

Chinese Piano Music: the Role of Composer Chu Wanghua in the Evolution of Modern Piano Traditions in China (the Case of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Capriccio Suite)

Música chinesa para piano: o papel do compositor Chu Wanghua na evolução das tradições modernas de piano na China (o caso da suíte Capriccio 'Sons do Templo')

Yinan Liu¹



Keyboard Instrumental Music Education Department, Shenyang Conservatory of Music, Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China
yinanliu5@yahoo.com, 705043633@qq.com

Abstract: Chinese piano music is based on folk songs, Chinese poetry, and the ethnic style, which contribute to the expressiveness of the sound and refinement of the intonation and tonal system. The paper addresses the Chinese piano music and the role of composer Chu Wanghua in shaping contemporary piano traditions, using the 'Sounds of the Temple' capriccio suite as an example. Based on the direct method of standardization, the paper determined the significance of the parts of the 'Sounds of the Temple' suite. The second part (0.93) is most significant for displaying the piano music, because it involves the use of polyphonic sounds, imitating other instruments. The first part of the suite (0.87) is based on a linear representation of sounds, imitating the sounds of bells. The third part (0.69) centers around the use of slow tempo as well as major tone deviations. Significant elements of the suite (mirror reprise, rhythmic transformation, monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds, application of guó huà techniques, texture elements) were determined on the basis of the measured complexity and harmony of performance, as well as their influence

¹ Yinan Liu received PhD in Shenyang Conservatory of Music. Currently he is a lecturer of music disciplines at the Keyboard Instrumental Music Education Department, Shenyang Conservatory of Music, Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China. His scientific interest includes instrumental music, piano music, folk songs, music elements, and musical traditions.

on national traditions. A comparison of performance using standard deviation suggested that the differences were based on monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds (1.07), which is attributed to a greater emphasis on the difficulty of performance than on other parameters. The paper's practical implications involve the possibility of preserving expressiveness and ethnic elements while playing the piano, based on Chu Wanghua's 'Sounds of the Temple' suite. Further studies might compare the elements that contribute to the expressiveness of performance in the 'Sounds of the Temple' suite by Chu Wanghua and 'Flower Drum' by Qu Wei

Keywords: canon technique; guó huà techniques; mirror reprise; national traditions; vertical music elements.

Resumo: A música de piano chinesa é baseada em canções folclóricas, poesia chinesa e estilo étnico, que contribuem para a expressividade do som e refinamento da entonação e do sistema tonal. O artigo aborda a música para piano chinesa e o papel do compositor Chu Wanghua na formação das tradições contemporâneas do piano, usando a suíte capriccio 'Sons do Templo' como exemplo. Com base no método direto de padronização, o artigo determinou o significado das partes do conjunto "Sons do Templo". A segunda parte (0,93) é a mais significativa para a apresentação da música para piano, pois envolve o uso de sons polifônicos, imitando outros instrumentos. A primeira parte da suíte (0,87) é baseada em uma representação linear de sons, imitando os sons de sinos. A terceira parte (0,69) gira em torno do uso de andamento lento, bem como grandes desvios de tom. Elementos significativos da suíte (reprise de espelho, transformação rítmica, repetição monótona de frases e sons, aplicação de técnicas de guó huà, elementos de textura) foram determinados com base na complexidade medida e harmonia da performance, bem como sua influência nas tradições nacionais. A comparação do desempenho pelo desvio padrão sugeriu que as diferenças se basearam na repetição monótona de frases e sons (1,07), o que é atribuído a uma ênfase maior na dificuldade de desempenho do que em outros parâmetros. As implicações práticas do artigo envolvem a possibilidade de preservar a expressividade e

elementos étnicos ao tocar piano, com base na suíte “Sons do Templo” de Chu Wanghua. Outros estudos podem comparar os elementos que contribuem para a expressividade da performance na suíte ‘Sons do Templo’ de Chu Wanghua e ‘Flower Drum’ de Qu Wei.

Palavras-chave: técnica canônica; técnicas de guó huà; reprise espelho; tradições nacionais; elementos musicais verticais.

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Introduction

Piano music in China is widespread because it seeks to conform to the national cultural worldview (SU and JIANG, 2021). The popularity of piano music in China is attributed to the characteristic features of the Chinese population, with a trend toward aestheticism, lyrical sentiments, and which is an integral part of national traditions (BAI, 2021). Chinese piano music is described by a combination of national and Western elements that are evident in tonality and rhythm (WINZENBURG, 2018). Such approach helps to push the boundaries of Chinese music and spread it to other countries (SPIES, 2015). The enrichment of musical composition, changes in intonation, and harmonies is a second aspect of the use of Western elements (SPIES, 2015). Despite the change in the melodic line expressiveness, Chinese musical compositions are described by the preservation of the pentatonic scale, which is directly attributed to timbre and intonation. The chords contribute to the sound vibrance and a national identity, combined with Western elements, which helps Chinese piano compositions to become more contemporary and expressive (BURGOYNE *et al.*, 2019).

When playing the piano, Chinese composers (Lin Hua, Xiao Yumei) use *guó huà* techniques that are based on a combination of painting and musical language, in which traditional elements and national spirit relying on traditional culture intersect (BOLLOS and COSTA, 2017). For example, the combination of *guó huà* elements can be seen in Chen Peixun's musical composition 'Autumn Moon Over the Calm Lake', which depicts the noise of the wind, the sounds of the night over the lake (BOLLOS and COSTA, 2017). While playing the piano, musicians also duplicate the sounds of other instruments (drums, violin), conveying vivid coloring, polyphonic techniques (BONNASSE-GAHOT, 2020; VAN, 2018). Piano playing relies on arrangements of various compositions that have been used for different genres, as well as pieces written specifically for the piano (YE, 2018). While playing the piano, musicians break

down texture lines and transform left and right hand parts, which helps to improve basic playing techniques (YE, 2018). For solo performance of musical compositions on the piano, there is a free interpretation of sounds that requires a sensitive ear for music and rhythm (XUE and LOO, 2019).

The uniqueness of the Chinese piano music is based on religious and philosophical ideas, largely influenced by Confucianism and Taoism, as well as cultural traditions that are associated with festive activities, theatrical traditions (TOMLINSON, 2017). The popularity of the piano in China is primarily due to the proliferation of opera and theater performances that involve piano music (SCHUILING, 2020). Opera and theatrical productions preserve national cultural traditions, which are built on intonation, the tone system, and rhythm (CHEN, 2016; WINZENBURG, 2018). The national character of piano music is created by imitating the repetition of the playing texture of other national instruments (XUE and LOO, 2019). Such techniques help to create ethnocentricity and instrumental diversity.

Chu Wanghua is a prominent representative of the contemporary piano tradition in China. He wrote more than 200 pieces for piano ('Ash Wednesday', 'Piano Sonata No. 1') (COMEAU *et al.*, 2015). He authored nearly 100 articles on contemporary music and music education issues ('A Collection of Articles on Music'), featuring autobiographies, historical aspects of creativity, and music criticism (COMEAU *et al.*, 2015). Chu Wanghua believes that methodological principles based on a combination of playing technique and artistry, finding new repertoire and using improvisation approaches should be considered when learning piano skills (BAGCI, 2020). In his writings Chu Wanghua considered lyrical sentiments, attention to linguistic details, and improvisation of music elements (LI *et al.*, 2021).

Literature review

In order to examine the aspects that shape the piano music, available literature was reviewed. Piano music evolved as a result

of the proliferation of new piano playing techniques. Long-standing musical techniques were based on melodies that were achieved directly while playing the piano. Playing techniques have improved as a result of digital tools which contributed to the development of artistic playing during the melody's adaptation. These approaches are more innovative, promote sensitivity and pace as a result of playing the piano and editing the tunes with digital tools (ZHANG, 2020). The piano playing quality is directly related to the tempo. The timbre affects the tone, the breadth of sound propagation, which makes the piano playing unique. The harmony of the sound is achieved by using the pizzicato technique, which contributes to the pace and vibrant sound. This approach promotes improvised play that is not limited to artistic elements. Harmonic sound is achieved through the use of individual sounds (KAWAMURA *et al.*, 2018).

Playing the piano requires not only technical skills, but also improvisational skills. A harmonious performance is achieved through the use of natural sounds that depend on the musician's skills and mood. Emotional moves make the sound expressive, mental issues affect the performance intensity. The diverse sound contributes to the musical expression that is achieved by varying the timbres (ZHANG, 2021). The virtuosity of piano playing depends on the technique used, the variety of repertoire, accompaniment, sight-reading and other skills. The stability of sound depends on the developed ear for music. The difference in performance technique depends on the pitch, pace and structure of the musical compositions (SNELL II and STRINGHAM, 2021). The piano playing skills are achieved through the expressiveness of performance, which is shaped by the aesthetic sound. The aesthetics of piano playing depends on reflexes (hands, head, eyes). The aesthetics of piano playing contributes to emotional sound, artistic merit, and beauty of sound (SHU, 2016).

The sound's emotionality and harmony depend on the chords being played, including major, minor, diminished and augmented triads and dominant, major and minor seventh chords with inversions created by different timbres. Musical emotions arise

from extra-musical connotations and conditions, and not from the music's technical features (LAHDELMA and EEROLA, 2016). Piano playing results from keyboard harmony, which is shaped by the chords of various songs. One-dimensional emphasis on musical notation can affect creative and subtle ways of playing the piano. The musical technique not only depends on the sound's pace and power, but also on the sound's variation, which is based on its tone and extension. The staccato method helps to change the rhythm and tempo of melodies (KETOVIORI, 2015). Tonality and intervals while playing contribute to a unique style of performance, which affect the perception of melodies by the audience. The performance technique depends on the skills and abilities that affect the performance's artistic merit. The combination of style and tempo affects the aesthetic aspects and technique of performance. Major technique is based on a variety of chords, octaves, double notes. Fine technique relies on melismas and passages. Polyphonic technique involves playing several sounds simultaneously on different instruments. Pedaling technique relies on the use of pedals (WEIß *et al.*, 2019). Playing the piano requires following the composition's genre. Traditional melodies should be performed in a quality and expressive manner. To render folk motifs, the chords' clarity should be adjusted by placing fingers over the necessary notes, and by using short strokes. The expressive signs contribute to the performance's naturalness (ZHENG and LEUNG, 2021).

Available literature suggests that the piano music is shaped by the chords played, the tempo and a variety of repertoire.

Problem statement

Chinese piano music combines national traditions as well as Western traditions that create contemporary compositions and shape their expressiveness. The creative process combines cutting-edge techniques with the observance of the tonal pentatonic system, which contributes to the uniqueness of the melodic line, as well as strengthens the timbre and tone. The change in established melodic formulas, which are based on

national elements, contributes to the vividness and modernity of the melodies, which is rendered in the pieces written by Chinese composers. The uniqueness of Chinese piano music is based on vibrant sound, unlike Western music, which focuses on polyphonic sound. Chinese piano music combines traditional sounds with the national style elements. The purpose of the presented work is to analyze Chu Wanghua's role in shaping the contemporary piano tradition in China, using the 'Sounds of the Temple' Capriccio Suite as an example.

The research tasks were as follows:

- determine the significance of the parts of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Suite for Chinese piano music, focusing on the direct method of standardization;
- identify the most characteristic elements of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Suite that are used when playing the piano in terms of performance complexity and harmony, as well as influence on national traditions.

Methodology

Research design

The study is based on the method of standardization (SU and JIANG, 2021). The first phase of the study involved an analysis of the features of the parts of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Suite by Chu Wanghua, which helped to identify the most significant parameters that shape the sound's aesthetic aspects and expressiveness. Significance of the suite's parts was determined using the direct method of standardization, which is based on intensive parameters that have differences in the time of influence on the deliverable. This method was chosen for the experiment, as it provides an opportunity to analyze the selected composition and its structural components. The direct method of standardization is conventional and compares performance based on intensive and standard measures (SU and JIANG, 2021):

$$S = \frac{n_f}{n_g} \times c_e, (1)$$

where n_f is an assigned value, which was obtained as a result of the study (the number is equal to 1 to 5);

n_g is the maximum possible value that is expected in the research process;

c_e is the standard value.

The following phase of the study identified the elements that affect the quality of music performance. The following elements were presented by the authors:

- mirror reprise;
- rhythmic transformation;
- monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds;
- application of guó huà techniques;
- the presence of texture elements.

The importance of the presented elements was determined by the respondents focusing on the performance complexity and harmony, the influence on national traditions. The significance was also measured by the direct method of standardization, for which the respondents were provided with advantages for the presented items. Respondents were to place values from 1 to 3, where the value of 3 was given to the most preferable parameter (performance complexity / harmony / influence on national traditions). Values submitted by students were emailed to instructors within 3 days. The parameters were compared to each other using the standard deviation according to formula 2 (LAHDELMA and EEROLA, 2016)

$$S = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - x_{cp})^2}{n-1}, (2)$$

where:

S - is the standard deviation;

n is the number of respondents;

x_i is the respondent's individual value;

x_{cp} is the arithmetic mean of the respondents.

Sample

A total of 144 piano students from Lishui University and Normal College, Jinhua were recruited to determine the characteristic features of the Chinese piano music. Piano skills, as well as enrollment for the 2nd-5th year of study was the main requirement for the selection of respondents. Students of the 2nd-5th year of study were chosen for the experiment because they have piano skills. First-year students were not involved in the study because the first-year curriculum addresses the theory, without placing a major emphasis on practicing. The level of students' piano playing skills was determined based on previous indicators of students' academic performance. It was also considered that, according to the curriculum, students of 2-5 years of study already possess the necessary range of piano skills. For the same reason, 15 first-year students were excluded from the study. Respondents provided voluntary consent to participate in the study, which is consistent with ethical standards for scientific publications.

Statistical processing

Microsoft Excel was used for the processing of the statistics. Microsoft Excel automated the collection, sorting and structuring of information. The software also helped to build diagrams based on structured data.

Ethical issues

This article is written within the ethical standards that apply to scholarly papers. The study ethics was based on respondents' rights and responsibilities, as well as the correctness of the provided information (NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, 2016).

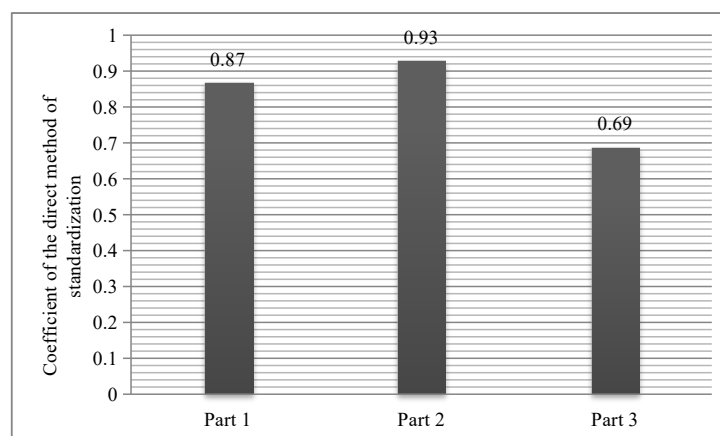
Research limitations

The study is subject to limitations caused by addressing the piano tradition in the case of Chu Wanghua's 'Sounds of the Temple', excluding comparisons with other piano pieces. However, the paper provides a detailed analysis of the suite parts, as well as the elements that contribute to the piano music.

Results

Chu Wanghua is one of China's most influential contemporary composers who did not focus solely on authentic music and included illustrative effects. The 'Sounds of the Temple' Suite was created for the piano in 1983, and its performance is beautiful and unorthodox, with folk flavor and a harmonious combination of traditional and Western performance techniques. The 'Sounds of the Temple' can be divided into three parts, the significance of which was determined by the authors according to the direct method of standardization (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - The Significance of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Suite for Chinese Piano Music



The subject of the first part (0.87) is based on the reflections of a Buddhist monk, which are driven by the absence of laws and

rules according to the Buddhist philosophy. The first part reveals the ways of thinking prevailing in China. The piano music of the first part is based on a linear representation of sounds that seeks to create harmony in a blurred and distorted setting. The vertical music elements accompany the major phrases, which imitate the sounds of the bells. The first part is described by slow tempo, which prevails over dynamic sounds. The first part uses a sophisticated musical language, which is based on C-sharp minor - E-major - C-sharp minor that is typical for early Chinese compositions. However, unlike classical compositions, the first part is described by Moderato maestoso timbre, for which repetition is typical. This approach contributes to the composition's romanticism. Figure 2 shows the first part's sheet music.

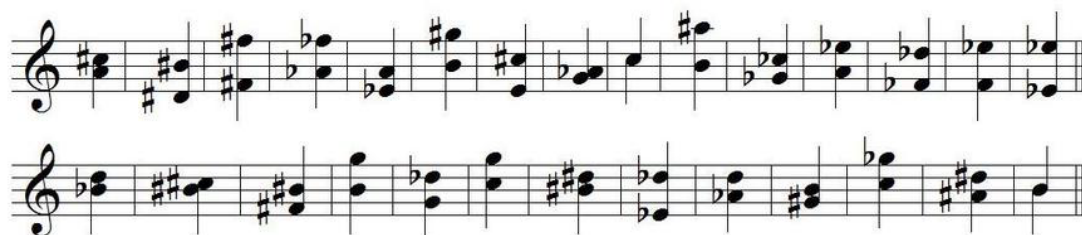
Figure 2 - An example of the sheet music for the first part of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Capriccio Suite

The image displays a page of sheet music for a piano piece. At the top, the tempo is indicated as 'Lento po rubato con calma ca. ♩ = 60'. The music is written in a 3/4 time signature. The first system shows measures 1 through 6, with dynamic markings of *p* and *pp*. The second system shows measures 7 through 12, with dynamic markings of *ppp* and *mf*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings. The piece concludes with a final chord in measure 12.

The second part of the suite (0.93) renders the character's inner feelings, which is achieved through emotional and rhythmic movements. This part uses polyphony with canon technique, and imitates other instruments, for example, drums, which are

the direct elements of the national traditions. The second part is described by a coherent tone row, which contributes to the connection of the piece's second and third parts. The combination of D, E-flat, F, B-flat helps to preserve the pentatonic scale system. The lyrical intonations draw a parallel with the serenade, as well as disrupt the melody's restraint and austerity. The second part uses explicit and implicit pentatonic scale, which hides the complexity of Chinese music. It is also based on the principle of circular repetition of elements that combine national and modern Chinese traditions. The advantage of the second part is also associated with the repetition of rhythmic elements imitating the drum sounds and contributing to the aesthetic aspects of playing melodies (Figure 3).

Figure 3 - An example of the sheet music for the second part of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Capriccio Suite



The storyline of the third part (0.69) is filled with dramatic elements that create contemplative elements which are based on slow tempos that prevail over dynamic tempos. In the third part, the major tonality deviation is favored over the pentatonic deviation. It is described by lyricism, thin texture, simplicity of melodies, the interplay of clear form and fluidity of development. It is also characterized by acoustic elements, attention to detail. The main section in the third part is emphasized by the low register, which covers a wide range of notes. The melody's tempo displays the freedom of sound.

Focusing on the direct method of standardization, the second part of the suite is the most significant and rich in musical elements,

as it addresses polyphonic performance of music, as well as imitates the sounds of other instruments.

The identified features of the three parts of the 'Sounds of the Temple' suite and their advantages helped to determine the elements that affect the peculiarity of the melody created when playing the piano. The intricacies which arise when playing these elements were revealed by using the direct method of standardization. The elements were compared with each other by using the standard deviation (formula 2) (Table 1).

Table 1 - Elements of the 'Sounds of the Temple' Suite affecting the uniqueness of the piano melody

Suite element	Complexity of performance	Seamless performance	Impact on national traditions	Standard deviation
Mirror reprise	-	+ -	+	0,47
Rhythmic transformation	-	+	+ -	0,92
Monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds	+	+ -	+ -	1,07
Application of guó huà techniques	+	-	+ -	0,81
The presence of texture elements	2	-	+	0,57

+ - ranked first in terms of importance
+ - - ranked second in terms of importance
- - ranked third in terms of importance

The analysis of the identified elements of the 'Sounds of the Temple' suite helped to determine their importance for the complexity and harmony of performance, and influence on national traditions. The findings suggested that the applied 'mirror reprise' element has a greater influence on the national traditions, because it renders high-pitched sounds, strengthening the symmetry. This is because national Chinese sounds are described

by the use of falsetto as a result of rendering high-pitched sounds. High-pitched sounds contribute to harmonious performance, so the second most important influence of a mirror reprise is for the performance harmony.

The rhythmic transformation develops intonation and main parts, as well as maintains aesthetics, which primarily contributes to the performance's harmony. The influence of rhythmic transformation on national traditions is the second most important element.

The monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds while playing the piano centers around the difficulty of performance, as it helps to create improvisational elements, as well as tranquil music and mood swings. The improvisational elements render cheerful and joyful notes, as well as create contrasting themes that contribute to a vibrant culminating point. This involves pentatonic, rhythmic movements that affect the emotionality of performance. The seamless rendering and influence on national traditions are almost on the same level, because the main difficulty is to maintain the monotonous performance in a specific section.

The use of *guó huà* techniques also involves the difficulty of performance, as it is based on the application of sound elements that display the texture typical for Chinese painting. Centering around *guó huà*, the melody renders expressiveness, overcoming technical difficulties. More specifically, this parameter is displayed in the bell sounds used in the suite's final part, which are based on imagination. The *guó huà* techniques applied in the suite also contribute to the preservation of national traditions, which render the sounds of the natural environment.

The texture elements primarily affect the national traditions, because they are based on the uniqueness of flavor, being displayed through pentatonic sounds and unique timbres. The suite has pure sounds that convey the uniqueness of Chinese musical culture. The texture elements involve the second vertical structure, which affects the melody's harmony and which is

based on the expressiveness that contributes to the timbre interpretation. The texture elements preserve the strokes' cultural pattern, influencing the national identity and rhythm.

Comparison of the indicators using the standard deviation suggested that monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds in terms of complexity and harmony of performance and influence on national traditions do not correlate with each other (1.07), which is due to the complexity of performance and lack of differences among the remaining indicators.

Discussion

Determining the characteristic features of musical performance while playing the piano was based on the analysis of scientific articles. Peking Opera has one of the highest artistic statuses in traditional Chinese culture, so the quality of the staged action and the sound of the musical instruments involved must be of a high standard. Piano music for Peking Opera is based on the precise performance that is created by the touches and movements of the pedals. Piano techniques of touching the keys and applying the pedals have implications for pure sound effects. Piano music in opera must match the national style, which contributes to the expressiveness of the sound (DENG, 2022). Chinese scholars believe that the expressiveness of the piano music comes from the use of pedals. Pedals help to extend the duration of sounds that become richer and more vivid. The pedaling technique requires developing a good ear for music, which helps to capture tones. For example, when playing low-pitched sounds, the pedal contributes to the full sound and unlocking of the sound, especially in fast playing, and it also shapes the tone and bar of the performance (XIAOLIN, 2021). The harmony during a piano performance is achieved by the chords used. The chords shape a major key, as well as the moderate simultaneous sound of three or more tones.

Major chords render joyful sounds, given the interval; minor chords create a melancholic sound (CORRIGALL *et al.*, 2022). This paper addresses the definition of harmony based on Chu Wanghua's 'Sounds of the Temple' capriccio suite, which made it possible to determine the storyline's features, as well as the music elements used in the three parts of the suite, without focusing on the variety of chords.

William Bradbury's 'The Lament of the Blind Orphan Girl', which was written in 3/8 meter, is one of the striking American piano music. Maintaining a culminating point while playing results from a dramatic transition to a minor tonality. The longer the duration and volume, the more harmonious melodies are observed (GALE, 2021). Musicians believe that the harmony of melodies depends on a particular piece of music. The perception of piano compositions depends on the audience's musical skills, following the allocation among tonality, rhythm and melodic sound (JIMENEZ and KUUSI, 2018). The harmony of piano melodies depends on the degree to which they rely on repetitive patterns and intense dissonances. Maurice Ravel's 'Entre Cloches' for piano imitates the sounds of bells. A sophisticated sound is produced with a variety of acoustic resonators that affect the performance quality (KIEFFER, 2017). The ratio of pitch to tone affects the emotionality of songs played on the piano. The timbre affects the sound features, its pitch, volume, and duration. Therefore, when playing new compositions, attention should be paid to analyzing the compositions to determine the most expressive elements (MIYAZAKI *et al.*, 2018). In this paper, a number of elements (mirror reprise, rhythmic transformation, monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds, etc.) that were used in the suite while playing the piano were emphasized, and their difficulty, harmony, and the presence of national traditions were determined.

During a piano performance, the acoustic parameters should be considered. The acoustic parameters depend on the audience (concert hall), as well as the instrument's tuning. Acoustic parameters affect the vividness, expressiveness of performance,

and also create loud, soft, rich sounds that affect the performance quality (MAO, 2022). Melodious piano playing is achieved as a result of awareness of the musical notes, the technical skills, improved learning effectiveness. Playing the piano contributes to the development of musicality and imagination. Loud sound contributes to clearer sheet music. The evenness of the sound is achieved by the dotted rhythms that result from additional tension (YIRAN, 2021). The piano is one of the important musical instruments in China that combines the national culture with the Western style of performance. Chinese piano music is described by a unique style that is based on ethnic elements, symbolism, spiritual commitment, and Chinese philosophy (BI, 2019). This paper established that the mirror reprise and the texture elements presented in the 'Sounds of the Temple' suite have a greater influence on the preservation of national culture.

The submitted writings place the major emphasis in piano music on a harmonious combination of sounds, the use of acoustic elements, as well as the emotionality. In this paper the piano music was studied on the basis of Chu Wanghua's 'Sounds of the Temple' suite, which helped to identify the features of each of the parts of the suite, as well as to determine the music elements that affect the performance vividness and expressiveness.

Conclusions

The specific features of the Chinese piano music were studied on the basis of the 'Sounds of the Temple' capriccio suite. The significance of the suite's parts for piano was initially determined. The findings suggested that the second part is the most important for Chinese piano music, pursuant to the definition of the direct method of standardization (0.93). The second part of the suite involves the use of polyphony, imitating the sound of other instruments. The coherent tone row typical for the second part contributes to the connection of the other parts of the suite. The first part (0.87) creates harmony of sound, imitating the sounds of

bells, and applying a restrained sound. The third part (0.69) relies on slow tempos, the melody simplicity, covering the wide range of note keys.

The authors have also identified the suite's elements that contribute to the melody's uniqueness - mirror reprise, rhythmic transformation, monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds, guó huà techniques, texture elements. The elements were compared in terms of complexity and harmony of performance, and influence on national traditions. The mirror reprise and texture elements were found to be most important in influencing national traditions. Rhythmic transformation has a greater influence on the harmony of the performance, because it contributes to the development of intonation and aesthetics. The monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds and the guó huà techniques have a greater impact on the difficulty of performance. The standard deviation for these elements suggested that a lack of correlation of values is observed in the monotonous repetition of phrases and sounds (1.07), because it is based on the complexity of performance and lack of differences among the remaining parameters. The paper's practical implications involve the possibility of applying piano playing techniques to expressive sound, based on the 'Sounds of the Temple' suite by Chu Wanghua. Further studies might compare the specific features of Chinese and Western musical compositions for piano. The results of the research can be used in further musicological works, in particular, the developed methodological model can be used to analyze the compositions of other composers from different countries. In addition, the article presents an analysis of the work of the Chinese composer, which can be used in the process of further research into Chinese culture, in particular, piano music.

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