

Hip-hop Culture Carries the Spirit of Protest

今回は、ヒップホップ文化の誕生とその社会的な影響に関する話題です。今でこそ日本でも音楽やダンスのスタイルとして広く知られているヒップホップですが、その原点は、1970年代のアメリカ・ニューヨークにありました。貧困や差別の中で生きる若者たちが、音楽やアートを通じて声を上げたことが始まりです。文中に登場する **denounce** は「非難する」「糾弾する」という意味で、**denounce injustice**（不正を糾弾する）、**denounce violence**（暴力を非難する）などの表現でも使われます。あなたは音楽が社会にどんな変化をもたらせると思いますか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

The signs of hip-hop's influence are everywhere. American rapper and music producer Pharrell Williams recently became a creative director for the French fashion company Louis Vuitton. Other hip-hop stars, including Dr. Dre, Diddy and Jay-Z, started billion-dollar fashion, lifestyle and music companies.

But it did not start out that way.

Hip-hop started 50 years ago as an escape from the **poverty** and violence in the Bronx area of New York City. The music and style appealed to Black and Latino teenagers. As hip-hop spread throughout New York, so did the culture.

People often mix up hip-hop with rap. Rap is a musical style that combines quick recitation of rhymes with musical beats. But hip-hop is more than just music. It is a culture, and rap music is one part of it. Hip-hop also includes other activities, like breakdancing, disc-jockeying and graffiti art.

In his 1993 song Hip Hop vs. Rap, KRS-One said: "Rap is something you do. Hip hop is something you live."

In the early days of hip-hop, playing music on the streets or turning a basketball court into a dance floor may have seemed like a simple invitation to have fun and party. But it actually was an answer to social and economic [injustice](#) in poor neighborhoods. It was a way to show joy and imagination even without resources and wealth.

As hip-hop and rap music grew into a force in American culture, entertainers used it to speak to their personal realities. In 1982, in the song The Message, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five [denounced](#) poverty and a lack of [investment](#) in Black communities. Several years later, Tupac Shakur railed against police violence in the song Changes.

Today, hip-hop's influence on music and other industries is so widespread that experts say it becomes difficult to measure. Writer Zack O'Malley Greenburg estimates that hip-hop's five wealthiest artists were collectively worth nearly \$4 billion in 2022.

There is also hip-hop's influence on protest, resistance and political dissent around the world. From the Arab Spring and the Palestinian freedom fight to feminism and class struggles, rap music is a popular expression for calls to action. Music videos produced by artists in Africa, Europe, Asia and South America often include breakdancers, graffiti and other elements of hip-hop.

In 2016, former U.S. President Barack Obama answered questions about human rights and free expression during a visit to Vietnam. One question came from Suboi, a female rapper known as Vietnam's "Queen of Hip-Hop." She said she struggled against the Vietnamese stereotype that rap and hip-hop music are not a good form of expression for Asian women.

"Let's be honest, sometimes art is dangerous and that's why governments sometimes get nervous about art," Obama said. "But one of the things that I truly believe is that if you try to [suppress](#) the arts, then I think you're suppressing the deepest dreams and aspirations of a people."

American civil rights leader Rev. Al Sharpton was 18 years old when hip-hop took off in his native New York. He said rap music fueled the movement that has shaped much of his public life. Now 68 years old, Sharpton said he believes hip-hop culture was part of what made it possible for the United States to elect its first Black president in 2008.

"Hip-hop took the chains off us and said, 'No, we're gonna say it our way,'" Sharpton said, "It was that freedom. It was that raw, non-watered-down kind of expression."

I'm Caty Weaver.

Hai Do adapted this story for Learning English based on reporting from The Associated Press.

Source: Hip-hop Culture Carries the Spirit of Protest

VOA

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. poverty (n.) the condition of being poor

Until COVID-19, world poverty decreased every year since 1980.

2. injustice (n.) unfairness regarding the law

Women in many countries are still fighting against economic injustice.

3. denounce (v.) to completely reject something you feel is morally wrong

Protestors denounced the government's decision to build more coal power plants.

4. investment (n.) to put money, time, or effort into a project to help it develop

Investment in AI technology by Amazon, Google, and Microsoft has grown quickly.

5. suppress (v.) to hold back or push down

It is against the law in most countries to suppress a person's opinions or ideas.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. How and why did hip-hop start?
2. What is the difference between rap and hip-hop?
3. How has hip-hop affected social movements in different countries? Please give examples for specific countries.
4. Have you ever listened to hip-hop artists, such as Grandmaster Flash?
5. What aspects of hip-hop culture are popular in Japan?