Fauré's Violin Sonata in A Major, Formal Analysis, Influence on Later Composers, and List of Deformations from the Traditional Nineteenth Century Sonata

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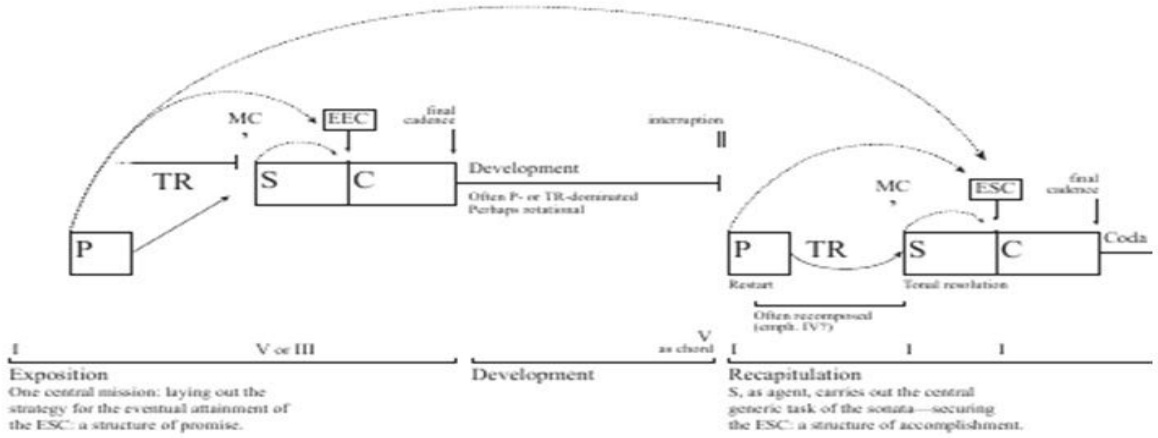
Introduction

Gabriel Fauré is one of the most enigmatic composers of the Romantic period. Having lived and actively composed through the late Romantic era and the first twenty years of the twentieth century, Fauré experienced many of the most radical shifts in Western music's style. By that point, the harmonic conventions of the common practice period had almost been abandoned entirely. Composers embraced new and exciting means of organizing pitch that include modality, symmetrical scales, and in the last portion of Fauré's life, atonal serialism. Orchestration began to see tremendous shifts as well. Traditional instrumental paradigms were brought into question by the composers of the post-Romantic period. Woodwinds and brass would begin to see orchestral roles in equal proportion to the strings, the influence of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* would influence composers to write for atypical chamber instrumentations, and instruments began to be view as much for their timbre as their range and traditional role in the orchestra. Throughout these shifts in musical style, Fauré continued to compose music that would grow in complexity to reflect his awareness of music on the bleeding edge. Fauré, however, composed many works that made use of traditional forms, such as the sonata, the fugue, and the mass, which are largely driven by tonal motion and key relationships. This, naturally, leads to the question: how will Fauré's reconciliation of tonal harmony and early music influence impact his perception of sonata form? Fauré's Violin Sonata No. 1 presents several examples of principal characteristics of Fauré's harmonic organizational methods, formal planning, and orchestrational techniques, all of which would become commonplace in the music of the next fifty years.

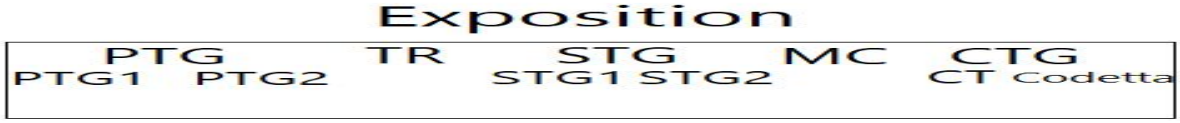
Summary of Form



Example 2.1 - A diagram of sonata form[1].

The sonata, which is visualized in Example 2.1, is a musical form embedded strongly into the fabric of the Western musical tradition. Most commonly regarded as a ternary form consisting of three distinct sections: exposition, development, and recapitulation[2], the origins of the sonata are in binary forms driven by tonic-dominant duality at the formal level. The introduction of a theme in a tonic key and succeeding it with contrasting material in the dominant key before returning to the tonic is one of the most consistent formal schemas in all of Western music, and is the foundation of the typical organization of a sonata. The sonata, however, is a form used ubiquitously well into the twentieth century. If the sonata is organized by tonic and dominant relationships, how do composers use alternative pitch organizations make use of this form? Fauré's harmonic language, which will be discussed in further detail later, makes very

[1] James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, "Sonata Form as a Whole: Foundational Considerations," in *Elements of Sonata Theory : Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford University Press, 2006), 17).
[2] Hepokoski and Darcy, 16.



Example 2.2 - A diagram of the exposition

little impact on the formal structure of the piece. Although Fauré's compositional style is most likely best described as quasi-tonal, Fauré is successful in extrapolating the thematic gestures and order of events from each of the sections without marrying them to their expected pitch center.

The exposition, which is modeled in example 2.2, consists of two theme groups, a transition, a medial caesura, and a closing section, all of which are typical of the section. The primary theme group is divided into three distinct sections. The first two primary theme group members are clearly divided by their instrumentation. The piano introduces the first member of the group, and the violin introduces the second member. Bridging the primary and secondary theme groups is a transition section that is both brief and dynamically rich. The secondary theme group is organized symmetrically to the primary theme group. It is comprised of two group members that are clearly defined by their instrumentation and arrangement. The first group member consists of the violin introducing the theme with light piano accompaniment, while the second group member involves a mirroring of the thematic material between both the piano and violin. Linking the secondary theme group and the closing section is a medial caesura. The medial caesura presents a sudden change of texture and volume, which is expected behavior. The closing section concludes the exposition with cadential material that prepares both the repetition of the exposition, and the development following the second iteration of the exposition.

The development is the section with the least amount of structure. The section is expected to be explorational, which often is interpreted by the composer as a series of modulations. Fauré

does explore various key centers, which will be discussed later. However, from the perspective of the traditional sonata form, the development is probably the least radical of all of the sections due to the experimental nature of Fauré's harmonic language. The most common characteristic of the development section is a passage called the retransition, which functions as intermediary material that prepares the listener for the return of the tonic key in the succeeding section. Fauré, in fact, concludes the development with a retransition that reintroduces the tonic key of A major.

The recapitulation, reintroduces the material from the exposition in the order of appearance. The largest difference between the exposition and the recapitulation lies in the harmonic disparities. The recapitulation adjusts the melodic and harmonic content to reflect the tonic key. In a textbook sonata, this would most largely impact the material that is introduced in the key of the dominant in the exposition. In the recapitulation, this material would be corrected by transposition to maintain the tonic key, akin to how a balanced binary form's B section would be expected to conclude in the tonic key. As expected in terms of the form, Fauré reintroduces material in the order of first appearance.

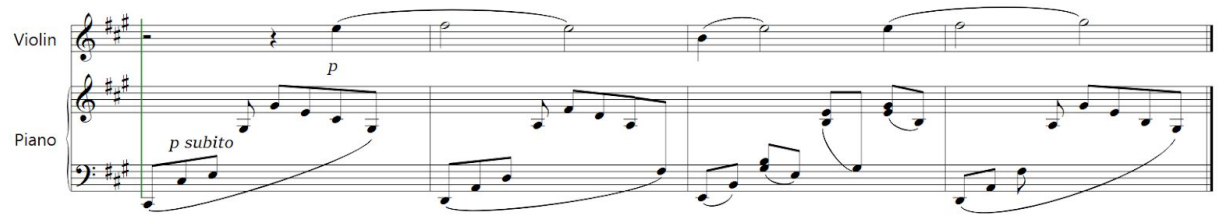
With the presence of all expected sections and their components, Fauré successfully uses the sonata form model in the absence of traditional tonal conventions. This is evidence that not only is Fauré a classist when it comes to phrase structure and formal planning, but also the fact that sonata form, despite being derived from the ebbing of tonic and dominant motion, is no longer tethered to a particular harmonic scheme. Furthermore, the absence of traditional harmonic conventions may have influenced Fauré in the direction of a straightforward sonata formal planning. The use of a textbook style sonata form contributed to the piece's coherence, and balance.

Summary of Harmony and Compositional Methods

In contrast to the logical and traditionally rooted formal scheming of Fauré's Violin Sonata in A Major, the use of proto-modern harmonic conventions presents an entirely different perspective of Fauré's compositional methods. At this point in his life, Fauré was a quasi-tonal composer. The aspects of tonality that are most prevalent in this piece are the use of diatonic scales, tertian harmonies, and dominant tonic cadences. Outside of the context of functional chord progressions, Fauré's harmonies appear to be typical of his time period. However, when analyzed at the progressional level, Fauré's choice of harmonies appear to be largely influenced by his education in early music, instances of which will be pointed out in the section by section analysis later on.

Fauré attended the École Niedermeyer Conservatory, a new and upcoming conservatory in Paris that specialized in early music. It was at this time that Fauré became intimate with pre-common practice period polyphony and modal pitch organization.[3] Fauré's harmonic language at the time of this composition is most likely explained as a modal approach to the tonal chromaticism of the late Romantic period. Fauré's harmonic progressions are mostly tertian harmonies that belong to the tonic's key. However, the use of tertian harmonies are not necessarily presented with the intent of resolution. In Example 3.1, from measures twenty-three through twenty-seven which will be explained in the section detailing the secondary theme group, Fauré presents a progression of mediant, subdominant, and dominant sonorities that do not resolve to a tonic. This is made even more atypical of the time period due to their placement at the beginning of a thematic introduction. Perhaps this progression could be justified as a series

[3] Jean-Michel Nectoux, "Scenes from Provincial Life," in *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*, trans. Roger Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 12.

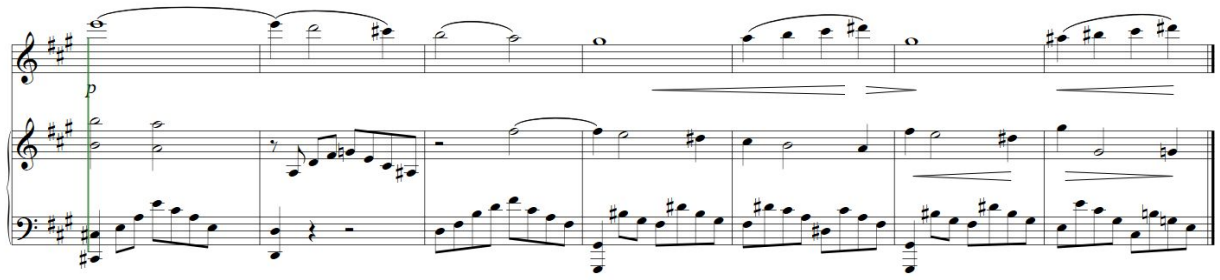


Example 3.1 - Measures 23 - 27. A iii > IV > V > IV progression in A major[4].

of passing chords could be buried into the middle of a section of a more harmonically traditional piece, however this is a defining characteristic of Fauré's harmonic profile at this time.

This is an example of Fauré's neo-modal approach to diatonic scales. Fauré's modal influence manifests itself primarily in two ways. First is in his progressions. Fauré appears to use chords in a much more discretionary fashion than composers who are also burdened by fundamental tonal harmony. Chord progressions often involve roots with adjacent scale degrees, such as the example from measure twenty-three. This composition, however, isn't purely modal. In the case of the exposition especially, which will also be described in further detail later, Fauré briefly visits the keys of the tonic A major's scale degrees. This can be seen in example 3.2, over the six measure span of thirty-four to forty. Starting on A, Fauré proceeds to emphasize B minor and C-sharp minor over the course of this fragment. When looking at the non passing chords, however, the progression is another series of adjacent chords akin to what was stated in a plainer fashion in the previous example. The progressions at the foundational level outline atypical common practice period harmony, however Fauré's use of dominant and predominant sonorities demonstrate his blending of two unique pitch organizations, which would grow to influence the compositions of composers well into the twentieth century.

[4] Gabriel Fauré, *Violin Sonata in A Major*. (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1877), 1.



Example 3.2 - Measures 34 - 40. Tonicization of scale degrees[5].

Fauré's harmonic language also borrows from the Romantic style by use of chromaticism. This is evident in Fauré's use of coloristic chords speckled throughout the piece. Fauré uses extended altered dominant sonorities, tonic seventh chords, and augmented sixth chords, which all provide evidence of his mastery of tonal harmony as well. Romantic harmonic influence is observable at the key level, too. A diagram of key relationships is presented in Example 3.3. Two especially Romantic key relationships: the chromatic mediant, and the parallel minor, are explored for extended lengths of time during the exposition. Deformations in and of themselves in the context of what is expected of the form, Fauré's choices of key, despite their unique presentations, are typical of the period.

In terms of Fauré's compositional devices, there appears to be evidence of influence from the music of his time and the music of antiquity. Fauré's melodic writing is, wholly, Romantic in style. The expressive lines that fluctuate in tempo and dynamic values speaks to the emotional qualities synonymous with the music of the period. In terms of varying and generating musical content, however, Fauré makes use of devices that are characteristic of early music. Throughout the piece, Fauré makes prolific use of sequence and imitation to prolong or reintroduce melodic content. Although these two devices were never phased out entirely, as music began to develop

[5] Gabriel Fauré, *Sonata in A Major*. 2.

A	C#m	F#m	E	Bm	C#m	Bm	A	D	A	C	E

Example 3.3 - A diagram of all keys explored in the exposition.

into a state of vertical conception, contrapuntal devices were no longer used as commonly. Fauré's harmonic progressions often appear to be influenced by the horizontal motion of the melody due to the tonally inexplicable nature of some fragments in the piece.

Primary Theme Group 1

This section that I've labeled *primary theme group 1* (PTG1) deviates wildly from the typical type three sonata expectation. The piece begins with a solo piano introduction. The introductory feeling of this section is due to the absence of violin material. This section does not function as an introduction one would expect in a traditional sonata. It is not slow, and it contains the first iteration of the primary theme. If one pays attention to the double stemmed notes, one can easily make melodic connections to the material introduced in the violin starting in measure twenty-three. The repeat sign that indicates the reiteration of the exposition is placed in measure three, rather than at the beginning. Superficially, this is due to the fact that the first ending, which occurs at bar 102, includes the material heard in the first two bars of the exposition. To the listener, this makes a profound impact on the quality of PTG1. Instead of functioning like an entrance, the material has a cyclical quality which repurposes the section almost like a post-closing theme transition.

The one obvious criterion that is met is the establishment of the tonic key of A major. Over the course of the piece, Fauré demonstrates a detachment from the idea of functional harmony, however A major appears to the the pitch collection in which the piece is organized within and around. The first sonority heard is, undoubtedly, A major. The melody in bars four

and five include the major seventh and major ninth of A major. This phrase, from bar one until bar five, serves as both the melodic and harmonic framework of the following fragment of PTG1. The following phrase, which starts in the pickup to bar six and lasts until bar ten. This phrase is an echo of the previous phrase, consisting of the same rhythmic profile and melodic figuration. Fauré diatonically transposes the material from the first five bars up a whole step to the supertonic of A major, B minor. Interestingly, Fauré maintains the minor third that can be seen in measures four and five, and nine and ten. In the context of A major, this minor third is diatonic; however in the context of B minor, this minor third is a chromatic alteration, coloring the B minor sonority with a major seventh and major ninth.

The following four bar phrase, between the pickup to measure ten and measure thirteen is a fragmentation of bars two and three of the primary theme. Harmonically, Fauré already begins to drift away from A major by voicing an F-sharp dominant seventh chord with a minor ninth. This chord's appearance in second inversion, however, alludes to momentary role. This chord has significance as the dominant of the B minor that preceded it. This is an example of Fauré's unique relationship with tonal harmony. One would expect a secondary dominant to resolve to its secondary tonic function chord: in this case, B minor. However, the F-sharp seven flat nine succeeds the B minor, which has a modulatory effect rather than a tonicizing effect. Fauré dissolves the notion of modulation quickly, however. In bars twelve and thirteen, he voices an E dominant seventh with a minor ninth. In addition to being another example of parallelism, this redirects the trajectory of the harmonic content of the piece back to A major. The minor ninth is interesting, however. The F-sharp seven flat nine is a response to the preceding B minor. The G-natural present in this chord is diatonic to B natural minor. However in the case of the E seven

flat nine chord, F-natural is not diatonic to A major. The appearance of F natural could be explained as an occurrence of modal mixture; however I find that Fauré's intent to maintain a sense of analogy between the adjacent phrases is a more apt explanation.

Phrase four, at the local level of PTG1, functions like a closing statement. The melody assumes a static quarter note texture that strictly outlines the implied harmony. Beginning in the pickup to measure thirteen, and lasting until measure twenty two, Fauré alternates between two principal sonorities: B dominant seventh with a major ninth, and C-sharp minor. The initial statement of the B nine chord immediately follows the E seven flat nine chord. This would imply a dominant of five relationship when looking at the piece through an A major lens. One would expect a resolution to an E based sonority; however Fauré follows with a C-sharp minor triad. This chord, structurally, is unlike any of the chords up until this point due to its lack of chordal extensions. The alternation between C-sharp minor and B nine changes the tonality of the piece to reflect a C-sharp minor sound world. As a result, B nine is no longer the dominant of the dominant in A major. B nine is now the flat seven of C-sharp minor. The use of flat seven to establish pitch centricity is, unquestionably, evidence of Fauré's modal influence. In this case, this progression would be diatonic to the C-sharp aeolian mode. This shift to C-sharp minor may be a strong deformation of the typical sonata, however C-sharp minor is adjacent to A major on the circle of fifths. The appearance of C-sharp minor can also be observed as a deceptive modulation if one were to view E, B and C-sharp as one, five, and six in the context of E major. Phrase four ends with a rather abrupt cadence in measure twenty-two. Further establishing a C-sharp minor sound world, Fauré ends this solo piano section with a G-sharp major triad. This is the first occurrence of B-sharp in the entire C-sharp minor section. The use of a dominant

sonority in an otherwise modal progression has a unique role in crystallizing the idea of a change of key. Without the appearance of a leading tone, an established sense of key is undermined. In the case of phrase four, the closing material strongly suggests C-sharp minor without introducing a leading tone until the final cadence.

Before moving on, it is important to acknowledge the role of pedal tones in this movement. Sustained notes in the bass would grow to become a heavily relied upon device by composers of the post-Romantic era[6]. One of many examples can be found in Claude Debussy's *Ballade* in Example 4.1. Although the left hand outlines a melody in A minor, the D pedal below, alongside the F and A pedals in the right hand, alters the perceived pitch center. In the context of tonal music, in which this sonata falls despite its usage of techniques from outside of tonality, pedal point is used as a device in building tension, or, in cadential situations, a device that helps recentralize the tonic[7]. Fauré seems to avoid all conventional usage of the pedal in this early in the piece. With one of the primary theme's functions being the solidification of the tonic key, an A pedal would be expected. A parallel pedal point occurs in bar six where a D pedal is sustained under a B minor sonority. Again, D is the third of a B minor chord. In this case, D would be more expected due to the supertonic of a scale occuring in first inversion often in cadential situations. The C-sharp pedal returns in bar ten, sustained under an F-sharp dominant seven flat nine chord. C-sharp is the fifth of the chord. D returns as a pedal in bar twelve under

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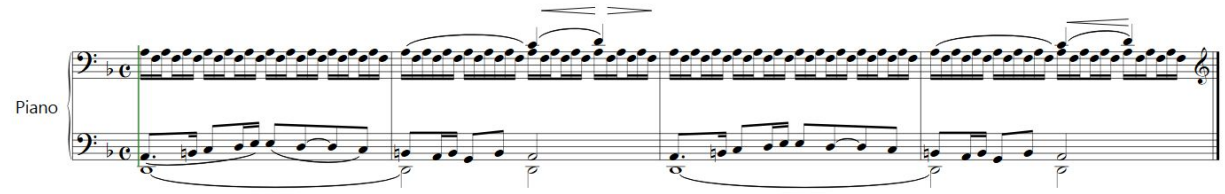
[6] Janet Duffel, "The Techniques of Impressionism in the Preludes of Claude Debussy," *Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita*, 1974, 13. (https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1628&context=honors_theses).
[7] Robert J. Frank, "Non-Chord Tones" (Southern Methodist University, January 11, 2002), https://web.archive.org/web/20070703095155/http://www.smu.edu/TOTW/nct.htm).

an E seven flat nine chord. D is the seventh of the chord. For the first time, D-sharp is not unusual due to it



Example 4.1 - Debussy, *Ballade*. mm 46-49. The use of pedal point in post-Romantic music[8].

being a chord tone. However, what makes it unusual is it's placement so appearance as a pedal in bar fourteen. However, much like the pedals in the previous measures, D-sharp is a chord tone of the sonority above it: the third of B nine. The pedal is contributing to, perhaps, the strongest of the deformations in PTG1 which is its pitch centricity. This section of the piece can be expected to be in the tonic key, however in addition to the temporary existence of A major as the key, the strength of the key is undermined by pedal tones. Pedals throughout the course of PTG1 function anomalously. They don't aid in the establishment of a tonal center, nor do they function as a means of strengthening cadential material. If the use of pedals in PTG1 had to be prescribed a typical function, it would be in developing tension. From a theoretical standpoint, which is quite different from the effect they have on the listener, the use of pedals as means of prolonging the introduction of a non-inverted harmony does invoke a sense of tension. In practice, it appears to be a coloristic device that projects Fauré's individualist relationship with the harmonic practices of his time.

Primary Theme Group 2

[8] Claude Debussy. *Ballade*. (Paris: Choudens), 1891.

The second member of the PTG is the first melody introduced by the violin. Beginning in measure twenty-three, the violin is introduced with rhythmic material derived from PTG1; hence its placement in the PTG. The rhythmic material could be argued to be an intact repurposing of the melody that comprises phrase three of PTG1; however, due to the contour of the melody, I suggest that the rhythmic material is a partial inversion and fragmentation of the first three bars of PTG1. The melody in phrase one begins with the same rising second, and contains a rising fourth in its third bar at measure twenty-five. This melodic material is prevalent for the first eight bars of PTG2, and in various locations later in the piece. Phrase three, which begins in measure thirty-one, introduces whole notes in the melody. The only places where relatively long note values have occurred in the piece, thus far, have been in the bass in PTG1. These whole notes function as a fulcrum to reinvent the melodic material seen earlier. The high E natural in bar thirty-four and tied into bar thirty-five showcases Fauré's retrograde repurposing of the two rhythmic modules from PTG2: quarter, half, quarter and two half notes. Phrase four consists of three rhythmic combinations: quarter, half, quarter, and whole, which we have seen in the previous measures, and four quarter notes, which is a new idea.

Harmonically, PTG2 presents more deformations than PTG1. The progression from the beginning of PTG2 can be seen in Example 3.1. In the case of PTG1, Fauré stayed in the realm of A major for approximately the first sixteen measures. PTG2 begins in a C-sharp minor tonality and persists in being directly referenced as a tonic functioning harmony for its entirety. The treatment of C-sharp minor at the beginning of PTG2 reveals that the half cadence that concluded PTG1 was merely a tonicization. The only place where one can observe an A major triad is in measure thirty-four. It's characteristic as a tonic triad, however, is undermined by the

immediately preceding juxtaposition of a C major triad. After arpeggiating a C-sharp minor triad, as would be expected after the modulation at the end of PTG1, Fauré immediately follows with alternating D and E dominant seven chords. Emphasizing the subdominant and the dominant of A major would establish expectations of a return to A major, however he does anything but. Bars twenty-seven through twenty-nine spell a chord progression that consists of C-sharp dominant seven, B minor 6/3, C-sharp half diminished, and a reappearance of F-sharp seven flat nine. This chord progression is most likely tonicizing B minor due to the presence of the key's tonic, supertonic, and dominant. So far, the progression is, to a degree, mirroring the progression in PTG1. The idea of a parallel progression between the two sections of the PTG is further supported by the B dominant seven chord in measure thirty, which is the dominant of the E centric passage that follows B minor in PTG1. This harmonic trend, however, does not remain consistent for long. Although Fauré tonicizes each of the highlighted chords from PTG1, they do not recur in the same order, nor with a proportional duration.

Fauré's early music influences are strongly evident when examining the melodic content and counterpoint between the violin and the piano. The first piece of evidence is his use of sequence[9]. The first eight bars of PTG2 can be divided into two four bar phrases. The first and second phrase are not only rhythmically identical, but also identical in their melodic shape. The second phrase, which starts in measure twenty-seven and lasts until measure thirty-one, is the first phrase transposed up a minor second. As a compositional device sequences are a useful tool in recycling a musical idea and are devices that are commonplace in early common practice

[9] Bruce Hammel, "Chapter 18: Diatonic Sequences," Virginia Commonwealth University, accessed May 6, 2020, http://www.people.vcu.edu/~bhammel/theory/mhis146/unit_4.pdf).

period music and before[10]. In addition to the use of sequence in PTG2, Fauré also makes use of imitative procedures between the violin and the piano. Imitation is a device that is widely observable in early musical styles[11]. The first brief instance of imitation appears in bars thirty-four and thirty-five. In octaves, the piano mimics the melodic material presented by the violin two bars prior. This instance of imitation, however, is transposed up a major third. A longer instance of imitation occurs in measure thirty-six through the entirety of the transition. What makes this imitation interesting, and perhaps Fauré's master stroke, is its canon-like profile. In measure thirty-six, it is clear that the piano is lagging behind the violin by two-and-a-half bars. However, if one were to follow this canon assuming the violin was the static leading voice, the canon would appear to be broken in measure thirty-eight, because the piano introduces new material. However, it is at this point that the voices begin to cross-reference one another. The material in the piano over the span of measures forty-one to forty-four is similar to the violin in measures thirty-seven to measure forty. However, the material in the violin in measure forty-one to forty-four is similar to the material in the piano in measures thirty-seven to measure forty-one. This unique use of imitation between the voices is typical of early music and concrete evidence that Fauré's early music schooling played an integral role in the development of his compositional identity.

The harmonic content of the rest of PTG2 mostly appears to be a string of brief tonicizations. Except for a few locations, the harmony consists of secondary dominant and secondary predominant progressions. The use of the B dominant seven chord is a means of

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[10] Forrest Tobey, "The Harmonic Sequence," Earlham College Music, accessed May 6, 2020, http://legacy.earlham.edu/~tobeyfo/musictheory/Book2/FFH2_CH4/4D_The Sequence.html).
[11] William Atkinson, "Printable Module 9: Imitative Polyphony," Columbia, accessed May 6, 2020, http://www.columbia.edu/itc/music/modules/mod9/module9_print.html).

introducing the E minor triad in measure thirty-two. Measure thirty-one, however, includes a D minor seventh triad, which would imply that the current modality is in the realm of C major. This is verified in measure thirty-three where a C major triad is played in the accompaniment. The occurrence of the only A major triad in the entirety of PTG2 follows the C major triad. It's function, however, is dominant rather than tonic due to the succeeding D major triad. One could make the argument that D major could be serving a subdominant role, however due to the harmonic characteristics of PTG2, this progression is most likely another secondary dominant relationship. Following D major is an A-sharp fully diminished chord which functions as a leading tone chord of B minor. B minor continues to be the focal tonality through measure forty-three, except for the first three bars of phrase four. At measure thirty-seven, immediately following an F-sharp minor triad, Fauré introduces G-sharp dominant seven. This two chord progression appears to be a subdominant to dominant progression in the key of C-sharp minor, which does arrive in measure forty after being preceded by a D-sharp fully diminished seventh chord and another G-sharp dominant seven chord. After a lengthy progression to re-establish the key of C-sharp minor, Fauré uses the C-sharp minor in conjunction with F-sharp dominant seven chords to recontextualize the B minor sound world first heard in measure thirty-five. Measure forty-four effectively breaks the B minor tonality by introducing a B half diminished chord. Followed by an E dominant seven chord, this would point the harmony in the direction of an A based tonality; however, A is never directly resolved to.

Approaching PTG2 from a forward moving linear perspective characterizes the harmonic quality of the overall progression as a series of chained dominants. The chords from moment to moment do not always appear to have a sense of congruence that would be expected of harmonic

procedures of this time[12]. When taking a step back and looking at the whole of the progression, Fauré appears to be spending the majority of the time in a B minor mode. After the first phrase of PTG2, which appears to be implying an A major tonality, the harmonies can all be related back to a B minor pitch collection. There are many instances of F-sharp dominant seven chords, as well as C-sharp sonorities with a minor third between the root and the third of the chord. These two chords, in compliance with prevalence of B minor throughout PTG2 is a firm argument for grounding this section in B minor. D major, which can be seen in measure thirty-five would be the mediant of B minor. The E minor chord in measure thirty-two would be the subdominant in B minor. Even more obscure chords, such as G dominant seven, which is not diatonic to B minor can be explained as an enharmonically equivalent spelling of a German augmented sixth chord. Some of the other chords that occur in this section, however, require thought outside of tonality in order to assign them a relationship. C major and D minor seven, which are seen in measures thirty-one and thirty-three are not diatonic to the key of B minor, however they are diatonic to the B Phrygian mode. C-sharp minor and E dominant seven, which are visible throughout PTG2 are not diatonic to B minor, however it is diatonic to the B Dorian mode. Modal pitch organization comprised virtually all of the music predating the Baroque period[13]. It is clear that on the tonal modal spectrum, the entirety of the piece thus far is moreso on the modal end. Fauré's use of modal and other nonfunctional procedures is further evidence that his early music

[12] Walter Piston, *Harmony*, ed. Mark DeVoto, 5th ed. (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987), 258.
[13] Haley J. Perritt, "From Modal to Tonal...", April 12, 2017, 2, https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1403&context=research_scholarship_symposium).

education played an integral role in his harmonic language which conflicts with the expectations of the typical sonata.

Transition

When compared to the entirety of the exposition, the transition is the briefest of all of the components lasting only ten measures. Starting at the pickup to measure forty-eight, the transition continues with an imitative passage. The imitation in this passage, although it does share some melodic characteristics, is not composed in the exact same style. Similarly to the imitation observed in PTG2, the roles of leader and follower are blurred. In measures forty-nine and fifty, the violin's rising melody appears to be the leader due to the reappearance of the same material in the left hand of the piano in measures fifty-one and fifty-two. However, the piano, at the same time as it imitates the violin from the previous two measures, varies the same melody in the right-hand. This variation is repeated in the violin in measures fifty-three and fifty-four.. The transition's appearance as a mere bridging of the two expositional theme groups alludes to its greater function of introducing material that will be developed as the closing theme.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the transition is its pitch content. Having been preceded by a melody harmonized by many secondary chords, the melodic content in the transition could convince the reader at first glance to believe that its melodic content is a string of secondary leading tones. In fact, this is a supportable argument due to prevalence of C-sharp and E in the harmonic scheming of the piece. The first melodic line includes a passage that starts on B-sharp, which resolves to C-sharp, and is followed by D-sharp, which resolves to E. This

outlook on the origin of the melody's pitch content, however, does not account for the F-sharp resolving to G in the following two beats. G has not yet appeared in the piece as a harmony. Fauré appears to be referencing the octatonic scale in this section[14]. His use of the octatonic scale is not coincidental due to the use of the scale in a number of his later works[15].

Fauré's use of the octatonic scale could be due to the contrast the scale provides when compared to the diatonic material that the piece has consisted of until the transition. The octatonic scale, however, contours to the harmonic trajectory suggested by the measures leading up to the imitative portion of the transition. Bars forty-nine and fifty include A dominant seven and C-sharp diminished harmonies. In a tonal context, these two chords would suggest a D centric soundworld. Example 6.1 displays a D major harmonization of the sonorities tonicized by the octatonic scale. E and D-sharp would function as the supertonic and its leading tone. G and F-sharp would function as the subdominant and its leading tonic. The B-sharp and C-sharp, however, present an issue with the observation. Assuming These two pitches were functioning with similar relationships to the other half step pairings, B-sharp would function as the leading tone of the leading tone of D major[16]. The use of the octatonic scale in this passage is an example of Fauré's complex relationship with harmony. Although the octatonic scale is a symmetrical scale that would become a popular means of organizing pitch amongst composers of the

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[14] Kenneth R Rumery, "Octatonic Scales," Northern Arizona University, accessed May 6, 2020, http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~krr2/ct_octatonic.html).

[15] Stephen Rumph, "Fauré and the Effable: Theatricality, Reflection, and Semiosis in the Melodies," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 68, no. 3: pp. 497-559, accessed May 6, 2020, https://www-jstor-org.jpllnet.sfsu.edu/stable/10.1525/jams.2015.68.3.497?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents).

[16] Phillip Magnusson, "A Structural Examination of Tonality, Vocabulary, Texture, Sonorities, and Time Organization in Western Art Music," University of Dayton, accessed May 6, 2020, http://academic.udayton.edu/PhillipMagnuson/soundpatterns/chromaticI/tonicization.html).

following generation, Fauré has still not fully severed ties with tonal conventions. In this case, the fragmentation of the octatonic scale is used cautiously and temporarily.

Example 6.1 - The octatonic scale harmonized using D major harmonies.

Secondary Theme Group 1

Similar to the PTG, the *secondary theme group, 1* (STG1) consists of two parts. Upon immediate comparison between the PTG and the STG, one may notice the lack of dynamic and emotional contrast. The secondary theme is expected to be a gentler compliment to the primary theme[17]. The primary and secondary themes in this sonata are both marked piano, which would suggest that Fauré has deviated from the commonly understood sonata practices of his time. Clearly, the themes do not assume the stereotyped roles of *masculine* and *feminine*[18]; however there does appear to be a slight hierarchy of volume. In the left hand of the piano at section B, at measure fifty-seven, the score is marked *pp* which is one level of volume lower than what is marked in PTG1. STG1, however, is preceded by a section marked *forte*. The *piano* marking is made much more apparent due to the suddenness of the dynamic change. PTG1 does not share this quality because it is the first section of the piece and, thus, not preceded by anything to provide dynamic contrast.

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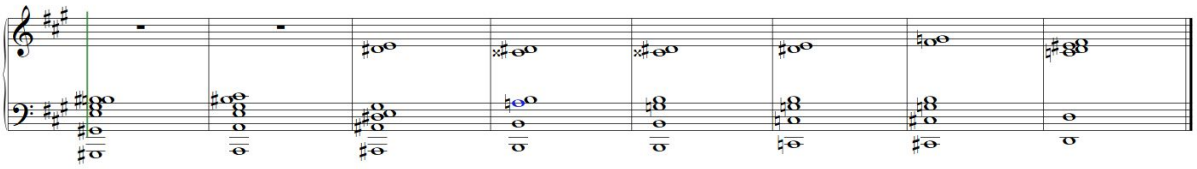
[17] Hepokoski and Darcy, 117.

[18] Hepokoski, "Masculine. Feminine. Are Current Readings of Sonata Form in Terms of a 'Masculine' and 'Feminine' Dichotomy Exaggerated? James Hepokoski Argues for a More Subtle Approach to the Politics of Musical Form," *Musical Times Publications* 135, no. 1818 (August 1994): 494-499, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1003328).

The thematic characteristics of STG1 are defined by rhythmic motives that are found in PTG2 and new rhythmic motives. The rhythmic modules appear to be pairings of a dotted half note followed by a quarter note, which is first used in measure forty-seven leading into the transition, and another rhythmic reintroduction. One of the rhythmic schemes is a half note followed by two quarter notes, which is a new idea. The other is four quarter notes which is first seen in PTG1 at measure fourteen, but is also visible throughout PTG2. All eight bars of STG1 are another instance of Fauré's use of sequence. STG2 continues to make use of the dotted half and quarter note motif, however, it is no longer a means of indicating the beginning of a new iteration of sequenced melody.

STG1 has a unique harmonic scheme, which can be seen in a reduction example 7.1, when compared to the rest of the exposition. The piano introduces a new accompaniment that includes a pedal underneath arpeggiated triplets. Each measure consists of trichords that are varied by a note that is a half step away from one another. The half step chord could be analyzed as its own sonority, however note that is varied by a half step appears to be congruent to the octatonic scale used in the transition. At bar fifty-seven, B-sharp is altered to B natural. In bar fifty-eight C-sharp is altered to B-sharp. In fifty-nine, E is altered to D-sharp. And, lastly, in bar sixty-three, G is altered to F-sharp. The only deviation from the original statement of the octatonic scale in the transition is the D-sharp to C-double sharp in measure sixty-one. This half step pairing is not in the same octatonic mode as the one that occurs in the transition, however the theme of secondary leading tones is maintained. The pedal consists of a rising chromatic bassline that starts on G-sharp, and ends on D. In addition to creating unique harmonic content for STG1, the D centric bassline is similar to the transition, which is derived from D as well. The



Example 7.1 - A harmonic reduction of mm 57-65[19].

bass is typically functioning as a chord tone over the course of the first eight bars of STG1. Taking into consideration the fact that the half step variants of the first trichord in each measure is a decoration rather than a progression, the chord progression is also driven by brief secondary dominant tonicizations. Measure fifty-seven begins with an E augmented triad, which resolves to A major seven in measure fifty-eight. This is the first dominant to tonic A major progression in the entire piece. Measures fifty-nine and sixty include E major and B dominant seven chords, which have made appearances throughout the exposition. Unexpectedly, measure sixty-one introduces a G augmented triad. It does, however, resolve to C major seven in the following bar. This is parallel to the use of E augmented as a dominant of A major seven at the beginning of the same theme group. This two bar progression of augmented to major seven resolution is a result of Fauré's use of sequence. In addition, these two key centers have a chromatic mediant relationship[20], which is a typical device of Romantic era composers[21].

Secondary Theme Group 2

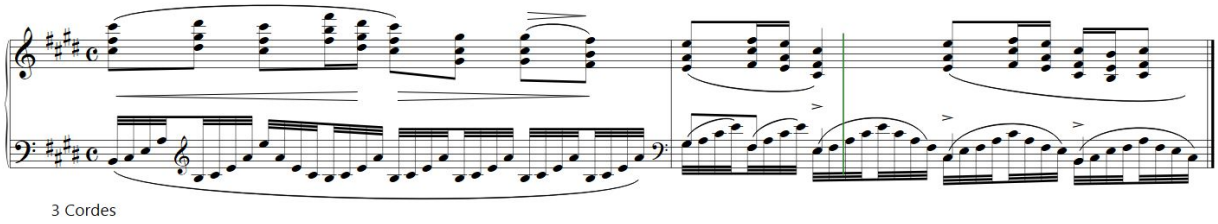
STG2 begins in measure sixty-five with the dotted half and quarter note rhythmic motif in the violin along with a change in accompanimental texture. The violin's melodic material

[19] Gabriel Fauré, *Sonata in A Major*. 3.
[20] Robert Hutchinson, "Modulations without Pivot Chords," Puget Sound, accessed June 5AD, http://musictheory.pugetsound.edu/mt21c/ModulationsWithoutPivotChords.html).
[21] Patrick McCreless, "Chromatic Transformations in Nineteenth-Century Music," John Hopkins, accessed May 6, 2020, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/178732).

continues to utilize rhythmic modules that have been prevalent in earlier portions of the exposition: dotted half note quarter note, and four quarter notes. Based on the rhythmic profile of the violin alone, one could come to the conclusion that the secondary theme group is not a theme group group at all due to the upward zig-zagging trajectory of the melodic line that spans STG1 and STG2. What separates the STG into two parts is the accompaniment, which not only introduces a new accompaniment akin to what is played in the transition, but also begins to join the violin in presenting the melodic content of this section. Each of the chords played in the right hand of the piano includes the note played in the violin as the third of its chord.

The accompanimental texture of the piano is unique when compared to the rest of the piece due to the contrast between the two hands. In the right hand, Fauré makes use of planing, which is a device that is commonly associated with the impressionist compositions of the post-romantic period[22]. One example of this can be found in widespread use across both Maurice Ravel's and Claude Debussy's catalogs. Example 8.1 is a fragment of Ravel's *Jeux d'Eau*, a piece dedicated to Fauré, which includes a passage of parallel harmonies in the right hand, and, coincidentally, a separate progression in the left hand. The harmonic content of the right hand appears to be in an A minor mode. The progression has a parabolic shape contouring the A minor scale from B until D-sharp, the leading tone of the dominant. The coexistence of F-natural, F-sharp, G-natural, and G-sharp throughout STG2 would suggest the use of the melodic minor mode. However, their traditional uses as descending and ascending tones, respectively, have been blurred by the harmonization of

[22] Philip Magnuson, "SOUND PATTERNS," SOUND PATTERNS: Chapter 41. Impressionism, accessed May 16, 2020, http://academic.udayton.edu/PhillipMagnuson/soundpatterns/microcosms/impressionism.html).



Example 8.1 - Planing and separate progressions from Ravel's *Jeux d'Eau*[23].

the theme[24]. Analyzing the roots of each of the right hand chords suggests that F-natural and G-natural are used in both ascending and descending scenarios. The appearance of F-sharp and G-sharp only ever occurs as thirds of each chord. The third of each of the planed chords, however, is the note that is being played simultaneously in the violin an octave above. The dichotomy of the natural minor and melodic minor scales occurring in different voices of the piano obscures the idea of a single pitch collection being used.

While presenting the parallel harmonies in the right hand, the left hand presents its own progression similar to the style first introduced in the transition. Unlike the progression taking place in the right hand, the left hand's harmonic progression is slower, presenting one arpeggiated chord per bar. The left hand, too, appears to be presenting parallel harmony in the form of arpeggiation. The progression, in terms of its shape, is similar to the right hand in being that it is curved. Harmonically, however, there is never any direct statement of A minor in the left hand over the course of STG2. The progression consists of an undulation between G, F in first inversion, and E in second inversion. Of course, all three of these chords are diatonic to the

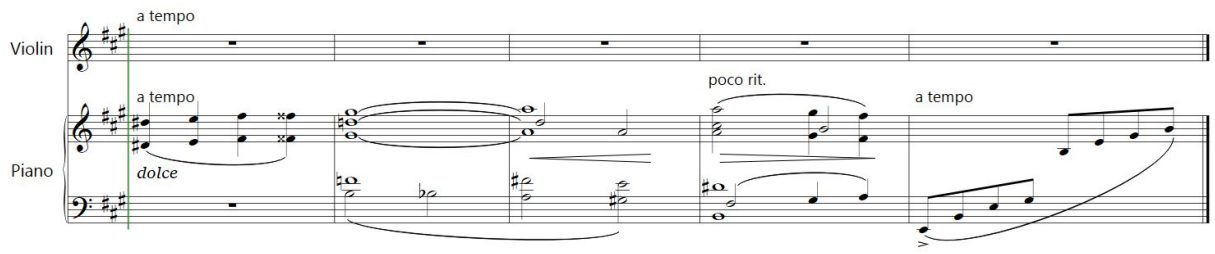
[23] Maurice Ravel. *Jeux d'eau*. Paris: E. Demets, 1902.
[24] Barbara Murphy, "Major and Minor Scales," University of Tennessee, accessed May 16, 2020, https://music.utk.edu/theorycomp/courses/murphy/documents/Major MinorScales.pdf).

key of at least one of A minor's forms; however, one can make the comparison between this left hand progression and the pedal point from PTG1 in terms of detracting from A's tonic presence, and, potentially, hinting at a modulation to the next key center.

The planing defined second phrase of STG2 comes to an end in measure seventy-four, where the piano transitions into an arpeggiated texture between both hands. Preceded by the material heard in the first measure of the second phrase of STG2, one would likely expect another repetition of the second phrase. However, Fauré introduces a C dominant seven chord, which harmonically disagrees with A minor. C dominant seven, in functionally harmonic terms, would be the dominant of the submediant, F. Interestingly, because the left hand progression from the previous measure ends on a G major arpeggio, the C dominant seventh could be a transitional chord added to supplement the progression, due to F being the next expected chord in the left hand sequence. The C dominant seventh, however, does not resolve to F; it resolves to E. This would suggest that C7 is functioning as a substitution for F, due to it belonging exclusively to F major, and providing nearly as much tonal context as the use of an F chord. There is also the possibility that it may function as a link in a chain of dominants starting with the G in measure seventy-three. This progression, however, would be momentary due to the E7 chord in measure seventy-six. There are several possible interpretations of the function of this chord, however, it is clear that its placement is tonally unusual, and a strong indication of Fauré's unique relationship with tonal harmony.

Medial Caesura or Essential Expositional Cadence

Following the E7 chord in measures seventy-six and seventy-seven, the piece's texture changes to include a violin solo followed by a chorale style passage in the piano. The textural



Example 9.1 - The EEC, mm 82 - 86[25].

change is an indication that the piece has transitioned, or is in the process of transitioning, into new material. Harmonically, the piece begins to suggest a modulation to E major, which can be seen in Example 9.1, however Fauré's modal influence complicates the tonality. The section begins with a G fully diminished seventh chord that is transformed into a German augmented sixth chord built on B-flat. This would suggest a resolution to A, as B-flat is the flatted sixth of D, however Fauré follows immediately with D major in second inversion. A makes an appearance on beat three following D major, however the chord includes a G-sharp, which is its major seventh, thus negating any dominant qualities. Measure eighty-one consists of B dominant seventh. B7 would imply a resolution to E major due to its functionality as the dominant of the key. Although the piece has not followed the key framework expected of a sonata exposition, major key sonatas are expected to end their expositions in the key of the dominant. A change in key this late into the exposition is, nevertheless, a deviation from sonata expectations due to the fact that a modulation to the dominant should have occurred prior to the STG. Instead of the B7 chord resolving to E major, the same five chord progression is repeated. At measure eighty-six, following the repetition of the progression, B7 resolves to E major in a cadence that elides with the closing theme.

[25] Gabriel Fauré, *Sonata in A Major*. 4.

What muddies the tonality of this section is Fauré's use of a D-natural chord. In an E major tonality, D-sharp plays an integral role as the key's leading tone. The progression is not devoid of D-sharps entirely, however. There is a B7 chord that eventually resolves to the expected E major. This is another example of how Fauré interpolated his early music influence with the tonal procedures of the common practice period[26]. D-natural would suggest that, with E major as our projected tonal destination, Fauré would be making use of the mixolydian mode[27]. This, however, is convoluted by the use of C dominant seventh and B dominant seventh chords. B dominant seventh already introduces D-sharp, which is not diatonic to E Mixolydian. C dominant seventh, moreso, complicates the pitch collection due C-natural, G-natural, and B-flat not belonging to E major modes. Although unlikely, Fauré could be making use of what is referred to as the "acoustic scale"[28] or "Lydian-Mixolydian" mode[29]. These pitch collections are Mixolydian modes with a raised fourth scale degree. C7 is spelled with a B-flat, which is enharmonically equivalent to A-sharp, which would be the Lydian fourth in relation to E. The use of D-natural may also be interpreted as modal mixture, where it is a borrowed chord from the parallel minor[30]. Regardless of interpretation, the use of the flatted seventh is a step away from typical tonal procedures.

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[26] Robert Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Ernst Eulenburg Ltd, 1979)) 235-6.
[27] Harold S Powers and Frans Wiering, "Mixolydian" Grove Music Online, accessed May 16, 2020, https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000018807).
[28] Roy Howat, "L'isle Joyeuse," in *Debussy In Proportion: A Musical Analysis* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), 48).
[29] Rika Uchida, "Tonal Ambiguity in Debussy's Piano Works," (*University of Oregon*, December 1990, 72-3).
[30] Michael Klein, "Mode Mixture, Secondary Dominants," Temple University, accessed May 16, 2020, https://astro.temple.edu/~mklein01/ChromHRWeek1Notes.htm).

When compared to the orchestration of the exposition up until this point, the piece has objectively consisted of more activity in both the violin and the piano. A phrase with these qualities could potentially indicate its role as the medial caesura[31]. The medial caesura, however, is expected to function as an intermediary passage that separates a two part exposition. If this passage were, in fact, the medial caesura, this brings into question the formal makeup of the exposition. Perhaps what I called the PTG is actually a deformed introduction due to the fact that it is played at the same tempo as the rest of the exposition. This, however, is unlikely due to the reintroduction of the PTG in the recapitulation. The drastic textural shift in this section, nevertheless, does not feel congruent with the material preceding it, nor the material succeeding it.

Another possibility is that there is no medial caesura at all, and, instead, this section is an essential expositional cadence, or EEC[32]. In this case, the EEC is located in the correct place in the exposition. In addition, this fragment functions as the strongest cadence in the piece up until this point. Lastly, the EEC is expected to cadence in the expected secondary key of the piece. Due to the A major identity of this piece, the second key center is assumed to be E major. Although Fauré explores a variety of different tonalities, some brief and some for more extended periods of time, E major is not the first explored key center: C-sharp minor is. Needless to say, the tonal ambiguity of the exposition, whose role is to introduce material that will influence the rest of the piece's composition, has kept the piece in a constant state of motion, which, harmonically, doesn't differentiate it from the expected role of the development. Fauré's goal appears to be a macro slackening of the harmonic motion in preparation for both a repetition of

[31] Hepokoski and Darcy, 24.
[32] Hepokoski and Darcy 120-1.

the exposition, as well as a gradation into the development section. This eight measure passage is unique, nonetheless, due to its exhibition of qualities expected in two separate portions of the exposition: the medial caesura, and the EEC.

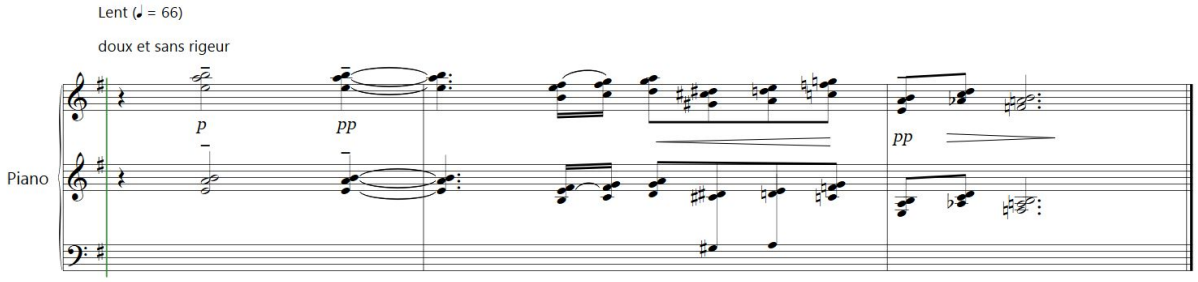
The Closing Theme and Coda

Following the intermediary material following the STG is the closing theme. Motivically, this section of the piece hybridizes elements of both the transition and STG2. In the violin part, Fauré reintroduces the melodic material from the transition. Although the melody is rhythmically similar, the pitch content is altered, presumably to reflect the current key of E major. Instead of starting on B-sharp and outlining a fragment of the octatonic scale, which is how it appears in the transition, the melody outlines a modified E scale that reflects qualities of both major and minor. The dichotomy of both parallel modes could be a reflection of how the tonic was treated over the course of the exposition. A major, albeit brief, is the central sonority at the beginning of PTG. While other key centers are explored as well, an extended passage of A minor comprises STG2. Presenting both major and minor in the context of the current E tonic could be a response to this. The piano's material in the closing theme borrows from the upward arpeggiation from the end of STG2. Stepping into a strictly harmonic role, the piano appears to be solely providing chordal context for the violin. This presents a difference between the transition and closing theme due to the piano lacking any elements of melodic imitation.

Because of its harmonic identity, the closing theme has the effect of a prolongation of the cadence first initiated following STG2. Starting in measure eighty-six, which also serves as the point of resolution in the key of E major, Fauré repeats a progression of E major, D major, C dominant seven, and B dominant seven. In addition to beginning and ending with the tonic and

dominant sonorities of E major, this progression is unique in comparison to the other progressions heard in the exposition for two reasons. First, this progression is the most effective at establishing its tonal center. The exposition contains many dominant tonic progressions, however they all are objectively more momentary in nature. Fauré deliberately avoids harmonic staticity by presenting harmonic context in the form of temporary modulations. This progression not only presents a descending series of chords that resolve in a traditional fashion, but the progression is also repeated, which strengthens the finality of the key. Second, the progression is another demonstration of Fauré's modal influence. The use of D major in compliance with C dominant seven and B dominant seven is another reconciliation of modal harmony and romantic chromaticism. The D major chord, in the context of E major, is the subtonic triad, which is evident in the Mixolydian mode. The progression, however, consists of C dominant seven, which is an enharmonic spelling of a German augmented sixth chord, and B dominant seventh, which is the dominant tetrachord in the key of E major. Example 10.1, illustrates the opening theme from Debussy's *Et la lune descend sur la temple qui fut* that makes use of a E-centric mode as its means of pitch organization. The blending of different pitch collections that span different eras of Western music is an enigmatic characteristic of Fauré's harmonic vocabulary, and is another example of a likely coloristic gesture of the next generation of composers.

The closing theme is followed by a coda that shares rhythmic, melodic, and motivic qualities with the closing theme. The piano part continues with the upward arpeggiation of the preceding eight measures, however, the violin part is now composed of the leading tone material from beats two through four of measures eighty-nine and ninety-three. Measures ninety-four and ninety-six tonicize the fifth of the E major triad, B, which is identical to the phrase endings of the



Example 10.1 Parallel Harmonies in Debussy's *Et la lune descend sur la temple qui fut*[33].

closing theme. However, the violin's melody is transposed down a minor third in measures ninety-nine and one hundred and one, tonicizing the third of the E major triad, G-sharp. In the context of E major, this is analogous to the tonicization of C-sharp which occurs in PTG1. As the piece nears the repeat sign, the sonority built on E morphs into a dominant seven chord, which implies a resolution to the tonic key, A. G-sharp still remains the third of the dominant, however, now that the piece is undoubtedly modulating to A major, G-sharp is now the leading tone of the key. The violin is never given the opportunity to resolve to the tonic, which could lead to the interpretation of this G-sharp as a momentary tonicization of the leading tone. This argument is undermined by the fact that the piano provides context in the form of an E dominant seven chord in the previous measure.

Interestingly, the coda concludes with material that unmistakably resembles the material first heard in PTG1. As opposed to placing the repeat after the G-sharp tonicization in measure 101, Fauré reiterates the first two measures of the exposition at the end of the coda, and places the repeat sign at measure three. Although subtle, this has a strikingly noticeable impact on the energy of the exposition. Structurally speaking, the arpeggiated figuration in the piano continues

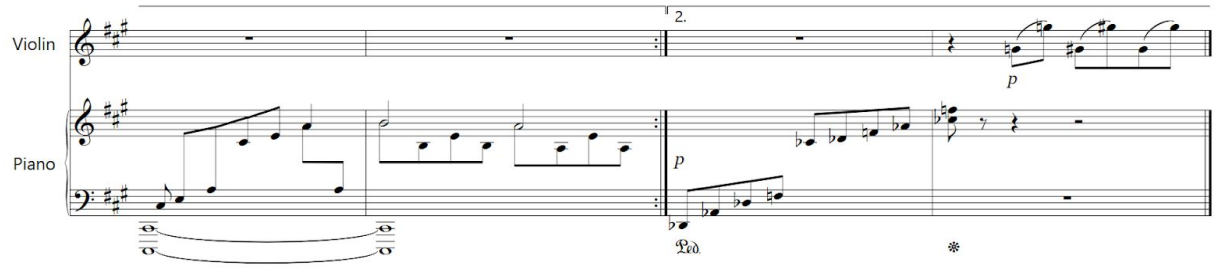
[33] Claude Debussy. *Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut*. Paris: Durand et Fils, 1908.

up until beat four of measure 102, leaving no space between the coda and the brief elided passage that reintroduces PTG1 (Rogers, elisons). The original statement of PTG1 projects a strong sense of forward propulsion due to it both starting on a pickup, and also maintaining a homogeneously rapid rhythmic profile for its entire duration. Eliding with the end of the coda impacts the repetition of the exposition by recycling the rhythmic momentum of the closing theme and coda into the beginning of the piece.

Development

As previously mentioned, the development section of a sonata is traditionally associated with experimentation and instability. Composers often modulate and introduce new ideas in an attempt to contrast the material that precedes it. Owing to the harmonic irregularities of the exposition, one could understandably begin analyzing the development section with a bias pertaining to the amount of contrast achievable by tonal exploration. Fauré spent the majority of the exposition rapidly tonicizing tones both diatonic and chromatic to A major. If the exposition prematurely presents a quality expected in the development, does it undermine the development's purpose? Perhaps the objective impact of an increase in harmonic motion during the course of the development could be lessened; however, the rapid modulations found in the exposition do not inhibit Fauré from composing a development that functions as expected.

Similar to the first ending that leads back into the reiteration of the exposition, the second ending begins with a D-flat in the bass. As seen in example 11.1, this D-flat is an enharmonic equivalent of the C-sharp that was previously functioning as the third of an A major triad. The use of enharmonic respellings is characteristic of Romantic harmony, and would continue to be



Example 11.1 - Enharmonic equivalence as a means of modulating 98 - 101[34].

used by composers of future generations. The D-flat, in this context, is functioning as the root of a D-flat dominant seventh chord, which would most naturally progress to a G-flat chord. Similar to the progression from the medial caesura, however, this D-flat is actually the flatted sixth of F major, which would make the D-flat seventh chord an enharmonically respelled German augmented sixth chord. Fauré repeats the major chord in the accompaniment for six measures, which is the longest a sonority has been voiced thus far.

Beginning in measure 106, the violin reintroduces a transposed version of the primary theme. This variation of the theme starts on the mediant of the scale, as opposed to the initial introduction of the primary theme which begins on the tonic. When comparing the development's variant of the primary theme and the original, the melody rises a half step to B-flat, as opposed to the whole step to B-natural that occurs in the original. The violin and piano engage in call and response style discourse during this phase of the development. This usage of imitation is another instance of Fauré's early music influence. The melodic content of this area of the development, however, introduces a variation to include a rhythmic permutation that had not

[34] Gabriel Fauré, *Sonata in A Major*. 4.

been used up until measure 109. Both the fragmentation of the primary theme and the new responsive melody make up the melodic profile until the cadence on beat three of measure 136.

The harmonic content in this section deviates from the sturdy F major in the previous six measures leaving its functionality up to interpretation. Following the last F in measure 107 is D minor. D minor is diatonic to the key of F. Due to the absence of C-sharps in this portion of the development, F major is still the likely tonic space. The confusion arises in the following measure. When aggregating the pitches in both hands, one can spell an F dominant seven chord in second inversion. The introduction of E-flat would lead one to believe that the progression would resolve to B-flat. The chord, however, resolves to D minor in measure 111, which brings into question the origin of the chord. To further confuse the tonality, Fauré introduces a D-flat major triad in measure 113, which, similarly to the F dominant seventh, lasts for two measures. This temporal symmetry might lead one to look to the voice leading in the bass for further evidence. D minor, F dominant seventh and D-flat major share F as a common tone. This is emphasized by the placement of F in each of the left hand figurations. When examining the left hand, a chromatic line reveals itself starting as far back as measure 106. C, the lowest note in this line, proceeds a whole step up to D, and then D a half step to E-flat. Considering the piece is in a single flat soundworld, an argument can be made that the piece is not in F major, but rather D Phrygian. Both D minor and F dominant seventh are diatonic to the D Phrygian mode. The use of a modal pitch organization, similarly to the harmonies belonging to the closing theme, are evidence of the influence of early music in Fauré's writing.

D-flat major, however, is not diatonic to D Phrygian, which would imply that the use of the Phrygian mode in this section of the piece is either incredibly brief, or there is a more

complex pitch hierarchy being applied. A simpler conclusion is that this is a harmonized line of chromatic sixth and seventh scale degrees in the key of F. While there is room for debate as to whether, or not, the piece is in D minor or F major over the course of this portion of the development, C-sharp makes its first appearance as the third of A major, the dominant of D, in measure 117. The material in measures 118, 119, and 120 all appear to be preparing for a cadence in D minor. However, in measure 121, Fauré resolves to F major in the fashion of an evaded cadence. D minor is never resolved to following the preparation in the previous three measures.

A trend in the harmonic planing of this piece is the modal fluidity of tonal scale degrees. Fauré does this in the exposition when visiting C-sharp minor and B minor, as well. While these keys are visited briefly, and tonicized by use of their dominants, compartmentalizing the tonic scale into a series of modes that are tonicized is an example of how Fauré has reconciled modal theory and Romantic tonality. In the case of the development, the liberal movement, and resulting tonal ambiguity, between D minor and F major demonstrates a modal treatment of tonal pitch organization. In somewhat of a parallel fashion, he restates the melodic material from the previous segment. This time, however, the tonality appears to be in the realm of F-sharp minor. This iteration of the melody, however, is not as unclear due to the abundance of E-sharps beginning in 129. The cadence, however, is written to reflect a similar progression to its D minor counterpart from the previous iteration of this idea. In the context of F-sharp minor, measures 134, 135, and 136 are composed of chords that appear to prepare for an authentic cadence in F-sharp minor. This, however, is prolonged by an A major chord, which is the same evaded mediant cadence observed before.

The next series of events appear to be a culmination of the previous areas of key exploration. Dominated by the accompaniment, the loud and rapid eighth note octave scalar passages outline the D minor scale and the F-sharp minor scale. The scales are incorporated in imitative style between the violin and the piano in four bar increments. This alternation between the voices evokes the same texture as the material from the transition. This is, most likely, intentional, due to the transitional nature of this passage, as it links two areas of thematic material.

Breaking from the imitative texture that has occupied the piece since the beginning of the development, material from PTG2 returns while maintaining the key of F-sharp. The progression in this section, which lasts sixteen measures starting in measure 154. While the melody consistently outlining an F-sharp minor scale, the harmony underneath neglects to mention the tonic triad. The progression in the piano consists of an undulation between D major, the submediant, and E-sharp fully diminished, the leading tone. This progression is interrupted every eight bars where the leading tone chord is substituted by C-sharp dominant 7, which is effectively the same chord as E-sharp fully diminished with a C-sharp as the root.

The following eight bars, 170 through 177, are written in the same spirit as the previous sixteen. The primary differences lie in the texture, the key, and the chord progression. Instead of the pivoting scalar material from the material before, this section consists of a mixture of stepwise motion and leaps that outline the new key, C-sharp major. The progression is similar due to the measure to measure alternation of chords without tonic resolution, however the chords chosen for this progression are F-sharp major, the subdominant that shares a tonic with the previous key, and B-sharp fully diminished, the leading tone. Instead of arriving at C-sharp in

measure 177, Fauré respells C-sharp as D-flat, preparing for another enharmonic modulation akin to the one seen at the beginning of the development seen in Example 11.1.

The melodic material from PTG2 makes a second return starting in measure 178. The D-flat respelling of C-sharp from the previous segment is now the mediant of the key of B-flat minor. Contrasting with the tonicless progressions that have comprised the previous portions of the development, this B-flat minor iteration of the PTG2 melody incorporates a single mid-progression tonic chord. Albeit, the chord is presented in second inversion, Fauré's harmonic vocabulary in this piece has proven to be inversion agnostic. The melody in this section is fragmented and sequenced with the end trajectory being F, the dominant of the current key. This sequence spans the length of 184 to 190. This sequence, similarly to the purpose of D-flat in the previous material, would recontextualize F as the mediant of the next key center, D-flat major.

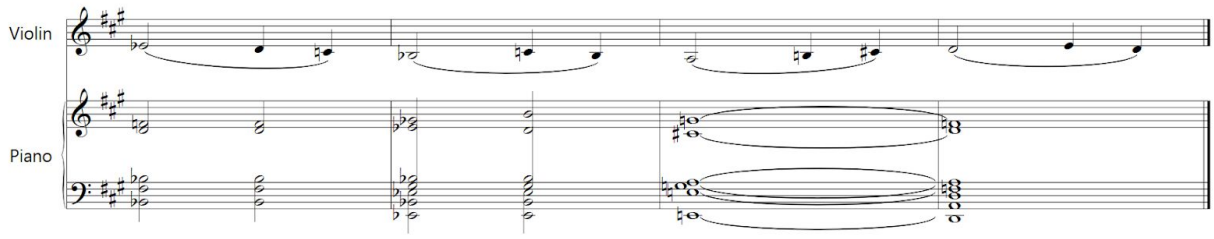
Fauré, again, intersperses two reintroductions of expositional thematic material with rapid figurations in the violin. Fauré blends this new eighth note rhythmic doubling with the chordal texture found in the F-sharp minor section starting in measure 154. Harmonically, however, the progression moves in stark contrast to its F-sharp minor counterpart. The F transforming into the mediant of D-flat major lasts only one complete bar, measure 198. Preceded by an A-flat dominant seventh chord in measure 197, the D-flat does not continue to be focalized. Instead, it functions as a departure point for a series of descending half step dominant seventh and major sonorities lasting through 206. This is the zenith of the development section in terms of its expressiveness and tonal uncertainty. The Neapolitan relationship between each pairing of dominant seventh and major chords, when played simultaneously with the hyper-chromatic melody in the violin, is the largest period of stress and angst in the entire piece. Apart from its

emotional impact, this section functions as a lengthy, zig-zagging, harmonic sequence that eventually arrives on F in measure 206.

The melody reintroduces the rhythmic configuration first observed in STG1. Outlining an A minor scale over the course of measures 210 through 217, the piece undergoes a phase of false retransition. In addition to the tonic recurring the parallel minor, the left hand of the piano is given a dominant pedal that lasts for eight bars, which would be expected to resolve to A major, rather than A minor. The same melody is restated in octaves starting in measure 218 in the key of F major. At the key level, this modulation is, perhaps, another example of an evaded cadence due to the avoidance of the expected tonic key. Opting to modulate to F major, thus prolonging the development, presents another example of Fauré freely emphasizing keys that are diatonically related to one another in a modal fashion. Prior to the harmonic movement towards E major in measure 224, he presents a tonicization of A minor over measures 222 and 223. The most peculiar characteristic of this progression fragment is the previous departure from A minor and arrival at F major. F major had served as the tonic for the previous four bars. Unlike the D minor and F major hybridized material from earlier in the development, F major and A minor do not possess a relative relationship with one another. Why would Fauré feel compelled to revisit a key center that was recently modulated from?

The melody from STG1 continues from measure 226 until measure 237, while accompanied by a new chorale style harmonization that includes the E, F, and G pattern first seen in STG2. Marked diminuendo, this recontextualization of the melodic material evokes memories from the medial caesura, due to the drastic change in texture and dynamics. The

harmony in this section alludes to the same tonal ambiguity that has characterized large swaths of this piece.



Example 11.2 - Peculiar chord progression preceding the retransition. mm 248-251[35].

Resolving to A minor, again, from E major, this section not only prolongs the recapitulation in a false retransitional style, but also incorporates cross relations that leaves the pitch organization of this section up for debate. The harmonization of this section incorporates both G-naturals and G-sharps, implying a mixture of natural minor and harmonic minor pitch collections. In such close proximity to one another, the use of both E major and E minor sonorities is the factor that contributes the most tonal confusion.

Arriving at a half cadence at measure 238 on E minor rather than E major, the listener is prepared for a long awaited resolution to A. Fauré, however, progresses to B-flat major, the Neapolitan of A and a tritone away from E. This B-flat serves as a springboard for a progression that outlines an A Phrygian sound-world without directly referencing A minor. B-flat major, D-minor, and E dominant seven make several appearances over the course of measures 242 through 263. The absence of A minor in this section demonstrates Fauré's unique ability to simulate the sense of Romantic yearning using his own harmonic language. A minor is constantly beckoned to, but arrives well after a period of harmonic intensity. Perhaps the most

[35] Gabriel Fauré, *Sonata in A Major*. 9.

interesting portion of this progression, which can be seen in Example 11.2, occurs over the span of measures 248 to 251. B-flat major, which had been sustained under an E-flat major scale fragment in the violin, serves as the dominant of E-flat major which immediately succeeds it in measure 289. In a half step relationship, A dominant seven resolves to D minor in the next two measures. D minor continues to serve its previous purpose as the subdominant of A minor.

After this extended period of restfulness, the piano initiates the actual retransition with a series of upward octave alternations shared between the hands starting in measure 256. This gesture is mimicked in the violin as well starting in measure 263, which is succeeded by the long anticipated A minor. Unlike a typical retransition[36], which is expected to terminate in the key of the dominant, Fauré continues in the key of A minor. Chromaticism in the melodic line, however, strategically emphasizes chord tones that are diatonic to the key of A major. The first instance of this occurs over the three beats between beat three of measure 265 and beat one of measure 266. The pitches included at the end of measure 265 are B-sharp and D-sharp. These two notes surround the C-sharp, which is the third of A major, that falls on the downbeat of measure 266. E, the fifth of A major, is surrounded by neighboring tones in an analogous gesture over the course of the next two measures, 266 and 267. Although subtle, the melodic motion does allude to the return of A major in the following section.

Recapitulation

The brief and abrupt shift from A minor to the parallel major introduces the recapitulation with a slight variation in the arrangement. The material heard first is the first group member from PTG1. This time, however, the violin plays the primary theme alongside the piano, which

[36] Hepokoski and Darcy, 198.

presents the return of the material in a non-literal fashion. This is a deformation of the traditional sonata, which would have included the original solo piano PTG1[37]. The material, harmonically, functions exactly as one would expect. The original harmonic progression returns intact, which is true for the majority of the harmonies present in the recapitulation, due to its role as a restatement of the exposition.

Following the restatement of PTG1 is the restatement of PTG2. Initially, the melody and harmonies reflect that of the original iteration of the group member, a loose tonicization of C-sharp minor, followed by a progression of tonicized scale tones: A, B, C-sharp, and E. In what would be akin to a tonal composition's correction to maintain the tonic key, Fauré extends the material from PTG2 to allow for further alteration of harmony. Starting in measure 300, which would be the equivalent of measure thirty-four in the exposition, Fauré deviates from the original chord progression that included: C major, A major, D major, A-sharp half diminished and B-minor. Instead, the recapitulation's statement of PTG2 includes the following progression: C major, A minor, D minor, B dominant seven, and E minor. In an extension of the theme group member, Fauré repeats the melody a diatonic fifth below, which includes a chord progression not previously stated in the exposition: D dominant seven, G major, G-sharp half diminished, and C-sharp seven. The melody returns to its original state in 307. This time, however, the melody reflects the changes made to the harmony.

The variation in chord choice over the course of the extension of PTG2, interestingly, does not reflect Fauré's intent to remain in the key of A major. Instead, this chord progression proves that there is an atypical pitch tonal scheme that transcends the traditional tonic dominant

[37] Hepokoski and Darcy, 233.

sonata model. In the exposition, the key centers that receive the longest emphasis preceding the transition are: D major, C-sharp minor, B minor, and A major. When compared to the altered recurrence of PTG2 in the recapitulation, which contains the following chord progression: G major, F-sharp minor, E major, and D major, one can observe that the macro progression retains similar qualities. Both the exposition and recapitulation outline A major soundworlds, however the recapitulation introduces the key of G major. Albeit brief, G major makes an integral appearance later on in the section that may explain this progression's significance. The most obvious relationship one can make between the two progressions, however, is their intervallic distance of a perfect fifth. Although the tonal organization of both the exposition and recapitulation have been made unclear by Fauré's modal influence, the tonal significance of the perfect fifth indicates that Fauré's harmonic plan is influenced by functional harmony.

Following the second statement of PTG2 is, as expected, the second statement of the transition. Deviating from the quasi-tonal pitch organization of the rest of the piece, Fauré makes use of the octatonic scale in this section. Although the pitch material used in this section does not belong to the tonal vocabulary, he continues to reflect the same tonic dominant relationship between the first and second iterations of the transition, similar to the previous section. In the first statement of the transition in measure starting in measure fifty-one, Fauré used an octatonic scale fragment starting on B-sharp and ending on G. The second statement of the transition, starting in measure 321, begins on E-sharp, which maintains the same fifth relationship seen in the previous section. One could infer that this octatonic scale is outlining G major due to this relationship. This transposed iteration of the octatonic scale, and it's harmonization, can be seen in example 12.1.

The second theme group returns intact with the only changes being harmonic. Starting on the tonic A major, the harmony in this section directly corresponds with the initial harmony from the first iteration of STG1. Comparing both sections provides insight in regards to Fauré's

Example 12.1 - The octatonic scale harmonized using G major harmonies.

harmonic choices during this section. The first four measures are devoted to forecasting the key that is expected of the section. In the case of the exposition, the second theme group is expected to be in the key of the dominant, which is what the progression entails: E major, A major, E major, and B dominant seventh. This is mirrored in the expected tonic, A major, during the recapitulation: A major, D major, A major, and E dominant seven. The second leg of the progression is more ambiguous. In the exposition, the progression explores G major, which has a chromatic mediant relationship with the previous key of E major: G major, C major, C-sharp fully diminished, and D dominant seven. Beginning at measure 331, a progression with the same relationship is emulated in the recapitulation in the key of C major: C major, F major, F fully diminished, and G dominant seven. Although chromatic mediant key relationships are customary in Romantic music[38], the harmonic trajectory of progression is destined for solely the left hand in STG2, which immediately follows STG1 in the recapitulation. Comparable to the first statement of STG2, which transforms the G major from the previous section into the flat three of E Phrygian dominant, C major is transformed into the flat three of A Phrygian dominant. Again,

[38] Hans Tischler, "Re: Chromatic Mediants: A Facet of Musical Romanticism," *Journal of Music Theory* 2, no. 1 (April 1958): 94).

the progression makes use of two simultaneous progressions that are split between the hands. In the left hand is an undulating three chord progression that outlines C major, B-flat major, and A major. In the right hand is a series of planned chords that harmonizes the violin's melody in thirds.

Following the trending of literally restating the exposition, the medial caesura makes its second appearance. Again, similar to the original statement of the medial caesura outlining a chromaticized progression pointing towards E major, this iteration of the medial caesura appears to be harmonically progressing to A major. Starting at measure 349, a C-sharp fully diminished chord is transformed into a German augmented sixth of flat seven, spelled E-flat, B-flat, C-sharp and G-natural. This progression ignores the expected resolution to the dominant, and, instead, progresses directly to the momentary tonic, G major. G major is followed by the submediant, D major, and then by an E dominant seventh, before repeating. The use of G major in place of G-sharp in this section is a precursor for the type of progression that will be used in the following section.

The closing zone, which succeeds the medial caesura, is modified to include a coda in the recapitulation, which is typical of sonata form. The progression begins in measure 356, and mirrors the progression first seen in the exposition, would be best described as a hybrid of A Mixolydian and A major, due to the presence of both a dominant flat seven, and a dominant five. The progression is repeated twice over the next eight bars before Fauré initiates the coda. Beginning where the final cadence of the exposition would start, at measure 365, melodic material that is reminiscent of the texture first presented in the development at measure 174. The rapid pairings of eight notes are accompanied by a new piano part that vaguely resembles an

extended version of the material from STG2. Over the span of the next sixteen measures, the violin and piano trade melodic parts in three measure increments. The piano is given a modified octave part due to the impracticality of the part the violin has. The harmony through measure 384 outlines chords that reflect both A major and the A major sounding modes that Fauré had referenced in the preceding sections. Grounding this section in A, however, is the series of beat one octave As in the left hand starting in 365. Although the chords in the following beats are typically not A, or even have A as a chord tone, the use of A as a pedal helps demystify the tonal qualities of this section. Otherwise, this chord progression may have been too ill focused to convey a sense of tonality.

The second half of the coda begins at measure 385. Beginning with material identical to the primary theme, the melody is varied to include arpeggiation of the tonic triad between its statements of the primary theme. This lasts until measure 398, marks the ultimate component of the piece. Resembling material from the transition, The piano and violin play melodic material that resembles an E major scale. Starting in measure 401, the first passage incorporates the octave figuration from the transition in the piano, while the violin sustains an E above. Four measures later, the melody retains the same texture; however, its contour is changed to further emphasize E major in preparation for a final dominant tonic cadence.

The harmony in the final cadential statement of the piece begins with a series of chords that evokes a fairly typical progression: F-sharp minor, B-dominant seven, E dominant seven, and A major. This modified six, two, five, one progression follows the circle of fifths. In comparison to some of the irregular progressions of this piece, this progression strongly grounds the tonality of this section leaving no room for alternate interpretation. The progression

minimizes to include only B-dominant seven and A starting in measure 396. This is a result of Fauré's harmonization of the descending line, which includes alternating chord tones of B major and A major. This is most likely due to Fauré's desire to include D-sharp to retain the sense of dominant tonality in this otherwise tonic progression. The progression of B dominant seven to A major is another example of a consolidated progression that skips its expected resolution. Small progressions like this one have occurred numerously throughout the piece, and have proven to be an important characteristic of the harmonic language of this movement. The harmony, beginning at measure 401 stagnates due to the scalar texture of the melody. Consisting of an E major scale, Fauré prepares for the final dominant tonic cadence over the span of the next nine measures. The piece concludes with a perfect authentic cadence: E dominant seven to A major.

Conclusion

In summary, Fauré successfully presents a traditional sonata despite deviating from the harmonic norms of the period. Although the largest deformations lie within the harmonic characteristics of the exposition, Fauré presents thematic material in the exact order expected of a traditional sonata. Much of the interest in this piece lies within its harmonic language. Fauré's reconciliation of tonal conventions and early music influence presents a unique take on the coloristic approach to harmony that fascinated composers of the Romantic era[3940]. The harmonic process of corroborating different theories and pitch organizations would become a defining characteristic of the next generation of post-Romantic composers. Contrary to what one would

[39] Caballero, Carlo. Fauŕe and French Musical Aesthetics. Music in the Twentieth Century. Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
[40] Moore, Stacy. "Review: Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics." Music and Letters 84, no. 1 (2003): 113-17.

expect, however, the unique harmonic approach Fauré takes does not impact his ability to strictly follow the traditional sonata form.

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