

2 The Twilight of the Tonal System

always clear, and seldom do we lose our tonal bearings, our sense of key and scale, and our immediate understanding of the function of the altered tones.

Diatonic relationships also prevail at the background levels of a diatonic tonal composition. Think of the keys that Bach is apt to reach in the course of a fugue, or the traditional key schemes for sonata forms and rondos. All represent diatonic relationships because in all cases the secondary tonalities are closely related to the primary tonality of the movement. Remember that the keys closely related to some primary key are those keys represented by the *diatonic* major and minor triads in the primary key. In a major key, ii, iii, IV, V, and vi are closely related tonics; in a minor key, III, iv, v, VI, and VII are closely related tonics.

Even at the highest level—key relationships between movements—diatonicism prevails. For example, all of the movements of a Baroque suite will be in a single key (the ultimate in diatonicism). More interesting in terms of the present discussion are the key relationships found in multimovement works of the Classical period. In such works, the first and last movements are *always* in the same tonality (although sometimes in a different mode), and this is considered the key of the composition as a whole. This is a fundamental characteristic of any multimovement tonal composition. In the music of the Classical period, the tendency is for one (and only one) of the inner movements to be in some contrasting but closely related key. Some examples are shown in the list below.

Only two of these works, the first of the Haydn symphonies and the third of the Beethoven quartets, exhibit a nondiatonic relationship between the key of an inner movement and the key of the piece. Both of the exceptions involve a chromatic mediant relationship (to be discussed later).

Mozart: 8 Piano Sonatas

K. 330–333, 457, 545

570, 576 (1778–89)

I–IV–I
I–I–I
I–IV–I
I–IV–I
i–III–i
I–V–I
I–IV–I
I–V–I

Haydn: 6 Symphonies,

Nos. 99–104 (1793–95)

I–III–I–I
I–IV–I–I
I–IV–I–I
I–V–I–I
I–vi–I–I
I–IV–I–I

Beethoven: 6 String

Quartets, Op. 18 (1800)

I–vi–I–I
I–IV–I–I
I–bVI–I–I
i–I–i–i
I–I–IV–I
I–IV–I–I

CHROMATIC TONAL MUSIC

The point at which tonal music becomes chromatic instead of diatonic is not an absolute one. Much of the harmony of chromatic tonal music can be analyzed by using the same vocabulary for altered chords, modulations, chromatic nonchord tones, and so forth, that