

October 8, 2007

Key determination:

- Large-scale form in tonal music goes hand in hand with key organization. Your ability to recognize and describe formal structure will be largely dependent on your ability to recognize key areas and your knowledge of what to expect.

Knowing what to expect:

- Knowing what keys to expect in certain situations will be an invaluable tool in formal analysis. Certain keys are common and should be expected as typical destinations for modulation (we will use Roman numerals to indicate the relation to the home key). Here are the common structural key areas:
 - V
 - vi
- Other keys are uncommon for modulation and are not structural:
 - ii
 - iii
 - IV

Tonicization or modulation?:

- The phenomena of tonicization and modulation provide a challenge to the music analyst. In both cases, one encounters pitches and harmonies that are foreign to the home key. How then, does one determine whether a particular passage is a tonicization or a modulation?
- To begin with, this is a question of scale. Tonicizations are much shorter than modulations. A tonicization may last only one or two beats, while a modulation will last much longer—sometimes for entire sections.
- A modulation will have cadences. These cadences confirm for the listener that the music has moved to a new key area. A tonicization—though it might have more than two chords—will not have cadences.
- A modulation will also typically contain a new theme. Tonicizations, on the other hand, are finished too quickly to be given any significant thematic material.

Half cadence on V or authentic cadence in V?

- In analyzing tonal music, you will undoubtedly come across situations where you must determine whether a cadence that ends with the pitches of the V chord is a half cadence in the tonic key or an authentic cadence in the dominant.
- (We will be using the following notation to describe these two possibilities. The first Roman numeral indicates the key relative to the home key. The second Roman numeral denotes the chord within that key:
 - I : V = half cadence on V in the tonic key
 - V : I = authentic cadence in dominant key.)
- To demonstrate this, take a look at the opening of the example on page 18 of the anthology (J.C. Bach, op. 5/2/ii). What type of cadence appears in m. 8?
 - M. 8 contains a half cadence in the home key (with a $\begin{smallmatrix} 6-5 \\ 4-3 \end{smallmatrix}$ suspension). This would be indicated by writing “I : V.”
 - In m. 9, however, we find a harmony with the same pitches: D, F \sharp , and A. Although it has the same pitches as the V chord in m. 8, the harmony is now functioning differently. What was a dominant harmony in m. 8 is now the tonic harmony of a new section. M. 9 marks the beginning of a passage in the D major, the dominant key. This passage arrives at an imperfect authentic

cadence in m. 20 and a perfect authentic cadence in m. 23. The D major harmony in m. 23 would be analyzed as “V : I.”

Frequency of PACs:

- In a tonal piece, one will not encounter very many PACs in the home key. This type of cadence is relied upon to define the form of the piece. If there were too many of them, they would lose their significance and meaning by creating an overabundance of formal sections. In the J.C. Bach piece on page 18 of the anthology, there is really only one strong, conclusive PAC: the concluding cadence in m. 50.

Assignment:

- Follow the “Key determination” link on the webpage and read the following chapters:
 - “1. Introduction: Musical Form and Keys”
 - “2. Knowing What to Expect”
 - “3. What Key Am I In?”
 - “4. Tonicization or Modulation?”
 - “5. Half Cadence on V or Authentic Cadence in V?”