Identifying French Compositional Styles: Subtlety Through Familiarity

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IDENTIFYING FRENCH COMPOSITIONAL STYLES: SUBTLETY THROUGH FAMILIARITY

A Thesis

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Abstract

In this study, I examine two French berceuses for violin and piano to identify common compositional traits, specifically subtlety and familiarity in rhythm and harmony. Both Fauré’s Berceuse (1878-9) and Ravel’s Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré (1922) are representative of small form pieces written by French composers; in addition, the relationship of the two works is particularly striking as Fauré was Ravel’s teacher. The similarities of genre and instrumentation, coupled with 40 years of separation provides a unique setting to examine aspects of French compositional practices over time. The introduction of my thesis outlines aspects of diversity within French music. The following chapters analyze traditional and extended tonality, melody, and mode, framing each discussion in the context of the small form. Here, the analytic techniques engage each composers approach towards harmonic overlap and harmonic movement. The results reveal that through surface simplicity, or familiarity in rhythm, phrase, structure, and harmony, each composer achieves a unique subtlety of harmony and harmonic movement.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all my teachers, past and present, for continually working with me, inspiring me, and helping me reach my goals. Thank you to Kristin Taavola, Mitchell Ohriner, and Gregory Robbins for serving on my committee. A special thank you to Keith Waters for his advice and recommendations. Finally, thank you to the Mettler family for all the support over the past two years.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Providing a concise description of French music from the late 19th century and onward remains a difficult task even though the music has been in existence for over 100 years. The difficulty is partially caused by the many diverse styles of music that emerged during the late 19th and early 20th century. For example, Fauré’s compositional practice, while both chromatic and modal, was firmly rooted in the tonal tradition. Ravel’s music exhibits tonal elements but is frequently working outside the realm of traditional chord progressions and functions. Despite the differences in style, both Fauré and Ravel are recognized as important and prominent musicians that both contributed to and continued a French musical tradition. The question at hand therefore is what common elements do these composers share with each other and the rest of music recognized as French? How can these styles, among many other styles, coexist under the umbrella of French music? Answering the question first requires considering the cause of all the styles and techniques present in French music.

One of the main motives behind French composer’s efforts to create a distinct national style is related to Wagner. Relationships between France and Germany were poor following the Franco-Prussian war, and they were only made worse during the time surrounding WWI. Wagner, a German and controversial figure in his own right, was viewed as a threat to French culture. Carlo Caballero says, “For a French composer
maturing between 1885 and 1895, the dominant problem was Wagner."¹ Barbara L. Kelley says, “Wagner was perhaps the most problematic figure for French musicians,”² and “As the revival of French music took hold, Wagner came to be seen by many, including Debussy and Saint-Saëns, as a stifling influence on French musical originality.”³ The relationship between Wagner, German music, and French culture has been explored in depth by many scholars. For example, Marion Shmid investigates the effects of Wagner on French culture and discusses the creation of an antihero in France surrounding WWI as a result.⁴ Brian Hart discusses France’s efforts to create a national identity within the symphonic genre in an effort to contribute French styles into a genre previously dominated by German composers.⁵ Georges Servières discusses Wagner’s reception in France in his book Richard Wagner jugé en France.⁶

The diversity of music within France is also a result of a division within the French musical community itself. There were strong disagreements, particularly between

¹ Carlo Caballero, Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 78.


³ Ibid., 8-9.


the Conservatoire and the Schola Cantorum, surrounding the source of permissible musical influence and the path future music of France should take. The Schola Cantorum emphasized church music, Gregorian chant, and polyphony while the Conservatoire was open to a variety of styles. Differences between composers within the same school existed as well. In his book *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, Carlo Caballero discusses sincerity and self-renewal as a central source of inspiration and standard of quality for Fauré. Conversely, Fauré’s own student Ravel didn’t believe in sincerity in art or music. Stephen Huebner outlines this difference in his discussion of perfection as a central aspect of Ravel and his compositional process in addition to Caballero. But, despite the difference of ideals, approach, goals, and final product, Fauré and Ravel, and many other composers within France, were actively engaged in creating “French music.” So, the question remains, are there common reoccurring elements within the diverse collection of French music?

There is one important unifying theme that united disagreeing parties in France and provided common ground. French musicians and composers acknowledged Rameau as a critical figure in the history of French music, and saw his legacy as a starting point in continuing a French tradition. Barbara L. Kelly writes:

[Rameau] was a unifying figure in French music of this period. For many he belonged to the golden age of pre-revolutionary France; for others he belonged to an era before the nineteenth century in which France had been usurped musically and militarily by what became Germany. Musicians and

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critics ascribed enduring “french” classical qualities to Rameau’s music, such as clarity, precision, and moderation. While d’Indy’s Schola promoted performances of Rameau, Debussy saw a return to Rameau’s ideals as the solution to the apparently weakened French tradition in the nineteenth century.\(^9\)

The efforts of the community behind Rameau’s return as an important musical figure is outlined by Katherine Ellis in her essay “Rameau in Late Nineteenth-Century Dijon: Memorial, Festival, Fiasco.” \(^{10}\)

One important influence Rameau had on French music not mentioned by Kelly is extensive use of small simple forms. Graham Sadler notes that Rameau’s keyboard works are primarily dance and small genre pieces like preludes\(^{11}\). He also states that they are organized primarily using binary and rondo forms.\(^{12}\) These small forms continued to be used by late French musicians including Debussy, Ravel, d’Indy, Fauré, Satie, and others. Some of the small forms were even developed into more flexible forms, such as Debussy’s piano preludes. These small pieces form a substantial portion of French music and are therefore worthy of careful consideration and discussion. These small pieces are often light in nature but complex in construction. A strong focus on small form music might showcase reoccurring traits that contribute to the elusive French style. Observing

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\(^{12}\) Ibid., 788.
these qualities in small forms might in turn provide insight into large forms within French music. For example, Demuth recognizes both the popularity of light music and its occurrence in large works by saying:

Émile Pessard won the Prix de Rome in 1866. He was a prolific writer of light operas much admired by Debussy. Napoléon Henri Reber was another dramatic composer. His chief mission was to free French music from the noise and bombast which had become fashionable.13

My thesis focusses on small scale works specifically by Fauré and Ravel. My research is supported by existing scholarship surrounding these two composers and their contributions to French music. Robert Orledge’s book Gabriel Fauré14 is an exhaustive book on Fauré. In addition to providing biographical information, Orledge separates Fauré’s music into three distinct periods and discusses major works within each period. He concludes with a summary of Fauré’s musical techniques, including harmony, melody, rhythm, counterpoint, texture, orchestration, and form. Orledge states that Fauré continued to work within Rameau’s third-based chords tradition while simultaneously incorporating modes.15 He also states that Fauré didn’t place a strong emphasis on rhythm,16 and that he was consistent with limited textures throughout his works.17

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15 Ibid., 236.
16 Ibid., 255.
17 Ibid., 260.
Finally, Orledge states that Fauré worked within traditional frameworks with only small amounts of experimentation.\footnote{Robert Orledge, \textit{Gabriel Fauré} (London: Ernst Eulenburg Ltd, 1979), 268-9.}

While not specifically about Fauré or Ravel, Deborah Mawer’s book \textit{Darius Milhaud: Modality and Structure in Music of the 1920s}\footnote{Deborah Mawer, \textit{Darius Milhaud: Modality & Structure in Music of the 1920s} (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1997).} is full of information relevant to discussion of French music. She discusses chromaticism, the influence of jazz, neoclassicism, modality, and form. In the process of discussing the strong likelihood of alternative readings in Milhaud’s music, she makes an important observation that is applicable to analysis of French music in general. She says:

\ldots one should stress the need for open-mindedness and flexibility: the intrinsically French qualities which give Milhaud’s music its ‘life’ cannot be comprehended purely from a structural standpoint. Above all, free melody is paramount.\footnote{Ibid., xviii.}

Matthew Brown’s article “Tonality and Form in Debussy’s Prélude à ‘L’Après-midi d’un faune,”\footnote{Matthew Brown, “Tonality and Form in Debussy’s ‘Prélude à ‘L’Après-midi d’un faune’,” \textit{Music Theory Spectrum} 15, no. 3 (Autumn 1993): 127-143.} is another noteworthy piece not specifically about Faure or Ravel but full of relevant information. For example, he discusses Debussy’s disguised tonal functions and ability to “[veil] our sense of tonality by manipulating the way in which melodic phrases intersect with their harmonic foundation.”\footnote{Matthew Brown, “Tonality and Form in Debussy’s ‘Prélude à ‘L’Après-midi d’un faune’,” \textit{Music Theory Spectrum} 15, no. 3 (Autumn 1993): 134.}
Numerous authors have done analytical work surrounding form in Ravel’s music. Daphne Leong and David Korevaar work together to examine how rhythm contributes to motion and form through layering.\textsuperscript{23} Sigrun B. Heinzelmann analyzes Ravel’s adaption of Sonata Form in his String Quartet and Piano Trio.\textsuperscript{24} Gurminder K Bhogal investigates the relationship ornament and metric complexity have on form as it is developed in Ravel’s piano music.\textsuperscript{25} Deborah Mawer discusses the influence of jazz on Ravel’s instruments, timbre, texture, and form.\textsuperscript{26} Elliot Antokoletz examines similar elements discussing Ravel’s departure from extended tonality into a more modern chromatic language in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{27} Roy Howat examines musical form in Debussy, Ravel, and Bartók created through proportion and numerical relationships that are emphasized with tonal and dynamic changes.\textsuperscript{28}


Robert Orledge claims “Fauré and Ravel represent the perfection of a tonal art before the break with tonality…” While unquestionably subjective, this statement still communicates a truth. The music of Fauré and Ravel both exhibit tonal qualities. The shared tonal qualities create a platform for smooth comparison while still allowing room for discovery between their distinctly different harmonic languages. Smooth comparison is also made easy because of their professional relationship: Fauré was Ravel’s teacher. Finally, both Fauré and Ravel primarily wrote small works. This makes them logical choices in the interest of exploring the qualities in small music forms.

I will engage the discussion of common traits in French music by identifying techniques of subtlety and familiarity, specifically in the context of two berceuses. Fauré’s Berceuse, Op. 16 was written in 1878-9 and Ravel’s Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré was written in 1922. Both pieces are written for violin and piano. The shared instrumentation and genre allows for easy comparison of techniques by eliminating potential problems of notation, instrument limitations, and stylistic traits determined by genre. The 40-year difference places the pieces in distinctly unique contexts regarding contemporary styles and techniques. This in turn provides the opportunity to realize long term continuity of technique and practices shared by each piece. These pieces are also small pieces thereby representing an important core of French music.

I will begin my discussion with an in-depth analysis of Fauré’s Berceuse. I will separate my analysis into separate discussions of harmony and melody. I will conclude

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my Fauré analysis discussing harmony and melody and their relationship to form. Next I will present my analysis of Ravel’s *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*. In similar fashion, I will discuss the piece in separate sections. I will discuss melody first and harmony second. I will finish by discussing their interaction with form. Finally, I will conclude my thesis with a summary of subtlety and familiarity and a brief discussion on the implications of my findings. Throughout the thesis, I will identify techniques of subtlety and familiarity by engaging three questions. The first question is “how are harmonies interacting.” The second question “how is harmonic motion created.” The third question is “how is harmonic motion avoided.”
CHAPTER TWO: HARMONY IN FAURÉ

Introduction

Fauré’s Berceuse is rooted in Common Practice techniques. The harmonies are easily understood using a vertical bass oriented analysis explained by Roman numerals. While Roman numerals accurately show bass oriented harmonic movement, they do not communicate the harmonic extensions used by Fauré. My discussion of harmony therefore will involve both a Roman numeral analysis to reveal what is traditional, and charts and diagrams to show was is new. I will show how Fauré uses two reoccurring bass structures to promote harmonic stability and mobility within each section. I will also introduce the role of “super dominants” at certain moments in the piece. The super dominant is a reoccurring topic in my discussion of both Fauré and Ravel’s berceuses. Super dominants are compositional tools used to unify content at specific harmonic sections. I will discuss the qualities of each super dominant in the context they appear.

My overall aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how Fauré recycles the same techniques throughout the entire piece to create an ongoing sense of familiarity. My discussion will progress through the harmonic sections outlined below in Table 1.
Table 1: Summary of Harmonic Motion in Berceuse Op. 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Chroma</th>
<th>Bass</th>
<th>Motion</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>B Major</th>
<th>F# Minor</th>
<th>D Major</th>
<th>A Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>S/M</td>
<td>S/M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S/M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S/M</td>
<td>S/M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My discussion begins by introducing the stable bass and mobile bass within the D major and F# minor sections of the piece. I will show how the stable bass rests within D major, and how the mobile bass moves throughout F# minor. I will also show how D major and F# minor are linked with a super dominant chord. Following this, I will briefly discuss how Fauré moves to a new and brief harmonic center of A major. I will conclude by summarizing the techniques and observations discussed.

Next I will discuss the dominant sonorities and the B minor sections. I will observe that the stable bass and mobile bass are adapted from their original forms, but continue to exhibit qualities of stability and mobility. I will also observe another occurrence of a super dominant scenario, this time as two separate dominant chords in the dominant sonority section. I will show that this new super dominant capitalizes on the shared key signature of D major and B minor, and uses that familiarity to transition and delay the arrival from D major to B minor. I will redefine the definition of stable bass and mobile bass to show more accurately how they work within the music. Finally, I will briefly discuss the harmonic active within the B minor section.

The next section I discuss involves the D major/D7 and G major sections. I show that this section is following a restatement of opening material, and the arrival of the D7 sonority is unexpected and preparing something new. I reveal that the G major measures are actually a product of the extended D7 sonority. I show that Fauré continues to reuse familiar techniques. D7 is prolonged using the stable bass, and when the G arrival comes Fauré switches to the mobile bass and moves immediately away from G through a chain of secondary dominants. I then observe large-scale similarities and differences between
the stable bass and mobile bass applications. Finally, I conclude with a summary of the previously discussed harmonic events.

**Discussion**

D Major and F# Minor

![Figure 1: Berceuse Op.16, mm. 1-2 and 16-19, Bass Patterns](image)

A quick scan of the music reveals there are two reoccurring bass patterns throughout the entire piece. In Figure 1, shown above, I have identified a “stable bass” and a “mobile bass.” The stable bass pattern is created through the oscillation of a fifth. In the beginning of the piece, the bass oscillates between D and A clearly outlining the key of the piece, D major. This motion is shown below in Figure 2 as it occurs in measure 8. In measure 11, also shown in Figure 2, the stable bass pattern is transposed to F# minor. In both examples, I labeled this reoccurring pattern as an oscillating I (or i) and V11 chord. The tertian extensions that create the V11 chords are best seen as neighbor...
motions displaced by an octave. For example, in measure 8, G neighbors F#, and B neighbors A. The neighbor motion serves as a prolongation technique. This means that the V11 chords are not acting as dominants but rather as tonic expansions. This motion represents a common tool in the berceuse genre. Kenneth L. Hamilton states that berceuses are cradle songs (or lullabies) characterized by compound time and a rocking accompaniment created through a tonic pedal bass that oscillates between I and V. This description accurately describes Fauré’s music.

It is important to notice that the third of the V11 chords, or ^7, is missing in both the piano and violin part in measures 8-9 and 11-12. The absence of the leading tone further contributes to the prolongation of the tonic by eliminating voice leading requirements. ^7 is used to create the harmonic motion that has been intentionally avoided otherwise. An example of intentional harmonic motion occurs in measure 10, shown above in Figure 2. This measure contains not only ^7 in D major (C#), but also the

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^7 in F# minor (E#). These tones not only occur in the same measure, but are combined within the same beat. The result is an augmented “super dominant” that creates the transition between the two harmonic areas. Notice that no other leading tones occur in the opening stable bass patterns in D major or F# minor except for in the measure 10 example. It is clear that Fauré intentionally creates harmonic motion only when he wants to.

My concept of “super dominant” is based on the combination two dominants from separate keys. Super dominant moments can appear in different forms. In this instance, the super dominant is one chord created using two leading tones from separate keys. The super dominant unites both keys through one shared dominant chord. The super dominant moments that will appear later involve two separate dominant chords acting together within one section. I will discuss these specific moments more in depth as they appear.

I labeled the neighboring V11 chords as V11 chords despite the lack of ^7 because of the root motion in the bass. Traditionally, oscillating between ^1 and ^5 is used to tonicize a key. Fauré is certainly utilizing this strategy to create the experience of a specific key, but he is adapting the role of traditional harmony through the manipulation of tendency tones. By eliminating the leading tone, Fauré establishes a D major sonority and rests within it rather than be forced move throughout it. His tertian extensions on the V11 chords enrich the sound that in turn provides aural complexity and depth to seemingly harmonically stagnant moments.

The second bass pattern is shown below in Figure 3. I have identified this pattern as mobile for two reasons. The first is due to the horizontal characteristics of the pattern.
The stepwise motion in the bass creates forward moving melodic qualities. Fauré strengthens this motion by creating semitone movement through secondary chords. The second reason I labeled this as mobile is related to the variety of vertical harmonies that occur above the pattern. The stable bass pattern contained the tonic triad prolonged through a V chord. In the mobile bass pattern, Fauré creates movement by moving through a variety of harmonies within the key as well as harmonies outside of the key. Measure 15, shown below in Figure 3, contains a tonic F# minor chord and a B minor7 chord. The B minor7 chord is a iv6 chord in F# minor and marks the first appearance of a chord outside of the I and V motion that had previously been established in the stable bass. By including this new chord, Fauré begins to create the forward motion that characterizes the mobile bass. Measure 16 moves to a III6 chord which is prolonged through a B# common-tone fully diminished7 chord. This same B# chord returns at the end of measures 16 and 17, but this time as a secondary diminished vii of v. This serves as an example of familiarity on a local level. Fauré uses the same chord as an extension of two completely different chords. The result is an incredibly smooth connection of measures 16-19. Visually, the music and the analysis look busy. Fauré is moving quickly through a number of chords with varying sonorities both in and outside the key. But, because Fauré linked the diatonic and chromatic chords with only one reoccurring diminished chord, he gracefully moves about the sonorities and creates smooth motion throughout F# minor. The aural experience is not busy at all. The chromatic secondary chords sound as though they belong within the key itself. Together, measures 15-19 expand F# minor using traditional methods of the T-PD-D-T phrase model.
Measure 19, shown above in Figure 3, utilizes a traditional method of modulation through a pivot chord. The chord is iv7 in F# minor, but becomes ii7 in A major. This modulation to A supports falling fifths F#-B-E in the bass. In measure 22 the falling fifths are broken with an ascending fourth from the E to an A thereby completing the chain in synchronization with the modulation. This modulation is strengthened further by harmonizing the E as a V7 chord in A major. Measure 22 also marks the end of the mobile bass, and the stable bass returns, this time in A major.

There have been three harmonic areas up to this point: D major, F# minor, and A major. D moved to F# through literal transposition, and F# moved to A through smooth connection of secondary chords and a pivot chord. The harmonic movement was
supported using only the stable and mobile basses. The movement was achieved by recycling bass types in new harmonic areas that closely related to each other. It is important to observe that any one harmonic area was not necessarily restricted to using only one style of bass. In fact, both the stable and mobile basses were used in the F# minor portion as shown below in Figure 4. The mixing and reuse of material is an example of familiarity, as is the movement to closely related keys. Familiarity works because new ideas are only subtly different, or they are accompanied by familiar gestures, harmonic overlap, or both. The harmonic movement therefore is experienced as subtle shifts rather than exhausting journey of departure and arrival. It is like floating on a calm river instead of climbing up a mountain. It should be noted that part of the smooth experience is also a result of harmonic contributions from melody that I haven’t yet discussed.

Figure 4: *Berceuse* Op.16, mm. 11-19
While the harmonies and progression employed by Fauré are easily analyzed and understood through Roman numerals, there are harmonic qualities happening that the Roman numerals cannot fully communicate. The extended V11 chords with the missing leading tones serve as one example. The elimination of the leading tone allows Fauré to establish and rest within the colors\(^{31}\) of an individual key without moving throughout it. The tertian extensions of the V11 chord smooth and enrich the texture and harmony of the music. The mobile bass utilizes chords within and outside of the key to create forward motion. By reusing one specific chromatic chord throughout the mobile bass progression, Fauré creates a sense of familiarity through repetition. The result is a smooth progression moving through the key that is rich with color.

**Dominant Sonorities and B Minor**

The bass patterns themselves serves as tools of familiarity throughout the piece. They are continually adapted, but they always maintain a recognizable element of stability or mobility. For example, in measures 26-28, shown below in Figure 5, the stable bass is adapted from an oscillating fifth to an oscillating major second. Previously, I stated the oscillating fifth was used to establish the sonority of a key. The disappearance of the fifth motion in the stable bass requires new consideration. In this instance, the bass

\(^{31}\) I am using color to describe the experience of harmony within a pitch collection. Color variation within a pitch collection is available through chordal extensions and multiple scale root perspectives as a product of modal inflection. Note that my current discussion of harmony does not include melody or mode which is crucial to the harmonic experience.
is not outlining a key. Instead, the bass is oscillating chord tones within a new specific sonority. The harmony is stabilized on an A7 chord. In measures 30-32, shown later in Figure 5:

![Figure 5](image)

Figure 5: *Berceuse* Op.16, mm. 24-33

Figure 5, the stable bass returns to an oscillating fifth pattern. However, in this instance too, the bass is not outlining a key but continuing to rest within the dominant sonority, this time within F#7. The variation of the oscillating fifth motion is easily explained as a voice leading strategy that gives the transition direction as it moves throughout the stabilized dominant sonority.

In Figure 5 above, the slurs show the A in the bass from measure 24 slowly moves to the G in measure 26 which in turn moves by step to the F# in measure 31. F# is
^5 of B minor which is the destination of this section. The dominant sonority during these measures provides another example of Fauré combining dominants to create a super dominant. In this super dominant, Fauré allows each dominant to exist independently.

Measure 26, shown below in Figure 6, shows the dominant of D major. Measure 31, also shown in Figure 6, shows the dominant of B minor. Notice that Fauré avoids resolving the dominant of D major (see Figure 4 above). Instead, he moves immediately to the new dominant of B minor. In measure 34, Fauré finally resolves both dominants within the same measure. This is shown in the top measure in Figure 6. The initially arrival sounds like a return to D major, but it is actually a delayed arrival to B minor. B minor isn’t established strongly until the end of measure 37 (see Figure 7 below).

The bass note on the downbeat of measure 34 is a D, and the chord is a Dmaj7. The second beat is a first inversion B minor chord. Ultimately, this measure is best
analyzed in B minor, which I will discuss shortly. The important moment here is that Fauré delays the resolution of the F#7 chord in order to resolve the A7 chord first. The F#7 chord is resolved on the second beat immediately following the A7 resolution. In this instance Fauré has once again created a super dominant scenario by utilizing two dominant sonorities of different keys in succession. This shows further the level of color that Fauré manages to achieve. He is capitalizing on the shared key signature of D major and B minor and moving through them simultaneously utilizing their respective dominants.

It seems that the identity of stability in the stable bass is undermined in the dominant measures just discussed. Dominant harmonies after all exist to create movement to tonics. Fauré however maintains the sensation of stability through two methods. First, despite the change of chord and oscillation interval, both chords in these measures are stabilizing only one specific sonority. Even though they are two different dominant chords, they share the same dominant sonority. Second, the stable quality in these measures remains in contrast to the active harmonic motion associated with the mobile bass. The characteristics of the stable bass and mobile bass can now be defined as the stability of one key or one sonority versus the mobility through many keys or many sonorities.

In measures 34-55 the piece continues in B minor. These measures contain the most diverse range of harmony within Fauré’s Berceuse. Appropriately, Fauré uses the mobile bass to move throughout this section. Similar to the adaptation of the stable bass
mentioned earlier, the mobile bass does not retain its original form. Not only has it moved to a new key area of B minor, its contour has also been subtly adapted. Despite these changes, the mobile bass retains the quality of mobility because of the quickly changing harmonies and stepwise nature of the bass line. Figure 7 above shows the mobile bass line as it occurs in measures 34-42. Measures 42-49 are not shown because they are a literal repetition of the bass line and chords. The B minor section concludes with a literal return to the opening material of these. The closure of the B minor section also concludes the final substantial key area within the piece. The piece continues with a restatement of the original D Major/F# minor material.
D7 and G major

The D7 section and the G major section are dependent upon each other. In fact, the G major section is primarily a product of the D7 section; Fauré needs to resolve the extended dominant sonority on D that occurs in measures 82-87. Without an arrival to G, the emphasized dominant sonority would be out of place. The arrival of the dominant sonority itself is a surprise. This section of the piece follows a restatement of the D major/F# minor opening material that briefly moved to A major. In this second version, Fauré makes the A arrival briefer; it only lasts half a beat. He then transforms the chord to an A7 that immediately moves to D7 on the downbeat of measure 82. The movement to D7 is unexpected and heralds the entrance of new material.

Measure 83, shown below in Figure 8, shows the beginning of the D7 harmony and its transition to G major. The confirmation of the movement to G major is only available from a retrospective analysis, and as stated, the G major section is primarily a product of the D7 sonority. The D7 sonority is the important harmony. It is used to support a D Mixolydian melody that I will discuss later. I represent the prominence of D7 and the approaching G Major arrival with a dual reading as shown in Figure 8. The top analysis represents the chords as the listener experiences them. The bottom analysis represents the destination the D7 will eventually reach through traditional harmonic function.
As Figure 8 shows, D7 isn’t confirmed as the dominant of G until measure 88. However, the arrival to G major is weak and barely experienced by the listener at all. The duration of dominant sonority far exceeds the duration of G major itself. The experience
of G major is weakened further by a chain of secondary dominants which begin on beat two of measure 88. These secondary dominants only resolve properly to the root of the following chord thereby further eliminating a sensation of strong tonicization of one key. There is even an exception to this: The downbeat of measure 89 does not resolve until the second beat of measure 91. With the multiple secondary chords and delayed resolutions, G major is never strongly established. Measures 83-91 therefore are best viewed as a long dominant expansion. The G tonic chord is the only non-dominant chord in these measures other than the repeating Amin7 chord in measures 83-86. The Amin7 chords however are easily explained as neighbor motion just like the V11 chords from the opening. They expand the chord that occurs on the downbeat. This means that the Amin7 chord is also supporting a dominant expansion alongside the secondary dominants in measures 83-91.

Now it is important to discuss the role and interplay between the stable bass and mobile bass as they are applied in these measures. Measures 83-87 utilize a stable bass providing smooth connecting neighboring motion between D7 and Amin7. In measure 88 the arrival to G is reached and the string of secondary dominants begins. These measures are appropriately supported with the mobile bass. It is interesting to observe how Fauré utilized both bass types to emphasize a dominant sonority in different ways. If you recall from Figure 5, the stable bass was used to rest within the dominant sonority created by using only one chord at a time. In this new instance, Fauré uses the mobile bass to move throughout a chain of secondary dominants expanding other dominants. The identity of the both patterns is preserved in each scenario.
Summary

Table 1, which outlined the harmonic movement of this piece, is reproduced below in Table 2. I listed the A major sections in parenthesis because their occurrences are brief. I also listed the G major section I just discussed in parenthesis because, as stated, it is never established as a strong harmonic center. The G as a product of D7 is represented with the dotted line.

The first occurrence of A is in measures 22-24, and it only serves only as a brief arrival point, not a point of emphasis. By working towards A major Fauré completes the harmonic motion of moving throughout the tonic triad (D-F#-A). The second occurrence of A major is in measure 81 and only lasts for half a measure before being transformed into the D7 dominant just discussed. Excluding both the G major and A major moments leaves only D major, F# minor, and B minor as important key areas. Reorganizing these in order of emphasis results in D major, B minor, and F# minor. The organic relationship between D major and B minor is obvious: they share a key signature. It makes sense that they are the two primary keys of the piece. There is an important relationship between D major, B minor, and F# minor that is less obvious. The first appearance of F# was a result of a transposition from D major to F# minor. There is a diatonic mediant relationship between these two keys. F# is also the dominant of B minor thereby showing a second diatonic relationship. F# therefore is diatonically related to both D major and B minor as a member of each respective tonic chord. This shows that the main harmonic sections of the piece are closely related. This represents another example of how Fauré utilizes familiarity. He never ventures far from home harmonically speaking.
It is interesting to see how conservative the harmonic motion of this berceuse is considering it was written in 1878-9. Contemporary composers to Fauré pushed traditional harmonic movement literally to the limit. It also seems as though this simple harmonic view betrays the aural experience of the piece. The rich harmony is partially explained through the chordal extensions on the V11 chords associated with the stable bass, and through the secondary chords that occur with the mobile bass. These two techniques however still cannot fully explain the depth of color and harmony within the piece. I have discussed briefly how Fauré utilized rhythmic and harmonic familiarity throughout his piece to unify it and progress throughout it. This discussion however was focused heavily on bass motions and vertical root oriented harmonies. These in turn only represent a small portion of Fauré’s use of familiarity and subtlety in this piece. To better understand the full picture requires the consideration of melody.
Table 2: Summary of Harmonic Motion in Berceuse Op. 16 (Reproduced)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Bass Type</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S/M</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S/M</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61-69</td>
<td>D Major</td>
<td>S</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-81</td>
<td>F# Minor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-95</td>
<td>D Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-111</td>
<td>B Minor</td>
<td></td>
<td>M/S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:
- D Major
- F# Minor
- B Minor
- Transition
- Dominant
- (A Major)
CHAPTER THREE: MELODY IN FAURÉ

Introduction

Robert Orledge, in his book *Gabriel Fauré*, states, “Fauré was first and foremost a
harmonist.” Orledge quotes Françoise Gervais’s statement that Fauré “reunited
modality and tonality in such an intimate fusion that they formed a unique and perfectly
homogenous language.” Orledge says “in this language, melody was ‘inseparable’, and
a sort of ‘emanation’ from the harmony.” Carlo Caballero says:

Fauré’s passion for innovation worked in harmony with his interest in
music of the past, not against it. More than most other composers of his
generation, Fauré knew the older repertories, even the most remote; his
respect for these traditions was not aloof but grounded in wide-ranging
knowledge. Like this schoolmates Eugène Gigout and André Messager, he
grasped the special value of his education at Louis Niedermeyer’s school,
and his experience there left permanent traces in his development.

Caballero also quotes Fauré himself stating:

Perhaps it might raise a few eyebrows if I said how much a musical
constitution can enrich itself through frequent contact with the masters of
the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and indeed what resources may
spring from the study and practice of Gregorian chant.

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33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Carlo Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge
University Press, 2001), 71.

36 Ibid.
Related to these statements, my discussion of melody is largely a continuation of the discussion on harmony. The melody in this berceuse remains at all times supported and in sync with the vertical bass oriented harmony. The melodies however contribute to the overall harmonic experience of the piece through their modal qualities. These qualities are realized over the horizontal movement that is an inherent quality of melody. To clarify, the previous discussion of harmony involved traditional tonality as seen through a vertical analysis. The current discussion of harmony involves horizontal modality as it appears in melody, and how it interacts with the vertical tonality that has been established.

I will break my discussion of melody into four groups. First I will discuss phrase 1 in the D major section. I will begin with an observation from Orledge that discusses Fauré’s use of diatonic scale overlap. I will recognize Orledge's observation in Fauré’s piece through melodic ambiguity centered around D major and A Mixolydian. I will discuss the qualities of the melody to show that one reading is not stronger than the other, and that both exist simultaneously. I will then consider what implications this has on the original harmonic analysis from the previous section.

Next I will discuss phrase 2 in the F# minor section. I apply the previous methods of consideration and determine the presence of three new scale types within the melody. I connect phrases 1 and 2 by showing familiar elements of continuity between them. I also address why anticipated or seemingly logical modes are not present in the second melody. I conclude with another quote from Orledge that supports the idea modal ambiguity in Fauré’s music.
The B minor discussion is fairly brief. I continue my discussion of the new melody using the previous techniques. I observe the presence of a chromatic scale, but show that it is properly supported by secondary dominants below. I also note that this moment is the first moment that lacks any harmonic ambiguity. The D Mixolydian section also discusses a chromatic melodic moment. I show that D Mixolydian relates to melodic material from the beginning and melodic material that has yet to occur. I show that the original opening melody is subtly altered to fit within a new context. Finally, I conclude with a brief summary of melodic harmonies used in the piece.

**Discussion**

**Phrase 1: D Major Section**

In a discussion of Fauré’s love theme from *Pénélope*, Orledge makes an important observation relating to Fauré’s use of tonality and modality in combination. He states, “Pivot chords are invariably used in Fauré’s transitions, related both to the old and to the new keys. But there is more to it than this: a minor and F ‘Lydian’ major are in fact the same scale for Fauré.”\(^{37}\) This statement is true for Fauré’s berceuse as well. There are many instances of pivot chords. The predominant pivot chord in Figure 3 serves as an example. It turns out that the similarities between *Pénélope* and *Berceuse* go beyond pivot chords. There are also many instances of overlap between traditional scales and modal scales. In fact, the opening melody, shown in Figure 9 below, offers a traditional tonal reading as well as a modal reading.

The berceuse is stabilized in D major using the stable bass. A quick scan through the melody reveals that all the notes fit into the diatonic D major scale collection. Interestingly, this melody only utilizes the tonic note D sparingly, and when it does occur, it is with short fleeting eighth notes. It appears Fauré is purposely avoiding emphasizing D too strongly. If we recall from the harmonic discussion, Fauré is also careful to avoid utilizing the leading tone until he is ready for a harmonic transition. It is safe to assume that Fauré is always aware of the implication and role certain notes have in the music. In this instance, Fauré is mindful of the melodic tonic, whatever it may be. A consideration of emphasized melodic tones begins to reveal a new modal understanding of the melody. The most emphasized note in this melody is A. The phrase

![Figure 9: Berceuse Op.16, mm. 3-10](image-url)
begins and ends on A, and the notes with the longest durations are on A as well. There is considerable neighbor motion around A from both G and B. Measures 3 and 7 contain double neighbors interrupted by a short D eighth note before returning to A in the next respective measures. In measures 4-5 and 8-9, A is connected with a triple neighbor figure using G and B again. Considering these traits, another logical description of the melody is A Mixolydian. Similar to the Orledge’s example from Pénélope, D major and A Mixolydian share the same collection of notes. The only difference is the note on which each scale starts. This is shown below in Figure 10a.

![Figure 10a: Diatonic Scale Overlap](image1)

In the effort to describe the harmonic activity in this berceuse, it is worth considering whether one reading is stronger than the other, or should even be considered stronger than the other. My conclusion is no. A lack of emphasize on one reading above the other allows the ambiguity and qualities of each scale reading to thrive. This ambiguity is the source of the unique harmonic colors experienced in the piece. To summarize, the scales share the same collection of pitches thereby creating an organic link. Because the underlying harmony is in D, and because A is melodically emphasized
by strong beat orientation, note duration, and neighbor motion, both readings are accurate ways of describing the music. It seems certain now that Fauré carefully considers the role of certain notes just like he carefully controlled the use of leadings tones. It appears Fauré is intent on allowing the natural qualities of the multiple scales within the pitch collection to exist. The overlap of D major and A Mixolydian, the two primary scales used in phrase 1, are represented below in Figure 11. B minor is also listed in addition to these scales. B minor has not yet occurred, but it will appear later, and it is important now to acknowledge its organic relationship to this pitch collection. I will develop Figure 11 as my melodic discussion continues to show how the overall harmonic activity relates to each other.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key Signature</th>
<th>Scales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td># #</td>
<td>A Mixolydian</td>
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Figure 11: Phrase 1 Harmonic Collection/Overlap in Berceuse Op.16

With this new information, it is important to question if we can still label this moment of the piece as in D major. I will begin addressing this with another quote from Orledge that says, “In his approach to harmony in general, Fauré is a classicist,
developing and expanding his inheritance from within…”^38 So, the answer then is yes, this section is in D major. Fauré is working within the tonal realm he inherited and is expanding it with modal overlap. The supporting harmony is grounded in D major while the melodies expand the traditional harmony from the D major pitch collection itself. With that in mind, this moment can perhaps be more accurately described as existing within D major. The previous discussion of harmony shows that a traditional analysis not only works, but accurately portrays not only functional harmonic movement, but conservative harmonic movement. However, I also stated that the conservative analysis does not accurately portray the color of the music. By labeling the melody as both D major and A Mixolydian it becomes clearer how Fauré achieved the rich color within the piece. D major and A Mixolydian can exist simultaneously within a D major pitch collection. This coincides with my previous statement related to the stable bass application and lack of a leading tone. Fauré creates a D major context and rests within the pitch collection. D major and A Mixolydian share the same pitch collection and therefore can exist simultaneously. The idea of moving within a pitch collection has large implications on this piece as well as the Ravel piece to be discussed later. In fact, a consideration of the next phrase and how it relates to the first phrase shows further how a reading of multiple views most accurately describes the fluidity of color within the music.

Phrase 2: F# Minor Section

Figure 12 below shows the second phrase and the vertical harmonic support. As I discussed in the harmony section, this moment is in F# minor and utilizes the stable bass. Following the previous discussion, it may be more accurate to now state that this moment is within F# minor. The melody is a simple transposition of the first phrase. However, the transposition from a major key to a minor key creates new relationships with the supporting harmony resulting in three melodic readings. The three new readings are shown above in Figure 10b. Once again, these three scales share the same set of pitches. Using the same process of consideration from before, we can understand the melody from a diatonic F# minor viewpoint. The melody and the supporting harmony are grounded in the same key. Initially, A major appears to be a bad reading because the melody is supported by a minor key, not a major one. E Mixolydian appears to be a poor choice because there isn’t a single E present in the melody. It seems as though F# minor is the only valid reading until you observe that F# also fails to be emphasized within the melody itself. It only occurs once as a short eighth note in measure 13. An examination of
the relationship between phrase 1 and phrase 2 reveals how the qualities of F# minor, A major, and E Mixolydian work together to contribute to our understanding of familiarity and continuity of the piece. The overlap of these new scales is outlined below in Figure 13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Signature</th>
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<tr>
<td># #</td>
<td>E Mixolydian A Major F# Minor</td>
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![Figure 13: Phrase 2 Harmonic Collection/Overlap in Berceuse Op.16](image)

The most familiar way of connecting phrase 1 and 2 is through traditional transposition. D major becomes F# minor in both melody and harmony. From this view, the relationship between the melodic and harmonic tonic in each respective section is preserved. D major harmonies support a D major melody which moves to F# minor harmonies and an F# minor melody. Phrase one and two can also be linked with an A Mixolydian to E Mixolydian reading. From this view, the continuity between phrases is preserved through the familiarity of the consistent Mixolydian mode. Finally, a reading of A Mixolydian to A major links the two phrases through continuity of the scale root, A. With this perspective we can understand each reading as valid. The overlap of the scales and melodic readings between phrase one and phrase two is represented below in Figure 14. The arrow represents the shared root relationship between A major and A.
Mixolydian. The overlaps in Figure 14 now demonstrate groups belong to either the same pitch collection, or the same scale type. As you can see, no matter how Fauré moves, it is also subtle because of preserved familiarity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Signature</th>
<th>Scales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
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<tr>
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<td>D Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>B Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>A Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>F# Minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14: Phrase 1 and 2 Harmonic Collection/Overlap in *Berceuse* Op.16

It is important to address why C# Mixolydian is not a valid reading. It seems natural that if the second phrase is a transposition of the first that the melodic readings would be transposed as well. With this logic, we should expect to see A major, F# minor, and C# Mixolydian. As discussed, we do see A major and F# minor. It does initially appear that C# Mixolydian is present as well. C# is emphasized by neighbor motion, number of appearances, and duration just like A was in the previous phrase. However, the transposition that occurred is not between two major keys. The motion between a major...
and minor key results in a different collection of pitches. C# Mixolydian requires a D# and a G-natural, neither of which are present in the melody. C# belongs to F# major, not F# minor. C# Mixolydian is not a diatonic scale of the present pitch collection and is therefore not a valid reading.

Modal ambiguity is recognized by Orledge in the following statement:

“Fauré’s harmonic style thrives on ambiguity, and his modal interpolations are so subtle as often to pass unnoticed. He used modal elements to soften and facilitate transitions between two tonalities, and the modes brought fresh colouring and flexibility into a tonal system that remained intact in the process.”

This describes exactly what is happening at this moment in the berceuse. Fauré is transitioning between two tonalities, D major and F# minor. The modes are softening and facilitating the transition while bringing color and flexibility. The vertical harmonies themselves are functioning properly in an intact tonal system.

B minor Section

The same logic, discussion, and ambiguity continue into the B minor portion of the berceuse. Measure 34-35, shown below in Figure 15, can be interpreted either as D major or B minor. B minor initially appears to be a good reading because of a slightly stronger melodic emphasis. The note D doesn’t even appear in the melody at all. However, the entire first measure only utilizes D in the bass. Both readings therefore are equal. This moment was discussed in depth in the harmony section as a super dominant

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moment moving to D major and B minor (see Figure 6). This acts as further evidence of the validity of multiple readings by confirming both D major and B minor in measure 34.

![Sheet music of Berceuse Op.16, mm. 34-41]

Figure 15: *Berceuse* Op.16, mm. 34-41

Measures 37-41 should only be read in F# melodic-minor for two reasons. The melody outlines F# ascending melodic-minor in a purely scalar fashion through ascending stepwise motion. The supporting harmony in these measures is expanding F# minor, the dominant in B minor. This an interesting moment for two reasons. The first is that this is the first moment in the piece where a clear harmonic moment is portrayed. The second reason this moment is interesting is because F# minor does not fit within the
pitch collection of B minor. While F# minor is not within the pitch collection, it has already been established that F# is closely related to D major through a mediant relationship, and B minor through a dominant relationship. F# therefore is familiar within the overall harmonic context of the piece. F# can boldly appear in these measures through Fauré’s use of secondary dominants.

D Mixolydian Section

Looking backwards at measure 36 (Figure 15 above) shows a moment that appears to be D Mixolydian. D Mixolydian, like F# ascending melodic-minor, is also part of a different pitch collection. This small sample prepares the entrance of a D Mixolydian melody. The source of the melodic material itself requires looking backwards. Figure 16a, shown below, shows the melody as it occurs in the opening of the berceuse. Figure 16b shows the melody reharmonized in measure 82. A direct comparison of the melodies shows only a subtle difference in the third measure of each. The D from the opening melody becomes C-natural in the reharmonized melody near the end of the melodic descent. The presence of a new note requires the consideration of new modes and scales. The reharmonized melody is now in either G major or in D Mixolydian, and is supported by a D7 chord. This is the same D7/G major relationship that was discussed in depth earlier (see Figure 8). For reasons I’ll discuss later, melody is best observed as D Mixolydian.

This moment serves as an excellent example to demonstrate Fauré’s use of familiarity and modal inflection. The continuity between the opening melody and its
reharmonization is supported through two logical readings. D major to D Mixolydian or, A Mixolydian to D Mixolydian. The first reading demonstrates root continuity while the second demonstrates scale continuity. Either way, at least one element is preserved, the tonic or the scale. The best description however is to say that both readings once again exist simultaneously. This reharmonization of the opening melody also demonstrates subtlety through familiarity. It also shows that all the melodies in this piece are somehow related to one another. The relations and continuity occur in shared root of melody and supporting harmony, root consistency between scales, or scale types.
Summary

Figure 17, shown below, represents all the melodic and harmonic readings that occur in the berceuse from beginning to end. It reveals all the colors Fauré utilizes without having to travel great harmonic distances. It is easy to observe the ambiguity any of the melodies possess within any one harmonic moment. It is difficult to understand how the ambiguity creates consistency over the course of the entire berceuse. Figure 17 aims to show that the ambiguity is a natural product of the harmonic areas Fauré utilizes, and that there is considerable overlap between each area. The ambiguity is a product by the vast amount of familiar scale possibilities. Fauré fills his Berceuse with color but manages to maintain a smooth, subtle, and continuously fluid character from beginning to end. This is achieved by never having to truly depart from one harmonic area. Instead, Fauré subtly shifts throughout a variety of closely related scales. His understanding of both harmony and modes allows him to explore many colors through the many opportunities of pitch collection overlap.
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<thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Mixolydian ———— Major</td>
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<tr>
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<td>A ———— D ———— B</td>
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<tr>
<td># #</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td># # #</td>
<td>E ———— A ———— F#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mixolydian Major Minor

Key

- **Same Pitch Collection**
- **Same Scale Type**
- **Same Scale Tonic**

Figure 17: Summary of Scale overlap and Root Continuity in *Berceuse* Op.16
CHAPTER FOUR: FORM IN FAURÉ

Considering the amount of scales that occurred within a relatively short piece, it is important to understand how Fauré organized these throughout the work as a whole. The continued use of familiarity and conservative supportive harmonic motion seems to pose the risk of boring monotony. It is also at risk of being too loosely structured and not having a sense of direction or orientation. The discussion of form will show how this piece is organized by section, and how the sections relate to the piece as a whole. The discussion will also outline an important moment at the end involving both the confirmation and closure of modal harmonies in addition to traditional harmonic closure.

Fauré’s berceuse is in ternary form, and is outlined in Table 3 below. The main factor in determining boundaries is through contrast. The most obvious contrast is created using keys. Section A and A’ both contain multiple key areas whereas section B remains in only one key, B minor. B minor itself is restricted solely to the B section which creates even stronger contrast with A and A’. The second main area of contrast involves the melody. The opening melody undergoes transpositions but always remains recognizable. The melody in section B is completely new and is also isolated within the B section itself. To clarify, the B section only uses one key and one melody, and both are restricted within the B section itself. Contrast between is further developed by newly composed transitional material between the opening A section and the B section. It is important that Fauré create contrast because of the continuous fluid movement throughout the piece.
The sectional contrast is also important because Fauré does not rely on cadences to create closure or separation.

Now that techniques of contrast have been defined, it is important to explore techniques of continuity and unification. Table 3 shows the occurrence of the bass patterns in order of their appearance. As you can see, the first half of the berceuse is dominated by the stable bass pattern. The mobile bass pattern during F# minor almost seems out of place. Fauré’s inclusion of the mobile bass pattern within the A section however is important in creating background continuity in the piece. The inclusion of the mobile bass in this section acts as a foreshadowing to the B section. As the table shows, the B section is comprised solely of the mobile bass pattern. If the mobile bass pattern had been first introduced during the B section the contrast between A and B would be stronger than it actually is. If the mobile bass hadn’t been foreshadowed, the B section would contain a new harmonic area, a new bass pattern, and a new melody. Contrast this strong would interrupt the fluid, familiar, and continuous nature of the piece. By including the mobile bass in the opening A section, Fauré introduced a new idea against a familiar background. The contrasting B minor key and new melody in turn are able to be presented against a familiar background using the mobile bass pattern. This strategy of introducing new against old remains true for the entire piece; Fauré never introduces a new idea without the accompaniment of a familiar characteristic. The constant presence of familiar material in turn allows Fauré the ability to truly capitalize on the fleeting and ambiguous harmonies created from the modal influence of his melodies.
One moment that I find particularly creative involves the creation of closure within the piece. Returning to Figure 16b above shows the opening melody reharmonized above a D7 supporting harmony. D Mixolydian was determined to be a valid reading of the melody. This means that D Mixolydian is supported with D7 harmony. In other words, the modal melody and the traditional harmony are united in root and sonority. Previous modal readings did not share the same scale root with the supporting harmony. For example, A Mixolydian for example was supported by D major in the beginning of the piece. I don’t think it is coincidence that Fauré chooses to unite the roots of the modal melody and the traditional harmony on the tonic note of the key piece as it draws near the end. Especially when you observe that the D Mixolydian/D7 measures are followed by D major melody and D major harmony. It seems obvious that Fauré is closing both the modal melodic harmonies and the traditional melodic harmonies with the true tonic note as the melodic root while being supported with the true tonic in the bass.
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<th>11-21</th>
<th>22-24</th>
<th>25-33</th>
<th>34-55</th>
<th>55-56</th>
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<th>70-81</th>
<th>82-87</th>
<th>88-91</th>
<th>91-111</th>
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<tr>
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<td>d Major</td>
<td>F Major</td>
<td>d Major</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td>d Major</td>
<td>F Major</td>
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<td>F Major</td>
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<td>D Major (F# minor)</td>
<td>D Major (A minor)</td>
<td>D Major (F# minor)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>F Major</td>
<td>D Major</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td>D Major</td>
<td>F Major</td>
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<td>F Major</td>
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<td>F Major</td>
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<tr>
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<td>D major/D7</td>
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<td>D major/D7</td>
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<td>D major/D7</td>
<td>minor</td>
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<tr>
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<td>M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Outline of Form and Content in Berceuse Op.16

Form Section

A 
B 
A
CHAPTER FIVE: MELODY IN RAVEL

Introduction

In this chapter, I will observe Ravel’s contrapuntal techniques and harmonic variations as they are applied to melody. First, I will discuss Ravel’s interest in counterpoint and melody citing points from Barbara L. Kelly and Roland-Manuel. Next I will observe Ravel’s counterpoint treatment of the primary melodic content of the piece. Following this, I will show similarities between Ravel’s melodies and Fauré’s melodies regarding ambiguity through shared pitch collections. I will then look at the entire first phrase as it is expanded from the opening melody on Fauré’s name. I will discuss the harmonic ambiguities that exist within the first phrase and compare them to existing observations from Peter Kaminsky. Following this, I will briefly consider the role of F-natural in the opening melody and prepare it for future discussion. Finally, I will conclude with a complete outline of all the melodic content in the piece to show that subtle transformations between melodies contribute to familiarity of content. Before jumping into the Ravel discussion, I want to note changes in the berceuse style. Early I stated berceuses were cradle songs characterized by a compound meter, a tonic pedal, and I-V oscillation. Ravel’s berceuse is in a simple duple meter, but preserves berceuse qualities through many pedal points and chordal oscillations. These will be discussed as they appear.
Discussion

As stated earlier, Fauré’s compositional practice is rooted in harmony. Ravel is a master of harmony himself, however he isn’t necessarily approaching composition from a purely harmonic stance like Fauré. While certainly considering the role and movement of harmony, Ravel equally engages counterpoint and melody. Barbara L. Kelly states that Ravel’s music “takes a path between harmony and counterpoint.” She quotes Roland-Manuel, a student of Ravel, talking about Ravel’s music saying, “Without being horizontal, it often derives the rarest effects from a sort of harmonic counterpoint.” Kelly also states that there was a general renewed interest around counterpoint and melody after the postwar period in France. Ravel’s *Berceuse* was written during the postwar period and is full of moments that indicate clear and conscious consideration to both counterpoint and melody.  

*Berceuse Sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré* is, as the name implies, dedicated to Fauré himself. Ravel creates the melody using notes that correspond to the letters of Gabriel Fauré’s name. The mapping of the letters to the notes is shown below in Figure 18. It is unclear how Ravel chooses specific notes to represent certain letters, but the original melodic name is presented in Figure 18a. Figure 18b demonstrates a second melody created by literally turning the melody upside and assigning a bass clef to the notes.

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41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., 44.
Ravel reorders the pitches in Figure 18b from back to front to create the second melody used within the piece. The final versions of these melodies are shown below in Figure 19. The upside down and backwards ordering of pitches are similar to retrograde and inversion techniques used in counterpoint. For this reason, I have named the melody in Figure 19b as RI melody. While unorthodox and nontraditional, the melodic manipulations have their roots in counterpoint. The process therefore shows Ravel’s intentional use of counterpoint inspired techniques to transform a melodic idea.

Figure 18: Two Melodic Spellings of Gabriel Fauré’s Name

Figure 19: Second Presentation of Melodic Content Derived from Gabriel Fauré’s Name

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Ravel expands the original melody derived from Fauré’s name to complete the entire first phrase. The full phrase is shown below in Figure 20. As you can see this phrase demonstrates many modal qualities. The G Mixolydian quality is only possible because of the brief F-natural which I will discuss momentarily. C Lydian and E minor share a key signature and can exist together in the same fashion as the major, minor, and Mixolydian scales previously observed in Fauré’s Berceuse. This fluidity between scales with matching key signatures demonstrates a continued line of harmonic richness that is associated with French music. Once again, subtlety is available through familiarity, in this case, a shared key signature. The modal qualities also serve as continuity between pieces.

![Figure 20: Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré, mm. 1-16](image)

Peter Kaminsky’s analysis of Ravel’s Menuet sur le nom d’Haydn provides further evidence of both fluidity within a key signature and Ravel’s counterpoint treatment of melody. Menuet sur le nom d’Haydn contains three strikingly similar qualities. The first is Ravel’s creation of the melody; the notes create a musical spelling of Haydn’s name. The second is Ravel’s manipulation of the melody on Haydn’s name.
Kaminsky writes “The antecedent phrase not only introduces the motto but also implies its retrograde, thereby anticipating its subsequent transformation.” This confirms Ravel’s clear intent on using contrapuntal techniques previously discussed, including the nontraditional retrograde. The final interesting similarity between these pieces is the harmony. Kaminsky observes that the prime form and retrograde melodies are harmonized in E minor and G major respectively. This is the same harmony utilized by Ravel in *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*, only in reverse order. This demonstrates another clear example of harmonic ambiguity created through common key signature.

There is one particularly important moment to observe in the opening phrase in *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*. The F-natural in the third measure is the only chromatic note in the entire melody, and it temporarily nullifies the only sharp present in the key signature. This F-natural serves two roles. The first is to avoid establishing G major too strongly. As we will later see, Ravel is resting within a G major/E minor harmonic area. The presence of an F# would contribute to a strong tonicization of G major. This would result in a less fluid and flexible harmonic experience. The F-natural allows the modal qualities of the melody to comfortably exist. The second role the F-natural serves is foreshadowing the entrance of the RI melody during an important structural moment in the piece. This specific moment will be covered in detail in the later discussion on harmony.

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A summary of all of Ravel’s melodic transformations in *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré* is shown below in Figure 21 in the order that they appear in the music.

Figures 21a and 21d show the original melodies generated from Fauré’s name (compare with Figures 18 and 19). Figures 21b and 21c show the transformations that are applied to the opening melody on Fauré’s name (21a). The changes applied in Altered Melody 1 are subtle. The melody is transposed to fit within a G ascending melodic-minor setting, and the contour in the third measure is altered. Melody 2 is transposed to fit in an OCT [01] setting, and second half of the melody is truncated. The gradual break down of the opening melody coincides with a slowly increasing amount on harmonic dissonance as I will discuss later. For now, it is important to recognize that melodies 19a, 19b, and 19c, are only subtly different from each other, and as a result, they remain familiar in every setting that they appear. This is another example of subtlety through familiarity.

Figure 21: Summary of Melodic Content in *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*
Earlier I stated that there was a renewed interest in melody and counterpoint in France, and that Ravel’s *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré* exhibited these traits. It seems almost as though only a portion of that statement is true. While the characteristics of counterpoint technique are present, an emphasis on melody seems to be lacking purely based on the small amount of melodic material in the piece. The melodies however play critical roles within the piece by aiding in harmonic transitions and defining key structural moments thereby emphasizing their importance. The general small amount of melodic material contributes to its importance. Ravel writes portions of music that do not contain melody at all. When the melodies do appear, they stand out strongly. The placement and use of the melodies will be discussed shortly.
CHAPTER SIX: HARMONY IN RAVEL

Introduction

My discussion of harmony observes Ravel’s unique extensions of tonal harmony. Ravel uses traditional and nontraditional pitch collections and moves throughout them with traditional chord progressions and other nontraditional techniques. He connects the harmonic sections he explores through several techniques including melodic content, bass movement, scale overlap, and other organic relationships. My discussion will progress through the harmonic sections outlined below in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitch Collection</th>
<th>G Major E minor</th>
<th>G Ascending Melodic Minor</th>
<th>OCT [01]</th>
<th>Dominants</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>G Major E Minor</th>
<th>G Major OCT [01]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>17-26</td>
<td>27-32</td>
<td>33-42</td>
<td>43-52</td>
<td>53-63</td>
<td>64-72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Summary of Harmonic Movement in Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré

I begin the G major/E minor section with a discussion of techniques and observations taken from an analysis by Peter Kaminksy. I observe an ambiguous tonic relationship shared between G major and E minor. I will show that both tonal centers share a functional chord progression that primarily rests within a predominant function. I will also discuss Ravel’s introduction of chordal planing which will continue through majority of the piece. I finish by observing that the predominant function continues into the next harmonic section.
In the G ascending melodic-minor section I discuss the transition from the previous melodic material into the new harmonically stagnant and dissonant section. I observe that Roman numeral analysis and chord progression are no longer applicable and the music is best understood as stagnant harmony within a pitch collection. I will show that movement is created using dissonance and melody instead of chord progression. I will observe these same qualities in the OCT [01] section that follows in addition to the role harmonic overlap plays in harmonic movement.

In the dominant section, I discuss the culmination of the techniques used in all the previous harmonic sections. I will show how the predominant motion from the previous sections is confirmed by the arrival of dominant material. I will outline that the dominant moment serves as another super dominant created by combining both dominants from the original G and E tonics. I will show that part of the super dominant is also created using the F-natural that is foreshadowed in the opening melody. I will observe that the motion into this section is created through continued melodic motion and contrapuntal voice leading.

Finally, I will discuss the closing G major/Oct [01] Section. In this section I observe that the structural bass movement belongs to a G major tonic through the completion of T-PD-D-T motion. I also observe that Ravel eliminates the role of an E tonic. I discuss that despite the presence the G oriented bass, the E tonic remains an important aspect of the piece even though it isn’t emphasized at the end. Finally, I discuss the reintroduction of the OCT [01] pitch collection as a means of tying the piece together.
Discussion

G Major/E Minor

Before looking at Ravel’s *Berceuse sur la nom de Gabriel Fauré* I want to discuss an analytical technique used by Kaminsky in his analysis of another Ravel piece, “Pavane de la belle au bois dormant.”

My interest is in his discussion involving two chords: A minor and C major. In the analysis, the A minor chord is labeled as “tonic” and the C major chord is labeled as “tonic-relative.”

A minor and C major share a common key signature just like G major and E minor in *Berceuse sur la nom de Gabriel Fauré*. Kaminsky’s analysis is structured from an A minor perspective, hence A minor as tonic and C as the relative major, but it observes their interplay as a shared functional tonic.

Kaminsky concludes this in his analysis saying:

…[the Pavane] utilizes completely conventional elements: a melodic unfolding modeled by a Schenkerian 5-line within a three-part classical form. The mature Ravel’s compositional wizardry emerges, however, through a transparent technical device-the superimposition of harmonic function-resulting in the stark noncongruence between the formal articulation and the tonal structure. In this way, Ravel, working with formal and tonal norms, subverts their normativeness by rewiring their connections, thereby creating a unique structural process.

*Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré* demonstrates the same techniques of rewiring connections between formal and tonal processes.

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46 Ibid., 87-88.

47 Ibid., 90.
The opening 4 measures, shown above in Figure 22, immediately set up the overlapping relationship between G and E. The first measure outlines an ascending G major triad in the melody. Ravel supports this with a contrapuntal descending line beginning on G thereby implying G as the tonic. The second beat can be analyzed as a B chord or V in E, that moves to the corresponding tonic E in measure 2. The V-i relationship, paired with the melodic leap from B to E suggests an E tonic. Interestingly, these opening 2 measures are easily analyzed using functional progressions from each tonic perspective. This is a similar scenario presented by Kaminsky earlier. There is ambiguity in the harmonies and tonal interpretation, yet each serve a role in functional progression.

The harmonies that follow do not promote one key center over the other. For example, the second beat of measure 2 is not only not a chord, but is a dissonant ninth. The down beat of measure 3 is the chromatic F-natural mentioned earlier. In measure 4 there is a weak half cadence from an E minor perspective, but the harmonies that follow
in measure 5 do not confirm E which in turn continues the ambiguity of a harmonic center. Without clear confirmation of one key center over the other, both key centers remain options for interpretation.

It is not crucial that we determine one specific key to understand what is happening in the piece thus far. In fact, this ambiguity represents a new example where Ravel rewires connections and functions of chords to create a unique structural process as previously described by Kaminsky. As described, the opening of the piece established two tonics. Figure 23, shown below, demonstrates how both G major and E minor continue to function together by enforcing predominant harmony beginning in measure 5 and lasting through measure 12. The first beat of Figure 23a reveals a dominant chord in both keys, but it is difficult to assign a Roman numeral to the second chord. Ultimately, it does not matter. Ravel is simply utilizing chordal planing that functions as neighbor motion to the downbeat. It is like Fauré’s use of I and V11 during the opening stable bass portion where V11 prolonged I through neighbor motion (see Figure 2). In measure 9 (Figure 23b), the second chord could possibly be analyzed as a dominant functioning 9th

Figure 23:
*Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*, mm. 5-6 and 9-10, Predominant Motion

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chord, however, it is best viewed as another prolongation of the downbeat. The neighbor motion in the treble line of the piano disappears in 23b, but the chordal planing technique remains active. So, while both chords in 23b are reorganized from their appearance in 23a, they continue to function in a predominant context. The continuity between 23a and 23b is therefore preserved by chordal planing and familiarity of chordal function.

Figure 24: Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré, mm. 13-16

Measures 13-16, shown above in Figure 24, confirm the tonic to predominant motion observed by moving to dominant function. In measure 13 the chordal planing temporarily ceases and the treble line of the piano part slows to half notes. The change in rhythmic motion sets up the closing gesture of the opening section. The harmonies in measures 14-15 can be analyzed as dominants in both keys. This moment is not an example of a super dominant scenario despite the presence of two dominants in two keys. These dominants exist within a harmonically ambiguous context and occur in a natural progression. They are not used to unify content or mark an important moment in the piece. The notes in measure 14 spell an unaltered V chord in E, and a V chord in G with
an added 6th. Once again both tonics appear to be equal. The bass notes in measures 13-14 however seem to lean towards a reading in G major through G-D movement. But, in measure 15, there is a clear melodic cadence outlining V-I in E. The melodic cadence is supported further with an E major triad in measure 16. This obvious cadence in E undermines the prominence of G from the previous measures. Harmonically however, this moment can also be read as a deceptive cadence in G. Once again, both harmonic centers function in a shared fashion. Looking ahead reveals that the shared functional relationship between G and E continues. The next section of the piece marks a modulation to a G ascending melodic-minor pitch collection sustained over a E pedal in the bass. The deceptive cadence in G and the E pedal that follow preserve the predominant motion across sections.

G Ascending Melodic-Minor

The entire G ascending melodic-minor section is shown below in Figure 25.

Unlike the smooth melodic section that preceded, the G ascending melodic-minor section is incredibly stagnant harmonically and melodically. The first two bars of the violin part are empty and the piano part establishes an oscillation between two dissonant chords. This oscillation is a continuation of the planing technique from the previous section (see Figure 23). At this point in the piece, chordal identification and progression is not a useful means of analysis. For example, the first chord in measure 17 could be analyzed as a C7 chord, however the second chord is problematic. It is some sort of augmented chord with a 9th on top if you disregard the bass E. Including the E only creates a stranger
chord. Fortunately, these chords don’t require a label or a functional role because the repeated oscillation, bass pedal, and general lack of movement hinders any sense of chordal progression. The E pedal serves as a continuation of the predominant. The new harmonic goal in this section is to establish dissonance which the piano chords quickly accomplish.

Figure 25: Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré, mm. 17-26

In addition to the dissonant chordal planing and bass pedal, Ravel uses the violin line as another opportunity to create a stagnant experience. Instead of serving in a continued melodic role from the previous section, the violin repeats a four-bar pattern spanning a small interval of a minor third. The failure to fulfill the expectation of a continuing melodic role leaves the listener hanging. Notice that melodic material is in
fact entirely absent until the entrance of the Altered Melody 1 in measure 24. The melody stands out and is instantly recognizable against all the dissonance, repetition, and nonlinear motion. The melody however is short lived and it quickly ends as it brings in the new section.

OCT [01]

Figure 26, shown below, displays the new harmonic section. The techniques from the last section are applied in the exact same fashion as before. Two dissonant chords oscillate over a sustained E bass pedal while the violin line meanders between a third, this time written as a diminished fourth. Melody once again is nonexistent until the second altered melody enters in measure 31. The primary difference between these measures and the previous measures is a higher level of dissonance created through the use of the OCT [01] pitch collection. Ravel’s technique of slowly increasing dissonance and use of the octatonic scale is observed by Kaminsky in his analysis of Menuet sur le nom d’Haydn. Kaminsky says “the ongoing canonical transformations of the motto engender a progressively more dissonant harmonic and pitch-collectional context, culminating with the sustained octatonic region.”48 This statement describes exactly what is happening in Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré as well.

The increasing dissonance and use of the OCT [01] combined with Kaminsky’s statement confirm the idea that pitch collection, rather than traditional progression using

chords and key signatures, is a better way of understanding the piece in these measures.

Ravel is moving from pitch collection to pitch collection rather than chord to chord. To clarify further, harmonic sonority, a product of pitch collection, serves the roll of

![Musical notation]

Figure 26: *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*, mm. 27-32

harmonic progression. The increasing level of dissonance acts as progression by increasing tension. Ravel also uses the melodies in the dissonant sections to create forward motion. He withholds melodic material until the end of sections thereby creating a transition through melodic movement. The melodies therefore play an important role and serve as continuity by linking stagnant dissonance levels with familiar linear driven content. It is important to note that the opening section can be easily understood as a G
major/E minor pitch collection that also exhibits qualities of traditional progress. This shows how it relates to the sections that followed it.

If pitch collection is indeed replacing the traditional role of progression as I have just stated, it is important to consider the harmonic motion up to this point to see how Ravel transitions between the pitch collections themselves. In an article titled “The Consecutive-Semitone Constraint on Scalar Structure: A Link between Impressionism and Jazz,”49 Dmitri Tymoczko discusses the combination of traditional and nontraditional scales in a smooth extension of traditional harmony. The product of his methods states that the whole tone, diatonic scale, ascending form of the melodic-minor, and the octatonic scale are all locally diatonic because, “any three adjacent pitches of any of these scales are enharmonically equivalent to three adjacent pitches of some diatonic scale.”50 In other words, the whole tone scale C-D-E-F#-G#-A# is locally diatonic with C major because they share the notes C-D-E. Tymoczko focuses on the relationship between chromatic scales and their relationship against diatonic scales.

If we accept the definition that scales containing three similar notes are indeed locally diatonic, we can also observe that some chromatic scales are locally diatonic with each other. Figure 27, shown below, demonstrates that G ascending melodic-minor and OCT [01] are locally diatonic, and actually exceed the 3-note requirement set forth by

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50 Ibid., 138.
Tymoczko. But what does this mean in the context of Ravel’s berceuse?

Tymoczko says we can expect:

significant and audible similarities between music based on the locally diatonic scales and traditional diatonic music: locally diatonic scales will bear some resemblance to traditional scales, while chords of locally diatonic thirds will resemble diatonic triads and seventh chords and so on.\(^5\)

In other words, the scales sound familiar because they are familiar. Once again

Tymoczko is comparing chromatic scales to diatonic scales, but the theory also applies to chromatic scale comparisons. Because G ascending melodic-minor and OCT [01] are locally diatonic, they will sound familiar to each other while also remaining distinct.

Ravel capitalizes on the overlap between these scales and uses it to increase the dissonance level and smoothly shift to a new pitch collection. This is another example of subtlety through familiarity. The introduction of the octatonic scale isn’t jarring for the

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The next section of the piece, shown above in Figure 28, is arguably the most important moment in the piece because it ties together several previous elements. The new section is immediately distinct because the bass pedal moves to D, the RI melody appears in the violin part thereby ending the stagnant meandering, and the chordal planing changes from ambiguous dissonant chords to two major triads. The movement of the bass pedal is perhaps the easiest and most obvious change to hear. The pedal rested on E for 16 measures that spanned both the G ascending melodic-minor pitch collection and the OCT [01] collection. When the bass note finally changes it immediately grabs the listener’s attention. It is necessary to consider why Ravel broke the E pedal pattern. The first important observation is to acknowledge that the pedal point changes at the same time the RI melody appears. The harmonic collection also changes in sync with the bass
pedal change and the entrance of the RI melody. In other words, the bass, harmony, and melody all change in synchronization. Clearly something is happening.

The new harmonic collection is initially difficult to explain because it does not fit into a traditional scale or key signature. A partial explanation of its origin is found back in measure 3 (see Figure 20). Earlier I stated that the F-natural was foreshadowing an important moment in the piece. This is that moment. The F-natural is used in the F major triad in this new section. The F major triad is a tritone substitution of B, the dominant of E. The bass note D is the dominant of G. When combined, these measures reveal movement to the dominants of both G and E. This serves as another super dominant moment by linking two dominants in one section. It also creates continuity between the opening melodic section that utilized two tonics and the dissonant activity that followed.

It is important to observe that while Ravel is clearly using pitch collection as harmonic motion, the initial analysis using chordal progression during the G/E moment is still relevant and important. The movement to the dominants confirms the sustained predominant motion that the Roman numerals provided. Ravel continued the predominant motion from the G/E section into the dissonant sections utilizing the E pedal point. When the pedal changes to D the predominant motion stops, and the dominant section begins utilizing the foreshadowed F-natural. The process of combining pitch collection motion alongside chordal progression is yet another example of Ravel’s unique structural process using tonal forms and norms.

The new harmonic section is not only a product of the F-natural and D dominants, but also of the previous dissonance. The second beat of measure 33, shown in Figure 28
above, sounds C#, D, E, E#, and G# simultaneously. In other words, three intervals of a second and tritone occur at once. So, even though the pitch collection in Figure 28 doesn’t conform to a traditional scale or key, it is organically created from the preexisting elements within the piece itself.

![Figure 29: Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré, mm. 32-22](image)

Ravel draws further attention to this section using melodic continuity and voice leading. This is shown above in Figure 29. Ravel creates melodic continuity by joining the end of the A2 melody with the beginning of the RI melody. Ravel also creates a sensation of arrival by voice leading the outer voices in contrary motion, each moving a whole step. The stagnant violin line slowly ascends to link with the high entrance of the RI melody while the bass pedal descends. These techniques represent continued evidence of Ravel’s contrapuntal considerations as well motion created through melodic movement.
The last important harmonic section to discuss is the closing section. The material in this section is interesting for two reasons. The first reason is that the ending of the piece finally reveals G as a structural tonic from a bass perspective. Figure 30 below shows the bass oscillating between G and D. A retrospective analysis reveals that the bass line moves from G, the first note of the piece, to an E-A oscillation. The E-A oscillation is reduced to an E pedal that eventually leads the D pedal in the dominant section. Finally, the D pedal moves to the D-G oscillation shown above. The bass movement of the piece moves through the traditional T-PD-D-T model. This motion is summarized below in Figure 31.

![Figure 30: Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré, mm. 64-end](image)

![Figure 31: Bass Line Movement and Function in Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré](image)
Another interesting moment in the closing section involves E. It appears as though Ravel intentionally eliminates E as a possible tonic. In fact, the piece ends with an Eb sustained against an A resulting in a tritone. It is as though Ravel chooses to destroy the option of E as a tonic rather than just avoid it. Even with the retrospective view, it is important to allow the earlier shared relationship between G and E to remain. It is undeniable that E contributes to the development and experience of the piece. The melodic and cadential motion around E and the important F major chord are important to the experience and structure of piece as a whole. These elements all require that E serves a role as a tonic. It would be incorrect to disregard the G/E relationship simply because E is not confirmed at the end. It is best to view the G/E relationship as working together in independent parts. The bass movement is best viewed in G, but majority of the melodic moments exhibit E tonic qualities.

The second reason the closing section warrants discussion is because the piece closes with a return of both a high level of dissonance and the OCT [01] pitch collection. The D# in the OCT [01] collections appears enharmonically as Eb, and the pitch collection is only missing A#. Perhaps Ravel avoided the A# (or Bb) to confirm G major as the final tonic rather than create a potential G minor reading. Regardless, it is interesting that Ravel chooses to reintroduce dissonance in the closing measures and end the piece on a lingering tritone. The harmonic motion in Ravel’s *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré* is reproduced from Table 4 and shown again below in Table 5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitch Collection</th>
<th>G Major E minor</th>
<th>G Ascending Melodic Minor</th>
<th>OCT [01]</th>
<th>Dominants</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>G Major E Minor</th>
<th>G Major OCT [01]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>17-26</td>
<td>27-32</td>
<td>33-42</td>
<td>43-52</td>
<td>53-63</td>
<td>64-72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Summary of Harmonic Movement in *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré* (Reproduced)
CHAPTER SEVEN: FORM IN RAVEL

Ravel’s Berceuse is in ternary form and is outlined at the end of this chapter in Table 6. As you can see, the piece is very sectionalized. The boundary between A and B is formed primarily through contrast. Section A is consonant and melodic while section B is stagnant and dissonant. The aural separation is very clear. The B section is very sectionalized within itself. It contains three distinct sections: G ascending melodic-minor, OCT [01], and the dominant section. Despite the many sections, the piece is cohesive because of Ravel’s unique structural process.

Ravel’s unique structural process in this piece is related to the slow movement of underlying structural material shown in the bottom two rows of Table 6. As you can see, the slow-moving processes at the bottom cross the distinct sectional lines in the upper parts of the chart. These slow-moving processes, specifically the bass and the structural movement, represent the ingenuity of Ravel’s formal design. The traditional and functional harmonic motion in the bass crosses formal sections and unites the traditional chord progressions from the G/E section with the pitch collection moments in the B section.

In the beginning of the piece it was unclear what the tonic was because the piece demonstrates qualities of both G major and E minor. The harmonies, while slightly ambiguous, functioned within a Roman numeral analysis and yielded results. Even though it was later determined that pitch collection served as the primary means of
understanding harmonic movement, the Roman numeral analysis from the opening revealed an establishment and sustainment of a predominant function. This in turn revealed that Ravel was combining the roles of both traditional and nontraditional harmonies with progression. The G/E relationship should therefore be viewed as functioning pitch collection and as an ambiguous two tonic functional progression. This duality of traditional harmony processes and new processes are examples of Ravel’s unique structural process.

The traditional functional harmonic progressions are contained within the opening A section. The B section marks the beginning of the new harmonic processes with movement through dissonant pitch collections. Ravel extends the old traditional harmonic movement across the boundary into the new harmonic process using the bass. In Table 6 there is a dotted line between the A/E and the E in the bass line. This is because the bass changes from an oscillation to a pedal point, and the A disappears. The E however is maintained and the PD function that began in the A section continues in the B section. As you can see, both the bass note and the structural movement cross between the formal sections that were described earlier as very sectionalized. This does not conflict with the sectionalized experience of the piece. In fact, the very fact that Ravel crosses this border so smoothly is a testament to his ingenuity. These tactics show how Ravel combined new processes with old processes, and fused them together into one united fully functional form.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Pd</th>
<th>Melodic Key</th>
<th>Structural Movement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td>Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E Minor</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52-63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td>Measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E Minor</td>
<td>Movement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **T**: Table 6: Summary of Form and Content in Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Faure
- **D**: Formal Section
- **Pd**: Pre-Dominant
- **Retrocension Inversion Melody**: R: A: Altered Melody
- **Original Melody**: O
- **Melody**: O: Original Melody
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

My discussion of the berceuses sought to identify and observe techniques used to create music in a French style. The berceuses are both small form works thereby representing a substantial amount of French repertoire. The berceuses also allowed for easy comparison because of their shared genre and instrumentation. In addition to this, the berceuses functioned well in the comparative analysis because of their respective composers. Both Fauré and Ravel are regarded as important French composers, and both work within the tonal realm in these pieces.

My analysis observed subtlety occurring through familiarity in rhythmic and harmonic techniques. In Fauré’s Berceuse, rhythmic familiarity is present in the reoccurring stable and mobile bass patterns. The patterns themselves are familiar to each other making transitions between them smooth and subtle. In Ravel’s Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré, rhythmic familiarity was observed in the chordal planing and bass pedal. In both berceuses, the rhythmic familiarity primarily serves subtlety of harmony; rhythmic familiarity provides a stable platform for the harmonies to subtly move upon.

Harmonic familiarity and subtlety was witnessed through ambiguity in both berceuses. In Fauré’s berceuse, the familiarity occurs in the ambiguity between the modal and traditional scales within a diatonic pitch collection. Harmonic familiarity was also observed in the conservative harmonic motion of the piece. Instead of traveling to distantly related keys, Fauré moves primarily between D major and B minor and exploits
the numerous color opportunities within their shared diatonic collection. In Ravel’s 
berceuse, the G/E relationship creates ambiguity between two potential tonics. In addition 
to this, Ravel capitalizes on the familiarity of scale overlap by subtly shifting from G 
ascending melodic-minor to OCT [01]. Ravel also uses only one melody that is slightly 
reharmonized each occurrence resulting in further subtle and familiar movement. 

There are a few considerations and concerns that need to be addressed 
surrounding the observances of the analysis. I stated that the similarities between the two 
pieces and the composers, including the teacher to student to relationship, supported the 
logic and ease of analytical comparison. While this remains true, it is also possible that 
the results of my analysis are not representative of all French music for the same reasons. 
Perhaps these techniques are only unique to berceuses. Perhaps these relationships only 
exist because Fauré trained Ravel. 

Fortunately, these same concerns provide future opportunities to test the results in 
new settings. The next step in the big process of recognizing French techniques and 
processes may involve looking at subtlety through familiarity in a comparison between 
these berceuses and any combination of other small works. It would be beneficial to 
compare these techniques to other compositions by Fauré and Ravel as well as other 
French composers. It may also be worthwhile to see both if and how these techniques 
occur in large French works. A final suggestion is to investigate how far forwards and 
backwards the technique of subtlety through familiarity can be applied.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


