

# Colonialism and Popular Music: Moments in Japan and Korea's Encounter With Foreign Culture Between The Late Nineteenth and Mid-Twentieth Century

Ziyun Lan<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Guangzhou Foreign Language School, 102 Fenghuang Avenue, Nansha District, Guangzhou, Guangdong, 511455, China*

*\*Corresponding author. Email: 177075@qq.com*

## ABSTRACT

Japanese music historian Takashi Iba wrote "Technically, Japanese culture was largely imported from foreign countries, then refined into Japanese things." As a Japanese scholar who would have lived through the late nineteenth century, Iba witnessed the peak of colonialist and imperialist practices by the very same Western countries influencing Japan; Korea, whose popular music has become a national trademark in the twenty-first century, also seems to have been influenced by Japan and the Western countries during the same time.

As Western colonialism expanded to East Asia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Western culture began to heavily influence the emergence of both J-pop and K-pop. This paper traces the birth and growth of popular music in Japan and Korea (known as J-pop and K-pop). Nevertheless, it must be noted that popular music in modern Japan and Korea also retained elements from their own traditional music while they absorbed Western elements. In studying the Western foreign influences on Japanese and Korean popular music, this paper seeks to understand the two countries' responses to colonialism, imperialism, and modernization in the realm of culture.

Although the development trajectories of Japanese and Korean popular music shared many similarities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they ultimately diverged. By examining foreign influences on popular music in Japan and Korea, this paper reveals that, although Japanese and Korean music were both inflected by external influences, they carried distinct meanings for the common people and governments in each country. Since this foreign influence was appropriated in Japan and imposed in Korea, it reflected different forms of national identity in the two countries.

In the twenty-first century, other parts of East Asia have developed musical culture in direct response to Japanese and South Korean popular music, especially in Mainland China. Due to the historical contact among countries in East Asia, current Chinese popular music includes many traits of Japanese and South Korean popular music, even though they all have similarities to Western popular music. As a result, listeners of music from these traditions should learn more about the historical background and connections among China, South Korea, and Japan, as well as those between these countries and the West if they want to understand Chinese, South Koreans, and Japanese popular music.

**Keywords:** *popular music, Japan, Korea, colonialism, imperialism, modernization, culture, East Asia, J-pop and K-pop.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing in the early twentieth century, Japanese music historian Takashi Iba articulates the difference between Japanese music and the classical music of Bach and Mozart in the following way: "[Japanese music] is not a product of individual fascinating talents that exceed the surrounding world. Its rise and fall are often related

to the surrounded society." He pinpoints Japan's ability to syncretize elements from foreign culture with its own, arguing, "Technically, Japanese culture was largely imported from foreign countries, then refined into Japanese things." [1] As a Japanese scholar who would have lived through the late nineteenth century, Iba witnessed the peak of colonialist and imperialist practices by the very same Western countries influencing Japan;

his analysis reflects the traces of that history. This chain of influence did not end there: Korea, whose popular music has become a national trademark in the twenty-first century, also seems to have been influenced by Japan and the Western countries during the same time. This prompts some important questions: what was the role of colonialism and imperialism in the development of popular music in Japan and Korea? What roles have Japan and Korea actively played when they encountered such influences brought by colonialism and imperialism? What are the similarities and differences in their responses to foreign influences in terms of music?

This paper traces the birth and growth of popular music in Japan and Korea (known as J-pop and K-pop). In contrast to art music and traditional folk music, popular music, in its modern form, is mostly a Western invention. As Western colonialism expanded to East Asia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Western culture began to heavily influence the emergence of both J-pop and K-pop. Nevertheless, it must be noted that popular music in modern Japan and Korea also retained elements from their own traditional music while they absorbed Western elements. In studying the Western foreign influences on Japanese and Korean popular music, this paper seeks to understand the two countries' responses to colonialism, imperialism, and modernization in the realm of culture. I argue that Japan and Korea's different experiences with colonialism and imperialism resulted in divergent attitudes toward foreign influences on culture.

In recent decades, scholars have researched various aspects related to popular culture or popular music in Japan and Korea. Many of them have paid attention to the relationship between popular music and domestic politics. For example, in *Tears of Longing*, Christine Yana explores how Japanese *enka* was influenced by contemporary political images. As a form of Japanese popular music, *enka* literally means "speech song" in Japanese language. The meaning of this word indicates that *enka* places more emphasis on lyrics than melody because it is supposed to deliver political messages to the listeners [2]. Additionally, Byung-Kook Kim's investigation of the political environment under Park Chung Hee's regime between the 1960s and 1970s provides a useful analysis of the impact of politics on popular music at that time [3]. While these studies have separately examined the pervasive influences of domestic political environments on the progression of popular music in Japan and Korea, my research offers a comparative perspective by studying how Japanese and Korean popular music responded to foreign influence. More specifically, I will consider the role colonialism and imperialism played in the development of Japanese and Korean popular music.

Although the development trajectories of Japanese and Korean popular music shared many similarities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they

ultimately diverged. Three primary similarities defined their early stages: First, both traditions bear visible (or, more precisely, audible) marks of foreign culture introduced by colonial or semi-colonial rule. Second, they retained elements of their indigenous music traditions while adapting foreign culture to form a hybrid form of music. Third, the lyrics of the Japanese and Korean popular music concerned in this study both demonstrated strong interests in politics and individual expression. Nevertheless, the two countries have also enacted distinct approaches and attitudes towards foreign incursions into the cultural realm. For context, Meiji Japan has long been referred to as the first Asian country to successfully industrialize and modernize following Western models. As this paper will show, modern Japan's drive to learn from and appropriate foreign culture can also be found in the expansion of its popular music. Meanwhile, in contrast to Japan, foreign influences on popular music were mostly imposed on Korea from the outside during the early twentieth century. In other words, Japan was an importer of Western culture whereas Korea was more of an unwilling recipient. These contrasting approaches to foreign influences ultimately resulted in the two countries' different policymaking toward music and popular culture.

In order to pinpoint the effects of colonialism and imperialism on Japanese and Korean popular music, this paper will address several important historical moments. Throughout, the maturing of Japanese and Korean popular music, colonialism, imperialism, and inter-state wars played important parts. First of all, the processes of modernization that decimated the traditional elite classes and weakened social stratification in both countries were sparked by colonial or semi-colonial rule. As a result of modernization, court music declined while popular music emerged. In modern Japan and modern Korea, music was no longer an elite privilege. Neither musicians nor listeners were now required to obtain professional musical theories or knowledge in order to produce or appreciate music. In other words, it was colonization and modernization that enabled the birth of popular music in Japan and Korea. By examining foreign influences on popular music in Japan and Korea, this paper reveals that, although Japanese and Korean music were both inflected by external influences, they carried distinct meanings for the common people and governments in each country. Since this foreign influence was appropriated in Japan and imposed in Korea, it reflected different forms of national identity in the two countries.

## **2. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC FROM THE 1800S TO THE 1970S**

To study Western influences on Japan and Korea's popular music, it is necessary to understand the basic history of Western popular music. First of all, popular

music is a form of mass culture with popular appeal, which means that, contrary to high art, it is readily accessible to large numbers of musically uneducated listeners rather than to the elite class [4]. One of the most well-known examples of early popular music was American “Tin Pan Alley songs” produced around the 1850s, the simplicity and accessibility of which made it popular [5]. Finally, and perhaps most influentially, as the product of industrial modernization, popular music is distributed through means of mass dissemination, such as modern communications technology [6]. Starting in the nineteenth century, new types of popular music can be correlated to developments in technology. In the 1870s and onward, the phonograph started to challenge the status of printed sheet music as the recording industry grew. These means of diffusing music brought popular songs to a larger audience who could not read music. In the 1950s, untrained musicians replaced the previous professional composers, orchestrators, singers, and studio orchestras, quickly overtaking half of the popular music market with rock and roll [7].

As mass music popularized, political debates and trends quickly spilled over into the discourse around popular music. In the 1960s, rock music was increasingly associated with social movements political radicalism and left-wing thoughts. During this time, because of the presence of African American performers in the industry, mainstream critics also started to connect it to “racial conflicts, promiscuity and juvenile delinquency” as white teenagers were increasingly influenced by popular music such as rock [8]. The radical culture of this era further nurtured rock music, making it a democratic and accessible form of popular culture [9].

### **3. POPULAR MUSIC IN JAPAN AND KOREA: DEVELOPMENT AND FOREIGN INFLUENCE**

In the nineteenth century, East Asia caught the attention of many industrialized Western colonial powers, such as Britain and the United States. It was during this time of Western expansion into Asia that Western music began to shape indigenous music in Japan and Korea. Prior to the arrival of Western music in the late nineteenth century, music in Japan and Korea was rarely performed for the common people. Instead, it was composed and played for the elite class on formal as well as religious occasions. The elite nature of music in this time means that it required both taste and training to produce and appreciate [10]. Although certain forms of folk music did exist, few composers wrote music specifically for the commoners. Mainstream values held music and art to be a privilege of the aristocracy and the literati [11]. Thus, it was only in the late nineteenth century, when Western colonialism stimulated top-down modern reforms in Japan, that the role of music shifted

from an elite art to a tool of nation-building, which meant that it eventually began to be made for the masses [12].

In the nineteenth and late twentieth century, the arrival of Western colonialism in Asia was accompanied by force. In fact, many conflicts involving foreign forces took place throughout the modern histories of Japan and South Korea. However, the contact between Asia and the West was not only marked by military conflicts and atrocity, but also the mobility of population and exchange of ideas. Sometimes, when foreign forces invaded a place, they also left their cultural influence on the indigenous culture, including ideologies that represented Western values. These interactions between colonizers and the colonized necessarily affect how music was created and recreated. Both Japan and Korea have been subjected to colonialism and imperialism in their modern history, which resulted in the two countries’ exposure to foreign culture, including music.

#### **3.1. Japanese Popular Music**

Although there had been foreign presence in pre-modern Japan, the country did not voluntarily learn from Western culture until the arrival of Commodore Perry in the late Tokugawa period. Like many places in Asia, in the nineteenth century Western culture arrived in Japan through force. However, Japan’s acceptance of Western culture was relatively voluntary than many other Asian countries. This attitude was most evident in the Meiji Restoration – a series of top-down Western-style modernization programs carried out between the 1860s and 1890s. This meant that popular music in Japan also voluntarily absorbed elements from Western music.

Western influence arrived in Japan in the nineteenth century and deeply affected how the Japanese people viewed the world. In 1853, Commodore Matthew C. Perry, who commanded a squadron of U.S. warships during America’s mission to open Japanese ports to American trade, fired cannons on Japanese territory and forced the Japanese who had been ruled under the policy of “*Sakoku*” – or national seclusion – for over two hundred years to commence trade with the Americans [13]. As a result of this shock, the Japanese started to realize that Western countries like the United States were much stronger than them; therefore, they chose to imitate Western institutions and ideas such as constitutional monarchy and liberalism [14]. Those who accepted these modern concepts would lay the foundations of the Meiji Restoration, which sought to systematically modernize Japan by introducing Western political institutions such as constitutional monarchy and ideas such as liberalism and equality. These Western values would later influence how Japanese popular music was performed.

The Meiji Restoration in 1868 occupied an important position in the development of Japanese popular music. The loss of sovereignty as Japan opened its ports to

Western trade and signed unequal treaties with the Western powers stimulated a strong sense of shame and nationalism among the Japanese [15]. Hence, the government decided to learn from the Western powers and, as a result, model their country's government and culture on the West. With the demise of the Tokugawa Shogunate (Japanese government under the control of military leaders from the Tokugawa family), the society underwent great transformations and grew more turbulent. The abolishment of the samurai class and the social outcasts undermined traditional social hierarchy and enhanced social mobility [16]. As a result, court music specifically designed for and protected by the elites and royalty began to decline [17]. Since Western culture was celebrated as the advanced form of human civilization in this period, in 1880, the Meiji government hired a music teacher from Boston to help modernize Japanese schools' music education [18]. Meanwhile, modern ideas of democracy and liberalism spread in Japan and affected the political scene, and people became more engaged in politics. In addition, the enlargement of modern commerce and trade also accelerated Japan's urbanization process [19]. Gradually, the political and social changes taking place in this time also began to affect the presentation of music.

These factors resulted in the creation of a form of music called *enka*, a Japanese term that literally translates to "speech-song." In the 1880s, during the Freedom and People's Rights Movement, *enka* emerged as a category of songs that expressed criticism of government in ways easily comprehensible to the general public. *Enka* songwriters intended these songs to express the ideas of the movement to the illiterate masses and gain popular support for the democratic ideals that Meiji intellectuals hoped to promote [20]. Therefore, *enka* was often heard in public places like teahouses and outdoors on the streets, where *enka* lyric sheets were sold. Since *enka* songs were composed to deliver political messages, the lyrics were considered more important than the melody and often concerned current affairs. For example, in 1881 the Japanese political activist and theorist Ueki Emori (1857-1892) composed a famous *enka* song named *Minken kazoe uta* (Civil Rights Counting Song). Aiming to promote the Western concepts of freedom and democracy in Japan, Emori wrote in this song: "No man is above another man, and no right is above another man. I'd give up my life for freedom, and I'm not afraid to do so. In a world of civil rights and liberties, there are still people who haven't woken up... what a pity! How quickly the world is opening up, and how sad it is when parents teach their children that among the five great continents, Asia is still half-opened." [21] The song was widely circulated among Japanese people and became one of the symbols of the *Jiyu minken undo* (Freedom and Rights Movement) in the 1870s and 1880s.

Although *enka* melodies shared many similarities with traditional Japanese music, during this time *enka*

songs were also inspired by school songs (*shoka*) and military songs (*gunka*), both of which had been borrowed from Western countries to modernize Japan's own music [22]. Around 1907, violin was also used as an accompanying instrument in *enka* performance [23]. Later on, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, *enka* continuously absorbed influences from European and American music genres such as folk and "new music." [24] Therefore, the arrival of the Western countries stimulated the process of modernization in Meiji Japan and inspired the creation of *enka*, a new form of music combining modern Western features with Japanese traditional musical forms.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Japan was engaged in a series of large-scale wars with foreign countries, including the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Japan's victories in these wars led to the rise of expansionism and colonization in other Asian countries, which greatly shaped mass culture and popular music in this period. In the wake of the first Sino-Japanese War, Japan obtained its first overseas colonies, including Korea and Taiwan. Then, after defeating Russia in the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905), Japan demonstrated to the world for the first time that an Asian country could win a victory over a European country [25]. The victories in these wars, together with the success in revising unequal treaties with the Western powers in the 1890s, greatly boosted Japanese nationalism and expansionism. Many Japanese scholars and statesmen started to promote the concept of Pan-Asianism, which argued that Japan should lead its Asian neighbors to shed Western colonialism and thrive together as a family [26]. Despite the collaborative tone of this propaganda, Japanese politicians ultimately wielded this ideology as a justification for Japanese colonialism and imperialism in Asia. In particular, it was employed to normalize Japanese cultural superiority over its Asian neighbors, thus facilitating the transplantation of Japanese culture to its colonies in Asia, such as Korea [27].

During the early twentieth century, Japan developed a specific genre of music that served a military function in the many wars they were fighting. "*Gunka*," a form of music used to bolster soldiers' fighting spirit and appeal to Japanese patriotic feelings, became popular during this period. Originally inspired by British and French military songs, *gunka* was a Japanese adaptation of Western military band music. As early as 1850s, Japanese elites had noticed the presence of military bands in Western countries and their role in boosting military morale. In the 1860s, the fear of being colonized by Western powers prompted the Meiji government to formally establish Western-style military bands in its own force. As they instituted this Western-style military band in Japan, a new genre of music – *gunka* – gradually formed. The music style of *gunka* "featured a steady march beat and an instrumental accompaniment emphasizing Western

military and drum instruments.” [28] In addition, the lyrics expressed primarily sentiments of patriotism and nationalism. For example, a *gunka* song composed by Koyama Sakunosuke and Yamada Bimyosai before the Sino-Japanese War named “Thousands of Enemies May Come” (“*Teiki Wa Ikuman*”) read: “Thousands of enemies may come, / but they are only disorderly troops! / Even if they are not, / we have always absolute justice!” [29] This poem's lyrical content aimed primarily at inspiring the Japanese common people by appealing to their patriotism and disparaging Japan's enemies. Since the purpose of *gunka* was to promote patriotism and mobilize war participation, people who commissioned musicians to compose *gunka* songs primarily worked for the government.

In other instances, the lyrics of *gunka* songs demonstrated Japan's growing ambitions toward becoming an imperialist power. For instance, one famous military song written after the Russo-Japanese War expresses Japan's ambitions toward Manchuria: “Here in far-off Manchuria / hundreds of leagues from the homeland / our comrades lie beneath the rocky plain / lit by the red setting sun.” [30] Thus, though *gunka* came into being as a result of Japan's encounter with Western imperialism, it transcended this origin when it became a tool in Japanese imperialist ventures in Asia. *Gunka* can be considered a form of popular music because its listeners were mainly composed of uneducated people and soldiers, who belonged to the general public. Importantly, the emergence of *gunka* and the purpose it served vividly demonstrated a specific period in modern Japanese history in terms of Japan's changing international position and diplomatic relations. As discussed above, *gunka* was one of the earliest forms of Western music introduced to Japan to modernize its army. In this regard, *gunka* represented Japan's relatively voluntary acceptance of Western culture as well as its aptitude in adopting Western culture to serve its own purposes. Therefore, *gunka* was a form of popular music that demonstrated how Japan imagined and reacted to modernization, colonialism, and imperialism.

The scale of foreign influence on Japanese popular music may have reached its pinnacle during World War II. After the end of the war, Western popular music directly affected Japanese music. The American troops that occupied Japan after the war spread American taste in popular music, which led to many translations of American and European hits in the post-war years. For example, the 1948 song *Tōkyō Bugiugi* – or “Tokyo Boogie Woogie” – was written in a major scale and sung without traditional Japanese vocal techniques, and the 1950s hits *Tennessee Waltz* and *Que sera, sera* were songs translated from Western hits [31]. Up till the 1970s, popular songs kept westernizing and including more characteristics from Western music. Even *enka* underwent changes, with its melody combining western major and minor scales with traditional Japanese

pentatonic scales. For example, many songs contained a solo voice and an orchestra that mainly consisted of European instruments, harmonies and rhythms; however, the vocal techniques used by Japanese singers and the melodic patterns were still traditionally Japanese [32].

After the end of WWII, many countries around the world experienced rapid economic development and a sudden uptick in birthrates known as the “baby boom.” The rapidly growing number of youths in the post-war era played an important role in the mass culture of the 1960s and 1970s, a period that witnessed tides of progressive social movements about civil rights, gender equality, decolonization, and protests against the Vietnam War [33]. In Europe and the United States, the popular music of this time, such as rock and roll, often featured expressions of opposition against the authority and resistance to traditional values [34]. Popular music such as rock and roll became a new tool of expressing discontent toward traditional power structures.

In postwar Japan, these global trends in politics also shaped popular culture and music [35]. With the introduction of rock and roll, a genre known as “Group Sounds” influenced by British and American pop music groups in the 1960s appeared in Japan [36]. Some of the most famous group sounds players included music groups “The Tigers” and “The Spiders,” and they took their cues from similar Western musical groups, for instance, the Beatles [37]. For example, The Spiders' lineup consisted of guitarists, pianist, bass players, drummer, and a singer, similar to Western bands [38]. Their tonal sense, overt beats, tonal harmonies, and usage of Western scales copied rock and roll. Along with rock and roll, a Western-influenced folk style that prioritized the melody over rhythmic basics or instrumental accompaniment also emerged in Japan under the continued influence of Western music and culture [39]. During this time, Japanese music saw the rise of protests about the decolonization movement, which was a focus of the anti-war movement in Japan. Therefore, new popular music expressed dissatisfaction, opposition to authority, and reflections on colonization [40]. In this way, post-war Japanese popular music not only absorbed from Western music technical characteristics such as musical arrangement and rhythm, but also expressed concerns about political trends in the Western world.

### **3.2. Korean Popular Music**

Even though the popular music of Japan and Korea were both products of foreign influence, the social contexts of how the music was enjoyed differed. Importantly, Westernization and modernization were imposed on Korea by either Western power or Japanese colonizers when Korea became a Japanese colony (1910-1945). Regarding Korean music, the first time when Western music was systematically imposed on it was in the wake of the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895),

after which Korea was in reality controlled by Japan. In 1910, Japan formally annexed Korea as a colony [41]. Under Japanese colonization, the Japanese government used the Korean school system to teach Koreans the Japanese language while prohibiting them from learning about their own language and culture. Japan at this time was deeply Westernized, so it essentially became a medium of diffusing Western ideas to Korea [42]. Therefore, the Korean government was sensitive to foreign influences on its culture because it indicated foreign invasion. In particular in South Korea during Park's regime, the government maintained rigid control of popular music and subjected it to censorship because it was suspicious of foreign erosion of its national culture and identity.

Japanese colonization over the Korean peninsula would not end until the defeat of Japan by the Allied Powers at the end of World War II. However, the Korean War (1950-1953) afterward again subjected Korean people to the atrocities of wars and foreign invasion [43]. A series of changes to Korean popular music occurred during the period of Japanese colonization [44]. Since Japan served as an intermediary for transmitting Western culture to Korea, as Korea became more "Japanized," it also became more Westernized. In order to better control Korea, Japan chose to assimilate Korean culture into Japanese culture, which included the prohibition of speaking Korean and the establishment of the Japanese school system in Japan [45]. This went as far as using Japanese music textbooks in Korean schools; therefore, "[T]he school songs *hakkyo ch'anggas* (Western songs for school) were, for the most part, based in Western musical idioms" instead of traditional Japanese musical styles [46]. In addition to reshaping Korean musical styles, the Japanese also introduced large recording companies, which sold phonographs and records and "boosted the recording production of the Korean popular songs by cutting the price of the records." [47] This helped promote the later mass diffusion of popular music in Korea. Under Japanese colonial rule, *t'ürot'ü*, a genre influenced by *enka*, emerged and dominated Korean popular music. It was constructed upon the Japanese pentatonic minor scale [48]. However, Korean traditional traits in popular music did not vanish. Early female *t'ürot'ü* singers "used nasal voices with lots of inflections and vibrations, which had been the trademarks of the traditional Korean singing performance." [49] As a result, *t'ürot'ü*, one of the earliest Korean popular music styles, synthesized different features of Western, Japanese, and traditional Korean music styles. It was not designed only for the elite class, but also the common people who could appreciate the music without specialized knowledge.

After the Korean War, many United States troops remained in South Korea, directly spreading their culture. Regarding the impact of U.S. military presence on Korean culture, John Lie's study has pointed out that "the

United Service Organizations (USO) arranged live shows, which provided the template for the first South Korean music show, *Sho Sho Sho*, broadcast by the government-owned TV station, KBS." Moreover, American popular music was transmitted to the Koreans by radios and television sets through the Armed Forces Korean Network (AFKN). Furthermore, South Korean musicians who came to play for American soldiers at the officers' club also immersed themselves into American popular music [50]. They "fully absorbed the American popular musical trends of those times in order to appeal to the American soldiers." [51] After working in an atmosphere full of American music, the style of South Korean musicians, who "dressed and comported themselves in line with American expectations," had absorbed many exotic elements [52]. As a result, their songs exhibited traits typical of both Korean and American music [53]. Later on, when they performed for the domestic audience, they helped spread the influence of American popular music to a wider population. Given the direct exposure to American popular music in post-war era, Korean popular music continued to syncretize characteristics and traits from both Western and Korean music styles.

However, Korean people's attitudes toward foreign music changed drastically during Park Chung-Hee's rule in South Korea from 1961 to 1979. Park, who was a military general before coming to power, led a military coup that overthrew the previous government. His government, which had brought enormous economic growth to South Korea, "maintained a policy of guided democracy, with restrictions on personal freedoms, suppression of the press and of opposition parties, and control over the judicial system and the universities." [54] When Park first assumed office, not only American rock started to spread in South Korea, Japanese-inspired Group Sounds performed by musician Sin Chung-hyön also became increasingly popular. As rock became more popular in South Korea, it became associated with things that would disrupt social order, such as sex, drug abuse, communism, and student movements. The perceived threats of popular music "prompted the Park regime to place Sin and his associates under heavy surveillance." [55] As a result, government censorship and crackdown on progressive culture became harsher, banning "222 South Korean records and 261 foreign songs, on the grounds of everything from 'negative influences on national security' to 'pessimistic content.'" [56] Overall, until the mid-1980s, the South Korea government had silenced the nascent culture of rock music, along with sexy clothing and other marks of popular culture deemed dangerous to social stability [57]. Meanwhile, in the 1970s, folk music emerged as an alternative genre around which anti-government urban youths coalesced, and "became inextricable from the student anti-government movement in South Korea." [58]

Therefore, during Park's rule, different types of popular music underwent decades of quelling, in which "[t'ürot'ü] was too Japanese, Japanese songs were imperialist, rock was sex-addled and drug-infused, and folk songs were anti-government; even composers of classical music, such as Isang Yun, came under fire for their political views." [59] In its place, the government attempted to promote "healthy songs" with cheerful lyrics and melodies [60]. Due to governmental suppression, the advance of popular music was strictly controlled to stabilize the country. Nevertheless, t'ürot'ü, Japanese music, rock, and anti-government music could still be heard in teahouses, individual homes, and various urban quarters [61].

#### **4. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JAPANESE AND KOREAN POPULAR MUSIC**

Both Japanese and Korean popular music were products of syncretism. This is most evident in the case of enka, which was a music genre that combined traditional Japanese music elements and Western ideas of liberalism and freedom. As for gunka, it featured an instrumental accompaniment emphasizing Western military and drum instruments. After the Second World War, Japanese popular music kept integrating Western elements; songs with mainly Western musical instruments and arrangements would be sung using Japanese-style vocal techniques [62]. Additionally, the melody of Japanese popular songs combined Western major and minor scales with the Japanese traditional pentatonic scales [63]. As a result, "enka is 'modern' music that brings Western instruments together with Japanese scales, vocal techniques, and textual themes." [64] In Korea, since the Japanese government forced Koreans to learn westernized Japanese music, the resulting Korean popular music combined elements from Japanese, Western, and Korean traditional music. During the Korean War, Korean musicians who were immersed in Western popular music composed songs based on both Korean and Western musical structures. As a result, both Japanese and Korean popular music syncretized musical traits and elements from other culture, resulting in new forms of music. [65-66]

Another similarity is that the focus and themes of Japanese and Korean popular music both shifted back and forth between politics and individuals. As the first type of popular music that emerged in Japan, enka's lyrics expressed the political opinions of ordinary people. Later, during times of war, gunka aimed to evoke nationalism and patriotic spirit in both the soldiers on the battlefield and among the general public in order to encourage morale. However, after the Second World War, popular music focused more on the melody of the songs rather than the lyrics, and those songs expressed the personal feelings of the composers rather than their

political views. In Korea, t'ürot'ü, being a product of Japanese influence, often contained political views as well. However, during the Korean War, South Korean musicians learned Western popular songs in order to entertain the American soldiers stationed in South Korea [67]. Therefore, after the end of the war, when South Korean musicians started to perform for Korean people in the same way they had for the Americans, the purpose of music changed to pure entertainment. Nevertheless, during Park's reign, the existing popular music was seen as politically "unhealthy," which resulted in a new type of "healthy" popular music that could strengthen the stability of the country, showing the influence of politics on South Korean music. One example of the healthy popular music was "Saemaül üi norae" (The song of the new village), a song composed by Park himself to celebrate a state-led rural reform called the New Village Movement (1961-1979) [68].

One major difference between Japanese and Korean popular music is the way by which colonialism came to influence them. In the case of Japan, Western culture directly influenced Japanese people after the arrival of foreign forces in the nineteenth century. This process differed in Korea. Instead, Western influence came through the Japanese colonial rule, which served as a medium of the diffusion of Western culture. By the time Japan occupied Korea, it had already absorbed several elements of Western culture and combined them with its own cultural practices. Therefore, while Japan forced the Koreans to erase traditional Korean culture, it was actually delivering Western ideas to Korea in the same process. It was only after the Korean War that Korea had more direct contact with American culture. Therefore, one could argue that Western culture came to Japan directly but came to Korea indirectly through the Japanese occupation [69].

The core difference between Japanese popular music and Korean popular music lies in their respective response to Western influences. It seems that Japan voluntarily accepted and promoted Western ideas and culture. In addition, Japanese popular music spread freely without much government intervention. It must be noted that, throughout the evolution of Japanese popular music, the Japanese government barely put any restrictions on the topics and ways of expression of popular songs, which left ample room for Japanese popular music to mature freely. Enka, gunka, and Group Sounds all either copied directly from Western countries or combined borrowed elements with Japanese characteristics.

As for the Korean case, the Korean government always kept a close eye on popular music, especially in the 1960s. Under the rule of Park Chung-Hee, rock was usually associated with sex, drugs, and political dissent, and so was placed under strong government censorship. Since Korea had been subjugated to colonial rule and foreign incursions for most of the late nineteenth and

early twentieth centuries, the unstable domestic and international environment made the government extremely sensitive to music and culture in general, which they considered to be a tool of political expression that might either strengthen or weaken the country. The government banned Japanese songs because they considered them to be imperialist propaganda that might lead South Koreans to recall the shameful history of living under Japanese colonization. Although t'ŭrot'ŭ was born in Korea, it was seen as Japanese because it contained elements of Japanese music. Folk songs were anti-government, which would hinder the government's control of the country [70]. Therefore, most popular music was seen as unhealthy and prohibited by the government. The Japanese government allowed the free flourishing of popular music, while the Korean government viewed music as a tool to control the country [71].

## 5. CONCLUSION

As a result of long-time interactions with foreign culture, both Japanese and Korean popular music syncretized elements from Western music with its own indigenous culture. However, whereas Western culture affected Japan directly, it affected Korea indirectly through Japan's occupation. After the Second World War, Japanese popular music evolved freely whereas Korean popular music progressed only under a lot of government restrictions. Born in a time shaped by political reforms and social changes, popular music in both countries expressed abundant individual feelings and political concerns. However, because the two countries experienced colonialism and imperialism in very different ways, their responses to foreign influences on indigenous culture also varied. In Japan, although the Tokugawa state was initially struck by American gunboat politics, the succeeding Meiji government quickly adapted to these challenges and launched a systematic Western-style reform, which imitated Western institutions and promoted Western culture. In this regard, the Japanese government's attitude toward foreign culture was quite open-minded, its attitude to learn was also voluntary. For Korea, however, things were a bit different. For many years in its early history of modernization, Korea had lived under the shadow of large empires. First colonized by Japan and later subjected to influences from the United States, Korea's government after WWII had a strong desire for national independence. This might have partially explained the South Korean government's sensitive attitudes toward foreign culture, demonstrated in the rigid control over popular music.

Ultimately, popular music in East Asia shows the wide-reaching and sometimes surprising effects of colonialism. In the twenty-first century, other parts of East Asia have developed musical culture in direct

response to Japanese and South Korean popular music, especially in Mainland China. Similar to K-pop, Chinese popular music is under the control of the government. For example, Chinese rap culture, which became popular a few years ago, has been suppressed by the government because it is more frequently associated with illegal behaviors such as drugs than other types of popular music. Big Chinese entertainment companies have started to imitate the K-pop industry, which includes the system of training singers, the appearance of stars, and musical arrangements. Additionally, fan culture, a special feature of K-pop, has also influenced China, where music fans begin to pay a significant amount of money to buy albums or accessories that could represent their idols or gather into communities to organize events expressing their support for their idols. In Hong Kong and Taiwan, though, J-pop influence is more important. Since Hong Kong was an early economic center in East Asia, it was influenced greatly by Japan, which was the dominant economic power in Asia in the 1970s and 1980s. Taiwanese popular music was also significantly influenced by its Japanese equivalent because the island was a Japanese colony between 1895 and 1945 and have maintained a close relationship with Japan even today.

Due to the historical contact among countries in East Asia, current Chinese popular music includes many traits of Japanese and South Korean popular music, even though they all have similarities to Western popular music. These common traits stem from their similar historical background. Historically, both Japan and South Korea had different levels of contact with China, since Korea was a Chinese tributary state and Japan frequently sent missions to China. This suggests that there could also be similarities at the base of Chinese, South Korean, and Japanese popular music. As a result, listeners of music from these traditions should learn more about the historical background and connections among China, South Korea, and Japan, as well as those between these countries and the West if they want to understand Chinese, South Koreans, and Japanese popular music. The similarities and differences among the popular music of these three countries demonstrate the unique history and characteristics of East Asian popular music compared to popular music from other parts of the world.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The title "AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS" should be in all caps.

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The title "ACKNOWLEDGMENTS" should be in all caps and should be placed above the references. The references should be consistent within the article and follow the same style. List all the references with full details.



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