

An Analysis of the Historical Role of Red Songs in Ideological and Political Work

Chuanling Geng^{1*}, Jinzhou Wang¹

¹ School of Marxism, Yangtze University, Jingzhou, China

Email Address

1071279252@qq.com (Chuanling Geng), wangjz1963@163.com (Jinzhou Wang)

*Correspondence: 1071279252@qq.com

Received: 5 August 2021; **Accepted:** 19 August 2021; **Published:** 31 August 2021

Abstract:

The red song originated in the early stage of China's new democratic revolution. It has distinctive national, political, and artistic characteristics, conveying a strong spirit of resistance and patriotism, and inspiring young Marxist pioneers and countless people to fight bloody battles. The red song is a unique cultural phenomenon in China, conforms to the Marxist view of practice and ideology, and has played a very important historical role in the ideological and political work of the Chinese Communist Party. To study and analyze the historical role of red songs in ideological and political work, to be able to learn the development process of red songs, analyze its development rules, and correctly guide the masses to establish a correct world outlook, outlook on life, and values, which is helpful to explore the new socialist outlook of red songs. The important value of the times stimulates the patriotism of the masses and promotes the national spirit.

Keywords:

Red Song, Ideological and Political Work, Historical Role, Contemporary Value

1. Introduction

The ideological and political work in our country is an important part of the work of the Communist Party. Guided by Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, the communist ideological system is used to educate party members, cadres, and the masses so that people can establish correct positions and viewpoints. Ideological and political work is the family heirloom of the Communist Party of China. Whether in the period of revolutionary war or the period of socialist construction, the Communist Party of China attaches great importance to ideological and political work. Mastering the correct methods of ideological and political work and consciously working hard to realize the party's current and long-term revolutionary goals and tasks are the unshirkable responsibilities of our young generation.

Among many methods of ideological and political work, red songs play an important role. The nature of red songs determines its role in ideological and political work, and the role of red songs reflects its nature. Starting from the background and main nature of the production of red songs, it comprehensively analyzes its development laws from the internal factors and external environment levels, so as to

better explore the historical role of red songs in ideological and political work under the premise of contradictions in different times.

2. The Background of Red Songs

The combination of songs and ideological and political work, the most important qualitative factor in this is the Chinese nation's love for this land for thousands of years, and the strongest and most resonant part of this relationship is the Red Revolution. Scholar Shan Jie [1] mentioned in the article: "Looking back at the birth and development process of the red song, it is not difficult to find that fighting for democracy, pursuing happiness, and yearning for prosperity is the eternal theme of the red song, and it is the fertile soil of the red song. The red song is the voice of the public and the voice of the people. It is the call of history and the pursuit of the times." Since the May Fourth Movement, the separatist warlords and imperialist wolf ambitions have made China's land full of war and smoke. The dire reality has made the emergence of red songs a historical necessity. The grassroots people have begun to use singing to convey their anger and anger towards reality and expectations for a better life.

Most of the earliest red songs appeared in the form of folk songs, without professional lyrics and music, only the endless emotional sustenance between the lines. In that special age, the immortal people continued to work hard for the hope of the nation, countless people with lofty ideals were at the forefront of the revolution, and a group of outstanding songwriters began to create revolutionary songs from a professional perspective, awakening the resonance of the people at a deeper level. It has played an irreplaceable role in awakening the national spirit. Such as Zhai Qiubai and *Red Tide Song*, Zhang Hanhui and *Songhua River*, Tian Han's lyrics, Nie Er's *March of the Volunteers*, composer *Mai Xin and Broad Sword to the Devil's Head!* and many more. Just as scholar Chu Yunfeng [2] believes that red represents revolution, red songs, as a kind of song, are also produced in social practice. They are only produced in the special social practice of modern revolution. They were born in response to the revolution and serving the revolution. The red song has continued to rise during the difficult years, inspiring batch after batch of people to fight for a new life. It has become an effective form of the Communist Party of China to propagate the revolution and gather the people's strength. The People's Armed Forces also promoted the development of red songs. Countless people sang songs and took up arms to defend their homes. Countless soldiers who defended their homes sang songs all over the country and spread the popular red songs to every land in the motherland.

3. The Main Nature of Red Songs

Although there are broad and narrow definitions of red songs, there is no clear definition, but the unique nationality, politics, and artistry contained in red songs make it a kind of ideological and political education resource or belief sustenance. In the age of blood and fire and the era of vigorous development, the red songs all expressed the people's praise of the pioneer leaders of the party, heroes and deeds. It is the people's yearning for a better life, Mao Zedong's thought of seeking truth from facts and insisting on walking with the masses. An important argument for the route. Huang Zitong [3] believes: "The red song records the story of the revolutionary era and reflects the development of the Chinese revolution. It allows people to follow the artistic conception of lyrics and music in the process of singing to outline the fighting life of people and martyrs during the revolutionary war. Depicting a scene where the

party and the masses of the people are deeply affectionate.” In the current complex and diversified background of the international and social environment, the red song is like a clear stream, which can purify the soul of people and enhance the confidence of our people in the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, theoretical confidence, institutional confidence, and cultural confidence. Unswerving in the struggle in the ideological field.

3.1. The National Character of Red Songs

Red songs have a strong national character. Hongge was born in the most special period in the long history of the Chinese nation and grew up with our nation. It has been passed down for more than 100 years and has influenced and inspired several generations. It has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the Chinese people and has become an indispensable food, pillar and sustenance for the spiritual world of the Chinese people for generations.

The early red songs were largely an expression of the people’s fighting spirit. They came from the most basic people and were sung in the mountains and rivers of the motherland. They contained a strong sense of patriotism and expressed the most simple and sincere praise and wishes of the people. Professor Lan Xianfa [4] said that when talking about patriotism education, he affirmed the role of red culture many times. As an important part of red culture, red songs played an important role in promoting national unity. He said, “Patriotism is the passionate theme in the long history of the Chinese nation’s thousands of years of continuous development. It is the spiritual force that unites and firmly unites the Chinese nation. Patriotism has existed since ancient times, and it has been the most important in modern China. The most prominent form of expression is the red culture.” For example, the anti-Japanese song *On the Songhua River* was an anti-Japanese song composed by Zhang Hanhui in 1935 when he heard and witnessed the sorrow and tragic scenes of hundreds of thousands of Northeast troops and people in exile in Xi’an. *On the Songhua River* conveyed the grief and indignation of the Northeast people and even the Chinese people after the September 18th Incident. The distressed Chinese nation was brutally slaughtered by the invaders, and the singing of anti-Japanese salvation songs with its strong national character shocked the hearts of the people who were suffering from distress, and awakened the bloody nature of people who were sleeping. Such as *Broad Swords March*, also known as *Broad Swords to the Devil's Heads!* Is an anti-Japanese salvation song composed by the composer Mai Xin in Shanghai in July 1937. The victory of the 29th Army and the heroic deeds of the Broadwords were spread throughout the country in the form of songs, which greatly inspired the enthusiasm of the soldiers and people across the country to resist Japan, and promoted the determination of national unity to resist the Japanese War. The foundation of nationality comes from the 5,000-year history and cultural heritage of our nation. Whether in the simplest form of folk songs or in elegant artistic halls, red songs have distinctive national characteristics. This is what only our country can do. There is a unique art form of red song.

3.2. The Political Nature of Red Songs

Red songs have a distinct political character. 2021 is the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. In the blood and fire of the party’s ancestors, we ushered in a great new era of socialist construction and opened a new chapter in the 14th Five-Year Plan. Opening the title page of history, through text,

images, and songs, we can still clearly feel the hardships of this century of trials and hardships, especially the red songs, as a kind of ideological and political education resources, with their distinctive political nature, in the construction of the party, the nation, and For other important commemorative festivals, learning to sing and appreciate red songs, and holding red song competitions have become an important way to review history, cultivate sentiments, and cultivate patriotism.

For example, the red song *Without the Communist Party, There Would Be No New China* was born in Tangshang Village, Xiayunling Township, Fangshan District, Beijing. Today, there is a *No Communist Party, No New China* memorial hall. The singing of the song has always been accompanied by the march of the people's army, accompanied by the advancing horn of national liberation. The Communist Party of China led the Chinese people to victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan and the War of Liberation. Since then, a poor and weak China has become prosperous and strong. For example, *Ten times farewell to the Red Army* is a red ballad in the red Soviet area of the Sichuan-Shaanxi Revolutionary Base. It was produced in the specific environment of southern Shaanxi and Daba mountainous areas in northern Sichuan during the Second Civil Revolutionary War. It has a clear background and a distinctive place. The characteristics make those who praise the party and the Red Army, praise the liberation, actively participate in the Red Army, reflect the military-civilian relationship, and support the anti-"encirclement and suppression" war songs have a long history.

After the Red Army left, a ballad that missed the Party and the Red Army was produced, new ideas were added, and a new artistic life was radiated. The folk ballads in southern Shaanxi and northern Sichuan had new inheritance and depth in breadth and depth. develop. For example, *Socialism is Good* is the most popular revolutionary song in the 1950s of New China. The speed of the song and the vigorous melody highly praised the thriving prosperity of the People's New China under the leadership of Chairman Mao of the Communist Party, which set off a climax of socialist construction. At the same time, it sang the strong determination of the people of the whole country to follow the Communist Party on the road of socialism. Educated and influenced the thinking and growth of several generations of people in New China.

3.3. The Artistry of Red Songs

Red songs are rich in artistry. The red song is undoubtedly the main theme song that conforms to the development of the times. It is derived from the excellent traditional Chinese culture, is cast in the revolutionary culture and advanced socialist culture created by the party leading the people, is rooted in the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and is deeply loved by the people. It has positive and progressive significance and strong spiritual appeal. The red song is an excellent form of artistic expression. It has both beautifully melodic and lyrical romanticism, as well as impassioned and inspiring revolutionary heroism. The scene of battle and life is perfectly integrated and complemented by tunes, making the listener instantly immersed in In the enjoyment of beauty, follow the tunes and lyrics to return to a specific historical era, and feel the background stories of the era conveyed by red songs in different era backgrounds through its artistic form.

Scholar Shen Xiaomei [5] believes: "Red songs are often created by excellent composers of older generations. Through personal experience, with the love for the party and the people, they combine national feelings and feelings with lyrics and tunes.

This kind of vividness Songs from life are more likely to resonate with people.” For example, *Nanniwan*, this tune was born in Yan’an in 1943. The Yangge team from Yan’an Luxun Art School came to Nanniwan and presented the newly compiled Yangge dance *Pick the Flower Basket* to the heroes of the 359th Brigade. *Nanniwan* is one of the episodes. This song has a beautiful and lyrical melody, and it sings enthusiastically to the Eighth Route Army soldiers who have pioneered wasteland production and established meritorious services, and praised them for transforming the desolate Nanni Bay into a beautiful “Jiangnan”. The whole song can be divided into two contrasting parts, the first half is soft and euphemistic, the second half jumps cheerfully, and finally the whole song is ended with a five-degree upward swing. The song absorbed the tones and rhythms of folk songs and dances, coupled with the performance form of singing and dancing, integrating lyricism and dance, making it more vivid and touching. *Nanniwan* spirit has become an important part of Yan’an spirit. Red songs such as *My Motherland*, *Let’s Paddle the Sculls*, *Don’t Forget the Original Heart*, *The Country*, *People’s Livelihood* and so on. While telling the grand story of the country’s revitalization and development, and the changes of the times, it also Tell the moving stories of the advanced model characters who touched China and the region, and also tell the daily stories around the people, and tell the moving stories of the people’s great creation in the process of realizing the Chinese Dream and the pursuit of dreams.

4. The Historical Roles of Red Songs

The pre-Qin *Yue Ji* said, “Every sound starts from the human heart” , “The way of sound is connected with politics”, “German music is music”. Music has the function of moral education since ancient times. Although the red song has experienced a century of ups and downs, it still conforms to the mainstream social consciousness. It carries an unyielding revolutionary spirit, a firm patriotic belief and a lofty national belief. It has played an irreplaceable historical role in different eras since modern times. This kind of ideological and political education resources is also in continuous development and growth.

4.1. The Role of Awakening the National Spirit

During the civil war, the main contradictions in our country experienced the broad masses of the people represented by the Beiyang warlords representing the interests of big landlords and imperialists and the Kuomintang and Communist Parties (mainly referring to the four types of workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie). The contradiction between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang was transformed into a class contradiction between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang. The red songs that emerged during this period, such as the early *Red Tide Song*, *Down with the Great Powers*, *On the Songhua River*, *March of the Volunteers* and other outstanding representative works, are full of anger against the foreign powers invading China and crimes against the powers. The accusation reveals the unyielding spirit of the Chinese nation, inspires the patriotism of the Chinese nation, and calls on the broad masses of compatriots to unite and resist the rule of the great powers and overthrow the warlords.

People with lofty ideals from all walks of life were awakened and inspired, and took up arms to march towards the historical stage of the proletarian revolution. In that era when materials were scarce and communication was inconvenient, the singing of red songs played an stimulating role in awakening the national spirit and uniting and

resisting. It represented the strong will of people from all walks of life not to be reconciled to the oppression of the Northern Warlords and the desire for national unity to fight together.

4.2. The Role of Enhancing National Cohesion

The main domestic contradiction during the Anti-Japanese War was ethnic contradiction. Mao Zedong once said that one anti-Japanese song is worth the strength of two divisions. Scholars Li Rongtao and Huang Fang [6] think “Revolutionary songs are an important cultural factor that affects the building of our country's cohesion. It plays an important role in the revolution, construction, and reform under the leadership of the Communist Party of China.” Red songs have greatly enhanced national cohesion through accusations of the crimes of the invaders and declaration of determination to defeat the aggressors. During this period, a large number of excellent red songs emerged, which carried the will of the party and the people, and were an important carrier for the party to carry out ideological and political work to unite the people of all ethnic groups to encircle the motherland, such as *The Yellow River Cantata* and *On the Taihang Mountains*, *Guerilla Song*, *Anti-Mopping Up*, *Going Behind the Enemy*, *Anti-Enemy Song*, *Salvation Army Song*, *Salvation March* and other songs, on the one hand awaken the people's patriotic passion against Japanese imperialism. On the other hand, praising the party's deeds in the War of Resistance and praising heroes and models has made the nation's anti-Japanese sentiment high, and vigorously devoted itself to the brutal war for national independence, which played an inestimable role on the battlefield of the War of Resistance Against Japan.

4.3. The Role of Promoting the Construction of The Communist Party of China

During the Liberation War, the main contradiction in our country turned into a class contradiction, which was a contradiction between the proletariat under the leadership of the Communist Party of China and the Kuomintang reactionaries. Du Yuwei [7] mentioned in her graduation thesis: “Red songs are an important means for the Chinese Communist Party to carry out ideological and political education. The content reflected in red songs is closely related to our party's policies and guidelines, and can promote national stability and national unity.” The red song is the product and carrier of the practice of ideological and political education. The various principles, policies, and ideas of the Communist Party of China need to be promoted to the masses to win revolutionary alliances of all strata. The reflector or carrier of ideological and political education carried out by the Communist Party.

The Third Civil Revolutionary War was a war waged by the Communist Party of China to overthrow the rule of the Kuomintang and liberate the whole of China. During this period, the nature of red songs changed to praise and praise, which spread from the liberated areas to the unliberated areas and promoted China. The Communist Party is the people's party. It is a proletarian party that strives for the liberation of the people. This political line has greatly inspired the people in the liberated areas to pursue a better life. It also demonstrated the determination of the Communist Party of China to liberate the people of the whole country, had won the support of people of all ethnic groups and strata of the country. Classic representative red songs such as *Nanni Wan*, *A Thousand Miles Leap into Dabie Mountain*, *Ten times farewell to the Red Army*, *The Sky of the Liberated Area* and so on, praising the earth-shaking changes in the lives of the people in the Liberated Area under the leadership of the party, and guiding the people to be full of The yearning for a better life also laid a firm

foundation for the founding of New China. The red songs are also known to the people across the country in a richer form of expression. They are mainly musicals and movie episodes. They are passed on by word of mouth, allowing the red songs to spread throughout the motherland along with the victory of the Communist Party of China.

4.4. The Role of Leading the Trend of Times

From the founding of New China to the period of reform and opening up. In addition to praising the leadership of the party and Chairman Mao, the content of the red songs began to focus on emotional sustenance, praising the deeds of worshipping heroes. During the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea, representative red songs such as *Chinese People's Volunteer Army Anthem*, *Heroes Paeon*, *My Motherland* and other representative red songs demonstrated the strong will of the Chinese nation to defy imperialism and the belief in overcoming the harsh environment of war. It also makes volunteer soldiers far away in a foreign country have nostalgia for the motherland and the will to win. In the early days of the construction of New China, the Communist Party and the people under the leadership of Chairman Mao set off a prosperous and prosperous scene of socialist construction. Confidence in the development of economic construction. Singing the red songs of the prosperity and strength of the motherland are mostly full of rustic flavor. The lyrics are simple and the tunes are beautiful and smooth. By praising the hopeful fields of hometown, praising the new life and expressing the praise of the good life.

The creation and singing of red songs during the reform and opening-up period are consistent with the main theme of social development, praising the new era, combining hope and the future ingeniously, not only praising the new changes and new looks after the reform and opening up, but also looking forward to the prosperity, prosperity and happiness future. Dr. Mei Shichang [8] believes: "The series of red music works born from 1978 to the present are in the same line as the red music born during the New Democratic Revolution. It promotes the main theme of the times, especially the new era and The patriotism of the times sang the main theme of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and praised the great achievements made by the Chinese Communist Party in leading the masses of the people over the past 40 years since the reform and opening up, highlighting the characteristics of the era of red music, and even more. Out of the ideological nature of red music." From *Singing the Motherland*, *Let's Paddle the Sculls*, *Socialism is Good to Hometown Love*, *Night of the Military Port*, *The Story of Spring*, *My Chinese Heart*, *In the Field of Hope*. Red songs like that are like the brilliant flowers of literature and art on the trajectory of history. While expounding the relationship between literature and art and politics, people and life, they also reflect the trend of the times and have witnessed the rise of the new China The glorious journey of getting rich. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, "Art is the clarion call for the advancement of the times, which can best represent the style of an era and can best lead the trend of an era." At this stage, the red songs are gradually combined with popular factors. The beautiful tunes are deeply loved by the people. The red songs that focus on publicity and praise began to enhance the atmosphere of the times and guide the people to pursue a happy life as the main direction. The enthusiastic praise of New China under the leadership of the Communist Party and the perfect combination of the times and politics of red songs inspired the broad masses of the people to participate in the great process of New

China's construction and reform and opening up, and promoted the rapid and earth-shaking changes in New China.

5. Conclusions

The red song is an important part of the red culture. It has played an important historical role in the development of ideological and political work in our country. It originated from the people and from life. It is rich in content and positive. It has its own unique formation mechanism and special connotation. Increasing the learning, singing, inheritance, and innovation of red songs is conducive to building a socialist core, value system, and building an advanced socialist culture.

The red song is an important carrier for spreading core values and inheriting our country's red culture. It is a compliment to the party's pioneer leaders, heroes and deeds, and the hard-won good life. It is the people's yearning for a better life and can deepen the appreciation of Marx. The study and perception of Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thinking of the "Three Represents", the Scientific Outlook on Development, and Xi Jinping's socialist thoughts with Chinese characteristics in the new era will better strengthen the people's understanding of the party in the current socialist new era. The faith of the people inspires the people's patriotism. Excellent red songs that contain traditional Chinese culture, local folk culture, revolutionary spirit, patriotism, and national beliefs should not be buried. Sing red songs, explore the historical role of red songs, and explore their irreplaceable role in contemporary times. The value and practical application of this is the responsibility of our young contemporary scholars, an unshirkable obligation of our young Marxists, and an unshakable attitude of our new socialist youth.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

This work was supported by the School-level Scientific Research Project of the School of Marxism, Yangtze University under research, grant number 2021MYY38.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the tutor, Professor Wang Jinzhou, for his help during the writing of this thesis, and the support of the teachers from the School of Marxism.

References

- [1] Shan, J. On the historical trajectory of the red song and the research on the function of moral education in colleges and universities. *Journal of East China University of Technology (Social Science Edition)*, 2020, 39(1), 64-66.
- [2] Chu, Y.F. Red songs and their ideological and political education function. Master's Thesis, Central China Normal University, Wuhan, Hubei, China, 2016.

- [3] Huang, Z.T. The application of red songs in ideological and political education research. Master's Thesis, University of South China, Hengyang, Hunan, China, 2015.
- [4] Lan, X.F. Use red culture to thicken the patriotism of college students. *People's Forum*, 2021, 696, 697(Z1), 150-152.
- [5] Shen, X.M. Research on the Function and Value of Red Songs in Ideological and Political Education. Master's Thesis, Northwest University for Nationalities, Lanzhou, Gansu, China., 2013.
- [6] Li, R.T; Huang, F. The application of revolutionary songs in the construction of national cohesion in the new era. *Journal of North China University of Technology (Social Science Edition)*, 2019, 19(5), 136-141.
- [7] Du, Y.W. The role of red songs in ideological and political education in colleges and universities. Master's Thesis, Jilin University, Changchun, Jilin, China, 2019.
- [8] Mei, S.C. Red Music and the Popularization of Marxism. Master's Thesis, Xiangtan University, Xiangtan, Hunan, China, 2019.



© 2021 by the author(s); licensee International Technology and Science Publications (ITS), this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)