

SHOSTAKOVICH AS INTERPRETER OF HIS OWN MUSIC: A STUDY OF
RECORDED PERFORMANCES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate Shostakovich's performances of his own music on the basis of recorded material. Not only was Dmitri Shostakovich a great composer of the twentieth century, but also a great performer of his own music. He left behind the following recordings of his own works:

Op.5, Three Fantastic Dances, recorded twice;

Op.22, Polka;

Op.34, Ten Piano Preludes out of twenty-four:

Nos 8, 14-19, 22-24 were recorded solo in 1947.

Nos 10, 15, 16 and 24 are arrangements for violin and piano by D. Tsyganov and were recorded in 1956;

Op.35, Piano Concerto No 1, recorded twice;

Op.40, Sonata for Cello and Piano, recorded twice;

Op.57, Piano Quintet;

Op.67, Second Trio, recorded twice;

Op.69, Children's Notebook;

Op.79, song cycle From Jewish Folk Poetry;

Op.87, Seventeen Preludes and Fugues out of twenty-four:

Nos 1-8, 12-14, 16, 18, 20, 22-24. Nos 1, 4-6, 14 and 23 were recorded twice;

Op.93, Symphony No 10, recorded twice;

Op.94, Concertino for Two Pianos;

Op.102, Piano Concerto No 2, recorded twice;

Op.134, Sonata for Violin and Piano.

The research method and procedure employed in this

study is the utilization of all of Shostakovich's available recordings as primary sources for analysis. A comparison between his performances and his scores shows that there are ninety examples which contain different notes, changes of ties, the repetition of long notes, the spreading of chords, cuts and the alteration of ornaments. In one instance a different version of the piece occurs ("Birthday", Op.69, No 7).

The comparison between 229 examples of the speeds in his recorded performances with the tempos indicated in their respective scores shows that forty percent (40%) of the tempos are identical, forty-five percent (45%) are slower, and fifteen percent (15%) are faster.

Shostakovich's dynamic signs are of great precision and generally adequately express his dynamic ideas.

His articulation signs remain an approximation of his performance articulation art, although they are accurate within the framework of conventional symbols.

Shostakovich's damper pedal indications are of great expressiveness. When no pedal indications are present in his scores the only reliable guide is to be found in his own recordings.

The differences between Shostakovich's scores and his recordings, especially with regard to the different notes and tempos, provide important material for editorial comments and/or "ossia" markings.

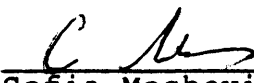
The differences analysed in this study are not found in any published editions. The only attempt which has been made to utilize Shostakovich's own recordings occurs

in Volumes 12 and 13 of the Soviet Collected Works Edition. These Volumes make use of the Soviet recordings of his Piano Concertos. Unfortunately the use of Shostakovich's own recordings is unscholarly in these Volumes, as the editors fail to use the French recordings of these Concertos and have inserted some of the played variants without the use of "ossia" markings directly into the scores.

Shostakovich's recordings of his own works constitute an invaluable source for understanding his performance style and for the editing and interpreting of his music. They are an indispensable portion of his musical heritage and as such should be acknowledged and used in all published editions.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

 Sofia Mosheevich
Sofia Moshevich

19 day of August, 1987

My children Avital and Jonathan

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Performances by composers of their own works occupy a special place among the vast number of recordings made since the invention of the phonograph. They are unique historical documents of great scholarly and artistic value. The importance of a study of such performances will be clearer in the light of these general aesthetic considerations:

- I. A composer-performer is the first and most valuable interpreter of his works. Being the creator of the piece, he does not "reproduce" it in the performance, but rather re-creates it and gives the most complete and clear picture of his own conception of the piece. This provides the clue to understanding the composers own performance style.
- II. The comparison of a composer's performance with the authorized text is necessary since only in this way can we see how direct the link is between the composer's idea and his notation of it; which of the performance indications in the score are of major importance, and which are merely suggestions that may be varied by the performer.
- III. In comparing the recorded performances of the composer made at different periods of his life, and

in particular those which are chronologically distant from the time of composition, we can witness the dynamics of change in the composer's approach to a certain work. This process of change may be taken as an authentic indication of possible changes for the performer and as an important factor for musicological analysis. The results of analyses of such performances provide us with a new interpretation of the musical works and in certain cases may even lead to "ossia" markings being inserted into the published scores.

- IV. The recordings of a composer's performances must be used as primary material for musicological research.¹ These recordings provide us with a unique opportunity to study authentic performances, in particular those of twentieth-century composers. They help us to understand more fully the composer-performer relationship of our time.
- V. Dmitri Shostakovich is one of the most important twentieth-century composer-pianists whose recordings are available today. While his music is universally recognized, his significance as a performer is not

1 See: László Somfai, the well-known authority on Béla Bartók studies, who expresses the same viewpoint about Bartók's own performances in his article "Manuscript versus Urtext: The Primary Sources of Bartók's Works," Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, 23 (1981), 52-54.

as commonly appreciated. The main reasons for this are the following:

- (a) Shostakovich, unlike Rakhmaninov or Prokofiev, did not tour extensively overseas as a pianist. His participation in the First International Chopin Competition (Warsaw, 1927); his tour to Turkey (1935) and performances in France (1958) certainly were not sufficient to establish his reputation as a world famous pianist-virtuoso.
- (b) His fame as a composer has surpassed his pianistic achievements. The fact that he publicly performed only his own compositions from 1933 (with rare exceptions) enhanced his reputation as a composer-pianist and tended to obscure the fact that he was also a brilliant pianist.
- (c) His performances of his own music, which he began to record on disc in 1947, appeared in the West sporadically and started to gain appreciation only after the composer's death.²
- (d) His illness which affected his right hand curtailed his appearances as a soloist from 1958. But for this affliction of the right hand we would probably have been left with

² See: Robert Dearling, folder notes to the record set Shostakovitch plays Shostakovitch, RLS 721 EMI Records (London, 1976).

many more recordings of the composer playing his own works.

The present study is the first investigative attempt to evaluate Shostakovich's performances of his own music on the basis of recorded material. This research is highly important because it leads to the greater understanding of Shostakovich's music and performance style. It is also of scientific interest as a "case study" for the more general problem of composers' performances of their own music.

1.2 Sources and Materials

The main source of the study is Shostakovich's own recordings of his music. The composer's letters, memoirs and accounts by his contemporaries and other bibliographical material have likewise been used. Various editions of his work have also been utilised and wherever possible reproductions of his autographs.

1.2.1 Recordings

There are numerous officially published recordings of Shostakovich's performances of his own works, namely the following: Three Fantastic Dances, Op.5; Polka, Op.22a; Ten Piano Preludes, Op.34; both Piano Concertos, Op.35 and Op.102; Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op.40; Quintet, Op.57; Second Trio, Op.67; Children's Notebook, Op.69; song cycle From Jewish Folk Poetry, Op.79; Seventeen (of

the twenty four) Preludes and Fugues, Op.87; Tenth Symphony, Op.93; Concertino for Two Pianos, Op.94; Four Preludes for Violin and Piano (arranged by D. Tsyganov) Op.34, Nos 10, 15, 16 and 24; and the Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op.134.

The Three Fantastic Dances; the two Piano Concertos; the Sonata for Cello and Piano; the Second Trio; the Preludes and Fugues Op.87, Nos 1, 4, 5, 6, 14 and 23; and the Tenth Symphony were recorded twice on different occasions.

A comprehensive listing is given in Appendix "A", of Shostakovich's recordings of his own works under the heading "List of Shostakovich's Recordings of His Own Works" which is referred to as the List for ease of reference and which comprises all the abovementioned records. The pieces in the List are organized in chronological order according to the date of composition. For the readers convenience the first column of the List headed "Index No" refers to the title of the composition, the opus number, the date of the composition, the record label and the relevant date of the recording. For example, Index No 1 means: Three Fantastic Dances, Opus 5, composed in 1922, released under the label USSR M10-39075 and recorded in 1947. Wherever two index numbers are given and one is in parenthesis, then the bracketed number indicates a duplication of the particular work: e.g., Nos 17, (18).

In the aforesaid List the record labels have been given

only of such records as are in the writer's collection. Most of these recordings are duplicated in various editions.³ The numbers of the works supplied in the List under the heading "Composition" are sometimes repeated because they contain numerical differences.

Most of these discs were collected by the present writer over a period of more than ten years from the Soviet Union, Israel, the United States, England and Germany.⁴

This collection comprises the latest Soviet set of Shostakovich's records Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist (I), (II) and (III) published by the firm Melodiya. The first edition consists of a four-disc set (1977), and includes Piano Concerto No 1 (conducted by Samosud),⁵ Piano Concerto

3 The best sources of information concerning the labels of the records are (i) Francis F. Clough and C.J. Cuming, The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music, 1925-1950 including the First Supplement, 1950-1951 (London, revised edition 1966), pp. 558-559 and 836. Second Supplement, 1951-1952 (London, 1953), pp. 204-205. Third Supplement, 1953-1955 (London, 1969), pp. 425-427. (ii) Krzysztof Meyer, Szostakowicz, the section entitled "Dyskografia" which was compiled by Jan Weber (Krakow, 1973), pp. 194-226. (iii) The most recent source about Shostakovich's records is: Derek C. Hulme, Dmitri Shostakovich, Catalogue, Bibliography and Discography (Maidstone, 1982). This catalogue, however, omits to mention on pages 14-15, under the title "The Composer on Records", Shostakovich's recordings of the Piano Preludes Op.34, Nos 22 and 23 as well as the Piano Prelude and Fugue Op.87, No 12. None-the-less, the Prelude Op.34, No 22 is mentioned on page 100 of the same source.

4 Only four discs, which have been marked by an asterisk in the List are not available in this collection.

5 Index No 7.

No 2 (conducted by Gauk),⁶ Concertino for Two Pianos,⁷ Children's Notebook,⁸ Three Fantastic Dances,⁹ Polka, Op.22a,¹⁰ Seven Piano Preludes Op.34,¹¹ Nos 14, 15, 24, 8, 17, 18 and 19, Second Trio (with Oistrakh and Sadlo),¹² Quintet (with the Beethoven Quartet: Tsyganov, V. Shirinsky, Borisovsky and S. Shirinsky),¹³ Four Preludes for Violin and Piano, Op.34 (with Kogan)¹⁴ and Symphony No 10 (piano arrangement for four hands, performed with Weinberg).¹⁵

A subsequent single-disc edition of the Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist (II) set contains eight Preludes and

6 Index No 25.

7 Index No 23.

8 Index No 14.

9 Index No 1.

10 Index No 3.

11 Index No 4. The description of the contents on the record label (M10-39075) and the booklet supplied for the set indicate that there are eight Preludes contained on the disc, including No 16 in B flat minor. For unknown reasons, this particular Prelude was not included, and the number of Preludes is therefore only seven and not eight as stated by the publishers. The List mentions the identical compositions under different record labels to highlight the omissions: See Index No 4a.

12 Index No 12.

13 Index No 11.

14 Index No 27.

15 Index No 21.

Fugues of Op.87 recorded in 1957,¹⁶ namely Nos 1, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 18 and 23. (The first recording of part of this opus was made in 1952 and published in the Soviet Union. It included the Preludes and Fugues Nos 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 16, 20, 23 and 24.)¹⁷

The third issue of the Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist (III) set consists of a single disc and has several unique attributes. Two rare recordings are contained on the disc. The first is Shostakovich's earliest published recording (1946) of his Cello Sonata with Soviet cellist, Shafran and, the second is his Violin Sonata played almost "at sight" with David Oistrakh.¹⁸ This recording was made in Shostakovich's home and was presented to Melodiya by D. Oistrakh from his private collection. It is a unique recording not only in that it was the last (1968) of Shostakovich's recordings, but also because it reveals the composer's surprising adaptability in coping with the impairment to his right hand through illness in his performance of the difficult piano part.

Although the present writer endeavoured in most cases to obtain Soviet editions of the composer's own performances, the condition of the discs themselves did not always assist the investigations, and in these instances

16 Index No 20. Here the record jacket erroneously reads "Four Preludes and Fugues" instead of eight as recorded on the disc.

17 Index Nos 16 and 17.

18 Index No 28.

the duplicate versions of these recordings published by Western firms were referred to. For example, the EMI records edition was used for the cycle From Jewish Folk Poetry¹⁹ and the Cello Sonata, played with Rostropovich.²⁰

Moreover, a number of Shostakovich's recordings were available only in non-Soviet editions. This is the position concerning his recordings of both of his Piano Concertos, conducted by Cluytens²¹ and the Three Fantastic Dances which were recorded in France.²² The Tenth Symphony, conducted by Shostakovich himself is, to the best of the present writer's knowledge, available only under the Colosseum label, CRLP 173.²³

Some of his Preludes and Fugues from Op.87, recorded in the USSR, have not been published there, but have been published by the Concert Hall Society, CHS 1354²⁴ (Nos 4, 12 and 14 which were recorded in 1952) and Seraphim, 60024²⁵ (Nos 8 and 22, recorded in 1952).

These recordings were probably produced from tapes, or

19 Index No 15.

20 Index No 10.

21 Index Nos 8 and 26.

22 Index No 2.

23 Index No 22.

24 Index No 18.

25 Index No 19.

from acetate discs, or matrixes received from the USSR.²⁶

The most difficult problem encountered, concerning most of these records, was to ascertain the dates of their actual recordings. Encyclopaedias of recordings as well as Weber's discography give no information about this aspect and, at best, only give the dates of the issue of the recordings. Hulme's catalogue is more helpful in this respect, but also contains imprecisions.

The present writer received the dates of the recordings made in the USSR from a private individual working for the firm Melodiya²⁷ who obtained them from the archives of "Wsesoyuzny Dom Zvukozapisi" (The All-Union Recordings House) in Moscow. These dates were then compared with the dates given on the labels of the Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist (I), (II) and (III) sets, and where they coincided they were added to the dates on the abovementioned List. Where the dates differed, the most probable date was given after consultation with all the available bibliographical sources and this was followed by a question mark - to highlight that these dates were merely the most probable dates.

26 This information can be found in the article "O sovetskoi plastinke," (About Soviet Records) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 1 (January, 1956), 147, in Russian, my translation.

27 Regrettably, I am unable to name this person who assisted me so much and to whom I am most grateful lest there be any untoward job repercussions for this person. The information supplied is referred to in the Bibliography under the title "Letter from Archives".

The Concert Hall Society and Seraphim records of opus 87 were published from Soviet material which, in all probability, date to the recording of 1952.

As stated above in all cases of uncertainty the question mark has been added, for ease of reference.

1.2.2 Scores

Throughout this thesis numerous published scores of Shostakovich have been utilized. The scores utilized fall into two categories, namely:

- (i) Those contained in Appendix "B" and which are utilized for comparison purposes with Shostakovich's recorded performances. See: the List entitled "List of Scores Utilized for Comparison with Shostakovich's Recorded Performances", Appendix "B".
- (ii) Those contained in the Bibliography and which are utilized for analyses throughout this thesis. See: the Bibliography at the end of this thesis, under the title "Scores".

The new Soviet Edition of Shostakovich's Collected Works,²⁸ comprising thirty published volumes to date, has been especially beneficial. The reproductions of the autograph pages at the beginning of each volume are of

28 Dmitri Shostakovich, Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes. Moscow: State Publishers "Music", 1980-1985.

particular interest and help.

Prior to the existence of the abovementioned edition it was difficult to obtain the necessary scores. For this reason various editions - Soviet, English, American, German and Austrian have been used including those in the writer's private collection; those which were available in the libraries of the Bar-Ilan, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem Universities of Israel; the University of the Witwatersrand; and the Johannesburg Public Library of South Africa. The Johannesburg Public Library has, for example, the rare score of the first edition (1935) of Shostakovich's Cello Sonata, Op.40.²⁹ It was exciting for the present writer, who is a Moscow graduate, to chance upon this invaluable discovery in South Africa.

1.2.3 Books, Articles and Published Correspondence

All available material in English, Russian and other sources has been utilised for the purpose of researching the topic under consideration. The Russian books, articles and published correspondence have been invaluable, although the English encyclopaedias and catalogues have been especially enlightening. The various sources are listed in the bibliography.

29 D. Shostakovich, Op.40, Sonata for Cello and Piano (Leningrad: "Triton" Edition, 1935). Hulme's Catalogue erroneously states on page 77 that the editor of this edition is Grigori Piatigorsky. Piatigorsky emigrated from the Soviet Union in 1921. This edition is unique in that it is the only edition of Shostakovich's own editing.

Due to the fact that Shostakovich's performances prior to 1946 had not been recorded or released on disc, the memoirs and accounts of his contemporaries and the critical reviews of his performances are of special interest. Most of this information can be found in Russian sources such as issues of the Sovetskaya Muzyka journal of those years and in articles/memoirs by such musicians as V. Bogdanov-Berezovsky, J. Schwarz, G. Kogan and others who had heard his early performances (see details in the Bibliography). Despite the difficulty in obtaining material from the Soviet Union the writer managed to do so and has considered it to be of the utmost importance to translate many of the Russian quotations directly into English, as has been done in the chapter "Shostakovich: the Pianist". Although these accounts cannot take the place of actual performances, they constitute an important source which helps to create the true picture of Shostakovich as a pianist in his early years. For this reason the writer has decided to preserve the recollections of his contemporaries in their original form.

A further reason for furnishing detailed information about Shostakovich's piano teachers and their views is to highlight the principles behind the famous Russian pianistic tradition. In addition, as a piano teacher and performer it is important to the present writer to trace step by step the delicate teaching process that was

adopted by his piano teachers and which contributed towards the development of his genius. The most informative sources in this regard are Shostakovich's own memoirs and S. Khentova's books (see the Bibliography).

Quotations from the memoirs of the musicians who worked closely with the composer, such as D. Tsyganov, Y. Mravinsky and K. Kondrashin have also been used.

Some of Shostakovich's published letters to L. Nikolaev, S. Shostakovich, K. Karaev and others have also been given as important background information.

Because Shostakovich's biography as a pianist is not well known in the West, the material selected from different sources and contained in this thesis will contribute to a fuller biography of Shostakovich.

1.3 Method of the Study

All of Shostakovich's available recorded performances in the writer's collection were compared with the scores of the respective pieces. (See Appendix "B": "List of Scores Utilized for Comparison with Shostakovich's Recorded Performances".) It became clear from careful listening to the pieces that Shostakovich often changed notes, ties and the performance directions indicated in the score, during the course of performance. However, in other recordings of his pieces his interpretations were remarkably faithful to the notation and all the performance indications.

Of particular interest were pieces which were recorded twice by the composer in different years. These recordings would either confirm the alteration that had taken place, or would show that the deviation from the score was simply a spontaneous performance happening.

Three particular situations arise:

Firstly: Where two recordings of different dates contain the identical alteration/s which differ from the score. This is a strong indication that the composer intended to vary the work in this regard.

Secondly: Where only one of the two recordings of different dates contain alteration/s which differ from the score. This may or may not be an indication that the composer intended to vary the work in this regard.

Thirdly: Where only one recording exists which contains alteration/s. Then it is impossible to say whether or not the composer intended to vary the work or whether it is merely a spontaneous performance variation.

For the purposes of this thesis no special devices were used in the analysis of these recordings apart from the writer's ears, a stop-watch and a Mälzel metronome. Although much more advanced metronome devices exist, preference was given to the Mälzel metronome because the composer used one himself and expressed the speed in his pieces by MM indications.

In several cases comparisons were made between Shostakovich's performances of his own works and interpretations of the same works by other musicians which usually showed a great difference of approach.

1.4 Organization of this Study

- (a) Chapter 1 is an introduction;
- (b) Chapter 2 deals with biographical background information concerning Shostakovich's life as a performer, entitled "Shostakovich: the Pianist";
- (c) Chapters 3-9 contain the most important results of the analysis of Shostakovich's recorded performances and are organized according to such aspects as:
Different Textual Versions in Shostakovich's Scores and Recordings (Chapter 3), Tempo in Shostakovich's Scores (Chapter 4), Tempo in Shostakovich's Performances (Chapter 5), Dynamics in Shostakovich's Scores and Recordings (Chapter 6), Articulation in Shostakovich's Scores and Recordings (Chapter 7), Shostakovich's Use of Pedal in His Scores (Chapter 8), Shostakovich's Use of Pedal in His Own Recordings (Chapter 9).
- (d) A final chapter (Chapter 10), "Idea - Notation - Realization", which consists of a summary of the preceding research.

Separate chapters have been used for Chapters 4 and 5, which deal with Shostakovich's tempo, and Chapters 8

and 9, which deal with Shostakovich's pedal. This has been done because of the amount of material involved and for the sake of convenience.

Each chapter incorporates the relevant examples, tables, and brief conclusions. Chapters 1-5 have appendices "A" to "G", which appear after Chapter 10.

Throughout this thesis reference is made to the composer's works in abbreviated form such as is shown in the following examples:

- (1) Tenth Symphony, Op.93/2/1-10
- (2) Song cycle, Op.79/11/1-2, 30-32
- (3) Piano Prelude, Op.34/24/37.

A Table is set out below which explains how the aforementioned abbreviations work.

Table I. Abbreviations of the Titles

Title	Opus No	Movement of Symphony, Sonata or ensemble composition or No in cycle of pieces or songs	Bar No
1. Tenth Symphony	Op.93/	2/	1-10
2. Song Cycle	Op.79/	11/	1-2, 30-32
3. Piano Prelude	Op.34/	24/	37

Performance differences which vary from the score, and which are inserted by the present writer according to Shostakovich's own performances are marked with square frames (|□|). Square frames are also placed over the

relevant portion of the published version to facilitate ease of reference.

For the sake of brevity Shostakovich's name is not repeated in the examples given throughout this thesis where reference is made to his own compositions. Reference to other music contains a full description of the work.

1.5 Purposes of the Study

- I. To ascertain the level of correspondence or lack thereof between Shostakovich's performances and his written scores.
- II. To discover characteristics peculiar to Shostakovich's performance style from his recordings of his own music and his scores.
- III. To provide new material for the better understanding, editing and interpretation of Shostakovich's music.

CHAPTER TWO

SHOSTAKOVICH: THE PIANIST

2.1 The Years of Study

Shostakovich, in an article entitled "Thoughts on Travelled Paths" described his first childhood musical impressions as follows:

I grew up in a musical family. My mother, Sofia Vasilyevna, studied for some years in the Conservatoire and was a good pianist. My father, Dmitri Boleslavovich, loved music deeply and sang well. Among the friends and acquaintances of our family were many amateur musicians who gladly took part in our music-making at home. I vividly remember the sounds of music from the neighbour's flat, where an engineer lived, an excellent cellist and a passionate lover of chamber music. He would have friends round regularly to play quartets and trios by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Borodin and Tchaikovsky. To be able to hear their playing better, I used to hide in the passage and sit there for hours. Our family also held amateur musical evenings. All this was deeply imprinted on my musical memory and played an important role in forming my creative consciousness. ¹

Shostakovich's mother, who was "a wonderful teacher for early beginners"² started teaching Mitia (Dmitri Shostakovich) piano when he was nine years old, in the summer of 1915, and from then onwards the boy began to

1 Dmitri Shostakovich, "Dumy o proidennom puti," (Thoughts on Travelled Paths) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 9 (September, 1956), 9, in Russian, my translation.

In my translations I have kept as closely as possible to the original meaning in the text. Where I have made use of other translations, I have indicated such.

2 Ibid.

compose his own music. Shostakovich wrote in his autobiography (1917):

My musical abilities began to show themselves when I was nine. Before then I had neither the desire nor the inclination to study music. It all started from the following event. I liked a piece by the composer Streabog, "Galop," which I had heard played for 6 hands by my sister with her friends. I asked Mother to teach me just to play the 1st and 2nd hands. She did. Then without knowing the notes, I learned to play another 2 - 3 pieces of the same Streabog. Since I was grasping everything with ease, Mother decided to teach me the notes. Because it came to me quickly, and, in addition, I proved to have perfect pitch, Mother decided to send me to the music school of I.A. Glyasser starting from the autumn. 4

Ignati Albertovich Glyasser (1850-1925) was a colourful figure at that time in children's musical education in Petersburg. Born in Poland, a close friend of I. Paderewsky, he studied in Germany under Teodor Kullak, Karl Klindworth and, probably, also Hans von Bulow.⁵

Glyasser wrote a number of books on the methodology

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- 3 The pseudonym Straebbog has been misspelt here. Streabbog - alias Jean Louis Gobbaerts (1835-1886) - was a Belgian pianist and composer who wrote over 200 piano pieces as well as a piano manual. See in Sofia Khentova, Shostakovich, zhizn i tvorchestvo. Tom 1 (Shostakovich: Life and Work. Book 1) (Leningrad, 1985), p.69, footnote, in Russian, my translation. Also in the International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, Tenth Edition (London, 1975), p.838.
 - 4 Quoted in Victor Delson, "Molodoi Shostakovich," (Young Shostakovich) Voprosy muzykalno-ispolnitelskogo iskusstva. Sbornik statei No 5. (Moscow, 1969), p.194, in Russian, my translation.
 - 5 Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha Kniga pervaya (The Young Years of Shostakovich. Book 1) (Leningrad and Moscow, 1975), pp.74-77, in Russian.

of piano technique, including "Rhythmic Repetitions"⁶ and "Trills as a Foundation for Piano Technique"⁷ and was greatly successful in developing strong basic finger techniques in his students. In his school, the children also studied solfege, elements of music analysis and history of music. In the first six months of his first year, Shostakovich studied with Glyasser's wife, Olga Fyodorovna, and made remarkably rapid progress:

I remember, that at one of the exams I played almost half of the pieces from Tchaikovsky's "Children's Album". The following year (1916) I was promoted to I.A. Glyasser's class.... In his class I played sonatas by Mozart, Haydn and during the next year Fugues by Bach. ⁸

In 1917 Shostakovich, who was eleven and who had studied music for only two years, played all the Preludes and Fugues of the Well-Tempered Clavier by Bach - a clear indication of his extraordinary talent.

A concert programme which mentions Shostakovich's performance on 26 April, 1918, of Beethoven's Sonata, Op.10, No 2, in C Minor, has been preserved.⁹

During these years Shostakovich frequently visited

6 Edition of Glyasser's Music Courses, Petrograd, 1917, in Russian. My translation of the title.

7 Published in Petrograd, 1917, in Russian. My translation of the title.

8 Dmitri Shostakovich, "Avtobiografia, 1927," (Autobiography, 1927) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 9 (September, 1966), 24, in Russian, my translation.

9 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.79.

the family of a famous Russian artist Boris Mikhailovich Kustodiev (1878-1927) whose daughter remembered:

Once in 1918, coming home, I said "There is a boy, Mitia, in our school, who plays Grieg and Chopin very well. Can I bring him to play for Father?" And after lessons I invited this boy. There is Mitia Shostakovich, small, with a shock of hair, giving my father the list of his repertoire and sitting down to play. The success of it exceeded all expectations, the boy captured my father's heart. This day became the beginning of the deep and precious friendship of our family and the Shostakoviches. 10

For the young Shostakovich this friendship was tremendously important. Kustodiev was terminally ill, crippled and confined to a wheelchair, yet despite this, continued painting works, abundant in life's joy. He was a man whom Shostakovich adored and remembered all his life. Kustodiev recognised in Mitia Shostakovich:

A peculiar sensitivity of emotions and mental constitution, a potential wealth of spirituality, still childish, but in which were hidden the highly promising sprouts of future achievements. 11

10 Ibid, p.82.

11 Valerian Bogdanov-Berezovsky, Vstrechi (Meetings) (Moscow 1967), p.173, in Russian, my translation. Valerian Mikhailovich Bogdanov-Berezovsky (1903-1971) was a classmate of Shostakovich in Steinberg's composition class. The two were close friends in their youth. Bogdanov-Berezovsky was a composer and brilliant musical critic. Their friendship had its "ups" and "downs" in the later years. However, Bogdanov-Berezovsky's reminiscences of Shostakovich, especially of his early years, cannot be rivalled due to his outstanding journalistic gifts, keen memory, and their common background with Shostakovich. The information supplied is from the book V.M. Bogdanov-Berezovsky. Stat'i, vospominaniya, Pis'ma (V.M. Bogdanov-Berezovsky. Articles, Memoirs, Letters) (Leningrad and Moscow, 1978).

Kustodiev drew two portraits of the young Shostakovich: the first artistic impressions of this composer, - and in these portraits his appreciation of the boy's unique gift is felt.

While Shostakovich remembered I.A. Glyasser as "an experienced and serious teacher"¹² I.A. Glyasser did not encourage Shostakovich's efforts in composition. Shostakovich wrote:

I.A. Glyasser's attitude towards my compositions was plainly sceptical and he did not encourage me further in this regard. None-the-less, I continued and composed a great deal then. In February 1917 I got bored studying with Glyasser. Mother then decided to take me and my elder sister for an audition with Professor A.A. Rozanova in the Leningrad Conservatoire with whom she herself had studied years ago. Rozanova accepted to teach both me and my sister. From 1917 to 1919 I studied under Rozanova and by the autumn of 1919 was enrolled in her class in the Conservatoire. Rozanova thought that I should study composition as well as the piano. ¹³

Alexandra Alexandrovna Rozanova (1876-1942), studied under M.A. Balakirev in 1888-1894, and graduated from the Petersburg Conservatoire in 1899 (under S.A. Malozemova). Thereafter she studied in France (probably during the years 1899-1922)¹⁴ with Paul Antonin Vidal (1863-1931) and Blanche Selva (1884-1942). She loved and was well

12 Shostakovich, "Dumy," p.10, in Russian, my translation.

13 Shostakovich, "Avtobiografia," p.24, in Russian, my translation.

14 This information has been found in Aleksandr Rozanov, "Rozanova," Muzykalnaya entsiklopedia, Tom 4 (Encyclopaedia of Music, Vol. 4) (Moscow, 1978), p.686, in Russian.

acquainted with French music and literature. In her class, the young Shostakovich learned a deeper and more poetic appreciation of music than under Glyasser and a great refinement in piano performance.¹⁵

At the same time he was studying composition under M.O. Steinberg (1883-1946) and counterpoint under N.A. Sokolov (1858-1922).¹⁶

In the autumn of 1920 Shostakovich was accepted into the piano classes of Professor Leonid Vladimirovich Nikolaev. This choice of new piano teacher was made independently by the young Shostakovich, as he had done once before when he left Glyasser's school.

15 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.91.

16 Shostakovich later recalled: "M. Steinberg's classes were very interesting. He considered a student's general musical development to be just as important as the academic disciplines and the studies in composition. In his classes we played a lot in four hands and analysed the form and instrumentation of these pieces. Maximilian Oseyvich (Steinberg) explained everything clearly and precisely with regard to harmony, always drawing our attention to those sections in the score which were of harmonic interest, nurtured our harmonic taste, developed our ability to perform any modulation on the piano easily and fluently...

I studied Counterpoint and Fugue under N. Sokolov. He was a superb musician and teacher, but, unlike Steinberg, he often missed classes, although he lived very close to the Conservatoire. To tell the truth, I discovered the answer and outsmarted him by going to his home for the lesson. Due to this I was able to gain a sound knowledge from him.

After Sokolov's death, I completed the course in polyphony with Steinberg, under whom I also studied form and instrumentation. Thus, I can consider myself entirely the protege of this remarkable musician." Dmitri Shostakovich, "Moya Alma Mater," (My Alma Mater) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 12 (December, 1965), 102, in Russian, my translation.

Shostakovich's passionate desire to become a student of Nikolaev's is understandable, and justified, in the light of the latter's bright personality and remarkable talent as a musician and teacher.

Leonid Nikolaev truly deserved his reputation as the most brilliant piano teacher at the Petersburg (Petrograd)¹⁷ Conservatoire in those years. He had graduated from the Moscow Conservatoire in 1900 as a pianist under V.I. Safonov - (his teacher of the Theory of Musical Forms was S.I. Taneyev), and as a composer, in which his greatest ambition lay, in 1902 under M.M. Ippolitov-Ivanov. He received the merit of the Great Gold Medal in both piano performance and composition. (During his musical education, Nikolaev simultaneously successfully studied Law at the Moscow University). After graduating from the Conservatoire he worked as an accompanist, teacher and conductor (from 1906 he conducted in the Bolshoi Theatre, where he was recommended by S. Rakhmaninov). He also composed prolifically, with such compositions as the Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op.11, Suite, Op.13 and Variations, Op.14 for Two Pianos, achieving contemporary success. He also appeared as a piano soloist.

In 1909 Nikolaev was invited by A.K. Glazunov to teach piano at the Petersburg Conservatoire where he

17 In 1914 Petersburg was renamed Petrograd and later in 1924 Leningrad.

became Professor in 1912.¹⁸ Nikolaev's great influence as a teacher on the new generation of Russian pianists is documented in Bogdanov-Berezovsky's memoirs:

Not only was Nikolaev an outstanding piano teacher, but the best in the Petersburg Conservatoire, to whose classes the most advanced students of other teachers aspired. He was a musician-performer with the mentality of a composer, coupled with vast cultural intellect. He trained not only pianist-virtuosos, but, primarily, thinking musicians. He created not a school in the sense of a single, narrow professional direction, but cultivated and raised a wide aesthetic stream in the pianistic sphere. This is shown by the varied and even diametrically opposed creative individuality of his students, - artists who were philosophers, artists who were poets - such as Sofronitsky, Yudina, Shostakovich, German Bik, Kamensky, Razumovskaya, Perelman. ¹⁹

Besides his specific gift of piano teaching, Nikolaev had a great talent for musical analyses. Shostakovich wrote:

Regret must be expressed for the fact, that he, (Nikolaev) S. Taneyev's pupil, did not teach composition as well. I showed him my compositions and always got the most valuable advice and comments from him. ²⁰

18 The information has been given according to the most recent book about Nikolaev: L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i i vospominaniya sovremennikov. Pis'ma (Articles and Memoirs of Contemporaries. Letters) (Leningrad, 1979, pp.6-7, in Russian.

19 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, Dorogi iskusstva, I (Directions of Art. Book 1.) (Leningrad, 1971), p.50, in Russian, my translation. To these names of Nikolaev's prominent students many others could be added: pianist-teachers S. Savshinsky, P. Serebryakov, piano methodologist L. Barenboim and world famous musicologist N. Fischman, to name a few.

20 Shostakovich, "Moya Alma Mater," p.102, in Russian, my translation.

Nikolaev's musical memory and knowledge of musical literature was astonishing. He could easily demonstrate from memory music from different epochs and styles, and always accompanied his students in Piano Concertos playing the orchestral part on the second piano from memory.²¹

The first meeting of the 13 year-old Shostakovich with Nikolaev has been described as follows by one of his classmates:

Dmitri Shostakovich was dressed in a sailor's costume. He played Grieg's Concerto for Leonid Vladimirovich (as always, L.V. accompanied from memory). Then Shostakovich performed his own piano pieces, and Leonid Vladimirovich was immediately convinced, that before him was an astonishing talent.²²

From the same source we read that L.V. Nikolaev's repertoire strategy with Shostakovich combined both wise and careful choice together with a courageous trust in

21 A typical incident reported by a student of Nikolaev's: "Once, awaiting L.V.'s (Nikolaev's) arrival, I was playing, warming up my hands. For some reason the Overture to Bizet's "The Pearl Fishers" sprung to my mind. Suddenly I felt there was someone in the hall. It was L.V. (Nikolaev). He went to the second piano and joined in the performance, catching the music absolutely synchronously, and together we played the Overture until the end. I was thrilled. "How can you remember so much music," I asked, "this Overture is hardly played". "But I can play further" answered L.V., "I know the whole opera." Yevgeni Shenderovich, "V trudnye gody," (In Difficult Years) L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, p.178, in Russian, my translation.

22 Josif Schwarz, "Neskolko sobytii i faktov," (Some Events and Facts) L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, p.122, in Russian, my translation.

his student's abilities in allowing him to perform Beethoven's Sonata, Op.106, when he was only fifteen years of age.

At the beginning (L.V. Nikolaev) paid particular attention to studies of polyphonic works in his lessons with Shostakovich. Also, among the first major compositions which were given to Shostakovich was Schumann's "Faschingschwank".

And a year and a half later, at the concert of Nikolaev's class, in the spring of 1922 in the Small Hall, Shostakovich played "Hammerklavier" by Beethoven. He was 15 years of age. He played really splendidly, with an absolutely amazing grasp of the grandiose concept of the work, with a rhythmic will of steel and with the deepest insight into its lyricism. 23

In these years piano performance and composition were equally important to him: "I practised the piano a lot and learned to sight read fairly fluently."²⁴

Shostakovich played not only his piano repertoire and his own compositions²⁵ but would also perform works by his fellow students who did not play the piano sufficiently well. Bogdanov-Berezovsky recalls how Shostakovich played his (Bogdanov-Berezovsky's) Variations:

23 Ibid.

24 Shostakovich, "Beseda s molodymi kompozitorami," (Conversation with Young Composers) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 10 (October, 1955), 16, in Russian, my translation.

25 Nikolaev taught that "One's own composition should be prepared for performance as thoroughly as somebody else's. Those who think that their own compositions are easier to play are mistaken". Aleksandr Geronimus, "Gody utcheniya u L.V. Nikolaeva," (Years of Study Under L.V. Nikolaev) L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, p.170, in Russian, my translation.

Masterfully - with arresting drive, freshly, sonorously, with an appropriate light detachment, which emphasized the contrast of each of the variations. During the performance Nikolaev and I whispered to one another: "How nicely Mitia is playing!" Yes, superbly!" 26

A. Balanchivadze, now a leading Soviet composer, recalls another occasion of Shostakovich's talent as a sight-reader and performer, some years later (1927).

My early composition - the "Concert March" in E Major - was played by Shostakovich brilliantly from the score in E Flat Major. Then he came up to me and said "I beg your pardon, I did not notice the four sharps." I understood his wit and my mistake with the clarinets in B Flat. However, I was astonished by his phenomenal orientation. In those years I did not yet realise that he could so excellently grasp somebody else's music. 27

During his years at the Conservatoire, Shostakovich's performance style developed and matured. Perhaps the most enlightening appraisal is that of his close friend of those years, V. Bogdanov-Berezovsky who recalls:

It may be said of Shostakovich's piano style of his early years that it was sharply individualistic and original, developing simultaneously and in correlation with the process of maturation of his compositional gifts. 28

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- 26 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, Vstrechi, pp.31-32, in Russian, my translation.
- 27 Andrei Balanchivadze, "D. Shostakovich," Dmitri Shostakovich. Sbornic statei. Sostavitel Givi Ordzhonikidze, (Collection of Articles. Compiled by G. Ordzhonikidze) (Moscow, 1967), p.96, in Russian, my translation.
- 28 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Otrochestvo i yunost," (Adolescence and Youth) D. Shostakovich. Stat'i i materialy. Redactor Grigori Shneerson, (D. Shostakovich, Articles and Materials, compiled and edited by G. Shneerson) (Moscow, 1976), p.144, in Russian, my translation.

Bogdanov-Berezovsky draws attention to features of his performance style such as his perculiar rhythm, sense of form and clarity of articulation.²⁹ Especially important, in his view, was Shostakovich's phrasing which was:

Not only always very definite, but frequently expressive of what lay hidden behind the meagre notational outline - the implicit meaning of the composer's idea.

Certainly, this feature, granted "by nature", was gradually ripening, although it had been potentially present even from the first months of study. It always revealed itself in his music-making at home, particularly when playing for four hands, where Shostakovich always took on the role of "conductor", the leading performer, irrespective of what he played, be it Ravel's "Ma Mère l'Oye", Rakhmaninov's Suite for Two Pianos or symphonies by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Scriabin, et als.

Genre and characterisation were components as evident in his manner and style of performance as they were in his music. His compositions and performances have not so much of a colourful or picturesque quality as a portrait-like, and psychological bias. It is not a decorative pattern or colourful complex which Shostakovich was painting, but a mood. In his performance the philosophic significance, dramatic force, depth of lyricism and merciless accusations of the grotesque... became more and more apparent. Primarily, this was revealed, of course, through his interpretation of his own piano pieces either for solo piano or chamber ensembles. However, in embryo, all the abovementioned qualities were present in his playing in his Conservatoire years, too, when he performed pieces by Schumann, Liszt, Chopin, Liadov and Prokofiev. Also in those years, inherent in his performance was a lyricism, light, at times a shade naive, though always consciously on guard against oversentimentality, dynamically explosive, sharply human, ironic, now and then bordering on caricature. 30

29 Ibid, p.144.

30 Ibid, my translation.

Y. Gershuni's retrospective account of Shostakovich's impromptu conducting of the first movement of Beethoven's First Symphony is as follows:

Shostakovich started off on the conductor's stand, tousled his hair, pulled on the cuffs of his grey... jacket, surveyed the now quiet teenagers with their instruments "ready" and raised his baton... He did not stop the orchestra, did not give any instructions on the performance, but concentrated all his attention on the tempo and dynamics, which he showed clearly in his gestures.... The character given to the first theme, I remember, was, simultaneously, an energetic driving force and lightness, and in the second subject in the bass, an obvious flexibility of soft legato articulation... Such moments... were spontaneous occurrences born from his intuitively subtle grasp of the character of a certain episode... and the players liked it. 31

An important role in the development of Shostakovich's musical taste in both performance and composition was played by the atmosphere of the concert life of Petrograd/Leningrad in those years. He later recalled:

During my years at the Conservatoire I heard as much music as in all the following years put together. I am deeply convinced that this was greatly beneficial to me. 32

We students regularly attended concerts at the Philharmonic Hall and chapel, and plays in the Opera Theatres. We were always present at the rehearsals. Having no money, we perfected the art of sneaking into

31 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, pp.111-112, in Russian, my translation.

32 Shostakovich, "Beseda," p.16, in Russian, my translation.

the halls without paying for our tickets, or making a scene, with proper decorum horrifying the ushers and administrators. But these small "crimes" were compensated by the vast musical knowledge which we gained in this "improper way". 33

We listened to a great deal of good music and played a lot on our own. My fellow students at the Conservatoire loved making music. For the sake of listening to or playing an unfamiliar piece, we would readily walk a good ten kilometers and, on occasions even miss supper. 34

In addition to classic Western and Russian music such as Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty" which was a favourite piece of the young Shostakovich, he could listen to music by Hindemith and Bartok, Křenek and Stravinsky, Berg and Schönberg.³⁵ He saw D. Fried and E. Cooper³⁶ conducting and admired the pianists A. Schnabel and E. Petri.³⁷ Shostakovich was influenced in his early years by the great Russian pianist Maria Yudina, who was also one of Nikolaev's students.

Yudina was my idol during my years of study under Nikolaev. Sometimes I tried, when performing, to imitate her in everything; when she made a ritenuto

33 Shostakovich, "Moya Alma Mater," p.103, in Russian, my translation.

34 Shostakovich, "Dumy," p.10, in Russian, my translation.

35 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.114 and Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life of Dmitri Shostakovich, translated by Graham Hobbs and Charles Midgley (London, 1981), p.24.

36 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.114.

37 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist (Leningrad, 1964), pp.24-25, in Russian.

somewhere it meant, that I, too, in the same place would surely also make it. Much later I realized that I had, probably, taken the wrong direction. I should have copied not selected devices or colours, but have learned something more general, on a larger scale...

Incidentally, it was Yudina, who advised me to learn Beethoven's Op.106, the famous "Hammerklavier". "Why do you all keep playing the "Moonlight" and "Appassionata", she once reproached me, "Take up the "Hammerklavier!" Nikolaev gave his consent; before bringing the piece to the Professor's lesson, I played it several times for Yudina...

I showed her my compositions - the piano ones and others. Maria Veniaminovna (Yudina) treated them kindly. She, in her turn, acquainted me with the piano music by Křenek, Hindemith and Bartók. I liked Křenek's F Sharp - Minor Piano Concerto very much when she performed it; and once or twice, I accompanied her in the second piano part, with pleasure. 38

On February 24, 1922, Shostakovich's father died from pneumonia. He was forty six (1875-1922), and survived by his wife and three children, Maria - nineteen, Dmitri - sixteen, and Zoya - thirteen. Although Shostakovich's mother, Sofia Vasilevna (1878-1955) then a widow of forty-two years, made every effort to support the family by working as a cashier and later as a secretary, the family, nevertheless became financially impoverished.

In addition to the death of his father, Mitia Shostakovich himself developed tuberculosis of the bronchial and lymphatic glands during the beginning of the next year. The Shostakovich's were reduced to

38 Shostakovich, "Memoirs on Yudina," Maria Veniaminovna Yudina, Stat'i, Vospominaniya, Materialy (M.V. Yudina, Articles, Memoirs, Materials) (Moscow, 1978), pp.40-41, in Russian, my translation.

selling even their grand piano, "Diederichs" to help afford Dmitri's treatment which included rest in the Crimea at Gaspra in the summer of 1923, after his operation for the aforesaid condition.³⁹ Shostakovich wrote:

In February 1922 my father died. At that time my family was in a very difficult financial position; on top of that in the beginning of 1923 I developed tuberculosis of the bronchial and lymphatic glands. The doctors considered it necessary to send me to the Crimea for treatment. When I came back from the Crimea, there were debts to be cleared. At the end of 1923 I had to take a job in a cinema. 40

Years later in 1956, the fifty year old Shostakovich described this work as musical accompanist for silent films as "a very exhausting, although, not totally useless job",⁴¹ however in 1926 he wrote that:

...it takes up every evening and the task of mechanically reproducing "human passions" on the piano is very exhausting. My work in the cinema sapped away my time, health and energy. 42

Clearly this job was ruining the boy's health, yet a great many of the cinema goers came just to listen to the

39 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, pp.119-125.

40 Shostakovich, "Avtobiografia," p.25, in Russian, my translation.

41 Shostakovich, "Dumy," p.11, in Russian, my translation.

42 Shostakovich, "Zhizneopisanie," (Curriculum Vitae) Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself and His Times. Compiled by L. Grigoryev and Y. Platek. Translation from Russian by Angus and Neilian Roxburgh (Moscow, 1981), p.10.

young pianist's interesting improvisations.⁴³

In spite of all these obstacles, Shostakovich continued with his studies and Glazunov's comments on his piano examinations of 1922 read as follows:

An outstandingly talented musician with a beautiful technique, developed beyond his age... thoughtful rendition, full of atmosphere. 44

Shostakovich graduated from the Conservatoire as a pianist in 1923.⁴⁵ There were two recitals: the solo recital and the performance of the Piano Concerto. The solo recital included:

Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C Sharp Minor,⁴⁶ Book I;
Beethoven's Sonata Op.53, in C Major;⁴⁷ Mozart's

43 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.130.

44 Ibid, p.127, in Russian, my translation.

45 It was, probably, in the Spring of 1923. No exact date is given in the sources. Shostakovich graduated from the Conservatoire as a composer two years later, in 1925.

46 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.133. In Khentova's first and earlier book on Shostakovich, she mentions another Prelude and Fugue, in F sharp Minor, Book I. Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.31. The same is repeated in Sollertinsky's Pages from the Life, p.29.

47 In Stevenson's article on Shostakovich, the latter's graduation programme is described incorrectly as including Bach-Liszt's A-Minor Prelude and Fugue, Beethoven's "Appassionata" and "some of his own compositions". A number of different pieces were performed on this occasion, although Shostakovich did not perform his own works. However, the pieces mentioned by Stevenson did form part of his repertoire. Ronald Stevenson, "The Piano Music" in Christopher Norris (editor) Shostakovich: the Man and his Music (London, 1982), p.86.

Variations in C Major (Köchel's number is given in neither of the sources), Chopin's Ballade, No 3, in A Flat Major; Schumann's "Humoreske" and Liszt's "Venice and Naples" from the "Years of Pilgrimage". In his second concert he played Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor. Shostakovich in his usual modest way wrote of this event.

I graduated from the piano department of the Conservatoire in 1923 and performed in two concerts. In my solo concert I played a programme which included pieces by various composers, and in the second, Schumann's Concerto with orchestra (the latter was not as well performed, as I was ill when I played.) 48

Impressions of the same graduation recitals recorded later by contemporaries of Shostakovich were more than positive. (It is to be noted that all final and transitional examinations were public recitals.) A fellow student recalls:

When Shostakovich graduated from the Conservatoire he was not yet seventeen. I have remembered his performance of all movements of the Concerto and Humoreske, Op.20 by Schumann all my life, and it still sounds in my ears. 49

Glazunov called him "already an accomplished musician" who played with sincerity and profound artistic flair.⁵⁰

48 Shostakovich, "Moya Alma Mater," p.103, in Russian, my translation.

49 Schwarz, "Neskolko sobytii," L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, p.122, in Russian, my translation.

50 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.133, in Russian.

2.2 The First Period of Performance Activity (1923-1930)⁵¹

After graduating from the Conservatoire as a pianist Shostakovich continued his studies as a composer at the Conservatoire while performing continuously. Unfortunately, only a few of his recital programmes from those years have been preserved, and these are given in the list of his performances, compiled by a librarian of the Leningrad Philharmonic Hall, N. Molokova.⁵² Set out below is a translation of an excerpt from his list (1923-1925):

51 There are, in the present writer's opinion, three distinct performing periods in Shostakovich's performing life, namely:

First Period: 1923-1930, when he performed both the works of other composers and his own compositions. (From the spring of 1930 until January 1933, Shostakovich did not appear as a concert pianist.)

Second Period: 1933-1946, when he usually performed his own solo and chamber music;

Third Period: 1947-1966, when he started recording his own compositions for purposes of making discs and performed as a soloist (until 1958) and as an ensemble player (until 1966).

52 This list is given as an Appendix in Khentova's Shostakovich - pianist, pp.84-90, in Russian. Details of the dates and other information have been added (in parenthesis) in accordance with the "Chronicle of the Life and Works of Shostakovich" given in Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 2 (Leningrad, 1980), pp.267-268 and Khentova's Shostakovich, zhizn i tvorchestvo, pp.529-530. The punctuation, inverted commas - etc. have been kept as written in Molokova's list.

- 1923 (Autumn) Leningrad. Concert of Society of Chamber Music's Friends. Bach-Liszt. Organ Prelude and Fugue in A Minor. Beethoven, Sonata No 23. Shostakovich. Preludes, Op.2, Three Fantastic Dances.
- (Autumn) Leningrad. Pieces by Chopin, Liszt. Shostakovich, Suite for Two Pianos.
- Leningrad. Concert of Society of Chamber Music's Friends. Liszt. Tarantella. Schumann. Sonata in F sharp Minor. Shostakovich. Preludes, Op.2.
- (10 December) Leningrad. Concert of Society of Chamber Music's Friends. Shostakovich played the piano part in Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No 5.
- (13 December) Leningrad. Conservatoire. Concert of M. Steinberg's class. Shostakovich. First Trio.
- 1924 (April) Leningrad. Concert of Society of Chamber Music's Friends. Bach-Liszt. Organ Prelude and Fugue in A Minor. Liszt. Funérailles, Tarantella.
- Leningrad. Schumann. Sonata in F sharp Minor. Liszt. Tarantella.
- (27 May) Leningrad. Conservatoire. Tchaikovsky. First Piano Concerto.
- 1925 (February) Leningrad. Pieces by J. Schillinger. 53
- Leningrad. Small Hall of the Conservatoire. Liszt. "Gnomes", "Venice and Naples", pieces from the "Years of Pilgrimage".
- Leningrad. Shostakovich. Suite for Two Pianos (with L. Orobin).

Khentova also mentions his concert in the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire on 20 March, where

53 Then, a young Leningrad composer.

Shostakovich played his Three Fantastic Dances, Op.5, Three Pieces for Cello and Piano, Op.9 (with A. Yegorov) and Suite for two Pianos, Op.6 (with L. Oborin).⁵⁴

A number of his recitals consisted of all Liszt programmes. Bogdanov-Berezovsky wrote in his critical review of one such recital during 1925:

The recital of the young pianist was devoted entirely to Liszt's works. Liszt - the wanderer and lyrical poet ("Années de pèlerinage"), Liszt - the fairytale teller ("Gnomenreigen"), Liszt - the mystic. Liszt - the virtuoso. All these images of Liszt were brightly expressed by the pianist.

Shostakovich's pianism is not superficially virtuosic, but deeply artistic. Technique - in the background, in the foreground - the author's thought. Nevertheless, technically all was perfect. Since his concert in June for the Society of Chamber Music's Friends - there is a great evolution.

There were some things in the programme from his old repertoire, as, for example, "Funérailles" played with strong, although somewhat cold pathos, and "Gnomenreigen". The latter very much suits Shostakovich's talent. Polished definition of rhythmic details, impetuosity of tempo and fantastic atmosphere were rendered arrestingly.⁵⁵

Quite often Shostakovich included his own compositions in his recitals. These performances met with particularly encouraging response from the critics. Shostakovich's early recital (1923) of his own works met

54 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, pp.144-145. It was a joint concert of works by the two young composers: V. Shebalin (Moscow) and D. Shostakovich (Leningrad). Shebalin's works were performed during the first half of the concert. In the second half, Shostakovich's First Trio was also performed by L. Oborin (piano), N. Fedorov (violin) and A. Yegorov (cello).

55 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Otrochestvo i younost," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.146, footnote, in Russian, my translation.

I venture to welcome this young man with the same words as I greeted the boy Heifetz. In Shostakovich's performance one is enthralled by the same exuberant yet calm self-assurance of genius. Not only do my words heed his exceptional performance, but his compositions, too. 56

In 1926 (July 3-15) Shostakovich went on tour with conductor Nikolai Malko, who described their performances in Kharkov:

Shostakovich was playing very well on a bad piano. I conducted three concerts in Kharkov during July, all on Mondays (Shostakovich's symphony, and thereafter Tchaikovsky's Concerto which he played brilliantly). 57

Shostakovich's solo recital in Kharkov on 15 July, 1926 included the following pieces:⁵⁸

1st Half

Shostakovich: Prelude and Scherzo (1925).
Eight Preludes (1920).
Fantastic Dances (1922).
Trio (with Kharkov musicians: Dobrzhinz, violin, Kassan, cello).

2nd Half

Liszt: Sonata "Après une lecture du Dante".
Funérailles.
Gnomenreigen.
Waldesrauschen.
Canzone. Gondoliera. Tarantella.

56 Delson, "Molodoi Shostakovich," p.197, in Russian, my translation.

57 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.162, in Russian, my translation.

58 Ibid.

In spite of his obvious talent and established reputation as a brilliant performer, Shostakovich experienced some difficulty when enrolling for the postgraduate studies ("Aspirantura") for performers. Nikolaev supported him morally and continued to teach him free of charge. As I. Schwarz related:

It might seem strange now, but after his graduation from the Conservatoire certain difficulties arose concerning Shostakovich's entering the postgraduate course (then called the Academic course.) This caused him a great deal of pain, and his mother, Sofia Vasilieyvna, even more pain.

At that time, Leonid Vladimirovich (Nikolaev) gave the young genius active support. 59

The warm and strong association between Nikolaev and the young Shostakovich is documented in Sofia Vasilieyvna's and Shostakovich's letters to Nikolaev. A letter from Shostakovich's mother to Nikolaev (Leningrad, 12 March, 1924) is translated as follows:⁶⁰

Dear Leonid Vladimirovich,

I dare not visit you personally, and this is why I am asking you to read my writing patiently.

Long, long ago it was my duty and deepest wish to thank you firstly for the help which Mitia got from D.S. Schor, but, mainly, for your unfailingly kind treatment of him, unfailing indeed, since it is already becoming clear to me that there is an absolutely incomprehensible coolness towards Mitia on the part of many friends in the musical world. Nevertheless, from you, he always came back as happy and soothed as he used to come back during the first days of his acquaintance with you. I, of course, am especially

59 Schwarz, L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, p.122, in Russian, my translation.

60 Ibid, pp.255-256, in Russian, my translation.

grateful to you now, when thanks only to you, Mityusha (Mitia) is not left completely alone.

As regards the most recent events concerning Mitia's expulsion from the Conservatoire, we both have absolutely no objection against the Board's decision that he is young as well as not mature enough for the "Academy" (Academic course). However, I can by no means agree with the issue of the Conservatoire closing its doors to such an exceptionally gifted boy of 17, who has spent less than 4 years in the Conservatoire and by so doing deprive him from further musical education, well knowing my financial position. And if for Mitia nothing has actually changed, this again is thanks only to you, as in this regard it is a private matter, completely unconnected with the Conservatoire. And how should I now feel, burdening you with a student, and being able to pay you back with nothing, nothing. I must thank you again and again and live in the hope that there will be a time when we, together with Mityusha (Mitia), will be able to return your kindness. He himself is upset by what has happened, and unfortunately, more than I could have expected, and I'm just not able to restore him to his normal mood.

I am sending my, Marusia's and Zoya's best regards and endless thanks.

Yours sincerely

S. Shostakovich. 61

61 In the editors' comments on this letter and on D. Shostakovich's letter (cited below), it is stated that Nikolaev succeeded on behalf of his student, and Shostakovich studied at the "Academy" in 1924/1925. (See L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, p.272). Nevertheless, this information is not confirmed by either of the other sources.

To the contrary, Khentova (in Shostakovich, zhizn, p.529) confirms the information on the Conservatoire Board's decision that Shostakovich was "too young and immature" to be enrolled at the "Academy". In the same source, mention is made of Shostakovich's application of 3 April, 1924, to enrol as a student at the Moscow Conservatoire. (Ibid.) Although in the same book Khentova writes that "the Board's decision was changed" (op.cit., p.124), she does not give any documentation of that fact, but does give documentation of the opposite fact, as mentioned above. Khentova should have included the documentation on the "changed decision" had this proved to be true.

Another letter, this time from Mitia Shostakovich to Nikolaev, dated 1 November, 1925 (exactly three months after he had completed his First Symphony) further describes the difficult conditions under which he was living.

Dear Leonid Vladimirovich

I am longing to see you one day soon. When might you permit me to come and talk about various things concerning my studies?

There is so much for me to tell you about my loafing. I can assure you that I am not lazy, but things are worse. The cinema has finished me off. Because I am somewhat sensitive, when I arrive home the cinema music is still ringing in my ears and the dreadful heroes are still appearing before my eyes. As a result I am unable to sleep for ages. I finally fall asleep not earlier than 4 or 5 a.m. So, in the morning I get up very late with a headache and in a bad mood. All sorts of ugly thoughts are creeping through my mind like I've sold myself to Sevzapkino for 134 roubles, and that I've become a movie-pianist. And then its time to dash off to the Conservatoire. And then I come home, have lunch, and fly off to the "Splendid Palace".

I hope that it will be over soon, and I'll be able to practise the piano regularly. I've started learning Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto now. Do you approve of this choice? I would like to come to you one of these days so that you can give me something new. Please let me know through Marusia when I'll be able to come to you. It would be convenient for me tomorrow afternoon between 1 and 4 p.m. 5 o'clock is too late. Generally speaking I can come any afternoon. In the evenings I am busy in the cinema.

Always yours, lovingly and faithfully

D. Shostakovich. 62

In 1925 on his graduation as a composer from the Conservatoire, Shostakovich wrote:

Finally in 1925 I submitted my first Symphony as my

62 L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, pp.253-254, in Russian, my translation.

diploma work for my graduation from the Conservatoire's composition department. 63

On 20 April, 1926 Shostakovich was enrolled into "Aspirantura" (post graduate studies) as a composer.⁶⁴

B.L. Yavorsky⁶⁵ asked N.A. Malko, then the main conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, to perform Shostakovich's Symphony. Malko agreed with pleasure,⁶⁶ and on 12 May, 1926 he conducted the symphony. This day might well be considered to be the turning point in Shostakovich's life. Shostakovich wrote (12 June, 1926):

On 12 May, 1926 in the Philharmonic Hall my symphony was conducted by N.A. Malko, and was met with great success. This good fortune, together with the success and fine sound of the symphony inspired me with courage and hope. If I can only manage to just support myself, I shall work ceaselessly and dedicate my entire life to the field of music. 67

63 Shostakovich, "Dumy," p.11, in Russian, my translation.

64 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 2, p.628.

65 Boleslav Leopoldovich Yavorsky (1877-1942) great musical philosopher, pianist, musicologist (author of the "Modal rhythm" theory), teacher, and man of musical education.

66 Nikolai Andreevich Malko (1883-1961) wrote later to Yavorsky (7 September, 1927): "Shostakovich... is so gifted, his talent is so prominent, so appealing... that Shostakovich just needs to start."
B.L. Yavorsky, Stat'i, Vospominaniya, Perepiska, Tom 1. (Articles, Memoirs, Correspondence, Volume 1) (Moscow, 1972), p.364, in Russian, my translation.

67 Shostakovich "Curriculum Vitae," Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.172, in Russian, my translation.

Yet, despite the great success of his First Symphony, Shostakovich sank suddenly into depression during that period:

Now (1956) I can no longer remember why, but for a short period after my graduation from the Conservatoire, I was suddenly seized with selfdoubts as to my vocation as a composer. I could compose nothing and in a fit of "disillusionment" destroyed almost all my manuscripts. I now bitterly regret this for the particular reason that amongst the burned manuscripts was an opera "The Gypsies", based on Pushkin's verses. 68

This state of depression ended with his composition and performance of the First Piano Sonata (November 1926). This was a one-movement composition, and was written with the clear intention of expressing himself in modern idiom (the influence of Prokofiev's Third Sonata is obvious). Shostakovich's First Piano Sonata is pianistically a fiendishly difficult composition and, unfortunately, is still rarely performed. The Sonata serves to prove the composer's exceptional pianistic technique. At the time of this Sonata's performance in Moscow (January, 1927) in the Beethoven Hall, Shostakovich was able to perform the work twice.

D. Kabalevsky relates the following:

"...For the sake of a better understanding of this music I will play it once more" said the composer quietly and diffidently when the applause subsided, and sat down at the piano and, even more energetically and convincingly, than just before, repeated, his First Sonata.

68 Shostakovich, "Dumy," p.11, in Russian, my translation.

...Those, in the Hall who were able to listen and really hear the music, felt that to our art a powerful and original talent had come. This originality was conveyed through his manner of performance, too - somewhat dry, toccata-like, but with regard to the pianism, flawless. 69

In retrospect, it seems somewhat ironical that the author of a work as innovatory as Shostakovich's First Piano Sonata was, at the same time, preparing his Chopin programme for the First International Chopin Competition (Warsaw, January 1927).

Shostakovich was recommended for the Competition by Yavorsky, who wrote to Nikolaev in his letter of 9-11 December, 1926:

9 December, 1926, Moscow

Dear Leonid Vladimirovich, in February or March the Chopin International Piano Competition will take place in Warsaw. I would like Sofronitsky and Shostakovich to be among our Russian piano participants. They must expose themselves to international critics...

I would be most grateful to receive your approval as soon as possible to officially put forward their candidatures.

December 11

During today's sitting of GUS (the candidates) appointed to the competition were:

2 from Moscow: Oborin, Ginsburg, 2 from Leningrad: Sofronitsky, Shostakovich, 1 from Ukraine: Horowitz...

Programme:

The whole Concerto (e-moll or f-moll)

Polonaise fis-moll

Preludes fis-moll and b-moll

69 Dmitri Kabalevsky, "Neskolko slov o Dmitrii Shostakovich," (Some Words About Dmitri Shostakovich) D. Shostakovich, Sbornic statey, p.89, in Russian, my translation.

One ballade

Two nocturnes (Op.9 No 1 b-moll, Op.15 No 2 Fis-dur, Op.15 No 3 g-moll, Op.27 No 2 Des-dur, Op.27 No 1 cis-moll, Op.37 No 2 G-dur, Op.48 No 1 c-moll).

Two etudes (Op.10 cis-moll, a-moll, Ges-dur, Op.25 As-dur, gis-moll, cis-moll, Ges-dur, a-moll).

Two mazurkas (Op.50 No 3 cis-moll, Op.63 No 3 cis-moll, Op.7 No 3 f-moll, Op.33 No 4 h-moll, Op.67 No 4 a-moll).

The competition starts on 23 January.

B. Yavorsky. 70

Of the pianists chosen by GUS (Glavnoe upravlenie uchebnykh zavedenii Komiteta po delam iskusstv) Lev Oborin, Grigori Ginsburg and Dmitri Shostakovich took part in the competition. A fourth pianist, Yuri Bryushkov (Moscow), was later added to their ranks.⁷¹

Nikolaev advised Shostakovich that he had been chosen to play in the Competition, approximately a month before it started. During this preparation period, Bogdanov-Berezosky wrote of Shostakovich:

The young Shostakovich's self-discipline was astonishing when he was preparing for the 1927 Warsaw Competition. For three weeks he locked himself away practising at home for hours at a time; postponed his composing, and gave up going to the theatre, and seeing friends. Even more startling was the result of his seclusion. Of course, prior to this, too, he had played superbly and occasioned Glazunov's now famous glowing exam reports... The audience was thrilled by the feeling of proximity to his live creative process, the sense of originality of the musical ideas.

70 B.L. Yavorsky, Stat'i, pp.367-368. Selected excerpts from this letter are quoted for the purpose of this chapter.

71 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.51.

None of us had doubted that he would win first prize. Nikolaev had even less doubts than anybody else, as he had entrusted him to represent his school at the first international contest to be held in Europe since the first World War, and even though there were recognised artists and famous "Chopin experts" among his recent graduates. 72

Shostakovich's Chopin programme for the competition included:

Concerto in E Minor, Op. 11.

Polonaise in F sharp Minor, Op.44.

Preludes Op.28 in F sharp Minor and B flat Minor. — Compulsory pieces

Ballade in A flat Major, Op.47.

Nocturnes in F sharp Major, Op.15, No 2 and in

C sharp Minor, Op.27, No 1.

Etudes in C sharp Minor, Op.10, No 4 and G flat Major.⁷³

Mazurkas in B Minor, Op.33, No 4 and in C sharp Minor.⁷⁴

A first hand evaluation of Shostakovich's interpretation of Chopin is impossible to achieve since no such recordings have been preserved. Sources that we can draw on however are his contemporaries' appraisals. Bogdanov-Berezovsky remarks that Shostakovich played Chopin's "Krakowiak", Op.14 while still a student (between

72 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Otrochestvo i yunost," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.136, in Russian, my translation.

73 Opus mentioned in neither of sources.

74 Opus mentioned in neither of sources.

the years 1920-1923) "freshly and originally":⁷⁵

He played it in the Small Hall of the Conservatoire not with orchestra but with the accompaniment of the second piano (performed by Nikolaev). From this rather small one-movement rondo, simple in texture, he was able to create a rich picture, full of the joys of life and with a brightly depicted folk atmosphere. This was felt at once in the melody of the introduction which Shostakovich interpreted smoothly and simply like a pastoral pipe-tune (in complete accordance with the author's mark *legato e semplice*); yet in full relief, like a lively dance, in the Allegro theme. ⁷⁶

Before leaving for Warsaw on 14 January, 1927, Shostakovich and the other competitors gave a recital in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire. According to critiques of the time, Shostakovich played technically weaker than the others, but his grasp of the structure of the pieces that he performed was praised.⁷⁷ His emotional eloquence and nobility of expression were emphasized too.⁷⁸

Anyone who heard the beautiful performance of Chopin's pieces in the combined concert of the young pianists before their trip to Warsaw, would certainly have engraved on his memory that deep, malancholic and majestic... interpretation (by Shostakovich) of the

75 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Otrochestvo i yunost," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, pp.145-146, in Russian, my translation.

76 Ibid.

77 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.50.

78 Ibid.

Shostakovich played well at the Competition. Unlike at the Moscow recital, his performance in Warsaw was technically excellent. According to the critics: "Of the technique it goes without saying: it was tops!"⁸⁰

His interpretations as always were totally original:

In Shostakovich's performance an abundance of unusually interesting details and a skill of placing in relief hidden contrapuntal deliniation is striking. ⁸¹

However, he did not win the first prize (Lev Oborin won it). Shostakovich was awarded a certificate of merit and in a letter to his mother he described events:

My dear Mummy.

That's it, the competition is over. The results: 1st prize - Oborin, 2nd - Szpinalskai, 3rd - Etkina and 4th - Ginsburg. I did not feature. I'm not at all upset, because the thing's done anyway. I played the programme very well and was a great success, and was amongst the 8 people selected to play the Concerto with the orchestra. I played the Concerto exceptionally well and was the most successful of the 8. The success was even greater than that of Moscow. I was met with a grand ovation, and was applauded at the end with a greater one. Everyone congratulated me and said that there were two candidates for the first prize: Oborin and myself. Furthermore, they said and wrote that the

79 Arnold Alschwang, "Critical Review," Sovetskaya Muzyka, 7 (July, 1939). Quoted by V. Grigoriev in the folder note of the record set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (I), p.5, in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, ML0-39073-80.

80 These remarks are from the critic Grigori Orlov who commented upon the competition in Warsaw's newspaper "Slowo" in February 1927. Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.55, in Russian, my translation.

81 Ibid, p.56.

Soviet pianists came off best of all. And if anyone should have all 4 prizes, then, it should be us. None-the-less, the adjudicators "with sore hearts" decided to give the first prize to a Russian and Leva (Oborin) was awarded it. I received a certificate of merit. The distribution of the remaining awards caused great perplexity amongst the public. Maliszewski who read the list of awards, forgot to read my name. Then voices from the public were heard: "Shostakovich, Shostakovich" and applause sounded. Then Maliszewski read my name out, and the public rather demonstrably gave me a storm of applause. Don't get upset. A manager is now sitting here negotiating my concerts. I will leave for Berlin next week, and on Saturday, (February) the 5th I am giving a recital in Warsaw. I kiss you affectionally. Yours Mitia. My kisses to Zoya and Marusia. I am missing you very much. I will be in Berlin for just a short while, and from there straight home.

1 February, 1927. 82

As mentioned in the above letter, Shostakovich gave recitals in Warsaw and Berlin that included not only pieces by Chopin, but also his First Piano Sonata and some of his own compositions.⁸³

In Leningrad, amongst his friends:

No-one attached any importance to the fact that Shostakovich was awarded the certificate of merit instead of first prize which was won by Oborin: everyone understood the trials and tribulations of being a contender under the circumstances of such a contest. It turned out that the young pianist had played when he was really ill, and was suffering from severe pains... (on coming back to Leningrad he underwent an appendicitis operation.) 84

82 L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, pp.272-273, in Russian, my translation.

83 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 2, p.269; Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.11.

84 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Otrochestvo i yunost," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.136, plus footnote in parenthesis; in Russian, my translation.

Yet, Shostakovich, himself was in a dilemma: he had to decide upon his future career, namely whether to be a performer or a composer. After the Competition it seems that he could not delay his composing any longer. By 25 February, less than ten days after he had returned home (he was in Berlin until 15 February), Shostakovich had composed the first piece, the "Recitative" from Aphorisms, Op.13.

In 1956 Shostakovich recollected:

After graduating from the Conservatoire the problem arose for me: what should I be - a pianist or a composer? The latter won, but to tell the truth, I should have become both. It is now too late to blame myself for this categorical decision. ⁸⁵

Soviet experts on Shostakovich (S. Khentova and V. Delson) have given a number of explanations for Shostakovich's decision about his career:

1. Full-time concert performing was too demanding of his energy and nerves to be combined with the intensive rigours of a composer's work.⁸⁶
2. His desire to compose in all genres and forms (music for theatre and cinema, opera, symphony etc) without limiting himself to the pianoforte medium.⁸⁷

85 Shostakovich, "Dumy," p.11, in Russian, my translation.

86 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.66.

87 Ibid, p.65. Also, Delson, "Molodoi Shostakovich," p.197.

3. The conflict that arose between the modern tendencies of his own music and the traditional romantic piano school frame in which he had developed as a performer, and which was the main trend in performance practice in Russia in those years.⁸⁸

These reasons may all be valid, but Shostakovich himself did not write or tell us about the reasons for his decision. It seems to the present writer that Shostakovich's words express a measure of bitterness and blameworthiness concerning his abandonment of his career as a piano soloist.

Until 1930 Shostakovich continued to appear frequently as a soloist, offering different programmes. A few of these from the period 1927-1930 are cited below:⁸⁹

1927 11 March Leningrad. Philharmonic Great Hall. Concert of pianists of L.V. Nikolaev's School. Chopin, two Nocturnes; two Etudes; Ballade in A flat Major. Nikolaev, Variations on the Four-Note Theme for Two Pianos (with I. Renzin).

18 March Moscow. Great Hall of the Conservatoire. Concert of pianists of L.V. Nikolaev's School. Liszt, "Venice and Naples".

88 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, pp.66-67; Delson, "Molodoi Shostakovich," pp.213-214.

89 The information is given in accordance with various sources: Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, pp.85-86; Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 2, pp.269-272; Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.11; Bogdanov-Berezovsky, Stat'i, p.148, 159; Khentova, Shostakovich, zhizn, p.194.

1927	Autumn	<u>Leningrad</u> . Premiere of <u>Aphorisms</u> , Op.13.
	Autumn	<u>Leningrad</u> . Performances with the singer Lidia Vyrlan. Romances and songs by Glinka, Mussorzhsky, Prokofiev (on A. Akhmatova verses), M. Gnesin.
		<u>Leningrad</u> . Leningrad Academic Chapel's performances of Stravinsky's "Les Noces" (together with Yudina, Maslakovez, Renzin or sometimes, Popov).
	23 November	<u>Leningrad</u> . Philharmonic Great Hall. Mozart Concerto for two Pianos (with G. Popov. Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by F. Stiedry.)
	26 November	<u>Leningrad</u> . Great Philharmonic Hall. Tchaikovsky, First Piano Concerto (Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by N. Malko).
	?	Schumann's Piano Quintet.
1928	Winter	<u>Leningrad</u> . Recitals with the singer Lidia Vyrlan. Romances and songs by Aleksandrov, Miaskovsky, Prokofiev (on A. Akhmatova verses), Steinberg, Streicher and Veisberg.
		<u>Leningrad</u> . Recitals of Chopin and Liszt works.
1929	January	<u>Leningrad</u> . Leningrad Society of Dramatists and Composers. Evening of Shostakovich's Works.
	3 February	<u>Leningrad</u> . Great Philharmonic Hall. Prokofiev, First Piano Concerto (Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by G. Scheidler).
1930	Spring	<u>Rostov-on-Don</u> . Tchaikovsky, First Piano Concerto. Prokofiev, First Piano Concerto (conducted by A. Yakobson). Shostakovich, Piano pieces.

The following excerpt is taken from a critical article, written in 1927, of one of the above mentioned concerts performed on 18 March, 1927 (Moscow):

In the beautiful young pianist Shostakovich, such potential is hidden that, probably, in time to come not only he himself (but also others) will be proud of the results. His performance of the entire Liszt cycle "Venice and Naples" (gondoliera, canzone, tarantella) was on an extremely high level... 90

The last appearance of Shostakovich as a solo performer of other composers' works was, as mentioned in the list above, in 1930 in Rostov-on-Don, when he played Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto and some of his own compositions.

The entire repertoire of Shostakovich's performances of the works of other composers is set out in Appendix "C", "Shostakovich's Repertoire of Solo and Chamber Music".

90 Grigori Kogan (K. Grimikh), "Concert of Leningrad Pianists of L.V. Nikolaev's School," Voprosy pianizma (Problems of Piano Art) (Moscow, 1968), pp.428-429, in Russian, my translation.

2.3 The Second Period Of Performance Activity (1933-1946)

Shostakovich's performances of his own works were of a peculiar quality from the very early years. Bogdanov-Berezovsky remembered Shostakovich playing his own works during his years at the Conservatoire:

...His recitals of his own music were most outstanding, having no analogy in pianistic practice. Whether he played, the Suite for Two pianos with his elder sister Maria Dmitrievna, at students' evening in the Small Hall of the Conservatoire during his third year, or played the Preludes and Fantastic Dances in the Green Hall of the Institute of Art's History... or acquainted his fellow-students with vocal Krylov's Fables, or "tried" his two-piano arrangement of then not yet completed First Symphony with some of his friends, - an integral and monolithic impression was always made by his music and its performance. 91

From 1933 Shostakovich began to appear again regularly with his own music. (There had been a break in his solo performances from the autumn of 1930 of over two years⁹² with a composition gap for the piano of five years, since the composition of the Aphorisms, Op.13 in 1927 until 1932 when he started to compose his Preludes, Op.34). As remarked by Khentova,⁹³ through performing

91 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Otrochestvo i yunost," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.147, in Russian, my translation.

92 However it should be stressed that during these years the piano was important in his working life and in his compositions for theatre, cinema and ballet. Also, on 15 August, 1932 he played the piano arrangement of his First Symphony, in Gaspra. Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 2, p.273.

93 Ibid, p.57.

his own music Shostakovich found the best means of promoting it. His compositions of the Piano Preludes, Op.34 (December 1932 - March 1933) and the First Piano Concerto, Op.35 (March - July 1933) greatly enriched the repertoire of his own piano music.

Despite the long break, Shostakovich regained his concert form quickly, due to his excellent piano training and vast musical experience.⁹⁴ The performance of his new Preludes and the Piano Concerto met with great success. This is illustrated by a critical review of a performance of the Concerto:

With elasticity, ease and precision, Shostakovich has arrestingly overcome all pianistic difficulties as only the composer himself could play, inimitably. Shostakovich does not leave any doubts as a pianist, even among those who far from agree with everything in his compositions.⁹⁵

Another critique reads:

... We will not look at Shostakovich's performance of his own music, it is perfect and deserves studying.⁹⁶

After completing his Cello Sonata in 1934, Shostakovich would sometimes include this in a programme

94 He practised on a new piano, "Blüthner" (No 83 516), which the family could afford to buy in 1928. Khentova, Shostakovich, zhizn, p.318.

95 A.K. Smis (alias K. Kuznetsov) "Muzykalno-kriticheskiye fragmenty" (Fragments of Musical Criticism) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 2 (February, 1934), 62, in Russian, my translation.

96 Alschwang, "Critical Review," Sovetskaya Muzyka, 7 (July, 1939), in Russian, my translation.

of chamber music as in Arkhangelsk's recital with V. Kubatsky, 28 January, 1936, where his and Rakhmaninov's Cello Sonatas were performed.⁹⁷

Shostakovich toured quite frequently in those years, although the conditions under which he had to travel were extremely difficult. He often had to queue for train tickets, could not get food, and lived in terrible hotels.⁹⁸ In summer in the Southern cities he suffered from the heat and often played when he was ill. He wrote in his letter from Baku (1934):

On the first day I got pleurisy, felt very bad.... From a dry pleurisy it became wet, plus I suffered severe headaches. ⁹⁹

Often summer concerts were held in the open air, and of one such open air concert in the summer of 1934 Shostakovich recollected:

When I was rehearsing today the north wind was blowing, probably the most unpleasant wind, because it blows up columns of dust.... The entire grandpiano became all covered with sand. The singer's throat was choked with dust to such an extent that he spat out mountains of dust. For the first time in my life I blessed my fate that I was not a singer. None-the-less, playing with

97 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 2, p.279.

98 Ibid, p.69.

99 Ibid, in Russian, my translation.

fingers on dusty keys is very unpleasant. 100

Of all the trips during those years, the most exciting was the overseas tour to Turkey (13 April - 24 May, 1935) where Shostakovich gave twenty-three concerts in five weeks. He appeared in Ankara (15 recitals), Izmir (3 recitals), and in Istanbul (5 recitals). In Turkey he played his Piano Preludes, Op.34, First Piano Concerto,¹⁰¹ and fragments from his music for the ballet "The Bolt". According to the press and L. Oborin's recollections,¹⁰² Shostakovich met with enormous success, both as a composer and as a pianist.

After "Pravda's" article "Cacophony Instead of Music" (28 January, 1936) with its unjust, primitive and brutal criticism of the opera "Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District", Shostakovich, probably did not perform publicly until November 1937. However, his success with the Fifth Symphony (performed on 21 November, 1937) acted

100 Ibid. During his tour in 1934 he met and became a close friend of A. Khachaturyan: "In Moscow in my carriage, but in another sleeper, an Armenian composer Khachaturyan got in. He proved to be a very nice travelling companion. We lunched together in a carriage restaurant, and I must say that I enjoyed Khachaturyan much more than the lunch. Because after the meal, I was still hungry. He gave me a wonderful sausage and pestered me until I ate it". Op. cit. p.70, in Russian, my translation.

101 Lev Oborin who was also a member of this delegation to Turkey accompanied the orchestral part on the second piano.

102 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.70-71.

as a great stimulus for both composition and performance.

In the following years he continued to appear often with his own works and some ensemble compositions of different composers. For example, in 1938, in Leningrad, he performed L. Nikolaev's Suite for Two Pianos (with V. Sofronitsky). In 1938, in Leningrad, and in 1939, in Moscow, Grieg's and Rakhmanninov's Cello Sonatas were performed together with his own Cello Sonata (with cellist A. Ferkelman).¹⁰³

He included in his concerts his new compositions such as the Four Romances on Verses of Pushkin, Op.46 for bass and piano (completed on 2 January, 1937) and Quintet, Op.57 (completed on 14 September, 1940). Dmitri Tsyganov recalls:¹⁰⁴

In 1938 after a successful performance of the First Quartet we suggested that Shostakovich should write a Quintet. He was interested and wanted to take part in the performance as a pianist. He fulfilled his promise in 1940. He brought the Quintet, movement by movement, to Moscow, showed these movements to us and then we started to rehearse. In the spring of 1940, after a performance of the Quintet, we recorded it on the radio... Dmitri Dmitrievich (Shostakovich) said many times that when he was composing a piece, he had in mind a particular performance and a particular performer. To some extent, perhaps, the Quintet, too, mirrored our Quartet's (the Beethoven Quartet)

103 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 2, pp.281-282.

104 Tsyganov Dmitri Mikhailovich (b. 1903), violinist, Professor at the Moscow Conservatoire. In 1923 he became the first violinist of the Beethoven Quartet - the ensemble to which the composer had entrusted the first performances of almost all his quartets. Tsyganov arranged some of Shostakovich's Piano Preludes, Op.34 for violin.

qualities with the added peculiarities of the pianism of Shostakovich himself... 105

In addition to his usual regular recitals in Moscow, Leningrad, Stalingrad, Kiev and Sverdlovsk he took part, for example in B. Yavorsky's course on "History of Performance Styles" for post graduate students at the Moscow Conservatoire. There he played his Preludes Op.34, First Quartet, Op.49 and Sixth Symphony and talked to the students about "consciousness of the creative process" (March 1940).¹⁰⁶

During the War (1941-1945) Shostakovich's activities, both as a composer and a pianist, remained active. After the beginning of the War, (21 June, 1941) and simultaneously with the composition of his Seventh Symphony, he worked hard on numerous arrangements of popular music for small ensembles which had to perform

105 Quoted in the folder note of the record set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (I), p.5, in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, M10-39073-80.

106 B.L. Yavorsky, Stat'i, p.659. B. Yavorsky was amongst those who supported Shostakovich in the difficult years and understood his "withdrawal" of the Fourth Symphony (which, although written in 1936, was performed for the first time twenty-five years later, in 1961). Yavorsky wrote to Shostakovich (13 October, 1942, Saratov): "I hope that we will soon hear your Fourth Symphony. These people, ("Rapmovtsy": members of the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians) will never be anything, the Great Patriotic War will sweep them away, and the great and significant content of this Symphony, daring in its realization will sound forth. Now one is unable to silence anybody, their despotic era, which established for composers an etiquette that respected only joyful emotions, has now come to an end". Op. cit, p.607.

these pieces at the front.¹⁰⁷ On 14 September, 1941, he took part in the concert at the Great Philharmonic Hall. Shostakovich recalled:

I was still two or three streets away from the Philharmonia (Philharmonic Hall) when people (although there had just been an air-raid and no one knew when the next would be) started coming up to me with the usual question: "You haven't got a spare ticket for the concert, have you?"

I played my preludes for this unusual audience in such an unusual atmosphere with gusto, completely forgetting about the danger: people had risked their lives to come here, demonstrating that the beauty of art was alive and could not be killed. 108

When he completed the first two movements of his Seventh Symphony he played them for his colleague-composers (17 September, 1941). Bogdanov-Berezovsky recalls this performance:

107 Shostakovich wrote about this time: "Classes carried on only till 1 July, and I was teaching and examining students. I did not go away on holiday, and spent day and night at the Conservatoire..."

I was made director of the musical section of the people's volunteer theatre... which went off to entertain at the front.

It was difficult to head the musical section of this theatre, since the only instruments were accordions. I applied to join the Red Army again, and was received by a Commissar... He said it would not be easy to draft me into the army, and advised me to limit my activities to writing music. After that I was dismissed from the people's volunteer theatre and informed that I was to be evacuated from Leningrad. I did not want to be evacuated...

...I kept watch on the roof of the Conservatoire as a volunteer fireman." D. Shostakovich, in "Komsomol'skaya Pravda," 12 April, 1942. Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.98.

108 Ibid, p.221. D. Shostakovich, in "Sovetskaya Kultura," 22 June, 1961.

We were hypnotised by the proximity of the creative process - mysterious and usually hidden from the eyes of strangers - and by the absolutely peculiar expressiveness and feeling of the composer's performance which was endowed with all the richest resources of "Shostakovichian" pianism, and saturated with the excitement and thrill of the composer's inner emotional state. 109

During his evacuation in Kuibyshev he worked at the Radio performing his own works and those of other composers.¹¹⁰ In his recitals in Kuibyshev (November, 1941 - January, 1942) he played his First Piano Concerto, Piano Preludes, Romances, Op.46 on Pushkin's verses (with singer A. Baturin), Quintet, Op.57 (with the Beethoven Quartet) and Cello Sonata, Op.40 (with cellist V. Matkovsky).¹¹¹

In July 1942 Shostakovich travelled to Novosibirsk. It was dangerous, being war time, but he was eager to listen to his new Seventh Symphony interpreted by his favourite Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by

109 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, Dorogi iskusstva, p.246, in Russian, my translation.

110 Khentova, D.D. Shostakovich v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voyny (Shostakovich during the Great Patriotic War) (Leningrad, 1979), p.59, in Russian.

111 Ibid, p.60. Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.91.

Y. Mravinsky.¹¹² (The whole orchestra had been evacuated to Novosibirsk). He was also delighted to meet his dear friend Ivan Sollertinsky¹¹³ in Novosibirsk.

After the premiere of his Symphony, Shostakovich gave a chamber concert in Novosibirsk performing his Quintet (with the Glazunov Quartet) and Song Cycle, Op.46, on Pushkin's verses (with singer V. Arkanov).¹¹⁴ In 1942 he

112 Shostakovich wrote in August 1942: "The way things have worked out, I have recently been separated from my favourite orchestra. It is working in Novosibirsk, and I am living in Kuibyshev. I need hardly describe my joy when I learned that it was interested in my Seventh Symphony. I excitedly set off for Novosibirsk to see my dear friends again.

I spent almost a month in Novosibirsk, where I once again felt myself steeped in the familiar Leningrad atmosphere." Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, pp.99-100.

113 Ivan Ivanovich Sollertinsky (1902-1944), brilliant scholar of Arts, musicologist, orator. A man of unique erudition and memory, he knew over twenty languages and dozens of dialects and had an encyclopaedic knowledge of history. For many years, he appeared as a pre-concert commentator at the Leningrad Philharmonic and was its Artistic Director in 1939-1944. He became the closest friend of Shostakovich in 1927 and called him a "tragic poet in music". Pamiati I.I. Sollertinskogo (In Memory of I. Sollertinsky) (Leningrad, 1972), p.206, in Russian.

Sollertinsky had an immense influence on Shostakovich both musically and intellectually. Shostakovich wrote: "... he taught me to understand and love such great masters as Brahms, Mahler, and Bruckner. Sollertinsky broadened my interest and outlook in music, so to say, "from Bach to Offenbach". D. Shostakovich, "Dumy," p.11, in Russian, my translation.

114 Khentova, Shostakovich v gody ... voyny, p.269.

also gave recitals in Ufa and Belembei.¹¹⁵

On 11 October, 1942, Shostakovich's old piano teacher Leonid Nikolaev, died in Tashkent from typhoid fever and starvation. In memory of Nikolaev, Shostakovich started writing his Second Piano Sonata (January, 1943).¹¹⁶ It was his tribute to the man who not only was his beloved piano teacher, but one of the first persons to recognise his genius for composition and wisely encouraged him to pursue his career as a composer.¹¹⁷

115 Ibid, p.270.

116 He was writing it when he himself suffered gastro-enteritis. He wrote to Sollertinsky in January 1943:

"Dear Ivan Ivanovich,
Yesterday I got up for the first time. I spent two hours out of bed. Today three, tomorrow more and so on. When the pain went away I began working on a Sonata for piano. The plan is complete and now I'm writing - slowly." Translated and quoted in Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life, p.112.

117 An episode, revealing Nikolaev's attitude towards Shostakovich as a composer has been described by N. Fishman: "One could not imagine Nikolaev angry, resentful or furious. During fifteen years of our acquaintance, I saw him bordering on the furious only once when he came back to his classroom having heard a discussion concerning Shostakovich's opera "The Nose" which was harshly criticised. Leonid Vladimirovich (Nikolaev) spoke nervously... I cannot remember now all his words. But already then, in 1929, he called Shostakovich a composer of genius." Natan Fishman, "Iz zametok..." (From Notes...) L.V. Nikolaev, Stat'i, p.146, in Russian, my translation.

Shostakovich's Second Piano Sonata, composed after the Seventh and before the Eighth Symphony, is "a piano symphony" in itself. It is a monumental work in three movements, which Shostakovich considered to be his best piano composition.¹¹⁸

Example 1. Second Piano Sonata, Op.61/1/1-6

ПАМЯТИ ЛЕОНИДА ВЛАДИМИРОВИЧА НИКОЛАЕВА
Dedicated to the Memory of Leonid Nikolaev
SONATA № 2 SONATA № 2
Соч. 61 [1943]

I



118 Swedish pianist Inger Wikström wrote about her conversation with Shostakovich: "When I wanted him to advise me what to play on the same record as the Preludes Op.34, he did not hesitate. "My Second Sonata," he said. "It is the piece I like most of my piano compositions." Inger Wikström, "Meeting Shostakovich," Musik-Journal, 10 (Vienna, March, 1977).

In the first movement (written in sonata form) the eloquent lyricism of the first subject is juxtaposed with the energetic second subject. The second movement (in ternary form) contains beautiful introspective meditation full of refined harmonies. The Finale is an immense variation cycle. Its theme is a thirty-bar long monody with typically Shostakovichian intervals of diminished fourth and diminished octave.

Example 2. Second Piano Sonata, Op.61/3/1-32

Moderato (con moto) $\text{♩} = 150$

1
8
16
24
32

On 6 June, 1943, Shostakovich premiered the Sonata publicly in the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire.

Maria Yudina was one of the first performers who immediately appreciated the new piece and included it in her repertoire.¹¹⁹ In the same concert Shostakovich's new Six Romances on Verses of English Poets, Op.62 were performed by himself and the singer, E. Flaks.¹²⁰

On 11 February, 1944 Shostakovich's best friend, Ivan Sollertinsky passed away. He was 41 years of age. Shostakovich was mortified by his death. He wrote to a friend (I. Glikman):

No words can express the grief which tortures my whole being. May our love for him, our faith in his genius and his phenomenal love of the art of music, to which he gave all of his wonderful life, serve to perpetuate his memory. Ivan Ivanovich (Sollertinsky) is no more. It is very difficult to overcome my grief. ¹²¹

Shostakovich's expression: "The composer's work should be born of suffering" (1 April, 1944)¹²² truly reflects his emotional state at the time when he composed his Second Trio, Op.67 dedicated to the memory of Sollertinsky (composed 15 April - August 1944).

119 Khentova, Shostakovich v gody ... voyny, p.168

120 Ibid, p.271.

121 Pamiati I.I. Sollertinskogo, p.250, in Russian, my translation.

122 Shostakovich in "Sovetskoye iskusstvo," 1 April, 1944. Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.113.

The first listeners of his new Trio were his students at the Moscow Conservatoire.¹²³ One of them (Revol Bunin) recalls:

We listened to it in silent admiration. When Dmitri Dmitrievich (Shostakovich) finished playing, he kept saying: "Don't be shy, criticize, criticize".¹²⁴

In 1944, before the premiere of the Second Trio, Shostakovich appeared with his First Piano Concerto (Moscow) and his Second Piano Sonata, and Romances, Op.62 (Leningrad, with singer E. Flaks).

The first performance of the Second Trio was in his native city, Leningrad, in the Great Philharmonic Hall with D. Tsyganov and S. Shirinsky, members of the Beethoven Quartet on 14 November 1944. In the same concert his Quintet, Op.57 was performed by himself with the Beethoven Quartet. The same programme was repeated in Moscow, in the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire on 28 November, 1944.¹²⁵

S. Savshinsky writes about Shostakovich as a performer:

He is an outstanding artist and performer. The crystalline clarity and precision of his thought, the almost ascetic absence of embellishment, the precise rhythm, technical perfection, and very personal timbre

123 From June 1943 Shostakovich took the post of Professor of Composition at the Moscow Conservatoire.

124 Khentova, Shostakovich v gody ... voyny, p.208, in Russian, my translation.

125 Ibid, p.272.

he produced at the piano all made Shostakovich's piano playing individual in the highest degree, and made him an irreplaceable interpreter of such works as the Quintet and the best of his Preludes. 126

During these hard years, Shostakovich had to perform his new symphonic and chamber compositions on the piano (e.g., he played the Seventh Symphony and its arrangement for four hands with L. Oborin on several occasions. The Eighth Symphony was also played by him. The Ninth Symphony was played by him with S. Richter. See Appendix "D", the "Chart of Shostakovich's Performances and Recordings".) Although these performances cannot be considered as recitals, they greatly enhanced his performance style.

126 Translated and quoted in Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life, p.140.

2.4 The Third Period of Performance Activity (1947-1966)

Although Shostakovich appeared in radio programmes throughout all his life,¹²⁷ it was towards the end of the nineteen forties (1947) that he started recording for the purpose of making gramophone discs. In May 1947 his performance of the Second Trio together with D. Oistrakh and M. Sadlo was recorded during the Prague Spring Festival and was later released on gramophone.¹²⁸ During the same Festival he performed his Second Piano Sonata and Quintet. E. Tawaststjerna who was present at this event later, in October 1974, wrote:

The tone of the piano says much about the player. Shostakovich's playing creates a contrapuntal image: like a feathery pencil drawing, tending more towards linear development than towards vertical structure... The descending third of the main theme was interpreted by him with restrained melancholy, the majestic octave theme being tinged with the colour of steel.

Shostakovich's playing is rooted in symphonic concept. The climax of the first movement is seen with the return of the main theme which is preceded by a tremendous tension in the development. The images then disappear as if swept away by a winter blizzard.

127 His first recording of the Quintet, Op.57, was mentioned in the previous section, p.60. In 1946, he also recorded his Cello Sonata, Op.40 with cellist D. Shafran for a single radio broadcast. Much later, in 1980, this recording was released on disc. Index No 9.

128 Index No 12.

The Andante movement was conceived by me as being almost impressionistic. I was astounded by the sharply etched thematic outlines in the composer's performance. The melodic line growing in an endlessly subtle rubato. Shostakovich's orchestral imagination was astounding in the middle section; as if one was hearing a solo flute accompanied by lower string instruments. The recapitulation was highlighted by the brilliance of Shostakovich's pianism. The melody was braided with cascading arpeggios, the sound becoming completely impressionistic.

And ultimately the theme of the finale, single voiced, bare of any supportive chord. Even now I hear how Shostakovich played as if measuring the varying levels of tension in the intervals - from the neutral intervals of the triads, through sharper chromatic steps to the tense diminished octave and tritone, and finally to the climax on the minor ninth. 129

In the same year in the USSR (most probably, in Moscow) he recorded the Children's Notebook, Op.69,¹³⁰ seven short pieces for piano, composed in 1944-1945 for his daughter Galina; the Ten Preludes, Op.34,¹³¹ Nos 8, 14-19, and 22-24; the Three Fantastic Dances, Op.5,¹³² and the Polka¹³³ from the ballet "The Age of Gold" which he had arranged for solo piano.

129 Eric Tawaststjerna, "Vstrechi s Shostakovichem," (Meetings with Shostakovich) D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, pp.285-286, in Russian, my translation. This information about Shostakovich's performance of the Second Sonata, is invaluable as no recording by Shostakovich himself exists.

130 Index No 14.

131 Index Nos 4, (4a), 5, 6.

132 Index No 1.

133 Index No 3.

From January 1948, however, after Zhdanov's vicious attack on "formalist" Soviet composers,¹³⁴ Shostakovich remained silent as a performer¹³⁵ until March 1949, when he suddenly had to leave for America. On March 27, 1949 at New York's Madison Square Gardens, before a big audience, he played the Scherzo from his Fifth Symphony on the piano.

In July 1950 he went to Leipzig for Bach's Bicentenary celebration. He took part there in the performance of Bach's D-Minor Concerto for Three Keyboards and Orchestra. (He played without preparation instead of Yudina, who had injured her finger and was

134 Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov (1896-1948) was a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party, and the ideological leader of Stalin's "cultural front". In the middle of January 1948 at the composers' conference, he accused composers such as Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Miaskovsky, Khachaturyan, Popov, Kabalevsky, Shebalin, Shaporin and Muradeli of creating music which "did not register with the listener... was depressing and lacking in harmony, inadequately expressive of the characters' emotions, and with frequent cacophonous passages..."

On 10 February 1948 the Party Central Committee adopted the Resolution about V. Muradeli's opera "The Great Friendship" embodying the criticisms raised at the composers' conference. Eric Roseberry, Shostakovich: His Life and Times (New York, 1982), pp.116-130; Solomon Volkov, Testimony - The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich (translated by Antonina W. Bouis) (London, 1981), pp.192-197.

135 However at that time he was not silent as a composer. During 1948 such masterpieces as the First Violin Concerto, Op.77 and the vocal cycle "From Jewish Folk Poetry," Op.79 were composed and kept hidden. They were performed for the first time only in 1955 (two years after Stalin's death).

unable to play.)¹³⁶

The trip inspired him with the idea of writing his Twenty-Four Preludes and Fugues, Op.87, which were completed in February 1951.¹³⁷ Although the official public premiere of the entire cycle was given by T. Nikolayeva on 23 December, 1952, in Leningrad, Shostakovich had played several pieces from this cycle earlier on a number of occasions and recorded Nos 1-8, 12, 14, 16, 20 and 22-24 in 1952.¹³⁸

A famous Soviet pianist and teacher, Yakov Flier recalls:

I was fortunate to listen to the first performance by Shostakovich of his genius cycle of 24 Preludes and Fugues. Shostakovich played for the Moscow musicians in the room of the head of the Moscow Conservatoire. This gigantic cycle was listened to amidst the deepest silence. The listeners were astounded. I realized that this composition was destined to become a part of the concert repertoire of the pianists of the world together with the "Well-Tempered Clavier" by Bach. The atmosphere of the work was conveyed by Shostakovich with a stupendous power. Since then I have not heard

136 Kirill Kondrashin, "Moi vstrechi s D.D. Shostakovichem," (My meetings with D. Shostakovich) D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.88.

137 This new opus of Shostakovich was discussed in the Soviet Composers' Union on 16 May, 1951. The summary of this discussion, published in Sovetskaya Muzyka, ends with the following words: "We must resolutely warn Dmitri Dmitrievich (Shostakovich) himself and all those composers who have not yet terminated all ties and traces with the modernistic past, from indulging these extremely undesirable relapses." "K obsuzhdeniyu 24 Preludii i Fug Shostakovicha," (A discussion of 24 Preludes and Fugues of Shostakovich) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 6 (May, 1951), 58, in Russian, my translation.

138 Index Nos 16-19.

the like. Perhaps, not everything was perfectly polished and virtuosic as with international pianists, but the imagery and unique colour of each prelude and fugue could not be interpreted more brightly than when it was performed by the composer himself. 139

Shostakovich's concert tours in 1951-1953 in the Soviet Union were frequent. Besides playing in Leningrad and Moscow, he also toured Lithuania (Vilnius, Kaunas), Latvia (Riga), Byelorussia (Minsk), Armenia (Yerevan), Georgia (Tbilisi), Azerbaijan (Baku), Ukraine (Kiev). The programmes included his new Preludes and Fugues, Op.87, the Second Piano Sonata and his ensemble compositions which he played with various different performers.

In the summer of 1953 he started composing his Tenth Symphony which was completed on 25 October of the same year. As usual, he made an arrangement of this Symphony for piano to play with composer Moisei Weinberg, his favourite duo-piano partner for many years. Weinberg tells us:

Since 1943 we played much classical music for four hands. We played Mozart and Haydn, Mahler and Stravinsky for ourselves. Dmitri Dmitrievich (Shostakovich) made many arrangements of his own and other composers' pieces for two pianos and used them in his Conservatoire classes for his student-composers. In 1947 he suggested to me that we perform his Fourth Symphony publicly. Later he arranged his 24 preludes and fugues for two pianos which we often performed. In 1953 he arranged his new Tenth Symphony for two pianos; we played it in Leningrad for Y. Mravinsky before its premiere. In the recording (of the Tenth Symphony) I play the "soprano" part and Shostakovich the bass. We

139 Quoted in the folder note of the record set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (I), p.5, in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, M10-39073-80.

always performed this in accordance with his wish. Later Shostakovich began to complain about his hands - it had already become difficult for him to play - and I had to sometimes substitute for him when premiering some of his works, for example, the cycle of Blok's verses and the Violin Sonata (with D. Oistrakh). Shostakovich's performance of his own works can be considered exemplary with regard to tempo, character and grasp of structure. As he conceived the piece - so he felt it. ¹⁴⁰

Shostakovich's and Weinberg's performance of the Tenth Symphony was recorded in 1954.¹⁴¹ In the same year Shostakovich's live performance of the First Piano Concerto was recorded with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by S. Samosud, the solo trumpet part was played by J. Volovnik.¹⁴² In 1955, he recorded his song cycle "From Jewish Folk Poetry" (with N. Dorliak, Z. Dolukhanova, A. Maslennikov),¹⁴³ his Cello Sonata (with M. Rostropovich)¹⁴⁴ and his Quintet (with the Beethoven Quartet).¹⁴⁵

D. Tsyganov recalls:

Later (1955) we made a new recording (of the Quintet) on disc.... This record was awarded "Grand Prix" in Paris.... The recording of the Quintet was made in three sessions. Firstly we recorded the prelude and

140 Ibid, p.6, in Russian, my translation.

141 Index No 21.

142 Index No 7.

143 Index No 15.

144 Index No 10.

145 Index No 11.

fugue. The next day, we recorded the scherzo only and then the last two movements. 146

In 1956, Shostakovich recorded the Concertino for Two Pianos with his son Maxim,¹⁴⁷ and the Four Preludes for Violin and Piano, Op.34 Nos 10, 15, 16 and 24 with L. Kogan, the arrangement for violin and piano was by D. Tsyganov.¹⁴⁸

Although Shostakovich's public performances were frequent in the middle nineteen fifties, he more often than not felt that they took too much of his time and affected his health. In addition, in 1955 pain began in his right hand which, as discovered later, was a symptom of a serious disease of the central nervous system. His disease, most probably, was accelerated by the tragic events of his life: the tragic death of his wife on 4 December, 1954¹⁴⁹ and thereafter within a year, the death of his mother on 9 November, 1955.

146 Tsyganov's memoirs are quoted in the folder note of the record set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (I), pp.5-6, in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, M10-39073-80.

147 Index No 23.

148 Index No 27.

149 Shostakovich's first wife and the mother of his two children, Nina Shostakovich (Varzar) died tragically from volvulus in Yerevan where she had been doing research as a physicist. She was only forty-five (1909-1954). At that time the children were teenagers: the daughter, Galina - eighteen and the son, Maxim - sixteen.

At that time, Shostakovich considered stopping his performances on stage as a soloist. He wrote to his former student, composer, Kara Karaev on 4 October, 1955:

I am living a hectic life. I am concertizing a lot, and without any particular pleasure. I am still unable to get used to the stage. It causes me a great many worries and affects my nerves. As soon as I reach 50 I'll stop concertizing.

For a long time I have not been composing anything. It upsets me very much. Actually, after the 10th Symphony I have composed nothing... Maxim¹⁵⁰ is completing school this year. What will happen with him further? All this is worrying me... 151

K. Kondrashin recalls that after Shostakovich's successful performance of the First Piano Concerto in Leningrad, 19 May, 1956, he again repeated his wish to stop concertizing. He was very nervous during the rehearsals, and said to Kondrashin after the concert:

Today I appeared for the last time as a soloist: such performances are too demanding for me. I have not been practising the piano regularly for many years, and when I have to perform I am very nervous! 152

Nevertheless he continued to perform, and the year 1957 was one of the most productive years of his performing life. He performed within the USSR almost

150 Shostakovich's son.

151 D. Shostakovich, letter to Kara Karaev. Kara Karaev Stat'i, Pis'ma, Vyskazivaniya (Kara Karaev. Articles, Correspondence, Opinions.) Moscow, 1978), p.53, in Russian, my translation.

152 Kondrashin, "Moi vstrechi," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.89, in Russian, my translation.

monthly in Leningrad, Moscow, Voronezh, Tambov, Sverdlovsk, Lvov, Kishinev and Odessa. In the same year the second recording of the following Preludes and Fugues, Op.87 was made,¹⁵³ namely Nos 1, 4-6, 13, 14, 18 and 23. (Nos 18 and 23 were recorded for the first time.) The other pieces had already been recorded once in 1952.

In January 1958 he was in Bulgaria in Sofia, where he played his Second Piano Concerto with the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, under K. Iliev. He also performed his Quintet, Op.57 with the members of the Beethoven Quartet in Sofia.¹⁵⁴

In May of the same year when he was in France, he played both Piano Concertos, some Preludes and Fugues from Op.87 and the Three Fantastic Dances in the Palais de Chaillot. His performance of the First Piano Concerto, (with the Orchestre National de la RTF, conducted by André Cluytens, solo trumpet - Ludovic Vaillant);¹⁵⁵ the Second Piano Concerto (with the same orchestra and conductor),¹⁵⁶ and the Three Fantastic Dances¹⁵⁷ were all recorded there.

153 Index No 20.

154 Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.195.

155 Index No 8.

156 Index No 26.

157 Index No 2.

A Soviet recording of Shostakovich's performance of the Second Piano Concerto was also made in 1958 with the All-Union Radio Symphonic Orchestra, conducted by Alexander Gauk.¹⁵⁸

1958 was the final year of Shostakovich's performing activity as a soloist. Thereafter he appeared rarely and only as an accompanist of his songs or as an ensemble player. For example, in February 1964, he played the Intermezzo from his Quintet, Op.57, in Gorky during the Festival of his works.¹⁵⁹

Two years earlier, in 1962, on 12 November, in Gorky, Shostakovich conducted his Festival Overture and the First Cello Concerto (the soloist was M. Rostropovich). (The second half of the same concert was conducted by M. Rostropovich). A critic's review on this concert was very encouraging:

In general, the orchestra sounded wonderfully. The performance of all the pieces was of a very high standard.¹⁶⁰

During the sixties, the condition of Shostakovich's right hand was deteriorating, but he struggled bravely with his incurable disease of the central nervous system. In

158 Index No 25.

159 Khentova, Shostakovich v gody... voiny, p.249.

160 V. Morenov, "Za dirizherskim pultom D. Shostakovich and M. Rostropovich," (D. Shostakovich and M. Rostropovich On the Conductor's Stand) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 1 (January, 1963), 109, in Russian, my translation.

1962, he demonstrated his new Thirteenth Symphony for his friends on the piano in his usual manner. Kondrashin recalls:

A.I. Khachaturyan, M.S. Weinberg, R.S. Bunin and some other people were at his home. Dmitri Dmitrievich (Shostakovich) played his Thirteenth Symphony for us having read beforehand Y. Yevtushenko's verses... I remember that after the performance Aram Ilyich (Khachaturyan) stood up and kissed him saying: "Thank you, Mitia. This is a great work." 161

M. Rostropovich and G. Vishnevskaya were also at his home on that evening. Vishnevskaya describes the event in her memoirs:

Dmitri Dmitriyevich (Shostakovich) was an excellent pianist, and always played his new works for friends himself until his illness made that impossible. On that autumn evening he sat down at the piano, played the prelude, and began to sing softly:

"No monument stands over Babi Yar..."

I always felt I was taking part in a secret rite when in our presence, yet one more work of Shostakovich's was being exposed to the world. Beginning with the first measures of that piece, all of us were gripped by an atmosphere of oppressive and tragic presentiment. Dmitri Dmitriyevich softly continued:

"Now I seem to be a Jew.

Here I plot through ancient Egypt.

Here I perish crucified, on the cross,

And to this day I bear the scars of nails."

With Shostakovich's music, the poem we all knew so well grew to global proportions and burned like red-iron. I could imagine suddenly the blood upon his shoulders, the "scars of nails," and my hair stood on end... 162

161 Kondrashin, "Moi vstrechi," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, pp.92-93, in Russian, my translation.

162 Galina Vishnevskaya and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Galina (London, 1984), pp.274-275.

When Shostakovich felt better he was happy to perform publicly, as he did on 28 May, 1966. This concert, celebrating Shostakovich's sixtieth birthday, took place in Leningrad where Shostakovich accompanied the singers Y. Nesterenko and G. Vishnevskaya. The latter remembers:

...I performed with Shostakovich for the only time in my life. It was at a concert in his honour at the Maly Hall of the Philharmonic in Leningrad...

He was a splendid pianist. But on the evening of the recital, waiting to go on stage, he was not only nervous, he was afraid - terrified that his hands would fail him....

The recital went off brilliantly. Never had I seen Shostakovich so joyous... 163

Bogdanov-Berezovsky wrote about this concert:

...Shostakovich's piano accompaniment in the "Preface to the Complete Collections of my Works, and Brief Reflections Apropos this Preface" (for bass and piano, Op.123), "Five Romances on texts from "Krokodil" Magazine" (Op.121), Romance on Shakespeare's Sonnet No 66, Aria from "Katerina Izmailova", and "Five Satires" on verses of Sasha Cherny" is amazing with its sharp visual imagery and sound characterisation. 164

This recital was the last of Shostakovich's public appearances as a pianist. Unfortunately, the excitement of the concert proved to be too much for him, and during the following night, 28-29 May, he suffered his first heart attack.

163 Ibid, pp.361-363.

164 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Otrochestvo i yunost," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.147, in Russian, my translation.

The last recording of Shostakovich performing was made, however, later in 1968. In December 1968, Shostakovich wrote:

...I have been writing music - this time a violin sonata. I wanted terribly to finish it in time for David Oistrakh's sixtieth birthday, which was in September. I intended to tie it up with a pink ribbon and give it to him as a gift. But, alas, I was too late.¹⁶⁵ It took me three months to compose the sonata, and I have only just completed it. Oistrakh is away on a tour at the moment, but as soon as he gets back to Moscow I hope he will learn the sonata and give its first performance. 166

When D. Oistrakh came back to Moscow he was anxious to learn Shostakovich's new Violin Sonata. Their almost "at sight" performance of the Sonata was then recorded:¹⁶⁷

The Violin Sonata was performed at Shostakovich's home by Oistrakh, with the composer, for an intimate circle of relatives and friends of Shostakovich. The acoustics did not favour the piano's tone. However, even this amateur recording brings to us Shostakovich's qualities as a pianist undiminished by the passage of the years: an immense emotional force, steel rhythmic drive... and a wonderful velocity in his fingers. 168

165 Shostakovich completed the Sonata on 23 December, 1968.

166 D. Shostakovich, in "Literaturnaya Gazeta," 4 December, 1968. Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.289.

167 Index No 28.

168 Victor Yuzefovich, notes on the record jacket of the set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (III) in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, M10-42045-46.

Until the last days of his life Dmitri Dmitrievich (Shostakovich) was distressed that he had stopped playing regularly and that he was not able to express what he wanted to do in the performance of his own works. None-the-less, although he praised other performers, he preferred to play by himself. 169

In the spring of 1969, Shostakovich was still able to play his new Fourteenth Symphony on the piano to his friends. Kondrashin recalls:

It was difficult for him to play because of the illness in his hands. When playing he sang the vocal part quietly, I would say even with a childish voice, so that it was only possible to create an impression from the work by following the score. However, a number of lyrical episodes (such as "The Suicide", "The Death of the Poet", and "O Delvig, Delvig!") made an enormous impression. 170

Later, Shostakovich suffered badly when he was no longer able to practice, and a few moments of piano playing were very exciting for him. This is reflected in his words published in June 1970: "I can play the piano again! I practise 2 or 3 hours a day, getting back my technique". 171

169 Quoted in the folder note of the record set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (I), p.5, in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, M10-39073-80.

170 Kondrashin, "Moi vstrechi," D. Shostakovich, Stat'i i materialy, p.95, in Russian, my translation.

171 D. Shostakovich, in "Sovetskaya Kultura," 2 June, 1970. Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.294.

Unfortunately such periods became increasingly rare during the remaining five years of his life, until completely impossible.

In conclusion of this section, it is stressed that Shostakovich not only contributed greatly to the piano music of our century, but also that his experience as a concert performer was of importance to him in his compositional creativity. He wrote the following in 1966:

...I am very well aware of how my audience perceives my music - and not after, but during the actual performance. I am clearly helped in this by the fact that I myself am a performer, and used to appear in public until 1958. If it were not for my incapacitated hand, I would still be playing today. 172

In 1973 he also stated:

I used to be a pianist and performed in public, both my own works and others. I am very aware of my audience. Often it happens that I am sitting listening to one of my own works, and I am aware that my ideas are falling on stony ground; at other times I feel that real contact has been made. It was very useful, by the way, that I learned to play the piano and performed in public. It has been of enormous benefit for my composition. It also made me aware of the audience, whom I always try to serve. 173

172 D. Shostakovich in Muzykalnaya Zhizn, No 17, 1966. Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.272.

173 Shorthand report of interview on American television 1973. Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.317.

Shostakovich's art as a pianist should be recognised and studied. This thesis is one of the first endeavours in this field. Shostakovich was both a composer and performer of genius. Fortunately through his recordings Shostakovich's unique art of interpretation can be demonstrated for generations to come.

2.5 Shostakovich as an Ensemble Player

Shostakovich appeared as an ensemble performer most of his life (until 1966). Khentova notes¹⁷⁴ that it was during the difficult years of his work in cinema (1923-1924), when he had to play with different ensemble groups, that his skill as an accompanist and ensemble performer began to develop.

Later, in 1928, when working for V. Meyerhold's theatre, the composer had to participate a great deal in ensemble performances. Shostakovich wrote:

My work at the theatre really consisted in my playing the piano. If, let us say, in the course of "The Government Inspector" one of the actresses had to sing a Glinka romance, I would put on a dress-coat, enter the stage as one of the guests and accompany her at the piano. I also played in the orchestra. 175

During the years 1925-1928 he often accompanied the talented singer Lydia Vyrlan. Bogdanov-Berezovsky wrote in a review about their concert in 1928 that:¹⁷⁶

Lydia Vyrlan is a thoughtful and sensitive artist... The singer found in D. Shostakovich a wonderful partner whose qualities as a performer were suitable to her artistic individuality.

174 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.29.

175 D. Shostakovich, in Sovetskaya Muzyka, 3 (March, 1974). Translated and quoted in Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.321.

176 Bogdanov-Berezovsky, Stat'i, p.158, in Russian, my translation.

As Shostakovich's experience as a performer in ensemble groups grew, he developed a particular system for his rehearsals. D. Tsyganov relates:

Fist of all, he performed his new piece on the piano from the score, then, he gave us its parts and always asked not to begin playing without him. 177

Shostakovich often asked for five or six ensemble rehearsals even if a piece had already been performed more than once.¹⁷⁸ The rehearsals usually occurred with a minimum of verbal explanations, and with the emphasis on many repeated performances, during which the tempo, dynamics, balance and other subtleties would be found.¹⁷⁹ Some of these findings have been incorporated in the new Soviet Edition of Shostakovich's Collected Works¹⁸⁰ from the parts of the performers. (A number of such changes will be discussed further during the course of this thesis).

D. Mogilevsky, the cellist of the Glazunov Quartet, reminiscing about the Quartet's performance with the composer of his Quintet, Op.57 recalls:

177 Dmitri Tsyganov, "Polveka vmeste" (Half a Century Together) Sovetskaya Muzyka, 9 (September, 1976), 30, in Russian, my translation.

178 Khentova, Shostakovich - pianist, p.76.

179 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, pp.208-209.

180 D. Shostakovich. Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes. Vol. 35-38. Moscow: State Publishers "Music", 1980-1983.

We, the string players, wanted "to sing" more, to play more emotionally. Shostakovich placed more emphasis upon the structural and motoric elements, and achieved the impact through the rhythmic precision. His emotional reservation provided a contradiction to the strings. He demanded a minimum of vibrato. The fast tempos on their own, excluded any possibility of emotional exaggerations and an "open" cantilena of the stringed instruments. 181

The same "contradiction" was obvious when Shostakovich performed his Cello Sonata in 1946-1947 with the cellist D. Shafran. Musicologist I. Yampolsky writes:

Shafran's manner of performing was soft and poetical, Shostakovich's was rhythmically sharply edged, and the contrast created subtle... shadings which etched an unusual tone picture. 182

Shostakovich was extremely selfdemanding and tireless in his work and expected the same from others. D. Tsyganov remembers¹⁸³ that during the war years they often played Shostakovich's Quintet on the radio for overseas listeners with him, and that they would perform it four or five times over the same night. During these exhausting performances there were breaks of one to one and a half hours only. Nevertheless,

Each broadcast performance was played by him like the

181 Khentova, Molodye gody, Book 1, p.209, in Russian, my translation.

182 Quoted by V. Yuzefovich in the notes on the record jacket of the set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (III), in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, MI0-42045-46.

183 Tsyganov, "Polveka vmeste," p.30, in Russian, my translation.

first: with great enthusiasm, and without any signs of exhaustion. Exactly the same attitude towards the performance art was expected by him from each of us. 184

Maxim Shostakovich remembers:

When father had faith in a performer he would take a most active part in the creative process. If on the other hand he didn't believe in someone, if he understood that any interference would be in vain, somehow he immediately shut himself off, and in reply to the musician's query about his performance would usually say hastily, "Fine, fine". Those he trusted and liked would sometimes be told their performance had been bad. 185

Just as the performance of his own solo compositions was inimitable so was his performance of his chamber music. Tsyganov's appreciation of this fact seems to be most correct:

Shostakovich was an unsurpassed interpreter of his own solo and chamber works. He played them in a style of interpretation which was typical for him... and which became an ideal for any performer.... In his pianism, as in all his creative work, one could feel the aura of his genius. His playing was wilful, unusually concentrated, disciplined, rhythmically astonishingly organized... and at the same time free, though improvisatory. In every concert - and we played his Quintet with him many times - his performance revealed something new, as though the music was created afresh... The art of Shostakovich's pianism does not find an appropriate manner of expression even in the performances of the greatest pianists. 186

184 Ibid.

185 Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life, p.222.

186 Quoted in the folder note of the record set Dmitri Shostakovich - pianist, (I), pp.5-6, in Russian, my translation. USSR, Melodiya, M10-39073-80.

Even those performers who were fortunate enough to work closely with the composer have confirmed that he disliked to give explanations regarding the interpretation of his pieces. G. Vishnevskaya informs us that:

Shostakovich did not like to talk about his compositions, and never explained the significance of given musical phrases to the performers of his works. It was as if he were afraid of words - afraid that words might destroy his inner musical vision. He always granted artists the right to interpret his works and so put the responsibility squarely on their shoulders. 187

The responsibility of interpreting Shostakovich's works in a manner that he would approve of imposes difficulties for any thinking musician. However the composer did everything he could to help us fulfil this task. His scores are deeply expressive, and he left many of his own recordings to us so that we may hear and study his own style of interpretation. In the following chapters of this thesis, Shostakovich's recordings will be investigated in order to draw attention to his specific style of performance and to contribute to the better understanding of his performance art.

186 Vishnevskaya, Galina, p.350.

CHAPTER THREE

DIFFERENT TEXTUAL VERSIONS IN SHOSTAKOVICH'S SCORES AND RECORDINGS

3.1 Shostakovich's Approach Towards the Correction and Revision of His Work

Shostakovich wrote:

If a work turns out badly, I leave it as it stands and try to avoid making the same mistakes in the next work. This is my personal style of work. Perhaps it springs from the desire to do as much as possible. When I learn that a composer has eleven versions of one symphony, I cannot help thinking: how many new works could he have written in all that time?

Of course, I too sometimes return to an old work. I changed quite a lot in the score of my opera "Katerina Izmailova", for example - about thirty years after I wrote it. ¹

Shostakovich's own changes in his published scores are really very rare. One such revision was made in his Cello Sonata, Op.40 which was written in 1934. The Sonata was performed for at least eleven years in accordance with the first publication of 1935.² This is demonstrated by Shostakovich's performance with cellist D. Shafran,³ in 1946. His second recording of the same Sonata with M. Rostropovich,⁴ probably in 1955, contains

1 D. Shostakovich, in Literaturnaya Gazeta, 21 December 1965. Dmitry Shostakovich About Himself, p.264.

2 D. Shostakovich. Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op.40. Leningrad: "Triton" Edition, 1935.

3 Index No 9.

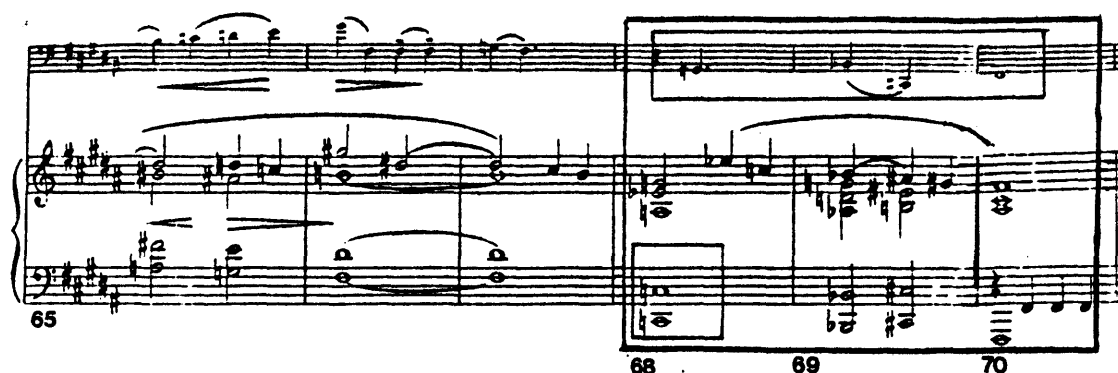
4 Index No 10.

certain textual differences which appear in the later editions, under the editorship of V. Kubatsky.⁵

The recent Soviet Collected Works Edition of the Sonata⁶ is based on the 1971 Kubatsky edition. The Collected Works Edition fails to mention important changes, in the editorial comments, such as those contained in bars 68-80 and 188-190 of the first movement for both the piano and cello parts. (See Examples 1a and 1b; and 2a and 2b. The bars which contain changes are marked with a square frame).

Example 1. Cello Sonata, Op.40/1/68-70

a) First Edition, published in 1935:



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- 5 D. Shostakovich, Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op.40
Ed. by V. Kubatsky. Moscow: Muzgiz, 1960. The same
work was republished by the State Publishers "Music",
No 6366, Moscow: 1971, with added viola parts in paral-
lel versions by V. Kubatsky and Y. Strakhov.
- 6 D. Shostakovich, "Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op.40,"
Collected Works, Vol. 38, Chamber Music.
Ed. by A. Nikolayev. State Publishers "Music", No
10927. Moscow: 1982, pp.3-36.

b) Collected Works Edition, published in 1982:

65 68 69 70

riten. a tempo

Example 2. Cello Sonata, Op. 40/1/188-190

a) First Edition, published in 1935:

187 188 189 190

rit. p espr.

b) Collected Works Edition, published in 1982:

186 188 189 190

riten. a tempo

P espress.

The abovementioned examples where Shostakovich changed the published score are not typical for him. More often than not Shostakovich's changes which occurred during his actual performances were not included in the published editions and remain only in the recordings.⁷ All the discrepancies between the published scores and Shostakovich's recordings which are listed in this chapter were discovered by the author by listening to records and tape recordings, aurally noting the discrepancies, and thereafter writing them down.

These examples can be grouped into three categories:

3.2 Changes of Notes

3.3 Changes of Ties and the Repetition of Long Notes

3.4 The Spreading of Chords, which are not Indicated in the Score.

3.2 Changes of Notes

Some of the notational changes sound twice in different recordings. This is a strong indication that the composer intended the changes to be as performed. For instance, in both the Soviet⁸ and the French⁹

7 Some of the changes made during the rehearsals of his chamber and symphonic compositions were inserted in different volumes of the Collected Works Edition from the scores of the musicians who worked with Shostakovich during these rehearsals.

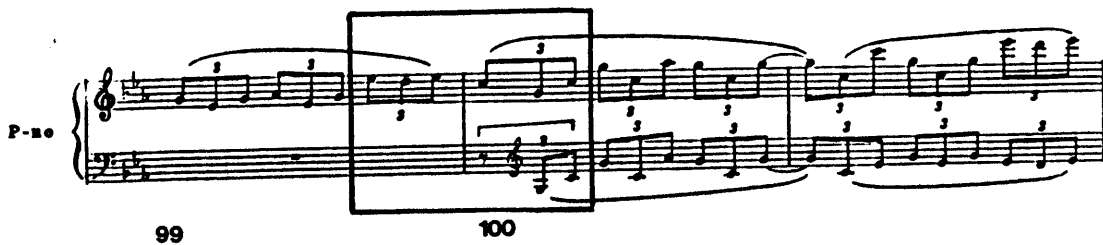
8 Index No 25.

9 Index No 26.

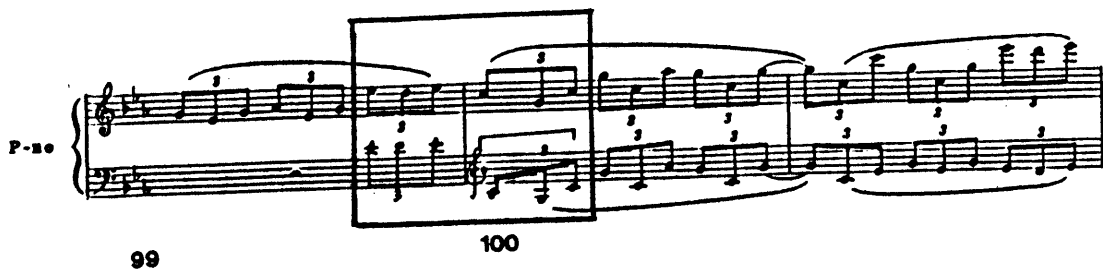
recordings of his Second Piano Concerto,¹⁰ Shostakovich starts playing in octaves from the third beat of bar 99 and not from bar 100 as is written in the score. See Examples 3a and 3b for comparison.

Example 3. Second Piano Concerto, Op.102/2/99-100

a) The published version:



b) The performed version. 1st recording (USSR) 1958;
2nd recording (France) 1958:



10 Date of composition: 1957; 1st publication of the orchestral score: 1959.

In the same movement, in bar 62, right hand, beat 3, quaver 1, Shostakovich plays B flat instead of A flat which is printed in all editions. See Examples 4a and 4b.

Example 4. Second Piano Concerto, Op.102/2/62

- a) The published version: b) The performed version, 1st recording (USSR) 1958; 2nd recording (France) 1958:



There are also situations when there are dual recordings of the same piece by Shostakovich, and where one finds that he plays in terms of the written score in one recording and deviates from the written score in the other recording. In such cases it is difficult to say whether or not the alteration was intended. Such a discrepancy is to be heard in the Soviet¹¹ and French¹² recording of his Fantastic Dance, Op.5/2/37. It is interesting to note that

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the appoggiatura sound in bar 37 in the Soviet recording¹³ of 1947 (Example 5a) virtually coincides with what is written in the autograph¹⁴ of 1922. The French recording¹⁵ of 1958 is consistent with the published version (Example 5b) which is without this appoggiatura.

Example 5. Fantastic Dance, Op.5/2/37

a) The Soviet recording, 1947, 1st recording:



b) The published version and the French recording, 1958, 2nd recording:



There are a number of examples containing alterations which differ from the score, and for which only one

13 Index No 1.

14 In the first autograph the appoggiatura is written as follows:  See T. Nikolayeva's editorial comments in Russian at the end of Vol. 39 of the Collected Works.

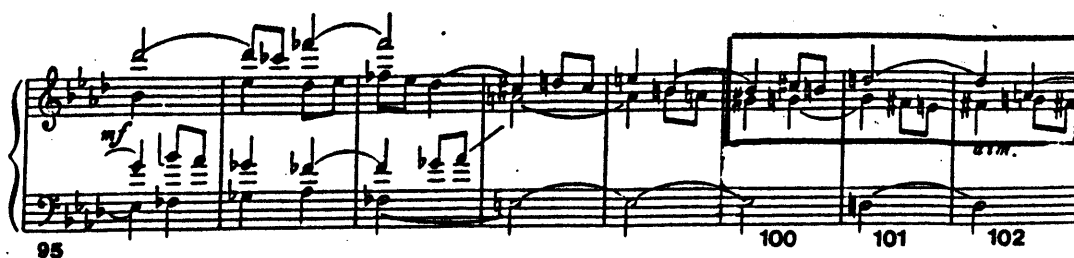
15 Index No 2.

recording exists. In all these instances it is impossible to say whether or not the change was intended or was merely the result of spontaneous performance. Nonetheless, all these examples are important for editorial comment. Unfortunately none of the examples given in this section have been noticed or mentioned in any edition to date, including the latest Soviet Edition of Shostakovich's Collected Works.

In the Piano Fugue in F Minor, Op.87/18,¹⁶ the middle voice in bars 100-102 and the top voice in bar 102, is played as shown in Example 6b. This is different to the published version shown in Example 6a.

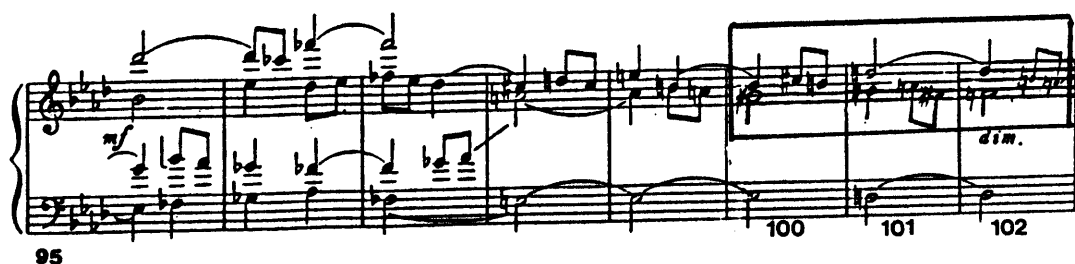
Example 6. Piano Fugue, Op.87/18/100-102.

a) The published version:



16 Index No 20. Date of composition: 1951; 1st publication: 1952.

b) The performed version, single recording 1957:



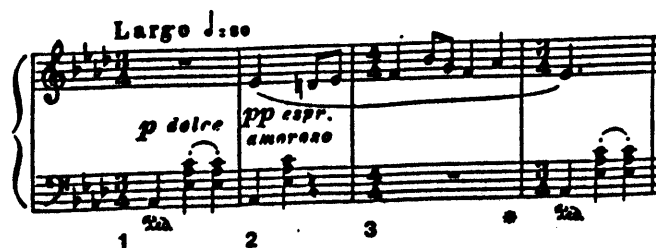
In the Piano Prelude in A flat Major, Op.34/17¹⁷
Shostakovich only plays one bar of the two introductory
bars. This cut is shown in Example 7b which is
contrasted with the published version shown in Example 7a.

Example 7. Piano Prelude, Op.34/17/1-2

a) The published version:



b) The performed version, single recording 1947:

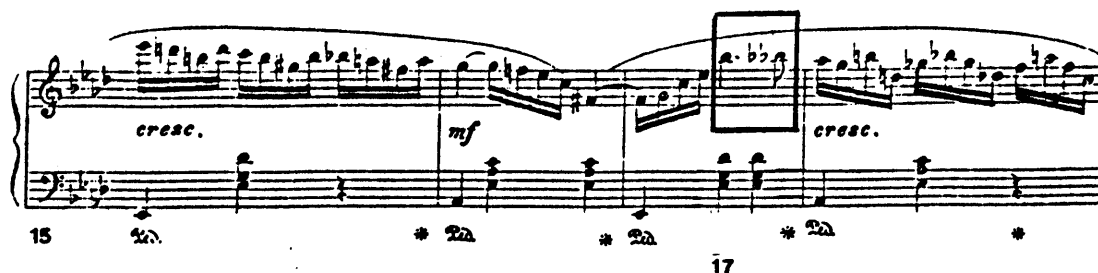


17 Index No 4. Date of composition: 1933; 1st
publication: 1934.

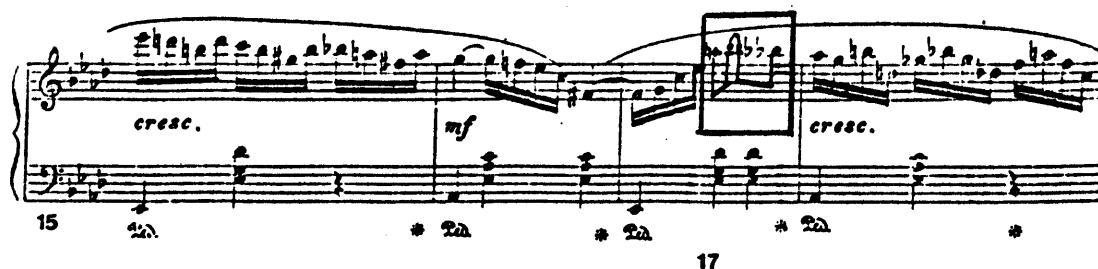
In the same Prelude, Shostakovich plays two quavers, A natural and B flat, in bar 17, in the top voice, on beat 2, instead of the dotted crotchet, B flat, which is printed in all the editions (see Examples 8a and 8b).

Example 8. Piano Prelude, Op.34/17/17

a) The published version:



b) The performed version, single recording 1947:



One of the most interesting examples of Shostakovich's change in musical text is to be found in his performance of the piano miniature "Birthday", which is the seventh piece from the Children's Notebook, Op.69. This opus was composed in 1944-1945 for his daughter Galina. The first six pieces were published in 1945.¹⁸

18 D. Shostakovich. Children's Notebook, Op.69. Music Fund of the USSR, 1945.

Shostakovich recorded the entire cycle of seven pieces in 1947.¹⁹ The last piece, "Birthday", however, was first published in 1983 in Volume 39 of the Collected Works.²⁰ T. Nikolayeva, the editor of Volume 39 writes that the autograph of this piece has been lost²¹ "but there is a copy of it at the Central State Archives of the Literature and Art of the USSR" in Moscow upon which the first publication of "Birthday" is based. The copy at the Central State Archives is the only existing copy of this piece.

The recorded variant of "Birthday" differs greatly from the published version in that the latter is fifty three bars long (see Example 9a), whereas Shostakovich plays only forty bars (see Example 9b), excising thirteen bars of the Coda. Shostakovich also plays different notes in bar 15 which is indicated by the present writer as "ossia" in Example 9b. (The metronome speeds, pedal

19 Index No 14.

20 D. Shostakovich, "Birthday," Op.69, No 7, Collected Works, Vol. 39, Works for Piano. Ed. by T. Nikolayeva. Moscow: State Publishers "Music", 1983, pp.131-132.

21 D. Shostakovich, Collected Works, Vol. 39. Editor's Note in Russian and English at the beginning of the Volume. The autographs (which are mistakenly translated into English as "autograph copies") of the first six pieces are preserved in two institutions: a) the Central State Archives and b) the State Central Glinka Museum of Musical Culture. At the end of Volume 39, Nikolayeva writes in Russian that the Collected Works publication of the first six pieces is based on the first edition, 1945, of the Music Fund of the USSR, which was, probably, based on the Glinka Museum's autograph.

indications and duration of the recording have also been marked with a square frame.)

Example 9. "Birthday," Op.69/7

a) The published version:

The musical score for "Birthday" by Ludwig van Beethoven, Op. 69 No. 7, is presented in a single system of two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The piece begins with a forte (ff) dynamic marking. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The score is divided into two systems of seven measures each, with a double bar line after the first system. The second system ends with a repeat sign. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the 22nd measure.

Four staves of musical notation for a piano piece, measures 26-39. The notation is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords and rests. Measure numbers 26, 29, 32, and 35 are indicated at the start of their respective staves.

b) The performed version, single recording 1947:

Three staves of musical notation for a piano piece, measures 126-139. The notation is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords and rests. Measure numbers 126, 129, 132, and 135 are indicated at the start of their respective staves. The first staff is marked **ff** and **con Ped.**. The second staff is marked **Poco più mosso d.: 72** and **Ped. = simile**. The third staff is marked **15** and **Coda:**. A coda section is shown below the third staff, measures 136-139, with measure numbers 136 and 139 indicated.



[Duration: 37"]

The numerical order of the recorded and the published pieces also varies. As shown in Table I below, the "Bear" is placed in position No 5 in the recording and in position No 3 in the Collected Works Edition. The "Sad Story" has position No 3 in the recording and position No 5 in the Collected Works Edition.

Table I. The Order of the Pieces of Children's Notebook, Op.69 in the Collected Works Edition and in Shostakovich's Recording

Collected Works Edition	Recording
1. March	1. March
2. Waltz	2. Waltz
3. The Bear	3. Sad Story
4. Funny Story	4. Funny Story
5. Sad Story	5. The Bear
6. Clockwork Doll	6. Clockwork Doll
7. Birthday	7. Birthday

Although Nikolayeva mentions that the sequence of the first six pieces in the Central Archives autographs differs from that of the Glinka Museum autograph, she fails to specify the precise differences.²²

The 1947 recording by Shostakovich of the "Birthday" differs from the single existing published copy from the Central Archives. Nikolayeva fails to clarify why she includes the copy of the "Birthday" with the Glinka Museum autograph, instead of including it with the Central Archives autograph. It is submitted that the 1947 recording of the "Birthday" may well be considered to be as authentic as the existing copy for the following reasons:

- i) there is no recording of the copy;

22 See Nikolayeva's comments in Russian at the end of Vol. 39 of the Collected Works.

- ii) there is no autograph or extra copy for comparison purposes;
- iii) the only recorded performance by Shostakovich differs from the copy;
- iv) the recorded performance (1947) is two years later than the copy (1945) and favours the conclusion that it was intended to be the final variant.

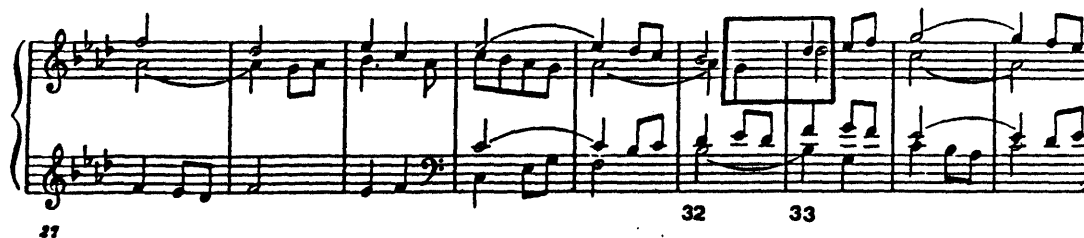
Sometimes Shostakovich's performances contain notes which differ in pitch from the score and which are probably accidental errors. For instance, in the Piano Fugue, in F Minor, Op.87/18/32-33,²³ Shostakovich plays the fourth, G-C, in the alto instead of the fifth, G-D, which is written in the score (see Examples 10a and 10b). The soprano and alto, in his performance, form an interval of a minor second instead of the prime interval which is published in the score. This is derived from countersubject 2 which appears in the alto from bar 30 to bar 38. In six of the seven appearances of this countersubject a fifth sounds in the analogous bars.²⁴ Shostakovich plays a fourth, only once in bars 32-33. It is submitted that this is obviously a performance mistake.

23 Index No 20. Date of composition: 1951; 1st publication: 1952.

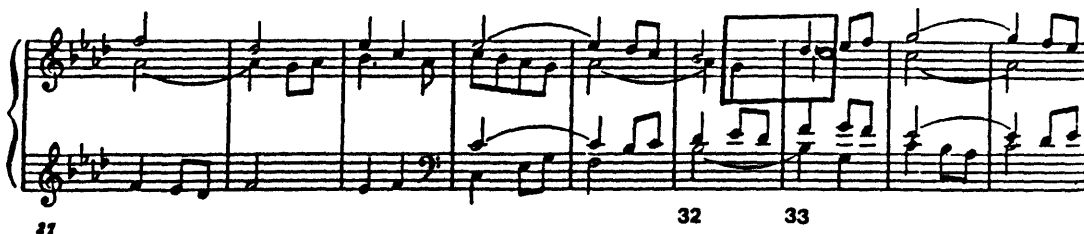
24 Namely: soprano bars 25-26; tenor bars 51-52; tenor bars 58-59; soprano bars 79-80; alto bars 109-110; tenor bars 116-117.

Example 10. Piano Fugue, Op.87/18/32-33

a) The published version:



b) The performed version, single recording 1957:



In the same Fugue an analogous situation arises in bars 59-60 in the alto where, in the thematic entry, Shostakovich plays a fifth, B flat-F, instead of the fourth, B flat-E flat, which is printed in the score (see Examples 11a and 11b). Whenever the theme appears in the Fugue there is a fourth. The fifth occurs only once, in bars 59-60, in Shostakovich's performance. This is again a mistake.²⁵

25 To date there is only one complete Western recording of the cycle of Shostakovich's Preludes and Fugues, Op.87 which is played by the pianist Roger Woodward (2 record box set. Label: RCA Red Seal LRL2 5100). Unfortunately, there are some wrong notes which are played by Woodward in this recording which warrant castigation. For instance, in the Prelude, Op.87/20 A natural is played in bars 9, 12, 28 and 29 instead of A flat (see Example 12). It is surprising that he does not recognise his error, even in bar 12 where Shostakovich writes A natural as an alteration to A