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# Integration of the Traditions of Folk-Instrumental Art into the Works of Chinese Composers of the 20th and 21st Centuries

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## Abstract

The problem of integration of folk art and, in particular, instrumental art, into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries, in the light of the above-mentioned phenomena, is relevant, comprehensive and, to a certain extent, inexhaustible for the researchers of the world musicological science. This was a factor that prompted disclosure of the topic in the publication in question, which was at the same time the reason for writing the study. Its relevance stems from the importance of a deep understanding of such a phenomenon as folk instrumental art and its implementation in compositional practice. The purpose of this study is to investigate the process of integrating folklore (its instrumental branch) into professional academic music of China. The main methods for achieving this, are the principles and approaches chosen here to review, collect, study and a certain systematic compilation of sources relating to Chinese music in general, as well as its folk-instrumental field – in particular. The result of the activities undertaken is the categories of all the sectors of the problem under consideration, derived from the research process. They form a coherent structure of systems such as musical language (means of musical expression) and ways of processing folklore sources. The tables and the figure-chart illustrate this aspect. There is a considerable number of different scholarly judgments, perspectives of specialists who have addressed in their research activities the issue of integrating folk instrumental art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries. However, the problem of integrating folk instrumental art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries, as a holistic and comprehensive phenomenon, requires its own deep and comprehensive research. This fact determines the practical significance of the present study. It also demonstrates the promising nature of scientific knowledge in this field in the future.

**Keywords:** Chinese piano works, saxophone works, Chinese composers' vocal music, genres and techniques of composition, principles of realising folk and national origins in professional art.

## Introduction

The integration of folk heritage into professional composer's art, in all schools, traditions and cultures without exception, served as an indicator of the national belonging of certain authorial styles. This also concerns the music of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries. By implementing the deep foundations of the folklore of their homeland, they were able to create examples of national classics distinguished by their uniqueness, originality and strong folk-national character. Chinese folklore is expressive and multifaceted. Another noteworthy factor is the phenomenon that its characteristic and content, peculiarities and individual features are determined by the region (area) of the country. Thus, differences emerge between the main types of artistic expression in the samples of folk art belonging to different territorial units (Zhakupov

et al., 2020; Nurgali & Kishkenbaeva, 2013). As earlier studies show, there are four regional stylistic branches in China as the main ones: Xinjiang, Shanbei, Guangdong and Sichuan (Shuyun, 2020).

Each of them is distinctive and unique, with an inner complexity that has a direct impact on the sound of the works created under the conditions of the professional Chinese school of composition. "The Xinjiang style" is related to the musical culture of the Uighurs and Kazakhs. It is characterised by frequent tempo changes, an abundance of syncopated rhythms and repetition of intonation cells in melodic structures. The thematically leading melody is usually preceded by richly ornamented improvisational introduction "sanban" (Shuyun, 2020; Nurgali et al., 2021).

"The Shanbei style" is characterised by epic narrative, variation in meter, variability in harmony, the construction of melodies from the summation of an even number of phrases and the predominance of intonations in which a perfect fourth interval plays a fundamental role (Shuyun, 2020). The characteristics of "the Guangdong style" are such features as the predominance of lyrical and pastoral images, the construction of melodies following the principle of singing the basic tone, the absence of broad intervals in the intonation structure of musical themes and the abundance of ornamental patterns (Shuyun, 2020). "The Sichuan style" synthesises the elements of Han Chinese and Tibetan cultures. The characteristics of the style are rooted in the characteristics of Sichuan melodies, based on an alternation of perfect fourths and minor thirds (Shuyun, 2020).

On the basis of the aforementioned characteristics of Chinese folk music styles, composers have the opportunity to implement in their works a wide range of ideas, images, moods, harmonies, intonation and rhythms, as well as to create different genres of professional music in the academic sphere. Chinese composers in the period of the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries embodied the traditions of each of the named regions according to their individual styles. This has proved to be a testament to the depth, colourfulness, versatility and national originality of one of the oldest musical cultures in the Asia-Pacific region (Nurgali et al., 2013; Sabadash et al., 2020). At the same time, there are a number of categories that unite the works of Chinese composers, implementing their ideas in different stylistic and technological spheres. This study reveals each of them and also characterises them according to their intrinsic content. The role and functional significance of these components of the author's work is highlighted.

Finally, a general picture of the process of integrating folk instrumental art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries is demonstrated. This is possible thanks to a clear definition of the most important elements that make up the structure of composition as an integrated system, as well as by identifying universal and classical principles generally accepted in the composing practice, the transformation of folklore sources by authors. They define the uniqueness of such a phenomenon as the Chinese school of composition of the 20th and 21st centuries in the context of world, particularly musical, culture. The relevance and future prospects of studying this problem are also evident, since the practice of composition-making implies a continuous renewal of the intonation and technological funds that constitute its basis.

## **Materials and methods**

The creativity of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries is a vast field, providing almost unlimited scope of material. Its value, originality, uniqueness and authenticity lie in the subtle and profound reflection of folk and national origins in professional music of an academic character. It is necessary to reveal the principles and mechanisms of embodying the leading elements of centuries-old Chinese folklore in the context of the author's works. It is of fundamental importance to explore the issue of clearly defining the components that make up a coherent system of composing works. The author's objective in this study is, on the one hand, to identify the categories of Chinese folk art that are reflected in the composers' works and, on the other hand, to analyse the ways these categories are embodied and implemented through the composers' individual processing of these categories in their own compositions.

The integration of folk instrumental traditions into the works of Chinese composers occurs through the incorporation into the author's projects of such folklore categories as: harmony and intonation structure; meter-rhythm; texture; genre; instrumentation and manner of performance. They become the logo, the symbol of the culture of each individual nationality. In order to investigate the processes of interpreting folk art sources in 20th- and 21st-century composer music, the materials dedicated to each of the above categories were collected and analysed in detail.

Thus, the harmony-intonation nature of Chinese music, based on the tone row, which is a pentatonic scale (anhemitonic or ahemitonic), has been examined in detail. According to the research, they constitute a more complex system of a higher order: the *yun-gong-diao*. The metre-rhythm of Chinese national culture is analytically covered as well, since this aspect is directly linked to the artistic traditions of the country's individual regions. It became necessary to establish the fact that the "Xinjiang style" mentioned earlier is represented, on the one hand – by the frequent change of tempos, and on the other hand – by the abundance of syncopated rhythms, while the variation of the metre is typical for the "Shanbei style".

The study also examined the field of folk instrumental art, such as the timbre system, the traditions of its use and combination in ensemble and orchestral formations, as well as the performance techniques using Chinese national instruments, as they were adapted by the professional academic school in the context of the modern composing style of China of the 20th and 21st centuries. It is also necessary to master a number of genres of academic professional music that have emerged in the works of Chinese composers, as the leading branches of national folklore – song and dance have transformed into transcriptions of different scales and became the basis of such composition forms as plays, variations, sonata and concerto.

The study of the ways in which folklore sources are processed has also proved to be one of the leading areas of the present study. Thus, the adaptation of rich folk-national material for European instruments (timbre transformations and modifications in the processing of folklore) as well as – interpretation techniques, recreating the characteristics of folk-national performance using instruments introduced into Chinese art practice from Europe, have been investigated. The genre transformation of Chinese folk music in the academic music of the 20th and 21st centuries, which was influenced by the creation of European-type classical compositions, was discussed in detail.

The harmonious-harmonic and structural-metrical systems of folk instrumental art were analysed, since through their convergence with the fundamental principles of European tonality and laws of formation, organic and deeply professional synthesis of the basic structures in these major poles of musical culture enabled the production of works that turned out to be classical examples of world music of the 20th and early 21st centuries.

**Results**

As the author’s collection of materials, their analysis and classification show, the process of integrating folk-instrumental art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries involves: exploring and studying in depth examples of Chinese folk art from different provinces and regions; recording folklore samples using the latest engineering equipment; composers’ focus on particular categories of folk instrumental art (harmony; rhythm; texture; genre; instrumentation); ways of arranging folk sources; the emergence of new genres of professional composition (concertos, suites, sonatas, variations and concert pieces).

Table 1 lists the most important elements of musical language through which Chinese composers were able to implement the phenomenon of transposing the traditions of popular instrumental art into the academic sphere.

**Table 1.** Categories of musical language as the basic components of a coherent system of composition

Category name	Category meaning
Harmony (harmony and intonation)	Reflecting the nature and character of the sound of the national scale, in this case – pentatonic scale and its later modifications
Meter – rhythm	Reflecting the nature and character of the pulsation, the alternation of up-beats and down-beats typical of Chinese musical folklore
Instrumentation (timbre range)	Reflecting the nature and character of the colouring of the sound field formed in folk Chinese music
Performance techniques	A means of achieving the most expressive effects in the process of interpretation, through an arsenal of technical playing methods developed in performing practice
Genres and forms	Reflecting the artistic and semantic essence of folk art samples, by demonstrating their semantic aspects in the context of clear compositional structures that have developed over the centuries

Table 2 provides a list of the means of the 20th and 21st century academic tradition in Chinese music by which the integration of folklore into professional art takes place.

**Table 2.** Means of integrating folk instrumental art into the art of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries

The stages of mastering folk art	Characteristics of folk-art learning processes
Collecting folklore	Scientific expeditions to various cities and regions of China, as well as video conferences and online source collection, aimed at comprehending the picture of folk art and defining its types, according to the characteristic features inherent in its samples
Recording folk melodies	Creation and use of the necessary engineering equipment to enable the preservation on electronic media of authentic versions of folk instrumental performance
Decrypting the materials	Creation of a textual (visual) version of folklore samples
Source processing	The actual creation of an author's composition on the basis of folk melodies, where the primary source undergoes varying degrees of transformation, often turning into a new genre

The process of collecting, recording and decrypting folklore has gradually expanded and improved due to the upgrading of material (transport, communication and engineering) base. Its profound modernisation has opened up almost unlimited possibilities for specialists in the study of folk and, in particular, instrumental art of China. In terms of composition, however, a truly creative individual artistic expression emerges in the processing of sources drawn from the centuries-long tradition of Chinese music-making. This fact prompts consideration of the principles of folklore interpretation separately and, to a certain extent, in more detail. Each of them is characterised by its own content and quality of primary source transformation. Thus, one of the most common examples of processing folk melodies is their arrangement for instruments of the European academic tradition, in which the intonation and rhythmic structure of folklore samples is fully preserved (Dautova et al., 2017; Tatenov & Askarova, 2014b).

A more complex and, inspired by the author's creative approach, more sophisticated method of processing national sources is transcription. It involves enriching the source material with timbre findings and virtuoso performance techniques typical of global professional music practice. This principle of transforming folklore materials and, at the same time, the genre of composition became popular in the 1960s-70s in the works of Wang Lisan, Wang Jianzhong and Chu Wanhua. It contributed to the formation of a vast arsenal of means, reflecting intonation and rhythmic structure of Chinese national music (Wa, 2015).

Then (late 1970s-1980s) the principle of working with thematic material of Chinese folk art, such as its implementation in major genres of European musical culture, became widespread. The harmonious, intonational and rhythmic foundations of folklore are being adapted to such structures as sonata, variations and concerto. The stage under consideration for the integration

of folk art into the composer's art contributed to the authors' individuality and creative freedom in the choice of genres, forms and themes. This, in turn, has enabled China's national school of composition to expand its possibilities and become open to a wider audience around the world (Wa, 2015).

The processing of Chinese folklore has also affected the sphere of style adaptation. Thus, the primary sources of folk, particularly instrumental art, were given a new life in the leading styles of academic Western European music: baroque ("Prelude and Toccata", "Impromptu" by Chu Wanhua; polyphonic piano works: Prelude "Plot from Bach", "Two two-voice inventions", three fugues in strict style by Huang Ji), romanticism (Piano Concerto "Huanghe" by Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanhua, Liu Zhuang), impressionism (Tan Dun – "Eight Memories in Watercolour" op. 1, 1978; Wang Lisan – "Paintings by Higashiyama Kaii", 1979; Chu Wanhua – Six Preludes, 1961-1977), expressionism ("Wukui" by Zhou Long, 1983, based on the fusion of authentic folk-dance tunes and the atonality of the New Vienna School; Second sonata by Chu Wanhua, 2006).

The underlying basis for the transformation of Chinese folk, in particular instrumental art, in the context of professional academic music is the application of classical composition techniques that have developed in European artistic culture over a number of centuries. These components include: the tonal-functional system (the sound scales of the two major harmonies of European classical music – major and minor, as well as the chord (harmony) of thirds structure, which has a clearly defined function in the overall structure); the extended 12-tone system (atonality, dodecaphony, serialism). The flexible, deeply organic and highly professional adaptation of the harmony and intonation system in Chinese folk music to the above systems created the image of contemporary compositional creativity which has become the heritage of world music art.

The integration of national instrumental music into the art of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries is also expressed in such a fundamental aspect of the problem as the transformation of the sound characteristic features of Chinese folk instruments and their playing techniques into the conditions of the classical European orchestra and its separate units (piano, saxophone and others). A large proportion of Chinese piano music is based on the imitation of a variety of national wind instruments. For example, the imitation of various playing techniques of the xiao-chang yin (trill) and the yin (grace notes) – present in the piano pieces by Zhu Wanhua, "Singing zheng and xiao" (1961) and "Xiangxiaogu" (1975) by Li Ying-Hai. The techniques of playing di-chan yin (trill), li yin (quick, short glissando), da yin and do yin (up and down grace notes), tu yin (repetition), hua yin (portamento) – refracted in the piano pieces "Piccolo flute of the shepherd" (1934) by He Lutin, "The music of the Chinese flute in northern Hubei province" from the cycle "Six concert etudes" (1973) by Zhao Xiaosheng, and "Scarlet peonies in bloom" (1973) by Wang Jianzhong. Imitations of such soprano techniques as yin (grace notes), chanyin (trill), zheng yin (repetition), huashe yin (literally translated – "snarling tongue"), po yin (mordent) can be heard in various fragments of the piano piece "A Hundred Birds Paying Respect to the Phoenix" (1973) by Wang Jianzhong, and other works. Characteristic intonation moves typical of sheng playing are recognisable in the texture of the piano pieces in Jiang Zusin's suite "Fair by the Temple" (1955) (Wang Ying, 2009).

An important feature of Chinese composers' piano works is the implementation of certain playing techniques on national stringed instruments. For example, the imitation of such erhu playing techniques as hua yin (portamento) and chisp zou (legato) are used in Zhu Wanhua's arrangement

of "The Moon Reflected in the Erzuan River" (1972). The most used techniques for performing on the banhu, which are also displayed in piano music, are several varieties and yin (grace note). Zhu Wanhua's piano piece "Liberated Days" (1964) imitates the yin. The basic techniques of playing the guqin include sang yin (pinching the natural string not pressed with the finger), an yin (pressing the string with the finger to change the pitch while playing the melodic line), zou yin (sliding the fingers quickly over the string) and fan yin (string harmonic) are also present in the texture of several Chinese piano pieces. They are the pieces "Xiangxiaogu" (1975) and "Yangguangsande" (1978) by Li Yinghai, "Three times the mums flowers bloom" (1973) by Wang Jianzhong and the Piano Concerto "Echo of Liao" (1993) by Zhao Xiaosheng (Wang Ying, 2009).

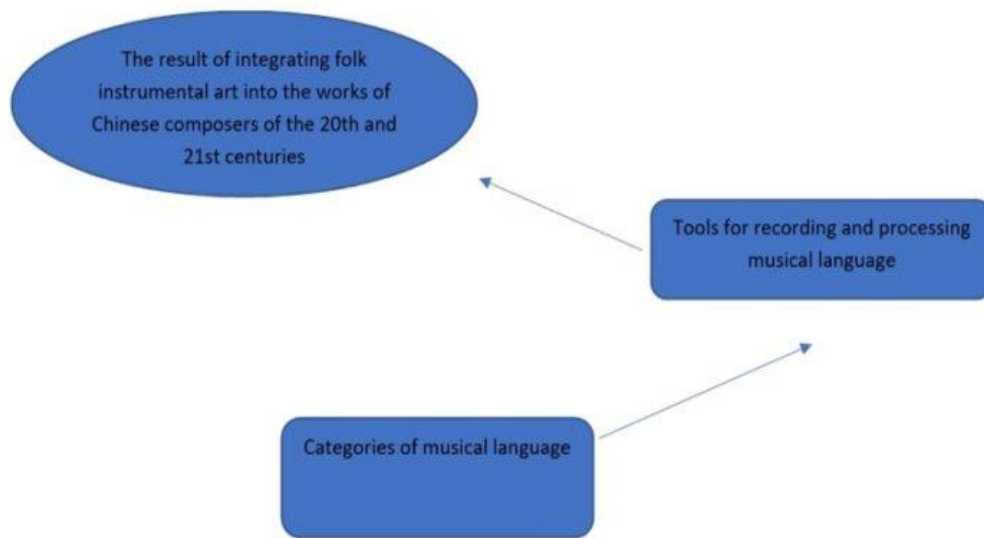
The performing range of pipa playing techniques is exceptionally wide and includes tan (plucking a string to the left with the tip of the right forefinger nail), tiao (raising a string with the tip of the right thumb nail to the right), gou (the principle, just like tiao, buut to the left), mo (slow, smooth plucking of a string), yao (rapid tremolo on a single string), sao (rapid plucking of three or four strings with the forefinger of the right hand from right to left), fu (the same as sao but from left to right), and many other techniques. The following pianistic techniques from Li Yinghai's "Xiangxiaogu" can be considered as piano transcriptions of some of the pipa playing techniques: repetition and tremolo imitating yao, lightning-fast glissando imitating sao and fu, sharp staccato resembling vigorous pinching of tan, tiao, gou (Wang Ying, 2009).

"Illustrations" of zheng playing techniques are present in many piano works by Chinese composers, such as the third part of Ying Chengzong's Piano Concerto "Yellow River" (1969), the pieces "Singing zheng and xiao" (1961) and Zhu Wanghua's "Embroidery of an Inscription on a Golden Canvas" (1973), Wang Jianzhong's "Liuyang River" (1972). In these opuses, the zheng sound is imitated by arpeggiato as well as glissandied passages. Imitations of the sound of the yangqin can be heard in Wang Jianzhong's piece "Embroidery of an Inscription on a Golden Canvas" (1973), Chei Pegisuish's piece "Thunder in Arid Weather" (1954), and a number of other piano works (Wang Ying, 2009).

The specificity of Chinese piano art, along with the implementation of the performing techniques of wind and string instruments, is also highlighted by numerous examples of imitating the sound of percussion instruments in piano works. The piano's texture acquires a special colouring in this case. Thus, powerful chords, wide range, and the presence of several layers imitate the striking of the bells in the fragments of Wang Lisan's piece "Noise of the Waves" from the suite "Paintings by Higashiyama Kaii" (1979). Ding Shande's piano opus "A Morning Breeze Blows" (1945) imitates the sonorous, sharp timbre of the bo (cymbals) with certain rhythmic intonation solutions. The quarto-quinta sonorities and rhythmical formulas inherent in music for percussion with a particular pitch are reproduced in the piece by Qu Wei, "Dance with the Drum" (1946) – it also includes heavy yunlo (gong) beats. Many qualities of the percussion instruments – the aforementioned quarto-quinta and octave harmonies, as well as the overall joyful atmosphere of "chime" – reflected in a piano piece "Thought of Spring" (1959) by Chen Peixun (Wang Ying, 2009).



Figure 1 illustrates the integration of folklore origins into the professional academic tradition of the present period.



**Figure 1. Integration of folk instrumental art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries**

Thus, the process of collecting, analysing and systematising the materials on folk, particularly instrumental, art integrated into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries provides a picture that reveals this problem in all its volume, versatility and complexity, according to the number of components that comprise it.

## Discussion

The researchers have developed an extensive body of research material on the topic of this study. Each of them worked on a particular area of the phenomenon in question. Issues of improvisation in the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries (through the example of Chu Wanhua) is the subject of Chui Wah's dissertation. The musicologist analyses Wanhua's piano transcriptions of themes from instrumental music ("Reflection of the Moon in the Spring", "The Crimson River") which offer the pianist great opportunities through a variety of performing techniques, in particular ornamentation, polyphony and also the concerto-romantic style. The range of genres the composer favoured is also revealed: etudes, preludes, barcarolles, capriccio and larger concert forms using modern writing techniques. It also covers the traditions of classical European academic music styles to which Chu Wanhua turned and the type of harmonic thinking (second vertical) that is characteristic of his works (Wa, 2015).

Wang Ying's dissertation deeply and comprehensively explores the principles of the implementation of national traditions in the piano music of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries. Thus, the orientation of the academic professional school authors towards samples of instrumental works, in particular folk dance tunes is revealed: "Taiwan Dance" (1936) by Jiang Wenye, "Xinjiang Dance No. 1" (1950), "Xinjiang Dance No. 2" (1955) by Ding Shande, "Three Dances" cycle (1951) by Ma Si Cong, "Dunlang Dance with Brass Drum" (1977) by Lu Huabai, "Lotus

Dance" cycle (1979) by Qiu Wei, "Wukui" (1983) by Zhou Lung, "Do-e" (1984) by Chen Yi and many other works that combine the national component with such European composition techniques as atonality and dodecaphony. Examples of imitating the playing of national Chinese instruments (almost all groups) in piano literature are studied: play "Singing Zheng and Xiao" (1961) by Zhu Wanhua, play "Piccolo Flute of a Shepherd" (1934) by He Lutin, play "Music of Chinese Flute in the North of Hubzu Province" (1973) by Zhao Xiaosheng, play "A Hundred Birds Paying Respect to the Phoenix" and "Scarlet Peonies in Bloom" (1973) by Wang Jianzhong, the suite "Fair by the Temple" (1955) by Jiang Zusin, the plays "Liberated Days" (1964) and "The Moon Reflected in the Erzuan River" (1972) by Zhu Wanhua, "Yangguangsande" and "Xiangxiaogu" by Li Yinghai and "Embroidery of an Inscription on a Golden Canvas" (1973) by Wang Jianzhong (Wang Ying, 2009).

The technical and acoustic characteristics of Chinese folk instruments used and realised their potential in the music of Xu Changjun ("Sword Dance" for luqin solo, "Phoenix" concerto for yangqin and orchestra, Capriccio concerto for huqin and orchestra of Chinese folk instruments) are covered in Yan Jianan's publication. According to the researcher, they have a direct impact on the harmonious intonation, harmonic and faceting components of Changjun's works (Jianan, 2020).

The involvement of the latest engineering technologies in the creation of music by contemporary Chinese composers, in particular the *Seq2Seq* model (for creating multi-track Chinese popular songs), is described by a group of scientists from China (Zheng et al., 2017b). The process of creating algorithms in composition design is analysed in one of the publications by Chinese specialists. In particular, a hybrid *PSO* model is described, where source music material is created using artificial intelligence, followed by its development using evolutionary operators in *GA* and the final form of the piece emerges (Zheng et al., 2017a; Tatenov & Askarova, 2014a).

The role of the European symphony orchestra's wind instruments, particularly the saxophone, for contemporary Chinese composers is also defined. Thus, its popularity and widespread use in the country is indicated. With regard to this fact, the activities of musician Fan Shengzi, who created arrangements of Chinese songs such as "Butterflies in Love" and "Moonlight Round Dance Asi", "Pastoral", "Flowing Waters", "Ussuri Boat" (in the blues style) and "Song from Imenshan" (based on Shengzi's work "Love for Nature") are highlighted. He greatly enriched well-known folk melodies by including improvisational and variation sections in his transcriptions. There is also discussion of works by composer Huang Anlun who composed a major work for saxophone and Chinese folk orchestra entitled "Chinese Rhapsody" (1988), in which elements of Chinese folk music are widely used: pentatonic scale, special methods of melodic development, combined with the traditions of Western compositional techniques (Maine, 2012).

Stepanova (2020) discusses in her work the relationship between the development of saxophone playing skills and the emergence of national performing schools on this basis, and this applies to the Chinese tradition as well. Music for saxophone made in the Asia-Pacific region (notably in Thailand) takes its shape in a series of different versions, one of which is the performance of the traditional Isan vocal form, molam, accompanied by saxophone as an accompaniment instrument, to which synth, electric organ, drums and electric guitar can be added if the composers wish. The various techniques of this style and the characteristics of the development of the musical material are highlighted (Seeyo, 2021).

Peng Cheng explores the harmony system of Chinese music and the principles of its implementation in the works of composers of the 20th and 21st centuries in his dissertation. Thus, he analyses the process of forming the Chinese national harmony system *yun-gong-diao* and its modernisation, through a deep synthesis with the European tonal-functional system, as well as with 20th century composition techniques, which leads to the emergence of “harmony dodecaphony” (Khaybullina et al., 2020). The specialist compares the chord structure of the major-minor and national Chinese systems. The latter, in contrast to the laws of the tertian vertical line formed in the music of Europe, represents the consonances formed by pentatonic material (major second, minor and major thirds, perfect fourth and fifth, minor and major sixth, minor seventh, up to the formation of pentatonic “clusters”). The study provides examples of using second-quint chords (“pipa chords”), second-third chords and quart chords (based on the *chu-tetrachord*) (Cheng, 2011).

The birth of the piano transcription genre as a reflection of the process of integrating folk art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries is evidenced by the work (dissertation) of Qiu Wah. Chen Shuyun covers the main stylistic trends in piano music of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries in his work. He reveals the reflection, based on Chinese national culture, of such trends in European academic art as romanticism (acquiring new traits by becoming an “Eastern branch” of this stylistic tradition), impressionism and neo-folklorism (Aimukhambet et al., 2017). The researcher also shares valuable observations and conclusions concerning the characteristics and distinctive features of national regional styles: Xinjiang, Shanbei, Guangdong, and Sichuan. The scholar finds their vivid elements in the works of Guo Zhihong – “Xinjiang Dance”, Song Yiqiang – “Spring Dance”, Ding Shande – “Xinjiang Dance No.1” (“xinjiang style”); Wang Lisan – “Lan Huhua”, Ye Lusheng – “The Story of Lan Huhua”, Zhou Guangren – Variations on a Theme of a Shanbei Folk Song, Chu Wanhua – “Sky of Liberated Areas” (“shanbei style”); Wang Jianzhong – “Clouds Catching up with the Moon” and Chen Peixun – “Autumn Moon Over a Quiet Lake” (“guangdong style”); Huang Huwei – suite “Paintings of Bashu”, Li Yinghai – “Rapeseed Blossom”, “When the Huaihua Flower Blossoms” and Chu Wanghua – “Love Song of Candong” (“sichuan style”).

The study of Chinese folk art in the context of the latest digital software is also actively taking place in contemporary research practice, as it promotes the integration of this branch of musical culture into the professional academic art of the present period. In particular, the *Layered Stability Detection (LSD)* sound segmentation algorithm and systems (*HMM-GMM* models) for recognising the internal content, character and audio quality of folklore samples in different regions of the country are analysed through experiments (Li et al., 2017). An in-depth comprehension of the styles inherent in the various areas of China is explored, among other things, through the *SVM classifier*. It combines the ability to read aural samples of folklore with the possibility of conveying the visual characteristics of their internal content (through the use of colour frequency-time maps) (Yang et al., 2018). The systematisation of Chinese folklore, according to its regional affiliation and style, also takes place by means of developments in the field of automatic classification of folk art music samples. For this purpose, the *CRF-RBM* model, which combines a conditional field (*CRF*) and the technical arsenal of a Boltzmann machine (*RBM*) (Li et al., 2019), is put into operation.

One of the achievements of the discipline integrating musical art and engineering was the creation of the *MG-VAE* audio design generator model, based on the automatic coding element *VAE*, capable of perceiving and displaying the style of works and actually algorithms for generating new themes from samples of Chinese folk culture (Luo et al., 2019).

The study of the ethics, theory and practice of instrumental music in southern China is the subject of Hui's work. He defines *xizhu* as the category representing a chamber ensemble made up of stringed and wind instruments, as well as a regional tradition in the Yangtze Delta region of eastern China known as Jiangnan *xizhu*. The scholar argues from the point of view of traditional Chinese music scholar Alan Thrasher that there are four leading ensemble styles developed in the provinces of Fujian and Guangdong. Analysing musical forms and styles, as well as – the numerological order according to which the repertoire is constructed, the nature of the phrasing and scale of the ensemble, the harmony basis – pentatonics, and the ideology of *yi yang*, Thrasher concludes that these components are imbued with ideals associated with Confucian culture (Hui, 2014; Begalinova et al., 2020).

Mezentseva discusses the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries in the context of intercultural dialogue of the Asia-Pacific region countries in her study. It looks in detail at the artistic traditions of indigenous peoples and the East Slavic migratory culture of the Russian Far East, as well as – countries of the Asia-Pacific region outside Russia. The author interprets the role of music and computer technologies in musical culture and education in the Far East of Russia and China, as the most important component of interaction in the field of academic music, focuses on the problems of informatization of modern musical education, and concludes on the unique experience of composition in China based on the traditional music of the Russian Far East (Mukhitov et al., 2020; Varii et al., 2020). The pentatonic basis of the Chinese harmony system, close to the modal organisation of the music of Far Eastern ethnic groups, which is also the basis of the musical folklore of Russian Far Eastern composers, stands out in particular. The author sees this as the basis for the interaction of cultures in the Far Eastern region, which is recognised as an important aspect from the perspective of creating a holistic multicultural space based on the principles of humanism (Aleksandrova et al., 2018; Mezentseva, 2021).

A cultural phenomenon in the history of art and, in particular, Chinese music, such as synesthesia, which combines local opera, poetry, painting and garden design, is also explored in the publications of scholars. They emphasise the mentality of the country's inhabitants, where the leading force is intuition, a factor of enlightened thought attained in the process of meditation and contemplation. A roadmap for the study of synaesthesia in Chinese art has also been presented by specialists (Xiong et al., 2015). The study of researcher Chen describes the founding father of such a branch of Chinese professional academic music as instrumental art – Huang Tzu. He pays particular attention to analysing the incorporation of the principles of European professional traditions into national art. In particular, he cites the following works by Tzu: the symphonic overture "In memoriam", the orchestral piece "Fairytale City", the polyphonic piano works – Prelude "The Story from Bach", "Two two-voice inventions" and three fugues in a formal style. The specialist calls for a deeper and more comprehensive study of the composer's heritage by domestic musicologists (Chen, 2019).

The works of Chinese composers of the "Realism Era", which extends from 1949 to 1976, is the central theme of Dai Yu's dissertation. He analyses such aspects of the activities performed by representatives of the academic professional music field as the development of major European-type genres and forms (the symphony), the implementation of programming principles in instrumental works, and the realisation of characteristic playing techniques on folk instruments and their combination with symphonic orchestral instruments. The scholar also notes that composers address the traditional temporal organisation of musical material – the even two- and four-barreled banshi metres, the free aperiodic "sanban" style of improvisational type, and forms of rondo varieties, which are favourites in Chinese folk music. In terms of tendencies and techniques of composition, phenomena such as avant-garde, minimalism and methods of creating compositions such as pointillism and repetition in a short time were tested by the composers of the "period of openness", expressing themselves in original results with a unique Chinese character (Romaniuk, 2021). The analyst encourages the discovery of aspects of the national music associated with harmonies smaller in sound scale than the pentatonic, and the exploration of ritual genres of Chinese folklore (Yu, 2017).

The problem of creation and functioning in the 20th century and in contemporary Chinese culture of a new type of traditional instrument orchestras, as well as the large-scale genre of academic music – symphony, is actively studied (Yan, 2018). In his dissertation, Yan Jianan explains the principles of the implementation of national traditions in professional composing art (on the example of Xu Changjun's music). He brings into focus the process of merging folk origins and contemporary composition techniques (the New Wave movement), reflecting styles such as Stravinsky and Bartók's neo-folklorism and the avant-garde (with its inherent dodecaphony, aleatoric music, minimalism and use of electronic instruments). A modified version of the intonation structure, chords, and timbre drama of modern compositions is also analysed in detail (Jianan, 2020).

This theme is also explored by Li Yun in his dissertation "Wang Jianzhong's Piano Works". He highlights the composer's genre priorities, his reflection of the traditions of linear thinking as a peculiarity of Chinese folk music (zhongqian), his characteristic style of arranging musical themes, where specific folk ornamentation is used through the melismatics of the piano, melodies based on national harmony system, both in their natural "pure" version and in combination with composition techniques of the 20th-21st centuries. In particular, the researcher reveals the types of Chinese "pentatonic dodecaphony row". He believes that this aspect serves to resolve the conflict between the atonal quality of dodecaphony and the traditional harmony structure of Chinese national music. This is achieved through the following principles and methods of working with the material: structuring the series; introducing folk harmony into the created series; using traditional folk rhythms in the series; introducing classical tonal elements into the theme (Yun, 2019).

The second half of the 20th century was also marked by an active process of developing folk sources in Chinese composers' piano music (folk songs and dances, poetry and literature, "gohua" paintings). Despite the pronounced integration of Chinese composer music into the world and European culture in particular, the preservation of the national style and spirit is facilitated by the imitation of the sound of folk instruments, the reliance on folk harmonies, intonations and rhythms

(Abdullina & Sun, 2018). However, the overall picture-panorama, which demonstrates the process of integrating folk and, in particular, instrumental art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries, still remains unexplored. This has prompted the author of this study to collect, examine and systematically analyse the available material in order to investigate the topic in question.

## **Conclusions**

The problem of integrating folk instrumental art into the works of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries is a complex and multifaceted one. It is based on such multi-component spheres as the system of means of musical expression and the complex of technical means of implementing folklore sources in a professional academic field. The analysis of each of the spheres makes it possible to identify their categories, as well as to define and characterise these components. The system of means of musical expression consists of harmony and intonation structure; meter and rhythm; texture; timbres of instruments; methods of sound production; genre; compositional form. The complex of technical means of reflecting national musical samples are represented by: engineering and technical basis for collecting and recording folklore material; its processing in that variant, which is peculiar to individual style of a composer. The embodiment of the art of traditional instrumentalists in the professional academic music of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries resulted in the emergence of such genres of the national musical culture as transcriptions, pieces, etudes, suites, as well as large-scale forms: symphony, concerto for solo instrument with symphony orchestra, rhapsody.

The mastery of Chinese composers and their adherence to deep national traditions manifested itself in the organic, highly professional combination of such polar systems of harmony thinking as pentatonic (reflected in the *yun-gong-diao* complex) and tonal-functional as well as dodecaphony-serial systems. The unity of these spheres is reflected in both melodic and chord-harmonic aspects. The techniques of playing Chinese folk instruments are finely implemented in music for piano, saxophone, vocal interpretation and other timbres. They are actively incorporated by composers into classical ensembles of the European type and give a quantitatively new sound to the music in general. Thus, the process of integrating folk instrumental music into the professional art of Chinese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries turned out to be profound and fruitful. It has undeniable prospects for implementation in the music of subsequent generations. The phenomenon under consideration also provides inexhaustible ground for the research work of scientists all over the world.

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