Form & Analysis **Name**: _____
Harmonic Reduction and Analysis G. Fankhauser

Chopin, Prelude in C, op. 28, no. 1 (1836)

1. Complete a *reduction* of the Prelude for SATB (4 voices) in the staves provided. Aim for simplified rhythm, texture, and range, using one chord per measure. Embellishing tones may be entered as noteheads (no duration). The first measure is done for you. Your reduction of m. 29 may include five voices.

2. What voice has the primary melodic line? Does it maintain for the entire Prelude? Do you consider the reduction in m. 1 appropriate? Explain.

3. Beneath your reduction, provide a *harmonic analysis*. Identify by *type* all six-four or other *linear chords* (passing "P" or neighboring "N").

4. Identify all *cadences*. Analyze the *phrase structure* and *form* of the piece.

5. Explain how the harmony in m. 22 functions. Why might Chopin spell the chord the way he does?

6. Does the music satisfy voice-leading principles of the Common Practice (proper resolution of dissonances, no parallel fifths, etc.)? If not, cite an example of a violation.

7. Which measure contains the *climax* of the piece? What leads to that climax? Justify your answers.

8. How does the rhythm change in mm. 18–20, and what purpose does the change of rhythm serve?

9. What is gained and what is lost in this *reductive analysis*?

10. Compare and contrast a few recordings. List the performers and note differences in interpretation, especially regarding questions above.

Extra challenge (may require outside research):

11. Describe how the basic motive G–A (what Schoenberg might call the *Grundgestalt*) creates and develops a musical narrative throughout the music. Specifically, one could analyze the A4 in m. 1 as an *upper neighbor*, but what does the A "want" to be? How does the A4 in m. 3 differ from in mm. 1–2?

12. Research the Fibonacci sequence: 1 1 3 5 8 13 21 34… How does the climax divide the Prelude at the *Golden Mean*? List other important events in the piece by those Fibonacci measure numbers. Do they support this ratio? Explain.

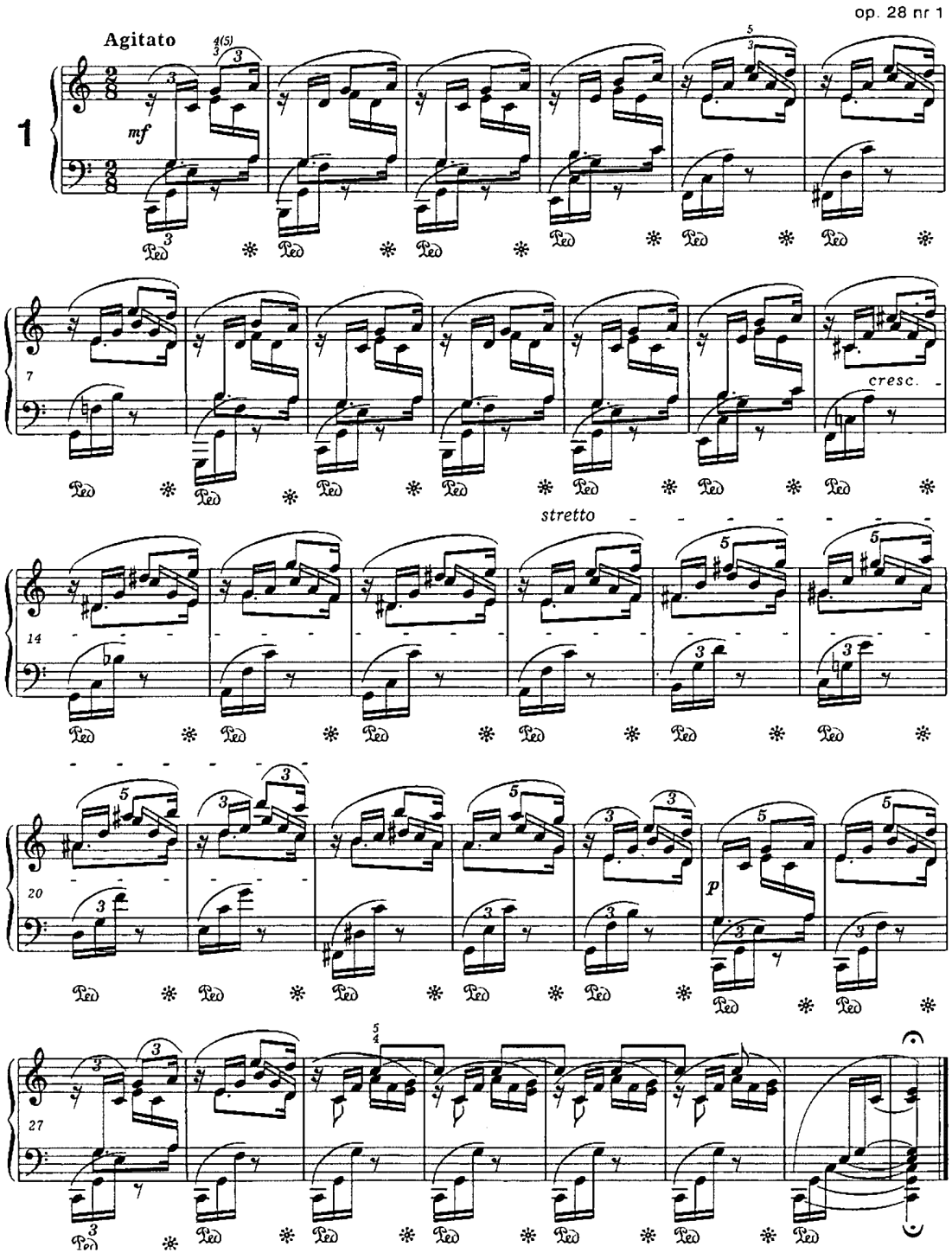
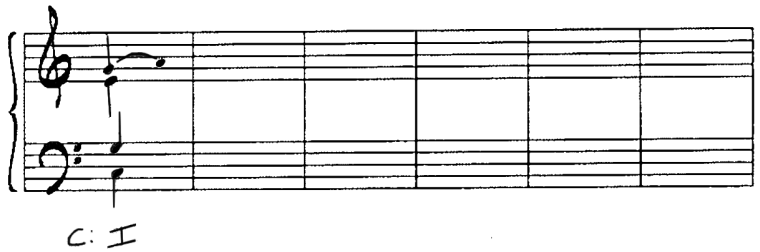
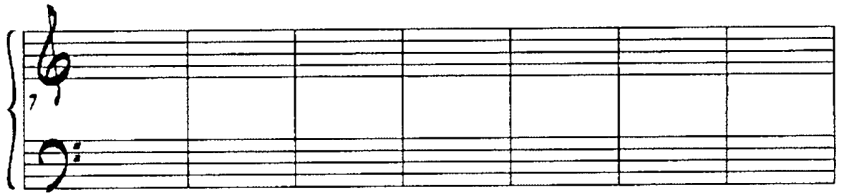
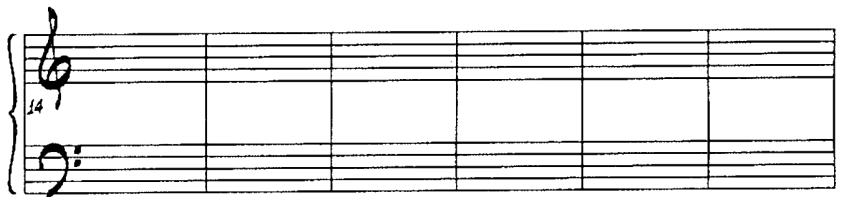
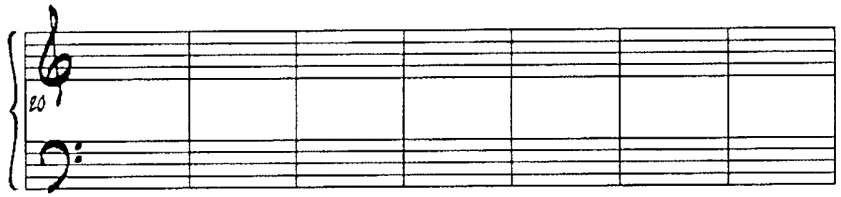
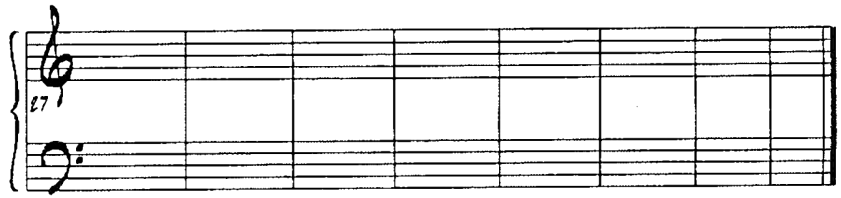
Further reading:

Agawu, Kofi V. 1987. "Concepts of Closure and Chopin's Opus 28." *Music Theory Spectrum* 9: 1–17.

Sobaskie, James William. 2007. "Precursive Prolongation in the Préludes of Chopin." *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland* 3: 25–61. (See voice-leading graph on p. 41.)

Urista, Diane. 2007. "Chopin's Prelude in C Major Revisited: Integrating Sound and Symbol." *Music Theory Online* 13, 1. (Great for considering the intersection between theory and performance, with comparison of several pianists.)

24 Préludes

A son ami Camille Pleyel

op. 28 nr 1