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**Development of the idea of patriotic education of students  
through school songs in China**

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**Abstract.** *Introduction.* The relevance of the study is determined by the increasing need for patriotic education of young people in modern Chinese society. In this regard, vocal art, as well as the genre of school songs, in particular, have a powerful pedagogical potential. *Purpose:* identification of the features of the development of the idea of patriotic education of students through school songs in China (1920s to the present century). *Materials and methods:* the theoretical basis of the study was the works of outstanding Chinese composers and teachers of the 20th century on the role of music and song in the patriotic education of young people. The research methods included the retrospective analysis of the issues of patriotic education in China; the theoretical and comparative analysis of the approaches of Chinese scientists to the implementation of the process of patriotic education in music lessons at school. *Results:* The periodization of the formation of the school song genre, which laid the foundation for the idea of educating patriots through songs during school music lessons in China, is presented. The results of comparative analysis of the works of Chinese researchers have shown that the idea of patriotic education has evolved within this genre throughout the twentieth century, reflecting the main events in the history of Chinese society. The features of the school song of the first half of the twentieth century related to military themes aimed at educating defenders of the Motherland are highlighted. The characteristic of the stages of updating the themes of school songs after the formation of the PRC is given. Since 1949, school songs have been dominated by pictures of peaceful life, praising the beauty of native nature, family values, labor feat, without losing their patriotic character. *Conclusion.* The idea of patriotic education through school songs in China has evolutionary nature. Despite the difference in themes, all songs of this genre have patriotic orientation and contribute to the education of citizens who are sincerely devoted to their native country.

**Keywords:** patriotic education in China; school song (suetan yuege); vocal art; classification of school songs

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## Развитие идеи патриотического воспитания обучающихся посредством школьной песни в Китае

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**Аннотация.** *Введение.* Актуальность исследования определяется усилением потребности в патриотическом воспитании молодежи в современном китайском обществе. В этой связи вокальное искусство, а также жанр школьной песни, в частности, обладают мощным педагогическим потенциалом. *Цель:* выявление особенностей развития идеи патриотического воспитания обучающихся посредством школьной песни в Китае (1920-е гг. по н.в.). *Материалы и методы:* теоретическую базу исследования составили труды выдающихся китайских композиторов и педагогов XX века о роли музыки и песни в патриотическом воспитании молодежи. Методами исследования послужили ретроспективный анализ вопросов патриотического воспитания в Китае; теоретический и сравнительный анализ подходов китайских ученых к осуществлению процесса патриотического воспитания на уроках музыки в школе. *Результаты:* представлена периодизация становления жанра школьной песни, заложившего основу идеи воспитания патриотов посредством песен во время школьных уроков музыки в Китае. Результаты сравнительного анализа трудов китайских исследователей показали, что идея патриотического воспитания эволюционировала внутри данного жанра на протяжении XX века, отражая главные события в истории китайского общества. Выделены особенности школьной песни первой половины XX века, связанные с военной тематикой, нацеленной на воспитание защитников Родины. Дана характеристика этапов обновления тематики школьных песен после образования КНР. С 1949 года в школьных песнях доминируют картины мирной жизни, воспевающие красоту родной природы, семейные ценности, трудовой подвиг, не утрачивая при этом патриотического характера. *Заключение.* Идея патриотического воспитания посредством школьной песни в Китае имеет эволюционную природу. Несмотря на различие тематики, все песни данного жанра имеют патриотическую направленность и способствуют воспитанию граждан, искренне преданных родной стране.

**Ключевые слова:** патриотическое воспитание в Китае; школьная песня (сюэтан юэ); вокальное искусство; классификация школьных песен

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**Introduction.** Patriotic education of the young generation is one of the priorities of modern educational work of schools in China, therefore, the questions about the competent organization of the process of patriotic education of young people of all ages, identifying the pedagogical potential of means and creating conditions for this work arouse the legitimate professional interest of researchers and practical teachers.

Researchers dealing with the issues of patriotic education of young people in China (Li Jiadao, 2017; Yu Hong, 2019; Qing He, 2019; Zhang Xiao, 2016; Zhao Xu Mei, 2020, etc.) mainly affect the educational process in pre-school institutions, general education and higher education, paying insufficient attention to music education in particular, the pedagogical potential of vocal art in the education of patriotic citizens of their country. In this regard, vocal art has great educational potential. Patriotism, being one of the essential qualities of a human personality, expresses value orientations, moral conviction, ideological maturity, and a person's life position.

The main stages of the process of formation and development of the idea of patriotic education of students by means of vocal art in the PRC are interrelated with the development of such musical trends in the cultural life of China as the renewal of national music (*go-yue*) and the formation of new music (*sin yin-yue*), in the line with which the idea of educating patriots through song evolved.

The features of these musical directions are described in detail by us in the previously published articles (Bessarabova, Liu Tse, 2018; Liu Tse, 2020). It should be noted here that the differences in musical directions are manifested in the fact that *go-yue* was based on ancient Chinese musical and poetic traditions with a predominance of the musical genre, and *sin yin-yue* – on Western European musical achievements with the dominance of the vocal genre.

The general features of these musical directions include the renewal of musical and vocal works based on Western music theory without the loss of national flavor, which contributes to the education of patriotic qualities of students.

The leading vocal genre of *sin yin-yue*, within which the idea of educating patriots during school music classes was developed, is the genre of *suetan yuege* – *school song*.

**Main part. The purpose** of this article is to identify and characterize the features of the formation and development of the idea of patriotic education of students through school songs in China (1920s to the present century).

**Methodology and methods.** Chinese scientists are currently investigating various aspects of the problem of patriotic education of young people: theoretical and ideological foundations of patriotic education in China (Bai Qiulin, Li Junru, etc.); formation and development of patriotic education in China (Li Suju, Pu Wei Zhong, etc.); organization of patriotic education in China at different levels of education (Qing He, Zhao Xu Mei, etc.); the relationship of patriotic education with other areas of educational work in China (Cheng Han, Wang Jun, etc.); means, conditions and methods of patriotism education (Chen Sitong, etc.); factors stimulating the formation of patriotism (Xiao Ping, etc.); the role of patriotic education in historical education in China (Tang Wenqi, etc.).

The difference in the concept of this study lies in the fact that we consider the issues of patriotic education in China in close relationship with the vocal art, namely, in identifying the pedagogical potential of the means of vocal art for organizing and implementing the process of patriotic education in a comprehensive school of the People's Republic of China. In this article, a school song acts as the means of patriotic education. It is necessary to show the evolution of the idea of patriotic education of students through school songs in China during the twentieth century.

The study covers the period from 1949 to the present, associated with the updates of the genre of *suetan yuege* (school song), within which the idea of patriotic education through vocal works was developed. At the same time we are making an excursion into the history of the origin of this genre (the early 1920s), which laid the foundation for the idea of educating patriots through vocal art in China.

At the first stage, the main research methods were the retrospective analysis of the problem of patriotic education in China; historical and logical analysis of this problem; content analysis of the legislative framework of the PRC in the field of education, as well as the source base on the problem in order to substantiate the relevance of the chosen topic, to outline the logic of the study and formulate its theoretical and methodological foundations.

At the second stage, a theoretical and comparative analysis of the approaches of Chinese scientists and practical teachers to the organization of the process of patriotic education in music lessons in secondary schools was applied in order to determine the educational potential of vocal art.

**Theoretical basis and methodology.** The theoretical basis of the study was the fundamental works of Chinese scientists on the following issues: various aspects of patriotic education of youth (Bai Qiulin, 2019, etc.); the role of music and singing in the education of youth (Zhao Shu, 2016, etc.); theory and methodology of music and vocal education in China (Hou Wei, 2018, etc.); history of the development of Chinese national music and song (Li Shimin, 2019, etc.); national cultural traditions of China (Wang Mindai, 2019, etc.); trends and genres of Chinese music (Yu Ying, 2017, etc.); biographical studies on famous Chinese composers and musical figures (Chen Baoshen, 2016, etc.).

We also relied on the research of Russian scientists about China on the following issues: the history of the development of education in China (Klepikov, 2007, etc.); national traditions of education in China (Bubentsov, 1998, etc.); the history of pedagogical thought in China (Borevskaya, 2004, etc.); the history of musical art in China (Diveeva, 2014, etc.); theory and methodology of music education in Russia and China (Abdullin, 2010, etc.); educational potential of musical art (Gribkova, 2021, etc.).

The methodological basis of the research is: a systematic approach (Y.K. Babansky, V.P. Bepalko, B.L. Wolfson, etc.), the specifics of which in research on foreign and comparative pedagogy is the consideration of issues of upbringing and education in relation to the history,

culture, politics, economy of the country, so the issues of patriotic education in this work are inseparable from the development of Chinese society; historical and pedagogical approach (S.V. Bobryshov, A.N. Dzhurinsky, etc.), which allowed to systematize scientific works to determine the stages of the process of formation and development of the idea of patriotic education of students by means of vocal art in China against the background of the historical development of the country.

**Research Results and Discussion.** Patriotic character in the vocal art of the twentieth century is expressed vividly in the genre of a school song – *suetan yuege*. This genre is quite young, since its origin falls at the beginning of the twentieth century and is associated with the inclusion of singing lessons in the school education system. At the end of the XIX century, a group of young Chinese composers, which included Li Shutong, Xiao Yumei, Jiang Zhimin, Shen Singong, trained in Japan. Subsequently, these composers became outstanding musical figures who entered the history of not only national, but also world musical art. While studying in Japan, these creative young people organized a music circle there called “Music Lessons”, which attracted young teachers, artists, musicians. They also organized creative evenings, concerts, discussions on the exchange of experience. After returning to their homeland, they initiated the introduction of singing lessons in schools, borrowing this experience in Japan. This group of composers wrote new musical works using Japanese and European melodies, which marked the beginning of the new musical direction – *sin yin-yue*. The same group of young composers, influenced by a new worldview acquired while studying abroad, laid the foundation for a new genre – *school song* (*suetan yuege*).

In 1902, in this regard, the document entitled “Memo regulating the activities of schools” was published, according to which folk songs and folk music must be studied in schools. Thus, the school song genre was based on Chinese folk music.

After 1910, music and singing lessons became weekly compulsory classes in schools, and

in 1923 the “Basic Requirements for School Music Lessons” were published, where the main goals of music education are defined as follows: mastering the basics of music theory by students; formation of qualities that contribute to understanding of the beauty of music, arousing interest in folk music and striving for joint participation in musical activities (which means choral performance of songs and participation in musical productions). The first school songs were performed by the students in a choir. The purpose of such classes was to educate children through song in the spirit of democracy and cultural achievements of that time, including the field of art. The aforementioned document also provided for close monitoring of the content of songs, which were supposed to strengthen patriotic feelings among students. Therefore, school songs were imbued with the ideas of patriotism, praising the beauty and greatness of the native land, the courage of national heroes, etc. As an example, the famous song “My great and Beautiful China” can be cited. This song was written on the poems of Liang Qichao (1873-1829), a reformer of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a publicist and writer.

Researchers of Liang Qichao's creativity (Lee Bidan, 2018; Yang Heping, 2016) note that he entered the history of China as the initiator of a revolutionary movement in literature. His creativity and educational work contributed to the birth of a new generation of poets, for example, such as Huang Junxian (1848-1905), known for his works that introduce the Chinese to the achievements of European civilization. Liang Qichao's poetry, imbued with sincere feelings of love for the Motherland, was written in simple language understandable not only to educated people, but also to every citizen. He called the main slogan of his works “the struggle for the prosperity of his native country”, justified the need to study and introduce advanced Western thought, scientific, technical and cultural achievements. According to scientists, Liang Qichao's works are characterized by a variety of judgments, great style, emotionality, and a call to action (Lee Bidan, 2018; Yang Heping, 2016).

A great contribution to the development of the school song was made by the composer *Li Shutong* (1880-1942), who stood at the origins of its development. According to him, songs performed by children should be understandable and attractive to children, as well as easy to remember and perform. The content of such songs should not contain complex expressions, obscure terms. They should be written in a simple everyday language, and at the same time contain deep meaning in order to fulfill their educational mission. Only in this case, as the author emphasized, the song will inspire children to do good deeds, and bring joy and hope. Researchers of Li Shutong's creativity also noted that the text and melody of the song should act in harmony, and not contradict each other (Jin Xuan, 2020: 31). According to the researchers, this remark was caused by the fact that the authors of the first school songs combined Chinese poetry and European melody, which often did not fit each other, distorting the original text or music (Tong Shuzhen, 2017: 21).

Li Shutong's work was greatly influenced by the social movement of May 4, 1919. This event acquired a patriotic character, as the demands of the public were aimed at protecting the national salvation, revival and development of the country. The May 4 movement touched all aspects of the intellectual life of the country: demands were made in favor of the spread of the spoken language (Baihua); traditional historiography, Confucian ethical norms were criticized; new demands were made in the field of education; new political theories were spread, etc. Of course, such trends could not but affect the musical culture of China and the work of composers of that period, to which Li Shutong belongs.

Li Shutong's songs reflect sincere devotion and love for the Motherland and the people, endless concern and anxiety for the future of the country. His early song “The Song of the Motherland” is dedicated to the suffering of the Chinese people, which emotionally conveys the bitter feelings of the author and his call to fight for a better future of the country.

Researchers of Li Shutong's creativity divide his works conditionally into three groups – a patriotic song, a lyrical song, a fairy song (Bian

Guohua, 2018; Jiao Huiyan, 2019). The content of *patriotic songs* conveys concern for the fate of the Motherland and encourages children to cultivate strong affection and sincere love for their native land. Examples are the most famous songs – “Song of the Motherland”, “New Great China”.

The content of *lyrical songs* is dedicated to human life in harmony with native nature. Without the ability to see the beauty of nature, as Li Shutong believed, it is impossible to teach a person to love his homeland. Therefore, lyrical songs greatly contribute to the education of patriotic qualities in children. The song titles – “Flowers fall on the water surface”, “Light wind”, “Autumn is sad with me” – paint beautiful pictures of peaceful life against the background of nature.

The content of *fairy songs* reflects real life in comparison with the heavenly one, makes you think about the meaning of earthly life – such are, for example, the songs “The evening Bell is ringing” and “Silver Moon”.

To emphasize this noticeable difference in the themes of the school song genre of the XXI century compared to the themes of the first half of the twentieth century, it is necessary to turn to the history of the formation of the *suetan yuege* genre.

In the 1920s, during its inception, school songs were dedicated to the new values of the new state, and were performed only at singing lessons in schools. In the 1930s and 40s, the leading theme of school songs was the struggle against the Japanese invaders. In the 1930s, a “Corps of young fighters” was created, who helped the Chinese army in the anti-Japanese war: they extracted the necessary information, identified traitors, etc. Therefore, the songs of this period glorified the exploits and bravery of young heroes, and brought up hatred of the enemy, devotion to the people, readiness to stand up for the Motherland. The musical art of this period was designed to unite the nation, raise the morale of the Chinese people and strengthen confidence in victory over the enemy. The songs “am a border guard”, “Children of the Army” are the most famous songs of these years.

As the results of the study showed, in the 1930s and 40s, school songs were divided into groups within the genre in accordance with the theme:

– songs about children at war, which are the leading theme of this period – “We are adults!”, “Children's Border Regiment”, “The Death of Er Xiao”, “We are not afraid of fighting”, etc.;

– songs about the nature of the native land – “When the west wind blows”, “The wind sings about spring”, etc.;

– songs about the hard work of children and peasants – “Children are workers”, “We dig sand”, etc.;

– song-anthem – “Clear Sky”, “Song of students”, etc.

Thus, the *suetan yuege* of the 1930s and 40s were aimed at fostering patriotism, courage and strong spirit to fight the enemy and win the anti-Japanese war. The melodies of the songs of this period reflect the resolute, persistent, optimistic character of the main character, who by his example is called upon to inspire the people to take active action against the enemy. Songs about children at war represented the artistic image of a young hero fearlessly taking part in the struggle for the freedom of the Motherland, glorified a child's feat, and thus had a great influence on the patriotic education of Chinese youth of the second half of the twentieth century. An analysis of the works of the scientists (Czou Sja, 2014) showed that, unlike the songs of the 1920s, in which composers actively relied on Western melodies, folk music begins to prevail in school songs of the 1930s and 40s, and the means of expression inherent in folk song are also used, which enhances its patriotic character.

According to the researchers, the *suetan yuege* of this period laid the foundations for the subsequent development of patriotic children's songs. School songs of the war years have become an integral part of the educational and concert repertoire of students of all ages (Qian Ren, 2020).

Chinese scientists studying the history of the school song genre note a noticeable renewal of this genre after the formation of the PRC in

1949, and identify several main stages of this renewal: Chinese scientists studying the history of the school song genre note a noticeable renewal of this genre after the formation of the PRC in 1949, and identify several main stages of this renewal:

- the stage of strengthening the new national school of composers (1949-1966);
- the stage of strengthening the political control of school songs associated with the cultural revolution (1966-1976);
- the stage of the revival of school song associated with the period of openness reforms (1976-1990);
- the stage of the new age in the development of the genre of school song associated with the use of technologies of the XXI century in the musical art (1990-2000s) (Czou Sja, 2014; Li Yanhui, 2017; Zhao Shu, 2016).

In the period from 1949 to 1966, a new ideology of Chinese society was formed, which is aimed at reflecting a happy childhood and a peaceful working life in the New China. These changes in the country inspire composers to create joyful, fervent, optimistic, dancing children's songs about love for their native country, about promising bright future, which cheer up with a lively melody. Researchers call *Gu Jianfen* (born in 1935) the most popular composer of this period, who claims that only the composer who learns to look at the world through the eyes of a child and understand his inner world can create songs for a children's audience (Wang Yin, 2020). The most famous songs created during this period include “Joyful Holiday!”, “Let's row together with oars”, etc.

Making a preliminary conclusion, it should be noted that the school songs of this period are distinguished by a high artistic level, glorify the peaceful life of ordinary people who live a happy life in their native country, work for the benefit of their people. Such songs have great educational potential, help to form children's respectful attitude to work, parents and the older generation, healthy lifestyle, family values.

The period from 1966 to 1976 is called by researchers a period of stagnation in the musical art of China due to strict political control by the

state. Many famous composers and musicians were forced to stop their creative activities, as they were persecuted for not wanting to create works under the pressure of censorship. During this period, mostly slogan songs were created, monotonous in subject matter: “I love Beijing Square”, “Red Star”, etc.

The period from 1976 to 1990 entered the history of Chinese musical culture as a time of revival of musical creativity, including school songs. During this period, composers begin to develop the genre diversity of musical culture for children, creating songs for feature and animated films.

The researchers note the following positive changes in the development of the genre of songs for children. Firstly, during these years, a union of professional composers was formed, who specialized only in the genre of school songs, realizing in their work the idea of a happy childhood in their native country, filling music with children's joy and festive mood.

Secondly, during this period, cultural ties with the USSR are being strengthened, which contributes to the popularization of Soviet songs on Chinese radio and television. In Soviet songs, Chinese composers find a new source of inspiration and borrow the experience of Soviet colleagues, which significantly enriches the genre of children's songs musically and poetically.

Thirdly, in these years there have been noticeable positive changes in the system of music education, including school education, as well as in the cultural life of cities and provinces of China (Czou Sja, 2014; Gong Yanyan, 2019).

One of the first school songs created during this period, and popular today, is the song “A girl collects mushrooms after the rain” Another song of this period – “Sow sunlight” – is dedicated to children's fantasies, and also creates a positive mood, takes listeners and performers into a fairy-tale world, helps to imagine the spring awakening of native nature and enriches the emotional and sensual world of children.

In the 1990s, according to the researchers (Qian Ren, 2020), a new classification of school songs within the genre was formed, which is markedly different from the one that was formed in the 1930s and 40s.:

- a lyrical song dedicated to native nature, high feelings for the Motherland, sincere feelings between people, a happy peaceful life in their native country, etc.;

- an anthem song dedicated to national heroes of the past and present, honored political leaders, achievements of the Chinese people, etc.;

- a joke song dedicated to humorous situations that can serve as a lesson in life;

- a household song dedicated to the daily peaceful labor of Chinese citizens, the labor exploits of the people or individuals.

In general, after 1949, the military theme in the genre of school songs is practically absent and gives way to peaceful paintings that glorify the beauty of their native land, work for the benefit of society, sincere human feelings and faith in a long happy life with family and friends. Despite the fact that the genre of the school song ceases to develop the heroic image of children in the war, the song does not lose its patriotic character, continuing to contribute to the education of a citizen devoted to his homeland, honest and responsible for his actions.

**Conclusions.** The main trend of pedagogical work on the education of patriots of the country in the PRC is the acquisition by patriotic education of the status of a continuous interdisciplinary process that permeates all spheres of life and activity of the individual, determining the nature of her professional, social, family relations, life priorities; and covers all types of educational work with patriotic content, and is not reduced to individual academic disciplines.

In this regard, noticeable changes affect the genre of *suetan yuege* – school song, which laid the foundation for the idea of educating patriots through songs during school music classes.

*Suetan yuege* of the 1930s and 1940s, aimed at fostering patriotism to fight the enemy and win the anti-Japanese war, had an appropriate intra-genre classification: songs about children at war, the nature of their native land, the hard work of children and peasants, a song-anthem. School songs of the war years were an integral part of the educational and concert repertoire of students of all ages before the formation of the PRC in 1949.

In the history of the school song genre, we have conditionally identified the stages of updating this genre after the formation of the PRC: the stage of strengthening the new national school of composers (1949-1966); the stage of strengthening political control associated with the cultural revolution (1966-1976); the stage of revival associated with the period of openness reforms (1976-1990); the stage of new time in the development of the genre school song related to the use of technologies of the XXI century in the musical art (1990-2000-ies.).

In the 1990s, a new classification of school songs was formed, which is valid today: a lyrical song dedicated to native nature, high feelings for the Motherland; an anthem song dedicated to national heroes of the past and present, achievements of the Chinese people; a joke song dedicated to humorous situations that can serve as a lesson in life; a household song, dedicated to the daily peaceful labor of Chinese citizens.

In this regard, songs created after the formation of the PRC (since 1949) are the most popular among the cultural heritage of China today, since military themes recede into the background in them, putting forward the ideas of a peaceful happy working life in a new society.

In general, there are several approaches to the creation of a school song in the work of Chinese composers: a combination of foreign melodies and Chinese texts that the authors wrote themselves; a combination of Chinese folk music and Chinese poetry; author's music and text.

It should be noted that the composers who worked in the genre of school songs unanimously emphasized the need to use foreign musical experience, but at the same time achieved a harmonious combination of Chinese texts with a foreign melody, trying not to lose the beauty of the music and the content of the song.

According to their content and nature of performance, school songs are diverse, but they all have a patriotic orientation, as they are designed to serve the task of educating students in the spirit of love and respect for their native country, folk traditions, and the historical past of China.



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