The genesis of the Soviet prelude set for piano: Shostakovich, Zaderatsky, Zhelobinsky, and Goltz

Matthew J. Roy
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THE GENESIS OF THE SOVIET PRELUDE SET FOR PIANO:
SHOSTAKOVICH, ZADERATSKY, ZHELOBINSKY, AND GOLTZ

A Thesis
Presented To
Eastern Washington University
Cheney, Washington

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts
in Music

By
Matthew J. Roy
Spring 2012
MASTER’S THESIS

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Thanks goes to those who helped me in my sheet music hunt, especially Dr. Ekaterini Levidou, Ms. Anna Andrushkevich, and Dr. Malcolm Henbury-Ballan.
DEDICATION

This paper is for my wife, Jessica,
in recognition of her steadfast good humor, patience, and support
and in anticipation of further adventures together.
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Chapter One

Introduction

This document is an attempt to establish a precedent for the study of the prelude set in every major and minor key for piano. Research on this genre tends to favor the analysis of several well-known and well-deserving sets, either holistically or selectively, but disregards the persistent presence of prelude sets throughout history. This longevity and the accompanying changes in the meaning of the word prelude, its contexts, traditions, and practices, have constantly given rise to confusion over the term itself and oversimplification of complex historical issues. Because of these challenges, the prelude genre requires careful, contextual assessment if the richness of its history, outside of the standard models, are ever to be properly understood. As a first step, this paper develops these ideas by contextualizing the unique genesis of the prelude set in Soviet Russia during the 1930s.

The selection of topic has been chosen based on the surprising, but largely unknown presence of the genre in the USSR, numbering at least forty-seven complete sets by Russian nationals, and even more by members of satellite Soviet Socialist Republics, from the 1930s to 1991. Such numbers indicate something about Soviet culture that fostered the creation of these pieces. The first four examples of prelude sets composed by Soviet composers have been selected to explore the unique circumstances in which this tradition started. Aside from Dmitri D. Shostakovich, the other three composers here under examination, Vsevolod P. Zaderatsky, Valery V. Zhelobinsky, and Boris G. Goltz, have not been studied to any great extent, especially in
English sources, and therefore this paper also functions as the first step towards a more thorough investigation of them from an academic standpoint.

Of the many documents, societies, and journals dedicated to the life and works of Shostakovich, very few give in-depth attention to his Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 34. Biographies by Fay, Moisenko, and Martynov, and cultural histories by Abraham, Krebs, Schwarz, Bakst, Olkhovsky, Slonimsky, and Taruskin, mention the piece in passing with some stylistic or cultural observations.¹ Moshevich’s Dmitri Shostakovich: Pianist helps to place the piece within the specific context of the composer’s pianistic style and compositions.² Books and papers by Antokoletz, Burge, Fankhauser, Gojowy, Haas, and Roberts, having a theoretical focus, use samples of Preludes to define Shostakovich’s stylistic proclivities.³ Ethelston Provence’s “A Stylistic Analysis of the Twenty-Four Piano Preludes by Dmitri Shostakovich,” the only document to thoroughly study each piece individually, does little more than use it to attempt to describe the composer’s musical style with no reference to the prelude set as a genre or the

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context of Soviet Russia. The most helpful and innovative source on the peculiarities of the work comes from Anatole Leikin’s “Decoding the Twenty-four Preludes of Shostakovich: A hermeneutic approach,” which was influential in the implementation and definition of polystylistic. Jeroen Riemsdijk’s writing displays an understanding of the historicity of the genre, but the difficulty in locating and translating Dutch periodicals has limited my use of his work in this paper to the small, but important concept of derailments as they apply to Shostakovich’s preludes in particular. The edition of the Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 34 used for this study was issued by DSCH Publishers, 2000.

Information on the other composers discussed here is rare, and this document breaks new ground through the use of previously untranslated Russian-language documents. Sources on Zaderatsky contain biographical information and descriptions of his music; the most important of these was written by the composer’s son and musicologist, V. V. Zaderatsky, appearing both in book and abridged journal article forms. Kretova’s article uses much of V. V. Zaderatsky’s material. Publications by V. L. Klyn have been included in the bibliography even though they

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could not be located, due to their obvious importance in Zaderatsky study. The edition of *Twenty-four Preludes* used for this study was published by Deka-BC Publishing House, 2006. Information on Zhelobinsky is limited to a short biography by Moisenko (see above). The only available edition of the music is the original 1934 publication by “Triton.” Research on Goltz is primarily limited to one monograph by Frid. The publication is by “Muzika,” 1971, and I am deeply indebted to Ms. Anna Andrushkevich, and Dr. Malcolm Henbury-Ballan for their help in tracking it down.

Eric Gilbert Beuerman’s work on the prelude set is a helpful overview of important points in the genre’s history. Additionally, Temperly and Kallberg give excellent insight into issues surrounding extemporaneous performance practices, and the importance of understanding the emic point of view when dealing with evolving terms. Information on other prelude sets and comparative examples come from personal research, collection, and analysis.

This thesis has three primary goals: 1) To introduce and describe the prelude sets of four Soviet Russian composers, 2) to put this music in the context of the history of the prelude genre in general and of Soviet Russia in particular, and, 3) to suggest that the pieces demonstrate

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various ways in which these composers dealt with the challenges of musical composition (and
indeed, life) during 1930s Soviet Russia.

Chapter Two of this paper deals with the history of the prelude and prelude set genres
from the earliest etymological beginnings through the major stylistic changes in the course of
their history. This chapter also deals with descriptions of Russian composers in the genre before
the 1917 Revolution. Chapter Three explores the cultural, political, and artistic contexts of Soviet
Russia, starting with the Revolution and ending in the early 1930s. The linear style of
composition is discussed, as well as artistic/political interpretation summed up in the concept of
intonazia. In Chapter Four the composers’ biographies are presented in such a way as to give
their history, personality, and social standing. Consideration of their musical styles and
compositions before the creation of their prelude sets, to the extent that other scores are
available, places their work in a broader, lifelong context. Chapter Five presents the prelude sets
of each composer, with special emphasis given to stylistic proclivities, as seen through the lens
of Soviet Russia’s political/artistic climate, and the associative traditions of preludes sets of the
past.

I hope to show that the prelude genre in Soviet Russia stands as an important musical and
cultural phenomenon. It demonstrates a reappropriation of past traditions, and shows attempts to
remake the prelude set in a new image, something particular to the genre’s history. It also
represents the theoretical and aesthetic trends required of the Soviet composer under Stalin, and
the various ways in which composers attempted to meet those demands. Given this governmental
pressure, the prelude sets show how composers expressed their identity in Soviet society.
Chapter Two

Historical Development of the Prelude Set

The study of a musical genre requires careful consideration of the way generic labels change over time. In the case of the prelude genre, its historical longevity is packed with various, cultural associations, forms, and functions. The term “prelude” signifies such diverse musical events as a fifteenth century organ improvisation,\(^1\) an eighteenth century flute flourish,\(^2\) a ternary-form piano Nocturne from the Romantic period,\(^3\) and a twentieth century symphony.\(^4\) The words “prelude set” or “prelude cycle” as well as the adjective “preludial” and the verb “preluding” intensify the categorical challenge. The diversity of the prelude suggests that the word’s usefulness as a generic marker lies not in any inherent, stylistic characteristics shared between all examples, but as an indicator of a “social phenomenon shared by composers and listeners alike.”\(^5\) Kallberg states, “research into the effects of genre should involve the reconstruction of contexts and traditions, and the perceptions of composers and their audiences, both historical and modern.”\(^6\) With this in mind, in this study I endeavor to consider the unique

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\(^1\) Willi Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music to 1700* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 1972), 43.


\(^4\) Rodion Konstantinovich Shchedrin, *Symphony No. 2 (Twenty-five Preludes for Orchestra)* (Boca Raton: E.F. Kalmus, 1993).


\(^6\) Ibid., 5.
features of individual pieces in order to understand both “the work’s coherence and its dynamic response to expectations surrounding it.”

The prelude set genre can be grouped into three broad categories, each with unique (but also overlapping) cultural associations and meanings: 1) the preamble, 2) the Bachian prelude-fugue, and 3) the Chopinesque character piece. The following historical survey begins with an etymological definition to understand the original context of the genre, and then offers examples of the three categories. The purpose is not to provide a complete and comprehensive history of the subject, but rather to contextualize those strains of musical and cultural thought that may have influenced the Soviet composers who form the focus of this study.

Definitions

Etymologically, a “prelude” is an introductory piece of music meant to establish and prepare the pitch or key of the following piece (from Latin praeludere “to play beforehand”), which the performer improvises at the appropriate moment of performance (from German preludieren “to play impromptu”). This definition, the genre’s most basic, suggests in itself the following functions: in a preparatory sense the prelude 1) attracts the listener’s attention, and 2) establishes the tonality or sets the mood for what follows; and in an improvisational sense the prelude 3) tests the instrument for tuning or touch, 4) tests the room for acoustics, 5) warms the performer’s fingers or breath, and 6) demonstrates the player’s skill and preparation to the audience. This definition interacts with a variety of cultural assumptions, traditions, and values. These include a high value placed upon the performance of a prelude as a culminating event of

the performer’s preparation, inventiveness, and taste. The prelude also invites the audience into relationship with the musical event, either as a listener or, in a religious context, a worshiper, signaling a cultural response appropriate to the tradition.

A “set” is a collection of objects which belong together as a group based upon some type of contextual cohesion. Initially, the creation of the prelude set stemmed from notational, pedagogical, and theoretical developments in music history. Notation allowed for the transcription of improvised music, which then became a concrete pedagogical tool for aspiring performers. Since the performer must be able to play in whatever style, mood, or key appropriate to the performance situation, notated preludes were collected, composed, and published in groups that tended to demonstrate the gamut of current theoretical practices of sound organization.

Table 1 illustrates the shift in prelude set organization from modal to tonal and non-tonal space. The diversity of musical language and weakening of tonal hierarchies in the twentieth century resulted in prelude sets of equally diverse formal organization. Some composers continue to use twenty-four pieces out of tradition rather than out of theoretical completeness. For other modern composers, the idea of composing one prelude in each major and minor key presents itself as a unique challenge. According to Paul Janssen, to compose his Twenty-four Preludes (2004), Wim Zwaag (b. 1960) “forced himself to think in a certain tonality, something that was in fact new to him - not to say a great challenge - and ultimately also a rediscovery, not only of the limitations, but also of the power of expression of the tonalities.”

This anachronistic

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10 Wim Zwaag, Twenty-four Preludes for Piano, Paul Komen, D.R.C. B002E3BQY0 (CD), 2012.
reinvention of tonality in a largely post-tonal world reflects a latent conservatism in prelude genre.

Table 1. Prelude set organization from modal to modern times.

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<th>Composer/Composition</th>
<th>Theoretical Organization</th>
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<td>Adam Ileborgh (?)&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Ileborgh Tablature&lt;/em&gt; (c. 1488)</td>
<td>Five praeambula in the modes C, d, a, f, g.(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johann Erasmus Kindermann (1616-1655)&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Harmonia Organa&lt;/em&gt; (1645)</td>
<td>Fourteen präambula in the authentic and plagal church modes.(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Inventions and Sinfonias&lt;/em&gt; (1723)</td>
<td>Thirty praeambulum(^c) in the viable mean-tone keys.(^d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Heller (1813-1888)&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 81&lt;/em&gt; (1853)</td>
<td>Twenty-four preludes in every major and minor key.(^e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claude Achilles Debussy (1862-1918)&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Preludes&lt;/em&gt; (1909-13)</td>
<td>Twenty-four preludes without key order.(^f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Bush (1900-1995)&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 84&lt;/em&gt; (1977)</td>
<td>Twenty-four preludes in diatonic and chromatic modes.(^g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoine Tisné (1932-1998)&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Preludes&lt;/em&gt; (1997)</td>
<td>Twenty-four non-tonal preludes.(^h)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

\(^{a}\) Apel, 43-44.
\(^{b}\) Johann Erasmus Kindermann, <em>Harmonia Organa</em>, ed. Albert Kreuser (Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike 3.0: 2011).
\(^{c}\) The pieces from this set, which first appeared in the <em>Clavierbüchlein vor Wilhelm Friedemann Bach</em>, bear the title praeambulum. Dreyfus, 1.
\(^{e}\) Stephen Heller, <em>Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 81</em> (Berlin: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1853).
\(^{f}\) Claude Debussy, <em>Préludes pour Piano (1er Livre)</em> (Paris: Durand at Cie, 1910); and Claude Debussy <em>Préludes pour Piano (2e Livre)</em> (Paris: Durand at Cie, 1913).
\(^{g}\) Alan Bush 24, <em>Preludes, Nocturne, Galliard, Corenty ne Kwe-Kwe</em>, performed by Peter Jacobs, Altarus 9004DDD. CD, 1995.
\(^{h}\) Antoine Tisné, <em>24 Préludes pour piano</em> (Paris: H. Lemoine, 1997).
The Preamble Tradition

I have chosen to categorize preludes which function primarily under the above etymological assumptions (introductory and improvisatory) as preambles. Collections of such pieces functioned primarily as pedagogical tools. The preamble tradition of preluding for the piano flourished during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, falling out of tradition by 1840. Although preluding existed in other forms and for various instruments and occasions, this time period is most pertinent to the development of the twentieth century keyboard prelude set.

In this tradition the ability to prelude was a performer’s “crown of distinction,” requiring “great and highly cultivated facility and rapidity of finger, as well as a perfect command of all the keys, and of every mechanical difficulty.” Furthermore, a prelude must demonstrate a performer’s innate, spontaneous, creative ability to ravish or inspire his or her listeners. The cultural value lies not so much in the notated music itself in a canonical sense, but in the ability of the performer to prelude, in the moment of improvisation. The large number of preamble sets and method books from this time reflects the dominance of major/minor tonality, the increase in amateur music making, the facility of music printing, and, most importantly, the rising status of the virtuoso pianist and the expectations required of that new breed of performer. Publications contain anywhere from fourteen to two hundred preludes, using either the most common or all twenty-four keys. The style generally reflects the most current and

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11 Smith, “Intentionality and Meaningfulness.”
15 Temperley, 327.
virtuosic pianistic techniques: scalar passages, arpeggios, harmonically adventurous chords, fluctuating tempo indications and juxtapositions, and an exploration of the limits of the keyboard. Some composers meld together the functions of the prelude and the etude, as in *Vingt-quatre Études en forme de Préludes dans tous les tons, Op. 20* (1839) by Édouard Wolff (1816-1880).\(^{16}\)

*Prelude No. 1 in C Major* of Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), from his *Twenty-four Preludes in all Major and Minor Keys for Piano, Op. 67* (1815), demonstrates a characteristic preamble (fig. 2.1).\(^{17}\) The emphasis on improvisation and showmanship comes out in the *Quasi improvisazione* tempo indication, lack of bar-lines, and frequent tempo changes. The texture consists of a series of ascending and descending runs that outline an embellished I-V-I harmonic progression.

Composers during this golden age were also expected to improvise in fugal style.\(^{18}\) Joseph Christoph Kessler (1800-1872) in *Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 31* (1835) demonstrates a prelude in imitative counterpoint for *Prelude 24 in G-sharp minor*, and Henri Herz (1803-1888) in *Exercices et Préludes pour le piano forte dans tous les tons majeurs et mineurs, Op. 21* (1830) includes a lengthy three-voice fugue for his *Prelude 24 in G-sharp minor*.\(^{19}\) Contrapuntal and fugal improvisation is discussed in the next section.

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\(^{18}\) Czerny *Letters*, 81.

Some composers blur the line between the introductory prelude and the independent fantasia by writing multi-sectional pieces of great length. Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785–1849) included developed preludes that leaned toward independence of function while maintaining a high degree of improvisational style in his Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 88 (ca. 1926).²⁰

J.S. Bach and the *Prelude-Fugue Tradition*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) wrote two monumental sets: *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (1722) and *Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues* (1744), commonly known as *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II* (1744). Each set contains a prelude-fugue pair in each major and minor key, and the 1722 volume is purportedly the first to include all major and minor keys. Bach operates in the large-scale Baroque tradition of the *stylus fantasticus*, an improvisational style in which “free” and “strict” writing contrast with each other. The nineteen organ *Praeludia* of Dieterich Buxtehude (c. 1637-1707) demonstrate one form of the style, in which toccata-like passagework contrasts with fugues and canons within a single piece. For Bach, therefore, both the prelude (“free”) and the fugue (“strict”) elements were improvised and could serve introductory functions. *Prelude in E-flat Major* from *Book 1* and *Prelude in C-sharp Major* from *Book 2* consist of both textures. Understanding this preludial inclusivity in the *stylus fantasticus* sheds new light on the contrapuntal preludes of twentieth century composers, as shown in later chapters.

History looks upon Bach’s cycles as models for composition rather than as models for improvisation. At the same time, Bach’s prodigious improvisational skills, and the extemporaneous expectation of musicians at the time, do not exclude the possibility that they

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25 Temperley, 326.
could have had a pedagogical intent.\textsuperscript{26} As in so much of his \textit{oeuvre}, the layers of Bach’s work function on many levels. Bach imbued a potentially dry, didactic genre with high artistic value,\textsuperscript{27} turning it into an encyclopedic exploration of “radicality, breadth, and multiple perspectives of its artistic concept.”\textsuperscript{28} As a whole the work codifies, summarizes, and expands on Baroque prelude forms, including: 1) figured preludes, 2) dances, 3) arias, 4) inventions and sinfonias, 5) concertos, 6) fugues, and 7) regional forms (French overtures and sicilianos), while the fugues likewise use a wide variety of techniques.\textsuperscript{29} The idea of the prelude set functioning as an artistic \textit{summa} resonates with many later composers who associated the genre with seriousness, artistic depth, and the codification of a musical style.

The influence of Bach manifests itself in different ways in later composers of prelude sets. Beyond the overall concept of compositional excellence and artfulness, many subsequent prelude composers tip the hat to Bach’s set in specific ways. The simplicity of the arpeggiated chords of \textit{Prelude No. 1 in C} from Bach’s \textit{Book I} has inspired many composers to begin their \textit{summae} in a similar fashion, perhaps attempting to evoke “an entrance, a portal, an archway leading to the temple.”\textsuperscript{30} The first prelude of Frédéric Chopin’s \textit{Twenty-four Preludes for Piano, Op. 23} (1839) suggests or echoes that of Bach by the use of repeated, arpeggiated figuration throughout the entire piece. Both pieces involve a four measure, small-scale tonicization of C Major and rise to their climax at a proportionally similar moment (fig. 2.2). Other composers

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{dreyfus}
Dreyfus, 2ff.
\bibitem{gillespie}
\bibitem{geck}
Geck, 533.
\bibitem{ibid}
Ibid., 538-540.
\bibitem{gray}
\end{thebibliography}
reference Bach by writing a C Major prelude of bare simplicity and metaphorical purity, consisting of plain chords occurring in a repeated pattern. Soviet composers continue this tradition in their own way, as we shall see.

Beginning in C Major, Bach orders his sets by following each major key with its parallel minor:

C c C# c# D d E♭ e♭ E e F f F♯ f♯ G g A♭ g♭ A a B♭ b♭ B b

Composers who use this same arrangement (an arrangement referred to in this paper as “Bach Order”) include Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785-1849) in Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 88 (ca. 1926), and August Alexander Klengel (1783-1853) in Forty-eight Canons and Fugues (1855),
among others.\footnote{August Alexander Klengel, \textit{Canons and Fugues for Piano, Parts 1 and 2} (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1855).} Variants of this order involve the substitution of one enharmonic key for another: $D\flat$ for $C\#$, $d\#$ for $e\flat$, $G\flat$ for $F\#$, and $a\#$ for $g\#$.\footnote{Beuerman, 53.}

Bach’s preludes canonized and codified Baroque improvisational and compositional traditions for the keyboard. The next section explores how Bach may have influenced Chopin, whose own set of preludes in turn canonized the “golden age” of the prelude tradition just as improvised preluding fell out of favor.

\textbf{Chopin and the Character Piece Tradition}

The continued existence of notated preludes and prelude sets after the social expectation and convention of preluding had faded points to a change in the values and assumptions surrounding the genre. Today the prelude flourishes as a serious composition used by many hundreds of composers. This generic revolution stems from the creation and publication of Frédéric Chopin’s \textit{Twenty-four Preludes for Piano, Op. 28} (1839). In Chopin’s work the prelude was melded with the eighteenth and nineteenth century character piece,\footnote{Ibid., 118.} the artistic vision of Bach, and the Romantic cult of genius.

The term “character piece” loosely refers to short instrumental pieces of a lyric nature meant to evoke or express a mood or feeling without the aid of words, and often with the assistance of a characterful, descriptive title. Also called \textit{Stimmungsbilder} (Gr. mood pictures), these pieces flourished during the nineteenth century, published in sets or cycles by almost every major composer from Beethoven to Richard Strauss. Some serve a pedagogical function, as in
Études caractéristiques, Op. 70 (1825) by Johann Baptist Cramer (1771-1858), and others, such as Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6 (1837) by Robert Schumann (1810-1856), suggest a cyclical performance in order to experience the full import of the descriptive associations.

For the purposes of this study it is important to notice that Chopin’s “expansion”\textsuperscript{34} of the prelude genre involves 1) the introduction of character piece genres and forms, 2) a shift from improvisation to composition, 3) a nod to J.S. Bach, and 4) the possibility of sequential intent in a prelude set.

Chopin’s pieces display a much larger degree of formal and generic variety than the sets of his contemporaries. Prelude 18 in F minor is the piece most in line with the preamble tradition because of its rapid scalar passages, adventurous chords, and lack of overt thematic development. (fig. 2.3) The other pieces in this collection bear less resemblance to the improvisational tradition, and often quote, evoke, or outright exemplify other Romantic genres: 1) mazurka (Prelude 7 in A Major), 2) song without words (Prelude 17 in A-flat Major), funeral march (Prelude 20 in C minor), nocturne (Preludes 15 in D-flat Major and 21 in B-flat Major), and étude (Preludes 3 in G Major, 16 in B-flat minor, and 22 in G minor) as well as figured prelude (Preludes 1 in C Major, 8 in F-sharp minor, 14 in E-flat minor, and 23 in F Major), aria (Preludes 2 in A minor and 4 in E minor), and contrapuntal creations suggesting a Romantic re-thinking of the Baroque invention (Preludes 5 in D Major and 11 in B Major). Many of the preludes have binary, ternary, or rondo forms, and feature at least one formal climax, which allows them conceivably to function with independence.

\textsuperscript{34} Beuerman, 152.
Chopin’s perfectionistic compositional process was an arduous affair described as a painstaking act of “chiseling”\textsuperscript{35} and in the case of the Preludes involved over four years.\textsuperscript{36} The care Chopin gave to these short pieces involved an associative shift in performance and compositional priorities. In giving the same amount of time and effort into the composition of his preludes as to larger genres like sonatas, Chopin challenges the concept that a prelude introduces a more important piece. Rather than the prelude pointing towards the performer’s skill, preparation, showmanship, etc, the prelude points to itself.

The influence of J.S. Bach permeates Chopin’s music, especially in both composers’ preferences for contrapuntal and melodic structure over virtuoso effect.\textsuperscript{37} While compiling Op. 28 in Majorca, Chopin carried with him both volumes of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier.\textsuperscript{38} Both


\textsuperscript{36} Maurice Brown, Chopin: An Index of his Works in Chronological Order (New York: St. Martis Press, 1960), 106.


\textsuperscript{38} Szulc, 32.
Figure 2.4. Motivic quotation in Chopin’s *Prelude 15 in D-flat Major, Op. 28* (top) and Bach’s *Prelude 3 in C-sharp Major, WTC1* (bottom), m. 1.

compositions codify the current body of small form genres and give great artistic value to a pedagogical type of work. Furthermore, it is possible that Chopin pays homage to the music of Bach in concrete musical terms, as demonstrated by similarities between C Major preludes (noted above) and a suggestive and almost subconscious quotation of Bach’s *Prelude in C-sharp Major, Book 1* and Chopin’s *Prelude in D-flat Major* (fig. 2.4). The idea of the musical homage captured the imagination of many subsequent prelude composers.

In this paper a “sequence” describes a group of musical events composed to be played and experienced in a prescribed order, progressing one after the other. Classical symphonies illustrate this sequential, compositional design, as composers intended that the three or four movements proceed in succession and from beginning to end. This term is used rather than
“cycle” because of the thematic implications of the latter. Chopin’s Preludes are invariably performed and recorded today sequentially from beginning to end. This concept of the prelude cycle did not originate with Chopin, who performed his preludes in small, carefully selected groups or as introductions to other compositions.39 Some analysts, working from an etic viewpoint alien to Chopin or his contemporaries,40 have attempted to justify sequential performance by citing formal features within the set as evidence for a large scale, sequential design. While these theories generally fall short of historical fact and aural experience, Chopin’s set does allow for various suggestive aural relationships between pieces.

Chopin’s order of keys differs from that of J.S. Bach, traveling along two parallel circles of fifths, the major key followed by its relative minor:

C a G e D b A f# E c# B g# F# e♭ D♭ b♭ A♭ f E♭ c B♭ g F d

This ordering (and its enharmonic variants) does not originate with Chopin, having appeared at least as early as 1812 in the Twenty-four Grand Caprices of flutist Philip Seydler (c. 1765-1819).41 Given the importance of Op. 28 in the history of the genre, however, I will call this progression “Chopin Order.”

Chopin Order comes closer to the ideals of the sequence in the close and equalized relationships between consecutive keys. In Bach Order, C Major is followed by C minor, a

39 Kallberg, 152.

40 Ibid., 149ff.

parallel relationship amounting to change of mode (I-i). The relationship between C minor and
the following C-sharp Major involves a much greater leap around the Circle of Fifths and has
very little in common in terms of ordinary tonal function (♭vii-I?). On the other hand, Chopin
Order equalizes the distances between adjacent keys: C Major to A minor involves a difference
of one note in the tonic triad (I-vi), and A minor to G Major does not involve a chromatic shift,
functioning in a more diatonic plane (ii-I). In pointing this out, I do not mean to say that a series
of pieces in Chopin Order functions as a sort of functional progression experienced piece by
piece. Rather, transitions between pieces across the entire spectrum of twenty-four keys have
smoother diatonic relationships than those in Bach Order.\footnote{Kresky, xv.}

The pitch relationships between a major key and its relative minor allow for some
interesting aural associations between pairs of pieces. The ending of \textit{Prelude 3 in G Major} and
the beginning of \textit{Prelude 4 in E minor} illustrates an example of a compositional feature prevalent
in prelude sets which use this key order. I call this feature a \textit{custos ending} (fig. 2.5). As noted by
the arrow, the first piece ends in such a way that the concluding two Bs in the right hand are
taken up as the melody in the beginning of the next, anticipating the following piece in the same
way that the custos neume anticipated the pitch of the next line in Gregorian chant. Other
instances include the transition from \textit{Prelude 11 in B Major} to \textit{Prelude 12 in G-sharp minor},
\textit{Prelude 17 in A-flat Major} to \textit{Prelude 18 in F minor}, \textit{Prelude 19 in E-flat Major} to \textit{Prelude 20 in
Figure 2.5. Custos relationship between Chopin’s *Prelude 3 in G Major* and *4 in E minor*.

*C minor*, and *Prelude 21 in B-flat Major* to *Prelude 22 in G minor*. This relationship between adjacent pieces allows for a very smooth transition in terms of aural space, even when style changes abruptly. The custos endings suggest, at the very least, Chopin’s consciousness of a close relationship between adjoining pairs of preludes.

Some analysts have attempted to discover *intervenomental motives*: short musical cells reoccurring cyclically throughout each prelude and therefore linking the entire set together like a sonata or symphony. In the case of *Op. 28* the identified motives usually consist of only two or three pitches, a fact which seriously undermines the validity of the analysis, as such relationships no doubt exist in countless other pieces.

In many ways the justification for playing the *Preludes* in a single sitting rests in the pragmatic demands of recording companies. We may conclude by saying that *Op. 28* works as a “unique musical organism,” capable of multifaceted uses and interpretations. The plasticity of the set served as a model for future composers and the multitude of styles, functions, and intents each subsequent set carries.

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43 Kresky, xvii.

44 Ibid., xviii.
Prelude Sets Following Chopin

After Chopin, the composition of prelude sets intensified in number and variety, whose many layers of associations, functions, techniques, styles, intentions, and models provide us with a wide array of pieces and procedures. By describing some general areas of variation, the position of Soviet composers in the genre can be more clearly defined.

Chopin Order is by far the most common order of keys, with Bach Order coming next. Orders different from these are of a wide variety and suggest their own unique view of grouping or cyclicality. For example, Twenty-four Preludes (Legends) for Organ, Op. 46 (1906) by Johan Gustav Emil Sjögren (1853–1918) travels in Chopin Order through the sharps and then restart at F Major to travel through the flats, a procedure which suggests a two-part sectionalization of the set as reflected in publishing. Erkki Melartin (1875–1937) divides his Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 85 (1913–20) into three groups of eight, each pairing each a major key and its parallel minor, ascending by minor thirds and outlining three fully-diminished seventh chords: (C c Eb eb F# f# A a - F f Ab g# etc.). Selim Palmgren (1878–1951) uses a completely random order of keys for his Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 17 (1907). Most sets, except for a small minority, begin with C Major.

Despite the popular nickname “Raindrop” attributed to Prelude 15 in D-flat Major, Chopin did not embrace the Romantic, Schumannesque proclivity for giving programmatic titles to his pieces. Later composers of prelude sets embrace the programmatic aspect of the character piece set to varying degrees. Walter Niemann (1876–1953) gives a characteristic title to each

piece in his *Twenty-four preludes, Op. 55* (1918) while Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924) applies descriptions to several of his *Preludes, Op. 179* (1921).\(^{48}\) Claude Debussy (1862-1918) reveals the evocative titles of his famous *Preludes* (1909, 1913) as an ellipsis at the close.

Some composers, such as Charles-Valentin Alkan (1813-1888) in his *Twenty-five Preludes, Op. 31* (1847), endorse the cyclical concept by adding a twenty-fifth prelude in C Major, thereby “completing” the set in the same key in which it began.\(^{49}\) Others unify their cycles by adding a coda that references previous material as in *Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 34* (1941) by Salvador Bacarisse (1898–1963).\(^{50}\)

The stylistic spectrum of prelude sets attests to their generic flexibility and association with codifying, displaying, or summarizing a given style. The more pedagogical of the preludes tend to also be anachronistic, such as *Der Fugenbaum, Op. 150* (1946) by Julius Weismann (1879–1950) in Baroque, contrapuntal style, or *Lyric Preludes in Romantic Style* (1958) by William L. Gillock (1917–1993).\(^{51}\) The *Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 37* (1881) by Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924) exemplify his concept of *junge Klassizität*\(^{52}\) through the use of past forms such as the gigue (*Prelude 7 in A Major*) and French overture (*Prelude 14 in E-flat minor*).\(^{53}\) Debussy’s aforementioned *Preludes* provide a testament to musical Impressionism. The planned

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but unfinished set of George Gershwin (1898–1937), of which three are published (1926) and four others exist as fragments, would undoubtedly have displayed an exploration of jazz idioms and styles,\textsuperscript{54} a task later realized by composers such as Nikolai Girshevich Kapustin (b. 1937) in his \textit{Twenty-four Preludes in Jazz Style, Op. 53} (1988).\textsuperscript{55}

For some composers, the sequential or cyclical aspect of the prelude set has been of prime importance. Custos endings occur often, especially in sets that use Chopin Order or another order that exemplifies aural relationships. Some composers unify their sets by legitimate and intentional intermovemental motives, as in \textit{Twenty-four Preludes} (2003) by Ken Benshoof (b. 1933), or summational codas, as in \textit{Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 41} (1999) by Lera Lvovna Auerbach (b. 1973).\textsuperscript{56} Boris Blacher (1903–1975) goes so far as to organize his entire \textit{Twenty-four Preludes} (1974) set as a palindrome, with the first and last piece almost exact mirrors of each other, and numerical relationships between subsequent pairs leading towards the middle.\textsuperscript{57}

The next section will explore the Russian tradition of prelude sets and some of the influences and stylistic proclivities which played their part in the development of this genre in pre-Revolutionary Russia.

\textsuperscript{54} Howard Pollack, \textit{George Gershwin: His Life and Work} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 390.


\textsuperscript{57} Boris Blacher, \textit{24 Préludes} (Berlin: Bote and Bock, 1978).
The Prelude Set in Russia before the Revolution

Due to the limited scope of the current study, this section includes only complete prelude sets (using all twenty-four major and minor keys with an optional twenty-fifth in C Major) written for piano by Russian composers before 1917, in order to trace some of the trends that may have influenced Soviet prelude composers. Preludes also flourished in Russia in other guises, namely: 1) stand-alone preludes, or preludes in incomplete groups, 2) complete sets of pieces in every key not titled “preludes,” and 3) sets of preludes organized upon different theoretical criteria than major-minor tonality.58 While these pieces, and other short forms, were undoubtedly of influence and value to future composers of the genre, complete prelude sets by pre-1917 Russian composers constitute a direct, generic link to prelude sets by composers of the Soviet Union.

Russia’s secular art music tradition began with the performance of the opera La forza dell’amore e dell’odio by Francesco Araja (1709–by 1770) at the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg upon the invitation of the Empress Anne in 1735.59 The careers of Johann Wilhelm Hässler (1747–1822),60 John Field (1782–1837), and Adolph von Henselt (1814–1889)61 testify to the dominance and influence of foreign musicians and techniques at least up to the first half of the

60 Composed a monumental prelude set in free and strict styles: 360 Preludes in All Keys, Op. 47 (1817).  
61 Composed a preamble-style prelude set in all major and minor keys: Twenty-four Preludes (?).
nintheteenth century.\textsuperscript{62} The first Russian prelude set in every major and minor key was written by Lev Stepanovich Gurilyov (1770–1844), a student of Giuseppe Sarti (c. 1729–1802) and Kapellmeister to the Orlov family until his emancipation from serfdom at his patron’s death in 1831.\textsuperscript{63} As Kapellmeister, Gurilyov conducted the serf orchestra and composed pieces for keyboard, many of which his employer allowed him to publish. He is credited alongside Dmitry Stepanovich Bortniansky (1751–1825) with developing the Russian piano sonata.\textsuperscript{64} In 1810, Gurilyov wrote \textit{Twenty-four Preludes and a Fugue}, dedicating the work to his employer, Count Vladimir Grigorievich Orlov. The inclusion of a single fugue (in elaborate vocal concerto style\textsuperscript{65}) adds an example of learnedness to a set whose preludes can broadly be categorized as either “instructional” or “lyrical.”\textsuperscript{66} The set has not been published in its entirety, but six preludes and the fugue have appeared in different anthologies and collections.\textsuperscript{67} These six examples reveal a style suggestive of preamble traditions: unmeasured cadenza passages, repeating figures, hand crossing, and multiple sections with tempo changes. Noteworthy features include \textit{Prelude in F-sharp Major} in recitative style (fig. 2.6), and \textit{Prelude in G-sharp minor}, which has a key signature that changes three times. While it is unlikely that Gurilyov stylistically influenced Soviet prelude composers, the Russian musicologist Anatoly Nikolayevich Drozdov (1883–

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\textsuperscript{64} \textit{Muzikalny Entsiklopedichesky Slovar} 1990, s.v. “Gurilyov, Lev Stepanovich.”

\textsuperscript{65} Margarita Mazo, e-mail message to author, January 10, 2011.

\textsuperscript{66} Vladimir Aleksandrovich Natanson, \textit{Proshloe russkogo pianizma (XVIII-nachalo XIX veka)}, (Moscow: Gos. muzykalnoe izd-vo, 1960), 192. Translation by the current author.

\textsuperscript{67} Three preludes and the fugue available in A. Drozdov and T. Trofimova, \textit{Russkaia starinnaia fortepiannaia muzyka} [Old Russian Pianoforte Music] (Moskva: Muzgiz, 1946); the rest from the personal collection of Dr. Malcolm Henbury-Ballan.
\end{flushleft}
1950) discovered and published three of the preludes and the fugue in a 1946 publication, suggesting that Soviet historians valued Gurilyov’s legacy and his contribution to Russian culture.\textsuperscript{68}

Chopin had a profound influence upon the Russian piano tradition.\textsuperscript{69} At a time when many composers denigrated Western trends in favor of an insular, Russian nationalist style, Chopin’s originality, genius, and eastern Polish heritage\textsuperscript{70} endeared him to Russian composers in terms of spirit and technique.\textsuperscript{71} With the support of Nikolai Grigoryevich Rubenstein (1835–1881) of the Moscow Conservatory, the publisher Peter Jurgenson came out with a Russian edition of Chopin’s complete works between 1873 and 1876 with a commentary by Rubenstein’s student, Nikolai Albertovich Gubert (1840–1888) that extolled the Polish composer as a signpost of musical modernism.\textsuperscript{72} Felix Mikhailovich Blumenfeld (1863–1931) published the first post-Chopin, Russian prelude set in 1895. He wrote his \textit{Preludes, Op. 17} while teaching in the piano department at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, having graduated there himself in 1885. The set

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{prelude.png}
\caption{Recitative style in Gurilyov’s \textit{Prelude in F-sharp Major}, mm. 1–4.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{68} Natanson, 178-179.


\textsuperscript{70} Hwa-Young Lee, “Tradition and Innovation in the Twenty-Four Preludes, Opus 11 of Alexander Scriabin” (DMA diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2006), 4.

\textsuperscript{71} Herbert Westerby, \textit{The History of Pianoforte Music} (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1924), 258.

uses the Chopin Order of keys, and reflects a strong Chopinesque influence in style, tonality, and form. Similarities between preludes in the same key suggest that Blumenfeld may have used Chopin’s Op. 28 as a direct model for his own Op. 17.\textsuperscript{73} For instance, both Chopin and Blumenfeld use a recitative style with angular, chromatic melodies in octaves and cadential, accompaniment chords for their Prelude 18 in $F$ minor. Figure 2.7 illustrates Chopin’s influence on Blumenfeld’s Prelude 23 in $F$ Major in the use of left hand melodies, similar opening pitches, and a right hand accompaniment that emphasizes the sixth scale degree as an added color. Overall, Blumenfeld’s set displays a proclivity for lyricism, subtle counterpoint, and large, full chords requiring rolled arpeggiation. Coloristic harmony, including a strong emphasis on the mediant, reflects some influence from modal trends in Russian nationalist style as well as general European chromaticism.

Figure 2.7. Similarities between Chopin’s Prelude 23 in $F$ Major (top) and Blumenfeld’s Prelude 23 in $F$ Major (bottom), mm. 1–2.

\textsuperscript{73} Beuermann, 151.
Aleksander Nikolayevich Scriabin (1871 o.s. [1872 n.s.]–1915) wrote over eighty preludes throughout his life, but only the *Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 11* (1888-96) appeared as a complete cycle.\(^{74}\) Scriabin wrote them in four groups and sent them to the publisher Mitrofan Petrovich Belaiev (1836–1904) while the former traveled in the West. Scriabin promised the publisher another complete set of twenty-four,\(^{75}\) but grew disenchanted with the idea and finished only twenty-one in individual keys (twenty-three total), which he later published as *Opp. 13, 15, 16*, and *17*. This shift points to a disillusionment with the concept of “completeness” in a prelude set, and, especially in Scriabin’s case, the growing ambiguity of tonality in his style. Chopin had already set precedents for key ambiguity both at the beginning (*Prelude 2 in A minor*) and end (*Prelude 23 in F Major*) of his preludes, and Scriabin extends the practice through unique harmonic progressions and colored triads. Scriabin’s use of Chopin Order requires that *Prelude 9* be in E Major, but it begins by hovering around C-sharp minor and only comes to rest at E Major on the last cadence. *Prelude 19 in E-flat Major* displays Scriabin’s burgeoning experimentation with rhythm: not only does it use quintuplets in the accompaniment against triplets in the melody, but the accompaniment is offset by one sixteenth note, creating a type of notated Chopinesque *tempo rubato* (fig. 2.8).\(^{76}\) The bulk of these preludes are in ternary form and include generic references such as nocturnes, mazurkas, and etudes as well as figured preludes, inventions, arias, and mixed genres.\(^{77}\) In terms of cyclicalité, Scriabin creates an overall


\(^{76}\) Another link with Chopin in this piece consists of the textural and melodic similarities between this piece and Chopin’s *Nocturne, Op. 27 No. 2*.

\(^{77}\) Lee, 10.
climax in Preludes 18 in F minor, 19 in E-flat Major, and 20 in C minor, which stand apart for their “technical demands, dynamics, and tempo indications” as the high point in the cycle.78 As shown below, many Soviet composers drew inspiration from Scriabin, especially his later, experimental style, during the 1920s, and his late, apocalyptic mystique appealed to many revolutionary musical ideals. Changing tastes in the 1930s recast the official Soviet assessment of Scriabin, labeling him “a degenerate formalist of the worst sort,” and his music that which “listeners should be spared the degrading experience of having to listen to.”79

César Antonovich Cui (1835-1918) wrote Twenty-five Preludes, Op. 64 in 1903. Although a military engineer by profession, Cui became associated with the nationalistic kuchka and made a reputation as both a composer and a critic. His preludes display several features of overt Russian nationalistic writing, including tonic pedal point, irregular phrase lengths, orchestral textures, and modality,80 while also using mid century, Schumannesque harmonies and Mendelssohnian textures. The style of writing, as well as dedications of individual pieces to specific patrons or artists, suggest an emphasis on showmanship in the context of the stylish

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78 Ibid., 77.
79 Bowers, 2.
French salon. Specifically, Cui dedicated *Preludes 1-7* to Maria Semyonova Kerzin, the founder and driving force behind the “Kerzin Circle” or “Russian Music Lovers’s Circle,” a society in which Cui acted as an informal advisor and which would have been the perfect place to perform his set.\(^8\) Cui’s order of keys is unique for tracing a circle of fifths in which each major key is followed by its mediant minor. A twenty-fifth prelude in C Major completes the set and suggests a sequential compositional intent:

\[
C e G b D f \# A c \# E g \# B e b F \# b b D b F A b c E b g B b d F a C
\]

Rheinhold Moritzevich Glière (1875–1956) published *Twenty-five Preludes, Op. 30* in 1907. He studied at the Moscow Conservatory under Sergei Ivanovich Taneyev (1856–1915) and Mikhail Mikhailovich Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859–1935), graduating in 1900 and teaching at the Moscow Gnesin School of Music. From 1905 to 1908 he studied conducting in Berlin with Oskar Fried (1871–1941), and may therefore have written the preludes in Germany. Glière’s prelude style is highly ornamented, requiring virtuosic technical skill, far surpassing that required for Blumenfeld or Cui. The preludes use Bach Order and the chordal texture of *Prelude 1 in C Major* suggests a Bachian homage. Chopin’s influence appears strongly in the figures and textures of the preludes, and Glière’s *Prelude 2 in C minor* quotes Chopin’s *Prelude 20 in C minor* melodically (fig. 2.9). Glière achieved notable fame before the Revolution and continued to write in the same, late-Romantic idiom that found acceptance under the new authorities.\(^8\)

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Sergei Vasilievich Rachmaninov (1873-1943) studied at both the St. Petersburg and Moscow conservatories, graduating from the latter in piano and composition in 1891 and 1892 respectively. As a touring virtuoso pianist, his playing was described as breathtaking and his contemporaries hailed him as the greatest of his generation.\textsuperscript{83} The bulk of his piano music was written during his career as a professional conductor and virtuoso pianist. His prelude set actually consists of pieces grouped together from three different opus numbers, spanning almost two decades: Prelude in C-sharp minor, Op. 3 No. 2 from Morceaux de fantaisie (1892), Ten Preludes, Op. 23 (1901-03), and Thirteen Preludes, Op. 32 (1910). Only after the publication of Op. 23 did Rachmaninov decide to write pieces to cover the remaining thirteen keys. A cyclical effect is created by a quotation of the first Prelude in C-sharp minor at the recapitulation of the

\textsuperscript{83} Gordon, 433.
final Prelude in D-flat Major, Op. 32 No. 13. The style of the Preludes comes from virtuosic, nineteenth-century, Romantic, “Third-Hand” traditions, and the works are noteworthy for their functional harmonies colored by unique chromaticism, thick chordal and contrapuntal textures, emphasis on extended melodies, and rhythmic vitality. Rachmaninov’s pieces stand apart for their large and involved formal structure, usually employing several contrasting sections and lasting over five minutes for eight pages. When the Revolution began in 1917, Rachmaninov along with a large number of composers, performers, and pedagogues, emigrated. Consequently the Soviet authorities branded him as an enemy to Communism and it was not until his death in 1943 that Soviet historians “forgave” his faults and reconciled his works and achievements as a Russian musician.

Now that we have investigated the origins and major traditions in the history of the prelude set and observed the Russian contributors to the genre, we can turn to an exploration of the cultural, political, and artistic context of post-Revolutionary Russia, and consider how that influenced the way in which composers lived, dealt with past traditions, and composed new music.

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84 Ibid.
85 Sergei Bertensson and Jay Leyda, Sergei Rachmaninoff: A Lifetime in Music (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 175.
Chapter Three

Russian Political and Musical Culture in the 1930s

Soviet Russian composers worked within a unique cultural context, replete with its own array of political, artistic, philosophical, and cultural forces. The Bolshevik Party played an important, but complicated and often misunderstood, role in the creation and control of this culture.¹ During the tumultuous October Revolution and ensuing Civil War period (1917–1921) Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924) assigned Anatoly Vasilievich Lunacharsky (1875–1933) as the People’s Commissariat of Public Education, whose task it was to ensure “artistic continuity and ideological reforms.”² Although some considered the apocalyptic and egalitarian nature of Socialism to be at odds with the idea of musical specialists with roots in the past, foreign culture, Lenin and Lunacharsky both worked towards supporting the conservatories and other musical establishments as a means for reeducating the working-class masses. Nelson explains that the government was

“marked, on the one hand, by the desire to control and eventually replace old elites; on the other they were tempered by a need for the technical expertise necessary to run a vast uneducated country and an appreciation of the cultural capital represented by ‘specialists’ such as scientists, engineers, and accountants, as well as artists, writers, and musicians. The pragmatism underpinning this tension reflected the magnitude of the larger cultural agenda, which called for the creation of a new ‘Soviet man.’”³


² Schwarz, 11.

The new “Soviet man” required a new “Soviet music,” an art form that could serve “as a weapon in the struggle for the building of Communism.”\textsuperscript{4} This section focuses only on developments in musical institutions and philosophies during both the 1920s and the 1930s. It will also explore the development of “socialist realism,” “formalism,” and “linear style” that came to characterize much of mainstream Soviet music, considering both government prerogatives and wider musical trends.

In 1921 the Bolshevik Party emerged victorious from the Civil War and turned its attention to the governing of a dilapidated and war-torn country. In March of that year, Lenin enacted the New Economic Policy, which reintroduced elements of capitalism for a time to reignite a stagnating culture and economy. Although the government retained ultimate control, the lessening of state-sustained systems allowed for the growth of a relatively liberal musical culture. Until around 1930, the Soviet government encouraged free competition among organizations of differing artistic outlooks and refrained from giving any group a monopoly through direct, governmental approval and support.\textsuperscript{5} After 1932, following the enactment of the first Five Year Plan (1928–1933) and the forced collectivization by Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin (1878–1953), political ideology towards control in the arts shifted and led to a period of artistic totalitarianism and the establishment of “socialist realism.” To understand the composers and the prelude compositions treated in this paper, it is important to understand the roles and aesthetic tendencies of professional organizations and institutions during the 1920s, and the shift of policy during the 1930s.


\textsuperscript{5} Schwarz, 48.
The 1920s: Professional Organizations and the Conservatories

The Association for Contemporary Music (ASM - Assotsiatsiya Sovremennoy Muzyki) was established in 1923 in Moscow, with a Leningrad\(^6\) branch formed in 1926.\(^7\) The society is best understood as a group of “elite modernists”\(^8\) who cultivated an international and modernistic outlook on music, but with roots firmly established in pre-Revolutionary trends.\(^9\) The majority of members viewed the ASM as a forum for all types of serious music, though there were some members deeply committed to the cause of ultra-modernism.\(^10\) Their concerts, meetings, newspapers, and areas of research reflected a desire to engage in contemporary trends in music. For them, the proletariat deserved to enjoy the music of the elites and could do so by exposure and education. Through ASM concerts, large and appreciative audiences were exposed to works by Claude Debussy (1862–1918), Paul Hindemith (1895–1963), Alban Berg (1885–1935) and Henry Cowell (1896–1965), as well as Russian modernists like Sergei Sergeyevich Prokofiev (1891–1953) and Nikolai Yakovlevich Myaskovsky (1881–1950). The ASM formed the platform for *A Book on Stravinsky* (1929) by Boris Vladimirovich Asafiev (1884–1949), “The Society for Quarter-Tone Music,” begun in 1923 by Georgi Mikhailovich Rimsky-Korsakov (1901–1965), and the electrical innovations of Lev Sergeyevich Teremen (1896–1993).

The Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM - Roskiyskaya Assotsiatsiya Proletarskih Muzikantov) was formed in 1923 by members of the propaganda department of the

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\(^6\) The northern city was named St. Petersburg when construction first began in 1703. In 1914 the name was changed to Petrograd and in 1924 it changed again to Leningrad.

\(^7\) Schwarz, 49-54.

\(^8\) Nelson, 49.

\(^9\) Taruskin *Defining Russia*, 91.

\(^10\) Schwarz, 101.
State Publishing House.\textsuperscript{11} The group operated from an aesthetic platform grounded in an apocalyptic interpretation of Marxism.\textsuperscript{12} Their militaristic viewpoint hinged upon music’s usefulness and immediate accessibility to a proletarian, classless society. Composers of the RAPM specialized in “mass songs,” vocal pieces using revolutionary lyrics and usually featuring simplistic melody and march rhythms. One of the more gifted members was the composer and folklorist Alexander Dmitriyevich Kastalsky (1856–1926) who easily adapted his liturgical arrangement techniques to settings of folk and pseudo-folk songs with propagandistic texts. The RAPM was also known for its vitriolic dismissal of both contemporary and historical music, declaring themselves anti-Western, anti-jazz, and often anti-classical,\textsuperscript{13} and vilifying modernist, erotic, mystic, futurist, and primitivist styles.\textsuperscript{14} The extremity of their position caused frequent splinter groups: the Association of Revolutionary Composers and Musical Workers (ORKIMD - Obyedinenie Revolutzionnykh Kompozitorovi Muzykalnykh Deyateley) felt as though RAPM was not extreme enough, and the Production Collective of Student Composers (PROKOLL - Proizvodstvennyi Kollektiv Studentov Kompozitortov) attempted to hold a balance between the ASM and RAPM for the good of the musical education of the masses. Members of PROKOLL included Dmitri Borisovich Kabalevsky (1904–1987) and Marian Viktorovich Koval (1907–1971). They worked as a collective to create large works such as the “first Soviet oratorio,” The Path of October (1927), which featured musical effects such as stomping of feet and spoken

\textsuperscript{11} Ib., 54-56.

\textsuperscript{12} Boris Thomson Lot’s Wife and the Venus of Milo: Conflicting attitudes to the cultural heritage in modern Russia (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 14-22.

\textsuperscript{13} Ib., 58.

\textsuperscript{14} Taruskin Defining Russia, 92-93.
recitations of revolutionary texts by Maxim Gorky (1868–1936), Vladimir Vladimirovich
Mayakovksy (1893–1930), and Alexander Alexandrovich Blok (1880–1921).\textsuperscript{15}

Both the St. Petersburg and Moscow Conservatories, founded in 1862 and 1866 respectively, were considered bastions of conservatism in the Western tradition and often drew harsh criticism from Russian nationalist composers and critics.\textsuperscript{16} After the Revolution and thanks largely to the cosmopolitan musical tastes of Lunacharsky, the conservatories continued to function, but with government-implemented changes. These educational reforms, officially announced in 1925 in the “Statement concerning the Moscow and Leningrad Conservatories,” emphasized the creation of “broadly educated musician-artists” and “citizens” who could respond to the changes in Russian contemporary culture as well as the latest developments in Europe.\textsuperscript{17} Students gained hands-on experience by giving performances and lectures in clubs, factories, or schools. In an attempt to make the conservatories more proletarian, admission standards were changed to allow the admission of more students from “worker” backgrounds. As a battleground between government, faculty, and students, the conservatories struggled to keep order amidst disagreements over admissions, requirements, curriculum, and other standards as well as fierce debates between modernists, proletarians, and traditionalists.

\textsuperscript{15} Schwarz, 57.


\textsuperscript{17} Schwarz, 96-101.
The Resolution of 1932

On April 23, 1932 Stalin enacted the Party Resolution entitled “On the Reconstruction of Literary and Artistic Organizations.” It marks a shift from a complex culture of multifaceted exploration and debate to one of controlled conformity and eventual uniformity under the authority of the government.\textsuperscript{18} The resolution coincided with the completion of the first Five Year Plan, which, together with a famine from 1931–33, had cost the peasant population dearly, and the implementation of the second Five Year Plan, which focused on industrialization. Stalin continued to isolate and destroy his political opponents through Party purges, and the Resolution makes sense in the context of his quest for autonomous and totalitarian control, not only over his political peers, but also over the direction of Soviet culture and the lives of Soviet citizens.\textsuperscript{19}

Sectarian factions such as ASM, RAPM, ORKIMD, and PROKOLL were summarily dissolved and replaced by the Union of Soviet Composers (SSK - \textit{Soyuz Sovetskikh Kompozitorov}), the sole arbiter of musical authority, censorship, standards, and style. At first, composers and musicologists generally viewed the SSK as a relief from the petty squabbles of the 1920s and eagerly anticipated a search for “creative solutions”\textsuperscript{20} through the unified directives of the Union. The criteria by which the SSK would now judge music centered around two odious poles of political/aesthetic theory: “socialist realism” and “formalism.”

Socialist realism is best understood as an aesthetic in which “the artist is obliged to look at contemporary life from the perspective of an idealized future and portray today’s defects as positive forces — positive in the sense that they urge Soviet society toward tomorrow’s

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 110.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 114.
inevitable noble Marxian synthesis.”  

The Communist party controls the direction of art in order to form an ideologically correct social consciousness. It is an attempt to industrialize art. 

The application of socialist realist doctrines to music presented a challenge because of the vagueness of musical meaning when compared to the linguistic content of literature or pictorial symbols of visual art. Asafiev headed the attempts at reconciling music to socialist realism in his books *Musical Form as Process* (1930) and *Intonazia* (1947). In these writings he introduces the concept of “intonazia,” defined as “any phonic manifestation of life or reality, perceived and understood (directly or metaphorically) as a carrier of meaning.” An intonazia links a specific musical event (melodic, harmonic, timbral, rhythmic, dynamic, etc.) with an aspect of reality in a symbolic or associative way, by 1) imitation or mimicry of natural phenomena, 2) programmatic links with other arts, especially through the use of text (lyrics, descriptive titles) or images, and 3) quotation or paraphrasing of broadly understood musical ideas or melodies as an associative, real-world leitmotif. The organization of component intonazias of a particular work and the resultant, objective meaning determine the piece’s “musical image,” or objective, universal meaning. While on the surface this theory attempted to reconcile Marxist theory to musical style for the sake of intelligibility and meaningfulness, more often than not it functioned as the rhetoric of political propaganda. The SSK acted as the first and last word in censorship, and through these theories assessed whether newly composed music conformed to the ideals of socialist realism or whether it strayed into the dangers of formalism.

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22 Bakst, 285.

23 Brown, 588.

24 Ibid., 559-561.
Formalism as a concept reaches back to the aesthetics of Plato and gained ground in the latter half of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Formalists were concerned with the structure and internal logic of a piece of “pure” art that had “no meaning or reference outside [itself].”

In music, formalists attempted to raise the status of “absolute,” instrumental music by “dissociating music from its social functions” and asserting that “musical truth, beauty and meaning lie solely in the combinations of pitches.” These ideas played a part in the modernistic aesthetics of works of European modernists like Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951), Anton Webern (1883–1945), Pierre Boulez (b. 1925), and other so-called serialists and structuralists. In the context of 1930s Russia, the term formalism became the label given to any work of art that did not meet the social and political goals of Soviet realism.

In many ways this aesthetic engages in wider European concerns with intelligibility, societal responsibilities, and modernism. The Frenchman Jean Cocteau (1889–1963) in his 1918 essay “Cock and Harlequin” calls for “every-day music” and a “return to simplicity.” Socialist realism demands both simplicity and accessibility for the sake of furthering the cause of order and Soviet ideals.

The vagueness of these definitions created difficulties for composers attempting to create meaningful music for the Russian public. Because of the requirement of mass accessibility (or at least “accessibility” as perceived and decided by the censors of the SSK) composers turned frequently to the larger, public genres such as operas, mass songs, symphonies (usually modeled

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after Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, complete with choral finale on a propagandistic text), and programmatic tone poems, or utilitarian music for education or group performance. In many ways the official style resurrected the *kuchka* sound ideals of the nineteenth century and maintained them until Stalin’s death in 1953.28 Even in 1957, the SSK exhorted Soviet composers to develop along the lines of Romantics and Nationalists like Chopin.29 Compared to the wide variance of styles during the 1920s, both public and private music of the 1930s developed into a generally unified musical style. It is important to recognize the latent negativity against “private” or “subjective” genres, including string quartets, solo songs, and piano preludes, as subjectivity could be interpreted as nonconformity to a unified, public socialist agenda.

**Linear Style**

The mainstream musical style of Russia that came to dominate during the 1930s and beyond is described by Roberts as “linear style.”30 This style consists, in large part, of 1) harmonies derived from Scriabin, including the weakening of tonality through emphasis on minor-second and tritone relationships, and the use of synthetic scales and chords, 2) polyphonic, melody-dominated textures operating in an enlarged diatonic system, exemplified by Prokofiev’s early, “ultramodernist” music, and 3) an emphasis on rhythmic energy and excitement derived from the ostinato traditions of Slavic folk music.31 This style reveals the influences of pre-

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28 Taruskin *Defining*, 94.


31 Ibid., 8.
Revolutionary Russian and contemporary European musical trends as well as the new demands of Socialist realism.

Scriabin’s late harmonic experiments developed most markedly after 1908 and were influenced by pro-French reactions against the chromaticism of Richard Wagner (1813–1883) and the coloristic/harmonic concerns of expressionists, Russian nationalists, and, especially, impressionists.\textsuperscript{32} His music explores the establishment of sonority through reiteration, while maintaining a high degree of ambiguity and flux due to the pivotal function of a given tone and the loss of harmonic resolutions. As already noted in his earlier Op. 11 style, Scriabin employed complex rhythmic and textural devices, avoiding regularity in meters and tempos. One of his last compositions, Prelude Op. 74, No. 5 (fig. 3.1) demonstrates Scriabin’s pedal point effects, complex rhythm,\textsuperscript{33} and construction based upon a series of octatonic scales.\textsuperscript{34} The influence of Scriabin dominated the work of many composers of the 1920s, especially those connected with

\textsuperscript{32} Elliott Antokoletz, Twentieth-Century Music (Englewood Cliffs: Pretince Hall, 1996), 100.

\textsuperscript{33} Perhaps reminiscent of Chopin’s Prelude in C Major?

\textsuperscript{34} George Perle, “Scriabin’s Self-Analyses,” Music Analysis 3 (July 1984), 108.
ASM, such as Nikolai Andreevich Roslavets (1880o.s.[1881n.s.]–1944), Samuil Yevgenyevich Feinberg (1890–1962), and Alexander Vasilyevich Mosolov (1900–1973).

Prokofiev spent many hours studying Scriabin’s music, but developed his style along polyphonic, horizontal lines. His extended diatonicism retains vestiges of Scriabin’s sudden harmonic shifts, especially at the minor-second, a process sometimes referred to as “neighbor-tone technique.” This involves chromatic shifts or slips that displaces diatonic space, rather than replace it with a new tonality as in modulation. Prokofiev’s style functioned on principles of harmonic syntax and expectation, often frustrating or obscuring them through chromatic expansion of his melodic material via neighbor-tone technique. In the fifth piece from Prokofiev’s *Visions Fugitives* (1915–17), the slip occurs at the surprising arrival of A♭ melodically, and a B♭7 chord harmonically in the first full measure, landing on G♭ major at measure two (fig. 3.2). Non-functional harmonic parallelism creates a space in which shifts like

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35 Roberts, 27.

36 Ibid., 41.

this can easily occur. At the return to G major at the end of the phrase, we hear the parenthetical nature of the chromatic shift as a momentary displacement, rather than as a modulation.

Whereas Scriabin was content to allow his compositions to hover in rhythmic polysemy, Prokofiev used motoric ostinati, a technique that features strongly in the linear style of the 1930s. In this context the definition of an ostinato requires some flexibility, as it often blends accompaniment with other functions. Roberts describes that ostinati occurring in Russian linear style can: 1) create or strengthen the tonic, 2) obscure the tonic through linear dissonance, 3) create color for structural or pictorial purposes, and 4) serve a cadential function.\(^{38}\) Composers of the linear style were influenced by Slavic folk song principles, including tonicization through pedal points and persistent, motoric rhythm.\(^{39}\) The contrasting section of the same piece from *Visions Fugitives* maintains a G Major pedal point in consistent rhythms against chromatically shifting harmonies (fig. 3.3).

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\(^{38}\) Roberts, 37.

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 32.
Linear style appeals to the mandates and wishes of socialist realism on several fronts. The emphasis on melody creates an accessible point of reference for listeners, and the conservative harmony maintains the expectations of functionality. At the same time, the music sounds modern and generally maintains interest through an expanded harmonic language and unexpected harmonic progressions like the use of neighbor-tone technique. The presence of folk-inspired rhythms and melodies connects it to the traditions of accessible, proletarian art, and the interpretation of a piece’s musical meaning is simplified by the transparency of the textures of linear style.

The stage has now been set for the contextualization of the genesis of the Soviet prelude set. The composers who wrote them lived, worked, and composed within the various political, cultural, stylistic, and historical situations here outlined. Each of them interacted within this historical context in their individual way, based on a variety of biographical factors to be discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter Four

Soviet Composers of Prelude Sets

The biographical sketches presented in this chapter are intended to give information pertinent to the understanding of the genesis of the Soviet prelude genre. Emphasis is therefore given to family background, early musical propensities, education, development of style, pianism, and relationship to the Soviet government and professional organizations. For Shostakovich, this process involves selection from the vast amount of research concerning his life, and the attempt to isolate his early development and the circumstances surrounding the creation of a little-known and much-ignored composition. For the other three composers, this sketch represents one of the few English-language accounts of their lives in print, working from very few documents. By summarizing the composers’ lives after the 1930s, I intend to draw their stories to a close and shed light on the ways in which their preludes sets contributed to their overall oeuvre.

D. D. Shostakovich

Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (1906–1975) was born in St. Petersburg to parents of Siberian heritage who were members of the “well-to-do liberal intelligentsia” and enjoyed music-making in the home.\(^1\) At the age of nine, his mother gave him his first piano lessons and he began to display extraordinary musical abilities.\(^2\) At the age of thirteen he entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory, studying piano with Leonid Vladimirovich Nikolayev (1878–1942) and

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\(^1\) Fay, 10.

composition with Maximilian Osseyevich Steinberg (1883–1946), although he also developed contacts with the musical scene in Moscow as well. After the death of his father in 1922, Shostakovich continued his courses while working as a cinema pianist, a post he occupied until his fortunes improved in 1926. Although he became a member of the Leningrad branch of the ASM in that same year, Shostakovich never placed all his livelihood and artistic identity in a single organization.\(^3\) His adaptability and musical skill allowed him to compose in a wide variety of styles and survive criticisms which would otherwise have been damaging to his career. The traditionalists of the conservatories appreciated his *First Symphony, Op. 10* (1924–25); RAPM praised him for his incidental music for the agitprop theater collective (TRAM) production of *The Shot, Op. 24* (1929); PROKOLL looked towards the modernist-proletariat crossover in his second and third symphonies — “To October,” *Op. 14* (1927) and “The First of May,” *Op. 20* (1929) respectively — complete with choral finales; and the the modernistic ideals of the ASM identified with the experimental explorations of the opera *Nos, Op 15* (1927-28) and incidental music for a production of *The Bedbug* (Op. 19, 1929).\(^4\) After the Resolution of 1932, Shostakovich continued to write music for theater and film, relatively safe commissions, while finishing his monumental opera *Lady MacBeth of Mtsensk District, Op. 29* (1930–32). Three weeks after finishing this fateful work, he began work on his *Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 34* for piano.

Throughout Shostakovich’s life, the piano remained a special and personal musical idiom for Shostakovich. His passion for improvisation and ironic sense of humor served him well as an entertainer at private parties and as the pianist at the silent movie theaters. His first, unpublished

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\(^3\) Taruskin *Defining*, 94.

\(^4\) Fay, 57ff.
compositions for piano included programatic miniatures bearing the influence of Chopin and Beethoven. The former featured so strongly in his early musical education that he had his 1919 portrait include a Chopin score as a prop, performed his own compositions with those by Chopin at the Shidlovskaya Gymnasium (1915–18), and later earned an honorable mention at his performance during the first Chopin International Competition in Warsaw in 1927, including in his performance Prelude 8 in F-sharp minor and Prelude 16 in B-flat minor. In 1920, Shostakovich gave a complete performance of his first published work for piano, Eight Preludes, Op. 2 (1919–20). He greatly valued these pieces, performing them together often, using them to audition for Alexander Konstantinovich Glazunov (1865–1936) at the conservatory, and contributing four (and one new prelude in E minor) for a communal twenty-four prelude set project with fellow students. They display Shostakovich’s penchant for motoric, scherzando rhythms (Prelude 1 in A minor), involved, linear polyphony (Prelude 5 in F minor), and collage texture with shifting tempos and overlapping or interrupted rhetorical gestures (Prelude 4 in D-flat Major) (fig. 4.1). His Three Fantastic Dances, Op. 5 (1922) enjoyed rampant popularity and explore a linear style treatment of a march, waltz, and polka respectively. The collage effect is particularly evident in the first dance, reminiscent of Debussy’s La serenade interrompue (1910) by juxtaposing stock march rhythms with coloristic decorations and ironic pauses. The First Piano Sonata, Op. 12 (1926) and Ten Aphorisms, Op. 13 (1927) illustrate Shostakovich’s exploration of dissonance and

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5 Moshevich, 10.
6 Ibid., 13.
7 Fay, 49.
8 Ibid., 23.
polyphony free from academicism: the first in an elaborate and thick musical texture with influences of Scriabin, and the second in miniaturized form suggestive of Prokofiev, Mosolov, or even the Second Viennese School. The descriptive titles of the Aphorisms defy explanation and illustrate a transformative or humorous intent. The third piece, Nocturne, probably influenced by Mosolov’s “expressionistic” Two Nocturnes, Op. 15 (1926), departs from the Chopinesque model by creating an urban, nocturnal atmosphere of harsh dissonances, jagged lines, and ffff dynamics, (fig. 4.2).

The years 1932–33 were a time of considerable productivity and professional success for Shostakovich both within and outside the USSR. He worked on various orchestral, theatrical, cinematic, and ballet commissions, and awaited the eventual production of the opera


12 Moshevich, 62.
Lady MacBeth in 1934. The advent of the SSK promised a time of new opportunities free from the proselytizing and invective of RAPM. Shostakovich desired to return to public performing following a lull in concertizing after the Chopin Competition. Beginning in December of 1932, the Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 34 were composed in a span of just over three months. After performing eight of them in January, Shostakovich premiered the complete set in May 1933. The composer recorded them twice (1947 and 1950) and had selections arranged for violin and piano (Op. 34a) and for orchestra (Op. 34b). More accessible than the First Sonata or the Aphorisms, they quickly gained prominence not only in the USSR, but internationally; in 1935 they received their western premiere at a concert of the Glasgow-based Active Society for the Propagation of Contemporary Music. The society’s director, Erik Chisholm performed them

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13 Fay, 72.
14 Ibid., 70-71.
alongside works by Busoni and George Antheil (1900–1959). In light of the growing insularity of Soviet culture, the appearance of these pieces in Scotland attests to Shostakovich’s growing international fame among enthusiasts of modern music.

The reception history of Op. 34 are tainted by the public denunciations of Shostakovich’s music in 1936, aimed mainly at formalist proclivities in his opera Lady MacBeth, and used as a reason for tightening of political control over arts through the narrowing of socialist realist definitions and implementations. Consequently, the Preludes frequently fall under the category of early, misguided attempts “under the influence of people who preached and advocated the principles of the extreme West” and represented the “follies of formalism.” This paper attempts to reassess the work by regarding it within the context of the historical development of the prelude genre and the stylistic directions of Russia in the early 1930s.

The Preludes were generally forgotten after the events of 1936. Following another public denunciation in 1948, Shostakovich composed Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues, Op. 87 (1950–51) for piano, the first published collection by a Soviet composer. Despite similarities between the two sets, the latter cycle enjoys much more popularity and academic consideration.

Shostakovich died of lung cancer in 1975, honored by Soviets and westerners alike as one of the greatest Russian composers of the twentieth century.

17 Ibid., 50.
18 The set by Arkady Dmitriyevich Filippenko (1912–1983) was composed in the 1930s but lost during the Second World War. Of the set by Vsevolod Petrovich Zaderatsky (1891–1953), written in 1937, only seven exist in edited form (see below).
V. P. Zaderatsky

Vsevolod Petrovich Zaderatsky (1891–1953) was born in the northern Ukrainian city of Rovno. His father stemmed from a bourgeois family in Kiev and worked as a railway engineer director, while his mother descended from aristocratic Polish ancestry and provided him with his first piano lessons. In 1910 he relocated to Moscow and entered the University and Conservatory simultaneously. The fact that he immediately began studying at the Conservatory without preparatory classes, and that he was hand-picked from among the new arrivals by Taneyev, attests to his musical skill. His other notable teachers at the Conservatory included Genrikh Albertovich Pakhulsky (1859–1921) for piano and composition, Karl Avgustovich Kipp (1865–1925) for piano, Sergei Nikiforovich Vasilenko (1872–1956) for composition, and Alexander Ivanovich Orlov (1873–1948) for conducting. Zaderatsky boarded with a family called the Platovs in Moscow, and developed a close friendship with the painter Fyodor Fyodorovich Platov (1895–1967), an artist of “broad interests and sharp [tongue]” who undoubtedly engaged Zaderatsky in intense conversations about art, society, and “leftist” experimentalism. During the year 1915 and into 1916, Zaderatsky traveled from Moscow to the imperial capital of St. Petersburg for the purpose of giving private piano lessons to Alexi Nikolaevich Romanov (1904–1918), Tsarevich and heir apparent to the throne of the Russian Empire. This appointment, which may have been negotiated through familial connections on

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21 Olga Roytenberg, *Neuzheli kto-to vspomnil, chto my byly... Iz istorii khudozhestvennoy zhizni, 1925—1935* [Can it be that Someone Remembers that we Existed... From the History of Artistic Life: 1925—1935] (Moscow: Galart, 2004), 428-429.
Zaderatsky’s mother’s side, would have fateful consequences for his later relationship with the Soviet authorities.

After graduating from the Moscow University Department of Law in 1916 Zaderatsky entered military service, passing his examinations in early 1917 from the School of Military Engineering with César Cui signing his diploma. Zaderatsky fought on the western and southern fronts, recording some of his adventures, including a near-death experience with a German battle-cruiser, in his unfinished semi-biographical novel *A Man in his Time*. From 1919–20, Zaderatsky fought in the White Army under Anton Ivanovich Denikin (1872–1947). His adventures may have formed the inspiration for the historical novel *The Road to Calvary* by Alexey Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1882o.s. [1883n.s.]–1945), a fellow White Army member. Among the more notable episodes, Zaderatsky is said to have shot a White Army officer for indiscriminately murdering prisoners, after which he fled only to be captured by the Red Army in 1920.²²

Zaderatsky faced execution after his capture, but Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky (1877–1926), the director of the secret police organization of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-revolution and Sabotage (CHEKA - *Vserossiyskaya chrezvychaynaya komissiya po bor'bye s kontrrevolyutsiyei i sabotazhem*), personally spared his life. While awaiting his interrogation and subsequent execution, Zaderatsky had played upon the piano, the sound of which purportedly caused Dzerzhinsky, a man ruthless and unsparing in “settling the accounts of counter-revolutionaries,” to personally see to his release and safe

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conduct. Zaderatsky’s career in the White Army was expunged, but several other factors remained which the government used as grounds for continuous suppression and dehumanizing animosity. His biographer and son, Vsevolod Vsevolodevich, singles out the pre-Revolutionary music lessons to the Tsarevich as the main source of Zaderatsky’s persecution. While he escaped with his life, the authorities denied him the right to vote, to live within a hundred miles of a major metropolitan area, to hold a major position, or to have his music published or performed publicly. He lived as a marked man and avoided communicating with his two sisters in Moscow to spare them any associative fallout.

Zaderatsky relocated to Ryazan in 1920, a city south-east of Moscow, and worked as an instructor in various musical schools. In 1927 the NKVD arrested Zaderatsky and completely destroyed all of his literary and musical documents. While the official reasons for his imprisonment remain unknown, the result effectively shattered Zaderatsky to the core. He attempted suicide by befriending the prison pharmacist and swallowing hoarded sleeping pills. After the incident he was released, partly due to the efforts of an unnamed commissioner. He wrote his earliest, surviving compositions (two piano sonatas, dated 1928) on assorted notebook pages, which may suggest that he turned to composition even before his release from prison, and that for him, as for few other composers, composition was a means of holding onto and expressing a sense of humanity in the face of consistent and brutal dehumanization.

In 1929 he was allowed to move to Moscow where he worked at the All-Union Radio as a minor staff composer and joined the ASM, earning the personal enmity of the RAPM through his direct and opinionated comments. By 1933, Zaderatsky grew concerned enough about the
escalating political situation to ask for letters of testimony from Ippolitov-Ivanov, Orlov, and others, in an attempt to safeguard himself against further repression. In 1934 Zaderatsky was relocated to Yaroslavl, a city north-east of Moscow where he would compose the *Twenty-four Preludes* for piano.

Zaderatsky possessed exceptional skills as a piano performer. While at the Moscow Conservatory, he publicly performed Chopin’s *Twenty-four Preludes* to the satisfaction of Kipp, a piano pedagogue known for the most exacting requirements. He went on tour to Sweden with the bass singer Grigory Stepanovich Pirogov (1885–1931) some time before 1916, the only occasion upon which he ever traveled outside Russian borders. Zaderatsky also held a special place in his heart for the music of both Rachmaninov and Scriabin. Additionally his teaching duties undoubtedly required a masterful facility at the piano. It lies beyond the scope of this paper to describe adequately Zaderatsky’s musical œuvre, given the destruction of his pre-1926 works and the lack of sources, published or otherwise. Biographical evidence points to the existence of compositions from many genres, ranging from operas, symphonies, and suites, to chamber, choral, and vocal music. The quest to locate these manuscripts requires nothing short of an archival expedition. This section, therefore, can only attempt to point out stylistic features from the few sources that are currently available, all of which happen to be piano music.

Three sets of piano miniatures reveal Zaderatsky’s stylistic proclivities prior to the composition of the *Preludes* in 1934: *Lyrical Microbes* (1928), *Notebook of Miniatures* (1929),

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25 Nelson, 158.

26 V.V. Zaderatsky *Per aspera*, 123.
and Porcelain Cups (1932). The first set consists of four pieces, the last of which is written for left hand alone. The other sets make use of characteristic titles with references to nature (Wildflowers, The Bat, Clouds), realistic scenes (Cars, Carousel, The March Poster, The Circus Rider), and imitations of other instruments (The Drum and Trumpet). Some pieces suggest a conscious shift to socialist realism aesthetics, such as the musical depiction of a Socialist propaganda poster, March Poster. Others, in particular those in Porcelain Cups, could have been written with child education in mind, given their simplistic rhythms and fanciful titles. Throughout the sets, Zaderatsky’s modernistic aesthetic reveals itself in a harmonic language influenced by Scriabin. Free chromaticism saturates his textures and every piece lacks a key signature. The third piece from Notebook of Miniatures, entitled Secret, uses non-tonal quartal and quintal harmonies moving in parallel motion (fig. 4.3). Often it appears as if the harmonies

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of each hand intentionally move so as to cause dissonance and a feeling of atonality. Zaderatsky uses the ostinato principle as a means of formal organization and harmonic color. Often the ostinati do not change at all during an entire piece and proceed without change in the accompaniment, providing a sort of “music-box” effect as in *The Bat*, the last piece from *Porcelain Cups* (fig. 4.4). The repetitiveness of the ostinati carry the pieces forward while the harmonic language remains non-tonal. Zaderatsky usually ends his “music-box” pieces by either 1) halting unexpectedly on a final chord, or 2) letting the ostinato simply run out.

It is unknown exactly when the preludes were written, but Zaderatsky completed them in Yaroslavl in 1934. His relocation from Moscow may have eased some of the pressure of working in the capital, and Zaderatsky busied himself instructing at the Sobinov Music Academy, organizing the Yaroslavl Symphony Orchestra, and expecting the birth of his son, Vsevolod Vsevolodevich. The example of Shostakovich’s *Op. 34* from the previous year may have had an influence on Zaderatsky to write his own set. Like so many of his works, Zaderatsky would never hear these pieces publicly performed or see them published. Through the concertizing efforts of various Ukrainian pianists, “Muzychna Ukraine” in Kiev published the *Preludes* in 1970. They became identified with Ukrainian cultural heritage and are today used as standard

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repertoire at the Kiev Conservatory. In Russia, on the other hand, it took over two decades from the first performance of the set by pianist Alexander Markovich (b. 1964) in the 1980s, and subsequent performances by composer Alexander Rayhelson (b. 1969), for “Deka-BC” in Moscow to publish the Preludes in 2006.

Following the unnoticed composition of the second Russian prelude set in Yaroslavl, Zaderatsky’s respite from governmental persecution came to a close. In 1937, at the height of the Yezhovshchina, Stalin’s unqualified persecution of the civilian population, Zaderatsky found himself arrested on charges of disseminating Fascist music. He was sentenced to ten years without correspondence rights to the gold mines of Kolyma at the North East Camp (SEVVOSTLAG) in eastern Siberia. While in the gulag he wrote Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues in a stunning display of personal determination, although he would only ever edit seven pairs after his release and only three have found their way to print. The NKVD miraculously signed his release in 1939 and he made his way back to his family and academic duties in Yaroslavl. The authorities continued to deny him the chance to perform or publish his works, and after 1948 pointed out formalistic characteristics in his most self-consciously socialist realist composition to date: a children’s piano concerto in the vein of Kabalevksy. While teaching at the Lvov Conservatory and writing symphonic works that would never be heard, he died of a heart attack in 1953, the year of Stalin’s death.

30 V.V. Zaderatsky Per aspera, 122-123.
31 Conquest, 276ff.
V. V. Zhelobinsky

Valery Viktorovich Zhelobinsky (1912–1946) was born in the city of Tambov, almost three hundred miles south-east of Moscow. The background of his parents is unknown, but he first displayed musical talents at the age of six. He composed and gave piano lessons to fellow students in the Tambov Musical Technicum School, graduating in 1928 at the age of fifteen, and continued his studies at the Leningrad Conservatory. He studied composition at least until 1931 under Vladimir Vladimirovich Shcherbachov (1889–1952), a pedagogue who “passionately rejected all that was outdated and outmoded, and encouraged his students to experiment with new mediums in every area of contemporary art.” Shcherbachov valued improvisation as a compositional method and frequently displays an extemporaneous design in his compositions thorough the pervasive use of folk-like left-hand ostinati. While Shcherbachov’s aesthetic leanings merit further study, it is possible that his use of running ostinati and tuneful melodies links him with musical primitivism or industrialism. Zhelobinsky’s style of composition certainly suggests that he took these lessons to heart and many of his conservatory compositions (songs, chamber music, theater and cinematic music, and symphonies) “bear the masterly touch of his teacher.” While developing a reputation as a prolific composer, Zhelobinsky also appeared as a concert pianist, often premiering his own works. He graduated from the conservatory in 1932 and the next year saw his opera, The Peasant from Kamarinsk performed at the Leningrad Maly Operatic Theater. The opera, in the folksy, simplistic “song opera” style,

33 Koptchevsky, 111.
34 Moisenko, 249.
35 Schwarz, 150.
propelled him into public fame to such an extent that Prokofiev mentioned him alongside Shostakovich and Kabalevsky as being a much lauded, but overrated composer in 1935.\textsuperscript{36}

Stylistically, the \textit{The Peasant from Kamarinsk} directly leads to the propagandistic opera \textit{The Quiet Don} (1935), by Ivan Ivanovich Dzerzhinsky (1909–1978) that so exemplified the new socialist realist aesthetics of the 1930s.\textsuperscript{37} Zhelobinsky also wrote mass songs in imitation or arrangement of folksongs,\textsuperscript{38} as well as the sound track for the short film \textit{Beglets} (1932), the first of six movies he would score. In the wake of Zhelobinsky’s rising fame, he composed and published \textit{Twenty-four Prleudes, Op. 20}.

Despite the rarity of scores, two pieces serve the purpose of providing a general understanding of Zhelobinsky’s pianistic style of composition. In 1933 he wrote \textit{Six Etudes}, though they were not published until 1936.\textsuperscript{39} Performances and recordings of selections of the set, including those by Vladimir Samolyovich Horowitz (1903–1989), Oscar Levant (1906–1972), and Raymond Lewenthal (1923–1988) attest to their popularity both in the USSR and the USA. The use of characteristic titles (\textit{Toccata, Nocturne, Waltz, Reminiscence, Dance,} and \textit{Recitative}) could possibly have Shostakovich’s \textit{Aphorisms} as a model, although they lack the ironic intent and, generally, keep to traditional genre expectations. (Zhelobinsky’s \textit{Nocturne}, for example, only ever reaches \textit{mf} and ends quietly in \textit{pp}.)


\textsuperscript{37} Moisenko, 250-51.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Muzikalny Entsiklopedichesky Slovar 1990}, s.v. “Zhelobinsky, Valery Viktorovich.”

Zhelobinsky frequently uses major and minor triads or seventh chords, but uses them in non-functional ways. The opening measures of Reminiscence feature an E pedal point beneath accompanying chords moving in chromatic parallelism (fig. 4.5). The right hand melody lacks concrete phrase structure and often seems unaware of the relationship between it and the accompaniment. When Zhelobinsky uses counterpoint, his freely chromatic and extemporaneous style creates dissonant voice-leading that border on atonality, were it not for triadic signposts that emerge unexpectedly from the texture. In terms of formal design, Zhelobinsky creates a sense of improvisation by often avoiding clear recapitulations and blurring the lines between thematic and transitional material.

Zhelobinsky published Gypsy Dance in 1934.\textsuperscript{40} Even though he marks it Op. 22 and used it in his 1937 opera Name Day, Zhelobinsky’s prolific compositional habits place the composition very close to the Preludes. The short piece illustrates Zhelobinsky’s proclivity for strumming accompaniment patterns in the style of Shcherbachov, especially prominent in the Allegro con fuoco section (fig. 4.6). The title links Zhelobinsky’s motoric ostinati to the “exoticized” folk (or rather pseudo-folk) traditions of the RAPM. This balalaika-pattern features prominently in Zhelobinsky’s Preludes.

\textsuperscript{40} Valery Zhelobinsky, Tsiganckii Tanets [Gypsy Dance] (Leningrad: “Triton,” 1934).
Zhelobinsky’s Preludes, Op. 20 were published in Leningrad by “Triton,” the same publisher to produce Shcherbachov’s Notions. While no information on its concert history has been found, we may assume that Zhelobinsky’s popularity and the quick publication date placed this set with his other compositions which are “played and performed all over the vast territory of the USSR, from the Black Sea to the Barents Sea.”

After the Preludes, Zhelobinsky continued to compose popular operas, including Name Day (1937) and Mother (1939), the latter based on a socialist realist novel by Gorky and considered his best. In 1945 he wrote Scenes of Childhood, pedagogical works bearing similarities to Kabalevsky’s Twenty-four Easy Pieces, Op. 39 (1944) in content and descriptive titles. They reveal a certain tightening of formal cohesion, but the same harmonic and melodic proclivities. He died in 1946 due to “a prolonged illness brought on by World War Two,” and Russia mourned for the untimely end of so promising a talent.

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41 Moisenko, 252.


43 Moisenko, 252.
B. G. Goltz

Boris Grigorevich Goltz (1913–1942) was born in the city of Tashkent, which since 1867 had functioned as the capital of Russian Turkestan. Cultural tensions between indigenous Muslims and colonial Russians intensified throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries, especially after the completion of a major railway in 1906 that opened the city to Europe. I could not find information on Goltz’s family heritage, though the ancestry of the name may well have German/Jewish roots. It is unknown how Goltz or his family reacted to the 1916 Basmachi Revolt between Russians and Muslims, or whether they remained in Tashkent during the anti-Bolshevik conflicts that continued into the 1920s. We do know that the family moved to Leningrad in 1926 and that thirteen year-old Goltz had already showed early pianistic and compositional talents. In 1928, financial difficulties made it necessary for him to work, as Shostakovich had done some years earlier, as a pianist in the silent movie theaters, a draining job that nevertheless increased Goltz’s improvisational abilities. He entered the piano course at the Leningrad Conservatory in 1933, taking lessons from Shostakovich’s piano teacher Nikolayev. Goltz held no ambitions to become a composer until encouraged by his professor of harmony, Venedict Venedictovich Pushkov (1896–1971), himself a former student of Shcherbachov and composer of operas, movie scores, and orchestral works. After looking at one of Goltz’s sketches, Pushkov convinced him to pursue a double degree in piano and composition. In his second year, Goltz used those sketches into create the Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 2.


45 Frid, 4.


47 Muzikalny Entsiklopedichesky Slovar 1990, s.v. “Pushkov, Venedict Venedictovich.”
Very little of Goltz’s academic compositions survive, and even fewer appear in print. A Scherzo, published in 1960, gives the only other example of his pianistic writing. Whether or not it preceded the Preludes it gives us an understanding of Goltz’s style during the short eight years in which he composed. Stylistically the piece has features of the linear style and some elements suggestive of Prokofiev’s Toccata, Op. 11 (1912) including perpetuum mobile sixteenth-notes, offset rhythmic patterns, pervasive chromatic scalar passages, and use of ostinati (fig. 4.7). The middle section switches to the parallel major and uses a folk-inspired melody colored with surprising harmonies and dissonant grace notes. The piece displays formal cohesion, textural and technical imagination, and an extended tonal harmony heavily colored by chromaticism.

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48 From the private collection of Dr. Malcolm Henbury-Ballan.

49 Akhonen, 17.

50 Frid, 14.
Goltz’s *Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 2* were published in 1971 by the Leningrad “Muzika” label. A posthumous biographer judged his works as “well positioned in the Soviet repertoire,” and selections from the preludes appeared in the concerts of several preeminent performers such as Pavel Alexeyevich Serebryakov (1909–1977) and Vladimir Vladimirovich Sofronitsky (1901–1961). Despite that reputation, Goltz’s music has fallen out of circulation and currently presents one of the most difficult scores to locate.

Goltz composed for only eight years, producing piano pieces, a string quartet, songs on Pushkin poems, mass songs, symphonic overtures, movie scores, incidental music for plays, and a piano concerto, most of which has been lost. He graduated from the Conservatory in piano in 1938 and in composition in 1940. The next year marked the beginning of Russia’s engagement in World War II and Goltz enlisted in the Political Administration of the Baltic Fleet. This organization consisted of a group of composers stationed in Leningrad, charged with the task of writing patriotic songs and plays for performing groups and military choirs. When the Siege of Leningrad began in September, conditions worsened and, according to eyewitnesses, Goltz and his fellow composers worked in debilitating hunger and cold, crammed into a small room and composing without the aid of a piano. Goltz’s songs, especially “The Song of Anger,” “The Song of Vengeance,” and “Shining Star in the Heavens,” enjoyed widespread popularity during the war. In March of 1942, Goltz died of an illness caused by malnutrition.

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51 Akhonen, 17.

52 I am currently working on preparing and negotiating a new edition of his piano works with the hope that this music may become more widely available to musicians and scholars.

53 Akhnonen, 16.

54 Frid, 7.
The varied experiences and unique musical and social personalities of these four composers is reflected in their music’s relationship to the ruling government, musical traditions of the past, and the piano as an instrument. Biographical information allows us to shed light on the possible influences that we will now observe in the kaleidoscopic diversity of the first Soviet prelude sets.
Chapter Five

Analysis of Soviet Prelude Sets

According to the latest research, the preludes sets by the four composers considered here represent the genesis of the Soviet foray in the genre. They engaged in the long history of the prelude set with its multifaceted interpretations and associative traditions, and in the contemporaneous mandates of socialist realism and the demands of Russian Soviet culture. Each composer composed according to his skill, personality, and artistic vision. It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine each prelude in a comprehensive manner. Rather, this chapter examines the preludes of each composer with a focus on broad characteristics of form, genre, style, and musical language, and offers possible interpretations of the work in the context of prelude history and Soviet culture. The accompanying tables give the key, tempo marking, time signature, and sub-genres, the last of which requires some explanation. The sub-genre category explains the dominant, stylistic features of a given piece, drawing mainly upon textural aspects and generic associations:

**Aria** - a prelude with a dominant, lyrical melody either in the right or left hand with a secondary accompaniment, e.g. Chopin’s *Prelude 4 in E minor*.

**Chorale** - a prelude with a homorhythmic texture, differentiated from the funeral march (below) by rhythmic flexibility, e.g. Blumenfeld’s *Prelude 1 in C Major*.

**Ostinato** - while not technically a genre but a technique, the term is here used to signify a prelude characterized by repeating figures without a clear melody, and emphasizing textural color and motion, e.g. Chopin’s *Prelude 14 in E-flat minor*. 
**Invention** - a prelude clearly displaying overt polyphonic counterpoint and therefore blurring the lines between melody, countermelody, and accompaniment. These pieces include imitative **Canons** and **Fugues**, e.g. anything by J.S. Bach.

**Toccata** - a prelude that uses pianistic devices (scalar passages, double notes, arpeggiation, grace-notes, tremolo, etc.) to blur the lines between the homophony of an aria, the polyphony of an invention, and the non-melodic textures of an ostinato. Rhythmic energy dominates and melodies are often more instrumental than vocal, e.g. Chopin’s *Prelude 3 in G Major* or *Prelude 16 in B-flat minor*.

**Dance** - a prelude that utilizes a rhythm associated with some kind of physical movement, as defined by rhythmic patterns. The use of recognizable accompaniment patterns and idioms signals the associative reference. These pieces include genuine dances and their stylizations such as the **Waltz**, **Gavotte**, **Gigue**, **Sarabande**, **Polka**, and **Tango**, as well as the **March**, **Funeral March**, and **Barcarole**, which, while not technically dances, emphasize repetitive, physical motion, e.g. Chopin’s *Prelude 7 in A Major* (mazurka), *Prelude 9 in E Major* (march), or J.S. Bach’s *Prelude 9 in E Major WTC1* (Siciliano).

**Recitative** - the term is used loosely here to denote a prelude consisting largely of monophony in imitation of vocal declamation, often with sparse, block accompaniment and free tempo, e.g. the beginning of Debussy’s *La fille aux cheveux du lin*. 
Shostakovich: *Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 34*

Taken in its entirety, Shostakovich’s prelude set lasts roughly thirty minutes and the average amount of measures is thirty-nine. Shostakovich composed his *Prelude 1 in C Major* as an enigmatic Invention rather than as a more traditional Ostinato or a Chorale. In contrast to Chopin’s epic ending, Shostakovich chooses to write his *Prelude 24 in D minor* as a humorous March that ends on a rather glib, *piano V-i* cadence. The highpoint of the set occurs at the ***climax of *Prelude 14 in E-flat minor***. Though this is not the first nor the last instance of ***in the set, the long crescendo leading to the climax and the sustaining force of the dynamics, distinguish this moment from the others for dramatic arc and tragic significance. The tension of this moment finds release in the lightheartedness of the waltz-like *Prelude 15 in D-flat Major*, a relationship Shostakovich would use almost two decades later when writing his *Preludes and Fugues, Op. 87.*

The use of Chopin Order allow for custos endings between consecutive pieces. The most clear-cut example occurs between *Prelude 13 in F-sharp Major* and *14 in E-flat minor*, in which the tolling A♯ of the former becomes the dominant B♭ of the latter, which features so importantly as a pedal point (fig. 5.1). Leikin goes so far as to say that to separate these pieces is akin to “separating the effect from its cause.” In some cases, tonal coloration may function to prepare for the next piece, as in the lingering E in *Prelude 3 in G Major* and the insistent D in *Prelude 23 in F Major*, even though the following pieces may begin in a different register. Lastly, the

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repeated A pedal point at the end of Prelude 7 in A Major comes back in a new guise at the third measure of Prelude 8 in F-sharp minor.

The Preludes are not technically difficult, especially when compared to the virtuosic demands of Shostakovich’s First Sonata or the prelude sets by Rachmaninov and Glière. Their relative brevity ensures that demanding sections, such as the running passages of Prelude 5 in D Major and 9 in E Major, do not last longer than a minute.

The Preludes mark a stylistic break with Shostakovich’s past music, and display a mature style that he would use well into the 1960s. To put it simply, Shostakovich utilizes the linear style tradition, with its emphasis on extended tonality, rhythmic ostinati, and counterpoint. He

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frequently employs harmonic/melodic shifts of a semitone, and freely uses parallel sequences, whole-tone and octatonic scales, and modes.

Shostakovich’s preludes have associations with other popular and traditional genres. Shostakovich’s background as a cinematic accompanist, and his proclivity for irony and humor reveal themselves in two dominant techniques: *derailments* and *polystylism*. Riemsdijk coined the term derailment (Dutch: *ontsporingen*) to describe the sudden shifts in texture, dynamics, and mood that highlight the “conflict of beauty and destruction” in Shostakovich’s *Preludes*. The catastrophic nature of this term applies only to some musical shifts in Shostakovich’s music, and I suggest the addition of the term *lapse* to signify changes that occur on the quieter side of the spectrum and often involve unexpected pauses or subtle changes in the piece melodically, harmonically, or rhythmically. Polystylistic refers to Shostakovich’s particular combination of generic features creating a simultaneous texture of different stylistic elements. Further examples will clarify this terminology.

In *Prelude 17 in A-flat Major*, Shostakovich evokes the Waltz by baldly referencing the traditional 3/4 rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. At the fourth measure, the piece quietly and unobtrusively lapses into 4/4 as the accompaniment momentarily disappears (fig. 5.2). The piece continues to suggest and then to frustrate the Waltz genre throughout by changing time signatures, erratic and dissonant melodies, and fluctuating tempo indications, including accelerando, ritardando, and a fermata.

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5 Leikin, 172.
Figure 5.2. Generic lapses in Shostakovich’s *Prelude 17 in A-flat Major*, mm. 1–9.

Shostakovich demonstrates this concept again in *Prelude 10 in C-sharp minor*. This Aria involves a steady bass pattern, reminiscent of guitar strumming. Figure 5.3 shows how the melody, now in the left hand, and regular accompaniment subtly shift into an uneasy cadence at B♭ minor (m. 29). When the accompaniment reappears (m. 30), the melody lapses into a
fragmented, chromatic figure, which echoes in pp after a pause. This halting technique recalls similar, far away effects caused by Scriabin’s ethereal, amorphous rhythms. For Scriabin, the halting, echoing non-resolution is consistent with the style of the whole piece, while in Shostakovich, the momentary aside disturbs the metrical flow established at the start of the piece by the strumming accompaniment. The disruption is all the more noticeable for the recognizable and associative context. Similar lapses occur in Prelude 7 in A Major (mm. 21-22), Prelude 11 in B Major (mm. 30-32 amoroso), Prelude 12 in G-sharp minor (mm. 30 to the end), Prelude in F-sharp Major (m. 23), Prelude 15 in D-flat Major (mm. 52 to the end), Prelude 19 in E-flat Major (mm. 10-11), and Prelude 22 in G minor (m. 8 and similar passages, and mm. 36-38).

The violence of a musical derailment in Shostakovich’s Preludes involves more bombastic musical procedures. Prelude 6 in B minor is a march that continually stumbles over itself through dissonant counterpoint, blunt cadential formulas, and disjunct melodies. But the event that brings the prelude crashing to an abrupt end amounts to a notated “accident” where cadences blunder over each other. Instead of the anticipated ending, the right hand erupts in an accented, fff coda complete with “snare drum” accompaniment (fig. 5.4).

Prelude 3 in G Major begins as a contrapuntal Invention, complete with momentary, distracted lapses. The piece nears a climax through a crescendo, only to shift suddenly to pp at the outer registers of the piano. Two measures later the texture again changes suddenly to f with a texture involving a dissonant tremolo against a relentless drum rhythm, and two measures after that the prelude suddenly explodes in a fff C♯ minor chord with low tremolo, which slowly fades off into p through a wandering whole-tone scale (fig. 5.5). This unprecedented and unexpected change in mood shifts the prelude away from its original, major key beginning and shows
Figure 5.4. Generic derailment in Shostakovich’s *Prelude 6 in B minor*, mm. 46–52.

Figure 5.5. Generic derailment in Shostakovich’s *Prelude 3 in G Major*, mm. 23 to end.

Shostakovich’s use of expectation and surprise. Similar derailments happen in *Prelude 4 in E minor* (mm. 26-27), *Prelude 16 in B-flat minor* (mm. 24-25), and *Prelude 19 in E-flat Major* (mm. 40-42).
Shostakovich’s polystylism is a product of the juxtaposition of elements or contrapuntal lines and the use of referential allusions or quotations. The opening measures of *Prelude 1 in C Major* present three distinct elements: 1) an Alberti bass figure outlining C Major, 2) a low bass octave C, and 3) a twisting chromatic line marked *espressivo* (fig. 5.6). Each element enters at a different time and at a different register, and each stands apart stylistically from the others. Leikin goes so far as to identify these elements as consciously composed semantic markers designed for ultimate convolution: 1) the Alberti bass figure recalls Mozart and the Classical era, 2) the low bass points to low organ *cantus fermi* of Baroque chorale settings, and 3) the chromatic line paraphrases the Queen of Shemakha’s motif from N. Rimsky-Korsakov’s *The Golden Cockerel* (1909). By identifying these allusions and quotations, this prelude creates a multi-layered and multi-styled web of meanings.

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Ibid., 177.
Prelude 7 in A Major likewise contains first two and then three disparate elements that may have referential meanings. The first element begins in the left hand with a Recitative invocation, recalling a similar texture in Chopin’s Prelude 6 in B minor and in his “Cello” Etude, Op. 25, No. 7 in C-sharp minor even to the point of opening with the same leap of a fifth as the latter. The right hand joins the melody at measure four with dry, portato, dissonant chords, at which point the bass melody begins a stylized trill ornament in short sequences. At the conclusion of the piece, another element enters in an inner voice, in the form of a repeating, eighth-note drone on A, reminiscent of both Chopin’s Prelude 6 in B minor and Prelude 15 in D-flat Major (fig. 5.7). In some ways, this piece appears to be a conglomeration of Chopin quotations and further research may be ably to identify further possibilities.

Polystylism goes some way to explain the textural shift in Prelude 24 in D minor. What began as a Gavotte with a March (or perhaps even a Cakewalk) rhythm suddenly shifts to Toccata with a driving bass ostinato under sustained tones in the right hand, which may act as a reference to the accompanimental figure in Chopin’s final prelude (fig. 5.8).
This paper cannot delve fully into speculation over Shostakovich’s hermeneutical symbols. (According to Leikin, quotations from Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, Arensky, Mozart, Chopin, Czerny, folk tunes, Jewish idioms, and mass songs appear in no less than thirteen of the Preludes, although he has not currently codified all his findings.) The identification of concrete, semantic messaging or coding in Shostakovich’s works has been a popular preoccupation both to western scholars bent on casting the composer as a dissident martyr and Soviet scholars concerned with the intonazias of socialist realism and the rationalization of musical mysteries. The identification of symbols demands careful examination and their interpretation ultimately weighs heavily upon speculation.

In conclusion, Op. 34 reveals Shostakovich’s predilection for unexpected musical events and stylistic combinations, mastery of the linear style and extended tonality, view of past traditions, and personal interaction with the mandates of socialist realism. The sudden shifts and superimposed references create a tragic and comical (or both) musical variety show (in keeping

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7 Ibid.

8 Anatole Leikin, e-mail message to author, January 19, 2012.
with Shostakovich’s cinematic background) in which anything can happen: pompous marches fall on their faces, academic canons play dirty, and strident waltzes fade into thin air. As a collection of small pieces in every key, Shostakovich used the *Preludes* to demonstrate his own contribution to the linear style. The miniaturized forms forced him to codify his ideas on tonality in a concise manner. By calling his set *Preludes*, using Chopin Order, and referencing past composers Shostakovich revealed his own stance on the heritage of the past. He seems to have valued it for its forms, traditions, and associations, but also calls them into question by disrupting linearity, rhetorical expectations, and other factors of propriety. While these pieces fell quickly under the scrutiny of post-1936 denunciation of formalism, Shostakovich may very well have had intended his pieces to illustrate his own understanding of socialist realism. While the *Preludes* may not always function with the intelligibility of an easily decoded *intonazia*, they do seem to attempt to bring the listener beyond - beyond expectations, conventions, traditions - and into, perhaps, a brighter, optimistic future. The ambiguous and ambivalent nature of the pieces make this interpretation, or any other, difficult to say with full confidence.
Zaderatsky: Twenty-four Preludes

In size and scope, Zaderatsky’s Preludes resemble those by Shostakovich, lasting approximately thirty minutes total with individual pieces averaging thirty-four measures. The set commences with a Toccata that pairs a rhythmically organic left hand melody against a right hand ostinato in a high register. Such a beginning could be an attempt to engage with the abstract, repetitive texture traditions of Bach and Chopin, a possibility made more suggestive by the use of a closed phrase that returns to C Major after four bars, something that both Bach’s C Major Prelude, Book 1 and Chopin’s Prelude 1 in C Major do. Zaderatsky ends his set with a piece that has overt associations with the final piece of Chopin’s Op. 28. Both pieces employ loud dynamics and a forceful, unrelenting ostinato in the bass. Zaderatsky goes so far as to reference the closing ascending and descending scalar passages that bring both pieces to a halt. The drama of the last piece sways the emotional weight of the set towards the end, and only two other preludes come close: Prelude 14 in D-sharp minor has comparable length and a dizzying accompaniment, but begins and ends quietly and mysteriously, and Prelude 18 in F minor pounds away at a tortuous pace, but only for eighteen short measures.

Zaderatsky uses Chopin Order, employing D♯ minor as the enharmonic equivalent of E♭ minor. The most common custos endings occur when the final chord of the major key includes an added sixth scale degree that anticipates the tonality of the relative minor, as happens in Prelude 13 in F-sharp Major to Prelude 14 in D-sharp minor, Prelude 15 in D-flat Major and 16 in B-flat minor, and Prelude 19 in E-flat Major and 20 in C minor. An unusual relationship occurs between Prelude 5 in D Major and Prelude 6 in B minor, in which the lingering A of the first transitions smoothly to the enigmatic A that begins the latter. A string of custos relationships
Figure 5.9. Custos relationships between Zaderatsky’s *Preludes 7-10*.

The *Preludes* cover a range of technical demands. Difficulties mainly lie in fast and sometimes awkward figuration, including double notes (*Prelude 12 in G-sharp minor*), tenths (*Prelude 19 in E-flat Major*), tight, chromatic runs (*Prelude 14 in D-sharp minor*), left hand leaps (*Prelude 23 in F Major*), leaps of a tenth (*Prelude 19 in E-flat Major*), and arpeggiated clusters (*Prelude 11 in B Major* and *17 in A-flat Major*). The repetitious nature of these preludes
and their accompanying technical challenges may point to a pedagogical intent in their composition.

The *Preludes* seem to represent a further step in Zaderatsky’s style from the three earlier piano cycles. He retains the “music box” ostinato effect, expanding their coloristic possibilities to produce a variety of effects and moods. Color through non-directed harmonies remains an important aspect of Zaderatsky’s style, and he uses modal scales, chords with added tones, whole-tone scales and chords, timbral effects (glissandi, grace notes, etc.), and super-tertian, quartal, and quintal sonorities. He rarely uses overt counterpoint, and on the whole his melodies tend toward the artificial rather than the singable. Contrary to his earlier sets, he uses key signatures, though his means of establishing a tonal focus tends to be through repetition. Zaderatsky’s melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and timbral proclivities draw comparisons with French impressionism as expressed through Debussy, especially in the use of stasis and motion in their own right, and suggestive tempo indications with subtle, programmatic or philosophical implications. Despite the limitations of comparing musical styles to the visual arts, Zaderatsky’s emphasis on abstraction, juxtaposition, and textual clarity, also resembles Suprematism, a modernist artistic movement begun by Kasimir Severinovich Malevich (1879–1935) in 1915, which relies upon simple, geometric shapes. Malevich asserted that this overt abstraction is meant to reinvigorate static, normal life through the destruction of familiar aesthetic orders and the dominance of subjective emotions.\(^9\) Specific examples will shed light on the possibilities of comparison between Zaderatsky’s *Preludes* and Suprematism.

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Compared to the multilayered textures of Debussy and Scriabin, Zaderatsky’s style highlights juxtaposition between musical elements. In *Prelude 6 in B minor* the overt sectionalization of elements clearly divides the piece into units that relate to each other only by the starkness of their contrast: three times a simple (*Andante semplice*) line in recitative style (the second time it imitates itself as a two-part canon) halts at a fermata, and, after a pause of silence, is answered by static, homorhythmic, dissonant, *pp* chords (*Misterioso*) with metrically ambiguous rhythms, which ends in unfulfilled silence (fig. 5.10). Zaderatsky intentionally highlights the juxtaposition of *Andante semplice* and *Misterioso* elements.

*Prelude 4 in E minor* takes sectional juxtaposition one step further by separating the contrasting elements harmonically and in terms of register. The first element consists of blocks of parallel triads, which later expand to seventh chords in a flexible modal space favoring the white keys of the piano, sounding in the lower registers. The second element appears as arpeggiated chords in the upper register, mainly consisting of black keys and moving steadily downward in parallel motion. The spatial and tonal independence of these elements do not waver throughout the entire piece, and they seem to be suspended in atmospheric stasis.
Zaderatsky’s homophonic Preludes retain this procedure by highlighting the disparity between a melody and its accompaniment. As one of the more extreme examples, Prelude 5 in D Major separates the bassoon-like accompaniment in the left hand from the flute-like melody in the right by upwards of five octaves. The justification for this disunity may lie in the influence of Prokofiev, given the tempo indication Grottesca, chromatically and metrically adventurous melody, and piquant staccatos and accents.

The Preludes utilize the ostinato principle in unique ways, often employing it as an example of dynamic motion for its own sake. Prelude 17 in A-flat Major consists entirely of repeated parallel blocks built of major seconds and fifths, constantly moving in unpredictable and seemingly amorphous flux (fig. 5.11). Slight variation of the intervalic pattern and emphasis of internal contrapuntal lines in measures 14-20 and 29-30 provide the only contrast to an otherwise unabashedly transparent coloristic study.

Even in his homophonic pieces, Zaderatsky’s accompaniments move with unwavering, dynamic regularity. The eighth note accompaniment of Prelude 7 in A Major continues throughout the piece, despite changes in pitch and slight changes in contour, until it is abruptly silenced at the penultimate measure (fig. 5.12). Prelude 2 in A minor represents the most extreme realization of repetitious accompaniment and recalls Zaderatsky’s earlier “music box” ostinati, linking him with the modernist trend towards the musical depiction of technology, most famously in Mosolov’s Iron Foundry (1927). The three-note ostinato outlines A minor and Eb Maj7, repeats itself every two beats, and endures without variation for thirty-five measures. The melodic material of the right hand works within this formal limitation with surprising variance, including contrasts of character and hand crossing to create bass register echoes.
At the turn of the twentieth century, technological advancement found its way into aesthetic discourse, especially through the work of the Italian Futurists. Despite the difference between Socialist realist and Futurist concepts of art, Zaderatsky seems to engage with these issues, especially in his suggestive and enigmatic tempo indications. *Prelude 18 in F minor* is marked *automaticamente, affettuoso*, meaning both “automatic” and “affectionate.” The automatic character of the piece seems obvious due to the driving, chromatic lines that Figure
5.13. Enigmatic tempo marking in Zaderatsky’s Prelude 18 in F minor, mm. 1–4.

*Automaticamente, affettuoso*

eventually turn into hammering, *furioso* octaves (fig. 5.13). The preponderance of mechanistic force in the piece raises the question how one is to play it with any sort of affection and suggests a deeper, aesthetic statement aimed at reconciling technology (*automaticamente*) and humanity (*affettuoso*). The Futurists considered this question of prime importance. The free-word, collage poem *First Record* (1916) by Italian Filippo Marinetti (1867–1944) embraced the heroic but impersonal implications of the body/machine that is liberated from utilitarian productivity.10 The French Dadaist Francis Picabia (1879–1953) expressed an ironic view in his painting *The Child Carburetor* (1919), in which a machine usurps human functions while loosing subjectivity, critiquing the concept of technological certainty and precision.11 While it is difficult accurately to pinpoint Zaderatsky’s aesthetic position, it is at least a possibility that the ambiguity of this tempo indication opens the door to theoretical, political, and social debate.

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11 Ibid., 154-155.
As a summarily ignored and denigrated composer, Zaderatsky occupies a unique position compared to his publicly recognized and politically censored contemporaries. On the one hand, his unwavering work ethic and compositions in the Socialist realist traditions indicate his desire to gain recognition for his work. On the other hand, we cannot know the extent to which Zaderatsky may have resigned some of his compositions to “the drawer” and written them outside accepted guidelines. The Preludes demonstrate both sides of this concept. Zaderatsky’s use of sparse textures and clearly defined sections, as well as references to machines and Dance forms, satisfies the Socialist realist requirement of intelligibility. At the same time, the Preludes show Zaderatsky’s links to the past with references to Debussy, Scriabin, Suprematists, Futurists, and Dadaists, links which would quickly become taboo after the 1936 Resolution along with any art deemed unrepresentative of reality. Surely Zaderatsky’s abstract sound pictures, with their harmonic ambiguity, recalcitrant ostinati, mysterious tempo markings, and emphasis on separated formal elements, find some resonance in Malevich’s subjective critique of representational norms in art: “Matter itself is eternal and immutable; its insensitivity to life — its lifelessness — is unshakeable. The changing element of our consciousness and feeling, in the last analysis, is illusion, which springs from the interplay of distorting reflections of variable, derivative manifestations of reality and which has nothing whatsoever to do with actual matter or even with an alteration in it.” For a composer who considered himself a living corpse, a prelude set of subjective fantasy may provide the opportunity for expression that reality will never give him.

12 Malevich, 18.

Zhelobinsky: Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 20

An analysis of Zhelobinsky’s Preludes is hampered by the deplorable state of the work’s single edition, which contains a startling number of inconsistencies in the assignment of accidentals. Issues in one measure from Prelude 13 in F-sharp Major, as shown in figure 5.14, involve the apparently simultaneous occurrence of B♭ and C♭ (beat two) and A♯ and A♭ (beat four). Since a critical study of the manuscript and the reconciliation of editorial discrepancies lie beyond the scope of this paper, the following study contents itself with a general description of Zhelobinsky’s musical language and his use of sub-genres.

Figure 5.14. Editorial ambiguity in Zhelobinsky’s Prelude 13 in F-sharp Major, m. 5.

Zhelobinsky’s Op. 20 has never been recorded and stands out for the brevity of individual pieces, averaging nineteen measures long, with Preludes 3 in C-sharp Major and 21 in B-flat Major lasting only ten measures. This set is the only one of the four under investigation to employ the Bach Order of keys. Like Bach, Zhelobinsky uses the unusual key of C♯ Major, but gives Prelude 22 in B-flat minor a key signature of six flats rather than five, giving it a slight phyrgian color. As stated above, Bach Order creates a chromatic shift between adjacent pairs, but
Zhelobinsky’s chromatic writing may make such tonal considerations moot when considering the effect of sequential performance. The opening piece of the set is a Chorale that suggests the Bachian tradition of simplicity and purity. The concluding Prelude 24 in B minor texturally recalls Chopin’s Prelude 4 in E minor and ends the set in contemplative stillness, fading off into ppp and concluding with a notated one bar rest. In terms of traditionally dramatic endings to prelude sets, the penultimate Toccata Prelude 23 in B Major would have made a more convincing candidate, marked Allegro vivace and ending with a brilliant, mechanistic accelerando. In comparison, the last prelude sounds like a contemplative afterthought. The length and complex dramatic contour of Prelude 10 in E minor also stand out as a dramatic highpoint in the set. Zhelobinsky’s score lacks many dynamic markings, but the loudest and most bombastic moment comes at the end of Prelude 12 in F minor where the Prestissimo Toccata comes to a close with accented fff chords.

Zhelobinsky’s technical demands in Op. 20 involve bravura passage work, including: 1) idiosyncratic runs and scales of sixteenth-notes in the right hand (e.g. Prelude 2 in C minor), 2) rhythmically dense passages suggestive of Scriabin or a use of tempo rubato (e.g. Prelude 6 in D minor), 3) wide leaps in accompaniments and melodies (e.g. Prelude 11 in F Major), 4) ascending and descending glissandi (e.g. Prelude 20 in A minor), and 5) tremolos shared between hands (e.g. Prelude 19 in A Major). The short span of the pieces ensures that the difficulties are quickly over.

Stylistically, Zhelobinsky uses a wide range of effects and procedures, drawing from many different traditions and combining them in his own unique way. This approach had already
manifested itself in his earlier *Six Etudes* and would continue through his successful career to the end of his life. In his harmonic language, triadic sonorities have an important place, especially as an anchoring signpost in an otherwise chromatic space. Triads frequently move in non-directed, parallel motion, with shifts occurring at the rate of a quarter note or of a measure. When the functional relationships of triads come into play, Zhelobinsky intentionally frustrates their resolution, and the cadence in *Prelude 4 in C-sharp minor* avoids the expected resolution to the tonic by the interposition of a lowered supertonic. Added notes are sometimes the product of supertertian stacking, but more often Zhelobinsky creates dense clusters for the purpose of creating tension or color. The dense amalgams of notes in *Prelude 15 in G Major* produce a concentrated wall of sound, seemingly with little theoretical justification (fig. 5.15).

Zhelobinsky’s melodies are equally enigmatic and often function independently of their harmonic underpinnings both diatonically and chromatically. Angularity and disjunct motion, especially leaps of a ninth, feature prominently and constantly defy melodic expectations. The relationship between melody and accompaniment in *Prelude 14 in F-sharp minor* intentionally creates biting dissonances and often creates a sense of polytonality against their harmonic Figure
5.16. Polytonality in Zhelobinsky’s Prelude 14 in F-sharp minor, 1–5.

underpinnings (fig. 5.16). Often Zhelobinsky begins his pieces in a diatonic space without accidentals, and either gradually or suddenly shifts to complex chromaticism.

Zhelobinsky’s textures often evoke associations from other genres, but in a completely different way than Shostakovich (see above). I will be using the term *subjective, generic imitation* to describe the singular way in which Zhelobinsky appropriates recognizable genres and transforms them. For Zhelobinsky, imitation concerns reinterpreting generic musical forms (Marches, Arias, etc.) through the lens of his subjective compositional language. By comparison, Shostakovich’s March preludes are marches, established by recognizable generic markers and frustrated by Shostakovich’s polystylism, lapses, and derailments. A March prelude by Zhelobinsky, on the other hand, imitates a march, never fully manifesting the genre through musical features. Shostakovich the composer intrudes into a generic form; Zhelobinsky the composer is always present, creating or realizing a generic form, not as its spiritual ideal, as in
Aristotelian imitation, but as his own, subjective understanding. The following examples attempt to illustrate this subtle difference.

Contrapuntal genres, such as fugues and canons, operate upon traditional assumptions and conventions, including the sequential exposition of voices and their relationship to each other. Zhelobinsky’s *Prelude 7 in E-flat Major* begins with a single, gigue-like melody, which

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initially suggests some sort of imitative genre (fig. 5.17). The arrival of a complete answering voice (m. 3) enters at the subdominant, thereby foiling the piece’s identification with academic fugal writing in which the answer is expected in the dominant. In the same measure, the piece looses its sense of linear independence due to the introduction of double-notes in the right hand. The imitative theme enters in inversion, but, rather than leading to motivic development, ushers in a homophonic texture, especially with the repeated chromatic fragment in measure nine. The piece continues to change tonal, textural, and motivic content every one or two measures, like a sequential patchwork. Were it not for the steady eighth-note rhythm and momentary fragments of the opening theme, the piece would assuredly denigrate “into a series of pleasant yet unrelated effects, a succession of isolated musical moments.”\(^{15}\) As it is, the piece does not last long enough to form a concrete conception of its generic references. Zhelobinsky’s harmonic, thematic, and melodic proclivities, with his emphasis on unexpected motion, leave an impression of a momentary flash of a piece, invention-like, now gigue-like, now toccata-like. In comparison, Shostakovich’s *Preludes 4 in E minor* and *9 in E Major* are genuine Fugues and Gigues respectively, and create and sustain their generic identity according to traditional assumptions. Only after establishing or suggesting generic and harmonic standards does Shostakovich frustrate them. Zhelobinsky’s musical language fails to clearly tie itself to specific genres or harmonic procedures.

*Prelude 5 in D Major* is more successful in establishing a generic reference to a march, through the use of dotted rhythms and “snare drum” grace notes over a four-measure phrase (fig.

\(^{15}\) Morgan, 48.
Figure 5.18. Subjective, generic imitation in Zhelobinsky’s Prelude 5 in D Major, mm. 1–4.

5.18). Elements which detract from a clear evocation of the march are ambiguities between the time signature (2+2+2) and the musical rhythm (3+3), and incongruous voice leading between hands (beat 3 of each measure). The question remains whether he intends the tonal and metrical awkwardness to comically or ironically parody the March genre, as Shostakovich does in Prelude 6 in B minor. Since Zhelobinsky uses these same effects in more dramatic circumstances and his style stays consistent throughout his career, he has probably not written a parodistic march, but perhaps only a sloppy one. If that is the case, we see more of Zhelobinsky than we do of the march in this piece.

Eleven of Zhelobinsky’s Twenty-four Preludes employ a strumming, folksy rhythm in the style of Shcherbachov and, of those, eight sustain that texture throughout the entire piece. Preludes of this type (designated both Toccata and Dance, the latter having a more cantabile melody) often have an ABA formal design with recognizable thematic returns. Between these thematic markers, Zhelobinsky gives free reign to pianistic filagree while the left hand outlines non-functional progressions. The accompaniment in Prelude 12 in F minor works as a pedal point that sustains the Prestissimo right hand sixteenth notes with long stretches of tonic harmony, broken only occasionally by the subdominant. In terms of subjective, generic imitation,
these pieces often evoke a stylized gypsy or folk idiom, but again fail to establish a concrete image due to Zhelobinsky’s unpredictable style. These pieces, numbering among his longest, rather suggest the composer’s ability to improvise over a steady bass pattern.

While the above pieces demonstrate improvisation bounded and sustained by a harmonic and rhythmic system, some pieces by Zhelobinsky suggest an improvisation completely free from thematic, rhythmic, or harmonic limitations. *Prelude 10 in E minor* is one of Zhelobinsky’s longest pieces. Unlike the seemingly amorphous forms from Scriabin’s late period, which in actuality held onto nineteenth century models, this piece unfolds in a completely free, through-composed manner.\(^{16}\) Compared to the emotional abandon of Schoenberg’s atonal pieces, which in the relinquishing of traditional tonal functions took up new principles of organization, Zhelobinsky avoids thematic repetition or harmonic syntax.\(^ {17}\) His enigmatic use of triads keeps the piece from escaping into complete atonality (fig. 5.19).

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 60.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 68.
In conclusion, Zhelobinsky’s *Op. 20* stands as a unique reinvention of the prelude set genre. Although contemporary criticism of this piece has not been found, it can be assumed, given Zhelobinsky’s popularity and the constancy of his style, that these pieces were found to adhere to the standards of Socialist realism. No doubt Zhelobinsky’s career as a concert pianist gave him the opportunity to play these pieces himself. In such a context the improvisational style would have functioned in the same way that nineteenth century preamble did, that is, to showcase the performer’s skill. As it stands they may have fared better in performance under their composer/improviser than in print under analytical scrutiny. Nevertheless, they have been here analyzed in order to create a clear picture of the manifestations of the prelude set genre within the context of Soviet Russia.

**Goltz: Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 2**

This set of preludes takes approximately thirty minutes to perform and individual pieces average thirty-two measures in length, aspects that place Goltz’s *Op. 2* in a direct line with the character piece traditions of Shostakovich and Zaderatsky, Russian prelude sets of the nineteenth century, and Chopin. The first piece begins the set quietly with an oscillating figure that could reference Bach and Chopin by its rolling contour and repetitions, but harmonically initiates a harmonic language far distant from simple, triadic tonality (fig. 5.20). The set ends with accented, *fff* chords, and satisfies the traditional expectation for a dramatic concluding piece. The set does not seem to function in an overall, large-scale arc: technically difficult pieces include *Prelude 6 in B minor, 18 in F minor, 20 in C minor,* and *23 in F Major,* and dramatic high points
include \textit{Prelude 4 in E minor}, \textit{8 in F-sharp minor, 10 in C-sharp minor}, and \textit{24 in D minor}. Goltz achieves a high level of variation between consecutive pieces throughout the set.

Several possible custos relationship between prelude pairs result from Goltz’s use of Chopin Order: the prominent F\# in \textit{Prelude 5 in D Major} becomes the anacrusis of \textit{Prelude 6 in B minor}, and both \textit{Prelude 7 in A Major} and \textit{Prelude 19 in E-flat Major} color their final tonic chords with sixths that usher in the tonality of the next pieces.

Of all the Soviet sets studied here, \textit{Op. 2} presents the best case for the consideration of a intermovemental motif that works to link pieces together. This motif consists of a repeating pitch alternating with descending chromatic pitches, moving obliquely in a steady eighth-note or sixteenth-note pulse, as seen in figure 5.21. Examples of this figure appear in prominent positions with three or more chromatic movements in at least six preludes from \textit{Prelude 1 in C Major} to \textit{16 in B-flat minor}. This motivic interconnectivity is significant in that it shows Goltz’s conscious effort to unite pieces of varying character cyclically within his set, thereby creating an overall sense of cohesion. As discussed later, Goltz displays a highly developed sense of motivic development within single pieces, a proclivity that in the light of possible large-scale motivic planning, indicates the possibility of organic development in the \textit{Preludes}. Such a concept would certainly count among the first in the history of the Soviet prelude set genre, and might prove singular in the entire history of the genre.
Both stylistically and technically, Goltz’s set draws comparison with the precedent set down by Chopin. Some of the more challenging pieces of Op. 2 seem to have their technical counterparts in Chopin’s preludes, such as the challenges in fast figural passages in Chopin’s Prelude 14 in E-flat minor and Goltz’s Prelude 6 in B minor, and quickly repeated octaves in Chopin’s Prelude 22 in G minor and Goltz’s Prelude 20 in C minor.

Goltz uses key signatures for all his pieces, but exhibits flexibility in terms of creating a sense of key. His musical language operates within the traditions of linear style, employing extended tonality, chromatic counterpoint, and shifts of a semitone. In Prelude 11 in B Major this shift takes the form of the prelude beginning in chromatically inflected B major (mm. 1-2), and ending the same way (mm. 20-22), but with the intervening material primarily in a C major tonal space (mm. 3-19). Harmonic syntax retains many aspects of traditional progressions, but also features modal/plagal relationships, unexpected resolutions and inflections, parallel sequences, and a proclivity for using the flatted supertonic as a dominant coloration. In Prelude 20 in C minor, the chromatic saturation is held together by low bass pedals while the left hand travels in chromatic parallel motion through a series of major and minor sevenths. Some sections include dissonant polytonality, as in Prelude 23 in F Major in which the right hand plays in F major and left in C# minor (fig. 5.22). As compared to polytonal sections in Zhelobinsky’s music, Goltz retains unity by consistent figuration and thematic relationships, and the colorful
harmonic moments have a clear function within the overall structure of the piece. Goltz’s non-tonal vocabulary includes whole-tone and modal scales, which include standard lydian, mixolydian, dorian, etc., as well as one instance of a more unusual series containing the notes C♯-D-E-F-G-A♯-B, and appearing in the middle section of Prelude 10 in C-sharp minor. While

18 It would be of interest to know if this scale has any relation to the six maqams, which are traditional Uzbekistani modes. They descend from Persian musical theory and developed in the late sixteenth century as the highest form of art music in Uzbek and Tajik culture (Richard Nidel, *World Music: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 210ff.). After the establishment of the Uzbekistan Composers’s Union (1939) Soviet ideology would attempt a complex cultural/political “reassessment” of the maqams and attempt to assimilate them into Marxist/Stalinist theory (David MacFadyen, *Russian Culture in Uzbekistan: One Language in the Middle of Nowhere* [New York: Routledge, 2006], 45).
standard voice-leading rules justify some of Goltz’s dissonant contrapuntal passages, he often uses chromatic countermelodies linearly for the purpose of color. In *Prelude 16 in B-flat minor* the reprise of the opening theme at the close of the piece includes a chromatic countermelody that moves inexorably and unapologetically from E to D♭, in the process creating an extreme clash of minor seconds on the fourth beat (fig 5.23).

Stylistically, Goltz’s *Preludes* stand out for their use of traditional contrapuntal procedures and reappropriation of nineteenth-century prelude idioms, but imbued with the composer’s modern musical language. A possible reason for these traditional influences is the fact that Goltz wrote his *Preludes* while in his second year at the Conservatory. Even the relatively liberal Leningrad Conservatory could not help but be a bastion of conservatism in terms of regular curriculum. Students undoubtedly became thoroughly competent in traditional practices of form and counterpoint. Also, the political and aesthetic pressures of Socialist realism had undoubtedly gained in influence by 1935. By the late 1940s, the governmental mandate that composers create intelligible music for the masses meant that officially sanctioned musical style resembled the nineteenth-century sounds exemplified by the *kuchka*, and employed the same compositional vocabulary.¹⁹

Goltz’s lean textures make use of steady motion and the interplay of separate lines in order to move through his complex harmonic language. In the middle portion of *Prelude 1 in C Major* Goltz transitions from a homophonic texture with a simple, left hand accompaniment to a polyphonic section featuring melodic sequencing (of the above mentioned intermovemental motive) between two voices, while an inner voice punctuates the transition to the next measure

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¹⁹ Taruskin *Defining Russia*, 94.
There are other instances in which contrapuntal elaboration gives variety and interest to Goltz’s textures.

Contrapuntal devices such as augmentation and diminution show Goltz’s understanding of thematic possibilities and sensitivity to cohesion and variation in small-scale forms. Prelude 7 in A Major begins with a five-note theme, which appears four times in the A section. After a more lyrical B section, which nevertheless contains many thematic relations to earlier material, the recapitulation involves two statements of the theme in double augmentation, and the piece concludes in a final statement in quadruple augmentation. Prelude 24 in D minor makes varied use of a four-note motif, appearing first in dotted rhythms. At the ff return of the theme after a central development section, the right hand plays it in octaves with an escape tone E while the middle voice of the left hand presents it in augmented quarter notes. The final triplet arpeggios in the right hand (m. 27) are supported by the motif now in half notes, reminiscent of a chorale cantus firmus. Lastly, the concluding, fff chords imbed the theme in eighth notes in the midst of the thick, chordal texture (fig. 5.25).
In terms of generic references in *Op. 2*, Goltz avoids both an overt association with concrete, associative genres (aside from three marches), like Shostakovich, and the modernistic, textural abstraction of Zaderatsky or late Scriabin. Goltz’s *Preludes*, rather, create a dialogue with accepted, pianistic genres by referencing the Romantic character piece tradition. I do not mean to insinuate that Goltz simply copied or aped Romantic composers, but rather that his use of textures, genres, and forms draws comparison to traditional models, which he then made new through his personal utilization of harmonic language and counterpoint.

One of the most pervasive elements in prelude tradition involves the positioning of the climax within a piece. Quite often Western music, especially miniature genres, rise to a climax
somewhere just midway of the piece. Goltz observes this formal convention and therefore extends nineteenth-century practice into the twentieth century, a device made more explicit by the generic references in his textures.

Many of Goltz’s textures have direct ancestors in the preludes of past composers. The harmonic content and non-tonal progressions of Prelude 5 in D Major situate it in the twentieth century, but the melodic contour, harmonic rhythm, and contrapuntal figuration are reminiscent of Chopin (fig. 5.26). Both pieces order their phrases in groups of four measures, and repeat the opening phrases of their melodies, Chopin three times, Goltz twice. In homophonic music of the nineteenth century, accompaniment figures took on a variety of standard forms. In Goltz’s music we find textural similarities in Prelude 3 in G Major with Heller’s Prelude 10 in C-sharp minor; Prelude 4 in E minor and 10 in C-sharp minor (middle section) with Chopin’s Prelude 4 in E minor; Prelude 20 in C minor with Glière’s Prelude 17 in A-flat Major; Prelude 12 in G-sharp

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20 Very often the climax can occur at the Golden Ratio, or around 68.1% through a piece. Whether or not composers have this mathematical ratio in mind when composing, many compositions display an overt concern with the proper, proportional positioning of the climax, (Kendall Briggs, The Language and Materials of Music, Volume 1 (New York, Highland Heritage Press, 2008), 71ff.)
minor with Blumenfeld’s Prelude 12 in G-sharp minor; and Prelude 8 in F-sharp minor with Cui’s Prelude 16 in F minor.

According to Frid, Goltz attached programmatic associations to many of his Preludes and personally revealed his inspirations to close friends. As a lover of nature, Goltz associated the atmospheric grace-notes of Prelude 14 in E-flat minor with the whimsical motion of snow flurries, and the middle section of Prelude 23 in F Major with a massive field of wheat waving in a gale. Interestingly, Goltz’s Prelude 19 in E-flat Major suggested to the composer sounds echoing in an alpine, Swiss valley. Whether or not nature inspired the music or vise versa, the composer’s naturalistic inspiration places him within the musical traditions of Romanticism and impressionism, especially compared to Debussy’s picturesque Le vent dans la plaine (“The wind in the plain”), Brouillards (“Mists”), and Bruyères (“Wheat”). However, as the field of Goltz study is in its infancy, it is as yet unknown how much reliability can be placed upon Frid’s document, since it was published almost two decades after the composers death, and filled with flowery, intonazia-driven analyses of Goltz’s sets with political, socialist realist overtones.

In conclusion, Goltz’s Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 2 shows an important turning point in Soviet piano writing, and especially future preludes sets by Soviet composers. By expressing the modernistic linear style within the context of traditional textures and forms, Goltz arrives at a balance between innovation and tradition. This twenty-two year old composer managed to find a personal and contemporary, but relatable and associative, musical style. It is perhaps futile, but understandable, to speculate how Goltz would have fared had he survived the Second World War

21 Frid, 4.

22 It would be interesting to know whether or not Goltz ever personally traveled to the Alps. As a full-time Conservatory student working on a double degree, in the context of the insular USSR, it would seem unlikely, making the nickname of this prelude particularly imaginative.
and continued to develop as a composer under the anti-formalist campaigns of the late 1940s. Given the personal and developed characteristics of this early composition (Eusebius and Florestan both exclaim with wonder, “An Opus two!”), one of the only extant examples of his compositional creativity, Goltz had an amazing talent. Even as his piece fell into obscurity, it gives testimony to the codification of the style, scope, and ideology of Soviet prelude sets, and the beginning to a mode of composition that in many ways continues to the present day.
Chapter Six
Conclusion

The vast range of topics discussed in this document have aimed at bringing to light neglected areas of study that deserve concerted, academic research. In the first place, the complexity of the prelude genre and its multiple manifestations over time requires that studies of these pieces should take those challenges into account. Additionally, the associative and quotational aspects of the prelude set make a knowledge of its historical interpretations and reinterpretations imperative to form a clear understanding of later forays. It could be said that as a genre, the prelude set involves a certain self-consciousness of past models that exceeds that of other compositional forms, and composers must come to grips with the influence of those models as they recast the historic form in new ways.

Such a task was very important to Soviet composers as they attempted to create a new society with new art forms. As control over these forms increased in the 1930s, Soviet composers, for a variety of reasons, turned to prelude sets and revealed the multiple ways in which this small genre expressed life in the Soviet Union. For Shostakovich, the prelude set initiated his style of lyrical irony and rhythmic buffoonery, but it also shows a composer attempting to remake an understanding of reality through the disruption of expectations. For Zaderatsky, the prelude set became the pariah’s attempt to enter back into society, but he ended up creating his own, miniature world, filled with abstract, harsh, juxtapositions. In the prelude set of Zhelobinsky, we see the music of a popular composer, an improviser of kuchkist vein, playing to the crowd and to the Kremlin. Lastly, Goltz shows us a young composer eager to hone his
craft and enter into conversation with traditions of the past. His would be the stylistic conservativism that would endure throughout the Soviet era.

Of the many loose strings left at the end of this project, some of the more pressing involve both the holistic and the specific. In terms of a holistic direction, research on the prelude set and its composers requires study over a vast area of time and involving people of many nationalities, styles, concepts, and inspirations. Once this has begun and a greater understanding of the genre’s place in history has been attained, close, specific study of individual prelude sets and their constituent parts should be undertaken. Not only would this enrich the world through the elucidation of forgotten people and their interaction with one of music’s most famous genres, but would make their music available for performers and audience members for the appreciation of our shared past and the enjoyment of worthwhile music.
Table 2. Shostakovich - 24 Preludes, Op. 34.

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Selective Discography

Shostakovich


Clarke, Raymond. *Shostakovich: Sonatas 1 and 2, Prelude and Fugue in D minor, 24 Preludes.*


Zaderatsky


Zhelobinsky

No recordings made.

Goltz

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