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Echoes of the Past: Stylistic and Compositional Influences in the Music of Sergei Bortkiewicz

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ECHOES OF THE PAST:
STYLISTIC AND COMPOSITIONAL INFLUENCES
IN THE MUSIC OF SERGEI BORTKIEWICZ

by

Jeremiah A. Johnson

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University of Nebraska, 2016

Adviser: Mark K. Clinton

Despite the wide array of his compositional output in the first half of the twentieth century, the late Romantic composer, Sergei Bortkiewicz (1877-1952), remains relatively unknown. Bortkiewicz was born and raised near Kharkov, Ukraine, but considered himself Russian. Bortkiewicz studied in St. Petersburg and Leipzig, lived in Berlin, and later returned to Kharkov during World War I. During the Russian Revolution, he fled to Istanbul as a refugee. Eventually, he returned to Berlin and then to Vienna, where he would remain during World War II and for the rest of his life. Substantial modern-day recording efforts have rekindled interest in this composer who was faced with difficult circumstances throughout his life; however, a paucity of scholarly contributions exist. This project seeks to address some of these shortages.

The first chapter provides historical perspective concerning Kharkov and Ukraine in the decades prior to the birth of Bortkiewicz. The second chapter presents a biography of Bortkiewicz against the backdrop of important events in world history. The third chapter contains commentary regarding Bortkiewicz's compositional output which consisted primarily of works for the piano, but also included orchestral works, solo concerti, one opera, and several collections of songs. Unfortunately, some of these pieces have been lost as a result of World War II.

The fourth chapter examines the compositional style of Sergei Bortkiewicz. Despite Bortkiewicz's pro-Russian sentiments, some of his music appears to contain Ukrainian folk idioms. Other observations in this chapter supplement the work of Nils Franke regarding musical retrospection in Bortkiewicz's works. These additional examples reaffirm harmonic and textural similarities and other stylistic connections in Bortkiewicz's music. Ultimately, these similarities have pedagogical advantages notably through stylistic comparisons and might affect one's approach to interpreting Bortkiewicz's music.

DEDICATION

For Chloe and Claire

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the wide array of his compositional output in the first half of the twentieth century, Sergei Bortkiewicz's works have been largely neglected by scholars. Most of the discourse written about him was written by the composer himself in his *Recollections*¹, which were completed in 1936. The remainder of his life until his death (from 1936-1952) can be pieced together through Bortkiewicz's letters and correspondence.

Nils Franke, a German-born pianist, pedagogue, and Head of Studies at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) remarked that "scholarly interest in Bortkiewicz's life and music has to date fallen into two specific categories, that of performance and biographical scholarship. However, one of these is more extensively represented than the other."² Franke explained that the performance documentation of Bortkiewicz's music has been more systematic from LP recordings in the 1970s and early 1980s, before a wide range of CDs appeared from the late 1990s onwards; these recordings cover a vast majority of Bortkiewicz's compositional output for "solo piano, piano chamber music, concerto, and symphonic writing."³ Several pianists have made a valiant effort to record a substantial portion of the known published piano repertoire. Some of these artists include Jouni Somero, Stephen Coombs, Klaas Trapman, and Cyprien Katsaris.⁴ "However, scholarly interest in the composer has been

¹ Bortkiewicz wrote these in German and referred to them as *Erinnerungen*, or "memories."

² Nils Franke, "Sergei Bortkiewicz: Musical Retrospection as a Lasting Art Form," *Music Science Today: the permanent and the changeable*, (Daugavpils, Latvia: Daugavpils University - Academic Publishing House, 2013), 110.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Wouter Kalkman, "List of Recordings," *Sergei Bortkiewicz: his life and music*, 2015, <www.sergeibortkiewicz.com>.

limited to a handful of publications that focus mainly on the biographical aspect of his life,”⁵ Franke added.

Ria Feldmann is one of the few who has delved into Bortkiewicz’s music, and her work in 1972 included an annotated catalog of the known Bortkiewicz works. Other projects, like the one submitted by Elke Paul to the Mozarteum in Salzburg in 2004, dealt with Bortkiewicz’s “Leben und Werk” [Life and Work] from the standpoint of a number of specific musicological focus areas.⁶ Bortkiewicz aficionado, Bhagwan Thadani, translated the *Recollections* into English⁷, although the translation could use a general editorial cleanup, because there are repeated paragraphs, misspelled words, and incorrect, inconsistent, or outright missing dates.⁸ Thadani was instrumental in saving some of Bortkiewicz’s works, like the *Russian Rhapsody*, Op. 45, from unpublished oblivion.⁹ Wooter Kalkman, a scholar and curator, currently maintains a website (Bortkiewicz.com) which contains biographical information, a listing of works (including their location and how to receive them), and links to other related reading. Pianist Anna Reznik has done considerable work on the pedagogical and pianistic aspects of Bortkiewicz’s music, although her writings are solely in Russian.

⁵ Franke, *Music Science Today*, 111.

⁶ Franke discussing Paul, in *Music Science Today*, 111.

⁷ Thadani refers to his English translation of the *Erinnerungen* as “Recollections, Letters and Documents,” as it contains correspondence as well as other documents like concert reviews and Bortkiewicz’s obituary.

⁸ Author’s Note: Thadani’s editorial errors of grammar and punctuation—particularly in quotes—have been corrected silently. Care has been taken by this author to keep quotes as Thadani translated them in order to preserve Bortkiewicz’s original meaning and personality as closely as possible without sacrificing readability and clarity.

⁹ Bhagwan Thadani, *Recollections, Letters and Documents*, translated from German and annotated, (Winnipeg: Cantext Publishing, 2007), 80-81.

Despite these in-depth resources, considerable scholarly shortages still remain regarding Bortkiewicz's music. In general, most of what has been written is in the genre of shorter articles rather than detailed investigations. From a pedagogical standpoint, Jane Magrath minimally covers some of Bortkiewicz's teaching pieces aimed at novice piano students, but she omits a wide range of others in the *Pianist's Guide to the Standard Teaching Repertoire*.¹⁰ Furthermore, other characteristics regarding Bortkiewicz's music have not been examined at all. For instance, extensive analysis of Bortkiewicz's music or a critical or scholarly edition of his complete works (despite some of the works being lost or missing) is not available. Other hindrances include the fact that many important documents are in Dutch, Russian, English, German, and even Japanese—and have not been translated. Franke concluded, "It is clear that at the time of writing [2012], a systematic scholarly enquiry into Bortkiewicz's achievements as a composer, teacher and pianist, is yet to take place."¹¹

This project will address some of these shortages, delving further into the musical inspiration in Sergei Bortkiewicz's compositions. The first chapter will put into perspective the city of Kharkov in the late 1800s, where Bortkiewicz was raised. Today, Kharkov is located within the country of Ukraine although historically, its geographic boundaries have shifted. Kharkov was a hub for Romantic intelligentsia in the nineteenth century, and its unique geography both helped and hindered the city at crucial moments in Russian and Ukrainian history.

¹⁰ Jane Magrath, *The Pianist's Guide to the Standard Teaching Repertoire*, (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., 1995), 310-312.

¹¹ Franke, *Music Science Today*, 111.

The second chapter will cover biographical information pertinent to the composer, with particular attention to placing Bortkiewicz's life within the backdrop of key, historic world events, supported by his own fascinating stories and personal accounts. His unique perspective as a touring musician in Europe during the Russian Revolution and *both* World Wars is captivating, yet tragic.

The third chapter will deal specifically with Bortkiewicz's compositional output, backed with source material from the composer, as well as commentary from Bhagwan Thadani, translator and Bortkiewicz scholar, and Wooter Kalkman, a curator and contributor to *Bortkiewicz.com*. After establishing this framework of Bortkiewicz's output, the fourth chapter will delve into his specific musical style and the potential influences in his compositions, which primarily include inspiration from other Romantic composers and Ukrainian folk music.

A fifth and final chapter will discuss pedagogical advantages to stylistic similarities found in Bortkiewicz and other works of the Romantic Era. Despite many years without significant scholarly interest, newly discovered scores have led to recent recordings and opened the door for future research topics. Modern-day efforts have revived fresh interest in this wonderful composer and his relatively unknown works.

CHAPTER ONE: A BRIEF HISTORY OF UKRAINE

It would seem that a composer from Kharkov, Ukraine, undoubtedly would employ the use of Ukrainian folk music and localized folk elements in his music; however, Bortkiewicz rarely acknowledged Ukraine in his own writings and compositions. Throughout his career, he continuously referenced his own pieces with the label “Russian,” for instance: *Russian Dances for Orchestra*, Op. 18; *Russian Melodies and Dances*, Op. 31; *Russian Rhapsody*, Op. 45; *Russian Poems on German Texts*, Op. 47 (for singer and piano); “Russian Peasant Girl,” from *Marionettes*, Op. 54; and the “Tema Russo,” [Russian theme] from the third movement of the Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 16.

In fact, any mention of Ukraine in Bortkiewicz’s *Recollections* appears quite tangentially. Here is one of the few such occurrences: “I spent the summer (as before in earlier years) on our estate ‘Artiomowka,’ 24 kilometers from the city of Charkow [Kharkov]. We thus lived in Little-Russia, in the so-called Ukraine. A beautiful country with fertile lands.”¹²

Being that Bortkiewicz lived in Kharkov but referred to it as “Little-Russia,” one must first delve into a brief history of the geopolitical factors at the time concerning Ukraine which would ultimately influence Bortkiewicz’s pro-Russian upbringing. Ukraine’s history is long, complex, and politically divided. “The land that’s now Ukraine has long been dear to Russian nationalists,” Ishaan Tharoor outlined in a Washington

¹² Thadani, *Recollections*, 9.

Post article, *How Ukraine became Ukraine* in March 2015. Ukraine has also been home to a host of other peoples, empires, shifting borders, and overlapping histories.¹³

1.1 Kharkov before Bortkiewicz

Originally, Scandinavian traders and settlers in the eighth through thirteenth centuries, the *Rus*, were the people for whom Russia was named. They “made their way from the Baltic Sea through the marshes and forests of Eastern Europe down toward the fertile river lands of what is now Ukraine,” Tharoor explained; “the first major center of the *Rus* was at Kiev, established in the 9th century.”¹⁴ Beginning in the thirteenth century, successive Mongol invasions subdued Kiev’s influence, and eventually led to the rise of Moscow and other settlements to the north.¹⁵

From 1650 to 1812, the land that is now Ukraine lay on the outskirts of competing territories and constantly shifting borders. Tharoor mentioned, “Ukraine would also see the incursions of Hungarians, Ottomans, Swedes, bands of Cossacks,¹⁶ and the armies of successive Russian czars.”¹⁷

Poland and Russia divided much of the region of what is now Ukraine along the Dniper River in the 1600s. Tharoor continued, “Russia’s advance continued a century

¹³ Ishaan Tharoor and Gene Thorp, “Maps: How Ukraine became Ukraine,” from *The Washington Post*, 9 March 2015, <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/03/09/maps-how-ukraine-became-ukraine/>>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Cossacks were a group of military warriors who specialized in riding on horseback; Rent, Suzanne, “The Cossacks,” *History Magazine Online*.

¹⁷ Tharoor, *How Ukraine became Ukraine*, 2015.

later, during the rule of Catherine the Great, who imagined her domains along the Black Sea constituted ‘Novorossiya,’ or ‘new Russia.’”¹⁸

In the late eighteenth century, the partitions of Poland led to the city of Lviv falling under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian empire. “It was there in the mid-19th century where Ukrainian nationalism began to take hold, rooted in the traditions and dialects of the region’s peasants and the aspirations of intellectuals who had fled the stifling rule of Russia . . .” Tharoor outlined.

Svitlana Kobets, a Literature and Humanities Instructor at the University of Toronto, detailed this intellectual renaissance in her historical and cultural survey,

Ukrainian Romanticism:

Ukraine entered the nineteenth century as a stagnating, culturally inadequate province of Imperial Russia. The century-long brain drain to the metropolis and denationalization of its nobility were devastating to Ukraine’s culture. Western ideas of Romantic nationalism, especially those of Herder, inspired rediscovery of Ukraine’s historical past, instigating the efforts of the educated elites for national self-assertion. . . . Historical scholarship comprised an integral part of the national movement, as did ethnographic studies. Numerous collections of historical and folk materials were published.¹⁹

According to Kobets, one of the first Russian Romantics to explore the Ukrainian Cossacks was Kondratii Ryleev (1795-1826).²⁰ Other works involving Ukrainian thematic materials were Faddei Bulgarin’s novel *Mazepa*,²¹ Pushkin’s historical epic *Poltava*, and

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Svitalana Kobets, “Ukrainian Romanticism: Historical and Cultural Survey,” *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era*, ed. Christopher John Murray, (New York: Taylor & Francis Books, Inc., 2004), 1168.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Liszt’s Transcendental Etude No. 4 is also titled “Mazeppa.”

Gogol's *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka*. Kobets acknowledged Gogol as one of “the most important among the Russian writers of Ukrainian descent.”^{[22][23]}

Linguistic issues were crucial for the Ukrainian Romantics. The Ukrainian language at the time was regarded as the language of the peasants and was considered appropriate for lower, comical genres. In contrast, “the Russian language was recognized as the Empire’s official language and was employed for the official and artistic purposes. . . . Not only was it important for Ukraine to develop a language of literary expression, it was also essential to prove its aesthetic value and applicability in a variety of genres,” Kobets explained.²⁴

Kharkov University became the first ideological center of Ukrainian Romanticism, although other cities like Kiev and Lviv later would contribute to a resurgence. In his work, *Eneida* [Aeneid], Ivan Kotliarevskiy (1769-1838), would promote the Ukrainian vernacular as a literary language that would leave a permanent impression on other Ukrainian Romantics.²⁵

Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) published his first collection of poetry in 1840—*Kobzar* [The Minstrel]—which brought him “instant recognition as a great Ukrainian poet, and also marked the birth of the modern Ukrainian literature.”²⁶ An eminent scholar of history, ethnography, and literature, he was also a translator, and above all a talented

²² Ibid.

²³ Bortkiewicz even mentioned Gogol’s importance to the Russian language in his own *Recollections*: “The greatest writer of Ukraine, Gogol, wrote his works in Russian. No one has understood the nature and the people of his land better than he, and yet he wrote in Russian, because as an artist and thinker he understood the superiority of the language.” Thadani, *Recollections*, 9.

²⁴ Kobets, *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era*, 1169.

²⁵ Ibid., 1168-1169.

²⁶ Ibid., 1169.

poet and prose-writer.²⁷ Of the Kievan Romantics, Shevchenko's lyrical and epic genre poetry would elevate vernacular Ukrainian to the level of a literary language.²⁸

Another titan of Ukrainian Romanticism—a historian, a writer, and a literary critic—Mykola Kostomarov (1817-1885) moved from Kharkov to Kiev, where he facilitated Ukraine's national awakening through poetic and linguistic efforts. He also contributed scholarly work as a part of the faculty of Kiev University.²⁹ In the mid-1840s, Kiev University assumed the role of the second center of the Romantic movement. Mykhailo Maksymovych (1804-1873), an eminent ethnographer, compiled several collections of Ukrainian songs, and published them in 1827, 1834, and 1849. These compilations have had enduring scholarly value, as well as a great impact on the Ukrainian Romantic movement.³⁰

1.2 Mykola Lysenko and the Ukrainian Resurgence

Mykola Lysenko (1842-1912) was a composer, ethnomusicologist, conductor, pianist, teacher, and a key figure in the Ukrainian musical resurgence. The Lysenko family had strong generational roots to the Ukrainian Cossacks; because of this, he gained a strong affinity to Ukrainian music and folklore.³¹

²⁷ In fact, Shevchenko is still featured on the Ukrainian 100-hryven banknote; "100 Hryven." *Currency Gallery: Ukraine*, Banknotes.com, accessed 23 July 2016.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1169

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Wasyl Wytwycky, "Lysenko, Mykola," *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, 2010, accessed 23 July 2016, <<http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\L\Y\LysenkoMykola.htm>>.

Lysenko learned to play piano from his mother at an early age. While still in school, he began transcribing Ukrainian folk songs and recording the wedding songs of the Pereiaslav region, as well as historical songs performed by the renowned kobzar³²—Ostap Veresai (1803-1890). Throughout his lifetime, Lysenko arranged approximately 500 folk songs, which were later published in twenty volumes in Kiev between 1950 and 1959.³³

Lysenko studied at Kharkov University and graduated in 1865 from Kiev University with a degree in natural sciences. However, strong ties and influences in Kiev, such as his close relationship with his cousin Mykhailo Starytsky and others, led Lysenko to the study and the development of Ukrainian music.³⁴

Lysenko worked as an arbitrator for two years in Tarashcha county. He then traveled to Leipzig to study music with K. Reinecke and E. Richter in 1867-1869. From there, he traveled to Kiev in 1869 working as a music teacher and conductor. From 1874 to 1876, he studied orchestration under Rimsky-Korsakov in St. Petersburg, before returning to Kiev where he taught music lessons and opened the Lysenko Music and Drama School in 1904.³⁵

The Russian Empire at the time, however, required a hostile and prejudiced imperial censor, which severely limited publishing. Since Lysenko was a Ukrainian

³² A kobza is a multi-stringed instrument of the lute family; kobzars were Ukrainian bards who sang and accompanied themselves on the kobza or bandura (Mishalow, "Folk Instruments of Ukraine," *Kutash.com*, accessed 23 July 2016).

³³ Wytwycky, "Lysenko, Mykola," *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*—by doing this, he prefigured Béla Bartók, who would combine the occupations of composer and ethnomusicologist in the 20th century (Turchyn, *Musica Leopoldis*, 2006).

³⁴ Wytwycky, "Lysenko, Mykola," *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

musician working and living in the Russian empire, he received no state financial support. An edict in 1876 even prohibited all publications in the Ukrainian language, which included theatrical performances and music scores. This affected Lysenko immensely and forced him to publish many works abroad, some of which he would not even see in his lifetime. In some cases, works had to be translated into French, Russian, or even Czech. Lysenko lived under constant police surveillance while the Russian press vilified him.³⁶

In spite of all these obstacles, Lysenko continued to organize and coordinate musical performances throughout Ukraine. He was a brilliant piano virtuoso and a talented conductor, producing countless concerts that promoted both Ukrainian and western European music. Lysenko's *oeuvre* includes operas and operettas (including the world's first children's operas), a symphony, a string quartet and a trio, various works for piano, and extensive cantatas, as well as choral miniatures, art songs, incidental music for theatre, and folk song arrangements.³⁷ Although Lysenko did not too frequently quote folk songs directly in his original compositions, the unique idioms of Ukrainian folklore did become an integral part of his musical style.³⁸

“Lysenko aimed to create a national Ukrainian musical style, but in fact he saw Ukrainian society as being an organic component of a common European culture—and this is clearly demonstrated in his music,” Dagmara Turchyn—a Lysenko scholar and

³⁶ Dagmara Turchyn, “Mykola Lysenko – His Life (1842-1912),” *Musica Leopoldis*, 2006. Accessed 23 July 2016.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ As this project will explore later, this could be said of Bortkiewicz as well.

historian—noted.³⁹ Other important sources for stylistic elements in Lysenko’s musical language are traced to music of the Ukrainian Baroque (particularly polyphonic a cappella concerti) and three-voice songs—*kanty*. Although Lysenko had no direct contact with composers from Western Europe, his music still reflects their stylistic influences. Lysenko was distinctly aware of Italian Verismo, French Impressionism, the Viennese Secessionist Movement, and Neo Classicism (or Neo Baroque), all of which permeate his art songs; however, Lysenko enhanced them with his own personal style.⁴⁰

Lysenko influenced a large group of Ukrainian composers, and his life’s work further expanded and developed Ukrainian musical culture.⁴¹ Turchyn summarized that, “Lysenko’s music was perceived by his compatriots to be the most authentic embodiment of the Ukrainian soul, and it had an enormous influence on the formation of Ukrainian national identity.”⁴²

Lysenko and the Ukrainian Romantics accomplished several important goals, but together launched a national renaissance in Ukraine—discovering and popularizing the country’s rich historical and ethnographic heritage. Kobets concluded, “All in all, for Ukraine the era of Romanticism became the time of its reemergence as a self-conscious nation.”⁴³ Despite this nationalist movement, the people of Ukraine would still see turmoil and instability well into the twentieth century.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Wytwycky, “Lysenko, Mykola,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*.

⁴² Turchyn, *Musica Leopoldis*, 2006.

⁴³ Kobets, *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era*, 1169.

1.3 Ukraine in the Twentieth Century

World War I (1914-1918) and the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 incited disturbance and upheaval in areas that now constitute Ukraine.⁴⁴ As Russia progressed into the twentieth century and Ukraine gained independence, some citizens (including the Borkiewicz family) became increasingly agitated with Bolshevik power over their homeland. Eventually, Nicolas II abdicated the throne and a provisional government was formed.⁴⁵ After several hundreds of years, the throne was suddenly empty. Unfortunately, this was at a crucial time when the country needed strong leadership the most—during the war.⁴⁶

In 1918, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk ceded some Russian lands from the Bolshevik government to the Central powers, while recognizing the independence of Ukraine and other territories.⁴⁷ Figure 1.1 shows the lands ceded in the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of 1918. Note how Kharkov lies on the border of this region. Modern-day Ukraine is outlined in green.

⁴⁴ Tharoor, *How Ukraine became Ukraine*, 2015.

⁴⁵ Nicholas II was head of the Romanov family. After Nicholas abdicated the throne, the Romanov family was kept under house arrest in Tobolsk and later Ekaterinburg where they were brutally executed in July 1918. Rumors swirled that one of the daughters, Anastasia, survived; however, recent DNA testing has disproved this. Massie, Robert K, *The Romanovs: the Final Chapter*, Random House, 1995.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁷ Tharoor, *How Ukraine became Ukraine*, 2015.



Figure 1.1. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, 1918.⁴⁸

The Bolsheviks promised immediate peace and end to land ownership; however, this was troublesome for the wealthy landowners like the Bortkiewicz family. Bortkiewicz lamented, “The Bolsheviks assumed power and signed the shameful peace of Brest-Litovsk. We followed with horror the development of this frightful tragedy. Some officers and patriots became mad or took their own lives like ancient Romans, when they saw their fatherland in misery.”⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Map Credit: Gene Thorp, *The Washington Post*, *ibid.*

⁴⁹ Thadani, *Recollections*, 27.

Later, after Germany's defeat, the terms of the treaty were nullified, "but the genie of Ukrainian nationalism was out of the bottle," described Tharoor.⁵⁰

"Independence movements of various stripes sprang up in cities like Lviv, Kiev and Kharkiv, but were eventually all swept away amid the wider struggle for power in Russia."⁵¹

At the end of World War I, Poland reclaimed Lviv and portions of what is now western Ukraine. During the Russian Civil War, Bolshevik forces battled a range of armies, led by loyalists to the old czarist regime and other political opportunists. The Bolsheviks remained triumphant, despite a lot of bloodshed and further combat with Poland. Bortkiewicz was lucky enough to escape this bloodshed; however, some of his family members were not. Looking back, he reflected on his last chance to escape Crimea in 1920:

I had no inkling at that time that Crimea would be our last stronghold against the advancing Bolsheviks, that someday I would leave my fatherland forever from this paradise, and fall into the hell and uncertain future of exile.⁵²

The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic was officially declared in 1922.⁵³ In the years to come, Ukraine would suffer immensely under the rule of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin during the 1920s and 1930s. Figure 1.2 shows Ukraine amidst the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

⁵⁰ Tharoor, *How Ukraine became Ukraine*, 2015

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 11.

⁵³ Ibid.



Figure 1.2. The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, 1922.⁵⁴

A large portion of Ukraine’s rural population was displaced and suffered under Stalin’s aggressive policies. From 1932 to 1933, nearly three million people died as the result of a man-made famine. Tharoor concluded, “To make up the numbers, Russian speakers from elsewhere immigrated to Ukraine’s hollowed out towns and cities, leaving a demographic footprint that defines Ukraine’s divisive politics to this day.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Map Credit: Gene Thorp, *The Washington Post*, *ibid.*

⁵⁵ Tharoor, *How Ukraine became Ukraine*, 2015.

CHAPTER TWO: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SERGEI BORTKIEWICZ

As mentioned previously, Bortkiewicz wrote his own *Recollections* in 1936. They contain his personal account throughout the Russian Revolution, World War I, and events leading up to World War II. The rest of Bortkiewicz's life can be pieced together from letters and documents Bortkiewicz wrote to Hugo van Dalen between 1936 and 1952.⁵⁶ These documents have been translated into English by Bhagwan Thadani and were published in 1996 by Cantext Publications as *Sergei Bortkiewicz: Recollections, letters and documents*.⁵⁷ The biographical information presented in this chapter will be crucial to understanding compositions and their influences in the works of Sergei Bortkiewicz, which will be presented in later chapters.

2.1 Origins

Sergei Eduardovich Bortkiewicz was born in Kharkov, Ukraine, on February 28, 1877, as the fourth child of Eduard Bortkiewicz and Sophia Uschinskaja, who was of Polish descent.⁵⁸ Bortkiewicz explained that there was a variety of musical activity in his home as a young child, particularly encouraged by his mother, whom he inherited his “desire for music-making.” His mother Sophia played piano very well and did a lot for musical life in Kharkov, particularly as a co-founder and honorary member of the

⁵⁶ Thadani, *Recollections*, 42.

⁵⁷ Thadani commented in regard to the letters: “Most of these letters to van Dalen are on postcards where Bortkiewicz has tried to squeeze in as many lines as possible, as can be seen from the originals reproduced at the end of the book. This, coupled with a rather untidy style of writing, makes it difficult to decipher some of these letters... Most of the Vienna letters were written from Bortkiewicz's apartment in Blechturm-gasse I/5, Vienna V, and are addressed to Hugo van Dalen in H. Zwardcroonstraat 28, The Hague, Holland.” Thadani, *Recollections*, 42.

⁵⁸ Kalkman, “Childhood and Study in St. Petersburg and Leipzig,” *Bortkiewicz.com*.

Imperial Russian Musical Society. Bortkiewicz noted that, “Even as a child I could attend new symphonic concerts and get to know many musical masterworks, which were then replayed in our house on the piano as duets.”⁵⁹

Bortkiewicz spent most of his childhood on the family estate of Artiomowka, about fifteen kilometers from Kharkov. During this time, he received piano lessons from Ilja Slatin, the headmaster of the school of music in Kharkov and from another piano teacher, Alfred Bensch.⁶⁰

The Bortkiewicz family owned a nice estate and land in Artiomowka, about fifteen kilometers from Kharkov, yet Bortkiewicz continually referenced Kharkov as “Little Russia” or “South Russia.” Bortkiewicz noted from his early childhood that Kharkov was regarded as the intellectual center of South Russia.⁶¹ “The farmers lived better than in North Russia, their little houses were nicer, better built, often decorated with small flower gardens. Even in nature and character the little Russian farmers were more cheerful, livelier, more talkative.”⁶²

2.2 St. Petersburg and Leipzig

In 1895, after graduating from grammar school in Kharkov, Bortkiewicz went to St. Petersburg to study law and to join the Imperial Conservatory of Music where he studied theory with Anatol Liadov. Bortkiewicz was really at school to study law at his

⁵⁹ Thadani, *Recollections*, 1.

⁶⁰ Kalkman, “Childhood and Study in St. Petersburg and Leipzig,” *Bortkiewicz.com*.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 9.

father's wish and passed his examinations when they came, but was often distracted by musical endeavors. He attended many concerts, and he even took some music courses.⁶³

Bortkiewicz fulfilled his one-year military service obligation immediately after this, although he was discharged early for illness of an inflammation of the lungs. Bortkiewicz spent the summer of 1900 on the family estate. As the fall approached, he decided to travel to Germany to study music. "The names of Goethe and Wagner attracted me very strongly," Bortkiewicz reminisced.⁶⁴

So in the autumn of 1900, Bortkiewicz went to Germany to study music at the Leipzig Conservatory of Music as a student of the Liszt pupil, Alfred Reisenauer. Bortkiewicz first mentions that he heard Alfred Reisenauer perform in Russia. He specifically notes: "Reisenauer was well-known and liked in Russia through his piano recitals which took him to the most distant provincial cities."⁶⁵ Young Bortkiewicz had no clue that he would one day be a student of Reisenauer in Leipzig, but later mentioned "Reisenauer favored me and had great hopes for me."⁶⁶ After two years of study there, Bortkiewicz was awarded the Schumann prize upon graduation in 1902. Two years later, he married Elisabeth Geraklitova, and they settled in Berlin.⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁶⁷ Kalkman, "Childhood and Study in St. Petersburg and Leipzig," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

2.3 First Berlin Period

From 1904 until 1914, Sergei and Elisabeth lived in Berlin where he started to compose seriously. Here he gave his first piano recitals and taught private lessons.⁶⁸

Bortkiewicz seemed to enjoy life in Berlin. One year, Bortkiewicz taught at the Klindworth-Scharwenka Conservatory where he met his lifelong friend, the Dutch pianist Hugo van Dalen (1888-1967). Van Dalen later provided significant financial support to Bortkiewicz during both World Wars and premiered Bortkiewicz's Piano Concerto No. 1 in November 1913.⁶⁹ Bortkiewicz and Van Dalen are pictured in Figures 2.1 and 2.2:



Figure 2.1. Sergei Bortkiewicz, 1905.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Thadani, *Recollections*, 21-22.

⁶⁹ Kalkman, "First Berlin Period," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

⁷⁰ <<https://sergeibortkiewicz.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/bortkiewicz1905.jpg>>



Figure 2.2. Hugo van Dalen, 1915.⁷¹

These good memories in Berlin would last only briefly, however, because Europe was on the cusp of World War I. Bortkiewicz questioned, “Why was this beautiful, happy illusion destroyed only too soon, why the enmity, the mindless war?!”⁷²

2.4 The Outbreak of World War I

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 changed Bortkiewicz’s life. Being a Russian, he was initially under house arrest and abruptly left Germany by train through Sweden. as he described, “For the first time I was the victim of fickle fate: I was driven out as an enemy over the North Sea, out of the country where I had lived for so many years and which I loved,” Bortkiewicz lamented. “I had no foreboding that six years later,

⁷¹ <<https://sergeibortkiewicz.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/vandalen1915.jpg>>

⁷² Ibid., 23.

I would be driven out of my homeland over the South Sea – the Black Sea – that an even grimmer fate stood before me.”⁷³

Although Bortkiewicz was tempted with a potential teaching position at the Imperial Conservatory, he returned to Kharkov. He re-established himself as a music teacher and gave concerts. “A number of students presented themselves, who wanted to study piano with me. Many music students, who had studied in Moscow and St. Petersburg during peace time, remained in South Russia and came to me.”⁷⁴

After returning to Kharkov, Bortkiewicz detailed a personal account of the Bolshevik’s rise to power in Russia after the abdication of Nicholas II, and the horrors that ensued from the Communist takeover. Bortkiewicz recalled that prices went up; there was often no light, no water, and no fuel to heat during the winter. Nevertheless, Bortkiewicz continued to rehearse music, as he recalled one instance with the violinist Alexander Mogilewsky, “We had to drink tea continuously, wrapped in furs, in order to warm our frozen fingers.”⁷⁵

Bortkiewicz explained that they could only venture out into the street wearing the “oldest, shabbiest clothes,” so as to not draw attention to themselves. There was a constant fear of house searches and arrest, and they had to be ready at any time, even during the night. Bortkiewicz was particularly worried because, as the son of a landowner, he was considered nobility.⁷⁶ As news of the approach of General Denikin’s

⁷³ Ibid., 23-24.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 28.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

White Army⁷⁷ came, the Bolsheviks became nastier and crueler every day. Shootings became the norm; friends and relatives would appear in the “red” newspapers daily who had been killed by the Bolsheviks—a fate which could have awaited Bortkiewicz any minute.⁷⁸

Bortkiewicz and his wife traveled to Crimea for a brief escape, but all the hotels were full in Sebastopol. They headed for Yalta instead, and found two furnished rooms with a magnificent view of the harbor. “I rented a piano and even started composing. My Nocturne Op. 24, No. 1 ‘came to my mind’ during a wonderful moonlit night!”⁷⁹

Bortkiewicz checked daily with the information bureau, which kept them informed of the Bolshevik advances. However, one day he notes that the White Army had been substantially pushed to the south—Kharkov was now lost. Unfortunately, Bortkiewicz’s mother, who chose to remain near Kharkov, and another relative fell ill with typhus fever and died in the chaos. Only one “White [Army]” stronghold remained—the Crimean peninsula, connected to the continent only by a narrow strip of land, where Bortkiewicz and his wife were. This was their last and only chance to escape the Bolsheviks progressing toward them.

Sergei and Elisabeth waited desperately in the port city of Yalta on the Crimean Peninsula for a ship to escape on. For a whole day, ships came and went—overflowing with people.⁸⁰ Sergei and Elisabeth Bortkiewicz sat on their luggage, exhausted, and

⁷⁷ General Anton Denikin’s “White Army” was an attempt of anti-Bolshevik volunteers to take back the country from the “Red” Bolshevik Army founded by Leon Trotsky in the Russian Civil War.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁸⁰ According to Robert Shenk in an article entitled “Black Sea Humanitarian Mission” in *Naval History Magazine*, 146,000 Russian refugees fled on ships to Constantinople in the autumn of 1920.

dozed from time to time. Eventually, two ships docked. “One of them was the ‘Konstantin’ the most beautiful steamer of our merchant fleet. Now was the time for us to push through at any cost.” For hours they waited at the stairs, and were finally successful in squeezing through. Bortkiewicz described the ‘Konstantin’ as so “over-filled to bursting point with people and luggage, there was not even a spot free on the upper deck.”⁸¹

2.5 Constantinople

In Constantinople,⁸² Bortkiewicz mentioned they had to be thrifty, and “turned their eyes away from temptation,” as he only had twenty dollars in his pocket.⁸³ The Bortkiewicz family had done quite nicely and accumulated much wealth under Imperial Russia. In fact, before fleeing to Constantinople in 1920, Bortkiewicz hinted at his net worth under former Imperial Russian rule: “my 1.5 million rubles⁸⁴ were totally worthless.”⁸⁵

After visiting a few music shops and making some connections, Bortkiewicz managed to teach some music students as a source of income. Eventually, he made an acquaintance with Natalie Chaponitsch, the wife of the Yugoslavian ambassador. Chaponitsch organized musical soirees in the embassy for Bortkiewicz which in turn

⁸¹ Ibid., 31.

⁸² Constantinople is today known as Istanbul, Turkey.

⁸³ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁴ Compared with the U.S. historical gold standard exchange rate before 1917, and then adjusted for inflation equals about 15 million dollars today. (“Gold and Silver Standards” CyberUSSR online, converted via Dollar Times).

⁸⁵ Thadani, *Recollections*, 27.

provided him with more students and income.⁸⁶ Although Bortkiewicz's situation was better, it certainly was not ideal. He longed for the music scene of Europe. In a letter to Hugo van Dalen, dated August 18, 1921, Bortkiewicz described his predicament in Constantinople:

Naturally I long for Europe, music, culture, art with my whole heart. Over here things are very pitiful in this respect. Only the place and the climate are beautiful . . . I will remain here [until] I have accumulated plenty of foreign exchange with concerts and lessons. I then hope to move to Vienna or Budapest to recover and finally to compose. Here I do not have the time or the mood to write even a few notes.⁸⁷

Eventually, through the help of the Yugoslavian Ambassador, and other musical connections, he received the necessary paperwork he needed to relocate to central Europe.

2.6 Relocation Back to Europe: Austria and Berlin

In 1922, Bortkiewicz and his wife relocated to Austria. He settled and remained there five years, supported in a friendly manner by Paul de Conne, his countryman and previous colleague from the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Wooter Kalkman writes, "Not only did Paul de Conne introduce Sergei Bortkiewicz to the Viennese music circle and to Viennese publishers, but he also helped the Bortkiewicz couple through his connections with the Ministry of Education in obtaining their Austrian citizenship."⁸⁸ During this time, Bortkiewicz composed pieces such as the Cello Concerto Op. 20, the Violin Concerto Op. 22, the Piano Concerto No. 2 Op. 28 (which was commissioned for the left-

⁸⁶ Ibid., 33.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 42-43.

⁸⁸ Kalkman, "First Austrian Period," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

handed pianist, Paul Wittgenstein who lost his right arm in WWI), the Douze Etudes, Op. 29 for piano, and the Piano Concerto No. 3, Op. 32.⁸⁹ Bortkiewicz tried in vain to find a teaching position in Vienna, but it appeared that there were more substantial opportunities from his previous musical connections in Berlin.⁹⁰

After a brief time in Paris, Bortkiewicz returned to Berlin in 1929, but the economic crises and the rise of the Nazi regime made his financial situation more serious every day. Many times he asked Hugo van Dalen for financial help. In a letter dated April 21, 1933, Bortkiewicz wrote to Hugo van Dalen: “Although I have a good reputation in Germany, I still am a ‘foreigner’ and now one is looked upon very unfavorably if one is not a genuine German, and there are even fewer opportunities for any position.”⁹¹ Bortkiewicz seemed to be an outsider wherever he went. Russians considered him Polish, because of his mother’s heritage. In addition, Russians were also looked down upon at the time in Germany and Austria, due to the behavior of Soviet troops abroad and heightened tensions after the war.⁹²

Bortkiewicz was forced to leave Germany yet again—being of Russian origin, he was now facing persecution from the Nazis and saw his name being deleted from all music programs. Since they had previously established citizenship in Austria, Bortkiewicz and his wife returned to Vienna in 1935.⁹³

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Kalkman, “Second Berlin Period,” *Bortkiewicz.com*.

⁹¹ Thadani, *Recollections*, 45.

⁹² Ibid., v.

⁹³ Kalkman, “Second Berlin Period,” *Bortkiewicz.com*.

2.7 Second Austrian Period

Bortkiewicz remained in Vienna, from 1935 throughout the rest of WWII and the rest of his life.⁹⁴ It was about this point in his life, that Bortkiewicz began to write down his *Recollections* which were completed and signed in Vienna during October 1936.⁹⁵ The rest of Bortkiewicz's life can be pieced together from letters and documents Bortkiewicz wrote to Hugo van Dalen between 1936 and 1952. Bortkiewicz would visit van Dalen one final time in the Netherlands in February and March 1938 before World War II.⁹⁶ Figure 2.3 captures a glimpse into one such moment from this visit.



Figure 2.3. Hugo van Dalen and Sergei Bortkiewicz, 1938.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 53.

⁹⁷ Kalkman, "Second Berlin Period," *Bortkiewicz.com*. <<https://sergeibortkiewicz.com/second-berlin-period-1928-1933>>

World War II caused Bortkiewicz and his wife's situation to deteriorate. The publication and performance of Bortkiewicz's music, which considered of Russian origin, was prohibited in Germany. To make matters worse, most of Bortkiewicz's printed compositions were held by his German publishers. The majority of these compositions were destroyed in the bombing of Leipzig on December 4, 1943, meaning Bortkiewicz lost the income from the sale of his music. He frantically wrote van Dalen to send the scores to his publisher, D. Rahter, to replace them.⁹⁸

As the end of the war approached, Bortkiewicz described in a letter on December 8, 1945, to Dr. Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven (founder of the Bortkiewicz Gemeinde), the primitive, almost animalistic conditions he was forced to endure:

I am writing to you from my bathroom where we have crawled in because it is small and can be warmed on and off with a gas light (!) The other rooms cannot be used and I can't touch my piano. This is now! What awaits us further? Life is becoming more and more unpleasant, merciless. I teach at the Conservatory with the heat at 4 degrees, soon even less! . . . I do not believe in happiness any more, rather that I am a dead man.⁹⁹

Bortkiewicz and his wife were physically and mentally exhausted by the end of the war, yet Bortkiewicz *still* composed for the piano. During these war years—in addition to the performances he mentioned above—Bortkiewicz composed his Piano Sonata No. 2, Op. 60, the Fantasiestücke, Op. 61, and the Three Mazurkas, Op. 64. In the autumn of 1945, Bortkiewicz was appointed the head of an education program at the Vienna City Conservatory, which helped provide the composer with some financial security in his later years.¹⁰⁰ At this point, Bortkiewicz's musical connections and

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 71.

¹⁰⁰ Kalkman, "Second Austrian Period," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

growing public support began to work to his advantage again. In fact, a group of Bortkiewicz enthusiasts and musicians even came together to support the aging composer and promote his works.

2.8 The Bortkiewicz-Gemeinde

The Bortkiewicz-Gemeinde (1947-1973) was a society of Bortkiewicz music lovers and promoters that met on the first Monday of each month November to May. The first meeting took place in the library hall of the Schillerplatz Academy, April 10, 1947. The years that followed would see performances of nearly the complete works of Sergei Bortkiewicz—74 opus numbers in all.¹⁰¹

On February 26, 1952, the Bortkiewicz-Gemeinde celebrated the seventy-fifth birthday of the composer with a concert by the Vienna Austria Radio Orchestra (RAVAG) in the Musikverein in Vienna. Bortkiewicz conducted the orchestra.¹⁰² The Piano Concerto No. 1 was one of several pieces performed at this concert, performed by pianist Felicitas Karrer. Other pieces included: *Des Frühlings und des Pans Erwachen*, Op. 44 for Violin and Orchestra, performed by violinist Jaro Schmied, and Bortkiewicz's Symphony No. 1, Op. 52.¹⁰³ Bortkiewicz reflected later upon the concert, "Finally, I had the opportunity to show, in a large hall with a large orchestra and soloists, what I can do. Not only the critics, but others who know me, were surprised and amazed."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Thadani, *Recollections*, 74-77.

¹⁰² Kalkman, "Bortkiewicz's Last Year," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Thadani, *Recollections*, 70.

The concert was warmly received with a positive review as reported by the *Neues Österreich*,¹⁰⁵ on February 28, 1952:

The festive birthday celebration concert in the large Musikverein Hall afforded an impressive insight into the orchestral work of the composer, still holding fast to the classical legacy, and who is working on his third symphony at this time . . . Lisztian difficulties were mastered by Felicitas Karrer with practiced skill. An exciting antique theme, seen with Slavic eyes, appeared in the “Lyric Intermezzo.” Jaro Schmied played the mysterious *Konzertstück* for violin and orchestra with a beautiful, warm tone. Inspired melodies characterize the First Symphony which returns to the Romantic theme in an expansive manner. The composer, with admirable energy, conducted the large Ravag¹⁰⁶ Orchestra which worked for the good cause with enthusiasm. We want to add our acclamation willingly to the list of congratulators.¹⁰⁷

Bortkiewicz concludes modestly, “I can always feel happy to have found so much recognition at the age of 75 years, which, really, comes in most cases after death to someone who really earned it.”¹⁰⁸

2.9 Bortkiewicz’s Death

In 1952, Bortkiewicz’s health began to further deteriorate. He fell ill early in the year and began to cancel appearances at concerts due to a recurring stomach ailment. Despite a surgery, which appeared to produce some relief, he passed away as the result of a thrombosis a few days later on October 25, 1952. Sergei Bortkiewicz was buried on November 4, 1952, at the Zentralfriedhof in Vienna. His wife Elisabeth died eight years

¹⁰⁵ An Austrian newspaper.

¹⁰⁶ Radio-Verkehrs-AG; [An Austrian Radio Transmission Company]

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

later on March 9, 1960, in Vienna.¹⁰⁹ Figure 2.4 shows the death announcement of Sergei Bortkiewicz, as written by Elisabeth in 1952:

†
 With deep sorrow I hereby inform all
 acquaintances and sympathetic friends that my
 deeply loved, unforgettable husband Herr

Prof. Sergei Bortkiewicz
 Composer
 Leader and Director of the Master Class in the
 Vienna City Conservatory

went to his eternal sleep with the Lord on
 Saturday, the 25th October 1952 at 21:45
 hours, after long and painful suffering in the
 76th year of his life.

The dear departed will be blessed according
 to Greek-orthodox rites on Tuesday, the 4th
 November at 13:30 hours, after lying in state in
 Hall I of the Viennese Central-Cemetery
 (entrance Gate II) and then after being blessed
 again will be laid for eternal rest in his own
 grave dedicated to honor him by the
 Community of Vienna.

Vienna, the 31st October 1952.

V, Blechturm-gasse 1.

Elisabeth Bortkiewicz¹¹⁰

Figure 2.4. Death Announcement of Sergei Bortkiewicz, 1952.

¹⁰⁹ Kalkman, "Bortkiewicz's Last year," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

¹¹⁰ The Death Announcement of Sergei Bortkiewicz; Thadani, *Recollections*, 77.

CHAPTER THREE: A SURVEY OF COMPOSITIONAL OUTPUT

Thanks to Hugo van Dalen, we can still enjoy Bortkiewicz's music and learn about his life from the many letters Bortkiewicz sent to the Dutch pianist. When van Dalen died in 1967, his family bequeathed the manuscripts of several compositions, a written autobiography, *Recollections*, plus a number of letters and printed scores to the *Gemeentemuseum* in The Hague. This collection was later transferred to the Netherlands Music Institute.¹¹¹ In some instances, the only known copy of a score is housed at the Institute. Thadani adds, "It is a pity that there are so many gaps and question marks left in the body of the oeuvre of Bortkiewicz. Many may have been irrevocably lost during the events of World War II."¹¹²

In an effort to save money, Bortkiewicz would copy the orchestra parts himself, humorously adding that his wife read him a book to save him from boredom.¹¹³ It also appears that paper shortages continued to contribute to much of Bortkiewicz's publishing woes after World War II. As the publisher Simrock began to reprint Bortkiewicz's works in 1948, Bortkiewicz commented, "My publisher N. Simrock has started to print my works lying there for years, cannot still send the proofs. It's miserable!"¹¹⁴

Without contact with his German publishers, and because several older works were destroyed in the bombing of Leipzig, Bortkiewicz had no way to collect royalties from his older pieces. To make matters worse, his newly composed works in the process

¹¹¹ Kalkman, "Bortkiewicz's Last Year," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

¹¹² Thadani, *Recollections*, 80-81.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

of being published were put on hold because of the paper shortage. “I don’t believe that a composer who is sought after, who could be performed, has ever found himself in this grotesque-devilish situation. . . . Nothing earned, nothing sold for endless years!” Bortkiewicz exclaimed.¹¹⁵ For these reasons, Bortkiewicz found himself in an awful predicament, and this might explain why some works are still missing today.

Although the majority of Bortkiewicz’s compositions are for piano, he wrote for various instruments and ensembles, including voice and opera, as well. A complete listing of Bortkiewicz’s compositions listed chronologically by opus number and their city of origin can be found in Appendix A.

3.1 Vocal Works

Bortkiewicz composed twelve sets of songs and one opera entitled *Akrobaten*, but unfortunately most of these vocal works are lost. Nevertheless, primary source material, such as letters, other documents, and publishing catalogs, provides information about these works and proves they did exist at one time. A few of the vocal works still remain, but unfortunately no recordings were found. Some scores can still be obtained through Kliment Publishing or the Netherlands Music Institute.

Bortkiewicz’s opera *Akrobaten* was based on the short novella by Hermann Bang entitled *The Four Devils*.¹¹⁶ As mentioned previously, the score is missing. Ironically, a

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 69.

¹¹⁶ The plot involves four orphans in a circus who become a high-wire act and contains sinister goings-on at a circus. From the story by Herman Bang, translated from: Barrett H. Clark, *Great Short Novels of the World*, New York: Robert McBride and Co., 1927.

1928 silent movie based on the same story is lost as well. *Four Devils* remains among the most sought-after lost films of the silent era.¹¹⁷

In a letter to Van Dalen in April 1933, Bortkiewicz mentioned the challenges to get the opera performed in Hitler's Germany:

You want to know if my opera [Akrobaten, Op. 50 – Thadani] can be performed elsewhere besides Vienna in the next season. I certainly hope so. After the Hitler-Revolution almost all opera producers, many orchestra directors and others have been removed and now new people have come in with whom I must again negotiate regarding my opera.¹¹⁸

Later, in a letter to van Dalen dated January 12, 1937, Bortkiewicz mentioned that a performance of the opera would take place as a “Pre-celebration” for Bortkiewicz's sixtieth birthday. Bortkiewicz conducted his own opera.¹¹⁹ It appears that the opera was met with initial success, because Bortkiewicz mentioned in a separate letter from March 1937, “Am very sorry that you heard my opera badly on the radio. I got a heap of letters, even from people not known to me. My fame keeps growing, unfortunately not my wallet!”¹²⁰ The opera appeared to find interest in other venues such as the Berlin Opera House.¹²¹

3.2 Orchestral Works

Bortkiewicz has ten works for orchestra, two of which are symphonies, ranging from 1914-1940. All scores have known whereabouts, through various sources.

¹¹⁷ Internet Movie Database, 2016; details about the movie can be found on the DVD for *Sunrise* released by Fox as part of their 20th Century Fox Studio Classics collection.

¹¹⁸ Thadani, *Recollections*, 45.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹²¹ Thadani, *Recollections*, 54.

Bortkiewicz completed his Symphony No. 2 in May 1937 which he claimed was structurally different from the first.¹²² Unfortunately, he could not afford a copyist at the time, and was forced to copy the orchestral parts by hand which he described as “a very tedious job.”¹²³ Nevertheless, in a letter to van Dalen he wrote, “I think so myself and hear from my friends, that I have been successful with the second, which is perhaps more characteristic than the first.”¹²⁴

The second symphony appeared to be received well. Bortkiewicz later wrote in March 1939, “I have heard many good things from many sides about my symphony, which seems to have pleased everyone, although it is much more difficult to conduct and to understand on a first hearing than my first symphony.”¹²⁵

Despite their apparent initial success, Bortkiewicz struggled to promote his symphonies. He later wrote to van Dalen:

. . . you could also show my symphonies to other conductors or give them for looking at them. Last year, Mengelberg had read my symphonies and had written me a very good long appreciative letter. In spite of this, again he had ‘no time’ to listen when I wanted to play them for him. The Mr. Big Shots are like this!!! Only when a composer is dead are his works dug out!! Fate!¹²⁶

The Second Symphony also appeared undergo an edit by the composer. Bortkiewicz noted later in 1947 that the conductor Eduard Flipse was still interested in the Second Symphony. Because of this, Bortkiewicz edited the symphony “as to improve

¹²² Ibid., 47.

¹²³ Ibid., 48.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 47.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 57.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 59.

the whole.”¹²⁷ In addition, Bortkiewicz composed several pieces for chamber ensemble: two pieces for cello and piano, two for violin and piano, and a piano trio.

3.3 Solo Concerti

Bortkiewicz composed several pieces for soloists in the form of concerti: a cello concerto, a violin concerto, a piece for violin and orchestra, three piano concerti, and a piece for piano and orchestra. Two were commissioned by Paul Wittgenstein for left hand alone—Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 28, and Russian Rhapsody, Op. 45.

After Bortkiewicz composed his First Piano Concerto, he wrote Nikisch in Leipzig asking if he could perform the concerto under his direction. Nikisch promptly responded. Upon hearing Bortkiewicz perform his concerto, Nikisch invited him to an evening concert that night at the Gewandhaus, where he had written a letter recommending the concerto to publishers “with words of great praise.” Bortkiewicz was surprised by this and was deeply moved being such a young musician and composer at the time.¹²⁸

In regard to his other concerti, Bortkiewicz later advised van Dalen to play his “First [concerto] everywhere to start with and later the Third if you are contracted again.”

¹²⁹ Bortkiewicz later explained his reasoning behind this was that the First concerto is

“more national,” “easier to perform,”¹³⁰ and “can be appreciated more.”¹³¹

¹²⁷ Ibid., 66.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 19.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 50.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., 55.

The Second Piano Concerto commissioned by Paul Wittgenstein was received with excellent reviews, despite one instance where Bortkiewicz disagreed with a questionable review of the conductor Ernst Kunwald who Bortkiewicz claimed “has become old” and “accompanied very badly.” Even Wittgenstein himself regretted that Bortkiewicz did not conduct.¹³² Another pianist, Siegfried Rapp, received enthusiastic reviews performing Bortkiewicz’s Second Concerto as well.¹³³

In regard to the Russian Rhapsody, which Bortkiewicz originally wrote for left hand alone, he later noted that the piece could “also be made for two hands (naturally with another passage, another piano movement).”¹³⁴ Despite its success, Bortkiewicz yet again ran into more performance and monetary woes. Van Dalen had the score for an extended period of time, and Bortkiewicz lost out on a radio performance and concert with the pianist Herman Hoppe. “A double loss of royalties!!” Bortkiewicz exclaimed, after frantically searching for the scores to no avail.¹³⁵

3.4 Piano Works

By far the largest quantity of Bortkiewicz’s output is comprised of his works for piano, which were composed from 1906 until nearly up to his death in 1952. The approximately forty piano works tend to include smaller character pieces within larger sets: mazurkas, nocturnes, etudes, preludes, and waltzes. However, there are a few examples of larger scale works like two piano sonatas and a ballade. Bortkiewicz also

¹³² Ibid., 44.

¹³³ Ibid., 70.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 45.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 49.

composed teaching pieces like the *Marionettes*, Op. 54 and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, unfortunately another work that has been lost.

Bortkiewicz noted that the first movement of his Piano Sonata No. 2 was completed in January 1942.¹³⁶ The piano sonata was received with “colossal success.” In writing to van Dalen, Bortkiewicz noted, “Everyone says that I’ve been especially successful with this sonata. Yes this could be the center piece in such a piano recital – the main course, the ‘roast meat!’”¹³⁷ Despite its success, Bortkiewicz feared sending the only score he had to van Dalen in Holland.¹³⁸ When the Dutch violinist Jaap Emmer came to Vienna to perform a recital with Joseph Pembaur, Bortkiewicz gave the score to Emmer who would then take the score back to van Dalen.¹³⁹

Interestingly, Bortkiewicz gave van Dalen some performance guidelines to the piece, “After the Andante, start the 4th movement slowly and then always faster till the tempo giusto (agitato). Pause for a big breath before the Finale! The C sharp major must be like a big surprise, proud and joyous!”¹⁴⁰ Bortkiewicz considered dedicating the sonata to van Dalen, but had already promised the dedication to another Viennese friend. Due to paper shortages, the sonata would be significantly delayed in printing, which in turn affected the dedication.¹⁴¹

As Bortkiewicz aged, his situation took a turn for the worse, exacerbated by paper shortages, publishing woes, illness, and financial strain. It is a shame that such great

¹³⁶ Ibid., 60.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 61.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 62.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 63.

repertoire has been lost from the fallout of World War II and throughout the course of history. Given Bortkiewicz's Russian-Kharkovian roots, commentary from his own biography, and with an awareness of his total *oeuvre*, it is reasonable to explore some of the potential insights, inspirations, and influences in these pieces.

CHAPTER FOUR: COMPOSITIONAL STYLE AND MUSICAL INFLUENCES

This chapter attempts to illustrate some of the compositional style and influences in Sergei Bortkiewicz's works. Malcolm Henbury Ballan, a Russian music enthusiast and contributor to special collections at the Research Centre for Russian Music at Goldsmiths, University of London explained, "Bortkiewicz' style was very much based on Liszt and Chopin, nurtured by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, early Scriabin and Russian folklore."¹⁴² As extracted from his *Recollections*, Bortkiewicz occasionally described the impact of these particular composers and others in his works.

This chapter is organized chronologically as Bortkiewicz traveled Russia and Europe. First, early compositional influences and people as outlined from Bortkiewicz's time in Kharkov will be illustrated. Then examples from St. Petersburg will be presented, followed by an exploration into German Romanticism: people and influences derived from Leipzig (where Bortkiewicz studied music). As a student of the Liszt pupil, Alfred Reisenauer, it will be illustrated how Romantic stylistic traits might vicariously be presented in Bortkiewicz's works under the tutelage of his famous teacher. Finally, other retrospective examples (as defined by Nils Franke) will be illustrated from influences such as Debussy, Scriabin, Tchaikovsky, and Wagner. The chapter is concluded with general commentary on Bortkiewicz's compositional style, as described by Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven and a Viennese review of a RAVAG concert in 1952.

¹⁴² Ballan, Malcom Henbury, *Sergei Bortkiewicz: Symphonies Nos 1 & 2*, Hyperion, 2002. Liner notes.

4.1 Early Compositional Influences

Anton Rubenstein appeared to be an early musical inspiration to the young Bortkiewicz. One of the first memories Bortkiewicz shared in his *Recollections* was his remembrance of Anton Rubenstein.

Rubenstein played the piano so magnificently and so uniquely. He could really sing at the piano. . . . He attacked the keys with his mighty lion-like paws, which were at the same time as soft as velvet. . . . I felt full of wonder, I listened tense and absorbed. . . .¹⁴³

As a resident of the city of Kharkov, Bortkiewicz also described how the art and culture—specifically opera and theater in Russia—made an impact on him from a young age. Bortkiewicz explained, “Many great artists had begun their careers with our theatre director Sipelnikow, and so the Charkow stage was looked upon as a springboard for the great stages of the two royal courts of St. Petersburg and Moscow.” Bortkiewicz claimed that Russia truly was an “artist’s paradise.” Concert halls remained full despite their high prices, and some performances were truly celebrated in an elaborate fashion. In some instances, the performer was draped with a laurel wreath and even given gifts of gold and silver. “After the performance, the celebrity was often carried by hand, often even the horses on his carriage were unharnessed and young fans brought him in triumph to his house in this manner, pulling along the carriage.”¹⁴⁴ Later in life, Bortkiewicz tried

¹⁴³ Thadani, *Recollections*, 1; Borkiewicz later describes Anton Rubenstein and the appointing of his “successor” Josef Hoffman: “Before his death, Anton Rubenstein declared his successor to be his pupil Josef Hofmann. The admirers of the Master believed him literally; the news of this spread like wildfire over the whole of Russia. Hoffman became the darling of the Russian public. Although virtuosos like d’Albert, Reisenauer, Busoni, Rosenthal were giving concerts at the same time as he, not one of them could approach the number of his concerts. Hoffman remained the sole ruler and each year earned a fortune in Russian rubles. Rewards and happiness! While recognizing his great pianistic talents though, one must ascribe his extraordinary success to the most favourable combination of stars. Even Nikisch was of the same opinion.” Thadani, *Recollections*, 19.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

profusely to garner this type of reception for his own pieces and performances, but unfortunately he was never met with this type of elaborate recognition.

4.2 Ukrainian Folk Influences

As mentioned previously, Bortkiewicz did not consider himself Ukrainian, but rather Russian. He was against the Bolshevik takeover and opposed to Ukrainian independence from Russia. As the son of a wealthy landowner under Imperial Russian rule, the Bortkiewicz family preferred things as they were.

Yet, because of his upbringing near the city of Kharkov, which was consolidated into the country of Ukraine with the Brest-Litvosk Treaty in 1918, it is feasible that some folk elements that we classify today as Ukrainian did make their appearance into his so-called “Russian” compositions.

Yakov Soroker, author of *Ukrainian Musical Elements in Classical Music*, argued that Ukrainian music is often lumped under the broad umbrella of Russian music, which fails to take into account uniquely Ukrainian musical elements.¹⁴⁵ In contemporary Ukraine, Soroker postulated that the study of the ties between Ukrainian folklore, idiom, and classical music were officially discouraged because of Russian chauvinism.¹⁴⁶ Bortkiewicz himself wrote “Tema Russo” [Russian Theme] on the third movement of his Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 16; however, even this designation will be brought into question regarding Ukrainian folk music idioms it appears to contain.

¹⁴⁵ Yakov Soroker, *Ukrainian Musical Elements in Classical Music*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1995), 1.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

Soroker outlined several distinguishable melodic phrases characteristic of Ukrainian folk music in his book *Ukrainian Musical Elements in Classical Music*. He warned, however, of potential problems with observing these characteristics. First, Soroker noted that “features occurring most frequently in musical folklore are not always the ones considered most characteristic.”¹⁴⁷ Soroker also added, “it is incorrect to say that a motif encountered in musical folklore is more characteristic than another simply because it occurs more frequently.”¹⁴⁸ For instance, one common melodic phrase in Ukrainian folk melodies is a descending minor tetrachord; however, the descending minor tetrachord cannot be considered uniquely Ukrainian due to its melodic neutrality and frequent occurrences in the musical folklore of other countries.¹⁴⁹

In contrast, another example was defined by the characterization of melodically resolving the leading tone down to the dominant of the mode rather than upward to the tonic as taught in traditional voice-leading.¹⁵⁰ Soroker’s research identified that some Ukrainian folk tunes provided a unique exception to this somewhat traditional rule. The cadence is rarely encountered in the folkloric melodies of other countries, but occurred in over five hundred Ukrainian folk melodies that Soroker examined.¹⁵¹ One such occurrence is in “Oi ishov kozak z Donu dodmu” [The Cossack Rode Home from the Don] as recorded by Lysenko, as seen in Figure 4.1:

¹⁴⁷ Soroker, *Ukrainian Musical Elements in Classical Music*, 5.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Soroker often referred to this as the “leading tone down a third.” Ibid., 7.

¹⁵¹ Soroker explains that “9,077 melodies examined by the author are to be found in Zinovii Lys’ko, *Ukrains'ki narodni melodii*, vols. II-VIII (New York, Jersey City and Toronto, 1964-86). . . . Five hundred melodies not included in UNM were also studied. All conclusions are based on this folkloric material.” Ibid., 126.



Figure 4.1. Lysenko, “Oi ishov kozak z Donu dodmu,” The Cossack Rode Home from the Don, leading tone resolving down a third, mm. 1-5.

Other Ukrainian folk songs which make use of the leading tone resolving downward a third include: “Oi zakhod’, iasneie sontse” [Oh Set, Bright Sun; D. Revutsky], “Iak pidu ia, molodaia,” [When I, a Young Woman, Go; Lysenko], “Pobratavsia soldy,” [The Falcon Made Friends; Serov], “V slavnim horodi Pereiaslavi,” [In the Famous City of Pereiaslav; Prac]. A melodic example from “Oi hore tii chaitsi ta hore nevozi,” [Oh, Woe to the Lapwing, Woe to the Poor One; Bihdai] shows three examples of the leading tone resolving down a third in Figure 4.2:

Largo

1

4

7

10

Figure 4.2. Bihdai, “Oi hore tii chaitsi ta hore nevozi,” Oh, Woe to the Lapwing, Woe to the Poor One, leading tone resolving down a third, mm. 1-10.

Despite his pro-Russian upbringing, it appears that some of these Ukrainian folk influences are present in Bortkiewicz’s compositions. One notable example of the “leading down a third” occurs in the Bortkiewicz piece “What the Nurse Sang,” from *Aus Meiner Kindheit*, Op. 14 as seen in Figure 4.3:



Figure 4.3. Bortkiewicz, “What the Nurse Sang,” from *Aus Meiner Kindheit*, Op. 14, leading tone resolving down a third to the dominant, mm. 4-6.

Another example of this unique treatment of the leading tone is from the Bortkiewicz Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 16. This theme contains a repeated example of the leading tone to the dominant of the mode in mm. 13 and 17. Bortkiewicz noted that the piece is based off of a “Russian Theme.” Bortkiewicz’s so-called “Tema russo,” however, appears to have been influenced by a song in a collection as transcribed by Mariya Mamontova in her *Children’s Songs on Russian and Ukrainian Tunes*, Set 2, (1877).¹⁵² Note the harmonic similarity and melodic treatment in No. 11, “By the River, By the Bridge,” as compared in Figures 4.4 and 4.5.

¹⁵² Tchaikovsky agreed to help Mamontova harmonize two sets of the collection. According to *Tchaikovsky-research.net*, “Tchaikovsky worked on the second set of songs during the first half of 1877, but they were not published at that time. . . . In 1878, Mariya Mamontova sent him still more songs to work on, but the composer, who had worked on the first two sets with great reluctance, flatly refused the request and returned her manuscript. Tchaikovsky was probably rather embarrassed by the nature of the songs in Mariya Mamontova’s collection—ranging from ancient peasant songs to modern town songs—and which were not always accurately transcribed. It seems that Mamontova was not responsible herself for recording the songs used in both collections, which were taken from a variety of sources. When Jurgenson [the publisher] came to reprint this set in 1888, Tchaikovsky wanted his name taken off the title page. However, the publisher refused to comply.” *Tchaikovsky-research.net*, “Children’s Songs on Russian and Ukrainian Tunes (Mamontova).”

III 49

Molto vivace e con brio Tema russo

Molto vivace e con brio

Tombourin, Cor.

B-flat: I V vi V/vi I

V vi V/vi (g:) i V i V

i V i VI V

Figure 4.4. Bortkiewicz, “Russian Theme” from Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 16 – Mvt 3, mm. 1-23; leading tone down a third to dominant, m. 13, 17

11

ВОЗЛЕ РЕЧКИ, ВОЗЛЕ МОСТА

Andante (Тихо)

The musical score consists of three systems. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is Andante (Тихо). The score includes dynamic markings such as [p], cresc., [mf], and [f]. The lyrics are in Russian: 'Возле речки, возле моста, Возле речки, возле моста, росла трава, Возле речки, возле моста росла трава.' There are two red boxes highlighting specific melodic phrases in the vocal line: one in the second system and one in the third system. Below the piano part, Roman numerals are provided for each measure.

Chord analysis for the first system:

G: I V vi V/vi I

Chord analysis for the second system:

V vi IV V/vi (e:) i iv V

Chord analysis for the third system:

i V i iv V i VI V

Figure 4.5. Mariya Mamontova, “By the River, By the Bridge,” *Children’s Songs on Russian and Ukrainian Tunes* (1877), Set 2, No. 11, mm. 1-16.

It appears that Bortkiewicz adapted the melody; however, many similarities remain. Each theme contains sixteen measures—four-bar phrases that occur four times. Despite being transposed, note the similarities of the opening tetrachord in each piece. A leap up a third consistently begins the second phrase of each example. Also prevalent are the rhythmic similarities and nearly identical harmony (with a slight harmonic variation in the second strain). Note also the harmonic analysis of each theme and that each phrase ends on a half cadence. Finally, note the consistent treatment of the leading tone down to the dominant in mm. 10 and 14 in Mamontova, as compared with the same treatment in m. 13 and 17 in Bortkiewicz. Despite Bortkiewicz’s plausible Russian chauvinism, his version, due to its unique treatment of the leading tone, appears to contain traces of Ukrainian Folk elements as defined by Soroker. One should also note that Mamontova acknowledged Russian *and* Ukrainian tunes in her title *Children’s Songs on Russian and Ukrainian Tunes*.

Soroker identified other elements of Ukrainian music as well. For instance, some melodic phrases and “rhythmic formulas” belong to a song and dance genre, like the *hopak*, *kozachok*, or *kolomyika*; whereas, others belong to a specific region like the Hutsul, Transcarpathia, or Volynia in Ukraine.¹⁵³ Other characteristics include the interval of the ascending minor sixth, which is often associated with melodies of urban folklore;¹⁵⁴ turns of the Lydian mode (natural minor with the augmented sixth scale degree);¹⁵⁵ and changes of mode which are “a highly characteristic phenomenon in the music of the

¹⁵³ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid; Sometimes this is even referred to as the Duma mode.

Slavic peoples, particularly the Ukrainians and to a larger extent, Czechs.”¹⁵⁶ One specific Ukrainian piece is the dance melody, “Oi lopnuv obruch” [The Ring Has Burst], which contains phrases that alternate from major to the parallel minor.¹⁵⁷ Figures 4.6 and 4.7 present few of these examples, as observed in Bortkiewicz’s pieces:

II. LA MELANCOLIQUE.

Serge Bortkiewicz, Op. 27, No. 2.

Lentamente.

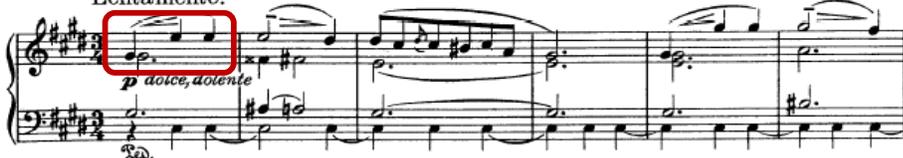


Figure 4.6. Bortkiewicz, “La Melancolique,” *Three Valses*, Op. 27, No. 2, opening motive beginning with an ascending minor sixth, mm. 1-6.



Figure 4.7. Bortkiewicz, “Shepherds and Shepherdesses,” *Impressions*, Op. 6, change of mode from G minor to G major, mm. 25-36.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 9.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

In addition to the aforementioned characteristics and examples, there is one unique melodic phrase that has “become a ‘signature’ melody among Ukrainian songs in general,”¹⁵⁸ and it occurs in two factions. The first consists of a descending minor sixth with a direct resolution into the tonic (often a cadence). “Oi ne khody, Hrytsiu, ta na vechernytsi” [Oh, Hryts’, Don’t go to Evening Parties] in Figure 4.8 demonstrates this type of resolution.¹⁵⁹

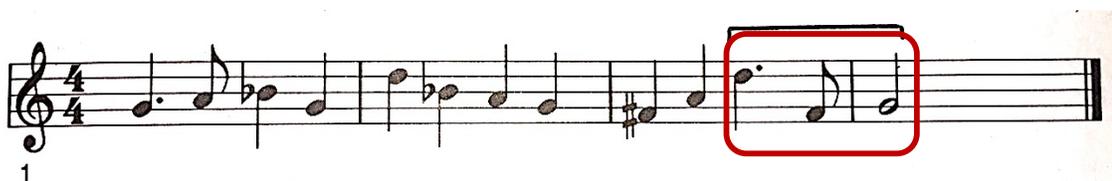


Figure 4.8. “Oi ne khody, Hrytsiu, ta na vechernytsi” [Oh, Hryts’, Don’t go to Evening Parties], an example of the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song,” mm. 1-3.¹⁶⁰

The second is a variation characterized by a descending minor sixth resolution into the tonic by means of the second scale degree, as seen in this example from “Veselyvsia kozachen’ko” [A Cossack was Merry] in Figure 4.9:

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 10.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 11.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

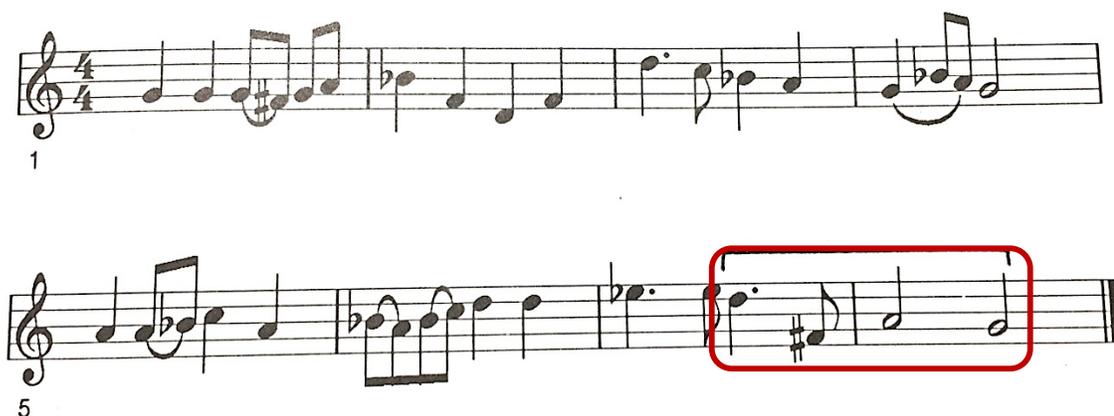


Figure 4.9. “Veselyvsia kozachen’ko” [A Cossack was Merry], an example of the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song,” second version, mm. 1-8.¹⁶¹

Soroker identified this distinct musical gesture as the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song.”¹⁶² There are many variations of the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song.” For instance, it can appear in minor or major, as in “Hei, ta khto lykha ne znaie” [Who Hasn’t Had His Share of Woe]. Other times there is a repetition of the main intervals, or the cadence might be repeated twice.¹⁶³

The “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song” is generally Ukrainian but not confined to one specific area. Soroker included numerous examples from various regions, noting that the melodic motif is extremely unique, yet extremely widespread throughout Ukraine.¹⁶⁴ (For a list of some of these folk tunes, consult Appendix C.) Soroker later showed how the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song” was further assimilated into the music of Haydn,

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 11-12.

¹⁶⁴ For a list of some of the Ukrainian folk melodies that contain the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song,” consult Appendix C.

Boccherini, Mozart, Chopin, and Brahms, becoming an essential component of their music.¹⁶⁵

The “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song” appears to be evident in some of Bortkiewicz’s music as well, as in this example from “What the Nurse Sang,” from *Aus Meiner Kindheit*, Op. 14 in Figure 4.10:



Figure 4.10. Bortkiewicz, “What the Nurse sang,” *Aus meiner Kindheit*, Op. 14, example of the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song,” m. 20-21.

Other variations of the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song” can be found in pieces like: *Im 3/4 Takt*, Op. 48, No. 2 (mm.23-24), and the finale to *Minuet Fantasie*, Op. 7, No. 2. Rather than approaching from the dominant, Figure 4.11 shows the cadence being approached from the third of the scale:



Figure 4.11. Bortkiewicz, *Im 3/4 Takt*, Op. 48, No. 2, variation on the “melodic turn of the Hryts’ song,” mm. 20-24.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 12-14.

In some cases, the title of the piece itself lends itself to Ukrainian heritage, for instance: *Dumka*¹⁶⁶ for piano, the subtitle “*Aus meiner Heimat*” [from my homeland], from Bortkiewicz’s Symphony No. 1 in D Major, Op. 52, or “The Cossack”¹⁶⁷ from *Marionettes*, Op. 54 as seen in Figure 4.12:

Der Kosak
Le Cosaque The Cossack

Sergei Bortkiewicz, Op. 54 №2

Allegro con brio

Figure 4.12. Bortkiewicz, “The Cossack,” from *Marionettes*, Op. 54, mm. 1-16.

Mykola Sukach, a Ukrainian conductor, wrote that Bortkiewicz, “has his roots in Ukraine; his music is permeated with Ukrainian themes, profound intellectuality, and culture.”¹⁶⁸ Yet, in Bortkiewicz’s mind Kharkov was distinctly Russian. While some of his pieces might contain Ukrainian Folk elements as described by Soroker, these

¹⁶⁶ A *dumka* is a Ukrainian music genre popularized by Lysenko; *dumka* literally means “thought.”

¹⁶⁷ Cossacks, as previously mentioned, were warriors of Ukraine with an affinity for horseback riding.

¹⁶⁸ Kalkman, “Revival of Bortkiewicz’s Music,” *Bortkiewicz.com*.

elements might be considered “Ukrainian” due to modern-day borders and the music and cultures that currently lie within them. Regardless of whether the land near Kharkov is considered “Ukrainian” today or “Russian” back in the early 1900s—to Bortkiewicz it was his homeland.

4.3 Influences from St. Petersburg and Leipzig

Bortkiewicz traveled to St. Petersburg originally to study law, but studied music and attended concerts on the side. From these concerts, Bortkiewicz noted: “the ‘Polowetzian Dances’ from Borodin’s opera *Prince Igor*, Rimsky-Korsakow’s *Scheherazade* and especially Schumann’s *Carnaval*, orchestrated by Russian composers, remain unforgettable for me.”¹⁶⁹

In the autumn of 1900, Bortkiewicz traveled to Leipzig to study music with Alfred Reisenauer. Other musicians, however, also made an impact on him in Germany. Bortkiewicz specifically mentioned Eugen d’Albert as a pianist comparable to his teacher, Reisenauer:

The only pianist whom I looked upon as being close to my Master, at that time, was Eugen d’Albert. He stood at the highest point of his pianistic skills and played with thrilling, demonic feeling. I see him even now, the little man with the thin, high voice, how he rushed up the high stairs to the podium of the hall of the department store, acknowledged the applause of the public with a little nod of the head and, still standing, threw himself on the keys as if he wanted to possess a beloved. He played Beethoven’s concertos in E flat and G, the *Appassionata* grandly.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 15.

This passage from Bortkiewicz's *Recollections* is particularly interesting, because it shows that Bortkiewicz was familiar with Beethoven's works as played by other pianists. Other allusions to Beethoven in Bortkiewicz's compositions will be presented later in this chapter.

Bortkiewicz met another musician in Germany—the widely popular conductor, Arthur Nikisch. Bortkiewicz made mention of several anecdotes and stories as being inspired by Nikisch's interpretation of composers like Tchaikovsky and Wagner. Bortkiewicz from his own accounts estimated he saw Nikisch perform over one-hundred times, and he later reflected on the conductor:

I remember how after the B minor chord of the last movement of the “Symphonie Pathétique” of Tchaikovsky had faded away like a breath, after the ending of this exalted tragedy of the dying man, the audience sat as though spellbound. Not a hand moved. Only when Nikisch left the conductor's desk, did the storm break out.¹⁷¹

Bortkiewicz especially liked Nikisch's interpretations of the Beethoven symphonies, the Egmont Overture, and the symphonies of Tchaikovsky. In fact, Bortkiewicz mentioned that after Tchaikovsky heard his own Fifth Symphony conducted by Nikisch, Tchaikovsky embraced Nikisch and told him that he never realized his symphony was so beautiful.¹⁷²

Also notable were Nikisch's interpretations of Wagner, which in turn might have affected Bortkiewicz's interpretation and compositional inspiration. Wagner's “Tannhäuser Overture” was a standard Nikisch encore from which the orchestra played from memory. In one instance, Bortkiewicz recalled that Czar Nicolas II asked Nikisch,

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 18.

¹⁷² Ibid., 4.

“Dear Master, when you come again to me in Petersburg, play Wagner again, I really ask this of you!” Nikisch was deeply moved by this.¹⁷³

Bortkiewicz concluded his thoughts on the great conductor with the following, “He [Nikisch] is unforgettable for me, and it is one the most delightful memories of my life that I often admired and personally knew this really great musician.”¹⁷⁴

4.4 The Liszt School

Bortkiewicz was a student of Alfred Reisenauer who was a pupil of Franz Liszt and taught in the same tradition. Reisenauer traveled to Liszt for thirteen years.

Bortkiewicz added, “he told the most interesting stories and anecdotes about Liszt. Apart from the high artistry, the noble figure of Franz Liszt, Reisenauer described masterfully his musical greatness, his golden heart, his selfless, self-sacrificing mentality.”¹⁷⁵ This educational lineage connects Bortkiewicz to the Romantic tradition and is crucial in understanding Romantic influences in Bortkiewicz’s works.¹⁷⁶

Another Lisztian influence on Bortkiewicz might have been the conductor Felix Weingartner. In one performance, Bortkiewicz took the place of Reisenauer at the piano to perform Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major.¹⁷⁷ “Reisenauer and Weingartner

¹⁷³ Ibid., 18-19.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 19.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 15.

¹⁷⁶ In fact, the great Theodor Leschetizky once noted that Reisenauer’s playing most reminded him of Franz Liszt himself. Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid; Felix Weingartner was an Austrian conductor, pianist, teacher, and writer. He was one of the first to record an extensive, representative repertoire. Patmore, “A-Z of Conductors,” *Naxos Online*.

were close friends. Both were students of Liszt and apostles of Wagner,” Bortkiewicz noted.¹⁷⁸

Bortkiewicz’s strong connection to the Liszt school was extremely impactful on Bortkiewicz as a composer. There are several compositions that appear to make analogous references to Liszt and his works, for instance: *Lamentations and Consolations*, Op. 17, “Orage,” from *Impressions*, Op. 6, “Au Clair de Lune,” from *Impressions*, Op. 6, and collections of etudes Op. 15, Op. 29. In another instance, Bortkiewicz noted travels that reference Franz Liszt, as well, “In Tivoli, in the Palazzo d’Este, I saw the room, in which Franz Liszt had lived, marveled at the garden with the famous view of Campagna, which spread out there like a sea, the magnificent cypresses and the *jeux d’eaux* which Liszt has depicted musically.”¹⁷⁹

In yet another instance, Bortkiewicz acknowledged in a letter to van Dalen in 1938, regarding a translation of a letter from Borodin regarding Franz Liszt: “By the same mail you will receive my translation and adaptation of a letter of Alexander Borodin in which he tells his wife about his journey to Germany and his repeated visits with the Master, Franz Liszt, in Weimar. Isn’t it captivating, very interesting? The good old times and what men!!!”¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Thadani, *Recollections*, 15.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 54.

4.5 Other Notable Influences and Compositionally Motivated Connections

Nils Franke, a Bortkiewicz scholar and connoisseur, has written an article entitled “Sergei Bortkiewicz (1877-1952): Musical Retrospection as a Lasting Art Form.” In his article, Franke hypothesized that some of these aforementioned influences might surface in the music of Sergei Bortkiewicz:

Given the close affinity between pianism as a form of personal skill, and the piano as a primary medium of compositional expression for a pianist-composer, it seems probable, if not highly likely, that the piano works of other composers may have contributed to the formation of Bortkiewicz’s own works. These may range from a literal embedding of a particular harmony to the use of a specific texture or the re-working of a pianistic formula. . . .¹⁸¹

Nils Franke noted several potential examples of a literal embedding in Bortkiewicz’s compositions. In one particular instance, Franke suggested that the Bortkiewicz Prelude Op. 33, No. 4 (1927) revealed a “pianistic re-thinking” of the Chopin Etude Op. 25, No. 11, “Winter Wind” as seen in Figures 4.13 and 4.14.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Franke, *Music Science Today*, 112.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

IV.

Serge Bortkiewicz, Op. 33. No. 4.

Molto agitato.

Figure 4.13 shows the musical score for the first seven measures of the Prelude in B Minor, Op. 33, No. 4 by Serge Bortkiewicz. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system begins with the tempo marking 'Sostenuto.' and the dynamic 'ff'. It includes a 'm. s.' (mezzo sostenuto) marking above a measure. The second system is marked 'Molto agitato.' and 'ff'. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

Figure 4.13. Bortkiewicz, Prelude in B Minor, Op. 33, No. 4, mm. 1-7.

Figure 4.14 shows the musical score for the first eight measures of Chopin's Etude Op. 25, No. 11, 'Winter Wind'. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system is marked 'Lento.' and 'p', followed by 'pp' and 'Allegro con brio, M.M. 80-89'. The second system is marked 'f risoluto' and 'dim.'. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

Figure 4.14. Chopin, Etude Op. 25, No. 11, "Winter Wind," mm. 1-8.

Nils Franke also mentioned a similar “compositionally motivated connection” in the finale of the Violin Sonata, Op. 26 to Schumann in that: “the combination of harmony and texture suggests a Schumannesque influence, without a literal reworking.”¹⁸³

The rest of this chapter seeks to demonstrate other similar compositionally motivated connections with various composers as found in the author’s own separate research, thus reaffirming Franke’s hypothesis.

4.6 Potential References to Chopin

Bortkiewicz rarely mentioned Chopin in his *Recollections*, but a brief overview of Bortkiewicz’s compositions points out several Chopinesque titles that appear to resemble something Chopin would have composed—the first being a mazurka [Bortkiewicz, *Three Mazurkas*, Op. 64, or *Four Pieces*, “Mazurka,” Op. 10, No. 2]. Another influence merely by name is the “Polonaise in C-sharp Minor,” Op. 12, No. 3, which appears to evoke one of Chopin’s preferred genres. A piano etude Op. 15, No. 4 was transcribed for violin and piano and renamed “Berceuse,” bringing to mind the Chopin *Berceuse*, Op. 57.

Some sets of the Preludes, Op. 13, and the Etudes, Op. 15 resemble other pieces as might be found in the Chopin *oeuvre*. One particular example by Bortkiewicz, the Nocturne “Diana,” Op. 24, No. 1 appeared to be composed in a style similar to a Chopin nocturne. Note the left hand arpeggio accompaniment pattern which supports a lyrical and occasionally ornamented right hand melody in Figure 4.15:

¹⁸³ Ibid.

Aufführungsrecht vorbehalten.

Nocturne (Diana)

Serge Bortkiewicz, Op. 24 №1.

Sostenuto.
dolce

Piano. *p*

pp

cresc.

Figure 4.15. Bortkiewicz, Nocturne in E-flat Major, Op. 24, No. 1, “Diana,” mm. 1-9.

Another example is the Bortkiewicz Prelude in E-flat Minor, Op. 6, No. 1. Note how the left-hand accompaniment pattern begins with the exact same five notes (albeit transposed a half-step) in the left hand accompaniment pattern of the Chopin Nocturne in E Minor, Op. 72, No. 1. Also, note similarities regarding the falling melodic thirds in m. 8 of Bortkiewicz and m. 4 in Chopin. Lastly, observe the two-voice chromatic counterpoint in m. 7 of Bortkiewicz and m. 6 in Chopin in Figures 4.16 and 4.17 below:

Prélude.

Serge Bortkiewicz.
dolce cantando rev. von O. Zapff.

Piano. *Andante placido.* *ppp legatissimo*

Figure 4.16. Bortkiewicz, Prelude in E-flat Minor, Op. 6, No. 1, mm. 1-10.

Nocturne.
(Oeuvres posthumes N° 7?)

F. Chopin, Op. 72. N° 1.

Nocturne. *Andante.* ($\text{♩} = 69$)

Figure 4.17. Chopin, Nocturne in E Minor, Op. 72, No. 1, mm. 1-6.

At the very least, the pieces are stylistic and texturally reminiscent of each other. These consistencies with Chopin might influence one's interpretive approach to the music of Bortkiewicz possibly leading to a greater understanding of the composer and his music.

4.7 Potential References to Tchaikovsky

As evidenced in his *Recollections*, Bortkiewicz was deeply inspired by fellow Russian, Peter Illitsch Tchaikovsky. Bortkiewicz conducted Tchaikovsky's symphonies numerous times, particularly the Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36. He was very familiar with these works and their premieres.

In the Bortkiewicz Symphony No. 1 - second movement, there is a possible allusion to the third movement of the Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4, with his "pizzicato scherzo ostinato," as compared with the pizzicato opening of the Bortkiewicz Symphony No. 1 second movement. The opening pages to each movement are presented in Figure 4.18 and 4.19:

TCHAIKOVSKY — СИМФОНИЈА № 4, ПРВИ ДЕЛ

III. SCHERZO

Pizzicato ostinato

Allegro

The score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes woodwinds and brass instruments, all of which are silent in this section. The second system includes the string ensemble, which begins with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. A red box highlights the first few measures of the string parts, with the instruction "pizzicato sempre" written above each staff. The tempo marking "Allegro" is placed above the string staves and below the section.

Instrument list:

- Kleine Flöte
- 1. Flöten
- 2. Flöten
- Oboen 1.2
- Klarinetten 1.2 in A
- Fagotte 1.2
- 1.2 in F Hörner
- 3.4 in F
- Trompeten 1.2 in F
- Alt, Tenor
- Posaunen
- Baß
- Baßtuba
- Pauken in Aa, Dax
- Violine 1
- Violine 2
- Viola
- Violoncello
- Kontrabaß

Allegro
pizzicato sempre

Allegro

Figure 4.18. Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36, Movement 3, “Pizzicato ostinato,” mm. 1-9.

Vivace $\frac{3}{4}$ II. Scherzo. *f. mod.* 33.

1. Fl. 1
2. Fl. 2
Vla.
Vcl.
Cb.

9

17

Cl. 1. 2.
Cl. 1. 2.
Cl. 1. 2.
Fg. 1. 2.

№ 6
20linig.

Figure 4.19. Bortkiewicz, Symphony No. 1 in D Major, Op. 52, Movement 2, “Scherzo”; mm. 1-24. Provided courtesy of the Edwin A. Fleisher Collection of Orchestral Music at the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Another example of Tchaikovsky's influence recalls the ending to the Bortkiewicz Piano Concerto No. 1, as compared with the ending to the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1. Note in Figures 4.20 and 4.21 how both pieces use alternating chords between the hands in sixteenth notes for a flashy ending¹⁸⁴:

Figure 4.20. Tchaikovsky, Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 23, third movement, alternating chords, mm. 287-293.

¹⁸⁴ Interestingly, alternating chords between the hands is apparent also in Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto ending, as well as the ending to his *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*.

The image shows a musical score for the third movement of Bortkiewicz's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 16, mm. 712-727. The score is in B-flat minor and 3/4 time. It features a piano (I) and a piano II (II). The piano I part has a melodic line with a fermata and a crescendo. The piano II part has a bass line with a crescendo and a fermata. The score is divided into three systems, each with a piano I and piano II part.

Figure 4.21. Bortkiewicz, Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 16, third movement, alternating chords, mm. 712-727.

It should be mentioned that Bortkiewicz was instrumental in translating the Russian letters between Peter Tchaikowsky and Nadeshjda von Meck from Russian into

German for publication.¹⁸⁵ Bortkiewicz made reference to the letters consistently in his correspondence with Hugo van Dalen. It appears the letters had substantial interest to the German-speaking public; Bortkiewicz noted in February 1939 that the German version sold over 2,275 copies.¹⁸⁶

Constant mention of these letters, and the fact that Bortkiewicz was so adamant about making the translations available to the public, show how important he considered Tchaikovsky in his own life and to the advancement of music in general.

4.8 Potential References to Wagner

Early in his *Recollections*, Bortkiewicz mentioned the powerful impact Wagner's music had upon him. He was extremely moved by the *Ring of the Nibelungs* and *Tristan und Isolde*. Bortkiewicz claimed he immediately went out and bought piano scores after hearing the operas and claimed he was "enchanted" by Tristan.¹⁸⁷ Bortkiewicz specifically recalled one performance under Nikisch's direction at the Leipzig Opera House that was particularly wonderful.¹⁸⁸

Occasionally, Bortkiewicz even referenced Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* by pointing out parallels in his own life that were reflected by moments in the *musikdrama*,

¹⁸⁵ Thadani, *Recollections*, 81; for more information, the original publication information is: "Die seltsame Liebe Peter Tschaikowsky's und der Nadjeschda von Meck. Nach dem Original-Briefwechsel herausgegeben," Leipzig, 1938.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 5; In a letter to Hugo van Dalen on March 4, 1940, Bortkiewicz mentioned a book he had written under his pseudonym, "Sawwa Borin Erotica," Four stories. Although he mentions, "The erotic element is only a 'Leitmotiv,' otherwise many serious subjects and thoughts. – Pity I can't send it to you... These are stories from the life of a Russian composer, from his love life. Fact and fiction." (Thadani, *Recollections*, 58). *Leitmotiv* is a term that is often associated with the music dramas of Richard Wagner.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

such as when Bortkiewicz discussed his waiting for a sea vessel with other Russians in Crimea bound for Constantinople. “Only a French warship lay anchored in the distance and shimmered in the light of electric lamps, otherwise the song of the herder in the third act of *Tristan*, “Yet no ship can be seen,” suddenly came to my mind.”¹⁸⁹

In a rather poetic description of his homeland in South Russia, Bortkiewicz referenced *Tristan und Isolde* yet again to describe the Russian countryside during spring and summer:

Spring and summer are glorious in South Russia. . . . In the beautiful bright summer nights the nightingales sing . . . and one dreams as though bewitched in the silent stillness of the night . . . : the A-flat mood from the second act of “Tristan and Isolde” – a yearning for love and happiness!¹⁹⁰

The influences of Richard Wagner could also be attributed in Bortkiewicz’s musical compositions. A reviewer of the RAVAG concert, held in February 1952, noted: “Among the works that were performed, the Piano Concerto in B flat major deserves the highest rank. A sad ‘Tristan’ sound murmurs throughout the three movements of the impressive piece complete with pianistic elegance. . . .”¹⁹¹ As demonstrated below in Figures 4.22 and 4.23, the opening to motif to the Bortkiewicz Piano Concerto No. 1 is essentially a direct quote from the “Prelude” to *Tristan und Isolde* by Wagner:

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 31.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 20.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 73.

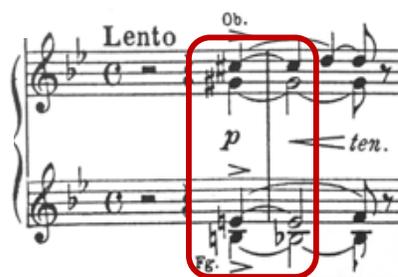


Figure 4.22. Bortkiewicz, Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 16 first movement, “Tristan” motif,” mm. 1-2.



Figure 4.23. Wagner, “Prelude” to *Tristan und Isolde*, piano reduction, mm. 1-2.

As seen above, the notes are remarkably similar, and the motif contains the same upward indirect resolution as found in the Wagner work. This motif recurs throughout all three movements of the piano concerto.

In a letter to Hugo van Dalen on March 4, 1940, Bortkiewicz mentioned a book he had written under his pseudonym, “Sawwa Borin Erotica,” Four stories. Although he mentions, “The erotic element is only a ‘Leitmotiv,’ otherwise many serious subjects and thoughts. – Pity I can’t send it to you... These are stories from the life of a Russian

composer, from his love life. Fact and fiction.”¹⁹² *Leitmotiv* is a term that is often associated with the music dramas of Richard Wagner.

It is feasible, that since Wagner was such a strong influence on Bortkiewicz, Bortkiewicz might have used the *leitmotiv* for musical expression as well. Upon examining the complete Bortkiewicz output, one such instance could be a recurring “Eros” or erotic *leitmotiv* in his musical pieces. The alto voice in the right hand of “Impromptu (Eros),” from *Three Pieces*, Op. 24, No. 3 (1922) contains a five note chromatic motif and is repeated constantly throughout the piece as seen in Figure 4.24:

Figure 4.24. Bortkiewicz, “Impromptu” (Eros), from *Three Pieces*, Op. 24, No. 3, alto voice in the right hand, mm. 1-4.

Notice the reiteration of this same chromatic falling line in the middle right-hand voice in Bortkiewicz’s Op. 29, No. 11, “Hamlet” (1924). In this instance, the “erotic” *leitmotiv* contains even the same five notes in the same key. The subject content of “Hamlet” might have drawn Bortkiewicz to use this particular “erotic” *leitmotiv* again, because Shakespeare consistently references “incest” and “misogyny” as themes

¹⁹² Ibid., 58.

throughout his stage play. The following example highlights the middle chromatic five note descending pattern in the middle voice of the right hand in Figure 4.25:

The image shows a musical score for Bortkiewicz's "Hamlet" from Etudes Nouvelles, Op. 29, No. 11. The score is in 3/4 time, B-flat major, and features a descending chromatic five-note motif in the middle voice of the right hand, highlighted with red boxes. The tempo is marked "poco animato" and the dynamics include "mf".

Figure 4.25. Bortkiewicz, “Hamlet,” from Etudes Nouvelles, Op. 29, No. 11, mm. 31-34.

These examples are notably similar when compared aurally. Other similar five note iterations of the *leitmotiv* might be portrayed in other later works as well, like “Ein Brief,” from *Ein Roman*, Op. 35, No. 7. *Ein Roman* is based on the Tolstoy novella “Family Happiness,” which again contains themes of a love story and the marriage of a young girl to a much older man. The descending chromatic five note motive appears in the lowest voice of the right hand in Figure 4.26:



Figure 4.26. Bortkiewicz, “Ein Brief,” from *Ein Roman*, Op. 35, No. 7, mm. 53-56.

These examples might be only plausible; however, they could reflect Bortkiewicz’s mention of the “erotic” *leitmotiv* in his *Sawwa Borin: Four Stories*. Wagner used the *leitmotiv* in his own works to represent fire, swords, magic, and longing. Where Wagner used an ascending chromatic four note motif to represent the “desire” *leitmotiv* in his works (see Figure 4.27), it is intriguing that Bortkiewicz would use a five note descending motif to represent a similar psychological state of mind.



Figure 4.27. Wagner, “Desire” *Leitmotiv*, *Tristan und Isolde*.¹⁹³

It is unfortunate that Bortkiewicz’s opera, *Akrobaten*, is missing, because it probably holds more clues to Bortkiewicz’s application of *leitmotifs* in his compositions.

¹⁹³ Weinstock and Heisterman, “Desire motive,” *Tristan und Isolde Guide*. UTexas.edu, <<https://www.laits.utexas.edu/tristan/motive2.php>>, 2007.

4.9 Potential References to Rachmaninoff and Scriabin

Bortkiewicz and Rachmaninoff were practically contemporaries; they were born and died around the same time, and both were affected by the Russian Revolution in similar ways, although Rachmaninoff would eventually emigrate to the United States by way of Scandinavia, and Bortkiewicz would remain in Europe. In his *Recollections*, Bortkiewicz briefly mentioned Rachmaninoff, not as competition in music, but as a fellow Russian:

Sergei Rachmaninoff traveled Russia during the war and gave piano recitals of his own compositions. After Scriabin's death, he even gave an all-Scriabin recital. The judgment on Rachmaninoff as a piano virtuoso has already been made long ago. He is world-famous and stands for many (also for me) as the greatest and most interesting pianist of the present time. Everything that he plays bears the stamp of his original highly artistic personality. His career as a virtuoso is extremely unique. Before the war he played abroad very rarely. He played his piano concerto off and on, that was all.¹⁹⁴ He did not give any attention to his great pianistic talent. . . . When necessity came, when he lost his entire property and had to flee from the Bolsheviks out of Russia, he really began his pianistic career in America, and actually at the age of 45. An astonishing accomplishment, astounding energy!¹⁹⁵

In some cases, the title of the piece triggers comparisons, as with the Bortkiewicz *Elegie* and the Rachmaninoff *Elegie*. Here, it appears the works might be complementary, although Rachmaninoff's is in E-flat minor and Bortkiewicz is in C-sharp major. The accompaniment pattern of the left hand is similar, yet inverted. As with the Schumann

¹⁹⁴ It appears that at one point, Rachmaninoff might have been considering dedicating his fourth piano concerto to Hugo van Dalen, as Bortkiewicz mentioned in an undated letter to van Dalen: "I searched for the Fourth Concerto of Rachmaninoff in Vienna in the music shops, but did not find it. It is really great that he has dedicated the concerto to you! Who has published it?" (Thadani, *Recollections*, 43). The modern day dedication on the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 4 is to Nicolai Medtner.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

example as described by Franke in the Violin Sonata, the combination of harmony and texture in the Bortkiewicz *Elegie* appears to resemble a texture and harmony reminiscent of Rachmaninoff as seen in Figures 4.28 and 4.29:

Frau Helene Hunaeiker gewidmet

ELEGIE

Serge Bortkiewicz (1877-1952)
Opus 46

Andante *cantando*

pp *u.c.* 6 6 *p* *mf*

Figure 4.28. Bortkiewicz, Elegie in C-sharp Major, Op. 46, m. 1-6.

A Monsieur A. ARENSKY.

25

ELEGIE.

S. Rachmaninoff. Op. 3. N^o 1.

Moderato.

Piano.

pp *mf* *cresc.* *dim.*

Figure 4.29. Rachmaninoff, Elegie in E-flat Minor, Op. 3, No. 1, mm. 1-8.

In addition to Rachmaninoff, Bortkiewicz described meeting and hearing Scriabin perform during an encounter with him in Moscow. Early Scriabin works were a strong influence on Bortkiewicz, as Bortkiewicz mentioned in his *Recollections*:

What an inspired harmonist, melodist, and poet he was earlier. I find it incomprehensible why his wonderful piano pieces appear so seldom in the programs of pianists. Piano virtuosos should be enthusiastic about the outstanding piano writing. They should be glad to finally introduce something new and beautiful!¹⁹⁶

Nils Franke mentioned in regard to Scriabin influences in Bortkiewicz works, “For all its individuality, it is hard to imagine the following work, Lamentation Op. 17, No. 7 without connecting it, at least tangentially to Scriabin’s use of harmony and rhythm in his Preludes Op. 11 in the 1890s.”¹⁹⁷ An example from each is illustrated below in Figures 4.30 and 4.31:

13

Figure 4.30. Bortkiewicz, Lamentation Op. 17, No. 7, mm. 29-32.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 25.

¹⁹⁷ Franke, *Music Science Today*, 113.

Figure 4.31. Scriabin, Prelude in D Minor, Op. 11, No. 24, mm. 27-37.

4.10 Potential Influences from Outside the Romantic Era

Thadani noted that the Bortkiewicz Etude in A Major, Op. 10, No. 3 is “a delightfully ‘ripply’ study, obviously inspired by Liszt’s *Jeux d’Eaux*.”¹⁹⁸ Although in one particular section, the piece appears to possibly quote a passage from Debussy’s *Arabesque No. 1*. Note the similar descending intervallic outline, which even contains the same six starting pitches as seen in Figures 4.32 and 4.33:

¹⁹⁸ Thadani, *Recollections*, 78.

Etude.

(Fontaine lumineuse.)

Serge Bortkiewicz, Op. 10. N° 3.

Allegro ma non troppo.

Piano. *mf*

The image shows the first two systems of the piano score for Bortkiewicz's Etude in A major, Op. 10, No. 3. The right-hand part features a melodic line with a specific fingering pattern highlighted in a red box. The tempo is 'Allegro ma non troppo' and the dynamics are 'mf'. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The score consists of two systems of music.

Figure 4.32. Bortkiewicz, Etude in A major, Op. 10, No. 3, “Fountain Lumineuse,” nearly identical right hand configuration, mm. 1-5.

Edited by ISIDOR PHILIPP

CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862-1918)

Andantino con moto

PIANO *p*

The image shows the first two systems of the piano score for Debussy's Arabesque No. 1. The right-hand part features a melodic line with a specific fingering pattern highlighted in a red box. The tempo is 'Andantino con moto' and the dynamics are 'p'. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score consists of two systems of music.

Figure 4.33. Debussy, Arabesque No. 1, nearly identical right hand configuration, mm. 1-7.

If this is truly a conscious effort by Bortkiewicz to quote Debussy, it would appear to show that Bortkiewicz's influences could have come from outside the realm of the Romantic Era. Once again, this compositional resemblance might affect one's interpretive approach to Bortkiewicz's piece.

Another potential reference includes the Bortkiewicz Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 32, "*per aspera ad astra*" [through difficulties to the stars]. "*Per aspera ad astra*" was considered a Beethovenian ideal, and some of Beethoven's pieces in C minor reflect darkness to light, minor to major, and triumph over adversity, such as the Symphony No. 5 with its "fate" motive and the Sonata in C minor, Op. 111. Andras Schiff in a series of lectures on the Beethoven Sonatas addresses this same issue where he referred to it as: "from the ground to the stars." This reference by Schiff mimics closely the subtitle that Bortkiewicz named his Piano Concerto No. 3: "*per aspera ad astra*" [through difficulties to the stars].¹⁹⁹

One possible interpretation of Bortkiewicz's Piano Concerto No. 3 is that it might have been influenced by Beethoven's Piano Sonata in C Minor, Op. 111. Note the motif of an ascending scale which leads to the outline of C, E-flat, B in the Beethoven Sonata in C Minor in Figure 4.34:

¹⁹⁹ András Schiff, "Piano Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111." Beethoven Piano Sonatas Lecture-Recitals. Wigmore Hall, 2004-2006.

2(130) **Allegro con brio ed appassionato.**

cresc.-

ff

a tempo.

mezzo piano

poco ritenente

cresc.

Figure 4.34. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C minor, Op. 111,
three note motive, mm. 17-27.

Now note the same notes leading up to the same outline of the same notes C and E-flat (although the leading tone has been omitted) also being approached by an ascending scale in Bortkiewicz Piano Concerto No. 3 in Figure 4.35:

The image displays a musical score for Bortkiewicz's Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 32, measures 24-30. The score is written for piano (1 and 2) and celesta (1 and 2). The piano part begins with a *rit.* and *morendo* section, followed by a *ppp lunga* section, and then a *Allegro vivace* section. The celesta part features a circled motif in the first system and a circled motif in the second system. The piano part has two circled motifs in the second system. The celesta part has markings *pp Vo. Ch.* and *cresc.* in the second system.

Figure 4.35. Bortkiewicz, Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 32, mm. 24-30.

Upon listening to each example, there is a strong aural connection to each motif's outlines, and they occur at similarly formal sections of the work (closer to the beginning of each work after a slow introduction).

Beethoven's C Minor Sonata, Op. 111 is also aurally recalled as well in another section of the Bortkiewicz piece. An ascending scale ("from the ground"—Schiff) leads to a pianissimo section in a compound meter of three in which light staccato left hand notes paired with alternating figurations in the right hand twinkle like stars in the night.

The texture of this structurally important moment (about two-thirds through the piece) in the Beethoven Sonata is demonstrated in Figure 4.36:

Figure 4.36. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C minor, Op. 111, mm. 72-77.

Note the analogous formal section of the Bortkiewicz Piano Concerto No. 3 (about two-thirds through the piece) and how Bortkiewicz depicts *astra*, or stars, in a similar fashion. Alternating figurations in the right hand are paired with scales in the left hand pianissimo marked *legatissimo egualmente*, also in a compound meter of three, while the orchestra plays passagework similar to the left hand of the Beethoven Piano Sonata in m. 491. This excerpt is demonstrated in Figure 4.37:

Figure 4.37. Bortkiewicz, Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor, “per aspera ad astra,” Op. 32, “starry” section, mm. 488-492.

If these examples truly are related, this would further show that Bortkiewicz might have expanded his realm of influences beyond the Romantic Era, and these similarities might change the way an artist interprets the piece.

4.11 A Summary of Bortkiewicz’s Compositional Style

As the preceding examples have hopefully shown, Bortkiewicz was influenced by a variety of composers, pianists, and conductors—particularly as a pupil of Alfred Reisenauer, an advocate of the great Romantics. One should be keenly aware, however, of other influences in Bortkiewicz’s style including the Russian opera and his Kharkovian

roots, which today are associated with Ukraine. Bortkiewicz was not merely an imitator. His piano pieces reconsidered melodies, sequences, patterns, and motifs in his own distinct voice, paired with glimpses of retrospection. However, these echoes of the past might have been meant to pay homage to his contemporaries and other great composers that came before him, and ultimately could affect one's approach to Bortkiewicz's repertoire.

A review of the Radio Austria Vienna Bortkiewicz Concert on February 28, 1952, summarized Bortkiewicz's style upon hearing his own works being performed on the program:

Like Tchaikovsky, his spiritual ancestor, with whose personality he has dealt with in writing,²⁰⁰ Bortkiewicz gave only a subjective impression of the soul of the Russian people, not however – as in the case of Mussorgsky and his followers – a natural image with quotations from folk songs. Heavy influences from German romanticism must be regarded as essential. The 20th century is hardly to be felt in this music, which projects into our time from a great past. In spite of this it is not academic or smoothly epigonic, but breathes and gives pleasure because of the honesty and the directness of the characteristics, that are to be seen in it.²⁰¹

On November 4, 1952, at the grave of Sergei Bortkiewicz, Hans Ankwicz-Kleehoven [founder of the Bortkiewicz Gemeinde] eulogized the composer and summarized his legacy and musical style:

Because Bortkiewicz was an important outstanding personality both as a musician and a person [sic]. This expressed itself in his entire outward appearance, in his magnificently sculpted head reminiscent of Roman emperors, in his proud upright attitude and his always evident dignified earnestness, which he at times softened with a friendly smile, but hardly ever with a merry laugh. As with so many other Slavs, a gentle

²⁰⁰ This refers to Bortkiewicz's translations of the Tchaikovsky – von Meck letters; Bortkiewicz consistently referenced these letters in his letters to van Dalen and was adamant about translating them for others to read.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 73.

melancholy also formed a basic feature of his character, which also echoed in his music and gave it a special charm. The minor keys were closer to him than the major ones. But since he also possessed an intellect and an almost French esprit, as it were, he was also successful in full, especially living melodies such as in his frequently played “Gavotte caprice.” If one wanted to characterize Bortkiewicz’s place in the history of music, one could perhaps call him a sort of “Russian Grieg.” Because although he mastered the larger forms with virtuosity – he specially preferred the lyrical or yet the pianistically brilliant piece and so it is likely that his Preludes and Etudes along with his various piano suites will remain permanently in the concert repertoire.²⁰²

After Bortkiewicz died, his wife Elisabeth was his sole heir. She stayed as a subtenant of Maria Cernas in Vienna, and passed away on March 9, 1960. According to Kalkmann on the Bortkiewicz website, her heirs were two daughters of her brother Sergei Ilyanko. “By then the memory of Bortkiewicz’ music had already faded away. His music went out of print and orchestral scores became very hard to obtain,” Kalkmann writes.²⁰³ Even the Bortkiewicz-Gemeinde was dissolved in March 1973, following the last president: Edmund Schwab.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Ibid., 73-74.

²⁰³ Kalkman, “What Happened After Bortkiewicz’s Death?” *Bortkiewicz.com*.

²⁰⁴ Kalkman, “Bortkiewicz Gemeinde,” *Bortkiewicz.com*.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

It is the author's opinion that there are distinct advantages to the stylistic elements that Bortkiewicz shared with other composers. As a teacher of music, these related pieces provide unique supplementary material—pieces in the same style that are lesser known to students. If a student for instance has exhausted the Chopin mazurkas appropriate to their level, one could supplement a Bortkiewicz mazurka that contains similar stylistic elements. For the student desperate to play Rachmaninoff, but who is not quite technically ready, Bortkiewicz's pieces could provide valuable prerequisites to prepare the student for other technically demanding repertoire in the future, particularly when it mimics so closely its stylistic counterparts.

One of the ways in which Bortkiewicz's music could be beneficial to new, young, or modern composers is that his works potentially offer compositional models and their implementation. By comparing Bortkiewicz's works to these predecessors, a composer could find insight into one's own compositional process. A student could compare and contrast melody versus accompaniment patterns; he or she could question what remains the same rhythmically or what musical fundamentals remain the same. These relationships could all be questioned in the compositional process. Dan Johnson, an author of the RightBrainRockstar Blog wrote:

No matter who first came up with this saying, the message is the same. If you want to be a successful artist, you need to emulate successful artists. It's widely held that one of the keys to success in any field is to focus not on avoiding the mistakes others have made, but on replicating the actions of those who have achieved success. In other words, look at what successful people do, and do that.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ Dan Johnson, "How to Steal from Artists and Get Away With it," *RightBrainRockstar.org*.

These similarities and allusions, whether coincidental or purposeful, could affect one's interpretations of Bortkiewicz's repertoire. For instance, if a performer is newly learning a Bortkiewicz nocturne, past knowledge and expertise of the Chopin nocturnes would provide valuable knowledge in the application of these same musical style features to Bortkiewicz. This approach might be quite different from a Bortkiewicz piece which appears to allude to Debussy or Beethoven, which might feasibly be more impressionistic or classical in an approach, respectively.

5.1 The Revival

As previously mentioned, Bortkiewicz's music was recorded in the 1970s and early 1980s, before a wide range of CDs appeared from the late 1990s onwards; these recordings covered a vast majority of his compositional output for "solo piano, piano chamber music, concerto, and symphonic writing."²⁰⁶ Several pianists made a valiant effort to record a substantial portion of the known published piano repertoire. Some of these artists include: Jouni Somero, Stephen Coombs, Klaas Trapman, and Cyprien Katsaris. The Ukrainian conductor Mykola Sukach has taken it upon himself to promote, perform, and rekindle interest in the orchestral music of Sergei Bortkiewicz.²⁰⁷

In addition, there have been other modern-day efforts to promote Bortkiewicz's work, like those of Anna Reznik and Nadejda Vlaeva. In March 2016, Vlaeva recorded an all-Bortkiewicz CD, including the world premier recordings of the recently discovered scores of the *Jugoslavia Suite*, Op. 58, *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 61, and the *Three Mazurkas*,

²⁰⁶ Franke, *Music Science Today*, 110.

²⁰⁷ Kalkman, "Revival of Bortkiewicz's Music," *Bortkiewicz.com*.

Op. 64. This undertaking demonstrates modern-day relevance—and that Bortkiewicz’s works are still being discovered.

Despite recent and current efforts to make the works of Bortkiewicz more known and accessible, scarcities still remain. While it appears that the piano works have been represented well, recordings of the orchestral works and some vocal works are severely lacking, despite the availability of scores.²⁰⁸

Bortkiewicz understood the importance of translations as evident through his own translations of the Tchaikovsky-von Meck letters. How ironic, then, that a lack of abundant translations presents a major hindrance to the accessibility of research into Bortkiewicz’s life and music—for instance, Elke Paul’s *Leben und Werk* and Ria Feldmann’s *Musikwissensdftliche Antnerkungen zu Sergei Bortkiewicz* [Musicological footnotes to Sergei Bortkiewicz] in German, and Anna Reznik’s writings in Russian.

Nils Franke rightly called for more extensive research regarding compositional and theoretical aspects of the pieces, and Chihiro Ishioka’s Japanese dissertation on the Bortkiewicz Piano Sonatas is an excellent start.²⁰⁹ Another relevant future endeavor would be to analyze Bortkiewicz’s Symphony No. 1 in D Major, Op. 52 “Aus Meiner Heimat” in accordance with the Ukrainian musical elements as laid out by Soroker. Since the inscription to the symphony reads “from my homeland,” it is highly likely that Ukrainian folk elements are present in the work.

²⁰⁸ See Appendix D, for more information about how to obtain these scores.

²⁰⁹ Chihiro Ishioka, “Sergei Bortkiewicz’s view on music and its reflections in his works, especially in his two piano sonatas,” *Bulletin of the Doctoral Programs, Tokyo College of Music*, Vol. 1, No. 2, March 2016.

With the strong international following that appears to be gaining momentum, a valiant effort would be to reinstate the Bortkiewicz-Gemeinde. Rather than meeting every Monday as the group formerly met, it is feasible that a group of performers, scholars, and enthusiasts could meet annually or biennially—possibly even hosting a competition. Many centennial anniversaries are coming up in regard to Bortkiewicz's life which should be celebrated. Efforts such as these would solidify Bortkiewicz's rightful place among classical composers, and keep his life and work in memory and relevance well into the future.

APPENDIX A – CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF PIECES BY CITY OF ORIGIN

First Berlin 1904 – 1914

- Op. 1 – Piano Concerto (destroyed by composer)
- Op. 2 – Sechs Lieder für Gesang und Klavier, 1904
- Op. 3 – Quatre Morceaux, 1906
- Op. 4 – Impressions, 1907
- Op. 5 – Minuit. Deux Morceaux, 1907
- Op. 6 – Trois Morceaux, 1908
- Op. 7 – Deux Morceaux, 1908
- Op. 8 – Esquisses de Crimée, 1908
- Op. 9 – Sonata No. 1, 1909
- Op. 10 – Quatre Morceaux, 1909
- Op. 11 – Six Pensées Lyriques, 1909
- Op. 12 – Trois Morceaux, 1910
- Op. 13 – Six Préludes, 1910
- Op. 14 – Aus Meiner Kindheit, 1911
- Op. 15 – Dix Etudes, 1911
- Op. 16 – Piano Concerto No. 1, 1913
- Op. 17 – Lamentations and Consolations, 1913
- Op. 18 – Russian Dances for Orchestra, 1914
- Op. 19 – Othello Symphonic Poem, 1914

Kharkov 1914-1919

- Op. 20 – Cello Concerto, 1915
- Op. 23 – 7 Poems by Paul Verlaine for Voice and Piano, 1918

Refugee 1919-1922

- Op. 21 – The Little Wanderer, 1922
- Op. 22 – Violin Concerto, 1922
- Op. 24 – Three Pieces for Piano, 1922
- Op. 25 – Three Pieces for Cello and Piano, 1922
- Op. 26 – Violin Sonata, 1922

Austria - 1922-1927

- Op. 27 – 3 Waltzes for Piano, 1924
- Op. 28 – Piano Concerto No. 2 (for left hand), 1924
- Op. 29 – 12 Etudes for Piano, 1924
- Op. 30 – From Andersen's Fairy Tales, 12 pieces for piano, 1925

- Op. 31 – Russian Melodies and Dances for Piano, four hands, 1925
- Op. 32 – Piano Concerto No. 3, 1926
- Op. 33 – 10 Preludes for piano, 1926
- Op. 34 – A Nightpiece for Orchestra, 1927
- Op. 35 – Ein Roman, 8 pieces for piano, 1928
- Op. 36 – Cello Sonata, 1924
- Op. 37 – 1001 Nights - Oriental Ballet Suite, 10 Pieces for Piano, 1926
- Op. 38 – Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello, 1928

Second Berlin 1929-1935

- Op. 39 – Kindheit, 14 easy Pieces for Piano, 1930
- Op. 40 – 7 Preludes for Piano, 1931
- Op. 41 - Suite for Cello solo
- Op. 42 - Ballade for Piano, 1931
- Op. 43 - Hafis Songs, after Hans Bethge for Singer and Orchestra or Organ/Piano, 1931
- Op. 44 - Lyrical Intermezzo for Violin and Orchestra, 1934
- Op. 45 - Russian Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra, 1935
- Op. 46 - Elegy for Piano, 1932
- Op. 47 - Russian Poems on German texts for Singer and Piano, 1932
- Op. 48 - 6 Pieces in 3/4-time for Piano, 1933
- Op. 49 - 2 Pieces for Piano, 1933

Second Austria 1935-1952

- Op. 50 - Acrobats, Opera in three Acts, 1938
- Op. 51 - Austrian Suite for String Orchestra, 1937
- Op. 52 - Symphony No.1 "From my Homeland", 1937
- Op. 53 - Overture to a Fairytale Opera, 1937
- Op. 54 - Marionettes, 9 Pieces for Piano, 1938
- Op. 55 - Symphony No.2, 1937
- Op. 56 - In the Park, Song Cycle after Curt Bohmer, 1946
- Op. 57 - Heitere Suite for large Orchestra, 1939
- Op. 58 - Yugoslav Suite for Orchestra, 1940
- Op. 59 - Lyrica Nova, 4 Pieces for Piano, 1940
- Op. 60 - Piano Sonata No.2, 1941/42
- Op. 61 - Miscellana, 6 Pieces for Piano, 1941
- Op. 62 - Sternflug des Herzens, 7 Songs for Singer and Piano, 1942
- Op. 63 - Suite for Violin and Piano, 1945
- Op. 64 - 3 Mazurkas for Piano, 1945
- Op. 65 - 4 Pieces for Piano, 1946
- Op. 66 - 6 Preludes for Piano, 1946-1947
- Op. 67 - 4 Songs for Singer and Piano after Josef Bubl, 1947/48
- Op. 68 - The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 6 easy Pieces for Piano, 1947

- Op. 69 - 3 Songs after Poems of Arthur Schopenhauer, 1948
- Op. 70 - Cinq Esquisses de Femmes, 5 Pieces for Piano, 1950
- Op. 71 - 3 Melodramas, 1950/51
- Op. 72 - 6 Songs, 1951/52
- Op. 73 - 3 Songs, 1951/52
- Op. 74 - 3 Songs after Edmund Schwab, 1952

Works without Opus number

- Seven Songs for Voice and Orchestra
- Olympic Scherzo for Orchestra
- Symphony No.3 (Vienna)
- Prelude for Piano, 1934
- Dumka for Piano
- Transcription of Menuet by Joseph Haydn for two Pianos
- Prelude for Cello and Piano
- 2 Songs, arranged for Voice and String Orchestra
- Picture of War, Song after Balmont
- Lysette, Song
- My Mother, Song

APPENDIX B - DISCOGRAPHY

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- _____. *Sergei Bortkiewicz: Piano Works*. Cyprien Katsaris. Piano 21, P21 004, 2001/2009.
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APPENDIX C – UKRAINIAN FOLK SONGS CONTAINING THE “MELODIC TURN
OF THE HRYTS’ SONG”

“This list of examples, which is far from exhaustive, serves to indicate the broad proliferation of the melodic turn of the Hryts’ song.”²¹⁰

—from Yakov Soroker’s

*Ukrainian Musical Elements in Classical Music*²¹¹

Kyiv Region

Oi na bidu, na hore kozak urodyvsia	[For Trouble and Woe a Cossack Was Born]
Oi shche ne svit, oi shche ne svitaie	[It is Not Yet Sunrise]
Ziishlo sontse vesnianeie	[The Spring Sun has Risen]
Viiut’ vitry, viiut’ buini	[The Stormy Winds are Blowing]
Oi dobraia hodynon’ka bula	[The Time was Good]

Eastern Ukraine

Oi i zrada, chorni brovy	[Dark Eyebrows Betray]
Oi kryknula lebedon’ka	[The Swan Cried Out]
Divchyno kokhana, zdorova bula	[My Greetings to You, Beloved Maiden]

Chernihiv area

Netiaho, oi netiazhen’ko moia	[Oh, My Impoverished Darling]
Chy ty chula, nen’ko moia	[Mother of Mine, Have you Heard]
Oi ty, bahachu	[Oh, You Rich man]
Homin, homin, po dibrovi	[A Clamour over the Grove]
Na kalynu viter viie	[The Wind Blows on the Guelder Rose]

Kuban region

Oi u poli richen’ka bystraia	[A Rapid River Runs through the Field]
Pishla baba na bazar	[A Woman Went to the Market]
U p’iatnytsiu na bazari	[Friday at the Market]
Ikhav kozak za Kuban	[A Cossack Rode beyond the Kuban]
Ikhav kozak za Dunai	[A Cossack Rode beyond the Danube]

²¹⁰ Soroker, *Ukrainian Musical Elements in Classical Music*, 13.

²¹¹ Ibid., 12-13. Note on Transliteration: “In transliterated titles of songs and dance melodies . . . , the Library of Congress system has been followed: the soft sign is marked with an apostrophe, while the Ukrainian *apostrof* and the Russian hard sign (*tverdyi znak*) are marked with a double apostrophe,” Soroker, *Ukrainian Musical Elements in Classical Music*, 3.

Volhynia

Oi u poli krynytsia
 Popid iarom pshenychen'ka iara
 Oi znaty, khto liubyt' pol'ku
 V mylomu zakutochku
 Iak bylyna ta topolia
 Pomalu, malu, chumache, hrai
 Oi ziidy, ziron'ko vechirniaia

[There is a Well in the Field]
 [Spring Wheat Grows near the Ravine]
 [One Knows Who Loves a Polish Woman]
 [In a Dear Little Nook]
 [Like a Blade of Grass and the Poplar]
 [Play Slowly, Ox-Cart Driver]
 [Rise, Evening Star]

Galicja (Lemko region)

Ne boitesia, moia myla
 Tam na hori zymnyi viter duie
 Ei ia, Bozhe mii
 Oi tam na hori maliuvaly maliari
 Tam na hori dva dubyky
 De zh ty idesh, Oleno
 Dzevchyno moia, napoi mi konia

[Don't Be Afraid, My Dear One]
 [A Cold Wind Blows on a Hill]
 [O My God]
 [On the Hill Painters were Painting]
 [Two Oaks Stand on a Hill]
 [Where Are You Going, Olena]
 [Water My horse, Girl of Mine]

Galicja (Pokutia region)

Tykho, tykho Dunai vodu nese
 Oi u poli serbyn ore
 Oi tam za haiom, za zelenen'kym
 Oi zatsvila cheremshyna zrisna
 Iedna hora vysokaia, a druhaia nyz'ka
 Ia zvidsy hora, ia zvidsy druha
 Napyimosi, kumko

[Slowly Flow the Waters of the Danube]
 [A Serb is Ploughing in the Field]
 [Beyond the Green Grove]
 [The Chokecherry Tree has Blossomed]
 [One Mountain is High, the Other Low]
 [One Mountain Here, Another There]
 [Let's Have a Drink, My Good Woman]

Galicja (Pidhiria region)

Po hori pavon'ka khodyt'
 V moho bat'ka krasna divon'ka
 Oi ikhala Kateryna
 Tam u poli kernychen'ka
 Pishla tuha za tuhoiu

[A Peacock Walks on the Mountain]
 [My Father Has a Beautiful Daughter]
 [Kateryna Was Riding]
 [There's a Well in the Field]
 [Sorrow Followed Sorrow]

Central Galicja (Lviv region)

Oi volosie tvoie prydalosia na moie
 Hei, huk, maty, huk, tam zhovniary idut
 Sam sym tego ne vymyslial
 Oi zaplachesh divchynon'ko
 Oi de zh taia sadovyna

[Your Hair is like Mine]
 [Oh, Here Come the Soldiers]
 [I Didn't Make It Up]
 [You Will Cry, Girl]
 [Oh, Where's that Orchard]

Transcarpathia

Oi na horon'tsi dva holubochky
 V seredu siam narodyla

[Two Doves on a Hill]
 [I Was Born on a Wednesday]

APPENDIX D – OBTAINING BORTKIEWICZ’S RARE AND OBSCURE WORKS

Cantext Publications
19 Laval Drive
Winnipeg, Canada R3T 2X8
https://openlibrary.org/publishers/Cantext_Publications

Free Library of Philadelphia
Edwin A. Fleisher Collections of Orchestral Music
1901 Vine Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1116
(215) 686-5322
www.freelibrary.org

Gemeente Museum Netherlands
Stadhouderslaan 41,
2517 HV Den Haag
The Netherlands
Phone: +31 (0)70 338-1111
info@gemeentemuseum.nl
<http://www.gemeentemuseum.nl>

Kliment Publishing
Kolingasse 15, 1090
Vienna, Austria
Phone: +43 1 317-5147
<http://www.kliment.at>

Petrucci Music Library
International Music Score Library Project
<http://www.imslp.org>

APPENDIX E – MUSICAL SCORES CONSULTED

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²¹² “Not actually engraved, but the work of a professional copyist,” *IMSLP.org*, July 2011.

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