

A few quick readings about Musical Colonialism were enough to dissuade me from trying to write a soundtrack that captured or imitated Senegambian styles of music. Much of what I read reaffirmed that the act of repurposing or remixing such styles would perpetuate the erasure/reduction of the customs and people that brought them about.

My next thought was to instead access the nationalistic music of 19th century Europe—a musical moment I felt I had more cultural authority to examine—and via slightly remixing, make celebrated classical works sound evil and by extension, hypocritical. However, as the scale of the game increased, I found myself more interested in the visual culture of the game, as well as the story that tied its characters and dialogues together. My theme of music expanded to something more along the lines of ‘culture’, a culture I attempted to illustrate through the game’s graphics. And with the remaining time I had for the musical aspect, I decided to produce an aggressively simple and innocuous tune reminiscent of other soundtracks from games of a similar aesthetic. In other words, the soundtrack became a way to reinforce the ‘gameness’ of the visuals and the playing experience.

Finally, I added a little evil nod to the Marseillaise to one of the two tracks I hoped to add to the game. Ultimately, I hoped that by focusing more on graphics and simplifying the soundtrack, I could help generate an authentic game experience, one that did not pursue immersion at the expense of Senegambian music.