Japanese rule in Korea (1910-1945) is most commonly known for authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, and exploitation. Within these broad contours, however, were vibrant spaces for transcultural adaptations, negotiations, and co-productions. My dissertation project is a multilayered cultural history that explores the birth of the Korean popular music industry during the colonial era. I investigate the transcultural interactions between Korean and Japanese music professionals, as well as the ways in which transnational recording companies worked within the opportunities and constraints of the global economy and the colonial state. In doing so, I seek to place the Korean popular music industry within the history of the global recording industry as much as the regional history of the Japanese empire.

To investigate the Korean popular music industry in a transnational context, my dissertation has a dual focus. At the macro-level, I investigate the intersection of political power and the transnational recording companies. Beginning the late 1920s, the major recording companies based in Europe and the United States opened Korean subsidiaries, often within a year of establishing regional headquarters in Japan. The SP (standard play) records of Korean popular music they produced were instant hits among Korean urbanites. Realizing the increasing influence of popular music in the 1930s, the colonial government attempted to control music production in various ways, and later, with Japan on the verge of total war, sought to utilize popular music as propaganda. Hence, the political interests of Japan as an empire and the economic interests of multinational capital were intricately entwined in colonial Korea. I explore how these power dynamics affected the Korean popular music industry as well as music professionals within it.

At the micro-level, I examine how individuals from heterogeneous backgrounds cooperated and competed in the recording industry while becoming popular music professionals. These professionals, as they worked to produce popular music, successfully responded to political and economic demands while incorporating the latest technologies and musical trends. I inquire into how virtuosity, ethnicity, education, gender, and class helped shape professional relations in the industry. I also explore the ways in which these music professionals' social and ethnic backgrounds affected their responses to political and economic changes, whether they took the path of accommodation, appropriation, or subversion.

**Methodology and Research Plan**

Sources on the popular music industry in Japan and Korea are sparse due to the tumultuous history of the two countries in the twentieth century. Therefore, I hope to reconstruct the Korean popular music industry by meticulously assembling the extant sources in South Korea, Japan and the United States. To study the dynamic engagement between the colonial government and the transnational recording industry, I will juxtapose government documents acquired in South Korea with sources by and about recording companies which I will collect in Japan. To examine the identity formation of popular music professionals, I will examine their professional achievements and aspirations by studying
biographies, newspapers, and magazines. I will also conduct textual analyses of personal narratives of these individuals, as represented in memoirs, correspondence, interview articles, and journals.

I have chosen the Kansai region for my main research site since the greatest number of Koreans in Japan has lived there since the interwar period. Moreover, Korean engagement in popular music making, including the recording of SP records in the 1920s and 30s, was most prevalent in this area. From September to January, I will study these SP records along with rare books and magazines on Korean popular music at the National museum of Ethnology in Osaka, as well as the nearby Research Centre for Japanese Traditional Music at the Kyoto City University of Arts. In February, I will research at the Kanazawa Phonograph Museum. Along with over 580 phonographs, the museum’s holdings include primary sources related to the Japanese recording industry. Researching key technological developments regarding phonographs and records will help me to better understand competition and collaboration among the recording companies as well as their successes and failures. In March, I will research at Meiji Gakuin University Library in Tokyo to investigate cooperation between Korean and Japanese music professionals. The university currently holds the largest collection of texts concerning modern Japanese music including posters, pamphlets, and sheet music. April through May, I will focus on collecting relevant documents for my dissertation by making short trips to private museums such as the Koga Masao Museum of Music as well as private collections.

**Goal of Research Project, Dissemination, and Mid to Long-term Goal**

To enhance my dissertation, I need to receive extensive feedback from scholars in various disciplines. First of all, Professor Fukuoka Shota, a renowned ethnomusicologist at the National Museum of Ethnology, has agreed to guide me throughout my research period. I also hope to present my research-in-progress at events and conferences hosted by the Chōsenshi Kenkyūkai, the national organization of historians of Korea, the Kyoto Consortium for Korean Studies, and the Japanese Association for the Study of Popular Music (JASPM). In addition, I plan to submit a paper to *Popular Music Studies*, the annual journal of JASPM. On the way back to the U.S. from Japan, I plan to present at my Korean host institute, the Graduate School of International Studies at Yonsei University, as well as the Korean Association for the Study of Popular music (KASPM). Upon my return to the United States, I will complete my dissertation and share it with concerned scholars in both Japan and Korea.

I hope my dissertation will provide a framework to enrich our understanding of the position and functioning of cultural industry in a colonial context. My career goal is to obtain a faculty position at a research university and devote myself to researching and teaching the transcultural history of East Asia. I also plan to expand my dissertation into a scholarly monograph and base my second book on a comparative study of the popular music industries of Taiwan and Korea.