

Exploration and Practice of Integrating Red Music Culture into the Immersion of Aesthetic Education in Higher Education under the Background of New Liberal Arts

Zhang Yudi, Li Hua

University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, Shanghai , China

Abstract: The New Liberal Arts initiative advances a clear concept of interdisciplinary integration. This idea naturally aligns with the core educational goals of school-based immersive aesthetic education programs in the new era, opening up new practical directions for the reform and innovation of music aesthetic education in higher education. Red music culture stands as a highly significant component in the history of modern Chinese music. It carries distinct artistic aesthetic value as well as profound historical and humanistic connotations, making it a high-quality, practical carrier for implementing music aesthetic education on campus. Looking at the current landscape of red music teaching in domestic universities, quite a few obvious shortcomings remain in many links: some courses deviate from their proper positioning, content explanations stay superficial, teaching scenarios are restricted to single classroom settings, and the supporting evaluation mechanism is far from complete. These issues make it nearly impossible to give full play to the immersive educational effect that red music culture is supposed to deliver. To address these practical problems, we can fully combine the core requirements of New Liberal Arts construction with the educational rules of music aesthetic education. A complete practical path can be built from three dimensions: ladder-like thematic course modules, progressive teaching implementation procedures, and a multi-dimensional support and guarantee system. This transformation will push red music-related teaching to evolve from scattered campus activities to systematic curriculum construction, and upgrade from the traditional one-way knowledge lecture mode to immersive experiential learning. In the end, it will provide a set of actionable references for the connotative development of public

music aesthetic education in universities.

Keywords: New Liberal Arts; Red Music Culture; Aesthetic Education Immersion; Music Education; Interdisciplinary Teaching

Since the advent of the new era, higher education in China has entered a stage of connotative development. As an important carrier of aesthetic education in universities, music education is also facing the requirement of transforming from skill training to comprehensive education. In 2020, the New Liberal Arts Construction Work Conference was held at Shandong University, issuing the Declaration on New Liberal Arts Construction. The conference pointed out that it is necessary to break the disciplinary barriers of traditional liberal arts, promote the cross-border integration of multiple disciplines such as humanities, arts, and social sciences, and focus on cultivating compound innovative talents. In the same year, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era, elevating aesthetic education to the strategic height of moral education and talent cultivation, emphasizing educating people with beauty, transforming people with beauty, and cultivating people with beauty, to build a comprehensive, whole-process educational ecology. In 2024, the Ministry of Education launched the full implementation of the School Aesthetic Education Immersion Action, further proposing that immersion should be used as the core path to integrate aesthetic education into all aspects of education and teaching, achieving the coordinated improvement of aesthetic literacy, humanistic sentiments, and innovative capabilities.

Under this policy background, the traditional teaching model dominated by theoretical

indoctrination can no longer adapt to the cognitive characteristics of contemporary young students. Red music, as a highly representative cultural resource in the development of modern Chinese music, has gradually entered the field of vision of university music teaching in this process. Red music has evolved across nearly a century, it from the Salvation Song Movement to the main-melody creations of the new era. These works don't only track how Chinese compositional style has shifted over time-also they can hold the layered social and cultural memories of every distinct historical phase, making them a natural, accessible bridge which links music aesthetic education with the teaching of history & culture.

Over the past few years, universities across the country have rolled out a wide range of red music works, not only including themed appreciation sessions but also campus performances. Just the same, most of these efforts are still one-off, temporary events. Few schools have built them into structured, long-term courses, and designed teaching that lets students step fully into the context behind each piece. This gap's means is the existing practices have not yet tapped into the full potential of New Liberal Arts: the interdisciplinary strengths and deeply immersive qualities that make aesthetic education so effective.

Starting from the real, everyday state of university music teaching, this article draws on New Liberal Arts frameworks and the established patterns of immersive aesthetic education. First it maps out the unique educational value red music carries, then breaks down the practical shortcomings we see in current teaching. Finally, it puts forward a cohesive, workable implementation path that fits general aesthetic education in higher education, offering concrete, actionable ideas to help red music aesthetic education move toward normalization and systematic development.

1. Theoretical Connotations and Synergistic Integration: New Liberal Arts, Immersive Aesthetic Education & Red Music Culture

New Liberal Arts represents an educational reform direction developed in response to the limitations of traditional liberal arts structures. It aims to dismantle the rigid, isolated boundaries between individual disciplines and drive meaningful cross-field integration that connects humanities, arts, and social sciences. For music

education as a specific discipline, this concept means moving beyond the long-standing framework which solely focuses on technical skill training. It encourages deep, practical links between music and history, sociology and other adjacent fields, highlights the inherent aesthetic and cultural education value of music courses, and nurtures music professionals who excel in their craft while holding well-rounded, interdisciplinary literacy.

Immersive aesthetic education represents a central guiding principle for school aesthetic education now. Different from the traditional art teaching mode that centers on straightforward knowledge instruction and repetitive skill drills, this approach prioritizes subtle, gradual influence that shapes perception without the learner even noticing. It can weave aesthetic experiences naturally into every part of school life, including daily classroom instruction, and campus cultural activities, and off-campus social practice projects. Through links such as aesthetic perception, artistic expression, and cultural understanding, it gradually improves students' aesthetic literacy and humanistic character. For music aesthetic education, immersion means allowing students to naturally obtain aesthetic experiences in the process of listening, singing, playing, and exploring, rather than passively accepting didactic aesthetic conclusions.

Red music culture is an important component of modern Chinese music history, specifically referring to musical works and related cultural forms produced during the social transformation process in China for a long time. It includes salvation songs and anti-war music during the revolutionary war period, along with main melody creations during socialist construction, reform and opening up, and the new era. With rich genres and distinct styles, these works can possess mature musical artistic value and carry rich historical and cultural connotations, serving as important resources with both professionalism and ideological nature in university music teaching.

2. Internal Mechanism and Practical Value of Collaborative Integration of the Three

The construction of new liberal arts, the infiltration of aesthetic education and the teaching of red music are mutually compatible and jointly building a collaborative education system with consistent goals, interconnected content and integrated processes.

From the perspective of educational objectives, all three approaches center on enhancing students' comprehensive literacy in a coordinated manner. Such as the "New Liberal Arts" initiative strives to break down rigid disciplinary boundaries, with the explicit goal of cultivating versatile and innovative talents capable of thinking across different knowledge systems. In contrast, immersive aesthetic education immerses learners in carefully designed sensory and cultural experiences, gradually shaping their aesthetic judgment and humanistic awareness in a natural, rather than forced, manner. Red music education, on the other hand, uses time-honored classic works as the core medium: by guiding artistic appreciation and immersive emotional engagement, it helps students establish a more acute aesthetic cognition while fostering a deep sense of cultural heritage. Ultimately, all three paths revolve around the common educational mission of cultivating individuals through the power of beauty and cultural influence.

When it comes to on-the-ground teaching practice, these 3 ideas naturally complement and reinforce one another. Each filling gaps the others can't easily address. The interdisciplinary research framework laid out by the New Liberal Arts movement frees music education from the narrow boundaries of a single discipline. It opens up space to dig deeply into the artistic value & modern relevance of red music, reading its layered meanings through historical, sociological and artistic lenses. This in turn helps people erect far richer cultural awareness, and directly serves the core educational goals that immersive aesthetic education sets out to achieve.

When it comes to practical teaching carriers, drawing on music's own emotional, all-embracing artistic qualities to deliver teaching aligns perfectly with the immersive, now gradual nature of aesthetic education which shapes learners quietly over time. It makes red music have particularly valuable, accessible high-quality resource for universities looking to roll out consistent, meaningful music aesthetic education on a regular basis.

3. Practical Dilemmas of Integrating Red Music into Aesthetic Education Immersion in Schools

3.1 Fragmented Curriculum System & Insufficient Synergistic Educational Force

At present, the integration of red music into university aesthetic education generally lacks systematic top-level design. It is mostly embedded in teaching in the form of scattered song appreciation or pre-class introductory playback, and has not yet formed coherent curriculum logic and layered progressive educational goals. The dissemination of red culture is mostly concentrated in the field of ideological and political courses, with loose connections to core aesthetic education courses and professional courses. The disciplinary barriers advocated by New Liberal Arts have not been truly broken, and the collaborative education pattern of "Ideological and Politics + Aesthetic Education + Professional" is difficult to truly implement[1]. The pEstablish an Interpositioning of music aesthetic education courses in some universities has certain deviations. Teaching content focuses more on the Western music system and skill training, with a low proportion of red music modules. Most remain at the level of basic work introduction, with insufficient excavation of historical context and spiritual core, failing to establish a deep connection with the core goal of cultivating cultural confidence[2].

3.2 Superficial Value Excavation and Weak Internalization of Spiritual Connotations

Existing red music aesthetic education practices generally show a tendency of "valuing form over connotation," with actual educational effectiveness falling short of expectations. Most teaching activities still stay at the surface level of song teaching and work listening, lacking in-depth interpretation of the revolutionary stories, spirit of the times, and artistic aesthetic characteristics behind red music. Students are mostly in a passive state of acceptance, finding it difficult to produce deep emotional resonance and value internalization. Relevant empirical surveys show that over 60% of students believe that red music-related aesthetic education activities are seriously formalized and lack innovation. Most still follow the old path of traditional singing and performances, failing to guide students to experience the spiritual core of red music from the level of artistic aesthetics. The value transfer effect of aesthetic education and ideological and political education is not ideal[3]. This superficial integration method continuously weakens the aesthetic education function of red music, making it difficult to truly

achieve the educational goal of moistening the soul and strengthening ideals and beliefs.

3.3 Homogenized Practice Carriers and Narrow Student Participation Coverage

The practical forms of red music aesthetic education are relatively solidified, generally existing problems of "valuing display over experience." Existing activities are mostly concentrated in traditional one-way display forms such as art performances and choir competitions. Core participants are basically students with artistic specialties, while most ordinary students can only participate passively as audiences, resulting in a narrow actual coverage of aesthetic education immersion. The excavation and organization of local characteristic red music resources are generally insufficient, with supporting historical backgrounds and creation stories being very scattered. Practical links such as field study and immersive experience are relatively weak, making it easy for students' understanding of red music to stay on the surface[]. At the same time, the activation and utilization of off-campus red music resources are insufficient, with low collaboration with local memorial halls and art troupes. A practical education platform linking inside and outside the school has not been established, limiting the field extension of aesthetic education immersion.

3.4 Weak Support Guarantees and Insufficient Momentum for Integration Promotion

The support system for integrating red music into aesthetic education is not yet perfect, constraining the high-quality promotion of this work. At the faculty level, music aesthetic education teachers in some universities lack systematic training in red cultural literacy, with inadequate grasp of the historical background and spiritual connotations of red music, making it difficult to carry out teaching with both aesthetic depth and ideological height. At the evaluation level, existing aesthetic education evaluations still take knowledge assessment and skill testing as core standards, failing to include dimensions such as red cultural identity and aesthetic literacy improvement in the evaluation scope. They focus on summative evaluation, making it difficult to comprehensively reflect the actual effectiveness of aesthetic education immersion. At the technical level, the

application of digital technology in red music aesthetic education is significantly lagging, lacking immersive and interactive digital teaching resources. Failure to rely on smart platforms to expand the temporal and spatial boundaries of aesthetic education immersion has affected educational effectiveness and attractiveness to young students to a certain extent.

4. Practical Paths for Integrating Red Music into Aesthetic Education Immersion under the Background of New Liberal Arts

Addressing current teaching problems and combining the interdisciplinary concepts of New Liberal Arts with the laws of music aesthetic education immersion, systematic practical paths can be built from three dimensions: course modules, teaching processes, and guarantee systems. This promotes the transformation of red music teaching from fragmented activities to systematic courses, and upgrades from one-way lecturing to immersive experiences.

4.1 Design of Ladder-Type Thematic Course Modules

Referring to the narrative logic of "linking songs with history and narrating history with songs"[], taking the development context of modern Chinese music history as the main line, and combining the music creation characteristics and aesthetic evolution of different periods, four progressive thematic teaching modules are set up to form a complete sequence of teaching content, promoting the deep integration of music ontology analysis, historical context interpretation, and humanistic connotation interpretation.

The first Module : Salvation Songs and Aesthetic Turn (1931-1937)

This module should corresponds to the historical background of the Anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement, which focusing on the creative achievements of the left-wing music movement and the salvation song movement. The teaching's take works such as "March of the Volunteers", "On the Songhua River" as core tracks. "March of the Volunteers" adopts an ascending tone which similar to a horn, a staccato rhythm, or a march genre, creating a strong appeal with its concise and powerful melody, it also can be regarded as a model of functional salvation music. "On the Songhua River" adopts a lyrical melody that descends

stepwise and a weeping tone treatment, combined with a three-part structure, integrating patriotic sentiments into delicate musical expression, and demonstrating the artistic charm of lyrical salvation songs. By introducing these works, students are guided to understand the stylistic characteristics of music creation in this period against the historical background.

The second module : Nationalization Exploration of Anti-War Music (1937-1945)

This module always focuses on music creation during the All-Nation Anti-War period, sorting out the nationalization exploration path and aesthetic achievements of revolutionary music. Core detailed products include the Yellow River Cantata and On Mount Taihang, supplemented by expanded works of the same theme and style to build a layered progressive content system. The Yellow River Cantata integrates solo, chorus, and background music recitation in an epic suite structure, deeply combining folk music motifs with symphonic creation techniques, representing the artistic peak of red music creation in this period. On Mount Taihang absorbs Shanxi folk mountain song tone materials, achieving an organic balance of lyricism & combativeness through two-part chorus texture. He Luting's Guerrilla Song can combine the popular singability of mass songs with an uplifting combat temperament through lively march rhythms and agile broken chord melodies.

The third module: Style Evolution during Construction and Reform Period (1949-2012)

The third module is divided into two parts which can sort out the functional transformation and diversified aesthetic development of red music after the founding of New China. Part 1: (1949-1978) revolves around the construction of national music narrative, with core works such as My Motherland and Long March Suite. The former is an interlude from the movie Battle on Shangganling Mountain, conveying patriotic sentiments in rural narrative through the structure of lyrical verses and ode-like choruses. The latter, created in 1965 (commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Long March victory), takes the Red Army Long March which from 1934 to 1936 as the narrative main line, integrating multi-regional folk materials and symphonic chorus techniques, serving as a benchmark for revolutionary historical theme creation. Part 2: (1978-2012) It focuses on the style transformation after reform and opening up

with core works such as On the Fields of Hope and Story of Spring, they presenting the aesthetic shift from single collective narrative to diverse contemporary expression, showcasing the popularization exploration of main melody creation.

The fourth Module: New Aesthetic Features of Main Melody Creation in the New Era (2012-)

This module is focusing on the creation characteristics of Red music in the new era, which can guide students to understand the contemporary inheritance and aesthetic evolution of red music culture. Core tracks include Never Forget the Original Intention, Building the Chinese Dream Together, and Song of the Strong Army. New era main melody works generally integrate symphonic techniques with popular expression logic, with melodies fitting contemporary youth listening habits and more exquisite arrangements, achieving widespread dissemination through converged media channels. Teaching should balance the analysis of creation techniques and aesthetic characteristics, while guiding students to combine their own experiences to discuss contemporary dissemination paths of red music, establishing connections between personal aesthetics and contemporary culture, achieving the unity of cultural inheritance and aesthetic cultivation.

4.2Design of Four-Stage Progressive Teaching Process

In the Historical Theory Foundation stage, we know music teachers and humanities teachers can collaborate to sort out the social and cultural background and music development context of the corresponding historical stage, erecting an overall cognitive coordinate for work appreciation. This stage does not pursue dense accumulation of knowledge points but focuses on helping students understand the artistic context and soil of the work's birth, providing clearer references for subsequent aesthetic appreciation and avoiding isolated, fragmented listening.

The Aesthetic Appreciation stage is very important, it is the core link of music aesthetic education, led by music teachers. Work analysis is carried out around dimensions such as melody, rhythm, harmony, form, and singing form, supplemented by audio, video, comparison of different versions, and live singing demonstrations, allowing students to fully feel

the artistic charm of the work. Only by truly letting students understand the beauty of music can the cultural connotations carried by the work be naturally conveyed.

In the Practical Exploration stage, diverse practical participation links are designed to promote the transformation of students from "audience" to "participants." Activities such as learning classic fragments, comparing singing versions, and collecting background materials can be carried out. Where conditions permit, small choir rehearsals, situational fragment performances, and thematic motif improvisation adaptations can be organized. Through multi-modal participation involving speaking, 动手, and thinking, students' aesthetic recognition of the work is deepened, while artistic expression and creative practice capabilities are exercised.

In the Reflection and Internalization stage, students are guided to sort out learning gains through thematic discussions, learning notes, and small sharing sessions, transforming classroom aesthetic experiences into their own aesthetic cognition and cultural understanding. Teachers can design open-ended guiding questions, encourage students to express independent aesthetic judgments, and promote the precipitation and deepening of learning effectiveness.

The above four stages are connected layer by layer and support each other, finally forming a complete educational chain.

4.3 Multi-Dimensional Support Guarantee System

The implementation and long-term operation of teaching models require strong support from supporting systems and resources, specifically starting from the following three aspects:

1. Set up an Interdisciplinary Collaborative Teaching Mechanism. Break into pieces barriers between different departments, form joint teaching teams composed of music professional teachers, humanities teachers, and off-campus cultural experts, and promote the normalization of collective lesson preparation and collaborative teaching.

2. Erect a Digital Aesthetic Education Resource Platform. Systematically collect audio, video, scores, historical documents, and other materials used in various teaching modules to form a unified aesthetic education resource library. And then we develop a digital teaching platform integrating online appreciation and practical

guidance to facilitate students' independent extended learning based on their own interests and progress.

Build a diversified evaluation system. don't rely on a single final exam, we need combine classroom participation, practical completion, and aesthetic literacy growth for process-oriented, comprehensive evaluation. only through multi-angle feedback, form a closed loop of "teaching-evaluation-improvement" to continuously promote the optimization and improvement of teaching effectiveness.

5. Practical Forms and Optimization Outlook

5.1 Reference Forms of Existing Practices

Currently, many universities in China have carried out explorations in the field of red music aesthetic education, providing practical references for the implementation of teaching models. The red music-themed aesthetic education project jointly carried out by East China University of Science and Technology and Shanghai Conservatory of Music integrates interdisciplinary faculty from both schools, follows the idea of "linking songs with history and narrating history with songs," combines work performance, thematic explanations, and interactive experiences, covering thousands of students from multiple universities, achieving inter-university sharing of high-quality aesthetic education resources [1]. Jiangxi Agricultural University systematically integrates red music into the curriculum system of musicology majors, introducing red classic works into courses such as musical form analysis, vocal singing, and choir conducting, combining professional skill training with aesthetic cultural cultivation. This not only consolidates students' professional foundation but also expands the educational depth of courses, forming a characteristic path of professional aesthetic education [2]. Some local universities rely on local red cultural resources to move music classrooms to red cultural venues and revolutionary sites, creating immersive aesthetic education scenes through on-site teaching, real-scene singing, and study practice, activating local cultural resources and greatly enhancing the sense of substitution and appeal of music teaching, serving as a feasible model for school-local collaborative aesthetic education immersion.

5.2 Future Optimization Directions

Combining common problems in current practice, the high-quality development of red music aesthetic education immersion in the future still needs to continue to advance in several directions. First, accelerate curriculum construction, promote the transformation of red music teaching from temporary activities to normalized courses, incorporate them more into public art courses and professional curriculum systems, improve content gradients and credit recognition mechanisms, and solve problems of fragmentation and homogenization. Second, deepen the quality of interdisciplinary integration, further improve the collaborative training mechanism for faculty, enhance teachers' interdisciplinary teaching capabilities, and truly achieve deep integration of music aesthetics and historical culture rather than simple content splicing. In addition, it is necessary to expand the whole-domain educational ecology, further integrate off-campus aesthetic education resources and digital technical means, create an immersive space with multi-dimensional linkage of classroom, campus, society, and online, allowing red music aesthetic education to cover a wider range of student groups and release more sustainable educational effectiveness.

Conclusion

This study further confirms that the deepening of new liberal arts construction, the implementation of aesthetic education infiltration actions in universities can provide opportunities for innovation in red music education, also can set higher standards for educational quality. This study further confirms that a practical path from three layers: course modules, teaching processes, and support systems. The purpose is to integrate the interdisciplinary thinking of new liberal arts, the goal of aesthetic education infiltration into red music classrooms, helping red music aesthetic education shift from superficial activity innovation can deepen connotation quality improvement. The universal value and long-term effectiveness of this educational model need extensive teaching practice verification, and

continuous deepening in areas such as local red music resource exploration and teaching evaluation system improvement. With the continuous advancement of new liberal arts and aesthetic education reforms, it is believed that red music culture will further take root in university music classrooms, becoming a carrier for cultivating students' aesthetic abilities, continuing the red cultural tradition, and shaping young people's humanistic sentiments.

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