

# The Fugues in the *Bachianas Brasileiras* By Heitor Villa-Lobos: Neoclassicism and The Learned Style

NORTON DUDEQUE  
Universidade Federal do Paraná (norton.dudeque@ufpr.br)

## Introduction

The cycle of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* represents a sophisticated conception of neoclassic works in which Villa-Lobos pays homage to Bach, by applying his perception of Bach's compositional techniques, associated to nationalistic references to Brazilian music. The *Bachianas Brasileiras* were composed during a period of 15 years from 1930 to 1945. In the period between the two World Wars, the music in Europe revived stylistic references and adaptations of forms and thematic processes originated in Classic and Baroque music. The decade of 1920s saw such diverse works as Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* (1919-20), Prokofiev's *Symphony no. 1* ("Classical", 1916-17) and Hindemith's *Kammermusik* (completed in 1927) as representing the tendency towards a more objective style, first designated as neoclassic by Stravinsky in 1923, which Messing summarizes as characterized by:

1. simplicity—the reaction against obscurity, density, and size;
2. youth—the belief that spontaneity, freshness, and vigour could often be best characterized by evoking the childlike condition;
3. objectivity—the response to the notion that intensely personal utterances led to either distortion and rank sentimentality;
4. cultural elitism—the posture that the previous elements were all inherent in non-Germanic peoples (MESSING, 1988, p. 89).

Wheeldon (2017) also discusses the rejection of previous models or tendencies in musical composition in France during the 1920s. She emphasizes the reaction against Debussy's music by "Les Six" and how it was transformed into a new aesthetic postulate, the neoclassicism. One of the main points raised by Wheeldon concerns counterpoint and its adoption as an alternative to "verticalisme", that is, the perception that Debussy's music consisted of "simultaneous agglomerations of sounds" as expressed by Paul Landormy in 1918. Referring to "Les Six" in the following year, Landormy declared, "the return to counterpoint, in opposition to Debussyist verticalism, is one of the rallying cries of the young school" (pp. 440–1). In 1920, Francis Poulenc, summarized the common ideas of "Les Six" as "the reaction

against vagueness, the return to melody, the return to counterpoint, precision, simplification”, also a reaction to Debussy’s music. Wheeldon, in addition, observes the importance that counterpoint classes had for the group of composers. Auric and Tailleferre studied under Georges Caussade (1873-1936), Milhaud and Honegger studied under André Gédalge (1856-1926), all in the Paris Conservatoire. Poulenc, on the contrary, studied counterpoint with Charles Koechlin (1867-1950) during 1921-22. By 1924-25, the slogan “Le Retour à Bach” became a movement resulting from the increasing emphasis on counterpoint in the music of preceding years. Koechlin, in 1926, wrote an article in *La Revue Musicale* entitled “Le ‘retour à Bach’” in which he lists the principles of neoclassicism:

[1] Clear themes as in certain allegros of Bach (a remonstrance!); [2] no Beethovenian, Franckist, or Wagnerian pathos; [3] no Fauréan or Debussyst *expressionism* (I certainly cannot write “impressionism”) but [4] *pure music*, which does not claim to signify anything. [5] And fugues. Or rather, sketches of fugues, adapted to the needs of an epoch in which time is money (see WHEELDON, 2017, p. 467; see also KOECHLIN, 1926).

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Even though Villa-Lobos’s two periods of residence in Paris (1923-24 and 1927-30) did not interfere in his preference for composing nationalistic music, it is well documented that he met and became well known to the most celebrated musicians and composers of the time, among these were D’Indy, Roussel, Honegger, Schmitt, de Falla, Stravinsky, and Prokofiev. Many of these composers had already adopted neoclassicism as a main tendency in his works at that time. When Villa-Lobos begun composing his *Bachianas Brasileiras* in 1930 he adopted a trend towards neoclassicism that he may had observed in Europe during the 1920s. Consequently, he adopted references to Bachian music style and demonstrated a great interest in Bach’s music during the following decades of 1930s and 40s. However, Villa-Lobos may not have only observed the neoclassicism present in Paris, but he also inherited Bachian ideals from the nineteenth century. For instance, Villa-Lobos sees the figure and the music of J. S. Bach as universal source for music, mythical and sacred; he declares “the music of Bach comes from the astral infinity to infiltrate in Earth as folk music, and this cosmic phenomenon reproduces itself over the lands, subdividing itself over the various parts of the terrestrial globe, with

a tendency to become universal”.<sup>1</sup> Villa-Lobos’s imaginative description on the universality of Bach’s music demonstrates that he recreates and replicates the mythological, cosmological, and superhuman Bach figure of the nineteenth century. In addition, he also re-interprets the compositional techniques used by Bach, according to his own perception of these procedures. Furthermore, it is possible to perceive Villa-Lobos’s *Bachianas* and his view of Bach’s music as contradictory to the European neoclassicism of the 1920s. On one hand, Villa-Lobos inherits the romantic view of Bach, on the other, he adopts the objectivity inherent to neoclassicism. The mixture of views is what makes Tarasti observe that

There is no such contradiction between Villa-Lobos’s neoclassicism and romanticism since the orchestra of many *Bachianas* is closer to that of romanticism than impressionism or Stravinsky-type primitivism. That is why Villa-Lobos’s return to Bach is in essence only superficially and accidentally related to the corresponding phenomenon of the 1920s in Europe (TARASTI, 1995, p. 176).

An example of this contradictory aspect in the *Bachianas* may be observed in the instrumentation of the suites. For instance, *Bachianas no. 2*; 7; and 8 are for large traditional orchestras, sometimes with the inclusion of Brazilian percussion section; and *Bachianas no. 3* is for piano and orchestra. However, *Bachianas no. 1* (orchestra of violoncelli); 4 (piano, later arranged for orchestra); 5 (soprano and orchestra of violoncelli); 6 (flute and bassoon); and 9 (for voice orchestra or string orchestra); present instrumentation closer to standard neoclassic instrumentation. In fact, Villa-Lobos seems to propose his own type of neoclassicism which incorporates his romantic inheritance, European neoclassicism, and Brazilian music.

In the perspective of neoclassicism, fugues in general were considered the highest expression of counterpoint, therefore it became a much favoured genre during the 1920s and 30s. Examples are Stravinsky’s fugue in the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930), Bartók’s fugue in his *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* (1936), and along with the model of J. S. Bach’s *Well-tempered clavier* are Hindemith’s *Ludus Tonalis* (1942) and Shostakovich’s 24 Preludes and Fugues for piano (see WALKER,

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<sup>1</sup> “[...] título de um gênero de composição musical criado de 1930 a 1945 para homenagear o grande gênio Johann Sebastian Bach. As *Bachianas Brasileiras*, em número de 9 suítes, são inspiradas no ambiente musical de Bach, considerado pelo autor como fonte folclórica universal, rica e profunda, com todos os materiais sonoros populares de todos os países, intermediária de todos os povos. Para Villa-Lobos, a música de Bach vem do infinito astral para se infiltrar na terra como música folclórica e o fenômeno cósmico se reproduz nos solos, subdividindo-se nas várias partes do globo terrestre, com tendência a universalizar-se” (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 187).

2001). Villa-Lobos's fugues in the cycle of *Bachianas* range from 1930 in *no. 1*, 1942 in *no. 7*, 1944 in *no. 8*, to 1945 in *no. 9*. In the 12 years that separate *Bachianas no. 1* and *no. 7*, for instance, Villa-Lobos arranged Bach's Preludes and Fugues from the *Well-tempered clavier* for mixed choir, *no. 4* (1934), *8* (1932), *14* (1937), *22* (1932) and fugues *1*, *5*, and *21*, all arranged in 1932. In addition, in 1938, he arranged the *Organ Fantasia and Fugue no. 6* for orchestra. Furthermore, Villa-Lobos's interest in counterpoint and fugal procedures seems to go beyond Bach's music. For instance, in the collection *Solfejos*, Vol. 2, published in 1946, Villa-Lobos composed several 2, 3, 4 and 6 parts canons, arranged circular 4 parts canons by Francisco Braga (1868–1945), a twelve-tone fugue by Max Brand (1896–1980), a 4 parts fugue by Handel and the already mentioned 4 parts fugue *no. 8* from *WTC* by J. S. Bach. But more interesting is Villa-Lobos own fugue entitled *Fuga IV sobre um tema de caráter popular brasileiro* (Fugue IV on a Brazilian popular character theme) for mixed choir, it is an arrangement of the orchestral fugue – fourth movement – of *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8* (see VILLA-LOBOS, 1946). Most of these arrangements were written for choir performances in the *Canto Orfeônico* program, in which Villa-Lobos was the leading figure.

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The series of *Bachianas Brasileiras* reflects in many aspects the adoption of Bachian musical allusions. For instance, many of these have among their movements a pair of prelude and fugue. The second and third movements of the *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 1* (1930) has a Prelude (*Modinha*) and Fugue (*Conversa* (or conversation)); *Bachianas no. 7* (1942) is arranged as a suite containing a Prelude (*Ponteio*), Gigue (*Quadrilha Caipira*), Tocata (*Desafio*) and Fugue (*Conversa*), and *no. 8* (1944) as a Prelude, Aria (*Modinha*), Tocata (*Catira Batida*) and Fugue, both works for orchestra. The last work in the series, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9*, composed in 1945, is set originally for a *cappella* chorus (and orchestrated for strings), and its movements are arranged as a Prelude and Fugue. Exception for *Bachianas no. 9*, which presents thematic relationship between the Prelude and Fugue, all other fugues do not present any thematic relationship between the prelude movements and their fugues. Also noticeable is the fact that the double designation present in the fugues of *Bachianas no. 1* and *7* imply a link and a suggestion of the mixture of Bach's stylistic traits and Brazilian music; the simple designation in *Bachianas no. 8*

and 9 suggests that the amalgamation of Bachian stylistic and Brazilian popular music elements is fully accomplished needing no mention of the intended mixture aimed by the composer.

In the *Bachianas*, Villa-Lobos alludes to former styles of music, not only to those related to Bach's music, but also those related to traditional Western and Brazilian music. Particularly, in the case of the fugues, Villa-Lobos devises a type of mixture between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century topics and newly devised topics that suits to his own compositional needs. In fact, Villa-Lobos alludes to topics pertaining to the learned style of eighteenth-century music, in the narrow and broad sense as defined by Chapin (2014). In its narrow sense, the learned style refers to techniques of imitative counterpoint such as, canon, fugato, and the fugue, "the chief genre of the learned style, was considered the ultimate stage of a composer's training and the finest test of his skill" (RATNER, 1980, p. 263). In a broader sense the style comprises species counterpoint, the chorale, and the improvisatory complexities of the fantasy (CHAPIN, 2014, p. 301). Therefore, it is important to observe that by alluding to a mixture of topics of the learned style and Brazilian music, Villa-Lobos devises his *Bachianas* in terms of a musical manifestation of an ethos, i.e., the characteristic spirit of a musical era associated to his beliefs of national Brazilian music.<sup>2</sup>

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In this way, it can also be identified specific topics and styles throughout the entire cycle of *Bachianas*. For instance, one of these topics – the chorale figuration – is frequently found throughout the individual pieces of the cycle. Villa-Lobos refers to chorale style in his description of some of the *Bachianas*. He describes a section in the *Fantasia* from *Bachianas* no. 3 as presenting a theme with a circle of fifths sequence accompaniment in chorale style (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 189). Similarly, he describes another passage in the fugue from *Bachianas* no. 9 relating to the same style (p. 197). These passages illustrate a recurring stylization component in the *Bachianas* cycle. However, in this text, the learned style is represented by the fugues in the *Bachianas*, and specifically the style is related to *fugue d'école* as Villa-Lobos may have learned from D'Indy's *Cours de Composition Musicale*.

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<sup>2</sup> For an application of these ideas to Argentinian music see PLESCH, 2017.

## *Fugue d'école*

In 1920, Darius Milhaud in his article 'Brésil' for *La Revue Musicale* states that Vincent D'Indy and the *Schola* are models for Argentinian and Chilean music, however, in Brazil, there is, clearly, a Debussyan impressionistic orientation (MILHAUD, 1920, p. 60–1). Despite of Milhaud's identification of the tendencies in Brazilian music of the time, the mention of D'Indy and the *Schola Cantorum* is of particular interest.

In 1941 Villa-Lobos stated the significance of D'Indy's *Cours de Composition Musicale* (1909) as an important reading during his formative years, which he dated around 1914 (CORRÊA DO LAGO, 2010, pp. 30–61). In fact, Nóbrega, reporting on the controversial Villa-Lobos's autodidactic studies, writes that the composer briefly attended classes on harmony with Frederico do Nascimento and Francisco Braga in the Instituto Nacional de Música in Rio de Janeiro. In addition, he mentions that Villa-Lobos was grateful to Alberto Nepomuceno, Henrique Oswald and Francisco Braga for advices on music. But more important is the mention that, during the 1910s, Leão Veloso brought from Paris a copy of D'Indy's treatise to Villa-Lobos and by studying it Villa-Lobos completed his formative years (NÓBREGA, 1969, p. 14). This is corroborated by Villa-Lobos's music itself. His music from the 1910s – Trios 1 and 2, Symphonies 1 and 2, for example – shows a tendency towards cyclic form, an approach favored by D'Indy.

Villa-Lobos's descriptions of the fugues in the cycle of *Bachianas*, published in *Villa-Lobos, sua obra* (1972), not only describe "a sort of informal" fugue such as the one in *Bachianas no. 1*, but also allude to specific terms of fugue composition and to *fugue d'école* instructions. The former is described as composed in the style of Satiro Bilhar, an old *carioca* bohemian singer and Villa-Lobos's friend, and "describes a type of conversation among four players, where their instruments dispute thematic primacy in successive questions and answers, in a dynamic crescendo" (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 188). The latter, *fugue d'école*, serves as source to compare Villa-Lobos's fugues to an ideal fugue model. For instance, the composer tries to distinguish between his fugue in *Bachianas no. 7* and the structure of a school fugue when declaring that the fugue presents some particularities in relation to "scholastic fugue" (*fuga escolástica*) and melodic aspects related to a

“sentimental” Brazilian music. He continues noticing the differences between the presentation of the fugue subject and the traditional presentation in its tonal transposition to the dominant. He continues describing the sections of the fugue, the re-expositions of the subject and episodes.<sup>3</sup> Finally, Villa-Lobos declares that this thematic technique is intentional and aims at a principle of free style, logical and assertive. Villa-Lobos’s notes on the fugue of *Bachianas no. 8* are of general character, briefly observing the structure of the piece, the presentation of the subject according to the rules of school fugue. He also observes the stylistic relationship to the classic Bachian style of this fugue and its relationship to motives and melodies of Brazilian character. Finally, the fugue from *Bachianas no. 9* deserves observations about its vocal treatment, and its form considering its episodes and re-exposition. One interesting observation concerns the identification of a section “in the form of a chorale” in the development section of the fugue. The chorale refers to the “chorale topic” which is often alluded to in several pieces of the *Bachianas* cycle (See MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, pp. 193–7).

In addition to D’Indy’s treatise important contribution to Villa-Lobos theoretical formation, André Gédalge’s *Traité de la fugue* (Paris 1901) may be acknowledged as corroborating Villa-Lobos view of fugues. In his treatise, Gédalge lists eight structural components of a *fugue d’école* (school fugue) — which coincide with the structural components listed by D’Indy (Paris, 1909) — these are: 1) the subject, 2) the answer, 3) one or more countersubjects, 4) the exposition, 5) the counter-exposition (optional section), 6) the episodes, 7) the *stretto*, and 8) the pedal point. D’Indy, however, subdivides his description of fugue formal characteristics into two sections: a) the melodic elements of fugue and b) the harmonic elements. In the first section D’Indy presents guidelines for the composition of the fugue subject, first answer and tonal answer, and countersubject. In the second section, D’Indy discusses the cadence, the order of tonal expositions in fugues in major and in minor modes (including the counter-exposition), the episodes, pedal point, and *stretto*. The structural sections of a fugue, therefore, coincides with Gedalge’s instructions. For Villa-Lobos, most probably, these guidelines may have importance for designing his fugues along with his study and

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<sup>3</sup> The term “re-exposition” that Villa-Lobos uses denotes the last exposition in the fugue. I adopt the standard term “exposition x”.

observation of J. S. Bach's fugues. However, Villa-Lobos does not follow the strict rules of the school fugue. In fact, he follows the structural elements of these guidelines for composing a fugue. Not surprisingly, these normative elements are adopted and adapted in Villa-Lobos's fugues in the *Bachianas* cycle. Even though none of Villa-Lobos's fugues conform to a Bachian fugue or a *fugue d'école* in a strict sense, they are organized according to a free use of the structural sections (components) proposed by Gédalge and D'Indy. Therefore, it represents a sort of "learned style" in which elements of fugue are adapted to the composer's own conception.

In the next section, analytic descriptions on the fugues in the *Bachianas* cycle are presented. Only *Bachianas no. 9* is observed in its entirety due to its thematic relationship between the prelude and the fugue.

## Analytic descriptions

### Fuga (*Conversa*) – *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 1*, third movement<sup>4</sup>

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Villa-Lobos describes the fugue of *Bachianas no. 1* as a sort of conversation (*Conversa*), between the players and in which the instruments alternate thematic importance in succeeding questions and answers.<sup>5</sup> This description and Villa-Lobos's view of fugue suggest the reason why this fugue is a sort of 'informal' fugue, that is, a fugue with an unusual disposition of its structural components and sections. However, the structural sections of a *fugue d'école* are present in Villa-Lobos's fugue. For instance, concerning tonality, the fugue begins in G minor and ends in B flat major. In addition, all tonal regions are closely related to the tonic: E flat major, C minor, D minor and B flat major. In what concerns the structural sections, there is a consistent alternation between expositions and episodes, except for expositions 2 and 3 that succeed each other. Furthermore, the structural components characteristic of *fugue d'école*, such as *stretto* section and pedal points, are also present. The formal segmentation with its sections and structural components of the fugue are shown in Table 1:

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<sup>4</sup> Parts of these analytic descriptions appeared in DUDEQUE, 2017, pp. 19–51.

<sup>5</sup> The Fugue (*Conversa*), composed in the manner of Satiro Bilhar, an old carioca bohemian singer and Villa-Lobos's friend, describes a type of conversation among four players, where its instruments dispute thematic primacy in successive questions and answers, in a dynamic crescendo (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 188).

Section	mm.	Tonality	Structural component
Exposition 1	1–16	G minor→E flat major	
Episode 1	17–30	E flat major→G minor	CS (countersubject) in augmentation S (subject) modified
Exposition 2 Sequential passage	31–8	G minor→C minor	
Exposition 3 Sequential Episode	39–43 44–6 47–58	C minor→G minor G minor G minor→C minor	Stretto 1 Stretto 2 G Pedal point (mm. 47–9)
Episode 2	59–65	C minor→G minor	CS primacy
Exposition 4	66–74	D minor →E flat major	Double fugue B flat pedal point
Episode 3	74–94	E flat minor →B flat major	S in augmentation Final cadence

Table 1: formal segmentation of the fugue; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 1*, third movement.

Example 1a shows the fugue subject beginning in the dominant harmony (G minor: V, m. 1) followed by its answer in the tonic (G minor: i, m. 4ff.). In Example 1b the subject is presented around E flat major and C minor (in m. 9ff.), that is, G minor: VI and iv; and in Example 1c F minor in m. 13 (ii of E flat major) and modulating to E flat major through its dominant in m. 14 (V of E flat major). The main countersubject is presented only in mm. 9 and 13 (shown in Examples 1b and c), and it functions distinctly from the traditional presentation in the first answer as a secondary element, in fact, it is set apart as to acquire an importance that is explored by the composer during the work. Example 1d, shows the subject augmentation in mm. 17–8 that delineates an arpeggio of the Dominant seventh (V7) of E flat major that results in the cadential movement towards E flat major in mm. 17–8.

a) Exposition  
Subject

b) Countersubject (main)

c) Countersubject (main)

d) Countersubject (augm.)

Example 1a-d: presentations of fugue subject and countersubject; *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 1, third movement.

Episode 1, which follows in mm. 18–30, presents the subject but the main countersubject predominates in the section. The second exposition returns to the tonic in m. 31, but it is soon interrupted by the sequential passage shown in Example 2a. The passage projects a circle of fifths sequence ending with an augmented sixth cadence to C minor: D minor–A major–G minor–C major–F major–B flat major–E flat major–D minor–D flat augment sixth–C minor. The following section, in Example 2b,

is characterized by the presentation of two *stretti*. The first superposes, and condenses the fugue subject as in the traditional technique. The second *stretto* presents the fugue subject without its eight-note anacrusis and emphasizes the tonic, G minor, and progresses to a sequential episode in mm. 47–59. Despite the great variation of chronological events in the fugue until this point, they configure structural components of a fugue that engender a relationship to neoclassicism, and to a stylization of Bach’s music. In the section between mm. 66–74, Exposition 4, the composer alludes to another fugue technique: the double fugue. Example 2c shows an excerpt from the double fugue allusion in which the subject is presented in cello 4 along with a new superposed subject in cello 2 (see mm. 66–7), and in the succeeding presentation the subject in cello 1 is presented at the same time with the new subject in cello 4 (mm. 68–9). At the end of this double fugue allusion, the B flat pedal point begins in m. 70 (Ex. 2c) and is prolonged until m. 74. There is no development or elaboration of this idea, suggesting just a reference to a fugue technique, and in the final Exposition, Villa-Lobos presents the subject in a sophisticated technique as an assertion of his ability of counterpoint techniques. Finally, the last section presents the subject in augmentation in mm. 74–81, as shown in Example 2d. Once more the composer alludes to another technique that demonstrates his knowledge of contrapuntal techniques, and, naturally, suggests allusions to polyphonic music of the past and to the learned style.

a)

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*mf*

D A G C F B $\flat$  E $\flat$  D

*p* *ff*

D, 6 $^+$  C

b)

Stretto 1 39

Stretto 2 44

c)

65

78

69

72

75

Augmentation of Subject begins



Examples 2a: mm. 34–8; 2b: mm. 38–46; 2c: mm. 65–71; 2d, mm. 74–81; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 1*, third movement.

In sum, the preceding examples illustrate how Villa-Lobos alludes, adapts, utilizes traditional tonality and techniques of counterpoint to create a Bachian stylization in the fugue of *Bachianas no. 1*.

### **Fuga (Conversa) – *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7*, fourth movement**

Both *Bachianas no. 7* and 8 are set for large orchestra. They represent works that pay a monumental homage to the music of J. S. Bach. In this sense, is common to associate the fugue subject of *Bachianas no. 7* to great works by Bach. This is the case of Jardim, who has argued that the subject resembles the main subject of Bach's *Die Kunst der Fuge* by presenting a D minor triad arpeggio followed by a lower neighbor note C sharp and its subsequent octave transfer in mm. 2-3 with a diminished seventh chord and back to the tonic in m. 4. This movement would emulate Bach's theme (see JARDIM, 2005, pp. 133–4). Perhaps, a more realistic description of the theme would begin by noticing the descending arpeggio of tonic in m. 1. It is followed by the neighboring diminished seventh chord in mm. 2-3 returning to the tonic in m. 4, projecting, thus, a tonic prolongation in the first 4 measures. The chromatic descending line beginning in m. 5 functions as link towards the V/V of A minor in m. 11, and then proceeds to the first answer in m. 13. The whole progression from m. 5 reads in D minor: VI–V–natural vii–iv–V–III A minor: V/V–V–i. In addition, the regular quarter notes chromatic descending arpeggios alternate with descending syncopated arpeggios conferring a Brazilian ambience to the theme. Example 3 shows the subject of the fugue.

Example 3: mm. 1-13; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7*, fourth movement.<sup>6</sup>

Structurally the fugue is subdivided in three sections: the first, section A, comprises Exposition 1 and Episode 1. The first exposition is characterized by the subject presentation and its answers at the distance of a perfect fifth tonalities. Thus, there is a sequence of D minor, A minor, E minor and B minor presentations of the subject. Villa-Lobos emphasizes this as a transgression of the rules of scholastic fugues by not adhering to the tonic-dominant presentation of fugue subject. Also included in this section A is the first episode in which the main countersubject is presented. The second section, B, presents a second exposition of subject with the same presentation in a sequence of fifth related tonalities, and it presents the short episode 2 which functions as a linking passage leading to Exposition 3. Finally, in section C, exposition 3 presents an abbreviated subject exposition projecting only the sequence of D minor and A minor.<sup>7</sup> Table 2 illustrates the formal segmentation of the fugue.

<sup>6</sup> The example illustrates a free interpretation of the structure of the fugue subject. I have no intention of representing a Schenkerian graph of the fugue subject.

<sup>7</sup> Villa-Lobos designates this section as re-exposition (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 194).

Section		Mm.	Tonality	Structural component
A	Exposition 1	1-48	D minor (mm. 1-12) A minor (mm. 13-24) E minor (mm. 25-36) B minor (mm. 37-48)	Subject (S) Presentation of Countersubject 1 (CS)
	Episode 1	49-62	(mm. 49-52) (mm. 53-62)	CS2-Main countersubject Progression of fifths F#-B-E-A Pedal point in A (V of D)
B	Exposition 2	63-110	D minor (mm. 63-74) A minor (mm. 75-86) E minor (mm. 87-98) B minor (mm. 99-110)	Main CS  (change of texture)
	Episode 2	111-113		Based on material of Episode 1 Progression by fifths F#-B-E-A (V of D minor)
C	Exposition 3 (Reexposition)	114-135	D minor (mm. 114-25) A minor (mm. 126-8) D minor (mm. 129-42)	Main CS ("stretto" imitation) Grandioso Pedal point in A from mm. 137ff.
	Coda	136-148	Final cadence (mm. 143-8)	Pedal point in A (V) Lento Passing 6+-I (Picardy third)

Table 2: formal segmentation of the fugue; *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 7.

As mentioned above, the first exposition presents the subject and its answers in fifth-related tonalities. Example 4 shows the beginning of each subject presentation and the answers.

Example 4 shows four presentations of the subject (S) and countersubject 1 (CS1) in different tonalities:

- 1: d: i, vii<sup>o7</sup>
- 13: a: i, vii<sup>o7</sup>
- 25: e: i, vii<sup>o7</sup>
- 37: b: i, vii<sup>o7</sup>

Example 4: presentations of subject; *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 7, fourth movement.

The first episode presents a dense polyphonic texture featuring rhythmic variety and harmonic instability in its beginning. However, the secondary dominants circle of fifths, V of F sharp–V of B–V of E–ii of D (see Ex. 5) in mm. 48–51, that produces tonal instability is overtaken by the stability produced by the pedal point in A (mm. 52–62), the dominant of D minor, which leads to the tonic in m. 63. In addition, in m. 54, there is the introduction of the main countersubject that is developed in the following measures.

Episode 1

48

V of F#

V of B

V of E

ii of d

5ths cycle

52

main CS

m. 61

d: V

82

Example 5: mm. 48–56, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7*, fourth movement.

The second exposition presents the subject in the tonic superposed by the main countersubject, a procedure that characterizes Villa-Lobos free-style fugue. The main countersubject is characterized by the lower neighbor note and an alternating arpeggio and is a typical figure that pays homage to Bach's music and therefore represents one of the best stylistic allusions (Ex. 6a shows the passage). In addition, the main countersubject is perfectly integrated to the fugue subject and acquires, for this reason, the same status as the fugue subject. The third exposition (see Ex. 6b) begins with the restatement of the fugue subject in D minor superposed to a sixteenth-notes scalar figure. Furthermore, the main countersubject is presented in mm. 120–2, also showing its integration and importance as a main thematic element in the fugue. Finally, in mm. 126–35, the subject is restated (see Ex. 6c), however, in A minor, followed by the D minor restatement. At the same time, the countersubject is presented and imitated with a fragment displaced by a

quarter-note distance, causing the effect of a “free-style *stretto*”. These examples illustrate how Villa-Lobos thought his free-style treatment of fugue. Probably, his idea was to play with the main function of the structural components of the fugue in order to subvert, alter and produce variety in his piece.

a)

Exposition 2 main CS

b)

Exposition 3

c)

Grandioso

126 CS fragm.

Main CS

Example 6a: mm. 63–7; 6b: mm. 114–20; 6c: mm. 126–30; *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 7, fourth movement.

The final cadence is structured by the progression of V/V–Augm. sixth–I. It is noticeable that the augmented sixth chord functions as a type of main dominant and

it delineates the stepwise progression towards the tonic, typical of Villa-Lobos tonal music. The allusion to Baroque music is represented by the final D major chord, i.e. the Picardy third tonic chord. Example 7 shows the final cadence.

The image shows a musical score for the final cadence of *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7*, measures 144-8. The score is in G major and shows a stepwise progression of chords: D minor (v7/V), A minor (6+), and D major (I). The final D major chord is a Picardy third tonic chord. The score is written for piano and features a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is not explicitly shown but is 3/4. The score is numbered 144 at the beginning. Below the score, the chords are labeled: d: v<sup>7</sup>/V, 6+, I, I.

Example 7: final cadence; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7*, mm. 144–8.

Villa-Lobos argues that his fugue from *Bachianas no. 7* is in free style despite the “perfect balance of style” and the deviation from scholastic rules (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 194). One of the main characteristics of the piece resides in the imitations in the exposition by fifths (D minor-A minor-E minor-B minor) between subject and answers. In addition, the main countersubject acquires importance during the piece as to be presented along with the fugue subject in the third exposition – *Grandioso* (see Ex. 6c), and presented with such an importance as to allude to *stretto* technique due to its close motivic imitations (m. 126ff).

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### **Fuga – *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*, fourth movement**

The fugue from *Bachianas no. 8* does not present a Brazilian subtitle. A similar fact made Wright suggest that Villa-Lobos achieved the “syntactical purity” of Bachian and Brazilian elements in *Bachianas no. 9* (WRIGHT, 1992, p. 98). Similarly, the Preludio and the Fugue of *Bachianas no. 8* also do not present a Brazilian subtitle, and along with *Bachianas no. 9*, suggest a final achievement of the aimed amalgamation of styles searched by the composer. Wright summarizes:

The shedding of Brazilian titles in the outer movements of *Bachianas n. 8* affords evidence that Villa-Lobos’s cultural synthesis was almost complete; here is a sublimation and distillation of overtly Brazilian musical characteristics to form an

ambience pure and bereft of pictorial association, yet remaining Brazilian (WRIGHT, 1992, p. 97).<sup>8</sup>

The fugue begins with a brief introduction based on the initial motive of the fugue subject. The first exposition presents the traditional sequence of tonic-dominant-tonic presentations of subject and answers. Each of the two expositions are followed by episodes that emphasize the countersubject and its fragmentation. In the second exposition, there is a *stretto* that ends in F minor and leads to a short episode that returns to the tonic, C minor. Table 3 shows the formal segmentation of the fugue.

Section	mm.	Tonality	Structural component
Introduction	1-6	C minor	Fragment of S
Exposition 1	7-21	S -C minor/G minor/C minor Cadence to C minor	Traditional presentation of Subject and answers (i-v-i)
Episode 1	23-46.1	F minor (mm. 32-3) C minor (mm. 37ff)	Fragment of S New CS (mm. 27-9) Texture change
Exposition 2	46-57	(F minor) Cadential to C minor	Stretto Cycle of fifths
Episode 2	58-65		CS
Coda	66-70		Final cadence 6+

Table 3: formal segmentation of Fugue, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*, fourth movement.

The Introduction presents motive *a* (marked with a bracket in Ex. 8) which will originate the beginning of the fugue subject. The motive is presented sequentially four times, and in the last one, the C-B natural-C (m. 2), ends the presentation and begins the progression towards V. The whole Introduction is centred in C minor and, tonally, it projects a progression to its dominant (V<sup>7</sup>) in m. 6. The whole progression reads C minor: i-ii<sup>o7</sup>-V-ii<sup>o</sup>-Augm. Sixth-V<sup>7</sup>. In fact, the augmented sixth chord in m. 3 functions as an anticipation of the dominant harmony of m. 6. The augmented sixth should reach resolution in the tonic chord, however it prolongs the leading note B natural (indicated by the dashed slur), and the seventh of the V harmony (F natural). The prolongation of the dominant harmony is a tonal characteristic present in several cases of “introductions” and refers to a traditional formal function of tonal music.

<sup>8</sup> It is important to observe that in Villa-Lobos’s description of the *Bachianas* he refers to the fugue of *Bachianas no. 8* as *Conversa* (see MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 196).

The image shows a musical score for the first six measures of the fourth movement of *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*. The score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line that begins with a grace note and an accent 'a'. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. Below the bass staff, Roman numerals indicate the chord progression: c: i, ii°7, V, ii°, 6+, V, V.

Example 8: mm. 1–6, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*, fourth movement.

The first exposition (see Ex. 9) is characterized by the presentation of the fugue subject in the tonic, C minor, in mm. 7–9, followed by the answer in G minor and in the major dominant (mm. 10–2), then it is followed by another subject presentation in the tonic (mm. 13–5). The last answer projects V minor and the major dominant in mm. 16–7 and leads to the final cadence of the exposition (mm. 17–8). Thus, the sequence of tonic, V minor, major dominant and tonic presentations of the subject characterizes a traditional approach to the fugue first exposition. According to Villa-Lobos, this sort of presentation also exemplifies the treatment typical of a Bachian fugue. He writes:

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The fugue obeys the natural exposition with the specific thematic characteristics that are justified, on one hand by the classic mode of treatment in what refers to Bach's style, on the other by the motives and Brazilian melodic lines presented in their various aspects (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 196).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> "A Fuga obedece à natural exposição com as particularidades temáticas características que se justificam, de um lado pelo modo clássico como é tratada no que se refere ao estilo de Bach, e de outro lado pelas células e linhas melódicas brasileiras expostas nos seus vários aspectos" (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 196).

Example 9: mm. 7–18, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*, fourth movement.

The first episode presents the fragmentation of the subject in mm. 23–8 (indicated by the brackets in Ex. 10a). In addition, Episode 1 is also characterized by the sequence of secondary dominants, beginning in m. 24, V of G, V of C, V of F, V of B flat, V of E flat, and a repose in E flat major in mm. 26–7. Also important is the presentation of the main countersubject in the bass voice in m. 27. This countersubject will be the main thematic figure that characterize the second section of the Episode (mm. 37–46). The latter also presents the procedure of fragmenting the subject and countersubject (indicated by the brackets in Ex. 10b) producing a dense polyphonic texture by the constant presentation of subject and countersubject fragments.

a) *Episode, fragmentation of Subject*

23

S frag.

V of G V of C V of F V of B $\flat$  V of E $\flat$  I of E $\flat$

27

V vi

Main Counter subject

b) *Episode, fragmentation of S and Main CS*

37

CS frag.

S

40

44

88

Example 10a: mm. 23–9; 10b: mm. 37–46; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*, fourth movement.

An important section is Exposition 2 which presents the *stretto* of the fugue. In Example 11a the beginning of the short *stretto* is illustrated. In the first exposition of the fugue, the presentation of the subject is followed by the answer 12 beats (three measures) after its statement. In the *stretto* the subject is followed by an answer, initially, 6 and a half beats after, then 5 and a half, two and a half and, finally, by three beats. The whole process is a sort of condensation between subject and answer producing an intensification in texture. However, the composer seems to

halt the process by introducing in m. 49.2 a progression of secondary dominants in a circle of fifths progression (indicated by the bracket). Thus, the progression reads V of B flat, V of E flat, V of A flat, V of D flat, V of G flat, reaching a cadence from this point on to F minor ( $ii^7-V^7-i$ ). In mm. 54–57 (see Ex. 11b) a second circle of fifths progression is presented, however this one leads to the tonic, C minor. The progression reads V of F minor, v of B flat, V of E flat, V of A flat, V of D flat, and finishing with the cadence in C minor ( $vii^{o6}-V^7-i$ ). The tonic is reached in m. 56.3 only after resolving the F natural suspension from m. 55.2 and its ornamentation in m. 56, and the A flat of m. 55.4 (tenor voice in the reduction).

a) *Exposition – Stretto*

b)

Example 11a: mm. 46–50; 11b: mm. 54–7; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*, fourth movement.

The final cadence, illustrated in Example 12, already presents the tonic in its beginning, nevertheless, it is followed by the chromatic bass line B natural–B flat–A natural–A flat, which functions as an augmented sixth chord, V/V, that does not resolve in V, instead it proceeds directly to the major tonic (I – Picardy third) and

then to the major tonic with added sixth, a Villalobosian mannerism also presented in first movement of *Bachianas no. 1* and in the fugue of *Bachianas no. 7*.



Example 12: final cadence, mm. 67–70, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8*, fourth movement.

The fugue of *Bachianas no. 8* is a more concise work than those fugues in *Bachianas no. 7* and *9*. The tonal treatment of subject and answers, and the use of structural components suggest a more traditional approach to fugue composition, and to *fugue d'école* instructions.

### ***Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9* — Prelúdio and Fuga<sup>10</sup>**

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The last work in the cycle is a pair of movements of Prelude and Fugue with no Brazilian subtitle. This simple designation suggests that Villa-Lobos had achieved in this work the synthesis aimed between a mixture of Bachian stylistic elements and his own stylistic compositional language. Musical evidence corroborates this point: 1) Both movements present a formal integration since there is only a brief fermata chord at the final measure of the Prelude; and 2) thematic unity denotes the deliberate integration between both pieces. In fact, *Bachianas no. 9* represents a compelling example of the intended combination of Bachian and Villalobosian stylistic music elements. Furthermore, the formal segmentation of the fugue shows that structural components of the *fugue d'école* are present, and the work is organized in three main sections: 1) the first exposition comprises subject presentations in (Dorian) F minor and its answers in (Aeolian) C minor; 2) the development section is structured in three episodes of elaboration of the subject, and also present a new theme that alludes to chorale topic; 3) the second exposition<sup>11</sup> presents two main sections with *stretto* presentation. Finally, a coda

<sup>10</sup> I take the string orchestra version published by Editions Max Eschig as the music text for the following comments on the work.

<sup>11</sup> Villa-Lobos describes this section as a re-exposition, I use the term exposition 2 in Table 4.

closes the fugue with a polytonal harmony. The Prelude is organized in three sections: the first presents the main thematic material (also for the fugue subject) and closes with a transitional segment; the second section is designed as a polytonal chorale; and the third is a concluding section. This description is schematically shown in Table 4.

Section		Measure	Tonality	Structural component
Prelúdio				
Thematic presentation		1-14	C major	Presentation of main theme in vla.
Concluding statement		15-9	C major	Confirmation of tonality and transition to chorale section
Chorale section		20-32	Polytonal	mm. 24-6: 6 <sup>+</sup> -V-I mm. 30-2 syncopated rhythm
Final section		33-7	C major	Final chord: C major with ninth and added sixth
Fuga				
Exposition	Exposition 1	1-28	F minor (Dorian) C minor (Aeolian)	Subject initial pitch F Answer initial pitch C Cadential 6 <sup>+</sup>
	Episode 1	29-44	C minor E flat	Transition Texture chordal (mm. 33-6) Fragmentation (mm. 37-8) Elaboration of S (mm. 39-44)
Development	Episode 2	45-55	Circle of 5ths progression towards E flat major (m. 50)	New Theme - Chorale topic
	Episode 3	56-71	E flat minor	Elaboration on Subject Subject (E flat minor, mm. 60-3)
Exposition 2	Exposition 2	72-94	Begins in D minor with flat fifth progresses to A minor (mm. 75-7);  cadential movement to C (mm. 78-81)	Stretto - Subject abbreviated
	Grandioso	82-95	C minor mm. 93-4	Stretto - Circle of fifths Theme 2 elaborated Transition - Polytonal
Coda Meno		95-9	Final cadence	Polytonal

Table 4: formal segmentation of *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9*.

The thematic unity that denotes the integration between Prelude and Fugue is illustrated in Example 13. The theme in the *Prelúdio* presents motives that are treated by rhythmic diminution to form the beginning of the fugue subject. Motive *a* and *a1* are characterized by the ascending scalar fragment with the repeated notes at its end. The rhythmic diminution in the fugue subject (Ex. 13b) presents the same motivic disposition denoting the relationship. The descending motives *b* and *b1* provide the continuity to the theme, they are also rhythmically diminished in the fugue subject, and provide the continuity for the subject. The relationship between both themes demonstrates the thematic unity that bonds both movements together.



Example 13a: motives prelude, mm. 3–8; 13b: motives fugue subject, mm. 38–9; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9*.

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The *Prelúdio* begins with the presentation of its main theme. This is centered around C major, however, in the whole first section between mm. 1–19, only in m. 19 the C major triad appears as a concluding tonic. The theme presents C as its focal note and, in fact, it is subdivided into symmetrical segments of seven notes each (indicated by brackets in Ex. 14). In Example 14, the prolonged beams indicate the C as the focal note in both phrases. The concluding C major triad is indicated by an arrow in m. 19, and it produces the release point of the tonal tension produced by the descending line (E–E<sub>b</sub>–D–D<sub>b</sub>–C–B–B<sub>b</sub>–A<sub>b</sub>–G) in mm. 15–9.

Example 14: mm. 1–19, *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 9, first movement.

In his description of *Bachianas* no. 9 of 1947, Villa-Lobos alludes for the first time to polytonality in the *Bachianas*. He writes “The *Prelúdio* in a mystic and slow tempo is distributed into six voices. In the no. (1) the harmonic atmosphere presents itself as polytonal until the final *fermata* characterized by the major ninth chord with the substitution of its fifth for a minor sixth” (MUSEU VILLA-LOBOS, 1972, p. 197).<sup>12</sup> In his article “Polytonalité et Atonalité” (*La Revue Musicale*, 1923) Milhaud begins by identifying polytonal passages in the music of J. S. Bach. In the *Duetto* (no. 2) Milhaud sees the origins of polytonality. He explains that in the example there is a combination of D minor in the upper part and A minor in the lower part. He even observes a superposition of an arpeggio of D minor and (a beat later) to another of A major. However, the combination of these two parts allows a vertical identification of each harmony in the tonality of the piece. In the article, Milhaud also proposes possibilities of chordal superposition. For instance, in his second example, Milhaud suggests that two chords may be superposed. For example, over a C major triad one can superpose a D flat major triad, D major, E flat major, E major, F major, F sharp major etc. There are also the variable forms, C major/D major, C minor/D minor, C major/D minor, and C minor/D major, and naturally, their possible reversion, i.e., D major/C major, etc. The many excerpts that illustrate polytonality in the literature and cited by Milhaud include Stravinsky’s *Petruchka* (1911), Ravel’s *Sonate* for violin

<sup>12</sup> Precedents of polytonality in Brazilian music appears in Alberto Nepomuceno’s *Variations sur un thème original* composed in 1902. In the work there are passages in which the composer superposes two different tonalities, for instance, A major/F sharp major; C major/F sharp major; C minor/A major; D flat major/G major. It is important to notice that Nepomuceno’s work dates of 15 years before the arrival of Darius Milhaud in Rio de Janeiro.

and cello (1920–22), and Koechlin's *Heures Persanes* (1913–19), among others. The two former excerpts illustrate harmonic superposition of chords, while the latter illustrates the superposition of melodic lines (B flat major/F major/E major/C major/D major) (see MILHAUD, 1923).

Therefore, there is an understanding, as Milhaud's text suggests, that a distinction between horizontal and vertical dimensions may be considered. Dahlhaus observes, when writing on counterpoint in the twentieth-century music, that:

Among the techniques that dissolved tonal harmony, bi- or polytonality is notable for its tendency to promote a contrapuntal style. Although it appears to proceed from the superimposition of chords of different keys (as in Strauss's *Elektra*), it is possible to consider the contrapuntal manifestation (as in Milhaud) as the truly representative one (DAHLHAUS, 1980, p. 850).<sup>13</sup>

Corroborating this assertion, Reti defines polytonality as “a compositional method where two musical lines which are in different keys appear contrapuntally juxtaposed” (RETI, 1962, p. 79). Finally, Dahlhaus raises an important issue for the polytonal style. He says that “tonal atomization of the style as a whole requires a particularly clear tonal characterization of the individual parts”, otherwise there would not be the recognition of tonality. Milhaud recognizes the problem and attempts a solution when composing works in which the polytonal melodic lines converge to a tonal center. For instance, in *Saudades do Brasil*, Op. 67/I, *Sorocaba*, there is a B flat major chord –the tonic– to which are superposed chords of C minor, C major, D major, but all converge to the tonal center of B flat in mm. 17–20. In the second piece of the series, *Botafogo*, there is a superposition of F minor and F sharp minor, which at the end of the first phrase (mm. 12–3) converges to C natural, achieving closure of a main tonal center.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For an extensive discussion of polytonality in Milhaud's music see KELLY, 2003, pp. 142–168. See also CORRÊA DO LAGO, 2015 and 2016.

<sup>14</sup> It is important to note that Villa-Lobos possibly had contact with Milhaud in Brazil between 1917–19. There is evidence of Villa-Lobos participating in the activities of the Veloso-Guerra circle. The couple Osvaldo Guerra e Nininha Veloso-Guerra promoted concerts with the French music of the time in Rio de Janeiro. Nininha Veloso-Guerra also premiered several of Milhaud's works including the piano version of *Saudades do Brasil* which Villa-Lobos conducted the orchestral version in 1931 (see CORRÊA DO LAGO, 2010, for a comprehensive report on the circle Veloso-Guerra and Darius Milhaud).

In Example 14, the tonality of the theme is centered around C as indicated by the prolonged beams, however only in m. 19 the C major triad appears. The chorale section that follows in mm. 21–33 does not define the tonality of C major as would be expected. In fact, the section alludes to chorale-part writing, but it is polytonal in harmonic characteristic. Example 15 shows a reduction of the chorale section in the *Prelúdio*, in which polytonality is expressed by the superposition of different lines. In the Example, the prolonged beams indicate the superposition of different keys (tonal regions). The first comprising the top three voices expresses C major between mm. 21–7 (indicated by the prolonged beams) emphasizing its dominant (V) in m. 25 through the augmented sixth chord (as a diminished third) in m. 24. In fact, this chord is a point of convergence in which the three lower voices “modulate” towards G major in mm. 24–33. The first segment of the lower voices, mm. 21–4, expresses A minor through its dominant harmony (V), and in the second segment mm. 24–33, G major is established throughout until the end of the chorale section. In mm. 28–33, in the top voices, B minor is constantly heard and remains static producing the sensation of a new tonal center. Additionally, an alternative reading of the passage could consider the B minor static triad as simply complementing the G major tonality with its major seventh.

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Example 15: mm. 21–32; *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 9, first movement.

The fugue subject begins centered in F minor (Dorian). Despite the lack of key signature, the tonality is established by the presentation of the fugue subject in

which each of the presentations in F minor is preceded by a cadential dominant which guarantees the tonic ( $V^7$ , with the leading note–E natural–resolving to F; indicated by the arrow in Ex. 16a). The answers (A) in C minor are preceded by an applied augmented sixth chord ( $6^+$  of G) followed by  $V/V$ . Thus, the process of subject and answer is characterized by the traditional treatment of tonic (subject) and v minor (answer). In Example 16, the first column (Ex. 16a) presents the subject in the tonic preceded by its dominant harmony ( $V^7$ ); the second column (Ex. 16b) shows the beginning of the answers presented in the minor fifth (v) which are preceded by its applied augmented sixth and the dominant ( $V/V$ ).

Example 16a–b: presentations of the fugue subject; *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9*, second movement.

The accomplishment between stylistic features of Bachian music and Villa-Lobos’s stylistic compositional qualities may be represented by the chorale theme in the development section. The excerpt shown in Example 17 is centered in E flat major, which is emphasized by the cadence in mm. 50–1. The whole progression from m. 45 reads in E flat: ii– $I^{6/4}$   $V$ –ii<sup>6</sup> IV–vi<sup>4/3</sup> iii– $V^{4/3}$  ii– $I^6$   $V^7$ –I. The new theme is presented as a model and sequence, descending stepwise from A flat in its beginning,

leading to B flat and E flat (indicated in Ex. 17 by the prolonged beams). The consolidation of the sequential thematic figure and the clear tonal expression of E flat major may represent the synthesis of Bachian elements that the chorale theme accomplishes.

Example 17: mm. 45–51, *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 9, second movement.

In spite of the lack of a “strict” *stretto* section, exposition 2 (mm. 72–92) presents the fugue subject abbreviated to three measures instead of the original four. The effect is of a *stretto* section produced by the answers anticipated in one measure. In m. 82 begins a section of elaboration of the chorale theme. The main characteristics present are: 1) it is sequential; 2) it projects a circle of fifths progression in C minor: i–iv–flat VII–III–VI–ii<sup>o</sup>–v–I; and 3) it presents the fugue subject. The sequences are derived from the chorale theme and they complete a circle of fifths sequence from tonic (C minor) to tonic, that is, C–F–B flat–E flat–A flat–D–G–C. The progression delineated by this sequence of harmonies is mainly diatonic assuring the expression of C minor. The presentation of the fugue subject beginning in m. 82 is also abbreviated in its size, and in m. 85 begins a false

presentation of the subject producing again the impression of a *stretto*, but the subject presentation is rapidly abandoned in mm. 86ff (see Ex. 18).

The image shows a musical score for Example 18, mm. 82-5, from *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9*, second movement. The score is in two systems. The first system (mm. 82-83) shows a 'Model' in the treble clef and a 'Subject' in the bass clef. The second system (mm. 84-85) shows a 'False presentation of S' in the treble clef. Roman numerals are provided below the bass clef: i, iv, ♭VII, III, VI, ii°, v, i.

Example 18: mm. 82-5, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9*, second movement.

The final coda of the movement comprises a polytonal cadence converging to pitch C in the last measure. In Example 19, the prolonged external beams indicate the progression centered in C and the internal prolonged beams indicate the different tonal regions that produce the polytonal effect. So, in mm. 95-6, the top three voices make tonal sense in D flat major in a progression from its V to I. At the same time, in the three low voices, the progression begins centered in C, but in m. 96, it changes to a progression in E flat major (mm. 96-7;  $V-^2-I^{5+}$ ). In m. 97, in the top voices, the dominant of C is emphasized by a secondary dominant (V/V) and progresses to the final cadence V-I in mm. 98-9. In the lower voices in mm. 97-9, C major is emphasized by the progression  $I^7-ii-V-I$ .

95                      96                      97                      98                      99

C:  $\flat$ VI    iv<sup>7</sup>                       $\flat$ II<sup>6</sup>                      V/V    V                      vii<sup>0</sup>7    V                      I

D: V                      iii                      I<sup>6</sup>                      G: V → I                      vii<sup>0</sup>7    V                      I

C: vii                       $\flat$ vii                       $\flat$ III<sup>+</sup>    I<sup>7</sup>                      ii                      V                      I

E $\flat$ : v                      2                      I

Example 19: final cadence, mm. 95–9; *Bachianas Brasileiras* no. 9, second movement.

## Concluding remarks

The main argument of this text is concerned with Villa-Lobos's approach to music composition in the fugues of *Bachianas Brasileiras*. By acknowledging his reading of D'Indy's composition treatise Villa-Lobos also recognizes his knowledge of rules and practices of fugue composition. Further evidence that support this argument may be corroborated by Villa-Lobos's own description of these works in 1947 and published by the Villa-Lobos Museum in 1972. In these descriptions the composer refers to scholastic fugue (*fugue d'école*) and how he adheres to and transgresses these composition instructions. If on one hand, he challenges the strict rules of *fugue d'école* by composing "informal" fugues titled "conversation" (*conversa*), on the other, he adheres to specific procedures such as subject and answers at distance of a perfect fifth, expositions, episodes, pedal points and *stretto* sections. For instance, the fugue from *Bachianas no. 1*, subtitled "conversation", denotes its informal character even in the composer's description, and pays homage to Satiro Bilhar, by, according to Villa-Lobos, alluding to his playing style. However, the fugue also presents skillful use of counterpoint procedures such as augmentation of subject and counter-subject, allusion to double-fugue, and *stretto* section. The fugue from *Bachianas no. 7*, also a "conversation", is referred by the composer as a free style distinct from the school fugue and presents in the exposition the subject and its answers in the distance of consecutive fifths and do

not present a traditional *stretto* section, for instance. The compact fugue of *Bachianas no. 8*, observes the traditional instructions of *fugue d'école* in the exposition of subject and answers, in addition of presenting clearly designed expositions and episodes. Finally, fugue from *Bachianas no. 9*, the only one with thematic relationship with its prelude, also is more traditional in the compositional procedures adopted. For instance, there are sections of exposition and episodes, and a *stretto* section. However, polytonality is utilized in the work denoting Villa-Lobos intention of rejecting traditional tonality. Therefore, the structural components of a *fugue d'école* are kept functional and they represent a learned skill by the composer. Ultimately, Villa-Lobos shows us his ability, his craftsmanship in fugue composition, and his chronologically distant inheritance of the learned style.

The consolidation of these characteristics, stylistic allusions to the music of J. S. Bach, and of Brazilian music moods provided the composer with the elements which he composed his fugues; these are neoclassical fugues in the twentieth-century music panorama, and are examples of a *nationalistic neoclassic music*.

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