HIP-HOP & ISLAM
HIP-HOP IS A CULTURE.
DJING
BREAKDANCING
GRAFFITI
EMCEEING

4 ELEMENTS OF HIP-HOP
ALI SHAHEED MUHAMMAD (A TRIBE CALLED QUEST, LUCY PEARL)
“MY RELIGION IMPACTS ON MY CHARACTER, AND THE MESSAGE I TRY TO DELIVER TO PEOPLE — TO STAY CONNECTED TO REAL LIFE. AND ALSO MY RELIGION GIVES ME DISCIPLINE . . .

I WANTED TO SHOW TO PEOPLE THAT, YES, I AM A MUSLIM, BUT I AM A DANCER, NOT A TERRORIST OR SOMETHING CRAZY.”

Lilou, a French Muslim of Algerian Descent and b-boy
MOHAMMED ALI AKA AEROSOL ARABIC
FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

- Shahada: declaration of faith
- Salah: obligatory prayer
- Zakat: alms-giving, charitable giving
- Sawm: fasting; Ramadan
- Hajj: pilgrimage to Mecca
GOALS OF SHARIA BASED ON INTERPRETATION

- Self-Improvement
- Justice Among All
- Public Interest
- Protection of Life, Faith, and Property
- Human Freedom
- Human Dignity
- Human Fraternity
YOU CAN USE RAP SONGS TO TEACH AND LEARN ABOUT MULTIPLE AREAS OF ISLAM AND LIFE AS A MUSLIM.
ALL OVER THE WORLD HEARTS POUND WITH THE RHYTHM
FEAR NOT OF MEN BECAUSE MEN MUST DIE
MIND OVER MATTER AND SOUL BEFORE FLESH
ANGELS HOLD A PEN KEEP A RECORD IN TIME
WHICH IS PASSING AND RUNNING LIKE A CARAVAN TRADER
THE WORLD IS OVERRUN WITH THE WEALTHY AND THE WICKED
BUT GOD IS SUFFICIENT IN DISPOSING OF AFFAIRS
GUNMEN AND STOCKHOLDERS TRY TO MERIT MY FEAR
BUT GOD IS SUFFICIENT OVER PLANS THEY PREPARED
MOS DEF IN THE FLESH, WHERE YOU AT, RIGHT HERE
ON THIS PLACE CALLED EARTH, HOLDING DOWN MY SQUARE

“Fear Not of Man” from Black on Both Sides (1999) Yasiin Bey (formerly known as Mos Def)
Could be referring to descriptions of the acts of angels (Kiraman Katibin)

“We created man—We know what his soul whispers to him: We are closer to him than his jugular vein—with two receptors set to record, one on his right side and one on his left: he does not utter a single word without an ever-present watcher.” (The Qur’an, Qaaf 50:16-18)

“Over you stand watchers, noble recorders who know what you do…” (The Qur’an, The Breaking 82:10-12)

The Prophet Muhammad had experience as a caravan trader
BLESSINGS COMING EVERYDAY
WORKING HARD IN SO MANY WAYS
PRAY 2 RAKATS OUT OF GRATITUDE
CAUSE THAT COMES FIRST, IT DON'T GET DELAYED

"On My Deen" from Fajr EP (2017) Deen Squad
Rakat is the process that Muslims follow when performing Salah

- You can think of this as a unit of measurement with respect to performing Salah
NEFERTITI, NO DRAMA
MAKE A FEMINIST PLANET
WOMEN HATERS GET BANISHED
COVERED UP OR NOT DON'T EVER TAKE US FOR GRANTED

“Hijabi (Wrap My Hijab)” (2017) Mona Haydar
WOMEN HATERS GET BANISHED
COVERED UP OR NOT DON’T EVER TAKE US FOR GRANTED

- Mona Haydar

- Poet and activist from Flint Township, Michigan

- “Michigan Muslim woman’s ‘Hijabi’ rap video catches fire online”

- Hijab is sometimes worn to express commitment to Allah’s call to modesty

- Could also be worn as an identity statement
S**T THE GOVERNMENT'S AN ADDICT WITH A BILLION DOLLAR A WEEK KILL BROWN PEOPLE HABIT AND EVEN IF YOU AIN'T ON THE FRONT LINE WHEN MASSAH YELL CRUNCH TIME, YOU RIGHT BACK AT IT

"Uncle Sam Goddamn" from *Undisputed Truth* (2007) Brother Ali
This song was released in 2007

- United States is actively engaged in warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan

- How is Brother Ali creating a conversation regarding justice for all of humanity through this particular line within this particular song?
SEE THE ANGUISH OF THE PARENTS
WHEN THEY’RE CARRYING THE BODY OF THE BABY THAT THEY
CHERISH
WHEN INNOCENT PEOPLE PERISH
IT’S A VERY THIN LINE BETWEEN A SOLDIER AND A TERRORIST

"Mourning In America" from Mourning In America And Dreaming In Color (2012) Brother Ali
WHEN INNOCENT PEOPLE PERISH
IT’S A VERY THIN LINE BETWEEN A SOLDIER AND A TERRORIST

- Brother Ali is exploring the perception of a soldier/terrorist, war/terrorism.
- Why is Brother Ali comparing these concepts in the same line?
THE INK OF A SCHOLAR
IS WORTH A THOUSAND TIMES MORE
THAN THE BLOOD OF A MARTYR . . .
SHORTY AIN'T LEARNED TO WALK, ALREADY HEAVILY ARMED
CIVILIANS AND LITTLE CHILDREN IS ESPECIALLY HARMED
CAMOUFLAGED TORAHS, BIBLES, AND GLORIOUS QUR’ANS
THE BOOKS THAT TAKE YOU TO HEAVEN
AND LET YOU MEET THE LORD THERE
HAVE BECOME MISINTERPRETATED [SIC] REASONS FOR
WARFARE

“American Terrorist featuring Matthew Santos” from
Lupe Fiasco’s Food & Liquor (2006) Lupe Fiasco
THE INK OF A SCHOLAR IS WORTH A THOUSAND TIMES MORE THAN THE BLOOD OF A MARTYR…

- This line could be from a *Hadith* (reports that describe the actions, words, or habits of the Prophet Muhammad)
  - possibly from a *Al-Jaami’ al-Saghîr* by Imam al-Suyuti (1445-1505)
    - Imam al-Suyuti says this is a “weak” (Da‘if) *Hadith*
      - different categories of *Hadith*
        - *Sahih*: sound
        - *Hasan*: good
        - *Da‘if*: weak
        - *Mawdu*: fabricated
“Hurt Me Soul” from Lupe Fiasco’s Food & Liquor (2006) Lupe Fiasco *Lupe says “astaghfirullah” at the beginning of the song, which means “Allah forgive me.”
POTENTIAL ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

▸ How has Islam added to the culture of Hip-Hop?
  ▸ Think of the 4 Elements of Hip-Hop culture

▸ With the insertion of Islamic teachings in rap, how has the writing style of rap music been affected?

▸ How have Muslims been able to more observably add their perspectives into “mainstream” rap music?

▸ Can the presence of Muslims and Islamic practices contribute to more positive, productive, and peaceful interactions within hip-hop culture?
Sources

- Red Bull Lilou B-Boy
- Amirah Sackett Breakdancing Muslim Woman
- Mohammed Ali Aerosol Arabic
- Yasiin Bey "Fear Not of Man" lyrics
- Deen Squad "On My Deen" lyrics
- Brother Ali "Uncle Sam Goddamn" lyrics
- Brother Ali "Mourning In America" lyrics
- Lupe Fiasco "American Terrorist" lyrics
- Hadith Reference Ink of the Scholar, Blood of the Martyr
- Categories of Hadith
- Lupe Fiasco "Hurt Me Soul" lyrics