Regional Centers for R&B/Soul

- **Stax** in Memphis, and Memphis sound generally
- **Motown** in Detroit: pop crossover
- **Chicago sound**: Curtis Mayfield
- **Fame Studios** in Muscle Shoals, Alabama
- **Atlantic Records**, NYC: Sweet Soul, Distribution

- Smaller Centers: Philadelphia, Cincinnati
• Based in Memphis, Tennessee
• 1960-1975
• Jim Stewart + Estelle Axton = Stax
• Racially integrated, later in ownership too
• Deal with Atlantic in 60s
• Less polish, mistakes ok
Movie Theatre + Box Office

Unusual acoustic space

Grassroots business model
Booker T & The MGs

- Stax House Band
- Consistent sound for label
- Band works out arrangements
  - vs. Motown
- Funkier vs. Popplier sound

Ex: Booker T & The MGs – “Green Onions” (1962)
Mar-Keys/Memphis Horns

- Stax house Horn section
- A few different members over the years

Ex: Otis Redding – “Satisfaction” (1966)
- Hooks!
Otis Redding
(1941-1967)

- 60s face of Stax
- Soul vocal style
- Running around studio, unique sound
- Sam Cooke, Little Richard influences
- Crossover (Monterey Pop Festival)
- Early death

Ex: Otis Redding – “Pain In My Heart” (1964)
Isaac Hayes  
(1942-2008)

Multiple roles at Stax:

• Songwriter, producer, arranger, vocals, organ

• *Hot Buttered Soul* (1970):
  R&B from singles to album format, multiple charts

• South Park

Pop standard to Symphonic Soul Funk:

Isaac Hayes

The Sound of Blaxploitation Cinema:

Ex: Isaac Hayes – “Theme From Shaft” (1971)

Maestro:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lytb0fgJ6vY
• Detroit, Michigan: 1959-1972
• LA: 1972-1998
• Modern re-launch/use of name

• Berry Gordy, Jr.
• African-American-owned
• Crossover intention
Independent label, but run like a major:
  - Division of labour, professional songwriters, arrangers, etc.
  - "Charm School:"
    - etiquette, choreography, vocal coaches, etc.
Funk Brothers

• “Hidden” house band at Motown in Detroit
• More technically-oriented, jazz background (compared to Stax)

• Marvin Gaye’s “What’s Going On” (1971): First time Motown credited backup musicians

• Standing in the Shadows of Motown (Film)
The Motown Sound

Pop production style:
• Orchestration
• Horn and vocal arrangements
• Prominent tambourine
• Flawless performance, groove not as central
• No improvisation

Process:
• Division of labour

Ex: The Temptations – “My Girl” (1964)
Martha Reeves & The Vandellas

- 1957-1972 (various names);
- 2010-Present
- “Girl Group”

- Holland-Dozier-Holland
- Pop values, orchestral brass
- Less funky, less improv

Ex: Martha Reeves & The Vandellas – “Nowhere to Run” (1965)
Marvin Gaye
(1939-1984)

• Session musician
• Early pop style
• Social consciousness
• *What’s Going On* (1971):
  
  Berry Gordy’s “No” to politics, esp. black politics

Ex: Marvin Gaye – “What’s Going On” (1971)

• Atypical jam style, spacey, less pop-oriented
Stevie Wonder (1950-)

- Motown at 11
- Multi-instrumentalist

Ex: Stevie Wonder – “Superstition” (1971)
- Clavinet
- Almost a one-man band
• Muscle Shoals, Alabama
• FAME = Florence Alabama Music Enterprises
• Rick Hall
• Late 50s/early 60s-Present
• Atlantic distribution
• House bands
• First 2 all white, v. young
• Third racially integrated
• Dispels essentialist idea of how “black/white” musicians sound
• Segregation in Alabama, breaks

Ex: Jimmy Hughes – “Steal Away” (1964)
Muscle Shoals Sound
(split & 2\textsuperscript{nd} studio)

- Aretha, 1\textsuperscript{st} hit, then took band to NYC
- Rolling Stones, 1969

Ex: Barbara A. Perry –
“A Man is a Mean, Mean Thing” (1965)

Wilson Pickett (1941-2006)

- Alabama to Detroit
- Gospel
- Atlantic
- Stax
- FAME

Curtis Mayfield (1942-1999)

• Chicago Soul sound (Curtom Records)
• The Impressions (50s/60s)
• Black pride in Soul

Ex: The Impressions – “People Get Ready” (1965)
Curtis Mayfield

- Solo Symphonic soul (70s)
- Black pride
- Explicitly political

1990: Paralyzed on stage

Ex: Curtis Mayfield – “We People Who Are Darker Than Blue” (1970)
- Euro and Afro traditions
Al Green (1946-)

• Kicked out of house as teen for listening to Soul (secular/sacred divide)
• Gospel mid-70s
• Rev. in Memphis

Ex: Al Green – “Let’s Stay Together” (1972)

• #1 Pop and R&B
Too many Soul/R&B artists to cover...

- Bill Withers ("Ain’t No Sunshine")
- Ben E. King ("Stand By Me")
- Barry White
- Mavis Staples/Staples Singers
- Ike and Tina Turner
- Gladys Knight
- Isley Brothers
- Michael Jackson
Current R&B/Soul

- Daptone Records (2002-)
- Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings
- Anitbalas Afrobeat Orchestra

Ex: Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings
   – “100 Days, 100 Nights” (2007)