



MAN JIANG HONG IN CHINESE CULTURE AND ITS GLOBAL RESONANCE IN NATIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION

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Abstract

Man Jiang Hong, a patriotic poem attributed to Yue Fei, has long served as a powerful symbol in Chinese cultural and national consciousness. Rooted in themes of loyalty, heroism, and resistance, the poem has transcended its literary origins to become a multidimensional artifact that influences music, media, education, and gender discourse. This article examines the evolving role of Man Jiang Hong within Chinese culture and explores how it has contributed to shaping national identity in both historical and contemporary contexts. Drawing on literary, sociological, and educational perspectives, the study highlights the poem's adaptation in opera, film, phonograph recordings, digital platforms, and classroom instruction. It further considers how Man Jiang Hong resonates beyond China's borders, particularly in diasporic and global discourses on cultural heritage and nationalism. Through its continued reinterpretation, Man Jiang Hong embodies a cultural bridge that connects traditional Chinese values with modern expressions of identity and pride in an increasingly interconnected world.



Keywords: Man Jiang Hong; Chinese Culture; Global Resonance; National Identity Formation

Introduction

Man Jiang Hong, traditionally attributed to Song Dynasty general Yue Fei, occupies a central place in the cultural and historical imagination of China. Originally a poem expressing unyielding loyalty and patriotic fervor, it has since evolved into a powerful symbol of Chinese identity. Over the centuries, Man Jiang Hong has been embraced and reinterpreted across diverse artistic forms, including opera, cinema, popular music, and educational curricula. Its powerful themes of resistance, sacrifice, and national pride continue to resonate with audiences today, both within China and among global Chinese communities (Su, 2024).

This article aims to analyze Man Jiang Hong as a cultural phenomenon that bridges the past and the present while also functioning as a touchstone of Chinese national identity. It explores the historical background and gendered interpretations of the poem, its role in modern media and educational institutions, and its symbolic relevance in a globalized cultural landscape. By examining how Man Jiang Hong has been reimagined through various mediums and moments in history, this study demonstrates the poem's capacity to reinforce a sense of collective identity and emotional continuity across generations. Moreover, it situates the poem in a broader cultural dialogue about how traditional texts can maintain relevance and even grow in symbolic power amid global cultural transformations.

The Role of Man Jiang Hong in Chinese Music and Its Cultural Significance

Historical background and cultural context of Man Jiang Hong: The historical background and narrative techniques of the song Man Jiang Hong, specifically its use in film and other media. Man Jiang Hong, originally composed

by the famous Song Dynasty general Yue Fei, is deeply rooted in themes of loyalty, patriotism, and resistance against foreign invaders. This song, with its stirring melody and poignant lyrics, became a powerful symbol of Chinese national pride, especially during times of war. The song's historical significance extends beyond its initial composition and has been adapted into various forms of modern media, including film and literature, where it continues to evoke intense emotional responses. By examining its use in these contexts, the song has maintained its relevance in contemporary Chinese culture, serving as both a historical reference and a cultural touchstone that communicates the collective spirit of resistance and heroism (Wang & Xiao, 2024).

During the Ming and Qing periods, women's engagement with Man Jiang Hong was a way of expressing their personal and societal ideals, often related to themes of resistance, sacrifice, and devotion. These adapted lyrics were important in fostering a sense of national identity and solidarity, especially among women who may have felt marginalized in the larger socio-political discourse. Through this gendered lens, Man Jiang Hong becomes a multifaceted cultural symbol, allowing both men and women to express patriotism and a shared sense of historical pride (Li, 2021).

The analysis reveals how the poem's use of forceful imagery and evocative language strengthens its message of resistance and patriotism. Through this literary analysis, the poem's structure and meaning highlight its function as a narrative tool that reinforces historical and cultural memory. Man Jiang Hong serves not only as a form of artistic expression but also as a vessel for the collective emotions of the Chinese people. The emotional resonance of the song has made it an enduring piece in Chinese cultural history, deeply embedded in the cultural and emotional landscape of China (Su, 2024).

Man Jiang Hong serves as a powerful symbol of Chinese resilience and patriotism, and its role in films evokes emotions of unity and strength in the face of adversity. Liu argues that the song's association with Yue Fei, a historical figure who epitomized loyalty and self-sacrifice, lends it a timeless quality that

continues to resonate with audiences today. The ongoing reinterpretation of the song in contemporary media highlights its cultural relevance and ability to adapt to changing political and social contexts (Liu, 2022).

Man Jiang Hong has been performed not only in classical music and poetry but has also found a place in Chinese opera and recorded media. The performance of the song in operatic and recorded formats allowed it to reach a broader audience, further cementing its status as a national anthem of sorts. This shift in the medium through which Man Jiang Hong was delivered is significant, marking its expansion from high art to popular culture. By becoming part of the media landscape, it solidified its place in both traditional and contemporary Chinese cultural forms, making it accessible to a wide range of people across generations.

The song has evolved from a patriotic anthem composed by Yue Fei in the Song Dynasty to a multifaceted cultural symbol that has been adapted and reinterpreted in various media forms. From its early use in literature and poetry to its modern-day adaptations in film and opera, Man Jiang Hong has remained a central cultural and emotional touchstone in China. Its themes of loyalty, resistance, and patriotism continue to resonate deeply with the Chinese people, making it not just a piece of music, but a living symbol of national pride and collective identity. Through its enduring presence in Chinese culture, "Man Jiang Hong" demonstrates the power of music and literature to shape and sustain a nation's cultural memory across generations.

The Symbolism of Man Jiang Hong in Chinese National Identity

Originally composed by the Song Dynasty general Yue Fei, Man Jiang Hong has long been associated with themes of loyalty, patriotism, and resistance against foreign invaders. These themes are central to the song's symbolic power in representing Chinese national identity. The song's narrative, which emphasizes the valor of individuals who defend their country, aligns closely with the broader cultural values of loyalty and national pride. Over time, Man Jiang Hong has been adapted into various forms of media, where its symbolic resonance has only

deepened. In contemporary Chinese culture, the song serves as a symbol not only of historical resistance but also of the enduring spirit of the Chinese nation, making it a central reference in discussions about Chinese nationalism (Wang & Xiao, 2024).

The song's themes of heroism and loyalty were not only significant for men but also deeply resonated with women, who adapted the lyrics to express their own forms of patriotism and resistance. By analyzing the adaptations of Man Jiang Hong in women's song lyrics, the result shows how the song became a vehicle for expressing national identity and social values that transcended gender roles. For women, engaging with the song allowed them to connect with the larger national narrative of resistance and sacrifice, making it a powerful symbol of their own place within the broader framework of Chinese identity. In this way, the song contributed to shaping a collective national consciousness that included both men and women in the struggle for the nation's honor and future (Li, 2024).

While their focus is on Taiwanese versus Chinese identity, their analysis offers valuable insights into how songs like Man Jiang Hong serve as symbols of collective memory and national pride. According to Yu and Kwan (2008), songs that emphasize loyalty and resistance become central to the formation of national identity, as they provide a shared emotional and cultural framework through which citizens can engage with their nation's history and values. Man Jiang Hong with its themes of patriotism and devotion, plays a key role in this process, particularly within mainland China, where it continues to be invoked as a symbol of unity and national pride (Yu & Kwan, 2008).

Fong, G. S. (1984) explores the role of traditional music and song lyrics in shaping the modern national identity of China, particularly in the context of early 20th-century Chinese intellectual and political movements. Fong's (2004) examination of figures like Lü Bicheng, who combined elements of traditional music with modern sensibilities, highlights the evolving nature of national identity as expressed through music. Man Jiang Hong with its roots in traditional Chinese operatic forms, serves as an example of how historical songs continue to

shape modern notions of patriotism and national identity. Fong argues that traditional songs like *Man Jiang Hong* are not static; rather, they evolve to reflect the changing political and cultural landscapes of China. This adaptability allows the song to maintain its relevance as a symbol of national pride, even as China continues to modernize.

The song has evolved from a historical anthem of resistance and patriotism to a powerful cultural symbol that transcends time and geography. Its themes of loyalty, heroism, and sacrifice continue to resonate deeply within Chinese society, serving as a central reference in both historical and contemporary discussions of national identity. Through its adaptations in various media and its continued presence in the collective cultural memory of the Chinese people, *Man Jiang Hong* remains an essential symbol of Chinese nationalism, embodying the values and ideals that define the nation's identity.

The Thematic Elements of Loyalty, Patriotism, and Heroism in *Man Jiang Hong*

Waldron, A. (1996) explores the theme of loyalty in *Man Jiang Hong* emphasizing its crucial role in the broader context of Chinese national identity, particularly during times of war. In his study of World War II and the subsequent reimagining of historical events, Waldron highlights how loyalty to the nation has been a recurring theme in Chinese cultural expressions, with *Man Jiang Hong* serving as a prime example. The song, composed by the Song Dynasty general Yue Fei, epitomizes the values of fidelity to one's country and the ideals of resistance against foreign invaders. Waldron suggests that *Man Jiang Hong* reflects not only Yue Fei's personal loyalty to the nation but also a collective call for loyalty from the people of China, especially in the face of external threats. This thematic focus on loyalty has made the song a symbol of patriotic sentiment, reinforcing the idea that the strength of the nation lies in the loyalty and dedication of its citizens.

The role of patriotism in Man Jiang Hong examining how the song represents an expression of national pride. The way Man Jiang Hong captures the essence of patriotism through its powerful imagery and poignant lyrics, which emphasize devotion to the homeland. The song's lyrical content, which evokes themes of sacrifice and duty, aligns with the broader Chinese conception of patriotism as an ideal that transcends individual desires in favor of collective goals. In this context, Man Jiang Hong becomes more than just a song; it transforms into a cultural artifact that symbolizes the deep emotional and ideological connections between the individual and the nation. The song's enduring popularity across generations is a testament to its ability to evoke these patriotic feelings, serving as a reminder of the importance of national unity and sacrifice for the greater good.

Yang, Z. (2016) delves into the concept of heroism, particularly through the lens of Chinese poetry, and identifies how Man Jiang Hong embodies the heroic ideals that are central to Chinese cultural narratives. Yang argues that heroism in Chinese literature, and by extension in Chinese music, is often portrayed through the actions of individuals who sacrifice personal well-being for the greater good of the nation. In the case of Man Jiang Hong the heroism is embodied by Yue Fei, whose loyalty and commitment to defending China against foreign invaders made him a national hero. Yang emphasizes that this sense of heroism is not only about personal valor but also about the broader impact of one's actions on the fate of the nation. Through its portrayal of Yue Fei's unwavering commitment to his country, Man Jiang Hong encapsulates the ideal of heroism that is celebrated in Chinese culture, where heroism is intertwined with patriotism and national pride (Yang, 2016).

The connection between heroism and loyalty by exploring the evolution of Yue Fei's image, particularly the ways in which his story has been used to reinforce the themes of loyalty and patriotism throughout Chinese history. Du traces the development of Yue Fei's image from the Song Dynasty to the present day, noting how his depiction in popular media, literature, and music, such as in Man Jiang Hong has been central to shaping Chinese national identity. According

to Du, Yue Fei's status as a national hero is inseparable from the themes of loyalty and patriotism that are embedded in the song. The song's portrayal of his commitment to the defense of China against foreign invaders has cemented his place as a symbol of idealized heroism, one that continues to inspire generations of Chinese citizens to uphold values of loyalty, sacrifice, and patriotism (Du, 2024).

A broader cultural context for understanding the themes of loyalty, patriotism, and heroism in Man Jiang Hong particularly within the framework of Chinese nationalism. Man Jiang Hong reflects the ideological construction of the Chinese nation-state, with its themes of loyalty and sacrifice serving as foundational elements in the narrative of Chinese national identity. The song's emphasis on unwavering loyalty and devotion to the nation has made it an essential part of the cultural canon that shapes contemporary Chinese national consciousness. The song's ability to evoke these themes, particularly in the context of historical struggles, reinforces its role as a patriotic anthem, which serves to unite the people in times of both national crisis and celebration.

The song has evolved from a historical anthem of resistance and patriotism to a powerful cultural symbol that transcends time and geography. Its themes of loyalty, heroism, and sacrifice continue to resonate deeply within Chinese society, serving as a central reference in both historical and contemporary discussions of national identity. Through its adaptations in various media and its continued presence in the collective cultural memory of the Chinese people, Man Jiang Hong remains an essential symbol of Chinese nationalism, embodying the values and ideals that define the nation's identity.

The Song's Role in Modern Cultural and Educational Settings

The contemporary landscape of folk song education in Guangdong Province, specifically addressing the educational challenges and cultural significance of traditional Chinese songs. Xiao highlights that songs like Man Jiang Hong continue to play a vital role in modern educational contexts, particularly in promoting cultural heritage preservation and national pride. In

Guangdong and other provinces, the teaching of traditional songs within school curricula is seen as a way to connect younger generations with their cultural roots. Xiao discusses the challenges in integrating such songs into the modern educational framework, particularly in the face of globalization and the growing popularity of Western music. Despite these challenges, Man Jiang Hong remains an important part of music education, offering students the opportunity to engage with the cultural narratives of the past while promoting national identity and pride in contemporary settings (Xiao, 2025).

The music form and performance techniques of Bayu folk songs, which, like Man Jiang Hong are deeply tied to Chinese traditions. Gong et al. point out that folk songs, including Man Jiang Hong are being integrated into music education in China as a way to preserve these important cultural forms. The performance techniques associated with such songs, which include intricate vocal ornamentations and stylistic nuances, are essential in understanding the cultural and emotional layers embedded in the music. Gong et al. argue that these songs, though rooted in traditional music forms, continue to serve as educational tools for teaching vocal technique, emotion, and cultural heritage. Man Jiang Hong with its emphasis on emotional depth and patriotic fervor, is a prime example of a song that contributes to the development of vocal skills while also reinforcing cultural values in modern educational settings.

Wang, Y. & Thotham, P. (2024) discuss the literacy transmission of Chinese folk songs in Southern Shaanxi, where songs like Man Jiang Hong serve as both a method of music education and a means of cultural preservation. Wang and Thotham emphasize the role of folk songs in imparting historical and cultural knowledge, with " Man Jiang Hong being a key example of a song that communicates themes of loyalty, heroism, and national pride. In regions like Southern Shaanxi, folk songs are passed down through generations, often in informal settings such as family gatherings or local festivals. However, in recent years, educational initiatives have sought to formalize the teaching of these songs within schools. Wang and Thotham note that this formalization helps ensure the preservation of cultural heritage while also fostering a sense of collective identity

among students. The inclusion of songs like Man Jiang Hong in school curricula plays a crucial role in maintaining the cultural fabric of these regions, particularly in the face of rapid modernization.

The cultural politics of introducing popular music into China's music education, a context in which traditional songs like Man Jiang Hong are increasingly viewed as both culturally significant and pedagogically valuable. While modern popular music has gained prominence in Chinese music education, traditional songs continue to hold a special place in the curriculum due to their deep cultural resonance. Man Jiang Hong is often used in both formal and informal educational settings to teach students about Chinese history, culture, and values. The integration of traditional music into contemporary education systems helps students understand the cultural roots of their national identity. This fusion of traditional and popular music in the classroom reflects the broader trend of maintaining cultural continuity while adapting to global influences.

Tang, Y. & Sornyai, Z. (2023) examine the cultural treasures of Baima Tibetan folk songs in Gansu Province and how they serve as a resource for literacy education in Chinese music history. Tang and Sornyai emphasize the importance of incorporating folk songs like Man Jiang Hong into educational settings as a way to enhance students' understanding of cultural diversity and heritage. In their study, they highlight the role of these folk songs in teaching students about the regional variations in Chinese music, which helps broaden their musical knowledge and deepen their appreciation for the nation's diverse traditions. Man Jiang Hong though originating from the Song Dynasty, is part of a broader cultural continuum in which songs of historical and cultural significance are passed down and incorporated into modern educational frameworks. Tang and Sornyai suggest that by teaching these songs, educators help preserve the rich diversity of China's musical heritage while fostering a sense of national unity and pride.

In conclusion, the role of Man Jiang Hong in modern cultural and educational settings underscores its enduring significance as a symbol of national pride and cultural heritage. The song continues to be an essential part of Chinese music education, contributing to both the development of vocal skills and the

preservation of cultural values. Man Jiang Hong serves as a bridge between the past and present, allowing students to engage with their cultural history while developing musical competence. In a rapidly globalizing world, the song's role in education reflects the broader efforts to maintain China's cultural identity and heritage, ensuring that future generations continue to appreciate and embody the values of loyalty, patriotism, and heroism that the song represents.

New Knowledges

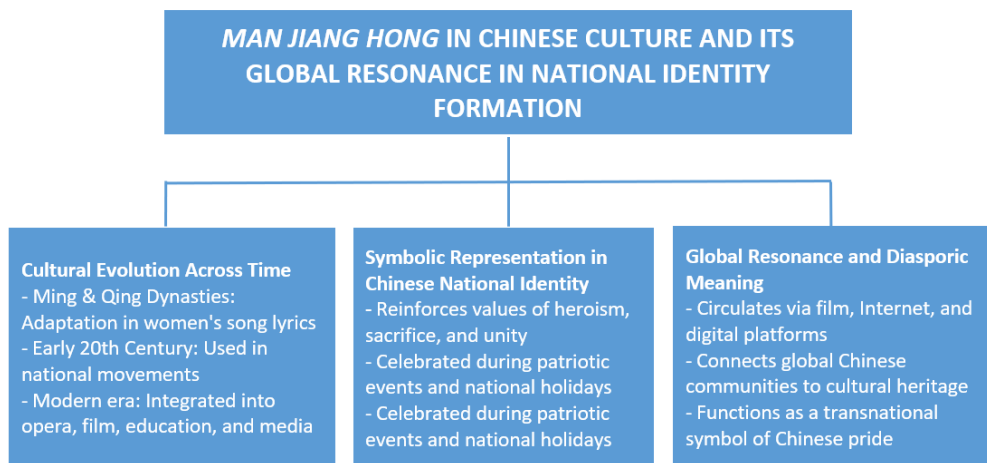


Figure 1: New Knowledges Diagram of Man Jiang Hong in Chinese Culture and Its Global Resonance in National Identity Formation.

Conclusions

Man Jiang Hong stands as a testament to the enduring power of cultural symbols in shaping national identity. From its origins as a patriotic poem attributed to Yue Fei, it has transformed into a versatile and enduring cultural icon, deeply embedded in the historical, artistic, and emotional fabric of Chinese society. As demonstrated in this article, the poem's themes of loyalty, heroism, and resistance have been continually reinterpreted across time and media,

reinforcing a shared sense of cultural and national belonging. In contemporary China, Man Jiang Hong not only retains its historical and literary significance but also plays an active role in educational and media narratives that promote national pride and cultural awareness. Furthermore, its presence in global Chinese communities and digital platforms highlights its capacity to resonate across borders, offering a point of connection for diasporic identity and transnational cultural expression. Ultimately, Man Jiang Hong exemplifies how traditional cultural works can both preserve historical memory and adapt to modern needs, thereby sustaining their relevance in the ongoing formation of national and global identities.

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