A COURSE IN KEYBOARD HARMONY BASED ON THE
RECIPIVE STYLE AND THE FIGURED BASS

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North
Texas State Teachers College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

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August, 1948
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to present a course in keyboard harmony based on the recitative style and figured bass of great works of music which can be used in the teaching of beginning and advanced college music theory, and may be correlated with the text The Contrapuntal Harmonic Technique of the Eighteenth Century by A. I. McHose.

Purpose of the Study

The reason for making the present study is to establish a course in keyboard harmony, organized on a progressive plan, that may be included in the curriculum of music theory at college level. Through the use of this study with the regular theory course, the student should gain an insight into the harmonic principles of music by actual performance at the keyboard. In working out the contents of this problem, the figured bass-recitative combination was selected because the exercises could be musical as well as theoretical. Also there is an abundance of material to choose from in this field.
Need for the Study

This study is especially needed in connection with theory training at North Texas State Teachers College as there is no accepted text used for the teaching of keyboard harmony based on the principles of chord progressions. Through the principle of chord progression the student establishes the concept of key feeling or key center.

Sources and Validity of Data

The data for this study were obtained from standard editions of great works of music, standard music encyclopedias and reference books, monumental sets of music, microfilm of historical collections, and microfilm of monumental sets of music. The music used is considered by the investigator to be standard and authoritative because of its wide acceptance and use by college music schools and libraries in the United States.

Method of Presentation

The organization of the keyboard harmony exercises is based upon the theory that a melody constantly implies and needs a vertical harmonic background. The melody is given in this course by means of the recitative with the figured bass giving the harmonic content. The recitatives used are taken largely from operas, cantatas, and oratorios of eighteenth century composers. As a result of these exercises
it is thought that the student will gain a feeling for a vertical harmonic background against a given melody.

The various sections of this text proceed chord by chord much in the same manner as the text with the rules presented in the text carrying over into the performance of the exercises.
CHAPTER II

FIGURED BASS

"Figured bass is a method of indicating an accompanying part by the bass notes only, together with figures designating the chief intervals and chords to be played above the bass notes."\(^1\) This system of notation is known as "Generalbass" in Germany, "Thorough-Bass" in England, "Basso Continuo" in Italy, and "Basse chiffre" in France.

This musical shorthand was used about 1600 by the early writers of opera in Italy - Peri, Caccini, and Cavalli - to indicate the harmonic background for the recitative.\(^2\)

This type of bass was not invented by the early operatic composers but was adapted by them from a device which had been used by organists to simplify the accompaniment of polyphonic choral works. Masses, motets and madrigals were seldom written or printed in score, and it was a practical impossibility for organists to construct an accompaniment by trying to read from four or five separately printed parts. The first alternative was to make a tablature. The second was furnished by the general bass, or basso generale. It indicated two things; the bottom limit of the music, and the basic harmony.\(^3\)


At the outset of figured bass the basso continuo was usually performed by at least two instruments - a string bass or wind instrument and a keyboard instrument. The bass melody was played as written by a string bass or a group of string basses while a keyboard instrument, usually an organ or harpsichord, played the same melody with the left hand and with the right hand filled in the implied harmonies. The playing or realization of the given bass melody was left to the improvisation of the keyboard artist with the result being a chordal accompaniment. According to Agazzari, one of the early users of the figured bass, the realization called for diminutions of the ornamental instruments. He said that the main reason that the continuo was adopted was that it was very suitable for the recitative in modern style. The predominant use of this device was to simplify the accompanist's reading at the keyboard and not as a theoretical device.

The figures used ranged from 2 up to 9 and occasionally up to 12 and 13. These numbers refer to the intervals above the given bass note in the key indicated by the signature. Later the figures above 9 were dropped and indicated as 3rds, 4ths, etc. The 9th remained in because of the common use of the 9-8 suspension.


The figured bass was chosen to further the study of vertical harmony because it in itself works in a vertical manner and is one of the best sources for this theoretical problem.

Since the figured bass was first used the means of notation has changed many times; however, the present accepted figurations and notations vary only slightly from the original markings. The present day accepted notations are presented in the remaining paragraphs of this chapter.

The common triad in root position does not necessarily need figuration. "A triad may be figured \( 5, 5, 8, 8, 5, 3, 3 \) or not at all. Every unfigured bass note, other than a passing note, is understood to bear a triad."\(^6\) The figures are written in numerical order with the largest number on the top such as \( 5, \) not \( 5. \) Some exceptions where a triad in root position would need figurations are: (1) when the 3rd of the chord is altered not in accordance with the key signature; (2) where the 5th of the chord is altered not in accordance with the key signature; and (3) when the bass note begins in an inversion and proceeds to root position before the duration of the given note.\(^7\)

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\(^6\) Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

When there is an alteration, it is notated by a sharp, flat, or natural sign placed in front of the figure. An alteration without a figure refers to the third above the bass note. When a note is to be sharped, it is often indicated by a diagonal stroke through the figure. The horizontal dash following a figure indicates that the note or notes of the previous chord are held over. If there is a small diagonal stroke following a figure, this indicates repetition of that particular figure which may be a single voice or a chord according to the notation.\(^8\) Quite often two successive figures will not signify chords but will refer to only one chord with non-harmonic tones such as the passing tone, appoggiatura, anticipation, organ point, suspension, etc. Suspensions are marked 9-8, 6-5, 4-3, 9-8, 4-3 and 7-6.

The most used figurings today are: for the common triad

in root position, 5 or 5 or no figures; common chord in first inversion, 6 or 6; common chord in second inversion, 6;

chord of the seventh, 5, 7, or 7; chord of the seventh in first inversion, 5, or 6; chord of the seventh in second

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 780-795.
inversion, 4 or 4; and chord of the seventh in second inversion, 4, 4, or 2.
CHAPTER III

RECITATIVE

"Recitative is a vocal style designed to imitate and to emphasize the natural inflections of speech."¹ This style is quite often used in connection with prose texts of a more or less narrative character, particularly in operas and oratorios, where it serves to continue the action from one number to the other. In keeping with its declamatory character, the use of a strict rhythm, phrase endings, and a flowing melody are largely ignored. The melodic line and accompaniment are of secondary importance. The recitative is sung either to a figured-bass accompaniment or to a fuller and more developed orchestral accompaniment. The figured-bass accompanied recitative is known as recitativo secco with the more fully developed accompanied recitative being known as recitativo accompagnato or stromentato.

The recitative arose in the revolt against polyphony in the early seventeenth century as probably the most outstanding innovation of the new music period. One of the first writers to use this vocal style in musical composition was Peri in his opera Euridice which was written in 1600.

It began with distinct phrases, definite melodic content and form; however, it assumed a less melodic role with the rise of the aria in the latter part of the seventeenth century. The recitative had its beginning and growth in serious opera but it had been effectively used in other mediums with only slight alterations. "Recitative in the oratorio was, with only such changes as would be dictated by the religious character of the text, similar to their operatic prototypes."²

"Recitativo secco (literally, dry recitative) was so called because it was accompanied only by the continuo instruments."³ It is this type of recitative where the rhythm is free to follow the verbal accentuation, the interest thus lying in the vocal part, and the accompaniment being reduced to the smallest amount of chordal figures.⁴ Its primary purpose was to continue the action by means of syllable treatment of the text. This form of recitative was well adapted for rapid speech. Usually there was little organization as to form in the recitativo secco which would show the unimportance placed on it by the composer. Regardless of the fact that this was a very uninteresting form of musical expression, it remained in use throughout the

³D. J. Grout, A Short History of Opera, p. 199.
Neapolitan opera period.

The recitative accompagnato or stromentato (accompanied recitative) is that form of recitative which is accompanied by the regular continuo keyboard instrument plus either the string section or full orchestra. "Monteverdi was one of the first to use this method in the closing measures of the famous 'Possenti spirit' in his Orfeo (1607) and Schutz used it consistently for the part of the Evangelist in his Auferstehungs Historie (1623)."5

These recitatives were reserved for two or three of the most dramatic points in the opera, for monologues expressing strong emotion at the climaxes of the action. The voice, declaiming in flexible, varied, and expressive phrases, alternated with orchestral outbursts of chords, tremolando figures, or rhythmic motifs. Sudden changes of mood, abrupt modulations were featured. The essential function of the orchestra, indeed, was not so much to accompany the singer as to express, during the pauses of his song, the emotions which words were insufficient to convey - to suggest, in combination with the attitudes and gestures of the actor, those further depths of feeling which only music and movement, transcending the too definite ideas and images of a text, could adequately render.6

This type of recitative reached its height in the opera of the eighteenth century where it was used to precede the tuneful arias in a work. Bach, Handel and Mozart were outstanding in their use of recitativo accompagnato in their cantatas, oratorios and operas.

The recitativo secco is used predominately in the

5Grout and Apel, op. cit., p. 630.
compilation of this study because it better illustrates the purpose, and there is an abundance of material to choose from in this field. The accompaniment is so sparsely placed that even the weakest student in piano can perform the exercises with a certain degree of accuracy. Also rhythm deviation from the designated signature is permitted and does not affect the musical continuity for the recitativo secco is not bound by strict markings.
CHAPTER IV

TRIADS

The exercises presented in this chapter may be correlated with Chapters I through IX of the specified text. In performing the figured bass of these exercises at the keyboard, the student will find that playing three tones in the right hand and one tone in the left will make the playing much easier. For the present it is recommended that the exercises be played in closed position. Parallel octaves and fifths may be avoided by changing the position of the upper voices. The recitative may be realized with the figured bass in several different ways - depending upon the need of the student. It may be followed mentally or sung by the person playing the figured bass; it may be played on the same piano one octave higher than written by another person; it may be played on another instrument or sung; or it may be played as written on a second piano. The recitative is the top staff in each exercise with the figured bass applying only to the bottom staff.

Root Position of Triads

These exercises require no figures as they are all in root position except when a member of the triad is to be altered. When a note is to be altered, the interval above
the bass note is given prefixed by the proper sign - flat, sharp, or natural. When an alteration appears with no figures suffixed, it applies to the third above the given bass note. For a triad in root position, double the root of the chord.

Fig. 1.—Example of the figurations for the triad in root position.

Tonic triads—

Exercise 1, "Cantata I"
Exercise 2, "Magnificent"  Krieger

Exercise 3, Alceste  Gluck

Exercise 4, Il Trovatore  Verdi
Tonic, dominant and subdominant triads.--

Exercise 5, "Cantata 1"

Exercise 6, Le Nozze Di Figaro

Zachow

Mozart
Exercise 7, "Zwingt, die Saiten in Cithara"  

Exercise 8, "Cantata 1"
Exercise 9, "Zwingt, die Saiten in Cithara"  
Ahle

Triads with roots a second apart—

Exercise 10, Le Nozze Di Figaro  
Mozart

Exercise 11, "Gegrusset seist Du, Holdselige"  
Weckmann
Exercise 12, "Misericordias Domini"  Ahle

Triads with roots a third apart--

Exercise 13, "Magnificant"  Krieger
Exercise 14, Le Nozze Di Figaro

Exercise 15, "Exulet a casto pectore vanus Amor!"  Albert

First Inversion of Triads

In notating the figured bass of a chord in first inversion, 6 or 6 is used with the proper accidental if the interval is to be altered. The soprano note is doubled in the tonic, dominant and subdominant triads, and the third is doubled in the leading tone, mediant, supertonic and submediant triads.
Fig. 2. -- Example of the figurations for the first inversion of triads

**Tonic, dominant and subdominant triads.**

**Exercise 16, St. John's Passion**  
Bach

**Exercise 17, The Messiah**  
Handel
Exercise 18, Mirella

Exercise 19, St. Matthew's Passion
Other triads --

Exercise 20, *Don Pasquale*  
*Donizetti*

Exercise 21, *Dinorah*  
*Meyerbeer*
Exercise 22, St. John's Passion

Second Inversion of Triads

The second inversion of a triad is notated, 6, plus the prefixed accidental if the interval is to be altered. The fifth of the chord is the best note to double.

Fig. 3. -- Example of the figurations for the second inversion of triads.
Exercise 23, St. John's Passion

Exercise 24, St. Matthew's Passion

Exercise 25, Il Trovatore
Modulation

Modulation is the process of progressing from one key to another. There are three types of modulation: (1) modulation by phrase, (2) chromatic modulation, and (3) modulation by means of a common chord.

Exercise 26, Cantata 95

Bach
Exercise 27, Don Giovanni

Mozart
Exercise 28, Cantata 95

Bach
CHAPTER V

NON-HARMONIC TONES

A non-harmonic tone is a tone which is outside the vertical harmony of the momentary chord and which appears as an ornament to the melodic content of one of the voice parts. Therefore, a non-harmonic tone may be defined as a tone combined with a harmony to which it does not belong. A non-harmonic tone is classified according to the manner in which it is approached and resolved. This chapter may be correlated with Chapters X through XIV of the specified text.

The Passing Tone

A passing tone is that non-harmonic tone inserted stepwise between two harmonic tones of different pitch. The passing tone may be accented, unaccented, single, double, triple or quadruple.

![Fig. 4. Example of the figurations for the passing tone.](image)

29
Exercise 29, L'Orfeo

Monteverdi

Exercise 30, L'Orfeo

Monteverdi

Exercise 31, L'Orfeo

Monteverdi
The Suspension

A suspension is a tone which is held over from one chord into the next in such a manner that it becomes non-harmonic with the second chord then it resolves to a harmonic interval of the second chord. It is a result therefore of delaying downward progression of any voice during a change of chords. The suspension may be single or double; however, the greater majority are single. This non-harmonic tone may occur in any part, but it is most common in the soprano. It requires a preparation note, the suspension note and the resolution note. The preparation note and the suspension note are the same tones with the preparation being harmonic and the latter dissonant. The resolution tone is harmonic. The suspension note moves either a half-step or a whole step to its resolution note. The suspension is figured from the bass note and named according to the interval formed between the bass and suspension note.
Fig. 5.—Example of the figurations for the suspension.

Exercise 33, "Salve coelestis Peter"
Exercise 34, "Consiglio" (Schering Collection) Cavalieri

Exercise 35, "Dafne" (Schering Collection) Gagliano

Exercise 36, L'Orfeo Monteverdi
The Neighboring Tone

A neighboring tone is that non-harmonic tone inserted diatonically between two harmonic tones of the same pitch. Each harmonic tone has four neighbors consisting of the next higher and lower letters - either as a whole step or...
half step. This non-harmonic tone may be single, double or triple in content with the single neighbor tone being the most frequent in occurrence.

Fig. 6.--Example of the figurations for the neighboring tone.

Exercise 39, *Auferstehungs-Historie*  
Schutz
Exercise 40, "L'Orfeo" (Schering Collection)  Monteverdi

Exercise 41, L'Orfeo  Monteverdi
Passing tones in combination with neighboring tones.--

Exercise 42, Cantata 149

Bach

The Anticipation

An anticipation is that tone which moves step-wise from any member of a given chord to anticipate the next chord. To the first chord this note is a dissonant tone, but to the second it is a chord member. The anticipation may be single or double in content and is usually found in the cadence.

Fig. 7.--Example of the figurations for the anticipation.
The Escape Tone

An escape tone is that non-harmonic tone which is derived diatonically ascending from an harmonic tone and leaps down to an harmonic tone for resolution. The upward interval is either a step or half-step, and the downward leap is the interval of a third.

Fig. 8.--Example of the figurations for the escape tone.
Exercise 44, L’Orfeo

Monteverdi

The Appoggiatura

An appoggiatura is that non-harmonic tone which is approached from below by the leap of a third and resolved downward by step. This non-harmonic tone may be single or double in content with the single appoggiatura being the most frequent. The single appoggiatura may be found in any voice.

Fig. 9.—Example of the figurations for the appoggiatura.
The Pedal Point

A pedal point is a tone that is sustained or repeated against a series of chord progressions. This sustained tone is usually in the bass; however, it may appear in an upper part. When it does appear in an upper part, it is called an inverted pedal point.

Fig. 10.—Example of the figurations for the pedal point.
Exercise 48, The Messiah

Handel

Exercise 49, Cantata 152

Bach
A seventh chord is a chord consisting of the third, fifth and seventh above a given note. It is a triad plus the interval of a third added above the fifth. This additional third may be either major or minor. The type of chord is reckoned by the interval made between the root and the fifth and by the interval made between the root and seventh. A seventh chord, therefore, may be built on any scale degree above any given triad. Figurations for the seventh chord are explained in detail in Chapter II. This chapter may be used in conjunction with Chapters XV through XX of the specified text.

The Dominant Seventh Chord

A dominant seventh chord is that seventh chord built on the fifth degree of a scale. In a major key this chord is a major-minor seventh chord and in a minor key is the same provided the seventh degree of the scale is raised. In playing this chord from a figured bass, the seventh of the chord descends one-half step to its resolution tone in a major key and a whole step in a minor key.
Fig. 11.—Example of the figurations for the dominant seventh chord.

Exercise 50, Le Nozze Di Figaro

Mozart
Exercise 51, *Dinorah*  
Meyerbeer

Exercise 52, *Cantata 11*  
Bach
The Supertonic Seventh Chord

A supertonic seventh chord is that seventh chord built on the second degree of the scale. In a major key this chord is a minor-minor seventh chord, and in minor it is a half-diminished seventh chord. The seventh of this chord resolves in the same manner as the seventh of the dominant seventh chord.
Fig. 12. -- Example of the figurations for the supertonic seventh chord.

Exercise 55, *St. John's Passion*  
*Bach*

Exercise 56, *The Messiah*  
*Handel*
The Leading Tone Seventh Chord in Minor

A leading tone seventh chord is that seventh chord built on the seventh degree of a scale. In a minor key with the seventh scale step raised, this chord is a diminished-diminished seventh chord.
Fig. 13. Example of the figurations for the leading tone seventh chord in minor.

Exercise 59, Cantata 91

Bach
The Subdominant Seventh Chord

The subdominant seventh chord is built on the fourth degree of a scale. In major this chord is a major-major seventh chord; in pure minor it is a minor-minor seventh chord; and, in melodic minor it is a major-minor seventh chord.

Fig. 14.—Example of the figurations for the subdominant seventh chord.
The Tonic Seventh Chord in Major

A tonic seventh chord is that seventh chord built on the first degree of a scale. It is a major-major seventh chord and rarely used. The figurations for this chord are the same as for other seventh chords.
CHAPTER VII

ALTERED CHORDS

An altered chord is that chord which contains an altered note of the given scale yet maintains the basic function of the original chord. The exercises presented in this chapter may be correlated with Chapters XXII through XXIV of the designated text.

Altered Chords in Minor

In minor, other than the raised sixth and seventh scale steps which are found as a part of the minor scale system, there are only the lowered second degree and the raised fourth degree of the scale.

Fig. 15.—Example of the figuration for an altered chord in minor.
Exercise 63, Cantata 95

Exercise 64, Cantata 93
Altered Chords in Major

In major there are more tones that can be altered; the following single scale alterations are permitted: raised first, fourth, and fifth degrees; lowered third, sixth, and seventh degrees. The following double alterations are permitted: raised first and lowered seventh degrees; lowered third and raised fourth degrees; and, lowered third and sixth degrees.

Fig. 16.—Example of the figurations for the altered chords in major.
Exercise 68, "Cantata 1"  

Exercise 69, *Judas Maccabeus*
Exercise 70, The Seasons

Haydn
CHAPTER VIII

THE CHORD OF THE AUGMENTED SIXTH

The augmented sixth chord is an altered chord which, in the normal spelling of the triad, contains the interval of a diminished third. When this interval is inverted, it becomes the interval of the augmented sixth. In using a chord of this type, the diminished third interval should be avoided. This chapter may be used with Chapter XXV of the designated text.

Fig. 17.--Example of the figurations for the augmented sixth chord.
Exercise 71, St. John's Passion

Exercise 72, "Cantata 114"
Exercise 73, *Iphigenie in Aulis*  

Gluck
CHAPTER IX

MODULATION TO FOREIGN KEYS

In Chapter IV modulation to closely related keys was discussed and illustrated, and it was found that each key had five closely related keys - each not more than one accidental away. Modulation to foreign keys, therefore, is going to a key two or more accidentals from the original or given key. This movement from one key to a foreign key is usually accomplished through an altered chord. This chapter may be used with Chapter XXVI of the designated text.

Fig. 18.—Example of the figurations for modulation to a foreign key.

Fig. 19.—Piano realization of Figure 18.
Exercise 74, St. Matthew's Passion

Bach
Exercise 75, The Passion of our Lord  

Graun
CHAPTER X

REVIEW

This chapter does not present any new problem in keyboard harmony; however, many of the previously presented problems are contained in the exercise.

Exercise 76, St. John's Passion

Bach
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