

IRREGULAR RESOLUTIONS OF ONE DOMINANT SEVENTH INTO ANOTHER

An orderly approach to understanding chromatic harmony consists of identifying three basic types of chord connection involving dominant sevenths. In each case the voice leading is identical: two voices moving in contrary motion by half step; two voices remaining unchanged. The resultant root motion is either by minor third or tritone (=two minor thirds).

Type One

Root motion is down a minor third.

Example 1

A musical staff with two voices. The top voice starts on B (dominant seventh) and moves down to A (another dominant seventh). The bottom voice starts on C and remains on C. The staff has a treble clef and a bass clef.

roots: C A

Example 2: In Schubert: *Der Neugierige* (Die Schöne Müllerin, No. 6) the progression marks the high point of the song:

A musical score for piano and voice. The vocal line includes lyrics: "ja nicht weiter - sa - gen, sag, Bächlein, liebt sie mich? sag,". The piano accompaniment consists of eighth-note chords. The key signature changes from F# major to D# major.

roots: F# D#

Type Two

Root motion is up a minor third.

Example 3:

A musical staff with two voices. The top voice starts on B (dominant seventh) and moves up to C (another dominant seventh). The bottom voice starts on E and remains on E. The staff has a treble clef and a bass clef.

roots: C Eb

Example 4: In Schumann: Ende vom Lied (Phantasiestücke, No. 8), the progression provides a change in harmonic color matched by the quiet dynamic.

Coda

roots: F Ab

Example 5: In Franck: Fifth Beatitude, the progression is done twice, with root motion from E to G to Bb.

roots: E G Bb

Type Three

Root motion by tritone.

Example 6:

3

roots: C Gb

Example 7: In Schumann: Davidsbündlertänze, No. 3, the progression is part of a rising chromatic bass.

31

roots: Bb E

Example 8: In Musorgsky: Boris Godunov, The Coronation Scene, the two dominant sevenths a tritone apart represent the Kremlin bells.

25

Moderato. $\text{♩} = 92$.

roots: Ab D

Example 9: In Stravinsky: The Rite of Spring, Types Two and Three are often presented both vertically and horizontally.

8

roots: F D F Ab F Ab

roots: B F Ab F D F

Type One occurs frequently in the 18th century, often as a phrase extender. Types Two and Three occur with increasing frequency after 1840.

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