

**CHARACTERISTICS OF MUSICAL LANGUAGE
IN THE COMPOSITION *CHANTS OF METOHIIJA*
BY SVETISLAV BOŽIĆ***

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Abstract. *The paper elucidates on the musical language of Svetislav Božić, using the example of his concertino for piano Chants of Metohija, in order to point to certain solutions that give a seal of authenticity to Božić's work. The concertino form is typically an oriental variation of a single lyrical breath, at times singable and danceable at other times, but basically one and the same thought without any prominent dramaturgical contrast; it is a single movement with several lyrical variations. The musical language reveals a distinctive predominant modal harmonization of the tertian principle in building harmony of neo-romantic and early impressionist provenance, which emerges as a result of building on tradition with a controlled touch of modernity and originality.*

Key words: *Svetislav Božić, harmony, melody, Chants of Metohija*

1. INTRODUCTION

Svetislav D. Božić (1954) is a Serbian composer, music theorist and pedagogue. He graduated from the Academy of Music in Belgrade in 1977, and then received his master's degree in 1979. At the same institution, he successfully developed a career as a music pedagogue and writer of scientific texts in the disciplines of music theory, occasionally giving lectures abroad. In 2015, he was elected a corresponding member, and in 2021, a full member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

The rich creative opus of Božić consists of over 300 compositions of various genres, from solo, chamber, choral, orchestral to vocal-instrumental¹. His compositions have been

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¹ www.svetislavbozic.com/biografija, accessed on February 21, 2023.

performed in 20 countries, and the importance of his work is evidenced by numerous awards, leadership positions in significant events, such as BEMUS and Mokranjčev days, membership in the most important national associations, etc. Božić is also the author of fourteen books, most of which belong to the field of music theory and represent indispensable literature for a better understanding of his work as a whole. His theoretical thought, as well as his compositional creativity, are an inspiration to researchers of various profiles – musicologists, music theorists, pedagogues, composers and other devotees and admirers of musical art².

2. FEATURES OF THE MUSICAL LANGUAGE OF SVETISLAV BOŽIĆ

In the creative oeuvre of this composer, one can see the desire to preserve the national in music, and the composer himself often explained his position on this issue: "We have been taught for decades that the song of our native land, of our own people, is something that should be forgotten, that should be humiliated, ridiculed, which should be left to the immature variety show and trained clowns, who are full of ignorance and, of course, the unlimited support of the puppet-obedient media" (Božić 2005b, 150). In addition to the fact that he strives for his roots, Božić is characterized by a certain amount of reserve towards modern means of expression. Namely, he believes that modernity rests in the continuity of the spirit, in the mental configuration, in the combination of acoustics with all these elements, in that arrangement which is eternally stable and is not at all costs inclined to be dissonant, nor pleasingly consonant, but tends to be one that he simply hears time in that way and actualizes it with his record³. Thoughtfulness, depth of thought and carefully selected musical expression show that Christmas is not too burdened by either the old or the new, that a priori it does not give priority to one or the other, but that it "starts from the totality of the experience that represents the object of musicalization, listening carefully to the acoustics of the space summoned from the collective memory roads of the south, taking care not to damage or change the spiritual content of the traditional model, i.e., its essence, with overly radical, modernist compositional procedures (in the context of the music of the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century) (Stošić 2020, 16–17).

In one of the last conversations, the composer points out that for every artist, creator, it is of great importance to know the basic signals of his musical basin, the melodic, harmonic, and above all the spiritual intonation of his people, which is never unequivocal or one-way: "Being familiar with music of one's people, and then create a new one or conditionally – a new one that preserves the national anthem in its creative core, does not mean being buried in a trench, but suitably equipped to move along the marvelous pattern of artistic offerings, which is a consequence of many overflows and calls. As a long-time professor of several musical disciplines that all flow into an endless river of harmonious thinking and perception, I could not remain untouched by great authors and works from the world's artistic heritage – not only musical. A musician hears music in painting, literature,

² In 2018, a round table entitled Rosary of Svetoslav Božić was held, where distinguished experts took part in discussing the creativity of this composer. As a result of the meeting, the collection of works *Rosary of Svetoslav Božić* (edited by Dragana D. Jovanović), Novi Sad, Matica Srpska Library, was published. in 2018

³ From an interview with the composer Svetislav D. Božić in the show "Locked in", RTS's cultural and artistic program, authored by Lidija Božić. The interview is available on the YT channel <https://youtu.be/Ljnc5zNvfPI>, accessed on September 23, 2021.

poetry, architecture. That and many other things determined my compositional style" (Ibid.). A music theoretician and educator J. Jelenković, our composer's daughter, clearly testifies "that the feeling for the Serbian ethos is ontologically engraved in the Božić's artistic being, that the presence of the national idiom is his decisive, representational stylistic trait which has been perpetually reconfirmed, innovated and strengthened due to its frequent reappearance at the level of his creative ideas and procedures over the past thirty years" (Jelenković 2018, 75).

The versatility that the composer insists on offers wide possibilities of understanding and transferring one art into another, as well as transferring the vocal to the instrumental medium. Thus, elements of vocal expression, typical of Byzantine and Serbian music, can also be recognized in the *Chants of Metohija*. Svetislav Božić is one of those composers "who transform folk music, and thus aspects of national culture, into artistic music." Works such as the piano concerts *Chants of Metohija* from 1988, *Raš* mosaic from 1996, *Chants of Bagrdan* from 2000, *Night in Hilandar* from 2010, or the piano suite *Byzantine mosaic in nine paintings* from 2009, certainly lead us to consider him as some kind of contemporary Bartók, which is no doubt a simplified categorization. Božić's position is undeniable that his work belongs to a long chronological line that stretches from Byzantium (in the broadest sense) to the present day" (Mudi 2018, 144).

3. CHANTS OF METOHIJA – FEATURES

The composition *Chants of Metohija* is dedicated to the pianist Danijela D. Karić, the daughter of the famous businessman and politician, Dragomir Karić, and the score was published by the Karić Foundation. The dedication, written by the composer on March 3, 1998, reads: "To dear Danijela, to remind her of native songs".⁴ *Chants of Metohija* were premiered in the Novi Sad Synagogue on September 3, 1998. when Danijela D. Karić performed as a pianist⁵ with the collaboration of the Serbian Chamber Orchestra with the conductor Đorđe Pavlović⁶.

The concertina form (ital. *concertino* – diminutive of *concerto* – concert) is a small-scale concert. The same name is used for the group of soloists in the Baroque concerto grosso and the newer, shorter type of concerto. Concertino can be of an instructive character or intended for concert performance, and is related to recent musical literature (Skovran and Peričić 1986, 272). It is a concerto for a solo instrument and orchestra of a smaller scale and less technical requirements.

For musical analysis, it is especially important to understand the composer's style and the source of his inspiration, and it is important to look back at the motives of the creation and the composer's thoughts about the creation of the piece: to such a spiritually native

⁴ The Karić family is originally from Kosovo and Metohija.

⁵ Aside from the *Chants of Metohija*, the pieces performed at the concert included: Etude no. 7 in F-flat minor (V. Mokranjac), Sonata Lesta (D. Radić), Etude op. 39, in D major (S. Rachmaninoff), Concerto for piano and string orchestra BWV 1052 in D minor (J. S. Bach) and Ne poy, krasavitsa (S. Rachmaninoff). A CD of the concert was published in the same year by PGP RTS.

⁶ The composition was performed several times, both in the country and abroad, and several performances were recorded. One of them was within the authorial concert Enlightenment, which took place in the Hall of the Mitrovica Castle on March 12, 2018, performed by the Orchestra of the Faculty of Arts of Kosovska Mitrovica – Zvečan. A few days later - on Savindan - the piece was performed by the professors of the Faculty of Arts in Priština and their guests as part of the concert with the same name held at Kolarac Endowment in Belgrade.

and precious territory. The melodic material of this piece is almost quotable, so receptive, as if it had been imprinted in our recent Kosovo-Metohija memory for decades⁷. *Chants of Metohija* are my conversation with new aesthetics that reject the signals of national belonging and prevent spiritual joy in art as well. *Chants of Metohija* show that the national substrate in melody and harmony does not have to be dissonant and at all costs false in order to be imprinted in the world of values... *Chants of Metohija* are a signal of my return to the roots, sources and chanting, which is quite sustainable even on a global scale. We don't need to be abstract, nationally disinherited, Esperantized, converted, in order to reach the world stage"⁸. The composer's comment clearly shows his value and artistic attitudes, as well as his attitude towards melody and harmony.

4. ANALYTICAL PRESENTATION

Chants of Metohija comprise several profiles of one and the same lyricism. "It is some kind of oriental variations of a single lyrical breath, at times singable and danceable at other times, but basically the same breath, the same thought without a prominent dramaturgical contrast. In its essence, it is a single movement with several lyrical variations"⁹.

The beginning of the composition bears the marking "Chanting – Raško... calm, monastic". The meditative quality of sound underlying the opening atmosphere of the piece, to put it in Božić's words, on the broad whiteness of the G Mixolydian mode is supported by the staticity of the tonic chord, which is not undermined even by the frequent occurrence of the recognizable sound of the Mixolydian minor seventh. A logically guided, simple melody moving at a gradual pace, with the support points on the T⁷ chord creates an impression of archaism, evoking with its repetition of energy-potent impulses, as well as with discrete decorations (m. 3, 6–7/1), magical, almost ritualistic associations. A pedal on the dominant in the string section (which corresponds to the ison in chanting practice), also represents a strong factor of staticity and modality affirmation. The composer himself talks about the pedal's importance: "the unequivocal power of the underlying pedal tones, those archaic sound carriers on the trail of Byzantine-Raška memory, frees the vertical of tertian structures and leads to the world of perfect consonances, harmonizing energies with the laws of the higher order and obedience" (Božić 2005v, 72). In that context, testifying about his Prelude no. 14, Božić seems to be talking about the very opening of *Chants of Metohija*: "in the color of old gold, with a distant reflection of the domes of Byzantine churches, discernable as bell strikes symbolized by the underlying pedal tones, the Mixolydian plain of the tired, vanished empire announces itself" (Božić 2005v, 75).

The pastoral quality of the impressive melodic line (m. 2–3/1) with varied repetition (m. 5–6/1) and intensified rhythmic development (small triplets) is brought by the flutes as a peculiar counterpart to the shepherd's flute, backed up by the piano and oboes in the first, and the clarinets in the second phrase. A broad Mixolydian modal framework based on a single tonic chord, without changing the harmonic rhythm, gets darkened by the

⁷ Remark: the interview took place in 2019 (<https://www.bastabalkana.com/2019/03/svetislav-bozic-kompozitor-metohijska-pojanja-su-signal-mog-povratka-korenima/>, accessed on September 23, 2021)

⁸ <https://www.bastabalkana.com/2019/03/svetislav-bozic-kompozitor-metohijska-pojanja-su-signal-mog-povratka-korenima/>, accessed 09/23/2021.

⁹ This is how the composer himself describes concertina form (the interview was held on February 28, 2023 with the idea to clarify certain formal and harmonic aspects of this piece).

Phrygian coloring, with a sound association of the Phrygian major rather than the Phrygian mode in the cadential melodic formula T 9-7-8 (m. 9–10/1). So, it is a change of mode type on the same 'tonic', i.e. a change by way of mutation (Despić 2002, 362). Such a creative process finds a model in the legacy of the 19th century composers of national schools¹⁰ "as a frequent principle of Božić's modal expressive-coloristic code" (Milenković 2018, 190). Regarding the author's style, Božić's words from his *Melancholic Shadows of the Southern Roads* (2005) could be literally transferred here, where the author, testifying about the musical language of his 33 preludes, states that: "most often the modal scale structure is varied by way of keeping the common finalis (often the genus of tonic sonority, too) [which is the case in the given example]. Instead of modulations, mutations are at work... This creates a special field of tension, tension by understanding" (Božić 2005v, 8). Permeating the spiritual, monastic overtones and folk ambient sound simply dazzles and enchants the listener, potentially sending him over to the cliffs and slopes of the Šar mountains, of Prokletije or Paštrik, magical crags of the White Drim and unquenchable lights of our sanctuaries: the monasteries of the Holy Archangels, Visoki Dečani, Pećka Patriarchate, Zočište, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Crna Reka and others, after which Metohija got its name. Božić's reintonation of the pastoral-monastic sound will continue until the last pages of this piece, stimulating the listeners' sensuality and subtly implying our spirituality, ever so indestructible, ever so eternal.

Example 1 (M. 1/1)

The musical score for Example 1 (M. 1/1) is presented in a multi-staff format. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), Oboe/Clarinet (Ob./Cl.), Piano (Piano), Violin (Vn.), Viola (Vl.), and Cello/Double Bass (Vc./Cb.). The score is in common time (C) and begins with a dynamic marking of *p*. The Flute part features a melodic line with a cadential formula T 9-7-8. The Piano part provides a harmonic accompaniment. The Violin, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass parts play sustained chords. At the bottom of the score, a diagram shows the mutation from G: T, with a bracket indicating the interval of a seventh (7) and a downward arrow indicating the fifth (5).

¹⁰ Here we refer primarily to the Russian national school, and it should be emphasized that such tendencies are also noticeable in Božić's other works of strong national orientation and foundation, on a wide line that leads from Byzantium and Athos, over Žiža and Studenica Monasteries, to Kosovo and Metohija, with the constant pulsation of Pan-Slavism, primarily East Slavic spiritual unity.

The musical score consists of five staves: Flute (Fl.), Oboe/Clarinet (Ob. Cl.), Piano (Piano), Violin (Vn.), and Viola/Celli (Vl. Vc. Cb.). The time signature is 2/4. The woodwinds and piano part feature intricate rhythmic patterns with many triplets and trills. The string part consists of sustained chords. At the bottom, there is a trill symbol (T) with a double-headed arrow, and figured bass notation: '3-4-2-3 (II)' and '8-9-7 8 3 3 3 3 3 3 (VIIp)'.

The element of contrast is introduced from measure 13/1 by intensifying the chordal texture with a parallel movement of triads in a fast, half-note harmonic rhythm. A five-measure phrase in the upper line of the chord bundles suggests a Phrygian overtone, whereas the tonal-modal basis remains unshaken with a marked accentuation of the major triad on the G tone, in four out of five measures. The mentioned contrasting phrase actually heralds a strongly contrasting section of the following example with a coloristic treatment of dissonant triadic parallelisms in the piano section without orchestral accompaniment (!). The fluid, seemingly tonally anarchic musical flow of the new ten-measure phrase (from m. 18) has its tonal foundation on the tone of G, as unchanging (mode)tonal support, despite the appearance of successive dissonances and six-measure absence of pulsations of the tonic major chord. The composer here consciously speaks the language of the composers of late Western European romanticism through the use of polar and mediant seventh chords, along with six-four chords as rather unstable forms of consonance, and polarization of the chord relationship $Md < - S$, as well as the appearance of the Lydian triad and the minor dominant, including a notable role of the II degree and its several times repeated plagal harmonic turn with the tonic. Yet, given the fast harmonic tempo, the parallelism of harmony that points to the impressionistic treatment of the vertical aspect, and the dissonance of the musical flow, indicate that the functionality of harmonies is rather theoretical and conditional, with a wider tonal support on the tone of G that frames this episode. Chromatic variants of scale degrees in the mechanism of parallel movement of major and minor triads have a coloristic-expressive role, potentially symbolizing the shimmering, toll and echo of the bells of Metohija shrines.

Example 2 (M. 6/2)

Слободно,
mf

G: T mD m II T mD m II P S m II sm d l mD sm d l mD
 (VII_F)

P II sm⁶d⁶ l VII_F P⁶ II \bar{M} D S m II T mD m II T

In the second part (103-187), a greater degree of contrast is observed, visible in measure 1/8 (marked as *Lyrical, soft*). The airy melodic line in the piano section, in the high register, after the orchestral tutti, is reminiscent of the address of an angel. Also, this part is characterized by a constant rhythmic sixteenth-notes pulse, which is interrupted for a quick moment, by a contrasting, lyrical, singing episode (marked as *Up tempo, sung*). Namely, in the context of expanding the aesthetic panorama of the current musical flow, Božić's "journey" through the diverse and colorful landscapes of Metohija, brings an expressive, sensitive and gentle melody of the original creative imagination in the folklore spirit (m. 1/13). In a similar atmosphere as at the beginning of the piece, but now in a much more pastoral than monastic manner, the flutes present an archaic theme in the register of the second octave, with the prevailing gradual movement along the tones of the lower pentachord of E Aeolian mode. The melodic movement from the VII degree upwards to the finalis (m. 2, 5–6/13) convincingly colors the musical fabric, enhancing the Aeolian aura and archaism. The idyllic, impeccably stylized melody is accompanied by the bassoon counterpoint and a pedal, bagpipe fifth of the clarinet as an unavoidable folklore element in the creativity of the composers of national schools, which stabilizes the modal center. The tonic pedal arranged by the voice of the violins lying on the high pitch of E3, go down by an octave in each subsequent measure of the string section, with its instruments joining in one after the other in the accompaniment, until they reach the tone of E in the double basses, intensifying colorful, but also energetic sound background. At the same time, the role of the oboes is to make persistent pulsations of the seventh of the minor/minor seventh chord of the tonic with an accented syncope in m. 3/13 that supports the syncopation in the flutes' melodic spinning of the theme. The rhythm-imbued seventh of the chord t⁷ additionally imitates the folk overtone suggesting a characteristic folk secundal friction towards the first degree of the soloist melodic line. The harmonic staticity of the described episode which unfolds completely on the t⁷

harmony of the E-Aeolian mode¹¹ indicates that, very much like at the beginning of the piece, the linear element of exposing the idyllic "folk" theme is of primary importance for the composer, while the harmonic element has the accompanying role of providing a coloristic sound support. Obviously, "the role of the 'ethereal and soft sonority' of the minor/ minor seventh chord" suited the composer as an element of mood "for the Orthodox Christian... confession" (Milenković 2018, 187) in the Aeolian "soft... dreamy modality" (Božić 2005v: 80), as the composer perceives it.

A calm, serene, but defiant six-measure melody with elements of heroism (trill accents on the melodic movement IV – III degree in m. 3–4/13) is successively repeated an octave lower in an expressive and dynamic crescendo with an increasingly important role of the string section (from m. 7/13).

Example 3 (1/13)

13 У темпу, напевно...

The musical score for Example 3 (1/13) is in 7/8 time and consists of 13 measures. The tempo is marked 'У темпу, напевно...' (Moderato, cantabile). The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Fag.), Violin (Vn.), Viola (Vl.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The flute part starts with a melodic line marked 'p'. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score is marked with dynamics like 'p' and 'p'.

The playful character of the third part (188m. 1/15, marked *Playful... decisive, but without parody*) resembles the scherzo of the sonata cycle. The composer chooses $\frac{7}{8}$ rhythm characteristic for the south of Serbia (Macedonia) with a 13-measure introduction which brings a strong contrast, serving as a preparation for the appearance of the main theme of this part of the form. Brisk and powerful mixed compound meter ($\frac{7}{8}$) by itself, with pulsations on every eighth note in the entire string section, evokes the folk "colors" and ambiance of the southern Serbian, i.e., Metohijan geographical and spiritual (!) space. Staccato beats on strong parts of a measure in other orchestral sections additionally emphasize the rhythmic "pregnancy" and energy of the new, playfully radiant episode. The harmonic background of the introductory section is conceptually built on the long

¹¹ As compared to the G-Mixolydian mode from the beginning of the piece, E Aeolian mode is a closely related modality, seemingly parallel (which would be E Phrygian mode!), and actually the same mode but for one accidental, similar to the classic I quintal relation.

duration of the minor/minor seventh chord of the tonic, and on repeating the plagal turn $t^7 - VI^5_4$ of the wide field of E-Aeolian modality. The scale passages of the winds section in sixteenth-note movement (from m. 6/15) introduce a deeply charged chant with varied repetitions that will mark the entire subsequent development of the form. Vertical organization of *Chants of Metohija* is based on the traditional varieties of chords of tertian structure. However, with emphasized duration and repetition of the chord VI^5_4 (tones C–F sharp–G) the composer, by his own choice, makes a strong contrast to the previous musical fabric by introducing a new, gently dissonant energy of development¹². The emancipated harmony VI^5_4 with independent quartal dissonance showing no tendency towards resolution, contains a latent quartal structure III^7_4 (G–C–F sharp) in the first inversion. It is the VI degree chord with emancipated quartal dissonance showing no tendency to resolve to a third, i.e. a triad with a fourth instead of a fifth, which can be interpreted as a quartal structure III^7_4 (G–C–F sharp). This type of harmony can be relatively often found in Božić's distant predecessor, – Petar Konjović, who calls such chordal structures "neutral chords". Contrast enhancement of the predominant tertian tissue with a latent quartal structure, gives the described segment of the musical flow a special quality, reflecting a new light on the chord palette.

On the wave of the relativized modal gravity, Božić "carves" the initial theme of the poetic character of folkloric, "almost quotable character". Searching for the possible models of the convincing folklore overtone of Božić's melodic inspiration, we learn the following from the composer: "It seems as if a certain tune from Kosovo and Metohija is quoted; in fact, it is more in the spirit of a quote. Anyone with a spiritual connection, call it gravity, with Metohija, feels that melodiousness, and it sometimes springs out of a person as his own chant; in fact, it comes as a consequence of the spirit of the melodic substance that watches over the Serbian people all the time, and we take over such things, so they look like a quote, which they are not"¹³. With this chant (from m. 1/16) Božić shows a refined sense for the authentic folk overtone, for strongly pronounced folk spirit of the chant's theme that celebrates the folk life of the eternal Metohija spring. And indeed, the melody that Svetislav Božić, a native of Loznica by birth, and spiritually a Serb of broad orthodox format and a cosmopolitan, feels and weaves, looks like a quote, in no way different from the original folklore melody, with an authentic expression of the Metohija folk soul. Spelt out by the piano, without orchestral accompaniment, using modally diatonic style, in a neoclassical form of the small period 4+4, the first sentence of the chant melodically ends on the second degree. The harmonic cadence brings a Doric overtone of the half-cadential formula $S^6_5 - VII$, and it is due to its apparently dominant relation that one cannot resist the impression of a transformed stereotypical Mokranjac's cadential turn $DD - D$, only dressed in a different attire, as other perpetrators of Mokranjac's tradition used to do. The second sentence, made more complex by bass chromatics and dissonant chords of the Phrygian and Lydian sixth chord, brings an authentic Phrygian turn $Fd 7 - t$ in the cadence. The development of the described theme on the following pages of the musical text leads through the celebration of life and immersion into the national spirit, into Božić's vision of natural beauties and folk life blessed by Saint Sava, as well as his eight-century long vigil over Metohija.

¹² Pay attention to the chromatic dissonance F sharp–G.

¹³ From the interview with the composer held on February 28, 2023.

Example 4 (M. 1/15)

15 Играчки...одлучно, али не карикирати

Fl. Ob.

Cl. Fag.

Piano

Vn. Vl.

Vc. Cb.

f *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p*

e: t⁷

VI⁵ t⁷ VI⁵

The musical score consists of several staves. At the top, there are staves for Flute/Oboe (Fl. Ob.), Clarinet/Bassoon (Cb. Fag.), and Piano. Below these are staves for Violin I/II (Vn. VI.) and Viola/Cello/Bass (Vc. Cb.). The piano part features a soloist melody starting at measure 16, marked with a box containing the number 16. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* and *f sub. p*. At the bottom of the score, there is a sequence of chords: t^7 , S^6 , $VII II^6$, $VII^2 III^6$, F^6 , (I^6) , L^6 , VII^6 , VI^6 , Fd^7 , and t .

Božić achieves contrast at the level of the macro-form by introducing a calm melody line, entrusted to a soloist (m. 1/32), with a remark *Peaceful, song of the East in its urban variant*. The new "profile" of Božić's lyricism brings an expressive nine-measure melody in the sentence form. The melody is structured on the Aeolian modal basis, with an emphasis on the tones of the tonic triad. In Božić's broad spectrum of permeation of modality and tonality, rich shading and tinting of expressive spheres shine through the harmonic component, now with different gravity in comparison to the previous episodes. Namely, what we have here is folklore modality and a potential experience of "varying" functions of the chords of the VII and III degrees (m. 2–3/32), but also of the following harmonies (harmonic-tonal ambiguity in the harmonic analysis of the example is given in parentheses) where the III degree as "one of the unstable triads of the scale [seemingly] acquires a local, momentary role of the tonic" (Berkov 1970, 39). Already in the initial measures we recognize the characteristics of the *peremenij lad* (variable tonal gender: a – C) as an element typical for the Russian national school, as well as ours, but to a lesser extent¹⁴. Božić's association with easy, almost imperceptible movement of (tone)modal center of gravity from minor to parallel major and vice versa, according to Despić, justifiably represents "a form of manifestation of modality" (Despić 2002, 150), on the basis of parallel scale sequences of the Aeolian and, a minor third higher, the Ionian mode.

The *Metohija* wellspring watered by orthodoxy and melancholic sentimentality gave a soul to the previously mentioned lilting melody in an ambitus of a ninth (m. 1–9/32).

¹⁴ Let's recall the song *Biljana platno beleše* from Mokranjac's Tenth Garland.

Aeolian tonal values are recognized not only by their harmonic turns and on the basis of an association with peremenij lad, but also by a characteristic free melodic movement from the tone of the VII degree. After the recognizable, modal, Aeolian cadence VII – t, the archaic, folkloric, modal plate of Aeolian coloring, changes the gravity point and the zone of modal support is moved to the tone of C, hinted in the previous sentence (m. 10/32). A momentary flash of the new C-Ionian modality, announces further development of the initial melodic idea with the expansion of the ambitus towards the lower register and expressive-coloristic shading in the form of application of the Mixolydian $\flat 6$ with the appearance of the minor dominant triad and its resolving into the major tonic. After the aforementioned recognizable Mixolydian harmonic turn d – T, the melodic sculpting of the Phrygian trichord conditions an appropriate harmonic treatment and fluctuation of the tonal base T – t – T (m. 13–15/32). A chanting melody in wide waves of varied repetition of duple time, looks as if it contains the composer's personal survival code in the style of folkloric, national romanticism. After a harmonically sharp turn D^7 – T, Ionic modal background brings cause-and-effect chordal connections D^6 – S^6 , D – II^6 , and a complete authentic cadence. Božić's spiritually close environment including Mokranjac, Konjović, Hristić and Tajčević obviously roused the composer to turn to the national sources of Metohija sound substance and the drifts of centuries-accumulated melodic ideas, in order to transform them through a creative prism into a symphony of spiritual peace, a gift to Danijela Karić and the artistic and cultural heritage.

Example 5 (M. 1/32)

Мирно, песма источна у урбаној варијанти

p

a: t VII² III VII⁶ VI⁶ III⁶ t VII
(C: D² T D⁶ S⁶ T⁴ VI)

s⁶ VII t C: VI D⁶ T⁴ II⁴ T II² d⁶

T t T s D⁷

T D⁶ S⁶ T⁴ VI D II D T

The final section of the concertina (Coda, 1/33), following the basic tempo (*Accelerate...*), is a sublimation of the previous thematic subjects. It is followed by a larger solo section leading to a bright finale. In a harmonic, yet dynamically expressive crescendo, Božić builds on the energy potential of the final melodic-rhythmic motif almost to the point of ecstasy, in which we recognize a hint of folklore expressionism, leading to an effective ending of the work.

5. CONCLUSION

Summarizing the findings of the research, it can be said that there is a certain similarity of opinion with the musicologist Branka Radović, who characterized Božić's music as neither abstract, nor alienated from the listeners, or avant-garde in terms of sound innovations and exclusivity, but in some cases neo-romantic and neo-classical, in terms of its style and anachronism, yet very listenable, receptive, close to wider layers of music lovers (Radović 2018, 36). In addition to the evident caution towards novelties, but also, in accordance with such an attitude, there is also a clear and unequivocal attitude of the composer towards tradition. Larger sections, as sonic images of the Metohija glades of our existence, carry the emotionality of the Metohija musical life "calibrated" through Božić's creative prism.

It can be concluded that the concertina for piano *Chants of Metohia* is an example of a contemporary composition that reflects the composer's views expressed earlier (connection with the national, moderate use of dissonance...). The interweaving of song and dance definitely gives this piece its stamp and unequivocally testifies to Božić's lyrical, unequivocal rootedness in the national soil, leading directly to the sources of our music, to Mokranjac, but also into the more distant past. So, when Božić asserts "that he Mokranjac was blessed with a great gift, as evidenced not only by his work but also by his belonging to his people, which is a trait of all great men in all times" (Božić 2006, 67), doesn't it seem more than justifiable to discern and acknowledge a logical line of tradition that leads from Mokranjac to Božić? Božić's *Chants of Metohija* and his distinctive predominant modal harmonization of the tertian principle in building harmony of neo-romantic and early impressionist provenance, emerging as a result of building on tradition with a touch of modernity and originality of a self-contained composer, – make the multi-layered meanings shine through. J. Jelenković justly states that "the presence of tonal and modal patterns in Božić's language is not the result of mere mannerism and his passive 'glance into the past'; rather, the act of their affirmation, in the given historical context, and within the composer's distinctive poetics, should be seen as a kind of symbolic gesture which establishes tonality and modality not only as a language but also as a sign of distinctiveness" (Jelenkovic 2018, 76).

In reviewing the meaning of the work, let's ask ourselves if this sublime touch and embrace of Božić's Metohija music, raise us to the almost tautistic level and at least temporarily quench our thirst for our primordial, national, unwavering and constant, spiritual, but also secular being at the very source of the national light and identity that we must never lose? Actually, it seems that Božić, with his merciful, bathed-in-Orthodoxy chants that spring from the spirit of the people of Metohija, defiantly yet meekly reveals that some unbridled energy of musical lyricism, of chants that live and will live forever, bursts under the diversely colored Metohija skies. *Chants of Metohija* are to the composer apparently the ever-painful song of his victimized people, and the grief and bliss in which all those who had ever left even the slightest trace in our history live in the continuum of national and spiritual being; and to us, the listeners, they are a consolation, a glimpse into

eternal life and the end point of all the roads leading from Byzantium, the Mediterranean, the east and west to our cradle – Kosovo and Metohija.

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ODLIKE MUZIČKOG JEZIKA U KOMPOZICIJI METOHIJSKA POJANJA SVETISLAVA BOŽIĆA

U radu se rasvetljava muzički jezik Svetislava Božića, na primeru končertina za klavir Metohijska pojanja, sa ciljem da se ukaže na pojedina rešenja koja daju pečat Božićevom stvaralaštvu. Formu Končertina odlikuje orijentalno variranje jednog lirskog daha, koji je povremeno pevljiv, povremeno igriv, ali u suštini, ista misao koja nema veliki dramaturški kontrast; to je jedan stav koji ima nekoliko lirskih varijacija. Muzički jezik pokazuje osobenu preovlađujuću modalnu harmonizaciju tercnog principa izgradnje sazvučja, neoromantične i ranoimpresionističke provenijencije, koja nastaje kao rezultat nadovezivanja na tradiciju, uz doziranu modernost i originalnost.

Ključne reči: Svetislav Božić, harmonija, melodija, Metohijska pojanja