

Across an Ocean

The Yoruba Roots of American
Hip-Hop
Bran Nightrain McGregor

Methods: Connecting Cultures Centuries Apart

- The Ancient Musical Culture of the Yoruba
- Linking the Yoruba to America
- Slavery and Music
- Freedom, Jazz, Blues, and American Music
- Does Hip-Hop relate to Ancient Yoruba Musical Traditions?

If You can
Talk,
You
can Sing
If You can
Walk,
You
can Dance

- Ancient African Saying



The Ancient Musical Traditions of the Yoruba

- "Music of Primitive People"
- A Role in all Aspects of Every Life, from Birth.
- Call and Response
- Interweaving Beats
- Community Participation
- Improvisation
- Dominance of Vocals and Rhythm



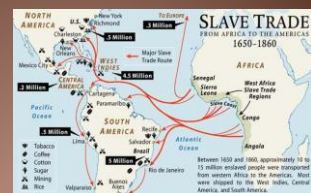
The Dun Dun or Djun Djun



- Emblematic of Yoruba Culture
- A "Talking Drum"
- Yoruba is a Tonal Language
- Part of Ancient History, Long Before the Middle Passage
- Other Instruments: Ivory Trumpets, Flutes, and Drums.

Linking the Yoruba to America

The most influential African culture in the "New World"



Losing All Possessions

- Shuttled Across the Atlantic
- No Instruments, No Belongings
- Clinging to what was Left: The Music of the Voice, Hands, and Feet
- A Transplanted African Culture



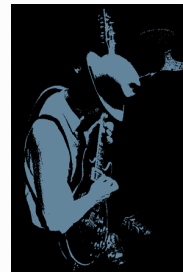
These Enslaved Africans in America Held Strong to Every Piece of Culture They Could, Continuing Their Unique Musical Practices While Bearing the Workload of a New Nation.



African Music in America

- Slaves were often encouraged to sing while working
 - Improvisation
 - Call and Response
- Involvement of the Community
- Dominance of Rhythm and Vocals
- Layered and interweaved beats
- Music as a central part of daily living
 - Resisting influence

Freedom, Jazz, Blues, and American Music



- 1865, Freedom is Slowly Won
- The Growth of Jazz and Blues in American African Cultures
- New Instruments, New Music
- Continuing African Musical Traditions
- Replacing the Performers: Minstrel Shows

Hip-Hop and African Music

- Growing Up: Battles of Words
- Games on the Streets: The Dozens
- Hip-Hop is the Natural Progression: Adding Technology to Ancient Music
- Dominant Vocals, Percussion, and Rhythm
 - Improvisation and Call And Response
 - A Community Event
- Created in America's Streets, but Part of the African Musical Tradition

Image Sources

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El Fin. Thank You!

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOSY4BfTqoQ>



Mos Def Rock N Roll.flv