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FEATURES OF THE "CHINESE STYLE" AND ITS ARTISTIC EMBODIMENTS IN ACADEMIC PIANO MUSIC OF CHINESE COMPOSERS

The article examines the problem of the formation of the piano school in China at the first historical stage: in the first half of the 20th century. The musical art of China is distinguished by its uniqueness and originality. Its development is closely connected with global musical trends, however, in modern Chinese society, piano art occupies a special place. For more than a century, it has gradually taken root in cultural life, achieving significant success in the performing, composing and educational spheres. This process has given rise to a number of important questions that require a deep historical and theoretical analysis to understand the formation of the Chinese piano school. In particular, the question of the formation of stylistic orientations in the musical creativity of Chinese composers of the first half of the 20th century requires more detailed study. Therefore, the study of the features of the "Chinese style" and its artistic embodiments in academic piano music acquires historical, theoretical and aesthetic and pedagogical significance. "Chinese style" is characterized by a unique combination of traditional elements with foreign influences. This concept includes not only national musical features, but also ways of integrating them with new aesthetic ideas arising from cultural exchange. Chinese style in music is a complex structure formed through the adaptation and synthesis of both native and borrowed folklore elements. This process of interpenetration is not a simple imitation, but involves a deep understanding and transformation of external influences, which allows the creation of new stylistic forms, while maintaining deep roots in the national tradition. Chinese style in music acts not only as a reflection of traditional culture, but also as a dynamic process in which different cultural layers are combined, forming new expressive means and methods of musical communication.

Key words: *Chinese style, Chinese piano music, musical art, piano culture, periodization.*

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ОСОБЛИВОСТІ «КИТАЙСЬКОГО СТИЛЮ» ТА ЙОГО ХУДОЖНІ ВТІЛЕННЯ В АКАДЕМІЧНІЙ ФОРТЕПІАННІЙ МУЗИЦІ КИТАЙСЬКИХ КОМПОЗИТОРІВ

У статті досліджується проблема становлення фортепіанної школи в Китаї на першому історичному етапі: в першій половині XX століття. Музичне мистецтво Китаю вирізняється унікальністю та неповторністю. Його розвиток тісно пов'язаний із загальносвітовими музичними тенденціями, проте в сучасному китайському суспільстві фортепіанне мистецтво займає особливе місце. Понад століття воно поступово укорінювалося в культурному житті, досягнувши значних успіхів у виконавській, композиторській та освітній сферах. Цей процес породив ряд важливих питань, що вимагають глибокого історико-теоретичного аналізу для розуміння формування китайської фортепіанної школи. Зокрема, більш детального дослідження потребують питання формування стильових орієнтацій у музичній творчості китайських композиторів першої половини XX століття. Тому дослідження особливостей «китайського стилю» та його художніх утілень в академічній фортепіанній музиці набуває історико-теоретичного та естетико-педагогічного значення. «Китайський стиль» характеризується унікальним поєднанням традиційних елементів з іноземними впливами. Це поняття включає в себе не лише національні музичні риси, але й способи їх інтеграції з новими естетичними ідеями, що виникають у результаті культурного обміну. Китайський стиль у музиці являє собою складну структуру, що формується через адаптацію і синтез як власних, так і запозичених фольклорних елементів. Цей процес взаємопроникнення не є простим наслідуванням, а передбачає глибоке осмислення і перетворення зовнішніх впливів, що дозволяє створювати нові стилістичні форми, зберігаючи при цьому глибоке коріння в національній традиції. Китайський стиль у музиці виступає не лише як відображення традиційної культури, а й як динамічний процес, в якому поєднуються різні культурні шари, утворюючи нові виразні засоби та способи музичної комунікації.

Ключові слова: *китайський стиль, китайська фортепіанна музика, музичне мистецтво, фортепіанна культура, періодизація.*

Introduction. China is a multinational country with an ancient culture. It has its own centuries-old history and brilliant traditions in art, including music. Up until today, Chinese music retains the originality and features inherent to it for centuries. And, at the same time, it is gradually included in the process of global evolution of the world musical space. Music in China has had an important social and educational significance since the sixth century BC. The great Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 BC) believed that music is not only a necessary, but even an obligatory element of human development, and demanded that education begin with poetry, strengthen it with ceremonies and end with music. According to Confucianism, music is a microcosm embodying the great cosmos; beautiful music contributes to the organization of an expedient state structure, always has a strictly defined and logical structure and many of its elements are symbolic. According to the beliefs of the ancient Chinese, the impact of music not only on people, but also on nature is such that disruptions to the musical system can even lead to various disasters.

Piano art occupies a special place in modern Chinese society. Over the course of more than 100 years of its existence, it has taken root in the minds of millions of people, reaching significant heights in performance, composition, and pedagogy.

Education through piano art influences aesthetic perception, cognitive ability, intellectual and non-intellectual development, intelligence, sensitivity, attention, understanding, thinking in general, etc. Good musical education influences the character of children, helps them grow up cheerful, active, confident, and agile. Music cannot be compared with anything. That is why piano education is as relevant a task as teaching music as such.

Analysis of recent research and publications. This topic is mostly covered in scientific works analysing the development of Chinese piano art in the twentieth century. Significant contributions have been made by such researchers as Li Huanzhi, Yang Yiyuan, Wang Changkui, Yang Hongbin, Wu Yan, Hua Minglin, Gao Yi, Dai Baisheng and others. Particular attention should be paid to studies devoted to certain aspects of the evolution of Chinese piano culture, which had an impact on the formation of compositional techniques and the development of the performance tradition. Such works include studies by Zhao Yue and Luo Kun, which examine the genre features and influence of Western music.

It is also worth mentioning fundamental works written in Chinese that systematise the development of this art in the twentieth century, including monographs by Bian Meng, Wang Ying, Li Xiaoxiao, Zhang Ming, Zhang Hui, Gu Yue, Gao And, Pan Wei, Dai Baisheng, and others. In addition, there are many studies that reveal in detail the genre aspects of Chinese piano music, including works by Pei Han, Sun Weibo, Li Xiaoxiao, Chi Nie Na, Guo Hao, Huang Ping, Qu Ba, and Wu Na.

Objective of the work. To explore the features of the "Chinese style" and its artistic embodiments in the academic piano music of Chinese composers.

The methodological basis is the dialectical and systematic methodology used in the field of cultural research. General scientific and logical methods of analysis, synthesis, induction and deduction, historical and comparative research of the problem are used.

Presentation of the main material of the research. The period of the 1930s and 1940s in China is characterised by the development of mass music culture and the intensification of the music and folklore movement (Лі Сябінь, 2011: 112). This movement is not so much opposed to the Romantic tradition as it is a means of rethinking it, in particular in the context of integrating folk music, professionalising it, and adapting the aesthetic principles of European Romanticism to national cultural specificity (Чжао Юе, 2023: 80–81).

The emergence of the «Chinese style» phenomenon is associated with the activities of the Shanghai Conservatory, in particular with the holding of a competition for composers, where one of the mandatory tasks was to create musical works within the framework of the «Chinese national style».

The competition was intended to help enrich the national repertoire, which in turn was to stimulate the development of Chinese musical culture and strengthen its identity. The competition brought young Chinese composers to the forefront, including He Luting, Yu Bianming, Lao Zhicheng, Jiang Dingxian, and Chen Tianhe.

Ideas to integrate the riches of national culture into contemporary academic music have long existed in the musical environment. In particular, elements of the «Chinese style» can be found in compositions dating back to 1932, such as Song of the Shepherd and Autumn Mood, written by Chinese composer and pianist Lao Zhicheng. These works illustrate the process of combining traditional Chinese musical features with academic forms, which was an important stage in the formation of a new direction in Chinese musical culture.

It is especially important to note that piano music became the medium in which the process of forming new artistic trends in Chinese academic music took place. This tradition of piano music development can be interpreted as an attempt to adapt national motifs to

the high demands of classical music, which contributed to the creation of a new musical language expression that combines folk themes and global musical influences.

The «Chinese style» can be seen as a cultural phenomenon that embodies the ideas of synthesis of the past and the present, the national and the global. Its influence has spread to various aspects of music, from professional performance to composing, and has become an important factor in shaping national identity in the context of globalisation. This phenomenon not only secured the status of a cultural marker of the era, but also became a platform for the further development of Chinese music in both national and international dimensions.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Chinese musicology actively discussed the issue of the «national musical style», but this phenomenon remained insufficiently studied. In Bian Meng's work «The Formation and Development of Chinese Piano Culture» (Бянь Мен, 1996). The so-called «Chinese style» is mentioned only in passing, and it is considered through the prism of analysing the works of Chinese composers. A similar theme is also touched upon in Zhao Xiaosheng's work «The Way to Piano Playing» (Чжао Сяошен, 2005), however, its consideration is limited to certain aspects.

A more systematic approach to the study of this phenomenon is demonstrated by Zhao Xiaosheng's article «The Context of the Chinese Piano» (Чжао Сяошен, 2003). The author has attempted to comprehensively study the characteristic features of Chinese piano music, focusing on such parameters as the content of the pieces, form, decorative elements, timbre shades, rhythmic structure, performance technique and pedalling. This work has become an important contribution to the study of the peculiarities of integrating national elements into academic music practice.

The topic of national style in piano music is also touched upon in Zhao Yue's dissertation (Чжао Юе, 2023), where this phenomenon is studied in the aspect of cyclic forms in Chinese piano music of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The author emphasises that the compositions created in the «Chinese style» convey national identity, using characteristic expressive means of a high artistic level. The author notes that although folklore elements continued to play an important role, they were not central to these works. The main emphasis was shifted to such aspects as harmonic organisation, intonation specificity and other elements of the musical language (Чжао Юе, 2023: 81).

These works mark the transition from a superficial discussion of the problem to its in-depth analysis, which contributed to the formation of scientific ideas about the «Chinese style» as a unique phenomenon that combines the traditions of Chinese culture with the aesthetics of academic music. Thanks to this research, the national musical identity has become more clearly defined, which has opened up new perspectives for its understanding within the world musical culture.

The analysis of musicological sources shows that the content of the concept of «Chinese style» in piano music has changed in different historical periods. In the period from 1934, when a piano competition was held, until the 1950s, this term was used to refer to compositions that conveyed the national character through specific musical means.

In Chinese scholarly literature, the term «Chinese style» has both narrow and broad interpretations, reflecting the multifaceted nature of its content. In a narrow sense, this term refers to the integration of elements of regional folk traditions into the work of Chinese composers. This interpretation emphasises the local ethnic characteristics that are reflected in music.

In a broad sense, the «Chinese style» covers any manifestation of national identity in the music of Chinese composers. This includes not only the use of folklore motifs, but also the reflection of cultural, historical and aesthetic aspects that shape the national character of music. Complementing each other, the narrow and broad interpretations of the term allow for a deeper understanding of the evolution of Chinese musical culture and its diversity in the context of the national tradition.

Musical works performed in the «Chinese style» often retain elements of the Western European musical tradition, which is evidence of the complex interaction between the cultures of the East and the West. This phenomenon is the result not only of musical exchange but also of the profound cultural changes that took place in China in the early twentieth century. One of the reasons for this integration is that European Romanticism, with its rich emotional expressions and innovative compositional methods, had a significant impact on the development of professional piano performance in China. Romanticism, which emphasised individuality, deep emotion and expressiveness, became one of the foundations on which the new Chinese piano school was built.

This trend in the development of Chinese musical culture was actively supported by prominent figures of the national musical art, who saw the combination of Chinese national motifs and European musical techniques as a way to achieve new aesthetic heights. One of the most important representatives of this cultural interaction was He Luting, whose work in the 1930s

was essential for the formation of a new musical style. He Luting emphasised that Chinese folk music should become an inexhaustible source of inspiration for contemporary composers, while at the same time borrowing Western methods, including polyphonic and harmonic techniques that were characteristic of the European classical tradition.

He Lutin's views on the integration of traditional Chinese music and European musical methods are reflected in a number of his piano works, which demonstrate a harmonious blend of national melody and Western musical techniques. One of his most famous works is «A Shepherd Playing a Flute». Another important piano work by the composer is Lullaby, in which He Luting skilfully combines traditional Chinese motifs with European polyphonic techniques. Among other iconic works in the Chinese style, the composer's Three Folk Songs, The Lament, The Party, and The Bagatelle also occupy an important place. These compositions are marked by rich musical content and vivid images that combine both national elements and influences of Western classical music.

If we consider the characteristics of «Chinese-style» compositions in a broader context, we can identify a number of parameters that emphasise the national specificity and depth of China's cultural identity. These features cover both structural and expressive elements of musical art, resulting from a combination of traditional Chinese motifs and Western musical influences. One of the main characteristics of such works is the use of vocal and instrumental themes, which have their roots in both folklore and professional musical traditions of China. An important role in this context is played by the music that originated in court circles during the dynastic period of Chinese history, which is characterised by a high level of skill and emotional expressiveness.

In addition, compositions in the Chinese style often reflect the content of national artistic works, such as folk tales, epics and legends, which are an integral part of the Chinese cultural heritage. The content of these works is often embodied in musical images that reflect moral lessons, mythological stories and social values inherent in the Chinese tradition. Music becomes not only a means of emotional expression, but also an important tool for conveying deep cultural codes and symbols enshrined in the national tradition.

Specific national genres play a special role in the creation of the «Chinese style», among which are musical, theatrical and poetic forms. Musical genres, such as Peking opera and other regional dramas, are important elements of the national cultural heritage and have a profound influence on the formation of musical works that reflect their unique stylistic features.

Poetic traditions, which are closely intertwined with musical traditions, are also reflected in compositions in the Chinese style. Poetry, which is an integral part of Chinese culture, not only serves as a source of inspiration for composers, but also often becomes the basis for creating complete musical works. They create a special rhythmic and intonational structure that has its own specificity inherent in Chinese poetic forms.

In addition, important components are the principles of harmonic, intonation and rhythmic organisation, which have their own specificity in the Chinese musical tradition. For example, the harmonic system of Chinese music differs significantly from Western music, as it is based on pentatonic modes. The rhythmic organisation is also different: Chinese music is often characterised by asymmetrical rhythms that express rhythmic freedom and flexibility, which are an important part of the traditional musical style (Лі Хуасінь, 2023).

Conclusions. Thus, the differences between the concepts of «Chinese style» in the narrow and broad sense lie in different approaches to the definition and interpretation of cultural features. In a narrow sense, this term refers to the preservation of dialectal features that are expressed in specific features of regional folk art. This may include certain stylistic, linguistic or musical elements that are characteristic of specific territorial or ethnic groups. This approach emphasises locality and preservation of authenticity, which makes it possible to explore the cultural identity of individual regions of China in greater depth.

In a broader sense, the «Chinese style» becomes national in nature, where individual regional peculiarities lose their clear boundaries and creativity is united under a common national cultural context. In this case, we are dealing with the generalisation of artistic traditions that are distinguished on the basis of their nationality, without reference to a specific geographical or cultural region. This approach promotes a unified cultural code that, while taking into account the diversity of China's regions, does not focus on their separate identities.

In general, these two approaches to defining the «Chinese style» reflect two different perspectives of the national cultural heritage: preserving local specificity and combining different traditions into one national cultural paradigm.

We see **the prospects for further research** in the analysis of the formation and development of the piano school of China in the 20th–early 21st centuries.

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