

October 10, 2007

Chord function:

- In the second measure of example 24 in your anthology (Mozart, K. 330/ii on page 8), what Roman numeral should be placed at the beginning of m. 2?
 - After a cursory glance at the music, it might seem logical to label the measure as “ii₄⁶.” After all, the pitches of a ii chord (G, B, and D) are there, and the fifth of the ii chord (the D) is in the bass. However, there are several problems with this interpretation:
 - For one thing, the chord at the beginning of m. 2 does not behave the way a ₄⁶ chord should. (It is not a neighboring ₄⁶ or a passing ₄⁶ chord. Nor is it a cadential ₄⁶ chord.)
 - Furthermore the B and G on the downbeat are quite clearly suspensions from the preceding V⁷ chord. To label the sonority with a “ii₄⁶” would be to make non-chord tones into chord tones.
 - The ii chord should also have a predominant function. This sonority does not lead to V and therefore does not **function** as a ii chord.
 - The correct answer would be to label the beginning of m. 2 as a vi chord with suspensions. This makes much more sense when considering the function of the harmony. It cannot be a ii chord because it doesn't function as a ii chord. It *is* a vi chord because it *does* function as a vi chord (it is the deceptive cadence resolution of the V⁷ chord of the previous measure).
- Further on in the same example, we come to another apparent ₄⁶ chord. On the downbeat of m. 4 we find a C in the bass with an F and an A in the right hand.
 - At first glance this appears to be a I₄⁶ chord. But again, there are several problems with this interpretation:
 - As with m. 2, the ₄⁶ sonority does not behave properly (it is not a neighboring, passing, or cadential ₄⁶ chord).
 - Also, m. 3 ends with a vii^{o6}/V. Logically, this sonority should resolve to a V chord, not some kind of I chord.
 - The beginning of m. 4 should be Roman numeralized with “V₄₋₃⁶⁻⁵.”

More on key determination:

- On Monday we looked at the excerpt on page 18 of the anthology (J.C. Bach, op. 5/2/ii). In this example we saw how m. 8 contained a half cadence in the tonic key (I : V) which, in m. 9, became the tonic of a new key area (V : I). We also discussed the relative weight of the various cadences in the piece. There is a repeated cadence, for example, at the end of the first section: the IAC in m. 20 is recomposed as a PAC in m. 23 (though even this cadence is weaker than the PAC in m. 50 due to its placement within the measure). This example will also provide us with another opportunity for practicing key determination:
 - What key are we in at mm. 28-29?
 - The dominant seventh chord on E in m. 28 resolves to an A-minor triad in m. 29. Does this mean that we have modulated to A minor? In this case, the answer is no.
 - Evidence:
 - The passage in A minor is too brief to be considered a modulation.
 - Furthermore, as the following measures show, mm. 28-29 are part of a sequence.
 - Considering this evidence, we can safely say that mm. 28-29 form a tonicization and not a modulation.

- Take a look at the example on page 38 of the anthology (J.C. Bach, op. 5/3/i). There are several opportunities for practicing key determination here.
 - What do the G#s in m. 13 indicate?
 - G# is problematic for a piece in G major. G# belongs neither to the home key nor to any closely related keys.
 - In this case the G#s are part of an applied dominant that resolves to an A-major harmony in m. 16.
 - (To understand why this seemingly foreign harmony appears here, you should keep the expected functional keys in mind. It is very common for a piece to modulate to the dominant key area. In G major, that would be D major. The A major harmony of m. 16 would then be the dominant of D major. In other words, the sonority of measure 13 is the dominant of the dominant of the dominant of G major! This might seem a little far fetched, but remember that dominant harmonies have a very strong pull towards their respective tonics. This chain of dominant-tonic resolutions helps firmly cement the eventual arrival of D major. Read on!)
 - What key are we in after the repeat in m. 33?
 - At this point we have the same thematic material as the opening of the piece, but transposed down a fourth. At this point we have modulated to the dominant key area.
 - (You would notate this by writing “V : I” under m. 33.)

Criteria for determining key:

- The length of the passage:
 - How long is the passage in question?
 - Tonicizations are short.
 - Modulations are long.
- The context:
 - Where did the passage come from?
 - Where is the music going?
 - Is there a strong cadence soon after?
 - How do the harmonies of the passage in question relate to that cadence?
- The presence of cadences:
 - Are there multiple cadences in the passage?
 - Do they all imply the same key?
- The presence of thematic material:
 - Are there any significant themes being presented in the passage?

Assignment:

- Read chapter 1 in your textbook (“Structural Phenomena”).

Quiz on Friday (October 12, 2007):

- The quiz on Friday will consist of two sections: definitions and phrase/cadence/period identifications.
- For the definitions, you should provide something more than simply quoting the textbook definition verbatim. “A melodic fragment,” for example, would be an insufficient definition of motive. For each definition, we are looking for answers that demonstrate your understanding of each concept.
- For the analytical portion of the quiz, you will be given a short passage similar to those we’ve looked at in class and asked to identify the types of phrases, cadences, and periods.