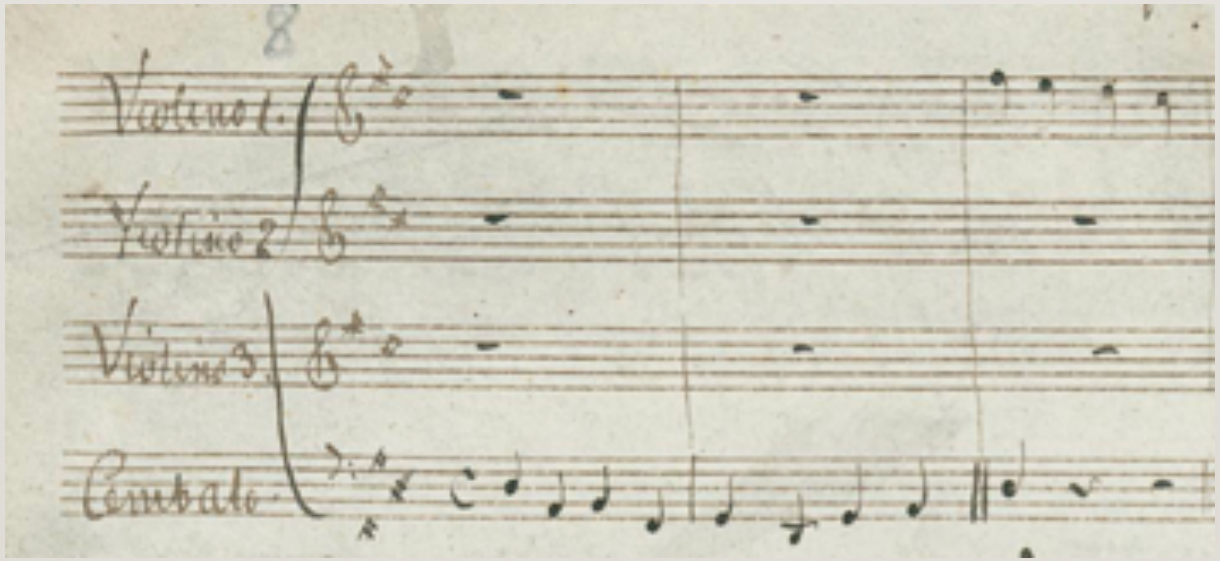
CHAPTER 16

HARMONIC SEQUENCES

WHAT IS IT?

- A harmonic sequence is a repeated chord pattern that will usually transpose up or down
  - Usually accompanies a melodic sequence
  - Often most easily seen by analyzing the bassline (if root position), or the RN pattern

EXAMPLE:



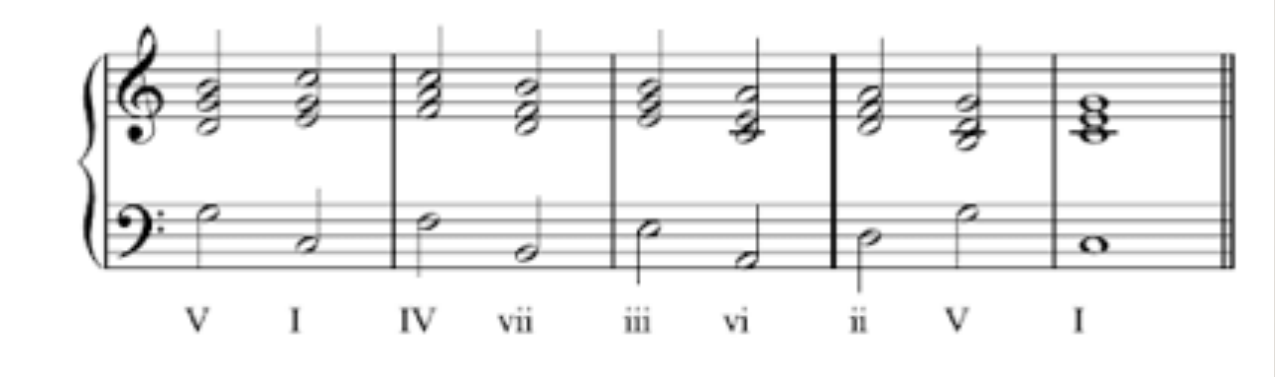
Canon in D

MOST COMMON SEQUENCES

- Descending Circle-of-5ths Sequence
- Ascending by 5ths Sequence
- Descending by 3ths Squences
- By Step
  - Parallel 6/3 chords
  - 7-6 and 5-6 techniques

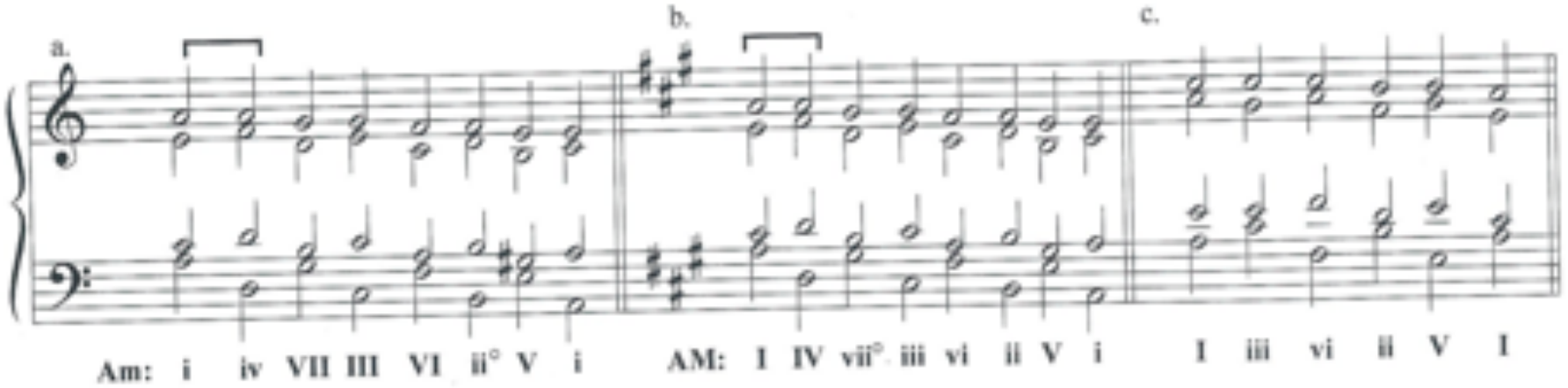
DESCENDING CIRCLE-OF-5THS SEQUENCE

Often Starts on I: Descending by 5th, ascending by 4th and repeat

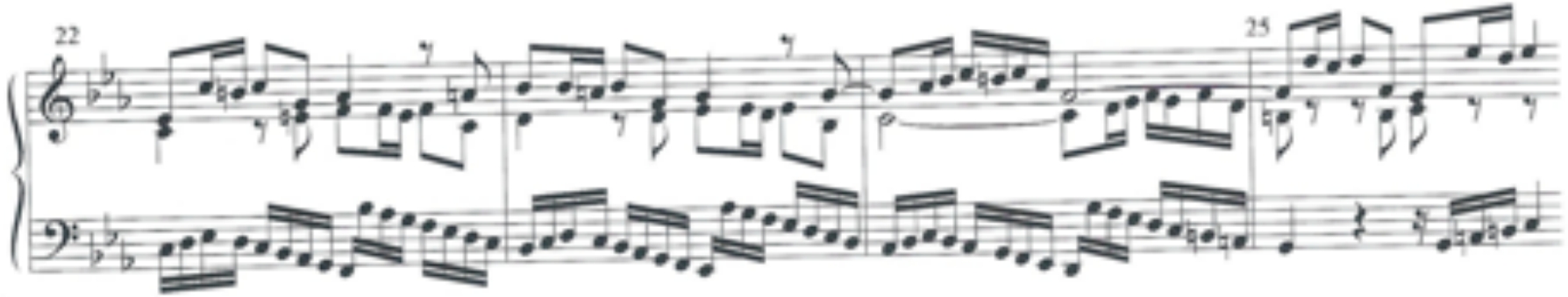


MORE EXAMPLES

Example 16.3

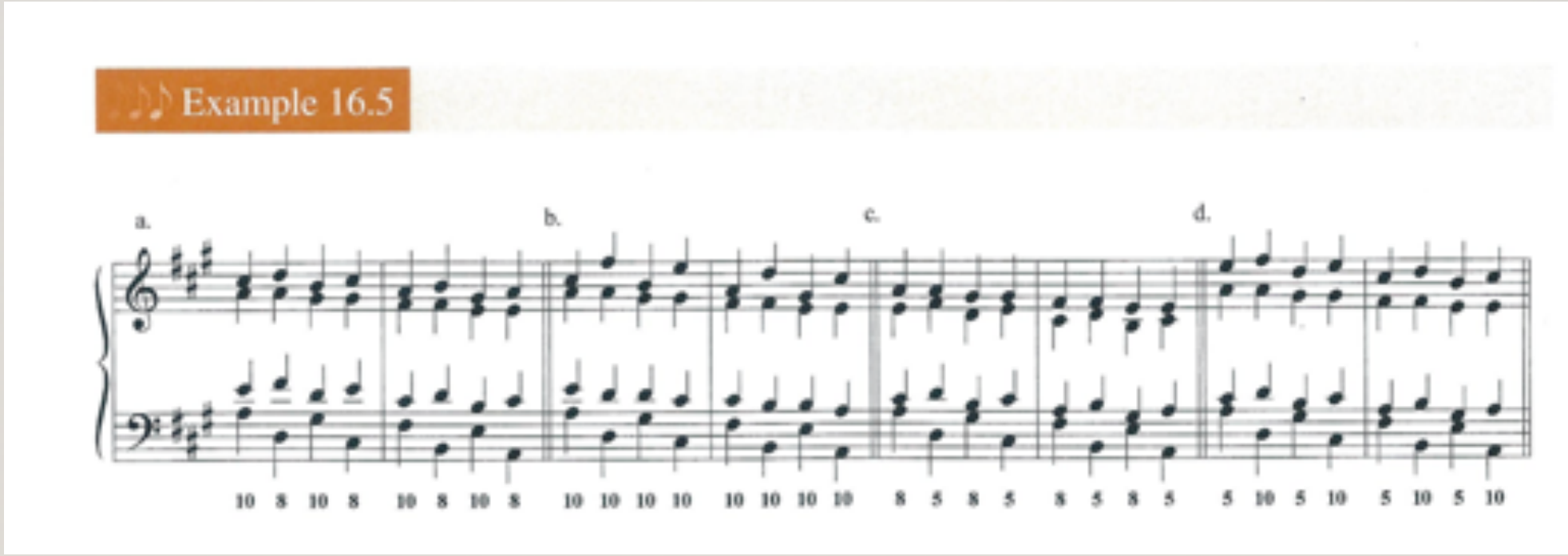


Example 16.4 J. S. Bach, Fugue 2 in Cm, from *The Well-Tempered Clavier,* I, mm. 22–25



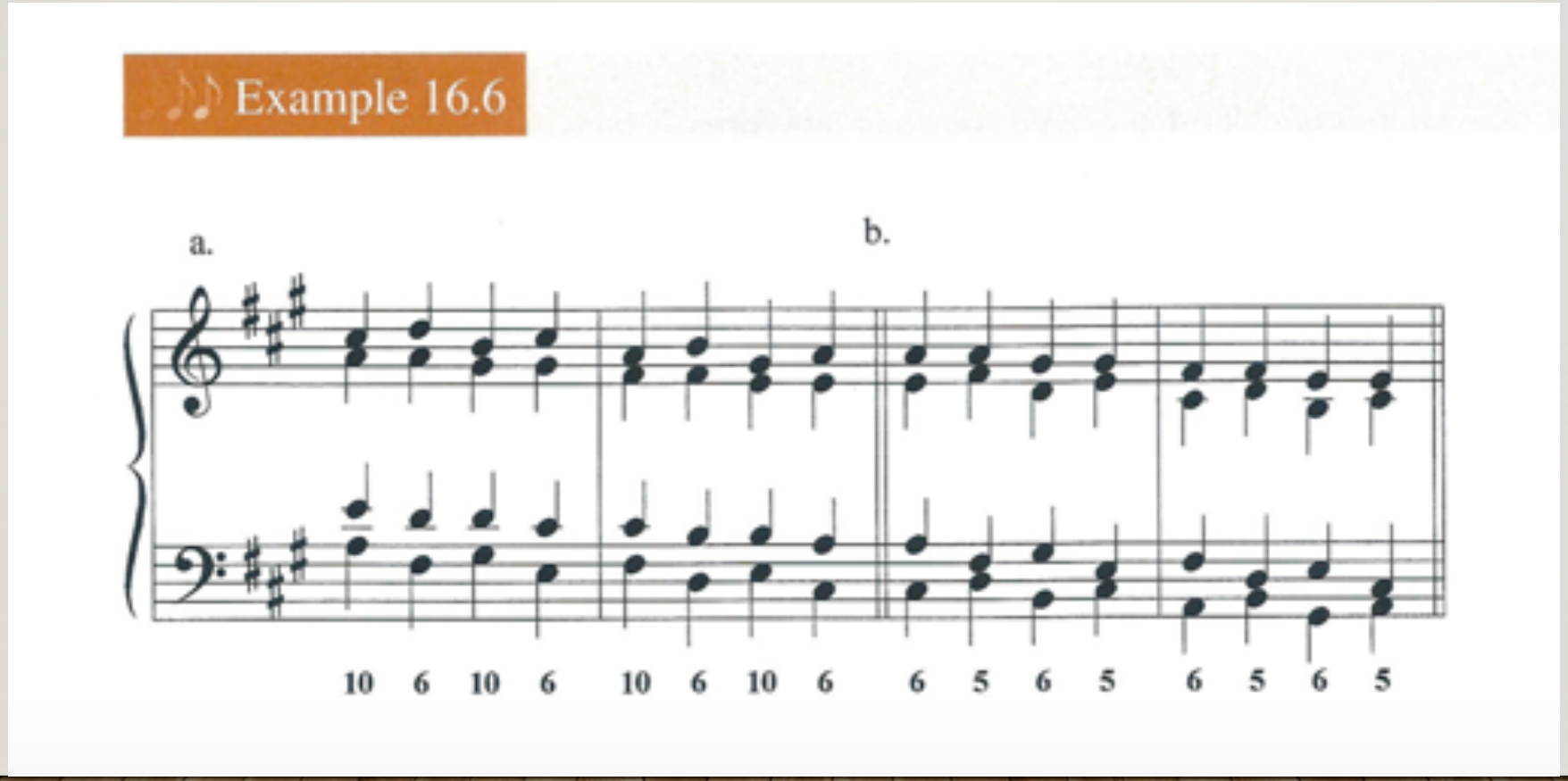
VOICE LEADING VARIANTS

- Common outer voice leading variants
  - 10-8
  - 10-10
  - 8-5
  - 5-10



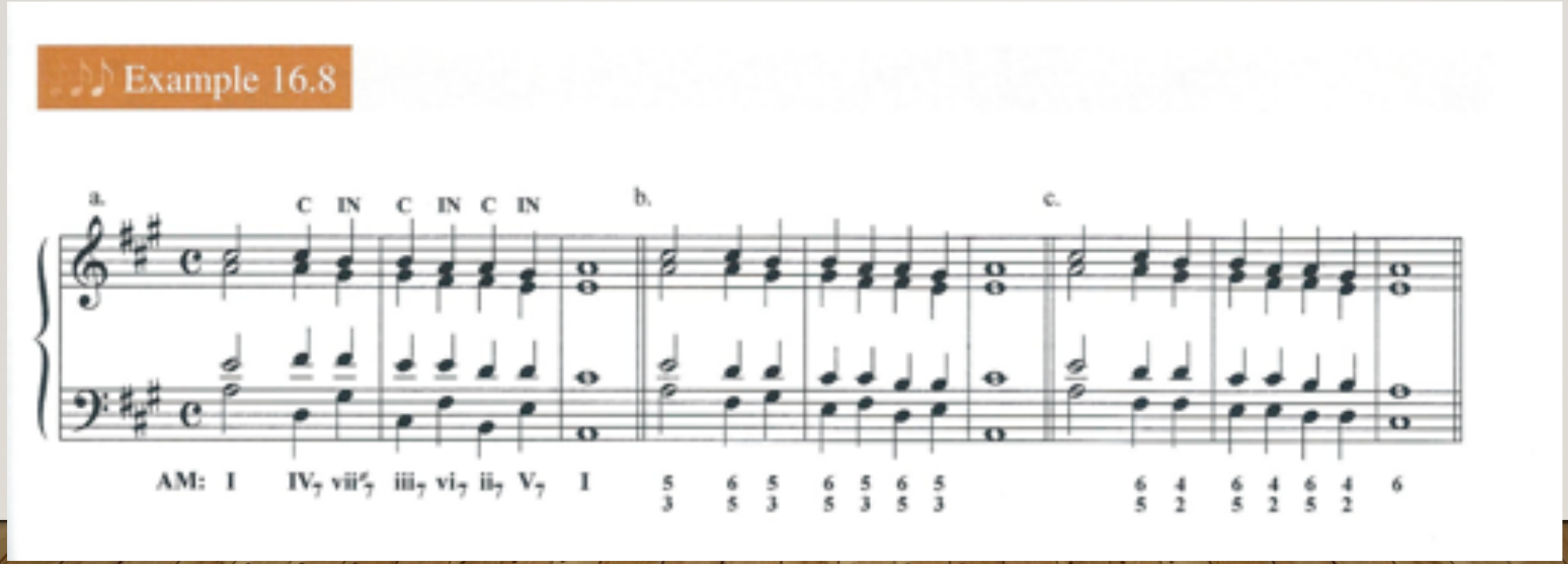
CIRCLE OF 5THS WITH INVERSIONS

- Same harmonic progression but using an inversion for one of the two chords
  - This can obscure the bass pattern, use the RN to find the pattern



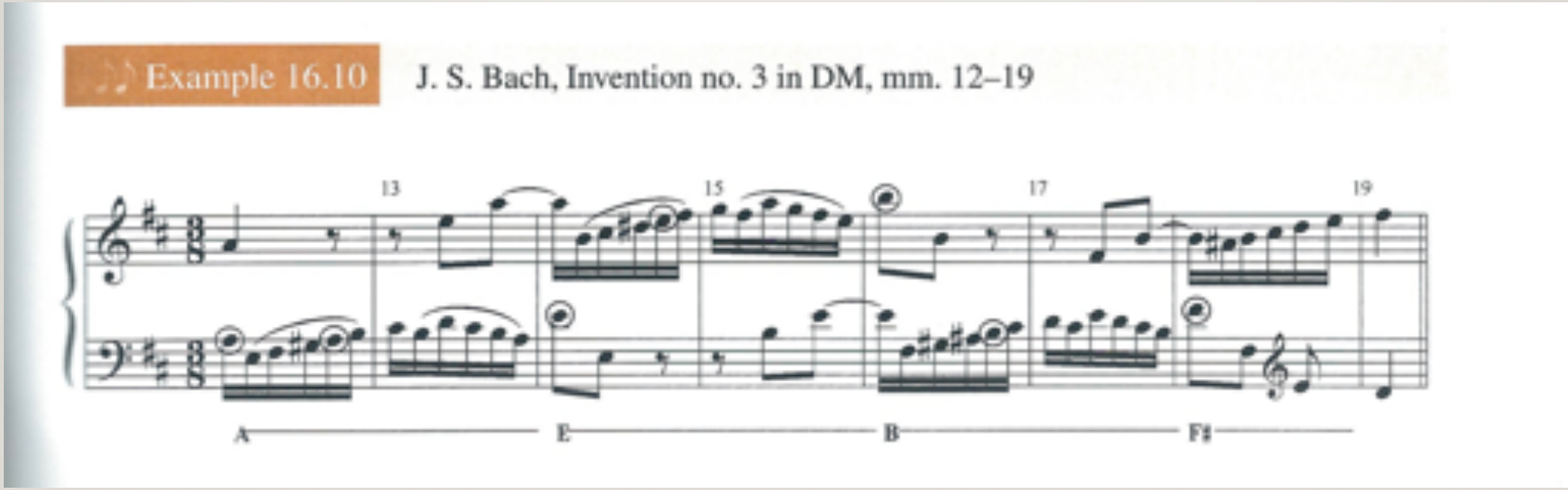
DIATONIC-SEVENTH CIRCLE OF 5THS

- Can be found in root position or inversion—again, look to the
- Best voice leading alternates complete with incomplete chords



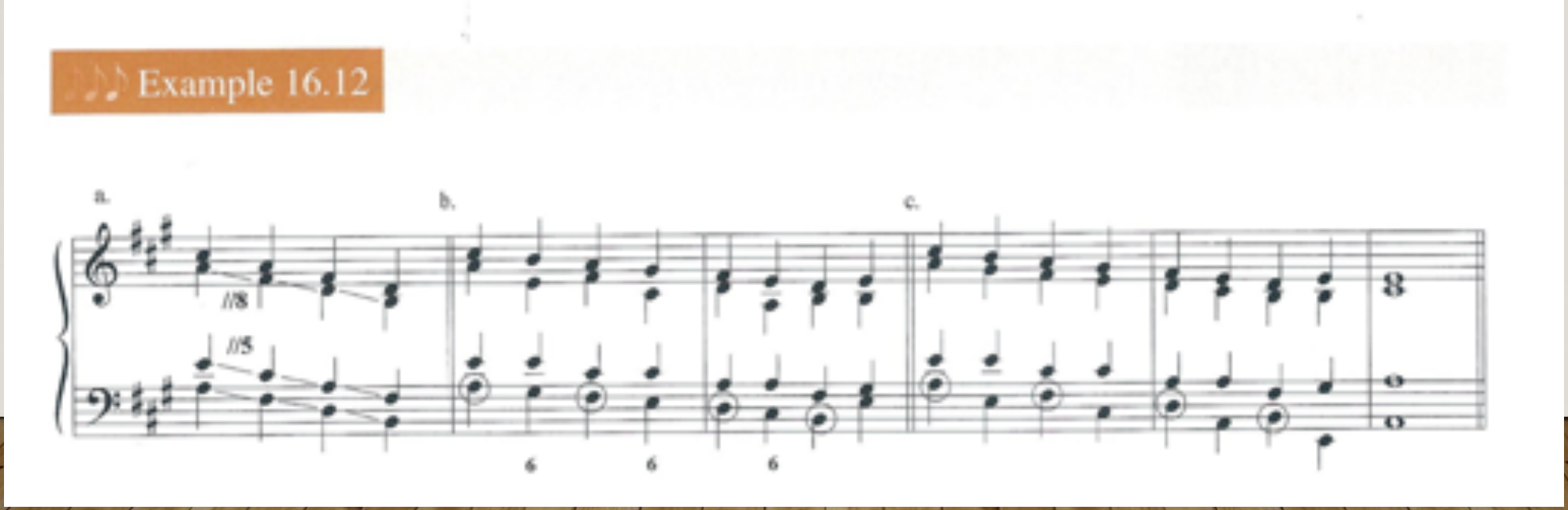
ASCENDING CIRCLE-OF-FIFTHS SEQUENCE

- Ascending 5th-Desceding 4th and repeat (I-V-ii-VI etc.)
- Inversions can also be used, find the sequence type by looking at RN relationships



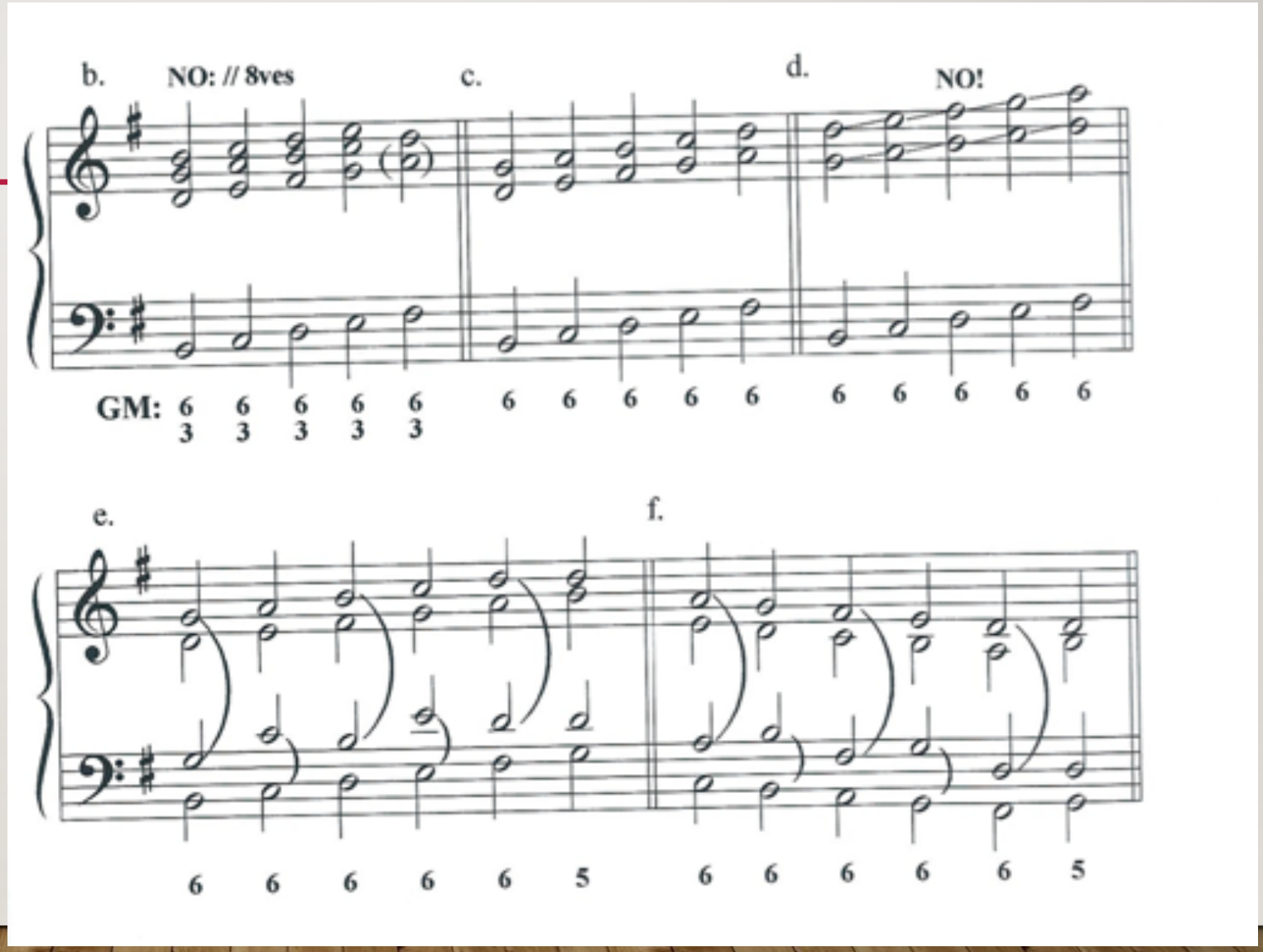
DESCENDING BY 3RDS

- If a sequence of root position chords descending by 3rds, bad parallels likely
  - Solution
    - Insertion of passing 6/3 chord (the bass will end up descending by step)
    - Insertion of an intervening chord a fourth below (Pachelbel Canon)



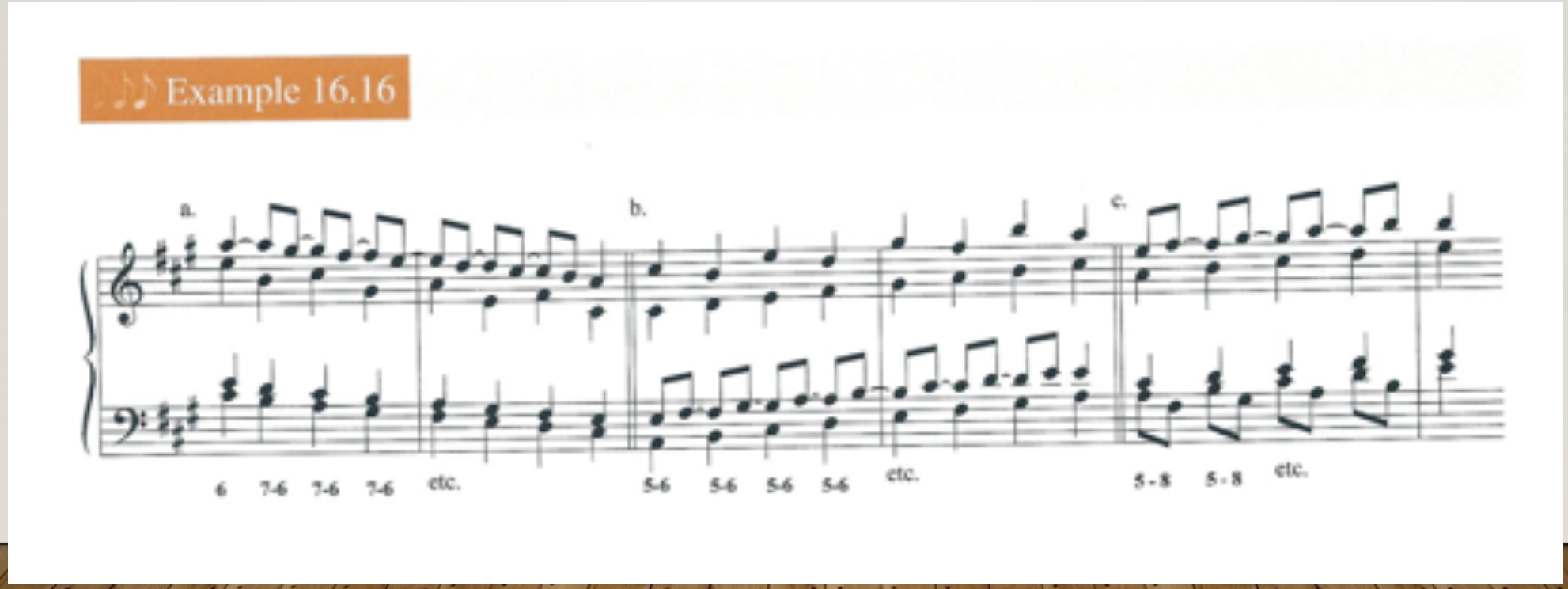
ASCENDING OR DESCENDING BY STEPS

- Using parallel 6/3 chords that ascend by step
  - Can be done, but can easily result in parallel 5th
    - Avoid by alternating the voice the contains the doubled notes.

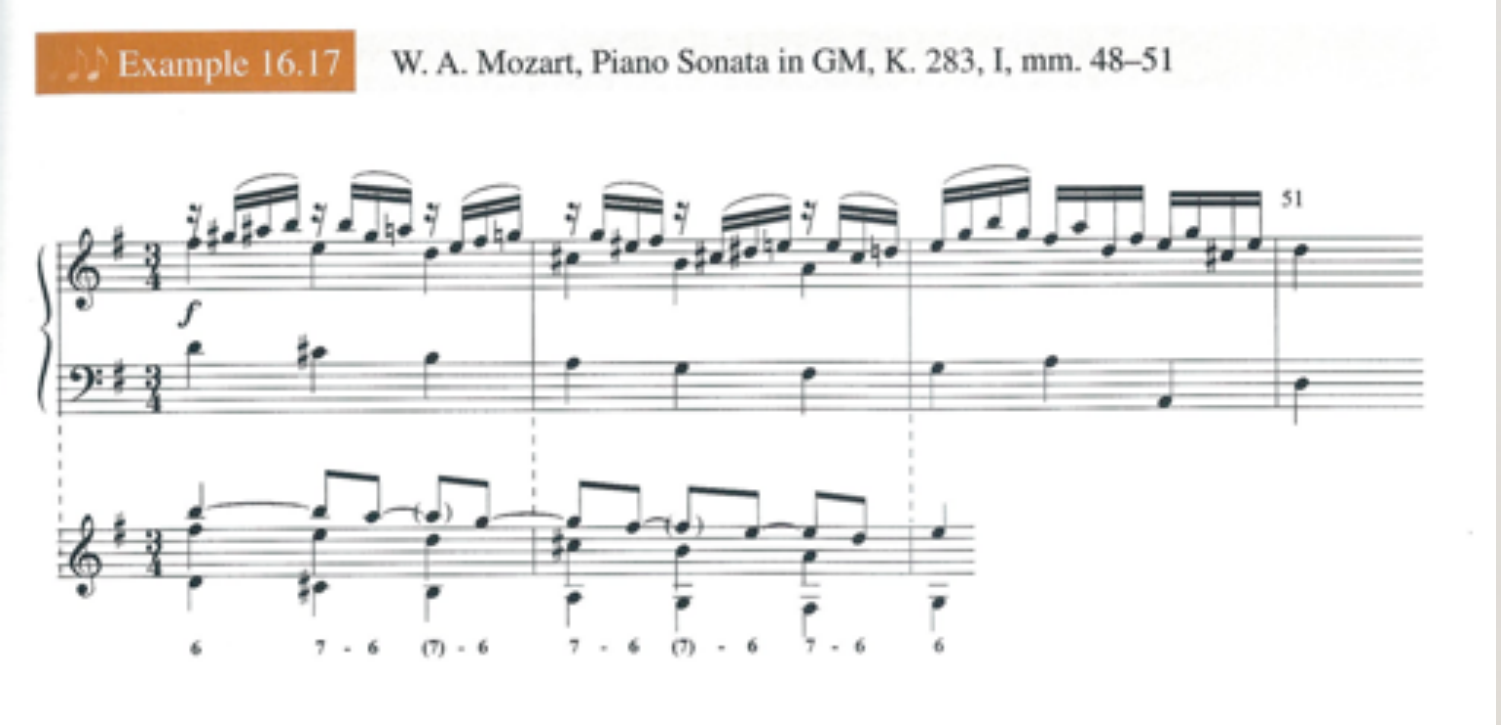
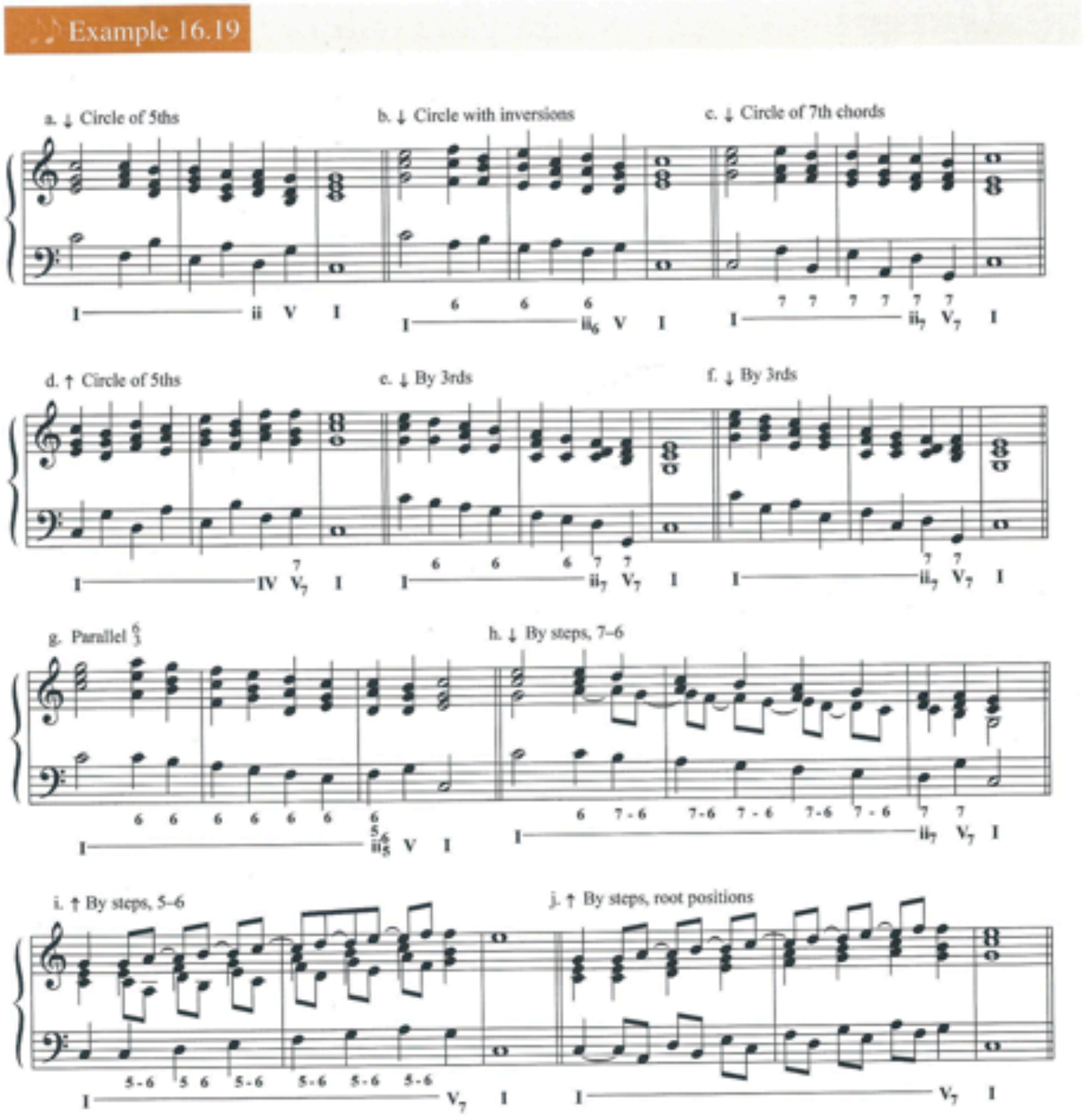


7-6 AND 5-6 TECHNIQUES

- Adding suspensions or retardations can be used to embellish a parallel 6/3 progression or avoid parallel fifths



MOZART EXAMPLE



SUMMARY OF SEQUENCES (PAGE 392)