

The british invasion: musical movement of 1960s

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The focal point of the paper is to analyze and evaluate the British Invasion or the musical movement of the mid-1960s composed of British rock-and-roll (“beat”) groups whose popularity spread rapidly throughout England and the United States. For the purpose it is important to understand the socio political equilibrium of the time. This is because the main factors in this movement are predominantly three fold. The first one is changing social pattern after the Great War. The second important factor is the aspect of cultural contacts and third aspect is the changing face of market and economy in UK and US.

It could be mentioned in the initial stages that it was degeneration time. Imperialism had taken its tolls on the world, which was grilling on the last fires of the Second World War. The losses were too heavy, and the shocks, almost unbearable. People just lived through a test of the extent organized cruelty and purposeful ruthlessness could reach. As far as the future was concerned, the initial tremors of what would lead to a massive cross across the globe were being felt - the crack that broke it up into three distinctly different worlds, the first, the second and the third.

In this context it would be relevant to mention that the generation was not finding their existence worth while or in other words they wanted more out of their life. This extra bit was searched everywhere and at every aspects of life and music was no different. The Beat movement came to this need of the hour with quite a few new faces budding with musical talents and a whole new genus of music called the rock ‘ n’ roll. (Prawer, 221-5)

It was regeneration time. Ideological conflicts and military interests were shaking civilization right up to its foundations. The doubts, dilemmas and <https://assignbuster.com/the-british-invasion-musical-movement-of-1960s/>

confusions were gradually, quite slowly indeed, giving way to a new and unique cultural revolution. It was happening all across the United Kingdom and the United States. People suddenly seemed to realize that there was enough of political warfare to disgrace humanity. The prevailing standards suddenly seemed to be meaningless, and the insurgent youths wanted something different to happen.

United Kingdom and its Beat Movement was no exception to this movement. As a matter of fact, it was one of the cores of it. The presence of a large number of African-Americans in the city was pushing it ahead to initiate the Civil Rights Movement. Something that had laid its roots in the human mind over a few millennia, apartheid that is, was gradually being uprooted by the new wave of what started being called the rock 'n' roll movement. The existing musical trends, blues and country, did not suffice in expressing the protests and grievances of the new generation, which started looking at itself as a victim of political conspiracies. (Powell, 49-53)

It could be stated that the focal point of this paper is realizing that what occurred in United Kingdom during the era of 1960s that was instrumental in giving the birth of rock n' roll. This was deeply influenced by the presence of the freshly migrated African American population in United Kingdom and influenced the musical development by a huge margin with musical forms that incorporated jazz meshing with country music.

But the basic background of this movement started much earlier and it would be relevant to mention that the black community contributed hugely to this movement. African American history and the context in this case is the great migration during the mid 1900s. While looking into the matter it

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can primary be mentioned that migration is a subject that is studied on all levels when dealing with humanity and its idiosyncrasies. In order to understand migration we must understand the various components involved in migration, including internal migration, external migration, immigration and both refugees and Internally Displaced Persons. During the twentieth century, especially in the middle decades, it was found that the population of Southern UK with specification of African American origin has doubled within a p of 10 years after the Second World War.

The population escalated to a high note and this time the immigrants were there in the region to put their hands on the industrial boom. This was obviously not at par with any single industry like Manchester but the cumulative sum total of the gross output became quite high and the settlements showed the white population of the area that there was more to music than usual traditional themes.

These people use to gather around at the evening and presented their compositions to themselves. It was a leisurely approach but people like McCartney or Lennon soon found out that these rural touch of music can be polished and urbanized to develop into a new form of musical genera that was ultimately to be known as Rock 'n' roll and as these people were from smaller towns and this part was to harvest most of the credit of this new form of music. (Tyerman, 233-37)

The life styles of the early 1960's through the later 1960's have emerged as fallout of the booming economy that is represented by the generation of ' baby boomers'. The hardship during the days of the Second World War gave birth to the newest possible philosophies that state it is obvious to follow the <https://assignbuster.com/the-british-invasion-musical-movement-of-1960s/>

trend of open market economy with all its perception of high yielding materialism. This hard cored materialism and pro life oriented attitude was previously known in the western world but now it came into a maximized form which sociologists refer as a pro active action against the mass destruction and insecurity of the last great war. The latest philosophy was to obtain as much as possible that life has to offer. Every social aspect changed with it and along with it changed the world around them.

Plays and writer were no different. Colours became more vibrant and approach became more outrageous to keep up with the society. Joe Orton's plays were a product of this period. UK and US was ready for this change and it only needed a spark to ignite its whole new musical genus. This was provided by the endowments of talented musicians like Roy Orbison, Johnny Cash and Carl Perkins, John Lennon and Elvis Presley. These people were to become the pride of the youth and the era soon came to be known as the cradle of Rock 'n' roll. (Manning, 279)

The funny side of this approach was however different from the basic perception of the life styles of the early 1960's through the later 1960 were a confluence of conflicting philosophies. As it was mentioned earlier that the idea of materialism was at its had hitting best but alternatively the simplicities of eastern philosophies, specifically Indian philosophies, were highly acclaimed though it was concentrated within a certain group of people. As a result, the poets and the writers, as least a section of them, who took their inspirations from life and society it self, inclined themselves towards the approach of simplistic formations of art forms.

It is a well known fact and it has been shown time and again by many literary historians and researchers that the main targeted audience were the baby boomers who had all the opportunities to take all the advantages of almost any and every marketing gimmicks. UK and its music were not far behind in this era. The musicians of this time needed something more vibrant and colorful and Rock 'n' Roll came out as the product of the time. (Dollard, 116-7)

It should be remembered that this was the era of the beginning of the ' cold wars' too and fascination of the authorities towards the space age race and nuclear future was overwhelming. So, it is obvious that the common demography of the country started mimicking the perception of the authorities taking the concept of space age right to their likings. As a result the musical designers could not be left far behind. They associated their music with the latest gizmos and presented the feature of Rock 'n' Roll as new age revolution.

The problem was that the new generation was unable to recognize themselves with the usual blues and other traditional forms. They wanted something exclusively that is easily identifiable to them. Rock ' n' Roll Music provided that element which included the latest approach to music with more flair and flamboyance. This music possessed more swings and action and this was what the generation of 1960's wanted. The Beat movement provided this exact genus of music. (Knott, 188-9)

The innovative and diversified methodology utilized between these two decades reflects a change in society's considerations. The choice to change furniture styles reflects a great deal on the emotional status of the era and <https://assignbuster.com/the-british-invasion-musical-movement-of-1960s/>

the need to recover from a series of devastating events. Those devastating events included World War II and a very emotional roller coaster in the depression era which wrought havoc in many ways on the methods of production and the economic infrastructure of the United States and UK. The devastation involved during World War II provided impetus for the designers from various European countries to flee to the United States and UK for sanctuary and freedom of expression. This is where the innovation for the new modern style of music was managed.

The 1950's period was indeed a lively decade for arts and technology where many forces emerged influencing changes in musical design. The push of space travel, the defense industry and consumer booms provided impetus toward increased influences of fashion in lifestyle design. Cheap yet fashionable articles made to be thrown away afterwards became fashionable for household interiors. Youths of the era became a strong influence on this era of design by attacking the principles of tradition in many ways including interior design. Designers were intrigued and influenced by fantasy films, space travel and its mystique and more. Later this attitude was becoming more relevant with pop art culture, the Beatles, Woodstock, Peace, Love, Psychedelia and the Youth Force. (Kumar, 334)

In conclusion it can well be stated that it is true that the movement of music in the form of Rock 'n' roll developed and reached at a great height but at the same time it is also a fact that it died out soon in its original form. However, the music of this era left a long standing legacy for generations to come in different forms and designs of music along with different issues to protest along with cultural homogeneous forms and changing socio

economic and philosophical context, the basic causes of the development of this musical movement.

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