

SEVERAL FIGURAE SIMPLICES IN *THE ART OF FUGUE* BY J. S. BACH*

Daniel Suceava

An exhaustive examination of the musical rhetorical figures found in *The Art of Fugue* would no doubt be of some interest for those who admit that this *opus ultimum* by Bach may be the object of a, say, textual approach in the rhetorical key. For the work viewed in its entirety resorts to a “narrative” technique in an obvious manner. Without venturing to extrapolate the procedures pertinent to “narratology” to the musical realm, we may nevertheless accept the idea that *The Art of Fugue* is a *narratio continua* in which the track of the unique theme,¹ with all its changes, is comparable to a diegetic unfolding. In this case (which the reader is requested to regard as a working assumption), the ordering of the fugues, which has been an object of lengthy debates in older and late musicology, should be reconsidered according to the similarity criterion with respect to the development of the historical discourse. Might one call up here an underlying text, a *sacra historia*?² The truth is that once you get somewhat familiar with Bach’s *opus*, you find it hard to repress the feeling that you are actually dealing with a *narratio continua de vita et de morte*³ and that today one may recuperate some of the intuitions advanced by E. Schwesbch (beyond the strictly anthroposophic context of his theses), who was banned by the quasi-unanimity of commentators to the realm of that “mauvaise littérature” mentioned by Marcel Bitsch.⁴ To say, as Bitsch did, that “même déagée du verbe, la musique de Bach demeure un puissant langage émotif” is well said yet little said.

This study will only deal with several “simple figures” which occur consistently throughout the work. In the musical text, these figures appear as mere “landmarks”, meant to turn the narrative substance articulate, and also as stylistic reminders. However, though some of the minimum formulae may be accounted for as professional “habits”, they are likewise essentially responsible for the cohesiveness of the whole.

The musical-rhetorical figures are related to the musical, and the associated literary, text, in vocal music. However, their effect is similarly at play in textless instrumental music.⁵ In the aftermath of an earlier tradition, the aesthetics of the musical Baroque employs the concept of *Klangrede* itself,⁶ correlatively with that of *Augenmusik*,⁷ which is preferred by the theorists of the Baroque. To these,⁸ “the music for the eye” appears to be more precious in a certain respect than that “for the ear” (*Ohrenmusik*). From this standpoint, the prevailing view⁹ is that *The Art of Fugue* would fall under the *Augenmusik* ideal. On the other side, several enthusiastic researchers of *The Art of Fugue* hold

* Roman figures denote the order number of the fugue (*contrapunctus*), after Albert Lunow’s edition, 1951, 21958. Arab figures indicate the bar. Bold Arab figures represent the order number of the musical examples used to illustrate the text herein.

just the contrary, namely that Bach “does not write for the eye, but for the ear”.¹⁰ The aesthetic dispute turns out to be ultimately superfluous given that the somewhat inaccessible nature of Bach’s opus does not necessarily enforce a cerebral, *in abstracto* approach of the work. The hearing of the opus gives the aesthetic satisfaction pertinent to any of Bach’s works, and in this respect *The Art of Fugue* may be leveled with the passions, the cantatas or the great pieces for organ. *The Art of Fugue* is both *Augenmusik* and *Hörenmusik*, like most of his masterpieces.

The figure is “the simplest articulation of the musical scheme”.¹¹ The rhetorical figure, which became a *figura musica*, is an *ornamentum* of music¹² in the baroque aesthetic view. The same meaning may be found in classical rhetoric. Quintilian (*Institutio oratoria* 9, 1, 4) defines even the difference between *figura* (*quae σχήματα Graece uocantur*) and *tropus* (*τρόπος*). *Figura, sicut nomine ipso patet, conformatio quaedam orationis remota a communi at primum se offerente ratione* (“the figure, as may be seen from its denomination, is, so to say, a figuration of the discourse, which is far from ordinary and spontaneous expressions”). However, in the case of tropes, some words are used instead of others (*in tropis ponuntur uerba alia pro aliis*),¹³ as is the case of the metaphor, metonymy, antonomasia, synecdoche, allegory, hyperbole and the like.

Concerning the musical figures of instrumental or vocal origin, which, for the age of Bach, are assessed by A. Schmitz to be of the order of one hundred,¹⁴ the classifications show two large groups: *hypotyposis*,¹⁵ with its two forms, *anabasis* (*ascensio, ascensus*) and *katabasis* (*descensio, descensus*), and the second large group, *emphasis* (*ἐμφασίς = significatio*).¹⁶

All these figures, vested with an obvious rhetorical significance, may be found in *The Art of Fugue*. Here are just a few examples from the hosts that might be indexed:

anabasis

①



V, 80—

②



I, 75—

katabasis

③



I, 63—

④



XI, 154—

saltus duriusculus



I, 77



I, 23

Although *saltus duriusculus* is defined as “an augmented or diminished characteristic leap”,¹⁷ Example 6 may be accepted as such, even if the interval is a minor seventh.¹⁸ This is actually a “distortion” of the figure appearing in I, 16 :



and represents an expressive leap which releases a too close sonorous body, projecting one of the sounds into a more lightful register. The role is here two-fold : a) expressive (*saltus duriusculus*) ;¹⁹ b) a technical procedure pertinent to instrumental notation : *Fantasia et Fuga in c* BWV 562 (Fuga)



passus duriusculus



XI, 28 – (chromatic counter-subject)



XI, 59 – (“Lamentobass”)



canone III alla decima, 18 –

In Burmeister's acceptance *passus duriusculus* (a term employed by Christoph Bernhard) is *pathopoeia*,²⁰ but this entails a large variety of, even contradictory, feelings. In Ernesti's lexicon, entry *Pathopoeia*, we read that this oratorical figure "vel odium, vel iracundia, vel misericordia movetur".²¹

*Parrhesia*²² would be an equivalent figure for *passus duriusculus* (after Chr. Bernhard). In the musical aesthetics of the Baroque, *parrhesia* is synonymous with *relatio non harmonica*²³ and *relatio obliqua*. Thus, it licenses any forbidden intervals (*intervalla prohibita seu inusitata*)²⁴ and especially the sham relation which, in terms of musical expression, is ordinarily assimilated with *affectus doloris*.

(12)

IV, 34

(13)

III, 33

(14)

A.

Orgel
Cont.

6
5

Johannespassion, Aria No. 11, bar 35

This type of *relatio non harmonica*, which is almost frequent in Bach's works, was used by Schütz a century earlier with even greater freedom:

H. Schütz, *Lukas-Passion*,
bar 622

H. Schütz, *Kleine Geistliche
Konzerte II* (1639), No. 2

(15)

(16)

From the province of the sham relation, Examples 12–16 were given to illustrate only the case of the *superflua* octave (\sharp), customarily associated with the strained expression or, in the kircherean theory of the 8 *affectus sive pathemata*, with the 6th, *Timoris & Afflictionis*,²⁵ and also with that accompanying the idea of resolving a tension, as is the case of 14, on the text: "Von den Strikken meiner Sünden *mich zu entbinden*". Let us also recall that, according to A. Schmitz,²⁶ *parrhesia* as *figura harmoniae* is not far from what Bernhard defined as *figurae superficiales* (*multiplicatio, ellipsis, retardatio, heterolepsis*, etc).²⁷

The *hypotyposis* category covers likewise the so-called *distendente maniera*, defined by J. G. Walther as a "figurative pedal point of broad ambitus and long intervals".²⁸ Here it is in *The Art of Fugue*, I, 63:

(17)

Of the figures in the e m p h a s i s group, we shall only recall that the *antitheton* figure, defined in rhetoric as entailing an opposition between two (or two and two) words, or between two phrases : *contrapositum autem uel, ut quidam uocant, contentio (ἀντιθετον δicitur), non uno fit modo ; nam et fit, si singula singulis opponuntur [...], et bina binis [...], et sententiae sententiis,*²⁹ is fairly important in *The Art of Fugue* insofar as it brings along an opposition of contrapuntal nature :³⁰ “*antitheton oppositio tam fit in thematibus et contrathematibus, quam in oppositione dissonantiarum*”.³¹

The *gradatio* figure, which consists in “the pluri-phase, gradually ascending repetition of a figure drive towards climax,”³² is strangely enough less represented in *The Art of Fugue*. Quintilian himself says that this literary figure is known to be rather seldom employed.³³ With Bach it is found in IV, 46 (→ 106) :

18



This figure occurs again in bar 119 (bass), this time counterpointed by another motive (tenor), actually derived from the BACH motive (a kind of *signatura* hidden in the melodic tessiture is here at play) :

19



Towards the end of VIII, 165—, the figure re-occurs but it is almost unrelated to the subject context of the fugue. Unlike IV, which is a one-theme fugue with the subject inverted,³⁴ VIII is a double fugue, and not a triple fugue as Riemann contended,³⁵ being part of the third group of fugues. In VIII, the above-mentioned figure occurs this time in canonic form with the high voices, a treatment unemployd in the case of the similar motive in IV, 164— :

20



The figure is worked out several bars later (bar 174). The canonic imitation in bar 164 is counterpointed by the bass motion which, once re-distributed into the registers generating it, comes out as a figure of large-scale *katabasis* :

21



Another figure pertaining to the *e m p h a s i s* category is *exclamatio* “*quae, apud Graecos ἐκφώνησις dicitur*” and which “*mouet pathos*”.³⁶ According to the theory of figures during the musical baroque period, *exclamatio* is related to an ascending minor-sixth leap.³⁷ The figure expresses “a dramatic climax”.³⁸ In I, this characteristic element occurs several times :



(characteristic element of the countersubject)



(beginning of the interlude)

Canon I commences in an exclamatory manner, the sixth leap re-occurring throughout this piece in a contrastive alternation with the chromatic sequences (*passi duriusculi*). The canon (“*per augmentationem in motu contrario*”) exhibits a large series of musical-rhetorical figures in the virtuoso manner, yet with no didactic or methodical ostentation.



In XV, shortly before the beginning of the second theme, the upper voice comes to a climax, cast by the same kind of exclamation :



Another rhetorical procedure occurring in several *contapuncti* in *The Art of Fugue* is *fermata* (the rhetorical break),³⁹ ordinarily made on dissonant chords and placed on the apex.⁴⁰ In the case of the rhetorical break, there exists actually a correlation of at least two *figurae*, one of which comes under *hypotyposis* and the other under *emphasis*. In I, 70 the dissonant diminished-seventh chord on which the stop is made is additionally potentiated by a *saltus duriusculus* in the high voice, which is taken over in the last but one bar (see 5) :



B flat in the *superius* is also a climax, a culminating tension which occurs first in this bar. The second rhetorical figure is just the general pause following the climax. The rhetorical term for this figure is *aposiopesis*, defined as a “temporary stop of the discourse by a

general pause".⁴¹ Quintilian⁴² associates this figure with the feeling of anger: ἀποσιώπησις, quam idem Cicero⁴³ reticentiam, Celsus obticentiam, nonnulli interruptionem appellant, et ipsa ostendit aliquid adfectus uel irae⁴⁴ [...] uel sollicitudinis et quasi religionis [...] uel alio transeundi gratia. Macrobius⁴⁵ holds that this figure is the opposite of exclamation: contraria huic figurae [sc. exclamationis] ἀποσιώπησις, quod est taciturnitas. A distinction should be made in this case between *taciturnitas* and what is denoted by "silence" in the theory of musical-rhetorical figures.⁴⁶ The latter term is more of a counterpoising of pauses in the discourse and has nothing in common with a general pause. Notwithstanding the restricted expressive area allotted to the *exclamatio* figure (only the ascending minor-sixth leap), we may consider that a *saltus duriusculus* like that in 26 and the diminished chord itself foregoing *fermata* assume an obviously exclamatory value in the discourse. Overlooking the use of rhetorical figures in the musical realm and considering their meaning alone, the above rhetorical scheme may be regarded as an *exclamatio/taciturnitas* antithetic succession, corresponding to an equivalent psychological meaning.

In XIII *rectus* and *inversus*, *fermata* is preceded by *salti duriusculi* in two voices (in the contrary sense) simultaneously:

(27)

(inversus) (rectus)

The procedure is found with Bach in both the vocal and the instrumental styles (*Praeludium et Fuga in G* BWV 541, *Fuga*; *Magnificat* BWV 243, Chorus No. 7: *Fecit potentiam*, bar 28, etc.).

In VI, 72— the diminished leap foregoing *fermata* is in the lower voice (*altus*):

(28)

In VII, 58 only the low voices break the discourse by *taciturnitas*, leaving a short concluding cadential *tirata* to the high voice, thus recalling bar 34 in "*Brandenburg*" *Concerto* No. 1 BWV 1046, 2nd part (*Adagio*):

(29)

In his *Conclave thesauri magnae artis musicae* (1719), Mauritius Vogt distinguishes between rhetorical figures proper and simple figures, which appear to have no obvious rhetorical role.⁴⁷ According to Chr. Bernhard, these would be *figurae fundamentales*,⁴⁸ synonymous with simple “*clores*”: *ligatura*, *syncopatio*, *transitus*, *commisura*, *symblema* and even *cambiata*. The sense of the “simple figure” appears to oscillate in modern terminology between the acceptations of the “cell” and the “motive” terms, the former being an indestructible melodic-rhythmic unity, the latter denoting a grouping of at least two cells. The definition of the English term ‘figure’, as synonymous with the German ‘Motiv’ refers to any short succession of musical notes (melodically or harmonically) which induces a unique, complete and distinct impression.⁴⁹ During the 12th and 13th centuries, the figure was actually the representation of the note: *Figura est repraesentatio vocis in aliquo modorum ordinatae*, Franco of Cologne writes.⁵⁰ These *figurae* (whence *musica figurata*) were of three kinds: simple, ligatures (slurred notes) and plicated notes (from *plica*, an embellishment, ultimately a kind of appoggiatura).⁵¹ The mediaeval acceptation of the term *figura* entailed thus also the existence of one note alone (*lcnga, brevis*), and likewise of a stereotype grouping of notes, set in typical melodic formulas. The meaning assigned by Bernhard and Kircher to the term *figura simplex* is partially compliant to this mediaeval tradition. In this sense, we shall use the term *figura simplex* for the cases when these figures in *The Art of Fugue* may be interpreted either as “cells” or as “motives”.

An examination of these *figurae simplices* in their consistent use throughout the work shows also the fair cohesiveness of the *Art of Fugue* in terms of minimal language items. On the other side, the occurrence of these figures in the final *contrapunctus* too furnishes a strong argument in favour of the kinship of this fugue and of the remainder of the corpus. This triple fugue is known to have been the subject of contradictory views.⁵² The confusion arose from the evidence given by Forkel, Marpurg, Mizler and Bach’s sons. However, Forkel speaks clearly of a “last but one fugue with three themes”,⁵³ and of *another* which Bach thought of as quadruple (“Fuge 4 Themata”). Mizler’s obituary⁵⁴ of 1754 (written most likely by Philipp Emmanuel) speaks of Bach’s plan to conclude the work with a grand four-theme fugue. Spitta must have relied on this criterion in considering that the unfinished fugue does not belong to *The Art of Fugue*, having nothing in common with it.⁵⁵ Later on, Nottebohm and Hugo Riemann attempted to demonstrate⁵⁶ that this planned, final quadruple fugue would actually be the unfinished XV itself. More recent research-works tend to invalidate Nottebohm and Riemann’s views and to overturn the otherwise ingenious argumentation of the two musicologists. According to M. Bitsch, a clear distinction should be made between the unfinished triple fugue and the planned quadruple fugue. This view actually agrees with Forkel’s statement (Forkel was the first biographer of Bach). Irrespective of how the matters stand, Spitta’s contention that the final fugue would have nothing in common with *The Art of Fugue*, which is still shared today,⁵⁷ turns out to be weak in the face of evidence.

In I, 12, a characteristic element in the soprano response is a *syncopatio* which is found identically so in XV, 25:



Besides, this type of *syncopatio* occurs also elsewhere in *The Art of Fugue* (X, 21; X, 115, both cases in *superius*). This *locus topicus* derives from the Renaissance formula *dis-cant clausula*, which was largely at play at the time. However, a comparison with a frag-

ment of *Capriccio sopra la Girolmeta* by Girolamo Frescobaldi (in: *Fiori musicali*, 1635) is surprising, especially given the turn similar to that assumed in XV (→ 31):



Another figure which we regard as *figura simplex* appears as a characteristic element in the countersubject in I, whose melodic pattern makes express reference to the theme of the fugue in *Praeludium et Fuga in g* BWV 535:



The minor-sixth leap (considered as *exclamatio*) might be interpreted as a hearing completion to its absence in the theme. Indeed, examining the over-all pattern of the main theme, we observe that after the fifth leap, the descending arpeggio sets on the sensible, an instant of tension, after which the melodic thread comes back progressively without however touching the fifth. The frequency of this type of theme is very poor in the baroque style. In most cases, a descending arpeggio calls for a compensatory sixth leap, built, as we have seen, as a typical rhetorical figure. Many examples may be given of fugue themes of this type in Bach's works (*WTK* I, 17, Fuga BWV 862; *fuga in E* BWV 566; *fuga in h* BWV Anh. 43; *Capriccio* BWV 992 No. 6: *Fuga all'imitazione della cornetta di pesciglione*; *sinfonia in g* BWV 797, etc.).



The figure (→ 33) re-occurs *ad litteram* in XI, this time in the countersubject of another theme (that in VIII, inverted, D¹ after Bitsch):



In I, the motive reappears in a rhythmic variation, the leap reducing to a fourth interval :



A like fourth leap is also favoured by formula IV, 13, the motive occurring later (bar 37) in an inverted manner :



Finally, the inversion of the figure appears in the last fugue (bar 168), the rhythmic coincidence with the counter-subject in I (→ 33) being in this case remarkable :



This figure is typical for the 16th-century vocal style. The leap is a fourth or a fifth one : Palestrina, *Virgo singularis* ⁵⁸

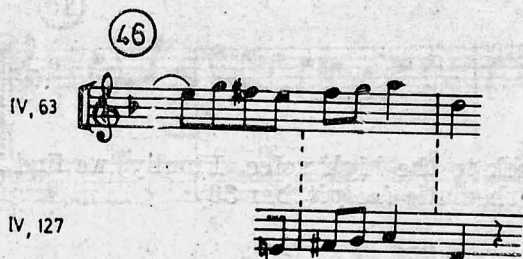
Adrian Petit Coclico, *Duces de tribulatione* ⁵⁹



Bach introduces this motive and associates it, clearly, especially in the last two great works, with an archaizing intention. Thus, for instance, in *Musicalisches Opfer* BWV 1079, *Ricercar a 6*, bar 51, and later bar 91, where the allusion to *prima prattica* relies also on the notation for choral voices :



The inversion of the figure (see 39 but according to 46), as it appears also in IV, 37 or in III, 61, may be interpreted as a variant of another figure, which is already found in the episodes (harmonic sequences) in III :



Indeed, in terms of the melodic scheme, the difference between the two figures is minimum (the changing note becomes a passing note). Here is how this figure evolves in III, 26— :



Reference to X, 39.— is strictly necessary :



The sequential chain may be found in *The Musical Offer*, *Ricercar a 3* (bar 61 ff, 143 ff, 155 ff, 171 ff) as an element of the countersubject. As an embellishment (bar 154), it anticipates under diminished values the sequence in the soprano which joins the last but one entry of the theme (*altus*). This is a “groppo”, “circolo mezzo”, “Zirkel” or “cadence”,⁶¹ a simple figure in the category of those “Maniren” referred to by Vogt,⁴⁸ which is identical with the cadential formula concluding XII (bar 56 *bassus*, cf. 49). The case is likewise interesting given that the figure ($\lambda\upsilon\kappa\lambda\omicron\varsigma$) is immediately anticipated in the same final bar, in *tenor* :



In III, 66, the figure occurs imitatively (*stretto*) in three voices :



A last occurrence (III, 70) brings the figure back to the high voice. Finally, we find it again in IX, 17 and in the last fugue (inversed thematic *incipit*, bar 30) :



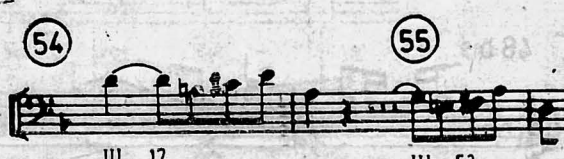
Another simple figure, which is more individualized than the preceding one but is related to it, is that foregoing *fermata* in I, 70 (→ 26). What characterizes this figure is the ascending third leap, let aside the diminished leap. In *The Art of Fugue* this *figura simplex*, in 3 distinct melodic patterns with respect to the third resolution, is frequently found : a) the ascending third leap is resolved by another leap in an opposite sense (the leap may be a fourth, a fifth or a diminished one) ; b) after the third leap there follows a gradual contrary progression ; c) after the third leap there follows a gradual progression in the same sense. The first pattern in *The Art of Fugue* is as shown below :



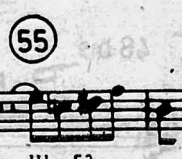
I, 75



II, 78



III, 17



III, 53

(56)

 IV, 137

(57)

 V, 75

(58)

 VIII, 13

(59)

 VIII, 28

(60)

 VIII, 110

In X, the interlude beginning with bar 79 relies on this figure. In XI, 99 the figure appears in voice doubling:

(61)


In the last fugue, the figure occurs however several times:

(62)


XV, 152—

(63)
 etc.

XV, 166

The second variant of melodic pattern (b) appears in I, 75 as a sequential chain with *syncopatio*:⁶²

(64)


The scheme may be compared with similar others in the works for organ:
Trio super Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr BWV 664

(65)


Jesus Christus unser Heiland BWV 688

(66)


In all the three cases (64, 65, 66) the sequence appears towards the end of the works of interest and may be assigned a conclusive role from a rhetorical standpoint. Example 64 frames within pattern b, and the other two either fall under a or in c. Variant b appears also in IV, 97, 129 and V, 88 :



This melodic pattern (b) is constitutive in the 2nd theme in XV, and its occurrence in the last fugue is almost obsessive :



This thematic element occurs also in the interludes. The motive appears also counterpointed by its own inversion in IV, 130 – *bassus* (→70), in V, 88 and in XV, 191 :



The figure appears likewise immitatively in the first *stretto* of the BACH theme (XV, 217 –) :

Bach's notated MS ends with bar 239 of counterpoint XV : the last three notes in Bach's handwriting are just those in the figure under examination, which appears to be one of the most consistently employed throughout the work :



Variant c of the figure is just an accidental occurrence, in I, 61 (sequentially, *synco-patio*), prefiguring the countersubject in IX :



A variant of the melodic pattern a is that in which the leap consists in a change of register :

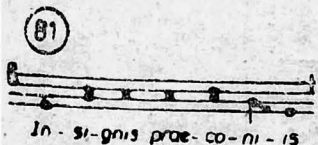


(cf. also VIII, 10 or XI, 106).

Reference should be made to the following passage of the motet in 5 voices *Ich weiss, dass mein Erlöser lebt* by Johann Michael Bach :⁶³



Of the three patterns (a, b, c) of the melodic scheme of the figure under examination, the second, which is less individualized than the first, may be considered as defining for *The Art of Fugue*. As was already shown, in the last fugue it becomes a thematic element and its frequency of occurrence in XV is fairly high. This melodic scheme is no doubt used as a subtle yet obvious archaizing hint. Examining even some typical formulas in the liturgical chant of the 4th-century Latin Church, let us notice that the initial third leap is fairly frequent :⁶⁴



This figure is actually a *cambiata* in inverted motion, which was frequently employed by the Flemish composers but was prohibited in the Palestrinean style : ⁷¹



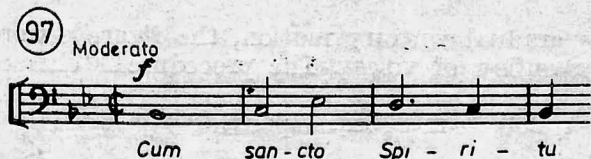
This *incipit* appears in a theme constantly adopted down to Bach and even after him. It may be found in a *Canzona ariosa* by A. Gabrielli (1596), in *Canzona detta l'Albergona* (1609) by Antonio Mortaro. With Frescobaldi it appears several times : in two fantasias, in a *Praeambulum (legatura)* for organ :



It was employed by the Spanish Sebastián Aguilera de Heredia († 1627) in *Tiento bajo de 1º tono*.⁷² Used by Froberger, a disciple of Frescobaldi (in *Ricercar* published in Louis Bourgeat's collection of 1693) and by Joh. Michael Bach in the above-quoted motet,⁶³ the theme is finally found in J. C. F. Fischer's *Ariadne musica* ⁷³ (1715, Fugue No. 8), wherefrom it is subsequently taken over by Bach in the same key, with the same values, *alla breve* (*Fugue in E major* in *WTK II*, 9 BWV 878) :



Later on, it may be found again with Schubert in No. 5 Mass in E flat major :



On the other side, the melodic pattern a is more frequent in Bach's other works. The characteristic leap (most often diminished : *saltus duriusculus*) is more pertinent to the late baroque style from which Bach seems to move away in his last work : *Toccatà et Fuga in d* BWV 538 : fuga, bar 132 (98) ; *Aria variata in a* BWV 989, Var. 9 (99) ; Kantate zum Sonntag Exaudi *Sie werden euch in den Bann tun* BWV 44, No. 1, bars 30 and 64 (100) ; Trio super *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr* BWV 664, bars 44 and 86 (101) ; *Suite 5 G dur* BWV 816 ("französische"), Courante, bar 6, Bourrée, bar 7 (102) ; *Musicalisches Opfer* BWV 1079, *Ricercare a 6*, bar 50 (103) ; idem, *Ricercare a 3*, bars 49 and 98 (104).



100
Oboe I

101

102

103

104

In case when the musical discourse develops an ascending diminished-seventh leap (or even another augmented or diminished interval), or when the lower leap is made on a step of the chord, the figure should be regarded as integral with the harmonic context. With this value, it is employed by, say, Beethoven (Sonata op. 10, No. 2, *presto*) :

105

(H C A B)

However, when the third leap is resolved by gradual contrary motion, the figure is more likely to be explained by reasons of linear onflow of voices. The procedure is characteristic of vocal music in particular :

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden, Motette BWV 230, bars 87 sq. *soprano*

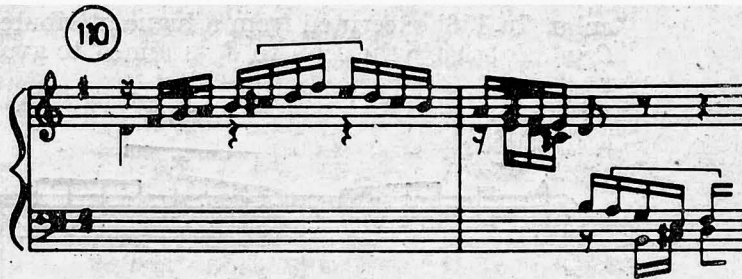
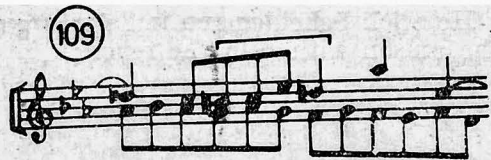
106

wal - - - - tet ü - ber uns in E - - - - wig - kert,

but it may be likewise found in the instrumental music : *Toccata et Fuga in F* BWV 540, *Fuga*, bar 88 (107) ; idem, bar 122 (augmented) (108) ; *Fuga a 5 con pedale pro Organo pleno* BWV 552, 2, bar 48 (109) ; *Goldberg-Variationen* BWV 988, var. 12 *Canone alla quarta in moto contrario*, bar 9 sq. (110).

107

108



The interval of the leap may be greater than the third. In this case, a latent polyphony may be at play : *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr* BWV 663 bar 45— (111) and 79— (112).



The ascending sixth leap was found already in I (→ 6) and it appears again in VIII, 20 (113) or in the Fugue in *Praeludium et Fuga in C* BWV 545, bar 72 (114).



In all these cases, the sixth leap variant actually springs from the simple figure first occurring in I, 16 (→ 7). In VIII (→ 113), it characterizes the countersubject, the motive relationship simmering above by cell segmentation :



Basically, we are dealing with a variety of *supcriectio* (Chr. Bernhard), one of those “Schritt-motive” detected by Schweitzer⁷⁴ in Bach’s cantatas, the procedure being however especially common in instrumental music (this is another detail in favour of the instrumental character and destination of *The Art of Fugue*),⁷⁵ in the music for organ in parti-

cular. In 116, excerpted from a fugue attributed to Heinrich Scheidemann in *Lüneburger Orgeltabulatur*,⁷⁶ the leap to d_2 is aimed to avoid the unison with d in the tenor:



Notes

¹ The theme expounded in I (*das Hauptthema* or even *Urthema* in Erich Schwab's terms, *Joh. Seb. Bach und die Kunst der Fuge*, 1931, ²1955, ³1988. With J. Müller-Blattau, *Geschichte der Fuge*, ³1963 and *MGG* [= *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik*, Kassel, 1955 ff], vol. iv. entry *fuga*, we also find the term *Urform*) is the true *origo* of the whole work, which will be defined, by referring it to, say, Titus Livius' work, as a *narratio continua ab origine*, "qui ne cesse que quand le récit [...] s'enferme dans la perfection de son achèvement linéaire" (Alain Deremetz, *Plutarque: Histoire de l'origine et génèse du récit*, in: *Revue des Études Grecques*, t. CIII (1990), p. 57). The same synthetic formulation might be applied to *The Art of Fugue*, should we not be forced to recall that this *opus ultimum* is likewise an *opus imperfectum*.

² The musical baroque made almost frequent use of like "programs" in instrumental music, where the purely musical, and, of course, mathematically grounded, expression (as the affect-generating opposition *consoni/dissoni* may be demonstrated in *fundamentum mathematicum*) may dispense with the text support. This is implied and its essence is proclaimed in the title: *Musicalische Vorstellung einiger Biblischer Historien in 6. Sonaten auff dem Claviere zu spielen*, to confine ourselves only to this known example of instrumental music with a "program", due to Joh. Kuhnau (Leipzig, 1700). Cf. Rolf Dammann, *Der Musikbegriff im deutschen Barock*, Köln, [1967], (²1984), pp. 364 f (hereafter Dammann).

³ Indeed, the last bar of the unfinished work (239 = 2190) seems to translate the words of the Ecclesiastes (7, 1): "and the day of death [is better] than the day of one's birth". *Melius est mori quam uiuere!*

⁴ Marcel Bitsch, *J.-S. Bach, L'Art de la fugue. Introduction, analyse et commentaires*, Paris, 1967, p. 33 (hereinafter: Bitsch).

⁵ See the article signed by Arnold Schmitz in *MGG*, iv, coll. 176 ff, and Sigismund Toduță (in collaboration with Hans Peter Türk), *Formele muzicale ale barocului în operele lui J. S. Bach*, vol. II, Bucharest, 1973, pp. 86–92 (hereinafter: Toduță). Cf. Arnold Schering, *Vom Wesen der Musik. Ausgewählte Aufsätze von...* Herausgegeben und eingeleitet von Karl Michael Komma, Stuttgart, [1974], pp. 159 f.

⁶ Joh. Mattheson, *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister*, Hamburg, 1739, p. 180.

⁷ Willi Kahl, *Selbstbiographien deutscher Musiker des XVIII. Jahrhunderts*, Köln, 1948, p. 132.

⁸ Joh. Mattheson, *Das Neu-Eröffnetes Orchestre*, Hamburg, 1713, p. 127. Joh. David Heinichen, *Der Generalbaß in der Composition*, Dresden, 1728: "Augen-

Music pappierene, wird mehr excoliret, als die Ohren-Music, welche die Seele beweget".

⁹ See also, among others: René Leibowitz, *L'Évolution de la musique. De Bach à Schoenberg*, Paris, 1951, p. 30: *The Art of Fugue* and *The Offering* "sont écrites, en majeure partie, pour être lues".

¹⁰ Bitsch, p. 32. For the whole matter, see the synthetic chapter *Das „abstrakte Schauerwerk“*, in: W. Kolneder, *Die Kunst der Fuge: Mythen des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Teil I, Wilhelmshaven, ²1983 (hereinafter Kolneder), pp. 42–51.

¹¹ Toduță, p. 86. In addition to A. Schmitz' article at note 5, see: A. Schering, *Die Lehre von den musikalischen Figuren*, in: *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* 21 (1908); H. Brandes, *Studien zur musikalischen Figurenlehre im 16. Jh.*, Diss., Berlin, 1935; E. Auerbach, *Figura*, in: *Istanbuler Schriften*, 5 (1944); H. H. Eggebrecht, *Zwei Nürnberger Orgel-Allegorien. Zum Figur-Begriff der Musica poetica*, in: *Musik und Kirche* 27 (1957); H.-H. Unger, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Musik und Rhetorik im 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, Würzburg, 1941 (*Berliner Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*, hrsg. von A. Schering, vol. iv).

¹² Dammann, p. 103: "bildhaft-affektiven Figuren". The first author of some treatises on musical-rhetorical figures is Joachim Burmeister (*Hypomnematum musicae poeticae*, 1599; *Musica autoschediastike*, 1601; *Musica poetica*, 1606, re-edited by Martin Ruhnke, in: *Documenta musicologica*. Reihe I: Druckschriften-Faksimiles, 10, 1955). The definition he gives to the figure is conformal to that furnished by treatises on literary rhetoric: *Ornamentum, sive Figura musica est tractus musicus; tam in Harmonia, quam in Melodia, [...] et cum virtute ornatorem habitum assumit et induit*. Cf. *Musica poetica*, chap. xii: *De Ornamentis sive de figuris Musicis* (Apud Dammann, p. 129).

¹³ H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*, München, 1960, §§ 600–910. Bibliography *ibid.*, § 1244 s.v. *figura*.

¹⁴ A. Schmitz, in *MGG* iv, coll. 176–183. Toduță, p. 87.

¹⁵ Quintilian, 9, 2, 40; Cicero, *In Verrem*, 5, 62, 161: *ὑποτύπωσις* [...] *proposita quaedam formarum ita expressa uerbis, ut cerni potius uideantur quam audiri* (= "hypotyposis [...], a mode of representing things such that they appear more seen than heard"). Cicero, *De orat.*, 3, 53, 202, gives an even more concise definition: *sub oculos subiectio*.

¹⁶ Quintilian, 9, 2, 3; 8, 3, 83; 9, 2, 64, where he places it among figures (*quoniam est figura*), Cicero, *De oratore*, 3, 202; *Orator*, 139. *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 4, 67 (Cf. *Cornifici Rhet. ad C. Herennium*. Introduction, testo critico, commento a cura di G. Calboli, Bologna, [1969], pp. 429 f, note 300). *Hypotyposis* is

“die wichtigste und zugleich allgemeinste Bildfigur des musikalischen Barock” (Dammann, p. 139) and has “zwei bevorzugte Sonderformen” (= *anabasis* and *kalabasis*) (Dammann, p. 140). On emphasis see: Gregory G. Butler, *Fugue and Rhetoric*, in: *Journal of Music Theory*, 21/1 (1977), p. 54.

¹⁷ Toduță, p. 89.

¹⁸ A. Schmitz, art. in *MGG*, col. 180.

¹⁹ We might bring this variety of *saltus duriusculus* among the ranks of figures indexed by *musica poetica*. In this case we would call it ἰσχυροπά (= *differentia*), lending the term to the literary rhetoric in the *correctio* category, a type which Lausberg (*op. cit.*, § 785) regards as “affektstärkere Typ”. The figure illustrated in 6 is indeed a correction by amplifying the prototype in 7.

²⁰ Dammann, p. 137: “eine hochaffektuose Figur”. Burmeister, *Musica poetica*, p. 61: *est figura apta ad affectus creandos, quod fit, quando Semitonia carmini inseruntur [...]: Tum quando semitonia carminis Modo congruentia saepius extra morem attinguntur*. For the literary equivalent, cf. *Emporii oratoris de ethopoia*..., in: C. Halm, *Rhetores Latini minores*..., Lipsiae 1863, p. 562, 10: *est sane praeter ethos et pathopoia, qua imitatur affectum non naturalem, sed incidentem*. Cf. Lausberg, *o.c.*, § 821. More than 150 years before Ernesti (see the following note), Joach. Thuringus (*Opusculum bipartitum de primordiis musicis*, Berlin, 1625; cf. Fr. Feldmann, in: *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, 15 (1958), apud Dammann, p. 137) defined this figure as being able to express *dictiones affectuum, doloris, gaudii, timoris, risus, luctus, misericordiae, exultationis, tremoris et similes*. An almost complete series of affects!

²¹ J. Chr. Th. Ernesti, *Lexicon technologiae Graecorum rhetoricae*, Lipsiae 1795, s.v. *Pathopoiia*.

²² Quintilian, 9, 2, 27: [*oratio libera*], *quam Cornificius licentiam uocat, Graeci παραρησάν*. Cornific. *ad Herenn.* 4, 36, 48. Hence, it is a *licentia* or *irreticentia* (*Carmen de figuris vel schematibus*, in: Halm, *Rhet. Lat. min.*, p. 130). Lausberg, § 761.

²³ Dammann, p. 59.

²⁴ Dammann, p. 337.

²⁵ Ath. Kircheri *Musurgia Universalis sive Ars Magna Consoni et Dissoni*, Romae 1650, t. i, lib. vii, chap. vi, p. 598. Cf. Jürgen Mainka, *Athanasius Kircher's Exemplifizierungen zur Affektenlehre. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Musikpsychologie*, in: *Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft*, 31/2 (1989), pp. 81–94. For 16, see H. H. Eggebrecht, *Heinrich Schütz, Musicus poeticus*, Wilhelmshaven, 1925, p. 54 sq. and H. J. Moser, *Heinrich Schütz. Sein Leben und Werk*, 1954, p. 442.

²⁶ *art. cit.*, col. 181 “falsche” Relation.

²⁷ Dammann, p. 328 sqq., the figure associated with *affectus doloris*.

²⁸ “Figurativer Orgelpunkt mit weitem Ambitus und grossen Intervallen” (J. G. Walther, *Musicalisches Lexicon*, Leipzig, 1732).

²⁹ Quintilian 9, 3, 81. Cornif. *ad Herenn.* 4, 15, 21 *contentio est, cum ex contrariis rebus oratio conficitur*. P. Rutili Lupi *Schemata lexeos*, in: Halm, *op. cit.*, 2 16 (pp. 3 sqq.), etc. Lausberg § 787.

³⁰ Dammann, pp. 138 sq.: “kontrapunktische Gegensatz (subjectum—contrasubjectum)”.

³¹ Mauritius Vogt, *Conclae thesauri magna artis musicae*, Prague, 1719. However, a little earlier, Kircher, *Musurgia Universalis*, t. ii, lib. viii DE MUSUR-GIA MIRIFICA, pars iii, chap. viii *Musurgia Rhetorica*, p. 144: *Antitheton, sive contrapositum, est periodus harmonica, qua oppositos affectus exprimimus*.

³² A. Schmitz, quoted art., col. 179: *Klimax* = *Gradatio* = *Auxesis* = “mehrmalige, sich steigernde Wiederholung stufenweise aufwärts” (after Burmeister, Ath. Kircher, Joh. Lippius).

³³ Quintil. 9, 3, 54 *gradatio, quae dicitur κλιμαξ, apertioem habet artem et magis adfectatam ideoque esse rarior debet*. Lausberg § 623.

³⁴ According to Jacques Chailley, *L'art de la fugue de J.-S. Bach*, Paris, [1971], p. 39, IV is the 2nd fugue in the cycle, using inversion of the main theme. This author considers the first fugue as the “ouverture” (*stile francese*) of the whole work, corresponding to II in Lünow's and most editions.

³⁵ Hugo Riemann, *Handbuch der Fugen-Komposition. Dritter Teil: Analyse von J. S. Bachs “Kunst der Fuge”*, Berlin, 1894, 1916, p. 57. To be confronted with the argumentation furnished by Bitsch.

³⁶ Macrobian *Saturnaliorum* lib. iv, 5, 17.

³⁷ J. G. Walther, *loc. cit.* (1732): *exclamatio* (= Ausruf) “ist eine Rhetorische Figur, wenn man etwas beweglich ausruffet; welches in der Music gar füglich durch die aufwärts springende Sextam minorem geschehen kan”. Schmitz, col. 181: “kleine Sexte nach oben”.

³⁸ Dammann, p. 138: “ein dramatischer Höhepunkt”.

³⁹ In the “Pausenfiguren” category (Schmitz, col. 182). Dammann, pp. 134 sq.

⁴⁰ Toduță, p. 545.

⁴¹ Schmitz, col. 182: “die Pause als Bezeichnung des Schweigens (= Generalpause)”.

⁴² Quintil. 9, 2, 54. Lausberg § 887 *reticentia*.

⁴³ Cicero, *De oratore* 3, 53, 205 = Quintil. 9, 1, 31. *Reticentia* is one of those *figuræ per detractionem* (Lausberg §§ 880–889).

⁴⁴ This is what Lausberg (§ 888) calls “die Affekt-Aposiopese”, as the first group from which *reticentia* is built, the second being “die berechnete Aposiopese”.

⁴⁵ *Saturnal.* 4, 6, 20.

⁴⁶ Toduță, p. 92.

⁴⁷ Dammann, p. 137: “nicht rhetorischen Figuren”.

⁴⁸ Vogt: *figuræ simplices* or “Maniren, flores, colores”. Cf. Joh. Lippius, *Synopsis musicae novae*..., Strassburg, 1612: “Flores [...], colores atque figuræ seu Ornamenta Musica”. Ath. Kircher calls them *principales*. Cf. Schmitz, col. 178.

⁴⁹ GROVE's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London, 1954, vol. iii, p. 90.

⁵⁰ Martin Gerbert, *Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica sacra potissimum*, St. Blasien, 1784, vol. iii, p. 3.

⁵¹ E. de Coussemaker, *Histoire de l'harmonie au moyen âge*, Paris, 1852, p. 191. For *plica* (“fold”), cf. *The New Oxford History of Music*, vol. ii, *Early Medieval Music up to 1300*, chap. x, *Music in Fixed Rhythm* by Dom Anselm Hughes, pp. 325 sq.

⁵² A compendium on that matter, by Kolneder, Teil III, chap. *Die Schlussfuge*, pp. 280–300.

⁵³ Joh. N. Forkel, *Über Johann Sebastian Bachs Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke*, Leipzig, 1802, p. 92: “Die vorletzte Fuge hat 3 Themata”. Part of the musical criticism of the time took over this information without observing that Forkel mentioned that he was referring to the *last but one* fugue. John Caspar Heck, for instance, in: *The Musical Library*, Book i, London, [?1775]: “The last Fugue is on three Subjects, the 3^d. of which he chose from his own Name: BACH...”, or Aug. Fr. Chr. Kollmann, *An Essay on Practical Musical Composition*, London, 1799, p. 51: “The three Subjects of that masterly triple Fugue with which Sebastian Bach has ended his ‘Art of the Fugue’” (to which the author adds the appropriate musical examples).

⁵⁴ Lorenz Mizler, in: *Neu eröffnete musikalische Bibliothek*, Leipzig, vol. iv (1754), p. 168: “und die letzte [Fuge], welche 4 Themata enthalten”. A dis-

ussion of this passage by Kolneder, Teil IV : *Kritische Chronologie*, pp. 465 sq.

⁵⁵ Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Leipzig, 1880, vol. ii, p. 677: "...eine Fuge mit drei Subjekten, an welcher Bach vor seinem Tode arbeitete, die aber mit diesem Werke gar nichts zu thun hat". The same opinion was shared by Moritz Hauptmann (*Erläuterungen zu Joh. Seb. Bach's Kunst der Fuge*, Leipzig 1841) and W. Rust.

⁵⁶ Gustav Nottelohm, *J. S. Bachs letzte Fuge*, in : *Musikwelt*, Berlin, 21–22 (1880–1881), pp. 232–236 and 244–246. Riemann declares himself satisfied with the inspired demonstration, which he supports, offering himself a concluding, yet less inspired, variant of the last fugue (cf. note 35, p. 141). A dispute between Riemann and Bernhard Ziehn on this matter appeared in *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*, 21 (1894), pp. 195 sq., 211 sq., 456 sq.

⁵⁷ Norbert Dufourcq, *Jean-Sébastien Bach, un architecte de la musique. Génie allemand? Génie latin?*, Paris, 1947, ²1954, p. 208: "insérée par erreur par l'éditeur Schübler". Cf. also Edm. Buchel, *J.-S. Bach, après deux siècles d'études et de témoignages*, Paris, 1968, p. 12, who shares the same view ("par erreur")!

⁵⁸ Apud: L. Comes, *Melodica palestriniana*, Bucharest, 1971, p. 90.

⁵⁹ Adrian Petit Coclico, *Consolationes Piaae. Musica Reservata* (Nürnberg, 1552). Herausgegeben von Martin Ruhnke, Lippstadt, 1958 (in: *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 42; Abteilung Motette und Messe, Bd. 5). About *musica reservata* in the context of the theory of affects: A. Schering, *Aufführungspraxis älter Musik*, 1931, p. 77 sq., p. 90; W. Serauky, art. *Affektenlehre* in: *MGG*, vol. i, coll. 113–121.

⁶⁰ In: *Monumenta musicae belgicae*. Ed. by J. Waetelet, vol. iv (1938), pp. 39 sq. For details, see Gustave Reese, *Music in the Renaissance*, London, ²1954, p. 543.

⁶¹ H. Engel, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Berlin, 1950, p. 159; apud Toduță, p. 274. This is the basic motive of the *Inventio 14 BWV 785*: a *torculus* intercepting *transitus regularis* notes.

⁶² For this type of suspensions with Bach, see Max Eisikovits, *Polifonia barocului. Stilul bachian*, Bucharest, 1973, p. 169.

⁶³ In: *Altbachischer Archiv*. Erster Teil: Motetten und Chorlieder. Herausgegeben von Max Schneider, Wiesbaden, 1966, p. 38.

⁶⁴ For the illustration of Gregorian music, use was made of the chapter *Latin Chant before St. Gregory* by Higinio Anglés, in: *New Oxford History of Music*, vol. ii *Early Medieval Music up to 1300*, edited by Dom Anselm Hughes. Ex. 81 *antiphona* (Gallican chant), 7th century, p. 77 Anglés; 82 *hymnus* 'Aeterna Christi munera', attributed to St. Ambrose, taken over by the Roman rite too, cf. *Liber Vespertalis*, p. 444, Anglés p. 68; 83 Easter hymn 'Venite populi', *Alleluia* sequen-

ce. Anglés p. 80 after Dom Paolo Ferretti, *Proprium Pontif.*, Romae 1922, who regards it as "ex antiqua liturgia gallicana": 84 the Mozarabic *Pater noster*, dated by P. Wagner to the 4th century, Anglés p. 82; 85 *preces* of the Mozarabic liturgy, Anglés p. 87 after G. Prado, *El Canto mozárabe*, p. 74. The text in *Variae Preces*, edited by Dom J. Pothier, Solesmes, 1901: 86 *Alleluia* after *Graduale Vaticanum*, p. 203, Anglés p. 124; 87 of *Officium Stellae* (Christmas play), a version from Rouen, Paris, Bibl. Nat. lat. 904, fol. 28^v–30, saec. XIII–XIV, apud W. L. Smoldon, *Liturgical Drama*, chap. vi of *New Oxford Hist. of Music*, quoted vol., p. 200; 88 from another liturgical drama for Christmas, Nevers, saec. XI, Paris, Bibl. Mazarine 1708, fol. 81^v, apud Smoldon, p. 201; 89 from the liturgical drama on a New Testament topic from the so-called manuscript "Fleury play-book", saec. XIII, copied at St. Benoit-sur-Loire Monastery, Fleury, Orléans, Bibl. de la Ville 201, pp. 233–243, apud Smoldon, p. 206 ("Raising of Lazarus").

⁶⁵ Cf. Dom André Mocquereau, *Le Nombre musical grégorien ou Rythmique grégorienne*, Rome–Tournai, 1908, l. i, p. 152, § 5. Paolo Ferretti, *Harmonia e ritmica nella musica antica*, Jucunda Laudatio 3–4, Venezia, 1969, p. 227.

⁶⁶ Let us mention, for instance, the Josquin's masses *De beata Virgine* or *La sol fa re*, apud P. Wagner, *Geschichte der Messe*, Leipzig, 1913 (= Hildesheim, 1972), p. 163.

⁶⁷ The theme of the madrigal after Max Seiffert, *Geschichte der Klaviermusik*, Leipzig, 1899, vol. ii, p. 80.

⁶⁸ Apud L. Comes, *op. cit.*, p. 167. A similar incipit in *Missa paschalis* a 5 (Kyrie) by Isaak, apud P. Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

⁶⁹ Johann Kugelmann, *Concentus novi* (1540), hrsg. von Hans Engel, Kassel und Basel, 1955, XXVII ("incerto autore"), p. 46.

⁷⁰ Idem, XI, p. 23.

⁷¹ L. Comes, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

⁷² In: *Antología de organistas españoles del siglo XVII*, tomo IV, por Higinio Anglés, Barcelona, 1968 ff.

⁷³ As a fugue theme, it is also found with Simon Lohel, about 1617.

⁷⁴ Albert Schweitzer, *J. S. Bach*, Leipzig, 1942, pp. 477–481. Cf. Toduță, p. 160.

⁷⁵ Kolneder, Teil I, pp. 66–74 (*Bachs mögliche Besetzung*). Donald F. Tovey, *A Companion to "The Art of Fugue"*, London, 1931, ⁴1966, attempts to demonstrate that the work is thought for a keyboard instrument. Gotthold Frotscher, *Geschichte des Orgelspiels und der Orgelkomposition*, Berlin, 1935, ³1966, vol. ii, p. 901, thinks that the organ is most appropriate to Bach's contrapuntal outlook.

⁷⁶ In: *Lüneburger Orgeltabulatur KN 208¹* (fol. 54^v: *Fuga H.S.M.*), hrsg. von Margarete Reimann, Frankfurt, 1957, Nr. 37 (*Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 36).