



1 basic social field, the subfield played a role in accepting socially heterogeneous  
 2 individuals, maintaining social hierarchy breaks, and maintaining social  
 3 stability.

#### 6 **Genesis of Chinese Rock Music: A Changing Era**

8 The ups and downs of Chinese rock music for decades accompanied the  
 9 social transformation since China's reform and opening up. It was born out of  
 10 the drastic social change, benefited from the social ideological trends and open  
 11 thoughts that collided fiercely at the time of change. Finally, when the market  
 12 economy continued to transform, Chinese rock music circle gradually quieted  
 13 down because its obedience to old tradition.

15 **Table 1.** *Chinese Rock Music Development*

Year	figure / band	cultural event	socioeconomic background
1978	Violet Band ( <i>ziluolan yuedui</i> )	first pop music band	the 11th CPC Central Committee: the start of China's reform and opening up
1979	Dongfang Hotel	first music teahouse	the establishment of Sino-US diplomatic relations
1980	Wanli Mawang Band	first music group performing just like a band	China's legal seat in the World Bank; nationalized enterprise autonomy expanding
1984	Cui Jian's Plywood Band ( <i>qiheban yuedui</i> ) and Ding Wu's Locust's Belly Band ( <i>fuhuangchong yuedui</i> )	underground Party circle in Beijing began to gather	economic reform: development of commodity economy
1986	Cui Jian	Performance of "I Have Nothing" ( <i>yiwusuoyou</i> ) on the stage "100 singers Concert for the year of World Peace"	40th Anniversary of the Victory of the World Anti-Fascist War
1990	Almost all the mature bands in Beijing	Performances on large-scale stages	turbulence in Eastern Europe; Tiananmen Square event

1994	Dou Wei, He Yong, Zhang Chu and Tang Dynasty Band	“Chinese Music Power” Concert in Hong Kong Coliseum	eve of Hong Kong’s return to China
1995		Sanlitun Bar Street, and live houses in many cities	developmentalist orientation widely accepted

1  
2 Any social subfield, including the artistic field, is subordinate to field of  
3 power, i.e. the economic and political field. This is the basic judgment of Pierre  
4 Bourdieu's field theory. According to Bourdieu, the connections of individuals  
5 and their positions in society form a "field", and there are many subfields in  
6 society because of different divisions of labor, such as literary field, scientific  
7 field and so on. Although Bourdieu acknowledges that the subfields have their  
8 own rules to a certain extent, they all need to follow the basic rule of the field  
9 of power in order to participate in the game of social operation. By the same,  
10 the emergence of Chinese rock music is not entirely the aesthetic logic of the  
11 art and music circles' own transformation, but the development of the subfield  
12 and the overall change of the external social environment mutually fitted each  
13 other, thereby constructed a legal space for the newly coming artistic symbol.  
14 From this perspective, it is the transformation of the basic field of politics and  
15 economy, and the autonomy trend of cultural subfield that constitute the  
16 fundamental power source for the birth and development of Chinese rock  
17 music.

18  
19 *Emergence of Rock Music Market: Dual Logic of Politics and Economy*

20  
21 From the Opium War in 1840 through the Cultural Revolution in  
22 1978, China has been in a long last revolutionary movement for national  
23 independence and class leadership. No matter the bourgeois-democratic  
24 revolution earlier or the socialist revolution later, it was the process by which  
25 one class deprived the right of speech of the other classes. Therefore, during  
26 the history of revolution, the field structure, ideological atmosphere, and  
27 discourse system of Chinese society was relatively unitary. Political demands  
28 highly restricted and regulated cultural and artistic activities. In the history  
29 of music development in modern China, the rise and popularity of school  
30 songs, worker-peasant-soldier revolutionary songs, foreign revolutionary  
31 songs, and mass songs were all related to prevailing political background. The  
32 marching style, choral form, solemn melody, and full of emotions of these  
33 types of music were adapted for arousing nationalistic emotions and patriotic  
34 enthusiasm, and thus are favored by creators and recipients.

35 Until 1978, the third plenary session of the 11th CPC Central Committee  
36 pointed out that the government’s main work would shift from class struggle to  
37 economic construction. The political field ceased to be the only field of power.

1 It had voluntarily given up its original absolute domination, and the economic  
 2 field had been empowered an equal status. Therefore, The criteria for judging  
 3 the value of practice have changed. Meeting the expectations of the political  
 4 field or not is no longer the sole criterion for social practice, behavior and  
 5 activities. The economic field has begun to play an important role in evaluating  
 6 the value of cultural activities.

7 Therefore, in the early 1980s, when the market required diversified artistic  
 8 works to meet different cultural needs, the monopoly of National Record  
 9 Corporation of China was broke by diverse corporations, including Guangzhou  
 10 Pacific Audio and Video Corporation, China Record Corporation Guangzhou  
 11 Branch, Beijing Baihua Audio Equipment Factory, etc. The multi-company  
 12 competition had replaced the one company's monopoly, and the audiovisual  
 13 industry had entered into the era of marketization. But it was in the initial  
 14 exploring stage. The huge market void prompted a lot of manpower and  
 15 resources to swarm in this area. The number of audiovisual companies surged  
 16 from a few in the first to a few hundred in just a few years. At the same time,  
 17 the distribution of cassette tapes has grown significantly. The producers had the  
 18 opportunities to try all types of music, and it was under this situation that rock  
 19 music entered the market. Actually, Chinese music circle initially didn't know  
 20 it's subcultural meaning and background "rock and roll" in western world. For  
 21 many music makers, it was their first time to encounter this form of Western  
 22 pop music. They were attracted purely by the music form because its natural  
 23 attraction to younger groups and began to imitate in their music works. Then  
 24 the circle found the great market adaptability of rock music. Just like Vera L.  
 25 Zolberg mentioned: "Seeing how the new styles are created, I argue that they  
 26 are better understood as part of a social process in which networks among  
 27 artists and other participants become established in a broader socioeconomic  
 28 context as oriented by political trends." (Zolberg, 1990) Therefore, as a cultural  
 29 commodity, the rise of economic field in China's reform and opening up period  
 30 provided enough market for rock music, thereby achieving a large-scale  
 31 expansion of rock music in the late 1980s and the 1990s in China.

### 32 *Background of the Rise of Rock Music: Autonomy of Cultural Field*

33  
 34  
 35 In the early 1980s, the reform of political system and economic  
 36 system went hand in hand with the reform of cultural system. Before that, there  
 37 are no independent music groups outside the network of nationalized song and  
 38 dance troupes (*gewutuan*)<sup>1</sup>. From reform and opening up, along with  
 39 socioeconomic transformation, *gewutuan* gradually began to take self-sustaining  
 40 economic model, which was actually the practice on the system level of the

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<sup>1</sup>*Gewutuan* was a cultural institution owned by the government. Because of its official capacity, it is always regarded as an opposite counterpart to the underground rock circle. This article will demonstrate the positive interaction between them two. The successful singers of *gewutuan* have many opportunities to give performances on official galas, while the rock musicians only have small gig. So they are dubbed as "gala singer" (*wanhui geshou*) by the rock circle.

1 discourse of "autonomy" that dominated the aesthetics and literary circle at that  
 2 time. That was the conquest of autonomy of the cultural field in China. Driven  
 3 by the reform of cultural system, almost all the nationalized troupes began to  
 4 be independent from the authorities, who allowed them to recruit performers,  
 5 and singers based on popular taste, arrange repertoires and determine  
 6 performance forms independently. Almost all the music performers and makers  
 7 affected by the new condition.

8 Firstly, the changes happened in performance form. A brand new  
 9 performance mode colloquially referred to as "*zouxue*"<sup>2</sup> was widely accepted  
 10 by *gewutuan*. The primary audiences of *zouxue* are typical the mass, and mass  
 11 interest largely determined the content of the show, which has given a huge  
 12 impetus to the birth and development of popular music, including rock music.  
 13 Some performers of professional troupes began to hold their own bands and  
 14 cover European and American rock songs, such as *Qiheban* of Cui Jian and Liu  
 15 Yuan, and *Cobra* of Wang Fang and Xiao Nan. Some *gewutuan* might take  
 16 extras in *zouxue*, such as Cao Ping, Cao Jun, He Yong, etc., all started their  
 17 rock performances by this way and became important roles in Chinese rock  
 18 music history later. Cao Ping's reminiscence indicated that how mass interests  
 19 influenced the performance of the *gewutuan*: "We were very popular in  
 20 covering Beatles's song. Actually the audience didn't care what we sing, they  
 21 just want that lively energy."<sup>3</sup>

22 The second is the change in musical form. In order to obtain more  
 23 audiences and occupy a larger market share, popular music in the  
 24 1980s<sup>4</sup>, extracted and integrated elements of various musical forms, and  
 25 eventually formed three main musical trends.

- 26  
 27 1) Some music makers carried forward the mass ballad that was popular in  
 28 the 1950s and early 1960s. For example, "Song of Toast" (*zhu jiu ge*) uses  
 29 the rhythmic characteristics of Xinjiang folk songs; "The Frontier Springs  
 30 Are Pure and Pure" (*bianjiang quanshui qing you qing*) starts by singing  
 31 seasons and landscape, then extols the deep affection between the military

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<sup>2</sup>*Zouxue* refers to a certain music practice in which the singers and musicians do work on a free-lance basis for *gewutuan*, they band together with a manager to sell their musical services by touring the nation and performing on a contractual basis for local, state-owned cultural organizations.

<sup>3</sup>Zhang, interview with Cao Ping.

<sup>4</sup>Du Yufu's article "Are Qing Yinyue, Liuxing Yinyue and Tongsu Yinyue the same thing?" (Renmin Yinyue, 1985-08) indicates that popular music in early 1980's in mainland China was divided into three genres: tongsu yinyue, qing yinyue, and liuxing yinyue. Tongsu yinyue refers to the instrumental music and songs that are easily understood. The mass ballad in 1950s and 1960s was classified into tongsu gequ. Qing yinyue is a kind of tongsu yinyue, which is entertaining and focus on daily life, just like genre painting. Liuxing yinyue literally is a translation of popular music. Because its commodity attribute, liuxing yinyue is considered as appealing to low and vulgar taste, even pornographic song. In the author's interview with Xiao Nan, the keyboard of Cobra Band (the first women rock band in China), Xiao Nan thinks that their music closely linked to qing yinyue.

- 1 and civilians.
- 2 2) Cover albums (some even all of the songs in the album is the cover of  
3 abroad popular music works) were produced in a large quantities, and  
4 main reason of this is speeding up the efficiency in production and fill  
5 market void, rather than imitating and acquiring.
- 6 3) Composing traditional and folk music in a kind of modern and popular  
7 music style was a highly influential trend. The primary method was  
8 newly writing traditional opera, matching it with symphonic arrangement  
9 and put it in a popular music structure. It was initiated with “Fight for  
10 Renaissance,” (*chongzheng heshan dai housheng*) the theme song of TV  
11 series “Four Generations under One Roof.” (*sishitongtang*) Then, a  
12 concert and its same name album called “South and North Singing  
13 Together” (*nanqiangbeidiao dahuichang*) pushed the trend to climax.  
14 The outstanding feature is recomposing existing traditional operas with  
15 electronic instruments, and transforming them into disco music.

16  
17 These attempts represented the diversified cultural needs emerging at that  
18 time, and could be regards as multi-layered social culture’s infiltration and  
19 fusion. These productions made a great success in market and at the same time  
20 shaped audiences’ reception, and offered an atmosphere for rock music circle  
21 to do deeper cultural integration afterwards.

22 The whole society's change from ideology to field power is the thought  
23 background and policy basis for Chinese rock music circle to adopt multiple  
24 cultural forms in music making and accommodate multiple social groups. On  
25 the one hand, since the reform and opening up, the emphasis on the solemn and  
26 exclusive One Truth has been replaced by the value of requiring diversity, self-  
27 expression, and the pursuit of consensus, which has provided chance for the  
28 artistic innovation of multiple integration. Corresponding to that, from its  
29 beginning, rock music integrates multiple musical styles and characteristics,  
30 and needs to constantly learn new musical elements to subvert and update  
31 itself. On the other hand, there are individuals having a relative looser  
32 relationship with the fundamental political field in every society. The structural  
33 adjustment of the whole social field caused them overflow from their original  
34 field, and they must reacquire a social position to obtain the survival right and  
35 identity. The emergent fields can accept these overflowers, and the rock music  
36 circle is one of them. Due to the fragmentation and reorganization of social  
37 structure, these emergent fields that accept overflowers must be composed by  
38 individuals belonging to different social classes. The above two aspects have  
39 formed the multi-cultural and multi-social integration of Chinese rock music  
40 from the artistic form to the groups of artists and supporters. The exclusive  
41 analysis is as follows.

42  
43  
44 **Musical and Textual Analysis: Fusion Music**

45  
46 For every society, the social culture is constituted by multiple cultural

1 patterns, such as fine art, popular art, folk culture, and so on, which could be  
2 seen as cultural stratification. Although the cultural stratification is only a  
3 constructive outcome, so-called boundary between “fine art” and “popular art”  
4 is less and less convincing. But in the 1980s and 1990s’ China, the cultural  
5 stratification is widely accepted. The intellectual circle generally believes that  
6 contemporary Chinese culture was continued from ancient China, and the  
7 cultural patterns we have nowadays, include dominant culture, elite culture,  
8 popular culture, and folk culture. (wang, 2004) Integrating all of the multiple  
9 cultural patterns is one of the key features of Chinese rock music wave.

10 As mentioned above, in the first half of the 1980s, popular music mixed  
11 multiple social cultures together, although at that time this attempt only  
12 remained in a primary stage of simple combo of basic cultural elements, and  
13 there were numerous flaws. For example, it continued the dominant culture  
14 while retaining its moralizing meaning. It learned from popular songs of Hong  
15 Kong, Taiwan and the west, including pop music structure and performance,  
16 and produced a large number of cover songs, but had not developed original  
17 musical language with local and individual characteristics. There is also a “new  
18 opera” (*xin xiqu*) model that integrated traditional or folk music elements  
19 with popular music techniques, but descended to assembly line products under  
20 the commercial chain. However, preliminary attempts had formed a music  
21 making thought and audience foundation for the further metamorphosis of  
22 Chinese popular music. Later on, rock music in China deeply integrated  
23 dominant culture, elite culture, popular culture, and folk culture, and mainly  
24 manifested itself in the following forms.

### 25 26 *Combining Elite Culture and Dominant Culture*

27  
28 In the 1980s and 1990s, reflecting on and dispelling previous revolutionary  
29 discourses was one of the main task of the dominant discourse on one  
30 hand, meanwhile the other task was extolling the ongoing social changes, and  
31 assuring of future and hope. Such emotion also became an influential trend in  
32 rock music, and was mainly reflected in two ways.

33 The first one is recomposing the red songs into rock music, such as the  
34 album “Red Rock” (*hongse yaogun*) published by Hou Muren in 1992, and Cui  
35 Jian's song “Nanniwan”. In “Red Rock” there was a rock version of “The  
36 Internationale” (*guojige*). Actually, there were two rock adaptations of “The  
37 Internationale” made by Chinese rock music circle almost at the same time.  
38 The other one is the work of Tang Dynasty, which became a speedy big hit and  
39 accepted by many audiences as a symbol of “rock spirit” in the history of  
40 Chinese rock.

41 In fact, the two adaptations are basically similar. Both of them replace the  
42 orchestral instruments with the electro-acoustic instruments, speeded up the  
43 middle plate of the original song. No changes have been made in the structure  
44 of the tune, the chords, the arrangement of the harmonies, etc. In particular, the  
45 version in “Red Rock” adopted the chorus of the original version, merged the  
46 bel canto and folk singing in the third paragraph. Therefore, the main theme of

1 the original vision of pursuing human happiness, inspiring communism belief  
 2 and hope is retained in this adaption, but only the tone transform from solemn  
 3 to excited and vehement. Such adjustment in hue makes the song more suitable  
 4 for the optimistic and positive emotion of the reform period.

5 Similarly, Cui Jian recomposed and covered a red song called “Nanniwan”  
 6 in 1987. His cover performance once caused an uproar, but could not be  
 7 interpreted simply as rebellious. The reason people have such a cognition is  
 8 largely because Cui Jian deleted a paragraph of lyrics at the end of the original  
 9 version:

10  
 11 Fighting while producing  
 12 359 Brigade is a model  
 13 Let 's move forward  
 14 Present a bouquet to the model  
 15

16 Cui Jian’s deletion of the paragraph dispelled the obvious intention of  
 17 chanting the revolutionary heroes in the original version. But as a part of a  
 18 song, the audience get the theme not only in the lyrics but also the music hue.  
 19 From singing technic and arrangement, this song uses the most popular music  
 20 expression at the time. Cui Jian's sound is not hoarse and irregular  
 21 pronouncing, which is familiar by the audience today, but close to a popular  
 22 singing technique called the “breathy voice” (qi sheng)<sup>5</sup>. Against the  
 23 background of the beautiful and pleasing sound, the elimination of the last  
 24 paragraph indeed delete the historical meaning, but the result is opposite to  
 25 people’s usual cognition. It veers to an eternal topic of singing the changes in  
 26 natural scenery and the improvement of living condition, which adapts to the  
 27 social vision of the time. Therefore, in these recomposed red songs, what was  
 28 emphasizing was not the subversion of the original song, but the re-activation  
 29 of the meaning of the previous song by the re-arrangement in popular music  
 30 techniques.

31 The second way is to explore and reorganize the motif of national belief  
 32 from remote history. This style was started by Tang Dynasty Band. Their song  
 33 "Dream Back to Tang Dynasty” (*menghui tangchao*) uses a large number of  
 34 traditional Chinese poetic, and singing techniques such as throwing tunes  
 35 (*shuai qiang*), spoken parts of Chinese opera. Other wise, in arrangement, the  
 36 guitar riff is composed in traditional Chinese music syntax. In this way, the  
 37 song set the classical atmosphere, and the role of Western music form in this  
 38 work is to strengthen the Chinese traditional artistic mood. Later, the bands and  
 39 musicians such as Acupoint (*xuwei*), Overload (*chaozai*), Zheng Jun, up to  
 40 Second-hand Rose (*ershou meigui*), Kongzi Says (*Zi Yue*) in the new century,  
 41 etc., all create similar musical image, or uses lots of Chinese classical or folk  
 42 music elements in their works. These songs could be seen as the earliest  
 43 Chinese-style popular music.

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<sup>5</sup>Breathy voice is first adopted in mainland China by a “gala singer”, Li Guyi, who learned the singing method from Taiwan popular music, especially a very famous singer Deng Lijun. Breathy voice is accused of decadent music at first, then is widely accepted.



1 At that time, Chinese rock music, just like the dominant culture, expressed  
2 the praise of the new situation of reform and the history and future of China.  
3 However, while rock music accepts the dominant culture as one of its themes,  
4 the optimistic praise and idealized depiction does not overwhelm the  
5 unavoidable doubts and the cultural reflection standing at a kind of elite  
6 position. Therefore, many rock songs show the fusion of the elite culture and  
7 dominant culture. Cui Jian's "A Piece of Red Cloth" (*yikuai hongbu*) is one of  
8 them.

9 In this song, two images are portrayed by Cui Jian in different instruments,  
10 one is a strong collectivity in a dominant position expressed by a bright  
11 trumpet texture, and the other is a fragile individual in a subordinate position  
12 expressed by a vocal texture. The vocal and trumpet form a contrasting  
13 polyphony, and the intimate and complex relationship between "I" and "You" is  
14 appeared in the multi-line musical texture. The relationship is not simply  
15 master and slave, control and being controlled, but in a complex state of  
16 addiction, attachment, contradiction and pain. The red symbols and political  
17 elements often become the object of deconstruction in Cui Jian's works.  
18 However, after deconstruction, Cui Jian usually does not leave a ruin of value,  
19 but reconstructs a new value system about ideals, hopes, and self-realization in  
20 the ruin.

21 Similarly, a large number of works describe collective ideals appeared in  
22 Chinese rock music in the 1980s and 1990s, such as Zang Tianshuo's "The  
23 Sun, the Children, and the World," (*taiyang, haizi, shijie*) the Breathing Band  
24 (*huxi yuedui*)'s "Walk Through the Brilliant World," (*zouguo renjian huihuang*)  
25 Black Panther Band (*heibao yuedui*)'s "The Light of Love," (*ai de guangmang*)  
26 etc. These songs try to give a cure for the confusion and anxiety of the groups  
27 that have been left on the edge of various fields in the process of rapid  
28 development and change. The medicinal material of this prescription comes  
29 from the dominant culture, that is the firm confidence in the future, while using  
30 the new musical form, and trying different means of expression, combining the  
31 themes of the dominant culture with the reflection of the elite culture. Whether  
32 reconstructing national beliefs from revolutionary history or gaining identity  
33 from traditional culture, they all end up on the theme of a vision for the future  
34 of the nation, which was consistent with the dominant culture.

35  
36

## 1 *Combining Mass Culture and Elite Culture*

2

3 Since western enlightenment was the most influential theoretical  
4 presupposition of intellectual discourse in the 1980s, one of the inherent  
5 requirements of literary and artistic creation was to use the elite discourse to  
6 inspire the public. Therefore, the elite culture and mass culture were isolated  
7 from each other at that time. However, under normal circumstances, many  
8 specific art works contain elements of elite culture and popular culture. The  
9 barriers between the two are to a great extent derived from the artificial  
10 construction of cultural and artistic practices in the historical context. For  
11 Chinese rock music in the 1980s and 1990s, because of its dual attributes of  
12 elite culture and commodity culture, it presented the themes of enlightenment  
13 from the beginning, and at the same time, with the pace of reform and opening  
14 up, it began the mass culture producing experiment in the market economy. If  
15 we interpret this phenomenon aesthetically, the dual attributes of Chinese rock  
16 music could be understood. Elite cultural characteristics of it, such as  
17 subjectivity, critical reflection, and innovation, are all formed and distributed in  
18 the mass cultural production chain. Zhang Chu is one of the most prominent  
19 representatives.

20 In Zhang Chu's work, lyric is the key element that constitutes its artistic  
21 characteristic. However, as a musical work, the lyrics must be matched  
22 by appropriate musical language. "Lonely Man is Shameful (*gudu de ren shi*  
23 *kechi de*)" and "Plant Making Factory (*zao feiji de gongchang*)" were two  
24 albums published by Zhang Chu during he affiliated with Magic Rock Culture  
25 Ltd.. They are the products of personal writing and teamwork. Zhang Chu  
26 writes the lyric and melody, which could be seen as the principal carrier of elite  
27 consciousness of the songs; and the arrangement is completed by Jia Minshu  
28 and his team, which is pleasing and easy to be accepted by the public.  
29 Therefore, in Zhang Chu's works, there are contrasts between oral poetry-style  
30 lyrics, plain melody and delicate arrangement. For example, the song "Ant, Ant  
31 (*mayi, mayi*)" in the first album shapes a nobody who takes things as they  
32 are. The world is so big and he is a humble ant, dreaming empty (lyrics: Think  
33 about neighbor's daughter/listen to radio/Look at my dream/It is buried  
34 in soil). He feels that life is always less satisfactory (lyrics: Watermelons and  
35 beans are planted in winter/But get empty glad in summer). He envies the legs  
36 of locusts, the eyes of dragonflies, and the wings of butterflies, however he can  
37 only accept the slender limbs and dark skin he was born with, and goes through  
38 the journey of life with hardships and dreams (lyrics: 365 days in one year  
39 divided into four seasons/my grains are peanuts, red dates, tears and millet).  
40 Zhang Chu takes ant as a metaphor to express his general sense of life for  
41 ordinary beings. Consistent with the characteristics of most of his songs, this  
42 work is also full of poetry but has simple and free melody. The arranger team  
43 integrates the scattered notes into the rhythmic pattern of the reggae music,  
44 making the song overall pleasant to the public ear.

45 In the album "Lonely Man is Shameful (*gudu de ren shi kechi de*)", the  
46 arranger team deeply understands Zhang Chu's characteristics and matches it

1 with a relatively personalized and free arrangement method, while using simple  
 2 and clear instruments, which highlights Zhang Chu's unobtrusive voice and  
 3 poetic lyrics against the background of the chords and instruments. The first  
 4 half of the 1990s was the honeymoon of mass culture productive chain and  
 5 elite culture's coordination, such as Black Panther Band, Wang Feng and No.  
 6 43 Baojia Street Band, and campus folk songs as a remarkable music trend,  
 7 showed the possibility of cultural works of artistic value orientation to achieve  
 8 commercial value.

### 10 *Combining Folk Culture and Popular Culture*

12 Folk culture in the traditional sense refers to the cultural form  
 13 spontaneously formed by the folks at the bottom of a community for the  
 14 purpose of self-entertainment. At the moment when the mass media is covering  
 15 social behavior and interaction, due to the fragmentation of community on  
 16 which folk culture roots in, the folk culture is gradually disappearing.  
 17 However, some scholars believe that popular culture can become a  
 18 contemporary continuation of folk culture in a certain sense, because popular  
 19 culture and folk culture are not two separate cultural forms, but "coexistence  
 20 and continuity coexist. What is broken is the cultural context, the mode of  
 21 production, the specific cultural form, the mode of consumption, and the mode  
 22 of reproduction of meaning; what continues is the eternal pursuit of mankind  
 23 for vitality and freedom. Their commonality lies in the same resources, the  
 24 common spiritual needs of different cultural subjects, and the similar value  
 25 orientation when enjoying different products." (Zhu, 2005) Popular culture in  
 26 the era of cultural industry could be seen as the new folk culture. As Fredric  
 27 Jameson convinces, "the works of mass culture, even if their function lies in  
 28 the legitimation of the existing order - or some worse one - cannot do their job  
 29 without deflecting in the latter's service the deepest and most fundamental  
 30 hopes and fantasies of the collectivity, to which they can therefore, no matter in  
 31 how distorted a fashion, be found to have given voice." (Jameson, 1992[1979])  
 32 Therefore, in many popular cultural texts, the support from folk culture is  
 33 common. Some of these works can enable the public to obtain alternative  
 34 gratifications about vitality, freedom, and rebirth in the imagination in  
 35 nowadays's daily life. In the 1980s and 1990s, the integration and use of folk  
 36 music elements in Chinese rock music, and the desire to return to the  
 37 community expressed in the music works showed that they were in the same  
 38 strain as folk culture to a certain extent.

39 These musicians and their works have a clear folk music tradition. Many  
 40 rock musicians such as He Yong, Liu Xiaosong, Wu Tong, Wang Yong, etc.  
 41 come from the folk music families or are majors of Chinese traditional music  
 42 instruments performance. They also tend to use Chinese traditional instruments  
 43 in their works to create a contemporary echo of traditional mood. There are  
 44 Sanxian (a three-stringed plucked instrument) in He Yong's song of *Bell and*  
 45 *Drum Tower*, bamboo flute in Zhang Chu's *Ants, Ants*, and Guzheng in Cui  
 46 Jian's "Let Me be Wild in the Snow (*rang wo zai xuedili sadianye*)."

1           Nevertheless, the simple collage of musical elements cannot achieve the  
2 deep cultural meaning and textual transformation of these works from a kind  
3 of popular culture to new folk culture. In this conversion, what's more  
4 important is whether the musician expressed his desire to return to the  
5 community and the collective appeal of being part of the community. Another  
6 musical trend born at about the same time as Chinese rock music was the  
7 "Northwest Wind" (*xibeifeng gequ*). "Northwest Wind" also adopts folk  
8 accompaniment, vocalization, and melody. Even when Chinese rock music was  
9 born, it was unified into the "Northwest Wind" trend because they have similar  
10 musical elements. However, the "Northwest Wind" cannot be regarded as a  
11 new folk culture, but a type of mass culture enriched with folk art characteristics  
12 and produced by cultural elites, who were seeking status rising in the process of  
13 social transformation. Therefore, contradictions can be found in ""Northwest  
14 Wind"" songs both in music and lyrics.

15           On one hand, the songs pursue rural atmosphere by traditional instruments  
16 and tonality, which offer the song a desolate, sad, and pathetic tone. On the  
17 other hand, it also runs through a disco rhythm full of joy and movement. In  
18 the lyrics, "Northwest Wind" songs often choose farmers in northern China as  
19 narrators to directly present their daily life, pointing out the hardship and  
20 barrenness, by which the songs seem as the megaphone of the community.  
21 Then, in the latter part of the chorus, the songs usually turn to present the  
22 pervasive confidence and hope of the future, and the narrator's attachment to  
23 the collective image of the country or the authority, which is in harmony with  
24 the mainstream ideology. Because "music makers behind the "Northwest  
25 Wind" are not in a minority, but a group of people who were about to enter into  
26 the circle of elite and mainstream at the time. It sang the thinking of this group  
27 in an era of diversified transformation in economic, political and cultural fields  
28 in the 1980s." (Qian, 2011) In contrast, only when realizing the anxiety of the  
29 collapsing state of community in the rapid social process, the collage  
30 application of the elements of rural music really meant the meaning of folk  
31 culture. In the process of urbanization and industrialization, there must be a  
32 large number of groups that cannot enter the urbanization process. They were  
33 the marginal population in labor division and mass media, and their voices are  
34 covered.

35           Unlike the observation perspective of "Northwest Wind" musicians, who  
36 stand outside the ruins of urbanization, rock musicians do not separate  
37 themselves from the ruins of society. The main creators of Chinese rock can be  
38 divided into three groups, i.e. institutional marginalists, wanderers, and cross-  
39 border artists. All of them were part of the urban ruins in the process of  
40 modernization and urbanization. As Wu Hong regarded, people have two  
41 different ways to remember and describe urban ruin. One is taking the city as  
42 an aesthetic subject, that is saying taking the city as an external object of  
43 thinking and longing; the other is putting yourself in it and constantly  
44 experiencing the disappearance of the city with your own experience. (Wu,  
45 2012) In the 1990s, rock music often showed frustration and indignation for the  
46 metropolis and the cultural industry. They had to grow in there but they did not

1 trust the modern reality. Nowadays, the urban folk differentiated from Chinese  
2 rock music. These music makers walk in the same path with the older  
3 generation, longing for the rural community, and still rely on the traditional  
4 oral distribution method. But in these works, such longing is not presented as a  
5 cynical curse or a back-step avoidance any more, but a possibility of  
6 understanding with peaceful mind, which exists in the urban space transformed  
7 by modern culture.

### 10 Sociological Analysis: Three Marginal Groups and A Stably Emergent Subfield

11  
12 From the 1980s through the 1990s, multiple cultural forms merged into  
13 Chinese rock music. To some extent, this fusion comes from the diversity of  
14 the music making group. The group here including all the core members who  
15 influenced the musical form and musical industrial ecology then, such as the  
16 composers, lyricists, band members, producers, brokers and so on. Borrowing  
17 from Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field, the music makers can be divided  
18 into three groups according to their different positions in the social field for  
19 their different institutional affiliation, family environment, and educational  
20 background. Under the background of the overall transformation of the social  
21 structure, these three groups separated from their original social positions and  
22 re-reorganized into a new subfield of rock music.

23 The first group is the marginalists of the nationalized song and dance  
24 troupes (*gewutuan*). Most of them are members or children of members  
25 *gewutuan*. Because of the work and family environment, this group was the  
26 first one who encountered Western pop and rock music in mainland China. As  
27 a result, they became the earliest makers of Chinese rock music and formed the  
28 most important territory of early Chinese rock. For example, Cui Jian and Liu  
29 Yuan once served as the trumpet player and saxophonist in the Beijing  
30 Symphony Orchestra; Zang Tianshuo served as a keyboard player in the  
31 Beijing Musical Drama Ensemble; Liu Xiaosong and Zhang Yongguang were  
32 percussionists in the Peking Opera Theatre; and Dou Wei also obtained the  
33 Shijingshanqing Young Music Ensemble. He Yong, Gao Qi, Chang Kuan, Wu  
34 Ke, Yu Jin, Wang Feng and other musicians were born in the orchestra family.

35 At the beginning of the reform and opening up, the change of the system  
36 wrapped these musicians who were walking on the edge of the system into the  
37 wave of marketization. They gradually have a clearer understanding of the  
38 cultural market and the public need during *zouxue*. It can be said that within the  
39 first few years of the reform of the cultural system, there was no clear  
40 boundary between *gewutuan* and the marginalized music groups. They  
41 mutually supported and recognized each other. The former approved the latter's  
42 study of western popular music and the breakthroughs in performance forms.  
43 The latter also benefited from the support of the former's stages, equipments,  
44 and learning materials, and even to a certain extent, *gewutuan* played a role of  
45 asylum to the marginalized music groups. Only with the permission of Wang  
46 Kun, the head of the Oriental Musical Drama Troupe, Cui Jian was able to sing

1 "I Have Nothing" at the "A Hundred Stars Concert" in 1986. Li Guyi's  
 2 acquiescence maintained the creation and performance of the Cobra Band.  
 3 Wang Jian publicly endorsed Zhang Chu's music works. It was only in the later  
 4 acceptance and recoding process, the relationship between them and its  
 5 influence was ignored, which led to a long-term one-sided understanding of  
 6 Chinese rock music. When we talk about Chinese rock music as well as the  
 7 cultural and artistic creation at that time, the huge impact of social reforms and  
 8 rethinking of the old political system promoted by official discourse in the  
 9 post-revolutionary period could not be overlooked. Therefore, it was partial to  
 10 discuss only the rebellious, revolutionary, or emotional venting effect of  
 11 Chinese rock music.

12 The second group could be named as "city wanderers". Most of them are  
 13 free musicians or young private entrepreneurs<sup>6</sup> who are immersed in the rock  
 14 music circle, and some of them are non-native musicians who come to Beijing  
 15 with their music dreams. Their family, education, and political background  
 16 could not provide them with sufficient cultural or political capital. Therefore,  
 17 they benefit from the changing social structure, the rise of the economic field,  
 18 and the impact of urbanization. This group acquires positions and exerts  
 19 influence in the subfield through acquired musical skills and market sensitivity  
 20 gained during their urban wandering. For example, Liu Yijun, who failed the  
 21 college entrance examination, practiced guitar for more than ten hours a day,  
 22 and found out how to use electric guitars to simulate the syntactic  
 23 characteristics of traditional Chinese musical instruments such as lutes and  
 24 zithers, and he participate *Tang Dynasty*. His guitar skill is the key cultural  
 25 capital. The market success of the two popular rock bands, Black Panther and  
 26 Compass, is largely due to their managers Guo Chuanlin and Wang Xiaojing,  
 27 whose keen grasp of market trends impact the bands' musical form and  
 28 performance style.

29 The third group could be named as "cross-border participants", which  
 30 refers to the music makers who cross the border from the original "post" and  
 31 entered the rock music circle. Firstly, this group included the college students  
 32 who participated in music activities during school, such as Xu Xiaofeng, Chen  
 33 Ge, Shen Lihui, Song Ke, Gao Xiaosong, Luo Bing, etc. They were interested  
 34 in music making at first, and some of them later turned their attention to  
 35 expanding the rock music market, and built industrial chain. The music labels  
 36 such as Strawberry Music Festival, Maitian Audiovisual, and Ali Music all  
 37 have the participation of these cross-border participants. Secondly, there are  
 38 some music college students who organized rock bands, performed and  
 39 published albums. Most of their majors are classical or traditional music  
 40 performance, so they can be termed as "academism" in the rock music industry,  
 41 such as Wang Feng and his No. 43 Baojia Street, Again, etc.. With professionally  
 42 trained musical knowledge and performance skills, the academism band  
 43 expanded the relatively plain and typed musical expression mode of Chinese  
 44 rock music at the time. Thirdly, some visual artists began their rock music

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<sup>6</sup>Private entrepreneur, colloquially referred to as *getihu*, has relative low social status at that time, who is unemployed and outside the system of state-owned economy.

1 making attempts, including Chen Dili and his Acupoint, Zuo Xiao Zuzhou who  
2 was one of the primary artist residents in Beijing East Village, etc. Their rock  
3 music activities were non-stereotypes, usually synchronized with the practice  
4 of other types of art, including performance art, conceptual art, and so on.

5 The above three groups of Chinese rock music circle were located in  
6 different positions in the social field due to different growth environments,  
7 family backgrounds, and education levels. They undoubtedly hold different  
8 musical ideas and styles, which reflecting the long-term life experience given  
9 by the social stratum where the individuals are located and the habitus they  
10 have accumulated in their living conditions. They chose to blend in a  
11 completely foreign and unfamiliar music category, rock music, and are  
12 committed to veer to a coding principle that is different from the mainstream  
13 cultural field under the control of the political field. Thus, a new social subfield  
14 emerged.

15 Exactly as Yu Changjiang pointed out, a sociologists, inspected the  
16 “Yuanmingyuan artists community”. He pointed out that since the reform and  
17 opening up, especially since the end of the 1980s, due to changes in social  
18 structure, economic system, and ideology, Beijing and other large cities  
19 naturally went through a trend of diversification and pluralism. These areas  
20 (here refers to the artists community emerged around late 1980s and the 1990s,  
21 such as Summer Palace Artists Village and Beijing East Village) appeared as  
22 spaces of urbanism and heterogeneity, and the previously invisible non-  
23 mainstream groups had begun to emerge and become marginal groups in  
24 society. (Yu, 2005) As the above analysis shows, as a newly emerged fringe  
25 field, Beijing rock music actually accommodated many different non-  
26 mainstream groups. Including the marginal groups that were “spilled out” of  
27 the system during the social change, the wanderers who separated themselves  
28 from the in-system organizations and faced the whole society by individual,  
29 and also the college students scattered in a relatively independent and unique  
30 environment of the university campus. Although these groups were different  
31 from each other in basic social conditions, in a newly emerged fringe field, they  
32 found their identity. The previously dispersed individuals are accommodated in a  
33 social field, thereby entering the social structure as a whole. Just as Bourdieu  
34 believes, “Two distinct class fractions converge on this site in pursuit of  
35 employment.” (McRobbie, 2009).

36 Of course, the law of society commonly understood in critical sociology is  
37 that social contradictions trigger political movements. Bourdieu analyzes another  
38 possibility beyond this clue, namely that changes in social field structure such as  
39 labor market will lead to uncertainty of future, which will evoke anxiety. However,  
40 the direct result of this anxiety is not the impulse to reshape the field through  
41 movement, but first to avoid disruption and discourage critical consciousness, that  
42 means the subgroups inventing new titles, positions, jobs, and so on in the new  
43 field structure gap. Therefore, what they hold and transmit is still the mainstream  
44 ideology and value or its variants, thus forming a new social bond and avoiding  
45 division and instability. This is the resilience of the social structure itself to  
46 accommodate change. This notion precisely explains why the cultural and art

1 circles in the 1980s seemed to trigger off a radical subversion, but they eventually  
2 were digested smoothly by the society and even maintained a social balance.

3 In summary, since the reform and opening up, the drastic and holistic  
4 changes of social field system was not initiated from the bottom up by emergent  
5 subfields or subcultural actors, but a top-down movement initiated by the political  
6 field that was absolutely the dominant field in China. It empowered the economic  
7 field and makes it a parallel field of power to itself. For other fields, such as  
8 cultural field, artistic field, and academic field, the rule of the political field was no  
9 longer the only code of conduct. The economic field started to play a role of value  
10 assignment, and in the background of dual logics, the social rules begin to loosen.  
11 Under the drastic social transformation, the subversiveness from the genesis of the  
12 field of rock music has been eliminated by the overall change of the field system.  
13 During the radical change of a society from homogeneous to decentralized, rock  
14 music as an emergent fringe field integrates different non-mainstream groups and  
15 scattered individuals, thus acting as a "safety valve" similar to the middle class of  
16 society.

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