“A MARGINALIZED MUSIC?”

UNDERGROUND ROCK MUSIC CULTURE IN SEOUL

SINCE THE MID-1990S

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Abstract

This thesis identifies and discusses aspects of the underground rock music scene formed after the mid-1990s in the Shinchon and Hongik University area of western Seoul, Korea. Although initially the Korean underground rock music was marginalized outside the mainstream of Korean popular music, its audience has gradually increased. In the 2000s, the scene is lively, active, and energetic. The study details how this Korean underground rock music culture has developed as a subculture (Hebdige) through the processes of globalization and localization (Appadurai) by examining first how the underground rock music culture has been influenced by the Western countries, including the U.S., and then how this culture creates its own social significances.
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Chapter I. Introduction

1. Scope and Goal of Study

Underground rock music clubs in Seoul have developed as a unique scene since the mid-1990s. When the clubs scene began somewhere around 1994, there were only a few underground rock music clubs, and those clubs were illegal as the "clubs" had been opened first as restaurants prohibited to host the performance of live music with two or more players. The club scene was marginalized at that time.

However, after the amendment of the Hygiene Law in Korea in 1999, underground rock clubs soon became legal. With the passing of this amendment of the Hygiene Law, several underground rock clubs in Seoul sought legal status. Achieving legality granted underground rock clubs in Seoul larger audiences than they had enjoyed initially. Now, in the 2000s, the club scene is animated and rock music played at the underground clubs scene has gradually gained popularity with Korean youth. Nonetheless, although gaining in popularity, underground rock music still does not enjoy great popularity nationally.

Before the beginning of the club scene in the mid-1990s, Koreans listened to the U.S. and the U.K. rock music performed since the 1950s and made popular through radio and television. In an attempt to discover the national context of Korean rock music culture and its background since the mid-1990s, the fifth part of Chapter I offers a short history of rock music and popular music in Korea. The sixth part
expands that understanding to include the international context of western music; I provide a brief summary of rock music in the U.S. and the U.K. in the 1990s in order to expose, at least in part, the influence of this music on Korean underground rock music since the mid-1990s.

In Chapter II, I describe the rock music scene in both China and Japan as comparison. This section shows that rock music from the U.S. and the U.K. has flowed differently to various countries according to the social contexts within each culture.

For example, while maintaining cultural similarities, China, Japan and Korea each display unique rock music scenes, mainly because of differing social circumstances within each nation. These differences contribute to the localization of the music and the unique rock music of these different countries can be identified as effective examples of the localization of globalized rock music.

In Chapter III, using information gathered from my fieldwork with four underground rock music clubs and also from internet research, I explain the various social contexts of Korean underground rock music extant in Seoul since the 1990s. Next, I focus on the musical elements of Korean underground rock music. A musical analysis of three songs with the transcriptions offers an understanding of the musical shape of Korean underground rock songs. Each song has its own unique character that has allowed it to be used as a useful example for analysis. I include transcriptions of these songs at Appendix C. Finally, I examine Korean underground
rock music culture since the mid-1990s as understood within the concepts of globalization and localization. For an examination of the Korean underground rock music culture, this study uses the theoretical framework of globalization and localization (Appadurai, 2000, pp. 27-47). According to Arjun Appadurai, the world today communicates beyond national boundaries. Various cultural phenomena such as popular music songs and movies flow easily from one place to another. My concept of globalization in this study is drawn from Appadurai’s idea of ‘flow.’ The underground rock music culture in Korea, for example, shows the influences from the U.S. and the U.K. rock music culture that has ‘flowed,’ through media channels, to Korea. This phenomenon is presented in Chapter III of this study.

Although an aspect of culture, such as rock music, might flow from one location to another, the resultant and related cultural phenomena at the new location place will have different qualities from that which has initially acted as catalyst or influence. For example, Appadurai writes about the incursion of American popular songs into the Philippines. When American popular songs first arrived in the Philippines, Filipinos accepted and learned such American popular songs such as Kenny Rogers’ songs, but they considered these songs by themselves as far more original than they are imagined to be in the U.S. (ibid., 2000, p. 29). From Appadurai’s idea, I define this phenomenon of redefinition and new identification of songs as ‘localization’ within the contexts of this study. A cultural phenomenon at one place and a cultural phenomenon at the other place carry different meanings according to location and to
the hegemonic cultural practices of that location; although the one may influence the other, the one does not faithfully mimic, or become, the other. Underground rock music in Korea, for example, is influenced by the rock music of the U.S. and the U.K., but the Korean underground rock music nonetheless has its own cultural uniqueness that separates it from the music of two Western countries that may have sparked the growth and development of the Korean rock music. This phenomenon of localization is further examined in Chapter III.

I show that while rock music may be disseminated commercially and defined through its status as product, that music gains various new meanings when performed in particular places within various unique social contexts. Seoul, for example, has an underground rock music club scene that has its own social meanings arising from Korean society’s acceptance and maintenance of its unique historical and cultural distinctions. Korean history has undergone both active and dynamic changes, particularly since its 1945 liberation from Japanese colonial rule. Colonial experiences and post-colonial conditions have produced both a chaotic and a dynamic social and cultural environment (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2002, pp. 186-192; Loomba, 2001, pp. 173-183). Even before 1945, Korea experienced dramatic cultural changes both because of its relationships with countries such as China, Russia, Japan, and Western countries and due to unstable national circumstances such as the Donghak Nongmin Hyeokmyeong (Donghak Peasants Revolution). Because

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1 *Donghak Nongmin Hyeokmyeong* (Donghak Peasants Revolution) arose in 1894 at the
of this revolution and the turbulent relationships with other countries, Korea underwent changes that redefined it as a modern nation, although that struggle toward modernity was later impeded by Japanese colonial rule. These historical and social processes are reflected in contemporary Korean lives and culture, including the underground rock music culture in Seoul, which exhibits signs of active and dynamic transformation due to social change.

In Chapter III of this study, I examine the social contexts of underground rock music culture in Seoul using the concepts of globalization and localization (Appadurai, 2000) and also the concept of subculture (Hebdige, 1996). According to Dick Hebdige, "Subcultures represent ‘noise’ (as opposed to sound): interference in the orderly sequence which leads from real events and phenomena to their representation in the media" (ibid., 1996, p. 90). Through live performances and communications of internet media, underground rock musicians and their fans in Korea create a ‘noise’ that resists the mainstream popular music market in Korea, which is currently dominated by big management recording and broadcasting companies. Korean rock culture as subculture is examined in detail in Chapter III. Chapter IV offers a conclusion to the thesis.

The main goal of this study is to examine a part of Korean underground rock music culture, offering possible explanations, and thus to illuminate some of the more southwestern part of Korea because of a tyrannical government. During one year it spread and developed over the whole southern part of Korea in order to repel foreign power such as China, Japan, Russia, and Western countries. Although this revolution failed, it provoked social changes in Korea (Donghak Peasants Revolution Memorial Hall, 2004, para.1).
important aspects of Korean underground rock music as there has been very little scholarly writing on Korean underground rock music until most recently. Therefore, it is my hope that this thesis will contribute to a continuing scholarly study of Korean underground rock music.

The scope of this study is limited in terms of both place and time. I limit my analysis to Seoul, home to the dominant underground rock music scene in Korea today. Other cities such as Busan, the second largest in Korea, do not enjoy such an active underground rock club scene (Kaoru, 2001, April, para. 5). Some cities, such as Daegu and Gwangju, have only a few underground rock music clubs. Underground rock music clubs in Seoul are concentrated in the western area of the city, the Shinchon and Hongik University areas. These are important locations, where young people usually gather and develop their own type of popular culture.

Hongik University is located very close to the Shinchon area. However, as there are two separate subway stations, “Shinchon” and “Hongdae Ipgu” (Entrance of Hongik University), Koreans frequently distinguish between them. These two areas are also separated by subtle cultural differences: “Shinchon area focuses more on fashion, entertainment, liquor and food, while the Hongik University area has private fine arts academies, galleries and unique cafes” (Seoul Metropolitan Government, 2003, para. 3-4).

Despite the differences between the Shinchon and Hongik University areas, for the purpose of this research, I consider the two as one area for two reasons. First,
they are very close each other, and second, both have underground rock music clubs which often cooperate with one another. For example, the underground rock music clubs in the Shinchon and Hongik University area jointly organized *Live Club Fest*, a performance that rock musicians from nine underground rock music clubs in the area jointly produced once a month.

One of the reasons many young people gather in the Shinchon and Hongik University area is that this area is home to several universities, such as Ewha Women’s University, Sogang University, and Yonsei University. These universities attract many young people, and underground rock music clubs spring up in the areas surrounding the universities simply because young people enjoy rock music; as British sociologist and popular music scholar Simon Frith (1981) writes, “Rock is the music of youth” (p. 181).

I also limit the time period of this study to the years after the mid-1990s. During this time, many underground rock music clubs have opened in the Shinchon and Hongik University area. Prior to the mid-1990s there were only a very small number of underground rock music clubs in the area. According to Seong-man Kang (2004), a reporter from a Korean daily newspaper *Hankyoreh*, the only live club near Hongik University in 1994 was Rock World (para. 2). However, according to Bong-sook Yun (2002), an officer of the Seoul Metropolitan Government, in 2002, live clubs (including underground rock music clubs) in the Hongik University area made up 70% of all live clubs in Seoul (p. 1). As a result, Koreans in Seoul consider
the Shinchon and Hongik University area as the club scene for underground rock music.

2. Romanization

In this thesis I follow the “Romanization by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Korea announced in July, 2000." I used this romanization to write Korean names, to indicate Korean book and song titles, and also to write song lyrics in Korean.

According to the “Romanization by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Korea,” spelling by standard pronunciation of Korean language is a fundamental rule. If possible, it is better not to use symbols such as hyphens, but to avoid confusion, a hyphen can be used. For example, Jungang and Jung-ang both mean “center,” however, if a hyphen occurs between ‘n’ and ‘g’ such as Jun-gang, there can be a different meaning depending on the context, or the word can be used as a proper noun. Therefore, if the position of a hyphen results in a different meaning and pronunciation, a hyphen will be used. Except for such cases, the romanization usually follows the standard pronunciation of Seoul and the middle Korea.

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2 This is the most recent version.
3. Research Methods

I was born and raised in Korea. During this past 35 years I have met and communicated with many Koreans, who gave me my understanding of Korean society. These kinds of experiences have helped me to develop my approach used for this study of people's lives and musical culture in Korea.

Since my years as a middle school student, I have been especially interested in rock music. As a university student from 1988 to 1992 and from 1994 to 1997, I met many Koreans, also interested in rock music, at the two universities, Yonsei University and the Korean National University of Arts. During those college years, I had several opportunities to play keyboard with amateur rock musicians, and from 2002 to 2003, I frequented underground rock clubs near the Shinchon and Hongik University area while also visiting web sites related to the underground rock music scene. After I visited clubs and web sites, I wrote down the clubs' names, musicians' names and their characteristics in my notebook, and I saved web sites' pages and by purchasing and copying various books about the music scene, I further researched rock music and underground rock music scene issues. I also bought and listened to underground rock compact discs. These various cultural and academic experiences have been useful for writing this thesis and helpful when transcribing Korean underground rock songs.

I transcribed the songs as examples of Korean underground rock music and to allow me to analyze more completely the various musical elements in an attempt to
understand better their musical characteristics. My hope is that these transcriptions of the songs can serve as useful musical examples of the Korean underground rock songs. In transcribing the songs, I have used Western staff notation because almost every rock song consists of western musical idioms such as tonal harmonies or duple meter. However, Korean underground rock musicians rarely use Western staff notation when they are composing songs. While composing, instead of recording these songs with notation, they more frequently and spontaneously create songs by improvisation as they play.

One Korean underground rock musician, Ji-han Jeon of the band Peterpan Complex, said to me when I interviewed him on Monday, August 23, 2004, that he and his band usually compose a short riff, which they then play and develop further through the playing of the song. Through the processes of playing and developing riffs, they complete their songs. He stated that after the band members make a song, however, he does write down the song on the Western staff, but only to arrange and to remember it.

Although Korean underground rock musicians do not always make use of Western staff notation, I have used it for transcriptions because Korean underground rock music is characterized by mostly Western musical elements.

3 Riff is “a short melodic ostinato, usually two or four bars long, which may either be repeated intact (strict riff) or varied to accommodate an underlying harmonic pattern” (Robinson, 2002, p. 415).
4. Definitions

Throughout this thesis, I use several terms that relate to popular music. For example, I write about “rock music,” “indie rock music,” “underground rock music,” and “pop music.” In this section, I explain and define these terms occurring in the text and footnotes, because some terms, such as “pop music” and “popular music” or “rock and roll music” and “rock music,” can be confusing. I also define other terms, used to describe Korean popular music and underground rock culture, which are frequently used in this study.

The concept of “popular music” can be easily confused with the concept of “pop music.” Furthermore, “rock music” and “rock’n roll” or “rock and roll music” are also frequently used without clear distinctions. However, music scholars in Western countries, such as the U.S., have defined these terms. To avoid confusion with these terms in this research, I offer conventional definitions for each of these terms, first defining “rock,” “rock and roll” and then, “popular music” and “pop music.”

“Rock” is “a term used to denote a particular category of pop music. A contraction of ROCK AND ROLL, it appeared in the 1960s, when it was used to describe certain new pop music styles developing after about 1965 in North America and Britain” (Middleton, 2001, p. 485). “Rock and roll” is “a term sometimes used broadly to refer to the popular music of the second half of the 20th century, but which often narrowly designates a style of the 1950s” (Walser, 2001, p. 486). According to these explanations, “rock” and “rock and roll” define a lineage over time. “Rock
and roll” started in the 1950s, and “rock” was derived from “rock and roll” in the
1960s.

“Popular music” is “a term used widely in everyday discourse, generally
referring to types of music that are considered to be of lower value and complexity
than art music, and to be readily accessible to large numbers of musically uneducated
listeners rather than to an elite” (Middleton, 2001, p. 128). “Pop” is,
a term applied to a particular group of popular music
styles. Originated mostly from the USA and Britain,
since the 1950s these styles have subsequently spread
to most parts of the world with the Western social and
cultural influences. In Western countries and in
many others too, they became the predominant
popular music styles of the second half of the 20th

According to these definitions, popular music can include pop, i.e., the extent of
popular music is broader than pop. In this thesis, the four terms will be used in
accordance with these definitions.

I will also use several terms relevant to the Korean popular music market today
and to Korean underground rock music culture. “Indie rock music” is a term
combining “independent” and “rock.” “Independent” is interchangeable with
“indie” or “indie music,” connoting “small record labels which are independent from
the majors (at least in terms of the productive and creative process of artist
acquisition and promotion), though still reliant on a major for distribution” (Shuker,
2002, p. 170). Therefore, “indie rock music” is rock music recorded and sold by
small and independent labels. Korean underground rock musicians primarily record and sell their albums through Korean independent labels. Therefore, in Korea, underground rock musicians are usually considered to be indie rock musicians.

"Underground rock music club" is defined as a performance place for live music that is physically located beneath a building's ground floor. In Korea, nearly every underground rock club is actually located under the ground floor. "Underground rock music" is defined as the music played at these underground rock music clubs. Korean underground rock musicians usually play at clubs which are located under the ground floor, but they also record their music with independent labels.

There are three mainstream genres of Korean popular music today: "ballad," "dance music" and "teuroteu" (trot). "Ballad," song popular among young people in Korea, use slow tempo melodies and various harmonies and have lyrics that are often telling love stories (Lee, 2001, p. 270). The definition of "dance music" in Korea corresponds closely to the definition of "dance pop" by popular music scholar Roy Shuker and can be described thusly: "a broadly constituted musical genre, dance pop is often maligned, in part because of its perceived commercial orientation and its main audience of adolescent girls" (Shuker, 2002, p. 94). Dance music in Korea has been especially and broadly popular within the mainstream of the popular music market since the 1990s. "Teuroteu" (trot) is not related to western trot (foxtrot) rhythm or genre: it is a Korean popular song style with Korean traditional musical elements such as gemyeonjo, a five tone scale consisting of la, do, re, mi, sol.
Teuroteu is also similar to Japanese enka using Japanese traditional musical elements such as a yonanuki major scale which consists of do, re, mi, sol, la, and a yonanuki minor scale which consists of la, si, do, mi, fa. Teuroteu songs are usually popular among the older generations in Korea.

5. A Short History of Popular Music and Rock Music in Korea

The phenomenon of Korean popular music can be traced back to 1920, when Korea was a colony of Japan (1910-1945) (Lee, 2001, p. 37). As a consequence of Korea's colonial status, early Korean popular music was influenced by Japanese popular music. For example, there were several Korean popular songs in the 1920s that used Japanese melodies but retained Korean lyrics; other Korean popular songs used melodies from Western music. For example, an early popular song in 1920s Korea, “Sa Eui Chanmi” (Praise of Death), used the melody from “Donauwellen Walzer” by the Romanian composer Iosif Ivanovich. Since the late 1920s, Koreans have composed their own popular songs, such as “Nakhwayoosoo” (Falling Flower

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4 Yonanuki major and minor scales are pentatonic. I quote the terms “yonanuki major and minor scales” from Han-guk Daejung Gayosa (History of Korean Popular Song) by Young-mi Lee (2001, pp. 62-65).

5 Teuroteu originated from enka style songs during the 1920s in Korea. They usually consisted of a yonanuki major and a yonanuki minor. However, several Korean musicologists and composers argued in the mid-1980s whether or not teuroteu originated from enka. In spite of the argument, it is hard to deny the Japanese influences on Korean teuroteu (Lee, 2001, pp. 62-65). And yet, it can be accepted that teuroteu also has elements of shinminyo, a Korean popular music genre which originated in Korea.

6 I refer to Young-mi Lee’s book for a history of Korean popular music, but I do not entirely agree with her analysis. I mainly refer to her book because it is useful among very few sources on the history of Korean popular music.
and Flowing Water), which demonstrates an aesthetic relationship both to children's songs and to Korean classical art songs. Nonetheless, popular songs composed by Koreans continue to display the influence of the Japanese popular song style enka. These Korean enka style songs mainly use Japanese scales, yonanuki major and minor scales. After liberation from the Japanese Empire in 1945, Koreans labeled these songs as teuroteu. The term teuroteu was derived from a description of a Western rhythmic pattern, the trot (foxtrot); however, there is in actuality little musical similarity between teuroteu and trot. Teuroteu, a genre of Korean popular music, has remained a form of Korean popular song since the early twentieth century.

Another popular music style in Korea that originated during the years of the early twentieth century was shinminyo (new folk song). Before the emergence of shinminyo, traditional folk songs were indigenous to specific regions and the composers were frequently unrecognized, but the composers of Shinminyo, a form of music popular throughout the nation, are well known. Shinminyo use more Korean traditional musical elements than teuroteu, often including, for example, the Kyeong-ki minyo mode—a folk song mode of Kyeong-ki province (Lee, 2001, pp. 78-79). Shinminyo lent various musical elements to teuroteu, including such as vocal techniques as bending pitches and using a twang sound (ibid., 2001, p. 81). However, as shinminyo did not represent as strongly social reality in Korea as did teuroteu, which had reflected peoples' tough lives under Japanese colonization,

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7 See page 14.
8 See page 14.
shinminyo gradually became obsolete by the 1970s. Nonetheless, over time, teuroteu slowly incorporated the shinminyo musical style, and teuroteu and shinminyo styles gradually combined. Consequently, teuroteu still remains as a Korean popular music genre relevant to older generations who have listened to popular music since the early twentieth century.

During the 1950s, the AFKN (American Forces Korean Network) broadcast radio programs designed to reach the U.S. army stationed in Korea. These broadcasts by the AFKN introduced many kinds of U.S. music, including rock and roll, to the Korean people. The U.S. military bases also created clubs where live music was performed, and several Korean pop musicians sang at these clubs. For example, one of the first Korean rock musicians, Jung-hyun Shin, performed at U.S. clubs on the military bases. Jung-hyun Shin formed a rock group of his own called Add 4, which played independently from 1962 to 1966. According to Young-mi Lee, Add 4 was the first Korean rock band (Lee, 2001, p. 226).

Although Jung-hyun Shin started to play at clubs on U.S. military bases, he later often played and sang on television during the late 1960s and early 1970s. He not only played and sang himself but also produced songs for other singers such as Chuja Kim. During the mid-1960s and the early 1970s, his songs and the songs of other singers he produced were popular in Korea. One of his well known songs was “Mi In” (Beautiful Woman) performed with his new band, Shin Jung-hyun Gwa Yeopjundeul (Jung-hyun Shin and Coins) in 1974. Jung-hyun Shin inserted Korean
traditional musical elements into his songs that had been previously used in other popular song genre, such as teuroteu (shinminyo). In “Mi In,” for example, he uses a Korean traditional scale, gyemyeonjo, which consists of la, do, re, mi, and sol (Baek, Choi, & Kim, 1995, p. 36). I include an example of the gyemyeonjo scale in his song, “Mi In” below.

Example 1. Gyemyeonjo Scale

Example 2. Gyemyeonjo Scale in “Mi In” (Beautiful Woman)

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9 In the 1970s, teuroteu and shinminyo were combined. Teuroteu is more representative term than shinminyo. See page 15-16.
According to Young-mi Lee, Jung-hyun Shin was popular with both the younger and older generations, in part because he played rock music for the young but composed his songs using the gyemyeonjo scale, sometimes used for the teuroteu style. With his inclusion of this scale in his compositions, he initiated a new style of music in Korea—rock with an element of teuroteu (Lee, 2001, p. 231). As he usually played and sang on television music shows watched by young and old in Korea, this music gained in popularity and many Koreans knew of his songs. However, after Jung-hyun Shin was arrested by the military government in 1974 for possession of marijuana, rock music suffered a loss of popularity in Korea. However, as those young people who had listened to Jung-hyun Shin’s music also enjoyed U.S. and British rock music, including both the music of the Beatles and of Elvis Presley, an audience for rock music continued to exist in Korea, despite Jung-hyun Shin’s decline.

During the 1960s, another type of popular song that used Western musical scales and harmonies entered Korea as competition for the earlier rock music. This newly introduced music often featured a big band sound and imitated the U.S. easy-listening style. Young-mi Lee calls this new musical genre the Korean easy-listening genre. However, she notes that this easy-listening music in Korea is different from the easy-listening music of the U.S. Korean easy-listening songs use very simple harmonies and are generally not as complicated musically as U.S. easy-listening compositions (Lee, 2001, p. 140). Whether called easy-listening or by any other name, the new
compositions which Koreans listened to during the 1960s were different from teuroteu and rock music.

Throughout the early 1970s, 1960s style of American folk music also gained popularity in Korea. There were many Korean folk singers such as Hyeong-ju Yoon, Chang-sik Song, Heui-eun Yang, Sae-hwan Kim and several duos such as Onions, One Plus One, and Sawol Gua Owal (April and May). This ‘folk’ genre did not use a big band sound. Instead, these musicians played acoustic guitars with perhaps a few instruments such as electric bass guitar as accompaniment. Harmonic progressions tended to be more Western in style. For example, the C-a-d-G progression was often used. Korean folk song singers were often college students who played for other students and young people; thus, the folk song genre naturally appealed to Korea’s young people.

In the mid-1970s, the military government in Korea suppressed these folk singers, believing that such suppression would allow the government to retain a firmer control of Korean society. Wanting a tightly controlled Korean society, the government considered folk singers dangerous since much of their music advocated a free and democratic society (Lee, 2001, p.240).

By the late 1970s, no form of music had gained ascendancy on the Korean music scene—not teuroteu, easy-listening, folk song, nor rock. Nonetheless, from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, although rock music in Korea was not exactly popular, it did continue to thrive, or at least survive, due to the efforts of various college student
rock musicians who participated in *Daehak Gayoje* (The University Popular Song Contest), a college students’ popular song competition started by the Munhwa Broadcasting Company in 1977. Hoping to win the contest, young college students continued to form rock bands. Some did win, and later gained popularity through radio and television appearances. Several popular rock bands rose to fame through these contests, including Sand Pebbles (1977), Hwaljuro (Airstrip), and Oxon 80 (1980).

Most of these new rock bands consisted of one vocalist, two or three guitarists, and one drummer (sometimes one keyboardist), similar to the composition of U.S. and British rock bands. The musical characteristics of these college student rock bands were different from those of Jung-hyun Shin’s band. Jung-hyun Shin was a professional musician who created his own unique music by combining various musical techniques, e.g., mixing Korean popular song styles such as *teuroteu* (*shinminyo*) with Western rock musical elements. College student rock bands, on the other hand, were amateur bands, and their songs did not seem to contain as many sophisticated musical elements as did the music of Jung-hyun Shin. Even though college student bands did not have the same professional skills as Jung-hyun Shin, their songs had a welcomed freshness due, in part, to their amateur status (Lee, 2001, p. 250). After the early 1980s, most members of college rock bands such as Cheolsu Bae or Chang-mo Koo quit playing rock music, abandoning their music for more

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10 This is Young-mi Lee’s opinion. Different opinions about the musical abilities of Jung-hyun Shin and college student rock bands exist.
secure jobs as radio DJs or businessmen. After this change, college rock bands lost much of their earlier popularity.

Other musicians scrambled to fill the void, and some created music that succeeded through cultural overlap, as had the earlier music of Jung-hyun Shin. For example, during the 1980s, Yong-pil Jo was a singer who combined almost every genre of Korean popular music. His popularity spread throughout the whole country and his fans included every generation; he performed Western pop music, *teuroteu*, easy-listening, rock, folk songs, and even dance music, using unique vocal techniques such as *chang*, one of the Korean traditional song styles. Young children to old ladies knew and sang his songs. His rise to fame was well orchestrated.

Yong-pil Jo’s management company intentionally advanced his popularity by pursuing teenagers’ imaginations. At this time, teenagers in Korea had considerable purchasing power. After Korea achieved industrialization and gained economic power in the 1980s, many parents were able to share money with their children, and those children frequently spent that money on music, buying records and cassette tapes. As a result of this enlarged market, popular music in Korea gained economic strength, and as more money was to be made, a more sophisticated marketing strategy became important to producers of music and sponsors of musicians. Yong-pil Jo’s success in the 1980s can be seen as a clear example of the result of sophisticated

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11 *Chang* is “one of three elements of Korean pansori. *Sori* (*chang*), *aniri*, and *balim* are the three elements” (*chang*, 1983, p. 1385). *Pansori* is “one of Korean traditional folk music. This is a theatrical music that one singer sings and tells a story with one drummer” (ibid., 1983, p. 1567).
marketing strategies (Lee, 2001, p. 258). Nonetheless, in the late 1980s, Yong-pil Jo's popularity gradually declined as a new type of popular music appeared in Korea called the ballad. The term “ballad” is applied to various songs with a slow tempo, lyrical mood, and various harmonic progressions. Ballad seemed to follow in the footsteps of the easy-listening music in the 1960s and the folk song in the early 1970s and are still one of the notable genres in the Korean popular music market today (ibid., 2001, p. 271). Despite the increasing popularity of ballad, rock music regained popularity in the late 1980s. For example, a rock band, Deulgukhwa (Wild Chrysanthemum) was the very popular with young college students. After college rock bands lost much of their popularity in the early 1980s, rock bands did not played on television music shows. Therefore, Deulgukhwa played primarily at performance halls and billed its performances as “live concert,” thus stressing that fact that these performances were live music rather than lip-sync performances. Deulgukhwa’s focus on “live concert” can be viewed as a reaction against the lip-sync trend in dance singers after the middle of the 1980s.

Deulgukhwa released their first album in 1985 and the second in 1986. These two albums increased the popularity of rock songs during the late 1980s. The lead singer’s high vocal quality, the band members’ musical abilities, and their intimate partnership all contributed to the popularity of the band. However, it seemed that

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12 However, in 1988, college rock band Muhanguedo (Unlimited Orbit), won the contest by Munhwa Broadcasting Company, and the band was popular during the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The band dissolved, but the band’s leader, Hae-cheol Shin, is still active among Korean rock musicians.
Deulgukhwa could not handle their great popularity; their teamwork collapsed after the second album. Then, lead singer Inkwon Jeon and keyboardist Seong-wook Heo were arrested for marijuana possession, and Deulgukhwa disbanded in 1987.

During the late 1980s, another popular rock band appeared called Boohwal (Resurrection) that, like Deulgukhwa, also played at performance halls. While Deulgukhwa was known for a soft rock musical style, Boohwal pursued a hard rock music sound. Over the course of Boowhal’s performance career during the late 1980s, the band changed several members and their popularity rose and fell. In addition to these two better known bands, there were also some lesser known rock bands in the 1980s such as Black Tetra and Sinawe. Black Tetra and Sinawe played heavy metal rock, and one of the Sinawe’s guitarists was Jung-hyun Shin’s son.

After Deulgukhwa disbanded, despite the emergence of rock bands such as Boohwal and Sinawe during the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the popularity of rock music once again waned, and dance group singers gradually began to dominate the Korean popular music scene with performances of teuroteu and ballad (Lee, 2001, p. 270). Seotaiji wa Idle (Seotaiji and Boys), for example, gained much popularity with a new type of dance music, featuring rap lyrics combined with the musical

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13 Hard rock “is also referred to as heavy rock, cock rock, or stadium rock.” The term has been applied since the late 1960s (the Small Faces, The Who) and early 1970s (Bad Company) to a variety of performers whose music was characterized by hard, driving rhythms, strong bass drum, use of backbeat (on snare), and short melodies, limited in pitch range” (Shuker, 2002, p. 158).

14 Heavy metal is “usually louder, ‘harder’, and faster-paced than conventional rock music, and remains predominantly guitar-oriented” (Shuker, 2002, p. 160). “Heavy metal began to attain stylistic identity in the late 1960s as a “harder” sort of hard rock, and relatively small but fiercely loyal subculture formed around it during the 1970s’ (Walser, 1993, p. 3).
elements of heavy metal. As Seotaiji was a rock musician who had played in the rock band Sinawe, his dance group played and danced in a manner that sometimes included tough shouting and intense motions. Their third album focused intensely on rock style music. Seotaiji wa Idle enjoyed immense popularity during the early 1990s. Their four albums sold millions, and the members of the band all became very rich.

After Seotaiji wa Idle disbanded in 1996, many other dance groups performed, but these groups had a tendency to focus more on appearance than on the music. Several big management companies controlled the popular music market, promoting many dance groups such as H.O.T. (High-five of Teenagers), Shinhwa (myth), and solo dance singers, such as Hyori Lee. Popular music in Korea, including dance music, has since become even more commercialized, as big management companies focus strongly on manufacturing sexy and brilliant images of popular music singers.

Nonetheless, although rock music in Korea during the early 1990s was not wildly popular, since the mid-1990s the underground rock music club scene has thrived in the Shinchon and Hongik University area in Seoul. Many young would-be rock musicians listened to their predecessors and Western rock music and developed the underground rock music after the mid-1990s.

Today, although the main Korean popular music genres are still teuroteu, ballad, and dance music, and although rock music is not usually included in mainstream music, underground rock music has brought diversity into the Korean popular music
scene, and underground rock musicians have successfully resisted big management companies such as S.M. Entertainment that control the popular music market, using their wide-spread commercial power to dictate which records would be sold and which musicians would play.

According to several popular music critics, Korean popular music culture has been virtually monolithic since the 1990s. For example, popular music columnist Seong-won Seon (1999) wrote, “Recently, dance music dominated the popular music market so that other popular music genres cannot lift up their heads” (pp. 204-205), but in spite of this, underground rock clubs continue to thrive. Since the mid 1990s, underground rock music, despite its lack of mainstream popularity, has continued to exist as a significant genre that gives diversity to an otherwise monolithic Korean popular music market led by dance music.

Rock music in Korea has almost fifty years of history. Although the rock genre is still not a mainstream part of Korean popular music culture, it maintains its cultural identity and reputation, making the ‘noise’ necessary to keep rock music alive in Korea today.

6. The Rock Musicians in the United States and Britain in the 1990s

Some mainstream rock musicians in the U.S. and Britain in the 1990s had a strong influence on the Korean underground rock music scene during the mid-1990s.
Their names, songs and influences will be discussed at length in Chapter III, and here I will merely refer to several mainstream 1990s rock musicians in the U.S. and Britain who had an influence on Korean underground rock musicians. Therefore, this section is not the whole history or complete information of U.S. and British rock music but simply a survey of U.S. and British rock musicians who had an influence on Korean underground rock music culture.

Alternative rock music in the U.S. found greater popularity during the 1990s with the success of the Seattle grunge band Nirvana’s independently produced album, *Nevermind.*\(^{15}\) Grunge is a rock music style that “combines hardcore and metal” (Szatmary, 2004, p. 298).\(^{16}\) Nirvana’s vocalist and guitarist Kurt Cobain “first became enraptured with...1970s metal bands such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath,” and Nirvana’s music has a rough vocal quality, cynical lyrics, and a heavy instrumental sound (ibid., 2004, p. 299). There were several other alternative

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\(^{15}\) Alternative rock is “a broad label, and (arguably) a loose genre/style, which has been used since the late 1960s for popular music seen as less commercial and mainstream, and more authentic and ‘uncompromising.’ At the historical heart of alternative music was its rejection of the commercial music industry, and the emphasis it placed on rock music as art or expression rather than as a product for sale for economic profit” (Shuker, 2002, p. 6).

\(^{16}\) Hardcore is “part of the US underground in the late 1970s......developed out of punk and was linked with grunge and alternative rock” (Shuker, 2002, p. 159). See page 23 for heavy metal.
'grunge-style' rock bands in the U.S. in addition to Nirvana, including Alice in Chains, Pearl Jam and Soundgarden. All these bands were all well known in the popular music market.

Nirvana's career started with a small record label without great commercial power, but when Nirvana's album *Nevermind* "unexpectedly sold over ten million copies" (Walser, 2001, p. 110), the band discovered financial success, and Nirvana became part of the mainstream U.S. popular music scene in the 1990s. This phenomenal success of U.S. alternative rock bands encouraged the formation of the Korean underground rock music scene in the mid-1990s.¹⁷

During the 1990s in the U.K., the British rock bands Blur, Oasis, Pulp, and others played a form of rock music that became known as Britpop. Britpop is "the general label applied to the British guitar-based pop/rock bands of the 1990s, initially by the UK music press....From an American perspective, Britpop has been described, not unfairly, as a 'defiantly nationalistic anti-grunge movement'" (Shuker, 2002, p. 36). Britpop music "...constructed sometimes quite explicit links with styles of the

¹⁷ See Chapter III.
1960s and 70s, including the Beatles and the Kinks” (ibid., 2001, p. 116). Britpop influenced several Korean underground rock musicians, such as Peterpan Complex, which has played an active role in the Korean music scene since 2000. For example, members of Korea’s underground audience have noted that Peterpan Complex’s songs are similar to one of the Britpop bands, Radio Head, and Peterpan Complex does not deny this view.

Other rock musicians in the 1990s in the U.S. and Britain included Radiohead, Red Hot Chili Peppers, R. E. M., Smashing Pumpkins, and U2. During the 1990s, U.S. alternative rock and Britpop in the 1990s were the most influential musical styles for the Korean underground rock music scene, and this trend continues today: this phenomenon will be examined in detail along with a discussion of globalization in Chapter III.
Chapter II. The Rock Music Cultures in China and Japan

During the twentieth century, U.S. and British rock music affected the musical cultures of many other countries besides Korea, but, as in Korea, western style rock music developing in other parts of the world did not necessarily conform to the styles found in U.S. and British rock. Popular music, it seems, often develops its own style and form to reflect the particular social and cultural context that sustains it. Popular music scholar Reebee Garofalo (1992) writes that,

rock music—in both its Anglo-American and African variants—became a global phenomenon with profound political implications....musicians throughout Eastern Europe, the Pacific region, and Africa have incorporated Anglo-American pop and rock into local culture forms and music movements in ways that enhance the local culture (p. 9).

As rock music spread throughout the world, it mixed with regional cultures and, in the process, contributed to the development of those cultures. Examples of how an appropriation of the music of dominant culture by the culture resisting domination can contribute new understanding and new voices to the local culture can be found in Russia, Zimbabwe, Indonesia and other countries.

Russian society, for example, imported Western rock music in the 1960s. Initially, Russian rock musicians were punished for their appropriation of this western music and suffered repression by the government, the KGB and the MPA (Main
Political Administration) of the Soviet Army and Navy before the legal acceptance of Western forms in the late 1980s. Robert Bird, Sabrina Petra Ramet and Sergei Zamascikov (1994) suggest that “the KGB likewise figured as a conservative voice, tending to view rock music as a medium for Western cultural and political influence” (p. 187). They continue, “It is therefore not surprising that the MPA always took an extremely hostile line, in its official organ, toward Soviet rock groups” (ibid., 1994, p. 187). Despite this attempt to exclude western rock music from Russian culture—or because of it—Russian rock music, in part due the nature of its difference and its connection to the west, developed a strong theme of resistance to the imposed repression, offering an alternative to the status quo and suggesting that many were perhaps discontented with their government. That context of rock as resistance remains as one of the primary characteristics of Russian rock today.

Another case of globalization and localization of rock music in the world is found in Zimbabwe, where the music is called Chimurenga, or ‘uprising,’ and exists as a form of music that combines western rock sounds with elements of traditional Zimbabwean music. According to Kaemmer (1998), “Chimurenga (uprising) ...include[s]...modern rock, mbira, and hymns” (pp. 756-757). Chimurenga developed as a hybrid form of music, mixing traditional Zimbabwean music and imported rock styles with musical elements from both rumba and jive, thus suggesting that although change was perhaps inevitable, the necessity of change was

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18Mbira, one of the traditional instruments of Zimbabwe, is a “lamellophone plucked by thumbs and forefingers” (Kaemmer, 1998, p. 745).
not stronger or more imperative than the need to retain traditional culture.\textsuperscript{19} This hybrid music spoke strongly for Zimbabwean culture and Zimbabwean self-rule. This ‘new’ rock played an important role during the Chimurenga war, a war against the British colonial rule in the country. Thomas Turino (2000) writes, “The chimurenga songs associated with ZANU [Zimbabwe African National Union] ....grew up with the war in the late 1960s and during the 1970s. Composers, who were themselves party political instructors, set new, explicitly political texts to a variety of preexisting musical styles and melodies for educational and informational purposes” (p. 205). In the case of Zimbabwe, rock music blended successfully into Zimbabwean music to find the means to present musically cultural resistance to colonial power.

Besides the Russian and Zimbabwean cases, other rock music has found unique ways to include local social values in the music. One such form of rock is the dandut of Indonesia (Taylor, 1997, p. 83).\textsuperscript{20} After indigenizing his style of rock, Rhoma Irama, a dandut musician, stressed the characteristics of Indonesian traditional music in his songs. He became very famous in Indonesia for his dandut style songs, which combined western-style rock with indigenous music, melayu, and

\textsuperscript{19} Rumba is “a popular recreational dance of Afro-Cuban origin” (Gradante & Root, 1986, p. 107). Jive is “black American urban popular music of the 1940s” (Oliver, 2001, p. 125).

\textsuperscript{20} The term, dandut, is “named onomatopoetically for the sound of the beat, a low drumbeats on the fourth beat of the measure followed by a high drum stroke on the first beat on the next measure” (Taylor, 1997, p. 83).
also openly criticized "Western bourgeois ideology: progress" (ibid., 1997, p. 85). 21

Due to Rhoma Irama’s efforts, *Dandut*, a localized popular rock music in Indonesia, gained its resistant status by appropriating a musical form of the dominant culture and then altering that form to celebrate the local culture.

Like Russian, Zimbabwean, and Indonesian rock music, Korean underground rock music also has its unique social context and musical development. Before my examination of the Korean case, however, it is helpful to compare the development of rock music in China and Japan with that of Korean rock music. With this examination and comparison, I hope to demonstrate that rock music in other countries does not just imitate U.S. and British music but rather localizes the imported music by including its own traditions that can accurately reflect the particular sociopolitical environment.

I focus first on China and Japan for comparison to Korea as both countries are often considered within the same cultural scope as Korea due to their geographical and historical proximity and because both countries have similarities within their rock music cultures but those similarities do not erase distinct aspects of culture that remain unique to each location.

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21 *Melayu* is "a genre of western/Arabic/Indian-influenced popular music in Indonesia" (Taylor, 1997, p. 82).
1. Chinese Rock Music

The Chinese have listened to rock music since the 1980s, and the Chinese audience for rock music is composed primarily of young people who accepted the "Rock music [that] was first introduced into Beijing in the mid-1980s by foreign students and members of the expatriate community who brought recordings, equipment, and musical knowledge" (Brace, Lee & Wong, 2002, p. 359). Initially, rock was introduced into a popular music context that already included two forms of popular music Liuxing yinyue and tongsu yinyue. Liuxing yinyue is translated as "popular music," while tongsu yinyue is translated as "popularized music" (Jones, 1992, p. 18). Each term has a different origin. According to Andrew F. Jones (1992), the term liuxing yinyue "was already in use by the 1920s to describe leftist film music and 'yellow music'....[and] tongsu yinyue was coined in 1984 by an old comrade who disliked the associations to yellow music conjured up by the word liuxing yinyue" (pp. 18-19). Liuxing yinyue generally refers to a more westernized popular music preferred by young people, but tongsu yinyue is often used to describe popular music closer to folk song style that may be enjoyed more by middle-aged people. Liuxing yinyue is often identified as a sub-category of music that is included within tongsu yinyue (ibid., 1992, p. 19). The basis for such categorization, however, can also be traced to the way the music was played and the way it spread. Chinese rock music was disseminated unofficially in underground rock clubs near universities, while tongsu yinyue was disseminated officially by national tools such as television.
or radio. It is important to remember that these terms refer to Chinese music. Thus, despite its status as popular music, rock music that originated in the U.S. and Britain was not included within the category of liuxing yinyue in China. As Andrew Jones (1992) notes, “Rock musicians tended to lump all other popular music together under the rubric of tongsu yinyue, and proceeded to situate themselves outside of this grouping” (p. 20). This self-imposed exclusion from the local context of popular culture is worth noting.

Musically speaking, rock music and tongsu yinyue are different. Rock music in China remains remarkably similar to various Western styles of rock such as heavy metal or punk rock, but tongsu yinyue retains the pentatonic scale of traditional Chinese music while utilizing Western pop rhythms like disco. The lyrics are also different. Rock music lyrics express individual feelings and emotions, but the lyrics of tongsu yinyue reveal patriotic and political sensibilities (ibid., 1992, p. 25).

Chinese government authorities suppressed rock music because they thought it caused “Spiritual Pollution” (Manuel, 1990, p. 234). Despite this governmental suppression, Chinese youth continued to appreciate rock music because of its emotional expressiveness. One of the first rock singers to gain popularity with young Chinese was Cui Jian, a trumpet player in the Beijing Symphony Orchestra.

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22 See page 23 for heavy metal. Punk rock is “a musical style/genre which, while usually associated with the UK ‘punk explosion’ of c. 1977-80, clearly had its antecedents in the garage rock bands of the late 1960s, such as the Troggs, and early 1970s American bands, most notably The Velvet Underground, Iggy and the Stooges, and the New York Dolls” (Shuker, 2002, p. 237).
who found himself so interested in rock music that he became a rock musician whose music expressed a sense of individuality that excited his audience and disturbed authorities. His song “I have nothing” was cited as inimical to the expression of communist ideals and was criticized by the communist authorities. “Consequently, he was banned from performing at large-scale concerts” (Wong, 2002, p. 367). Cui Jian may have been banned from singing to large concerts, but his music continued to influence a generation of young people and continued to be sung in other venues. For example, in 1989, “I have nothing” was sung by students at the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square. As Jones (2002) suggests, “His music, particularly the lyrics, attracted international attention to him as a spokesperson for the disenfranchised twenty-to-thirty something generation in mainland China” (p. 367).

Cui Jian’s image of rock music resistance was taken up by other Chinese rock bands such as Cobra and Tang Dynasty. Cobra’s members are all women, so they are also called a “girl band.” At first, they simply wanted to play music and did not want to focus on gender issues, but gradually they created music and performance that focused more on women’s issues “partly because of the competitive market for rock in China and partly because of their own realization that their positions as women allows them to express their worldview through a special lens” (ibid., 2002, p. 364). Now, their songs stand as a kind of resistance against more traditional ideas about women and passivity in China; even so, that resistance is not direct or aggressive. Another rock band which has a strongly individualistic and perhaps
tougher rock image is Tang Dynasty. The band started in 1988 with three members, and one of the members was Chinese-American. Its music was strongly influenced by the hard rock and heavy metal of Western countries. According to Wong (2002), "Tang Dynasty was China's first long-haired, black-leather-clad, head-banging, distortion-heavy, guitar-driven rock band" (p. 365).

The Chinese rock scene started in the 1980s and, therefore, is a comparatively recent cultural development that has had much influence on the sociopolitical environment of China. Chinese rock music was initially influenced by Western society, but because rock's influence on the complex relationship between the government and young people, especially students, it can be said that Chinese rock music culture functions in Chinese society as useful commentary on and rebellion against both governmental control of society and traditional thought.

2. Japanese Rock Music

While there have been various popular musical forms such as enka, easy-listening, punk, and pop in Japan, the Japanese accepted rock music earlier than young people in China (Fujie, 1992, pp. 372-373). When Japan was defeated at the end of World War II, the U.S. stationed military in Japan, and U.S. culture was imported into Japan. As a result of Japanese familiarity with American culture, when rock and roll birthed itself in American culture in the 1950s, it too quickly found its way to Japan through military channels. The U.S. military was the primary
source for the introduction of rock, as it had been in Korea. In the 1950s, rokabiri (rockabilly) music was prevalent in Japan ("Rockabilly," 1997, p. 197). At first, rokabiri musicians such as Masaaki Hirao, Keijiro Yamashita, and Mickey Curtis copied U.S. singers such as Carl Perkins, Elvis Presley, and Gene Vincent as well as other American rockabilly songs. Later, however, some Japanese rokabiri musicians developed their own styles that incorporated Japanese musical techniques. For example, Masaaki Hirao composed a rokabiri song that used a Japanese folk song melody and rock rhythm (ibid., 1997, p. 197).

In the 1960s, the influences of rockabilly from the U.S. combined with the influence of the phenomena of the British rock band the Beatles to yield ereki bumu (electric boom), "emphasizing the electric guitar combined with vocals influenced by the Beatles and other rock groups" (Mitsui, 2002, p. 746). Rock music bands that included electric guitars and drums along with a rock singer were very popular and were called gurupu saunzu (group sounds). Famous gurupu saunzu included the Carnabies, Dynamites, Golden Caps, Tempters, and Tigers. These rock groups usually played American or British rock songs; they did not write their own music.

In the 1970s, grupu saunzu music gradually withered away in part because of the unoriginality of the music; there were too many uninteresting grupu saunzu songs. However, some bands such as The Happy End remained popular. Several Japanese

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23 Rockabilly is "an early fusion of black and country music in the American South, predating (just) and overlapping with rock’n roll, with its peak in the mid-1950s" (Shuker, 2002, p. 259).
rock musicians who wanted to continue their music went underground in a way that could scarcely relate to commercial success, but did contribute to their artistic success ("Rockabilly," 1997, p. 205). After the 1970s, Japanese rock musicians such as Hachimitsu Pai or Zuno Keisatsu “began writing and recording in Japanese....Japanese rock had finally found its own voice” (ibid., 1997, p. 205).

Around this time, Japanese rock musicians began to japanize rock music from Western countries. During the 1970s and 1980s, this experimentation with rock music in Japan continued at underground clubs. The term “live house” developed to describe these clubs. Many rock bands played at these ‘live’ houses that offered Japanese rock musicians the space and the time for musical development.

When the Japanese rock band Boowy became popular in 1987, the Japanese rock scene repeated the golden age it had once enjoyed in the 1960s, but this time musicians were playing a japanized rock. The success of rock in the late 1980s continued into the 1990s. During this golden age, there were many rock bands that enjoyed serious musical successes such as B’z, Luna Sea, Loudness, and X Japan. The musical finesse of these Japanese rock bands had been developed during the 1970s and 1980s when rock musicians mainly played at live houses where Japanese rock bands jammed, playing with a greater spontaneity that allowed them to become excellent musicians and to develop their own style.

One of the pioneers of visual rock in Japan was X Japan. The members of the band painted their faces, wore splendid costumes for visual rock, and had enthusiastic
fans in both Japan and Korea. According to McClure (1998), “Their music is perhaps best described as speed-metal, and in keeping with the band’s image, it’s highly melodramatic—a sampling of X Japan song titles should give some idea: “Sadistic Desire,” “Endless Rain,” “Evening of Despair”...” (p. 122).24 Other Japanese rock bands such as L’Arc-en-Ciel or Glai gained popularity in Korea, introducing japanized rock to the Korean youth.

After first accepting Western rock music in the 1950s, Japanese rock musicians developed their own musical identity and a high level of musical accomplishment as a result of the Japanization of rock music.

3. A Comparison of Rock Music in China, Japan, and Korea

In this section, I briefly review the Korean rock music situation and then, discuss and compare Chinese and Japanese rock music with the rock music of Korea.

Korea began importing Western rock music in the 1950s and 1960s, when Jung-hyun Shin was a successful Korean rock musician. In the 1970s, however, Korean rock music did not thrive for several reasons. ‘Live’ performance halls, such as the Japanese “live club,” were rare in Korea, and, therefore, Korean rock musicians did not enjoy the same opportunities to develop their musical abilities through live performances that might feature both rehearsed and spontaneous

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24 Speed metal/thrash metal, “largely a US phenomenon, thrash developed out of hardcore and punk, and became a journalistic convenience for guitar-based non-mainstream metal, usually played faster and louder” (Shuker, 2002, p. 303).
musical performances. Any more experimental rock was marginalized. Since the 1980s, Korean popular music scene had been dominated by several big stars such as Yong-pil Jo or Seotaiji wa Idle (Seotaiji and Boys) and was strongly influenced by television shows that usually feature teuroteu, dance music, and ballad songs. As a result, the market for more marginal rock music in Korea was very small, and Korean rock music culture did not evolve rapidly, even though several Korean rock musicians, notably Dulgukhwa and Buhwal, enjoyed great popularity in the 1980s.

As previously noted, the Chinese rock scene formed in the 1980s in reaction to communist policies prior to the 1970s when the government resisted and even condemned Western rock culture. In the 1980s, Chinese and Western students in China listened to and enjoyed rock music at several restaurants and bars near the university area in Beijing, and rock music became a voice of resistance against government suppression of free expression. Chinese rock music gained its popularity through its status as a tool of resistance, but Korean rock music, remained rooted in an acceptance of musical forms imported from the U.S. and Britain and developed less as a tool of resistance than as a relatively friendly adaptation of imported culture.

From this perspective, the Korean and Chinese cases are quite different. According to Korean popular music critic, Jin-mo Im (1993), many Korean people still think of rock music as the music of resistance (p. 4), mainly because rock music had originally developed within a non-mainstream resistant culture in the U.S. For
example, in the U.S. rock musicians such as the Doors opposed the U.S. government by singing antiwar songs during the Vietnam War (Orman, 1984, p. 156), and the Korean audience for rock knew of this function of U.S. rock music. However, in the case of Korea, the first generation of Korean rock music was not part of a resistant culture. According to Young-mi Lee (2001), the first generation of Korean rock musicians did not directly resist the government (p. 232); they were simply entertainers. Therefore, one of the differences between Chinese rock culture and Korean rock culture is that Chinese rock culture actively resisted government and nation's social conditions, but Korean rock culture was not such a force for resistance. Korean rock musicians played for crowds in public places without strong opposition from the government.

Both Japan and Korea embraced U.S. rock music in the 1950s and 1960s, when it was being played on U.S. military bases after World War II. However, there were also differences between Japan and Korea. In the mid-1970s, Japanese rock music was played in many underground rock clubs called “live house” where Japanese rock musicians were able to cultivate their musical abilities and develop their own rock music styles as they ‘japanized’ rock music and found their own voice. As a result, after the late 1980s, Japanese rock developed strongly as a powerful genre of popular music.

The Japanese rock music scene today is quite different from the contemporary Korean rock music scene. A Japanese informant told me that Japanese popular
music is usually called “J-Pop,” and that identity includes all popular music including rock and dance music in Japan. He added that the term originated because Japanese popular music as a whole is japanized today, and therefore, called “J(apanese) Pop.” Japanese rock is no longer solely imitative of western rock; it has its own identity.

Such is not yet the case in Korea. While Japanese popular or rock music is japanized to the degree that the music is now known as “J-pop,” Korean rock music is still imitative of Western or Japanese popular music, as both Korean listeners and critics have noted. Although Korean rock musicians have not yet fully indigenized rock to create their own rock music that separates from its original influences, since the mid-1990s, young people in the Shinchon and Hongik University have formed their own rock culture.

In the next chapter, I will discuss more thoroughly this Korean underground rock culture and examine its club scene, role of fans, musical elements, and social contexts.

25 I interviewed him on Sunday, April 18, 2004 in Hawaii. He is a graduate student of the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He permitted me to write his statements in this research.
Chapter III. The Underground Rock Music Culture in Seoul

1. Korean Underground Rock Music Clubs and an Internet Radio Station in Seoul

In this section, I present my field research on the Korean underground rock culture. For the purpose of field research, I visited four underground rock music clubs near the Shinchon and Hongik University area, frequented by Korean youth. As previously noted in Chapter I., there are several underground rock music clubs near the Shinchon and Hongik University area. I also include in my discussion an examination of an internet radio station, Ssamnet.com, which features Korean underground rock music, and describe Korean underground rock music fans as observed at the underground clubs and internet sites.

Ordinarily, Korean underground rock clubs have difficulty remaining in business because inadequate income, but these four clubs have been relatively successful in maintaining their businesses, even though they still struggling financially and thus serve as suitable subjects for study. The first club under discussion is Rolling Stones, located in the Shinchon area. The club’s name derives from the British rock music
band and opened in 1996 (Kaoru, 2001, November, para. 11). Rolling Stones has its own small record company that features underground rock bands (ibid., 2001, November, para. 12). This kind of small record company is usually called an indie label.  

Rolling Stones is a small club. If seated, the audience might number a maximum of eighty people, and if all chairs were removed from the club leaving standing room only, the capacity of the club is about two hundred people (ibid., 2001, November, para. 20). I visited Rolling Stones three times during summer 2003. Ordinarily, ten or twelve people attended weekday performances, and on Sunday around eighty or ninety people came to listen to rock music in the club. Three to five underground bands usually played at a one-day performance. For example, on Friday, July 4, 2003, I went and watched five rock bands at the Rolling Stones club: Ares, Free Market, Gunk Rubbish, Nevada #51, 14 Left.

The music styles of these bands were mainly speed metal/thrash metal or slow heavy metal.  

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26 See page 12-13.  
27 For speed/thrash metal, see page 39. For heavy metal, see page 23.
metal/thrash metal, and 14 Left played heavy metal at a slow speed, incorporating vocalization that might be described as 'extreme shouting' to create a sad mood. The audience at Rolling Stones was primarily young women, although some young men were also in attendance. Their ages ranged from late teens into the twenties, and audience response was enthusiastic. When the band Ares played, for example, many girls shouted with excitement and joy. Ares has five members—one vocalist, one electric guitarist, one electric bass guitarist, one drummer, and one keyboardist—and the music they played was extremely fast with a tough electric sound. The keyboardist, who wore a skeleton mask, added to the noise with a synthesizer. It seemed as if the fast music and interesting costuming of the band members excited the young women. When the other bands played, the audience also shouted and participated in intense head banging. The mood created by the performance was one of excitement, expressed loudly and physically.

On Tuesday, July 8, 2003, I returned to Rolling Stones and three bands performed: Crave 4, Nastyona, and 14 Left. Crave 4 played in a modern rock style
with a moderate tempo and simple melodic line.\textsuperscript{28} The band Nastyona performed rock songs that included tempo changes, such as slow-fast-slow. The vocalist, situated in the center of the stage, played keyboard and led the band with her keyboard melodies and accompaniment. Their music used various harmonies and rhythms, characterized by the changes of tension and release.

On Sunday, July 20, 2003, I visited the club Rolling Stones again. On that day, three bands performed: Ares, Lavidite, Nastyona. The band Lavidite played songs which combined rock music and the ballad.\textsuperscript{29} Many young women in the audience applauded and screamed when the band performed.

The second underground rock club I chose to explore was Drug, located near Hongik University. Drug opened in 1994 as a café, and in 1996 registered as a performance place (Kaoru, 2001, February, para. 7). Four or five bands usually play at Drug but only on weekends, and because there are no chairs, the concerts are always standing performances with a maximum of two hundred or more in the audience (ibid., 2001, February, para. 11-13). Drug mainly serves as a showcase for

\textsuperscript{28} Modern rock “is usually made since the late 1980s, and the term is confused among pop or indie rock since the late 1980s” (Shin, 2001, pp. 244-245).

\textsuperscript{29} See page 12.
punk rock bands.\footnote{See page 34.} When I visited Drug on July 19, 2003, about ninety people, mostly teenagers and young people in their twenties, milled erratically about as audience. Unlike Rolling Stones, the number of men in the audience was nearly equal to the number of women. Four bands, Beach Valley, Off Limits, Rock Tigers, and Viva Soul played. Three of these bands played punk rock, and one, Viva Soul, played hip-hop music. The band Beach Valley played ska punk music with guitars, drum, one trombone, and two trumpet players.\footnote{Ska is described as: “reggae initially developed in the 1950s when Jamaican musicians combined indigenous folk music with jazz, African and Caribbean rhythm, and New Orleans R & B. The resultant hybrid was ska.” (Shuker, 2002, p. 254)} Off Limits played fast and loud punk rock music while Rock Tigers performed rock and roll style music.\footnote{See page 11-12.} Both bands were very loud and active. Drug’s frantic audience head banged and screamed in response to the music.

The club Drug also has its own record company, and has been successful marketing recorded music, primarily due to the band Crying Nut, which has played there. Also a punk rock band, Crying Nut includes four members who initially played standards of U.S. or British Punk rock music in 1995. Since 1996, however,
the band has written and played original songs. In 1996, Crying Nut released its first album, *Our Nation*, along with another band, Yellow Kitchen that has also performed at Drug.

One of the songs on this first album, “Mal Dalija” (Let’s Ride a Horse Fast), became a big hit. Played often on several Korean television music programs, the song can be cited as being perhaps responsible for the sale of more than 20,000 albums.

Most underground rock bands record on indie labels, but many of these records have yet to be released and, if released, few sell thousands of copies. Crying Nut, however, enjoyed great success on the Korean underground rock music scene. They later released second and third albums, which sold almost 60,000 copies (Lee, 1999, para. 19). On 31 December 2002, four members joined the army as their duty; Crying Nut no longer offers public performances.

Although there may be many reasons for Crying Nut’s success, one may be that the band played simple music with a driving rhythm that appeals to many. Crying Nut mainly focused on punk rock, which usually employs few chords and maintains a
clear and simple melodic line. The success of Crying Nut gave much exposure to club Drug between the late 1990s and the early 2000s.

The third underground rock club I visited is SLUG.er. SLUG.er opened in 1999 near Hongik University (An & Song, 2000, para. 7). When I visited the club on Thursday, July 10, 2003, the audience was comparatively small. According to workers at the club, on weekdays frequently only ten or more people attend performances, and on weekends, perhaps twenty or more people are in the audience. The audience that I observed consisted of teenagers and people in their twenties. The ratio between women and men was even. Three bands, using a variety of styles, performed. Kyrie Eleison played thrash metal; Ri-an played rock music combined with ballad, and Freaky played modern rock. Due perhaps to the small size of the audience, the mood was relatively subdued, even though the audience danced and did engage in head banging.

The fourth club I chose for my research is Jammers, which opened in 1996 near Hongik University (Jammers, 2002, para. 4). At the time, Jammers and Drug were the main clubs of the golden age of the Hong Dae (Korean abbreviation of the Hongik
University) club scene (ibid., 2002, para. 6); later, following the example set by Jammers and Drug, several other underground rock clubs opened (ibid., 2002, para. 6). Like other clubs, Jammers also has its own indie label, and in 1997, they introduced the first recording of several underground rock bands which had played previously at Jammers. The club also tried to forge links between several underground rock clubs to make a continuously active scene (ibid., 2002, para. 7). Jammers has had difficulty surviving economically, but, nonetheless, is still alive today. Many underground rock bands have played at Jammers, including Cocore, Delispice, Eonine Ibalgwan (Sister’s Barbershop), Nae Guie Docheong Jangchi (Wiretap of My Ear Inside), Peterpan Complex, Wounded Fly; these bands still play actively on the Korean underground rock scene.

When I visited the club Jammers on July 5, 2003, three bands played: Gruna (But), Schools, and Link. Gruna’s band members included a guitarist, bassist, and drummer. The guitarist sang, and the band played songs in the style of modern rock.33 The band Schools had four musicians: two guitarists, one bassist, and one

33 See page 46.
drummer with one guitarist singing most of the vocals. Their music, in contrast with that of Gruna, can be described as fast punk rock.\(^{34}\) The band Link had four members, including a singer, guitarist, bassist, and drummer; they played music between the ballad and modern rock style.\(^{35}\)

These four underground rock clubs each encountered difficult economic problems that they struggled to overcome. In order to survive economically, to attract attention to Korean underground rock music, and to develop Korean popular music, some underground rock clubs near the Shinchon and Hongik University area sponsored *Live Club Fest*, a major event featuring bands from nine underground clubs in this area that would gather regularly for a joint concert once a month since June 21, 2002 (Yang, 2002, para. 4).

I went to *Live Club Fest* twice: once on July 20, 2003 at Rolling Stones, and again on August 24, 2003 at Ssamzie Theater Baram near Hongik University. Ssamzie Theater Baram is not an underground rock club but a general performance hall owned by the rock internet site Ssamnet.com; the theatre often hosts underground

\(^{34}\) See page 34.
\(^{35}\) See page 12 and 46.
rock music performances. Six or seven bands played at each Live Club Fest performance, and the second of these events that I attended was especially impressive. Despite heavy rain that day, two hundred or more people gathered. One of the bands, Dog Sleep, thanked the audience for coming to the performance in spite of the heavy rain. Perhaps because of the storm, the mood of the performance was very exciting for both the performers and audience. The performers and the audience communicated as one group and expressed their love for underground rock music and live performances, with loud singing and energetic head banging.

In any discussion concerning Korean underground rock music culture, the role of the fan should be addressed. As audience, most Korean underground rock music fans are very active, not only at every performance, but also on internet sites that relate to Korean underground rock bands. Almost every underground rock band has its own home page, which allows active communication with fans. For example, on the home page of the band Nastyona, http://cafe.daum.net/nastyona, it is easy to find frequent written communication between fans and the band members. This fluid communication between fans and band members is not, however, confined to the
internet. At almost every performance, fans actively encourage the band members, and then, later, after performances, many impressions and opinions about the performance are posted on the webpage. Through such processes of direct communication, the band and its fans are more firmly linked together. The bands receive instant feedback from the fans and feel as if that feedback is both encouraged and appreciated.

An internet radio station, Ssamnet.com that presents Korean underground rock music also ably connects rock musicians and their fans. As previously stated, Ssamnet.com has a performance hall—Ssamzie Theater Baram—that often presents underground rock bands and has hosted large concerts of underground rock music called *Ssamzie Sound Festival* since 1999. 36 After the second *Ssamzie Sound Festival*, the internet radio station, Ssamnet.com, gathered and reported fans’ opinions. Before the concert, rock fans were asked to elect their favorite bands, knowing that those bands that receive the most votes will audition at the radio station. The *Ssamzie Sound Festival* succeeds through cooperation between active rock bands, the

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36 *Ssamzie Sound Festival* has also been held at universities such as Yonsei University and Sungkyunkwan University.
internet radio station, and underground rock music fans. Such lively interactions and communication between underground rock musicians and their fans form a “subculture” (Hebdige 1996), positioned against the mainstream popular music scene in Korea, which is usually supported by large management companies such as S.M. Entertainment and Yedang Entertainment. These management companies find and train as new pop singers who have good looking faces and bodies. Having strong financial power, these companies can successfully market and promote these singers ensuring both their popularity and increased profits for the management firm. Unfortunately, they often market musicians, regardless of talent or musical prowess, and many singers attain popularity and fame because of their sexy dancing and good looks instead because of musical talent.

Large management companies mainly present dance music via large Korean broadcasting companies such as KBS or MBC. Therefore, audiences who usually listen to popular music recorded on major record labels or broadcast by major broadcast companies passively accept the songs that such record labels and broadcasting companies present. Burney Joe (2001), a Korean MTV VJ, confirms
that “The Korean management companies have great power over pop singers....the popular music trend is manipulated by the management companies” (para. 5).

As these large management companies successfully disseminate dance music throughout the country, Korean rock music has been marginalized. Korean underground rock musicians and club managers say they have a hard time surviving in the Korean popular music market (Lee, 1999, para. 23). Nonetheless, underground rock musicians and the managers of underground rock clubs continue to resist mainstream popular music market by insisting on presenting their music at underground rock clubs, and most underground rock musicians continue to record their songs on indie labels, an activity that can be understood as further resistance against the large management companies and their record labels. From this point of view, the Korean underground rock music scene can be understood as a resistant “subculture” by Dick Hebdige. He (1996) writes, “Subcultures represent ‘noise’ (as opposed to sound): interference in the orderly sequence which leads from real events and phenomena to their representation in the media” (p. 90). It is not certain whether Korean underground rock music strongly and effectively interferes with the
mainstream dance music market in Korea; however, it is clear that Korean underground rock music represents marginalized "noise" with every real performance. Moreover, the active communication between rock musicians and their fans via internet media suggests that Korean underground rock music is indeed a subculture, according to Hebdige’s definition.

Due to its small market and comparatively small number of fans, Korean underground rock music is marginalized in comparison to mainstream Korean popular music culture, but such marginalization has also granted Korean rock musicians a freedom that has allowed them to build their own autonomous culture. One of the greatest reasons the Korean underground rock music scene has its own culture is that it is not manipulated by management firms, as noted above. Instead, Korean underground rock musicians and their fans meet directly and sing together at the small live performance halls. When underground rock musicians meet their audience in performance, there are often improvisatory and lively moments that are appreciated by fans. To survive in the Korean underground rock music scene, musicians practice and present their music often, and thus achieve a high degree of
musicality, also greatly appreciated by fans. If their musical abilities are not high, the audience will not listen to their music.

Celebrity dance singers, such as Hyori Lee and Baby Vox, are meticulously and successfully produced by the management companies. Before a singer releases her or his album, commercial advertisements are aired on television or internet sites on a large scale. These advertisements adroitly manipulate the public’s imagination about the singer in order to focus attention on them. Although the singer often cannot sing well, he or she can be moderately or even wildly successful in the Korean popular music market. The produced singer usually participates in many television shows, but often lip-syncs the songs.

Because management companies such as S.M. Entertainment and public broadcasting companies such as KBS or MBC unilaterally present produced singers for commercial profit, the Korean popular music audience does not have a broad range of choices when it comes to listening to various popular music genres. Underground rock music, on the other hand, offers listeners choices not offered by mainstream commercial producers. If a listener goes to underground rock music
clubs and listens to several rock bands, he or she can choose her or his favorite band.

In such circumstances, underground rock bands survive by developing their musical abilities and various performance styles in order to win the favor of their listening public. Korean underground rock music is significant because it can provide diversity within the Korean popular music market. In the next section, I examine three Korean underground rock songs as examples of the musical practices of Korean underground rock musicians.

2. Korean Underground Rock Music: Music Analyses

For an understanding of Korean underground rock music culture, it is effective to present several musical examples of Korean underground rock songs in order to convey the structures of the songs. The explanations about the songs through transcriptions mainly consist of musical analyses such as harmonic progressions, rhythmic shapes, and textures. For the musical analyses, I use the first set of pitch names from *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*. The musical analyses and

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37 The one employed in this dictionary and widely used elsewhere is the first of the three
transcriptions will help readers to understand the Korean underground rock songs. Transcriptions of the songs are attached in Appendix C. This section also includes the song lyrics translated into English.

I chose three songs for analysis that were popular since the mid-1990s: “Mal Dalija” (Let’s Ride a Horse Fast) by Crying Nut, “Goseumdochchi Complex” (Hedgehog Complex) by Peterpan Complex, and “Bada” (Sea) by Sugar Donut. These songs and their musicians have remained popular among Korean underground rock music fans since the mid-1990s.

The first song, “Mal Dalija” (Let’s Ride a Horse Fast), is a significant song in Korean underground rock culture, because it was one of the first that made underground rock music popular during the mid-1990s and the early 2000s. The

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1. C1 C c c’ c” c’’’’
2. CCC CC C c c’ c” c’’
3. C2 C1 C c c1 c2 c3

---

illustrated here, in which middle C (the C occurring roughly in the middle of the piano keyboard) is designated c’. In all three, the form of the name changes with each C, proceeding upward. Thus, the B above middle C in the first scheme is b’, and the B below middle C is b (“Pitch names,” 1986, p. 640).
second song, "Goseumdochi Complex" (Hedgehog Complex), is a refined and polished piece in a scene which has few refined songs with complex musical feature.\textsuperscript{38} The third song, "Bada" (Sea), is in a punk rock style. Punk rock is one of the popular genres in Korean underground rock music in the 2000s.\textsuperscript{39}

2.1. "Mal Dalija" (Let's Ride a Horse Fast)

The band Crying Nut had four members when they played and recorded this song: one vocalist, one electric guitarist, one electric bass guitarist, and one drummer. The electric guitarist sings together with the vocalist as a chorus, and the chorus melody is written on the transcription when it appears.

"Mal Dalija" was recorded in 1998, but popular music listeners in Korea still consider this song one of the most famous and representative of Korean underground rock music. Transcription of "Mal Dalija" is from page 113 to page 144. For the transcription, I used the Crying Nut band's first album recorded in 1998 titled Crying

\textsuperscript{38} More recently, there have been many more musically complex underground rock songs such as "Cause You're my Mom" by Nastyona.

\textsuperscript{39} More recently, Korean underground rock musicians and their fans tend to focus on modern rock. For modern rock, see page 46.
Nut. This song is in D major with 4/4 meter. The tempo is from M.M. 118 to 120. The song displays a strophic ternary form. Measures 1 to 7 are a short introduction by the drum and guitar. From measure 8 to 13 is the first phrase of the song, which has a simple melodic line appearing with the pitches e-f♯-g. The second phrase, in measures 14 to 19, is nearly the same as the first, except the lyrics are different. The first and second phrases construct the first part of the ternary form of the song.

Measures 20 to 29 consist of two phrases: one is from measure 20 to 23, and the other from measure 24 to 29. These two phrases are the second part of the ternary form that reveals a gradually exciting mood with a crescendo and a greater density of notes, such as thirty-second notes.

The third part of the ternary form is found in measures 30 to 37 and is also constructed in two phrases: one from measure 30 to 33, and the other from measure 34 to 37. The second phrase in the third part is a repeat of the first phrase. The

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40 M.M. is “abbreviation for Maelzel Metronome” (“M.M.,” 1986, p. 499). Metronome is “a device used to indicate the tempo of a composition by sounding regular beats at adjustable speed. It was invented ca. 1812 by Dietrich Nikolaus Winkler (ca. 1780-1826) of Amsterdam but takes its name from Johann Nepomuk Maelzel (1772-1838)” (“Metronome,” 1986, p. 489).
third part is also the climax of the entire song. The melodic line is very simple: f#-e'-f#-d', g'-f#-g'-e'. The same melodic sequence is also applied to the rhythmic pattern of the melodic line: one half note, two quarter notes, and one whole note are repeated. Although the melodic line of this part is musically simple, the most exciting and active mood is here with many thirty-second notes and the very loud dynamics. The dynamic and loud rhythm of the drum in this part contributes to the active mood. The audience usually jumps, bangs heads, and shouts at this part.

From the first phrase to here is the first verse.

After the first verse there is a two-measure interlude, and the second verse starts at measure 40. The phrase construction of the second verse is almost the same as in the first verse: the first part of the second verse is 12 measures, and the second part of the second verse is 10 measures. The third part of the second verse starts at measure 62.

The third part of the second verse is more extended than the first verse. The third part of the first verse is 8 measures, but the third part of the second verse is almost 21 measures. During these 21 measures, the exciting mood is continued with
the simple sequence f"#-e'-f"#-d', g'-f"#-g'-e' consisting of one half note, two quarter notes, and one whole note. At the end of the song, the vocalist shouts roughly.

The song ends with passion and exasperation. I include the phrase structure of the song below.

Table 1. Phrase Structure of “Maldaliya”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction: measure 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First verse-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-First part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Second part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Third part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlude: measure 38-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second verse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-First part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Second part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Third part</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In fact, this song has a simple and easily recognizable harmonic progression like D-b-G-A and this together with a lively and fast rhythmic pattern such as thirty second notes at measure 28 and 29, makes audiences and musicians excited.

The lyrics of the song also contribute to the exciting and active mood using extreme vocabularies of young people such as 'dag chyeo' (shut up). This song appealed especially to young people who were interested in popular music in Korea using such extreme vocabularies. The lyrics are:

“Mal Dalija” (Let’s Ride a Horse Fast) [my translation]

(The first verse) Life is this.
Uh-huh, makes sense.
Everybody makes mistakes.
I know everything, shut up!
If we sing, can we forget?
If we love, can we be loved?
If we have a lot of money, can we succeed?
If we have a car, we can go fast, shut up!
Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!
Shut up and listen to my word!
We must run.
We will not be a fool.
(Refrain, chorus) Let’s ride a horse fast! (repeat two times)

(The second verse) We become old men.
We have to work for our old age.
Everything is closing in.
We don’t have any power, shut up!
Love is difficult,
Complicated and pretty.
If we try to forget, can we forget?
Easily wounded, shut up!
Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!
Shut up and keep quiet!
We have to run.
We have to fight against lies.
Let’s ride a horse fast!

(Refrain, chorus) Let’s ride a horse fast! (repeats 6 times)

(Shouting) Oh! What we can do on the trashed earth is only run!
What do we want more?
A friend who hides there, come on!
Friend!

There are four syllables in the Korean lyrics: mal-dal-li-ja. These four syllables are well suited with the simple melody having the pitches f’#-e’-f’#-d’ or g’-f’#-g’-e.’

The third part of the first and second verses, with f’#-e’-f’#-d’ and g’-f’#-g’-e’ and their simple lyrics “mal-dal-li-ja,” make the audience and musicians at every
performance extremely excited. The simple melody, basic harmonic progression, dynamic lyrics, and lively instrumental eruptions of emotion are the reasons people have continued to enjoy this song since the late 1990s.

2.2. "Goseumdochi Complex" (Hedgehog Complex)

The second song is "Goseumdochi Complex" (Hedgehog Complex) by the band Peterpan Complex. Peterpan Complex has actively played on the underground rock scene since 2000. "Goseumdochi Complex," recorded in 2002, speaks of lonely people who cannot love each other. This song is a representative song for the band and is structurally refined composition. Among Korean underground rock songs since the mid-1990s, it was rare to find sophisticated and skillful songs. "Goseumdochi Complex" is one of the first such songs among Korean underground songs since the mid-1990s, and therefore, I chose to transcribe and analyze it here.

Peterpan Complex has one vocalist, one electric guitarist, one electric bass guitarist, and one drummer. With the permission of a member of Peterpan Complex,
Ji-han Jeon, I did not transcribe the vocalist’s guitar part due to its similarity to that of the electric guitarist. The transcription of this song is given on page 145 to 175. I listened to the first album of the band, *Radiostar* recorded in 2003 for the transcription.

“Gosmdochi Complex” is in C major and has a 4/4 meter. Tempo is from M.M. 82 to M.M. 84. A four-measure electric guitar riff that repeats almost through the whole song is suggested in the first four measures. This riff that has c notes as pedal tones makes the song consistent. Furthermore, the B-flat pitches for the electric bass guitar line that starts at measure 5 as the eighth note of almost every measure in the riff make the riff sounds polished. B-flat pitches also appear in the chorus melody of the first and last beats starts at measure 9.

Although this song is in C major, there are several B-flat major chords throughout the song. This chord is not included in those of the C major key but is a borrowed chord. In addition, the B flat chords create the harmonic progression of B flat (IV of F major)- F (I of F major and IV of C major)- C (I of C major) and make

\[ \text{See page 61.} \]
for an unstable tonality between F major and C major. The listeners can expect C major and F major at the same time in this song.

However, in the last beat of measure 18, G major chords are found cadencing to a C major chord in measure 19. This is also found from measure 27 to 29 in the second phrase. This progression strongly reinforces the key of C major and is a contrast to the introduction of the piece. The changes from unstable to stable tonality provide a sense of tension and release throughout the piece.

When audiences listen to rock music, they do not usually analyze it with musical concepts such as tonic chord or secondary dominant chord. Instead they seem to sense clichés or new sounds in a song. Through the B-flat major chords in this song, the audience can recognize the changes of tonalities, C major and F major, even though many audiences do not analyze the harmonic progression. Feelings of unstable tonality may be one of the attractions of the song for audience.

“Goseumdochi Complex” has a similar strophic ternary form to “Mal Dalija” (Let’s Ride a Horse Fast) by Crying Nut. There is a 12-measure introduction made up of an electric guitar solo from measure 1 to 4 and the electric bass and drum from
measure 5 to 8. From measure 9 to 12 the vocal part enters with the other three instruments. The musical texture of the introduction progresses from thin to dense. Up to this point, the process of the song is well structured.

From measure 13 to the fourth beat of measure 20 is the first part of the song, which consists of two phrases: one from measure 13 to the second beat of measure 16, and the other from the third beat of measure 16 to the third beat of measure 20. There is also a continuous guitar riff throughout except in measure 18, where the guitarist stops the riff in order to keep pace with the vocal part's ending. The riff starts again at measure 19. Because of the communication between two parts, the guitar riff and vocal melody are superbly suited to each other.

The second part is started from the fourth beat of measure 20 to the second beat of measure 28 is the second part. The second part also consists of two phrases: one is from the fourth beat of measure 20 to the third beat of measure 24, and the other is from the fourth beat of measure 24 to the second beat of measure 28. There is a repeated B flat-F-G harmonic progression during the second part. This progression results in a changing mood from the start of the song. The song mostly uses c or c'
pitches from the introduction to the first phrase except from measure 17 to 18; these two measures end the motion of the first part.

In the second part of the song, the G major chords reinforce the C major tonality in the third part. The second part also acts as a bridge between the first part and the third part with the construction of the I-V-I harmonic progression in C major key.

The third part of the song starts from the third beat of measure 28. The third part also consists of two phrases: one is from the third beat of measure 28 to measure 32, and the other is from measure 33 to measure 38.

The G major chord from measure 27 continues to measure 28 and prepares for the C major chord at measure 29. The C chord at measure 29 satisfies the expectation for the C major tonality at measures 27 and 28. During the third part, the harmonic progression is normal and simple: C- G- F- C (I-V-IV-I in C major key). This simple progression brings resolution, from the tension of the third part, which made use of the B-flat major chord and the resulting unstable tonality (F major or C major). Tension and release are one of the most important aspects of making music, and this song makes use of this phenomenon in its harmonic progressions to affect the
audience. Measure 39 to 42 is a short interlude using the same riff from measures 9 to 12. After this interlude, the second verse starts from measure 43. The first part of the second verse is almost the same as the first part of the first verse except for short motives of the riff included in the chorus melody in measures 43, 44 and 45. These motives of the riff in the chorus melody give the feeling of continuation from the original riff melody. However, the chorus melody is just a short piece, and the vocal solo melody begins right afterwards. The first phrase of the second verse is interesting because of the alternation between fragments of the chorus and the main melody.

The second part of the second verse is extended for two measures longer than the second part of the first verse. In the extended measures, G major chords are repeated: this is a sustained V of the C major key, and the expectation of C major chord (I of the C major key) is extended.

C major chords at measure 61 of the third part of the second verse give the full satisfaction of the stable tonality of C major key to most audiences due to a sustained G major chord at measures 57 to 60. The third part of the second verse is the same
as it is in the first verse: the C- G- F- C harmonic progressions are repeated for 10 measures and two beats.

From measure 71 to 74 there is a riff melody with a chorus, which is one octave lower than at measure 9 to 12, and from measure 75 to 78 the riff melody without the chorus follows. The F major chords at the end of the song give the listeners a sense of instability. The order of the phrases and parts of the song are below.

Table 2. Phrase Structure of “Goseumdochi Complex”

Introduction: measures 1- 12

First verse
-First part : First phrase: measure 13-second beat of measure 16
: Second phrase: third beat of measure 16-
fourth beat of measure 20
-Second part : Third phrase: fourth beat of measure 20-
third beat of measure 24
: Fourth phrase: fourth beat of measure 24-
second beat of measure 28
-Third part : Fifth phrase: third beat of measure 28- 32
: Sixth phrase: measure 33-38

Interlude: measures 39-42
Second verse

-First part: First phrase: measure 43-second beat of measure 46
   : Second phrase: third beat of measure 46-third beat of measure 50

-Second part: Third phrase: fourth beat of measure 50-third beat of measure 54
   : Fourth phrase: fourth beat of measure 54-second beat of measure 60

-Third part: Fifth phrase: third beat of measure 60-64
   : Sixth phrase: measures 65-70

Ending: 71-78

The unstable tonality of the song is matched by the lyrics, which address a sense of estrangement among contemporary people who cannot love each other, and feel solitude and uneasiness. In short, the unstable tonality of the song is suited to the uneasiness and solitude in the lyrics:

“Gosmdochi Complex” (Hedgehog Complex) [my translation]

(Chorus at introduction) I have believed! (repeat three times)
(The first verse) I am not sad.
I am not happy,
because I will be alone again.
There is no friend when I look around.
I know myself a little bit.
I know myself better.

(Refrain) I am stifled.
I have a headache.
I feel like I am mad,
always (repeat from “I am stifled”)

(The second verse) I don’t believe any more.
Now I know myself,
because I will be alone.
I make you wounded as I come close to you.
I am wounded as you come close to me.
I am wounded.

(Refrain)
(Chorus) I have believed! (repeat three times)

The sadness and uneasiness of the lyrics are well suited to the unstable tonality of the song, while the consistency of the guitar riff makes the song comfortably coherent.

2.3. “Bada” (Sea)

The band Sugar Donut has been one of the active underground rock bands in Korea since 2000. The band has one vocalist, one electric guitarist, one electric bass
guitarist, and one drummer. They recorded “Bada” (Sea) in 2003, and they have played often at several underground rock clubs. This song is easy to sing for both the players and the audience. Therefore, it is a good example of Korean underground rock music that audience and players enjoy in live performances together. In fact, the band Sugar Donut is known for producing easy and comfortable punk rock songs and is representative of a tendency in Korean underground rock music in the 2000s.\textsuperscript{43} I used the “1.5” album of the band titled \textit{Speed King} for the transcription. The transcription of “Bada” is from page 176 to 195.

This song is in C major key, 4/4 meter, and binary form with an instrumental interlude between the first part and the second part. The tempo is from M.M. 124 to M.M. 126.\textsuperscript{44}

Measures 1 and 2 are a short instrumental introduction on G major chord (V in C major key). From measure 3 to 34 is the first part of the song, which is made up of two phrases. The first is from measure 3 to 18 and the second is from measure 19 to

\textsuperscript{43} For punk rock, see page 34.
\textsuperscript{44} See page 61.
34. The two phrases are almost the same except for the lyrics. Each phrase is divided into two sub-phrases: the first sub-phrase is from measure 3 to 10, the second is from measure 11 to 18; the third sub-phrase is from measure 19 to 26; and the fourth sub-phrase is from measure 27 to 34. The first and second sub-phrases take the form of a question and answer, while the third and fourth sub-phrases have the same melodic shape as the first and second. Each sub-phrase is eight measures long, which makes the song well-balanced.

The harmonic progressions in this song are very normal and stable: the short introduction is played on G major chords, and there is a C-F-G-C-G harmonic progression in the first sub-phrase. The second sub-phrase has a harmonic progression of F-G-C-a-F-G-C, and has no altered chords. The harmonic progressions of the third and fourth sub-phrases are the same as in the first and second sub-phrases.

Measures 35 to 50 is an interlude with an electric guitar solo similar to the vocal melody in the first part of the song and which can also be divided into two phrases. The first phrase is from measure 35 to 42 and is nearly the same as the first sub-
phrase of the vocal melody. The second phrase is from measure 43 to 50 and follows the same harmonic progression as the second sub-phrase of the vocal melody, except in measure 50. Measure 50 is built on a C major chord instead of G major chord. The pitches of the second phrase of the electric guitar solo are: c\"-d\"- e\"-f\"- e\"-d\"-c\"-d\"-c\"; all intervals are seconds. The guitar solo interlude is not excessive in expressions or improvisation but is rather simple and plain.

From measure 51 to 81 is the second part of the song’s binary form. Whereas the first part of the song is constructed of two similar phrases, the second part of the song is made of two different phrases. From measure 51 to 58 is the first phrase of the second part of the song. This phrase offers both a new melody and harmonic progression: a-G-F-G is used.

The second phrase of the second part of the song is exactly the same as the first phrase from measure 59 to 74, but the second sub-phrase of the first part is added after measure 74: therefore, from measure 75 to 81 is an extended phrase at the second phrase of the second part of the song. The last measure, 82, is a very short ending played on g pitches. The order of the phrases and parts of the song are:
Table 3. Phrase Structure of “Bada”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Phrase Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>measures 1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First part</td>
<td>-First phrase: measures 3-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Second phrase: measures 11-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlude</td>
<td>-First phrase: measures 35-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Second phrase: measures 43-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second part</td>
<td>-First phrase: measures 51-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Second phrase: measures 59-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-First sub-phrase: measures 67-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Second sub-phrase: measures 75-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending</td>
<td>measure 82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This song uses a great deal of repetition: the first part repeats the same melody and harmonic progressions twice. The interlude also repeats the first phrase of the first part of the song with a few improvisations for the solo guitar. The second part of the song has a different eight-measure phrase, however, after the phrase, there is another repetition of the first sub-phrase and the second sub-phrase of the first part. The second sub-phrase of the song is repeated once again as the final phrase of the
song. The harmonic progressions are comparatively basic: C (I of C major key)- F (IV of C major)- G (V of C major) or a (vi of C major)- G (V of C major)- F (IV of C major). There are no altered chords in the song. The simplicity and easiness of the song’s melodic and harmonic content does not make it boring due to its fast tempo and active rhythm. The lyrics speak of a bright and cheerful feeling for a lover at the edge of the sea, as shown.

“Bada” (Sea) [my translation]

(The first verse) Now I would like to hug you not sleeping in the great sea
Your small shoes are drifting away
A fierce wind encloses my longing for you leaving a trace

(The second verse) Now I want to hold you not surprised by a huge wave
Your warm hands are getting cold
A fierce cloud encloses my longing for you leaving a trace
Tiring waves and the sun are passing by the horizon

(Repeat of the first verse)

The lyrics show a warm-hearted person who would like to defend his or her lover. The music is cheerful and happy in mood paralleling the warm-hearted
person in the lyrics. The simple melody and harmonies in C major tonality of the
song match the bright, warm mood of the lyrics.

Up to this point, I have undertaken musical and lyrical analyses of three
underground rock songs. Each song has its own particular qualities that justify its
inclusion in this study. First, “Madalija” by Crying Nut is one of the most
commercially successful and representative songs of Korean underground rock music
since the late 1990s. Its simple repeated harmonic progression and its melody with
powerful drumming and singing parts are the most attractive points of the song.

“Gosmdochi Complex” by Peterpan Complex shows a polished musical construction
and an interesting unstable tonality. Finally, “Bada” by Sugar Donut is a cheerful
song that everyone can follow and sing. Singing together during live concerts at small
performance halls is one of the powerful aspects of underground rock music for both
the audience and musicians. Furthermore, underground rock musicians and their
audiences communicate with each other through songs without any manufacturing by
big management or broadcasting companies. “Bada” represents the possibility of a
direct communication between musicians and the audience, therefore, I chose to
transcribe and analyze it. In the next section, I discuss Korean underground rock music as a social phenomenon and examine how that phenomenon relates to globalization and localization.

3. Korean Underground Rock Music Culture: Global Sources and Localization

The clubs discussed in the previous section—Drug, Jammers, Rolling Stones and SLUGer—have been open since the mid-1990s. Since this time, several other underground rock music clubs have also opened near the Shinchon and Hongik University area (Bbang, Coda, Feed Back, Live Club, Play House and Queen). Before the mid-1990s, very few underground rock music clubs existed in this area. For example, "In 1994, the only live club near the Hongik University was Rock World" (Kang, 2004, para. 2).

One of the reasons for the rise of Korean underground rock music clubs during the 1990s was the strong influence of the U.S. rock band Nirvana. Drug's ex-manager wrote that "Nirvana music mania and punk music mania resulted in a Drug band

45 In January 2004, Drug changed its name to Skunk Hell
46 See page 26-27.
which mainly played Nirvana’s songs...there was a memorial performance in 1995 for Nirvana’s lead singer, Kurt Cobain” (Lee, 1999, para. 6). The Nirvana influence was very strong in Korea during the 1990s, and Drug gathered together bands to play Nirvana influenced music and audiences to listen with passion to Nirvana’s songs.

As noted on page 26 and 27, Nirvana was one of the most popular alternative rock bands in the U.S. during the 1990s. Although Nirvana initially recorded on an indie label, Sub Pop, in 1987, “Benefiting from media that had begun to lionize the Northwest, Nirvana became a national phenomenon....the band had sold 10 million copies of their debut album and had entered the chart at the number-1 position with their follow-up, *In Utero*” (Szatmary, 2004, p. 301). Nirvana’s immense popularity is evidenced by *Popular Music and Society*’s decision to publish a summer quarterly issue, volume 19.2, in 1995, entirely devoted to Nirvana and Kurt Cobain, Nirvana’s lead singer, after the first anniversary of his death in 1995.

Nirvana’s success on the U.S. pop music scene strongly influenced the Korean rock scene, and Nirvana fans increased in Korea. The people who gathered at Drug at the memorial performance for Kurt Cobain might be described as “Nirvana
maniacs.” In remembrance of Cobain’s death, they played and enjoyed with enthusiasm Nirvana songs. The musical influence of Nirvana is also evident in several songs of Korean underground rock music, dating from the late 1990s. For example, the harmonic progressions of a song of the band Sugar Donut echo the musical style of Nirvana. A part of the harmonic progression from the song “Smells like Teen Spirit” by Nirvana is F- B flat- A flat- D flat, and a part of the harmonic progression from the song, “Screwed Spinner Jump” by Sugar Donut is F sharp- C sharp- A- E. The harmonic progressions are one peculiarity of Nirvana’s music. In the case of the song, “Smells like Teen Spirit,” the B flat major chord and A flat major chord create an unstable mood. In the f harmonic minor scale, the iv chord is made up of by the pitches b flat, d flat and f, and the III+ chord is constructed by A flat, C and E pitches. Because the iv chord of a harmonic minor scale is one of minor triads and the III+ chord is an augmented triad, the B flat major chord and the A flat major chord in the song are borrowed chords. These borrowed chords create an unstable tonality in the song. This unstable tonality by using borrowed chords is one of the unique characteristics of Nirvana’s music. The song “Screwed Spinner Jump”
by the Korean underground rock band Sugar Donut is similar. The F sharp major key is complicated by the borrowed chords, A major and E major. This song appears to be in the key of A major only because of the two borrowed chords, A major and E major. The musical examples of the harmonic progressions of each song are below:

Example 3. Harmonic Progression of "Smells like Teen Spirit"

Example 4. Harmonic Progression of "Screwed Spinner Jump"
Sugar Donut does not imitate Nirvana with any precision. These two songs have differences in language, musical texture, mood, and structure. In spite of these differences, however, not many Korean rock songs used such borrowed chords before Nirvana’s influence on the Korean underground rock music scene. This case, therefore, can be understood as an example of an influence of Nirvana on Korean underground rock music after the mid-1990s.

In comparison with the club Drug, the club Jammers did not pay much attention to Nirvana’s music. Jammers was founded on the idea that if musicians in the U.S. or British rock music cultures needed space to practice and to perform in order to develop their music, so, then, did Korean musicians. Jammers’ manager (2002) wrote,

a friend who learned to play guitar with me and I searched for practicing places, and we found one where we could practice and jam with other musicians, and that place became Jammers….I liked to play and listen to rock music, and I thought that many rock clubs are needed in Korea to develop Korean rock music culture, because if there are many successful rock clubs in Korea, Korean rock musicians can survive, develop and focus on rock music as the U.S. rock musicians do (para. 1-2).
The manager of Jammers also stated that in other countries, rock musicians can make a living by playing at clubs so that they continue playing into old age; if Korean underground rock musicians could perhaps survive by playing rock music at clubs, they, too, might continue playing into old age and have a better chance at successfully developing an underground rock music in Korea, including Korean songs, which might be known globally (ibid., 2002, para. 3).

In addition to Jammers, other underground rock clubs in Seoul since the 1990s have dreamed of a rock scene where the musicians can survive economically through their performances. Accurate or not, this idea is rooted in the ideal images of the musical life as imported from the U.S. rock music culture. In fact, however, cultural and social conditions of the U.S. and Korea are and continue to be quite different. While the U.S. has developed a relatively stable economic system, Korean society is neither politically nor economically stable. If musicians are able to survive in the U.S. by playing at clubs, that survival is due, in part, to the relatively stable economy of the U.S. that creates more disposable income. Nonetheless, this thinking highlights a strong cultural connection between Korea and the U.S. In spite of
differences between Korean and U.S. societies, Korea and the U.S. have remained deeply connected since the 1950s. Indeed, Korea has worked to build a close relationship with the U.S. in order to survive the realities of a globalized world economy. The U.S., on the other hand, has been equally active, creating a close relationship with Korea in an attempt to control the markets of East Asia. Because of this close relationship and because of America's strong political and economic power, Korean underground rock musicians, club managers, and even fans cannot avoid experiencing influence from the U.S.

This influence of the U.S. on other countries is one of the main characteristics of globalization visible within the Korean music culture. British theorist Stuart Hall (1991) has stated, “The new kind of globalization is not English, it is American” (p. 27). Desire for American rock club culture within the Korean underground rock scene and the wide-spread enjoyment of Nirvana music videos on MTV in Korea can be both understood as effects of global mass communication. Koreans can connect with the U.S. rock music culture through various media such as recordings, pop news, satellite broadcasting, and the internet. Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (2000)
notes that this powerful media instantly connects people in the world and that “...many audiences around the world experience the media themselves as a complicated and interconnected repertoire of print, celluloid, electronic screens, and billboards” (p. 35). The media is one of the primary tools that spreads the social and cultural power of the U.S. and accelerates globalization throughout the world. For instance, the internet is a popular and effective means to foster communication between musicians and fans in today’s world. The influence of U.S. music on the Korean music culture is only one example of globalization, however; other examples can be found in the rock music cultures of other countries, including Japan.

There are many Japanese internet sites for communication between popular musicians and their fans. One of the popular sites for communication is between J-pop musician, Utada Hikaru and her fans (http://www.toshiba-emi.co.jp/hikki and http://hikki.cc/hikki-main.html). Japanese popular musicians and fans also communicate at “BBS” (Bulletin Board System), usually included on Japanese musicians’ home pages. At BBS, fans can send e-mails to their favorite singers, and although the singers usually do not reply to fans directly, they can read this fan mail.
Intimate interaction between Korean underground rock musicians and their fans through the internet is also mentioned at Section 1 of Chapter III. As previously noted, *Live Club Fest* and *Ssamzie Sound Festival* advertise on the internet, and Korean underground rock music fans actively participate by electing their favorite bands through internet polls. The results of these elections for favorite bands are reflected at the festivals through the choice of bands playing. Additionally, many Korean underground rock bands also communicate with their fans through their home pages on the web, often communicating with fans directly. Musicians read and write opinions at the musicians’ home pages. Korean underground rock bands gain an awareness of their fans through active internet communication, and it is possible that this direct communication contributes to their presentation of high level performances as they work to please these fans they have come to know.

Even though Korean society accepts the U.S. rock culture and also uses the internet in the same way as the Western countries or other countries in the world, Koreans do not share the same ideas about the U.S. rock culture or about underground rock music in Korea with those in other countries because of the
distinctive social and cultural conditions in various countries. While Korean rock mirrors that in the U.S., both are also culturally distinctive. Those heterogeneous aspects of culture evident in Korean rock music I identify as a form of localization.

As previously mentioned, the Korean music scene is currently in an incipient stage of localization. Currently, Korean underground rock musicians are striving toward a koreanized rock music. Although Korean underground rock musicians have been strongly influenced by the U.S. and other Western countries, they want to make koreanized rock music that might perhaps surpass Western rock music and survive within the Korean popular music market. Struggling against the global power of the U.S. rock music and economic power of the large management and broadcasting companies in Korea, some Korean musicians want to emphasize the local Korean aspects of underground rock music. Concerned with their survival in the marginalized rock scene, these Korean underground rock musicians are searching for their own musical style, which might usefully separate them from the U.S. or British rock music. Through this process of finding their own style, arguments frequently arise between musicians and fans concerning imitation and originality, but,
nonetheless, these arguments can be cited as evidence of this struggle of cultural transformation. A good example is the case of the previously described Korean underground rock band Peterpan Complex. Their songs are considered by many to be similar to those of the U.K. band Radiohead. A Korean internet music site, Bugsmusic, interviewed the band and asked about the musical similarity between Peterpan Complex and Radiohead. One of the members of the band Peterpan Complex noted that:

the band members like Radiohead music....rock music comes from the West....so we cannot perfectly avoid the Western rock music style....but, even though we follow the Western rock music style, there will be certain Korean aspects in our music. Furthermore, if we adopt western rock music properly and practice hard western style music, it is helpful in making our own style of rock” (Shin, 2004, para. 3-7).

When I interviewed Ji-han Jeon, the leader of the band Peterpan Complex, on Friday, August 20, 2004, he noted that if his band were to gain skillful proficiency playing Western style rock music, the band might then be able to create more easily its own style of rock. He added that even though Koreans wear Western style
clothing and circumstances in Korea are increasingly westernized, Korea still retains its own history and social customs. If a Korean makes something, that something may have Korean characteristics, although those characteristics may not always be easily distinguishable. Ji-han Jeon added that some Korean underground rock musicians strongly refuse the U.S. or other Western countries' style of rock music, and they still try hard to find koreanized underground rock. He also suggested that although there are many Korean underground rock musicians who try to create music with distinct Korean characteristics, but he does not care if his music strongly incorporates rock music from the U.S. or Britain.

Ji-han Jeon stated that he and other musicians sometimes argue about the koreanization of rock music, and further noted that it is not easy to define elements of koreanized rock. In his opinion, Korean underground rock musicians should have broad views and not focus on just a “Koreanized” style of rock.

According to Ji-han Jeon, Korean underground rock musicians may have not yet formed an obvious style of koreanized rock, but, certainly, several Korean underground rock bands have tried to make their own styles. For example, the band
Crying Nut and other bands included on the club Drug label initiated “Chosun (the traditional name of Korea) punk,” a form of music which can be identified perhaps as koreanized underground rock music; however, no one has identified concretely exactly what distinguishes a koreanized underground rock music. Except for its Korean lyrics, it is not certain whether or not there is an obvious musical particularity in Korean underground rock music since the 1990s. This pursuit of underground rock music with a nationalized identity is not a pursuit shared by U.S. or British rock musicians. Unconcerned about national or ethnic identity of their music, U.S. or other Western rock musicians make and sing just “rock,” primarily because rock music is originated in these Western nations.\textsuperscript{47} Korean musicians, on the other hand, seriously seek localized forms of music as a way of distinguishing themselves from imported rock music, both to survive in increasingly globalized world and to stress Korean nationality. As discussed, the Korean underground rock music scene since the mid-1990s has revealed both globalized and localized aspects. The globalized

\begin{footnote}
\textsuperscript{47} Of course, rock music has African musical characteristics, because Afro-American musicians have influenced on rock music in western countries. However, rock music also has Western musical elements and it has developed mainly in Western countries, especially in the U.S.
\end{footnote}
aspects include the fact that the Korean underground rock club scene formed from a strong influence of U.S. rock culture and was influenced by U.S. musicians such as Nirvana. The localization of Korean rock surfaces through the activities of some underground rock musicians currently who are searching for a koreanized rock sound. In fact, it is not easy to differentiate the globalized and localized aspects of rock, because they are intricately mixed in the Korean underground rock scene. For example, the active communication between rock musicians and their fans through the internet, an aspect of communication that might be identified as a result of globalization, is common in both Korea and Japan, but locally that communication differs in each country. Korean rock musicians reply directly to their fans, but Japanese rock musicians usually do not reply to their fans. In other words, the internet exists both as a product and a tool of globalization, but each culture may localize the media to match various aspects of each particular culture. What is certain is that the Korean underground rock music culture, although still marginalized in the Korean popular music market, is dynamic, alive, and growing.
Chapter IV. Conclusion

During the mid-1990s near the Shinchon and Hongik University area, the Korean underground rock music club scene began to develop, and this study initially posed one question: why did Korean underground rock music form at that time?

Through my study, I discovered that one of the reasons for the formation of the Korean underground rock music scene is the phenomenon of globalization. As noted in Chapter III, the success of the band Nirvana in Korea and communication through the internet and other electric media can be identified as examples and tools of globalization. The Korean underground rock music scene has also its own cultural context and is striving to create a localized music as Korean underground rock musicians seriously attempt to create a koreanized rock music. However, it seems that Korean underground rock musicians have not yet achieved to their own satisfaction a localized koreanized rock music.

Historically, rock music is a music that crosses borders. Rock and roll music started in the U.S. in the 1950s, but “its musical ancestry can be traced back many
centuries to the musical traditions of both Africa and Europe” (Friedlander, 1996, p. 11). From the U.S., rock music has spread through many parts of the world, and the current phenomenon of globalization has only accelerated rock music’s worldwide popularity. Korean underground rock musicians and their fans follow the latest rock trends and listen avidly to the rock stars of the West. As a result, Korean underground rock musicians can copy the latest Western rock songs, and their fans are anxious to hear the newest imported songs. However, this does not mean that Korean underground rock musicians and their fans only imitate Western rock music. Korean underground rock musicians also try enthusiastically to develop their own music as a koreanized rock music.

Appreciating both Korean and Western rock music, Korean rock music fans criticize and encourage Korean underground rock music through the internet, where Korean underground rock musicians and their fans meet and often share their opinions. Some musicians and fans communicate almost every day through the internet. This active communication creates a well-developed Korean underground rock music culture, in spite of the fact that it is still not included in the mainstream of
the Korean popular music market. Simon Frith (1981) has stated that, “Rock is the
music of youth” (p. 181) and Korean underground rock music is supported by young
people with vivid spirits who resist the big management companies that produce the
more slick popular music labels. Although Korean underground rock musicians and
their fans know that the corporate management companies and three public
broadcasting companies dictate the Korean popular music market, the Korean
underground rock music subculture, musicians and fans alike, resist this commercial
dance or ballad music market by producing live rock music performances, which
offer direct communication between musicians and fans. While popular dance
singers often lip-sync, Korean underground rock musicians always play their music
live at underground rock clubs. After the performances, fans write their opinions on
the bands’ internet homepages so that the musicians know their fans’ responses.
Through such active communications, Korean underground rock musicians and their
fans hope to undercut the mainstream Korean popular music market led by both huge
management and the broadcasting companies. Although the underground rock
music culture has made only a few inroads in the main popular music culture, the
resistance is vital and flourishing. No one can predict whether or not Korean underground rock musicians can create koreanized rock music or if the production of such koreanized rock music will guarantee a continued flourishing of Korean underground rock music culture. Korean underground rock music may either decline or further develop. Although the future of Korean underground rock music culture is uncertain, I predict cautiously that Korean underground rock music can be developed, because Korean underground rock musicians play actively, think seriously, and their fans have recently and gradually increased. In summer 2004, I obtained much information through internet sites which dealt with underground rock music performances. In the underground rock club home pages I searched, such as DGBD, Jammers, and Soundholic revealed more fans than in 2003.

Even if the Korean underground rock music scene does not develop in the future, the scene still has had a significant meaning since the mid-1990s in Korean popular music culture. The significance of Korean underground rock music is that it has offered diversity in the Korean popular music scene and an unorganized resistance to management companies pursuing commercial profit and producing monotonous
dance singers. Recently, these large management companies and broadcasting companies have begun to pay attention to several popular underground rock musicians such as Nell, Rumble Fish and Jaurim. Some of these bands have recorded with major record labels such as Yedang Entertainment and subsequently had their music aired on the music shows of broadcasting companies such as KBS. Evidently, the Korean underground rock music scene is moving slowly outward from its initial realm. No one knows if this extension and development can be continued. However, it is certain that Korean underground rock musicians and their fans since the mid-1990s have offered diversity, resistance and liveliness to the Korean popular music culture, and this is the most meaningful information about Korean underground rock music culture since the mid-1990s and the conclusion of this research.
Appendix A. Korean Underground Rock Bands and Their Recordings

1. Ares: members
   Vocal: Jung-wook
   Guitar: Who
   Bass Guitar: Zeen
   Drum: Hyo-jun
   Keyboard: Kyoung-woo

2. Beach Valley: members
   Vocal and Trombone: Chang-min Jang
   Guitar and Vocal: Hong-ki Jin
   Guitar and Vocal: Myeong-kwon Han
   Trumpet and Chorus: Chang-hoon Woo
   Trumpet and Chorus: Hyeon-seok Kang
   Bass: Ki-sun Yun
   Drum: Hae-won Ryu
   Album: none

3. Biuret: members
   Vocal and guitar: Hye-won Moon
   Guitar: So-yong Yun
   Bass: Woo-seok Seo
   Drum: Ju-yon Lee
   Album: none

4. Bulldogmansion: members
   Vocal and guitar: Han-cheol Lee
   Guitar: Chang-seok Seo
   Bass: Han-ju Lee
   Drum: Jeong-beom Jo
Albums: Bulldogmansion (2002)
Salon De Musica (2004)

5. Nabi Hyogua (Butterfly Effect): members
   Vocal: Bada Kim
   Guitar: Sang-eun Seo
   Bass: Han-jong Jeong
   Drum: In Shin

6. Cocore: members
   Vocal and guitar: Woo-seong Lee
   Vocal and guitar: Myeong-soo Hwang
   Vocal and bass: Jae-hyeon Kim
   Drum: Yong-moon Jeong
   Albums: Boyish (2000)
   Odor (2001)

7. Crave 4: members
   Vocal: Joo Hwan
   Guitar: Tae-Young
   Bass: Bak Ha Nan Ta
   Drum: Jerry
   Album: none

8. Crying Nut: members
   Vocal: Yun-sik Park
   Guitar: Sang-myeon Lee
   Bass: Kyoung-rok Han
   Drum: Sang-hyeok Lee
Albums:  Mal Dalija (Let’s Ride Horse Fast) (1998)
         Circus Magic Yurangdan (1999)
         Hasuyeonga (2001)
         Crying Nut Best-Wild West disc 1,2,

            Chosun Punk (1999)
            Hamyeon Doenda (2000)
            Huino Aerak (2001)
            Deulgukhwa Tribute Album (2001)
            Shinra ui Dalbam (2001)
            Sympathy 1970–2001 June
            Who are you? (2002)
            What you (2002)
            Dreams Come True (2002)
            Open the Door Vol. 1 (2002)

9. Delispice: members

         Vocal and guitar: Min-gyu Kim
         Vocal and bass: Jun-ho Yun
         Drum: Jae-hyeok Choi

Albums:  Delispice (1997)
         Welcome to the Delihouse (1999)
         DRRRR! (2001)
         Espresso (2003)
10. Dog Sleep: members
   Vocal: Bon Jun
   Guitar: Jee Sung
   Bass: Myoung Dae
   Drum: Dong Hee

   Album: none

11. Dr. Core 911: members
   Vocal: Moon Lee Kyeong Min
   Guitar: Dap Ship Li An
   Bass: Showgy
   Drum: Dr. Juny
   Rapper: G ru

   Albums: Dr. Core 911 (1999)
           Bi Jeong San Jo (2000)

12. Eonine Ibalgwan (Sister’s Barbershop): members
   Vocal and guitar: Seok-won Lee
   Guitar: Neung-lyong Lee
   Bass: Mu-jin Jeong
   Drum: Dae-jeong Jeon

   Albums: Bidulgineun Haneul Ui Jui
           (A Pigeon is a Rat of Sky) (1997)
           Huildam (Reminiscence) (1998)
           Ggum Ui Pop Song (Pop Songs of a Dream) (2002)

13. Freaky: members
   Vocal: Hye-joo Hong
   Guitar: Yu-na Kim
   Bass: Hyeon-ho Lee
   Drum: Young-ho Jeon

   Album: none
14. Free Market: members
   Vocal: Du-Huyun Kim
   Guitar: Jun-oh Jae
   Bass: Seok-won Hong
   Drum: Hyeon-woo Jeong


15. Ghetto Bombs: members
   Vocal and guitar: P. J. Meang
   Vocal and guitar: Juhyun
   Vocal and bass: Suck
   Vocal and drum: Gong

   Album: Star (with the band Schizo-2003)

16. Gruna (But): members
   Vocal: Seung-Hueon Gong
   Guitar: Hyeon-ki Kim
   Bass: jin-ho Ko
   Drum: Gwan-hyeon Bae

   Album: none

17. Gunk Rubbish: members
   Vocal: Ki-nam Shon
   Guitar: Hyeon-chul Park
   Bass: Kwang-sun Hong
   Drum: Jeong-nam Kim

   Album: none

18. Hookyclub: members
   Vocal: Hyeon-su Kim
   Guitar: Bong-gyun Choi
Bass: Han-yeong Yun
Drum: Dae-sup Im
Album: Solitude (2002)

19. Jacob’s Ladder: members
Vocal: Ju-il Kim
Guitar and vocal: Dong-uk Lee
Guitar and vocal: Il Park
Bass and vocal: Seong-hun Jeong
Drum and vocal: Ji-heon Han
Drum and vocal: Yeong-su Kim

20. Kyrie Eleison: members
Vocal: Ingikasu
Guitar: RJ
Bass: Imall
Drum: Jung-moo
Album: Kyrie Eleison (2002)

21. Lavidite: members
Vocal: Ki-ho Kang
Guitar: Seong-rim Jo
Guitar: Dong-joo Lee
Bass: Tae-young Jeong
Drum: Geun-gil Jeong
Album: Contact (2004)

22. Lazy Bone: members
Vocal and guitar: Jin-woo Noh
Guitar: Jun-gyu Im
Bass: Kyeong-sun An  
Drum: Seok-nyeon Kim  
Vocal and rap: Jun-won Lee  
Keyboard: Moon-yong Kim  
Albums:  
Lazy Diary (2002)  
Do It Yourself (2003)  
Extreme 2.5 (2004)

23. Link: members  
Vocal: Jin Hak  
Guitar: Eun Ha  
Bass: Jeong Wan  
Drum: Seong Who  
EP album: Do as you like it (2002)

24. My Aunt Mary: members  
Vocal and guitar: Sun-yong Jeong  
Bass: Jin-yeong Han  
Drum: Jeong-jun Park  
Albums:  
My Aunt Mary (1999)  
The Green Night (1999)  
2002 Rock N Roll Star (2001)  
Gong Hang Ganeun Gil (Way to Airport) (2004)  
Just Pop (2004)

25. Nae Guie Docheong Jangchi (Wiretap of My Ear Inside): members  
Vocal: Hyeok Lee  
Guitar: Ju-won Lee  
Bass: Ui-jun Hwang  
Drum: Jae-hun Jeong  
Albums: Wiretap in My Ear (2001)
26. Nell: members

Vocal: Jong-wan Kim  
Guitar: Jae-kyeong Lee  
Bass: Jeong-hun Lee  
Drum: Jae-won Jeong  

Albums:  
- Reflection of Nell (2001)  
- Speechless (2001)  
- Let It Rain (2003)  

27. Nastyona: members

Vocal and keyboard: Yona  
Guitar: Tae Young  
Bass: Cheol Woo  
Drum: Young Jin  

Album:  

28. Nevada # 51: members

Vocal: Ozoo  
Guitar: Joo BooM  
Bass: Doong  
Drum: G. gum  

Album:  
- The 51th Night with Friends (2004)  

29. No Brain: members

Vocal: Seong-woo Lee  
Guitar: Min-seop Kim  
Bass: Jae-hwan Jeong  
Drum: Hyeon-seong Hwang  

Albums:  
- Viva No Brain (2001)  
Never Mind the Sex Pistols Hero’s the No Brain (2001)

30. Nun Ddeugo Kobein (Open One’s Eyes and Cut One’s Nose): members
Vocal: Ggam Ak Gui
Guitar: Mok Mal La
Bass: Seul Peu Ni
Drum: Gi Ha
Keyboard: Yeon Li

31. Peterpan Complex: members
Vocal: Ji-han Jeon
Guitar: Chi-won Lee
Bass: Deok-rae Rho
Drum: Kyoung-in Kim
Albums: 1 Inching Juungong Shijeom (2002)
Peterpan Complex 2-0.5 (2003)
To Be Glorious (2002)

32. RI-AN: members
Vocal and guitar: Ri-an
Guitar: Gyeon Woo
Bass: Jin-kyeong Kim
Drum: Kyeong-shin Jang
Keyboard: Jeong-hye Hong
Album: none
33. Rock Tigers: members
Vocal and guitar: Tiger
Guitar: Psycho MJ
Bass: Rock
Drum: Hurricane Billy
Chorus and screaming: Velvet Geena

34. Rumble Fish: members
Vocal: Jin-ee Choi
Guitar: Seong-geun Kim
Bass: Ho-il Kim
Drum: Cheon-hui Park

35. Samhoseon Butterfly (3rd Line Butterfly): members
Vocal and guitar: Ki-wan Seong
Vocal and guitar: Sang-a Nam
Bass: Gyu-hyeong Kim
Drum: Sang-woo Kim
Keyboard: Nam-yun Kim
Haegeum: Hui Lu
Albums: Self-Titled Obsession (2001)
Oh! Silence (2002)
Time Table (2004)

36. Sugar Donut: members
Vocal and guitar: Changs
Guitar: Hyunsu
Bass: Taks
Drum: DR
Speed King 1.5 (2003)
Banollim (2004)

37. Transfixion: members
Vocal: Hae Lang
Guitar: Ho-jin Jeon
Bass: Dong-uk Son
Drum: Cheon Gi
Album: Transfixion (2002)

38. Viva Soul: members
Vocal, rapper: Jood, Samuel, Uncle Bomb
Album: Viva Soul and Pastel (Our Nation) (2004)

39. Wounded Fly: members
Vocal: Ho-sik Kim
Guitar: Hui-seok Kim
Bass: Deok-jung Kim
Drum: Bok Lee
Albums: Two Toys (2001)
Between (2003)

40. 14 Left: members
Vocal: In Suk
Guitar: Jeong Gyu
Bass: Hyeok Ong
Drum: Mi Seok
Album: none
Appendix B. Korean Underground Rock Music Clubs, Fieldwork Dates, and Bands’ Names

1. at Ssamzie Space Baram- May 5, 2003- Sugar Donut (solo concert).

2. at Ssamzie Space Baram- May 17, 2003- Peterpan Complex (solo concert).


5. at Rolling Stones- July 8, 2003- Crave 4, Nestyona, and 14 Left.


9. at Ssamzie Space Baram- August 24, 2003- Dog Sleep, Gruna, and Nevada #51.

10. at SoundHolic-August 20, 2004- Peterpan Complex (solo concert).
Appendix C. Transcriptions

From the “Drum Set” part of the three transcriptions, the lowest notes indicate the bass drum, the middle notes show the snare and tom toms, and the highest notes indicate the cymbals. In the transcription of “Maldaliya” (Let’s Ride Horse Fast), the symbol $\sim$ indicates the sound in between speech and pitch with a strong accent. The symbols $\diagup$, $\diagdown$, $\backslash$ refer to short glissandi, which follow the directions indicated.
Mal Dalija (Let's Ride a Horse Fast)

\[ \text{\[=118-120} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electric Guitar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric Bass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum Set</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocals

Electric Guitar

Electric Bass

Drum Set

3

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

3
Vocals

E. Gtr.

dag chyeo

E. Bass

Dr.

Vocals

E. Gtr.

no lae ha myeon it hyeo ji na

E. Bass

Dr.
fortissimo
wuriaegaen him i eopji dagchyeo
46

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

sa lang eun eo ryeo un geo ya

47

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

bog jap ha go ye ppeun geo ji
Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

48

it eu lyeo myeon it hyeo jil gga

49

sang chyeo bat gi shi un geo ya
Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

fortississimo
Vocals
E. Gtr.
E. Bass
Dr.

63

Vocals
E. Gtr.
E. Bass
Dr.

64

Vocals
E. Gtr.
E. Bass
Dr.
Dr.

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

oh! sseuregi gat eun i jigusang eseo (shouting)

mal dal li
wuriga halsu it neun il eun (shouting)

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

ojig dalineun geot ppuniya (shouting)

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.
73  mu eol deo ba la lia (shouting)

74  sum eo it neun chingu, ili naoragu (shouting)
Goseumdochi Complex (Hedgehog Complex)

\( \text{\textit{J}} = 82-84 \)

\begin{align*}
\text{Vocals} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array} \\
\text{Electric Guitar} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array} \\
\text{Electric Bass} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array} \\
\text{Drum Set} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{2} \\
\text{Vocals} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array} \\
\text{E. Gtr.} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array} \\
\text{E. Bass} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array} \\
\text{Dr.} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\text{\textit{J}} \\
\end{array}
\end{align*}
13

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.

mezzo forte

14

Vocals

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Dr.
Dr. E. Gtr. Vocals
E. Bass Piano

je un na leul jo geumal gets sso now I know my self
Vocals
E. Gtr.
E. Bass
Dr.

Vocals
E. Gtr.
E. Bass
Dr.

forte

166
Bada (Sea)

\( \text{f} = 124-126 \)

Vocals (guitar)

Electric Guitar

Bass Guitar

Drum Set

\( \text{forte} \)
Vocals(guitar)  

E. Gtr.  

Bass  

Dr.  

5  

gaudanjeo badasogae jamdeulji an do rog  

7  

neouijogeumagdeonshin bal eun meol
Vocals(guitar)

E. Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

Vocals(guitar)

E. Gtr.

Bass

Dr.
Vocals(guitar)  
E. Gtr.  
Bass  
Dr.

21 da lan jeo pa do sog ae nol la ji an do rog

Vocals(guitar)  
E. Gtr.  
Bass  
Dr.

23 neo ui dda ddeut haet deon son deung eun ja
25 ggu man deo sig eo ga nae

Vocals (guitar)

E. Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

27 jeo gi mae seo wot deon gu leum eun nae

Vocals (guitar)

E. Gtr.

Bass

Dr.
59 i je neul an go it eul ggae cha

61 ga un jeo ba da sog ae jam deul ji an do rog

Vocals(guitar)
E. Gtr.
Bass
Dr.
References Cited


