The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

The Department of Applied Social Science

"Voice of Discontent: Youth and Politics of Music

in post-1997 Hong Kong"

CHAN KAR CHUNG

"A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Philosophy"

APRIL 2005

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it reproduces no material previously published or written, nor material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

_____

CHAN KAR CHUNG

Abstract

The people of Hong Kong experienced their deepest sense of insecurity and anxiety after the handover of sovereignty to Beijing. Time and again, the incapacity and lack of credibility of the SAR government has been manifested in various new policies or incidents. Hong Kong people's anger and discontent with the government have reached to the peak. On July 1, 2003, the sixth anniversary of the hand-over of Hong Kong to China, 500,000 demonstrators poured through the streets of Hong Kong to voice their concerns over the proposed legislation of Article 23 and their dissatisfaction to the SAR government. And the studies of politics and social movement are still dominated by accounts of open confrontations in the form of large scale and organized rebellions and protests. If we shift our focus on the terrain of everyday life, we can find that the youth voice out their discontents by different ways, such as various kinds of media.

This research aims to fill the gap and explore the relationship between popular culture and politics of the youth in Hong Kong after 1997 by using one of the local bands KingLyChee as a case study. Politically, it aims at discovering the hidden voices of the youth and argues that the youth are not seen as passive victims of structural factors such as education system, market and family. Rather they are active and strategic actors who are capable of negotiating with and responding to the social change of Hong Kong society via employing popular culture like music by which the youth obtain their pleasure of producing their own meanings of social experience and the pleasure of avoiding the social discipline of the power-bloc.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor and my friend, Dr. Ben, Hok Bun Ku, for his critical remarks on my early formulation of the research problem, valuable advice, and inspiring comments. Without his exceptional patience and tolerance, I can't finish this thesis.

I would also like to thank Dr. Ting Wai Fong for being my co-supervisor and her valuable advice, comments. Special thanks to my friend Josh who spent great effort in editing my English.

Moreover, I have to thank my friends and RM 315 study fellows for their support and brainstorming. In particular to Gloria, Ho Leung, Louie, Ah Chung, Law Pak Ko, Albert, Sai, Carmen, Krebs and Denise.

Lastly, I have to say "thank you" to my girl, Joyce, and my family members who have given great emotional support from the beginning of my postgraduate study until the submission of the thesis.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

INTRODUCTION

For a long period of time, Hong Kong people, especially the Youth[1],

have been chastised for their political indifference and helplessness. It was

often said that most of the people in Hong Kong were very passive as they

grew up in a colony where civic education was absent. It was also said that

in Hong Kong's Chinese society, influenced by the utilitarianistic familism,

people were only concerned with their families and their clans. Chinese

kids were taught to take whatever that was given.   They should stay away

from social involvement, especially anything to do with government and

politics (Lau, 1984). However, is it a "truth" or a "myth"?

If we look at Hong Kong history closely, it would not be difficult for

us to find that in fact Hong Kong people have spoken out, via different

social movements and protests, that they are neither passive nor politically

powerless (see, Chiu & Lui, 2000). After 1997, again, Hong Kong Chinese,

including the youth, have impressed the outside world that they are no

---

[1] Hong Kong Government define those people aged 15-24 as the target population in planning services for the youth. This definition has been adopted by the United Nations as well. In my opinion, youth classification by age is not so significant; youth definition is an identity issue rather than just an indicator of age groups. And I will go into details in chapter 2.

longer passive in politics. Rather, they actively participate in political movement and fight against the governmental actions which are threatening their right and freedom. This attitudinal change of the Hong Kong people is closely related to the context of the post-1997 political economy in the territory.

Hong Kong people experienced their deepest sense of insecurity and anxiety after the handover of sovereignty to Beijing. As Lui Tai-lok (1999) states, the handover on 1 July 1997 must have marked the beginning of "a year of anxiety" for most of the residents in this former British colony. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) was suffering from a legitimacy crisis in the post-1997 days. Things began to change as the local economy gradually felt the heat of the Asian financial crisis, with a drop of 1,438 points in the Hang Seng index on 28 October 1997. The fear was reinforced by the uncontrollable bird flu that followed and a rapid downturn in the Hong Kong economy at the beginning of 1998, with a drastic drop in property prices, a stock market rocked by economic flux and turmoil in the region, as well as rising unemployment rates (rising from 2.2% in 1997 to 8.7% in July, 2003, when there was an unemployed population of 309,000). Moreover, the airport fiasco also reflected the

powerlessness and inefficiency of the SAR government in response to challenges. It totally disappointed the Hong Kong populace.

Time and again, the incapacity and lack of credibility of the SAR government manifested in various new policies or incidents, such as the issue of the right of abode, the 85,000-a-year flats target, the Aw Sian incident, the ineffective education reform, as well as the question on former financial secretary Antony Leung's integrity in the wake of his failure to declare his new car purchase before the budget day, as well as the SARS crisis. Hong Kong people's dissatisfaction with the SAR government reached the highest level never seen before 1997. And the popularity of the Hong Kong government plunged to the lowest points according to several public opinion polls, as public dissatisfaction with the SAR administration reached its height since the Chinese take-over. A mood of "feeling bad" or "something must have gone wrong" was widespread at the time. People's dissatisfaction continued to accumulate and spread like an epidemic in the community.

Hong Kong people's anger and discontent with the government reached its peak when, on July 1, 2003, the sixth anniversary of the hand-over of Hong Kong to China, 500,000 demonstrators poured through

the streets of Hong Kong to voice their concerns over the proposed

legislation of Article 23 and their dissatisfaction to the SAR government.

Another protest, numbering 50,000 people, surrounded the Legislature on

9 July, 2003 to add further pressure on the government. The Chief

Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Tung Chee-hwa,

decided to postpone the vote. The suspension awakened the dormant souls,

the minds of the politically insensitive. And most important of all, it

reminded 6.8 million of Hong Kong people that we had the courage and

power to embrace democracy, and do it passionately.

However, the most important thing was that in the 1 July Protest or

through the article 23 incident, the Youth has turned into a focal point to a

large extent; some secondary school students set up an organization

voluntarily against the legislation of Article 23 and mobilized all of the

secondary school students to come out and voice their opinion on this

controversial issue. On 1 July, there were approximately few thousands of

secondary school students participating in the protest. Many commentators

and scholars believed that the youth was really the "future of Hong Kong",

while some of the activists were also glad to see they were the successors of

the political activities in Hong Kong. To me, it is encouraging but not

surprising. Being a youth myself, I always think the youth are not passive

in political and social affairs and are not devoid of opinions as the adults

would have believed. We have our own way of expressing our views,

views that scholars of political sociology do not pay attention to. The

studies of politics and social movement are still dominated by accounts of

open confrontations in the form of large scale and organized rebellions and

protests.

If we shift our focus on the terrain of everyday life, we can find that

the youth voice out their discontents by different ways, such as the various

kinds of media. Music is an important medium which young people often

utilise. In culture politics,[2] music is an important political arena that has

become crucial to the ways in which young people organize memory,

identity, and their autonomy. Young people also make use of music for the

appropriate display of feelings in particular social setting to express their

discontent with the socio-political conditions. For example, in post-1997

Hong Kong, one of the most successful young music groups, LMF[3], has

---

[2] I will discuss how I understand culture politics in the next chapter.

[3] The original idea of LMF is a "super group" format for the ending show of various "Dark Entry" performances. They contained members from various bands and played cover version of Metallica, Pantera...etc. Now, it is a hip-hop/Hardcore rap super group, formed by Anodize, NT, Screw and DJ Tommy. LMF has been, commercially, the most successful among local alternative bands since 1999.

caught the attention of many in the general public. The appearance of foul

language in the lyrics as claptrap has surely made them stand out, but

what is more crucial to their popularity is the ability to articulate their

songs with the interests of the Hong Kong people, especially the youth.

For the long history of local bands that spans more than a few

decades (Chu 2000), there were not many band that regarded themselves

as socially aware (Blackbird[4] can be classified as this kind of band). The

band, King Ly Chee, is a rarity in regard to their music about community,

and considers its lyrics and music as focusing on personal and social

matters, especially the Hong Kong youth. Their mission is to educate those

around them on the culture and idea of a movement called punk rock,

which includes hardcore as well. Punk rock and hardcore is an attitude and

a lifestyle based on challenging what is the normal way of thought within

society.

---

[4] The band is basically a duo, made up of Lenny, the lead guitarist/singer/songwriter, his wife Cassi who plays bass guitar, and other guest musicians. The band was active in Hong Kong since the early 1980s. Yet as early as the 1970s, the members had been involved in local social movements. The band intended to merge music and art with grassroots living, using music as the tool for social struggle about living, about the society, and about politics.

KingLyChee was formed in May of 1999. They are tired of Hong Kong's band scene and wanted to start a band that would play a very new style of music that mixes punk rock, hardcore, metal and indle-rock. They focus on creating their music style as well as on lyrics, resulting in their band being one that is highly socially aware. They only play original music because they want to teach youth bands in Hong Kong to be proud of writing their own music, even their own thoughts.

Music has an important social function, as suggested by Hallam,

There is also a need for more systematic investigation of the ways that music can impact on groups of people in social settings. To date, research has tended to focus on commercial and work environments. The way that music may affect behavior in public spaces has been neglected Such research, for instance, might explore whether particular types of music might stimulate orderly exists from large public functions, reduce the incidence of disorder in particular settings, increase tolerance when people have to queue for relatively long periods of time or engender feelings of well being and safety in public places. (Hallam, 2001:19)

However, in Hong Kong, social scientists pay inadequate attention on music, evidenced by the scarce research on the impact of music on people and social groups. This research aims to fill the gap and explore the relationship between popular culture and politics of the youth in Hong Kong after 1997 by using one of the local bands KingLyChee as a case study. Politically, it aims at discovering the hidden voices of the youth, and

argues that the youth are not seen as passive victims of structural factors such as education system, market and family. Rather they are active and strategic actors who are capable of negotiating with and responding to the social change of Hong Kong society via employing popular culture like music by which the youth obtain their pleasure of producing their own meanings of social experience and the pleasure of avoiding the social discipline of the power-bloc.

Methodology

Rethinking Methodology in Youth Culture and Popular Music Studies

In his article "Researching Youth Culture and Popular Music: a methodological critique" and his important book *Popular Music and Youth Culture*, Andy Bennett (2000) traces the development of research methodology on youth culture and popular music and identify methodological problems in the field. He illustrates the necessity of empirical research in the field of youth culture and popular music, instead of just making use of theories and concepts drawn from cultural Marxism. He also emphasizes that ethnography approach is crucial in gaining an

understanding of how popular music features in the lives of young people, together with observations made through visiting clubs, venues and other locations in which types of music and their attendant stylistic innovations are appropriated and 'lived out' by young people, providing crucial insights into the cultural relevance of music and style within the contextual frame of those localized experiences that collectively inform everyday life.

Youth culture and popular music have become a focus of sociological interest since the mid-1970s, when most of the studies were primarily theoretical and imposing theoretical frameworks on the cultural significance of music and style from above. The Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) had done a lot about the post-Second World War working class culture, which responded against the backdrop of socio-economic forces, such as mod, rockets and skinheads. It was studied using a structural-Marxist approach incorporating Gramsci's concept of ideological hegemony. Bennett comments that "the fieldwork would serve only to reveal something which is already known, the misconception of working-class youth concerning the socio-economic forces which conspire to produce the everyday experience of class. The 'real' nature of such circumstances, and thus a more accurate

understanding of youth's symbolic forms of resistance, it is maintained, can only be grasped through theoretical abstraction."(Bennett, 2002: 453) In Bennett's sense, similar problems can be identified with Hebdige's treatment of punk rock in his study *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, posits an association between the fragmented, 'cut-up' style of punk image and the socio-economic decline of Britain during the late 1970s. However the empirical reflection offered by Hebdige is being made to fit the bigger picture which has already been fashioned at the level of theoretical abstraction.

To transcend the original CCCS concern with the working-class youth as well as to go beyond the limitation of conventional studies of youth sub-culture, Paul Willis, in his ethnographic study, presents empirical case studies of a working-class motorbikes gang and a group of middle-class hippies in his book *Profane Culture*. The motorbikes, hippies and marijuana, as specific icons, produce specific styles, meanings, contents and forms of consciousness within the group. In the analysis, Willis employs the concept of homology as a theoretical framing device. Bennett praises Willis' work like, "this study comprises two largely incompatible projects: one which seeks to provide the reader with an

ethnography 'thick description' (Geertz 1973) of the everyday lives of working-class bikers and middle-class hippies; another which effectively using a narrative of homology in which issues of musical taste, personal taste, personal image, and a range of consumer choices, which may on the surface appear to hold highly reflexive meanings, are argued by Willis to be structurally determined."(Bennett 2002:454)

From the mid-1980s, many sociologists of youth studies and those in related areas of study rejected purely theoretical models of investigation and turned to ethnographic research in an attempt to situate their accounts of the relationship between youth culture and popular music more firmly in the social settings where the relationship was formed and where its micro-social manifestations. Finnegan's (1989) *The Hidden Musicians* and Cohen's (1991) *Rock Culture in Liverpool* begin to redress the absence of 'ethnographic data and miscrosociological detail' in research on youth and music. She suggests that the useful information concerning Liverpool's popular music scene is gleaned from everyday conversations with local people such as 'taxi-driver, hairdressers, waitresses and waiters.' Each writer reflects in their role as researcher and the possible impact of their presence in the field on the data collected, e.g. a form of gender coded

'outside status' on Cohen.

Since the two early studies, a number of studies have arisen in the field. Redhead's (1993) *Rave Off*, for instance, is an early account of British house music phenomenon of the late 1980s and the early 1990s. Others work on contemporary dance music stretch, such as Richard's and Kruger's (1998) study on the annual 'Love Parade' in Berlin and Champion's (1997) account of the struggle of Wisconsin, which deal with the hostile attitudes of both local communities and the police adopting an essentially partisan stance. A further study of contemporary dance music, Thornton's (1995) *Club Cultures*, is situated more firmly in the ethnographic 'tradition'.

In short, the significance of Andy Bennett's argument is his identification of the problem of the absence of critical debate concerning methodology in the field of popular music. However, back to Hong Kong's youth and popular music studies, we can find that they focus on the textual analysis and are scarce in study by means of ethnography. To fill the gap and contribute to Hong Kong's youth and popular music/culture studies, I will try to make use of the method of ethnography.

Ethnography as Everyday Life

Ethnography is no longer the patent method of anthropology. Ethnographic researchers also no longer carry out field studies in primitive society or third world societies. Today more and more qualitative sociologists advocate using the method of ethnography to understand our own daily experience (Glasser and Hertz, 1999). To them, everyday life is a field of ethnographic study. In the collection *Qualitative Sociology as Everyday Life,* edited by Glasser and Hertz, authors use accounts from their lives to reflexively examine how their knowledge of sociology comes to inform their everyday experiences. In their research, their systematized, repetitive observations and in-depth, probing interviews form the basis for understanding why people behave the way they do and how their perspectives shape their action (Glasser and Hertz, 1999). These insightful writings inspire me to re-position my research and help me make sense of my study.

As Glasser and Hertz state that, "The everyday things happen to scholars also happen to ordinary people" (Glasser and Hertz, 1999: x). I, myself as a youth, believe that my experiences in post 1997 Hong Kong are similar to other Hong Kong young people to a certain extent. I, as a music

lover, also share the similar feeling with others that popular music is important in the everyday life of the youth. Therefore, in this research, I will treat the everyday life as my ethnographic field. When I try to understand the youth culture and alternative music/noise, I am always trying to understand myself. It seems that everyone has a theory about who I am, what I am doing, and what I am declaring, and during the period of my undergraduate studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, not many people shared my challenging or "alternative" thoughts towards the entire world on a number of fronts. And when I began my study at the Polytechnic University, post-modern theories, social science methodology and cultural studies reminded me of the memories of my growth and through this thesis, I have a chance to understand myself why I am so attached to alternative music, or re-dig those repressions, sufferings in my heart and memory of being a young person in Hong Kong.

Back to everyday life ethnography, the main methods I employed in my study are participant observation, semi-structured 'one-to-one' interviews, and unstructured everyday conversations. The participant-observation approach is crucial in gaining an understanding of how popular music features in the lives of young people in the context of

the everyday life. Interviews and casual discussions with young people, together with observations made through visiting clubs, venues, concerts and other locations in which types of music and their attendant stylistic innovations and appropriated and 'lived out' by Hong Kong young guys, provide me with crucial insights into the cultural relevance of music and style within the contextual frame of those localized experiences that collectively inform everyday life.

Studying everyday discourses of the subordinate groups helps us to understand the dynamics of cultural conflict and accommodation in the process of interaction of different knowledge and worldviews. The dominant groups formulate the legitimate or normal form of knowledge and diffuse this knowledge to the subordinate groups. What KingLyChee have done is not merely a self-expression but also their intention to get others to come around to their particular frames of meaning and viewpoints, and to produce alternative noise to challenge the mainstream ideology and critique the political condition of Hong Kong. What their music also shows is their discontent with the post-1997 socio-political situation in Hong Kong and try to challenge the power structure and social systems that are assumed to be "natural". And their noise can be classified

as the discontent of some citizens especially the subordinate groups.

In order to understand the background and beliefs of those musicians and audience especially the youth, as an alternative music lover and KingLyChee's fan, I have also collected KingLyChee's press reports and scripts of interviews for the analysis of the research. The studies of Hong Kong popular music and musicians' life story are scant, as most of the analyses are made through author's self-interpretation of the works of the musicians under research. What is missing from the text is the appropriate and adequate understanding of the social background of the musicians. Aside from the in-depth interview, an analysis of their lyrics will provide me with a tool to discern their ideology.

Interviewing the audience is also very important as I believe the audience are not only passive receivers of the music or message that the musicians created, but have their own interpretations. Through reviewing interviews and their articles can help articulate viewpoints from them besides the producers of the music and their messages behind. I also conducted twelve semi-structured interviews before the show time of KingLyChee first concert on 25 December, 2003 with KingLyChee fans, which is a practical way to understand audience thoughts, interpretation

about KingLyChee songs, lyrics and its ideology.

Self and the Field

In Thornton's *Club Cultures*, she claims herself to be "an outsider to the cultures" and possess no personal 'insider' knowledge of dance music, concentrating instead upon an attempted engagement 'with the attitudes and ideals of the youthful insiders whose social lives revolve around clubs and raves' (1995:2)

As Bennett has noted, "For many years, the notion of field-based research being carried out by a person with native or near native knowledge of the subject matter of their research was deemed unethical given need for objectivity and detachment, qualities considered central to the social-scientific rigor of bona fide ethnographic sociological work…In more recent years this once established maxim in ethnographic research has been challenged as an increasing number of researchers have drawn on their 'insider' knowledge of particular regions or urban spaces and familiarity with the patterns of everyday life occurring there" (2002:460).

As Hammersley and Atkinson suggest: "The problem of obtaining access…is often most acute in the initial negotiations to enter a

setting…though the problem persists, to one degree or another, throughout the data collection process" (1995:54). A number of contemporary ethnographic studies reveal that such knowledge of and familiarity with local surroundings has substantially assisted researchers both in their quest to gain access to particular social groups and settings and in knowing which roles to play once access has been gained/made possible.

Frith (1987) also remarks how an intimate knowledge of fan discourse, rather than serving as a distraction from the purpose of youth and music research, may in fact be utilized as a means of understanding the collective aesthetic values attached by audiences to particular styles of music. Knowledge acquired through the learning of a particular set of stylistic and performative conventions, can be recast as a method of researching, analyzing and relating musical taste to the broader issues surrounding the musicalization of everyday life for young people.

Being a researcher, the insider knowledge of the researcher plays a major role in facilitating access to the field and the forming of relations. In Bennett's view, the use of 'insider knowledge' by contemporary youth and music researchers is simply following a current methodological trend in ethnographic work. As a music lover, I have been listening to various

music styles, from Hong Kong popular music, alternative music to other foreign music, having even formed a band with my friends and trying to express my view through producing songs. Through my encounters with different types of music, bands and lyrics, I have come to realize that I can't retreat from music in my daily life. Thanks to the radio and the record player, music seems to be the soundtrack of my everyday life, and my ears are so likely to be entertained these days by various types of music. Music does help me through whatever critical moment there is in my life; it relates closely to my being. This background of mine either helps me to understand more deeply some worldviews of the youth in their everyday life, or make me my subjects more willing to have a chat with me without feeling embarrassed.

Chapter Structure

Before getting into the theme of youth resistance, I must first introduce the theoretical development of some of the focal issues in this thesis. In Chapter 1, in the course of reviewing theories, studies, researches on youth, music and cultural politics, I will first trace the theoretical evolution of the focal concerns in this thesis through presenting the

strengths and weaknesses of these works as well as stating my appropriation to my thesis.

In Chapter 2, I will focus on the popular discourse on youth image in Hong Kong in general, as the "at-risk" youth image is deeply rooted in the public since the 1970s. In the mid-1980s, another dimension, ie. youth as the "hope of the future", was introduced into the public discourse. Regardless of all the dimensions, the main focus remains still the "control" over young people. Through newspapers, studies and researches conducted by the social welfare organizations, I intend to show the reinforcements of the dual extreme images of "at-risk" and "hope of the future" among young people which indeed neglect the need of a large number of "ordinary" youth, while affirm the reality of the marginalized youth, whose voice is also hidden in Hong Kong society.

In chapter 3, I will trace the development of Hong Kong's mainstream music scene, and examine how the Canto-pop music dominates the music industry in Hong Kong. On the other hand, I will also describe the difficulties faced by alternative band music, and how people acquire living space in the face of a music scene dominated by Canto-pop music. The

paradox of mainstream music scene and alternative music scene provides, rather perfectly, an isolated position for some of musicians to make "noise" varying from the productions of Canto-pop music industry, and express their perspectives through their music and lyrics.

From Chapter 4 to Chapter 6, which can be regarded as the core parts of my thesis, I will show how young people articulate music as an arena of youth resistance through the case study of KingLyChee. In chapter 4, it is the prologue of KingLyChee, and readers can know more about the band, the music style they played, as well as the purposes of forming the band. I will also demonstrate how hardcore-punk has influenced the band ideology, even claiming hardcore-punk as a way of life/living style.

Chapter 5 introduces several themes of the band, and explains the way it uses music and its living style to resist against the mainstream music scene and the mainstream discourse on the youth through an analysis on KingLyChee's lyrics as well as on their performative acts.

Lastly, in chapter 6, I will capture another dimension of KingLyChee, ie. their popular appeal, through interviews with KingLyChee's supporters/fans. I will illustrate the process of young people searching for

their identities through KingLyChee's music, lyrics and living styles in the

context of post-1997 Hong Kong.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

The history of youth culture as an object of sociological study is both long and complex. There are various theoretical perspectives in attempting to interpret the significance of youth culture. Early studies of youth focus on youth crime and their delinquency. Analyses on style-based youth culture during the 1970s and the early 1980s, especially in Britain, provide another explanation of youth which consider young people responding to socio-economic issues by playing out on the surface of the body to produce a form of spectacular 'subcultural' resistance. Until the mid-1980s, the sociology of youth culture has assumed a new direction of understanding the identity politics of contemporary youth culture receptive to the plurality of issues and circumstances. Popular music is no doubt a primary leisure resource of young people. As Frith (1987: 139) observes: "We absorb songs into our own lives and rhythms into our own bodies; they have a looseness of reference that make them immediately accessible". To young people, music as culture, as a way of life which bound young people together with an invisible chain of sounds and a network of verbal images

in defense against the adult world (Gleason 1972: 143). In this chapter, by tracing the development of youth culture studies, popular music studies and cultural politics, I try to demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of these works so as to state my appropriation to my thesis.

1.1. Studies on Youth Culture

When reviewing the sociological and cultural studies literature on youth, three distinct periods of scholarship emerge: the sociological work from the University of Chicago in the early part in the twentieth century; the work of the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Culture in Birmingham (CCCS), England; and the recent work being done on another account for the "post-subculturalist" or "club culture" strands of theory in England that have emerged in an attempt to explain the distinctly 'late-century' rave subculture.

1.1.1 Chicago School

The foundation of the modern sociology of youth culture was laid during the 1920s and 30s by a group of US sociologists based at the

University of Chicago. The 'Chicago School', as this group came to be known, wanted to construct a sociological model of juvenile delinquency as an alternative to the individualist criminological accounts that held sway at this time. The Chicago School argued that juvenile delinquency, as with other forms of criminal behavior, was determined by cultural norms, but not a symptom of psychological deficiency. One of the most detailed studies to emerge from the Chicago School is Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1943). The study focuses on an Italian-American Slum, which Whyte refers to as 'Cornerville'. Whyte argued that the behavior of young gangs in Cornerville was simply a normal part of growing up in the district. By joining gangs and engaging in acts of violence and the theft, the youth of Cornerville prepared themselves for adult life through learning the social structure and became racketeers.

Subsequent Chicago studies continued to focus upon deviance as a normal response, looking at it from the point of view of the 'deviant' actors themselves. At the same time, however, emphasis began to shift away from the 'local' as a frame of reference for the acquired deviant sensibilities of youth and towards a new approach which suggested that youth itself was capable of generating a series of norms and values, a 'culture' or

'subculture' in its own rights.

A number of different models were offered by Chicago theorists to explain how deviant subcultures function to normalize particular forms of deviant behavior. Becker argued that deviant behavior was the product of social labelling; that 'social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance and by applying those rules to particular persons and labelling them as outsiders' (1963:9). On the other hand, Merton's (1957) model of means and goals, suggested that deviance became a solution for those groups who lacked the socially prescribed 'means' to acquire material and cultural rewards but who, nevertheless, desired such rewards. Delinquent subcultures were deviant in their means but conformist in terms of their desired goal, which had also been utilized in more contemporary sociological work on youth. Two other Chicago theorists, Matza and Sykes (1961), contested the notion that subcultures would in every case resort to some form of delinquency activity. They argued instead that it was also possible to speak in terms of legitimate subcultures whose codes of subterranean values, while deviant in as much as they offered non-conformist routes to pleasure and excitement, did not challenge the socio-economic order of the dominant society as such.

1.1.2 Subculture as resistance

The Birmingham school was strongly influenced by American sociology. Cohen and others had argued that the work of the Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies represents the British encounter, or symbolic interactionalism as outlined by the "Chicago School". As Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson point out in their introduction of *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain*,

Our starting point, as for so many others, was Howard Becker's Outsiders — the text which, at least for us, best signalled the "break" in mainstream sociology and the subsequent adoption, by many sociologists working in the fields of deviance, sub-cultural theory, or criminology — originally in America but rapidly in this country too of what came to be known as interactionist, and latter a transactional or labelling perspective (Hall & Jefferson 1975:5).

These British sociologists discovered that interactionism, and particularly the work of Howard Becker and Erving Goffman, provided profound insight into the ways in which becoming a "deviant" was largely the result of being labelled by others. However, these British theorists found that they could not account for the obvious class-based origins of British youth subcultures and stay completely within an interactionalist framework.

Using the original Chicago premise that subculture provided the key to an understanding of deviance as normal behaviour in the face of particular social circumstances, the CCCS reworked this idea as a way of accounting for the style-centred youth cultures in post-war Britain. According to the CCCS, the deviant behaviour of such youth cultures or "subcultures" had to be understood as the collective reaction of youth themselves, or rather working-class youth, the point of origin for style-based youth cultures, to structural changes taking place in post-war British society. The significance of the CCCS approach laid in its application of a Marxist perspective to the study of youth subcultures. Crime could be interpreted as a direct result of class conflict. As Cohen (1972) suggested, subcultures were an attempt on the part of working-class youth to bridge the gap between life on the new estates and former patterns of traditional working-class community life. Subcultures were seen to form part of an ongoing working-class struggle against the socio-economic circumstances of their existence. In his study *Learning to Labor*, Willis (1977) followed the progress of a group of male working class teenagers, the 'Lads', during their final 2 years of education in a British comprehensive School. During this time, the 'Lads' participated in what

Willis termeds a counter-school culture by employing a strategy of subterranean which rejected the educational demands of school system in favour of 'having a laugh'

The Birmingham school held that becoming a delinquent was largely a result of the labelling process, and the working-class youth was much more likely to be labelled as such that were members of other groups. Borrowing from the Frankfurt School—particularly Adorno – and with a nod towards Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, researchers were able to outline youth's basic orientation towards popular culture as being a combination of mass-market manipulation and genuine expression through reappropriation (McRobbie, 1994). The politics of youth's resistance to hegemonic culture was explained through the use of semiology, the interpretation of the cultural use of signs and symbols and the subcultural, class-oriented meanings that came to be attached to these symbols. The use of a semiological method was generally made with particular reference to the work of Roland Barthes. While offering a semiotic analysis to Madonna, Fiske wrote:

Combining the crucifix with the signs of pornography is a carnivalesqe profanity, but the new combination does not 'mean' anything specific, all it signifies is her power over

discourse, her ability to use already written signifiers of patriarchal Christianity, and to tear them away from their signifiers is a moment of empowerment (Fiske, 1989:106).

Hall and Jefferson's *Resistance Through Rituals* (1976), the centrepiece of the CCCS's work on youth culture, subcultural resistance then was conceptualized in a number of different ways in *Resistance Through Rituals.* In Clarke's study of skinhead culture, he argued that the skinhead style represented 'an attempt to re-create through the "mob" the traditional working-class community as a substitution for the real decline of the latter'. Willis (1978) presented empirical case studies of a working-class motorbikes gang and a group of middle-class hippies in his book *Profane Culture*. The motorbikes, hippies, marijuana as specific icon produced specific styles, meanings, contents and forms of consciousness within the group.

Hebdige (1979), however, rejected the concept of homology, arguing that the central assumption of a transparent relation between sign and referent signification and reality was over simplistic. He abandoned homology in favour of polysemy and posited an association between the fragmented, 'cut-up' style of punk image and the socio-economic decline of Britain during the late 1970s.

The concentration on the "resistance" concept warranted in light of

the historical infatuation that youth studies theorists had had with the term.

The tendency to study punks and skinheads----youth subcultures inspired

much of the seminal research and theory in Britain in the late 1970s and

1980s.

1.1.3 Building on the Classics: Postsubculturalism

The work of the CCCS offered the first sustained attempt by British

sociologists to account for the style-based youth cultures of the post-war

period. However, the Centre was not without its critics. One of the most

salient critiques came from Angela McRobbie, a writer who was herself

formerly associated with the CCCS. McRobbie's criticism of the CCCS

related to the Centre's lack of concern with the relationship of girls to

youth subculture. 'Girls and Subcultures", the only piece in *Resistance

Through Rituals*, considered the place of girls in relation to subculture and

argued that such absence could be attributed to the stricter parental control

and regulation of girls' leisure time. In later work dealing with fashion and

dance, McRobbie (1994) provided further illustrations of how female

strategies of style-centred resistance had been largely overlooked. It

marked the milestone of the post-subculturalism.

The post-subculturalist strands tended to be less class-focused and more sensitive to the diverse meanings of the cultural activities of youth. The traditional conflict between working class and middle class values theorized in previous work was less evident in this culture, yet feelings of marginalization and alienation still existed among its members. These feelings had been attributed to a contemporary culture that was believed by some to promote a more fragmented, individualistic culture of middle class and working class youth----a culture characterized by weakened ties with social class-related community support systems (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997).

Central to the more recent development in the study of youth culture were the works of British scholar Angela McRobbie, and of Steve Redhead and his affiliates from the Manchester Institute of Popular Culture (MIPC) -- two distinct schools of thought on the rave subcultural phenomenon. McRobbie's work was characterized by optimistic descriptions of the ways that 1990s youth sought and used 'pleasure' as a symbolic escaped from the social tensions of their times and pleasure-seeking and pleasurable behaviours as contemporary versions of subcultural 'resistance' of young

people.

Influenced by McRobbie, Pini (1997) and Malbon (1998 & 1999) emphasized the temporary, fleeting, and apolitical character of the rave scene, arguing that rave's "resistance is found through losing yourself (e.g., in the music, in the dance, in the social and physical surroundings). Thorton (1995) more conventionally described how some youth empowered themselves by becoming successfully integrated into the exclusive, underground club/rave culture.

Steve Redhead and MIPC theorized an increasingly 'postmodern, post-punk' 1990s youth culture characterized by a 'loss of meaning', an inability to transmit 'shocking' message through style and nostalgia. It was these trends that inspired Redhead (1990) to proclaim "the end of youth culture" (i.e., the end of the 'subcultural' model), and to argue for a movement from classic conceptions of "subculture" to a radically updated notion of "club culture" or "post-subculture". Muggleton (1997,2000) extended this position in his suggestion that "if modernist subcultures were defined in terms of a series of theoretical oppositions to non-subcultural style, then postmodernity dissolves such distinctions"(1997:200), and the collapse of "grand narratives" should not

logically lead to celebratory interpretations of resistance at the local level.

These ambivalent and pessimistic interpretations of 'post-subcultural' activity were intriguing updates on and variations of classic approaches. While McRobbie's, Pini's and Malbon's position was akin to some versions of early subcultural theory in their focus on subtle and symbolic strategies of resistance, their interpretation of 'pleasure as resistance' was extreme when comparing to early work that tended to, for example, describe the ways that subculture members adopt shocking styles in order to express displeasure with the status quo. Alternatively, the MIPC theorists noted here took the subculture concept and popular notions of 'resistance' to their ultimate conclusion. In the broader context of youth cultural theory, they effectively extended traditional explanations of youth cultural behaviour that focused largely on the ways that youth reactively and proactively dealt with feelings of alienation. These 'post-subculture' scholars concentrated on the potential for youth to be, on one hand, apathetic and passive in their cultural activities and on the other hand, optimistic and creative in utilizing alternative methods of empowerment/resistance.

Following the shift of paradigms, there are different interpretations of

youth culture at different stages in Hong Kong's youth studies. In the following section, I will briefly review the development of Hong Kong youth studies.

1.1.4 Hong Kong Youth Studies

Owing to the official discourse of young people that sees the youth, who are nothing but risk-taking troublemakers threatening social stability after the 1966 riots, as the target of social control group, most of the scholars have noted that young people might equally be conceptualized as an index of social ills and dared to exploit the explanation behind those so-called youth problems in Hong Kong. The landmark was engendered by Ng (1975, 1980), who illustrated that the social causes of youth violent crimes and the way in whci the family relationship initiated youth delinquency. Mok (1985) basically followed the argument of Ng, and extended the category from youth crimes to problem behaviours of adolescents. He warned that most of the studies at that time concerned youth crimes but disquieted some kinds of juvenile delinquency that were not classified as crime. In his hypothesis, there was some interrelationship of these kinds of juvenile delinquency and youth crimes, and stated that

family relationship factor seems to be the vital issue affecting the personality and behaviour of the youth.

These two academic works formulated the juvenile delinquency as the legitimate status in the studies on the youth and social services. The trend of youth studies in Hong Kong became youth problem oriented, which intended to understand the relationships of various factors (family, peer, school, media, etc.) and youth delinquent behaviours. In a concrete way, the focus or discussion on youth problem was mainly on two aspects, ie. juvenile delinquency and mass media effects on youth.

Since the 1970s, mass media excitement and consumerism enlarged rapidly, it was partly because of the direct result of an economic boom at that time which in turn led to a growth in consumerism. The consumer industries quickly realized that young people presented a highly possible and money-spinning market and, consequently, a whole range of commodities designed specifically for them began to appear. These commodities included fashion clothes, records, magazines, young soap opera, and episodes. A straightforward linkage originated between consumerism and the youth abnormal behaviours, such as foul language, smoking, gambling, fighting, school dropout, etc. The hypothesis was that

those who were engaged in mass media or the consumerist economy did so

with more so-called atypical attitude and behaviour, which was mostly

influenced by TV programs or other media. Some of the study even noted

that the source of the youth problem was mostly owing to the influences of

TV programs or movies. This stance persisted into the 1990s. (Ng &

Cheung 2001)

As Mok (1990) has noted, since TV programs and popular music

surround adolescents' daily lives, the youth would find their emotional

excitements in the products of mass media, although it was impossible for

those kinds of commodities to fulfil the emotional needs of the youth.

Wong (1991) also stated Gibberish talk and ineptitude of youth subculture

or popular songs were a kind of extensions of the emotional consumerisms.

Mass media played a vital role in the self-finding process of the youth,

which only emphasized the sensual, individual pleasure and neglected the

critical thoughts and objective analysis training. Most of the leisure of the

youth like idol worship, comic readings, and ineptitude subculture also

reflected the increased intention of young people to search for autonomy

and to retreat from their social responsibilities. In Wong's view, Hong

Kong youth culture was shaped by this kind of consumerism and instant

pleasure chasing rather than concern on the society in which they lived, which led to their incapability of problem-solving. Most of the studies in this strand seemed to analyze youth problem, but the youth's voice was hidden. The scholars just tried to justify their arguments that the youth were a passive, dangerous group.

Apart from them, there were some scholars or associations accomplish many researches on the youth problem and youth problem solving methods. Lo (1992 & 1997) focused on the field of youth gangs and juvenile delinquency, the youth offenders. Lee (1993, 1996 & 1997) concentrated on the encounters between youth and police in the occurrence of Juvenile Delinquency, youth-at-risk. Two Youth associations: Breakthrough and the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups also accomplished some research or conducted polls regularly on youth problem (school dropouts, drug abuse, drinking, gambling etc), youth phenomenon (obsession with fitness, job seeking in the mainland as a trend, influence of IT, youth social capital etc.), attitudes towards social issues (Article 23, gender role, opinion on legalized soccer gambling). All these studies have widened our understandings on how the mainstream society perceived the youth problem and phenomenon.

There were different strands on youth studies in challenging the above assumption that problematized youth from the outset (Cheung & Cheung, 1983; Chan 1987; Shao 1997, 2001, 2002). As Cheung and Cheung (1981) stated, when the adults accused young people of being troublemakers, they failed to take the youth's position into account and to understand those young people in a youth-centred manner. After the 1981 Christmas Eve riot, various studies tried to use in-depth interview and field research methods to understand the youth intensely. Ethnographic method was the key to providing an alternative to the dominant view of the slum as a social problem, a view upheld and propagated by social policy studies and social work reports at this time. Chan's (1981) research came across as the most important study at that time, which provided an alternative analysis different from the social problem approach. He attempted not to emphasize the bad effects of the mass media on the youth, but highlighted how young people actively selected some elements of the media trends and turned them into their own subculture as a style, while doing something in a mistaken situation in order to revolt against social inequality and inappropriate social authority. This sort of analysis emphasized on young people's initiative and self-awareness. Siu (1988)

noted that the culture of van as a kind of resistance of the youth against the space limitation through the speed of the vans, and that there was a close bonding among the youth drivers. Macus (1992) also rejected the assumption of youth's social ills, arguing that those so-called bad guys of the school just used their own means such as truancy, delinquent behaviours to revolt against the restraints of the school system, and to express their discontent with the educational system.

While most of the scholars concentrated on the evaluation of the youth problem and phenomenon, some scholars such as Lui (1996) critically assessed the mainstream discourse of the youth as troublemakers and homogenized groups in the wake of the mass media effects, and emphasized that the so-called youth problem was merely a product of the social construction, a moral panic. In another research, So and Chan (1992) also considered young people undoubtedly as a heterogeneous group according to various factors. Some young people organized their identity and autonomy through consuming commodities or mass media, while others may use other means such as voluntary works and church-going. Although in their study, there was not any specific analysis on diverse youth behaviour, still their works rang a bell on the heterogeneity of young

people that youth studies scholars neglected.

1.2 Popular Music Studies

Popular music study is a diverse field. While many studies cover a broad range of interests, Swiss, Sloop and Herman (1998) tend to emphasize on three different categories of analysis.

First, there are works concerned primarily with the institutional analysis of the production of popular music and its political economy. Work on this area includes politico-economic and organizational analyses of the music industry, as well as considerations of the technologies of musical production, government policies towards musical production, and the practices of musicianship itself. This approach is evinced in books such as Negus (1992), Jones (1992), Bennett et al. (1993), and Cohen (1991).

Secondly, there are works devoted to the textual analysis of the representations and symbolic meanings of popular musical forms, such works tending to offer musicological analysis of the structure of popular music, interpretation of lyrical content, or the examination of the visual iconography of music in the form of music video. Key works in the area include Shepherd (1991), Walser (1993), Whiteley (1992), and Brackett

(1995).

Thirdly, there are works that concentrate on the ethnographic analysis of rituals of everyday life through which popular music is interpreted and used. Here, the focus is upon fans in general, and musical scenes or subcultures in particular, as they actively create cultural meaning and identity. Works in these classics include such as Hebdige (1979) and Willis (1978), and more recent works such as Lewis (1992), Thornton (1995), and Bennett (2000, 2001).

1.2.1 Popular Music with Adorno, Benjamin and Gramsci

Taken as a whole, these three approaches make up the dominant framework for investigating popular music from a cultural studies perspective. According to the logic, popular musical texts can be analyzed as institutionally-produced commercial commodities that function as cultural artifacts inscribed with meanings which are then consumed and interpreted by fans and audiences. This logic has rooted in the critical analysis of popular culture, especially in the work of Theodor Adorno and the Frankfurt School, whose leading theorists also included Horkhemer, Marcuse and Habermas. For Adorno, the holistic critical analysis of

popular music as it moved through the circuits of production, textualization, and audience reception was central to understanding the politics of mass culture in modern capitalism. Popular music was a rationalized, standardized and pseudo-individualized artefact that produced rationalized and standardized responses of emotional sentimentality and "false consciousness" in the consuming audience.

In Contemporary popular music studies, Adorno's monolithic view of the cultural industry, his high-culture dismissal of the aesthetics of popular music, and his pessimistic account of the pleasures and the uses of popular music have all been soundly criticized. Frith argued that Adorno's theory of consumption reduced 'a complex social process to simple psychological effect' (1983). In attempting to rethink Adorno's interpretation of the effects of mass culture upon the individual, some theorists have turned to the work of Benjamin. In contrast to Adorno, Benjamin argued that technological reproduction gave back to humanity that capacity for experience which technological production threatened to take away. Although none of Benjamin's work focused upon music as such, his ideas could be easily applied to the study of music, especially mechanically reproduced music. A particularly effective demonstration of this was

offered by Middleton, who compared Benjamin's thesis on the film audience to the listener's reception of a piece of recorded music.

Benjamin saw the film audience, detached from the moment of production, as being in the position of a critic, identifying with the analytical work of the camera rather than with the experience of the characters. The technical reproduction turned everyone into an expert, hence a potential participant. This approach has enormously suggestive potential for analysis of listening, for it fully accepts the significance of new potential for analysis of listening, for it fully accepts the significance of new perceptual attitudes and situations while by-passing or at least putting into question the usual, too easy Adornian assumptions of passivity (Arnold 1990: 65-66)

The ideas of Benjamin, as interpreted by Middleton, awarded the music listener a degree of participation in the construction of musical meanings.

Apart from Benjamin inspiration, theoretical counterpoint to Adorno has been the Gramscian emphasis on the resistance to hegemony among people and their capacity to produce their own meanings of popular texts and artefacts through ritual, recontextualization and alternate readings.

Certainly, it has been the emphasis on the potential among consumers of popular culture to be creatively active readers and users, and thus avoid being sewn up into dominant ideology, such as Fiske (1989). I will discuss this point in detail in the following section.

Nevertheless, Adorno, Benjamin and Gramsci share a common desire to connect production-text audience at the core of a political economy of culture in capitalist society. The problem remains, to determine the degree of freedom that individuals have in constructing meanings within the nexus of capitalist production process. Will it be another story, if we place music in the everyday life of those so-called passive people?

1.2.2 Popular Music in Everyday Life

Berland (1993) argued that the commodification of the song was only the beginning of the story, for we should understand the process through which the song was insinuated into the fabric of people's lives. Grossberg (1994, 1996) also considered the most important effects of popular music in everyday life involve economic, bodily, libidinal, emotional and political effects, some of which were material and some of which were ineffable, effects that could not be reduced to the meaning of a cultural text and how

that meaning was inscribed in production or interpreted in consumption.

As Firth also remarked "the use of music as a commercial tool to which as a commercial tool to which we mostly object these days: its use to manipulate us in the market. There can be few people who are unaware of how music is used by advertisers and retailers. But it is equally important to note that people nowadays routinely use music and organize their activities for themselves."(Clayton, Herbert & Middleton, 2003:98) In the sense that music as means of defining one's individual identity or in DeNora's (2003) version, music has become crucial in organizing memory, identity, and their autonomy.

1.2.3 Popular music Studies in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, sociologists pay little attention on the studies of popular music. Still, it can be classified into three types. Some scholars have adopted Theodor Adorno's concept of "cultural industry" to analyze the different phenomena of Hong Kong's pop stars such as Andy Lau and Sam Hui. As Ng (1980) stated, Sam Hui songs seemed to reflect the lower working class voice at that time, and the false image was actually constructed by the radio and television. From his points of view, Sam Hui's

lyrics were neither critical to the social circumstances nor directed at the

inequality of Hong Kong society in those times. Rather, his songs just

reflected the phenomenon or to some extent even rationalized the

unfairness. Adorno (1990) laid down the relationship between the culture

industry and society as follows:

This (operation of the culture industry) is made possible by contemporary technical
capabilities as well as by economic and administrative concentration. The culture industry
integrates its consumers from above. Thus, although the culture industry undeniably
speculates on the conscious and unconscious state of the millions towards which it is
directed, the masses are not primary but secondary, they are objects of calculation, an
appendage of the machinery. The customer is not king, as the culture industry would have
us believe, not its subject but its object.

The production of popular music mainly serves the interests of

capitalists. Popular music has become a rationalized, standardized and

pseudo-individualized artefact that produces rationalized and

standardized responses of emotional sentimentality and "false

consciousness" in the consuming audience (Swiss, Sloop and Herman,

1998). Sue (1993) noted that the myth of success of Andy Lau, who was

born to a lower class family but became a well-known superstar, was just

another illustration of make-believe "false consciousness" that the chances

of success in Hong Kong were aplenty., while other local scholars

concentrated on analyzing the young people's pop involvement and the formation of youth identity. Meanwhile, Ma (1987) employed psychoanalysis method, suggesting that the idol worship on the part of the young was just an act of obtaining sensual fulfillment and lacking in any critical judgment.

There are some other scholars who are committed to the textual analysis of the representation and symbolic meanings of popular music. Policy Viewer (1994), for instance, made use of lyric analysis to state that over 70% of popular songs were love songs in the period between 1984-1994. These scholars wanted to stress that the trend of love songs was strewn with romanticism and individualism, devoid of any sense of social responsibilities among the youth. Fung (1996) also illustrated the evolution of the attitude towards love affairs through the lyrics of the popular songs.

Some academics do not agree with the audience's passive role in consuming the "commodities" of the cultural industry, and their argument is that the readers as active readers and users are able to resist the hegemony and are capable of producing their own meanings of popular texts and artefacts through rituals, recontextualization, and alternate readings. As Mok (1985) stated, the effects of the rationalized, standardized

and pseudo-individualized artefact undoubtedly escort popular music, and became nothing but commodity. Yet most of the studies seemed to simplify the effects of popular music on the audience and the interaction process of the audience and the music. The major literature includes Zhu's (2000) research on the lyrics of Hong Kong's popular music.

1.2.4 Noise / Music

It must however be pointed out that many scholars tend to focus on the mainstream music, with rather few studies looking at the phenomenal growth of the alternative music in Hong Kong. Almost like a born right, the mainstream music is treated as "music" while its alternative counterpart is deemed as "noise", unworthy of analysis of any kind, let alone a scholarly one. In my observation, "noise" is not necessarily meaningless. In fact, some local bands in the 80's such as Tat Ming Pair[5] successfully expressed their political opinions and aroused the public awareness through their music production. Same as Tat Ming Pair, LMF's

---

[5] Tat Ming Pair was formed in the time of Hong Kong's 2nd band boom in the 80's. The name is taken from the name of Tats and Anthony and gives the public an impression of some unique music style. Their music, at that time, is considered as innovative and very "European" influenced. Actually, both Tats and Anthony are influenced by Euro music from Japan, PSB, Bowie.... etc. In their early gigs, they even played the Japan's classic "Cantonese Boys" to show their salute to the 80's new romantic music.

music seeks to articulate the discontent of the band members with the socio-political circumstances in post-1997 Hong Kong, posing challenge to the power structure and the social system that are assumed to be "natural". Although Zhu (1998, 2000) has accomplished some research on the indie bands, it however appears that he has made his studies too textual by only drawing on the lyrics of those bands in his analysis of the hidden ideology. In my opinion, lyrics are sometimes just the work of the lyric writers, not the bands'.

 Until recent years, Lee (1999) and Ma (2002) devote their efforts on alternative bands in Hong Kong by using the ethnographic method. Lee rejected the dismal account of marginal as powerless or dispossessed and made capable of asserting self identities in the ambivalent marginal sites. Her study focused on the barely political band Blackbird on its resistance against the mainstream discourse and stated the capability of resistance and self-assertion, arguing that marginality could indeed be creative openings and empowering to subjectivities. Ma's (2002) had done an ethnographic study on the most successful alternative band LMF, which tried to capture the moments of post-97 sub-cultural formation in Hong Kong and demonstrated how sub-cultural formed a resistance against

popular discourses by examining the emotional energies produced in everyday interactions within the sub-cultural groups, as well as between these groups and the mainstream society. Except for these two studies, there were few researchers who devote their efforts on alternative bands from the perspective of cultural politics in Hong Kong.

Ma's and Lee's studies mostly concentrate on the alternative music and identity issue and explain how the two bands, LMF and Blackbird, develop their identity through their music. In my research, I attempt to focus on youth voices in music, how youth use music as a medium to express themselves and respond to the social change of Hong Kong society.

1.3 Popular Music and Cultural Resistance of the Youth

1.3.1 Cultural Domination and Resistance

It is widely accepted by scholars of political sociology that political dominance in modern society not only rests on coercion; the operation of power and their success also depend on consent from below. The concept of "hegemony" originating with Gramsci is used to explain the way the ruling elite/class seeks to perpetuate their power, wealth, and status by popularizing their own philosophy, culture, morality, attitudes, values and

beliefs, which render them unchallengeable. Consequently, the dominant group's interests are accepted as universal. Hegemony in this sense could be defined as an "organizing principle" or worldview that is diffused by agencies of ideological control and socialization into every sphere of daily life. As a result, the prevailing consciousness is internalized by the broad masses, and becomes part of "common sense" or part of the natural order of things (Bogg, 1976; Holub, 1992). Chantal Mouffe further interpreted Gramsci's thought that, not only was the achievement of hegemony a simple process by which the dominant group imposes its own ideology on others, the hegemonic ideology could also at the same time make use of ideological elements from diverse sources, even from the ideology of those who were dominated (Mouffe, 1979:193).

Similar to Gramsci in a broad sense, Foucault also argued that power was not imposed from above, but the operations of power and their success depended on consent from below. For both of them, power was produced and reproduced in the interstices of everyday life and permeates the individual's understanding of the world. As he clearly stated in a conversation between Foucault and Gilles Deleuze:

Everywhere that power exists, it is being exercised. No one, strictly speaking, has n official right to power; and yet it is always exerted in a particular direction, with some people on one side and some on the other. It is often difficult to say who holds power in a precise sense, but it is easy to see who lacks power (Foucault, 1977:213)

In Foucauldian version, it is also not enough to use the concept "state" to analyze the power and domination in our society, because to him power is not conceived to be imposed from the top of society hierarchy, nor derived from a fundamental binary opposition between a ruling and ruled class or state and society, but it rather operates from bellows. He said:

To pose the problem in terms of the State means to continue posing it in terms of sovereign and sovereignty, that is to say in terms of law. If one describes all these phenomena of power as dependent on the State apparatus, this means grouping them as essentially repressive: the Army as power of death, police and justice as punitive instances, etc. I don't want to say that the State isn't important; what I want to say is that relations of power, and hence the analysis that must be made of them necessarily extend beyond the limits of the State… because the State, for all the omnipotence of its apparatuses, is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations, and further because of the State can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations. The State is superstructure in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth. (Foucault, 1980:122)

In his later work, Foucault was even more concerned with how knowledge was put to work through discursive practices in specific institutional settings to regulate the conduct of others. He focused on the relationship between knowledge and power, and how power operated

within what he called an institutional apparatus and its technologies. Foucault's conception of the apparatus of punishment, for examples, included a variety of diverse elements—"discourses, institutions, architectural arrangements, regulations, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophic propositions, morality, philanthropy, etc... The apparatus is thus always inscribed in a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain co-ordinates of knowledge.... This is what the apparatus consists on: strategies of relations of forces supporting and supported by types of knowledge" (Foucault, 1980:194-196)

This approach took as one of its key subjects of investigation the relations between knowledge, power and the body in modern society. It saw knowledge as always inextricable enmeshed in relations of power because it was always being applied to the regulation of social conduct in practice. This foregrounding of the relation between discourses, knowledge and power marked a significant development in the constructionist approach.

If we follow this version of power and domination, conventional understanding of social movement alone will become insufficient for us to make sense of the resistance seen on the part of the subordinate groups in

everyday life, which is dominated by open confrontations in the form of large-scale rebellions and revolutions. Actors (individual or social group) are regarded as having the capacity to process social experience and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme condition of coercion.

On the other hand, Michel de Certeau suggested a broader perspective on everyday life politics. He rejected the model of social production and action which largely focuses on the macro aspects of social process, i.e., the terrain of everyday life should become the focal point. For de Certeau, the "marginal majority" were never merely passive subjects of the economic, social or institutional structure in the process of social change. Rather, they were the active agent whose strategies and interaction shape the outcome of development. They also possessed the capacity to process social experience and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme conditions of coercion. He defined strategies as a way of seeking to discipline and manage people and institutions, whereas tactics were a way of constituting a sort of "anti-discipline" and "art of making" that proceeded by manipulating imposed knowledges and symbols at favourable moments. (de Certeau, 1984:xix).

Similar to de Certeau's concept of "Tactics", in James Scott's (1985) *Weapons of Weak*, Scott argued that much of the politics of peasant/subordinate groups falls into the category of "everyday forms of resistance" which included such acts of foot-dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, feigned ignorance, desertion, pilfering, smuggling, poaching, arson, slander, sabotage, surreptitious assault and murder, anonymous threats, and so forth. As they required little or no coordination or planning; they made use of implicit understandings and informal networks; they often represented a form of individual self-help; they typically avoided any direct, symbolic confrontation with authority (Scott, 1985:xvi). Scott and other scholars noticed, most of the subordinate classes were not intended to destroy, or even radically alter, the political system or the social structures in which peasants or other subordinate group operated (Scott, 1985; Adas, 1992).

Capable of formulating in discourse the rationale for their action, subordinate groups hence carried out their resistance through discursive penetration. Their discourse was often inaudible as it was conducted offstage most of the time. But this was not always almost so. Subordinate people as strategic actors were able to create public discourse according to

the environment and situation. They are also able to make radical claims in public by adopting the central terms of what might have been seen as hegemonic discourse. When E. P. Thompson studied the English working class in the eighteenth century, he made the following remark,

Whatever this hegemony may have been, it did not envelop the lives of the poor and it did not prevent them from defending their own modes of work and leisure, and forming their own rituals, their own satisfaction and view of life.

So for Thompson, hegemony did not constitute a rigid, automatic and all-determining structure of domination (Thompson, 1978: 163). In similar vein, Raymond Williams has warned against interpreting hegemony as a 'totalizing abstraction', to be virtually equated with the absolute ideological and political domination of society. "A lived hegemony is always a process", not a rigid, all-encompassing, unchallenged structure, but "has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified" (Williams, 1977: 112-13). There were always non-hegemonic or counter-hegemonic values at work to resist, restrict, and qualify the operations of the hegemonic order (Williams, 1977; Arnold, 1984).

Everyday language and rhetoric are recognized as a crucial aspect in studying the counter-hegemonic values, as it embodies a specific

conception of the world and constitutes the means by which sentiments can be communicated and shared among the marginal majority. Music as a form of everyday language has also been an important area of sociological or anthropological inquiry because it is recognized as the important vehicle or medium, which operates as symbol, carries meanings and represents the meanings the people wish to represent (Hall, 1997: 5).

Music is also a signifying practice in our daily life, consciously and unconsciously. Music production is another way of power negotiating through everyday language, in which different parties read/ re-read, decode/ re-decode, and interpret/ re-interpret the "policy", "regulation", "system" and "responsibility" (Swiss, Sloop and Herman, 1998). Making sense of the alternative music will invariably remain the most difficult task as there are many voices, some of which are consistent, some contradictory, and some incomprehensible, hence the emphasis in my research on the contextualization of the emergence of Kinglychee's music from within the political economy of the post-1997 Hong Kong society, and particular attention will be paid to how music can be deployed as a way of youth resistance.

CHAPTER 2

Youth in Hong Kong's Dominant Discourse

In our familiar public spaces like shopping arcades, cinemas, fast food restaurants, or parks, teenagers are omnipresent, almost always in groups with trendy hair, clothes, and attitudes that mark them out as belonging to another "tribe". Young people are frequently represented as "out of control" and as a threat, not only to the hierarchical foundations of society, but most importantly to themselves as well. As Henry Giroux writes, "the discourse on youth shifts from a social failing in the society to questions of individual character, social policy moves from the language of social investment—creating safety nets for children—to the language of containment and blame"(1997:17).

Until 1960s, the Hong Kong adolescent was less of a concern for the government and society. However, the scenario took a turn when the youth began to account for 40% of the population in Hong Kong. The government was aware of the existence of the youth as a social category especially after the riots in 1966 and 1967, while different social groups also started to pin their meanings on what constituted the concept of "youth". The 1966 and 1967 riots became the watershed of the youth issue, hitherto

centred on the problem of social inequality and lack of communication between the government and citizens. An evaluation report[6] also stated that the reactionary potential of the youth as a power keg.

In the 1966 riots, there were 1,465 people arrested, 668 people of whom were under 25[7]. For the first time, the youth became a focal point of society. In the official discourse, the youth were defined as a risk group threatening social stability, so it was necessary for the government and its agents to redirect the youth's anger and dissatisfaction with the society. Thus, a series of leisure activities such as concerts were launched by the authorities, including the building of many leisure facilities for the youth in order for them to put their seemingly enormous energy to use. On the other hand, the youth became the target of social control groups, increasingly being seen as risk-taking troublemakers motivated by nothing more than their own rebellious self interests.

In view of the staggering growth rate of youth crime in the 1970s, the Hong Kong government projected the image of young people as a 'threat' to law and order in the early 1980s. On the eves of Christmas Day and the

---

[6]香港政府：<一九六六年九龍騷動調查委員會報告書>。香港：香港政府印務局，1967。

[7]香港政府：<一九六六年九龍騷動調查委員會報告書>。香港：香港政府印務局，1967。

New Year in 1981, riots broke out in Central. These riots prompted public

concerns over youth delinquent behaviours in Hong Kong, as well as other

youth problems such as misbehaviour in school and snooker outlets, TV

games arcade phenomenon, juvenile gangs and drug abuse. The

"youth-at-risk" discourse remained dominant in the early 1980s, on the

assumption that young people were seen as a threat to the assumed values

of the 'majority' either on account of their style of dress, violent behaviour,

drug-taking culture, or because of their attitudes towards employment,

schooling or political process. Until the mid-1980s, popular conceptions of

youth started to portray the dualism of young people as both a symbol of

society's victims, at 'risk' and the symbol of society's future, which was

confirmed by 1985 International Youth Year and the Report of Youth Policy

in 1988.

'Youth' as an age category, for institutional and policy purposes, is

generally defined as an age range between 13 and 25. Put differently,

everyone 'grows up', but 'youth' is a specific process in which young

people engage with institutions such as school, the family, the police,

welfare and many others. The outcomes are shaped by the relations of

power inherent in the social divisions of society. Wyn & White (1997)

provided extensive analyses on definition of 'youth' instead of age, arguing that the social construction of 'youth' is to a large extent socially constructed, institutionalized and controlled. To them "Youth is a relational concept because it only exists and has meaning largely in relation to the concept of adulthood. The concept of youth, idealized and institutionalized (for example in education systems and welfare organizations), supposes the eventual arrival of adulthood. If youth is a state of 'becoming', adulthood is the 'arrival'. At the same time, youth is also 'not adult', a deficit of the adult state. This dimension of the concept of youth is evident in the positioning of young people as requiring guidance and expert attention (from professionals) to ensure that the process of becoming adult is conducted correctly" (Wyn&White 1997:11).

Thus, the model that "Youth is a state of 'becoming' and adulthood the 'arrival' "coincidentally fits into the popular concept of youth in Hong Kong society that informs the way in which the people think and set out their expectations of youth. In this chapter, through analyses of newspapers and youth reports done by youth welfare organizations, we can see how power, in terms of government, welfare organizations and mass media, operates in shaping and categorizing young people into dual

extreme category of youth the problematic vs youth the elite.

2.1. Why Youth Always At-Risk?

After the 1988 Report of Youth Policy, the dualism of the youth as the future and "at risk group" has become deeply rooted in Hong Kong society. The idea that youth constitutes a significant and distinct category is inevitably reinforced by popular media and welfare organizations. As far as the media and welfare organizations are concerned, the central theme is still that youth is a social problem.

One dimension of popular conceptions of youth in the mass media involves positioning young people as a threat to the accepted social values. With the media presentation of youth image and other youth reports by welfare organizations, the dominant discourse of youth image as at-risk is the most visible image that has been reinforced in Hong Kong society. When one reads news, magazines or watches documentary programs produced by local TV stations, it's not difficult for one to find that the focus of their presentation is on youth being plagued by delinquent behaviours such as drug abuse, alcoholism, shop lifting, fighting, premarital sexual intercourse etc.

Moreover, the captions of news about young people are awash with negative perceptions: "Youth Poll reflects youth's despondence with their future; youth discontent arouses scholars' fear for potential riots" (Apple Daily, 1999-01-02), "40% Youth is unemployed in Tai Po, Scholars concerned over the likelihood of demanding effects" (Apple Daily, 1999-02-01), "Poll indicates that 36% youth belongs to high-risk group, professionals says: the prevention of offence should start since primary school"(Ming Pao, 2000-12-03), "4,700 young people could be addicted to morbid gambling, the average age of youth gambling falling below 12 for first time"(Ming Pao, 2004-5-24), "Employed youths lack sense of responsibility, 85% employers believe improvement needed"(Apple Daily, 1999-05-31). All of the news captions and reports are rather negative perceptions on young people, reflecting the fact that this terrifying, at-risk image of the youth has taken roots among the editors and reporters of the mass media.

In some issues, inconsistency characterizes the reporting on young people and adulthood. For examples, "Nearly 40% of the young people involve in agiotage" (Sing Tao Daily, 1997-10-19), "Concern, not interest, drives young people seeking for jobs" (Ming Pao, 1998-11-26). Reports on

young people of this nature fully reflect the inconsistency that Hong Kong

is a highly capitalized city, with many Hong Kong citizens engaging in

diversified investments on stoke and real estate, or fulfilling monetary

needs as their first priority, but when young people who involve in

agiotage with their special game cards, clothes and shoes, etc. or tracing

monetary needs rather than interest during job-seeking process are being

condemned. Another classic example of stereotyping of the issue goes as

follows: "delinquent youths waste their night time; social welfare

organizations request for more resources on night services for young

people" (Sing Tao Daily, 1997-9-8). It indicates that night-time is dangerous

for young people, as more delinquent or even illegal behaviours take place

at night. For this reason, it is incumbent on social welfare organizations to

request for more resources on night services for young people. However,

what is lost in the report is the fact that even adults gather together at night,

and the media clearly eschew discussing why adults are permitted to hang

out at night while young people are not.

In the images presented in the mass media, young people are always

regarded as dangerous, at-risk, materialistic, rebellious, exuberate, violent,

irresponsible, lazy, softhead, inconsiderate, etc. It's not hard to indicate the

intention of controlling youngsters so as to maintain the social order. As Grossberg questions, "If youth is part of the last category in the list of subordinated populations—servants (i.e., racial and subordinated populations), women, and the young—it is surprisingly treated as an unproblematic category" (1994:25). In short, the "at-risk" discourse has legitimized the normality of marginalizing young people and control over them.

Apart from the mass media, social welfare organizations, as a legitimized power, also played a vital role in constructing the at-risk image of the youth. Ng's study is a landmark of youth studies. Ng (1975, 1980) in his studies illustrated the social causes of youth violent crimes, as well as how the family relationship initiated the youth delinquency. Mok (1985) basically followed the argument of Ng, and extended the category from youth crimes to problem behaviours of adolescents. He warned that most of the studies at that time concerned youth crimes but disquieted some kinds of juvenile delinquency that not classified as crime. In his hypothesis, there was some interrelationship of these kinds of juvenile delinquency and youth crimes and stated that family relationship factor seems to be the vital issue affecting the personality and behaviour of the youth.

These two academic works formulated the juvenile delinquency as a legitimate status in the studies on the youth and social services. Basically, most of the youth studies in Hong Kong mainly focused on the explanation behind those youth phenomena -- the problem, e.g. how various factors such as family, peer, schools, and media have an effect on the youth. In the 1990s, the reports on the youth emerged in large scale. Since 1993, the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups has done a large amount of research on youth issues, such as "The Push and Pull Factors of Joining Juvenile Gang" (1993), "Teenage Pregnancy: Service and Policy Options" (1995), "A Study on the Alcohol Drinking Habits among Youth in Hong Kong" (2000), " and "Seeking Employment in the Pearl River Delta: A Study of the Attitudes of Hong Kong Youth"(2003). A youth research team was established in 1993, which developed three different series of youth studies for the Federation. A Youth Research Centre, the first of its kind in Hong Kong, was put into operation in May 1996. Research on youth issues as a trend became part of the essential works of those welfare organizations. According to the Hong Kong Youth Data Bank, launched by Breakthrough, from 1998 to 2003, there are 224 reports and surveys on youth.

Most of the reports were remarkable in that they sought to ascertain

how young people behave in certain situations, and where they stand on a variety of topical issues of socio-political nature, benchmark the face and attitude towards youth. As a matter of fact, most of the reports focus on constructing the "at-risk" image of the youth in Hong Kong. There are nearly 60 reports on youth delinquent behaviours, ranging from drug abuse, gangsters, shoplifting, night-drifting, smoking, alcoholic to gambling. Ting & Ho (1998) intended to examine why so many youth research works were presented using a problem-oriented approach. In their views, most of the researchers have received deep influence from the theories of the Human Development of school of psycho-analysis, inspired by Freud, Erickson and Blos, etc. which consider adolescence as the 'stress and storm' period in human development. This problem-oriented approach is hypothetic of medical model and the institutions need to take actions to diagnose and prescribe treatments on this kind of illness. Be so as it may, the "troubling teenagers" image is insidiously constructed thanks to these youth researches. When examining the results reflected in these researches, it is not hard to find that they impose negative images on young people. For example, in some of the researches (e.g. "Teens of the night: The Young Night Drifter in Hong Kong" (2000), A Study of Effects of

Gambling among Youth in Hong Kong"(2000),etc.) on the so-called

delinquent behaviours of young people, the youth are accused of

night-drifting, engaging in gambling, etc. However, the irony is that all

these acts are permitted in the adult world. It is doubtful about the guilt is

accommodative to young people because of their "age" rather than those

behaviors, which shows a double standard in shifting the goalpost when it

comes to these behaviors.

Moreover, the aims of some youth studies are really open to

discussion. In a study on Youth Gangs in New Town development (2000)

conducted by The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, the author, for

the purpose of definition, stated three characters of young gangs: those

aged under 20 years old; those who always gather with the same groups of

people; and those who have triad membership or have a close relationship

with triad members. It is doubtful as to whether these characters do fairly

and genuinely reflect the realities of those young people living in the new

towns. If I put together a group of young people under the age of 20 to

form a study group, within which there is one teenager who has a friend

with triad membership, this group of young people would undoubtedly be

classified as a young gang according to the definition. However, what they

do is nothing but having some group discussion. On the other hand, the two new towns chosen for this study, i.e. Tseung Kwan O and Tin Shui Wai, are very far from other urban areas. Being youngsters, sometimes they can't afford to pay transport fees to the urban area, precisely the reason why they chose to stay in where they live, so it's easy to be their visibility in their own community. Lastly, in the report, the researchers portrayed the housing estates in the new towns as a breeding ground for young gangs, a suggestion which assumes that lower class youths are probably prone to joining young gangs or becoming triad members. Certainly, the class experience and the objective position of the parents in production shape the economic, cultural and social resources available to children and young people. But it seems unfair to assume the larger possibility of lower-class young people engaging in delinquent and illegal behaviors.

The above aside, some other so-called researches on youth attitudes, habits on some of the issue, those welfare organizations always try to emphasize of possibility of risk-making of those youth in order to acquire more resources be allocated for youth. For example, in a report done by the Hong Kong Christian Service (2000) about the job preference of those

non-engaged youth, the organization also intended to link the relationship of those non-engaged youths with drug abuse because of the boredom in their out-of-school life and peer influence, which emphasizes the possibility of delinquent behaviours of those non-engaged youth. In yet another research by the Holy Carpenter Church Community Centre (2003) about the routine of visiting internet cafés among young people, the organization intended to devalue internet cafés and treat them as risky places, proposing even that the government should bar those under the age of 18 from internet cafes, while making it compulsory for cybercafe operators to install filterable software on PCs so as to make the youth inaccessible to whatever baleful website there is.

All young people are potential offenders in a climate of suspicion, fear and trepidation. In a similar vein, analysis which highlights the relative powerlessness of almost all young people, and which speaks of 'this generation' as being 'victims', serve to call forth images and responses that welfarise the problem and pathologies the young (Wyn & White, 1997:89). While some institutions (schools, social welfare organizations and the juvenile justice system etc) are increasingly charged with a responsibility over young people, the monitoring system of these institutions has

inevitably led to the idea that some young people can be identified as 'at-risk' so as to receive more resources for youth services. The rhetoric of youths being victimised has inevitably led to a 'welfarist' response on the part of the state, and with it come more selective allocations of resources as definitions of 'needs' and 'deserving' are used to justify that the money is indeed being 'well spent'. The question is: do they have the ultimate needs of young people and the most appropriate ways to help them uppermost in their minds? In tons of youth researches from different welfare organizations, it is, more often than not, suggested that more resources be allocated for youth services as a way to cope with youth problems. For example, in a research on the drifting youth conducted by HKFYG in 1999, four suggestions were made in response to the problem. Out of them, only one was about caring the diverse needs of the young people, while the rest of the suggestions were about more resources and facilities required to support youth services. In those reports, there was also very little soliciting of the opinions of youths themselves, and most of the suggestions made on the issues were based on the views of those welfare organizations. It seems so ironic that the voice of the youth is nowhere to be heard in most of the researches conducted ostensibly with a view to understanding the opinions

and attitudes of the young people.

Bessant (1993) once argues that "on the assumption that young people were naturally rather animalistic and uncontrollable, but that if tamed by social conventions they could be respectable. The assumption of this dual representation (of which the more negative image was dominant), provided an ongoing legitimation for state intervention, control and protection (Wyn & White 1997:19). Those researches on youths can be used by the social welfare organizations, on one hand, to legitimatize their intervention, control and protection when it comes to the so-called potential trouble-makers and victims. They reinforce the essential characteristics of young people because of their age, focus on the assumed links between physical growth and social identity, as adolescence is assumed to involve a number of developmental tasks which must be completed appropriately, or the young person is expected to achieve his or her adulthood. On the other hand, the problem-oriented approach on youth researches also ensures that welfare organizations obtain more resources on youth service in the face of the slashed government budgets, which cut back the fiscal supports to welfare services after the 1997 financial crisis. Various researches accommodative on their targeted client

groups of the organizations sometimes act as an important indication to obtain adequate or more resources, fiscal supports from the governments. As such, the 'at-risk' youth image has become deeply rooted in the minds of ordinary people.

Apart from the "at-risk" image, young people have been accused of being political indifference and helplessness. It has often been said that most young people in Hong Kong are very passive and self-centred. They care nothing about social issues but their own petty things. According to the "Report on Young People's involvement in Political Activities" (2003), only 21.6% of young people aged 18 to 29 voted in elections, while only 37.2% of young people are concerned about political news. And the report stated that political awareness among young people in Hong Kong is weak regardless of the dimensions of voting activities and the degree of concerns on political issues.

After the 1 July Parade in 2003, young people who participated in the parade or enthusiastic about political incidents and current affairs became sanctified in news reports, such as "the Secondary 6 students forming union spontaneously against Article 23" (MingPao, 2003-6-29), "1 July Parade inspired young people to be responsible citizens and political

descendant" (Sing Tao Daily, 2003-7-16). News articles of these kinds were

produced with a view to representing a different image of the youth as

being responsible, politically aware, tough and flexible about the situations

of the society, as opposed to the "at-risk" image of the youth prior to this.

However, this different image of the youth is yet to make inroads into the

dominant discourse on Hong Kong youths.

2.2. *Young People as Future Hope*

Apart from the "at-risk" image of young people, the symbol of

society's future, is also sanctioned by the 1985 International Youth Year

and the Report of Youth Policy in 1988. Undoubtedly, the most visible

image presented in the news is the "at-risk" image, but during the summer

time when HKCEE and HKAL result announcement days are near, it is

easy to find news reporting on how those outstanding students preparing

for their examinations, as well as on their hopes of becoming professionals

to serve the people of Hong Kong, "Those outstanding students in HKCEE

prefer to be politicians" (SingPao, 2003-8-12); "Four 5A girls dare to be

newscasters"(Sing Tao Daily, 2004-7-10); while other reports, "Through

Youth Pre-Employment Training program, an HKCEE failed student

becomes beautician"(MingPao,2004-7-31); "Through Project Yijin, 6 points student gains entry to Lingnan University" (Hong Kong Economic Times, 2004-8-9). These stories are about those who are failed students seeking their own ways to study or learn other skills in the wake of their failure in the public examinations.

When the government's policy on youths is put under close scrutiny, it is found that the policy is, to a large extent, to treat young people as assets to Hong Kong society, encouraging on one hand those with academic achievements to continue their studies until they are qualified to serve the society in different fields, while calling for those deemed as failures in academic pursuit to prepare themselves for different working skills to serve the society on the other, often by participating in other campaigns such as the Youth Pre-Employment Training Program, Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme to enhance the employability of young people. With work experience and job skills, they are expected to brighten their employment chances. Apart from the training programs, the Youth Self-Employment Support Scheme has also been launched to train and assist youngsters to be self-employed by conducting market research on marketing strategy, sales technique, customer service, financial

management and budgeting which will be useful regardless of whether or not the applicant chooses to run a business or take up employment in the end.

Young people are also subjected to various forms of education and training on an increasing scale, for their lives which eager in an accepted 'pathway' to adulthood. As Wyn and White state, "state intervention in the lives of young people is extensive (through a wide range of welfare, education and criminal justice institutions); intensive (through increasingly intrusive measures designed to control youth activity); and contingent (through use of a range of positive and negative incentives to guide youth behaviour). Mechanisms of both 'consent' and 'coercion' are utilized to maintain social order "(Wyn & White 1997:134). At the end, no matter the news report presentations or government policies also attempt to impose adult character to the young people, so that young people can transit to adulthood successfully. In contrast, through education and job attachments, young people are occupied by their studies or jobs which prevent those failures from becoming "risk" to the society.

2.3. Youth Voices and Youth Subjectivities

Be it the "at-risk" or the "future hopes" discourse, either of them indeed constitutes the youth problem in different manners. The terminology and name the mainstream, including the helping profession, constitutions have directly affects the self-identity of the young people. The naming system like "normal youth" vs "marginal youth", actually embedding the mainstream value, have imposed controls over young people, through direct behaviour controls or oblique controls on their paths of young people future by regulating them to study or work. The ultimate aim is to monitor and ensure that young people are able to transit from adolescence to adulthood successfully. Lauded as a symbol of hope for the future while scorned as a threat to the existing social order, youths have become objects of ambivalence caught between contradictory discourses and spaces of transition. Youths nonetheless become a central focus of adult fascination, desire and authority. They are exposed to different "authoritative" understandings of their own developments and their own needs. However, the most important questions are: where are the voices of the youth? What are the voices that we heard from those so-called youth studies, youth forums, youth magazines and youth

councils? Who speaks through these voices? Are these the voices of the professionals or the voices of the young people? Do the young people have room to determine which way the youth services should be carried out?

Moreover, the other problem of mainstream discourse is that it attempts to universalize youth images, distorting the social differences and the diverse experience of young people along the way. However, as a youth, my personal experience informs me that the youth are not a totality. Put simply, they sometimes present a picture of young people which is factually incorrect. In fact, the images of youths in Hong Kong society are diverse: Celebratory, terrifying, and sympathetic. Like adult culture, youth culture is sometimes mistakenly regarded as being monolithic and one-dimensional. The multiplicities of voices have constituted the subjectivities of different youth.

I started to think what a youth will experience when he/she faces the different authoritative voices of different adults. Is he/she confronted with conflicts when choosing between the normal youth and the so-called marginal youth? When the main discourse classifies young people into the two categories, the "at-risk" and the "future elite", the extreme discourse of this nature in fact neglects other so-called ordinary young people.

Therefore, there is a call for analysis of 'youths' from their community

positions as members of particular class, gender, ethnic and 'race'. Mallen

and Pearce have stated that the active identity seeking process of young

people are "[I]n a manner similar to the diversity of textual and visual

images of youth, youthful identity resists a coherent and stable meaning.

The elusiveness of identity is matched by the shifts in self-image.

Consequently, how young people are seen and how they see themselves

are not straightforward forms if mediation and knowing; thus, the

mirroring of youth in a multiplicity of texts can never be seen as mimetic of

an anterior world. Like shards of glass from a broken mirror, the image of

youth in contemporary western societies is always fragmented. Thus youth

cannot be seen as a fixed, preexisting entity or a unified image. Rather, it is

a complex, mercurial signifier offering mixed messages and resisting a

single interpretation or positioning" (Mallen and Pearce 2003: x).

When the main discourse imposes the "adulthood" concept on young

people, youths seemingly become silent in the public sphere, being

reduced to merely following the path to adulthood. However, youths are

not powerless and passibe, for they do speak, although their voices

generally emerge at the margins of society — in underground magazines,

alternative music spheres, computer hacker clubs or other subcultural sites.

Despite that adults continuously deny youths their political agency while

exploiting their forms of cultural expression, the space of youth and the

forms of youth identification (fashion, music, etc.) have become

battlegrounds in the cultural process of identification. As Moysey (1993:11)

puts it, "subculture reflects a combination of alienation from society and a

rebellion against society. The social views of these groups are mixed and

eclectic. The same subculture can include ideas that range from

revolutionary, to reactionary, to nihilist. At the same time some

subcultures are identified with progressive or reactionary views. For

examples, skinheads are identified with racist views, punks with anarchist

views, hippies with anti-war views, and so on." As society attempts to

monitor youth needs, aspirations and behaviours by various social

institutions, such practices can never fully control young people, leaving a

privileged place for the youths to rearticulate their own territory with their

own differences. This unique position is formed at the intersection of

youth's alienation from the adult world, and the sense of difference has

indeed been constructed by the world.

In the following chapters, through a case study of a local alternative

band, KingLyChee, I will illustrate how music as a privileged site of youth resistance to the mainstream discourse of the dual extreme image impacts on young people, and how the youth make use of their music and ideology to inspire young people to choose their own life, not merely following the pre-set values and the path to "adulthood" according to the mainstream discourse in Hong Kong society.

CHAPTER 3

Hong Kong Music Ecosphere

Music is a political arena for disadvantaged groups to transform their own status quo. Different forms of music emphasize different patterns of participation in production, circulation and reception of the music message. One can treat music as a political issue in that one seeks to make sense of whose message is conveyed by whom and to whom. However, in the past 20 years, different from the music scenes in other places in the world with a more balanced music scene, the music business in Hong Kong was dominated by Canto-pop music and the Idol market. Almost 90% of the songs broadcasted on radio are Canto-pop songs performed by idol artists, while all other music styles are classified as alternative music. This sort of music, as an important element of youth culture in Hong Kong, actually serves the interests of the commodity market and creates the mass of passive audiences. To understand how Canto-pop music has come to dominate the music scene in Hong Kong, we need to trace the development of Hong Kong popular music development. In this chapter, I will also analyze Hong Kong's band music and see how youth bands acquire breathing space in Hong Kong music business and examine the

complex relationship of Canto-pop music and band music.

3.1. Development of Hong Kong Popular Music

Canto-Pop music is undoubtedly the most popular music type in Hong Kong in recent years, but it is in fact a music type with only some 30 years of history. Before it came to dominate the Hong Kong music scene, there had been other types of music that could be regarded as alternative music now. In this chapter, I will trace the development of the Hong Kong popular music from the era before 1949, the year the Communist rule began in Mainland China, right to the recent domination of Canto-Pop music.

3.1.1. Chinese Cantonese Opera Era—before 1949

Before 1949, the traditional Chinese Cantonese Opera was the most popular music type in Hong Kong. There were various Chinese Cantonese Opera performances at night on daily basis in different venues around Hong Kong and Kowloon. During the Lunar Year, the Chinese Cantonese Opera Groups would tour different places in the New Territories as well. The fans of Chinese Cantonese Opera were diehard followers of the actors

and actresses of Chinese Cantonese Opera, who were well-paid and enjoyed good reputation. Although the first broadcast Radio station GOW (which changed its call-sign from GOW to ZBW in 1929) was only established by the Hong Kong government in 1928 (RTHK 1988:13), as an English channel, it served the English-speaking audience almost exclusively. As such, the music programs were basically dominated by western music. Until 1934, a Chinese channel under the call-sign ZEK was launched, the programs of which were mainly infotainment-driven, Chinese Cantonese Opera being an item most popularly introduced by the Disc Jockeys (Zhu 1999: 386). The popularity of Chinese Cantonese Opera sustained until 1949.

3.1.2. Mando Pop Songs from Shanghai

After the Chinese civil war, the Communist party became the ruling party of China in 1949. Many mainland Chinese migrated to Hong Kong, included some of the capitalists, artists, expatriates from Shanghai, who brought with them capital and resources, and contributed enormously to the economic and cultural development of Hong Kong. The dominating status of Chinese Cantonese Opera in Hong Kong music scene, too, was

shaken to its core by Mando-Pop (Mandarin pop songs). Shanghai film makers set up companies to produce Mandarin movies, and Mandarin pop song composers also shifted their bases from Shanghai to Hong Kong so as to assist the film makers in producing Mando-Pop musical dramas. This aside, they also produced Mando-Pop song records, which began to draw the attention of the audience in Hong Kong. At the same time, ZBW and ZEK were merged and officially named Radio Hong Kong (RHK) in 1948. Meanwhile, another radio station Rediffusion(麗的呼聲) was launched in 1949, together with the Commercial Radio. Seen in this light, it is not too far-fetched to say that the radio stations did played a vital role in expanding the music market in Hong Kong.

3.1.3. Western popular songs invasion—1960s

Mando-Pop and Chinese Cantonese Opera continued to dominate the mainstream music market until the early 1960s. In addition, Yellow Plum Opera (huangmei diao 黃梅調) records were also popular at that time. In the 1960s, western popular songs substituted Mando-Pop gradually, which became most popular with Hong Kong youths. In those times, the most popular radio programs were those that played western popular songs,

such as those of Elvis Presley, Pat Boone, Connie Francis and Cliff Richard, who were the most popular singers. The radio stations in Hong Kong started to introduce some songs of the so-called Mersey Beat bands, such as The Beatles, Gerry & The Pacemakers and Searchers, to the audience, although it appears that the type of music played by these bands was not very well-received. However, a big turning point took place after the visit of the legendary band, The Beatles, to Hong Kong. In June 1964, the Beatles toured Hong Kong and gave a live performance, which ushered in a new wave of band forming. Inspired by the popularity of band music all over the world, the young people in Hong Kong were enthusiastic about forming bands, as evidenced by the mushrooming of a number of groups, such as Lotus, Teddy Robins and the Playboys, which were the most famous in those times. From the mid-1960s onwards, local record companies started to help some local bands and musicians to produce their own western popular song records. Some members of the bands, such as Sam Hui, Teddy Robin, Alan Tam, Roman Tam and George Lam, played a vital role in the Cantonese Music Scene in the 1970s.

In order to resist the invasion of western pop songs, a new kind of Mando-pop songs appeared, adopting western popular songs melody with

Mandarin, or a mixture of Mandarin and English lyrics. Between the end of the 1960s to the early 1970s, some Taiwanese Mando-Pop songs too were popular. Yo Su Jung and Ching Shan, for instance, were the most famous Mando-Pop singers from Taiwan.

In the face of the onslaught of Mando-pop and Western popular songs, some Chinese Cantonese Opera artists and composers attempted to restore the glories of the traditional Chinese Cantonese opera. Instead of composing new melodies, they made use of the existing Chinese opera melody with some new Cantonese lyrics and focused more on the song production by adopting modern forms as chorus and rhythm. which was not so common in the Chinese Cantonese Opera industry. One composer, Zhou Cong, even gave up the traditional Chinese Cantonese Opera melody altogether, and made use of western popular song melody with some modern form of Cantonese lyrics. This reinvented music style undoubtedly marked a milestone of the Canto-pop music.

Until the mid-1970s, there were basically three types of music in Hong Kong: Mando-Pop music, Western Popular songs and the new kind of Canto-Pop music. The most popular style among them was the western popular songs, especially those of Elvis Presley, which are most popular

with the young people. Mando-Pop music was also a favourite, especially

for those music lovers who came from Mainland China. And the newly

formulated music style—Canto-Pop music – was successful in attracting its

own audience to a certain extent as well.

3.1.4. Canto-Pop songs' domination—after the mid-1970s

After the launch of Rediffusion TV (麗的電視) in 1963 and TVB in 1967,

the visual entertainment began to make gradual inroads into Hong Kong

families. By the 1970s, television became an important part of local life.

Much like radio in the 60s, TV was by now a vital medium of pop music.

The first Hong Kong Canto-Pop star, Sam Hui, produced his own

Canto-Pop songs about the lives and sentiments of Hong Kong, which

were broadcasted in the "Star Show" and hosted by himself. Sam Hui

became the most popular Canto-Pop singer-cum-composer in the

mid-1970s. Canto-Pop music became popular among the Hong Kong

people, thanks to the theme songs of the TV soap operas. Joseph Koo and

Sandra collaborated on a very successful pop piece Bitter Sweet Marriage

(啼笑姻緣). By 1977, TV theme song industry was booming. Joseph Koo

and James Wong from TVB (eg. Wild Tides and Shanghai Beach) and

Michael Lai from RTV (eg. Crocodile Tears and Metamorphosis) produced several great works in a row.   This further reinforced Canto-pop as the major trend of the local pop music industry.

There were other factors that facilitated the development of Canto-Pop music in the 1970s. For example, the Copyrights Law of 1972 in Hong Kong caught the attention of some global record companies such as WEA, Polygram and CBS. These record companies exploited the music market in Hong Kong with their technologies and experiences at in the expense of the existing local record companies. The capitalists built up the music market. Due to technological improvements, the costs of producing records were lowered. Later in the decade, the walkman further popularized music as a portable companion in the packed buses and trains. The influence of the Disc Jockeys, too, helped the Canto-Pop music to boom. The first Top Ten Gold Hits Awards was sponsored and presented by Radio Hong Kong, which marked a milestone for the Canto-Pop music.

Apart from the booming Canto-Pop music market, a new kind of Star System was formed in Hong Kong's music industry. Through performing the theme songs of TV soap opera series, Adam Cheng, Roman Tam, etc.

shot to stardom and were extremely popular with the audience. Following the success of Sam Hui, these singers abandoned Mando-Pop songs and western popular music for Canto-Pop songs, and increased hugely the number of Canto-Pop songs in the music industry. From the 1980s onwards, Hong Kong's music industry has been increasingly dominated by Canto-Pop music.

The expansion of both the broadcasting hardware and software, coupled with the advent of the MTV era, facilitated the packaging and visualization of popular music in the 1980s. The opening of various stadiums, such as the Hong Kong Queen Elizabeth Stadium and Hong Kong Coliseum precipitated the showbiz and entertainment business. Pop concerts became a symbolic event of superstardom and modern fandom. Marketing and Packaging strategies such as image-design, cover-design, concept-design, hair-design, make-up, photography, video direction etc. became the main elements for the Canto-Pop Music business, together with music. Given the keen competition, the record industry must seek new strategy to package the music and to mould the image of the stars. It was no longer just about producing music, but idol-making as well, and the most successful cases are no doubt Alan Tam, Leslie Cheung and Anita

Mui .

Wong Chi Wah once emphasized how Canto-Pop music was packaged as commodity,

The production of Canto-Pop music was in fact premised on the resources and direction. The ultimate mission of those record companies is not about arts production, but to make as much money as they possibly can, the Canto-Pop songs being merely one of their strategies. For this reason, those capitalists and record companies only hope to produce songs and records that people will be interested in which is also the highest priority of the record companies. (1990:1)

By the early 1990s, some of the idols, Alan Tam, Anita Mui and Lesile Cheung, for instance, had made known their intention not to receive any more music awards of any kind. Following this, the *Four Heavenly Kings* (四大天王)-- Jacky Cheung, Andy Lau, Leon Lai and Araon Kwok - became the new darlings of the industry, the media and the masses. Since then, the four of them came to dominate the Canto-pop music scene and win all the best male artist awards in various presentations until recent years as the mainstream music scene underwent another cycle of the era of the Four Heavenly Kings.

The whole operation systems of the mainstream music business are basically backed up by other mass media such as radio stations, TV stations, newspapers, magazines, etc. The addition of Metro radio, Star TV, MTV

and Cable TV, plus the new modes of media such as MD,VCD, DVD and the Internet further expand the space for the promotion of pop music, providing myriad possibilities in the development of the music industry. These technological innovations carve a new path for music business, in addition to the voice and techniques of the singers. Physical attraction is the most important criterion of being a singer. And Karaoke, is a mixed blessing for the Canto-pop. As far as the industry is concerned, the more karaoke-oriented the songs are, the higher their popularity will be. In recent years, most of the popular songs or idols such as Twins, Joey Yung, Kelly Chen, Eason Chan and Andy Hui have all been producing the so-called karaoke-oriented songs. However, many a critic would argue that these songs are simplistic and repetitive, which will drag the Canto-pop into a cycle of degradation. Nevertheless, it is the audience who enjoy the music and it is the businessmen who earn the money. On this account, the profit-seeking aspect of the music industry seems to be the defining feature of the current period, but the story does not end here.

The cycle goes on until one day when CD piracy is so extremely rampant that the audience would rather pay 1/3 of the price to get the mediocre music, depriving the music industry of a huge sum of the profits.

According to the IFPI Commercial Piracy Report 2003[8], no fewer than 40%, or two out of every five physical recordings sold in the world, are pirated copies. Global sales of pirated CDs more than doubled between 1999 and 2002, from 510 million to 1.1 billion units. They increased 14% in 2002. Three of IFPI's top ten priority markets most affected by piracy are in Asia: China, including Hong Kong which has the biggest piracy problem in the world, Taiwan and Thailand. In 2002, the estimated capacity of all disc formats (discs carrying all media, such as music, film and computer software) of Hong Kong was 2700 million units but the total legitimate demand of all disc formats was just 150 million units showed the illegal pirate sales, as supply of discs is far outstripping legitimate demand. On the other hand, those record companies are also terrified by the so-called illegal downloads i.e. computers users sharing and downloading music tracks for free over the internet also seriously affected the sales of compact discs.

2. Band Development in Hong Kong

---

[8] Source: the official website of IFPI, www.ifpi.org

The 1960s and the early 1970s marked the golden age of band music. However, it went into a sharp decline and eventually vanished from the scene following the invasion of the Taiwanese Mando-pop music and the domination of the Canto-Pop music. The relationship between Canto-Pop music and band music was complicated and paradoxical. On one hand, the former band members played a vital role in the development of Canto-Pop music in different eras, while some of members of the famous bands such as Alan Tam, Kenny B, Elisa Chan, Johnny Yip and George Lam catalysed the take-off of Canto-Pop music from the mid-1970s. After the second band wave in the 1980s, some of the members of these famous bands, such as Gibert Leung, Chen Guang Ron, Anthony Wong and Joey Tang, together with the lyrics writer of the band, Lin Xi, became producers, composers and lyric writers of massive influence from the 1990s onwards. On the other hand, Canto-Pop music's domination prompted other types of music to turn alternative, and band music is undoubtedly one of those severely affected by the supremacy of Canto-pop music. As the market and the resources began to shrink after the 1990s, the whole band scene has gone underground. In this part, I will try to sketch the development of band music from the 1960s until now.

3.2.1. The Incubation Period—1960s

To trace the history of the band music, we need to start from the 1960s. It was during this period that the post-war baby boomers entered their adolescence. Most of them had an affinity with western culture characterised by the so-called British Invasion phenomena, in which the English popular music became popular with the youth at that time. Young people also formed bands to play music, and most of the bands performed the songs of those western bands and singers that they listened to. On the other hand, the amateur singing contest held by Rediffusion and Sing Tao Newspaper Group in the early 1960s provided opportunities for youngsters to perform on stage, while other singing contests began to enter the fray. After the visit of the legendary band, the Beatles, in 1964, who inspired the band wave in Hong Kong, forming a band became some kind of stylish and trendy activity among the youth. Many bands would participate in the singing contests so as to accumulate performing experiences; playing music in a band was also a means of livelihood at that time, as band members played music at night clubs and pubs for a living. Moreover, they could gain more experience by performing at shows as well.

Diamond Records, a records company, started to produce records for the local bands, and the famous ones included Teddy Robin & the Playboys, Joe Junior & the Side-effects, Lotus, Mystics, Menace, D'Topnotes and Kontinentals. Following the roaring success of these bands, Hong Kong's band music industry began to flourish.

The band wave was somewhat disrupted by the riots, which was inspired by the Cultural Revolution in Mainland China and led to a large number of young people leaving Hong Kong to further their studies in foreign countries, with some of the bands calling it a day due to the departure of the members. Still, some of the bands became even more popular with the public, thanks to TV programs. Lotus and Teddy Robin & the Playboys were also given the chance to host "Starshow" and "Soundbeat", two TV entertainment shows. Apart from the programs, TV stations would also retransmit some live shows or concerts of the bands. Until 1968, those band groups were popular among the audience, especially the youth.

However, the invasion of Mando-Pop music from Taiwan took wind out of the sail of western popular music. Taiwanese Mando-Pop became the most popular music type in Hong Kong. As a result, some of the bands

were disbanded, while other band members went solo, still others decided to move behind the scenes to do production and write songs for mainstream singers. There were even those who made a complete exit from the music scene altogether. Ostensibly, the band wave in the mainstream music scene was waning, but the members of various bands became the mainstay in the development of Canto-Pop music later in the 1970s.

To sum up, most of bands in the 1960s produced, performed western popular songs of those famous singers and bands, and band music style can still be classified as a kind of mainstream music at that moment.

3.2.2. The Transformation Period— the 1970s

In the 1970s, Hong Kong mainstream music scene underwent some substantial changes, characterised first and foremost by the fading out of Western popular music and the rise of its Canto-Pop counterpart. Thanks to local television programs, local popular culture was booming. Meanwhile, Canto-pop music was fast developing, at the expense of both Mando-pop songs and western popular music.

In the early 1970s, mainstream music scene was arguably a side product of the band wave in the 1960s. There were still some artists sang

western popular songs, most of them were the ex-members of those famous bands in 1960s, such as Sam Hui, Big AL, even some of the bands, as Wynners and New Topnotes began to compose and produce their own English songs. In contrast, some of the ex-members could only earn a living by playing live music in hotels, night clubs and Club houses.

In the late-1970s, almost all of those famous bands split up. Some of the ex-members of the bands, Alan Tam and Kenny B from Wynners, Geroge Lam and Big AL from Jade, as well as Elisa Chan and Johnny Yip from New Topnotes, for instance, went solo and started to sing Canto-pop songs. On the other hand, those who refused to shift to singing Canto-pop songs or those who retreated from record companies kept up their performance in various resorts, some private parties and discos.

In the 1970s, the band wave began to vanish, but some of the bands could still produce their own records owing to the support of the record companies. After the disbandment of some bands, their members would still stay in the mainstream music scene as singers or went behind-the-scene as producers or composers. Although the members of those bands still played a vital role in the late-1970s and early-1980s in different forms, still the 1970s should be regarded as the watershed of band

music which has been expelled to be a kind of alternative music, dismissed

by the mainstream music scene.

3.2.3. Second Band Wave—1980s

As the Canto-Pop music was flourishing, a new kind of Star System

emerged in Hong Kong's music business. The entire mainstream music

scene was donimated by the entrepreneurs of record companies, because of

the unpopularity of band music in early-1980s; no company was willing to

invest on band music, and from 1980s the whole band scene went

underground. Some of the bands still perform at night clubs, pubs or other

private parties, but they also performed songs in acoustic, or sang famous

Canto-Pop songs in dedication to the audience. This aside, some zealots

started to produce complication cassette in a D.I.Y form without the

assistance of the mainstream record companies. "Guitarists Sampler" in

1980 and "Xiang Gang" in 1983 were both produced by Lenny Kwok, the

founding member of Blackbird, which was vital to the alternative band

scene, and inspired those bands to produce records/cassettes on their own.

Until the mid-1980s, some of the bands started to produce their own

records by their own means without the resources of the record companies,

as Black Bird, Lady Diana, Chyna, Cicada, Danny Summer produced their own records/cassettes around 1983-1985. These D.I.Y productions of the bands on one hand inspired those fellow bands, while reminding those record companies of the possibility of making it alone on the other.

On the contrary, with the sponsorship of the Carlsberg Beer, Tom Lee Music organized its first Pop Music Festival in 1985, which was held annually and provided opportunties for the bands to perform in public. The emergence of the Carlsberg Pop Music Festival showed the way for the bands, and participating in the festival was seemingly the goal of those bands. The festival was also a cradle of some famous bands, such as Tai Chi, Beyond, Fundamental, Boundary, etc. Those record companies also looked for some talented bands and produced records for them, including those mentioned above. All bands signed contracts with the mainstream record companies after the festival. Apart from the music festival, ambitious record companies would also search for some talented young people and produced records with the support of the companies, and Tai Ming Pair, Raidas, as well as Ukiyo-e are classic examples in this regard. Many bands in the 1980s also had the opportunities of releasing their albums with the resources of the record companies, in return, they were

constrained by the companies, and same as the popular singers, those record companies also had marketing strategy on band music, as some types of songs different from Canto-pop love songs. For this reason, most of the bands' song patterns and lyrics were different, which were about politics, youth or anti-war songs. Not many bands could actually strike a balance between the constraints of those record company and personality of the band, while Beyond and Tai Chi were also criticized for being only the products of the companies devoid of their character of the 1980s. Tat Ming Pair was arguably the most successful, as it was able to strike a balance between maintaining the band's style and keeping a different image imposed by the company. Their unique music style and lyrics were more radical and innovative than other bands signed by big and famous companies.

Apart from those bands who were successful in the mainstream music scene, other bands chose to stay underground. In the late-1980s, apart from the annual Carlsberg Pop Music Festival, another enthusiastic music critic, Sam Jor once organized some variety band show composed of different bands, known as the "From the Underground" concerts. In 1989, another famous variety band show "Dark Entry" was organized by some hard

rock/metal bands. At least 10 shows were held between 1989 and 1996, and all of the shows before 1994 took place in Ko Shan Theatre, a holy land for those bands and supporters of the bands. However, few band shows were held after the theatre's renovation. The importance of these series of underground concerts, on one hand, provided opportunity to some amateur bands to accumulate the experience of performing in public, while the alternative bands that played heavel metal and hard rock music could develop alongside the successful mainstream bands on the other. At that time, diehard supporters of underground bans even boycotted the bands signed by the mainstream record companies, seeing the mainstream bands' acts or adjustment of their music style some sort of betrayal to the cause of the underground bands.

The second band wave, which happened in the 1980s, lasted only from 1984 to1990. Still, the bands commanded huge following. This could be due to the fact that Canto-pop songs remained the most popular at that time, and band music therefore acquired a breathing space in the mainstream music scene. To examine the phenomenon of the 1980s second band wave, the Carlsberg Pop Music Festivals certainly played a vital role as a cradle for those bands; the drain of Canto-Pop music after late-1970s'

development also provided a chance for tband music. Unlike the Canto-pop standardized music, band music offered a different choice for the audience who were bored with Canto-pop music. Moreover, the demand of the audience compelled the record companies to invest on band music. As Wong (1990) stated, the band wave of the 1980s was the product of consumerism. At its initial stage, the band wave was certainly backed up by the market and mass media. Nevertheless, the over-dumping of new bands into the market shortened the life of the second band wave. The disbanding of Tat Ming Pair in 1990 therefore marked the end of the second band wave.

One of the contributions of those bands in the 1980s was to bring new kind of music style to the audience in Hong Kong. Moreover, some of the members of those 1980s famous bands, such as Gibert Leung, Chen Guang Ron, Anthony Wong, Joey Tang, together with those bands' lyric writers, such as Lin Xi, became influential producers, composers and lyric writers in the 1990s. As the second band wave began to wane in the early 1990s, the band scene tended to develop in their own ways and turn underground once again.

3.2.4. D.I.Y. Spirits—1990s till now

The Indie band scene occurred in the early 1990s. The Martyr and the Box released their self-financed records. Meanwhile, three independent record labels: Global Independence Generation (G.I.G), Sound Factory and Music Communication started to run business of producing records for those so-called alternative musicians. For examples, Black Box, Black Bird and Wong Chau Sang & Anthony released their records under the G.I.G; while …HUH!?, Anodize and Virus released their records under the sub-label, D.I.Y. Music of Music Communication and A.M.K (Adam Met Karl) also produced their few records under the Sound Factory. With the release of the albums, more audience could access band music not just by attending band shows and inspired the public of various music styles in the band scene, there were bands who played heavy metal, hard rock as Anodize, Zen; or Black Box's folk rock style, gothic style of Virus, noise-pop style of A.M.K.

In 1994, the radio program, "Quote Zone" of The Commercial Radio 2 hosted by Alvin Wong, Brian Leung and Chan Fai Hung, was actively promoting both international music and local band sound. Apart from the program, a music magazine, "Quotable" was released as well to promote international music and local band sound. There was one classic gesture, 17

indie bands performed in the 12,000-seated Hong Kong Coliseum in 1994.

Another example was the show in June 1995 when Quote Zone presented

the Heavenly Kings, as with other popular singers and indie bands

together in the Hong Kong Coliseum which tried to break the boundary of

mainstream and indie music scene. After the crossover show, there were

more and more crossovers among the mainstream singers and indie bands.

Higher creativity from the expanding creative pool and more genuine

choices were offered.

Another radio program, "It's a band-forming time" (組 band 時間)

broadcasted in Commercial Radio 2 in 1996, after the vanishing of "Quote

Zone", "It's a band-forming time" could be classified as the bequest of

"Quote Zone" in promoting local indie music, as some young indie bands,

such as Charisma, Distribution, N.T., Screw were also given a chance of

releasing a song on the complication records organized by the program

and performed in the Hong Kong Coliseum.

Although those independent record companies faded in 1996, the

whole indie band scene was still so going strong. Instead of securing

studios for their practices, those bands can pay a very low price to rent

empty factory buildings, which became a paradise for those indie

musicians, bands to have their own band rooms for practice, cheaper prices of those music instruments and recording equipments which allow those musicians, bands to produce their records. With the popularity of the internet, the bands, musicians can also construct their own websites to share their beliefs, information and songs. Given these advantageous circumstances, the number of alternative music lovers or the number of new band formed has escalated in recent years. Those annual Rock On show and Warehouse Youth band Competition and another local music magazine "Music Bi-Weekly" occurrence also helped to promote international music and local band music.

In 1999, LMF produced their independent debut album "LazyMuthaFucka" and 18 000 copies of their CDs were sold. The band swiftly became the focal point of the mainstream, especially for issues of swearing and bad effects' on teenagers. Because of this initial success, LMF was signed up by the D.N.A. -- the sub-label of Warner Music. LMF's first Warner distributed album sold more than 70 000 copies in the summer of 2000. The success initiated the trend of independent record release of indie bands. From 2000 till now, more than 20 bands and solo artists have released their debut albums, with some of them having even second and

third self-financed, independent records under their belt, such as Primary

Shape, The Pancakes, 3P, Wildchild, Site Access, Ketchup, Lam Kee,

Pullover and False Alarm.

After 2000, the former member of Tat Ming Pair, Anthony Wong and

some of his friends formed a new independent label,

"PeopleMountainPeopleSea" and help some talented music groups to

release their records, the label had released records for Pop Pop, YLK

Organiztion, Slow Tech Riddim, Fruit Square, alok and at 17, there in, at 17

was so popular among the secondary school and university students.

Apart from releasing records, the members of "PeopleMountainPeopleSea",

such as Anthony Wong, Jason Choi, Veronica Lee, Gaybird and Yu Yat Yiu,

are important composers and producers in the Canto-Pop music scene as

well. On the other hand, another legend band, Beyond, also set up its own

label, "2nd Floor" and once released Tat Flip's debut record. Howeverl, very

few records have been released after that. The member of Beyond, Paul

Wong, also established his own studio and record label, "Polar Bear".

Other independent labels, Catalyst Action, 89268 records and Far East

records, were also established to promote foreign alternative music and

assist some local musicians and bands to release their records.

As a minority groups in the mainstream music market, the musicians, bands in the indie scene and those independent record companies really understand the whole circumstances of Hong Kong's music scene, many of them educing the D.I.Y. (do it yourself) spirit to find their own living sphere in the music market so as to spread their songs to more audience through their websites, band shows, or independent records. These tactics indeed stood as a resistance to the domination of Canto-pop music and reminded the audience of their own existence in the music scene.

3.2.5. *Fluffy Association between Canto-pop Music Scene and Indie Music Scene*

In various so-called alternative music scenes in Hong Kong, the indie music scene should be the only one which keeps a close relationship with mainstream Canto-pop music scene. To a large extent, it is due to the affluent crossover among both scenes, and this kind of fluffy association has actually generated a bizarre paradox in both scenes. Because of the similarity between the music styles, Canto-pop music style is not so unique in that it is music composed with sounds of piano, guitars, bass guitars, drums or other electronic instruments, and it still needs people to play those music instruments. Those indie musicians are probably the most

professional musicians who have the skills, and the talented ones are sometimes the producers and composers of Canto-pop songs. As the standardized, not surprising song progressions of those Canto-pop songs, those indie musicians may sometimes be invited to do some remix and rearrangment on the original songs, or even as song producers of some Canto-pop songs which tried to made some unexpected stuffs to those audience . Apart from the production process, those indie musicians are also invited to be session musicians at concerts. The different involvement of those indie musicians in the production process of Canto-pop records helps the mainstream singers to produce a high quality records, and the records companies are more than willing to receive their assistance.

On the one hand, those record companies intend to make more money by flooding the music business markets with standardized canto-pop songs in order to draw the interest of those audience, high quality music and new elements are therefore required to satisfy the various needs of the audience. Those indie musicians' involvement in the songs' production process undoubtedly help to produce high quality music. Most of the time, those indie musicians are constrained by the record companies, still they can acquire a space by adding new elements to the standardized Canto-pop

songs. Through the involvements, to a certain extent, the indie musicians can start an evolution on mainstream music scene by adding new elements on the canto-pop songs' structure, music progression or changing mainstream music business operating system. For examples, some popular idols, Edmund Leung, Gigi Leung, Nicolas Tse and Juno Mak, sought to be singers-cum-song-writers by producing songs of their own. In 2004, one of the Heavenly Kings, Jacky Cheung, even released a self-innovative album "Life is like a dream", for which the artist composed all the songs and wrote all their lyrics.

On the other hand, the indie band scene is also an incubation place for those singers and other producers-cum-composers, such as Alan Tam, Kenny B, Elisa Chan, Johnny Yip and George Lam, played a vital role in the soaring of Canto-Pop music from the mid-1970s. After the second band wave in 1980s, some of the members of those famous bands, such as Gibert Leung, Chen Guang Ron, Anthony Wong and Joey Tang, together with the lyric writers, Lin Xi, became influential producers, composers and lyric writers from the 1990s onwards. Candy Lo, as an ex-member of Black&Blue, was another example among Canto-pop singers. The record companies really need new comers in the music business in any time.

Meanwhile, the indie band scene was also a place to seek for talented

people to join the music business. When they come across some talented,

popular bands in the indie music scene such as Zen, Lam Kee, LMF, the

record companies also signed the bands and helped them to release records,

which is mostly the ultimate goal of many bands in the indie scene. With

the resources provided by those record companies, they can produce better

quality records as well as getting financial support for survival. The

packaging strategy is a strong point of the record companies, no matter

mainstream idols or bands, indie musicians; those record companies will

have different packaging strategy according to the needs of the audience.

For example, the record company exploited LMF's 'bad boy' image and

changed it into cultural products and material goods. As Ma comments on

this kind of absorption:

Product disenchantment: a Fordist mode seeks to re-enchant products by constantly adding in exotic elements. Alternative bands, with their excessive signs and overflowing emotional energies, become ideal resources for re-enchanting the disenchanted world……They can also be absorbed and appropriated by the mainstream to recreate fashionable commodities. Emotional energy is a wild card for many situations. It can serve as resistive energy and at the same time absorbed by the market and the elite to re-energize dominant economic and cultural formation (Ma 2002: 196)

However, does it mean that those indie bands and musicians are

passively absorbed by their mainstream counterparts? Taking LMF or Tat

Ming Pair as an example, we can see how they tried to strike a balance in

the mainstream music scene. Tat Ming Pair of the 1980s was packaged as

some kind of new romance groups of weird images with ever-changing

outlooks. Still the duo was able to bring in electronic music which was

unusual in the mainstream music scene, and express through the lyrics

their political opinions as well as fear for the handover. The commercial

band wave of the 1980s made use of songs to articulate political opinions,

and Tat Ming Pair was the unique example which did just that at that time.

Likewise, to maintain a critical posture, LMF utilized tactically the media

to negotiate their own financial survival but at the same time continued to

defy social norms and the rules of the media by resorting to foul language

at concerts that were sponsored by the mainstream companies. Through

the entertainment sections of the newspapers, they criticized some unusual

phenomenon in the mainstream music business and voiced their opinions

on some political issues.

With noise is born disorder and its opposite: the world. With music is

born power and its opposite: subversion (Attali 1985:5). Comparatively,

alternative band music is seen as "noise" to Canto-Pop Music. Apart from

the music and lyrics, the popular discourse on bands images also leads to the marginaliztion of alternative bands. Just like other sub-culture groups, alternative bands also make use of dressing style and rituals, such as punk-style with rubber T-shirt, leather miniskirts, fetish items, S/M implements, leather bondage gear and boots or Hardcore, Metal style of their tattoo, so as to distinguish themselves from the public. Popular perceptions often stigmatized alternative bands, associating them with criminality, violence, aggressiveness, evil as well as various kinds of deviant behavior (e.g. tattoo is associated with violence, drug abuse, casual sex, swearing, smoking, etc.), which was in turn associated with the discursive images of "at-risk" youth that I mentioned in the previous chapter. For the general public, the so-called deviant behaviors of those alternative bands challenge the moral consensus and even legal power. However, As Ma (2002) comments, "For sub-cultural groups, transgression generates positive emotions, which confer emotive power and status to the transgressor…Underground communities negotiate their own lines of transgression according to the desire of how far they want to distance themselves from normality. They 'complete' the taboos by confirming the popular prediction that they are really bad seeds of the community. They

'transcend' them by self-stigmatization, absorbing the emotional energies of transgression and turning them into identity resources."

As most of the bands still use this kind of emotional energies to resist the dominant mainstream music scene, most of the alternative bands share a detached attitude towards the mainstream music scene; going commercial and entering the mainstream is thus a sign of compromise. Beyond, Zen, LMF and many other bands were once accused of betrayal to the indie music scene by other independent bands and indie music supporters. With more crossovers of the mainstream music scene and indie scene, and with the cheap technology, there are greater possibilities of the indie bands and musicians producing their own records.

However, some alternative bands intend to change the bad images by their life styles, music and lyrics. In the next chapter, I will employ King Ly Chee as a case study to see how the band resists against the dominant mainstream music scene as well as the mainstream ideology with their emotional energies, and also the way they try to transform/challenge people's perception and stigmatization on alternative bands.

CHAPTER 4

The Emergence of Hong Kong Local

Hardcore-Punks

– King Ly Chee

illustration 1: KingLyChee Members with DJ Inti (Girl)   Photo from Commercial Radio Website

[Youth Culture]…win space for the young: cultural space in the neighborhood and institutions, real time for leisure and recreation, actual room on the street or street-corner. They serve to mark out and appropriate "territory" in the localities. They focus around key occasions of social interaction…they explore "focal concerns" central to the inner life of the group… They adapt and adapt material objects – goods and possessions – and reorganize them into distinctive "styles" which express the collectivity of their being-as-a-group…Sometimes, the world is marked out, linguistically, by names or an argot which classifies the social world exterior to them in terms meaningful only within their groups perspective, and maintain its boundaries (Hebdige 1979: 88).

While adults continuously deny youth their political agency, and

exploit their forms of cultural expression simultaneously, the space of youth and the forms of youth identification (fashion, music, etc.) have become a battlefield in the cultural process of identification that often leave young people feeling disconnected and powerless. As society attempted to shape the body of youth — to organize its material, ideological and affective life by monitoring its needs, aspirations and behavior, the youth gained a space of independent existence as "youth". Apart from these social institutions, after all, such practices can never fully control their effects. This left a space within which the privileged place of youth enabled them to rearticulate their own territorializaion by foregrounding the sense of their own difference, a difference which had already been constructed for it. As Simon Jones stated "young people use music to situate themselves historically, culturally, politically in a much more complex system of symbolic meaning than is available socially" (Jones: 1988 in Grossberg, Nelson& Treichler 1992:177).

The central feature of youth culture, and its metonym, is its music. Rock 'n' roll has always symbolized youth. "The whole adolescent milieu is penetrated at many levels by an active interest in music…adolescent discourse centers around the language and terminology of rock and that

music provides the core values…"(Roe 1987:215). The core of adolescents'

personal identities is their musical taste. Such preferences as well as the

salience of music serve to differentiate them from adults. Lorraine and

Rosenbaum give a similar assessment of the function of music. They

contend that rock music helps teenagers to identify with their peers rather

than their families: "It is created by and for young people and may

function for teenagers in delineating a rebellious subculture that stands

apart from the adult world" (Rosenbaum and Lorraine 1987: 394). Rock

music continues to play a central role in youth culture, in part due to its

confrontational and antagonistic stance towards adult values. KingLyChee,

as a youth group, is a good illustration. It seeks to produce alternative

"noise" to challenge the mainstream ideology of Hong Kong and critique

the political condition of Hong Kong. In this chapter, I will discuss how

this youth group makes use of hardcore-punk music as a medium to

initiate other youngsters to resist against mainstream ideology in Hong

Kong.

4.1. The Rebirth of Hong Kong Hardcore -- KingLyChee

"See, punk rock has existed in HK for a very long time. But for the local Chinese
community it has always been something that has been considered an 'expatriate' thing,"

Riz said (Fracture, April/May 2003).

KingLyChee came into existence in May 1999, after the founder of the band, Riz Farooqi moved back to Hong Kong, having live in the United States for about four and a half years. Since his return to Hong Kong around February of 1999, he has been trying to re-immerse himself into the local music scene. After a couple of months of observation, he realized that there was something drastically wrong about the local punk music scene.

Hong Kong has always had its tiny punk rock community, but the community was made up of solely expatriate kids. These kids usually stay in Hong Kong until they finish their secondary education. The bands and the people who worked in Hong Kong created an incredible punk rock scene in the territory. Things were exciting in that there were awesome local punk bands like Pregnant Men, That Guys Belly, Tokyo Sex Whale etc., which played crazy shows and started their own labels, consistently releasing a whole barrage of zines[9]. However, after they graduated from secondary school and moved on with their lives outside of Hong Kong, all of the remnants of their hard work eventually disappeared. It was a

---

[9] Zine is a self-published magazine, which does not come out regularly since the entire publication is designed, written, laid out, and complied, even distributed by a small groups of people without assistance from the commercial publishers and distributors.

never-ending cycle with a new batch of expatriate kids creating something exciting, which died off at the end as the expatriate kids graduated, killing off the punk scene with it. As they left, the punk rock community just went back to square one and the cycle started again.

As Riz recalls, "Since I was an outsider at that time (not playing in any bands thus not really involved in what was going on), it was easier for me to step back and try to figure things out. That's when it hit me that the problem with that Hong Kong's punk/hardcore community was that it never involved the local people." (EM, 2002 Fall/Winter) Riz always wonders why there are not more locals involved anymore. The punk/hardcore bands at that time sung in English which automatically ignored a large population of Hong Kong. When the band got on stage they spoke in English further segregating the crowd, but by far the worst characteristic of a typical "expatriate" band was that as soon as they were done, they would pack up and leave as would audience that would show up to support. This left the following or preceding Chinese bands with no audience besides Riz and a few supporters of local bands. This weird segregation that went on reminded Riz of the reasons that he fell in love with punk/hardcore in the beginning, which was because it was a culture

that promoted acceptance of anyone and everyone as it was all based on who and not what they were.

Then Riz tried to figure out why more local people (Chinese) were not taking part in punk rock or hardcore. After a few shows, he started befriending local kids and asked them what they thought of punk rock and hardcore etc. As much as 90% of the kids that Riz had approached were yearning to learn more about this type of music. All that the kids could do was go into local music shops where they would be served in their own language by sales people who, instead of introducing bands like Sick of It All, Bane or Minor Threat, would introduce fucking Limp Bizkit, Korn, Slipknot, Kid Rock and all that other crap-jack-rock as hardcore.

After a long talk with one of his friends, Pat, one of his favourite bass players of one of his favorite all time Hong Kong bands The Green Partner outside of a bar in Wan Chai, he realized that what these kids needed was a place to access information like zines/mail order that would s explain punk rock and hardcore. Apart from this, he realized that the biggest obstacle for the local Chinese Population to get involved was language. He knew that if he wanted to bring hardcore/punk culture back to Hong Kong society and promote something deep as the hardcore ideology, he had to

provide it in the most accessible language—which is Chinese. It is because these kids are those who will forever live and breathe in Hong Kong, be educated in Hong Kong, work in Hong Kong, or even die in Hong Kong, who could also be the ultimate beneficiaries of the ideas of hardcore. Their involvement in hardcore music would mean that the scene could last longer than was the case with the expatriate punk bands, which lasted only two years on average. He therefore decided to start a bilingual zine "Start From Scratch". The name was chosen for the simple idea that everyone needed to erase all the stuffs that the major record stores sold to them and start from the very beginning. "Start From Scratch" was produced and distributed by Riz, which, promoted the idea of hardcore without any help of a commercial publisher or distributors. Since Riz did not really know Chinese, it would defeat his original idea if Zine remained an English-only mangazine. Fortunately, since day one those friends who Riz met through skateboarding and attending shows, offered to help translate Riz's articles. Without the aid of his friends, Zine would have remained an English-only publication, which would not have helped achieve what Riz had set out in his original idea. Neither would it have been as widely known as it is now.

While Riz started writing articles for the first issue of "Start From

Scratch"[10], he realized that a magazine was not enough, as kids would need to experience the sights, sounds and emotions of a hardcore band to connect the ideas with reality. Thus, he decided to start KingLyChee, not only out of his love for music – he had been playing in bands since he was 13 - but also with an admirable purpose of introducing a healthy, positive and active culture of hardcore to Hong Kong. The band's name – KingLyChee - actually came from the fruit, lychee. As the month of May also marks the harvest of lychee, the band was then named Lycheewong in Cantonese. This was also due to the fact that all the members loved eating lychee and wanted the band to be a little bit "Hong Kong". Given that some of their friends thought the name lycheewong was old-fashioned, they changed it to KingLyChee, which sounded more hip and stylish. Both the first issue and KingLyChee's first shows took place in the same week of June. The original line up of the band was Riz, the guitarist and vocalist, Ian Cruz, the bassist, and Stephane Wong, the drummer.

The band has changed a lot since it was formed. Ian, the original bass

---

[10] Start From Scratch is a punk/hardcore/emo/indle rock and skateboarding magazine printed in Hong Kong. The entire purpose of the zine is to promote punk/hardcore culture and skateboarding in the territory. No one had tried to explain the whole idea of hardcore and punk rock culture and so the publication was created to help everyone get a clearer picture through its bilingual format (Chinese and English). A total of 8 issues have been released so far. They do not come out regularly since the entire publication is designed, written, laid out, and complied by Riz single-handedly.

player, left the band to pursue his study abroad. The drummer was never into punk/hardcore more than just the music so the departure of the drummer was something that Riz had expected. Not until Alex Chung Chi Kin joined the band did the real KingLyChee begin to take form. Alex had been a big time reader of "Start From Scratch" and had always watched KingLyChee perform at shows. What always attracted him to the zine and the band was the purpose of using hardcore to positively influence the youth of Hong Kong, as well as the topics of the band's songs and ideas. When the band bass player, Ian left, Riz talked to Alex, who then sang for another band, Slingshot that had just called it a day. Alex told Riz that he originally played the bass and would be interested in playing the bass for KingLyChee. But before he made a decision, he wanted Riz to explain all the lyrics and purpose of the band clearly and Riz knew immediately he wanted Alex as part of this. He joined the band after finishing recording their first album "We Are Who We Are" in June of 2000.

After Alex joined KLC, he revolutionalized the sound, attitude and an idea of the band. His first comment was on the English lyrics of the band, suggesting that they should start singing in Chinese, so that the message could be clearly stated and understood by the locals. Since Alex joined the

band, KingLyChee has become bilingual. Perhaps most of the songs are composed in both Cantonese and English lyrics, which have worked wonders in opening up the KingLyChee's music, message and lyrics to kids throughout Hong Kong and has been able to extend its popularity to Mainland China and Taiwan. After the drummer left, good friends who were playing in other bands at the time volunteered to keep KingLyChee going, promoting their message, playing their music until the band found someone permanent. Another guitarist, Andy, Chung Chun Kin, Alex's brother, joined the band after he graduated from a university in the USA. At the same time, the drummer's position changed again and again, and the drummers were more of the session type then permanent members. Until their good friend, Kevin, Li Kin Wang, the former drummer of LMF, joined the band in July, 2002 after years of searching, Kevin was arguably the right person to be part of the band who had grown up listening to heavy music including hardcore whom they knows exactly where the band's music genre, lyrics and in terms of the attitude of KingLyChee. After 3 years the current line-up is the most solid as far as KingLyChee is concerned, made up of four brothers with the same passion and goals in life. The band released their second album "Stand Strong" in November,

2003 after the long break between "We Are Who We Are", following the band's contract with a brand new local Hong Kong independent label called Polar Bear Production owned by Paul Wong (member of the legend band—Beyond as well) in August, 2002. On 25th December, 2003, KingLyChee organized their first solo concert in celebration of their second CD release.

illustration 2: KingLyChee first album "We are Who We are" cover (photo:Riz)

illustration 3: KingLyChee Second album "Stand Strong" cover (design by Gabe)

4. 2. Hardcore Ideology and the Roots of KingLyChee

KingLyChee always emphasize that "We're not just playing music and we get on stage and we're hardcore, and we get off stage and we're like" (Giant Robot Issue 33, Summer 2004) who also made it their purpose and mission to educate those people on the culture and idea of a

movement called punk rock, which includes hardcore as well. Everything

starts with hardcore; let's see the culture of punk rock and how it resists

against cultural hegemony with the inspiration of hardcore.

4.2.1. "Punk is not dead"—U.S Hardcore

Leblanc once commented on the announcement of the death of punk

by some commentators, stating "they are right in one respect: the original

music scene that spawned the subculture is no more. What they forget,

however, is that punk was not only, nor even primarily, about punk music,

or events, or obscure political and artistic affiliations—punk was, and is,

about living out a rebellion against authority. In the sense, punk as a

subculture is still alive, with kids all over the world spawning new scenes

and constantly adding to its maintenance and development" (Leblanc 1999:

34).

By 1979, the Sex Pistols had disbanded in a maelstrom of lawsuits.

Punk rock was being co-opted by the music industry it had sought to

oppose and was marketed as a new wave. Designers Vivienne Westwood,

Zhandra Rhodes and Gianni Versace and the fashion industry had defused

punk's sartorial terrorism. Politically, the conservative forces of right-wing

parties had triumphed in Western politics and ideology. Throughout the

1980s and early on into the 1990s, in Britain, Canada and the United States,

conservative ideologies dominated public discourse. Punk was dead. The

story of British punk may have ended in San Francisco with the Sex Pistol's

demise, but the story of new U.S. hardcore punk subculture begins there.

Hardcore Punk began in the early 1980s with post punk bands like

Black Flag, the Germs, Middle Class, Fear, Fugazi, Sick of It All, Teen Idles,

Minor Threat, Bad Brains, and the Rollins Band. Hardcore bands in the

beginning were rhythmically loose and heavier than their forerunners like

The Clash, and the Sex Pistols, and played with more intensity and drive

than punk bands typically did. Later the movement began to tighten

rhythmically and the intensity increased as bands incorporated the energy

of genres like heavy metal into their sonic repertoire. Also the style

incorporates the social activism and political consciousness, anarchism of

other movements with it to create a movement very distinct from its punk

roots. The west coast group D.O.A. may be the first to coin the name

hardcore in relationship to punk with the release of Hardcore 81 which was

very influential and did much to fuel the genre but there are examples of

hardcore bands which go back to the late 70's like Black Flag, The Pagans,

The Viletones, The Germs, Chain Gang, The Misfits and others.

The movement is divided much as rap music is with east coast and west coast although other subdivisions exist as well. East coast hardcore tends to be smoother, with grooves that flow in context with the vocalist who sings or shouts the lyrics. West coast hardcore tends to be harder with rhythms that start and stop with intense bursts and vocals that combine screaming and low growling lyrics." Hardcore originated primarily around major cities like LA, DC, NYC, and Boston, as a vehicle for expressing resentment at collective double standards within the punk scene itself and outside. From about 1980 to 1984 the two most popular hardcore bands were Minor Threat from Washington D.C. and Black Flag from Los Angeles. Minor Threat was greatly inspired by Washington D.C.'s Bad Brains. Minor Threat combined a loose experimentalism reminiscent of the original punk movement while Black Flag released their album "Damaged" which defined the musical aggression of hardcore to some fans. Discharge was among the first to simplify the genre with speed driven blasts of intense rhythms within a simple three chord song structure.

In the 1980s hardcore music combined with heavy metal with bands such as DRI, and Sick of It All. There have been many sub movements

within hardcore like the straight-edge movement which got its name from a Minor Threat song which advised avoidance of drugs, alcohol, and promiscuous sex. More recent hardcore bands like NoMeansNo, Fugazi, D.O.A, and The Ex, continue in this tradition to carry on the mantle of hardcore punk rock.

Hardcore punk still retained a DIY aesthetic. Using markers, paint and metal studs, punks ornamented their clothing, handwriting slogans ("No Future, Fight War, not Wars"), symbols (the anarchist circled A), band names (Misfits, the Exploited), and song titles ("Nazi Punks Fuck Off") on their shirts and jeans; painting band logos on their leather jackets. In U.S. hardcore, politics once again played a central role in the articulation of style and lifestyle. These political factions included Peace Punks and Positive Force punks—vegetarian, spiritual, politically committed, pacifist Washington, D.C., punks inspired by Crass—straight-edge punks who advocated a chemical-free lifestyle, as well as skinheads and Nazi punks, who espoused white supremacist fascist ideologies. The prevailing punk ideology remained anarchy, with anarchist hardcore punks maintaining a high profile by organizing political groups and events. Early punks' Rock Against Racism concerts evolved into Rock Against Reagan events in the

United States. Like Crass, these groups organized fund-raising concerts, coordinated and attended protests and demonstrations, and released flyers and 'zines. This punk anarchism was not based primarily upon textual sources, but rather on a grassroots interpretation of antiauthoritarianism and personal responsibility. Punk anarchism stressed not revolution, but education towards liberation, primarily through personal choice and responsibility.

The ascendancy of hardcore punk created a schism in the punk scene. Hardcore began not only to describe a type of fast, hard-edged punk music, but to denote subcultural commitment as well. Hardcore punks expressed the greatest commitment to the punk subculture, hardcore punks viewed their participation in the subculture as permanent, exhibiting their disdain for mainstream society through their adoption of the most extreme forms of punk style and lifestyle.

4.2.2. Straight-edge

In the late 70s, USA, Washington D.C. - the local punk scene - is bigger than ever, but as time went by many punks just turned into weird dressed colorful junkies. Normal shows can only be accessed from people older

than 21 years to protect minors from the dangers of alcohol abuse. The only exception was the so-called "all ages" shows. At these shows minors would receive an X on the back of their hands, painted with a black magic marker, to exclude them from getting alcohol (through this X they could easily be identified as minors at the counter).

Some of the teens were quite unsatisfied with the way the scene developed back then, with all its drug abuse and slogans like "no future", therefore they took the initiative and founded their own bands, wrote their own lyrics against drug abuse and the resulting lethargy. They started to preach other ideals which were much more constructive than the average punk bands message back then. At that time the hardcore scene was born out of the cornerstones of the punk scene. Some punk ideas lived on in hardcore, for example the DIY ethic (do it yourself), some politic ideals and independence, but all the cynic and destructive elements were replaced by more positive messages.

One of these lyrics was giving a whole sub culture its name:

"Straight Edge" by Minor Threat, 1981

I'm a person just like you
But I've got better things to do
Than sit around and fuck my head
Hang out with the living dead
Snort white shit up my nose
Pass out at the shows
I don't even think about speed
That's something I just don't need
I've got the straight edge
I'm a person just like you
But I've got better things to do
Than sit around and smoke dope
'Cause I know I can cope
Laugh at the thought of eating ludes
Laugh at the thought of sniffing glue
Always gonna keep in touch
Never want to use a crutch
I've got the straight edge

As Minor Threat became more popular, many older punks began to paint the X which was known from all ages shows on their hands to declare their solidarity with the younger kids and to give up alcohol and drugs with them together - the whole movement had its sign from that time on. (Note: Even when most people think that Minor Threat is the founder of the straight edge philosophy, some others believe that the band Teen Idles, something like a pre-Minor Threat band, expressed these thoughts first without getting so popular with it).

Straight-edge refers to a philosophy of most basic tenets that promote

a drug free lifestyle. It developed as an offshoot of the punk rock/hardcore

scenes of the early 1980's when the term itself is believed to have been

coined by Ian Mackaye, in the self-titled song, while he was the singer of

the seminal hardcore band, Minor Threat. Mackaye eschewed the nihilistic

tendencies of punk rock, promoting instead the simple (almost simplistic)

philosophy of "don't drink/ don't smoke/ don't fuck."   In the 12 years

since the demise of Minor Threat, these simple beliefs have transformed

the minds of scores of teens worldwide. Increasingly disenchanted with

societal ills, young men and women adopt the straight-edge doctrine as a

blueprint to better first themselves, and then the world in which they live.

While the original definition of straight-edge only included the rejection of

mind altering substances and promiscuous sex, modern interpretations

include a vegetarian (or vegan) diet and an increasing involvement and

awareness of environmental and political issues. As noted, straight-edge

grew out of the punk rock/hardcore scene and so music plays an

important role. The Teen Idles, an early 80's Washington, DC hardcore

band, and something of a precursor to Minor Threat, can arguably be

called the first straight-edge band. Since that time there have been

hundreds if not thousands of bands who've so labeled themselves. Early

bands included Minor Threat, SSD and Uniform Choice. In the mid to late

80's, straight-edge hardcore reached a zenith, especially in the greater

Metropolitan area of New York City. This atmosphere led to the creation of

Gorilla Biscuits, Bold, Wide Awake and arguably the most prolific band of

the era, Youth of Today. While the bands of this period did much to

popularize straight-edge, they also contributed to its close minded and

antagonistic aspects. The attitude between straight-edge and the rest of the

world often took on adversarial tones during this time, largely becoming

"The positive youth crew versus people who drink, smoke and/or do

drugs." Many people dislike straight-edge and its adherents because of

such intolerant views.

Straight-edge today, while nothing like the "halcyon" days "back in

'88," still offers a viable and positive lifestyle. Bands such as Strife,

Mouthpiece, Earth Crisis and Snapcase, continue to proliferate and bear the

standard. While its detractors often claim that straight-edge(rs) are no more

than suburbanite, cliquish, fashion victims, few can argue that the

philosophy is still valid. The drug-free lifestyle has left its positive impact

on more than one wayward youth. Perhaps the ideals and ideas are more

pertinent today than ever as the focus begins to reach beyond affecting

merely oneself to altering and improving one's society and environment.

4.3. "We Are Who We Are" – The Missions of KingLyChee

As the adherence of the band movement, the hardcore/punk rock

culture had a dramatic impact on the lives of Riz, Alex, Andy and Kevin in

that it gave them a direction and, more importantly, a positive outlook on

life. To them, hardcore is much more than just music and they really

wanted to represent hardcore as best as they could by talking about it in

the local media and in interviews, etc. Since day one, the band has had its

very clear vision and mission, articulated through its music.

Following the path of those hardcore bands, KingLyChee tried to

build and promote a hardcore scene in Hong Kong. The members are

strongly attached to hardcore ideology, and the band emphasizes that

hardcore is not a trend but a way of life (SCMP, November, 28, 2003). In

another interview, KingLyChee expressed their attitude towards hardcore

ideology, "it's a culture, music is just one of its media. It is not about

performing, and we will still live in a hardcore way. Hardcore is about

protecting the unlucky people, being fair, facing squarely those social

problems and trying to stop them……hardcore is rational; it tries to

inspire people to ponder over some issues, such as asking yourself 'what

are you doing?' Everyone will have a different role, that's the importance

of life." (PM magazine, November 2003)

With their strong beliefs, King LyChhee, using their music and lyrics,

express their feelings and viewpoints on certain issues that they think need

to be drastically addressed. The traditions of U.S hardcore activist ideology

inspired KingLyChee as well. The attitude shows their activist ideology of

not just exposing the problems they recognize, but to do something for

those suffering groups. For examples, the band once organized a concert in

aid of victims of the Tuen Mum bus tragedy on August 17, 2003. The band

has also helped a charity distribute food to the homeless and raised money

for families of SARS victims. KLC also donated a portion of the record sales

of their second album" Stand Strong" to the Senior Citizen Home Safety

Association. As they stated in their interview by the SCMP on November

28, 2003, "This is our style. We've organized loads of charity shows before

because we want to help people who are in need."(SCMP, November 28,

2003)

Apart from hardcore ideology, straight-edge lifestyle also gives some

inspirations to KingLyChee members. Maybe some of the straight-edgers have a die-hard attitude to the so-called regulation of "don't drink/ don't smoke/ don't fuck." But KingLyChee members' stance towards Straight-edge lifestyles is not the firm regulations. "We have been promoting this lifestyle in a positive way. We are not the hardline-extreme-type who use straight edge as a criteria to befriend people. That's just ridiculous but I don't think anyone segregates people like this anymore anyway, at least I hope no one does that still. Our X's are on our hands and when people ask us to explain then we do. We started up Hong Kong's first straight-edge hardcore band called Guan 36 and introduce straight edge and that's it. From day one it's been about respecting people differences, if people choose to drink and smoke then that's fine. Everyone has the freedom to make their own choices-as long as they respect our choice of lifestyle then we respect theirs." (Fracture, April/May, 2003)

KingLyChee have made it their purpose and mission to deconstruct the pop culture in Hong Kong, in other words, ***educate those around on the culture and idea of a movement called punk-rock***, which includes hardcore as well. Punk rock and hardcore represent an attitude and a lifestyle,

premised on challenging what is the normal way of thought within society.

As the band can witness in Hong Kong, the majority of Hong Kong's residents, including the youth, are apathetic to what is going on around. Most of the people in Hong Kong are simply unconcerned about the problems of the city. Very few people concerned about issues such as environment, the elderly, racism, etc. Lives are lived forever in pursuit of financial and material happiness; too busy to care about the youth. For this reason, KingLyChee made it their mission to *raise awareness of certain issues*. These issues include racism, child abuse, the environment, homelessness, repression of women, repression of any form of freedoms, as well as various other issues that the band feels need to be drastically addressed. They understand that to many people in Hong Kong, their way of thought is very unusual. Their way of speech is very unusual to their fellow Hong Kong bands as well. By this definition KingLyChee are clearly not a typical Hong Kong band, which from day one the founder of the band, Riz, has made it an important part of the band's music, lyrics and daily practice. They are a band that will clearly and openly question something that the band doesn't feel right. Whether it's regarding a fellow Hong Kong band's way of dress or actions, KingLyChee will confront an

issue that they feel needs to be confronted. They feel that "by confronting

an issue the band can come closer to actually solving the problem and

therefore pave the way for future bands and residents to clearly embrace

punk rock and hardcore ideology. When we confront an issue what they

do for a positive change and result, and is not meant to be

counter-productive to the future Hong Kong music community"

(Revolution, January 2003). Of course, the band admits that it does not

have the answers to all the problems, but at least it tries to raise an issue to

see if someone else does have a solution. That's the band's attitude in life.

By simply talking about it the band is just trying to help push the

process of finding a solution. That is the purpose of the band, to make

people at least think about certain issue. KingLyChee use their music to

promote their lyrics and their ideas. They strongly believe that punk rock is

nothing without its music, but punk rock is meaningless without thought

provoking lyrics. If punk rock bands play music with meaningless lyrics

they are considered fake and ridiculed by true believers and members of

this sub-culture. Lyrics in punk rock and hardcore music are just as

important, even more than the actual music itself. The band is especially

supportive of those bands who do not pretend to be something that they

are not on stage or in their daily lives, via clothing, music or stage actions.

CHAPTER 5

Music as an Arena of Youth Resistance

Separating music and lyrics is an analytical strategy much criticized by popular scholars. Yet in this case considering lyrics in isolation and then turning to the music forces us to eschew simple reading of the song. But Lull (1992) emphasizes that "Lyrics of popular songs can be used as communicative resources, too. Although most listeners claim that the "beat" or "sound" of the music is generally more important than the lyrics, the impact of words must not be overlooked. Popular music projected a language that was useful to adolescents in their personal and social lives years ago. Analyses of lyrics throughout the history of popular music have consistently demonstrated the pertinence of music at various periods. When a personally relevant or amusing lyric is transmitted in music it often becomes a focal point for listeners, sometimes overriding the physical and emotional attractiveness of the beat. The beat can be seen as a medium for delivering the lyric in a rhythmic way; sending it deep in the mind of listeners." (Lull 1992: 20-21)

In his study of Metalheads (fans of those heavy metal music), Harris observed "With most Death Metal, the lyrics are almost totally

indecipherable without a lyric sheet…the interpretation of lyrics is always problematic, but how might we understand them when they are indistinct…Yet whether the lyrics are available or not, the song titles generally are, and they leave little room for ambiguity. A title like *Fucked with a knife* creates such a horrific images that it may determine the meaning of the song to the point where lyrics are virtually superfluous…Would it apply to hearings when no lyrics and song titles are available?" (2003:84) Taking death metal as an example, Harris dared to situate lyric importance in popular music study, with different music genre, the importance of lyric analysis varies. With a same music genre, it is sometimes impossible for hardcore punk to make it without a lyric sheet. The vocals are grunted and screamed rather than sung clearly. The musical backing is extremely fast and dexterous, with complex tempo changes. The guitars are highly distorted, and the speed of the riffs makes the songs dense and difficult to follow. Given that sounds are generally coded as harsh and unpleasant, they seem utterly suited to the matter of the lyrics.

5.1. Voices, Not Noise --- the Lyric of KingLyChee

As with most hardcore punk bands, KingLyChee constantly

emphasize the importance of their lyrics. As Riz clearly stated, "Lyrics could make or break a band for us 'cause the music could be great but if we open the booklet to find lyrics that don't impact us in the form of provoking us to think about an issue or something personal then the connection isn't as powerful." (Fracture, April/May, 2003) Therefore, as far as KingLyChee is concerned, punk rock is nothing without its music, but punk rock is meaningless without thought provoking lyrics. Lyric is their pen, their sword, and their important tool to push for social awareness, to voice out their discontentment, to change the psyche of Hong Kong youth, and to better their lives and the lives of the future residents of their beloved little city Hong Kong.

Almost all of the lyrics of KingLyChee were inspired by their own experience, daily encounter with various people and incidents. Through personal experience, feelings are translated into the lyrics. In this part, I will try to categorize three main themes of KingLyChee's lyrics as social issues, denouncement on Hong Kong's mainstream ideology, in pursuit of dream and analysis what the band try to articulate through their lyrics .

5.1.1 Social Concerns

Fighting against discrimination is the most pronounced theme in KingLyChee's songs. With the songs, the band tries to address three types of discrimination in Hong Kong: ethnic, elderly, and gender.

On Racial Discrimination

As a Southeast Asian, Riz has a deep experience of being a racial minority living in Hong Kong. Riz went through his school life in international school and when he revealed in an interview about his life in the school, he said: "In the school, there were 2 groups; on one hand, the Gui Lo (the Cantonese reference to westerners) and on the other hand, the Chinese. I didn't belong to either of the groups of people, which made me buttoned up; I don't like study and the living goal. Music seems to be my own friend at that time, and when I came home, I would just stay in my room and play guitar. Music is always my home."(Apple Daily 2000) In the song "In Tsik", they sing:

> *Do we look that different from you,*
> *That you feel the need to desecrate my childhood.*
> *Who are you to judge me?*
> *Takes a toll on me and now I feel myself draining,*
> *Drain-its what it feels like*
> *IN TSIK A KO (We are who We are)*

The screaming singing style of the songs, "Do we look that different from you, that you feel the need to desecrate my childhood?" and "Who are you to judge me?" questions that -- apart from skin color, is there any difference between various cultural groups? In the exegesis of the songs, the band states inside the CD Sleeve, "Members of this band are not members of any majority race of Hong Kong population. Life for us as kids in Hong Kong's closed-minded society was difficult, packed with memories that at times are too difficult to recall. For many of us, attending Hong Kong's local schools was an ordeal in itself with constant name-calling and ridiculing of those classmates who differed from others in terms of skin color, way of talk, dress and countless other differences based solely on cultural backgrounds." Precisely through the personal experience, Riz reflects the anger deep inside of the supreme status of some other racial groups in Hong Kong, such as Westerners and Chinese. He cries -- "Why they have the right to judge?" This kind of bad experience made Riz feel non-sense when he was six years old, "I know I'm different, I know something is wrong with me. And I always questioned myself. I was like…., I suck, and I'm not good enough to be in society here. "(Maximum Rock N' Roll, 253, June 2004)

146

In KingLyChee's lyrics, they consistently mentioned the miserable memories in daily live due to their identity as a racial minority in Hong Kong, which became a kind of psychic disturbance. As they made clear in another song "Scarred":

This is my life you've scarred.
And now honestly can you expect anything from me.
You've scarred a painful past full of painful memories.
That sound keeps me up at night.
That sounds…

"This is my life you've scarred" and "You've scarred a painful past full of painful memories" also reflect the sorrow of the oppressed racial minority in Hong Kong. In Riz's view, "there is a lot of ignorance in Hong Kong. So when people in Hong Kong see people like me, they treat us like total outsiders, we're the outcasts. That's why I felt like when I was growing up here, because I was the minority. I'd go into a Chinese restaurant and it would be loud, like they normally are. Then my family would walk in and everyone would just quiet down and look at us like, 'What are they doing here?'" (Maximum Rock N' Roll, 253, June 2004)

In another song, "Everlasting":

I just want to rest my weary head,
From this bombardment.
When you asked me how I pushed myself away.
I sat silent and held it all in.
Now look at me.
Now I'm sitting here the next morning,
Thoughts of last night are playing and rewinding.
Over and over and every time they play,
Get worst and worst.

Facing the experience of "bombardment" as a result of their minority status, they just can't take a "rest", "pushed my self away" may be a kind of escape from those bombardments; but still those miserable scenes are just "playing" and "rewinding" over and over again. It seems that they still can't run away from the past, and seems like a label on them, a label that sticks for eternity. When the scenes play over and over again, the feelings just get "worse". It seems that they had no choice but to face it with regret. Fortunately, hardcore music emerged in Riz' life with a big impact on him. "And then, I found hardcore; the entire point about hardcore is, it's okay to be different. You can be who you are. Take pride in who you are, learn more about yourself. So hardcore totally fucking saved my life, that's all I have to say" (Maximum Rock N' Roll, 253, June 2004)

On the Elderly Problem

Owing to their experience as a racial minority living in Hong Kong, the band's members are more sensitive to other marginal groups' situation in Hong Kong. That's why the band pays more attention to various discriminations towards those minority groups in Hong Kong as well.

Through the daily encounter with the elderly, Riz is inspired by the elderly who clear up garbage in McDonalds or sweep the streets, including some of the street sleepers. All this makes him aware of the elderly problem in Hong Kong society . In the song "Frail Hands",

This is me as you pass me by
Lost on the street corner from this bleak bleak life
.Don't dare to provoke anything
Does not have hope anymore
This battle, my weak heart, just can't Take care,
To swallow without a choice
My identity scratched from the city
Identity has been taken away
I'm not asset, to society

KingLyChee write the lyrics by foretelling the feelings of the elderly whose "bleak life" unseen, being neglected by the other people in the society of their contribution to the society when they still got the productivity towards society. Even those old people are regarded as

useless, burden or not "asset" to society. But the elderly just can "swallow

without a choice". As far as the band sees it, the elderly are treasures, a

goldmine of wisdom and memories. But in Hong Kong, instead of treating

them as assets to society, people see them as a social burden. This prejudice

is ridiculous to the band, and the song a dedication to the elderly, which

prompts other people to think about this odd scenario in Hong Kong.

On Gender Issues

KingLyChee also pay attention to the issue of gender discrimination.

In "Gotta Go See", the band intends to replicate the thoughts of some

Asian females oppressed by Asia's traditionally male-dominated culture,

There she goes
There's so much anger inside of her
To ever properly explain
She gets her words confused and
It's why she feels like her world in ending
Trapped in herself never know who's at fault
Just wants to live her life
Save her soul

This song is sung through the eyes of the countless people the band

have befriended over the years, summarizing their daily struggles in

wanting to be themselves but are forced to be cloaked in a culturally

obedient coat to their families because of cultural barriers. Behind the

obedient coat is the "anger inside of her", they may sometimes feel "like a

world in ending" and at last the song ended with an appeal to save their

life and soul which precisely reflects the denial of female personal needs in

some Asian cultures.

In "Refuse":

I refuse to accept this culture of vanity
Focus on images
Negative cyclical effects
Effects of trendy terms
A model that society accepts
Creates a so-called "successful" model
Based on appearance
To shape a culture of superficial judgment developed day by day

Accommodative to the trend of promoting importance of physical

appearance of weight-loss treatments, breast enlargement pills and other

things, the band tries to appeal for the rejection of the judgmental culture

vis à vis women, as people are solely judged by physical appearance.

KingLyChee also pay attention to the current affairs in Hong Kong.

After the tragedy of a family in Tin Sui Wai, in which a woman and her

two children were killed by her husband, the band wrote a song on

it —"Children":

His joy's been ripped and torn out,
replaced by a sense of hopelessness.
He's just a boy with a golden heart,
trapped in a world that will tear him apart.
How do you respond? How do you respond to the words...
"NO - ONE - LOVES - ME"
I declare that I will never turn a blind eye again...
This responsibility - lies within me.
I will - never - stand idle again...
The key - to change - is in - their precious little hands...

This tragedy is not only related to domestic violence, but also related

to the gender issue. Through the song, the band expresses its condolences

for the children murdered by their father, as well as misgivings over the

childhood life that was ruined. Their "joy" had been "ripped" and "torn

out" and "replaced by a sense of hopelessness". Confronted with this

situation, despite sadness, the band even urges others to "never turn a

blind eye again" and "change" the situation as their "responsibility".

On Education System

Despite the emotional feelings on their living experience of being a

racial minority in Hong Kong, the band also attempts to respond to racism

by understanding the rationale behind it. In the song "Masterpiece", the

band traced the reason of racism in the imperfect educational system of

Hong Kong.

Look inside yourself and you will find
That we're all the same
No one cares about a color of skin
We stand united screaming for you to listen
I'm talking everything that I've learned
And erasing it from my skull
Cause you can't pollute me
With your false educating…
Look closer at what you read and you will see
They try to desperately to create an enemy
So it's up to us to create
A better world for ourselves
Please think before you speak
Look at me for who I am
Not for what I am

According to the band's understanding, one of the main reasons that

racism exists here in Hong Kong is because of ignorance. The education of

Hong Kong's public schools forces students to recite and memorize things

ambiguously, without these things being clearly explained to them. It

makes the band's members wonder why the schools do not teach about

racial and cultural tolerance at an earlier age. The rote-learning education

system of Hong Kong doesn't inspire ideas and solutions, but "pollutes" and turns children into heartless robots when they grow up. This "false education", thus leaves the kids clueless about the people they interact with everyday. It is almost as if the educational body of Hong Kong is purposely creating an ignorant and socially intolerant community. The greedy quest for material wealth becomes a perfect match. When these kids grow up they remain ignorant and apathetic to the problems around the world. To them, it is no concern to them while other people suffer.

In another interview, Riz claimed that "I feel super-blessed that this band is around. To be honest, for me this band is very therapeutic. It gets at all the stuff that's inside my heart, and I get to scream it out. But the best part is that it's not me, myself screaming. I know that when I'm singing a song about racism, I know that I can look at Alex, and he's standing behind me. And he's someone Chinese. It was Chinese people, who treated me bad in the beginning, but I look at my band, I look at the community we've built, and it shows me that there's hope in Hong Kong." (Maximum Rock n' Roll 253, June 2004)

5.1.2. Resisting Hong Kong Mainstream Ideology

Another theme of KLC's lyrics is the denouncement of Hong Kong's

Mainstream Ideology, and the discontent of the band can be seen in the

song "Sickened Eyes"

What this world revolves around is this
Flowing through this city's arteries…
An endless stream of polluted dreams
Instilled in me…
The belief…
That "there's no reason to fight this"

Materialism
Exists on every level of this Society
I run far away…
Plagued by lies, of commercial lives
Mould the way that you should live
Cloaked in designer labeled dreams…
Don't try and challenge their enforced status quo…
They have millions washed chasing their monetary hopes…
I run far away…

Consumed by work and relaxing
Empty souls that live on a material level
Destructive consumption
Narrow minds are hard to open

In the first part of the lyric, the band intends to condemn some social

realities that they identify. As they stated, the "Materialism exists on every

level of this society" people living here are just "plagued by lies, of

commercial lives" and "cloaked in designer labeled dreams", the goal of

most of the Hong Kong people lies in their "monetary hopes". People in

Hong Kong just "live on a material level" with "empty soul" and do not care about other things. Through the song, the band criticizes the abundance of material wealth of Hong Kong and the lack of other aspects such as arts, culture and music. In their opinion, the most important point is that "the majority mode leads people's mind to be brainwashed gradually". Thus in the second part of the song, the band seeks to raise people's awareness and persuade them to hold on and fast to their independent thoughts and not be affected by the mainstream brainwash.

I will never judge or assume anything based on material view again
Humanity and life values will accompany me for the rest of my life
Nothing can affect my independent thoughts
Let's face the ideas that have already poisoned
a vast amount if souls and sing…

Fuck You
NO-you can't hold me
No-you can't silence me
My-heart is sworn
To-fight this war
Don't be afraid…step out of a material mind
Don't be afraid…step out of a material mind
No one can take away your life

They can't silence you, stay independent
They can't silence me, stay committed
You've got us so stand strong, never be led by
You've got us so stand proud! the chains of the majority again

To them, if you can "stay independent", "stand strong", "stand proud", then you can "step out of a material mind" and "no one can take away your life", "you can't hold me", "you can't silence me". All the lyrics try to encourage people to fight against material brainwash. A minority they may be at the time, they will however become "part of the chain of the majority again" some day.

The band is acutely aware that pursuing something that has no financial value is seen as foolish by the majority of the cityfolk. In another of their songs, "Stand Strong", the lyric reflects the spirit and belief of the band, stating: "The path we have chosen to dedicate our lives to, is not one accepted by family or society. Why? Because there is no monetary reward for everything we work tirelessly to accomplish and for all the causes that we fight for. When those people see us fight for the rights of minorities or for better treatment of our elderly, they laugh at us for wasting the time." But in the song, the band firmly upholds its beliefs.

I will-Stand Strong-to this Stand-Forever
Go ahead-and ridicule me
Go ahead-and belittle me
This stand I hold tight…your criticism won't affect me
The fire from within my heart…cause you're too blind to see
I've been told that nothing I've done in my life…matters

They think that we've done is meaningless
To us, wealth isn't measured by our bank accounts but by what's in our minds
But what we value in life is what's in our minds, not material possessions
Its all we have…it's all we'll ever have
These things we will carry with us until the end…
Until the end…

The band still stands strong with "the fire from within their heart" in the face of the ridiculing and belittling by the people, whose "criticism" or thought that "what we've done is meaningless" won't "affect" them. The band still stands strong on the beliefs "value in life is what's in our minds, not material possessions" "until the end".

"Our Life's Blood" is especially written for the younger generation in Hong Kong.

Our song…
To release an idea of building a positive world
To tell you to stand up for your real self
At times, you may question your own mind, as time goes by
Disbelieve your own self, you may be afraid
So you fight your heart, your soul, your thoughts
Although times goes by
Your everything that means anything to you
The rights of your being are still in your hands

The band encourages youth to stand up for their real selves, as in Hong Kong they are discouraged from developing their own unique identities and aren't encouraged to become whatever they want to become.

Instead, parents, school and society impose on them the path and identity that they should follow. They tell the youth that "The rights of your being are still in your hands" and let them know that they should/must "fight your heat, your soul, your thoughts", and be set free from the mercy of the adult world.

KingLyChee also have disagreement/dismay with the nonchalance of Hong Kong people except for monetary rewards. In the song "Charcoal", through the experience of their travel abroad, such as watching an innocent young boy strum a toy guitar begging for money in China, they would like to tell the Hong Kong people how lucky they are and they should "Cherish the opportunities we have" and "Cherish the freedoms we have". Confronted with the possible curtailment of freedom following the proposed amendment to Article 23 of the Basic Law, the band encourages the people in Hong Kong to stand up and safeguard their freedoms. At the time when the song was being written, Hong Kong was experiencing a high tide of daily suicides in the post-1997 period. Thus, the band composed lyrics like "Let go of those excuses for giving up on life; let' go of those worthless knee-jerk reactions; try to consider the hardships of others in this world, the sky remains the same, it all depends on how we think

and face the world". It aims at drumming up the hopes of the Hong Kong people, as well as encouraging them to live on in the difficult time.

5.1.3. Pursuit of Dreams

Other than expressing their opinions and feelings pertaining to social issues and the mainstream ideology, King LyChee also made the pursuit of dreams a main theme in their lyrics. Since the band was formed, there has been a constant change in its lineups, while discouraging words or criticisms from other people have hindered the development of KingLyChee. In the face of this tough circumstance, the band once again emphasizes the importance of music or forming a band, which helped it to gain its confidence in its unusual and harsh lives.

In the interview of Rock Magazine, Riz expressed how music helped him to get through those harsh moments in his life, "I had a miserable childhood, (discriminated by other peers and without friends) for me, the only way to escape from this kind of unhappy incidents was to listen to some angry, assaulted music. At the age of 10 or 11, I started to listen to some metal music, that kind of assaulted music made me find some comforts……when one day, one of my friend introduced hardcore music to

me, and when I read the lyrics, I started to stick into punk and hardcore culture." (Rock Magazine Vol. 239, 2003) In the same interview, Riz also told how the hardcore music helps him regain his self-confidence. "When I was a young boy, I was so scared because of the uniqueness of my skin color. I am a Pakistani, and have no self-confidence; I am/was shy. But when I found hardcore music, I started to be proud of myself, proud of my uniqueness. In the society, to be different is unacceptable; you must look the same as everybody, with the same lives and goals, drive same kind of cars and marry same kind of people…these are all bull shit. But hardcore respects somebody who is unusual and different, which gives lives various mixtures and possibilities." (Rock Magazine, Vol. 239, 2003)

In the song "Hopeless", the message echoes the views expressed in the interview above,

If I had a choice do you think I would waste it?
I've got nothing to offer and that's how I feel.
This music is all I have.
Can anything else come crash down on me?
I've got this one last piece of me and me and
I'm going to hold it.

"This music is all I have" represents the band's relationship with

music, as they are proud of "holding" this "last piece" of their own battlefield, nothing else "come crash down on" them to hold music as their discharge from the life's downfalls in their life. In another song "Stand Strong", through the lyrics, we can see, facing condemnation from other people, how KLC still stand strong.

They laugh at us because we are different
We laugh at them because they're all the same
This stand…provokes us to constantly think
We are proud of it

Maybe there are some counter ideas on the ignorance, other people's laugh, KingLyChee believes that people "laugh at us" because "we are different". When other people laugh at the band, the band can laugh their ignorance off in return. In the gaze of the band, "they're all the same" and the band is "proud of" its difference and stands strong for Hardcore, "provoking them to constantly think" of different stuffs in different angles.

Even though KingLyChee present their strength, assurance of what they believe in, or what they think and what they act, still the band went through a period of disenchantment and despondence 4 years after its birth. The song "A Useless Gift" totally reflects the feelings about their 4 years'

journey. Renouncing the full band style of playing the songs with heavy guitar riffs, and profound sound of drum, Riz just sang the songs on his own with his acoustic guitar, expressing perfectly their feelings in the 4-year path, which perfectly replicates the helplessness of forming a band in Hong Kong.

4 short years ago
This was just a dream we had
To connect our thoughts
Through words and music
With the intent
To inspire others
To think about their lives
But there was so much against us

In Hong Kong society
Our dreams are crushed repeatedly…
In Hong Kong society
Our courage tested endlessly
In Hong Kong society
We have to sacrifice all that we love…
But at what cost?

On the whole, we can see in the lyrics of KingLyChee their ideas, opinions on various issue they concern, as the band declared in their official website, "We are a band that will clearly and openly question something that we don't feel is right. Whether it is regarding a fellow Hong

Kong band's way of dress or actions, we will confront an issue that we feel needs to be confronted… Of course we do not have the answers to all our problems, but at least we try to raise an issue to see if someone else does have a solution. By simply talking about it we are just trying to help push the process of finding a solution." Instead of solely condemning the problems, issues that KingLyChee don't feel right, the band also tries to find the solutions in some of the issues or conditions as well. Some of the lyrics analysed undoubtedly show their ergative approach to providing ideas and way out to some of the issues. Their encouragement shown in the lyrics also strengthens the compassion of those who share the same ideology with the band or those groups that are suppressed, suffering under Hong Kong's mainstream ideology, such as minority groups, youth, the elderly, alternative bands and musicians. Their stance against mainstream ideology is clearly illustrated as well in their lyrics.

5.2. Resisting against the Mainstream Music Scene

Hong Kong, as I mentioned in Chapter 3, is a city thoroughly absorbed in Canto-Pop music, from which the people cannot escape. It is like a horrible disease, and it just follows everywhere you go. In the subways, televisions, MTR, posters, advertisement, magazines, cafés, bars and so on, the Canto-Pop is ubiquitous. In Riz's word, "everything is plastered with this substanceless crap and kids are bombarded with it from day one."

5.2.1. True Music vs Substanceless Crap

KingLyChee is extremely discontented with the mainstream music scene. They repeatedly and openly criticize Canto-Pop music. They are very right to point out that the mainstream scene is based on commercial and formulaic pop in which the music is not really produced by actual musicians or singers. The band gets particularly worked up when other people describe these pop idols as 'musicians.'

"How can they be described as musicians when they don't write their own music and lyrics?" said Alex. "They're only karaoke queens and their music is not sincere. It's an insult to genuine musicians who struggle

through life and practice everyday." (BC Magazine, December 2003)

Riz also said, "In HK, actors and actresses or notable figures that have become popular are suddenly thrown record contracts to exploit on their popularity and demand. Basically, any celerity here can re release a cliché pop album after suddenly being thrown a record contract from a record company that will write everything for them, all they have to do is somewhat sing the melodies and the lyrics that are given to them. The end result is the same pop album released a million times every year, nothing new and definitely nothing inspiring." (Fracture, April/May, 2003) Riz rightly captures the phenomena of the mainstream music scene.

They also think the Canto-Pop's lyrics are meaningless and "pathetic half-hearted". Riz stated, "The lyrics are pathetic half-hearted written words that are copied and pasted from earlier hits and centered on the typical pop topics of love and romance. HK companies believe in a formula when it comes to lyrics and musical arrangements..." (Fracture, April/May, 2003)   In the song "Chaos of Thoughts and Actions", KingLyChee tended to arouse the audience to rise up against the sickening music industry by boycotting the, in the band's view, "rubbish" music.

To support original music

Stop buying low-quality products

Let's become the foundation and stimulate a new musical world

Let's hold our hands and unite

This is a call…for a revolution…of thoughts and actions

Come on…Its time to fight for a change and revolutionize music

Revolution-and revolutionize music

GO! Apply change

Our silence, fulfills the desire of businessman

Our silence, enhances the absurdity of this game

Games, rules, kill the souls of our musicians

Rage-the fire burning inside-the voice of Hong Kong's underground

As KingLyChee understands it, it's time to call for a revolution, which is to empower people and show them that they can take control of the music scene in Hong Kong by boycotting the substance-less music. The conflicting stance of the band makes them emphasize not to be "silent" of just "fulfilling the desire of businessman", "enhancing the absurdity of this game", following the so-called games "rules" of Hong Kong music scene which just "killed" the souls of the musicians. In KingLyChee viewpoint, boycott is an act to make those who run business in the scene recognize that the audience no longer want the standardized garbage.

Besides the role of the audience, KingLyChee also believe that the unity of the alternative music bands is vital to creating a revolution in Hong Kong's music industry, as they express in the song "Do Something"

Hold on real tightly cause
You're in for a ride
We're all in the same boat
So get up and help it float
Everyday it seems like we're waiting
What are we waiting for?
Look in my eyes and tell me if I can take it
I feel like giving in

The remarks of the songs shown in their official website correspond to their opinions on Hong Kong's alternative music scene: "It amazes us how passive members of our music community are. Certain people do nothing more then laze around waiting for people to invite them to perform at shows before they even consider attending one. While others are working night and day to build something special in our beautiful little city it pains us to think about those that are sitting at home while local bands are out busting their ass on some tiny little stage, bar, school or university in front of maybe a handful of people. What if everyone did his or her part? Is it really that difficult to fit attending shows into your schedules? Is it really that hard to even make a gesture to introduce yourself to other members of our music community? Are you that absorbed in 'keeping face' that you can't come down and help out a new band?" Therefore, for KingLyChee,

168

"it's time for a revolution." However, revolution is not without a cost.

At the beginning, the band was formed to "inspire others to think about their lives" with KingLyChee's "words" and "music". However, constantly, "there was so much against us", which makes their dreams "crushed repeatedly" and "tested endlessly". Sometimes, they are at a loss as to whether what they've done is right or wrong, to the point of even asking themselves sometimes: Why "we have to sacrifice all that we love" and pay "cost" for their dreams? In their second album "Stand Srong", there is a rerun dialogue based on their miserable experience of conveying demos to the boss of a mainstream record company which reflects some of the confrontations from other people, which discouraged KingLyChee's spirit.

Boss: Come in
Assistant: Hey boss! Got a new band for you to check out. They're called KingLyChee.
Boss: Come on in
Assistant: Sit down here boys.
Boss: KingLyChee right? Got any demos?
Assistant: Sure. They've brought some demos. (To the guitar player…)
Get it out man.
KingLyChee: Here.
Boss: (Listens for a few seconds)Next! (Listen to the next tracks)Next!(Listen to an acoustic song for a bit and then angrily screams) No! No! No! No! No! Skip it! (Listens to an acoustic song for a bit and then angrily screams) Stop it! (Looks back at the band) Come on- its all just noise! Secondly, you guys are singing in English. This is Hong Kong man!

(Looking back at the assistant)Are you the one who found this shit band?

Assistant: *Of course not! It was…it was that guy-what's his name! He's the one that found them!*

Boss: *(Looking back at the band) Let me tell you something…what you have here — isn't worth a shit in Hong Kong!!*

Boss: *(In a sarcastic tone) Is this your first day in Hong Kong? How can people sing that shit in Karaoke? Where do you think you are coming from? The US?! Do you idiots have any idea how the music market works in Hong Kong! Media, Television, Karaoke, mass-marketing…how can you do all that with this crap! Why don't you call this "HK Hardcore Crap"instead!*

In the dialogue, the response of the boss reflects to a very large extent the attitude of those working in Hong Kong's mainstream record companies. It also shows the operating strategy in the music industry: media, television, karaoke and mass-marketing. Countenance to this kind of condition, KingLyChee may feel unaided and annoyed but still they keep their strong spirit on fighting against the terrible situation through the chorus of "A Useless Gift."

> *I will never let, I will never let this world kill my voice*
> *I will never let, I will never let this world kill my passion*

These two slogans totally reflect the toughness and fighting spirit of the band in producing their albums in a DIY way and in organizing shows by themselves. The supports of their fans/supporters also reinforce their

strength to do what they think is right. In the song "Thank You", which is composed as a result of the inspiration received from a very emotional email to the band one day, and tells the band that its lyrics and music can strike the hearts of people throughout Hong Kong. The band also dedicates the song to its supporters, "When we see you move based on your feeling as us…", every second they spend reading KingLyChee lyrics, every word they express to the band at the show or through email" When we know that we are able to influence you…" and "When we hear you stand for the same ideals as us…". All the support gives the band strength" Our hearts got filled with strength…" to keep on believing that they have the power to change no matter how difficult it seems. And the last part of the song,

As I write these words on this piece of paper
I want you to know that our hearts are powered
By your love
By your friendship
And by your thoughts

When you take time to read our words
You are entering our lives
This song is dedicated to you…
For letting us becoming a part of your lives

WE WILL NOT LET YOU DOWN

With the lyrics, the band dedicated the songs to their supporters with

their "love", "friendship" and "thoughts" and lastly guaranteed not to "let" their supporters "down".

KingLyChee also emphasizes the unity of Hong Kong's alternative bands. Through the song, the band informs that all of the musicians are "in the same boat", and bands and musicians should be helping each other by different means. The most basic act is to show up at band shows to support their fellows in the scene. However, as KingLyChee have observed, different music bands such as indie-pop, punk/hardcore, electronica, metal bands are just eager to support those that they know but not all other bands and musicians in the scene, so how can the alternative music scene grow?

KingLyChee also encourage other bands and musicians to be more active in spreading their music in various ways and not just "waiting" as constant "waiting" will be discouraging, which will eventually make the bands and musicians "give in".

Now KingLyChee is not alone. As Riz said, "KingLyChee is not only the four of us now. It's a community. We want to challenge the mainstream music scene..."

5.2.2. DIY Production vs Commercial Production

Most of the alternative bands did not engage in mainstream operations. They insist on practising the do-it-yourself (DIY) lifestyles. After the establishment of KingLyChee, Riz decided to publish a music magazine on bands and skateboarding after a long talk with one of his friends who played in a band as well. The magazine, 'Start from Scratch', was produced and distributed by him. It aims at promoting the idea of hardcore without any help of a commercial publisher or distributors. He wanted to include mail order so that kids could read articles about punk/hardcore and then in the middle of the zine one could scan through a mail order section to pick out records from active hardcore/ punk bands worldwide. The zine has been a bilingual publication since day one. It has been made possible with friends that he met through skateboarding or through attending shows, who offered to help translate the articles.

When KingLyChee started to plan for their album recordings "We are Who we are" in 2000 after winning a band competition sponsored by Tom Lee, YMC channel, Channel V, and Rock Records in which 50 bands took part. Their original winning song, entitled "Hell Song #5", was played on YMC channel 3 to 4 times the following weekend on March, 2000. A

mainstream commercial operation once contacted the band and convinced them to release their debut album under the name of the company. It was really a good opportunity for the alternative bands to produce their albums with better recording equipments, and the bands could also save a lot of time on the setup of the equipments as well as money on booking a studio. Most of all, it was an assurance of a good quality record. On the other hand, it was really a good opportunity to be famous with the assistance of the company in promotion. Or perhaps those bands could even make a phenomenal rise in the mainstream music scene.

Nevertheless, the members of KingLyChee refused to do so after considering the limitations imposed by the company, although it could lead to the uncertainty during the recording sections and more money could be spent on booking a studio. Morevoer, it was time consuming to record nine songs in 10 hours, while hiring a recording studio cost $700 per hour. All they wanted was to finish their debut album by themselves freely without any creativity and recording limitations even force the band need to borrow money from friends and parents in order to produce their own CD album with total budget of $40 000. The band produced the album all by itself, from setting up equipments, booking the studio, shooting the

pictures of the CD cover, designing the CD sleeves to typing the lyrics inside the CD sleeves. After the CD production was complete, the members needed to distribute the CDs and posters to various record stores and shops by themselves, posting posters on the streets. Given that it took a year to sell 1000 copies, the band didn't make any money. What they did gain was a stream of loyal supporters who have fervently joined the hardcore revolution.

The band released their second album "Stand Strong" in November, 2003 after a long break and after the band signed a contract with a brand new local Hong Kong independent label called Polar Bear Production, owned by Paul Wong (member of the legendary band—Beyond as well) in August, 2002. Mostly DIY, Paul Wong helped out as a producer and added to the hype, three collaborators from Hong Kong alternative rock scene, Jun Kung, Josie Ho and Kit from LMF all made guest appearances on the album. A well-known local tattoo artist Gabe Shum also created the illustration for the album's chilling, visually powerful cover: a series of hands holding real hearts, connected to form a heart shape, placed on the top of Hong Kong's red bauhinia flower. And Prodip from LMF helped with the design of the CD sleeve.

Apart from the help of these friends, with the assistance of providing better recording equipment and ample time of recordings, and sound engineer of the Polar Bear studio, Ah Yun assisted the band's whole recording session and the quality of the records was vastly improved. Riz even thought of Ah Yun as being the fifth member of KingLyChee during the recording period. Although the band has been signed by a record label, it is still taking an active role in the whole concept of the album, recording the album and promoting KingLyChee. It even set up a 'street team' to promote its new album. As Riz recalled, "I posted a recruitment notice on our website, We thought only our friends would join, but now we have more than eighty members and I didn't know most of them before. It's the most touching thing in the world. These people take time out of their busy lives to help us."(BC magazine, 1, December, 2003) The street team members helped promote the album in their schools, universities, hang-out places and neighborhoods with the posters and stickers provided by KingLyChee. To celebrate the release of their second album "Stand Strong", the band also held a CD release show on 25, December, 2003.

In contrast with the abundant resources of the mainstream recording companies, The DIY creativeness is the survival tactic of the

underprivileged, especially the alternative bands in Hong Kong. The

advances in technology such as powerful home computers and digital

keyboards, which can duplicate almost any sound imaginable, as well as

cheap recording hardware all make it possible for budding

singer-songwriters to create DIY CDs in their own band rooms. This kind

of DIY production undoubtedly subverts the operations of the mainstream

record companies. As the alternative bands and musicians can release their

CD on their own, they can record their albums, design their album covers

and sleeves inside and promote the album by themselves. On the other

hand, DIY rituals of alternative bands are charging up energy for members

to construct their own sense of confidence and self-worth.

5.2.3. Unembellished Concert vs Adorn Concert

Participating in KingLyChee concerts is a very different experience

compared to participating in other mainstream singers' concerts. Through

their concerts, KingLyChee try to create another concert culture and a

resistance to the mainstream music scene in Hong Kong. In this part, I will

try to demonstrate how KingLyChee's shows and concerts resist against

the mainstream music scene and the mainstream ideology in two ways.

First of all, the raw set up of the shows and the concerts makes the concerts focus solely on music itself once again. Secondly, it breaks down the buy and sell relationship of performers and the audience, emphasizing on the participation of the audiences.

For a long period of time, concerts organized by the mainstream music companies and their singers seemed to be another sub-products of the singers. It can be said to be the products of the mainstream music industry. When the audiences buy the tickets of the concerts, the organizers will guarantee them a seat, some luxurious clothing, accessories on the singers' bodies, an extraordinary stage with various light-setting, special equipment and traps accompany with all of the hit songs of the singers.

In order to resist against the persisting rules and habits of pop concerts, in KingLyChee concerts, it isn't possible to see a stage with any tricks, just the guitar, drum sets, high power amplifiers, sophisticated mixers, wires snaking everywhere, some raw lighting system and the shows sometimes will even be held in some open area, such as a park, without a stage, and a banner may very well be the only decoration of their shows. Very different from the other pop singers' concert, the members of the band, like the young folks, also wear casual dressings such as T-shirts,

jeans and shorts when they are on stage.

illustration 4: KingLyChee Live performance in Taiwan
(photo from KLCofficial website)

The whole concept of the mainstream concerts seems to be another embodiment of the "buy and sell" relationship, as the consumers can get the kind of services they expect from the concert producers by taking a look at the so-called pop stars on stage, listening to the songs that they expected. Besides, the detached relationship is reinforced by the physical distance of the stage and the sitting area of the audience. The audience always sit far away from the stage which seems to be an altar of the stars. The relationship between the performers and the audience always resembles that between an idol and the ordinary people, and the latter worship and adore their idol through the holy practices of buying its records, finally getting involved in the concerts to finish the ritual of worshipping it. In most of the pop concerts, the audiences are trained to be disciplined and quiet. What they need to do is just sit back and enjoy the

179

show, with limited involvements such as clapping hands, screaming, as well as singing-a-long with the singers from their seats. Not many people will stand up, wave their bodies or dance to the music. The security guards on duty at the concerts will prohibit the audiences from standing up from their seats.

Illustration 5: Scream from the audience in KingLyChee concert (Photo from KLC official website.)

In contrast to this buy and sell, idol and worshippers' relationship, KingLyChee appear to create another kind of culture of concert participation in Hong Kong. As a general rule, the stage does not belong to KingLyChee themselves only, as there is an open space for the audience as well. Most of the time, KingLyChee will choose the venue without any seats, so that the audience can get a place closer to them. When the band plays, the members can feel how the audience feel through their motions such as nodding heads, screaming, or singing-a-long. KingLyChee even collide with the security guards who restrict the movement of the audience, and go near the stage and play diving game.

Illustration 6: Riz collide with the security guard

(photo from KLC official website)

The band often tries to break the detachment between performers and audience by various means, while provoking the audience to participate in the show in different ways. Firstly, it always tries to share the message of each song that they perform in the show. In these days, quite a few bands explain what their songs are about before playing them, even distributing the lyrics to the audience before the release of their 2 CDs and encouraging the audiences to sing along with the band, as well as inviting people to go up on the stage and get the microphones to sing when they feel identified with the lyrics. In KingLyChee's shows, it is not a surprise to see some young people singing with Riz on stage.

Illustration 7: two boys sing along with Riz on stage (photo from KLC's official website)

The diving game is also another essential element in KingLyChee's shows, and they never turn down those who get the mood from the music the band play; they will just climb up onto the stage and dive from the stage one after another. There are various diving styles -- some of them dive by his back; some of them just jump and let his/her body fly to the crowd; and the people down the stage just spontaneously catch them and the people just lift up those who dive, after waving for about 10 seconds before placing him/her down on the floor.

Illustration 8: stage diving game (photo from KLC official website)

Sometimes even KingLyChee members dive from the stage too, and

play their guitars while being lifted up by the crowd. KingLyChee will also

teach the crowd to play circle-pit, which is a game that one person acts as a

leading boy/girl, when he/she runs in a circle, everybody just follows

them and run, before crashing into other people, making the whole thing

seem like the whole room is running around in one big circle in unity.

Illustration 9: Circle pit (photo from KLC official website)

Illustration 10: Riz dive from the stage(photo from KLC official website)

During the past 3t to 4 years, KingLyChee have performed more than

100 shows at home, across the mainland, and Asia---even rocking 10,000

rockers in Seoul. They play regularly in different bars and other venues. By

comparison, Canto-Pop stars only perform in public when an audience of

20,000 fills up the stadium. As Carmen Choi, editor of an indie-music monthly "15-tracks", says "Two years ago, there were one to three alternative concerts a year, now there are about four a month." (Asiaweek Magazine, August, 2001) Although there are mostly 200 to 300 audiences taking part in the alternative rock shows, still the bands now have more chances of performing in public. Playing live shows is a core element for a band, and KingLyChee never miss any chance of public performance. Sometimes the band even organizes shows by itself and invites other hardcore and punk bands from foreign countries to play in Hong Kong. For example, a punk/thrash band R.A.M.B.O's Hong Kong tour on 12, April 2004 was organized by Riz and KingLyChee, while KingLyChee made a support appearance at the show. Riz also organized the first Punk-Hardcore-Metal festivals in Hong Kong on 9, May 2004. An occasion for Hong Kong punk/hardcore/metal bands notwithstanding, a Beijing punk band—Reflector - was also invited to perform at that day. The band makes frequent appearances on various shows and acts as the organizer of some shows on one hand, while supporting the local alternative music scene by playing at shows on the other. All this effort reflects the DIY spirit behind the band, and there is no need to wait for somebody to organize a

show, as all music lovers can organize shows on their own.

Illustration 11: The poster of Hong Kong first Punk-Hardcore-Metal festival organized by KingLyChee. (poster from KLC official website)

Judging from the number of shows that KingLyChee play, no matter how big the turnout there is in the venue and regardless of the raw set-up of the concert and the stage, the band always tries to arouse the emotion of the audience. The band really intends to change the local music scene or the concert atmosphere, believing that music and involvement of the audience should be the most important elements in the concerts rather than luxurious clothing, accessories on the singers' bodies, an extraordinary stage with various light-setting.

5.2.4. *Noise vs Music*

As Attali stated "Our science has always desired to monitor, measure,

abstract, and castrate meaning, forgetting that life is full of noise and that

death alone is alone is silent: work noise, noise of man, and noise of beast.

Noise bought, sold, or prohibited. Nothing essential happens in the

absence of noise." (Attali 1985:3)

KingLyChee music is full of distorted guitar works, heavy riffs,

unorthodox song structures, arty noise, and extreme dynamic shifts,

anthems, distorted vocals. The music style that KingLyChee play is

abnormal to most of the mainstream music listeners. Riz's vocals are

grunted and screaming rather than clear, and the sounds of the band

emphasize simple chord progressions, a pounding beat. In their second

album, there is a "dialogue" between a boss of a label and an assistant,

introducing KingLyChee. The boss tells that there is no place for

KingLyChee in the karaoke-world of Hong Kong. This dialogue in fact

reflects the tight spot between the mainstream music scene and the

alternative music scene. The mainstream music is treated as "music", as if

it was its birthright, while its alternative counterpart is deemed as "noise".

The so-called "music" seems meaningless to KingLyChee, and the other

way round it is "noise" – the "substanceless crap" as Riz said in a UK

magazine Fracture interview (Fracture, April/May, 2003). Also as the

drummer Kevin says, "Most Hongkongers merely see music as simple entertainment; we want to revolutionize the way people think". (SCMP, 7,August, 2003)

KingLyChee play a very new style of music that mixes punk rock, hardcore, metal and indle-rock. They focus on creating their music style and also want to focus on lyrics, resulting in their band becoming a very socially aware band. They only play original music because they want to teach youth bands in Hong Kong to be proud of writing their own music, even their own thoughts. KingLyChee are not a typical Hong Kong band, which from day one the founder of the band, Riz, has made it an important part of the band music, lyrics and daily practice. The purpose of the band is to make people at least think about issues that need to be thougth about. The band uses its music to promote its lyrics and ideas. As far as KingLyChee see it, if punk rock bands play music with meaningless lyrics they are considered fake and ridiculed by true believers and members of this sub-culture. Lyrics in punk rock and hardcore music are just an important as the actual music itself.

Through KingLyChee's "noise", no matter musically or lyrically, what they intend to do is to challenge what is accepted as the normal way of

thought by society.

5.2.5. Close Relationship with
the supporters vs Detached Relationship with the fans

In order to maintain the star image of the singers, the relationship between the singers and the fans is detached at best, as there is not much chance for the fans to be in touch with their adored singers. Only through the interviews on mass media, fan club gatherings, and concerts that they can meet their idols, learn news about them, and listen to their unpublished songs or even talk to them. Alternatively, KingLyChee is eager to develop the relationship with their supporters or other people who want to know more about the band. On their official website, apart from the background information of the members of the band, there are also email address, icq number, message board and phone number of each member for others to keep in touch, while people from all over the world post messages everyday on the message board and the band will also reply to each of them daily. There are also news sections on the website, and Riz updates them on daily basis. The news sections serve as a diary that describes the band members' lives, personal feelings or their after show feelings, as well as their opinions towards some social issue. On the

website, KingLyChee also upload some new songs, pictures, and videos of the band, and supporters can listen to them and watch them through the website. As described above, the band tries to break the detachment between performers and audience in their concerts, through the website, the supporters/ those interested people can communicate with the band, thanks to the websites.

CHAPTER 6

Identity, Pleasure and Sub-cultural Politics

Through the music, lyrics, performance style and, most importantly, the ideology behind, KingLyChee showed how they rearticulate music as a space for battlefield, which enables them, as powerless, disconnected teenagers, to resist against the mainstream discourse, as elaborated in the last few chapters. In the post-1997 era, Hong Kong has been going through a tough time, being confronted with various political incidents and economic downturns. Scholars pay attention to the life situation of the deprived social groups such as the marginalized workers, new immigrant women, the elderly and the ethnic minorities. However, young people as a silent group in the society seldom have their voices heard, and the society at large does not understand how it should respond to the miserable situation. In this chapter, I will also focus on the need to listen to the voices of youth via the channel of alternative music and how KingLyChee's music has become the mechanism of collective identity building and community mobilization and how the subcultural politics operate in the hardcore music scene.

6.1. Voice of discontent of Hong Kong youth in post-1997 era

For a long period of time, Hong Kong people especially the Youth have been accused of being apolitical or political indifference. However, since the handover of sovereignty to Beijing on 1 July 1997, students have become an experiment object in the wake of various education reforms. The number of unemployment among the youth has risen in tandem with the economic downturn. As of the winter of 2001,[11] there were 19,400 people unemployed within the age group of 15-19, and the number for the 20-25 age group was 31,900. The people of Hong Kong experienced their deepest sense of insecurity and anxiety after the handover. In their drastic response to the undesirable policies, severe economic downturn, mismanagement by officials and the violence shown on the part of the police forces, the people of Hong Kong brought petitions and staged demonstrations, and violent clashes also became more frequent. An unprecedented turnout of 500,000 pro-democracy demonstrators at a march in Hong Kong on July 1, the sixth anniversary of the hand-over of Hong Kong to China, also shocked the world. Some secondary school

---

[11] 小童群益會：<青年成長工作路>。香港：香港小童群益會，2003。

students set up an organization voluntarily against the legislation of Article 23 and mobilized all of the secondary school students to come out and voice their opinion on this controversial issue. These collective actions have indeed caught the scholars' attention.

However, when shifting our focus from the macro aspects of social processes to the terrain of everyday life, we will find that the people in Hong Kong not only carry out resistance in action, they are also able to make their discontents heard by manipulating multiple media in the public space. As an important medium of everyday life, music has assumed a highly significant role and is now widely used by many young music groups as a way to express their discontent with the socio-political conditions of the post-1997 Hong Kong society, among them are prominent groups and musicians like LMF, Tat Flip, KingLyChee, and Paul Wong, the lead member of Beyond. Being the most successful music group, LMF has caught the attention of many in the general public. The appearance of foul language in the lyrics as claptrap has surely made them stand out, but what is more crucial to their popularity is the ability to articulate with their songs the interests of the Hong Kong people, especially the youth. Their lifestyles and aspirations are quite alternative, in the sense that they are

usually discredited or condemned by mainstream institutions such as schools and the media especially focusing on the issue of swearing, indecency and 'bad' effects on teenagers.

How do these bands represent the interest of the youth in Hong Kong and how do they voice out the anger and discontent with the post-1997 Hong Kong society and government? In Chapter 3, I have discussed that in the alternative band scene, most of the bands differentiate themselves from the mainstream and maintain a strong in-group emotional solidarity among themselves. With the mainstream imagination of alternative bands, their way of life is "out of control" or "deviant" in the view of ordinary people. These alternative bands can mobilize strong emotional energies that are generated by their social semiotics of fear and transgression to the post-1997 conditions. These bands and their music serve as symbolic resources for cultural differentiation and popular resistance among teenagers. They generate strong 'emotional energies', which have been mixing with populist anti-government sentiments of post-1997 Hong Kong. (Ma 2002)

6.2. *Music as a separate space for the youth to search for identity*

The boundaries of youth subcultures are also identified by cultural content, and music is a symbolic form of communication that embodies aspects of this content. Music is meaningfully interpreted by social actors in a way that helps to define or reaffirm their social world. I conducted twelve semi-structured interviews before the show time of KingLyChee first concert on 25 December, 2003 with KingLyChee fans with knowledgeable and committed insiders who were not necessarily representative of the subculture as a whole. The interviews were MP3 recorded and later transcribed. The informants ranged between ages of18 and 22, and were involved in KingLyChee music at different periods of time. Some of the informants were currently very involved or at early stages of involvement. I was able to non-interactively observe the behavior of younger participants, and have relied upon reports of the informants for insight into the attitudes and biographies of younger participants. Among those informants, we can see the different stage of identity search through KingLyChee music, lyrics and ideology.

6.2.1. Difference

Both KingLyChee and LMF songs are mostly about living experiences of young people in Hong Kong, in which the anger, desperation among young people are also exposed. To ordinary people, they will be regarded as "noise" from the alternative music scene with stigmas of violence, aggressiveness and wicked. But to the supporters of KingLyChee, not many young people consider KingLyChee and LMF as similar bands.

On the one hand, I ask those informants about the difference between LMF and KingLyChee, apart from their different music genres. Basically both bands can be regarded as socially-aware. Still, most of the informants think that the messages or issues that KingLyChee intend to raise are more positive than those articulated by LMF, and some of them even condemn LMF for criticizing for the sake of criticism, as well as lacking any positive messages.

Interviewer: What is the difference between KingLyChee and LMF? What do you think?

Boy A: Comparatively, they convey the problem better…I feel

Interviewer: that's…KingLyChee?

Boy A: yes…and they not just try to attack other people, but try to convince you to reflect as well.

Girl H also shares the same views as Boy A,

Interviewer: Ok…how do you feel about LMF and KingLyChee, are there any differences?

Girl H: LMF…I think LMF…is full of dirty words…I think LMF just rap…

Interviewer: just rap…

Girl H: yep…

Interviewer: Is there any difference between their messages?

Girl H: I think KingLyChee are more constructive…

Interviewer: ah… do you think LMF just intend to condemn?

Girl H: ah…LMF…ah…I think LMF…ah…don't try to disturb me…

Interviewer: I am not trying to guide you to answer.

Girl H: Not just give denouncement…but I really think their message is not so constructive

It is not easy to understand why those informants distinguish the differences between KingLyChee and LMF by assessing the constructive messages behind. But if we examine it from a "being different" perspective, to some of the alternative music lovers, LMF's is classified as pop music which uses dirty words or participates in Television advertisement productions as some kind of gimmick, hoping to make them famous. Those informants may try to differentiate from Pop music stuff so as to fit into the alternative hardcore scene. Or in another perspective, KingLyChee can really preach their hardcore spirit to the hardcore fans, instead of

196

denouncement; people can take actions on helping other minority groups in the society.

I also asked informants to describe how they were first exposed to the alternative music scene, or the music of KingLyChee. Almost all the informants consistently perceived themselves as being "different" from those in their reference group: "normal others," i.e. their peers, parents and the mainstream society in general.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the meanings of Hardcore?

Girl H: ah…this…how to say it…it's something about acknowledging the problems…how to say that…it reflects the realities of the society…and it's lyrics about "I love you"…

Interviewer: That's why you are really sick of those "I love you" songs?

Girl H: I am not sick of them…but…not so hate them…but I'd like to choose this kind of style…

And in another interview, Boy D also recognizes his difference:

Boy D: That's…I feel there are so many social problems in this place… such as elderly problem or other issue on environmental protection, actually I… am really concerned about them, but in fact I can't express my feelings in other ways…

As far as Girl H is concerned, maybe she can't really figure out why

she prefers punk-hardcore music to the mainstream canto-pop music, but

she dare to be different from others. And Boy D is unable to find a means

to express his personal opinions on certain issues because of his difference.

In another case, Girl C expresses her confusion about her consciousness of

being different.

Girl C: hum…maybe…before I listen to their record…there are other people who

share same thoughts with you, but you didn't know that…and you will feel so

confused…

As Grossberg suggested "If youth is part of the last category in the list

of subordinated populations—servants (i.e., racial and subordinated

populations), women, and the young—it is surprisingly treated as an

unproblematic category in almost all of the research that surrounds and

constructs it. It is, at the very least, surprising how under theorized it has

remained. One could not get away with a similar acceptance if

commonsense notions for any other "subordinated" group. Perhaps this is

because, in some very concrete ways, youth is the most silenced population

in society, not only in intellectual but in social and political terms as well."

(1994:25)

Spontaneously, Boy D and Girl C also express their confusions of

being different, as well as the powerlessness and frustrations of young

people in searching for their own identities that are shown again in these

two cases. In Hong Kong, youths mostly undergo the socialization of the

mainstream discourse as an valuable asset of the society, participating in

and accepting the responsibilities for the development of the society, for

they are seen as future leaders and workforce through lifelong learning.

The voices of the Youth are often hidden in the society; they seem to just

follow the so-called usual typical path carved out for an average person of

Hong Kong. Critical to mainstream middle-class ideologies, people in

Hong Kong strongly believe in educational investment and upward

mobility as the formula of middle class success. When young people

choose not to follow the preset path, they will be classified as a "failure" or

a "deviant" according to the elitist standards. When young people

recognize their differences, or choose their own lifestyles that vary from the

typical Hong Kong people, they will feel powerless, confused and

frustrated, to the point of questioning themselves as to whether they have

done the right thing.

6.2.2. Affiliation

Facing the confusion and frustration in searching for their identities, the boundaries of youth subcultures are also identified by cultural content, and music is a symbolic form of communication that embodies the aspects of this content. Music is meaningfully interpreted by social actors in a way that helps to define or reaffirm their social worlds (Lewis 1987).

In the affiliation stage, those supporters of KingLyChee become aware of the fact that there are certain things that are indeed unconventional and shocking, having a nonconformist in relation to the mainstream society; individuals begin to see themselves from the perspective of members of the subculture. Punk is defined as a scene, a community or social group of which one is member, apart from recognized standard dress and a code of behavior. Those supporters begin to define punk as a system of values and beliefs, and thus become concerned with expressing and ideological commitment to the subculture (Andes 1998).

When I ask about the charm of KingLyChee, most of the informants think that their messages in the lyrics are really eye-catching. Some of the informants are stimulated by KingLyChee messages and find their identification in their songs. As Girl C indicates the attractiveness of

KingLyChee,

Interviewer: ok! In your view, how they catch your attention? Their music or other thing?

Girl C: ah…their messages…

Interviewer: What kind of message?

Girl C: it's something…ah…about how you can live or treat yourself in Hong Kong society.

Another informant, Boy G, who is not so engaged in hardcore music but has also been inspired by KingLyChee's messages:

Interviewer: How do you feel about their messages in the songs…or how do you feel about their lyrics or the way they try to preach the hardcore spirit?

Boy G: It's not bad…to the ordinary people…for example…ah…ah…too materialistic…maybe there are many people in other cities who are also too reliant on material enjoyment. I think…ah…if they really get the message behind their music or lyrics, it will be fine.

Boy K even thinks that in Hong Kong, KingLyChee are heroic in that they express their grievances, "Compared to other Hong Kong bands…I feel KingLyChee are more brave…express more…other…not so many bands have the guts to stand up…"

And to other informants, KingLyChee's messages inspire them to take

a look on Hong Kong society. As Girl H responds, "how do they influence me…ah…it's about discrimination…I really try not to discriminate against other people…any other things…it's about the elderly problem…and I will try to identify, take care of the elderly people around." Girl H even vows not to consume alcoholic because of KLC.

Interviewer: ok…how do you feel about their hardcore spirit…do you engage in it?

Girl H: No smoking…No alcoholic drinking?... I once drank…but it's over…no more alcoholic la…

Since the appearance of KLC, a hard core scene has been gradually created in Hong Kong, also as a result of the availability of magazines, concerts and records. Some informants also received support from other peers in the scene, and when I ask about the scene, some of the attached young people express that it is just like a family.

Interviewer: As you just talk about Hong Kong hardcore scene? Actually I really don't know what it is about. Can you tell me about the scene? Is it a community or an organization…or?

Boy A: Actually it's not a community; in fact … hardcore scene is just like…I think…if I play it in an old-fashioned way…it's like a home…a family…

Interviewer: family…

Boy A: that's it …ah…not focussing on anything, just helping each other…giving our efforts to help each other.

Interviewer: is there any gathering? Or you guys just gather when there is a concert?

Boy A: it's not like that… ah…we are all friends…but not so many people…

Interviewer: You guys can be friends because of KingLyChee?

Boy A: When you go to their shows, you may recognize other familiar people and get to know more friends when you frequently go to their shows.

Girl C talks about the significance of KingLyChee to herself, "is there any difference?... in the past, I have some unique thoughts that are different from my friends, but now it seems…seems to confirm what I am thinking about… and I will stand firm…when you…such as living in this sense…maybe you will think why you are so different from other people? Am I abnormal? Why do I think of this different stuff? Why I am not so comfortable…when hanging out with this kind of people? And now I know that…even I am different from other people but at least there is still a group of people that share the same things as you."

And Boy D also said that KingLyChee made his unique thoughts possible: "But through the band that tries to tell other people about the existence of the problems, which may be neglected in the outside world…but in the hardcore sense, we can express our opinions on the

current issues in the society." Meanwhile, Boy A also regards KingLyChee as important to him, "The first issue is…let me know what is hardcore first…build up Hong Kong hardcore scene. On one hand, hardcore music suits my style…and those lyrics can touch some of the social problems in Hong Kong, which raise me concerns about what's happening in this society." From the response of the informants, we can see how KingLyChee's music and ideology help them to define and reaffirm their social worlds. On the other hand, through KingLyChee, they find more fellows who share their "unique" viewpoints and get affiliated.

As Mary Celeste Kearney (1998: 151) suggested that "for centuries now, separatism has been a useful tool for disenfranchised groups to come to power and act in the face of oppressions resulting from the fragmentation of society into society into a dominant, mainstream culture and other various cultures which negotiate, yet contribute to, the center's hegemony. Separatism has functioned for such groups first as a survival tactic, a temporary means of acquiring social, political and cultural space and time separating from hegemonically defined and controlled institutions, relationships, and roles." *In The Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau argues that this initial stage of separatism requires the

opportunism associated with tactical maneuvering: that is, the ability to transform circumstances into favourable situations that reorganize space and thus challenge imbalance in access (1983:36-38). Separatism as a tactic of the disenfranchised becomes a strategy of the newly empowered, who can use their collective identity as a place or location from which to initiate radical political action. For examples: riot grrrls[12] are separating from male and older women as well as mainstream culture to establish and assert their own sociopolitical identity via a culture that remains distinctly girl-oriented and unadulterated. Separatism works for riot grrrls because it is a temporary tactic enacted for safety and empowerment. Riot grrrls separate themselves from males to act on behalf of females; they separate themselves from adults to act on behalf of youth; and they separate themselves from the mainstream to act on behalf of radical culture and politics.

This so-called "separatism" can be seen as a tactic of youth against mainstream culture. This unique position was formed at the intersection of

---

[12] In 1992, Bikini Kill released the song "Don't Need You" on their *Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah* album. Sung by Kathleen Hanna, the raging lyrics foreground the pro-girl identity politics and separatist philosophy adhered to by those participating in the radical female youth culture known as riot grrrl: "Don't need you to say we're alright/Don't need your protection/Don't need no kiss goodnight/Us girls don't need you"

youth's alienation from the adult world, and the sense of its difference that had been constructed by that world. This position was articulated into a series of minor rearticulations of the adult realities of everyday life and music as the privileged site of youth's investment and eventually the spatial coordination of youth culture. Through reversing those negative emotions of fear, range, inferiority and shame into positive emotions of solidarity and rebellion, the supporters of KingLyChee search for their affiliation through KingLyChee.

6.3. Pleasures-seeking and Pleasurable behaviors as subcultural 'resistance'

Angela McRobbie's work is characterized by optimistic descriptions of the ways that the 1990s youth seek and use 'pleasure' as a symbolic escape from the social tensions of their times. McRobbie considers these pleasure-seeking and pleasurable behaviors as contemporary versions of subcultural 'resistance', "we deconstruct the notion of resistance by removing its metapolitical status…[and] reinsert it a more mundane, micrological level of everyday practices…then it becomes possible to see the sustaining, publicizing and extending of the subcultural enterprise"(1994:162). Influenced by McRobbie, Pini (1997) contended that

"the rave dance floor…is one of the few spaces which afford—and indeed, encourage--- open displays of physical pleasure," (p.167)

As for KingLyChee, my experience at several of their concerts has informed me about the interactions between KingLyChee and the audience, and through various behaviors, young people get pleasures in the concerts. Below is one of the concert dairies at KingLyChee CD release party on 25 December, 2003.

6.3.1 An Ethnography in KingLyChee concert.

On the 25th December, 2003, the Christmas day night, when most of the people were enjoying their party with their friends, I and other young people chose to take part in the first concert of Hong Kong rare hardcore band, KingLyChee. For the members of KingLyChee and the supporters of the band, it was undoubtedly a big day, the milestone of Hong Kong Hardcore Music Scene.

When I got off the Taxi, I just couldn't figure out where I should go, it's a long, steep road leading to somewhere. Just walking about 3 minutes, I saw the stickers, posters of KingLyChee Concert, and some arrows which leading the audience to the venue. When I reached the flatland, I just couldn't believe that it's a beautiful cathedral, at first, I really assumed that KingLyChee would hold their

first concert in that beautiful cathedral, when I engrossed to look at the cathedral, I heard some distorted voice of guitars coming from the building next to the beautiful cathedral. At this moment, I really made sure that their concert would be held in an antiquated building next to that cathedral. The tickets of the concert were accompanying with their second album"Stand Strong", that means everybody in this concert should get the ticket through buying their album, because of this special way of selling tickets, the participants of the concert should be interested in KingLyChee music and hardcore and I decided to do some interviews with the audience before the show.

After an hour, I had done nearly 15 short interviews with the audience; I thought it's time to go into the concert hall. I went upstairs from the Ground Floor to the Fifth Floor, when arriving at each floor, you just needed to follow the directing arrow to the next floor, and finally I reached the concert hall. Same as most of the indle rock show, you would see a stall outside the hall selling some souvenirs as band CDs, posters and T-shirts. Since it's really near the show time, I just passed through it and didn't have a look. When I gave my ticket to the crew and he stapled a hole on my ticket, I started to enter a totally different world that I had before.

Since secondary school, I had been taking part in various indle rock shows,

but it's a really different picture that I had never seen before. It's a hall without any seats, an open area, various group of people in different places of the concert hall chatting, smoking, playing, I really thought that it's a Christmas party rather than a concert, they all looked like friends. As I was still shocked by what I was seeing at that moment, somebody called me, and I looked back, it's one of the interviewers who invited me to join them for the show with his friends. Being alone was a really bad feeling in this place, without any hesitation, I followed him to a place on the left side of the hall; their friends were standing on the chairs outside the backstop of the hall. I was very curious why they chose to stay there, and one of the girl said "all the people were crazy during the show, if you didn't want to knock down by them, you'd better stay away from the stage". At this moment, I tried to stare around and found that different from other shows which the audience tried to be near the stage, apart from some small group of people, the audience were distributed in diverse position in the Hall, most of them resided in front of the stage, some of them just like us stayed on the side of the hall, some of them stood in the middle-back of the hall, some of them even sat on the balcony of the hall.

Suddenly, Hurrah sound was filling up the hall and l looked back on the stage, the supporting act of the show Fat Job had been on stage. Through their 15 minute set, they played several songs trying to heat up the crowd, and asked the audience

to give them some reaction and to sing and jump with them. It's my first time to be in this kind of hardcore show, honestly, I couldn't take notice of any word that they sang, or notes that they played; I could just hear distorted guitar noise, bass noise. Even the singer of the band turned his voice into such a kind of noise; only the drum sound was clear, "Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom" attacking my heart.

After playing their last song, Fat Job tried to introduce the hero of that night, KingLyChee, they appealed to the crowd to shout out the name of KingLyChee for several times, then the drummer added some beat decorating the voices of the crowd. Within a minute, the members of KingLyChee came out and the guitarist and lead singer, Riz said hi to the audience, while the audience near the stage gave a louder hurrah sound to them. My friends and I with other audience didn't shout, but just stayed calm waiting for the show to begin. Various colours of lights flashed all around the stage, and some flash light kept flashing orderly from the back of the stage. The distorted guitar's voice, bass voice and the drum beat started to invite the crowd to have fun with the band. The band was full of energy, all of the members illustrated their tightness on their facial expression, and they also tried to be in motion when performing. They nodded their heads and jumped to the beats of the songs, while the guitarists, Riz and Andy, as well as bassist, Alex, were treating their music instruments as parts of their body. They flowed in

numerous directions, from left to right and from up and down, pointed upon the ceiling of the hall, as if they were guns pointing to their band mates and the audience. As a newcomer to this kind of performing style, I just couldn't feel engrossed about their performance, seemed as their supporting act Fat Job, KingLyChee members also tuned their guitars, bass to a kind of distorted noise by different effect boxes, which sounded very different from the original sound of guitars and bass. Kevin also made use of one more base drum so as to make sound, beating harder and louder. This kind of heavy tone music accompanied with Riz's voice that sounded like yelling and screaming gave people an impression that KingLyChee's music was angry, heated, throbbing, raw, passionate, emotional……. As well, I really couldn't catch what they were singing apart from some of the songs that I've heard before, since I could only catch some parts of the songs but not their entirety.

After a few songs, something magical happened: a boy near the stage, climbed up and raised his hands, seemingly to give a signal before diving from the stage, and the people down the stage just spontaneously caught him and lifted him up, shaking him for about 10 seconds before placing him down to the floor. Following this boy's example, when the people became in tune with the music that KingLyChee played, they would just climb up to the stage and dive from it one

after another. You would see various diving styles, as some of the people dived by

their back, while others just jumped and let their body fly to the crowd. They were

all caught by their reliable peers of this game; no one fell down accidentally on the

floor instantly after their magical jump. Another extraordinary scene was that,

there were some volunteers who also hanged around on the stage; they would give

a hand to those who wanted to climb onto the stage, and ensured that the diving

process went on orderly and smoothly. The Band also encouraged the people to go

up on the stage and sing with the singer when the people felt identified with the

lyrics. Apart from KingLyChee's music, this diving game and the sing-a-long act

seemed to be some interface response from the audience. This kind of interactions

between the performers and the audience was unusual in a mainstream singer's

concert, whereby most of the interactions would involve only clapping hands,

screaming, or singing along on the part of the audience. Even in most of the indle

band shows, there were very limited interactions between both sides. Some of the

spectators always criticize the performance of the bands, likening it to nothing

more than masturbation on stage which totally ignores the audience. After each

song, the audience just clapped their hands for sometime and waited for another

song to start. In contrast to the cases above, Riz always tried to heat up the

audience by introducing their next songs, and the message behind. He even

tempted all the audience to shout out, sing, jump, dive when the band was playing.

In the middle of the concert, Riz asked the audience" is it a nice show?" a girl from the middle part of the hall just shouted out "it's a damn boring show!" All of the audience just turned silent. The feedback of this girl appeared to annoy Riz, and he just replied to her that "it's not a show of Twins and Boyz, if you really think it's a god damn boring show, just go away, nobody will care about you!" After his speech, the people near the stage just said hurrah while the girl was leaving the hall. At that time, I really couldn't understand as to why Riz was so angry. But when the girl went away, he seemed to have a taste of small victory. He appealed to the crowd to ignore the girl and just enjoy the show. The music started again, and the people seemed to forget what had happened, releasing all their energy and paying attention solely to KingLyChee. With the aid of other guests, Paul Wong and Josie Ho, the mood of the audience was getting higher and higher, and a boy even tried to climb up to the top of the amplifier on the left hand side of the stage, the height of amplifier was nearly equal to a floor He simply jumped off it and was magically caught by the crowd.

At the last part of the concert, I tried to go to the balcony to see if the scene there was any different. When I got to the balcony, there were nearly 20 people sitting there, and there were some young people who looked tired and were taking a

rest. Also there were some middle-aged women sitting there as well. They didn't

feel that KingLyChee's music was noisy, as they seemed to be enjoying it, clapping

their hands and screaming to the band. As I felt that I had so much to question

about what I had seen, the band played their last song. Before that, the band would

like to say thank you to those people who helped them, stayed there for the show or

those important people in their life. When Alex expressed his gratitude to his

family, he looked upon the balcony and was thankful to the supports of all his

family members. At the very moment, all of my doubts were fading away.

When I left the hall and walked down to the MTR station, I just couldn't

have the sense of hearing, I really didn't know how loud was the music that

KingLyChee had played, but at that moment my ears seemed to be stuck with

something deep inside them. And my mind just flashed back to the show that I had

just participated, the sounds, the sweat, the people that I met that night, it was

really an excellent experience of exploring the Hong Kong Hardcore scene and the

performing style of those hardcore bands.

Illustration 12: a boy dive from the amplifier (photo from KLC official website)

6.3.2 Hunger for Sensation

As James Lull stated "audience participate on popular music in ways that are physical (singing alone, tapping, clapping, dancing and so on); emotional (feeling the music, reminiscing, achieving a spiritual "high" and the like); and cognitive (processing information, learning, stimulating thought, contributing to memory, framing perceptions, and so forth). A listeners may relate to music directly by experiencing it a very personal way. For instance, one might turn to music for soothing relaxation or to escape and enjoy the sound privately." (1992:19)

To a large extent, participating in KingLyChee concerts seems to be some kind of ritual for their supporters in terms of the shared meanings of the members of this group, to interpret the reality and define their identity. The supporters love pounding sensations of the music; they love the intensity of it. To them, KingLyChee concerts are the sensory equivalent of war. It is the ultimate in sheer skill-pounding, body-wracking, roaring sensation, and to them it is an ecstatic experience. The advances in sound technology, both on the concert level and on the home stereo level, make possible the extraordinary high-sensation sound of KingLyChee. The sound of the electric guitars beats with exceptional precision, the drums

pound with unprecedented force; the vocals are given an unearthly rawness.   The musical combination of speed, roughness and volume that is characteristic of KingLyChee sound makes for auditory sensation such as "intense", "fast", "energy" and "loudness" which make those supporters scream, stage dive and sing along.

Malbon (1998, 1999) emphasizes the temporary, fleeting and apolitical character of the rave scene, arguing that rave's "resistance is found through losing yourself [e.g., in the music, in the dance, in the social and physical surroundings], paradoxically to find yourself" (1998:281). From the perpective of the mainstream ideology, their 'hysterical' shaking and dancing on stage, screaming, as well as stage diving game, all lead to a common sense of conclusion that their lives are pretty out of control. In their own world, those audiences are controlling their own body movements in concert halls and in performance (Frith 1983; Straw 2001). On one hand, screaming, the diving games and the sing-a-long acts are empowering, liberating and sensual. On the other hand, they also provide opportunity for the audience to feel the music physically, release their anger or emotion, even soothing their tension and helping them escape from the reality.

Challenging dominant discourse of any sets of meanings produced by the social groups, the "out of control" behaviors are thus no act of escape, but are crucial parts of resisting the subjectivities that the society tries to construct for them. As Fiske commented "Semiotic power is not a mere symbol of, or licensed substitute for, "real" power. Its uses are not confined to the construction of resistant subjectivities, but extend also to the construction of relevances, of ways of negotiating this interface between the products of the culture industries and the experiences of everyday life. The reward, and therefore the motivation, for making meanings and relevances is a form of semiotic pleasure, the pleasure of the text. The fact that these meanings are relevant means that this power-pleasure can be transferred across the boundary between text and everyday life." (1989:132)

Conclusion

Youth, as a period of transition to adulthood, has meaning only in relation to the specific circumstances of social, political and economic conditions. Once this is understood, it is possible to situate and examine the significant differences between groups of young people. In chapter 2, I have stated how the operation of dominant discourse shapes and categorizes young people into a dual extreme category of the problematic youth and the elite youth in Hong Kong. And the theories of hegemony stress the power of the dominant to construct the subjectivities of the subordinate and the common sense of society in their own interests. Nevertheless, as we know, the growing up of young people can take account of diverse ways through social institutions, as well as the ways they negotiate their transitions. Social identity is constructed in the context of a series of living experiences, as where one lives and grows up has a major influence on how one sees the world. And the universalization of youth culture and youth experience distorts the social differences and diversity of experience among young people. On one hand, there are some young people who simply follow the pre-set typical path of the Hong Kong people; on the other hand, some other young people such as the members

of KingLyChee, dare not follow the legitimate or normal form of the mainstream discourse.

In Stuart Hall's perception, popular culture is structured within what he calls the opposition between the power-bloc and the people. The power-bloc consists of a relatively unified, relatively stable alliance of social forces—economic, legal, moral, aesthetic; the people; on the other hand, is a diverse and dispersed set of social allegiances constantly formed and reformed among the formations of the subordinate. The opposition can also be thought of as one between homogeneity, as the power-bloc attempts to control, structure, and minimize social differences so that they serve its interests, and heterogeneity, as the formations of the people intransigently maintain their sense of social difference that is also a difference of interest. The relationship is always one of conflict or confrontation; the hegemonic forces of homogeneity are always met by the resistance of heterogeneity. (Hall, 1981; Fiske 1989:8).

These kinds of resistance take various forms that differ in their social visibility, in their social positioning, and in their activity. KingLyChee use hardcore punk music to resist the prescriptions of the mainstream discourse on young people. Within the subculture, they not only encounter

the mainstream ideology, but suffer under its enforcement through the expectations and behavior of their peers and parents. They thus draw on the subculture to create identities that break the norm to be mainstream adolescent.

Through the micro-social, local aspects of everyday life as the focus for critical inquiry, music-making as an activity via which young people make sense of, negotiate or resist the local circumstances in which they find themselves. Music-making becomes a shared 'pathway' through which members of young bands negotiate the 'impersonal wilderness of urban life' (Finnegan 1989: 306). Through the musical activism young bands are able to mark themselves out from both the parent culture and the school and the kinds of demands which the latter impose upon young people. Playing in a group gives young people a chance to distance themselves from those aspects of life which they find least appealing and to envisage a different kind of life for them, one which is based not around schoolwork and subsequently a job or career, but rather upon musical creativity and artistic expression, the negative experience of society.

What role does the hardcore-punk subculture play in their perceptions of themselves and in their self-esteem? Through KingLyChee

members and their supporters' narratives and accounts, we have heard

intimations of their resourcefulness, glimmer of their inner strength. When

I interviewed those supporters, I would ask them, "Did anything change in

your life after you encountered punk?" Sometimes, they would tell me

personal accounts of their own development. It could be argued that the

least politically active are the bodily pleasures of evasion, which young

people refuse the dominant ideology and its discipline, and able to

construct a set of experiences beyond its reach. The members of

KingLyChee and the audience in their concerts "lose" their socially

constructed identities and disrupted the structure of

domination-subordination in their moments when the intensity of bodily

concentration-pleasure became orgasmic.

When the public stage is controlled by the powerful institution, the

subordinate, silent young people lack a variety of channels and political

resources that allow them to influence the officials. So the young people

choose to resist "offstage". Young people take control of the meanings of

Hardcore-punk ideology that produce a sense of empowerment in one of

the most disempowered of the social groups, which may well result in

political progress in their daily lives. Be it in the mainstream discourse, in

schools, in the workplace, or in their communities, the experiences of the

young people have been ignored and their voice silenced. The active

involvement of parents in the censorship of popular music is indicative of

an increasing concern to block or ban young peoples' access to particular

songs or musical styles. Such action centers on the belief that, for instance,

the violent and the misogynistic overtones of hardcore-punk and metal

lyric put young people at risk. However, the key to youth subcultural

participation is resistance. This resistance against mainstream anticipations

on the role of young people must be considered when we examine youth

deviance. It is the case that young people use subcultures to repudiate or

reconstruct their identities, enhances their self-esteem using a variety of

behavioral, stylistic and discursive resources offered by the hardcore-punk

subculture.

Fiske proposes that "the resistances of popular culture are not just

evasive or semiotic: they do have a social dimension at the micro level.

And at this micro level they may well act as a constant erosive force upon

the macro, weakening the system from within so that it is more amenable

to change at the structural level."(Fiske 1989: 11) As KingLyChee made it

their mission and life attitudes to raise the awareness of certain issues that

the band feel need to be confronted, and by confronting an issue the band

can come closer to actually solving the problem and hence pave the way to

embrace punk rock and hardcore ideology. The band admits that it does

not have the answers to all the problems, but at least it tries to raise the

issue. Nevertheless the guerrilla tactic of KingLyChee may be a means to

carve out a space where young people can define their own sense of self as

a rebellion against the mainstream discourse, as political rebellion, or as a

survival network, which embodies a specific conception of the world and

constitutes the means by which sentiments can be communicated and

shared among the youth in Hong Kong.

Postscript

Through the dialogue with those examiners in the oral examination, it is also a self-reflexive process which inspires me to recognize some of the limitations in this thesis.

In this thesis, I always stress the audience are not only passive receivers of the music or message that the musicians created, but have their own interpretations. Due to the time constraints, only semi-structured interviews had been conducted. One of the main limitations is the insufficiency of information from the audience perspective such as ethnic, social and education backgrounds, a detailed delineation of the effects on shaping the identities and ideologies of the followers are lacked which led to an unsatisfactory analysis on understanding of how popular music features in the lives of young people in the context of their everyday life and how young people 'lived out' after encountering KingLyChee music and message.

To a certain extent, if there is affluent time, a systematized, repetitive observations and in-depth, probing interviews should be done to understand how young people organize memory, identity, and their autonomy and producing their own meanings of social experience and the

pleasure of avoiding the social discipline of the power-bloc.

Apart from the above limitation, I also try to be reflexive in the research process and writing, and such reflexive writing is also vital to understand my analysis and interpretation. Nevertheless, I failed to do this kind of reflexive writing consistently especially in the analytical chapters.

Bibliographies

Adas Michael. 1992. "From Avoidance to Confrontation: Peasant Protest in Precolonial and Colonial South Asia.", Nicholas B. Dirks (ed.) *Colonialism and Culture*, edited by. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Andes, L. 1998. "Growing Up Punk: Meaning and Commitment Careers in a Contemporary Youth Subculture", Epstein, J. (ed.) *Youth Culture: Identity in a Postmodern World*. Malden MA: Blackwell.

Arnold, D. 1984. "Gramsci and Peasant Subalternity in India" in *Journal of Peasant Studies,* Vol. 11. No 4:155-177.

Arnold, D.1991.*The Culture Industry*. London: Routledge.

Attali, J. 1985. *Noise: the political economy of music*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Baulch, E. 2002. "Alternative Music ad Mediation in Late New Order Indonesia". *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*. 3(2). P. 221-234.

Becker, H. 1964. *The Other Side: perspectives on deviance*. New York: Free Pr.

Bennett A. 2002. "Researching Youth Culture and Popular Music: A Methodological Critique", *British Journal of Sociology*. 53(3) P.451-466.

Bennett, A. 2000. *Popular Music and Youth Culture*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Bennett, A. 2001. *Culture of Popular Music*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Bennett, T., Frith, S. Grossberg, L., Shepherd, J.and Turner, G. (ed.) 1993. *Rock and Popular Music: Politics, Policies and Institutions*. London: Routledge.

Berland, J. 1993. "Sound, Image and Social Space: music video and media

reconstruction", Frith, S., Goodwin, A. and Grossberg. L. (ed.) *Sound and Vision: the music video reader*. New York: Routledge.

Bogg, C. 1976. *Gramsciís Marxism.* London: Pluto Press.

Brackett, D. 1995. *Understanding Popular Music*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Brake, M. 1980.*The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures: sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll.* London; Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Brake, M. 1985. *Comparative Youth Culture: the sociology of youth cultures and youth subcultures in America, Britain and Canada*. London; Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Champions, S. 1997. "Fear and Loathing in Wisconsin", Redhead, S., Wynne, D. and O'Connor, J. (ed.) *The Clubculture Readers: readings in popular cultural studies.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Chiu, Stephen W. K & Tai Lok Lui. 2000. *The Dynamics of Social Movement in Hong Kong.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Clayton, M., Herbert, T. and Middleton, R. 2003. *The Cultural Study of Music: a critical introduction*. New York: Routledge.

Cohen, P. 1972. "Subcultural Conflict and Working Class Community", *Working Papers in Cultural Studies 2*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

Cohen, S. 1991. *Rock Culture in Liverpool: popular music in the making.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

de Certeau, M. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

DeNora, T. 2003. *After Adorno: rethinking music sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Epstein, J.S. (ed.) 1995. *Youth Culture in Late Modernity.* London: Sage Publication.

Epstein, J.S. (ed.), 1994. *Adolescents and Their Music: if it's too loud, you're too old.* New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc.

Finnegan, R. 1989. *The Hidden Musicians: music-making in an English town.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fiske, J. 1989. *Reading the Popular.* Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Fiske, J. 1989. Understanding the Popular Culture. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Foucault, M. 1977. *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: selected essays and interviews*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Foucault, M. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Frith, S. 1983. *Sound Effects: youth, leisure and the politics of rock* London: Constable.

Frith, S. 1987. "Towards an Aesthetic of Popular Music". Leppert, R. and McClary S. (ed.) *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception.* Cambridge: Cambridge: University Press.

Furlong, A. and Cartmel, F. 1997. *Young People and Social Change: individualization and risk in late modernity.* Buckingham: Open University Press.
Furlong, A. 1997. *Young People and Social Change: individualization and risk in late modernity.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays.* New York: Basic Books.

Giddens, A. 1987. *Social Theory and Modern Sociology.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giroux, H. 1997. *Channel Surfing: race talk and the destruction of Today's youth*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Glassner, B. and Hertz, R (ed.) 1999. *Qualitative Sociology as Everyday Life*. London: Sage Publications.

Grossberg, L. 1994. "Is Anybody Listening? Does Anybody Care?", Ross, A. and Rose, T. (ed.) *Microphone Fiends: youth, music and youth culture*. New York: Routledge.

Grossberg, L. 1994. "The Political Status of Youth and Youth Culture", Epstein, J.S.(ed.) *Adolescents and their music : if it's too loud, you're too old*. New York : Garland Pub.

Grossberg, L. 1996. " The Space of Culture, the Power of Space", Chanbers, L. and Curti, L.(ed.) *The Postcolonial Question: common skies, divided horizons*. New York; Routledge.

Grossberg, L.,Nelson,C. and Treichler, P.A. 1992,*Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge.

Hall, S. 1981. "Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular'", Samuel, R. (ed.) *People's History and Socialist Theory*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Hall, S. 1997. *Representative: Cultural Representative and Signifiying Practice*. London: Open University Press.

Hall, S. and Jefferson,T. (ed.) 1976. *Resistance Through Rituals: youth subculture in post-war Britain*. London: Hutchinson.

Hallam, S. 2001. *The Power of Music*. London: The Performing Right Society

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. 1995. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice. 2nd edn*. London: Routledge.

Harris,K.K. 2003 "Death Metals and the Limits of Musical Expression". *Policing Pop.* Philadelphia : Temple University Press.

Hebdige, D. 1979.*Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London: Routledge.

Highmore, B. 2002. *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: an introduction*. London; New York: Routledge.

Holub, R. 1992. *Antonio Gramsci: Beyond Marxism and Postmodernism*. London: Routledge.

Jones, S. 1992. *Rock Formation: Music, Technology and Mass Communicatio*n. New Bury Park, CA: Sega

Kearney, M. C. 1998 "Don't Need You: Rethinking Identity Politics and Separatism from a Grrrl Perspective", Epstein, J.S.(ed.) *Youth Culture: identity in a postmodern world*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell.

Kellner, D. 1995. *Media Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kim, R. 2002. "KingLyChee". *Evil Monito*. 2002(Fall/Winter).

Lau, S. K. 1984. *Society and Politics in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.

Leblanc, L. 1999. "Punky in the Middle: Cultural Constructions of the 1996 Montreal Summer Uprisings." Ferrell, J. and Websdale, N. (eds) *Cultural Representations of Crime and Deviance*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Lee, W. L. 2000. *Teens of the night - The young night drifter in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong.

Lee, W.L. 1993. *The Encountering of Unattached Youth and Police in the Occurrence of Juvenile Delinquency*. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Lee, W.L. 1996. *Teens of Night: A Study on Night Drifting Young People in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Lee, W.L. 1997. *Working with Natural Groups of Youth at risk*. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Lee, W.S. 2003. "Revolution Rock". *South China Morning Post*, 28th
November, 2003.

Lee, Ying Chuen. 1999. *The Practice of Marginality: a study of the
Subversiveness of Blackbird.* Unpublished M. Phil. Thesis. Hong Kong: The
Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Lewis, G. 1987. "Patterns of Meaning and Choice: Taste Cultures in
Popular Music", Lull, J. (ed.) *Popular Music and Communication*. Beverly
Hills, Calif.: Sage.

Lewis, L. 1992. *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*. New
York: Routledge.

Lo, T.W. 1992. "Groupwork with Youth Gangs in Hong Kong", *Groupwork*
5(1): 58-71.

Lo, T.W. 1997, *Research on the Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programmes for
Young Offenders: Full Report.* Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong,
commissioned by the Fight Crime Committee.

Loewenberg, A.S. 2004. "Kowloon Core" *Giant Robot*. Issue 33(summer).

Long, N. 1992. *Battlefields of Knowledge: The Interlocking of Theory and
Practice in Social Research and Development*. London: Routledge.

Lui, Tai-lok, 1999. "Hong Kong society: anxiety in the post-1997 days",
Journal of Contemporary China, 8 (20), p.89-101.

Lull, J. 1992. *Popular Music and Communication*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage
Publications.

Ma, Eric. 2002. "Emotional Energy and Sub-cultural Politics: alternative
bands in post-1997 Hong Kong". *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*. 3(2). P.
187-200.

Malbon, B. 1998. "Clubbing: consumption, identity and the spatial
practices of every-night life", Skelton, T. and Valentine, G.(ed.) *Cool Places:*

geographies of youth culture. New York: Routledge.

Malbon, B. 1999. *Clubbing: dancing, ecstasy and vitality*. New York: Routledge.

Mallen & Pearce. 2003. *Youth Cultures: texts, images and identities*. Westport, Conn: Praeger.

Matza, D. and Sykes, G.M. 1961 "Juvenile Delinquency and Subterranean Values", *American Sociological review*, 26(5),p.712-19.

McRobbie, A. 1994. *Postmodernism and Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.
Merton, R.K. 1957. *Social Theory and Social Structure*. London: Collier-Macmillan.

Miles, S. 2000. *Youth Lifestyles in a Changing World*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Mok B.H., 1985. *Problem Behavior of Adolescents in Hong Kong: A Socio-Cultural Aspect.* Hong Kong: Institute of Social Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Mok, D. 2001. "Getting In the Groove". *Asiaweek Magazine*. 2001(August)

Mok, D. 2003. "Rock of Ages". *South China Morning Post*, 21st November,2003.

Mouffe, C. 1979. *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Muggleton, D. 1997. "the Post-Subculturalist", Redhead, D., Wynne, D., O'Conner, J.(ed.) *The Clubculture Reader: readings in popular cultural studies*. Malden: Blackwell.

Muggleton, D. 2000. *Inside Subculture: the postmodern meaning of style*. New York: Berg.

Negus, P. 1992. *Producing Pop: Culture and Conflict in the Popular Music*

Industry. London: Edward Arnold.

Nelson, C. and Grossberg, L. 1988. *Marxism and the Interpretation Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Ng, A. 1975.   *Social Causes of Violent Crimes Among Youth Offenders in Hong Kong.* Hong Kong: Social Research Center, Chinese University Of Hong Kong.

Ng, A. 1980. F*amily Relationships and Delinquent Behaviors*. Hong Kong: Social Research Center, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Pichaske, D.R. 1979. *A Generation In Motion: popular music and culture in the sixties*. New York: Schirmer Books.

Pini, M.1997. "Women and the Early British Rave Scene", McRobbie, A. (ed.), *Back to Reality: social experience and cultural studies*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Redhead, S. 1990. *End of the Century Party: youth and pop towards 2000*. New York: St.Martin's Press.

Redhead, S. 1993. *Rave Off: Politics and Deviance in Contemporary Youth Culture*. Aldershot: Avebury.

Richard, B. and Kruger, H.H. 1992 "Pavers Paradise?: German Youth Cultures in the 1990s" , Skelton, T. and Valentine, G.(ed.).   *Cool Places: geographies of youth culture.* London: Routledge.

Roe, K. 1987. "The School and Music in Adolescent Socialization," Lull,J. (ed.), *Popular Music and Communication*. California: Sage, P. 212-230

Rosenbaum, J.L. and Lorraine, P. 1987. "Sex, Violence and Rock n'Roll: Youths' Perceptions of Popular Music." *Popular Music and Society* 11: 79-90.

Ross, A. and Rose, T. 1994. *Microphone Fiends*. London and New York: Routledge.

Sassoon, A. S. 1987. *Gramsci's Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Scott, J. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: everyday forms of peasant resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Scott, J. C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Shepherd, J. 1991. *Music as a Social Text*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Shuker, R. 1994. *Understanding Popular Music*. London: Routledge.

Siu, J. 2003. "Say it Aloung—KingLyChee" *BC Magazine*. 2003(December).

So, Y.K., Clement. 1992. *Mass Media and Youth in Hong Kong: a study of media use, your archetype and media influence*. Hong Kong: Commission of Youth.

Sophie, A. 2004. "KingLyChee: Singing in Your Mother Tongue". *Maximum Rock n' Roll*. 253 (June).

Straw, W. 2001. "Dance Music", *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swiss, T., Sloop, J. and Herman, A. 1998. *Mapping the Beat: Popular Music and Contemporary Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers LTd.

Thompson, E. P. 1978. "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class". *Social History. III*.
Thorton, Sarah. 1995. *Club Cultures: music, media and subcultural capital*. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press.

Wallace, C. 1998. *Youth In Society: the construction and deconstruction of youth in east and west Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Walser, R. 1993. *Running With the Devil: Power and Madness in Heavy Metal*

Music. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press.

Whiteley, S. 1992. *The Space Between the Notes: Rock Music and the Counter-Culture.* New York: Routledge.

Whyte, W. F. 1993. *Street Corner Society: the social structure of an Italian slum.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Williams, R. 1977. *Marxism and Literature.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Willis, P. 1977. *Learning to Labor: how working class kids gets working jobs.* Farnborough: Saxon House.

Willis, P. 1978. *Profane Culture.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Wilson, B. 2002. "The Canadian Rave Scene and Five Theses on Youth Resistance", *Canadian Journal of Sociology.* 27(30). P. 373-412.

Wong, C. C., Alvin. 1997. *The Making and the Use of Popular Music in Hong Kong.* Unpublished M.Phil. Thesis. Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong.

Wyn & White. 1997. *Rethinking Youth.* London: Sage Publications.

"Hardcore From the Heart". *South China Morning Post*, 7th August, 2003.

"Hong Kong Hardcore". *Revolution.* 2003(January).

"KingLyChee". *Fracture.* 2003(April/May).

"KingLyChee". *PM Magazine.* 2003(November).

"We are Who we are". *Rock Magazine.* 2003(Vol.239).

丁惠芳、何榮宗：<本地青年研究的檢討與反思>。刊於<青年研究學報>。第一卷，第一期，頁 133-141。香港：香港青年協會，1998。

中央青年事務委員會：<青年政策報告書>。香港：香港政府，1988。

佘雲楚：<紀律危機還是教育危機？論師道尊嚴與學校權威之隕落>。刊於<香港社會科學學報>。冬季，第十三期，頁 31-67，1998。

史文鴻：<劉德華的大眾文化形象>。刊於史文鴻：<社會文化批判>。香港：次文化堂，1993。

吳俊雄、張志偉編：<閱讀香港普及文化 1970-2000>。香港：牛津大學出版社，2001。

吳宏：<批判許冠傑>。刊於<理工學生報>。香港：理工學院學生會，1980: 9(3)

呂志偉：<現代性、社會控制與香港青少年問題 1945 -1979>。刊於吳俊雄、張志偉編：<閱讀香港普及文化 1970-2000>。香港：牛津大學出版社，2002(修訂版)。

張月愛、章嘉雯：<透視香港年青人的消費文化>。刊於呂大樂編<普及文化在香港>。香港：曙光出版社，1983。

明光社：<賭博對香港青少年的影響 – 研究報告>。香港：明光社，2000。

朱瑞冰編：<香港音樂發展概況>。香港：三聯書局(香港)有限公司，1999。

朱耀偉：< 香港流行歌詞研究：七十年代至九十年代中期>。香港：三聯書局，2000。

朱耀偉：<光輝歲月：香港流行樂隊組合研究>。香港：匯智出版有限公司，2000。

洛楓：<世紀末都市：香港流行文化研究>。香港：牛津大學出版社，1995。

聖匠堂社區中心：<「網吧上網的動機及情況」問卷> 。香港：聖匠堂社區中心，2003。

莫泰基：<感性消費：青年工作的新課題>。刊於社聯及青少年部編<過渡期的青少年服務資料彙編>。第一卷，第一期，頁 19-39。香港：香港社聯兒童及青少年部出版， 1990。

莫漢輝：<流行樂壇誰主浮沉？>。刊於<星島日報>，1995 年 3 月 25 日。

邵國華：< Van 仔文化：鐵鑄成的次文化>。刊於<博益月刊>，1998：13。

邵家臻: <逆構青年>。香港 ： 香港政策透視， 2001。

邵家臻: <青年 ： 建構與解構>。香港 ： 香港政策透視， 1997。

邵家臻:<青年不是什麼>。香港 ： 香港政策透視， 2002。

陳韜文、蘇鑰機：<一項有關傳媒使用、青少年類型及傳播影響的研究>。刊於青年事務委員會編<大眾傳媒與青少年>。香港：政府印務局，1992。

陳韜文：<大眾傳媒與青少年文化--油脂與探索>。刊於<社聯季刊>，1987 :102

香港基督教服務處:<失學失業青少年的職業取向及濫藥危機處境調查報告>。香港：香港基督教服務處，2000。

香港政府：<一九六六年九龍騷動調查委員會報告書>。香港：香港政府印務局，1967。

香港電台：<香港廣播六十年, 1928-1988>。香港：香港電台，1988。

香港青年協會：<「香港青年對北上珠三角發展事業」的取態研究 >。香港：香港青年協會，2003。

香港青年協會：<參加街頭童黨的推力和拉力>。香港：香港青年協會，1993。

香港青年協會：<少女懷孕現象：服務與政策的取向>。香港：香港青年協會，1995。

香港青年協會:<新市鎮發展與童黨問題的關係>。香港：香港青年協會，2000。

香港青年協會：<青少年飲酒狀況的研究>。香港：香港青年協會，2000。

香港青年協會青少年流動工作隊：<星夜計劃報告書(97-99) >。香港：香港青年協會，1999。

馬卡斯：<反抗學校的街童>。刊於<學苑>。香港：香港大學學生會，1991/92：

1。

馬國明：<新一代偶像崇拜>。刊於<明報月刊>，1987。

馮禮慈：<從歌詞轉變看我們的感情依歸>。刊於<明報>，1996 年 7 月 25 日。

黃志華：<粵語流行曲四十年>。香港：三聯書局(香港)有限公司，1990。

黃成榮、賴偉良、邵家臻、李偉倫：<霸權主義下的流行文化：剖析中文金曲的內容及意識形態>。香港政策透視，1994。

黃成榮：<探討香港青少年的"無厘頭"文化>。刊於<明報月刊>，1991。

黃成榮:<青少年價值觀及違規行為>。香港：三聯書店(香港) 有限公司，1999。

蘋果日報：<入職青年多欠責任感　八成半僱主認為須加改善>。1999-5-31。

蘋果日報：<大埔四成青少年失業，學者憂引發嚴重問題>。1999-2-1。

蘋果日報：<建基於自我的 Hardcore 精神>。2001-12。

蘋果日報:<青少年調查　多看淡前景　學者恐不滿情緒引發暴亂>。1999-1-2。

明報:<4700 青少年或成病態賭徒　首次賭博年齡平均不足 12 歲>。2004-5-24。

明報：<中六生自發組織聯盟反對二十三條立法>。2003-6-29。

明報：<調查指 36%青少年屬高危一族　專家：預防罪惡從小學開始>。2000-12-3。

明報：<連番失意會考　展翅重生變美容師>。2003-6-29。

明報：<青少年搵工重薪金多於興趣>。1998-11-26。

星島日報：<七一大遊行啓發年青人，為政壇培養下一代>，2003-7-16。

星島日報：<會考狀元多傾向從政>。2003-8-12。

星島日報：<逾四成青少年參與炒作>。1997-10-19。

星島日報：<邊緣青年「虛度良宵」 社工團體要求增加夜間服務資源>。
1997-9-8。

星島日報：<高考狀元愛當女主播>。2004-7-10。