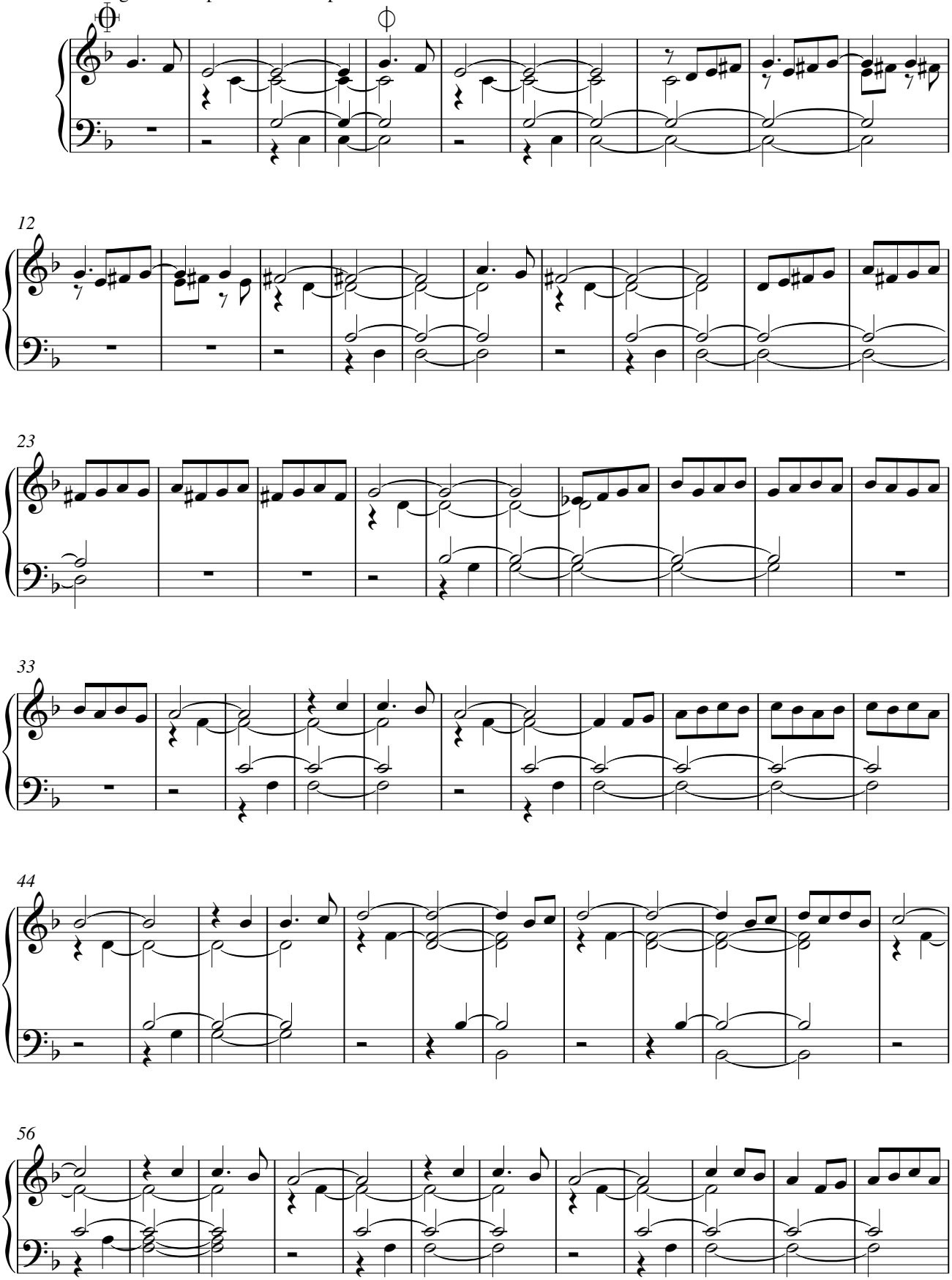
Fantasía que contrahaze la harpa
en la manera de luduvico

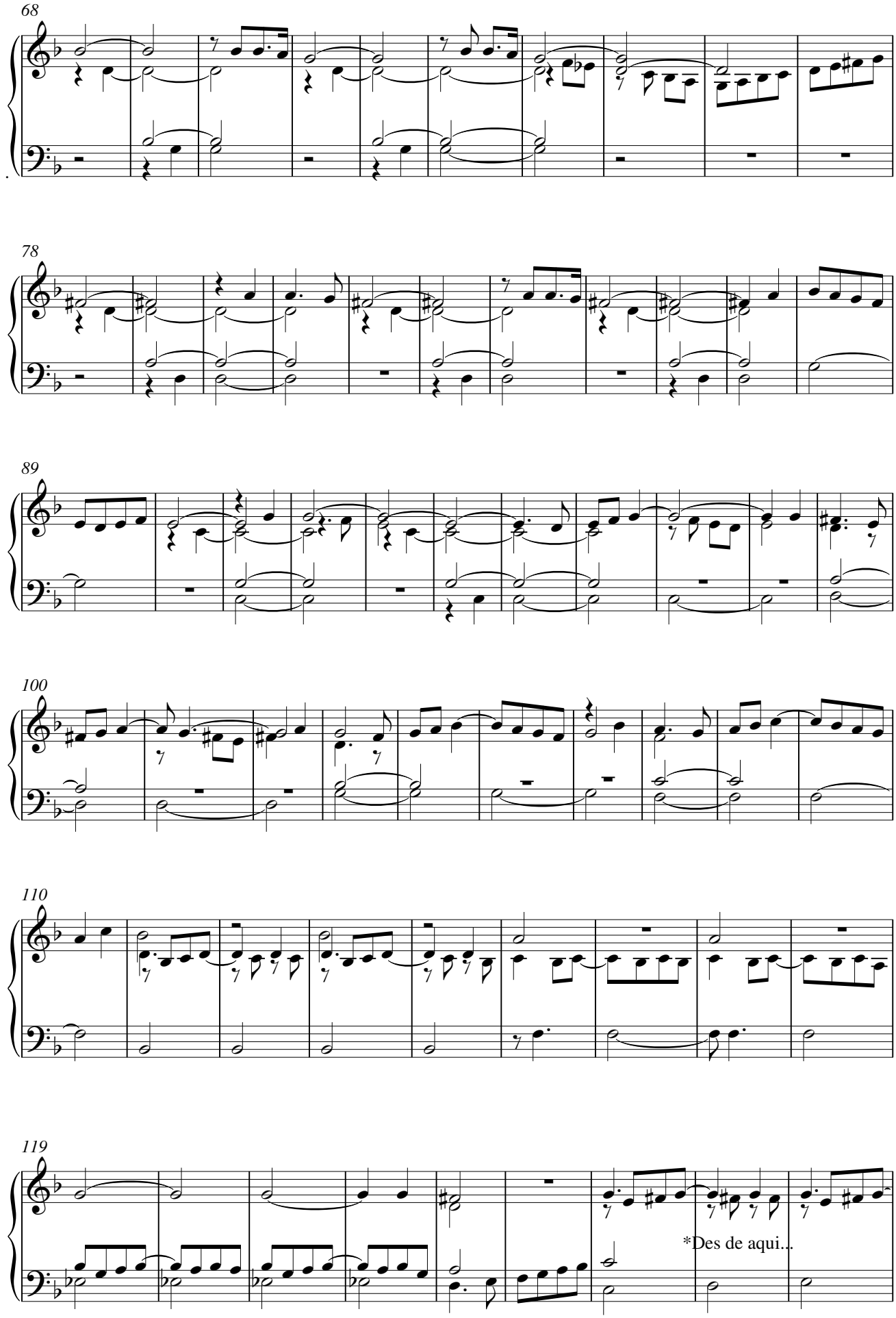
es difficil hasta ser entendida.

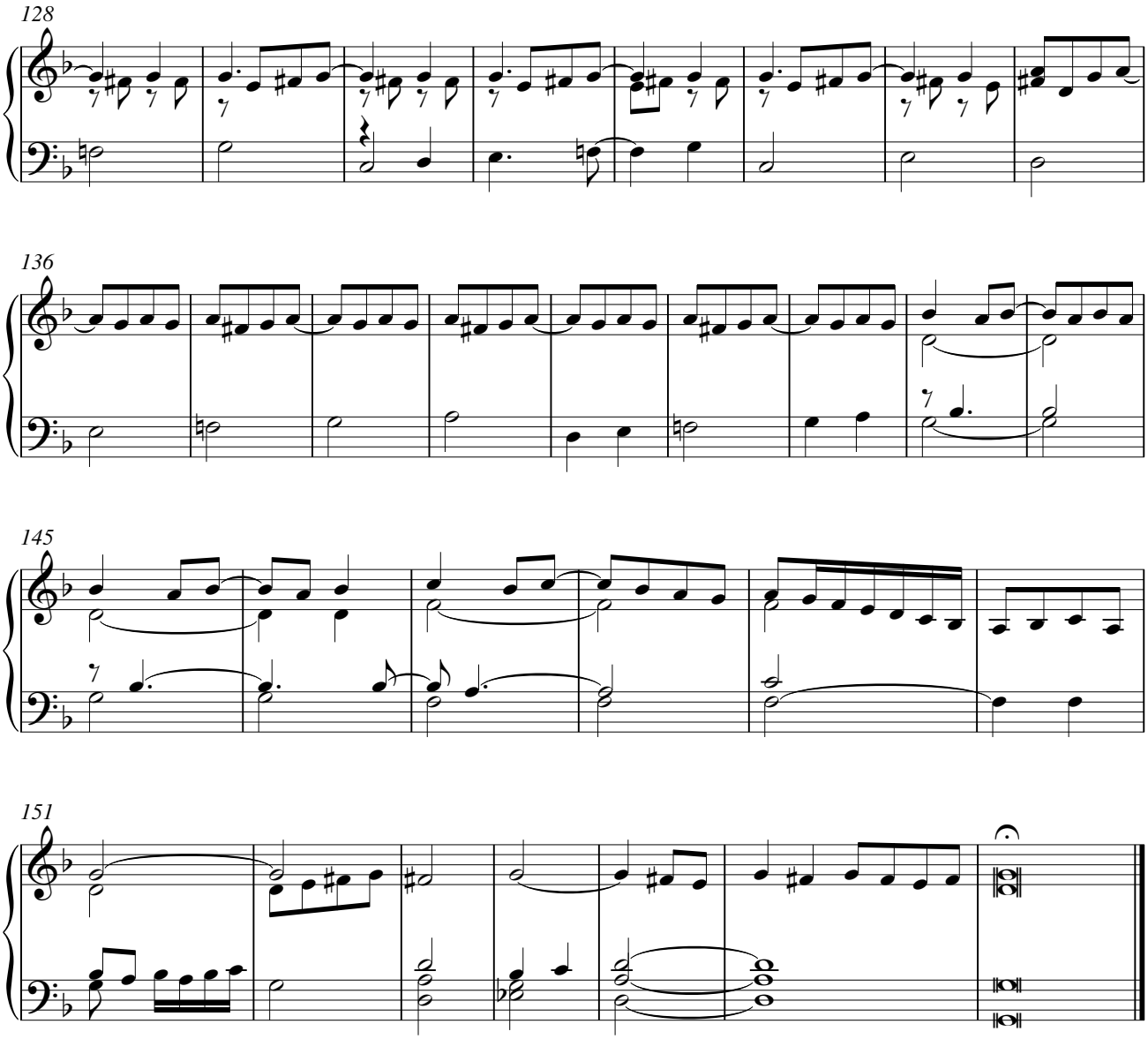
from: Tres libros de musica en cifras para vihuela, Sevilla 1546

Arranged for harpsichord or harp

Alonso Mudarra (ca 1510 - Sevilla 1580)




68
78
89
100
110
119
*Des de aqui...


128
136
145
151

Note

The title means: Fantasia that imitates the harp in the way of Ludovico; is hard to understand. Because of the differences between the editions on IMSLP I made a transcription of the facsimile of the original tablature, Alonso Mudarra, Tres libros de musica en cifras para vihuela, Sevilla 1546, facsimile edition with introduction by James Tyler, Monaco 1980.

Tyler gives the interpretation of some signs based on Mudarra's introductory notes. I maintained the bar lines, but halved the note values. Mudarra did not indicate rests, but used the sign ^ for sustaining notes. Besides I interpreted open strings, if not followed by a note on the same string, as notes to sustain. So the length of tied notes are my interpretation, you may sustain them as long as you want.

The "repeat" mark at the beginning has been used to indicate the tempo: apriessa, quickly. The sign at bar 5 means quickly too, so I assume that a syncope was meant. I amended bars 59 and 73, see the note in my score transcription of the tablature .

In bar 126 a text appears: "*Des de aqui hasta açerca del final ay Algunas falsas tañiendo se bien no pareçen mal", meaning: "From here until about the the final note I included some false notes to play; if well played they will not seem wrong." I doubled the note values of the penultimate bar, hoping that my interpretation of an error remark in the end of book III of the 1546 edition is right, see the note in my score transcription of the tablature.

The standard tuning of the vihuela is G, c, f, a, d', g'. The lowest note of a 16th century harpsichord (even with short octave) or Italian harp is C, so you may add bass notes one octave down. The Spanish harp with 27 strings reaches until G, as you may see in my edition of the Tiento. Make your own choice between sonority, taste and authenticity. Mudarra deliberately wrote g's in bars 28, 70 and 73, where he could have written G's.

John Griffiths, in the article in the Grove online, enigmatically remarks that the "Fantasía que contrahaze la harpa en la manera de Ludovico is a disguised set of folia variations that use cross rhythms and bold chromaticism to imitate the legendary harpist of Ferdinand III of Aragon."