Scholasticism and Formal Structure in Camille Saint-Saëns's Fugues for Keyboard

Pedro Segarra-Sisamone

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SCHOLASTICISM AND FORMAL STRUCTURE
IN CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS'S FUGUES FOR KEYBOARD

by

PEDRO I. SEGARRA-SISAMONE

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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ABSTRACT

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PEDRO I. SEGARRA-SISAMONE

Advisor: Prof. William Rothstein

Drawing on the treatises of Cherubini (1835), Dubois (1901), and Gedalge (1901), this dissertation examines the relation between the fugue d’école and Saint-Saëns’s compositional practices with reference to his fugal works for piano and organ and sets out to answer the question: To what extent are the formal and tonal structures of Saint-Saëns’s fugues determined by the organizational conventions associated with the fugue d’école? While the scholastic fugue has been described as an artificial construct, this study argues that this tripartite model, with its variants and subtypes, can be considered as the parent model for most fugues composed during the nineteenth century.

After outlining Saint-Saëns’s acquaintance not only with the scholastic tradition, but also with Bach’s compositional practices, the first chapter establishes the theoretical background to the study, building on the normative components that determine the stereotypical fugue d’école as presented in the aforementioned treatises. Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive discussion of fugal form in the wider context of the genre from the late nineteenth century to the present. Chapter 3 is devoted to a series of analyses organized around issues of design and structure in selected Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues from his opp. 52, 90, 99, 109, 111, and 161. The fourth and last chapter considers the implications of the previous analyses for developing a theory of fugal form and speculates on the broader applicability of this theory, using it to analyze keyboard fugues by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century composers.
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I dedicate this dissertation to all the fellow citizens who work with determination and integrity to build a more just, compassionate, and harmonious Puerto Rico.

_Y gloria a las manos, a todas las manos que hoy trabajan. . ._

—Juan Antonio Corretjer
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: SAINT-SAËNS, THE *FUGUE D’ÉCOLE* (IN THEORY AND PRACTICE), AND THE “GREAT SEBASTIAN”1

Camille Saint-Saëns and the nineteenth-century scholastic fugue are, in a sense, connected by space, time, and reputation. Not only do Saint-Saëns’s birthplace and birth year coincide with (arguably) the first published reference to the scholastic fugue (in Luigi Cherubini’s *Cours de contrepoint et de fugue*; Paris, 1835), but the composer and the compositional model both tend to be described by the same adjectives: rigorous, dry, learned, academically-minded, unimaginative, and inexpressive. In a passage from his well-known article “Musical Theory as a Humanistic Discipline,” Edward T. Cone goes a step further and establishes a direct link between Saint-Saëns and the *fugue d’école*. Cone writes:

We all know what happened to [fugue] at the hands of the Conservatoire; we have only to read Gedalge’s well-known treatise to realize vividly how a living form can all too easily become a bloodless abstraction. The *fugue d’école* no doubt has its uses for one who wishes to study the sources of Saint-Saëns’s amazing lack of style, but it has no value for one who wishes to approach actual fugal composition, either critically or creatively. (Cone 1989, 35–36)

1

Setting aside his vitriolic (and clearly one-dimensional) assessment of the *fugue d’école* and Saint-Saëns’s compositional style, Cone’s statement raises a number of intriguing questions. First, is the scholastic fugue (as a synthetic genre-related exercise) incompatible with actual fugal composition? Second, is there a single model for the scholastic fugue? Finally, what

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1 Saint-Saëns uses this appellation (in reference to J. S. Bach) in his memoir of Hector Berlioz, which is reprinted in his *Portraits et Souvenirs* (1900, 8).
insight can be gained by using the fugue d’école to examine the sources of Saint-Saëns’s compositional practices with respect to fugue?

Drawing on the methodologies of fugal instruction, as codified by Cherubini and Halévy (1835), Dubois (1901), and Gedalge (1901), this dissertation examines the relation between the nineteenth-century French scholastic fugue and Camille Saint-Saëns’s compositional practices with reference to one specific repertoire: Saint-Saëns’s fugal works for piano and organ. More specifically, this dissertation sets out to answer the question: To what extent are the formal and tonal structures of Saint-Saëns’s fugues determined by the organizational conventions associated with the fugue d’école? To answer this question, I will examine six fugues from his opp. 52, 90, 99, 109, 111, and 161.²

In the context of the present study, the choice of Saint-Saëns’s fugal works for keyboard as case studies is significant for three reasons. First, Saint-Saëns attended the Paris Conservatory and, as this project will suggest, was intimately acquainted with both the conventions and proponents of the scholastic fugue. Second, Saint-Saëns’s fugues seem to exhibit a methodical and, to some degree, conscious evolution of design. His étude and organ fugues, for example, seem to subscribe to the nineteenth-century scholastic fugue, whereas his later collection of fugues, op. 161 (1920), departs from this systematic model and evolves within a more experimental syntax.³ Third, in the course of his long career as pianist and organist,

² Aside from one early fugue from his Six Duos, op. 8, and one étude written in a fugal style from his Six Études for the Left Hand Alone, op. 135, the six fugues selected for this study encompass the totality of Saint-Saëns’s collections of keyboard fugues (opp. 99, 109, 161), étude fugues (from his études opp. 52 and 111), and the fugue from his Suite for Piano (op. 90). In other words, we will survey one fugue from each of these opuses—works that encompass the changes in style, structure, and design in Saint-Saëns’s fugal compositions from his youth to the last years of his life.

³ In his Cours, Cherubini uses the term “étude fugue” (fugue d’étude) to denote a type of synthetic (and pedagogically oriented) fugue that follows a fixed overall harmonic organization and employs various contrapuntal devices; in other words, this term appears to be a prototypical nomenclature for the scholastic fugue. In the context of this dissertation, however, I use this term to designate the fugues composed by Saint-Saëns for his piano études opp. 52 and 111. Fascinatingly, and as this study will attempt to demonstrate, Saint-Saëns’s étude fugues serve a double purpose: the first is to provide students with exercises for perfecting a particular musical skill or technique; the second is to exhibit the elements,
Saint-Saëns built a reputation as one of the foremost interpreters of J. S. Bach’s fugues. Saint-Saëns’s self-proclaimed cult of Bach’s fugues compels us to examine the formal structure of his fugal works vis-à-vis some of Bach’s most consistent compositional procedures.

**State of Research**

If, in the extensive literature on imitative counterpoint and fugue, the nineteenth-century fugue d’école has received limited attention, the figure of Camille Saint-Saëns has failed to transcend—even in this narrow realm—the level of a passing reference. With the exception of three doctoral dissertations (Scherperel 1978; Mulvey 1994; Perry 1994) and one book (Smith 1992) devoted to the study of Saint-Saëns’s organ works from biographical, comparative, or performance-practice perspectives, my preliminary research reveals that Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues have been neglected by modern scholars, not only in areas related to music theory, but also in the broader spectrum.

While a number of authors, during the second half of the twentieth century, have written about the scholastic fugue in a synoptic way (Horsley 1966; Gauldin 1995; Kennan 1999), this formulaic model has eluded the interest of contemporary music theorists, as it is still considered by many as “one of the less salutary legacies of nineteenth-century theory pedagogy” (Damschroder & Williams 1990, 55). There are, however, a few notable exceptions to this tendency. Although somewhat dated, Joaquín Zamacois’s *Curso de Formas Musicales* (published in 1960; reprinted in 1985, 1997, 2002, and 2004), a textbook still studied in many French-influenced conservatories in Europe and Latin America, devotes more than forty pages...
to a comprehensive examination of this pedagogical genre, with particular reference to the writings of Cherubini, Dubois, Gedalge, and Dupré.

More recently (and from a different perspective), Robert O. Gjerdingen has taken up the subject, by means of documenting, in a webpage, the entire collection of *fugues de concours*, written for the competitions held every summer at the Paris Conservatory (1858–1926). Working from a similar perspective, Anthony Bergerault’s article (2011) “L’enseignement du contrepoint et de la fugue au Conservatoire de Paris (1858–1905)” describes the holistic pedagogic project behind the teaching of imitative counterpoint at the Paris Conservatory, and the methodologies and theoretical approaches associated with the scholastic fugue.

**The Structure of the Dissertation**

Because a full appreciation of Saint-Saëns’s fugues is dependent, as this dissertation will set out to prove, on understanding their relationship to the scholastic fugue, the last portion of this chapter is devoted to an overview of the pedagogical works of Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge and how these authors outline the elements of the fugue. After delineating the nexus between Saint-Saëns and his pedagogical training and influences, the first chapter establishes the theoretical background to the study, building on the normative components that determine the stereotypical scholastic fugue as presented in the aforementioned works. While there are some minor divergences among these three texts, all of them prescribe, in essence, the same general set of conditions and essential parts: (1) the subject, (2) the answer, (3) the countersubject (or multiple countersubjects), (4) the exposition, (5) the counterexposition, (6) the episodes, (7) the stretto, and (8) the pedal point. In addition to these fundamental components, this chapter will address the order of keys (that is, the practices of modulation) suggested by these texts vis-à-vis the alternation of episodes and restatements of the subject and answer.
Closely linked to the aspect of modulation and harmony in fugal writing is the issue of formal organization. Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive discussion of fugal form in the wider context of the genre from the late nineteenth century to the present. While fugue is often described as a process or procedure rather than a form (Bukofzer 1947; Erickson 1955; Tyndall 1964; Green 1979; Mann 1987; Renwick 1995a; Gauldin 1995), in this chapter I argue that a considerable number of fugues written in the nineteenth century most naturally fall into a three-part formal scheme. All the pedagogical works surveyed in the first chapter cast the fugue into three large sections: (A) the first section, consisting of the exposition, the counterexposition, and a transitional episode; (B) a central development section, entailing an alternation of episodes with statements of the theme in different keys and the emergence of the dominant pedal point; and (A) a third and final section comprising a series of stretti and the return of the subject at its original pitch or in an octave transposition. Although, as William Renwick aptly points out in his book Analyzing Fugue (1995), “the simple fact of departure from the tonic and subsequent return does not of itself define a ternary form,” in this chapter I will demonstrate that a series of audible and distinguishable factors—such as the absence of the tonic key from the middle section, the dominant pedal point, the position of strong cadences, and changes in dynamics, texture, and figuration—makes the three-part structure the preferred formal framework for the fugue in the nineteenth century. Additionally, however, I will propose and examine two supplementary formal types, frequently found in numerous late Baroque fugues, which left an indelible mark in the fugal works of composers who, like Saint-Saëns, looked back into the creative mind of J. S. Bach.

Chapter 3—the largest part of the dissertation—is devoted to a series of analyses organized around issues of design and structure in selected Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues. I analyze, dialogically, some of Saint-Saëns’s étude and organ fugues (from his opp. 52, 99, 109, and 111), which are rooted in the scholastic model but whose internal strategies of formal articulation differ among themselves. Similarly, I examine the fugue from his Suite for Piano,
op. 90—an homage to the Baroque tradition—and sketch out several connections between this work and the compositional procedures of J. S. Bach. I conclude the chapter by considering Saint-Saëns’s final and most experimental collection of fugues, op. 161.

The dissertation’s final chapter, chapter 4, considers the implications of the previous analyses (vis-à-vis the formal types proposed in chapter 2) for developing a theory of fugal form and speculates on the broader applicability of this theory, using it to analyze keyboard fugues by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century composers like Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Rheinberger, Guilmant, Reger, Dupré, and Ravel. Although this preliminary theory of fugal form—whose origin lies in the ahistorical scholastic model—argues against the notion that a tonal fugue can be explained with reference to a definite, ideal “textbook” form, virtually all of the elements and structural principles that determine the stereotypical fugue d’école can be found in the compositions and theoretical treatises from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. My goal is that readers of this dissertation will come away with not only a new appreciation of Saint-Saëns’s fugal works, but also with a systematic basis upon which to evaluate and identify the unique properties that individuate a tonal fugue.

What Is Meant by “Fugue”?

From the fourteenth century to the present, the word “fugue” has acquired, in the musical context, a wide variety of meanings. Even within the major-minor tonal system, the term has been defined as a compositional technique, a procedure, a process, a genre designation, a texture, and a form. To complicate matters further, there is no universal

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4 Here, the term “tonal fugue” is used to refer to a fugue based upon the principles of common-practice tonality. This clarification is necessary because Saint-Saëns composed his collection of fugues op. 161 during the early 1920s, a time when many composers were moving away from functional tonality in their compositions.
consensus among modern theorists on what are the defining characteristics and elements of a fugue. As Roger Bullivant notes:

Such vagaries of definition are not really to be wondered at when it is realised that terms are not always consistently used by composers or by theorists, and that linguistic muddles do not necessarily imply any difficulty in our recognising certain purely musical phenomena which may be differently described by different writers at different periods. Fugue has become a controversial topic largely because, in addition to its live usage by composers throughout more than four centuries, its study has for long featured in the academic pursuit of music: this is, indeed, probably why so much has been written about it. (Bullivant 1971, 11)

I will return to these issues in more detail in the next chapter. For the time being, and to avoid losing ourselves in a wilderness of definitions, this study proposes that a fugue is a polyphonic composition based upon one or more themes—which are systematically and imitatively enunciated in a fixed number of parts or voices—that entails various stages of development and thematic manipulation in accordance with a broad spectrum of aesthetic and stylistic values. I admit that this definition can be criticized on the grounds that it is quite extensive and can apply to an excessively wide range of compositions (some of which may even carry titles other that “Fugue”) with a variety of instrumental and vocal combinations. Yet this definition may prove useful as a general description for the flexible and ever-changing nature of fugue. In the particular context of this project, I will focus primarily on the examination of individual fugues for keyboard (which might or might not be coupled with one or more pieces of different character; for example, a prelude), like those exemplified in the piano and organ fugues by Saint-Saëns and many other nineteenth-century composers. As noted above, the analysis of Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues will be supplemented and contextualized both by the examination of fugues written by masters and apprentices within the French scholastic tradition and by several keyboard fugues written outside the Romantic era.
Analytical Approach

While the scholastic fugue has been described as an “ahistorical,” “artificial,” and “Frankensteinian” construct (Horsley 1966; Bent 1994; Schachter 1999), this study argues that this compositional prototype can be considered as a useful model for analyzing most fugues composed during the nineteenth century—a restricted musical repertory. Based on this initial proposition, this study borrows Hepokoski and Darcy’s concept of “dialogic form” (2006) and places Saint-Saëns’s fugues in dialogue with a limited network of normative procedures in accordance with a series of pedagogically and theoretically conditioned compositional options. As this chapter will show, the scholastic model—as exemplified in the fugues de concours composed for the annual fugue competition at the Paris Conservatory and the Prix de Rome—is defined by certain features, proportions, and harmonic and thematic requirements, such as the concatenation of the exposition and the first episode, the placement of clear-cut cadences, the evasion of the tonic during the middle section, the harmonic interruption on the dominant before the concurrent return of the tonic and the main subject, and conspicuous changes in dynamics, texture, and figuration.5

Through a series of section-by-section analyses (focused on aspects of design and tonal structure), annotated scores, and voice-leading graphs, this study places six fugues by Saint-Saëns in dialogue with the fugue d’école and its constituent components and strategies; but it also establishes a nexus between a series of formal digressions (from scholastic paradigms) in Saint-Saëns’s fugues and two additional formal models (derived from Percy Goetschius’s and Wallace Berry’s formal types) that invoke J. S. Bach’s keyboard fugues.

5 For purposes of this study, it is necessary to clarify that when I employ terms like “interruption” or “harmonic interruption,” I am using them in a Schenkerian sense. By definition, a dominant harmony that is interrupted is not part of an authentic or deceptive cadence, at least not in the foreground.
Saint-Saëns’s acquaintance with Bach’s fugues began while he was yet a child, under the tutelage of Camille-Marie Stamaty (1811–1870). The program of his first concert as a pianist in 1846, given at the Salle Pleyel in Paris when he was just ten years old, included an unspecified Prélude et fugue de J. S. Bach. His interest in Bach’s music was further fostered by his first organ teacher, Alexandre-Pierre Boëly (1785–1858), the resident organist of Saint-Germain-l’Auxerrois since 1840, and one of the first advocates of Bach’s organ music during the first half of the nineteenth century (Smith 1992, 2–3). After two years with Boëly, Saint-Saëns was admitted, as an auditor, to François Benoist’s organ class at the Paris Conservatory. In his reminiscences of his early days in Benoist’s class, Saint-Saëns takes pride in having immersed himself in the meticulous study of Bach’s The Art of Fugue (Nichols 2008, 50).

As a young piano teacher at the École Niedermeyer, a position he obtained in 1861, Saint-Saëns exposed his students not only to the music of modern composers, but first and foremost to the music of Bach. As Charles Koechlin notes, “Saint-Saens did not restrict his role to that of a professor of piano—however scrupulous and exacting; he opened the door to the whole of music. Bach first, with the 48; and then, the class over, he sat himself down to play Schumann, Liszt, even Wagner” (1945, 2). In relation to the musical upbringing at the École Niedermeyer, Gabriel Fauré, Saint-Saëns’s protégé and lifelong friend, declares that Bach’s music constituted their “daily bread” (1922, 198–99). In Saint-Saëns’s pedagogical project, Bach became an emblematic figure, to the point that he dedicated, during his first year of tenure, the first six arrangements of

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6 In the preface to Boëly’s Recueil de Noëls, op. 15, Saint-Saëns describes his teacher (who was remembered due to his performing skills as “The French Bach”), as “an impeccable composer and a theorist of the first rank,” who had a “unique trait of drawing his inspiration from the past” (Smith 1992, 199). Saint-Saëns further observes that Boëly “took great pains to write in the style of Scarlatti and Bach, the object of his greatest admiration” (199).

7 According to Fétis, François Benoist “was the only organist in France able to hold his own with the Germans” (Smith 1992, 4).
his Piano Transcriptions of Bach’s Works to the first six prizewinners in his advanced piano class.\textsuperscript{8}

For Saint-Saëns and several other composers in the first half of the nineteenth century, Bach provided enormous creative and constructive stimulus. As Antoine Hennion observes, “Bach’s early adopters in France (Boëly, Fétis, Chopin, Alkan, Gounod, Franck, Liszt, Saint-Saëns) copied, paraphrased, transcribed—not because they were unfaithful, but because Bach was a means for making music, not a composer of the past (2003, 87). In his essay “Harmonie et Mélodie,” Saint-Saëns criticizes an unnamed author for dismissing Bach’s compositional practices vis-à-vis the topic of modulation and for arguing that he learnt about modulation by studying minor Italian composers; which, in Saint-Saëns opinion, “is rather like saying that Raphael learnt to draw in Berlin” (Nichols 2008, 18). Saint-Saëns would describe the complete edition of Bach’s works (published by the Bach-Gesellschaft), in particular his cantatas, as “an astonishing revelation” which brought “unexpectedness and power to move.” He further notes that “Until then we thought we knew Bach: we were now learning to know him and to discover in the incomparably virtuosic composer a wide-ranging poet—of whom The Well-Tempered Clavier had in meantime given us some idea” (169).

Establishing a connection between Saint-Saëns’s musical world and the French scholastic fugue is not a difficult task. A product of the École Niedermeyer and the Paris Conservatory, Saint-Saëns studied composition with Fromental Halévy, the co-author of Cherubini’s Cours de contrepont et fugue, and was intimately acquainted with the particulars of the fugue d’école, as he participated twice, without success, for the Prix de Rome in 1852 and 1864. The composition of a scholastic fugue, on a subject composed by one of the jury members, was a requirement in the preliminary stage of the prestigious competition (Zank 2009, 88).

\textsuperscript{8} The six prizewinners—and dedicatees—were Gabriel Fauré, Eugène Gigout, Adolphe Dietrich, Adam Laussel, Émile Lehmann, and Albert Périlhou. Later in his life, Saint-Saëns would dedicate the Prélude et Fugue in D Minor, op. 109, no. 1, to Faure; the Prélude et Fugue in E-flat Major, op. 99, no. 3, to Gigout; and the Prélude et Fugue in G Major, op. 109, no. 2, to Périlhou.
Later in his life, and as a prominent member of the music section of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Saint-Saëns dictated the fugal subject for the preliminary round of the Prix de Rome in the 1881 and 1908 competitions. Furthermore, Saint-Saëns had the rare honor of being the only composer, from Cherubini’s directorship in the 1820s to Dubois’s era in the 1900s, who dictated the subject for the annual fugue competition at the Paris Conservatory (in 1896) without having attained the rank of Director, or even being an employee, of the institution (see Bergerault 2011). The prize-winning fugue of 1896, based on Saint-Saëns’s subject, will receive detailed attention later in this chapter.

Not only was Saint-Saëns engaged in composing subjects for competitions, but some of his fugal subjects are featured in treatises on counterpoint and fugue by his contemporaries. For instance, Dubois and Gedalge, in the appendixes of their respective works, make use of various subjects composed by Saint-Saëns. In relation to Cherubini’s Cours, which was regarded as the vade mecum of fugal writing well before the publication of the aforementioned treatises, Saint-Saëns stresses its authority as a guide on how to write fugues. In his monograph Les idées de M. Vincent d’Indy (1919), Saint-Saëns criticizes d’Indy’s Cours de composition musicale (1909) for neglecting the name of Cherubini among the “masters of the past,” and digresses to commend Cherubini’s “antique treatise” for its “admirable” examples of fugues and its practicality (1919a, 33–35).¹⁰

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¹⁰ All quotations from Saint-Saëns (1919a) are the author’s translation.
From Bologna to Paris: Tracing the Origins of the Fugue d'école

After the mid-eighteenth century, fugal composition declined as a free-standing category of composition. Nonetheless, the fugue was reinvigorated, under the influence of Johann Joseph Fux’s *Gradus ad Parnassum*, in compositions and pedagogical works of Viennese and North Italian composers during the last quarter of the century. Through the instructional writings of Giovanni Battista Martini (1706–1784) and Johann Georg Albrechtsberger (1736–1809), the study of fugue (and the study of counterpoint, for that matter) was strongly promoted as one of the most crucial elements in the training of musicians and composers. As has been noted elsewhere (Horsley 1966; Mann 1987), these works exerted a formative influence on composers like Jommelli, J. C. Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, all of whom make extensive use of fugal techniques in their respective sonatas, string quartets, symphonies, choral works, and other nonfugal genres. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the fugue found its place in theoretical constructions and classrooms, more specifically as an abstract, contrived, and, ultimately, theoretically rationalized compositional exercise. As Imogene Horsley declares:

An artificial form, it combined the traditions of fugue with the rigors of scholastic contrapuntal devices and gave practice in such other procedures as the modulating sequence and pedal point. In addition, it was an exercise in form, in combining the various parts into a relatively fixed structure. This academic fugue—or *fugue d'école* as it was named in France—was a fairly practical bridge between the schoolroom and the world of art, but it was no guide to the understanding of fugue. It was derived from the observation of extant fugue literature and in part from intensive theoretical speculation, and eventually it was the theory pedagogue who won out. The forms and procedures emphasized in academic tradition began to have the ring of true authority, and the fugues of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven were forced by industrious analysis to fit into the scholastic forms or were criticized as wrong. (1966, 1)

Most directly relevant to this study is the French rendering of this academic exercise. The nineteenth-century French *fugue d'école*, which endured as late as the twentieth century, finds its closest line of ancestry in the North Italian tradition that originated from the teachings of Giovanni Battista Martini. Martini’s advanced method of instruction, the *Esemplare, o sia Saggio fondamentale pratico di contrappunto sopra il canto fermo* (Bologna, 1774–75),
became the model after which Fétis’s and Cherubini’s instructional texts on counterpoint and fugue were structured. In a report of the music division of l’Académie des Beaux-Arts to the Minister of Interior, Cherubini commends Fétis’s Traité for continuing the trend started by the authoritative pedagogical writings of Fux, Martini, and Albrechtsberger—in that specific order (Leniaud, Bouvier, and Fossier 2003, 257–58). As a brief examination of the treatises of Fétis and Cherubini will show, a considerable number of its examples of fugues are written by Martini, his mentors (Predieri and Sarti), or his students (Jommelli and Perti). More concretely, the analytical approach that Fétis, Cherubini, and various later French theorists adopt in their respective treatises on fugue in the nineteenth century (namely, the frequent use of full-length examples in open score, with the upper parts in C clef, accompanied by annotations, structural labels, and brief observations) seems to have its origins in Martini’s Esemplare.12

With regard to design and form, the fugue d’école was shaped by Martini’s prototype of a fugue with a tonal answer (fuga del tuono). The four-part fugue that Martini presents as a model in his discussion “On the completion of the entire fugue” has, to use the terminology of the nineteenth century, an exposition, which includes a countersubject, and a counterexposition (1775, xxxiv–xxxxvi). After the counterexposition, the fugue progresses immediately to a pair of entries in the subdominant, which is followed by an episode that leads to the announcements of the subject and the answer in the submediant key. After these modulations, an episode prepares

11 While Martini and other Bolognese composers exerted a major influence on French instructional texts, many concepts, principles, and musical examples by German theorists, especially Marpurg (1753) and Albrechtsberger (1790), also made their way into the French literature on counterpoint and fugue. Treatises by Marpurg and Albrechtsberger were translated into French by Alexandre-Étienne Choron (1771–1834), the former as part of Choron’s three-volume Principes de composition des écoles d’Italie (Paris, 1808–9), which also reproduces parts of Martini’s Esemplare. Choron must be regarded, along with Cherubini, as an important transmitter of foreign theories into France in the early nineteenth century.

12 Before moving to the examination of various fugues “chosen from the most celebrated and skilled masters,” Martini dedicates a section of vol. 2 (“Del compimento de tutta la Fuga”) “to demonstrate to the young composer how to conduct the entire fugue” (1775, xxxiv, xxxvi). Interestingly, in his Cours, Cherubini follows Martini’s analytical approach almost to the letter when he places a chapter with virtually the same designation (“De la composition entière de la fugue”) before introducing various examples of fugues in 2–8 parts.
the return of the tonic. However, Martini employs a point of repose over a dominant chord (what we would regard today as a half cadence) before the beginning of a close stretto of the subject and the answer in the tonic.\(^\text{13}\)

While the modulation scheme used by Martini differs from that found in French treatises (where, for example, the use of the subdominant is usually relegated to the last portion of the middle section), the overall form and the components of Martini’s fugue fulfill many of the normative conditions of the *fugue d’école*: the use of a countersubject, the avoidance of strong cadences in or immediately after the exposition, the use of closely related keys, the evasion of the tonic in the middle section, the formation of the episodes from the thematic materials of the exposition, the interruption at the end of the development, and the tonic return combined with the reaffirmation of the theme in stretto. I will address these conditions in detail at the end of this chapter.

Stylistically, the *fugue d’école* is modelled on the Italian vocal fugue as conveyed most immediately by Martini. This type of neo-Palestrinian fugue, with its expressive and sedate character, became the ideal vehicle for teaching composition from a contrapuntal perspective. Students at the Paris Conservatory and candidates for the *Prix de Rome*—from Berlioz in the

\(^{13}\) While it would be an overstatement to claim that Martini is offering in this section a fixed formal plan for the composition of a fugue, his pedagogical purpose at the beginning of the second volume of his *Examples* seems to be akin to that of Cherubini in his textbook. Martini is not merely commenting on fugal examples; he wants the student to consider these examples in the light of a series of rules, prescriptions, and observations. For example, Martini states that the student “must” exchange the order and pitch-level of the subject and answer after the customary entrance of all the voices (1775, xxxiv). Also, Martini emphasizes, rather strongly, the reiteration of the subject in the third and the sixth of the fundamental tone, that is, after the divertimento (episode)—which should be constructed from fragments of the subject—that separates the entrances at the fourth of the mode (xxxvii–xxxviii). According to Imogene Horsley, this overall harmonic prescription is echoed later in the treatises of Francesco Galeazzi (*Elementi Teorico-Practici di Musica*, 1796) and Angelo Morigi (*Trattado di Contrappunto Fugato*, 1802). Regarding the point of repose in the fifth of the mode, Martini presents two aesthetic rationalizations for this practice. First, the return of the initial subject may be more easily distinguished; second, the listener would be able to perceive the stretto more clearly, “which is, according . . . to the most experienced masters, one of the most valuable parts of the fugue” (xxxx). For Martini, these “most necessary rules” are intended to present “what is required in the composition of each separate section of the fugue,” before becoming acquainted with “the manner, the style, the conduct, and the exceptions” employed by the masters (xxxxvi).
The pupil should write for voices, and not for instruments. He must therefore conform to the natural compass of the different kinds of voices. He will thus learn to produce effects by voices only—a study of considerable difficulty, and perhaps but too much neglected; and he will afterwards find himself more at his ease when he shall write for instruments, and when, of course, he will no longer be obliged to confine himself within the limits of the voice. (1841, 6)

The result of this approach is reflected in the crystallization of a horizontally conceived four-voice vocal fugue, in which the aspect of harmony is seen as a byproduct of the continuous contrapuntal flow. As Gedalge notes in his treatise, “It is necessary to show students that fugal composition is concerned, above all, with horizontal writing. The melodic independence of the parts is limited only by the necessity of producing . . . a logical harmony resulting from the simultaneous sounding of the parts” (1901, 3). At this point, it should be noted that the term “vocal fugue” is purely notional and that it denotes, in practice, the imitation of a certain style. As has been noted, the absence of text in the parts and the somewhat flexible range of the four voices should be sufficient to clarify that “vocal fugue” is not synonymous with “fugue for the voice” (Bergerault 2011).
The Fugue d’école in Theory

Luigi Cherubini’s *Cours de contrepoint et de fugue* (Paris, 1835)

Written during his tenure as Director of the Paris Conservatory, Luigi Cherubini’s *Cours de contrepoint et de fugue*, published in 1835, was one of the most influential and studied works in the realm of counterpoint pedagogy during the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth. Contrary to the commercial failure of its predecessor, François-Joseph Fétis’s *Traité du contrepoint et de la fugue* (1824) (which was commissioned by Cherubini as a response to the “erroneous” doctrines of Anton Reicha), Cherubini’s *Cours* was widely used not only in France but also in many other parts of Europe after it was translated into Italian, German (twice) and English (twice). This work was studied and lauded by composers of the stature of Mendelssohn, Chopin, Wagner, Brahms, and Vaughan Williams (Fellinger 1987; Vaughan Williams 2008).

The authorship of this work is, however, shared among a number of people: Cherubini himself; Fromental Halévy (a pupil of Cherubini), who wrote and organized the text; and the indirect but conspicuous influence of Fétis and his treatise (Damschroder and Williams 1990, 55). As Ian Bent comments concerning the similarities between these two works, “the structure of Cherubini’s *Cours* is virtually a carbon copy of that of Fétis” (2002, 590). Moreover, Fétis states, in his *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*, that Cherubini “never thought of writing any manual with this description,” and that its creation may have been propelled by “someone” who had the idea of “turning to account” the collection of rules and precepts set by Cherubini in his classes at the Conservatory (Bridgeman 1862, 500).

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14 When I refer to Cherubini, in the context of the work under consideration, I use it as a practical designation to mean both the *de facto* writer/editor (Fromental Halévy) and the conceptual—and accredited—author (Luigi Cherubini). In this study I use and quote from J. A. Hamilton’s English translation of the *Cours* (1841), reprinted by the New York Public Library in 2011, and Franz David Christoph Stöpel’s (1835?) bilingual French/German edition.
Cherubini devotes the last book of his *Cours* to an examination of fugue, its essential elements, and its overall organization. He begins by briefly discussing the term “fugue” (*fuga*) and its meanings throughout time. In this respect, he notes that while the term has always signified an imitative form, “at present, we apply the name of fugue to a composition of considerable development and regularity, which was unknown to the ancient classical composers . . . because their system of tonality did not lend itself to what we call a tonal fugue” (Cherubini 1841, 285). Cherubini considers the modern fugue as a transitional region between the systems of strict counterpoint and free composition; in fact, he claims that “all that a good composer ought to know may find its place in a fugue” (286).

After briefly introducing the two principal types of fugues (tonal fugue and real fugue) and its subcategories (fugue of imitation, irregular fugue, and pieces written in fugal style), Cherubini delineates four essential conditions that are indispensable in a fugue. These conditions are: (1) the subject or theme, (2) the answer or consequent, (3) the countersubject, and (4) the stretto. While it is true that both Marpurg and Martini—two of the most frequently referenced theorists in Cherubini’s *Cours*—emphasize the role of stretto as a common feature in a fugal composition (for instance, Martini considers stretto as a device “which normally concludes a fugue”), Cherubini goes a step further in making this device an indispensable requisite of a fugue (Mann 1987, 180, 271). The legacy of Cherubini’s proposition vis-à-vis the use of stretto is preserved in André Gedalge’s *Traité de la fugue*, in which the author regards stretto as the seventh essential element of a fugue (1901, 8). In addition to the aforementioned necessary conditions, Cherubini includes the pedal as an element “which is almost always introduced in a fugue of any considerable development.” The reason for not considering the pedal as an absolute requisite of a fugue has to do with the fact that, as Cherubini points out later in his detailed discussion of the pedal, this feature is not required in a fugue in two parts. In addition to these indispensable conditions, a study-fugue (*fugue d’étude*—one of the first references to fugue from an explicitly scholastic standpoint) may include contrapuntal devices
such as imitation, inversion, transposition, contrary motion, and stretto. However, Cherubini advises “not [to] introduce them all” in a fugue intended for public performance (287).

In his more detailed examination of the stretto, Cherubini notes that “the art of employing the stretto . . . consists in the manner of varying its aspects, and in seeking the means, each time we introduce the stretto, to draw closer and closer together the commencement of the subject with the entry of the answer” (305). Here, Cherubini implicitly echoes Albrechtsberger in his *Gründliche Anweisung zur Composition*, who pointed out that the “nearest or quickest stretto” should be reserved for the conclusion of the fugue (Albrechtsberger 1855, 157). We can trace the origin of this compositional advice to the writings of Giovanni Maria Bononcini in his *Musico Pratrico*, published in 1673 (Mann 1987, 43). Cherubini uses the term “stretto” exclusively to describe when the entrance of the answer occurs before the subject is finished (or vice versa), overlapping with it. Cherubini’s definition of stretto does not appear to be used anywhere in this work to designate a passage wherein the subject or answer is played (canonically) against itself, or to denominate the whole of the last section of the fugue.

As was pointed out earlier in the discussion of the indispensable conditions of a fugue, Cherubini refuses to consider the pedal “indispensable” because it is not required in a two-part fugue. Thus, we may regard the pedal as an essential element in fugues in three parts or more. A cursory glance at the full-length model fugues at the end of the *Cours* reveals that all of them (excepting, of course, those in two parts) exhibit a pedal point near the end. Concerning the placement of the pedal, he declares that the pedal may be employed in any part, as long as it occurs on the tonic or the dominant. However, Cherubini observes that the “most advantageous” (and generally employed, as he demonstrates in each of the full-length examples) configuration of the pedal is when a dominant pedal occurs in the bass (or lowest-sounding part). The function

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15 In his *Gründliche Anweisung zur Composition* (1790), Albrechtsberger makes a similar observation regarding the excessive use of contrapuntal devices in a fugue, as he notes that “they can seldom be all employed in one fugue” (1855, 162).
of the pedal, writes Cherubini, “is to free the composer from the severity of the rules; that is, during its duration, he may introduce [unprepared] discords and even modulate” (306). Furthermore, he suggests that the pedal point can also be a place in which the composer may use the subject and the answer in stretto, the countersubject, and some of the contrapuntal artifices discussed at the beginning of this section (motivic imitation, inversion, contrary motion, etc.) all at once.

Cherubini presents several observations regarding the episodes and the large-scale harmonic scheme of a fugue. In relation to the episodes (or divertissements), he notes that they are connecting passages—with the purpose of modulation—that are structured out of fragments and motives of the subject and countersubjects, along with other “ingenious artificial contrivances” (332). While Cherubini does not recognize the episode as one of the four indispensable conditions of a fugue, he seems to do so at least indirectly by observing that “in the course of the fugue there ought to be more than one episode” (333).

With respect to modulation, Cherubini prescribes an explicit and rigid scheme of key succession. According to him, when a fugue is in a major key, it should modulate first to the key of the dominant (V), followed by the submediant (vi), the subdominant (IV), the supertonic (ii), the mediant (iii), and then back to the dominant (V) before arriving to the tonic key. In the case of a fugue in a minor key, Cherubini seems to be more flexible. He proposes modulating first to the mediant (III), followed by either the minor dominant (v), the submediant (VI), the subdominant (iv), or the subtonic (VII), before returning to the tonic key. In both modes the composer may use the parallel key, but only in a transient manner. In defending these “laws of modulation,” Cherubini claims that “modern composers in their compositions have broken through [these] simple and rational law[s] of modulating, replacing it by a manner much freer, and often crude and incoherent; but if their deviations from the beaten path [are] tolerated in modern works, it is essential and it is expressly recommended . . . not to follow their wanderings
in respect to a composition so strict as a fugue” (333–34). While it is possible that Cherubini is not referring to any composer particular, I suspect (and this is merely an educated guess) that his target is Anton Reicha (who could be regarded, in this context, as a “modern composer”) and, more specifically, Reicha’s peculiar collection of *36 Fugues for Piano*, op. 36, published in 1803. If we take into account, as pointed out at the beginning of this section, that Cherubini’s *Cours* was published in part as a reaction to the “erroneous” teachings of Reicha (the rivalry between Cherubini and Reicha has been discussed by various authors, including Demuth 1948 and Bent 1994), it would not be too difficult to relate the adjectives “free,” “crude,” and “incoherent” to Reicha’s uncharacteristic collection of fugues, which features such innovations as answers at the tritone.

In the concluding chapter of the volume, concerning “the entire composition of a fugue,” Cherubini asserts that “we must . . . examine and analyze many fugues by the best masters, in order to obtain sufficient confidence and experience in this sort of composition” (1841, 336). The last line quoted is rather puzzling since, as has been already noted, most of the examples in the fourth book of the *Cours* are by Cherubini himself, with the exception of two relatively brief examples by Martini, one by a minor Bolognese composer by the name of Angelo Predieri (1655–1731), and one full-length fugue for eight parts by one of Martini’s students, Giuseppe Sarti (1729–1802). Like Martini, Cherubini confines his examples to North Italian composers. However, neither the charge of academic narcissism nor the charge of self-promotion can be brought against the author of this work. While reading Cherubini’s *Cours*, the reader must keep in mind that the real author of this work was Halévy, Cherubini’s protégé and one of his most talented pupils. Therefore, the profusion of examples by Cherubini contained in this work may be seen as a token of homage or deference from a devoted disciple.

Although it is difficult to know to whom Cherubini is referring by the designation “the best masters,” we cannot fail to notice that there is not a single example by J. S. Bach in this work; as has just been noted, Cherubini (like Martini) limits his examples to music by Italians.
Moreover, the reader would look in vain for a mere mention of the German composer (not even as part of a footnote) in Cherubini’s volume. This oversight is particularly odd not only because many authors before and after Cherubini have benefited from the richness and diversity of Bach’s fugues in their writings (Marpurg, Kirnberger, Albrechtsberger, Fétis, Prout, Dubois, Riemann, Gedalge, and Dupré, to name a few), but also because the only author that Cherubini endorses and recommends in his book—Marpurg—figures as one of the most eminent exponents of Bach’s fugal works during the eighteenth century.

Théodore Dubois’s *Traité de contrepoint et de fugue* (Paris, 1901)

Like Cherubini, Théodore Dubois undertook the task of writing his *Traité de Contrepoint et de fugue* (1901) while holding the position of Director at the Paris Conservatory (1896–1905). A product of the Conservatory, Dubois studied organ with François Benoist, fugue and counterpoint with Ambroise Thomas (receiving the first prize in 1857), before winning the *Prix de Rome* in 1861. His treatise, which follows the thematic layout of Cherubini’s *Cours*, remains a standard reference work for the study of the scholastic fugue. Vincent d’Indy describes Dubois’s widely disseminated *Traité* as having “precisely the French qualities lacking in [works] of his predecessors . . . clarity and precision” (Pasler 2008, 129).

While Dubois declares, in his general overview of the fugue, that “J. S. Bach has bequeathed us with the most beautiful models in this type of composition,” he draws a connection between the fugue and the most prevalent compositional genres during the nineteenth century (1901, 109). As he observes, “We cannot say that a symphony, a sonata, a trio, a quartet, etc., is a fugue, but we can say that these works are modern transformations [of this genre], and that there are, between the developments of a symphony and those of fugue,

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10 All quotations from Dubois’s and Gedalge’s treatises are the author’s translations.
many similarities in their background, if not in form” (109). Dubois’s discussion of the elements that constitute the fugue do not differ in essence from that of Cherubini’s: the elements of the *fugue d’écot* are the subject, the answer, the countersubject (or countersubjects), the coda, the episode, the stretto, the pedal, the new subject, and the free parts.17 However, unlike Cherubini, Dubois explicitly links some of these elements with the overall design of the fugue. Dubois, for instance, drawing on the terminology used in the treatises of Reicha (1824) and Fétis (1824), employs the term “exposition” to denote the initial section in which the subject or answer is first presented by each voice—the first and “most important” section of the fugue (1901, 131). In the same way, he uses the term “stretto” to designate both a close succession of thematic statements and the whole of the last section of the fugue. Dubois suggests that the stretto section should not occupy more than a third of the whole fugue.

Dubois’s formal scheme for the scholastic fugue builds upon the notion of continuity. In relation to the exposition, he recommends modifying the final portion of the last entrance so as to overlap the end of the exposition with the beginning of the first episode, thereby avoiding a cadential separation (see example 1.1). According to Dubois, the principle of continuity is equally applicable to the transitions between episodes and middle entries. The only exception to this norm takes place immediately before the beginning of the stretto section. At this point, a cadence may be introduced after a relatively brief pedal point. Concerning the use of pedal points, Dubois notes that while a brief dominant pedal point may be employed before the stretto, “the real place for the dominant pedal point is the stretto section, towards the conclusion of the fugue” (110). A tonic pedal, which, according to Dubois is not a requirement, is usually placed at the very end.

17 Dubois regards the new subject, the free parts, and the pedal in the upper and internal voices as optional elements.
Contrary to Cherubini and Gedalge, Dubois does not stipulate a specific order of modulation for the episodes and middle entries. However, he notes that the archetypal scholastic fugue ought to modulate to three closely related keys (157). Dubois’s observations regarding the length of the episodes are rather limited; however, he mentions that the first episode, which occurs between the exposition and the first entrance in a related key, should be more extensive than subsequent episodes.

André Gedalge’s *Traité de la fugue: De la fugue d’école* (Paris, 1901)

Completed in 1901, André Gedalge’s *Traité de la fugue (Première partie: De la fugue d’école)* provides, in its more than three hundred pages, a detailed and exhaustive discussion of the scholastic fugue. Originally, Gedalge conceived this volume as the first installment of a monumental three-part treatise on the principles governing the fugue, its multiple formal configurations, and its relationship with the art of musical development (Gedalge 1901, 1). However, only the first volume, which concentrates almost exclusively on the synthetic construct of the scholastic fugue, was published.

Gedalge designates the scholastic fugue not “as a type [genre] of composition, but as an exercise in musical rhetoric, an arbitrary, conventional form, which, in actual practice, has no application” (1). While Gedalge conceives the scholastic fugue as a compositional study in “order and logic,” he eschews, unlike Cherubini, abstracts and unimaginative constructs in favor of
examples drawn from the great masters, with special emphasis on the works of J. S. Bach.

Concerning this point, he writes:

Whenever I could, however, I have supported the rules with examples from the masters, particularly those of J. S. Bach. In a treatise on fugue, I consider legitimate to invoke the highest authority on the subject, namely the composer who was able to make of the fugue one of the most beautiful and one the most complete manifestations of the musical art. I must confess, however, that I feel some embarrassment to call attention to this fact, for it must seem rational that the examples offered to students in the instruction of any art should be drawn from the masters of this art. (1901, 1)

Gedalge delineates the scholastic fugue in eight essential parts: the subject; the answer; one or more countersubjects; the exposition; the counter-exposition (optional); the episodes; the stretto; and the pedal. However, in discussing its formal organization, Gedalge divides the scholastic fugue into three main sections: (1) the exposition, comprising the ensemble of four successive entries, in alternation—subject, answer, subject, answer—the series of succeeding countersubjects introduced shortly after the initial subject, and an optional counter-exposition with an intervening episode; (2) the episodes (or developments), which serve as transitional passages that periodically lead to re-entries of the subject and answer in keys related to the main key and thence to a pedal point on the dominant; and (3) the stretto, which, as in Dubois’s Traité, designates the whole of the last section of the fugue, including the tonic pedal point at the very end of the work. Concerning the pedal point, Gedalge observes that while it is possible to place the pedal point on the dominant at the end of the stretto section (that is, in the final section of the fugue), “the masters have employed the pedal point on the dominant before the stretto, saving the tonic pedal for the end of the fugue” (242).

Like Cherubini, Gedalge prescribes a strict order of modulation in the scholastic fugue. According to Gedalge, if the subject is in the major mode, the first modulation after the exposition (which must always be in the tonic) is to the submediant key (vi), where there is an entry of the subject, followed by an entry of the answer in the mediant key (iii). After a
transitional episode, the fugue should progress to the subdominant (IV), in which only the subject must be used, for the answer would prematurely bring the fugue back to the tonic key. After a short episode, or even without any transitional passage, the fugue ought to modulate to the supertonic (ii), in which there is only one entry (either the subject or the answer). Gedalge advises that the most extended episode, in which the subject may enter in the dominant key (V), should be the one before the first stretto section on the tonic (I). Concerning this episode, he writes that this final episode may progress to the stretto section (most naturally after an extended pedal point), either directly or by means of a brief pause.

In the minor mode, Gedalge observes that while the number of episodes and the way of reaching the stretto section are the same as in the major mode, the key succession changes. After the exposition, Gedalge recommends modulating first to the mediant key (III), followed by the appearance of the answer in the subtonic (VII). After this, the fugue should modulate to the subdominant (iv), followed by an answer in the submediant (VI). Finally, the last episode may present the subject in the dominant key (V) before reaching the first stretto. It is evident from these observations that Gedalge, like Cherubini and Dubois, argues for the avoidance of the main key during the central part of the fugue; this premeditated evasion is a paramount principle in the tripartite formal organization of the nineteenth-century scholastic fugue. I will return to this issue later in this chapter, and, with more detail, in chapter 2.

In the same chapter, entitled “Modulations of the fugue,” Gedalge gives a table of average proportions for the length of the exposition, episodes, middle entries, and transitions in a fugue in the major mode (see figure 1.1). While Gedalge acknowledges that these proportions are

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18 As mentioned above, in the nineteenth-century scholastic tradition, the term “stretto” is used to designate not only the close imitation of subject and answer but also the complete final section of a fugue, which is devoted to the demonstration of multiple stretti (usually between three and six). Accordingly, Dubois and Gedalge employ designations like “first stretto” or “fourth stretto” to identify the various internal stretti that comprise the large-scale stretto section.
purely arbitrary (and cannot be confirmed by the fugues of Bach, Handel, Mozart, or Mendelssohn), he asserts that “tradition alone has set them up and made them observed and respected” (195). As Kent Kennan aptly observes, Gedalge’s artificial plan “may have some value in the beginning stages of fugal writing, when students sometimes find themselves at a loss as to procedure unless they have some sort of blueprint to guide them” (1999, 235). Although this arrangement takes the fugue up to the first stretto (that is, the simultaneous return of the main theme and the tonic key), Gedalge observes that if the fugue maintains the same proportions the length of the entire piece would be somewhere between 100 and 150 measures; clearly, these overall proportions are outstandingly large when compared with those of most fugues in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Thus, regarding the aforementioned tripartite overall structure, Gedalge suggests assigning approximately one-sixth of the fugue to the exposition, one-half to the episodes and middle entries, and one-third to the stretto (final) section (194–95).

**Table 1.1.** Gedalge’s table for the dimensions of the scholastic fugue (up to the first stretto) and the order of modulations for the major mode.
Gedalge’s observations concerning the employment of perfect cadences are concise but well-defined. While Gedalge points out that a fugue may be written without a single perfect cadence, he mentions that, in many cases, it is a good idea to employ one (1) to conclude a “melodic period” or (2) to delineate a change in the pattern of figuration within an episode (224–29). However, he explicitly forbids the use of a cadence during the exposition, since this section “should form an indivisible whole” (231). Gedalge notes, vis-à-vis the relationship between cadences and thematic material, that a perfect cadence may be “judiciously” employed provided that (1) the melodic continity of the subject is not interrupted and that (2) after the cadence, the subject reenters on a chord member of the final chord of this cadence. A point of interest here is that Gedalge uses Bach’s fugues (and no others) to illustrate these guidelines concerning the use and placement of perfect cadences.

The Fugue d’école in Practice

The fugues written for the annual competition at the Paris Conservatory and the qualifying round of the Prix de Rome provide insightful perspectives on the relation between the compositional strategies and procedures outlined in the treatises discussed above and the actual craft of fugue as an exercise in musical rhetoric. Since the 1820s, but more prominently during the second half of the nineteenth century, the guidelines and principles of the fugue d’école were channeled—through the works of Reicha, Fétis, Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge—into these competition fugues. Instruction in counterpoint and fugue assumed such prominence in the pedagogical endeavor of the Conservatory that the responsibility of creating the subjects for its competition rested, almost invariably, with the Director of the institution. An exception to this

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19 Although Gedalge fails to define (explicitly) what he means by “perfect cadence,” the musical examples in the twelfth chapter of his treatise (1901, 225–30) suggest that he is referring to a cadence consisting of a V–I (or V7–I) progression, with both chords in root position and scale-degree 1 in the upper voice of the tonic chord.
practice, however, was the competition of 1896. Owing to the death in February of that year of Ambroise Thomas, Director of the Conservatory since 1871, Saint-Saëns accepted the task of writing the subject for the annual competition. As observed earlier, Saint-Saëns also dictated the subjects for the *Prix de Rome* in 1881 and 1908.

The award-winning fugue for 1896, composed by Georges Caussade on Saint-Saëns’s subject, serves to illustrate the parameters and the genre-defining elements of the *fugue d’école.* While the three texts considered above agree on the essential elements of the fugue and the placement of its particular devices, there is a limited degree of flexibility in the actual realization of this relatively fixed model. Nonetheless, this constrained flexibility—which is usually reflected in the thematic layout of the exposition, the harmonic structure, and the proportions of the overall and internal sections—does not preclude the possibility of outlining a prescriptive model for the scholastic fugue. While a survey of all the award-winning fugues composed for the annual examinations at the Paris Conservatory and the *Prix de Rome* is beyond the scope of this dissertation, an analysis of Caussade’s fugue, supplemented by several other competition fugues, demonstrates a set of necessary conditions, which, in turn, generate a recognizable and consistent formal structure. I address the latter aspect in the next chapter.

The four-voice fugue exhibits a distinct three-part organization consisting of exposition, development, and stretto sections (see Caussade’s fugue in example 1.2). The exposition (mm. 1–17) presents the subject and answer, both accompanied by a countersubject from the second entrance on, at regular four-measure intervals. From both theoretical and compositional point of view, this exposition satisfies what I designate as the first four general conditions of the scholastic model. These conditions are represented in figure 1.2.

\(^{20}\) A student of Théodore Dubois, Georges Caussade (1873–1936) joined the faculty of the Paris Conservatory in 1905. Under the directorship of Gabriel Fauré, and as part of various wide-ranging curricular reforms, Caussade was appointed professor of counterpoint; he also would teach fugue in the coming years. Caussade’s students included Olivier Messiaen, Lili Boulanger, Maurice Duruflé, Germaine Tailleferre, and Georges Dandelot.
Example 1.2. Georges Caussade’s 1896 entry (Premier Prix) for the Paris Conservatory competition in fugue (subject by Saint-Saëns). The fugue is taken from Dubois’s Traité.
Example 1.2 (cont’d)
Example 1.2 (cont’d)
Example 1.2 (cont'd)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First condition:</strong></td>
<td>The thematic material in the exposition should move only between the tonic and dominant keys (Cherubini 1841, 343; Dubois 1901, 114; Gedalge 1901, 276).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second condition:</strong></td>
<td>Regardless how many parts a fugue may have, the exposition requires no fewer than four entries (Cherubini [1835?], 116–24; Dubois, 131; Gedalge, 70).21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third condition:</strong></td>
<td>A countersubject should be introduced after the initial subject (Cherubini, 292; Dubois, 123; Gedalge, 59).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fourth condition:</strong></td>
<td>For the sake of continuity, a perfect cadence must not be used in, or at the end of, the exposition (Dubois, 131; Gedalge, 276).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Figure 1.2.** Conditions 1–4 for the scholastic fugue: Exposition

Viewed broadly, the exposition of the scholastic model has three functions. From a tonal viewpoint, it establishes the principal key through a basic harmonic construction—the continuous alternation of the tonic and dominant. From a thematic standpoint, it presents four statements of the primary subject, accompanied by one or more subsidiary themes. From a morphological perspective, the exposition generates, by the avoidance of cadences, a sense of continuity and forward motion between the first two large-scale sections of the fugue—a defining feature of this compositional exercise.

As mentioned above, there is some degree of flexibility in the realization of this type of fugue. In the exposition, the composer has a selection of available options. Among these are: various dispositions of the successive announcements of subject and answer; the employment (or not) of a counterexposition; the interpolation of a brief episode between the second and third entries; the use of multiple countersubjects, and the simultaneous articulation of the first subject and a countersubject. While the nature and dimensions of the subject have a significant

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21 Although Cherubini does not make an explicit reference to this condition, every one of his examples of fugues, even those in two parts, satisfy it.
effect on the selection of these options, a multiplicity of ad hoc preferences and variants can be seen in the works of composers and apprentices.

For instance, the order of entries in Caussade’s fugue is tenor, alto, soprano, bass. The choice of this specific order, which represents one of the four possible dispositions that Gedalge recommends for fugues in four parts with one countersubject (figure 1.3), should be considered a preference that does not have any significant consequence for the formal structure of the fugue. A similar observation can be made concerning the use of a short episode between the second and third entries, or regarding the choice of starting the initial subject with one or more countersubjects; none of these features are present in the fugue under examination. Whereas Dubois expresses a preference for using “four successive entries without interruption,” Gedalge, following Cherubini, points out that the use of “the above procedure is rather frequently used even if alternate entries of subject and answer can be made without interruption (Dubois 1901, 112; Gedalge 1901, 72; Cherubini 1841, 329). They concur with regard to the choice of placing one or more countersubjects before the conclusion of the initial subject: both assert (both in their conclusions and examples) that it is better to start the countersubject once the subject has finished.22

While the aforementioned preferences are virtually irrelevant in shaping the large-scale organization of a fugue d’école, or as genre-determining factors, the decision to include a counterexposition has implications for the overall proportions of this tripartite model. A purely optional feature, the counterexposition does not articulate a new formal section or a new tonal space, but it does provide an extension of the principal key and a reiteration of the thematic materials. According to Gedalge, the counterexposition is necessary “only when the subject is

22 In his Cours, Cherubini declares: “To me, this disposition does not appear the best; and I think we shall obtain the greatest variety in the ensemble of the parts, by managing the countersubjects so that they shall only come in successively; first allowing the subject to be heard isolated” (1841, 300). Surprisingly, the vast majority of the complete fugues at the end of Cherubini’s Cours begin with the subject and countersubject together, either simultaneously or almost immediately.
very short; or when it lacks a sufficiently characteristic melodic physiognomy, so that four entries are not enough to impose upon the attention of the listener” (1901, 108). Thus, the raison d’être of the counterexposition is to equalize, or even extend, the expositional space with regard to the overall proportions of a fugue.\textsuperscript{23}

Turning attention now to the development section of Caussade’s fugue (example 1.2, mm. 17–55), we find that the first episode modulates to the sixth degree. This episode, which is elided with the end of the fourth entrance in the exposition, is based on fragments of the countersubject and the free parts. Without any cadential closure, the first middle entry (in the relative minor) begins in the alto at measure 25 and is immediately followed by an answer in the soprano. By means of a second episode, which derives from fragments of the head and tail of the subject and two motives in free counterpoint, the fugue modulates to the subdominant key, in which only the subject is employed (m. 40). The third and last episode of the development

\textsuperscript{23} Gedalge also warns the student against prolonging the exposition beyond the proportions prescribed in the scholastic model. He declares, “Whenever a subject has more than four measures in moderate tempo, it is advisable to avoid the counterexposition so as not to lengthen the fugue in an unnecessary way” (1901, 108).
section is primarily concerned with the process of preparing the dominant pedal point that leads to the stretto section.

Before getting into a detailed discussion of the required features (or conditions) in the development section, I need to unpack some specific aspects of cadences, modulatory design, and the rearrangement and transformation of the melodic materials from the exposition. Perhaps the most noticeable aspect of Caussade’s development section is the absence of cadences in the alternation of episodes and thematic statements; all the voices progress in a steady and uninterrupted flow of ideas derived from the exposition. This sense of continuity seems to highlight the dramatic harmonic interruption after the dominant pedal that marks the end of the development in measure 55. In nearly every published example of the scholastic fugue in the second half of the nineteenth century, the dominant pedal is coupled with a point of repose or other break of articulation, before the launch of the principal subject in the stretto (final) section. For instance, all but one of the twelve fugues that received the Premier Prix at the Conservatory in the years 1860–1870 conclude the development section with a dominant pedal point followed by a fermata. While this pause is typically emphasized through the use of a fermata, occasionally the pedal is followed either by a rest in all the parts or by a short melodic link to the next section. According to Cherubini, who applies this procedure even in two-part fugues (example 1.3), this point of stasis generates a “very good effect” by giving “greater brilliancy” to the appearance of the stretto section (1841, 343).

In terms of its tonal scheme, the development modulates, after reaching the first middle entry, from the submediant to the subdominant—a modulation scheme suggested, as we have

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24 The fugue of Alexandre Lavignac (1846–1916), composed on a subject by Daniel Auber for the contest of 1864, presents a dominant pedal at the conclusion of the development, but instead of stressing the interruption with a fermata, all its parts rest at the same time for one beat before the beginning of the stretto section.
Example 1.3. Extract from Cherubini’s Example of a Strict Fugue in Two Parts in C Major, mm. 73–88 ([1835?], 118). Note the “point of repose” on the dominant before the stretto section (m. 87).

seen, by Cherubini and Gedalge for fugues in the major mode. With regard to the first modulation, the submediant and the mediant keys are (for fugues in major and minor keys, respectively) the first-level-default choice for the first pair of thematic announcements in the development. To give a concise example of this preference in fugues intended for competitions and classes, all the first-prize winners of the fugue competition at the Paris Conservatory during the years 1880–1885 adopted this scheme of modulation. Similarly, all the competition fugues presented by Dubois and Gedalge at the end of their treatises establish the relative key in the first pair of middle entries. Although, based on the examples of competition fugues, no absolute rule can be laid down for the order of modulations after the first middle entry, one thing is mandatory: the tonic must be avoided throughout the development section.

In his observations regarding the order of modulations for the major mode, Gedalge notes that the answer of the first pair of middle entries leads the fugue to the mediant key—that is, before progressing to the second episode, which leads to the subject in the subdominant. However, that his table for the major mode (fig. 1.1) shows the tonal center of this answer in parentheses—Réponse (3e degré)—and before the second episode seems to suggest that Gedalge regards this modulation as hierarchically inferior or even transitory. Gedalge’s annotated scores at the end of his treatise seem to strengthen this hypothesis.

The winners of the Paris Conservatory competition in fugue during these years were: Henry Pierné and Paul Vidal (1881); Charles René (1882); Vincenzo Ferroni and Anatole Grand-Jany (1883); and Xavier Leroux (1884). No first prize was awarded in the years 1880 and 1885.
As mentioned above, the three episodes of this fugue are composed of fragments and permutations derived from the melodic materials of the exposition, a principle of variety that is stressed in all the theoretical works under examination (Cherubini 1841, 333; Dubois 1901, 144; Gedalge 1901, 113). In fugues for examination and competition, each episode must exhibit a different combination and disposition of these materials, and the occurrence of repeated patterns or harmonic sequences (e.g., descending-fifth sequences) is virtually nonexistent. As Gedalge declares, in competitive examinations “it is required—without any reasons being given—that all episodes be established on different thematic materials, in direct contradiction not only to the customary practice of the masters of the fugue, but also to the procedures associated with the symphonic development” (1901, 233). The prohibition of harmonic sequences is an especially sharp departure from the practice of eighteenth-century composers in writing fugal episodes.

Figure 1.4 shows the conditions of the development. While very occasionally one may come across a development section with slight deviations or a minor reworking of one of these normative principles, conditions 4–8 are found not only in Caussade’s fugue but in nearly every competition fugue scrutinized. Here, the fourth condition has been extended to include the first event in the internal anatomy of the development. To some extent, the restatement of this condition aims to reflect the desired continuity between the exposition and development in the French scholastic model.

The final part of Caussade’s fugue (mm. 56–82) comprises four successive stretti followed by a pedal point on the tonic, which anticipates the final cadence.27 The first three

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27 Although in their respective treatises, Dubois and Gedalge use the term “stretto” as an umbrella term to denote the canonic succession of (1) subject and countersubject, (2) answer and countersubject, (3) subject and subject, and (4) answer and answer, they acknowledge, following Cherubini, that a true stretto is that which occurs between the subject and the answer.
| **Fourth condition**  
(Extended version): | For the sake of continuity, a perfect cadence must not be used in or at the end of the exposition. This rule ought to be extended up to the first episode of the development (Dubois, 131; Gedalge, 276). |
| **Fifth condition:** | The first announcement in the development must be in the submediant—for fugues in the major mode—and the mediant—for fugues in the minor mode. The following announcements ought to be in closely related keys (Cherubini, 334; Gedalge, 194). |
| **Sixth condition:** | The use of the tonic key is forbidden in the development section (Cherubini, 334; Dubois, 157; Gedalge, 194). |
| **Seventh condition:** | The motives of an episode must be derived from the materials of the exposition. Sequences are strictly forbidden (Cherubini, 333; Dubois, 144; Gedalge, 113). |
| **Eighth condition:** | The development should conclude with a point of repose, triggered by a pedal point on the dominant—that is, just before the onset of the stretto section (Cherubini, 343; Dubois, 110; Gedalge, 242). |

**Figure 1.4.** Conditions 4–8 for the scholastic fugue: Development

stretti—(1) subject and answer at two measure-intervals; (2) the countersubject at one-measure intervals; (3) subject and answer at one-measure intervals—consist of four entries, whereas the last one presents only two entries—(4) the subject and the answer in augmentation at one beat’s distance. No two of the four stretti reproduce the same order of entrances.

An examination of several competition fugues, composed between 1857 and 1900, shows that no definite guidelines can be prescribed for the number of stretto entrances and the nature of the canonic combinations. In his closing remarks on the overall design of a fugue, Gedalge points out that the “composition of the stretto in the scholastic fugue does not have as many restrictions as the first two sections of the fugue” (1901, 251). In a general way, however, one may notice that the majority of these fugues have between three and six stretti, with most presenting a stretto of the subject and answer (consisting of four entries) in the initial stretto.
Also common is the practice of combining a subject or answer in their original time-value with one or two statements in augmentation, diminution, or inversion. Nonetheless, regardless of its particular design and conformation, two elements are essential in the final section of every *fugue d’école*: the reintroduction and final grounding of the tonic, and the use of multiple stretti (see figure 1.5).

Although a high number of scholastic fugues introduce a tonic pedal in the bass in or near the end of the final section (a required procedure according to Gedalge), Dubois points out that the use of this or any kind of pedal “is left to the discretion of the composer” (1901, 168). In effect, an examination of the scholastic literature shows several examples of fugues written for competitions, or for study in the classroom, that do not make use of a tonic pedal in the whole stretto section—to name a few examples, the award-winning fugues at the Conservatory in 1857 (Théodore Dubois), 1866 (Jules Massenet), and 1900 (Raymond Pech). Accordingly, this study concludes that while the tonic pedal is frequently used to announce the end of a fugue, it cannot be regarded as a crucial condition of the *fugue d’école*.

As a fugue moves towards its conclusion, it is also common to find the addition or duplication of voices, particularly at the very end, where a pedal point or a collection of relatively long notes in the bass may be reinforced in the lower octave (see the augmented answer at the end of Caussade’s fugue; ex. 1.2, mm. 76–82). The purpose of this addition, writes Gedalge, is “to obtain a greater plenitude of sound at the end of the fugue” (1901, 186). In some sense, this point of textural saturation, which reinforces (perhaps as a logical corollary) the thematic saturation generated by the multiple stretti that preceded it, may be considered a customary musical gesture that marks the imminent end of the fugue.
### Ninth condition:
The first stretto must assert the definite return of the tonic key. While the existence of transient modulations to closely related keys cannot be ruled out entirely, these digressions should be organized recursively around the tonic (Cherubini, 334; Gedalge, 277).

### Tenth condition:
This last section of the fugue must be constructed out of multiple stretti (Cherubini, 287; Dubois, 164; Gedalge, 277).

**Figure 1.5.** Conditions 9 and 10 for the scholastic fugue: Stretto (final) section

### Conclusion

The scholastic fugue is almost universally regarded as an idealized, artificial, and ultimately lifeless branch of musical composition—in the words of Bullivant, “a genre in which theory is . . . hopelessly at variance with practice” (1971, 175). However, this study argues that this type of fugue, whatever its reputation and shortcomings, was predominant not only in many academic circles in Europe during the nineteenth century and part of the twentieth, but also had a tremendous influence on the artistic (i.e., non-scholastic) fugues of many Romantic composers. As Imogene Horsley appropriately notes:

The patterns of the school fugue present us with a better prototype for analyzing fugues of the Classical and Romantic periods than does a knowledge of the fugues of Bach. Even those composers who strove most earnestly to reconstitute the fugue of Bach produced fugues that are better understood by recourse to contemporary textbooks. Although the exact formal outlines given in these textbooks were rarely followed, a number of characteristics involving form that are inherent in both the French and German school fugues are found in composed fugues of the time. (Horsley 1966, 272)

While several authors, as we will see in the following chapter, reject the idea of examining an eighteenth-century fugue (as epitomized by Bach) under the light of the scholastic model, little has been written about the relationship between the nineteenth-century fugue and this idealized tripartite outline. Here it is not my intention to devalue, much less to deny, the influence of Bach’s fugues in the last two-thirds of the nineteenth century; in the next
chapter, I take a closer look at the influence of the Cantor of Leipzig on the Romantic and twentieth-century concept of fugal form. My intent is rather to underscore the powerful role of the *fugue d'école* as a generative model and to investigate the specific ways in which its constituent conditions outline the tripartite formal design found in many fugues written during this time, particularly those by Saint-Saëns. However, to achieve this task and construct an analytical framework, it will be beneficial first to consider what has been written about fugal form.
Chapter 2

Fugue as a Formal Process: A Fallacious Construct?

The relationship between fugue and form is a complicated one. At the heart of this problematic relationship lies the question of whether or not certain common procedures and form-defining features place the fugue in a definite formal category. From the point of view of form, the fugue has been described, since the mid-nineteenth century, (1) as a process, texture, or technique that generates a variable form by means of one or even multiple formal designs, (2) as a polyphonic form that is subject to one of three preordained formal schemes (sectional, three-part, and two-part form), or (3) as a relatively fixed three-part form. While the principal argument of those who consider the fugue a contrapuntal process is that every fugue has its own unique form—the prevalent view among modern writers—a second group of authors argues that the fugue unfolds an ordering of identifiable circumstances, elements, and conditions “capable of broad generalization” (Berry 1986, 345). Alternatively, the idea that all fugues are in three-part form appears to have its roots in the theoretical construct of an idealized fugue in the second half of the nineteenth century.

To establish the theoretical background and analytical approach of this study, this chapter sets out to evaluate the elucidations of eleven authors and one team of authors on the subject of fugal form since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This chapter will examine the fugal theories of Hugo Riemann, Ebenezer Prout, Percy Goetschius, Donald Francis Tovey, Kent Kennan, Joaquín Zamacois, Douglass Green, Wallace Berry, Roger Bultivant, Marcel Bitsch.
& Jean Bonfils, Robert Gauldin, and William Renwick.\(^2\) The reason for restricting this survey to texts written after the last quarter of the nineteenth century is threefold. First, it coincides with the crystallization of the scholastic fugue as a pedagogic exercise in France, Germany, and England. Second, it concurs with the emergence of texts on fugue that aim to reconcile this genre with the compositional practices of J. S. Bach—that is, after the revival and reassessment of his music in the nineteenth century. Finally, this group of texts might be appropriately described as “modern” in the sense that it is most closely related to our contemporary analytical tradition—a tradition that (in agreement or resistance) remains under the pervasive influence of nineteenth-century *Formenlehre*. Here it is necessary to stress that most of the following authors are not primarily concerned (like Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge) with handing us blueprints on how to write a fugue. Rather, their focus is on the systematic and conscientious explanation of the fugue—its components and formal procedures—from a theoretical and historical standpoint.

### Twelve Perspectives on Fugal Form

Hugo Riemann

In the foreword to his *Catechism of Fugal Composition* (1890), Hugo Riemann rejects the idea of writing a manual of fugal theory based on abstract rules and states that full-length analyses of Bach’s fugues are far more valuable than a collection of vague and artificial prescripts. Taking Bach’s fugues from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* as exemplary models for the

\(^2\) In this literature review, the formulations and ideas of these authors are arranged chronologically by the date of publication of the first edition of their respective most influential text that approaches the topic of fugal form. For example, while the fourth edition of Kent Kennan’s *Counterpoint* was published in 1999, it occupies the fifth position in this review because the first edition was published in 1959.
study of form, modulation, and phrase structure, Riemann argues that most of Bach’s fugues subscribe to a three-part structure. He writes:

The first result of the present analysis of fugues is to establish in the clearest manner the perfect agreement of Bach’s fugal structure with the norm of all other musical formation; tripartite division according to the scheme A–B–A (foundation-laying section in the principal key, modulating middle section, concluding section in the principal key) is everywhere clearly exposed to view; and sound reasons, likewise, may be given for the few apparent exceptions. (Riemann [1890?], 1:I)

Although aspects of thematic design, phrase structure, texture, and figuration assist in the articulation of this tripartite configuration, Riemann’s analyses show that these sections are primarily defined by tonal motions and relationships as marked off by cadences. More often than not, the first section goes beyond the conventionally designated exposition (i.e., the presentation of the subject in all voices in either its original or answer form) and includes an episode that either modulates to a new key or reaffirms the original key by means of a cadence. However, the occurrence of two or more episodes or developments within the first section is not uncommon in Riemann’s analyses.

For instance, in his analysis of Bach’s Fugue in C-sharp Minor from WTC1, Riemann argues that the first section comprises two “developments” (Durchführungen) and concludes with a conspicuous cadence in the relative major (see example 2.1). As it did for Marpurg, Durchführung for Riemann denotes a passage in which the main theme of a fugue passes imitatively through multiple voices; he opposes Durchführungen, which he characterizes as

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29 Central to Riemann’s analytical approach is the underlying view that the norm of the eight-measure period is applicable to fugal composition. According to Riemann, not only does the subject/answer pair form an eight-measure period, but the fugue as a whole is subdivided into eight-measure periods. However, Riemann frequently employs appendages, elisions, contractions, extensions, and other maneuvers to cope with the irregularities found in Bach’s fugues.

30 While Riemann generally regards the exposition as an internal component of the initial section, he sometimes uses the term “exposition” to denote the totality of the first section.

31 In the context of the first section, Riemann points out that the “first development” coincides, in nearly all the fugues examined, with the customary exposition ([1890?], 1:4). However, subsequent developments may occur not only in the first section, but also in the modulating and concluding sections.
**Example 2.1.** Bach’s Fugue in C-sharp Minor, BWV 849 (WTC 1), mm. 1–35: First section (with two developments), according to Riemann’s analysis.

“principal parts” [*Hauptteilen*] of the fugue, with *Zwischenpartien* or “intermediate parts”—i.e., episodes (Riemann [1890?], 1:4). In the context of this fugue, Riemann observes that the first “development” ends with the redundant entry in the tenor at measure 22. The second development joins in immediately, presenting four entries (in the tenor, second alto, bass, and first alto, respectively) and concluding with a perfect authentic cadence in E major at measure 35. According to Riemann, the beginning of the modulating section, which is elided with the conclusion of the first section, is reaffirmed by the immediate departure from the previously established key and the change of figuration in the soprano.
One thing that is immediately striking about Riemann’s discussion of formal structure in Bach’s fugues is that the dimensions of the three principal sections of a fugue—resulting from his analytical approach—tend to be more elastic and variable when compared with those found in the works of French and English theorists in the late nineteenth century. For example, in his analysis of Bach’s Fugue in C Minor from the second book of The Well-Tempered Clavier, Riemann places the end of the first section right in the middle of the piece (m. 14). The conclusion of the first segment, which comprises two developments, coincides with a perfect authentic cadence in the key of the dominant.

Riemann admits exceptions to the principle of tripartition, as defined principally by tonal relations. In some fugues, the main sections are demarcated by thematic aspects, contrapuntal procedures, texture, and figuration. In the aforementioned example, for instance, the middle section, which he often defines as the “modulating section,” does not modulate. With regard to this irregularity, Riemann concludes:

The close in G-minor is followed directly by the second section, of which the already mentioned combinations form the characteristic feature. This second section is also in C-minor and the fugue has therefore no real modulating section; but here it must be noticed that for this loss we are compensated not only by contrapuntal combinations, but also by rapid transitions and striking harmonic effects such as those already indicated. ([1890?], 2:14)

Bach’s Fugue in B-flat Minor from the second book of The Well-Tempered Clavier is an example, in extremis, of a fugue that not only fails to adhere to the prototypical formal scheme (ABA) but also delineates its main sections by means of complex contrapuntal procedures such as inversion, invertible counterpoint, and stretto. According to Riemann, this fugue divides itself into five sections: (I) development of the theme in original form; (II) stretto of the theme in original form; (III) development of the theme in inversion; (IV) stretto of the theme in inversion; (V) stretto of the theme in original form against its own inversion. In his analysis, Riemann focuses most of his comments on the “contrapuntal
combinations” of these sections and cautiously avoids any reference to terms associated with the three-part formal plan.

Ebenezer Prout

According to Ebenezer Prout (1891), every instrumental or vocal fugue, regardless of its particular details, is written in ternary, or three-part, form. Taking Bach’s fugues as the starting point for his elucidations and principles, Prout admits that the idea of fugue as a ternary form can be traced back to the theoretical works of A. B. Marx and Hugo Riemann. For Prout, “the first section of a fugue extends as far as the end of the last entry of the subject or answer in the original keys of tonic and dominant” (1891, 139). Accordingly, if the episode following the exposition leads either to a counterexposition or to an isolated redundant entry in one of the original keys, this episode and the additional entries belong to the first section. The middle section is composed of modulating episodes and entries in keys other than the tonic and dominant (including distantly related keys). In his article “Fugal Structure,” published one year after his treatise, Prout accounts for the possibility of having a middle entry in the tonic key. As Prout observes:

We can always decide if such an entry belongs to the middle section by observing whether there are subsequent modulations to other keys than tonic and dominant. Where such a middle entry occurs, the form of the fugue has some affinity with one of the older rondo forms, in which, after each episode, the chief theme recurs in the tonic key. (1892, 149)

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32 In contrast to the French scholastic model, Prout’s definition of “counterexposition” is less restrictive and allows for up to the number of voices presented in the exposition. He also acknowledges the possibility of a counterexposition with inverted entries (1891, 90).
Prout also points out that the number of modulating episodes and middle entries is significantly reduced in fugues in which the subject is often combined with itself in stretto. He notes that this procedure may even blur the boundaries of the three overall sections.\footnote{In this article, Prout shows particular interest in the proportions of the three main sections of the fugue. In comparing the fugues from the two volumes of The Well-Tempered Clavier, he concludes that while the middle section is most frequently the longest of the three sections, Bach’s practice demonstrates the elasticity of the fugal form. Among his findings, Prout notes that nearly all the fugues in which the first section is the longest contain a counterexposition and that there is only one fugue—out of the forty-eight—in which the final section is the longest of the three, due to its unusually early return to the tonic key (the first fugue in book 2).}

Prout’s general observations regarding the final section of the fugue do not differ significantly from those of Riemann’s text: The beginning of the final section is marked by a subject in the tonic key that is not followed by a subsequent modulation. He describes the occurrence of a final section without a complete statement of the subject as an exceptional “irregularity of construction” (1892, 149). However, Prout asserts, drawing on Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier and The Art of Fugue, that neither the stretto nor the pedal point are essential components of the final section.

Percy Goetschius

In his book Counterpoint Applied in the Invention, Fugue, Canon and other Polyphonic Forms, Percy Goetschius states that the exposition is an indispensable component of fugal form, “no matter what its subsequent development (its design as a whole) may be” (1902, 229). He argues that the last announcement of the subject or answer is customarily followed by a relatively lengthy episode that establishes the key in which the exposition is expected to close.\footnote{According to Goetschius, a redundant (or extra) entry may occur in this closing episode. According to Goetschius, a redundant (or extra) entry may occur in this closing episode.}

From his perspective, the exposition is demarcated, as a rule, by a perfect cadence in the dominant (in fugues in major keys) or the mediant (in fugues in minor keys).\footnote{Regarding the harmonic goal of this episode, Goetschius notes that “other keys, especially the original key itself, are possible . . . and not infrequently chosen” (1902, 228).} While Goetschius observes, drawing on several examples from The Well-Tempered Clavier, that this closing
cadence “is often made fairly strong,” he readily admits the possibility of ending the exposition with a “much lighter” or even “transient” cadence (228).

However, “that which follows the exposition is not . . . subject to any further specific conditions” (229). Contrary to most French, English, and German authors in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Goetschius argues that there are no restrictions on the number of thematic announcements after the exposition, nor on the keys in which these entrances occur. He writes:

The subsequent conduct of the fugue may be as free as that of the invention, always expecting that a certain dignity and general seriousness of style should be maintained. After the exposition the writer is free to realize more definite structural purposes; to carry out more extensive modulatory designs; to develop the thematic resources of the subject, both as a whole, and in its component figures; and to pursue some broad (quasi dramatic) design, leading in successive stages to effective climaxes at, or near, the end. (230)

Despite this sense of compositional freedom, Goetschius’s treatment of fugal form rests on the postulate that a good fugue exhibits a well-defined formal design. He distinguishes three types of formal design for the fugue:

1. Sectional form: The most common and natural design for the fugue. The number of thematic and episodic sections in this formal design is variable (from three to eight sections in total). “The episodes assume an importance fully equal, if not superior, to that of the thematic portions” (231). Most commonly, each succeeding section of the fugue exhibits new traits and features.

2. Two-part song-form: “The chief difference between this and the sectional design is the distinctly marked cadence (usually perfect) in or near the middle of the fugue” (239). The second part of this type of fugue—which shows some parallelism with the first part—is often characterized by the use of contrary motion of the subject or by means of new contrapuntal devices.

3. The three-part song-form: After the exposition, the second part of this formal design is “generally characterized in some manner” (239). This section ends with a half cadence in the tonic key, usually emphasized by a pedal point. The third and last part is marked by a “return to the beginning” (240). This return does not need to contain the totality of the
exposition, just “enough to establish key and formal design” (240). Common devices in this section include the use of stretto and a coda.

Goetschius adds a fourth category to describe fugues with “special design” (240–42). The formal scheme of these fugues is often akin to that of the sectional fugue, but with a systematic exploration of the contrapuntal possibilities of the thematic material (e.g., stretto, contrary motion, augmentation, diminution, etc.).

What is immediately striking about Goetschius’s categories of formal design for the fugue, and the analyses in prose that support them, is the primary role of cadences and episodes (especially when they develop recognizable and recurrent material) in shaping the “form of the whole.” While an announcement of the theme may acquire, after the exposition, a certain importance as a means of articulating a new section, Goetschius seems to be inclined to consider thematic portions as formally salient only when they exhibit a well-ordered presentation of the subject and answer (highly reminiscent of that to be found in the exposition) or new contrapuntal variants, such as stretto or inversion. With the exception of the required tonic return in the three-part design and the desirable, but not required, cadential dominant in the two part form, Goetschius does not suggest a key scheme for the sections that follow the exposition, nor does he delineate a relation between the harmonic organization of a fugue and a particular formal design.

In his analysis of the post-expositional sections of Bach’s Fugue in B Major from the first book of The Well-Tempered Clavier (231), Goetschius illustrates the significance of cadences in outlining the formal division of a fugue. Example 2.2 shows an annotated score in conformity with Goetschius’s verbal commentary. In his view, this fugue is in sectional form and exhibits five distinguishable segments—that is, four sections after the exposition. As can be seen, each
Example 2.2. Bach’s Fugue in B Major, BWV 868 (WTC 1), mm. 8–34: Sections II to V, according to Goetschius’s verbal analysis.
succeeding section begins immediately after a relatively strong cadence: section II starts after the IAC that concludes the exposition in m. 9; section III begins after the IAC on the third beat of m. 13; sections IV and V begin after the PACs in mm. 18 and 26, respectively. Sections II, III, and V begin with a recurrent episodic passage, section IV with a pair of subjects in inversion. The final section of the fugue is not defined by the return of the tonic, but rather by the placement of the last PAC in the fugue (m. 26), which occurs on the supertonic. For Goetschius, the concurrent return of the principal key and the original subject (m. 29) takes place in medias res and does not denote a structural marker in the formal outline of the fugue.

Donald Francis Tovey

In his writings for the Encyclopædia Britannica, posthumously republished as The Forms of Music (1944), Donald Francis Tovey states that, since the age of Palestrina, fugue is “a texture the rules of which do not suffice to determine the shape of a composition as a whole” (1959, 36). In eschewing the idea of fugue as form, Tovey observes that while the rules and the standard form given in most pedagogical treatises, like that of Cherubini, have no real connection with the fugal tradition as epitomized by J. S. Bach, “it played an interesting part in the renascence of polyphony during the growth of the sonata-style, and even gave rise to valuable works of art” (26–27). Drawing on the scholastic maxim that “every fugue should have a stretto,” Tovey notes that whereas this is not, by any means, a requirement in the works of Bach and Handel, this rule is not entirely detached from the compositional aesthetics in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As Tovey declares:

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36 This study defines an IAC as a relatively weak authentic cadence (V–I) that has either or both chords inverted (e.g., V₄/₂ – I₆), or has scale-degree 3 or (more rarely) 5 in the soprano of the tonic chord. A cadence using vii°₈, vii°₆, or vii°₆/₅ as a substitute for the dominant chord is also regarded as an IAC. Various intrinsic factors in the design of a typical fugue (most notably the reordering of the parts due to the principles of invertible counterpoint) make William Caplin’s definition of IAC (1998, 2004) inadequate for the study of fugal form.

37 Both in his edition of Bach’s The Art of Fugue (originally published in 1931) and in the aforementioned work, Tovey argues that the fugue-form set forth by Cherubini is inherently Italian and, therefore, incompatible with Bach’s compositional procedures.
[This] pedagogic rule proved to be not without artistic point in later music; for fugue became, since the rise of the sonata-styles, a contrast with the normal means of expression instead of being itself normal. And while this was so, there was considerable point in using every possible means to enhance the rhetorical force of its peculiar devices, as is shown by the astonishing dramatic fugues in Beethoven’s last works. (27)

Tovey thus draws a link between the systematic and recurrent use of complex imitative techniques, which he associates with “academic exercises,” and some of the fugal compositions—or movements in fugal style—of Classical composers such as Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

For Tovey, the exposition of a fugue concludes when all the voices have presented a subject or answer. A review of his annotated analyses shows that he regards the exposition (i.e., “the first entries”) as a purely thematic event. With respect to harmony, he declares that the exposition is not intended to stress a contrasting dichotomy between the tonic and the dominant keys. In his view, “the answer . . . is not so much a transposition of the subject to the key of the dominant as an adaptation of it from the tonic part to the dominant part of the scale, or vice versa” (37). Tovey defines the space between thematic entrances as “episodes,” making no distinction between those occurring during and after the exposition.

Kent Kennan

Kent Kennan (1999) views the notion of fugue as a three-part form as a nineteenth-century construction, incompatible with the type of fugal composition crafted during Bach’s life or even a century after his death. This concept, writes Kennan, “came to be questioned and finally supplanted by the earlier and more valid one of fugue as a way of writing, a particular contrapuntal approach” (1999, 202). According to Kennan, the term “fugal form” is devoid of any precise meaning, because there are various formal strategies available for writing a fugue. Kennan admits that the general idea of a three-part scheme has been adopted because the phases of exposition, development section, and return are found in almost every fugue.
However, he notes that in defining the overall form of a fugue we must take into account the proportions of the individual sections and their mutual relationship.

While Kennan declares that the exposition is the only section in a fugue that proceeds in conformity with a “set formal plan,” he notes that this section may be “extended beyond the normal proportions . . . either by the addition of an announcement or by sequential extension” (209). According to him, this sequential extension of the exposition usually leads to a cadence in a key other than the tonic. However, Kennan fails to point out the features that differentiate this extension from the first episode of the middle portion.

Although Kennan admits that the terms “middle portion,” “final portion,” and “recapitulation,” could be criticized as implying a fixed three-part design (which, according to him, is not well adapted to every fugue), he retains these terms because they are convenient for discussing the formal features of a fugue. Regarding the middle portion, he notes that, in fugues with a short final portion, there are likely to be more middle entries; he also considers the use of a dominant pedal just before the final tonic as a fairly frequent device. Concerning the final portion, Kennan observes that while the end of a fugue may be constructed in different ways, “there will invariably be a return to the tonic key somewhere before the end” (225). In this context, he uses the term “recapitulation” to denote the presentation of the initial subject and countersubject (if existent) in the tonic key. According to him, if a fugue exhibits a full recapitulation, “the point of return is likely to be about two-thirds of the way through”; it may entail the use of stretto, pedal points, textural stratification (extra voices), and quasi-improvisatory passages (225).

After discussing the fugue as a whole, Kennan notes that even though many fugues fall into a three-part scheme, there are numerous examples of fugues involving a binary or sectional design, or even delineating a formal scheme that is located in a gray zone between the binary and tripartite categories. For example, he observes, taking Siegmund Levarie’s article “Fugue
and Form” (1943) as a point of departure, that many binary fugues contain short recapitulations at the end, and brings the reader to the question: “how much of a recapitulation may be present without giving the form a preponderantly three-part (ABA) feeling rather than a binary feeling” (236)? In his view, there are fugues in which the analyst cannot provide a conclusive answer to this question.

Joaquín Zamacois

In chapter II of his Curso de Formas Musicales (1997), Zamacois argues that a fugue may be divided, for analytical purposes, into two or, more often, three sections.38 In his view, the progression from section to section is often imperceptible to the listener, because these sections are not defined by conspicuous cadences or new themes. The first section of the fugue comprises the exposition (sometimes with a “supplementary entrance” or an optional counterexposition) and concludes when all voices have given a statement of the subject or answer. Zamacois points out that while some theorists consider the first transitional episode, after the last entry of the exposition, as part of the first section, he assigns this episode to the second section.

Based exclusively on harmonic factors, Zamacois classifies the second section of the fugue according to three types:

1. The type that achieves a tonal expansion, introducing the subject and answer in various keys—usually closely related ones—excluding the keys presented in the first section. (The most common type.)

2. The type that fails to achieve the aforementioned tonal expansion, because all the entries of the subject and the answer remain in the keys of the first section. (An old-fashioned type, rarely used in modern times.)

3. The type that combines the two previous categories, as it presents new keys, but also those used in the first section. (Frequently found in The Well-Tempered Clavier.)

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38 This statement should not be understood to mean that Zamacois casts the fugue as either a binary or ternary form; nowhere in this chapter does he use these terms.
These types exhibit two variants:

a) The subject and answer retain their original form and are not treated in stretto.

b) The subject and answer appear in augmentation, diminution, contrary motion, or stretto. (Zamacois 1997, 81–82)

Simply put, type 1 avoids the tonic and dominant keys; type 2 remains in these keys; type 3 may modulate to any key. For Zamacois, the second section defines the overall organization of a fugue, whether or not a third section is required. He observes that “the third section is unquestionably required only in those fugues in which the second section conforms to the first type” (Zamacois 1997, 85).

According to Zamacois, the function of the third section is to reaffirm the principal key, either by means of a simple episode or, more often, by the introduction of one or more thematic statements. He regards the use of stretto and pedal point as common but not required features of the final section.

Douglass Green

Drawing on the analytical approach of Tovey, Douglass Green states that “the fugue is not a form” but a polyphonic composition with a texture consisting of a number of individual lines that are based on a theme and its imitations (1979, 258–59). For him, the fugue is not a standardized musical structure, like the rondo or the sonata form, for it usually has a unique form of its own. Regarding this point, he writes:

Two Bach fugues may have much in common, but the relationship between them is not of the same kind as the relationship between, say, two of Beethoven’s sonata forms. Fugues are classed together in a singles species not because of similarities of form, but because they exhibit in their texture similar contrapuntal procedures. From the point of

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39 Although the occurrence of a fugue with only two sections, in accordance with Zamacois’s definition, is rare, Bach’s fugues in D minor and E minor from the first book of The Well-Tempered Clavier (types 2 and 3 respectively) are examples.
view of form each fugue is independent. It may show a binary or ternary form; it may exhibit resemblances to the rondo. (1979, 258–59)

Rather than elaborating a systematic scheme for the fugue, Green prefers to adopt a comparative approach to show the degree of similarity or divergence among the features of individual fugues, both in the realms of tonal structure and design. To examine the formal procedures customarily associated with fugue, Green compares two fugues (both in G minor) written by different composers: Louis Marchand and J. S. Bach. In his comparison, he points out, with regard to tonal structure, that Marchand’s fugue is restricted to the tonic and dominant keys and lacks obvious cadential goals, whereas Bach’s fugue moves to various harmonic regions and is divisible on account of its strong cadences.

Green observes that “far-reaching contrasts are contrary to the continuously flowing, unified nature typical of fugal style” (274). He continues by pointing out that “[i]n no fugue . . . is any great contrast, such as often occurs between the first and second parts of a ternary form, to be looked for” (274). In this context, Green concludes that a fugue is usually divided either by way of multiple modulations or by cadences. Consequently, he argues that Marchand’s fugue is a one-part form, whereas Bach’s fugue exhibits an “arched” three-part design.

With regard to design, Green recognizes only two contrasting areas: expositions and episodes. He uses the term “exposition” much as Marpurg and Riemann used Durchführung (usually translated, misleadingly, as “development”), to mean any presentation of the subject or answer, regardless of its key or location in the fugue, and the term “episode” to

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40 Green analyses Bach’s Fugue no. 16 in G Minor from the first book of The Well-Tempered Clavier. With the exception of the Fugue in C Minor from the same volume (the “textbook” fugue par excellence), this is one of the most analyzed fugues in the modern literature. Among its most attractive features are: the regularity of the countersubject, the clarity of its cadences, the constant use of inversion and double counterpoint, and the tonic return marked by thematic statements in stretto.
denote a section of the fugue that does not include a statement of the subject. For example, in his analysis of Bach’s Fugue no. 16 in G Minor from the first volume of The Well-Tempered Clavier, Green identifies five expositions and five episodes (including what many would term “bridge” or “link”) within the overall three-part scheme. Although Riemann’s analysis of this fugue (Riemann [1890?], 1:109–12) does not enumerate its Durchführungen and Zwischenspiele, his count of these passages would presumably be similar to Green’s.

Wallace Berry

“Is the fugue a form?” With this question Wallace Berry confronts the issue of fugal form right from the beginning of his chapter on “Fugue and Related Genres.” Berry argues that, for over three hundred years, the fugue has showed noticeable common features of form: the exposition of thematic material, recurrence of the subject, developmental episodes and tonal flux in the central part of the structure, and a tonic return (usually) accompanied by one or more thematic statements (1986, 345). Berry writes:

These are form-defining characteristics, if we consider that form has as one of its essential bases the plan of tonal and thematic events marking the directions of (expository and developmental) action. Like other forms, the fugue unfolds in a “narrative” or “scenario” embodying an ordering of circumstances, conditions, materials, and stages of identifiable kinds capable of broad generalization. . . . Obviously all forms vary in realization. The schematic definition of the prototype is always fictional, yet

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41 In “A Comparison of Thematic and Episodic Analyses of the Bach Two-Part Inventions” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1980), Thomas Leckie establishes a connection between the authors who reject the notion of fugue as a form and the more-inclusive usage of the term “exposition.” As Leckie points out, “All of the writers who so carefully defined fugue as a procedure rather than a form have applied the term exposition more freely that the French theorists who first establish the terminology. This is true of Bukofzer, Apel, Erickson, Garrett, Green, Tyndall, and Mann” (1980, 46). Leckie regards this particular use as contradictory, as he declares: “Applying the term exposition to the statements of the theme other than the opening ones appears to be an unrealistic attempt to force fugue into the more formal structure, which the above writers were seeking to avoid by the use of the term procedure” (46).


43 In Berry’s chapter, “development” means the opposite of Riemann’s Durchführung. It refers to episodes, where thematic material is fragmented, not to statements of the entire subject or answer.
always true. The features by which fugue is defined are as valid as anything that can be said of any form. (1986, 345)

While Berry observes that the conventional concept of ternary form (ABA) is not entirely compatible with fugue, he points out that the fugue’s form is—tonally speaking—rounded and consists of three “stages of events, or processes:” (1) the exposition of the thematic material, (2) development and tonal variation, and (3) the return of the tonic marked by at least one thematic statement. However, unlike the proponents of the scholastic model, Berry proposes that these three stages are frequently demarcated by cadences as well as by “distinct identifying factors of content and procedure” (346).

Berry considers that fugal form is best understood through the lens of the Baroque fugue (the age of its “greatest universality”) and regards Bach’s fugues as the best models for the study of the genre. Although using Bach’s fugues as the main yardstick to evaluate and study the elements, organization, and procedures of a fugue was standard practice in the scholastic treatises of Prout, Dubois, Gedalge, and Zamacois, Berry differs from these authors in using multiple Bach examples to stress the power of cadences in articulating the stages and internal sections of a fugue. For instance, he considers that the function of the exposition—as the first stage—is the presentation of the fugue’s thematic material at tonic and dominant levels, but he emphasizes that a cadential punctuation is usual, though not required, at the end of the exposition or after the subsequent episode (359). Even though Berry argues that the concept of tripartition is central to fugal form, he notes that a fugue is “a sectional form in which clear but often inconspicuous cadences on related tonics [may] articulate a bisectional or multisectional plan” (369).

At this point, a distinction between “stage” and “section” is required. For Berry, a fugue unfolds a tonal narrative of three stages—exposition, departure, and restoration—but it may be divided into two, three, or more interconnected sections demarcated by cadences that frequently
exhibit “a drop-off in textural density and a renewal of the accumulative process” (369). Simply put, a stage may be demarcated by cadences and harmonic elements but also by thematic processes, whereas a section is exclusively outlined by cadences and harmonic contrasts. The boundaries of stages and sections may or may not coincide.

For example, Berry notes, without further elaboration, that Bach’s well-known Fugue in C Minor from the first book of The Well-Tempered Clavier articulates a bisectional plan consisting of two sections and coda. Although Berry fails to specify the location of the cadences that articulate the binary division and the beginning of the coda, we may be fairly confident that he is referring to the PAC in the dominant minor around the middle of the fugue (m. 17) and the final authentic cadence on the tonic, which elides with the post-cadential pedal point (m. 29). Interestingly, these sectional markers—the strongest cadences in the fugue—do not coincide with the inception of the three stages as defined by Berry.

Roger Bullivant

In his book Fugue, Roger Bullivant writes in the first chapter (“What is a Fugue?”) that “[p]robably no type of musical composition has ever been graced with so many different definitions, or has so many words written about it, as fugue” (1971, 11). Bullivant notes that while the fugue has been described by different authorities as a piece of imitation, a movement in ternary form, a contrapuntal procedure, a method of motivic development, or just a texture, these descriptions fail to capture the wide range of compositional resources and possibilities found in a real fugue. Although Bullivant’s argument regarding formal organization follows the Toveyism that “the fugue is not a form,” he rejects the idea of fugue as a texture because it oversimplifies the matter, thus he writes:

It is of great importance to realize, however, that when we say ‘fugue is not a form’ we do not mean ‘fugues do not have forms’. The forms of the complete fugues are admittedly
not ‘forms’ in quite the academically conventional sense, and it is perfectly true that in
some cases it is barely possible to speak of a form at all; but the construction of the
complete fugue constitutes none the less one of the most fascinating fields of study. . . .
The confusion between the two statements about fugue is the greatest weakness in
Tovey’s constant insistence that ‘fugue is a texture’: it has already been seen that texture
is to a certain extent an attribute of fugue, but to pretend that there is no more to it than
that is to ignore the structure of the complete fugue altogether, to say nothing of the
essentially thematic nature even of incidental fugue. (Bullivant 1971, 29)

According to Bullivant, fugal form is not defined by its strictness but by its freedom; after
the exposition, almost anything may happen. In this regard, he points out that analytical
approaches that focus exclusively on thematic entries (the scholastic model), cadences (R. O.
Morris), or keys of entries (Riemann and Prout) often prove inadequate to represent effectively
the greater freedom of design in composed fugues. Similarly, although Bullivant recognizes
that the post-Bachian fugue shows some familiarity with the principles of nineteenth-century
sonata form, he criticizes the modern desire to align our analytical approach to the outlook of
sonata form. While acknowledging that a fugue has some common features and procedures,
Bullivant notes that “[t]here are no fundamental rules of music at all. All one can say is ‘this is
what Bach does’, ‘this is what Bach rarely does . . .’, ‘this is a purely academic rule, but it may be
a stepping-stone to something else’, and so forth” (1971, 191). After presenting a collection of
resources available for the construction of a fugue, twenty-one in total, he makes a case for a

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44Bullivant’s position regarding the organization of a complete fugue is akin to that of Alfred Mann. As
Mann points out in his comprehensive historical outline of writings on fugue: “It has become evident that
the term fugue does not apply to a form, as does, for instance, the term minuet. It denotes something
structurally less concrete. Nor does the term merely apply to a texture, as does, for instance, the term
counterpoint. From the very beginning of its use, it has denoted something structurally more concrete”
(1987, 72).
45It is intriguing to see how Bullivant departs from his English predecessors, Prout and Kitson, in
rejecting the ternary form, based on key contrast, as the default formal organization for a fugue. As he
observes, “Since before Bach’s day, the signs of a ternary key scheme have been seen to be neither
frequent nor conspicuous it must be assumed that the old story has once more repeated itself: a procedure
used by Bach in a few well-known cases has, because of its superficial—in this case, very superficial—
resemblance to sonata form been adopted by academic teaching and made a general principle. . . . Even a
study of WTC alone . . . would be enough to convince an intelligent first-year student that as an overall
‘form’ for fugue the ternary scheme was useless” (1971, 189–90).
degree of flexibility in fugal composition and shows examples of fugues in binary, ternary, rondo, and ritornello forms.

Bullivant employs the term “exposition” as a general designation for “the opening set of entries in which the theme is first propounded” (32). He argues that any definition that denies the possibility of (1) adjusting the conventional alternation of the entries (subject–answer–subject–answer, etc.), (2) presenting a new entry without actually adding to the number of parts, or (3) separating an entry from the opening entries with a substantial episode, is too narrow for the understanding of a real fugue. For him, the question “Where does the exposition ends?” is meaningless; a fugue may be so continuous that there is no noticeable break. Contrary to the scholastic tradition, he rejects, like Tovey, the concept of modulation within the exposition. He uses the term “digression” to denote the use of the scale of a key without a real shift of tonality.

Regarding the post-expositional material, Bullivant notes that the theoretical division between episodes and middle entries is, in most cases, useless in music that is essentially contrapuntal. He writes, “Although it is of interest to the student of fugue to observe how entries are ‘joined on’ to what is technically ‘free’, musically speaking the only features that mean anything are cadences, conspicuous scale figures, etc., which are significant not as part of episodes, but in relation to the design of the whole” (97). However, he regards the idea of the episode as the vehicle of modulation par excellence as an academic misrepresentation. In his view, while an episode can be employed as “a form of contrast to the exposition,” this contrast can be achieved without modulation (189). With respect to modulations, Bullivant notes the gradually increasing interest in the variety of middle entries as the history of fugue progresses. In discussing modulation, he notes that the systematic modulation schemes used in academic fugues fail to recognize the possibility of independent modulations—that is, a conspicuous modulation unrelated to a subject entry.
Although the overall design of a fugue does not necessarily depend on the idea of a “structural recapitulation,” Bullivant argues that its use is limited to a few composers: primarily J. S. Bach and, under his influence, Shostakovich and Hindemith. He hypothesizes that Bach adopted this device from the dance suite and the concerto, at a time when the so-called sonata form was in its early stages. Bullivant declares:

[Bach], so to speak, caught the device of recapitulation while fugal style was such as to be able to adopt it appropriately: after him, while sonata form and its allied forms came to depend more and more upon it, fugue took other paths and became obsessed with device, complexity and exciting climaxes, and apart from one or two exceptional uses and the aforementioned modern imitations it seems to have died out. (Bullivant 1971, 133)

Bullivant extends the meaning of “recapitulation” a step further to include the use of recapitulated episodes as a formal device. He presents three stylistically contrasting examples—Bach’s Fugue in G Minor (BWV 542) and Hindemith’s Fugues nos. 7 and 9 from *Ludus Tonalis*—in which an episode is repeated and transposed at some later stage of the fugue, generating a recognizable but non-thematic formal event.

Marcel Bitsch & Jean Bonfils

Bitsch and Bonfils blame theorists for formulating the idea of the fugue as a fixed and rigid form. They define the fugue as “the free development, in contrapuntal and imitative style, of a vibrant melodic cell according to a precise dynamic scheme in association with a flexible tonal plan” (1993, 55; my translation). They observe that while, at a certain point in its early history, the fugue seems to have been rooted in a bipartite or tripartite design, the composition of fugues with four, five, or even more sections (punctuated by prominent cadences) can be found throughout all historical periods. According to Bitsch and Bonfils, the number of central expositions of the subject and transitional episodes are “extremely variable from fugue to fugue”
(52). However, taking Bach as their primary source, Bitsch and Bonfils note Bach’s proclivity for symmetric architectures in his fugues. For example, they note Bach’s preference for ABA *da capo* form in his large-scale organ fugues and his recurring synthesis of the fugue with the Vivaldian ritornello structure, with the expositions of the subject functioning as the refrain sections.

Tonally speaking, Bitsch and Bonfils declare that the principal key of a fugue is stated in the initial exposition and the counterexposition (if existent), and confirmed in the final reexposition, which is often preceded by a dominant pedal and followed by a tonic pedal. Drawing on Vincent d’Indy’s observations regarding the fugue, Bitsch and Bonfils simplify the tonal plan of a fugue as a large-scale I–V–I cadence (*grande cadence*) that is prolonged through a variable succession of closely related keys (53). In this respect, they establish a proportional relation between the length of a fugue and the relative proximity (or remoteness) of the key changes in the central expositions: whereas short fugues modulate little (to the dominant or subdominant keys) or not at all, fugues of larger dimensions present the subject in more distant keys. While Bitsch and Bonfils concede that the three-part tonal plan found in numerous Bach fugues—namely, a fugue that presents the subject in various closely related keys during the central expositions and closes with a reexposition in stretto—is generally accepted as the archetype for the first exercises in fugal writing, they argue that in practice every fugue follows its own path.

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46 Bitsch and Bonfils use the term “final reexposition” (“*réexposition finale*”) to denote the reprise of the subject in the main key. Vis-à-vis the dominant pedal, even though the authors seem to make an effort to free themselves from the rigid procedures associated with the French scholastic model, quite surprisingly, they insist on the use of this pedal almost as a precondition for the arrival of the final section.

47 The influence of Vincent d’Indy’s discussion of fugue in vol. 2 of his *Cours de composition musicale* (1909) on Bitsch and Bonfils’s text is evident both in its conclusions and its scope. Like d’Indy, Bitsch and Bonfils divide the fugue into expositions (plural) and episodes, and they define the main sections by the placement of cadences. Also, similarly to d’Indy, Bitsch and Bonfils extend their examination of the fugue beyond Bachian models and include a detailed historical survey of the fugue in older and modern contexts.
Robert Gauldin

Robert Gauldin (1995) regards the fugue as a compositional procedure rather than a formal model. Although Gauldin states that, “based on tonal centers alone,” the listener may be inclined to divide a Baroque fugue into three sections (opening, middle, and concluding sections), he argues, like Kennan and Green, that the structure of individual fugues stresses “their unique rather than their common properties” (1995, 223). Referring to the historical background and validity of the concept of tripartition in a fugue, Gauldin observes:

Many fugues of this period tend to adhere to this pattern. However, theorists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have attempted to devise a stereotype for the fugue, even to the extent of evoking sonata-form terminology (“development” for the middle section). They assign contrapuntal procedures or devices to each part of the “ternary” structure. This “academic fugue” (*fugue d’école*), with its contrived rigidity, is diametrically opposed to the free and imaginative approach by Baroque masters. (1995, 223)

Contrary to Wallace Berry, Gauldin argues that cadential punctuation is rarely used at the end of the exposition. Aside from the introduction of a redundant entry or a counterexposition, Gauldin’s concept of exposition does not account for the possibility of incorporating the first modulatory episode as part of the first section. With reference to the concluding section of the fugue, he points out that the reappearance of the subject in the tonic key usually, but not always, indicates the conclusion of a fugue.

William Renwick

William Renwick (1995) rejects the notion of fugue as a fixed three-part tonal structure. According to him, virtually every piece written in any Baroque form, “whether binary or ternary

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48 Gauldin uses the term “episode” to denote both the short passage that connects an answer with a subject within the exposition (what is more commonly termed “bridge,” “codetta,” or “link”) and the modulatory episodes that follow the exposition. Here, I am referring to the first episode after the last entry of the exposition.
dance, through-composed prelude, concerto, or da capo aria,” begins in the tonic, departs to a series of related keys, and returns to the original key (1995a, 202). Regarding the design (or outer form), Renwick considers that the reappearance of the subject in the tonic key near the end of a fugue is not reason enough to consider a fugue as a ternary structure. As Renwick comments:

> Each of the fugues analyzed in this chapter possesses this characteristic. . . . Of the two basic options for thematic material, subject or episode, it only makes logical and rhetorical sense to conclude with the former, which is after all the primary motive of the piece. While a perception of form in fugue no doubt arises from the interplay of motivic and tonal factors such as these, certain apparent formal events, tonal or motivic, may just as likely be resultants of other factors, including purely rhetorical ones. (Renwick 1995a, 202–3)

Writing from a Schenkerian perspective, Renwick argues that the tonal structure of most fugues can be described as an undivided or one-part form at the deepest level. In his view, “interruption plays no part in typical fugal structure; nor does ternary form with contrasting middle section” (203). To demonstrate how a series of local features and design elements interacts with the uninterrupted fundamental structure in a complete fugue, Renwick examines, in the last chapter of his book, three fugues from The Well-Tempered Clavier: the C-major and B-flat-minor fugues from book 2 and the F-sharp-minor fugue from book 1. In this respect, Renwick seems unable to turn away from the resourcefulness of the fugues from The Well-Tempered Clavier as ideal subjects for the study of fugue.

However, in a later article, “A Précis of Fugal Form,” Renwick calls into question the validity of Schenker’s concept of fundamental structure vis-à-vis fugal form. More specifically, he notes that in many cases “the fundamental structure, that is the final descent, occupies only the closing measures of a fugue, bringing into question the relevance of fundamental structure as a guiding force in the form of the work” (Renwick 2003; emphasis in original). In this article, Renwick acknowledges that while a fugue is often described as a process rather than a form, an individual work may exhibit a diversity (even a combination) of formal strategies, including
motet form, binary, ternary, three-part, and rondo forms. However, he states that fugues in true binary and ternary form are extremely rare.\textsuperscript{49} In relation to fugues that exhibit a three-part form, Renwick asserts:

To accurately determine the relevance of this idea for a given fugue, the analyst must determine the principal sections of the piece and then determine the relations between them. Ultimately, a closing section needs to be identified as different from a middle section. One way this may be done is through a return to the tonic key and introduction of the subject in the tonic. (Renwick 2003)

In his summary of the factors that influence the perception of form in a fugue, Renwick observes, like Berry and Goetschius, that cadences are among “the most powerful means of formal articulation” (Renwick 2003). In relation to the conventional segmentation of a fugue (exposition, episodes, development, etc.), he notes that it is relevant to the study of fugal form to determine the extent to which these sections coincide (or fail to coincide) with the divisions of an individual fugue as demarcated by cadences. This last concept recalls Berry’s distinction between “stages” and “sections” in a fugue, although Renwick avoids Berry’s bias toward tripartition.

\textbf{Between Uniqueness and Commonality}

The process of classification is germane to every field of human activity and inquiry. The act of classifying presupposes the task of perceiving differences as well as similarities between individual objects, processes, events, phenomena, etc. In the particular context of musical form, this task requires two distinct paths—a bifocal approach. As Halsey Stevens aptly observes, “It is essential to consider the larger dimensions, which make it possible to categorize; but it is equally

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textsuperscript{49}]While several authors (i.e., Riemann and Prout) employ the term “ternary form” to denote, broadly speaking, a piece that can be divided into three parts or sections, Renwick’s definition of this term requires “a contrasting middle section as well as a similarity or identity between outer, framing sections” (2003). The fugue from Bach’s Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro, BWV 998, is a clear example of a true ternary form, according to Renwick’s definition.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
important that the individual differences, the unique solutions, be specially considered in the analysis of many works” (Berry, 1986, xi). In examining the various perspectives concerning fugal form, we have seen that those writers who argue that a fugue is not a form seem to emphasize the countless unique strategies that may be employed after the initial exposition. On the other hand, those authors who regard the fugue as a form (with a limited number of inner designs and segmentations) focus on how various recurring features and common conditions might be read in dialogue with a limited number of large-scale schematic definitions.

One of the aims of this study is to challenge the trope that the uniqueness of a fugue (perhaps the term “postexpositional randomness” is more precise) is a legitimate argument for dismissing the concept of fugal form as a fictional and useless construction of nineteenth-century *Formenlehre*. From a historical standpoint, the concept of fugue as a preordained succession of procedures and stages that generates an overall form does not originate in the nineteenth century. This idea can be found in the writings of Antonio Bertali and Johann Reincken as early as the third quarter of the seventeenth century, and later in the magnum opus of Fux in 1725.\(^5\) The “demotion of fugue to a style, texture, or technique,” to borrow Laurence Dreyfus’s phrase (1996, 136)—a perspective that fails to recognize a range of conventional prescriptions, restrictions, definitive elements, and stage of occurrence associated with the fugue since the pre-Bach era—seems to have been nurtured by the timeworn idea that a fugue does not follow a socially preconceived plot like, say, ritornello or sonata forms—forms that in their own environments reveal both significant differences and similarities. Rather, this study subscribes to Berry’s proposition: “The features by which fugue is defined are as valid as anything that can be said of any form; the subject exposition, development, and restabilizing recurrence, within a unified tonal configuration, themselves define fugal form” (1986, 345). In the fugue, it is possible to establish a constellation of genre-defining characteristics to the point that the term

\(^5\) For a detailed discussion of these works see Walker 2004, 166–203 and 315–33.
“fugue” is frequently used as the parent category of other fugal variants such as fugato, fughetta, double fugue, triple fugue, etc.

Perhaps this proposition requires further elaboration. For one, it is not the intention of this study to argue that the fugue was conceptualized as a form *per se* before the nineteenth century. Naturally, that would be an anachronistic application of the term “form.” However, the idea of fugue as a succession of predetermined procedures and definite stages—an idea that predates the nineteenth-century conception of form—had an impact on many fugues composed after the second half of the eighteenth century. As Horsley aptly points out, “After the mid-eighteenth century, theory assumed more importance in the development of fugue form even though the relation of theory and practice in the realm of fugue became more artificial” (1966, 261). Paul Walker holds a similar view when he says that “nearly all the elements that determine the stereotypical scholastic fugue . . . can be found in German and Italian theory of the Renaissance and Baroque” (2004, 354).

Accordingly, there is a danger in overlooking the influence of these theoretically conceived models—not only from a stylistic, rhetorical, and aesthetic perspective, but also with respect to the particular treatment and placement of many formal stages and devices in a fugue. While the arguments of diversity and unpredictability—posited by those who regard fugue as a procedure or process—may be valid in the context of the eighteenth-century fugue and even more so before the late Baroque era, this proposition seems to lose strength as the fugue progresses from the mid-eighteenth century to the nineteenth century—or, put in another way, as the theoretical dominion began to anchor itself in compositional practice (and, increasingly, vice versa). To rephrase Robert Gauldin’s assertion, nineteenth-century fugues could be defined by their common features rather than by their unique properties (see Gauldin 1995, 223). To think of fugue as a procedure devoid of any particular order of events may be a practical and safe general proposition if one intends to define the genre altogether from, say, the advent of the
major-minor system to the present. However, within the constraints of this dissertation, it is conceivable and in no small way illuminating to outline fugue by appealing to a limited range of formal principles.

The relation between form and the scholastic fugue (and its derivatives) is less problematical. Although synthetic in nature, this type of fugue, which influenced the teaching and craft of composition in countries like France, Germany, England, and Spain, was universally conceived as a fixed three-part form: exposition, middle section, and stretto (final) section. As Dreyfus notes, “Only in the academic fugue of the nineteenth century and its offshoots has form continued to play an important role in understanding fugue, since pedagogues have traditionally sought a mechanical model for student composition structured by the order of musical events” (1996, 136). The academically fabricated three-part design, favored not only in the French fugue d’école but also in the theoretical elucidations of German writers like A. B. Marx in the mid-nineteenth century, seems to have had a pervasive influence on most fugues composed after 1850. Imogene Horsley emphasizes the ubiquity of this design in the fugues of German composers when she declares:

Like many theoretical ideas that have a logical and aesthetic appeal, the three-part fugue form affected many fugues written in the last half of the [nineteenth] century. Its influence is most obvious in those fugues where the three sections delineated by key are set off clearly by audible means such as strong cadences or clear changes in texture, dynamics, or register or are separated by long episodes. Such fugues can be found among the works of J. G. Rheinberger (1839–1901) and Max Reger (1873–1916). The final fugue from the Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel of Johannes Brahms is a successful fugue in this form. (1966, 267)

Despite some obvious differences between the synthetic fugue d’école and the actual fugues of German composers like Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms (all of whom studied and valued Cherubini’s Cours), it is undeniable that the idea of fugue as a tightly knit tripartite form was a powerful one throughout the century.
Hence, to explore the degree of affinity between the generic scholastic fugue and Saint-Saëns’s fugal works for piano and organ, this study appropriates Hepokoski and Darcy’s notion of “dialogic form” (2006). As Hepokoski observes in his essay “Sonata Theory and Dialogic Form”:

Grasping the full range of an implicit musical form is most essentially a task of reconstructing a processual dialogue between any individual work . . . and the charged network of generic forms, guidelines, possibilities, expectations, and limits provided by the implied genre at hand. This is ‘dialogic form’: form in dialogue with historically conditioned compositional options. (2010, 71–72)

To confront Saint-Saëns’s fugues, this study has defined, at the end of the first chapter, a limited network of conditions in accordance with a series of pedagogically and theoretically conditioned compositional options. As noted, this network of conditions is drawn from the influential textbooks of Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge and the exemplars composed for the annual competition at the Paris Conservatory and the qualifying round of the Prix de Rome during the second half of the nineteenth century. As Margaret Mulvey notes, “The parameters of the fugue d’école form are defined in particular by precise harmonic requirements used in conjunction with the exact order of essential elements” (1994, 46).

However, in examining Saint-Saëns’s fugues dialogically against the fugue d’école and its constituent conditions and strategies, we will perceive, as expected, some formal features that were not influenced by the fugue d’école. Due to these formal digressions from the scholastic model, and to Saint-Saëns’s demonstrated devotion to the cult of Bach’s fugues, this study finds it necessary to address, in a subsidiary manner, two additional formal types, arising from the preceding literature review, that invoke Bach’s compositional practices vis-à-vis the fugue.

At the risk of extending my argument beyond a manageable scope—after all, my primary focus is nineteenth-century fugues—a limited discussion of form in Bach’s fugues is de rigueur. Bach emerges, for reasons that range from validation to (mis)representation, as the central
figure not only in the fugal works of Romantic composers like Saint-Saëns (who describes Bach as “the Jupiter of the fugue”), but also in the theoretical landscape of fugal theory after the second half of the nineteenth century. Without exception, all of the authors examined in this chapter have taken Bach’s fugues, especially those from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, as the starting point for crafting their own formulations on fugal form. Bach opens up a network ofexegetical commentaries. In the name of Bach, and with specific reference to *The 48*, Tovey and Green dismiss the idea of fugal form altogether; Goetschius and Berry produce a limited palette of three formal strategies; and Riemann and Prout advance an ideal tripartite model.

This study follows the second approach (Goetschius 1902; Berry 1986). In analyzing Bach’s fugues, particularly those from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and his organ fugues, it is possible to come up with three typical formal plans: bisectional (two-part form), tripartite (three-part form), and multisectional. Clearly, the realization of an individual fugue may display—especially in Bach’s hands—affirmations, reformations, and deformations when we reread it in the light of these idealized strategies; however, as Berry declares, “The schematic definition of the prototype is always fictional, yet always true” (1986, 345). Whereas in the scholastic fugue the cadences are less conspicuous and less frequent, in most of Bach’s fugues the large-scale sections are determined by the placement of clear-cut cadences in different keys. For instance, a fugue with a clear internal cadence, positioned approximately in the middle of the fugue, may suggest a design of two balanced sections; while, on the other hand, a fugue with two or more strongly marked cadences may delineate a tripartite or multisectional design. These cadences are usually confirmed by other factors (salient thematic entrances, textural and registral changes, the distinctive use of contrapuntal devices, etc.) and tend to mark the beginning of a new section.

51 The prominent role of cadences as means of formal articulation in J. S. Bach’s fugues has been discussed by many recent authors (Horsley 1966; Bruhn 1993; Gauldin 1995; Renwick 1995a and 1995b; Lester 1999 and 2001; Jones 2013).
Three Types and One Subtype for the Analysis of Nineteenth-Century Keyboard Fugues

The mid- and late-nineteenth-century fugue, like many other forms and types of composition, may be defined—to borrow Hepokoski and Darcy’s term—as a dynamic and flexible constellation of conventional strategies and options. This study therefore proposes three generic types of large-scale formal scheme: tripartite design (type A), multisectional design (type B), and bisectional design (type C). In addition to these three classifications, which are derived from the writings of Goetschius (1902) and Berry (1986), this study suggests a subtype for the tripartite design when it complies with some of the defining conditions of the scholastic model: the scholastic design (type A1). While it is safe to assume that no composer would have the intention of writing a scholastic fugue as an actual composition, many French, German, and English composers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries tended to emulate, as has been observed by various writers surveyed in this chapter, this formal design in their fugues. In the case of the French musical scene, the influence and aesthetic appeal of the scholastic fugue seem to merge much more conspicuously. Vincent d’Indy, in his classification of musical forms, goes as far as to regard the fugue d’école as an actual genre within the realm of forms of dramatic origin (figure 2.1; “dramatic” for d’Indy refers to the origin of a musical genre in texted vocal music, not to opera specifically).

While my analytical approach takes into consideration the form-determining significance of elements such as texture, contrapuntal devices, figuration, register, and dynamics, I generate these four formal types primarily by taking into account (a) the placement and relative strength of cadences, (b) the overall key design and range of modulation, and (c) the thematic design. Hierarchically speaking, however, cadences have the greatest weight in my understanding of fugal form; they are the main structural markers.
Figure 2.1. Vincent d'Indy's diagram for the historical and technical classification of musical forms. Note the fugue d'école at the top of the dodecahedron under the designation "Forms of dramatic origin resulting from the rhythm of speech" (d'Indy 1909, 13).
The reader may well ask why a study that is mainly focused on the thematic and continuous approach of the *fugue d’école* leans toward the recognition of cadences as the main determinant of the overall form of a nineteenth-century fugue. Presumably, this analytical perspective would seem more closely in accord with the cadentially determined scheme found in many of Bach’s fugues. As Imogene Horsley aptly points out, “As the ideal of weak and avoided cadences was perpetuated in Classical and Romantic fugues, the cadences became less frequent” (1966, 277). Even Gedalge, who stresses the principle of continuity as an indispensable quality of a fugue, notes that some theorists have carried this principle to an extreme, precluding the employment of clear-cut cadences in the course of a fugue, reserving them for the final section (1901, 220).

It is in part, however, owing to its very scarcity that I propose the cadence as the single most salient form-defining element of a nineteenth-century fugue. As a result of the Romantic ideal of continuity, the use of a well-defined cadence should be regarded as a calculated compositional choice. For instance, in the case of a scholastic fugue, the conspicuous half cadence before the concluding section, which heralds the relaunch of the tonic and the main subject, becomes the most prominent structural marker. This harmonic interruption (a hallmark of the rule-bound scholastic fugue) not only articulates the formal boundary between the middle section and the concluding section, but more pointedly, in the absence of other competing cadences, it has the power to attract the listener’s attention as a crucial structural moment in the whole fugue.

The relative position of this forceful cadential event differentiates this formal model from, for example, the balanced design of a fugue that exhibits a definite (and unique) cadence at or near the middle of its structure, or the sectionalized architecture of a fugue that exhibits a collection of relatively equidistant cadences of more or less equal strength. Naturally, when one undertakes the task of differentiating one type of composition from the other, it becomes
necessary to allow for a continuum of gradations by which the one type may be challenged by another, or even pursue some unusual design that stretches or lies outside the spectrum of conventional expectations. After all, the composer’s idiosyncratic voice has some weight behind it. In any case, this analytical preference seems to apply not only to fugues composed under the manifest influence of the scholastic model, but also to Romantic fugues that draw upon the different principles and strategies associated with the eighteenth-century keyboard fugue as developed by Bach. In my view, the familiar *modus operandi* of analyzing the form of a fugue mainly by its thematic content—an analytical method that still casts a substantial shadow over the way we teach fugue nowadays—leads to a fruitless, pendular fluctuation of entries and episodes.

**Tripartite Design**

The overall plan of a fugue that articulates a tripartite design (type A) involves a relation of correspondence between the first and third sections and the demarcation of the contrasting middle section. Viewed broadly, this triphasic pattern of correspondence and contrast is typically achieved by the departure from the tonic once the exposition is concluded, the avoidance of the tonic in the central section, and the simultaneous return of the tonic and the main subject in the concluding section. While elements of key contrast and thematic design are essential in generating the distinction between the outer sections and the middle section, the position of cadences is crucial in defining (and, sometimes, defying) the internal boundaries of this formal scheme. From my perspective, a three-part design may exhibit a perfect or imperfect authentic cadence at the end of the exposition or the counterexposition, if existent. However, a fugue that articulates this design often presents a transient or elided cadence between the exposition/counterexposition and the first episode (henceforth termed the *post-expositional episode*), or no cadence at all. As pointed out above, the proponents of the scholastic model,
Dubois and Gedalge, favor continuity between the first section of the fugue and the post-expositional episode. These two options, here termed respectively the *elided exposition* or *counterexposition* (symbolized $\text{Exp}(\text{Œ})\text{Ep}$ or $\text{Cxp}(\text{Œ})\text{Ep}$) and the *dissolving exposition* or *counterexposition* ($\text{Exp}(\text{Ø})\text{Ep}$ or $\text{Cxp}(\text{Ø})\text{Ep}$), are directly linked with the scholastic subtype (type A′).

The fugue from Cesar Franck’s *Prelude, Fugue, and Variation* for organ, op. 18, dedicated to Saint-Saëns, furnishes a typical case of $\text{Exp}(\text{Œ})\text{Ep}$ (elided cadence between the exposition and the post-expositional episode). As example 2.3 shows, the exposition concludes with an IAC (m. 34) that sets off a new section aurally distinguishable from the previous one, different in texture and rhythmic figuration. For the listener, the absence of the lowest part after the elided cadence might be the most noticeable confirming sign that something new has started.

With some frequency, the last thematic statement in the exposition or counterexposition dissolves into the post-expositional episode, and the shift between the first two large-scale sections of the fugue is, as Zamacois points out, “imperceptible to the listener” (1997, 76). Such a situation ($\text{Cxp}(\text{Ø})\text{Ep}$) occurs in Alexandre Guilmant’s Fugue in A-flat Major, op. 40, no. 1 (example 2.4). Setting aside the unusual contraction of the post-expositional episode (measure 26), which functions more like a brief transition to the pair of entries in the submediant key, it is difficult to pinpoint any distinguishable element that indicates the boundary between the last statement in the counterexposition and the first episode. Sometimes the final note of the last statement in the exposition or counterexposition is prolonged by means of a suspension so as to disguise the progression from one section to the next. This strategy, favored by Dubois in his *Traité*, is frequently encountered in fugues written for examinations and contests after the 1860s.
Example 2.3. Franck, Fugue from *Prelude, Fugue, and Variation*, op. 18 (1862), mm. 22–37

and in countless examples in the French organ literature. An example of this disguising linkage occurs in Ravel’s Fugue in D Major, composed for the preliminary round of the *Prix de Rome* in 1900 (see example 2.5, m. 17).

In fugues that articulate a tripartite design, the essential task of the middle or development section is twofold: (1) to expand the tonal range of the exposition by a series of episodes and the systematic presentation of the main thematic idea, or ideas, in an indefinite progression of related or distant keys; (2) to unfold, reshape and manipulate—polyphonically—
Example 2.4. Guilmant, Fugue in A-flat Major, op. 40, no. 1 (1862), mm. 19–30
Example 2.5. Ravel, Fugue in D Major (1900, composed for the *Prix de Rome*), mm. 11–19
the themes, motives and figures presented in the exposition. In the hands of theorists like Cherubini, Marx, Riemann, Prout, Gedalge, and Dubois, this second section is allied, in its explorative and motion-oriented nature, to the development section of what, since Marx, has been called sonata form. The middle section, more often than not, introduces no new material. Rarely, one may encounter distinctive materials not associated with the exposition, or unembellished harmonic sequences in one or more episodes.

Whereas in many Baroque fugues the dividing line between entry and episode is often, but not always, clearly defined, in Romantic fugues, particularly those that fall into a tripartite design, this demarcation is purely theoretical and rarely distinguishable. As noted above, the use of clearly articulated cadences (PACs, IACs, or half cadences) in the exposition and in the course of the middle section is a rare event. In my view, their use might undermine the idea of the middle section as a discrete but continuous section, or even put into question the validity of reading a given fugue as articulating a bona fide three-part design.

The middle section generally concludes with a characteristic, and relatively distinct, half cadence in the dominant of the main key. This harmonic interruption is usually prepared or confirmed by a salient dominant pedal point or a short elaboration of the dominant chord. In the scholastic model (type A¹), as noted in the first chapter, this interruption (or caesura) is almost invariably triggered by a pedal on the dominant followed by a fermata, a literal rest in all parts, or some other articulating break. This interruption and the launch of the concluding section in the tonic generate the most crucial marker in this formal design. The momentary disruption of continuity and the subsequent reanimation of the parts, which occur somewhere between the midpoint and end of a fugue, lure our attention in the absence of any competing internal cadences before this point. Even though this harmonic interruption might be disguised or blurred by a local dominant-to-tonic cadence or a connective melodic link, the idea of a large-scale structural pause between the middle section and the concluding section is intrinsic to
nineteenth-century fugal theory. Robert Schumann’s Fugue in D Minor, op. 72, no. 2, furnishes an example of the dominant interruption prolonged by a salient pedal point and connected to the concluding section by a melodic fill (example 2.6, mm. 79–83).

Harmonically speaking, the middle section of this formal design is intended to achieve, in the words of Zamacois, a “tonal expansion” through a cycle of keys (1997, 81). While the scholastic model (type A') limits these expansions to closely related keys and the parallel mode, a “greater scope of fluctuation” can be seen in many fugues during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Berry 1986, 368). However, regardless of the tonal range, for this expansion to be maximally effective (in relation to the subsequent reaffirmation of the primary key), the tonic and dominant keys ought to be avoided, or touched upon in a fleeting manner, in the development section.\(^5\) Aside from the dominant preparation before the concluding section (which represents an active dominant in the home key, not the tonic of its own region), this evasion is, as I have noted, a normative harmonic procedure of the scholastic model.

In type A fugues, the concluding section is marked by the restoration and definitive grounding of the tonic region and the principal subject. Frequently, the initiation of this section is reinforced by noticeable changes in texture and dynamics; the use of dynamics as a supporting agent of formal articulation is a phenomenon of nineteenth-century fugues. Similarly, fugal devices like stretto, inversion, augmentation, and diminution are frequently deployed in this part. The contents of this section, as Goetschius observes, “should be more

\(^5\) The notion of tonic and dominant evasion in relation to the development section (or middle section) requires some clarification. While no hard and fast rules can be laid down, an actual reactivation of the tonic and dominant keys in the development section requires, in my definition, at least one of the following conditions: (1) a conclusive cadence in one of these keys; (2) the occurrence of the main subject or answer on its original harmony; or (3) the presentation of a subsidiary theme or a relatively extended episode in one of these keys. Regarding condition (2), whereas in the scholastic treatises a subject seems to have, at least in theory, a fixed harmonic identity, in practice, a thematic statement may be divorced— as a melodic object—from its original harmonic context and reintegrated into a new harmonic environment. In other words, a subject or answer may occur at its original pitch level while being harmonized differently—for instance, by the relative minor.
Example 2.6. Robert Schumann, Fugue in D Minor, no. 2 of his *Four Fugues*, op. 72 (1845), mm. 77–86

elaborate and interesting than any preceding section; hence, stretto-imitations are peculiarly appropriate” (1902, 240). As has been noted, the use of one or more stretti is a requirement in the scholastic subtype (type A\(^1\)).

In considering its proportions, the concluding section may be either longer or shorter than the initial section. As seen in Caussade’s *fugue d’école* in the first chapter (example 1.2), the concluding (or stretto) section in many scholastic fugues might account for more than a third of its total length; however, there are plentiful examples of tripartite fugues in the nineteenth-century fugal literature that exhibit a more compact concluding section. While the issue of proportions must be taken into account in considering fugal form (for example, proportions play a significant role in distinguishing a bisectional from a tripartite design), from my perspective, this section does not need to extend beyond what is required to establish the tonic key and the
main subject, if the requisites of harmonic interruption and evasion of the tonic (as a well-established key) have been met in the middle section. Under the abovementioned conditions, the concluding section is—regardless of its dimensions—a well-marked section and fulfils its restorative function. However, the use of multiple emphatic cadences in the post-expositional space (preceding the concurrent return of the tonic and the initial subject) may lessen the strength of the final section as a genuine third segment in a tripartite scheme and may suggest that this final section is best interpreted as the last segment of a multisectional design.

Multisectional Design

This formal scheme can most effectively be described as the arrangement of thematic entrances and episodes within a variable number of sections (usually between three and eight) demarcated by well-defined cadences and a relatively flexible modulatory design. In this design, as Goetschius points out, each succeeding section is usually differentiated from the previous one by exhibiting new traits and contrapuntal strategies (1902, 231). The most evident difference between this design and the tripartite design is the recurring use of clearly marked cadences throughout a fugue. While the tripartite design is characterized by a tendency to evade strong cadences in the post-expositional space—the space that separates the exposition from the distinctive harmonic interruption before the final section—the multisectional design is likely not only to cadence immediately after the exposition or the post-expositional episode, but to deploy fairly definite cadences throughout the body of the fugue.

Robert Schumann’s Fugue no. 3 in G Minor from his *Six Fugues on BACH*, op. 60, furnishes a clear example of a fugue with a multisectional design (see example 2.7). The six sections of this fugue are outlined by decisive cadences. These occur on the downbeat of m. 17 (in the dominant), m. 22 (in the subdominant), m. 31 (in the dominant), and m. 35 (in the
Example 2.7. Schumann, Fugue in G Minor from *Six Fugues on BACH* (1845), op. 60
Example 2.7 (cont'd)
submediant), before reaching the dominant interruption at m. 50. In this fugue, it is fascinating to see how Schumann emphasizes, rather systematically, the importance of these cadential events by triggering or disabling the pedal part. Whereas the first, third, and fifth cadences are followed by the launch of the pedal part, the even-numbered cadences neutralize the pedal part in the subsequent section.

The scholastic principle that a fugue should avoid the tonic and the dominant in the middle entries or episodes, to effectively reaffirm the primary key at or near the concluding section (Zamacois’s first type; see p. 56), is not always in evidence in a fugue presenting a multisectional plan. In this type of fugue it is not uncommon to encounter the keys of the exposition, the tonic and dominant, governing one or more of the internal sections (Zamacois’s third type). For instance, in the previous example by Schumann (example 2.7), the dominant key is firmly brought back at the end of the third section (m. 31). This section is flanked by the PACs in the subdominant and the submediant at measures 22 and 35, respectively.

This cadence-oriented formal strategy, frequently found in Bach’s fugues, is fairly common in the fugues of early Romantic composers like Mendelssohn and Schumann, and, to some extent, as we will see shortly, in some of Saint-Saëns’s fugues. Two clear examples of multisectional design may be found in Mendelssohn’s Fugue no. 2 in D Major from his *Six Fugues on BACH*, op. 60 (April 7, 1845), he and his wife, Clara Wieck Schumann, immersed themselves in the study of Cherubini’s *Cours* (Daverio 1997, 307). A promising avenue of future inquiry would be to examine the synthesis of these two trends—the German figured-bass-oriented perspective and the North Italian/French linear approach—in the compositional practices of Mendelssohn, Schumann, and other composers of their generation.

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53 The pedal entry at m. 18 not only poses the question of where does the exposition ends, but more compellingly demonstrates the inadequacy of analyzing fugues exclusively by thematic content. While it is perfectly possible to regard this statement as the initiation of a fifth voice, and, consequently, to set the end of the exposition at m. 22, I regard this subject as a redundant entry located outside the first overall section. First, the entrance occurs immediately after the PAC at m. 18; even in Bach’s fugues, cadences are extremely rare in the midst of what we denote nowadays as the exposition. Second, this entrance is rhythmically altered (mm. 21–22) when compared with the previous four. Finally, save for the climactic textural stratification at the end of the fugue (mm. 54–59), the pedal part does not seem to be employed as a fifth voice in the contrapuntal texture.

54 Mendelssohn and Schumann both studied Bach’s best-known fugues and Cherubini’s *Cours* (Fellinger 1987, 50; Geck 2012, 182); in addition, Mendelssohn had received early training in counterpoint and fugue from Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832). The same day that Schumann finished the first of his *Six Fugues on BACH*, op. 60 (April 7, 1845), he and his wife, Clara Wieck Schumann, immersed themselves in the study of Cherubini’s *Cours* (Daverio 1997, 307). A promising avenue of future inquiry would be to examine the synthesis of these two trends—the German figured-bass-oriented perspective and the North Italian/French linear approach—in the compositional practices of Mendelssohn, Schumann, and other composers of their generation.
Preludes and Fugues, op. 35, and in Schumann’s Fugue no. 3 in F Minor from his Four Fugues, op. 72. Even though the ubiquitous concept of tripartition is undoubtedly exhibited in countless fugues by these and many other composers, it is nonetheless true that the strategy of sectionalizing a fugue by means of clear-cut cadences makes its way into the nineteenth-century fugue.

Bisectional Design

In the nineteenth-century fugal literature, one might, on rare occasions, find a fugue showing an overall bisectional architecture (type C). This type of balanced design, which is most likely derived from a significant number of short fugues and fugal gigues in the eighteenth century, requires a decisive cadence in or somewhere around the middle of the fugue (Bullivant 1971, 173; Kennan 1999, 235).55 In fugues outlining a type C plan, the second part is often defined by some new type of contrapuntal treatment (inversion, a new countersubject, stretto, etc.), texture, or register. One might also find a fugue in which the composer, as William Renwick observes, “has maintained an analogy between the parts of the two sections, such that the entire second section can be understood as a re-composition of the first section” (Renwick 2003). In all, there seems to be a natural correlation between this formal design and relatively short fugues.

In discussing this design, two clarifications are in order. First, despite the fact that the middle cadence occurs more frequently, as one might expect, in the dominant or relative major (for fugues in the minor mode), some fugues exhibit a bisectional design with the middle cadence in some other closely related key; my reading of a bisectional plan therefore admits the latter possibility. Second, a fugue with a type C design may have internal cadences with less

55 Examples of this formal design may be found not only in various short fugues from Bach’s The Well-Tempered Clavier (no. 6 from book 1; nos. 2 and 7 from book 2), but also in his fuguetas BWV 901 and two of his fugal Inventions (BWV 781 and 786). Other examples include Telemann’s Fugue no. 6 (TWV 30:26) from his Fugues légères et petits jeux à clavessin seul and Mozart’s Gigue in G Major, K 574.
conclusive effect than the conspicuous dividing cadence. While weak internal cadences are infrequent but possible in this formal plan, the strongest cadence must occur near the midpoint of the fugue.

An excellent illustration of this design can be seen in Saint-Saëns’s Fugue in F Minor from his “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 3 of his Études op. 52 (example 2.8). After the exposition—three statements (subject–answer–subject) and a redundant entry—a partial statement of the answer dissolves into the post-expositional episode, followed by a pair of entries in the mediant key (mm. 22–30). After a brief episode, the fugue moves into the submediant key and closes there with a clear-cut PAC. An examination of the entire fugue reveals that Saint-Saëns places this cadence near the middle of the piece (m. 37). Immediately after this prominent cadence, Saint-Saëns introduces a subsidiary subject and thins out the texture, thus emphasizing the function of the cadence as the beginning of something new. Even though the initial subject reappears twice near the end of the fugue (mm. 57 and 62), the second time reinforced by a change in dynamics and texture and the reintroduction of the subsidiary subject, there is no cadential articulation up until the very end of the fugue. In other words, the midpoint PAC in measure 37 does not have a competing event during the entire fugue.

**Conclusion**

The three types of formal design and the scholastic subtype described above provide a first step toward understanding the influence of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fugue on the compositional practices of Camille Saint-Saëns with regard to his fugues for keyboard. To explore the influence of the idealized scholastic model and the compositional strategies of J. S. Bach on Saint-Saëns’s fugues, I have invoked, for practical reasons, not only the terminology
Example 2.8. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in F Minor from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 3 of his Études, op. 52 (1877)
Example 2.8 (cont’d)
Example 2.8 (cont’d)
and designations of nineteenth-century *Formenlehre* and the *fugue d’école*, but also Hepokoski
and Darcy’s concept of dialogic form. Rather than conclude that every fugue in the nineteenth
century must fit neatly into one of these formal types, the main objective of these formal
categories, as a contextual and limited taxonomy, is to explicate the ambiguities, tensions,
uncertainties, deviations, recastings, and (especially) the appropriations within this
compositional genre; in the words of C. P. E. Bach, to explore “how far a work departs from
ordinary ways” (C. P. E. Bach, 1949, 441; emphasis added). “Fugue” is not merely a formal
label. However, a formal label may stand as a useful representation of how a given fugue is
organized within a collection of genre-related norms and how it is situated in relation to other
fugues, in both practical and theoretical realms. The detailed application of this formal
taxonomy to Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues is the subject of the following chapter.
CHAPTER 3

TWO (OR THREE?) MODELS FOR SAINT-SAËNS’S KEYBOARD

FUGUES: SIX CASE STUDIES (1877–1920)

There are two Camille Saint-Saënses. The first reveres and cultivates the musical language of Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. His compositional output is defined—above all—by an extraordinary sense of clarity; a factor that leads, all too often, to the frequent criticism that his music is “too faithful to classical form, with sacrificing too much to its requirements . . . too cold” (Prod’homme 1922, 476).\(^5^6\) As Saint-Saëns himself admits in a letter to Camille Bellaigue in 1892: ”Yes, I am a classicist, nourished on Mozart and Haydn from my tenderest infancy. I wished that it might be possible for me to speak any but a clear and well-balanced language” (Prod’homme 1922, 476–77). Furthermore, he expresses concern about the direction of contemporary music, as he declares that “music has become shapeless and reduced to an indefinable and liquefied porridge, intended only to produce sensations and impressions on the nervous system” (1900, 178; my translation).

The second Saint-Saëns, an inverted image of the first (the other—in a Borgesian sense), not only venerates and speaks in favor of the music of Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner but also acknowledges that he lives “in the midst of a world of romanticism, in a world of color and picturesqueness, which could not content itself with so little” (Saint-Saëns 1919b, 138). This

\(^{56}\) In his *Lettres intimes*, Gabriel Fauré shares his frustration with the commonly held view of Saint-Saëns’s music as conservative and unappealing. Fauré declares, regarding his mentor’s music, “The excessive polyphony, even though it is always quite justified, of Wagner, the chiaroscuro effects of Debussy, the vulgar and passionate writhings of Massenet, these are the only things that move or attract the public today. While the clear honest music of Saint-Saëns, which attracts me more than anything, leaves this same public indifferent” (Nectoux 2004, 15).
For many critics in the early twentieth century, Saint-Saëns’s fugues for keyboard represent the unequivocal emblem of the compositional orientation and aesthetic ideals of a composer “that derives a certain pleasure . . . in keeping within self-imposed bounds” (Parker 1919, 566). For example, according to d’Indy, Saint-Saëns stands among the ranks of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Franck as one of the most respected composers of fugues in the modern era; however, he is somewhat critical of Saint-Saëns’s fugues for being “cold and conventional” (1909, 99). Arthur Hervey takes a more neutral perspective and affirms that Saint-Saëns’s early étude fugues (1877) are “written in a severe scholastic style,” whereas Emile Vuillermoz praises Saint-Saëns’s final collection of fugues (1920) for imposing, “by means of pedagogic and rule-bound tactics,” “its clarity, logic, measure, simplicity, lucidity, and reason” (Hervey 1922, 114; Vuillermoz 1923, 102). Regardless of the (mildly) negative, neutral, or positive assessment of these fugues, it is indisputable that they have not escaped an aura of academicism.

Based on these observations, one may conclude that the hand of the second Saint-Saëns—the Romantic experimentalist—is nowhere present in these works. However, in this chapter, I would like to argue that these fleeting remarks denote a partial (or perhaps superficial) understanding of Saint-Saëns’s musical style vis-à-vis fugue and that it is possible to demonstrate, over the entire span of his fugal output, significant evolutionary changes in terms of harmonic language and musical form. While the principal thesis of this study is that the larger
part of Saint-Saëns’s fugues carry, owing to the composer’s training and later involvement with the contests at the Académie des Beaux-Arts and the Paris Conservatory, the unequivocal imprint of the fugue d’école, I hope to demonstrate that these pieces not only exhibit definite elements and strategies associated with eighteenth-century fugal writing, but also the idiosyncrasies generated by the fecund synthesis of the two Saint-Saënses—in the words of Timothy Flynn, “an eclectic creator who could synthesize various musical styles into his own without creating slavish imitations” (Flynn 2003, 1).

In his review of d’Indy’s Cours de composition musicale, Saint-Saëns takes some pride in saying that the ground-breaking fugue that forms part of the first movement of his Symphony No. 2 in A Minor, op. 55 (1859), “appeared scandalous to many listeners,” but, at the same time, severely criticizes Franck for writing “a fugue that is not a fugue” (in relation to the final movement of Franck’s Prelude, Fugue, and Variation for organ, op. 18)—a fugue that, after the exposition, “resembles a fugue no more than a zoophyte resembles a mammal” (1919a, 34–39). For Saint-Saëns the fugue is, within a flexible (but not amorphous) framework, a genre with well-defined characteristics. As this chapter will suggest, the six fugues examined in this study—from Saint-Saëns’s opp. 52, 90, 99, 109, 111, and 161—dwell within the three formal constructs discussed in the previous chapter. However, within these schemes, the tripartite design (type A) emerges as the preferred choice. Furthermore, some compositional choices and strategies directly linked to the scholastic subtype (type $A'$)—which can be found even in Saint-Saëns’s first submission for the qualifying round of the Prix de Rome in 1852 (when he was only seventeen years old!)—transfer from this pedagogical artifice into Saint-Saëns’s compositional language, having a significant impact even on the composer’s late fugues.\footnote{I will return to Saint-Saëns’s fugue for the Prix de Rome in more detail in the first analysis of this chapter.}

While this dissertation is primarily concerned with exploring issues of form in Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues, it is necessary to touch upon the tonal implications and melodic
outline of the initial subject/answer pair, as these thematic components are intricately tied to the harmonic and voice-leading structure of the exposition as a tonic-affirming space, and hence of the fugue as a whole. This discussion may also prove useful in examining formal issues in a fugue, given that a subject (or answer) may present a particular feature of harmony and voice-leading (take, for example, the dominant-to-tonic subjects in fugues from the opp. 90 and 109, no. 3) that might have an impact later in the process of formal sectionalization.

Likewise, a thematic statement might be, harmonically speaking, re-contextualized later in the fugue, thus creating a harmonic/melodic dissociation that may have significant implications in the stability (or relative strength) of the middle entries. For example, in the majority of Saint-Saëns’s organ fugues, the pairs of middle entries seem to emulate, more or less, the harmonic environment delineated by the initial subject/answer pair; however, this is not always true in the fugues that appear to be more in dialogue with the formal strategies found in fugues composed in the first half of the eighteenth century (i.e., the fugue from his Suite op. 90). Although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to examine the many fascinating voice-leading details found in the six fugues discussed in this chapter (as complete compositions), it is worth examining the local harmony and voice-leading of several passages that reform, contravene, or even clarify the thematic elements presented in the exposition.
I. Fugue in A Major from “Prélude et fugue,” no. 5 of *Six Études, op. 52* (1877)

Saint-Saëns composed his *Six Études*, op. 52, in the same year he resigned as the organist of the Église de la Madeleine in Paris (a prestigious position that was immediately filled by Théodore Dubois). By the time of composition of this work, the first of two sets of piano études, Saint-Saëns was already a successful and mature composer. However, even though Saint-Saëns composed these études in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Fugue in A Major from his “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 5—the second and last fugue in the collection of études—seems to be modeled, both in its internal proportions and overall harmonic scheme, after the scholastic fugue at its most incipient stage. In various ways, this fugue, which, as I will attempt to establish below, complies with most of the requirements of the scholastic subtype (type A1), appears to be more directly related to the examples found in the works of Martini and Cherubini than to those found in the treatises of Dubois and Gedalge.

Example 3.1 presents an annotated score of the entire fugue. The first section of this four-voice fugue (mm. 1–25) is almost equal in length to the middle section (mm. 25–50) and considerably longer than the concluding section (mm. 50–68). As one might expect, such an unusually long initial section is bound to result from the inclusion of a counterexposition. In this fugue, the four initial entries comprising the exposition (mm. 1–12) are followed by a brief transitional passage that leads to the counterexposition, in which all voices are employed (mm. 13–22). Especially striking is the use of four entrances in the counterexposition, a configuration that goes against the more orthodox arrangement offered in the treatises of Dubois and Gedalge and exhibited in the *fugues de concours* after the 1860s. In the view of the aforementioned

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58 Although it is true that the counterexposition with two entries in reverse order becomes crystallized in the scholastic fugue during the second half of the nineteenth century, French-influenced theorists like Reicha and J. A. Hamilton mention it in their respective treatises of 1824–6 and 1840 (see Reicha [1832?], 4:905; Hamilton [1840?], 48).
Example 3.1. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in A Major from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 5 of his Études, op. 52 (1877)
Example 3.1 (cont’d)
Example 3.1 (cont’d)
Example 3.1 (cont’d)
authors, the counterexposition must present only two entries, reversing the order of entries (the answer followed by the subject) and introducing the subject in one of the voices that had the answer in the exposition, and vice versa (Dubois 1901, 112; Gedalge 1901, 108). By contrast, the extended counterexposition of this fugue—which has no equal among Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues—seems to be more in line with the concept of rovescio as explained by Martini.60

Martini argues that to avoid the practice of those “semi-contrapuntalists” who, at the beginning of a fugue, present the theme a single time in one or two of the voices, making it later difficult to recognize its melodic content, the young composer must reiterate the subject and the answer, but exchanging their initial locations in the parts of the fugue (Martini 1775, xxxiv).61 Thus, if the bass and the alto, for instance, had the subject in what we would now call the exposition, in the following section, these voices would have to reiterate the answer; in consequence, the tenor and the soprano, who had the answer in the initial segment, would have to reintroduce the subject in the exchange section. Martini, unlike the late nineteenth-century French authors, does not say anything about exchanging the sequential order of the subject and the answer; rather, he is concerned with exchanging the registral position of the thematic entries.

Martini presents two examples of this type of extended exposition. Both his exemplary model of a four-part fugue with a tonal answer, discussed in chapter 1, and the example of a four-part fugue composed by Angelo Predieri, re-articulate, like Saint-Saëns’s fugue, the totality

60 Although Cherubini, unlike Dubois and Gedalge, fails to address the counterexposition in his discussion of the elements and attributes that may be introduced in a fugue, the overwhelming majority of his examples at the end of his Cours include counterexpositions. Among these examples, Cherubini presents a four-part fugue with a four-entry counterexposition (see Cherubini’s Tonal Fugue in Four Parts in F Major; [1835?], 142–48).

61 In her translation of Martini’s Preface to the second part of his Esemplare, Deborah Burton translates the term rovescio as “part-exchange.” See Burton 2004, 35–108.

61 Francesco Galeazzi seems to give a similar description for the reversing (rovesciar) of the parts that occurs once the four voices have entered. See Galeazzi 2012, 301.
of the parts after the customary exposition and exchanges the registral position of the subjects and answers (see Martini 1775, xxxiv–xxxxvi; Mann 1987, 274–79).\footnote{A significant difference between Martini’s four-part fugue and that of Predieri is that Martini begins the rovesciamento (the part-exchange section, or what the nineteenth-century French theorists would later define as the “counterexposition”) with the answer, whereas Predieri initiates it with the subject “at an interval other than the one at its first entrance” (Mann 1987, 278). Timothy Smith (1996) uses the term “re-exposition” to denote “An exposition, following the initial exposition, in which the voices enter in the same order as the first exposition.” This study, however, does not consider the reversal in the order of the entries as a condition for a counterexposition and favors a more inclusive notion of counterexposition: an extension of the exposition—which is usually preceded by a brief transition—where the voices reassert at least one statement of the subject and the answer in the key of the first exposition.” As I attempt to demonstrate in this study, there is a fair degree of flexibility in the scholastic concept of the counterexposition.} Just as in the examples of Martini and Predieri, this reiteration of the thematic statements in the first section of Saint-Saëns’s fugue produces a resilient dominance of the tonic key in the overall tonal plan of the piece—a dominance that should be considered unusual in the context of a late nineteenth-century composition.

Figure 3.1 contains a voice-leading graph of the first six measures of the fugue—the basic structure of the subject/answer pair. The subject outlines a descending third-progression \( \hat{5} – 4 – 3 \); accordingly, the resulting answer (in the alto) delineates a \( 1 – \hat{1} – \hat{7} \) progression. The simplicity of the subject’s underlying melodic and harmonic elements, which contrasts with the chromatic nature of the vast majority of the subjects in the late nineteenth-century fugue literature, seems to correspond to the fugue’s overall harmonic plan.\footnote{A significant difference between Martini’s four-part fugue and that of Predieri is that Martini begins the rovesciamento (the part-exchange section, or what the nineteenth-century French theorists would later define as the “counterexposition”) with the answer, whereas Predieri initiates it with the subject “at an interval other than the one at its first entrance” (Mann 1987, 278). Timothy Smith (1996) uses the term “re-exposition” to denote “An exposition, following the initial exposition, in which the voices enter in the same order as the first exposition.” This study, however, does not consider the reversal in the order of the entries as a condition for a counterexposition and favors a more inclusive notion of counterexposition: an extension of the exposition—which is usually preceded by a brief transition—where the voices reassert at least one statement of the subject and the answer in the key of the first exposition.” As I attempt to demonstrate in this study, there is a fair degree of flexibility in the scholastic concept of the counterexposition.} All the thematic entrances after the initial subject (including those in the counterexposition) are accompanied by a countersubject. The last entrance in the counterexposition (mm. 20–21) dissolves into the post-expositional episode, which in turn leads to the forceful PAC in the tonic key that marks the end of the first large-scale section of the fugue. Saint-Saëns builds the post-expositional episode from a small melodic idea that belongs to the second countersubject, which emerges in the
counterexposition. As observed in chapters 1 and 2, the merging of the counterexposition into the post-expositional episode ($\text{Cxp}(\Omega)\text{Ep}$) is an aesthetically preferred compositional choice from a French scholastic perspective. Nonetheless, while the placement of a PAC at the conclusion of the post-expositional episode (m. 25) is nowhere proscribed in the French treatises, a cursory examination of the fugues found at the end of these pedagogical works, or even those composed for the competition at the Paris Conservatory, shows that the occurrence of a strong cadential punctuation at this point is a rare event at best. This compositional strategy follows a formal disposition favored by J. S. Bach and some of his predecessors.

In my analytical model, the placement of a—relatively early—clear-cut cadence creates a significant distinction between a post-expositional episode that belongs to the first section of a fugue, and one that belongs to the development or middle section. Simply put, if a conspicuous cadence occurs, as in this fugue, between the thematic conclusion of the exposition (or counterexposition) and the first middle entry in a key other than the tonic or the dominant, and this cadence is not placed in or near the midpoint of the fugue (thus articulating a bisectional design), the post-expositional episode becomes part of the first section. Conversely, if the post-expositional episode progresses into the first middle entry in a key other that those employed in the exposition without a strong cadence separating them, the episode belongs to the middle
section of the fugue and, in consequence, the first large-scale section ends with the conclusion of the last entrance of the exposition or counterexposition.

The relatively short episode that follows the PAC in the tonic key (mm. 25–29) is built on a collection of quasi-canonic imitations. The main melodic figure in this passage seems to be derived from one of the free parts in the exposition (see the soprano in mm. 9–10 and the bass in mm. 19–20). As I noted in the seventh condition of the scholastic fugue (see p. 39 above), the motives of an episode must be drawn from the materials of the exposition, including the free parts (Gedalge 1901, 113–14). This episode leads to a pair of subject entries, in the alto and the soprano, in the subdominant key (mm. 29–33). With these first middle entries, Saint-Saëns seems to be, once again, drawing on a scholastic archaism. Whereas the use of the subdominant key at an early point in a fugue is inconsistent with the tonal scheme exhibited in virtually every scholastic fugue after the second half of the nineteenth century (and contradicts the modulation patterns presented in the model fugues from the treatises of Dubois and Gedalge), the articulation of the first middle entries in this key—for fugues in both major and minor keys—is far from being an exception vis-à-vis the fugues of several North Italian composers in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.64 Both the abovementioned four-part fugues of Martini and Predieri exhibit a pair of entries (subject and answer) in the subdominant key after the counterexposition.65 Regarding this tonal shift after the exposition, Martini conjectures that many composers may have wished to modulate first to “the fourth of the key [Quarta del Tuono]” because of the tonal likeness between the answer of the subdominant pair of entries and the initial subject in the tonic key (Martini 1773, xxxvii). In his opinion, “less scrupulous”

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64 In her historical survey of the fugue, Horsley points out that one of the most notable changes that takes place in the nineteenth-century fugue, vis-à-vis the overall key scheme, is the relocation of the subdominant entries from the beginning to the latter part of the fugue (1966, 24).

65 While Cherubini declares, in his scheme of modulation for fugues in the major mode, that the key of the submediant must follow the tonic and dominant keys, a considerable number of major-key fugues at the end of his Cours modulate first to the subdominant and then to the submediant (1841, 334). See Cherubini’s Tonal Fugue in Two Parts in Bb Major, Tonal Fugue in Three Parts in F Major, and Tonal Fugue in Four Parts in F Major ([1835?], 122–48).
composers may progress from the exposition to “other participating degrees of the [main] key,” like the third and the sixth, with less effective results, owing to the modal dissimilarity between the principal key and these keys; namely, if the principal key is major, the third and the sixth degree would be minor, and vice versa (1773, xxxvii).

The second entry in the subdominant key, in a similar fashion to the last subject of the counterexposition, dissolves into the following episode (mm. 32–34). This transitional episode, which is largely based on the melodic material that follows the head of the subject, leads to a pair of incomplete entries in the submediant key, now accompanied by the initial countersubject. Once more, the scholastically oriented quality of restlessness that characterizes the middle section of this fugue is exemplified in the way Saint-Saëns truncates the last entrance in the submediant key and merges it with the extensive episode that leads the music to the dominant region, which sets off the final stage of the middle section (mm. 39–49). The use of partial entries is common in the French scholastic tradition. Gedalge observes that a “subject may, in the course of the fugue, be employed partially; that is, it may be interrupted either for the entrance of the answer or the beginning of an episode” (1901, 270). According to him, this procedure should be used in subjects that are relatively long (1901, 270–71). Although Cherubini and Dubois, unlike Gedalge, do not provide a detailed discussion of modifications in the length of the subject, they do present multiple examples of fugues with partial or interrupted subjects in the development or middle section; see the passage from Cherubini’s *Example of a Real Fugue in Two Parts* in C Major in example 1.3, mm. 73–88 (the subject is interrupted in measure 76).

Two aspects of this episode’s design lie outside the scholastic ideal. First, one could make the case that this episode, which I have divided into two parts (mm. 41–45 and mm. 45–50), resists the traditional conception of episode for the reason that Saint-Saëns introduces a partial subject entry—in the lowest part—within its sequential framework. The first part of the episode
in mm. 41–45, which includes a partial statement of the subject in the dominant key, exposes—quite beautifully—the subject’s underlying stepwise descent through a series of parallel 6/3 chords that are ornamented by a simple chain of 7-6 suspensions (see the voice-leading graph in figure 3.2). While the episodes in a scholastic fugue should be constructed using fragments or short melodic ideas derived from the main melodic elements of the exposition, the use of a partial subject in an episode—one that is at least equal in length to the last answer in the counterexposition—goes against the principle of thematic recess stipulated in the scholastic model. Second, the use of unadorned harmonic sequences, like the descending-fifths sequence that occurs in mm. 45–48, not only defies the notion of episode in a scholastic sense, but also stands out as a *rara avis* in the context of late nineteenth-century compositional practice (Damschroder 2008, 65). As Gedalge declares:

> At the École, harmonic sequences in the fugue are strictly forbidden. This is all very well if one understands by it that, in episodes, one should not have simple progressions of chords, whether ornamented or not. To take a simple harmonic structure, such as is found in harmony exercises, and repeated it at different pitch levels, offers nothing of musical interest. (Gedalge 113, 1901)

Despite this episode’s compliance with some of the provisions and compositional strategies found in treatises on the *fugue d’école*—the placement of the longest episode at the end of the middle section (Gedalge 1901, 195) and the employment of fragments of the subject to construct an episode (Cherubini 1841, 332–33; Dubois 1901, 144; Gedalge 1901, 113) one may speculate that, in essence, Saint-Saëns modeled it after the diatonic sequences frequently found in Baroque fugues.66

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66 While the three French authors surveyed in this study recommend the use of fragments derived from the materials of the exposition to form the episodes, Dubois and Gedalge observe that the head of the subject (*tête de sujet*), one the main components of the episode under examination (mm. 45–47), should not be used before the final section (Dubois 1901, 144; Gedalge 1901, 276). According to Dubois, the reason behind this advice is that the head of the subject is the principal element of construction in many of the stretti in the concluding section; its use before this point may lead to monotony (1901, 144). However, the use of the head of the subject for the construction of episodes is more consistent not only with a considerable number of model fugues found in the early French treatises—see, for example,
In line with the compositional strategies of the *fugue d'école*, Saint-Saëns closes the middle or development section of this fugue with a dominant pedal point (mm. 48–50), which drives toward the point of repose that anticipates the reassertion and restoration of the original form of the subject in the principal key. This structural point of arrival is immediately followed by a two-measure connective passage that serves as a link (to put it in Hepokoski and Darcy’s terms, a caesura-fill) between the middle and concluding sections. While most scholastic fugues display the subject immediately after the point of repose, one may find, with much less frequency, this type of connective passage (see, for example, Florent Schmitt’s four-part fugue for the *Concours d'essai* of 1896; example 3.2). In this instance, the passage serves to accelerate the—usually more gradual—process of textural stratification that occurs at the early stages of the concluding section; here, the texture thickens from one voice to four voices in just three measures.

\[\text{Figure 3.2. Voice-leading graph of the episode in mm. 41–45}\]

Cherubini’s *Real Fugue in Three parts* in G Major ([1835?], 126) and Reicha’s *Fugue à 4* in C Major ([1832?] 4:930–31) but also with many fugues composed in the Baroque era, including Bach’s Fugue in C Minor from the first volume of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. 

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Example 3.2. Florent Schmitt’s 1896 entry for the preliminary competition at the Paris Conservatory (subject by Gedalge). The fugue is taken from Gedalge’s Traité.

The registral disposition of the reinstatement of the initial subject and countersubject in measure 53 (in the bass and tenor, respectively) resembles the inception of the counterexposition in measure 13. Before the conclusion of this subject, a subject in augmentation in the soprano (m. 55) enters and produces the first stretto of the concluding section. The subject in the soprano does not maintain its augmented quality throughout the entirety of its melodic content; it return to its original dimensions in mm. 58–59. Like most keyboard fugues composed in the nineteenth century, or in any century for that matter, the use of stretto in the concluding section in this fugue is noticeably less severe and systematic than the stretto section in a typical fugue d’école. Although the idea of thematic intensification is, from a rhetorical standpoint, commonplace in fugal composition, the orderly and methodical disposition of stretti in the late nineteenth-century scholastic model is rarely, if ever, emulated in actual fugues.

After the end of the partially augmented subject, which coincides with a deceptive cadence in measure 59, Saint-Saëns makes use of different conformations of the head of the subject in close imitation, generating an additional event of textural accumulation. This passage, which unfolds mostly over a dominant pedal, leads to the second and final PAC in the fugue. In the final stretch of the fugue (mm. 63–68), Saint-Saëns follows the orthodox compositional
strategy of saving the closest stretto for the very final portion of the fugue. Although it is true that this passage begins with incomplete presentations of the answer and the subject (the answer being reduced simply to its head) and the imitation entails only two parts, the procedure of placing fragments of the main melodic components of the fugue at a stretto interval of one eighth note (alto and soprano in mm. 63–64) seems to echo the advice found in the French treatises.\textsuperscript{67} \textsuperscript{68} The fugue concludes with a statement of the subject in the bass that ultimately dissolves into the final cadence.

In closing, I turn now to a comprehensive overview of the whole piece. As observed above, the fugue falls into three well-defined sections that are demarcated by two clear and decisive cadences: the PAC in measure 25 and the I:HC in measure 48. The I:PAC in measure 63 marks the structural conclusion of the fugue; I prefer to see the events after this cadence (mm. 63–68) more like a coda than a further stage in the concluding section. Harmonically speaking, there seems to be a striking similarity between the overall key succession of this fugue (I–IV–VI–V // I) and some of the vocal fugues found in North Italian, or North Italian-influenced, sources in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century.

It is worth examining this fugue in the light of Saint-Saëns’s \textit{Fugue in Four Parts} in G Major, submitted for the qualifying round of the \textit{Prix de Rome} in 1852—while Saint-Saëns was still a student at the Paris Conservatory (example 3.3 shows the manuscript of the fugue). Besides notable stylistic differences, such as the pianistic idiom of the former versus the vocal

\textsuperscript{67} In their respective treatises, Dubois and Gedalge admit the possibility of commencing the last stretto with the answer (see Dubois 1901, 164; Gedalge 1901, 168–69). Nonetheless, in their view, this stretto, reversed or not, requires the participation of all the parts.

\textsuperscript{68} Gedalge notes that “the head of the subject and of the answer are the indispensable elements of a stretto” (1901, 155). By extension, he notes that, in practice, the successive entries in a stretto might be constructed out of the first measures or even the first notes of the subject and answer.
Example 3.3. Saint-Saëns, Fugue [à quatre parties] for the preliminary round of the 1852 Prix de Rome. Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France, département de la musique, MS-535 (1)
Example 3.3 (cont'd)
Example 3.3 (cont’d)

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style of the latter, the parallels between the design and tonal scheme of these two pieces are both inescapable and fascinating. For instance, in both fugues the voices in the exposition enter from the top down (S–A–T–B; as is seen in many examples in the treatises of Martini and Cherubini) and progress to a counterexposition, in which the subject and answer exchange parts but maintain the same order of entrance of the exposition. Similarly, in both fugues, Saint-Saëns dissolves the last statement of the counterexposition into the post-expositional episode, ending in both cases with a strong (but scholastically unusual) PAC in the tonic key. These fugues, though separated by a span of 25 years, also share similarities in their schemes of modulation for the middle section, as the first two groups of entries in both fugues occur (contrary to most scholastic fugues written in the second half of the nineteenth century) in the subdominant and submediant keys. Also, in both fugues, Saint-Saëns anticipates the dominant interruption at the end of the middle section with a pedal point and reserves the use of stretto, though in moderation, for the final section.

Whereas several features in this fugue resonate more strongly with the early scholastic model (as codified in the writings of Martini and Cherubini), it is clear that each of the large-scale sections in this tripartite fugue embodies the general plan of execution and the narrative of the late nineteenth-century *fugue d’école*. The fugue begins with a conspicuous—almost wearisome—affirmation of the main melodic elements in the tonic key, followed by the uninterrupted reformulation of these materials within a manifestly restricted tonal range. The middle section, which is ultimately delimited by a point of repose and a reduction in textural density—the crux of the type A¹ formal design—is succeeded by a restoration of the principal key and a renewal and further intensification (both texturally and thematically) of the overall accumulative process that began with the introduction of the principal subject.

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69 A noteworthy difference between the two fugues is the number of entries in the counterexposition. In the fugue written for the *Prix de Rome*, Saint-Saëns outlines, in accordance with the French pedagogical tradition, a two-entry counterexposition, even though he decides not to reverse the order of the entries.
II. Fugue in F Major from “Prélude et fugue” of the Suite pour le piano, op. 90 (1891)

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, several prominent composers associated with the French musical scene reintroduced the dance-related suite for solo piano. Claude Debussy’s Suite bergamasque and Suite pour le piano (1890 and 1901), George Enesco’s Suites nos. 1 and 2 for piano (1897 and 1903), and Maurice Ravel’s Le tombeau de Couperin (1914–17) are among the most notable examples of this kind of neo-Baroque pastiche. Saint-Saëns’s Suite pour le piano, op. 90 (1891), a lesser-known example of this type of composition, begins its sequence of dances, like Enesco’s Suite no. 1 (op. 3) and Ravel’s Tombeau, with a prelude and fugue; however, in the case of Saint-Saëns’s suite, the prelude and fugue are joined in one movement. The three-voice fugue in F major (example 3.4), the object of this analysis, could be described best as a fughetta and represents a decided departure from the tripartite framework that characterizes most of Saint-Saëns’s étude and organ fugues. As regards its proportions, tonal range, and form, the fugue appears to be more consistent with the bisectional design found in some short fugues and fughettas from the Baroque period.

The fugue presents the initial subject in the soprano over a dominant harmony—a tonal residue of the conclusion of the prelude. At a local level, the off-tonic subject (mm. 1–2), which presents a dramatic upward leap of a tenth near its head, achieves a motion from the dominant to the tonic by means of a descending linear progression $\hat{5} – \hat{4} – \hat{3}$ (see figure 3.3). One of the most immediately striking features of this descent is the duration and prominence of $\hat{4}$: the effectuation of the register transfer that connects the Bb4–Bb5–Bb4 accounts for most of the subject’s linear basis. The answer, an exact transposition of the subject, exhibits an $\hat{8} – b\hat{7} – \hat{6}$ linear motion. Harmonically speaking, the answer would have ended on the subdominant if

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70 For the sake of simplicity in the analysis, I number the first measure of the fugue as “measure 1.”
Example 3.4. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in F Major from “Prélude et Fugue” of his Suite pour le piano, op. 90 (1891)
Example 3.4 (cont’d)
Figure 3.3. Voice-leading graph of the exposition, mm. 1–5

the pitch F♯ was not introduced so prominently in measure 3 and the first half of measure 4. As can be seen in the voice-leading graph (figure 3.3), the introduction of the answer in the second half of measure 2 marks the beginning of an auxiliary cadence (IV–VⅦ–I) in C minor. The C-minor chord on the first beat of measure 3 acts as the subdominant of G minor in another IV–V–I auxiliary cadence, ending on the third beat of measure 4. The difference between the two auxiliary cadences is that the dominant is more extensively composed out in the G-minor cadence—note the F-sharp diminished seventh chord (VII) before the introduction of the dominant of G minor in measure 4. Of particular relevance is the fact that the resolution of this local dominant into the supertonic occurs in the midst of the second statement of the subject.

Regardless of the various ways in which the nuances of voice leading of this passage may be interpreted, the unusual harmonic and melodic structure of the answer not only produces a dramatic harmonic identity crisis with regard to the reaffirmation of the third entry (the return of the subject) in the exposition, but also disturbs the normative role of the exposition as a tonic-
affirming zone. Compositional choices like the use of only three voices, the lack of a consistent countersubject, the employment of the archaic real answer, and the re-launch of the subject over what one may regard as “the wrong chord” (V of II) stress the inherent incompatibility between this idiosyncratic exposition and the exposition delineated by the French scholastic treatises. Conversely, the features and elements of this exposition, including the conclusion of the answer in a harmony other than the tonic and the dominant (see the expositions of Bach’s Fugue in C-sharp Major from WTC II, BWV 872, and the Fugue from the first Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin in G Minor, BWV 1001), seem to be in dialogue with the myriad of compositional solutions found in more than a few expositions in Bach’s keyboard fugues.

After the conclusion in measure 5 of the exposition’s third and last entry, Saint-Saëns uses the last portion of the free counterpoint that accompanied the answer (soprano, m. 6, beats 3–4) to create an area of motivic saturation in mm. 6–8. The post-expositional episode is followed by two statements of the subject in the middle voice and the soprano. The first entry is somewhat hidden in the middle voice and is metrically shifted (per arsin et thesin); the second, which is a partial statement, dissolves in measure 10 and initiates a brief sequential episode that ends with the introduction of the subject in the bass. This statement (mm. 11–13), which begins in the dominant of the supertonic key and ends in a German augmented sixth chord in inversion, seems to come closer—once again—to Bach’s fugal writing, in which a thematic element may be weaved into a harmonic tapestry that contravenes its original harmonic context (see figure 3.4). In this instance, Saint-Saëns modifies the final portion of the subject’s melodic outline to reach the most prominent structural marker of the fugue. The powerful II:PAC at measure 14 not only marks the midpoint of the composition, but also resonates both with the striking introduction of the supertonic in the exposition and the persistence of the D-major chord (and its harmonic equivalent, the F-sharp diminished seventh chord) throughout the first half of the piece (see mm. 3–4, and mm. 6–7). It almost seems as if this cadence denotes, from a
Figure 3.4. Voice-leading graph of the subject in the bass (leading to the II:PAC), mm. 11–14

rhetorical standpoint, the final (and perhaps satisfactory) destination of the D-major chord introduced in the exposition.

As regards the formal structure, this emphatic cadence is not challenged by any other competing cadence or forceful structural event during the entire fugue. Even though the original subject is relaunched—in stretto—two measures later (note the partial statements in the soprano and middle voice), the structural power of this thematic saturation decreases dramatically because it is not coupled with a simultaneous return of the tonic key. As Goetschius notes, the second part of a bisectional design is “often individualized to some extent . . . by means of a new and characteristic counterpoint” (inversion, stretto, augmentation, etc.) and usually exhibits some parallelism with the first part (Goetschius 1902, 239). In my view, the thematic and textural intensification found shortly after the II:PAC is similar to that of the second large-scale section of Bach’s Fugue in C Minor from WTC2 (BWV 871). Like the second part of Bach’s fugue, this section functions as an area of thematic manipulation that stands on the dominant
preceding the final cadence. The fugue concludes, in resonance with the subject-tonic key dissociation that has characterized this piece, with a seven-measure episode that evades even a faint reminiscence of the subject and delays the decisive return of the tonic for the last measure.

While a type A fugue must present a simultaneous (or nearly simultaneous) return of the principal subject and the tonic key before its conclusion, a type C fugue may well end, like Saint-Saëns’s Fugue in F Major, without reasserting the subject in the tonic key. Formally speaking, the final portion of a fugue with a bisectional design is not necessarily defined, unlike virtually all three-part fugues, by an unequivocal sense of tonal and thematic restoration. Bach’s Fughetta (Variation 10) from the Goldberg Variations (BWV 988) provides, for instance, a good example of a short type C fugue that ends without reasserting the initial subject in synchrony with a well-defined restoration of the principal key. In this case, Bach closes the fughetta with a statement of the answer. The capricious character of Saint-Saëns’s fugue, together with its compact design, seems to be more in consonance with some of the ad hoc idiosyncrasies found in some of Bach’s bisectional fugues such as the Fugue in D Minor from WTC1 and the abovementioned Fugue in C Minor from WTC2.

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71 The occurrence of this thematic and harmonic dissociation is not limited to type C fugues. There are many fugues that exhibit a sectional design (type B) that end without stating the main subject in the principal key—see Bach’s D major fugue and C sharp major fugue from the first and second book of the WTC, respectively.
III. Fugue in E-flat Major from “Préludes et fugue,” no. 3 of 3 Préludes et fugues, op. 99 (1894)

The Prélude et Fugue in E flat Major, op. 99, no. 3, belongs to the first collection of three preludes and fugues for organ composed by Saint-Saëns during his lifetime, the other being the Trois Préludes et Fugues, op. 109. The piece, composed in September 1894 and dedicated to Saint-Saëns’s former pupil (at École Niedermeyer) and life-long friend Eugène Gigout, begins with a toccata that features a rapid and relentless broken-chord figuration in the right hand; it closes with a four-voice fugue in ¾ time that approaches the order of modulation suggested by Gedalge and exhibits various elements and features that resonate with the compositional strategies of the fugue d’école. Formally speaking, the fugue (example 3.5) presents a simple tripartite plan, which features a middle or development section that is almost twice as long as the first section and more than three times longer than the concluding section.

The first section (mm. 1–40) opens with a long and almost singable subject that moves from the tonic to the dominant by means of a compound melodic line that articulates a descending fourth, $\hat{3} - \hat{2} - \hat{1} - \hat{7}$ (figure 3.5). The answer, beginning on the dominant and accompanied by a countersubject, returns to the tonic through a melodic descent $\hat{7} - \hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{4} - \hat{3}$. The two remaining statements, which are also accompanied by the countersubject, are separated by a two-measure bridge (mm. 19–20) that, due to the use of the head of the answer, may deceive the listener initially into believing that the answer begins immediately after the conclusion of the subject statement in the pedal. The last statement in the exposition, the answer that begins in measure 21, is followed by a short episode (mm. 27–31) that leads to the counterexposition.
Example 3.5. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in E-flat Major from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 3 of his 3 Préludes et Fugues, op. 99 (1894)
Example 3.5 (cont’d)
Example 3.5 (cont’d)
Example 3.5 (cont'd)
Example 3.5 (cont'd)
A word must be said about the voice-leading of the subject/answer pair reproduced in figure 3.5. As the graph shows, the subject and answer in this fugue rely—to an unusual degree—on implied tones. While William Rothstein notes that, “at the beginning of most fugues, it is necessary to infer a bass line to the opening statement of a fugue subject,” in this fugue, the polyphonic (or compound) design of the fugue’s main subject also requires the use of implied tones to clarify several points of resolution and the stepwise linear progression of the upper voice (1991, 308). For example, the implied Eb4 in measure 5 shows the likely resolution of the F4 and D4 that appeared over the dominant in measure 3—note the implied retention of the F4 and D4 in measure 4. Similarly, the implied Bb4 in the answer (in measure 11) expresses the resolution of the C5 introduced in the third beat of measure 9. Whereas the above-mentioned resolutions are implied in the graph in figure 3.5, they are actually present in the
countersubjects that accompanied the last two entries in the exposition (see mm. 15–17 and mm. 23–25 in figure 3.6).

Contrary to what Saint-Saëns does in the counterexpositions of his étude fugues in A major and E flat minor from his opp. 52 and 111, respectively (the latter will be examined after this analysis), in this fugue he reverses the order of entries, presenting the answer before the subject, but he does not set the answer in one of the voices that had the subject in the principal exposition and vice versa. While Dubois and Gedalge, in their respective treatises, regard both the reversal and the exchange of the statements as requirements of the counterexposition (Dubois 1901, 112; Gedalge 1901, 108), there are examples in the French scholastic literature in which the exchange of parts does not occur. For instance, the two fugues that shared the first prize in the 1863 contest at the Paris Conservatory, composed by Georges Hess and Jules Massenet, begin the counterexposition, as in this fugue by Saint-Saëns, with the answer in one of the voices that already announced it in the exposition. Another striking feature of this counterexposition is the abbreviation of its two statements: the answer that begins in measure 31 is truncated at its fifth measure; the subject at measure 36 dissolves into the post-expositional episode \( (\text{Cxp}(\varnothing)\text{Ep}) \) after only four measures. Although it is true that this thematic contraction is remarkable and virtually nonexistent in a scholastic context, it counteracts the potential monotony of repeating such long statements without an extraordinary degree of variance.\(^7\)

\(^7\)Saint-Saëns’s use of a counterexposition in this fugue might seem, from a scholastic standpoint, both unnecessary and archaic. As Gedalge declares, the use of a counterexposition is advisable only when the principal subject is very short (i.e., whenever a subject has fewer than four bars in moderate tempo or lacks a “distinctive melodic character”) and its tessitura lends itself to its presentation in any of the four voices (1901, 108). This is certainly not the case with Saint-Saëns’s fugue, which not only exhibits a subject that lasts six measures, but also whose tessitura extends beyond the range of a sixth prescribed by Gedalge (1901, 9). Dubois declares that in most cases it is preferable to avoid the counterexposition, for it may lead to an undesired sense of monotony in the fugue (1901, 112). An examination of the fugues written for the annual competition at the Paris Conservatory and for the preliminary round of the Prix de Rome shows that the counterexposition falls into disuse after the 1880s.
In the post-expositional episode (which, like the brief episode that separates the exposition from the counterexposition, is based on fragments of the tail of the subject), Saint-Saëns leads the music from the tonic to the submediant key (mm. 40–45), the first-level default modulation for a scholastic fugue in the major mode. The pair of entries in the submediant key, in the bass and tenor, continues to the next episode without the accompaniment of the countersubject or the interpolation of a non-thematic break or transition. In the next ten measures (mm. 57–66), Saint-Saëns crafts an episode without the use of—obvious—melodic elements derived from the exposition. As I observed in outlining the normative conditions of the fugue d’école as delineated by Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge (see pp. 27–41), the episodes should be constructed of melodic materials derived from the exposition. Here, Saint-Saëns, instead of following the recommendation of the aforementioned theorists (which resonates with virtually all of the competition fugues composed after the 1860s), appears to be drawing on the principle of variety with regard to the melodic design of the episodes—a principle that Jean-Georges Kastner emphasizes in his Théorie abrégée du contrepoint et de la fugue (Paris, 1839).\footnote{Jean-Georges Kastner (b. Strasbourg 9 March 1810; d. Paris 19 December 1867) was a French composer and musicologist. Kastner studied counterpoint and fugue with Anton Reicha and composition with Henri-Montan Berton at the Paris Conservatory. Kastner’s two volumes on instrumentation, Traité...} In his treatise, Kastner argues that while the use of fragments of the subject and

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\textbf{Figure 3.6.} Fugue in E-flat Major from Saint-Saëns, op. 99, no. 3, mm. 15–17 and mm. 23–25
countersubject to form an episode may generate a general sense of unity, he observes that the
use of “foreign resources” in an episode leads to a desired degree of richness and variety ([1839]
1842, 71). Kastner’s remarks regarding the use of new melodic material to form an episode seem
to reflect, to a great extent, the opinion of his teacher of fugue and counterpoint at the Paris
Conservatory, Anton Reicha. In his *Traité de haute composition musicale* (1824–26), Reicha
notes that there are two types of episodes: those that are constructed using fragments of the
subject, thus promoting “unity in the fugue” (according to him, “the most valued” type of
episode), and those that are made out of invented elements, thus “adding more variety in the
fugue” (Reicha [1832?], 4:911; my translation). Regarding the second type, Reicha asserts that
the “invented” materials “must be consistent with the rest of the fugue” and “show some [degree
of] familiarity” with the fugue’s thematic elements (Reicha [1832?], 4:911; my translation).

After this episode, Saint-Saëns introduces a pair of incomplete statements in the key of
the dominant; the second entry (measure 71), which is somewhat buried (both aurally and
visually) in the alto, is in inversion. Although none of the treatises analyzed in this study
explicitly forbid the presentation of middle entries in the dominant, an examination of the
competition fugues shows that the appearance of the dominant key (not to say subject
statements in this key) at such an early point in the middle section is practically nonexistent in
the scholastic literature and should be considered as a significant departure from the scholastic
norm. Moreover, this early intervention of the dominant key in the middle section—with or
without thematic statements—is a rare and odd exception with regard to Saint-Saëns’s organ
fugues. With the exception of the fugue from the “Prélude et Fugue” in D Minor, op. 109, no. 1,
which exhibits a bisectional design with a distinctly marked cadence on V near the midpoint of
the fugue, Saint-Saëns prefers to reserve the use of the dominant key for the conclusion of the

*géral d’instrumentation* (1837) and *Cours d’instrumentation* (1839), were adopted for use in the
composition classes at the Paris Conservatory.
middle section. As I noted in the previous two chapters, the French treatises encourage the introduction of the dominant, as an active dominant in the main key, toward the end in the middle section, that is, when it occurs immediately before the restoration of the tonic key in the concluding section.

After this pair of partial statements in the dominant key, the fugue initiates its longest episode (mm. 75–94). This episode is mainly based on melodic ideas derived from the tail of the subject, the countersubject, and the free counterpoint (in the soprano) that accompanies the second statement in the counterexposition (mm. 36–37). It concludes with an IAC in the subdominant key, which marks the beginning of a new tonal area. This relatively weak cadential event in measure 94 coincides with a dramatic textural thinning-out and elides with the presentation of a partial statement in the alto and the introduction of a new countersubject in the soprano. To some extent, this prominent new countersubject, which will complement all of the subject statements from this point on (including those in the concluding section), has the character and function of what Dubois and Gedalge denote as “the new subject.” Dubois observes that when one wants to add interest to the fugue and the principal theme does not allow for further developments, “one can then involve a new theme to enrich the future combinations in the fugue” (1901, 184). Although, from a scholastic standpoint, a new subject should be heard at first unaccompanied and then together with the principal subject, the chief purpose of this new theme—as a subordinated theme—is ultimately to supplement, contrast, and enhance the main theme. According to Gedalge, the first condition for a new subject is that it must be written in invertible counterpoint with the main subject so as to place it eventually against the “the very foundation of the fugue” (1901, 253). Additionally, this subject should appear in a closely related key (or in the tonic itself) at some point after the second episode (254). While it is not my intention to claim that this new countersubject in Saint-Saëns’s fugue should be regarded as a bona fide new subject (at least in a strictly scholastic sense), it meets nearly all of the properties and requirements that distinguish a new subject.
Following the dissolution of the last subject (and the new countersubject) in the subdominant area, the episode beginning at measure 102 initiates the path toward the ultimate goal of the middle section: the dominant arrival that heralds the restoration of the principal key and the initial subject. Starting in measure 107, Saint-Saëns articulates a broad harmonic motion that leads the music from II to V. The relentless sixteenth-note pattern in the soprano (sempre più forte) initiates, much like a ticking clock, a process of intensification that leads to the dominant pedal point at measure 111. The final section of the fugue (mm. 115–34) begins with a forceful assertion of the principal subject and the new countersubject in the outer voices. Instead of relying on the use of stretto, Saint-Saëns replicates these two themes (m. 19) but exchanges their position in the voices. For the first time since the first pair of middle entries (mm. 45–57), Saint-Saëns reestablishes the main subject, now in the soprano, to its original length. At this point, he uses—in a similar fashion to what he did in the short passage that separates the exposition from the counterexposition (mm. 27–31) and again at the beginning of the post-expositional episode (mm. 40–42)—the tail of the subject to lead into the episode that closes the fugue.

In examining the overall architecture of this fugue through the lens of the scholastic model, I hope to have demonstrated that this fugue reflects—both in its features and formal scheme—the basic framework of a typical fugue d’école. Notwithstanding Saint-Saëns’s digressions from the scholastic blueprint (i.e., the counterexposition without the part-exchange, the brief return of the dominant key in the middle section, and the lack of stretto in the concluding section), this fugue not only exhibits a well-defined and continuous tripartite design that is never challenged by internal cadences (save for the expected dominant interruption at the end of the middle section), but also presents an overall harmonic scheme that subscribes, to a great extent, to the modulatory strategies found in the treatises of Cherubini and Gedalge. Aside from the unusual interpolation of the dominant key in mm. 67–75, the large-scale harmonic
sequence of the middle section follows the submediant–subdominant–supertonic harmonic progression found in the aforementioned treatises and in countless competition fugues.

Perhaps the most prominent discrepancy between Saint-Saëns’s E-flat major fugue and the typical *fugue d’école* is the significant modification of the relative proportions of the concluding section in relation to the first two sections. In this fugue, as well as in the overwhelming majority of type A fugues (written outside the *école*) in the nineteenth century, the concluding section is substantially shorter than the conventional stretto section of an actual scholastic fugue. The dimensions that Gedalge presents for the stretto section, which are met by innumerable *fugues d’écoles*, are rarely, if ever, found in the fugues of nineteenth-century composers, even in those that exhibit an extraordinary scholastic imprint. In discussing the dimension of the final section in a *fugue d’école* it is advantageous, I think, to keep in mind that the pedagogical purpose of this section was to demonstrate the multiple ways and procedures by which the main thematic elements may be recombined and repositioned in canonic fashion. In the context of an actual composition, the overuse of this contrapuntal device may lead to an unwanted proportional disparity between the final section and its counterparts. As d’Indy declares:

> The contrapuntal function of the stretto has led to serious abuses, which had contributed, in a not insignificant way, to the decadence of the art of the fugue and, in the schools, to a genuine game of patience. The simple assertion of the concluding tonic, in which the stretto takes place, has taken such an extension in certain scholastic fugues that sometimes it length is equal or even superior to that of all the expositions and episodes combined. (d’Indy 1909, 63)
IV. Fugue in C Major from “Prélude et fugue,” no. 3 of 3 Préludes et fugues, op. 109 (1898)

Saint-Saëns finished his second set of Préludes et Fugues in February 1898 at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and dedicated its individual pieces to Gabriel Fauré, Albert Périlhou, and Henri Dallier, respectively. The colossal Prélude et Fugue no. 3 in C Major, which Saint-Saëns describes as “sparkling,” imbued with “perilous splendors” (Ratner 2002, 126), contrasts sharply with the rest of his preludes and fugues for organ in two respects. First, unlike any of his previous preludes, this prelude avoids a firm conclusion as it ends with a HC; the performer is instructed to “move immediately to the fugue.” Second, the tonally ambiguous nature of the subject’s head generates an arresting sense of tonal distortion and dislocation that has significant harmonic and formal consequences beyond the boundaries of the exposition. Saint-Saëns’s last fugue for organ carries a tremendous resonance with the commonly stated maxim that the “character of a fugue” is defined by “the nature of the subject selected” (Gedalge 1901, 8).

Example 3.6 reproduces the score of the fugue. Although this four-part fugue conveys, like the previous organ fugue (from Saint-Saëns’s op. 99), a tripartite formal design, it poses certain analytical challenges that are inherent, as I noted above, to the mutable tonal outline of the principal subject, but also to the unusual tonal trajectory of a fugue in which its author seems to make a deliberate effort to stray away from the main key. Despite these and other challenges, this fugue may be regarded as a bona fide type A fugue in which the line of demarcation between the last two sections is somewhat blurred—I will address this issue later.

74 Henri Dallier (b. Reims, 20 March 1849; d. Paris, 23 December 1934) was a French organist and composer. Dallier studied organ with César Franck, who described him as “a very capable and distinguished pupil” and composition with François Bazin at the Paris Conservatory (Stinson 2012, 174); he won the first prize in both organ and counterpoint and fugue in 1878. A year later he became organist at Saint-Eustache and in 1905 he succeeded Fauré as the organist of La Madeleine.
Example 3.6. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in C Major from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 3 of his 3 Préludes et Fugues, op. 109 (1898)
Example 3.6 (cont'd)
Example 3.6 (cont'd)
Example 3.6 (cont’d)
Example 3.6 (cont'd)

Return of the initial subject
(still in the active dominant)
Example 3.6 (cont’d)
Example 3.6 (cont’d)
For the moment, I will propose that this fugue exhibits a three-part design with the exposition (and a counterexposition) ending in measure 32 and the concluding section beginning in measure 90, with the restoration of the initial subject in the lower part.

Figure 3.7 provides a voice-leading sketch of the subject/answer pair in measures 1–9. Broadly speaking, the subject (in the tenor) achieves a motion from the dominant to the tonic by means of a basic \( \hat{5} - \hat{4} - \hat{3} \) linear progression; the tonal answer (in the alto) returns the music to the dominant and projects the corresponding \( \hat{8} - \hat{8} - \hat{7} \) melodic motion. However, the chromatic nature of the subject might well lead the listener (at least in my experience), to perceive, at first, the beginning of the subject in the key of E minor or even G major. Although it is perfectly plausible to interpret the D\#4 and C\#4 in measure 2 as chromatic incomplete neighbor tones to E4 and D4, respectively, the F\#4 in measure 1 in addition to the absence of the tonic pitch in the first two measures of the subject contribute to the difficulty of hearing the head of the subject as a discernible melodic motion within the key of C major. It is not, I think, until the introduction of the F4 in measure 4 that the subject presents the first clear indication of its true harmonic goal.\(^{75}\) Furthermore, at the end of the bridge that follows the conclusion of the answer and countersubject (mm. 9–10), Saint-Saëns seems to further exploit the harmonic malleability of the subject by introducing a D\# immediately before the restatement of the subject in the soprano (m. 11)—a subject that is supported by an E–G dyad. While I am inclined to consider that the subject in measure 11 is supported by an implied I\(^6\) chord (the D\#4 functions as a decorative neighbor note to the E4 within a larger G4–F4–E4 motion in the alto in mm. 9–11),

\(^{75}\) From a scholastic perspective, this type of tonally ambiguous subject is—pedagogically speaking—both undesirable and inadequate. A good subject ought to exhibit a well-defined tonal scheme, suitable for a “clear and precise harmonization” (Zamacois 1997, 87); any chromatic pitch within the subject should not affect “the overall tonality of the subject” (Gedalge 1901, 10).
this passage, like many others in this fugue, is tainted by some degree of harmonic uncertainty; one may well understand the subject as being relaunched over an E-minor chord.\footnote{76 The principal argument in favor of reading the D♯4 at the end of measure 10 as a decorative neighbor note to the anticipated E4 or perhaps as a chromatic passing tone moving from an implied D4 (over a dominant chord)—note the leap from the D5 to the G4 in the last two notes of the soprano in m. 10—is the fact that Saint-Saëns uses the dominant chord with an augmented fifth in several places in this fugue. See, for example, the third beat of measure 7 in the exposition, the third beat of measure 27 in the counterexposition, and the first beat of measure 30 at the end of the counterexposition.}

After presenting the third and fourth entries, with their respective countersubjects, the exposition leads to a short episode that concludes with a V:PAC in measure 22.\footnote{77 Notice how Saint-Saëns modifies the second note of the final answer (the A3 in the bass in m. 15 contrasts with the A♯4 in the alto in m. 5) and the initial notes of its accompanying countersubject. In consequence, the #IV in the third beat of measure 5 becomes a diatonic IV in the third beat of measure 15.} This forceful cadence elides with the reintroduction of the subject in the bass, which, in turn, triggers a two-part counterexposition (with no reversal of the entries) that ends in measure 31. In light of the \textit{fugue d'école}, this cadence is problematic, for it collides with the virtually invariable norm that a cadence must not be used in the first section of the fugue. Indeed, I am not aware of any instances in the scholastic literature in which a PAC is employed between the exposition and the counterexposition.\footnote{78 This cadence is still more puzzling when we find out that, with the exception of this fugue, Saint-Saëns employs clear-cut cadences—in fugues with counterexpositions—only after the episode that follows the counterexposition and leads to the first middle entry (see the \textit{étude} fugues op. 52/5 and op. 111/5).} Furthermore, this uncharacteristic cadence raises an analytical dilemma,
because it calls into question its function as an agent of formal demarcation; more specifically, this PAC requires us to consider if the counterexposition belongs to the first section of the fugue.

While I argued in the previous chapter that cadences have the utmost weight in my understanding of fugal form, in this instance the cadence is dramatically weakened by the fact that the counterexposition (mm. 22-30) elides with it and carries on with the harmonic environment of the exposition. As the graph in figure 3.8 illustrates, the chord of G major is detonicized with the introduction of the F4 at the end of measure 23, setting up the simultaneous return of the tonic chord and the answer (m. 26). While the subject in the bass at measure 22 elides with a V:PAC, its harmonic goal is not different from that of the (unharmonized) subject at the beginning of the fugue. In other words, the relative strength of this cadence, though salient, is lessened because it is not succeeded (harmonically or thematically speaking) by something new; therefore, the counterexposition can be understood as being part of the first overall section.

Like the previously analyzed organ fugue, the end of the counterexposition in this fugue dissolves (\text{Cxp}(\Theta)\text{Ep}) into a brief post-expositional episode (mm. 30–32). However, in this fugue the post-expositional episode is followed by an unusual half cadence in the mediant key in measure 32. Formally speaking, one could hear the initial section extending up to this cadence—a structural marker that elides with the introduction of the first middle entry in the aforementioned key. Here, Saint-Saëns deviates from the conventional key schemes favored in the nineteenth-century scholastic literature and presents the first pair of middle entries in the key of the mediant (the first entry, like the initial subject, moves from the dominant to the tonic). Of all of Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues in the major mode, only this fugue and the fugue that precedes it in this set (in G major) have the first middle entries in the key of the mediant. Whereas such an unusual choice of key for the first pair of middle entries can be understood,
Figure 3.8. Voice-leading graph of the counterexposition, mm. 22–30

rhetorically, in a number of ways, one may venture to think that it could represent the partial success of a key that seemed to be dormant in the first section of the fugue. E minor seems to be foreshadowed not only in the first five notes of the initial subject, but also in the use of D♯ at the end of the bridge (mm. 10–11) and in the dominant chord that ends the counterexposition (m. 30). While this study is less interested in rhetorical concerns, in this particular fugue the mediant key engages in a narrative of resistance, largely waged in the battlefield of key relations, that deserves some consideration. For the moment, I shall set this issue aside to continue with the formal analysis; however, I will address this matter in more detail later in the analysis.

The real answer in the mediant region (mm. 36–40) leads to an episode in the key of the submediant. Here, as in many of his keyboard fugues, Saint-Saëns accentuates the separation between an episode and the statements that precede and follow it by reducing the texture and modifying the rhythmic figuration. Though this sort of contrasting strategy is uncommon in an actual scholastic fugue, Saint-Saëns does derive the main motive of the episode from the materials of the exposition: the lower voice of the manual part in measures 40–41 introduces the tail of the subject in diminution. To some extent, Saint-Saëns also eases the transition between this episode and the surrounding entries as he introduces the sixteenth-note figure before the
beginning of the episode (m. 39) and abandons it only after the introduction of the subsequent middle entry in measure 44. In his elucidation of the episode in a scholastic context, Zamacois recommends such a linking (or fusing) strategy between thematic and non-thematic sections (1997, 120).

In mm. 44–53, Saint-Saëns presents a pair of subjects (without countersubjects) in the key of the subdominant. This section represents the last time a thematic statement will appear in its original length during the middle section; from the next episode on, diminution, which Saint-Saëns introduced in the episode in mm. 40–44, becomes, in a way, the hallmark of the rest of the fugue. The episode beginning in measure 53, the longest in this fugue, introduces, after three measures, a sequential pattern (a circle-of-fifths progression: III♯–VI♯–II♯–V) based on the head of the subject in diminution (mm. 56–63).

While the almost constant tonal flux and the lack of structural cadences in the middle section of this fugue are, thus far, consistent with the French scholastic tradition, the way in which this fugue returns to tonal areas and thematic elements previously presented in the early stages of the middle section may generate in the listener a paradoxical sense of moving forward while being held in the past. For example, beginning in measure 69, Saint-Saëns reintroduces the pair of entries that he used in measures 44–53, now in diminished form. The versatile melodic design of this subject allows Saint-Saëns to relaunch the first entry, at least initially, over a submediant harmony. From a harmonic standpoint, this pair of subjects does not lead the music to a new key area, nor does the following episode in measures 73–78.

Likewise, the last two statements in the middle section (mm. 78–82) are a diminished reiteration of the first pair of middle entries in measures 32–40. These two entries in the mediant key, in conjunction with the subjects in diminution in mm. 69–73, behave much like a diminished reflection in a convex mirror. In other words, as the fugue moves toward its conclusion, these two pairs of entries may be understood as a distant and compact reproduction
of the first two pairs that appeared at the beginning of the middle section. However, the idea of recursion is not only limited to the thematic aspect; mm. 78–82 also correspond to the return of the obstinate mediant key—a return that occurs before the dominant preparation that precedes the closing section.

The final episode in the middle section (mm. 82–86) leads, through a set of chords that include the flattened mediant and submediant chords, to the active-dominant arrival in the tonic key. In this episode, it does not seem that Saint-Saëns uses a flat spelling for the sake of notational convenience. If anything, the passage of music in mm. 83–86 seems to be constructed around the parallel key of C major (C minor)—although this key is never properly established. The arrival of the I:HC in measure 86 is texturally reinforced by the reintroduction of the pedal part. However, contrary to what we have seen in the tripartite fugues examined thus far, here Saint-Saëns eschews the use of the—scholastically sanctioned—pedal point (as the tension-producing agent *par excellence* before the imminent return of the initial subject in the principal key). Alternatively, he resorts to the use of melodic figures in the pedal (mm. 86–89), loosely based on the diminished form of the head of the subject, which lingers on the dominant pitch. Saint-Saëns’s interest in pushing against scholastic conventions is also reflected in the circumvention of the conventional break of articulation before the closing section and the reemergence of the initial subject within the dominant of the main key.

At first sight, one may conclude that the act of welding the middle and final sections is the main cause for the striking disruption (or misalignment) in the restoration of the expositional elements. However, we should bear in mind that, at least in principle, the beginning of the concluding section ought to parallel—more or less—that of the exposition. Consequently, if the initial subject moves from dominant to tonic, the subject that launches the concluding

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79 What Saint-Saëns delineates in the pedal part in mm. 85–89 closely resembles what Gedalge denotes as an “ornamented pedal,” that is, a pedal note that, instead of being sustained, is emphasized through a repetitive melodic pattern or intertwined into a sequential melodic figure (Gedalge 1901, 187). Although not without precedent, this type of nonliteral pedal is very rarely found in the scholastic literature.
section may well evoke this harmonic scheme. Indeed, there are examples of fugues in the scholastic textbooks, featuring subjects beginning with $5\hat{5}$, in which the final section begins with the principal subject over the residuals of the active dominant in the principal key that originated in the middle section, delaying the return of the tonic until the introduction of the answer or even later (refer to the four-voice fugues in Cherubini [1835?], 135–41; Dubois 1901, 216–23; and Gedalge 1901, 315–21). What distinguishes most of these examples from Saint-Saëns’s fugue is that the boundary between the second and third overall sections in these scholastic examples is defined, at least to a limited extent, by a series of ancillary form-determining elements, such as the placement of a fermata or some other break of articulation, the use of complex contrapuntal devices (i.e., stretto), abrupt changes in texture and figuration, etc. With the exception of the fortissimo that highlights the entrance of the initial subject in the pedal part, the music in measure 90 shows slight, if any, change or contrast when compared with the episode that precedes it (mm. 86–89). From a formal standpoint, the task of the dominant preparation at the end of the middle section remains unfinished—despite the intervention of the main subject in measure 90—until the consolidation of a thematic statement with the tonic key. Of special interest is that, contrary to the past presentations of the principal subject in the exposition and counterexposition, in the last subject (m. 90) the leading tone not only features prominently in the counterpoint in the upper voice, but also resolves directly (not implicitly or by means of a register transfer) to the actual tonic pitch that starts the answer—see the voice-leading graph in figure 3.9. Thus, in my view, the actual onset of the concluding section occurs with the introduction of the answer in measure 94, which, in turn, coincides with the restoration of the full four-voice texture; after measure 66, Saint-Saëns reduced the counterpoint to vertical combinations of two and three voices.
The answer in mm. 94–98 is the last complete statement in this fugue. In this final stage, Saint-Saëns outlines a gradual process of intensification, still without recourse to stretto. However, the recurrent use of melodic figures derived from the head of the subject (consisting of a descending third followed by an ascending second) results in some degree of thematic saturation—for instance, the last seven sixteenth-notes in the pedal part in measure 94 may be understood as representing a truncated double-diminution of the head of the answer. The answer that ends in measure 97 is immediately followed by a dominant pedal point that leads to a toccata-style passage, based on an arpeggiation of the dominant seventh chord. After introducing various fragments of the subject and pushing the music to a more chordal texture, Saint-Saëns concludes the fugue, most surprisingly, without attaining a PAC in the tonic key. This imperfect cadence provides an excellent point of departure for discussing the overall design of this fugue.

In the hands of a composer like Saint-Saëns, the evasion of a conclusive cadence in the principal key through the entirety of a fugue cannot be taken as a meaningless or fortuitous compositional decision; all the more so if the tonic key has been consistently undermined (or even avoided) in crucial areas such as the main subject, the exposition, and the beginning of the
closing section. To some extent, the role of C major has been, since the beginning of the fugue, that of what in theater is known as the unseen character: the present absent; the figure who controls the drama without ever becoming an evident or dominant force. If anything, the tonic key plays a subordinate role in the unfolding of the large-scale harmonic plan of this fugue. Saint-Saëns’s emphasis on other tonal areas such as the dominant (the only PAC in this fugue occurs in this key) and the mediant (in the middle section) would appear to imply his insistence on crafting an unusual or extraordinary harmonic design.

Nonetheless, Saint-Saëns’s dismissal (or occasional stretching) of the standardized or conventional options vis-à-vis the tonal range of the fugal genre in late nineteenth-century France is not limited to the mostly passive involvement of the tonic key in areas in where one would normally expect it to exert control. For example, whereas the first-level default option for the first middle entry in the central portion of a fugue in the major mode is the submediant key, in this fugue, this key is only touched upon transiently at the beginning of the episode that follows the first pair of middle entries (m. 40) and in the launch of the first diminished entry (m. 69). In transposing the subject to keys related to the principal key after the exposition, Saint-Saëns chooses to oscillate repeatedly between the mediant and the subdominant, rather than to outline a linear, non-repetitive, narrative departing from a pair of statements in the relative minor. With the exception of this fugue, all of Saint-Saëns’s organ and étude fugues in the major mode make use of the subject transposed to the submediant key, usually in the early stages of the middle section.

Saint-Saëns’s recursive use of the mediant key in this fugue also demands a more detailed discussion. For one thing, the use of the mediant key in the development (or middle section) of a fugue in the major mode is, both vis-à-vis Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues and from a scholastic perspective, decidedly non-normative. In none of the fugues in major keys examined in this study do we find a middle entry or a clear-cut modulation to this tonal area. Likewise, the
reader will look in vain for a modulation to the mediant key in the full-length examples of four-part fugues in the pedagogical writings of Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge—or even in Zamacois’s *Cours*, well into the twentieth century.\(^8\) Furthermore, Saint-Saëns’s use of the answer in the mediant key (a statement delineating a B-major harmony) contrasts with Gedalge’s general observations regarding modulations in the development section, as he notes that the use of the answer in this key should be discouraged because it “would make the fugue modulate to keys from which it would be difficult to return to the main key in a natural way” (1901, 196).

There is a drama involved in the act of embracing the uncommon and wondrous while circumventing the conventional and expected. As Saint-Saëns himself declares, “Great artists, being gifted with powerfully active imaginations, quickly use up their tools, like tough workmen; they have soon worn through the convention they employ to express their ideas; they then create another one for their use and move their art to a different place” (Nichols 2008, 105). Here, Richard Kearney’s definition of “imagination” seems particularly apt: namely, “the act of making what is present absent and what is absent present—while generally reversing the negative verdict it had received in the tribunal of tradition” (Kearney 1998, 3). In this fugue, Saint-Saëns’s imagination is manifest in several compositional strategies such as the transvaluation of the mediant (the unlikely hero?) and the tonic key (the present absent), the unusual layout of the middle entries, the atypical placement of a V:PAC within the first section, the evasion of the characteristic pedal point at the end of the middle section, and the use of an I:IAC at the end of the fugue. This is not to say, however, that this fugue fails to show some of the generic peculiarities of a conventional tripartite scheme: the use of the principal subject and answer exclusively in the outer sections, the avoidance of the tonic key in the middle section, the lack of

\(^8\) Although Cherubini recommends, as I pointed out in the first chapter, the use of the mediant key before the dominant that prepares the ultimate restoration of the tonic in a fugue in the major mode (see p. 19), the full-length examples at the end of his *Cours* make no use of this tonal area.
competing cadences between episodes and middle entries, and the emphasis on the dominant before the restoration of the main thematic material, to name some of the most prominent. However, while some of the most conspicuous compositional strategies found in this fugue could be considered as unconventional from the viewpoint of the nineteenth-century French scholastic tradition, they could also be interpreted as the natural and necessary clash between the poetic imagination of the composer and the prescriptions of the “grammarians” (Gedalge 1901, 2) “without which the life of art would become impossible” (Nichols 2008, 105).
V. Fugue in E-flat Minor from “Prélude et fugue,” no. 3 of Six Études, op. 111 (1899)

While Saint-Saëns’s activities as a piano teacher occupied only a very short period of his extensive and prolific career as a performer and composer (only four years, 1861–65, at the École Niedermeyer), his legacy as a piano pedagogue can be seen reflected, to some degree, in his two sets of six etudes, opp. 52 (1877) and 111 (1899), and his Études pour la main gauche seule, op. 135 (1912). Like his first set of etudes, Saint-Saëns’s Six Études, op. 111—composed while on one of his many winter retreats to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria—serve a dual purpose: evidently, to provide the student with musical examples aimed at developing a wide range of technical difficulties, but also to present constructive and impeccable compositional models that feature a variety of formal designs and strategies. In his études, form comes to the forefront, not as a consequence or a corollary, but as the very foundation from which any display of technical prowess, or even breathtaking creativity, can legitimately be made. In this context, Prod’Homme’s posthumous assessment of Saint-Saëns’s compositional ideals seems particularly apt:

His mind is made up to respect the established forms, because he does not think it expedient to do otherwise, because in them he sees a means which suffices for the expression of his thought. This thought is invariably clear, limpid, exempt from any too powerful outbreaks of feeling, without pretentions to forcing music outside the limits assigned to it by the ancients. (Prod’Homme 1922, 477)

This is not to say that Saint-Saëns’s keen sense of form forbids him to exhibit ingenious or exceptional procedures in the pieces of this set, nor that some of these études may exhibit the occasional stretching or alteration of the standardized formal designs. The fugue in E-flat Minor from the “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 3, dedicated to Charles Malherbe, comes across as an eminent example of music that promotes, above all, formal clarity. However, at the same time, this fugue
This four-voice fugue (example 3.7), viewed broadly, is based on a three-part formal design that conforms to the scholastic model as defined by the French treatises. It is divided into three large sections, with the developmental segment significantly lengthier than the outer sections: Exposition and Counterexposition, 15 measures; Development, 35 measures; Concluding (Stretto) section, 12 measures. The exposition opens with a modulating subject in the alto, which evokes the chromatic (and rather serious) subjects frequently composed for the annual fugue competition at the Paris Conservatory and the *Prix de Rome*, and replicates the thematic material, at dominant/tonic levels, in the soprano, bass, and tenor respectively (the voice-leading graph of the subject/answer pair is reproduced in figure 3.10). The subject exhibits a partly conjunct ascent from tonic to dominant via a raised fourth degree, whereas the answer completes the ascent from dominant to tonic: The subject’s $\hat{4} - \#\hat{4} - \hat{5}$ is answered by $\hat{7} - \#\hat{7} - \hat{8}$. All the thematic entrances in the exposition (after the initial subject) are accompanied by a countersubject.

The fugue completes its exposition at m. 9, after which a short episodic passage leads to a counterexposition. Once again, Saint-Saëns modifies the order of the entries suggested by the scholastic model. While he complies with the requirement of introducing the subject in one of the voices that had the answer in the exposition (soprano), and, conversely, presenting the answer in one of the voices that had the subject in the exposition (bass), the counterexposition

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81 Initially, Saint-Saëns considered dedicating this “serious” piece to Théodore Dubois, who was at that time Director of the Paris Conservatory (Ratner 2002, 55). After some consideration of whether it would be beneficial to include the name of Director of the Conservatory on a set mainly dedicated to pianists, he ultimately decided to dedicate the “Prélude et Fugue” to his friend Charles Malherbe. In the autograph title page [*Bibliothèque nationale de France, département de la musique, MS-564*], the name of Théodore Dubois is crossed out in pencil (Saint-Saëns, 1899).

82 Charles Malherbe (b. Paris, 1853; d. Cormeilles, 1911) was a violinist, musicologist, music editor and collector. An expert on eighteenth-century music, Malherbe worked as the librarian-archivist at the Paris Opera.
begins with the subject and concludes with the answer—a practice that is nowhere mentioned in the works of Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge, but that had precedents in eighteenth-century fugues (see, for example, the Fugue in F Major from WTC1 and the Fugue in C# Minor from WTC2).

Like most scholastic fugues, the first section of this fugue eludes a strong cadential event. Conforming to the norm, the counterexposition of this fugue cadences only imperfectly (m. 16), as it is demarcated by a transient cadence on the tonic, and elides with the post-expositional episode (Cxp(E)Ep). This episode (mm. 16–19), which is based on the last portion of the

Example 3.7. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in E flat Minor from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 3 of his Études, op. 111 (1899)
Example 3.7 (cont’d)
Example 3.7 (cont’d)
Example 3.7 (cont’d)
countersubject, achieves a modulation from tonic to mediant—the most common harmonic motion in the post-expositional episode in a scholastic fugue in the minor mode—and concludes with an emphatic III:PAC. As I pointed out in the first analysis of this chapter, while the occurrence of a PAC at the end of the post-expositional episode is especially common in fugues in the eighteenth century, this early cadential affirmation of the new key—although not forbidden—is extremely unusual in the nineteenth-century fugue d'école, as it goes against the underlying sense of intersectional continuity emphasized in the treatises of Dubois and Gedalge.

The reintroduction of the subject in the mediant key in measure 19, coupled with the restoration of the original tempo, a sudden thinning of texture, and the introduction of a new thematic element (in the form of a dynamic countermelody in the bass), marks the beginning of the middle section. This subject is answered by an entry in the soprano in measure 21, which, in turn, ends with the launch of a six-measure episode (mm. 23–29) that leads the music to an IAC in the subdominant key—A♭ minor. The episode of mm. 23–29 points to a type of thematic treatment not far removed from what one may find in countless keyboard fugues by Bach, namely the use of the head motive as the main melodic material for an episode in the middle.
section, a practice that scholastic writers like Dubois, Gedalge, and Zamacois discourage in their respective textbooks (see the footnote on page 109).83

Following the IV:IAC in measure 29, a slightly abridged version of the subject resurfaces in the subdominant key, counterpointed, like the first pair of middle entries, by a relentless sixteenth-note pattern. This subject in the soprano is followed, after a one-measure link, by a modified rendition of the subject in the bass. In a very Bachian vein, Saint-Saëns not only eschews the use of the countersubject after the exposition (in this case, altogether), but also modifies the thematic materials in the middle entries. As the voice-leading graph in figure 3.11 illustrates, the abridged statement of the subject in the subdominant dissolves into a sequential passage that leads to the key of the submediant, C♭ minor. The motion IV–VI supports a descending sixth progression in the upper voice (note the descending register transfer from F♭5 to F♭4 at the end of measure 31). The modified entry in the bass (m. 32)—which unravels within a local VI (IV) III harmonic progression—also dissolves into an ascending sequence that begins on the third beat of measure 33. The subject reappears in the alto in measure 35. Although the melodic outline of this subject suggests the key of the supertonic, Saint-Saëns places most of it over an atypical C pedal—the local dominant of II.84 In the light of the fugue d’école, this short pedal should be considered a deviation from the norm, as a pedal almost invariably occurs on the dominant and tonic degrees of the main key. This statement is answered in the soprano, which, in turn, proceeds to an episode derived from the tail of the subject (mm. 39–42), which concludes with a PAC in the distant key of C minor.

83 The second, third, and fifth fugue from Bach’s WTC1 (in C minor, C-sharp major, and D major, respectively), just to name three well-known cases, provide multiple instances of episodes based on the head motive.

84 The use of the supertonic in the development section is virtually non-existent in a fugue d’école in the minor mode because “its fifth is not naturally perfect” (Cherubini 1841, 333).
Figure 3.11. Voice-leading graph of mm. 29–37

Up until this point in his career, Saint-Saëns had shown a preference to move only to closely related keys in his étude fugues. In the context of these didactic pieces, such a limited tonal palette may be the consequence of a pedagogical attempt to elucidate the conventional elements and strategies of the “time-honored and venerable fugue” (Saint-Saëns 1919a, 39). For example, the tonal scheme in the first half of this fugue (I–III–IV) not only follows Gedalge’s order of modulation as specified in his treatise, but also a considerable number of fugues in the minor mode in the three treatises examined in this dissertation. These momentary departures from the conventional expectations of the genre at the end of the middle section (such as the

\[\text{Figure 3.11. Voice-leading graph of mm. 29–37}\]

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\[\text{In his Curso, Zamacois also proposes the mediant and subdominant keys for the first two groups of entries (1997, 129). Like Gedalge, he recommends eschewing the second entry (the answer) in the key of the subdominant, presumably because it would replicate the subject in the original key. Perhaps the unusual recasting of the second entry in the subdominant key (mm. 32–34) reflects Saint-Saëns’s attempt to negotiate with this restriction.}\]

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pair of entries in the supertonic key and the pedal and PAC on the raised submediant) are best understood in the light of Saint-Saëns’s slow but gradual incursion into new harmonic regions in his keyboard fugues composed in the late 1890s.

The episode emerging from the C minor cadence is primarily based, like the passage in mm. 23–26, on close superimpositions of the head motive. Following this episode, Saint-Saëns introduces an abbreviated subject in inversion in measure 47 that leads to a pedal point on the dominant (mm. 49–50). This salient pedal anticipates the distinctive harmonic interruption that marks the end of the middle section.

The final section of the fugue (Tempo I°, m. 51) begins with what the scholastic writers define as a “true stretto” (Dubois 1901, 110): a close overlapping of the subject and the answer, the answer entering second in order. Of the nine keyboard fugues in opp. 52, 90, 99, and 109 (all written in the nineteenth century), this fugue is the first one that initiates the concluding section with this type of stretto. The stretto is immediately followed by an imposing chordal version of the head motive—with octave doubling of the sort frequently found in Liszt’s, Busoni’s, or Philipp’s piano transcriptions of Bach’s organ fugues—that leads to a two-and-a-half-measure cadenza-like flourish that announces the end of the fugue.

If one examines the overall architecture of this fugue from a formal perspective, the most significant point to be gleaned would be Saint-Saëns’s integration of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century elements of fugal composition. One might be tempted to read into this fugue an authentic multisectional design—a design that is often favored by fugue composers in the Baroque era—because of the two salient PACs (m. 19 and m. 42) and the more transient IAC (m. 29) that occur between the post-expositional episode and the unequivocal return of the tonic.

While Gedalge requires four entries (Subject–Answer–Subject–Answer) in the first stretto of the final section (1901, 277), Cherubini and Dubois do not make this a requirement.
and the principal subject in measure 51. This interpretation would suggest a fugue with five sections.

One might also argue that the III:PAC after the post-expositional episode (m. 19) and the interruption over the dominant pedal just before the concluding section of the fugue (mm. 49–50) are the fugue’s two most prominent structural markers and that they articulate the formal boundaries of the development section, thus generating an overall three-part design. This interpretation would have to devaluate the relative strength of the cadence in measure 42 (IVI♭3:PAC) on the grounds that the cadences in measures 19 (III:PAC) and 49 (I:HC) are immediately followed by significantly new features of texture, figuration, and contrapuntal devices (i.e., the only stretto), whereas the music that follows the cadence in measure 42 is a rearrangement of something previously heard in mm. 23–26. Other arguments in favor of this reading are the evasion of the tonic and the dominant keys in the central portion of the fugue and the temporary decrease in tempo only before the cadences in measure 19 and 49; the tempo primo marking in measure 51 infuses, I think, a sense of return in a recapitulatory sense. Thus, I propose that the section that starts in measure 51 operates as the third and final stage of a three-part design. However, this fugue leaves the door open for further refinement of the observations regarding fugal form offered in the previous chapter.

Two qualifications are worth making here. First, while, as I pointed out in chapter 2, the use of clearly articulated cadences after the exposition is perhaps best regarded as one of the defining features of a fugue with a multisectional design (a type B fugue), an internal cadence (PAC, IAC, or HC) is not by itself a sufficient condition for formal segmentation at a large-scale level. Ultimately, the strength of a cadence, as a form-defining structural marker, depends primarily on both its relative weight and its distribution within the overall architecture of a

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87 In a genre in which the ability to create cadences while maintaining a sense of forward motion becomes a valued skill, Saint-Saëns’s indications for decreasing the tempo before these cadences may suggest, at least in this fugue, a calculated effort to emphasize their importance as points of repose in the overall structure.
fugue. For instance, a fugue with a scholastic design may exhibit internal cadences, but only if these cadences are less prominent than the structural dominant interruption that announces the return of the tonic key and the principal subject. Also, although in a less scholastic vein, a fugue exhibiting internal cadences, such as the one under consideration, may articulate a tripartite design if the two strongest cadential events occur (1) near the conclusion of the exposition (or counterexposition) and (2) just before the final return of the tonic—that is, near the boundaries of the tonic-affirming spaces that begin and end a the fugue. But if a fugue presents a relatively periodic distribution of cadences of equal or similar strength that consistently initiate something new in terms of tonality, texture, register, figuration, and contrapuntal devices, or if this fugue displays the strongest structural marker or markers closer to the middle than to the extremes of its overall architecture, then the idea of tripartition will seem unsatisfactory or, at least, less convincing.

Second, the use of the dominant interruption or the elaboration of the active dominant in the principal key before the conclusive restoration of the tonic—a trademark of the fugue d’école—is not a sine qua non for tripartition in a formal sense. There are many fugues in which this crucial interruption is preceded by two or three PACs in different keys, thus becoming part of a multisecional design (see, for example, Bach’s Fugue in A-flat Major from WTC2 and Mendelssohn’s Fugue in F Minor from his Six Preludes and Fugues, op. 35). Similarly, while the proponents of the scholastic fugue in the nineteenth century promoted the dominant pedal point—which very often prepares the abovementioned interruption—to the rank of “indispensable attribute of the fugue” (Cherubini 1841, 308), it can be found with some frequency in type B and C fugues composed in the nineteenth century. Saint-Saëns’s fugue from

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88 Even though the use of salient cadences in the development section are unusual in examples of French scholastic fugues, particularly in the late nineteenth century, Gedalge admits the possibility of using, at least in theory, a cadence (even a perfect one) “whenever the musical sense permits it or demands it, just as one uses punctuation in speech” (1901, 224).
his *Suite pour le piano*, op. 90, furnishes a good example of a prominent pedal within a bisectional design.

Viewed telescopically, this fugue seems to point explicitly to some of the most defining components of the late nineteenth-century *fugue d’école*: the four-voice exposition (with countersubject); the two-entry counterexposition; the first middle entry in the mediant key (in a minor-key fugue); the evasion of the tonic key in the development section; the dominant interruption preceded by a pedal point; and the final stretto followed by a process of textural intensification. However, when examined in detail, neither the striving for continuity after the expositional area nor the overall harmonic scheme in the latter part of the middle section seems to reflect the general scholastic thesis that the development section is “nothing more than one long, single episode” with multiple thematic interpolations in keys closely related to the tonic (Gedalge 1901, 221). Contrary to the majority of Saint-Saëns’s fugues for organ—which tend to exhibit a three-part design and to save the most salient cadence or caesura for the end of the development, but which, for the sake of continuity, avoid strong cadences after the post-expositional episode—all the fugues from his two collections of études (opp. 52 and 111) articulate relatively strong cadences after the post-expositional episode, in conjunction with conspicuous changes in texture, figuration, register, and thematic material. As a result, this fugue maintains a tension between the thematic and continuous approach of the French scholastic model and the sectional and cadentially determined influence of Bach’s fugues. At the same time (although more discreetly), this fugue seems to point toward the harmonic language of his *Six Fugues* op. 161, which exhibit a greater freedom of modulation to distantly related keys.
VI. Fugue in A Major from *Six Fugues, op. 161* (1920)

An aura of academicism has been traditionally ascribed to the later works of Saint-Saëns. As Timothy Flynn declares, “By the turn of the century, much of his music displayed a rather academic and neoclassical character, notably the preludes and fugues for organ (op. 109) from 1898, the first string quartet from 1899, the string quartet no. 2 (1918), the six fugues for piano (op. 161) of 1920, and the three sonatas from 1921 for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon respectively” (2003, 5). While I am inclined to agree, for the most part, with Flynn’s view, I think that he falls into the common trap, with respect to Saint-Saëns’s *Six Fugues, op. 161*, of automatically equating the genre of fugue with academicism. As American pianist Geoffrey Burleson aptly observes, this collection “represents a form that Saint-Saëns had explored for more than five decades, and one that he imbued not only with brilliant craft and invention, but highly individual character. The *Six Fugues, Op. 161*, come off far less as a collection of academic fugues and much more as a suite of dynamic character pieces” (Burleson 2012). The *Six Fugues*, composed in Algiers in 1920 and dedicated to Isidor Philipp, mark a departure, in their treatment of form, tonal range and thematic manipulation, from Saint-Saëns’s organ and étude fugues.89 This collection as a whole could best be defined by its almost explicitly Bachian character rather than by its connection to the scholastic tradition. Saint-Saëns himself seems to have been conscious of this connection when he asserts in a letter to Philipp: “you will find in them a distant reflection of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, despite my efforts to get away from that idea, but the requirements of the genre will inevitably lead to certain forms” (Ratner 2002, 66).

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89 Isidor Philipp (b. Budapest, 2 September 1863; d. Paris, 20 February 1958) was a French pianist, composer and pedagogue of Hungarian descent. Philipp studied piano with Georges Mathias (a pupil of Chopin), Theodore Ritter (a pupil of Liszt), and Saint-Saëns. He was professor of piano at the Paris Conservatory from 1893 to 1934.
The first piece of the set (Allegro moderato), a four-voice fugue in A major, provides a good example of a fugue with a multisectional design (example 3.8). The six sections after the exposition are outlined by clearly articulated cadences that not only mark the initiation or dissolution of a tonal area, but also indicate the beginning of something new with regard to contrapuntal treatment, texture, or figuration. In contrast to the previously analyzed étude and organ fugues, in this fugue Saint-Saëns is primarily concerned with the exploration of various contrapuntal procedures and the combinatorial development of the subject.

The exposition begins with a subject in the tenor that outlines an ascending progression $\hat{1} - \hat{2} - \hat{3} - \hat{4}$ that concludes with the first pitch ($\hat{5}$) of the answer in the alto; figure 3.12 furnishes a voice-leading reduction of the subject/answer pair. The answer, which begins on the dominant, makes its way back to the tonic through an ascending progression $\hat{5} - \hat{6} - \hat{7}$ that finishes with the first note of the third entry in the soprano ($\hat{8}$). The latter entry then articulates a motion from the tonic to the dominant. Saint-Saëns modifies the last two pitches of the fourth and final entry in the exposition and derails the arrival of the tonic, which would be the most common tonal implication of an answer that prolongs the dominant chord. Ultimately, the post-expositional episode, which begins in measure 7, leads to the IAC in the tonic key that demarcates the end of the first section at measure 10.

The section that follows (mm. 10–17), the first of five distinct sections that occur between the exposition and the final arrival of the tonic key, begins with an incomplete subject in inversion (soprano), in stretto with a partial recto subject in the bass, which, in turn, is

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90 Broadly speaking, the harmonic and melodic structure of this subject/answer pair may be considered a variation of Renwick’s paradigm 8a (1995a, 61–62). A notable difference is that whereas in Saint-Saëns’s fugue the voice-leading resolution of $\hat{4}$ in the initial subject and $\hat{7}$ in the first answer occurs in the first note of the next entrance, in Renwick’s examples (all by Bach) the subject ends with $\hat{5}$ and the answer with $\hat{8}$. 

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Example 3.8. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in A Major from his *Six Fugues*, op. 161 (1920)
Example 3.8 (cont’d)
Example 3.8 (cont’d)
Example 3.8 (cont’d)
Example 3.8 (cont'd)
Figure 3.12. Voice-leading graph of the subject/answer pair, mm. 1–4

overlapped by a nearly complete statement in the tenor. Immediately after these entries, Saint-Saëns introduces another inverted and partial subject in the alto, in stretto with a statement in the soprano that presents its first three notes (the tête de sujet) in recto and the rest in inversion. The section ends, not before presenting an inverted and partial statement in the bass, with an IAC in the dominant key in measure 17. Two observations will simplify the remainder of this analysis. First, due to the sheer thematic saturation that characterizes this fugue (and contrasts with the orderly and systematic use of the subject in a typical fugue d’école), it would be almost meaningless—and certainly tiresome—to point out every statement of the subject. Second, in this fugue Saint-Saëns presents many more partial than complete statements of the subject. Therefore, from this point on, I will make the distinction between partial and complete statements only when it adds to the analytical discussion.

After the V:IAC in measure 17, the next section (mm. 17–27) begins with a sudden thinning of the texture. This section continues to show a pervasive use of stretto. The section closes with an IAC in the supertonic that is emphasized by the poco ritardando in measure 26. The cadence in measure 27 elides with the start of the next segment (mm. 27–32), which is more likely to be heard (due to its concise proportions, sequential progression, and the
nonappearance of the subject) as an episode that achieves a modulation from the supertonic to the key of the lowered seventh, G major. A striking feature of the episode in mm. 27–32 is that it seems to bear a “hidden relationship” (to use Schenker’s own expression) with the voice-leading fabric of the initial subject and the answer (1979, 143–44). The graph in figure 3.13 illustrates the voice-leading involved in this episode. While this passage is devoid of any complete statement of the subject, the ascending octave F♯4–F♯5 outlined here (supported by a progression from II to the dominant of ♯VII) embodies—or perhaps blossoms from—the basic melodic contour of the subject/answer pair (A3–A4).

I read the downbeat of measure 32 as a decorated (and elided) PAC in the key of the lowered seventh. The G-major chord here includes a ninth above the bass, but this is an appoggiatura: the tonic note in the soprano is merely delayed. Saint-Saëns begins the next section (mm. 32–52) with the introduction of two subjects in augmentation and stretto in the lower voices; these entries are answered by two inverted statements of the subject—also in augmentation and stretto—in the upper voices, accompanied by sixteenth notes in the left hand (mm. 35–37).

The following music suddenly moves toward a caesura-like half cadence in F♯ minor, the key of the submediant. However, this half cadence, unlike the distinctive I:HC that in many fugues precedes the definitive restoration of the principal key, is not strong enough to mark the beginning or the end of a discrete section in the overall form of the work. Instead, Saint-Saëns’s reintroduction of the subject in augmentation in measure 43 seems to suggest that this passage of music might be taken, at least from a thematic standpoint, as part of the large-scale section dedicated to the presentation of the subject in augmentation that began in measure 32.
After the subdominant cadence (IV:IAC) in measure 52, which is reinforced by a sudden thinning of the texture, Saint-Saëns introduces three partial entries of the subject in stretto (one of them in inversion) and various fragments derived from the head of the subject. In the context of the fugue’s large-scale harmonic structure, this section articulates a motion from the subdominant to the active dominant of the principal key (m. 59); much of the section is in A minor, the parallel minor (mm. 54–58). The half cadence on the downbeat of measure 59 marks the beginning of a relatively extensive passage constructed around the active dominant (mm. 59–68), which leads to the conspicuous interruption preceding the final reassertion of the principal key.\footnote{While the idea of a half cadence on $V^7$ (or an inverted V) counters the widely accepted notion that a half cadence ought to involve a dominant triad in root position (Caplin 1998, 75–77; Caplin 2004, 70), I find it difficult not to hear the $V^7$ chord in measure 69 as a clear point of repose. In his article “The Half Cadence and Other Such Slippery Events,” Burstein provides multiple examples from the eighteenth-century repertoire that constitute half cadences on dissonant or inverted dominants; he argues that several eighteenth-century writers “openly accepted” this possibility (2014, 210–14).} As a whole, this passage, which begins with a complete statement of the subject, is characterized by a relentless thematic saturation that involves the presentation of the subject—or fragments of it—in inversion, stretto, and augmentation. The dominant seventh
chord at measure 69 is immediately followed by a toccata-like (or cadenza-like) passage, which thrusts toward the tonic pedal point that heralds the final segment of the fugue. The final stage (mm. 72–77) starts, like the section that follows the exposition (mm. 10–16) and the section that precedes the return of the tonic (mm. 52–69), with three statements of the subject in stretto, one of them in inversion.

From a rhetorical standpoint, it is difficult to regard Saint-Saëns’s use of stretto in the final stage of this fugue as having the same level of cumulative and intensifying power as the final stretto of some of his type A fugues. The recurrent use of this contrapuntal device throughout the fugue under analysis diminishes the climactic quality typically associated with the final stretto—a phenomenon familiar from eighteenth-century stretto fugues (two good examples are the fugues in C major and D minor from the first book of The Well-Tempered Clavier). Likewise, the epigrammatic nature of the closing section of this fugue resonates, proportionally speaking, with the concluding section of countless fugues with multisectional design in the Baroque era. The A-major fugue ends with a dramatic reduction in tempo (m. 76) and a synoptic gesture—based on the head of the subject—over a tonic pedal. The synthesis of the recto and inverted forms of the head motive in measure 76 seems to epitomize the unceasing engagement between recto and inversion that has defined this fugue since its early stages. The resemblance between this gesture, as a summa summarum of the whole piece, and that of the last two measures of the D-minor fugue from The Well-Tempered Clavier—a fugue that also displays a high degree of stretto and inversion—is striking (see example 3.9).

In sum, the multiple structural markers that Saint-Saëns has placed—rather periodically—throughout this fugue bring it close to the multisectional design found in many Baroque fugues. In this case, cadential arrivals outline a harmonic scheme that explores five principal key areas (I–V–ii♭–VII–IV) in seven distinct sections. Of all the Saint-Saëns fugues
Example 3.9. Bach, Fugue in D Minor from WTC2, mm. 40–44

examined in this study, only this fugue and the short fugue from the Suite op. 90 exhibit a formal architecture and a disposition of the thematic elements that contrast so markedly with the nineteenth-century scholastic model. However, this is not to say that all the fugues in the op. 161 collection are at odds with the tripartite scheme that so strongly influenced fugal writing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whereas the fourth and sixth fugues (in G minor and C major, respectively) stray into a grey area that combines elements and strategies of both type A and type B formal designs, the second, third, and fifth fugue (in E-flat major, G major, and E major, respectively) are in dialogue with the generic formal scheme of the type A fugue.\textsuperscript{92}

The sheer heterogeneity of the fugues that comprise Saint-Saëns's op. 161 complicates the task of selecting one of its fugues as a representative example of the whole collection—a problem that did not arise in the case of the étude fugues and the two sets of organ fugues. Despite this

\textsuperscript{92} As pointed out in chapter 2, it is possible to find fugues that exhibit \textit{ad hoc} designs. This may happen when a fugue invokes elements pertaining to two or more formal types, thus generating an exceptional form. For example, in the fugues in G minor and C major from Saint-Saëns's op. 161, there is a striking absence of structural cadences—a hallmark of the scholastic model (type A\textsuperscript{3}). The only kind of cadence occurring in these fugues is the normative caesura that prompts the beginning of the closing section—though in the case of the Fugue in G minor, this caesura occurs, due to the harmonic implications of its subject, on II\textsuperscript{b} (mm. 69–70). Despite the lack of internal cadences, in these fugues Saint-Saëns seems to demarcate internal sections by introducing new melodic ideas in distantly related keys (which, unlike a scholastic new subject, are unrelated to their respective original subject in almost any conceivable way), usually coinciding with a change of register, texture, and dynamics (for example, see m. 42 in the Fugue in G minor and m. 65 in the Fugue in C major). It is difficult not to perceive these passages as something new. While, in my theoretical approach, cadences have the greatest weight in outlining the form of a fugue, it is possible (though less common) to demarcate an internal section by the coalescence of some of the events or elements that usually reinforce a clear-cut cadence: the introduction of a new tonal area or contrapuntal device; changes in texture, figuration, register, or dynamics.
diversity, there are two common denominators to be found among all of the fugues of this collection: (1) the manifold use of (complete or partial) stretto before the final restoration of the principal theme and the tonic key; and (2) the exploration of distantly related keys after the exposition. For instance, while all of the fugues in op. 161 modulate to distantly related keys, only two fugues in the collections opp. 52, 90, 99, 109, and 111—two out of ten—move beyond the scholastic norm “of modulating only to keys related to the main key” (Gedalge 1901, 193). Saint-Saëns’s apparent comfort in using stretto more liberally and his proclivity for exploring a greater scope of tonal regions represents a major departure from the scholastic architecture found in most of his étude and organ fugues.
CONCLUSION

This chapter draws several conclusions about the influence of French scholastic thought on Saint-Saëns’s fugues for keyboard. These conclusions are based on a survey of the frequency of some of the defining elements and conditions associated with the *fugue d’école* in the six case studies examined in this chapter. I classify these conclusions in three general categories: form; tonal scheme; and thematic manipulation. A cursory examination of the sixteen keyboard fugues composed by Saint-Saëns between 1877 and 1920 will be sufficient to demonstrate that these six fugues provide a representative sample of Saint-Saëns’s compositional practices with regard to this genre. In the interest of brevity, I will not attempt a detailed description of all of these pieces; rather, I will provide concise supplementary observations on Saint-Saëns’s fugal output as a whole to strengthen and contextualize these conclusions.93

**First conclusion** (form): The vast majority of Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues adopt a tripartite design. In the case studies, four of the six fugues (op. 52, no. 5; op. 99, no. 3; op. 109, no. 3; and op. 111, no. 3) display a relation of correspondence between the outer sections and the demarcation of a contrasting middle section. For example, all but one of the organ fugues (op 109, no. 1) exhibit tripartite construction.

**Second conclusion** (form): With the exception of the—revolutionary—fugue op. 109, no. 3, all of the fugues examined in this chapter adhere to the scholastic principle of cadential evasion within or at the conclusion of the first section. This compositional strategy is reflected across Saint-Saëns’s fugal output. However, whereas two of the fugues examined here (op. 90 and op. 99, no. 3) progress from the post-expositional episode to the first middle entry without any

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93 To facilitate the discussion of these conclusions, I abbreviate the titles of Saint-Saëns’s fugues as follows: Saint-Saëns’s Fugue in C Major from the “Prélude et Fugue,” op. 109, no. 3, is identified, for instance, as “op. 109, no. 3.”
cadential break, the étude fugues (op. 52, no. 5 and op. 111, no. 3) conclude the post-expositional episode with strong PACs. Although, as I noted above, the use of this cadence is nowhere prescribed in the scholastic treatises, these strong cadences have the effect of segmenting the first two large-scale sections of these fugues in a way that is rarely seen in the scholastic literature. Saint-Saëns’s submission for the qualifying round of the Prix de Rome in 1852 is a rare example of a fugue d’école that demarcates the first section cadentially instead of thematically (with the end of the last entry in the counterexposition).

Third conclusion (form): Four out of the six fugues examined in this chapter (op. 52, no. 5; op. 99, no. 3; op. 111, no. 3; and op. 161, no. 1) articulate a clear dominant interruption before the final restoration of the tonic key. Notable among these is the first fugue of op. 161, a type B fugue. In three of these fugues (those exhibiting a three-part scheme), Saint-Saëns anticipates the dominant interruption with a pedal point in the lower part. There are type A fugues in opp. 109 and 161 (op. 109, no. 2; op. 161, no. 5), however, in which the I:HC that marks the end of the middle section is somewhat obscured (or masked) by a melodic fill or a short connective passage that diminishes the brilliance of the return of the initial subject in the main key.

Fourth conclusion (tonal scheme): Regarding the choice of modulation after the exposition (or counterexposition), Saint-Saëns’s fugues, as a whole, appear to be at least partially contingent on the pattern of modulation exhibited in a typical academic fugue. In accordance with the vast majority of the examples found in the treatises of Cherubini, Dubois, and Gedalge, and in the contest fugues composed in the second half of the nineteenth century, Saint-Saëns’s fugues op. 99, no. 3 (E♭ major), and op 111, no. 3 (E♭ minor), modulate, after the first section, to the relative minor and relative major, respectively. Also in a scholastic vein, Saint-Saëns’s fugue op. 52, no. 5 (A major), evokes—like his fugue d’école written for the 1852 Prix de Rome—the
North Italian tradition, as exemplified in treatises of Martini and Cherubini, and presents the first middle entries in the key of the subdominant. In the case of the first set of organ fugues (all in major keys), the first statements in the middle section occur in the submediant key; in the second set, the first modulation after the first section—in all the fugues—is to keys other than those suggested in the scholastic literature. Perhaps the most consistent finding regarding this area is that all of Saint-Saëns's keyboard fugues that delineate clear bisectional or multisectional designs (op. 52, no. 3; op. 90; op. 109, no. 1; and op. 161, no. 1) are significantly at odds with the strategies of modulation taught in French institutions in the nineteenth century.

**Fifth conclusion** (tonal scheme): With rare exceptions, Saint-Saëns's early fugues largely modulate to closely related keys (for example, my first four case studies modulate only to keys related to the tonic). The late fugues show an increasing tendency to modulate, or briefly digress, to ever more distant keys. In the span of time between the composition of the fugues op. 109 (1898) and op. 161 (1920), Saint-Saëns's use of distant keys went from sporadic to pervasive.

**Sixth conclusion** (tonal scheme): All of the fugues that articulate a tripartite or multisectional design avoid the tonic key in the middle or internal section. This principle of evasion holds true in the broader context of Saint-Saëns's fugues; for example, in his final collection of fugues (op. 161), only in the outer sections does the music touch upon the tonic key.

**Seventh conclusion** (thematic manipulation): Saint-Saëns shows a clear preference for using countersubjects in the exposition of his fugues. With the exception of the fugues delineating bisectional and multisectional designs (op. 90 and op. 161, no. 1, respectively), all of the remaining case studies make use of a countersubject in their expositions. At first sight, these findings may suggest that there is a link between the use of a countersubject and the choice of
formal design, such as, for instance, that Saint-Saëns is more likely to use countersubjects in tripartite fugues than in bisectional fugues. This study suggests, however, that this *post hoc ergo propter hoc* reasoning is misleading. For example, in all of the fugues delineating bisectional designs in the totality of Saint-Saëns’s keyboard fugues (op. 52, no. 3; op. 90, and op. 109, no. 1), only the fugue from the neo-Baroque *Suite* eschews a countersubject in the exposition.

**Eight conclusion** (thematic manipulation): All of the expositions (or first sections) of fugues exhibiting a tripartite design (op. 52, no. 5; op. 99, no. 3; op. 109, no. 3; and op. 111, no. 5) contain a counterexposition. While the counterexposition gradually fell into disuse in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *fugue d’école* (Zamacois 1997, 129), Saint-Saëns seems to be particularly fond of this tonic-affirming device. However, the composer takes an experimental stance towards this procedure: note the Italian-influenced four-entry counterexposition in op. 52, no. 5, and the non-reversed counterexpositions in opp. 109, no. 3 and op. 111, no. 5.

**Ninth conclusion** (thematic manipulation): Stretto is less common in Saint-Saëns’s fugues written in the nineteenth century than in a typical scholastic fugue. For instance, Saint-Saëns makes use of stretto in only two of the five case studies composed before 1900 (in the étude fugues op. 52, no. 5 and op. 111, no. 5). In the context of the étude fugues (type A fugues), Saint-Saëns reserves the use of stretto—which in these fugues might be considered as moderate—for the concluding section. In contrast, stretto is significantly more pervasive in op. 161. Although the fugue that opens this collection (analyzed in this chapter) is an exceptional case of a stretto fugue, the rest of the pieces in this collection rely, to various degrees, on this contrapuntal artifice.
CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION: TOWARD A THEORY OF FUGAL FORM

For more than two centuries, fugal pedagogy—as a discrete musical discipline—has played a major role in the formal instruction of musicians and composers. Even nowadays it is common to find courses focused exclusively on fugue in undergraduate and graduate programs across the world; graduate entrance exams that involve, for instance, the analysis of an eighteenth-century fugue or the composition of a fugal exposition; even contests on the composition of a fugue in a tonal idiom. For example, the Padre Martini Fugue Award, held at the Mannes School of Music at The New School (since 2006), rewards the best fugue written on a given subject. Moreover, the teaching of fugue has been associated with a long and illustrious tradition of prescriptive textbooks aimed at teaching students the dynamics, affordances, and constraints of style associated with this genre of composition. Some of these works rely—to a great extent—on the adoption of pre-established axioms (or exemplary pieces) as given by the authoritative voices of the past. When Prosdocimus de Beldemandis declares, in the introduction to his Contrapunctus (1412), that he does “not intend in any way to oppose [his] predecessors,” but to reject “some things customary among modern writers” (1984, 27), he is returning to one of the signature tropes (as Ian Bent aptly notes: “theorists cry in the wilderness”) of counterpoint and fugal pedagogy ever since its origins (see Bent 2002, 591–94).

As noted in the first two chapters, several writers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have severely criticized the scholastic textbooks on fugue (and the pedagogical approach they embody) as a set of artificial, sterile, or even obsolete theoretical abstractions whose relevance to musical practice is, at best, questionable. Nonetheless, the French fugue...
d’école, notwithstanding its multiple shortcomings and the severe criticisms that have been leveled against it, represents a sui generis case in which a dogmatic, scholastically oriented compositional exercise not only becomes a de facto genre of composition, but also embodies a well-defined formal design that exerts an authoritative influence on the composition of fugues in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Still in the first quarter of the twentieth century, when the study of Bach’s fugues was increasingly taken up by theorists and professors, the fugue d’école was the default model for the study of fugue in French-influenced conservatories and music departments. Jules Combarieu considers, in his essay L’Enseignement musical au Conservatoire et la pédagogie moderne (published in 1910), that Bach’s fugues are both “dangerous” and “unable to provide a basis for instruction” and commends the fugue d’école as a systematic and organized model of composition (Groth 1983, 220; my translation). Even as late as 1941, and on the other side of the English Channel, Edward Dent favors the scholastic model, as opposed to the study of Bach’s fugues, as the most viable instructional model for students, as he declares, “The ’48,’ to say nothing of the great organ fugues, have little in common with the orthodox fugue d’école, as Gedalge calls it—what we may call the academic examination fugue. But the academic fugue has a very honourable ancestry in the church fugues of Mozart and his Italian models, and it is far the best model for the beginner” (1958, 13).

As the in-depth analyses in the previous chapter indicate, this prescriptive model of fugue exerted a significant influence on the overall design of Saint-Saëns’s fugues for keyboard. This is the main proposition of this dissertation. While it would certainly be possible to posit clear and plausible avenues of influence between the fugue d’école and the fugal works of many composers who studied in schools and conservatories where academic fugal theory remained central in the curriculum, the extent and degree to which this compositional exercise affected a group or school of composers merits further study and lies beyond the boundaries of this dissertation. However, what this study does suggest, as a corollary to the examination of the literature on fugal composition between the first quarter of the nineteenth century and the first
quarter of the twentieth century, is that the three-part design nurtured and crystallized by the scholastic tradition in myriad textbooks and teaching institutions in Europe (and later in the Americas) is the standard reference, the norm, by which the formal architecture of a fugue composed during Saint-Saëns’s lifetime (1835–1921) can be read and evaluated. In his entry “Fugue” in the second edition of *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Ralph Vaughan Williams offers us a valuable insight into the general notion of fugal form in the early twentieth century. He writes, echoing Prout’s definition, “This then is the construction of a fugue as generally understood. It will be noticed that it falls into three sections: exposition, middle section, and climax (stretto). These three sections coincide with the design usually described by the formula A. B. A. under which nearly every piece of music may be said to fall” (1906, 120). Vaughan Williams’s interpretation of the fugue as a tripartite form not only coincides with the common view of the French authorities on the subject, but also, as has been shown, with that of several prominent non-French theorists such as Marx, Riemann, Prout, and Dent. Consequently, the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century theoretical and pedagogical literature on fugue seems to suggest that any departure or deviation from this tripartite model should be regarded, a priori, as countergeneric or at least unorthodox in nature. Consequently, I posit that the multisectional (type B) and binary (type C) formal schemes advanced in the second chapter of this dissertation should be regarded as less preferred options—that is, in the context of fugues composed (roughly speaking) between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Saint-Saëns’s fugues seem to reflect this general proposition.

More often than not, any notable deviation from the normative *fugue d’école* is seen, as I have pointed out above, as the fruit of a “different ancestry” of fugal composition, more specifically that of Bach ([A. H.?], 1948, 288). While writers like Prout, Dubois, and Gedalge attempt in their respective textbooks to negotiate, in dissimilar ways, with this binary opposition of, to quote Prout, the “master” versus the “old rules” (to contextualize what Bach does in light of the pedagogical intents of the scholastic model), the general consensus in the literature
During the fin de siècle and the first decades of the twentieth century is that “the widest divergence,” vis-à-vis fugal construction, “is found between the teaching of the old theorists and the practice of the great composers” (Prout 1891–92, 152). Paul Walker, in his entry on fugue for the current version of Oxford Music Online (formerly Grove Music Online), not only acknowledges the prevalence of the tripartite formal design since the nineteenth century, but also the role of Bach’s fugues as the most widely accepted pendular “alternative” to the scholastic archetype. Walker declares:

Since the early 19th century genre designations have been defined largely if not exclusively by their formal structures. Formal structure, however, is not in the end a defining characteristic of fugue. As a result, there has been prolonged argument about whether fugue is a form at all (and, by extension, whether it is a genre) as well as whether any particular formal model should be considered necessary (most often recommended in this context is a ternary model vaguely reminiscent of sonata form). . . . There has developed, beginning in the mid-17th century, a theoretical, textbook model for fugue, most often associated with Fux’s Gradus ad Parnassum and, thanks in large part to Cherubini, with the teaching of the Paris Conservatoire. The appropriateness of this model as a standard, and of its characteristics as necessary and sufficient for the genre, has been a topic of considerable debate. The most commonly recommended alternative to this model has been the fugues of J.S. Bach, especially those of Das wohltemperirte Clavier (the ‘48’). (Walker 2017, under “Fugue”)

At this point, it would be difficult to deny the primary locus of the concept of tripartition—due to its presence in nineteenth-century compositional theory, but also due, in part, to the influence of the sonata principle—in the collective imagination of fugue composers in the Romantic and post-Romantic era, particularly in France but also in Germany and England. What changed in the interim between the 1830s and the 1920s was the ways in which—or the strategies by

94 While Bullivant argues that, in principle, a student ought to learn fugue by studying the “live” music of great composers (that is, to learn fugue “according to Bach”) and not from a textbook, he acknowledges that the “examination fugue” (i.e., fugue d’école) has some practical advantages, while, at the same time, recognizes the dominance of the idea of tripartition in fugal composition (171, 175–77). As he declares, “When writers such as Kitson were producing their textbooks . . . the sonata-form harmony oriented attitude still dominated, if not the music actually being written, at least the music with which the average student would be likely to be familiar. There was a need, therefore, not only to make fugue understandable to the average student in an age to which the ‘classical’ fugal style had become basically foreign. This, at heart, is the reason for the ‘ternary form’ idea and many others . . .” (177).
which—composers articulated and delineated the overall design of actual fugues resulting from the conventions of this tripartite scheme. Owing to his long and fruitful life and his proclivity for fugues, Saint-Saëns offers us a rare case of a composer that runs parallel with the rise, crystallization, and deformation of this formal ideal.

Approximately within the same time span, it is instructive to think about the ways in which composers also grappled with the formal strategies found in the keyboard works of Bach. Whereas for us Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* has become “the most widely accepted yardstick by which we evaluate fugue” (Walker 2004, 2), for composers like Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, and Saint-Saëns the study of Bach’s fugues from the *WTC* (or any other of his fugues, for that matter) was harmonized, for instance, with the study of the fugue as prescribed by Cherubini without this resulting in a paradoxical or conflicting pedagogical approach to this genre. However, if one takes into account the myriad of interpretations, deconstructions, and selective appropriations articulated by theorists vis-à-vis Bach’s fugues (as unavoidable exemplars of this genre) as the nineteenth century ended and twentieth began, it seems safe to speculate that composers would increasingly emulate and synthesize the compositional strategies found in the large number of Bach’s fugues that do not adhere to the tripartite design fostered in the scholastic milieu.

**From the Vestibule to the Writing Desk: The Voice of the Composer in Light of the Expected Forms**

As I noted in chapter 2, while it would be reasonable to assume that no composer would have the intention (or the interest) of writing a *fugue d’école* as a full-fledged composition, this prescriptive model should be understood, to rephrase the words of Aloysius in the *Gradus*, “as the vestibule” through which many Romantic composers gained entrance to the general
principles of fugal writing (Mann 1987, 90). Even a composer like Chopin, who is not immediately recognized for his prowess as a bona fide contrapuntist (in an imitative sense), decided to immerse himself—in the last decade of his life—in the study of fugue and learned counterpoint, as prescribed by Cherubini in his *Cours*. In a letter written to his close friend Julian Fontana in the summer of 1841, Chopin urged Fontana to obtain and send him an unidentified book by Kastner (presumably his *Théorie abrégée du contrepoint et de la fugue*, 1839) and Cherubini’s *Cours*, emphasizing the importance of sending him the latter’s textbook “without fail” (Chopin 1931, 226). Chopin’s self-study of Cherubini’s rendering of the scholastic fugue may be best reflected in his Fugue in A Minor, B. 144—composed in 1840–41 but published posthumously in 1898. The two-part fugue (reproduced in example 4.1) begins, like Cherubini’s two-part tonal fugues ([1835?], 116–18, 122–24), with a four-entry exposition, in which the first pair of entries is separated from the last pair by a relatively short episode. As in Cherubini’s examples, the statements are, from the first answer on, accompanied by a countersubject, and the exposition is followed by a second transitional episode that leads to a reversed, two-entry counterexposition or *rovesciamento*; in Chopin’s fugue the entries in the counterexposition are presented in partial form. The post-expositional episode, which Chopin constructs out from fragments of the countersubject and the tail of the subject, ends with a IV:PAC in measure 39. This cadence elides with a solitary entry in the aforementioned key (mm. 38–43), which, in turn, leads to the episode that launches the dominant interruption in measure 50. Chopin begins the final section of the fugue (mm. 51–69) with a true stretto and makes use

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95 The autograph of this fugue not only exhibits multiple modifications and corrections, but also Chopin’s annotations of the main thematic materials and modulations (i.e., *thème sous-dominante*). This seems to suggest that the Fugue in A Minor might be better regarded as a personal study or exercise (Cherubini’s term *fugue d’étude* seems apt for describing the character of it) on the elements, procedures, and formal organization of the French scholastic fugue.

96 As I noted in chapter 2, Dubois and Gedalge also require four entries in the exposition of a scholastic fugue, even if the fugue is in two or three parts (Dubois 1901, 131; Gedalge 1901, 70).
Example 4.1. Chopin, *Fugue* in A Minor, B. 144 (1840–41; published posthumously in 1898)
Example 4.1 (cont’d)
Example 4.1 (cont’d)
of two dominant pedal points before the end of the fugue.

Even though Chopin’s two-part fugue presents an unusually compact middle section (with just one statement), the dimensions of its first section, the design of its episodes, and the modulation to the subdominant key in the first middle entry, among other features, suggest a close dialogue with the early scholastic fugue as delineated by Cherubini under the influence of the North Italian school of fugue. In the first analysis in chapter 3, I pointed out the influence of the early nineteenth-century scholastic model on some of Saint-Saëns’s early fugues. The point I want to stress vis-à-vis Chopin’s fugue is that this type of exercise in composition was, in or outside a classroom environment, the virtually unavoidable conceptual starting point for the study of fugue after the first quarter of the nineteenth century. To be sure, examples like Chopin’s fugue or Saint-Saëns’s Fugue in A Major, which adhere so meticulously to the prescribed strategies and components of the scholastic fugue, should be considered as the exception and not the rule. In the hands of the master composers of this period, there is a natural and expected impulse to recast, stretch, or even transgress—to varying degrees—the boundaries and elements enforced by this model. Thus, one should and must anticipate a broad spectrum of deviations from the expected paths—deviations that are reflected more directly in the expressive reformulation of the thematic, harmonic, and formal elements found, first, in the fugue d’école (and its revisions) and, second, in Bach’s fugues, especially those from The Well-Tempered Clavier.

For example, the fugue from Brahms’s Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, op. 24 (1861), and the first fugue from Dupré’s Three Preludes and Fugues, op. 7 (1914), are two touchstone examples of fugues that furnish a strong sense of tripartition, while eschewing some of the restrictions and prescriptions of the scholastic fugue. For instance, the overall key scheme of their middle sections, like many keyboard fugues written after the middle of the nineteenth century, is not restricted to closely related keys; both fugues modulate to the flattened mediant
key. As Berry notes, “Tonal range is one of the most relevant features of style, and it is to be expected that a great scope of fluctuation will be found in nineteenth- and twentieth-century fugues” (1986, 368–69). Also, while in both fugues the conclusive restoration of the main subject in the principal key is reinforced by a dramatic change in texture and dynamics, Brahms and Dupré generate an intensified sense of return without resorting to the use of the scholastically sanctioned stretto. In Brahms’s fugue (example 4.2), the concluding section begins (m. 75) with a simultaneous presentation of the initial subject doubled in sixths in the right hand and the subject in inversion doubled in thirds in the left hand. In Dupré’s fugue (example 4.3), the beginning of the final section (m. 51) is marked by a potent entrance of the subject in the right hand ushered by an eighth-note figure in the pedal (loosely based on the subject).

Not infrequently, one comes across type A fugues that evade or override the distinctive harmonic interruption (or caesura) that separates the middle from the concluding section.

Brahms’s above-mentioned fugue from his Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel and

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97 Schenker and Horsley, in their respective analyses, affirm that the fugue from Brahms’s op. 24 is divided into three parts (Schenker 2005, 98–105; Horsley 1966, 284–89). While they both agree that the end of the first section occurs in m. 25, they place the boundary line between the middle and concluding sections in different places. In his analysis in the second volume of Der Tonwille, Schenker argues that the final segment of the fugue starts in m. 49, even as he acknowledges that the tonic key returns in m. 46 and that the beginning of m. 49 coincides with the introduction of a subject in augmentation in the parallel minor key (2005, 104). Horsley, on the other hand, places the beginning of the final section in m. 75. In this respect, she argues that “the [main] three sections of the fugue . . . are clearly set off from one another by two long episodes—episodes that are much longer than those appearing between statements of the theme within the three parts” (1966, 284). More specifically, she notes that the definitive return of the principal key in m. 75 (see her table on p. 285) is reinforced by the introduction of the initial subject (“doubled in sixths, and inverted and doubled in thirds in the left hand”) and the change to forte in the dynamics (284–87). For Schenker, m. 75 marks the beginning of a large-scale dominant prolongation that concludes in m. 96. In his view, the Bb⁴ at the beginning of the subject in m. 75 functions as a suspended fourth over V that resolves on the downbeat of m. 82. (Schenker’s graph on pp. 100–101 shows an implied F root in mm. 75–76.) While I agree with some of Schenker’s arguments, such as that a—literal—dominant pedal point starts immediately after the inception of the main subject in m. 77 (see his graph on p. 101), I find the introduction of the principal key in m. 49 too fleeting (or feeble) to be completely satisfying; if anything, the parallel minor key seems to be more salient in the passage that starts in m. 49. The arresting introduction of the main subject in the principal key in m. 75 (which Brahms prepares with a three-measure crescendo), combined with the changes in texture and dynamics, persuades me to agree with Horsley’s interpretation.
Example 4.2. Brahms, Fugue from *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel*, op. 24 (1861), mm. 72–79

Example 4.3. Dupré, Fugue in B Major from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 1 of his *Trois Préludes et Fugues*, op. 7 (1914), mm. 50–55
Reger’s Fugue in B Minor from “Präludium und Fuge,” no. 4 of his *Sechs Praeludien und Fugen*, op. 99, are two instructive examples of type A fugues in which the concluding section continues uninterrupted from the previous section (see examples 4.2 and 4.4). From a rhetorical standpoint, these fugues lack the catapult effect produced when the launch of the final section is preceded by a half cadence in the principal key at the end of the middle section—or the second-to-last section, in the case of type B fugues. While the inception of the concluding section in fugues that override the expected I:HC might be less evident, one may still be able to demarcate the beginning of a new section by means, for instance, of a simultaneous return of the tonic key (after a period of absence) and the main subject, the use of stretto, or changes in texture, figuration, and dynamics.

Much less frequently, one may come across a point of repose (a caesura) at the end of the middle section that is not built around a dominant arrival in the principal key. While Cherubini, in his *Cours*, acknowledges the possibility of placing a cadence on the relative minor, the dominant of the relative minor, or the dominant minor of the principal key (1841, 343), the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literature on fugue shows how infrequent is the occurrence of such solutions in the works of composers and theorists. Exceptions do occur, though. For example, in Saint-Saëns’s Fugue in G Minor, op. 161, no. 4 (a type A fugue in dialogue with type B strategies; see the footnote on p. 183), Saint-Saëns separates the middle section from the concluding section with an unusual half cadence, or dominant arrival, in the dominant key (example 4.5). Note that in Saint-Saëns’s fugue the launch of the concluding section, in measure 71, does not coincide with a clear return of the tonic, for the reason that the head of the main subject outlines a vii\(^7\) chord. Similarly, in Reger’s Fugue in E Minor from his *Introduktion, Passacaglia und Fuge*, op. 127 (1913)—a type B fugue—the final section begins
Example 4.4. Reger, Fugue in B Minor from “Präludium und Fuge,” no. 4 of his Sechs Praeludien und Fugen, op. 99 (1907), mm. 37–40

Example 4.5. Saint-Saëns, Fugue in G Minor from Six Fugues, op. 161 (1920), mm. 69–74
after an arresting interruption produced by a vii⁰⁷ of V (example 4.6). Here, Reger links the caesura in measure 98 with the beginning of the final section, in measure 101, through a connective passage that ultimately outlines a vii⁰⁷ in the tonic key.

As I have noted in the previous two chapters, cadences—especially those followed by something new in terms of texture, contrapuntal devices, figuration, register, or dynamics—are the most powerful means of formal articulation in my construal of fugal form. However, on rare occasions, a composer might introduce new material that could be analyzed as a new (contrasting) internal section without recourse to the use of an IAC, a PAC, or the conventional HC that precedes the restoration of the main subject in the principal key. In most of these cases, the sense of contrast with the previous material is produced by a simultaneous—and at times abrupt—change of several less forceful (or auxiliary) form-defining elements such as texture, figuration, or contrapuntal devices, but also other factors, like changes of key or tempo. A hallmark example of this type of sectionalization can be found in the introduction of the monumental chorale in Mendelssohn’s Fugue in E Minor, op. 35, no. 1 (published in 1837), a type B fugue that Charles Rosen describes as a “character piece” (1995, 591). The chorale—in the parallel major key—starts in measure 104 (see example 4.7) and is accompanied by an unyielding walking bass line; it is preceded by the dissolution of a vii⁰⁷/V chord in mm. 99–104. This chorale, which should not be regarded as a post-structural episode, is not heralded by a clear-cut cadence but by a dramatic change in mode, texture, dynamics, and tempo.

In this fugue, one may also find an extremely rare example of a large-scale section beginning on a deceptive cadence (example 4.8, m. 41). While a deceptive cadence hardly ever functions as means of formal articulation (usually, this type of unrealized cadence leads to an authentic cadence in the promised key), in this instance, this unfulfilled cadential event coincides with an orderly presentation of four statements of the subject in inversion.
Example 4.6. Reger, Fugue in E Minor from *Introduktion, Passacaglia und Fuge*, op. 127 (1913), mm. 97–102
Example 4.7. Mendelssohn, Fugue in E Minor from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 1 of his 6 Preludes and Fugues, op. 35 (1837), mm. 99–108

Example 4.8. Mendelssohn, Fugue in E Minor from “Prélude et Fugue,” no. 1 of his 6 Preludes and Fugues, op. 35 (1837), mm. 38–53
Here, Mendelssohn strengthens a cadence that is not by itself a form-defining structural marker by relying on elements of thematic design. In this context, the G-major chord on the downbeat of measure 41 is not part of a short-lived and calculated detour leading back immediately to the dominant key; Mendelssohn abandons B minor during the entirety of the inverted exposition. Rather, it marks both the abandonment of the dominant key and the beginning of something contrapuntally new.

As I pointed out in chapter 2, a fugue delineating a bisectional design may present one or more internal cadences, providing that these cadences are less decisive (or conclusive) than the dividing cadence. Needless to say, these internal cadences, whether IACs or HCs, have the effect of weakening the bisecting power of the central cadence, since they suggest the intervention of a competing formal strategy. The fifth piece of Schumann’s 7 Klavierstücke in Fughettenform, op. 126 (1853), reproduced in example 4.9, provides a classic instance of a type C fugue in which the presence of additional cadences, with less conclusive effect, suggests the intrusion of the type of cadential sectionalization found in type B fugues. While in this four-voice fughetta there are two IACs (at measures 36 and 40), the strongest cadence of the piece not only occurs near the middle of the piece (the VII: PAC in measure 26) but leads to the reintroduction of the subject in the principal key in measure 29. As observed in the previous chapter, the second half of a bisectional fugue usually shows either some new contrapuntal treatment or some sort

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98 Writers like Percy Goetschius (1902) and Thomas Benjamin (2003) have suggested a strong link between the fughetta (as a discrete fugal variant) and the concept of bisection. For example, Thomas Benjamin argues that “A fughetta (literally, small fugue) normally contains one exposition, one episode, and a second, balancing section, which may consist of one or two more entries . . . or an extended episode or coda” (2003, 258). However, this study argues that despite the considerable number of examples of fughettas outlining two balancing sections, it might be perilous and counterproductive to take the idea of bisection as the default compositional path for most fughettas, as there are more than a few examples of pieces bearing this title that delineate tripartite, sectional, or even ad hoc designs. As Paul Walker aptly notes in his entry for term “fughetta” in the *Grove Music Online*, “No constructional principles seem to be implied by the choice of the terminology: the diminutive is reflective simply of length” (Walker). For instance, Dubois’s Fughetta in D Major from his 10 Pieces for Organ (1887) and Rheinberger’s Fughetta no. 6 in A flat Major from his Twelve Fughettas, op. 123b (1884), are two unambiguous examples of type A and type B fugues, respectively (in the case of Dubois’s fughetta, its designs comply with virtually all of the defining conditions of the scholastic model).
Example 4.9. Schumann, *Seven Piano Pieces in Fughetta Form*, op. 126, no. 5 (1853)
of recomposition that mirrors—to varying degrees—the first section of the fugue. Here, Schumann seems to combine both strategies, as the music after the dividing cadence brings back, as I noted, the tonic key and the initial subject/answer pair, but now with the statements doubled at the third and a new countersubject in triplets (mm. 29–36).

However, while this dividing cadence, which occurs around 57 percent of the way through, is not preceded by any competing structural marker, its dividing power is diminished to some extent by the v:IAC in measure 36 and the I:IAC in measure 40. Although one may argue that the v:IAC marks the end of an internal section, the following passage (mm. 36–40) seems to be too short to be considered an additional internal section; furthermore, the use of the countersubject in triplets in this passage suggests that it is connected, at least thematically, with the material in mm. 29–36. After the I:IAC in measure 40, the last phrase in mm. 40–45 carries out the formal task of attaining the structural I:PAC. While the use of a tonic pedal during the course of this phrase might suggest reading it as a coda, the inconclusiveness of the cadence in measure 40 makes this phrase formally relevant, as it produces the needed I:PAC. All things considered, the occurrence of the strongest internal cadence near the center of the piece, without it being part of a series of equidistant post-expositional cadences (as in, for example, Saint-Saëns’s Fugue in A Major, op. 161, no. 1), suggests a type B fugue.

Occasionally, one might come across a fugue in which the strongest, or sole, internal cadence occurs midway through its length, but in which this cadence does not prompt new contrapuntal devices or combinations, or a reworked reiteration of the initial section. Guilmant’s *Fughetta sur les initiales de Félix Alexandre Guilmant*, op. 90, no. 3, provides a fine example of a type C fugue that may not give a strong—or at least immediate—sense of bipartition, since the

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99 The IAC-status of the cadence in measure 40 seems to be weakened by the new *pp* dynamic coinciding with the reintroduction of the initial subject on the third beat; as an alternative, one could read this event as a half cadence in the tonic key. However, that all previous cadences in this fugue have consistently fallen on the third beat may suggest that this I:IAC elides with the beginning of the final phrase.
material following the cadence does not articulate a sharp contrast with what has gone before. Although the PAC in the subdominant key that occurs about 48 percent through the piece, in measure 19 (example 4.10), elides with the launch of a statement in the upper voice, one does not observe significant changes (of texture, register, figuration, dynamics, or contrapuntal treatment) indicating the beginning of a second section. While one may argue that the significance of this cadence as a structural marker is weakened to some extent by the notion of sameness between the material that precedes and follows it, the absence of competing cadences (other than the closing I:PAC before the coda in measure 34) and the failure of the main subject to return in the principal key after the exposition seem to underscore the form-defining influence of this event.

Nonetheless, the presence of a PAC at or near the middle of a fugue, even when it is reinforced—contrapuntally or thematically—by post-cadential material, does not ensure an unproblematic formal reading. Guilmant’s *Fughetta sur l’hymne du dimanche de Quasimodo*, op. 19, no. 3, presents an *ad hoc* example of a bisectional fugue whose dividing cadence is in the principal key. The I:PAC in measure 41, as may be seen in example 4.11, elides with the introduction of three partial entries (subject–answer–subject) in close stretto. This event of thematic saturation is followed by an additional statement of the subject in the pedal part (measure 49), accompanied by a series of block chords in the manuals.

In this short fugue, however, one could make the argument that the I:PAC in measure 41 is a terminal gesture and, thus, that the return of the original thematic statements, the distinctive use of stretto, and the subsequent textural intensification in measures 41–49 are part of an extended coda. In other words, this interpretation would entail the corollary assumption that, due to the lack of tonal contrast between what precedes and follows the I:PAC, Guilmant’s
Example 4.10. Guilmant, Fughetta sur les initiales de Félix Alexandre Guilmant from 18 Pièces nouvelles, op. 90, (1904), mm. 17–20

Example 4.11. Guilmant, Fughetta sur l’hymne du dimanche de Quasimodo from Pièces dans différent styles, op. 19, (1865 ?), mm. 39–62
Fughetta would have to be analyzed as a bona fide one-part fugue with an unusual balancing coda.

From a harmonic standpoint, the analytical challenge presented by this fughetta does not stem solely from the occurrence of its dividing cadence occurs in the tonic key. After all, the main historical source of the bisectional fugue is the eighteenth-century binary model, a model that admits the exceptional possibility of closing the first section with a cadence in the original key (even though this strategy of sectionization occurs rarely in the eighteenth century). Nor does the challenge arise from the appearance of material occurring immediately after the dividing cadence in the principal key in a manner that mirrors more or less the material in the exposition. This compositional strategy may be found with some frequency in the fugal literature. (See, for example, Rheinberger’s Fughettas nos. 3 and 7—in D-flat major and E minor, respectively—from his *Twelve Fughettas*, op. 123b; in both fugues, the second section begins immediately after a PAC in the dominant key.) However, the analytical conundrum in Guilmant’s fughetta arises ultimately from the non-canonical combination of both compositional strategies: (1) the strong cadence in the tonic key near the midpoint of the fugue and (2) the obvious parallelism between the material after measure 41 and the original exposition. While I readily admit that the unusual design of this fugue calls for an *ad hoc* explanation, its formal design is still dependent on the principle of bipartition.

This survey is not meant to be an exhaustive account of every compositional alternative that challenges or contravenes the generic formal expectations of fugues composed between the 1830s and the 1920s. What I have attempted to do in these few pages is to suggest some thoughts on the possibilities for the manipulation of the form-defining elements of not only the Romantic fugue as prescribed in many music schools and pedagogical textbooks, but also of fugues exhibiting formal patterns that may be traced back to the eighteenth century. Naturally, as is often the case with any musical genre with constraining conditions, there are exceptional
cases in which the most common formal designs seem to offer little or no constructive input. A touchstone example of a fugue presenting an *ad hoc* formal design, in a Romantic context, may be found in the fugue from Liszt’s *Fantasie und Fuge über das Thema* B-A-C-H, s. 260/529. As Horsley aptly points out regarding this fugue: “Once the exposition is over, it is scarcely polyphonic, almost a nineteenth-century fantasia rather than a fugue; the freedom is a lack of control rather than the controlled effort at new order seen in Beethoven’s fugues. Except for the theme, the resemblance to Bach or to any other fugue composer is faint” (1966, 377).

**Fugue in the Twentieth Century: The Limits of Tonality and the Twilight of the Cadence as the Principal Form-Defining Device**

As the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, composers not only started to push the limits of tonality and traditional voice-leading, but also began to renew and recast the formal patterns set in previous centuries. In the realm of fugal composition, these stylistic and aesthetic changes had, broadly speaking, two sets of consequences. The first of these is that, as tonal contrast and affirmation declined in significance as primary form-defining forces, many composers started to craft individual (perhaps experimental) solutions to provide formal cohesion in their fugues. Elements like melody, intervallic relations, rhythm, timbre, dynamics, texture, and register play a more prominent role in sectionalizing fugues composed after the first quarter of the twentieth century than they did in the previous two centuries. The second consequence is a conspicuous decrease in the composition of fugues. As Walker notes:

The indissoluble bond between fugue and tonality, traceable back to Dressler and Clemens in the 16th century and strongly reaffirmed in the 19th, made the genre uncongenial to those 20th-century composers who had abandoned tonal harmony. . . . The principal compositional trends since World War II—total serialism, aleatory music and minimalism—have proved inhospitable to fugue. Accordingly, interest in fugue during the second half of the 20th century came to rest almost exclusively with composers seeking to emulate past compositional styles and scholars engaged in the study of the history of imitative counterpoint. (Walker 2017, under “Fugue”)
In this context, the three generic formal designs that I propose in this study seem to become less useful as pre-existing prototypes (or templates) for analyzing fugues as one moves well into the twentieth century. For instance, harmony and tonal structure—as reflected in cadences, modulations, and key areas visited (or revisited)—are, in the view of this study, the principal criteria for the formal delineation of a fugue. Although it is possible to evaluate some twentieth-century fugues in light of these criteria (for example, in their respective collections of preludes and fugues, Hindemith and Shostakovich furnish us with several fugues that may be understood, at least partially, in relation to the proposed formal designs), one should realize that the form-defining power of these elements is dramatically weakened in fugues that evade tonal orientation or stability.¹⁰⁰

In fairness, before bringing this study to a close, it may be enlightening to test the scope and practicality of the formal types discussed in the previous two chapters as tools for examining the formal design of a fugue exhibiting weak or ambiguous tonal structure. The fugue from Ravel’s *Le tombeau de Couperin* (1914–17) is an illustrative example of a fugue that goes beyond the limits of functional tonal harmony. From an analytical perspective, this fugue—which is Ravel’s only work titled as such—becomes even more appealing if one takes into account the

¹⁰⁰ In his *Ludus Tonalis* (1942), Hindemith presents several fugues that seem to some extent dependent on some of the most customary formal designs found in fugues in the eighteenth century. For instance, the last fugue of the collection (*Fuga duodecima* in F♯) could be analyzed as a bisectional (stretto) fugue in which the second part of the fugue (beginning in the middle of the fugue, in measure 18) reveals a mirrored version of the grouping of thematic statements used in the first half. Similarly, a case could be made that *Fuga nona* in B♭ furnishes an example of multisectional fugue in which each of its five sections is delimited by a new manipulation of the subject: the first section is based on the subject in *recto*; the second section on the subject in inversion; the third on the subject in retrograde; the fourth on the subject in retrograde and inversion; and the fifth on the subject in augmentation. Shostakovich’s Fugue in C Major from his *Preludes and Fugues*, op. 87 (1950–51), could be best described as a bona fide tripartite fugue, with the concluding section beginning—after a dominant pedal point (mm. 75–78) and with the soprano and alto in stretto in the principal key—in measure 79. Bullivant notes, vis-à-vis the idea of “recapitulation” (which, in his view, is not limited to three-part fugues but also admits “binary recapitulations”) that “The holding together of a design by the more or less exact recapitulation of material is well known through its use in the classic sonata: all the ‘forms’ familiar from textbooks—sonata form, rondo, minuet and trio—depend upon it. However . . . its use in fugues is, for various reasons, restricted to certain composers—chiefly J. S. Bach, and, under his influence, Hindemith and Shostakovitch” (1971, 133).
scholastic training of Ravel at the Paris Conservatory and his five unsuccessful attempts to win the *Prix de Rome*: for his submission for France’s most prestigious award for young composers, Ravel composed his fugues in D major (1900), F major (1901), B-flat major (1902), E minor (1903), and C major (1905), all based upon given subjects (see Orenstein 1991, 150–52).

While this fugue—reproduced in example 4.12—exhibits various elements associated with the scholastic tradition (including the use of a two-entry counterexposition and the adoption of a dominant pedal to anticipate the stretto section), the overall design of this fugue can be best understood as a type C fugue. Taking cadences as the primary means of formal articulation, I find that, within the scarcity of strong cadential events in this fugue, the I:HC in measure 30, near the middle of the fugue, marks the beginning of more active contrapuntal writing. Like Saint-Saëns’s Fugue in F Major from his *Suite* op. 90, or Bach’s Fugue in C Minor from *WTC2*, this cadence—which may not seem to have the same strength of the cadences that divide the aforementioned fugues—not only emerges as the strongest (sole?) inner cadence in this fugue, but also represents the beginning of an extensive and systematic use of stretto, a contrapuntal device that is absent during the first half of the fugue.

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101 Ravel’s unexpected elimination from the qualifying round of the 1905 edition of *Prix de Rome*, after having been a finalist in three previous competitions (1901, 1902, and 1903), and the jury’s decision to award all the prizes to the students of a member of the jury (Charles Lenepveu) give rise to a national scandal dubbed by the French press as “L’affaire Ravel” (see *Le Matin*, May 21, 1905, Jean Marnold’s “Le Scandale du Prix de Rome” in the *Mercure de France*, June 1, 1905, and Pierre Lalo’s “Le Concours du Prix de Rome; le Cas de M. Ravel” in *Le Temps*, July 11, 1905). In the wake of this scandal, Dubois was forced to resign as Director of the Paris Conservatory in the summer of 1905 and was replaced by Ravel’s mentor, Gabriel Fauré. Regarding this scandal, Orenstein notes: “One must differentiate clearly between two decisions made by the jury. The first was to eliminate Ravel in the preliminary round, while the second was to award all the prizes to Lenepveu’s pupils. Although both verdicts evoked vigorous opposition, the latter appears particularly objectionable, and despite Lenepveu’s assertions to the contrary, an impartial observer will find it difficult to believe that the jury arrived at its decision in a scrupulous manner” (1991, 44).
Example 4.12. Ravel, Fugue from *Le tombeau de Couperin* (1914–17)
Example 4.12 (cont’d)
Example 4.12 (cont’d)
The principal subject of this fugue (mm. 1–2), which comprises only four pitches (A, G, B, and E), does not seem to convey a strong or immediate sense of tonal gravity. However, the fact that the prelude that precedes this movement ends with an E-minor chord and that Ravel delineates the triad B₅–G₅–E₅ twice within the subject seems to indicate that the subject is organized around E. While the subject and the answer outline (twice) the chord of the tonic and the chord of the minor dominant, respectively, the avoidance of the pitch D♯ in mm. 1–6 seems to suggest a conscious attempt to avoid employing functional tonality (in a traditional sense) within the exposition. Thus, one may argue that pitch-collection in the exposition in this fugue outlines E Aeolian or E Dorian. The three-voice exposition is followed by a two-measure transition (mm. 7–8) that leads to a two-statement, non-reversed counterexposition (mm. 9–13). In this section, the countersubject accompanies every statement of the subject and answer after the answer in mm. 3–4.

One aspect of Ravel’s fugue that deserves attention is its avoidance of functional tonality for most of its duration, while exhibiting a controlling, referential centricity throughout the piece. In this fugue, as in the prelude that precedes it, it is difficult not to hear a kind of E-centricity. In his Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory, Joseph Straus makes a clear distinction between tonality and pitch centricity, as he declares:

Because a piece is not tonal, however, does not mean it can’t have pitch or pitch-class centers. All tonal music is centric, focused on specific pitch classes or triads, but not all centric music is tonal. Even without the resources of tonality, music can be organized around referential centers. . . . In the absence of functional harmony and traditional voice-leading, composers use a variety of contextual means of reinforcement. In the most general sense, notes that are stated frequently, sustained at length, placed in a registral extreme, played loudly, and rhythmically or metrically stressed tend to have priority over notes that don’t have those attributes. (Straus 1999, 113–14)

Furthermore, Straus notes that a “sense of centricity often emerges from the use of stable, referential collections” (116). He argues that “By drawing all or most of the smaller sets from a single large referential set, composers can unify entire sections of music, particularly if the
referential set is associated with a specific pitch or pitch-class center” (116). In the context of the first section of Ravel’s fugue (the exposition and counterexposition), the collection of pitches employed in the whole passage, but also, and perhaps more importantly, Ravel’s emphasis on some of the pitches of this collection (i.e., the salient arpeggios outlining the tonic and the minor dominant chords in the subject and the answer, and the countersubject that moves from B to E or from B to E) suggest that E Aeolian or E Dorian could be acting as the “primarily source collection[s] from which surface motives are drawn” (Straus 1999, 119). For instance, an examination of first section (mm. 1–12) shows that Ravel uses pitches that contradict E Aeolian or E Dorian in only three instances—two G♯s in measures 8 and 11, and one A♯ in measure 11. Broadly speaking, then, the first section oscillates—to use Straus’s lexicon—between the 1-sharp collection (E Aeolian) and the 2-sharp collection (E Dorian).

If one regards the initial subject of this fugue as centering around E, then the first pair of entries in mm. 15–19, which follows the post-expositional episode, ought to delineate—in accordance with the fugue d’école—the key of the relative major. Once again, and just as in the exposition and counterexposition, Ravel appears to distort, or veil, the tonality suggested by the melodic outline of the subject and answer. Here there is a weak but perceptible sense of G major. Ravel uses the 1-sharp collection in the subject and introduces C♯ once the answer form enters in measure 17.

After a three-measure episode based on the countersubject, Ravel presents a pair of subjects in inversion (mm. 22–25). The first statement of the pair occurs within a white-note collection that may be organized around the pitches D, F, and A, thus suggesting a D Dorian centricity. On the third beat of measure 23, Ravel introduces a G♯ diminished seventh chord, a rare functional chord that reinforces the A Dorian or A Aeolian centricity of the music that accompanies the inverted entry in mm. 23–26. The statement ends on an A-minor chord reinforced by a forte dynamic.
These statements are followed by the longest episode of the fugue (mm. 26–34). Thematically speaking, this episode may be divided into two parts: the first part presents the countersubject in both recto and inverted forms; the second part, beginning in measure 30, combines the countersubject with three partial entries of the subject, including an entrance in the answer form. However, this episode seems to be divided even more explicitly by the half cadence on the downbeat of measure 30. This cadence, which coincides with the introduction of a salient dominant pedal point, is, as I noted above, the strongest structural marker in the whole fugue. Whereas, in comparison with the cadences found in most of the fugues examined in this study, this cadential event may not seem particularly prominent, it marks the first time in the fugue in which Ravel introduces a major dominant chord, and only the second appearance of the leading tone. With regards to its centricity, this cadence marks the beginning of a relatively long passage (mm. 30–39) that is restricted to the 1-sharp collection; D♯ disappears from the music.

After three partial statements of the subject (including one entry in the answer form) and three countersubjects, which occur over the dominant pedal triggered by the I:HC in measure 30, the fugue proceeds to an orderly succession of stretto entries. First, Ravel presents the subject and the answer in stretto, also over the dominant pedal, in measures 35–37. These statements are almost immediately followed by a pair of inverted entries in stretto (mm. 39–41). In some respects, this sequence of entries emulates the events that follow the post-expositional episode in the first part of the fugue. Subsequently, Ravel introduces two pairs of entries, separated by a brief transitional episode, in which the subject in recto in the soprano overlaps an inverted version of the subject in the alto (mm. 44–49).

The episode starting in measure 50 could be divided, like the episode in mm. 26–34, into two distinct parts: the first part descends to the low register using superimposed fragments of the subject; the second part, beginning in measure 54, counteracts the registral direction of the first part by using the countersubject in inversion. Fascinatingly, Ravel places the lowest note in
this fugue at the end of the first part of this episode, in measure 54 (E2 in the bass), and the highest (E6) at the end of the second section, which coincides with the I:PAC in measure 58. (While there is no bass note on the downbeat of measure 58, the E6 in the soprano seems to imply an E-minor harmony.) Although in all previous analyses I have used the term PAC to denote a cadence with a major V chord, in the modal context of this piece—and vis-à-vis Ravel’s compositional style in general—one may argue that a minor dominant chord, such as the one at the end of measure 57, may serve as part of a structurally conclusive cadence.

A three-part stretto in measure 58 marks the start of the coda. This coda displays, on one hand, a dramatic relaxation with respect to tempo and dynamics and, on the other, an intensification with regard to the distance (or time-interval) of imitations and the number of voices involved. This stretto, which is a “true stretto” by a scholastic definition, represents the first and only time in the entire fugue that Ravel juxtaposes the three voices in stretto. The fugue ends, following a three-entry stretto of the countersubject, with a tonic chord without the third.

The conspicuous coexistence of modal and tonal elements in this fugue, in addition to the paucity of clear-cut cadences, may lead the analyst not only to demote the structural significance of cadences and the overall key design, but also to look into other, relatively less forceful form-defining features, such as the placement of the entries, contrapuntal devices, texture, figuration, and dynamics.

Through a different lens, however, Ravel’s fugue from Le Tombeau de Couperin may be analyzed as a tripartite fugue. For example, Henri Gonnard (2001), in his analysis of this fugue, asserts that its overall design is three-part. In Gonnard’s view, Ravel devotes the first

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102 Mark Devoto goes as far as to describe this fugue—without going into details or theoretical considerations—as an example of a scholastic fugue. As he declares, “As for Ravel, one cannot say that imitative counterpoint is a characteristic feature of his art, but when one considers a brilliant exception, the fugue d’école in Le tombeau de Couperin, one is impressed by the utter mastery of the technique not nearly as much as by the naturalness of the piece itself” (2004, 188).
section of the fugue (mm. 1–21) to the alternation of three expositions (in recto) and three episodes; the second (mm. 22–34) to the presentation of the subject in inversion and stretto; and the third section (mm. 35–51) to the contrast between the subject in recto and inversion, on one hand, and, on the other, to the proliferation of stretto (2001, 57). While Gonnard regards the dominant pedal point that starts in measure 30 as “the center of gravity of the work,” his interpretation of the formal design of this fugue rests ultimately on motivic (or thematic) factors.

In his analysis of this fugue, Timothy Smith (2003) also argues for a tripartite division; however, Smith’s segmentation of three sections of the fugue does not coincide with that of Gonnard. For Smith, the exposition ends in measure 14, the development extends from mm. 15–53, and the final section begins in measure 54. While Smith devotes a considerable part of his analysis to a discussion of cadences and tonal contrast, his partition of the three large-scale sections of this fugue seems to rest largely on the placement, combination, and permutation of the thematic materials. Unlike Gonnard, however, Smith does regard tonal contrast as a determinant for formal division. For example, Smith seems to regard the presentation of the first pair of entries in the mediant key (G major), which coincides with the launch of what he denotes as “the development,” as a contrasting element that helps to separate the first two sections. Moreover, in discussing cadential punctuation, he recognizes a “perfect cadence” at the end of the exposition in measure 9, and the half cadence in the tonic key in measure 30. Regarding the first cadence, Smith reads the $\flat$VII chord at the end of measure 8 as a minor V$^7$ chord with a missing root—which also may sound, according to him, like a deceptive cadence (V–vi) in the key of G major—and argues that this cadence marks the end of the exposition but not the end of the first section. As regards the half cadence in the tonic key in measure 30, Smith states:

_This cadence is particularly strong, and separates the inverted subject section of the development from the material that follows. This cadence is important in the overall_
form for several other reasons as well. This marks almost the exact centre of the work, and therefore serves to separate the material that follows it from the first half of the work. . . . This is the first of only two instances in which we find the raised 7th degree of the scale. This centres the listener back into the key of E minor for the next section. (Smith 2003)

While Smith emphasizes the formal strength of this cadence, not only as a cadence that marks the beginning of something new, but also as an event that restores the hegemony of the tonic key, it is rather startling to find that this cadential event does not play a decisive role in his formal interpretation of Ravel’s fugue.

**Concluding Thoughts**

As I pointed out in the first two chapters of this dissertation, many theorists in the past 100 years or so have called into question both the legitimacy of the scholastic fugue as a useful pedagogical resource and the validity of the idea of fugue as a form, or a limited set of forms, for either compositional or analytical purposes. In this dissertation, I hope to have demonstrated that these accounts do not tally, first, with Saint-Saëns’s fugues for piano and organ, and, second, with the fugal compositions of many composers in the Romantic era. The concept of the scholastic fugue, not only as expounded in French treatises but also as disseminated in many pedagogical circles in Europe after the middle of the nineteenth century, has proved extraordinarily useful for understanding the formal and compositional basis of keyboard fugues written by nineteenth-century composers with distinctly different voices.

A critical examination of some of the most common formal strategies in Bach’s keyboard fugues is equally enlightening for the above-mentioned analytical purposes, and certainly worth juxtaposing with the formal plan outlined in the synthetic scholastic model. Without wanting to dismiss the real influence of theorists and composers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (for example, Bertali, Reincken, and Fux), I want to suggest that, from the first quarter
of the nineteenth century to the present, there have been only two paramount approaches for
teaching how to write fugues: that of Bach and that of the scholastic tradition. In many ways, the
negotiation between these two understandings of fugal composition—which is reflected not only
in the pedagogical formation of composers such as Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, and Saint-
Saëns, but also in the theoretical formulations of theorists like Dubois and Gedalge—is not
entirely alien to the modern student’s pedagogical environment. For instance, Thomas Benjamin
states in his *Counterpoint in the Style of J. S. Bach* that “it is best that the first few fugues one
composes be based on specific procedural/formal models drawn from Bach (1986, 244)” but, in
the same chapter, notes that “Stretto is an effect often reserved for the latter sections of a fugue,
because of its intensifying, climactic effect” (261), and that a “dominant pedal point may occur
near the end, over which one may hear the subject, often in stretto” (263). As Bullivant aptly
declares, “even teachers… who purport to be violently anti-examination-fugue and pro-Bach,
have had, when it comes down to it, to set to and prescribe a form for the student which
amounts… to nothing other than that old friend, the ternary scheme by key of entries and
stretto” (1971, 177).103

In revisiting Edward Cone’s comment regarding the fugue d’école and Saint-Saëns’s
compositional practices at the very beginning of this study (see page 1), I cannot deny that there
is some truth in it: the French scholastic model “has its uses for one who wishes to study the
sources of Saint-Saëns’s” fugal works (Cone 1989, 36). However, rather than taking the fugue

103 Another good example of this dualistic negotiation between Bach’s fugues and the tripartite model is
found in Gauldin’s book on eighteenth-century counterpoint. On one hand, Gauldin declares that “Despite
the great accomplishments of the late Baroque masters, their efforts in the area of fugue pale against the
achievements of J. S. Bach” (1995, 210), while also stressing that “in diagramming a fugue’s structure, one
must seek to discover its intrinsic qualities rather than force it into a predetermined mold” (223). On the
other hand, he admits that “many fugues” in the Baroque era “tend to adhere to” the tripartite formal
scheme and closes the chapter on “The Three-Voice Fugue” by examining two fugues by Bach (the C
minor and D sharp minor fugues of *WTC I*) that—in his view—adhere to this formal plan (223). For
instance, regarding the Fugue in C Minor from *WTC I* (a fugue that has been also linked to the concept of
bipartition; see Herford 1973; Berry 1986; and Ledbetter 2002), Gauldin notes that “the usual
partitioning of . . . [this] fugue results in a conventional tripartite structure (223; emphasis added).
d’école as a dreadful compositional blueprint that “uninspired composers use to fill pages of music paper” (Nelson 1994), or as the last resort for composers exhibiting, in the words of Cone, an “amazing lack of style” (1989, 36), I think it might be instructive and enlightening to consider, first, the significance that this model had for Saint-Saëns’s contemporaries and, second, the ways in which it has been adjusted, reshaped, amalgamated, and deformed.

No genre of composition can survive outside of socially acceptable limits; the fugue d’école, even with its academic dress, is no exception. If the scholastic fugue had such a powerful presence in textbooks and classrooms for more than a century, there is a need to incorporate it as an important component in an informed and comprehensive understanding of fugues in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While I hope that this renewed rereading of the Romantic fugue might shed some light on how we talk and think about the compositional and formal strategies of many fugues in the Romantic era, we are yet left to wonder to what extent contemporary approaches to teaching fugue—in textbooks, schools, conservatories, and colleges—are still dependent on this synthetic model.
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