

Knowing our National Anthem:

March of the Volunteers

National Anthem of the People's Republic of China

(March of the Volunteers (a translation of 《義勇軍進行曲》))

Lyrics by Tian Han
Composed by Nie Er

March Tempo

起

來! 不 願 做 奴 隸 的 人 們! 把 我 們 的 血 肉,

築 成 我 們 新 的 長 城! 中 華 民 族

出

Arts Education Section
CDI, Education Bureau

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Knowing our National Anthem: *March of the Volunteers*

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- Meaning of Lyrics
- Scores and Recordings
- History and Spirit
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March of the Volunteers: Music Characteristics



The national anthem is a march in G major, written in duple time, the tempo marking is “March Tempo”

The trumpet introduction imitates the sound of the bugle, giving a strong sense of rhythm

Syllabic setting of lyrics throughout the song, which creates an energetic mood, e.g.

起 來! 不 願 做 奴 隸 的 人 們!

Lyrics and music are related, e.g.

the ascending melodic line matches the meaning of “Arise!” (起來!)

起 來! 起 來! 起 來!

The use of triplets and dotted rhythms enhances the expressiveness of the music

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到 了 最 危 險 的 時 候, 每 個 人 被 迫 着 發 出

最 後 的 吼 聲。 起 來! 起 來! 起 來!

我 們 萬 眾 一 心, 冒 着 敵 人 的 炮 火 前 進!

冒 着 敵 人 的 炮 火 前 進! 前 進! 前 進! 進!

March of the Volunteers: Meaning of Lyrics



Reflecting that the country was in a life-and-death situation

Arise, we who refuse to be slaves!
With our very flesh and blood,
Let us build our new Great Wall!

Implying that the country was at war

Reflecting the united Chinese nation being resolute and fearless

The peoples of China are at their most critical time,
Everybody must roar defiance.

Arise!

Arise!

Arise!

Millions of hearts with one mind, Brave the enemy's gunfire,
March on!

Brave the enemy's gunfire, March on!

March on!

March on, on!

The content of the lyrics reflects that the country was in a grim situation



March of the Volunteers: Scores and Recordings

Scores / Standard Scores

- Stave notation ¹
 - Numbered musical notation ²
 - Vocal and piano ³
 - Orchestra ³
 - Wind band ³
- ¹ See Schedule 1 of National Anthem Ordinance
- ² See Schedule 2 of National Anthem Ordinance
- ³ See “standard score” as indicated in section 5 of National Anthem Ordinance

Official Recordings

- Choir ⁴
 - Instrumental ⁴
- ⁴ See “official recording” as indicated in section 5 of National Anthem Ordinance

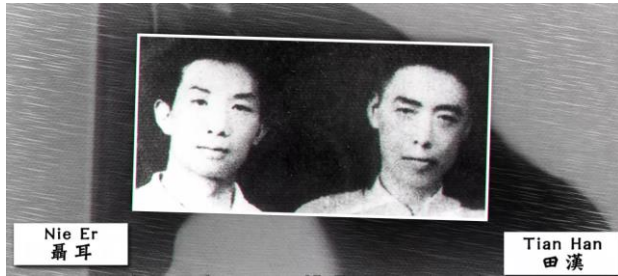


Link of the National Anthem Ordinance

www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/A405!en-zh-Hant-HK?INDEX_CS=N



March of the Volunteers: History and Spirit



The lyrics of *March of the Volunteers* was written by the playwright Tian Han, with music written by the composer Nie Er.

March of the Volunteers is originally the theme song of the movie *Sons and Daughters in a Time of Storm*. The movie is about fighting against Japanese Aggression and saving the country. *March of the Volunteers* was circulated extensively throughout the country after the movie was premiered in May 1935.



Sons and Daughters in a Time of Storm depicts the heroic stories of young people marching to the front line to defend the Motherland against Japanese occupation in the early 1930s.

March of the Volunteers was well-received and popular among the people. During the time when the society was highly against Japanese Aggression, the song has boosted morale and strengthened solidarity, reflecting the united Chinese nation being resolute and fearless.

March of the Volunteers: History and Spirit

The script of *Sons and Daughters in a Time of Storm* was originally written by Tian Han. Tian Han also wrote the lyrics for *March of the Volunteers* and then the composer Nie Er composed melody for the lyrics.

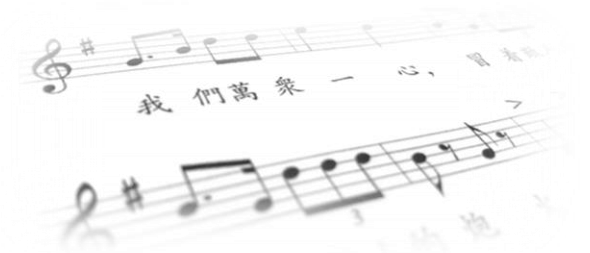
March of the Volunteers has strong regular rhythm and uplifting tune. The mood is majestic and spirited. The song captures the fearless and tenacious fighting spirit of the Chinese nation.



During the composing, Tian Han and Nie Er had amended the lyrics as well, so as to enhance the effect. For example,

- adding a trumpet introduction to the song, echoing each other with the end;
- repeating the phrase “Brave the enemy’s gunfire” and “March on” several times, making it more expressive and powerful.

As the national anthem, *March of the Volunteers* is the symbol of the country, which embodies national identity and sense of belonging.



March of the Volunteers: Development as the National Anthem

- 27 Sep 1949 The First Plenary Session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference decided: ***March of the Volunteers*** was adopted as the provisional national anthem
- 1 Oct 1949 The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China was established. At Tiananmen Square in Beijing, with the rise of the “Five-star Red Flag”, ***March of the Volunteers*** resonated for the first time at Tiananmen Square



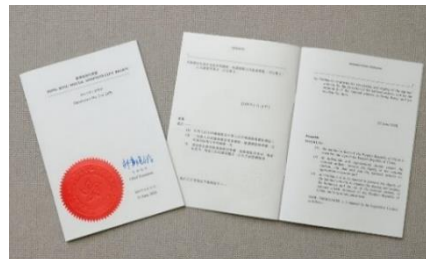
March of the Volunteers: Development as the National Anthem

- 14 Mar 2004 The Tenth National People's Congress passed the “Constitution (Amendment)” and added a paragraph to Article 136 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, stipulating that ***March of the Volunteers*** shall be the national anthem of the People's Republic of China
- 1 Sep 2017 The Twenty-ninth Session of the Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress passed the National Anthem Law of the People's Republic of China
- 1 Oct 2017 The National Anthem Law of the People's Republic of China took effect in the country



March of the Volunteers: Development as the National Anthem

- 14 Nov 2017 The Thirtieth Session of the Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress agreed to add the National Anthem Law of the People's Republic of China to Annex III to the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
- Date same as above The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government announced that, pursuant to Article 18 of the Basic Law, the National Anthem Law of the People's Republic of China would be implemented in the HKSAR by way of local legislation consistent with the constitutional and legal regime of the HKSAR
- 4 Jun 2020 The National Anthem Bill was passed at Third Reading by the Legislative Council
- 11 Jun 2020 The Chief Executive signed the National Anthem Ordinance in accordance with Article 48(1)(3) of the Basic Law
- 12 Jun 2020 The National Anthem Ordinance came into immediate effect after it was being gazetted



March of the Volunteers: Resources for Reference



Educational Video –

“The Symbols of our Nation and Hong Kong SAR: the National Flag, the National Anthem and the Regional Flag”

https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_xeue6mgg



Audio Picture Book –

“Our National Flag, National Anthem and Regional Flag”

https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_mh1zs4tu



Examples of Learning and Teaching Strategies / Learning Activities on the National Anthem (Music)

www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/resources/mus-curri/NA-music-sample-en.pdf



Learning and Teaching of the National Anthem: Supplement to the Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - Secondary 3) (2020)

www.edb.gov.hk/en/music_supplement



Webpage –

“Getting to Know the National Flag, the National Emblem, the National Anthem and the Regional Flag”

www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols



Web-based Resource Platform –

“National Education One-stop Portal” – “National Flag, National Emblem, National Anthem and Regional Flag”

<https://cbleportal.edb.edcity.hk/index.php?class=index&func=cate&cateid=51&motype=0&page=3&selectlangtype=3>



Webpage –

“National Anthem” by the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China

<http://english.www.gov.cn/audio>



Webpage –

“National Anthem” by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau

www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/national_anthem.htm



Webpage –

“Flags, Emblem and Anthem” by the Protocol Division Government Secretariat

www.protocol.gov.hk/en/flags.html