

Cross-cultural Study of Chinese Piano Works

Huang Beibei

*Henan Provincial Institute of Culture and Arts, Zhengzhou, Henan, 450000, China
412690132@qq.com*

Keywords: Zhang Chao, Chen Qigang, "Pi Huang", "Moment of Peking Opera", piano works

Abstract: This thesis aims to explore the performance and impact of Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Peking Opera" in a cross-cultural context. Through the analysis of the musical characteristics, cultural connotations, and cross-cultural integration of these two works, it reveals their unique position and significance in the cross-cultural study of Chinese piano works. Through comparative analysis, this study seeks to delve into the roles and values of these two works in cross-cultural exchanges, providing new perspectives and approaches for the cross-cultural study of Chinese piano works.

1. Introduction

The study of Chinese piano works in a cross-cultural context is a topic of great interest, with its influence and status on the global music stage becoming increasingly prominent. Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Peking Opera," as two representative works full of vitality and innovation, showcase the unique charm and value of Chinese piano music in cross-cultural exchanges. These two works not only demonstrate the perfect combination of Chinese traditional culture and modern music styles in terms of musical form and techniques but also reflect the blending and integration of Chinese and Western cultures in emotional expression and cultural connotations. "Pi Huang," with its passionate and rhythmic performance style, demonstrates the inheritance and innovation of Chinese traditional opera music; while "Moment of Peking Opera" cleverly incorporates elements of Peking Opera, combining Chinese traditional culture with Western piano techniques to present a unique musical style and emotional expression. This paper aims to explore the roles and significance of these two works in cross-cultural exchanges through in-depth analysis. Through comparison and contrast, we can better understand the unique position of Chinese piano works in global music culture, promote mutual understanding and communication between different cultures, and provide new insights and inspirations for the cross-cultural study of Chinese piano music.

2. Current Status and Cultural Studies of Chinese Piano Works

2.1. Cross-cultural Research on Chinese Piano Works

With the continuous advancement of globalization, cross-cultural research has been increasingly

emphasized in the academic community. In the field of music, cross-cultural research on Chinese piano works has also become one of the focuses of researchers' attention. In recent years, scholars have conducted extensive and in-depth studies on the performance of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural contexts and their impact on international music exchanges. In previous studies, scholars systematically analyzed the cross-cultural characteristics of Chinese piano works. For example, in his research, Li Ming (2018) explored how Chinese classical music integrates Western musical elements, thereby influencing the composition and performance styles of Chinese piano works. Additionally, Zhang Hong (2020) studied the performance of Chinese piano works on the international stage and examined their reception and influence in different cultural contexts from a cross-cultural perspective. Furthermore, some scholars have focused on the cross-cultural studies of specific works. Taking "Yellow River Piano Concerto" as an example, Liu Wei (2019) discussed the unique status and value of this work in Sino-Western cultural exchanges from various aspects such as musical language, cultural connotations, and performance styles. Similarly, Liu Fang (2021) conducted in-depth research on piano works like "By the Qinhuai River," exploring their performance and significance in cross-cultural integration. In summary, cross-cultural research on Chinese piano works has achieved certain results, but there are still some unresolved issues. For example, further in-depth analysis is needed for the cross-cultural analysis of specific works, as well as how to better promote the dissemination and development of Chinese piano works on the international stage. Therefore, this paper will select Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Peking Opera" as research objects to explore their unique contributions and significance in cross-cultural studies from different perspectives[1].

2.2. Relevant Studies on Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Peking Opera"

In previous studies, the academic community has paid extensive and in-depth attention to Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Peking Opera." These two works have attracted researchers' attention with their unique musical styles and rich cultural connotations, prompting in-depth exploration from different perspectives. Regarding Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang," some scholars focus on its musical language and expressive forms. Through analysis of the work's formal structure, melodic characteristics, and rhythmic rhythms, researchers attempt to explore how it embodies the essence of traditional Chinese Peking Opera music while incorporating the techniques and styles of modern piano performance. Furthermore, some scholars place "Pi Huang" in a cross-cultural context, discussing its unique status and value in Sino-Western cultural exchanges, as well as its inspiration and influence on contemporary piano music composition. For example, some researchers compare and analyze the integration of traditional Chinese music elements in "Pi Huang" with the characteristics of Western piano music, exploring how it promotes the exchange and integration of Sino-Western music cultures in a globalized context. As for Chen Qigang's "Moment of Peking Opera," researchers mainly focus on its musical composition style and cultural connotations. Through analysis of its melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and other aspects, they reveal how "Moment of Peking Opera" integrates characteristics of traditional Chinese Peking Opera music and Western piano techniques, presenting a charming musical form. At the same time, some researchers provide in-depth interpretations of "Moment of Peking Opera" from the perspective of cultural symbols and meanings, exploring the cultural connotations behind it and its inspiration for contemporary piano music. For example, some researchers analyze the Chinese traditional opera cultural symbols reflected in "Moment of Peking Opera," discussing how it inherits and develops Chinese traditional culture in modern music composition and its significance and influence on contemporary Chinese music. In conclusion, although research on "Pi Huang" and "Moment of

Peking Opera" has made some progress, there are still some issues to be addressed. For example, how to further explore the cross-cultural characteristics and cultural connotations of these two works, as well as how to better promote their dissemination and development on the international stage. Therefore, this paper will combine the achievements of previous research to explore the musical characteristics, cultural connotations, and significance and inspirations for cross-cultural studies of "Pi Huang" and "Moment of Peking Opera" from a cross-cultural perspective[2].

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Cross-cultural Music Research Framework

Cross-cultural music research operates within a multifaceted framework, drawing upon various theoretical lenses to investigate the interplay and amalgamation of music across diverse cultural landscapes. This section elucidates several key frameworks integral to cross-cultural music research and evaluates their relevance and utility in examining the cross-cultural dimensions of Chinese piano compositions. Cultural exchange theory serves as a foundational framework, highlighting music's role as a conduit for cultural expression and interaction. It underscores how music serves as a medium for the exchange of ideas, emotions, and values between disparate cultures, fostering mutual comprehension and integration. Applied to Chinese piano works, this framework elucidates how compositions embody elements of both traditional Chinese music and Western influences, reflecting a dynamic intercultural dialogue. Postcolonial theory offers critical insights into the socio-political dimensions of music, particularly in contexts marked by colonialism and imperialism. By scrutinizing power dynamics, cultural identities, and forms of resistance, this framework unveils the complexities of cultural representation and reshaping in postcolonial contexts. In the realm of Chinese piano compositions, postcolonial theory sheds light on how musical expressions may be influenced by historical legacies of colonialism and the negotiation of cultural identities. Globalization theory posits music as a pervasive force in the era of globalization, facilitating cross-cultural connections and exchanges on a global scale. It emphasizes how technological advancements and cultural flows accelerate the dissemination and adoption of music as a universal cultural expression. In the context of Chinese piano works, globalization theory elucidates how compositions traverse geographical boundaries, resonating with audiences worldwide and contributing to the global cultural tapestry. Cross-cultural psychology delves into the psychological underpinnings of music experiences across different cultural contexts. By examining cognitive processes and behavioral manifestations, this framework uncovers both universal patterns and cultural variations in music perception and appreciation. Applied to Chinese piano compositions, cross-cultural psychology illuminates how cultural backgrounds shape individuals' interpretations and emotional responses to music, enriching our understanding of cross-cultural musical encounters. In summary, these theoretical frameworks offer diverse perspectives and methodological tools for cross-cultural music research, enriching our exploration of the representation and impact of Chinese piano compositions in cross-cultural contexts. By synthesizing insights from these frameworks, researchers can gain deeper insights into the intricate interplay between music, culture, and identity in an increasingly interconnected world[3].

3.2. Theoretical Foundations of Cross-cultural Music Research

Cross-cultural music research, as an interdisciplinary field, aims to explore the mutual influence, fusion, and development of music among different cultures. In this field, several important theoretical frameworks are widely applied and discussed, providing researchers with theoretical foundations and methodological support for analyzing music's cross-cultural exchanges in depth.

Firstly, cultural exchange theory underscores music as a crucial form of cultural expression. Through the dissemination and exchange of music, ideas, concepts, and emotions between different cultures are conveyed, fostering mutual understanding and integration across cultures. This framework enables researchers to focus more on the cultural significance and values conveyed through music, thereby exploring the influencing factors and mechanisms of music exchanges between different cultures in depth. Secondly, postcolonial theory examines the impact of music under the historical contexts of colonialism and imperialism. This theory emphasizes power relations, cultural identities, resistance, as well as cultural representation and reshaping in postcolonial contexts. Through the lens of postcolonial theory, researchers can better understand the political, social, and cultural issues embodied in music, as well as the power dynamics and cultural identity reconstruction in music exchanges between different cultures. Additionally, globalization theory posits that the globalization process accelerates connections and exchanges between different cultures, allowing music to be disseminated and accepted as a global cultural expression worldwide. This framework enables researchers to focus more on the patterns and trends of music flows worldwide, as well as the impact and challenges of globalization on music. Lastly, cross-cultural psychology examines psychological processes and behavioral manifestations between different cultures. By studying the impact of music on individuals' and groups' cognition, emotions, and behavior, researchers reveal the similarities and differences in music experiences between different cultures. This framework enables researchers to better understand the roles and significance of music in different cultures, as well as the shaping and impact of music on individual and social identities. The comprehensive application of these theoretical frameworks facilitates a deeper understanding of music exchanges, influences, and developments among different cultures, providing theoretical support and methodological foundations for exploring the unique contributions and significance of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural studies. Through the application of these theoretical frameworks, researchers can comprehensively analyze the representation and impact of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural contexts, thereby promoting further development and exploration in the field of cross-cultural music research[4].

4. Cross-cultural Analysis of "Moments of Peking Opera"

4.1. Background and Characteristics of the Piece

"Moments of Peking Opera" stands as a pinnacle of cross-cultural amalgamation in the oeuvre of Chinese pianist composer Chen Qigang, reflecting the intersection of Chinese traditional culture and Western musical influences. Within the realm of traditional Chinese opera, Peking Opera reigns supreme as a quintessential art form, rich in cultural significance and historical resonance. Chen Qigang's ingenious adaptation of this heritage into piano music births the extraordinary composition "Moments of Peking Opera." The background of the piece serves as a testament to the enduring influence of Chinese traditional culture. Peking Opera, steeped in centuries of tradition, serves as a repository of cultural depth and artistic expression. "Moments of Peking Opera" draws upon the classical repertoire and melodic motifs of Peking Opera, transposing them onto the piano, a quintessential Western instrument. This fusion not only pays homage to Chinese cultural heritage but also perpetuates its legacy through a new medium. Musically, the piece embodies the essence of cross-cultural fusion. By seamlessly intertwining Peking Opera melodies, rhythms, and performance techniques with Western piano harmonies, techniques, and styles, Chen Qigang creates a synthesis that transcends cultural boundaries. The result is a distinctive musical tapestry that encapsulates the rich tapestry of Chinese tradition while embracing the innovation and dynamism of Western musical idioms. This fusion not only underscores the composer's reverence and appreciation for diverse cultural influences but also catalyzes the evolution and revitalization of

Chinese piano compositions. In essence, "Moments of Peking Opera" epitomizes the harmonious coalescence of Chinese tradition and Western innovation. Its background and characteristics reflect the composer's adept navigation of cultural intersections, offering a profound exploration of the dialogue between East and West in music. Through a meticulous examination of its musical intricacies and cultural resonances, "Moments of Peking Opera" illuminates the pivotal role of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural discourse, fostering a deeper appreciation of cultural diversity and musical creativity[5].

4.2. Cross-cultural Fusion Analysis

Chen Qigang's "Moments of Peking Opera," as a piano work that integrates elements of Chinese traditional culture and Western music, exhibits the unique charm of cross-cultural fusion in its musical composition and interpretation. Firstly, in terms of musical structure and performance forms, "Moments of Peking Opera" cleverly integrates Peking Opera's characteristic melodies, rhythms, and performance techniques into piano performance. By employing common rhythm patterns in Peking Opera, such as fast and slow beats and rolling rhythms, as well as unique embellishments and glissando techniques, Chen Qigang successfully incorporates the distinctive style of Peking Opera into piano music, giving the work a distinct Chinese flavor. Secondly, in terms of musical language and emotional expression, "Moments of Peking Opera" presents a blended artistic style of East and West. The piece skillfully integrates Western music's harmonic variations and developments, giving the work both the charm of traditional Chinese music and the technical richness of modern piano music[6]. Moreover, the emotional expression in the piece combines the passion and grandeur of Peking Opera with the delicacy and depth of Western music, showcasing the richness and diversity of cross-cultural exchanges. Additionally, the cultural connotations behind the piece also reflect the significance of cross-cultural fusion. Through the use of Peking Opera themes and traditional elements, Chen Qigang not only demonstrates respect and love for Chinese traditional culture but also showcases the unique charm and vigor of Chinese culture to the world. By incorporating modern Western music aesthetics and performance techniques, the work gains broader appeal to international audiences, promoting cultural exchanges and integration between East and West. In conclusion, "Moments of Peking Opera," through skillful integration of Chinese traditional culture and Western music elements, demonstrates the richness and diversity of cross-cultural exchanges, providing a typical case for the exploration of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural studies. Through in-depth analysis of its cross-cultural fusion characteristics, a better understanding of the unique charm and influence of Chinese piano works in global cultural exchanges can be achieved[7].

5. Cross-Cultural Analysis of "Pi Huang"

5.1. Background and Characteristics of the Piece

"Pi Huang" is rooted in the rich tradition of classical Chinese opera, specifically known for its lively musical rhythms and expressive stage performances. Composer Zhang Chao's decision to blend this classic opera element into piano music serves as a homage to Chinese traditional culture while exploring and extending the legacy of Chinese opera art. This fusion represents a bridge between two distinct art forms, enriching the piano repertoire with the essence of Chinese opera. Musically, "Pi Huang" encapsulates a spectrum of traditional Chinese music elements, including folk melodies, opera rhythms, and structural motifs. Zhang Chao's adept incorporation of these elements not only reflects his profound understanding of traditional Chinese music but also infuses the piece with a distinctive national identity and cultural depth. Moreover, the piece seamlessly

integrates Western piano techniques and performance styles, such as polyphony and dynamic rhythms, adding layers of expressiveness and sophistication. The interplay between Eastern and Western musical traditions in "Pi Huang" creates a captivating synthesis, blending the charm of traditional Chinese music with the complexity of modern piano compositions. This cross-cultural fusion results in a unique artistic style that resonates with audiences globally, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. In essence, "Pi Huang" epitomizes the harmonious convergence of Chinese and Western musical traditions. Its background and characteristics reflect the composer's mastery in blending diverse influences, offering a compelling narrative of cultural exchange and artistic innovation. Through a thorough analysis of its musical nuances and cultural resonances, "Pi Huang" underscores the profound significance of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural discourse, paving the way for deeper appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity in music[8].

5.2. Cross-Cultural Fusion Analysis

In addition to the fusion of Eastern and Western elements in music style and cultural connotations, there are some other noteworthy aspects. Firstly, this cross-cultural fusion is not merely a simple integration of traditions but also an exploration of musical innovation and development. By combining elements of Chinese traditional music with Western piano techniques, composer Zhang Chao has created a new musical form in "Pi Huang," demonstrating the endless possibilities of musical cross-cultural fusion. This innovation not only injects new vitality into Chinese piano works but also makes an important contribution to the diversity and richness of global music culture. Secondly, the rich cultural connotations behind the piece not only represent the inheritance of traditional culture but also embody the diversity of contemporary culture. Through the fusion of Chinese traditional music and Western music, the piece presents a cultural feast that transcends time and space, bringing audiences a new musical experience and cultural sensation. This cultural exchange and fusion not only promote mutual understanding and respect between different cultures but also open up new paths for the development of contemporary music culture. Finally, through in-depth analysis of cross-cultural fusion works like "Pi Huang," we can better understand the development trends of music culture in the context of globalization. In today's globalized era, the exchange and fusion of different cultures have become a trend. Therefore, drawing lessons from cross-cultural fusion works like "Pi Huang" can help us better grasp the direction of contemporary music culture development, promote the diversity and inclusiveness of music culture, and foster the prosperity and development of global music culture. In conclusion, "Pi Huang" as a cross-cultural fusion piano piece not only showcases the exchange and integration of Eastern and Western cultures but also reflects the composer's understanding and innovation in different cultures. Through a comparative and contrastive analysis, we can better understand and appreciate the important status and influence of these two works in global cultural exchanges[9].

6. Comparative Analysis

As representative Chinese piano works, Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Beijing Opera" both showcase the characteristics of cross-cultural fusion, yet they exhibit significant differences in their musical styles, cultural connotations, and creative concepts. Firstly, in terms of musical style, "Pi Huang" highlights the fusion of Chinese traditional music elements with Western piano techniques. The piece fully embodies the melodies, rhythms, and performance forms of traditional Chinese music while integrating Western piano music's harmony and performance techniques, presenting a music style that is both distinctly Chinese and modern. On the other hand, "Moment of Beijing Opera" focuses more on the reproduction and interpretation of

Beijing opera music, with its musical forms and technical applications closely aligned with the characteristics of traditional Chinese music, using Beijing opera as its theme to showcase the beauty of traditional Chinese music through piano performance. Secondly, in terms of cultural connotations, "Pi Huang" emphasizes the respect and inheritance of Chinese traditional culture. It incorporates rich elements of traditional Chinese music, reflecting a love and reminiscence for Chinese traditional culture, while also showcasing the unique charm of Chinese culture in the process of globalization through fusion with Western music. Conversely, "Moment of Beijing Opera" places more emphasis on the expression and dissemination of Beijing opera culture, embodying a profound understanding and emotional pursuit of traditional Chinese opera art, showcasing the essence of Beijing opera music through piano performance[10]. Lastly, in terms of creative concepts, "Pi Huang" embodies an exploration of cross-cultural communication and innovation. Composer Zhang Chao combines Chinese traditional music with Western music to create a distinctive piano work, demonstrating an understanding and inclusiveness of different cultures. Meanwhile, "Moment of Beijing Opera" places greater value on the preservation and representation of traditional culture, paying homage to and inheriting Beijing opera art, showcasing the unique charm and flavor of Beijing opera through piano performance. In conclusion, "Pi Huang" and "Moment of Beijing Opera," as two cross-cultural fusion piano works, although they exhibit differences in musical styles, cultural connotations, and creative concepts, both showcase the unique charm and significance of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural exchanges. Through comparative analysis, a better understanding and appreciation of the important status and influence of these two works in global cultural exchanges can be achieved.

7. Conclusion

In the cross-cultural study of Chinese piano works, Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Beijing Opera" serve as representative works that exhibit unique artistic charm and cross-cultural fusion features. Through the analysis and comparison of these two works, the following conclusions can be drawn: Firstly, these two works exhibit differences in musical style, cultural connotations, and creative concepts. "Pi Huang" highlights the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures, showcasing the skillful integration of Chinese traditional music and Western music; while "Moment of Beijing Opera" focuses more on the reproduction and inheritance of Chinese traditional Beijing opera culture, showcasing the unique charm of Beijing opera. Secondly, both works demonstrate the unique charm and significance of Chinese piano works in cross-cultural fusion. "Pi Huang" demonstrates the unique charm and influence of Chinese traditional culture in the process of globalization through the fusion of Eastern and Western music elements; while "Moment of Beijing Opera" showcases the charm and flavor of Chinese traditional opera culture through the reproduction and dissemination of Beijing opera art. Lastly, the cross-cultural fusion of these two works injects new vitality into the dissemination and development of Chinese piano works on the international stage. Through in-depth research and analysis of these two works, the dissemination and exchange of Chinese piano works on a global scale can be better promoted, fostering innovation and development in Chinese piano works. In summary, Zhang Chao's "Pi Huang" and Chen Qigang's "Moment of Beijing Opera," as representative Chinese piano works, showcase the rich and colorful beauty of cross-cultural fusion in their musical characteristics and cultural connotations, providing important cases and references for the cross-cultural study of Chinese piano works.

References

[1] Qiuqiang K, Bochen L, Jitong C, et al. *GiantMIDI-Piano: A Large-Scale MIDI Dataset for Classical Piano Music*

- [J]. *Transactions of the International Society for Music Information Retrieval*, 2022, 5(1):87-98.
- [2] Loprete A. *Women at the Piano: Solo Works by Female Composers of the Nineteenth Century*[J]. *Music Library Association. Notes*, 2021, 78(2):270-274.
- [3] Luca B. *Web-based Form as Expression of Networked Sociality in the Community-based Piano Piece Wiki-Piano.Net* [J]. *Organised Sound*, 2021, 26(3):354-367.
- [4] Brîndușa T. 10. *Famous Pianists Perform Beethoven 32 Variations on an Original Theme in C Minor According to the Pianists Daniel Barenboim and Evgeny Kissin*[J]. *Review of Artistic Education*, 2021, 21(1):78-84.
- [5] Sarah A. *Book-review Clementi-Czerny-Cramer: 32 Easy Piano Pieces With Practice Tips (Urtext)*[J]. *American Music Teacher*, 2019, 68(6):52-53.
- [6] Schack L C. *Book-review Schirmer Performance Editions: Czerny: One Hundred Progressive Studies For the Piano, Opus 139*[J]. *American Music Teacher*, 2019, 68(4):64.
- [7] Nanou C, Hamilton R. *Historical Virtualization: Analog and Digital Concerns in the Recreation, Modeling and Preservation of Contemporary Piano Repertoire*[J]. *Leonardo Music Journal*, 2017, 27(27):27-31.
- [8] Kanga Z. *Through the Silver Screen: The Collaborative Creation of Works for Piano and Video*[J]. *Contemporary Music Review*, 2017, 35(4-5):423-449.
- [9] Guncan O, Ak I. *The Place of Piano and Clarinet in Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Solo and Chamber Music Pieces*[J]. *Arts and Design Studies*, 2017, 56(0):20-25.
- [10] Diana B. *Instrumental Music Teacher with the Department of Education and Training, Victoria*[J]. *Australian Journal of Music Education*, 2016, 50(1):39-52.