

Cultural similarities and differences of hip-hop in the u.s. and france

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Introduction Hip Hop is one of the most popular music genres today as it draws its audience to its harmonious and stylistic musical arrangement. However, Price contends that in the backdrop of the jolly Hip Hop music lies a rich cultural heritage (1). Price added that Hip Hop is a thought-provoking music contained therein is the culture and sentiments of the displaced minorities. Considering the emergence of Hip Hop in various Western countries, this paper focuses on the Hip Hop culture in the U. S. and France. Accordingly, this paper contends that the fundamental similarity of Hip Hop culture in both countries lies in the representation and ways of expression of the minorities, regardless of the range of differences, which lies in the different ways in which the displaced minorities attempt to reconstruct themselves. Similarities Primarily, the Hip Hop culture in the U. S. and France is a product of the Liberation Movement that attempts to emancipate minority groups from social and cultural displacement, particularly the Afro-Americans. Relatively, the Afrocentric themes of the American and French Hip Hop create the relatedness of the American and French Hip Hop. Hip Hop develops in the U. S. and France in the same time frame, which is during the 1970s-1980s, and the said music genre serves as a medium of expression for the displaced minorities and immigrants, particularly the youth in their attempts at social integration (Marshall 570). The movement aims to integrate cultural minorities, such as Afro-Americans and Latinos, with the mainstream society without prejudice (Price 1). Specifically, the Hip Hop culture in both countries takes root in the African culture of expression, particularly relative to economic issues, religion, and socio-cultural

commentary on racial issues. The said similarities are expressed in the film *La Haine* and Helenon's contention of the Africanized Hip Hop in "Africa on their Mind." For instance, the film traces the lives of three friends in a French urban center, who attempt to find social acceptance, regardless of their racial identity. Finding no easy escape to their situation, the three friends resort to rioting, illegal activities, and activism wherein they get the chance to air their concerns in aggressive ways, such as vandalism and riots ("*La Haine*"). In Helenon's article, the U. S. also harbors the same issue of racial differences expressed through music from the teenage children of immigrants (151). Specifically, Helenon states that the rise of Hip Hop culture in the U. S. as a result of the Liberation Movement is also used as a way of expressing socio-cultural concern, criticism, slavery, and personal sentiments relative to the plight of immigrants in the U. S. Differences

Although the emergence of Hip Hop in the U. S. and France has similar roots, Hip Hop cultures in both countries demonstrate different preferences in which they can restructure the perception of people concerning their identity. In France, for instance, cultural minorities adopting the Hip Hop culture aim to promote the value of multiculturalism wherein both native-French and immigrants exercise equal rights and responsibilities ("*La Haine*"). The activities of the main characters, who are the three friends, demonstrate their ideas in their series of rioting activities wherein they want the people to notice their value as multicultural youth in their society. For instance, French Hip Hop culture attempts to adopt the revisionist strategy of Afro-American Hip Hop in America, particularly in upholding the African identity along with the Americanization of their citizenship. Contrastingly,

this is different in the U. S. wherein the primary aim of the Hip Hop culture is to fight the persistent racial prejudice against Afro-Americans; this they do through creating highly commendable, musical output that attracts both Native Americans and Afro-Americans (Helenon 151). Specifically, the American Hip Hop culture attempts to hasten the complete dissolution of racial discrimination as much as to strengthen the rights of immigrants, particularly the Afro-Americans. The reconstructionist strategy of American Hip Hop relies on its attempt at developing the consciousness of Native Americans concerning the actual socio-cultural significance of the African race on the American society. Conclusion The film and the article demonstrate the socio-cultural aspect of Hip Hop as a music genre, particularly on the relative development of the said genre in the U. S. and France. Through the two sources, one can say that both the French and American Hip Hop cultures have an Afrocentric approach to introducing Hip Hop as a music genre; this is because of the explicit elaboration of the condition of Africans and other immigrants in both the U. S. and France. However, regardless of their similarities, French and American Hip Hop cultures differ in the way they present their reconstructionist strategy; the French being more culturally focused while the American is inclined toward musical aestheticism and attraction of a wider range of audience.

Conclusively, it is evident that although there are cultural parallelisms in the emergence of the said musical genre, there are also differences, which also influence the different approach of each culture toward introducing their racial identity. Works Cited Helenon, Veronique. "Africa on Their Mind: Rap, Blackness, and Citizenship in France." *The Vinyl Ain't Final: Hip Hop and the*

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