

New ideas cast in old molds. Structures of musical forms in the *Sinfonia Concertante for Cello and Orchestra, op. 125*, by Sergei Prokofiev

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Abstract: *Along with brilliant suggestive melody, harmony replete with surprising cadences, an elegant adventurous rhythm, colourful seductive orchestration, sound intensity ranging from whisper to extreme loudness, Prokofiev uses musical form as raw material imaginatively wrought. The same structure considered from various perspectives reveals various aspects; in the Sinfonia concertante for cello and orchestra, op. 125, there are ample opportunities to interpret form. The point of departure is, as almost always with the Russian composer, the classic and baroque forms and genres.*

Keywords: *form, sinfonia concertante, sonata, variations*

1. Introduction

While in a previous study (Dumitru 2014, 47-65) we discussed aspects of rhythm, meter and tempo in the first Concerto for cello and orchestra by Dmitri Shostakovich, the present paper focuses on the manner in which another great Russian composer of the 20th century, Sergei Prokofiev, conceived the architecture of the Sinfoniaconcertante for cello and orchestra, op. 125 (Sinfonia concertante in the text), which is the re-creation, a few tens of years later, of the Concerto for cello and orchestra op. 58. The similarities and differences between the two versions are not the issue of the present paper, as they have already been discussed by researcher Lyn Henderson (Henderson 1991, 123-136; Lindemann, 2006). Equally, we will only cursorily address the extreme difficulties of the cello part (Morrison, 2009), ...” considered to be impossible to play. Although contemporary cello soloists can actually perform it, it is still a formidable challenge for any musician” (wikipedia, 2017), to mention only issues related to its sonorous construction. Convinced that the technical difficulties can be solved, even at the price of countless practice hours that the cellist must spend in front of the score, we will leave aside interpretation

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issues and direct our attention to Prokofiev's position towards musical forms in *Sinfonia concertante*.

2. Argument

The present paper aims to emphasize the elastic modern personal manner in which Prokofiev merges traditional baroque (theme and variations) and classical (sonata) forms, as well as a century-old genre (*sinfoniaconcertante*) with a musical language that is both personal and innovative. The Russian composer was firmly grounded in the past (Morden, 1980) and his corner stone was the principle of clear melody, elegantly accompanied harmonically and of great rhythmic expressiveness; he thus created fluid, vividly coloured, highly suggestive sound images. This very closely describes the thinking behind the piece whose form we will analyze in the present paper.

3. Part I

It can be said that the macro-structure of the initial section of the *Sinfoniaconcertante* is created in sonata form, although there are arguments in favour of a three-part construction A B A'. During our analysis we will discuss in detail the differences between and similarities of the two forms. With their tempo, metre, rhythm, harmonic and melodic structure in which woodwind instruments, horns and string instruments take part, the first four bars suggest a march-like beat - it is as if a platoon are on parade - this Introduction is reminiscent of the sonata form.

The image shows a musical score for the string section of the Sinfonia Concertante, Part I, bars 1-4. The score is for Violini I, Violini II, Viole, Violoncelli, and Contrabassi. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a metronome marking of 96. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score shows the initial four bars of the orchestral introduction, featuring a march-like beat. Dynamics include *ff*, *f*, and *p*. Performance instructions include 'pizz.' (pizzicato), 'pizz. arco', and 'pizz. arco'.

Example 1. *Part I, bars 1-4, Orchestral introduction, strings only*

Considering that at bar 6 Theme I of the Exposition of the sonata form begins, an instant change in the character of the music can be perceived when the solo instrument appears. Although the previous melodic contour (a sequence of two seconds and a third) is retained in the accompaniment, the cello's narrative is sad,

sorrowful and mysterious at the same time; it plays in a comparatively high register, characteristic of the violin rather than of the cello, which should be performed on string

Example 2. Part I, bars 6-20, Theme I.

One argument in favour of the sonata form are the bars 21-49, which create a bridge organized in three segments: Bridge 1, orchestral, is reminiscent of the Introduction (bars 21-28), while Bridge 2 is closer to the characteristics of Theme I, given the solo interventions in the same high register (bars 29 - 38), and finally Bridge 3, which creates a passage to the next Theme (bars 39 - 49).

Unlike the first expository thematic fragment, the section starting from bar 50 consists of a genuine thematic Group, which is far from being second in importance, and is in sharp contrast in terms of ideas with the first; it begins with the same tonal area E minor in which the first musical idea was placed. This Group has a three-stanza structure, based on the IIA IIB IIA' pattern. In IIA, Prokofiev retains the gradual melody scalar profile and the strictly orchestral expression that appears in the Introduction to the Exposition; the 8 bars (50-57) can also be interpreted as an Introduction to Theme II. The sound character is substantially modified, especially due to contrasting orchestral registers (low versus high) and the manner in which the player sections respond to each other. The general atmosphere is dim, attenuated, gelid.

Example 3. Part I, bars 50-57, Theme Group IIA.

The sequence of the first four bars is easy to see, as it moves from fundamental note E to B flat, and it is equally easy to remark on the ascent of low pitched instruments up a minor-major scale. The manner in which the violins are treated is innovative, as their register and trémolo create the impression of glacial mist that was mentioned earlier.

IIB (bars 58-68) brings the cello again to the fore, with an arpeggiato shift from the low to the high register and back, expressing clear, bold, almost imperative musical ideas whose energy then gradually fades.

Example 4. Bars 58-68, Theme Group IIB.

In IIA' the orchestral path faithfully replicates that in IIA, this time starting from the fundamental notes D and A flat, which are one tone lower than the previous exposition; the novelty lies in the meandering melody of the cello in lower values

and dynamics. The Exposition of the sonata form ends with a Conclusion placed between bars 77-92, where the cello's expression is a cadential expression, while the orchestra is limited to a set of chord structures:

The image shows a musical score for Example 5, bars 77-84, which is a fragment of the Conclusion in a cadence type. The score is arranged in a system with multiple staves. The instruments listed are Tr-be (Trumpet), Cor. (Coronet), V-a solo (Violin solo), Ob. (Oboe), Cl. (Clarinet), Fag. (Bassoon), Tr-be (Trumpet), Cor. (Coronet), V-a solo (Violin solo), V-c (Viola), and C-b (Cello). The V-a solo part is marked 'espress.' and 'f'. The V-c part is marked 'p pesante'. The C-b part is marked 'p pesante'. The score shows a cadential expression for the cello, while the orchestra is limited to a set of chord structures.

Example 5. Bars 77-84, a fragment of the Conclusion, cadence type.

If we were to consider only what we have found so far, the exposition of the sonata form is obvious, with the exception of the difference between the key in Theme I and II, that both start from the same fundamental note E. The different emotion and state between the two themes is obvious, they are similar to visual or cinematographic images, which is frequent with Prokofiev who was, among other things, the author of exceptional ballet pieces.

According to rule, the Development should start at bar 93. It is true that here a new section clearly begins, extending up to bar 196; in our analysis we will see if this section transforms, alters, mixes the themes to be found in the sound material of the Exposition. Throughout the 100 bars the thematic ideas of the Exposition are not present, the only clues relating it to the first large section of the form is a preference for the gradual scalar profile of the cello solo and its subtle orchestral accompaniment.

Analyzing and listening to the piece itself indicates that there are 5 segments of the great middle section that are expressed as follows: segment 1 (bars 93-114) begins with a orchestral sound pulp, however, accompaniment is attenuated; segment 2 (bars 115-133) is characterized by the solo cello's gradual scalar profile, the double strings of sixths and eighths included; segment 3 (bars 134-152) carries a small tendency to develop an idea introduced by the same solo cello in the high register; segment 4 (bars 153-176) brings in the brass and the low strings.

The image displays a page of a musical score for Example 6, Part I, bars 177-187, segment no. 5 of the middle section. The score is written for a large ensemble and includes the following parts:

- Cassa**: Percussion part with a tempo marking "poco a poco accelerando".
- V.c. solo**: Solo cello part, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic.
- V.lo**: Violoncello part.
- V.co**: Violino part.
- C.b.**: Contrabasso part.
- Fl.**: Flute part.
- V.c. solo**: A second solo cello part, also starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic.
- String and Woodwind Sections**: Multiple staves for strings (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Cellos, Contrabasses) and woodwinds (Oboes, Cor Anglais, Timpani). Dynamics range from *pp* to *sf*.

The score features various performance instructions such as *arco*, *pizz.*, *arco*, and *arco*. A rehearsal mark "20" is visible above the Oboe part. The page number "150" is located at the end of the first system.

Example 6. Part I, bars 177-187, segment no. 5 of the middle section.

The last segment, no. 5 (bars 177-196), is the only one that manifestly reminds of the musical material in the Exposition, although it reminds more of the Introduction than of the thematic ideas. The soloist's path meanders here, being increasingly more difficult as a result of extended registers and chromatic notes.

The impression that made us state that at the end of Part I the Sinfoniaconcertantedisplays a sonata form can be interpreted in a slightly different manner due to the analysis of the second large section (no. II). We see that the latter does not have the nature of a Development but looks more like the middle fragment of a three-stanza form. Moreover, we could expand this idea and interpret segment no. V as an Introduction of the final section. However, the arguments in favour of the previous statement are easy to refute on account of the extraordinary feeling of return at bar 197 and the following one, where Theme I emerges again with the full force of an entire regiment marching forth. Paradoxically, or at least apparently so, the sound is reminiscent of the beginning of a Reprise, which almost obliterates the absence of the development quality of the middle section.

Example 7. Part I, bars 197-201, Reprise, fragment of Theme I.

As the cello's melodic contour swings between the super high and the middle-to-low register, the reappearance of Theme I brings to the fore the orchestral discourse, also placed in the upper level of the general musical register, with a remarkable expression resulting from the striking of the violin's and viola's upper strings.

Example 8. *Part I, bars 207-211, Reprise, fragment from the end of Theme I.*

The musical line is mildly descending towards the lower register, the lower strings take over the rhythmic motif previously presented by the violins in the pizzicato. The fragment takes a particular colour due to the addition of an extra muted trumpet that plays in a register which is rather suitable for the horn.

A passage fragment vaguely reminiscent of the second segment in the Bridge of the Exposition takes us to thematic structure no. II; from it, Prokofiev only retains IIA and IIA', presented, however, in reverse order (i.e. first IIA', bars 223-233, and then IIA, bars 234-242).

Bar 243 brings an ending only 7 bars long which can be seen rather like a conclusion of the Reprise than a Coda of Part I.

Example 9. *Part I, bars 243-244, the beginning of the final fragment.*

The analysis of the first part of the Sinfoniaconcertante reveals a structure adapted to Prokofiev's highly original compositional ideas. In the three-part A B A' pattern a sonata form is hidden, so that the result emphasizes the Exposition (A) and the Reprise (A') and abandons the reshaping effort of the Development (B). The impressive recursion of Theme I in section A', as well as the absence of a genuine Coda, are also both arguments in favour of the combination we have just suggested.

The brevity and lack of energy of the first part's ending may be actually intentional so as to make way for Part II, the actual centre of gravity of the entire piece.

4. Part II

The size of this part itself is impressive (509 bars), as the composer needed ample room to present his musical ideas; even when taken out of context, it can well stand as a piece in itself. To anticipate, we can say at this early point that the form is that of a sonata in which the elements of another form are blended, to be disclosed at the end of the analysis. *Allegro giusto* is the tempo selected for the unfolding of the musical section, beginning with an Introduction of great solo virtuosity (bars 1-21).

The image shows a musical score for Part II, bars 5-20, a fragment of the Introduction. The score is written for a large ensemble, including Violin solo, Oboe, Flute, Violin solo, Violin all, Violin solo, Clarinet, Flute, Violin solo, and Piano. The music is marked 'f con brio' and 'mf'. The score shows a complex, rhythmic passage with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, characteristic of Prokofiev's style. The score is divided into two systems, with bar numbers 10, 20, and 28 indicated.

Example 10. *Part II, bars 5-20, a fragment of the Introduction, of great virtuosity.*

The Exposition of the sonata form is here considerably more substantial compared to the first part of the Sinfonia concertante, since Prokofiev lays much more emphasis on Theme I, which he devises as a genuine Group I consisting of three thematic ideas separated by transitions. This first group is opposed, in obvious sound contrast, to a second group, which is still larger, while the Exposition section ends with a Conclusion and a Cadence of an obviously developing nature for the solo cello. The group IA reveals a Prokofiev that is cognizant of the latest trends embraced by his contemporaries, i.e. the repetitive minimalist technique.

The example above, where the clarinets, bassoons, violas and cellos in the orchestra repeat the same group of sounds, demonstrates the use of the technique of repetition mentioned previously.

Example 11. *Part II, bars 24-32, a fragment of Group IA.*

The solo cello takes advantage of the orchestra's neutral treatment and performs a passionate, intense theme, which is sentimental at the same time; the theme is also conceived with the principle of repetition in mind.

Bars 38-45, which at first sight may seem to serve as a bridge, are in actual fact a transition towards another thematic segment of the first expository Group. Section IB (bars 46-61) retains the quality of the previous theme exposition, of which it reminds towards the end. The cello presents its ideas mainly in the high register and is accompanied by a supple orchestral discourse, devised homophonically in a typical accompaniment outlay.

Example 12. Part II, bars 45-54 in Group IB.

Another transitional fragment occurs between bars 62-71 and is created using the same repetitive principle; however, this time it is only the orchestra, with almost all the instruments playing, which retains the vigorous nature of Thematic Group I.

The third segment, IC, reveals a kaleidoscope-like path; the image is reminiscent of ballet music suggesting reflections and evocative colours that trigger the frenzy of muscular human bodies. The similarity with some fragments of the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* is obvious. When the exuberant Group IC (example presented above) is concluded, a segment occurs which is evocative of other sound horizons in sharp contrast with the thematic ideas previously analyzed. If the components IA, IB and IC of the Thematic group I are similar in terms of ideas and of vigorous unsophisticated sentiments, the theme presented in the following fragment comes from a different world - it is for this very reason that the fragment that separates them can be considered a Bridge, especially since it is rather extensive (bars 89-115).

The musical score for Example 13, Part II, bars 45-54, is presented in two systems. The first system includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Fag.), Trombone (Tr-be), and Violoncello solo (V.c. solo). The second system includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Trombone (Tr-be), and Violoncello solo (V.c. solo). The piano accompaniment is shown in two staves below each system. Dynamics include *mf*, *pp*, *pizz.*, *arco*, and *ord. v.* The score features various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 13. Part II, bars 45-54, a fragment of the Group IC.

Prokofiev divides the Bridge into two distinct segments: the first one (bars 89-96) retains the vigorous nature of the previous section, while the second (bars 97-115) prepares the dramatic change in the sound expression. This starts at bar 116, where Thematic Group II begins; IIA is a warm sentimental theme, with its vibrant expressiveness overflowing into the cello's high register.

Example 14. Part II, bars 117-131, a fragment of IIA.

The readerscan have a look at the example and try to form in their mind an auditory image of the wonderful passionate sound of the second system in the example above – the feeling it can create is almost ecstatic! As if this were not enough, in the next four bars Prokofiev caresses his audience with a new delicate tender theme, one of the tenderest in the entire musical literature.

Example 15. Part II, bars 132-135, a fragment of IIB.

Another Transition (bars 36-148), which is the 3rd in the sequence of the fragments we designate by this name, moves towards a slightly different repetition of IIA (bars 149-171) and IIB (172-178). The musical contour then moves towards a brief Conclusion (bars 179-187), which is surprisingly tragic; this is doubled by a substantial cello cadence along bars 188-242. At the beginning of the present study, we said that we are less interested in the degree of difficulty of the solo instrument's discourse; we cannot, however, ignore the great inventiveness used to compose this fragment. The instrumental sections do not serve a hollow virtuosity, an empty platitudinous demonstration of the mastery of the soloist's arms and fingers. The cadence path bears the imprint of the melodic meaning, it takes over intonations from both thematic groups, which it alters and erodes to disintegration; to experienced cellists this section may reveal the help the composer was provided by the famous Mstislav Rostropovich for the treatment of the solo cello.

45

V-c
solo

ff *espress.* *pizz.*

Più mosso e poco a poco accelerando

poco rit.

200

210

210

210

210

210

210

Example 16. Part II, a fragment of the cello solo's cadence.

The second extended section of Part II of the Sinfoniaconcertante begins at bar 243; the feature revealed by the composer in the following 115 bars is one of obvious thematic arrangement. Similar to the Exposition, the Development begins with an introduction of great virtuosity, which continues the cello's cadence in the repetitive manner shown in Example 11.

The image displays a musical score for Example 17, Part II, bars 243-248. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Trombone (Tr-be), and Violoncello solo (V-c solo). The Oboe and Trombone parts play a repetitive rhythmic pattern marked 'senza sord.' and 'Facilitazione'. The Violoncello solo part features a complex, virtuosic line with 'pizz.' (pizzicato) markings. The second system shows the Oboe and Violoncello solo parts continuing their respective parts.

Example 17. Part II, bars 243-248, a fragment of the Introduction to the Development characterised by great virtuosity.

The composer chose the theme IC for the fragment between bars 243-271 with the intention of elaborating on it; this process goes to cell level, which takes the sound away from its source in the Exposition. The theme of the bassoon in *mp* is somewhat difficult to identify among the strong repetitive environment of the solo cello and of the violins (bars 254-255), but it is easier to trace when it is performed by the first violins (bars 266-269) whose strings are plucked in a register that makes it stand out against the soloist's contour which moves between the low and the medium register.

V-c solo

div. pizz.

mp

p

pizz.

p

V-c solo

Example 18. Part II, bars 265-269, a fragment of the IC in the Development.

Prokofiev temporarily abandons the Thematic group I and, using another transition (the 4th, at bars 272-282), goes to the Thematic group II, which is reminiscent of both IIA and IIB. The adaptation of Theme IIA (bars 283-310) begins ingeniously with a delicate sound performed by the strings and the triangle, where the horn's octave leaps occur, in the medium to high register. The expressive entrance of the cello is spiced up by Theme IC, illustrated in the bassoons' timber *a due*, which is much easier to trace within this sound environment.

The musical score for Example 19, Part II, bars 283-295, is a fragment of the IIA in the Development. It features a Cor I (Cornet I) part with a 'I solo' marking and a dynamic of 'p'. The strings (T-lo, V-o solo) play a rhythmic accompaniment with dynamics of 'pp' and 'p'. The woodwinds (Fag., T-lo) have dynamics of 'pp' and 'mp'. The vocal solo part (V-o solo) is marked 'div.' and 'pp'. The piano accompaniment (pizz.) is marked 'pp'.

Example 19. Part II, bars 283-295, a fragment of the IIA in the Development.

Theme IIB (bars 311-316) retains the character presented in the Exposition, with its discreet ornaments, and is followed by another transitional fragment (the 5th from the beginning of the 2nd part of the Sinfoniaconcertante, bars 317-334); this fragment is, in a manner of speaking, a sort of a second short cadence that takes us back to Theme IC (bars 335-346). We see here that Prokofiev valued this theme

greatly since he returned to it in a very steady tempo and illustrated it using the dialogue between the colours of the muted trumpets, the clarinet and the violas in pizzicato, then of the oboe, while the solo cello plays ascending and descending scales.

Example 20. *Part II, bars 335-340, a fragment of the resumed Theme IIC in the Development.*

The sixth and final transition of the Development (bars 347-358) has the sound of a wave reaching the shore and prepares the third large section of the sonata form, the Reprise; we will not concentrate on it before remarking on how the Development is created in terms of form. Its structure reveals a three-stanza pattern A B A', where A (bars 243-282) consists of the Introduction, theme IC and transition IV, while B (bars 283-334) includes themes IIA, IIB and transition V, and A' (bars 335-358) reveals theme IC and transition VI.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| A (bars 243-282) | B (bars 283-334) | A' (bars 335-358) |
| Introduction, IC, transition IV | IIA, IIB, transition V | IC, transition VI |

Example 21. *Part II, the structure of the Development.*

In the example above we can see the way in which Prokofiev merges classical forms in a creative concept that is both unified and original; here, a self standing form - the A B A' three-stanza pattern expresses the structure of the middle section of the sonata form. At the end of our analysis we will see how, in turn, the dual nature of the sonata is closely intertwined with the fundamental features of another musical structure.

Let us now return to the Reprise, which begins at bar 359. Faithful to his own concept, the composer revisits Thematic group I, which this time is smaller in size, while theme IA (bars 359-376) brings in a fresh energy.

Example 22. Part II, bars 362-367, a fragment of the IA in the Reprise.

To make the sound of the theme already presented by the solo cello richer, Prokofiev takes it an octave higher compared to the Exposition, which brings a note of increased harshness – a metal-like sound, some musicians would say - to the solo instrument's discourse. The limitation of Thematic group I mentioned earlier

consists of the elimination of Theme IB and the presentation of Theme IC, which is reached by resorting to Transition I (identical to that in the Exposition, bars 377-388). The C of the thematic group is, in its turn, condensed (bars 389-396) and outlines the same sound profile that we have meanwhile become familiar with; the progress towards Thematic group II continues naturally with the Bridge reduced to segment 1 (bars 397-404).

The condensation operated by Prokofiev on the first thematic group and the Bridge is partially applied to Thematic group II, in the sense that it still consists of IIA only (bars 405-436) and IIB (bars 437-443), although the themes are not resumed in a varied form, as it happens in the case of the Exposition. The Conclusion (bars 444-453), identical to the previous one, brings the Reprise to an end and makes room for the Coda (bars 454-the end).

To emphasize the closing nature of Part II, the composer drives the sound stream to an end that makes it look like a delta with two distributaries: Coda 1 (bars 454-470) accumulates tension and accelerates the tempo.

Example 23. Part II, bars 454-460, the beginning of Coda 1.

Coda 2 (bars 471-the end) grows to a paroxysmal tension, the sound stream breaks in ample harsh orchestral sound flows; they are also repetitive, as if to remind us of the repetitive nature of the beginning.

The image displays a musical score for Example 24, Part II, bars 482-487, a fragment of Coda 2. The score is arranged in a system with multiple staves. The instruments listed are Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Fag.), Trumpet III (Tr-ne III), and Tuba. The music is characterized by repetitive, rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings such as (a2). The score is written in a complex, multi-measure format, with various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 24. Part II, bars 482-487, a fragment of Coda 2.

The final chords of Part II of the Sinfoniaconcertante burst in the tensed, increasingly louder sound of the horns and trombones which thus conclude the ingeniously devised, kaleidoscope-like progress. This very different and varied content is an argument in favour of our earlier statement that the sonata form - which cannot be denied - is presented in the form of the rhapsody! The composer masterfully absorbs from it the element of variedness and transcends the folklore element in the ballad-like expression of Theme IIA, whose powerful manifestation and vibrant emotion could well characterize a heroic poem. We can thus draw this analysis to its natural conclusion, that the amazing structure and nature of the second part is that of a sonata-fantasy, a term which is not specific of musicology; it is, however, acceptable and can be demonstrated within the context of Prokofiev's music.

5. Part III

Part III of the Sinfonia concertante undoubtedly presents a form of theme and variations characteristic of the Baroque and of Classicism, shaped by the composer in a dual contour based on the two-sided structure A (rapid tempo) B (steady tempo) and Coda (very fast tempo). It is thus a new demonstration of the manner in which the structure of the musical discourse is adapted to the author's aesthetic as well as practical needs.

The theme (bars 1-18) is conceived in E major with altered notes; it is presented twice by the solo cello; the second presentation is slightly shorter, in sixths.

Violoncello solo

74

Andante con moto

Violini I

Violini II

Viola

Violoncelli

Contrabassi

mf *p*

mf *p*

Example 25. Part III, bars 1-15, the Theme.

The theme is narrative, conversational in nature, perhaps slightly darkened by the register tenor octave, below middle, and the tempo (*Andante con moto*) where the first phrase is presented, in a manner obviously reminiscent of some of Händel's creations. The second sentence retains the same tempo but transfers the sounds of the theme to the central octave, which now suggests light, boldness, youth.

The 1st Variation (bars 19-72) brings with it a change in the metre from 3/2 to 3/4 and transforms the binary into a tertiary pulse, even if the unit is still the crotchet. It is a method that actually alters the tempo from a slow to a fast one, although the score bears no indication to that effect. We are, however, convinced that Prokofiev did think of this tempo, may have even made a note of it, which was mistakenly omitted by the editor, for later (at bar 188, the 4th variation) the indication *Allegretto* (*pocomenomosso*) appears, which makes no sense in the context in which the previous notation had been *Andante con moto* at the first bar.

The shortened theme conceived in a three-part manner is resumed in turn by the muted trumpets, the horns, the flutes and clarinets, while the solo cello performs virtuosic passages in eighth notes.

The musical score for Example 26, Part III, bars 19-30, the beginning of Variation I, is presented in a multi-staff format. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The instruments and parts shown are:

- Fag. I:** First Flute, playing a melodic line with dynamics *mp* and *mf*.
- Tr-be:** Trumpet, playing a melodic line with dynamics *mp* and *mf*, marked *con sord.* (con sordina).
- V-c solo:** Solo Cello, playing a virtuosic eighth-note passage with dynamics *mf* and *mp*.
- V-c:** Cello, playing a supporting line with dynamics *mp*.
- Ob. I:** Oboe, playing a melodic line with dynamics *p*.
- Fag. I:** Second Flute, playing a melodic line with dynamics *p*.
- Tr-be:** Trumpet, playing a melodic line with dynamics *p*.
- Cor. I:** Horn, playing a melodic line with dynamics *mp*.
- Tuba:** Tuba, playing a melodic line with dynamics *pp*.
- V-c solo:** Solo Cello, continuing the eighth-note passage with dynamics *mf* and *mp*.
- V-c:** Cello, playing a supporting line with dynamics *mp*.

The score concludes with a rehearsal mark '30' at the end of the bottom staff.

Example 26. Part III, bars 19-30, the beginning of Variation I

Between the first and the second variation there is an instrumental cadence that has a transitional structural role, however, at the same time, beyond the obvious technical difficulties it carries, it also has a rhythmic and melody expressiveness (pizzicato on four strings, a very quick succession of pizzicato and arco, double strings in various intervals).

Variation II (bars 105-148) is a bravura section; the horns shine in eight chords that are immediately answered in a rhythm of eighth notes where the second sound is always replaced by a pause, which gives the impression of unsteadiness, of a „rhythmical limp”.

The musical score for Example 27, Part III, bars 105-118, the beginning of Variation II, is presented in a multi-staff format. The instruments and parts are as follows:

- Picc.**: Piccolo, starting with a *solo* marking and *mf* dynamics.
- Cl. I**: Clarinet I, also starting with a *solo* marking and *mf* dynamics.
- Cor.**: Cor Anglais, playing a rhythmic accompaniment.
- Tuba**: Tuba, playing a rhythmic accompaniment.
- Timp.**: Timpani, playing a rhythmic accompaniment.
- V-c solo**: Violoncello solo, starting with *f pizz.* and *arco* markings.
- V-c**: Violoncello, starting with *f pizz.* and *non div.* markings.
- C-b**: Contrabass, starting with *f pizz.* and *f* markings.
- Cl.**: Clarinet, playing a melodic line.
- Fag.**: Bassoon, playing a melodic line.
- Tr-be**: Trumpet, starting with *f* and *Icon sord.* markings.
- Cor.**: Horns, playing a melodic line.
- Timp.**: Timpani, playing a rhythmic accompaniment.
- V-c solo**: Violoncello solo, starting with *pizz.* and *mf* markings.
- V-ni I**: Violin I, starting with *f arco* markings.
- V-le**: Viola, starting with *f arco* markings.
- V-c**: Violoncello, starting with *f arco* and *div. mf* markings.
- C-b**: Contrabass, starting with *f pizz.* and *mf* markings.

Example 27. Part III, bars 105-118, the beginning of Variation II.

Variation III (bars 149-187) retains the same tempo and is the first in which the theme is transformed in a manner which renders it different from the initial one. The mood of this part is one of playfulness, but also haughtiness and even sarcasm when the soloist's discourse goes to the register of the harmonics.

The musical score for Variation III (bars 149-187) is presented in a concert band arrangement. The instruments listed on the left are:

- Ob.
- Cl.
- Fag.
- Cor.
- V-c solo
- V-n I
- Cl.
- Fag.
- Cor.
- V-c solo
- String section (pizzicato)

The score includes various dynamic markings and performance instructions:

- p* (piano)
- mp* (mezzo-piano)
- piss.* (pizzicato)
- piss. p* (pizzicato piano)
- p* (piano)
- piss.* (pizzicato)
- p* (piano)

The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and dynamic markings such as *p*, *mp*, and *piss.* The string section includes a *piss.* (pizzicato) marking.

The musical score for Example 28, Part III, bars 155-176, is a fragment of Variation III. It is written for a full orchestra and a solo voice. The woodwind section (Ob., Cl., Fag.) and strings (Cor. I II, V. c.) play a rhythmic accompaniment. The solo voice (V. c. solo) has a melodic line. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *a2* (second octave). The number 88 is in a box in the top right of the woodwind section.

Example 28. Part III, bars 155-176, a fragment of Variation III.

Variation IV (bars 188-263) comes with a slower tempo - as mentioned earlier; with it, comes a sequential path, first with the orchestra and then with the solo instrument, which seems to be heavy-laden by the double strings with varying intervals and sometimes also varying rhythms. Although in terms of the theme, the distance from the original increases, we could equally say that the composer returns to the conversational mood of the beginning.

Allegretto (poco meno mosso)

Example 29. Part III, bars 188-222, a fragment of Variation IV.

Variation V (bars 264-283) is a very short and altered repetition of Variation II, while Variation IV (bars 284-311), mainly orchestral, reveals an impressive deploy of sounds with emphasis on the brass section. It is the moment when Prokofiev abandons the rapid tempo - and implicitly section A mentioned earlier - and aims at a passage towards a different, calmer, more reflective mood, which is the reason for a new transition (bars 312-336).

Variation VII (bars 337-348) represents the beginning of the slow B section and is suggestive of a mood of introversion and sedate abandon; Prokofiev masterfully uses the instruments - the piccolo, the celeste - to perform scales in the

highregister, the first violins and the clarinets' arpeggios relying on the bassons' ostinato quarter notes. The tempo is *Pocomenomosso* once more, although a return to the *Andante* of the beginning would also be in order; the atmosphere is airy, entirely adapted to an almost exact repetition of the theme by the solo cello. The metre requires increased attention, since the composer retains a discourse in the 6/4 of the transition section, although the manner in which the durations are grouped is rather evocative of the initial 3/2.

99 *Poco meno mosso*

Fl. *I solo*
 Ob. *pp leggiero*
 Cl. *pp*
 Fag. *I solo*
 Timp. *pp*
 Celesta
 V. solo *mp*
 V. *pp*
 Vi. *pp*
 Cb. *pp* *div. pizz.* *(ord.)* *pp unis.* *div.*

Ob.

Cl.

Fag.

Cor.

Timp.

Celesta

V.e. solo

V-n I

V-n II

C-b.

340

Ob.

Cl.

Fag.

Tr-ni

Tuba

Timp.

Celesta

V.e. solo

V-n I

V-n II

C-b.

I solo

p

pp

mf

mf

pp

mfz sprizz.

unis.

Example 30. Part III, bars 337-345, a fragment of Variation VII.

Variation VIII (bars 349-356) briefly reminds us of the theme in the trumpet section and is followed by a 3rd transition (bars 357-370) towards the final section, the Coda. This section, from bar 371 to the end, divided into segments - 1 (bars 371-

384) and 2 (bars 385 to the end) - introduces a special dark atmosphere, mainly created by instruments such as the tuba and the bassoon playing in the low register, as well as the repetitive technique of the cello, the attack in *fp* followed by *crescendo* suggesting billowy sounds successively breaking against the shore.

The image shows a musical score for Example 31, Part III, bars 370-376. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes a Violin solo (V.o. solo) with a melodic line starting in bar 370, and a piano accompaniment with a repetitive sixteenth-note pattern in the cello/bassoon part. The second system includes a Bassoon (Fag.), Trumpet (Tr-be), Tuba, and Violin solo (V.o. solo). The Bassoon and Tuba play a low, repetitive pattern. The Violin solo in the second system has a melodic line with a 'Il solo' marking. Dynamics include *f*, *mp*, and *fp*.

Example 31. Part III, bars 370-376, the beginning of the Coda.

The researcher into the score is again faced with a question: did the composer intend to change the tempo here? The discourse is obviously more dynamic, the repeated sixteenth notes and eighth notes reinforce this idea, the more so as the conclusion to the third part - and implicitly to the entire piece - is being prepared here. Could this again be the editor's omission? The interpreters - the soloist and the conductor - are in a difficult position. The entire musical path, especially the dynamic one, requires a faster tempo, however, due respect to the score requires that the performers check their impulses and comply with this request which is curious, to say the least, in this context.

6. Conclusions

At the end of our analysis, we can say that each of the three parts can be placed at the beginning, middle or end of the piece - without any loss in terms of expressiveness, as if they were parts of a musical puzzle. The theme and variations

can be very well placed at the beginning, followed by the sonata forms, and the variations can be equally placed in the middle section, without any alteration to the essence of the piece. We pay homage to Prokofiev's structural thinking, which places some of the forms inside the others, combines them in various ways, as his own sensitivity on one hand, his reason on the other, move him towards the masterful combination in a Lego game. Moreover, the composer's concern for ways to combine sounds and moods that create aesthetic responses is obvious; the cello's technical difficulties are skillfully subordinated to aesthetic aims. What Prokofiev masters here is the exploitation of the instrument's expressiveness, of its baritone-like sound and its amazing range of sound suggestions, and takes it to peaks of unparalleled, charming beauty!

7. References

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