TRACT „AKHAK QUEBOM”
(„BASES OF SCIENCE ABOUT MUSIC”)
AS A MIRROR OF KOREAN CULTURE

As a result of the study of non-European music „There is no longer any idea of European art music, as the alpha and omega of all music, as the dominant and only beautiful area of sound art, as the measure to be measured and evaluated by all other diverse Manifestations music all over the world”

B.V. Asafiev

The purpose of this represented scientific article is to get acquainted with the first fundamental cultural and theoretical work of the Korean people of the 15th century, which determined the subsequent development of the musical culture of Korea. There are research methods for this scientific investigation. For a detailed study of the chosen topic, an integrative methodology is used, which combines historical, theoretical, comparative methods of scientific knowledge. The scientific novelty of the scientific article lies in the fact that for the first time in Russian
musicology the phenomenon of Asian traditional ceremonial music „aak” is considered, which is devoted to all nine volumes of Song Hyun's treatise „Akhak quebom”. **Conclusions.** The study of the musical culture of Korea, and in particular the „aak” music, which is a part of the Far Eastern tradition, is extremely important for studying the history of the musical culture of the region. Since aak has been better documented than other types of Korean music, the study of this particular variety seems to be relevant for understanding the development processes of Korean musical culture as a whole. The musical culture of the era of the „Korean Renaissance” considers music, first of all, as a part of the ritual, a means of harmonizing the energies of the Universe and influencing the moral ideals of people. This leaves its mark on the theoretical positions of the work itself. In understanding the essence of the pentatonic scale structure, sometimes symbolic interpretations and philosophical explanations turned out to be more important (than acoustic and mathematical). A special role was played by the culturological approach, which made it possible to understand the logic of culture, which manifests itself, in particular, in musical art and music theory, not limited primarily to the analysis of scale and their structures.

**The key words:** „Akhak quebom”, „aak”, Korean, pentatonic, treatise, traditional, ceremonial.
томов трактата Сон Хена «Акхак квебом». Висновки. Дослідження музичної культури Кореї, і зокрема музики «аак», що є частиною далекосхідної традиції, представляється вкрай важливим для вивчення історії музичної культури означеного регіону. Оскільки «аак» була документована краще, ніж інші види корейської музики, дослідження саме цього різновиду видається актуальним і для розуміння процесів розвитку корейської музичної культури в цілому. Музична культура епохи «корейського Відродження» розглядає музику, насамперед, як частину ритуалу, засіб гармонізації енергій Всесвіту та впливу на моральні ідеали людей. Це накладає суттєвий відбіток на теоретичні положення самої роботи. Для розуміння глибинної сутності структури пентатонічної шкали, іноді символічні інтерпретації та філософські пояснення виявляються більш важливими й максимально дієвими, результативно плідними (ніж акустичні та математичні). Особливу роль відіграв культурологічний підхід, що дав змогу зрозуміти логіку культури, яка проявляється, зокрема, в музичному мистецтві та теорії музики, не обмежуючись, насамперед, аналізом масштабу та їх структур. «Аак» щонайбільше розширює наші уявлення не лише про професійну музику, а й про складну структуру музичної культури, що віддзеркалюється у різних регіонах Сходу.


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Трактат «Акхак квебом» («Основы науки о музыке») как зеркало корейской культуры

Цель статьи – знакомство с первым фундаментальным культурно-теоретическим трудом корейского народа XV века, который определил последующее развитие музыкальной культуры Кореи. Методы исследования. Для детального изучения выбранной темы используется интегративная методология, которая сочетает исторические, теоретические, компаративные методы научного познания. Научная новизна статьи заключается в том, что впервые в
отечественном музыкознании рассматривается феномен азиатской традиционной церемониальной музыки «аак», чему посвящены все девять томов трактата Сон Хёна «Акхак квебом». **Выводы.** Исследование музыкальной культуры Кореи, и в частности музыки «аак», которая является частью дальневосточной традиции, представляется крайне важным для изучения истории музыкальной культуры региона. Поскольку «аак» была документирована лучше, чем остальные виды корейской музыки, изучение именно этой разновидности представляется актуальным и для понимания процессов развития корейской музыкальной культуры в целом. Музыкальная культура эпохи «корейского Возрождение» рассматривает музыку прежде всего как часть ритуала, средство гармонизации энергий Вселенной и влияния на нравственные идеалы людей. Это накладывает отпечаток на теоретические положения самой работы. Для понимания сущности структуры пентатоничной шкалы, иногда символические интерпретации и философские объяснения оказываются более важными (чем акустические и математические). Особую роль сыграл культурологический подход, который позволил понять логику культуры, которая проявляется, в частности, в музыкальном искусстве и теории музыки, не ограничиваясь прежде всего анализом масштаба и их структур. «Аак» расширяет наши представления не только о профессиональной музыке, но и о структуре музыкальной культуры различных регионов Востока.

**Ключевые слова:** «Акхак квебом», «аак», корейский, пентатоника, трактат, традиционный, церемониал.

**Statement of the problem.** The treatise „Akhak Quebom” is the most valuable monument within Asian culture. Based on the Chinese musical theory, Korean scientists and musicians creatively enriched and developed it, introducing their corrections into literally every of its (theories) positions. As a result of this process, aak court ceremonial music and the theory of music as a whole acquired specific Korean features and became the realities of national culture. The study of the treatise of Song Hyun is not accidentally undertaken by researchers of Chinese and Japanese court ceremonial culture, as a synthesis of East and West. And a similar direction has only just been outlined.

**The relevance of the study** is presented in a comparative, historical-typological and culturological study of all the ceremonial traditions of the
Far East (and not just traditionally paired: Sino-Korean, Sino-Japanese), which should be presented precisely as a phenomenon of national culture, and not just „produced in Chinese tracing paper”.

**Literature review.** Among the works on the history, mythology, culture and art of Ancient Korea in Russian, we note the works of E.E. Alekseev, L.V. Brazhnik, S.P. Galitskaya, R.I. Gruber, A.Ya. Gurevich, J.K. Mikhailova, M.A. Saponova, Yu.N. Kholopova, A.N. Yunusova.

Significant articles of 2001 included in the publication “Akhak quebom” (Seoul, 2001): „Akhak quebom study from the point of view of linguistics” by Lee Hyun-hee, and „On the significance of Akhak quebom as a historical and poetic monument of the era” by Song Ki-Oka, a Monograph on the Morality of Music by Akhak Queb, devoted to the study of the political, religious and philosophical influence of Confucianism on the problems of the treatise.

From studies of the source study, we single out the work of the professor at the Korea Conservatory Song Ban-Son, „Akhak Quebom Research from the Point of View of Citation Accuracy” (Song Ban-Son, 2001). From studies of the musical direction about „Akhak quebom” we will single out „Research on frets Akhak quebom” by Nam San Suka, where 245 pages are devoted to the detailed study of only one book of the treatise. A number of articles by Korean scholars are published in English. Some of them are devoted to the era under study and consider the existence of high-aak music. Among them, we note the works of Lee Hye-Ku, Han Man-Young, Hwan Byung-ki.

Separately, you can put several works of the Russian researcher U Gen-Ira, devoted to the history and theory of Korean music: the brochure „Introduction to the Korean national music. Issues of Theory”, article „On Korean Traditional Music”. The author mentions Akhak Quebom among the most authoritative sources, but in fact does not provide specific references to the text of the treatise, setting out the general provisions of the theory and history of the Korean music.

The interesting and rich in facts work of the Korean researcher Lim Hyun-Jung „Musical art of Korea of the 15th century in the context of the artistic and aesthetic movements of the Renaissance” deserves special mention, performed in Russian.

The research in the theoretical part of the work was based on the works of Y.N. Kholopov on pentatonic and frets of ancient music; monograph by L.V. Brazhnik „Angemitonics in modal and tonal systems”,...
work by R.A. Iskhakova-Wamba „Angenitonics as a musical system. The research", M.G. Kondratyev „On the Dynamics of the Musical-Theoretical Status of Pentatonic”.

The purpose of the article is to get acquainted with the first fundamental cultural and theoretical work of the Korean people of the 15th century, which determined the subsequent development of the musical culture of Korea.

The object of study is the traditional Korean musical culture, as in its own way rethought and adapted Chinese culture. The subject of the study is the 15th-century Song Hyun’s treatise „Akhak quebom”, in which for the first time the musical-theoretical postulates of Korean philosophical thinking are examined.

Presenting main material. King Joseon (the ancient name of Korea) Sejong the Great, nicknamed during his lifetime as a reformer king, came to power in 1418, was firmly convinced of the need for a radical reform of the country's musical life. „Our music has no reason to be ashamed of ourselves. She is no worse than Chinese. For performance during ceremonies, receptions and open performances it is necessary to streamline it, choosing the best,” said the monarch. At his court, the Music Chamber is created (Akki togam; from 1466 – Chanagwon), designed to pursue state policy in the field of music. The emperor began to embody his desires in creativity. Sejong is the author of a number of major cyclical works, which subsequently formed the basis of „Jongmyo Chereak” – a kind of analogue of the West European Mass, performed and revered by Koreans to this day.

During the reign of Sejong, dignitary Park Young created a new kind of musical notation, which became one of the outstanding achievements that he carried out with the support of the emperor of the reform of the entire Korean music system. Based on the ancient Chinese treatises on music, the dignitary rethought, put in order and improved 65 musical instruments.

Park Young created a peculiar musical notation system of the mensural type – „Chong Gan Bo”, which made it possible to record sounds not only in height but also in duration, thanks to which Korea preserved the oldest samples of music (Korean and Chinese) in „Chronicles of the reign of Sejon”. A qualitative leap is taking place in music itself: instead of a pentatonic scale, an officer introduces a chromatic scale of 12 tones.

In 1543, by order of the king, a group of scholars, led by the assistant emperor for culture, Song Hyun, created a real musical encyclopedia of
that time – the nine-volume treatise „Akhak quebom” (literally translated as „The Musical Canon”, „Fundamentals of the Science of Music”). It compiles and systematizes all the achievements of Korean music at the time of the 15th century.

The Preface to the treatise describes in detail the circumstances of its creation. The authors cite, firstly, that the music records and illustrative materials (tables, diagrams, illustrations) that were stored in the music library were already very old at that time and their condition was unsatisfactory. Therefore, there was a need to redo their full edition. Secondly, as the authors write, the perception of music requires a high level of preparedness for the listener; usually the possibilities of a person are small. To this end, and created a real book – „Fundamentals of the science of music”.

It was only in the 1960s that a copy of the book was found in the Japanese Bondzhua library in the Japanese city of Nagoya, and this find is considered to be the oldest copy of Akhak quebom.

Song Hyun’s treatise addresses the history and theory of music; rules for performing music of different traditions; a description of musical instruments intended for holding court ceremonies, and methods for their manufacture; ritual things for ceremonies, dance routine and their musical accompaniment.

Here is a list of the problems of the treatise (as a whole, only in outline – with the exception of his first book, which we describe in much more detail in view of its clearly musical and theoretical orientation), from which the nature of ancient Eastern science emerges.

The first book of the treatise is devoted to the presentation of the theory of sound and sound relations, scale and various modes of the ancient Korean music. The second one contains descriptions of the participation of musicians in the most important ceremonies, ritual sacrifices, describes the repertoire performed in these cases, as well as when the emperor left. The third book offers material on the history of certain types of the Korean (and Chinese, which existed in Korea) music with a description of the types of Chinese court and folk music and dance in the history of Koryo. The fourth book describes in details the genre forms of Chinese court music (and dance), performed at that time at the Korean court. Book Five describes a court dance like Minsokak. The main content of the sixth and seventh books is a description of the type, manufacturing technology and functions of the instruments (mainly Korean) of the court and ritual orchestras.
The eighth book describes the most important attributes of ceremonies: symbolic objects, costumes, musical instruments. In the last, ninth book, detailed descriptions and instructions on the clothes of performers of various gender and age groups are given.

As you can see, the treatise describes almost everything that is needed to perform music at court – from theory to the composition of the orchestra, its position, performance of dances, description of musical instruments, rules for playing them and even the clothes of musicians and dancers.

We dwell in more detail on Volume 1 of the treatise, which sets out the basic theoretical laws of the Korean music.

From the foreword of Akhak Quebom, understanding of the meaning of music in the 15th century becomes clear. The authors write that music is given to man by Heaven, although it has a natural origin, and it acts on a man as nature, disturbing his pulse and brightening his consciousness. „The level of understanding of music,” the authors of the treatise say, “can be very different: one who knows the technique of music, often does not have a high understanding of it, a person who perceives it well, often is not familiar with its theory. <...> Ah, how difficult the music is”.

The perception of music, according to Song Hyun, depends on the state of the soul, and „prosperity and stagnation in society come depending on the state in which the country is governed, and this indicates that music can affect political changes in society”.

Serious attention was paid only to a more balanced aak court music, which, in comparison with folk music, was rhythmically less diverse. Such music was studied not from the side of its sound structures, melodies or rhythms, but from the point of view of the sublime esoteric meanings and meanings embedded in it.

Known since the 3rd century, documents on Korean music affirm the unconditional value of education for a person and the idea of the relationship of philosophy, public life and music. Let us recall the fact that Korea of the 15th century was very strongly influenced by Confucianism, within the framework of philosophical representations of which music was seen as a reflection of the laws of the cosmos, nature and high moral laws of life of the state and humanity, but not the feelings of an individual.

Based on such philosophical views, Koreans are adapting the ancient Chinese system of lu-lu sounds for their national instruments, which is based on the principle of the main source sound Hwang John (Chinese. Huang Zhong – lit. „Yellow bell”). In the Akhak Quebom treatise, it
corresponds to the tone extracted by a bamboo tube, which can accommodate 1200 grains of well-ripened millet. The philosophical understanding of this phenomenon in the treatise is illustrated by the following words: “Bamboo <...> Heaven gives us, so we make ceremonial instruments from it. The purity and falsity of sounds, measures of length, weight – we took all these measures from nature. The man acted only as an intermediary, the cause of the sounds of harmony and the „instrument” for creating great music”.

The „Rule and Subtraction of One-Third” described by Song Hyun, in fact, coincides not only with the Chinese, but also with the Pythagorean quarto-quint method, similar in Europe, for obtaining new sounds (by dividing the sounding string of the monochord in ratios 2:3 and 3:4). Nevertheless, the Korean and European twelve-tone series are fundamentally different in their perception and theoretical understanding. If in Europe twelve sounds are twelve musical-semantic equivalent heights between which there is only a mathematical-quantitative difference, then in ancient Korea sound has the properties of a tone – each with its own meaning and original quality. Each of the twelve tones of the system in Korean music is called „Yul” (in Korean it would be „Ym”) – a tone (from Chin. Lu), which in a free translation means „legitimate and beautiful point”.

The treatise describes the effect that various sounds have on the feelings and behavior of people, in accordance with which their purpose and scope are determined:

Iron sounds are high and clear, they indicate a team of armed people, their character is peppy and energetic. Stone sounds are pure and transparent, and when a person listens to them, their mind is enlightened, and he is no longer afraid of death and sacrifices himself for the sake of the fatherland. String sounds are sad, but full of dignity and will. They remind us of government officials whose work is noble and directed by a sense of duty to the motherland and the emperor. Bamboo sounds have a unifying effect on people. When a wise person hears such sounds, he thinks of an official who educates people. Leather sounds are loud, they make people move. The sounds of the earth are muffled, quiet, but audible and understood by all. Wooden sounds are straightforward, therefore – correct and honest.

The sound system of the ancient Korean music is full of cosmological symbolism, which in many respects coincides with the famous Chinese one. The light and active forces of Heaven, on the one
hand, and the dark, passive forces of the Earth, on the other hand, determine the presence in music of opposite rows of sounds – yule, where the series c-d-e-fis-as-b means the masculine principle („Yang”), based on the basis of the system-forming interval of the fifth, and Ryo, where the cis-es-f-g-a-h series means the feminine („Yin”) and relies on the sound derived by the fifth.

In theoretical work, a vivid description of all twelve sounds is given. Each of them corresponds to a sacred animal (from a mouse to the last 12th animal – a pig) and a month of the year (from c – November to h – October). As already mentioned, Song Hyun describes the original system of interactions and cosmic attraction between male (Yul) and female (Ryo) sounds, the result of energy “merging” of which is usually half-tone! – the birth of new sounds in the quarto-fifth system becomes.

As a result, in the Song Hyun treatise, the cosmological symbolism of the musical system is reduced to a general table-diagram, the circular perfection of which is the core of ancient Korean musical cosmology.

The treatise „Akhak quebom” explains in detail the composition and structure of various types of pentatonic, based on the „rule of addition and subtraction of one third” already known to us. Recall the scale obtained in this way: c, g, d, a, e, h and so on until the 12th sound, right up to closing at $f = eis$. But in performing practice, the theoretical rule underwent changes, and by the 15th century in Korea (as in China) the twelve-tone scale was reduced to the first five tones used to form the anemitonic pentatonic scale. Naturally, the names of these tones were borrowed from the Chinese theory of music – kun, san, kak, chi, u. Each pantatonic row could be built from any of 12 sounds, as a result a system of 60 pentatonic rows (12*5) – Yuk Ship Joe – was obtained.

We make an important point. As mentioned above, all five pentatonic rows are, in fact, the treatment of the main, first Kun Joe. Musicians heard and considered in all cases the central, fundamental tone of Kuhn, wherever he was.

Thus, Song Hyun's treatise makes it possible to present medieval Korean musical theory as a harmonious system, on the one hand, reflecting the world model of that era, and on the other, inscribed in the state and cultural system of Korean society, closely connected with Confucian ritual and court ceremonial.

The developed and streamlined system of creating Korean frets, based on the dominant tone, will be reflected in the music of the 20th century, primarily in the work of the Korean-German composer Yun Isan,
who, taking as a basis the work of Song Hyun „Akhak Quebom”, will rethink the achievements of his predecessors and will create a new theory of the fundamental tone (Hauptton), on which his composer technique will be based.

**Conclusions.** The musical culture of the era of the „Korean Renaissance” considers music, first of all, as a part of the ritual, a means of harmonizing the energies of the Universe and influencing the moral ideals of people. This leaves its mark on the theoretical positions of the work itself. In understanding the essence of the pentatonic scale structure, sometimes symbolic interpretations and philosophical explanations turned out to be more important (than acoustic and mathematical). A special role was played by the culturological approach, which made it possible to understand the logic of culture, which manifests itself, in particular, in musical art and music theory, not limited primarily to the analysis of scale and their structures.

Aak, being a phenomenon of Korean culture, not only preserved and in some ways preserved the basic philosophical and aesthetic criteria of the Chinese court and ceremonial culture, but also gave them a new life, enriching the traditions of Korean professional music, which in turn fed on folk sources.

The most important factor in adapting the Chinese tradition in Korea may be the presence of Korean musical terminology (Korean reading of all Chinese characters), which had already taken shape by the 15th century and was recorded in a treatise. This indicates that all the basic provisions of the doctrine of music by this time were already understood, „renamed” and mastered in musical practice. At the same time, the scales were rethought, in particular, the change in the position of the main tone of the pentatonic scale (kuna), its free movement to any position indicates the existence of a kind of „hearing” of the borrowed music by the Koreans, which became an integral part of Korean culture by the 15th century.

Equally important is the choice of scales more characteristic of Korean music: Pyeongjo, whose structure was stable and unchanged throughout the history of Korean music, and Gamengjo, which was very characteristic of Korean folk music and had many modifications. Among them, trichordic and tetrachordal scales played a special role, more characteristic of Korean folk music than five-stage scales. Ornamentation and the tradition of „manifestation” of tone through neighboring sounds adorning it played a special role in the process of lad formation. The
resulting music sounded more sensitive and emotional, reflecting the particularities of the Korean mentality.

This process took place in parallel with the development of its own Korean tradition of making ceremonial musical instruments, the appearance of their Korean varieties. Adding into the text „Akhak quebom” sections devoted to Korean scale proper, types of notation (authorship of one of them was attributed to Song Hyun), elements of the ritual, indicates the presence of a developed Korean musical and cultural tradition and confirms the initial position of our study regarding the treatise and its contents as deeply national phenomena.

Research prospect. „Aak” expands our ideas not only about professional music, but also about the structure of the musical culture of various regions of the East. This problem, of course, is worth exploring further; a comparative study of the indicated traditions as types of oriental professionalism seems relevant.

Список використаних джерел і літератури:


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