

MUS 233 Modulation

Modulation means to change key within a movement of a piece (or within a piece if there is only one movement). Generally speaking (99% of the time), tonal music modulates.

While modulation can certainly add a dimension of interest, there is also a typical **structural basis**:

- A typical first movement or binary piece will use modulation to help define its sections and overall structure:

||: I ----- V ----- :|| ||: X~~~~~ I ----- (I) :||

- Starts in the home key
- Modulates to the key of the dominant
- Explores less-stable keys (multiple distant keys modulated-to and tonicized)
- Returns to the home key (a return to stability)

There can sometimes be a vague line between modulation and tonicization (i.e. no right answer)

Key Relationships:

Since modulation involves changing keys, there are different terms for the relationship that two keys can have:

- **Enharmonic:** The keys sound the same, but are spelled differently (NOT a modulation).
E-flat and D-sharp.
- **Parallel:** The keys have the same tonic, but one is major, the other is minor (NOT called a modulation, but a change of mode).
G major and g minor.
- **Relative:** The two keys share a relative major/minor relationship.
F major and d minor.
- **Close/Closely related:** The two keys are separated by no more than one sharp or flat (one degree left or right on the circle of fifths). This can involve relative majors and minors as well.
B-flat major and F major/d minor
- **Foreign/Distant:** The two keys are more than one key signature apart.
E major and C major.

Diatonic Common Chord Modulation:

- Can take place between keys that are close, foreign or relative.
- Uses a diatonic chord (or chords) that is (are) common to the two keys and pivots from one key to the next on that chord (surprisingly enough, the common chord is also called a pivot chord).
- Has a smooth effect as one key transitions to the other.
 - Most common:
 - I to V (*close*)
 - i to III (*relative*) or to v (*close*)
- Analyzed with a bracket showing the single pivot chord functioning in both keys

Other Types of Modulation:

- **Secondary (altered) Common Chords:** $V^{(7)}$, $vii^{o(7)}$
 - Not diatonic, but still common (pivot): V/iv in CM is V in am
 - Analyzed with a bracket showing the single pivot chord functioning in both keys
- **Sequential**
 - State something at one pitch level, then immediately state it at another level (i.e. sequenced in a new key)
 - Sequences up by step are very common
 - Analyzed with “(seq.)” written in conjunction with the new key
- **Common Tone**
 - Pivot on an emphasized tone that is common to two keys (not only in melody)
 - The two chords linked by a common tone might share a **chromatic mediant** relationship (a foreign relationship)
 - The roots of the two chords (of the common tone) are a M/m 3rd apart
 - They are both major or both minor triads
 - Analyzed with a bracket showing the common scale degree in both keys (a carrot symbol “^” goes above the scale degree numbers)
- **Monophonic**
 - Carried by a single instrument or line, or by a group of instruments playing in unison
 - Analyzed by writing the new key “X:” where the modulation takes place
- **Direct (a.k.a. Phrase Modulation)**
 - No preparation from one key to the next
 - Usually takes place at the beginning of a new phrase (i.e. one phrase ends in key “X” and the subsequent phrase starts in key “Y”)
 - Analyzed by merely writing the new key where it begins “Y:”