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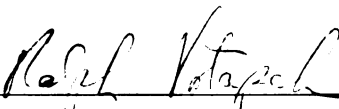
CHOPIN'S APPROACH TO FORM IN HIS FOUR  
PIANO SCHERZOS

presented by

Julia Tieu-Luong Lam (Fang)

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CHOPIN'S APPROACH TO FORM IN HIS FOUR PIANO SCHERZOS

By

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## ABSTRACT

### CHOPIN'S APPROACH TO FORM IN HIS FOUR PIANO SCHERZOS

By

Julia Tieu-luong Lam (Fang)

The study of form in Chopin's works has suffered neglect. One instance of this neglect is that various authors have criticized Chopin's approach to form as being weak or have confessed to being baffled by the form of his four piano Scherzos. This dissertation will thoroughly explore the scherzo-trio form in a historical context, and prove that Chopin's Scherzos show a creative and masterful development of form that expands the scherzo's power and versatility.

Chapter I is a general study of the derivation and use of scherzo-trio form in the works of the Baroque and Classical composers. The four subsequent chapters are devoted to the research and analysis of Chopin's four Scherzos respectively. The analysis of each scherzo is preceded by pertinent biographical facts concerning the circumstances at the time of composition. Each of these chapters further divides into separate subject headings of formal structure, melodic structure, and harmonic and

tonal structure.

Many authors on Chopin questioned why Chopin used the title "scherzo" in these four works. Apparently, a detailed study of Chopin's four Scherzos has not been done. Some authors take refuge in calling them "a new form" (which they are not); others have speculated that Chopin was trying to confuse his contemporaries with this title; while still others have gone so far as to say that they are misnomers. Though lacking the lighthearted and playful style of a scherzo, the form that Chopin used in the four Scherzos is derived from the traditional sectional form of the scherzo-trio movement used in sonatas, chamber works, and symphonies.

Scherzo no. 1 follows a clear outline of the composite ternary form; Scherzo no. 2 involves a more complicated hybrid form--combination of the sectional three-part design with elements of sonata principle; Scherzo no. 3 has a structure of a four-part sectional form; while Scherzo no. 4 can be defined as an extended compound ternary form. Adding to the dimension of the form is Chopin's extensive use of coda. The codas in Chopin's Scherzos are developments of primary thematic features.

Traditional characteristics of a menuet-trio or scherzo-trio can be seen in the many repetitions of material in these works. The Baroque custom of writing the trio for three-parts can be seen in Scherzos nos. 1,2,

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and 4. Also, a conventional choice of keys is used by Chopin in the trios of Scherzos nos. 1, 3, and 4.

Chopin's group of four Scherzos is marked by family resemblances to each other. These works share the same triple time signature, and are all given a Presto tempo indication. The four-bar groups, with one count to a bar, are a characteristic phrase structure in these pieces. An extreme contrast in mood and tempo is seen in the trio section. The element of contrast is a distinctive element in the four Scherzos of Chopin.

In looking at the development of form in Chopin's scherzos, one could hardly agree that form is the greatest piano composer's weakest point. By greatly expanding the form, Chopin transforms the scherzo into a virtuoso piece of power and grandeur. It is hoped that these studies can be a contribution to pianists in their interpretations of Chopin's Scherzos.

The edition of the Scherzos used in the discussion is Chopin's Institute Edition, edited by Ignacy J. Paderewski (Polish Music Publication, 1974).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Ralph Votapek, who served as my major advisor, for his time and assistance on the completion of this thesis.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE EVOLUTION AND EARLY USE OF MENUETS AND SCHERZOS

The term "scherzo" had been used in compositions as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century. The literal meaning of the word scherzo in the original Italian is "a musical joke,"<sup>1</sup> but the application of the term in the early stage is extensive. In the works of the Italian composers, scherzos were used as light canzonets<sup>2</sup> in vocal solos or ensembles with instrumental accompaniment. In the works of other composers, examples of scherzos were written for solo instruments with or without continuo.

Monteverdi had written a set of Scherzi Musicali

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<sup>1</sup>For these early works, the Italian plural scherzi is used. However, in the later usages, the word "scherzo" had been embedded in the English language, and the plural "scherzos" is used by various authors as often as the Italian equivalent. For the remainder of this dissertation, the English plural "scherzos" will be used.

<sup>2</sup>The definition for canzonet given in the Harvard Dictionary of Music is: "In the late 16th and throughout the 17th century, a short vocal piece in a light vein, much in the character of a dance song."

in 1607. These are airs for one voice with continuo accompaniment. All the examples except the last work in this collection, Quel Sguarde Sdegnosetto, were written in quadruple time, and the structure of one-part, bar-form, simple binary and ternary forms can be found in them. Subsequent sacred or secular scherzos were written by lesser known composers in the seventeenth century, Antonio Troilo (fl. 17th c.) wrote a volume of Sinfonie, Scherzi, a 2 voci in 1608; Antonio Cifra (1584-1629) composed a set of Li Scherzi Sacri in 1613; Antonio Brunelli (fl. 17th c.) is best known for his three secular books of Scherzi, arie, canzonette, e Madrigali written in the years of 1613, 1614, and 1616; and Biagio Marini (b.? d.1665) wrote a set of Scherzi e canzonette a una, e due voci in 1622; instrumental scherzos were written by two Austrian composers--Scherzi da violino solo with bass continuo for organ or cembalo and bass viol or lute by Johann Jacob Walther (ca.1650-1717) and Scherzi musicali per la viola di gamba by Johann Schenz (1753-1836).

In the Baroque suite, Johann Sebastian Bach includes one scherzo in his keyboard partita no. 3--fantasi , allemande, courante, sarabande, burlesca, scherzo, gigue. The tempo indication for this dance movement is Allegro vivace, already anticipating the fast tempos of Beethoven's scherzos. It is repeated binary form in duple time, and is characterized by continuous sixteenth-notes and

well-articulated rhythms. This appears to be the only example of a scherzo appearing in a dance suite during the Baroque period. The first time scherzos were used in classical compositions was in Haydn's six string quartets, Op.33, in which he replaced minuets with scherzos. In exception to the faster tempo indication (Allegro instead of Allegretto) seen in quartets nos. 2, 5, and 6, these scherzos show little stylistic differences with his minuets. After Haydn's Op.33, there was very little development of the form until Beethoven. He gave the scherzos new distinction and dimension, using them consistently in sonatas, chamber works, and symphonies in place of minuets. After Beethoven, the scherzos gained a regular place in nineteen-century composers' works.

The formal structure of Haydn and Beethoven's scherzos is derived from the minuet. At its introduction in the second half of the seventeenth century, the minuet was an official French court dance. It is recorded that King Louis XIV himself had danced the first minuet composed by Lully in 1653.<sup>3</sup> This elegant dance was reserved for the aristocrats because they alone were taught the complicated figure of the dance--a combination of cross-rhythm between the triple time of music and left-right

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<sup>3</sup>Willi Apel, "Minuet," Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 531.

pairs of dance steps.<sup>4</sup>

Music	$\overbrace{1 \ 2 \ 3}$	$\overbrace{1 \ 2 \ 3}$	$\overbrace{1 \ 2 \ 3}$
Steps	$\underbrace{1. \ r.}$	$\underbrace{1. \ r.}$	$\underbrace{1. \ r.}$

The menuet's antecedent dates back to the sixteenth century. Authorities like Willi Apel<sup>5</sup> and Eric Blom<sup>6</sup> have ascertained that the menuet evolved from a species of branles--a group of independent popular dances from that period. Thoinot Arbeau in his book, Orchesography, gives the rhythm for at least twenty different types of branles. Among them, he shows four important kinds which were danced by three different groups of people: "The old people gravely dance the branles doubles and branles simples, the young married ones dance the branles gais, and the youngest of all dance the branles de Bourgogne."<sup>7</sup> The grave branles doubles and simples, and fast branles de Bourgogne are in duple time, while the moderate branles gais are in triple time. Four

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<sup>4</sup>Eric Blom, "Menuet-Trio," Music and Letters, Vol. XXII (1961), p. 169.

<sup>5</sup>Willi Apel, "Branle," p. 105.

<sup>6</sup>Eric Blom, "Menuet-Trio," p. 175.

<sup>7</sup>Thoinot Arbeau, Orchesography: a treatise in the form of a dialogue. (New York: Dance Horizons, Inc., 1968), p. 113.

measures of the rhythm for branles gais are given by Arbeau (see example 1 below).

Example 1.



Blom had made it clear that menuets originated from branles danced in the province of Poitou. This species of branles, branle de Poitou, is in triple time, and is possibly a transformation of branle gais. Two measures of rhythm for branle de Poitou is given by Arbeau in the example below.

Example 2.



However, according to Apel, the menuet is derived from branle à mener (this type of branles is not discussed by Arbeau). This is a follow-the leader type--one couple leads and the others follow. Unfortunately, there is no example of branle à mener given by Apel or other sources. Apel further points out that this species of branles survived into the seventeenth century as amener--a dance movement in moderate triple time with phrases of six measures (3+3 or 4+2). It appears in the suites of Heinrich Biber, J. K. F. Fischer, and Alessandro Poglietti.

The early menuets (given in the collection Philidor and Vingt Suites d'orchestra edited by Ecordeville in 1906) suggest very closely the liaison with the triple time and the phrasings of amener dance movement. Although there seems to be a discrepancy between Blom and Apel on which type of branles the menuet is derived from, the example of menuet de Poitou<sup>8</sup> given below shows obvious connection with both amener and branle de Poitou.

Example 3.

229. Louis Couperin (1630-1665)

Menuet de Poitou

For Harpsichord




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<sup>8</sup>This example is taken from the Historical Anthology of Music edited by Archibald T. Davison and Willi Apel (London: Harvard University Press, 1973), Vol. II, p. 93.

The inscription of "Poitou" given by Couperin shows clearly its derivation from branle de Poitou. Also, the two three-measure phrases can be compared to the two-measure rhythm given for branle de Poitou in example 2, p. 5. If each measure subdivides into groups of three, two three-measure phrases in simple triple time result. Therefore, we can safely assume that menuets originated from the sixteenth-century branles simples, which transformed into branles de Poitou, branles à mener, and finally ameners of the seventeenth-century dance suite.

The menuet was the most cultivated dance of the eighteenth century. It became the only movement from the Baroque suite which survived in classical and romantic sonatas. The menuet alone is retained in the sonata scheme because its delightful and graceful nature provides pleasant contrast and variety between movements of a sonata.

In the Baroque suite, the menuet appears as one of the optional dances, and is often written in pairs--menuet I, menuet II, with or without a return to menuet I. The term "trio" which later supersedes menuet II, derived its name from the custom of writing the alternate dance for three solo instruments. In an orchestral suite, the solo instruments used are two oboes and one bassoon to contrast with the fully orchestrated menuet. A good example can be seen in J. S. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto

no. 1. Bach employs the term "trio" only when he does write for three parts in his keyboard suite, as in the third French suite and the Clavier Overture in F major. Eric Blom in his article "Menuet-Trio," describes the menuet as aristocratic in nature, while the trio is rustic.<sup>9</sup> Occasionally, the trio assumes the character of the musette, which suggests the bagpipe as its bass instrument--the most rustic of all instruments. In orchestral writing, the congenial solo sound of oboes and bassoons best represents the bagpipe because they are the descendents of characteristically outdoor instruments. A trio does not always consistently follow a menuet in early compositions. It only becomes part of the entire structure--sectional part-form--in the sonatas, chamber works, and symphonies of the classical and romantic composers. In these works, the trio loses its old custom of writing for three parts, but designates only the middle section distinguishing from the first section in lighter texture, contrasting material, and a change of mode, or key to a related tonal area. The trio in the nineteenth-century works gradually becomes more lyrical in contrast to the more vigorous scherzo section.

The Baroque menuet usually displays binary

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<sup>9</sup>Eric Blom, "Menuet-Trio," p. 162.

design in both the menuet and trio sections. The outline of the form with da capo is:

<u>Menuet</u>	<u>trio</u>	<u>menuet</u>
: a :  : b:	: c :  : d :	a b

In J. S. Bach's keyboard suites, the menuets are mainly constructed on the binary design with or without da capo: simple binary design is seen in French suite no. 2 in C minor and no. 4 in E-flat major; two menuets in binary form without da capo are seen in Partita no. 1 in B-flat major, while two menuets in binary design with da capo are seen in French suite no. 3. in B minor and English suite no. 4 in F major.

Some texts incorrectly refer to Haydn as the first to introduce menuets into his symphonies. Menuets are often included as the closing movements in Jean-Baptiste Lully's (1632-1687) ballet music and Alessandro Scarlatti's (1660-1725) operatic sinfonia. They are found as last movements in the sinfonia of Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770) and G. B. Sammartini (1700/1-1775). Johann Stamitz (1717-1757), founder of the Mannheim orchestra, had expanded the pre-classic sinfonia from three movements to four by adding a fast finale after the menuet. Stamitz' menuets consist of two strains of eight measures each, but the trio's second strain is extended to sixteen measures. Austrian composers Mathias Georg

Monn (1717-1750) and Georg Christoph Wagenseil (1715-1777) followed the four-movement scheme of Allegro-Adagio-Minuet-Allegro. The same sequence of movements was adopted by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven in their string quartets and symphonies. Beethoven, however, was the first to write sonatas for four movements, replacing many minuets with scherzos.

Minuets appear as last movements in Johann Christian Bach's (1735-1782) keyboard Sonatas, Op. 5 no. 1, no. 2 and Op. 12 no. 2, and Wagenseil's harpsichord Sonatas nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Writing minuets with variations was common as seen in Baldassare Galuppi's (1706-1785) sonata no. 15 and J. C. Bach's sonata, Op. 12 no. 1. These pre-Classic examples illustrate a repeated binary design in each section followed by a da capo of the first section.

Haydn changed the French spelling "minuet" to the Italian "minuet" in his works. The German spelling "minuetten" was employed by Mozart and Beethoven.<sup>10</sup> It is the slightest and shortest movement in the compositions of Haydn and Mozart, and is invariably written in one of the following forms.

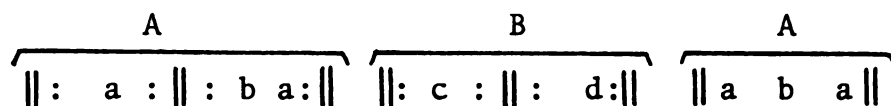
1, both minuet (A) and trio (B) are binary. This is the most commonly used.

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<sup>10</sup>For the purpose of consistency in this dissertation, only the French "minuet" is used.



2, A is rounded binary, and B is two-part, or the reverse.



3, both A and B are rounded binary followed by a return of A. This sectional three-part form is seen more often in the later works of Haydn and Mozart.



In the early works of Haydn and Mozart, the trio shares similar material with the menuet as well as contrasting material. In some works, the trio has the same key as the menuet, while in other trios, a change of mode or key to a related tonal area can be seen. A predilection for the change of mode is seen in Haydn's compositions. Mozart preferred a modulation to the subdominant. In later works, Haydn employed a mediant relationship between the menuet and trio as in his Symphonies no. 99 and no. 104. An interesting contrapuntal device is seen in his Symphony no. 47, written al rovescio--the second part of both the menuet and trio is the same as the first

part played backward.

Haydn and Mozart generally followed the four-movement plan in their symphonies, with the menuet-trio appearing as the third movement, or, occasionally, as the second movement. In the three-movement symphonies of Haydn, the menuet-trio is either placed as the second movement or last movement. In Mozart's three-movement works, a menuet is seldom included, with the notable exception of Symphony no. 7. Most of Haydn's string quartets consist of four movements, with the menuet-trio placed as the second or third movement. In all the quartets of Op. 9 and Op. 17, the menuet is always seen as the second movement. Mozart wrote his string quartets in three movements as often as four movements. In the four-movement works, like Haydn, he placed the menuet as the second or third movement. Again, his quartets in three-movement scheme rarely include a menuet movement (except quartet no. 29). Mozart had written an unusual menuet movement with two different trios in his Clarinet Quintet, K. 581/iii, which result in a composite five-part form: A-B-A-C-A. This is an innovation which will be followed by some nineteenth-century composers in their scherzos--Schumann's symphonies no. 1 and no. 2, Brahms' symphonies no. 2 and also, his Piano Scherzo, Op. 4.

The norm for Haydn and Mozart's piano sonatas is the three-movement version. Among Mozart's eighteen piano sonatas, there are only two menuets and trios,

placed as middle movements in Sonatas K. 282 and K. 331. Haydn used minuets in about half of his piano sonatas, as either an inner or last movement. Although Haydn wrote some of the most charming minuets, he was dissatisfied with them, and said that "he wished someone would write 'a really new minuet.'"<sup>11</sup> Perhaps this is the reason why in his string quartets, Op. 33 (known as the Russian Quartets), the inscription "scherzo" or "scherzando" is given instead of minuet. Hence, this set was also given an alternative name Gli Scherzi. This is the first use of the term, adopting the structure of the minuet's sectional three-part form.

In Haydn's piano sonatas, a scherzo is included in H. XVI/9/iii and a scherzando is given in H. XVI/36/ii. As though Haydn had not quite adopted the practice of substituting scherzo for minuet in his sonatas, these two movements are placed side by side with a minuet-trio. The scherzo in Sonata H. XVI/9/iii has a simple ternary design. It is placed as the finale, following a minuet-trio. However, the scherzando in Sonata H. XVI/36/ii which precedes a minuet-trio movement, has a rondo design. Both the scherzo and scherzando are in duple time, marked Allegro, and are characterized by continuous sixteenth-

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<sup>11</sup>Donald Jay Grout, A History of Western Music, revised edition (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1960), p. 481.

notes and sharp rhythms. (resembling J. S. Bach's scherzo in Partita no. 4).

Muzio Clementi (1752-1832) had written two scherzos in his Gradus ad Parnassum, no. 82 and no. 97. These two pieces are technical studies, marked Allegro molto, but have no formal adherence to the familiar menuet movements.

With Beethoven, the four-movement scheme becomes standard in his early piano sonatas. A menuet-trio or scherzo-trio is regularly placed as the third movement. Even though Haydn had used scherzos to replace menuets first, Beethoven is acknowledged as the father of the modern scherzo. His scherzos are merely successors to the menuets in formal structure; stylistically, they show distinctive characteristics. These inner movements are no longer the least significant and easiest to play, but become more brilliant and substantial. Beethoven's scherzos are characterized by faster tempos, driving staccatos, sudden sforzandos, shiftings of the accents by syncopation, sprightly rhythms, playful elements, and violent dynamic contrasts. The menuets which Beethoven continued writing, however, retain the moderate tempo and graceful dignity of the Baroque dance suite.

In many of Beethoven's scherzo-trio or menuet-trio movements, both sections are two complete pieces in simple ternary design. The combination of the menuet,

trio, and menuet da capo, results in a large sectional three-part form, or more properly referred to as "composite ternary form." Short codas are added by Beethoven into the form as seen in the scherzo of the piano Sonata Op. 2 no. 3/iii, and minuets of Op. 14 no. 1/ii, and Op. 31 no. 3/iii. The coda in the scherzo of Symphony no. 3 is distinguished by a change of time from triple to duple.

The repetitions of parts are rarely strict, but are treated in varied forms by Beethoven. While many trios of Beethoven and other nineteenth-century composers' scherzos show more lyricism and have slower note-values, the trios in Beethoven's piano sonatas are often given faster note-values. In contrast to the basic quarter-note values of the first section, the trio or minore section has eighth-note accompaniment patterns (Op. 2 no. 1/iii), as well as triplet patterns (Op. 2 no. 3, Op. 7, Op. 10 no. 3), and even sixteenth-note patterns (Op. 22).

In his thirty-two piano sonatas, Beethoven had only indicated seven movements with the title "scherzo." The tempo indication in these seven scherzos is increasingly faster--Allegretto (Op. 2 no. 2/iii), Allegro (Op. 2 no. 3/iii), Allegro assai (Op. 14 no. 2/iii), Allegro molto (Op. 26/iii), Allegro vivace (Op. 28/iii), Allegretto vivace (Op. 31 no. 3/ii), and Assai-vivace-Presto (Op. 106/ii). While Beethoven's minuets are written in the moderate tempo of Allegretto with three beats per

measure, his scherzos are counted with one pulse per measure.

An extended plan is used by Beethoven, which is referred to as "Grand Scherzo" by Ian Spink.<sup>12</sup> This form involves two repetitions of the trio and a double da capo of the scherzo section, and the large outline results as A-B-A-B-A. This is seen in the Sonata for Cello and Piano in A major, Symphony no. 4 and no. 7 (Although the third movement in neither of the two symphonies is given an inscription, it is clearly a scherzo.) The forms which Beethoven used in his piano scherzos are varied. Sonatas Op. 2 no. 2/iii, Op. 2 no. 3/iii, Op. 26/ii, and Op. 28/iii follow the conventional composite ternary form. The scherzos which are treated other than composite ternary form are seen in Sonatas Op. 14 no. 2/iii, Op. 31 no. 3/ii, and Op. 106/ii. In Sonata Op. 14 no. 2, the scherzo is placed as the finale in a three-movement scheme. The time signature is 3/8, but the form and style are clearly rondo-like. The second movement of Op. 31 no. 3 is a scherzo, having a sonata-allegro form. This movement is--like Hadyn's scherzo in Sonata H. XVI/36 and scherzando in H. XVI 36/ii--in duple time, and is placed side by side with a menuet-trio. However, the swift tempo, staccato

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<sup>12</sup>Ian Spink, An Historical Approach to Musical Form (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1967), p. 125.

sixteenth-notes, humour, playfulness, and sudden sforzandos in syncopation are in the style of Beethoven's scherzos.

Free treatment of the scherzo form is seen in Beethoven's Sonata Op. 106/ii, which has the following general outline A-B-C-cadenza-A (with extension)-transition-like-A'. Both C and the transition-like passage near the end are marked by very abrupt change of time and tempo. Great contrast of material and mood are apparent at each section. The emancipation of the traditional form as illustrated in this scherzo is typical of Beethoven's late style.

In summary, we have seen that the structure of the menuet remains strict in the compositions from the Baroque to the nineteenth century. It originated from a species of branles in the sixteenth century. The scherzos in the works of the early seventeenth-century composers have no relationship to the present scherzos. J. S. Bach incorporated a scherzo in his Partita no. 4, which shows some similarity with Haydn's scherzo in Sonata H. XVI/9/iii later. Haydn substituted scherzos for menuets in his string quartets, Op. 33. It was Beethoven who greatly developed the scherzo form, and established it as a regular movement in sonatas, chamber works, and symphonies. Freer structural design as well as an extended plan are seen in some of his middle and late works.

The nineteenth-century composers gradually turn

away from the chief large form of piano music--the sonata--to the smaller form, mainly A B A. Chopin is very fond of this simpler form, where B material is contrasting rather than developmental. His four Scherzos are among the large scale works which Chopin developed from this smaller form. He was the first to transform the scherzos into independent virtuoso pieces, and further expanded the form. Chopin's four scherzos show even more brilliancy, virtuosity, and greater increase of speed in comparison to Beethoven's scherzos. Further, Chopin's set of four character pieces are highly personal and dramatic, express a series of intense mood and emotion--anger, passion, tenderness, longing, nostalgia, melancholy, and fantasy.

In Chopin's works, an extreme contrast of mood and tempo is seen in the trio section. The Baroque practice of writing the trio for three parts which had long been neglected by the classical composers, is now the prevailing texture in Chopin's Scherzos nos. 1, 2, and 4. Further, the old musette form is apparent in the trio of Scherzos nos. 1 and 4, where the drone bass of a bagpipe is represented with pedal bass.

Chopin's set of four scherzos has been called a misnomer and a new form by some authors who have not studied and analyzed these works. Structurally, these pieces are an outgrowth of the scherzo as a movement in a sonata and fully justify the application of the title "Scherzos."

## CHAPTER II

### CHOPIN'S SCHERZO NO. 1 IN B-MINOR, OP. 20

#### Biographical Facts

On the evening of November 2, 1830, the twenty-year old Frederick Chopin began the most momentous journey of his life, not knowing that from then on he would become an exile from his beloved Poland. Newly graduated from the Warsaw Conservatory, Chopin was urged by his teacher, Josef Elsner, and colleagues to pursue a career in Vienna in order to develop his art in a more cosmopolitan cultural environment.

Despite his heady success as a result of two debut concerts there the previous year, the eight months in Vienna proved to be a great disappointment to the young Chopin. The year before, Vienna had welcomed him when he did not intend to make his living there, and would not be a threat to the already saturated musical community. But now, when he had returned to make a career, he found himself in an unfriendly environment, beset by disappointments, frustrations and intense loneliness. He was constantly thwarted in his attempts to schedule concerts and publish

compositions. It was not until April that Chopin was able to appear in a public concert, and even then, it was only as one of ten artists on the program. He played his E-minor concerto without an orchestra. In a deep mood of disillusionment, Chopin confided his feelings to a friend:

I can do nothing in the way I want. I have to dress up, do my hair, put on shoes and have a detached and satisfied look on my face in their drawing rooms--it is only when I get home that I can let myself go on the piano just as I please. I am the intimate friend of nobody, but I have to be cordial with everyone...But how am I to get away? Go to Paris?<sup>1</sup>

It was also then that news of the Polish uprising against the Russians arrived on November 29, 1830. Chopin's already unsettled state of mind was further disrupted by this news. He poured out his despair and fear for the future of Poland in a passionate entry in his diary:

...But perhaps I have no mother any more. Perhaps some Muscovite has killed--murdered her. My sisters, raving, resist. My father, in despair, is helpless. There is no one to help my mother. And I here am idle, empty-handed. Only sometimes I groan and suffer and pour out my despair at the piano. But what's the use? Oh God, Oh God, shake the earth, let it swallow up the people of this age. May the most cruel tortures torment the French who did not come to our aid.<sup>2</sup>

It was in this mood, then, of longing and help-

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<sup>1</sup>Alfred Cortot, In Search of Chopin (New York: Abelard Press, 1952), p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>Stephen Miswa, ed., Frederic Chopin (Published under the auspices of the Kosciuszko Foundation, 1949), p. 24.

lessness that Chopin composed the B-minor Scherzo, the G-minor Ballade, the D-minor Prelude, and the Revolutionary Etude. These well-known compositions, all in the minor key, were composed between the years 1830 and 1831. The B-minor Scherzo, which was begun in Vienna and completed in Paris, especially conveys Chopin's impetuous and fiery mood. The work was published in 1835 by Schlesinger (Paris) and Breitkopf & Hartel (Leipzig). It was dedicated to T. Albrecht, an attaché of the Saxon Legation in Paris.

### Formal Structure

Of the four Scherzos, the structure of the B-minor Scherzo is closer to the composite three-part form than the other three. The work has the following outline:

Introduction [A] Scherzo [B] Trio [A] Scherzo Coda  
 ||: A :|| B A B A || || C D C D C' || || A B A ||

The repeat of B A in the first section is written out by Chopin, rather than indicated by a repeat sign. In the middle section, Chopin reverses the usual order of

||: C :||: D C :|| into ||: C D :|| C' || ,  
 thereby, indicating even at this early stage in his career, the individualistic character of his genius. Chopin rarely adhered to a strict plan, but rather usually amended the form to meet his aesthetic and musical intention. The B-minor Scherzo is the most conservative of the four

Scherzos, having a structure which corresponds closely to scherzo-trio form as it was generally used in the classical sonata. The mood of the trio provides sharp contrast to that of the first part. The change of mode in the trio section is traditional. Haydn himself used this modal alteration in the minuets of his early string quartets.

The first main section which is preceded by an eight-measure introduction, has a very clear-cut ternary design: A with repeat--measures 9-68; B--measures 69-124; return of A--measures 125-184; and repeat of B A--measures 185-140.

The work opens with two clashing dissonant chords-- $ii_3^4$  -  $V_5^6$  moving from the first chord near the top of the keyboard to the second chord near the bottom. In part A, two parallel phrases move in upward sweeping motion building to a crescendo. They are followed by two phrases in downward sweeping decrescendo motion which are then met at the top by three powerful chords at measures 43 and 44-- $G6/iv$ ,  $iv_4^6$ ,  $vii_7^d$ .

The closing section of part A (measures 44-65) conveys a musical dialogue between the treble and the bass parts. This section moves in slower note values and has distinctive thematic ideas (see example 4 p. 23).

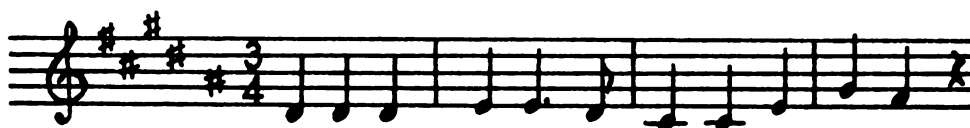
## Example 4. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 44-57.

Part B, measures 69-124, resumes the fast eighth-note motion of Part A before the closing section. In this section, extensive chromaticism is used. Melodic emphasis in each phrase is given with an accent mark. We see, also, that this *agitato* section builds from *sotto voce* to a climax in fortissimo at the last phrase (measures 110-124). The bass in the first phrase (measures 69-72) starts in the same manner as at the beginning of part A (see example 5 below).

## Example 5. Scherzo in B minor.

The trio (measures 305-388) has three distinct parts: first part, C--measures 305-320 and D--measures 321-336; second part, C and D repeated together--measures 337-368; and third part, C--measures 369-384. Therefore, the trio illustrates reverse order of the traditional

ternary form. In contrast to the stormy first section, the trio has a mood of celestial calm. The trio theme is a well-known tune taken from an old Polish Christmas carol Lulajze Jezunin translated as Sleep, Baby Jesus by Herbert Weinstock. The original tune, as given by the Polish Chopin Institute edition, is:



Alan Rawsthorne describes the impression he had when he once heard it sung by a Polish peasant.

I once heard a Polish peasant singing this tune, high up in the Tatra Mountains. The effect was strangely moving in the stillness of the craggy rocks with their patches of snow. His voice came from nowhere in particular, ventriloquially, floating through the mountain air. He sang with abandon, in a quite uninhibited fashion, and with a certain hard, almost ruthless quality that enables the Slavs to get to the heart of their most poignant melodies.<sup>3</sup>

Chopin's quotation of this Polish Christmas carol is undoubtedly due to his nostalgia, as revealed in his writing, during his first Christmas away from home in Vienna.

At midnight I walked slowly all alone to St. Stephens. When I entered, no one was there. Not to pray, but to look at the immense structure

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<sup>3</sup> Alan Rawsthorne, "Ballades, Fantasy, and Scherzos" in Chopin, Profiles of the Man and Musician, edited by Alan Walker (New York: Barrie & Rockliff, 1966), p. 65.

at this hour, I stood in the darkest corner at the foot of a Gothic pillar. The splendor, the grandeur of these enormous vaults, is indescribable. It was quiet--only occasionally was my reverie broken by the footsteps of the sacristan lighting candles at the rear. A coffin behind me, a coffin beneath me...only above one there was no coffin. A wonderful harmony was brewing in my head...More than ever I felt my loneliness.<sup>4</sup>

The interpretation of this theme is commented upon by Artur Rubinstein: "The trio of the B-minor Scherzo, is based on the Polish Christmas carol Lulajze Jezunin. Thus this section should be played underlining the melody in the following manner:



But it should not be played as the following version, as so many editions have printed it, and so many pianists play it."<sup>5</sup>




Two symmetrical eight-measure phrase of theme C

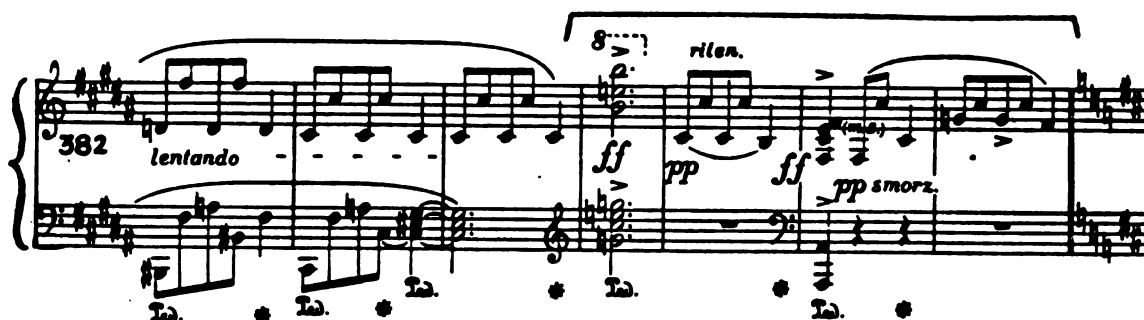
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<sup>4</sup>Casimir Wierzynske, The Life and Death of Chopin (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1949), p. 132.

<sup>5</sup>Dean Elder, "A Conversation with Artur Rubinstein," Clavier, Vol. VIII, No. 6, September, 1969, pp. 1420.

(measures 305-320 and measures 337-352) are followed by two eight-measure phrase of D (measures 321-336 and measures 353-368). The melody of theme C is in even quarter note values, while theme D is characterized by the rhythm: . Measures 385-388 comprise four-measure retransition leading to the return of A. Chopin startles us here with a sudden outburst of the two opening chords. Inserted between these two chords is the undisturbed, quiet accompaniment pattern of the right hand, which underscores the dramatic effect of the two thundering chords.

Example 6. Scherzo in B minor, mm 382-388.



Following the tranquil mood of the trio, the entire A section returns. Measures 389-566 provide an exact return of the large A section (measures 9-302) without the first repeat of part A.

The coda comprises two parts: first part--measures 601-625. The first part builds from a forte level to a fortissimo, then to the climactic chords in fortistissimo. The last part stays fortississimo till the end of the work. This part consists of descending tonic arpeggiation

followed by an ascending chromatic scale leading to the tonic note at the top. This chromatic scale is often played in alternated chromatic octaves after the virtuoso style of Franz Liszt.<sup>6</sup> The two powerful chords at the end of the piece echo the two chords at the beginning.

In comparing the structure of the two large A and B sections, the former is distinguished by a hemiola rhythm (see example 15, p. 32), while the latter section is marked by a very even and uniform rhythm (see example 21, p. 37). A noted distinction between the two sections is also seen in Chopin's use of the piano register. In the two introductory chords as well as the large A section, the extreme compass of the piano is well explored. In the trio section, however, Chopin keeps it within the middle of the keyboard register. This is a structural feature which is found also in Scherzos no. 2 and no. 4.

### Melodic Structure

The Scherzo in B minor is unified by two well-defined melodic features: the descending diminished seventh (G-A#); and a figure with a two-note slur motive.

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<sup>6</sup>In the Historical and Analytical Comments given by James Huneker in the Schirmer edition of the Chopin's Scherzos, he mentions that it was Tausig who taught his students to use the interlocked octaves. However, Huneker speculates that Liszt used them before anyone else.

The descending diminished seventh, G-A#, is used prominently in this scherzo. This interval can be found in several key structural points such as the introduction, the end of parts A and B of the large A section, the end of the trio section, and the end of the returning A section.

It is first seen in the bass of the two introductory chords (see example 7).

Example 7. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 1-8.



The diminished seventh recurs at the beginning of the closing section of part A (measure 44).

Example 8. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 44-45.



At the close of part B, it reappears at measure 124 and acts as a transition leading to the return of part A.

Example 9. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 121-125.



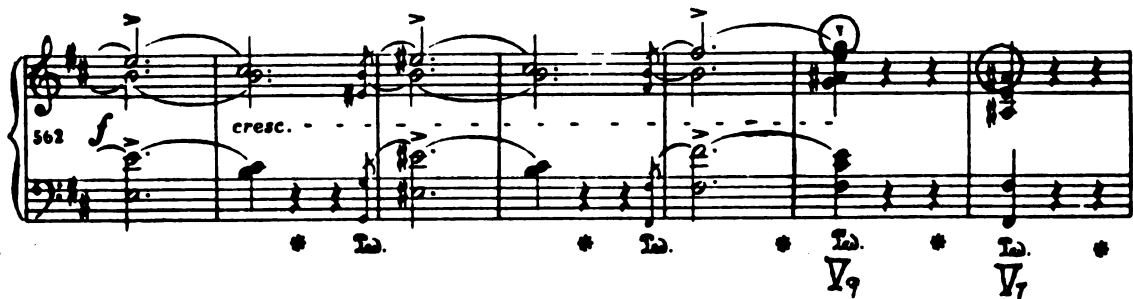
At the retransition to the returning A section, measures 385-388, it recurs in the bottom of the two fortissimo chords.

Example 10. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 385-388.



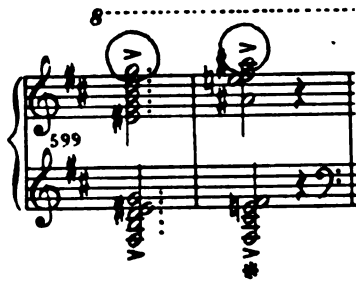
At the conclusion of the returning A section, measures 567-578, the diminished seventh is heard in the top voice of a dominant-ninth chord progressing to a dominant-seventh chord (see example below).

Example 11. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 562-568.



Its inversion, the augmented second, is found in the top notes of the two climactic chords (measures 599-600) in the midst of the exciting coda, bringing this motivic element to its final conclusion (see example 12 below).

Example 12. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 599-600.



The second melodic motive, the two-note figure, appears frequently in several thematic ideas contained in the work, often in a concealed form. In other instances, the two-note figure is a chromatic second which results from the resolution of the diminished seventh--the two motives are reciprocal to each other.

The combination of the two motives is first seen in measures 1-9. The delayed resolution of the diminished seventh seen in the two introductory chords is interpolated by another diminished seventh and its resolution (see example 13, p. 31).

Example 13. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 1-9.



In the closing section of part A, measures 44-58, the diminished seventh and its resolution interact to form a three-note figure in the bass. This bass figure and the two-note motive seen in the right-hand passage are essential thematic features (see example 14).

Example 14. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 44-57.



In part A, the two-note motive is prominently used in both the right-hand and the left-hand lines. The two-note figure appears in two linear lines of the right-hand passage in measures 13-15 and measures 21-23 (see example 15).

## Example 15. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 9-15.



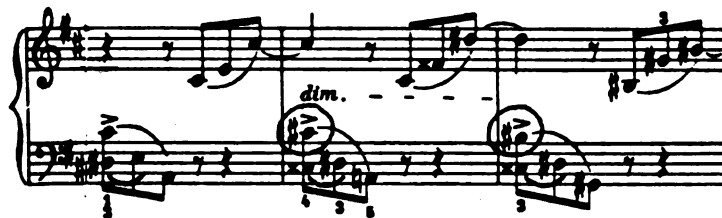
In measures 25-33, a two-note figure in the top voice of the left-hand harmonic line is stressed, while chromatic seconds can be found in the right-hand passage.

## Example 16. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 29-33.

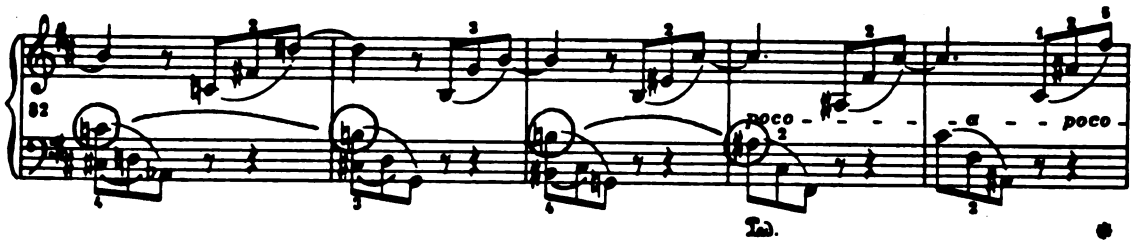


In measures 79-85, the two-note group is apparent in the chromatic descending line played by the left-hand thumb every two measures, while the two-note figure is seen within the three-note slur in the lower bass part.

## Example 17. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 79-85.



## Example 17 continued.



In the coda, the two-note motives are intrinsic to the longer phrase.

## Example 17a. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 570-590.

*sempre più animato*

570 *f* *cresc.*

575

580

585

An interesting note is mentioned by Paderewski in the commentary of the Polish Chopin Institute edition concerning the climactic phrase in fortistissimo in part B (measures 110-116). Paderewski quotes the following editorial version in Leschetizky's edition of this Scherzo.<sup>5</sup>



Thus, it makes the left-hand and the right-hand pattern symmetrical, which Paderewski seems to approve of. This may make sense when we observe the next two phrases (measures 117-124) in which the left hand and the right hand form a symmetrical pattern also, i.e., the right-hand pattern is a retrograde of the left hand's (see the example given).

Example 18. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 117-120.




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<sup>5</sup>Frederic Chopin, Scherzos, in Complete Works, Vol. V, ed. by Ignacy J. Paderewski (Warsaw: Chopin Institute, 1950), p. 91.

### Tonality and Harmonic Structure

In this work, Chopin employs only one change of mode and one other tonal area besides the tonic B minor. Both alterations occur in the trio section: theme C is in B major and the second phrase of theme D is in G-sharp minor.

There are frequent uses of chromaticisms and dissonant intervals (the diminished seventh, augmented second and augmented fourth), chromatically altered tones (most of which form the chromatic two-note figure discussed above), altered harmonies, dominant harmonies and secondary dominants. Heavy use of reiterated tonic and dominant pedal points are seen over long phrases. In part A of the large A section, pedal tonic and dominant bass notes consistently recur. In the first phrase (measures 9-16), a tonic bass is reiterated over the predominant tonic harmony. In the second phrase (measures 17-24), the tonic pedal bass remains, while the harmony is centered on the subdominant. Dominant harmony prevails in the next two phrases, with a dominant pedal in the bass. This dominant bass finally gives way to a new bass line in measures 37-43, at which point the harmony is changed to a diminished seventh chord. A retrograde of this bass line is seen in the top voice of the next three chords (see example 19 p. 36).

## Example 19. Scherzo in B minor. mm. 9-44.

10 *f p* *cresc.*

16 *f* *iv*

22 *cresc.* *f* *V<sub>7</sub>*

28 *f*

34 *cresc.* *f vii<sub>7</sub>*

39 *f* *ritenuto* *p* *G6 iv<sub>4</sub> vii<sub>7</sub>*

In part B, dominant pedal bass notes are reiterated first in measures 101-109, and subsequently, the corresponding repeated passage in measures 217-225 (see the example given below).

Example 20. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 217-225.



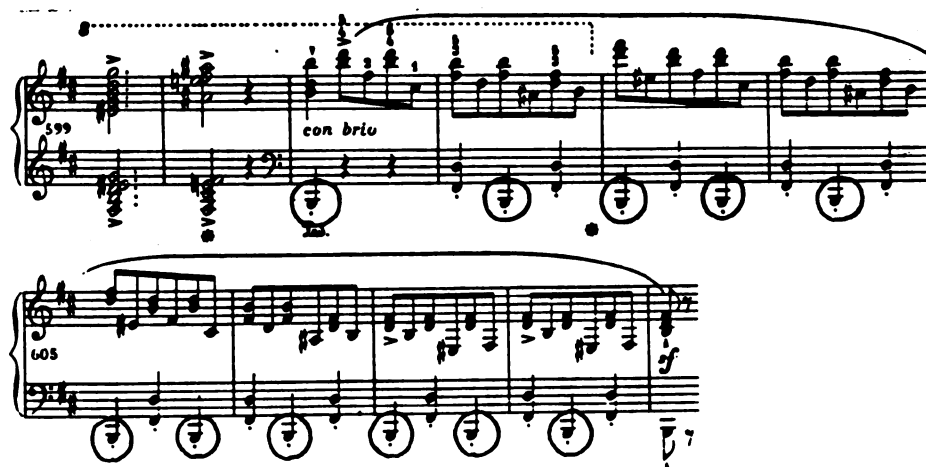
In the "berceuse" accompaniment which embellishes the Christmas carol tune, bell-like dominant notes are heard in the top voice over tonic notes in the bass (see the example given).

Example 21. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 305-309.



Tonic pedal bass notes are heard in the descending arpeggiated passage in the coda from measure 601-609.

## Example 22. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 601-609.



Chopin often gives emphasis to a dissonant chord by repeating it many times for dramatic effect. Two such chords in the coda are worth mentioning. From measure 581 to 584, a supertonic four-three chord is stated four times, clashes with the leading tone in the right hand. The G in the bass and the A# in the treble form an augmented second, which is the inversion of the distinctive diminished seventh already discussed earlier.

## Example 23. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 581-584.



As the coda comes to a fortississimo summit, a more dissonant chord is introduced. The tonic six-four with an added sixth and an added raised fourth is stated

nine times (measures 594-599) until it finally progresses to a dominant-seventh chord at measure 600.

Example 24. Scherzo in B-minor, mm. 594-599.



The chromatic motion in the three transitional chords which change mode from b minor in the first section to B major in the trio section creates new beauty in harmonic color. The second inversion of the supertonic-seventh chord in measure 298 progresses to a French sixth, which is then followed by the dominant-seventh of B major (the upper grace-note B resolving to A# is a 4-3 suspension). In this example as well as many other examples of mode change and modulation, Chopin takes utmost care to achieve smooth voice-leading. This technique reflects Chopin's careful study of J. S. Bach's compositions, whom he admired above other composers.

Example 25. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 297-304.

4-3 Suspension

ca lan do

b: ii<sup>°6</sup><sub>5</sub> F<sub>6</sub> B:V<sub>7</sub>

A written-out enharmonic modulation occurs at the end of theme D modulating from G-sharp minor back to B major, the key of theme C. The harmony at measure 334 is a leading-tone seventh chord in G-sharp minor, spelled Fx A# C# E, while at the next measure the note Fx is spelled enharmonically as G $\flat$ . A second-inversion leading-tone seventh chord in the key of B major results from this enharmonic change. This color change from Fx to G $\flat$  must be brought out with sensitivity by the pianist so that the listener is brought to a subtle awareness of the harmonic fluctuations.

Example 26. Scherzo in B minor, mm. 331-336.

The musical score for Example 26 shows measures 331 through 336 of the Scherzo in B minor. The notation includes a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a harmonic accompaniment. The key signature is B minor. The tempo marking 'dim.' is above measures 334 and 335, and 'riten.' is above measure 336. The harmonic progression is indicated below the bass staff: G# (measure 334), VII d7 4/2 (measure 335), B: VII d7 4/3 (measure 336), and V7 (measure 337).

We have seen that the formal structure of the B-minor Scherzo conforms to the scherzo-trio plan of a classical sonata movement with modification. The middle part resembles the trio of a scherzo movement in its mode-change, in the contrast between mood and tempo, and in its lighter texture. But while the first section is often brought to a definitive conclusion by a final cadence, the harmonic progression ending the scherzo section leads directly into the trio section without

a pause. The extended use of a coda as seen in the B-minor Scherzo as well as the other three Scherzos gives an additional dimension. In this way, Chopin creates innovation and excitement in the scherzo form.

### CHAPTER III

#### CHOPIN'S SCHERZO NO. 2 IN B-FLAT MINOR, OP. 31

##### Biographical Facts

The eight-month stay in Vienna had proven to be a period of intense loneliness and frustration for Chopin, with little promise for any meaningful progress in his career. Finally, he decided to set out for Paris which attracted artists of every kind at the time. It was here that Chopin found the only congenial home away from his native Poland, and he remained there for the remaining nineteen years of his short life.

In Paris, Chopin began to concertize once again. With the help of Camille Pleyel and Frederick Kalkbrenner, he appeared in his first concert along with several of the best artists of Paris in February, 1832. He played his F-minor piano concerto and Variations on La Ci Darem La Mano, as well as a two-piano work with Kalkbrenner, who was celebrated as the undisputed king of pianists in Paris for many years.<sup>1</sup> Pleyel Hall was filled with

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<sup>1</sup>Chopin had taken a couple of lessons from Kalkbrenner, but was persuaded by Liszt and Hiller that he was already playing better than Kalkbrenner. The lessons discontinued, and Kalkbrenner and Chopin remained on good terms.

important members of the Parisian musical community, and the concert proved to be a huge success for Chopin. Both Liszt and Mendelssohn were in the audience, and Liszt declared that "the most redoubled applause would not match his enchantment."<sup>2</sup>

The concert marked the beginning of a new life for Chopin and his entrance into the inner circle of the elite in Paris. By chance he met Prince Walenty Radziwill, who took him to a soirée given by the Baron de Rothschild, one of Paris' most elegant musical patrons. The elite of Paris society were there, and Chopin was asked to play. Once again, his success was brilliant, and lessons were requested by many aristocratic ladies, among them the Baronne de Rothschild. Chopin now became one of the most sought after artists of high Parisian society. Princess de Vandemont, Prince Adam Czartoryski, and Count Apponyi all claimed him as their favored protégé. He charged the inflated fee of twenty francs a lesson, even though Kalkbrenner, the reigning prince of piano pedagogy, charged only ten to twelve francs a lesson. This newfound affluence was a great blessing to Chopin, allowing him security and peace of mind to devote himself to composing in the most congenial circumstances.

The Second Scherzo in B-flat minor was composed in

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<sup>2</sup> Bernard Gavoty, Frederic Chopin (N.Y.: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1974), p. 141.

1837, during the period of time that he had established himself as the most respected composer and pianist in Paris. The work was dedicated to one of his pupils, Countess Adele de Furstenstein. It was published immediately by Schlesinger and a year later by Breitkopf & Hartel. Of all the four Scherzos, this is the only one that Chopin programmed regularly in his concerts. Alfred Cortot gives a chapter describing Chopin's concerts in his book, In Search of Chopin. Cortot places the number of Chopin's concerts to be only thirty, many of them being only casual appearances in private homes. The B-flat minor Scherzo was clearly a favorite of Chopin, since it was among the few compositions which Chopin performed in his rare public appearances.

Although Chopin had been acclaimed as the best pianist in Europe since the time he played at the French Court in the Palace of St. Cloud in 1838, he suffered from a weak physical condition and a morbid anxiety about performing in public. He himself gave us an idea of the agony he experienced in the following words: "You can't believe," he wrote, "what a martyrdom it is for me during the three days before I play in public."<sup>3</sup>

He confided to Liszt:

I am not the right person to give concerts. The public intimidates me, I feel asphyxiated by the breath of the people in the audience, paralyzed

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<sup>3</sup>Alfred Cortot, In Search of Chopin, p. 87.

by their curious stares and dumb before that sea of unknown faces.<sup>4</sup>

This explains why Chopin did not appear in concert frequently. When the revolution broke out in Paris in April of 1848, Chopin accepted an invitation from one of his pupils, Jane Wilhelmina Sterling, to visit England. The trip proved to be marred by his deteriorating physical condition. He had suffered a serious bout of illness prior to the trip, and his health only further declined as a result of the trip abroad. He did give a series of concerts in England, and during this concert tour the B-flat minor Scherzo was programmed frequently. The first performance was at Stafford House at a party given by the Duchess of Sutherland, where Queen Victoria heard him play. Subsequently, two public matinees were given, the latter including a performance of the B-flat minor Scherzo. Despite his physical weakness, Chopin was reported to have played with even more strength and brilliance at the second matinée than he had at the first.

Chopin also gave concerts in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester. Twelve hundred people came out for the Manchester concert, where he played the B-flat minor Scherzo again, indicating that it remained a favorite recital piece, even at this late date.

On his return to London, Chopin finally suffered

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

from the physical demands of his extensive concertizing. He was bed-ridden for three weeks with a heavy cold, headaches, and bronchitis, with symptoms of pulmonary weakness. Despite his extremely poor condition, he left his sickbed to play at a charity concert in Guildhall on November 16 on behalf of the Polish refugees. So strong was his love for his countrymen that it overrode any consideration of personal well-being. Thus did his final appearance symbolize the values which ruled his life, love of music, and love of country.

#### Formal Analysis

The Second Scherzo departs greatly from the well-defined formal, tonal and melodic structure of the First Scherzo. We find in this work diverse thematic materials, frequent modulations, and an expanded form. Chopin wove into the scherzo-trio form new elements rather than following a conventional rounded-binary design in each section. It is obvious that Chopin had no intention of keeping the classical outline. A hybrid form results in the B-flat minor Scherzo which combines elements of the sonata principle with that of the composite three-part form. Analyzing it as a hybrid form, it has the following diagram:

**[A]**      - Scherzo or Exposition

Parts	<u>A</u>	<u>transition</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>closing section</u>
Keys	B-flat minor (F minor)	D-flat maj.	G-flat maj. A-flat maj. <u>D-flat maj.</u>	D-flat maj.
Measure numbers	1-48,	49-64,	65-117,	117-132
Written-out repeats of the same sections	133-180 (with slight variation)	181-196,	197-249,	249-264

**[B]**      - Trio

Parts	<u>C</u>	<u>C'</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>
Keys	A major, F-sharp minor	A major C-sharp min.	C-sharp F-sharp min. E major,	E major
Measure numbers	265-284,	285-309,	309-333,	334-365,
Written-out repeats	366-386,	387-412,	412-435,	436-467,

**[C]**      - Development

Parts	<u>E'</u>	<u>D'</u>	<u>transition theme</u> (from <u>D''</u> )	
Keys	Suggesting A minor and G-sharp minor but leads to G minor	G minor C minor A-flat minor	A) E major F-sharp maj. A-flat min. (enharmonic)	B-flat min.
Measure numbers	468-492,	492-516,	517-543,	544-583,

Return of A

Parts	<u>A</u>	<u>transition</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>closing section</u>
Keys	B-flat minor	D-flat major	G-flat maj. A-flat maj. <u>D-flat maj.</u>	D-flat maj.
Measure numbers	584-631,	632-647,	648-708,	708-715

Coda

Keys	A major, (B-flat minor), D-flat major
Measure numbers	716-780

In conforming to the scherzo and trio form, the large B section here is a definite trio which contrasts with the A section in tempo and mood. In addition, the return of A section is almost an exact repetition, following the plan of a composite ternary form. Overall, the fast tempo, the triple time signature and the four-bar groupings (with one beat to a bar) are characteristic of a scherzo. However, the structure of the smaller parts departs from the traditional ternary principle. In the A section, there are two distinct themes which are linked by a transition and are followed by a closing section. In the trio, the  $||: C :||:D \ C :||$  design is replaced by  $||:C \ C' \ D \ E :||$ .

Elements of sonata form are evident in the design of two of the main sections in this scherzo. The A

section fits the scheme of an exposition in its sequence of thematic materials and key choice. The use of the relative major for the second thematic area is a logical key relationship in classical sonata form. Further, thematic materials from both the A and B sections are manipulated in the C section to achieve a dramatic climax--paralleling the development section of a sonata form. These compositional procedures serve to freely expand the concept of scherzo form. Therefore, it is not inappropriate to refer to this work as a fantasia or capriccio as some writers have done.

In his book, Chopin the Composer, Edgar Kelley analyzes the B-flat minor Scherzo under the subject heading "Amplification of the Sonata Principle." He discusses this and other compositions by Chopin, stressing the "enriching" and "ennobling" qualities which sonata elements impose on some of the less highly developed forms. The section at measures 468-588 is referred to by Kelley as a "working-out" section, as the development of a sonata.<sup>5</sup>

Arthur Hedley, in his short discussion on the Scherzos of Chopin, mentions also that "the B-flat minor Scherzo is cast in the form of a sonata movement with a trio intermezzo inserted before the "working-out" section. It suited Chopin very well not to be tied down to any

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<sup>5</sup> Edgar Stillman Kelley, Chopin the Composer (New York: G. Schirmer, 1913), p. 113.

strict form, to be free to shape his course according to the dictates of inspiration and dramatic impulse."<sup>6</sup>

A different analysis is given by William Robert Hutchinson in his Ph.D. thesis, "Implication, Closure and Interpolated Change as Exemplified in the Works of Frederic Chopin." The following sketchy outline is given by Hutchinson.<sup>7</sup> (Measure numbers are given here by the present writer for clarification purposes.)

A	--- B-flat minor	(mm. 1-48)
B	--- D-flat major	(mm. 49-132)
A	--- B-flat minor	(mm. 133-180)
B	--- D-flat major	(mm. 181-264)
C	--- A major (middle section) Development through C-sharp minor, E major, and moving to B-flat minor	(mm. 265-583)
A	--- B-flat minor	(mm. 584-631)
B	--- D-flat major	(mm. 632-715)
D	--- closing	(mm. 716-780)

Hutchinson adds in his remark that this could be a D-flat major Scherzo rather than B-flat minor if the A section in B-flat minor is treated as introduction and

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<sup>6</sup> Arthur Hedley, Chopin (London: Collier Books, 1962), p. 183.

<sup>7</sup> William Robert Hutchinson, "Implication, Closure and Interpolated Change as Exemplified in the Works of Frederic Chopin" (Ph.D., Music, Univ. of Chicago, 1960).

D-flat major theme as the main theme. The fact that this work ends in D-flat major does support Hutchinson's supposition, however, the B-flat minor theme recurs too many times for it to be considered just as an introduction. Its prominent thematic feature justifies its classification as a primary theme.

### Melodic Structure

Among the many thematic ideas in the B-flat minor Scherzo, the triplet motive of the opening theme distinguishes itself as an essential thematic feature. Von Lenz, a pupil of Chopin, said that Chopin himself referred to the first two triplet motives (figure "a" in example 27) as a question and the corresponding phrase (figure "b") as an answer. The contrast between the two phrases is marked by their dynamic difference as well as the "high" and "low" of the piano register.


#### Example 27. Scherzo in B-flat minor

Figure A. mm. 1-4

Figure b. mm. 5-9



The triplet motive poses a mysterious question twice. Von Lenz also gave the following comment concerning the interpretation of this triplet motive: "For Chopin,

it was never question enough, never piano enough, never important enough. It must be like a charnel-house."<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the antitheses must be exaggerated in performance. The sotto voce triplets contrast greatly with the fortissimo chords, which are characterized by the dotted rhythm . As if one statement does not give enough emphasis, this question and answer persists in the three subsequent phrases. In both the written-out repeat section of A and the final returning section of A, the initial B-flat of this opening theme disappears. One could speculate that the first B-flat is there simply for rhythmical reasons. In the two subsequent recurrences of theme A, Chopin makes two very slight changes so as to avoid a strict repetition.

In the repetition of the A section the dotted rhythm of figure "b" is replaced by a quintuplet at measure 147 and a quadruplet at measure 172. At the final returning section of A (measures 584-631), the note F at the end of each questioning phrase is held for six beats instead of a quarter-note followed by five beats of rests. In both of these sections, a two-measure trill on the note Eb is added in order to connect the gap of a third from the end of theme A to the beginning of the transition theme (measures 179-180 and measures 630-631).

The transition theme (measures 49-64) is, like the

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<sup>8</sup>Herbert Weinstock, Chopin: the Man and His Music (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), p. 230.

first theme, marked by the dynamic contrast of fortissimo and pianissimo. This thematic material is varied and treated prominently in the coda. The con anima second theme is one of Chopin's most cantabile and breathtaking melodies. The B theme section builds from pianissimo to an exciting fortissimo (measures 65-117), a procedure which is also used in part B of the First Scherzo. It is this theme which Robert Schumann referred to as being "so tender" when he compared Chopin's Second Scherzo with a passage from a poem by Lord Byron "...so tender, so bold, as full of love as of scorn."<sup>9</sup> The closing section (measures 117-132) is composed of tonic and dominant-seventh arpeggios. In contrast to the First Scherzo where the A section leads directly to the trio without a pause, the A section of the Second Scherzo does come to a conclusive ending. This section ends in the relative major key rather than the traditional tonic minor.

Chopin apparently never intended his repetitive passages to be interpreted the same way. Even with exact repetitions, subtle differences must be brought out in performance. This may be safely assumed from the recollection of Chopin's playing by A. J. Hipkins: "Chopin never played his own compositions twice alike, but varied each according to the mood of the moment, a mood that charmed

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<sup>9</sup>Frederick Niecks, The Life of Chopin, Vol. II (London: Novello and Co., third ed., 1902), p. 257.

by its very waywardness."<sup>10</sup> In addition, Chopin's own markings in the trio theme and repeats clearly confirm this point. The trio theme is a duet for the two upper voices, and the two statements of this theme differ subtly in counterpoint (measures 265-276 and measures 285-297). In the second statement at measure 285, Chopin adds an accent mark over the first note C# of the alto line to indicate predominance of the alto line over the soprano. The bass note A in the first A major chord is eliminated at measure 285 which results in parallel fifths between the two lower voices. In the second phrase of this statement, he adds an extra measure (measure 293) in the middle of the phrase. (Compare the two statements given in examples 28 and 29.)

Example 28. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 265-276.

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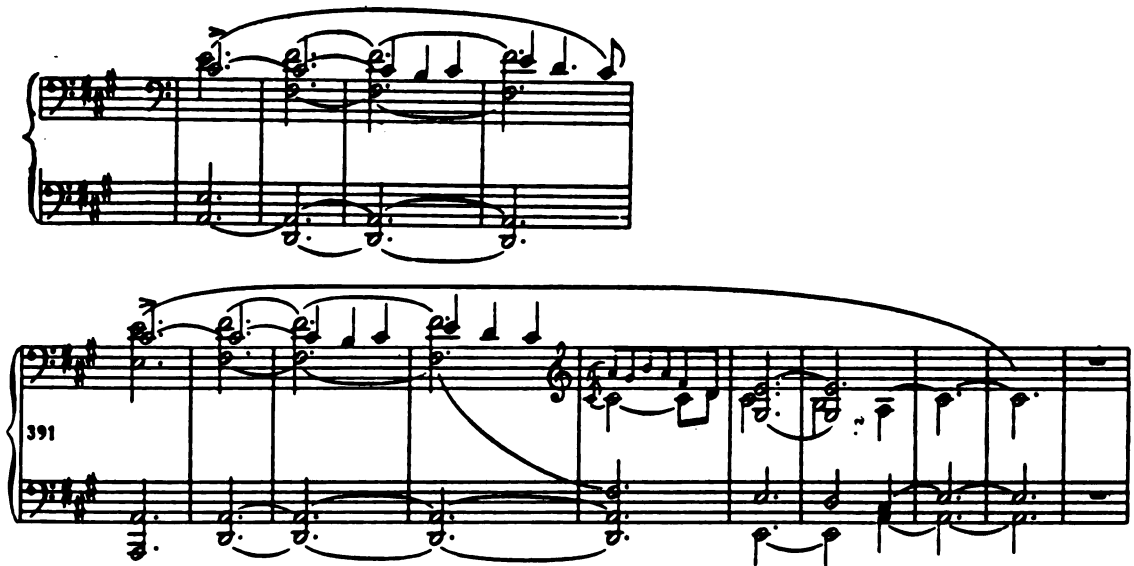
<sup>10</sup> Edith J. Hipkins, How Chopin played, p. 52.

## Example 29. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 285-297.

The phrasing also differs subtly in repeating section of the trio theme. In measures 366-378, a single phrase-marking is given to the entire melody instead of two phrase-markings (4+8), while in the following statement, measure 395 is ornamented. (Compare the two statements given in examples 30 and 31.)

## Example 30. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 366-378.

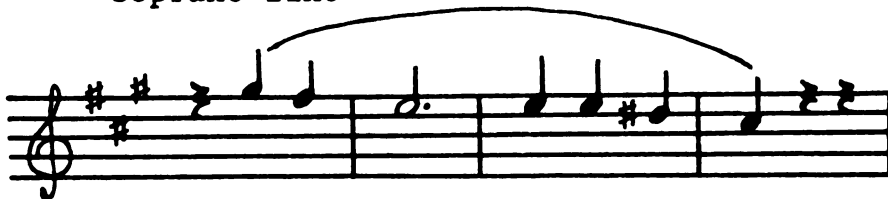
## Example 31. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 387-400.



Theme D, measures 310-322, is based on tonic and dominant harmonies. Its melodic structure breaks down into four individual lines. The alto line consists of repetitions of the same five-note motive. The soprano line is more cantabile, while the tenor outlines a triadic contour and the bass line moves in stepwise motion (see the example below).

## Example 32. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 313-316.

Soprano line



## Example 32 continued.

## Alto line



## Tenor line



## Bass line



In theme E, measures 334-365, the real melodic interest is in the bass, while the top line has embellished passage-work which sounds like a happy "merry-go" round. In performance, it is customary to resume the original tempo here since the filigreed figuration sounds most convincing in a fast tempo (see example 33, p. 57).

## Example 33. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 334-341.

The musical score for Example 33, Scherzo in B-flat minor, measures 334-341, is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 334-341, is marked *leggiero* and features a rapid, arpeggiated melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system, measures 338-341, continues the arpeggiated melody and bass line. The bass line is marked with '1mo.' and includes asterisks indicating specific notes.



Themes E, D, and the transition theme (from the A section) are manipulated in long sequential passages to many remote tonal areas. Three sequential phrases developed from Theme E are treated from measures 468-491. The first phrase, measures 468-475, has an arpeggiated figuration outlining the leading-tone seventh in the key of A minor. A new bass line appears in the next two phrases while the arpeggiated figuration continues in the keys of G-sharp minor and G minor. In the development of theme D, measures 492-516, the original four-measure soprano line of this theme is superseded by three descending notes, and the bass line is moving in stepwise downward motion instead of upward motion (compare the bass line in example 34, p. 58 with example 32, p. 56).

## Example 34. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 492-498.

Following a sequential passage of the transition theme, a second extended development is given to theme D (measures 544-583). Although the writing in this passage shows that the five-note groups and the three descending octaves are one single melodic line over an harmonic bass, we still hear two distinct lines as shown in example 34. The reason why Chopin did not make the F at measure 545 (also the D at measure 547, and Bb at measure 549) a dotted half-note could be due to its impracticality in performance (see the example given below).

## Example 35. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 544-549.

The con fuoco five-note figure drives through a prolonged climax which finally subsides to emphasize the dominant of the tonic minor key. The same five-note figure is repeated six times from measures 566-583 in gradual diminuendo and calando preparing for the return of the A section.

The coda comprises material from theme A and the transition theme (from the A section). The rhythmic sequence or modulating motive  is derived from the triplet figure of theme A. From measures 732-747, two statements of theme A return. The antitheses disappear and the triplet motive is no longer asking a question but makes three convincing statements. The transition theme appears from measures 716-723 and measures 756-763. The sequential motive  which first appears at the end of the transition theme in measure 719 becomes a significant figure in the latter part of the coda (measures 748-771).

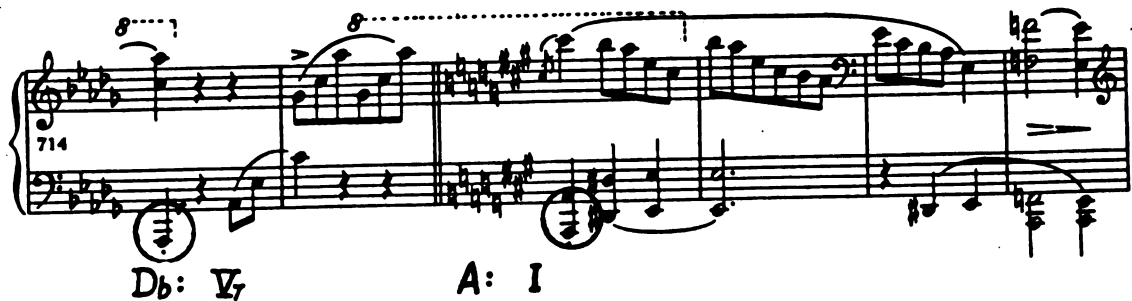
### Tonality and Harmonic Structure

Whereas Chopin only employs one change of mode and one other tonal area besides the tonic key in the B-minor Scherzo, he digresses into fifteen other tonal areas besides the tonic key in the B-flat minor Scherzo and only three of them are closely related keys (see the listing of keys given in the diagram on pp. 46 and 47). There are examples of abrupt modulations to distant keys and examples of long chromatic phrases used parti-

cularly by Chopin to delay the arrival of the new key. The smooth voice-leading is always observed carefully in whatever means of modulation he uses. This skillful technique together with his sense of beauty for harmonic color stamp his trait of genius.

A very abrupt modulation occurs at the beginning of the coda (measure 716) where Chopin changes from the key of D-flat major to the unexpected key of A major--a distant key having enharmonically a chromatic-mediant relationship (see example 36).

Example 36. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 714-719.



Another example of a sudden modulation is seen at measure 516. As theme D comes to a deceptive cadence in the key of A-flat minor at measure 516, the submediant in second inversion becomes an enharmonic tonic in second inversion in the key of E major--an unexpected new tonality, but enharmonically having a diatonic mediant relationship (see example 37 p. 61).

## Example 37. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 513-518.

$\text{a}_b$  :  $\text{V}_3^4$   $\text{VI}_4^6$   
 $\text{E} : \text{I}_4^6$

In the con anima second theme, Chopin employs a borrowed chord to modulate from G-flat major to A-flat major. The harmony at measure 72 is a borrowed  $\text{ii}_7^\circ$  in A-flat major. A chromatic modulation occurs in the next phrase where Chopin modulates from A-flat major to the main key of the second theme, D-flat major (observe the smooth bass line in the example given below).


## Example 38. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 69-83.

$\text{G}_b$  :  $\text{I}$   $\text{A}_b : \text{ii}_7^\circ$   $\text{V}_7$

$\text{A}_b : \text{I}$   $\text{I}_7$

## Example 38 continued.

Musical score for Example 38 continued, measures 81-83. The score is in B-flat minor (three flats). Measure 81 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a chromatic ascending passage in the right hand. Measure 82 is marked *dolce* and continues the chromatic passage. Measure 83 shows the continuation of the chromatic passage. Below the staff, the chord progression is indicated as  $D\flat: V_2^4$  and  $I_6$ .

A long chromatic passage, delaying the modulation from the key of B-flat minor to its relative major, is seen in measures 724-732. At each sequence of the modulating motive , one or two notes are inflected upward a semitone until a German sixth chord is reached at measure 731, which then progresses smoothly to a tonic chord in second inversion in the key of D-flat major (see example 39).

## Example 39. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 724-732.

Musical score for Example 39, measures 724-732. The score is in B-flat minor (three flats). Measure 724 starts with a *cresc.* marking. The score shows a long chromatic passage with various chord progressions indicated below the staff:  $b\flat: V$ ,  $III_4^{+6}$ ,  $i_4^6$ ,  $i$ ,  $V_{IV}$ ,  $III_{IV}^{+6}$ ,  $IV$ ,  $G_6$ , and  $D\flat: I_4^6$ . The passage ends with a *pia mos.* marking and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes measure numbers 724 and 726.

An intricate modulation is given in measures 524-536, presenting an enharmonic modulation by sequence. At measure 524, the transition theme in E major progresses to an harmonic outline of the leading-tone seventh in the key of F-sharp minor (measures 528-531) which is then followed by a sequential phrase giving an enharmonic leading-tone seventh in the enharmonic key of A-flat minor. At measure 535, an inverted augmented sixth spelling is suggested in the bass ( $f\flat - d\sharp$ ) which proceeds to the leading-tone seventh in the key of B-flat minor at measure 536. Thereby, Chopin modulates from E major to B-flat minor by passing through F-sharp minor and A-flat minor (see example 40).

Example 40. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 524-537.

ff

cresc.

$vii^{dy}$   
F#m.


E:

532

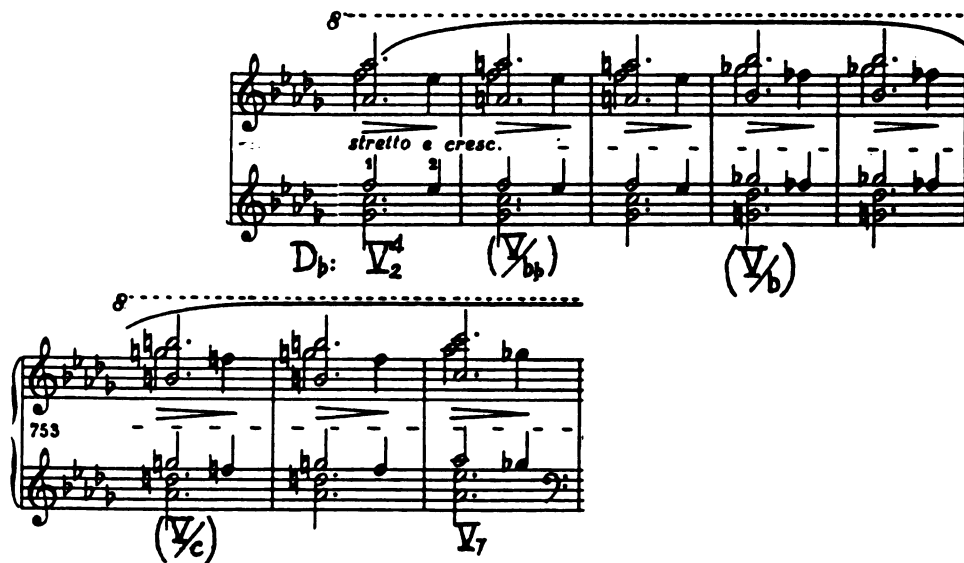
$vii^{dy}$   
Abm.

$b\flat$ : Aug. 6th.  $vii^{dy}$

2da.

The series of strikingly dissonant chords in measures 748-755 was probably offensive to the ears of Chopin's contemporaries. The entire passage is based on the motive  of the transition theme in measure 719. This passage begins and ends in D-flat major; but the intervening harmonies--in two-bar segments--are not functional within D-flat. They sound more as if they have fleeting dominant characteristics in B-flat minor, B minor, and C minor (see example 41).

Example 41. Scherzo in B-flat minor, mm. 748-755.



The musical score for Example 41, Scherzo in B-flat minor, measures 748-755, is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 748-752, is marked *stretto e cresc.* and features a series of chords: D-flat major (V<sub>2</sub>), B-flat minor (V<sub>b</sub>), B minor (V<sub>b</sub>), and C minor (V<sub>c</sub>). The second system, measures 753-755, continues the harmonic progression with chords (V<sub>c</sub>) and V<sub>7</sub>. The score is in B-flat minor, indicated by three flats in the key signature.

The B-flat minor Scherzo, as observed, is complex and ambiguous in its formal and harmonic structure. It is a remarkable composition which has enjoyed more popularity and praise than the other three Scherzos. It was exclaimed by Louis Ehlert that "this composition was composed in a

blessed hour!"<sup>11</sup> and Huneker declared that "it has a noble tone, is of a noble type."<sup>11</sup> Because of its immense popularity, it is often over-performed by professional pianists and abused by amateurs who do not devote enough time to its preparation.

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<sup>11</sup>Ashton Jonson, A Handbook to Chopin's Works (Heinemann, 1905), p. 190.

## CHAPTER IV

### CHOPIN'S SCHERZO NO. 3 IN C-SHARP MINOR, OP. 39

#### Biographical Facts

When Chopin finally settled in Paris in the year 1832, he had the opportunity to make acquaintances with some of the most prestigious musicians and writers in Europe. It was also here that the momentous meeting between Chopin and the notorious novelist, Aurore-Lucile Dupin--known to the world by her pen name of George Sand--took place. Paradoxically, Chopin's initial reaction to her was one of revulsion. His fastidious and conservative nature was repelled by her eccentric, masculine behavior and appearance--she dressed in men's clothes, and smoked cigars excessively. Yet, beneath her masculine appearance lay other qualities--an intense motherly nature, and a high intellect and devotion to art. Gradually, an intimacy developed between them as George Sand replaced Chopin's former love, Maria Wodzinska. The relationship profoundly influenced the rest of his life and career.

When George Sand invited both Chopin and Liszt to her country estate at Nohant in 1837, Chopin declined.

However, in the following year, Chopin joined Sand and her two children in a journey to Majorca in October, 1838. The congenial climate of Majorca was intended to be an idyllic retreat to improve the rheumatic condition of Sand's son and Chopin's chronically frail physical condition, but the trip proved to be a disastrous experience for Chopin, and greatly endangered his health. Even their arrival in Majorca was marred by difficulty in finding suitable lodgings. Their first few days were spent in two poorly furnished and noisy rooms above a barrel maker's workshop. Finally, they found a house in Establiments near Palma, which also proved to be entirely unsuitable. The damp plaster walls of the house could not sustain wet rain, and the house was never warm. The worst was to come when the travelers had gone out for a long walk one evening on a rough and rocky ground, and encountered a violent wind that totally exhausted Chopin, leading to a recurrence of acute bronchitis, and violent bouts of coughing, to which Chopin almost succumbed. The local doctors who were called in determined that Chopin was consumptive. Alarmed by the possible consequences of Chopin's condition, their landlord asked them to leave the house immediately, but only after paying for the replastering and whitewashing of the walls to prevent contamination. Fortunately, George Sand discovered a deserted monastery in the mountains of Valldemosa that was available to them. Chopin's physical condition, at this time, was so debilitated that he was virtually

helpless. Even worse, the dread disease was seen as a menace to the villagers who treated the four strangers in a most unfriendly manner. Moreover, there was no news from Paris for quite some time, and the Pleyel piano did not arrive until late January. Even then, Chopin was forced to pay an exorbitant fee for the customs.

Throughout this period of intense physical and emotional strain, Chopin was tenderly cared for and nursed by George Sand at Valldemosa, and managed to rally enough strength to return to work. Chopin described their eerie surroundings in the following words:

You can imagine me, between the rocks and the sea, in a cell in an immense abandoned monastery, with doors bigger than any carriage gate in Paris. Here I am, without curls or white gloves, pale as always. My bedroom, shaped like a large coffin, has an enormous dusty vault, a small window looking out on orange trees, palms, and cypresses in the garden. Facing the window, beneath a filigreed rose window in Moorish style, a camp bed. Beside the bed, an old "untouchable," a sort of square desk, uncomfortable for writing, on which there is a candlestick with a candle. On the same desk, Bach and my notebooks. Silence...one could cry out...eagles soar over our heads. In a word, I am writing from a very strange place.<sup>1</sup>

This was the environment, then, in which Chopin began writing the C-sharp minor Scherzo, which he despaired of ever finishing. He wrote to his friend Julian Fontana: "do not speak to anyone of the Scherzo, I do not know when I shall finish it, for I am still weak and cannot

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<sup>1</sup>Bernard Gavoty, Frederic Chopin, p. 220.

write."<sup>2</sup> He also managed to finish revising the Preludes and the Polonaise in C-minor, Op. 40. The Preludes nos. 1, 2, 4, and 10 were written in Valldemosa.

Finally, in February, 1839, Chopin and the Sands left Majorca, on route to Nohant, after first traveling through Italy and Genoa, and allowing Chopin to convalesce briefly at Marseilles. This was the composer's very first summer at Nohant, and the environment there seemed to rejuvenate him. Finally the C-sharp minor Scherzo was completed, as well as the Funeral Sonata, Op. 35. The year after their return to Paris in October, 1839, Chopin published the Third Scherzo, the Second Ballade, the Second Impromptu, and the Waltz in A-flat, Op. 42.

Chopin dedicated the Third Scherzo to his pupil Adolph Gutmann, who had come to Paris from Germany, at age fifteen, to study with him. Gutmann, who was largely built, was called le bon géant Allemand. When Moscheles came to Paris and visited Chopin in 1839, Chopin played for him the Funeral Sonata and the Prelude in A-flat major, but let Gutmann play the more strenuous C-sharp minor Scherzo. The Master's art is revealed to us in the following excerpt from Moscheles' writings which give us an insight into the special quality of Chopin's playing as well as his music:

Chopin has just been playing to me, and for the first time I understand his Music. The rubato,

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<sup>2</sup>Ashton Jonson, A Handbook to Chopin's Works, p. 212.

which with his other interpreters, degenerates into disregard of time, is with him only a charming originality of manner; the harsh modulations which strike me disagreeably when I am playing his compositions no longer shocked me, because he glides over them in a fairy-like way with his delicate fingers; his piano is so soft that he does not need any strong forte to produce his contrasts, and for this reason one does not miss the orchestral effects which the German School requires from a pianoforte player, but allow one's self to be carried away as by a singer, who, unconcerned about the accompaniment, entirely follows his emotions. (Moscheles, Diaries, Leipzig, 1872)<sup>3</sup>

One year later, in April 26, 1841, Chopin gave a concert at the Salle Pleyel in which he performed only his most recent compositions. Included on the program was the Third Scherzo, indicating that he must have rallied his strength to play the demanding Scherzo. Chopin's profound effect on the audience is described in this segment of a review of the concert:

One can say that Chopin is the creator of a school of pianists and a school of composers. Nothing equals the lightness, the delicacy, with which this artist touches the keys. His compositions, so full of originality, of distinction, of grace--are unparalleled. Chopin is unmatched as a pianist and must not, indeed cannot, be compared to any other.<sup>4</sup>

### Formal Structure

In his third Scherzo, Chopin again frees the

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<sup>3</sup>Edith J. Hipkins, How Chopin Played (London: J. M. Dent and Sons), p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Alfred Cortot, In Search of Chopin, p. 132.

Scherzo from the classical mold. New dimensions are added, and the tripartite design is expanded to a sectional four-part form: A B A B--a well-balanced formal structure. The work has the following outline:

Introduction mm. 1-24

A Scherzo

Parts	A	B	A
Keys	C# minor	C# minor	C# minor
Measure numbers	25-56	57-105	106-154

B Trio

Parts	C	C	D	C	<u>transition</u>
Keys	Db major	Db major	Ab major	Db major	
Measure numbers	155-199	200-242	243-286	287-319	320-366

A Scherzo

Parts	A	B
Keys	C# minor	C# minor
Measure numbers	367-398	399-447

**B** TrioCoda

mm. 573-649

Parts	C	C'	C''
Keys	E major	E minor	C# major
Measure numbers	448-493	494-540	541-572

Although the repeat of the trio section had been used by Beethoven in his Fourth and Seventh Symphonies, Chopin's structure in this Scherzo is unique. The da capo of Chopin's Scherzo is shortened and the second trio is not followed by another return of the scherzo section. Further, instead of a strict repetition of the trio as seen in Beethoven's examples, Chopin's second trio is varied and beautifully transformed.

In regard to the phrase structure of the C-sharp minor Scherzo, Huneker points out: "The work is clear-cut and of exact balance. Chopin founded whole paragraphs either on a single phrase repeated in similar shapes or on two phrases in alternation--a primitive practice in Polish folksong."<sup>5</sup>

The groups of four quarter notes to a bar instead of three in the introduction is rhythmically ambiguous. These quiet quadruplets are met at the top by three powerful chords, illustrating the fierce contrast of dynamics

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<sup>5</sup>James Huneker, "Historical and Analytical Comments," preface in Scherzos and Fantaisie, ed. by Carl Mikuli.

as well as texture and register which is a distinctive element in Chopin's Scherzos. De Lenz remarks that Chopin dedicated this work to Gutmann because this giant "could knock a hole in the table with these chords."<sup>6</sup>

The structure of the theme-group A is well balanced, and consists of two similar statements of the main theme. Theme A is stated energetically with double octaves which outline a C-sharp minor descending scale (see example 42).

Example 42. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 25-33.



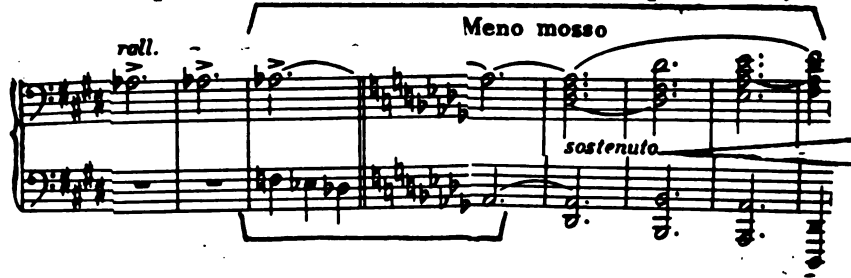
The playfulness, lightheartness, and persistent staccato quarter-notes of the B theme-group, mm. 57-106, are characteristic elements seen in Beethoven's scherzos. The structure of the phrases in this thematic group is also well-balanced; the second phrase (measures 67-74) is parallel to the first phrase; and the fourth phrase (measures 83-90) is a transposition of the third phrase (measures 75-82). The return of theme-group A at measure 107 is extended and leads into the B section. The

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<sup>6</sup>Weinstock, Chopin: the Man and His Music, p. 245.

first phrase of the trio is introduced at measure 154 by its retrograde version in diminution in the left-hand figure (see example 45).

Example 43. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 152-159.



This chorale-like section is not considered a trio by many authors, Gerald Abraham states, "the Scherzo Op. 39 dispenses entirely with a trio, the middle section consisting first of passage-work, then of a variation of the chordal second subject with its delicious showers of *leggierissimo* quavers."<sup>7</sup> In this section, the old trio form of a duet between the two upper voices seen in the other three Scherzos is replaced by a chorale-like setting of a familiar tune. It is indeed a rather unusual trio, but its change of mode and distinct contrast from the A section still justify its designation as such.

The chorale setting was undoubtedly inspired by the still and isolated surroundings of the monastery at Valldemosa where Chopin started the work. Also, the

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<sup>7</sup>Gerald Abraham, Chopin's Musical Style (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 58.

studying and editing of the Bach's volumes that he brought with him to Majorca could well have been a stimulation. And though the "religious" setting is only make-believe, Chopin adds to the theme romantic flair and impressionistic effect. At the pause of each chorale phrase, he embellishes it with falling cascades of notes and the effect of the pedal indication is quite impressionistic, which Ashton Jonson describes poetically as "the lovely laughter of the wind-swept wheat."<sup>8</sup> Unlike the trio of the other three Scherzos where it stays in the middle of the piano register, this section in the C-sharp Scherzo uses the two extreme opposition of the piano compass (see example 44).

Example 44. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 155-162.



This familiar tune which Chopin uses in a chorale setting is in no way original. It has been used by many composers in various contexts. The first two phrases of the tune are seen at the beginning of the Larghetto movement of Beethoven's Second Symphony, appearing originally

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<sup>8</sup> Jonson, A Handbook to Chopin's Works, p. 214.

in the first violin part, and imitated by the winds four measures later. (see example 45).

Example 45. Beethoven's Second Symphony,  
2nd mvt., mm. 1-4.



Each phrase in the B section of Chopin's work is similar in construction--a chorale phrase followed by descending eight-note patterns. The four phrases of the chorale are repeated at an octave higher from measures 200-243. "D" material, mm. 243-286, which precedes the third stanza comprises dominant-seventh arpeggiated figuration in the keys of A-flat major, G-flat major and D-flat major, while melodic interest is heard in the top notes. The third repetition of chorale stanza returns to the original register. A prolonged retransition brings to an impressive return of the large A section--part A, measures 367-398 and part B, measures 399-447. Thereby, the return of the A section is in a binary design and not ternary. The second B section returns from measures 448-572 with developments of the chorale theme. The first stanza is stated in E major which digresses into a più lento, varied statement of the theme in E minor. It is a transcendental moment when this theme comes to a

peroration in C-sharp major over a dominant bass pedal (measures 542-572). The theme is no longer set in chorale style but is transformed into a long continuous phrase of twenty-five measures, which rises to a precipitous group of octaves leading to the impetuous coda. The symmetrical structure is also evident in the coda which divides into two main parallel parts (measures 573-604 and measures 605-636), concluded by final double octaves (measures 637-649) reminiscent of the main octave theme. This coda should be played at an extremely fast tempo, while the final octaves marked stretto are to be played even faster. Alternating between the reiterated C-sharp octaves are descending chromatic octaves which bring the piece to a close in C-sharp major--a picardy third. Among the codas in Chopin's four Scherzos, this coda is the most impressive and technically demanding for pianists.

### Melodic Structure

While the B-flat minor Scherzo is distinguished by many diverse thematic ideas, the C-sharp minor Scherzo is dominated by two very prominent main themes--the vigorous octave theme in the A section and the chorale-like theme in the B section.

In breaking down the melodic structure, we find melodic patterns based on two-note and three-note groups. Both A and B theme-groups are built on groups of three quarter notes in stepwise motion (see examples 46 and 47, p. 78).

## Example 46. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 25-40

## Theme-group A

Two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system (measures 25-30) is marked *risoluto* and *ff*. The second system (measures 31-40) is marked *ten.* and *p*. The key signature is C-sharp minor (three sharps). The music features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand.

## Example 47. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 59-82.

## Theme-group B

Three systems of musical notation for piano. The first system (measures 59-66) has a measure number of 59. The second system (measures 67-74) has a measure number of 67 and is marked *cresc.*. The third system (measures 75-82) has a measure number of 75. The key signature is C-sharp minor (three sharps). The music features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand.

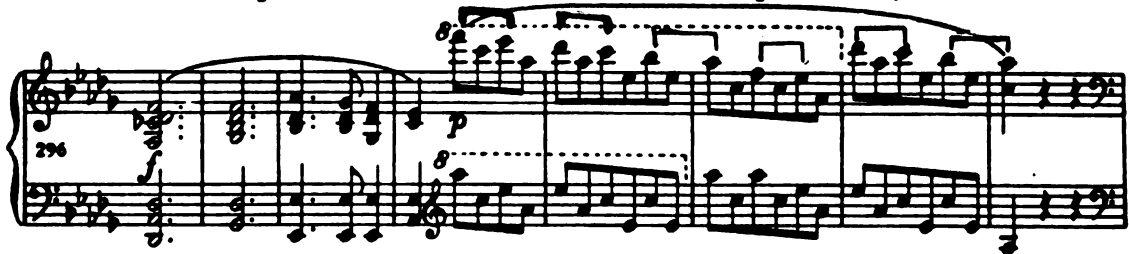
The right-hand line in the first two phrases of the theme-group B is a sustained duet. The soprano line moves closely around the same two notes, while the alto line has a wider range of melodic contour (see the alto line given in example 48). This section builds from the dynamic level of piano to a climactic fortissimo--a construction so typically manifested in the A section's second theme, also seen in the first two Scherzos. The staccato quarter-note movement transfers from the bass to the alto and tenor in measures 75-90. While the excitement is further increased by the doubling of the bass line in measures 91-98.

Example 48. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 59-66.



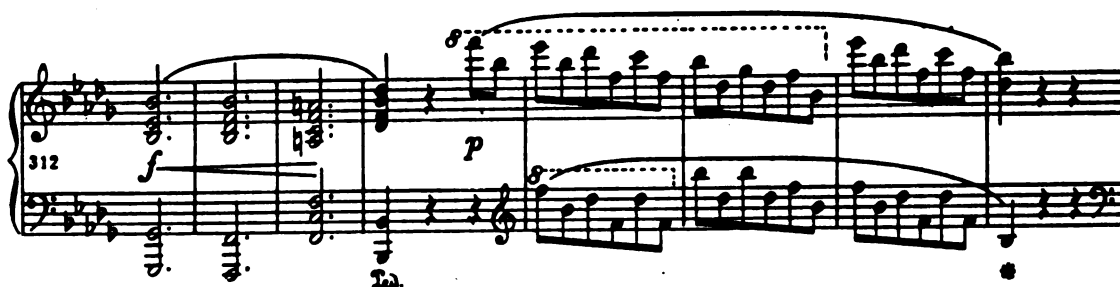
Melodic pattern of two-note groups are found in the tinkling top notes of the descending eighth-notes at the end of each chorale phrase. These two-note groups result in a rhythmical stress of a hemiola effect (see example 49 below).

Example 49. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 296-303.



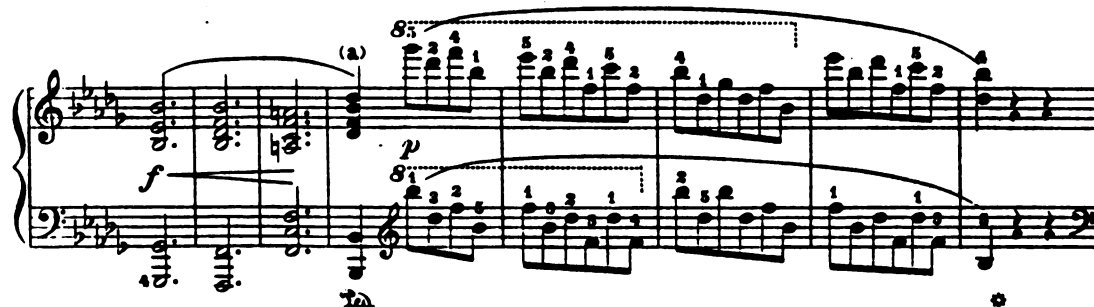
In the last chorale stanza of the B section, measures 312-319, the eighth-note pattern is shortened in both hands, as compared with previous similar passages.

Example 50. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 312-319.



The reason for Chopin's modified version, as explained by the Editorial Committee of the Polish edition, is due to the fact that the pianos at Chopin's time had not included Gb<sup>4</sup>. As we are no longer confronted by this obstacle, the following version appearing in the Schirmer edition seems advisable.

Example 51. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 312-319.



In the coda, three-note groups in the bass are seen in the first two phrases (measures 573-560), which are followed in the next two phrases by groups of two-note in leaping octaves. An accent mark over the second octave of

each bar obscures the rhythmic flow. Tonally, we can see that Chopin is emphasizing the three descending notes of the C-sharp minor scale with these accent marks (see example 52).

Example 52. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 582-593.



### Harmonic Structure

In contrast to the Second Scherzo where he modulates to many remote keys, Chopin chooses a rather logical tonal scheme in the various thematic areas of the Third Scherzo. He either simply changes the mode or modulates to a closely related key. The chorale theme in the first B section is in D-flat major--an enharmonic change of mode from the tonic minor. The second B section starts in relative major, E major, while the first variation of the chorale theme is in E minor, a change of mode from the previous E major statement. It then modulates to the concluding statement of this theme in C-sharp

major--a change of mode from the tonic minor.

There are momentary tonal shifts within the various thematic sections. The choice of keys in these passages are mostly closely related. The C-sharp minor B theme in the A section shifts its tonal center briefly to F-sharp minor in measures 75-82. In the D-flat major chorale setting, the second phrase is in A-flat major and the third phrase is in G-flat major. In the E-major chorale stanza of the second B section, the third phrase is in A major while the third and fourth phrases of the E minor statement is in F-sharp minor (the only slightly remote key relationship).

The harmonic structure of the introduction in this work is most equivocal. Alan Rawsthorne remarks in his analysis of the four Chopin's Scherzos that these first twenty bars of the C-sharp minor Scherzo are keyless, and in that regard, Chopin is seventy-five years ahead of his time.<sup>9</sup> In order to explain the harmonic foundation of these opening bars, the Chopin Institute Edition had made some enharmonic changes from Chopin's notation. The change which the Polish edition had made are: F instead of E# in bar 1; C# instead of Db in bar 4; A# instead of Bb, Ax instead of B and D# instead of Eb from bars

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<sup>9</sup>Alan Walker, "Chopin and Musical Structure" in Profiles of the Man and the Musician, edited by Alan Walker, p. 247.

12-16. A comparison side-by-side of Chopin's original notation in the Schirmer edition with that of the Polish edition is given in the following example.

Example 53. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 1-20.

a, Schirmer edition

b, Chopin Institute Edition

*Presto con fuoco*

With these euphonic changes, the following harmonic foundation results from measures 1-20 as given in the commentary of the Chopin Institute edition.



With the change of notation given by the Editorial Committee, a series of chromatically descending major and minor triads can be seen clearly. Naturally, the sound desired by Chopin remains the same. His original notation outlines a descending chromatic scale, D-Db-C-B-Bb-A. Obviously, Chopin intended an excessive chromaticism with no regard for functional harmonic progression. It is only in the three land-mark like chords that tonal structure in C-sharp minor can be defined--the first chord at measures 6 and 7 is a V/VII; the second chord at measures 14 and 15 is a supertonic chord; and the third chord at measures 18 and 19 is a Neapolitan sixth.

Frequent use of chromatic inflections is seen in both melodic and harmonic materials. One notable example is the raised fourth scale degree (fx), which is seen peripheral to both A and B themes in the A section (see example 46 and 47). The raised fourth degree (Lydian) is a trait of folk element which Chopin employs frequently in his works.

The emancipation of the chords of the seventh is

one of the major harmonic evolutions of the nineteenth century. Chopin freely uses the chords of the seventh as well as ninth, and fully explores their colorful effects. The prolonged transition (measures 320-351) to the A section illustrates such unconventional use of the seventh chords. In this section, he glides from one subtle harmonic change to another over a dominant pedal bass, and has no intention to resolve them to a functional harmony.

Example 55. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 320-351.

320 *sostenuto* *f* *dimin.*

$G7$   $Am7$   $Ad7$   $B7$   $G\#m7$   $G\#dm7$

330 *sotto voce*

$G\#d7$   $A\#7$   $a\#dm7$   $a\#d7$

337 *p*

$a\#dm7$   $a\#d7$

## Example 55-continued.

345

a#dm7 C#:V i6

These altered seventh chords fluctuate harmonically from Am7 to Ad7, G#m7 to G#dm7 and G#d7, A#Mm7 to A#dm7 and A#d7 over a dominant pedal bass. Dominant harmony in C-sharp minor is finally established at measure 351, which resolves to the tonic chord in first inversion in the next measure. From measures 359-366, the tension to resolve the dominant-seventh is heightened by the insertion of the persistent submediant octave which is heard here as an added second to the dominant harmony.

## Example 56. Scherzo in C-sharp minor, mm. 355-366.

355

accelerando

With the Third Scherzo, Chopin further expands the ternary design of a scherzo-trio form to a four-part sectional form. Inherent in the classical scherzo form of this work are the thrusting quarter-note movement in triple time, the contrasting thematic ideas, the symmetrical phrase

structure and the conventional choice of keys.

From a pianistic standpoint is more technically demanding than the other three Scherzos. The octave theme and the octave jumps in the coda demand virtuoso technique in speed as well as immense power. The sparkling filigree passages in the trio require delicate but firm finger touch. If performed properly, this Scherzo never fails to make an overwhelming impression.

## CHAPTER V

### SCHERZO NO. 4 IN E MAJOR, OP. 54

#### Biographical Facts

Following the retreat at Majorca and the summer at Nohant with George Sand and her two children in 1839, Chopin established himself as a regular member of the novelist's family. With the exception of the summer of 1840 when both he and Sand decided to stay in Paris, Chopin returned to the peace and quiet of the French countryside every subsequent summer until the final break between Sand and Chopin in 1847. In the comfort of Nohant, where he could enjoy the first home and family environment since his youthful exile from Poland, Chopin felt relaxed and able to compose. Of these years, 1841 and 1842--the year of composition of the E-major Scherzo appear to be both the happiest and most productive of his career; his masterworks were numerous during this period.

Several factors contributed to the happiness of these years that were divided between Chopin's residence in Paris, and the rustic environment at Nohant. In Paris, there were numerous salons, gatherings of artists,

intellectuals, and the social elite of cosmopolitan Paris, at which Chopin was a great celebrity, and the center of attention. He was treated like a prince on these occasions, while, back at Nohant, the frail composer was tenderly cared for and protected by George Sand. She was hostess to many artists and writers during these long summers, several of whom became Chopin's intimate friends. One such person was the painter Delacroix, who visited Nohant in the summer of 1842, and left Chopin with happy memories of the warm regard each had developed for the other. Delacroix described the atmosphere of Nohant as one that inspired the great composer to pour his sentiments and feelings into the musical notes that were his primary vehicle of expression:

The place is very pleasant, and the hosts could not be kinder or more considerate...From time to time you hear through the window which opens on to the garden, wafts of Chopin's music, as he works in his own room; this blends with the song of the nightingales and the scent of roses...I have endless tête-a-têtes with Chopin, of whom I am very fond, and who is a man of rare distinction: the truest artist I have ever met. He is one of the very few people one can admire and respect.<sup>1</sup>

The works which he composed in Nohant in 1842 were the Scherzo in E major, Ballade in F minor, Polonaise in A-flat major, Third Impromptu, three Mazurkas, Op. 50 and

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<sup>1</sup>Derek Melville, Chopin: a biography, with a survey of books, editions and recordings (London: Clive Bingley, 1977), p. 48.

Mazurka in A minor. Chopin also felt healthy enough during these two years to perform in public again. On April 26, 1841 he gave a highly successful concert at Pleyel Hall,<sup>2</sup> followed by another concert on February 21, 1842, in which he collaborated with the singer Pauline Viardot and the cellist Franchomme with superb results.

Tragically, the serenity of these untroubled years was short-lived. A series of unfortunate events occurred that threatened Chopin's delicate constitution. He suffered the double shock of the death of his Polish friend, Jas Matuszynski, and then, his father, Nicolas Chopin, in 1844. Both were consumptive like Chopin, a fact that had terrible forebodings for him, seeming to presage his own premature death. In fact, Chopin's own deepening illness, and the wound caused by George Sand having deserted him in his last two years, both proved to be incurable. He stopped composing after his split with Sand in 1847 and gave his final concert in Paris in 1848. The concert tour to England that year proved to be his last--the following year, this most gifted composer of the piano met his tragic and early death.

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<sup>2</sup>See the review of this concert given on p. 70, Chapter IV.

### Formal Structure

The Sturm und Drang of the first three scherzos give way to a more subtle and whimsical last scherzo. Although it lacks the instant appeal of the three earlier works, it is the most congenial of the four scherzos. The choice of the E-major key in contrast to the use of minor keys in the other three scherzos suggests a brighter mood. James Huneker describes this work as "sunny" and "delightful" music.<sup>3</sup> Besides a touch of melancholy seen in the trio, this scherzo does convey a mood which is as light-hearted as Chopin could ever be in his compositions.

The structure of the E-major Scherzo is a full-fledged da capo form. Due to the enlarged dimension within each section, this work can be defined as an "extended compound ternary form."<sup>4</sup> Within the large A section, each part is greatly extended, and consisting of several sub-parts or melodic ideas--part A has five sub-parts, and part B comprises two sub-parts. An outline of the work is given on page 92.

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<sup>3</sup>James Huneker, "Historical and Analytical Comments," Chopin, Scherzi and Fantasy (New York: Schirmer, Inc., 1943).

<sup>4</sup>The term "extended compound ternary" is explained by Wallace Berry in his book Form in Music (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 114, as "a type in which one of the three parts is more extensive than either the binary or the simple ternary."

**[A]** Scherzo

Parts	A	A'
Sub-parts	a b a b c c d d e	a b a b
Measure numbers	1-152	153-216

**[A]** -- continued.

Parts	B	A
Sub-parts	f f g g g	a b a b c c
Measure numbers	217-272	273-352

transition

mm. 353-392

**[B]** Trio

C	link	C	transition
mm. 393-426	mm. 427-432	mm. 433-466	mm. 467-512

**[B]** --continued

C
mm. 513-540

Retransition

mm. 541-600

**A**

## Scherzo

Parts	A	A'
Sub-parts	a b a b c c d d e	a b a b
Measure numbers	601-752	753-816

**A**

--continued.

Parts	B	A''	<u>Coda</u>
Sub-parts	f f g g h	a b	a
Measure numbers	817-889	889-925	925-967

The melodic ideas in Part A are fleeting and capricious, while a surprise element created by short sforzando notes is characteristic in this section. Five melodic ideas form part A--a, b, c, d, e. Each melodic idea consists of two contrasting phrases: a--measures 1-16; b--measures 17-32; a--measures 33-48; b--measures 49-64; c--measures 65-80; c--measures 81-96; d--measures 97-112; d--measures 113-128; and e--measures 129-152. Each melodic phrase of a, b, c, and d is repeated twice.

Passages of arabesque-like figures prevail in part B (measures 217-272), which is divided into two distinct sub-parts. The first sub-part, "f," consists of two eight-measure phrases, while the second sub-part, "g," has three parallel phrases (measures 249-272). The waltz-

like passage of "g" is marked by the cross-rhythm of duple against triple division which resembles the theme of the Grande Valse in A-flat major, Op. 42. The return of part A is shortened (measures 273-352), consists only of melodic ideas a, b, and c. It digresses to a fiery transition section, which builds to a dramatic climax. This transition provides a dramatic contrast with the trio section. The climactic chords before the trio (measures 377-382), if played in stretto as indicated, give a rather frantic effect.

Example 57. Scherzo in E major, mm. 374-383.



The trio takes the form of a cantabile nocturne-like melody. In contrast to the short melodic ideas of the large A section, the sustaining trio theme is structured in two long fifteen-measure phrases. It appears first in a simple two-voice texture. The usual three-voice texture of a trio is resumed in the second statement of this theme. The last return of the theme at measure 513 is a most transcendental moment. It is as if the dreamy

reminiscence of the theme in two-parts finally comes to a reality with the joining of the alto voice at measure 516. This section has sometimes been unjustly criticized for its repetitiveness. The exquisite nature and subtlety of the trio, if brought out with insight and sensitivity by pianists, could stand many repetitions.

With a few slight variants, the entire parts A and A' are repeated from measures 601 to 815. Part B, which follows, is parallel to the previous B part until measure 865, where the last phrase is varied and extended to three more phrases. The last return of part A in measures 889-925 is much transformed and already has aspects of conclusion. In measures 889-913, the melodic material of "a" is scarcely recognizable, while "b" material is extended and developed which leads imperceptibly into the coda. This section is based on the first two phrases of the work. While the coda in the three preceding scherzos is marked by a distinct division, the coda in the E-major Scherzo is not clear-cut.

### Melodic Structure

Making up the melodic idea "a" or theme "a" are two contrasting phrases. The first phrase, measures 1-8, opens the piece without an introduction. It is a very subtle statement--one in which absolute silence is required before starting. The serene mood of the first phrase is

broken by a surprise sforzando bass note, which sets off the second phrase, measures 9-16. This contrasting second phrase is characterized by the familiar dotted rhythm (see example 58 and 59).

Example 58. Scherzo in E major, mm. 1-8.



Example 59. Scherzo in E major, mm. 9-16.



Thematic and structural significance are evident in the first five notes. Although the second phrase (example 59) consistently returns with the first phrase, it does not have the same distinction and development as the latter. The following analyses will be concerned with the first phrase of theme "a" only, which will be referred to as the five-note motive. Much development and transformation are given to the many recurrences of this motive. It is necessary to study and analyze these passages carefully in order to bring out the many subtle changes as

intended by Chopin.

The five-note motive is first repeated in measures 33-48. A soprano line triples the theme in unison, and a sustained E is added which provides a harmonic progression from tonic to submediant in the first four measures (see example 60).

Example 60. Scherzo in E major, mm. 33-40.



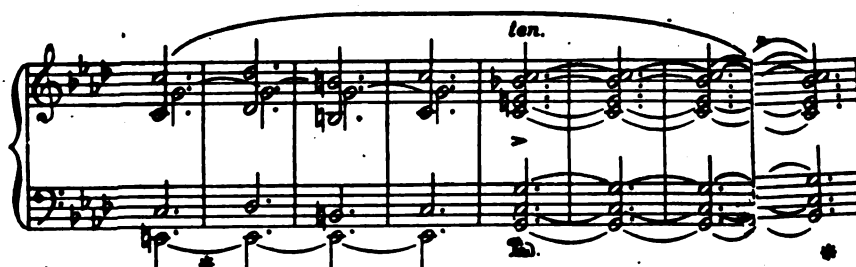
The Chopin Institute Edition had changed the key signature from E major to A-flat major at measure 153 instead of eight measures later as shown in the original edition. It is explained by the Editorial Committee that the purpose of the change is to indicate more clearly the beginning of a new section. Tonal change as well as interval contraction are seen in this recurrence of the motive. A dominant harmony sustains in the first phrase, while the two chromatic inflections, Fb and D#, act as changing tone (see example 61).

## Example 61. Scherzo in E major, mm. 153-160.



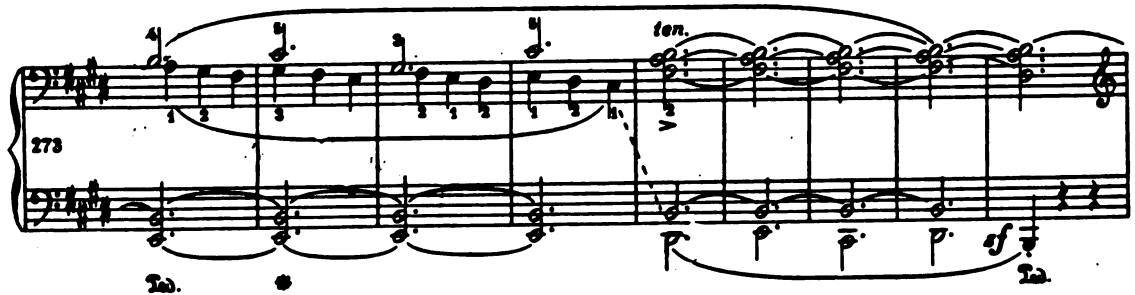
The same motivic transformation is transposed in F major in measures 185-192. With the addition of a sustained G in the alto, a complete dominant triad results. (see example 62).

## Example 62. Scherzo in E major, mm. 185-192.



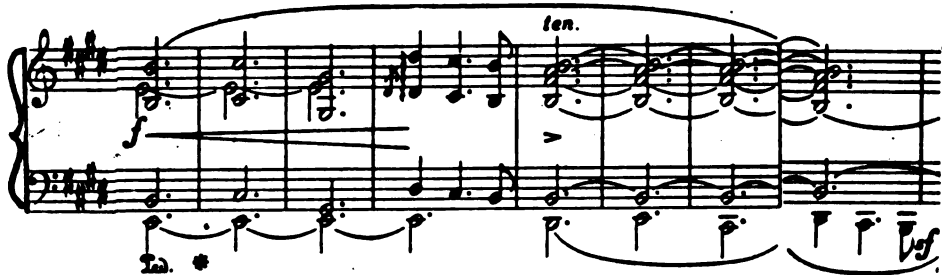
Part A returns in the tonic key at measure 273. The five-note motive is stated in the soprano, while an alto line in groups of three descending quarter-notes is added. For the first time, the motive is imitated tonally in the bass in measures 277-280 (see example 63).

## Example 63. Scherzo in E major, mm. 273-280.



At the repeat of this phrase, measures 305-312, a forte level is given for the first time. Elaboration is given at the end of the motive, and a tonal imitation is heard in the bass in measures 309-312 (see example 64).

## Example 64. Scherzo in E major, mm. 305-312.



The return of theme "a" in the da capo section is skillfully done by means of a trill-like figure which ingeniously intertwines with the theme. This trill-like figure, which is derived from the first two notes of theme "a," creates much excitement. Beginning with this statement of the theme, Chopin breaks the eight-measure phrase structure into two four-measure phrases. A tonal answer of

the first four notes is heard in the second four-measure phrase (see example below).

Example 65. Scherzo in E major, mm. 601-608.

Tempo I

The musical score for Example 65 is in E major (three sharps) and 3/4 time. It consists of two systems. The first system shows measures 601-604, with a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The second system shows measures 605-608, with a trill-like figure in the right hand. The bass line features a continuous eighth-note pattern.

The trill-like figure continues in the repeat of the theme in measures 633-640. This statement follows the same melodic elaboration as given in example 64. However, unlike the three preceding examples, there is not a bass imitation in the last four measures (see example 66).

Example 66. Scherzo in E major, mm. 633-640.

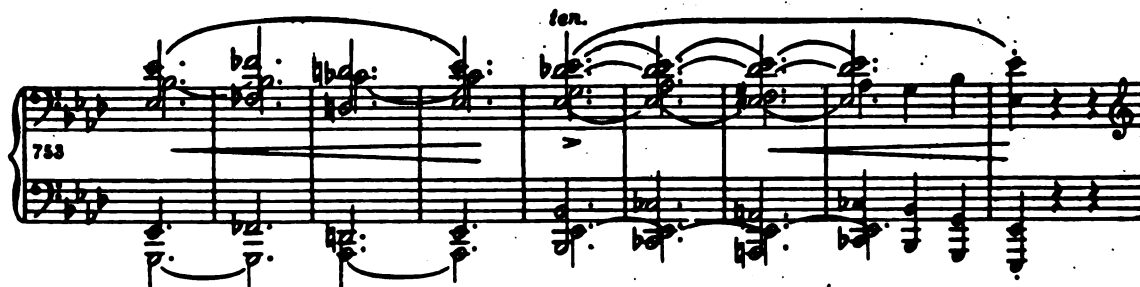
The musical score for Example 66 is in E major (three sharps) and 3/4 time. It consists of two systems. The first system shows measures 633-636, with a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The second system shows measures 637-640, with a trill-like figure in the right hand. The bass line features a continuous eighth-note pattern.

## Example 66-continued.



Like the corresponding passage given in example 61 (p. 98), the change of key signature is given by the Chopin Institute Edition at measure 753 instead of eight measures later to indicate the beginning of a new section. The key signature is A-flat major, but the first phrase of theme "a" is stated in A-flat minor. Much working-out is seen in this statement. The soprano has the same motivic transformation as seen in example 61. Harmonically, it progresses from dominant to tonic minor in the first four-measure phrase. The four notes are answered in the next phrase (measures 757-761) by two voices moving in sixths with a melodic extension moving in contrary motion. This melodic extension is derived from the sequential figure seen in the transition before the trio section (see example 67, p. 102).

## Example 67. Scherzo in E major, mm. 753-761.



The same motivic development is transposed in F major in measures 785-793.

## Example 68. Scherzo in E major, mm. 785-793.



The final returning part A consists of two parts-- the first part, measures 889-913, is freely based on theme "a," while the latter part, measures 914-925, is a development of melodic idea "b." The trill-like figure from example 65, which reappears in retrograde form, is derived from the last two notes (C#-B) of the five-note motive. Interweaving with the trill is a new melodic line consisting of two four-measure phrases.

The coda is composed of a thematic development of both phrases of theme "a." The first part, measures 925-

940, consists of a phrase extension of the five-note motive over a tonic pedal bass. The first note of the five-note motive elides with the last chord of "b" melodic material. The last part of the coda is a working-out of the second phrase, which develops into a precipitous group of octaves.

Example 69. Scherzo in E major, mm. 920-932.

### Tonality and Harmonic Structure

Major tonalities predominate in the E-major Scherzo. In part A (measures 1-152), Chopin modulates to closely related keys only--A major, B major, and C-sharp minor. Two abrupt modulations which are distinguished by a short sforzando chord occur at measure 81 and measure 121 (see examples 70 and 71, p. 104).

## Example 70. Scherzo in E major, mm. 77-84.



A: I                      B:  $V_5^6$

## Example 71. Scherzo in E major, mm. 120-124.



B:                      c#: vii<sup>d7</sup>

Chopin's predilection for mediant and chromatic relationship in his distant-key choices is evident in this work. In part A' (measures 153-200), the tonal center of A-flat major shifts to the restatement of theme "a" in F major at measure 185--a distant key having a mediant relationship. It then modulates to F-sharp major at measure 201--a distant key having a chromatic relationship.

The chromatic modulation occurring from measures 197 to 201 is a familiar procedure used by Chopin as discussed in chapters II and III. The harmony at measures 197 and 198 is a secondary dominant of V in F major. By inflecting the top note G upward to G# and by an enharmonic change of F to E#, a leading-tone seventh chord in F-sharp major

results at measure 199. In the next measure, the three upper voices move upward by half-step to reach a German sixth chord, when then resolves to F-sharp major tonic chord in second inversion. Although the secondary-dominant and the diminished-seventh chords are not resolved in the conventional manner, Chopin's smooth chromatic writing creates new harmonic subtlety and beauty.

Example 72. Scherzo in E major, mm. 198-201.

F: V7/V

F#: vii<sup>d7</sup><sub>2</sub> G6 I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>

While all three recurrences of the trio theme stay in C-sharp minor, Chopin makes several excursions to remote tonal areas in the transitional passages. From measures 467 to 500, Chopin shifts the tonal center from C-sharp minor to F-sharp major and F major.

The chord progression used in the modulation from F-sharp major to F major (a chromatic-key relationship) in measures 483-488 is, again, unconventional. The tonic chord of five in measure 486, which becomes a supertonic seventh in B-flat minor (a transitional key) resolving to an enharmonic dominant. The tonality of F major is finally reached at measure 489.

Example 73. Scherzo in E major, mm. 481-488.

F#: V7      I

vii/V 4-3 suspension

The last statement of the trio theme at measure 513 extends to a long retransition section leading to the return of the large A section. This section modulates from C-sharp minor to C major (a distant key having a chromatic relationship again), through sequential phrases, and finally settles in the original tonic key, E major, at measure 553. A prolonged dominant pedal is heard in the bass from measures 553 to 594. As this section comes to a climax at measure 577 on a dominant-ninth chord, the harmony sustains for eighteen measures preparing for the triumphant return of the main theme.

With the last scherzo, Chopin's mature style is fully developed. The da capo form is well-defined and greatly expanded. In it, we find skillful thematic workmanship of the use of the first five notes, which hold the piece together. This fanciful, yet sublimely subtle scherzo provides a delightful relief to the passionate earlier scherzos. It is a magnificent work which has been

unjustly neglected in the concert hall.

### Conclusions

The discussion of Chopin's four character pieces, the Scherzos, in chapters II, III, IV, and V shows the outgrowth and expansion of the scherzo-trio or menuet-trio form used by the earlier composers. While keeping certain characteristics of the old form, Chopin gave his scherzos new expression and distinction. Gerald Abraham in his well-known book, Chopin's Musical Style comments negatively on Chopin's use of the smaller form: "Chopin's form is generally considered to be his weakest point. It was also the weakest point of all his contemporaries. And, of course, compared with Beethoven's--a fantastically unfair comparison--his sense of form is primitive, being limited almost exclusively to the possibilities of more or less modified ternary form."<sup>5</sup> In looking at Chopin's approach to form in his four Scherzos, one could hardly agree with Abraham's statement. Precisely it is the creative impetus of Chopin in reshaping and expanding the smaller form in the four Scherzos that gave these works an unique position in the piano repertoire.



Regarding formal structure, all four Scherzos of


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<sup>5</sup>Gerald Abraham, Chopin's Musical Style, p. 44

Chopin are based on the sectional form of the classical menuet or scherzo movement in sonatas, chamber works, and symphonies. The B-minor and E-major Scherzos follow a clear outline of the composite ternary form; the B-flat minor Scherzo involves a more complicated hybrid form-- combination of the sectional three-part design with elements of sonata principle; while the C-sharp minor Scherzo has a structure of a four-part sectional form. Adding to the dimension of the form is Chopin's extensive use of coda. Like his four Ballades, Chopin's coda in the four Scherzos has an important structural function. These closing sections are developmental of primary thematic features, driving to a climactic and exciting ending. Also, an introduction is given to the First and Third Scherzos. The two introductory chords in the First Scherzo conceal a unifying melodic element. The extended introduction in the Third Scherzo, however, has little structural significance. It serves to arouse attention, and its harmonic ambiguity heightens the dramatic effect of the appearance of the main theme in the tonic key.

Chopin's group of four Scherzos is marked by family resemblances to each other. All four works share the same triple time signature, and are all given a Presto tempo indication. The four-bar groups, with one count to a bar, are a characteristic phrase structure in these pieces.

The more expanded a form becomes and the weightier the material it contains, the greater is the need for contrast. Consequently, the element of contrast is an essential feature of the four Scherzos of Chopin. The trio section in these works is greatly contrasted with the first section in mood and tempo. This dramatic change is especially marked in the B-minor Scherzo, where the soaring violence of the first section is contrasted with a theme of sublime peace in the trio. The metronome marking for the trio in this work is  =108. In comparing to the indication of  =120 for the first section, the ratio is more than 3:1. The element of contrast between sections is also evident in the use of register in Scherzos nos. 1, 2, and 4. While the extreme compass is explored in the A section, the middle section is mostly in the middle of the keyboard. The antithesis is apparent between phrases as well as sections. The first two phrases of the Second and Fourth Scherzos are distinguished by their contrasting nature.

The dotted rhythm  is characteristic in the last three Scherzos. In the C-sharp minor Scherzo, it is distinctively seen in the main theme and second theme of the first section. The second phrase of the main theme in both the Scherzo in B-flat minor and Scherzo in E major is characterized by the dotted rhythm.

Prominent use of tonic and dominant pedals are seen in Scherzos nos. 1, 3, and 4. In analyzing his

harmonic writing, we find that Chopin takes utmost care to achieve smooth voice-leading in parts by semitonal movement. He often glides his chords of the seventh from one to another by chromatic alteration, with no intention of resolving them conventionally. By doing so, Chopin creates unique subtlety and beauty in harmonic color.

The four Scherzos of Chopin have sometimes been criticized for their many repetitions of material. However, it is the nature of the traditional menuet-trio or scherzo-trio form to be repetitious. Other traditional aspects of the form can be seen in the three-part texture of the trio in Scherzos nos. 1, 2, and 4. A conventional choice of keys is used by Chopin in the trio of Scherzos nos. 1, 3, and 4.

Character piano pieces entitled "scherzo" written by other nineteenth-century and twentieth-century composers are few. Short, two-page scherzos in the character of a capriccio were written by Mendelssohn, Liszt, and Jean Françaix (1912). Mendelssohn's Scherzo in B minor has no Opus number. Liszt's Scherzo was written in 1827, and Françaix' Scherzo was written in 1932. All three pieces are marked with an agile tempo (Prestissimo in Mendelssohn's Scherzo, Allegro molto quasi Presto in Liszt's work, and vif in Françaix' example). Françaix' Scherzo has a simple ternary design; Liszt's Scherzo is in one-part form, while Mendelssohn's piece has a free structure of A A B C B coda.

Brahms' Scherzo in E-flat minor, Op. 4 is a nineteenth-century piano piece which approximates the dimension of Chopin's Scherzos. Brahms' example has an extended plan with two different trios A B A C A. Another extended solo Scherzo for piano, Op. 6, no. 3, was written by Charles Griffes (1884-1920). This work has a large A B A design.

The free nature of a scherzo is described in Grove's Dictionary of Music as "the most free and independent of all the movements of a classical instrumental work, being characterized by its sportive and playful style than by any fixed and systematic distribution of subjects and keys."<sup>6</sup> Retrospectively, the scherzo does not always adhere to a strict structural plan as seen in Haydn and Beethoven piano sonatas discussed in chapter I. The nineteenth and twentieth-century character piano pieces written by Mendelssohn, Liszt, and Françaix show a free design in the character of a capriccio.

Though lacking the playful style of a scherzo, the form that Chopin used in the four Scherzos is derived from traditional scherzo-trio movement. By fully expanding the form, Chopin transforms the scherzo into a virtuoso piece of unparalleled power and grandeur. In terms of formal

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<sup>6</sup>"Form: Sonata Movements," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians (1955), Vol. III, p. 443.

structure, the Scherzos of Chopin fully justify the application of the term.

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