

Minuet in C Analysis

(a study in understanding the harmonic implications of melody)

This piece is not actually by Leopold Mozart (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's father), but rather an anonymous composer. Leopold included it in a music book he compiled for his daughter, Nannerl.

Because of the sparse texture of this simple piece, it is easy to hear it as mainly a melody with a supporting line. But the combined melody and supporting line actually imply chords in almost all instances.

To perform a complete analysis, do the following:

1. Identify the chords with roman numerals. Even though this is mostly a two-part (two-notes at a time) texture, harmonies are implied by the simultaneous notes sounding in the bass and treble clefs. In some cases the chords are inverted (i.e. the 3rd or 5th of the chord is in the bass clef). Except where there are parentheses, all notes are a part of a chord in the key of C.

There is one chord per each short horizontal line beneath the bass staff of each system. For example, the second measure has three chords in it (so three horizontal lines beneath the staff). For the few inverted chords, either write the figured bass, or write the inversion type ("1st inv.", "2nd inv."). On the score, the third measure has been analyzed as an example.

2. Identify the phrases and cadences. The cadence points are marked with an asterisk (*). There are four phrases in this piece (and therefore four cadences). Label the cadences (either as "authentic" or "half") and label the different phrases "a, b, c", etc.

Notice that each cadence has a longer (dotted half) note in the melody that begins on the downbeat. This really helps to emphasize that it is a cadential/stopping point.

3. Identify the form. Is this piece in binary (AB) or ternary (ABA') form, or something else?
4. Identify any sequences.
5. Identify other significant features about the piece:

Can you identify anything different about the material that begins the second half of the piece (measures 11-13) as compared to the rest of the piece?

Two of the phrases are an unusual six-measures long (the first and third phrases are the traditional four-measures long). What allows for the longer phrases?