

CHAPTER II

Of *COMPOSITION* in 3 Parts.

First Counterpoint.

That Composition in 3 Parts is the most perfect, is evident from the **Harmonical Triad 1. 3. 5.** being composed of 3 Parts, which may be used without any additional note; for if any other note was to be added to it, it would be only repeating any of those contained in the Triad. Ex. 1. This Counterpoint therefore is a Composition of three equal parts against one another, and is regulated according to the same Rules given above in the Composition of two parts. What still remains to be said concerning this kind of Composition will be contained in the following additional Remarks.

1st The Harmonical Triad is to be introduced in every Bar, unless for certain reasons it should prove impracticable; for sometimes another Concord as the Sixth or Eighth is chosen instead of it, for sake of better Melody, or for sake of avoiding the wrong Progression of two Eights or Fifths immediately following on another. see Ex. 2.

2nd When the Bass ascends gradually, sufficient Room must be left between the Parts, in order to meet in the contrary motion, as in the Ex. 2.

3rd The Rules concerning the different Motions are to be applied here likewise. This only is to be added, that the same rules must be observed in the middle parts as well as the extreme. Yet in Composition of more Parts, in order to avoid greater Irregularities, those Rules cannot Always be so strictly observed.

Ex. 1 Ex. 2 good Ex. 3 not so good Ex. 4 not so good Ex. 5 not so good

Remarks to the Examples above

In the Ex. 2. we find everything agreeable to the Rules of Counterpoint given above, as well with regard to Melody, as with the proper Regulations and progressions of the Parts. As to Ex. 3 the progression of the middle part from the first Bar to the second is not so regular, nor is the same Variety observed as in Ex. 2. A is used twice in the middle part, but in Ex. 2. but once. In Ex. 4. the progression of the 2 superior parts is wrong on account of the forbidden 5ths but the progression of the 5th to the 8th in a similar motion as in the two last Bars is allowed of, especially as it could not properly be avoided since the Tenth in the Counterpoint cannot properly be used at the Conclusion. In Ex. 5. the ascending Sixes used on the accented part are more displeasing to the Ear than those used on the unaccented, which have no place in this kind of Counterpoint.

We proceed to an Example where the Parts will be disposed in a threefold manner, so that the Canto fermo will appear either in the extreme parts or in the middle.

Ex. 1 Ex. 2

Canto fermo

Canto fermo

Canto fermo

Remarks

To the 1st Ex. Progressions like that from the seventh Bar to the eighth, though contrary to the Rules of Motion, cannot always be avoided in Composition of three or more parts; for if we had passed from F to C in a contrary motion, an imperfect Concord would have proceeded to a perfect in a similar motion, and the ninth note in the middle part would have formed an Unison with the Bass, whereas a Unison is less harmonious than an Eight. Besides we ought not in this kind of Composition, to exceed the Compass of the five Lines without necessity, see Ex. *a*. Nor would it have been rectified by the alteration shown in Ex. *b*. on account of the unnatural and unmelodious progression by Skips.

Ex. *a* Ex. *b*

To the 2nd Ex. In the ninth Bar the Triad has not been used, according to the common Rules, as the Eight in the upper part is preferable in point of Melody.

Second Counterpoint.

Of two Minims against one Semibreve in three Parts

Here must be remembered what has been said of this Counterpoint in the Composition of two Parts and concerning the Harmonical Triad at the beginning of this Chapter, yet with this additional remark that for sake of the Triad and for avoiding two Fifths sometimes, a Minum may skip a Third as in Ex. 1.

The following are the Examples relating to this Counterpoint in three different Situations. Ex. 2. 3.

Ex. 1 Canto fermo Ex. 2 Canto fermo

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Remarks

First Syncopation has been introduced towards the latter end of the Examples above contrary to this kind of Counterpoint as otherwise either a Unison or Eight both being void of Harmony would have been used instead of it.

Second The Sharp Third at the end of the last Example has been used in order to prevent two Fifths.

Third Counterpoint

Of four Crotchets against one Semibreve.

As we pursue the same Method in the Composition of three Parts that has been used in that of two Parts, so the same Rules must be observed in respect to this Counterpoint, with this difference only, that whereas in the former four Crotchets were placed against one Semibreve, so in this part of Composition four Crotchets are to be placed against two Semibreves.

What further remains to be observed is that accented notes principally are to be regarded, and that if the Harmonical Triad cannot be introduced on the first accented note, it ought to be so at least on the second and third. See the following Examples according to the different situation of Parts; which also may be contrived in such a manner that one of the parts may consist of Crotchets, the other of Minims and the third of Semibreves. as in Ex. 5.

Ex. 1

Ex. 2

Canto fermo

Ex. 3

Canto fermo

Ex. 4

Canto fermo

Ex. 5

Canto fermo

Fourth Counterpoint

Of Syncopation

Here it will only be necessary to show what is to be observed with regard to the Concord of the additional third Part; that it requires the same Concord that would have been used if there had been no Syncopation. see Ex. 1, 2, The same is to be understood when the bass or lowermost Part Syncopes. see Ex. 3. 4. With regard to the two last Examples it must be observed that the progression of the former seems to be wrong, as is plainly discovered in the latter where no Syncopation is used, Such Succession of Fifths, if covered by Syncopation, is nevertheless allowed of in composition in the middle parts only, but the same Licence[sic] cannot be allowable with regard to Eights, because an Eight is less harmonious than a Fifth. see Ex. 5. 6.

Ex. 1 Ex. 2 Ex. 3 Ex. 4 Ex. 5 Ex. 6

Sine Ligatura Cum Ligatura

8 9 8 5 6 5

The musical examples show six measures of counterpoint in three parts (treble, alto, and bass staves). Ex. 1 and 2 are labeled 'Sine Ligatura' and 'Cum Ligatura' respectively. Ex. 5 and 6 show specific intervals: 8 9 8 and 5 6 5.

Here follow the Examples to this Counterpoint in a threefold Situation.

Ex. 1 Ex. 2

Canto fermo

The musical examples show two measures of counterpoint in three parts. Ex. 1 is labeled 'Canto fermo'.

Remark

In the third Bar of the first Example a Discord has been used instead of a Concord on the unaccented part of the Bar, contrary to the common Rule, which is not only allowable in such a Case when the Bass lies still, but also looked upon as an Elegance. see Ex. 2. In the sixth Bar the 7 is accompany'd by an 8 because first it is part of the Subject itself, and secondly Syncopation is to be introduced on every Bar if possible.

Ex. 3 Ex. 4

The musical examples show two measures of counterpoint in three parts. Ex. 3 and Ex. 4 are labeled.

Remark

In the last Example above, a Rest has been put in the first Bar of the Bass, as no Syncopation could properly be introduced there, and as that Space could not be filled up by any other kind of Counterpoint, which manner of proceeding in such case is allowed of in Composition. Yet the Example above might have been regulated as in the following Ex. 1. which is rather preferable. Here the Counter Tenor in the first Bar supplies the part of the Bass. The same may also be practised with the Tenor, and occasionally even with the Treble. Another Instance where a Rest is properly applied, see in the Examples 2. 3. where it appears that two hidden Fifths, which in this part of Composition in particular cannot be allowed of, are entirely prevented by means of that Rest.

Ex. 1 Ex. 2 Ex. 3

The Fifth or Florid Counterpoint

Nothing material remains to be observed, but what has been mentioned already with regard to this Counterpoint in the Composition of two parts, in particular, and all the Rules given above are likewise to be applied so far as the nature of this kind will permit. We observe here only in particular, that the use of the Contrary motion in almost every Bar will greatly contribute to render this kind of Performance easy.

Canto fermo

Canto fermo