

The Analysis of Zhang Zhao's Piano Works

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Abstract

The research 'The Analysis of Zhang Zhao's Piano Works' This qualitative research study has two objectives: 1. To investigate the historical development of Zhang Zhao piano works. 2. To analyze the selected pieces of Zhang Zhao's piano works. The main sources are document data and field work data. Field data were obtained through observations and interviews.

The results show that:

1. Over time, the historical development of Zhang Zhao's piano work has changed a lot. In the Early Period (1980s to the 1990s), the traditional Chinese style was the center of his creation. In the Middle Period (Westernization), around the 1990s-2000s), Western music and Zhao's Chinese cultural background had a significant impact on his style development. Now, in the Late Period (Mature Period), from 2000s to date), Zhang Zhao's style has changed. He incorporated these concepts into modern music and learned natural inspiration.

2. By analyzing the characteristics of Zhang Zhao's piano works by the structure, melody, rhythm, and harmony of the two piano works, "Pi Huang" and "The Three Songs of Foothills", The researcher have found that the stylistic characteristics of Zhang Zhao's works have changed, no matter from the structure used, the melody composed, the rhythm, or the harmonic modes used, from the beginning of the Early Period when he only wanted to circumvent Western compositional techniques, perfectly highlighting the Chinese national characteristics and culture, emphasizing on the imitation of the Chinese instrumental sound, and heavily adopting the national style to compose piano pieces. Then in the Middle Period, he began to adopt western compositional structures and techniques, and tried to integrate them with the Chinese pentatonic scale to show the emotions and feelings in Zhang Zhao's heart. All these changes show Zhang Zhao's inner struggle and transformation, and also reveal that Zhang Zhao's works are characterized by his strong Chinese background, the penetration of Western influences, as well as his Chinese heritage, Chinese culture and art, and the inner feelings brought to him by nature.

Keywords: Zhang Zhao; Piano Works; Historical Developments; Music Analysis

Introduction

A celebrated Chinese composer, pianist, and distinguished educator, Zhao Zhang (b. 1964) has written music for voice, dance, and a wide variety of instruments. His works include compositions for symphonic and chamber orchestras, chamber ensembles, chorus, and solo and ensemble works for Chinese traditional instruments. He has written two operas and two musicals. Zhang's works have been widely performed, recorded, and have received international recognition. He has the distinction of being the first Chinese composer whose piano compositions were selected for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and Trinity College London. His music is published by Schott Music and People's Music Publishing House, and his music and articles have been collected in the Dictionary of Chinese Music and Musicians, the Chinese Symphonic Anthology, and A Century of Piano Solo Works by Chinese Composers.

During his career as a pianist and composer, Mr. Zhao has historically created a large number of works spanning different periods and displaying different styles and characteristics. Unfortunately, despite Zhao Yun's achievements, the composer's contributions have not been widely recognized in mainstream music contexts. In addition, although Zhang Zhao's works have gained certain recognition around the world, previous academic research on Zhang's piano works has mainly focused on the analysis and exploration of his single work, and has not summarized his career piano works. Research on characteristics and style has been limited.

The absence or lack of research analyzing Zhang's style warrants further investigation, especially as Asian students' consumption of piano literature continues to increase and music and art curricula diversify. Zhang Zhao's historical status is increasing day by day, and scholars and the public are eager for more analysis and guidance on his piano works to help them learn and perform. In this study, the researcher will focus on selecting representative works from his Early Period (1980s-1990s), the Middle Period (Westernization, around 1990s-2000s) and the Late Period (mature period, from 2000s to date) to discuss his unique style in each period and highlight the historical development over the years. And select two of his masterpieces to conduct an in-depth analysis from the aspects of structure, melody, rhythm, and harmony, allowing readers to understand the development of his unique composition style in different periods, going beyond existing research, and incorporating these important new dimensions into existing in the academic literature.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the historical development of Zhang Zhao piano works.
2. To analyze the selected pieces of Zhang Zhao 's piano works.

Research Methodology

The methodology of the research was a qualitative method. Two types of data were collected ---document data and field work data. Field data were obtained through observations and interviews. The researcher will collect data through literature reading, music listening and video watching. The researcher will listen to his piano works which will be covered in the research. Accompanied with technical analysis of his compositional techniques, stylistic features and thematic development, the researcher can obtain a professional and profound

knowledge. The researcher will also watch videos introducing the pianist and his music works and interviews exploring his styles and characteristics. All data will be helpful for the research.

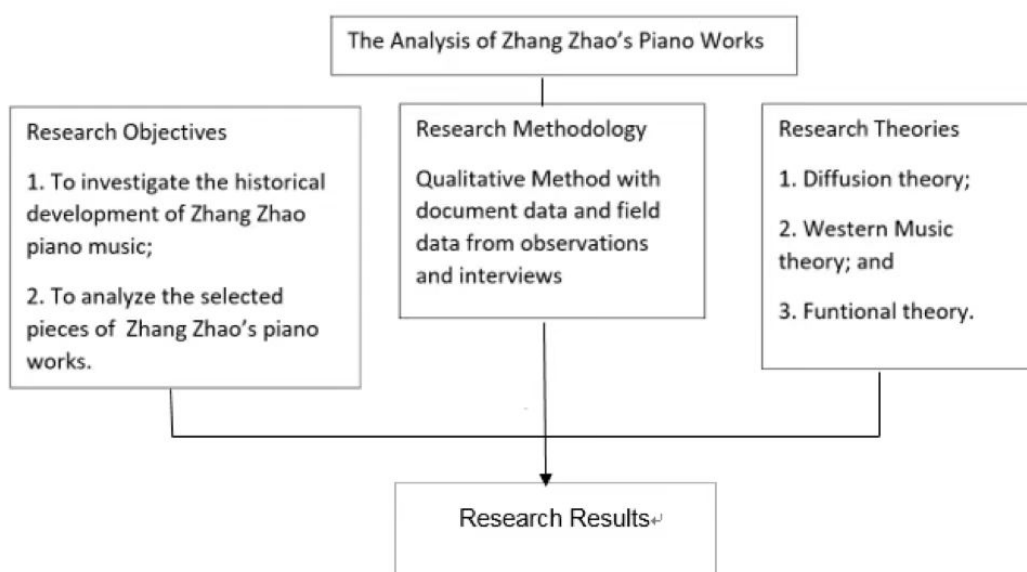
Data analysis in this research focused on identifying and extracting useful information from the collected raw data, eventually making meaningful interpretations and conclusions. Thus, in the research, the qualitative data earlier collected is analyzed through the thematic analysis, where the focus is on identifying key themes and patterns relating to the stylistic features and characteristics in Zhang Zhao's piano works. The thematic analysis reveals detailed interpretations of stylistic features and characteristics unique to Zhang Zhao's piano works across different periods.

For the first objective, I will identify the three periods in his career and also the representative piano works in each period with respective styles. Then, the historical development of his style will become clear by knowing the changes over the years.

For the second objective, I will select his masterpieces in his mature period for technical analysis in terms of structure, melody, rhythm, harmony compositional techniques and stylistic features, etc.

Research Conceptual Framework

Theories used for the research were diffusionism, functionalism, and Western music theory. This conceptual framework is shown in the following diagram.



Research Scope

The research scope for the thesis describes the boundaries within which the research was conducted. The research scope ensured that the research objectives were realistic and achievable based on time and resource constraints. For this research, the research scope was limited to the representative piano music of Zhang Zhao across the periods of his career, including Pin Huang 1995 in the Early period (1980s-1990s), The Three Song of Southern Foothills (early 2000s) in the Middle period (Westernization, around 1990s-2000s) and Ballad (2013) and Nature No.1 (2021) in the Late period (mature period, from 2000s to date), and the

characteristics of his masterpieces, including Pi Huang and Three songs of the Southern Foothills. The elements absorbed in his representative piano works in each period of his career will be introduced, and will be a technical analysis of his two selected piano works in terms of their structure, melody, rhythm and harmony. The study scope of time is December 2022 to January 2024.

Research Findings

The research covered the four major compositions in Zhang Zhao's musical epoch including Pi Huang (1995), Three Songs of Southern Foothills (2000s), Ballad (2013), and Nature No. 1 (2021) to learn about the influence of Chinese traditional elements and Western techniques and to perceive how his compositional styles have changed across the three periods in his career, including the Early period (1980s-1990s), Middle period (around 1990s-2000s) and Late period (from 2000s to date). It will be a detailed introduction to the elements in each of these representative works:

1. the Early Period (1980s-1990s) with Pi Huang 1995 as a case

This period happened between 1980 and 1990s when Zhang Zhao's piano works were significantly influenced by his Chinese heritage and traditions. Pi Huang is the typical example in this period because it represents Zhang Zhao's quest for nationalism and cultural identity. During the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), the first Western keyboard instrument was introduced into China with the rise of Peking Opera; therefore, against this background, Zhang Zhao's incorporation of Peking Opera into Pi Huang is reasonable and creative. Pi Huang was originally developed in 1995 and finalized in 2005 after revisions. However, despite its fine quality, Zhang Zhao had kept refining and enriching its content until it was finalized in 2009(Gu, 2020). In the first "Palatino" Cup Chinese Music Composition Piano Works Competition in China, Pi Huang stood out to become the winner of the competition. It has a total of 10 parts, including:

Table 1, the 10 parts of Pi Huang

10 sections in Chinese	English translation	Italian markings	Features	Peking Opera style
<i>Daoban</i>	Introduction	Rubato	Prelude	Free
<i>Yuanban</i>	Original	Largo pacatamente	The main theme	Xi Pi
<i>Erliu</i>	Two six	Allegro innocente	Gradual increase in speed with a clear attitude.	Xi Pi
<i>Liushui</i>	Running Water	Allegro zeffiroso	A rhythm of one beat and two beats in Peking Opera, and Pi Huang uses a two-beat rhythm to achieve acceleration.	Xi Pi

<i>Kuai Sanyan</i>	Fast Four Beats	Spirito	Passion and liveliness	Xi Pi
<i>Manban</i>	Slow plate	Lento a capriccio	Music is relaxed after the transition and the turning point	Er Huang
<i>Kuaiban</i>	Fast plate	Lento a capriccio	A distinct contrast with Slow Plate, showing the drama more deeply.	Xi Pi
<i>Yaoban</i>	Rock plate	Vivace angoscioso	Tight pull slow-singing	Xi Pi
<i>Duoban</i>	Stomp plate	Presto sdegnoso	Reaches the peak speed of the whole song	Xi Pi
<i>Weisheng</i>	Ending	Andante brillante	A sense of summary	Xi Pi

Traditionally, the Chinese music is typically drawn from five pentatonic modes, and each is made up of five notes, namely Gong (宫), Shang (商), Jue(角), 徵(Zhi) and Yu (羽). Both the note and the modal system can be represented by each name. Among the five notes, *Gong* and *Zhi* resemble the Western major scale most, and the intervallic relationships between the tonic and the other pitches produce major seconds, thirds and sixths. Therefore, *Gong* and *Zhi* are mostly used in *Xi Pi* style. *Jue* and *Yu* bear similarity with Western minor scale because the intervallic relationships between the tonic and the other pitches produce minor thirds, sixths and sevenths. They are usually used in *Er Huang*. *Shang* combines the features of both major and minor tonalities, which contain both major and seconds and minor sevenths. As is revealed in table 1, Zhang Zhao uses *Xi Pi* style throughout the music. For example, he uses *Xi Pi* to express the negative emotions such as anger and indignation on the mistreatment inflicted upon Yue Fei, the historical hero in Song dynasty. For this expression, Zhang Zhao placed the G *Zhi* mode purposefully in the treble clef and E^b *Gong* mode in the bass clef, which establishes two separate but interwoven modes. The *Douban* is a *presto* passage and leads to a dramatic climax with one beat per measure with *crescendo* and *accelerando*.

Zhang Zhao also used a colorful musical device *Jin la man chang* (slow singing with fast bowing accompaniment), a Peking Opera feature in the *Yaoban* section to express tension. He suggested that one can hear the top voice E^b-A^b in whole notes to represent the slow singing line when considering the passage from figure 1. Zhang used traditional Chinese stringed instruments, including Jinghu and Sanxian, and the percussion instrument, the Bangu, to produce the inner accompanying voices.



Figure 1, *Jin la man chang* in *Yaoban*, *Pi Huang* by Z. Zhang, mm. 135-138.

Different from *Xi Pi* which is used to express excitement and features a strong tonality and fast tempo, *Er Huang* is characterized by its lyricism, slow tempo and a minor tonality, and it is inspired by a sense of fantasy and romanticism. The *Manban* in mm.88-91 is a slow and dream-like section, a typical *Er Huang* style. It is written in the mode of *E^b Yu* (*E^b-G^b-A^b-B^b-D^b*), and uses a minor tonality to capture the fantasy-like quality of the passage (figure 2). As the only section written in *Er Huang* style, the *Manban* serves as the lyrical connection between the previous and following sections.



Figure 2, *Manban* in *Er Huang* style, *Pi Huang* by Z. Zhang, mm. 88-91.

In addition to Peking Opera, *Pi Huang* also reveals the influence of nature and Chinese literature on Zhang Zhao's style. When he composed *Pi Huang*, he drew inspiration from the well-known Great View Pavilion Couplet of Kunming written by Ran Sun (1711-1773) in 1765. An antithetic couplet in Chinese poetry is a pair of lines having parallel rhyme and metrical length. *Great View Pavilion Couplet of Kunming* is the longest couplet in Chinese poetry and each line has 90 characters to offer a perfect panorama of the entire lake. The top line depicts the picturesque scenery of Dian Lake, which is quite familiar for Zhang Zhao when he studied in the Yunnan Art School by the lake. This line inspired him to portray the scenery in two sections, *Erliu* and *Liushui*. The bottom line is about national heroes such as Yue Fei and he expressed his indignation to his tragic death in *Duoban* and *Weisheng*. *Duoban* is about his rage at Yue Fei's suffering, and *Weisheng* is his elevation of the heroic spirit of Yue Fei with brilliant block chords in *fortissimo* and a decisive chord in *sforzando*.

2. The Middle Period (around 1990s-2000s) with *the Three Songs of the Southern Foothills*

In this period, Zhao's compositions and style display obvious Western influences, a slight deviation from his earlier works. *The Three Songs of the Southern Foothills* is a classic example that depicts this transition. While the composition majorly carries the recollections of his childhood, it stands out as a piece that merges both the traditional aspects of the Yi ethnicity with the techniques of Western composition. The composition bears a form, tempo, structure, and melodic features that reflect native microcosm features. Another feature that defines the music's native characteristic is its melody and several appoggiaturas that mimic the tonality of local compositions. An analysis of folk music additionally reveals that Zhang Zhao is well-versed in the elements of traditional music including Yi people's harmony, ethnicity, and even pedal treatment (Li, 2022).

The Three Songs of the Southern Foothills cycle essentially contains three musical materials including Wenshai Dai, Lunan Sani, and Honghe Tonglu. These are based on the Yunnan folklore. Their musical language is based on certain elements of expressive freedom, graceful melody, the use of a detailed figurative system, and an adoption of different timbre instruments. Additionally, the composition bears a triadic compositional structure that is organized by sequence and pace, that is fast to slow then fast. The slow part forms the main part of the work. Such a dramaturgy is mainly evident in Western musical structures. This sufficiently justifies Zhao's adoption of Western structures.

Shan Wa

A fundamental component of traditional Chinese music, the Shan Wa scale is similar to the Western minor pentatonic scale but has subtle differences. This scale, which consists of the notes A, B, C, D, and E, can inspire either a melancholic or joyous feeling based on rhythm and speed. The musical composition under discussion follows a single-tripartite form. Four sixteenth notes quickly descend in the opening to create suspense. The B portion's somber and melancholic D Yu key contrasts with the upbeat A Yu key of the A section. The coda ends in a serene key of A Yu, while A1 returns to the upbeat A Yu theme. The melody, which is based on the Shan Wa scale, creates unity and coherence via repetition and variation, creating an engrossing musical story.

Shan Yue

The 21-bar musical composition has a clean and succinct two-part structure. The introduction, A, B, and coda make up the framework, which creates a serene and tasteful 4/4 piece. A parallel mono-bipartite form, with tonality shifting between B Yu and B Zhi, is how it is described. The opening section's tune conjures up a heavenly atmosphere with its constant tonic unison development. Figures 3 show the melodic details and the structural diagram, respectively.



Figure 3, Zhang Zhao's "Shan Yue", [Introduction], pp. 1-3bar

The figure displays a composition in the Shan Wa scale, a pentatonic scale prevalent in traditional Chinese music. Red circles highlight key elements: A Yu key signature, indicating prominence of A, B, C, D, and E notes; a 4/4-time signature, denoting four beats per measure; and a lively Shan Wa scale-based melody in A Yu. Notations include dynamics (P, pp), ritardando for tempo slowdown, legato for smooth play, and varying time signatures (L-8, 8-7). The overall presentation suggests a soft, gradually slowing piece with a lively and upbeat A Yu melody, offering insights into the musical structure and expression.

Shan Huo

The structure of the music is a replicating single-tripartite, with the primer-A (a+a1)-B (b+c)-A1 (a2+b1)-Coda pattern. Between C Gong and F Gong, there is a change in tone. The A part of the melody consists of two parallel 10-bar phrases, the second of which has a higher octave interpretation (a1). One experiences a unique aesthetic with the non-square structures and different approaches to the same song.

The middle portion, often known as the B section, is an expanded and developing form that is a replication of the single trilogy. Using musical motifs from the A portion, this segment develops from it. The dynamics of the b and c phrases are different from one another. The presentation of the melody in the b phrase goes beyond single notes to incorporate column chord structures.

3. The Late Period (from 2000s to date) represented by Nature No. 1 and Ballad

Nature No.1 (2018) is a blend of Western and Chinese musical components and portrays the characteristics of evoking and reflecting about nature and his Chinese heritage. A distinctive characteristic in how Zhang Zhao utilizes stylistic features in his piano works is through focusing on self-expression, especially through emotions. His works help communicate stories of his Chinese cultural heritage and nature. He used elements of Chinese pentatonic modes, the Guqin's emulation, and Western tonal and post-tonal music in Nature No. 1. His exposure to a wide range of international musical forms inevitably led to the purposeful use of Western methods. This study examine the symbiotic fusion of Western and Chinese musical elements in Zhang Zhao's composition Nature No. 1, a major work from his mature phase, which spans the early 2000s to the present (Gu, 2020). A closer examination of the opening movement exposes the work's careful division into two main sections, Section A

(mm. 1–19) and Section B (mm. 20–39). Zhang deliberately shapes the theme of Section A using two pitch-class sets, [G#, D \flat , B, F \sharp] in m. 1 and [G#, G \flat , F#] in mm. 2-3. This intentional usage of pitch-class sets is a prime example of Zhang's dedication to fusing Western and Chinese elements together in his works as shown in the diagram below.

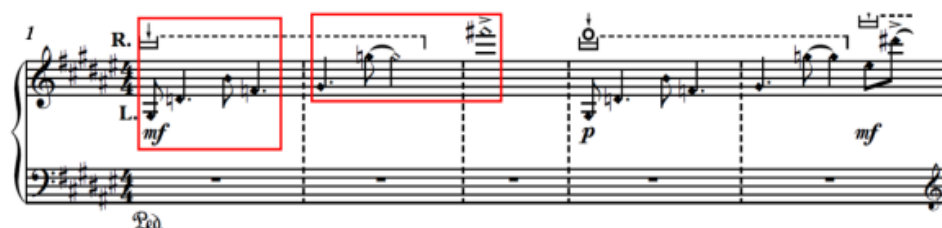


Figure 4: Pitch-class sets [G#, D \flat , B, F \sharp] and [G#, G \flat , F#]

In the first movement, Zhang changed the pitch-class set's intervallic linkages, creating a tightly knit collection of sets, as [D \sharp , F \sharp , A \flat , C \sharp] at measure 25 illustrates (listen to Musical Example 17). Known as a set class (sc), this group is a collection of pitch-class sets connected via transposition. The method for determining the set class is the prime form, which is a series of pitch-class numbers beginning with 0. Consequently, sc (0369) is the prime form for sets transposed from the pitch-class set [D \flat , F \sharp , G#, B] normal form [2, 5, 8, 11]. Note the transposition of upci3 in Zhang's "Meditation of Ice and Snow, Nature No. 1" in Musical figure 5.

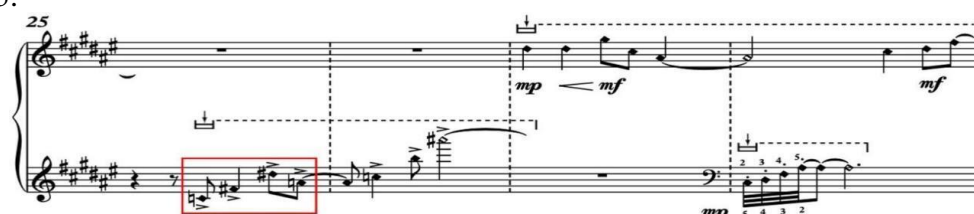


Figure 5: pitch-class set [D \flat , F \sharp , G#, B] normal form [2,5,8,11]

Zhang uses the octatonic mode or scale in "Poem from a Blaze," which has eight pitches that alternate whole tones and semitones symmetrically. Many 20th-century composers investigated this mid-19th-century pitch arrangement. Zhang's octatonic-inspired scale, as shown in the coda's upper bass clef: G-Ab-Bb-C-Db-Eb- E \flat -F#-G, follows the pattern of whole tones and semitones, rather than symmetrical alternation. Musical Example 6 shows Z. Zhang's octatonic-inspired scale in "Poem from a Blaze, Nature No. 1" (measures 142-147).

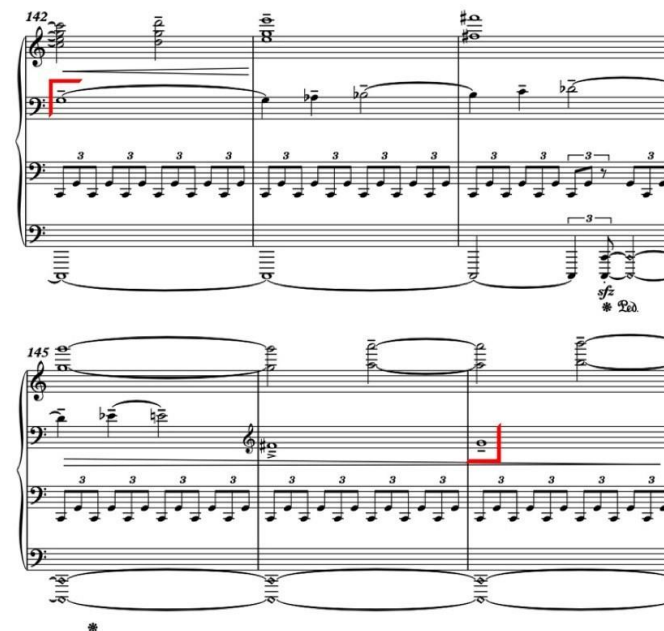


Figure 6: Z. Zhang's octatonic-inspired scale

Ballad (2013) is another work in the mature period to demonstrate Zhang Zhao's attainment in storytelling and expression of emotions. The stylistic features in Ballad (2013) depict characteristics of folk rhythms and melodies similar in Chinese folk songs. As shown in the example 7 in the figure below, the picture shows the first notes of the song, which are E, G, A, B, and E. These sounds create a simple ascending scale, which is a popular motif in Chinese folk music. This scale fits the topic of the song by evoking a sense of yearning. The notes D, C, B, A, and D make up a falling scale that creates a depressing and isolating atmosphere. The music keeps repeating, implying that Erxiao's emotions are cyclical and never-ending. A largo tempo, which is slow and dignified, is appropriate for the themes of loss and perseverance since it exudes seriousness and reflection.



Figure 7: the first notes of the song, which are E, G, A, B, and E.

To sum up the above, the historical development of Zhang Zhao piano works by analyzing the representative piano works in three period of his career is shown in the Table 2:

Table 2: the evolution of this styles over the three periods

Period	Years	Representative	Styles
The Early Period	1980s-1990s	Pi Huang (1995)	The focus on traditional Chinese elements, including Xi Pi and Er Huang styles in Peking Opera, Chinese literature, painting, nature and national heroes.
The Middle Period	1990s-2000s	The Three Songs of Southern Foothills (1992)	The inclusion of Western compositional techniques such as form, tempo, structure and melodic features, deviating from his early works.
The Late Period	2000s to date	Nature No.1 (2018) and Ballad (2013)	The good combination of Chinese and Western elements for storytelling and expression of emotions. Achievement of a harmonious blend between Chinese and Western musical elements. And join his own unique feelings and insights to the creation.

It can be seen from the analysis and research of this chapter that Chinese cultural heritage and Western culture have a significant impact on Zhang Zhao's style of work from the 1990s to the three different periods of modern times. Zhang Zhao's Chinese descent influenced his style in his work that conforms to the traditional Chinese style. This style dominated in the 1990s, but as he came into contact with the West and his music culture and practice, Zhang Zhao gradually began to try to incorporate relevant style characteristics into his great piano works. Today, Zhang Zhao has begun to reflect his own feelings and ideas in nature, creating innovative and unique piano works of the integration of Chinese and Western culture.

The Analysis of selected pieces conclude: ‘Pi Huang’ and ‘The Three Songs of Foothills’

Pi Huang Structure

This music uses the plate structure of my country's Peking Opera. The musical structure diagram is shown in the figure below:

Table 2:, source Yanying Cen

Peking Opera panel structure										
Part	Guide Part	Part One				Part Two	Part Three			Ending
Plate Type (板式)		Original Plate (原板)	Er Liu (Two six) 二六	Liu Shui 流水	Kuai Sanyan 快三眼	Adagio 慢板	Allegro 快板	Yao Ban 摇板	Duo Ban 垛板	
Section	4+3	4+4+4+6	11+8+7	4+8+4	6+11+4	7+5+3	10+5+10+7	8+10+9+15	27+25+18+10	6+9
Tonality	Eb Gong		Eb Gong— F Shang	A Shang	Eb Gong— Bb Zhi	Gb Gong	A Zhi— Bb Yu	F Yu	Eb Zhi	Eb Gong

The full layout of the music is [Guide]-[Original Plate]-[Er Liu(Two six)]-[Liu Shui]-[Kuai Sanyan]-[Adagio]-[Allegro]-[Yao Ban]-[Duo Ban]-[Ending]], it is not difficult to detect the composer's deep understanding of the linear structure of traditional Chinese music. The composer used almost all the commonly used patterns in Xipi tune, but he was quite ingenious in connecting them. This is because even in the traditional Xipi singing set, it is difficult to see such an approach of "catching up" all the patterns in one go. It is often arranged in a scattered-slow-fast-scattered pattern (for example, [Guide]-[Adagio]-[Adagio]-[Adagio] The combination form of [Original Board]-[Er Liu(Two Six)]), or use [Original Board], [Liu Shui] or [Allegro] among them alone. And although there is a certain degree of formula in traditional singing, each style of singing is often completed in gradual changes. "Pi Huang" uses the traditional board form as an outline in the core of the form, but also uses the theme variation method in the connection of the board forms.

Melody

The guide part (bars 1-7) is commonly known as the introduction part. Bars 5-6 use a through-flow of eighth notes for introduction. The melody sounds like the sound of a "gu zheng" played quickly.

Er Liu(Two six) (bars 26-51) musical material is a variation development of the original theme.(Bars 45-51) The use of decomposed melody texture enhances the fluidity of music development, and at the same time plays a role in foreshadowing the arrival of the flow board.

Kuai Sanyan (bars 68-85) reproduces the changes in the original theme, and the music speed gradually increases. This part also reaches the climax of the music. The emotion (measures 82-84) gradually rises. The musical emotion advances with the increase of the melody range and reaches the climax of the music. As shown in Figure 8 below,



Figure 8, Zhang Zhao's "Pi Huang", [Kuai Sanyan], pp. 82-84bar

Rhythm:

In the **Adagio** (bars 86-100), the music rhythm changes in measures 87-93. The upper part and the lower part mainly progress with quarter notes, and the rhythm of the inner part is half notes and eighth notes. The rhythm progresses in an orderly manner. As shown in Figure 9 below,



Figure 9, Zhang Zhao's "Pi Huang", [Adagio], pp. 86-91bar

The **Yao Ban** (bars 133-197) follows the Peking Opera body which has no board and no eyes, and begins to run through with eighth note rhythm. From bar 178, a syncopated rhythm pattern is used to buffer the music. As shown in Figure 10 below,



Figure 10, Zhang Zhao's "Pi Huang", [Yao Ban], pp. 177-184bar

Harmony

The harmonic progression in the **original plate** (bars 8-25) is mainly based on the main harmony, and the third inversion of the dominant seventh chord is also deeply reflected in this phrase. The harmony converges in bar 25 and ends at the main chord of the Eb Gong mode. As shown in Figure 11 below,



Figure 11, Zhang Zhao's "Pi Huang", [original plate], pp. 7-19bar

The musical tonality of **Liu Shui** (sections 52-67) changes to the A-Shang national mode. The harmonic texture is mainly in the form of single notes and the superimposition of second and fourth intervals.

The most noteworthy thing about the **Allegro** part (bars 101-132) is that the bass part of bars 102-104 uses a chord that omits the third note, which better highlights the sound effect of pure fifths.

In the **Yao Ban** (bars 133-197), the low part repeatedly uses chord tones such as C, D, G, and A to form a pure fifth scale. For example, it is most obvious in measures 137-139 of the music. In the 144th measure of the song, the feather f is added to the original Ab-C-Eb major triad, creating the effect of an additional sixth. It is also one of Teacher Zhang Chao's favorite uses of harmony.

The characteristics of Shan Wa from Three Songs of Foothills

Structure

The music reproduces the single-tripartite structure, Its structure is introduction-A(a+a1)-B(b+b1)-transition-A1(a2+a3)-Coda, and the structural diagram is shown in table 3 below:

Table 3, source Yanying Cen

Reproduce the three-part formula再现单三部曲式									
Period 乐段	Introduction 引子	A		B		Transition 过渡	A1		Coda
Phrase 乐句		a	a1	b	b1		a2	a3	
Section 小节	1-5	6-15	16-23	24-31	32-39	40-46	47-54	55-62	63-69
Tonality 调性	A Yu		Bitonality 双调性 (D Yu+ G Yu)	D Yu		A Yu			

Melody

The introduction part (bars 1-5) uses the rapid descending progression of four sixteenth notes as an introduction, which leads to the rhythmic beating texture of two eighth notes in bars 6-7, giving the theme a certain vitality.

The reproduction of the section A1 (bars 47-62) is a type of dynamic reproduction. The main manifestation of the dynamic reproduction is that the melody of the upper part of the piano performance is raised an octave for reproduction. The addition of decorative sounds also makes Shan Wa's lively and lovely music The character is expressed vividly and exquisitely. As shown in Figure 12 below.



Figure 12, Zhang Zhao's "Shan Wa", [Section A1], pp. 47-62bar

Rhythm

Section A (bars 8-23), the theme A phrase, as the theme phrase of the whole song, makes extensive use of the musical rhythms of the first eight and last sixteen, as well as the two eighth-note rhythms and the quarter-note rhythm. As shown in Figure 13 below.



Figure 13, Zhang Zhao's "Shan Wa", [Section A], pp. 6-11bar

The B section (bars 24-39) uses a single rhythm, with only three musical rhythms appearing, two eighth-note rhythms, quarter-note rhythms, and the first sixteen and last eight rhythms.

Harmony

The introduction part (bars 1-5) starts with an appoggiaturas progression with a pure fifth relationship, the musical tonality is the A Yu national mode, and the decomposed tones of the texture are mainly columnar triad progressions with A Yu as the root note. As shown in Figure 14 below.



Figure 14, Zhang Zhao's "Shan Wa", [Introduction], pp. 1-5bar

Section A (bars 8-23) The musical tonality of the al phrase is bitonal. The upper part of the piano playing is in D Yu mode, and the lower part is in G Yu mode. The harmonic texture is presented in the form of broken chords.

In section B (bars 24-39), the lower part of the piano performance imitates the upper part of the piano performance, forming a conversational piano language, which draws on Western polyphonic composition techniques to a certain extent.

Through the structure, melody, rhythm, and harmony analysis of Zhang Zhao's two piano works, "Pi Huang" and "The Three Songs of Foothills", we found that: "Pi Huang", a piano work representing the Early Period of Zhang Zhao, has an unusually strong Chinese national character, using the Peking Opera's plate structure throughout the piece, which is an artistic reproduction of one of China's cultural treasures, "Peking Opera". is an artistic reproduction. In the melody writing, it employs a dialogic melody with contrasting hands, and an ethnic melody with Xi Pi and Er Huang styles. The melody is smooth and bright, the rhythm is free and casual, and the use of richly varied Chinese ethnic modal harmonies makes the piece more colorful. In the creation of structure, melody, rhythm, and harmony, it is mainly centered on displaying Chinese national culture.

“The Three Songs of Foothills” consists of 'Shan Wa', 'Shan Yue' and 'Shan Huo', and the piano work as a whole shows a kind of emotional direction from joyful to quiet and then to joyful, the three songs have their own characteristics and are closely connected with each other to form a highly unified set of suites, which vividly expresses the natural and humanistic scenery of the ethnic minorities in Yunnan Province. It vividly expresses the natural and humanistic scenery of Yunnan's ethnic minorities. Chinese traditional music has always attached importance to melody and neglected harmony and polyphony. This piece is not only full of novelty in the harmonic arrangement but also employs polyphony, which makes the sound present a multilayered and multi-colored effect, not limited by the narrow range of the original melody of the folk song, and gives great play to the advantages of the piano's music creation, so that the beautiful melody can be fully displayed in the wide range of the sound. This suite reflects the characteristics of Zhang Zhao's Middle period compositions: a distinctive Chinese national style, sincere feelings, and a variety of compositional techniques. Unlike his piano works in the Early Period, Zhang Zhao borrowed a great deal of Western classical techniques, such as Western compositional structures, polyphony, and ornaments, and so on. He began to want to integrate Chinese and Western music and culture.

Discussion

Through four representative works, the historical development of Zhang's three composition style periods is traced, and Zhang Zhao's "Pi Huang" and "The Three Songs of Foothills" are specifically analyzed from four aspects: structure, melody, rhythm, and harmony. This study found that in his early period, in order to highlight the characteristics of Chinese national culture, he selected elements from traditional Chinese music and national folk music, and tried to avoid using the composition techniques of the Western classical period. He wanted to show One's own detachment and uniqueness. But it soon became clear that completely avoiding Western compositional techniques would not work. At this point, it conflicts with and is inconsistent with the results of previous related research. In the previous research, Gu believed that Zhang Zhao did not have his own central idea in the early period, but was based on a lot of learning and imitation. Western composition techniques, and imitated and created many Western works. (Gu, 2019)

This study found that in his middle period, he absorbed a lot of Western composition knowledge and mastered a lot of techniques. He wanted to use Western composition techniques to tell his inner Chinese story and improve harmony. In his middle period, his yearning for Chinese culture was as strong as his desire to get rid of the influence of Western music. This is consistent with previous relevant research results.

Zhang Zhao gradually realized that imitating Western music would limit his artistic growth, so he turned to creating a style that reflected his culture and authenticity. He turned to creating a style that reflected his culture and authentic surroundings. In pursuit of the Chinese sound, he began to select elements from traditional Chinese music and ethnic folk music to establish his own unique composition method. Zhang's yearning for Chinese culture is as strong as his desire for himself.

When he composed his early piano work "Pi Huang", he consciously focused on traditional Chinese music, especially "Peking Opera".

However, he retained Western classical instruments such as piano, violin and oboe as the carrier of his works in the second stage.

Later, Zhang realized that avoiding Western music altogether might make his music sound monotonous and conservative. He said in a recent interview: "Music should not be bound by any fixed format, format boundaries or limitations.

Through the Zhang's late period work "Nature No. 1", he attempts to broaden his creative perspective by applying various Western expression elements and theoretical practices, including pitch. Examples include tone groups, tone clusters, controlled incidental music, modified octaves, and choral traditions. This expansion is further enriched through the use of contrasting Chinese pentatonic modes and the unique and ethereal timbre of the guqin.

In his late period, he deliberately blurred nationalism, the boundaries between the West and the East, and the label of the East. While creating Nature No. 1, he began to embrace different styles and approaches and realized his goal of using music creation as a communication tool for the world.

It can be seen from this study that by the second stage, especially the third stage, Zhang has dramatically expanding his compositional voice by identifying a range of influences to guide his compositional aesthetic. This view is consistent in attitude with that of previous studies, but this study further confirms that Zhang Zhao established the goal of music creation as a tool for world communication in the third stage.

In the creation of "Pi Huang", Peking Opera was probably Zhang Zhao's most important influence. He said: "As a Chinese composer, I have the responsibility to introduce Chinese culture to the world through music." Peking Opera is one of China's greatest cultural treasures and inspired him to adopt every aspect of his dramatic roles, including vocal style and range. He also studied Banqiang, a traditional form of Peking Opera, and Xi Pi and Er Huang, the two basic contrasting styles that make up traditional Chinese music. Mr. Zhang's motivation is that of Chinese culture, and the piano is the best vehicle for expressing his motivation.

All these changes show Zhang Zhao's inner struggle and transformation, and also reveal that Zhang Zhao's works are characterized by his strong Chinese background, the penetration of Western influences, as well as his Chinese heritage, Chinese culture and art, and the inner feelings brought to him by nature.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations to the Government

The government should aggressively promote cultural exchange initiatives to broaden the understanding of Chinese music across the world. Through the encouragement and sponsorship of events such as the China Now Music Festival, which showcases current Chinese compositions, the government creates a forum for intercultural communication. These kinds of activities contribute to a more linked global cultural environment by fostering a greater knowledge and appreciation of Chinese musical achievements on an international scale.

2. Recommendations to Schools

It can be revolutionary to directly incorporate research findings on Zhang Zhao's works into music curricula. Students get a deeper awareness of the cultural and international influences that create modern Chinese piano works through this kind of inclusion. Another way that educational institutions may encourage students' creativity is through practical inquiry. It is essential to inspire students to explore a wide range of genres and subjects in their compositions, taking cues from the avant-garde viewpoints emphasized in Zhang Zhao's works.

Students use practical activities as a way to expand their musical horizons and develop their creativity.

3. Recommendations to Society

The encouragement of music literacy in local communities is a way to get involved in society. The relationship between society and the rich cultural tapestry woven into musical compositions may be strengthened through programs like lectures, seminars, and community gatherings centered on comprehending the effects on piano pieces.

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