

## Music 232

### Chapter 9, Second Inversion Triads

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

- Not used as substitutes for root position chord
- Bass arpeggiation/melodic bass
- Cadential six-four
- Pedal six-four
- Passing six-four
- Part-writing practices

**The six-four chord is considered dissonant and/or unstable due to the structure having a fourth above the bass (same as in counterpoint). Its uses are limited:**

#### I. Bass arpeggiation and melodic bass

- A. The bass arpeggiates the chord, involving a root-position triad, first inversion or both
- B. Usually in a metrically weak (less emphasized) position
- C. The bass assumes a melodic role and incidentally "encounters" a six-four along the way
- D. This is not the same as keyboard-style arpeggiation

#### II. Cadential six-four

- A. A tonic chord in second inversion
- B. In a metrically strong position— occurring on a strong beat or stronger portion of the beat
- C. Immediately resolves to a V chord in root position
- D. Analysis: functions as a precursor to the dominant, delaying its arrival and analyzed as such
- E. The voice leading is smooth: scale tones 1 and 3 resolve down to 7 and 2, respectively

#### III. Passing six-four

- A. Used to harmonize the middle note of a three-note scalar figure in the bass (ascending or descending); the surrounding chords will not be six-four chords
- B. Can be any triad, but is most often a I/i six-four or a V six-four
- C. Usually on a weak beat
- D. Analysis: its harmonic function is weak and is analyzed with parentheses

#### IV. Pedal six-four

- A. Used to elaborate/ornament a static root position triad
- B. From root position, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> move up by step and then directly back down (think of them as upper neighbors in their respective voices)
- C. Also called an embellishing or stationary six-four
- D. Falls on a weak or weaker part of the beat
- E. Analysis: put in parentheses
- F. Used to embellish a I/i or V root position triad
  - I – V 6/4 – I
  - i – V 6/4 – i
  - V – I 6/4 – V
- G. When the upper voices are moving back down after the six-four, the bass may move before the upper voices return to their original positions (see example 9-12 on page 142)

#### V. Part writing

- A. In four-parts, double the bass (the 5<sup>th</sup> of the chord); exceptions are rare
- B. The other voices move smoothly—often by step into and out of the six-four chord
- C. In three parts it is best to have complete chords
  1. if the root or 3<sup>rd</sup> is omitted, the 5<sup>th</sup> will be doubled