

## CHILDREN'S PIANO MUSIC OF UKRAINIAN COMPOSERS LIVING ABROAD: PRESERVATION OF THE MENTAL CODE



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**Abstract.** The study analyzes the most representative piano works for children created by Ukrainian composers, living abroad. The piano heritage of composers of the Ukrainian diaspora of didactic orientation is chosen as the object. The purpose of the article is to identify the principles of education of a creative personality in its national identity on the basis of educational piano works. The reference to the unique heritage of composers of the Ukrainian diaspora, who have realized this goal in their works, seems especially relevant and needs further research. Methodological principles of the paper are based on a combination of historical and cultural, analytical, musicological research methods.

**Keywords:** *composers of the Ukrainian diaspora, children's piano music, Ukrainian folklore, national identity.*

### Introduction

In the rich and diverse collection of piano works of composers-pianists of the Ukrainian diaspora one can observe a pronounced tendency to create a repertoire of didactic direction. The need for this has formed naturally, as it was necessary not only to develop the performing skills of music school students, but also to preserve the historical memory, traditions in the generations of Ukrainians born and raised far from the revival of their historical Homeland.

This activity was in tune with the relevant European trends, which were reflected in the creative works of German, Hungarian, French, Polish, Russian and other national schools of composition. Based on the traditions of a very wide repertoire for children, the practices laid down in the albums "Pieces for Children" by Th. Kullak, albums of music to Andersen's fairy tales by C. Reinecke, children's Christmas plays by F. Mendelssohn, "Album for the Youth", "Children's Ball" and "2 Four-Hand Piano Works for Young and Older Children" by R. Schumann, "Christmas Tree" by F. Liszt, "Children's Games" by J. Bizet, "Children's Corner" by C. Debussy, "Bagatelle", "Ten Light Piano Pieces" and "For Children" by B. Bartok, "Children's Album" by P. Tchaikovsky, etc. were logically passed on to the educational literature of composers of the Ukrainian diaspora. Considering the fact that many Ukrainian composers of the

diaspora came from Galicia, where musical traditions had always been developed at the crossroads of Europe's East and West, their work was significantly influenced by Polish composers, whose musical works were mostly performed or created there. This is, for example, a cycle of mazurkas "Among Life and Fun" by Alois Lipinsky, an album of dance pieces (mazurkas, waltzes, quadrilles) for children's performance by S. Monyushko, Suite for the piano by V. Vshelyachynsky created during the years of work at the Ternopil Music School, Folk songs (Dumky and Shumky) by S. Nevyadomsky, "Dance Suite" for children's performance by T. Mayersky, and others.

The children's collections of M. Lysenko and S. Lyudkevych, created earlier in Ukraine, became first of all examples of the birth of piano music for children, which were later joined by V. Vytvytsky and V. Bezkorovainy.

Collections of the Ukrainian diaspora composers (as well as collections of European composers), in addition to directly didactic purposes, became examples of the embodiment of the “native land” archetype. This archetype of the Ukrainians’ mentality, like a “spiritual gene”, has long been rooted in their cultural and historical environment and integrated into the national composition creative work. V. Ohirchuk defines Ukrainian mentality as an integral characteristic of people’s lives, which determines the specifics of their forms of response (Ohirchuk, 1998, p. 180). Cultural and historical formations of the Ukrainian national mentality, which are manifested in all spheres of life, were realized in the field of creative activity and were reflected in the formation of educational piano repertoire.

Thus, Ukrainian composers living abroad aimed not only at developing technical performing skills and providing quality professional education. They understood their broader task – to educate students in the traditions of their native national culture, to involve them in the Ukrainian musical heritage, to preserve its riches and, thus, to promote education of a creative personality in its national identity. “Being in the minority, Ukrainians in different countries of the world ... have never lost the feeling of inseparable kinship with their people, with the ancient forefathers’ land, and this was one of the major factors of their survival” (Karas’, 2012, p. 632). As prototypes of Western romantic children’s albums, the albums of Ukrainian diaspora composers served as a guide for the formation of the genre in Ukrainian pedagogical piano literature, not aiming at the development of purely technical performance skills, but at the development of imaginative thinking, aesthetic taste, they embodied the idea of synthesis of arts and played a great role in the formation of national identity.

**The analysis of recent research and publications.** H. Karas’s fundamental work “Musical Culture of the Ukrainian Diaspora in the World Time Space of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Monograph” (2012) is devoted to a comprehensive study of the process of formation, development and peculiarities of the musical culture of the Ukrainian diaspora in different countries of the world; the work of V. Ohirchuk “Traditions and Innovations in the Formation of the Ukrainian Mentality” (1998) deals with the study of the

characteristics of the Ukrainian mentality; the diversity of artistic and imagery content of children’s works, which is the basis for their widespread introduction into the practice of music education is the subject of the article by O. Shcherbinina “Children’s Piano Cycle as a Creative Laboratory for the Development of Artistic and Imagery Conceptions of a Musician” (2018); the problem of studying the national character as an organic component of the mental phenomenon is studied in the work of O. Bondarenko “Ukrainian Mentality in the Diversity of Mental Formations and Archetypes: Historical and Cultural Aspect” (2008); characteristic features of pieces from R. Savytsky’s music album are covered by his son, R. Savytsky Jr. in the preface to the publication “Ukrainian Piano Album for Beginners” (1977).

**The purpose** of the article is to identify the principles of education of a creative personality in its national identity on the material of educational piano works of Ukrainian composers living abroad.

**The main material of the research.** From the performance point of view, the didactic repertoire of foreign composers is focused on the gradual mastery of various technical, sound, artistic and imaginative tasks and is mostly represented by blocks of small pieces-exercises-etudes, which allow the teacher to have multiple options for creating work programs and choose the necessary complexes of work and pace of overcoming technical difficulties. Therefore, their work is dominated by the tendency to create music notebooks, groups of collections based on genre, etudes and so-called children’s albums – cycles of pieces, consisting mostly of program or genre miniatures, as close as possible to a full value work of art.

In various individual styles, the problem of compiling a Children’s album has found a stable reflection in the genre of a cycle of miniatures. Cyclization in such collections is conditioned by the desire to approach a child’s worldview, corresponding to the imagery of their age. “The best examples of a Children’s album have always been perceived as evidence of the special poetic worldview of their authors, the ability to think aphoristically, accurately, in concise compositional forms, and moreover, under conditions of strict economy of means of expression” (Shcherbinina, 2018, p. 85).

The most important point in continuing the tradition of compiling children's collections by composers of the Ukrainian diaspora have become examples of relying on elements of their national musical language – the use of melodic expressions of national dances and folk songs, typical rhythmic formulas or mode peculiarities, which preserves a strong national character and especially helps to educate students in the traditions of their national culture. As O. Bondarenko notes, “national character is an organic component of a mental phenomenon, because, like the mentality, it ... characterizes the behavior of the society, of an individual, organically including their specific subjectivity in the objective historical process. National character is the way of world perception inherent in the national community” (Bondarenko, 2008, p. 77).

In the conditions of work of Ukrainian pianists in educational institutions abroad, providing methodological and educational needs of their compatriots, vectors of continuity of national traditions, methods of work with folklore materials have been developed, through which ethnic specificity of everyday and national forms of music performance, rituals, way of life and mental values of Ukrainians are being learnt in age-appropriate forms. Preservation of national traditions in emigration, where the outlined problem was particularly acute, is one of the most significant aspects of their activities and exhibits systematic work on creating a modern, relevant to the subject and means of expression and highly artistic, nationally outlined didactic repertoire. The creation of such a repertoire was focused on the practical needs of the educational process, on the reproduction of advanced pedagogical trends, the involvement of the latest for that time compositional techniques. Its value also lies in the fact that these collections were created by experienced and practicing musicians who combined the professionalism of a performer and a teacher in one person.

Didactic works for the piano by Ukrainian composers living abroad attract attention due to their genre diversity. These are arrangements of Ukrainian folk songs and dance melodies, author's songs, variation cycles, etudes, written in cycles, sonatas, polyphonic works, miniatures and pieces of medium form. The expressive system of these genre varieties has different genesis, purpose,

drama, methodological orientation, and is given special qualities and functions in the works of the diaspora composers. One of the most important functions is the formation of national identity, which naturally leads to the active involvement of the intonation vocabulary of expressive, recognizable folklore means. Drawing on national song and dance sources, Ukrainian composers living abroad promoted their native musical culture, helping to preserve the national consciousness in students. That is why it is so natural to turn to such iconic musical samples as “Yikhav kozak za Dunay” (“A Cossack Was Going across the Danube”), “U susida khata bila” (“The Neighbor's House Is White”) or “Shchedryk” (“Shchedryk”), whose melodies have already gained great popularity since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and have repeatedly been employed as the thematic subject in the works by a number of foreign composers.

Numerous representatives of different generations of Ukrainians living in Europe, the USA and Canada joined the creation of educational didactic literature in the field of piano art: Ya. Barnych, V. Bezkorovainy, I. Bilohrud, T. Bohdanska, V. Vytvytsky, I. Vovk, O. Zaleski, V. Grudyn, V. Kipa, M. Kravtsiv-Barabash, Z. Lysko, A. Rudnytsky, Yu. Oliynyk, Yu. Oransky, R. Savytsky, I. Sonevytsky, S. Turkevych, Yu. Fiala, M. Fomenko, V. Shut' and others. Their educational repertoire is very vast, the most numerous being didactic collections, albums and program cycles: two notebooks “Easy pieces on the piano”, “Pieces on Ukrainian themes for four hands” and a pedagogical collection “Pry yalyntsi” (“By the Christmas tree”) by V. Bezkorovainy; “Piano miniatures on Ukrainian folk themes” by Z. Lysko; two collections of “Ukrainian folk songs for the piano for four hands” by V. Vytvytsky (the first one was created in Ukraine, the second – in the USA); “Pieces for Children”, dedicated to Roman, S. Turkevich's grandson; “Ukrainian piano album for the youngest”, “Ukrainian carols” by Yu. Oliynyk; a cycle of piano pieces for children “Seasons of the Year” and “Vesnyanky-hayivky” (“Spring and Grove ritual Songs”) by I. Sonevytsky; “My Rainbow. 5 Easy pieces for the piano on Ukrainian themes” by M. Fomenko; “Children's Suite” by V. Grudin; “Four concert pieces on Ukrainian themes”, “27 piano pieces based on Ukrainian folk songs” by A. Rudnytsky; “A Collection for students in harmonious and polyphonic

styles", "School of Piano Playing" by V. Shut'; "Ukrainian piano album for beginners" by R. Savytsky; a collection of pieces and variations "Chrystya Is Playing the Piano" and four notebooks "My Ukraine" by M. Kravtsiv-Barabash, etc.

Ethnocharacteristic features of Ukrainian national melodies and deep awareness of the essence of performing and technical requirements and age psychological features are clearly felt in all of the above collections. They were created in order to encourage children's interest in Ukrainian folklore-oriented music of various genres, stimulate their creative imagination, develop musical hearing, subordinate vivid imagery to the purpose of improving technical and performing techniques, develop and enrich their own performing experience, popularize the folklore heritage of their people. Therefore, there is a minority of compositions of instructive-etude direction and the predominance of works of art in the didactic literature of Ukrainian composers living abroad.

For example, we find such a solution in the didactic cycle of children's piano pieces by S. Turkevich "Pieces for Children" (1946), where the pieces have double names: № 1. "A Folk Piece" ("Variations on a Ukrainian Theme"), № 2. "Passage" ("A Walk"), № 3. "March" ("Mother's Word", on the theme of a duet of boys from children's opera "The Heart of Oksana" by the composer), № 4. "Lullaby", № 5. "A Little Sparrow", № 6. "In the Square" ("A Hiding Place"), № 7. "A Little Horse" and unfinished pieces, № 8. "To School" and № 9. "The Prayer". In creating each of them, the composer foresaw the recognizability of the folklore source, she also enriched some of them with the complexity of harmonic language through the use of *Orgelpunkt* and alteration, as if achieving the effect of extending the key, but at the same time preserving accessibility and conciseness of means of musical expression, necessary for children's educational repertoire.

The creation of the collection "Ukrainian Piano Album for Beginners" by R. Savytsky was the result of the pianist's work on providing practice for the youngest members of the Ukrainian community in the camps for displaced persons (Berchtesgaden, Germany), where he was the director and a teacher of a music school. The creation of the collection lasted for 7 years (1947-1954) and was completed in the USA, when R. Savytsky

headed the Ukrainian Music Institute in New York. The album includes 12 items: 10 miniatures in the form of a period, created on the basis of melodies of kolyadky (carols) and Ukrainian folk songs and two small variation cycles on the themes of folk melodies. The cycle items are arranged in the ascending order of performance difficulty. In his introductory speech to the publication on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Ukrainian Music Institute, R. Savytsky Jr. wrote, "... the harmony, melody, texture and general character of the pieces fully correspond to the understanding and technical capabilities of junior school children. The author turned to Ukrainian folk melodies because they are a favorable material for a detailed and interesting explanation and for instilling in young people the euphony of their native music" (Savytsky, 1977, p. 3). The album items, full of national color and deep artistic expression, were very popular in Germany and the USA, and after its publication by the efforts of R. Savytsky Jr. in Ukraine (1999), they became part of the pedagogical repertoire of children's music schools in Ukraine.

Ihor Sonevytsky's little-known album "Seasons of the Year" (1951-1955, New York) and Vasyl Bezkorovainy's children's album "By the Christmas Tree" stand out among the model examples of cyclical folklore-oriented works of didactic character.

In creating the students' repertoire, Sonevytsky, in addition to educational tasks for young Ukrainian performers, chose the goal of popularization of symbolic samples of Ukrainian song through piano arrangement. The album "Seasons of the Year" consists of four cycles of didactic pieces, wherein the first two include the study of calendar-ritual folklore: the first one, "Winter" (kolyadky and shchedrivky "Boh sya rozhdaye" ("God Is Being Born"), "Nova radist' stala" ("New Joy Has Come"), "Nebo i zemlya" ("Heaven and Earth"), "Dyvnaya novyna" ("Strange News"), "V poli pluzhok ore" ("In the Field a Plow Tills"), "Po vs'omu svitu" ("Around the World"), "Vozveselimsya" ("Let's Have Fun"), "Zakuvala syva zozulen'ka" ("A Gray Cuckoo Started to Cry"), "Boh predvichnyy" ("God Is Eternal), and the second one – Spring and Grove Folk-songs "Vesnyanky-Gaivky" ("Podolyanochka", "Cu-ckoo", "Z-pid biloho kamenya" ("From Under the White Stone"), "Perepilochka" ("Little Quail"), "Oy ty, staryy

didu" ("Oh You, Old Grandfather"), "Zhuchok" ("A Little Beetle"), "Yahilochka", "A vzhe vesna" ("It's Spring Already"). The third cycle "Summer" contains work, game, humorous, Kupala songs "Baba i kurchata" ("Grandma and the Chickens"), "Zanadyvsya zhuravel" ("Crane Comes to Us"), "Dobryy vechir, divchyno" ("Good Evening, Girl"), "Po dorozhi zhuk" ("A Beetle On the Road"), "Vyyslyshy v pole kosari" ("Reapers Went out into the Field"), "Chorna kura" ("Black Chicken"), "Hey na Ivana" ("Hey on Ivan (Kupala)") and Plast (Scout) songs "U lisi na polyantsi" ("In the Woods in the Clearing"), "Pusty zh mene, maty do taboru" "Mother, Let Me Go to the Camp"), "Oy na stavi" ("Oh, at the Pond"). The final fourth cycle (created in 1988), "Autumn" – Striltsi' hymn "Oy, u luzi chervona kalyna" ("Oh, Red Guelder Rose in the Meadow"), lullabies and songs dedicated to the 1000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Baptism of Kievan Rus: "Palomnyky" ("Pilgrims"), "Skomorokhy" ("Fools"), "Dzvony" ("Bells"). Each part of the album consists of miniatures, whereas the piece "A vzhe vesna" ("It's Spring Already") is a little variation cycle.

The album miniatures are very accessible for performance and are barely harmonized popular melodies with lyrics. Studying the pieces gives one an opportunity to closely get acquainted with the most commonly used samples of songs of a certain calendar cycle, to take part in national events and celebrations. Collectively, these are well thought out compositions of the educational repertoire to work on hand coordination, practicing articulation, the ability of contrast performing energetic rhythms and cantilena, acquaintance with the simplest polyphonic techniques, mastering genre features (march, lyric song, dance, round dance, children's games).

The cycle of kolyadky (carols) by V. Bezkorovainy "Pry yalyntsi" ("By the Christmas Tree") keeps to the traditions of Galician home music performing, where harmonizations of short melodies (with lyrics) served as an accompaniment and support for amateur performers during Christmas fun parties. Similar examples of creativity, on which the artist focused, are found in the works of V. Barvinsky, B. Vakhnyanin, M. Kravtsiv-Barabash, D. Sichynsky, Ja. Yaroslavenko. In the cycle of Bezkorovainy, these are 16 simple harmonizations of the most popular kolyadky of strophic structure

with the chorus, laid out similarly to *Liedertafel*, characteristic of traditional forms of choral folk performance. In some carols we meet octave duplications of bass voices "Kheruvymy svyat" ("Cherubim Holy") "Vo Vyfleyemi" ("In Bethlehem"), "Boh pryrodu" ("God of Nature"), "Vselennaya, veselysya" ("Universe, Have Fun!") or typical genre formulas of accompaniment (for example, a waltz in "Vozveselimsya vsi kupno nyini" ("Let's All Rejoice Together Now"), "Na nebi zirka yasno zasyala" ("A Star in the Sky Began to Shine Bright").

Bezkorovainy's performing sphere (the pianist was active in concert activities) concerned primarily the role of the accompanist, but the most important in his various activities was pedagogical work – he taught piano playing at high schools in Tarnow (Poland), Vienna (Austria), at the branch of the Ukrainian Music Institute of America in Buffalo (the USA). Being in emigration, the composer created many piano works – fantasy "In the Green Grove", "A Song without Words", "Thought", "Little Fugue", children's pieces dedicated to his grandchildren "Little Andrew's Waltz" and "Roma's Waltz", etc. Working on these pieces, the composer pursued the same goals as most composers of the Ukrainian diaspora – along with the development of technical and performing skills, acquaintance with different types of textures, musical genres and forms, to learn more about Ukrainian folklore and educate students in the traditions of their native national musical culture. These also include "Choven khytayet'sya" ("The Boat Sways"), folk arrangements "A u nashoyi susidky" ("At Our Neighbor's"), "Lullaby", "Z toyi hory" ("From that Mountain"), "Oy, pid hayem" ("Oh, under the Grove"), "Chy ye v sviti molodytsya" ("Is There a Young Woman in the World"), waltzes "Vechirni mriyi" ("Evening Dreams"), "Zahray my, tsyhane" ("Let's Play, Gypsy"). Even all the three of his Sonatas for the piano are full of elements of folk song intonations, which determined not only the figurative content and mood of the works, but also the ways of development of themes, the specifics of Ukrainian mode system, peculiarities of texture, harmony and even imitation of Ukrainian musical instruments (bandura tender strings playing, space calling sound of trembita (Guzul pipe).

Bezkorovainy's sonatas are one of the most interesting examples, where there can be

especially flexible approach to solving performance tasks as long as the national character of the musical language is preserved. As if pushing didactic tasks to the background, the composer does not resort to direct quoting of the folklore sources, but uses them in a re-intoned form (as M. Lysenko did it). In the didactic literature of the Ukrainian abroad, these qualities give the sonatas special value – they help to model the archetypes of nationally outlined musical thinking in young performers.

Close to the synthesis of the creative principles of the Galician composers of the “Prague school” and the pedagogical foundations of Bela Bartok is the collection “27 Pieces on Ukrainian Themes” by A. Rudnytsky (1948), aimed at overcoming more complex technical tasks by young pianists. While preserving the forms of traditional academic music, the basis of the theme of each of the pieces of the cycle is a certain folklore source, declared in the genre program title: Solemn etude “God Is Eternal”, Nocturne “Oy, ne svity, misyachen’ku” (“Oh, Dear Moon, Do not Shine”), Toccattina “Rain”, Ballad “Verkhovyno”. The pieces of Rudnytsky’s cycle are in tune with Bartok’s instructions to introduce elements of the newest musical language,

more complex and diverse metrorhythmics into children’s piano literature, at the same time relying on national folklore and preserving vivid imagery. Thus, in the pieces of the cycle, Rudnytsky sets somewhat complicated, but very interesting tasks aimed at the manifestation of creative imagination. For example, the piece “Verkhovyno” has the genre subtitle *ballade* and is based on the material that became the basis for M. Verbytsky’s arrangement of the folklore kolomyyka and the theme of the chorus “Verkhovyno, svitku ty nash” (“Verkhovyno, You Are Our World”), - the work of the head of the Peremyshl composition school M. Verbytsky was based on the play by the Polish playwright J. Korzeniowsky to the words of M. Ustyanovych for singing-and-playing “Verkhovyntsi”. Rudnytsky’s piece, which has the form of verse, uses themes of two variant stanzas (A+B) based on the model of a Dumka-Shumka (a lyrical song and dance melody). The textural presentation, which is rich in articulation and rhythmic techniques, is composed in a peculiar way – it combines additional undertones, imitating the choral texture, and ethno-instrumental sound simulation.

## Conclusions

The analysis of the didactic repertoire shows that with the help of their works pianists of the Ukrainian diaspora brought up Ukrainian children living abroad, often born outside the ethnic territory, to be creative personalities in their national identity, eliminated the problem of lack of Ukrainian pedagogical repertoire in emigration. Pursuing this or that educational goal, they always fulfilled it, preserving the national characteristics of Ukrainian imagery and musical language, thus contributing to the formation of a strong national identity. Based on the samples of romantic music, they demonstrated the continuity of the Ukrainian pedagogical traditions, laid down by M. Lysenko; embodying the archetype of the “native land”, they contributed to the preservation of the Ukrainians’ mental code. The works for children presented above have an important educational, enlightening, artistic, didactic value, they contribute to enhancing the role of the representation of Ukrainians in non-national environments and the integration of their achievements into the world music culture.

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