Popular Music

K-pop

History

Origins of Korean popular music

The history of Korean popular music can be traced back to 1885 when an American missionary, Henry Appenzeller, began teaching American and British folk songs at a school. These songs were called changga in Korean, and they were typically based on a popular Western melody sung with Korean lyrics. For example, the song "Oh My Darling, Clementine" became known as "Simcheongga." During the Japanese rule the popularity of changga songs rose as Koreans expressed their feelings against Japanese oppression through music. One of the most popular songs was "Huimangga". The Japanese confiscated the existing changga collections and published lyrics books of their own.

The first known Korean pop album was "Yi Pungjin Sewol" (This Tumultuous Time), by Park Chae-seon and Lee Ryu-saek in 1925, which contained popular songs translated from Japanese. The first pop song written by a Korean composer is thought to be "Nakhwayusu" sung by Lee Jeong-suk in 1929. In the mid-1920s, Japanese composer Masao Koga mixed traditional Korean music with Gospel music that American Evangelists introduced in the 1870s. This type of music became known as Enka in Japan, and later in Korea as Trot .