

## **MIGRATION AND TRAUMA: A UKRAINIAN COMPOSER IN BRITAIN, 1946–1977**

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## **МИГРАЦИЈЕ И ТРАУМА: УКРАЈИНСКА КОМПОЗИТОРКА У БРИТАНИЈИ, 1946–1977**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study focuses on the composer Stefaniâ Turkevič, who immigrated to Britain after the Second World War (1946), as part of a large group of Ukrainians fleeing Stalin's repressions. The forced emigration left an indelible mark on her consciousness and largely shaped her career in exile, which foundered and ultimately led to her obscurity as a creative artist. The main aim of this article is to analyse the psychological aspects of what ostensibly seems a poorly managed career in order to find answers to the question why such an experienced composer failed to take her place in British musical culture and went unrecognized as a composer even among the Ukrainian diaspora in Britain, except for a few minor events.

**KEYWORDS:** forced migration, displacement, Ukrainian diaspora, Ukrainian composer, female composer, cultural trauma.

### **АПСТРАКТ**

Ова студија бави се композиторком Стефанијом Туркевич, која је емигрирала у Велику Британију након Другог светског рата (1946)

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у оквиру великог таласа Украјинаца који су бежали од Стаљинових репресија. Присилна емиграција оставила је неизбрисив траг у њеној свести и у великој мери обликовала њену неуспешну каријеру у егзилу, доводећи на крају до непрепознавања Туркевичеве као ствараоца. Главни циљ овог чланка је анализа психолошких аспеката наизглед лошег управљања каријером, како би се пронашли одговори на питања о томе зашто тако искусна композиторка није успела да заузме своје место у британској музичкој култури и зашто је као аутор остала непризната чак и унутар украјинске дијаспоре у Британији, с изузетком од неколико мањих догађаја.

Кључне речи: присилна миграција, расељавање, украјинска дијаспора, украјински композитор, композиторка, културна траума.

## INTRODUCTION

Ukrainian composer Stefanià Turkevič (1898–1977) spent almost half of her life in Britain (1946–1977). As a representative of a large group of forced post-war Ukrainian migrants, her case can be fruitfully examined through the prism of collective trauma caused by war, fear of death from Stalinist repressions, political persecution due to participation in the national liberation movement, restrictions on religious and human freedoms, and so on. Being exposed to all these traumatic factors, her personal response to geographical displacement has been strongly shaped by her gender, her migrant status as the immigrant wife of a foreign soldier under British command, and her changing social and professional status before and after the immigration.

By examining selected works and related facts of her professional biography, in this article I seek to answer the following research questions: What symptoms of personal migrant trauma are reflected in her work of the British period, and what caused the traumatic impact on her personally and professionally? How does this approach to the work of Stefanià Turkevič correspond to the dominant approach to the interpretation of her work in current musicology, and how does it relate to other ideas relevant in current academic discourse on migration in general, and Ukrainian post-war migration in particular?

The methodology applied in my research was based on analysis of the composer's manuscripts kept at the Cambridge University Library,<sup>1</sup> scientific

<sup>1</sup> Fond Music manuscripts, Turkewicz-Lukianowicz Stefanie, GBR/0012/MS Add. 10397.

publications on Stefaniâ Turkevič's work (Pavlišin 2004; Karas' 2012; Beregova 2022), documentary sources (composer's submissions, correspondence, press concert reviews and announcements, minutes of meetings) at the BBC Written Archives, the Archive of the Society for the Promotion of New Music, the Royal Society of Female Musicians Archive, and the Shevchenko Library and Archive, maintained by the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain, and supported by information obtained during in-depth interviews with the composer's eldest daughter, Zoâ Lisovs'ka-Nižankivs'ka, and materials from the family archive (Geneva, Switzerland).

A detailed discussion of psychological trauma, cultural trauma, cultural bereavement, culture shock, cultural conflict, migration, and mobility is beyond the scope of this text. Therefore, I will limit myself to a basic approach to these issues relevant to this specific case study, which represents a theoretical framework for applying the trauma concept to Stefaniâ Turkevič, without delving into all of the divisions and terminological complexities associated with these complicated phenomena.

## RECENT STUDIES ON TRAUMA AND MIGRATION

Trauma occurs from experiencing “stressful, frightening or distressing events that are difficult to cope with or out of our control” (Mind 2023). Because migration takes multiple forms, ranging from urgent fleeing from war or persecution to a peaceful relocation for personal or professional reasons, speaking collectively of migrant experience risks presenting false equivalence between groups of very different social status and life experience. However, as Edward Said has argued, it may be possible to speak of at least a baseline of migrant experience: that of psychological feelings of loss or of “life led outside habitual order” (Said 1994, 149). Among the common traumatic factors for people who have experienced migration, scholars indicate the loss of social status, a drop in living standards, restrictions in the volume and procedure for receiving social services compared to the native population of the host country, among other things such as the language barrier, cultural misunderstanding, and other forms of cultural alienation and dislocation (Seidel 1986; Kalaga and Rachwal 2001; Schouler-Ocak 2015).

In order to avoid class affiliation of the subjects of mobility, as well as the positive (in relation to frequent travellers) or negative assessment (in relation to those who are poor or undocumented) accompanying this differentiation, the current agenda for contemporary debate on migration and mobility is to apply a single analytical lens, whether to explore the experiences of domestic or international travellers, asylum seekers, students, migrant workers, repatriates,

and so on. The proposed “New Mobility” paradigm, according to its proponents, as an inclusive category, is applicable to examination of all forms of movement, from walking across the room to the flowing of water (Urry 2007; Glick Schiller et. al. 2013). This proposed methodology, despite the advantages associated with its comprehensive universality, loses its credibility when it comes to determining the rate of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is twice as high in forced migrants (refugees and asylum seekers) compared to labour migrants (Lindert et al. 2009). That is why for the purposes of my research it is necessary to distinguish displacement as one of the types of mobility, including the phenomenon of exile as one of the subtypes.

The phenomenon of exile has not yet, in my view, been clearly conceptualized, which has engendered controversial methodological approaches. Some researchers interpret this concept philosophically and broadly – “in varying degrees the normal role for the modern creative writer is to be an exile” (Gurr 1981, 13); others adhere to a highly specialized interpretation of the term as a “banishment to a foreign country, or to a remote part of one’s own country, according to an edict or judicial sentence” (Exile 2024). Guided by this specialised definition, Stefaniâ Turkevič cannot be called an exile, since neither she or her husband were members of the political opposition or participated in the activities of the Organizaciâ Ukraïns’kih nacionalistiv [OUN – Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists] (See Shkandrij 2015 and Himka 2021). However, her sister’s husband, Volodimir Martinec’, was one of the key organizers and participants of the OUN and took an active part in the anti-Soviet ideological and militaristic activities in the western territories of Ukraine in 1941–1944. Obviously, such a family relationship posed a direct threat not only to freedom, but also to life in the context of a large-scale Narodnyj Komissariat Vnutrennih Del [NKVD – People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs] campaign to punish members of this organization and their relatives for collaborating with the Germans, for anti-Soviet activities, and the fight against the Red Army after the liberation of Ukrainian territories from the Nazis. Political persecution was so likely that Stefaniâ Turkevič’s siblings also left Ukraine with their families; only the youngest sister, Lidiâ Turkevič-Metel’s’ka, remained in Lviv. She and her family were deported to Siberia along with 160,000 other Ukrainians (Mondon 2013), where she died in 1962, before her family was allowed to return to Lviv.

Another reason for leaving, although not so obvious, was the desire not to return to the Soviet life again, having experienced it for two years (1939–1941). The Soviet takeover of Galicia in 1939 had a detrimental effect on Turkevič’s second husband Narciz Luk’ânovič’s career. His private psychiatry practice was nationalised by the proletarian government, which condemned any form

of capitalism. However, it must be acknowledged that the advent of Soviet power, paradoxically, gave Turkevič more professional opportunities than she had been granted in the Polish-controlled Galicia. First of all, the hegemony of Polish musicians in Lviv (from 1919–1939) was finally broken by the Soviet rule, and second, professional opportunity for women was one of the ideological positives of the Soviet society. Thus, on 2 January 1940, she finally took up the position of an associate professor at the Department of Theory and Composition of the L'viv's'ka deržavna konservatoriâ im. M. V. Lisenka [now Mykola Lysenko Lviv National Music Academy]; she had been trying to obtain a post there since 1934, after she returned from Prague to Lviv with the status of the first Galician female Doctor of Philosophy. Stefaniâ Turkevič was elected to the Union of Soviet Composers, and participated as the only female composer at the Second All-Union Congress of Soviet Composers (Kiev), on 28 March – 5 April 1940, alongside her male Lviv-based colleagues. Obviously, this means that the new Soviet government recognized her as a composer, which could have been the key to her career success; but Stefaniâ Turkevič retreated into near-silence. In 1940, she finished her *Sùita na Ukraïns'ki temi* [Suite on Ukrainian Themes for Piano] and during the Soviet (to 1941) and subsequent Nazi occupation (1941–1944), she did not compose a single piece, working only as a teacher. In the spring of 1944 she left Ukraine forever, theoretically voluntarily, but in fact it was forced, since this was the only way to avoid the reprisals that would most likely be applied to Stefaniâ Turkevič and her husband; and even if the family had survived, they would have hardly been able to engage in professional activities, if they had continued to avoid cooperation with the authorities.

#### CAUSES AND SYMPTOMS OF STEFANIÂ TURKEVIČ'S PERSONAL TRAUMA

Stefaniâ Turkevič left Ukraine among a large group of Galicians who fled from the Soviet power. Like others, her family moved towards the eastward-advancing American and British forces, which were Soviet allies in the fight against Nazism. The family spent the final year of the war in bombed Vienna, and after that they were sent to a displaced persons camp in Villach. This is where Stefaniâ Turkevič's emigrant story took an unexpected turn, separating her from both her relatives and the diaspora community. Through his brother's contacts, Stefaniâ Turkevič's husband, Narciz Luk'ânovič, received a doctor's position in the Polish II Corps under British command. This gave the family the right to immigrate to the United Kingdom in the autumn of 1946 among the first wave of post-war immigrants, which not only allowed

them to avoid long years of living in displaced persons camps, but also served as a huge advantage for the family, since it provided Narciz Luk'ânovič with a quick start and became the key to his successful career as a practicing psychiatrist and scientist in the United Kingdom.

The first five years in Great Britain (1946–1951) Stefaniâ Turkevič mostly devoted to arranging family life and raising her youngest daughter. One can assume that existential tasks, in other words, satisfying basic needs, may have, to some degree, drowned out her feelings of loss of her past life. It is also likely that the growing success of her husband's career, which meant the stabilisation of the family after experiencing a period of turbulence, also, to some extent, moderated her reaction to the loss of her previous professional life.<sup>2</sup> We can speculate that, against the backdrop of her husband's professional successes, Turkevič's professional lack of fulfilment may have seemed insignificant. In societal discourse at the time about the migrants' success (or lack of it), only men were measured; women's achievements remained invisible within their primarily domestic roles.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, British post-war society was still structured in such a way that middle-class married women with children were not expected to work.<sup>4</sup> And yet, the more reasons Stefaniâ Turkevič had from a social point of view to be identified as a successful immigrant case, the more she must have felt like a bird locked in a golden cage and the stronger was the feeling of her personal trauma, caused by cultural bereavement, which over time arguably became the underlying trigger for her actions and the key to understanding her migrant creativity.

When the family's financial and housing situation improved so much that they were able to afford their own house and a piano, Stefaniâ Turkevič returned to composing music, and simultaneously began to promote her music by submitting works directly to the leading British music promotion organizations. First of all, she submitted her Symphony No. 2 (1952), the first work she completed since arriving in Britain and the first major work to have broken her creative silence under Soviet rule, to the Society for the Promotion

<sup>2</sup> In 1955, Narciz Luk'ânovič was appointed a clinical psychiatrist at Barrow Hospital (Barrow Gurney, North Somerset), previously awarded conjointly by the Royal College of Physicians of London and the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Before that he had worked as a medical superintendent at a neuropsychiatric unit for the rehabilitation of Polish soldiers in Brighton (1947–1951), a medic at the clinic of the Relief Society for Poles in London (1951–1952), and a registrar at the Barrow Hospital in Bristol (1952–1955).

<sup>3</sup> This trend continues even today, as Bridget Anderson notes, as the migrant clichés such as “the good citizen,” “the non-citizen,” and “the failed citizen” are male dominated (Anderson 2013, 7).

<sup>4</sup> See Holdsworth 1989 and Howarth 2019.

of New Music (SPNM). According to the documents in the SPNM archive, the reviewers accepted the symphony for performance, but it seems that the piece was never performed in Britain.<sup>5</sup> There are no comments on this matter in the society's documents; a possible explanation for this oddity is found in Stefanià Turkevič's letter to her friend Vira Vovk: "My symphony received positive reviews, but it is too big and too long to be performed, they want something smaller in cast and volume" (Vovk 1992, 8).

Not achieving the performance of her music through the SPNM, in 1956 she switched her efforts to the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) Third Programme (the station playing classical music). On the advice of the one of most powerful British impresarios Emmie Tillett, who ran the Wigmore Hall, Turkevič sent them the scores of her *Symphoniette* [author's spelling – M. R.] and Quartet.<sup>6</sup> Having received an official BBC rejection, signed by Harry Croft-Jackson (Music Programme Organiser), dated 29 April 1957 (BBC WAC, 38/M/HC-J), Turkevič then sent the score of her ballet *The Girl with the Withered Hands* (1957) to the same address. This time she received a more encouraging reply: Lionel Salter, Head of Music Production for Television, suggested that her music could be performed as an orchestral work, which Turkevič readily considered as a viable opportunity, but having adapted her score accordingly, alas, a year later, the work was again rejected by Harry Croft-Jackson, on 17 June 1958 (BBC WAC, RCONT10, 38/M/HC-J).

Simultaneously with the submissions to the SPNM and the BBC, Stefanià Turkevič joined the Royal Society of Female Musicians, with her election dated 24 July 1957.<sup>7</sup> However, having analysed the minutes of the society's annual reports, I found that Turkevič did not seem to take part in any activity organized by the Society. We could speculate that her apparent indifference stemmed from her greater involvement in musical events organized by the British cell of the Ukrainian diaspora, with which, perhaps, Turkevič still hoped to revive professional ties lost due to the acceleration of her immigration process. In 1957, she accompanied singer Oleg Nižankiv's'kij and violinist Aristid Virsta at several concerts: in Bedford, 5 October, St. Peter's Hall; London, 6 October, St. Pancras Town Hall; Bradford, 13 October, Co-operative Hall; Coventry, 27 October, Courtaulds Club; and Manchester, 10 November, Houldsworth Hall (Holovna Uprava ObVU 1957, 1957a, 1957b, 1957c). As a soloist Stefanià

<sup>5</sup> Archive of the Society for the Promotion of New Music (SPNM). Fond CS/1, Submissions by composers in response to the SPNM for works, 1947–1995, No. 1228.

<sup>6</sup> BBC Written Archives Centre (BBC WAC). Fond RCONT10, Composer Miscellaneous Contributor section, 38/M/SVG.

<sup>7</sup> Royal Society of Female Musicians Archive (SWM), S. W. M. Members. Elected & Resigned from 1920 to 1960.

Turkevič played only once: on 2 February 1958 she performed her *Variations on a Ukrainian Theme* at Hammersmith Hall in London (Holovna Uprava SUB 1958). And yet, we can see in hindsight that, even if she had aligned herself more closely with the Ukrainian émigré cultural organization, her participation in diaspora events would have done nothing to further her career as a serious composer in Britain. If anything, it may have distracted her from building a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with the Royal Society of Women Musicians at the initial stage of their cooperation.

In 1959, she submitted to the BBC Scherzo for piano and two children's nursery rhymes *When I Was a Little Boy* and *Bless You, Bless You* and followed these up with her *Fantasy* for double string quintet in 1961 (BBC WAC, RCONT10, 38/M/HC-J), but, as in all previous cases, she failed to have any of her works seriously considered for performance in Britain. Turkevič relied on using what seemed deceptively like an "open door" method, possibly trusting that all submissions would be treated equally. But perusal of the lists of names of composers who succeeded using this apparently open method of solicitation makes it obvious that the BBC did not typically collaborate with "outsiders" or unknown names, commissioning works only by relatively senior, established composers. For the tenth anniversary of the Third Programme in 1956, when she submitted her work for the first time, the BBC commissioned works from relatively senior names; six British composers: Kenneth Leighton, Phyllis Tate, Peter Racine Fricker, Anthony Milner, Alun Hoddinott, and Michael Tippett; and five Europeans: Boris Blacher, Jacques Ibert, Vagn Holmboe; Goffredo Petrassi, and Andrzej Panufnik (Carpenter and Doctor 1997, 162). The situation was no different in the SPNM. Having examined the SPNM Published Recommended List for 1952, when Turkevič submitted her Symphony No. 2, and the lists from the next few years, it can be concluded that preference was given to young, mainly male composers, such as Alan Bush, John Lambert, Richard Rodney Bennett, Cornelius Cardew, Alexander Goehr, Peter Maxwell Davies, Stephen Dodgson, and Malcolm Williamson; an exception is Elizabeth Maconchy, whose *Theme and Variations for Violin and Cello* was also listed in 1953 (Wolf 2013, 60–61). It is hard not to suspect that her submissions were regarded less favourably because she was an unknown woman composer with an Eastern European name that might have even been misinterpreted as Russian. Even with the many barriers existing in post-war British musical circles towards both migrants and women composers, the style of Turkevič's Symphony No. 2 more than anything else, worked against its composer finding a sympathetic audience in Britain: "The Second Symphony [...] in terms of style, is a colossal step backward compared to the First [...] It could be attributed to an average Soviet composer or to the style of the previous era" (Pavlišin 2004, 57). It is

reasonable to assume that the rejection of this symphony was linked to the British musical establishment's pervasive disdain for "socialist realism," despite the irony of Turkevič's personal orientation as an anti-Bolshevik composer. In the 1950s, BBC music staff's reaction to works that contained at least the slightest hint of Soviet conformism (even if these judgments, as in Turkevič's case, were erroneous) was standardised and very unambiguous. Let us, at least, remember the verdict by the BBC's Director of Music, Eric Warr, regarding Shostakovich's *The Song of the Forests*: "simple stadium music to set to words celebrating the progress of Soviet forestry" (Fairclough 2007, 280).

Another question is why Stefaniâ Turkevič, having received these repeated refusals, continuously tried the same approach, while ignoring the potential for collaborations with local performing groups, at least in those places where she lived for a while – Bristol (1952–1962), and then Belfast (1962–1972). I will assume that, like other exiles, she was in what has become known as "a garrison situation," in which attitudes towards an unfamiliar environment quite likely stemmed both from her sense of exclusiveness and superiority on the one hand (the natural consequence of her high social standing in Galicia), and from fear and insecurity on the other. "For by definition, while a garrison ostensibly guarantees the isolation and exclusivity of those inside, it also emphasizes the fact that there are threats, real or imaginary, from without, and except for the more insensitive of its inhabitants, a great deal of rationalizing about their vulnerable situation must have gone on inside" (Dahlie 2014, 11). Displaced people are forced to start from scratch in order to re-build the social status they had enjoyed at home. On the one hand, these people will experience bewilderment and confusion when faced with their new social and cultural environment; on the other, they may continue to feel entitled to their former sense of exclusivity and superiority based on their achievements in the pre-migrant life. Having been born into one of the richest and most educated Lviv families, and having been surrounded since childhood by the flower of Galician cultural society, in Britain, Stefaniâ Turkevič may have naively relied on a straightforward method of self-promotion, assuming that the high quality of her work would speak for itself. With an active sponsor – Emmie Tillett, for instance, who was billed as a high-level professional patron – she could have made progress. But left to promote her music alone, she stood very little chance of success. To coin a British phrase, success rarely only comes from "what you know," but relies heavily on "who you know."

The setbacks that Turkevič had faced were, I contend, partly due to a broader issue of unfavourable social climate for women composers in Britain at the time, where women were still expected to perform traditional roles as wives and mothers, though, in this regard, Ukraine lagged even further

behind Britain, despite the Soviet Union's declared openness to women's higher education and professional aspirations. On the reality of "gender equality" in creative fields in Ukraine at that time Iryna Tukova notes: "Until the last third of the 20th century the profession 'composer' (and indeed 'film director') was traditionally considered more particularly male. Women composers were considered an exception rather than the rule" (Tukova 2022, 117). Indeed, Turkevič's departure from Ukraine in 1944 left a void in the field of female composition; this gap in Ukrainian culture remained until the 1960s, when Lesâ Dičko (born 1939) began to gain recognition. Meanwhile, in Britain, several women composers of Turkevič's generation – including Elisabeth Lutyens (1906–1983), Grace Williams (1906–1977), Elizabeth Maconchy (1907–1994), and Imogen Holst (1907–1984), were making significant contributions to the post-war British music, with achievements comparable to those of established male composers. For example, between 1960 and 1973, eight new Lutyens' works were commissioned and premiered by the BBC. In 1963, she received a cash award for composition from the Phoenix Trust; in 1970, she was awarded the City of London Midsummer Award for services to music (Roma 2006, 62–63). In 1953, Elizabeth Maconchy won the London Country Council Prize for her orchestral work *The Thames*. In 1955, the BBC featured her six quartets in a programme devoted to contemporary composers (Roma 2006, 64, 79).

It is an incontrovertible fact that, compared with her British contemporaries, Turkevič was at a significant disadvantage. As a mature migrant, she did not have the same opportunity to build essential professional networks during her studies in Britain, unlike her British peers who were graduates of the Royal College of Music and other British conservatoires. Furthermore, certain professional opportunities were simply unavailable to Turkevič as a migrant, given the nationalist policies promoted by the British musical establishment after the Second World War (Lew 2017; Scheduling 2018). Specifically, as a migrant composer, Turkevič could not join the Guild of British Composers, as Elizabeth Maconchy had, nor could she bring leading figures from the male musical establishment into her circle, as Elisabeth Lutyens had done through her Composer's Concourse, founded in 1953. Likewise, it was unlikely that Turkevič would have been able to assume the role of artistic director of the Aldeburgh Festival, a position given to Imogen Holst in 1956 after years of working as Benjamin Britten's assistant. While native composers enjoyed certain advantages unavailable to migrants, the harsh reality for all was that gaining a foothold in the British music scene required women composers to be exceptionally proactive: "She [Elizabeth Maconchy – M. R.] had never felt prejudice toward the performance of student compositions at the RCM, nor had she felt any discrimination because

she was a woman. However, once out of the academy, Maconchy discovered there would be no performances of her works unless she sought them” (Roma 2006, 78). The constant professional failures Turkevič had faced were deeply distressing for her and compounded the emotional toll of her displacement. In a letter to a close friend Vira Vovk from 1954, she wrote with raw vulnerability: “With indescribable anguish and nostalgia for the past, I seek justification for my life in music” (Vovk 1992, 7).

It is also true that she experienced bewilderment and confusion, not understanding who her audience was, whom she needed to impress, and what the social conventions were regarding self-promotion in this alien cultural environment, which was a consequence of being in a state of “in-betweenness,” which also “determines the quality of displacement” (Soroka 2012, 7). We can clearly see that Turkevič attempted to adjust to her new cultural environment, as evidenced by her writing works based on lyrics by English writers (for example, *Triptych*, women’s choir with piano on lyrics by Stella Benson, William Barnes, and Robert Louis Stevenson; a song *Sweet and Low* to lyrics by Alfred Tennyson), replacing Ukrainian opera librettos with ballet plots in English. But all these attempts were, in fact, just a protective façade against the fact that she still consoled herself with false hopes of returning to Ukraine or at least being brought back to Ukraine as a Ukrainian composer, so she was never able – or did not allow herself, which is also possible – to fully settle on a new cultural side. After thirteen years of living in Britain, being a wife of a well-respected doctor of the Barrow Hospital, in a letter to her friend Turkevič wrote: “We are also going to buy a house in Bristol, although my whole soul protests against this, because I feel that I do not belong here, I will not put down roots, but there is no other way out, I will have to die in a foreign land” (Vovk 1992, 9).

Regarding the exile’s yearning for return, Marc Robinson notes: “Few exiles, no matter how fully they assimilate into new societies, ever succeed in muffling their own persistent questions about what is going on ‘back home’, and what it would feel like to see for themselves” (Robinson 1994, xix). Sentimental attraction to home, which is a natural reaction to its loss, because, as we know, we begin to value something much more when we are deprived of it, is also a form of psychological defence against the traumatic phenomenon of exile. As long as home, even in the form of a distant memory, is preferable for the exile to a new setting which they disdain or even hold in contempt, the exile is not deprived of their status of an exile, which, paradoxically, they value and carefully nurture because, for them, integration to a new society means reconciliation with the fate of forced displacement. Dahlie bears the same idea in mind:

Exile is a step which both in its genesis and in its unfolding is irreversible, for there is a self-fulfilling paradox which attends this term: as long as the dislocated individual continues to be at odds with both the world he has rejected and the one he has moved into, he remains spiritually and intellectually an exile; if he returns permanently to his homeland, he can in retrospect be seen as having been either an expatriate or an émigré; and if he becomes totally integrated into his adopted society, he would in that respect become indistinguishable from that country's indigenous writers and thereupon cease to be an exile. Strictly speaking, however, these are all theoretical situations, for in practice the exile never goes home and he never attains a completely total integration (Dahlie 2014, 4).

For Turkevič to have been successful in the British music community it would have been essential for her to understand and accept the new cultural reality, because it was not words or genres that caused the failure of her music; most likely, and in addition to the other cultural factors complicating fair evaluation of her music, it was her overtly conservative (indeed, rather old-fashioned) style, combining adherence to the stylistic idiom of late nineteenth-century Romanticism and her adherence to Slavic folk music in the old "national" style. Those works she submitted to the BBC and the SPM – *Symphony No. 2*, *Symphoniette*, *Quartet*, *Scherzo for piano* and the two children's nursery rhymes – were written in exactly this style. Such submissions were inevitably doomed to fail, in the conditions of the actively developing avant-garde in British musical art of the 1950–1960s and the prejudices of the Cold War, considering – rightly or wrongly – such music through the prism of Soviet socialist realism.

## TWICE AN EXILE

It would be a mistake to say that Turkevič's sense of uprootedness was caused solely by her departure from her homeland, since at the same time thousands of Ukrainians were also abroad, and they shaped Ukraine beyond its geographical borders, zealously standing for the preservation of national traditions. I assume that the more significant traumatic catalyst was the fact that she found herself alienated from the Ukrainian community abroad, and was marginalized by them too as a composer, against the backdrop of the inability to return to her homeland or have any professional relationship with the mainland Ukraine.

Taking into account Stefaniâ Turkevič's previous experience of living in a foreign cultural environment and how she dealt with cultural loss, which

is undoubtedly relevant when assessing personal trauma (Eisenbruch 1991; Bhugra et al. 2010), it is important to note that living first in Berlin (1927–1929), and then in Prague (1929–1934), she was not truly in an alien cultural context, since Galicia was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918. Moreover, German was her second native language, while on arrival in Britain she knew little or no English. Already having a high level of social mobility in Germany and Czechoslovakia, she was an established member of the Ukrainian community, surrounded abroad by participants in the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921 who emigrated after its failure, one of whom was her first husband, the Ukrainian painter and graphic artist Robert Lisovs'kij (1893–1982).<sup>8</sup> Secondly, it is no less important that, while staying in Germany and Czechoslovakia, she continued to remain a part of Galician musical life, freely coming to Ukraine to visit her relatives and friends.

A well-established diaspora network made it possible for Galician musicians to move freely in the interbellum period between the Western European centres of Ukrainianism, which were Prague, Berlin, and Paris. Many Galician musicians lived in Prague and studied both at the Prague Conservatory and Ukrainian diaspora institutions such as the Ukrainian Free University and the Mihajlo Drahomanov Ukrainian Pedagogical Institute. Mikola Kolessa (1925–1931), Roman Šimovič (1929–1933), and Evgen Cegel's'kij (1933–1937) studied at the Prague Conservatory at the same time as Turkevič studied composition at the Prague Conservatory with Otakar Šin and Vítězslav Novák (1930–1933). Her sister, singer Īrena Turkevič-Martinec', was also living in Prague with her husband, who was a prominent figure in the Ukrainian émigré community in Prague. Īrena was deeply engaged in the cultural and social life of the Ukrainian community, while Stefaniâ, though less active due to the demands of caring for her young daughter, made a point of attending her sister's concerts and events where her first husband, Robert Lisovs'kij, participated as a lecturer. Compared to her male Galician counterparts, Turkevič's works were rarely performed in Prague. Nevertheless, her first String Quartet was performed at a concert of graduates of the Prague Conservatory in 1933, and her song *Koli ò teper* [When and Now] at one of the concerts organized by the Ukrainian diaspora in 1934.

<sup>8</sup> They married in 1925 in Lviv. At that time Robert Lisovs'kij was a student of the Berlin Academy of Arts. In 1926, Stefaniâ Turkevič had her first daughter, Zoâ, and moved with her to Berlin in 1927. There she studied at the Berlin University of the Arts under Franz Schreker. In 1929, her husband got a position as professor of Graphics at the Ukrainian Studio of Plastic Art in Prague, the brainchild of the Ukrainian Free University, and the family moved to Prague. In 1934, Stefaniâ Turkevič came back to Lviv for a while, due to her daughter's weak health. Separation caused a natural end of the marriage. Turkevič remarried in 1937 to Narciz Luk'ânovič.

In Britain, Turkevič was isolated from the diaspora community, firstly, as already mentioned, due to her accelerated immigration process, and then because the British branch of the Ukrainian diaspora community, created after the Second World War, did not pay much attention to her works, being more interested in her as an accompanist for Ukrainian vocalists and instrumentalists in popular concerts. Such neglect, on the one hand, can be explained by the peripheral status of the newly created British branch of the Ukrainian diaspora, which was significantly inferior, both in terms of financial capabilities and established networking, relative to the diasporas in the United States and Canada. It is for this reason that many of Turkevič's Lviv colleagues, who, like her, ended up in exile – Zinovij Lis'ko (1895–1969), Vasil' Vitvic'kij (1905–1999), Âroslav Barnič (1896–1967), and Bogdan Púrko (1906–1953), as well as her brother, conductor Lev Turkevič (1901–1961), and sister, singer Ārena Turkevič-Martinec' (1899–1983) – emigrated there. Another reason, more specific, is the demand for folklore and mass, amateur culture among the post-war Ukrainian diaspora, which fought for preservation of national and cultural authenticity and wanted to slow down the acculturation, which is inevitable in migration, as much as possible.

Thus, at a concert held during the First Convention of Ukrainian Artists and Writers, held in Toronto on 3–5 July 1954, the most significant and massive cultural event of the Ukrainian diaspora since its resettlement in Western countries from displaced persons camps after the end of the Second World War, vocal, chamber-instrumental, and folk ballet numbers were performed, with the dominance of vocal music in eighteen numbers out of a total of thirty-two. Among the works of Ukrainian composers, non-immigrants and immigrants alike, preference was given to works inspired by Ukrainian folklore and having a patriotic theme (for example, Mikola Fomenko *Lŭbit' Ukraïnu* [Love Ukraine], Volodimir Grudin *Poema na ukraïns'kì temi* [Poem on Ukrainian Themes] for violin and piano). A special group among the performed works (six out of eighteen performed vocal issues as a whole) consisted of Galician *Strilec'kì pisni* [Streltsy Songs]<sup>9</sup>, which caused sharp criticism from the so-called “Eastern” critics among the diaspora (Volinák 1954). I will quote the response to this criticism from Zinovij Lis'ko, a critic and a composer well-known within the diaspora, then living in Munich:

Strilec'kì pisni was well known and popular in Galicia, both among the intelligentsia and among the largest masses of the people, who treated

<sup>9</sup> These songs were created in the legion of *Organizaciâ ukraïns'kih nacionalistiv* [The Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists] and *Ukraïns'ka povstans'ka armîâ* [The Ukrainian Insurgent Army] during the national liberation struggle.

it as a legacy of the liberation struggles, with love and pietism. [...] Even if these songs were really worthless from an artistic point of view, then the very fact that the compatriots of one Ukrainian region consider them to be certain national relics requires some restraint and delicacy in expressions, especially from people who repeatedly assure of their love for Galicians (Lis'ko 1954, 3).

Cultural events were an important source of income for the political apparatus of the Ukrainian diaspora, so the organisers were forced to follow the lead of the public and take care not to alienate their audience, focusing primarily on immigrants from the western regions of Ukraine, who constituted the dominant majority among the Ukrainian post-war migrants. Such a cultural policy not only made it possible to keep the widest possible population close, but also to maintain the fire of national struggle within this society, which was, no less than financial, an essential condition for the existence of the apparatus of the Ukrainian emigration in exile. While Stefaniâ Turkevič's Lviv colleagues, who like her ended up in emigration, fell into amateurism and populism, serving the diaspora's needs in the form of easily digestible light classical music, she was the only one from the post-war Ukrainian emigration who managed to preserve and develop the ideals of the pre-war Galician (Ukrainian) school of composition in exile, which was a manifestation of the loyalty to the strengths of the original homeland (Duffy 2017), another symptom of traumatic exile. If, instead of writing symphonies, operas, and ballets, Stefaniâ Turkevič had tried to achieve success as a composer of straightforward patriotic songs or writing works for bandura orchestras, as other did, for instance, Vasil' Vitvic'kij (1905–1999), Āroslav Barnič (1896–1967), and Bogdan Pŭrko (1906–1953), her story might have turned out differently. The former Galician residents could have become Turkevič's potentially widest audience, affording her a unique and privileged position as “their” composer. However, Turkevič did not consider it necessary to follow such a course, and in any case, judging by what we know about her, such an appeal to “classics for the masses” may not have attracted her.

The only performance of Stefaniâ Turkevič's work organised by the Ukrainian diaspora was the result of the closest family connection: her sister Ārena Turkevič-Martinec' staged her children's opera *Serce Oksani* [Heart of Oksana] by The Ukrainian Children's Theatre in Winnipeg. This production was supported by the Women's Association of the Canadian League for Ukraine's Liberation. The director and artistic manager was Ārena Turkevič-Martinec'. Inspired by the success of the production, Turkevič composed three ballets – *The Pearls* (1960), *Mavka* [The Forest Nymph] (1964), and *Scarecrow*

(1969), and two more children's operas – *The Young Devil* (1971) and *A Vegetable Plot* (1971), but none of them were ever performed. To speculate on yet another “might-have-been,” Turkevič could have perhaps enjoyed a more successful career in the West, had she not followed her husband to Britain but instead accompanied her sister to Canada.

### VOICING GRIEF

In the previous subsection, I pointed out examples of reconstructing the traditions of the pre-war Galician school of composition in Turkevič's migrant works; in this subsection, “voicing the experience of grief” is a way of embodying personal exile trauma, which not only points to the past, but also interprets the present: what was happening with the composer when she was composing these works. Firstly, I focus on the ballet *The Girl with the Withered Hands* (1957). I speculate that this ballet libretto, created by the composer, is largely autobiographical. The composer sees herself as a girl with withered hands who is rejected by the crowd for her otherness, and faith in the Virgin Mary helps the girl cope with the sadness of loneliness and despondency. “Belief and comfort from participation in religious gatherings,” according to Marice Eisenbruch, are the “antidotes to the person's cultural bereavement” (Eisenbruch 1991, 674). Turkevič showed the effect of the so-called antidotes on herself in an allegorical form in the ballet. In despair the girl turns to the statue of the Virgin Mary (Nos. 9 and 10 of the ballet score), her hands are healed (No. 11), and she dances “The Dance of Creative Happiness” (No. 12).

Another nuance is that the girl in the ballet is also a creator by profession, like Turkevič, for whom her withered hands were an obstacle to creativity. Immediately after healing, she takes clay from the bottom of the stream with her hands and makes a vase out of it (No. 13). The central allegory of the ballet is also important – withered hands. On the one hand, this is a contextual symbol that is clear from the letter written while she was working on the ballet (7 December 1954): “I apologize for the letter – my finger hurts unbearably – I have a rheumatoid bone tumour – I can not even play” (Vovk 1992, 8). Besides, the hands are also an important symbol in Slavic culture, one of the meanings of which is to emphasize the vital necessity of something or someone. “I feel like I don't have hands” is what they would say if they want to put it shortly. Probably, this necessity for Stefaniâ Turkevič was her native cultural continuity, outside of which she felt incomplete and alone.

Another example is the song *Guculka* [Hutsulka]. This song is a part of the triptych on the words of Vira Vovk, Turkevič's dear friend, but also a Ukrainian writer who emigrated to Brazil; two others are *Večornici* [Evenings]

and *Sribna pisanâ* [A Silver Song]. Stefaniâ Turkevič received the text of this song back in 1953, as reported in a response letter to the poet, but work on it continued for about twenty years, on which Turkevič reports in a letter dated 1 July 1974: “I just got a collection of Carpathian folk melodies from the library here [Cambridge – M. R.] and composed a whole song on your words (‘Hutsulka’)” (Vovk 1992, 9).

The words of “Hutsulka” represent the stylisation of folk poetry, with the reproduction of Ukrainian symbols, for example, “soničko pisanko” (“pysanka” is a traditional Ukrainian painted egg with geometric and floral designs) and “gori trizubati” (the “trizub,” or the trident, is a symbol of the Ukrainian coat of arms). The lyrics of the song do not have a clearly defined meaning; they are a series of poetic metaphors and associated symbols. It is only at the end of the song that a specific sentence appears – “Tugu neopisanu na čžžini nošu [I feel an indescribable longing in a foreign country],” which can be considered not only the central semantic idea of this song, but it also constructs the polyphonic narrative of how Stefaniâ Turkevič felt during thirty-one years in exile, and the feelings of grief and loss with which she passed away. The composer’s tombstone in Cambridge depicts a skein of cranes in flight. This poetic image was taken from the song “Can you hear, my brother?” (words by Bogdan Lepkij, music by Levko Lepkij), symbolizing the migrant’s fate in general and the Stefaniâ Turkevič’s case, in particular.

## CONCLUSION

The Second World War and Stalin’s terror have led to the displacement of millions of Soviet residents to the West, and Ukrainians made up a significant number of them. Most Ukrainian musicians found employment in serving the ideals and goals of the Ukrainian diaspora, aimed at preserving their national culture in exile, but there were also those who, for various reasons, found themselves in immigration as a lonely exile, separated not only from the mainland Ukraine, but also from the diaspora networking, which provoked the decline of their careers. One of these exiles was Stefaniâ Turkevič, Ukraine’s first professional female composer, and the only female composer in the post-war Ukrainian émigré community worldwide. Forced emigration was a traumatic experience that she has never come to terms with, and male dominance in her life and marginalisation within the diaspora community in Britain served as additional catalysts for her personal immigrant trauma. Her migrant works are the poetic “testimonies” of her personal trauma as a composer in exile, which embodied the reconstruction of the stylistic dogmas of the past, the voicing of grief, and the theme of homecoming.

Responding to the research questions posed at the outset, it should be emphasized that my approach to Turkevič's migrant output differs significantly from the one dominant in Ukrainian / US musicology (Pavlišin 2004; Karas' 2012; Beregova 2022; Batstone 2022). According to them, the only reason for Turkevič's failure as an emigrant composer is that the Soviet government banned her in Ukraine. True, her works were both blacklisted within the Soviet Union and not approved by the Soviet organizations responsible for selecting scores and recordings to be sent abroad as representatives of Soviet culture. But the advantages of that support should not be overestimated; among Turkevič's Soviet Ukrainian contemporaries, only Boris Lâtošins'kij was awarded an official visit to Great Britain, as part of the first return visit on 8–22 May 1961, within the British-Soviet state cultural exchange campaign, as part of the warming of relations between the USSR and the Western world. Elizabeth Maconchy, one of the hosts of the Soviet delegation, subsequently described it as "a chance for a holiday" (Maconchy 1961, 12). Already from this comment, one can guess the output of the visit, which did not bring significant benefits either in the promotion of Lâtošins'kij's own music in Britain, or Ukrainian music in general. In fact, Shostakovich was the only really successful Soviet musical import to the West, and his success stemmed not from the usual official channels of selection but rather from the independent championing of his music by powerful musicians in Europe and the United States, from the earliest conductors who performed his symphonies such as Bruno Walter and Nikolai Malko to Otto Klemperer, Arturo Toscanini and Henry Wood. We cannot, therefore, attribute Turkevič's lack of professional success in Britain to the absence of Soviet support, the effectiveness of which was in any case extremely limited in Britain. We need instead to probe more deeply into the psychological aspects of her apparently poorly managed career, to find answers to the question why such an accomplished and experienced composer failed, time and again, to make any impact on British musical life bar a few small-scale concerts where she performed as an accompanist. These repeated errors of judgement, combined with a failure to connect effectively with musicians in Britain who might have supported her and offered sound advice, speak to a deep schism between Turkevič's concept of what a composer should expect and how they should conduct their careers, and the reality of artistic careerism in Britain, where personal connections were paramount, and the ability to change one's style in accordance with changing fashions was an invaluable, if cynical, advantage. The forces of globalisation in contemporary art over the past two decades have shifted the pendulum towards "the foregrounding of the omnipresent musical basis of native culture," which now helps migrant composers to distinguish

themselves within new cultural landscapes (Dubinets 2021, 32). In post-war Britain, however, this emphasis – rooted in Turkevič’s sense of traumatic displacement and deep homesickness – ultimately worked against her. The British musical establishment was entirely intolerant of any migrant composers’ attempts to impose a “Little Homeland” on England, as it prioritized the protection of its own cultural identity in the context of the large influx of refugees from Nazi-occupied territories and the Soviet Union. As Ralph Vaughan Williams cautioned Austrian refugee-composers in 1942, it would be unacceptable to “force a ‘Little Austria’ on England – keeping itself apart from the ‘untouchables’ and having its own musical life without any reference to the life going on around” (Cobbe 1996, 95). This harsh warning against a perceived failure to integrate could also apply to Turkevič, who, as a migrant composer, also depended very much on the artistic sponsorship she sought in the UK to integrate within the broader British musical community to advance her career.

Having devoted her work to the fundamental mission of the post-war Ukrainian diaspora, which did not benefit Stefaniâ Turkevič as a composer, she failed to take her place in the British musical culture, since her compositional style was inspired not by the ever-changing cultural context in which she lived, but rather that in which she was raised as a person and a composer, and that made her lack of demand among the British music reviewers inevitable. Framing her career failure as the reflexes of a composer suffering from acute trauma helps us avoid harsh judgements about her failures of judgement and allows us to understand, with greater historical empathy, her instinctive responses to this alien cultural environment, where she found herself forever positioned as an outsider, never a participant.

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МАРИЈА РОМАНЕЦ

МИГРАЦИЈЕ И ТРАУМА:

УКРАЈИНСКА КОМПОЗИТОРКА У БРИТАНИЈИ, 1946–1977

(РЕЗИМЕ)

Ова студија бави се композиторком Стефанијом Туркевич, која је емигрирала у Велику Британију након Другог светског рата (1946) у оквиру великог таласа Украјинаца који су бежали од Стаљинових репресија. Присилна емиграција оставила је неизбрисив траг у њеној свести и у великој мери обликовала њену неуспешну каријеру у егзилу, доводећи на крају до непрепознавања Туркевичеве као ствараоца. Главни циљ студије је анализа психолошких аспеката наизглед лошег управљања каријером, како би се пронашли одговори на питања о томе зашто тако искусна композиторка није успела да заузме своје место у британској музичкој култури и зашто је као аутор остала непризната чак и унутар украјинске дијаспоре у Британији, с изузетком од неколико мањих музичких догађаја у којима је учествовала.

Представљено истраживање део је већег пројекта који се бави украјинским емигрантским композиторима у Западној Европи након Другог светског рата, сагледаним у контексту музичке културе земаља домаћина и украјинске дијаспоре. Основна идеја истраживања је указивање на дубоки раскол који је постојао између очекивања друштва, како у дијаспори, тако и у заједницама земаља домаћина, у односу на композитора-мигранта. Случај Стефаније Туркевич јасно илуструје овај раскол; њен неуспех у каријери био је одраз акутне трауме коју је претрпела услед присилне емиграције.

Подаци коришћени за ово истраживање прикупљени су у британским архивима, као и путем интервјуа с најстаријом кћерком Стефаније Туркевич, Зојом Лисовском-Нижанковском, који је вођен 28. и 29. августа 2023. године.