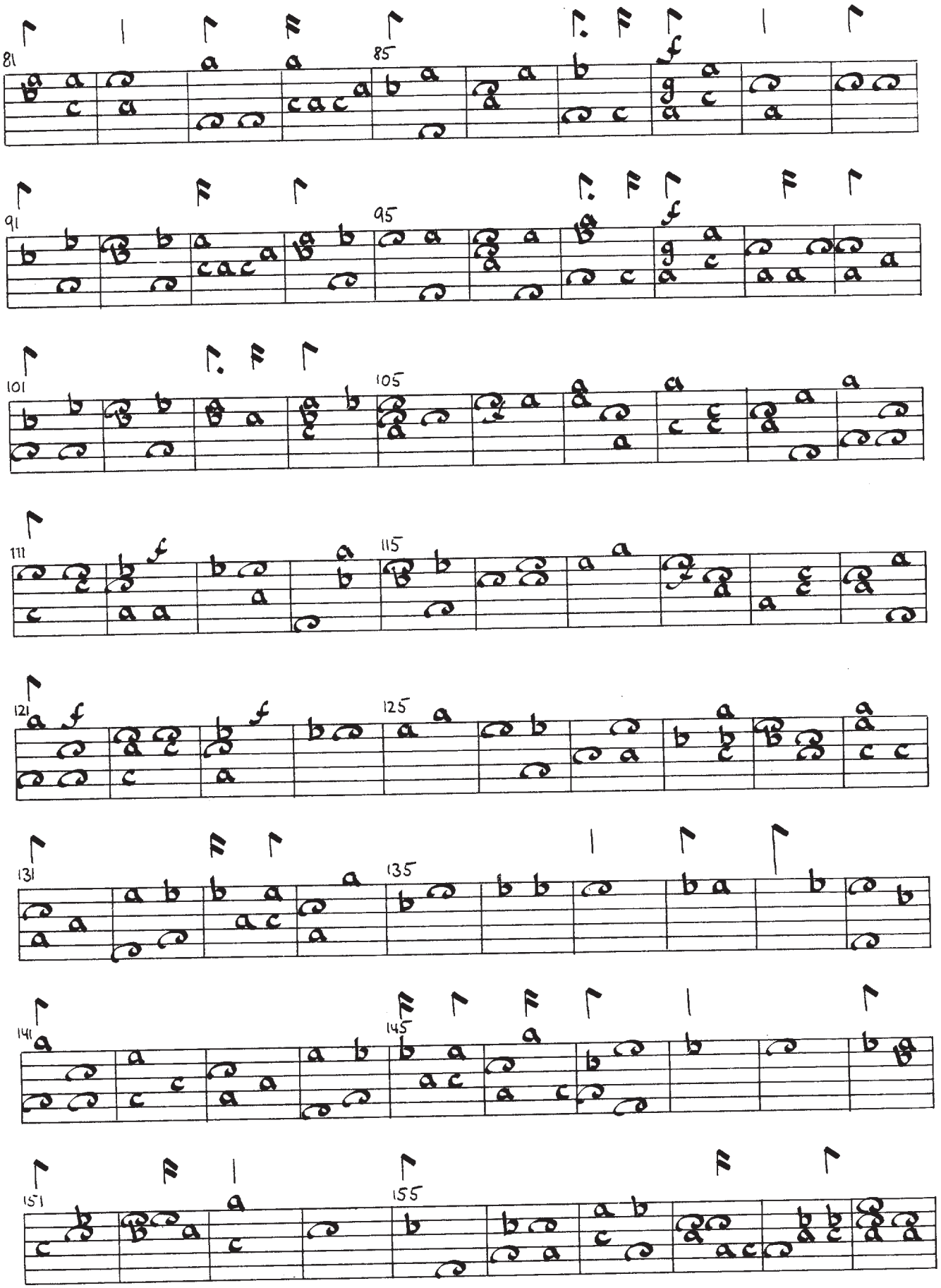


ADRIANO : PATER NOSTER

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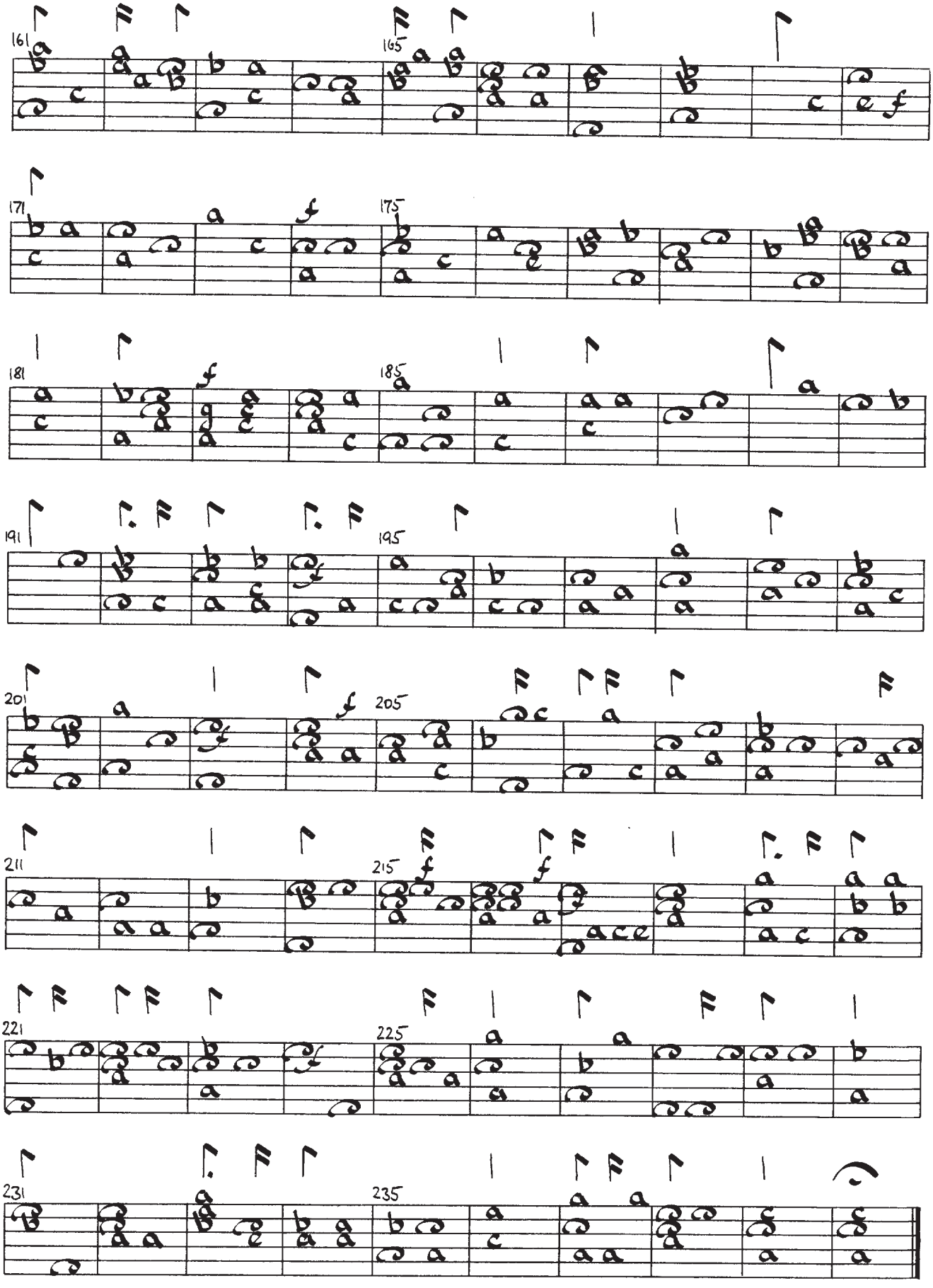
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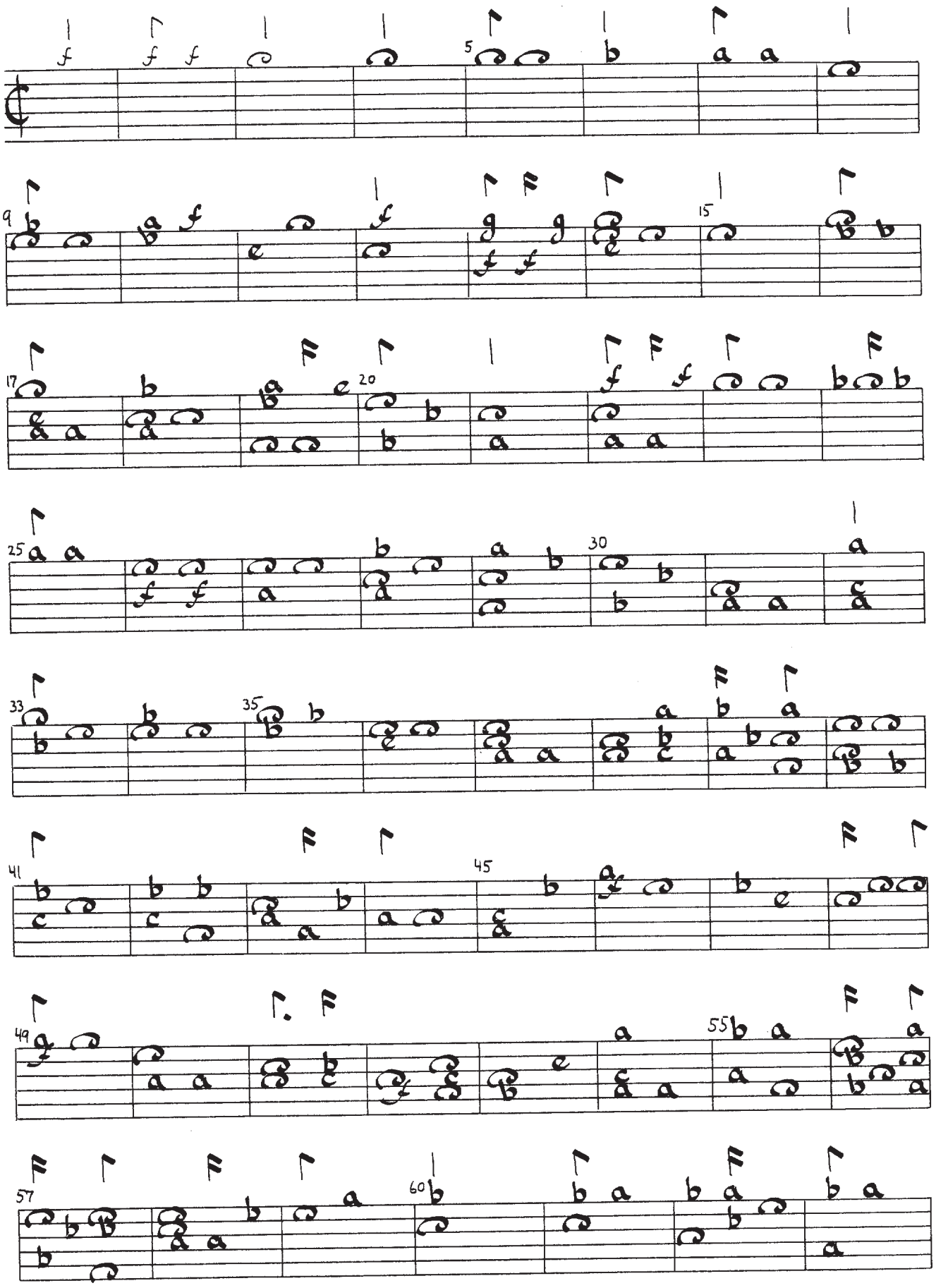

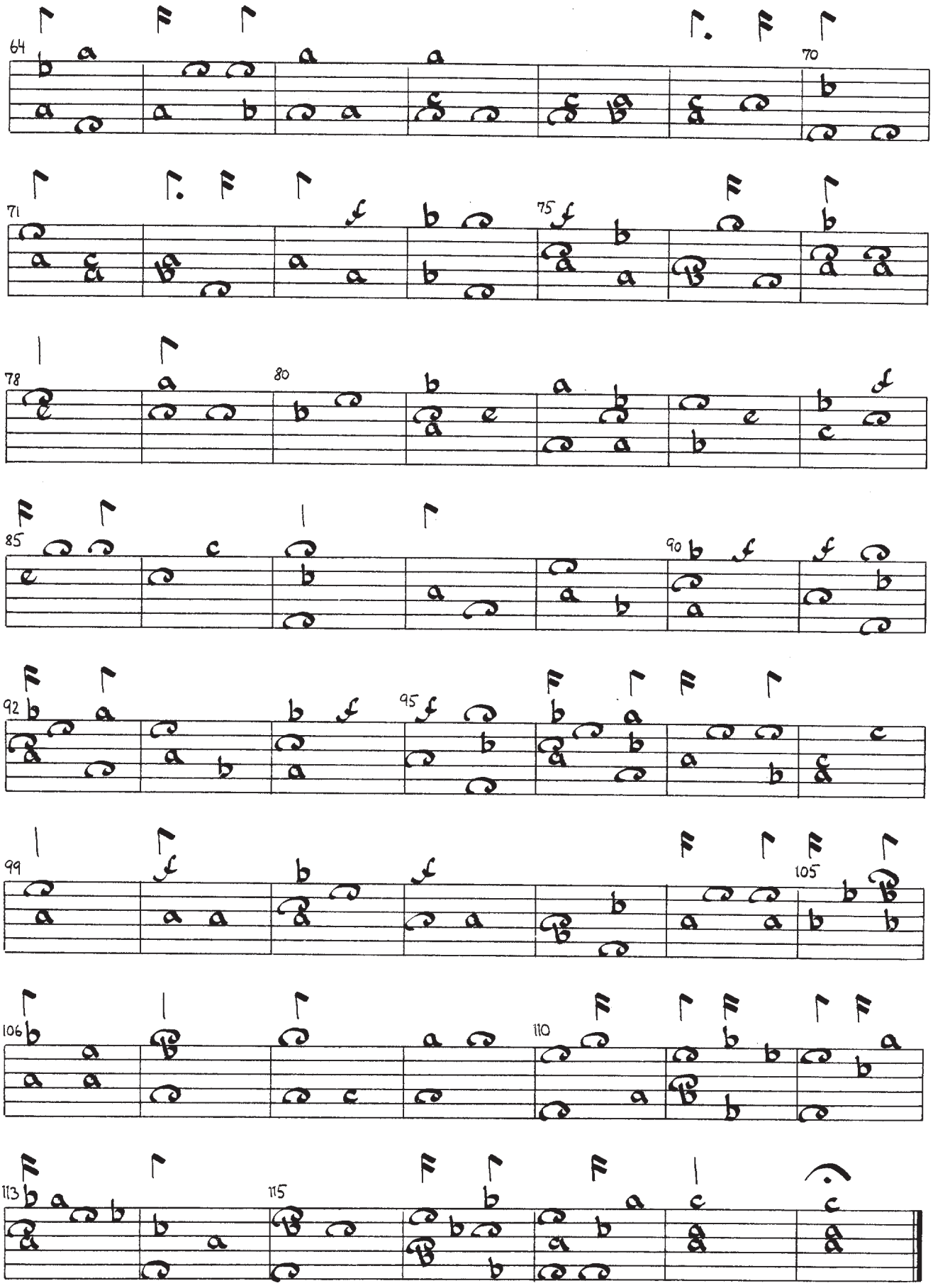
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