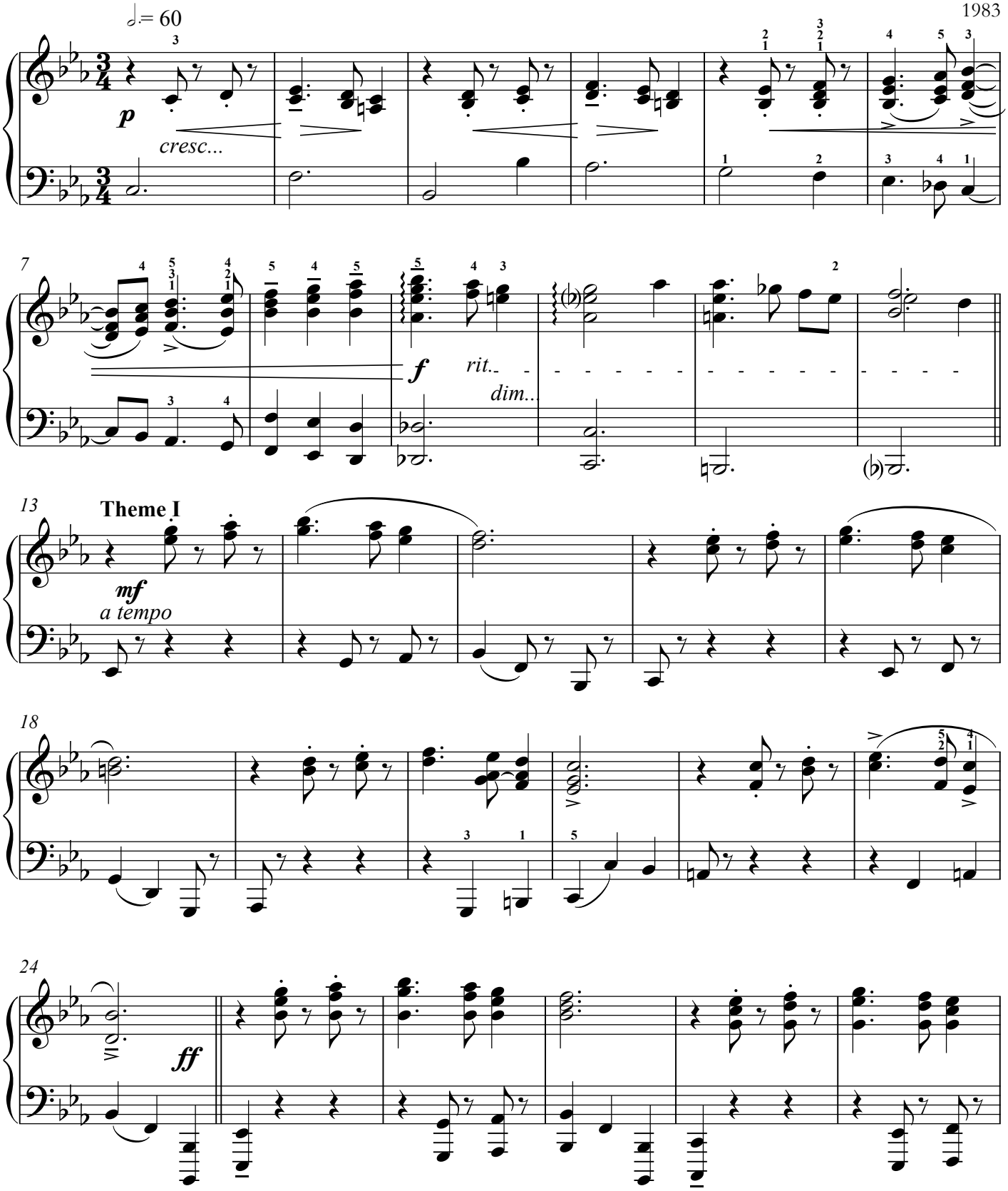
Mercury

miles zarathuštra

1983



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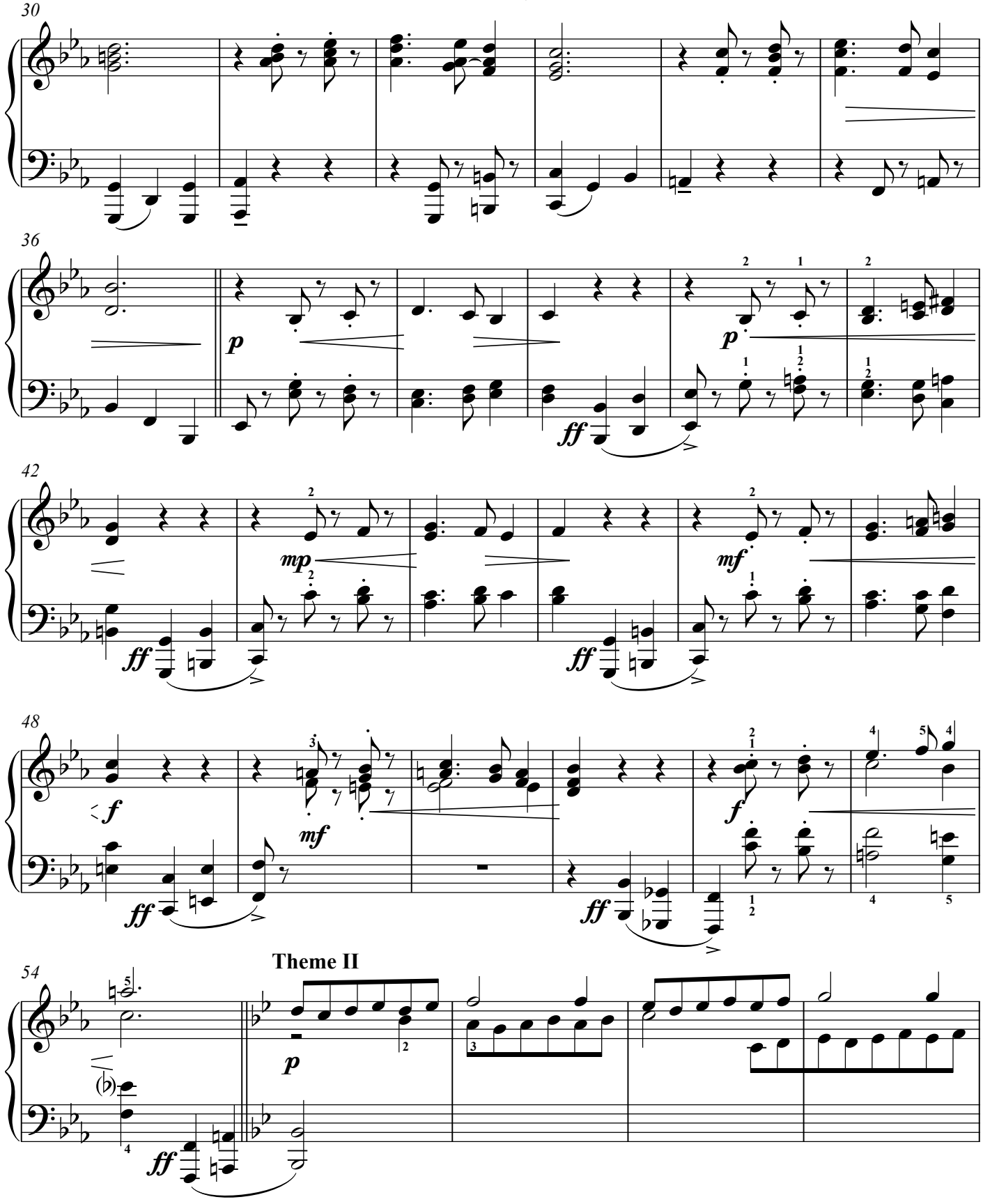
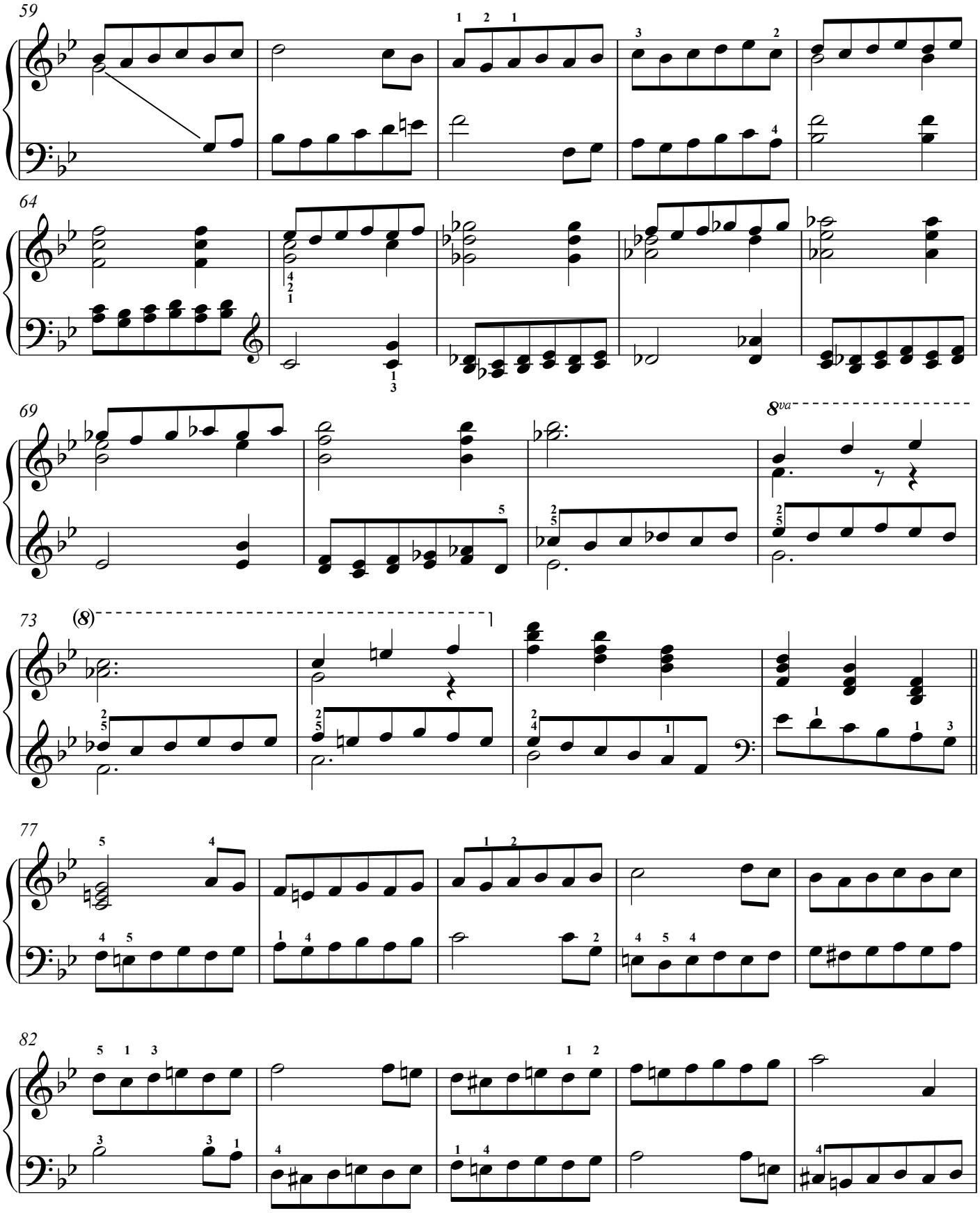
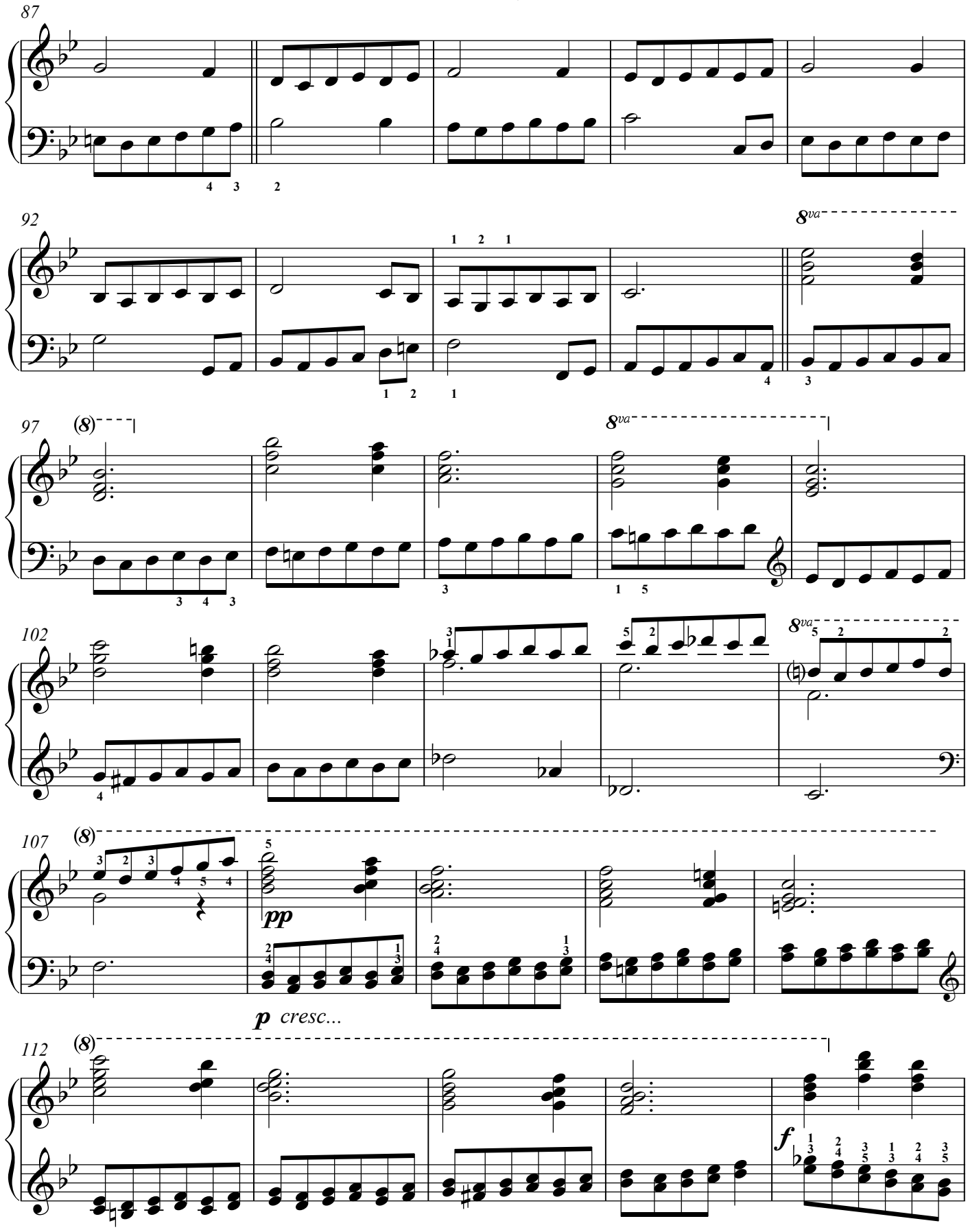
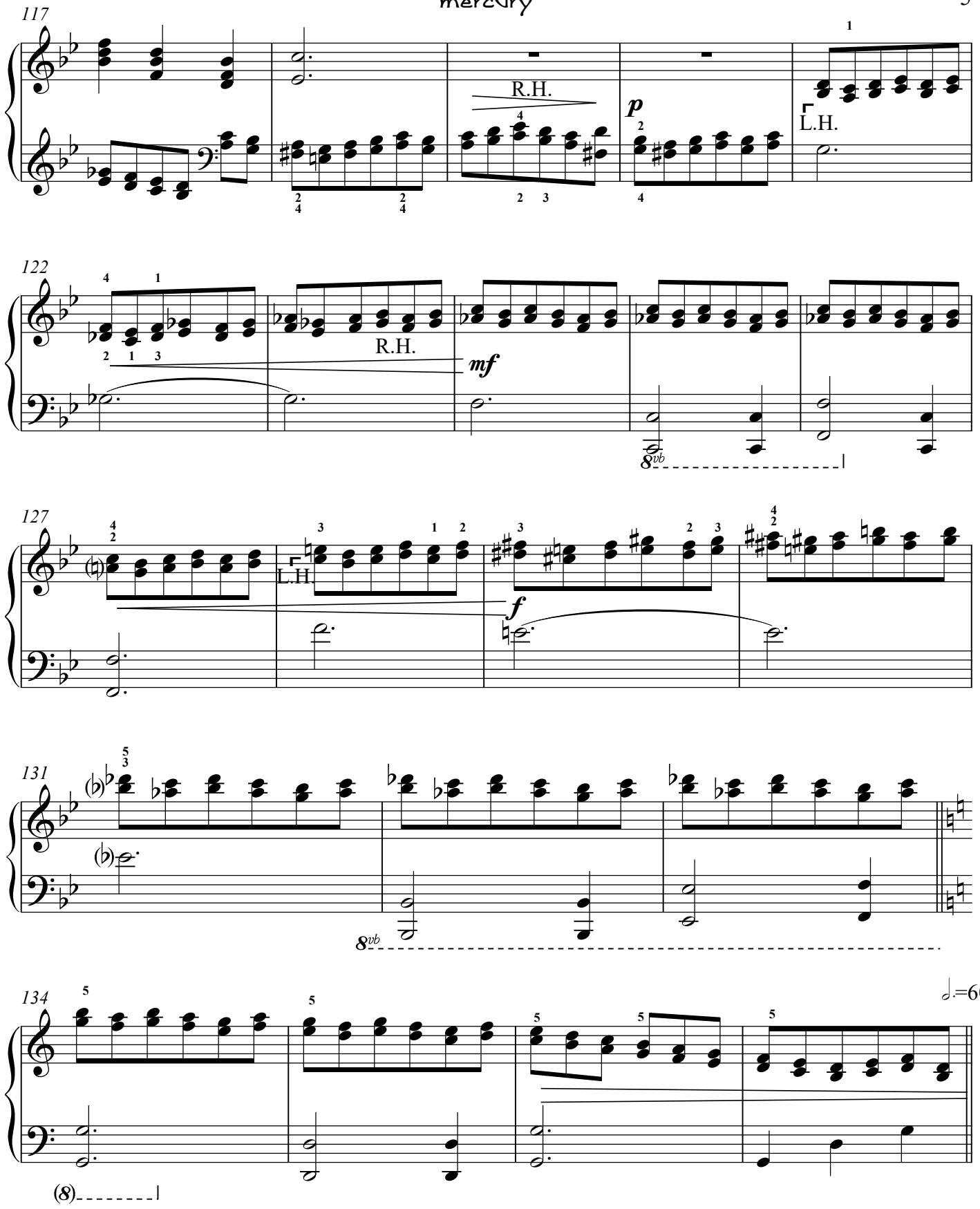
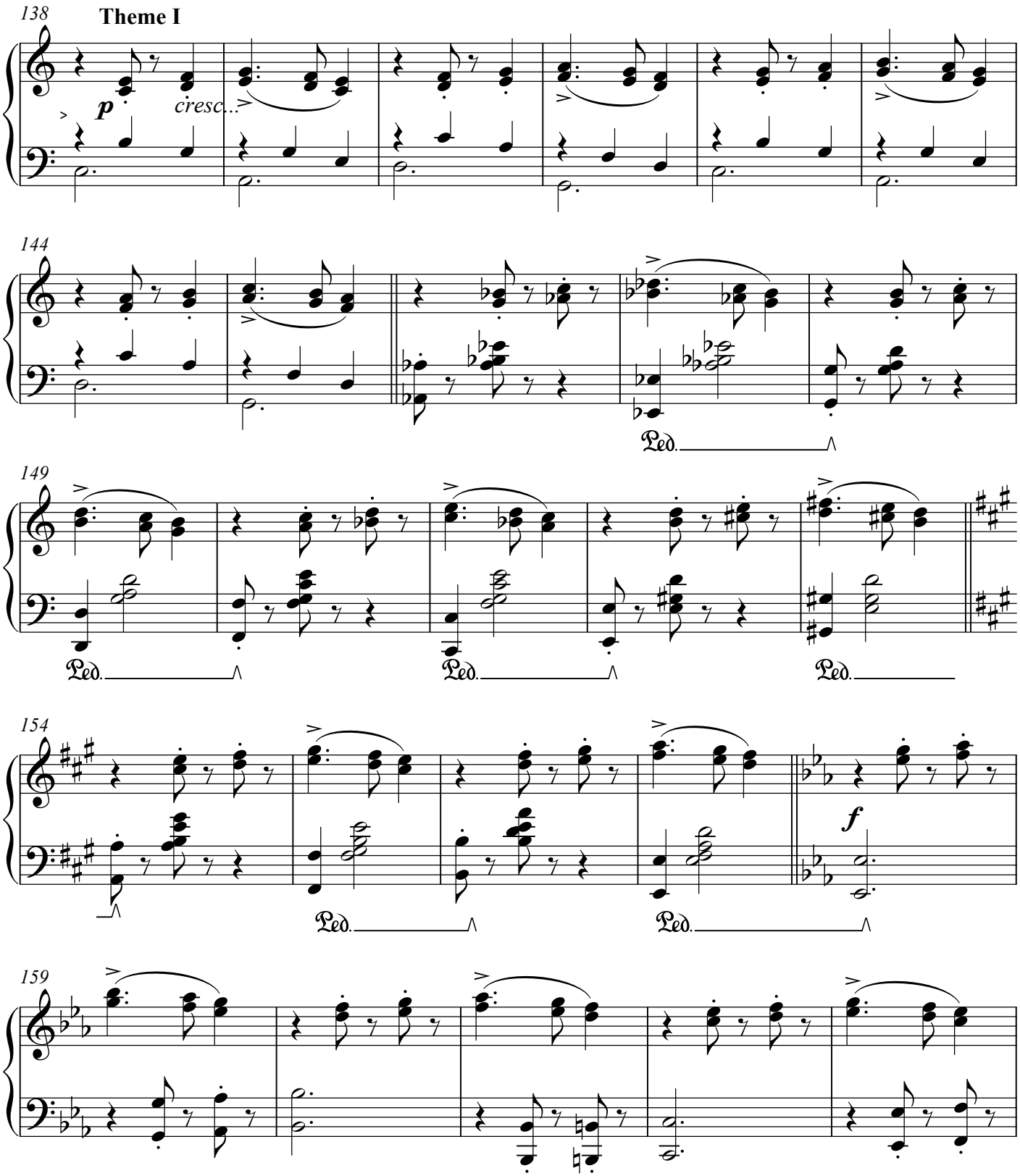
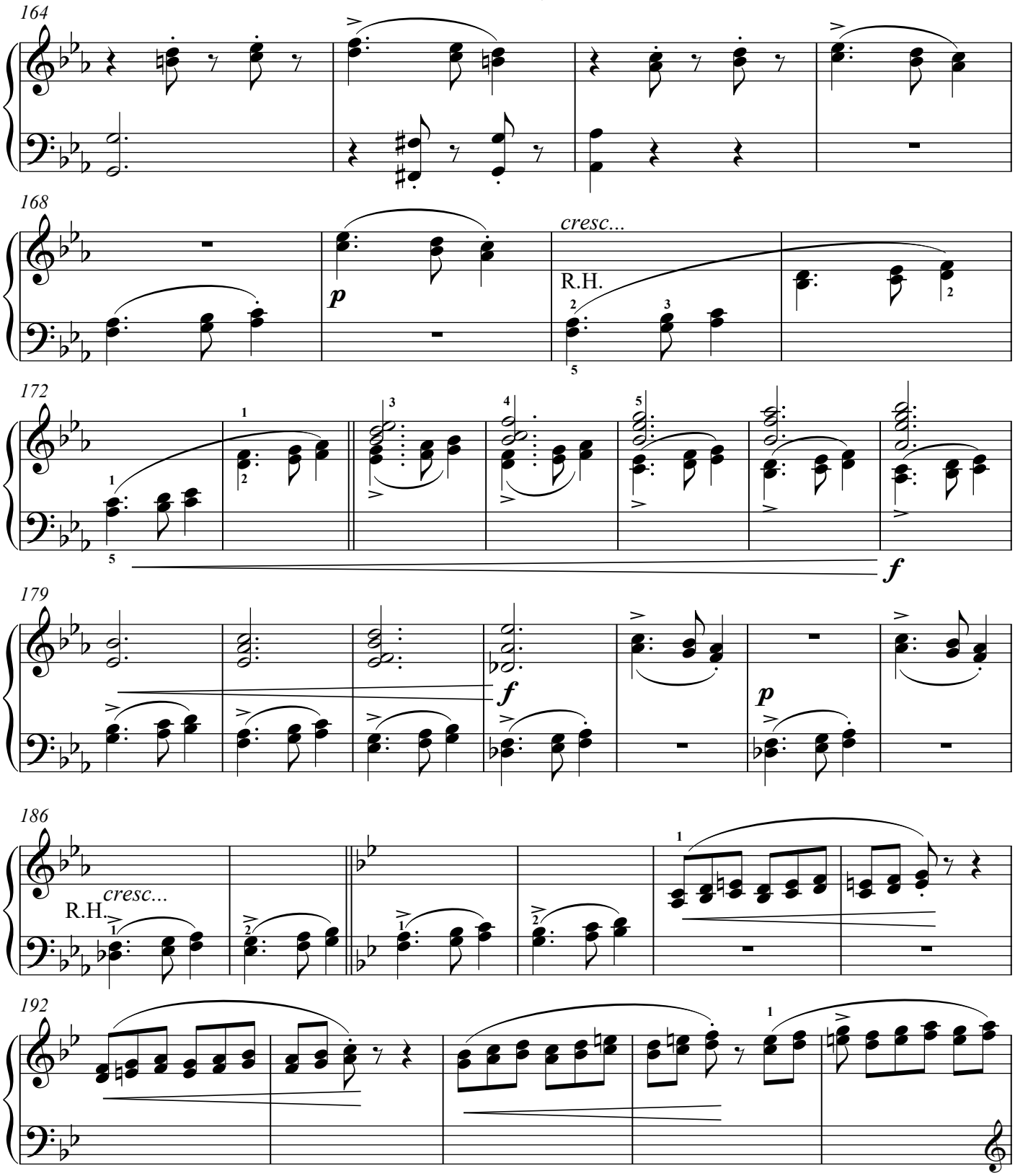

30
36
p
p
ff
42
mp
mf
ff
ff
48
f
mf
ff
f
ff
54
Theme II
p
ff


59
64
69
8va
73
(8)
77
82


87
92
8va
97
(8)
8va
102
8va
107
(8)
pp
p cresc...
112
(8)
f


117
R.H.
p
L.H.
122
R.H.
mf
8vb
127
L.H.
f
131
8vb
134
(8)
♩.=60


138
Theme I
p
cresc...
144
Ped.
149
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
154
Ped.
Ped.
f
159


164
168
cresc...
R.H.
p
172
f
179
f
p
186
R.H.
cresc...
192

197 8va mercury

Theme II

p

201 (8)

205 (8) 8va

209 (8)

pp

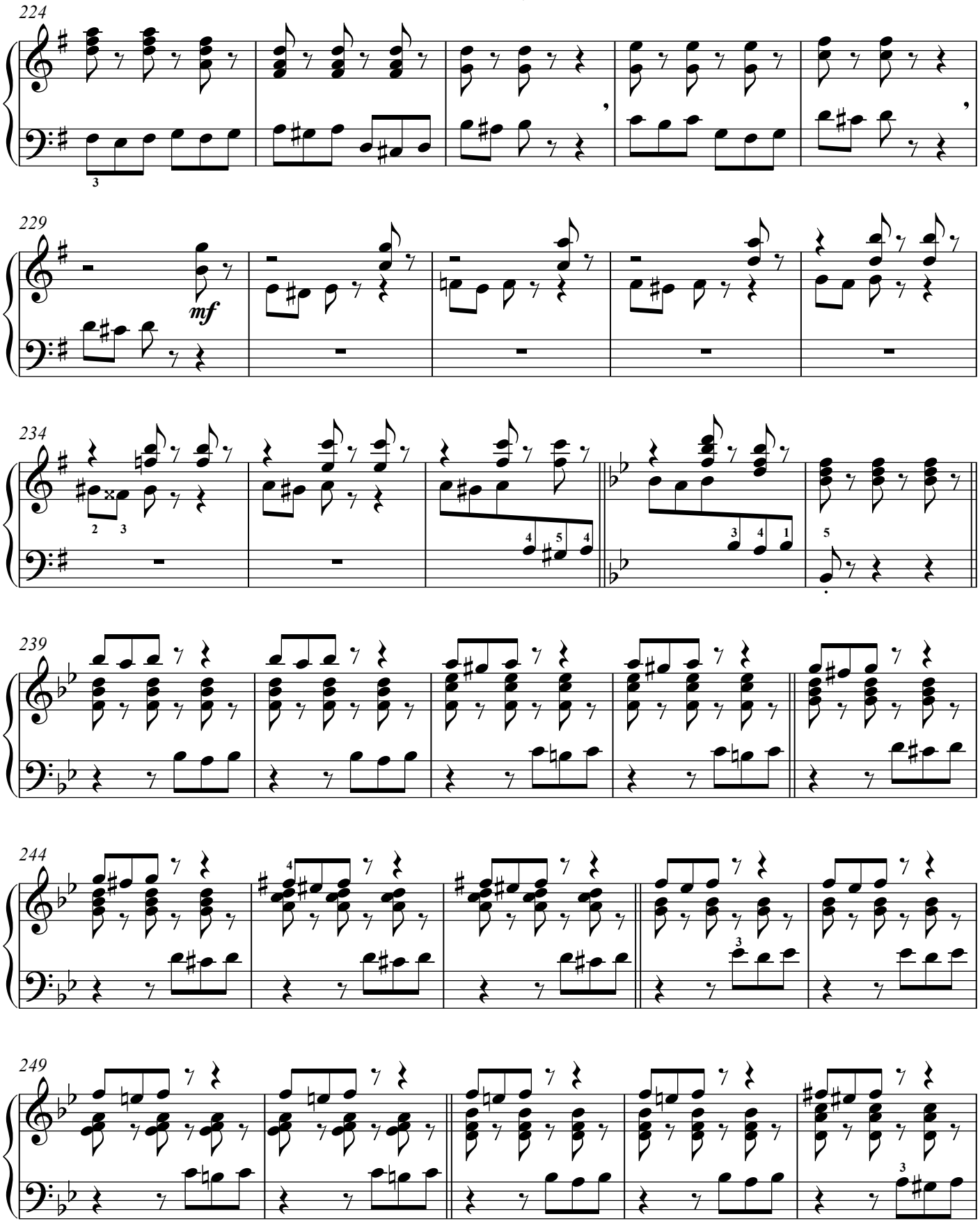
mf

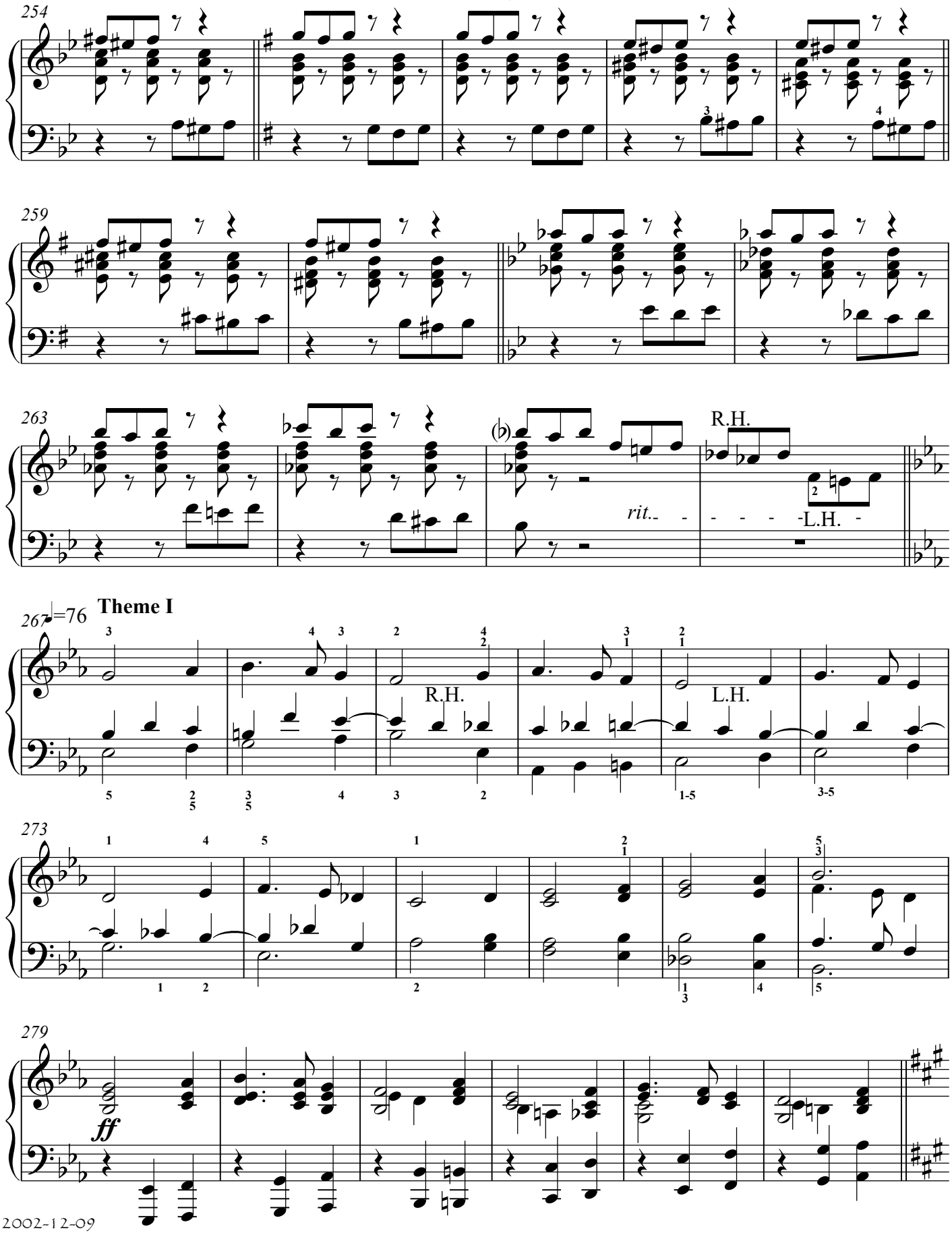
R.H.

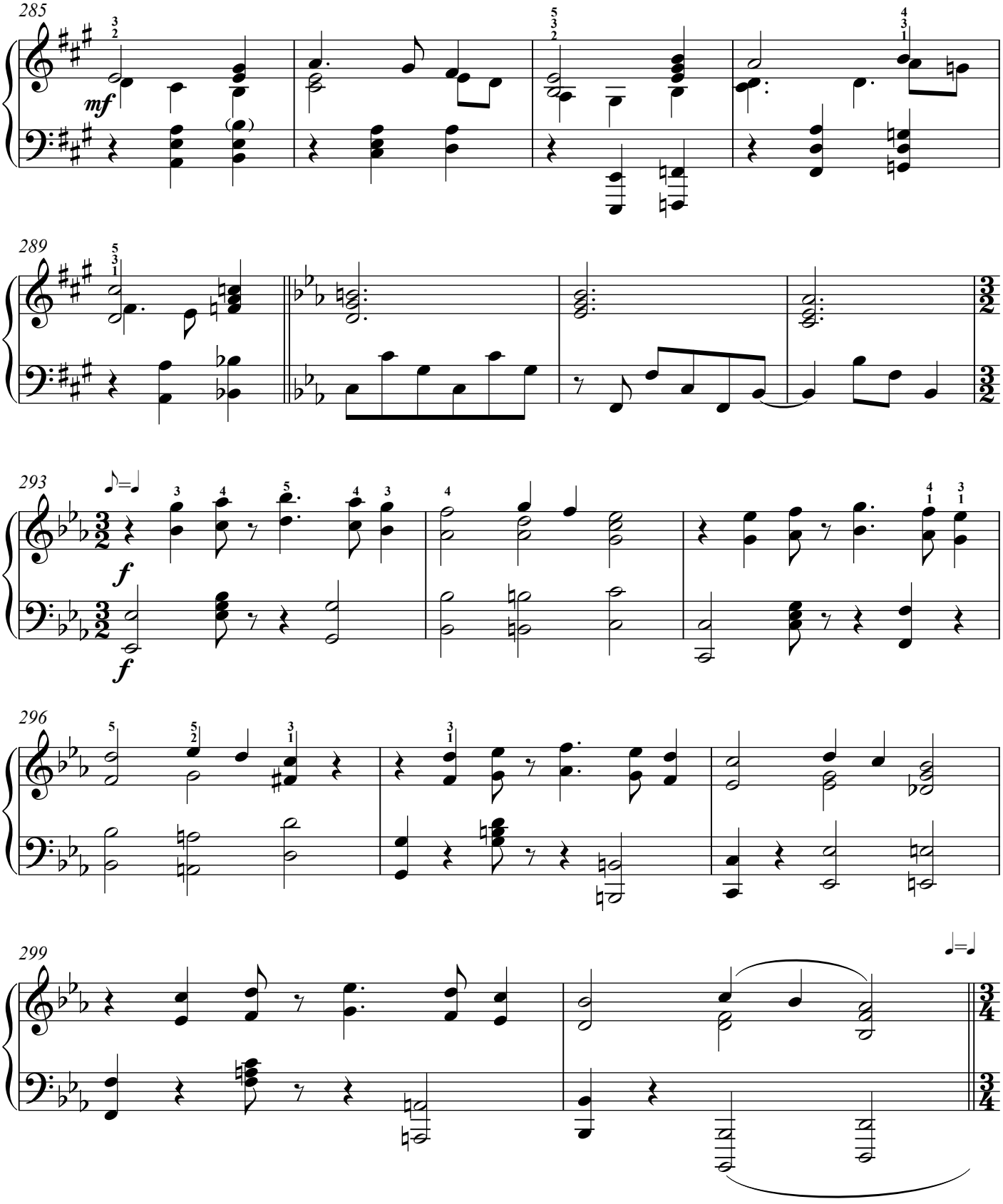
214

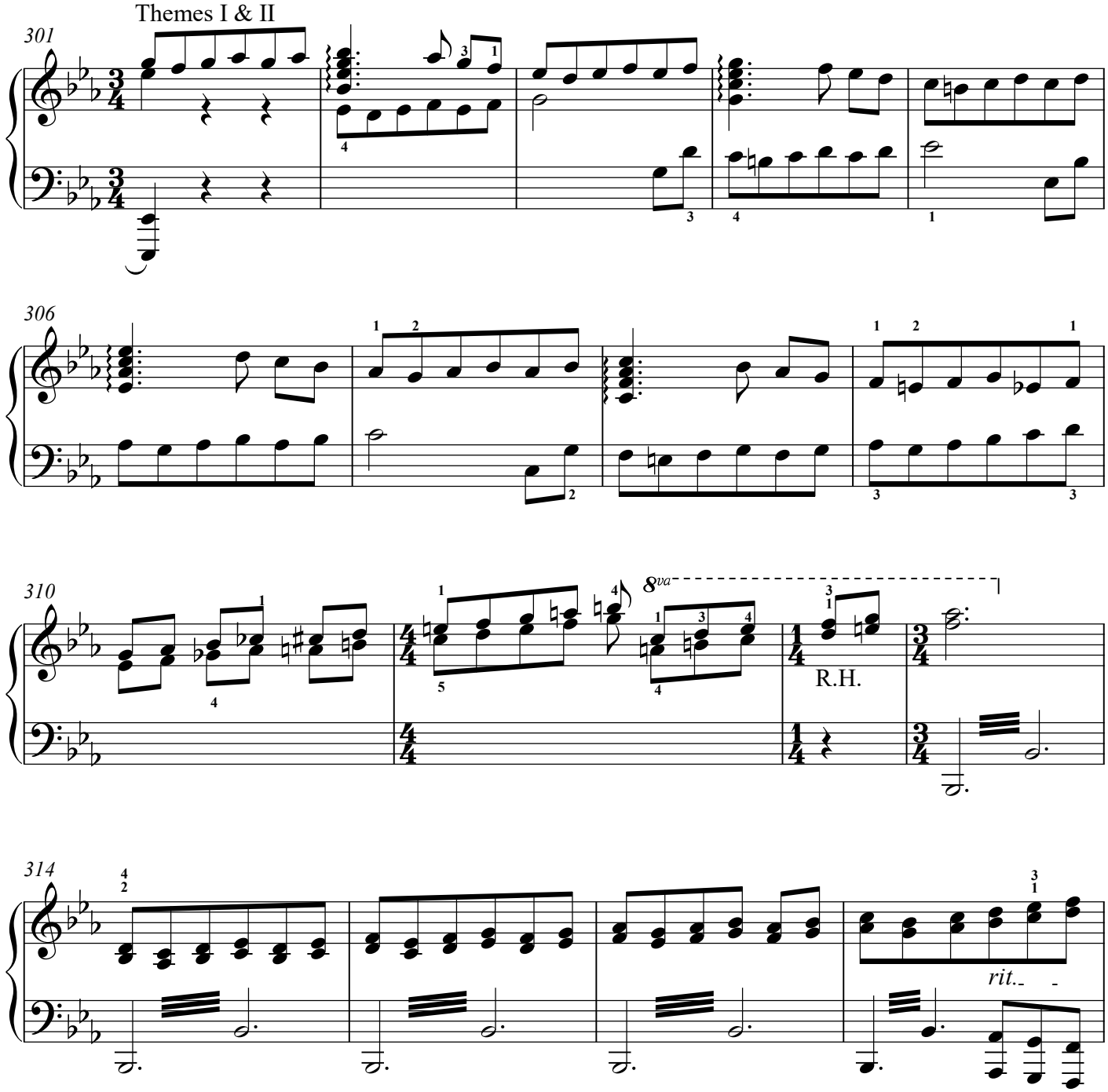
219

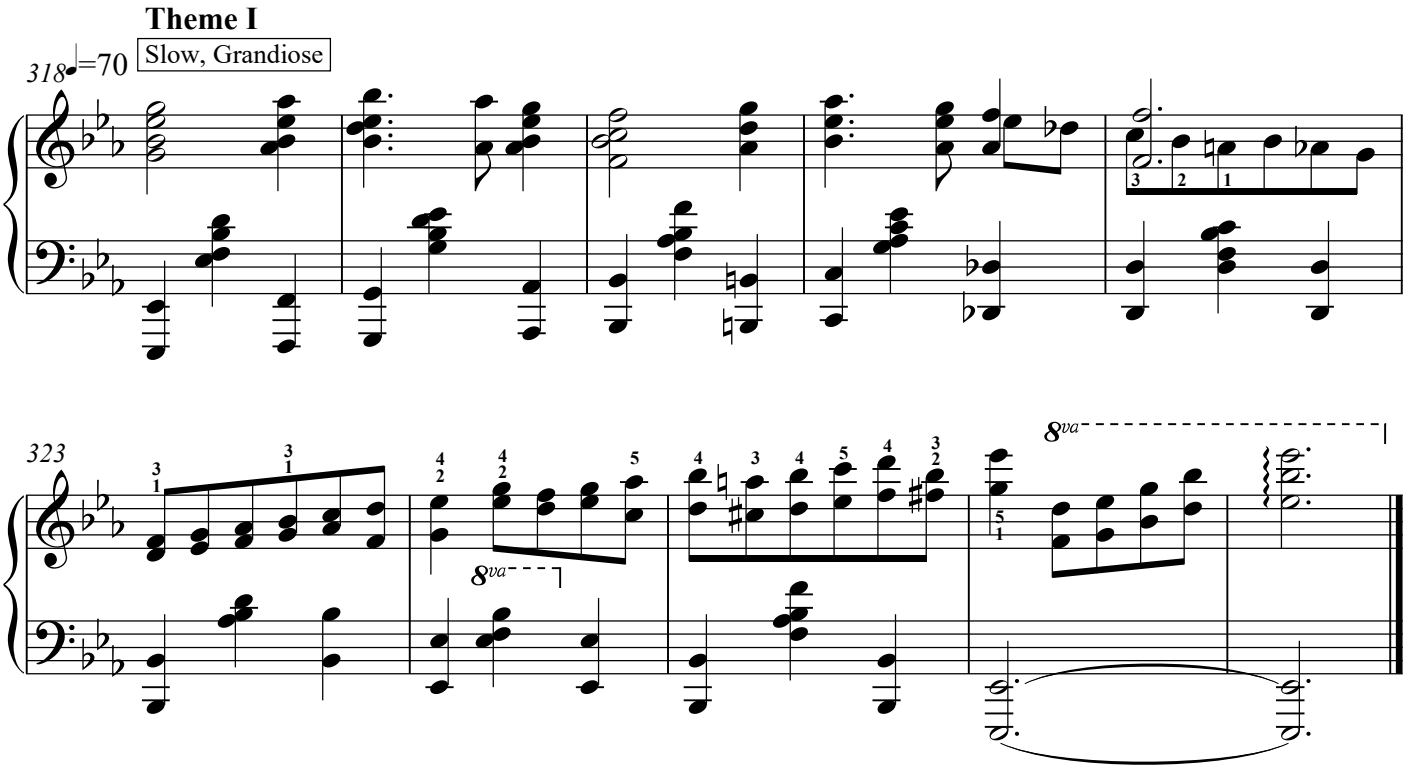
2002-12-09


224
229
mf
234
239
244
249


254
259
263
R.H.
rit.
L.H.
267
♩=76
Theme I
R.H.
L.H.
273
279
ff


285
mf
289
293
f
f
296
299


Themes I & II
301
306
310
8va
R.H.
314
rit.



mercury / notes

This is probably the longest single movement I have ever composed, and certainly the longest for solo piano. It was at a time when I was undertaking to grasp the classic European forms, such as (in this case) "Sonata" and "theme and variation." The piece indeed starts out with a rather typical Sonata exposition, moving into a series of variations on the two themes. The remainder of the piece could be considered "development."

The name "mercury" refers in particular to the transformational passage where one theme "morphs" into the other: in bar 168 the inverted theme I becomes a series of 1/8 notes at bar 190, which turn into theme II at bar 197. The title is also a reference to how the themes are constantly evolving throughout the piece, thinking of the ephemeral, "mercurial" nature of things.

-= miles =-