

**THE PRINCIPLES OF CHORD BUILDING  
IN THE COMPOSITION “DIVINE MOTHER”  
BY STOJAN STOJKOV**

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The composition “*Divine Mother*” (1984) for high voice, narrator, synthesizer, guitar and string orchestra is one of the most representative works by the Macedonian composer Stojan Stojkov (1941), performed successfully several times in Macedonia and abroad.

Like most of Stojkov’s works, this composition is intonationally based on Macedonian folk melodies, integrated by the composer by harmonic and polyphonic methods characteristic of 20<sup>th</sup> century music.

This paper concerns the harmonic matters in Stojkov’s work and aims to examine the principles of chord building in the composition “*Divine Mother*” as well as their differentiation according to the principles of function.

With the first examination of the score, it is evident that the chords are planned vertical structures as well as structures resulting from melodic and harmonic actions. In their form they have different functions in reference to the mode (modal and static) and are presented in various ways (texture). Even though they are not characteristic polyphonic elements we encounter them at polyphonic segments in the score.

According to the definition of a chord by the Russian theorist Tatiana Bershadskaya “...*a complex of sounds creating a logical, differentiated, constitutive unit of music matter*”, the chords in the composition “*Divine Mother*” are built by the verticalization of intervals and by the verticalization of intervallic order of sounds from a melody, i.e. according to the *thematic principle* (Bershadskaya’s terms).

The chord resulting from the verticalization of intervals are chords having the following texture:

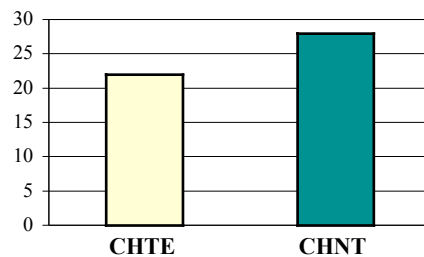
- 1 tertian intervallic texture
- 2 non-tertian intervallic texture

They are given as monochords and polychords.

## 1. Monochords

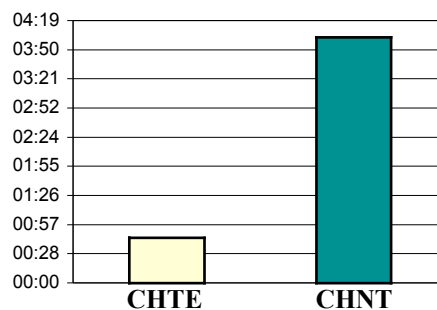
Most of the monochords are present in all segments of the compound ternary music form of the composition (A - Development - A1), as seen from the following table, are of a non-tertian intervallic texture.

|             | CHTE      | CHNT      |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| A           | 13        | 12        |
| Development | 0         | 11        |
| A1          | 9         | 5         |
| <b>Sum</b>  | <b>22</b> | <b>28</b> |



The dominance of the non-tertian monochords is even more evident in regard to their distribution in terms of the duration of the piece (08:05).

|             | CHTE         | CHNT         |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| A           | 00:26        | 01:52        |
| Development | 00:00        | 01:46        |
| A1          | 00:19        | 00:25        |
| <b>Sum</b>  | <b>00:45</b> | <b>04:03</b> |



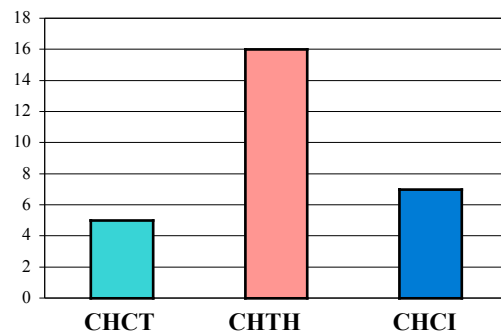
**The non-tertian chords** of this piece (according to Bershadskaya's classification) are of various types:

- 1 chords formed by *changing the tertiary texture*

- 2 chords formed according to the *thematic principle - thematic harmony*
- 3 chords formed according to the principle of *chosen intervals*.

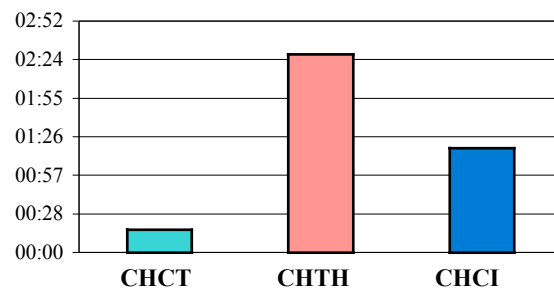
The chords formed according to the thematic principle prevail.

|             | CHNT        |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|             | <i>CHCT</i> | <i>CHTH</i> | <i>CHCI</i> |
| A           | 2           | 10          | 0           |
| Development | 0           | 4           | 7           |
| A1          | 3           | 2           | 0           |
| <b>Sum</b>  | <b>5</b>    | <b>16</b>   | <b>7</b>    |



The dominance of the non-tertiary chords built according to the thematic principle is evident in their duration:

|             | CHNT         |              |              |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|             | <i>CHCT</i>  | <i>CHTH</i>  | <i>CHCI</i>  |
| A           | 00:13        | 01:39        | 00:00        |
| Development | 00:00        | 00:28        | 01:18        |
| A1          | 00:04        | 00:21        | 00:00        |
| <b>Sum</b>  | <b>00:17</b> | <b>02:28</b> | <b>01:18</b> |



*The thematic harmony* appears at the beginning of the piece. Holding the tones of the synthesizer's melodic line creates an impression of chord complexes, which seem to

be formed gradually, similar to romantic harmonic figuration. Thus the interval structure of the chords in fact reflects the interval structure of the melody. The result in sound is a verticalization of the melodic horizontal.

The change in such chords depends on the composer's wish to shift the attention towards a specific tone in the melody. Thus the chords have a static function.

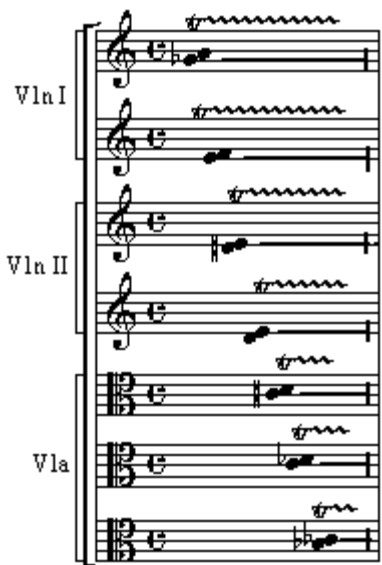


The remaining chords built according to the thematic principle act in a similar or same manner.

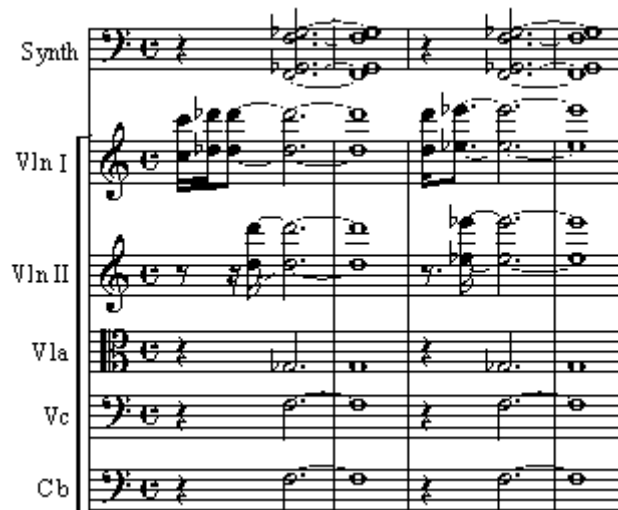
The non-tertiary chords built according to *chosen intervals* appear as monointervallic and polyintervallic. Monointervallic chords are built with the verticalization of the second interval, whereas the polyintervallic chords are built on the second and third intervals, the second and sixth and the sixth and seventh.

Since the chords built by the second and sixth and also the second and seventh the **held** interval - the second is stressed, we also call them chords with a **held structure** (Slonimsky's term).

*a) Monointervallic*



*b) Polyintervallic*



*Changing the tertiary texture of the chords in the composition occurs with the*

replacement or omission of some of the tones.

Thus, for instance, in the complex of tertiary chords in the reprise (A1), the tertiary texture of two chords is modified by replacing one chord tone in one chord (e-g-as-d), and omitting (ed-f-as) one in the other chord.

Musical score snippet for measures 106 and 107. The score includes parts for Voice, Synth, Vln. I, and Vln. II. The Voice part has lyrics: "ди - деи го - ре - ила". The Synth part features a melodic line with eighth notes. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and moving lines.

The chords with a **tertiary intervallic texture** are seen in the expositional parts of the composition.

The melodic lines from the polyphonic syllable in the exposition create sonorities which can be explained from a harmonic aspect. They are mostly triad tertiary chords whose connection depends on the basics of tonal functionality. Thus, they have a modal function.

Musical score snippet for measures 108, 109, 110, and 111. The score includes parts for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts feature complex melodic lines with many sixteenth notes. The Vla., Vc., and Cb. parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and moving lines.

As opposed to these, the tertiary chords in the reprise are organized in a harmonic syllables and are presented in triads and seventh chords. They also have a modal function which borders with static at the parts that note a change in the tertiary texture of some of the chords and parallel movements in chords of seconds.

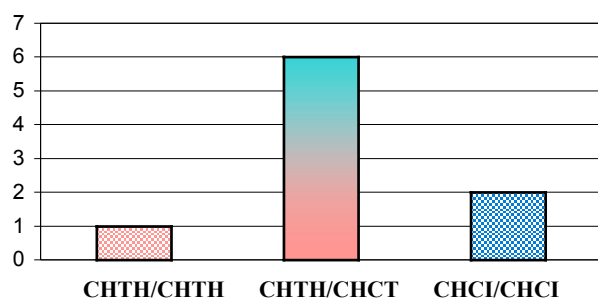
Voice: Вер-на зго-вор-на ај ди-дси  
 Synth: *p*  
 Vln. I: *sub p tremolo sempre*  
 Vln. II: *sub p tremolo sempre*

## 2. Polychords

The polychords of the composition “*Divine Mother*” are parallelisms of two chord layers built from a different or same kind of sub-chords.

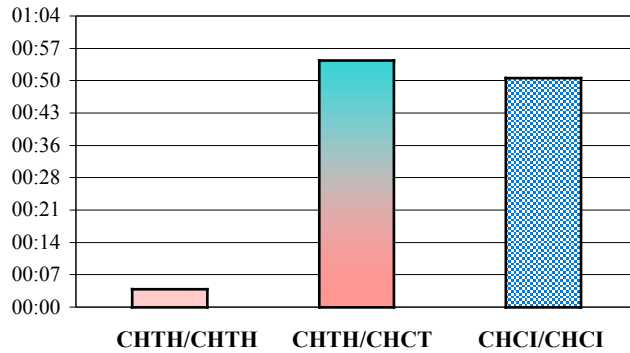
The following table shows the number of the types of polychords (according to the type of sub-chords they were built from) in all parts of the music form. There is an evident domination of the polychords with sub-chords built according to the thematic principle and the sub-chords with a changed tertiary texture.

|             | POCH             |                  |                  |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|             | <i>CHTH/CHTH</i> | <i>CHTH/CHCT</i> | <i>CHCI/CHCI</i> |
| A           | 1                | 2                | 0                |
| Development | 0                | 0                | 2                |
| A1          | 0                | 4                | 0                |
| <b>Sum</b>  | <b>1</b>         | <b>6</b>         | <b>2</b>         |



Their dominance regard to the polychords where both sub-chords are built on the principle of chosen intervals visibly declines according to absolute time of sounding.

|             | POCH             |                  |                  |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|             | <i>CHTH/CHTH</i> | <i>CHTH/CHCT</i> | <i>CHCI/CHCI</i> |
| A           | 00:04            | 00:17            | 00:00            |
| Development | 00:00            | 00:00            | 00:51            |
| A1          | 00:00            | 00:38            | 00:00            |
| <b>Sum</b>  | <b>00:04</b>     | <b>00:55</b>     | <b>00:51</b>     |



As seen from the previous tables, the dominant polychords occur in the exposition of the composition. The tones of the sub-chords built on a thematic principle appear successively and pointilistically arranged through the strings section. Changing the tertiary texture in the other sub-chords occurs with the omission of one chord tone.

The musical score shows a complex arrangement of polychords across multiple instruments. The Guitar part features a melodic line with some tremolo. The Violin I section consists of four staves, with the first two marked 'tremolo ordinario'. The Violin II section has two staves. The Viola and Cello parts provide a harmonic foundation. The overall texture is dense and pointilistic, reflecting the polychordal nature of the composition.

The two sub-chords from the polychord texture in the development are built on the principle of chosen intervals, and are monointervallic clusters. One of them is composed of eleven tones from the chromatic scale, whereas the other is a sonor of d and des.

The image displays a musical score for a symphony orchestra, focusing on the development section. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves for each instrument family. The instruments listed on the left are:

- Violins I (Vln I): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
- Violins II (Vln II): 1, 2, 3, 4
- Violas (Vla): 1, 2, 3
- Violoncellos (Vcl): 1, 2, 3
- Contrabasses (Cb.): 1, 2

The score features several key annotations:

- tremolo:** Indicated above the first Violin I staff.
- sui ponticello:** Indicated above the first Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso staves.

The musical notation consists of rhythmic patterns and clusters of notes, characteristic of a polychord texture. The clusters are monointervallic, meaning they are built from a single interval repeated across multiple notes. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C).

Polychords with two sub-chords built on a thematic principle occur as a result of the chain linking of separate parts of the music form (in the exposition), so that a chord of one part and a chord of the other build onto each other.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Synth, Vln I, and Vln II. The Synth part is at the top, featuring a tremolo and a melodic line. The Vln I part consists of four staves, and the Vln II part consists of two staves. The score includes various dynamics such as *pp* and *mp*, and articulations like *tremolo ordinario*. The music is written in common time (C) and includes various rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

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The use of various principles of building chords in the composition “*Divine Mother*” which associate to different music styles and allude to folk melodies exhibits typical tendencies of 20<sup>th</sup> century music. Stylistic pluralism is a common feature - a sum of opposing aesthetic positions reflected through various compositional stylistic devices. In this composition, pluralism is visible in the different principles of building and the functioning of the chords.

The dominance of non-tertiary chords built on the thematic principle points to the dominance of the work’s melodic principle, a characteristic of the neofolk music style. Through employing sonors in the work, the composer enters the realms of another music style - sonorics, characteristic for the 1960s.

On the other hand, the tertiary interval texture chords of the composition are organized according to the principles of the neo-classical music style, including its sub-genre, neo-baroque (in the polyphonic sections of part A).

Further, the polychord sonorities occurring in this work and built from sub-chords

with a non-tertiary interval texture are the main feature of the harmonic organization of most music styles from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This proves that the chords in Stojkov's works are plural, acting as a synthesis of different principles of building taken over from the various music styles of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Appendix: (see mentioned terminology)

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>CHTE</b> | Chords with tertian intervallic texture                            |
| <b>CHNT</b> | Chords with non-tertian intervallic texture                        |
| <b>CHCT</b> | Chords formed by changing the tertiary texture                     |
| <b>CHTH</b> | Chords formed according to the thematic principle-thematic harmony |
| <b>CHCI</b> | Chords formed according to the principle of chosen intervals       |
| <b>POCH</b> | Polychords   |

Bibliography:

1. \_\_\_\_\_, 1978, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_
2. 1991, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_