

# *The Functions of Musical Culture and Moral Pedagogy in the United Front Work of the New Era: A Central Thread of Chinese National Community Consciousness*

Li Xiabin

Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang, 524048, China

**Keywords:** New Era; United-Front Work; Musical Culture; Chinese National Community; Moral Pedagogy

**Abstract:** The development of a sense of the Chinese national community takes its place in this study. The results prove that musical culture is not only the means of spreading moral codes and increasing national identity, but it is also the key to social integration and harmonious evolution. Against a backdrop of the evolving issues, formations, and needs that the united-front project may face in the new era, it questions the way the musical culture may help spread the development of such a consciousness, as well as how it provides the spread of the social norms and values. The paper is based on the Chinese significant leader, Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics to a New Era and elucidates the theoretical nexus between united-front work and moral education first. It subsequently takes up the social functionality of musical culture and devises strategic modalities within which music can be incorporated into current united-front practice.

National values and aesthetic ideas contribute to social stability positively and become the condition of increasing identification and integration at all levels of society. The practice of uniting the people through a united front has been widened in the new era, not only on political and organizational fronts, but also on cultural and social fronts, in the process of developing socialism with Chinese characteristics. The uniqueness of the cultural identity, balance, and guidance of ideals and values are the peculiarities of the music culture as a nuanced social force, and used to be viewed as significant methods of strengthening the national identity and unifying the moral basis of society.

## **1. Theoretical Foundations and Analytical Framework**

### **1.1 The Centrality of United-front Work and Contemporary Context Thereof**

The united front work, as one of the key activities of China, was suggested by key leaders of the governing body at the First National Congress in 1921, and it is necessary to point out the necessity to unite all forces that can be united and gain broad support. The idea of a united front to the Cultural Revolution was developed in 1940 [1]. United front work has been one of the strategic priorities of the governing body since that time. In 2011 the arrangements to deepen cultural system reform in China and promote the great development and prosperity of socialist culture were

comprehensive and detailed made with the adoption of the Decision of the Central Committee of the governing body of China on Several Major Issues Concerning the Deepening of Cultural System Reform and Promotion of the Great Development and Prosperity of Socialist Culture at the Sixth Plenary Session of the 17 th Central Committee of the governing body. It also established new tasks and requirements of strengthening ideological and ethical construction of the socialist direction, explicitly suggested the strategic objective to create a socialist cultural power with a specific emphasis on the development of high level of cultural awareness and confidence, improvement of cultural literacy of the whole nation, cultural soft power of the country, popularization of Chinese culture, and the aspiration to develop a socialist cultural power [2]. After the 18th National Congress of the governing body, China has repeatedly reiterated the value of united front work, especially in the process of facilitating the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity. Unified front work has been used as a base towards the improvement of national identity, social stability, and cultural identity.

With the changing times, the united front work has been changing its focus to being more centred on cultural identity instead of merely being based on political coordination and cooperation. Edward Burnett Taylor, in his book, *Primitive Culture*, makes the assumption that culture, in its ethnographic meaning, is a complex whole in a broad context. This is in line with the principle guideline of the essential requirement of united front work, which was great unity and great solidarity [3]. The new era combats the united front work with new demands, especially, it is necessary to effectively respond to the trends of complex social changes and diversification.

A few scholars have indicated that the absence of cultural identity, value clashes, and societal turmoil has emerged as one of the social ills experienced by China in the new age. Under these conditions, the united front work does not only have to address the traditional political and economic domains but also has to be proactive in the cultural arena; in this case, cultural identity should be used to strengthen national unity and bring about social stability. The unity front work, especially among the multi-ethnic and multicultural society in China, can serve to enhance the identification of the societal members to the community by enhancing cultural identity, minimizing contradictions and differences among various groupings and hence social stability and harmony. A significant Chinese leader remarked that the united frontal battle in the new era should be centred on national unity and mutual prosperity, and excel in the profound integration of cultural identity, and that it is necessary to build cultural confidence and reinforce the spirit of community of the Chinese nation.

The joint front action in the new era is not like the conventional political alliances, but rather a holistic and cross-cultural strategic broadside against the landscape of social transformation and development. This is a project that is targeted towards creating a sense of national identity and belonging. The question of how to solve social conflicts with the help of culture, enhance social governance, and facilitate social harmony, has become inevitable and imperative to the united front work.

## **1.2 The Potential Capacity and Unique Workings of the Musical Culture in the United Front Work**

It is crucial to note that the united front work in the new era should not only help in promoting political and economic collaboration between different social groups but also enhance social unity and stability via cultural identity and moral education. The music culture, being a special system of social symbols, has its own peculiar features of helping to transmit collective memory, spirit of the nation, moral principles, and social norms as one of its paradigm functions. This peculiarity allows it to exercise an irreplaceable and unique role in the processes of social integration, the

strengthening of national consciousness and the formation of societal values.

### **1.2.1 The spring rain freshens the ground, and the country becomes more united and national**

Music is an important source of cultural identity. It not only expresses a feeling of unity, but it also shapes a set of memories, through numerous means, among which are ethnic music, traditional folk songs, and revolutionary anthems. This makes communication and acceptance of the various cultures between people of different ethnic backgrounds easy. Music can overcome linguistic and cultural boundaries, especially in the complex ethnic mosaic of China, where music is able to bridge in order to build ethnic solidarity. Being used as a tool of emotionality, music can stir within different industries and ethnicities, thus contributing to the solidarity of the nation and reinforcing the cultural identity of the Chinese nation. It has been noted and shown repeatedly by scholars that using music culture as a method of emotional mobilization and resonance can release the power of national solidarity, foster a sense of cultural belonging and social harmony and stability. The great feeling of pride and belonging in the hearts of people is inexplicable at Tiananmen Square when people observe the flag-raising ceremony and thousands of people sing together to sing the national anthem. The Love of the Boatmen song was a national craze in the 1990s, and the song Let's Row Our Boats was the background music that accompanied a whole generation of teenagers throughout their entire childhood.

### **1.2.2 Social and moral education and norms should be encouraged in an imperceptible and indirect way**

It has been agreed that the intangible power of music has a very strong effect on human behaviour and social norms. The example of red revolutionary songs was that such songs not only served to solidify the mobilization of the society at the time of revolution by showing that they are loyal to their nation, society, and ethnicity, but also remained a form of propagation of the socialist values that are core to society today. Old-fashioned cultural musical forms keep the past intact and maintain social values. All of that, passed orally through ethnic festival melodies, village folk songs, and revolutionary anthems, not only helps to transmit ethnic history and values, but also makes people more conscious of their belonging and group identity.

The new era united-front work should therefore inherit and re-engineer these traditions of music in such a way that moral pedagogy becomes more broadly spread throughout the society, raising the moral consciousness of the citizens. The united front can mobilise a sense of responsibility and purpose by commissioning and spreading works whose lyrics relate to the Chinese Dream or the renewal of the nation. When the throng of ranks in the parade of the National Day this year sang On the Songhua River it was not simply martial ardour that was evoked, but the inculcation of fundamental socialist principles by the very possibility of singing together. Since exhortation has become a frequent source of annoyance or even open denial, the culture of music is a zephyr which nobody can refuse or evade, and it insidiously establishes the moral identification when the listener is ostensibly doing something different.

### **1.2.3 Laughter and Laughter are integrated into the research, and this fosters cultural assimilation and social peace**

As society is developing and the process of globalization is gaining momentum, Chinese society is becoming more diversified. Various ethnicities, religions, languages, and cultures slowly blend with each other in order to create a complicated socio-cultural set-up. In such a situation of multiculturalism, the strengthening of cultural identity and cohesiveness is an essential tool to prevent the growth of social conflicts and social stability as a vital task in the united front work of

the new era.

Music has exceptional cross-cultural communication strengths. Music is said to be the universal language of the world. It is the conduit between the ethnicities and religions and offers a common cultural platform that assists various communities in finding common emotional and value-based appeals in the multicultural surroundings. To give an example, a trip to such states as Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia, where people are welcoming and rich in folk traditions, will enable us to mix the folk music with the modern one, with the help of such activities as singing and dancing with locals. Such a merger is successful in its ability to unite cultures, bring harmony in society, and enhance understanding between them. The examples of cultural performances where people of multiple ethnicities worked together and created music works which were common and of a mutual source can be viewed as the way in which music can represent common values and feelings, and eventually, when it comes to the mutual acceptance of various social groups.

#### **1.2.4 Rouse passion and stir memories to generate a sense of resonance between the socialist central values and the patriotic feeling**

The joint frontal work in the new era should not only be vigorously encouraging the core value of socialism and the spirit of patriotism, but also it should be able to build the unanimity and feel the touch with the people so as to consolidate and build national unity. Music, as a medium of expression, can make society appreciate and exercise these values in a better way. Anti-Japanese war revolutionary songs, red classics and modern patriotic songs were all means to communicate common beliefs and ideals to the society through music in the particular historical circumstances.

The reform and opening-up policy was adopted in the country in the 1980s and 1990s. Many positive songs, in terms of employing lyrics, melodies, and other methods, had a direct impact on the emotions and minds of people, and they resonated with them when listening to the songs and enhanced their feeling of belongingness to the nation and society. These songs became a pride and remembrance of a generation in China. In the modern world of multiculturalism, in particular, the application of music in national pride, social responsibility, and collectivist spirit has become a significant element in the united front work of the new era. The memories of the hard work in the younger days of several generations of China come to mind when listening to such a song as the one named Youth by Meng Ran, and the modern-day youth are encouraged to work hard and strive to get on.

## **2. The role of music culture in enhancing the sense of community of the Chinese nation**

### **2.1 Connotation and Construction of the Chinese National Community Awareness**

It is the awareness of the Chinese nation community that is the unity of the sense of identity, belonging and responsibility of all Chinese and in particular the different ethnic groups towards the great community of the Chinese nation. Developing the sense of the Chinese nation community is one of the fundamental tasks of the governing body of China in building socialism with Chinese features. In August 2021, a significant Chinese official, in a speech at the Central Ethnic Work Conference, when explaining the innovative development of the ethnic work of the governing body, noted that we should properly understand the relationship between the consciousness of the Chinese nation community and the consciousness of the various ethnic groups [4]. In his article The Margins of China: Historical Memory and Ethnic Identity, Wang Mingke states that there are scholars inclined to study what it means to be a Chinese person through the prism of historical tracing [5]. Being a highly emotional art form, the culture of music is instrumental in creating awareness of the ethnic community.

## **2.2 The Cultural Carrier Function of Music**

Music culture as a carrier acts not only as a form of art to be appreciated, but more than that, as a way of transmitting cultural identity and moral values. In this case, we can trace in history that the transmission and continuation of the music culture has been refracted through the aesthetic of the period. The things that fit modern requirements are spread and transmitted, whereas the things that fit the needs of future generations are found and used by the next generations or unearthed and analyzed by music archaeology. Simultaneously, it is not possible to deny the fact that the emotional-artistic character of music culture predetermines its significance as one of the significant media to express the national culture, history, and values. But, owing to the process of filtering out of the times, its legacy has given it the features of a symbol of the epoch, as regards consciousness of the national community. As an illustration, the Chinese traditional culture of rituals and music is considered to be a necessary part of social ethics and morality. Music, according to this cultural practice, is not just an art of enjoying but also a way of passing and controlling behaviour. By singing, people not only get the chance to feel the aesthetic value of music but to experience the memory of history, the sense of cultural identity and the moral norms which music represents.

The spirit of music distribution is manifested in two main dimensions. The most explicit goal of it is to lead audiences to experience, create and perceive musical beauty and eventually attain human education by teaching music [6]. The history of the Chinese nation proves that since ancient times, music has been closely associated with the social-political structures and moral principles. In particular, folk ballads, traditional operas, and ethnic instruments are the types of music that play a crucial role in the transmission of cultures. These forms of music define the history of a nation, its culture, and its collective emotional experiences that are important avenues of enhancing cultural identity. As a case in point, the Mongolian long songs, Uyghur Meshrep, are not only types of music; they can be described as the identity and the heritage of every ethnic group in various aspects, including life, religion, and the community. Ethnic histories and cultures are sustained and maintained through music. The transmission and the development of ethnic music allow the cultural resonance of other groups, which further strengthens a sense of collective identity of the Chinese nation as a community.

## **2.3 Relationship between music and morality**

The governance of the Chinese with virtue was an expression in ancient China, and it is more likely to bring about social stability and development, in addition to the ideological growth of the people. [7]. Confucius suggested that there should be a rise of poetry, a standing on propriety and a completion by music. The persistently accepted music in the "Record of Music" explains that there could not be a better method of transformation of customs and manners than music. Music, being a cultural expression, is an irreplaceable aspect in moulding social behaviour and morality. Here, it must be pointed out that only the music that satisfies the needs of the times can be passed on and spread by society. Hence, the fundamental values and moral notions, which address the social needs, can be spread silently and widely by the intentional distribution and the release of music at particular times and spaces, gradually permeating and immersing like fine rain and nourishing the earth, becoming the guiding principles and moral bottom lines of people's behaviour.

## **3. The united front work of the new era in terms of music culture**

### **3.1 Music education in higher education is a significant union frontal work**

University education is an essential development phase in helping the Chinese youth to nurture a



sense of self-awareness, which instils proper, scientific, and rational national identity and social responsibility and builds on the sense of community in the Chinese nation. This crucial arena needs to be immediately filled by the united front work. In the light of the United Front Department, the universities are to effectively carry out cultural guidance and moral education roles by inheriting and innovating the music culture.

This greatly depends on music culture. The ethnic music concerts and cultural exchange activities held at colleges and universities can foster the national identity and social responsibility of students and the national awareness of the Chinese nation as a community. Through these activities, students are able to learn how music is practised within the various ethnic communities, gain cross-cultural awareness, and enhance a sense of community because of their involvement.

The nodal instrumentality through which these objectives will be fulfilled is postulated to be music empirically. Universities are able to institutionalize ethnic-music concerts, intercultural sonic workshops and joint composition projects, which will make audible the polyphony of the Chinese nation. These immersive experiences help students to learn cross-cultural phonemes, develop inter-ethnic sympathy, and, by the corporeal process of co-performance, to bind personal affect to the signifier Zhonghua minzu. The consequent inflated communal belonging is therefore not only discursive but somatically written on and results in a long-lasting predisposition to national unity.

### **3.2 In the era of the Internet, distribution of music culture is a significant means of coherent frontal work**

In the era of the Internet, digital platforms are critical platforms for selling socialist core values and ethnic solidarity. Online music, especially ethnic music and socially oriented music, has no geographical or ethnic restrictions as it quickly travels around and touches the hearts of different audiences. As an example, ethnic music and videos on short-video platforms with military themes can not only entertain the population but also unconsciously bring social responsibility and ethnic unity. The concepts have emerged as potent instruments of the united front work of the new era.

### **3.3 The music culture is of critical essence to the moral creation of grassroots societies**

Decades ago, grassroots communities were struggling to bring forward social ethics because of the complicated demographic composition and problems with the implementation of social education programs. The culture of music is important in enhancing social peace and stability. An example of this is community music programs, which make a subtle influence on the cultural values and core values of the residents by entertaining them through cultural means. By organizing such activities as community choirs, music festivals, and music education, residents will have a collective consciousness of social responsibility, ethics, and legal observance. In many cases, especially in multi-ethnic areas, music culture improves the harmony and unity of the community by ensuring the interaction between various ethnic groups.

Take an example of a community in Hainan Province where people from every part of China co-exist. The community, through the musical talents of the residents, has acquired the habit of holding cultural events that feature different regional cultures. This brings the residents chances to meet, enjoy and share knowledge with each other. With time, the community has become a cultural centre that links various regions and ethnic groups and creates a peaceful and non-discriminatory living environment.

## **4. Recommendations and conclusions of policy**

### **4.1 Policy recommendations**

#### **4.1.1 The scientific regulation of digital platforms**

The monitoring of the elements of digital culture platforms should be enhanced, and the Internet should be scientifically utilized to disseminate the music culture, in particular, to the younger generation. The socialist core values should be strengthened in terms of publicity through the use of online media, and the united front work should be more efficient and cost-reduced.

#### **4.1.2 Scientific leadership in the creation and transmission of folk music culture**

The government needs to institute measures to promote innovation and the passing of music in the private sector, and the development of traditional music in the new era. It must assist the local artists in their creative activities, increase the confidence of the culture of the country and promote innovation and adaptive growth of music.

#### **4.1.3 Gradually and scientifically lead the sexual interaction and collaboration among the ethnic groups**

We will enhance the establishment of cross-ethnic cultural exchange systems, we will arrange a variety of cultural activities, we will encourage mutual understanding and cooperation between ethnic groups, and we will enhance the spirit of community of the Chinese nation.

#### **4.1.4 Enhance functional supervision in the united front work**

In united front work, it is crucial to strengthen functional oversight of cultural activities to ensure their effectiveness. Notably, the current international landscape is fraught with uncertainties. Any misstep in this field could negatively impact a government's image and credibility, potentially leading to unforeseen consequences. President Chinese important leader emphasized: "To excel in united front work under new circumstances, we must be adept at fostering friendships and partnerships." [8] For instance, the 2025 "Red Scarf Hearts Towards the governing body" youth talent contest held by a provincial Communist Youth League organizational structure was not able to stay focused on its intended goal because of bureaucratic inaction and bureaucratic inertia by the corresponding departments, which undermined the credibility of youth projects in society. Thus, in a united front department, there should be increased supervision of cultural activities, no formalism, authentic hits, and redoubling social trust.

### **4.2 Research summary**

The history and the people have decisively shown that history has selected the ruling body of China. National independence and people's liberation would not have been possible without its leadership[9]. The leadership problem is the most essential one in the united front that defines its character and orientation[10]. This paper discusses the issue of united front work in the multicultural environment of the new era, and suggests the worth and meaning of the music culture to the united front work in the present day. Studies have shown that music culture is the only one used to bring hearts together, bring ethnic unity and a cultural identity of various ethnic groups. Additionally, being a symbol of the nation, the culture of music occupies a privileged position in the process of moral education, passing the social norms and ethical principles and shaping the behaviour of people and groups. Due to the large-scale use of digital technologies, the channels of

distribution have been extended dramatically, with music being heavily influenced by younger generations. To conclude, the music culture has a special position in increasing the awareness of the Chinese nation as a community, and promoting moral education, which makes it a critical means of united front work in the new era.

## References

- [1] Mao Zedong. 'On New Democracy.' *First Congress of the Cultural Association of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region*, January 9, 1940.
- [2] Wang Fuxin. *Research on the Theory and Practice of United Front Work under the Background of Cultural Construction* [J]. *Journal of Shanxi Institute of Socialism*, 2012, (04): 37-41.
- [3] Shi Taifeng. *Improving the Overall Pattern of United Front Work*[N]. *People's Daily*, 2024-08-05 (6).
- [4] Xi Jinping emphasized at the Central Conference on Nationalities that we should take forging a sense of community for the Chinese nation as the main line to promote high-quality development of the governing body's nationalities work in the new era [N]. *People's Daily*, August 29, 2021 (1).
- [5] Nie Yao, Wan Hongbo, Wang Ping. *Exploring the Awareness of the Chinese National Community from the Perspective of Chinese Traditional Culture*[J]. *China Military to Civilian Conversion*, 2025, (14): 122-124.
- [6] Cai Chengqi. *Music Education - An Important Carrier of Ideological and Political Education*[J]. *Art Evaluation*, 2022, (02):137-139+151.
- [7] Li Xinying. *A Brief Analysis of Music Education and Character Cultivation from the Perspective of Moral Education* [J]. *China Nationalities Expo*, 2022, (19): 62-64.
- [8] Xi Jinping. *Xi Jinping on Governance (Volume II)* [M]. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2017: 304.
- [9] *Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist the governing body of China on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the governing body's Centennial Struggle* [N]. *People's Daily*, 2021-11-17(01).4.
- [10] Wang Yangyang. *Research on Strengthening the Concentrated and Unified Leadership of the governing body over United Front Work*[J]. *Journal of Guangdong Institute of Socialism*, 2022, (01):25-30.