Music 232  
Chapter 15, Other Seventh Chords

These notes are a distillation of Kostka/Payne's *Tonal Harmony*. They are in no way a substitute for reading and working through the actual text book.

Overview

The IV\(^7\), VI\(^7\), I\(^7\) and III\(^7\) chords follow the same voice leading tendencies as the more frequently-used seventh chords.

**IV\(^7\)**

The IV\(^7\) can be a major seventh chord (in major) and minor seventh chord (in minor) and rarely a major-minor seventh chord in the melodic minor mode.

Like its triad version, the IV\(^7\) usually goes to V or vii\(^{6}\), and may first pass through ii\(^{7}\) or I/i\(^{6}\/4\).

**VI\(^7\)**

The VI\(^7\) can be a minor seventh chord (in major), a major seventh chord (in minor) and rarely a #vi\(^{b7}\) half-diminished seventh in melodic minor when the next bass note is the leading tone. Most often it goes to ii (circle of fifths progression), but it can go directly to V\(^{7}\), where the V\(^{7}\) chord will be in first inversion (bass line: 5-6).

**I\(^7\)**

The I\(^7\) can be a major seventh (in major) and a minor seventh (in minor). The chordal seventh behaves like a descending passing tone: approached from above by scale degree 1 (in a tonic triad) and resolving to scale degree 6 (usually in a vi/VI, IV/iv or ii/ii\(^{6}\) triad or seventh chord).

Deciding if the chordal seventh is an actual chord tone or just a non chord tone can depend on its relative duration or its contrapuntal behavior (i.e. if it is prepared and resolved like a chordal seventh or if rather, it behaves like a neighbor tone, for example).

**III\(^7\)**

Like its triad counterpart, the iii\(^7\) or III\(^{M7}\) will easily go to the submediant (vi\(^{7}\)/VI\(^{M7}\)), but can also go to the subdominant (IV\(^{b7}\)/iv\(^{7}\)).

Circle of Fifths Sequence

Seventh chords easily fit into the previously mentioned circle of fifths sequence. The minor key version would contain a iv\(^{7}\)–VII\(^{7}\)–III\(^{M7}\)–VI\(^{b7}\)–ii\(^{6}\)–V\(^{7}\)–i progression.

In four parts:

- If the seventh chords are in root position, complete chords will alternate with incomplete (no 5\(^{th}\)) chords
- If the sevenths chords are inverted, six-five chords will alternate with four-two chords, or four-three chords will alternate with root positions chords

In three parts:

- The chords will usually be in root position

Notice that in these progressions, the bass line will inevitably have an unresolved leap of either an augmented 4\(^{th}\) or a diminished 5\(^{th}\) (between vii\(^{6}\) and IV\(^{b7}\) in major and VI\(^{b7}\) and ii\(^{6}\) in minor). This is acceptable because the powerful and rhetorical drive of the sequence overpowers the apparent voice leading problem of the leap.