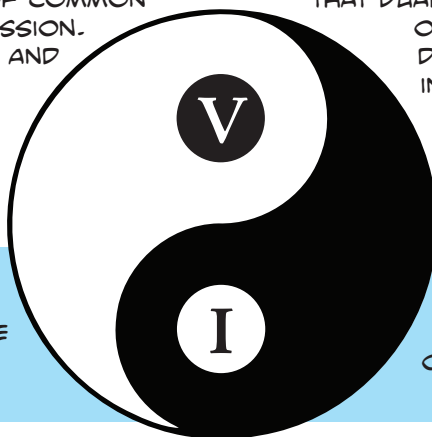


# Secondary Dominants

THERE IS A **DUALITY** AT THE HEART OF COMMON PRACTICE PERIOD HARMONIC PROGRESSION. LIKE THE ANCIENT CONFLICT OF **JEDI** AND **SITH**, IT CONSISTS OF FORCES THAT, AT ONE LEVEL, WORK **AGAINST** EACH OTHER... BUT AT ANOTHER, HIGHER LEVEL, WORK **TOGETHER**, CREATING ENERGY THAT DRIVES ALL ELSE.

THAT DUALITY, OF COURSE, IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF **DOMINANT FUNCTION** AND **TONIC**. DOMINANT HARMONY TYPIFIES **TENSION** IN THE COMMON PRACTICE PERIOD, AND THE **TONIC** REPRESENTS RELEASE. ITS SIMPLEST FORM, THE **AUTHENTIC CADENCE**, HAS BEEN **UBIQUITOUS** IN WESTERN MUSIC FOR CENTURIES.

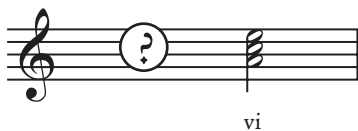


THE PROGRESSION OF DOMINANT MOVING TO TONIC IS SO STRONG, IT WOULD BE NICE TO BE ABLE TO USE IT TO PROVIDE MOTION TO CHORDS **OTHER THAN TONIC**.

BUT THAT'S **CRAZY TALK**, THOUGH, ISN'T IT? I MEAN, HOW COULD WE **CONTROL** THAT MAGIC AND MAKE IT OBEY OUR **COMPOSITIONAL WHIM**?

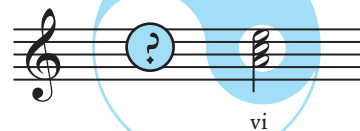
THE ANSWER, OF COURSE, IS WITH **SECONDARY DOMINANTS**.

LET'S SAY WE WANTED TO APPROACH THIS **VI** CHORD.

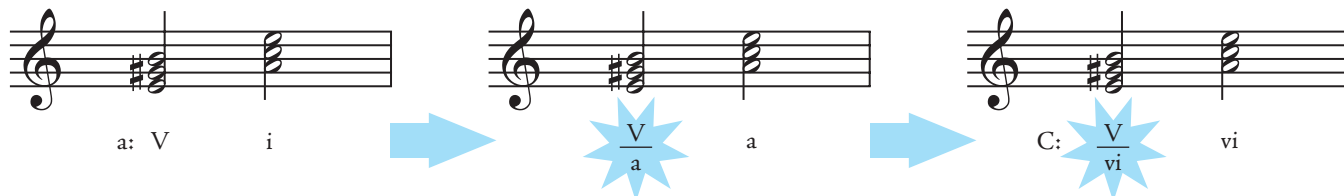


WE COULD USE ONE OF THE USUAL DIATONIC CHORDS, THE TONIC, THE SUBDOMINANT, THE MEDIAN... BUT WHAT IF WE'RE LOOKING FOR A BIT MORE **TENSION AND RELEASE**?

WHAT IF WE WANTED TO USE THAT **DOMINANT-TONIC** MAGIC?



IF WE PRETEND FOR A MOMENT THAT THE CHORD WE'RE RESOLVING TO IS A **TONIC** CHORD, WHAT WOULD THE CORRESPONDING **DOMINANT** CHORD BE? **ALTERED**, YES, BUT WE'RE NOT AFRAID OF THOSE ANYMORE:



WHILE WE MIGHT HAVE ONCE CALLED THIS A SHORT **MODULATION**, IT IS REALLY MORE LIKE BORROWING ANOTHER KEY'S DOMINANT CHORD.

IF WE THINK OF THE **V** CHORD IN THE KEY AS THE **PRIMARY DOMINANT**, **V** CHORDS OF RELATED KEYS ARE **SECONDARY DOMINANTS**.

NOW, WE'RE NOT JUST LIMITED TO THE **V** CHORD: THERE ARE **FIVE** CHORDS WITH A DOMINANT FUNCTION!

**V   V<sup>7</sup>   vii<sup>o</sup>   vii<sup>ø7</sup>   vii<sup>o7</sup>**

**DOMINANT FUNCTION CHORDS**

**V   V<sup>7</sup>   vii<sup>o</sup>   vii<sup>ø7</sup>   vii<sup>o7</sup>**  
**x   x   x   x   x**

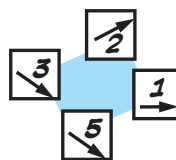
**THE SECONDARY DOMINANTS**

THAT GIVES US A HUGE LIST OF POSSIBILITIES!

IN **MAJOR KEYS**, THE "X" ABOVE CAN BE ANY DIATONIC CHORD OTHER THAN **TONIC** (OBVIOUSLY) OR THE **LEADING-NOTE TRIAD**. WHY? BECAUSE A **DIMINISHED TRIAD** HAS A HARD TIME ACTING LIKE A **TEMPORARY TONIC CHORD**.

IN **MINOR KEYS**, THE COMPOSERS GENERALLY ONLY USED SECONDARY DOMINANTS OF **IV** AND OF **V**.

THESE CHORDS OFTEN RESOLVE TO THE CHORD "**UNDER THE SLASH**," BUT THEY CAN ACTUALLY BE APPROACHED AND RESOLVED USING THE **BASIC ROOT MOVEMENTS**!



**YES. YES THEY DO.**