Examining Moral Education:

A Comparative Study between Québec's Ethics and Religious Culture Program

and China's Moral Education Program

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Table of Contents

Abstract

This thesis examines moral education with a comparative study between Québec's Ethics and
Religious Cultures (ERC) Program and China's Moral Education Program. The purpose of this
study is to identify the similarities and contrasts across the two programs. In addition, it also
aims to apply theories in the study of moral education to explore the factors behind these
similarities and differences. As substantial research in moral education has exposed an obvious
gap between theories and actual practices of moral education, this thesis intends to fill this gap.

  The methodology of this thesis is mix method of Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) and
Philosophical Inquiry. The QDA organizes the content of both programs into thematic
similarities and differences. The Philosophical Inquiry applies theories to the elaborations of
these similar or differential points accordingly. Despite the controversial feature of moral
education, this thesis believes that a promotion of the "common good values" would always be a
desirable component in moral education practices. Moreover, the instilment of critical thinking
should be the ultimate goal for moral education as it enables students to think and act upon moral
issues critically.

  Keywords: moral education; religious literacy; patriotic education; Québec; China

Abstrait

Cette thèse examine l'éducation morale avec une étude comparative entre le programme d'Éthique et cultures religieuses (ERC) du Québec et le programme de l''éducation morale de la Chine. Le but de cette étude est d'identifier les similitudes et les contrastes entre les deux programmes. En outre, il vise également à appliquer des théories dans l'étude de l'éducation morale pour explorer les facteurs derrière ces similitudes et différences. Dans la mesure où les recherches substantielles en éducation morale exposent un écart évident entre les théories et les pratiques, cette thèse vise à combler cette lacune.

La méthodologie de cette thèse est la méthode de mélange de l'analyse qualitative des données (AQD) et de l'Enquête Philosophique. Le ADQ organise le contenu des deux programmes en similitudes et différences thématiques. L'Enquête Philosophique applique les théories à l'élaboration de ces points similaires ou différentiels en conséquence. Malgré la caractéristique controversée de l'éducation morale, cette thèse estime qu'une promotion des « valeurs du bien commun » serait toujours une composante souhaitable dans les pratiques d'éducation morale. De plus, l'endoctrinement de la pensée critique devrait être le but ultime de l'éducation morale, car il permet aux élèves de penser et d'agir de façon critique sur les questions morales.

Mots-clés: éducation morale; alphabétisation religieuse; éducation patriotique; Québec; Chine

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Introduction

In this thesis, I will compare two moral education programs that I have direct connection with. The first program is the one I did when I was a student in China. As a recipient of this program, I would provide perspectives to start this comparative study with firsthand information. The second program I am going to include is the Québec's Ethics and Religious Culture (or ERC, as I shall refer to it henceforth) program. Both programs are relatively recently adopted. China's current moral education program is introduced in 2001. The ERC program is implemented to all Québec primary and secondary schools in 2008. As such, in comparing the two programs I also seek to show how each program is influenced by both local and global contemporary social, cultural and developments. Overall, I identify and discuss 5 key themes that enable a detailed comparison and contrast of the two programs. Two themes reflect commonalities across the two programs – "fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity" and "teaching respect for and compliance with the law". Three themes reflect what I judge to be significant points of contrast between the two programs – "a promotion of religious literacy", "patriotic education" and "teaching the value of hard work". These themes are identified through a codifying method based on the framework of O'Leary (2014), an internationally-renowned scholar in research methods. Under this framework, I first examine the words and concepts that are reinforced with a high frequency in both programs. Furthermore, I use my own 'coded label' to capture key areas of similarity and difference which might otherwise be obscured by terminological and other differences between the two programs. My 'coded labels' are based on well-accepted ideas in the academic studies of moral education. The Appendices of this study present the process of my codifying method. After identifying and describing these 5 themes in Chapter 2, I discuss and analyze 4 of them in more detail, in Chapter 3. Ultimately, my aim in undertaking this comparison is to gain insights into the complexity and diversity of different school-based approaches to moral education policy. The comparative discussion I provide in this thesis, however, reflects deeper philosophical issues in moral education. Before discussing the aims and purposes of my comparative analysis in more depth, I will first briefly outline one of these deeper philosophical issues – namely, the fundamentally disputed nature of moral education.

The Controversial Nature of Moral Education

As a vital component of education, moral education is deemed as a way to foster individual virtue in students, as it aims to promote the common good (Wringe, 1998). However, as many philosophers and educators argues, moral education is inherently controversial. For example, philosopher Hand (2014) mentions that the content and justification of morality have no universally acknowledged standard. As such, the questions of the content of moral education (what shall be included in the curriculum) and pedagogy (how to teach morality) are open to dispute in the practice of moral education. Hand's answer to these issues is that we, as moral educators, should teach "robustly justified moral standards" to students (p. 528). Nevertheless, despite this confident conclusion, Hand's idea of "rational moral enlistment" is in turn criticized by John White (2016, p. 454), who argues that moral motivation is properly grounded in sentiment and that moral enlistment therefore should be properly carried out by modelling and praising the desired sentiments. Despite such disagreements, progress is possible. For example, Tillson (2017) has recently attempted to bridge the disagreement between Hand's 'rational enlistment' view and White's 'moral sentimentalist' view, while arguing that neither view is sufficient on its own. Instead, he proposes a new perspective of moral education: to revise or expand students' existing moral commitments through a certain kind of critical reflection – a reflection that would include both rational and emotional dimensions. It is safe to say that these similar disagreements about the nature and justification for moral education will not be resolved in ways that lead to consensus any time soon. In short, this brief example of recent argumentations raised by the three philosophical scholars illustrates the likelihood that the controversy over moral education may stay as a permanent feature of it. This point should be kept in mind when examining actual policies and practices of moral education, as I aim to do in this thesis. While such policies do claim, or at least imply, agreement on matters of the content and justification of moral education, by setting down requirements for school teachers, we should not thereby ignore the fact that intellectual and philosophical disagreements remain, and continue, in the background.

This point about the controversial nature of moral education also applies to my discussion of moral education. In my discussion, I frequently invoke the term 'common good' as a desirable and justifiable goal or objective of moral education. In doing so, I mean to highlight the fact that this goal is central to the two national programs of moral education under analysis here – China's

moral education program and Québec's Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) course. I do not mean to suggest, however, that this goal is itself unanimously endorsed by moral philosophers, nor that its content is universally agreed upon. Nevertheless, as far as controversies in moral education go, disagreements about the goal of pursuing the 'common good' seem relatively mild. One reason for this is that this idea is open to many possible interpretations, and adaptable to diverse social and cultural contexts. Furthermore, such a goal seems especially well-suited to moral education in schools, which are charged with the socialization of young people, and for doing so in ways that adhere to broad principles of social justice (Callan, 1995; McDonough & Feinberg, 2003).

The link between the value of promoting the common good and justice is reinforced by the philosopher Michael Sandel (2009). In his book *Justice: What's the Right Thing to do?,* he says that we should reason about the common good and consider cultivating virtue as a viable and indispensable approach to achieve justice. In light of his statement, I argue that moral education, due to its controversial nature, should also aim for the common good values and cultivate students' ability to reason about these values. In short, the claim that moral education should foster the common good need not and should not imply that individual students must suppress or stifle their capacities for personal, subjective and critical moral reflection. Most importantly, this view of the goal of moral education seems ideally suited to a context within which the nature and justification of morality is subject to dispute and disagreement, as noted above. Inasmuch as morality has no universally accepted standard, the ability to reason and reflect on it would seem to be a desirable goal in the practice of moral education and shall be an ongoing process.

Organization of this Thesis

The preceding discussion of the controversial nature of morality in moral education provides a useful context within which to situate the present thesis. As mentioned above, even if the notion of teaching for the common good, or teaching students to pursue the common good, does not necessarily immune to philosophical criticism, it represents a common perspective on moral education underlying the two programs of moral education I intend to examine and analyze in this thesis. Such comparisons are rare in the theoretical literature on moral education, and one reason for this may be that it seems difficult to identify a basis for comparing policies on moral education that apply to vastly different social, economic and cultural contexts as those of

Québec and China. My analysis in the chapters below acknowledges and addresses these differences, and therefore does not deny their importance. Nevertheless, I suggest that it is also important and worthwhile to focus on what connects the two programs. This point of connection, I demonstrate, can be located in the idea of teaching for the pursuit of the common good.

This insight – that the idea of the common good represents a point of overlap between China's moral education program and Québec's ERC program – therefore enables me to undertake a unique, comparative study of these two programs, which are otherwise different in many ways. Ultimately, my thesis seeks to illuminate how two recently adopted, national policies of moral education answer the questions: "What content should be included in moral education?" and "How should moral education be taught?". It does so by examining both the similarities and key differences across these two programs.

The thesis is organized into three main chapters, plus a brief concluding chapter. The first chapter discusses the social, cultural and political context of each moral education program. This discussion enables readers to understand how each program arises in a specific context, as part of a broader response to dramatic changes in both societies since the late 20th Century. To help readers understand these specific social changes in both societies, I will provide a general overview of the social context of both moral education programs in the first chapter of this thesis. The program content and focus on both sides have some significant similarities, yet many obvious differences.

The second and third chapter in this study focus on the presentation and discussion of the similarities and differences between the two programs. The first task of Chapter 2 is to describe and explain the coding methods I employed for categorizing and analyzing the content of each moral education program – in particular the official policy documents upon which they are based. The second purpose of the chapter is to describe the specific areas of similarity and contrast. In this respect, Chapter 2 focusses on identifying and describing the details of key themes in each program. I identify two, important broad thematic similarities across the two programs. The first theme is that of understanding cultural diversity as an important educational objective. That is, the acknowledgement of "others" and how to co-exist with them in a civilized society are mentioned in both programs. It is notable that in the ERC program, cultural diversity is embodied in the form of religious diversity in Québec society, and there are relatively large amounts of discussions on this topic. In China's program, this objective is embodied mostly by

teaching students to obey and comply with the collective values in the country. Understanding the cultural and ethnical diversity in China is indeed one of these collective values. The second 'common' theme is that of maintaining social order by teaching students to obey laws. Despite the different ideologies the two societies represent (capitalism and socialism), both sides recognize the importance of teaching students to be law-abiding citizens. Besides these two similarities, Chapter 2 also identifies and describes three outstanding thematic differences across the two programs. These three 'different' themes are: China's emphasis on patriotic education, Québec's emphasis on religious diversity as a key aspect of moral education, and China's focus on hard work and industriousness as a personal moral quality. As both moral education programs represent their own unique social context, these differences indicate possibilities of moral education from different perspectives. These perspectives also provide answers to the questions of "what to include in moral education" and "how to teach morality" in a sense that the different experiences from both programs would offer additional space to testify the theories in moral education. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth analysis and discussion of four out of these five themes. I focus on two 'common' and two 'contrast' themes. Thus, the themes of teaching for cultural diversity and teaching the importance of obedience to the law are discussed in order to deepen the readers' understanding of the similarities shared by the two programs, and two 'contrast' themes – patriotic education and religious literacy – are discussed to illuminate and deepen understanding of the different approaches exemplified by the two programs. For reasons of space, the theme of teaching the importance of hard-work and industriousness – emphasized in the Chinese moral education program but neglected in the Québec program – is not analyzed in detail.

Overall, the three chapters answer the research questions in this thesis: What are the similarities and differences both moral education programs represented? What are the potential factors that possibly fostered these similarities and differences? What can we learn, as moral educators, from these similarities and differences? What answers this study has provided to the questions of "what to include in moral education" and "how to teach morality"?

Chapter 1 The Social Context of Moral Education: Québec's ERC and China's Moral Education Program

In the first two chapters of this thesis, I will present a detailed comparison between Québec's ERC Program and China's Moral Education Program. This chapter focuses on the social and historical background of both programs. Chapter 2 compares the contents of both programs based on the research method I will utilize. Chapter 3 then identifies and explains significant points of comparison and contrast across the two programs.

Understanding the social context of both programs is of great importance as the social context offers vital insights such as the main goals, the historical background, and the development of two programs, and above all, the social changes the programs represent. This chapter intends to provide readers with the social background of both moral education programs. The purpose of these analyses in terms of the social context of both programs is crucial for readers, as they provide a general impression of both programs. This impression will lay a solid foundation for readers to comprehend the comparison and contrast of both programs in the following chapters. My description in this chapter is based on historical facts, official government policy documents, and examples drawn from textbooks that were widely used in classrooms.

The two moral education programs represent social changes in China and Québec in recent years. Specifically, the Québec ERC program is a fruit of the secularization process of Québec society since the 1960s after the Quiet Revolution, and the Chinese moral education program represents drastic social changes in China since the adoption of the Reform and Opening-up policy in the 1980s. With the purpose of helping students in keeping up with these social changes, both programs were designed to replace or refine a previous version of moral education in its educational curriculum. The following section will present the social changes both programs represented with detailed illustrations of the social and historical context of both societies.

1.1 Social and Historical Context of Québec's ERC Program

In this section, I will issue the social and historical context for the Québec ERC program. I will begin with an overview of the history of religious education in Québec to help readers to familiarize themselves with the general background of the religious and moral education before and after the ERC program. Then, I will go through major historical periods in Québec to

demonstrate the secularization process of the Québec society and its educational system. Following the historical background of education in Québec, I will introduce the ERC program subsequently as it was a fruit of the secularization process of the education system in Québec. I hope this section will help readers understand the social context that has gestated the ERC program.

1.1.1 An Overview of the History of Religious Education in Québec

In 2008, Québec adopted a new moral education program, which reflected a dramatic change from previous policies and practices. The new program, called *Ethics and Religious Culture*, was promoted as a much-needed course for a secular, culturally and religiously diverse, modern Québec society. Prior to the adoption of the ERC, Québec public schools were required to offer three-options of moral education, namely: Catholic Moral and Religious Instruction, Protestant Moral and Religious Instruction, and a Non-Denominational Moral Instruction. This three-part structure reflected a 19th century consensus struck between English and French colonizers in Canada, whereby the educational rights of both English Protestant and French Catholic communities would be constitutionally guaranteed. Since the 1867 *British North America Act*, Québec society had become increasingly religiously diverse. This diversity was to some extent accommodated by the 'non-denominational' moral education option in schools, which was inadequate as it neglected the need for a more integrated moral education program to accommodate not only French and English Canadians, but the population with increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds in Québec's society. It's also noticeable that in recent history of Québec, especially after the Quiet Revolution in the 1960s (Boudreau, 2011; McRoberts, 1988), the school system in Québec underwent a significant transition from denominational to linguistic school boards. The secularization process of Québec's school system aspired to a new moral education program which embodied democratic values to address the diversity of Québec's society. However, until the initiation of the ERC program in 2008, Catholic and Protestant moral education was officially prioritized. The ERC was thus viewed in part as a way to address the increasingly secularized, multi-religious public sphere in Québec.

At the same time as Québec was transitioning from denominational to linguistic school boards, it was also in the process of revamping its provincial curriculum, as education falls under the provincial governance (Dickinson & Young, 2008). As such, the ERC program is one component of the broader Québec Education Program (QEP) which includes a series of school

subjects like history, math, and science among others. The QEP is not just a collection of individual courses. Each subject area in the QEP is elaborated with reference to common overarching objectives, a set of cross-curricular competencies, or as the Ministry of Education referred as "broad areas of learning" (Morris, 2011, p. 191). The purpose of introducing the "cross-curricular competencies" was to orientate ERC program in the broader curriculum settings in Québec and to reveal its connections with the QEP. There are nine cross-curricular competencies the QEP aimed for. Out of these nine competencies, according to Morris (2011), competency 3, "exercises critical judgment" and competency 8, "to cooperate with others" are explicitly related to the ERC program. Competency 1, "use information"; competency 2, "solves problems"; competency 4, "uses creativity"; and competency 9, "communicates appropriately" are seen to relate to the ERC program (p. 192). The ERC program aims to cultivate three competencies, i.e., ethics competency, religious competency and dialogue competency for students, as citizens in the Québec society, to reason about the common good and to recognize others. Its connections with the broader QEP competencies share many overlapping sections. For example, in the ethics competency, the ERC program emphasizes on interpersonal relationship, which involves cooperation with others, effective communication, and problem-solving skills. These emphases embody the QEP competencies of "solve problems", "to cooperate with others" and "communicates appropriately". The religious competency in the ERC program aims to promote a mutual understanding among all citizens based on an extensive knowledge of the phenomenon of religion. This echoed the QEP competencies of "exercises critical judgement", "to cooperate others", "use information", and "communicates appropriately". Last but not the least, the dialogue competency in the ERC program, which aims to enable students' ability to effectively communicate with others based on the acquirement of religious and ethics competency, has a connection with all the QEP competencies mentioned above. The ERC's connection with these cross-curricular competencies proves that the ERC program does not stand alone in the QEP, rather, "it is a logical outgrowth of the school curriculum officially designated as the Québec Education Program" (Morris, 2011, p. 191).

Furthermore, the QEP has three educational aims, being the construction of a world-view, the structuring of identity, and empowerment, respectively (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2007). The ERC program speaks for these aims in a way that the knowledge students grasp from the ERC program would help them to understand the society well. Moreover, it

would help them to understand their role as citizens in the society, to understand their
connections with others and to empower them to think and act upon ethics and religious matters.
To sum up, the ERC program, together with other subject areas in the QEP, would ultimately
contribute to the achievement of the three objectives in the QEP.

This brief overview presented how the ERC program could be viewed as part of a
broader process of secularization in Québec, marked by increasing religious and cultural
diversity. I will further elaborate on the secularization process of Québec society in the following
section by highlighting some key historical developments leading to the adoption of the ERC.

1.1.2 Historical Background of Education in Québec

As scholar Solange Lefebvre (2016) mentioned in her book chapter *"A cultural and
Dialogic Approach to Religious Education"*, that Québec education "inherit both French and
British legacy" (p. 156). This means the current education system in Québec contains both
French and British characteristics. Looking back to its history, it is evident that Québec's history
is unique compared to other provinces and regions in Canada. In a sense, it experienced three
major historical periods, namely, the French colonization (1608- 1760), the British conquest
(1760- 1867) and the Confederation of Canada (1867- Present). And each of these has shaped
Québec's education system from a very distinctive perspective. For example, according to
Lefebvre (2016), the education system in Québec inherited features from British society in terms
of the promotion of religious education in its school system, and at the same time, it resembled
France in terms of a centralized bureaucracy which advocated unified decisions to the whole
region. This hybrid nature of Québec society explained the emergence of the ERC program. On
the one hand, including religious education in the school system is desirable in Québec from its
British legacy. On the other hand, the French legacy determines that if an education program
needed to be introduced, it should apply to all. Therefore, a concrete explanation of the historical
background of religious education in Québec would serve as useful references for readers to
understand the social context of the education system in Québec, and ERC program particularly.

As a result, this section will discuss the history of education in Québec in chronological
order. With the introduction of historical facts in Québec, I expect readers to learn and
understand the secularization process of Québec society and its impact on the education system
in Québec. Moreover, I also expect readers to understand why the ERC program came into being
from a historical perspective with my illustration in this section.

Early History in Québec

French colonization (1608- 1760) marked the beginning of Québec's history. The involvement of religious orders in educational endeavours can be traced back to the historical foundation of Québec (Boudreau, 2011, p. 212). The French rule brought Roman Catholic Church to Québec and according to Boudreau (2011), "Members of orders such as the Jesuits, Recollects, Sulpicians, Ursulines, Grey Nuns, and the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame were responsible for the formal education of children before and following the British Conquest in 1760" (p. 212). According to Burgess and Henchey (1987), at that time, the purpose of education was mainly focused on bringing Christian faith to the natives (p. 21). The influence of Catholic education to the Québec education system is fundamental, as, during that time, Catechesis was inseparable from education and was in fact considered as the most important element of any education (Jaenen, 1976, p100). Therefore, it could be asserted that the education in Québec started with the Church.

In the year of 1760, the British defeated New France and this marked the beginning of British Conquest in Québec history. The British Conquest brought Anglo-Protestantism to the region. According to Boudreau (2011), the "Catholic education endeavor faced serious challenges after the British Conquest as many clergies went back to France and the Catholic Church property had been reduced" (p. 213). However, the French Catholics fought stubbornly against a centralized education system in fear of the assimilation into English language and culture. Consequently, despite those major setbacks, education stayed under the Church rather than at the state level after the British arrival (Boudreau, 2011, p. 213).

In spite of the tensions between French Catholics and the English Protestants, the two colonies were able to reach an agreement to confederate to a single Canada within the British Empire in 1867. In the same year, section 93 of the *British North America Act* granted provincial jurisdiction to education while protecting the rights of Catholics and Protestants to operate confessional schools (Boudreau, 2011, p. 213). This formed the two separate Confessional religious education systems in Québec, being Catholic and Protestant schools, respectively. The majority of Québec population were French Catholic with a minority of English Protestants. Because of the linguistic and cultural differences, both systems ran their schools independently with little or no government interference (Boudreau, 2011, p. 213).

The division of Catholic and Protestant school boards in Québec was based on linguistic and cultural differences in Québec. Under this system, the moral instructions in these two school boards were distinctive as well, namely, Catholic Moral and Religious Instruction, and Protestant Moral and Religious Instruction. With the supplement of a non-denominational moral Instruction after the Quiet Revolution, which I will discuss in the next section, these three options regarding moral education constitute the moral education system in Québec society before the ERC program. As mentioned above, this three-part structure reflected a 19th century consensus struck between English and French colonizers of Canada. This consensus ensured the educational rights of both English Protestant and French Catholic communities would be constitutionally guaranteed, as they are considered as two of the 'founding' groups in Canada. This system, indeed, represented significant social, cultural and political changes in earlier history of Québec, and manifested a limited form of religious diversity in Québec as well. This diversity was somewhat confined as it neglected other groups of people in Canada at the time. The most obvious example was the indigenous people. As their perspective seemed to be neglected, due to colonial oppression (Alfred, 2009), in this agreement between French and English Canadian entirely. Colonial oppression, the religious conflicts between French Canadian and English Canadian, and the emergence of cultural pluralism in early Québec history has gathered together and called for a significant social reform in Québec society, which happened in the 1960s.

The Quiet Revolution in Québec

The Quiet Revolution in Québec happened from 1960- 1966, and marked a very significant time when Québec society underwent a series of rapid social, cultural and political changes (Boudreau, 2011; Dickinson & Young, 2008). These changes were results from the social changes in earlier periods in Québec history. It is during this time that Québec society gradually transformed to a more secularized modern and democratic society (McRoberts, 1988). The education system in Québec went through rapid changes during this time as well. Instead of the previous church-orientated educational system, the provincial government went into educational affairs in the hopes of building a more secularized school system. The slogan of the liberal campaign was "C'est le temps que ca change (It's time for change)" and indeed it best described the nature of this time period. As a matter of fact, the Quiet Revolution contributed to the Québec economic boost during the 1970s, to the rise of Québec nationalism and the secularization of education. These changes were vital for the Québec society to this day.

From the perspective of educational development, this time marked many significant changes as well. In 1961, the government established the Royal Commission of Enquiry on Education in Québec, which is also known as the Parent Commission. In 1964, the Ministry of Education in the province of Québec was established and the Council of Public Instruction was abolished and the Superior Council of Education was established as an advisory body to the Ministry of Education. The Catholic and Protestant Committees remained part of the advisory body (Boudreau, 2011, p. 213-214). Confessional education in Québec became a shared responsibility of the government and churches during this time. As there were more participants to supervise educational affairs, educational reform to keep up the secularization process of the Québec society was made possible more than ever. The later linguistic school board division is an example of such educational reform. In addition, the development of the ERC program was also made possible because of the state intervention in educational affairs.

It was also during this time that the aspiration of a modern educational system to embody democratic and secular values became the priority of the Québec government. These democratic and secular values are intended to promote mutual understanding and common good among all people, consider multiple perspectives among all people, and enhance trust among all people despite their religious, cultural and ethnic differences. The ERC program can be seen as a program that bears these democratic and secular values in a sense the program is designed to promote mutual understanding and the pursuit of common good among different groups of people in Québec society.

As a matter of fact, the Québec government built regional comprehensive high schools called "polyvalentes" to provide general and vocational programs at the same time. The CÉGEP (College d'Enseignement Gênéal et Professionnel) system was also created during this time. Many university campuses were also being expanded at the same time (Boudreau, 2011, p. 214). The idea of replacing confessional school boards to linguistics boards was emerging. This emergence was due to previous confessional school boards as offering too much "church education", which was no longer valid and desirable in a more secularized Québec society. Whereas, the "linguistic" focus was thought to be a "modern" way to classify the school boards because it minimized the impact of church education by marking the difference of school boards only with the differences of the instructional languages. The Quiet Revolution accelerated the secularization of the education system in Québec. Consequently, a non-confessional moral

option was introduced to schools for those parents or students who did not want a confessional religious education (Boudreau, 2011, p. 214).

The Proulx Report

The Proulx Report was a task force of re-examining religions in Québec schools. It was headed by scholar Jean-Pierre Proulx with the commission from the Education Minister Pauline Marois in October 1997. As Gouvernement du Québec (1999) indicated, the task force was "to examine the place of religion in schools, to define relevant guidelines, and to propose methods for their implementation."[1]With the supplement of a non-confessional moral education option to the existing Catholic and Protestant Moral Instructions, there were three options of moral education in Québec before the ERC. This was a result of the Quiet Revolution, which marked the secularization process of Québec educational system. The Proulx Report came in the time when the transition from denominational school boards to linguistic school boards was ongoing in Québec. With the aim of examining the place of religion in schools, the task force was seeking new possible alternatives for moral education in its school system. This, I believe, contributed directly to the emergence of the ERC program. The Prolux Report consulted parents, school personnel and religious and secular representatives. The whole report was over two hundred pages in the task force, among which, the Proulx report provided 14 recommendations to the government regarding religious education and these recommendations were all eventually implemented by the Québec government in the next decade (Boudreau, 2011, p. 214-215). The recommendations were as follows:

> 1) We recommend that the Government of Québec and the National Assembly confirm the primacy of the right to equality and freedom of conscience guaranteed in the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and, consequently, that they repeal or not renew the current notwithstanding clauses in education legislation which overrides the application of the Charters.

> 2) We recommend that legislation be enacted to establish a secular system of public schools dispensing preschool, elementary, and secondary education.

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[1] See Gouvernement du Québec (1999), *Religion in Secular Schools: A New Perspective for Québec, Abridged Version*. p. 7.

3) We recommend that the current denominational statuses held by public schools be revoked.

4) We recommend that the Education Act be amended to stipulate that the values and beliefs of religious groups cannot be used as criteria to set up a public school for the purposes of a specific project.

5) We recommend that the basic school regulations for elementary and secondary education provide for the study of religions from a cultural perspective in place of Catholic or Protestant religious instruction, and the study of religion be compulsory for all children.

6) We recommend that the programs of study of religions from a cultural perspective be developed and implemented in keeping with the guidelines and frameworks proposed by the Commission des programmes d'études of the Ministère de l'Éducation, and with the relevant provisions of the Education Act.

7) We recommend that the Ministère of L'Éducation encourages flexible measures for teacher-in-service training for the study of religions from a cultural perspective and allocate the necessary financial resources for such measures.

8) We recommend that the Education Act authorize schools to provide common religious and spiritual support services for students of all faiths and that these services be publicly funded.

9) We recommend that the Government define the general objectives of religious and spiritual support services for students in the basic school regulations just as it defines those of other student services: that the local school governing boards draw up programs of activities in keeping with these general objectives; that the school boards set the criteria for hiring religious support specialists in keeping with these same objectives without discrimination.

10) We recommend that the Education Act stipulate that the local school governing boards, may, outside school hours, provide facilities to religious groups that wish to dispense religious instruction or offer services at their own expense to members of their

faith attending the school; and that the Act stipulate that the governing boards must exercise this power without discrimination, taking into account any priorities they may legitimately set with the respect to the use of school premises.

11) We recommend that the provisions of the Act respecting the Conseil superieur de l'éducation pertaining to the Catholic Committee and the Protestant Committee be repealed, that the provisions of the Act respecting the Ministère de L'Éducation pertaining to the associate deputy ministers for the Catholic and Protestant faiths also be repealed and, consequently, that the appropriate changes be made to the organizational structure of the Ministère de L'Éducation.

12) We recommend that section 41 of the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms be amended to recognize, as stated in article 18(4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, "the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions."

13) We recommend that any other applicable legislative and regulatory provisions be amended in keeping with these recommendations.

14) The last point makes suggestions on how the recommendations should be gradually implemented with general and specific provisions.[2]

These fourteen recommendations from the Proulx Report focus on the position of religious education in public education. Based on these recommendations, a program of the study of religions from a cultural perspective that applies to all primary and secondary school students should be desirable in the Québec school settings. Besides the above suggestion of a universal religious culture education program in Québec, the Proulx report also recommended religious and spiritual services for students at schools, which demonstrated its concerns concerning religious matters in the school system in Québec. In terms of teacher education, the Proulx report clearly recommended that financial resources and training sessions should be accessible for

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[2] See Gouvernement du Québec (1999), *Religion in Secular Schools: A New Perspective for Québec, Abridged Version.* p. 85-87.

teachers. There are other recommendations (Recommendation 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, and 13) in the report that secured legal protection for this universal religious culture education program in the education system in Québec. These recommendations justified a secularized religious culture education program. This justification contributed directly to the emergence of the ERC program.

The report was not favored by all as it recommended to secularize the school system in Québec. However, as Boudreau (2011, p. 215) asserted, these recommendations to the government were "the most rational arguments possible". It seemed the Québec government also held a positive stance regarding this universal religious culture program. Furthermore, the government felt the need to justify themselves, and their educational recommendations according to 'rational arguments' that did not assume or reflect any particular religious commitments or perspectives. By 'rational arguments' it would seem that the members of the Proulx commission saw themselves as needing to justify their educational ideas and proposals from a secular perspective rather than a religious or even a multi-religious one (i.e. to members of different faith communities). Therefore, despite the fact that the report was not favored by all, the Québec government started to implement the recommendations of the Proulx report not long after. On July 1, 2000, Catholic and Protestant public schools were abolished. But the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction and Protestant Religious and Moral Instruction stayed as options for moral education choices in the school system. The Protestant and Catholic Committees were also replaced by a non-confessional advisory committee named Religious Affairs Committee (Gouvernement du Québec, 2003). The committee is composed of parents, educators, and experts in religious and philosophical matters with no regulatory powers but to advise and support the Ministry in regards to policymaking, planning, evaluation, information and so on (Gouvernement du Québec, 2003).

1.1.3 The Ethics and Religious Culture Program

As I have mentioned above, the recommendations from the Proulx Report suggested a universal religious culture educational program to all Québec primary and secondary school students. The ERC program was not adopted whole cloth from the Proulx Report, but the report undoubtedly had a huge influence over the program that was eventually adopted, which in fact, is the ERC program. The ERC program was initialized in the year of 2005 where two separate teams worked on drafting the program in elementary and secondary levels. With consultations with experts, the program was planning and implementing professional development for teachers

at the same year (Éducation, Loisir et. Sport, 2006). In the following year 2006, the program was on a validation and review period. It was during this time that several elementary and secondary schools trialed a provisional version of the program and the training sessions for teachers were also launched. This period also marked the time that the program was seeking for ministerial approval in June, 2007 (Éducation, Loisir et. Sport, 2006). By September 1st, 2008, the program was finally approved by the school systems in Québec and was officially introduced and implemented to all elementary and secondary schools.

The ERC program is a carefully designed program which considered all stakeholders in moral education, teachers, students, parents, and the general public in Québec society. It was based on the recommendations of Proulx report to adopt a universal and compulsory religious culture program to all primary and secondary school students in Québec. With a process that took 10 years to initialize and carry out the program, the ERC program addressed the desire of a securitized moral education program in Québec that combined ethics and religious culture in an integrated program.

The program received quite a lot of criticisms during the process of its implementation. For example, shortly after the implementation of the program, a national Canadian newspaper published an article entitled "*Québec's Creepy New Curriculum*" to criticize the program (Morris, 2011, p. 189). There were other examples of the setbacks the program received, like the law case in which the judge favored Loyola High's School's right to offer its own Catholic version of the program. The debate over "moral relativism", which meant the philosophical trend advocated by the State (Boonstra, 2012), was another criticism the program received. Catholic parents applied to exempt their children from the program as they claimed that the program violated the freedom of conscience and religion under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom* and the *Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* (Boonstra, 2012). However, the school board denied their application for exemption. This case was eventually brought to the Supreme Court of Canada. In the end, the court held that "the ERC program is within the constitutional power of the Québec government" (Boonstra, 2012). This led the debate of moral relativism towards the ERC program. In short, these criticisms reflected the drastic social, cultural and political changes in Québec society during its transition from a conservative and denominational society to a more secularized and democratic society. As a result of the secularization process of the educational system in Québec, the ERC program needed time for

the general public to accept. But overall, as Gouvernement du Québec suggested, "Over a period
of several years, numerous public surveys have been conducted regarding religious instruction in
Québec. Groups of specialists have also presented various reports. The main finding is that
schools have evolved by adapting to the changes occurring in today's world." (Éducation Et
Enseignement supérieur, 2017).

Content of the Program

The ERC program centered on three major educational competencies: first, the
competency to reflect on ethical questions; second, the competency to demonstrate an
understanding of the phenomenon of religion; and third, the competency to engage in dialogue.
These three competencies were identified as instruments for fostering two more fundamental
objectives: "recognition of the other" and "pursuit of the common good". Divided into
elementary and secondary level, the ERC program categorized the content in the program
according to the three competencies listed above. Under each competency, there were topics that
needed to be covered in each level. For example, under the competency of "demonstrating an
understanding of the phenomenon of religion", elementary level curriculum covered topics such
as "family celebrations", "stories that have touched people" and "religious values and norms", [3]
which could easily be related to students' experience at elementary schools and therefore could
be digested by them. With the accumulation of experience and knowledge, the same competency
in the program for secondary level upgraded to a large extent in order to adapt students' learning
needs. In secondary level, topics such as "Québec's religious heritage", "existential questions"
and "religious experience"[4] were included in the program. These topics were more abstract
compared to the examples in elementary level in a sense they were not simply experiences or
stories, but topics that required students' personal understanding and evaluations. This was
different to the previous Catholic or Protestant Moral and Religious Instruction because the ERC
program did not constrain itself to a specific religious culture. Instead, it aimed to call for a
critical thinking on religious faith in general, not necessarily only to think upon students'
personal religious faith. This, again, echoed the recommendation from Proulx report. And it was
also a result of the social changes in Québec overtime, from a denominational society to a more
open, secular and just society.

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[3] See Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 342-347
[4] See Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 502-506

1.1.4 Conclusion

To sum up, it is important to understand the religious education in Québec as it revealed the social context of the ERC program over time. In the early history of Québec, education was helmed by the Church, therefore, the school system had a denominational feature. During that time, Québec society underwent a series of social, cultural and political changes. In 1867, which marked Canadian Confederation, section 93 of the *British North America Act* granted provincial jurisdiction to education while protecting the rights of Catholics and Protestants to operate confessional schools (Boudreau, 2011). The French Catholic school boards and the English Protestant school boards operated education respectively in the province thereafter.

This denominational school boards system existed in Québec for a long time. As the accommodation between French Canadian and English Canadian neglected the ever-growing diversity in the Québec society, a reform to secularize the society became desirable. In the 1960s, the Québec society underwent the Quiet Revolution which marked a very significant time of Québec society in terms of drastic social, cultural and political changes. The secularization of Québec society took place at this time, so did the educational system. The aspiration of a modern educational system that embodied democratic and secular values to keep up the secularization process of the Québec society became favorable during this time. As a result, the government took charge of public education during this time, education became a shared business of the state and church. It was also during this time, a non-confessional moral education was introduced to the school systems in Québec, which supplemented the previous Catholic and Protestant moral instructions.

The secularization process of the Québec society required educational reform as well. The previous denominational school boards were replaced by linguistic school boards in Québec gradually. With recommendations from the Proulx Report, an integrated universal religious culture program to all primary and secondary students in Québec seemed to be desirable at this time. The previous moral education based on denominational differences was no longer valid and applicable to the current Québec society. Therefore, the ERC program, based on the recommendations of the Proulx Report to build a secularized moral education program, was finally implemented to all primary and secondary schools in Québec as of the year 2008.

1.2 Social and Historical Context of China's Moral Education Program

The previous section highlighted the historical process through which Québec's ERC program was adopted. As a result of the secularization process in Québec society, the ERC program represented the drastic social, cultural and political changes in Québec society in recent years. As a comparative study between the ERC program and China's Moral Education Program, a clear understanding of the social context of China's program would be equally important. Therefore, I introduce the social background of the moral education program in China in this section. The intention of this section is to present necessary information for readers to understand the education system in China and situate moral education in the system.

1.2.1 An Overview of the Education System in China

Unlike Canada, where control of education is a provincial matter, education in China is at the governance of the state. The Ministry of Education, founded in 1949, is a state department that oversees the overall educational affairs in the country, which includes curriculum design and implementation, funds allocation and resource distribution.

The Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) attaches great importance to educational endeavor ever since it was founded in 1949. From 1949 to 1965, the education system in China was based on the education system of the Soviet Union, which was a highly centralized education model. Under this model, the state took charge of all educational affairs and the decision making followed a pyramidal pattern in which the decisions the state made would apply to all without exceptions. As the country was just founded during this time, it required numerous industrial talents to build the industry departments, therefore, the education system back then prioritized industrial development purposes.

It was also during this time (1955), that the country established the *College Entrance Examination* (CEE,高考, *Gao Kao*) system. This system is a Chinese innovation based on historical experiences in China. The *Imperial Examination System* (科举, *Ke Ju*), originated in Sui Dynasty (581- 618 AD), which helped the state select the most talented people to work for the government, was the prototype of the CEE system. Under the CEE system, the state could select the most qualified students according to their grades to get into higher education level, which would "ensure" the quality of higher education in the country. Due to the state's decision that education should serve for industrial development purposes during this time, the CEE system was meant to boost industrial development in its early times.

However, the Cultural Revolution (1966- 1976) devastated the education system in China. This policy halted schools at all levels. Higher education suffered the most during this time as it was shut down until the end of this era. Millions of young students lost the opportunity to be educated at any level of education in the country. The CEE system was also ceased during this time, and was resumed in 1977.

Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping (1904- 1997), who was considered as the designer of the Reform and Opening up policy in China, China went into a new era. The reform and Opening-up was implemented during the 1980s in China, shortly after the Cultural Revolution. After 3 decades of limited communication with the outside world due to political and ideological dissents during the Cold War time, China aspired a reform inside the country to re-examine itself in terms of policy making, and an opening-up outside the country to build up an open market system that helped to release the country's economic potential. During Deng's leadership, the country went through drastic social changes in terms of economic development, cultural openness and political reform as compared to the Cultural Revolution period. These changes, in return, contributed significantly to the overall development of the country (Qi & Tang, 2007, p. 467).

With the adoption of the Reform and Opening-up policy, China went into a new era, and so did the education system. In 1986, the Chinese government decided to establish and implement the 9-year compulsory education system (九年义务教育, *Jiunian Yiwu Jiaoyu*) in the country, which remained as an element in its educational system thereafter. The government issued *Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China* on July 1, 1986, ensuring attending schools as a civic obligation for all. In 2008 fall, the 9-year compulsory education was made free to all citizens in China. Before that, students enrolled in schools needed to pay tuition and administration fees. After 2000, most schools waived tuition fees for students, however, a certain amount of administrative fees was charged in most schools. As a result, in 2006, the government refined the *Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, ensured that the 9-year compulsory education should be free to all. The 9-year compulsory education was also referred as "Basic Education" in China, which demonstrated the significance of this phase of education was to lay a solid foundation for all students in terms of their life-long educational endeavours.

The Chinese education system is divided into 5 phases, the second and third phases constitute the 'compulsory' element discussed above. In the first phase, children aged from 3 to 6 usually enroll in pre-school kindergarten, which is not a compulsory action. Then, at the age of 6 or 7, all citizens in China are required to attend primary schools which usually last 6 years. In some provinces, primary school is 5 years. The third phase is also a compulsory action. Students who graduated from primary schools will need to continue attending another 3-years of junior high school education. In some provinces, junior high schools last 4 years. Overall, primary school and junior high school together constitute the 9-Year Compulsory Education in China. The enforcement of the 9-year compulsory education in China is protected by the *"Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China"* (中华人民共和国义务教育法) which was established in 1986. A citizen is obliged to attend school from primary level to the junior high school level. Following the 9-Year Compulsory Education, a three-year senior high school education will prepare students to study in universities, which constitutes the fourth phase in the education system in China. University and college education is the fifth phase in the education system. Senior high school education and university education are not mandatory to all citizens. The law does not include attending high school and college as a citizenship obligation, whereas, the 9-year compulsory education is applicable to all by law. As this thesis only examines the moral education program in China's 9-year compulsory education, discussion upon other phases in China's education system would not be further examined. The above information is for readers to understand the general structure of China's education system.

The subject areas in the 9-year compulsory education are diverse. In primary school level, students are usually required to study subjects including Chinese Language and Literature, Mathematics, English, Moral Education, Physical Education, Music education, Arts, and Computer. As law made it compulsory to attend schools, students are automatically considered for the next level of study, which is junior high school. In this phase of education, students are required to study Morality and Laws, Chinese Language and Literature, Mathematics, English, Physics, Chemistry, Chinese History, World History, Geography, Biology, Physical Education, Information and Technology, as well as Music and Arts. Moral education shared an important position in the subject areas in the 9-year compulsory school settings.

As an independent subject area, moral education, in theory, is considered as important as other subject areas such as Chinese Language and Literature, Mathematics and English.

According to the Ministry of Education in China (MOE, 2001), moral education should account for 7% - 9% among all subject areas in the 9-year compulsory education system. In reality, however, moral education seems to receive less attention as compared to the subject areas mentioned above. The fact that moral education receives less attention as compared to other subject areas does not necessarily indicate it is less important. It is simply because moral education does not determine overall grades for students when it comes to significant examinations such as the CEE. Subject areas like Chinese Language and Literature, Math and English share a significant amount of grades in the CCE, because the educational system distributed higher portions of grades to these three subjects as they are the major subjects. In comparison, the subject area of moral education is considered as minor subject. However, as I shall reiterate, this does not mean that moral education is less important in the overall curriculum settings in China.

To sum up, this section briefly overviewed the history of education in the PRC and the general educational system settings in the country. In addition, specific emphasis was given to the 9-year compulsory education as my thesis examine this phase of education in China. Moral education is a subject area in the 9-year compulsory education. It is an important subject area, however the attention concerning the subject was somewhat less since the subject area was not associated with examinations in the school system. As I have mentioned earlier, that the 9-year compulsory education setting was adopted during the Reform and opening-up in China when the country underwent significant cultural, economic and political changes. It is crucial to unfold this period of time in China to help readers better understand the social context of the current moral education program in China. Therefore, the next section will talk about the Reform and Opening-up policy in China and its influence towards education.

1.2.2 The Reform and Opening-up and its Influence towards Education

The decision of 9-year compulsory education was made during the time when the Reform and opening-up policy was adopted by the PRC government. During this time, the country went through rapid social changes with the boost to its economy. These social changes continue to affect multiple dimensions of people's life in China to this day. For example, the market system has brought products from all over the world to China and at the same time promoted the "Made in China" products globally. The exchange of these products enriched people's life in China, at the same time created millions of job opportunities in the country. The social changes that this

policy has brought to China were more than the market system, therefore, an independent section introducing this policy is crucial for readers to understand the general social context of this policy as well as its influence towards the moral education program in China.

Designed and commissioned by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, the Reform and Opening-up policy developed a market economy in China, which compensated the planned economy in the country before (Qi & Tang, 2004, p. 467-468). The market economy system opened the Chinese market to the whole world and brought fast economic growth to the country. The growth in economy strengthened the overall capacity of the country, therefore, made it possible for the government to input more funds in education. On the other hand, the growth in economy also improved living standards for many people in China, and made it possible for them to think about their life from perspectives other than food and shelter (Qi & Tang, 2007, p. 468). In other words, people started to care more about their life from a cultural perspective and require accommodations of their cultural life to be able to keep up with the fast pace of the economic growth (Bian, 2002).

Opening-up the country's market will inevitably involve cultural exchange as the process of building market system is the process of exchanging ideas with the whole world. Meanwhile, with the expansion of media and internet, China is closely tied to the global community more than ever. Media and internet, in turn, have brought new sources of information to Chinese people. As such, with the joint efforts of cultural openness and media expansion, Chinese people were exposed to increasingly more new ideas from other cultures such as democracy, liberty, and individualism, which supplemented the traditional Chinese morality and ethics. The traditional Chinese morality and ethics were shaped significantly by the Confucianism philosophy which promoted group interests over individual interests (He, 2005, p. 59). Loyalty to the country was considered as one of the five ethics (He, 2005, p. 67) in Confucianism philosophy (the other four ethics are "Benevolence", "Righteousness", "Courtesy", and "Wisdom"). The exposure of the idea of individualism, for example, has provided new perspectives in regards to people's perception to the collective interests over individual interests. The 1989 Tiananmen Square Student Protest was an action that called for democracy, freedom of speech, and more political participation among young people in China (Cherrington, 1991). In my personal opinion, it was also a protest to call for more space for individual interests over the collective interests. This example was to illustrate how cultural openness and media expansion have changed people's

perception of morality and ethics in China after the adoption of the Reform and Opening-up policy.

In terms of education, the supplement of Chinese morality and ethics from cultural openness and media expansion has brought new perspectives for people to think upon education. This new perspective was in fact, the aspiration for a reform to the existing curriculum to keep up the drastic social, cultural, economic and political changes in China. Consequently, on June 8, 2001, the Ministry of Education issued an *Outline for Basic Education Curriculum Reform*, indicated specific curriculum reform guidelines. One of the most important guidelines was regarding placing curriculum in the social context of China. [5] As I have mentioned previously, that the Reform and Opening-up has brought significant social changes in China, among which, the changes of people's perception of morality and ethics were most important for education. As such, the curriculum reform had to embody these social changes to help students keep up with these social changes. In addition, the *Outline* also gave focus on cultivating students' ability to integrate the knowledge they absorbed in class to their daily life. [6] In other words, the *Outline* confirmed the importance of teaching students to test the knowledge they have gained instead of just accepting them as facts to help them in getting points in exams. As a matter of fact, the *Outline* acknowledged the shortcomings of the previous curriculum, which was on the fact that education in China focused too much on transmitting knowledge as "facts" therefore leading to education as reciting facts instead of critically thinking upon them. [7] The idea of encouraging students to apply knowledge to their practice requires students to test the knowledge they have gained which will provide different but multiple perspectives for them to comprehend, question and apply the knowledge eventually.

To sum up, the Reform and Opening-up brought rapid economic developments and huge social changes to China, which impacted education. During this time, some people got wealthier in terms of material possessions, which enabled them to think upon the cultural perspective of their life more often. With the joint efforts of cultural openness and media expansion, Chinese people were exposed to increasingly more ideas such as democracy, liberty, and individualism. These ideas, have re-shaped Chinese people's perception in terms of morality and ethics.

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[5] *Outline for Basic Education Curriculum Reform*, Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 1
[6] *Outline for Basic Education Curriculum Reform,* Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 1
[7] *Outline for Basic Education Curriculum Reform,* Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 1

Consequently, to orient students better with these changes, a country-wide curriculum reform took place in 2001. The reform suggested to place curriculum more into the social context of China, and called for more space for critical thinking by the recommendation of an ability for students to apply and test the knowledge they absorbed in class with reality. As a subject area, this country-wide curriculum reform applied to the moral education program in China as well. In the next section, I will focus on how moral education was placed in the reform.

1.2.3 Moral Education in China

Moral education has always played a pivotal role in educational practice in China. Known as a land of ceremonies and rites, to educate its people to be well-behaved humans seemed to be the fundamental and ultimate goal of education in China, regardless of the ideology or the government which represented the country during different periods in its history. As such, as early as Chinese civilization started, moral education (德育, literally means the cultivation of morality and ethics) served as the top-tier of all educational endeavors (Qi & Tang, 2007, p. 477).

Moral education in ancient times in China (before the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912) was not regulated systematically by the government. Since education was a privilege only for people with a noble name in ancient times, education could not be applicable to all as it is today. As a matter of fact, moral education was mostly carried out with a set of social norms and regulations from the Confucianism philosophy in ancient times. Ideas such as the five ethics, "Benevolence", "Righteousness", "Courtesy", "Wisdom" and "Loyalty" served as the primary guidance and is continuing affects people's thinking until today.

In its recently history, the first Minister of Education in the Republic of China, Mr. Yuanpei Cai, introduced the notion of civic education as a subject area for all primary and secondary students in 1923 (Liang, 1953). His idea was to introduce liberalism into civic education and implement an education system that could be accessible to all citizens in China. However, China soon went to war with Japan one decade later. Moral education during war time was under a politicized system which advocated the support for the Kuomintang. [8] Then with the founding of the PRC, the Communist Party of China carried this politicized system of moral education in mainland China until the reform and opening-up time.

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[8] National Education Affairs Administrative Committee, Republic of China, 1927

Despite the long history of moral education in China, my thesis will mainly focus on the current moral education curriculum China adopted, which was based on the curriculum reform in the year of 2001. The Reform and Opening-up has brought tremendous economic growth to China and changed people's life from different dimensions. From the perspective of morality, with the supplement of western democratic ideas, people's perception of morality and ethics had evolved. One example to illustrate this change, the traditional morality would assume sex before marriage as morally shameful, whereas, with the supplement of the idea of sexual liberation from western democratic values, people's perception concerning sex has changed in a way that such action would not be considered as shameful anymore. These changes, however, were not embodied in the moral education curriculum at that time.

Therefore, under the guidance of the *Outline* in 2001, a new version of moral education curriculum was created and implemented in the school system. The objectives of China's new moral education curriculum were to address the social changes and to meet students' needs for personal development. The curriculum aimed to teach students to be good citizens with a good sense of collectiveness. The curriculum also hoped that students could foster a positive life attitude so that it could lead them to a happy and meaningful life.

Unlike the ERC program, the current moral education program in China was not meant to replace the previous program, but to refine it by modifying details in the old version. For example, the current program added more stories in textbooks for students to discuss and voice their opinions towards certain topics such as students' role in being good citizens, the importance of good ethnic relations in the country and the significance of hard-work in students' educational and professional paths (MOE, 2011). These changes would help students to understand themselves well, and in particular, to understand their relationship with the Chinese society well. In the example above, a good ethnic relationship (will be discussed in Chapter 3) would strengthen a shared Chinese identity to all citizens in China. And by working hard, the economic growth in China could be sustainable. The new version of the moral education program in China would like to ensure students personal development in the social changes in China, and above all, to ensure the development at the collective and national level.

In short, these changes to the moral education program would prepare students to meet the social, cultural, political and economic changes in China after the Reform and Opening-up

(Law, 2007, p. 35). As an important component of the 9-year compulsory education in China, moral education reform manifested the overall curriculum reform in 2001.

1.2.4 Summary

The current moral education program in China is a fruit of the curriculum reform to the 9-year compulsory education in 2001. As the reform *Outline* suggested that the curriculum should place social context into consideration, as well as to integrate critical thinking in the curriculum settings. The new version of the moral education program in China was based on these two suggestions. The economic growth in China strengthened the overall power of the country, at the same time brought major visible changes to the social fabric of the country. As western democratic ideas became accessible to Chinese people, the importance of individual flourishing became very obvious in the society. Therefore, ensuring personal development was integrated into the moral education curriculum in China was a necessary trend to meet with the rapid social changes. In addition, the current program added more stories in the textbooks to illustrate moral issues and encouraged students to voice out their opinion regarding these stories. Unlike the previous educational settings which only focused on learning facts, the new version of moral education program in China encourages students' personal opinions and also requires students to test the knowledge they have absorbed in class to reality.

1.3 Summary of Chapter 1

To sum up, the social context of both moral educations programs shared many similar points. Before the existence of the current moral educational program, there was a previous version of similar program(s) in the educational system in both societies. Both programs were designed to cope with rapid social changes in their individual context.

The ERC program replaced the previous three moral instruction options with an integrated program that applies to all schools in Québec. It is based on the recommendations from Proulx Report to secularize the education system in Québec. It is also a desirable goal to have such a program in the contemporary Québec society as it has become home to First Nations, French-Canadians, English-Canadians and numerous new immigrants from all over the world. Therefore, an integrated moral education program that favors no specific groups of people would promote the democratic and secular values Québec held.

The Chinese moral education curriculum is a fruit of the Reform and Opening-up policy which brought tremendous economic, cultural and political changes to China. After decades of

overall development in the country, the desire to refine the educational system was very

demanding in China. With exposure to more western democratic values, Chinese people's

perception of the morality has changed significantly. Therefore, the moral instruction needed to

be updated accordingly. As a matter of fact, personal development was integrated as a very

important element in the current moral education program in China. Meanwhile, critical thinking

become more desirable in the new program as well. These changes would help students to situate

themselves better with the drastic changes around them.

      In short, the common aim of launching the current moral education program in Québec

and China was to ensure students' learning needs were well accommodated with the social

changes over years in their recent history. I hope this chapter has provided some interesting

points for readers to understand both moral education programs from their social and historical

backgrounds. This knowledge will situate readers well in the next chapter where I present the

comparative analysis on the content of both programs.

Chapter 2 Mapping the Content of Two Moral Education Programs

This chapter and the next chapter provide, together, a comparative analysis of two national moral education programs – Québec's ERC and China's moral education program. The present chapter focusses on presenting similarities or areas of overlap in the content of the two programs, at the same time, identifying significant areas of difference. However, before proceeding with this comparative discussion, I first discuss some methodological issues that explain the basis for my comparison of the two moral education programs whose differences reflect very different political, cultural and social contexts within which they were designed and implemented.

2.1 Research Methodology of this Study

Comparing the two programs of moral education under consideration presents two obvious challenges. The first challenge involved the problem of identifying themes for comparison from among many possible alternatives. In order to identify key similarities and differences across both programs, I employed a coding method based on Zina O'Leary's (2014) influential Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) method in her book *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*. This book provides requisite and fundamental overview of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in the field of Social Science. As an internationally recognized scholar in research methods, her book provides valuable theoretical framework for me in terms of the coding methodology I adopt. The second challenge concerns the actual comparative analysis and evaluation itself. I approach this task through philosophical reflection, analysis and evaluation. My study thus incorporates a 'mixed methods' approach by combining these two methodologies. The qualitative coding method, based on O'Leary's theory, will identify the thematic similarities and differences in both programs. After that, the philosophical analysis will address on these overlapping and differential points with literature from scholars such as Ronald Morris, Spencer Bourdeau and Kevin McDonough. These two individual research methods will provide a joint framework to guide this thesis. In the following sections, I will elaborate on the research methods I have adopted in this thesis.

2.1.1 Qualitative Coding Method in this Study

The coding method I choose to employ is drawn from O'Leary's framework. In addition, I also refer to Auerbach and Silverstein's book *Qualitative Date: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis* for more reference. I mostly use O'Leary's framework to code the data in my thesis,

and refer to Auerbach and Silverstein's framework whenever necessary to validate and supplement my coding methods. According to O'Leary's (2014, p. 372) framework, there are six steps in the process of QDA: 1) Identifying biases and noting overall impressions; 2) Reducing, organizing and coding your data; 3) Searching for patterns and interconnections; 4) Mapping and building themes; 5) Building and verifying theories; 6) Drawing conclusions.

As the data in this study were mostly generated from policy documents and textbooks issued by the government, they already existed as very logical and systematic data themselves, namely, each section in both programs existed in the format of a lesson or a topic in which the main ideas would be expressed accordingly. Hence, my coding method start on reducing (Step 2 of QDA) the content of these lessons and topics to concise ideas that would help me, and most importantly, the readers of this thesis to identify the similarities and differences in both programs. In doing so, as suggested by O'Leary (2014), I explore the topics and lessons through the key words that are used and the concepts that are discussed in policy documents and textbooks from both programs. As O'Leary (2014, p374) explains, words can be explored through their repetition, or through exploration of their context and usage. This idea is also recognized by Patton (2001) and Corbin & Strauss (2007). Therefore, I specifically look for these words that are being repeated multiple times in these documents to look for the common interconnections as suggested in step 3 of QDA. Step 3 is introduced here because the words that are being repeated does not necessarily mean that they are the key ideas in each topic, they might be simple repetition in some case. In addition, my main task to code these data is to interpret them to readable key concepts that would help readers to recognize the similarities and differences of both programs. Therefore, looking for the interconnections to supplement the word repetition would be ideal to have the most concise conclusions.

The coding method I used is described as follows: By looking for these repetitions of words and their interconnections, I first made a list of the different major topics covered in each program. Second, I identified and listed key learning objectives of these topics, i.e., the key concepts these topics embodied. Third and finally, I organized these two lists in a way that made clear how each major topic is related to different learning objectives. Most importantly, however, my coding method did not strictly maintain and follow the terminology and categories specified in the respective policy documents from China and Québec. Instead, I used my own thematic 'coded' labels to capture key areas of similarity and difference which might otherwise be

obscured by terminological and other differences between the two programs. These labels and
the coding process is attached in the Appendices of this thesis. The reason I included my own
coded label here was to make sure the data in both programs would be understandable for
readers. That was because the same idea would be described differently in both programs due to
their social, cultural and political differences.

An example would help to illustrate. One specific topic in the ERC program is
"Interpersonal relationships in groups". This topic includes discussions of several sub-topics,
such as "the development of personal identity and the groups to which people belong",
"advantages and disadvantages of group life" and "the diversity of relationships between group
members". [9] In this case, I categorized the ERC terminology under a new, 'coded' topic,
"Understanding cultural diversity". This code then served as a conceptual 'bridge' to compare
the ERC topic with comparable topics in China's moral education curriculum, despite the
terminological differences employed in the two programs.

This code was also based on O'Leary's QDA mode. After I have sought the word
repetitions and looked for their interconnections in step 2 and 3, mapping and building theme
would come to the next. In doing so, I referenced scholarly works to gain inspiration to re-name
these topics to a conceptual bridge as I have mentioned above. For example, the term
"understanding cultural diversity" was based on Kevin McDonough's book chapter in
*Citizenship and education in liberal democratic societies: Teaching for cosmopolitan values and
collective identities*. In his article, he mentioned multiple times the idea of "promoting cultural
respect to minority people in a multination state" (McDonough, 2003). With the inspiration of
his idea, I then concluded "Interpersonal relationship in groups" as respecting cultural diversity
because this best captured the idea in this topic.

Back to the example of "understanding cultural diversity". In China's moral education
program, I applied the same code to the third lessons at primary level, which requires students to
"Love the people. Be a good child in family, a good student at school. Knows how to
harmoniously get along with others". [10] My rationale to conclude this topic as understanding
cultural diversity lies on the fact that it teaches students to deal with interpersonal relationships
in a group. Although this lesson does not specifically mention cultural diversity, its emphasis on

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[9] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 337
[10] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

the importance of interpersonal relationship in different social groups would require an

understanding of the differences students have with "others" in contemporary Chinese society.

These differences embody cultural connotations. Thus, the code of "understanding cultural

diversity" would apply to the theme of this lesson. Nevertheless, my use of common, coded

labels to identify shared themes and topics should not gloss over noticeable areas of difference

between the two programs. The significance of good behavior in family life, which is a

significant aspect of the Chinese program, is not highlighted in the corresponding section of the

Québec curriculum. This point is important to keep in mind. Nevertheless, I simply want to

emphasize here that my coded labels are intended to highlight areas of overlap and contrast

between the two programs in this case, and not to impose or assume a perfect correspondence

between the two programs.

In short, based on this coding method I have employed under the framework of O'Leary,

each topic in both programs represented at least one learning objective that best captured the core

concept of the specific topic. These learning objectives were results of my conclusion of the

word and concept repetitions in each program documents. Meanwhile, these learning objectives,

or as I shall refer as "coded labels" came from the inspiration of scholar works such as the

example of "understanding cultural diversity". In other cases, I adopted some commonly

accepted concepts in moral education such as "religious literacy", "patriotic education" or "law

education" as coded labels for these learning objectives. Although I cannot possibly include all

the learning objectives embodied in both programs, I will, however, identify the most distinct

ones for further discussion in later chapters.

2.1.2 Philosophical Inquiry in this Study

The coding method described in the above sections provided me with a way of selecting

and organizing 'data' that would provide the basis for my comparative discussion of the two

moral education programs from China and Québec. I now turn to the main task of this thesis,

which is to actually explain and critically analyze the content of these two programs.

Unlike the QDA I have introduced before, the philosophical inquiry I have employed in

this thesis is more sophisticated. The reason of this complexity lies in the fact that there is no

consensus on what is involved in this sort of inquiry, such that it cannot be described as a

unified, coherent and self-contained methodology. For example, as Ruitenberg (2009, p. 318)

mentions, that the method in philosophy of education refers to "the various ways and modes in

which philosophers of education think, read, write, speak and listen, that make their work
systematic, purposeful and responsive to past and philosophical and educational concerns and
conversations". Based on her theory, the methods in philosophical inquiry can be various, as
long as they embody the thinking process of the scholar. Furthermore, as Holma (2009) mentions
the method of philosophical reconstruction, or the process of analysis and synthesis. In his
theory, the philosophical reconstruction seeks 1) to understand the concepts as they are used in
this particular context, 2) to clarify the interconnections of these concepts, and finally, 3) to
reconstruct the text for understanding and interpreting it from a new perspective (Holma, 2009,
p325-338). My analysis process in this thesis was influenced by his mode.

However, there are many different ways of thinking philosophically, and there are
disagreements among philosophers about what constitutes genuinely philosophical thinking and
analysis. Nevertheless, my goal in this thesis is not to provide an overall picture of philosophical
inquiry. I will, instead, use this method to identify some of the analytical goals and interpretive
challenges my thesis presented, and then explain how I employ the philosophical inquiry to
address these challenges. For example, some of the goals and challenges included – comparing
and analyzing the similarities and differences in both programs, after the coded data from the
ERC and Chinese moral education program documents. Another task included analyzing and
interpreting the data in light of related scholarly work in moral philosophy and moral education.
Related to both of these tasks was the challenge of critically examining some of my key
assumptions. For example, with the comparison of both programs, one of the most obvious
differences is regarding patriotic education. Although the ERC program does focus on fostering
civic identification in the program, compared to the massive coverage of "patriotic love" in
China's moral education program, it becomes a major difference both program share. Therefore,
my assumption was that the importance of patriotic education in China's moral education was
simply due to its political system. However, with a thorough examination of scholarly works
related to patriotic education, my understanding of patriotic education was widened. Therefore, I
could articulate this topic with more details based on the philosophical inquiry method I have
adopted in this thesis. In addition, as a comparative study, inevitably I need to apply tactics such
as contrast, analogy, exemplification and synthesis to build a clear thread that connects my
illustrations in the thesis. Based on Holma's mode, I will employ these tactics to interpret the
thematic similarities and differences in this thesis. For example, in my illustration of the thematic

similarity of "teaching respect for and compliance with the law" in the next chapter, I will employ exemplification to illustrate my understanding of the law, as I would like to phrase this concept in a less juridical way for readers to comprehend. These tactics are within the broader range of the philosophical inquiry I have employed in this thesis and will be utilized mostly in Chapter 3 to discuss and analyze the thematic similarities and differences in both programs.

In short, the QDA method and the Philosophical Inquiry are two individual methods that are being employed in this thesis. The qualitative coding method is subordinate and secondary to the philosophical analysis. But this thesis was made possible with their joint efforts. In the next section, I will present an overview of the two programs. Following that, the content of both programs will be introduced systematically with the employment of the QDA method.

2.2 An overview of the Two Programs

The ERC program was implemented in 2008. It aims to cultivate students' competencies to reflect on ethical questions, to demonstrate an understanding of the phenomenon of religion and to engage in dialogue. With these three competencies, the program would like to achieve its objectives to help students to recognize others and to pursue the common good. Divided into elementary and secondary level, the ERC program categorized the content in the program according to the three competencies listed above. The program was introduced to replace the previous three moral education choices in the curriculum settings in Québec. The ERC program itself was a result of the secularization process of the Québec society. It is an individual part of the broader Québec Education Program (QEP). In the first chapter I have mentioned the cross-curricular competencies QEP aimed for, which demonstrated that the ERC program was designed to function interactively with other parts of the QEP to foster the three further cross-curricular educational aims — the construction of a world-view, the structuring of identity, and empowerment (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2007).

The current Chinese moral education curriculum was introduced during the curriculum reform in China in 2001. It is a major subject area in the 9-year compulsory education. The program aims to help student to understand "myself" and "my" obligations and rights as Chinese citizens; to understand the relation between "myself" and "others" and to conduct effective communications with "others" accordingly; and to understand my relations with the society, the environment, and the nation as a whole. In addition to these three requirements of understanding,

the program also aims to teach students to respect for and comply with laws. [11] These four requirements mentioned above are the competencies the program aims to cultivate for the students. The moral education program in China's education system, similar to Québec's ERC, exists alongside, and interacts with, other subject areas in the curriculum － such as Chinese Language and Literatures, Mathematics and English and so forth. Like the ERC, the Chinese moral education curriculum is designed to cultivate cross-curricular abilities and to develop overall quality for students.

In terms of the goals of the program, the current Chinese moral education curriculum has two specific goals. The first one is to addresses the social needs in Chinese society which is to help students to situate themselves well in the social changes in China in recent years. The program believes moral education teaches students to be good citizens, cultivates a sense of collectiveness and helps students to form good world outlook, life philosophy and values. These good deeds of moral education would achieve the goal of helping students to meet with the social changes in China. The second goal of the program is to meet students' personal development, as well as to assist students to discover and create a happy and meaningful life in their future endeavors. Both goals are in response to the ideas of the 2001 Curriculum Reform Outline in China.

It is also worth mentioning that both the ERC and the Chinese moral education program are designed based on their unique social background. The ERC program is a result of the secularization process of the Québec society and the Chinese moral education program was updated during the Reform and Opening-up period in China. As a result, they employ distinctive and disparate vocabularies and terminology in elaborating the details of their curricular content. These terminological differences, and the social and cultural meanings attached to them, created challenges for both the classificatory and interpretive tasks outlined previously in this chapter. In the next section, I explain how I used the five coded labels, as a solution to bridge the two programs by identifying common themes, values, goals as well as a way to pinpoint salient points of difference and contrast.

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[11] *Outline for Basic Education Curriculum Reform*, Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 2

2.3 Thematic Similarities and Differences between the Two Programs

As is mentioned in the research methodology section, since both programs were divided into individual topics, I decided to code the theme of each topic according to the most significant idea it represented, which I refer as the "learning objective" for each topic. These learning objectives will assist readers to easily identify the similarities and differences in both programs.

As a result, ERC program after coding, represent three salient "learning objectives", i.e., the objective of understanding and respecting cultural diversity, the objective of teaching students to be law-obedient, and the objective of the promotion of religious literacy. On China's side, there are four learning objectives in total, understanding and respecting cultural diversity, teaching students to be law-obedient, patriotic education and teaching the value of hardworking. Following the coding method adopted for this study, I defined five distinct perspectives to capture the thematic similarities and differences between the two programs. I further divided these five perspectives by identifying two major thematic 'similarities' and three major thematic 'differences' between the two programs.

In terms of similarities, both program emphasized on teaching respect for and compliance with the law, at the same time recognized the importance of fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity. The differences between both programs were a bit complicated in a sense some of the themes overlapped to some degree but ultimately went on a different track. For instance, in terms of the theme of patriotic education, both program addressed their concerns on this topic and include this topic as a learning objective in their practices. Their motives, however, were quite different to each other. According to MacMullen's (2015) classification, it appeared to me that the ERC program promoted a 'civic identification' among students. Whereas the Chinese program sought for the "patriotic affection" among students. This classification will be further introduced in Chapter 3. Nevertheless, despite the overlap in both programs in terms of patriotic education, I concluded it as a major difference they shared. Apart from patriotic education, both programs took different stances in regards to the topic of teaching religious literacy and the teaching of the importance of hard work. Religious competency, as a major component of the ERC program, accounted for 1/3 of the whole program. However, religious literacy was an unfortunate omission in the Chinese program since the program mentioned nothing concerning this topic. Interestingly, China's moral education program did introduce a

number of topics in regards to hard work, whereas the ERC program neglected this focus. In short, these similarities and differences were ultimately organized as follows:

Thematic Similarities:

i.   Fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity

ii.   Teaching respect for and compliance with the law

Thematic Differences:

i.   Teaching Religious Literacy

ii.   Patriotic Education

iii.   Teaching the importance of hard work

In the following sections, we will take a closer look at the content of both programs under the guidance of the thematic similarities and differences I have identified above. I will pinpoint each topic in both programs and reference the program information to validate my comparison. This chapter will not discuss the similarities and differences both program share, rather, it will simply locate the similarities and differences in the two programs for readers to better understand how these points are articulated in this thesis. The next chapter will shoulder the responsibility of discussing, interpreting and analyzing these similarities and differences.

2.3.1 Fostering Understanding and Respect for Cultural Diversity

To begin with, both moral education programs talk about the importance of understanding and respecting cultural diversity. By cultural diversity, I am referring to both programs' emphasis on the significance of recognizing and understanding the difference between student as an individual and "others" in the society. This cultural diversity is in terms of the cultural, religious and ethnic differences among citizens in both societies. This similarity is an idea throughout both programs. In Québec's ERC program, as the objectives of the program are to pursue the common good and to recognize others, all three competencies in the program embody the idea of understanding and respecting cultural diversity. In China's program, this idea is also a salient one as the program concludes this understanding as a good virtue in interpersonal relationship. The program therefore calls for students' attention to understand this diversity. To help readers understand this similarity vividly, I will retrieve some of the topics in both programs to demonstrate this similarity in the following text.

The theme of cultural diversity in Québec's ERC Program

I will begin by introducing several specific examples from the ERC program. Furthermore, I will list these examples in separate sections, divided according to the three competencies in the program – the ethics competency, the religion competency, and the dialogue competency – related to the broad theme of "understanding cultural diversity".

Example 1: *Ethics competency-* The ethics competency in the ERC refers to students' ability to reflect on ethical questions. This competency enables students to think for oneself and to use critical and creative thinking, to guard against the consequences of passivity and moralism, and also to be cognizant of and respect the basic values of Québec society. [12] Furthermore, this competency is broken down into more specific components. These components are different at the elementary and secondary levels. At the elementary level, there are six topics under ethic competency, being 1). "the needs of humans and other living beings"; 2). "interpersonal relationships in groups"; 3). "demands associated with the interdependence of humans and other living beings"; 4). "demands of belonging to a group"; 5). "individuals as members of society"; and 6). "demands of life in society", [13] respectively. At the secondary level, there are seven topics regarding ethics competency, 1). "Freedom"; 2). "Autonomy"; 3). "Social Order"; 4). "Tolerance"; 5). "The future of humanity"; 6). "Justice"; and 7). "Human ambivalence". [14]

Broadly speaking, the ethics competency in elementary level in the ERC program emphasizes discussions on the relationship of individual and groups. For example, in the topic of "demands associated with the interdependence of humans and other living beings", it talks about the responsibilities for students at home and at school, and values and norms that guide behavior at home and at school. [15] This topic points out the importance of maintaining interpersonal relationships in a group, both at home and school. It also attaches great importance to the understanding of the differences, i.e., the diversity in terms of culture, religion and ethnicity, among individuals in a group. In return, respecting for this diversity would assist students to maintain a good relationship with other people in a group. Hence, I coded this topic as "fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity". Other topics in the ethics competency in the

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[12] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 310
[13] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 335-340
[14] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 497-500
[15] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 335-340

elementary level shoulder the same responsibility, which is to present the importance of maintaining good interpersonal relationships within a group for students. As a result, I coded all the topics in the ethic competency in the elementary level of ERC as "understanding cultural diversity". I believe the ethics competency in the elementary level in the ERC program involves an ability for students to realize their differences with others and at the same time, to realize their responsibilities in dealing with these differences. What's more, to deal with these differences, an understanding of the diversity in Québec society is significantly important. Based on these facts, it was a proper call to code ethics competency in primary level as cultural diversity understanding skills.

In the ethics competency in the secondary level, the ERC program introduces ideas such as "freedom", "autonomy" and "social order". These ideas seem to have no direct link with my code label "understanding cultural diversity". However, despite how abstract these ideas are, I argue that by nature these topics still address the same issue as raised in the primary level, which is to assist students to properly deal with interpersonal relationship. For example, in the topic of "autonomy" and "social order", the ethics competency includes the relationship of individual and group again. This action demonstrates a fact that an understanding of this relationship would be crucial for students to digest these abstract ideas as mentioned above. In terms of other topics in the ethics competency in the secondary level, they present apparent connections with my coded label "understanding cultural diversity". Consequently, this label applies to the topics in secondary level regarding ethic competency as well.

A further significant feature of the ERC's secondary level curriculum is that the learning objective of *understanding* cultural diversity gradually shifts to the objective of *respecting* cultural diversity. Specifically, the program not only talk about the importance of understanding cultural diversity, it goes further by introducing these in-depth concepts such as social order, tolerance and autonomy to give students options to think upon cultural diversity and to also realize the importance of respecting it. The difference between "understanding" and "respecting" cultural diversity, as I shall articulate in my own opinion, is about the different subjective matter in this topic. Understanding cultural diversity, the curriculum itself is the subjective matter as students are required to absorb knowledge to comprehend the connotation of cultural diversity. Whereas respecting cultural diversity, student is the subjective matter because respect comes from within students themselves based on their understanding of cultural diversity. As students

in secondary level have accumulated more knowledge and life experience than in the primary
level, the objective of "understanding cultural diversity" would consequently go further to
"respecting cultural diversity".

Example 2: *Dialogue Competency*- In the ERC program, teaching students skills needed
for effective dialogical relationships is understood to imply a context of cultural (and religious)
diversity (McDonough, 2011; Morris, 2011). Nevertheless, dialogue and the skills associated
with engaging in dialogue with others is singled out for specific attention as an especially
important aspect of cross-cultural understanding. Furthermore, dialogical skills are regarded as
educationally important for ethical reasons that do not especially pertain to cultural differences
as well. For example, two individuals from similar cultural and religious backgrounds may
disagree on any given ethical issue, or they may misunderstand each other's ethical views. In that
case, the dialogue competency is designed to fix educational attention on the importance of
ethical dialogue but not necessarily on cross-cultural understanding. Nevertheless, in what
follows I will focus on those elements of the ERC program that apply to the dialogue
competency as it applies to the theme of cross-cultural understanding.

To further specify the content under dialogue competency, the elementary level covers
topics such as "means for developing a point of view", "types of judgements" and "process that
may hinder dialogue". [16] Under each topic, there are detailed classification of the various forms
of these concepts. For example, the following four types of judgement are specified: judgement
of preference, judgement of prescription, judgement of reality and judgement of value. Teachers
are thereby encouraged to keep these categories in mind as ways of helping students to better
understand the meaning of judgement, and to enhance their ability to make a proper judgement in
particular real-life cases.

At the secondary level, the curricular content associated with the dialogue competency
seeks to further reinforce students' communicative abilities. In accordance with the skills
identified at the elementary level, the association with cultural diversity is more explicitly
defined. It is worth mentioning that the topics under dialogue competency in secondary level
remain the same as they are in primary level. For example, in the secondary level, under the
same topic "types of judgement" the program applies the same classification of "judgement of
preference", "judgement of prescription", "judgement of reality" and "judgement of value" as it

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[16] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 351-353

does in the primary level. Therefore, topics under dialogue competency in the secondary level aim to enhance students' ability to make proper judgement in real-life cases as well. In addition, secondary level advances the objective of "understanding cultural diversity" to "respecting cultural diversity". These dialogue skills, would in turn, help students to better communicate with other people based on their respect of the cultural diversity in Québec society.

Example 3: *Religions Competency*- In this thesis, I treat the religion competency in depth in the next section, which deals with difference between the two programs. This is because, as I have noted previously, the topic of religious diversity and religious competence is nowhere discussed in China's moral education program. Nevertheless, I wish to briefly discuss this competency here, as it also conveys the idea of cultural diversity. As such, in a limited way, it does provide a point of overlap between the ERC and China's moral education program. For instance, in both elementary and secondary level of the program, topics such as "Religions in society and the world", "Forms of religious expression in the young person's environment", "Québec's religious heritage", "Religious down through time" and "Religious experience"[17] all demonstrate the program's intention to help students to understand the phenomenon of religion and to respect religions from different denominations. This intention explicitly connects to the general topic of "understanding and respecting cultural diversity".

As religious competency will also be introduced in the next section in terms of the differences both program share, I will pinpoint more content in the ERC program regarding religious competency in the next section. However, it is very important to note that all three competencies in the ERC program connects to the one general goal of fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity in Québec society. This goal echoes the program's objective to help students to recognize others, and will ultimately lead to the pursuit of common good as cultural diversity is a strength of the society. Consequently, the cross-curricular competency the QEP mentioned above will be possible as the respect for cultural diversity is connected to other subject areas such as democratic citizenship. Students' ability to think upon these topics concerning cultural diversity will in turn, foster their ability to "exercises critical judgment", "to cooperate with others" and to "communicate appropriately".

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[17] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 342-347 & Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 42-46.

The theme of cultural diversity in China's moral education program

China's moral education program also emphasizes the importance of understanding and respecting cultural differences, though this theme is expressed in somewhat different ways from those in the ERC program. In order to examine how this theme of cultural diversity is expressed in China's moral education program, an organizational issue must first be clarified. Whereas the ERC is organized according to competencies, China's program is organized according to different 'lessons'. Each lesson elaborates on an individual topic. In the primary level, there are 10 lessons in total. Secondary level includes 8 lessons in the program. Furthermore, topics in regards to cultural diversity can be found in multiple lessons in both the primary and secondary levels.

For example, in the primary school level, the third lesson requires teachers to discuss good behaviors for children at home and for students at school in order to regulate and better assist them in interpersonal relationship. [18] These good behaviors in China's program define a line of good and bad interpersonal relationship in Chinese society. Given the fact that China is a multicultural and multi-ethnic nation, cultural diversity is an indispensable lesson for students. Since an understanding of it would contribute to a harmonious interpersonal relationship among different ethnical groups in China. Hence, the underlined meaning of "good behaviors" is to encourage students to understand and show respect for cultural differences in China. As such, it is sufficient to code this lesson as "understanding and respecting cultural diversity". Meanwhile, the primary level of China's program also discusses topics such as "understanding individual's role in a society", "loves and promotes peace", "be willing to honor your group"[19] and so forth. They are not phrased exactly the same as in the ERC program, but they indeed emphasize individual's roles and responsibilities in society, and how to effectively maintain good interpersonal relationships in it. All of these ideas embody my coded label of "understanding and respecting cultural diversity".

In the secondary level of China's moral education program, the label "understanding cultural diversity" can be found mostly in the first two lessons. The first lesson emphasizes citizen rights and obligations, at the same time urging student "to have a comprehensive understanding of the current world and to always promote peace and harmonious co-existence

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[18] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[19] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

with other people in the world". [20] As I have mentioned in an earlier section, that one of the aims of the QEP is in regards to "the construction of a world-view". This lesson in China's program expresses a similar idea in terms of this world outlook. Furthermore, the second lesson in this level talks about respecting cultural diversity from the perspective of interpersonal relationship again. The exact content is that "students should respect, care and understand others and cooperate with them". [21] These two lessons demonstrate the content in China's moral education program that are associated with the topic of "understanding and respecting cultural diversity".

To sum up, both moral education programs attached their attention to the importance of understanding and respecting cultural diversity. Coincidentally, they both talked about "interpersonal relationship" very frequently in regards to this topic. China's moral education program emphasized the importance of educating children to well maintain interpersonal relationships with other people based on an acknowledgement of the cultural differences in the Chinese society. Whereas the Québec ERC program focused on cultivating students' dialogue ability with the ethics and religious competency that the program aimed to enable them. The different initiatives, however, ended at the same track to foster an understanding and respect for cultural diversity in both societies.

2.3.2 Teaching Respect for and Compliance with the Law

The second similarity in both programs is on the topic of teaching students to be law-obedient citizens. There are direct and indirect discussions on this topic in both programs. The ERC program mostly presents this topic in its secondary level under ethics competency. In China's program, showing respect for law is a topic in both its primary and secondary level. In the following section, I will start with introducing topics in the ERC program that are in close connections to this theme. As the division of China's moral education program is by lessons, I will pinpoint the lesson in which obedience to laws is addressed in China's program after the presentation of the ERC program.

The theme of teaching respect for and compliance with the law in the ERC Program

The ERC program introduces the theme of respecting for law mostly under the ethics competency in its secondary level. The program itself did not mention the rationale for the neglect of this theme in its primary level. But my hypothesis was that the program designer took

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[20] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[21] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

the abstract nature of the notion of laws into consideration. Therefore, this theme was introduced in a later phase when students were able to digest the concept with the accumulation of their knowledge and life experiences. Meanwhile, related topics such as "autonomy", "freedom" and "social order" existed alongside with the theme of "respect for and comply with the law" in the secondary curriculum in the ERC. The high correlation of these topics with the theme of teaching law-obedience would ultimately reinforce students' understanding of this theme. This might be another possible factor for the omission of this theme in the elementary level of the ERC program.

In order to discuss the theme of law-obedience in the ERC program, it is first necessary to discuss in more detail how the ethics competency at secondary level curriculum is organized. Ethics competency in the curriculum is organized into 7 topics. Several of these topics are especially pertinent to the theme or goal of teaching law-obedience. First, the topic of "social order" introduces "forms of obeying and disobeying laws". [22] In terms of the disscussion of disobeying laws, the program includes topics such as "criminality, code of silence, dissidence, revolt, protest, conscientious objection, civil disobedience, etc". [23] These topics examine disobedience to laws from multiple dimensions. Second, the topic of "justice" in secondary level also connects to the theme of teaching law-obedience. Under the discussion of "justice", the program talks about "ways of viewing justice" and "questions of justice". [24] These discussions would inevitably involve discussions of laws because laws are created to promote and achieve justice (Tapp & Kohlberg, 1971). Several other topics, including "the future of humanity", "tolerance", and "human ambivalence"[25] also associate with the theme of teaching laws in a sense a discussion of law is desirable to help students to better understand these concepts. In short, there are direct and indirect connections with the theme of "teaching respect for and compliance with the law" in the ERC program.

The theme of teaching respect for and compliance with the law in China's Program

Unlike the ERC program, China's moral education program introduces the discussion of laws in both its primary and secondary level. As is mentioned above, China's program is divided into lessons. There are 10 lessons in its primary level, and 8 in its secondary level. The topic for

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[22] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, Secondary level, p. 38
[23] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, Secondary level, p. 38
[24] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, Secondary level, p. 40
[25] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, Secondary level, p. 37-40

the 8th lesson of primary level is about "enlightenment education of concepts such as laws, equity and democracy". [26] It discusses laws as well as their relationship with other concepts such as equity and democracy. This is similar to the discussion of "justice", "the future of humanity", "tolerance" and "human ambivalence" in the ERC program as they arouse students' curiosity of the theme of laws. This curiosity helps students to recognize the importance of law and identify its difference with other concepts as mentioned above.

Unlike the 8th lesson in the primary level of the program, which claims itself as an enlightenment lesson for students concerning the topic of laws, the secondary level presents more in-depth analysis of this theme in China's program. The direct connection of teaching students to be lawful citizen can be found in the second last lesson. [27] The primary learning objective of this lesson is to help students to understand Chinese legal system and their obligation as a citizen in China. This can be seen as a direct mentioning of the theme of "teaching respect for and compliance with the law". There are also indirect connections of law-obedience education in the secondary level. For example, in the first lesson of this level, it requires students to realize their obligations and rights as a Chinese citizen. [28] As laws determine these citizen rights and obligations, this requirement in the lesson would involve a discussion of laws, evidently. In addition, the learning objective in the third lesson is to promote an understanding of the social and political systems in China among students[29]. As a part of the social and political systems in China, the theme of showing respect for laws will be necessary to be included in this lesson.

To summarize, both programs directly included the theme of "teaching respect for and compliance with the law" in their discussions and urging student to realize the importance of laws. There were also indirect connections with this theme in both programs such as the discussion of democracy, equity or justice. As democratic citizenship is a salient idea throughout the ERC program, it naturally included topics such as freedom, autonomy and justice alongside with the discussion of laws. In this way, students would understand the importance of law through its correlation with other associated concepts. China's program addressed the importance of being law-obedient citizens in both its primary and secondary level. The program chose a

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[26] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[27] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[28] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[29] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

more imperative tone to discuss this theme by including it as a citizenship obligation. A detailed discussion about the theme of teaching laws in both moral education programs will be given in Chapter 3 to help readers to think upon law education from additional perspectives.

In summary, the two thematic similarities in both programs are "fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity" and "teaching respect for and compliance with the law". I have presented the content from both programs to illustrate these two similarities in the above sections. I hope readers have acquired a clear impression in regards to the thematic similarities in both program, by far. A detail discussion and analysis in terms of these two thematic similarities will be presented in Chapter 3.

I will now move on to the three thematic differences in both programs in the following sections. The three thematic differences in both programs pertain to their different attitudes towards "religious literacy", "patriotic education" and "the value of hard work". I will again, focus on the presentation of the content from both programs to illustrate these differences. The thematic differences of "teaching religious literacy" and "teaching the value of hard work" have a unilateral feature. This means they only exist in one of the two programs. In this case, I will only present the content from the program which addresses the according theme. Both programs introduce the theme of patriotic education, although with quite different purposes. In this case, I will present the content from both sides in the theme of patriotic education. The discussion and analysis of these thematic differences, will again be introduced in Chapter 3.

2.3.3 Teaching Religious Literacy

The first difference I identify concerns the topic of teaching religious literacy. This theme constitutes a major element of Québec's ERC program, while it is entirely neglected in China's moral education program. The reasons for this difference have to do with issues discussed in Chapter 1, related to the very different social contexts within which the programs were developed, and the associated, perceived social, cultural and political purposes and problems the programs were designed to address. I will offer a more detailed analysis and discussion of these differences in Chapter 3. My main purpose in this chapter, as I have stated, is first to identify and describe how these differences are represented in the respective moral education programs of Québec and China.

The theme of "teaching religious literacy" in the ERC Program

I will again, start with the ERC program. But it is very important to understand what religious literacy means before we look into the topic. Religious literacy, according to Moore (2006, para. 2), entails "the ability to discern and analyze the fundamental intersections of religion and social/political/cultural life through multiple lenses". Specially, her definition implies the idea that a religious literate person should not only learn about religious facts, they will also acquire the ability to discern and explore religions from political, social and cultural context across time and space. For example, a religious literate person would regard wearing a hijab as no difference from wearing a common hat or scarf for a long period of time. Being religious literate would enable her/him to understand the religious and cultural connotations of hijab, which symbolize modesty, privacy and morality of Muslim women (Droogsma, 2007).

It is also very important to distinguish between "religious literacy" and "religious education". Religious literacy pertains to the ability to understand the phenomenon of religion and its interactions with our society from social, political and cultural perspectives. As such, religious literacy is a skill or set of skills required for citizenship in a liberal-democratic society. Its primary purpose is to facilitate communication, dialogue, and conflict resolution amongst citizens who adhere to very different religious views, or who do not adhere to religious views at all. By contrast, "religious education" refers to the educational attempt to enlist children in a single, particular faith community. Under this mode, the purpose of these instructions concerning religion is to convince students to believe in the promoted religious belief(s). Philosopher Hand (2003) refers such educational attempt as directive teaching. He believes that particular cognitive attitudes to some proposition such as belief is being promoted in directive teaching (Hand, 2003).

While religious education is often compatible with religious literacy, they are quite different phenomena and they represent strikingly different and sometimes opposed conceptions of education. One of the fundamental purpose of education, as far as I am concerned, concerning the respect for diversity and the promotion of personal autonomy. Based on this, education for religious literacy is inherently religiously pluralistic, whereas religious education is not. Indeed, the cultivation of skills of religious literacy include capacities for critical reflection that require students to question, challenge and in some cases even reject religious beliefs and commitments taught to them by their parents and local communities. While religious literacy does not actively aim at promoting such skeptical criticism, this may nevertheless be one of its indirect effects.

More importantly, however, the primary goal of religious literacy is to promote mutual respect and cooperation among citizens of diverse faith backgrounds. The ERC program can be seen as a response to the goal of religious literacy. In a sense, the program does not aim to impose any religious beliefs to students, rather, it advocates a mutual understanding amongst citizens in Québec society based on the religious competency in the program. Ultimately, this religious competency, together with the other two competencies, i.e., ethics and dialogue competency, would achieve the program's objectives to recognize "others" and the pursuit of the common good. As Prothero (2007) states that basic religious literacy is an essential requirement for contemporary U.S. citizens. The ERC program demonstrates that the goal of teaching for religious literacy is not unique to the US context.

Now I will discuss more precisely how the goal of religious literacy is exemplified in the ERC. Religious competency in both elementary and secondary levels in the ERC program all direct to a common learning outcome which is to enable students to think upon the phenomenon of religion and especially on issues concerning religious diversity from its cultural, social and political dimensions. For each level, there are six topics under religious competency in the ERC program. In the elementary level, the program talks about "family celebrations", "stories that have touched people", "religious practices in the community", "forms of religious expression in the young person's environment", "religions in society and the world", and "religious values and norms", [30] among which are topics relate to students' knowledge and experience at elementary level. For example, under the topic of "religious practices in the community", discussions such as "places of worship", "religious objects and symbols", and "practices of prayer" and "meditations" [31] are included in it. Without any specific knowledge building in terms of religions, topics of such kind connect closely to students' exposure to the phenomenon of religion at their age. Consequently, these connections make it easier for students to voice out their opinions in these discussions.

In accordance with the accumulation of experience and knowledge, topics for secondary school students under religious competency increase the difficulty. For example, one of the topics asks students existential question. This is not an easy task as advanced knowledge are required to articulate a fine answer to this question. According to the ERC program in the

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[30] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 341-347
[31] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 41-46

secondary level, teaching guidelines regarding the theme of existential questions are "to help
students be aware that human beings have always asked themselves fundamental questions- Who
are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going? (the title of Paul Gauguin's famous
painting, completed in 1897) - and that various religious traditions or currents of thoughts have
offered responses to these questions."[32] With the advance of their knowledge and social
experience, students at secondary level would articulate their own opinions towards these
questions better than the time when they were in primary level. Meanwhile, topics of "religions
down through time", "religious experience" and "religious references in art and culture"[33] under
religious competency in secondary level arouse students' curiosity to re-examine the real
meaning of religious diversity and religious competency. This re-examination indeed promotes
mutual respect and cooperation among citizens of diverse faith background. Ultimately, it would
contribute to the realization of the ERC's objectives of recognizing others and the pursuit of the
common good.

The ERC program aims to promote an education attempt to enhance the mutual trust and
respect amongst citizens with different faith background. In this way, the program's efforts to
advocate religious literacy in Québec society is manifest. As a matter of fact, I have pointed out
different topics in the program concerning the promotion of religious competency in the above
section.

However, the promotion of religious literacy is an unfortunate omission in China's moral
education program. No contents in the program have directly or indirectly addressed the
importance of religious literacy. In the next chapter, I will discuss the neglect of religious
literacy in China's moral education program in details.

2.3.4 Patriotic Education

The second major difference in both programs concerns their different approaches of
patriotic education. By patriotic education, I am referring to the emotion education that aims to
teach students to show loyalty to their country (Hand, 2011; Nussbaum, 2011). MacMullen
(2013) classifies patriotism as "patriotic love" and "civic identification". According to him,
"patriotic love" refers to the love of one's polity whereas "civic identification" refers to a certain
felt relationship to the agency of the polity in question (MacMullen, 2013). His classification

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[32] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 44
[33] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 41-46

applies to this difference in the two programs. In China's program, to arouse patriotic love is
indeed the primary objective. The program introduces topics such as "support for the country",
"being proud of the country", "having faith in socialism" etc. These topics intends to arouse a
sense of pride among students. This pride would ultimately contribute to the affection of the state
(MacMullen, 2015) The ERC program takes a rather different attitude towards this topic. The
program aims to foster a "civic identification" as parts of democratic citizenship. Compare to
China's program, patriotic education is a subordinate idea in the ERC program as more focus is
given to enhancing a mutual respect and trust among citizens in the program. To present the
curricular content to illustrate this difference, I will start with China's moral education program
in this section, and move on to the ERC program after that.

The theme of "patriotic love" in China's moral education program

In China's moral education program, "love of the country" is the first and foremost
lesson in both primary and secondary levels. There are other lessons thereafter such as "love of
Chinese culture", "understand the history of China" and to "be proud of being a member of the
Chinese community", etc. [34] These lessons are connected to the topic of love of the country,
because it aims to arouse a sense of pride of being a Chinese citizen.

Specifically, in the first lesson in primary school level in China's program, it clearly
states that "students should be proud of their Chinese identity". Students are also required "to
understand the history of China and understand the gap between China and world's most
developed countries". [35] This lesson also includes additional patriotism details, such as the
requirement for students "to show respect to Chinese national flag and national anthem, to know
about the famous historical sites in China, to learn the history of China and to realize the
difficulties China has overcame in its contemporary history (after the first Opium War in 1840)".
[36] Furthermore, the second lesson in the primary level requires students "to support the
Communist Party of China". [37] This lesson talks about the achievements China has achieved
under the leadership of the CPC. It also talks about the core value of the CPC, which is to serve
the people.[38] These topics talk about CPC's role in the achievements China has made in recent

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[34] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[35] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[36] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[37] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[38] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

years in terms of economic growth, poverty reduction and infrastructure building, etc., which is another demonstration of patriotism.

Then, in the secondary level, the first lesson is about patriotic education and it also includes citizen rights and obligations in this lesson[39]. The third lesson pertains to the theme of patriotic education as well, but emphasis is given to the elaboration on the social and political system in China. This lesson also introduces Marxism concepts, such as dialectical materialism, socialism and the social class of proletariat. [40] These introductions enrich patriotism with philosophical evidences. In the next lesson, although it starts with the discussion of the virtue of hard work, it ends with "students should also have faith and willing to devote him/herself to the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics', [41] which again is a manifestation of patriotic education.

The theme of "Civic Identification" in the ERC program

The ERC program also addresses issues akin to patriotic attachment, though there are key differences between the two programs in the kind of attachment that is promoted and the degree to which that attachment is viewed as unconditional. In the ERC, the theme of patriotism is primarily evident in ethics competency, as opposed to the religious competency. Here, the ERC does promote affiliation to the community and the common good, and it teaches the importance of participating in democracy as a citizen. For instance, the topic of "social order" in the secondary level in the ERC introduces examples of different forms of power – "authoritarian", "charismatic", "cooperative", "democratic" etc.. [42] The introduction of democratic citizenship can also be found under the topic of "autonomy" in the secondary level. In this topic, the program includes topics such as "desire for emancipation", "acts of solidarity" and "struggles against dependencies". These discussions reveal the importance of participation in democracy as citizens. Meanwhile, in the topic of "tolerance" in the secondary level, ideas such as "multiculturalism", "pluralism" and "cultural integration" also demonstrate democratic values.

Unlike the Chinese program, however, the idea of teaching students to support a particular political party would be seen as a major ethical and educational violation of secular democratic principles in the ERC program. For example, under the topic of "Freedom" in the

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[39] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[40] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[41] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[42] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 38

secondary level of the ERC, "freedom of action", "freedom of thought", "freedom of expression", "free will", etc.[43] are introduced. As the aim for this topic is to "draw upon situations that involve exercising freedom to help students to reflect on different ways of examining and considering the resulting implications in the lives of individuals and groups", [44] the situation mentioned above, to support a political party unconditionally, would have implications against the different types of freedom as mentioned above.

To sum up, in terms of patriotic education, both programs include this as an important part of their moral education program. However, I conclude this as a major difference since the aim of the patriotic education for each program is different. China's moral education program focus on arousing citizens' "patriotic love" for the country whereas the ERC program aims to foster a "civic identification" among students by encouraging them to participate in democracy. As patriotic education shares a very important position in China's program, my discussion regarding this thematic difference in Chapter 3 mostly concerns patriotic education in China. I will try to explain the reasons of this importance in China's moral education program.

2.3.5 Teaching the Value of Hard work

Another obvious difference in both programs is in regard to the value of hard-work. China's program addresses the importance of hard-working throughout its program. However, this theme is not embodied in the ERC program.

My primary goal in this chapter is to present the content in both programs. However, I would like to articulate some points in terms of labor education in China's moral education program in this section as I will not further discuss this theme in the next chapter due to limited time and space in this thesis. One of the advocates in the 2001 curriculum reform in China was to call for a "quality education" amongst students. This "quality education" mode was in response to the reform of the exam-oriented education system in China. [45] Under this "quality education" mode, the aim of education in China is to cultivate students with an all-round development in terms of moral, intelligence, sports, aesthetics and labor education (Dello-Iacovo, 2009). As labor education is considered as a significant component of an all-round person in terms of education, it is natural to include this topic in the moral education curricular in China.

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[43] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 37
[44] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, secondary level, p. 37
[45] *Outline for Basic Education Curriculum Reform*, Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 1

Meanwhile, the Reform and Opening-up demonstrated the labor force is one of the most significant strengths for China's success (Ross, Zheng & Prime, 2016). As such, the value of hard work is considered not only as a significant quality of an all-round person, but a common good in the Chinese society. Hence, this theme remains as a valid teaching objective in China's moral education program.

The theme of "teaching the value of hard work" in China's moral education program

In the primary level of China's program, the 5th lesson encourages students to "trust the power of hardworking and become a hardworking person". [46] The 6th lesson asks students "to be a diligent person and always pursue for the truth". [47] Furthermore, in the second last lesson in the primary level, the program lists multiple virtues that a good student should possess. The virtue of "perseverance" defines one of the good qualities for students in this lesson. In the secondary level, the value of hard work is mentioned directly in lesson 4 and 6, where the learning objectives clearly states that hard work should be pursued by all students. The indirect mentioning of this theme could be found in lesson 2, lesson 5 and lesson 8[48] when the program defines and discusses good virtues that students should possess. These details can be accessed in Appendix B in this thesis.

Teaching the value for hard-work seems to be an omission in the ERC program. In some topics in the ethics competency in the secondary level, such as topics of "justice" and "human ambivalence", the program does mention the notion of "work". However, they are viewed as parts of democratic citizenship. The program in nowhere has mentioned or promoted the value of hard work.

To sum up, the last difference in both programs is about their different treatment of "the value of hard work". The ERC program does not address this topic, whereas China's program attaches considerable importance regarding the teaching of hard-work. Labor education shares a space in China's moral education because it is considered as one of the factors to determine an all-round student. The success of the Reform and Opening-up also speaks for the value of hard work. Based on these factors, labor education stays as one important element in China's moral education.

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[46] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[47] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)
[48] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

2.4 Summary

In the second Chapter of my thesis, I presented a general picture of the comparison of Québec's ERC program and China's moral education program. I first introduced my research methodology in this chapter as it would help readers to understand the way I classified the thematic similarities and differences in the two programs. Following this introduction, I then move on to the presentation of the content in both programs according to the five themes I have identified as points of overlap and contrast.

In short, the similarities in both programs were on the topics of "fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity" and "teaching respect for and compliance with the law". Both programs' different attitudes and approaches towards topics of "religious literacy", "patriotic education" and "the value hard work" constituted the three thematic differences. To make these 5 themes comprehendible to readers, I referred to the content of both programs and pinpointed the areas of embodiment in each program in terms of the 5 themes of comparison and contrast.

I hope this chapter provided readers with additional details in terms of curricular content on both sides. The intention of this chapter was not to provide detailed critical analysis, but rather to help readers learn the two programs in-depth based on their content. The next chapter will shoulder the responsibilities of discussing and analyzing these similarities and differences in both programs. I employ a philosophical inquiry to fulfill these responsibilities in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 The Complexity of Moral Education in Practice: Comparing and Contrasting the Two Moral Education Programs

Having outlined the major points of comparison and contrast between the ERC and China's Moral Education program in the previous chapter, the main purpose of this chapter is to examine and discuss these points further in depth. Chapter 2 introduced the mixed research methods used in this study, which combines qualitative coding methods and philosophical inquiry. The previous chapter utilized the qualitative coding method and chapter 3 will employ the philosophical inquiry to discuss the similarities and differences in both programs. With references from multiple philosophers' works, such as Sandel, Morris, McDonough, MacMullen and Hand, I will illustrate and elaborate on the overlapping and differential points across the two moral education programs. At the same time, I will add my personal understanding to enrich the elaborations in this chapter. Another purpose of this chapter is to explore the potential factors that foster these comparisons across the two programs. I hope readers can join my discussion in this chapter and view moral education from additional perspectives. As a matter of fact, I will begin by examining the similarities across the two Programs. Specifically, two thematic similarities were identified:

- Fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity
- Teaching respect for and compliance with the law

3.1 Philosophical Analysis of the Importance of Fostering Understanding and Respect for Cultural Diversity

The first and foremost similarity in both programs is the topic of understanding and respecting cultural diversity. As mentioned in Chapter 2, both Québec's ERC and China's Moral Education Program emphasize the importance of cultural diversity, though in quite different ways. In this section, I argue that these differences can be better understood and compared as alternative social, cultural and educational approaches to a common educational goal – that of promoting a commitment to foster the common good (Sandel, 2009). In what follows, I explain both the differences and the underlying commonality between the two programs in more detail. In the next section, I discuss how the common good in China's moral education reflects Confucian influences, as these have been adapted for the contemporary Chinese context. In the following section, I explain that Québec's ERC program reflects a liberal, pluralist philosophical framework of the common good.

3.1.1 Collectivism from Confucianism View

Unlike most of the western democracies which place individualism in a very significant position, China is often represented as a 'collectivist' society. According to this view, Chinese society emphasizes the values of the collective over the interests and rights of individuals. Nevertheless, in contemporary educational contexts, this collectivist dimension of Chinese culture is compatible with a growing recognition of China's character as a culturally and ethnically diverse society. Additionally, as in pluralist liberal-democracies like Québec, growing recognition of the fact of cultural diversity in China is accompanied by expanding recognition of the kinds of conflicts, disagreements and other individual differences that such diversity entails. As such, an important perceived task of moral education is to enable young people to reflect upon and resolve such conflicts. In short, although it may not be wrong to contrast Chinese collectivism with Western individualism, it is perhaps important to interpret this as a matter of degree rather than as an absolute difference

One of my major goals in Chapter 2 was to show how this moral task is reflected in China's moral education program, through its focus on addressing the theme of cultural diversity. In that chapter, I showed that teaching of cultural diversity within the program included various of topics, such as to understand the background of China as a multinational country, to respect people with different ethnicities, to recognize differences with other people and tolerant them during interpersonal relationships and to cultivate good personalities, among others. In this section, I explain how China's moral education program can be understood as pursuing this educational goal in the name of 'the common good' – specially, as this concept of common good is understood from a Confucian perspective. This perspective, I argue, could assist readers' comprehension about the moral education system in China and furthermore contribute to comprehending how cultural understanding skills were embodied in it.

In this section, I understand collectivism as a social and political view that promotes group interests as the primary goal, over and above individual interests. Furthermore, as Triandis (1995) classified, the concept of collectivism can be further divided into horizontal collectivism and vertical collectivism. The former promotes democratic decision-making, and emphasizes in sharing and cooperation, whereas the later one tends to prefer a submission to authority and place group interests always on top of individual interests (Triandis, 1995, p. 244-245).

China's moral education program exhibits clear elements of vertical collectivism. Numerous topics within the program emphasize that individuals should comply to group interests, even at the expense of furthering their own desires or aspirations. For example, in the fourth lesson in the primary level of the curriculum, teachers are urged to encourage students to show compassion and empathy to others. [49] Most importantly, the reasons provided for doing so include the fact that such qualities are necessary in order to ensure that group interests are honored by all citizens. [50] A second example occurs in the second lesson from the secondary level of the program. Here, there is an explicit injunction that students should properly handle personal interests with collective and national interests. [51] This means that solidarity in a group should always be pursued and students should choose this solidarity, which is the collective and national interests, over personal interests. Personal interests therefore come after, and can be achieved after the collective interest. Although nowhere in its program does China insist that individuals must always comply to group interests, there is clearly an emphasis on the importance of group interests ahead of individual interests. Indeed, it would seem that the underlying idea is that when individual desires or aspirations conflict with important collective values or goals, the latter must always take precedence over the former. As such, China's moral education program clearly presents the pedagogical task as one in which teachers are required to ensure that students resolve differences that arise from ethical and social disagreement and diversity in ways that are in harmony with established, collective values.

In this respect, China's moral education program can be understood as reflecting historical influences; but it should also be seen as a response to contemporary cultural and social development. Historically, the influence of Confucian ideas is prominent. As discussed in Chapter 1, Confucianism, as He (2005, p. 61) mentioned, plays a very important role in Chinese philosophy. According to Confucianism, there are three major responsibilities for a Chinese, namely, to cultivate herself/himself, honor her/his family and then ultimately, honor the country and bring peace to the world (修身齐家治国平天下). In light of this, together with my previous illustration on vertical collectivism, it seems to be mandatory for all individuals to be prepared to serve for collective group interests. This idea of being submissive to collective interests was

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[49] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix II)
[50] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix II)
[51] Moral Education Outline (China), Secondary level (Translated by author, see appendix II)

embodied in Confucianism with the creation of a hierarchy in the societal structure in China—a hierarchy that encompasses the family, social life beyond the family (especially professional life or working environment), and finally life within the larger society as a citizen. According to Confucian doctrine, learning to put collective values ahead of individual interests is embodied at each level, in an evolving and gradually expanding process of educational growth and development (Tu, 1996; He, 2005; Lee & Ho, 2005). Consequently, in the smallest unit, family, everyone should respect the elders and honor the family to her/his best effort; in schools, students are divided into classes, therefore they should be willing to sacrifice personal interests to honor the class, and then be willing to sacrifice class interests to honor the school if necessary; in the workplace, especially in state owned companies, employees should respect their supervisors and their supervisors should respect government officials who have direct associations with them, etc. The ultimate goal through all these examples, however, is to honor the country and contribute to the thriving of the country. Nevertheless, as I have explained, this emphasis on allegiance to collective values and commitments does not imply a complete rejection, or erasure, of diversity. Rather, as I shall now show, it implies a particular educational approach towards addressing and reconciling conflicts that arise when individual and collective interests arise.

While the influence of Confucian ideas is significant, I also argue that China's moral education program was developed in the context of an emerging awareness and recognition of recent, changing cultural and social circumstances – in particular, a growing awareness of China's character as a culturally diverse society. As I discussed in Chapter 1, China's moral education program was initiated during a period of strong, economic growth and globalization. Along with this growth, concerns grew about illiteracy (and its elimination), poverty reduction and minority rights protection (He, 2005, p. 71). Concomitant with this growing diversity, and of social awareness of its effects, came a strengthening and increasingly urgent sense that moral education should play a prominent role in the state's response. As such, the Chinese moral education program can be viewed, at least in part, as a political attempt to bolster and reaffirm collective Chinese values and interests in the face of increasing diversity. Underlying this response is the view that the attendant problems of cultural diversity need joint efforts from all Chinese citizens. And understanding and respecting cultural diversity is the precondition to gather these joint efforts because it enables a mutual understanding for all the people.

Ultimately, I argue, the moral education program was designed in part to impart to young people an understanding of how the importance of cultural diversity in China's moral education curriculum can be reconciled with China's prioritization of collective social and cultural interests. In a diverse and populous country like China, where collective rights outweigh individual rights, understanding the diversity of the country is a shared responsibility of all citizens as the prosperity of the country cannot be achieved without the joint efforts of all people in the country. Notably, China's moral education program reflects an implicit awareness of the danger that an unconstrained or uncontrolled cultural diversity might pose toward collective interests – such as the dangers of cultural fragmentation, social conflict, and ethnic or national separatism that have plagued Western, pluralist democracies since the late 20th Century (McDonough & Feinberg, 2003). Therefore, the moral education program in China realized the importance of understanding and respecting cultural diversity in the country and placed it as a major subject matter in the moral curriculum.

To sum up, an understanding of collectivism in China helps readers to understand how cultural diversity is portrayed and shaped in China's moral education curriculum. Collective values, as these are represented in the curriculum, reflect a Confucian tradition of social hierarchy, which has long influenced Chinese culture and society. Under this system, collective and national interests came before individual interests, and will only be achieved after the achievement of, and consonant with the maintenance of, collective interests. Thus, individuals should comply with the collective values that the country held collectively. This collective nature of China's social system determines that understanding the diversity of the country is a shared responsibility of all citizens. In the practice of moral education in China, the teaching of cultural diversity encompasses various topics, such as to understand the background of China as a multinational country, to respect people with different ethnicity, to recognize differences with other people and tolerant them during interpersonal relationships and to cultivate good personalities etc. These topics in all, will contribute to a mutual understanding of all people in China, and ultimately contribute to the achievement of collective and national interests in the country.

3.1.2 Liberalism in Québec's Program

Whereas the theme of cultural diversity in China's moral education program is nested within a broader political and cultural philosophy of social collectivism, Québec's ERC program

is explicitly grounded in values derived from liberal political philosophy. In this section, I
examine this liberal educational focus more closely.

The primary goals of Québec's ERC program are to promote "the understanding of
others" and "the pursuit of common good". Although the reference to the common good
introduces a 'collectivist' element into the ERC's goals, the collectivism at issue is a 'thin'
conception (Walzer, 1994). In other words, although the ERC calls upon educators to reinforce
certain shared values as way of encouraging the pursuit of 'the common good', the values in
question are precisely those that are viewed as necessary for pluralism and diversity
(McLaughlin, 2003, p. 346). As such, within the ERC, there is no apparent tension between the
goal of fostering skills of critical thinking, and ethical reflection on the one hand, and the goal of
pursuing the common good on the other. This is contrary to China's curriculum where collective
interests are valued over and above individual interests.

As others have noted, liberalism is the political philosophy behind Québec's ERC
program (McDonough, 2011, p. 224; Weinstock, 2013, p. 92). As Philosopher John Dewey
(1935) wrote in his book, *Liberalism and Social Action*, Liberalism is a term that can be denoted
to ancient Greek philosophy in which individual intelligence was highly valued and was
regarded as the primary means for achieving social growth. Unlike classical liberals such as John
Locke, however, Dewey rejected the idea that individual rights were necessarily prior to political
and social relations (Dewey, 1935). Rather, according to Dewey, liberalism's emphasis on
individual rights was a product of historical changes, by which the capacity and status of
individuals to contribute to political life derived not from birth or other ascriptive factors, but
was instead available to all citizens regardless of race, religion and other diversifying factors
(Feinberg, 1995). Furthermore, according to Dewey, the optimal development of individual
abilities of freedom and critical reflection depended on a specific kind of social and educational
community context. Specifically, only within a community marked by diversity of 'associations'
could individuals learn and grow in ways that reflected intelligent adaptation to the constantly
changing circumstances of political life in a democratic society (Dewey, 1916, p. 38-46). In
particular, the educational potential for individual growth depended crucially on the many
opportunities for communicative interactions with others, from diverse 'associations of interest'
– which encompasses diverse cultural formations -- available to them in a pluralist democratic
community. As Dewey's ideas provide an apt basis for Québec's ERC, combining three points

of emphasis – individual freedom and growth, social and cultural pluralism, and communicative dialogue – as educationally fundamental. In this light, when it comes to the topic of cultural diversity, it is clear how Québec adopts quite a different stance than a more collectivist society such as China.

This difference is evident concretely in the ethics competency of the ERC. Interpersonal relationships play an important role in the section of the ERC that illustrates the ethics competency. For example, at the primary level, under the topic of "individuals as members of society", the program encourages discussions on questions like "differences as sources of enrichment and conflict in society" and "prejudices, generations and stereotypes". [52] Notably, these discussions are meant to be open-ended, in order to stimulate students' participation in discussing ethical issues. Although such topics are clearly desirable from the perspective of 'collectivist' values such as social cooperation and harmony, the ERC discourages educators from pushing students to reach predefined, preferred conclusions. Instead, these discussions under the ethics competency stress the need to provide spaces for students to think upon ethical issues from an individual perspective. For example, if teachers are encouraged to help students learn and understand the importance of mutually respectful discussion of their disagreements on controversial issues, the ERC also makes sure that educators know they are ultimately to leave ethical judgments to individual students themselves. According to this liberal approach to cultural diversity, the goal of pursuing collective aims associated with the 'common good' are presumed to enable and indeed encourage ongoing individual, and cultural, disagreement and differences.

The dialogue competency of the ERC program reflects a similar liberal understanding of the educational role of cultural diversity. Here, the ERC emphasizes the educational importance of helping students to understand the connotations of 'dialogue'; to form a distinctive, and coherent "a point of view"; and to make different types of "judgement" through dialogue. [53] At the same time, the ERC provides guidelines for enabling students to exercise reflection and caution when they are trying to apply different dimension of the dialogue competency. For instance, when making a judgement, the ERC program would require students to understanding different types of judgements, namely, "judgement of preference", "judgement of prescription",

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[52] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, primary level, p. 339.
[53] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 352-353.

"judgment of reality" and "judgment of value". [54] The purpose of such distinctions and
qualifications, when taught as part of the dialogue competency, is not only to encourage students
to voice out their opinions towards ethics and religious topics, but to help them produce some
meaningful idea exchange with the knowledge covered under this competency. In sum, the
dialogue competency is initially framed as a device for teaching collectivist aims of social
cooperation and social harmony. However, when examined more closely, this competency turns
out, like the ethics competency, to embody a liberal emphasis on ethical individualism.

Individualism is also emphasized in the third and final competency of the ERC, the
religious competency. This emphasis in one sense reflects the ERC's intention to affirm and
reinforce the traditional liberal emphasis on freedom of religion and the freedom to choose one's
religion, or to choose to reject religion altogether. As the Québécoise religious scholar Lefebvre
said in 2013 in the *International Seminar on the topic of Living with Religious Diversity*, that
Québec's ERC program is not just "about" or "on" religion, but also "from" religion (Lefebvre,
2013). This feature of the religion competency is important to keep in mind when evaluating
other aspects. For example, the religion competency also includes the injunction to encourage
students to develop an understanding of the phenomenon of religion – a secular injunction that
applies to all religions equally, while disallowing preferential treatment for any particular
religion (Lefebvre, 2013; MacMullen, 2004; McDonough, 1998). This aspect of the competency
is aligned closely with the theme of cultural diversity, and also with the dialogue competency,
since students are expected to develop substantial knowledge of different religious traditions, as
a way of developing the broader competency of understanding 'the phenomenon of religion'.
Nevertheless, in line with its liberal philosophical underpinnings, the ultimate 'collectivist' goals
of the ERC remain very 'thin', since there is (and can be) no higher religious or other communal
agenda for moral education to install, over and above the religious (and non-religious) diversity
that characterizes society as a whole. Instead, the primary 'collective' or 'common good' value
promoted by the religion competency is one that affirms the priority of individual religious
choice and conscience.

Compared to the approach of China's moral education program to address the topic of
cultural diversity from a perspective that prioritized collective values over individual interests,
the ERC program promoted personal autonomy while aspiring the commonly good. This

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[54] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 352.

difference was shaped by the philosophies behind the two programs. Under the influence of Confucianism, China's moral education program stood for collectivism. Due to this stance, ensuring national and collective interests would guarantee individual interests and resolve the potential conflicts between personal and collective interests. Quite on the contrary, although the ERC program spoke for the collectively "common good", the liberal nature of the program prioritized individual flourishing over collective interests firmly. The elaborations of Confucianism and Western Liberalism above have identified the factors that underpinned both programs' objective to promote a mutual understanding among citizens in the society.

3.2 A Philosophical-thinking about the Relationship of Laws and Education

In this section, I will discuss the second similarity both programs share in terms of teaching students to respect for and comply with the law. As I've put in section 2.3.2, despite major cultural, political, economic and philosophical differences which the two moral education programs represented, they've addressed at the importance of integrating the knowledge of law to their programs. This coincidence is not unique, as many moral education programs placed law education as a major topic. For example, in Japan and Hong Kong's moral education program (Morris, 2000; Tu, 1996), the knowledge of laws was also mentioned. Pointing out these similarities does not in and of itself provide a philosophical justification for teaching laws in moral education; it only serves to illustrate the fact that law education is commonly thought to play an important role in moral education, and that this assumption is pervasive across social and cultural borders.

The question of justification – that is, of what reasons provide a warrant for including education about the laws of a particular society within the scope of moral education – is philosophically complex, such that to answer it adequately would require an analysis more detailed than I am able to undertake here. Nevertheless, the question is pertinent to my comparison of the two programs of moral education under examination in this thesis, since one point of comparison and contrast has to do with the question of why each program includes this subject matter. In Chapter 2, I demonstrated that this topic – teaching students to respect for and comply with laws – is a common point of comparison and overlap between the two programs. In this section, I go a step further to examine some of the possible arguments or reasons why they might be included within each program.

3.2.1 Philosophical Arguments for Teaching Obedience to Laws in School

The question of why we should teach obedience to laws in school derives from a more fundamental question – why are individual citizens obliged to obey the law in the first place? According to Hart (1977), legal systems constitute a set of social regulations that define and regulate people's behaviors and actions. According to this view, we need laws, and compliance to laws, in order to restrict the excesses of human self-interest. As each and every one is a unique individual, we have our own ideas towards all the things. It is by nature that we want the best for ourselves. However, as we live in a plural world where we need to interact with "others" all the time. Therefore, the best things that we wanted might not always came to our hand because of limited resources in our world. Then conflicts were triggered during this process. To ease these conflicts, we need a power to define the line of right and wrong. This was when laws came into practice and took its effects. In short, we need laws to define right from wrong based on a commonly accepted social regulate system. However, although laws may be necessary for social cooperation and mutual benefit, compliance with those laws cannot be guaranteed apart from a process of socialization and education designed to ensure it.

Nevertheless, as discussed in Chapter 2, the fundamental purposes of education in many societies includes the aim of promoting personal autonomy and respect for diversity. In the Québec context, in particular, these goals are central aspects of the ERC. There appears to be at least a potential conflict, then, between the goal of fostering compulsory, universal compliance with a common set of laws for all, on the one hand, and an education that emphasizes respect for individual choice and conscience and cultural diversity on the other. Such conflicts arise in liberal-democratic states such as Québec, for example, because different cultural and religious groups sometimes hold conflicting views about what is legally appropriate or permissible. Indeed, Québec law imposes legal restrictions on the use of English (and other languages besides French) in schools, which are opposed and disputed by Anglophone and other linguistic minority groups. How is it possible to reconcile the goal of teaching obedience to laws with the potentially conflicting goals of fostering respect for diversity and the primacy of individual autonomy?

One way of understanding why these two sets of educational goals need not conflict within moral education programs like the ERC and China's moral education program is by remembering that teaching obedience to, or compliance with, laws is compatible with encouraging students to think independently and autonomously through respectful dissent,

disagreement and dialogue. To learn that one must comply with laws is not necessarily the same thing as learning that one cannot dispute or challenge, and even attempt to overturn or change the laws, through legal means. Thus, the philosopher of education Harry Brighouse argues that democratic citizenship education should include both a goal of fostering the disposition to comply with laws, and the disposition to "engage in political participation through legal channels to achieve justice" (Brighouse, 2006, p. 64). This argument is consistent with the emphasis in Québec's ERC, for example, on the goal of promoting respectful 'dialogue'- a skill that would apparently be necessary for the kind of legal political action that Brighouse calls for, which presumably excludes alternatives such as violent revolution or resistance.

In China's program, the disposition to comply with laws also answers the question between legal system and justice. For example, in the 8th lesson in the primary level of the program, it clearly indicates that students need to understand "concepts such as laws, equity, and democracy". Students are also required "to obey the laws" and "to deal with problems in a democratic and legal way". [55] China's program recognized laws' function as regulatory power for students to ease potential problems in their life. Based on this recognition, individual's compliance to law would enhance their political participation through legal channels, which echoed Brighouse's disposition. In addition, Chapter 1 mentioned that the program in China encourages students to test knowledge they have grasped in classroom with reality. In this process, students would be able to think independently in terms of legal matters. To sum up, the ideas of political cooperation and independent thinking in the process of teaching laws are the same objectives as in the ERC program. However, collective interests would still value more than individual interests in China's program concerning teaching respect for laws.

Another argument for reconciling the goals of diversity and autonomy with the goal of compliance invokes the value of social trust. According to MacMullen (2015, p. 72-74), teaching dispositions of compliance to laws is justified in part by the need to ensure that social relationships, including social relationships that provide conditions for individual freedom, cultural and religious diversity, and political dissent, are nested within an overarching social context of political trust. Thus, as MacMullen argued, even if education should enable individuals to work for legal and political change, such change can only be promoted in justice-oriented ways within a stable political structure – that is, a political culture within which citizens

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[55] Moral Education Outline (China), primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

reliably obey legitimate laws that secure the conditions of dialogue and respectful disagreement, even as they work to change unjust or illegitimate laws (MacMullen, 2015, p. 72-74).

To reiterate, the foregoing is not meant to provide a philosophically complete defense of the educational goal of teaching compliance for laws. Rather, my goal in this section has simply been to review some philosophically commonplace, reasonable arguments for this goal. I suggest that these arguments provide a reasonably compelling rationale for the goal of teaching compliance to laws, a goal that is in any case presented in both Québec's ERC and China's moral education program. According to this rational, laws regulate certain standards in our daily life and it is a basic requirement for citizens to understanding the role of it and to be disposed to comply with these laws. Education for legal compliance as a goal of moral education, according to this view, functions as a basic requirement for students to understand why we need laws and realize the importance of laws at the same time.

3.3 Summary of the Similarities in Both Programs

In this section, I have examined the two thematic similarities across Québec's ERC program and China's moral education program. I argued that both programs regarded the two overlapping themes as effective ways to teach young people to pursue and advance the common good.

In terms of their same intention to "foster understanding and respect for cultural diversity", both programs approached to this theme quite differently. This difference was shaped by the different philosophical minds behind the two programs. As a matter of fact, I have outlined Confucianism and Western Liberalism in this section to illustrate how the different approaches adopted by the two programs pursued the same "common good" in terms of enhancing mutual understanding among citizens. This further justified the importance of cultural diversity in both societies.

 Concerning the same goal of teaching compliance with laws in the two programs, I have reviewed certain philosophical arguments that provide a rationale for this goal. Although these arguments differ significant in certain respects, I have also shown that they share a key, underlying similarity: that is, they both justify the goal of teaching compliance with laws by appealing to a core educational and political commitment to fostering the common good. In the case of Québec, this common good seeks to balance and reconcile a two potentially competing values – individual freedom and social cooperation and compliance. The educational arguments

for teaching compliance with laws reflect this democratic balance. In the case of China, the program reflected the ideas of political cooperation and independent thinking in the process of teaching compliance to laws as well. The program encouraged students to deal with potential problems in their life with a "democratic and legal way". However, due to the country's firm stance in collective interests, individual freedom appeared to be a less obvious idea in this teaching.

Consequently, it is also worth mentioning that although both programs addressed the two topics above, but the approaches were not exactly the same. To sum up, I believe China's moral education curriculum focused more on students' obligation in obeying laws and understanding cultural diversity, whereas, Québec's ERC program chose a more objective way to address the same topics in which student are encouraged to voice out their opinions regarding these topics in class. As such, individual interests were valued more explicitly in Québec's ERC program than China's moral education program.

3.4 Discussion of the Variances in Both Programs

Having examined and discussed the two major thematic similarities between the two programs, I will now turn to an examination of the three major thematic differences, which were initially identified in Chapter 2. Specifically, three thematic differences were identified:

- different attitudes towards religious education reflected in each program
- the different attitudes towards patriotism as an educational value
- the focus on hard-work in China's program

However, due to limited space and time in this thesis, I will place my focus on the discussion of religious literacy and patriotism in this section. As I shall reiterate that my purpose in this thesis is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of both programs, but to illustrate some key similarities and differences. In this regard, my discussions of the two thematic differences are sufficient for these illustrative purposes.

3.4.1 The Significance of Religious Literacy in Educational Practice

The two moral education programs choose very different attitudes towards religion in education. The ERC program seeks to promote an understanding of religious culture as one of its major objectives; whereas China's moral education program neglects this theme. In this section, I first discuss some of the main reasons this theme is given importance in Québec's ERC; I then analyze why religious education is neglected in China's moral education. Finally, I argue that

religious literacy is an important educational value, and therefore should be integrated in China's

moral education as well. Therefore, I will also talk about the experience which could be

borrowed from the ERC program to China's moral educational practice. In this section, I also

aim to contribute to readers' understanding about religious freedom in China from an objective

perspective.

In Québec's ERC program, the treatment of religion is consistent with the concept of

religious literacy – an idea developed in the work of scholars Diane Moore in the US, and Robert

Jackson in the UK. Religious literacy is a relatively new concept. It is a fruit of modernization

and globalization. In particular, the notion of religious literacy is designed to account for two

related features of religious life in contemporary global societies. First, there is the fact of

religious difference and diversity, which creates pressure on governments and schools to avoid

adopting a preferential stance in favor of a single, official religious view or doctrine and instead

to recognize religious pluralism.   The second feature is the ongoing importance of religion as an

influence in the lives and worldviews of many citizens (Moore, 2007). Together, these two

features create challenges for secular societies and schools to treat religious values and ideals

respectfully.

The emergence of secularism and science challenged the position of religion as a major

power in shaping our culture. But they have not changed the fact that understanding religious

difference is necessary in the interests of achieving social peace and cooperation. For many

citizens, religious knowledge is indispensable to interpret the difference existing in this world.

Even for citizens who do not themselves adhere to religious faith, an understanding of religious

perspectives is necessary for interacting respectfully with their fellow citizens who do

(Waddington et al., 2012, p. 14). For example, in Québec, there have been heated debates about

government policies aimed at restricting religious clothing in the public arena, including in

public schools (McDonough et al., 2015, p. 257; Milot, 2008). Some citizens oppose such

policies, on the ground that wearing a hijab is not different from wearing a common hat or scarf

for long periods of time. Others disagree, arguing that the display of overt religious affiliation by

government officials violates secular principles of religious neutrality. These two positions do

not exhaust the possible alternative interpretations of the significance of religious symbols for

those who choose to wear them. For example, some citizens who wear the hijab may appreciate

support from their fellow citizens, but they may also feel demeaned by arguments that reduce the

meaning of their religion to that of non-religious clothing such as those worn by non-religious citizens for the purpose of alleviating the effects of cold weather. Furthermore, the meanings of religious clothing may differ for those who choose to wear it. For some, there are religious connotations of hijab, which symbolize modesty, privacy and morality of Muslim women (Droogsma, 2007). For others, however, the meaning may be more in line with feminist objections to patriarchal sexualisation and objectification of women (Laborde, 2006, p. 361). As this brief discussion makes clear, citizens who wish to engage in respectful political discussions about disputed public policies, such as those in Québec, France and elsewhere regarding the hijab, religious literacy is an essential tool. Without it, the dangers and negative effects of ignorance, stereotyping and disrespect are high. Religious literacy may not eliminate these dangers completely; but an education that fosters religious literacy, as the Québec ERC program aims to do, may go a long way toward reducing the worst social effects of religious ignorance and intolerance. Consequently, religious literacy is the ability to learn and reflect on religious phenomena in public life in a respectful way (Prothero, 2007).

Religious literacy is not simply about some basic facts of religion. Being literate in religion requires more than facts, the ability to reflect on religious questions matters more (Moore, 2007). According to Moore (2006, para. 2), "religious literacy entails the ability to discern and analyze the fundamental intersections of religion and social/political/cultural life through multiple lenses". In other words, being religiously literate enables us to adopt multiple perspectives, and to explore social/political/cultural issues from their religious dimensions. Although this educational goal is different from one that requires citizens to adopt an unreservedly positive and laudatory view of all religions, it is likely to foster young people's willingness to consider religious perspectives sympathetically, rather than to assume the worst or most negative stereotypes on offer. For example, despite all the differences, religious practice ranging from Christianity to Muslim, from Buddhism to Hinduism, from Sikhism to Taoism all promote human values and spiritual flourishing (Cottingham, 2005). An education for religious literacy may enable citizens to see this, while also teaching young people that religion is also invoked for purposes that violate these promotions, including violence and oppression. Furthermore, religious literacy takes seriously the idea that in order to be a truly religious literate person, there is a long way ahead as religious learning is a lifelong journey (Moran, 1991). Overall, then, religious literacy is an educational view that seeks to convey the complexity and

multifaceted nature of religious phenomenal, and it thus makes the study of religion quite demanding.

As Moore (2006) also argues, it is not acceptable to leave the teaching of religion solely in the hands of particular religious communities, their leaders, or parents. For example, doing so risks allowing unchecked inaccuracy and distortion in understanding "other" religions traditions in religious teaching practice. Nor, on her view, is it acceptable to simply ignore religion completely in public schools. According to her, doing so treats religion as a purely "private" matter, which therefore needs no public attention. Such approaches are unacceptable, she argues, because addressing religion and religious phenomena is essential in order to address matters of public concern to all. As she says, "one of the most troubling and urgent consequences of religious illiteracy is that it often fuels prejudice and antagonism thereby hindering efforts aimed at promoting respect for pluralism, peaceful coexistence and cooperative endeavors in local, national and global arenas" (Moore, 2006, para. 1). In this way, the ideal and values of religious literacy resonate strongly with the goals of Québec's ERC program.

3.4.2 Religious Freedom and Religious Education in China

As discussed in Chapter 2, the theme of religion is largely absented from China's moral education program. This absence may seem understandable to Western observers who are used to seeing China as a completely secularized society, dominated by the ideology of state sponsored socialism. However, while this view of Chinese society has always been oversimplified, it is increasingly a distortion of social and political reality in contemporary China. In this section, I seek to provide a somewhat more realistic picture of the place of religion in China, and I argue that this picture is inconsistent with the neglect of religion in moral education. I also suggest that the ideal of religious literacy provides a promising possibility for rectifying this gap in Chinese moral education policy.

The freedom of religion is guaranteed by the *Constitution of People's Republic of China*. More specifically, Article 36 states that, "No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion" (*Constitution of the People's Republic of China of 1982*). Five religions are officially recognized in China: Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, Buddhism and Protestantism. In accordance with *Regulation on Religious Affairs*, the PRC government protects these five recognized religious beliefs. As such, religions besides these five typically are not under the protection of state laws. Meanwhile, religious groups are

considered as social groups in China, which need registration with government (*Regulation on Religious Affairs*, 2005). All the registered religious groups are under the protection of laws. Religious rituals, ceremonies and other activities could be practiced within these registered religious groups. In short, freedom of religion is guaranteed in China by law, but there are limitations to this freedom. Certainly, it's undeniable that China has a long way to go in regards to religious freedom, but China is slowly but surely moving closer toward religious freedom (Lamb, 2014). In any case, however, it seems surprising and noteworthy in light of these facts that the theme of religion, religious diversity, religious freedom, and religious literacy are completely absent from moral education policy and practice in China.

Indeed, there exists no official religious curriculum setting in Chinese primary and secondary education. This is probably because religion is viewed as inconsistent with Chinese emphasis on secular ideals in public education. In China's case, primary and secondary education is a state business. Whereas secularism require a state to be neutral on matters of belief (Kosimin & Keysar, 2007, p.23). As a matter of philosophical principle, however, secularism does not in and of itself imply eliminating all mention of or reference to religion. Indeed, the ideal of religious literacy discussed above is a secular doctrine, which seeks to uphold and exemplify the respectful and even-handed treatment of religion by recognizing religious diversity and difference. As such, there is no apparent reason why China's commitment to secular education implies the complete exclusion of religion from school curricula.

The compatibility of religion and secularism in education is evident in Chinese educational policy at the post-secondary level. At the college level, most state-fund universities have religious studies courses, and many of the top-notched universities, such as Peking University, Nanking University, and Fudan University etc., have religious study department offers undergraduate and post-graduate level programs. According to *Regulation on Religious Affairs,* national religious groups are able to either appoint students to study abroad or select foreign students to study in China based on their needs (*Regulation on Religious Affairs of 2005*). What's more, there are many independent Buddhism colleges, Taoism colleges and Islamic colleges in China as well, although these colleges must be registered and certified by the state. Usually these religious colleges and programs received limited funding because more funding were given to these science, engineering or technology programs. However, this regulation is not unique to religious studies; similar regulations exist for liberal arts and social science programs

as well. Clearly, religious education in college level enjoys a reasonably high level of freedom and autonomy in China (Lamb, 2014). Apparently, the Chinese state perceives no inherent conflict between this state of affairs and its overarching commitment to political secularism. This raises the question of why the commitment to political secularism leads to the exclusion of religion and religious literacy at the pre-university level.

Within the scope of this thesis, I cannot address or answer this question. However, I would like to suggest some reasons why including religious literacy might be desirable and possible within Chinese secular schools, prior to university level education. For example, religious literacy is a natural complement to subjects such as history, geography and politics in China's national education. In the subject area of history, an introduction to the different religions in the world is an indispensable element for world history. This knowledge would compensate students' understanding of historical facts in different regions across the world. An omission of this knowledge would be incomplete in history because the according historical events might become incoherent with the overall background during that specific time. An example to illustrate this point, knowledge of Buddhism should be inseparable to understand history of multiple countries such as India, Thailand, and even China itself since Buddhism shaped the history of these countries significantly. Neglect the knowledge of Buddhism might jeopardize students understanding of the connotation of certain historical events that were associated with the development of Buddhism. The same rule applies to subject areas such as geography and politics. The omission of religious literacy would be impossible because of its high correlation with these subject areas. As such, to include religious literacy as an objective in its moral education program seems even more demanding.

In this section, I have argued that a specific religious curriculum should be implemented to China's national education to erase religious illiteracy. This is not against the principle of secularism. To remain neutral on religious belief doesn't necessarily equal to do nothing in this subject. Religions shaped our world and is influencing us continuously. As such, understanding and reflecting on religions are necessary for both religious and secular societies.

Here, it is useful to hearken back to the experience of Québec, in reflecting on the possibility for change within China. As discussed earlier in this thesis, the introduction of the ERC in Québec create a great deal of heated public debate and criticism. This debate is still ongoing (Morris, 2011). Nevertheless, as Éducation et Enseignement supérieur Québec indicates,

Over a period of several years, numerous public surveys have been conducted regarding religious instruction in Québec. Groups of specialists have also presented various reports. The main finding is that schools have evolved by adapting to the changes occurring in today's world.

This is a precious experience that China could refer to.

As a multicultural and multiethnic society, a program like the ERC program should be implemented in China's national education to eliminate religious illiteracy. An understanding of the phenomenon of religion should be an aim in China's national education as well. If being literate in religion could erase some of our fears regarding to it, then there's no ground of neglecting religious literacy in educational endeavors. Therefore, I am arguing once again that a religious educational program like the ERC program which talks about religion directly and encourages students to voice out their opinions towards religions should be created and implemented in China's national education.

To sum up, due to different ideology and a lack of understanding of the realities in Chinese society, there is an unwarranted misconception that religious freedom is irrelevant to the Chinese educational context. In recent years, Chinese government is putting more endeavors in promoting religious freedom. But it is an undeniable fact that there's no official religious educational program in China's national education. As a multicultural and multiethnic nation, various religions are practiced in China. However, religion has always been considered as a private matter in Chinese society and thus was neglected in public sphere. As I have argued in this section, being religious literate should be an aim of China's national education as well. Therefore, understanding the phenomenon of religion and cultivating an ability to reflect on religious matters is crucial for Chinese students as well. Experiences from other society such as Québec's ERC program should be borrowed as reference to build a religious education program based on Chinese context. Ultimately, this program will promote mutual trust among all the ethnic groups within and beyond China.

3.4.3 Patriotic Education

As is discussed in Chapter 2, in China's moral education program, over half of the content is directly or indirectly associated with patriotic education. The program aims to foster an unconditional patriotic affection among citizens in the country. On the other hand, in Québec's ERC program, the references to patriotic education are somewhat less straightforward.

As noted in Chapter 2, patriotism may be too strong a term to use in connection with the ERC. Instead, the focus there is upon values associated with democratic citizenship and the contribution these values make to the common good. As such, I suggested that "citizenship identification" is a more appropriate label in that context. In this section, I discuss in more detail the contrast between 'patriotic education' in China's moral education program and 'citizenship education' in Québec's ERC.

Based on the introduction of the patriotic education in China's moral education program from the translated version of *Moral Education Outline* issued in 2001, I will analyze the reason why patriotic education shared such an indispensable role in China's education. With the discussion of patriotic education in China, I will then integrate other scholars' point of view to generate a personal understanding in patriotic education.

3.4.4 Patriotic Education in China. Why is it so important?

In Chapter 2 I have presented the lessons in China's moral education program concerning the theme of 'patriotic education'. Meanwhile, in Appendix B of this thesis, I applied the coded label of 'patriotic education' in China's program multiple times as the embodiment of 'patriotic love' can be found in different lessons of the program. It's also noticeable that the idea of 'patriotic love' exists in the first lesson for both primary and secondary levels of the program. In what follows I discuss two reasons for this emphasis. The first reason has to do with the Confucian roots of Chinese moral education. The second reason pertains to historical and contemporary political factors. I discuss each of these two reasons in turn below.

First and foremost, a discussion on Confucianism heritage is extremely important to understand the philosophical justification for patriotic education in China. In Confucian philosophy, family is the basic unit in Chinese society. As Fan (2000) discussed in his paper, *"A Classification of Chinese Culture",* Chinese society's prosperity cannot be separated from its commonly-accepted and overly-emphasized idea that building a family should be the goal of any human. Furthermore, the notion of family is closely associated with notions of solidarity. Indeed, 'home' is considered the first and most fundamental crucible for building strong human relationships of loyalty and affiliation. Nevertheless, although solidarity relationships in the family are regarded as very important in and of themselves, they are also regarded as instrumental building blocks for more extended and broader relationships of patriotic loyalty. Indeed, the emphasis on family relationships in China's moral education program must be

understood in this broader context. It is no exaggeration to suggest that the educational links between family solidarity and patriotism are quite literal in the Chinese context, since the nation or country is conceived as a big, extended family that includes all citizens. This idea is reinforced in and buttressed by Confucian philosophy. According to Confucianism, a state is a large family for all citizens where they could attach their emotions to, and share common values and goals with other citizens (Shils, 1996). Furthermore, Confucianism pursue a unified nation as the fundamental principle regarding to politics (Ai, 2014). This is why Confucianism was regarded as a national ideology by many of the dynasties in Chinese history such as Han Dynasty, Song Dynasty and Ming Dynasty, among which were the times that Chinese society flourish the most during the past 2000 years. Until the Republic of China and the current People's Republic of China, Confucianism was regarded as major reference for politics, economics and diplomatic affairs in the country. The prominent status of Confucianism was mostly shaped by its promotion of a unified nation and its focus on citizen's responsibility to love the country (Ai, 2014).

Aside from Confucian influences, the prominence of patriotism as a theme in China's moral education program is also explained by its centrality to history education as a vehicle for fostering national solidarity and identity. As Nussbaum argued, that the love of country "is not simply abstract and principle-dependent, but one that conceives of the nation as a particular, with a specific history, specific physical features, and specific aspirations that inspire devotion" (Nussbaum, 2011). This could further explain the purpose of patriotic education in China. For example, after the first Opium War in 1840s, China suffered numerous wars and invasions. These invasions spanned three distinct political epochs — namely the Qing Dynasty, the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China (Law, 2007). The most notable contemporary vestige of this historical divide involves the division between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China, resulting from Civil War in China after the World War II. The perceived tragedy of this division has created a strong aspiration for a stable political life within mainland China's borders, which motivates and reinforces China's educational policy – i.e. a policy determined to support a unified and strong country (Hughes, 2013).

Consequently, to maintain an effective govern of the country, patriotic education was applied to its nationally-issued moral education curriculum in the PRC. This patriotic education not only serves for the purpose of political govern, but most importantly, it is a commonly-

accepted idea in Chinese history and philosophy as a strong, unified and vibrant country serves as the fundamental and pre-condition for individual flourishing (Ai, 2014).

As many philosophers (Hand, 2011; Nussbaum, 2011) point out, patriotic education is an education in and of the emotions – an education that cultivates a 'love of country'. However useful this emotional dimension of patriotic education is for fostering the relationships of social solidarity and loyalty valued within China's moral education program, it also reveals a danger that perhaps explains the absence of patriotism from the language used in the ERC curriculum. Because patriotism involves shaping young people's emotions for political purposes, it is vulnerable to manipulation by those in political power, who may use education to further their own political interests, including non-democratic interests. In light of this danger, why is patriotic education so important in China's moral education curriculum? Does patriotic education in China's moral education curriculum imply an anti-democratic bias? Before we provide any answer to this question, let's first review the classification of patriotism.

One way of answering this question involves examining the relationship between the concept of patriotism and the concept of nationalism. According to contemporary political philosophers, nationalism comes in different varieties, some of which are compatible with democratic citizenship and others which are threats to democracy (Kymlicka, 1995). If so, then patriotic education may be compatible with democracy if it seeks to foster certain kinds of nationalistic sentiments, but incompatible if it seeks to foster other forms of nationalism. This is the well-known distinction between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism (McDonough, 2003). According to McDonough (2003), ethnic nationalism refers to "a tribal, strongly communalist phenomenon which seeks for cohesion based on shared descent and common blood, or shared religion"; whereas, "civic nations seek cohesion on the basis of shared political principles, and citizenship is open in principle to anyone who wants to live within their borders, regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity, and who willingly endorses the nation's constitutional principles" (McDonough, 2003, p. 364). Furthermore, according to this analysis, civic nationalism echoes with the notion of liberal democracy and multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 1995). On the basis of this categorization, we can now return to the question posed earlier about whether China's emphasis on patriotic education is anti-democratic or not. The answer will depend on whether the patriotic education question seeks to foster civic or ethnic nationalism.

At first glance, it looks like China should fall into the classification of ethnic nationalism as the country promoted a shared identity of "Chinese ethnicity (中华民族)" since the inception of the ROC, more than 100 years ago (Dreyer, 1976; Mackerras, 1994). Under this shared identity, the goal of moral education is to assimilate the different ethnic groups that have historically inhabited China under a new, common, and unified 'Chinese ethnicity' (Townsend, 1992). In this light, the educational goal of pursuing the "common good" through patriotic education advances a clearly ethnic nationalist agenda.

But this conclusion may be too quick, and overlooks some complicating factors. As mentioned earlier, the ethnic differences of citizens in China are vast, and includes a wide range of languages and religious denominations. Furthermore, as pointed out earlier, this diversity is officially recognized in Chinese educational policy at least to some extent, though not in pre-university level schools. In short, Chinese education does not adhere to a totally assimilationist agenda, and for this reason it probably does not reflect a strongly ethnic nationalist perspective. Instead, nationalism in China is more likely a hybrid of civic and ethnic classifications – or perhaps reflect a transitional phase from an older ethnic nationalism to an emerging civic nationalism – since the goal of promoting a harmonious patriotic co-existence increasingly recognizes the inevitability of diverse racial, religious, and ethnic identities, at least under the current PRC government (Zheng, 1999).

This actually explains many controversial issues relate to China. For example, the sovereignty dispute of South China Sea among China, Vietnam, Philippines and other Southeastern Asian countries could receive enormous support from Chinese citizens even without any official advocate from the government. Because maintaining the unification of China, as is promoted by Confucian thoughts, is a commonly-accepted idea by most of Chinese citizens. In terms of the moral education curricular, students are required to understand the history of China[56] as in the first lesson in the primary level. This understanding involves a knowledge of the territory for all members in the big family of Chinese ethnicity. This idea of unification applies to the relations of Mainland China and Taiwan as well. With the democratization of Taiwan since 1980s, increasingly more local people in Taiwan would distinguish themselves from Chinese community across the strait because of ideology difference

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[56] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

of Taiwan and Mainland China (Chu & Lin, 2001; Chang & Holt, 2009; Hughes, 2013). The secession from China's influence is an emerging idea in Taiwan. In order to maintain a unified China, the PRC officials Deng Xiaoping even raised the notion of "One Country, Two Systems" in 1990s to resolve this issue (Zheng, 1999). This policy was applied to Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) after their return to the PRC government in late 1990s. The determination of maintaining a unified China is a deeply-rooted idea in Chinese philosophy, among which Confucianism contributed the most to this idea (Ai, 2014; Zheng, 1999). And this idea of maintaining the unification of China is also embodied in the moral education program. Topics such as "understand the history of China", "be proud of the Chinese identity", and "understand the socialism system in China"[57] are seen to be the promotion of this idea in the program.

My goal in this section has not been to defend the strong emphasis on patriotic education in China's moral education program, but rather to explain some of the reasons for it. As a matter of fact, I believe the patriotic education in China is a bit over-addressed to some extent. In places, for example, the curriculum goes well beyond the goal of fostering a love of country, or of reinforcing a sense of identification and solidarity amongst Chinese citizens, to actually promote favoritism for the ruling Communist Party of China. To the extent that China's moral education program promotes an uncritical acceptance of a single-party political system over multi-party democracy, China's moral education program goes well beyond the kind of patriotism that might be associated with 'civic nationalism' and democratic values. Clearly, such an emphasis blurs the line between the love of a country and the love of a particular political party or system of the government. A more democratically oriented form of patriotic education – or an education that sought to foster a sense of 'civic identification' along the lines of Québec's ERC – would distinguish more carefully between these difference concepts, and in doing so would contribute to radically different conception of patriotism. Just as chapter 2 mentioned that the curriculum suggested students to cultivate a good personality without further define on what kind of personality it promoted, I am arguing that the curriculum could be more specific in terms of patriotism as well. Overall, I agree with Hand (2011), who argues that when it comes to a controversial topics as patriotic education, it is always better to provide multiple perspectives and clearly define different terms to avoid ambiguity for students to better understand the topic

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[57] Moral Education Outline (China), Primary level (Translated by author, see appendix B)

comprehensively. Indeed, in recent years, many Chinese scholars raised similar criticisms and come to similar conclusions about the nature and importance of patriotic education (Law, 2007; Qi & Tang, 2004). These views acknowledged the rapid and overall development in China, at the same time urging more space for critical thinking when it comes to controversial educational themes such as patriotism. Furthermore, the 2001 curriculum reform outline also recognized the importance of testing knowledge that students absorbed in classrooms with reality. The blurry distinction in terms of these different concepts concerning patriotism might jeopardize students' testing ability as well.

To sum up, under the huge influence of Confucianism which promoted the love of a country as a responsibility for citizens, together with a shared history that aspired Chinese citizens for a steady and meaningful life, patriotic education became a significant part of moral education in China. My discussion in this section aimed at enabling readers to better understand why patriotic education is so important in China. Nevertheless, in recent years the aim of patriotic education in China has come in for strong criticism from domestic scholars. In light of these ideas, I argued that patriotic education in China should clearly distinguish lines to define different concepts in regards to patriotism. The employment of critical thinking should also be a desirable goal in the program. Experience from other moral education practices such as the ERC program which advocates a "civic identification" amongst citizens should be borrowed in China's practice.

3.5 Summary of the Differences in Both Programs

This section mainly discussed the two variances in Québec's ERC program and China's moral educational curriculum. And particularly addressed at the point which could be borrowed or integrated to the other program.

Specifically, in terms of the promotion of religious literacy, there were merely any coverage in China's moral education program. The country's insistence in carrying out secularism in its moral education program served as the major reason of this omission. On the contrary, religious cultures had a significant role in Québec's ERC program. The program intended to promote a mutual respect and trust amongst citizens in Québec's society on the basis of a comprehensive knowledge of religion. This is an invaluable experience China could borrow to refine its moral education program. The integration of religious knowledge is neither against the concept of secularism nor the neutrality of education. As a multiethnic and multicultural

society, different religions were practiced in China and have shaped Chinese society from different cultural, religious and political dimensions. This fact calls for a carefully designed program to include comprehensive religious knowledge that aims for the promotion of religious literacy in China's pre-university education.

When it comes to patriotic education, the two programs shifted their attitudes interestingly. In China's moral education program, arousing a 'patriotic love' was the primary purpose. The ERC program, on the other hand, seeking a 'civic identification' to promote democratic citizenship amongst students. The attachment to the love of the country was justified by Confucian philosophy, which deemed loyalty to the nation as a civic responsibility for all citizens. The historical and political backgrounds in China also contributed to the fact that patriotism account for a large portion of its moral education program. Nevertheless, I believe patriotic education without the promotion of democratic values would jeopardize students' ability to think critically towards patriotism. As such, I prefer the ERC program's approach to promote 'civic identifications' amongst citizens.

In terms of these two thematic differences in the two programs, I believe the experience from the ERC program should be referenced by curriculum designers in China. The embodiment of democratic values should be introduced more in China's curriculum as the society continues to move forward. The ERC program offers valuable insights to intergrade democratic values in moral educational practise. It can serve as a good example for curriculum designers in China to update moral education in the country in the near future.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

This thesis examined moral education with a comparative study between Québec's Ethics and Religious Culture Program and China's Moral Education Program in its "9-year Compulsory Education" (1986 – present). Both programs were issued and implemented in recent years to either refine or replace the previous moral education program in its educational curriculum. The rationale for the introduction and implementation of both programs was to help students to keep up with the drastic social changes in both societies in recent years. The ERC program was implemented in all Québec primary and secondary schools in the year of 2008. The program itself was a fruit of the secularization process of Québec society and its impact to the education in the province. The program was divided into ethics competency, religious competency and dialogue competency. The two overall objectives of the ERC were to aim for "the pursuit of common good" and to help students to recognize "others". China's current moral education program was revised in 2001 under the guidance of the *Outline for Basic Curriculum Reform (Outline)* that the country issued in the same year. After 2 decades of the Reform and Opening-up Policy, the country experienced significant social, cultural, economic and political changes. The new moral education program aimed to help students to react properly to the drastic social changes in China as well.

This thesis adopted a mix research method of Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) and Philosophical Inquiry. The QDA assisted me to code different topics in the two moral educational programs into thematic similarities and differences. The two thematic similarities between the two moral education programs were on the topic of "understanding cultural diversity" and "teaching student to respect for and comply with law". The three thematic differences in the two programs after coding were in regards to "teaching religious literacy", "patriotic education" and "teaching the importance of hard work". These five themes are the major components of this thesis. The second part of my research methodology, the philosophical inquiry enabled me to discuss these similarities and differences in details.

Recap of the Major Findings in this Thesis

This thesis was divided into four chapters. Each chapter dealt with a specific objective. Chapter 1 presented the social and historical context of both moral education programs. Chapter 2 pinpointed the similarities and differences in the two moral education programs based on the QDA method I have adopted. Chapter 3 elaborated on the two thematic similarities and three

thematic differences based on the Philosophical Inquiry I have employed as the second component of my research method. Overall, these three chapters tried to answer the four research questions I have raised in the beginning of this thesis: What are the similarities and differences both moral education programs represented? What are the potential factors that possibly foster these similarities and differences? What can we learn, as moral educators, from these similarities and differences? What answers this study has provided to the questions of "what to include in moral education" and "how to teach morality"? In addition to these three major chapters in this thesis, the present chapter tries to conduct a synthesis of this study. In doing so, it provides answers to the research questions in this thesis. The limitations and future research expectations will also be included in this chapter.

Specifically, Chapter 1 was the general introduction to both programs. Both moral education programs were introduced and implemented in recent years with the aim to help students to keep up with the social changes in their unique social context. Québec had a long history in terms of religious education. As a matter of fact, in its early history, education was administrated by churches. It gradually formed the two distinguished school boards in Québec society, the French Catholic School Boards and the English Protestant School Boards. In the 1960s, Québec society underwent the Quiet Revolution, which accelerated the secularization progress of Québec society. During this time, the government took charge of education and began to build a more secularized school system. Consequently, the school boards in Québec shifted from the confessional division to linguistic division, which meant school boards would be divided only by the instructional language differences instead of religious differences. Although a non-denominational moral education option was introduced to the school system to supplement the Catholic Moral Instruction and Protestant Moral Instruction during this time, the aspiration of an integrated educational program that combined moral education with religious education became desirable. With the stimulation of *The Proulx Report* (Boudreau, 2011), the ERC program finally was implemented in all primary and secondary schools in Québec in 2008. The program managed to achieve the "recognition of others" and the "pursuit of the common good".[58] These objectives were embodied in the three competencies the program structured, namely, ethical competency, religious competency and dialogue competency.[59] These competencies

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[58] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 303
[59] Ethics and Religious Culture Program, elementary level, p. 303

would in turn enabled students to keep up with the cultural and religious diversity Québec society embraced. On China's side, the current moral education program was introduced in 2001. The program followed the *Outline* in 2001 to refine the previous moral education program. Ever since the country adopted the Reform and Opening-up policy in the 1980s, the country enjoyed a significant economic boost and followed that was a series of drastic social, political and cultural changes. In terms of education, the country ensured the position of the 9-year Compulsory Education system by law in 1986. Students were required to attend schools and enjoyed the rights to be educated. The Reform and Opening-up changed people's life significantly in terms of their disposable wealth (Qi & Tang, 2007). It also brought cultural openness to Chinese people. With the expansion of media and technology came different accesses to information, which made people realize the importance of their spiritual life (Bian, 2002). These changes have created obvious conflicts with the previous curriculum design in China. As a matter of fact, the *Outline* issued in 2001 proposed a series of ways to modify the previous educational curriculum. One of them was to update the current curriculum to meet with the social changes in the country. A new version of the moral education program introduced in 2001 indeed was a result of the *Outline*. The information provided above in Chapter 1 would help readers to have a general impression of both programs in terms of the social changes they represented.

Besides presenting and explaining key methodological issues of my research, the main focus of Chapter 2 was to identify key themes from the two moral education programs, and to organize these themes for subsequent comparison and contrast. Two thematic similarities were highlighted – first, the theme of "fostering understanding and respect for cultural diversity" and, second, "teaching respect for and compliance with the law". Additionally, three thematic similarities were identified -- "Teaching religious literacy", "patriotic education" and "teaching the importance of hard work". Chapter 2 pinpointed the content in both programs to illustrate these five themes. This chapter referenced a number of materials from program textbooks and government documents. With the presentation of these "data", readers should have grasped the rationale of the classification of the five themes mentioned above as the overlapping and differential points in both programs.

Finally, Chapter 3 focused on a detailed analysis of the four out of the five themes identified in the previous chapter. This chapter employed the methodology of Philosophical Inquiry to illustrate on the similarities and differences in both programs. In terms of the topic of

"understanding cultural diversity", I illustrated my understanding of "collectivism" in China's program and "liberalism" in the ERC program. Though both programs represented very different philosophical thinking, they ended up in the same direction in terms of the theme of "fostering understanding for cultural diversity". This demonstrated that recognizing diversity in both societies was deemed as a common good value that should be pursued by all citizens. Another common good value both programs agreed upon was the theme of teaching respect for and compliance to the law. To illustrate this similarity, I articulated my understanding of the justifications of placing the knowledge of law in moral education practices. In this way, I was able to explain the rationale of including the teaching of law in both programs.

The discussions upon the three thematic differences were followed by the discussion of the similarities both programs shared. The first difference the two moral education programs shared was on the topic of "the promotion of religious literacy". As was explained in the first chapter, religious education in Québec has a long history, and it continues to be a very important element of the moral education program in Québec currently. However, religious literacy was an unfortunate omission in China's 9-year Compulsory Education. Based on this fact, the section about religious literacy in Chapter 3 mainly examined the position of religious education in China. Although there were programs about religion in its higher education level, it was indeed an omission in the basic education in China. Hence, I illustrated the experience of the ERC program to argue that it would be desirable to include religious literacy as an objective in the 9-year Compulsory Education in China. In terms of patriotic education, although the ERC program did emphasize on fostering a "civic identification" as parts of democratic citizenship, this was significantly different compared to the aim in China's practice. The program in China tended to foster a "patriotic love" among students. This, as I have argued, might jeopardize students' ability to think critically towards the topic of love of the country. Furthermore, I have argued that the patriotic education should be include in moral education to enhance the solidarity of the society. But the precondition of including this topic was that critical thinking should also be part of patriotic education. The limitation of time and space prevent me from discussing the last thematic differences in both programs, which concerned the value of hard work. However, as I mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, my discussion of the two thematic differences across the two programs were sufficient for the illustrative purposes in this thesis.

To sum up, this study looked at moral education from a comparative study in the hope of rethinking moral education from the perspectives the two moral education programs examined in this study have offered. The major findings in this thesis, pertaining the discussion of the four thematic comparisons and contrasts, which I have outlined above. As for the questions of "what to include" and "how to teach" moral education, the answers are as follows. Despite the controversial nature of many topics in moral education, this study believes that moral education should continue to address more controversial but significant topics in its classroom for students to discuss and reason about. Critical thinking would resolve the "how to" question as it echoes the aim of education, which is to empower students to be socially intelligent individuals. We, as moral education practitioners, should not stop moving forward simply because of the complexity of moral education.

Limitations of this Study

I hope by far this study has provided some useful points regarding moral education. However, as a comparative study, there are some drawbacks which I could not avoid. For example, as the curriculum reform in China is a continuing process (MOE, 2012), some of the recent reforms and changes might not be included in this study. In addition, as I translated all the data from Chinese to English, there might be some subjective judgements in terms of the translation. On the Québec's ERC program side, due to limited resources I could access, most of the data were generated from syllabus and documents issued by the government instead of onsite classroom observations to examine the program in person, which I believe might affect the accuracy of the conclusion in this study as well.

Therefore, I hope future studies will integrate class observations in the study to examine both programs in a more comprehensive way. In addition, I believe interviews with teachers and students in both programs will be invaluable sources of data, in that they are the very participants of the programs. Therefore, their emotions, understandings and feedback will improve the accuracy of the research in moral education. I would like to conduct a further study in my PhD study in this field if I will be given the privilege to do so.

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Appendices

Appendix A

ERC Program Content

All contents are retrieved oline from Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de L'Éducation du Loisir et du Sport, 2008

http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/formation_jeunes/ecr_elementary.pdf

http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/formation_jeunes/ecr_secondary.pdf

Table A1 ERC Program Ethics Competency in Elementary Level

Elementary Level			
Topics	Word Repetition	Concept Repetition	Coding
The needs of humans and other living beings • Myself as a unique living being • Shared and distinctive needs • The diversity of interdependent relationships	Relationship, self and others, diversity	Understand the diversity in a group, properly dealt with interpersonal relationship	Understanding cultural diversity
Interpersonal relationships in groups • The development of personal identity and the groups to which people belong • Advantages and disadvantages of group life • The diversity of relationships between group members	Interpersonal relations, group	Understand diversity in a group, understand the relationship of individual and groups.	Understanding cultural diversity
Demands associated with the interdependence of humans and other living beings • Responsibilities at home and at school	"myself" and "others", responsibility, individual, group	Students' responsibility at home and at school. Definition of proper actions in groups. Individuals'	Understanding cultural diversity; Responsibility.

• Appropriate and inappropriate actions • Values and norms that guide behaviour at home and at school •Individuals or groups that have demonstrated a sense of responsibility when dealing with living beings		responsibility in interpersonal relationships.	
Demands of belonging to a group • Behaviours and attitudes that contribute to or detract from group life • Values and norms that guide group life • Conditions that foster or detract from the well-being of each member • Roles and responsibilities of group members	Group, individual, member, values, responsibility	Features of group life.	Understanding cultural diversity;
Individuals as members of society • Young people as members of society • Differences as sources of enrichment and conflict in life in society • Prejudices, generalizations and stereotypes	Individual, group, conflicts, society	Understand differences could create potential conflicts in society.	Understanding cultural diversity.

Demands of life in society • The distinction between what is acceptable and unacceptable in society • Management of tensions or conflicts • Values, norms and responsibilities that guide life in society.	Tensions and conflicts, responsibility in society	Understand the common good that should be pursued in society.	Understanding cultural diversity; Law-obedience education

Table A2: ERC Program Ethics Competency in Secondary Level

Secondary Level			
Topics	Words Repetition	Concept Repetition	Coding
Freedom • Reflections on freedom • Limits to freedom	Freedom	Introduction of the notion of freedom in democratic society	Law-obedience education. Civic identification
Autonomy • Dependence and autonomy • Individuals and groups	Autonomy	Introduction of the notion of autonomy in democratic society	Understanding cultural diversity; Civic identification
Social order • Groups, institutions and organizations • Forms of obeying and disobeying the law • Transformations of values and norms	Social order, laws, group	Respect law as an objective to maintain social order	Respecting cultural diversity. Law-obedience education
Tolerance • Indifference, tolerance and intolerance • Tolerance in Québec	Tolerance	Tolerance for individual in a democratic society	Understanding cultural diversity; Civic identification
The future of humanity • Ways of seeing the future of humanity • Challenges to be met	Humanity	Understand the notion of humanity	Civic identification; Law-obedience education and understanding cultural diversity.
Justice • Ways of viewing justice • Questions of justice	Justice	Discussion upon justice, feature of democratic society	Civic identification; Law-obedience education
Human ambivalence • Expressions of ambivalence •Ambiguities of human action	Ambivalence, human action	Discussion on "humanity" from its paradoxical feature	Civic identification; Law-obedience education

Table A3: Religious Literacy in both Elementary and Secondary Level in the ERC program

Elementary and Secondary level				
Topics in Elementary Level	Topics in Secondary Level	Words Repetition	Concept Repetition	Coding
Family celebrations • Celebrations • Rituals associated with birth	**Québec's religious heritage** • Founders, influential figures and institutions • Influences on values and norms • Heritage works	Family celebration; religious heritage	Understand religion with "family celebration" and "Québec religious heritage"	Promotion of Religious literacy; Understanding cultural diversity
Stories that have touched people • Stories that have had a major influence • Stories about key figures	**Key elements of religious traditions** • Stories • Rites • Rules	Religious stories, Rites and rules	Understand religion from religious stories	
Religious practices in the community • A time for celebrations • Places of worship, religious objects and symbols • Spiritual guides for believers • Words and writings related to religious traditions • Practices of prayer and meditations	**Representations of the divine and of mythical and supernatural beings** • Names, attributes and symbols of the divine • Mythical and supernatural beings	Religious practice; Divine; Mythical and supernatural beings	Discussion upon religious practices.	
Forms of religious expression in the young person's environment • The physical environment • Community and cultural forms of expression	**Religions down through time** • Founding times • Times of development and diffusion	Religion, community, history	Connections of religions with human groups. Development of religions through time.	

• Stories about the origins of the world	• Religious renewal and new religious movements			
Religions in society and the world • Religions in the world • Founders • Ways of representing time	**Existential questions** • The existence of the divine • The meaning of life and death • The nature of human beings	Religions, society, existential questions	Development of religions. Religions connections with existential questions	
Religious values and norms • Values and norms • Exemplary individuals and their works • Practices related to food and clothing	**Religious experience** • The nature of religious experience • Effects of religious experience • Religious references in art and culture • Works of art of a religious character • The presence of religious forms of expression in secular arts	Religious practices, religious experience	Discussion of religion with personal experience	

Table A4: ERC Program Dialogue Competency in both Elementary and Secondary Level

Topics in Elementary Level	Topics in Secondary Level	Words Repetition	Concept Repetition	Coding
Forms of dialogue and conditions that foster dialogue Forms of dialogue: •Conversation • Discussion • Narration • Deliberation • Interview • Debate	**Forms of dialogue and conditions that foster dialogue** Forms of dialogue: Conversation • Discussion • Narration • Deliberation • Interview • Debate • Roundtable	Forms of dialogue.	Classification of different forms of dialogue	Understanding cultural diversity
Means for developing a point of view Means: Description • Comparison • Synthesis • Explanation • Justification	**Means for developing a point of view** Means: Description • Comparison • Synthesis • Explanation • Justification	Point of view	Classification of different ways to develop a point of view	Understanding cultural diversity
Means for examining a point of view	**Means for examining a point of view**	Point of view	Ways to examine a point of view	Understanding cultural diversity
Types of judgments: •Judgment of preference • Judgment of prescription • Judgment of reality • Judgment of value	**Types of judgments:** • Judgment of preference • Judgment of prescription • Judgment of reality • Judgment of value	Judgements	Classification of judgements	Understanding cultural diversity
Processes that may hinder dialogue:	**Processes that may hinder dialogue:** Hasty	Hinder, dialogue	Different processes that may hinder dialogue	Understanding cultural diversity;

Hasty generalization • Personal attack • Appeal to the crowd • Appeal to the people • Appeal to prejudice • Appeal to stereotype • Argument from authority	generalization • Personal attack • Appeal to the crowd • Appeal to the people • Appeal to prejudice • Appeal to stereotype • Argument from authority • "Two wrongs don't make a right" argument • Straw man argument • False dilemma • Causal fallacy • False analogy • Slippery slope • Conspiracy			Civic identification
	Types of reasoning: Induction • Deduction • Analogy • Hypothesis	Reasoning	Different types of reasoning	Understanding cultural diversity

Appendix B

China's Moral Education Curriculum Program Content

All content were translated by author, retrieved online from Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2001)
http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_sjzl/moe_364/moe_302/moe_368/tnull_4404.html
Table B1: Content in Primary Level (China)

Topics	Words Repetition	Concept Repetition	Coding
Be proud of Chinese identity. Understands the history of China. Understands the gap between China and world's most developed countries. Loves and supports peace.	Proud, Chinese identify, Chinese history, peace	Arouse "patriotic love" among students, teach students to understand "Chinese identity" which contains understand the diversity of Chinese society	Patriotic education; Understanding cultural diversity.
Supports the Communist party of China.	Support, communist party of China	Support the leading party in China	Patriotic education
Loves the people. Be a good kid in family, a good student at school. Knows how to harmoniously get along with others.	Be a good kid, harmonious	Interpersonal relationship in family and at school.	Understanding cultural diversity;
Understands individual's role in a group. Shows compassion and empathy to others. Be willing to honor the group.	Individual, group, honor group	Individual's position in a group. A promotion of "collective values"	Understanding cultural diversity; Patriotic education
Trust the power of hardworking and be a hardworking person.	Hardworking	Labour education	Teaching the value of hard-working.
Believe in science. Be a diligent student and always insist on the pursuit of the truth.	Science, diligence, pursuit of truth	Believe in science; labour education	Teaching the value of hard-working;
Be a student and an individual with propriety. Uses polite language in public. Protects environment.	Propriety, polite language, environment protection	Foster good manner and behaviors among students. Promotion of environmental protection.	Understand cultural diversity.

Enlightenment education of concepts such as laws, equity, and democracy. Obeys the laws. Deals with problems in a democratic and legal way (faith in majority rule)	Law, equity, democracy.	Introduction of democratic concepts in classroom to deal with interpersonal relationship. Promote obedience to laws.	Law-obedient education; Understanding cultural diversity
Be a student with honesty, integrity, modesty, openness, braveness, wisdom, perseverance, tolerance, receptiveness, punctuality and responsibility.	Good virtues	Foster good virtues among students	Understanding cultural diversity; Teaching the value of hard-working.
Enlightenment education of Marxism dialectical materialism.	Marxism, materialism	Understand Marxism and dialectical materialism.	Patriotic education.

Table B2: Content in Secondary Level (China)

Topics	Words Repetition	Concept Repetition	Coding
Patriotic education. Students should learn the history of China's reformation and transformation from a bruised war-torn country after WWII to a peaceful socialism country now. Students should understand the benefit of the country is the benefit of all citizens. Students should also have a comprehensive understanding of the current world and always promotes peace and harmonious co-existence with other countries in the world.	Patriotic education, history, co-existence	Arouse patriotic love among students; Understand the history of China; A promotion of peace among people in the world.	Patriotic education; Understanding cultural diversity.
Collectivism education. Students should respect, care and understand others and cooperate with them. Students should properly handle personal interest with collective and national interest.	Collectivism, cooperate, personal interests	A promotion of collective interests over individual interests.	Patriotic education; Understanding cultural diversity.
Marxism and socialism education. Students should learn and understand the theory of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. Dialectical materialism and historical materialism should also be covered.	Marxism, socialism, materialism	Understand the social and political system in China.	Patriotic education
Education in ideals. Students should foster a correct life philosophy, which is to achieve goals through hardworking. Students should also have faith and willing to devote him/herself to the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics.	Ideals, life philosophy, hardworking, And devotion	Teach good virtues students should aim for. Among which, hardworking and be ready to devote to the construction of the nation are significant elements.	Teaching of the value of "hard-working"; Patriotic Education
Ethics education. Learning and understanding traditional Chinese moral and ethical values. Be a student with environmental morality.	Ethics, morality	A promotion of the Chinese culture in terms of the ethics and morality in the Chinese philosophy	Understanding cultural diversity; Patriotic education

Labour and social experience education. Students should be aware that a quality life can only be achieved from diligence and hardworking. Students should participate in various labour-orientated activities to receive social practice.	Hardworking, diligence, participation.	Teaching the value of hardworking among students.	Teaching of the value of "hard-working"
Democracy and law education. Students should learn and understand China's socialism democratic system, their citizen rights and obligations, and legal system. Obeying laws and regulations in China and be a good Chinese citizen.	Law, socialism, citizen rights and obligations	Promotion of being law-obedient students. Understand the political system in China. Understand citizen obligations and rights.	Law-obedience education; Patriotic education
Personality and psychological education. Be a self-respect, self-discipline and self-dependent person. Student should have a positive attitude towards health, friendship, family and love.	Personality, positive attitudes	Define the line of good personality and a promotion of these personalities.	Understand the cultural diversity; Teaching the value of hard-working