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## Assignment #2: Chopin

Chopin's Prelude Opus 28, no. 4 is a very different piece when analyzed by ear and by sight. During my first listen and before looking at the score, the piece sounded like it was based on diatonic harmony, which followed a very simple progression. The melody is very repetitive and sings over an eighth note accompaniment in the left hand. However, upon looking at the score, I found the piece to be hard to analyze – especially in the left hand.

Measures one through twelve of his piece start are in e minor. Measure one presents a pronounced  $i^6$  and works into a pronounced  $V^7$  on the downbeat of measure twelve. While listening, this is very obvious. Chopin uses the  $i$  and  $iv$  chords explicitly at times, and implicitly at others before artfully landing on beat one of measure twelve.

Below is Example 1. In measure one Chopin gives us a very clear sense of e minor by stating the tonic for the entire measure. Then, between measure two and beat three of measure 10, he alters the chords. As he alters the chords in the left hand, at the very most, one voice moves per beat. And it never moves more than a whole step. In measure five he very clearly lands on  $iv^7$ . Then in measures ten and eleven he repeats a  $I^7-iv^6$  progression twice before moving to the  $V^7$  in measure twelve.



Example 1: Measures 1-12 of Chopin's Prelude Opus 28, no. 4.

Example 2 is my reduction of the first twelve measures.



Example 2: Reduction of measures 1-12 of Chopin's Prelude Opus 28, no. 4.

As you can see in the above example, Chopin follows very traditional diatonic harmony in this prelude. He hides this, but the underlying progression is very simple.