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African Cultural Retention in the African Diaspora

The College at Brockport, State University of New York

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TRIO

RONALD E. MCNAIR
POST-BACCALAUREATE
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Introduction

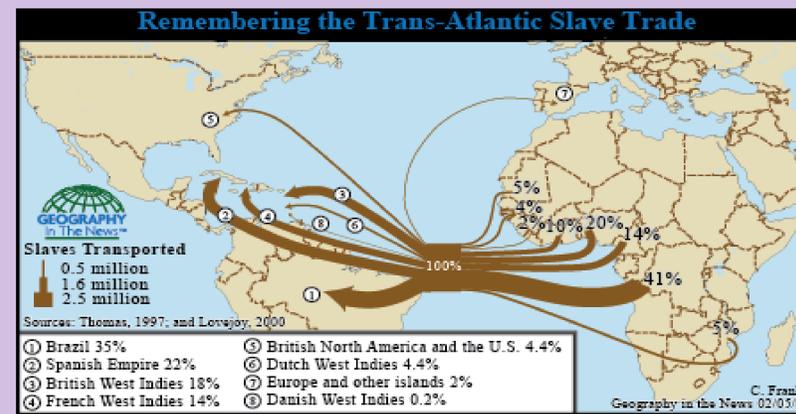
This research will discuss how African culture has survived throughout the diaspora. Through misinformation and myth perpetuated in part by Eurocentric media, many don't recognize the lasting legacy of African culture. A closer look at music, language, food, religion, etc., will help dismantle false narratives pertaining to African culture and enlighten people to what has been retained. For example, Nigerian culture can clearly be found within Brazilian culture's religious practices. My research seeks to encourage accurate and precise information in relation to the depiction of Africa and support a multicultural lens on African and Black History in our educational system.

Methodology

The style of research used was analyzing various documents and autobiographies concerning facts about enslaved Africans on their journey from Africa to the Americas and facts concerning African Culture that were not as well known.

Procedure

Exploring the slave castles of Ghana where some enslaved Africans were held until being auctioned off; researching multiple contexts of places where African descendants were dispersed, I researched various cultures of black ethnicities to see any resemblances or similarities of cultures in Africa.



Conclusion



African Americans, Caribbeans, Hispanics, and Afro-Latinos share a very deep connection with Africa. Although there are many black people dispersed throughout the world, much of the same cultural influences from various African cultures are still apparent in the rest of the African diaspora. African culture has not died due to the advent of the Atlantic Slave Trade. African culture is still being practiced but just through various and intricate forms.

Research Question

How has African culture been retained throughout the diaspora of African descendants?

Results

There are still aspects of African culture that black people at different regions of the world still follow and practice. For example, the Gullah people (right) happen to be descendants of enslaved Africans from West African countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Senegal. There are some influences from Ghanaian culture as well as it can be seen with the patterned kente cloth the woman in front is wearing. The Gullah people also specialize in rice production and use the same traditional practices similar with Sierra Leonean people.



Limitations

Although this is a year-long research project, the project encountered some limitations. Despite utilizing information from many historical texts and academic documents, I was not able to extend the research in which I could personally talk with other people about their culture, or administer surveys.

The Salsa Dance, which is popular in Cuban culture, has origins from West-Africa. The footwork and arm movements mimic some of the same styles with dances performed in West-Africa.



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