W. A. Mozart composed "Gigue in G major" on the 16th of May 1789 in Leipzig; his bass counterpoint, found in measures 21-23 of the 'B' section, emerged in the world of jazz as a harmonic sequence nearly one-hundred and sixty years later. Jazz bassist, Ray Brown played this sequence frequently during the late nineteen-forties; yet, when I explained this passage and played it for him in 1994 he became rather astonished because "Gigue in G major" was completely new to his ears. Indeed, this reoccurrence of Mozart's sequence as a progression played by jazz improvisers is no less than a mathematical phenomenon.

The improvised section (measures 42-47) is a variation of Mozart's bass counterpoint (section 'B' measures 21-23) which resulted from my practicing exercises for this composition on pages 99-133 of "Essentials for Pianist Improvisers". "Gigue in G major" is notated (measures 1-39) in its entirety; the written improvisation follows (measures 42-47) in addition to segments of clefs-inverted within measures 40-41, 63-73, 80, 82-86, 101-105 and 120-121; also, two variations of his ending are on pages five and nine.

Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938) wrote, as studies, Chopin etudes with inverted clefs (left-hand plays right-hand notation and vice versa) and with today's digital technology, neuroscientists prove that this information is transferred between right and left arms and is also registered in each; consequently, music is understood more thoroughly in the nerves of each arm and within the brain for performers who practice clefs-inverted.

Treble-clef notation of the improvisation (measures 42-47) should be practiced as a suggested guideline but in performance, you may improvise or approximate these tones over the written counterpoint. In a slower tempo, you'll perhaps question a few intervals because their delayed-resolution does not exactly match the left hand counterpoint; nevertheless, when the treble-line is played together with the bass at a faster tempo, it will have a more interesting contrast. I also propose that you execute the left and right-hand as though each belongs to different pianists.

Fingering and expression marks are kept to a minimum so that pages remain uncluttered. Do keep in mind that interpreting in as many different ways as imaginable develops your style; and practicing hands separately molds your melodic expression.

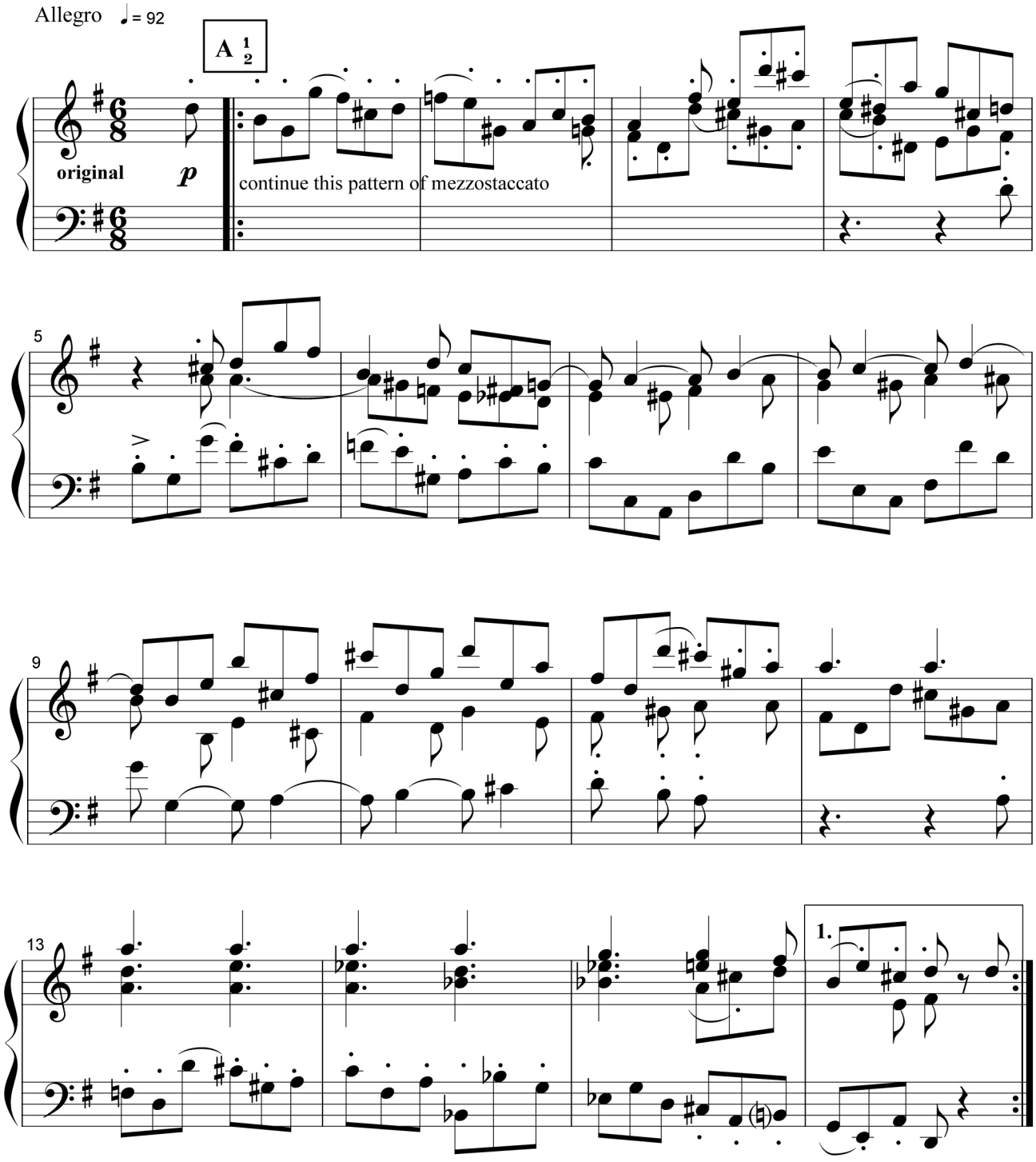
I admittedly prefer the original; however, Ferruccio Busoni wrote an elaborate transcription of this title (recorded by Egon Petri on Appian Recordings CDAPT 7027 vol. III) and if I too have committed cardinal sin, it's with the hope that I've stimulated the listener's curiosity by connecting this unique late eighteenth-century masterpiece with the improvisational style of today.

Walter Norris 20 VII 2010 Berlin

Gigue in G major

org. = original
c. inv. = clefs inverted
c. rev. = clefs reverted

W. A. Mozart
K. 574



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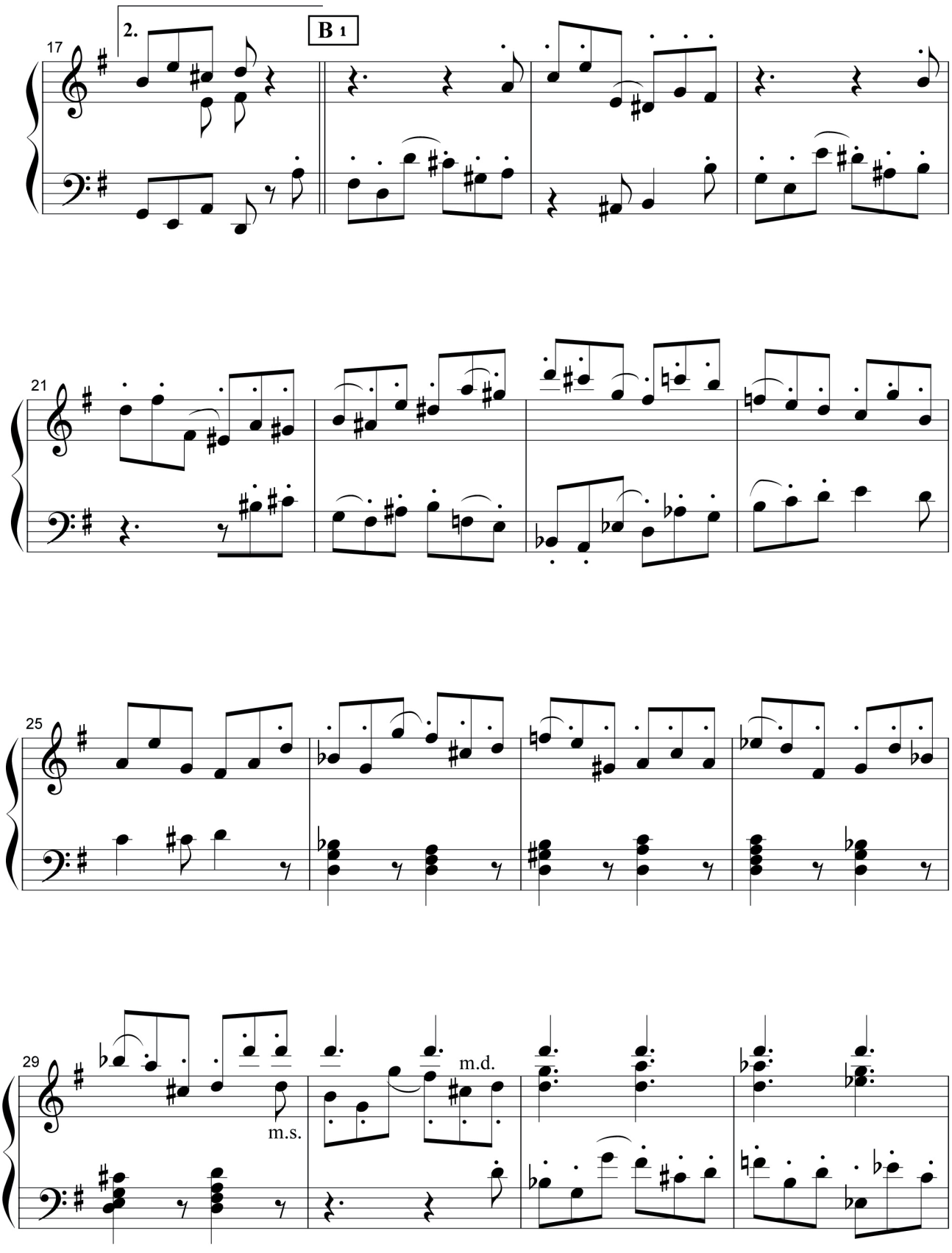
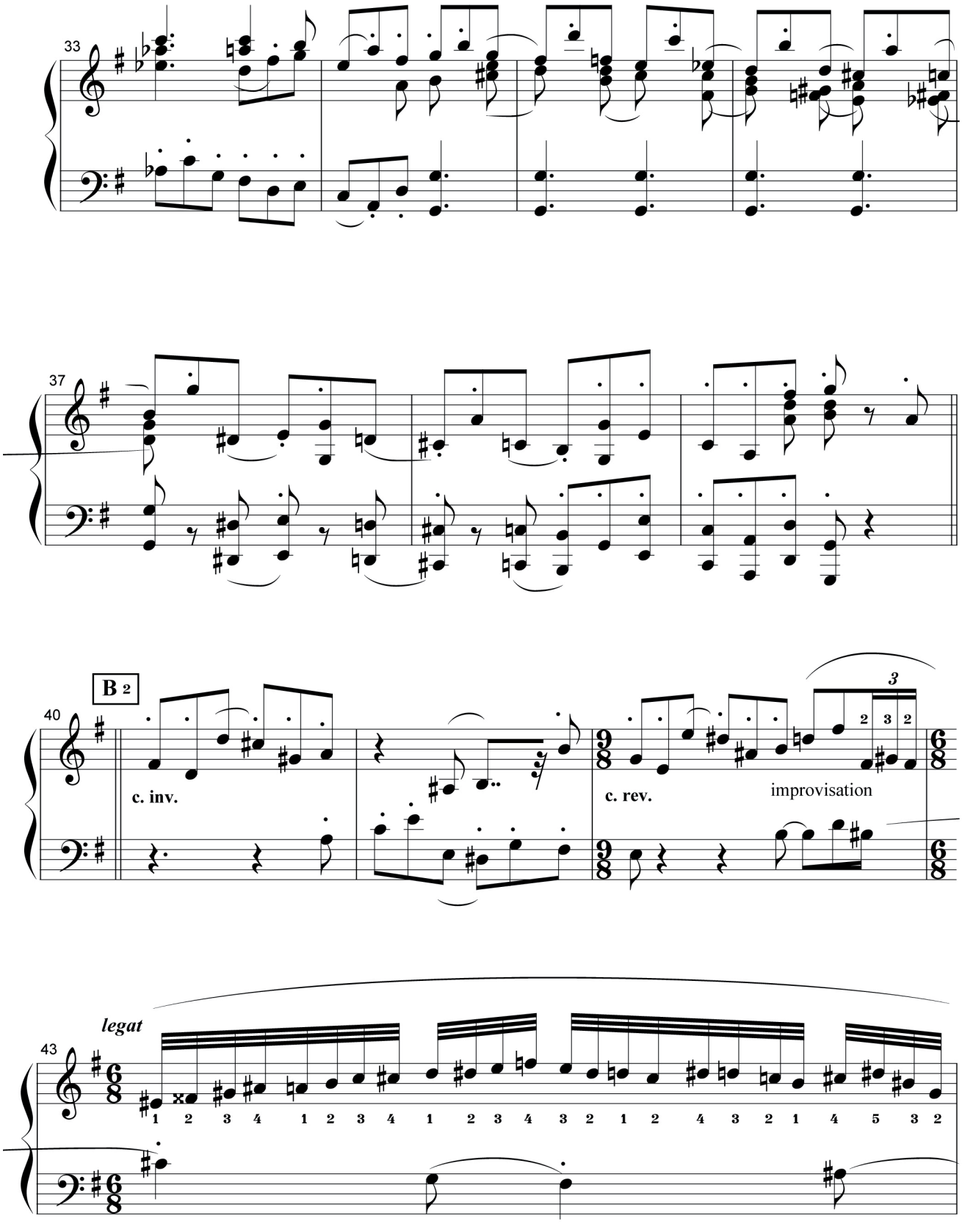
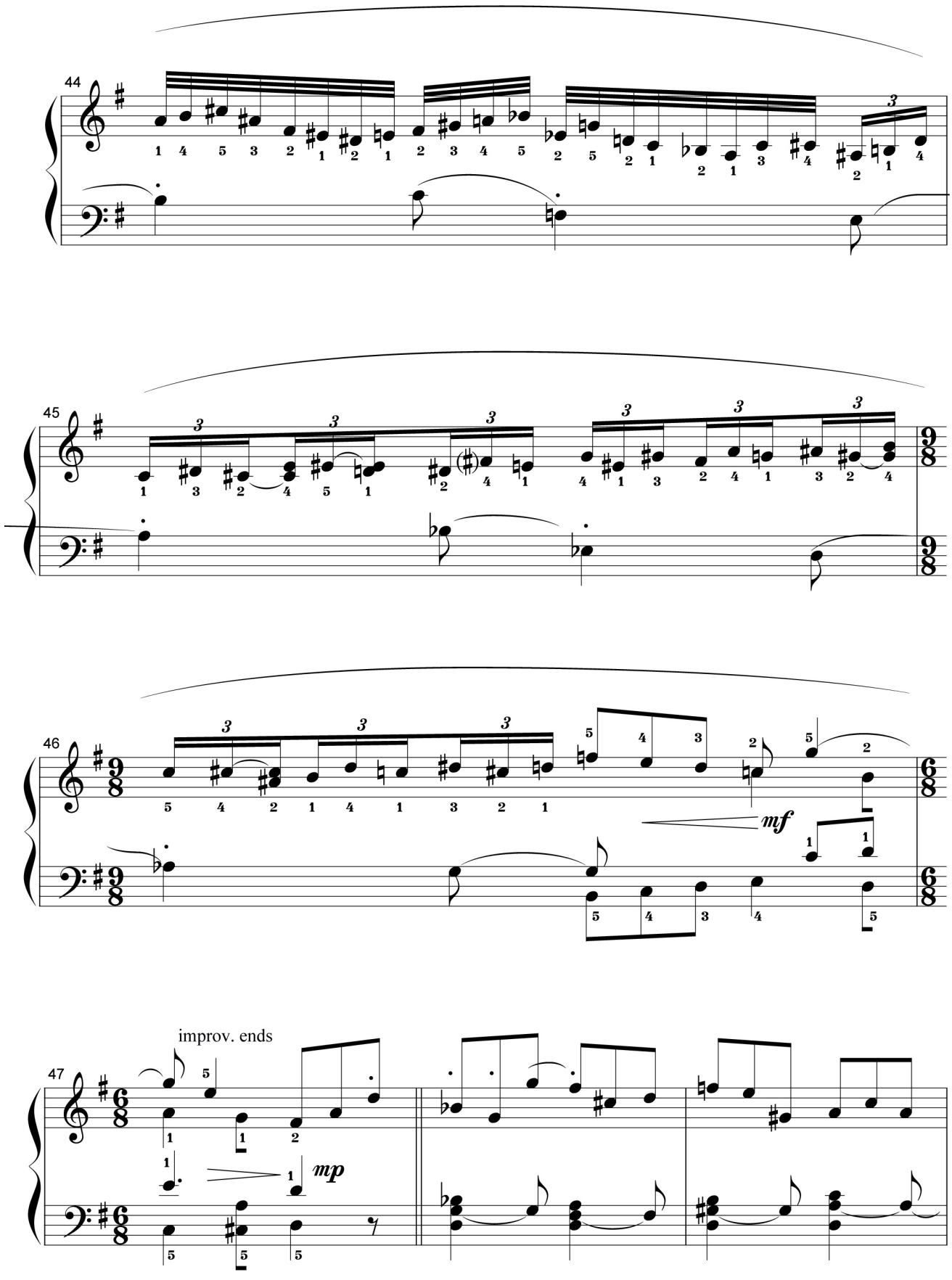
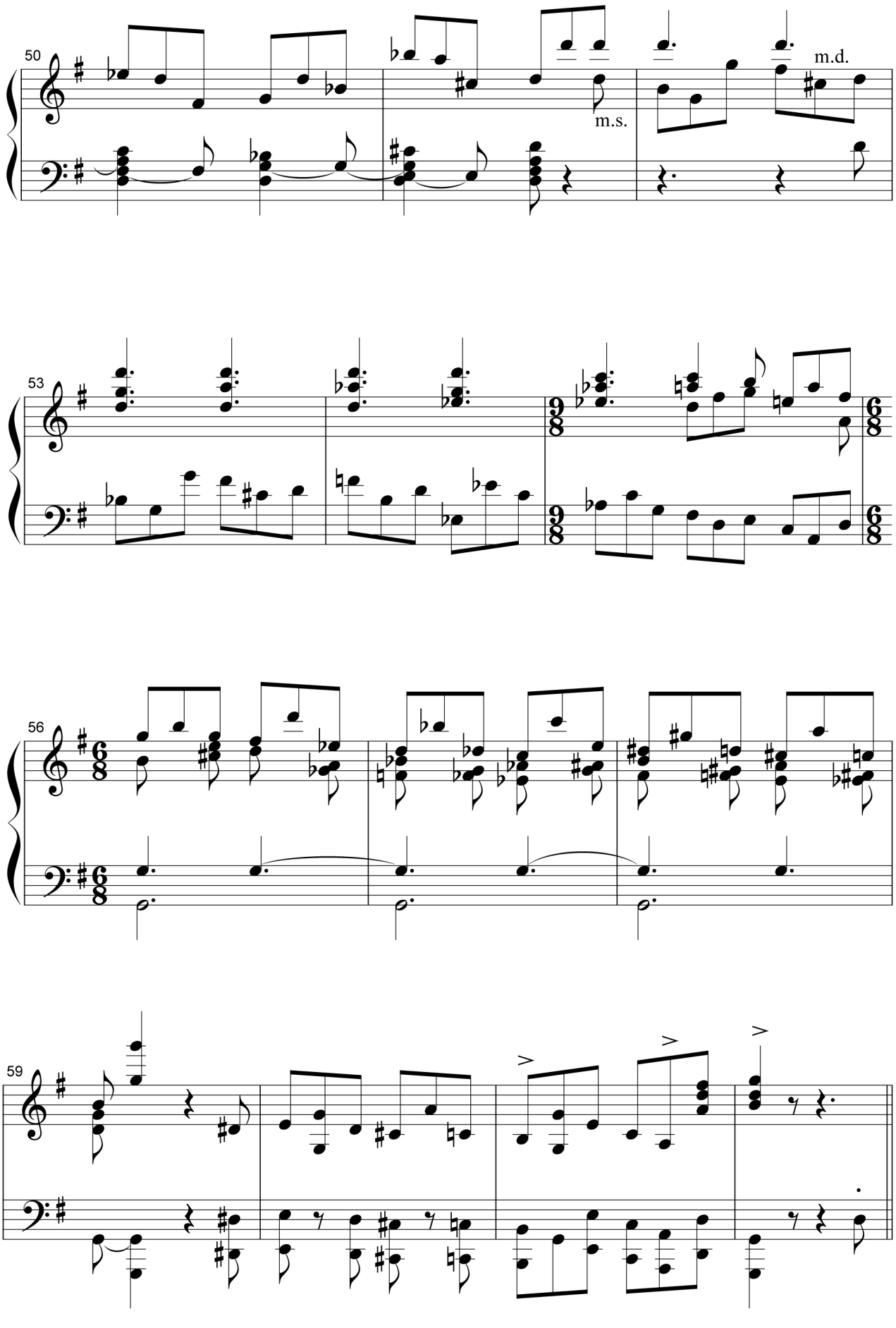
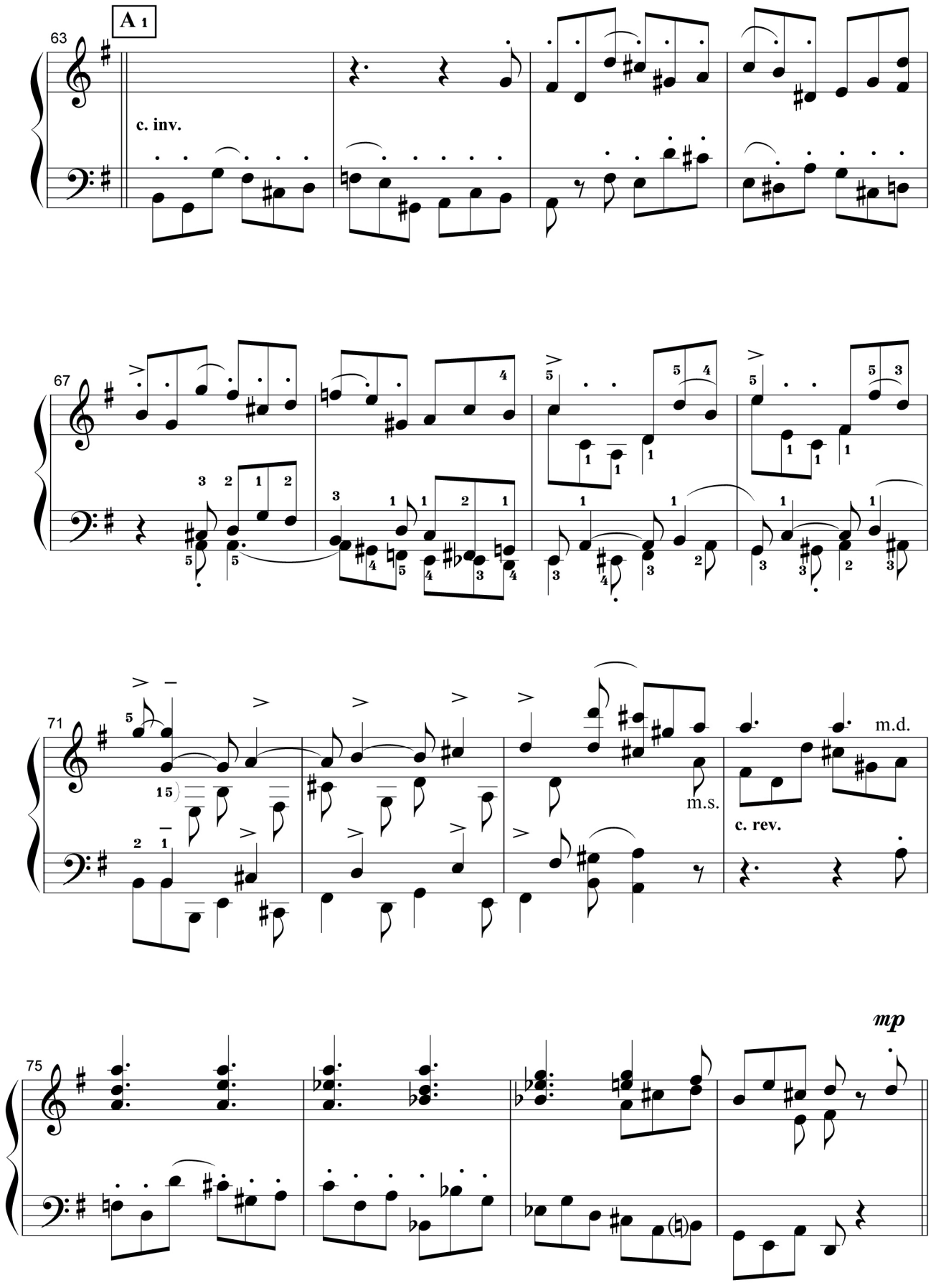
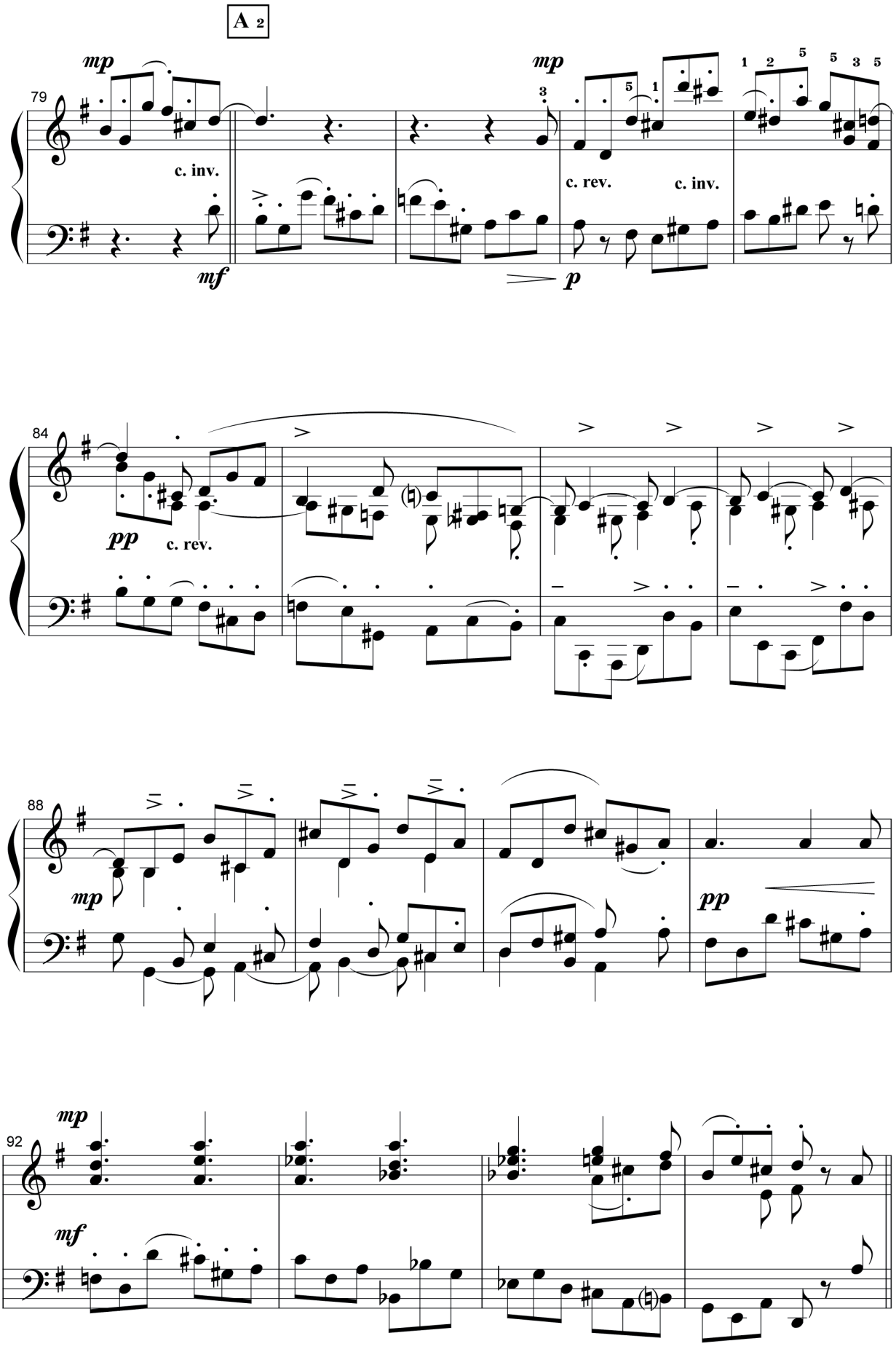

2.
B 1
17
21
25
29
m.d.
m.s.

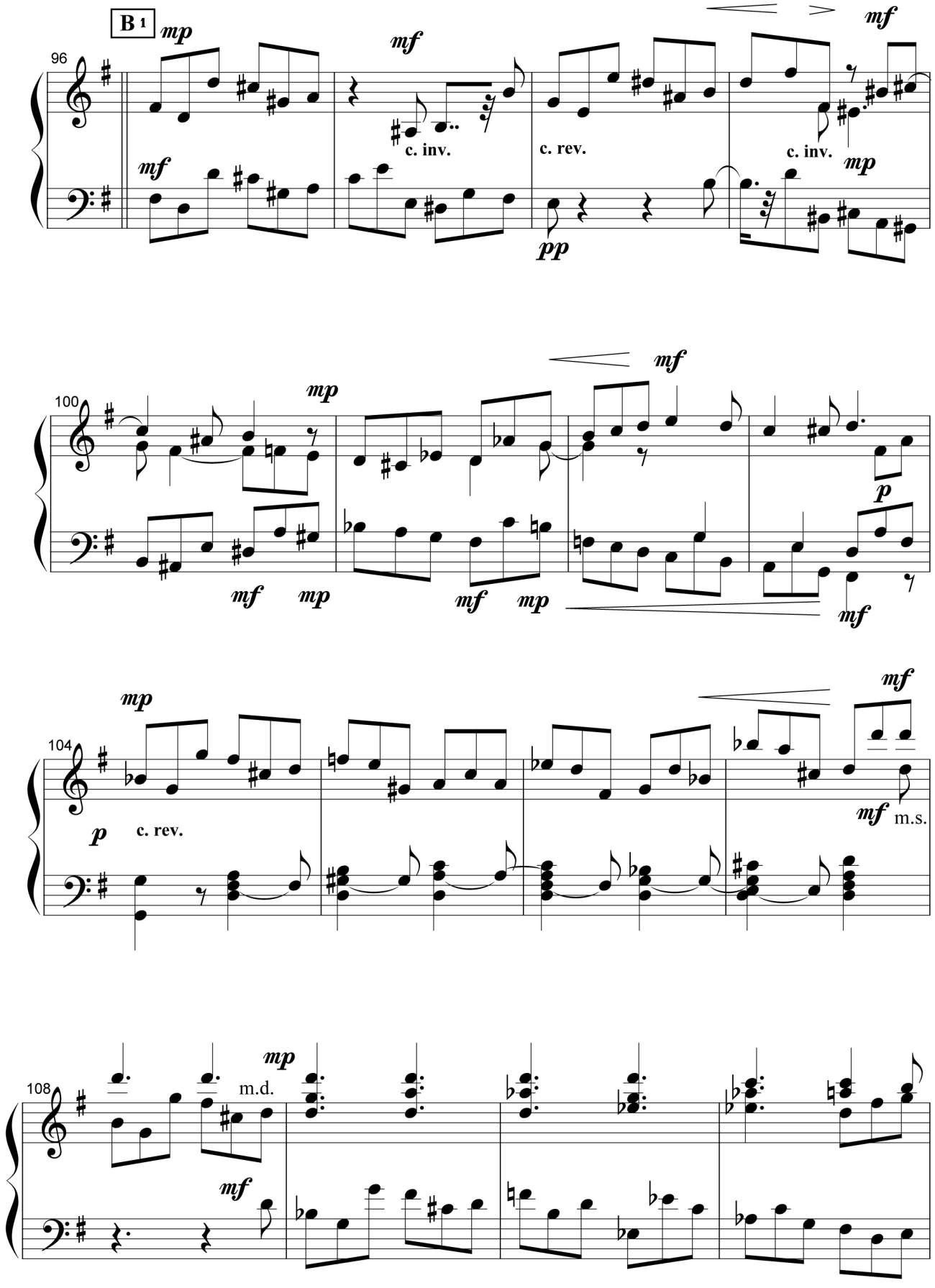

33
37
B 2
40
c. inv.
c. rev.
improvisation
3
legat
43
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 3 2 1 2 4 3 2 1 4 5 3 2

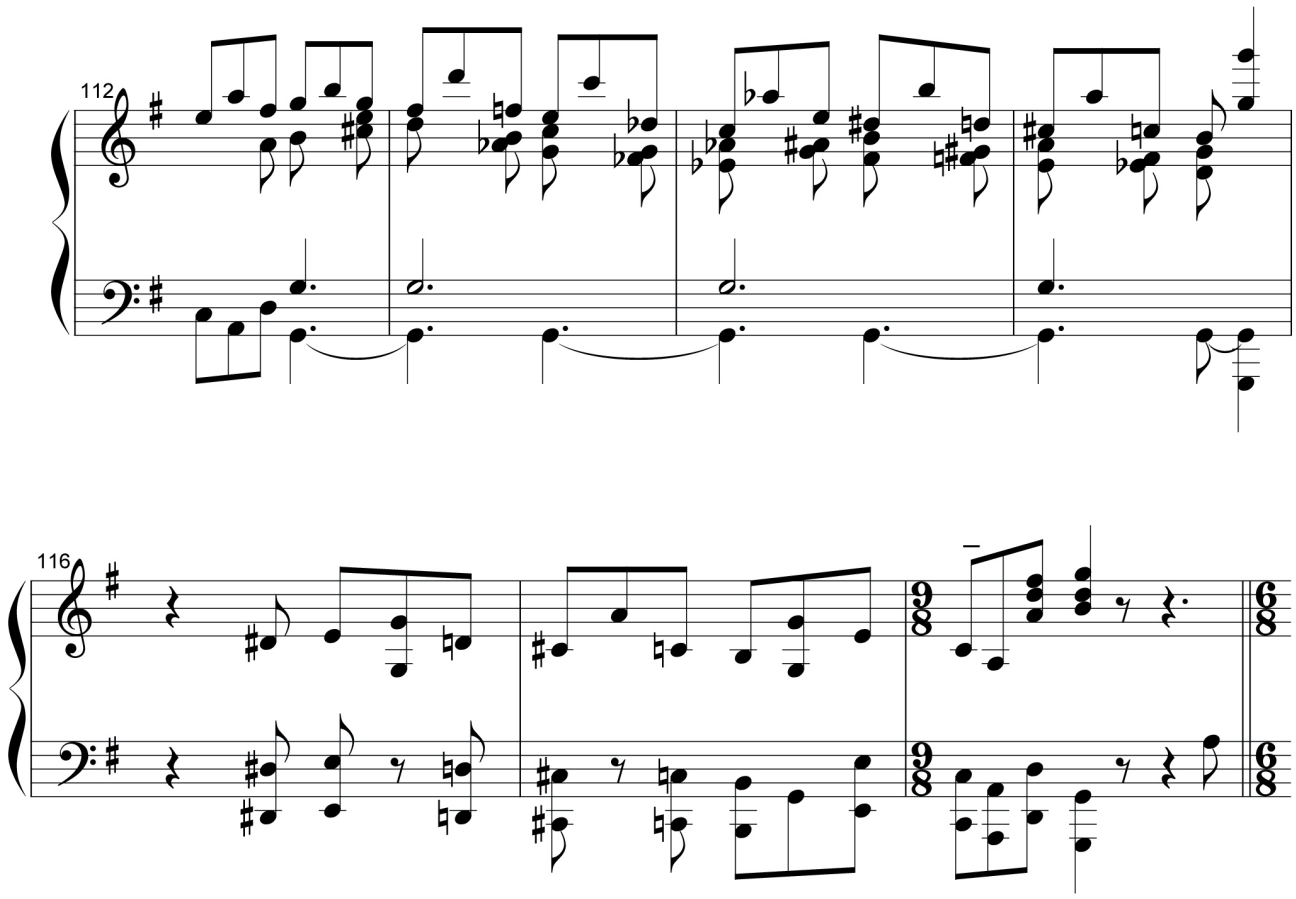

44
45
46
mf
47
improv. ends
mp

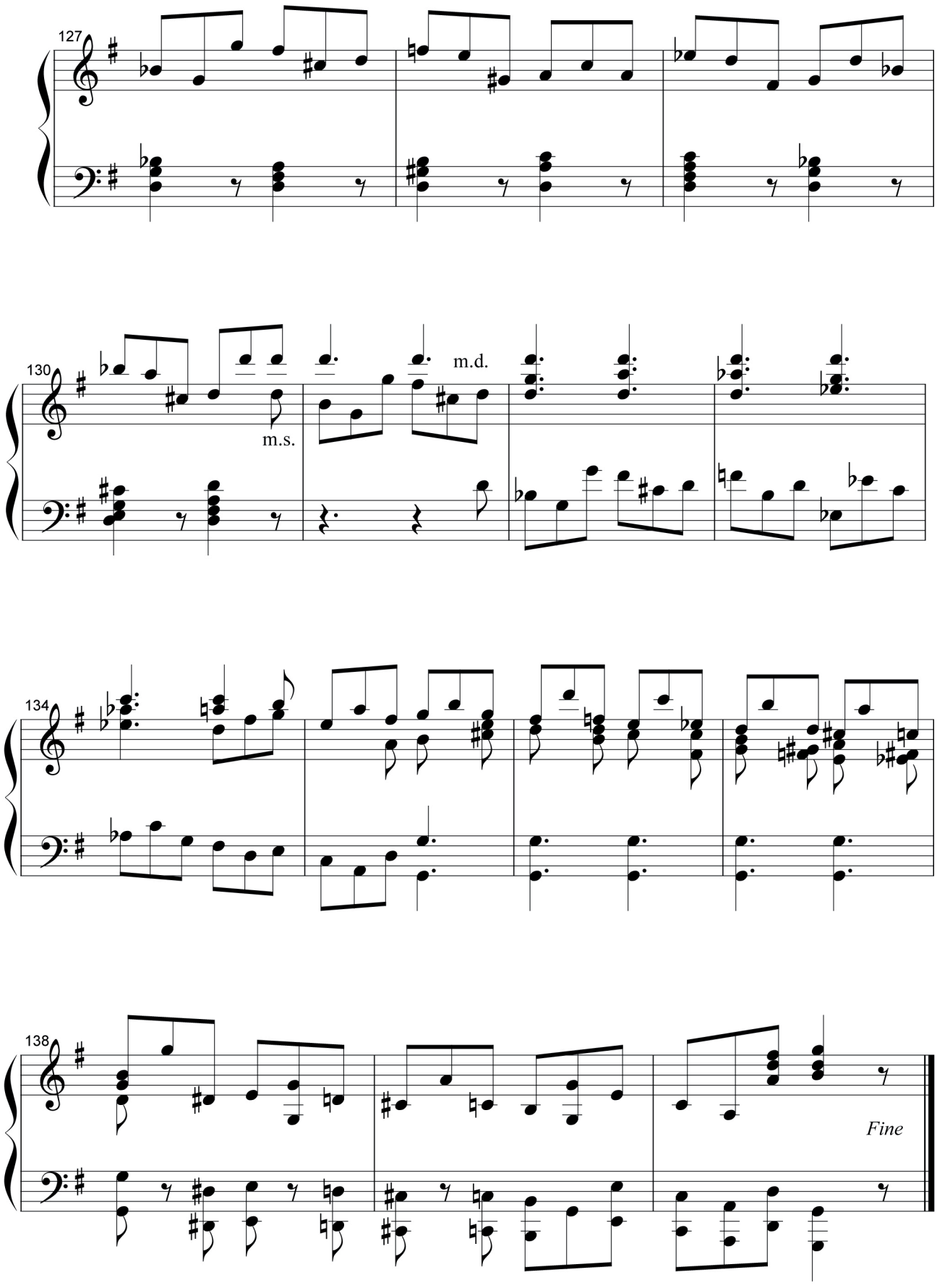

50
m.s.
m.d.
53
56
59


A 1
63
c. inv.
67
71
m.d.
m.s.
c. rev.
75
mp


A 2
79
mp
c. inv.
mf
mp
c. rev.
c. inv.
p
84
pp
c. rev.
88
mp
pp
92
mp
mf


B 1
96
mp
mf
mf
c. inv.
c. rev.
c. inv.
mf
mp
pp
100
mp
mf
mf
mp
mf
mp
p
mf
104
mp
mf
p
c. rev.
mf
m.s.
108
mp
m.d.
mf


112
116
B 1
119
mf
c. inv.
p
f
mf
123
c. rev.
c. inv.


127
130
m.d.
m.s.
134
138
Fine