



East African Hip Hop: Youth Culture and Globalization (Interp Culture New Millennium)

Mwenda Ntarangwi

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In this book, Mwenda Ntarangwi analyzes how young hip hop artists in the East African nations of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania showcase the opportunities and challenges brought by the globalization of music. Combining local popular music traditions with American and Jamaican styles of rap, East African hip hop culture reflects the difficulty of creating commercially accessible music while honoring tradition and East African culture. Ntarangwi pays special attention to growing cross-border exchanges within East African hip hop, collaborations in recording music and performances, and themes and messages that transcend local geographic boundaries.

In using hip hop as a medium for discussing changes in East African political, economic, and social conditions, artists vocalize their concerns about economic policies, African identity, and political establishments, as well as important issues of health (such as HIV/AIDS), education, and poverty. Through three years of fieldwork, rich interviews with artists, and analysis of live performances and more than 140 songs, Ntarangwi finds that hip hop provides youth an important platform for social commentary and cultural critique and calls attention to the liberating youth music culture in East Africa.

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