

Mastering Mocquereau's Method

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Structure for Tonight

- Principles outlined in *Le Nombre Musicale Grégorien* by Dom André Mocquereau
 - Rationale for the Method
 - Some basic elements
- Exercises for practice
- Invocabit Me - Introit

Mocquereau's Rationale

as outlined in *Le Nombre Musicale Grégorien*

- Based on Dom Joseph Pothier's *Mélodies grégoriennes* (1880)
 - Rhetoric as the basis for understanding structure and performance of Gregorian chant
- 30 years of experimentation and practice
- Good performance so as to promote the singing of chant

Still worse, the direction of devoted but insufficiently trained teachers led to faulty renditions and incorrect interpretation with failures which threw discredit on the cause of Gregorian Chant, on its promoters and their doctrines, thus seriously retarding progress.

In the face of these difficulties, the best minds were in agreement both as to their cause and their obvious remedy. The principal cause was lack of definite rules for the rendition of rhetorical musical rhythm and the imperfection of neumatic notation at least for rhythmic detail.

1. It became imperative to determine, define, and develop the theory of rhythm, not only in its general outlines, but even in its smallest details;
2. To fix the rhythm by means of a clear and precise notation, intelligible to little children and simple village cantors, a problem that must be faced by every teacher of Gregorian rhythm if his work is to be practical.

Is the solution of this problem possible today? Undoubtedly.

As for the constituent elements of this restoration, they are numerous:

- a) the natural laws of rhythm;
- b) the accentuation and natural rhythm of the words themselves; distinctions differing according to the sense of the words, and pauses (*mora vocis*) equally varied;
- c) the neumatic notation, despite its imperfections, of which we shall speak in a moment; neumatic notation with its grouping of notes, with its *pressus*, *strophicus*, *quilisma*, etc.;

- d) the melodic form, and modality of the chants which again are, in themselves, a help to the rhythmist;
- e) lastly, the Romanian additions, letters and signs found in the St. Gall manuscripts, and other rhythmic signs used in various neumatic notations which are not to be disdained — all these elements are precious, not only for the determining of the rhythm, but as a proof to us that a most exquisite and natural art governed the rendition of these Gregorian melodies.

(pp. 21–22)

Necessity of a Teacher or System

“It seems almost inconceivable to modern musicians, equipped with an admirable system of musical writing, that any notation should fail to indicate the rhythm of its melodies; inconceivable that any system should fail to indicate the exact intervals! This, however, was precisely the case in regard to the neumatic notations of antiquity. For a pupil, the presence of a master was indispensable for the singing of the intervals as well as for the indication of rhythm. In other words, the oral tradition was twofold, tonal and rhythmic.”

(p. 24)

“If the reader does not wish to stray and lose his way perhaps for years, on the wrong paths, if he wishes to avoid not only error but waste of time, he must be on his guard against any preconceived idea arising either from our Western languages or from our modern music, and keep in mind the great divergences existing among languages and between the different musical forms which have reigned during the course of centuries. We cannot too strongly recommend this attitude of independence.”

(p. 32)

What is rhythm?

Architecture, sculpture, painting

**Beautiful in the
state of repose**

Space

Music, poetry, dance

**Beautiful in the
state of movement**

Time

[F]or we shall see that there exists only one general system of Rhythmics; its fundamental laws are based on human nature itself and are necessarily found in all the artistic creations, musical or literary, of all peoples and in all times.

All the elements of sound have an objective reality but they would be of no use if we had not, in ourselves, the aesthetic, intellectual and physical faculties that enable us to judge, appreciate, and relish rhythm and, furthermore, other faculties that permit us to create, subjectively, rhythms which, objectively, do not exist. Indeed, we possess rhythm alive within ourselves. The life that is in us and that flows along in time, manifest itself by a series of movements, ordered with admirable regularity. The throb of our pulse, the beating of our heart; our breathing which is in ternary time, our walking which is binary. These are physiological facts among many others, which reveal in us an existence of constant, spontaneous and living rhythm.

Indeed our intelligence itself, is it not rhythmmed, so to speak, by the harmonious laws of logic and reason?

7. *Time* is the measurement of movement and of quiescence. Taken by itself, time cannot be measured nor produce upon us any sensation. It is only through the things that take place in time, that occur and *move* within it, that we become conscious of time, are able to discern it, and give it its value. Moreover, apart from these things, time does not exist.

8. *Movement* is the condition which, by dividing time, renders appreciable to our senses its invisible and silent flow.

9. The faculty of perceiving the *movements* which divide the sum of the moments of which time is composed, this faculty is reserved above all to two of our senses, our *sight* and our *hearing*.

The eye seizes these divisions, these instants, by the visible movements of bodies; thus the second hand that turns on the face of a clock or the movements of dancers, etc.: these are *local* or *visible movement*.

The ear perceives these divisions through the sonorous vibrations of the air, through sound, and the succession of sounds: it is *sonorous movement* — *instrumental*, if produced by instruments, and *vocal*, if produced by the voice, in speech or in song.

It is especially with vocal music that we shall concern ourselves. (p. 39)

- How sound is made
- “Phenomena of Sound”
 - Duration or quantity - prolongation
 - Intensity or dynamics - amplitude of vibrations
 - Pitch or melody - rapidity of vibrations
 - Timbre or phonetic quality - form of vibrations

- The intimate and harmonious union of all these sound phenomena: long and short, strong and weak, high and low, timbres of all sorts, successive or simultaneous, give birth to Melody, Speech, Harmony, and finally to Rhythm without which all melody, all speech, all harmony remain brute matter, — inert and dead.
- Rhythmic order - a fifth phenomenon
 - “Cinematic”
 - Sounds in relationship

**Rhythm is the relational and ordered
movement between sounds.**

Form & Matter

Sounds, words, gestures

Ordered movement

Elements of Rhythm

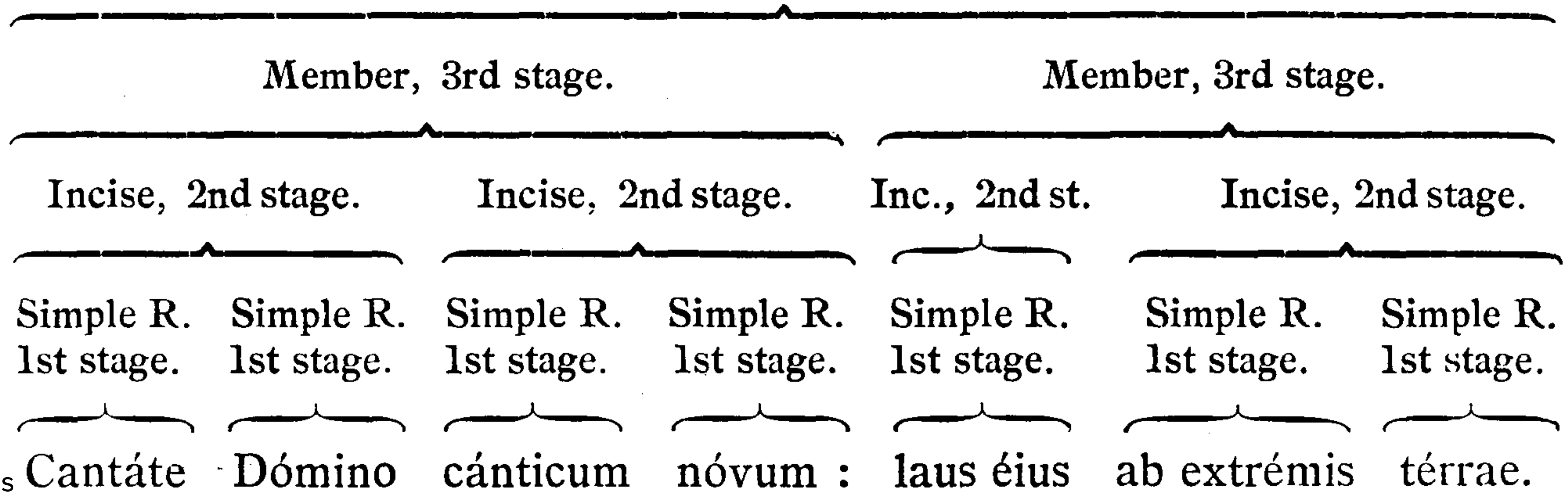
Sounds

Melody

Words

Harmony

Rhythm-Phrase — 4th stage



Elementary rhythms

Fundamental units
pulse, sounds, syllables

Pulse

- Basic pulse (individual ictus) is indivisible in Gregorian chant, but:
- Can be condensed
- Can be enlarged
- Can be doubled or tripled into a composite pulse
 - Composite pulse is a rhythmic unit (rhythmic ictus)

The Rhythmic process is synthetic, a constant effort toward synthesis. — Rhythm does not consist in the mere distinction between isolated elements of sound, nor in their cold juxtaposition. Rhythm is the art of well ordered movement, the *musica ars bene movendi* of St. Augustine. It is a synthetic reconstitution, broad and harmonious, of those moments by which we perceive, apprehend and measure the silent flow of time. All beautiful ordonnance of movement presupposes a coordination, a mutual dependence by which is established a close relation of fitness and of proportion.

Unity, rather than distinction.

lambic

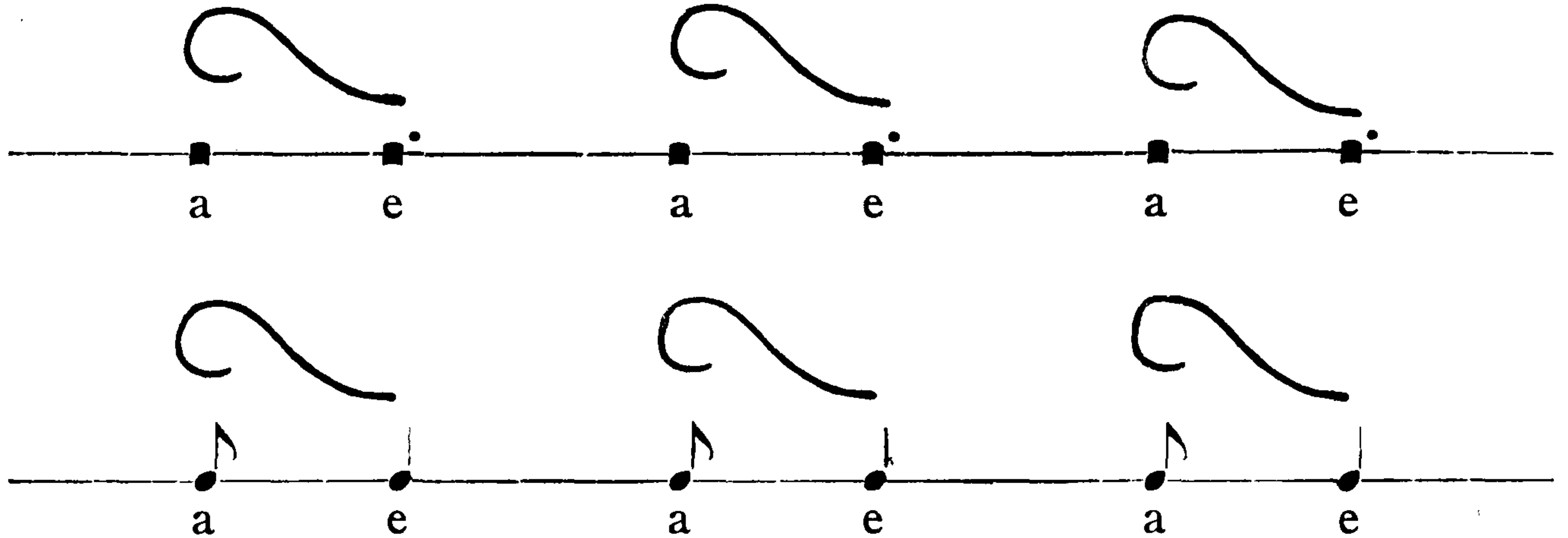


Fig. 20.

The rhythmic ictus are the time bearers of rhythm.

p. 61

The ictus, the touch, the rhythmic support, — all these terms are equally good — is not a strong beat necessarily. It is merely the point at which the rhythm alights, poises itself, touches, whether to take a fresh impetus and continue on, or whether to terminate a movement. The ear and the inner rhythmic sense distinguish the ictus by this alone: its character of arrival, of support, of rest. Nothing further, no question, yet, of strength or weakness. The phenomena of quantity and of rhythm must not be confused with the dynamic phenomena of which we shall speak before long.

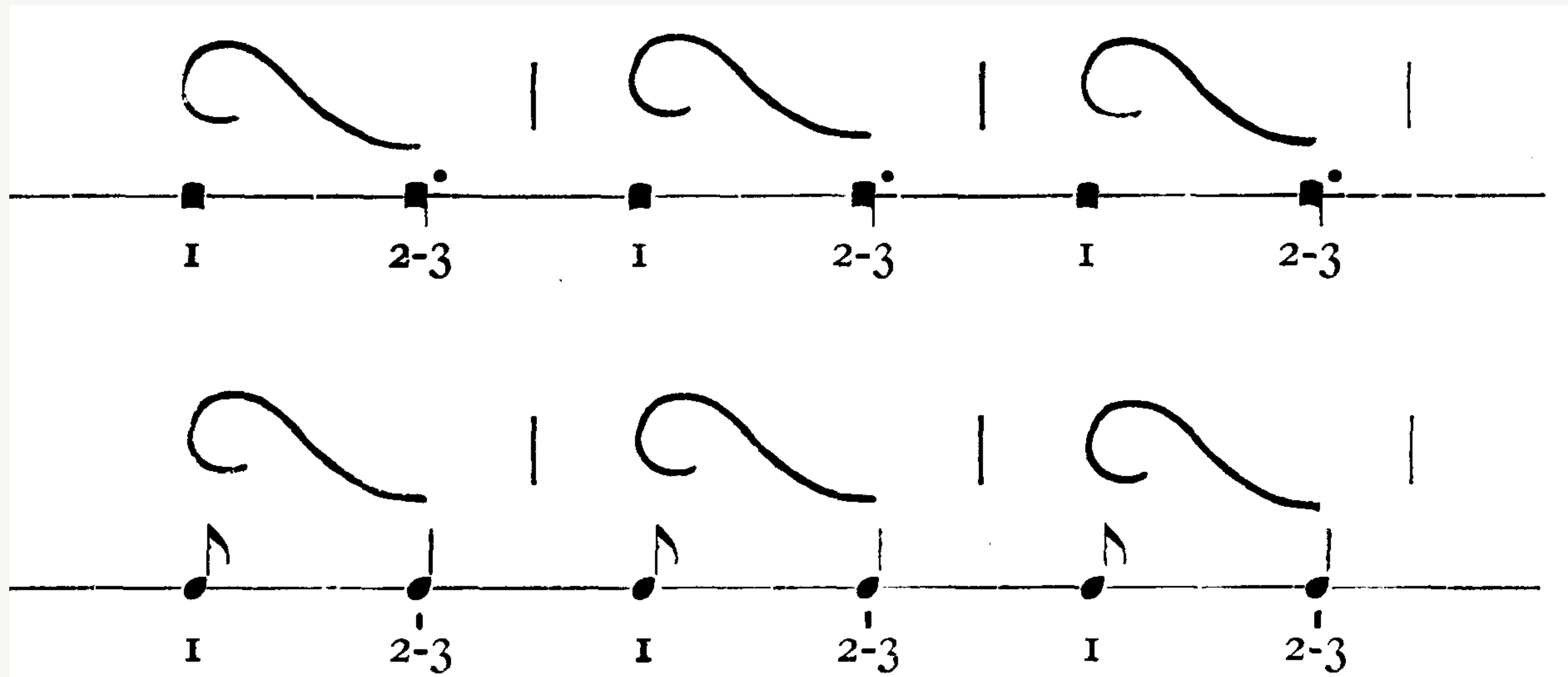


Fig. 26.

Spondaic

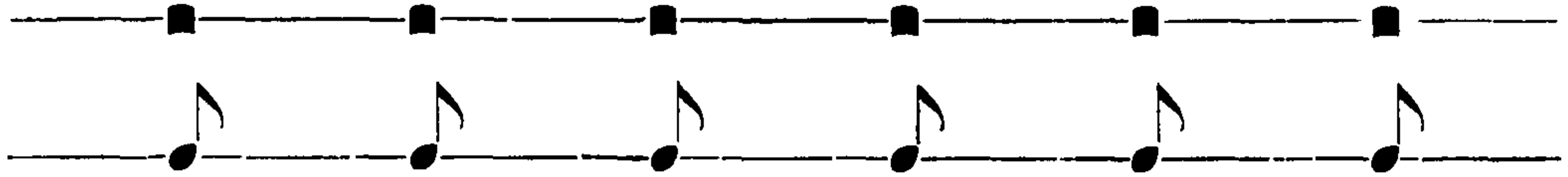


Fig. 29.

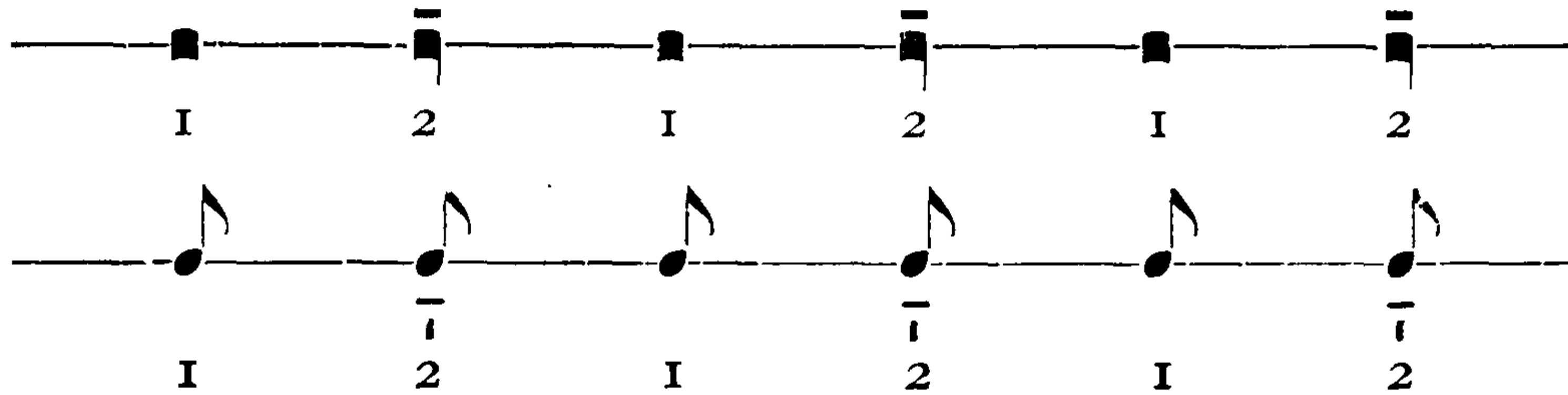


Fig. 30.

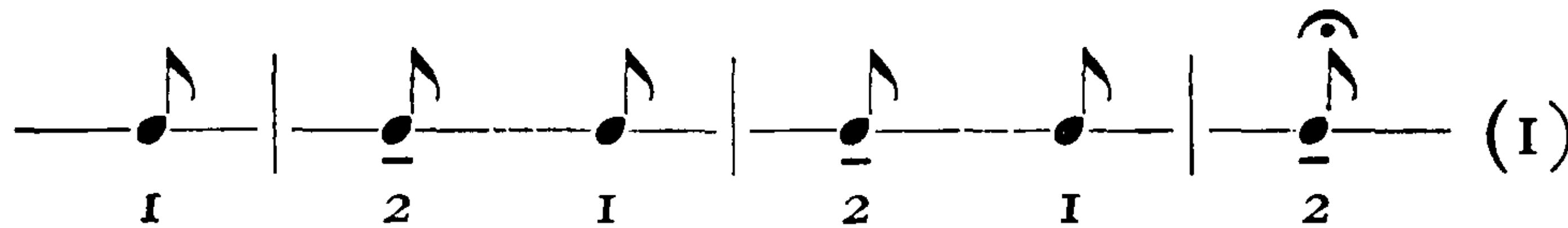


Fig. 31.

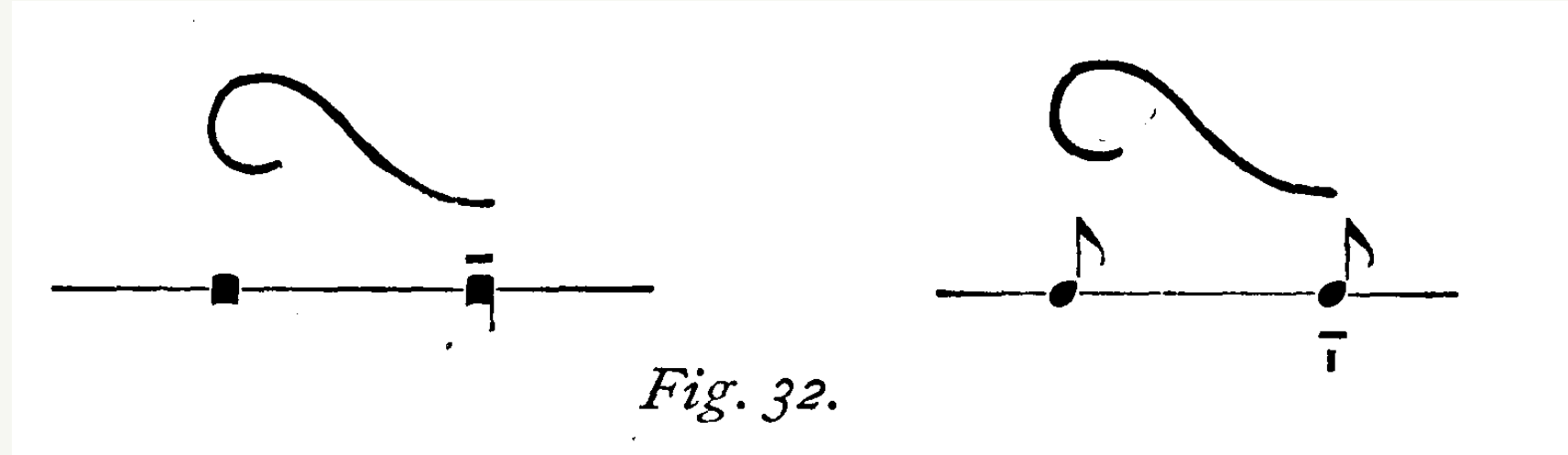


Fig. 32.

These two motives are only variations of one and the same fundamental form: élan-repos.

This single movement with its beginning and end, its élan and repos, is the essential yet least material element of rhythm. Consequently, it is most difficult, not perhaps to understand, but to explain. It is the form, the soul of rhythm; it is rhythm itself. Intensity can only complete it, affirm it, embellish it. Melody, without it, loses all character. Harmony itself, follows and keeps step with it.

“To have a right understanding of rhythm, we must realize that the movement which constitutes a rhythm is a unity. Though we talk of two pulses, one at the arsis (élan) the other at the thesis (repos) they are in reality inseparable. They are two phases of a single indivisible movement, which otherwise would become incomplete and abortive. We must therefore, in theory and in practice, guard the continuity of the rhythmic movement, for in this continuity consists its unity.”

Everything should tend to bring out this intrinsic unity. “It is necessary... that these two parts, arsis and thesis (élan and repos) should attract one another, and that the voice should be carried over from one to the other, so that the second part arrives as the result of the first,” just as movement is of necessity followed by repose.

Rhythm can organize itself in:

1. A constant duplex movement;
 2. A constant triplex movement;
 3. A movement that in free and mixed — in which duplex and triplex groups succeed each other in a harmonious combination.
- } This is the measured form

All these rhythms exist in nature. As we have said, a man walks in duplex, and breathes in triplex time. As for free and mixed rhythms, they are everywhere about us, the natural condition of rhythmical movement in the elements themselves. The undulations of the sea, audible and visible, the outline of mountain ranges, the waving grain, the sound of the wind, etc., all these are things of marvelous rhythm — of nombre — but they escape a mathematical, mensuralistic movement. Those who affirm that free rhythm or mixed rhythm is the most natural, are perhaps right; because everything in nature, while submitting to rhythm of numerus, to proportion and harmony, is absolutely free from the mathematical and artificial laws which too often regulate and hamper the works of man's creative genius.

Intensity (Dynamics)

The first row of musical notation consists of four measures. Each measure is represented by a five-line staff with a brace on the left side. Above each staff is a hand position diagram showing the first finger (I) on the first line and the second, third, and fourth fingers (2-3-4) on the second line. Below each staff are two notes: a quarter note 'a' on the first line and a quarter note 'e,' on the second line. A dynamic hairpin is drawn above the notes in each measure, showing a crescendo from the first note to the second. The dynamic markings above the notes are: I, 2-(3), I, 2-(3), I, 2-(3), I, 2-(3).

The second row of musical notation is identical in structure to the first row, consisting of four measures. Each measure has a five-line staff with a brace on the left, a hand position diagram above, and two notes ('a' and 'e,') below. A dynamic hairpin is drawn above the notes in each measure, showing a crescendo. The dynamic markings above the notes are: I, 2-(3), I, 2-(3), I, 2-(3), I, 2-(3).

Intensity (Dynamics)

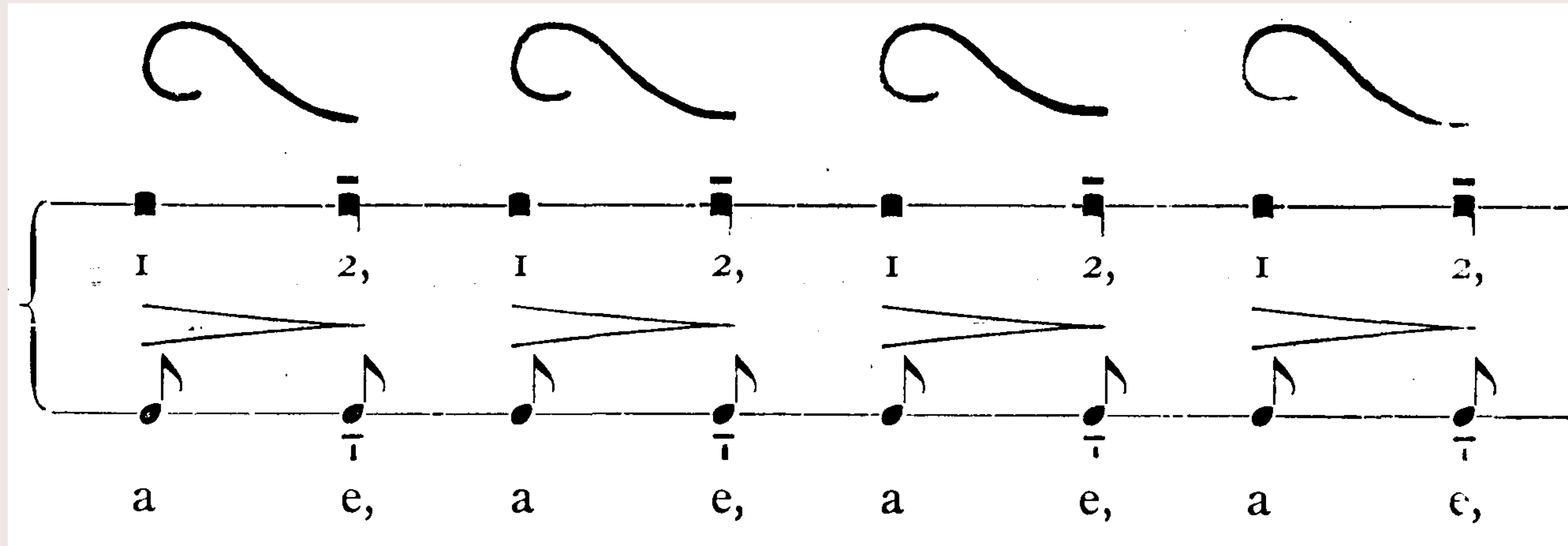


Diagram illustrating the first exercise for intensity (dynamics). It shows four measures of music on a five-line staff. Above each measure is a wavy line representing the dynamic contour. The notes are 'a' and 'e,' with fingerings 'I' and '2,' respectively. A bracket on the left indicates the dynamic range. The dynamic contour shows a crescendo from the first measure to the second, followed by a decrescendo in the third and fourth measures.

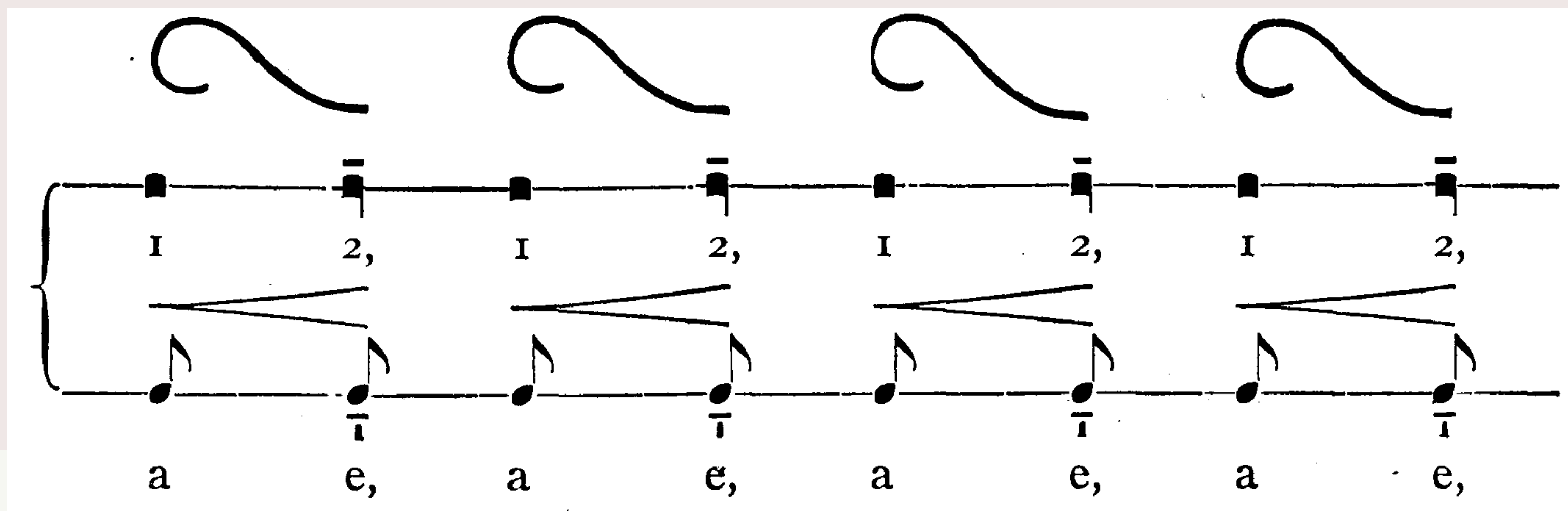


Diagram illustrating the second exercise for intensity (dynamics). It shows four measures of music on a five-line staff. Above each measure is a wavy line representing the dynamic contour. The notes are 'a' and 'e,' with fingerings 'I' and '2,' respectively. A bracket on the left indicates the dynamic range. The dynamic contour shows a crescendo from the first measure to the second, followed by a decrescendo in the third and fourth measures.

I 2, I 2-(3), I 2, I 2-(3),
 a e, a e, a e, a e,

I 2, I 2-(3), I 2, I 2-(3).
 a e, a e, a e, a e.

a) A single basic pulse :

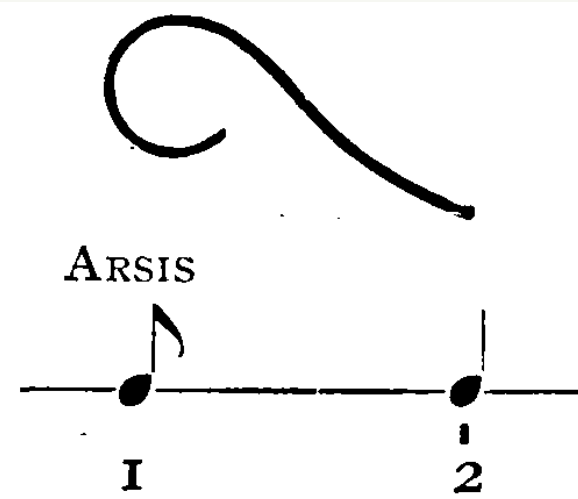


Fig. 54.

b) A duplex composite pulse :

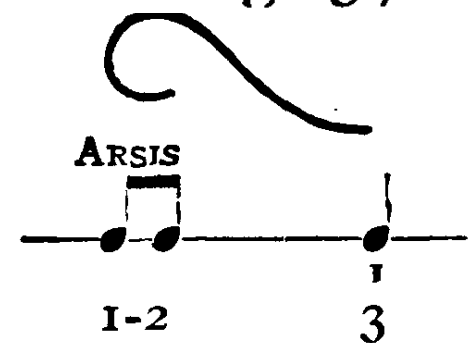


Fig. 55.

c) A triplex composite pulse :

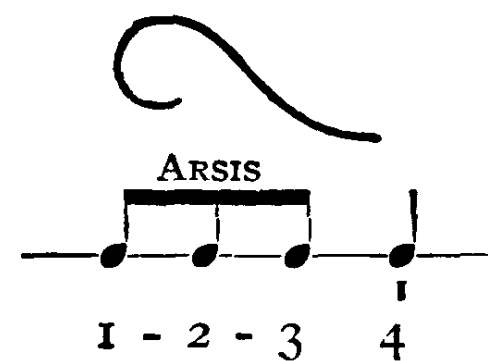


Fig. 56.

114. *Development within the thesis.* — The thesis of a si rhythm may contain :

a) A single basic pulse :

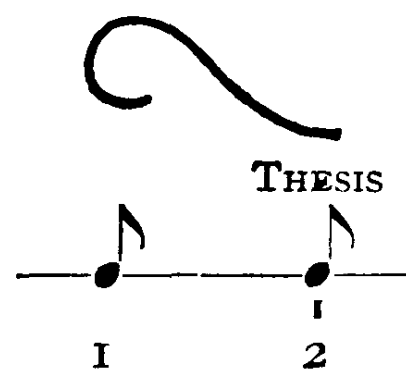


Fig. 57.

b) A duplex composite pulse :

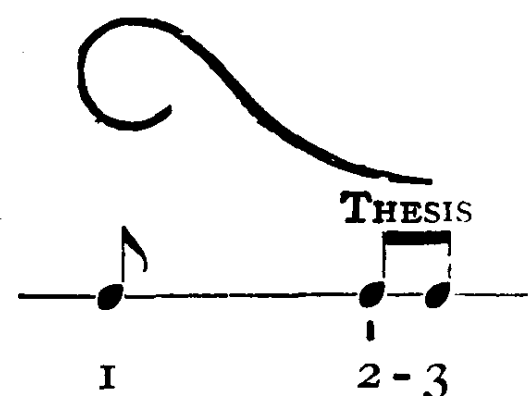


Fig. 58.

c) A triplex composite pulse :

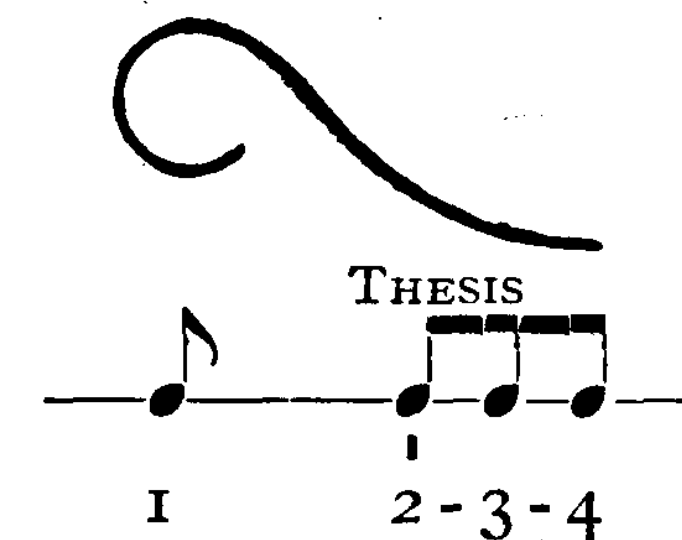


Fig. 59.

115. *Development within both arsis and thesis.*

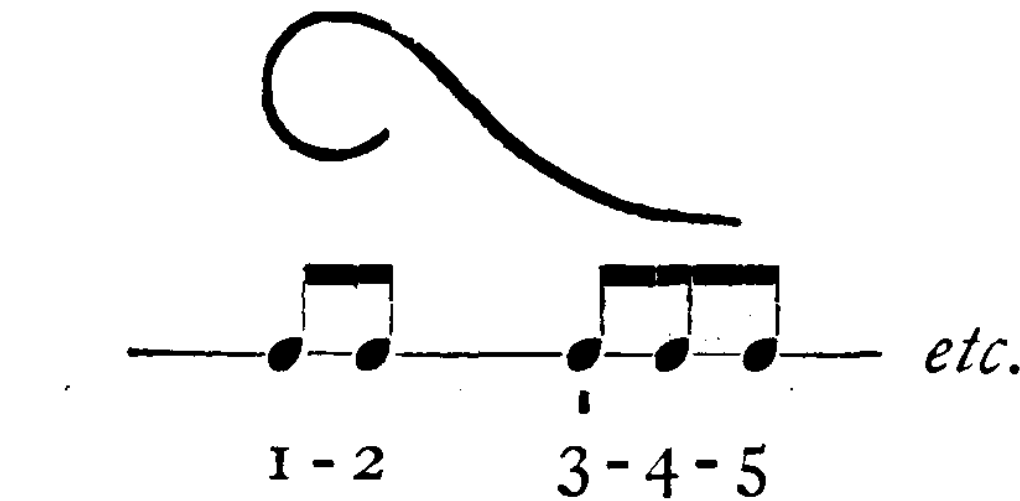
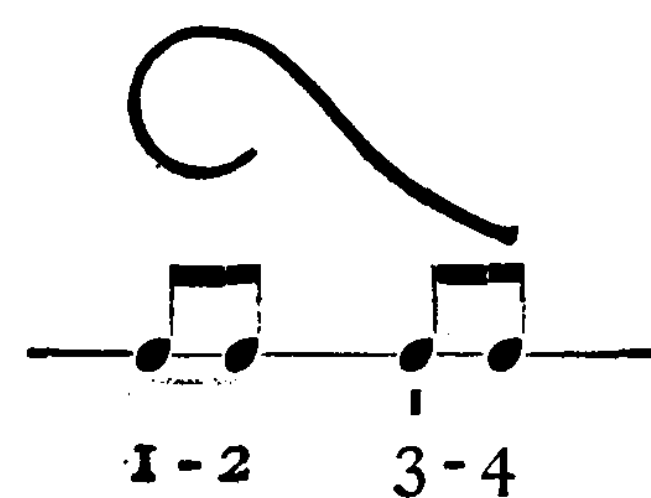


Fig. 60.

1 2 3-(4),

a e i,

1 2 3-(4),

a e i,

The first row of exercises consists of three identical examples. Each example features a wavy line above a five-line staff. The staff contains three notes: a first finger (I) on the first line, a second finger (2) on the second line, and a third finger (3) on the third line, which is marked with a circled 4 (3-(4)). Below the staff, the letters 'a', 'e', and 'i' are written under the first, second, and third notes respectively. A piano accompaniment is shown below the staff, consisting of three notes: a quarter note 'a' on the first line, a quarter note 'e' on the second line, and a quarter note 'i' on the third line. A slur connects the first two notes, and a vertical line connects the third note to the letter 'i' below it.

The second row of exercises consists of three identical examples, identical in notation to the first row. Each example features a wavy line above a five-line staff. The staff contains three notes: a first finger (I) on the first line, a second finger (2) on the second line, and a third finger (3) on the third line, which is marked with a circled 4 (3-(4)). Below the staff, the letters 'a', 'e', and 'i' are written under the first, second, and third notes respectively. A piano accompaniment is shown below the staff, consisting of three notes: a quarter note 'a' on the first line, a quarter note 'e' on the second line, and a quarter note 'i' on the third line. A slur connects the first two notes, and a vertical line connects the third note to the letter 'i' below it.

I 2 3-(4),



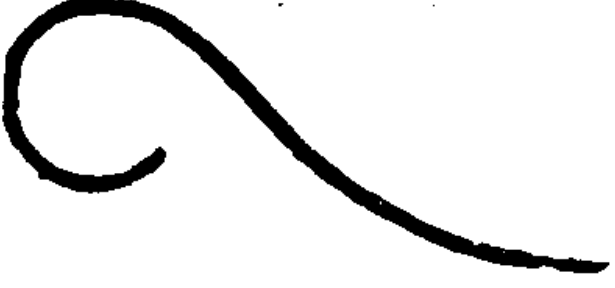
a e i,

I 2 3-(4),

a e i,



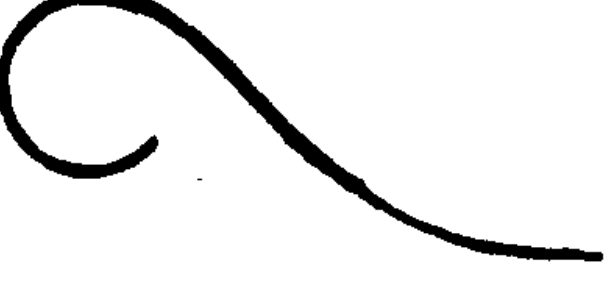
Three examples of a musical exercise. Each example consists of a wavy line above a staff. The staff contains four notes with fingerings: 1, 2, 3, and 4-(5). Below the staff is a piano accompaniment consisting of four notes: a, e, i, and o, with a crescendo hairpin above them.

Three examples of a musical exercise, identical to the first set. Each example consists of a wavy line above a staff. The staff contains four notes with fingerings: 1, 2, 3, and 4-(5). Below the staff is a piano accompaniment consisting of four notes: a, e, i, and o, with a crescendo hairpin above them.

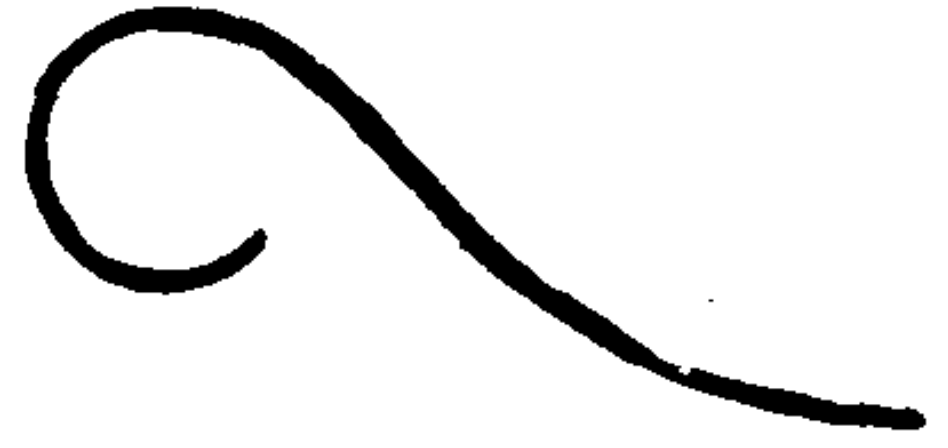
I 2 3 4-(5), I 2 3 4-(5), I 2 3 4-(5),

a e i o, a e i o, a e i o,

I 2 3 4-(5), I 2 3 4-(5), I 2 3 4-(5).

a e i o, a e i o, a e i o.



1 2 3 4-(5), 1 2 3 4-(5), 1 2 3 4-(5),

a e i o, a e i o, a e i o,

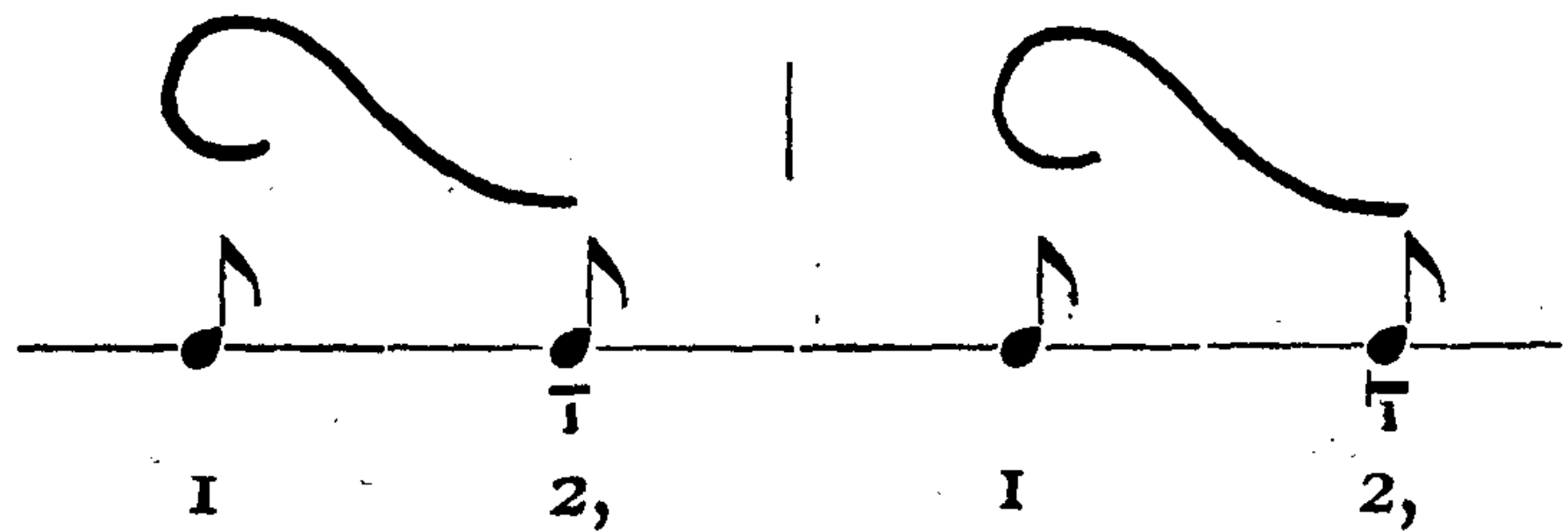


Fig. 84.

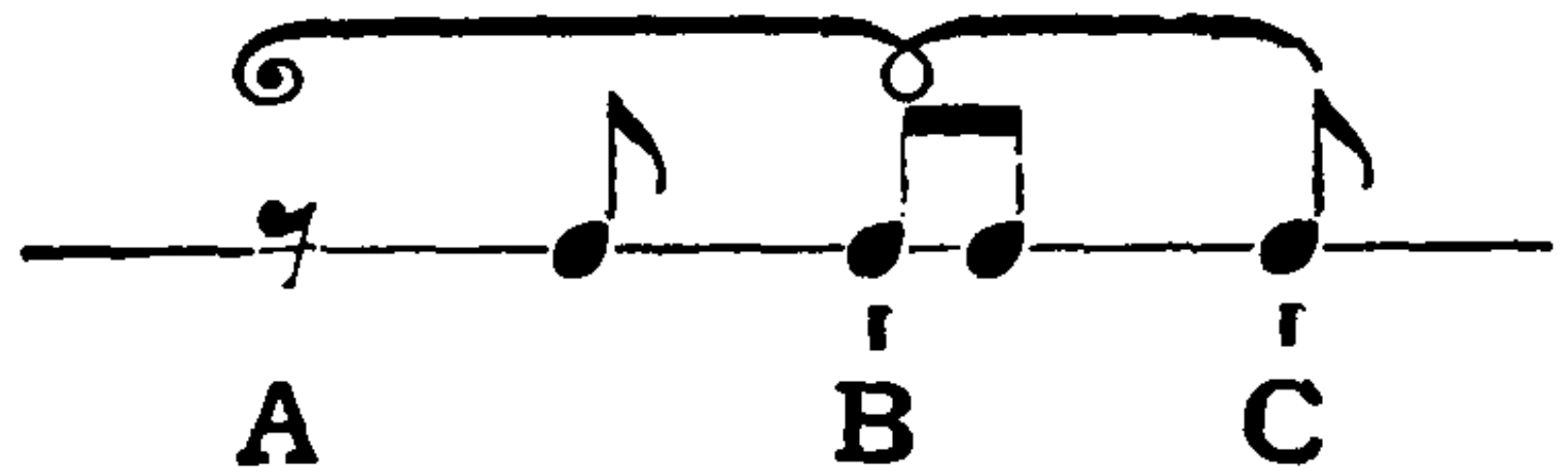


Fig. 85.

Composite rhythm

RHYTHM — PHRASE

RHYTHM — MEMBER

RHYTHM — MEMBER

RHYTHM — INCISE RHYTHM — INCISE RHYTHM — INCISE RHYTHM — INCISE

A B B C A B C A B B B B B C

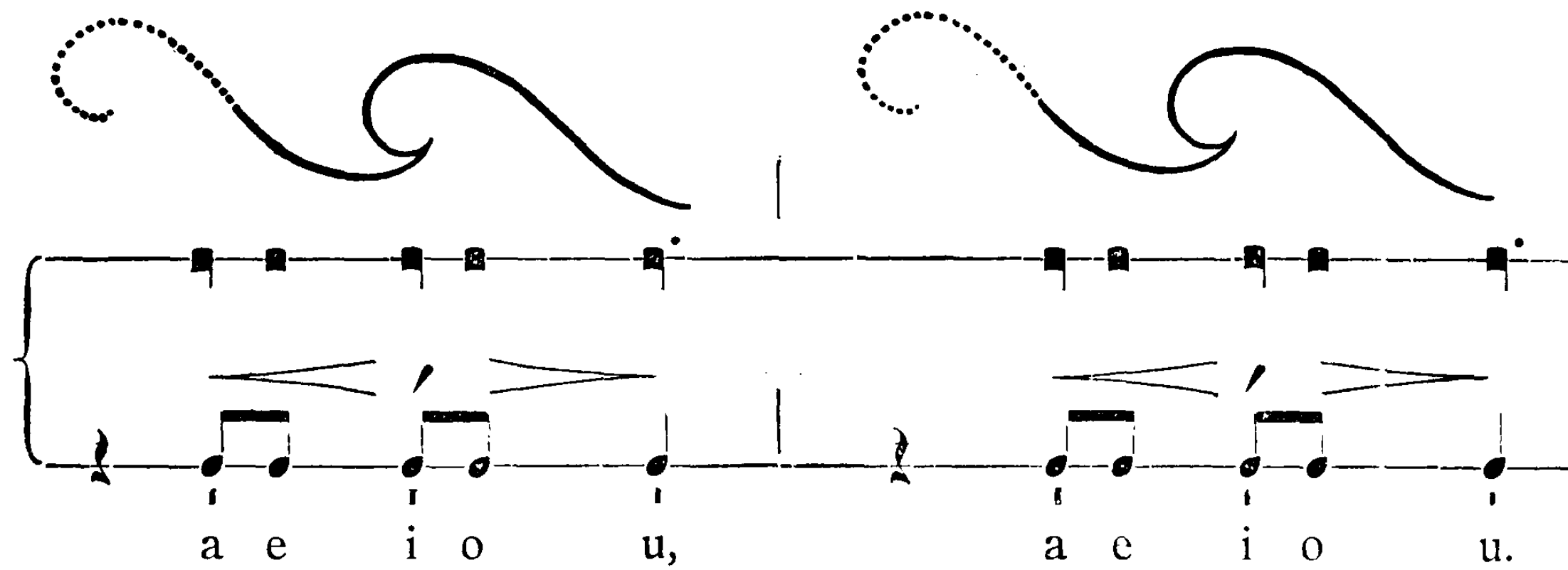
Cantá-te Dómi-no cán-ti-cum nó-vum, laus é-jus ab extrémis tér-ræ.

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for the Latin phrase 'Cantate Domino canticum novum, laus eius ab extremis terræ.' The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. Above the staff, there are four levels of rhythmic analysis. The top level is a long horizontal line labeled 'RHYTHM — MEMBER' that spans the entire phrase. The second level consists of two shorter horizontal lines, each labeled 'RHYTHM — MEMBER', one above the first two measures and one above the last two measures. The third level consists of four horizontal lines, each labeled 'RHYTHM — INCISE', each spanning a single measure. The fourth level consists of letters A, B, and C placed above the notes to indicate rhythmic groups. The first measure has notes A, B, B, C. The second measure has notes A, B, C. The third measure has notes A, B, B. The fourth measure has notes B, B, B, C. Vertical lines separate the four measures.

Fig. 95.

EXERCISE XIII.

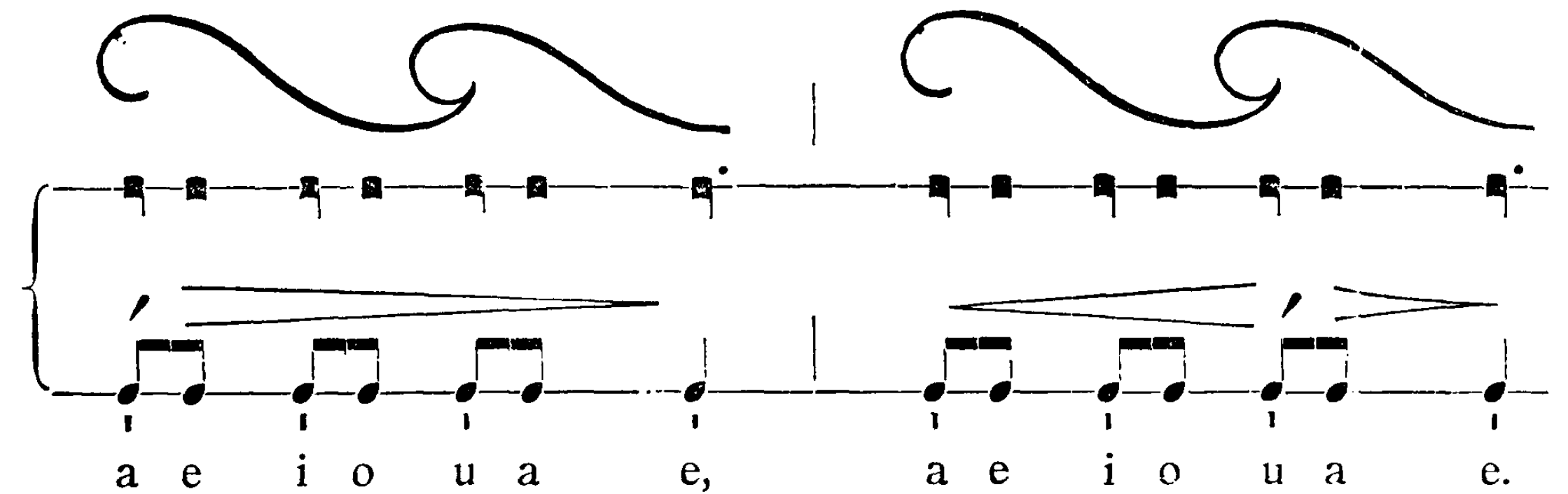
One thesis, one arsis, one thesis.



Musical notation for Exercise XIII. It features two staves. The top staff contains a dotted line with a wavy line underneath, representing a melodic contour. The bottom staff contains a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests. The notes are labeled with vowels: 'a e i o u,' and 'a e i o u.' The rhythm consists of a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, followed by a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, and finally a half note. The first half of the exercise is followed by a vertical bar line and then the second half.

EXERCISE XIV.

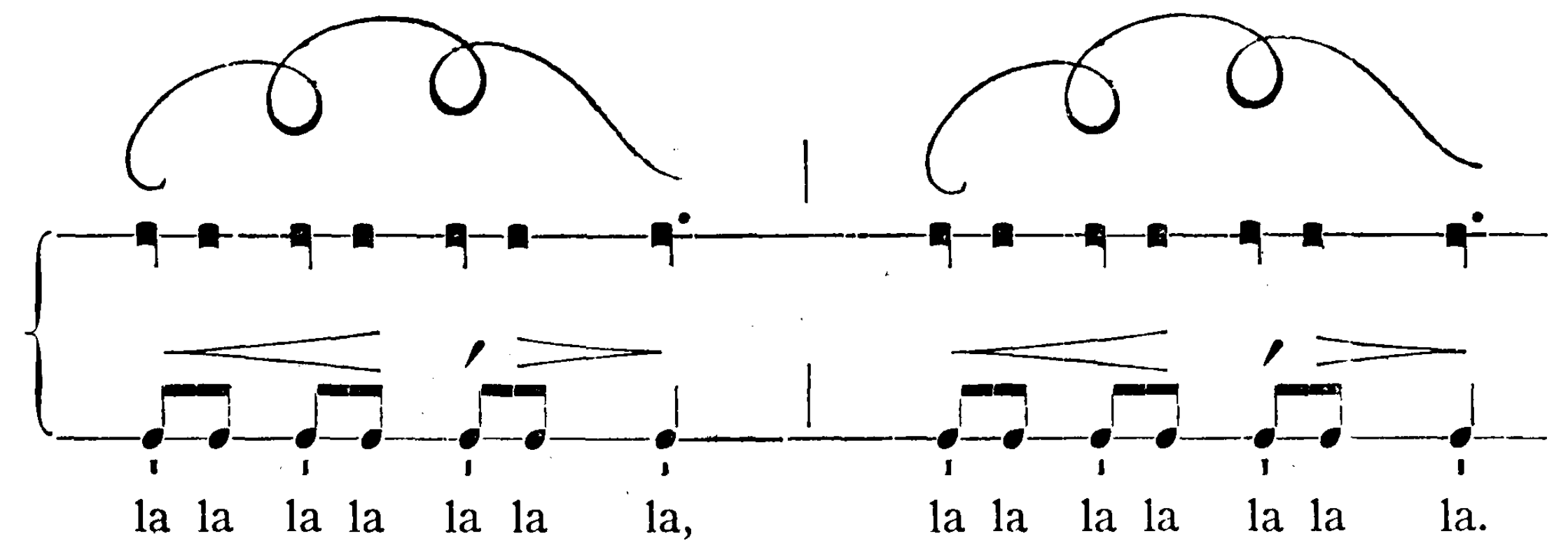
One arsis, one thesis; one arsis, one thesis.



Musical notation for Exercise XIV. It features two staves. The top staff contains a solid line with a wavy line underneath, representing a melodic contour. The bottom staff contains a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests. The notes are labeled with vowels: 'a e i o u a e,' and 'a e i o u a e.' The rhythm consists of a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, followed by a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, and finally a half note. The first half of the exercise is followed by a vertical bar line and then the second half.

EXERCISE XV.

Three arsis, one thesis.



Musical notation for Exercise XV. It features two staves. The top staff contains a solid line with a wavy line underneath, representing a melodic contour. The bottom staff contains a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests. The notes are labeled with 'la la la la la,' and 'la la la la la.' The rhythm consists of a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, followed by a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, and finally a half note. The first half of the exercise is followed by a vertical bar line and then the second half.

Two arsis, two thesis.

Musical notation for 'Two arsis, two thesis.' The exercise is presented in two measures. Each measure features a vocal line with a melisma of 'la' syllables and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. Above the piano part, a wavy line with a circular flourish indicates the melisma. The vocal line is written on a staff with a brace on the left. The syllables are: *la la la la la,* and *la la la la la.*

EXERCISE XVII.

One arsis, three thesis.

Musical notation for 'EXERCISE XVII. One arsis, three thesis.' The exercise is presented in two measures. Each measure features a vocal line with a melisma of 'la' syllables and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. Above the piano part, a wavy line with a circular flourish indicates the melisma. The vocal line is written on a staff with a brace on the left. The syllables are: *la la la la la,* and *la la la la la.*

GREGORIAN CHIRONOMY ⁽¹⁾

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a 7/4 time signature. The melody is written in a single line with various note values and rests. Above the staff, a large, thin-lined shape indicates the dynamic flow, starting with a crescendo and ending with a diminuendo. A vertical line marks the general accent over the word 'canticum'. Below the staff, the Latin text is written in a Gothic-style font: 'Can-tá-te Dó-mi-no, cán-ti-cum nó-vum, láus é-jus, ab ex-tré-mis tér-rae.' Brackets below the text divide the phrase into four members: 'member I' (Cantate), 'member II' (canticum), 'member III' (laus), and 'member IV' (ejus, ab extremis terrae).

Rhythmic Analysis by Phrase Members.

Member I :	Three arses	- One thesis.
Member II :	One arsis	- Two theses.
Member III :	One arsis	- Two theses.
Member IV :	One arsis	- Three theses.

The dynamic flow of the whole phrase is indicated by the sign of *créscendo* and *diminuendo*.

The general accent, the climax of the whole phrase is marked by a sign over the accented syllable of the word "canticum".

⁽¹⁾ Although this melody has been altered slightly in the Vatican version, we have preferred to retain the form used by Dom Mocquereau in 1907. The correct version will be found in the *Nombre Musical Grégorien*, Volume II, Page 600 - with the chironomy adapted to the changes in question. (Tr.)

Basic Principles

- Free rhythm composed of indivisible elements
- Elementary rhythms combine at the ictus into larger architectural elements;
- Melodic structure (profile, neumatic shape/break, and mode), word accent, and grammatical structure shape the overall architecture (greater rhythm).

Basic Principles

- “[T]akes into account the rights of the verbal text to which it belongs. Yet, due respect is paid to the melody, and precedence is always given to the latter.”
- Dom Joseph Gajard, *The Solesmes Method: Its Fundamental Principles and Practical Rules of Interpretation*, trans. R. Cecile Gabain (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1960), 1.6.

Invocabit Me Introit

Intr.
8.

I

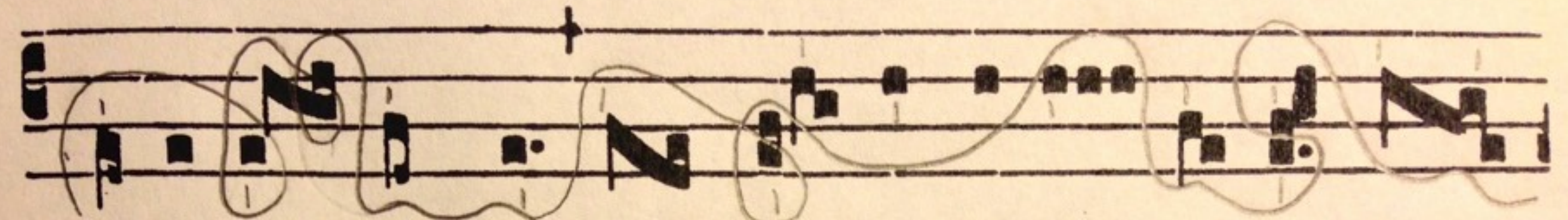
Nvo-cá- bit me, * et e- go exáu- di- am e-

um : e- rí- pi- am e- um, et glo- ri- fi- cá- bo

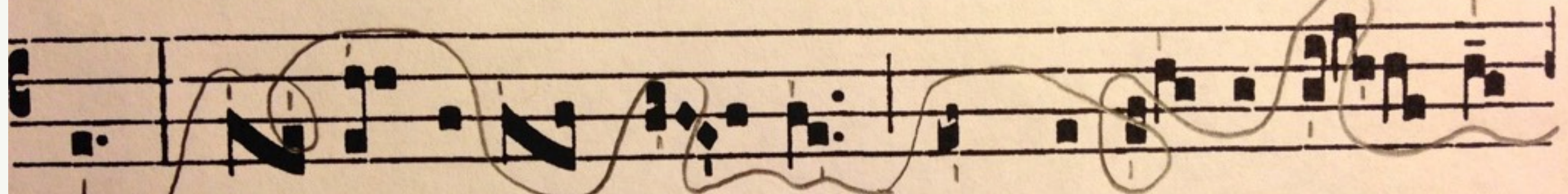
e- um : longi- tú- di- ne di- é- rum a- dimplé- bo

Intr.
8.

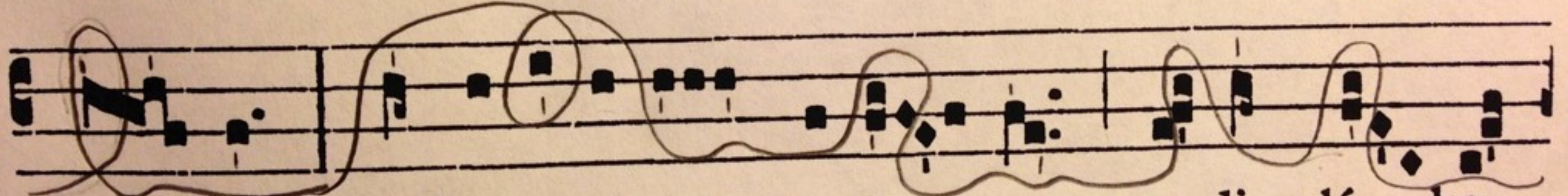
I



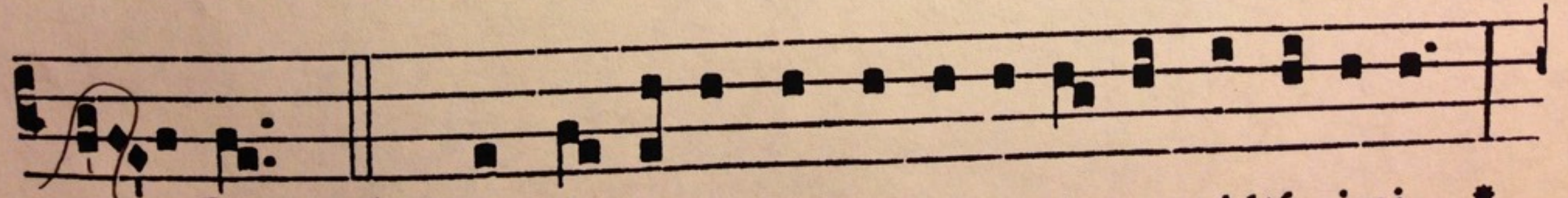
Nvo-cá- bit me, * et e- go exáu- di- am e-



um : e- rí- pi- am e- um, et glo- ri- fi- cá- bo



e- um : longi- tú- di- ne di- é- rum a- dimplé- bo



e- um. *Ps.* Qui há- bi- tat in adju- tú- ri- o Altíssimi, *

whole phrase

phrase

incise/
member



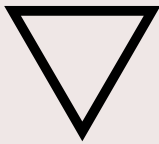
Invocabit me, et ego exaudiam eum: |

eripiam eum, et glorificabo eum: |

longitudine dierum | adimplebo eum. ||




Member 1



A	3	
A	2	
A	2	
T	2	lighten
T	2	repose

Member 2



A	3	refresh energy
A	3	Convey word structure, move
T	2	lighten
T	2	
A	3	
T	2	lighten
T	2	lighten, then prepare
A	3	
T	2	lighten
T	2	lighten more
T	2	repose

Invocabit Me Introit

Intr.
8.

I

Nvo-cá- bit me, * et e- go exáu- di- am e-

um : e- rí- pi- am e- um, et glo- ri- fi- cá- bo

e- um : longi- tú- di- ne di- é- rum a- dimplé- bo

Questions?