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La Chanson d'Eve: Counterpoint in the Late Style of Fauré

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May 1997

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts.

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Acknowledgements

Since I began this thesis, I have been able to benefit from the generosity, skill, talent, and specialized knowledge lent me by a number of persons and organizations and to whom I would like to express my gratitude. At the top of the list are my willing and encouraging thesis advisors, Professors Steven Huebner and Peter Schubert. Both read through many tangled, garbled musings in several downright drafty versions of this thesis and guided me through the process of making it more thoughtful and less windy. Since they work in different areas of music research, I would also like to thank my advisors for taking the extra time that it required to collaborate with each other on my project. Continuing in the academic vein, I must acknowledge the help of professors who read through some of the research presented here: Richard Green for his help with Louis Niedermeyer's treatise, and Brian Alegant and Don McLean for their analytical insights into "Paradis" and "Crépuscule".

No less appreciated is the assistance provided me by Cynthia Leive and the staff of the Marvin Duchow Music Library for their help not only with source material, but also the vagaries and frustrations of computers, printers, software and everything else that can be associated with a technological nightmare. To the people down the street at Inter-Library Loans, I really must say "hats off" for finding the one and only circulating copy of "Mélisande's Song" in North America!

Finally there is the much imposed-upon group of persons who freely lent unconditional emotional support throughout the entire process: my spouse, François

de Médicis; my mother and step-father, Dorothy and Allan Eiserman; my grandmother, Rowena Mattison; my sister, Jennifer Eiserman; and my dear friend René Lessard.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the women in my family whose strength of personality, individuality of thought and sheer ability to work has made them powerful role models: Rowena, Dorothy, and Emma.

Abstract

In the field of musicology, most commentators agree that the late style of Gabriel Fauré is highly contrapuntal. At the same time, no systematic or generally accepted methodology exists for the discussion of the way in which Fauré combines individual lines, except for Robert Orledge's brief enumeration of Fauré's preferred procedures with respect to such things as time and interval of entry. In this thesis, I develop a method for examining counterpoint in selected songs from the late-style song cycle, *La Chanson d'Eve*. This is based on historical information concerning Fauré's education, his pedagogical habits, and his comments concerning the composition of *Pénélope* which was written during the same time period as the songs. This methodology is then applied to an examination of the interaction between the voice and piano, something Orledge has referred to as the "Themeless Contrapuntal Duet." Since Fauré himself claimed that he combined motives according to the poetic context, I have also tried to show instances in which their content may be influenced by the text. Finally, I show how these cells of simultaneously sounding motives may be used to create a larger sense of form.

Résumé

La plupart des travaux musicologiques portant sur l'oeuvre de Fauré reconnaissent la nature hautement contrapuntique des oeuvres de la dernière période. Cependant, aucune méthodologie décrivant systématiquement l'art fauréen de combinaison des lignes n'a été encore reconnue, hormis la courte liste de Robert Orledge citant les procédés favoris du compositeur en ce qui a trait aux intervalles de temps et de hauteurs entre les entrées. Dans cette thèse, je développe une méthode d'analyse contrepointique appliquée à une sélection de mélodies tirées d'un cycle de la dernière période, *La Chanson d'Eve*. Cette approche est fondée sur une étude historique portant sur l'apprentissage musical de Fauré, ses habitudes pédagogiques, et ses commentaires touchant la composition de *Pénélope*, une oeuvre contemporaine du cycle vocal. Ensuite, l'application de la méthodologie aux mélodies rend compte de l'interaction de la voix et du piano, une combinaison qualifiée par Orledge de "Duo contrepointique a-thématique." Puisque de l'aveu même de Fauré les motifs sont agencés en fonction du contexte poétique, je suggère des liens entre l'organisation contrepointique et le texte. Finalement, je montre comment la combinaison simultanée de motifs est exploitée pour créer une forme d'organisation à grande échelle.

Introduction

Like many well-known composers, Gabriel Fauré's life has been conveniently divided into three stylistic periods. This division has been agreed upon in the two most recent biographies: Jean-Michel Nectoux's *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life* (1991), and Robert Orledge's *Gabriel Fauré* (1979). But while these two scholars concur that the third style period begins in 1906, they differ subtly in their characterization of Fauré's music from this time. Nectoux describes the music composed during the years 1906-1924 as, "a stiffening of melodic lines and a still greater harmonic audacity resulting from a more consistent emphasis on counterpoint."¹ Nectoux sees this in a work which he feels is key to the development of Fauré's late style--*La Chanson d'Eve* (1906-1910).² This being said, Nectoux's description of the *contrapuntal* consists mainly of a description of *monophonic* motives.

Robert Orledge acknowledges that Fauré's music from the third style period is contrapuntal, and yet his discussion of *Eve* makes no reference to manifestations of counterpoint. In fact, most of Orledge's discussion of the third style period focuses on the harmonic aspects of the individual works, with exception of *Le Jardin clos* (1914). Orledge claims that, "the line between *Le Don silencieux* (1906) and *Le Jardin clos* is a clear one, for the majority of the 'enclosed garden' songs appear as themeless contrapuntal duets between the voice and the bass-line which surround a less austere

¹ Jean-Michel Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*, trans. by Roger Nichols (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 295.

² *Ibid.*, 369.

chordal centre."³ *Eve* falls within that time period of 1906-1914, during which Orledge perceives a heightened polarization of outer voices. Yet we are not shown how the interaction of outer voices in *Eve* differs from or leads towards *Le Jardin Clos*. Orledge seems to imply that *Eve* shares in the contrapuntal nature of the later work, but he does not make direct comparisons.

In many respects, we cannot blame Robert Orledge or Jean-Michel Nectoux for failing to concretize what they each refer to in relatively vague terms—counterpoint in the works from the third style period, and *Eve* in particular. Taken globally, the discussion of counterpoint in the musicological literature tends to be limited to a listing of *procedures*, such as canon, fugue, and imitation, as well as the particulars of these procedures such as time and interval of entry. Even within the study of 15th and 16th-century contrapuntal music, the problem of analysis has only recently been addressed. This thesis expands on the observations of both Jean-Michel Nectoux and Robert Orledge. I replace Nectoux's discussion of the monophonic motives in *La Chanson d'Eve* with an examination of layers of motives, which I refer to as "combinations." I also attempt to reconcile this contrapuntal aspect of the cycle with its "audacious" harmonies. To some extent I expand Orledge's perceptions of the "contrapuntally alive duet" even while I also allude to traditional techniques such as imitation and canon. These approaches have been put to work in Chapters Three, Four, and Five of this thesis in analyses of three motivically related songs.

³ Robert Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Eulenburg Books, 1979), 142.

Chapter One

Historical Background and Review of Selected Secondary Literature

Historical Background

This chapter outlines the historical background and scholarly precedents which have informed the analytical methodology presented in Chapter Two of this thesis. It is limited to aspects of Fauré's biography which may have had a significant impact on his third style period, and secondary sources which deal directly with aspects of harmony, counterpoint, and pitch centricity in Fauré's music.

It is very tempting to compare Fauré's late style with Beethoven's: he became deaf during the last phase of his compositional career and he also began to write more contrapuntally. Indeed it has become a tradition to explain Fauré's change in style during the latter years of his life as the result of his hearing impediment.¹ We maintain the biographical, Beethovenian myth in spite of the fact that we know that Fauré's compositional process rarely involved an external experiencing of sound: he habitually composed in his head, away from the piano.² Deafness was frustrating to Fauré because

¹ This tradition begins with the biographies of Charles Koechlin and Philippe Fauré-Fremiet and continues to figure in the work of Robert Orledge and Jean-Michel Nectoux.

² See Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré*, 197. See also Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 484. Even Fauré's experience as a pianist was extremely internal and may have been prompted by his experience as a student. At the Niedermeyer School he was obliged to practice in the same room and at the same time as fifteen other students and it is unlikely that he ever really heard himself play. In spite of this he became an accomplished pianist.

he could not hear his compositions *after* they had been composed.³ Therefore, while deafness may certainly have contributed to the contrapuntal nature of Fauré's late style, we should examine Fauré's biography for additional causes.

Fauré and the Niedermeyer School

One source for Fauré's late style may have been his education at the Niedermeyer School. The importance of Louis Niedermeyer's influence on Fauré has been acknowledged throughout the history of Fauré scholarship, from Charles Koechlin's biography, through Françoise Gervais' theoretical study, to the most recent biography by Jean-Michel Nectoux.⁴ Three aspects of his education at this school may have informed the contrapuntal nature of his late style: the study and performance of Renaissance music; the harmonization of Gregorian chant; and his training in harmony which emphasized voice leading.

Renaissance sacred polyphony held a special place at the Niedermeyer school. The school choir rehearsed this type of music, or engaged in "simultaneously singing" to

³ Fauré wrote of his deafness in 1922, "With my wretched hearing, there are moments when I could not tell what passage in my music someone was playing. . . I have never played, either for myself or anybody else, a single note from *Pénélope* since it was first written in Lausanne in 1907. If I'm not mistaken, even then I was not hearing things on pitch when my fingers pressed down the keys." Gabriel Fauré in Emile Vuillermoz, *Gabriel Fauré*, (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Company), 45.

⁴ Koechlin, Charles, *Gabriel Fauré*, (Paris: Editions d'Aujourd'hui, 1983), 7-8. See also Françoise Gervais, *Etude comparée des langages harmoniques de Fauré et de Debussy*, in *La Revue Musicale* (special edition) 272 (1971), 21, and Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 12.

borrow Niedermeyer's term,⁵ three times a week and often performed at church services. This repertoire also served as a model of counterpoint for the students. According to Gustave Lefèvre, students were restricted to species counterpoint in the style of Palestrina since the tonal counterpoint of composers like J.S. Bach was deemed to contain too many contrapuntal liberties to be an example for novices.⁶ Fauré's training at the Niedermeyer School also included the harmonization of plain-chant according to a method developed by Niedermeyer in conjunction with Joseph d'Ortigue and published in an instructional treatise in 1856.⁷ This work has been examined as a possible source for Fauré's harmonic style by James Kidd who posits a direct relationship between the harmonic progressions which result from the application of Niedermeyer's method and characteristic successions in Fauré's style in general.⁸ (Kidd refers to these successions as "channel progressions.") His study is limited to about thirty songs from Fauré's early and middle periods, however, and does not address the question of counterpoint.

The significance of Niedermeyer's method may lie in three factors: he invokes a layering process to create polyphony; he considers the triad as resulting from layering;

⁵ Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 105.

⁶ Gustave Lefèvre, "L'école de musique classique Niedermeyer," in *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du conservatoire* part 2 v. 6, 3621.

⁷ Louis Niedermeyer, and Joseph d'Ortigue, *Traité théorique et pratique de l'accompagnement du plain-chant* (Paris: Editions Repos, 1858).

⁸ James, C. Kidd, "Louis Niedermeyer's System for Gregorian Chant Accompaniment as a Compositional Source for Gabriel Fauré" (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Chicago, 1974). Kidd's views have been challenged by Marie-Claire Beltrando-Patier in "Les Mélodies de G. Fauré" (Ph.D. Thesis: Université de Strasbourg II, 1978).

and he calls for the saturation of harmonizations with pitches specific to the mode of the chant and thereby causes his students to practice a certain amount of pitch-centric composition. The layering process is most clearly seen at work in Chapters Two through Five of the treatise where Niedermeyer shows the student how to compose polyphonic cadences which will reinforce the sense of mode. This is achieved in any given mode by superimposing two of the characteristic cadential formulae to create a contrapuntal combination. One voice from the combination should be placed in the upper register (soprano) but the other may function as a middle or bass voice. The remaining voices are added arbitrarily to create vertical triads. These added or “filler” voices do not have to derive from cadential formulae, but Niedermeyer imposes the restriction that they not be inflected by accidentals (with the exception of B-flat).

A case in point are Niedermeyer's cadences for the first mode. First he provides the student with four fragmentary cadential melodic formulae, which are reproduced below.

Example 1--Niedermeyer's Cadences for Mode 1⁹



He then demonstrates the layering process by combining two or more of the formulae,

⁹ The numeric labelling overtop of the cadential formulae are my own and used for clarity again in Example 2 (page over).

and filling in the remaining voices to create triads. Niedermeyer's example has been reproduced below, with some modifications (i.e., white notes denote cadential formulae while stemless quarter notes indicate that the pitch belongs to an added voice).

Example 2--Niedermeyer's Combinations for Mode 1

The musical notation consists of two staves, treble and bass clef. Above the treble staff, there are seven measures with numbers 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 3 above them. Below the bass staff, there are seven measures with numbers 2, 1, 3/4, 2, 3, 2 below them. The notes are mostly stems and stems without stems, with some white notes. The notation is arranged in a grid-like fashion with vertical bar lines.

Niedermeyer's writing of polyphony through the layering process is intended to wipe out the threat of modal contamination, and he condemns tonal accompaniments of plainchant as "bi-tonal." His logic stems from the premise that four-part harmony is actually the simultaneous sounding of four melodies: if a modal melody is superimposed over three other lines which belong to a different tonality, the resulting combination is "absurd and cacophonous."¹⁰ This view of harmony as the outgrowth of contrapuntal combination may also have contributed to the contrapuntal nature of Fauré's late style.

The *Traité* also engages the notion of pitch centrality. In a summary of principles for the setting of plainchant, Niedermeyer makes two generalizations. First, settings must

¹⁰ Louis Niedermeyer, *Traité*, 35.

make exclusive use of the notes of the modal scale to which the chant belongs. Second, the notes in the chords which are built on the final and dominant share the same function as the final and dominant tones (in the modal sense of the terms), and the reiteration of these chords will clarify the mode. The fundamental of the chord does not necessarily have to be a final or dominant tone; the sonority must simply contain this pitch.

Niedermeyer holds that the sense of any mode will be perceptually reinforced by saturating a setting with triads which include a final or dominant tone. This might of course imply a transfer of tonal polarities onto medieval modes; however, it is not the root movement between triads which defines the mode, as tonic-dominant progressions help to define key, but the absolute pitch value of the tone included in the triad. In other words, the triad is merely a natural emanation of the final or dominant, whose conspicuous presence in a work allows the mode to be expressed. This contrasts considerably with major/minor tonality wherein the tonic is defined by the succession of intervals around it and not by its specific frequency.

Such emphasis on pitch is also found in the *Notes Préliminaires*, where Niedermeyer claims that the plagal modes are not "new." Rather, they are to be seen as variations on the authentic modes because they share common final tones. Relying on Pierre-Benoît Jumilhac's theories,¹¹ Niedermeyer also stresses the importance of the dominant: "it is these voices...the final and the dominant which characterize the modes,

¹¹ Niedermeyer cites the seventeenth-century theorist Jumilhac in his text but does not specify the source of his information. He may be referring to Jumilhac's *La science et la pratique du plain-chant*, (Paris: n.p., 1847).

and which distinguish one from another."¹² Thus Niedermeyer's definition of mode is deeply rooted in pitch specificity and it is perhaps this which allows him to reason that there are probably only four modes, (Protus, Deuterus, Tritus, and Tetrardus). However, he accepts an eight mode system,¹³ and also acknowledges the possibility of Zarlino's system of twelve modes, but ultimately rejects it as purely theoretical along with systems of sixteen modes.¹⁴

A final aspect of Fauré's education which is significant to this thesis is treated by all the major authorities on Fauré's work, and this is the importance of his *anti-Ramiste* training with Gustave Lefèvre at the Niedermeyer School.¹⁵ Lefèvre apparently based his course on the work of Pierre Maleden who was significantly informed by Gottfried Weber's theories. This Weberian influence on Fauré's compositional style is interesting in that it stresses voice leading. Sonorities were viewed as a conglomerate of scale degrees, not a stack of thirds.¹⁶ The student was permitted to respell triads and allowed a great deal of license when deciding upon the scale degree of each chord tone member.

¹² Niedermeyer, *Traité*, 21. "Ce sont proprement ces deux voix...la finale et la dominante, qui donnent la forme aux modes et en font la distinction et la différence."

¹³ Ibid., 22.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Lefèvre's teaching was based on the work of Gottfried Weber. See Françoise Gervais, *Etude comparée*, 54-59. See also Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré*, 251-252; Robin Tait, *The Musical Language of Gabriel Fauré* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), 72-78; Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 227-229.

¹⁶ Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 226.

However, once scale degrees were assigned, the chord tones were obliged to behave in typical voice-leading fashion. In Lefèvre's words:

You must explore the directions in which each note of the chord can move, either diatonically, chromatically or enharmonically, so as to form a new aggregation.

You can then assign this to a certain key depending on how you designate the notes that compose it.¹⁷

This freedom allowed Lefèvre's students to move from chord to chord in unconventional ways—to be approached as one set of chord tones and left as another.¹⁸ This multiplicity of meaning also entails problems for the analyst who wishes to place neat and unequivocal labels under chords. For the purpose of this thesis, I consider the system taught at the Niedermeyer School to be a form of harmony which we might recognize as submitting in part to the rules of voice-leading in counterpoint. I also think it is a strong incentive to treat even successions of chords as first species counterpoint or the simultaneous sounding of independent melodies whose tones move in strict observance of voice-leading even if they must be reinterpreted in terms of scale degree.

Fauré as Pedagogue and Composer

The beginning of Fauré's late style period coincides with his appointment to the

¹⁷ Lefèvre in Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 228.

¹⁸ Jana Sásław describes a similar phenomenon resulting from Gottfried Weber's theories. See "Gottfried Weber and Multiple Meaning", *Theoria* 5 (1990-91): 73-103.

directorship of the *Conservatoire*. Therefore, some hypotheses concerning his attitude towards the role of counterpoint in composition may be gleaned from his pedagogical habits. When Fauré was appointed to the position in 1905, one of the first things that he did was to create a separate class for the study of counterpoint.¹⁸ Prior to his appointment, counterpoint and fugue had been included in composition classes. But we must not assume that counterpoint held a secondary importance in the *Conservatoire* training, because it was necessary for students to be able to compose fugues in order to win the *Prix de Rome*. Moreover, a movement had been afoot in the *Conservatoire* since 1892 to have counterpoint separated from the composition class, but was vigorously opposed by Ambroise Thomas and Théodore Dubois.

Fauré's creation of the separate course, and also his comments to his student Emile Vuillermoz, imply that he felt that counterpoint was a *normal* prerequisite for composition, and that students should arrive at composition class already prepared in the subject. From this it seems that he regarded counterpoint as a natural part of composition--not something special that should be worked up to great effect for the *Prix de Rome*. Actually, Fauré disliked teaching counterpoint very much, a job which he left to André Gédalge, who had coached Massenet's students as well.¹⁹

In his writings Fauré said very little about the technical aspects of counterpoint as

¹⁸ This process is described in detail in Gail Hilson Woldu's "Gabriel Fauré as Director of the Conservatoire nationale de musique et de déclamation, 1905-1920" (Ph.D. Dissertation: Yale University, 1983), 84-86.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

a systematic craft. However, he did speak about the combining of musical material for his opera *Pénélope*, which he composed concurrently with *Chanson d'Eve*. While composing Ulysses's royal theme, Fauré wrote to his wife:

When I say I am working at this theme, here is what goes into the process: first, I seek out all the combinations into which I shall need to mould the theme according to the circumstances of the text. . I also look to see if this theme will combine with that of Pénélope. Then I seek out all the ways of transforming the theme, to bring about the varied effects, both in its entirety and in its constituent parts. . In a word, I make myself a card-index of its resources which will serve me for the entire work.²¹

Thus for Fauré a theme for a main character is developed so that it may work both as a monophonic entity and as a contrapuntal object in combination with other themes, when necessitated by the dramatic situation. A main character's theme must also have the capacity to combine with that of another principal.

Orledge has also referred to the combination of motives in two works other than *Pénélope*. The first is found in his discussion of the motives for the First Cello Sonata (1917). He finds the third motive "unusual in that it is a duet from the very beginning, both elements recurring as the piece develops, with the piano providing an answer to the

²¹ Fauré, Gabriel, *Lettres intimes*, (Paris: La Colombe, n.d.), 144, translated in Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré*, 221 and Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 486.

questionings of the cello."²² Orledge also refers to this phenomenon in his section on the Second Piano Quintet, and again the notion rears its head in the context of a discussion of the work's motives. He finds two themes which occur simultaneously, "theme G and its vital bass accompaniment G1 make up another rondo idea."²³

Fauré's statements about the combination of motives for *Pénélope* and Orledge's observation of two-voiced motives for two instrumental works make a case for viewing Fauré's thematic process as both monophonic and polyphonic, as well as something which is closely tied to the notion of counterpoint as a process which is strongly attached to the layering of motives. Taken alone this might seem odd, but it becomes more plausible when combined with my reading of the Niedermeyer treatise and summary of Fauré's pedagogical attitude towards counterpoint. The notion of layering and of the triad as an ancillary element do not, however, figure prominently in current secondary sources.

Review of Selected Secondary Literature

Scholarly discussions of counterpoint in the work of Fauré are scarce, and only address procedures and the polarity of outer lines. The small part of the literature devoted to the contrapuntal aspect of Fauré's style also begins with writers who seem to have ulterior motives for discussing this aspect of Fauré's writing. In his biography of the composer from 1945, Fauré's student, Charles Koechlin, described the obviously

²² Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré*, 169.

²³ *ibid.*, 182.

contrapuntal aspects of Fauré's music (i.e., the canons in the *Requiem*, *Dolly*, and the second Violin Sonata) only in order to dampen any suggestion of d'Indy's "scholasticism."²⁴ A newspaper article of the same vintage written by Wilfrid Mellers has a somewhat different agenda, which is to defend Fauré against charges of writing "charming" music. Mellers's entire discussion is somewhat marred by his numerous and overly obvious use of phallic symbols, for example, he describes a melodic line as "virile," "irrepressibly long" and resembling "a pure and inexhaustible jet of water."²⁵ It is Mellers who initially emphasized the independence of the bass and soprano voices in Fauré's music: "nowhere is the *power* of Fauré's mature art more patent than in this solid tension between melody and bass."²⁶ He also views Fauré's harmony as shaped by this polarization of outer voices.²⁷ Robert Orledge's referential biography of Fauré from 1979 transmits most of Mellers's views--though seemingly without the agenda or the colourful metaphors! Aside from this, Orledge refers to the procedural aspect of counterpoint by identifying Fauré's preference for canon and imitation at close times and narrow intervals of entry.²⁸ The most recent substantive and authoritative work on Fauré by Jean-Michel Nectoux repeats much of what is said by Mellers and Orledge in the short space assigned

²⁴ Koechlin *Gabriel Fauré*, 169-170.

²⁵ Wilfrid Mellers, "Gabriel Fauré" in *Studies in Contemporary Music*, (London: Denis Dobson, 1947), 61.

²⁶ *ibid.*, 62.

²⁷ *ibid.*, 65

²⁸ Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré*, 258.

to counterpoint.²⁹ For the most part, discussions of counterpoint in Fauré seem motivated by a desire to improve the composer's image. They inevitably lead back either to procedure or to treble-bass polarization.

This is evident in Robert Orledge's *Gabriel Fauré*, where the third-period song cycles are described as "themeless contrapuntal duets between the voice and the bass-line which surround a less austere chordal centre."³⁰ It is difficult to build on Orledge's insight since the exact meaning of "themeless contrapuntal duets" is elusive. Does "themeless" imply a lack of melody? This is certainly an option since throughout the biography Orledge consistently assigns a secondary importance to melody in Fauré's music. Reading his notion of "themelessness" as "unmelodic" would make his statement seem contradictory since we tend to think of counterpoint as something which is inherently melodic, with identifiable musical ideas, subjects, counter-subjects or "themes." But a "themeless" contrapuntal duet could also simply mean that the melodic phrases lack internal repetition. Thus while Orledge's duets may have a pronounced linear or "melodic" focus, they may also lack the coherence and structure of repeated phrases, and as a result have no clear identity or "theme." Furthermore, the functional features that we normally associate with a clearly distinguishable *tonal* melody may not be present in the duets. When all is said and done, Orledge has merely provided a convenient label for Mellers's observations on the existence of a strong polarity between

²⁹ Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 245-248.

³⁰ Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré*, 142.

the accompaniment, probably the left hand for the most part, and the singer's part in the mature songs.

Even though the focus of this thesis is counterpoint, it is appropriate to summarize some of the main literature dealing with Fauré's harmony since I will deal with vertical events in Chapters Three, Four, and Five. As in discussions of counterpoint, a tradition persists in the study of Fauré's harmony. This is to assert that Fauré's style derives far more from harmony than counterpoint. It begins with a telling statement found in the writings of another of Fauré's students, Emile Vuillermoz, of the same vintage as Koechlin's biography:

Gabriel Fauré's great attribute was to have understood that musical language can *progress* only by the development and enrichment of harmony. Fauré knew that harmonic discoveries--the annexation of a new chord, of an unexpected relationship between superimposed sound--make for the life and energy of our art. All the conquests of Wagner, Liszt, Chopin, Gounod, Lalo, Moussorgsky, Chabrier, and naturally Fauré, Debussy and Ravel, were realized solely in the domain of harmony. Counterpoint had no part in it. To have had the courage to base one's teaching on that axiom denotes a singular clairvoyance and true courage.³¹

This tradition continues into the often-cited work of Françoise Gervais, and has been reinforced in recent generations of scholarship by Robert Orledge and Robin Tait.

³¹ Vuillermoz, *Gabriel Fauré*, 27-28. Emphasis mine.

Since the work of Françoise Gervais, the study of Fauré's harmony has mostly been devoted to the examination of isolated sonorities, and questions of the influence of church modes. However, some aspects of Robin Tait's work are relevant to this study. His observation that the sixth scale degree frequently remains flattened in melodic minor compositions³² is significant to my analyses of "Melisande's Song,"³³ "Crépuscule" and "Paradis" because in these songs the sixth step is volatile. Tait's remarks concerning the half-diminished seventh help to shed some light on the ambiguity of supertonic half-diminished seventh chords in the songs I have studied. Specifically, he points out that the half-diminished seventh may function both as dominant and pre-dominant (i.e., as II7 of the key being approached, or as VII7).³⁵

Tait also identifies an increase in the use of major chords with added sixth during the third style period.³⁶ This might be extended to allow an interpretation of some of the supertonic half-diminished seventh chords as sub-dominants with added sixth. Although this is a Rameau-influenced view of harmony which Fauré would not have learned with Niedermeyer, it is something which may have evolved over the course of his career or even through his exposure to the "moderns" under the guidance of Camille Saint-Saëns.

³² Tait, "The Musical Language of Gabriel Fauré", 85.

³³ "Melisande's Song" (sic) was written to an English text for an English language production of Maeterlinck's play. This is the original title.

³⁴

³⁵ *ibid.*, 28-29.

³⁶ *ibid.*, 64.

As well, this view of the supertonic as sub-dominant with added sixth is compatible with Niedermeyer's system for the harmonization of plainchant where the notes of the chord do not really matter, as long as they provide thirds to surround the modally significant pitch.

I have also relied on Tait's generalizations about the major seventh chord. Normally we might view this as prolongational. From Tait's point of view, however, this type of sonority marks a point of emphasis in Fauré's music.³⁶ I will also be paying special attention to the dominant ninth, not because these chords abound in the third style period, but because there is less and less use of them.³⁷ It is my feeling that if something is used infrequently, then it must have a special meaning when it makes a rare appearance.

The literature of today which deals with aspects of Fauré's harmony and counterpoint follows a historical tradition in Fauré scholarship. Unwittingly, these discussions may carry with them deeply buried ideological attitudes towards composition. This is evident in the polarization of published opinion concerning Fauré's compositional orientation. Most writers, including Charles Koechlin, Emile Vuillermoz, Françoise Gervais, Robert Orledge, and Robin Tait adamantly describe Fauré as a "harmonist." They look for consistency of harmonic succession in their attempt to define Fauré's mature language. But in another camp there is often an emphasis on the "melodic" and "contrapuntal" aspects of Fauré's late works in writings by scholars such as Wilfred

³⁶ Ibid., 32.

³⁷ Ibid., 61.

Mellers and Jean-Michel Nectoux.

The dispute over harmony and counterpoint is an old argument, much older than the critical polemic between *Harmonistes* and *Contrapuntistes* which occurred during the years 1905-1914. Roughly, these two parties came to represent respectively the *Conservatoire* and the *Schola Cantorum* respectively and were also known as *Debussystes* and *d'Indystes*.³⁸ Fauré's earliest apologists, Charles Koechlin and Emile Vuillermoz, were also his students at the *Conservatoire*. They were associated with the *Debussystes* and also the *Société musicale indépendante* of which Fauré was also nominally a member. Emile Vuillermoz was a main and particularly virulent force in critical attacks on Vincent d'Indy who epitomized the *Contrapuntistes*.

Any historical discussion of Fauré's music, and particularly the late style which coincides with the harmony-counterpoint debate, may be at least partly informed by the ideologies associated with being a "harmonist" or a "contrapuntist." Specifically, the "harmonist" is associated with the figure of Claude Debussy, who is usually viewed as an innovator leading away from Romanticism and into the twentieth century. In a teleological view of history, it is perhaps more attractive to be grouped with Debussy than the lesser-known figure of Vincent d'Indy, a "contrapuntist." In his time, d'Indy promoted his compositional style, transmitted to his students at the *Schola Cantorum*, as the germ of the music of the future.³⁹ But in the years since the Second World War his

³⁸ Léon Vallas, *Vincent d'Indy* vol.2, (Paris: Albin Michel, 1950), 61-69.

³⁹ See d'Indy's inaugural address on the opening of the *Schola Cantorum* at the St-Jacques Street location, "Une école répondant au besoins modernes", *La Tribune de Saint-Gervais* 15 Nov. 1900, 5-7.

"importance" has diminished considerably and he is certainly not viewed as a composer whose style "led" to later developments.

Most Fauré scholars take a "harmonist" position and are shackled to a Wagnerian ideology of musical progress. They imply that Fauré should be viewed as a "progressive" or innovator in the same way that we have come to think of Claude Debussy. Charles Koechlin accredits Fauré with the "discovery" of a large number of harmonic progressions.⁴⁰ Françoise Gervais' dissertation of 1954, later published as a special issue of *La Revue Musicale* in 1971, is a comparison of Fauré's and Debussy's harmony which may easily have been fuelled by a desire to grant the former the same dignity and respect that we often have for the latter. It makes a special plea to readers to consider Fauré as an *innovator* who leads to Igor Stravinsky!⁴¹ As late as 1984, Robin Tait again raises the issue of Fauré's "importance" as a composer, and decides that Fauré's reputation as playing second fiddle to Debussy can be eradicated if the "autonomy" of his harmonic style is brought to light.⁴²

Writing as I do in the wake of post-modernism, I feel no need to establish the importance of the composer I have decided to study. I do not wish to carve out a special and prestigious place in history for this "Master of Charms"--would demonstrating that a type of counterpoint is at work in the late Fauré somehow make him more "important", more "innovative", more "progressive" anyway? What I hope to achieve is an historically informed way of looking at and listening to *La Chanson d'Eve* which might have more

⁴⁰ Koechlin, *Gabriel Fauré*, 64.

⁴¹ Gervais, *Etude comparée*, 89.

⁴² Tait, "The Musical Language of Gabriel Fauré", 1-9.

aural salience, for me and perhaps for others, than current types of analysis offer.

Chapter Two

Methodology: Layers and the Combination of Motives in *La Chanson d'Eve*

In this thesis I work from a very broad definition of counterpoint as "the combination of two or more melodic lines."¹ Under the umbrella of this vague definition, we might consider a Mahler symphony to be as contrapuntal as a Josquin motet. But it serves as a starting point for examining some of the issues raised in the previous chapter--for understanding the "contrapuntal" aspects of Fauré's works which cannot be described in terms of procedure. This methodology is based on the hypothesis that Fauré's piano accompaniments in the *Eve* cycle result from the layering of individual motives. It is supported by an aspect of Fauré's compositional process which was revealed in Chapter One: he composed a "card index" of motives which could be combined for his opera *Pénélope*. The theme may be transformed "to bring about varied effects" and will be found in different combinations, depending on "the circumstances of the text." It stands to reason then, that by examining passages of the *Eve* cycle which contain a recurrent motive, consistent layers or combinations of motives might be found. As well, the variation in the content of each combination might be accounted for by the implications of the text.

The idea that a thematic aspect of music may also be inherently contrapuntal has been examined by Peter Schubert in an article on Fauré's German contemporary, Arnold

¹ DeVoto, Mark, "Counterpoint," in *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), 205.

Schoenberg.² For his analysis of Schoenberg's First String Quartet (Op. 7), Schubert invokes the notion of "combination motive" in order to explain vagrant harmonies. He justifies his approach with references to Schoenberg's acknowledgement of instances in which harmony is actually "led" by melody.³ Schubert asserts that,

pairs of voices can be identified which, used together, have a primary function, creating interval successions that are the basis for harmonies not easily identifiable in terms of roots. Such pairs of voices, furthermore, can be used motivically both in obviously contrapuntal contexts and in music that appears 'homophonic-melodic.'⁴

Schubert describes the combination-motive as a relatively small unit comprised of two voices which have only two or three notes in each voice. Within this framework, any number of "free lines" may be woven into the texture. As a result, the small, two-dimensional unit may become embedded or hidden within more dense textures.⁵

In my own analysis and use of the term "combination motive," I do not fully adopt Peter Schubert's definition. First, the motives that are combined in *La Chanson d'Ève* tend to be longer and more distinct than those found in Schoenberg's Opus 7. Second, Fauré's process tends involve the combination of more than two motives. Third,

² Schubert, Peter, " 'A New Epoch of Polyphonic Style': Schoenberg On Chords and Lines," *Music Analysis* 12/3 (1993): 289-320.

³ Ibid., 289.

⁴ Ibid., 290.

⁵ Ibid., 310.

most of the individual lines that make up the combinations in the *Eve* cycle recur with some consistency. Even though they may be heavily ornamented or varied, it would be difficult to characterize any voice in most of the Fauré combinations as "free."

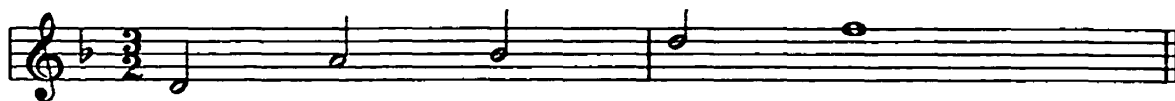
The first stage of my methodology involves the construction of a "card index" of motives which are contrapuntally combined in *La Chanson d'Eve*. One of the most prominent originates in Fauré's incidental music for an English-language production of Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1898), shown in Example 1 below. It is found in the opening measures of "Mélisande's Song" as well "La Mort de Mélisande" (an orchestral movement) and "Crépuscule", the first song of the *Eve* cycle. Because the motive is closely connected with the death of Maeterlinck's heroine, I refer to it as the "Mélisande Motive" (MM) throughout this thesis. It is comprised of an opening leap of a fifth, followed by a rising half step which becomes the root of a major triad.

Example 1-- The Melisande Motive

"Mélisande's Song" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6

"Crépuscule" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6

"La Mort de Mélisande" mm. 9-10; 55-56



Fauré's process of motivic transformation involves rhythmic variation, transposition, and varying degrees of melodic decoration. But regardless of the type and degree of variation, he consistently maintains the melodic contour of MM. In the

three variations of MM shown in Examples 2a-2c, subtle alterations include rhythmic augmentation and transposition.

Example 2a--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 1-6



Example 2b--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 50-54

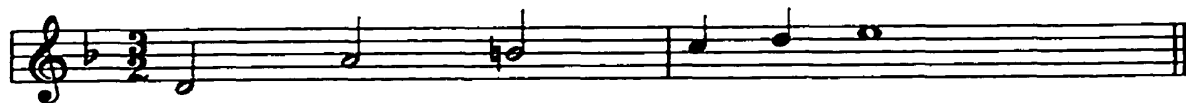


Example 2c--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 108-113



One of the most consistent alterations to MM is the substitution of a step-wise ascending tetrachord for the major triad, shown in Examples 3a-3c. This variation also tends to entail a widening of the half step into a whole step.

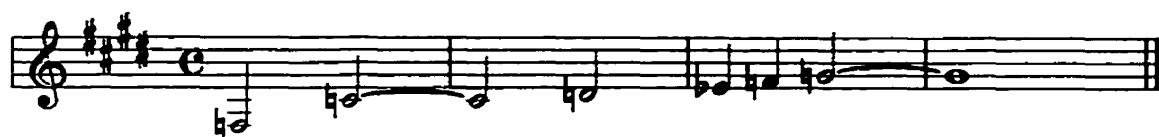
Example 3a--The Melisande Motive
"Melisande's Song" mm. 7-8; 9-10
"Crépuscule" mm. 7-8; 9-10



Example 3c--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 8-12

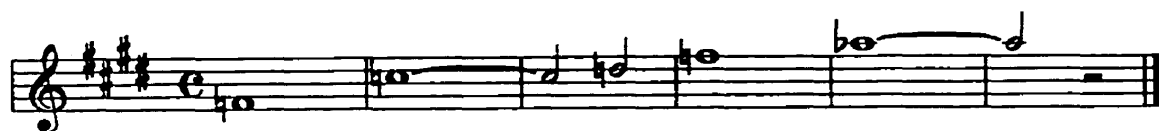


Example 3c--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 122-125



It is also possible to find hybrids of the types of MM shown in Examples 1-2c and those in Examples 3a-3c. For instance, in the excerpt shown in Example 4a, even though a whole step follows the opening leap it is succeeded by a triad (albeit a diminished triad) and not a tetrachord. Example 4b resembles Example 4a insofar as the first three intervals are concerned, (fifth, whole step, third), but the motion through the triad is abandoned in favour of an incomplete outline of a fourth.

Example 4a--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 116-121



Example 4b--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 55-57

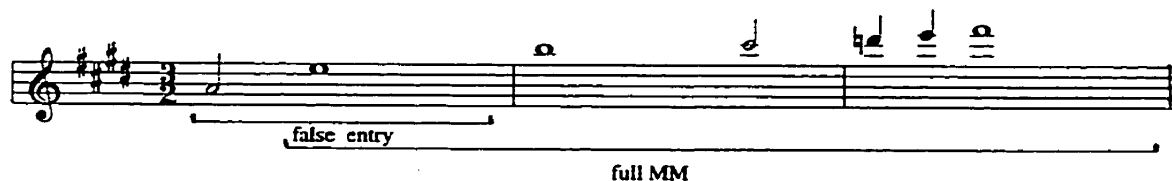


In terms of other types of melodic variation, Fauré seems to favour three processes: extension, abbreviation, and decoration of select pitches with non-harmonic tones. In Example 5a, MM has been extended through the repetition of a part of itself (the half-step followed by a third). The opening leap of a fifth is repeated at the beginning of MM in Example 5b. In both cases, the repetition appears seamless through overlap.

Example 5a--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 14-20 [21]



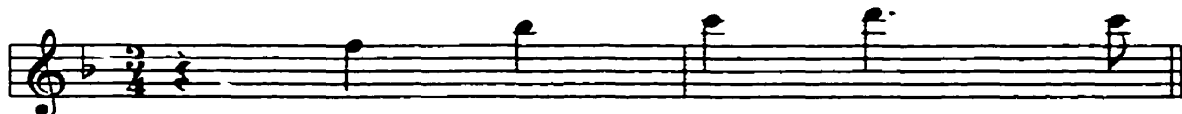
Example 5b--The Melisande Motive
"Paradis" mm. 57-59



Fauré also occasionally chooses to present a shortened version of this motive. For instance, the last presentation of MM in the final measures of "La Mort de Mélisande" is curtailed (see Example 6a, page over).⁶

⁶ Also note the compression of the opening interval from a fifth to a fourth.

Example 6a--The Melisande Motive
"La Mort de Mélisande" mm. 57-58



One rather hypothetical transformation of MM is not only abbreviated but also decorated. The extent of the alteration makes two readings possible. Denoted by elongated upward and downward stems in Example 6b, the structural tones of MM are decorated by lower neighbours, passing tones, and changing tones. These embellishing tones have a prolongational effect, shown with dotted slurs.

Example 6b--The Melisande Motive
"Melisande's Song" mm. 19-20



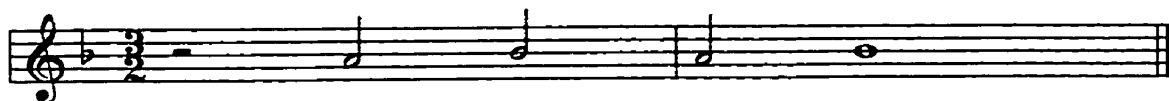
Of all the members of the "card index," MM is perhaps the most obvious motive. Part of this stems from the fact that it is usually placed in the upper register. There are, however, a number of other recurrent motives that are combined with MM. One of these is the "Phrygian Sigh" (PS), so called because of its rocking half-step motion and allusion to the phrygian mode. The Phrygian Sigh makes its first appearances in the same places as MM, although its placement in an inner voice makes it less conspicuous (see Example 7, page over). Also in the category of less overt but recurring motives is the "Ambiguous

Third" (AT), so-called because it is modally ambiguous. The AT may be any outline of a third in any direction, either diatonic or chromatic. Both possibilities are given in Examples 8a and 8b.

Example 7--The Phrygian Sigh

"Melisande's Song" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6

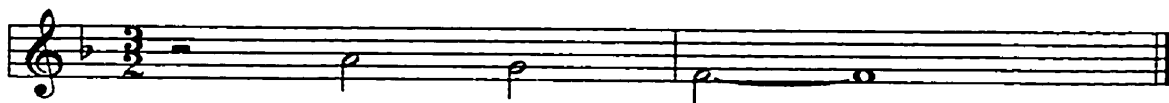
"Crépuscule" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6



Example 8a--The Ambiguous Third

"Melisande's Song" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6

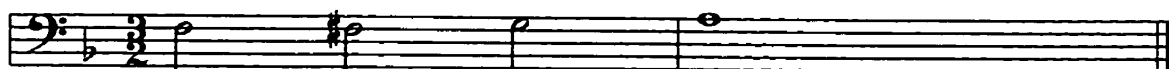
"Crépuscule" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6



Example 8b--The Ambiguous Third (chromatic version)

"Melisande's Song" mm. 15-16; 17-18

"Crépuscule" mm. 15-16; 17-18



While they may seem shapeless, one important group of motives in the card index are several species of fourth and fifth as defined in Renaissance theories of mode. The adoption of this pre-tonal theory seems appropriate since the Fauré songs under

under discussion frequently suggest the Dorian and Phrygian mode, often through the use of a characteristic species of fourth or fifth. I have chosen to base much of my interpretation of mode on occurrences of specific outlines of fourth and fifth in response to Putnam Aldrich's argument that they are the most important criteria for establishing mode.⁷ I have also adopted a modified version of his system for labelling fourths and fifths, shown below in Example 9.

Example 9--Species of Fourth and Fifth

Example 9 consists of two staves of music. The top staff shows four intervals: 1st-5th, 2nd-5th, 3rd-5th, and 4th-5th. The bottom staff shows four intervals: 1st-4th, 2nd-4th, 3rd-4th, and 3rd-4th. Each interval is represented by a sequence of notes on a five-line staff, with stems indicating the direction of the interval.

Species of fourth or fifth tend to occur in inner voices of the combination, but in some cases may be very clearly and audibly presented. For example, the 2nd-4th shown with downward stems in Example 10 is juxtaposed to the rising 1st-5th which is part of the mutated MM.

Example 10--Species of Fourth

"Melisande's Song" mm. 7-8; 9-10

"Crépuscule" mm. 7-8; 9-10

Example 10 shows a single staff of music in 3/2 time. It features a sequence of notes: a quarter note, a half note, a quarter note, and a half note. The interval between the second and fourth notes is a fourth, with a downward stem, as described in the text.

⁷ Aldrich, Putnam, "Analysis of Renaissance Music," *The Music Review* 30/1 (Feb. 1969), 3.

The Phrygian Sigh, Ambiguous Third, and the species of fourth and fifth might seem overly amorphous to qualify as distinct motives. But examination of an orchestral passage from *Pelléas* reveals that Fauré found these motives distinct enough to be used on their own--not only as accompanimental "filler" to support MM. Most obvious is the string of 2nd-4ths presented in contrary motion in the outer staves (see Example 11, page over). As well, a succession of chromatic AT's and PS's are found in the inner voices.

An inventory of possible combination members would not be complete without the malleable "Leap With Step" motive (LWS) and its compressed cousin, "*the wriggler!*"⁸ The LWS motive occurs in two distinct versions, one in which a melodic leap is followed by a step in the *opposite* direction, and another in which the leap is followed by a step in the *same* direction. Both occur simultaneously in Example 12a where the first type of LWS is found in the upper stave at the same time that the second emerges in the lower.

Example 12a--The Leap With Step (LWS)
"Melisande's Song" mm. 24-27



⁸ This motive cannot be abbreviated and must be written in uniformly lower-case letters and consistently followed by an exclamation mark.

Example 11--"La Mort de Mélisande" mm. 13-21 (orchestral reduction)

The image displays a musical score for the orchestral reduction of "La Mort de Mélisande" (mm. 13-21). The score is arranged in a system of seven staves, each representing a different instrument or section. From top to bottom, the staves are:

- 2nd-4ths Flute (Fl):** The top staff, showing a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics. A bracket above the staff indicates a phrase that spans across several measures.
- 2nd-4ths Violin (VI 1):** The second staff, featuring a melodic line that mirrors the flute's. A bracket above the staff indicates a phrase.
- Violin and Viola (VI + V):** The third staff, showing the combined parts for Violin and Viola.
- Horn 4:** The fourth staff, containing a single horn part.
- Horn 1:** The fifth staff, containing a single horn part.
- AT (Trumpet):** The sixth staff, containing a trumpet part.
- PS (Piano):** The bottom staff, containing the piano accompaniment, which includes chords and arpeggiated figures.

Additional labels and markings include:

- Kb (Kb):** A label for the piano part, positioned below the bottom staff.
- etc...:** This marking appears at the end of the Flute, Violin, and Horn 1 staves, indicating that the reduction continues beyond the shown measures.
- Dynamic markings:** Various dynamics such as *mf*, *f*, and *pp* are present throughout the score.
- Articulation:** Slurs and accents are used to indicate phrasing and emphasis.

As Example 12a also demonstrates, LWS's often appear in groups of two or three, sometimes in temporally overlapping presentations (Example 12b), or in combination with *the wriggler!* (Example 12c).

Example 12b--The Leap With Step (LWS)
"Crépuscule" mm. 11-14

The musical notation for Example 12b is in bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. It consists of four measures of music. Above the staff, four horizontal lines with the label 'LWS' are positioned over the first four notes of each measure, indicating the 'Leap With Step' motif. The notes are: G2, A2, B2 (first measure); C3, D3, E3 (second measure); F3, G3, A3 (third measure); B3, C4, D4 (fourth measure).

Example 12c--The Leap With Step (LWS)
"Melisande's Song" mm. 11-13

The musical notation for Example 12c is in bass clef with a 3/2 time signature. It consists of three measures of music. Above the staff, two horizontal lines with the label 'LWS' are positioned over the first two notes of the first and second measures. Above the third measure, a horizontal line with the label 'the wriggler!' is positioned over the three notes. The notes are: G2, A2, B2 (first measure); C3, D3, E3 (second measure); F3, G3, A3 (third measure).

Passages from "Paradis," where mutations of LWS are found prominently in the upper voice, suggest that this motive held some importance for Fauré. Perhaps it was the elasticity of the theme that caused him to use it in the ways shown in the previous examples. In Example 12d (page over), a spatially expanding chain of LWS's transforms this card index member into a completely new and autonomous entity that we could call the "Paradis Motive" (PM).⁹ The figure grows from a statement of *the wriggler!* which is repeated and inverted. An LWS interlocks these two statements, expands the leap of a second in *the wriggler!* to one of a third and

⁹ Robert Orledge has also identified PM as a motive in *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Eulenburg Books, 1979), 139.

smooths over the bar line. In the final presentation of LWS, the initial leap grows to encompass a fourth.

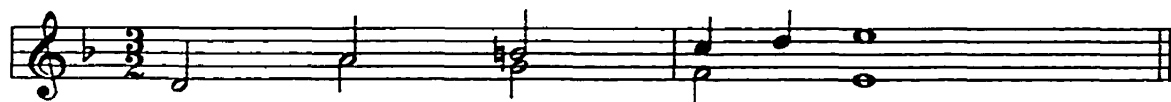
Example 12d--The Paradis Motive (PM)
"Paradis" mm. 21-23

As in the case of MM, LWS may also be rhythmically varied. A combination of repetition, rhythmic variation and melodic decoration results in the compounded presentation of the motive found in Example 12e. In this case, three shorter statements of LWS, marked by upward stems in the example, interlock with two longer-range and more decorated versions of the motive.

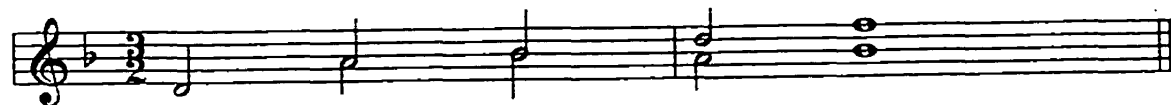
Example 12e--The Leap with Step (LWS)
"Crépuscule" mm. 31-33

Before moving on to examine the ways in which Fauré's motives may be combined, I would like to point out some other relationships between motives. First, LWS and AT frequently share the interval of the third. Second, the common transformation of MM discussed above contains a species of fourth and fifth (see Example 15). Third, an incomplete PS is also contained within MM (Example 16).

Example 15--The Melisande Motive and Species of Fourth or Fifth
"Melisande's Song" mm. 7-8; 9-10
"Crépuscule" mm. 7-8; 9-10

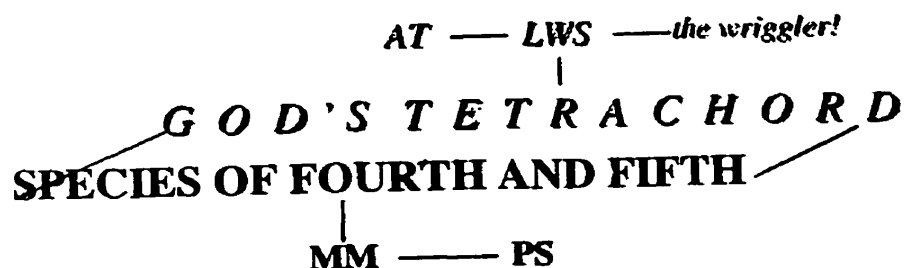


Example 16--The Melisande Motive and The Phrygian Sigh
"Melisande's Song" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6
"Crépuscule" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6



Associations amongst all members of the "card index" emerge when we consider the ties that each motive may have ties to either God's Tetrachord or a species of fourth and fifth. God's Tetrachord is a shadow or undefined "other" to the species of fourth and fifth.

Figure 1—"Card Index" Relatives



In three songs from *La Chanson d'Eve* and in "Melisande's Song" and "La Mort de Mélisande" from *Pelléas et Mélisande*, it is possible to find fairly consistent combinations of the members of the "card index." I have found them by seeking out MM, which is often placed in the upper register of the piano accompaniment. In the rest of this chapter, I will point out all the combinations from *Pelléas* and the *Eve* cycle. But I will also attempt to come to some understanding of the rationale behind the choices Fauré made when assembling his layers of motives. Certainly, we know that the text may have been a factor, and this will be discussed in Chapter Three. We also know that Fauré learned to layer at least cadential motives when he studied the harmonization of chant with Louis Niedermeyer.

As I pointed out in Chapter One, Niedermeyer stressed the layering of modally significant fragments because he felt that each individual voice could reinforce the mode as long as the material in the voice was modally-determining itself. Thus it may be logical to assume that Fauré shuffled the members of his "card index" in varying

layers, according to the type of mode he wished to express, or even according to the degree of modal clarity he wished to achieve. Furthermore, I assume that Fauré limited himself to the eight-mode system stressed in Niedermeyer's treatise.

Layers of the card index members in passages from the orchestral music for *Pelléas* demonstrate to a certain extent the power of the individual line to articulate mode.

In the orchestral section which depicts Mélisande's death (see Example 17, page over), the cyclic MM and its common transformation are found in the first violins at mm. 9-10 and 11-12. The first statement of MM in mm. 9-10 suggests a pitch center of D, but the mode is ambiguously Dorian and Phrygian since neither E nor E-flat is present. A 1st-5th in the second statement of MM provides a more clear indication of Dorian than in the previous instance of this motive, but the pitch center has shifted to A and some of the motives in the layer contradict this reading.

Non-Dorian material includes the Phrygian Sigh found in the first violin divisi at mm. 9-10. The motive waivers between A and B-flat, ending in an unresolved manner on B-flat in m. 10. In addition to this, the viola descends from B-flat to F in mm. 11-12 and produces a Lydian 3rd-4th.¹¹ Heightening the ambiguity of this section are the interlocking 1st-5th (Dorian) and 3rd-4th (Lydian) in the bassoon in mm. 10-12. Together these tetra and pentachords bridge over the two statements of MM. Of course some of the motives are completely neutral: the AT found in the second violin at mm. 9-11 merely provides a consonant counterpoint for MM, while the chromatically filled-in

¹¹ A slur in the original score from B-flat to F indicates that these pitches form a group.

Example 17-- "La Mort de Mélisande" (mm. 7-20)

The image displays a musical score for the piece "La Mort de Mélisande" (mm. 7-20). The score is divided into two systems, each containing staves for various instruments and voices.

System 1 (Measures 7-14):

- Flute (Fl.):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes the instruction *trac. poco c.*
- Oboe (Ob.):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th).
- Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. (Bb)):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *1st-5th*, *3rd-4th*, and *PS*.
- Flute in C (Fl. C):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *1st-5th*, *3rd-4th*, and *PS*.
- Cor Anglais (Cor. (Fa)):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *1. (Andante)* and *f*.
- Trumpet (Tr. (Fa)):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th).
- Timpani (Timp.):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th).
- Arpeggio (Arpe):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th).
- Violin I (VI. I):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *non mod. ab.*, *ps*, and *MM*.
- Violin II (VI. II):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *non mod.*, *ps*, and *MM*.
- Viola (Vla.):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *non mod.*, *ps*, and *AT*.
- Cello (Vc.):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *3rd-4th*, *non mod. p*, *plac.*, and *trac. poco c.*
- Double Bass (Cb.):** Measures 7, 11, and 14 (2nd-4th). Includes *pp* and *[p] 2nd-4th*.

System 2 (Measures 15-20):

- Flute (Fl.):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th). Includes *poco*.
- Oboe (Ob.):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th).
- Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. (Bb)):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th).
- Flute in C (Fl. C):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th).
- Cor Anglais (Cor. (Fa)):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th). Includes *3.* and *trac.*
- Trumpet (Tr. (Fa)):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th).
- Timpani (Timp.):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th).
- Arpeggio (Arpe):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th).
- Violin I (VI. I):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th). Includes *[un]e*, *espressivo*, and *marcato*.
- Violin II (VI. II):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th). Includes *espressivo* and *Passionato*.
- Viola (Vla.):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th). Includes *poco ed espressivo*.
- Cello (Vc.):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th). Includes *trac. 2nd-4th*.
- Double Bass (Cb.):** Measures 15, 19, and 20 (2nd-4th). Includes *trac.*

version in the bassoon at mm. 15-16 makes its presence more forcefully felt.

In this short section Fauré introduces the modal and pitch centre problems which will occupy him for the rest of the movement. In the measures that follow, first the celli and bass, then the winds, and later the violins exploit the ambiguity of tonal centre as they proceed to spell out Phrygian-like 2nd-4th's on E (mm. 13-14); A (mm. 15-16); D (mm. 17-19); and G (mm. 20-21). Except for E, these are the pitch centres which figured in the previous measures (mm. 9-12). As a further means of emphasizing Phrygian, PS is taken up and rhythmically augmented in the bassoon at mm. 13-14 and subsequently passed through the bassoon and horns.

Layers of motives at the end of the movement would seem to overwhelmingly confirm the mode as Phrygian. The bridging but volatile 1st-5th that originally appeared in mm. 10-11 returns as a compellingly Phrygian 2nd-5th descent in mm. 55-60 (see Example 18, page over). This outline of a characteristic interval also contributes more to the articulation of mode than the 1st-5th from mm. 10-11 because it is temporally synchronized with the potentially Phrygian MM at mm. 55-58.

Material in the second violin divisi between mm. 55 and 60 reinforces the Phrygian in a less direct manner. It first appears as an AT which descends from A to F (mm. 55-56). The F is then prolonged through arpeggiation and returns in the same register on the second beat of m. 59. The AT descent is then elongated to form a 2nd-5th which terminates on D in m. 60. The sounding of the 2nd-5th in the second violin divisi bridges the modally-defining statement of the 2nd-5th in the bassoon and the ascent through a full Phrygian octave on D in the

Example 18-- "La Mort de Mélisande" (mm. 54-end)

54 58 PHRYGIAN

Fl. *p dim.* *pp* *1. Solo* *dim.* *pp*

Ob.

Cl. (Sib) *1.* *p* *1.* *2nd-5th*

Fg. *pp*

Cor. (Fa) *1.* *2.* *3.* *4.*

Tr. (Fa)

Timp.

Arpa

I *con sord.* *MM* *MM* *dolce.*

VI. *con sord.* *div.* *pp* *una.* *pp sempre* *div.*

II *con sord.* *AT* *2nd-5th* *AT* *pp sempre* *div.*

Vla. *con sord.* *p* *pp* *div.*

Vc. *p* *div.*

Cb. *p* *pp* *div.*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for the opera 'La Mort de Mélisande'. The score covers measures 54 to the end of the piece. The key signature is Phrygian, indicated by a flat on the B line. The tempo is marked 'MM' (Moderato). The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. (Sib)), Bassoon (Fg.), Cor Anglais (Cor. (Fa)), Trumpet (Tr. (Fa)), Timpani (Timp.), Arpa (Arpa), Violin I (VI. I), Violin II (VI. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The Flute part features a '1. Solo' section starting at measure 58. The Clarinet in B-flat part has a '2nd-5th' section. The Violin I part has a 'con sord.' (con sordina) section. The Violin II part has a 'con sord.' section and a '2nd-5th' section. The Viola part has a 'con sord.' section and a '2nd-5th' section. The Violoncello part has a 'p' (piano) section. The Contrabass part has a 'p' section. The score is written in a standard musical notation with various dynamics and articulations.

It seems significant that the raised E's in m. 61 in the viola and second violin divisi belong to lines which may be classified as AT's. These notes are discretely placed in the inner voices of the strings and restore the ambiguity of the opening in a way which might not even be perceived by the listener. In the end, Fauré chooses to leave the piece with at least some of the ambiguity with which it began.

Examining the orchestral music for the death of *Mélisande* reveals a fairly clear layering of motives. But one has to wonder at the rationale behind the combinations-- why does Fauré choose a given arrangement of individual lines at a given moment? I have tried to suggest that the expression of mode may govern the ways in which motives are layered. Through careful combination, Fauré may either cloak it in a veil of ambiguity or allow it to stand nakedly obvious.

The combination of motives at the end of *Pelléas* is not unique. In fact it is one of three recurrent layers found in "Melisande's Song," "Crépuscule," and "Paradis." The beginning of "Melisande's Song" (see Example 18a) was appropriated in its entirety and formal placement several years later for "Crépuscule."

Example 18a--"Melisande's Song" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6
"Crépuscule" mm. 1-2; 3-4; 5-6

A multi-stave presentation of the passage (Example 18b) makes the individual voices plain.

Example 18b--COMB-1, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 18a

The image shows a musical score with four staves. The top three staves are labeled MM, PS, and AT, and the bottom staff is labeled Pedal. The music is in 3/2 time and features a combination of three motives (MM, PS, AT) over a pedal point. A dashed line indicates the continuation of the pedal point across the staves.

Example 18b shows the combination of three motives, MM, PS, and AT, which occur over a pedal, which I will refer to it throughout this thesis as "COMB-1."¹² It is possible to find this combination in other instances, although a high degree of melodic variation may make it less obvious. Aside from its contents, COMB-1 is also characterized by its modal ambiguity. Only one of its members offers any clue as to the mode of the passage, and this is the PS in the inner voice. COMB-1 returns at the opening of "Paradis," in a transposed and rhythmically augmented form without altering the contents in any way (see Examples 19a and 19b, page over).

¹² Each combination will henceforth be assigned the label "COMB-n" The numerical extensions follow the chronological order in which the combination was likely composed. I base the order on Nectoux's dating of the songs concerned: "Melisande's Song" (1898); "Crépuscule" (June 1906); "Paradis" (September (1906). See *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 548-553.

Example 19a--"Paradis" mm. 1-6

Example 19b--COMB-1, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 19a

A notable aspect of Fauré's procedure is a tendency towards temporal misalignment of the "card index" members. In a passage strikingly similar to the opening of "Paradis," the pedal is set apart from the other motives in the combination through its premature entrance (see Examples 20a and 20b).

Example 20a--"Paradis" mm. 50-54

Example 20b--COMB-1, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 20a

Musical score for Example 20b, showing four staves: MM (Mezzo Soprano), PS (Soprano), AT (Alto), and Pedal (Bass). The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The Pedal part features a prominent bass line with a dotted line indicating a melodic contour across several measures.

The same type of manipulation is at work in a later passage of the same song (see Example 21a) where the pedal is not only out of time but decorated and transferred to other octaves (Example 21b).

Example 21a--"Paradis" mm. 108-113

Musical score for Example 21a, showing two staves: Treble and Bass. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The tempo is marked "Meno mosso". The Treble staff starts with a whole note rest and then contains a melodic line. The Bass staff starts with a whole note rest and then contains a bass line with dynamic markings "sempre *f*" and "*p*".

Example 21b--COMB-1, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 20a

Musical score for Example 21b, showing four staves: MM (Mezzo Soprano), PS (Soprano), AT (Alto), and Pedal (Bass). The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The Pedal part features a complex bass line with a dotted line indicating a melodic contour across several measures.

The second recurring combination, COMB-2, contains an MM, a PS, and one or more species of fourth or fifth. In "Melisande's Song" and "Crépuscule", it makes its first appearance after three successive presentations of COMB-1. This context heightens the effect of the subtle changes to the combination (see Examples 22a and 22b).

**Example 22a—"Melisande's Song" mm. 7-8; 9-10
"Crépuscule" mm. 7-8; 9-10**

Example 22b—COMB-2, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 21a

Because COMB-2 contains species of fourth and fifth, it has a more pronounced sense of mode. In its first appearance COMB-2 includes the common transformation of MM which moves stepwise through a 1st-5th. This strong indicator of the Dorian mode

is countered to some extent in the inner voices by a PS, and a 2nd-4th which both point towards Phrygian and the 3rd-4th which belongs to the Lydian mode. The whole is further complicated by the juxtaposed 1st-5th and 2nd-4th which both extend from A, suggesting Aeolian. Because my premise is that Fauré works with an eight-mode system, I must discount this solution. But I will not entirely dismiss it because Niedermeyer acknowledges twelve-mode systems, and Fauré may have refined his understanding of mode beyond his youthful education.

The sudden appearance of A as the lowest note of the final triad would support an Aeolian reading. The problem with this is that it is difficult to tell where the A comes from. If I assume that it originates from the D at the beginning of the combination, I may interpret the interval as a descending 1st-4th and likely belonging to D-Dorian. The result is that the outer voices of the combination simultaneously suggest Dorian, though with different pitch centres, even as the inner voices provide modal tension.

Fauré reused this combination in two other instances in "Paradis." Although transposed and rhythmically augmented, it is virtually unchanged, except where the variation makes it possible to interpret an AT in an inner voice (see Examples 23a-24b, page over). This small variant seems negligible compared with the number of species of fourth and fifth, especially prominent in Example 24b.

Example 23a—"Paradis" mm. 8-12

Example 23b--COMB-2, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 23a

Example 24a--"Paradis" mm. 55-59

Example 24b--COMB-2, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 24a

In several places in "Paradis" it is possible to find hybrid or, more appropriately, conflated versions of COMB-1 and COMB-2 which I call COMB-1/2. These typically take the form of a COMB-1 which includes a species of fourth or fifth. The first instance of COMB-1/2 bears more resemblance to COMB-1 than COMB-2, because the species of fourth is the unclassified type or God's Tetrachord (see Examples 25a and 25b). The ambiguity of the passage is striking and frankly suited to the context since it is used to lead from one formal section to another. This modal uncertainty also prompts me to group it more with other COMB-1's.

Example 25a--"Paradis" mm. 14-20 [21]

Example 25b--COMB-1/2, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 25a

A second instance of COMB-1/2 also bears more affinity to COMB-1 than COMB-2 since the species of fourth is buried in an inner voice and moves unobtrusively in similar motion with the other parts (see Examples 26a and 26b).

Example 26a--"Paradis" mm. 116-121

Musical score for Example 26a, showing two staves (treble and bass clef) in a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and common time. The piece is marked "dolce". The treble staff contains a melodic line with a slur over the final two measures, while the bass staff is mostly silent.

Example 26b--COMB-1/2, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 26a

Multi-stave musical score for Example 26b, showing four staves labeled MM, PS, AT, and 3rd-4th Pedal. The key signature is three sharps and common time. A dashed line indicates a pedal point across the bottom two staves.

The third cyclic layering, COMB-3, contains one or more of the the slippery LWS and its relative, *the wriggler!*, in addition to an MM and any number AT's. It is found for the first time in "Melisande's Song" after statements of both COMB-1 and COMB-2 (see Examples 27a and 27b).

Example 27a--"Melisande's Song" mm. 11-14

Example 27b--COMB-3, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 27a

Modally, COMB-3 is much more ambiguous than any of the combinations discussed so far: it contains no characteristic species and never incorporates the common transformation of MM which has a 1st-5th. Furthermore, since LWS is shorter than both MM and the chromatic version of AT, there is a frequently lack of temporal alignment in this combination. While it is not modally significant, there may be a degree of dissonance in COMB-3 caused by the reversal of the melodic direction of

AT (see the alto voice in Example 27b). The result is a certain amount of tension which results from the tritone between B-flat and E.

There are two minor differences between the COMB-3 of "Melisande's Song" and that of "Crépuscule": the LWS has transformed, and rhythmic variation of AT results in the placement of the tritone on a weak beat.

Example 28a—"Crépuscule" mm. 11-14

Example 28b—COMB-3, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 28a

(chromatically filled-in)

Fauré may also choose to compound the uncertainty of this combination by manipulating the rhythm in the inner voices (see Examples 29a-30b, page over).

Example 29a—"Melisande's Song" mm. 15-18

Example 29b--COMB-3, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 29a

Example 30a--"Crépuscule" mm. 15-20

Example 30b--COMB-3, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 30a

Hybrids of COMB-3 may also be found in "Melisande's Song" and the *Eve* cycle. As was the case for the COMB-1/2 hybrid, COMB-2/3's tend to strongly resemble COMB-3 even though they may have a species of fourth or fifth embedded in the texture. For instance, the inner-voice 2nd-4th shown in Example 31b (below) is heavily embroidered and hidden to a great extent. The 3rd-4th in the same example falls away from an incomplete statement of MM.

Example 31a--"Melisande's Song" mm. 19-20

Example 31b--COMB-3/2, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 31a

MM (minus first note)

MM

AT LWS

AT

AT

AT LWS Species

AT

3rd-4th

2nd-4th

AT

AT LWS

LWS

LWS

So far I have discussed only recurring combinations, but there are several which are unique to particular songs. I could discount the significance of combinations which are not cyclic, or which are used only in a limited way. However, as I pointed out at the outset of this chapter, Fauré claimed that in *Pénélope*, the combinations which included the Ulysses theme varied according to the "circumstances of the text." I also believe that these layers of motives are significant inasmuch as they all contain MM.

When it appears at the end of "Melisande's Song," LWS may appear to be a spatially compressed version of MM (see Example 32a).

Example 32a—"Melisande's Song" mm. 24-29

The musical score for Example 32a consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in 3/4 time. The upper voice (treble clef) begins in measure 24 with a tritone outline (F#-C) and continues through measure 26. In measure 27, the upper voice moves to a Phrygian 2nd-5th (D-F#-C). The lower voice (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 29.

Our attention is drawn to it due to its positioning as the highest voice of the combination—a position normally reserved for MM. The tritone outline of the top voice suggests an incomplete 3rd-5th and the Lydian mode. But with the appearance of D in m. 27, the upper voice is revealed as a decisively Phrygian 2nd-5th. This establishes a modal relationship between LWS and MM, as both are ambiguously Phrygian. The passage in Example 32b (page over) features a layering of four LWS's, but because of the contour and the mode of the upper voice, I include it among the combinations as COMB-4.

Example 32b--COMB-4, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 32a

The image shows a musical score for Example 32b, titled "COMB-4, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 32a". It consists of four staves of music. The top two staves are labeled "LWS" and the bottom two are also labeled "LWS". The top two staves have "incomplete LWS's" indicated by dashed lines, and the bottom two staves have "LWS" indicated by solid lines. The music is in 3/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern.

Two combinations are unique to "Crépuscule." In COMB-5, part of MM is transferred to the bass voice and there is the suggestion of invertible counterpoint (see Example 33a).

Example 33a--"Crépuscule" mm. 25-28

The image shows a musical score for Example 33a, titled "Crépuscule" mm. 25-28. It consists of two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern.

Example 33b (page over) provides a more clear picture. The two upper staves contain voices: one composed of an MM, the other of two AT's. In the second measure of the example, these voices are transferred to the bass and appear to be inverted at the tenth. The whole occurs around two middle voices. In this instance, Fauré has made

reference to the contrapuntal practice of invertible counterpoint without actually carrying it out.

Example 33b--COMB-5, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 33a

The musical score for Example 33b, COMB-5, is presented on six staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom four staves are in bass clef. The time signature is 3/2. The score is divided into two measures. The first measure contains a melodic line in the top staff, a bass line in the third staff, and a bass line in the fifth staff. The second measure contains a melodic line in the top staff, a bass line in the third staff, and a bass line in the fifth staff. Labels 'MM', 'AT', 'LWS', 'PS', '1st-4th', and 'MM' are placed above and below the staves to indicate musical features and intervals.

I think it is important to ask if it is really necessary for the inversion to be strictly "by the book." Fauré could have arranged his lines in any way he chose, and yet he chose this deceptively traditional way of doing it. COMB-5 could very easily be an allusion to contrapuntal procedure in much the same way that non-tonal chord successions often allude to tonal function.

The second layering unique to "Crépuscule" is COMB-6. It bears a strong resemblance to COMB-4, because three of the four voices are LWS's (see Example 34a).

Example 34a—"Crépuscule" mm. 31-32

Example 34b--COMB-6, Multi-stave Presentation of Example 34a

One of the big differences is that MM results from the motion of the two lower voices (see bracketed MM in Example 34b). It may seem rather unorthodox to pick out pitches from different voices. At the same time, this motive has been obviously present in the other combinations in the song and its upward leap of a fifth fairly

noticeable. Furthermore, in piano texture it is often difficult to distinguish the number of independent voices. It may well be that there are five parts sounding in this combination instead of four.

This concludes my discussion of contrapuntal combinations in selected music from *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *La Chanson d'Eve*. As we have seen, each combination varies in the extent to which it defines mode. Thus in the context of the larger musical composition each combination may take on a role either to articulate sections of the form or to aid in expressing the sentiments of the text. In the chapters which follow, I will examine the formal context of the combinations in greater detail as well as their relationship to the text.

Chapter Three

The Combination as a Poetic, Expressive Device

At the beginning of Chapter Two, I pointed out that in the case of *Pénélope* Fauré's process of motivic combination was influenced by the poetic text. In this chapter I will pursue this notion to suggest relationships between the variance in the combinations and the mood and meaning of the poetry. Maurice Maeterlinck's poetry for "Melisande's Song" deals with the loss and confusion of sense. Ultimately its message is pessimistic, although a mysterious illusion of false hope permeates sections of the text. The poem tells of the plight of three blind sisters who have been locked away in a tower and anxiously await a delivering prince. The sisters have been given a lamp, and although they cannot see its light, they are obsessed with its existence. They are also confused, not by its light but by its hissing sound.

There is also something very ancient in the text of "Melisande's Song", even more ancient than its setting in a medieval castle. It is a story about people, chosen but frail people--the blind daughters of a king. These normally privileged persons are shut away in a windowless space to await an unknown fate. And they wait for seven days while their lamps burn. The story reminds us of biblical tales about lamps. One has a happy ending (the story of Chanuka) but another does not (the tale of the wise and foolish virgins). If we consider the dramatic context, the song has a strong sense of foreboding because it is an allegory for Mélisande's fate, which she sings during the climactic tower scene in the play: the sisters who wait in a tower for a prince are analogous to Mélisande who waits in a tower for Pelléas. Over the whole hangs a confusion of sense, where the

lamp light as a heard phenomenon misleads the sisters and compounds their blindness.

Static and modally ambiguous, COMB-1 complements the opening mood of the poem which is strongly influenced by the ancient imagery of the lamps, and the uncertainty over the fate of the three sisters. The narrator delivers the first two stanzas of text. This text is mainly descriptive and involves little or no action: the sister's "sit," the lamps "make a glimmer" and hopelessly "burn on." The only suggestion of action is the recollection of the sisters actually climbing the stairs to reach their place of confinement. This point in the poem is marked by a move away from COMB-1 centered on D to the more modally definitive COMB-2 centered on A.

Text	Accompaniment
The King's three blind daughters Sit locked in a hold. In the darkness their lamps Make a glimmer of gold.	COMB-1, v.1 COMB-1, v.1
Up the stairs of the turret The sisters are gone Seven days they wait there And the lamps they burn on.	COMB-2, v.1 COMB-2, v.1

In the next two stanzas, COMB-3 accompanies the excited, deluded dialogue of the first two sisters.

Text	Accompaniment
"What hope?" says the first And leans o'er the flame "I hear our lamps burning, O yet if he came!"	COMB-3 COMB-3 COMB-3
"O hope?" says the second "Was that the lamp's flare, Or the sound of low footsteps The Prince on the stair?"	COMB-3 COMB-2

COMB-2 slides almost imperceptibly into the accompaniment just as the second sister reaches the ultimate moment of delusion where she imagines that the sound of the lamp might be that of rescuing footsteps. It is as though the accompaniment in some measure stands aloof from the fantasies of the second sister and recalls the uncertainty of the opening. It leads to a restatement of COMB-1 that accompanies the unexpected entrance of the third blind sister. This “holiest” of sisters has the knowledge that the lamps have been extinguished and delivers a hopeless verdict to the accompaniment of COMB-4. This combination comes as rather a surprise since it is very unlike the others. It also opens up a new modal possibility, Lydian,¹ which is later clarified as Phrygian in m. 26 and reinterpreted as Aeolian at the very end of the song.

Text	Accompaniment
But the holiest sister	COMB-1
She turns her about,	COMB-4
“O no hope now forever	COMB-4
Our lamps are gone out.”	COMB-4

Another way in which COMB-4 reflects the dismal message of the text is through its striking texture. The four voices of this combination move in parallel motion, and virtually halt any sense of time or forward progression. An examination of the succession of combinations up to this point shows an incremental increase in parallel motion from the beginning to the end of the song (see Example 1).

¹ Filling in the missing F to complete the tetrachord outline from E-flat to A would produce a succession of three tones outlining a tritone. There is no species of fourth which outlines a tritone, thus I assume that this figure represents an incomplete species of fifth: either 2nd-5th missing the first note or 3rd-5th missing the last. One could also interpret this outline of an unclassified species as an allusion to “God’s Tetrachord.”

Example 1--The Combinations in "Melisande's Song"

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system contains three measures:

- COMB-1 mm. 1-2:** Treble clef, 3/4 time, B-flat major. The melody consists of a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note Bb4. The bass line has a whole note chord of G2-Bb2-D3.
- COMB-2 mm. 7-8:** Treble clef, 3/4 time, B-flat major. The melody consists of a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note Bb4. The bass line has a whole note chord of G2-Bb2-D3.
- COMB-3 mm. 11-12:** Treble clef, 3/4 time, B-flat major. The melody consists of a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note Bb4. The bass line has a whole note chord of G2-Bb2-D3.

 The second system contains three measures:

- COMB-3 mm. 15-16:** Treble clef, 3/4 time, B-flat major. The melody consists of a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note Bb4. The bass line has a whole note chord of G2-Bb2-D3.
- COMB-3 mm. 19-20:** Treble clef, 3/4 time, B-flat major. The melody consists of a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note Bb4. The bass line has a whole note chord of G2-Bb2-D3.
- COMB-4 mm. 24-25:** Treble clef, 3/4 time, B-flat major. The melody consists of a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note Bb4. The bass line has a whole note chord of G2-Bb2-D3.

The mood of the poems in *La Chanson d'Eve*² also progresses towards an increasing sense of confusion and pessimism, culminating in resignation and death. "Paradis" opens the *Eve* cycle with the receding of the earth's waters, the blooming of the blue garden, and the awakening of Eve. Fauré's musical setting of this lengthy poem features an alteration between combinations of the type examined in Chapter Two and contrasting sections which often include the "Paradis Motive" (PM).

Like the opening of "Melisande's Song" a static mood hovers over the first poetic stanza of "Paradis." In this case, the first morning lazily exudes its fragrance over a watery world. Eden blossoms from out of an undefined oceanic mass, like a flower's scent expanded by a

² Fauré did not write the poetry for *Eve*. He selected individual poems from a larger cycle by Charles Van Lerberghe and arranged them in their present order in 1910.

current of air, and COMB-1 cedes to a more modally defined COMB-2. But the sounds and actions of life described in the second stanza are given a different setting. It includes PM and has a thicker texture and wider range which reflect the greater level of activity in the poem.

Text	Accompaniment
C'est le premier matin du monde, Comme une fleur confuse exhalée dans la nuit Au souffle nouveau qui se lève des ondes, Un jardin bleu s'épanouit.	COMB-1 COMB-2 COMB-1
Tout s'y confond encore et tout s'y mêle, Frissons de feuilles, chants d'oiseaux, glissements d'ailes,	PM PM
Sources qui sourdent, voix des airs, voix des eaux, Murmures immense	PM PM
Et qui pourtant est du silence	PM

A sudden thinning out of texture coincides with the reappearance of COMB-1 and COMB-2 and forebodingly signals the awakening of Eve in the third stanza (see Example 2, page over). As the world spreads itself before her, the invigorating and almost celebratory accompaniment that includes PM returns. But "like a good dream," it dissolves utterly with the appearance of God and his instructions to Eve, clothed in descending diminished fourth, quasi-octatonic tetrachords.

Example 2--"Paradis" (mm. 74-79)

Or, Dieu lui dit: Va, fille hu - mai - ne, Et donne à tous les êtres.....

Text	Accompaniment
Ouvrant à la clarté ses doux et vagues yeux, La jeune et divine Eve s'est éveillée de Dieu, Et le monde à ses pieds s'étend comme un beau rêve.	COMB-2 PM
Or, Dieu lui dit: "Va, fille humaine, Et donne à tous les êtres Que j'ai créé, une parole de tes lèvres, Un son pour les connaître."	God's Tetrachord God's Tetrachord God's Tetrachord God's Tetrachord

As I mentioned in Chapter Two, we know from Fauré's correspondance that he invested these tetrachords with meaning, specifically that they represented the voice of God.

I've worked for seven hours and I've resolved the problem of making God sing. When you see what his eloquence consists of, you'll be amazed it took me so long to find. But I'm afraid absolute simplicity, in the current musical climate, is the hardest of all to discover.³

The diminished tetrachord contrasts considerably with the other motives in the cycle and fulfils the suggestion of awe which began with the ambiguity of COMB-1 and the awakening of Eve. God's Tetrachords later re-appear rhythmically diminished in an inner voice as Eve assigns names to the plants and animals.

Text	Accompaniment
Et Eve s'en alla docile à son seigneur, En son bosquet de roses, Donnant à toutes choses Une parole, un son de ses lèvres de fleur: Chose qui fuit, chose qui souffle, chose qui vole	PM PM Tetrachord Tetrachord

The closing stanzas describe the twilight. Perhaps in order to underscore the relationship between twilight and daybreak, Fauré sets this passage with a hybrid

³ Fauré in Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré*, 367.

combination, COMB-1/2. Its appearance restores a calmer mood through a thinning out of texture and elongation of rhythmic values. Yet the modal ambiguity of COMB-1/2 creates expectation. There is a difference between the kind of tension which results from God's Tetrachords and that which comes with COMB-1/2. In the first there is a strong urge to resolve the diminished fourth while in the second there is only a desire for clarification of the mode.

Text	Accompaniment
Cependant le jour passe, et vague, comme l'aube Au crépuscule, peu à peu, L'Eden s'endort et se dérobe Dans le silence d'un songe bleu.	COMB-1 COMB-1/2 COMB-1/2 COMB-1/2
La voix s'est tue, mais tout l'écoute encore, Tout de demeure en l'attente, Lorsqu'avec le lever de l'étoile du soir, Eve chante.	MM only MM only PM

On the whole, "Paradis" fluctuates between moods of uncertainty and moments of sheer wonder. However, it ends positively as Eve finds her own voice to the accompaniment of the PM motive. In this opening song of the cycle, Eve establishes a deep connection to all living creatures by giving them their identity through the instrument of her own "petal-like" mouth.

Part of my understanding of the poetry in "Crépuscule" comes from the progression of the poems which precede it, and therefore I have included some analysis of these texts. In the second song, "Prima verba," Eve is also sure of herself. She demonstrates knowledge of her relationship with the plants and animals (*italics mine*).

Text—“Prima verba”
 Comme elle chante
 Dans ma voix,
 L’âme longtemps murmurante
 Des fontaines et des bois!

...
 Quelle merveille en nous à cet heure!
 Des paroles depuis des âges endormies
 En des sons, en des fleurs,
 Sur mes lèvres enfin prennent vie.

Depuis que mon souffle a dit leur chanson,
 Depuis que ma voix les a créées,
 Quel silence heureux et profond
 Naît de leurs âmes allégées!

Things begin to change in “Roses ardents,” where Eve becomes more dependent on the plants and animals. She must go to nature to find her voice (*italics mine*).

Text—“Roses ardentes”
 Roses ardentes
 Dans l’immobile nuit,
 C’est en vous que je chante,
 Et que je suis.

*En vous, étincelles,
 A la cime des bois,
 Que je suis éternelle,
 Et que je vois.*

O mer profonde,
 C’est en toi que mon sang
 Renaît vague blonde,
 Et flot dansant.

Et c’est en toi, force suprême,
 Soleil radieux,
 Que mon âme elle-même
 Atteint son dieu!

While absent since the beginning of "Paradis," God reappears at the end of the fourth song, "Comme Dieu rayonne." Here he regains control of all the earth's creatures, and of all the voices given to them by Eve—a voice which had animated and made them come to life. Eve ceases to act and merely observes. She gives back her possessions and her voice.

Text—"Comme Dieu Rayonne"
 Comme Dieu rayonne aujourd'hui,
 Comme il exulte, comme il fleurit.
 Parmi ces roses et ces fruits!

Comme il murmure en cette fontaine!
 Ah! comme il chante en ces oiseaux...
 Qu'elle est suave son haleine
 Dans l'odorant printemps nouveau!

Comme il se baigne dans la lumière
 Avec amour, mon jeune dieu!
*Toutes les choses de la terre
 Sont ses vêtements radieux.*

In the fifth, sixth, and seventh songs, Eve's voice becomes silent, her body passive. Although she seems quite taken with the things around her, she is merely an observer. Her identity as a woman transforms into parts of the vegetable world and she often refers to herself as a flower or a flower's scent. She ceases to speak and instead only exudes fragrance. By the seventh song "Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil", Eve is a mere receptive object of sensuality, her voice transformed into the pure but silent *scent* of sexuality as seen in the text below (*italics mine*).

Text—"Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil"
 Suis-je comme une grappe de fruits
 Cachés dans les feuilles,
 Et que rien ne décèle,
 Mais qu'on odore dans la nuit?

Text—“Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil” (continued)

Sait-il, à cette heure
 Que j'entr'ouvre ma chevelure,
 Et qu'elle respire;
 Le sent-il sur la terre?

Sent-il que j'étends les bras,
 Et que des lys de mes vallées,
 Ma voix, qu'il n'entend pas,
 Est embaumée?

This loss of identity, initiating power, and voice is made explicit in the eighth song, where Eve seems to literally step outside her body. She observes and refers to herself in the third person. But this silencing seems somehow cathartic: as we note in the following excerpt from “Dans un parfum de roses blanches,” a loss of voice brings on a “golden paradise” to replace the sunken garden or “blue paradise” of the earlier poem.

Text—“Dans un parfum de roses blanches”

Dans un parfum de roses blanches
 Elle est assise et songe;
 Et l'ombre est belle comme s'il s'y mirait un ange.

Le soir descend, le bosquet dort;
 Entre ses feuilles et ses branches,
 Sur le paradis bleu s'ouvre un paradis d'or.

Sur le rivage expire un dernier flot lointain.
 Une voix qui chantait, tout à l'heure, murmure.
 Un murmure s'exhale en haleine, et s'éteint.

An Eve whose singing has become a faint murmur speaks in “Crépuscule.” She asks questions, and all but one relate to the sense of hearing and to the voice: “who is crying”; “is it a voice from the future or the past”; “what cry rips through the lullaby of your voice”; and “what cry bridges your flowery girdle and your veil of joy?” Like the three blind daughters in “Melisande’s Song,” Eve suffers from confusion caused by sound.

Another point in common between “Melisande’s Song” and “Crépuscule” is that the combinations are presented in exactly the same order up to and including COMB-3. One explanation for this is that “Crépuscule” is merely a reworking of “Melisande’s Song.”⁴ This most certainly might be true, I would hazard that the similarities between the two settings result in part from consistencies of mood between the two poems. My hypothesis is based on Nectoux’s argument that when Fauré borrows or reuses a motive, it retains the signification acquired in the context of the original work from which it is taken.⁵ If this is the case, then one might well say that Fauré has grafted specifically significant musical material from “Melisande’s Song” on to “Crépuscule” because the intention of the two texts are very similar.

This seems to be the case for the shift from COMB-1 to COMB-2. In “Melisande’s Song,” it coincides with a change from descriptive stasis (the sisters sitting in a darkened room) to one of action (the sisters climbing the stairs). Likewise, the questions in the first stanza of “Crépuscule” move from the passive domain of hearing (“Who is crying?”) to a more active one of physical sensation (“What comes to beat against my heart?”).

⁴ Jean-Michel Nectoux refers to “Crépuscule” as an “adaptation” of “Melisande’s Song.” in *Gabriel Fauré*, 303, while Robert Orledge has called the song an “appropriately developed version of ‘La Chanson de Mélisande’ (sic)” in *Gabriel Fauré*, 192.

⁵ Nectoux, Jean-Michel, “Works Renounced, Themes Rediscovered: *Eléments pour une thématique fauréenne*,” *Nineteenth-Century Music* 2/3 (March 1979), 232.

Text	Accompaniment
Ce soir, a travers le bonheur,	COMB-1
Qui donc soupire, <i>qu'est-ce qui pleure?</i>	COMB-1
<i>Qu'est-ce qui vient palpiter sur mon coeur,</i>	COMB-2
<i>Comme un oiseau blesse?</i>	COMB-2

In “Melisande’s Song”, the appearance of COMB-3 occurs to mark an intensification of confusion caused by aural misconceptions on the part of the first two sisters. The scenario is similar in “Crépuscule”, where Eve’s sense of hearing fails her almost completely. She strains her ear to the point of pain to identify the voice, yet only hears silence.

Text	Accompaniment
<i>Est-ce une voix future,</i>	COMB-3
<i>Une voix du passe?</i>	COMB-3
J’écoute, jusqu’a la souffrance,	COMB-3
Ce son dans le silence.	COMB-3

The appearance of COMB-2 before the final stanza is common to both “Melisande’s Song” and “Crépuscule” but the similarities between the two songs end at this point. No “holiest” sister appears in “Crépuscule” to dispel the mystery. Rather, answers continue to evade increasingly graphic questions. The crying that Eve heard in the first stanza transforms in the third to a scream that “tears” through a lulling voice and “crosses over” boundaries.

Text	Accompaniment
Ile d’oubli, o Paradis!	COMB-2
<i>Quel cri déchire, cette nuit,</i>	COMB-5
<i>Ta voix qui me berce?</i>	COMB-5
<i>Quel cri traverse ta ceinture de fleurs,</i>	COMB-6
<i>Et ton beau voile d’allegresse?</i>	

As shown above, the text of the third stanza makes clear the presence of two voices aside from the speaker’s: one screams and the other, a familiar voice, rocks.

The opening of this stanza marks a high point of crisis and uncertainty, particularly because of the sudden awareness of the presence of a third voice. Musically, the pseudo-invertible combination, COMB-5 underpins the whole, significantly transferring MM to the lower voice for the first time in the song. Ostensibly, a two-voice canon effect results from successive statements of COMB-6, yet examination reveals that the second statement of the motive continues in an inner voice (bracketed in Example 3).

Example 3-- "Crépuscule" mm. 25-28

The musical score for "Crépuscule" mm. 25-28 is presented in a three-staff format. The top staff is for the voice, the middle staff is for the right hand of the piano, and the bottom staff is for the left hand. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/2. The vocal line starts with the lyrics "Quel cri dé- chire....". The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with chords and moving lines. A bracket is drawn under the piano accompaniment in the second measure, highlighting a specific musical combination.

Eve's final question is set with COMB-6. As noted in Chapter Two, this motive consists mainly of LWS's which offer no modal definition. In this case, there is a concealed MM. COMB-6 is here used as a sequence, moving towards a complete annihilation of motivic material at the conclusion of the song. And yet, for all that the poem generates increasing anxiety and confusion, Fauré's setting ends with a rather optimistic shaking off of the combinations in favour of several measures of clear, even uplifting D Ionian scales and triads.

In this chapter I have tried to provide a poetic context for the mutations of the combinations discussed in Chapter Two. This examination has also helped to explain the subtleties which occurred when music from "Melisande's Song" was

re-worked for "Crépuscule." Reading meaning in music can never be definitive.

What I have sought to achieve with my interpretation is a background on which to place the musical combinations so that they might be more clearly heard.

Chapter Four

"Themeless Contrapuntal Duets"

Up to this point I have written almost exclusively of the piano accompaniment and the process of combining that takes place within it. In this chapter I will discuss the relationship between the singer's part and the layers of motives over which it hangs. I will attempt to explain it as a "Themeless Contrapuntal Duet" to borrow Robert Orledge's term, and will also point out instances of imitation and heterophony which take place between the voice and piano. One of the most interesting aspects of the voice's relationship to the accompaniment is the frequent lack of temporal synchronization between the two parts.

This is less obvious in "Melisande's Song" where there is a degree of alignment between the vocal part and the piano. Usually, the overlap between the phrases in the voice and the two-bar statements of combinations is slight: the resting pitch of the vocal part is merely tied over the downbeat and into the beginning of another combination as shown in Example 1.

Example 1--"Melisande's Song" (mm. 6-7; 10-11;14-15)



The image shows a musical score for "Melisande's Song" in G major, 3/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Lange Wate a glim. mer of grid. Up the stairs of the there and the temporary burn on. It but here. mer lange burn.ang. O put' of to". The score illustrates the overlapping of vocal phrases and piano combinations, with the vocal part often tied over the downbeat and into the beginning of another combination.

This overlapping of phrases is a mild form of elision which smooths over the choppy two-measure long statements of the combinations. It is a consistent occurrence which

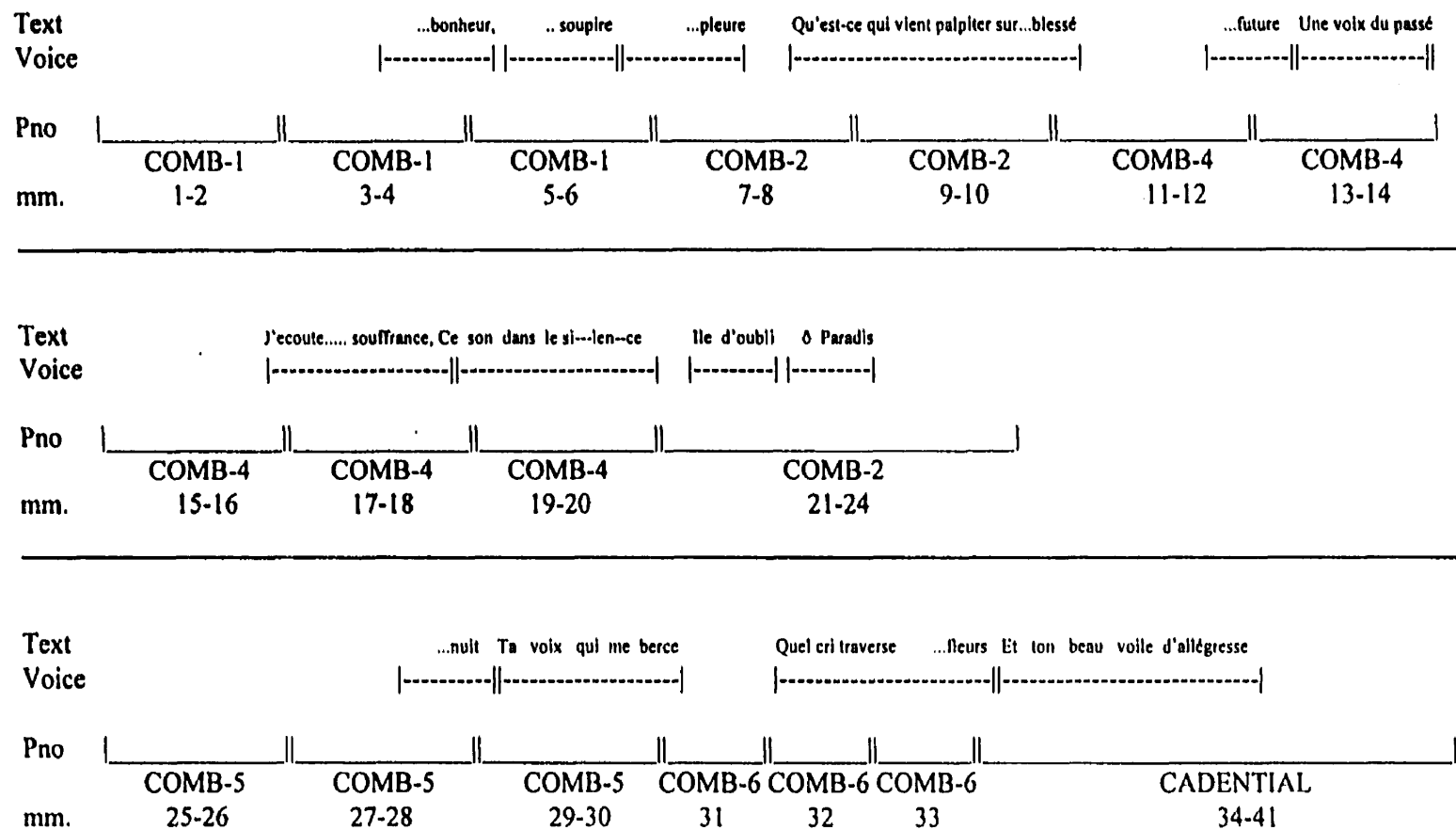
makes the sudden coordinated cadence on A at m. 21 all the more effective since, for the first time, and after a rhythmically accelerated drive towards a resting point, motion simultaneously ceases in both parts (see Example 2).

Example 2--“Melisande’s Song” (mm. 20-21)

The same kind of phrase overlap may be found in “Crépuscule,” but not with anywhere near the consistency as in “Melisande’s Song.” In seven instances, the termination of the vocal phrase is tied over into the beginning of a new combination or overlaps in some other way. However, in four cases, the vocal cadence is perfectly aligned with the end of a combination. Referring to Figure 1 (page over), it is possible to see that the voice and piano tend towards greater temporal synchronization at the end of the song than at the beginning.

The overlapping of phrases has several consequences. The first is a greater sense of fluidity. As in “Melisande’s Song”, the uncoordinated vocal phrases bridge the beginnings and ends of combinations and make them less obvious. As well, the prefacing of each combination in mm. 6-14 by vocal up-beats provides a musical analogue for the hurried or panicked succession of questions in the text. Finally, these uncoordinated parts result in a contrast of texture for the middle section.

Figure 1—Temporal Alignment of Voice and Piano in "Crépuscule"



Beginning at m. 17, the overlap between the voice and accompaniment lessens. The ensemble then congeals from m. 17ff in two stages. First the space between the vocal entries and the combinations lessens considerably. Then from mm. 17-30 some of the pitches in the vocal melody are doubled in the upper notes of the right hand of the piano part. From m. 32 until the end, the voice's melody is exactly doubled in the upper voice of the accompaniment.

Is there any significance or meaning encoded in the degree of temporal coordination between the voice and piano? I would posit that the alignment of the voice and piano, particularly from m.16 onwards, makes a musical comment on the text being set. As shown in Example 3, the vocal melody is doubled almost exactly in mm. 16-18, at the same time that the text refers to a frustrated inability to hear. If the voice remained somewhat independent of the accompaniment in mm. 3-14, it has certainly lost this quality to some extent in mm. 16-20.

Example 3— "Crépuscule", mm. 16-20

The musical score for "Crépuscule", mm. 16-20, consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with lyrics: "J'é - cou - te, jus - qu'à la souf - fran - ce, Ce son dans le si - len - ce." The piano accompaniment is written in two staves (treble and bass clef). The score includes dynamic markings: *p* (piano) at the beginning, *cresc.* (crescendo) in the middle, and *f* (forte) at the end. The piano part features a melody that closely follows the vocal line in mm. 16-18, illustrating the congealing of the ensemble.

The poetry in mm. 16-20 oxymoronically refers to a "sound in the silence." This is reminiscent of a line of text from the second stanza of "Paradis".

Tout s'y confond encore et tout s'y mêle,
 Frissons de feuilles, chants d'oiseaux, glissements d'ailes,
 Sources qui sourdent, voix des airs, voix des eau,
Murmure immense, et qui pourtant est du silence.

The last line of the stanza refers to an enormous whisper which is, after all, silence. How may a sonic event of such proportion be described as "silent"? Does Van Lehrberghe refer to the memory or imagination of sound, which is "silent" in the literal, physical sense? Or is the silent whisper an unheard sound, such as the tree which falls unheeded in the forest? Whatever the intended meaning or meanings of this turn of phrase, I believe it is significant that this oxymoron repeats itself.

Leading up to the passage in "Crépuscule" shown in Example 3, Eve strives to identify a sound that she hears. After the questioning in mm. 3-14, the sound is revealed as "silent" in mm. 16-20. Eve's inability to hear the sound within the silence coincides with the lessening of the rhythmic and melodic independence of the voice. Before m. 16 there were two distinct voices, sounds, in the song--the voice and the piano. After m. 16 there is increasingly only the sound of the piano which is echoed in the voice.

If a sound may be silent in memory or in instances where no auditor is present, then perhaps the disappearance of a distinct vocal line represents the absence of memory or the loss of the subject who might hear the sound. Even though the first person present tense attests to Eve's presence in the song and to her witnessing of the sounds, she may have lost the ability to perceive a sound--her hearing. It strikes me as ironic that Fauré aligned the voices so very carefully: the sound is so terribly close to Eve, but it is silent.

In addition to it, Eve's recognition of the silence entails the loss of musical subjectivity. The sound may be silent because no subject hears it.

Aside from the rhythmic aspect of melody, the vocal parts in both "Melisande's Song" and "Crépuscule" have a melodic relationship with the accompaniment. At the beginning of the former, the voice appears to have been assigned a compound melody, sketching out the inner voices of the combination (see Example 4).

Example 4--"Melisande's Song" mm. 3-5

The image shows a musical score for measures 3-5 of "Melisande's Song". It consists of two staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has three measures of music. Above the first measure is a box labeled "PS". Above the second and third measures is a box labeled "AT". Above the fourth measure is another box labeled "PS". The lyrics are: "The King's three blind daughters / sit locked in a hold / in the dark, see their". The piano accompaniment is shown below the vocal line, with a "Pedal" marking at the beginning.

In mm. 11-21, the voice's melodies bear little resemblance to the accompaniment. The type of melodic relationship heard in mm. 3-5 is re-established with the entry of the "holiest" sister in m. 22. In mm. 24-25 the voice is assigned a tritone outline from the piano part, only backwards. Along with the right hand of the piano in m. 27, the vocal part also steps conclusively down from E-flat to D.

Example 5--"Melisande's Song" (mm. 24-28)

The image shows a musical score for measures 24-28 of "Melisande's Song". It consists of two staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has four measures of music. The lyrics are: "bout, / O no hope now for e . ver / Our lamps are gone out.". The piano accompaniment is shown below the vocal line.

Before the doubling of the melody in the right hand of the piano in m. 17 of “Crépuscule,” the vocal part also seems fairly independent in terms of its melody. At the same time, examining high points of the vocal phrases reveals a loosely unfolding outline of the MM motive which is repeated several times in the upper voice of the combination (see Example 6). This type of relationship, a hidden link between the voice and piano, may be referred to as heterophony: the voice decorates MM over the span of several measures while the accompaniment repeats the motive.¹

Example 6—“Crépuscule” mm. 1-9

The image displays a musical score for the first nine measures of "Crépuscule." It consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows the piano accompaniment with the tempo marking "Adagio non troppo (♩ = 72)" and a dynamic marking of *p*. The second system shows the vocal line with lyrics: "soir, à travers le bon-heur, Qui donc sou-pi-re, qu'est-ce qui". The third system continues the vocal line with lyrics: "pleu-re? Qu'est-ce qu'il vient pal-pi-ter sur mon". The piano accompaniment features a prominent melodic motif in the upper voice, which is identified in the text as the MM motive.

¹ Charles Rosen has also observed “heterophonic accompaniment” in Chopin’s G major Prelude and C# minor Scherzo as well as Schumann’s “Fantasie” op. 17. See *Sonata Forms*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988), 388-390.

In "Paradis" it is possible to observe more traditional (i.e. procedural) forms of counterpoint between the voice and piano. Usually this occurs between the voice and the right hand of the piano in sections which contain the combinations. The voice tends to imitate the MM motive, but this is not strict and is usually confined to the opening leap followed by an abbreviated or decorated ascent. This is likely due to the restricted vocal register, which never exceeds E4, and does not allow the complete triad or tetrachord of MM to be sounded.

In the sections where MM is prominent, the roles of "dux" and "comes" are frequently traded between the voice and piano. As shown in Example 7 (page over), the voice first enters as "comes" until it becomes rhythmically aligned with COMB-1 in m. 4. Beginning in m. 7, the contrapuntal roles are exchanged and the voice as "dux" leads by stating the MM motive.² The voice then continues to lead until the end of the section.

During the section found in mm. 51-60 (see Example 8 below) there is more allusion to imitation than any actual carrying out of the procedure. The first vocal entry in m. 53 is non-imitative, but its initial decorated descent of a third is strongly reminiscent of the end of the vocal phrase in mm. 8-10, and the one which follows in mm. 57-59. It is almost as though the voice has entered too late to include the opening interval of MM. With a downward leap of a fourth in mm. 55-56, the voice becomes aligned with the octave descent in COMB-1/2. The second vocal entry at first appears imitative since it begins with an opening leap, but is soon revealed as a doubling of the

² The alteration of the opening interval from a fifth to a fourth may suggest the effect of "tonal answer."

inner voice of the accompaniment in mm. 58-59.

Example 7--"Paradis" mm. 1-20

comes
p
 C'est le premier ma - tin du mon - de,

dux
Andante molto mod^{to} ($\text{♩} = 69$)
p

6
 Com - me u - ne fleur con - fu - se ex - ha - lé - e dans la nuit,
sempre p

11
dux
poco cresc.
 Au souf - fle nou - veau qui se lè - ve des on - des,
comes

16
 Un jar - din bleu d'é - pa - nou -
poco a poco cresc.
p

Example 8--"Paradis" mm. 51-60

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system shows the piano accompaniment with performance markings: *poco rit.*, *a Tempo*, and *dolce e tranqui*. The second system includes the vocal line with the lyrics: "Ou - vrant à la clar - té ses doux et va - ges". The third system continues the piano accompaniment with the marking *Andante (♩=58)* and the lyrics "Or, Dieu lu".

The passage in mm. 108-125 involves similar allusions to contrapuntal technique.

In mm. 111-113, the vocal line enters very late, but it imitates the top voice of the combination entirely except for the initial leap from A to E (see Example 9 page over). The absence of this leap makes the imitation much less noticeable. In mm. 122-125 the voice leads in the presentation of MM from COMB-2. This is also fairly unobtrusive

Example 9--"Paradis" mm. 108-12 .

111

Meno mosso (♩ = 96)

112

mp

Ce . pen . dant le jour pas . . . se, et . va . ge, comme

116

l'a . . be, . . . Au cré . pas . cu . . le, peu à peu, L'É .

pp
dolce

120 121

den s'ea . dort . . . et se dé . ro . . be . Dans le si .

124

len . . ce d'un son . . . ge bleu . . .

since the initial leap of the fifth is filled in partially with a third. The voice lingers on C in mm. 124-125 and fails to ascend to E as we would expect MM to do. This is likely because it has arrived on the natural sixth scale degree, the tendency of which is to resolve downwards. This resolution, however, only occurs in the bass voice of the accompaniment in conjunction with the resolution of the augmented sixth.

The examination of the relationship between the voice and the accompaniment in this chapter has helped to expand Robert Orledge's idea of the "Themeless Contrapuntal Duet." Where Orledge only sees the polarity of outer voices, I observe instances of imitation and allusion to this contrapuntal technique between the right hand of the piano and the voice. Furthermore, as was the case for some of the combinations examined in Chapter Two, Fauré frequently manipulates time relationships between the lines he chooses to layer. The contrapuntal play between voice and piano in the duet may be made even more dynamic through a lack of temporal synchronization.

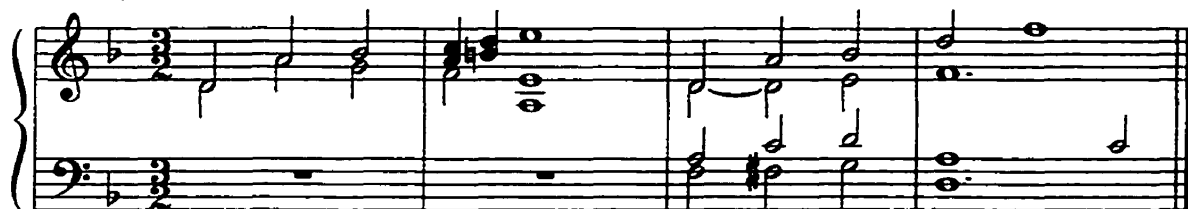
Chapter Five

Form: Contrapuntal Combination or Harmony?

The almost continual, ostinato-like presence of the combinations in "Melisande's Song" and "Crépuscule" lends a sense of shapelessness to each of the songs. At the same time, however, the mode and pitch centre produced by each combination provide structural markers which help to delineate form. A reading of form based on contrapuntal combinations may be reinforced through a tonal interpretation of the work; however, such analyses might also result in a different picture of the structure. In either case, one reading should not take precedence over another. Both should merely add to the multiplicity of meaning that one might expect to find in music that is precariously suspended between two stylistic periods in music history.

The form of "Melisande's Song" seems best understood as a bar form (A A' B) when the focus of the analysis is the contrapuntal combination, and its implications for pitch centre and mode. An opening "A" section may be placed between mm. 1-10 where COMB-1 and COMB-2 promote a sense of gradually clarified sense of Aeolian and a shift in pitch centre from D to A. After the relative stability of COMB-2, the entry of COMB-3 at mm. 11 signals the beginning of a new section which lasts until m. 21, although this is smoothed over to some extent by the vocal cadence which is tied over from m. 10 into m. 11 (see Example 1, page over).

Example 1--End of A Section, Beginning of A' ("Melisande's Song" mm. 9-12)



Superficially, the appearance of COMB-3 produces the illusion of the variation process. However, if we allow COMB-3 to stand as a substitute for COMB-1, a much different musical form takes shape. COMB-3 resembles COMB-1 in that it is modally ambiguous with an initial putative pitch centre of D. It gravitates towards a statement of COMB-2 at the end of the section and an obvious cadence on A which ironically accompanies the sister's delusional hearing of the Prince's approaching footsteps (see Example 2). The repetition of the same tendency, from modal ambiguity to relative clarity, and from a pitch centre of D to one of A, constitutes an abstraction of the first section and favours a reading of this part of the song as a varied repetition or "A'".

Example 2--End of A' Section, Beginning of B ("Melisande's Song" mm. 19-22)

cresc. espressivo

The pairing of COMB-1 with COMB-4 about two-thirds of the way through the piece creates a contrast to the previous sections of the song, and may be heard as a "B" section (see Example 3). This bar form, as an archaic background, provides a fitting metaphor for the medieval setting of the song's poetry and the larger dramatic context of *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

Example 3--B Section ("Melisande's Song, mm. 22-29)

A tonal reading of "Melisande's Song" complements the analysis based on contrapuntal combinations, even while it offers a different view of the form. From a harmonic point of view, the song appears ternary since there is an area of contrast towards the middle of the song in which the role of D shifts from its initial function as tonic to one of sub-dominant. The pitch D then briefly returns as tonic in the final measures of the song.

At the beginning of the "B" section in m. 15, a D appears as part of a second inversion minor seventh chord on the downbeats of mm. 15 and 17 (see Example 4). Keeping Niedermeyer's process and the notion of the triad as resultant in mind, it may be that D continues to act as tonic even though it appears in a seventh chord. By adopting Robin Tait's view of Fauré's harmony, however, the D7 sonority in mm. 15-18 could be interpreted as a major triad on F with added sixth, which he claims is, "used in the late works with a boldness not found in the second period." He also finds that this chord, "has the advantage in the late works of softening the effect of the tonic chord, especially in passages of transition."¹

Example 4—"Melisande's Song" mm. 15-19

The musical score for Example 4, "Melisande's Song" mm. 15-19, is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 15-17, and the second system covers measures 18-19. The music is in 3/4 time and features a prominent D7 chord in the bass line, which is interpreted as a major triad on F with an added sixth. The second system includes the instruction "cresc. espressivo" and a dynamic marking "f".

¹ Tait, Robin, "The Musical Language of Gabriel Fauré," (Ph.D. diss.: University of St-Andrews, 1984), 64.

Without meaning to undermine the interpretation of the D7 chord given above, I suggest that this passage might be examined through the eyes of someone trained to respect voice leading, as Fauré most certainly was. In this case, the third inversion arrangement of the chord creates contrapuntal tension with specific implications for resolution to a G tonic. The pedal C is held for four full measures and every down-beat reinforces its obligation to step down to B (or the lowest note of a first inversion G triad), even when inner-voice appoggiature obscure the harmony. Even though the C does not resolve in mm. 15-18, it behaves as it should on the first and second beats of m. 19 in both the melody and an inner accompanimental voice. In this case, one could argue that the instability caused by voice-leading is here as essential to the articulation of tonal center as function. But it has not been my purpose to promote one reading over another. Rather, I would like to emphasize the ambiguity and possibility of multiple interpretations for this passage.

The A that arrives in m. 21 is somewhat startling, rather false, and this is probably due to the unsettled nature of the passage that precedes it. Fauré coldly abandons the A area with a return to the opening motivic material and the key of D minor.² He prolongs this key through the suggestion of B-flat (bVI) in mm. 24-27 which are saturated with "dominant sevenths" on F. At the end of the song, Fauré slides into a subdominant

² Some may wish to view the reappearance of the opening material and the measures which follow as a move from A to B-flat (bII), especially since the materials in m. 22 are so ambiguous and the "dominant seventh" sonorities in mm. 24-27 place such emphasis on this key area. However, the return of the motive is a powerful reminder of the opening of the song and the D minor key, which I feel overrides the notion of an adventurous, direct move from A to the bII area.

substitute (ii°6-5) in order to create the final, plagal-like cadence.

In the case of "Crépuscule", different analytical approaches also produce complementary results. When the combinations are considered linearly, this song bears resemblance to "Melisande's Song". (An initial succession of COMB-1 and COMB-2, "A", is followed by COMB-3 and COMB-2, "A' ".) Unlike Fauré's earlier song, however, surface features of "Crépuscule" contribute significantly to obscuring the form.

A vocal phrase smooths over the structural division between the "A" and the "A' " sections with a clear 1st-4th descent. This cadence-like gesture in the voice to some extent takes the focus away from the entrance of COMB-3 at m. 11, which should signal a new section (see Example 5).

Example 5--"Crépuscule" mm. 11-14

The image shows a musical score for the vocal line and piano accompaniment of "Crépuscule" from measures 11 to 14. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef. A bracket above the vocal line spans measures 11 and 12, labeled "1st-4th", indicating a first-to-fourth descent. The lyrics are: "Est-ce u-ne voix fu-tu-re, u-ne voix du passé?". The piano accompaniment is written in two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a 3/4 time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some suspensions in the inner voices.

As well, there is no cadence at the end of the "A' " section, even though the accelerated rhythms, chaining of LWS's in the bass, and inner voice suspensions of COMB-2 suggest a drive towards a resting point. As shown in Example 6 (page over), the expected cadence is elided with the beginning of the "B" section and the appearance of COMB-5 at m. 25.

Example 6—"Crépuscule" mm. 21-25

The musical score for "Crépuscule" mm. 21-25 is presented in two systems. The first system features a vocal line in treble clef with the lyrics "I. . le d'ou-bli, ————— ô Pa-ra-dis!". The piano accompaniment is in bass clef and includes a "cresc." marking. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, marked "r. espressivo" and "sempre".

In spite of the lack of cadence at the end of A', the final third of the song, the B section, stands in marked contrast to the earlier two-thirds. This is because in the canon-like COMB-5, the MM is transferred to the lower voice for the first time. Moreover, and much unlike "Melisande's Song", there is not even a hint at any of the combinations from the opening: COMB-5 is followed by COMB-6 in mm. 31-34, which gives way to a long cadential section to conclude the song.

One tonal reading of this song complements the form produced by the arrangement of the combinations. "Crépuscule" begins in D minor and ends in D major. This seems like an extremely logical move and could suggest the "paradis d'or" of the

song that precedes "Crépuscule." But the road to paradise is deceptive. In the "A" section there is a prolongation of D minor which involves briefly touching down on A minor in mm. 7-10. A shaky reestablishment of the tonic might be interpreted as a signal of the beginning of a new section, or "A' ". However, the resulting successions produced by COMB-3 also seem transitional.

A feint to G +/- in mm. 15-20 contrasts with the opening material (see Example 7). This suggests the beginning of a "B" section, and also hints at the possibility of cycling to the relative F major. But since this does not materialize, the material in mm. 11-24 may be interpreted as an "A' " section because it mirrors the tonal motions of the "A" section.

Example 7--"Crépuscule" mm. 15-20

As in "Melisande's Song", there is an emphasis on plagal cadences in "Crépuscule." The substitution of ii°6-5 for the subdominant at the final cadence reappears, and the crucial pivot chord which turns the harmonic direction back towards D

is VII7—a different subdominant substitute. The ending of the song, shown in Example 8, strongly suggests that Fauré enjoyed the ambiguities of his substitutions: the bass voice makes a long descent through the melodic minor scale in mm. 35-37 and the final vocal phrase is in the Aeolian mode.

Example 8—"Crépuscule" (mm. 34-41)

tu - - - re de fleurs, Et

ton beau voi - - - le d'al.lé - - - gres - - - se?

poco a poco

pp

There is almost no basis for formal comparison between "Paradis" and the two earlier songs. In the first place, it is about four times the length of "Melisande's Song" and "Crépuscule." The poetry for "Paradis" is a narration of the events of an entire day, and requires a musical form that is flexible enough to convey the story, and rigid enough to provide a coherent framework. Fauré's arrangement of the combinations, interspersed with other motivic material produces the form shown in Figure 1. Alternating sections produce a sense of continual fluctuation as COMB-1, COMB-2 and COMB-1/2, "A" materials, are juxtaposed with an active accompaniment containing the PM motive, "B" materials. In the midst of these fluctuations, God's Tetrachords appear in stark contrast to the other material, and effectively mark the mid-point of the song.

Figure 1--Formal scheme for "Paradis"

mm. 1-49	mm. 50-72	mm. 73-107	mm. 108-139
AB	AB	C, B/C	AB

The brief reappearance of the PM accompaniment or "B" materials at m. 91 is fused with God's Tetrachords at m. 98. This gives the passage in mm. 91-107 more the appearance of a transition than a stable presentation of motivic materials. One could argue differently; indeed Robert Orledge interprets the passage at the beginning of m. 91 as purely "B" material, with the resulting form shown below.

Figure 2--Robert Orledge's Reading of the Form of "Paradis"³

Motives:	A	B	A	B	C	B	A	A	B
Measure:	1	21	50	62	73	91	108	126	134

The variance is slight, but whereas my version emphasizes the pairing of the materials and the strength of contrast at the mid-section with God's Tetrachords, Orledge's version is more suggestive of a lop-sided palindrome.

Perhaps the most striking formal feature which tonal analysis may reveal in "Paradis" is the move to bII at God's Tetrachords, just past the middle of the song. Again, this is a motion already inherent in the PS motive, introduced at the outset of the song. But the fluctuations in and out of E major which surround the impressive Phrygian second (or tonally, bII) mid-point are also important in delineating the structure of this song.

Unlike "Crépuscule," the tonal motion of "Paradis" is not a long single process of striving towards the parallel major. Rather, in "Paradis" this key is touched on four times at poetically important moments in the song. The combinations preceding the E major sections act as agents of tonal modulation, and different combinations show different ways of approaching the parallel major. Figure 3 (page over) charts the alternation of key areas and the motivic material, which might suggest a sonata-rondo form, with PM as the rondo theme, although PM is not the first motive presented.

³ Orledge, Robert, *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Eulenburg Books, 1979), 139.

Figure 3--"Paradis", Form Through Tonal Motion

Measure No.	Motive or Combination	Tonal Area (Pitch-Centre)
1-6	COMB-1	E minor
7-13	COMB-2	Tonicization B minor
14-20	COMB-1/2	modulatory
21-49	PM	E major
50-54	COMB-1	E minor
55-59 (60)	COMB-1/2	E minor
61-72	PM	E major goes to A+/C#-
73-90	God's Tetrachords	F major (bII)
91-107	PM + God's Tetrachords	E major
108-111	COMB-1	F minor
116-121	COMB-1/2	F minor
122-125	COMB-1/2	Back to E major via V4-2/bII (diminished 3rd)
126-131	MM only + PM	E major

A tonal reading of "Paradis" tells me little more about the form of the song than an examination of the combinations. But I would suggest that this kind of analysis, a combined approach which takes into account the contrapuntal combination, voice-leading and resultant harmonies, could go a long way in explaining our perception of Fauré's late style. For the most part in this Chapter I have attempted to show the large-scale tonal implications of triads which might well be resultant from a consistent layering process. I believe that it is another sign of the complexity of Fauré's process--of an ability to hear sounds in more than one way.

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Conclusion

In this thesis I have attempted to offer one way of looking at counterpoint in the late style of Fauré, which may be justified by aspects of his general background, his training at the Niedermeyer School, and his own pedagogical legacy. The thorough examination of combined motives in Chapter Two provides a flexible approach to counterpoint even while it expands on our understanding of "motive" in Fauré's music, something which already has a long scholarly history culminating in the work of Jean-Michel Nectoux.

Analysis using the notion of motivic layers may also be used to gain an understanding of what Orledge refers to as "the themeless contrapuntal duet." I have suggested that several aspects of the relationship between the voice and piano may work as a musical comment on the poetic themes of the text. These include the level of temporal coordination between the two parts, and the volatility and exchange of the roles of "dux" and "comes." The themeless duet may also become expressive through "hidden" types of counterpoint, such as the slow, heterophonous unfolding of a motive pitted against a more quickly moving presentation in the accompaniment. Studying contrapuntal combinations may also provide either an alternative or a complement to the role of traditional harmonic analysis in delineating form.

By no means have all my questions concerning counterpoint in the late style of Fauré been answered in this thesis. One area for further research would involve investigating earlier works for contrapuntal combinations. A second would involve a large-scale study of voice leading, with particular attention to enharmonism and

reevaluation. Finally, Fauré's attitude towards mode deserves special attention. In the *Eve* cycle, he frequently suggests modes from the twelve-mode system (i.e. Aeolian), but greater emphasis on Phrygian and Dorian might mean that he truly accepted only an eight-mode system.

It is difficult to isolate one aspect of Fauré's style in investigations such as mine. The problem is compounded when that single aspect is deemed to be counterpoint, because we must confront fundamental questions such as the very definition of the word. Aside from a few worn out procedures, how may we even begin to discuss something as nebulous as the play and interaction of melodic lines? We must, in the end, invent our own ways of talking about counterpoint. And what will this reveal to us about the composition itself? For me, the weaving in and out of lines in the piano, and the layering of the ghost-like voice of *Eve* and *Mélisande* over this texture has tremendous expressive potential. In the crossing and colliding of lines, the sense of isolation and crisis in the song texts is communicated to me more powerfully than through any other musical device. This experience is at the heart of my desire to understand Fauré's art of combining. My goal has determined my means.

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