

of how to approach the performance history of a specific genre of music, and gives the field of klezmer studies a book that bridges the history of its Eastern European past with the start of its U.S. chapter.

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## Manifest Technique: Hip Hop, Empire, and Visionary Filipino American Culture

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Over the past 15 years, music and performance studies scholars have analyzed the relations and collaborations between Filipino American and Black performing artists during the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Mark R. Villegas's *Manifest Technique: Hip Hop, Empire, and Visionary Filipino American Culture* continues this research as he journeys through the global circuits of Filipino American hip hop vernacular cultures. Villegas focuses on Filipino American “manifest techniques,” which he describes as a reversal of U.S. colonial and expansionist visions of “manifest destiny” in the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century, in order to highlight how diasporic Filipino Americans devise “multiple, messy, and often contradictory expressions in hip hop” (x). He argues that Filipino American hip hop makers—ranging from dancers, emcees, and DJs to graphic artists and poets from the 1980s to today—act as agents of postcolonial memory work that construct a new Filipino racial knowledge. Villegas traces how their complicated political and collaborative work, which he argues is intimately linked to Black American hip hop and expressive cultures, “operates as a local and popular site for Filipino Americans to investigate their racial position in history and the world, expanding the opportunities for practitioners to author their own representation” (5). One exciting contribution of this cultural history is that Villegas also considers Filipino American vernacular hip hop cultures outside of expected urban centers like New York City and San Francisco. He alternatively centralizes locations where these often-overlooked expressions and collaborations emerge, particularly communities in and around military bases, such as Jacksonville, Florida and Richmond, Virginia.

In chapter 1, “Currents of Militarization, Flows of Hip Hop: Expanding the Geographies of Filipino American Culture,” Villegas highlights the vast geographic terrains and spatial politics where Filipino American hip hop vernaculars appear, particularly through the influence of U.S. military bases. Through the metaphor of “currents,” he traces the “symbiotic epistemological flow” that U.S. militarization has had on Filipino American hip hop artists. The author analyzes the biographies of emcees Geologic and Bambu, whose careers have been impacted by the U.S. militarization of the Philippines

<sup>1</sup>See Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns, *Puro Arte: Filipinos on the Stages of Empire* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2012); Antonio T. Tiongson, Jr., *Filipinos Represent: DJs, Racial Authenticity, and the Hip-hop Nation* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2013); J. Lorenzo Perillo, *Choreographing in Color: Filipinos, Hip-Hop, and the Cultural Politics of Euphemism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020); Mary Talusan, *Instruments of Empire: Filipino Musicians, Black Soldiers, and Military Band Music During U.S. Colonization of the Philippines* (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2021).

since the 1980s. For example, Geologic's father was recruited into the U.S. Navy and his family traveled to military bases in Long Beach, California, Honolulu, Hawaii, and Bremerton, Washington. Geologic's migration aligns with the wave of migrants that Villegas calls the "Filipino American military class" (35). Bambu, in contrast, grew up in Los Angeles in heavily military recruited districts, and served in the U.S. Marines. Villegas analyzes their lyrics and interviews to index how both artists' upbringings and careers signal how U.S. imperial contact zones undergird the multiracial and collaborative politics of the Filipino American hip hop vernacular.

Villegas's second chapter, "'Civilize the Savage': Toward Islam, Filipino Origin, and the Golden Age," pivots to Islam's role in the Filipino American hip hop vernacular. He takes to task how contemporary U.S. militarization and control over Mindanao has led to the historic colonial erasure of Muslim Filipinos vis-à-vis Philippine nationalist projects. Despite this erasure, Villegas argues that Third World and anticolonial identification with Islam has been part of the Filipino American hip hop vernacular's collaborative and decolonial politics. For instance, he historicizes the "golden age" of hip hop in the late 1980s and mid-1990s when Filipino American artists encountered the Black Arts Movement and Black Muslim radicalism through hip hop. Villegas provides an in-depth cultural history of the importance of Black Muslim and international figures such as Malcolm X and Universal Zulu Nation in the work of Filipino American artists Bambu, Freedom Self-Born Allah Siyam, Odessa Kane, Manila Ryce, and Geologic. He also considers the contemporary work of Filipina American women emcees, including Rocky Rivera and her song "The Rundown," which expresses "political solidarity with displaced and marginalized Muslims worldwide" (57).

Chapter 3, "Nation in the Universe: The Cosmic Vision of Afro-Filipino Futurism," builds on the previous chapter by attending to interracial Black and Filipino collaborations through Afrofuturism and science fiction. Villegas again demonstrates that Black cultural expressions and radical social movements have had a central role in Filipino American popular music. He defines his term "Afro-Filipino futurism" as a "genre inspired by the cultural tools and artistic inertia established in African American speculative imaginaries prevalent in hip hop culture ... that envision a redeemable or preferable position in the world and the universe" (90). In describing Filipino American hip hop makers' embodiments of extraterrestrial aliens, Villegas articulates how these artists imagine speculative and cosmic worlds through performances that facilitate Filipino American cultural decolonization outside modernity and nationalism. The first part of the chapter studies the decolonial and militant politics of the interracial hip hop cultural organization Universal Zulu Nation (UZN). Villegas then turns to the "abstract, strange, and quirky" works of DJ Qbert and the Invisibl Skratch Piklz (ISP) and Filipina American emcee, Hopie (118). Villegas pays particular attention to Hopie's feminist cosmic visions and extraterrestrial aesthetics in her music videos "Space Case" and "Solar Systems." In "Space Case," she revisits the clinical and anthropologic capturing and exhibiting of "native" Filipinos at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. Villegas analyzes how Hopie renders herself as an "alien" subject in response to the U.S.'s benevolent assimilating colonizing agents that "erased the knowledge of U.S. war and occupation in the Philippines" (115). Through her "contraband counter-memory" work, Hopie's music and visual representations craft an alternative to Filipino colonial erasure by presenting a pleasurable, fugitive, and otherworldly consciousness that focuses on women-centered spaces (116).

The final chapter, "Postcolonial Bodies, Modern Postures: Erasure and Community Formation in Filipino American Hip Hop Dance Culture," considers choreographers, dancers, and community leaders as vital in navigating modernity within U.S.–Philippine colonial relations. Villegas offers nuance to the global success and popular reception of Filipino American hip hop performing bodies in mainstream culture. He argues that dancers from Filipino American hip hop dance collectives formed in Pilipino Culture Nights (PCN) in California—groups like Kaba Modern, PAC Modern, and Samahang Modern—took on names that were meant to be a pun on the concept of "modern" to subvert the U.S. civilizing missions to assimilate colonial subjects into "acceptable" bodily compartments. Villegas contends that these dance groups' vernacular cultural strategies, which he calls "modern postures," embody a "queer politics" that disrupt the "proper politics" of hip hop cultures. In turn, these

dance collectives offer alternative kinship networks and sites of affiliation and belonging for Filipino Americans.

As an ambitious cultural history, *Manifest Technique* invites us into the postcolonial memory work that the Filipino American hip hop vernacular materializes and reimagines. Although Villegas proposes to analyze the masculinist and “messy” queer aspects of hip hop, as he asserts in the introduction, his analysis in the first chapter on the feminist and queer politics of Filipino American hip hop emcees Geo and Bambu’s musical poetics could have been enhanced.<sup>2</sup> For instance, Villegas could have explored further how the politics of masculinity and homophobia in militarized communities affect Filipino American hip hop artists’ cultural expressions and the “Filipino American military class” writ large. Nonetheless, *Manifest Technique* offers a rich and expansive comparative ethnic studies framework among other foundational hip hop studies, including those published by Jeff Chang, Elliott Powell, Nitasha Tamar Sharma, and Oliver Wang.<sup>3</sup> Villegas’s study astutely illuminates how Filipino American vernacular cultures formulate a historical suturing between U.S. empire and postcolonial memory work, which will enrich perspectives for scholars working on Filipino American performance cultures. This book will greatly benefit interdisciplinary scholars, graduate and undergraduate students, and music journalists working at the intersections of performance studies, hip hop studies, American studies, Filipino/Filipino American studies, and Asian American studies.

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## Between Beats: The Jazz Tradition and Black Vernacular Dance

By Christi Jay Wells. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

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Most books have an origin story, but few are as pointed—or as cinematic—as *Between Beats*. Academic perspective collided with the urge to dance, causing the author to “truly [feel] the gravity of jazz historical narratives. When I say gravity, I mean precisely that: it pulled me off my feet and planted my ass in a chair” (1).

Recounting the experience of lindy-hopping to a live band performing Ted Buehrer’s transcription of Mary Lou Williams’s music at the 2013 American Musicological Society’s annual meeting in Pittsburgh, PA, Wells felt that gravity pull their “ass into a chair” when the “band crossed the ‘bebop’ moment” and the music went from being music for dancing to music to be listened to

<sup>2</sup>See for example, Guest Editor C. Riley Snorton, “The Queerness of Hip Hop/The Hip Hop of Queerness,” *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International* 2, no. 2 (2013), vi–x.

<sup>3</sup>Jeff Chang, *Can’t Stop Won’t Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation* (New York, NY: Picador, 2005); Nitasha Tamar Sharma, *Hip Hop Desis: South Asian Americans, Blackness, and a Global Race Consciousness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Oliver Wang, *Legions of Boom: Filipino American Mobile DJ Crew in the San Francisco Bay Area* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015); Elliott H Powell, *Sounds from the Other Side: Afro-South Asian Collaborations in Black Popular Music* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2020).