PROXIMITY

The nearness of two notes to each other in small intervals.

Ramsay

"centrifugal force. A third note produced by the prime 5 is derived from the note produced by the first power of 3, and this note by the first power of 5 having being slightly acted on by the force of gravity, and the first power of 5 having only a little centrifugal force, the result is that this note E in the scale of C, derived from the first power of 3 by the prime 5, is balanced between the two forces. It is the only note in the system which in the octave scale has not a large interval on the one side of it nor on the other, and consequently it is the only note which attracts and is attracted by two notes from **proximity**. Thus it is that the musical system is composed of three notes having specific gravity and three having specific levity or bouyancy, and one note, E, the center of the tonic chord, balanced between these two forces. As the attractions of notes from **proximity** take place when the notes with downward tendency meet the note with upward tendency, had the notes been animated by only one of these forces there could have been no system of resolutions of the notes either in melody or harmony; they would all have been by gravity weighing it downwards, or by levity soaring upwards." [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 28]

PROXIMITY - The nearness of two notes to each other in small intervals. [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 40]

Some of the elements of the Chromatic System were known 200 years ago. The Diatonic scale, being called the "Natural scale," implied that the chromatic chords were consider to be artificial; but the notes of the chromatic chords, from their **PROXIMITY** to the notes of the tonic chord, fit to them like hand and glove. Nothing in music is more sweetly natural and pleasingly effective than such resolutions; and hence their extensive use in the hands of the Masters. The chromatic chords have close relations to the whole system of music, making the progressions of its harmonies easy and delectable, and producing effects often enchanting and elevating, as well as often subtle and profound; and while they are ever at hand at the call of the Composer, they are ever in loyal obedience to the laws of their own structure and system. When a diatonic chord precedes another diatonic chord belonging to the same scale, it has one note moving in semitonic progression;[1] but when a chromatic chord precedes a diatonic chord, it may have three semitonic progressions.[2] The primary chromatic chord resolves into 8 of the 24 diatonic tonic chords, with 3 semitonic progressions. These identical notes of the chromatic chord, with only some changes of names, resolve into another 8 of the 24 tonic chords, with 2 semitonic progressions and one note in common; and when they resolve into the third and last 8 of the 24 tonic chords, they move with one semitonic progression and 2 notes in common. So to the chromatic chord there are no foreign keys.[3] And as it is with the first chromatic chord, so with the other two. [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 51]

In a musical air or harmony, *i.e.*, when once a key has been instituted in the ear, all the various notes and chords seem animated and imbued with *tendency* and motion; and the center of attraction and repose is the tonic, *i.e.*, the key-note or key-chord. The moving notes have certain leanings or attractions to other notes. These leanings are from two causes, *local proximity* and *native affinity*. The attraction of native affinity arises from the birth and kindred of the notes as seen in the six-octave genesis, and pertains to their harmonic combinations. The attraction of local proximity arises from the way the notes are marshalled compactly in the octave scale which appears at the head of the genesis, and pertains to their melodic succession. In this last scale the **proximities** are diverse; the 53 commas of the octave being so divided as to give larger and lesser distances between the notes; and of course the **attraction of proximity** is strongest between the nearest; a note will prefer to move 5 commas rather than 8 or 9 commas to find rest. Thus far **PROXIMITY**. [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 91]

Tonic
Subdominant - F, A, C E G, B, D - dominant
Center

- and it is balanced between the two forces. If the effects of notes or chords depended solely on their ratios, then

the effect of the subdominant, tonic, and dominant would have been alike, for these chords have exactly the same ratios. The centrifugal force of the notes of the dominant chord would take if away from the tonic chord; but Nature, in her skill to build and mix, has in the octave scale placed the middle of the dominant B under the root of the tonic C, and the top of the dominant D under the middle of the tonic E; so that these two rising notes are inevitably resolved into the tonic chord. The gravitating tendencies of the notes of the subdominant would take it also away from the tonic; but in the octave scale Nature has placed the middle of the subdominant A above the top of the tonic G, and the root of the subdominant F above the middle of the tonic E; so that these two falling notes also are inevitably resolved into the tonic chord. In this way two notes resolve to the center of the tonic, D upwards and F downwards; one to the top, *A to G*, and one to the root, *B to C*. Nature has thus placed the notes which have *upward tendencies* under the notes having *downward tendencies*; she has also related them by **proximity**, the distance from the one to the other being always either a semitone or the small tone of the ratio 9:10. [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 95]

are attracted to each other by *affinity*. But the case is quite different with *F and G* and *C and D*. The second fifth above F is G (F a c, C e g), and G becomes the interval above F in the octave scale; and these two notes are neither attracted by affinity nor **proximity** nor *gravitating tendency*. F sinks away from G, being *heavier*, and *under* it; and G soars away from F, being *above* it, and *lighter*. In a similar way the second fifth above C is D (C e g, G b d), and D in the octave scale becomes the interval of the second above C, and *C and D*, like *F and G*, are not attracted by either affinity or **proximity**. C is heavier than D, and being under it would sink away from it; D is lighter, and being above it would soar away from it, and so neither are they attracted by gravitating tendency. [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 96]

"Each note in the scale is attracted to the note above it or the one below it. B is attracted to C. If F and G were attracted to each other by **proximity**, then A would be left alone without a note to attract or by which to be attracted by **proximity**. All the [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 98]

notes attracted by **proximity** are attracted in the direction of the center of the tonic chord, major or minor. But if D in the major is attracted by C, the root of the tonic, then it would be moving away from the center. Two notes which have the ratio of 8:9, as C and D, or two notes which are produced by the same ratio as C and D, or two notes where each of them is either a root or a top, as C and D, never resolve to each other by **proximity**. It is an invariable order that one of the notes should be the middle of a chord. [Scientific Basis and Build of Music, page 99]

See Also

Attraction
attraction of local proximity
attraction of proximity
Bjerknes Effect
Law of Proximity
Laws of Music
local proximity
PROXIMITY
Ramsay - Tendencies of the Notes form Proximity and Affinity
Scientific Basis and Build of Music