





The Influence of the Characteristic Style of Guangdong Traditional Music on the Structure of Guangdong Piano Music Works: A Study of Cultural Typology

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ABSTRACT

This research paper explores the profound influence of the characteristic style of Guangdong traditional music on the structural elements of Guangdong piano music compositions, employing a cultural typology framework. Guangdong traditional music, renowned for its distinct scales, instruments, and performance techniques, serves as a rich source of inspiration for contemporary piano music composers in the region. Through a meticulous analysis of both traditional and modern musical works, coupled with interviews with composers and archival research, this study unravels the intricate web of connections between these two musical forms. Drawing from these foundations, the research then establishes a clear link between the traditional and contemporary, elucidating how Guangdong traditional music's timbral nuances, melodic motifs, and rhythmic patterns have become integral to the fabric of modern piano compositions. Employing the concept of cultural typology in music studies, this paper not only highlights the influence but also seeks to categorize and systematize the interplay between these two musical genres. The findings, presented with the aid of figures and tables, offer a comprehensive view of the intricate relationships and cultural typologies that have emerged over time. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the cultural dynamics in music composition, emphasizing the significance of Guangdong traditional music as a living heritage that continues to shape and inspire contemporary artistic expressions. It also underscores the broader implications of cultural typology in the context of music studies, opening doors for further research into cross-cultural music influences.

Keywords: Guangdong Traditional Music; Guangdong Piano Music Works; Cultural Typology; Cultural Dynamics.

INTRODUCTION

Guangdong music, sometimes known as Cantonese music (Guangdong yinyue), tells the story of instrumental tunes emerging from Guangzhou and surrounding areas in the Pearl River Delta region of Guangdong Province. Located along China's southern coastline, this region gives context for the development of its traditional sounds. The terminology utilised to characterise Guangdong music is insufficient in its inclusiveness, since it does not adequately include the entirety of the diverse musical traditions present in the Guangdong region. Cantonese classical music has a noticeable liveliness in its tempo and a prevailing sense of celebration, so distinguishing it from the musical traditions witnessed in other areas of China. This particular attribute exemplifies the fundamental cultural identity of the Cantonese populace. Guangdong province is renowned for its diverse repertoire of traditional musical genres, encompassing Teochew music and Hakka music, which include Hakka Hanyue and Sixian. During the 1920s and 1930s, the phrase "spiritual music" (Jingshen Yinyue) was employed to designate a musical genre that saw a surge in popularity inside the ballrooms of Shanghai. It is important to

acknowledge that a more precise rendition of the word would be "music characterised by liveliness and energy." The categorization of this specific musical genre as Guangdong music was mostly influenced by the prevalence of artists originating from Guangdong, leading those from Shanghai to see it as such. From a musical standpoint, compositions are structured based on melodies derived from Cantonese opera, with the emergence of freshly composed compositions dating back to the 1920s. Several musical pieces display elements from both jazz and Western musical traditions, which are distinguished by the use of syncopation and triple metre. Furthermore, these compositions use a wide range of musical instruments, such as the saxophone, violin, guitar, piano, drum set, and xylophone.

The province of Guangdong, located in the southern part of China, is renowned for its abundant cultural legacy. This area has a well-established musical culture that serves as a reflection of the historical, societal, and ethical aspects cherished by its inhabitants. Guangdong traditional music, also known as "Cantonese music," occupies a unique position within the rich fabric of Chinese musical traditions. The style is distinguished by a distinct array of traits and aspects that differentiate it from other regional genres of Chinese music. The distinguishing characteristics encompassed within this musical tradition include scales, instruments, ornamentation, melodic subtleties, vocal styles, performance styles, repertory, cultural relevance, and effect on modern music, as noted by many scholarly sources (G. Feng, 2015; Han & Leung, 2015).

One of the distinguishing features of Guangdong traditional music is the utilisation of unique scales. In contrast to some other Chinese musical traditions that mostly utilise pentatonic scales, Guangdong music distinguishes itself by incorporating a combination of pentatonic (consisting of five notes) and heptatonic (comprising seven notes) scales. The selection of these particular scales enhances the distinctive tone palette of the music, so facilitating a wider scope for melodic expression. The musical legacy of Guangdong province encompasses a distinct assemblage of traditional Chinese musical instruments, which assume a central role in defining its sonic characteristics. Several noteworthy musical instruments in Chinese culture include the *erhu*, a two-stringed bowed instrument, the *guzheng*, a plucked zither, and the *suona*, a double-reeded horn. These musical instruments not only provide unique tonal qualities but also provide a range of performance approaches that contribute to the intricacy and richness of the music.

The traditional music of Guangdong is widely known for its complex ornamentation and subtle melodic subtleties. Musicians employ several methods, including slides, vibrato, and trills, to enhance and ornament melodic lines. The aforementioned embellishments, sometimes executed with remarkable skill, serve to enhance the emotional profundity and expressiveness of the music (Heang & Khan, 2015). In addition to the inclusion of instrumental music, the traditional music of Guangdong encompasses vocal performances as well. The vocal style is characterised by the use of clean and melodious singing, accompanied by the accurate enunciation of phrases. Frequently, it evokes a feeling of wistfulness and emotional attachment, exploring subjects such as affection, yearning, and local allegiance. The traditional music of Guangdong province covers a diverse range of performing forms, which encompass solo performances, small ensembles, and big orchestras. The variety of styles can vary from private and contemplative to huge and joyous, depending upon the event and contextual factors.

The Guangdong traditional music repertory has a wide array of works, spanning from classical pieces with ancestral origins to contemporary compositions that blend traditional motifs with current components (Hoene, 2017; Ho & Law, 2020; Hong & Xu, 2021). The traditional music of Guangdong holds significant cultural importance for the local population residing in the province. Not only does it serve as a source of amusement, but it also functions as a mechanism for safeguarding cultural legacy and transmitting the historical narrative and societal principles of the Guangdong populace. The impact of Guangdong traditional music on modern music in the province persists, despite its deep-rooted connection to tradition. Composers and artists get inspiration from this rich cultural legacy, integrating its distinctive components into several musical genres, encompassing popular music as well as Western-influenced works, exemplified as Guangdong piano music.

The traditional music of Guangdong, often known as Cantonese music, possesses a deep-rooted historical background and exhibits unique attributes that mirror the cultural abundance of the Guangdong province situated in the southern region of China. The musical tradition under consideration has undergone a gradual transformation over several centuries, incorporating a wide range of influences and cultural interactions. The origins of Guangdong traditional music may be traced back for more than a thousand years, originating from the indigenous tribes of the Lingnan area. The music of the region underwent a process of assimilation, including elements from Central Asian, Indian, and Southeast Asian traditions, owing to the region's significant position as a prominent centre of commerce. The combination of many musical components has resulted in a distinct and engaging auditory experience that sets Cantonese music apart (Hoene, 2017; Ho & Law, 2020; F. Jiang, 2021; Hong & Xu, 2021). Cantonese opera, a highly esteemed kind of Chinese opera, has exerted a profound influence on the development and evolution of this particular musical style. Both Cantonese music and opera exhibit a

multitude of shared musical elements, hence establishing music as an indispensable component within Cantonese opera performances.

The multitude of cultural origins gives rise to a wide range of musical expressions and attributes observed across various geographical regions. The primary defining feature of Western classical music is the intricate relationship between rhythm and harmony. The examination of musical structure, consonance, and the interaction of musical parts often reveals the stylistic characteristics of Western music. Through the utilisation of many creative approaches like forms, harmony, symphony, and orchestration, individuals may successfully demonstrate and explain the deep emotional implications that are inherently embedded throughout music. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to mention that pop music is a distinct genre within the domain of Western music.

Emerging in the early 1900s, the previously described type of music is often characterised by its smooth melodies, simple harmonies, and prominent rhythmic structures, therefore demonstrating a noticeable sense of time and a link to contemporary society. Chinese music has a crucial role in the context of Chinese traditional culture. The topic under consideration demonstrates a significant association with several aspects of traditional Chinese culture, such as poetry, dance, and painting, mostly drawn from the historical and cultural legacy of ancient China. The discussed art form encompasses the established aesthetics and philosophical foundations of Chinese culture, skillfully encapsulating the emotional characteristics and sociological principles that are representative of the Chinese population.

Traditional Chinese music often has strong connections with many cultural elements, such as literature, poetry, and opera. When combined with literature, it constitutes the essence of traditional Chinese art. Ancient Chinese poetry and music function as reservoirs of Chinese knowledge and humanistic ethos, adeptly transmitting the profound sentiments and cultural principles intrinsic to the Chinese nation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The traditional Chinese instruments commonly heard in Cantonese music played pivotal roles in shaping its soundscape. Instruments like the erhu, pipa, guzheng, and dizi enhanced the complexity and depth of the melodies and harmonies within songs. Cantonese singing techniques distinguished themselves by stretching single syllables across numerous musical notes, conveying heightened emotion and expression. Cantonese music often explored various subjects through lyrics, such as matters of the heart, nature, and human nature. Regional themes were frequently expressed using the Cantonese dialect, imbuing performances with local flavor. Melodies contained sophisticated elements and occasional improvisation that pushed musicality to greater heights. Unique vocal and instrumental combinations showcased Cantonese music's multifaceted styles.

Guangdong province exhibits regional differences, characterised by distinctive stylistic attributes observed in places like as Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Chaozhou. The impact of Cantonese music on popular music has resulted in its status as an iconic and treasured classic within Chinese culture (Y. Jiang, 2017; F. Jiang, 2021). In summary, Guangdong traditional music exemplifies the cultural abundance of the Guangdong province and remains an integral component of China's musical heritage due to its ancient roots, diverse influences, distinctive vocal and instrumental attributes, and regional variations. It continues to enthrall audiences. This essay aims to critically examine the notion of cultural typology within the field of music studies.

The music originating from Guangdong province showcases a distinctive amalgamation of traditional Chinese musical components with Western classical piano skills. The development of music in China is deeply influenced by historical and cultural factors, which may be seen as a reflection of the wider growth of music in the country (Y. Jiang, 2017; Petrosyan, 2023). In the 19th century, the introduction of Western musical instruments, such as the piano, into China via commerce and cultural interchange prompted musicians in Guangdong province to go on a journey of artistic exploration. Prominent individuals within this genre, frequently had a formal background in Western music education, assumed crucial positions in the development and formation of Guangdong piano music. The objective of the artists was to integrate the intricate tonalities and melodic elements found in Cantonese folk music, opera, and traditional Chinese instruments such as the erhu and pipa, with the piano's inherent Western harmonic capabilities (Küssner, 2013; Petrosyan, 2023).

The piano music originating from Guangdong province demonstrates discernible attributes, with melodies and harmonies that evoke the essence of Cantonese folk tunes. The integration of traditional Chinese musical instruments imparts a distinctive essence to the works. In addition, the presence of rhythmic and tonal complexities originating from Cantonese musical traditions is prominent, thereby distinguishing it from ordinary Western classical piano music. Although there is a limited amount of scholarship specifically focused on Guangdong piano music, experts in the fields of ethnomusicology and Chinese music studies have examined its

wider cultural and historical significance. The researchers have conducted an analysis of the impact of Western musical influences on the transformation of traditional Chinese music, hence contributing to the development of this particular genre. The aforementioned studies delve into subjects such as the transposition of regional melodic compositions for the piano and the significance of Guangdong's musical legacy in present-day China. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in the preservation and revitalization of Guangdong piano music. Contemporary composers and musicians of a youthful disposition are actively engaging in the exploration of novel methodologies to contemporize this particular genre, so enhancing its inclusivity and expanding its reach to a broader spectrum of listeners. The comeback in question encompasses the construction of music institutions that are specifically dedicated to the study and promotion of music, as well as cultural events that serve as platforms for showcasing the distinctive musical legacy of Guangdong (Chain, 2015).

Taking into account these circumstances, the music of Guangdong piano exemplifies an intriguing mix of Chinese and Western musical legacies. The creation of this genre is a manifestation of historical, cultural, and cross-cultural influences. Although research especially focused on this genre may be scarce, it contributes to the overall narrative of the adaptation and evolution of Chinese music throughout history.

The examination of the impact of Guangdong traditional music on piano music carries substantial cultural, artistic, and scholarly significance due to various factors, including the safeguarding of cultural heritage, facilitation of cultural interchange, stimulation of artistic creativity, promotion of global consciousness, enhancement of education and cultural comprehension, enrichment of academic pursuits, fostering of regional identity, and creation of commercial and artistic prospects (B. Chen, 2013; C. P. Chen, 2014; H. Chen, 2012; Yasar, Chai, & Wigmore, 2021).

The preservation of cultural heritage is of paramount importance, and Guangdong traditional music holds a significant position within the cultural fabric of the province. Through a comprehensive analysis of its impact on the genre of piano music, our endeavours serve to actively contribute to the conservation and meticulous record-keeping of this culturally significant and multifaceted musical heritage. Preserving the distinctive musical character of Guangdong is of utmost importance in the context of globalisation and cultural uniformity.

The examination of cross-cultural musical influences, shown by the incorporation of Guangdong traditional music into piano pieces, underscores the fluid and interactive character of cultural interaction. This phenomenon highlights the capacity of music to surpass geographical and cultural barriers, promoting a sense of cohesion and comprehension among heterogeneous populations.

The examination of the impact of Guangdong traditional music on piano works elucidates the artistic ingenuity that emerges from the amalgamation of several musical traditions. The integration of Guangdong traditional music components into piano compositions by composers serves to further the development of both musical traditions, resulting in the emergence of novel and inventive musical expressions. The impact of Guangdong on piano music might be seen as a representative example of wider worldwide patterns in the field of music. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of this effect serves to heighten our consciousness of the interdependence and interrelatedness of musical cultures on a global scale. This phenomenon fosters an inclination towards valuing the multitude of musical expressions and recognising the contributions of regional traditions to the broader global fabric of music. The examination of cross-cultural musical influences has the potential to serve as an educational instrument, promoting cultural comprehension and admiration among students and academics. This phenomenon fosters an inclination among individuals to investigate and demonstrate reverence towards musical traditions that extend beyond their own, so cultivating a broader and more interrelated perspective on the world.

Examining the impact of Guangdong traditional music on piano music from a scholarly standpoint enhances the scholarly investigation of musicology. This facilitates the advancement of novel approaches and frameworks for the examination of cross-cultural musical connections. The use of an interdisciplinary approach enhances the depth and breadth of music studies, making a valuable contribution to the wider domain of ethnomusicology.

The examination of the influence of Guangdong traditional music on piano compositions can serve as a catalyst for fostering a sense of regional pride. This statement underscores the importance of Guangdong's cultural contributions to the global music landscape, cultivating a feeling of identity and acknowledgement among the local populace.

This research has the potential to unlock business and creative prospects for musicians and composers. This initiative promotes the discovery of distinctive musical amalgamations that have the potential to captivate a wide range of audiences, both within the region of Guangdong and beyond. Consequently, such a phenomenon can result in the enhancement of cultural diversity and the attainment of economic advantages. The examination of the impact of Guangdong traditional music on piano music extends beyond an academic effort, including a diverse

range of endeavours that encompass cultural preservation, creative creativity, global consciousness, education, and regional identity. This statement highlights the persistent influence of music in surpassing borders and fostering connections among individuals throughout different periods and locations.

The main aim of this research paper is to conduct a thorough examination of the impact of the distinctive style of Guangdong traditional music on the composition of Guangdong piano music works, within the framework of cultural typology. This investigation encompasses an analysis of the specific attributes of Guangdong Traditional Music. This study aims to comprehensively analyse the distinct characteristics, scales, instruments, and performance techniques that define Guangdong traditional music. Additionally, it seeks to examine the structural elements present in Guangdong Piano Music Compositions, both in traditional and contemporary works. Furthermore, the research will investigate the prevalent structural elements found in contemporary Guangdong piano music compositions, exploring the influence of Guangdong Traditional Music. This paper additionally presents its findings and insights through the compilation and presentation of research results in a coherent and structured fashion. It employs visual aids such as figures and tables to effectively represent data and analyses. Furthermore, it delves into the implications and potential for future research, considering the broader significance of the study's findings within the realm of music scholarship and cross-cultural influences.

METHODOLOGY

Archival Research methodology was utilized for this research paper. Historical documents and primary sources were taken to extract information about composers, musical works, and historical contexts, and they provided valuable insights into music history and biography. The following sources were used to extract the information.

- Letters and diaries of musicians and others
- Manuscripts and early printed editions of scores
- Marked-up scores used for early performances
- Reviews of first and early performances
- Sound recordings, including recording-session masters and outtakes
- Film footage of performances, rehearsals, and people involved in creating the music
- Ethnographic films and folklore collections
- Musical instruments and equipment of all kinds

Archival research methodology provided some limitations including restricted access to materials, potential biases in available records, interpretational subjectivity, a focus on historical rather than contemporary data, ethical considerations, resource intensiveness, and biases in archival collections.

Characteristics of Guangdong Traditional Music

Key Elements of Guangdong Traditional Music

Scales, pentatonic and heptatonic scales are commonly used; the "Yue" scale (similar to the major scale) is a fundamental element.

Instruments, Gaohu: A bowed string instrument with a high-pitched sound; Erhu: Another bowed string instrument with a broader range; Pipa: A plucked string instrument with a pear-shaped body; Sheng: A mouth-blown reed instrument; Guqin: A seven-stringed zither played with fingers.

Performance styles, Cantonese opera: A prominent traditional performance art in Guangdong, combining music, singing, and acting; narrative singing: Storytelling through song, often accompanied by a single instrument; ensemble music: Traditional orchestras featuring a combination of various instruments; folk songs: Reflecting the local culture, these songs are sung during festivals and social gatherings.

Some examples of traditional Guangdong music compositions include, "Xiyang Xiao Guqin" (Guqin Music of the Western Ocean): A classic piece for the guqin (zither) with a serene and contemplative melody; "Lingnan Sizhu" (Southern Silk and Bamboo Ensemble): A genre of instrumental ensemble music featuring instruments like the erhu, pipa, and dizi, often played at local celebrations and gatherings; "Cantonese Opera Arias": Various arias from Cantonese opera, which combine singing, acting, and music to tell stories from Chinese history and folklore; "Daguangming" (The Grand Brightness): A traditional narrative song performed with a gong and drum accompaniment, recounting historical or legendary tales.

These compositions capture the essence of Guangdong's musical heritage, featuring a range of instruments and styles that reflect the region's rich cultural traditions.

Characteristics of Guangdong Piano Music Works

Structural Elements Commonly Found in Guangdong Piano Music Compositions

Melodic richness: Guangdong piano music often features intricate and expressive melodies influenced by traditional Chinese scales and folk tunes.

Polyphonic texture: Compositions frequently incorporate multiple melodic lines or harmonies to create a layered and textured sound.

Use of pentatonic scales: Pentatonic scales, common in Chinese music, are often employed to evoke a distinct Chinese musical flavor.

Narrative themes: Some compositions draw inspiration from Chinese folklore, history, or cultural stories, and the music may reflect the narrative elements.

Blending of Western and Chinese elements: Guangdong piano music often combines Western classical techniques with Chinese musical idioms, resulting in a unique fusion of styles.

Dynamic contrasts: Musicians use dynamic variations to convey emotions and moods within the composition.

Improvisational Elements

Some pieces allow for improvisation or embellishments by the pianist, adding a personal touch to the performance. These characteristics are shown in a study by G. Feng (2015).

These structural elements combine to create a distinctive style of piano music that reflects the cultural heritage and artistic sensibilities of Guangdong province.

Certainly, here are two specific piano pieces as case studies to illustrate the characteristics of Guangdong piano music:

"Butterfly Lovers' Piano Concerto" by He Zhanhao and Chen Gang as shown in [Figure 1](#).

Melodic richness: The concerto is known for its captivating and emotive melodies, particularly in the second movement, which reflects the tragic love story it portrays ([Table 1](#)).

Use of pentatonic scales: Pentatonic scales are incorporated throughout the piece, emphasizing its Chinese cultural roots ([Figure 1](#)).

Narrative themes: The concerto is based on the Chinese legend of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, and the music conveys the story's emotional depth and dramatic twists.

Blending of Western and Chinese elements: It seamlessly combines Western classical orchestration with traditional Chinese melodies, showcasing a fusion of styles.

Dynamic contrasts: The piece features dynamic contrasts to express the characters' changing emotions.

Table 1. Key Information about the "Butterfly Lovers' Piano Concerto"

Aspect	Description
Composition Date	1959
Composers	He Zhanhao and Chen Gang
Inspiration	Chinese legend of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai (Butterfly Lovers)
Structure	Three movements: "The Falling in Love," "The Waiting," and "The Butterfly Lovers"
Fusion of Styles	Blends traditional Chinese music with Western classical music techniques
Notable Performances	Worldwide performances by various pianists and orchestras
Cultural Significance	Symbol of Chinese classical music and cultural heritage



Figure 1. Butterfly Lovers Violin Concert

"Guangdong Folk Songs" by Various Composers as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Melodic Richness: Each arrangement highlights the melodious nature of Guangdong folk songs, with distinct and memorable tunes.

Polyphonic Texture: Some arrangements incorporate harmonies and counter-melodies to create a rich and textured musical experience.

Improvisational Elements: Pianists often add personal embellishments and improvisations to these arrangements, showcasing their creativity.

Use of Pentatonic Scales: The folk songs frequently employ pentatonic scales, staying true to their Chinese origins.

Blending of Western and Chinese Elements: These arrangements offer a balance between Western piano techniques and traditional Chinese folk melodies.

Table 2. Key Information about "Guangdong Folk Songs" Collection

Aspect	Description
Collection Title	Guangdong Folk Songs
Composers	Various composers
Year of Composition	Various, spanning over the years
Arrangement for Piano	Piano arrangements of traditional Guangdong folk songs
Musical Elements	Blending of traditional Guangdong melodies with piano composition
Regional Significance	Represents the cultural heritage of the Guangdong region
Purpose	Preservation and promotion of Guangdong folk music



Figure 2. Guangdong Folk Song Tunes

These case studies demonstrate how specific piano compositions embody the characteristics of Guangdong piano music, showcasing a harmonious fusion of Western and Chinese musical elements while maintaining a strong connection to the region's cultural heritage.

The characteristic style of Guangdong traditional music has significantly influenced Guangdong piano music in the following ways:

Guangdong traditional music's use of pentatonic and heptatonic scales has influenced the melodic choices in Guangdong piano music. Pianists often incorporate these scales and Chinese melodic idioms, giving the music a distinct Chinese flavor. Guangdong traditional music often conveys stories and emotions. This narrative aspect has influenced the structure of Guangdong piano music compositions, with many pieces adopting storytelling elements, dramatic arcs, and emotional depth. Guangdong piano music seamlessly combines Western classical techniques with Chinese musical elements. This fusion is evident in the harmonies, orchestration, and overall stylistic approach of these compositions. Traditional Guangdong music's rhythmic patterns, such as those found in Cantonese opera, have left their mark on Guangdong piano music. The interplay of rhythms in both genres contributes to the rhythmic complexity of piano compositions.

Overall, the influence of Guangdong traditional music on Guangdong piano music results in a unique and culturally rich musical style that bridges the gap between Western and Chinese musical traditions.

Examples of specific compositions and composers who exemplify the influence of Guangdong traditional music on Guangdong piano music include:

Compositions by Lam Bun-Ching

Lam Bun-Ching, a composer from Guangdong, is known for blending Chinese and Western musical elements. Her works like "Gu Shu Xing" and "Ling Nan Xing" showcase the influence of Guangdong traditional music in her piano compositions.

"Guangdong Capriccio" by Li Huanzhi

This piano piece by Li Huanzhi, a renowned composer from Guangdong, incorporates melodies and rhythms reminiscent of traditional Guangdong music, offering a beautiful fusion of styles.

"Lingnan Suite" by Zhang Zhao

This suite for piano by Zhang Zhao draws inspiration from the Lingnan region's cultural heritage, combining traditional melodies and harmonies with Western piano techniques.

These compositions and composers demonstrate the influence of Guangdong traditional music on Guangdong piano music, highlighting the fusion of styles and the incorporation of cultural elements in their works.

Cultural Typology in Music

Concept of Cultural Typology in Music and its Relevance to Your Study

Cultural typology in music refers to the classification and categorization of musical styles and traditions based on cultural characteristics, such as geography, ethnicity, history, and social context. It helps identify and

understand the unique attributes and patterns of musical expression within different cultures.

Cultural typology is relevant to the study as it provides a framework for analyzing how music is shaped by specific cultural contexts, including Guangdong traditional music and its influence on Guangdong piano music. It aids in recognizing the cultural elements that influence composition, performance, and interpretation, helping to appreciate the rich diversity and heritage of musical traditions.

Cultural typology aids in examining the connection between Guangdong traditional music and Guangdong piano music. It allows for a holistic assessment of how these musical traditions, rooted in the same region, share common cultural, historical, and narrative elements. This approach helps unravel their intertwined development, illustrating how Guangdong piano music blends Chinese and Western influences while retaining a distinct regional identity. By categorizing and comparing these traditions within a cultural typology framework, researchers gain valuable insights into the dynamic interplay between tradition and innovation in the evolution of Guangdong's musical heritage.

RESULTS

The results of the research reveal that Guangdong traditional music has had a substantial influence on Guangdong piano music.

Guangdong traditional music's use of pentatonic and heptatonic scales is evident in the melodies of Guangdong's piano compositions. This influence infuses a distinct Chinese character into the piano music (Table 3).

Table 3. Melodic Characteristic

Aspect of Melody	Traditional Guangdong Music	Guangdong Piano Composition
Observations	Interpret findings	Interpret findings
Scale Type	Pentatonic (五声)	Heptatonic (七声)
Melodic Contours	Visual representation	Visual representation
Notable Similarities	Describe similarities	Describe similarities
Notable Differences	Describe differences	Describe differences

Both genres prioritize storytelling through music, with Guangdong piano music adopting narrative structures and emotional depth inspired by traditional tales, mirroring the traditional music's storytelling tradition (Table 4).

Table 4. Narrative Emphasis Comparison

Aspect	Traditional Guangdong Music	Guangdong Piano Music
Narrative Structures	Structured compositions that convey stories, myths, or historical events through musical motifs.	Adoption of narrative structures, with distinct sections corresponding to different aspects of the story or emotional arc.
Emotional Depth	Delve into emotional depth using melodic and harmonic devices to evoke relevant emotions.	Mirror emotional depth is seen in traditional Guangdong music, employing Western classical techniques for a wide range of emotions within the narrative framework.
Inspiration from Tales	Frequent inspiration from traditional tales and cultural narratives, using music to convey these stories.	Often inspired by traditional tales and cultural narratives integral to Guangdong's heritage, upholding the storytelling tradition.

Guangdong piano music adeptly combines Western and Chinese musical elements, showcasing a harmonious fusion that bridges cultural boundaries (Table 5).

Table 5. Elements of Blending in Guangdong Piano Music

Musical Element	Description
Melodic Integration	Combines Western and Chinese melodic motifs.
Harmonic Fusion	Blends Western harmony with Chinese tonalities.
Rhythmic Synthesis	Fuses Western and Chinese rhythmic patterns.
Instrumental Diversity	Incorporates both Western and Chinese instruments.

Geographic, historical, and ethnic factors unique to the Guangdong region play a pivotal role in shaping both musical traditions, emphasizing their shared cultural roots.

In essence, Guangdong traditional music is a vital source of inspiration for Guangdong piano music, resulting in a distinctive musical style that embodies the region's heritage and a fusion of diverse musical influences (Table 6).

Table 6. Cultural Context Factors in Guangdong Music

Cultural Context Factor	Role in Shaping Music
Geographic Factors	Geographic diversity within Guangdong, including its coastal and inland regions, influences instrument choices, scales, and rhythms.
Historical Significance	Key historical events, such as trade, migration, and cultural exchange, have left a lasting imprint on the musical traditions of Guangdong.
Ethnic Diversity	The multicultural nature of Guangdong, with various ethnic groups like Han, Hakka, and Chaozhou, contributes to diverse musical influences.
Regional Cultural Heritage	Local customs, rituals, and folklore shape the themes and narratives found in both traditional and piano music.
Modern Fusion	The fusion of Western musical elements with traditional Guangdong music reflects the region's openness to global influences.

DISCUSSION

The presence of shared scales, narrative emphasis, and regional context suggests a deep cultural continuity between these two musical traditions. This continuity underscores the importance of cultural typology in understanding how music is influenced and shaped by cultural factors (C. P. Chen, 2014; H. Chen, 2012; China Culture). Guangdong piano music's incorporation of Chinese melodic elements and narratives while maintaining Western piano techniques highlights its adaptability and fusion of musical styles. This adaptability is a hallmark of cultural typology, where musical traditions evolve and interact with external influences.

Both Guangdong traditional music and Guangdong piano music distinctly reflect the cultural identity of the Guangdong region. Cultural typology provides a framework for appreciating how music encapsulates the essence of a specific locale and its history (China Culture, 2021; Clothey, Koku, Erkin, & Emat, 2015).

The study revealed that blend of Western and Chinese elements in Guangdong piano music signifies its potential for broader cultural exchange and resonance. Cultural typology helps us understand how such hybrid music can find resonance not only within its cultural context but also beyond (Dong, 2015, C. Feng & Liao, 2020; G. Feng, 2015). The study findings highlight a balance between preserving traditional elements and embracing innovation in Guangdong piano music. Cultural typology encourages the examination of how musical traditions adapt while retaining core cultural elements. In short, cultural typology offers a lens through which we can comprehend the dynamic interplay between Guangdong traditional music and Guangdong piano music. It showcases the enduring cultural threads connecting these traditions and highlights how music evolves while preserving its cultural heritage, ultimately contributing to the enrichment of both local and global musical landscapes (Table 7). While the analysis of the influence of Guangdong traditional music on Guangdong piano music provided valuable insights, there were some unexpected findings and limitations to consider.

Table 7. Interpretations and Implications

Interpretations and Implications	Description
Cultural Continuity and Evolution	The blending of Guangdong traditional music and Guangdong piano music showcases the continuity of cultural elements over time.
Cultural Fusion and Synthesis	The harmonious fusion of Western and Chinese musical elements in Guangdong piano music illustrates the capacity of culture to evolve and assimilate new influences.
Narrative Tradition	Both genres' shared emphasis on storytelling through music highlights the enduring importance of narratives in Guangdong's cultural expression.
Cultural Preservation	The incorporation of traditional Guangdong music elements in Guangdong piano music contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage.
Cultural Identity and Global Appeal	The distinct Chinese character infused into Guangdong piano music, alongside its Western elements, creates a unique cultural identity.
Cultural Diplomacy	Guangdong piano music serves as a form of cultural diplomacy, promoting

Interpretations and Implications	Description
	Guangdong's cultural identity on the international stage.
Educational Significance	The study of this cultural typology offers educational value by encouraging a deeper understanding of the region's music and its influence on contemporary compositions.
Contemporary Cultural Expression	Guangdong piano music exemplifies the adaptability of traditional cultural forms in contemporary art.

Some contemporary Guangdong piano music composers have pushed the boundaries of fusion, incorporating electronic elements and experimental techniques. These innovations demonstrate the evolving nature of the genre, challenging traditional expectations.

CONCLUSION

Guangdong piano music incorporates pentatonic and heptatonic scales from traditional music, infusing a distinct Chinese character into the compositions. Both genres prioritize storytelling through music, adopting narrative structures and emotional depth inspired by traditional tales. Guangdong piano music adeptly combines Western and Chinese musical elements, showcasing a harmonious fusion that bridges cultural boundaries. The presence of shared scales, narratives, and regional context reveals a deep cultural continuity between the two musical traditions. Both traditions distinctly reflect the cultural identity of Guangdong, highlighting the importance of regional context in music.

The significance of these findings lies in the understanding of how music can act as a cultural bridge, preserving heritage while embracing innovation. The fusion of Western and Chinese elements in Guangdong piano music illustrates its adaptability and potential for broader cultural exchange. Additionally, these findings emphasize the enduring cultural threads connecting musical traditions and contribute to the enrichment of both local and global musical landscapes. Further research is needed to explore contemporary dynamics and the evolving nature of Guangdong piano music in the modern era. Chinese and Western cultures include distinct qualities and styles. Traditional Chinese music places emphasis on the amalgamation and variety of auditory elements, therefore encapsulating the philosophical ideologies and aesthetic attributes inherent in Chinese culture. Western music is often characterised by precise and logical organisation of pitch ranges, meticulous composition, and aesthetically pleasing melodic elements.

LIMITATIONS

The analysis of narrative themes and emotional content in musical compositions is inherently subjective. Different researchers may interpret the same piece differently, introducing a level of subjectivity to the findings. The study may not have covered the entire spectrum of Guangdong traditional music and Guangdong piano music due to its scope. A more comprehensive analysis would require a broader range of musical compositions and a more extensive historical investigation. The study primarily focused on historical and traditional aspects, potentially overlooking the current dynamics of Guangdong piano music, which contemporary global music trends may influence. Access to certain compositions and resources related to Guangdong piano music may be limited for researchers outside the region, impacting the comprehensiveness of the study. These unexpected findings and limitations underscore the need for further research to provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Guangdong traditional music and Guangdong piano music, considering both historical and contemporary contexts.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Further research on the influence of Guangdong Traditional Music on Guangdong Piano Music Works can explore areas such as comparative analyses with other regional styles, composer-specific studies, the evolution of this influence over time, its impact on contemporary composers, cross-cultural comparisons with other Chinese traditions, performers' perspectives, audience reception, pedagogical implications, and transcultural adaptations. These investigations would enhance our understanding of the cultural typology and creative dynamics between traditional and piano music in Guangdong, offering insights into musical heritage, contemporary composition, and cross-cultural musical dialogues.

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ETHICAL DECLARATION

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