

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

PRINCIPLES OF WRITING

The study of Harmony examines the structure and relationship between *vertical* combinations of musical tones and their succession. Counterpoint examines the structure and relationship between *horizontal* combinations of musical tones and their succession. When these successions center on a key they become *progressions* that establish a tonality.

Therefore:

harmonic progression establishes tonality vertically; melodic progression establishes tonality horizontally. In practice they are directly related.

SCALE DEGREE FUNCTION

In the major and minor key systems, the tonic, subdominant, and dominant scale degrees are primary tones or *tonal* notes because the ear perceives them as most effective in establishing a tonal center. The leading tone/subtonic, mediant and submediant are secondary tones and are also classed as *modal* notes because the ear perceives them as establishing the mode. The supertonic tends to be a secondary tone but can have the effect of a primary tone.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TRIADS

Primary triads occur on the tonic, subdominant, and dominant scale degrees. Secondary triads occur on the supertonic, mediant, submediant, and leading tone/subtonic.

VOICES

There are four traditional *voices* (parts) used in the study of Harmony. They are Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, using the grand staff for notating parts.

The Soprano part is written on the treble clef of the grand staff, stems up. Its range is c^1 to a^2 .



The Alto part is written on the treble clef of the grand staff, stems down. Its range is g to d^2 .



The Tenor part is written on the bass clef of the grand staff, stems up. Its range is c to a^1 .



The Bass part is written on the bass clef of the grand staff, stems down. Its range is F to d^1 .



Although the full range of each voice may be used, it is advisable to confine the voices to the middle of their respective ranges. Range extremes should occur only for reasons of melodic line. Parts should not remain in those registers.

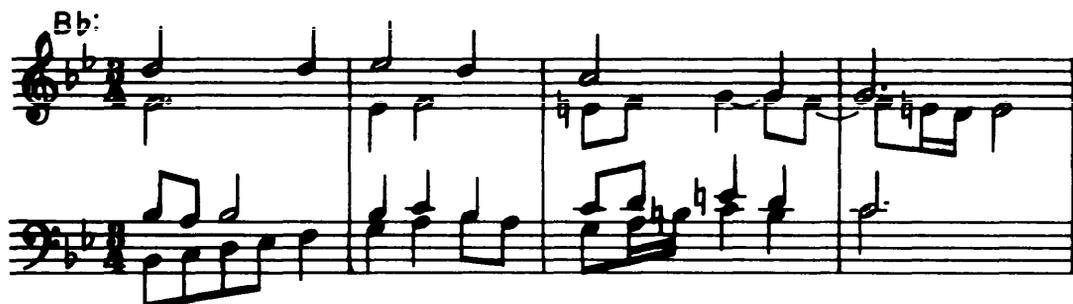


FIGURE 1.1: Example of Four Voice Notation