TONAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE SELECTED PIANO PRELUDES OF
SHOSTAKOVICH (OP.34: NOS.1, 3, 6, 14, AND 24):
AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Tze F. Alfred Lee, B.Sc.
Denton, Texas
August, 1994
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This study is an investigation of tonal structures in selected preludes of Shostakovich's Op.34. Explanations and analytic perspectives provide support of tonality oriented interpretation for the compositions which often appear to be "atonal." Chapter One is divided into (1) historical perspectives of the prelude as form, and (2) Summary of Shostakovich's life and work. Chapter Two contains a historical background of (1) the development of Shostakovich's compositional styles, emphasizing his early style of piano composition, and (2) the impact of his "Lady Macbeth," the crisis and its influence on later works. Chapter Three deals with the problems of and analytical approaches in the study of the selected preludes.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Prelude as a Form for Keyboard Music

During the Renaissance (1430-1600), preludes are mostly of the unattached type, consisting of a florid, quasi-improvisatory right-hand part accompanied either by slower-moving parts in the bass or sustained chords.¹ Preludes of the sixteenth-century exhibited an improvisatory character, containing passages with abrupt changes of texture, fast scale passages, imitative sections, and passages with figuration patterns. Though often bearing other titles such as Intonazione, Ricercare, or Toccata, these prelude-like keyboard pieces were the true successors of the fifteenth-century German keyboard preludes found in the Buxheim Organ Book and other manuscript sources.² Toward the end of this period, the preludes of the virginalists, including William Byrde, John Bull and Orlando Gibbons, show an expanded repertory of virtuoso techniques.³ Hence, by the early Baroque period, the term “prelude” referred to a rhapsodic form of instrumental improvisatory solo music for lute or keyboard that preceded the more strictly structured fugal section.⁴

During the Baroque period (1600-1750), the prelude became associated with a suite of dances, or as an introduction movement to a fugue, or served a special function

such as in chorale preludes. Composers like Johann Kuhnau, Ferdinand Fischer, and Johann Krieger displayed some unique technical, harmonic and rhythmic characteristics in their preludes. For example, Ferdinand Fischer used nineteen of the twenty-four keys in his collection of preludes and fugues (Ariadne Musica, 1715). This particular work may be regarded as the direct model for J.S. Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier not only in terms of the order of keys, but also in regard to the fugue themes.5

Bach’s two sets of preludes and fugues from the Well-Tempered Clavier, of which Book I was completed in 1722 and Book II in 1744, include all twenty-four keys in the semitone sequence of parallel major and minor pairs. Leichtentritt classifies Bach’s Preludes in six categories: (1) the simple prelude in broken chords, in the style of an improvisation; (2) the prelude in constant motion, originating from the technical aspects of the instrument, sometimes approaching the toccata style; (3) pieces in the style of an invention; (4) the prelude more or less approaching fugue or fughetta; (5) aria-like concertizing solo or duet with basso continuo; and (6) a fantasia type of prelude in which elements of aria melody and polyphony are mixed.6 There is also a very special type of prelude, the “chorale prelude,” which is a short setting for organ of a chorale strophe and is intended to serve as an introduction to congregational singing. It was developed by seventeenth-century northern German composers, notably Buxtehude, and is seen at its finest in Bach’s Orgelbuchlein. The term, however, is often loosely applied to any organ piece based on a chorale melody.7

5Bukofzer, op.cit., pp.263-66.


Although many composers contributed to the development of preludes during the late Baroque and Classic periods, it was not until 1836-39 that the title was adopted for discrete musical compositions, to a significant set of twenty-four Preludes, Op.28, of Frederic Chopin. This set of preludes follow a very clear tonal plan: like the preludes and fugues of J.S.Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier, they encompass all the twenty-four tonalities of the major-minor system.\(^8\) In Chopin’s Preludes, however, each major key is followed not by its tonic minor, as in Bach’s forty-eight but by its relative minor key.\(^9\) The major relative-minor pairing of key follows the circle of fifth: C-a, G-e etc. Most of Chopin’s Preludes are very short character pieces that consist of one homogeneous section in which a single short motivic gesture or musical idea, figuration, or texture is explored. The collection as a whole shows a wide range of keyboard textures, harmonic style, and mood. Virtuosic passages are juxtaposed with the most lyrical statements, and extremes of harmonic ambiguity (as in the Prelude No.2 in A minor) can be contrasted with the purest diatonic writing (Prelude No.7 in A major).\(^10\)

Chopin’s contribution to the development of prelude as a musical genre can be seen in his harmonic and technical innovations. He not only created new patterns (Nos.1,8), but also extended the procedure of repetitions of musical ideas by incorporating modifications of rhythmical patterns as well as melodic gestures (Nos.7,19). The preludes also contain new technical problems in performance, such as “studies for “extensions” (Nos.5,19); for velocity, and for “skip” in the left hand (No.16); for legato pedalling (Nos.17,20); and for octave playing (No.22).”\(^11\) All these, it should 


\(^10\)Plantinga, op. cit., p.197.

be added, present a new set of technical demands in piano study.

According to Westerby, the Russian national pianoforte style is derived from and inspired by the spirit and technique of Chopin’s piano compositions. This style is particularly evident in the Preludes—a “form” that has a character similar to that in the “etudes, but distinctly poetical in spirit.” Russian composers not only have adopted and attained a level of mastery in this style, but also have developed it further.\textsuperscript{12}

Rachmaninov also wrote Preludes and, like Chopin’s, in all the major and minor keys: the famous “inescapable” prelude in C-sharp minor, Op.3, No.2 (1892), is now combined with the ten preludes of Op.23 (1904) and the thirteen of Op.32 (1910) to make “a total set of twenty-four.”\textsuperscript{13}

Rachmaninov’s Preludes differ from Chopin’s in that his preludes generally tend toward “a solid, polyphonic style of musical treatment, a broad structure and, at times, with clear contrasts between independent sections.”\textsuperscript{14} Instead of Chopin’s relatively shorter duration (e.g. one-half to two pages), Rachmaninov’s Preludes often occupy four, six, or eight pages. Melodies in the ten preludes of Op.23, though strongly under the influence of Chopin, more often resemble Tchaikovsky’s than Chopin’s. Many of the thirteen preludes of Op.32, in contrast, are “imbued with power, full of declamation and drama, demanding from performers an enormous level of technical skill and a bravura style of interpretation.”\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{12}Westerby, \textit{op. cit.}, p.258.


Scriabin’s earlier compositions were greatly influenced by Chopin’s works and from them he also adopted the style for the Preludes; they may very well be the most important among his character pieces. These preludes also afford an opportunity to trace Scriabin’s stylistic development, as they represent a span from his earlier works (Opus 11,13,15,16,17) to the end of his creative period (Opus 67,74). His early set of twenty-four Preludes (Opus 11) can be seen as short essays in the Chopinesque idiom, but the later preludes became more experimental, employing some adventurous harmonies and are assigned no key signatures.\textsuperscript{16}

The prelude traditions of Bach and Chopin thereby continued their development in Russian pianoforte music, as can be evidenced in the cycles of pianoforte compositions of Scriabin and Rachmaninov. At the same time, this development is not found in Europe during the period of the second half of the nineteenth century to the first part of the twentieth-century. The only work bearing the title Preludes is Debussy’s cycle of preludes (Book I, 1910; Book II, 1913); these compositions, however, were conceived and created in an entirely different manner.\textsuperscript{17} They comprise a series of impressionistic sketches of legends, literature, painting, architectural landmarks, natural phenomena and personages. The pianistic style of these preludes is drawn from Debussy’s musical heritage, the works of Chambonnières, Rameau and Couperin: etched contours, clarity of texture, rhythmic precision, supple melodies, and clear, sectional structures, such as ternary and rondo-sonata.\textsuperscript{18}

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Shostakovich, a culminating figure in Russian Preludes, composed his twenty-four Preludes, Op.34 in the period from December 1932 to March 1933. This work followed closely Chopin's tonal plan of sequencing each of the pieces by way of coupling of relative major and minor keys in the cycle of fifth, from C major to D minor. Each of the preludes not only briefly develops a single musical idea and projects a single mood, as in Chopin's tradition, but also, in its unique way, employs the typically Russian programmatic device of making a miniature commentary on some other composer's style. According to Leonard, there are paraphrases of Bach, Chopin, Prokofiev, Scriabin, Tchaikovsky, and Richard Strauss. Other preludes appear to be parodies of old salon pieces from the "Albumblat era" of Russian piano music, such as the Songs Without Words, Reveries, and Consolations, by such composers as Arensky, Cui, Karganov, and Pachulske. While the styles in Shostakovich's Preludes vary widely, the importance of the preludes as a whole lies in their emotional impact. It may be said that Shostakovich continued along the path of Chopin, Scriabin, and Rachmaninov while, at the same time, he conceived his Preludes as a series of psychological sketches, thereby aligning himself with Russian nationalistic traditions of pianoforte composition.

Shostakovich's Life and Work

Dmitry Shostakovich was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on September 25, 1906. He studied at the Leningrad Conservatory from 1919 to 1925; he studied piano with Leonid Nikolayev and composition with Maximilian Steinberg. His early works, written between the ages of fourteen and seventeen, were highly praised by the critics, as was his

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20 Martynov, op. cit., p.54.
First Symphony, which was composed at the age of nineteen as a Conservatory graduation piece. After 1926, he became the leading composer of the Soviet Union. However, he came into conflict with Soviet authorities in 1936, when his opera Lady Macbeth was forced off the stage by criticism in Pravda. Later, in 1948, he was further disgraced and, along with a group of fellow composers, was denounced in a party resolution.

On the international scene, Shostakovich is widely regarded as one of the greatest symphonists of the mid-twentieth century. During the period of forty-five years (1925 to 1970), he wrote a total of fifteen symphonies. These symphonies, though greatly varied in size and character, are all highly developed and of extended length, engaging a large number of contrasting themes, such as in the Symphony No.10. His contribution to the twentieth-century symphonic literature is indisputable, particularly with his “mature” symphonies (e.g. Nos.5 and 7), which served to demonstrate his position in the music lineage of Tchaikovsky and Mahler, developing it into a new category of modern Russian symphony.21

Like many great composers, Shostakovich also was a pianist. He was awarded a Certificate of Merit at the First International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw (1927). Although early on he often performed his own works in public, he soon gave up plans of pursuing a career as a piano virtuoso. It is evident, however, that the piano remained his favored instrument; solo piano works occupy a large portion of his total output, including twenty-four Preludes, twenty-four Preludes and Fugues, two piano sonatas, two piano concertos, two piano trios and a piano Quintet.

21Leonard Burkat, Program Notes from Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, 59th Season, 1989, p.29.
Shostakovich’s early piano music showed that he discarded keyboard showmanship and instead opted for a sparse linear texture. His melodic line is often angular and “non-romantic.” At the same time, his harmonic language ranges from traditional tonality to polytonality and even increasingly frequent atonality, the latter by use of dissonant textures.\(^\text{22}\) His works can be described as eclectic and progressive, rooted in traditional tonality but using dissonance and even atonality as expressive means, with no adherence to any particular device or trend. In this regard, it is worthy to note that Shostakovich considered the use of dodecaphonic serialism “entirely justified if it is dictated by the idea of the composition.”\(^\text{23}\)

With Stravinsky and Prokofiev, Shostakovich represents the culmination of twentieth-century Russian music. Unlike his two older contemporaries, however, he lived all of his life in Russia and, despite political pressures, ultimately contributed to twentieth-century Russian idiom. Indeed, soon after Prokofiev’s departure from Russia in 1918, Shostakovich became a singularly bold young innovator of Russian music. Therefore, he is alone among composers of his generation in having composed his entire output within Russia, having to deal and negotiate with the mandates of Soviet aesthetics.\(^\text{24}\)


\(^{23}\)Ibid., p.272.

\(^{24}\)Ibid., p.273.
CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Shostakovich’s early style of piano composition

Shostakovich’s style of piano writing was developed and influenced not only by individual composers such as Anton Rubinstein, Busoni, or Hofmann, but also by the collective cult of piano composition which they generated. In particular, this new phenomenon of composer/pianist as leading creative musician which began around the time of Clementi and continued to Medtner (with the obvious exceptions of Berlioz, Verdi and Wagner), was more evident and sustained in Russia and Poland than anywhere else. Scriabin, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev, Medtner, Paderewski, Godowsky, Hofmann, and Wanda Landowska are but a few of this phenomenon.¹

With the exception of the Twenty-Four Preludes for Piano (Opus 34) of 1932-33, the Three Fantastic Dances for Piano (Opus 5), the First Piano Sonata (Opus 12), and the Ten Aphorisms for Piano (Opus 13) were all composed by the year of 1926—the same year in which Shostakovich received international acclaim with his First Symphony. Hence, these pieces written before 1926 can be regarded as the works from Shostakovich’s conservatory period and the earliest piano composition from his first creative period.

The Three Fantastic Dances were found among the papers of Alexandra Rozanova, a Petrograd Conservatory Professor of piano, for whom Shostakovich had played while still a pupil of Gnessin Music School. However, these three short pieces did

not receive their first performance in Moscow until 20 March, 1925 at an all-Shostakovich recital. The opening March, which Stevenson called a "humoresque," is written in C major, but only in the eighth bar is the home key of C major established.

The second dance is a G major waltz of a mixed lineage from Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev's ballet music. Due to the frequent recurrence of dominant harmony, the tonality is more often implied than asserted, and the tonic chord appears only in the last bar. The final Polka is like a sketch for his later polka in his Golden Age ballet. The music begins in A-flat major and progresses through various tonalities. Until the very last chord, the piece sounds as if the tonality of A-flat is not only maintained but also will be confirmed at the end. At the very end, however, the music suddenly switches to C major.

The stylistic characteristic of Shostakovich in these three short pieces can be described as lightness of touch and with graceful humour, as well as fanciful imagery: the jesting of the first dance, the lyrical capriciousness of the second and particularly the grotesque "zig-zags" of the third. "Galloping" miniature rhythms, unexpected harmonic changes and turns of melody anticipated many later creative features in Shostakovich's compositions. Technically, these three dances show the composer's intimate knowledge of the idiomatic possibilities of the instrument. At the same time, these features can also be observed in his early orchestral works while the harmonies show the influence of Prokofiev, whose piano works and the popular "Classical" Symphony were often performed in Leningrad. Still a more pervasive influence was that of Schumann; this can

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3 Stevenson, op. cit., pp.87-88.

4 Martynov, op. cit., p. 4.
be seen from the composer's struggle to compress lyrical ideas into a small musical area and to attempt to introduce musical ideas derived from the theatre.\(^5\)

His Three Fantastic Dances were followed by orchestral works and chamber compositions of the next few years, and it was not until 1926 that Shostakovich returned to writing piano music, his first piano sonata, Op.12. This is a one-movement work in three sections: allegro (containing a brief parenthetical \textit{meno mosso} and \textit{adagio}); lento; and allegro (with a slight broadening in the coda). Stevenson describes this work as "constructivism-in-music," in which "constructivism" is defined as "the organization of the given material on the principles of tectonics, structure and construction, the form becoming defined in the process of creation, by the utilitarian aim of the object."\(^6\) The styles of the three sections in this sonata are like a tarantella, a nocturne, and a \textit{moto perpetuo}, respectively. Noteworthy is the fact that tone-clusters were used, as well as a quasi-Schoenbergian tone-row at the opening of the sonata. Also used is the idiosyncratic notational style of Liszt engaging three staves; this, however, is a rare occurrence in Shostakovich's music.\(^7\) As a whole, this experimental piano piece most clearly exhibits the influence of Prokofiev's piano style. It contains quotations from Stravinsky, as well as the counterpoint of Hindemith; it even projects a Scriabin-like mood of mysterious brooding contrasted with wild hysterics and employs many quartal harmonies. There is a constant flow of dissonance with flashes of tonality and, all told, the sonata bears little trace of the old Russian nationalism.\(^8\)


\(^6\)Stevenson, \textit{op. cit.}, p.89.

\(^7\)Ibid., pp.88-91.

\(^8\)Leonard, \textit{op. cit.}, p.325.
Even more characteristic of this period is his Aphorisms for Piano, Op. 13, written in the same year as the sonata. Consisting of ten short pieces, this set displays an idiomatic diversity and even idiosyncratic disunity consistent with emerging modern. Largely confined to two-part textures, this work was later denounced by the composer himself in a revealing way: “I was pursuing abstract experimentation—the pieces were an erroneous striving after originality.” The first Aphorism is a “Recitative,” with its Bartokian reiterated monotones and an abrupt, inconsequential ending. No. 2 is a “Serenade.” Its monody is punctuated by guitar-like chords, and haphazard two-part note-against-note counterpoint in the second section. There seldom are two consecutive bars in the same time-signatures. This is followed by “Nocturne,” the third Aphorism, and No. 4 which is subtitled “Elegy” with its very slow and mesto tempo lasting only eight bars. A quick March for No. 5 is followed by an Etude for No. 6 filled with five-finger exercises. Aphorism No. 7 is a waltz based on the Dies Irae, in Milhaud-like bitonality. No. 8 contains as many rests as notes, and its three-part writing seems indifferent to continuity of contrapunctal relationships. “Legend” is the subtitle of No. 9. It is full of ostinati. It is bitonal, and the texture begins with two parts and ends in four parts. The final Aphorism is subtitled “Lullaby,” a slow, lyrical piece cast in the Phrygian mode—that is, until it ends in an A major chord with added note B. There is a softly padding octave bass, and the tune is full of song-like melodies. This is perhaps the “only nearly normal piece” in the set, as Stevenson comments.9

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10Stevenson, op. cit., pp.92-4.
“Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk” and Crisis

Norman Kay, in his work on Shostakovich, points to one particular work which may be regarded as a turning point in the style development of the composer. This work is Lady Macbeth. The public response and, more importantly, the repressive attitude of the Party Newspaper toward this work resulted in a conflict in the composer’s mind that clearly affected his subsequent output. Kay states: “Shostakovich suffered increasingly from a kind of split focus in his output. On the one hand, the symphonies up to No.4 continued the stylistic trends of the earlier works, though progressively adding to the density and inflation of resources. On the other hand, a group of much smaller works contradicted this tendency by concentrating on linear writing, cool neo-classical forms, and succinct understatement.”11 It is important, therefore, to examine the place of Lady Macbeth in the context of the development of the composer’s output, particularly those works immediately preceding and following the opera Lady Macbeth. It is more significant, in the context of the present study, that one understands the impact of this work, since the Preludes were composed immediately afterward.

Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District was Shostakovich’s second opera, written in the period from October 1930 to December 1932. The four-act opera deals with the position of women at different times in Russia, and took as its theme the tragic death of a woman desperate to find true love and happiness but stifled by the corrupt life of the nineteenth-century Russian provinces.12 Based on the libretto of a novel(la) by Nikolai Leskov (1865), it is the story of a sensitive merchant’s wife, Katerina, who is bored with her stultifying life with her husband and father-in-law. She falls in love with a handsome

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11Kay, op. cit., p.20.

young worker on the estate, Sergey, and together they murder her wealthy but ineffectual husband and father-in-law. For this crime, they are arrested and deported to Siberia. On the road to prison, Sergey turns his attentions from Katerina to Sonetka, a young and alluring convict. Katerina, realizing Sergey's infidelity, drowns herself and drags Sonetka with her.13

Lady Macbeth was conceived, not like the old “sectional” opera consisting of arias, choruses, and recitatives but symphonically while remaining faithful to dialogues and actions.14 Shostakovich adopted for his Lady Macbeth the device of integral interludes and passacaglia-based forms as in Alban Berg's Wozzeck, a strong influence in both drama and music.15 The libretto is not in formal verse form, but more like simple and often vulgar speech. The music exhibits a strong Russian flavour, achieved chiefly through the use or imitation of Russian folk song. The techniques employed are varied; for instance, harmony ranges from the simplest diatonic progressions to the extreme dissonances of polytonality and atonality.16

Lady Macbeth was an opera in the grand nineteenth-century traditions. The premiere performance of Lady Macbeth was held at the Malyi Theatre of Leningrad on the 22nd January 1934. It ran triumphantly for two years, both in Russia and abroad, before the official denouncement by the Party following Stalin's attending a performance of the opera in January, 1936.17 On 28 January, 1936, an article entitled “Chaos instead

15Kay, op. cit., p.28.
of Music” in the Party newspaper Pravda denounced the “fidgety, screaming, neurotic” score of the opera and branded it as “coarse, primitive, and vulgar.”\(^\text{18}\) The opera was found offensive in its explicit subjects such as its Straussian realism in the portrayal of certain bedroom scenes, the unpleasant violence and tragic power of its subject matter, and by the modernism of its musical language.\(^\text{19}\) And while ostensibly directed against Shostakovich, the same article was interpreted as a warning against all modernism in Soviet music, resulting in the removal of the opera from the repertory.\(^\text{20}\) Under Stalin’s Second Five Year Plan and the conception of “Socialist Realism,” every effort of a composer was to glorify the country. As a result, Soviet composers were now directed towards the elusive goal of “Socialist Realism.” Besides the gigantic expansion of Russian industry, the collectivization of farms, and the elimination of a rich peasant class, a campaign was initiated to root out all signs of Western “decadence” in art. Contemporary European music was virtually banned; no jazz was allowed to filter through the new boundary. The only styles to find favor were the marches, songs, and dances written by the members of the Association of Proletarian Musicians.\(^\text{21}\)

Under these external pressures, Shostakovich became increasingly self-conscious. At the same time, Shostakovich had also tried to discipline and correlate the opposing forces of tradition and innovation; this can be seen and observed in his Cello Sonata and the twenty-four Piano Preludes Op.34.\(^\text{22}\) But the importance of the simplified style of

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\(^{18}\) Schwarz, op. cit., vol.17, p.265.  
\(^{19}\) Roseberry, op. cit., p.86.  
\(^{20}\) Schwarz, loc. cit., p.265.  
\(^{21}\) Kay, op. cit., p.19.  
\(^{22}\) Schwarz, op. cit., p.266.
preludes lies in the fact that it reflects Shostakovich's new aesthetic attitude brought about by Lady Macbeth, and that nearly all of Shostakovich's subsequent chamber music grew from the seeds planted in this one particular work.\textsuperscript{23} With his twenty-four Preludes, Shostakovich began to develop a more simple and open style, with more easily recognizable melodies, as opposed to his earlier idioms of extreme dissonance, mechanism, complication, and eccentricity. To be sure, his experimentation with neo-classic idioms can be observed to have begun earlier--four years before the Pravda article.\textsuperscript{24} Subsequently, this new compositional approach brought him not only the success of the Fifth Symphony (1937), but also the works that followed which helped reinstate Shostakovich as the foremost among the Soviet composers of the younger generation.

\textsuperscript{23}Kay, op. cit., p.20.

\textsuperscript{24}Leonard, op. cit., p.330.
CHAPTER III

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE SELECTED PRELUDES

Summary of Style Features of Late/Post Romantic Composition:
Problems and Approaches in Analysis

Shostakovich’s Twenty-Four Preludes for Pianoforte, Opus 34, were written in the period from December 1932 to March 1933. Hence, it can be classified as early twentieth-century piano music. Already in his earlier piano music (1924-36), Shostakovich showed his preference for sparse and linearly oriented texture. At the same time, his harmonic idiom ranges from traditional tonality to polytonality where, with use of dissonant textures, music at times borders on atonality. The one fundamental issue before an analyst, then, is: are preludes of the set (Nos. 1, 3, 6, 14, and 24) tonal or atonal, or are some tonal while the others are atonal? Here, too, theorists are confronted with the question of conflict between perception and conception, between ear and eye.

Atonality is a term which is used to describe all music which has no identifiable tonal center, or to describe all music which is neither tonal nor serial, and to describe specifically the post-tonal and pre-twelve-tone music of Webern, Berg and Schoenberg.1

Generally speaking, atonality implies the absence of a tonal center in music.

Before the discussion of Shostakovich’s idiomatic writing for piano in the selected preludes, a brief narrative of style features of music from the immediately preceding era is necessary. It is by referring to these earlier style features that a more accurate understanding and appreciation of Shostakovich’s compositional gestures can be

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Broadly speaking, style features that undergird nearly all particularly romantic idioms of compositions from mid- to late nineteenth-century can be summarized as follows:

(a) Modal mixture and its resultant idiomatic gestures:

Modal mixture implies the coexistence of two modes associated with the same tonic. Hence C major and C minor can be regarded as the same key (tonality) but with different modality. Gottfried Weber, among early nineteenth-century theorists, made the earliest reference to this concept and articulated this perspective in his examples of harmonic analysis as well as melodic composition and relationship of keys. If, then, C major and C minor, for example, are regarded as the same "key" (referring to tonality; modality is but one aspect in expressing tonality but not affecting the latter), it must be recognized also that scalar material is no longer heptatonic but at least nonatonic, with two modally inflected mediant degrees (e.g. E and Eb coexisting in the C tonality) and two submediant degrees (e.g. A and Ab). This modal coexistence of major and minor for the same tonality also invites the inevitable extension of the group of relative, or relatable keys. That is, besides the diatonic keys (or commonly called "closely related" keys) of C major, the diatonic keys of C minor also become relatable by virtue of modal mixture.

Hence the region of "diatonic" keys with C major as the principal key is expanded to include D minor, E minor, F major, G major, A minor, as well as E-flat major, F minor, G minor, A-flat major, and B-flat major. The ramification of this extended scale pattern and extended group of relatable key is considerable. What may be seen as "chromatic" in melodic and harmonic gestures can now be regarded, in the proper style idiom of mid- to late nineteenth-century composition, as diatonic. In certain keys, the extended scale pattern and key group will also make enharmonic spelling necessary as the limitation of
the conventional key-signature system demands. For example, the lowered submediant scale degree of A-flat major is F-flat which is often spelled enharmonically as E-natural. The same is also true for spelling of keys from modal mixture. For example, the Neapolitan key of Db is enharmonically cast as D major rather than theoretically correct key of Ebb—a key which has no place in the conventional key-signature system.

(b) Linear orientation of voice leading and exaggeration of non-chordal tones:

Departure from more clearly discernible homophonic texture of the classical composition also marks one of the most important style features of mid- to late nineteenth-century composition. While not following the imitative contrapuntal style of the baroque era, romantic compositions exhibit contrapuntal texture by engaging in strong linear connection in voices, particularly in the bass. This impression of contrapuntal texture is further enhanced by frequent engagement of non-chordal tones which are often exaggerated agogically and metrically. As the result, chordal orientation is often obscured and there is an abundance of non-essential harmonies, making harmonic analysis extremely problematic.

(c) Constant modal and tonal shift, often without any conventional means of tonal affirmation:

Another feature that characterizes compositions of mid- to late nineteenth-century is constant shift of tonal center. Often tonal detour is merely hinted rather than asserted.

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2 The theoretical bases may be found in Kirnberger's discourse on "non-essential" harmony and, in particular, early nineteenth century French treatises (essentially linear). Kirnberger strongly advocates the thorough-bass school (i.e. individual bass line movement throughout a piece) and the linear nature of harmonic theory. Fundamental progression by fifths, thirds and seconds are accepted in their respective hierarchical order (from strongest to weakest). He also accepts all triadic chord types, and all major-major, major-minor, minor-minor and diminished-minor are regarded as admissible dissonant seventh chords. By examining harmonics in the contextual perspective, dissonant intervals are classified in terms of essential and non-essential (e.g. 7th in the dominant seventh is essential, while 7th in the fully diminished seventh as non-essential) and, therefore, chords are also classified as either fundamental chords (root-identifiable chord) or non-essential chords (i.e. linear in nature, without any identifiable root) such as passing or appoggiatura chords.
The problem that is created by frequent tonal shift is compounded by the fact that transient tonal orientation is created not always by the presence of dominant-to-tonic harmonic progression. Rather, the key orientation is also created by either subdominant-to-tonic progression where the once-all-important dominant harmony is completely bypassed, or by mere prolongation of the implied tonic harmony. And in the process of prolongation of the tonic harmony, chordal sonorities which have no clear diatonic function can also be engaged in essentially linear fashion. In harmonic analysis, then, labeling of such sonorities would yield no meaningful insight; rather, all such sonorities may simply be regarded as a series of non-essential harmonies. Example 1 demonstrates the above described style features of the compositions and the aspect of linear—or non-essential—harmony, in particular, of mid- to late nineteenth-century. Other equally telling—if also somewhat more problematic—examples are the many passages in Brahms’s Op.118, No.2 (e.g. mm.20-34; 56-65), Wagner’s Prelude to Tristan und Isolde (mm.29-70), and Frank’s A major sonata for Violin and Piano (mm.8-15), just to name a few.

This analytic illustration shown below will help to clarify many of the compositional gestures found in analytic problems in the study of Shostakovich’s selected work.

![Ex.1](image)

In this short excerpt, one may identify various discrete sonorities, such as C major triad (m.17), and C-sharp diminished triad. Both can even be labelled as “functional”
chords relatable to the principal key (A major), such as flat VI (C major triad being the lowered mediant chord of A major and thus a chord of modal mixture), and as vi° or as ii° of V (C-sharp diminished triad being the diminished submediant or as the diminished supertonic of the dominant harmony). However, two features in this short passage would indicate that neither of the above two analytic identifications of the sonorities in question is correct: (a) the bass note is sustained during the shifting of sonorities; and (b) the voices in these two sonorities move in (chromatic) stepwise manner, C to C-sharp and eventually to D; G to G-sharp. That is, C major and C-sharp diminished triads are formulated as the result of linear voice movement of C-C#-D and G-G#, over the sustained bass E. Before the bass note E moves up a fourth to A, the sonority then becomes E major-minor seventh—the undisputable dominant harmony of the principal key A. Therefore, neither C major triad nor C-sharp diminished triad is a “discrete” chord or essential harmony but, rather, “service” chord (which Kirnberger called non-essential harmony). Such “passing” sonorities resulting from voice movements abound in romantic compositions, blurring thereby the distinction between the discrete and non-discrete harmonies and even undermining the integrity of the undergirding tonal orientation.

These features described above will, from purely visual appearance of the written score, make many compositions from the last decades of nineteenth-century to the early decades of twentieth-century appear “atonal.” Aural perception of the same, however, often contradicts this visual impression. And it is in dealing with analytical problem that I propose to investigate Shostakovich’s selected preludes, to provide “tonal” explanations and analytic perspectives for compositions which often appear “atonal.”

For analytic methodology, the functional harmonic analytic system (after G. Weber) as well as the reductive diagrammatic schemes will be engaged. It should be
recognized, however, that harmonic analytic system such as using Roman numerals to represent discretely harmonic function of chordal sonorities will encounter certain problems and limitations when applied to music of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century compositions in general and in Shostakovich's music in particular. Also, reductive schematic diagraming is here utilized merely to facilitate portrayal of essential tonal schemes and harmonic backgrounds in a given composition. The following examples serve as explanations to the symbols used in the analytical diagrams in this study. In Ex.2a (Prelude No.1), the whole notes indicate the structural or harmonic tones.

![Ex.2a](image)

There are times when white notes are also used to illustrate theoretical scale patterns, or special feature in the pieces, such as the F phrygian scale in the Prelude No.1 (mm.16-17) (Ex.2b), or the whole tone scale in the Prelude No.3 (mm.31-32) (Ex.2c).

![Ex.2b](image)

![Ex.2c](image)
In contrast, the darkened notes, somewhat smaller in size, are used to indicate non-harmonic tones or decorative notes such as passing tones (Ex.2d), neighbor tones (Ex.2e), appoggiatura tones (Ex.2f), escape tones (Ex.2g), and pedal point—a tone that is sustained through a succession of chords, usually in the bass, as in the Prelude No.1 (mm.14-15) (Ex.2h). Interpretation of notes as of decorative nature is from the perspective of note value (agogic accent), or underlying chordal sonority, or the sustained (or repeated) bass note.

Ex.2d

Ex.2e

Ex.2f

Ex.2g

Ex.2h

In a reductive diagrammatic scheme, the bracketed line connecting white-head notes is intended to highlight the linear bass line movement, such as in (Ex.2i) where the hierarchical position of tonic and dominant, with occasional neighboring tones and scale passages connecting the tonic/dominant chords, is stressed.

Ex.2i

Finally, an explanation must be offered here for analytical narrative styles
employed in this study to discuss each of the selected works from Shostakovich's Preludes. Besides the system of G. Weber's functional symbols and linear reductive schematic diagrams, I also have opted to adopt a somewhat descriptive narrative approach, one which may be likened to that of Sir Donald Tovey. While identification of tonality, modality and particularly telling essential harmonies relative to the implied tonality still constitutes an important part in this analytic study, descriptive narrative approach can be particularly useful in conveying interpretive perspectives about compositional gestures. For analytical labelings such as mentioned above often fall short in expressing the nuance of composer's intent. Since the main thrust of this study is to explain—-that is, describe—how and what compositional gestures of Shostakovich contribute to create a tonal image and an aural impression of tonality-orientedness in music (sound), as opposed to the printed scores where it often appears “atonal,” descriptive narrative serves to identify the gestures which contribute to this tonal impression or aural perception. That is, unlike prevailing harmonic analysis system(s), a descriptive narrative approach is more capable of expressing the nature of voice-leading gestures connecting one essential harmonic point to the next. The reductive diagrams, therefore, are used as supplement more graphically to convey the analytical perspectives in the descriptive narratives, to show more succinctly the essential harmonies and tonal focuses at crucial points in the composition, on one hand, and to represent voice-leading gestures between these structurally important harmonic and tonal points, on the other.

The adoption of this Tovey-like narrative approach, which is kept as succinct as possible in this analytical study, is established practice. Functional harmonic analysis via the Weber system actually can be augmented by Toveyan descriptions, and vice versa. To be sure, a revival of Toveyan descriptive approach to musical analysis has been witnessed in recent years, led by scholars such as Joseph Kerman (in his lecture series at
University of California Berkeley, and particularly in his Contemplating Music, 1985, his
“Challenges to Musicology”) and Kevin Korsyn (in a number of his recent publications). One may even argue also for this approach to analysis that a considerable amount of
analytic narratives in Schenkerian studies share a kindred spirit with Toveyan statements
and, in fact, the two are quite alike in their fundamental perspectives to musical analysis.

The style of Shostakovich’s Preludes may be described as eclectic, including
waltz, march, polka, fugue, etude, gavotte, and dance. Other preludes are like “song
without words,” impromptu, tarantella, nocturne, barcarolle, and symphonic adagio. The
five preludes selected from the set for this study (Nos.1, 3, 6, 14, and 24) represent the
diversity of styles contained in Shostakovich’s Op.34, such as modal variety, different
degrees of harmonic, textural and linear complexity, and widely ranging expressive
moods. Prelude No.1 anticipates the general character of the entire collection; Prelude
No.3 is in a character of Mendelssohn’s “song without words;” though a miniature and
least complex in harmony and tonality, Prelude No.14 is the most famous in the whole
set; Prelude No.24 is a gavotte with a more complex harmonic idiom. Prelude No.6 is
presented last, since the piece is most interesting among these five pieces; it is the most
complex harmonically and modally as well as in general character (changing from polka-
like dance to a march at the end).

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4 Stevenson, op. cit., pp.95-97.
Structural Analysis

Prelude No.1

Although Prelude No.1 appears to be atonal in certain parts of the piece (e.g. measures 8-12, due to the dissonant counterpoint in the voice movements), it begins and ends on a tonic triad of C. With the sustained C in the bass voice at the beginning of measure 2, the tonal focus is established. Then a subdominant minor enters on the fourth beat of measure 5, followed by a dominant in measure 6, leading to a deceptive cadence in measure 7. In measures 10-12, the subdominant bass moves from F through E to D, accommodating various passing sonorities (including one which may even be labelled a “French sixth”) and eventually back to F, supporting an altered subdominant harmony (the Neapolitan sixth harmony). Following it, a pedal point of the dominant of subdominant (i.e. tonic) occurs in measures 14-15. This leads to the F phrygian scale with a raised sixth degree before the final authentic cadence. In a larger perspective, then, measures 10-17 may be seen also as a prolongation of subdominant harmony, strategically positioned between the tonic and dominant harmony.

The prelude is written with wide use of modal mixtures and co-existence of modal degrees such as the lowered second, third, sixth, seventh, or raised fourth degrees of the basic scale (e.g. the C subdominant key in measures 5-6, the Neapolitan chord in measure 12, and the F phrygian mode in measures 16-17). The first phrase begins with a dissonant prolonged appoggiatura F on the fourth beat of measure 2. It then descends a sixth through passing tones Eb, D, Db, B, and Bb to A (Ex.3), and instead of passing through A-flat directly to G, the A-flat is displaced up an octave through scale movement and, therefore, can be seen as an appoggiatura to G. While the sustained bass note C in Ex.3 supports its tonic chord (middle voice) in descending linear voice movement (i.e. E to C and G to E with D and F as passing tones respectively). The melody proceeds in
measure 5 through modal mixtures of the subdominant (i.e. Eb, Db, and Ab), and consequently resolves to B (of Dominant harmony) which ends the first phrase in measure 8. While the G octave of the fully diminished seventh (third and fourth beats of measure 6) may function as an implied dominant harmony which is resolved deceptively in measure 7, the more definitive dominant harmony returns in measures 8-9, leading to a half cadence in measure 8.

The second phrase consists of individual contrapuntal voice movements in which the upper and middle voices begin on the fourth beat of measure 8, while the bass voice begins on the second eighth-note of measure 8. However, via the F sharp minor triad and the half diminished seventh as an enharmonic appoggiatura chord (passing chord) in measure 9, all voices resolve to the subdominant in measure 10. The upper two independent voices then move in dissonant parallel seconds and ultimately resolve to F and C of the subdominant triad in measure 12, while the bass voice reaches the subdominant F on the first eighth-note of the second beat of measure 12 through the altered subdominant harmony. After the passing arpeggios in measure 13, the third phrase arises from the C octave bass which acts as a dominant pedal point of F in measures 14-15 (see previous explanation). However, with the tonic entering in bass in measure 14, the role of measures 10-13 as the subdominant harmony becomes apparent
particularly when it progresses eventually to dominant in measure 18. This reasserts the
tonality to C in measures 19-20. It should be noted at the same time that harmonic and
linear activities in measures 14-17 can be understood as follows: (1) subdominant
harmony sustained over the tonic pedal; (2) subdominant degree sustained (or suspended)
in the top voice ($f^3$) while other chord tones of the subdominant harmony (C, A) move in
neighboring-tone gesture (e.g. A moving to G, F to Eb in mm.14-15; C to Bb, A to Ab
and C to D in mm.16-17); (3) scale-wise movement in left hand creating a “bimodal” (F
Phrygian ?) effect within the F octave. The following reductive diagram serves to
summarize the analytic perspectives and interpretations in the above narrative.
Diagram 1

Prelude No. 1
Prelude No. 3

A clearly observable procedure of tonic prolongation in measures 1-3 begins.

**Prelude No. 3.** This is followed by tonicization of the subdominant chord in measures 4-7. This, too, can be seen also as a means to strengthen the tonic. The tonic G is then negated in measure 7, where the C minor seventh chord acts as ii\(^7\) of B-flat major, and the harmonic progression confirms the new tonality (Bb), leading to an authentic cadence in measure 8. Further tonal fluctuation follows thereafter, and, in measures 9-10, E minor harmony is heard, with the motive in the bass (measures 9-10) that is almost identical to the primary motive in measures 1-2. However, the E minor chord at the beginning of measure 9 can also be seen as a submediant chord of G, which, in turn, may be seen as assuming a tonic function (G) (cf. Riemann's "Parallel" chord and harmonic function).\(^{5}\) After the arpeggiation of G-flat and F major in bass voice in measure 11, there appears again a tonicization of the subdominant chord in measure 12, which is then followed by the supertonic of G in the first two beats of measure 13. Before this supertonic chord reappears at measure 21, the minor iv chord on the last two beats of measure 18 acts as a structural bass note linkage from the previous V\(^7\)/IV in measure 12. By way of a fully diminished seventh serving as an implied dominant harmony in measure 22 and a substitute dominant pedal in measures 23-24, there is a return to the tonic chord G in measure 25. This does not mark the end of the music, however; another shift of tonal focus occurs in measure 29 ff. to an unexpected C-sharp minor chord after two measures of tremolos and dissonant minor seconds. However, with the use of the descending whole tone scale (C#, B, A, G, F, Eb) in measures 31-32, the music reasserts the G tonality, first by a syncopated iii chord in measure 33, then the altered subdominant harmony and,

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\(^{5}\)All harmonies can be identified/classified to have either Tonic, Dominant, or Subdominant function resulting in harmonic implication or substitution. For instance, according to Riemann's concept of "Parallel" chords, submediant and mediant harmonies may be substituted for tonic harmony. At the same time, submediant and supertonic harmonies may substitute for subdominant harmony, while subtonic and mediant harmonies may substitute for dominant harmony.
subsequently, the authentic cadence with an added sixth in the top voice followed by a long arpeggiated chord of modal mixture in the bass voice.

The “structural” bass line movement of Prelude No.3 comprises of a large portion of tonic prolongation especially in measures 1-20. This is shown in the diagram below:

![Diagram 2: Prelude No.3]

The following reductive diagram serves to summarize the analytic perspective and interpretations in the above narrative.
Diagram 3

Prelude No.3
Diagram 3 (Continued)
Prelude No.14

Prelude No.14 exhibits a more stable tonal design than many other preludes in the set. The Eb minor tonality is maintained throughout the piece. The tonic prolongation in measures 1-6 acts as an introduction to the first phrase (from mm.7-15). The first phrase begins in measure 7 and over a tonic pedal in measure 8, accommodating a passing chord and then a bVII chord (i.e. of modal mixture) in measure 9, the Eb minor tonic chord is reaffirmed in measure 10. While the top voice of the first phrase continues, a tonal shift is negotiated with the use of the passing chord (secondary dominant) serving as an enharmonic pivot chord in measure 11 and the F-sharp in measure 12. This chordal sonority actually possesses a strong tonality-orienting harmonic function: the dominant augmented-sixth harmony. An impression of a tonal shift to the key of E minor is thereby achieved (Ex.4).

\[
\text{Ex.4}
\]

However, this tonal shift is only of a brief duration of two measures. In measure 14, the F major appoggiatura chord of the first beat leads to the F-flat chord (the Neapolitan sixth chord of Eb) which acts as an altered subdominant harmony, and, as such, is resolved to the dominant pedal point which is anticipated by the B-flat triplet on the second beat of

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6Dominant Augmented Sixth Harmony is a usage of Augmented-Sixth harmony which is occasionally observed in compositions from the romantic period. In the diatonic context (i.e. where major and minor keys of the same tonic coexist), the chord contains three essential tones: the leading tone, the lowered supertonic, and the subdominant. To these an additional tone can be added, such as the dominant, or the lowered submediant. It is dominant harmony in function, and possesses all the characteristic features (both harmonic and linear) of the Augmented-Sixth harmony. Hence, Dominant Augmented Sixth is an altered dominant harmony (paralleling to the Augmented-Sixth as an altered subdominant harmony).
measure 14. This progression marks the ending of the first phrase with a half cadence in the Eb minor tonality (first beat of m.15).

The second phrase begins on the third beat of measure 15 over a dominant ostinato of Eb minor. This dominant prolongation in the bass voice continues and with an ascending octave triplet (mm.18-19) subsequently reinstates the Eb minor tonic chord. Dominant harmony enters in measures 20-22, followed by the bVII(7) under the F tremolo in the top voice. This brings the whole piece to its climatic point in measure 24. In measures 25-26, an authentic cadence appears in the bass voice with a syncopated appoggiatura chord on the second beat of measure 25, leading to the Eb minor tonic chord a half beat later than the Eb tonic bass at the beginning of measure 26. The tonic prolongation continues in the bass voice, while the top voice makes descending scale movement in measures 26-29. Subsequently, with the B-flat dominant pedal point in measures 30-31 accommodating a passing chord (G major), the tonic prolongation in measures 32-36 reasserts the principal tonality. The following reductive diagram serves to summarize the analytic perspectives and interpretations in the above narrative.
Diagram 4

Prelude No.14
Prelude No.24

As the other selected preludes of the set, Prelude No.24 employs an extensive use of “non-essential” harmonies (especially the altered subdominant harmony which is mainly used as tonic harmony prolongation in the second section) and a multiplicity of non-harmonic tones (such as appoggiatura, passing tone, neighboring tone) between different tonal areas. The descending motive at the beginning leads to the D minor tonality with G-flat and E-flat as appoggiaturas to F and D (mm.2-3). This is supported by a chromatic ascending linear bass line movement in measures 2-9 (from D to E, F, G, G-sharp, A, and back to D) thereby giving a clear direction to the harmonic progression. Meanwhile, in the context of the essential harmonic background, certain chords (e.g. the bVII6 chord in measure 4 and all chords in measures 5-6) may be regarded as passing sonorities of modal mixtures (Ex.5).

Following the authentic cadence in measures 8-9, the upper voices ornament what is essentially a tonic chord in the B-flat tonality of the submediant key, with parallel sixths over a traditional ii-V-i cadence in measures 10-11. B-flat tonality is soon to be eradicated; the linear movement of A (leading tone) to G and then to F-sharp and D-sharp over the bass voice moving from B-flat to B (mm.11-12), the tonality shifts to B. This new tonality is also short-lived. Another descending motion in the bass through the
subdominant minor of B to its diminished supertonic minor (mm.14-15). In the context of the subsequent authentic cadence (D-T) in D minor in measures 16-17, however, this C-sharp diminished triad (m.15) can be interpreted as having a dominant function (vii°) which, followed by another dominant-to-tonic progression (E-flat to A-flat) in the region of sharp IV (or VII of V of D minor), helps to create an impression of a temporary tonal area in D minor (mm.16-17). Hence, in a larger, mid-level macro-harmonic progression (mm.1-17), the B-flat and B-tonalities are the two transient tonal areas within the D minor tonality.

Measures 17-30 can be treated as a developmental passage of measures 1-17. Again, V-I cadence of B-tonality is heard in measures 18-19, followed by a passage implying C-tonality (mm.19-21). The tonality again shifts to E major (mm.21b-23a). The ensuing measures (mm.24-27a) create a sense of tonal/modal ambiguity and, in measure 27, the chord marks a tonic six-four of D minor; all voices shift upward to treble range, combining arpeggiation in R.H. and linear dyad in L.H. but essentially a decoration of a dominant harmony of D minor. The bass reenters at measures 29-30 to reasserts the D minor tonality with the Neapolitan minor sixth leads to a V-i cadence.

In the second section (mm.30-38), there is a constant tonal shift between D minor and its parallel major (i.e. D major) which is achieved by tonicization of the subdominant (mm.30-32 and mm.35-36). The Neapolitan minor sixth harmony in measures 33-34 and 37 can be seen as an altered subdominant harmony which progresses toward the implied dominant harmony at the last beat of measures 34 and 37 before the tonic harmony. On the other hand, measures 30-38 may also be seen as wholly a prolongation of tonic harmony. With the sustained bass note D in the first beat of each of measures 30-32, 35-36, and also 38, the D minor tonality is maintained except for the changing of mode of the tonic chord in measure 31 and the first two beats of measure 36. E-flat sonority
(mm.33-34; m.37) stands in the minor Neapolitan relation to D minor tonality and therefore gives an impression of a plagal cadence in essentially a prolonged tonic harmony from measure 30 to the end (Ex.6).

Ex.6

This "plagal" prolongation of the tonic harmony is further evident in measures 40-43 and measure 45. Also noteworthy is a recall to the beginning passage; G-flat enharmonically spelled as F-sharp is heard again in measure 44, followed by the dominant B-flat seventh chord (m.45). What follows is only the Neapolitan minor arpeggio in the upper voice and G-sharp appoggiatura just before the final authentic cadence. The following reductive diagram serves to summarize the analytic perspectives and interpretations in the above narrative.
Diagram 5

Prelude No.24
Diagram 5 (Continued)
Prelude No.6

Bitonality characterizes Prelude No.6. With tonal and modal uncertainty in the opening measures (mm.1-3), two different sets of tonal/modal material are used in nearly strict consistent manner, one for the treble line (R.H.) and the other for the bass part (L.H.) (Ex.7).

Ex.7 G Modality in R.H. vs Bb/F tonality in L.H.

The introduction begins with two F-sharp notes in the opening measure that ultimately becomes the dominant degree of the key of B minor. However, the F major seventh chord and the Bb major tonic chord (mm.2-3) may also suggest a tonal orientation of Bb (as D-T) or F (as T-S). F-sharp again is announced, however, and is sustained from measure 4 through the first beat of measure 6, while the bass articulates the B minor triad and, in the following measure, repeats the tonic to dominant-seventh progression (mm.5-14) with broken-chord patterns. In this passage, the tonality of phrase one (mm.6-14) for the top and bottom voices is kept distinct. The melody is in G major with measures 10-12 articulating a minor subdominant harmony (chord of modal mixture in dyadic progression), while the bass reiterates a dominant seventh-tonic progression in B minor.

Motive 1 (2nd beat of m.6 to m.7) (Ex.8) begins in the key of G in measures 7-9, accommodating a minor subdominant (iv of G) harmony in measures 10-12, and marks a cadence in measure 14 in support of the B tonality of the bass harmony. (However, the
dissonant major seventh Eb-D, measure 12, which resolves to the implied G major tonic, can also be seen as a linear motion approaching B which is further extended to measure 14 with the G major scale in parallel sixth). Phrase two (mm.14-22) employs the same motive 1 in the melody, with implied harmonic progression of the subdominant of G, followed by V/vi and then Neapolitan, leading to another linear cadence in measures 20-21. The "accompaniment," meanwhile, assumes a series of harmonic progressions relative also to G tonality such as can be interpreted as an enharmonic Dominant Augmented Sixth and V/7/V of G in measures 15-16 and measures 17-18 respectively. In measure 20, the F natural bass acts as an appoggiatura to F-sharp which then proceeds down to the B minor tonic chord. From a larger perspective of harmonic progression, then, the entire passage from the beginning to measure 22 can be analyzed as constituting a descending scale-degree "progression," from IV, iii (V/vi), bII (which is also the Dominant Augmented Sixth), and to I of G tonality. Meanwhile, the bass ascends with chromatic tones D-sharp (enharmonic E-flat), E, and F natural to F-sharp and, consequently, coinciding with soprano to cadence in B minor in measure 22.

A new motive 2 (1st beat of m.22 to 1st beat of m.24) (Ex.9), prominent with non-harmonic tones (or tones standing in dissonant relation to bass tones or implied chord sonorities), begins the third phrase (mm.22-33), accommodating simultaneously the motive 1 (mm.26-27), a descending five-note motive 3 (Ex.10) (m.28) along with altered harmonies of G-V/ii, bIII, and v in the bass voice (mm.26-30). However, the cadential pattern reveals a reversion of the B minor tonic chord over the G major linear cadence (mm.31-33).
Motive 4 (Ex.11) (2nd beat of m.33 to 1st beat of m.37) in the bass voice begins the second section (mm.33-49), with a linear G chord which descends through chromatic tones in the bass voice, leading to an implied subdominant harmony (an Augmented-Sixth harmony without the presence of the tonic G) in measures 36-37. This is followed by a modified linear sequence of the motive in the A tonality (mm.37-41), ending again in an altered subdominant harmony (the Neapolitan sixth harmony) in measures 40-41. Then, there appears to be independent voice movement (mm.41-49) in which the top voice descends through a B natural minor scale with C natural as passing tone in measure 44 leads to the B minor tonic chord; meanwhile the bass part (mm.42-44) moves in a contrary motion to the top voice in the A minor tonality. While seemingly independent voice movements continue, the harmonic implication in measures 44-45 or even to measure 47 seems clearly to be the dominant of A. This, then, is followed by a descending A natural minor scale movement from its fourth degree down to F. The syncopated F natural (mm.48-49) then becomes an appoggiatura to F-sharp, and
consequently ending again with a G linear cadence over the B minor chord (without tonic). Therefore, the tonality scheme in the second section becomes-G, A, B minor and A minor, and, G and B minor.

The two (fff) dotted quarter notes in the final section (mm.50-58) indicate a joint affirmation of B minor tonality in both voices. The descending chords in the upper voice can be seen mainly as passing chords (e.g. 2nd and 3rd chords of m.51, 1st chord of m.52, 2nd and 3rd chords of m.53, and all chords of m.54), while the bass reiterates a B minor tonic chord preceded by a dissonant triplet figure (mm.50-54). However, in an identical gesture in measure 4, G and E-sharp move to F-sharp (dominant of B minor) as neighboring tones. Finally, both a harmonic and melodic authentic cadence in B minor occurs in measures 56-58, with a descending G scale movement from its fourth degree and bVII in the bass, ending on the mediant (i.e. tonic of B minor). The following reductive diagram serves to summarize the analytic perspectives and interpretations in the above narrative.
Diagram 6

Prelude No.6
Diagram 6 (Continued)
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

A wide range of stylistic features can be observed in Shostakovich’s Preludes (Op.34). It covers the gamut of textural diversity, harmonic idioms, tonal and modal orientation, and formal structure. This study has examined five preludes from Op.34: Nos. 1, 3, 6, 14 and 24. These individual preludes are selected in part to represent the range of style diversity in Shostakovich’s Preludes. It is accurate to state, in this perspective, that matters dealt with in the present analytic study and style features that have been identified in the narratives are also found in other preludes in Shostakovich’s Preludes.

Generally speaking, features that characterize many of the preludes in Op.34 are similar to that of mid- to late nineteenth-century compositions. These features include—but are not limited to—the following: (a) coexistence of major and minor heptatonic scale patterns—the so-called modal mixture—as well as other modal scales, such as Phrygian; (b) linear orientation—as opposed to chordal “part-writing” manner of voice leading—in all voices and registers; (c) constant tonal shifts (i.e. modulations) and modal interchanging. Particularly noteworthy is the linear nature of voice leading in this set of preludes which might have been in more of a chord-oriented homophony typical of piano textures (See concluding paragraph).

Modal mixtures and co-existence of modal degrees are frequently used in the Preludes. These include the lowered second, third, sixth, seventh, and also with raised fourth degree of the basic scale. For examples, Prelude No.1 (measures 5-6, the Neapolitan chord in measure 12, and the F phrygian mode which results in a bimodal effect in measures 14-17); Prelude No.3 (the descending whole tone scale in the bass of
measures 31-33, and measures 35-36); Prelude No. 14 (the flat seventh chord as chord of modal mixture in measure 9, and the Neapolitan sixth chord of Eb which can be interpreted as having an altered subdominant function in measure 14); Prelude No. 24 (measures 4-6, and the E-flat sonorities which are used as tonic harmony prolongation in measures 33-34, 37, 40-43, and 45); Prelude No. 6 (measure 1-3 in the right hand, the chord of modal mixture in dyadic progression in measures 10-12, and measures 18-19).

There is an extensive use of linear or non-essential harmonies and an abundance of non-harmonic tones such as appoggiatura, passing tone, and neighboring tone in the Preludes. That is, the contrapuntal texture of the preludes is characterized by exaggerated use of non-chordal tones. For example, in measures 9-10 of Prelude No. 1, via the F-sharp minor triad and the half diminished seventh as linear or non-essential harmonies (i.e. passing chord), the contrapuntal voice movements in measure 9 resolve to the subdominant harmony in measure 10. In Prelude No. 24, the altered subdominant harmony (here, a non-essential harmony) is actually a prolongation of tonic harmony in measures 30-38.

Constant tonal and modal shift is often achieved by unconventional processes of tonicization. Transient tonal orientation may be created by either subdominant-to-tonic progression, prolongation of the implied tonic harmony, or through contrapuntal movement of voices rather than traditional harmonic progressions. Such transient tonal and modal shifts are usually of shorter duration (only of a few measures), for examples, Prelude No. 14 (measures 11-13); Prelude No. 24 (measures 10-11, 12-14, 18-19, and 21-23). Also, the transient tonality or shifting modality may function as passing sonorities between structural points within the Preludes. For examples, Prelude No. 3 (measures 10-11, 19-20, and 29-33); Prelude No. 6 (measures 2-3); Prelude No. 24 (measures 41-43).

The linearity in these preludes is of greatest significance. The prominence of non-chordal tones by increasing their agogic accent and thereby often making the underlying
chordal sonorities fleetingly short in duration is one of the devices many mid- to late
nineteenth-century composers employed in otherwise homophonic composition.
Composers who extensively utilized this device are Brahms, Wagner, Liszt and Franck,
to name a few. The same device, when used in abundance and with a greater degree of
emphasis, creates an impression of undermining tonal orientation. Shostakovich has
engaged devices essentially akin to those utilized by the above-mentioned composers; the
difference is in degree and extent of use, but not in kind. Therefore, Shostakovich’s
Preludes studied here often appear non-tonal or even atonal on the printed score. This is
due in large part to the use of linear, non-essential tones which are agogically exaggerated
and often chromatically elaborated, at times with enharmonic spellings. Underneath the
surface of the printed page of musical notation, however, one can detect much more
conventional parameters of harmony and tonality. And it is because of this often hidden
or concealed harmonic and tonal idioms that the listeners obtain the aural impression that
the music “sounds” tonal, albeit varied and ornamented with linear devices.

The reductive diagraming in this study is intended to show this underlying tonal
thinking of the composer. Labelings are used to identify the elements of tonal harmony
that can be perceived aurally. Together, these two analytic devices—reductive diagram
and tonal/chordal label—are intended to support the aural impression of these
compositions as “tonal,” as opposed to the visual impression from the printed scores as
nearly “atonal.” With these analytic devices, this study has shown that Shostakovich’s
Preludes (and in particular the selected preludes closely examined in this study) are
tonally conceived.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


