

## Music 232

### Chapter 5, Voice Leading

These notes are a distillation of Kostka/Payne's Tonal Harmony. They are in no way a substitute for reading and working through the actual text book.

#### Overview

- The melodic line
- Four-part notation
- Motion between chords
- Parallel motion

#### I. Voice Leading (according to K/P)

A. VOICE LEADING: the way chord progressions are produced by the motions of individual musical lines (i.e. counterpoint)

#### II. The Melodic Line – see example 5-1 for examples

- A. Rhythm: should be simple with durations equal or larger than the duration of the beat. The final note should be on a strong beat
- B. Harmony: chords tones only
- C. Contour: mostly conjunct interesting shape, but clear with a single focal point (climax)
- D. Leaps:
  - 1. avoid augmented intervals, 7ths, 9ths and higher
  - 2. diminished intervals ok if resolved by step in the opposite direction
  - 3. resolve leaps greater than a P4
  - 4. Small consecutive leaps in the same direction are ok if they outline a triad
- E. Tendency tones:
  - 1. leading tone resolves up to the tonic; exceptions are the 1-7-6-5 melody line, or when the leading tone is in the alto or tenor and resolved by an adjacent upper voice
  - 2. scale degree 4 usually goes to scale degree 3 (not as strict as the leading tone tendency)

#### III. Notating chords on the grand staff

- A. Four-part textures, SATB
  - 1. top voices (soprano or tenor) stems up
  - 2. bottom voices (alto or bass) stems down
- B. Can represent a reduced score

#### IV. Voicing

- A. How the chord is distributed in space (see example 5-7)
  - 1. CLOSE STRUCTURE: less than an octave between the soprano and tenor
  - 2. OPEN STRUCTURE: an octave or more between the soprano and tenor
- B. Voice crossing: no voice crossing with the outer voices, but occasional crossing of the inner voices is possible to avoid more severe voice-leading problems
- C. Spacing:
  - 1. adjacent upper parts (but NOT the bass) should be within an octave of each other
  - 2. between the tenor and the bass more than an octave is fine
  - 3. Range: Soprano C-G; Alto G-D; Tenor C-G; Bass E-C

#### V. Moving from chord to chord

- A. Parallel motion
  - 1. no parallel perfects
  - 2. no anti-parallel perfects
- B. Unequal fifths
  - 1. P5 to  $\circ$ 5 or  $\circ$ 5 to P5: ok unless  $\circ$ 5 to P5 is with the bass and another voice
- C. Hidden/Direct perfects
  - 2. forbidden if only between the outer voices
  - 3. ok with an outer voice and an inner voice, or just with inner voices
  - 4. ok in outer voices if the soprano moves by step
  - 5. generally easier to have in instrumental textures