

Reggae music essay



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Reggae is a genre that developed from numerous musical styles. It is rooted in the music of black slaves transported from Ghana by the Spanish in the 15th century. They created a unique style of music that was popular as mento in Jamaican folk music from centuries and changed in the 1960s and 70s, in the destitute ghettos of Kingston, into reggae.

The music was produced from the strong island beat mento music and used with Jamaican youth's desire for esteem, self-identity and affirmation amidst poverty. Reggae's lyrics were full of effective political, social and religious messages. The present paper describes the Reggae music which is allied with the Rastafarian Culture. The base of reggae music is ' Rasta' which drives the artists to spread all over the world.

The phrase Reggae indicates a particular manner that began after the advancement of rock steady. Reggae has two subgenres, the roots reggae and dancehall reggae. This was invented in the late 1970s. Reggae is established upon a rhythm style typified by standard chops on the off-beat, known as the skank. The rhythm is normally slower than that found in reggae's predecessors, ska and rock steady. Reggae is often related with the Rastafari movement, which left a great impact on many well-known reggae musicians in the 1970s and 1980s.

Various famous reggae musicians practice Rastafarianism and consequently many reggae lyrics reproduce the viewpoint and customs of Rastafarianism (Romer, 2007). Reggae music was widespread with other forms of Caribbean music. It is a creation of the amalgamation of African rhythms and European

melody and harmony (Hebdige, 1990). Reggae song lyrics cover many subjects which include faith, love, sexuality and broad social issues.

Bob Marley was main artist who grew Reggae music. He was a supporter to the religion of Rastafarianism. His relations with this religion which posits that one person's outlook is as convincing as another's, so long as they are possessed of the Spirit of Jah (God) directed to reggae being intimately apparent as inherently Rastafarian. Bob Marley became Jamaica's first international superstar with creating albums related with Rastafarianism. In the 1960s and 70s, almost every reggae musician who followed Marley, was a Rastafarian.

He was the key player in popularizing reggae at global level. He recorded ska, rocksteady, and nyabinghi-drumming records in the beginning of his career. Reggae became popular and was getting radio play in the United Kingdom on John Peel's radio show in late sixties. Reggae is at all times played in 4/4 time or swing time because the symmetrical rhythm pattern do not lend itself to 3/4 times. This music is quite simple, and a whole song comprises of no more than one or two chords.

To play this music, a standard drum kit is normally used but the snare drum is often tuned very high to give it a timbale-type sound. Some reggae drummers prefer separate extra timbale or high-tuned snare to get this sound. Reggae drumbeats have three main categories- One Drop, Rockers and Steppers. Carlton Barrett invented one Drop style. In this style, the emphasis is completely on the second and fourth beat of the bar.

In the Rockers beat, the stress is also on beats one and three and various syncopations are frequently included. The example of this style is the Black Uhuru song Sponji Reggae. Reggae music is played with wide variety of drumming instrumentation. Bongos are most commonly used to play free, spontaneous patterns with weighty use of African-style cross-rhythms.

The bass guitar is very important instrument in reggae, and the drum and bass is often called the riddim. Records indicate that many reggae singers have created different songs which were recorded over the same riddim. The rhythm guitar in reggae generally plays the chords on the off-beat, a musical figure recognized as skank. The sound of this instrument is very dampened, short and scratchy chop sound, nearly like a hitting instrument. Another instrument which is used in reggae is the lead guitar which adds a rock or blues-style harmonious solo to a song, but usually it plays the same part as the bass line, an octave higher, with a very dampened and picked sound.

In reggae music, the keyboard usually doubles the rhythm guitar's skank, playing chords on the offbeat in a staccato style to put in body. The reggae-organ shuffle is exceptional to reggae. In playing with chords, a Hammond organ-style sound is used. This is identified as the bubble.

Precise drawbar settings used on a Hammond console for creating correct sound. It is quite complex reggae keyboard rhythm. At present, synthesizers are used to imitate brass horn parts in many recent reggae recordings and concert tours. Horn sections are commonly used in playing introductions and counter-melodies in reggae music. A classic reggae horn section has saxophone, a trumpet and a trombone.

The lyrics in reggae are simple than the instrumentation and rhythm. Using reggae style any song can be created. Reggae rock is a combination genre in which elements of reggae and rock music are merged. The singer Matisyahu is recognized for joining together traditional Jewish themes with reggae and rock sounds. Reggae music is famous for its custom of social criticism, though many reggae songs discuss lighter, more private subjects such as love, sex and socializing. Some reggae artists have conversed against what they perceived as the domination of traditional religious code of belief.

Many reggae songs talk about freedom that is linked with the ban of ganja, which is considered a sacrament by Rastafarians. The greater use of cannabis enhanced the reggae since its beginning. Catch a Fire album of Bob Marley was contentious at the time when the album was first released. Other themes of social activism include Black Nationalism, anti-racism, misogyny, anti-colonialism, anti-capitalism, criticism of political systems, and criticism of the colonial education system.

Few of these themes, such as cannabis use, have been widespread in reggae music all through in the history of the music. Homophobia is recently used to in reggae music. The reggae rhythms demonstrated the popular theme in the world of music. At the present time, these apply to nearly all forms of Jamaican pop.

Reggae has developed into a more reputable style. In recent years, politicians use the music to solve their purpose. Dr Eric Williams, Trinidad's Prime Minister, used the street-style of calypso for his renowned speech ??? Massa Day Done???-the Days of the White plantation Owner are Over

(Hebdige, 1990). Work Cited [http://worldmusic. about.](http://worldmusic.about.com/od/genres/p/Reggae.htm)

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