

# **The Harmonic-Bass Divorce in Rock: A Method for Conceptualizing the Organization of Chord Extensions**

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## “Rock’n Me” (The Steve Miller Band, 1976), opening verse

0:26

B

A<sup>5</sup>

E

B

Well I been look-in' real hard and I'm tryin' to find a job but it just keeps get-tin' tough-er ev-'ry day but I got

— to do my part 'cause I know in my heart I got to please my sweet ba by yeah. —

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## Types of Harmonic-Bass Divorce

- Hierarchy
- Loop
- Syntax

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# Reduction by Nobile (2015): “Hierarchy Divorce”

$I^8$  —  $(V^7/IV)$   $IV^{(b7)}$   $I$

# • Hierarchy Divorce

## J. S. Bach, Fugue in C minor, The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1, BWV 847

29

Harmony above pedal:  $i$   $V/iv$   $iv$   $vii^{07}$   $i$   $ii^0$   $vii^{07}$   $I$

Background harmony:  $T$  \_\_\_\_\_

# • Hierarchy Divorce

Opening keyboard part for “Jump” (Van Halen, 1984); recomposed

Chord progression: G/C C F/C G/C C F/C F C G(sus4)

8vb

The musical score is presented in a grand staff format, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The treble clef part is primarily composed of chords and single notes, with a 7th fret barre indicated by the number '7' above several notes. The bass clef part features a bass line with a red box highlighting a specific melodic phrase. A dashed line labeled '8vb' is positioned below the bass clef staff, indicating an octave transposition. The chord progression is written above the treble clef staff: G/C, C, F/C, G/C, C, F/C, F, C, G(sus4).

# • Syntax Divorce

## Opening keyboard part for “Jump” (Van Halen, 1984)

G/C C F/C G/C C F/C C/F G(sus4)

8vb

# • Syntax Divorce

## Opening keyboard part for “Jump” (Van Halen, 1984)

G/C C F/C G/C C F/C C/F G(sus4)

8vb



# • Syntax Divorce

“Perfume & Bubblegum” (Chas Williams, 2005)

The image displays handwritten musical notation for the piece "Perfume & Bubblegum" by Chas Williams. The notation is written on a staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The piece is in 4/4 time. The notation is divided into two systems. The first system contains the following notes: B (boxed),  $\underline{6-5}$ ,  $\underline{4\frac{1}{3}}$ ,  $\underline{2^{-7}\frac{1}{4}}$ ,  $\underline{6-\frac{1}{4}}$ , and 5. The second system contains:  $\underline{6-5}$ ,  $\underline{4\frac{1}{3}}$ ,  $\underline{2^{-7}\frac{2}{7}}$ , a circled 1, a circled 2, a box containing  $\frac{5}{7}$  and a diamond containing  $\frac{5}{7}$ , and another diamond containing  $\frac{5}{7}$ . Two red arrows point down to the circled 1 and circled 2. A red box highlights the first system. Below the staff, there are some markings: "M7" followed by a bar line, then "5", a comma, a bar line, "L", a bar line, "5", a comma, a bar line, and "5".

**“White Hardware” (Chas Williams, 2005); verse**

Handwritten musical notation for the verse of "White Hardware" by Chas Williams (2005). The notation is written on a five-line staff and includes various rhythmic values and accidentals.

The notation is organized into measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure contains a square box with a checkmark (✓) and a vertical line. The second measure contains a vertical line. The third measure contains a vertical line and a note with a flat (b) and a stem. The fourth measure contains a vertical line. The fifth measure contains a vertical line and a note with a flat (b) and a stem. The sixth measure contains a note with a flat (b) and a stem, and a square box containing the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and a note with a flat (b) and a stem. The seventh measure contains a note with a flat (b) and a stem. The eighth measure contains a note with a flat (b) and a stem, and a square box containing the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and a note with a flat (b) and a stem.

Below the staff, there are several handwritten notes and symbols, including the number 5, a note with a flat (b) and a stem, and the numbers 4 and 5.

# “With or Without You” (U2, 1987); intro

(Play 4x)

The musical score is written for three parts: E-Bow, Loop, and Bass, all in the key of D major (two sharps). The E-Bow part consists of a series of sustained notes: a whole note D5, a half note E5, a half note F#5, a whole note G5, a half note A5, and a half note B5. The Loop part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5. The Bass part plays a steady eighth-note line: D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4. The score is divided into five measures, with Roman numerals I, V, vi, IV, and I indicating the chord progression. The first measure is a whole rest, and the subsequent measures contain the notes and chords described above. The score is marked with a repeat sign and a double bar line at the end of each measure.

# • Hierarchy or Syntax Divorce?

“My Life Without You” (Jim Riley, 2010); verse

$\vee$   $\parallel$  1 1MAJ7 4 4-  $\frac{4-}{b7}$

1 1MAJ7 4  $\frac{4-}{b7}$

# • Loop Divorce

“I Really Got the Feeling” (Dolly Parton, 1978); intro

The image shows a musical score for the intro of "I Really Got the Feeling" by Dolly Parton. The score is written for piano and consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains chords and some melodic fragments, while the bass staff contains a bass line. Above the treble staff, the following chords are indicated: C, G/C, C, G/C, C/F, G/F, and F/G. A dashed line labeled "8vb" spans the first six measures of the score. Below this line, Roman numerals I, IV, and V are placed under the first, fourth, and fifth measures respectively, indicating the harmonic structure of the loop divorce.

The “Soul Dominant”

$$V^9_4 = \frac{IV}{5}$$

# • Hierarchy—Loop—Syntax

“I Can’t Fight This Feeling” (REO Speedwagon, 1984); intro

The image displays a musical score for the intro of the song "I Can't Fight This Feeling" by REO Speedwagon. The score is written in 4/4 time and the key of A major (two sharps). It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. Roman numerals are placed below the bass staff to indicate the harmonic structure.

**System 1:**

- Chords: A, E/A, F#m7/A, E/A, A/F#, E/F#
- Roman numerals: I, vi

**System 2:**

- Chords: F#m7, E/F#, A/D, E/D, F#m7/D, D/E, E
- Roman numerals: IV, V

# “I Can’t Make You Love Me” (Bonnie Raitt, 1991); verse

Musical notation for the verse of "I Can't Make You Love Me" by Bonnie Raitt. The notation is in 4/4 time, key of E-flat major (one flat), and features a treble clef. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with a fermata over the final note of each phrase. The lyrics are: "Turn down the lights, turn down the bed, turn down these voi - ces in-side my head. \_".

Chord progression: Eb Gm<sup>7</sup> Eb B<sup>b</sup>/D Gm<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>7</sup>

Lyrics: Turn down the lights, turn down the bed, turn down these voi - ces in-side my head. \_

# “I Can’t Make You Love Me” (Bonnie Raitt, 1991); intro

Chords:  $E_b^{maj9}$   $Gm^{11}$   $E_b$   $Bb/D$   $Gm^{11}$   $Cm^7$   $Cm^7$

Upper-voices: IV I V VI IV IV I IV I IV I IV I

Bass: IV vi vi IV IV  $I^6$  vi ii ii



# “Jumpin’ Jack Flash” (The Rolling Stones, 1968); verse

Musical notation for the first line of the verse. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The melody is written on a treble clef staff in common time. The lyrics are: "I was born \_\_\_\_\_ in a cross - fire hurr-i- cane, And I howled". Above the staff, the chords are labeled: B $\flat$ 5, A $\flat$ 5, B $\flat$ 5, and A $\flat$ 5. A red rounded rectangle highlights the second measure, which contains the lyrics "cross - fire hurr-i- cane," and is associated with the A $\flat$ 5 chord.

Musical notation for the second line of the verse. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The melody is written on a treble clef staff in common time. The lyrics are: "\_\_\_\_\_ at my ma\_\_ in the driv-in' rain.\_". Above the staff, the chords are labeled: B $\flat$ 5, A $\flat$ 5, B $\flat$ 5, and A $\flat$ 5. A measure rest with a fermata is present at the end of the line.

# THANK YOU!

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