

Questions Regarding a Fugue

- 2.1 What characterizes the subject of this fugue?
- a) How long is it? Where does it end?
How does it begin: with a strong beat or an upbeat?
 - b) Is it made up of one indivisible phrase, or does it consist of several subphrases?
 - c) What kind of pitch outline does it show?
Does it contain mainly small intervals, or many leaps?
Does it feature any intervals of particularly high tension?
 - d) What is the rhythm within the subject?
Does it contain many different note values?
Are there dotted notes, tied notes, and/or syncopations?
Are these rhythmic features also prevalent throughout the entire fugue?
 - e) What is the subject's harmonic background?
 - f) Considering harmony, melody, and rhythm, where is the climax within the subject, and what kind of dynamic outline is expressed?
- 2.2 What is the importance of the subject in this fugue?
- a) How many subject statements does the fugue comprise altogether?
In which part (voice) and in which measures do they appear?
 - b) Does the subject remain basically unchanged, or are there modifications of detail, of shape, or of length?
 - c) Does the subject ever appear in stretto or parallel?
- 2.3 How many counter-subjects does Bach invent for this fugue?
Answer for each of them:
- a) How long is it?
 - b) What is its phrase structure?
 - c) Considering the melodic and rhythmic features, where is the climax and what kind of dynamic outline is expressed in the counter-subject?
 - d) Can you draw a sketch showing phrase structure and dynamic outlines in the interplay of subject and counter-subject(s)?

- 2.4 What happens in the episodes of this fugue?
- How many subject-free passages are there? Where?
 - What material is used? Is any of the episodes related to the subject? Are there any significant episode motifs? Which are these? What is their character and dynamic outline?
Are any of the episodes no more than cadential closes?
 - What is the relationship between the episodes? Is any of them a varied, transposed, or otherwise altered version of another?
 - What role in the development of the composition does each episode play?
- 2.5 For interpreters: Consider the main aspects of performance practice:
- What is the character expressed by the material of this fugue? Consider the details of the subject, its counter subject(s), and the episode motifs: Would you conclude that this fugue constitutes a rather lively or a rather calm basic character?
 - What tempo and articulation are advisable for this material?
 - What tempo proportion for the prelude and fugue seems best?
 - If there are ornaments, how are they to be executed? Should any of them be transferred to analogous notes that appear unornamented in the score?
- 2.6 What is the design of the fugue?
- Are there any indicators that reveal the structure of this piece? Does the entering order of the voices show obvious grouping? Does any subject statement appear in reduced ensemble? Which episodes seem to conclude a section? Do any two stretches of the piece show an analogous design?
 - What is the harmonic outline of the whole piece? In what progression of keys does the subject appear? Which subject entries belong harmonically together? Are there any significant cadential closes in the fugue?
 - Can you draw a sketch of structure and texture? It should show all the subject statements (mark them "S"), the counter-subjects (CS1, CS2 etc.), the rests in any voice, the episodes (mark them "E1," "E2," etc.)
- 2.7 What is the overall dynamic outline in this fugue?
- What kind of dynamic development can you detect in each of the sections you have found?
 - How do the sections relate in this respect?