



Minor Keys and Diatonic Modes

CHAPTER 5

Parallel Keys

- ▶ Parallel keys share the same tonic.
- ▶ Parallel-key pentachords are the same except for the 3rd scale degrees. The minor key pentachord has a lowered 3rd (b3) scale degree (flat in this case means lowered...not necessarily a flat note)
- ▶ Often occur within a single piece or movement to reflect a change of mood.
- ▶ Example:
 - ▶ Major Pentachord: D E F# G A (Do Re Mi So Fa)
 - ▶ Minor Pentachord: D E F G A (Do Re ME So Fa)

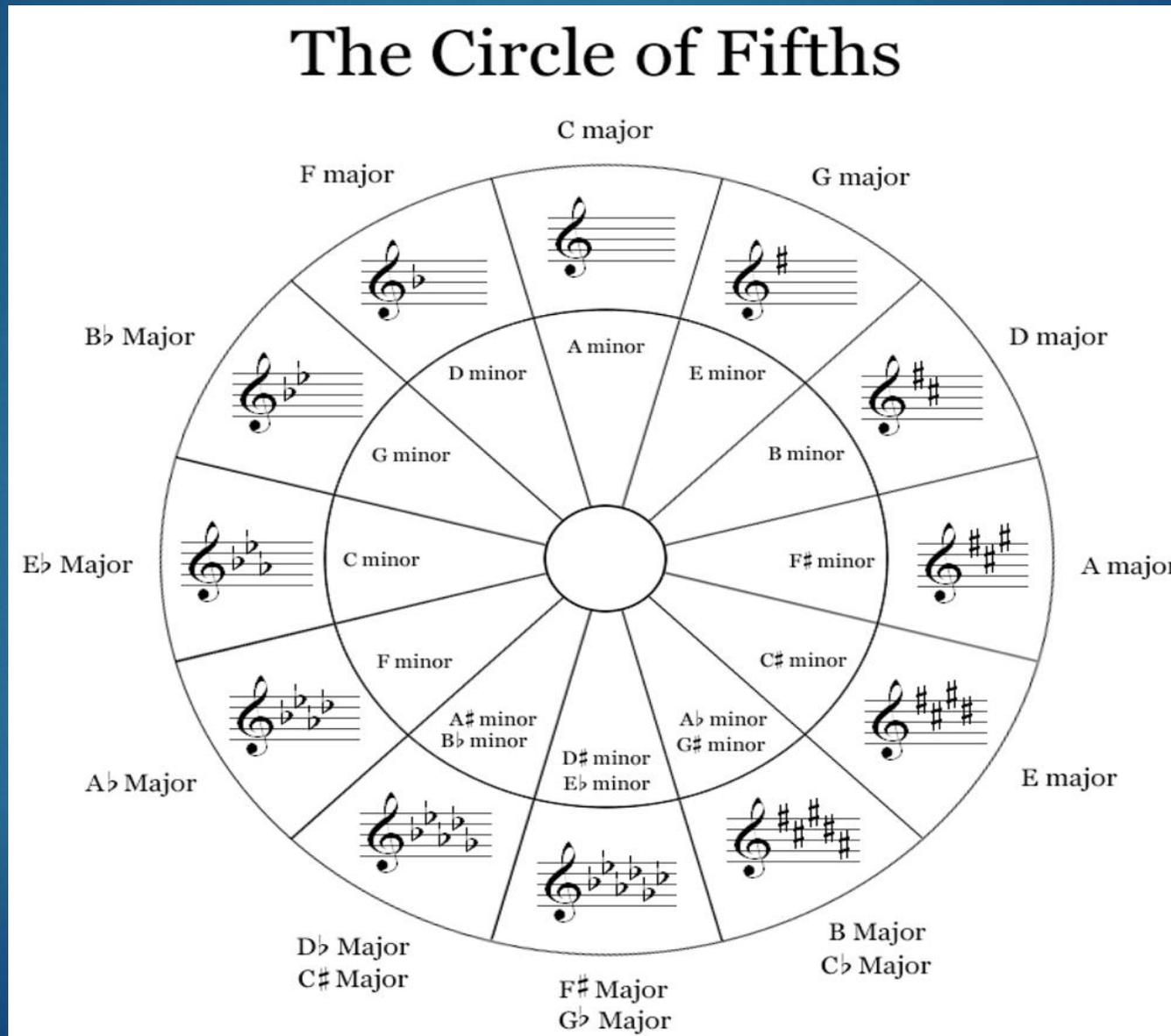
Parallel Keys

- ▶ Two ways to find the key signature for the *parallel* minor:
 - ▶ Move 3 spots counterclockwise around the circle of fifths
 - ▶ Add 3 flats (or subtract 3 sharps) from the key signature of the major key

Relative Keys

- ▶ Relative keys share the same key signature.
- ▶ Again, relative keys may be used within the same movement or section of a piece to create a change in color or mood.
- ▶ To find the relative minor of any major key, find the 6th scale degree. This is the tonic of the relative minor key (shortcut: count down 3 half steps from the major key tonic)
 - ▶ Example: F G A B \flat C D E F
- ▶ To find the relative major of any minor key, locate the $\flat 3$ of the minor scale and that is the tonic of the relative major (count up 3 half steps from the minor key tonic)
 - ▶ Example: D E F G A B \flat C D

Circle of Fifths



Identifying the Key

- ▶ Look at the key signature. What major and minor key would be associated with that key signature?
- ▶ Look at the beginning of the melody and bass line for motion to and from either the major key or minor key tonic. Find patterns which indicate key such as $5 \rightarrow 1$ or $1,2,3,7 \rightarrow 1$
- ▶ Check the end of the melody and bass line for motion to the tonic.
- ▶ Note any accidental (generally used to create a leading tone in a minor key)

Identifying the Key

▶ Examples to analyze:

- ▶ <http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-nZBPQVBQHM/UdYRh8Wd-tl/AAAAAAAAAFB4/wnz28wOYKrU/s1600/Old+Canon.JPG>
- ▶ <http://www.all-music-sheets.com/images/Sonata-C-Minor-D958.jpg>
- ▶ <http://www.all-music-sheets.com/images/MendelssohnSongWWOp38No1.jpg>

Forms of a Minor Key

- ▶ All forms of a minor key share the same minor pentachord to begin. The difference is in the tetrachord that follows. The 6th and 7th scale degrees may or may not be lowered from their “major state.”
- ▶ Natural minor tetrachord: 5 b6 b7 1 (so le te do) H W W
- ▶ Harmonic minor tetrachord: 5 b6 7 1 (so le ti do) H 1 ½ H

Minor Scales

- ▶ **Natural Minor Scale**—Minor pentachord plus natural minor tetrachord; absence of a leading tone
 - ▶ $b3$ $b6$, $b7$
 - ▶ Example: G A B b C D E b F G (Do Re Me Fa So Le Te Do)
- ▶ **Harmonic Minor Scale**—Minor pentachord plus natural minor tetrachord; very distinctive sound because of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ step
 - ▶ $b3$ $b6$,
 - ▶ Example: G A B b C D E b F $\#$ G (Do Re Me Fa So Le TeiDo)
 - ▶ **Mixing sharps and flats is okay**
 - ▶ **Double sharps may be necessary**

Minor Scales

- ▶ **Melodic Minor—descending and ascending are different**

- ▶ Ascending: $b3$

- ▶ Example: G A **B b** C D E F# G

- ▶ Descending: $b3$ $b6, b7$

- ▶ Example: G **F** **E b** D C **B b** A G

Hearing Scale Types

- ▶ Is the 3rd lowered?
 - ▶ If yes, then NOT major
- ▶ Is there a leading tone?
 - ▶ If not, then it's natural minor.
- ▶ Is there a 1 1/2 step present?
 - ▶ If yes, then it's harmonic minor.
- ▶ Is the scale the same going up as going down
 - ▶ If not, then it's natural minor.

Writing Minor Scales— Half Step/Whole Step Patterns

1. Write pitches on the staff from tonic to tonic.
2. Add accidentals as needed to make the minor pentachord (W H W W) at the beginning and end of the scale
3. For natural minor, add accidentals to create a natural minor tetrachord at the top of the scale, both ascending and descending
4. For harmonic minor, use accidentals to create a harmonic minor tetrachord (H A² H) OR just add the leading tone to the natural minor scale
5. For melodic minor, use the major tetrachord at the top of the ascending scale and the natural minor tetrachord at the top of the descending scale

Writing Minor Scales— Key Signature Method

1. Write pitches on the staff from tonic to tonic.
2. Determine the relative major key (count up 3 half steps)
3. Write in the accidentals from that key signature and you have the natural minor scale.
4. Add accidentals for the desired form of the minor scales as needed
 - ▶ Raise $b7$ to 7 for harmonic minor
 - ▶ Raise $b6$ to 6 and $b7$ to 7 for ascending melodic minor

Odds and Ends

- ▶ **Naming Scale Degrees:**
 - ▶ Everything is the same in the “minor mode” as in the “major mode” except for when $b7$ is used, in which case it is called the subtonic.
 - ▶ When $b6$ is raised to 6 in the melodic minor, it’s just called the raised submediant.
- ▶ Scale degrees 3, 6, and 7 are sometimes called the modal scale degrees because they create the distinctive sound of each mode.
- ▶ Minor pentatonic scale: 1, $b3$, 4, 5, and $b7$ (do, me, fa, so, te)

Diatonic Modes

- ▶ Some music is based on melodies that don't fit exactly into major or minor. Ex 5.16—Greensleaves uses key signature as G major or E minor but with a scale that begins and ends on A
- ▶ This type of scale that is neither major or minor is known as modal.
- ▶ Modal melodies are typically found in music of the Renaissance and early Baroque as well as folk and popular music of many time periods, and some rock and jazz.
- ▶ These modes are often known as the “church” modes.

Relative Identification of Modes

- ▶ Think of modes as rotations through a diatonic collection.
 - ▶ Ionian (1 to 1)
 - ▶ Dorian (2 to 2)
 - ▶ Phrygian (3 to 3)
 - ▶ Lydian (4 to 4)
 - ▶ Mixolydian (5 to 5)
 - ▶ Aeolian (6 to 6)
- ▶ To identify the mode of a piece, think of the major key associated with the key signature. If the most stable pitch is 4, then it's Lydian; if it's 2, then it's Dorian, etc.
- ▶ I Don't Particularly Care For Magic Acts.

Parallel Identification of Modes

- ▶ Modes based on a major scale
 - ▶ Ionian (Major)
 - ▶ Mixolydian ($\flat 7$)
 - ▶ Lydian ($\#4$)
- ▶ Modes based on a minor scale
 - ▶ Aeolian (natural minor)
 - ▶ Dorian ($\#6$)
 - ▶ Phrygian ($\flat 2$)

Spelling Modal Scales--Relative

- ▶ Write notes from “tonic” to “tonic.”
- ▶ Determine what key signature should be used (ex. If you are doing Dorian, it begins on the second degree of the key being used).
- ▶ Add accidentals for that key.

- ▶ Example: Write A Dorian.
 - ▶ Write notes from A to A.
 - ▶ Dorian begins on the 2nd degree of a major scale, so you'd be dealing with the key of G Major
 - ▶ Add an F#

Spelling Modal Scales--Parallel

- ▶ Compare the given mode with the major scale or natural minor scale (depending on which it relates to)
- ▶ Write out that scale (major or natural minor).
- ▶ Add accidentals on the additional affected note.

- ▶ Example: Write F Phrygian
 - ▶ Phrygian mode is based on a natural minor scale
 - ▶ Write out an F natural minor scale.
 - ▶ Lower the 2nd note of the F natural minor scale