A Level Music
Music of the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries

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Lili Boulanger, *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* for Baritone Solo, Chorus and Orchestra, (1912)

Background information

The following materials are essential for use with this resource:

- Complete score, Ricordi: 1919 (https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/0/03/IMSLP405091-PMLP539799-mdp.39015080929014-1-25.pdf)

- Vocal score, Ricordi 1919 (for easier harmonic analysis) (https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/2/21/IMSLP334022-SIBLEY1802.25683.8dca-39087013497484soldier.pdf)

- A recording of the piece (several good ones available on iTunes, YouTube and Spotify)

  NOTE: This resource refers to bar numbers, which will need to be added to both scores.

It will be useful for students to have completed the following preparatory work:

- A general introduction to early twentieth-century music

- French music at the turn of the century: Satie, Fauré, Ravel, and Debussy

- Harmony and tonality in the Western Classical Tradition and their extension around the turn of the century

- Church modes and the whole-tone scale

These notes are intended to assist music teachers in their preparation and delivery of the set work. They are offered as outline guidance and contain suggestions regarding the necessary musical content and background for study, but they are not meant to be an exhaustive resource.

Note that there is no published analysis of this work, but the following sources are useful for contextual and stylistic background:

- Hunter, S. J. (2022) *Harmony, Form, and Literary Response in Selected Works of Lili Boulanger (1893–1918)*, M. Phil. diss, University of Queensland

- Potter, C. (2016) *Nadia and Lili Boulanger*, London: Routledge

- Renee-Smith-Gonzalez A. (2001) *Lili Boulanger (1893-1918): Her Life and Works*, DMA diss, Florida Atlantic University

- Rosenstiel, L. (1978) *The life and works of Lili Boulanger*, New Jersey: FDU

- Taruskin, R. (2010) *Music in the Early Twentieth Century (The Oxford History of Western Music)*, Oxford: OUP.

A note on musical analysis

It is important that teachers and students understand that an analysis is a re-creation. We deliberately draw out particular qualities, join certain dots and interpret one chosen moment in the context of another. Different choices could always be made; an analysis ultimately describes how an author hears the piece. Musical style and language were rapidly evolving and fragmenting in the early twentieth century, which makes analytical judgement even more contingent on the chosen interpretive frameworks. This analysis provides a suggested approach but other reasonable interpretations will be accepted.

French music in the early twentieth century

Lili Boulanger's work embodies a tension found in much French music around the turn of the century: it both luxuriates in and yet rejects the lush chromatic style of Richard Wagner. A horrified fascination with Wagner is also seen in earlier French composers such as César Franck, who purportedly attached to his score of *Tristan und Isolde* a label bearing the word 'poison'. Likewise, this antipathy to the spirit of German Romanticism was resurgent in the 1920s with Les Six standing up for an irreverent Neo-Classical outlook that rejected German music and anything seen as under its influence (including Debussy).

Although there is obviously more to Wagner than harmonic tension and release, it is through this aspect of his music that the French reaction to his influence at the turn of the century can most readily be understood. We encounter the same rich harmonic language of extended chromatic chords (such as the 'Tristan' chord discussed below), but it is often stripped of its function. If the yearning for resolution in Wagner's harmony is continually deferred (like Tristan and Isolde's love), in the music of Satie and Debussy this function is completely dissolved. This can most famously be seen and heard in the parallel chains of sevenths and ninths that are denuded of their functional context in works such as Debussy's *Sarabande* and his *Trois Nocturnes*. Richard Taruskin has labelled this process in French music as 'getting rid of glue', in particular getting rid of the semitone resolutions so typical of tonal music and so heightened in chromatic progressions.

Lili Boulanger's musical education was spent in the company of composers who shared this outlook including Fauré (who directed her studies), Debussy and Saint-Saëns. Her work, including *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat*, draws on several strands often encountered in French music of this period:

- Seventh and ninth chords outside their traditional harmonic context (as already discussed)

- Church modes (and a reconstruction of plainchant-style music)

- Scales from outside the Western Classical Tradition (e.g. pentatonic, hexatonic and octatonic)

Like Debussy, Boulanger identified with the Symbolist (rather than the Impressionist) movement, which valued indirect suggestion and the mystical power of art. The author Baudelaire, for example, scorned the use of description in poetry, writing that '...by describing what is, the poet degrades himself and is reduced to the rank of schoolmaster'. Debussy similarly stressed the importance of not succumbing to intellect or formalism, writing that 'beauty must appeal to the senses ... must impress us or insinuate itself into us without any effort on our part'. He famously said that 'there is no theory ... pleasure

is the law', but in reality Debussy's music is carefully calculated – the sensual freedom of his music is hard won. He might have quietly agreed with Lili's sister, the renowned composition teacher Nadia Boulanger, who stated that 'a great work is made out of a combination of obedience and liberty'.

Lili Boulanger: a brief biography

Biographical thumbnails of Lili Boulanger (1893–1918) inevitably focus on the fact that her life was cut tragically short at the age of just 24. She suffered from chronic illness, starting with bronchial pneumonia at the age of two and ending with intestinal tuberculosis (today she would probably be diagnosed with Crohn's disease). Her brief life, further restricted by constant illness, throws into even sharper relief her astonishing talent, which even eclipsed that of Nadia, her prodigiously gifted older sister.

Lili Boulanger was born in Paris to Ernest, a successful composer and teacher, and Raïssa, purportedly an émigré Russian princess. Her mother organised frequent soirées attended by Debussy, Fauré and Saint-Saëns, and she was brought up in an intensely musical environment. Lili was quickly identified as a musical prodigy, learning singing, violin, piano, cello and harp as well as attending many of her older sister Nadia's classes at the Paris Conservatoire as an observer.

Both Nadia and Lili were incredibly driven, determined to secure the best possible start to their careers as composers by winning the prestigious Prix de Rome. This prize had previously been won by Berlioz, Gounod, Bizet and Massenet, a cast list of first-rate composers that the sisters were keen to join. The competition was demanding, beginning with a preliminary round in which candidates submitted a chorus and a vocal fugue before up to six students were chosen to progress to the second round. The competitors then had three weeks to write a cantata from scratch in a studio without a piano, meeting only at mealtimes. Nadia competed unsuccessfully in three competitions from 1906 to 1908 but came close in her last attempt, during which she probably did not help her cause when she infuriated Saint-Saëns by scoring the preliminary round fugue for string quartet rather than for chorus.

Lili prepared assiduously for her first attempt by setting texts from previous competitions. She made the first round of the 1912 competition but was too ill to continue, withdrawing before the second stage. *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* was written while recuperating from this abortive attempt and it impressed the Conservatoire staff so much that they awarded it the highest possible honour for student coursework, the Prix Lepaulle, awarded to 'a young musician having produced during the year an exceptional work in any genre'. Given that the Prix de Rome was not ultimately awarded to anyone in 1912, she had come very close indeed.

In 1913, after five attempts between them, Lili finally became the first woman to be awarded the Prix de Rome for her setting of a text entitled *Faust et Hélène*. One of the conditions of the prize was to live and work in the Villa Medici in Rome but this was cut short by the outbreak of World War I.

This freed Lili to branch out compositionally and also to devote herself to charity work related to the war effort, including distributing a newspaper to Conservatoire students fighting at the front. She worked on an opera, *La Princesse Maleine* (based on a Maeterlinck play of the same name), but her health worsened and she died in 1918 with the work unfinished and before the conclusion of the war. Nadia Boulanger was devastated by the death of her sister and, partly as a result, curtailed her own composition activities, devoting most of the rest of her life to teaching. An extraordinary range of talent passed through her hands including Aaron Copland, Philip Glass, Astor Piazzolla, Daniel Barenboim and Quincy Jones.

Although *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* was essentially coursework, its very high quality was recognised and a première was arranged in 1915. Dedicated to her teacher Georges Caussade and published by Ricordi (now she was a prize winner), it was a critical success, with one writer even suggesting that it was 'one of the grandest inspirations to have been written since the funeral march of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony'. Critics also noted that this sombre memorial to a fallen soldier had been written two years before the outbreak of World War I and therefore had a prophetic quality.

Lili Boulanger's musical style

Even in her earliest works, Boulanger established a strong sense of style, heavily influenced both by Wagner and by her French teachers and mentors. Although Debussy is an obvious point of reference, Caroline Potter considers Fauré to be even more important.

The following traits can be seen in her early body of work (and to a lesser extent in her post-Prix de Rome output):

- Melody and harmony with strong modal inflections
- Unusual cadential progressions involving secondary chords (particularly II and VII)
- Parallel extended chords (primarily sevenths of various kinds)
- Pedal points, with complex chromatic progressions often anchored over long tonic and dominant pedals
- Enharmonic and sudden modulations
- Sharp changes of texture and instrumental or vocal forces to distinguish sections
- Occasional use of harmony and melodic lines based on the whole tone scale

Selected further works

Lili Boulanger's works up to and including the Faust et Hélène setting are quite similar in style. After that, however, her musical language, while still recognisable, evolved considerably. It is worth listening in particular to the last two works on this list, which show a sterner and grittier approach to harmony and dissonance.

1911	*Renouveau*	Vocal quartet (SATT) and piano/orchestra
1911	*Les Sirènes*	Soprano, chorus and piano
1911	*Reflets*	Voice and piano
1912	*Hymne au Soleil*	Contralto, chorus and piano
1912	*Le Retour*	Voice and piano
1913	*Faust et Hélène*	Mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, chorus and orchestra (This was her Prix de Rome entry)
1916	*Psaume 129*	Baritone and orchestra
1917	*Psaume 130*	2 solo voices, chorus, organ and orchestra
1917	*Vieille Prière bouddhique*	Tenor, chorus and orchestra
1918	*Pie Jesu*	Voice, string quartet, harp and organ
1918	*D'un Soir Triste*	Orchestra

An overview of *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat*

The ternary structure of this work is shaped by the setting of the text, which is taken from the play *La Coupe et les lèvres* (literally 'The Cup and the Lips') by Alfred de Musset. The A- and B-section stanzas are drawn from different parts of Act IV, in which the heroic death of a soldier is recounted (although in the play the situation is considerably more complex). The A section is sombre and relatively static, while the B section is intense and passionate, an outburst of personal emotion in contrast to the ritualistic chanting that dominates the outer sections. Potter describes this central section as resembling a funeral oration delivered by a friend.

The rest of this resource traces motivic and harmonic threads through the work rather than giving a bar-by-bar account, so it is important to become acquainted with the overall structure as set out below before continuing.

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Bar	Section	Tempo markings in vocal score	Translation of text	Forces	Description
1	**Introduction** Très lent	*Lento*		Instrumental	Funeral march with drums and woodwind (military band style).
16	**A1**		'Hush the muffled drums, let the priest take his station, on your knees comrades all, silent for this consecration. Hark while for him they're saying the prayers for the dead.'	Basses	Plainchant-like melody over Bb pedal.
24	**Interlude:** ***Dies irae*** *Plus vite*			Instrumental	Quotation from *Dies irae* chant first in strings and developed across orchestra.
41 51	**A2** *Allegro* *Lent*	*Allegro*	'To his tomb we, his men are bearing the captain as a soldier he died for his lov'd homeland falling.'	Tenors	More mobile and energetic melody over ostinato auxiliary note figure in trumpets.
53 57	**A3** *Plus lent –* *Allegro, très rhythmé*	Lento – *Allegro*	'God taketh now his soul. His body those he led.'	SATB	Hymn-like chorale texture.
61 70	**A2 & 3: Reprise** *Plus vite*	Lento	*Repeat of A2 and A3 (text not music).*	Male voices	Plainchant style – voices and instruments all in open fifths and with free metre.
74 81	**B (intro)** *Allegro agitato* A tempo	*Allegro agitato*		Instrumental	Triplet chords with more urgent, chromatic melodic fragments.
84 110	**B**	*Large* *Allegro*	'Lying on draperies purple and clouds with warm glows merging, when through the skies they drive, the tempest's breath them urging, are resting warriors bold in golden mail arrayed. Lean down thou, noble heart, over these hills verdure shielded, and watch your comrades break the blades that they have wielded, casting them on the cold ground where thy clay has been laid.'	Baritone solo	Much more operatic and dramatic. Most of the harmonic and tonal action happens in this section.
113	**A** *Tempo 1°*	*Tempo 1°*	*Repeat of text from A1 starting with* 'Let the priest...'	SATB	Sombre plainchant style in voices and ends with vocalising. Instruments play the *Dies irae* chant over the top.

Orchestral forces

Lili Boulanger scored *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* for a large orchestra that has some distinctively French touches.

Woodwind

The orchestra consists of standard triple woodwind with the exception of the flute section, which has no piccolo. The oboes are supplemented by cor anglais and the clarinets by bass clarinet, as in most Romantic and early twentieth-century orchestras, but the bassoons are joined by a sarrusophone.

The sarrusophone is a metal-bodied instrument somewhat like a saxophone but with a double reed like an oboe or bassoon. It was originally invented as a whole family of instruments in the mid nineteenth century, but it did not catch on except for its contrabass version as a replacement for contrabassoon, and only then very rarely. Other French composers who use the sarrusophone include Ravel in *Shéhérazade*, Debussy in *Jeux* and Dukas in *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Sarrusophone parts are often played on contrabassoon.

This array of woodwind is used to great effect at the beginning, sounding somewhat like a military wind band that might accompany a funeral procession.

Brass

The brass is the standard line-up of four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba, but it is supplemented by two cornets, another French touch seen in Dukas's The *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. This addition adds colour and weight to the brass section and allows the trumpets to split off from the main brass, as they do to add the repeated auxiliary-note ostinato figure from bar 57. Note that the horns in bass clef transpose up a fourth. This is an old-fashioned notation that died out in the 1920s, from which point parts written in the bass clef transpose downwards, as they do in the treble clef.

Strings and percussion

The string section is the standard orchestral configuration. Boulanger frequently uses them muted in octave unison to convey hushed contemplation, for example in the *Dies irae* or in the final A section. Elsewhere the strings become more Wagnerian, adding to the urgent emotion of the B section with a rising line at the end of the instrumental introduction, or pulsing triplet chords at the entry of the choir. In the first A section, the basses, and sometimes the cellos, amplify the repeated B flat pedal notes that provide the funeral march's steady tread.

Boulanger writes for two harps, which is almost standard in French music at the time, but their contribution is restricted to quiet chords and unisons in the more sombre moments.

Apart from timpani and suspended cymbal, Boulanger employs some percussion particular to the ritualistic nature of the piece. She asks for a 'tambour', which is fairly non-specific but probably refers to a military field drum of the sort used by marching bands. She also asks for a tam-tam and a bell in B flat, which adds a certain authenticity to the chanting at the end of the A section.

Voices

Boulanger employs different combinations of voices to provide strong contrasts between sections. The opening is sung by basses and then tenors alone before the full choir joins in the A3 section. Apart from singing with the rest of the male voices in the final chant of the A section, the solo baritone is reserved for the impassioned central B section, in which he sings alone without the support of the rest of the choir.

Motivic development

Dies irae

Dies i rae dies il - la, Sol vet sae - clum in favilla: Teste Da vid cum Sibylla

Original Gregorian chant from the 13th Century to the words of Dies irae

Many French composers at the turn of the century were interested in Gregorian plainchants. This led both to modally tinged melodies, with their flattened sevenths and other altered scale degrees, and to a more specific interest in recreating the sound of plainchant as they imagined it. Both approaches are found in abundance in this piece.

An obvious starting point for a motivic analysis of *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* is Boulanger's use of the famous *Dies irae*. She is drawing on a venerable tradition of invoking this particular chant, with its fiery lyrics (Day of wrath and doom impending!), which, even if we restrict ourselves to French music, includes Berlioz in *Symphonie fantastique*, Gounod and Massenet.

A network of motifs related to the *Dies irae* can be traced throughout the piece, but we may begin with the first direct quotation in the instrumental section that starts at bar 24. Boulanger quotes just the first eight notes (bars 24–26) before beginning her own development. The two motivic fragments used most intensively in the rest of the piece are the auxiliary-note figure and the falling third. Boulanger particularly focuses on the second of the two auxiliary-note figures (B♭ A♭ B♭), presumably because she favours the modal quality of the flattened seventh (A♭). For this reason, the C below is bracketed, since Boulanger most often repeats the figure without the additional note. This is marked as **motif X** below (a falling third followed by a lower auxiliary), as it appears many times throughout the work.

Dies Irae
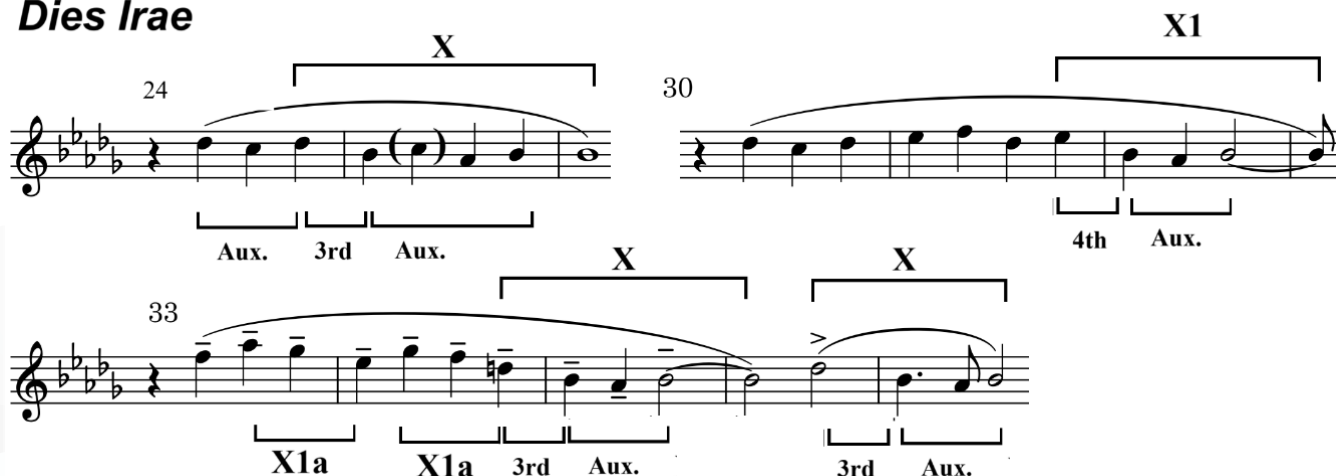
After an exact repeat of this plainchant quotation in bar 27, the first development of the idea in bar 30 extends it upwards to F, followed by a variant of X in which a falling fourth, rather than a third, precedes the auxiliary note. This is labelled **motif X1**. Boulanger then extends the melody further upwards and introduces another variant, involving a falling span of a fourth partially filled in by a descending second. This is labelled **motif X1a**, and it reappears at several points in the piece.

Developments of motif X

Having identified some of the motivic content of the Dies irae, we can trace its various appearances in the rest of the piece. After an instrumental introduction, the first choral entry at bar 16 (section A1) is a sombre chant. The basses, accompanied by sparse chords over a B♭ pedal, circle mostly around the auxiliary-note figure and variants of X, as shown below:

Skipping forward for the moment, the A3 section that ends the first part of the work (starting at bar 61) invokes Gregorian chant much more explicitly. In this reprise of the text, the male voices and instruments present the melody in open fifths and in a free metre that shifts between time signatures to accommodate the length of each phrase. A bell punctuates the phrases to underline further the mock-liturgical nature of this passage.

The melody centres on the tonic of B♭ and consists mostly of fragmented motifs from the *Dies irae*, although with considerably more repeated notes.

In the final section of the work (the reprise of the A-section text starting at bar 113), Boulanger once again adopts a simple chant-like texture. This time, however, the choir sings in chords rather than bare fifths. The texture resembles a hymn more than a chant, while above it the strings and harp slowly intone the original *Dies irae* melody. By this stage, the choir is restricted almost exclusively to the auxiliary-note figures that have been so heavily emphasised throughout the work. The opening of this section can be seen below in vocal score:

In all of these sections, Boulanger invokes the chant style to a greater or lesser extent. One of the striking features of *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* is the way in which the music shifts between this rather static liturgical style and more impassioned vocal writing.

Section A2 (starting at bar 41) lies somewhat between these two approaches. The tenors sing of bearing their comrade to his tomb, and the music becomes a little more animated. This section is much more harmonically mobile than what has preceded it, although the repeated auxiliary note in the trumpets to some extent takes the place of the B♭ pedals that have dominated so far. The section opens with a rising line (an idea to which we will return shortly):

After this opening ascending line, however, most of the material in section A2 can be traced back to the familiar auxiliaries, thirds and fourths that make up the X family of motifs derived from the *Dies irae*.

Falling thirds

One of the elements of the X motif that we have not yet explored on its own is the falling third. The instrumental introduction that opens *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* is initially constructed entirely from this motif. In bar 6, after a series of four falling thirds, the melody begins an ascending line of the sort discussed below. Then in bar 8, the brass take up the dotted rhythms of the drums, entering with a figure that combines the auxiliary note, which will become so fundamental, with the falling third from the opening.

We have already seen multiple instances of the falling third as part of the larger X motif in the A section, but there are not many examples of the triadic double falling third from the opening elsewhere in the piece. There is, however, a prominent example at a sudden moment of hush (*pp subito*) in the B section at bar 95. In the melody that follows, there are several rising thirds, but it would be a stretch to insist on too much motivic connection here.

Right at the end of the movement, the woodwind recall the opening with a very similar falling triad. After the first note (a Bb, shown in brackets), the sopranos and altos join in with the vocalising that closes the piece. This is followed by an extended filled-in version an octave lower before the work ends with the tenors, supported by clarinets, singing a final repetition of the lower auxiliary note that has dominated the piece.
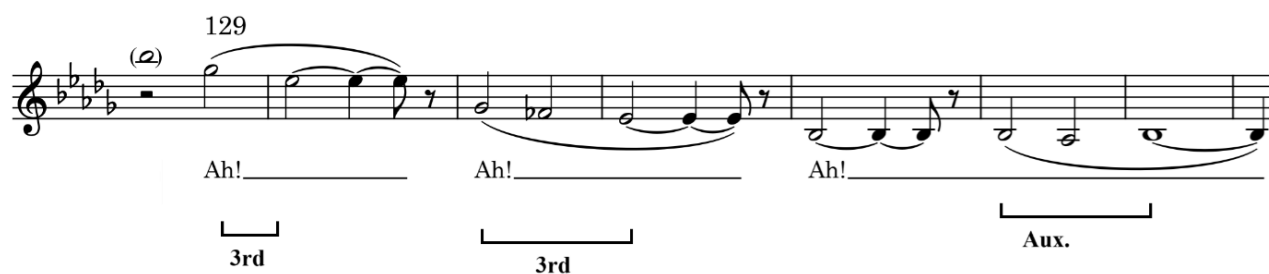
Fourths and tritones

After all the sombre restraint of the A section, the B section begins with a much more impassioned melodic idea that starts in the cellos (bar 74) and works its way up through the strings. After a sequenced repeat, the cellos then play just the first three notes two further times. The prominent interval in this passage is the falling tritone, which appears again in the baritone solo just before it begins its final climactic phrase at bar 104.

This interval of a tritone could be understood as a more anguished version of the falling perfect fourth found at the beginning of motif X1.

Ascending lines

The impassioned tritone motif stands in vivid contrast to the static chant-based motifs that dominate the A sections. There is, however, a final type of melodic figure that bridges the gap between the sombre *Dies irae* material in the A section and the more emotionally charged baritone writing in the B section. As the music becomes more expressive, Boulanger introduces stepwise ascending melodic motion. Perhaps the most dramatic and Wagnerian instance occurs at the end of the instrumental opening to the B section, as the woodwind and strings climb chromatically an octave and a sixth from bar 79 to 84.

Tracing back ascending lines from the beginning of the work, the first instance grows out of the opening *Dies irae*-based material at bar 10. The brass, starting with an auxiliary note, ascend through an octave, joined by the strings as a B♭ major chord briefly brightens the harmony in bar 13.

Aux.   3rd

The next significant stepwise ascent takes the tenors up to a G♭, the highest note of this section, as they bear their captain to his tomb. At this point, the two key motifs from the chant – an auxiliary note and a third – reappear.

Nous vou - lons   au tom - beau_____ por - ter_____ le ca - pi - tai - ne.

Aux.   3rd
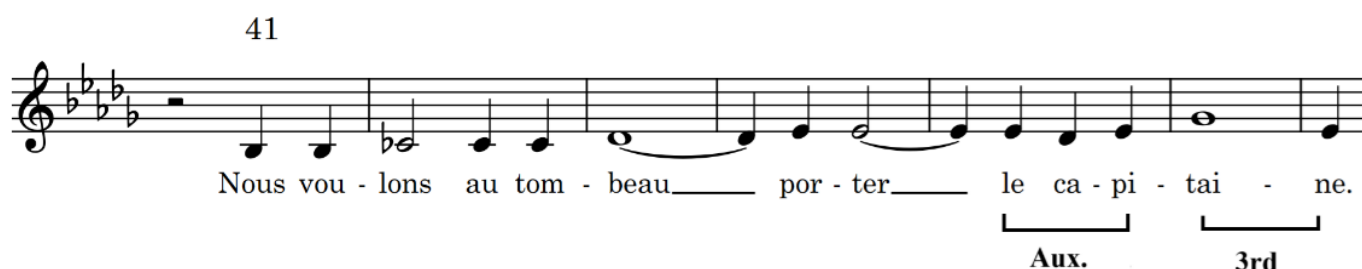
It is worth noting the markings on the score around this section, as the more emotional stepwise ascents at bars 41 and 49 are marked *avec énergie* and *elargi* (broadening) respectively, whereas the more overtly chant-based material in the middle at bar 47 is marked *très retenu* (very restrained) and 'simple'.

The baritone solo in the B section contains multiple instances of ascending lines as it accumulates emotional intensity, the most notable of which are excerpted below:

Si   en ri - deaux de pour - pre

3rd

Et   vois___ tes com - pa - gnons bri - ser leurs ja - ve - li - nes

Aux.   3rd

Sur cet - te froi - de ter - re ou ton corps, ou ton corps est res - te!_____

Harmony and tonality

Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat begins and ends in a sombre B♭ minor, a key that Boulanger would return to in her setting of *Psalm* 130 (1914–17). For the majority of both A sections, the tonality is quite static, but, as with the melody, the B section is much more active.

Before exploring the harmony and tonality in detail, it is worth briefly considering some of the trends found in French music of this period. As discussed briefly on page 2, the yearning chromatic harmony of Wagner is one important strand, whether it is ultimately indulged or denied.

The characteristic tension of Wagnerian harmony can clearly be heard in the famous opening to *Tristan und Isolde*, in which the 'Tristan chord' (sounding like a half-diminished seventh, though not spelt this way) resolves by way of an augmented sixth progression to a dominant seventh.

Rather than proceeding to the tonic at this point, Wagner sequentially repeats the entire progression twice, each time denying the expected arrival. When it does eventually resolve, it is not onto the tonic but rather by way of an interrupted cadence.

It is presumably this continual denial of harmonic expectation that led César Franck to regard this music as toxic. As noted by Taruskin and others, the 'poison' of this endless yearning for harmonic resolution is self-consciously neutralised by both Satie and Debussy. These same sonorities are employed so that their primary purpose is colour rather than resolution. In addition, the context is often, compared with high Wagnerian drama, relatively banal, as in Debussy's *Sarabande* for piano. The first chord has the same half-diminished quality as the Tristan chord but is absorbed into a parallel stream of unresolved seventh chords, a stylistic hallmark of Debussy.

Another important thread in French music of this period is an interest in church modes, which is particularly relevant in Boulanger's work given the inclusion of part of an actual modal chant in the form of the *Dies irae*. In the music of Debussy, Ravel and Fauré, two main consequences of this interest can be observed. First, the modal inflections of the melody, most commonly manifested in flattened sevenths, and of the harmony, in the form of cadences with a strong modal flavour. Second, it encourages a loosening of chord function, with an emphasis on stepwise progression from and to secondary chords such as II and VII, rather than the falling fifths and thirds more closely associated with functional harmony.

This latter tendency can be seen clearly in Gabriel Fauré's *Le Plus Doux Chemin* (1904), one of Boulanger's teachers. In bars 9–12, the music oscillates in a kind of harmonic suspension between the tonic and supertonic, before resolving rather unemphatically in the dominant via a ♭VII moving to I.

Even at the end of the song, Fauré arrives on the home tonic of F by way of a supertonic chord, first flattened and then restored to its diatonic form. In both passages, it is notable that the cadential moments are neither in root position nor do they exhibit the ascending leading-note voice-leading characteristic of traditional tonal music or Wagnerian resolution. The flattening of both VII in the example above and II in the example below enhances the modal character and further loosens the functional progression.

The opening of *Pour les Funérailles d'un Soldat* has clear examples of all these harmonic traits, in this case over a tonic pedal.

1. In bars 1–3, there is a progression of altered secondary chords moving by step
2. In bars 4–5, Boulanger writes a chain of unresolved seventh chords
3. The cadence in bars 6–7 is a strongly Dorian-inflected plagal cadence

Finally, the fifth chord (marked ?) is hard to analyse conventionally, but it has the same half-diminished quality as the Tristan chord, with a root of B♭.

Cadential progressions reminiscent of the Fauré example appear at two important structural moments in the work.

First, the *Dies irae* instrumental finishes with a cadence into the next vocal section, as bar 41 approaches the tonic through both II and ♭II – a typically non-functional, modally tinged progression.

Then, at the very end of the work, Boulanger approaches the final tonic (again over a tonic pedal) from a ♭VII, preceded by II.

Another interesting passage occurs in bars 11–15. As can be seen below, the traditional functional labelling of chords begins to break down. Although the passage starts with a falling fifths progression (V–I–IV), it then slides between I, II and a succession of chords that are difficult to process conventionally.

The second chord in bar 14 (marked ?) is a Tristan-like half-diminished sonority, moving in this case to an augmented sixth chord, albeit not in the same manner or context as Wagner.

After more than seventy bars in which Bb has been the tonal centre, often underpinned by a tonic pedal, the B section introduces a sense of harmonic and tonal momentum. Following the tritone figure mentioned above, Boulanger begins a series of rising chromatic chords over a dominant pedal, culminating in the first perfect cadence from the opening Bb onto an ecstatic Eb major.

This sudden outbreak of conventional resolution by descending fifths continues throughout the B section, which may be interpreted as a long circle of fifths: Eb in bar 84, Ab in 92, D in 94, G in 95, and C in 108. This overarching progression is shown below in the context of the surrounding Bb minor A sections. At bar 110, Boulanger sideslips from C (vi in the overall Eb major of the B section) to F♯ rather than F, occluding the final resolution back to Bb minor in the concluding A section, which then proceeds onto a cadential 6/4 in Bb before resolving onto V and I.

This is not the only chromatic sideslip. Another notable example occurs in bar 103, where Boulanger slips from G to F♯ and then continues another step around the circle of fifths to B, before unexpectedly resolving this dominant onto C, the next step in the original cycle.

This type of chromatic sidestep is a common feature of Fauré's harmonic style. An earlier example can be seen where a IV–V progression in B♭ minor is interrupted by a brief move from E to B: