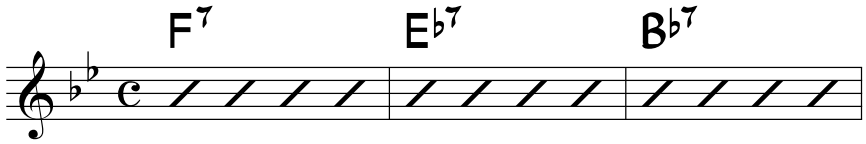
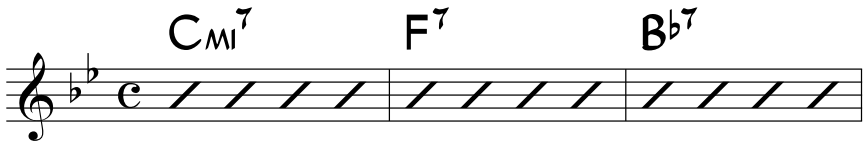
More important, we find similarly plentiful examples in the compositions and improvisations of the great jazz masters, especially once the harmonic conventions of bebop, with their emphasis on secondary dominants leading to the minor ii chord, set in. One of the great bop innovations was to "functionalize" the changes to the common 12-bar blues. The traditional harmony in bars 9-11 of the 12-bar blues was V7-IV7-I7. In the key of Bb this would be:

Example 1.8



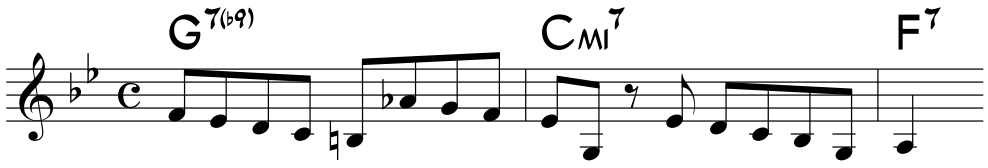
Typically Charlie Parker and those influenced by him would alter this harmony to a familiar ii7-V7-I7:

Example 1.9



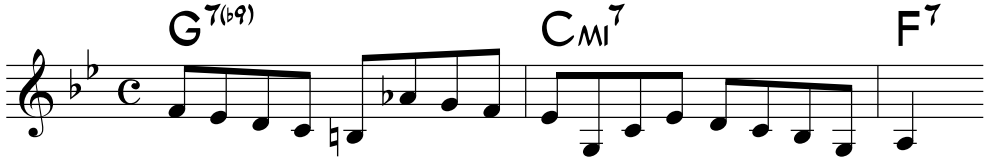
Then they would set up this progression by playing a secondary dominant in bar 8, most often a VI7(b9) (which in Bb would be G7(b9)), leading to the ii7 chord in bar 9. So when we listen to Charlie Parker playing a blues in Bb we hear sequences like this (from his solo on "Bloomdido," starting in bar 8 of the second chorus):

Example 1.10



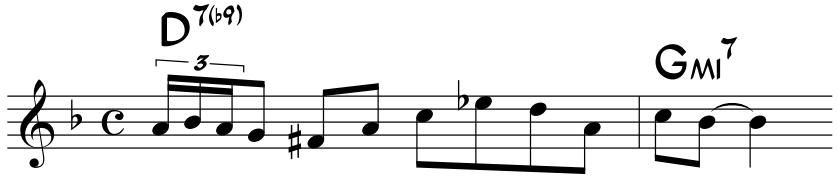
This is pure, unadulterated HM used over the G7(b9) chord. Later in the same solo, again beginning in bar 8 of the chorus, we find a nearly identical line:

Example 1.11



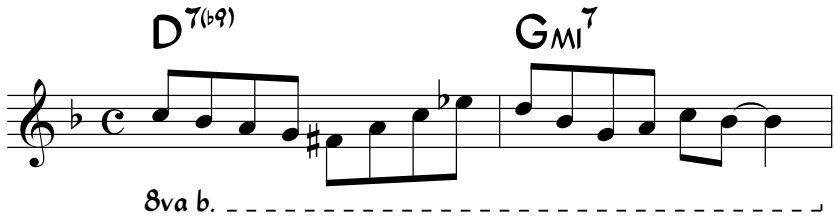
This approach to bar 8 of the blues is utterly characteristic of Bird's improvising style, and similar lines can be found throughout his recorded oeuvre. Here are bars 8 and 9 of a solo on "Billie's Bounce," a blues in F:

Example 1.12



This line arpeggiates an F# diminished seventh chord, all notes of which belong to the G HM scale. The next example, the same measures (8 and 9) from "Now's the Time," also in F, has the same arpeggio but in a different place in the bar:

Example 1.13

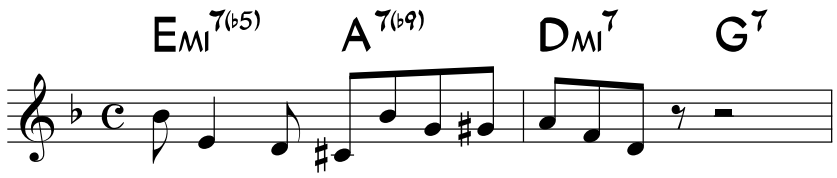


Many more examples of Bird using the HM scale in bar 8 of blues improvisations could be provided.

In each of the above examples (Example 1.10—Example 1.13) Parker's lines use *only* notes from the HM scale. As we continue our investigation, we will often find instances where Bird and other artists add chromatic notes to the scale, doing so in a manner that does not change the basic sound and functionality of the scale. The added chromatic notes generally fall on the upbeats so that they are not emphasized—wherever a note falls on a downbeat, it is from the HM scale, so the chromatic notes are heard as "passing tones" or "neighbor tones" or "approach tones." Composers and improvisers have used such chromatic embellishments for centuries, and we shall see them frequently in the passages discussed below.

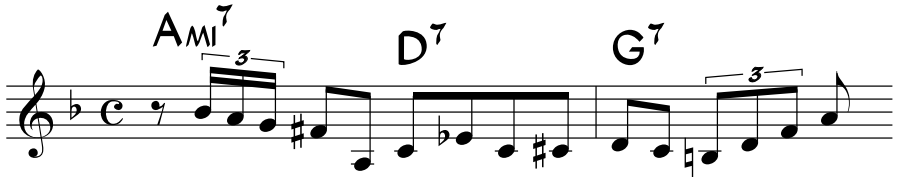
Bird did not limit his use of the HM scale to bar 8 of the blues. We also find it used anywhere the chord progression calls for the sequence of a m7(b5) chord leading to a 7(b9) chord a fourth higher, resolving to a minor (or dominant) chord a fifth below the dominant chord. This happens in a variety of contexts, several of which are observed in his solo on "Confirmation." We see the HM scale (with one chromatic passing tone, the G# placed on the upbeat of beat 4) where the sequence is vii7(b5)-III7(b9) leading to vi7:

Example 1.14



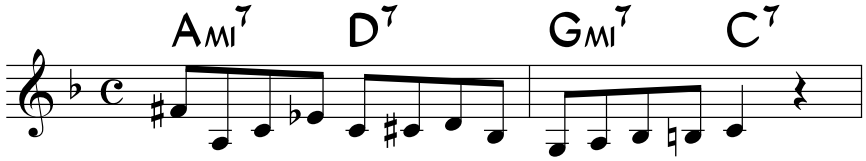
We also see it where the sequence is iii7-VI7 leading to II7, even though the lead-sheet chords do not directly point to the HM scale. That is, the iii7 chord in the published harmony is *not* explicitly iii7(b5), and the VI7 chord is *not* explicitly VI7(b9). This example again uses a chromatic passing tone:

Example 1.15



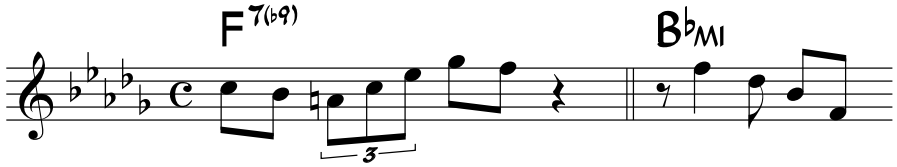
He does the same thing when the sequence is iii7-VI7 leading to ii7. Here again the published chords are unaltered, and there is a chromatic passing tone on the upbeat of beat 3:

Example 1.16



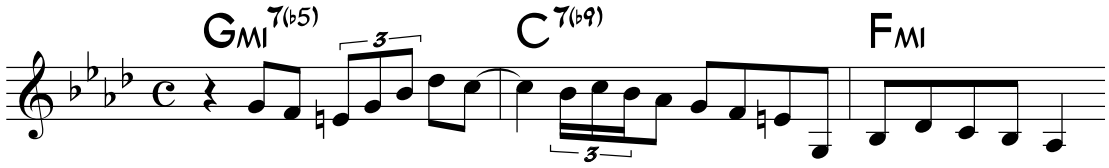
We also see it in minor key tunes such as "Segment," where the HM is used over the V7(b9) chord resolving back to the tonic i:

Example 1.17



And we find use of the HM in minor key sequences within major key tunes, such as "Donna Lee," where the chords (ii7(b5) and V7(b9)) are spread out over two bars:

Example 1.18



The HM scale is clearly a staple of Bird's improvisation strategies. And like most of his strategies, this one passed into the "common vocabulary" of jazz improvisation in the bebop era and beyond. Indeed, Dizzy Gillespie's tune "Bebop" makes use of the HM in the second part of the introduction: