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A comparative review of music education in mainland China and the United States: From nationalism to multiculturalism

Wai-Chung Ho

Hong Kong Baptist University: tediwch@hkbu.edu.hk

This paper attempts to compare interactions between social changes and the integration of nationalism and multiculturalism in the context of music education by focusing on the ways in which the governmental politics of mainland China and the United States have managed nationalism and diversity in school music education. This paper also explores the ways in which music education, in response to different sociopolitical contexts, relates to the teaching of both musical and non-musical meanings in the dual context of nationalism and multiculturalism, and discusses some of the challenges facing music education in music classrooms today in these two nations. This paper argues that the interplay of tensions in the current wave of nationalism and multiculturalism seen in both mainland China and the United States show the enduring nature of state ideologies in a dynamic, contentious process of social construction.

Keywords: mainland China; United States; music education; nationalism; multiculturalism

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is often an important means to transmit to students certain types of values that are acceptable to society and to the authority of the state, such as national cultural values. Hobsbawm (1990) views culture as an intellectual instrument fashioned with a political agenda. For Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), who is regarded as the founder of political nationalism, there is a direct relationship between national identity and the nation state (Barnard cited in Wilborg, 2000); people are what governments mold them to be and education elevates the individual to acquire a national identity (Wilborg, 2000). With a view to fostering national cohesion, education has played different roles at different times and in different national contexts (Blum, 2014; DCSF, 2007; Njeng'ere, 2014). The major task of education systems is the formation of national citizens and the preparation of future workers for the national labour market (Green, 1997). The changing notions of citizenship and citizenship education in the contemporary world also give rise to new meanings and understandings of and approaches to citizenship education (Law, 2011; Roth & Burbules, 2007).

In all societies, education is used to help assimilate children into their corresponding societies. The spirit of national culture has played an important role in defining and theorizing education in school. Students in many countries are made to participate in activities that show respect for their nations, including saluting their national flag and learning their national anthem (see Cave, 2009; Githens-Mazer, 2007; Japan Today, 2015; Tovey & Share, 2003). Education systems instruct children in a particular governing language, myths of national images, and national symbols, thus contributing to the formation and maintenance of a separation “between ‘us’ and ‘them’” (Hjerm, 2001, p. 37). However,

there are always questions about the extent to which school education should promote nationalism and nationalist values.

The rapid and often radical changes experienced by societies have led to much debate about cultural transmission and school education. Since the 1980s, multiculturalism has been a profound and ongoing process in every cultural, economic, and political aspect of the current world. Nationalism is frequently viewed as the antithesis of multiculturalism. Nationalism and multiculturalism are often distinguished “as polar opposites,” viewed, respectively, as “the disease” and “the cure” in liberal and antiracist circles (Asari, Halikiopoulou, Daphne, & Mock, 2008). Beck (2000) particularizes nationalism as one of the “enemies” of cultural cosmopolitanism and opposes the national “monological” to the cosmopolitan “dialogical” imagination. Multiculturalism is a challenge to nationalism, and multiculturalism’s varied, even contradictory nature impacts on the economic, political, cultural, social, and educational dimensions of human activities in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. Nationalism and multiculturalism, theoretically at least, have fundamental dimensions. A core hypothesis is that the national and multicultural debate fundamentally alters the relationship between the place in which we abide and our cultural experiences and identities in the global age.

In this era of increasing globalization, the concept of national culture as sustained in school education may be problematic. McCarthy, Giardina, Harewood, & Park (2003) argue that young people fall into the dilemma between being citizens of a global culture and being accepted in the societies in which they live. Compulsory education, including music education, has been used to advance social and political values in many corners of the world. With reference to the Western world, Sloboda (2001) argues that the “meaning of music” is the product of the constantly shifting dialogues of diverse groups, which may blend around a “dominant ideology” to bring about an enduring education program (p. 249). Nonetheless, whether nationalism and multiculturalism should be promoted consistently in present day classrooms has been hotly debated, especially in the United States (US), Canada, the Caribbean, Japan, mainland China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan. Moreover, the often-conflicting forces of nationalism and multiculturalism are impacting the discussion regarding cultural transmission in school music education (Ho & Law, 2009).

Theme of the Comparative Study

Although discussions of nationalism and multiculturalism may be presented using a variety of terms, here they are viewed as transformative processes intent on changing both culture and education. While there is comparative educational literature available on the US and other countries (e.g., Deem, 2001; Fitz & Beers, 2002; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2003; Reisel, 2011; Van Langen & Dekkers, 2005; Walker & Archung 2003), no studies on nationalism and/or nationalism and multiculturalism in a changing world have been carried out in relation to Sino/US music education. Though a comparative study has been done on German and American music education, it focuses on general, performance-based and multicultural music education (Kertz-Welzel, 2008). Other studies on China and the US mainly focus on politics, state affairs, and science and mathematics education. This comparative study explains how music education in China and the US is structured in accordance with national and multicultural awareness and values. In this paper, both nationalism and multiculturalism are considered to be political processes that remain relevant for school music education in the global age. The three key questions are:

1. To what extent can both nations’ school music education help to develop a sense of national identity?

2. To what extent have the sociopolitical changes experienced by the two countries affected their music education policies with respect to the values of multiculturalism, such as the recognition of ethnocultural diversity?
3. How do the two nations attempt to balance the dialectic between nationalism and multiculturalism in school music education in the global age?

This article first reviews the literature and relevant documents on the historical context of introducing nationalism in music education in mainland China and the US. The article then describes the introduction of multicultural music education in response to the different social contexts of these two nations, and follows this description by comparing the challenges facing the two nations with respect to the dynamic contradiction between nationalism and multiculturalism in twenty-first century school music education. The article concludes with a discussion on music education as a means of state control and compares the cultural constructs of mainland China and the US. There would appear to be extensive debates about how these two nations cope with the inclusion of nationalism and multiculturalism in their music curricula and how they balance the dialectic between nationalism and multiculturalism in school music education. As shown in this paper, the pursuit of such a process within music education can have different purposes, in accordance with the different political and social contexts of mainland China and the US.

NATIONALISM IN MUSIC EDUCATION

Nationalism is essentially a collective state of mind in which people believe their primary duty and loyalty is to the nation state. It involves a strong identification with a group of individuals and a collective and/or political entity to which they subordinate their individual interests. Chinese nationalism, sometimes known as Chinese patriotism, is a nationalism based on the Chinese people and Chinese culture, rather than on simple sovereignty (Dikötter, 1996; Zheng, 1999). This top-down form of nationalism is also known as state or state-led nationalism. However, most scholars typically consider the US as an example of civic nationalism, civil nationalism, or liberal nationalism, it being a relatively inclusive nation that shares the civic principles of equality, freedom, individual rights, tolerance, and economic mobility (Greenfeld, 2001; Kohn, 1957; Pei, 2003). American nationalism is not based on its historical territory; rather, it has relied on the superiority of its economic, political, and military powers in the world and the “dominance of English over immigrant languages” (Baker, 2011, p. 81).

An expected result of this comparative study of music education and values education in nationalism is that China and the US both hold reflective and defensible opinions about music education and education policies around the world with respect to sociopolitical transformations. The next section examines how mainland China and the US have shaped their teaching practices by developing materials that are aligned with their national cultural beliefs in their historical contexts and the extent to which their music education systems promote different nationalist values.

Nationalism in music education in mainland China: From songs against foreign aggression to Chinese communist songs

Chinese nationalism in the twentieth century was directed against Western and Japanese imperialism, rather than against its other Asian neighbours. In 1917, China entered the First

World War against Germany, in hopes of retrieving Shantung¹ Province; however, the post-war Versailles Peace Conference of 1919² ceded Shantung to the Japanese. Feeling betrayed, the Chinese delegation to the Paris Peace Conference refused to sign the treaty in protest against the principal powers (France, Japan, Italy, the UK, and the US), who had upheld Japan's claims on the former German colonial territory of Qingdao and the surrounding province of Shantung. Popular anger and frustration led to strikes and demonstrations, with tensions coming to a head in Beijing on 4 May 1919,³ when thousands of university students gathered in Tiananmen Square to protest the loss of Shantung Province and the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Boycotts of Japanese and British goods became common and protest songs attacking the Conference and Western and Japanese imperialism became popular (Ho, 2006a, 2010).

The growth of nationalism in school music education was further reinforced by military activities during the Second World War. During China's eight-year war against Japan (1937–1945) and its ensuing four-year Civil War (1945–1949), antiwar and patriotic songs were adopted as teaching materials for both school and community education. Nie Er's⁴ (1912–1935) "March of the Volunteers," originally written as the theme song for a patriotic film named *Fengyun Ernu* (*Young Heroes and Heroines in Stormy Years*), became the most popular protest song of the war. It was provisionally adopted as the national anthem of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on 27 September 1949, a status made official by the National People's Congress on 4 December 1982.

The Chinese state has promoted nationalism as an essential component of its efforts to create a new, unified collective political culture. China's national identity is referred to as a form of "racial nationalism" (Dikötter, 1992, 1996), meaning a cultural nationalism that imagines the nation to have a distinctive civilization based on a unique history, culture, and territory. However, when the Communist Party of China (CPC) founded the PRC in 1949, it was inevitably confronted by the uneasy relationship between Chinese nationalism and Chinese communism in school education. In regard to this complicated relationship, nationalism in present-day China's school music education can be observed in two areas: (1) the continual emphasis on antiforeign aggression in its teaching materials; and (2) the establishment and consolidation of teaching materials on the CPC, and the concept of a "new Communist China."

Mainland China's current music syllabus is the "Nine Year Compulsory Full-day Education Curriculum," including six years of elementary school music and three years of junior secondary school music, implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) (2012). The syllabus suggests that teachers adopt values education in the music curriculum, emphasize

¹ Shangdong (Shantung) Province is located on the eastern coast of mainland China along the lower reaches of the Yellow River and is one of the cradles of Chinese civilization. The city of Qufu, located in southwestern Shandong Province, is the birthplace of Confucius. In addition to Confucianism, Shangdong is also a pivotal cultural and religious site for Chinese Buddhism and Taoism.

² The Treaty of Versailles was one of the peace treaties signed at the end of the First World War.

³ The May Fourth Movement (also known as the "new culture" movement) marked a turning point in China's intellectual development and in its conception of political patriotism. For its participants and demonstrators, the significance of the movement lay in its demand that China adopt Western notions of equality and democracy and abandon the Confucian approach, which focused on obedience and hierarchical relationships; "Science and democracy" was its main slogan.

⁴ Nie Er (originally named Nie Shouxin) was born in Yuxi in Yunnan Province, located in Southwest China. Fond of music from the time he was a child, he became a famous self-taught composer. In 1933, he joined the Communist Party of China (CPC), after which he wrote more than 30 songs, including "Graduation Song," "Pioneers," and "Song of Selling Newspapers," as well as other instrumental pieces. On 17 July 1935, Nie drowned while swimming in Fujisawa, Kanagawa, Japan.

aesthetic qualities, and build students' love of music, the nation, and life (Ministry of Education, 2012, pp. 4–5). Even though the Second World War ended 70 years ago, anti-Japanese feelings⁵ linger in the Chinese community and anti-Japanese songs, such as “The Sino-Japanese War” (1894–1895), are still used in class to praise China's reconstruction following Japanese aggression. Works by patriotic composers such as Nie Er and Xian Xinghai⁶ (1905–1945) can be found among the teaching materials, as can teaching songs such as “Zhongguo Wa” (“The Chinese Girl”), which relates the sense of belonging to the homeland and the bagatelle of family life (Shaonian Ertong Publishing House, 2011, p. 19) as shown in the following lyrics (translated by the author):

*...Nationality is placed under the big pagoda tree at the slope of the loess...
Wherever we go, we will not change our name. We are Chinese girls.
Our favorite drink will be the water from the Yellow River forever...
Our favorite shoes will be those with soles made by our mothers.
They are dependable when we face the world...
We are the brave Chinese girls.*

This renewed focus on patriotic songs was meant to unite everyone under the “one-China” concept and to reinforce national pride. Red songs, the name given to songs praising the nation, the CPC, and the spirit of revolution, were widely performed in communities, schools, and villages throughout the nation (Zhou, 2011). As the 90th anniversary (in 2011) of the 1921 founding of the CPC in Shanghai approached, the red song phenomenon grew as Chinese musicians and songwriters composed and submitted new songs to express their patriotism and to applaud the achievements of both the nation and the CPC.

Education has a key role to play in the political and ideological development of the new China (Ho & Law, 2015; Zhou, 2014). As the centrepiece of a new Chinese national identity, music materials are required to provide students with evidence that patriotism is useful and that the new China under Communist rule is strong in enhancing regime legitimacy (see People's Education Publishing House, 2012, Unit One; Southwest China Normal University Press, 2012, Unit One). In 2015, China marked the 70th anniversary of the Japanese surrender in the Second World War during a public holiday on 3 September, which was the day after Japan signed the official instrument of surrender in 1945. On 4 July, more than 600 Tiananmen armed police officers participated in a singing competition to commemorate the anniversary at the National Museum in Beijing, while many schools in China also gathered to present their singing at contests themed: “Bearing the history and valuing peace.”

⁵ Modern anti-Japanese sentiment in China is rooted in nationalist and historical conflict, as well as in recent controversies surrounding Japanese history textbooks. Although Japan has been criticized for the atrocities it committed during the Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945) ever since that war ended, the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, composed of a group of conservative scholars, published in 2000 the *New History Textbook*, which downplayed or whitewashed the nature of Japan's military aggression in the Sino-Japanese wars and the Second World War. The textbooks were approved by the Ministry of Education in 2001, which led to a huge controversy in mainland China, Korea, and Japan. In September 2010, relations between China and Japan deteriorated to their lowest level in decades following a maritime collision off the Diaoyu Islands and Japan's subsequent detention of the captain of the Chinese fishing boat involved. Protesters, including college and university students, took to the streets in major cities across China, singing the Chinese national anthem and chanting such anti-Japanese slogans as “Japan, get out of the Diaoyu Islands,” “boycott Japanese goods,” “don't forget national humiliation,” and “don't forget September 18th.”

⁶ Xian Xinghai, one of China's greatest patriotic musicians, used national music styles to produce a large numbers of songs intended to incite mass resistance to the Japanese invasion and achieve national liberation. He composed over 300 works, including the famous “Yellow River Cantata.”

Nationalism in music education in the United States: From singing patriotic songs to the cultivation of American folk culture

Music education in the US is said to be based on the intermingling of social, political, and religious contexts (Abeles, Hoffer & Klotman, 1994, Chapter 1; Mark, 1996, Chapters 1 & 2). In 1838, the Boston School Committee (board of education) was encouraged to integrate music into the school curriculum of public schools as a basic subject to provide children with an intellectual, moral, and physical education (Mark, 1996). Since 1848, music education has been part of public school education in the US, intended as a means of socialization and to help “children understand music and its role in civilization” (Dewey, 1934, p. 10; Woodford, 2005, p. 10). This section of the paper traces and reviews nationalism in US music education in two arenas: (1) the emphasis on patriotic movements; and (2) defining the US’ idiom in the curriculum through the promotion of American music composed by American musicians and songwriters.

American nationalism in music education has generally been dedicated to the concepts of individual liberty, representative government, and freedom of religion. The American Civil War (1861–1865) was a separatist conflict between the Northern states (the Union) and the breakaway Southern states (the Confederacy). Both North and South used music to marshal troops extensively during the Civil War, the most famous example being Julia Ward Howe’s “Battle Hymn of the Republic” (“Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord”) (see Eisenach, 2004). Students continue to be asked to learn and identify the characteristics of songs popular during the Civil War, such as “Lincoln and Liberty,” “We Are Coming Home Father Abraham,” and “The Battle Cry of Freedom.” American nationalism originated in “The American Creed,” written by William Tyler Page in 1917 as an entry into a patriotic contest, and the song places the concepts of democracy, liberty, and the rule of law at its core. At the meeting of the executive committee of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) in Chicago in October 1940, MENC leaders determined to promote “music as a means of nurturing national solidarity and buoying citizens’ morale” (Goble, 2009, p. 105) and inspired music educators to feature “American patriotic songs” and other songs that might encourage “loyalty and fidelity to American ideas and principles and allegiance to the American flag” in their classroom teaching (Goble, 2009, p. 105).

Throughout history, nationalism in school music education in the US has responded to domestic sociopolitical events through the promotion of its national anthem (“The Star-Spangled Banner”) and other patriotic songs, whether during the American Civil War or after the 11 September 2001, terrorist attacks; a year after those attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and six months before the beginning of the Iraq War, President George W. Bush initiated a program of history and civic education to improve students’ knowledge of domestic history, increase their civic involvement, and deepen their love for their nation (Kahne & Westheimer, 2003; Westheimer & Kahne, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). The *Music Educators Journal* (an American journal based on music teaching approaches, instructional techniques, current trends, and issues in school music education and community music education) displayed the American flag on the cover of its November 2001 issue. In the issue, the president of the MENC, Mel Clayton, maintained that “[a]s music teachers, we all have a new opportunity to influence our students’ lives through music, to foster this renewed sense of patriotism and appreciation for the ideals on which our country was built” (cited in Beegle, 2012, p. 134). In March 2005, the MENC officially launched the National Anthem Project at the US Capitol in a ceremony nationally televised on ABC’s “Good Morning America.” In the first year of the project, more than 1,700 schools honoured the anniversary of the national anthem. In January 2006, the National Anthem Road Show, organized by the National Association for Music Education, began visiting schools, events, and civic locations across

the US to encourage students and community members to learn about the national anthem and to lend support to local school music programs. The National Anthem Project came to a climax with a major event on 14 June (Flag Day) in Washington, DC, where participants gathered at the Washington Monument for a mass performance and patriotic sing-along with “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band. The MENC promoted the song to be used in the school music curriculum and in school performances (Abril, 2012, p. 77). This campaign also involved setting up the National Anthem Project website to introduce the revival of America’s patriotism by educating Americans about the significance of the Star-Spangled Banner in both the song and the flag. “The Star-Spangled Banner,” written during the Battle of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812–1814, is a song about nationalism, unity, and victory that encourages Americans to have the strength of will in difficult times, such as when the country is under attack.

Moreover, at the onset of the Iraq War in 2003, “God Bless the USA” was performed on the TV show “American Idol,” reflecting and contributing to “new retellings of the American Dream narrative” (Meizel, 2006, p. 500) that define or redefine Americanness itself. The song returned to popularity when Osama bin Laden was killed by an American raid in Pakistan in May 2011. Individual states highlight patriotism during celebrations of significant historical events through the singing of patriotic songs and by pledging allegiance to the flag (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003, p. 11). In Nebraska, for example, state legislature Bill 982 requires each of the state’s school boards to appoint a committee on “Americanism” that steers its curriculum to encourage students to honor the nation in their hearts and minds (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003, p. 11).

In addition to American patriotic songs, schools in the US are also encouraged to use audio and visual resources to help students learn about American folk songs and those composers whose music clearly defines the American idiom. As argued by Willis (1985), “American folk music is the most natural and logical place to begin music instruction” (cited in Ward, 2003, p. 3). Scholars such as John and Alan Lomax (1941), Charles Seeger and Ruth Crawford (Allen & Hisama, 2007; Yung & Rees, 1999), and many others (Houlahanm & Tack, 2015; Xiques, 2014) also argue that it is the nation’s and schools’ obligation to teach American folk songs to the next generation of American children to help them understand their cultural heritage. The book *Years of American Song and Poetry* helps teachers to examine 18 historical American songs and poems, organized by time periods, from historical perspectives. Songs such as “We Shall Overcome,” “Yankee Doodle,” “Hunters of Kentucky,” “You’re a Grand Old Flag,” and “Sunny California” are taught in an attempt to provide historical background information. Moreover, *Making Sense of American Popular Songs*, by Ronald J. Walters and John Spitzer, helps teachers and students to work with American popular songs as a way of understanding the past.

To sum up, music education has been an instrument for nation building in both mainland China and the US. Both nation states believe that the music curriculum should be a patriotic vehicle for the transmission of national cultural heritage within a specific social setting. The ideology of China’s school music education tends to oppose foreign aggression and to consolidate the establishment of Communist China by means of Chinese patriotic and other revolutionary songs, whereas American nationalism in music education is primarily based on a combination of patriotism, multi-ethnic liberty song teaching, American jazz, and music written by contemporary American composers.

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND MULTICULTURALISM IN MUSIC EDUCATION

Despite differences in mainland China's and the US' ethnic organization, historical backgrounds, and political ideologies, multicultural education in both countries is a teaching and learning process that generally helps students to be sensitive to people of different cultural backgrounds and provides equal opportunities to students so that they may reach their fullest educational potential. *The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (Banks & Banks, 2004) defines multicultural education as "a field of study designed to increase educational equity for all students that incorporates, for this purpose, content, concepts, principles, theories and paradigms" (p. xii). Sleeter and Grant (1999), however, maintain that multicultural education has a variety of definitions, because people "do not always agree on what forms of diversity it addresses" (p. vii). Within the context of educational equity toward understanding multiculturalism, issues of culture and identity have increasingly challenged national concerns of what is largely a realist agenda of music education.

Multicultural music education in mainland China

More intensive global interactions have brought about more opportunities for cultural diversity in Chinese music education. The recent mania for rock concerts, MTV music, Japanese and Korean television dramas, and Latin and ballroom dances bears witness to the Chinese enthusiasm to embrace capitalist modernity. In the wake of China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2002 and its successful bid for the 2008 Olympics, China has become ascendant in the global economy, resulting in calls for multicultural integration in the school music curriculum (see Ministry of Education, 2012). Published under the supervision of the MoE, *Minority Education in China* (a bimonthly national journal) publicizes policies and guiding principles for the education of ethnic minorities; as noted by the MoE (2012), Chinese students should develop a broader sense and understanding of and greater respect and love for the arts by learning about musical diversity and the richness of other cultures.

Diverse ethnic minority cultures within China have become "more open and communicative" (Qi & Tang, 2004, p. 47). Chinese authorities deliberately chose ethnic unity as a major theme of events commemorating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the PRC. At the anniversary's grand gala on 1 October 1 2009, thousands of performers dressed in traditional festival costumes of different ethnic groups and danced joyously to the rhythm of their famous folk songs in Tiananmen Square. Government authorities prescribe Chinese ethnicity within the context of China's "harmonious society" campaign, and China's ethnic and folk songs are viewed as ethnic nationalism within the organic unity of the Chinese nation (Ho & Law, 2011).

In addition to Chinese ethnic minority music, the current arts curriculum for senior high schools includes traditional Western music, American pop and jazz, Andrew Lloyd Webber musicals, modern dance, electronic and film music, and popular songs from other Asian nations (see Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2010, 2011a, 2011b; Shaonian Ertong Publishing House, 2009). As a result, students understand the musical characteristics of jazz and are able to explain it in terms of African-American culture; moreover, despite disputes over Taiwan's political status, popular songs such as "Tomorrow Will Be Better" (Shaonian Ertong Publishing House, 2009, p. 19) and "Empty Bottles of Wine to Be Bought" (Shanghai Education Publishing House, 2011, p. 25), which were composed by Taiwanese singer-songwriters Luo Tayou and Hou Dejian, respectively, have been deemed suitable for

publication. Learning world music encourages Chinese students to develop a broader sense of aesthetics and a greater understanding of and respect for other countries and their cultures.

Multicultural music education in the United States

The US is a pluralist society that has, from its founding, taken in immigrants from different cultural backgrounds. Due to continuous mass immigration from diverse populations, the educational approach to multiculturalism has been observed in American education since the Civil Rights Movement⁷ in the mid-1960s. As opposed to Hispanics and Latinos, who are the largest ethnic minority groups, African-Americans make up the largest racial minority group in the US. In recent decades, new immigrants from Asia and Latin America have also added a large measure of cultural diversity to the American population. Many Americans have multiple identities, as they come from different ancestral origins and tribal and communal associations and have varied ideological outlooks on race and culture.

The role played by multiculturalism in US music and general education has become increasingly significant over the years. As the turn of the twentieth century approached, people started working on proposals for a day to formally honour Native Americans. In the years following the Second World War, music education in the US presented the “music of many lands and people” in school education (Goble, 2009, p. 115). The Tanglewood Symposium in 1967 was perhaps the first forum to call for multicultural education as a means of broadening students’ scholastic experiences (Mark, 1996). In 1990, President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 as “National American Indian Heritage Month” to celebrate Native Americans’ accomplishments and rich contributions to the establishment of the US, to celebrate intertribal cultures, and to educate the public about the heritage, history, art, and traditions of Native Americans.

The integration of Native American music into the curriculum can be seen as an expression of multicultural education. Schools are expected to raise students’ awareness of the continued existence of Native Americans and to introduce students to unique, authentic Native American music, musical instruments, dances, and masks to foster respect for the cultural traditions of various Indian cultures (Barry & Conlon, 2003; Damm, 2006). Teachers are encouraged not to stereotype Native American music (e.g., to avoid the typical drumbeat used in many Hollywood films to signify “Indians nearby”) and instead to present authentic music within its cultural contexts (Damm, 2006). Such celebrations help to bridge the cultural gap between the dominant and subordinate cultures and to integrate Native American culture into the curriculum.

Moreover, African-American culture in the US is composed of various cultural traditions of African ethnic groups that have become part of and distinct from American culture. According to the US Census Bureau (2001), African Americans are defined as “people having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa” (p. 2). The African musical practices that emerged from post-slave culture were superimposed on the dominant white music culture in the US. Sociomusicologists, Howard Becker (1963) and Charles Keil (1966), studied, respectively, the lives of African-American jazz musicians to show how deviance became a socially constructed category and blues musicians to examine the expressive role of blues bands and performers; Becker and Keil focused on the intense interaction between performer and audience in the Chicago area in the 1960s. As late as 1964, Allen Feldman

⁷ The Civil Rights Movement (1955–1968), also known as the African-American Civil Rights Movement, was a political movement aimed at outlawing racial discrimination against and providing voting rights to African Americans. The phrase often conjures images of Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968) delivering his famous “I Have a Dream” speech.

questioned: “By what ratiocination are directions of such institutions [colleges and schools of music] persuaded that this [jazz] is material benefiting the dignity of an institution dedicated to the higher disciplines?” (cited in Volk, 2004, p. 71). African-American music has been described as “the most important ethnic vernacular tradition in America,” and the repertoires of African Americans enclose “the broadest and most enduring array of vernacular genres and styles in America” (Stewart, 1998, p. 3). Barbara Reeder and James Standifer’s *Source Book of African American Materials for Music Educators* (1972) is “a milestone publication” for “background information, resource materials, and sample lesson plans” (Goble, 2010, p. 235). In order to ensure a solid foundation for the future of jazz, the International Association of Jazz Education (IAJE) aims to secure funding for jazz, stimulate audience growth, and ensure the continued worldwide development of jazz and jazz education. The Thelonious Monk Institute (a non-profit institute offering school-based jazz education programs for young people) promotes *Jazz in America: The National Jazz Curriculum* to help students explore jazz, culture, and art. However, according to Keith, it is usually assumed that the large contributions to American music should not be limited to jazz, blues, gospel, and spirituals (Miller, 2010); it should also include a large quantity of concert music by Black composers who made contributions to American music (Keith, cited in Miller, 2010).

By 2050, it is anticipated that the population distribution of the US will be 10% Asian and Pacific Islanders, 16% Black, 22% Latino, and 52% European descendants (Anderson & Campbell, 2010, p. 1). Many American schools are no longer racially or culturally homogenous and students benefit from the inclusion of world music and foreign cultures. The *National Standards for Music Education*, adopted in 1994, sprang from the development of various documents and initiatives intended to support multicultural music education (Volk, 2004). With reference to John Dewey, Woodford (2005) argues that music teachers should become more involved in society as a whole and that teaching almost exclusively Western music from previous centuries offers students a narrow view of how music should be performed and created. The national music curriculum incorporates strong multicultural elements to enhance students’ understanding of the concepts of cultural diversity and cultural pluralism, as well as their appreciation of music cultures around the world (see Abril, 2006; Fung, 1995; Johnson Jr., 2004; Miralis, 2003); for example, the growing use of mariachi music in US school music education is in response to America’s expanding Hispanic population (Clark, 2005). Music educators are even encouraged to introduce the folk and popular music traditions of non-Western societies to help students appreciate diverse cultures (Campbell, 1992).

CHALLENGES FOR MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE DYNAMICS OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF NATIONALISM AND MULTICULTURALISM

In preparing students for the challenges of an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, education reform and related policies need to address both national demands and global needs. Increasing economic globalization has created pressure on educational institutions to prepare students to be citizens of the “new world order.” In both mainland China and the US, the process of translating global imperatives for education is always intertwined with national processes of social change and education reform that are facilitated and/or constrained by local players and conditions. This interweaving, in turn, gives rise to tensions between global and national concerns in globalization-oriented education reform in music education.

This section argues that challenges to the current wave of nationalism and multiculturalism in these two nations are in response to their dynamic, contentious process of social construction.

Music education is subject to each state's respective history and ever-changing political by-play; the current expression of nationalism is taking a changing, positive form (particularly in mainland China) that incorporates expanding individualism and multiculturalism in its educational and cultural contexts. Nationalism and multiculturalism might not be "polar opposites" (see Asari et al., 2008; Beck, 2000), particularly with reference to music education in mainland China.

In response to the three main questions of this study, regarding the relationship between nationalism and music education, and the dynamics of the values of nationalism and multiculturalism in respect to sociopolitical transformations in music education, this section discusses two challenges: first, the challenge facing nationalistic or patriotic educational learning experiences due to the so-called new Chinese values in mainland China and the struggle for civil religious American values in the US; and, second, the challenge of implementing multicultural music education in the respective Chinese and American contexts.

As to the first challenge, tensions often exist between the values, needs, and interests of individuals and the values, needs, and ideologies of the nation state. Traditional and modern values coexist in Chinese students' lives and revolutionary and patriotic music lies beyond their daily experiences; as such, Chinese music education faces tensions between traditional Chinese values, contemporary official ideologies, and market forces. To respond to young people's notions of patriotism, and in keeping with the gradual infusion of individual values as a result of the PRC's Open Door Policy, China has emphasized the value of "individuality" in its music curriculum and has increasingly shown openness toward popular music in the community, as well as in the school curriculum (Ho & Law, 2015). This transformational and challenging relationship between politics and culture has resulted in reforms in education policy and practice in China's schools (e.g., Qi & Tang, 2004; Wang, 2008). In 2005, for example, a list of 100 patriotic songs for secondary schools compiled by the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission sparked controversy by including certain popular songs that encourage individualism rather than dedication to collective social values (Ho, 2006b). Among these was popular Taiwanese singer Jay Chow's song "Snail," the lyrics of which encourage young people to pursue success in difficult times (translated by the author):

*Should I leave my heavy shell and look for a blue sky? Float in light winds?
You are so silent, as if you do not dare rest.
I must crawl upwards slowly, waiting for the sun to silently gaze at its face.
The tiny sky has a huge dream.
The heavy shell gazes upwards lightly (lightly gazing upwards).
I must crawl upwards slowly, fly ahead during the night at the highest point.
The tiny sky has a huge dream:
One day I will have a piece of sky that is my own.*

The lyrics "are far removed from patriotism" and encourage young people to pursue their dreams and to realize their individual, as opposed to collective and patriotic, values (Kondo & Wu, 2011, p. 27).

Moreover, the present Chinese curriculum attempts to use Western music to define nationalism and national pride in the new China and includes learning about Western culture and nationalism to cultivate among students a similar passionate love for their own homeland. For example, "Ode to Joy" is used in lessons discussing how Beethoven's work was influenced by the French Revolution's ideals of "Freedom, equality, and fraternity," how these relate to burgeoning capitalist individualism, and how the lyrics (translated into Chinese) teach students to love each other in the community (People's Music Publishing House, 2011, pp. 53–54). In another example, the second movement of Dvorak's Ninth

Symphony was paired with Chinese and English lyrics in a song titled “Nostalgia” to denote one’s patriotic longing to return home (People’s Music Publishing House, 2010, pp. 26–29).

American culture has been enriched by values and belief systems from virtually every part of the world. As demonstrated by the debates over the Pledge of Allegiance,⁸ American schools have struggled with the extent to which nationalism and religious values should be promoted. Generally speaking, American values are rooted in fundamental American moral and religious values to bring together a progressive majority for a better America. Though Americans are among the best-educated populaces in the world, the state has been criticized for its poor performance in ethics education (Thomson, 1989). As commented by Cummings (2009, p. 12), in spite of (or perhaps because of) the country’s strong “individualist heritage,” American elites tend to maintain their interest in “strengthening of collective or control value such as a guide for behavior and individual responsibility.” In regard to these “collective concerns,” American elites might be said to share similar attitudes with mainland Chinese elites (Cummings, 2009, p. 12). Westheimer and Kahne (2003) argue that there has been a lack of consensus with respect to the means and goals of civic education in schools and the use of the American flag and the Pledge of Allegiance remain at the crux of controversy (Chu, 2003; Chu & Couper, 2003). While the US has long proclaimed its tolerance of religious diversity to the world, its own religious rituals are almost exclusively Christian. Consequently, the growing cultural presence of non-Western religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam in the US is a significant new challenge to the doctrine of diversity (Wuthnow, 2004, 2005). If it is inappropriate for public schools to perform a concert dominated by the songs of a single religious tradition, are such commonly used songs as “God Bless America,” “God Bless the USA,” and “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” consistent with the multicultural ideals of school education?

Regarding the second challenge, of implementing multicultural music education in the two countries, the tensions relate to the growing disparity in Chinese and American students’ access to multicultural musical understanding. While jazz and popular music are found in teaching materials, music types from most of the rest of the world are rarely included. Other world music—mainly from Africa, France, Ireland, Italy, Latin-American countries, North America, Poland, Russia, and Scotland—is introduced in a few textbooks (see Lei, 2007, 2009a, 2009b; People’s Music Publishing House, 2011; Shaonian Ertong Publishing House, 2009, 2011), and only a few songs in English are included in the song materials, including songs from the musicals *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*; “Power of the Dream” (written by David Foster, Linda Thompson, and Babyface for the opening ceremonies of the 1996 Summer Olympics); “A Whole New World” (written by Alan Menken) (Shaonian Ertong Publishing House, 2009, pp. 39–41); “Red River Valley” (a Canadian folk song) (Lei, 2007, p. 30); and “Love Me Tender” (recorded by Elvis Presley) (Lei, 2007, p. 30). Other English popular songs such as “Tears in Heaven” (written by English singer-songwriter Eric Clapton) (Lei, 2007, p. 33) and “Early Morning Rain” (written by Canadian singer-songwriter Gordon Lightfoot) (Lei 2007, p. 34) are sung in Chinese. Due to the availability of resources and the educational training of music teachers, creating a truly multicultural music education curriculum is problematic in mainland China. China’s Ministry of Education and music teachers throughout the PRC should surely attend to this failure of multicultural intentions (Law & Ho, 2009).

⁸ The Pledge of Allegiance is an expression of loyalty to the federal flag of the US “and the Republic for which it stands.” Written by Francis Bellamy (1855–1931), a Baptist minister and Christian socialist, for the children’s magazine *Youth’s Companion* in 1892, it was formally adopted by Congress in 1942. The Pledge of Allegiance has been revised four times since its composition, the most recent change being the inclusion of the words “under God” in 1954.

Despite the existence of multicultural education standards, which were established by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education in 1979, there has been criticism of the lack of multicultural perspectives in teacher training institutions (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Huerta, 1999; Zimmerman, 2006). Even though music teachers in the US believe in the value of introducing diverse music cultures, they are often unsure of how to provide that instruction effectively in the classroom (Butlera, Lind, & McKoy, 2007; Norman, 1994; Young, 1996). Moreover, while the ideology of cultural pluralism acknowledges the differences between races and music cultures in the curriculum, it can be difficult for teachers to translate policy into practice. For example, Damm (2000) has found that in Oklahoma, which has the largest Native American population of any American state, 79% of 213 elementary music teachers included Native American music in the curriculum; the remainder felt they lacked experience with the music or were concerned about offending local Native Americans (Damm, 2000). Studies have also shown that students in teacher preparation programs lack the inventiveness to teach culturally diverse populations in schools (Bradfield-Kreider, 2001).

CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed the extent to which nationalist and multicultural education in music education in mainland China and the US has diverse political and social ideas. It has argued that music education, as seen in these two countries, can be continually reinvented through the interplay between nationalism and multiculturalism in response to changing needs and contexts. To some extent, music education in both mainland China and the US seeks to instill a sense of culture, identity, and patriotism in students by means of new values in music. Music education is subject to the ever-changing interplay of the countries' respective history and politics; the current expression of nationalism, particularly in mainland China, takes a more positive form, one that incorporates an expanding component of individualism and multiculturalism in its educational and cultural contexts. The friction between international multilateralism and the US' unilateralism, which is an essential characteristic of the country's foreign policy, reappears as a conflict between the patriotic requirements of the state and the multicultural aspirations of school music education.

Considering China's long history and the fact that nearly 92% of its population is of Han ethnicity, that country faces the question of how to provide music education that caters to the needs of the 55 ethnic minorities making up the remaining 8%; in the US, although the majority of the population is white, Hispanic and Asian populations have grown considerably over the last decade, in part due to immigration, raising questions about what multicultural music education means to the population. The US faces the problem of developing a multicultural education model that reflects its "melting pot" view of the country's various races, cultures, and ethnicities (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1988; Hallinan, 2000). The US and mainland China are both less than certain about what constitutes the best way of teaching national cultural values and multiculturalism in music education.

Through these two case studies, it can be seen how music education is used for nation building, and how tensions between the local and the global are inherent in the curriculum. In any case, education reforms in mainland China and the US represent an interesting and complex interplay between the ideologies of nationalism and economic globalization and partly explain the gap between policy intent and policy action in the translation of global imperatives into national realities. Whether the more comprehensive nature of education, and particularly the curriculum reforms in mainland China and the US, can help prepare students for the challenges of nationalism and economic globalization in the twenty-first century

remains to be seen. Whatever the case may be, there appears to be a degree of tension between the role of schools and music teachers on the one hand, and what authorities deem desirable on the other. The challenges facing mainland China and the US are not limited to the introduction of nationalistic education and diverse music cultures in school music; they also involve the use of school music curricula in teaching political ideologies in a changing society.

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