

The Influence and Inspiration of Chinese Traditional Philosophy on Chinese Modern Piano Music Creation

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Abstract: From the very beginning, Chinese piano music has carried the ideological and cultural tradition of China for two thousand years. Chinese musical thinking is influenced by Confucianism and Taoism. Confucianism emphasizes the harmony between music and social order, while Taoism pursues the unity of man and nature in music. The practical reason and music sense culture in Chinese thinking never deny the unity of mind and body, spirit and sense. Chinese piano music should conform to the "Tao", that is, the creation and existence in a way that conforms to nature and laws, which reflects the cosmology embodied behind the Chinese music view. In terms of performance, it is also necessary to adjust the corresponding mode, so that the piano can speak the most pure Chinese music language, reflect the Chinese cosmology, meet the needs of music sense culture, and achieve a truly spiritual equality between Chinese and Western music culture exchanges.

Keywords: Traditional Philosophy; Chinese Piano Music; A Literary Creation; Influence

1. INTRODUCTION

From the moment when the piano was introduced into China, it was bound to be affected by the Chinese traditional culture and thought in all directions. The depth and breadth of this influence, as time goes on, will certainly go far beyond the earliest form of the original music culture. As we all know, Zhao Yuanren's Peace March is the earliest piano music handed down in the form of music documents in China. In fact, during the late Ming Dynasty and the early Qing Dynasty, when Western learning was spreading eastward, the western clavichord music culture was introduced into the court through Catholic missionaries. In the 28th year of Wanli, that is, in 1600, Matteo Ricci, an Italian missionary, presented a clavichord to the Mingshen Sect. Diego de Pantoja, a Spanish missionary and musician, immediately gave a mandate to teach four supervisors to play the clavichord. In order to meet the personal artistic interest and appreciation

habits of the Mingshen Sect, Matteo Ricci also wrote a total of eight chapters of Xiqin Music Meaning according to the Catholic doctrine for these supervisors to play and sing, And performed in the imperial palace in Beijing for the Emperor Mingshen. This is the first gathering of Chinese rhymes and piano music, and also the first appearance of piano music in the form of a palace concert. These four supervisors have also become the earliest piano players and keyboard players in China. In addition, according to the Pengshan Mystery written by Su (Su, 2020), a scholar of the Imperial Academy of the Qing Dynasty, Emperor Kangxi also learned to play the ancient piano in person under the influence of the spread of Western learning to the east, and played the Buddhist music created by Pu'an Zen Master of the Southern Song Dynasty, namely Pu'an Mantra. This is an important event in the history of music. Pu'an Mantra became the earliest Chinese piano adaptation and a rare Chinese Buddhist piano music. This early music event undoubtedly revealed an important information, that is, from the very beginning of the earliest concrete form, Chinese piano music has carried the ideological and cultural tradition that has lasted for thousands of years in China. Since then, Chinese history has entered the so-called "unprecedented change in three thousand years", especially after the baptism of the New Culture Movement and the slogan of "overthrowing the Kongjiadian" (Li & Heng, 2023; Li & Chen). The original orthodox guiding ideology of Confucianism has been collapsed and its social function has been dissolved, but it does not mean that the traditional Chinese philosophy has lost its influence on modern Chinese people and Chinese music culture. On the contrary, in the daily life of Chinese people Confucianism still plays an important role in the way of thinking and music creation and performance. This is not only because the law of cultural lag theory is playing a role, but also rooted in the different music sense culture and practical reason between Chinese and Western Christian culture. Chinese music culture is not only spiritual experience, but also rooted in Chinese physical and physiological experience (Li, 2021; Wong, 2020).

2. THE ONLY WAY TO THINK ABOUT CHINESE PIANO MUSIC FROM THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF CULTURAL BACKWARDNESS

The theory of cultural backwardness put forward by American sociologist Gao believes that the interrelated components independently

take the lead in changing or lagging behind, resulting in differences due to the development of time or space, depth and breadth of the movement, which leads to the contradiction of each related part and weakens its relevance, that is, cultural backwardness (Gao, 2021). When the piano was first introduced into China during the Opium War, British promoters hoped to buy one piano for every ten Chinese families. Obviously, this vision could not be realized in the end. There is no doubt that apart from the weak purchasing power at that time, the Chinese people's perception of music is completely different from that of the West. The western culture and technology originally accumulated in the atmosphere of western learning spreading eastward have not been inherited and learned under the long policy of locking the country, and the original knowledge has already disappeared. The performance and creation of piano music simply lack the corresponding cultural foundation (Huang et al., 2023; Zheng & Leung, 2023). It was not until the turn of the century that the first generation of Chinese piano players entered the stage of music history under the introduction and influence of the western modern school system, such as the opening of Western style secondary schools for women in China and the West, and the all-round stimulation of western social and natural sciences. In this period, the earliest Chinese piano work "Peace March" was taken as an example (Zhu & Hu, 2022). In terms of musical vocabulary, it showed more forms of western music: major melody, functional harmony, march rhythm, and the lively rhythm of Haydn's "Astonishment Symphony". If we look at the creation technology of such works from a western perspective, it may be true that Mr. Xiao Youmei's "Chinese music is at least a thousand years behind western music", but today's view of music anthropology has already denied Mr. Xiao's earlier assertion. On the one hand, the Peace March is the embryo of Chinese piano music, and it is completely reasonable for the embryo to have the form of western piano music. On the other hand, the modes, verve, tune and nationalization of sound that Chinese traditional music pays attention to are not reflected here (Zheng & Leung, 2021; Zhou, 2020). The connection between the work and these elements appears weak and different, which is a manifestation of cultural backwardness. However, it cannot be ignored that the mother of the embryo of Chinese piano music is Chinese traditional culture, Ogben believed that the status of this intangible traditional culture in its group value was very lofty, and attached with great emotional value. The habit and conditional recognition of pentatonic music and the great influence and success of traditional music elements in the history of Chinese music are protected and appreciated by the Chinese community

(Cui, 2021; Wang). Therefore, Mr. Zhao Yuanren has been consciously committed to eliminating this difference and lag in various ways during the piano accompaniment of his later art songs such as "Saw the vat", "Selling Cloth Ballads" and "Teach Me How Not to Miss Her". There is no doubt that in the process of nationalization of piano music, He Lvting's Shepherd's Piccolo has epoch-making historical significance. It is not only that musical works have been able to skillfully use counterpoint skills and equivalent performance skills, fully digested the European music technology theory, but also make use of the Chinese traditional polyphony and melody to add flowers, so that piano music has a more Chinese brand in the way of expression. From the perspective of performance, the melodic movement has broken through the law of "strong, weak, sub strong, weak" in 4/4 beats of western music, and has a more vocal tendency. In harmony, it inherits the selection of Mr. Huang Zi's Song of Eternal Sorrow, "Mountains in the Void". Both the vocal and piano accompaniment parts reflect the exploration of national pentatonic. From the perspective of these music creation efforts, these predecessors have made a positive push to eliminate the cultural lag in piano music and Chinese traditional culture and art. Indeed, this effort to eliminate cultural backwardness has expanded the space for piano music to survive and develop on the soil of Chinese culture, and has made great contributions to the promotion and dissemination of piano music in the future (Bei & Jian, 2024; Poon, 2024).

3. FROM THE DIFFERENCE OF CHINESE AND WESTERN MUSICAL CULTURAL THINKING, SEEK THE MUSICAL LANGUAGE AND PERFORMANCE THEORY OF CHINESE PIANO MUSIC CULTURE

The difference between Chinese and Western musical thinking is fundamentally due to the difference in thinking mode. Pythagoras' theory, as the beginning of western music theory, is based on the study of mathematics. It studies the relationship between intervals from the mathematical logic deduction. In terms of ideology, Aristotle believed that the performance and creation of music had moral power and enlightenment, and was more important than the pleasure generated by music (Confucianism also had a similar view). Throughout the history of western music, from Gregory's simple songs to modern western music, especially piano music, is a process of personality liberation and music

effects constantly getting rid of the shackles of divinity and guilt, and exploring the pursuit of all kinds of sound and listening (Gao, 2021). Therefore, the combination between horizontal and vertical sound (especially vertical sound) has been constantly tried, broken through, created and theorized. Finally, in the 20th century, there appeared a "compromise" music vocabulary with vague melody, broken tonality and negative emotion to reflect the creation technology and depth of thought of the works (Chen, 2022; Sun, 2022). Chinese musical thinking is influenced by Confucianism and Taoism. Confucianism in traditional Chinese society is the order standard of social and personal operation and behavior, while Taoism has become an important supplement and spiritual backyard of Chinese thought in the process of confrontation and contradiction with Confucianism. Confucianism emphasizes the social function of music. In the Book of Rites of Xiao Dai and the Book of Music, the pentatonic scale "Gong, Shang, Jiao, Zheng, Yu" corresponds to the real "monarch, minister, people, things, and things" respectively. The arrogance and disorder of class and order in the Confucian ideological system is unacceptable, so Confucius said Ji's "Eight Yis dance in the court, which is tolerable, which is intolerable", emphasizing the rule of etiquette and music. Therefore, it is impossible for Confucianism to randomly combine notes in the scale without restraint. From the guiding ideology, the possibility of the development of counterpoint technology and harmony is eliminated. Therefore, The single line thinking and the emphasis on the development of melody make the creation and performance of Chinese music move towards vocal tune, emphasize the effect of phonology, and run through the entire ancient and modern Chinese music history, which still has a genetic impact on the current Chinese music interest (Fu et al., 2021; Lu & Tan, 2021). On the other hand, the culture of practical reason and musical sense in Chinese thinking never denies the unity of mind and body, spirit and sense. In the western Christian culture of sin, spirit and body are opposed and the rationality of desire is denied. The Confucian Book of Music points out that "Music is music. A gentleman can enjoy his way, while a villain can enjoy his desire. If the desire is controlled by the way, then music is not chaotic..." Dialectically unifies the contradiction between morality and desire in music, and noble people use the reason in music to resist the sensory pleasure caused by music. As for Taoism, the view of Laozi that "Tao follows nature" recognizes the sensual pleasure of people whose music meets the natural attribute, while Huainanzi · Benjingxun also dialectically believes that music makes the body and mind peaceful, and can not be used to

pursue sensual pleasure and indulgence, that is, "the harmony that music brings is not therefore sexual". From the Confucian emphasis on the harmony between music and social order or the Taoist pursuit of the unity of man and nature in music, it is quite different from the Western music art that emphasizes individual self certification and individuality. Therefore, the creation of Chinese piano music has embodied this feature since its inception. For example, the piano accompaniment of Huang Zi's "The Mountains Are in the Void" comes from the court ancient tune "Qing Ping Tiao" of the Ming Dynasty, and even the "Yellow River Piano Concerto" (the Yellow River Cantata is the material, and the texture of Rachmaninov's fourth piano concerto is an incredible "collective creation" by Westerners) does not emphasize Chopin's unique personal style (Zhang & Situ, 2017), but is the same as the ancient music and dance "Cloud Gate" and "Salt Lake". The self certification of creation is achieved through the harmonious integration of itself with society, history and nature. At the same time, the description of water form in the Yellow River Piano Concerto also fully reflects the understanding of water in Taoism. The water in "Ode to the Yellow River" is the "water is the capital" in "Huainan Zi", the description object of "Laozi", "the highest good is like water, and water is good for all things without competition", and it is the water that has nurtured the Chinese civilization for five thousand years; The water in "Defending the Yellow River" is the water that "the world is the most soft and the world is the most strong" and "no one can defeat the strong". It is the spiritual force that can defeat all enemies under the joint action of the piano and the band. From the perspective of the style of the whole work, it does not reflect the so-called personal techniques and personal style of Xian Xinghai or any of the members participating in the collective creation (Chen, 2013). Instead, it reflects the national characteristics such as the ring finger of the pipa, the tune of operas and folk songs, which is an outstanding exploration of Chinese piano music language. It is not only acknowledged that music can have an impact on people's spirit and emotion, but also acknowledged that music can also have an impact on people's physiological state, so as to reflect on the development trend of Chinese piano music. In the Book of Music *Leben*, it has been explained that music has a dynamic role in the emotions of human beings. However, in the creation of modern Chinese piano music, it seems that another aspect of Chinese traditional music thought has been ignored, that is, music also has a huge dynamic role in human physiological state! In addition to paying attention to the social attribute of human beings, Taoism also attaches great importance to the natural attribute of human beings, that is,

music is closely related to people's physical and mental health, that is, "Five Tibetan Xiangyin". In the Yellow Emperor's Canon of Internal Medicine, almost in the form of a list of parallelism sentences, Qi Bo's remarks reveal that the five tones of "palace, commerce, horn, symbol, feather" are connected with various emotions and senses of human organs, such as "heart, liver, spleen, lung, kidney", and are linked in geographical location and seasonal festivals, reflecting that the five elements represented by the five tones are mutually reinforcing, which fully reflects the cosmology embodied behind the Chinese music concept, namely, the unity of heaven and man. Music should be created and exist in a way that conforms to "Tao", that is, conforms to nature and laws. When these internal laws are ignored, human physiological functions and emotions will be disordered and lead to diseases. On the contrary, according to this theory, using the birth and restriction of the five tones in music can regulate the physiological function and achieve the goal of music health preservation.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the above considerations, the author believes that Chinese piano music should be balanced with modernity on the basis of Chinese people's unique thinking mode and the construction of music culture psychology, and explore its future on this basis. The value of Chinese piano music does not have to take "modernity" as its only criterion. In fact, the word modernity has never been pure, and it is not just a concept in the sense of science or culture. It also exists in the political field, and even appears in modern history as a strategic tool of the cultural cold war by the United States. In order to resist the socialist realism emphasized by the Soviet Union in the field of culture and art, the CIA funded the art works represented by Pollock and bid up their prices; Support Schoenberg's expressionist music to perform in the world. With the modernity of unconscious, anti classical and anti classical art, it sets up a false standard for cultural advantages and disadvantages, thereby reflecting its so-called "political correctness". However, even some composers deeply influenced by Schoenberg and Webern, such as American composer George Rockberg and Polish composer Panderesky, who have independent thinking ability, have found the limitations of non tonality in their long-term creative practice. The former even claimed to return to tonality unconditionally. The latter bravely returned to tradition after "Lament for the Victims of Hiroshima.", For example, the violin concerto in 1976 and the Polish

Requiem in 1984 represent a series of major works. Chinese traditional culture can contain local musical instruments such as pipa, erhu, dulcimer and suona, and it can undoubtedly let the piano speak the purest Chinese music language, reflecting the Chinese cosmology.

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