

MIECZYSLAW WEINBERG:  
VIOLIN AND PIANO SONATA NO. 3 OP. 37 AND NO. 5 OP. 53

by  
SILVIA SUAREZ

JENNY GRÉGOIRE, COMMITTEE CHAIR

JACOB W. ADAMS

JOANNA C. BIERMANN

THOMAS S. ROBINSON

CHARLES G. SNEAD

SEONGSIN M. KIM

A MANUSCRIPT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts  
in the Department of Music  
in the Graduate School of  
The University of Alabama

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

2020

Copyright Silvia Suarez 2020  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

## ABSTRACT

Composer Mieczyslaw Weinberg (1919 – 1996) wrote six sonatas for violin and piano, and three sonatas for solo violin, as well as an extensive number of chamber music, symphonic, vocal, and instrumental works. There is very little written on Weinberg's violin and piano sonatas. The technical challenges and creative musical language employed in these works make them worthy of being studied, investigated, and added to the standard violin and piano chamber music repertoire. For this project I will write about the Sonatas no. 3 op. 37 (1947), and no. 5, op. 53 (1953) of Mieczyslaw Weinberg. I will also discuss Jewish influences and Shostakovich's influences on Weinberg's life and compositional style. To support this research, I will include excerpts from the scores to analyze Weinberg's musical language. The performance of these two works will take place in the Spring of 2020 in conjunction with my final manuscript.

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this manuscript to the people who have helped me through the years of my musical studies. Especially my family, friends, professors, mentors, and those who have supported and inspired me to pursue my dreams.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Prof. Jenny Gregoire for her guidance during my studies at The University of Alabama. I am grateful to have the helpful feedback and instruction of the members of my committee: Jacob Adams, Joanna Biermann, Thomas Robinson, and Charles Snead to complete this manuscript.

## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi
BIOGRAPHY.....	1
SOVIET MUSIC IN STALIN’S REGIME.....	4
JEWISH INFLUENCES.....	6
SHOSTAKOVICH’S INFLUENCES.....	9
SONATA NO. 3 OP. 37.....	11
SONATA NO. 5 OP. 53.....	22
CONCLUSION.....	32
REFERENCES.....	34

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1 - Sonata no. 5, 2 <sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 81-106) .....	7
FIGURE 2 - Sonata no. 5, 2 <sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 235-244) .....	8
FIGURE 3 - Sonata no. 3, 1 <sup>st</sup> movement (mm. 1-22) .....	12
FIGURE 4 - Sonata no. 3, 1 <sup>st</sup> movement (mm. 50-60) .....	13
FIGURE 5 - Sonata no. 3, 1 <sup>st</sup> movement (mm. 65-73) .....	14
FIGURE 6 - Sonata no. 3, 1 <sup>st</sup> movement (mm. 186-190) .....	15
FIGURE 7 - Sonata no. 3, 2 <sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 1-15) .....	16
FIGURE 8 - Sonata no. 3, 2 <sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 33-36) .....	17
FIGURE 9 - Sonata no. 3, 2 <sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 62-64) .....	18
FIGURE 10 - Finale of Shostakovich Piano Trio no. 2 (mm. 29-41) .....	19
FIGURE 11 - Finale of Weinberg's Sonata no. 3 (mm. 182-189) .....	20
FIGURE 12 - Finale of Shostakovich's Piano Trio (mm. 194-200) .....	21
FIGURE 13 - Finale of Weinberg's Sonata no. 3 (mm. 199-200) .....	23
FIGURE 14 - Finale of Shostakovich's Piano Trio no. 2 (mm. 381-399) .....	24
FIGURE 15 - Finale of Weinberg's Sonata no. 3 (mm. 213-219) .....	25
FIGURE 16 - Sonata no. 5, 1 <sup>st</sup> movement (mm. 37-42) .....	26
FIGURE 17 - Sonata no. 5, 2 <sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 149-156) .....	27
FIGURE 18 - Sonata no. 5 2 <sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 204-216) .....	28
FIGURE 19 - Sonata no. 5 3 <sup>rd</sup> movement (mm. 1-8) .....	29
FIGURE 20 - Sonata no. 5, 3 <sup>rd</sup> movement (mm. 179-193) .....	30

FIGURE 21 - Sonata no. 5, 4<sup>th</sup> movement theme (mm. 57-61) ..... 31



## BIOGRAPHY

Mieczyslaw Weinberg's works feature diverse musical styles such as Jewish, Polish, and Moldovan folk music, and show influences of composers like Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Mahler, Bartók, and Myaskovsky.<sup>1</sup> Weinberg was born in Warsaw on December of 1919 to Jewish parents. His father, Samuil Weinberg, was an accomplished violinist and conductor who toured through Eastern Europe with a Jewish Theater Company. Mieczyslaw started participating in the tours with his father when he was ten years old. In 1933, Mieczyslaw joined the Warsaw Conservatoire as a piano student of Josef Turczyński.<sup>2</sup> In 1939 the Nazis invaded Poland, which resulted in Weinberg fleeing his country and seeking refuge in the Soviet Union. Weinberg never saw his family again, as they were soon taken to the Łódź ghetto, and after that to the Trawniki concentration camp, where they were eventually murdered.

The fate of his family inspired Weinberg to compose works about death and war, as an act of commemoration for the life of his family and compatriots.<sup>3</sup> Weinberg decided to go to Mintz, now the Republic of Belarus, where he was fortunate to receive full refugee rights, even though the USSR was not obliged to let him enter.<sup>4</sup> Weinberg joined the Minsk Conservatoire as a composition student of Vasily Zolotaryov, who was a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov. In 1941, the

<sup>1</sup> Abaigh McKee, "Music and the Holocaust," Holocaust.ort.org. Accessed January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/weinberg-mieczyslaw/>

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Elphick, "*The String Quartets of Mieczyslaw Weinberg: A Critical Study*" (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2016), 23.

<sup>3</sup> David Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom* (Hofheim, Germany: Wolke Verlag, 2010), 15.

<sup>4</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 23.

Nazis invaded the Soviet Union and Weinberg was forced to escape again, this time to Tashkent, Uzbekistan.<sup>5</sup> During his time in Tashkent, he married Nataliya Vovsi-Mikhoels, the daughter of Jewish actor Solomon Mikhoels, who was the head of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.<sup>6</sup> Shostakovich was a mentor and longtime friend of Weinberg's. While Weinberg was never one of Shostakovich's students, he was greatly influenced artistically by the Soviet composer.<sup>7</sup> In early 1953, as a consequence of an anti-Semitic movement that took place during Stalin's regime, Weinberg was arrested and sent to the Lubyanka prison, one of the reasons being his supposed associations with the 'Doctor's Plot'.<sup>8</sup> The plot consisted of accusing nine doctors, mostly Jewish, of being spies working for the "Jewish-bourgeois nationalist group", as well as murdering Soviet leaders Shcherbakov and Zhdanov.<sup>9</sup> Thankfully, he was released soon after Stalin's death in March 1953. Weinberg spent the rest of his life composing in Moscow. Weinberg's impressive body of works includes twenty-six symphonies, seventeen string quartets, six concertos, seven operas, an operetta, three ballets, four cantatas, twenty-eight sonatas, and more than two hundred songs. He wrote more than sixty film scores, theater and circus music to make a living, so that he did not have to depend on having his main works published. Great artists like violinists David Oistrakh, Leonid Kogan, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, the Borodin Quartet, and conductors Kirill Kondrashin and Vladimir Fedoseyev performed Weinberg's music during his lifetime.<sup>10</sup> In 1971, Weinberg received the 'Honored Artist of the Russian Republic'

<sup>5</sup> Elphick, "The String Quartets of Mieczyslaw Weinberg: A Critical Study," 24.

<sup>6</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 34.

<sup>7</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 41.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Elphick, "Weinberg, Shostakovich, and the influence of anxiety," *The musical Times*, (Winter 2014): 50.

<sup>9</sup> Caesar – 1. "The Doctors' Plot," Cia.gov. Accessed March 1st, 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/caesar-01.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 9.

award; in 1980, the ‘People’s Artist of the Russian Republic’ award; and in 1990, he won the State Prize of the USSR.<sup>11</sup>

A degenerative condition that affected his digestive tract caused his death in 1996.<sup>12</sup> This manuscript discusses Jewish influences and Shostakovich’s influences on the creative work of Weinberg, focusing on his Sonatas no. 3 op. 37 and no. 5 op. 53.

<sup>11</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 125.

<sup>12</sup> Elphick, “*The String Quartets of Mieczyslaw Weinberg: A Critical Study*,” 27.

## SOVIET MUSIC IN STALIN'S REGIME

In 1946, Andrei Zhdanov, the Central Committee secretary in Stalin's regime, released the *zhdanovshchina*, a measure of strict conformism in the arts.<sup>13</sup> The *zhdanovshchina* rule attempted to eliminate "cosmopolitanism" and "anti-patriotism" from the creative work of all intellectual individuals in the Soviet Union, including composers and writers.<sup>14</sup> Socialist Realism ideals were desired, as they would emphasize the optimism and positivity of the Soviet future.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, all artistic and creative works in the Soviet Union were supposed to mirror and promote the principles of socialist society under Stalin, emphasizing socialist values such as the emancipation of the proletariat. In 1948, Solomon Mikhoels, who was Weinberg's father-in-law, the Artistic Director of the Uzbek Opera and Ballet Theater, and the head of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, was assassinated by Stalin's orders; his death was announced as an accident.<sup>16</sup> From 1948 to 1953, Stalin's guards and militia followed Weinberg everywhere. During this time some Soviet composers' works, including Weinberg's, were banned from being performed, recorded, or broadcast.<sup>17</sup> Around 1949, with the launch of Stalin's anti-cosmopolitan campaign, a series of anti-Semitic occurrences unfolded. There were attacks on Jewish theater critics, the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee was dissolved, and Jewish authors and actors were

<sup>13</sup> Rosamund Barlett, *Shostakovich in Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3.

<sup>14</sup> Abaigh McKee, "Music and the Holocaust," Holocaust.ort.org. Accessed January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 <http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/weinberg-mieczyslaw/>

<sup>15</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 49.

<sup>16</sup> Abaigh McKee, "Music and the Holocaust," Holocaust.ort.org. Accessed January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 <http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/weinberg-mieczyslaw/>

<sup>17</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 62.

murdered in the summer of 1952.<sup>18</sup> It was under this repressive environment that Weinberg wrote his violin and piano sonata no. 3 and no. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 74.

## JEWISH INFLUENCES

Some of the Jewish influences in Weinberg's music can be traced to his parents.

Weinberg's father was a violinist and composer, and although he did not play at a very high level, he toured and wrote music for a Jewish Theater Company. Weinberg learned to play the piano by himself and sometimes assumed his father's role leading the ensemble.<sup>19</sup> Weinberg spent numerous hours with his father absorbing the characteristics of Jewish music. "...From the age of six I tagged along behind him; I went to listen to all those less than top-quality, but always very sincere melodies."<sup>20</sup>

Another important figure who influenced Weinberg's life was his father-in-law, Solomon Mikhoels, whom Weinberg met through his marriage to Nataliya Vovsi-Mikhoels, in 1942. Weinberg's first Sinfonietta and his Sonata no. 1 op. 12 for violin and piano are dedicated to him.<sup>21</sup> Weinberg completed his Sinfonietta no. 1 in 1948. In his dedication of the piece he used a quotation from one of Solomon Mikhoels' speeches praising the ideal life conditions of Jews in the Soviet Union, "Jewish songs begin to be heard in the kolkhoz [collective farm] fields, not the song of old gloomy days, but new happy songs of productivity and labor."<sup>22</sup> The Sinfonietta was one of the reasons Weinberg was arrested for accusations of being a Jewish Nationalist.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Fanning, *Myecyzlaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 17.

<sup>20</sup> Fanning, *Myecyzlaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 17.

<sup>21</sup> Fanning, *Myecyzlaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 37.

<sup>22</sup> Allan B. Ho and Dmitry Feofanov, *The Shostakovich Wars* (2011), 173, <http://www.siue.edu/~aho/ShostakovichWars/SW.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Allan B. Ho and Dmitry Feofanov, *The Shostakovich Wars* (2011), p 173, <http://www.siue.edu/~aho/ShostakovichWars/SW.pdf>

In the second movement of Weinberg's Sonata no. 5 op. 53 one can hear some influences of the klezmer style of Jewish music in mm. 86-87 and 100-101. The minor-second/minor-third pairings evoke the minor-second/augmented-second succession in the "Phrygian Dominant," the fifth mode of the harmonic minor. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1 – Sonata no. 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement (violin part, mm. 85-104)



From mm. 235-258, Weinberg uses the klezmer-sounding rhythm of 'oom-pah' and changes the meter to 2/4 to contrast with the previous 6/8 time signature of the second movement. (Figure 2)

Figure 2 – Sonata no. 5, 2nd movement (mm. 235-244):

The image displays a musical score for the second movement of Sonata no. 5, measures 233 through 244. The score is presented in three systems, each with a single treble clef staff and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. Measure numbers 233, 237, and 241 are indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and dynamic markings. The first system (measures 233-236) features a treble staff with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a grand staff with chords and moving lines. A dynamic marking of *ff* is present in the second measure, and *ff marcatisissimo* is written in the grand staff of the second measure. The second system (measures 237-240) continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system (measures 241-244) concludes the passage with sustained chords and melodic fragments.



## SHOSTAKOVICH'S INFLUENCES

Before meeting Shostakovich, Weinberg believed that Impressionism and Neo-Impressionism were the most advanced musical styles in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>24</sup> When Weinberg first discovered Shostakovich's music he thought of it as 'the discovery of a continent'.<sup>25</sup> On one occasion Weinberg was playing the celesta and harp part of Shostakovich's 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony on the piano, since the orchestra did not own these instruments, and he wrote about his experience: "...At the next concert Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony was to be performed. And so this was the first time that I really became acquainted with music by Dimitry Dmitrievich. ... I remember how, sitting at the piano in the orchestra, I was staggered by every phrase, every musical idea, as if a thousand electrical charges were piercing me."<sup>26</sup>

Shostakovich and Weinberg met in 1943 in Moscow. A copy of the score for Weinberg's first Symphony reached Shostakovich's hands. Shostakovich, who was very impressed, immediately offered an invitation to Weinberg to relocate and work in Moscow, which Weinberg eagerly accepted.<sup>27</sup> They cultivated mutual respect and admiration for each other. Weinberg would refer to Shostakovich as a friend and mentor "I count myself as his pupil, his flesh and blood."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 26-7.

<sup>25</sup> Simon Wynberg, "Mieczyslaw Weinberg," The Orel Foundation, [http://orelfoundation.org/composers/article/mieczyslaw\\_weinberg](http://orelfoundation.org/composers/article/mieczyslaw_weinberg)

<sup>26</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 27.

<sup>27</sup> Anastasia Seifetdinova, "*Mieczyslaw Weinberg's Sonata no. 4 for Piano: An Analytical Study*" (DMA diss., University of Hartford, 2014) 4.

<sup>28</sup> Fanning, *Mieczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 9.

When Weinberg was in prison in 1953, Shostakovich courageously wrote a letter to Lavrentiy Beriia, the head of the NKVD (The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs), to attest for Weinberg's innocence. Shostakovich also signed official documents to obtain custody of Victoria, Weinberg's daughter, in case Weinberg's wife was also arrested. When Weinberg was released the papers were burnt as a ceremonial act.<sup>29</sup> The two composers lived in the same block and shared their works with each other during or after they were completed.

“[Shostakovich would visit...] whenever he simply wanted to sit for a while and have a chat. Always when he had finished a new work. Anything: a symphony or a quartet. Even when it still was just in manuscript. It could happen that I listened to the new work twice... it came about that I showed all my works to Dmitry Dmitriyevich.”<sup>30</sup>

Weinberg's and Shostakovich's friendship continued until Shostakovich's death, in 1975. The two composers had an amiable competition to see who would write more string quartets. Shostakovich mentioned in a 1964 letter to librettist and critic Glikman: “Another quartet, the Tenth, was finished yesterday. It is dedicated to Moysey Vainberg [Mieczyslaw Weinberg]. He wrote nine quartets and with the last of them overtook me, since at the time I only had eight. I therefore set myself the challenge of catching up and overtaking Vainberg, which I have now done.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Elphick, “Weinberg, Shostakovich, and the influence of anxiety,” 50.

<sup>30</sup> Elphick, “Weinberg, Shostakovich, and the influence of anxiety,” 51.

<sup>31</sup> Elphick, “Weinberg, Shostakovich, and the influence of anxiety,” 58.

## SONATA NO. 3 OP. 37

Weinberg wrote his third sonata for violin and piano in 1947, and dedicated it to Soviet violinist and teacher Mikhail Fichtenholz, who is also the dedicatee of two of Weinberg's sonatas for solo violin, op. 82 and 95.<sup>32</sup> The Sonata consists of three movements:

*Allegro moderato*

*Andantino*

*Allegretto cantabile*

The first movement, *Allegro Moderato*, is in sonata form. There are two main contrasting themes. The first theme is lyrical in nature and it is first presented by the violin. This theme consists of 8 + 8 measure phrases. The second eight-measure phrase is transposed a half step up from the original pitches, ending with a descending arpeggio towards the closing Bb on m. 15. (Figure 3)

<sup>32</sup> Fanning, *Myeczyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 122.

Figure 3 – Sonata no. 3, 1st movement (mm. 1-20):

I M. WEINBERG (1919 – 1996)

Violino

Allegro moderato  $\text{♩} = 60$  *p*

Piano

6

11

16

The contrasting second theme is stated first by the violin in m. 50. This time Weinberg uses *staccato* to indicate a lighter, more playful character. In m. 54 the piano imitates the theme in the violin a third above the original pitch. (Figure 4)

Figure 4 – Sonata no. 3, 1st movement (mm. 50-60):

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system, starting at measure 16, shows a treble clef staff with a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3' in a box. The piano dynamic 'p' is indicated below the staff. The second system, starting at measure 51, features a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The third system, starting at measure 56, includes a treble clef staff with a melodic line, a piano 'p' dynamic, a 'cresc.' marking, and a 'ff' dynamic. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature.

The development starts in the piano with a *fortissimo* dynamic. The texture is thicker, with octaves in the right hand of the piano in mm. 65-66, and the rhythm becomes more complex. Weinberg uses triplets in the right hand of the piano against eighth notes in the left

hand in m. 67. Louder dynamics and accents are used to achieve a more dramatic character.

(Figure 5)

Figure 5 – Sonata no. 3, 1st movement (mm. 65-73):

65

68

71

*ff*

c 4104 x

With a tempo change to *pochissimo meno mosso* in m. 170, the rhythmic figures slow down and the texture becomes lighter. The opening melody appears in the left hand of the piano changed by augmentation from m. 187 to the end. (Figure 6)

Figure 6 – Sonata no. 3, 1st movement (mm. 186-190):

The image shows a musical score for measures 186-190 of the first movement of Sonata no. 3. The score is written for piano and consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with the number '186' and the instruction 'pizz. arco'. It contains a melodic line of eighth notes with slurs and accents. The bass staff contains a single note on the first beat, followed by rests, and then a series of quarter notes on the second, third, and fourth beats. The dynamic marking 'mf' is placed above the first quarter note in the bass staff. The tempo marking 'rit. al fine' and the dynamic marking 'pp' are placed below the treble staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and a fermata in both staves.

The second movement, *Andantino*, is also in sonata form. The absence of accompaniment in the opening section allows the melodic line to be free and creates a recitativo-like character. In the piano part, the downbeats are usually a rest, followed by three quarter notes that help to drive the phrase forward. The accompanying quarter notes become almost as important as the melody, since Weinberg writes them only when the melodic line is inactive. (Figure 7)

Figure 7 – Sonata no. 3, 2nd movement (mm. 1-15):

Andantino ♩ = 80

*p*

*Ped.* \*

*cresc.*

*f*

*poco a poco dim.*

*Ped.* \*

*Ped.* \*

c 4104 k

The second theme has a more active accompaniment part, since the piano has eighth notes in the left hand and half notes in the right hand. The violin melody consists of dotted rhythms and thirty-second notes, which along with the *crescendo poco a poco* marking, and the rising in the register of the violin, creates a sense of urgency. (Figure 8)



Figure 8 – Sonata no. 3, 2nd movement (mm. 33-36):

The musical score for measures 33-36 of Sonata no. 3, 2nd movement, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 33-34) shows a melodic line in the treble clef and piano accompaniment in the bass clef. The melodic line begins with a *pp* dynamic and a *cresc. poco a poco* instruction. The piano accompaniment also starts with *pp* and *cresc. poco a poco*. The second system (measures 35-36) continues the melodic and piano parts, with the melodic line ending on a sharp sign. The piano accompaniment features a prominent descending sixteenth-note passage in the lower register.

Descending sixteenth-note passages resemble a sigh-like gesture. These sixteenth-note passages will reappear throughout the movement, usually with no piano accompaniment, creating an element of improvisatory, recitativo-like style. (Figure 9)

Figure 9 – Sonata no. 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement (mm. 62-64):



In the third movement, *Allegretto cantabile*, Weinberg uses the same Jewish dance style (*freylekhs*) as the last movement of Shostakovich's Piano Trio no. 2 op. 67 (composed in 1944).<sup>33</sup> According to the Jewish English Lexicon, *freylekhs* is a lively song or dance performed at Jewish private parties or celebrations. The term is also described as a joyful *Nigun* (Jewish religious song), featuring a choreography that fits its duple meter.<sup>34</sup> A similar treatment of the texture is used in both Weinberg's Finale of his Sonata no. 3 and Shostakovich's Finale of his 2<sup>nd</sup> Piano Trio. The piano plays the melodic line in octaves while the violin in Weinberg's sonata and violin and cello in Shostakovich's piano trio play pizzicato. In the Finale of Shostakovich's Piano Trio no. 2, in mm. 29-41, the cello plays on the downbeat and third beat, while the violin plays the offbeats. The piano has the melodic line in both the left hand and right hand, written

<sup>33</sup> Fanning, *Myecyslaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 57.

<sup>34</sup> Yaakov Mazor, "Freylekhs," Jewish Music Research Centre, 12/01/2020, <https://www.jewish-music.huji.ac.il/content/freylekhs>

two octaves apart from each other. Figure 10 indicates the same textural treatment in Weinberg's Sonata no. 3.

Figure 10 – Finale of Weinberg's Sonata no. 3 (mm. 182-189):

The image displays three systems of musical notation for the finale of Weinberg's Sonata no. 3, measures 180-189. Each system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below it. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 2/4. Measure numbers 180, 184, and 187 are indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. The first system (measures 180-183) features a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) instruction above the top staff and an 'mf' (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking below it. The piano part in the grand staff is marked 'p sempre legato' (piano, always legato). The second system (measures 184-186) includes a 'cresc. poco a poco' (crescendo, little by little) instruction in both the top and bottom staves of the grand staff. The third system (measures 187-189) continues the musical texture. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and phrasing slurs.

Descending chromatic lines are found in both Weinberg's and Shostakovich's last movements. In the Finale of Shostakovich's Piano Trio no. 2, from mm. 194-197, descending chromatic sixteenth notes are written, which the violin imitates in m. 197. Similarly, in Weinberg's Finale of his Sonata no. 3, the same descending chromatic writing is present. (Figure 11)

Figure 11 – Finale of Weinberg's Sonata no. 3 (mm. 199-200):



The image shows a musical score for the Finale of Weinberg's Sonata no. 3, measures 199-200. The score is written for three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a descending chromatic line of sixteenth notes in the upper staves, with some notes beamed together. The lower staves contain accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The number '199' is written above the first measure of the top staff.

Both composers divided the pitches of the melody between the strings and piano, creating a fragmented melody between both parts. In the Finale of Shostakovich's Piano Trio no. 2, in mm. 384-390, a melodic hocket is present. The piano has the downbeats, while the violin and cello play the offbeats. In m. 387, the first half of the downbeat is empty, followed by eighth notes in the piano, cello, and violin. In m. 388, the melodic hocket is resumed with downbeats in the piano and offbeats in the violin and cello. Weinberg writes a melodic hocket in the Finale of his Sonata no. 3 in the same manner as Shostakovich. (Figure 12)

Figure 12 – Finale of Weinberg’s Sonata no. 3

Melodic hocket (mm. 213-219):



The Finale of Weinberg’s Sonata no. 3 features a cadenza, which starts with double stops. The top voice has ascending arpeggios, while the bottom voice states an ascending B flat major scale. This scale is repeated in the same voice with an E natural instead of E flat, followed by a descending scalar motion. After an ascending E flat major arpeggio, Weinberg writes tenths, followed by an alternation of a descending three-note gesture marked *pizzicato* and an ascending three-note gesture with an octave leap marked *arco*. The end of the cadenza leads to the coda of the movement in m. 235.

## SONATA NO. 5 OP. 53

This sonata was written during 1953, the same year that Weinberg was taken to prison at Stalin's orders. Weinberg dedicated it to Shostakovich.

The Sonata no. 5 consists of four movements:

*Andante con moto*

*Allegro molto*

*Allegro moderato*

*Allegro*

The first movement, *Andante con moto*, begins with the first theme in the right hand of the piano marked *pianissimo semplice*. This theme is reiterated throughout the movement in different dynamics and registers, as well as embellished with double-stops in the violin. The *attacca* marking at the end of the first movement provides a contrasting element between the slow whole notes at the end of the first movement and faster eighth notes in the quicker tempo of the second movement. (Figure 13)

Figure 13 – Sonata no. 5, 1st movement (mm. 37- 42)

First theme of the first movement embellished by double-stops and grace notes:

The image displays a musical score for the first theme of the first movement of Sonata no. 5, measures 37-42. The score is written for violin and piano. The violin part is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 2/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 37-38) shows the violin playing a melodic line with double-stops and grace notes, starting with a *pp* dynamic and moving to *ff molto espr.* The piano accompaniment consists of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system (measures 39-40) continues the violin melody with similar embellishments. The piano accompaniment features a more active bass line. The third system (measures 41-42) concludes the theme with a final flourish in the violin and a sustained chord in the piano.

The second movement, *Allegro molto*, is in sonata form. The first 19 bars consist of a piano introduction. The first theme occurs in m. 20 in the violin with dotted quarters, while the piano accompanies with eighth notes. In m. 69 the second theme emerges in the violin, preserving the dotted-quarter rhythm from the first theme. The piano alternates

between long sustained chords and shorter one-measure chords. The second theme is marked *Sul G* for 38 measures for the violin, which provides a noticeable contrast with the timbre of the first theme, executed mostly on the A and E string. From mm. 151-154 there is a short instance of a canon that starts on the downbeat of the piano and is imitated by the violin starting on the second half of m. 151. (Figure 14)

Figure 14 – Sonata no. 5, 2nd movement (mm. 149-156)

Canonic material mm. 151-154:

The image displays a musical score for measures 149 to 156 of the second movement of Sonata no. 5. The score is written for violin and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 149 to 152, and the second system covers measures 153 to 156. The violin part is marked *f* (forte) and features a canon that begins on the second half of measure 151. The piano part is marked *f* and includes a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking in measures 153 and 154. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Weinberg's use of extremely high registers is very common of his musical style. In mm. 209-216, Weinberg writes a *crescendo* to a *fortissimo* Eb 7. In the violin, this register is naturally



quieter than lower registers, so it is challenging to achieve the level of loudness desired by the composer. (Figure 15)

Figure 15 – Sonata no. 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement (violin part, mm. 204-216):



The third movement, *Allegro moderato*, is a playful rondo. The A section is first stated in double-stops in the violin without piano accompaniment. The emphasis on the downbeat half notes makes the character dance-like. (Figure 16)

Figure 16 – Sonata no. 5, 3rd movement (mm. 1-8):

con sord.

*pp leggiero*

Allegro moderato  $\text{♩} = 100$

4

8

From mm. 181 to 243 Weinberg indicates *Sul G* for the violin for 63 measures. From mm. 181-188, the piano has a pedal E Major chord held over an eight-measure phrase in the violin, which allows the violin melody to be the main focus of attention. Once the violin arrives to a long note on m. 188, the piano answers with an urgent four bar statement. (Figure 17)

Figure 17 – Sonata no. 5, 3rd movement (mm. 179-193):

179 senza sord. sul G al φ  
f espr.  
mf  
c 728 κ

184

189

The fourth movement, *Allegro*, begins with an introduction in a *pianississimo* dynamic. (mm. 1-29). The violin has running eighth notes under a slur while the piano holds drone-like pedal chords. The string crossings present a challenge for the violinist, since it is difficult to not produce accents as a result of the change in bow direction. Weinberg marks a new *Andante* tempo in mm. 30-31, which brings back the opening melodic material of the first movement in the piano. In m. 32 the tempo changes to *Allegro* with the opening introductory material of running eighth notes. The next tempo change occurs in m. 40 to *Andante*, where the principal theme of this movement is stated for the first time (Figure 18). After another *Andante* marking, the fifth and final tempo change occurs in m. 56 to *Allegretto*, which will remain for the rest of the Finale.

Figure 18 – Sonata no. 5, 4<sup>th</sup> movement theme (mm. 57-61):



From mm. 56-152 the main theme is developed and passed back and forth from the violin to the piano. From mm. 153-215 a fugal episode occurs. The first two measures of the fugue are created with the same pitches as the main melodic material in m. 56. The fugal section starts with

50 measures of solo piano and the violin joins only for the last three entrances of the theme.

(Figure 19)

Figure 19 – Sonata no. 5, 4th movement Fugue (mm. 153-158):

68 153

Piano

*f marcato*

156

v

In m. 203 both the theme of the fugue in the violin as well as the main melody in the piano join forces. (Figure 20)

Figure 20 – Sonata no. 5, 4th movement (mm. 203-205):

The image shows a musical score for measures 203 to 205 of the 4th movement of Sonata no. 5. The score is written for violin and piano. The violin part (top staff) begins at measure 203 with a *fff* dynamic and features a melodic line with sixteenth-note rests. The piano part (bottom two staves) is marked *ff*, *molto espressivo*, and *sempre tenuto*. It consists of a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The score concludes at measure 205, which is marked with a **71** in the top right corner.

From mm. 297 to the end Weinberg brings back the opening material of the first movement in the violin. The sixteenth-note rests after each note of the melody and the *pianississimo* dynamic create a dramatic effect. The last two measures die away with a *morendo* marking. (Figure 21)

Figure 21 – Sonata no. 5, 4th movement (mm. 297-305):

The musical score is presented in three systems. Each system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below it. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Andante' and the dynamic is 'ppp' (pianissimo). The first system covers measures 297 to 300. The second system starts at measure 300 and ends at measure 303. The third system starts at measure 303 and ends at measure 305. The melody in the right hand is characterized by long, flowing lines with many slurs, while the left hand provides a steady bass line with occasional chords and rests.

## CONCLUSION

Weinberg's works encompass many musical styles including Moldovan, Polish, and Jewish folk music. He was influenced not only by Shostakovich, but also Prokofiev, Mahler, Bartók, and Myaskovsky.<sup>35</sup> Despite his music encountering political barriers, Weinberg thought of the Soviet Union as his savior. He always tried to remain out of reach of the political forces of power, but his gratitude and loyalty to them never ceased to exist.<sup>36</sup> Composer Krzysztof Meyer's reflected on all the reasons that prevented Weinberg from achieving recognition in the Soviet Union:

"I do not think that Weinberg was promoted by the Composer's Union. It is true that he was played quite a lot, but he received hardly any State Prizes. I think he was not a trump card for the regime in his totalitarian system. A Jew, Mikhoels's son-in-law, one who did not write much political music and was not active in public life, of Polish descent, arrested in 1953, and extremely modest: all these were real disadvantages in the eyes of the authorities. And in some strange way such 'sins' still mattered, in spite of the de-Stalinisation."<sup>37</sup>

Weinberg's positive outlook on life, despite the misfortunes he encountered, is admirable. Notwithstanding the loss of his family during the Nazi invasion, having to escape Nazi persecution several times, not having the success that his works deserved in Soviet Russia, being incarcerated, and having to live as an immigrant his entire life, his attitude remained positive. He always refused to think of himself as a victim, even when facing these horrible situations. He found joy in composing and in a sense, this work obsession kept him motivated to withstand any

<sup>35</sup> Abaigh McKee, "Music and the Holocaust," Holocaust.ort.org. Accessed January 10th, 2020, <http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/weinberg-mieczyslaw/>

<sup>36</sup> Fanning, *Myecyzlaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 11.

<sup>37</sup> Fanning, *Myecyzlaw Weinberg In Search of Freedom*, 166.



obstacles that crossed his path. Weinberg's works are being performed and recorded more often nowadays, and new pieces are being brought to light. Although he did not experience the recognition that he deserved during his lifetime, future generations of musicians will have the opportunity to study, perform, and appreciate Weinberg's compositions as worthy additions to the repertoire.

## REFERENCES

- Bartlett, Rosamund. *Shostakovich in Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Caesar – 1. “The Doctors’ Plot.” Cia.gov. Accessed March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/caesar-01.pdf>
- Elphick, Daniel. “Weinberg, Shostakovich, and the Influence of Anxiety.” *The Musical Times*, Vol. 155 (Winter 2014), 49-62.
- Elphick, Daniel. (2016). *The String Quartets of Mieczyslaw Weinberg: A Critical Study* (Order No. 10303300). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1865299044). Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.libdata.lib.ua.edu/docview/1865299044?accountid=14472>
- Fanning, David. *Mieczyslaw Weinberg in Search of Freedom*. Hofheim, Germany: Wolke Verlag, 2010.
- Ho, Allan B., and Dmitry Feofanov. *The Shostakovich Wars*, 2011.  
<http://www.siue.edu/~aho/ShostakovichWars/SW.pdf>
- Mazor, Yaakov. “Freylekhs.” Jewish Music Research Centre. Accessed 1/14/20.  
<https://www.jewish-music.huji.ac.il/content/freylekhs>
- Weinberg, Mieczyslaw. “Violin Sonata no. 3 op. 37.” Recorded by Kolja Blacher and Jascha Nemtsov. January 01, 2007. Audio, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhXa4nNrwp0>
- Weinberg, Mieczyslaw. “Violin Sonata no. 5 op. 53.” Recorded by Maria Slawek and Piotr Rózanski. November 06, 2015. Audio, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbkONJtp\\_AE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbkONJtp_AE)

McKee, Abaigh. "Mieczyslaw Weinberg." Music and the Holocaust. Accessed 1/5/20.  
<http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/weinberg-mieczyslaw/>

Seifetdinova, Anastasia. (2014). *Mieczyslaw Weinberg's Sonata no. 4 for Piano: An Analytical Study* (Order No.3623780). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1551228794). Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.libdata.lib.ua.edu/docview/1551228794?accountid=14472>

Wynberg, Simon. "Mieczyslaw Weinberg." The Orel Foundation. Accessed 1/5/20.  
[http://orelfoundation.org/composers/article/mieczyslaw\\_weinberg](http://orelfoundation.org/composers/article/mieczyslaw_weinberg)