

Generalbass Schule

Thoroughbass School

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[1] DAS CAPITEL V[OM] GENERALBAß

Generalbaß will so viel sagen, als eine zum Grund gelegte Baßnote, über welcher durch Ziffern diejenige Harmonie angezeigt wird, welche darzu soll gegriffen werden. In der Harmonie nun sind wegen des Übelklanges vier erlegte Fälle hauptsächlich zu vermeiden, nemlich. 1.) offenbahre Octaven 2.) ofenbahre Quinten 3) verdeckte Octaven und Quinten und 4tens die Relatio non harmonica, oder der unharmonische Querstand. Diese Fehler zu vermeiden, so müssen sich die Stimmen auf eine solche Art aus einander und gegen einander bewegen, daß dieselben vermeidet werden. Dieser Arten von Bewegungen nun sind dreyerley] nemlich Motus rectus. Motus obliquus und Motus contrarius.

[2] REGULA 1.

Zu einen Accord gehöret Tertia. Quinta und Octava, mithin läst sich jeder Accord auf dreyerley Art verändern, nehml[ich] Es kann entweder die Octave, oder die Quinta, ja auch die Tertia oben liegen. Zweytens kann der Accord auf dreyerley Art erscheinen, nehml[ich] Dur. moll und Naturell, Dur heist, wenn die Tertia zur Baßnote groß ist, moll heist, wenn die Tertia zur Baßnote klein ist, und Naturell nennet man, wenn nicht allein die Tertia sondern auch die Quinta klein ist. Da jeder Ac-

THE CHAPTER ON THOROUGHBASS

Thoroughbass is when a bass note is taken as a foundation, and figures placed above it indicate the harmony that should be played. In harmony there are four cases that should be avoided on account of the resulting discord: namely (1) parallel octaves, (2) parallel fifths, (3) hidden octaves and fifths, and (4) the non-harmonic relation, or non-harmonic cross relation. In order to avoid these errors, the voices must move in such a manner away from and towards each other that the errors are avoided. These types of motion are threefold, namely *motus rectus*, *motus obliquus*, and *motus contrarius*.¹

RULE 1

To the *Accord* belongs the third, fifth, and octave. Thus, each *Accord* may be varied in three ways, namely, either the octave, fifth, or the third may lie in the top voice. Secondly, the *Accord* may appear in three ways, namely major, minor, and natural. Major is when the third to the bass is big; minor is when the third to the bass is small; and natural is when not only the third but also the fifth is small [i.e. diminished]. Because each *Accord* that appears as the foundation of a piece can appear in two ways,

1 Unlike present-day Anglo-American theory, Baroque treatises subsume similar and parallel motion together in the category of *motus rectus*.

cord zu einem zum Grunde gelegte Stück auf zweyerley Art erscheinen kann, nemlich Dur. Moll. und befinden sich 12 verschiedene Töne in der Harmonie, so folget daraus ganz natürlich, daß es in der Tonkunst 24 Ton Arten oder Modos geben muß. Von diesen 24 Ton arten haben allezeit 2 und 2 nemlich einer Dur und einer Moll einerley].

namely major or minor, and because there are twelve different pitches in harmony, it follows quite naturally that in the art of composition there must be twenty-four keys or modes. Of these twenty-four keys, two always share [a tonic pitch] in common [e.g. C major and C minor].

[3] Vorzeichnung, mithin sind in allen zwölf-ferley] Vorzeichnungen, diejenigen Modi welche einerley Vorzeichnung haben, heissen die Anverwandten.

Key signatures: thus, there are twelve key signatures, and those modes which have the same key signature are deemed related.

Offenbahre Octaven und Quinten von einander zugleich.

Obvious octaves and fifths simultaneously

böse. [bad] böse. [bad] am bösesten [worst] Verdeckte Quinten. [hidden fifths]

The musical notation shows a piano accompaniment in C major. The first three measures feature chords with a hidden fifth: C major (C-E-G), F major (F-A-C), and G major (G-B-D). The fourth measure shows a C major chord with a hidden fifth (C-E-G) and a G major chord (G-B-D) in the bass. The fifth measure shows a C major chord (C-E-G) and a G major chord (G-B-D) in the bass.

Relatio non harmonica; oder unharmonische Querstand.

Non-harmonic relation, or cross relation²

The musical notation shows a piano accompaniment in C major. The first four measures feature chords with non-harmonic relations: C major (C-E-G), F major (F-A-C), G major (G-B-D), and C major (C-E-G). The fifth measure shows a C major chord (C-E-G) and a G major chord (G-B-D) in the bass.

[4] *Motus rectus*, ist wenn zwey oder mehr Stimmen miteinander auf oder herunter gehen.

Motus rectus is when two or more voices ascend or descend with each other.

The musical notation shows a piano accompaniment in C major. The first six measures feature chords with motion by step: C major (C-E-G), F major (F-A-C), G major (G-B-D), C major (C-E-G), F major (F-A-C), and G major (G-B-D). The seventh measure shows a C major chord (C-E-G) and a G major chord (G-B-D) in the bass.

Motus obliquus, ist wenn eine Stimme stille stehet und die andere fortgeheth.

Motus obliquus is when one voice holds and the other moves.

2 The last four bass notes of the following example appear without upper voices in the original.



Motus contrarius ist, wenn zwey oder mehr Stimmen gegen einander oder aus einander gehen, es mag nun gradatim oder Saltatim gehen. *Motus contrarius* is when two or more voices move toward or away from each other, either by step or by leap.



[5]



Exempla zur Übung der Accorde durch alle Ton arten. Examples to practice the *Accords* through all keys.³



3 This practice technique may have been borrowed from Heinichen (1711. *Neu erfundene und Gründliche Anweisung*. Hamburg: Schiller, 27; or 1728. *Der General-Bass in der Composition*. Dresden: Author, 121–122).

[6]

Es dur hat 3. b. wie C. moll. Es. moll hat 6. b. wie Ges dur

Musical notation for Es dur (C major) and Es. moll (E-flat major) in C-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: Es dur (C4, E4, G4) and Es. moll (Bb3, D4, F4).

Dis moll hat 6 # wie Fis dur.

Musical notation for Dis moll (D-flat major) and Fis dur (D major) in D-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: Dis moll (Bb4, D5, F5) and Fis dur (D4, F4, A4).

E. dur hat 4. # wie Cis moll. E. moll hat ein # wie G dur.

Musical notation for E. dur (E major) and E. moll (E-flat major) in E-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: E. dur (E4, G#4, B4) and E. moll (Eb4, G4, B4).

F dur. hat 1 b wie D moll. F. moll hat 4. b wie As dur.

Musical notation for F dur. (F major) and F. moll (F-flat major) in F-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: F dur. (F4, A4, C5) and F. moll (Eb4, Gb4, Bb4).

[7]

Fis dur hat 6. # wie Dis moll. Fis moll hat 3 # wie A dur.

Musical notation for Fis dur (F-sharp major) and Fis moll (F major) in F-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: Fis dur (F#4, A4, C5) and Fis moll (F4, A4, C5).

G. dur hat 1. # wie E moll. G. moll hat 2. b wie B. dur.

Musical notation for G. dur (G major) and G. moll (G-flat major) in G-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: G. dur (G4, B4, D5) and G. moll (F4, Ab4, Bb4).

As dur hat 4. b wie F moll. Gis moll hat 5. # wie H. dur.

Musical notation for As dur (A major) and Gis moll (A-flat major) in A-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: As dur (A4, C5, E5) and Gis moll (G4, Ab4, Bb4).

A. dur. hat 3 # wie Fis moll. A moll hat kein # und kein b wie C dur.

Musical notation for A. dur. (A major) and A moll (A minor) in A-clef, 4/4 time. The first system shows two measures for each mode, with a double bar line between them. The notes are: A. dur. (A4, C#4, E4) and A moll (A4, C4, E4).

[10]⁴

C. dur.
A moll.

G. dur.
E. moll.

D. dur.
H moll.

A dur.
Fis moll.

Detailed description: This system contains four pairs of musical staves. Each pair represents a major and minor key pair. The top staff of each pair is the major key (C. dur., G. dur., D. dur., A dur.) and the bottom staff is the minor key (A moll., E. moll., H moll., Fis moll.). The notation shows a sequence of notes across two measures, with some notes marked with a sharp sign (#) or a cross-in-square symbol (x[#]).

[11]

E. dur.
Cis moll.

H. dur.
Gis moll.

Fis dur.
Dis moll.

Es moll.
Ges dur.

Detailed description: This system contains four pairs of musical staves. Each pair represents a major and minor key pair. The top staff of each pair is the major key (E. dur., H. dur., Fis dur., Es moll.) and the bottom staff is the minor key (Cis moll., Gis moll., Dis moll., Ges dur.). The notation shows a sequence of notes across two measures, with some notes marked with a sharp sign (#), a cross-in-square symbol (x), or a cross-in-square symbol with a bracketed sharp sign (x[#]).

4 Presumably the student is supposed to play all these progressions beginning in the various positions outlined on page [9].

[12]

Cis dur.
Ais moll.

Des dur.
B. moll.

As dur.
F moll.

Es dur.
C. moll.

[13]

B dur.
G. moll.

F. dur.
D. moll.

[14] N[ota] B[ene] Wenn ein # oder ein ♭ oder ein ♮ über einer Bass note stehet, so gilt es nie-mahlen der 5ta oder 8tava sondern allezeit der Terza.

N.B. When a sharp, flat, or natural occurs over a bass note, it never applies to the fifth or the octave, but always to the third.

Dieses Exempel welches zu cromatisch ist, ist ein wenig zu hart vor das Gehör.

This example, which is too chromatic, is a little bit too harsh on the ear.

[15] REG[ULA] 2. VON DER SEXTA.

RULE 2: REGARDING THE SIXTH

Zur 6^{ta} gehört Tertia und Octava. N[ota] B[ene] Wenn zwey Sexten hintereinander Stufen weise folgen, und die Sexta liegt zufälliger weise oben, so wird die erste 6^{ta} ordentlich genommen mit der 3/8 und die andere 6^{ta} wird duplirt, man läßt aber die Octava bey der Duplirung weg wie N[umer]o 1 zeigt, liegt aber zufälliger weise die Terz oben, so greift man die erste Sexta mit der 3/8 ordentl[ich] hingegen wird bey der zweyten Sext wieder die Octava weggelaßen, und an deren statt die Terz duplirt, wie Fig[ura] 2 zeigt. N[ota] B[ene] Kommen in geschwinden Noten viele Sexten hintereinander vor, so werden durch und durch die Octava bey allen Sexten weggelaßen, und nur oben die Sexta in der Mitten die Terz gegrif[f]en wie Fig[ura] 3. zeigt.

The sixth takes the third and octave. N.B. When two sixths follow consecutively by step and the sixth happens to lie in the top voice, the first sixth is ordinarily taken with 8/3 and in the other, the sixth is doubled. One omits the octave in this doubling, as shown at No. 1. [See below p. [16] for realizations.] But if the third happens to lie in the top voice, then one ordinarily plays the first sixth with 8/3. In contrast, by the second sixth, the octave is again omitted and instead the third doubled, as Fig. 2 shows. N.B. If many sixths follow one another in quick notes, then the octave is omitted in all of them, and only the sixth in the top voice and the third are played, as in Fig. 3.

Four examples of musical notation in bass clef, showing different ways to handle sixths. Each example has a '6' above the note. No. 1: A single sixth. No. 2: A sequence of sixths. No. 3: A sequence of sixths with some accidentals. No. 4: A sequence of sixths with some accidentals and a '5' above the final note.

[16]

Three figures and two examples of musical notation in piano accompaniment. Fig. 1: A sequence of sixths with 'male [poor]' and 'bene. [good]' labels. Fig. 2: A sequence of sixths with 'male [poor]' and 'bene. [good]' labels. Fig. 3: A sequence of sixths with 'male. [poor] ben[e]. [good]' labels. ad. N. 1: A sequence of sixths with 'male [poor]' and 'bene. [good]' labels. ad. No. 2: A sequence of sixths with 'male [poor]' and 'bene. [good]' labels.

[17] REG[ULA] 3. VON DER 6/5

RULE 3: REGARDING THE 6/5 CHORD

Zur 6/5 gehöret die Terzia. der Bass muß allezeit nach der Baßnote über welcher die 6/5 stehet, eine Stufe über sich steigen, ihre Auflösung gehet allezeit in Accord über sich wie Figlura] 1. zeiget, bißweilen gehet auch die 6/5 in 6/4 über sich wie Fig[ura] 2. zeiget. Bißweilen gehet auch die 6/5 in die 4/2 N[ota] B[ene]. Bey Fallung eines halben Tons in Baß, wie Figlura] 3. zeiget.

6/5 takes the third. After a bass note over which the 6/5 stands, the bass must at all times ascend by step. Its resolution always ascends to the *Accord* [5/3] above it, as Fig. 1 shows. Occasionally [the bass of a] 6/5 chord also ascends to 6/4, as Fig. 2 shows. Occasionally the 6/5 chord also goes to 4/2. N.B. Fig. 3 shows what occurs when the bass descends by half step.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 shows a 6/5 chord in the bass line resolving to a 5/3 chord. The bass line ascends by one step from the 6th degree to the 5th degree.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 2 shows a 6/5 chord resolving to a 6/4 chord. The bass line ascends by one step from the 6th degree to the 4th degree. Fig. 3 shows a 6/5 chord resolving to a 4/2 chord. The bass line descends by a half step from the 6th degree to the 4th degree.

Exempel 6/5 tarum [Examples of the 6/5 chord]

[No. 1.]

No. 2.

No. 3.

Examples of the 6/5 chord in the bass line. Each example shows the chord in the bass line with its resolution. Example 1 shows a 6/5 chord resolving to a 5/3 chord. Example 2 shows a 6/5 chord resolving to a 6/4 chord. Example 3 shows a 6/5 chord resolving to a 4/2 chord.

bene. [good] bene. bene bene male. [poor] male. male. [bene?]

4. oben. [4th above] 2. oben. 6. oben.

Daß nehmlche Exempel in Fundament-Noten. [The same example as above in foundational notes.]

[20] Choral. Auf auf mein Herz mit Freuden

*[sic]

Choral. Wir gläuben all an einen Gott.

[24] Choral. Aus tiefer Noth schrey ich zu dir

REGULA 7. VON DER SEPTIMA.

Zu der Septima gehöret wenn sie allein stehet, die 5/3 wenn die 7/4 erscheinet, so gehöret 7/5/3 die Secunde dazu. N[ota] B[ene] wenn zwey Septimen hinter einander folgen, so werden sie folgender maßen also behandelt. Wenn die erste Septima mit 5/3 gegriffen worden, so wird die andere Septima mit der Terz und anstatt der Quint: die Octava genommen, und hat man zu der ersten Septima die Octava anstatt der Quinta genommen, so wird zu der andern Septima die gewöhnliche Quinta genommen. [25]

RULE 7: REGARDING THE 7 CHORD

When 7 occurs alone, it takes 5/3. When 7/4 appears, the second belongs with it. N.B. When two 7's follow after each other, they are handled in the following way. When the first 7 is played with 5/3, then the next 7 takes the third and, instead of the fifth, the octave [i.e. 7/5/3 – 8/7/3]. And if one played the octave instead of the fifth to the first 7, then the next 7 takes the usual fifth [i.e. 8/7/3 – 7/5/3].

No. 1. No. 2. No. 3. oder. [or] No. 3. No. 2. No. 1.

*[originally: $\frac{6}{-}$]

[26]

[27] REGULA 8. VON DER EIGENTLICHEN QUARTA.

Zu der Quarta wenn sie mit der daneben stehenden Terza verbunden ist, gehöret $\{5/8 \{4/5/8$. ihre Resolution oder Auflösung geschieht, in die daneben stehende Terz.

RULE 8: REGARDING THE ACTUAL FOURTH

When followed by a third, the fourth takes $8/5$, resulting in $8/5/4$. It resolves to the following third.⁶

6 "0" in this treatise indicates that the bass note should not be realized (i.e., the upper voices should rest).

[hypothetical realization]

Exemplum.

[28] Choral. Jesu deine Paßion.

[29] REGULA 9. VON DER NONA.

RULE 9: REGARDING THE 9 CHORD

Zu der Nona wird gegriffen, die 5/3tia. N[ota] B[ene] Sie muß [nicht!] confundirt werden, mit der Secunde denn zur Secunda gehört 4 und 6ta. Ihre Resolution (nehmlich. 9/5/3) der Nona geschieht einen Ton unter sich in Octavam. (Annotirt) die Nono darf niemals [anders] als gebunden erscheinen, wie Quarta und Septima.

9 take 5/3. N.B. It must [not] be confused with the 2; the 2 takes a 4 and 6. Its resolution (namely, 9/5/3) of the 9 occurs one step below it into the octave. (Annotation:) The 9 may never occur without a tie, as the fourth and the seventh.⁷

[hypothetical realization]

9 8 4 3
melior [besser; better]

[hypothetical realization]

[hypothetical realization]

[30]

⁷ Just like Heinichen, Kittel allows only the fourth, diminished fifth, and seventh to enter unprepared. Though Kittel does not explicitly state that the diminished fifth may enter unprepared, his examples illustrate this (e.g. p. [17], No. 2). See Heinichen (1728, 107).

Choral. Jesu deine Paßion.

[32] REGULA 10. VON DER 7/4.

RULE 10: REGARDING 7/4

Zu der 7/4tima gehöret die Secunda. Ihre auflösung ist gewöhnlichermasen in die 8/5/3 auch bisweilen bey liegenden Baße in die 7/5/3.

7/4 takes a second. It usually resolves to 8/5/3 and occasionally uses a held bass, resolving to the 7/5/3.

Exemplum. [with hypothetical realization] [33]

This section contains three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C), and a bass clef staff. The notation includes chords and melodic lines with various ornaments and accidentals. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 0-8 below the notes. The first system has 8 measures, the second has 8 measures, and the third has 8 measures.

[34] Choral. Valet will ich dir geben.

This section contains two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C), and a bass clef staff. The notation includes a complex rhythmic pattern in the treble staff and a more melodic line in the bass staff. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-8 below the notes. The first system has 8 measures, and the second has 8 measures.

[35]

This section contains three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C), and a bass clef staff. The notation includes chords and melodic lines with various ornaments and accidentals. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 0-8 below the notes. The first system has 8 measures, the second has 8 measures, and the third has 8 measures.

[36] Recit:

Arioso

[37]

Recit:

[38] Choral. Wer nur den lieben Gott [nur Titel] Chorale. Wer nur den lieben Gott [title only]

[39] Choral. Jesu dein Paßion [nur Titel] Jesu dein Paßion [title only]

[40][leer]

[41] N[ota] B[ene]. Zu einer 7tima neben welcher eine 6ta. stehet, darf niemahlen die 5ta wohl. aber die 8tava genomen werden. NB. With the figure 7-6 one may never take a fifth, but [instead] the octave.

[42-43][leer] [empty]

[44] Allegretto.

7 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 3 5 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 8 = 9 4 7 2

3 3 5 5 3 1 6 4 5 0 5 3 3 6 0* 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 7

*[sic]

3 7 7 3 6 5 3 1 7 4 2 3 3 5 6 5 3 8 - 6 5 3 6 6 7 3

*[originally d¹ in tenor]
**[sic]

[45]

0 7 6 5 3 1 6 5 0 8 7 6 5 3 1 6 5 3 3 5 4 5 6 5 3 6 6 7

*[originally: 7]

3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 7 3 0 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 8 = 9 4 7 2 3 8 = 9 4 7 2

7 3 0 4 2 2 6 7 4 2 4 2 6 7 4 2 4 2

[46]

Musical score for measure 46, featuring a treble and bass clef with various notes and fingerings.

[47]

Musical score for measure 47, featuring a treble and bass clef with various notes and fingerings.

Musical score for measure 48, featuring a treble and bass clef with various notes and fingerings, including dynamic markings *p* and *f*.

[48] Allegro.

Musical score for measure 48, featuring a treble and bass clef with various notes and fingerings.

Fine.

[Remaining pages (49–257) are not shown. For an overview of their contents, see the Appendix in the commentary to this edition. See PDF facsimile at www.derekremes.com/research (15 Dec 2019).]

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