

Introduction

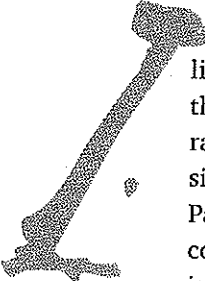
Another Root—Hip-Hop outside the USA

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GLOBALIZING RAP

A new era . . . a more prosperous one . . . for me and my brothers. . . I'm intoxicated because I can break into this new era where the fears that held me back don't exist any more the style has evolved from TUNIS to HONOLULU and it's coming out from the sector where it was devolved.

—Ménélik, "Another Root," on Nobukazu Takemura, *Child's View*



In his track "Another Root," the African French rapper Ménélik marks out a new era of confident, emergent global hip-hop that has evolved from Tunis to Honolulu. He illustrates it by rapping in French on a 1994 album by the Japanese jazz musician Nobukazu Takemura, which was recorded in London, Paris, Osaka, and Tokyo. In the pages that follow, we will encounter Japanese b-boys struggling with the hyperconsumerism of Tokyo youth culture, Italian posses promoting hardcore Marxist politics and alternative youth culture circuits, and Basque rappers using a punk rock–hip-hop syncretic to espouse their nationalist cause and promote the rights of ethnic minorities globally. Rappers in war-torn Bosnia declare their allegiance with the violent lives of gangsta rappers in South Central Los Angeles, and a rap group in Greenland protests that country's domination by the Danish language. Rap and hip-hop culture's incorporation into dance music culture in Korea and Bulgaria is examined, as are its Islamic and African manifestations in France and the United Kingdom, and its indigenization in Australia and Aotearoa–New Zealand. Its adaptations in both Francophone and Anglophone Canada contrast with its growth as a commercial force in Holland's music scene.

Hip-hop and rap cannot be viewed simply as an expression of African American culture; it has become a vehicle for global youth affiliations and a tool for reworking local iden-

tity all over the world. Even as a universally recognized popular musical idiom, rap continues to provoke attention to local specificities. Rap and hip-hop outside the USA reveal the workings of popular music as a culture industry driven as much by local artists and their fans as by the demands of global capitalism and U.S. cultural domination. But the flow of consumption of rap music within the popular music industry continues to proceed hege- monically, from the USA to the rest of the world, with little or no flow in the opposite direction. This book documents and analyzes for the first time some of the other roots hip-hop has developed outside the USA, filling a vacuum in academic writing on the subject, in which the expression of local identities globally through the vernaculars of rap and hip-hop in foreign contexts has rarely been acknowledged.

The global and local manifestations of hip-hop culture in the mid-1990s coincide with what Russell A. Potter, in his book *Spectacular Vernaculars*, diagnosed as “a vulnerable time” for hip-hop in the USA, “reminiscent of rock and roll during its late-seventies lull” (1995: 147.) Despite the burgeoning commercial popularity and success of mainstream R&B-oriented and gang- sta rap in the USA (in December 1998 *Billboard* noted “the genre’s increas- ing and steady presence on the Billboard 200 charts” [Smith 1998: 27]) and the increasing number of women rappers gaining mainstream success in the USA (Oumano 1999: 25, 28, 32, 38) hip-hop’s rhetorical conventions and tropes have become increasingly atrophied, clichéd, and repetitive. While the often brutalizing features of gangsta rap, with its apparent espousal of urban ugliness, greed, misogyny, capitalism, crime, homophobia, joyless sex, male physicality, and violence, appear to be declining, the bland R&B styles of Puff Daddy and others have risen to prominence. In 1996 Greg Tate, a con- sistent chronicler of what he refers to as the “golden age” of U.S. hip-hop from 1979 to 1991, wrote a lead article in *Vibe* magazine titled “Is Hip Hop Dead?” in which he lamented that “creatively [U.S.] hip hop [was] withering away, dying a slow, painful death,” having become “spiritually and politically irrelevant.” Citing the dearth of new talent “in a marketplace saturated with sucker MCs,” Tate expressed the faint hope that “a revitalized underground” would emerge (1996: 35). It could be argued that this has to some extent taken place with emergent rap groups such as Slum Village in Detroit; Juras- sic 5, Dilated Peoples, and the People under the Stairs in Los Angeles; and others associated with the Rawkus label in New York and the Quannum collective in the San Francisco Bay area (DJ Shadow, Latyrx, Blackalicious, Lyrics Born, et al.). More black women rappers, such as Lil’ Kim, Foxy Brown, Missy Elliott, and the 1999 multi-Grammy-winning Lauryn Hill—the first rap artist to win a major album Grammy—have also entered the mainstream

arena, and even mainstream white singers such as Mariah Carey have begun to incorporate hip-hop influences. Nonetheless, it is difficult to disagree with the British music writer Edwin Pouncey, reviewing 1999 releases by RZA (of the Wu-Tang Clan and Gravediggaz) and Cypress Hill, in the European avant- garde style bible *The Wire*: “With the assassination of Tupac Shakur and Big- gie (Notorious BIG) Smalls, gangsta rap itself suffered a near fatal blow from which it has still to recover. Today it sounds in bad shape as it limps towards the new millennium. It’ll take a rapper with superpowers to drag the genre back from the brink of its self-inflicted disaster, with their creative muscle hooked up to something more substantial than a bad mouth and a handful of 70s samples” (1999: 57).

For a sense of innovation, surprise, and musical substance in hip-hop cul- ture and rap music, it is becoming increasingly necessary to look outside the USA to countries such as France, England, Germany, Italy, and Japan, where strong local currents of hip-hop indigenization have taken place. Models and idioms derived from the peak period of hip-hop in the USA in the mid- to late 1980s have been combined in these countries with local musical id- ioms and vernaculars to produce excitingly distinctive syncretic manifesta- tions of African American influences and local indigenous elements. But these foreign developments have rarely, if ever, been acknowledged in the growing body of academic commentary on hip-hop in the USA, nor are re- cordings that feature them released in the parochial U.S. market, where lo- cally produced recordings still accounted for 91 percent of the market in 1998, despite non-U.S. domestic music product reaching an all-time high of 64.6 percent in the rest of the world (Boehm 1999). This U.S. insularity is owed only in part to language barriers, as is evidenced by the increasing number of collaborations between African American and French rappers, such as Missy Elliot and MC Solaar’s popular 1999 hit “All n My Grill” and Wu-Tang Clan member RZA’s work with IAM and Arsenik.

Most U.S. academic commentaries on rap not only are restricted to the United States and African American contexts, but continue to insist on the socially marginal and politically oppositional aspects of U.S. hip-hop in re- garding it as a coherent, cohesive, and unproblematical expression of an emancipatory African American culture of resistance. In an essay that goes sharply against this prevailing academic grain, Paul Gilroy analyzed the dis- appearance of any rhetoric of “freedom” from rap music in the USA since the early 1990s and its replacement by an ethos of abjection, male sexual predatoriness, and male body introspection. Using examples by artists such as R. Kelly and Snoop Doggy Dogg, Gilroy noted: “Hip-hop’s marginality is as official, as routinized, as its overblown defiance; yet it is still represented

as an outlaw form." He went on to identify a need to interrogate "the revolutionary conservatism that constitutes [rap's] routine political focus but which is over-simplified or more usually ignored by its academic celebrants" (1994: 51; see Mitchell 1996: 22–39 for a critique of U.S. academic analyses of hip-hop).

The origins of rap and hip-hop are usually ascribed to the Bronx in New York and to DJ Kool Herc's introduction of his "monstrous" Jamaican sound system in the mid-1970s (Toop 1991: 18–19; Rose 1994: 51–52). As Tricia Rose points out in her widely acclaimed and influential study of African American hip-hop culture, *Black Noise*, rap has important antecedents in 1960s and 1970s African American music in figures such as the Last Poets, Gil Scott-Heron, and Millie Jackson, as well as in the speeches of Malcolm X, the Black Panthers, and blaxploitation films (55). Toop paints a more complex picture in acknowledging the important influence of Jamaican sound system toasters (DJs who rapped over the instrumental dub and reggae records they played) such as Count Machouki, U Roy, and King Stitt, who were themselves influenced by the jive of 1950s African American radio DJs such as Dr. Jive and Douglas "Jocko" Henderson via the Jamaican producer Coxsone Dodd (39). This circular, diasporic influence has been invoked to justify claims that the roots of rap and hip-hop are quintessentially African American; but these roots are as culturally, eclectically, and syncretically wide ranging as they are deep. Toop lists only some of them:

Rap's forebears stretch back through disco, street funk, radio DJs, Bo Diddley, the bebop singers, Cab Calloway, Piggmeat Marhkam, the tap dancers and comics, the Last Poets, Gil Scott-Heron, Muhammed Ali, a cappella and doo-wop groups, ring games, skip-rope rhymes, prison and army songs, toasts, signifying and the dozens, all the way to the griots of Nigeria and the Gambia. No matter how far it penetrates into the twilight maze of Japanese video games and cool European electronics, its roots are still the deepest in all contemporary Afro-American music. (19)

This is not to underestimate the strong Latin American influence in breakdancing and graffiti as well as rap, and the more multicultural aspects of hip-hop culture in its manifestations in Los Angeles (see Cross 1993; Kelley 1994). The participation of Latino rappers such as Disco Wiz, DJ Charlie Chase, Ruby Dee, and Devastating Tito; graffiti artists such as Futura 2000; and breakdancers such as the Rock Steady Crew in the initial developments of hip-hop in the Bronx in the late 1970s is also an important aspect of the origins of hip-hop. The same is true of the Hispanic rap movement that developed in East Los Angeles in the 1980s led by Kid Frost and Mellow Man

Ace, although since 1993 at least five essays have appeared that give long-overdue consideration to this subject (Flores 1994, 1996; Kelly 1993; Del Barco 1996; Perkins 1996). As Cross claims, "the culture of the gang, the culture of the vato, the pachuco and westie, Eurodisco, skate culture, house, Rastafarianism and Islam all contribute to the language of hip-hop. . . . In 1993 it has become exceedingly difficult to talk about hip-hop as a unitary phenomenon" (63).

Scant attention has been given to Native American rap and hip-hop, with the exception of Neal Ullestad's 1999 survey of American Indian rap and reggae, which chronicles the "rant and roll" of the American Indian Movement activist and actor John Trudell, the "pow wow hip-hop" of Robbie Bee and the Boyz from the Rez, and the conscious rap of WithOut Rezervation (W.O.R.), who combine traditional chanting and drumming with rap, as do the Pomo–Apache Indian rapper Btaka, the Tulsa-based rapper and actor Litefoot, and Casper the Hopi reggae rapper, many of whose releases are only available on hard-to-find tapes (1999: 62–90).

In *Black Noise* Rose expresses the hope that future books on rap music and hip-hop will deal with "more globally focused projects" such as Latino rappers in Los Angeles and New York, Chinese and Japanese breakdancers in Hong Kong, and the French, German, British, and Brazilian rap scenes (1994: xiv–xv). But she seems to assume that this would involve studying the appropriation of rap and hip-hop as an essentialized, endemically African American cultural form. Potter goes so far as to suggest that the globalization of hip-hop may involve a distortion of an inherent assumed Afro-diasporic purity:

Hip-hop . . . represents a complex weave of black Atlantic style and African American homespun. As it gains audiences around the world, there is always the danger that it will be appropriated in such a way that its histories will be obscured, and its messages replaced with others. . . . Even as it remains a global music, it is firmly rooted in the local and the temporal; it is music about "where I'm from," and as such proposes a new kind of universality. (1995: 146)

Predicating his entire argument on a misappropriation of Gilroy's concept of a "populist modernist" black Atlantic diasporic vernacular (Gilroy 1993: 45) into what he calls the "resistance postmodernism" of African American hip-hop, Potter's insistence on the authenticity of the "African American homespun" origins of hip-hop sounds like a parochial attempt to deny its appropriateness to other localities outside the USA. (It is worth recalling that Gilroy regards postmodernism as a Eurocentric notion inappropriate to

black Atlantic culture, and “Afrocentrism” in the USA as more appropriately referred to as “Americocentrism” [1993: 42,197].)

Nonetheless, this book takes up Rose’s challenge. I have been unable to contact any critical observers of rap and hip-hop in Hong Kong, where I was repeatedly told it did not exist, although a 1999 article by Jason Tan on the MTV Asia Web site about the eponymously titled debut EP in Cantonese of the Hong Kong rappers LMF suggests that “perhaps the first wave of hard-core hip-hop from Asia is happening earlier than expected” (<http://www.mtvasia.com>). One thing Tan neglects to mention is that LMF stands for “Lazymuthafucka” and is a loose collective of rappers and DJs who joined forces with the Hong Kong heavy-metal band Anodize, thrash metal group Screw, and Hardcore NT to produce an expletive-ridden, declamatory hybrid sound that combines influences from Cantonese opera with hip-hop to celebrate the Street Kid Triad subculture of working-class housing estate boys (*uktsuen + sai*), and to denounce incest in a track called “Scum.” Their local popularity was sufficient for them to release an album on Warner Music Hong Kong titled *Lazy Clan*, which the Hong Kong and Singapore edition of *The Voice*, HMV’s monthly magazine claims “had a major impact on the local music scene, which has long been drenched in bubble-gum pop. . . . Maybe LMF is the upgraded reincarnation of forerunning Chinese rappers like [the 1960s actor] Tang Gei Chen and [Canto-pop singer] George Lam, but it has also taken its musical cues from the general hip hop movement” (“LMF, the Lazy Clan” 2000).

After selling 14,000 copies of their debut EP, LMF established themselves as virtually the sole representatives of “Canto-rap” (an alternative to the mainstream Canto-pop) in Hong Kong, attacking in their lyrics the prevalent values of Canto-pop, economic racism, and materialism espoused by the media and the younger generation. In a profile of them in the English language daily *South China Morning Post*, Kenneth Howe portrayed the group’s struggle for acknowledgment of hip-hop in a climate where young people in Hong Kong are rendered conservative by a “Confucian upbringing which stifles their creativity” and do not tend to rebel like their Western counterparts. He also suggested that since the 1997 handover to China, Hong Kong youth “preferred to identify with the glamour of Canto-pop in order to distinguish themselves through material possessions from their mainland cousins.” Using samples from Bruce Lee film soundtracks and 1970s Canto-pop songs, the group also achieves the difficult feat of rapping in the nine-tone language of Cantonese, “a linguistic Rubic’s cube,” although they have been criticized in some quarters for sounding forced and artificial in their attempts to combine Cantonese with hip-hop diction. Their principal rap-

per, MC Yan, studied French for two years in France, completed a master’s degree in fine arts in Hong Kong, and draws on his knowledge of Chinese literature in his lyrics, and his rapping, influenced by the Wu-Tang Clan, is “off-rhythm, lyrics floating above and beyond the beat, in order to ‘show my technique.’” In a familiar espousal of hip-hop as a vehicle for exploring and constructing youth identity, Yan claimed that “through hip-hop, we are trying to find out who we are, what we are. That’s what black people in America did” (Howe 2000). But the group’s 2001 EP *LMFamiglia*, with its nod to Mafia rhetoric, demonstrates a move towards the pop mainstream, with a notable absence of their trademark expletives, and tracks like “Para Salud,” which they wrote for a television commercial for San Miguel beer, and “YYY,” which they contributed to the soundtrack of a popular commercial film, *Gen-X Cops*. But as the first fully fledged hip-hop group in Hong Kong, they have established an important precedent.

Similarly, there is no survey of hip-hop in Brazil—where the *capoeira* fighting style originated in slave camps and developed into a dance form that was influential on breakdancing, and where violent “funk-balls” have developed where rival gangs fight it out to the sounds of hip-hop—or in other parts of Central or South America. There is no doubt that hip-hop is flourishing in this part of the world, as evidenced by the annual (since 1996) government-sponsored National Hip-Hop Conference in Cuba, which features rappers from all over Latin America. According to *The Source*, Fidel Castro regards rap music as “the existing revolutionary voice of Cuba’s future” (in Ogbar and Prashad 2000: 32), and this nationalist project has been signaled by groups such as Orishas, a quartet of rappers who produced an album titled *A lo Cubano* in 1999, which was released by EMI in Spain and France and includes a track titled “537 C.U.B.A.,” a rap version of “Chan-chan,” the well-known opening track of the internationally celebrated *Buena Vista Social Club* album. Chile’s La Pozze Latina attests to lively hip-hop activity in Latin America, as does the ironically named Colombia Rap Cartel, a collective of six hip-hop posses—formed by Carlos Andres Pacheco of the group Gotas de Rap, who released two CDs and toured Europe three times—that help emergent rappers in Bogotá, Cali, and Aguablanca. In the words of Patricia Ariza, the producer of Gotas de Rap, hip-hop in Colombia, as elsewhere in Latin America, is “a valuable cultural alternative to marginal sectors in this society” (Pratt 2000: 38).

Likewise, the Indian subcontinent and Scandinavia, both of which are reputed to have lively hip-hop scenes, will have to be left for future projects. Although such Swedish rappers as Stakka Bo, Infinite Mass, and Looptroop rap in English, sometimes even assuming U.S. accents that almost make them

undistinguishable from U.S. rappers, Bjurström has made the important observation that hip-hop has functioned as a key form of resistance by youth of ethnic minorities against the white skinhead subculture and describes how the Swedish rapper Papa Dee's tongue-in-cheek claim to be an "Original Black Viking" became a rallying call for struggles against skinhead and neo-Nazi claims of Viking ancestry (Bjurström 1997: 49, 54). Other distinctive Swedish-language rappers include Mambo Kings and the female MC Feven.

There also appears to have been little critical analysis of hip-hop in Africa, apart from a 1999 master's thesis, "Tracking the Narrative: The Poetics of Identity in Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture in Cape Town," by Lee William Watkins of the University of Natal, South Africa. This ethnographic survey focuses mainly on breakdancing but analyzes the output of the Cape Town rappers Prophets of da City and Black Noise, who both espouse a global diasporic "black" identity, as well as hip-hop groups such as Grave Diggers Productions and Brasse Vannie Kaap, who identify more closely with the plight of more marginalized "colored" South Africans in post-apartheid Cape Town. The latter group raps in "a fascinating mixture of street-wise Afrikaans, English, xhosa, Arabic, ebonics and prison slang," and their use of Afrikaans "is being recognized by Afrikaans language institutions and the media as a unique rendition of the language" (Watkins 1999: 32). This official recognition of hip-hop vernacular expression as an indigenous form of cultural expression is echoed in other parts of the world, and Watkins notes intriguingly that some "colored" South African rappers identify more closely with U.S. Latino rappers than with African American hip-hop (1999: 24).

The increasing availability in some parts of the English-speaking and Francophone world of albums by the Senegalese rappers Positive Black Soul (who rap in English, French, and Wolof) and Daara J; the Moroccan posse Ahlam and Aisha Kandisha's Jarring Effects; the Algerian rappers M.B.S. (Les Micros Qui Brisent le Silence [The Microphones That Shatter the Silence]), Caravanne, S.O.S., and Le Constat (included on a 1998 Virgin France compilation, *Algerap*); and the South African rappers Prophets of da City and Zimbabwe Legit, for example, also provide evidence of a distinctive Africanization of hip-hop culture. This challenges the often shallowly rhetorical and largely imagined Afrocentricity of much U.S.-based rap music (e.g., Keyes 1996). There is also a plethora of French rappers of African origin, attested to by names such as IAM (Imperial Asiatic Man), NAP (New African Poets), Afrodisiac, and Addis Posse. As MC Solaar has commented, he and other French rappers of African origin are stigmatized as "coming from Africa or French West Indies. When a black person in the United States says,

'I'm an American,' there is evidence. But here, people think we come from Africa" (Linden 1998: 170).

As Ted Swedenburg points out in his chapter on Islamic rap in France and the United Kingdom, French Islamic rappers such as Akhenaton of IAM are also skeptical about what they see as a bogus rhetorical embrace of Islam by many U.S. rappers. Similarly, if the English journalist David Hudson's report of the hard-line militant Islamic rhetoric of the Palestinian rap group Shehadin (Martyrs) is correct, they make the rhetoric of U.S. Nation of Islam rappers seem mild by comparison. Shehadin advocate suicide and bomb attacks against Israelis and a sternly moralistic Islamic stance, expressed in a song titled "Order Your Wife to Wear a Veil for a Pure Palestine" (Hudson 1995). But as Swedenburg has argued, it is perhaps inappropriate to define the indigenous *anasheed* chanting employed by Islamic musical groups as rap music (correspondence with the author 1998).

War is frequently used as a rhetorical trope in U.S. rap. But when Chuck D of Public Enemy invokes the war in Bosnia to contrast the relatively small degree of violence rappers reflect in the ghettos of the USA (as he did in Isaac Julien's 1995 film about sexism, homophobia, and violence in reggae and rap, *The Darker Side of Black*), he might spare a thought for the Croatian hardcore rap group the Ugly Leaders. This group features DJ Pimp Tha' Ho' and Lyrical Maniac MC Condom X, whose names sound like desperate, juvenile parodies of U.S. hip-hop sobriquets. But as DJ Pimp Tha' Ho' has stated, hip-hop is the most appropriate medium of expression for war-torn Bosnia: "Rap is the form of music that had the power and directness to say what needed to be said. It fit our situation. . . . People here are also killing and dying for nothing." The Ugly Leaders are forced to write their most provocative lyrics in English; otherwise, their record label will not publish them. But their signifying (a hip-hop technique Potter defines as "repetition with a difference" [27], or versioning) on U.S. themes includes recording a Croatian-language version of Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise" that alludes to the succession of Balkan governments and plays on the fact that "paradise" means "tomato" in Croatian (Greenwalt 1996). Similarly, the Algerian rappers M.B.S. directly invoke war-torn Algeria in their 1998 album *Ouled El Bahja*, produced in a combination of French and Arabic, and as the French reviewer Fred Guilledoux states, "They don't bother to strike any poses or hide behind the wire: the most terrible violence is right on their street corner. . . . The message is crude and chaotic, like the sound: the voices are not really mixed evenly. But a formidable vitality and a determination to fight against hatred is unleashed from these fragments, which can leave no one indifferent,

either here or down there" (1998: 89; author's translation). Bouziane Daoudi has estimated that there are more than 60 hip-hop groups in Oran and about 100 in Algiers, "turning Algeria into the rap leader of Arab nations and probably the entire Muslim world despite a meagre musical output." Linguistically blending French, English, and both literary and spoken Arabic, sometimes in the same sentence, Algerian rappers display considerable verbal dexterity, and the Algiers and Oran hip-hop scenes have shifted in focus from an initial middle-class orientation toward a more underprivileged constituency (2000: 34–35).

In its recombination into local linguistic, musical, and political contexts around the world, rap music and hip-hop culture have in many cases become a vehicle for various forms of youth protest. They are also used in different local contexts to espouse the causes of ethnic minorities (e.g., in the Basque Country or Aotearoa–New Zealand) and to make political statements about local racial, sexual, employment, and class issues (e.g., in France, Italy, Germany, and elsewhere). They are also used as the basis for musical experimentations that combine local vernacular traditions and influences with break beats, scratching, MCing and signifying adapted from U.S. hip-hop. The essays in this book explore these national and regional appropriations of rap and hip-hop within their different social, cultural, and ethnic contexts. In doing so, they avoid the clichéd Eurocentric rhetoric of postmodernism too often invoked in academic attempts to explain rap inadequately in terms of pastiche, fragmentation, the loss of history, and the blurring of boundaries between "high art" and popular culture (e.g., Shusterman 1991; Potter 1995).

These essays cover local manifestations of hip-hop in most of Europe, Anglophone and Francophone Canada, Japan, Korea, and Australasia. A common feature of the hip-hop scenes in most of these countries is their multi-ethnic, multicultural nature as vernacular expressions of migrant diasporic cultures, which would appear to reflect the multicultural origins of rap in the South Bronx more significantly than current Afrocentric manifestations of rap in the USA. There is ample evidence here that rap and hip-hop have become just as "rooted in the local" in Naples, Marseilles, Amsterdam, the Basque region, Berlin, Sofia, Sydney, Auckland, or the Shibuya district of Tokyo as it ever was in Compton, South Central Los Angeles, or the South Bronx. The fact that in these localities it often tends to draw on a considerably wider range of musical genres, idioms, and influences than it does in the USA is surely a more appropriate argument for the locality, temporality, and "universality" of hip-hop. The few U.S. journalistic or academic commentaries that do exist on rap music outside the U.S. (Bernard et al. 1992; Cocks 1992; Jones 1994; Perkins 1996) tend to assume that it is an exotic and

derivative outgrowth of an African American–owned idiom, confined to national borders but subject to continuous assessment in terms of U.S. norms and standards. Perkins, for example, in his essay "Youth's Global Village: An Epilogue," largely restricts himself to Latino rap in the USA and a footnote referring to Bernard's and others' survey of global rap that appeared in the *New York Times* in 1993 (see Mitchell 1996: 36–38), and he wrongly identifies Apache Indian as based in India rather than the United Kingdom (Perkins 1996: 269).

In its initial stages, appropriations of rap and hip-hop outside the USA often mimicked U.S. models, but in most countries where rap has taken root, hip-hop scenes have rapidly developed from an adoption to an adaptation of U.S. musical forms and idioms. This has involved an increasing syncretism and incorporation of local linguistic and musical features. Few attempts have yet been made in academic commentaries to analyze the various foreign adaptations of the genre in the context of musical and national or regional languages of individual countries, or even in terms of a global fusion of transnational influences. But it is notable that *The Source*, arguably the leading U.S. hip-hop magazine, in 1998 began to acknowledge rap music outside the USA, no doubt because it has become so prominent in major music-producing countries such as France, Japan, and Germany that it is increasingly difficult to ignore. *The Source's* special 100th issue of January 1998 featured, along with a history of U.S. hip-hop and various top-100 lists of U.S. rap recordings, brief overviews of hip-hop scenes in London, Jamaica, Vancouver, Paris, Senegal, Italy, Japan, Holland, Spain, Hawai'i, and Cuba. Conservatively estimating that there were more than 150 rap groups in France, making it the largest market for hip-hop after the USA, Tracie McGregor argued that this global spread made hip-hop "the biggest youth-driven culture since the sixties rock movement" (1998: 109). *The Source* followed up its new global awareness in its March 1998 issue with features on Latino hip-hop and another survey of the French scene, whose title, "An American Artform in Paris" (Linden 1998), indicated a prevailingly colonialist view of hip-hop as a U.S.-owned musical subculture. Otherwise, it is left to *Billboard* to offer sporadic global market reports on rap music outside the USA, such as the cryptic coverage of hip-hop scenes in Tokyo, Munich, Paris, Milan, Amsterdam, Sydney, and the United Kingdom in its "Rap Spotlights" in November 1997, December 1998, June 1999, and December 2000.

Roland Robertson (1995) has employed the term "glocal," combining the global with the local, to emphasize that each is in many ways defined by the other and that they frequently intersect, rather than being polarized opposites. Robertson adopted this blend of local and global from its use in Japan

to describe the adaptation of global farming techniques to fit local conditions and its subsequent use as a marketing buzzword to refer to the indigenization of global phenomena. In his chapter on Japanese rap music, Ian Condry notes that a Japanese rapper, ECD, uses the metaphor of “a flame flying across the ocean” to describe the hip-hop scene in Tokyo, indicating that although U.S. rap was the inspiration, the local hip-hop scene caught fire on the fuel that was already there. This “glocal” indigenizing dynamic has reproduced itself in hip-hop and rap scenes the world over, to the extent that it is arguable that rap can now surely be regarded as a universal musical language and its diffusion one that has taken root in most parts of the globe. This was confirmed by the Italian radio announcer and music critic Luca De Gennaro, who stated in the container insert of the first compilation of Italian rap music, the 1990 *Italian Rap Attack* (ironically, almost all in English): “Rap is a universal language, in whatever language it happens to be in, and whatever part of the world it is produced” (in Canevacci et al. 1993: 193). In 1996 he was echoed in the antipodes of Italy by the New Zealand record producer Alan Jansson, who was responsible for OMC’s worldwide pop-rap hit “How Bizarre”: “[Maori and Polynesians] can listen to a rap track from the States and straight away they can start rapping too. Rap now is not just an American thing, it’s a new universal language” (Walker 1995). A 1997 release, *Kataaq*, by an Inuit rap group from Greenland called the Nuuk Posse, which Jake Barnes has described as ranging from “surreal Trip Hop to Public Enemy-style agit prop” (1997: 65), criticizes, among other things, the Danish language dominance of Greenland. This illustrates that the universality of hip-hop is spreading even to some of the world’s farthest peripheries.

GLOBAL NOISE: A TOUR GUIDE

The first part of this book focuses on Europe. We begin, appropriately, in France, the world’s second largest hip-hop market and the fifth largest global music market, with 7 percent of the world’s music sales but an unusually high proportion of local product (Negus 1994: 159–60), although the domestic share of the French music market dropped from 48 percent to 44 percent in 1998 (Boehm 1999). Francophone rap was given a spur in the early 1990s by a decision of the French Ministry of Culture, which passed a law insisting that French-language stations play a minimum of 40 percent of French-language music. As Claude Grunitzky has pointed out, rap took root in France as early as 1983, when a national television network introduced a weekly program called *Hip hop*; “French hip hop continues to grow into a self-sufficient culture, one in which American attitudes are now deemed inappropriate and far removed from French realities” (1998). The French

monthly hip-hop magazine *Groove* combines features on both U.S. and French MCs and DJs, along with CD reviews and articles on the other elements of hip-hop culture, graffiti and breakdancing, and even includes a CD featuring the artists covered in each issue. French rappers have achieved high levels of commercial success in France and often appear in the French charts. For example, MC Solaar sold more than a million copies of his second album, *Prose Combat*, worldwide in 1994, despite the language barrier (Binet 1998: 117). IAM sold an estimated 700,000 copies of their third album, *L’école du micro d’argent* (The School of the Silver Microphone) in Francophone-only markets in three months in 1997.

In chapter 1, André Prévos traces the arrival of African American rap and hip-hop in France in 1984 and the emergence of French rap during the mid-1980s. He also traces the antecedents of its linguistic wordplay (such as the reverse slang *verlan*) in earlier recordings of popular French song artists like Bobby Lapointe, Charles Trénet, Yves Montand, and Alain Bashung. He places rap in the context of traditions of appropriation of African American musical forms such as jazz and blues in France and shows how syncretism emerged in the very first French recording that made explicit use of rap techniques. This was by the group Chagrin d’Amour, who combined links with earlier French *chanson* traditions with the African American idioms of rap. He explores the “adoption” period in French rap in the 1980s, which was marked by the emergence of French recordings whose stylistic features were closely related to those of the U.S. models they tried to emulate in terms of self-aggrandizement, boasting, and attitudinizing. Prévos emphasizes the variety of ethnic origins among French rappers, from the French Caribbean to the Arab populations of North Africa in particular. Its origins in the immigrant and working-class housing projects of the *banlieues* (outer suburbs) of French cities, as displayed in Matthieu Kassovitz’s 1995 film *La haine* (Hate), are also noted. A broad variety of musical inflections ranging from hardcore rap to reggae and raggamuffin distinguishes French rap from U.S. rap and gives it features more in common with British and Italian hip-hop.

The “adaptation” period of French hip-hop in the 1990s involved the growth of hardcore rap and Zuluism (based on Afrika Bambaataa’s Zulu Nation). During this period U.S. models were for the most part adapted directly to French realities, but other concepts, such as Afrocentrism, could not be translated wholesale into the French context. Prévos makes the important point that French rappers such as IAM attempted to circumvent the so-called return-to-Africa ideology prevalent among some U.S. rappers in order to avoid playing into the hands of right-wing anti-Arab movements like Le Pen’s National Front. Consequently, IAM constructed an elaborate

“pharaohist” ideology and mythology that does not celebrate black or Arabic Africa, but rather adapts the Africa of ancient Egypt into religious symbolism. They also mythologize their native Marseilles, a marginalized city with a high non-European immigrant population, as *le côté obscur* (the obscure side) of France, and they rap in Marseilles dialect. Described by Grunitzky as “by far the biggest and most consistent rap group in France” (1998), IAM have gone on to collaborate with the Wu-Tang Clan in the USA, Algerian rai singers Khaled and Cheb Mami, and the Montreal-based Francophone rappers Dubmatique, as well as releasing a plethora of solo albums by individual group members. As Steve Cannon has noted, there is in Afro-French rap “a closer physical and therefore less mythical relationship of (black) rappers in France to the *pays d’origine* [African homeland]” than in the USA (1997: 164.) Cannon also notes that despite the fact that only 6 percent of the population of France consists of non-European immigrants, hip-hop has become a vital form of antiracist expression for ethnic minorities:

[S]tudies of hip hop in France in the 1980s and 1990s suggest that not only is the most numerical participation in both production and consumption of hip hop “products” among people of minority ethnic origin, but also that hip hop in France is characterized to a great extent by its role as a cultural expression of resistance by young people of minority ethnic origin to the racism, oppression, and social marginalization they experience within France’s *banlieues* and in its major towns and cities. (155)

Prévos also deals with recent clashes with the law in relation to obscenity and a rhetoric of cop killing by French rappers such as Suprême NTM (also covered more sketchily in Huq 1999) and Ministère AMER. These are analyzed not as a duplication of the censorship of gangsta rap that Ice-T’s “Cop Killer” encountered in the USA (see also Prévos 1998), but as a rhetorical adoption of patterns of violence that may be a more general social phenomenon in modern urban societies. That French hip-hop and rap music have become a major world force was illustrated by the participation of more than eighty rappers from France and French-speaking Switzerland, many of them African and Asian immigrants from the *banlieues* outside Paris, in an eight-hour freestyle marathon at the Leysin Alps Festival on 31 March 1998. Rap’s rich impact on the French language was also illustrated by the publication in 1998 of a controversial dictionary of French urban slang partly derived from French rap, *Comment tu tchatches?* (How Do You Talk?) by a Sorbonne professor, Jean-Pierre Goudaillier. This charts the language of the French *banlieues*, known as *cefron*, “a melting pot of expressions that reflect

the ethnic make-up of the communities where it is used, borrowing words from regional dialects as well as Arab, Creole, Gypsy and Berber languages” (Bell 1999). It also reveals French rappers and North African immigrant youth to be talented linguists who often speak French, *cefron*, and their native language at home, rather than the illiterate and uneducated subclass the French mass media portray. The indigenous diversity of French hip-hop was illustrated in 1999 when Manau, a white Celtic hip-hop group based in Breton, reached the top 5 in the French charts with their album *Panique celtique*, on which traditional Celtic instruments such as bagpipes and accordion are blended with scratching and rapping.

Ted Swedenburg’s chapter on Islamic rap in the United Kingdom and France builds on Prévos’s work on Francophone rap, extending his discussion of IAM’s pharaohism and examining the work of other Muslim-influenced, rap-related musicians in France and England. Focusing primarily on the work of three prominent figures in European Islamic hip-hop—Aki Nawaz, of the U.K. group Fun-Da-Mental; Natacha Atlas, formerly of the London-based Transglobal Underground; and Akhenaton, of IAM in France—Swedenburg embeds their projects in the ethnic, political, cultural, and religious aspects of a hip-hop activist response to “Islamophobia” in Europe. Sensitive to the complexities of exoticism, political militancy, and prejudice surrounding Islamic migrant cultures in Europe, he analyzes the output of these three figures in relation to their constituencies of South Asian youth in Britain and Arab youth in France. He also discusses the critical views of the Sicilian Muslim Akhenaton on what he regards as inauthentic, “homemade” African American manifestations of Islam, despite his being influenced by U.S. Nation of Islam and Five Percent Nation rappers. Swedenburg concludes that the “transglobal Islamic underground” of Muslim-influenced rap in Europe has been almost totally ignored in the USA, despite its clear affinities with the Islamic rhetoric of much African American hip-hop culture.

Swedenburg’s work on Aki Nawaz and Natacha Atlas draws on research done by David Hesmondhalgh on these artists’ involvement with Nawaz’s London-based recording label Nation Records (2000). In chapter 3, Hesmondhalgh and Caspar Melville expand on this work to consider manifestations of rap and hip-hop in the context of “urban breakbeat culture” in Britain. It is arguable that with a few exceptions, such as the success of the British rappers Slick Rick and Monie Love in the USA, hip-hop culture and rap music as such have never taken root in Britain, whose domestic share of the music market fell from 54 percent to 48 percent in 1998 (Boehm 1999). Surveying “Brit-hop” in *Billboard* in December 1998, Kwaku writes, “The story of British hip hop in 1998 is a mixture of sad tales of under-funded promotion by the

majors, who fail to fully exploit the potential of their domestic rap acts, and ongoing struggles by small cash-strapped indie labels to keep British rap ticking over" (1998: 52). In the 1980s rappers such as Derek B. and Young MC had some degree of subcultural success among West Indian and black British communities in Britain, and groups such as Credit to the Nation, the London Posse, Eusebe, Earthling, Gunshot, and Anglo-West Indian MC Roots Manuva consolidated this subcultural following in the 1990s. But the multi-ethnic (South Asian, West Indian, African, and Anglo-Saxon) configurations of British and British-Asian hip-hop, ragga, techno, rave culture, trip-hop and drum 'n' bass have exerted a far wider influence on British listening, dancing, and subcultural behavioral practices. Rap and hip-hop are still largely perceived in the United Kingdom as U.S. imports. The Jamaican sound system culture on which U.S. hip-hop is based had already taken root in Britain before the evolution of rap and hip-hop in the USA and provided a basis on which British creolizations of hip-hop developed. This occurred through the club culture that evolved in Britain in the 1980s, often crossing boundaries of class, race, and ethnicity, and provided the social context in which they spread. Novel syncretisms evolved in combinations such as bhangramuffin (in the work of Apache Indian, Fun-Da-Mental, Kaliphz, the Asian Dub Foundation, and others), jungle, techno, ragga and scratching (DJ Krush, DJ Rap, DJ Vadim, Blade, the Herbaliser, et al.), drum 'n' bass, electronica, and trip-hop (Goldie, Roni Size, Massive Attack, Portishead, Tricky, et al.; see Johnson 1996; Eshun 1998; Reynolds 1998). While these manifestations were undoubtedly initially influenced by U.S. hip-hop, they represent a continually shifting, heterogeneous, and complex music scene in which hip-hop is displaced and often delyricized. In the process it becomes a more amorphous, abstract, and atmospheric cross-genre musical practice, engulfing a wide range of home-grown musical and lyrical influences. As Daddy G. of Massive Attack has stated: "We had the realization that trying to sound American wasn't what we were about. We had to take in all the other musical influences from where we came from — punk, new wave — so we took it all on board and were true to ourselves instead of making dodgy American-style records. Since then we've always talked about things immediately around us instead of guns and banging your 'ho'" (quoted in Holmes 1998: 5). But within the diversity and complexity of the U.K. breakbeat culture — which, Hesmondhalgh and Melville argue, cannot be simply labeled "hybrid" — diametrical ethical conflicts between black and white, "intelligent" and "stupid," ambient and hardcore, and soulless and soulful are played out as in other hip-hop scenes.

Nonetheless, recent developments in U.K. hip-hop indicate parallel devel-

opments with U.S. hip-hop. The drive-by shooting in London in July 1999 of Tim Goodman, the most influential U.K. hip-hop DJ in mainstream radio, had alarming echoes of similar occurrences in the USA. And Tricky's 1999 album *Juxtapose*, produced after a two-year sojourn in New York and featuring DJ Muggs from Cypress Hill and Grease from the Ruff Ryders, as well as the ballistic British MC Mad Dog trying to emulate U.S. rappers, displays a seemingly perverse and cryptic attempt to form a (perhaps parodic) attachment to some of the more misogynist and violent aspects of U.S. rap. Although the album's opening track, "For Real," accuses gangsta rappers of being more influenced by films than by reality, Tricky regards *Juxtapose*'s characteristically blunted beats and skewed rhythms as an attempt to make "a more commercial record" (Hitchings 1999: 23) and includes tracks titled "I Like the Girls" and "Hot Like a Sauna." These somewhat belie Tricky's claims that he is "trying to muck up the hip hop scene because it's all pretty tedious at the moment — not so much musically, more lyrically. I mean, they talk about the same things — the tough guy stuff. I don't talk about guns or girls, but there's room for a different thing" (Cyclone 1999: 14). As Peter Shapiro commented in *The Wire*, while Tricky's "willingness to confront hip hop's ugliness is laudable, his refusal to take on hip hop on its own turf is a cop out" (1999a: 58). Nonetheless, Shapiro claims, Tricky's idiosyncratic criticisms of U.S. hip-hop from an outsider's perspective, however ambiguous, are more effective than Public Enemy's onslaught against betrayers of hip-hop's values by the likes of Puff Daddy, Funkmaster Flew, and Def Jam in *There's a Poison Goin' On* (1999), which "comes over like the product of too much in-fighting" (1999b: 55). Despite its full-on attacks against the rap recording industry, *There's a Poison Goin' On*, which was made available on the Internet a month before it was released in record shops, was lauded in *Billboard* for "giving the finger to the system" and using the Internet as "an effective, direct route to potential music consumers" (Atwood 1999: 26). It would appear that however hard "renegade rappers" (Atwood 1999: 26) in the USA try to subvert or critique the regimes and institutions of rap music, they end up being effortlessly absorbed by them.

In his overview of German-language rap and hip-hop since the influx of breakdancing and graffiti there in 1983, Mark Pennay's chapter reflects upon some of the ways in which the domination of the English-speaking market has far-reaching and often subtle effects upon popular-music production in non-English-speaking countries. This occurs even in Germany, which, along with the United Kingdom, accounts for 9 percent of the global music market and is the third-largest popular-music market in the world after the USA and Japan, with a 43 percent share of domestic product in

1998 (Boehm 1999). Pennay argues that the restricted porosity of the language barrier led directly to the emergence of distinctive German performers and a fierce contestation of the domain of German rap, with lasting effects upon the genre. Drawing on discussions and debates carried out in German hip-hop fanzines and Internet sites, he analyzes the contrasting output of the most prominent German rap groups, Advanced Chemistry and Die Fantastischen Vier, who represent the hardcore and commercial poles of German hip-hop respectively. He also examines their female counterparts Cora E and Tic Tac Toe. He emphasizes the multicultural, migrant ambit of German hip-hop in the context of the increase in right-wing racist violence in the 1990s, which echoes similar manifestations in France, and its different political ramifications in East and West Germany. Since its watershed year of contestation in 1993, Pennay argues, the two poles of German hip-hop have begun to merge. A similar situation is also evident in Italy, as are certain similar continuities between hip-hop and the punk rock movements of the 1980s.

In his important 1998 article "From Krauts with Attitudes to Turks with Attitudes," Dietmar Elflein has discussed the challenges made to the "nationalisation" of the German hip-hop scene by Turkish and other "migrant hip hop" groups (1998: 255–65). As elsewhere, important primary U.S. influences on German hip-hop were Charlie Ahearn's 1982 film *Wild Style* and the 1984 film *Beat Street*, produced by Harry Belafonte. U.S. role models and English lyrics predominated in Germany in the mid- to late 1980s, but in 1991 the first Turkish-language rap recording, "Bir Yabancimin Hayati" (The Life of the Stranger), was released. In the same year a compilation titled *Krauts with Attitude* was released, in which only three of the fifteen groups involved, including Die Fantastischen Vier, rapped in German; the others rapped in English. But as a result of the success of Die Fantastischen Vier's "pop rap," terms such as "100 percent German hip hop" and *deutscher Hip Hop* indicated the emergence of a rhetoric of national identity in German hip-hop. In 1995 the compilation *Cartel*, featuring predominantly the Turkish-language rap crews Karaken (who also used samples from Turkish arabesque and Pop Musik), Da Crime Posse, and Erci C., which sold more than 300,000 copies in Turkey—though only 20,000 copies in Germany—signaled the emergence of a Turkish-German migrant rap scene, which became known as "Oriental hip-hop." Modeling itself on the U.S. Nation of Islam, this "artificially constructed ethnic minority which was supposedly 'Turkish'" (261) became something of an oppositional movement to German national hip-hop. By the mid-1990s hundreds of rap groups in the Ruhr district in southern Germany could be described as Turkish or Kurd but were unknown outside of youth

community centers and escaped the attention of everyone except social workers (263). A more diverse multiculturalism manifested itself in a 1997 release, "NO! Wanna Be," by the group TCA (the Microphone Mafia), which included rappers of Spanish, Italian, Turkish, and German origin and which used musical samples from all these countries. This more diverse "immigrant hip-hop" movement, which includes the popular hardcore group Advanced Chemistry, who use West African musical samples, and Indeed, who use Korean musical samples, emphasize the multiethnicity of a national scene which Elflein describes as "by its nature, various and pluralistic" (264).

In his study of the localization of hip-hop in Frankfurt, the English academic Andy Bennett has emphasized the important role played in expressing locally relevant issues and themes by that city's North African, Southeast Asian, and Southern European immigrant ethnic minority groups (2000: 140). While the first wave of ethnic minority rappers, represented by Advanced Chemistry, made a point of rapping in German to combat racism and establish their citizenship credentials, Bennett points out that in a second wave, Turkish rappers in Germany have embraced the Turkish language and traditional Turkish music as a way of emphasizing their ethnic difference: "traditional Turkish musical styles have been fused with African American rap styles to produce a distinctive variation of the rap sound. If German language rap has come to signify the voice of the second-generation immigrant attempting to integrate into German society, then Turkish rap works to a broadly opposite effect, the whole Turkish rap movement translating into a singly defiant message aimed at the Turk's white German hosts" (145).

Pennay's brief consideration of the reception of rap music in East Germany prior to German unification leads us into Claire Levy's assessment in chapter 5 of the absorption of rap and hip-hop in the Eastern European context of Bulgaria. The influence of African American rap and hip-hop began to be felt in Bulgaria in the early 1980s, mostly through the activities of DJs in discotheques. As a result, some of the more commercially successful U.S. rappers such as Kurtis Blow, MC Hammer, Public Enemy, and Coolio became familiar to Bulgarian listeners and dancers, especially teenagers. Rap music, along with breakdancing, and other visual elements of hip-hop culture, was absorbed into the everyday lives of many young Bulgarians, especially in the larger cities. Levy analyzes the impact of rap music in Bulgaria from two perspectives: as a fashion involving the use of stereotyped images of black rappers in mainstream pop music, and as an expression of social realities in more marginal local contexts. Both manifestations exist in Bulgarian youth practices and are analyzed in relation to various pop-related activities in the Bulgarian musical mainstream. These include television en-

ertainers who incorporate rap into their routines, television and radio commercials, and songs by composers such as Assen Dragnev, who combines a curious symbiosis of rap and regional Bulgarian folk music. The output of recent Bulgarian rap groups who have imitated black American rappers but who attempt to go beyond hip-hop fashions in symbolizing (through their lyrics, behavior, life style, etc.) the voice of a distinct social group with elements in common with the black ghetto rappers of the USA is also examined. Prominent examples are Gumeni Glavi (Rubber Heads), Nishto (Nothing), Defect, Drugite (the Others) and M'glata (Fog). As in other Central European countries, such as the Czech Republic, where groups such as Rapmasters and J.A.R. have had chart successes (see Mitchell 1996) and DJs and rap groups have proliferated in recent years, rap in Bulgaria was absorbed in the amalgamated context of pop, dance, and techno music. Its local manifestations often combine seemingly disparate and clashing musical idioms with ethnic folk music inflections in a genre-defying syncretism.

In her study of the incorporations of hip-hop in Holland, Mir Wermuth examines the ways in which young Dutch people, both white and black, have adapted hip-hop from Harlem to Haarlem and used it to create an individual and collective identity for themselves. This process has involved the creation of a relatively small space in which to produce rap music and hip-hop in the national language, known as Nederhop (see also Krims 2000). A significant proportion of Dutch rap is produced by black immigrants from the country's former colonies and is in either English (as in the case of the internationally successful Urban Dance Squad and 2 Unlimited) or Surinamese patois (*sranang tongo*, a creole language). Dutch-language rap, as produced by hardcore groups such as the Amsterdam-based Osdoorp Posse, who won the annual Dutch pop music award for 1995, had little commercial success in Holland before the mid-1990s. Wermuth deals with the role played by women in Dutch hip-hop but also argues that despite its espousal by black immigrants in Holland, Dutch rap has not tended to reflect the ethnic and political concerns of rap in other countries. Sluger (1998: 124) has noted the example of Extince, a rapper who had a string of number-1 hits in English over a ten-year career, but who in 1997 began rapping in Dutch slang in a track titled "Sprakwater." This led the way to commercial success for a number of Dutch rappers in the late 1990s. Out of this situation considerable discussion has arisen about issues such as authenticity, purity, and the adaptation and the incorporation of what is regarded by many Dutch hip-hop fans as "originally black music." Drawing on debates within British cultural studies about authenticity and its various polarities, as well as her fieldwork with Dutch hip-hop fans, Wermuth discusses Dutch-language rap in relation to

Anglophonic and African American rap and the ethical and aesthetic judgments made by Dutch fans.

Issues and pressures relating to authenticity recur in chapter 7, in which the anthropologist Jacqueline Urla provides a detailed, in-depth analysis of the work of Negu Gorriak (the Crude Winters), a punk-rock group that incorporate raps and that has represented the Basque nationalist cause in Spain. Breakdancing, graffiti writing, and rapping infiltrated Spanish cities such as Madrid and Barcelona, as elsewhere in Europe, in the mid-1980s. Spanish hip-hop posses such as BZN and the Jungle Kings were the first to release albums, to be followed later by the colorfully named Club de los Poetas Violentas, Los Verdaderos Kreyentes de la Religion del Hip Hop, and 7 Notas 7 Colores (Santos 1998: 126). But Negu Gorriak, a fiercely antistate, anticapitalist, eclectic punk-rock group based in Usurbil, drew upon the visual codes and musical forms of "nation-conscious rappers" in African American hip-hop. They combined this with punk, ska, reggae, and raï musical influences and used this syncretism to espouse the cause of Basque language and nationalism as militant political activists. Urla charts the group's development from the punk-rock group Kortatu working in the Basque tradition of "radical rock," through a lawsuit and a fine for offenses against a Spanish military officer, to their international tours. As they began to play outside Spain, they forged links of solidarity with oppressed ethnic minorities throughout Europe and South America, and they seemed to encounter few language barriers, despite their continual use of the minority Basque language. The group's bitter disillusionment with the first appearance in Spain of their idols, Public Enemy, who were ignorant of the Basque cause and preferred to play for the U.S. army rather than for what they saw as a homogenously "white" Spanish audience, is also discussed. Drawing on notions of "strategic antiessentialism" and "domestication," Urla argues persuasively for the appropriation of rap as a global idiom, with particular emphasis on its use as a political weapon to "fight the power" in specific ethnic localities.

Political activist and punkoid "combat" rappers like Negu Gorriak also exist in Italy, where extreme-left posses like Onda Rossa Posse, Assalti Frontali, and AK 47 have used similar forms of revolutionary rhetoric. But by and large the Italian hip-hop scene is less concerned than rappers in other European countries with migrant ethnic minorities, expressing instead a focus on the diversity of dialects and customs in the different regions of Italy. The earliest Italian rap recordings and performances in English gave way in the early 1990s to the use of regional dialects by individual rappers such as the Salento-born Papa Ricky and regional posses such as Almamegretta,

Africa Unite, Mau Mau, 99 Posse, Sud Sound System, and others, many of whom were associated with what has been referred to as "Mediterranean reggae." These groups were also part of a computer-linked network of underground *centri sociali*, or social clubs, which functioned as more than simply music venues. Chapter 8 offers a survey of this nationally linked but regionally diverse movement of Italian hip-hop, which combines the influence of British Jamaican ragga and African American and Latino rappers and has developed alongside a resurgence of 1970s-style mass oppositional political activity in Italy, both reflecting and providing a soundtrack for it. The importance of the *centri sociali* as both venues and nurturing places for the development of indigenous Italian rap styles and idioms is also discussed. In the process, contestations about the *centri sociali* as indicators of authenticity and street credibility against more individualistic, "funky" appropriations of hip-hop in pop contexts (for instance, Jovanotti, Frankie Hi NRG MC, DJ Flash, and Articolo 31) are examined. The musical lineage of Italian rap, which, it could be argued, extends from seventeenth-century opera *recitativo* to Mediterranean folk music and Italian punk rock, is also dealt with. Much Italian rap, although taking the form of syncretic "stylistic exercises" influenced by African American and Spanish-language rap, has also functioned as an alternative mode of social and political discourse that has spoken out about local social problems such as homelessness, unemployment, and police repression and attacked targets such as political corruption, the Mafia, and the Northern League. (It is particularly interesting to note the anti-Mafia stance of much Italian hip-hop in the context of the uncritical embrace by many U.S. gangsta rappers of Italian American Mafia role models. These have largely been adopted secondhand from the overblown stereotypes of Martin Scorsese's films; see Rodriguez 1997.) The use of regional dialects and instrumentation in Italian rap serves as a cultural repository for "tribalized" local cultural forms, and gives Italian rap a folkloric dimension which aligns it with rap music in other European countries.

From Europe we move to Asia, and in chapter 9 Ian Condry surveys the Japanese hip-hop scene, which encompasses a diversity of styles that provides yet another window on the interaction between global popular youth culture and local identity. What began as a dance fad in the early 1980s in the Hokoten "pedestrian paradise" in Yoyogi Park in Tokyo has evolved into a hip-hop scene that has both commercial and underground currents. Drawing on a year and a half (1995–97) of ethnographic research in Tokyo clubs and recording studios, Condry discusses the various styles of "J-rap" as it developed in the 1990s and argues for the importance of the club scene as the real site of Japanese rap's growth and development. Although occupying

only a very small portion of the 78 percent domestic music market in 1998 (Boehm 1999) in the second-largest music market in the world (12 percent, compared with the USA's 31 percent), Japanese rap reveals significant tensions between hip-hop culture and Japanese language, ethnicity, and culture. Commercial interests are entwined in a complicated way with the music. In 1994 debate broke out among Japanese rappers about what constituted "real" Japanese rap. Was it the "party rap" or "rap lite" of groups such as East End X Yuri, which appealed to teenage girls and dealt with light-hearted love and having fun? Or was it the "underground" hip-hop of Microphone Pager and others, which appealed to teenage boys and took a more oppositional stance toward mainstream society? Party rappers have been more commercially successful, and some argue that they offer the most honest picture of Japan as a peaceful country. Underground rappers have created a more active Tokyo club scene, and their struggles to "keep it real" have involved using hip-hop culture to interpret their own experiences. For them, an oppressive system lurks behind the glossy image of Japan's success.

The depoliticization of Japanese rap relates to its history. Originally taken as a vocal style, musicians struggled with perceived deficiencies in the Japanese language, namely, a grammar that makes it difficult to produce interesting rhymes and the difficulty of giving Japanese, an unaccented language, the punctuated rhythm of rap. As the language barrier was crossed and information about the history of rap became more widely available, an increasingly holistic way of thinking about hip-hop culture came to the fore, illustrated by groups like Scha-Dar-Ra-Par, who manage to bridge the gap between hardcore rap and "rap lite." Rap and hip-hop have been appropriated in Japan within the context of a widespread dichotomy between pop-music heaven and school-and-exam hell experienced by young Japanese people. The current generation of Japanese youth grew up after the postwar economic miracle, yet face a shrinking job market after the bursting of the bubble economy of the 1980s. Japanese rap shows how they are using the idioms of hip-hop to envision a new Japan and their own identity within it.

In chapter 10 Sarah Morelli examines the reception of U.S. rap music in Korea and the social and cultural contexts of the formation of Korean rap and hip-hop. As in Bulgaria, hip-hop has developed within a predominantly pop- and disco-oriented dance-music culture. Since the onset of its popularity in Korea in 1992, rap has been overwhelmingly accepted and enthusiastically consumed by an ever-growing audience of Korean youth. Break-dancing has also provided a dream of escape from the poverty of young working-class Koreans. Hip-hop and other symbols of African American culture have also been adopted into Korean culture through the visual signs of

fashion, dance, and gestures. Though phonetic considerations seemed at first to make it impossible to incorporate rap vocal styles into Korean popular music, Korean musicians have managed to do so. The result is a combination of rap with several other musical genres already popular in Korean *shinsaedae*, or youth culture. Korean rappers typically use rap in verses and combine its *sprechstimme* (speech-singing) style with melodies in the style of heavy metal, funk, rock, or even pop ballads.

This syncretism of a wide range of musical genres, often by the same group in the course of a single album, is now commonplace in Korea. One example of it is a group called Noise, whose album sleeve for *Third Revolution* describes the musical genres of each track: "Rave Dance Music," "Reggae House Music," "European Hip-Hop," "Slow Dance Music," "Techno Rave," "Disco House Music," "New Wave Rock," and "Funk Bossanova." Despite these bizarre syncreticizations ("rave" is a term used to describe a subculture or event, not a musical style, and what exactly is "reggae house" or "funk Bossanova?"), Noise's music in fact reveals itself throughout the album to be a rather homogenized blend of dance pop similar to "pretty-boy" groups such as Savage Garden. So is this Korean appropriation of hip-hop and other Western popular musical styles simply another form of global homogenization? On the one hand, rap has been appropriated as a musical idiom by Korean pop idols similar to those that exist in Japan. But also as in Japan, it has also been used to protest the educational pressures placed on young people to succeed by attending cram schools and bettering themselves by attending university.

Korean hip-hop appears to have achieved new heights of sophistication at the turn of the millennium through the small but thriving Seoul-based independent MP (Master Plan) label, which in its MP Hip-Hop Project 2000 launched "K hip-hop" recordings by Da Crew, Joosuc, Tequila Addicted, South Side AllStarz, Soul Chamber, DJ Soulscape, Side-B, and others, with raps predominantly in Korean with occasional smatterings of English. Da Crew (also known as Da Crew of Korea) in particular, a young duo consisting of producer-composer Seven X and lyricist Saatan, backed by a team of guest DJs, produced a world-class album in 2001, *City of Soul*, which blended skillful, funk-oriented beats with taut scratching, sharp, soulful samples, and seamlessly flowing raps.

In exploring the subversive and critical nature of some rap music in Korea, such as that of Seo Taiji and the Boys, Morelli argues that hip-hop has also continued to carry its implications of youth resistance, both through lyrics and music, but to a different degree from its U.S. counterpart. Like Cui Jian in China, who turned from protest rock to rap in his 1998 album *The*

Power of the Powerless (a title derived from an essay by the former dissident Czech president and rock fan Václav Havel), Taiji has suffered censorship and been ordered by the Korean authorities to cut his hair. This suggests that rap and hip-hop culture can operate as a form of musical dissidence in widely differing political contexts. The social difference it represents in Korea is due to the dynamics of indigenization, as well as to the challenge it provides to the social characteristics and the established musical order in Korean society.

But there are also socially engineered, institutionalized implications arising from the growing popularity of Korean hip-hop and pop music in Hong Kong and China. The Backstreet Boys-like pop-rap group H.O.T. (Hi-five of Teenagers), whom Morelli mentions in passing, and who became very popular in the People's Republic of China in the late 1990s, were used in 2000 as a model by the state-run mainland Chinese radio station, Radio International, to create the home-grown Chinese pop-rap groups TNT, Tinkerbelle, and Annie. These ten performers were selected by Korean music industry experts from more than 5,000 applicants in Beijing and taken to Seoul to be groomed and trained to sing and dance and dress fashionably. According to a report by Elisabeth Rosenthal in the *New York Times* (2001), the three mainland Chinese rap groups then performed at a concert at the Workers' Stadium auditorium, patrolled by the People's Armed Police, supervised by Party officials and fronted by a middle-aged MC in a suit and tie. Dressed in "silver tracksuits, oversized white tuxedos and Goth black tunics and pants," their repertoire set out to "develop hip-hop and R&B with Chinese characteristics," in the words of Chen Yu of TNT, and included a rap version of a traditional Chinese folksong and an expression of support of Beijing's bid to host the 2008 Olympic games. This state-sanctioned pop-rap represents the opposite end of the spectrum from the more oppositional, hardcore rap of Cui Jian, but illustrates the Chinese government's recognition of the potency of rap and hip-hop as a vernacular vehicle of expression for youth.

According to Jeroen de Kloet, Cui Jian was the first artist to adapt hip-hop to mainland China, in a track titled "Get Over the Day" that questions the wisdom of the Chinese state in relation to the 1997 Hong Kong handover (2000: 37). Elsewhere in Asia, as in Korea, rap seems initially to have been incorporated into the existing repertoires of pop singers largely as one of many Western popular musical idioms, with little specialization in rap music or hip-hop culture. In his 1998 book *Dance of Life*, which deals with popular music and politics in Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore, Craig A. Lockard has little to say about rap and hip-hop. In Malaysia he cites the groups 4U2C and KRU, who had a following mostly among

teenage girls in the 1990s, and an all-female rap group called Feminin; all three rap in Malay and, are perceived by critics as too Westernized and “un-Islamic,” and their music is “value laden, attacking pollution, abandoned children, alcoholism, smoking, bad dietary habits, and other social ills, even though they carefully avoid more controversial topics that might result in increased government interference.” These groups, together with MC Silva Choy and the Kopi Kat Klan in Singapore, who satirize Singapore life in English and Singlish, are, according to Lockard, “pretty tame stuff” in comparison to “American gangsta rap, or even to the hard-edged rap popular among the underclass in Rio de Janeiro or Capetown” (1998: 259), but manage nonetheless to be controversial in their countries of origin. The Malaysian hip-hop group Poetic Ammo’s 2000 English-language release *The World Is Yours*, featuring Sheila Majid and D’alliance, among other local pop luminaries, received a high-profile release launch along with an interactive VCD featuring an award-winning music video, arcade games, computer downloads, and Swatch sponsorship at Tower Records, suggesting something of a mainstream coming of age for rap in Malaysia.

In Singapore the flamboyant singer and composer Dick Lee, who has also recorded and been immensely popular in Japan and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, uses passages of what C. J. W.-L. Wee has described as “a domesticated rap style befitting Lee’s pro-West resistance to the West” (1996: 494) in Lee’s 1991 album *Orientalism*. This expresses a positive, reverse sense of Edward Said’s term describing Western exoticization of the Orient in asserting (in English) an Asian identity that aims to demonstrate that “the new Asian ready for the twenty-first century” must be assertive and combat caricatures, stereotypes, and “token yellows.” Elsewhere, on his 1989 album *The Mad Chinaman*, Lee rapped in Singlish to a version of a popular Malay song, “Rasa Sayang” (To Feel Love), to express the delights of Singapore as a cosmopolitan country where “[e]verything we have has to be the best / of the fabulous East and the wonderful West . . . / we can eat, eat, eat till we nearly drop / then we all get up and we shop, shop, shop” (Wee 1996: 503). This use of rap as a rhetorical strategy to express a national and pan-Asian identity politics and to counter ethnic stereotyping is yet another example of the appropriation of rap music into political contexts of ethnic assertion.

But there has also been a reverse flow of influence from Asia to the USA in hip-hop culture, rarely acknowledged, in the form of martial arts and kung fu, which U.S. hip-hop groups such as the Wu-Tang Clan have embraced as a key activity. This cross-cultural influence is given expression in the Hong Kong filmmaker Corey Yuen’s 1985 martial arts film *No Retreat No Surrender*, in which Jason Stilwell, an Anglo-American (but rather Chinese-looking)

devotee of Bruce Lee, strikes up a friendship in Seattle with R.J., an African American hip-hopper and breakdancer. In a key scene in this film, R.J. takes Jason to Bruce Lee’s grave, where Jason prays, in an embodiment of what Meaghan Morris has referred to as “melodrama, real melodrama, not the tortuous allegory of a Freudian case-study word which feminism found in the ‘woman’s film,’ but festive, romping, participatory popular melodrama” (1998: 8). The influence of this “participatory popular melodrama” of Hong Kong martial arts cinema remains an underresearched aspect of hip-hop culture (see Gordon 1996: 32), although the tantalizing examples of “hip hop’s eastern gaze” in Koushik Banerjea’s essay “Ni-Ten-Ichi-Ryu: Enter the World of the Smart Steeper” (1998: 17) are a notable exception.

Chapter II moves to Oceania and Australia, where—guided by Ser Reck, a.k.a. Celsius, the narrator of Paul Fenech’s 1998 film about Sydney hip-hop, *Basic Equipment*—Ian Maxwell discusses the Sydney hip-hop group Def Wish Cast’s attempt to forge a white, Australian-accented, Anglophonic, nationalistic hip-hop culture. Def Wish Cast are located within their performance context, in which they claim to represent their particular community, based in the socially and geographically marginalized, non-Anglo, migrant-dominated western suburbs of Sydney. Concepts of community, authenticity, Australian nationalism, and hip-hop transnationalism come into play as Maxwell examines at close quarters the processes by which cultural agents in the western suburbs of Sydney receive, abstract, translate, and apply ideas about hip-hop culture to their own situation. The fragility and underground nature of the Sydney hip-hop scene is placed in the context of an Australian self-image of peripherality, and the affective basis of the scene is analyzed in terms of inherited values of hip-hop authenticity, which are contrasted with mass-media perceptions of hip-hop as another form of U.S. cultural imperialism. Maxwell also deals with one of the few Aboriginal rap groups to have emerged in Australia, the female duo Blackjustis. (In 1998 another Aboriginal rap crew, Native Rhyme Syndicate, who are directly influenced by U.S. gangsta rap, emerged almost from nowhere after winning a Deadly Award, the Aboriginal alternative to the bland, mainstream ARIA [Australian Recording Industry Association] awards.)

Based on fieldwork carried out on the Sydney hip-hop scene, Maxwell’s research concluded in 1995, before a number of more ethnically diverse rappers emerged on the Sydney scene and elsewhere in Australia. The development of a national Australian hip-hop scene was also given some degree of “official” recognition by the release by the local label Mushroom in 1995 of *Home Brews*, volume 1. This was a compilation of eleven Australian rap tracks by mostly unrecorded and almost exclusively male “bedroom” hip-

hop practitioners from Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, and Adelaide. Robert Brailsford's container insert notes expressed a prevailing sense of fragility and search for identity: "[A]part from having a hip-hop history, it is a history being built on. The main problem being Australian hip-hop suffers the same fate as English or for that matter Zambian hip-hop. The prevailing attitude is that only American hip-hop is real. . . . The main challenge for Australian hip-hop is to discover and consolidate what makes it unique. I don't really think anyone knows what that is, but Home Brews should provide some clues" (Various artists, *Home Brews* 1995). The album's diversity of styles is immediately noticeable, with trip-hop, ragga, acid jazz, and funk influences predominating. As a grouping together of exponents of a virtually invisible underground movement, it provides a valuable indicator of some of the more notable developments in an increasingly diverse national hip-hop scene. This was even more evident in the second volume of *Home Brews*, released in March 1998. As the Sydney hip-hop luminary Blaze has noted, referring to a growing number of young hip-hop crews in Sydney such as Et-nik Tribe, Beats-a-Frenik, Easybass, Fathom, MetaBass 'n' Breath, and Moonrock, a pluralist local scene is united by a single-minded dedication and commitment to hip-hop culture: "[I]t's just a bunch of kids, basically, who have the drive and initiative and they just do it in their spare time. They realise Australia's not the kind of country where you're gonna make money from it, and if you do think that way you're doomed to failure" (Blaze 1995). The Urban Xpressions Hip Hop Festivals, held over ten days in Sydney in March 1998 and three days in June 1999, which I was involved in, united many of the protagonists of the Australian hip-hop scene in a visible manifestation and celebration of its sense of a historical community, diversity, and force (see Mitchell 1999).

Hip-hop has appealed to Australian youth of non-English-speaking backgrounds as a vehicle for expressing their otherness within Australian culture. Two important recent examples of this are Brethren's 1996 eponymously titled mini-album, which includes a track in Spanish, "Pasa la cuchara" (Pass the Spoon), and *Sleekism*, the 1997 debut album by Sleek the Elite. The latter is a flamboyant and witty freestyler of Lebanese extraction who raps about Australian racism, political life, capitalism, sexual encounters, solidarity with Aborigines, and sympathies and conflicts with Lebanese culture in Australia. MetaBass 'n' Breath, an energetic Sydney crew formed in 1996 that includes two Anglo-Americans, also released a notable album of cluttered, world music-inflected hip-hop, *Seek*, in 1997, with some Spanish lyrics. Their tours of the USA in 1997 and 1998, with their highly charged, energetic, and distinctive public performances, earned them a write-up in *Billboard* in



Fijian-Australian rapper Trey. Photo by A. Gharevinia, courtesy of the artist.

1999 (Eliezer 1999: 46) in the first-ever acknowledgment of Australian hip-hop in that publication. There is also strong evidence of a Pacific Islander diaspora in the debut album by Koolism, a rap group from Canberra, which includes a track called "Juss a Brown Fellow." In it the Tongan rapper Fatty Boomstix, formerly of Easybass, maps out the diaspora of what he refers to as "Australasian rap," following a rhetorical track from Australia to New Zealand and through the Pacific Islands of Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, and New Caledonia. The Fijian rapper Trey, one of the few women MCs on the Sydney scene, expresses similar affinities with Pacific Island culture. One track on her eponymously titled tape, called "One Nation Party," is dedicated to Pauline Hanson, the Australian equivalent of Le Pen, leader of France's racist National Front; her work explores equivalences between hip-hop and Fijian musical and rhetorical formations that indicate how rap music has become indigenized in the Pacific region. As Kurt Iveson has noted, "[F]ar from representing the loss of Australian national identity in the face of global capitalism, Australian hip hop artists are engaged in the project of attempting to build a multicultural national identity in place of a racist monocultural model that is

now gaining strength in Australian national politics" (1997: 47). As D'Souza and Iveson have noted, hip-hop in Australia, as in Germany and elsewhere, represents a "credible alternative" espoused by youth of non-Anglo background to the "'whiteness' of preexisting Australian youth cultures and the racism experienced by migrants." In this context, "[r]ealness . . . is defined by the ability to manipulate elements of hip-hop in an expression of place. American accents are jettisoned for Australia, talk of ghettos is replaced with talk of the suburbs" (1999: 60).

The work of Koolism and Trey shows how the black ethnic identity markers of much U.S. rap have become "brown" ethnic identity markers in Pacific Islander rap. This is even more predominant in Aotearoa–New Zealand, my country of origin, where rap was much more easily absorbed into Maori and other Polynesian rhetorical traditions. *Patere*, in Maori, for example, means a form of abusive public discourse; one Maori dictionary even translates it directly as "rap." Maori rappers such as the Upper Hut Posse, Dam Native, Moana and the Moa Hunters, DLT, OMC, and Che Fu have thus successfully managed to combine rap with vernacular expressions of Maori militancy that sometimes incorporate the use of the Maori language. Some, such as OMC, have even managed to obtain some degree of international commercial success. Chapter 12 shows how Maori-Pakeha (white settler) biculturalism is reflected in the rap music and hip-hop culture of Aotearoa–New Zealand, where there is an increasing prominence of Maori and Pacific Islander artists adopting rap styles. This began with the appropriation of breakdancing by Maori and Pacific Islander youth and the music of the Patea Maori Club, who combined hip-hop with traditional Maori chants in the early 1980s. Most Polynesian rap music in Aotearoa–New Zealand has appropriated a variety of African American musical paradigms and blended them in distinctive and idiosyncratic ways with traditional indigenous musical forms of *waiata* (song), and idioms such as the *haka* (war dance), *patere*, and *karanga* (call to ancestors). Upper Hutt Posse and their leader, Te Kupu, a.k.a. D Word (Dean Hapeta) combine their powerful expressions of Maori militancy with the sentiments of the Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan (see Buchanan 2000). They also incorporate *te reo Maori* (the Maori language) into their music as part of a broader cultural and political project to assert Maori sovereignty and to ensure the survival of the language. U.S. hip-hop influences have also been combined with syncretic Maori and Pacific Islander "urban Polynesian" musical idioms in the incorporation, appropriation, and indigenization of U.S. hip-hop influences by other Maori, Pacific Islander, and Pakeha groups and musicians in Aotearoa–New Zealand. King

Kapisi's "Samoan hip-hop to the world" is an important recent manifestation of this, combining with Fijian rapper Trey and the Tongan rapper of Sydney Posse Koolism to form a Pacific Island hip-hop diaspora. Elsewhere in the Pacific, the influence of hip-hop is also spreading. If, as Kirsten Zemke-White (1999) has claimed, the Hawai'ian rappers Sudden Rush's *na mele paleoleo* (Hawai'ian rap music), as expressed on their album *Ku'e* (Resist), has been influenced by Upper Hutt Posse's *E Tu* (Be Strong), there are signs of a pan-Pacific hip-hop network that has bypassed the borders and restrictions of the popular music distribution industry.

In the final chapter we return to North America, where Roger Chamberland charts the spread of hip-hop and rap throughout Canada, where there are more than 200 rap groups. Particular attention is given to Francophone rap in Quebec, where hip-hop is still expanding by way of parallel and alternative diffusion on the fringes of the commercial circulation of the Canadian music industry. Centers of production and distribution of rap music are analyzed in the larger Canadian cities such as Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, and on a smaller scale in Halifax and Quebec City. Chamberland argues that a sense of multicultural conviviality governs interethnic relations in Canada, a consequence of which is that other, non-ethnically bound themes are used in the discourses of Canadian hip-hop. Themes that are often of secondary importance in U.S. rap find stronger echoes in Francophone Quebec and the rest of Canada: the difficulties of finding a job, precarious living conditions, emphasis on the customs and habits of white civilization (as opposed to black or Asian communities), the collapse of the education system, and the hypocrisy of the political scene. Owing to their common struggles for acceptance by the Canadian music media and industry, a sense of national and regional underground solidarity has developed among Canadian rap groups. The success in the late 1990s of the Vancouver-based Rascalz and the Montreal-based Francophone rappers Dubmatique, building on the earlier successes of the Dream Warriors and Michee Mee, provide cause for optimism. But the Rascalz's refusal to accept their token, untelevised Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences Juno Award in 1998 for Best Rap Group indicates that Canadian rappers' struggle for acknowledgment in the shadow of U.S. rap continues (although the group was offered a conciliatory televised performance slot in the 1999 Juno Awards). Despite being in the shadow of the USA, Canadian hip-hoppers such as Dubmatique, La Gamic, Rascalz, and Swollen Members have succeeded in constructing a distinctively multicultural Canadian hip-hop nation that is increasingly being acknowledged on a global scale.

CONCLUSION: "GLOCAL" HIP-HOP AND LOCAL IDENTITY

The different hip-hop scenes surveyed here have considerable affinities as well as differences, not least in the way they all tend to seek out local roots, and they generate tensions and debates in relation to notions of authenticity, commercialism, politics, ethnicity, and language. All involve an initial negotiation with U.S. rap, followed by a return to the local, and in some cases the country of origin, emphasizing that hip-hop is about both where people are from and where they live. This return to the local also reflects the growing share that local repertoire is occupying in the global music industry (64.6 percent in 1998, up from 58.4 in 1991 [Boehm 1999]) as well as a growing sense of the superior credibility of local musical product over U.S. imports (Straw 2000). In the European, Canadian, and Australasian contexts examined here, this often becomes intertwined with the claims of displaced immigrant groups and contestations about nationality and "hyphenated" identity. Language is also an important aspect in the globalization of rap and hip-hop, with regional dialects and indigenous languages other than English coming to the fore as important markers for the vernacular expression and construction of identity.

In his essay "Music and Identity" (1996), Simon Frith has pointed out the fallacies involved in looking for direct reflections of identity or place in music; rather, musical practices need to be interpreted as processes through which identity is actively imagined, created, and constructed. Or, as Martin Stokes has put it, "Music and dance . . . do not simply 'reflect.' Rather, they provide the means by which the hierarchies of place are negotiated and transformed" (1994: 4). The reclaiming of local spaces and localities as sites for the construction of imaginary local identities through musical and sub-cultural practices such as rap and hip-hop is also an important aspect of what Stokes has described as an "insistence on locality and authenticity [that] contradicts a post-modernist argument in which history has disappeared in the pursuit of the instantaneous, and authenticity has been supplanted with a celebration of surfaces" (21). Hip-hop practices also become vehicles for reconstructing the "roots" of local histories, as in the use of local dialects in Italy and the Basque Country and indigenous rhetorical and linguistic practices in Aotearoa–New Zealand. In the process, "glocalization" takes place as local activities interact with the global form of rap and particular histories of different geographical scenes are constructed. The concept of the "hip-hop nation," originally used as an African American construct (although initiated in the New York *Village Voice* in 1988 and introduced into *Billboard* in 1991; see Decker 1994) has also played a role in the globalization of hip-hop. The rhetoric of the hip-hop nation has enabled

hip-hoppers in more remote parts of the world to express a sense of belonging to a global subculture of breakdancing, graffiti writing, MCing, and DJing whose U.S. roots and origins are often, but not always, acknowledged. One recent example of this global connectedness of marginal hip-hop scenes is the collaboration between the Maori rapper DLT and the Canadian posse Rascalz—whose DJ and producer, Kemo, is Chilean—as well as the South African-born, German-based rapper Ono and Ryad, an Algerian-born, Paris-raised, Brooklyn-based rapper, and the innovative Paris-based Saian Supa Crew on DLT's 2000 album *Altruism* (Jewell 1999: 84–86).

After more than two decades, rap and hip-hop have moved far beyond any perceived "local" U.S. origins in the South Bronx (or South Central Los Angeles). Consisting of a syncretic confluence of musical, technological, visual, and dance forms that originated in Jamaica and Latin America, they now operate in a global conglomeration of different local contexts, where many of the same issues of roots, rootlessness, authenticity, appropriation, syncretization, and commodification involved in notions of "world music" (see Keil and Feld 1994: 265) have again come into play. The diverse "glocal" musical and social dynamics that hip-hop scenes from Greenland to Aotearoa–New Zealand have developed in establishing their "other roots" illustrate that the globalization of rap music has involved modalities of indigenization and syncretism that go far beyond any simple appropriation of a U.S. musical and cultural idiom.

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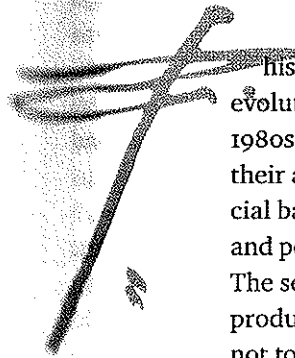
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Chapter 1

Postcolonial Popular Music in France

Rap Music and Hip-Hop Culture in the 1980s and 1990s

ANDRÉ J. M. PRÉVOS



This essay will deal first with the steps that have marked the evolution of rap music and hip-hop culture in France in the 1980s and 1990s: their arrival in France in the early 1980s, their adoption by popular artists from varied musical and social backgrounds, and, finally, their adaptation by composers and performers to French societal and popular environments. The second goal of this essay is to locate these recent musical productions within the realms of postcolonialism. I will aim not toward a well-defined or definitive system, but at several steps that may contribute to a better positioning of these productions within realms of inquiry whose practitioners (Gilroy 1993a; Potter 1995) have already mapped out interesting inroads.

RECENT THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON RAP

The recordings produced by rap and hip-hop artists offer materials whose quality is not always remarkable but whose contents may benefit from detailed and close analysis. These analyses may also make more evident the fact that those who consume these popular productions belong not to an undifferentiated and shapeless mass, but to a multilayered and varied patchwork of subgroups, each with its own interests (Shusterman 1992: 168–70). Richard Shusterman has usefully underlined how rap artistry leads rappers to destroy the dichotomy between original creation and borrowing through the creative recombination of bits and pieces sampled from varied and diverse sources (219–20).

In the concluding chapter of *La culture hip-hop* (Bazin 1995), the author mentions three possible and complementary approaches to hip-hop culture: the empiricist approach, which