

African Theatre Quick Facts

Known to be the place from which the very first humans originated;

- Great diversity of geography, climate, politics, and languages (more than 800 spoken languages)

Problems and Issues

- Oral historic records (Importance of the Griot in West Africa);
 - **GRIOT**- a member of a class of traveling poets, musicians, and storytellers who maintain a tradition of oral history in parts of West Africa.
- Colonial powers dismissal of these histories and traditions;
- Many of the histories were lost by the time writing symbols were adopted;
- Contradictions between the imposed European history and the Natives' oral histories
Double Consciousness --->Assimilation<-->Matriculation
- Civil wars following independence – Apartheid Slavery and Slave Trade and the loss of part of the population and memory of the past – But also, impacts on World music and arts
- Western and Eastern religions vs Ancestral belief systems

Pre-colonial African performance:

- Complexity of forms, languages, and symbolism
- Drumming Dances
- Masks and Masquerades (Pende Masks, Yoruba Egungun)
- Puppets (Bamana or Bambara)
- Rites and Social Drama
- Religions

Rituals and Ritualistic Performances

- Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls (Rites of Passage)
- Preparation for hunting sessions
- Preparation for wars
- Power functions
- Honoring the dead
- Daily Social Functions/ Communication

Panafricanism - The Independence Movement à Edward Blyden, W.E.B. Dubois, Haile Selassie, Kwame Nkrumah & Sékou Touré -

The belief that people of African descent throughout the Diaspora (meaning spread throughout the world) share a common history, culture, and experience and should stick together.