

The Introductory Dominant:
Addressing the Paradox of “Before-the-Beginning” Dominant Prolongation

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Introductory Dominant

- 1) prolonged emphasis on the dominant harmony
- 2) occurs at the beginning of a movement, prior to any themes or cadences

Figure 1. Dvorak Symphony No. 9

The figure shows a musical score for Dvorak's Symphony No. 9, illustrating the transition from the end of the third movement to the beginning of the fourth. The score is written on two staves: the upper staff in treble clef and the lower staff in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major, indicated by a sharp sign (#) on the F line. The notation shows a final cadence in the third movement (Mvt. 3) on the tonic (I), followed by an introductory dominant (V) in the fourth movement (Mvt. 4), and finally the arrival of the tonic (I) at the main theme. A bracket above the notes spans from the end of the first movement to the beginning of the second, highlighting the prolonged dominant. Below the staves, the Roman numerals I, V, and I are aligned with the corresponding notes.

Mvt. 3 Final cadence in em Mvt. 4 Introductory Dominant Tonic arrival at main theme

I V I

Figure 2. Beethoven Symphony No. 7

Mvt. 3 Final cadence in FM

Mvt. 4 Introductory Dominant Tonic arrival at cadence

$\flat VI$ V I

Figure 3. Schumann, *Carnaval*

Florestan

Coquette

V? I V I

Figure 4. Schumann, “Im wunderschönen monat mai” from *Dichterliebe*



“Im wunderschönen Monat Mai” by Heinrich Heine, trans. Hal Draper

In May, the magic month of May,
When all the buds were springing,
 Into my heart the burning
Bright arrow of love came winging.

In May, the magic month of May,
When all the birds were singing,
 I told her of my yearning,
My longing and heart-wringing.

Bibliography

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