**Chapter 6: Melodic Organization**

**Motive**

* A *motive* (or *motif* ) is a short, recurring figure that appears throughout a composition or section of music.
* Distinctive melodic and/or rhythmic patterns form the underlying structure of a motive.
* Best to use only to refer to those musical ideas that are “developed” (worked out or used in different ways) in a composition.
* Can consist of a pitch pattern or a rhythmic pattern.

***Melodic Motive***

* A *melodic motive* is a repeated pitch pattern. It usually recurs accompanied by the same or a similar rhythmic pattern (Beethoven’s 5th).

***Rhythmic Motive***

* A recurring rhythmic pattern (the Munster’s Theme Song, waltz).
* Rhythmic motives not associated with melodic motives also commonly appear as the motives in accompaniment figures. Accompaniments typically include a limited number of rhythmic motives that are repeated with only slight variation.

***Sequence***

* A pattern that is repeated immediately in the same voice but begins on a different pitch class.
* Diatonic sequence – keeps the pattern in a single key, which means that modifiers of the intervals (major, minor, etc.) will probably change.
* Modulating sequence – transposes the pattern to a new key.
* A *sequence* is the immediate restatement of a melodic motive or longer figure in the same instrumental or vocal part at a higher or lower pitch. Each separate unit of the sequence forms a segment. The sequence is one of the most common basic methods of melodic elaboration found in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
  + A sequence requires at least two segments.
  + Most sequences contain no more than three or four segments.
  + Sequences usually have only one direction—the segments succeed each other at continuingly higher pitches or continuingly lower pitches.
  + Sequence segments usually continue by the same interval distance. As an example, if the first segment begins on C and the next starts with E, then the remainder of the segments will continue in thirds.

***Real Sequence***

* A *real sequence* contains continuing **segments that are exact transpositions of the first segment.** Every tone is transposed at **exactly the same intervallic distance**.

***Tonal Sequence***

* A *tonal sequence* accommodates the diatonic scale, so that **only diatonic notes of the scale are used**. This means that the transposition of the segments may not be exact.

***Modified Sequence***

* In a *modified sequence* some of the segments may be decorated or embellished in a way that does not destroy their original character.

***False Sequence***

* A *false sequence* repeats part of a figure and states the remainder in sequence—a mixture of sequence and repetition.

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**Phrase**

* Smallest identifiable musical idea that ends with a cadence.
* Represents a musical idea and moves toward a goal.
* A *phrase* is a substantial musical thought usually ending with a harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic cadence. The presence of a cadence distinguishes a phrase from a motive.
* Phrases are frequently four measures long, but may be longer or shorter.
* A phrase presents a complete (though sometimes dependent) musical thought.
* Relatively independent musical idea terminated by a cadence.
* Usually labeled with lower-case letters (a, b, c, and so on).

***Phrase Segment***

* Distinct portion of a phrase, but it is not a phrase either because it is not terminated by a cadence or because it seems too short to be relatively independent.
* Frequently end with a cadence.

***Phrase Member***

* Phrases frequently contain slight melodic interruptions and thus divide into two *phrase members*.
* Phrase members are sufficiently separated, usually by a longer note value or rest, to distinguish them as individual units.
* Sometimes the second phrase member is either a repetition or a sequence of the first; however, it is just as often contrasting.
* Under certain conditions, phrase members may be nearly indistinguishable from phrases themselves, with only the tempo serving as the deciding factor.

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**Period**

* Two adjacent phrases may combine to form a *period* if:
  + The second phrase ends with a strong cadence – usually perfect authentic. Closure (finality) must be achieved at the end of the second phrase.
  + The first phrase ends with a weaker cadence than the second. A half cadence is common at the end of the first phrase.
  + The two phrases bear some musical relationshp to each other. Often, they will create a “question-answer” effect called *antecedent-consequent*. The first phrase acts as the antecedent (question) and the second phrase as the consequent (answer).
* The most commonly encountered pattern is Phrase 1 ending with a half cadence followed by phrase 2 ending in a PAC or IAC.

***Parallel Period***

* Two adjacent phrases form a *parallel period* if they both begin in the same manner.
* The two phrases may be nearly identical except for the cadences, or they may only be similar for a measure or two.

***Contrasting Period***

* A *contrasting period* results when the two phrases are not similar in melodic content. The second (consequent) phrase may be different because of a change in the melodic contour or the inclusion of a dissimilar rhythmic figure, or it may simply differ in the lack of reference to material contained in the first phrase.

***Three-Phase Period***

* Most periods are composed of just two phrases, but those of three and more do occur.
* The *three-phrase period* may be organized as A A B (antecedent, antecedent, consequent) or A B B (antecedent, consequent, consequent).
* The third phrase must end with a stronger cadence than either of the first two.

***Double Period (Four-Phrase Period)***

* Sometimes known as the *four-phrase period.*
* The fourth phrase must bring the period to closure and should be at least as strong as any of the other three.

***Repeated Phrases***

* Both phrases are identical.
* It does not contribute to the growth of a musical form.

***Nonperiod Construction***

* Sometimes a series of phrases, some of which may be unrelated or lacking closure, do not arrange themselves conveniently into periods. Terms for such groupings range from “phrase groups” or “phrase chains” to “dissimilar phrases” or “dissolved periods.” For purposes of analysis here, these nonperiod combinations can be called ***dissimilar phrases****.*

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**Modification of the Phrase**

Composers often seek to modify a phrase in one way or another, sometimes to lengthen it and sometimes to provide other forms of variety.

***Phrase Extension***

* An *extended phrase -l*ength has been increased through the elongation of some part of it. Phrases may be extended by a few beats or up to twice their normal length.
* The extensions may be near the beginning, in the middle, or near the cadence.

***Beginning Extension***

* Phrases may be extended near the beginning by repeating or sequencing a few opening tones.

***Internal Extension***

* A small melodic group may be repeated in the middle of the phrase to extend its length. The following phrase would be shorter, but nonetheless complete, without the extension.

***Cadential Extension***

* Elaborates or repeats a cadence, a cadence figure, or individual cadence chords.
* Extending a phrase adds to the overall length, some phrases are longer than others simply by design and not by extension:

***Change of Mode***

* Sometimes modified by a *change of mode* from major to parallel minor or vice versa.

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**Melodic Structure**

General Characteristics

* A *climax tone* is the highest stressed pitch of a phrase or other unit.
* Usually the climax tone is reached only once, but it can appear with reiterations of the pitch and with embellishments.
* Most phrases contain an *ascent* to and *descent* from the climax tone. Although fluctuations in the prevailing direction are a common occurrence, you should consider the overall direction when assessing the ascent and descent.
* Many melodic phrases contain significantly placed pitches of the tonic triad (scale degrees 1ˆ, 3ˆ, and 5ˆ) that are important in shaping the entire phrase.
* Scale pitches 3ˆ–2ˆ–1ˆ often conclude those phrases that end with the tonic pitch.