

Hierarchical Form in Prokofiev's Flute Sonata Op. 94, II. Scherzo

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Abstract

When Prokofiev wrote the Flute Sonata Op. 94, Soviet composers were torn between their own artistic styles and the need to conform to the ideals of “soviet realism.” In the second movement of the flute sonata, Prokofiev alternates between his own style of composition and the “soviet realism” style. The displaced chromaticism throughout the piece, although adopted by other Soviet composers of this period, is representative of Prokofiev’s individual style. Within this movement, Prokofiev uses form as a basis for making distinction between harmonic ambiguity and stability, motivic repetition and lyricism, and phrase expansion and phrase regularity. Although the form of this movement is traditional in its harmonic relationship and small and large-scale structures, Prokofiev uses the form in a way that facilitates his relationship between his own compositional desires and the political constraints of the Soviet style.

Keywords: Prokofiev, Sergei; Flute Sonata Op. 94; Scherzo and Trio form; displaced chromaticism

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At the time in which Sergei Prokofiev wrote his Flute Sonata Op. 94, in 1943, the composer was living in Russia amid World War II. The war had forced him to be evacuated several times, moving to several locations across Russia. Prokofiev was Russian born and studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, however he spent many years after his graduation living in the United States and Paris. Prokofiev's compositions are influenced by his experiences while traveling in the United States and Europe. In Paris, Prokofiev rivaled Stravinsky. Prokofiev's compositions, while harmonically complex and dissonant, remained formally, rhythmically, melodically, and metrically traditional in comparison to Stravinsky's polyrhythms and ambiguous meters. Therefore, despite his popularity, Prokofiev never became as provocative as Stravinsky. This may have been one factor that led Prokofiev to return to Russia in 1936, where he remained until his death in 1953. At the time that Prokofiev was writing the Flute Sonata Op. 94, artists were under pressure from the Soviet regime to compose in the style of "socialist realism." Prokofiev had also been composing children's music such as Peter and the Wolf around this time.¹

From 1936 to 1950, composers such as Prokofiev were under intense political pressure to conform to style of "socialist realism." While early influences in Soviet Russian music encouraged innovation and modernism in composers, music of this period discouraged these very ideas. Prokofiev, with his march-like rhythms and meters and clear harmonic framework

¹ Redepenning, Dorothea. "Prokofiev, Sergey." *Grove Music Online*, n.d.

made interesting by his unique harmonic language, fit well into this style of Russian music.²

These circumstances forced Prokofiev to negotiate between the ideals of Soviet music and his own compositional style. Prokofiev's Flute Sonata Op. 94 is one example of how this conflict manifests itself in his music from this period.

Sergei Prokofiev was commissioned to write a sonata for flute and piano by the Committee on Artistic Affairs of the USSR.³ At the time Prokofiev was living in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, where he was working with Sergei Eisenstein at the United Film Studio. In a letter to Nikolai Miaskovsky, Prokofiev referred to the commission as “not exactly timely, but pleasant.”⁴ In his autobiography Prokofiev wrote that he “had long wished to write music for the flute, an instrument which [he] felt had been undeservedly neglected.”⁵ Prokofiev expressed a desire to write the sonata in a “delicate, fluid classical style.”⁶

The year of 1943, when Prokofiev wrote the sonata, was a prosperous year for Prokofiev. Even though his country was at war, Prokofiev was awarded the Stalin Prize for his Seventh Sonata, awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor for his contributions to Soviet music, given the title of Honored Artist of the RSFSR,⁷ and was busy with his collaboration with Sergei Eisenstein on *Ivan the Terrible*. Prokofiev also traveled to Perm in Urals in 1943 and in Alma-Ata and Perm, Prokofiev composed the Flute Sonata in D Major, Op. 94 before returning to

² Slonimsky, Nicolas. “The Changing Style of Soviet Music.” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 3, no. 3 (1950): 236–55. <https://doi.org/10.2307/829735>.

³ Prokofiev, Sergei. *Selected letters of Sergei Prokofiev*. Edited by Harlow Robinson. Boston: Northeastern University press, 1998. 327.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 327.

⁵ Prokofiev, Sergei. *The Artist and the War*. Foreign Languages Publishing House. pgs. 124-132.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pgs. 124-132.

⁷ Nestyev, I. V., Florence Jonas, and Nicolas Slonimsky. *Prokofiev*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1960.

Moscow in the same year.⁸ The first performance of the sonata was on December 7, 1943 by flutist Nikolay Kharkovsky and pianist Sviatoslav Richter. Prokofiev later arranged the sonata for violin at the request of violinist David Oistrakh, who also helped with the arrangement.⁹

The second movement of Prokofiev's *Flute Sonata in D Major* utilizes a hierarchical-based formal structure highlighting distinctive contrasts between detached, disjunct motives and smooth conjunct lines, between irregular and regular phrasing, and between elements of dissonance within tonal ambiguity versus chromaticism within a tonal background. The ternary, Scherzo and Trio structure found in this movement allows for Prokofiev clearly make stylistic distinctions between the Scherzo and the Trio of the movement. While the Scherzo contains short motives, irregular phrasing, and ambiguous meter, the Trio has longer melodic lines, regular phrasing, and maintains a simple duple meter. This distinction between the two sections is further highlighted by the different treatments of the chromatic alterations of diatonic harmonies in each section (See table 1).

Discussion of #4/b5

Perhaps the most distinct characteristic of Prokofiev's music is his unique harmonic language, often referred to as "wrong-note harmonies" by music historians and theorists. It is important to address this characteristic here, as understanding how Prokofiev utilizes this language in the more local sense of individual chord changes will inform how he uses it in the more global sense of overall form. Throughout this movement, Prokofiev employs dissonance by

⁸ Stevens, Danielle Emily. *Sonata for Flute and Piano in D Major, Op. 94 by Sergei Prokofiev: A Performance Guide*. Texas State University, San Marcos, 2014.

⁹ Minturn, Neil. *The Music of Sergei Prokofiev*. Composers of the Twentieth Century. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.

Table 1 - Hierarchy of Prokofiev's Form

Scherzo (Exposition)		Trio (Contrasting Middle)		Scherzo (Recapitulation)	
Overall:	motivic, musematic, use of phrase expansion to create longer phrases, faster harmonic rhythm	Overall:	lyrical, discursive, regular four-bar phrasing, slower harmonic rhythm	Overall:	motivic, musematic, use of phrase expansion to create longer phrases, faster harmonic rhythm
section a	section b	section a	section b	section a	section b
Expansion of three eighth note rising motive, use of the mixolydian mode	Punctuated by melody, use of #4/b5 in melody line	Expansion of three eighth note rising motive, use of the mixolydian mode	Use of #4/b5 in melody, passing of melody between flute and piano, conjunct with some leaps	Expansion of three eighth note rising motive, use of the mixolydian mode	Punctuated by melody, use of #4/b5 in melody line
			Use of trills and ornamentation, disjunct		Use of material from section a
					coda

frequently lowering the fifth scale degree or the enharmonic equivalent of raising the fourth scale degree. The first example occurs in the transition

between the a and b sections of the Scherzo (mm. 62-82). The C natural minor runs exhibited in the flute line contain the pitch Gb (see figure 1). This



Figure 1 – C minor runs with b5

pitch is most likely altered to better harmonize the Eb minor chord that accompanies this figure.

The Eb minor chord is functioning as a chromatic upper neighbor to the D minor chord that occurs immediately prior to and following the Eb minor harmony. The alteration between these two harmonies occurs six times, each time accompanied by the C natural minor motive and prolongs the D minor harmony. This alteration creates an emphasis on the intervals of a semitone and that of a tritone (the distance from the tonic to the altered pitch). This is echoed in the form of the sections both before and after this transition section. In measures 7 to 27 the music moves through the key areas of A major, E major, e minor, and Ab major. The tritone interval is emphasized in the immediate transition from E as the tonal center to Ab, while the semitone is emphasized in the overall movement of A to Ab. The section following this transition, measures 83 to 112, also move from A major to Ab major, once again emphasizing the semitonal movement.

Measures 7 to 14 offer an example of Prokofiev's use of #4 in the middleground of his composition. Here D# is used as a leading tone to E and the #4 scale degree in A minor. The D# is harmonized by a B major chord, a result of passing motion in the bass and soprano as well as harmonization in the inner voices. This chord is foreshadowed by a displaced B in every A minor chord that proceeds it. Furthermore, the C is emphasized rather than the A in the three-note motive at the beginning of this section by use of chords in the piano that strike with this pitch

even when it is on a weak beat. All these elements contribute to the overall line which allows for the #4 to lead smoothly to the dominant arrival in measure thirteen.

Within the b section (mm. 83-122), the occurrences of the #4/b5 scale degree are more prominent within the harmonic context. For example, in measure 85-86 a D# is present in the flute and piano lines that replace the E in the tonic triad (see figure 2). This technique is further



Figure 2 – Prokofiev Dominant (mm. 85-86)

elaborated on in Heederks article, “Semitonal Succession-Classes in Prokofiev’s Music and Their Influence on Diatonic Voice-leading Backgrounds in the Op. 94 Scherzo,” in which Heederks brings to mind Poszowski’s definition of a major or minor triad with a root that is half step below the tonic or

dominant scale degrees, creating a need to resolve, as a “Prokofiev Dominant.”¹⁰ However, this case is slightly different in that it is not the root (A) that is altered, but the fifth of the chord (E becomes D#). The tendency for D# to resolve to E is still present though this resolution does not occur. Instead, the D# is part of a downward line that begins with an E in measure 83, to a D# in measure 85, and finally resolves to a D in measure 87. This line embellishes the transition from the A major chord in measure 83 and 84 to the D minor chord in measure 87. This section shows how the #4/b5 phenomenon creates an emphasis on the intervals of a tritone and a semitone. The tritone is the interval from the root (A) to the altered note (D#) which occur simultaneously.

While the semitone is emphasized in the chromatic line (E to D#) that leads to the occurrence of this altered chord. This emphasis is reflected in the higher form of this section as well. The tonal movement from 83 to 112 is from A major to Ab major, a semitonal emphasis. The tritone

¹⁰ Heetderks, David. "Semitonal Succession-Classes in Prokofiev's Music and Their Influence on Diatonic Voice-leading Backgrounds in the Op. 94 Scherzo." *Intégral* 27 (2013): 159-212.

movement comes at the end of the section in which Gb major is used to set up a transition to d minor, replacing G major in a typical tonic to minor dominant movement.

Deborah Rifkin, however, gives a different interpretation of these chromatically altered chords. By considering the chromatic alteration motivically rather than harmonically, Rifkin is able to classify and explain semitonal displaced chords from an Schenkerian perspective, a phenomenon that can be seen in the

motive repeated in measures 94 to 95 and 96 to 97 (see figure 3). In these measures, the raised subdominant scale degree (D#) is supported by a G# minor chord that



Figure 3 – Semitonal Motive mm. 94-97

moves to a B diminished chord. The D# in this chord acts as the agent (or leading tone) to E major and the B (which is in the bass voice) functions as a supporting base to the agent (G#).^{11, 12} This pitch therefore has more functionality than if it were just a D# without a supporting bass. However, while the B is held over to the next chord, the D# agent does not discharge as expected to an E. In the bass voice the D# is lowered a half step to D and in the flute melody the D# leaps up to B. This seems to prove, despite its appearance, neither of these D#s are functioning as agents at all. This motive would therefore be called a “non-functional pitch class motive” according to Rifkin’s theory of motives.¹³

¹¹ Rifkin’s theory of functional pitch-class motives is based on the theory of scale-degree harmonic functions from Daniel Harrison’s *Harmonic Function in Chromatic Music*. The agent (or third of the chord, in this example) has the most functional discharge in that it usually resolves to a specific pitch. The agent is supported by the base (or root of the chord) and the associate (or fifth of the chord)

¹² Deborah Rifkin, author. “A Theory of Motives for Prokofiev’s Music.” *Music Theory Spectrum*, no. 2 (2004): 265.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 265.

Measures 95 and 97, the raised fourth scale degree also create a “Prokofiev Dominant” as defined by Heederks (see figure 3). In these measures, the D# in the melodic line of the flute, accompanied by the G#m chord in the piano, serves as a “Prokofiev Dominant” in two ways: The G# has the tendency to resolve to A (tonic) and the D# has the tendency to resolve to E (dominant). However, once again, neither of these resolutions occurs within the melodic line and the chord instead moves to a GM chord. The G# in this chord leaps downward instead of going up stepwise, the D# in the flute line leaps up instead of stepping up, and the D# in the piano line steps downward instead of stepping up.

The harmonic function of the raised fourth scale degree in measure 105 is similar to the occurrence in measure 85 (see figure 4). In 105, the pitch is accompanied by an altered Abm chord that replaces the Eb with D. This once again creates a need to resolve to Eb that is never fulfilled as the progression moves to a Dbm chord instead with the tendency tone D followed by



Figure 4 – “Chromatic Displacement” in mm. 105-107

a caesura in the flute melodic line. This note’s function is best described by Richard Bass’ theory of “chromatic displacement” in Prokofiev’s music. Bass referred to notes, such as this D,

that are a semitone away from a diatonic

chord member as “shadows of the diatonic chord tone.”¹⁴ This D serves another function, however, that of an accented passing tone between the Eb in measure 104 and the Db in measure 107.¹⁵

¹⁴ Bass, Richard. “Prokofiev’s Technique of Chromatic Displacement.” *Music Analysis* 7, no. 2 (1988): 197–214. doi:10.2307/854056.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 197-214.

The first phrase of the Trio (mm. 162-165) contains a raised fourth scale degree that does indeed resolve to the fifth scale degree (see figure 5a). This is the first instance in which

Figure 5a – Raised fourth in m. 162-165

Figure 5b – Raised fourth in mm. 166-169

Prokofiev utilizes the proper resolution of this altered pitch. It is interesting that Prokofiev finally follows traditional voice leading in the section in which he creates motion through the melodic line over short motives and dissonance. This occurrence, in measure 163, over a pedal open fifth in the piano (D-A) with the raised fourth (G#) resolving to the fifth (A) in the flute. However, the next phrase (mm. 166-169) contains a raised fourth that does not resolve regarding its tendency (see figure 5b). In measure 166 both the flute and the piano have this scale degree notated. The flute has the raised fourth within a melodic line in which the G# leaps up to a C. In the piano, the G# replaces the A from the open fifth in the previous phrase (D-A becomes D-G#) and the G# moves chromatically down to a G.

Another explanation for these altered scale degrees is found in the description of Russian *lads* or modes in Inessa Bazayev's article. The mode or *lad* that contains a raised fourth scale degree is the Lydian mode, which is the same as the church mode.¹⁶ Supporting this argument is the use of the Mixolydian mode in measures 15 to 18 and 42 to 45. However, the raised fourth and lowered fifth alterations do not occur consistently enough for this explanation. Nevertheless,

¹⁶ Bazayev, Inessa. "The Expansion of the Concept of Mode in Twentieth-Century Russian Music Theory." *Music Theory Online* 20, no. 3 (September 1, 2014). <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.14.20.3/mto.14.20.3.bazayev.html>.

Bazayev's article makes it clear that chromaticism, such as this in which scale degrees do not necessarily resolve as tendency tones but serve a harmonic purpose, was common in Russian music from this time.

Motive and Motion in the Scherzo

Throughout much of the Scherzo, motivic repetition is used to create movement within the melodic line. The most prevalent motive is made of three short rising eighth notes (see table 2.1). This motive is varied in numerous ways such as through the expansion of this motive to create a longer line. Another

motive is set of five staccato eighth notes that are developed in several phrase extensions within the Scherzo, for example in measures 19 to 27 (see table 2.3 and 2.4). Although the pattern changes slightly with every repetition, the starting and ending notes of the motive are consistent throughout. In measures 19 to 27 every motive begins and ends on Ab (sometimes with an octave transposition).

The b section, however, does not use motives in this way. Instead of constant repetition



Figure 6 – Repetition and Expansion of a motive in mm. 94-98 (Full expansion not shown)

Table 2 – Motivic units in the Scherzo

Motive	Description	Alterations
1. 	Three eighth note motive	Transposition
2. 	Four eighth note motive	Transposition
3. 	Five eighth note motive, begins and ends on the same pitch with downward contour	Transposition, intervallic augmentation and diminution
4. 	Five eighth note motive, ends on the same pitch an octave lower	Transposition, intervallic augmentation and diminution
5. 	Five eighth note motive, similar to 3 except inverted, only occurs in the piano	Transposition, intervallic diminution

of reoccurring motives, the b

section contains single repetitions

of each motive, all of which occur

only once. In measures 94 to 102, a

short motive is presented, repeated, and then expanded to transition to the next phrase (see figure 6). The repetition of an entire phrase in measures 87 to 92 and 107 to 112 down a half step is also an example of how repetition creates motion in this section (see figure 7). Because of this, and the presence of a raised fourth scale degree in

both preceding phrases (mm. 83-86 and mm.

103 to 106), this section seems to exhibit a

three-phrase modulating period (see table 3). It

is interesting to note the half step relationship

between both the repeated phrase and the key areas of these two sections (A major and Ab



Figure 7 – Repetition of a phrase down a half step in mm. 87-92 and mm. 107-117 (Only first two measures shown)

major). The last motive in the b section is similar to

the five eighth note motive from the a section. This

motive also has five eighth notes in which the same

pitch is used as the beginning and end (Gb), however

this instance is slurred rather than staccato. This motive is used as a transition between the a and b sections.

In measures 7 to 13 the non-chord tones in the piano accompaniment serve an interesting function. Measures 7 to 11 include the alternation between A minor and D minor chords.

However, the A3 that should be in the right hand of the piano accompaniment is replaced by a B3. The pitch B3 serves as an accented neighbor tone to the A present in the D minor chord.

However, the B3 also serves as an anticipation to the arrival of the B chord in measure 12. The B chord functions as a secondary dominant of the E chord that occurs in measure 13. A similar

effect happens in measures 27 to 34 in which the piano part is arpeggiating a Db minor chord. In these measures a Db minor harmony is prolonged throughout. Yet the pitches C and G or C and

Table 3 – Phrase structure in mm. 83-112

Measure	Phrase Length	Key Area	Motivic Content
mm. 83-92	10 m.	A	a
mm. 93-102	10 m.	a	b
mm. 103-112	10 m.	Ab	a'

Bbb are frequently used. C and G have a semitonal relationship with Db and Ab respectively with each note being a half-step lower than the diatonic pitch. Bbb on the other hand, has a semitonal relationship with Ab as it is a half-step above the diatonic pitch. This is another example of how Prokofiev uses semitonal nonchord tones to offset the diatonic harmonics. After this section, in measures 35 to 39, the neighbor tone phenomenon, like the one in measures 7 to 12 returns. Between the alteration of Gm7 and Dm chords, a E neighbor tone (to the D in the Gm7 chords) sounds on the same beat as the Dm chords. In the same way as before, the E serves as both a neighbor tone and an anticipation to the E chord in measure 39.

Another technique employed in the Scherzo is the use of mediant. In this section, mediant relationships stand out in both the major key areas and in the smaller scale chord changes. This is first evident in the introduction to the Scherzo in the first few measures of the movement. Measures 2 to 5 alternate between Bbm and Db chords. These measures serve a semitonal relationship to the first major key area of A minor which is established in measure 7. The next mediant relationship is between this key area of A minor and the key area in measures 15 to 18 which appears to be in C mixolydian. These measures contain no B naturals, only B flats and alternates between the chords C major and G minor. Although this section is very short and does not leave a lot of room to establish a tonal center, it seems almost certain that C mixolydian (rather than F major) is being implied. Furthermore, C mixolydian functions as a transitional section to yet another mediant relationship. This time, Ab major (the next key area) functions as a chromatic mediant with C mixolydian. The next mediant relationship that occurs is at measure 42 and is an almost direct transposition of the example at measure 15. This mediant relationship is between D minor and F mixolydian.

The other way in which Prokofiev transitions between key areas is using semitonal relationships. For instance, although A major in measures 7 to 14 and Ab major from measure 19 to 27 are separated by the short transition in C mixolydian, the overall structure is from A major to Ab major. Shortly after, Db minor in measures 27 to 33 are used to transition to D minor at measure 34. Furthermore, passages such as that in measures 58 to 74 alternate between two chords a semitone apart, here Ebm and Dm. Passages such as this are commonly used in the transitional areas in the Scherzo as they are effective at maintaining motion while remaining in the same key area. This section is used to modulate from D minor to Db major, yet another semitonal relationship.

The return of the Scherzo is an exact repetition of the original A for the first 106 measures. At measure 336, the repetition is replaced with a variance of what occurred previously. Instead of maintaining a Gb major harmony throughout the transition, as in the beginning Scherzo, the music uses Gb as a starting point of a descending line transitioning to the coda and the return of the original key of a minor.

Melody and Motion in the Trio

Unlike the fast paced, motivically driven Scherzo, the Trio is stagnant, lyrically driven and reflective. Here the tempo slows down and the harmonic rhythm is sustained for longer. With pedaled chords being frequent in this section, some chords are sustained for many measures at a time. Other chords seem to be merely due to simultaneous passing tones that connect major harmonies. Furthermore, the most commonly sustained harmony from this section is that of the tonic, D major, which also contributes to a feeling of halted motion. This continues until measure

209 when the music begins to transition back to the Scherzo using faster rhythms (although the harmonic rhythm is still slow here).

Within the Trio, Prokofiev creates motion using symmetrical phrasing, sequence, and ornamentation (particularly trills). All the phrases within the Trio are four bar phrases, with the



Figure 8 – Repetition of a phrase in mm. 174-181

exception of an extended phrase in measures 206-211 and an eight-bar phrase in 212 to 219 that functions as a transition to the next section (the return of the Scherzo). The

melody in this section highlights this phrasing by using mostly conjunct lines grouped by slurs into the four bar phrases in measures 162 to 173, by repetition such as the repetition of an entire four measure phrase in measures 174 to 181 (see figure 8), or through sequencing such as the two-bar sequence in measures 182 to 187 (see figure 9) (Note that while the last two bars are not an exact repetition of the sequence, it maintains the contour of the motive).

Furthermore, the use of trills and repetitive



Figure 9 – Two bar sequence in mm. 182-187

figures is used to create motion during points of harmonic stagnancy. This occurs in measure 176 to 177 where a D trill is followed by a repeated figure of four rising sixteenth notes and is repeated throughout the measure. However, unlike instances in the Scherzo these repeated figures serve as an embellishment of melody rather than as the sole means of motion.

Like the Scherzo, the Trio also uses mediant relationships, but in a different way. Here the mediants result from modal mixture. For instance, in measures 176 to 177 and 180 to 181, a Bb major-minor chord is used within the context of D major. Rather than operating as a

dominant seventh chord, however, the Bb major-minor chord is simply a bVI resulting from the borrowing of the lowered mediant and submediant from D natural minor. Here Bb is used to bring uncertainty to the mode of this section. Adding to this is the use of open fifths in this section, particularly those representing the tonic chord in measures 162 to 165. Even the flute line, which contains mostly F#'s, lands on a F natural in measures 165, blurring the line between major and minor. Another chromatic mediant relationship is found in measures 184 to 188 in which B minor (which is currently being tonicized) is followed by G# minor, the #vi of B minor. G# minor is another result of modal mixture as it uses the raised mediant and submediant scale degrees. This gives the mediant scale degree a sense of flexibility between its major and minor counterparts making this section seem ambivalent to the mode being used. The uncertainty of mode here is also supported by the scarcity of dominant or diminished chords in the harmonic progression. The only instances of a leading tone being harmonized is when a new tonal area is being established. This happens in measure 183 where an A half-diminished chord is used to briefly tonicize B minor and in measure 189 when an A major chord is used as the dominant of D major to transition back to the original key.

The piano accompaniment also provides a clear distinction between the Scherzo and Trio. The left hand especially shows this. In the Scherzo the piano has mainly quarter note rhythms in the Scherzo which is constantly arpeggiating chords. This provides significantly more movement than the pedal left hand that is dominant in the Trio. The right hand echoes this distinction by containing mostly quarter note chords or short eighth note motives in the Scherzo and doubling the pedal motion of the left hand in the Trio.

Discussion of phrase structure

The irregular phrasing of the Scherzo, and its return, contrasts with the regular four-bar phrasing of the Trio. This contributes to the ambiguity of the Scherzo that also occurs harmonically, metrically, and formally. The Trio, on the other hand, is clear-cut in its phrasing, meter, harmony (as it is mostly within the key area of D major), and formal structure.

The Scherzo and the Recapitulation

both have irregular phrase lengths and

asymmetrical period-like structures.¹⁷

However, the repetition of these phrases

groupings is somewhat regular. The first three phrases of the Scherzo, for example, have the following lengths of 6 measures, 8 measures, and 13 measures. These phrases are then repeated with some slight variance with the final phrase extended to 16 measures (see table 4). This expansion is done through interpolation with the repetition of the five eighth note motives (motives 3 and 4 in table 2). While the two six measure phrases contain introductory and transitional material respectively, the two eight measure phrases contain similar motivic material. The thirteen measure and sixteen measure phrases also contain similar motivic material. These phrases together form a sort of parallel double period that is separated by the presence of the

Table 4 – Phrase Structure of the Scherzo

a			
mm. 1-6	6 m.	alteration of chromatic mediants	introduction
mm. 7-14	8 m.	a, E	a
mm. 15-27	13 m.	e, Ab	b
mm. 28-33	6 m.	db	transition
mm. 34-41	8 m.	d, A	a'
mm. 42-58	16 m.	A	b'
mm. 58-61	4 m.	d	transition
alteration of Ebm and Dm w/C natural minor runs			
mm. 62-82	21 m.		transition
b			
mm. 83-92	10 m.	A	a
mm. 93-102	10 m.	a	b
mm. 103-112	10 m.	Ab	c
mm. 113-119	7 m.	Gb	d
mm. 120-122	3 m.	Gb	transition
a'			
mm. 123-130	8 m.	d, A	a
mm. 131-156	11 m. + 15 m. Ext.	A	b
mm. 157-161	5 m.	E	transition

¹⁷ I say period-like here because common definitions of a period suggest that a period should end in a conclusive cadence. Most of the phrase groupings I will talk about are conclusive in their motivic content but not in their harmonic endings.

transitional phrase (see table 4). These phrases also serve as a means of modulation, beginning in A minor and ending in A major with several short tonicizations in between. Beginning at measure 83, however, the phrasing becomes more consistent. Measures 83 to 122 are comprised of four ten measure phrases. These phrases are motivically contrasting and are joined together mostly by the constant motion of the piano accompaniment. While some motives reappear, the phrases themselves seem more through-composed. These phrases also modulate from A major to Gb major with short tonicizations in between.

However, these phrases are not so different from typical four-bar phrasing. For example, the eight-bar phrase in measures 7 to 14 is made up of a two-measure unit that is repeated

Figure 10 – Phrase Expansion in mm. 7-14

followed by a four-phrase expansion of the original three note motive (see figure 10). The

original motive and its repetition, therefore, represent a four-bar phrase that is expanded. The following phrase, measures 15 to 27, uses a similar technique to expand an otherwise four-bar phrase. The first part of this phrase uses a transposed and varied version of the two-measure motive from the previous phrase. And like the previous phrase, this motive is repeated. This phrase, however, is expanded through the repetition of a new motive, which is one measure long.

Measures 34 to 41 parallel 7 to 14 and measures 42 to 58 parallel 15 to 27 with more repetitions of the one measure motive. Measures 58 to 82 are transitional with an emphasis on motive rather than phrase. Measures 83 to 92 contain a ten-measure phrase that is expanded by elision and interpolation. Measures 83 to 86 would contain a four-measure phrase with a pick-up

had the music ended on a dotted half note G# with a supporting

half cadence in the bass (see

figure 11). However, the passing

F# that follows and the lack of supporting cadence in the accompaniment here connects this

phrase to the next through elision. Interpolation is used in measures 88 to 89 with a repeating

eighth note motive, which breaks up what would otherwise be a four-measure phrase from 87 to

91 ending on an imperfect authentic cadence.



Figure 11 – Phrase expansion in mm. 83-92, the F# at the end of the first line creates an elision between two otherwise separate phrases

Measures 95 to 102 represent yet another would-be four-measure phrase. A two-measure motive is presented followed by a repetition of this motive. These two motives would be a four-measure phrase if not followed by an immediate transposition and expansion of the motive which is also four measures long. This pattern of two measure motives with are repeated followed by a four-measure expansion and variation that Prokofiev uses frequently in the Scherzo has a certain symmetry that is similar to the classical idea of a musical sentence. The sentence structure of an idea that is repeated and then continued and cadenced in a two-phrase period. The difference here, is that Prokofiev connects the idea to the expansion so that no cadence occurs until the end of each phrase.

Measures 103 to 106 are a normal four measure phrase. It is followed by measure 107 to 112 that are expanded through interpolation in the same way as measures 87 to 92. These measures are followed by a transitional section from measures 113 to 122 that focuses on motives rather than phrases in the same way as measures 58 to 82. Measure 123 to 130 are a transposition of 7 to 14 and use the same phrasing. Measures 131 to 152 use the same phrasing as 15 to 27 except the one measure motive is repeated even more and leads into a transposition to

the Trio. This section ends with a five-measure phrase from measures 157 to 161 that is expanded by melodic sequence (see figure 12).

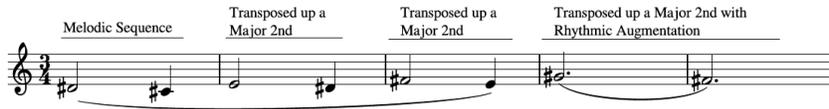


Figure 12 – Expansion Through Sequencing in mm. 157-161

The Trio, on the other hand, contains regular four bar phrasing and little modulation (see table 5). The first three phrases of this section (mm. 162-173) form a symmetrical three phrase period in which the first two phrases are parallel and the last phrase is contrasting. This period stays within the key of D major.

Following this are two symmetrical, parallel periods one in d minor and one modulating from Bm to A major. The three-phrase period is repeated followed by an expanded version of the d minor period. This expansion represents a closing of B material as the music begins to transition back to the Scherzo. The two eight measure phrases that follow

Table 5 – Phrase Structure in the Trio

Measures	Length	Key Area	Phrase Similarity
a			
mm. 162-165	4 m.	D	a
mm. 166-169	4 m.	D	a'
mm. 170-173	4 m.	D	b
b			
mm. 174-177	4 m.	d	a
mm. 178-181	4 m.	d	a
mm. 182-185	4 m.	E	b
mm. 186-189	4 m.	E	b'
a'			
mm. 190-193	4 m.	D	a (melody in piano)
mm. 194-197	4 m.	D	a' (back to flute)
mm. 198-201	4 m.	D	b (back to piano)
b'			
mm. 202-205	4 m.	d	a
mm. 206-211	6 m. (ext.)	d	a'
mm. 212-219	8 m.	Ab	b
mm. 220-228	8 m.	alteration of chromatic mediant	transitional

are independent of the pervious material (and each other) and modulate back to A minor.

The phrasing of the Recapitulation uses the same techniques as the original Scherzo until measure 336 in which a transition starts that leads to the coda starting in measure 349. Like in the Scherzo, the coda uses interpolation and expansion to create longer phrases. The first phrase in measures 350 to 354 uses the interpolation of an eighth note motive to create a six-measure

phrase. Similarly, the phrase in measures 355 to 362 uses the same motive through interpolation to expand this phrase to eight measures. The final phrase of the piece in measures 363 to 371 is an expansion of this motive that leads to a climatic end.

Scherzo Form (Tying it all together)

It may have been Prokofiev's desire to write in a "classical style"¹⁸ that led him to compose within a Scherzo and Trio structure. The Scherzo and Trio evolved originally from the Minuet and Trio and shares the same formal structure as the Minuet.¹⁹ Although the form itself dates back as far as the Baroque era, with the Scherzo modifications being popularized in the early Romantic era²⁰, Prokofiev uses the form in a way that reflects both a "Soviet Realist" style and Prokofiev's unique compositional style.

This movement of Prokofiev's Flute Sonata Op. 94 is in compound ternary form with the Scherzo subdivided into a smaller ternary form and the Trio is subdivided into a repeated binary form (see table 6). More specifically, it is in a Scherzo and Trio form. This is obvious right away primarily because of Prokofiev's style marking at the beginning of the piece ("Scherzo") and his use of a large-scale ternary form with contrasting styles between the two parts. However, this interpretation is also supported by Prokofiev's use of key areas and the small-scale forms of the Scherzo and trio. The sections of the Scherzo and trio can also be divided into exposition, contrasting middle, and recapitulation sections, to borrow Caplin's terms.²¹ Prokofiev uses this

¹⁸ Prokofiev, Sergei. *The Artist and the War*. Foreign Languages Publishing House. pgs. 124-132.

¹⁹ Caplin, William Earl. *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 221-229.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 220.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 221-229.

form to highlight stylistic differences (such as chromaticism/dissonance, phrase regularity/irregularity, etc.) between these sections.

Table 6 – Scherzo and Trio Form Interpretation

Section:	Scherzo				Trio				Recapitulation of Scherzo			
Sections (smaller):	a	a'	b	a'	a	b	a'	b'	a	a'	b	coda
Key:	i	iv	I	i	IV	iv	IV	iv	i	iv	I	i
Measure:	1	34	83	123	162	174	190	202	229	256	305	349

Caplin’s definition of Exposition of a Minuet Form, allows for anything between a sentence or period to something “complex enough to resemble an entire sonata-form exposition.”²² Although Caplin does not make a distinction between Scherzo and Trio form and Minuet and Trio form, considering that the Scherzo was popularized by Beethoven who was known for his formal expansion, it is likely that Scherzos fell at the longer end of this spectrum. Prokofiev’s Scherzo falls on the more extreme end of the scale as it contains its own small-scale ternary form. The Scherzo is motivic and uses frequent repetitions to expand phrases beyond the typical four bar phrasing. This section is based on a few eighth note motives especially that of three rising stepwise eighth notes (see table 2). This repetition and variation of this motive serves as the basis for this movement. The Scherzo also has accompaniment with a quarter note pulse with the left hand together the right hand emphasizing every other beat. This creates an effect where the chords, usually played by the right hand, falls on weak beats just as often as they do on strong beats. The harmonic rhythm is also fairly quick in this section. The Scherzo is further divided into three sections (a, b, and a’) creating a small ternary form. This division is typically for Scherzo form, although repeats usually create a rounded binary or incipient ternary rather than the arch form that Prokofiev uses.^{23,24} Although the entire Scherzo is motivically driven, the

²² Ibid., 220.

²³ Stein, Leon. 1962. *Structure and style; the study and analysis of musical forms*. Evanston, Ill: Summy-Birchard Co. 81-84.

b section is punctured by lyrical movement. The b section also features longer lines, which are still derived from the opening three-note motive.

The Trio has lyrical lines that are divided into four bar phrasing. This is accompanied by pedal chords in the piano creating a slow harmonic rhythm in this section. This melody is ornamented with grace notes and trills. This section is also the part of this movement that uses a key signature. While the Scherzo modulates frequently and is ambiguous in its tonal centers, the Trio more clearly establishes key and only modulates after a dominant function chord. The Trio is further divided into an a and b section which are repeated with some variation. However, this is more of a written-out repeat since the only difference is the melody is passed back and forth between the piano and flute and the end is altered to prepare for the transition to the next section. One difference from typical Minuet and Trio form is that the trio of this movement changes meters.²⁵ This change, however, adds to the stylistic differences between the two sections. The slow duple meter of the Trio makes the rhythms sound more stable and even than the fast triple of the Scherzo.

In earlier music, especially that of the minuet and trio from with the scherzo and trio form originates, it was common for the repeat of the Scherzo to be represented by a simple “da capo” rather than a written-out repeat.²⁶ However, when the material is embellished or a coda is added the repeat is written out, this movement falls in the latter category.²⁷

²⁴ Green, Douglass M. *Form in Tonal Music: An Introduction to Analysis*. 2d. ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979. 145.

²⁵ Caplin, William Earl. *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 229.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 220.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.

Interestingly, Neil Minturn, in his analysis of this movement, interpreted the form as a rondo form. This is due to the insistent reappearance and variation of the first section of the movement throughout each repeat of the Scherzo (see table 7). However, this interpretation ignores the independence and importance of the Trio (mm. 162- 228). The Trio represents a large section unto itself, which contrasts with the characteristic style of the Scherzo (mm. 1-161). Minturn instead refers to this section as section C (mm. 162-227) making it formally equivalent to the middle section of the Scherzo (mm. 83-122, which he in turn calls section B).²⁸ Although Minturn's analysis highlights the variation of the opening motive more than a compound ternary reading, the analysis presented in this paper clarifies the import of the Trio's deliberate style change from the Scherzo that bookends lyricism with motivic variation.

Table 7 – Minturn’s Rondo Form Interpretation

Sections:	Section A	Section B	Section A'	Section C	Section A''	Section B	Section A''' and coda
Measures:	1	83	123	162	229	305	349

Although repetition is the primary method Prokofiev uses to create motion in the Scherzo, the Trio is not without repetition. While the Scherzo has shorter motivic and immediate repetitions, the Trio focuses on repetitions of sections and phrases. Richard Middleton makes the distinction between these two types of repetition clear using the terms "musematic" and "discursive." "Musematic" repetition occurs at the level of shorter segments (motives, measures), while "discursive" repetition involves longer units (phrases, periods, or even sections).²⁹ Prokofiev uses these two distinct styles of repetition to distinguish between the elegance of the longer gestures of the Trio and the insistence of the shorter gestures of Scherzo.

²⁸ Minturn, Neil. *The Music of Sergei Prokofiev*. Composers of the Twentieth Century. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997, 145-151.

²⁹ Middleton, Richard. "“Play It Again Sam’: Some Notes on the Productivity of Repetition in Popular Music.” *Popular Music* 3 (1983): 235–70.

Another interesting feature revealed in this form chart (see figure 11) is the extensive use of the subdominant tonal area. Although many key areas are established throughout the course of this movement, the main tonal areas are constricted to the major and minor versions of the tonic and subdominant. Furthermore, Prokofiev frequently uses parallel transformation in alternating between the parallel modes of the tonic and subdominant key areas. This contributes to the smooth voice leading found throughout this movement. It is considered rare for the Scherzo to modulate however when it does, Caplin argues that this modulation “may well represent the principal tonal conflict of the movement.”³⁰ This movement represents this idea nicely as the subdominant, as a secondary key area in the Scherzo, becomes the main key area of the Trio.

When Prokofiev wrote the Flute Sonata Op. 94, Soviet composers were torn between their own artistic styles and the need to conform to the ideals of “soviet realism.” In the second movement of the flute sonata, Prokofiev alternates between his own style of composition and the “soviet realism” style. The lyricism of the Trio fits nicely into what Slonimsky defines as the “sophisticated neo-romanticism” of Soviet music.³¹ Prokofiev’s use of chromatic voice leading and melody was also within the bounds of Soviet style in this period. On the other hand, the displaced chromaticism throughout the piece, although adopted by other Soviet composers, is representative of Prokofiev’s individual style.³² Within this movement, Prokofiev uses form as a basis for making distinction between harmonic ambiguity and stability, motivic repetition and lyricism, and phrase expansion and phrase regularity. Although the form of this movement is

³⁰ Caplin, William Earl. *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 221.

³¹ Slonimsky, Nicolas. “The Changing Style of Soviet Music.” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 3, no. 3 (1950): 236–55. <https://doi.org/10.2307/829735>.

³² *Ibid.*, 236-55.

traditional in its harmonic relationship and small and large-scale structures, Prokofiev uses the form in a way that is modern and uniquely Prokofiev.

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