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**FEATURES OF TRADITIONAL MUSICAL CULTURE IN CHINA
ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ТРАДИЦІЙНОЇ МУЗИЧНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ В КИТАЇ****Wang Liwen / Ван Лівень***graduate student of the department of choreography
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Abstract. *The article examines the peculiarities of traditional musical culture in China and the specifics of the processes associated with its integration into world culture and the adoption of the achievements of European civilisation. The purpose of the article is to describe the peculiarities of the traditional musical culture of China and to trace the origins of the Europeanised model of piano performance in a country that was alien to this culture until recently. It has been found that Chinese pianism in its formation and development is based on both the comprehension of European and world piano art and national musical traditions, which, in addition to purely professional musical criteria, are permeated with the philosophy of Confucianism and Taoism.*

Key words: *traditional musical culture of China, national traditions, Chinese folk instruments, Confucianism, state educational system.*

Introduction.

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 necessary, but even obligatory element of human development, and demanded to start education with poetry, strengthen it with ceremonies and complete it with music. According to Confucianism, music is a microcosm embodying the great cosmos; beautiful music contributes to the organisation of an expedient state structure, always has a strictly defined and logical structure and many of its elements are symbolic in nature. According to the beliefs of the ancient Chinese, the impact of music not only on man, but also on nature is such that violations of the musical system can even lead to various disasters.

Along with Confucianism, one of the leading trends in Chinese philosophy has long been Taoism, founded by Lao Tzu (6th century BC). Lao Tzu interprets the term Dao («road», «path») in a broad, generalised way, as the path passed by nature and people in their formation and development.

As in Confucianism, and in Daoist thinkers we meet considerations about the cosmological meaning of music, about its influence on nature and about the reflection of nature in music. In the aesthetic and ethical views of Lao Tzu, the criterion of beauty is simplicity and modesty, inherent in all natural things. The same provisions are the basis of the concept of «Chin Dan Gao Yuan», widespread in China, which includes, in addition to simplicity and modesty, nobility and breadth.

Of other Chinese cosmological theories of music, the most interesting is the theory set out in the book «Liushi Chunyao» (or «Chronicle – Spring and Autumn») in the



presentation of Liu Buwei), which states that music is the harmony of the world, that it is born and develops with nature.

Confucianism and Taoism created the cultural climate in which Chinese musical culture, including piano culture, developed and continues to develop.

Chinese pianism in its formation and formation is based both on the comprehension of European, world piano art, and on national musical traditions, which, in addition to purely professional musical criteria, are permeated with the philosophy of Confucianism and Taoism.

Main text.

China has long been called the land of «Li Yue» – the land of etiquette (Li) and music (Yue). For many centuries, hardworking Chinese people have created various types of art (theatre, calligraphy, poetry, painting, architecture, etc.), with which traditional Chinese music is closely associated. The common desire for perfection and taste gave rise to original forms and traditions. This is the foundation on which Chinese musical culture has been and continues to be built.

In ancient China, music had social and educational significance. The great Chinese philosopher and thinker Confucius (551–479 BC) believed that music was not only a necessary but also an obligatory part of human development. He considered music to be one of the six arts and called for education to begin with poetry, be supported by ceremonies, and end with music. According to Confucianism, music is a microcosm that embodies the larger cosmos; good music helps to streamline the correct state system, always has a clearly defined and logical structure, and many of its elements are symbolic. The ancient Chinese believed that music influenced not only people but also nature, and that a disruption of the musical system could lead to various disasters [5, s. 139].

In addition to Confucianism, one of the main streams of Chinese philosophy has long been Taoism, whose founder is considered to be Lao Tzu (571–471 BC). The main concept of this trend – Tao («path», «path») – is metaphorically compared to water (flexible and unbreakable). The direction of action that follows from Tao is non-action (wu wei): yielding, submissiveness, giving up desires and struggle. Having rejected luxury and war, the sage ruler must return to the people the simplicity, purity and ignorance that existed before the advent of culture and morality. Both Confucian and Taoist thinkers affirmed the cosmological significance of music, its influence on nature, and the reflection of nature in music. In the aesthetic and ethical views of Lao Tzu, the criterion of beauty is the pursuit of simplicity and modesty. The same ideas underlie the concepts of qing (simplicity), dan (modesty), gao (nobility), yuan (breadth), which are widespread in China [1. s. 45].

Chinese musical culture has long incorporated the national traditions of the country's various ethnic groups. One of the oldest forms is the performance of music on folk instruments. As early as the Zhou Dynasty (11th century BC), musicians used more than 70 instruments, which were divided into eight groups according to the material of manufacture: gold (bell, Zhao, etc.), stone (Qin, etc.), stringed (Guqin, Xie, etc.), bamboo (Xiao, Hu), pumpkin (Shen, Zheng, etc.), earthen (Xun, Fou, etc.), leather (Qangu, Zhaogu, etc.), and wood (Zhu, Yu, etc.). All these instruments are called the eight «sounds» of the space surrounding a person [4. s. 69]. Since Li Yue's



instructions were widely distributed in the palaces and houses of feudal lords, they contributed to the emergence of talented and even outstanding musicians, the best of whom were called «shi» (for example, Shikuan, Shijuan, Shicao, Shixiang). With the development of playing instruments, the theory of playing also developed. For example, the famous musician Shi Shiwei (from Zheng Province) expressed his opinion after playing the guqin: «The inner feeling comes from the heart, the outer feeling from the instrument» [6. s. 239]. This is one of the main aesthetic principles of playing traditional instruments.

Guqin music is a living embodiment of Chinese musical aesthetics. The guqin is an ancient Chinese seven-string plucked instrument played with two hands: the finger of the right hand touches the string with a pad or fingernail, and the fingers of the left hand grip the corresponding string and slide along it, in some cases creating the effect of doubling major notes. The sounds of the Guqin express a person's deep dreaminess: as if the soul is flying through the sky. One Chinese historian said in this context: «If you want to learn about Chinese music, read the literature on the Guqin...» [2. s. 54]. In the history of performance, valuable theoretical material includes such books as *The Theory of Playing the Guqin* (Chen Yudiao, Beisun Dynasty), *The Atmosphere of the Guqin in Xishan* (Xu Shaning, Ming Dynasty), and *Eight Rules for Playing the Qin and Gu* (Dai Yuan, Qing Dynasty).

During the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), the Twelve Melodies palace music system was adopted in 628, and a state structure was subsequently established in which the Da Yueshu and Gu Chuishi institutes managed music education and tested musicians' knowledge. Music education lasted 10-15 years, and upon completion, musicians had to play more than 50 complex pieces, for which the commission gave grades: excellent, good, satisfactory [3. s. 17].

So, China is a country where music has always played an important role, but for thousands of years it has been the traditional culture of the nation, closed to foreign influences. Many scholars writing about China in different languages acknowledge the great role of the philosophy of Confucius (551–479 BC) in shaping the national consciousness. In the field of music, this doctrine states that it is necessary for human development, as it is one of the manifestations of a harmonious and purposeful world. However, the word «yue» in Chinese refers not only to music but also to other forms of aesthetic activity. Most importantly, yue means structurally ordered beauty.

As noted, for centuries, almost until recently and even today, for many Chinese people, culture was closed, free of foreign influences – music consisted of playing traditional instruments and folk songs. The current massive interest in this layer of culture can be explained by the fact that music and playing musical instruments have been cultivated extremely intensively in China throughout history due to the special attitude towards this type of aesthetic activity. And in the modern Chinese consciousness, the traditional idea of man as a microcosm and the cosmological understanding of music form the basis of the national concept of its teaching. The art of music is much more closely connected with human existence than in European ideas. According to ancient and modern Chinese traditional teachings, everything in man is one with the cosmos. Music, like other types of aesthetic activity, is characterised by a very multifaceted symbolic thinking – despite its outward simplicity, everything is



correlated with the universe and the socio-political system.

The sounds of the 12-step pitch correspond to the months of the year, the time of day, and the structure of the pentatonic system is identified with the five planets, five colours, five parts of the world, five senses, five emotional and psychological types of intonation, and five social ranks. The sound of traditional ceremonial instrumental ensembles must exactly match the sound symbolism developed, and its violation can cause natural disasters, national and political catastrophes. The world is based on five elements (like five sounds in a musical system, five emotional modes): Water, Earth, Fire, Wood and Metal. Traditional wind instruments, as well as instruments with wooden and metal strings, belong to this cosmic element.

Music lessons were part of the mandatory educational «set» along with the study of rituals (norms of behaviour), language and its written form (the ability to write characters), that is, in fact, painting and graphic arts training. Confucianism is not exactly a philosophy; rather, it is a traditional system of life values, «precepts», by which the Chinese people have lived for over two thousand years. The judgements and statements of the Great Teacher were written down by his numerous disciples, and his meaning was developed as a kind of religious cult. In the sixth century, by order of the rulers, temples in honour of Confucius were built in literally every city. The Chinese have a respectful and reverent attitude towards the descendants of this outstanding thinker, who at the beginning of the XX century numbered about thirty thousand people.

Musical culture in China has always been an important part of people's lives and the social and educational «programme» of the state. The era of the famous Tang Dynasty, which ruled Central Asia in the seventh and eighth centuries (before the Mongol unification of the Yuan Dynasty), is indicative in this regard. It was a time of flourishing agriculture, trade and wide contacts with many countries of Asia and the Far East, a time of significant achievements of Chinese culture. The Tang art style, especially music, spread to Korea, Japan and Vietnam. During the Tang Dynasty, there were special departments of Da Yueshu (in charge of canonical and folk music) and Ku Zhuishu (in charge of court orchestras). Chinese instruments were diverse and numerous - strings, plucked instruments and wind instruments. Festive music (yan yue), for example, used instruments from Central Asia, India, Korea and Indochina and was called «10 kinds of music» (fizhi). In the seventh century, court orchestras numbered up to 1,500 performers. Chamber music on strings and wind instruments became widespread in the homes of the nobility and educated people, and history has preserved the names of famous musicians of this period.

During the T'ai period (when the anchor clock and gunpowder were invented and the classical tea ceremony was established), a state system of music training existed for 15 years. At the beginning of the eighth century, five music schools were opened: The Court School (Jiaofan) and the Pear Garden (Liyuan) at the imperial palace. This educational system was led by the aforementioned Da Yueshu and Cui Chlsuishu, who controlled the level of skill. Thus, a demanding approach to mastering the instrument became a distinct national trait, and the widespread spread of music education contributed to the nation's musicality. Even today, the lack of absolute hearing is rare among the Chinese. However, this is due not only to the traditional cult of music



learning, but also to the very nature of the 'tonal' language, in which modulations of vowel pitch give words different meanings.

The cult of music in the twentieth century stems from the age-old rituals of music-making and the understanding of its role in human aesthetic activity. And the «modernization» of instruments is associated with new political events and ideological concepts – the desire to integrate into world culture, to adopt the achievements of European civilisation.

Conclusions.

Piano art, as well as other kinds of art, at any stages of its formation and development is connected with socio-historical conditions and is subject to their influence. The main course is a course on the way to civilisation, despite the resistance of reactionary forces trying to oppose progress. And China's culture has experienced this more than once. The Chinese people have created the original system of views on the nature and human society, on history of development of culture. Chinese piano art develops in line with this system and in its own way reflects the history of China, connected with huge social and political changes, starting from the Opium War (1840) and up to the present period of «reform and openness of foreign relations».

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***Анотація.** У статті досліджуються особливості традиційної музичної культури в Китаї та специфіка процесів, пов'язаних з її інтеграцією у світову культуру, перейняття досягнень європейської цивілізації. Мета статті – описати особливості традиційної музичної культури Китаю та простежити витоки європеїзованої моделі фортепіанного виконавства в країні, донедавна чужій для цієї культури. Виявлено, що китайський піанізм у своєму становленні та формуванні базується як на досягненні європейського, світового фортепіанного мистецтва, так і на національних музичних традиціях, які, крім суто професійних музичних критеріїв, пронизані філософією конфуціанства й даосизму.*

***Ключові слова:** традиційна музична культура Китаю, національні традиції, народні інструменти Китаю, конфуціанство, даосизм, державна освітня система.*

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