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## **Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante, Opus 125: An Analysis and Thematic Comparison to the Concerto, Opus 58.**

Kent Brian Jensen

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**PROKOFIEV'S SINFONIA CONCERTANTE OPUS 125,  
AN ANALYSIS AND THEMATIC COMPARISON TO  
THE CONCERTO OPUS 58**

**A Monograph**

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Musical Arts**

**in**

**The School of Music**

**by**

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**B.M., University of Arizona, 1982**

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## **Abstract**

Prokofiev's *Sinfonia Concertante*, Op. 125, written between 1950 and 1952, was a thorough-going revision of the less successful *Cello Concerto*, Op. 58, composed between 1933 and 1938. The purpose of this monograph is to analyze and explain Prokofiev's unique tonal style through a comparison of themes and their separate treatment in the first movements of these works. The monograph is in three main parts: a brief history of Prokofiev and the background of these two pieces, a comparison of the first movement themes of these works, and an analysis of Prokofiev's key relations and modulatory devices.

Almost all of the thematic material of the *Concerto* appears in the *Sinfonia Concertante*. However, Prokofiev adapts and expands the themes in the *Concerto*'s ternary movement to create a quasi-sonata form in the *Sinfonia Concertante*. A comparison of themes and motives in these works indicates the degree to which Prokofiev's composition of these works was a process of arranging clearly conceived thematic ideas.

Richard Bass's theory of "Chromatic Displacement" is employed to explain Prokofiev's melodic chromaticism. The strongly diatonic themes frequently contain chromatically shifted fragments which have the initial characteristics of ornamental chromaticism. Tonally, individual melodic lines may briefly go out of phase with the prevailing key. Or they may contain chromaticism implying one tonal destination while contrapuntally arranged to support the sonorities of a contrasting key area.

## Introduction

Sergei Prokofiev completed two works for cello and orchestra. The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, Opus 58 was composed between 1933 and 1938. Cellist Leonid Beresovsky premiered this work on November 26, 1938 with little popular success.<sup>1</sup> In late 1947 Prokofiev heard the twenty-five-year-old Mstislav Rostropovich play the Concerto and promised to rewrite it for him. After several revisions, Prokofiev completed the brilliant and lengthy Sinfonia Concertante, Opus 125 in 1952. This work is a resetting of virtually every thematic idea of the Concerto with an expanded solo role. However, the new balance of ideas results in a fundamentally different piece. The Sinfonia Concertante is about thirty-eight minutes in duration as compared to twenty-seven minutes for the Concerto. Basically the first and second movements of the Concerto are expanded in the Sinfonia Concertante and the last movement is slightly shortened.<sup>2</sup>

Prokofiev liked the Concerto and resented its lack of popular acceptance, saying that it was akin to his Second Violin Concerto and that public "indifference to it is mere stupidity."<sup>3</sup> Despite Prokofiev's estimation of the work, in recent years the Concerto has become virtually forgotten while the Sinfonia Concertante is widely performed and recorded. Prokofiev reworked the same themes in many compositions throughout his

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<sup>1</sup> Victor Seroff, Sergei Prokofiev: A Soviet Tragedy (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), 222.

<sup>2</sup> The Sinfonia Concertante is expanded in the first movement to 249 from 139 measures, the second movement to 509 from 372, and reduced to 401 from 504 in the last movement.

<sup>3</sup> David Gutman, Prokofiev (London: The Alderman Press, 1988), 111.

career and made many interesting choices in this revision. Examining the differences in the first movements of these two works will provide insights into Prokofiev's style in general as well as the specific issues of how he adjusted tonal, rhythmic, and thematic elements from the Concerto to create the Sinfonia Concertante.

Prokofiev's style is focused on the construction and development of melodic ideas. Prokofiev always kept a notebook with him so he could record a melody whenever it came to him.<sup>4</sup> He often said he hated to let a good melody get away and he frequently reused them, trying to find just the right setting. This is what happened with the themes of the Concerto in the Sinfonia Concertante. It is apparent from a comparison of these two works that Prokofiev's themes are the basic building blocks of these pieces. A comparison of their settings in the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante provides an interesting perspective on both his evaluation of the Concerto and on his compositional method.

Prokofiev's harmonic style, so difficult to follow for many listeners, can confound the performer as well. One basic challenge for the performer is understanding and delineating the unique tonal character of his music. In Prokofiev's music, abrupt and melodically inflected modulations into distant keys require special aural attention from the performer. Although independent melodic lines can have a clear tonal profile, they are often combined to create sonorities which abruptly move to, or through, distant tonalities. When modulations occur (and it is not always clear when this happens), the shift may occur without the use of applied chords. Although Roman numeral analysis

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<sup>4</sup> Harlow Robinson, Sergei Prokofiev (New York: Viking, 1987), 221.

can document keys in these works, it fails to explain adequately the melodic component of Prokofiev's harmonic style.

The first chapter will give a brief history of Prokofiev's life including the background of the Concerto, Opus 58 and the Sinfonia Concertante, Opus 125. Chapter two compares the different settings and locations of the themes in the first movements of both the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante. The third and final chapter examines Prokofiev's methods of modulation, showing a characteristic melodic component where individual lines are freed from a ruling and unifying tonal system. It is hoped that this will offer insights into these two works for cello and orchestra, and into Prokofiev's style in general.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Historical Overview: Prokofiev, the Concerto and Sinfonia Concertante**

Sergei Sergeevich Prokofiev was born April 23, 1891 to parents who were resident overseers of a farm in the Ukrainian district of Smolensk. Maria Grigorevna Zhitkova Prokofiev and Sergei Alekseevich Prokofiev were well educated and indulgently considerate of their only child's education. His mother, who was born a serf two years before emancipation, was a serious amateur pianist and his earliest musical influence.<sup>1</sup>

In the Summer of 1902, under the advice of the director of the Moscow Conservatory, Sergei Taneev (Taneyev), she hired a promising student-composer, Reinhold Glière, who was employed to live and teach at the Sontsovka Ukraine estate in the summers of 1903 and 1904 for the considerable sum of 70 rubles per month. But after consulting Alexander Glazunov concerning her son's musical ability, Maria Grigorevna moved with her thirteen-year-old son in February of 1904 to enroll Sergei at St. Petersburg Conservatory.<sup>2</sup>

During his early exposure to St. Petersburg's cultural life, Prokofiev was attracted to musical stage productions. His diary records 45 opera performances which he attended between February 1904 and June 1905. In addition to many Russian operas, he also attended six operas by Wagner, whose works were just becoming popular in Russia at that time. Prokofiev, always taken with the fairy-tale in music rather than the

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<sup>1</sup> Harlow Robinson, Sergei Prokofiev (New York: Viking, 1987), 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 12-26.

romantic, enjoyed Grieg's *Peer Gynt*, Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Kashchei the Immortal*, but was not much impressed with Gounod's operatic version of *Romeo and Juliet*. While he grew out of his coolness for romantic themes, Prokofiev's child-like fascination with mythical themes or folk tales continued throughout his life. Some of his best works had a folk tale or children's stories like *Peter and the Wolf* (1936), and *Cinderella* (1945).<sup>3</sup>

In his conservatory years, 1904-1914, he studied with both Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov. Prokofiev often irritated many of his professors with his arrogant demeanor and later claimed to have appreciated only Nicolai Tcherepnin, who welcomed progressive contemporary music.<sup>4</sup> Unconsciously at first and later with intent, Prokofiev cultivated a "bad boy" image, and acquired an early attraction for the music of composers like Scriabin who shocked the sensibilities of his conservative professors. Nicolay Miaskovsky, his first friend at the conservatory, was ten years older and was Prokofiev's primary influence in both introducing him to the music of modern composers and encouraging Prokofiev's own innovative musical traits.<sup>5</sup> At times Miaskovsky even seems to have explained Prokofiev's music to Prokofiev, who trusted his advice implicitly. It is a mark of distinction that Miaskovsky never provoked the jealousy, resentment, or verbal abuse which Prokofiev showed to virtually every other person close to him. During their 43-year friendship, Prokofiev wrote to Miaskovsky faithfully and 312 of his letters survive.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 26, 40-41.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>5</sup> David Gutman, *Prokofiev* (London: The Alderman Press, 1988), 34-35.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 31. Their correspondence is edited by Dmitri Kabalevsky and M. G. Kozlova in *S. S. Prokofiev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska S. S. Prokofiev N. Ya.*



After graduating in 1914, Prokofiev set off for London and had the good fortune to meet and impress the famous impresario of the Ballets Russes, Sergei Diaghilev, in June of that year.<sup>7</sup> Prokofiev was jealous of Stravinsky's international success and some years previously had immaturely criticized Stravinsky's *Petrushka*, saying, "Is there any music in the ballet or not? Yes and no. Unquestionably, not a single place in the ballet has really good music; a large part is modernistic *remplissage* (filler). But where does he use *remplissage*? And when is *remplissage* permissible--if it is permissible at all? . . . in the liveliest spots in the action, it is not music that he writes, but something brilliantly illustrating that moment. If this is not *remplissage*, then I don't know what is. And if he can't compose music for the most important spots, and merely fills them in with whatever comes along--then he is musically bankrupt."<sup>8</sup> In spite of the great success of Shostakovich and many other composers, Stravinsky was the only rival that Prokofiev acknowledged in his lifetime.

Prokofiev's first staged work with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, The Buffoon (*Chout*), was delayed until the 1921 season by the First World War. In the interim he established himself as a serious Russian composer with the successful St. Petersburg premieres of the *Scythian Suite* (1915), based on the ballet *Ala and Lolly* (1914-1915) which Diaghilev had rejected, and the "Classical" Symphony (1916). In 1918 he also made favorable connections to musicians important to the newly formed Communist government and was politically distanced from the bourgeois Diaghilev. This helped

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*Miaskovsky: Correspondence* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompositor, 1977).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>8</sup> Robinson, 93. Translated by the author from S. S. Prokofev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska.

Prokofiev get permission to travel abroad at the end of Russian involvement in the First World War and assisted Prokofiev's later return to the Soviet Union.<sup>9</sup>

Because of the continuing war in Europe, Prokofiev traveled east through the civil war centered in Siberia for Vladivostok on the Trans-Siberian Railway.<sup>10</sup> On October 29, 1918 in New York, Prokofiev gave his first American solo recital. Prokofiev was very fortunate in securing a contract with the Chicago Opera company to produce *Love for Three Oranges*, then just an idea. After returning to Europe in the Spring of 1920, Prokofiev did not understand and felt harried by the constant demand by the Paris audience for new and innovative compositions. Catering to the Paris fashion trends in music seemed an integral part of popular success. The reviews of his Violin Concerto, premiered Oct. 18, 1923 referred to it as "Mendelssohnian" and "passé." There were more disappointments to Prokofiev in the twenties, which encouraged him to think of returning to the Soviet Union. His Second Symphony, premiered by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitsky on June 6, 1925 was a crushing critical failure.<sup>11</sup> This work was an experiment that featured a great deal of complexity, which Prokofiev apparently believed was his primary appeal with the Paris audience. In reference to the premiere, André George in *Nouvelles Litteraires* said "one rarely hears music so little composed--in the exact sense of that expression (*aussi peu composée*)." The Symphony "continues indefinitely and stops, without any logic, even internal, to justify it. . . . It is

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 130-8.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 142-3.

<sup>11</sup> Israel Nestyev, *Prokofiev* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 212-3. He cites that out of 28 reviews of Prokofiev's Second Symphony premiere, 25 were abusive and one was complimentary.

everywhere insistent and tiresome without restraint."<sup>12</sup> Prokofiev later said of the premiere in a letter to Vladimir Derzhanovsky that "neither I nor the audience understood anything in it."<sup>13</sup>

While he was forced to supplement his income with solo appearances around Europe, Miaskovsky's letters told him of the popularity of his music in Russia. Prokofiev was becoming convinced that Soviet audiences were more open to his music and that the Soviet Union would be a better working environment. Though he suspected that the political realities there demanded some careful maneuvering, Prokofiev returned to the Soviet Union in early 1927 (his first visit since the war) to enjoy a very warm reception and successful tour. Following this visit, Prokofiev was more convinced that the Soviet Union would be the solution to all of his problems.<sup>14</sup> At this time Stalin was emerging from the group of contenders for Soviet leadership and consolidating his position. The power of musical bureaucrats was growing and their mercurial praise and censure of compositions would quickly become a problem. They could never entirely forgive Prokofiev for his absence during the early years after the revolution. Two years later, the Soviet musical establishment attacked his representation of the revolution in his stylized and politically superficial Ballets Russes production *The Steel Step (Le Pas d'acier)* which premiered shortly after his 1927 visit.<sup>15</sup>

The only consistently successful area of Prokofiev's European career was the part overseen by Diaghilev. His beneficial influence was evident in virtually every one of

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<sup>12</sup> Robinson, 188.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 188-9.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 200-8.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 211.

Prokofiev's successful works for the European stage. *Love for Three Oranges* was the most successful stage production to this date not influenced in some essential way by Diaghilev. Performances with Diaghilev included *Buffoon* (1921), *The Steel Step* (*Le Pas d'acier* 1927), and both *The Gambler* and *The Prodigal Son* in 1928. In the final year of Ballets Russe in 1929, Prokofiev had both *Le Pas d'acier* and *The Prodigal Son* running simultaneously. Diaghilev, along with Koussevitsky had essentially provided for most of Prokofiev's opportunities in the Europe and America that followed. Though Prokofiev's European career was launched by Diaghilev, Prokofiev, unlike Stravinsky, seemed to have little ability to write for the European stage without Diaghilev's influence. When Sergei Diaghilev died of diabetes at age fifty-seven on August 19, 1929, this severed another of Prokofiev's ties to the West.<sup>16</sup>

From 1928 until 1936, Prokofiev enjoyed successes in Europe including the Third Symphony, 1928 (a reworking of themes from *Fiery Angel*) and *The Prodigal Son*, 1928. Prokofiev began traveling between Paris and Russia between 1932 and 1936 while maintaining a Paris residence for his family. During this period Prokofiev began working on film scores with Soviet film directors including the famous Sergei Eisenstein. Composing for film, a powerful Soviet propaganda tool, was an officially sanctioned use for music where Prokofiev found success and acceptance. Among these collaborations are *Lieutenant Kizhe* (1933), *The Queen of Spades* (1936), and incidental music for *Boris Godunov* (1936), and *Evgeny Onegin* (1936).<sup>17</sup> Lina and Sergei continued to give

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 228-33.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 270-304.

concerts in the West for a few years after 1936, until the increasingly xenophobic Soviet atmosphere made it too awkward. The entire family moved to Moscow in 1936.

In 1932, shortly before beginning to sketch out the Cello Concerto, Prokofiev had written to Miaskovsky that he was striving for a "new simplicity" in his music. Believing that the Parisian love for complexity and innovation was antithetical to his new aesthetic, he continued sounding out his friend about the possibility of returning permanently to the U.S.S.R. The conservative Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM), which had given Prokofiev such problems in the past, had been disbanded in a new wave of Stalinist reforms on April 23, 1932 and Prokofiev was more hopeful than ever that he might return to a more favorable artistic climate in the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup> From this time onwards, Prokofiev had visions of himself as a creator of the new Soviet music. One of the first pieces to exhibit this "new simplicity" is the Sonata for Two Violins, Op. 56. Of this Miaskovsky corresponded "I do not think I am mistaken in believing that if formerly you tried to stun, then now you try to impress and intrigue, which does not possess the same spontaneity."<sup>19</sup> While many critics have thought Prokofiev was pressured into a simpler style by Soviet cultural policies, he was himself trying to create music appropriate to the new Soviet society. After some searching, Prokofiev created many works in the mid-nineteen thirties which are accessible for their clarity and simplicity. Some of the more successful works in this style include *Lieutenant Kizhe*, *Romeo and Juliet* (1936), the Second Violin Concerto (1935), and *Peter and the Wolf* (1936).

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 265

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 266

After intense work with director Sergei Eisenstein on the film score of *Alexander Nevsky* (1936), Prokofiev turned to revising the Cello Concerto begun in Paris in 1933. The Cello Concerto dates from start to premiere are 1933-1938, spanning the period when Prokofiev was primarily occupied with writing film music and making initial adjustments to Soviet life. The cello part was entrusted to a young Moscow conservatory student, Leonid Berezovsky for the premiere. The pianist, Svyatoslav Richter, then 23 years old and living in the same Moscow apartment house with the Prokofievs, was asked to rehearse with Berezovsky. Richter recalls:

For two solid months I used to walk several miles to Berezovsky's apartment on the sixth floor. . . . My attitude was purely businesslike. Although Berezovsky was pleased with the engagement, the music was obviously alien to him. He shrugged, he sighed, and he complained about the difficulties, but he practiced diligently, and he was very nervous. I cannot say that I myself had liked the concerto, but I felt that it was interesting to work on it.

Later, when rehearsing with Prokofiev, Richter recalls:

Prokofiev himself opened the door, and led us into a small canary-yellow room. . . . A few drawings of the stage sets from *The Love for Three Oranges* were hanging on the walls. These, if I am not mistaken, were in pencil or India ink. To begin with, Prokofiev said sternly to his sons, "Children, go away! Don't bother us!" and then sat down. Berezovsky looked terribly upset. Probably because of this, Prokofiev did not feel like talking to him too much, and went to the piano and began to show him "this way or that way". . . . I stood a little way apart, all on my own. Prokofiev was businesslike, and not at all sympathetic. Apparently he was irritated by Berezovsky's questions. But I was very pleased that Prokofiev's demands were similar to my own perception of the piece. Prokofiev wanted to hear only what was written in the score--ah, but all! And Berezovsky had a tendency to be sentimental, and could not find a single spot on the score where he could show off the sound of his playing. Prokofiev never asked me to play a single note, not once, and so. . . . we left.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Victor Seroff, *Sergei Prokofiev: A Soviet Tragedy* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), 220.

Richter and Berezovsky gave a well-received preview of the concerto at the Composers Union and then the concerto went on to rehearsal with orchestra under Melik-Pacheyev. According to Richter, Melik-Pacheyev had as little understanding of the piece as did Berezovsky. Richter said of the premiere on November 26, 1938:

I was nervous about the composition and, of course, about Berezovsky. Throughout the performance I felt as if the floor were disappearing from under my chair. Melik-Pacheyev was taking very "uncomfortable" tempi, actually, not the right kind anyway. I thought that he never really understood the composition. The performance was a complete fiasco. Berezovsky and Pacheyev managed to take some kind of bow, and with this everything ended.<sup>20</sup>

Critically, the premiere was a failure and even Miaskovsky said: "Brilliant piece but . . . somehow it does not come off."<sup>21</sup> Later, though he felt that the piece was simply not understood, Prokofiev revised the piece, adding a cadenza before the United States premiere in 1940 by Gregor Piatigorsky.

During the war years before writing the *Sinfonia Concertante*, Prokofiev had been desperately searching for a Soviet character, purpose, or appeal for his music. In November of 1947 Prokofiev received the title of "People's Artist of the Russian Republic" while being criticized simultaneously by the official press for his Sixth Symphony. Negative reactions reached a climax with the "musical court martials" of January 1948 when, in a three-day conference, Andrei Zhdanov's Central Committee of the Party pronounced a negative verdict on Muradeli's *The Great Friendship*. The resulting document, released on February 10th, was a "pretext for the vilification of Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Miaskovsky,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 221-2

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

Khachaturian and nearly all the leading composers of the day."<sup>23</sup> This decree was specifically applied to certain works of Prokofiev by the composer and secretary of the Composer's Union, Tikhon Khrennikov. Khrennikov called Prokofiev's music "formalistic."<sup>24</sup> This term was originally applied to music preoccupied with purely technical devices and formal constructions such as atonal music, but was gradually applied all of the arts which could be considered anti-Soviet in either form, influence or a lack of popular appeal. This intense and unexpected attack overwhelmed Prokofiev, whose health had been poor since a fall resulting in a brain concussion in 1945. This accident was attributed to excessively high blood pressure; accordingly Prokofiev had to avoid all stressful situations. The fallout from this latest political attack was that formal apologies were exacted from the offending composers, many of their earlier works were now proscribed, and privileges which they had formerly enjoyed were revoked.<sup>25</sup>

Following on the heels of this was the arrest of Lina Llubera, Prokofiev's ex-wife and mother of his children. The long marriage between Sergei and Lina had become a marriage in name only when Prokofiev took up residence with Mira Mendelsohn in 1940. The Soviet government, in a February 1947 decree, made it illegal to marry a foreigner, which retroactively annulled Prokofiev's marriage to Lina. Only one month before Lina's arrest, there is evidence that there was some official coercion in getting Prokofiev to marry Mira, the daughter of a prominent party member close to Stalin, thus distancing

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<sup>23</sup> Robinson, 470-77.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 470.

<sup>25</sup> William W. Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century: from Debussy through Stravinsky, (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1966), 459.



Lina from the composer. Friends urged him not to complain too much lest he be arrested himself. Prokofiev's poor health due to the accident and his persistent hypertension dissuaded him from making greater efforts to gain Lina's release.<sup>26</sup>

In late December of 1947, one month before the crackdown on Soviet composers, Prokofiev heard the twenty-year-old Mstislav Rostropovich perform his Cello Concerto in the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. Prokofiev praised Rostropovich's performance and during congratulations backstage, promised to rewrite the concerto for him. Rostropovich reminded Prokofiev at every opportunity, and in 1949 was sent the Cello Sonata, Op. 119 with an invitation from Prokofiev to play through it together and discuss it at Prokofiev's dacha at Nikolina Gora.<sup>27</sup>

When Rostropovich arrived at Nikolina Gora to play through the sonata, he found the convalescent Prokofiev under a strict (and unsuccessful) regimen for treatment of his hypertension. Frequently the doctors prohibited more than a half hour of work per day. With these restrictions on Prokofiev's time, it was easier to have Rostropovich stay at Nikolina Gora while collaborating on the "Second Concerto," the work which would become the Sinfonia Concertante. For two summers Rostropovich made extended stays at the dacha with his wife Galina. He became a great admirer of Prokofiev and, according to his wife, even acquired some of Prokofiev's mannerisms, including his European taste for fashionable clothes and perfumes.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Seroff, 154., Robinson, 477.

<sup>27</sup> Israel Nestyev, Prokofiev, trans. Florence Jonas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 307.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

Between early 1950 and early 1952, collaboration between Rostropovich and Prokofiev on the Second Concerto (Op. 125) was sporadic due to Prokofiev's health. The work was finally premiered on February 18, 1952 with the Moscow Youth Orchestra conducted by Svyatoslav Richter. This, Richter's conducting premiere, was coldly received and Prokofiev was encouraged by some close friends to simplify the form and orchestration somewhat.<sup>29</sup> After some small revisions in 1952, Prokofiev renamed the piece *Sinfonia Concertante* for Cello and Orchestra (also Op. 125).<sup>30</sup> The result was an immensely popular work which showed the best of Prokofiev's lyric and rhythmically charged style. In contrast to many works composed in the few years prior to this, which were staid and simplistic in comparison, the *Sinfonia Concertante* shows youthful vigor and playfulness which recall the charm and simplicity in *Cinderella* (1945) and *Lieutenant Kizhe*. Collaboration with a talent like Rostropovich apparently played a significant role in composing the *Sinfonia Concertante* with the addition of more difficult solo material relative to the Concerto.

Melody was of primary importance to Prokofiev and in a letter defending himself against the accusations of formalism in the musical court martials of 1948, he said:

I have never questioned the importance of melody. I love melody, and I regard it as the most important element in music. I have worked on the improvement of its quality in my compositions for many years. To find a melody instantly understandable even to the uninitiated listener, and at the same time an original one, is the most difficult task for a composer. Here he is beset by a great multitude of dangers: he may fall into the trivial or the banal, or into the rehashing of something already written by him. In this respect, composition of complex melodies is much easier. It may also happen that a composer, fussing over his melody for a long time, and revising it, unwittingly makes it over-refined and complicated, and departs

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Robinson, 489.

from simplicity. Undoubtedly, I fell into this trap, too, in the process of my work. One must be particularly vigilant to make sure that the melody retains its simplicity without becoming cheap, saccharine, or imitative. It is easy to say, but not so easy to accomplish. All my efforts will be henceforth concentrated to make these words not only a recipe, but to carry them out in my subsequent works.

I must admit that I, too, have indulged in atonality, but I also must say that I have felt an attraction towards tonal music for a considerable time, after I clearly realized that the construction of a musical work tonally is like erecting a building on a solid foundation, while a construction without tonality is like building on sand.<sup>31</sup>

The next chapter will compare and contrast the first movement themes of the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante. Prokofiev was an inveterate reviser of his own works, frequently reusing melodies and motives in other genres. The Sinfonia Concertante is a thorough going revision of the Concerto wherein almost every thematic element of the Concerto reappears in the Sinfonia. The themes are typical of Prokofiev's both energetic and lyric melodic style.<sup>32</sup> Many of the themes are virtually identical while others are creatively rescored or recombined. The end result produces a more poised and unified effect in the Sinfonia Concertante, creating a modified sonata form from the ABA organization of the Concerto. The following chapter will discuss and highlight these thematic differences.

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<sup>31</sup> Austin, 459-60

<sup>32</sup> Nestyev, 309.

## Chapter 2

### **First Movement Thematic Catalogue and Comparison of the Cello Concerto Op. 58 and the Sinfonia Concertante Op. 125**

Sergei Prokofiev began composing the Op. 58 Cello Concerto in Paris in 1933 and completed it five years later, the second year after returning to Moscow with his family. The Concerto is in three movements, marked Andante, Allegro guisto, and Andante con moto. The Sinfonia Concertante Op. 125 was composed in 1950-52, some twelve years later, using the Concerto's thematic material and the same movement markings in a greatly expanded work. As is characteristic of Prokofiev's style in general, the first movements of both of these works employ clearly organized tonal themes and theme areas. The major theme groups define basic sections in these movements. This chapter will identify the first movement themes of both works with specific attention given to the changes Prokofiev made to the themes in the later work. This reveals Prokofiev's singular focus on melodic considerations as well as providing a basis for evaluating the changes made in the Sinfonia Concertante.

Early in his career Prokofiev had personally and professionally enjoyed the notoriety of being a musical *enfant terrible*. This side of his creative personality is reflected in the seemingly conscious effort to surprise the listener with clever or innovative combinations of melodic material. The choices he made creating the Sinfonia Concertante from Concerto material are intriguing in many particulars. Some themes were lifted virtually intact with the original orchestration while others are reworked in

subtle ways. Some themes are reordered or have different transpositions giving them a different context and function in the Sinfonia Concertante. Despite thematic similarity between the first movements of these two pieces, their forms are quite different. Detailed outlines of the first movements of the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante are provided in appendices A and B.

The first movement of the Concerto is arranged thematically in an ABA form, the last section of which is itself cast in a ternary design with coda. The first movement of the Sinfonia Concertante reorganizes this thematic material in a modified sonata form which is divided here into five sections. The primary structural difference between the first movements of these two pieces is the treatment and positioning of subsidiary thematic material (called the wedge theme) which first appears late in the Concerto. Table 2.1 has lines connecting corresponding thematic material between these movements. In the Sinfonia Concertante, this wedge theme is also used between the principal and contrast theme areas and assumes the role of a second theme which returns

<b>Concerto</b>		<b>Sinfonia Concertante</b>	
1-31	Principal theme Martial Motive	1-50	Principal theme Martial motive
31-66	Contrast theme	50-93	Wedge theme & quasi-cadenza
67-87	Principal theme	93-164	Contrast theme, development
87-101	Wedge theme (Interlude)	164-196	Martial Motive & quasi-cadenza
102-129	Principal, Wedge theme and Coda	197-249	Principal, Wedge theme and Coda

with the first theme in the recapitulation (mm.197-249). Most of the expanded solo cello role in the Sinfonia Concertante is added to the wedge theme area and the retransition. The changes result in a larger and more cohesive movement which is in better proportion with the remaining movements. For the sake of tracking the themes used in both the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante, the same designations will be used wherever possible.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Principal Theme Sections:**

As shown in table 2.2, the treatment of the principal theme is much the same in both the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante. Two paired antecedent and consequent phrases of the principal theme form a double period, the antecedent going from E minor to F# major and the consequent returns to E minor. The Sinfonia layout shows the first

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**Table 2.2 Principal Theme Sections**

<b>Concerto</b>		<b>Sinfonia Concertante</b>	
1	Martial motive. pattern, orchestra.	1-6	Martial motive pattern, orchestra.
2-7	First antecedent phrase. solo.	7-12	First antecedent. solo cello.
8-16	First consequent phrase. solo.	13-21	First consequent. solo cello.
17-22	Second antecedent phrase. orch.	22-28	Second antecedent. orchestra.
23-31	Second consequent phrase. solo.	29-50	Second consequent. solo cello.
		(33-44)	Modulatory extension.
		(45-49)	B dominant pedal.

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<sup>1</sup> Lyn Henderson, "A Comparative Study of Prokofiev's Cello Concerto, op. 58 and Sinfonia Concertante, op. 125," *Music Review* 52 (1991): 123-5. Henderson divides the first movement of the Concerto into two sections with the wedge theme area (mm.87-101) serving as a transition. Henderson's analysis of the Sinfonia Concertante identifies transitions in mm.78-92 and mm.177-196 between three basic sections. The present analysis breaks the Concerto into three sections with an interlude in the last section and the Sinfonia into five sections. This facilitates thematic comparisons and focuses on a ternary thematic organization of the Concerto which is expanded to a quasi-sonata form in the Sinfonia.

section of the Sinfonia Concertante to be quite similar to the Concerto but with some additions. These additions are five additional bars of introduction in mm. 1-5, the modulatory extension of the second consequent in mm. 33-44, and the final dominant pedal point in mm. 45-49. This expands the section by 19 bars and one beat over the first section of the Concerto. The overall result is a larger principal theme area, a strong E minor cadence and greater cohesiveness to the first theme area.

In the Sinfonia Concertante, five additional measures of introduction feature the tonal chromaticism that informs the rest of the movement. In fact, the chromatic scale is completed by the downbeat of the fifth bar. The excerpt in example 2.1 shows the upper voice outlining E minor in a minor  $\hat{1}-\hat{2}-\hat{3}-\hat{5}$  pattern while the first vertical sonority and the bass line motion suggest C major (the key of the central section of the movement). The chromaticism disappears by the sixth and last bar of the introduction which is identical to the Concerto's one-bar introduction. The eighth-note  $\hat{1}-\hat{2}-\hat{3}-\hat{5}$  pattern, designated the "martial motive," basically serves as introduction and accompaniment to the principal theme. This motive provides effective contrasting counterpoint to the lyric principal theme.

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The musical score for measures 1-6 of the Sinfonia Concertante introduction. It features a chromatic scale in the upper voice (Flutes, Clarinet, and Violins) and a bass line motion suggesting C major. The score is labeled 'measures 1-6' and 'Concerto, m1'. The instruments listed are E min. Flutes, Clar & Vn, Strings pizz., Bass & Vc, and C Major V I.

**Example 2.1** Sinfonia Concertante, Introduction.

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In both works, the principal themes contain chromatic transpositions of diatonic motives and intervals. Example 2.2 shows a shifting interval pattern in the antecedent phrase (identical in both works). The melodic sixth of C#-to-A# interval echoes the D-to-B and is a factor in shifting the harmony from E minor to a rather distant F# major. After the C#, the phrase closes with a A#-G#-F# quarter-note descent to the tonic (scale degrees  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ ). This descending three-note motive reappears as a head motive used in the contrast theme area (mm. 93-164). By starting from the C#, the last four notes (in the succession  $\hat{5}-\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ ), is a major-mode retrograde of the martial motive.

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**Concerto**  
measures 2-7

**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 7-12

### Example 2.2 Principal Theme, First Antecedents.

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The consequent phrase of the principal theme in both works shifts from F# minor back to E minor. This phrase resolves with an ornamented  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  quarter-note motion to the tonic labeled in example 2.3. The head motive is the basic difference between the Concerto and Sinfonia consequents. The rhythm of this Sinfonia head motive  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$  relates generally to the dotted-eighth, sixteenth rhythm of the wedge theme in mm. 50-57, and is rhythmically identical to the head motive of the C Lydian contrast phrase (in mm. 101 and 156).



As shown in example 2.2, the rhythm of the Sinfonia's consequent is more homogeneous, containing less syncopation and fewer running sixteenth-notes than that of the Concerto. The descending scale of quarter-notes and eighth-notes in Concerto mm. 12-15 is reorganized in Sinfonia mm. 18-21 into two rhythmically rhymed two-bar units of  $\text{♪♪} \text{♪} \mid \text{♪} \text{♪♪}$  bracketed in example 2.3.

The Sinfonia also abandons a significant point of imitation between the Concerto antecedent and consequent phrases. Bracketed below the third and fourth measures of example 2.3 (first staff), the Concerto consequent contains a transposition of the antecedent  $\hat{5}\text{-}\hat{2}\text{-}\hat{1}$  falling fifth head motive and  $\hat{1}\text{-}\hat{3}\text{-}\hat{5}\text{-}\hat{1}$  tonic triad figure shown in example 2.2. The Sinfonia contrasts the component phrases of the principal theme, giving the consequent (second staff) only the  $\text{♪♪♪} \text{♪♪} \mid$  rhythmic pattern while abandoning the antecedent's head motive.

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### Example 2.3 Principal Theme, First Consequents.

The Concerto, one of Prokofiev's earliest attempts at a "new simplicity" of style, remains in 2/4 meter throughout the movement but is occasionally made to sound "wrong-footed" by stressing the second beat. The principal theme entrance in m. 2

sustains through the downbeat of the subsequent bar and the tonic sounds (for the first time) on beat two of m. 3. Again in mm. 4 and 8 of the antecedent and mm. 10 and 11 of the consequent, the second beat is arrived at by falling fifth and the downbeat is either tied into or not articulated.

Note in examples 2.2 and 2.3 how the Sinfonia Concertante similarly emphasizes the second beat in the principal theme.<sup>2</sup> However, the Sinfonia's 3/4 bar in m. 12 actually shifts the downbeat to beat two for the first four bars of the consequent phrase (mm. 13-16). The sense of downbeat is reestablished at the downbeat of m. 17 where all three voices simultaneously articulate the downbeat (the martial motive in the viola/clarinet line, the harmonic rhythm in the bass line support, and the theme in the solo cello).

Example 2.4 shows the second principal antecedent phrase of both works which are scored in the orchestra (violins). These antecedents are varied from their first appearances, particularly in the Concerto where running 16th-notes and syncopations are added. However the Sinfonia adds one bar of 2/4 at the beginning and removes the final

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**Concerto**  
measures 17-22



**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 22-28



**Example 2.4** Principal Theme, Second Antecedents.

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<sup>2</sup> The second beat is approached by falling fifth in m. 13, ornamented with grace notes in m. 14, and the downbeat is tied over in m. 16.

3/4 measure. This extends the repeat of the antecedent phrase by one beat.<sup>3</sup> The Sinfonia version also anticipates F# minor with the A natural in m. 27.

Prokofiev avoided closing the Concerto first section in E minor by eliding the cadence with the beginning of the next theme in C major. The Concerto consequent phrase shown in example 2.5 is shifted to the orchestra for the last four measures,

**Concerto** measures 23-31

*Solo cello* *Flute*

**Sinfonia Concertante** measures 29-50

*Solo cello* *Flute*

**Example 2.5** Principal Theme, Second Consequents.

<sup>3</sup> If the delayed entrance of the theme is counted, the antecedent is extended by only one eighth-note instead of one beat.

leaving the soloist free to enter with the next theme. This both continues forward motion into the next theme group and de-emphasizes the structural division at m. 31.

The parallel passage in the Sinfonia Concertante consequent (also shown in example 2.5 following the Concerto excerpt), creates a quite different effect by closing the double period with a powerful cadence to E minor. The Sinfonia consequent phrase appears to be quite different from the corresponding Concerto phrase but their harmonic similarity is underscored in the first six bars of each excerpt's bass line. After the first four bars of the Sinfonia phrase (mm. 29-32) tension is heightened in an extended modulatory passage (mm. 33-44) where the martial motive accompaniment disintegrates into a walking eighth-note pattern. In these measures the bass rises rather circuitously and chromatically to settle on a dominant pedal in mm. 45-49. To close the section, the Sinfonia theme resolves the pedal to E minor without modulating or colliding with the next theme group.

#### **The Sinfonia Wedge Theme Section:**

Sinfonia mm. 50-92 is constructed from material found late in the Concerto movement. In the Sinfonia movement, this section separates the principal and contrast theme areas which were adjacent in the Concerto. This section generates sonata form characteristics in the Sinfonia when this wedge theme, here in the position of a second theme, returns in the recapitulation. With only minor adjustments, the last section of the Concerto is easily transformed into the Sinfonia's recapitulation. As shown in table 2.3, the wedge theme occurs twice in this section of the Sinfonia, first in mm. 50-57, and

again in mm. 69-76 accompanied by a triplet-32nd note accompaniment in the solo cello.

A quasi-cadenza solo passage follows each wedge theme statement.

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**Table 2.3** Sinfonia Concertante Wedge Theme Section

50-57	Wedge Theme, (orchestra)
58-68	Solo, quasi-cadenza material.
69-76	Wedge Theme in orch. with solo triplet 32nds.
77-86	Solo, quasi-cadenza material.
87-93	extension, cadence to C major

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The Sinfonia wedge theme is almost identical to the first eight bars of the Concerto interlude mm. 87-101, which are shown in example 2.6. The Sinfonia wedge theme shown in example 2.7, is also an orchestral theme comprised of a descending dotted eighth- sixteenth scale (foreshadowed in the principal theme, consequent phrase

measures 87-93

PP Strings

Flute

Violin 1

Clar.

Clar.

**Example 2.6** Concerto, Interlude Theme.

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measures 50-58

*p* tranquillo

Strings

1st Oboe

Flutes & Clar.

1st Bassoon

**Example 2.7** Sinfonia Concertante, Wedge Theme.

head-motive) and a contracting eighth-note scale marked "*p tranquillo*". In the Sinfonia, both wedge theme statements are prepared by dominant pedals and followed by 16th-note *f espressivo* solo cadenza material.

The solo quasi-cadenza passage (mm. 58-68) is shown in example 2.8. This first solo passage eventually settles on an A dominant pedal which leads into the second wedge theme statement, now in D minor, in mm. 65-77.

measures 58-68

Solo cello

**Example 2.8** Sinfonia Concertante, First Quasi-Cadenza.

Example 2.9 below shows the Sinfonia's solo cello passage work which accompanies the second wedge theme statement in D minor (mm. 69-76). This solo material is based on Concerto mm. 121-124 (shown below the Sinfonia excerpt) which accompanied wedge theme material in the transition to the coda. Both the Sinfonia wedge theme and the solo accompaniment shown in example 2.9 return in the recapitulation in the home key of E minor. In these two excerpts, the basic motive patterns are bracketed. The alternating stepwise pattern 32nd-triplets bracketed above the staff, and the 32nd-triplets in a falling three note pattern bracketed below the staff. Alternating the 32nd-note triplet pattern with 16ths in the Sinfonia gives the material more interest and helps bring it more to the foreground.

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**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 69-77

D minor *p* Solo cello

A flat minor

**Concerto**  
measures 121-124

Solo cello

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**Example 2.9 Solo Wedge Theme Accompaniment Material.**

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The second quasi-cadenza passage (mm. 77- 92) is shown in example 2.10. All but the last six bars (mm. 87-92) are over a G minor pedal chord in the orchestra. These last six bars, containing fragmented and transposed solo motive pattern (indicated in example 2.10), are a highly chromatic transition into the third section.



**Example 2.10** Sinfonia Concertante, Second Quasi-Cadenza.

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### **The Contrast Theme Sections:**

The Concerto in mm. 31-66 and the Sinfonia Concertante in mm. 93-164 converge again thematically. While the antecedent and consequent phrases of the principal theme and the wedge theme contain internal modulations, the contrast phrases begin and end in the same key or mode. In both works, the contrast phrase areas are in sections bounded by C major but the Sinfonia arrangement is developmental, moving through a greater variety of keys. Table 2.4 shows the layout in the Concerto, revealing an alternation of two phrases. The first is the Ionian phrase, presented in the solo cello



in C and G. The second is the Aeolian phrase which appears in three statements in B Aeolian, scored in the oboe and flute.

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**Table 2.4 Concerto Contrast Theme Section**

31-38	Solo C Ionian. plus four bar ext. mm.38-41.
42-46	Orch B Aeolian.
47-54	Solo G Ionian.
54-58	Orch B Aeolian.
59-62	Solo C Ionian fragments.
62-66	Orch B Aeolian.

---

Table 2.5 shows the Sinfonia contrast theme section where Prokofiev abandons the alternation of phrases used in the Concerto.<sup>4</sup> In the Sinfonia, two consecutive Aeolian contrast phrases (mm. 115-133) are followed by two consecutive Ionian contrast phrases (mm. 134-153). These phrases are nested between two statements of a newly composed Sinfonia "C Lydian phrase" (mm. 101-109, and 156-164). After the last appearance of the C Lydian phrase, head motive fragments alternate with martial motive solo cello pizzicato chords to begin the retransition (mm. 164-175). Unlike the alternating solo and orchestra arrangement in the Concerto, all phrase statements are

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**Table 2.5 Sinfonia Concertante Contrast Phrase Section**

93-100	Orchestral introduction.
101-109	Solo C Lydian phrase. with extension mm. 109-114.
115-118	Solo F Aeolian phrase. with ext. mm. 119-122.
123-126	Solo B Aeolian phrase. with ext. mm. 127-133, head motive fragments.
134-141	Solo Eb Ionian phrase. with ext. mm. 142-145.
146-153	Solo B Ionian phrase. with 2 bar ext.
156-164	Orch. C Lydian phrase exact restatement of mm.101-109.

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<sup>4</sup> In the layout of table 6, all non-thematic statements are indented.

played by the soloist except the last which is presented in the brass. This section of the Sinfonia is more developmental and chromatic than the corresponding section of the Concerto, particularly in the extensions. Throughout this area of the Sinfonia, the phrases enter in a new key without strong harmonic confirmation. For this reason the section has a modal quality, and the phrases are identified by modal designations. The modal quality is literally underscored by almost continuous tonic pedals which change to support each phrase.

This contrast theme section begins with an eight-bar orchestral introduction (mm. 93-100) which is comprised of a rocking broken-sixths eighth-note texture. The prominent sixths foreshadow both the interval content of the following phrase's head motive in m. 101 and the broken-sixth eighth-note accompaniment of the Ionian phrase in mm. 134-141 shown in example 2.15 on p. 34.<sup>5</sup>

The introduction leads into the C Lydian phrase in mm. 101-109 shown in example 2.11. This is the only phrase of this section not clearly based on a complete Concerto model. However, it does use the head motive rhythm of the Sinfonia principal



**Example 2.11** Sinfonia Concertante, Contrast C Lydian Phrase.

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<sup>5</sup> This broken sixth accompaniment pattern supports both Ionian statements in the Concerto on which the Sinfonia Ionian phrase in mm. 134-141 is based.

theme consequent (m. 13) in m. 101 and an Ionian phrase motive (m. 136) in m. 108, both of which are bracketed above the staff.

The next two phrase statements in the Sinfonia are the Aeolian phrase. In the Concerto, this four-bar phrase appeared in B Aeolian, scored for flute and oboe. In the Sinfonia Concertante, this phrase follows the first C Lydian phrase but is scored for the solo cello in F Aeolian. It is extended by four bars and recurs immediately in B Aeolian, extended this time by seven bars. No longer a brief ritornello idea, it is an independent phrase in the solo cello. The F Aeolian statement in mm. 115-118 begins in over an F pedal in the tuba. As shown in example 2.12, the head motive is repeated up a step on the first beat of mm. 119-121, before a chromatic melodic connection to the next statement in B Aeolian. The B Aeolian statement (mm. 123-126 in the third staff of example 2.12) is an exact transposition of its predecessor and is lined up with the original Concerto Aeolian phrase (in the first staff). It is followed by a seven-bar extension which oscillates between G and F# sonorities before a one-bar G major scale which leads to the Ionian phrase at m. 134.

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**Concerto**

measures 42-46

**B Aeolian phrase**

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**Sinfonia Concertante**

measures 115-123

**F Aeolian phrase**

measures 123-126

**B Aeolian phrase**

head motive fragments

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**Example 2.12 Contrast Aeolian Phrases.**

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Each phrase in this section of the Sinfonia is in a different key or mode supported by tonic pedals where the key shifts between phrases are effected melodically without strong harmonic support. The pitches circled in example 2.12 track the high notes of the phrase and the extension in mm. 118-123, showing a stepwise connection from C to the F# beginning of the B Aeolian phrase.

As shown in example 2.13, the first Ionian statement in both works is eight bars long with a four bar extension. The Ionian phrase, which basically arpeggiates the tonic triad, is the most unambiguously diatonic phrase in the Concerto and was lifted virtually intact to be reset in the Sinfonia. The Ionian phrase opens with a heroic  $\overset{\wedge}{3}\overset{\wedge}{-}\overset{\wedge}{2}\overset{\wedge}{-}\overset{\wedge}{1}$  major scale descent to the tonic ( $\overset{\wedge}{5}\overset{\wedge}{-}\overset{\wedge}{3}\overset{\wedge}{-}\overset{\wedge}{2}\overset{\wedge}{-}\overset{\wedge}{1}$  including the grace note which matches the principal antecedent ending, mm.10-12, and is the major retrograde of the martial motive), a tonic triad arpeggiation in the second bar, and a written-out turn on the tonic going into the fourth bar. In both works, this previously cadential motive incorporates the resolution from the end of the preceding phrase into its head-motive and melodically confirms a downward key shift of a major third. The extensions of this theme in both works are rhythmic variations of the theme's first four bars.

Example 2.14 shows the next Concerto and Sinfonia Ionian phrase. While the Concerto setting of these two phrases is separated by a four-bar Aeolian phrase, the Sinfonia follows the Eb Ionian phrase immediately with the second Ionian theme in B (mm. 146-153). This statement varies the phrase identically to the Concerto with similar ornamentation (double-stopped sixths and the 32nd-note septuplet). The head motive

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**Concerto**  
measures 31-42



**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 134-146



**Example 2.13 First Ionian Phrases.**

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(mm. 146-147) which descends from D# to B is scored in the first violins and is not shown in the example.

---

**Concerto**  
measures 47-54



**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 146-153



**Example 2.14 Second Ionian Phrases.**

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Example 2.15 shows a four-bar orchestral figuration which, in some form, accompanies each phrase in this section. This orchestral "sixth accompaniment," which also accompanied the Concerto Ionian phrases, is scored in the cellos or violas consisting

of a chromatically shifting broken-sixth pattern. As previously mentioned, this accompaniment also relates in rhythm and interval to the introduction of this section. Composed of one eighth and four 32nds, this accompaniment pattern tonally drifts in and out of phase with the Ionian phrase and also accompanies the C Lydian phrase in steady sixteenth-note values in mm. 106-109. A diatonic version of this accompaniment appears with the first four bars of each Aeolian phrase statement (mm. 115-118, and mm. 123-126). Note values are the same (four 32nd notes alternating with one eighth) but the interval is an ascending octave beginning on the second eighth note of the bar.

Measures 134-146

Solo cello **Ionian phrase**

Viola

Sixths accompaniment

Sixths accompaniment

Sixths accompaniment

**Example 2.15** Sinfonia Concertante Sixths Accompaniment With First Ionian Phrase

Shown in example 2.16, the C Lydian phrase is restated in the brass (mm. 156-164) to close the section. As the orchestral counterpart to the solo statement of this



**Example 2.16** Sinfonia Concertante, Second C Lydian phrase.

---

theme (mm. 101-109) at the beginning of the section, this thematically brackets the contrast theme area.

#### **The Retransition Area:**

The retransition of the Sinfonia Concertante (mm. 169-196) contains the remainder of solo material added to the original Concerto design and, along with the wedge theme area, is the other basic structural addition to this work. The retransition falls into two parts. The first (mm. 164-176) breaks down the movement's two- and four-bar hypermetric structure. The solo, using the martial motive in pizzicato quadruple stops, interrupts C Lydian phrase fragments. The next part of the retransition (mm. 177-196) rebuilds the hypermeter in a textural crescendo into the recapitulation through additive units of solo passage-work over martial motive material.

To this point, most of the Sinfonia movement has fallen into two- and four-bar hypermetric units. In the principal theme area, the bass line defined a two-bar harmonic rhythm which was occasionally extended or shortened this pattern by added bars or 3/4 measures. The wedge theme was arranged in two complementary four-bar units. And the contrast theme phrases and their extensions are all four-bar units.

The dissolution of four-bar hypermeter begins where a five-bar extension of the C Lydian phrase (mm. 164-168) is interrupted by the pizzicato martial motive in the solo

cello shown in the first line of example 2.17. Three more bars of C Lydian material (mm. 171-173) are cut off by two more measures of pizzicato martial motive shown in the second line of example 2.17. These martial motive interjections cut the contrast phrase fragments (and the hypermetric flow) into odd measure groupings. Finally, even the 2/4 march of the movement is arrested with a 1/4 bar at m. 176 (shown in example 2.18). The dominant interval content outlined in these martial motive variants contributes to the "braking" effect. Note how this eighth-note pattern (in quadruple stop pizzicato chords), by flattening the fourth note of the  $\overset{\wedge}{1}\overset{\wedge}{2}\overset{\wedge}{3}\overset{\wedge}{5}$  minor scale pattern, outlines a diminished triad rather than a minor triad. In the second martial motive variant (mm. 174-175), not only is the motive outlining a diminished triad, but the last two vertical sonorities of each bar are fully diminished sevenths.

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measures 169-171  
pizz  
Solo cello

measures 174-175  
pizz  
Solo cello

**Example 2.17** Sinfonia Concertante, Solo Pizzicato Martial Motive.

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Table 2.6 represents Prokofiev's methodical regeneration of a two- and four-bar hypermeter in the second part of the retransition area (mm. 176-197). This area is laid out in three units of the martial motive variants accompanied by solo cello passage work in mm. 177-180, mm. 182-185, and mm. 186-194. These units are framed by four



thematic interruptions in m. 176, m. 181, m. 186 and mm. 195-196 and are indented in table 2.6 with durations shown in note-values. While rebuilding a four-bar hypermeter, the entire retransition gradually develops into the introductory martial motive pattern as the recapitulation begins at m. 197.<sup>6</sup>

---

**Table 2.6** Sinfonia Concertante Retransition Hypermeter Pattern

176	1/4 bar interruption (= ♩ value)
177-180	martial motive, orch. = 2 + 2 bars with solo 16th triplets.
181	1/4 bar interruption (= ♩ value)
182-185	martial motive in orchestra. = 2 + 2 bars with solo 16th triplets.
186	2/4 bar (= ♩ value )
187-194	martial motive in orchestra. = 4 + 4 bars with solo 32nds.
195-196	2,2/4 bars (= ♩   ♩) of transitional octatonic martial motive fragments.
197-249	RECAPITULATION.

---

As stated previously, the 1/4 bar "interruption" at m. 176 ultimately arrests the marching 2/4 meter. The first two interruptions (mm. 176 and 181 in example 2.18), are scored for violas and cellos and basically mark time in a dotted 16th-32nd note rhythmic pattern. The interruption in m. 186 uses the full string section, and the final interruption in mm. 195-196, includes the winds and serves as a transition into the recapitulation.

Example 2.18, shows the first of these 2/4 martial motive/solo unit as well as the 1/4 bar interruptions on either side. At the beginning of the retransition, the martial motive is relatively distant harmonically and melodically from the original minor <sup>^ ^ ^ ^</sup>1-2-3-5 martial motive pattern. In the example, the scale degrees are labeled above the notes of the top voice in the second staff, to show the diminished and augmented martial motive

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<sup>6</sup> However, when the recapitulation begins, the two-bar hypermeter of the principal theme (defined by bass motion) is not restored until the beginning of the principal theme antecedent phrase beginning in m. 215.

variants.<sup>7</sup> Also shown in example 2.18, the double bass dotted 16th-32nd, is placed on the third eighth. The dotted 16th-32nd figure is later "corrected" (m. 184) to sound on the fourth eighth as in the introduction.

---

measures 176-181

Solo Cello

Viola

Bass

---

**Example 2.18** Sinfonia Concertante Diminished and Augmented Martial Motive

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This passage suggests the aural impression of a marching soldier adjusting to get back in step with the ranks. A two-bar hypermeter pattern is again established and a 2/4 meter is now continuous from m. 187 going into the recapitulation at m. 197 though the martial motive is interrupted again in mm. 186 and 195-196.

**The Recapitulation and Coda:**

Placing the wedge theme in the area of a second theme in the Sinfonia movement allows a recapitulation to be easily constructed from the last section of the Concerto. This is achieved with only minor expansions and adjustments of the Concerto themes basically in their original order. Though it is not the archetypal recapitulation, this section tonally resolves the movement comprised entirely of exposition material.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The solo passage work matches solo cello material from mm. 69-77 (triplet 16ths) and rhythmically relates to violin passagè work from mm. 157-164 (32nds).

<sup>8</sup> The wedge, or second theme is not in the dominant key but modulates away from

The last section of the Concerto contains virtually the same material as the Sinfonia but the feeling of return is interrupted by the wedge theme introduced in mm. 87-101 as an orchestral interlude separating two principal theme statements. In table 2.7, the outline of themes in the final Concerto section is arranged to show four basic subsections and a coda. This corresponds closely to the layout of the last section in the Sinfonia Concertante shown in table 2.8.

The close correspondence between tables 2.7 and 2.8 is most apparent at the beginning and at the end. However, both works also contain the same thematic material between the return of the principal antecedent phrase and the coda. The Concerto, in mm. 91-124, contains wedge theme material (mm. 91-101), the principal theme in G# minor (mm. 102-117), and the wedge theme with the solo triplet 32nds material (mm.

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**Table 2.7 Concerto Final Section**

67-78	Principal antecedent, solo (begins in m. 68, extended five bars).
79-87	Principal consequent, solo.
87-101	Wedge theme, orchestral interlude (with 7 bars ext.).
102-108	Principal antecedent, solo.
109-117	Principal consequent, solo.
117-120	Wedge theme orch. begins on resolution of the preceding consequent.
121-124	Wedge theme continued. with 32nd note triplets in the solo.
125-129	Coda, Wedge fragments. with 32nd note scales on E minor.

---

**Table 2.8 Sinfonia Concertante Recapitulation Themes**

198-214	Principal antecedent, solo (11 bar ext. over the martial motive).
215-223	Principal consequent, orch.
223-226	Wedge theme, First four bars identical to mm.50-57. solo 32nd note triplets, mm.223-226 (from mm. 69-76)
227-233	Wedge theme continued, orch. with principal antecedent, solo.
234-240	Wedge, orch. with principal antecedent, solo. (ext. mm.241-242.)
243-249	Coda, Wedge fragments with solo 32nd-note scales on E minor.

---

E minor. In the recapitulation it returns in E minor and, after an internal tritone shift to Bb minor, is modified to return to E minor in two subsequent statements.

117-124). In this same thematic space (between the beginning of the Bb minor wedge theme and the coda), the Sinfonia uses the same creates an ingenious simultaneous setting of the principal theme's antecedent and the wedge theme.

The last section of the Concerto, as laid out in table 2.7, is a large collection of different thematic ideas.<sup>9</sup> However, the thematic correspondence of the Concerto's last section and the Sinfonia's recapitulation is striking. Example 2.19 shows the return of the principal theme in both works. The first three bars of these principal themes are similarly expanded, delaying the first articulation of the tonic pitch. Both themes gesture a return, but the return is only fully realized in the Sinfonia. The Sinfonia version displays greater rhythmic homogeneity and states the return of the theme more deliberately through more frequent use of the  $\hat{5}\text{-}\hat{2}\text{-}\hat{1}$  head motive pattern (bracketed above the staves in example 2.19).

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**Concerto**  
measures 68-78

Solo cello

**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 198-214

Solo cello

**Example 2.19** Return/Recapitulation of the Principal Theme, Antecedent Phrase.

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<sup>9</sup> Lyn Henderson's analysis begins the second of the two sections of the Concerto movement with the interlude (wedge theme) at m.87. This creates an ABA first section and the second section following the interlude has the principal theme in G# and interlude material leading into the coda.

Example 2.20 shows the principal consequent phase in Sinfonia mm. 215-222 (stated in the full orchestra) and the principal consequent in Concerto mm. 79-87 (in the solo). This scoring unifies the Sinfonia movement by answering the tutti antecedent phrase from mm. 22-28 with a massive tutti consequent phrase. The Sinfonia's powerful cadence back to E minor is the first unaltered restatement of this theme. In contrast, the Concerto setting of the corresponding phrase is developmental with a florid embellishment of the head motive.

---

**Concerto**  
measures 79-87

Solo cello

**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 215-223

Tutti *f* *espressivo*

"E" in bass

---

**Example 2.20** Return/Recapitulation of the Principal Theme, Consequent Phrase.

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Though both works follow the principal theme return with the wedge theme, the Concerto wedge theme is not being recalled but is introduced as new material in mm. 87-101. Shown in example 2.21, the Sinfonia uses the first four bars of wedge theme in E minor with the soloist's accompanying triplet 32nd notes in mm. 223-226.<sup>10</sup> These four measures are an exact transposition to E minor of mm. 69-72 where this material appeared in D minor.

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<sup>10</sup> The Concerto wedge theme was shown in example 2.7.

measures 223-227

Solo Cello

Vln. I

p tranquillo  
Strings con sordino

**Example 2.21 Sinfonia Concertante Wedge Theme, Recapitulation.**

The Concerto follows its wedge theme interlude with an exact transposition of the full principal theme in G# minor (mm. 102-117) followed by a wedge theme variant in mm. 117-124. In comparison, Prokofiev replaces Concerto mm. 91-124 (from the fifth bar of the wedge theme interlude until the coda) with the Sinfonia passage shown in example 2.22. The excerpt begins with the Bb minor continuation of the wedge theme accompanying a Bb minor principal antecedent phrase. The simultaneous setting of both themes ingeniously effects a modulation from Bb minor to C major in mm. 227-233, and from C minor to D in mm. 234-240. In order to make these phrases and their key shifts line up, one measure is added to the beginning of both antecedent phrases and one beat is subtracted from the end of the wedge themes. The last three bars of 3/4 in example 2.22 (mm. 240-242) are transitional, leading from D major to a B dominant sonority which resolves into the E minor Adagio coda (mm. 243-249).

measure 227-242

Solo cello

Fl. & Ob.

Strings

Vc. & Ch.

Flute I

Basn. I

Fl. & Ob.

Strings

Vc. & Ch.

Flute II

Oboes

Basn. I

Basn. II

Vc. & Ch.

**Example 2.22** Sinfonia Concertante Principal Theme Antecedent and Wedge Theme Material.

The Sinfonia Adagio is a close copy of the last bars of the Concerto, but extends the final resolution by two bars. In example 2.23 below, the first three bars of the coda in both works are identical and the last two lines show their different resolutions. In both works, the solo material shown in the example below accompanies wedge theme fragments in the orchestra. The scale figurations in the solo are a subdued version of the solo triplet-32nd figures which have accompanied the wedge theme in the second section and recapitulation.

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**Concerto mm. 125-7 and Sinfonia mm. 243-5**

Adagio

Solo Cello

Sinfonia Concertante measures 246-9

Concerto measures 128-9

**Example 2.23 Solo Line in the Adagio Codas.**

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The well-integrated last section of the Sinfonia Concertante represents a tighter arrangement of the thematic material than the Concerto's final section. By contrast, the last section of the Concerto's kaleidoscopic mixture of previously presented themes, newly introduced material (wedge theme) and the principal theme's last statement in G#



minor, leave an overall impression of fragmentation and dissolution instead of recapitulation. Since the wedge theme material is introduced in the position of the second theme group in the Sinfonia Concertante, all of the material used in the last section relates to the exposition. The last section of the Sinfonia has greater tonal coherence than the Concerto by eliminating the tonal drift caused by the Concerto's G# minor statement of the principal theme and relating it with the principal antecedent and wedge theme combinations which lead back to E minor.

The combinations of these themes and accompanimental patterns often create striking harmonies. The following chapter will discuss the way Prokofiev uses these thematic and melodic lines to carry the music through unique successions of sonorities.

## Chapter 3

### Tonality and Modulation

As mentioned earlier, Prokofiev often carried a note pad with him during walks and kept one near his bed in order to record melodies whenever they came to him. Melody was the starting point in Prokofiev's compositional process and became the basic building blocks of his compositions. The comparison of themes in the previous chapter illustrated how little the thematic material of the Concerto was changed in the Sinfonia Concertante.

Prokofiev's distinctive chromaticism is rooted in his melodic material. His chromatically shifting lines have an inherent diatonic quality but, in contrapuntal combinations, can create almost pantonal successions of sonorities. Traditional harmonic analysis, such as assigning Roman numerals to chords, does not explain what Prokofiev's music is as much as it demonstrates what it is not. Austin's analytical approach to the chromaticism of Prokofiev labeled it (rather pejoratively) as "wrong note" harmony.<sup>1</sup> Many other analyses have avoided tonal issues to focus instead on rhythmic and textural aspects. The basic problem with a harmonic analysis of Prokofiev's music is that his harmonies are often melodically generated.

Richard Bass's article, "Prokofiev's Technique of Chromatic Displacement," approaches Prokofiev's unique harmonic structures melodically. In Bass's opinion, many

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<sup>1</sup> William W. Austin, "Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony," *Music Review* 17 (1956): 206. A discussion of "wrong notes" in this article originally only explained raised fourth scale degrees which inflected a subsequent shift to the dominant.

of Prokofiev's chromatic pitches should not be regarded as wrong notes, but as substitutions for diatonic notes. Bass explains:

Although whole key systems and their component harmonies may be subjected to chromatic displacement, it is the displacement of individual notes within the system that is fundamental to the technique. A chromatically displaced, or so-called 'wrong' note is also a kind of substitution, that is, it appears instead of, rather than in addition to, the notes of the chord. It does not function as an altered note, but represents a diatonic one; the diatonic note it represents is present as a 'shadow' cast by the displacement itself, and the result is a musical 'synesis' in which function is clear but terms in the diatonic syntax are not in strict agreement. Chromatic displacement depends heavily on perception in the illusion it creates. A displaced note is treated exactly as its diatonic counterpart would be—it is neither prepared nor resolved, and behaves as though nothing were 'wrong' with it in the first place. Even though it comes as something of a surprise, the listener is obliged to deal with it in a diatonic context, as a representative of its diatonic shadow. At the same time, the displacement is not quickly forgotten, and generates implications of its own. The fact that it is perceived ambiguously enables the composer to use it motivically, to draw parallel relationships between it and other events in the voice-leading structure.<sup>2</sup>

For the purposes of this paper, the term "chromatic displacement" refers to replacing diatonic notes in a melody with chromatic neighbors. These chromatic notes (displacements) assume the scale-degree function of the diatonic notes which have been replaced (shadows). The displacement is a semitone replacement of an expected shadow. The shadow is expected because it is either the natural path of a melodic pattern, or it is implied by a previously heard melodic unit (as in a sequence or other modified repetition).

A chromatic displacement in one voice may briefly conflict with the prevailing key, or it may be a melodic connection, playing a distinct and independent role in a

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Bass, "Prokofiev's Technique of Chromatic Displacement," Music Analysis 7 (1988): 199-200.

modulation. In some cases the entire texture may be displaced to a new key area. The essential element of chromatic displacement is the independence of the melodic lines from a ruling harmonic system. A traditional modulation may employ a pivot chord and/or introduce a dominant sonority of the new key. This defines the new key area and assigns scale-degree function for all the pitches in the texture. In a modulation through chromatic displacement, the melodic line may have "pivot pitches" but scale-degree function, if any, is not implied by the harmony but by the melody itself.

In the first movement of the Sinfonia Concertante, Prokofiev used traditional methods of modulation in addition to his chromatic displacement technique. This chapter will outline the tonal layout of the first movements of the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante and discuss the types of melodically generated key shifts which are characteristic of Prokofiev's style.

Table 3.1 shows the first movements of the Concerto and the Sinfonia Concertante to have similar key plans. In both first movements, Prokofiev establishes E minor and moves to C major in the middle section before returning to E minor. Prokofiev has employed traditional formal structures in these works to support his non-traditional harmonic shifts. The Concerto is in a ternary form with the last section

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**Table 3.1** Key Areas of the Concerto and Sinfonia Concertante First Movements.

<b>Concerto</b>		<b>Sinfonia</b>	
1-31	E minor	1-50	E minor (1st theme)
		50-93	E minor to C (2nd theme -transitional)
31-67	C major modulatory	93-164	C major, (developmental)
67-101	E minor	164-196	C to E minor (retransitional)
102-125	G# minor to E minor	197-249	E minor (recapitulation)
125-129	E minor		

---

(mm.67-129) itself cast in an ABA arrangement. The Sinfonia first movement is set in a more complex modified sonata form. Consequently, the length of the Sinfonia's movement is almost twice that of the Concerto's. While the Concerto movement is comparatively episodic with abrupt key and theme changes, the Sinfonia uses lengthy transitions (mm. 77-93 and mm. 164-196) and clear cadences to separate its three major sections.

### **Principal Theme Area:**

Shown in table 3.2, the E minor principal theme areas of the Concerto (mm. 1-31) and the Sinfonia (mm. 1-50) are comprised of two principal theme statements preceded by an introduction.

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**Table 3.2 Key Areas of the Concerto and Sinfonia Concertante  
Principal Theme Sections.**

<b>Concerto</b>		<b>Sinfonia Concertante</b>	
1	Introduction, e.	1-6	Introduction, C-e.
2-7	Principal Antecedent, e-F#.	7-12	Principal Antecedent, e-F#.
8-16	Principal Consequent, f#-e.	13-21	Principal Consequent, f#-e.
17-22	Principal Antecedent, e-F#.	22-29	Principal Antecedent, e-f#.
23-31	Principal Consequent, f#-C.	29-	Principal Consequent, f#-.
		33-44	modulatory, deceptively resolving dominant chords.
		45-49	B dominant pedal to e in m. 50.

---

The Sinfonia introduction, unlike that of the Concerto, offers a foretaste of Prokofiev's chromaticism using all twelve tones by the fifth bar. Shown in example 3.1, the Sinfonia introduction is five bars longer than the Concerto single-bar introduction (which is identical to Sinfonia m. 6). Though the principal theme area begins and ends in

E minor, the first sonority of the Sinfonia is actually C major which is reinforced in the bass line with  $\hat{5}-\hat{1}$  motion into the second bar. Not so coincidentally, C major is the second major key area of the movement. In this introduction, E minor begins to emerge with the repeated E minor  $\hat{1}-\hat{2}-\hat{3}-\hat{5}$  eighth-note pattern (martial motive) in the upper voice (mm. 1-4) and supporting  $\hat{5}-\hat{1}$  motion in the bass line (mm. 3-4). Later, the martial motive pattern is both varied and displaced to heighten harmonic tension in the retransition.



### Example 3.1 Sinfonia Concertante Introduction.

Following the introduction, local modulations occur within each phrase of the principal theme. In a traditional tonal antecedent/consequent period, the antecedent often ends with a half cadence supporting the second degree in the melody, and the consequent reaches a full cadence supporting the tonic degree. Similarly, Prokofiev's antecedent begins in E minor and ends on the second scale degree, F#, but rather than a dominant of E minor in the supporting harmonies, the phrase modulates to F# major. Although the consequent returns to E minor, it begins in F# minor.<sup>3</sup> Despite the abrupt

<sup>3</sup> Lyn Henderson, "Prokofiev's Fifth Piano Concerto," *Music Review* 47 (1986): 268, cites similar modulating themes in the Fifth Piano Concerto.

modulations in the supporting harmonies of both antecedent and consequent phrases, Prokofiev's principal theme area has Classical double period phrase structure.

The first system in example 3.2 contains a reduction of the Sinfonia's first antecedent phrase (mm. 7-13). The modulation to F# is accomplished by a combination of separate melodic events: a chromatic displacement of a relative mode modulation in the theme, a motive transposition in the accompaniment, and a suspension resolution in the bass. To illustrate the chromatic displacement in mm. 10-12, the second system in example 3.2 is "undisplaced" to reveal Bass's "shadow structure." This diatonic version now shifts to the relative major of E minor by reinterpreting the theme's D-to-B in mm. 10-11, as the 5th and 3rd scale degrees in G major.<sup>4</sup>

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measures 6-13      Solo cello

viola pizz. and clarinet

Vc. & Cb.

"Undisplaced" version

Solo cello

viola pizz. and clarinet

Vc. & Cb.

**Example 3.2** Sinfonia Concertante First Antecedent Phrase with "Shadow."

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<sup>4</sup> Note the falling-fifth motion, 5-1 in the bass supporting the theme,  $\hat{5} \hat{3} \hat{2} \hat{1}$ , in mm. 10-12.

However, just as Prokofiev's modulation here cannot be explained in one harmonic system, the "undisplacement" of all voices does not work either. Though the original solo and bass lines chromatically shift in the same direction (in mm. 10-11 respectively), their staggered timing creates very different effects. The theme displaces to create a dissonance with E minor while the bass shifts into consonance with F# major. The inner voice moves to support F# via martial motive transpositions. Forcing the martial motive pattern into a strict diatonic system, as in the second system of example 3.2, assigns scale-degree functions where none were evident and destroys the motive's minor quality. Further, the corrected version of the theme is static where the ascending sixth D-to-B repeats. The displacement is an integral part of the phrase. Without it, the phrase should be shortened by one bar.

Brackets above the top staff in example 3.2 mark two ascending sixths across bar lines 10 and 11 the second of which (being a semitone lower), is the beginning of a chromatic displacement. The repeated interval identifies both the shadow (D-to-B) and the displacement (C# and A#) and, to some degree this repetition pulls the scale-degree function of the D-to-B through the displacement. The shifted diatonic pattern is the only "preparation" of the modulation and the phrase goes on to cadence in F# major as if no modulation had occurred. Unlike a modulation employing a pivot chord or a secondary dominant, the displacement flows directly into F# major with the V7/ F# occurring two beats after the melodic displacement itself.

The line in the second staff shifts to F# major through transpositions of the martial-motive. Both martial-motive variants in mm. 10 and 11 go out of phase with E



minor and begin to support F# major on the second beat of bar 10 (an A#) and the C# dominant on the second beat of bar 11 (an E#). Cleverly, the martial motive transposition in m. 10 begins in harmonic agreement with E minor. In this bar, the G and A could be considered pivot pitches until the third of the pattern generates the A#. The subsequent transposition in m. 11 generates the leading tone in a V7/F# sonority.

On the third staff (beat two of m. 11), the bass line moves down a half-step to C#. This seems to be a chromatic displacement but the bass is simply moving into agreement with the other voices since the modulation is all but completed before beat two of m. 11. This descending half-step motion behaves diatonically, resolving a bass suspension created against the previously shifted upper voices.

Example 3.3 shows the first consequent phrase in both the Concerto (mm. 8-16), and the Sinfonia (mm. 13-21). Both versions of the phrase begin in F# minor and return to E minor. In the Sinfonia, the modulation begins at m. 17 where the bass breaks the falling fifth pattern and descends to a D against the Fs in the theme and the viola/ clarinet line. The resulting D minor sonority disrupts F# minor and E minor seems to gradually coalesce from the pull of the home key and the descending E natural minor scale in the theme.<sup>5</sup>

The bass plays a somewhat neutral role in this modulation. Though the falling fifth series is interrupted at the point of the theme's shift, it continues in a two-bar rhythm, confined to notes common to both F# minor and E minor. The F natural in the

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<sup>5</sup> Even though the chord on the first beat of m. 17 might be labelled a first inversion Bb major chord, the weight of the bass line and the relatively thin presence of the Bb in the viola/clarinet line make this sound more like a D minor chord to which non-chord tones are gradually added.

**Concerto**  
measures 8-16

Solo cello

Vla. pizz.

Vc. & Cb.

(Vc. & Cb.)

**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 13-21

Solo cello

Vla. pizz.

Vc. & Cb.

(Vc. & Cb.)

Vln. arco

Vc. & Cb.

(Vc. & Cb.)

**Example 3.3** First Principal Theme Consequent Phrases.

theme (Sinfonia m.17 and Concerto m. 12), which may be considered a chromatic displacement, is expressed as a chromatic appoggiatura on the second eighth. The F on the downbeat in the viola/clarinet line of the same bar could also be considered a chromatic displacement but acts more as a long-range passing tone to E minor in m. 21.

The modulation in example 3.3 has a relatively small chromatic displacement component when compared to the modulation in example 3.2. But as in mm. 10-12, this modulation is effected by melodic lines which have a temporarily ambiguous or

independent scale-degree function. The aural flow of Prokofiev's shifting tonalities requires balancing an interruption in the harmonic progression with convincing melodic direction. In part, the theme does this with a long melodic minor descent to E, but the Sinfonia version of this theme also supports forward motion with a transient harmonic progression. In example 3.3 (from the beginning of Sinfonia m. 17 through beat 1 of m. 18) the upper two voices lightly tonicize D minor with a  $i-vii^{\circ}-i$  chord progression. This replaces the harmonically arresting Bb chord in Concerto m. 12 and adds forward momentum to the passage.

The next statement of the Sinfonia principal antecedent phrase (mm. 22-28 -- not shown in an example) uses the same modulatory devices cited in example 3.2. Because of this repetition, the key shifts are more readily accepted by the listener. The only difference in this second antecedent phrase is the anticipation of F# minor with an A natural in the upper strings on beat two of m. 27.

Example 3.4 shows the Concerto and Sinfonia second consequent phrases. The Concerto phrase in the first system of the example basically follows the pattern of its first consequent. The important difference in the Concerto is the E resolution in m. 31 immediately becomes the third degree of the C Ionian phrase, denying the E minor resolution. This mediant relation also appears in the Sinfonia's development where it will be specifically discussed.

In contrast, the second Sinfonia consequent phrase (shown in the second, third and fourth systems of example 3.4), diverges radically from both its first Sinfonia appearance and the Concerto second consequent. The Sinfonia phrase (mm. 29-50)

**Concerto**  
measures 23-31

*Solo cello* *Flute*

**Sinfonia Concertante**  
measures 29-50

*Solo cello* *Clar. & Vla.*

*Hrn.*

*Flute*

Chords:  $\text{D} / \text{Bb}$ ,  $\text{Bb} 7$ ,  $\text{Eb}+ (\text{G}7)$ ,  $\text{C}7$ ,  $\text{Db} / \text{bb}$ ,  $\text{Ab}+$ ,  $\text{B} 7$

Fingering: 7 5 3 6, 7 6 3 6, 7 5 3 6, 7, 5, 3, 6, 6, 3, 6

**Example 3.4** Second Principal Theme Consequent Phrases.

resolves normally to E minor, set up by an extended modulatory passage and a five-bar dominant pedal. The modulatory passage (mm. 33-44) begins where the original phrase (mm. 13-21) shifts back towards E minor. Labeled in the bass of example 3.4, this passage is basically a succession of deceptively resolving dominants. The upper lines

arpeggiate these sonorities which are linked by the chromatic bass line, rising circuitously from D in m. 33 to settle on B in m. 45. In mm. 45-49, a long dominant pedal sets up the powerful E minor cadence at m. 50 which closes the first theme area. Compared to the Concerto, this creates a stronger structural division and supports the Sinfonia's larger sonata form.

An interesting feature of mm. 45-49 is a repeating motive of four eighth-notes in the solo cello. This motive, which basically fills out the dominant chord over the B pedal, appears twice as a false chromatic displacement. This motive pattern is A-F#-D#-G (the 7th, 5th, 3rd and 6th of the B dominant), written near the note heads in example 3.4. However in mm. 46 and 49 the pattern shifts the second eighth (F#) up to G creating a A-G-D#-G pattern. While both F# and G are diatonic members of E minor and the G on the second eighth is easily explained as a long-range neighbor tone, it imitates a chromatic displacement. Of course not all semi-tone variations in Prokofiev's melodies will be chromatic displacements with a discernable shadow pattern, and this diatonic variation is not a displacement either. However, similar incidental chromatic variations or shifts in melodies set up the effective use of chromatic displacement and melodically connected key shifts.

#### **Wedge Theme Section Modulations:**

The Concerto follows the principal theme area with the contrast theme area. In the Sinfonia Concertante, the wedge theme section separates the principal theme area and the contrast theme area. This wedge thematic material appears only as an interlude

in Concerto mm. 87-101 but, in the Sinfonia, it functions as a second theme which is recapitulated at the end of the movement.

As shown in table 3.3, the second section of the Sinfonia Concertante features two eight-bar statements of the wedge theme followed by quasi-cadenza solo sections (indented in table 3.3). Except for key, the wedge theme is virtually identical in both statements. This eight-bar theme functions as a ritornello and is followed by quasi-cadenza solo passages growing out of 16th-note material found in the last bar of the theme. Both statements are prepared by dominant pedals and contain a tritone shift between two four-bar segments.

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**Table 3.3 Key Areas of the Sinfonia Concertante Wedge Theme Section**  
**Sinfonia Concertante**

50-57	Wedge theme (orchestra). E minor- Bb minor- towards E minor.
58-68	Solo cello quasi-cadenza material. C major - A dominant pedal.
69-76	Wedge theme in orch. with Solo triplet 32nds. D minor- Ab minor- towards D minor.
77-86	Solo cello quasi-cadenza material. D minor - G minor pedal.

---

The section also employs chromatically displaced falling-fifth key relations. This is shown in example 3.5 in the the tritone-related four-bar units of this theme. Bracketed below the bass line, the C# at m. 52 moves to F in m. 53, chromatically compressing this ascending fourth. The F functions as a displacement of F# (even though the diatonic shadow is not a strong expectation in the mass of chromatic lines in mm. 52-53) and resolves by falling fifth to Bb minor in m. 54. This chromatic displacement is repeated in mm. 56-57, where bass motion from G to B chromatically displaces a G to C progression as the wedge theme attempts to return to E minor in m. 58.<sup>6</sup> Instead of returning to E

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<sup>6</sup> This is identical in the next contrast statement (mm.69-76) which is an exact transposition down to D minor which shifts to Ab minor at m.73.

minor, the wedge theme resolves deceptively to C major through a common tone connection, overlapping the beginning of the first quasi-cadenza in C major.

**Example 3.5** Sinfonia Concertante Wedge Theme.

The quasi-cadenza passages follow the wedge themes in related keys. Note in last bar of example 3.5 (m. 58), which is the beginning of the quasi-cadenza passage, how the tonic resolution of the E minor wedge theme is reinterpreted as the third of C major. Later, at the end of the second wedge theme at m. 76, the D resolution is reinterpreted as the fifth in the second quasi-cadenza passage in G minor.

The second cadenza in mm. 76-86 (over a G minor pedal chord sustained in the horns for ten bars) leads directly to the passage shown in example 3.6. This example shows the transitional ending of this second solo passage which leads into the C major contrast theme section at m. 93. This area (mm. 87-92) is comprised of transposed variations of the cello motive shown in m. 87. Stepwise voice leading between the

woodwind's sustained notes (on the second staff) are supported by a chromatic bass line which meanders from G down to D and finally up to C. This modulatory passage is similar to one in mm. 35-44 of example 3.4; both are unstable chord progressions. The interesting feature of this passage is that it separates a G pedal in mm. 77-86 from the C major resolution in m. 93. Though the G pedal supports a non-dominant G chord in mm.

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measures 86-93

Solo cello

Woodwinds

Vc. & Cb

Tutti Strings

Third Section

---

**Example 3.6** Sinfonia Concertante Modulatory Transition to the Contrast Theme Section.

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77-86, it remains in the listener's ear through the modulatory passage until its resolution to C major at m. 93.



### Contrast Theme Section Modulations:

The third section of the *Sinfonia Concertante* and the second section of the *Concerto* are both comprised of similar "contrasting" material. Unlike the principal and wedge themes which contain internal modulations, each contrast phrase is in a different mode with almost continuous tonic pedal support. The overall pitch content, with frequent lowered sevenths and raised fourths, make this section sound more like a succession of shifting modalities than tonalities. For this reason the various melodic ideas have been identified by their modal quality. Modulations between these phrases are made melodically and rarely employ dominant-to-tonic harmonic progressions. Appropriately, this developmental section of the *Sinfonia* shows more deceptive or displaced progressions and a general lack of strong cadences. Table 3.4 shows the keys and positions of the contrast themes in both works.

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**Table 3.4 Key Areas of the Contrast Theme Sections**

<b>Concerto</b>		<b>Sinfonia Concertante</b>	
31-41	C Ionian. Solo ext. 38-41.	101-114	C Lydian. Solo. ext. 109-114, c
42-46	B Aeolian. Orch.	115-122	F Aeolian. Solo. ext. 119-122, f#
47-53	G Ionian. Solo	123-133	B Aeolian. Solo. (Key sig. e/G) ext. 127-133, ends with G scale.
54-58	B Aeolian. Orch.	134-145	Eb Ionian. Solo. extension 141-145
59-61	C Ionian. fragments. Solo	146-155	B Ionian. Solo. transition 154-155
62-64	B Aeolian. Orch	156-164	C Lydian. Brass. to m. 164

---

Example 3.7 shows three different types of modulation used in this section of the *Sinfonia*. The first is a falling fifth relation (c to f in m. 115), the second is a chromatically displaced falling fifth relation (f to b in mm. 123), and the third is a chromatic mediant relation (G to Eb in m. 134).

The first modulation occurs with the start of the F Aeolian phrase at m. 115.

While there is a V7 of F in m. 109, this dominant-to-tonic harmonic progression is muted in mm. 110-114 with notes from F minor, becoming a simple falling-fifth key relation.<sup>7</sup>

In example 3.7, note the linear connection into m. 115 where the persistent C in the solo is rearticulated as the fifth of F Aeolian. This is similar to the common tone connections between the wedge themes and the quasi-cadenzas which followed.

When the B Aeolian phrase enters at m. 123, the falling fifth occurs in a chromatically displaced version. All of the lines beginning at m. 123 are an exact transposition of the F Aeolian phrase. With repetition of the same phrase using the same voicing in the outer lines, the displacement at m. 123 is clearly heard against the shadow of the modulation at m. 115. In this displaced modulation, the tonic F in the solo cello shifts up a half step to F# to become the fifth of B Aeolian and the bass descends by tritone from F to B. This displacement at m. 123 also explains Prokofiev's moving away from dominant sonorities before the falling fifth relation at m. 115. If the connection at m. 123 is modelled on a V7-i pattern, the chromatically displaced resolution would not resolve the leading tone and have a more dissonant aural impact.

At m. 123, the key signature change to one sharp is rather surprising. The passage clearly begins in B Aeolian but the key signature suggests that the passage has gone from F Aeolian to E minor or some other one-sharp tonality. After the first four bars of the phrase, the passage becomes modulatory. The key signature may indicate the function and harmonic tendency of the Aeolian phrase in the Concerto where, in mm.

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<sup>7</sup> Stated simply, the C sonority at m. 114 does not have the leading tone E which was present in the phrase until m. 109.


31-66, the phrase was in B Aeolian in all three iterations. These Concerto phrases were also in a one-sharp key signature and followed Ionian phrases in the keys of C and G. In

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system, measures 109-137, features a 'Solo cello' line at the top, followed by 'String pizz', 'Clar. & Va. arco', 'Va. & Vc. arco', 'Vc. arco', and 'Tuba'. The second system, measures 123-134, includes 'Clar.', 'Bsn.', 'Bass', and 'Bass' parts. The score is marked with 'Aeolian theme' at measures 115 and 123, and 'Ionian theme' at measure 134. The key signature changes from one sharp (F#) to two sharps (F# and C#) at measure 134. The score is written for a large ensemble, including strings, woodwinds, and brass.

**Example 3.7** Sinfonia Concertante Aeolian Phrase Modulations.

Sinfonia mm. 123-134, the B Aeolian phrase gives way to a brief G major (mm. 132-133) before the Eb Ionian phrase, yet this is not convincing. Viewed in this light, this key signature at m. 123 must indicate Prokofiev's perception the relation of this phrase to E minor or of the implied possible destinations of the modulatory extension in mm. 127-133.

The last type of modulation shown at m. 134 in example 3.7 exploits a common tone connection in a mediant relation (which, as mentioned earlier, connects the Concerto principal and contrast sections). The G presence in mm. 131-132 connects to the first note of the Ionian phrase at m. 134 and is reinterpreted as the third scale degree of Eb major. Note in the example the stepwise descent in the head motive in the Ionian phrase which descends in quarter notes to the tonic Eb at m. 135. This relates to the cadential motive in the antecedent of the principal theme. The bass line, rising by half step to Eb in m. 134, redefines the D (m. 133) retroactively as the leading tone. This type of chromatic mediant shift also connects this phrase in an identical fashion to the following B Ionian phrase (mm. 146-153) with the <sup>^</sup>3-<sup>^</sup>2-<sup>^</sup>1 head motive scored in the horns.

The C Lydian phrase which opened this section (mm. 101-114) returns in the low brass (mm. 156-164) to close the section. Example 3.8 shows the modulation between the B Ionian phrase and the C Lydian phrase which is prepared in mm. 153-156 by chromatic variants of the the C Lydian phrase head motive  (bracketed above the staves).<sup>8</sup> The modulation melodically connects B major to C major by correcting the

<sup>8</sup> This motive reappears to prepare the retransition and relates rhythmically to the head of the principal theme consequent phrase.

head motive up a semitone after the B on the second eighth of bar 156. At this point (which is marked with a vertical line through the second staff of m. 156), the head motive matches the original C Lydian phrase from beat two. This has the reverse effect of chromatic displacement since scale-degree function was unclear before, rather than after the shift.

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**B Ionian theme**

measures 152-159

n. 156

**C Lydian phrase Brass**

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**Example 3.8** Sinfonia Concertante Modulation into Final C Lydian Phrase Statement.

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### Retransition Shifts:

The retransition falls into two parts: the first (mm. 164-176) uses solo cello quadruple-stop pizzicato chords in a martial motive pattern to disrupt C major phrase fragments, and the second part (mm. 177-197) gradually remolds martial motive variants into the original E minor motive pattern which opened the movement.

Example 3.9 helps illustrate how the soloist's pizzicato martial motive figures lead to E minor. As explained in chapter two, these martial-motive interjections break up both the C Lydian phrase fragments and the four-bar hypermeter which is regenerated in the second part of the retransition (mm. 177-197). Note in mm. 169-170 of the example below how the upper line outlines a  $C^\circ$  triad by flattening the fourth note of the martial motive pattern. In the next appearance, an inner line of mm. 169-170 (shown in open note heads) is put into the upper voice in mm. 174-175 to outline an  $Eb^\circ$  triad. This second variant is the enharmonic equivalent of a  $vii^\circ / E$  which is reinforced on the last two eighths of mm. 174-175 by a dominant vertical sonority enharmonically equivalent to a  $vii^\circ 7$  of E.<sup>9</sup>

measures 169-171

pizz

Solo cello

measures 174-175

pizz

Solo cello

$e^b \circ 7$   $e^b \circ 7$   $d^\# \circ 7$

### Example 3.9 Sinfonia Concertante Martial Motive Solo Pizzicato.

Example 3.10 shows the beginning of the second part of the retransition where at m. 176, the C Lydian phrase fragments have disappeared and the four-note martial motive moves to the orchestra. In the upper line on the second staff (viola line, mm.

<sup>9</sup> The pizzicato chords in each bar mm. 174-175 create vertical sonorities of one half diminished, and two fully diminished seventh chords. These chords are by eighth-note: c half dim. 7, f minor, and two F# dim. 7 (which are enharmonically equivalent to D# dim. 7 chords).

177-178), the diminished martial motive variant again outlines more dominant harmonies of E (respelled as  $D^{\sharp\circ}$  or  $vii^{\circ}$  / E minor). This is followed in mm. 179-180 by a second two-bar unit built on E $\sharp$  which outlines an augmented triad by raising the third and fourth notes of the martial motive. These two-bar units in mm. 177-180 chromatically displace the entire motive to either side of E ( $D^{\sharp}$  and E $\sharp$ ). They also chromatically displace members within the martial motive pattern itself, outlining diminished and augmented triads which increase harmonic tension until E minor arrives in m. 182.

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measures 176-183 Solo Cello

Retransition

Viola

Bass

E minor

**Example 3.10** Sinfonia Concertante Retransition, mm. 176-183.

As explained in chapter two, the 1/4 measures in mm. 176 and 181 are false starts as the four-bar hypermeter is reestablished. By the last two bars shown in example 3.10 (mm. 182-3), the martial motive arrives in the first violins (upper line of the second staff)

in the home key of E minor and all voices of the texture have the identical pitch content found in m. 1 (Example 3.1 p. 52). However, solo passage work implies continuation until m. 196. In the remaining bars of this section, the martial motive continues as an ostinato in E minor (mm. 182-189) and A minor (mm. 191-194). At mm. 195-196, an octatonic ascent of parallel half-diminished seventh chords in the strings and winds closes the retransition and ushers in the recapitulation beginning at m. 197.

#### **A Return/Recapitulation Section Modulations:**

Table 3.5 illustrates the layout of thematic material in these final sections of the Concerto and Sinfonia Concertante. The final section of the Sinfonia Concertante is in three main parts: a return of the principal theme antecedent and consequent in

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**Table 3.5** Key Areas of the Concerto Last Section and the Sinfonia Concertante Recapitulation.

<b>Concerto</b>		<b>Sinfonia Concertante</b>	
67-78	PT antecedent. e-F#.	198-214	PT antecedent. e-F#.
79-87	PT consequent. f#-e.	215-223	PT consequent. f#-e.
87-101	Wedge (Interlude). e-b <sup>b</sup> -e.	223-226	Wedge. e.
102-108	PT antecedent. g#-B <sup>b</sup> .	227-233	Wedge & PT antecedent. b <sup>b</sup> -C.
109-116	PT consequent. b <sup>b</sup> -g#.	234-240	Wedge & PT antecedent. c-D.
117-120	Wedge fragments. g#-b <sup>b</sup> .	241-242	Ext. (becoming B dom)
121-124	Wedge material. b <sup>b</sup> -e.		Wedge material.
125-129	Adagio Codetta. e.	243-249	Adagio Codetta. e.

---



mm. 198-223, two simultaneous settings of the wedge and principal theme antecedent in mm. 227-240, and a coda comprised of wedge theme material in mm. 243-249.

The recapitulation is the most tonally clear section of the Sinfonia movement.

The Concerto organization of this same section of material (mm. 67-129) is less integrated and does not function as a recapitulation (the wedge theme is introduced for the first time at m. 87). The layout of the keys in the Concerto section is also less cohesive, specifically with regard to the G# minor principal theme statement in mm. 102-117 which sounds harmonically recessed between the surrounding E minor passages.

The Sinfonia recapitulation begins with a greatly extended principal antecedent phrase statement in the solo cello in mm. 198-214 and a climactic espressivo restatement of the principal consequent phrase by the full orchestra (mm. 215-223). In mm. 223-226, the wedge material returns. This is accompanied by the solo 32nd-note triplet material, identifying the passage as a tonic recapitulation of the first four bars of the D minor wedge theme from mm. 69-76.

Example 3.11 begins after these four bars where the wedge theme shifts, as expected, to Bb minor at m. 227. Example 3.11 shows how Prokofiev cleverly combines the wedge theme and the principal antecedent phrase in two combined statements to modulate from Bb minor to C minor (mm. 227-233) and from C minor to D major (mm. 234-240). In order for the two themes to fit together, the wedge theme is altered (through a third relation), to shift up a whole-step instead of a tritone (at mm. 231 and 238). The point of modulation aligns with the principal antecedent phrase when the theme's first note is extended by one bar. The final shift from D to E minor, shown in

measure 227-234

Solo cello Fl. & Ob.

Strings

Vc. & Cb.

Flute I

Basn. I

Va.

measures 234-243

Solo cello

Strings

Vc.

Flute

Oboe

Adagio

Clar.

Basn.

Basn.

Vc.

**Example 3.11** Sinfonia Concertante Principal Antecedent and Wedge Themes.

mm. 241-242 of example 3.11, is melodically connected with a chromatic scale in the oboes and a chromatic broken third pattern in the bassoons and upper strings. The arrival of E minor is confirmed in the double basses with a cadential 5-1 going into m. 243.

**Concerto mm. 125-9**  
**S.C. measures 243-249**

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system contains staves for Solo Cello, Fl., Vc., and Cb. The second system contains staves for Ob. I & II, Va., and Vc. The 'Sinfonia ending' section is marked above the woodwind and string staves. The 'Concerto ending' section is marked above the cello and double bass staves. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

**Example 3.12 Codas.**

The codas of both works, shown in example 3.12 on the previous page, end the movement with wedge theme material in the orchestra beneath the solo cello's tranquil triplet-sixteenth E minor scale patterns. These Adagios are identical for the first three bars and the Concerto's final two bars are shown below the Sinfonia's last four bars. Note how the Sinfonia's final four bars are a written-out ritard of the Concerto's last two. This is particularly obvious in the oboe line (second staff) where the Sinfonia's note values are doubled. As the movements close, the cello reaches the final B (fifth degree) in an E minor final chord. Both the G#s in the cello and the Abs in the oboes leave the listener with a final hint of major-minor ambiguity. The cello ends sustaining the fifth of the tonic triad. This leans away from absolute closure and into the second movement. The Concerto marking, "attacca" into the second movement is absent in the Sinfonia Concertante score. Though this might be merely accommodating his collaborating cellist who must begin the Sinfonia Concertante's fifteen-minute Allegro guisto, the fiery beginning of the second movement is such a radical change of mood that an attacca connection seems impatient and musically unwarranted. Both the written-out ritard and deleting the attacca are in the spirit of Prokofiev's giving poise and broader gestures to the sharp contrasts of the Sinfonia Concertante.

## Conclusion

Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante is remarkable in that it uses the Concerto's thematic material almost exclusively in a profoundly different work. The transference of Concerto themes to the Sinfonia Concertante underscores Prokofiev's compositional method where thematic ideas came first and were then fitted in a work. Prokofiev's procedures of writing themes and then generating the composition is not an unusual approach. Many composers have reused particular themes in different compositions. Beethoven revised his themes laboriously before one was eventually decided upon and the final version would have indicated much of its own harmonic setting.

What is unusual is how much of Prokofiev's compositions is left unexplained by harmonic analysis. Usually, Western art music is classified and defined in terms of its harmonic structure even though it is historically based on scales, melodic formulas and counterpoint. To better understand Prokofiev's music, it should be approached melodically, from his compositional perspective. Richard Bass's theory of "chromatic displacement" provides this approach to Prokofiev's melodically constructed modulations and key relations.

Instead of a harmonic structure constantly defining the scale-degree function of all voices in the texture, Prokofiev's shifting melodic lines occasionally move independently, implying their own function. These independent melodies imply harmonic function, in part, because they are constructed of recognizable diatonic patterns. In example 3.2 (p.51), the principal theme primarily outlines pitches of the tonic chord in

the first three bars and proceeds to cadence to F# in the final three bars in a  $\hat{5}\hat{3}\hat{2}\hat{1}$  pattern. Including the grace note, this  $\hat{5}\hat{3}\hat{2}\hat{1}$  pattern serves as head motive of the Ionian theme. The martial motive outlined the tonic triad in a minor  $\hat{1}\hat{2}\hat{3}\hat{5}$  pattern (a minor retrograde of the antecedent phrase cadential pattern) and fell by fifth to the next repetition of the motive. The bass line supported a two-bar harmonic rhythm which frequently moved by falling fifth.

Even when melodic lines shift chromatically, their behavior still has a diatonic interpretation. In example 3.2, the chromatic shift in the theme begins with the C# which could be read initially as ornamental or the raised melodic minor 6th degree, but when the passage slips into F# major, the C# assumes a structural significance which was not at first apparent. The viola/clarinet line is in E minor until the A# on beat two of m.9, yet from beat one, m. 9 may be read in F major as an enharmonic spelling of  $\hat{2}\hat{3}\hat{4}\hat{7}$ , or  $\hat{1}\hat{2}\hat{3}\hat{\#6}$  in G minor, or a variant of the martial motive. Thus the A# is set in a diatonic pattern which carries it out of E minor so it arrives coincident with the C# in the theme to shift the key.

The difficult aspect of this modulation is that all of the voices require separate diatonic explanations. They shift at different times and through different diatonic scales. The bass line also moves independently. Though it seems to undergo chromatic displacement down to C#, it actually diatonically resolves a suspension created against the upper voices that have already shifted to F# major. This C# arrives on beat two of bar 11, providing the root of a C# dominant 7. The structure of this modulation is like

overlapping pieces of wood laminated together. Through contrapuntal combinations of disparate tonal elements, Prokofiev grafts a new key onto the phrase.

A hallmark of Prokofiev's style is a unique combination of Classical and Romantic elements. These two pieces are abundantly endowed with traditional melodic patterns, phrase structures, harmonic progressions, and formal schemes. The Sinfonia's greater popularity relative to the Concerto is perhaps due to greater clarity of its traditional elements. A basic weakness of the Concerto, in comparison to the Sinfonia, is its form. Henderson reads an ABA first section, and a second section comprised of an added interlude, an A theme return in G# minor, and a coda.<sup>1</sup> The present analysis posits a ternary design where the orchestral interlude is the middle of the final A section with coda. In either analysis, with the interlude (wedge theme) introduced well beyond the middle of the movement, the arrangement sounds rather episodic. In both works the principal theme area is modeled on a double period. However, while the Sinfonia closes the first theme area convincingly in the tonic key, the Concerto principal theme area opens into a new section through a mediant relation. Towards the end of the movement the Concerto again uses another mediant (G# minor in mm. 102-117), and returns to E minor only five bars before the end of the movement.

In contrast, the Sinfonia is arranged in a modified sonata form where the sections are well defined and possess a clearer functional role. The Sinfonia's first theme area (in contrast to the Concerto's) closes the double period in the tonic, and the wedge material is introduced earlier, in the position of a second theme. Both themes return in a highly

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<sup>1</sup> Lyn Henderson, "A Comparative Study of Prokofiev's Cello Concerto, op. 58 and Sinfonia Concertante, op. 125." *The Music Review* 52 (1991): 123-5.

integrated and tonally clear recapitulation. The recapitulation is approached by a long and well focused retransition. Many of Prokofiev's interesting modulations and key relations, which sound developmental, are contained in the development. Also, all of the thematic material of the movement is presented by the end of the development. These traditional elements help establish a "relatedness" between Prokofiev's more unusual sonorities and key relations and give these pieces their relative degrees of coherence. In the Sinfonia Concertante the soloist plays a slightly higher percentage of the time than in the Concerto, but since the Sinfonia movement's form has more structural coherence, the solo role sounds more assured and thus the soloist has more to say.

Though he may have enjoyed shocking his Conservatory professors, Prokofiev always wanted to be a popular composer. Popularity eluded him when he sought it the most, especially at the end of his life in the Soviet Union. Prokofiev's most popular compositions, such as *Peter and the Wolf* and his Classical Symphony were those that were composed relatively quickly, and the exhaustively reworked *Second Symphony* and the *Fiery Angel* opera were critical failures. However Prokofiev also enjoyed some successes which were reconstructed from earlier failures. The *Scythian Suite* was based on the first ballet that Diaghilev rejected and the *Fiery Angel's* themes were reworked in his popular Third Symphony. Unfortunately, Prokofiev did not live to hear his last and perhaps his best redeemed failure, the Sinfonia Concertante.



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## Appendix A Concerto Précis

### **Principal Theme, A Section, mm. 1-31.**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Introduction Martial motive. e -Orchestra                |
| 2-7   | Principal theme antecedent. e-F <sup>#</sup> . -Solo     |
| 8-16  | Principal theme consequent. f <sup>#</sup> -e. -Solo     |
| 17-22 | Principal theme antecedent e-F <sup>#</sup> . -Orchestra |
| 23-31 | Principal theme consequent. f <sup>#</sup> -C. -Solo     |

### **Contrast Theme, B Section, mm. 32-66.**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 31-42 | C Ionian. -Solo                                    |
| 42-46 | B Aeolian -Orchestra                               |
| 47-54 | G Ionian. -Solo                                    |
| 54-58 | B Aeolian.. Over f <sup>#</sup> in bass -Orchestra |
| 59-62 | C Ionian fragment. -Solo                           |
| 62-66 | B Aeolian. -Orchestra                              |

### **Principal Theme Return, mm. 67-124.**

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 67      | Introduction Martial motive. e -Orchestra                                      |
| 68-78   | Principal theme antecedent. e-F <sup>#</sup> . -Solo (5 bar extension)         |
| 79-87   | Principal theme consequent. f <sup>#</sup> -e -Solo                            |
| 87-101  | Interlude Wedge theme in E minor.  |
| 102     | Introduction Martial motive. E pedal below g <sup>#</sup> chord (E) -Orchestra |
| 103-108 | Principal theme antecedent g <sup>#</sup> -b <sup>b</sup> -Solo                |
| 109-117 | Principal theme consequent. b <sup>b</sup> -g <sup>#</sup> -Solo               |
| 117-124 | Wedge material. g <sup>#</sup> -b <sup>b</sup> - ...                           |
| 125-129 | <b><u>Coda, mm. 125-129.</u></b> Wedge theme material. e.                      |

## Appendix B

### Sinfonia Concertante Précis

#### **Principal Theme Section. mm. 1-50.**

- 1-6 Introduction Martial-motive. e -Orchestra
- 7-12 Principal theme antecedent e-F<sup>#</sup>. -solo
- 13-21 Principal theme consequent f<sup>#</sup>-e. -solo
- 22-28 Principal theme antecedent e-F<sup>#</sup>. -Orchestra
- 29-50 Principal theme consequent f<sup>#</sup>- modulatory -e. -solo

#### **Wedge Theme Section. mm. 50-93.**

- 50-57 Wedge. e/b<sup>b</sup> -Orchestra
- 58-68 Quasi-cadenza. C-A pedal. -solo
- 69-76 Wedge. d/a<sup>b</sup> -Orchestra
- 77-93 Quasi-cadenza d- g pedal. -solo

#### **Contrast Theme Section -developmental. mm. 93-164.**

- 93-101 Introduction. C -Orchestra
- 101-114 C Lydian phrase. -solo
- 115-122 F Aeolian phrase. -solo
- 123-133 B Aeolian phrase. -solo
- 134-145 E<sup>b</sup> Ionian phrase. -solo
- 146-155 B Ionian phrase. -solo
- 156-164 C Lydian phrase. -Orchestra

#### **Retransition. mm. 164-196.**

- 164-176 Alternating Lydian phrase fragments and solo martial motive pizzicato.
- 177-196 Martial-motive variants.

#### **Recapitulation. mm. 197-249.**

- 197 Introduction. martial motive. e. -Orchestra
- 198-214 Principal theme antecedent e-F<sup>#</sup>. -solo 11 bar ext.
- 215-223 Principal theme consequent f<sup>#</sup>-e. -Orchestra
- 223-226 Wedge with solo 32nd triplets. e
- 227-233 Wedge with Principal theme antecedent in solo cello b<sup>b</sup>-C.
- 234-240 Wedge with Principal theme antecedent in solo cello c-D.
- 241-242 Wedge fragments. D-V/e
- 243-249 **Coda.** Wedge theme fragments. e.

## **Vita**

Kent Jensen was born in 1959 in Bloomington, Minnesota. He began private cello lessons in 1973 with Eric Wahlin, a member of the Minnesota Orchestra and former member of the NBC Orchestra during the 1930s and '40s. Jensen holds a Bachelor of Music degree in cello performance from the University of Arizona where he studied with Gordon Epperson (1979-82), and a Master of Music degree in cello performance from Louisiana State University where he studied with Thaddeus Brys (1982-84). During his doctoral residence at Louisiana State University (1985-90), Jensen studied with Thaddeus Brys, Kaaren Makas and Dennis Parker. Jensen resides in the New Orleans area with his wife Saeko Yatsuka and son Isaac Kyo and is a member of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra.

**DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT**

**Candidate:** Kent Jensen

**Major Field:** Music

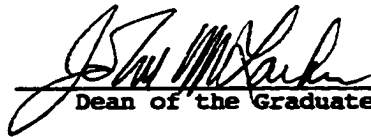
**Title of Dissertation:**

Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante Opus 125, An Analysis and Thematic  
Comparison to the Concerto Opus 58

**Approved:**

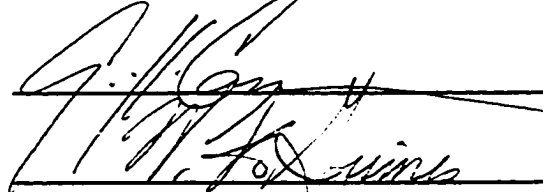


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October 17, 1995