

Don't Fight the Power: Expressions of Nationalism and Patriotism in Chinese Hip-Hop Lyrics

by Lily Nguyen

From the birth of hip-hop music in the Bronx, hip-hop lyrics have historically invoked messages of anti-establishment protest, but in 2016, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) began to sanitize and co-opt hip-hop music as a form of government propaganda. This research explores how contemporary Chinese hip-hop artists incorporate nationalist and patriotic ideology into the lyrics of hip-hop songs. Previous scholars have debated whether it is possible to empirically distinguish between nationalism (belief in the superiority of one's country) and patriotism (love of one's country). Though research on the prevalence of nationalism in Chinese hip-hop exists, there is little distinction between nationalism and patriotism. The project utilized thematic coding on pro-China lyrics for nationalist and patriotic elements on a purposeful selection of Chinese hip-hop songs' lyrics. I then examined these codes for correlations between occurrences of a thematic code. This research reveals a tendency for nationalist Chinese hip-hop songs to emphasize divisions between Chinese citizens and foreign peoples, whereas patriotic songs focus on the nation's own well-being and accomplishments. Given the dangerous consequences nationalism can lead to, such as war, distinguishing between nationalism and the less threatening patriotism holds significance when evaluating the Chinese government's push for nationalism in Chinese hip-hop songs.

Though hip-hop music was originally born in the United States to express subversive and anti-establishment ideas, some Chinese music artists have modified the genre to convey pro-establishment beliefs. Instead of writing lyrics criticizing government behavior, these hip-hop artists utilize pro-China lyrics to affirm the artist's faith and love for the country and to inspire listeners to do the same. Che Che, the chief producer of *The Rap of China*, believes, "The core of Chinese hip-hop is about young people singing about their own land and own people...to express the stories happening in their country" (Yau, 2020). The famous hip-hop artist and trailblazer GAI—real name Zhou Yan—weaves traditional Chinese cultural elements and patriotic references to history with a modern beat and rap (Lanyon, 2019; Yau, 2020). Another artist featured on *The Rap of China*, Sun Bayi, has even rapped overt lyrics praising the Chinese Communist Party (CCP): "There won't be hope unless the party and the people can be united; let's stick to the principle and firmness of the party and go forward" (Vanderklippe, 2018). This subsection of patriotic Chinese hip-hop artists greatly contrasts from hip-hop's original intentions

of rebelling against authority. The background of the Chinese hip-hop scene influences artists' choices in lyric-writing and promoting nationalist ideology.

This research examines Chinese hip-hop lyrics for explicit expressions of nationalism and patriotism. Specifically, the project investigates whether music artists promote pro-China sentiment in different and discernible forms depending on whether the sentiment is nationalist or patriotic. Thematic coding of a selection of hip-hop songs from mainland Chinese artists categorizes pro-China lyrics into distinct topics and contexts, such as local foods, traditions, politics, and government. The analysis further codes these instances of pro-China language as either nationalistic or patriotic to examine possible correlations. Existing research analyzing the Chinese hip-hop genre does not distinguish between nationalism and patriotism within song lyrics. Because nationalism may increase violence, aggression, and the potential for war between nations, an analysis of the bottom-up medium of Chinese hip-hop can reveal whether pro-China sentiment among the general populace is potentially dangerous or merely benign patriotism.

Literature Review

Distinguishing Nationalism and Patriotism Debate

Due to varying histories, cultures, and languages, every country associates nationalism and patriotism with unique connotations; therefore, within the realm of Chinese political science, scholars must interpret nationalism and patriotism specifically with Chinese conceptions of the terms in mind. Despite the cultural differences, the debate of whether researchers can empirically distinguish between nationalism and patriotism also exists within research on Chinese populations. Some scholars have conducted surveys on the construction of national identity among Chinese citizens, ultimately finding that nationalism and patriotism are highly distinct in China, with nationalism favoring protectionist government policies and patriotism aligning with a benign internationalism (Gries et al., 2011; Sinkkonen, 2013). On the contrary, Wang (2017) advocates for a more holistic, multidimensional hybrid type of nationalism, viewing nationalism and patriotism in China as having overlapping meanings and utilizing Xi Jinping's "Chinese Dream" discourse as an example of the hybrid nationalism/patriotism. The current research on Chinese nationalism and patriotism disagrees on whether nationalism and patriotism are distinguishable; hence, more research within the understudied field of Chinese hip-hop provides further qualitative evidence of whether differentiating the two terms is possible. If the analysis determines Chinese hip-hop songs to be simultaneously nationalist and patriotic, this research will support the notion of indistinguishable, hybrid, and multidimensional nationalism/patriotism.

The Chinese Government's Use of Music as Propaganda

Researchers of Chinese media are examining the tactics the Chinese state uses to co-opt popular hip-hop culture for nationalist propaganda purposes. Though hip-hop is a foreign musical import from the United States, the genre is localized and sanitized into pro-China directives through censorship and incentivizing artists to self-censor. While exploring the conceptions of political leaders in China, Lagerkvist (2008) coined the term "ideotainment" as the "juxtaposition of images, symbolic representations, and sounds of popular Web and mobile phone culture together with both subtle and overt ideological constructs and nationalistic

propaganda" (p. 121). Zou (2019) used this notion of ideotainment while performing a case study of the Chinese hip-hop group CD Rev's most popular music videos to showcase how "state-centric ideology is aesthetically evoked by co-opting popular cultural formats" (p.178). Amar (2018) further investigated the roots of propaganda in hip-hop and summarized the history of China's attempts to censor and shape the messages of hip-hop artists. Though research exists on nationalist propaganda in Chinese hip-hop, scholars make little distinction between nationalism and patriotism. This project uses established definitions of nationalism and patriotism to code pro-China hip-hop lyrics and determine whether the government's co-option of hip-hop has influenced the frequency of nationalist versus patriotic lyrics.

Scholars have found the government's relationship with the hip-hop genre varies from periods of acceptance to suppression. The state's level of censorship is largely contingent upon hip-hop's alignment with CCP (Chinese Communist Party) values like obedience and loyalty. Nathaniel Amar (2018) explains the government's contradictory behavior by recounting the history of Chinese hip-hop from its underground roots in the 1990s to more recent commercial successes. The Chinese government initially accepted the hip-hop culture, incentivizing hip-hop artists to promote positive values, such as filial piety and respect, but scandals in 2018 accusing hip-hop artist PG One of "encouraging young people to take drugs and humiliate women" caused the state to swiftly ban hip-hop artists or tattooed persons on television programs (Amar, 2018, p. 110). Because the scholarship has shown the Chinese government's propensity to incentivize music artists who promote the Party's social values, an analysis of modern Chinese hip-hop lyrics may reveal an increase in pro-China lyrics for the purpose of being promoted by the Chinese government. Financial incentives and fear of punishment may motivate artists to write lyrics promoting social values in alignment with CCP values.

Research Design

To collect the data, I used the Chinese search engine Baidu (<https://www.baidu.com/>) in conjunction with an established set of criteria to create a purposeful sample of pro-China Chinese hip-hop songs and lyrics. I limited the sample

to hip-hop songs created by mainland Chinese artists from 2010 to 2021. If the artist or artist's company had not already released an official English translation of the lyrics, I utilized Google Translate (<https://translate.google.com/>) to translate the lyrics from Chinese into English and emailed unclear machine-translated lyrics to research mentor and fluent Mandarin-speaker Dr. John Kennedy to check for accuracy. First, I typed "China Hip-Hop Artists" in Chinese into Baidu's search bar to obtain links to Baidu's biographies and discographies of recommended hip-hop artists and then eliminated songs published before 2010 and songs by non-mainland Chinese artists from further examination. I determined whether to include the remaining songs in the final dataset by scanning each song's lyrics for terms highlighting China in a positive light, eliminating songs without nationalistic, patriotic, or pro-China lyrics. After locating a total of 16 songs, I recorded citation information and lyrics and then translated English lyrics for each selected song into Microsoft Word documents. Because these artists appear in Baidu's search results, the artists are not only accessible to Chinese audiences, but the artists have a significant following in China. I selected hip-hop artists from mainland China to ensure any nationalistic/patriotic lyrics were directed towards mainland China, and I only utilized songs from 2010 to 2021 to gather data relevant to the current day. The use of Google Translate is a sufficient method of translation because I am looking for overt pro-China references in the lyrics; however, the majority of artists already provided an English translation of the lyrics, ensuring the artist's message was translated properly.

For the data analysis, I performed thematic coding on each of the translated hip-hop lines by first locating and highlighting pro-China song lyrics in the Word document and then typing relevant codes, e.g., "nationalism, government" or "patriotism, history," in bolded text next to each pro-China term. To collect quantitative data, I recorded the frequency (number of terms) of both nationalism and patriotism in each song in an Excel spreadsheet. For the qualitative analysis, I created separate Word files for each code containing a list of every occurrence of the code identified throughout the Chinese hip-hop songs by thematic coding. After reading the entirety of each song's lyrics, I coded

each song as nationalistic, patriotic, or both (coded as 1, 2, and 3 respectively) in Excel depending on whether nationalistic or patriotic terms consisted of over 60% of the pro-China terms. For reoccurring thematic codes, I created additional columns in the spreadsheet to record the number of times each code occurred in each song. Then, after compiling direct quotes of lyrics with coded themes into separate documents for each theme, I performed a second round of coding looking for correlations, trends, and discoveries about the thematic code. Thematic coding isolates the nationalist and patriotic elements of each song and establishes a framework of common themes to compare across multiple songs. The coding of frequency determines whether Chinese hip-hop songs can be wholly patriotic or entirely nationalist. The qualitative method of coding key phrases for connections reveals what pro-China themes occur frequently over a broad number of songs, adding context to the research question of how Chinese hip-hop artists express nationalism or patriotism in Chinese hip-hop songs.

Analysis

Frequency of Nationalism

The most common nationalist thematic codes featured across the widest range of songs included battle/enemies, defense, territory, history, and world respect. The most common nationalist codes in number but not in breadth referred exclusively to China's outgroups, including anti-West, anti-Korea, anti-Japan, anti-Taiwan, anti-Hong Kong, and One-China codes. As Table 1 shows, the nationalist code battle/enemies appeared in almost half of the sample and across four artists. The codes history, territory, and world respect also appeared in four artists' songs. Because of the relatively large number of outgroup-themed codes in nationalist songs, these songs and codes invoke a sense of war against other nations who are enemies to China's territory and culture. The artists use the codes to call for Chinese citizens to defend the nation against foreign influences and ideas.

Table 1: Most Common Nationalist Codes

	Battle/Enemies	Defense	Territory	History	World Respect
Number of Songs	7	5	5	5	5
Total Number of Codes	38	29	25	15	8

Table 2: Nationalist Songs Code Frequency

Artist	Title	Year	Number of Nationalist Codes	Number of Patriotic Codes
CD REV	The Force of Red	2016	38	0
CD REV	Diaoyu Islands Belong to China	2017	21	2
CD REV	Chinese Rappers Say "No" to THAAD	2017	24	2
CD REV	Hong Kong's Fall	2019	28	0
CD REV	South China Sea	2018	17	17
Fat Shady	Stupid Foreigner	2017	22	2
Wang Yifan	Chinese Daddy	2018	22	0

The state-sponsored group CD REV's discography may indicate a coordinated government effort to create nationalist hip-hop songs. CD REV receives financial and technical support from the Communist Youth League of China (CYLC) to create pro-China hip-hop songs and music videos. Out of the sample of eight Chinese hip-hop artists, the state-sponsored group CD REV produced the greatest number of nationalist songs (Table 2). With the support of the CYLC, CD REV has also created songs with no patriotic language and solely nationalist rhetoric, namely, "The Force of Red" and "Hong Kong's Fall" (CD REV, 2016a; CD REV, 2019). These songs both explicitly promote the Chinese government's efforts to politically unite Taiwan and Hong Kong with mainland China, while simultaneously insulting Western nations against these goals. By actively supporting nationalist hip-hop groups, the Chinese government can benefit from songs that strengthen the population's inwardness and love of country. If CD REV is a successful group, the government may continue to invest in songs as a tool to spread political propaganda beyond anti-West and anti-Taiwan initiatives.

Table 3: Non-State-Sponsored Nationalist Songs Thematic Frequency

Artist	Title	Nationalist Codes					Patriotic Codes	
		Battle/Enemies	History	Xenophobia	Politics	Money	Women	
Fat Shady	Stupid Foreigner	1	1	22	1	1	1	
		Family	History	Progress/Technology	Anti-West	Money		
Wang Yifan	Chinese Daddy	1	3	2	22	1		

However, non-state-sponsored artists have also written nationalist hip-hop songs, similarly portraying foreigners as enemies or unwanted pests. These songs have a high frequency of nationalist terms, with almost no patriotic language, indicating a focus on China's relationship with other nations. Frustrated by foreign tourists and immigrants using public resources, artist Fat Shady wrote

a song insulting foreigners for being impolite, having improper decorum, and being a burden on Chinese society (Fat Shady, 2017). As seen in Table 3, only 2 codes referring to Chinese wealth and women in "Stupid Foreigner" are patriotic, piling in comparison to the 22 nationalist coded lyrics relating to xenophobia, politics, history, and enemies. Additionally, after studying abroad in the United States, Chinese student Wang Yifan wrote a song addressed to Americans and Chinese American students, admonishing the students' dog-like worship of the United States (Yifan, 2018). Because non-state-sponsored artists also promote nationalist ideas, the government's push for nationalism may be succeeding in convincing the Chinese population to adopt nationalist attitudes. This bottom-up nationalism can be violent and strongly xenophobic, as these two songs illustrate, causing diplomacy and cross-cultural communications between China and other nations to suffer.

Frequency of Patriotism

Table 4: Patriotic Songs Code Frequency

Artist	Title	Year	Number of Nationalist Codes	Number of Patriotic Codes
CD REV	South China Sea	2018	17	17
CD REV	This is China	2016	3	28
Duo Li Gang & Su Han	Tsinghua Tao	2017	0	27
GAI	The Great Wall	2018	8	57
GAI	Huaxia	2019	0	23
Higher Brothers	Made in China	2017	3	34
Sun Bayi	Brilliant China	2018	4	65
Sun Bayi	Singing the Three Kingdoms	2018	0	52
VaVa	Eazy Life	2016	1	43

None of the artists producing patriotic songs in the sample are financially sponsored by the Chinese government, but some hip-hop artists are still motivated to include nationalist language in song lyrics. Although the majority of these song lyrics are highly patriotic, some artists might make an effort to promote nationalist and government values for either personal benefit or for a desire to support the government. Three of the songs in the sample are solely patriotic songs; three additional songs' codes are over 90% patriotic (Table 4). However, CD REV's "This is China" and GAI's "The Great Wall" include at least 10% nationalistic codes. "South China Sea" by CD REV even features 50% of both nationalist and patriotic codes (Table 4). CD REV's motivations for

creating pro-China songs are clear: direct monetary support from the government; the same motivation does not apply to GAI. Perhaps GAI truly does believe in supporting the spread of nationalism, but another likely reason for the inclusion of nationalist lyrics is a desire to seek out approval and support from the government. Other patriotic artists can avoid censorship by creating patriotic songs or by not including negative lyrics towards China, but a song with nationalist lyrics might be evidence of an attempt to garner stronger government promotion.

Table 5: Most Common Patriotic Codes

	History/Ancestors	Virtue	Hard Work	Wealth	Nature
Number of Songs	9	5	5	5	5
Total Number of Codes	85	48	12	42	35

Among the patriotic codes of the lyrics, the most common themes were history/ancestors, Chinese virtues, hard work/perseverance, nature, and prosperity/wealth. Although other themes appeared more frequently in song lyrics, usually because one song repeated a particular theme multiple times, these themes were reoccurring in the greatest breadth of songs. By far, history/ancestors was the most reoccurring patriotic theme across songs, appearing in over half the songs in the sample, and the most coded patriotic theme in general (Table 5). Patriotic songs used this theme to invoke within listeners pride in China's 5000-year history. The other themes of Chinese virtue, hard work, wealth, and nature also referred exclusively to Chinese citizens' remarkable personal qualities or the beauty of China's land. Because these themes occur most frequently in patriotic lyrics, most Chinese artists believe China's history, geography, and hardworking nature are reasons to love the country. These reasons focus on unique Chinese qualities, rather than a comparison to other nations, suggesting that patriotic songs do not pose as a violence-inducing threat to foreign countries.

Characteristics of Nationalist Songs

Nationalist lyrics in hip-hop songs often center themes of violence, war, and battle, creating a divide between the Chinese people and foreign nations. The battles can either be literal references to history or abstract and ideological in nature but always uphold the superiority of the Chinese perspective. In Table 6, GAI's "The Great Wall" tells a story of "indomitable

China" and reminds the listener of heroes of Chinese history who defended the motherland (GAI, 2018). Additionally, CD REV's "The Force of Red" focuses on an ideological battle against the West and a territorial battle with Taiwan (CD REV, 2016a). The hip-hop group raps in English, aiming to reach an audience in the West, while including Chinese captions in the music video in hopes of persuading Chinese citizens as well (Table 7). The artists attempt to persuade audiences of the importance of defending Chinese civilization, even to the point of war. This importance has been prevalent since ancient times, as in GAI's "The Great Wall," and continues to be relevant in modern times, as CD REV claims.

Table 6: GAI, "The Great Wall"

Nationalist Lyrics
The moonlit fort of Qin-Han Empire / And the forbidding frontier mountains
Have witnessed the heroic blood / Spilled in defense of our civilization
To secure our inviolable borderland / We carry the indomitable spirit of China

Table 7: CD REV, "The Force of Red"

Nationalist Lyrics
That all you faggots from the Western / Better shut your mouth
You media punk ass white trash fuckers / Stop talking this, talking that
Cuz of your freaking outta shit / You afraid us?
Then don't be acting like a fool tryna fight against us / We love peace
But we are not pigeon / In this area we are sleeping dragon in the arena
Fuck anybody tryna split up PRC / the leader
There's only one China, HK, Taipei / They are my fellas

Nationalist political songs often advance China's political aspirations regarding other nations, such as the One-China policy. These songs also tend to directly attack countries which oppose the policy. For example, CD REV's songs actively promote Chinese nationalist foreign policies, such as the One-China policy, the Diaoyu Islands or Senkaku Islands territorial dispute, the South China Sea territorial dispute, anti-democracy movements in Hong Kong, and anti-American Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense system deployed in South Korea (CD REV, 2016a, 2017a, 2017b, 2018, 2019). These songs use negative language against nations and territories such as South Korea, Japan, the United States, Taiwan, and Hong Kong to discredit the countries' political stances (see Table 8). By defaming the reputation of China's foreign opponents, nationalist political songs may be attempting to persuade neutral nations to become allies with China rather than the United States, Japan, South Korea, or Taiwan. By promoting specific policies in favor of China's development and foreign policy, these songs might encourage listeners from neutral nations to support national policies in line with Chinese political goals.

Nationalist song lyrics utilize vulgarity and swear words more often than patriotic songs. The vulgar language includes English curse words and derogatory language towards foreigners and enemies of China. Table 8 showcases lyrics by the group CD REV, insulting specific politicians of foreign countries and “anybody tryna split up PRC the leader” (CD REV, 2016a). The patriotic songs in the sample did not utilize vulgar language in any pro-China lyrics. Though the Chinese government attempts to censor Chinese music for both anti-government sentiment and vulgarities, the government seems to be more lenient with nationalist hip-hop artists who use vulgarity to promote the nationalist ideology. The contradictory behavior of the government reveals the tendency for government sponsored groups to be able to bypass the censorship of swear words.

Table 8: Political Lyrics

Artist	Title	Lyrics
CD REV	Diaoyu Islands belong to China	I say Abe, Shinzo you better be quick / Get the **** in down on you knees for all those women you've raped, been slain /
CD REV	The Force of Red	Fuck anybody tryna split up PRC the leader / Fuck JYP / Fuck DPP / Fuck Tsai-Ing Wen / You better realize who's got your back / PRC the force of red / Your president Xi / Your premier Li / Fuck that, the bitch Tsai Ing Wen
CD REV	Hong Kong's Fall	Hey democracy / Why you always hiding somewhere so hard to seek / So many counterfeits copying one / Once I heard you be found in the Middle East / People were throwing bombs across the city streets / If that's what you want sorry I can't agree / Get those foreign armies outta town then we can talk about it / Now you be found in Hong Kong / All I see is a beautiful dream turning to nightmare / Can I say hi there Hong Kong they all liars / Yeah I'm talking about American hypocrisy / They know nothing about love / Just wars and casualties / And Mrs. Clinton you know nothing about Chinese citizens

Characteristics of Patriotic Songs

A trend in artistic and cultural imagery exemplifies patriotic songs' pride in China's unique characteristics and accomplishments. In the sample, more patriotic songs utilized more themes of Chinese art, architecture, culture, food, technology, and philosophy than nationalist songs. For example, GAI's song “The Great Wall” refers to the Great Wall of China 28 times to compare one of China's most iconic and lasting creations to the undying spirit of the Chinese people (GAI, 2018a). GAI additionally praises the magnificent construction of Taoist temples in the Wudang Mountains and compares the miraculous work of the Chinese to “precious... blue and white porcelain” in the song “Huaxia” (GAI, 2018b). In the song “Made in China,” the Higher

Brothers also wrote about inventions and concepts from Chinese culture, including the philosophical ideas of yin and yang and feng shui, the martial art tai chi, the classic text I Ching, and the architectural wonders of the Terracotta Warriors, the Great Wall of China, and the Forbidden City (Higher Brothers, 2017). When artists write about famous aspects of Chinese culture, such as art, architecture, and philosophy, without encouraging conformity to Chinese culture, both artists and listeners can feel a healthy sense of pride in sharing this culture with the rest of the world. The cultural exchange can improve rates of tourism, leading to greater diplomatic relations and interactions with foreigners. Ingroup and outgroup relationships may improve among patriotic individuals, but nationalist individuals may resent increasing contact with foreigners.

Table 9: Artistic and Cultural Imagery in Lyrics

Artist	Title	Lyrics
CD REV	This is China	The beautiful land with rich culture remain / As for scientific achievement we have Tu Youyou who discovered artemisinin / Also there are KBBF crystal and Shenzhou series in astronomy
GAI	The Great Wall	In the shadow of the Great Wall / The Yellow River rolls eastward / Such a land of beauty and grandeur
GAI	Huaxia	How should we praise the sweat of the working people? / Create more miracles as precious as blue and white porcelain / Embracing the Three Mountains and Five Mountains, there are ancient temples in Wudang Shaolin / Appreciate the Four Books and the Five Classics, I sing in Chinese for you to listen
Higher Brothers	Made in China	Ying yang feng shui—made in China / From tai chi to I Ching—made in China / The Great Wall—made in China / From the Terracotta Warriors to the Forbidden City—made in China / I welcome you to the nation that makes magic from 5000 years of culture / Made in China will amaze you
VaVa	Eazy Life	Enjoy Li Boqing's storytelling then have a great lunch / Hot pot, Maocai, and Malatang / Friends invite me to play mahjong / Welcome to panda's hometown / Good wine will make you sway / The fresh air is appreciated even by foreigners / The delicious food can be found everywhere

Hip-hop artists use the theme of unity in patriotic songs in conjunction with imagery of a family's continual growth and progress. In stark contrast to the nationalist use of unity, artists do not make mention of politics relating to the One-China policy, Taiwan, or Hong Kong. GAI in “The Great Wall” presents an image of a unified Chinese community, working hard to create progress, without mentioning any other nations (GAI, 2017a). The song “Brilliant China” compares the nation to a home and the people to a large family working to take care of each other “with a shared future for mankind” (Bayi, 2018a). The patriotic usage of unity allows artists to promote the idea of a country united in values and purpose, strengthening ingroup relations without the need for weakening outgroup relations. The progress and development mentioned in these songs can actually

benefit foreign nations when China shares its advancements and prosperity through international trade.

In contrast to nationalist political songs, patriotic political songs usually support the Chinese Communist Party in general without mention of specific policies, aiming to unify the population under one government party. When referring to the government, the artists express approval for the Party's actions and structure, with no criticisms. For example, as seen in Table 10, Sun Bayi's (2018a) song "Brilliant China" is patriotic because Bayi recounts the Chinese Communist Party's development of the nation, while avoiding nationalism by not mentioning other countries. The artist emphasizes the relationship between the government and the people, believing the government brings "happiness for the people and rejuvenation for the nation" (Bayi, 2018a). Because political issues can vary over a wide breadth of national interests, both nationalist and patriotic artists focus on certain aspects of politics to best suit the motives of the song. Patriotic political songs simply promote the people's general trust in government, improving in-group relationships, without mention of international affairs.

Table 10: Sun Bayi, "Brilliant China"

Patriotic Lyrics
We all know the original intention and mission of the Chinese Communists / Seek happiness for the people and rejuvenation for the nation
It's never ending / The socialist society with Chinese characteristics has now entered a new era
All people must not fail in their pursuit of a moderately prosperous society / Start building a modern socialist country in an all-round way
Improve party leadership / Make the party stronger
Looking forward to the party's new performance and new atmosphere / The party and the people are bound together, and there is hope for the nation
Firm the principle of party spirit, let us go forward one after another / To ensure that the party will always maintain vigorous vitality and combat effectiveness

Themes in Both Nationalist and Patriotic Songs

Both nationalist and patriotic hip-hop songs reflect traditional Chinese beliefs borne out of Confucianism, such as a respect for hierarchy, ancestors, and history. Many Chinese hip-hop artists are proud to be part of China's long 5000 years of history and traditions, drawing from their heritage to inspire feelings of patriotism in listeners. Tsinghua University's hip-hop song created to promote the university's prestige and wisdom frequently refers to the ancient Chinese Emperors Yan and Huang; the rappers say, "The talents' origin from sages that comes not afar / And to the predecessors we bow" (Gang & Han, 2017). CD REV's nationalist "The Force of Red" upholds China's "5000-year-old

history" while saying of the West, "You the fresh kid," (CD REV, 2016a). In the dataset, references to history are typically patriotic, but nationalist artists may use these values to justify violence against other nations. When taken too far, a respect for ancestors and the past can lead to replicating the violent conquering nature of empires and capturing territory.

Table 11: References to History in Nationalist Lyrics

Artist	Title	Lyrics
CD REV	The Force of Red	Republic of China Died in 1949 / It's a new era now / There's only one China, HK, Taipei / Stick your wild ass with your own young sword / Mind your own business / Or you be mothafucking Judas / We have 5000-year-old history / You the fresh kid / Tell your Uncle Sam about the thing / The red King's coming back / If you are still provoking
CD REV	Diaoyu Islands Belong to China	Japs wanna rewrite the history of the second war / They say they own the Diaoyu Island / And gon put it in their elementary courses / So we gotta show them with a clear attitude / The vomit puke from over 6 billion people in the world dropping on you / What you did during World War 2 was witnessed and then legislatively prohibited / It was mentioned in Potsdam Proclamation that Japanese sovereignty shall be forever limited in Honshu, Kyushu, Hokkaido, Shikoku / So Diaoyu is ours / Know the truth? / I am here to applause for those who respect history / In Southern Song Dynasty, Penghu Islands were included in China's ocean defense system / In Ming Dynasty the Diaoyu Island was on the map of China / Though some attitudes of the government in Qing Dynasty disappointed us / Shimonoseki Treaty led to homelessness of Chinese refugees
Fat Shady	Stupid Foreigner	Stupid foreigner, quickly find a translator, your higher peer is going to curse you mightily / Go ask your grandmother, turn up your grandfather / To tell you about the Eight-Axis Power
GAI	The Great Wall	The moonlit fort of Qin-Han Empire And the forbidding frontier mountains / Have witnessed the heroic blood / Spilled in defense of our civilization
Wang Yifan	Chinese Daddy	Come and come, let me ask you, where were you when the Chinese were bullied? / Where were you muttering when hub was put on the Tibetan flag? / It doesn't mean that we are strong if America is called Dad, but Chinese people have never lacked myths since ancient times

Table 12: References to History in Patriotic Lyrics

Artist	Title	Lyrics
CD REV	This is China	To make a better world just like the old, old history / Yes, we do want the recovery / Just for a better living and and our great great China Dream
CD REV	Diaoyu Islands Belong to China	The whole world saw the perseverance of Chinese people at that time
CD REV	Chinese Rappers Say No to THAAD	There is always something and we wanna be grinding / To reverse your views about China / We are not a brand new comer
Duo Li Gang & Su Han	Tsinghua Tao	Inheriting Emperor Yan and Huang who triumphed over the beasts / Classic and Flamboyant, we thrive for centuries / The talents origin from sages that comes not afar / Confucius writes the lyric that you can apprehend / Look before you leap / And to the predecessors we bow
GAI	The Great Wall	With the courage from our forebears / Our blood, sweat, and unruly vigor / Has nurtured the homeland for millennia / A proud and righteous ancient nation / Leaving our unfading memory to posterity
GAI	Huaxia	How can dust cover up youth? Yan Huang and Mu Cangxia / Five thousand years up and down are like quicksand, not worth the soul to enter China / History will not be buried, its brilliance will not be orchestrated by anyone
Sun Bayi	Brilliant China	To make history, the party and the people must depend on each other

Additionally, both nationalist and patriotic songs have emphasized the desire for foreigners to view China in a positive light. Although artists believe China is meritorious of praise from its own achievements, some artists believe other nations should acknowledge China's great works. Higher Brothers' (2017) patriotic song "Made in China" includes the lyrics, "Even Arizona State University teaches Chinese," in order to acknowledge the importance of world respect and popularity. Simultaneously, the same song includes the nationalist lyric, "The responsibility I feel is like the Chinese national team winning respect in swimming," comparing China to other nations (Higher Brothers, 2017). Though wanting the nation and culture to be respected and well-known throughout the world can be solely patriotic, nationalist artists can manipulate world respect into anti-foreign sentiments. A nationalist artist believes that not only should other nations respect China, but other nations should conform to Chinese values.

Negative Language Towards China

Chinese hip-hop artists have gradually self-censored lyrics for negative language towards China or lyrics against the values of the Party throughout the years, opting for lyrics in line with the values of the government. When hip-hop artists are not well-known, the artists can take greater risks with subversive, anti-establishment lyrics, but as the artists become famous, the government is more likely to take notice of and ban any music against Party values. Though hip-hop artist GAI first gained notoriety through songs with violent, gangster, and trap imagery, GAI has begun to incorporate traditional Chinese instruments and themes into songs since appearing on television show "The Rap of China" (Amar, 2018). Similarly, CD REV initially included negative aspects of China in their premier song "Made in China," but the group now exclusively produces songs with no admittance of China's wrongdoings (CD REV, 2016b). Artists are fearful of government intervention in hip-hop songs and must self-censor to avoid penalties. These examples may reveal the patriotic/nationalist sentiment in certain discographies is not honest or genuine.

Table 13: CD REV, "This is China"

Negative Lyrics
First things first, we all know that China is a developing country / It has large population and it is really hard to manage / Especially after World War II almost perished
It is real that the pollution is severe at the present stage / In big cities like Beijing, Tianjin / Always pollution haze / Similar to 1950s London and LA
It's painful with higher growth rate you see / People are too busy with business / Everybody wanna have a better life / Make money, get married / But they are like the first or sec generation of rich / Not well-educated
It's really painful to point out the problems as they are too much for us to even think about and mention / The food and drug security event / Melamine Milk had affected so many babies / And they all suffered from malnutrition
What's more there was the Vaccination issue / Illegal business operation has caused expiration and led to / The panic in domestic / What's wrong with the businessmen / And it's reasonless to do business riding on them babies
The question is there were still somebody who wanted the situation to be worse / And their name is You know who / They will get US dollar perks / The Spy, the traitor, the liar and the monkey making jerks / They are leading the public into another extreme and it worked
Also, it's shameful to talk about some politicians / Because of their corruption and malversation in bidding sections / Their sexual pics and the prostitution scandals / Are all as a disgrace to the country and its people

Because the purpose of "This is China" was to disprove negative falsifications about China, CD REV may have chosen to include both positive and negative facts about China to preserve a sense of credibility. Hip-hop artists are concerned with maintaining a sense of credibility and authenticity with listeners, as the hip-hop genre prides itself on portraying the realistic feelings of common people. CD REV (2016b) begins the song by rapping, "Today I wanna restore the impression you have on my country / You guys can know better about what the truth is and how Chinese people assess their own country." As seen in Table 13, the song then explains that China is a developing country with problems of corruption, pollution, poor medicine, and famine, but China is continually developing improvements (CD REV, 2016b). The artists have faith in the country's future. In patriotic and nationalist songs, negative language can be used to add credibility to the artists' claims of patriotism/nationalism. However, the Chinese government may not continue to allow such uses of negative language, depending on the context and severity of the negative language.

Discussion

Social Identity Theory

According to social identity theory, because group membership creates a distinction between the ingroup and the outgroup in an individual's mind, Chinese hip-hop artists' group membership of nationality may exert pressure on artists' behavior to create songs in conformity to the ingroup or nation's values. This distinction also leads to individuals feeling personally threatened when outsiders challenge ingroup values, and an individual's self-

esteem increases when the individual views the ingroup as superior to outgroups (Druckman, 1994; Leaper, 2011).

The nationalist Chinese hip-hop songs in the sample always attacked foreign nations and contrasted the superiority of Chinese life, culture, and politics to outside countries like the United States, Japan, and South Korea, supporting social identity theory's claims of an ingroup viewing an outgroup as inferior. Social identity theory states individuals tend to view the ingroup less critically and with favoritism in comparison to outgroups (Leaper, 2011). The analysis revealed a connection between nationalist lyrics in six songs and the degradation of foreign nations' capacity to carry out international initiatives. Nationalist artists chose to attack the United States, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong specifically because these countries opposed mainland Chinese values or government initiatives (e.g., One China policy); artists exclusively contrasted foreign nations with China, choosing to avoid any commonalities these countries had. Social identity theory's understanding of ingroup positive bias explains Chinese hip-hop artists' social drive to write songs with pro-China lyrics, and outgroup negative bias explains artists' tendency to write negative lyrics directed towards outside nations and political figures. Because the act of categorization into ingroup and outgroup also reinforces biases, listeners of these hip-hop songs are likely to negatively stereotype foreigners without critically reflecting on self-bias. The theory suggests that in the future nationalist artists may even depict any foreign country, not just countries actively opposing Chinese initiatives, as lesser and in need of reform to be more like China.

Distinguishing Nationalism and Patriotism

This research agrees with previous literature linking nationalism and patriotism to a greater intolerance and tolerance of minorities respectively. The analysis found nationalist Chinese hip-hop songs divide Chinese audiences from the outgroup by claiming China's superiority to other nations, whereas patriotic songs emphasize the inherent beauty of China's nature, art, and culture. This research concurs with Blank and Schmidt's (2003) panel study on East and West German national identity which correlated nationalism with the

denigration of outgroups, similarly to how nationalist Chinese hip-hop songs in the sample insult foreign outgroups and tourists. The study also found patriotism to be correlated with a higher tolerance of outgroups, supported by patriotic hip-hop songs' desire for foreigners to see the beauty of China in person (Blank & Schmidt, 2003). Additionally, the analysis' distinction between nationalism and patriotism supports previous surveys on Chinese citizens' construction of national identity because the previous studies concluded nationalists favored protectionist government policies and patriots supported friendly internationalism (Gries et al., 2011; Sinkkonen, 2013). Despite the ongoing debate as to whether Chinese nationalism and patriotism are distinct, this analysis added further evidence to support discernibility between Chinese nationalism and patriotism. Previous studies analyzed Chinese citizens' opinions on specific national issues, but this research analyzed lyrics already written by artists, allowing for greater representation of types of nationalism and patriotism. The research presents a bottom-up analysis of nationalist/patriotic views of Chinese citizens, finding distinct uses of thematic codes among nationalist and patriotic songs.

Conclusion

Nationalism and patriotism are distinguishable in Chinese hip-hop because nationalist lyrics create a divide between Chinese nationals and foreign peoples, whereas patriotic lyrics focus on China's prosperity, nature, and unique culture. Nationalist songs encourage violence against the outgroup through lyrics encouraging battle and defense of China's ideology, but patriotic songs instill Chinese listeners with pride for their country and a desire to share the culture with outsiders. In the sample of songs, the most common nationalist codes referred to battles, defense, and territory, but the most common patriotic codes talked about Chinese art, history, and culture. Lyrics referring to history were usually patriotic, but nationalist artists used history to justify modern day violence against other nations to reclaim China's property and territory. Additionally, artists used the theme of unity differently in nationalist/patriotic songs, with unity being used as imagery of a family in patriotic songs, and in nationalist songs, unity was almost exclusively used to refer to the One-China policy. This research

is significant because nationalism can be potentially dangerous, leading to war and violence. Politicians should pay close attention to bottom-up nationalism in Chinese citizens because a growing nationalist sentiment indicates that the Chinese government's push for nationalist propaganda is leading citizens to self-produce nationalist propaganda. This realization will also help policy makers to prepare for the potential consequences of nationalism and combat propaganda control.

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