

= Homophony =

In music , homophony (/ h??m?f?ni , ho?- , -?m?fni / ; Greek : ????????? , homóph?nos , from ????? , homós , " same " and ????? , ph?n? , " sound , tone ") is a texture in which a primary part is supported by one or more additional strands that flesh out the harmony and often provide rhythmic contrast . This differentiation of roles contrasts with equal @-@ voice polyphony (in which similar lines move with rhythmic and melodic independence to form an even texture) and monophony (in which all parts move in unison or octaves) . Historically , homophony and its differentiated roles for parts emerged in tandem with tonality , which gave distinct harmonic functions to the soprano , bass and inner voices .

A homophonic texture may be homorhythmic , which means that all parts have the same rhythm . Chorale texture is another variant of homophony . The most common type of homophony is melody @-@ dominated homophony , in which one voice , often the highest , plays a distinct melody , and the accompanying voices work together to articulate an underlying harmony .

Initially , in Ancient Greece , homophony indicated music in which a single melody is performed by two or more voices in unison or octaves , i.e. monophony with multiple voices . Homophony as a term first appeared in English with Charles Burney in 1776 , emphasizing the concord of harmonized melody .

= = History = =

= = = European and German music = = =

Homophony first appeared as one of the predominant textures in Western music during the Baroque period in the early 17th century , when composers began to commonly compose with vertical harmony in mind , the homophonic basso continuo becoming a definitive feature of the style . The choral arrangement of four voices (soprano , alto , tenor , and bass) has since become common in Western music . Homophony began by appearing in sacred music , replacing polyphony and monophony as the dominant form , but spread to secular music , for which it is one of the standard forms today .

In 20th century classical music some of the " triad @-@ oriented accompanimental figures such as the Alberti bass [a homophonic form of accompaniment] have largely disappeared from usage and , rather than the traditional interdependence of melodic and chordal pitches sharing the same tonal basis , a clear distinction may exist between the pitch materials of the melody and harmony , commonly avoiding duplication . However , some traditional devices , such as repeated chords , are still used .

Jazz and other forms of modern popular music generally feature homophonic influences , following chord progressions over which musicians play a melody or improvise (see melody @-@ dominated homophony) .

= = = African and Asian music = = =

Homophony has appeared in several non @-@ Western cultures , perhaps particularly in regions where communal vocal music has been cultivated . When explorer Vasco da Gama landed in West Africa in 1497 , he referred to the music he heard there as being in " sweet harmony " . While the concept of harmony in that time was not necessarily the same as the concept of homophony as understood by modern scholars , it is generally accepted that homophonic voice harmonies were commonplace in African music for centuries before contact with Europeans and is common in African music today . Singers normally harmonize voices in homophonic parallelism moving in parallel thirds or fourths . This type of harmonic model is also , implemented in instrumental music where voices are stacked in thirds or fourths . Homophonic Parallelism is not restricted to thirds and fourths , however all harmonic material adheres to the scalar system the particular tune or song is

based on . The use of harmony in sixths is common in areas where a hexatonic scale system is used . For instance , the Fang people of Gabon use homophony in their music .

In eastern Indonesia (i.e. in the music of the Toraja in South Sulawesi , in Flores , in East Kalimantan and in North Sulawesi) , two @-@ part harmonies are common , usually in intervals of thirds , fourths or fifths . Additionally , much music of the Middle East is generally homophonic , although polyphony is also an important texture , while Chinese music is generally thought to be homophonic , since instruments typically provide accompaniment in parallel fourths and fifths and often double the voice in vocal music , heterophony also being common in China .

= = Melody @-@ dominated homophony = =

In melody @-@ dominated homophony , accompanying voices provide chordal support for the lead voice , which assumes the melody . Some popular music today might be considered melody @-@ dominated homophony , voice typically taking on the lead role , while instruments like piano , guitar and bass guitar normally accompany the voice . In many cases , instruments also take on the lead role , and often the role switches between parts , voice taking the lead during a verse and instruments subsequently taking solos , during which the other instruments provide chordal support .

Monody is similar to melody @-@ dominated homophony in that one voice becomes the melody , while another voice assumes the underlying harmony . Monody , however , is characterized by a single voice with instrumental accompaniment , whereas melody @-@ dominated homophony refers to a broader category of homophonic music , which includes works for multiple voices , not just works for solo voice , as was the tradition with early 17th @-@ century Italian monody .