

MASTER'S THESIS

Does music make coming home easier?: musical and sociological analyses of selected compositions commemorating the 1997 return of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China

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**Does Music Make Coming Home Easier?
Musical and Sociological Analyses of Selected Compositions
Commemorating the 1997 Return of Hong Kong to
the People's Republic of China**

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Abstract

The Reunification of Hong Kong with China was a significant world event in the last decade of the twentieth century. To commemorate the event, Chinese communities worldwide held a myriad of celebratory activities. In Hong Kong, the Association for Celebration of Reunification of Hong Kong with China (ACRHKC) was set up by a group of politicians and businessmen to promote and organize celebratory activities, which prompted Hong Kong composers to respond with the so-called Reunification compositions. The purpose of this study is to examine the role music played in the 1997 Reunification as well as the meaning of such celebratory activities and compositions. While the Reunification celebratory activities are carefully documented in this thesis, such activities are scrutinized in the context of the social and political condition of Hong Kong at the time. The focus of this thesis is however on a repertoire of ten Reunification works composed by eight local composers. To better understand this repertoire of music, the composition history and the composers' attitude towards the Reunification are examined. Special attention is given to the exploration of the musical characteristics and the ideological subtext as expressed in the music. In light of globalization, the torrent that changes the world tremendously, the final section of this thesis discusses the issue of cultural identity that troubled composers of Hong Kong and the PRC prior to the Reunification.

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