

# Influence of motown era on music

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Influence of Motown Era on music. Music is a way in which people express themselves and it brings with it a lot of social changes in the form of culture and personal behavior. The Motown era traces its origination back from the 1960s that was when it attained peak of its success. It did not only involve good music but also brought with it showmanship and style. The music in this era is characterized by songs with very deep lyrics. The name Motown emerged from a record company started by one Berry Gordy in the year 1960 in Michigan, United States. The Motown sound mainly involved music in the genre in form of pop, rhythm and blues and soul. The major group of artists who emerged during this period consists of groups such as:

Supremes, The Four Tops and The Temptations.(Perone 42) Even today there are artists who produce their music with the Motown influence in them; a good of example of such an artist is the group Boyz II Men. The group borrows its style of music mainly from the groups The Temptations and The Four Tops. They comprise of four artists as seen in the older groups. Their way of singing is also similar as they sing together in harmonies. They have also copied their style of dancing from the older groups where they dance as a group in a line. The other current groups and artists who have taken up the Motown touch in their style of music are Babyface and En Vogue. Babyface is viewed by many to be one of the best producers and song writers who ever lived. However, the man believed to be heavily behind the musical success of the Motown era goes by name Smokey Robinson due to his ability to write and produce songs. Actually he was the one who gave Berry the idea of starting up a record company. He is said to have written close to 4, 000 songs. En Vogue is a group of women and is said to have taken after the

Supremes as their lyrics mainly involved relationships and love. Motown still has a strong influence up to date since most of the songs produced today borrow their lyrics heavily from the songs of the Motown era. The R&B music of the current generation is perceived to be a subsidiary of the Motown music.(Perone 73) In the 1950s, the black communities had not attained right to social freedom as the racial segregation was still prevailing. The establishment of the Motown Records in 1959 created a platform for fight against racial, economical, political and social discrimination as well as mass violence and police brutality against the blacks. The artists producing with the Motown Records during that period mainly black people produced song lyrics had messages in protest against the social injustices the black were subjected to. In the early 1960s, the Motown became the most independent recording company. Through its processes of bringing together artists with talents from all sorts of races, the company managed to bring about substantial reduction in the racial and social obstacles that was highly spread initially. Way back before the emergence of the Motown Records black artists had managed to break through into the Billboard Top 40 chart on several occasions. Examples of such black musicians are Jackie Wilson and Ruth Brown. During this era the socio-political setting was highly broadened thanks to the Motown Records which brought together all the talents under a single record label. Berry tried by all means to narrow the racial discrimination gap by producing songs that appealed all people irrespective of their skin color. (Perone 114) The greatest contribution of the Motown Records in the struggle for civil rights of the black people is the recording of a speech by Martin Luther King dubbed ‘ I have a Dream’.

Therefore it would be in order to state that the music of the Motown era contributed significantly in the fight against racial discrimination towards the black people and attainment of liberation. The emergence of hip-hop in the 1970s which brought with it massive cultural phenomena also traces its origination from the cultural integration started off in the Motown era. The message behind hip-hop music advocated for social equality and called for an end to discrimination against African-Americans. The music of the era also had a great effect on dressing styles among the people especially the black people as they tried to emulate the dressing styles seen with the popular artists during that period. The music also brought with it new dancing styles different from those seen in the previous periods. (Perone 214) Works Cited Perone, James E. Music of The Counterculture Era. New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2010.