

Yeezus is Jesuz



Examining the Socio-Hermeneutical
Transmediated Images of Jesus
Employed by Kanye West

Daniel White Hodge, PhD
North Park University, Chicago



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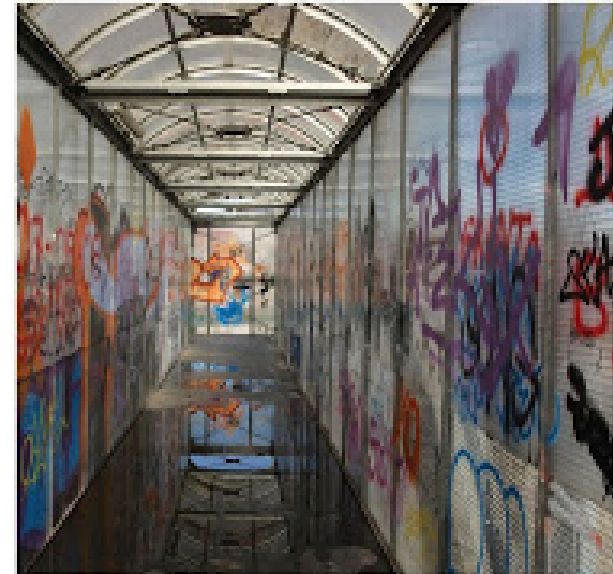
Context & Setting

- *The Hostile Gospel: Exploring Socio-Religious Traits in The Post Soul Theology of Hip Hop culture* (Brill Academic, 2015)
- *Between God & Kanye: Youth Ministry in a Post Civil Rights Era* (Inter Varsity Press Academic, 2016)

The Hostile Gospel

Exploring Socio-Religious Traits
in The Post Soul Theology of
Hip Hop Culture

Daniel White Hodge



Working Definition of Hip Hop

- Hip Hop is an urban sub-culture that seeks to express a life-style, attitude, and/or urban individuality. Hip Hop at its core—not the commercialization and commodity it has become in certain respects—rejects dominant forms of culture and society and seeks to increase a social consciousness along with a racial/ethnic pride. Thus, Hip Hop uses *rap music, dance, music production, MCing, and allegory* as vehicles to send and fund its message of social, cultural, and political resistance to dominate structures of norms.

Working Definition of Rap

- Rap is the main medium of the Hip-Hop culture that brings definition, value, understanding and appreciation to the social isolation, economic hardship, political demoralization and cultural exploitation endured by most ghetto poor communities.
- Thus, rap is the musical expression that compliments the oral communication of its culture. Rap also captures and esteems the ghetto poor existence as valid and real to all people of color & poor Whites. Rap brings the revenue, which fuels the culture and its message.

Research



- Kanye's Body of work
 - The College Dropout (2004)
 - Late Registration (2005)
 - Late Orchestration: Live at Abbey Road Studios(2006)
 - Graduation (2007)
 - 808's & Heartbreak (2008)
 - My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy (2010)
 - Watch The Throne (2011)
 - Yeezus (2013)

Theomusicology & Hip Hop

Ghetto Life
Disenfranchisement
Post Soul/ Post
Modern Era
Political & Social
Action

Descriptive

A "voice" for the Hip Hop
Generation
A Hip Hop Theological Mantra
A "Real Time" Connection
with Skeptics & The "nones"

Shift in Religious
Thought (1991-
present)
The Mystery of God
Ambiguity
Conscious Thought

Normative

Predictive

Conceptual Framework



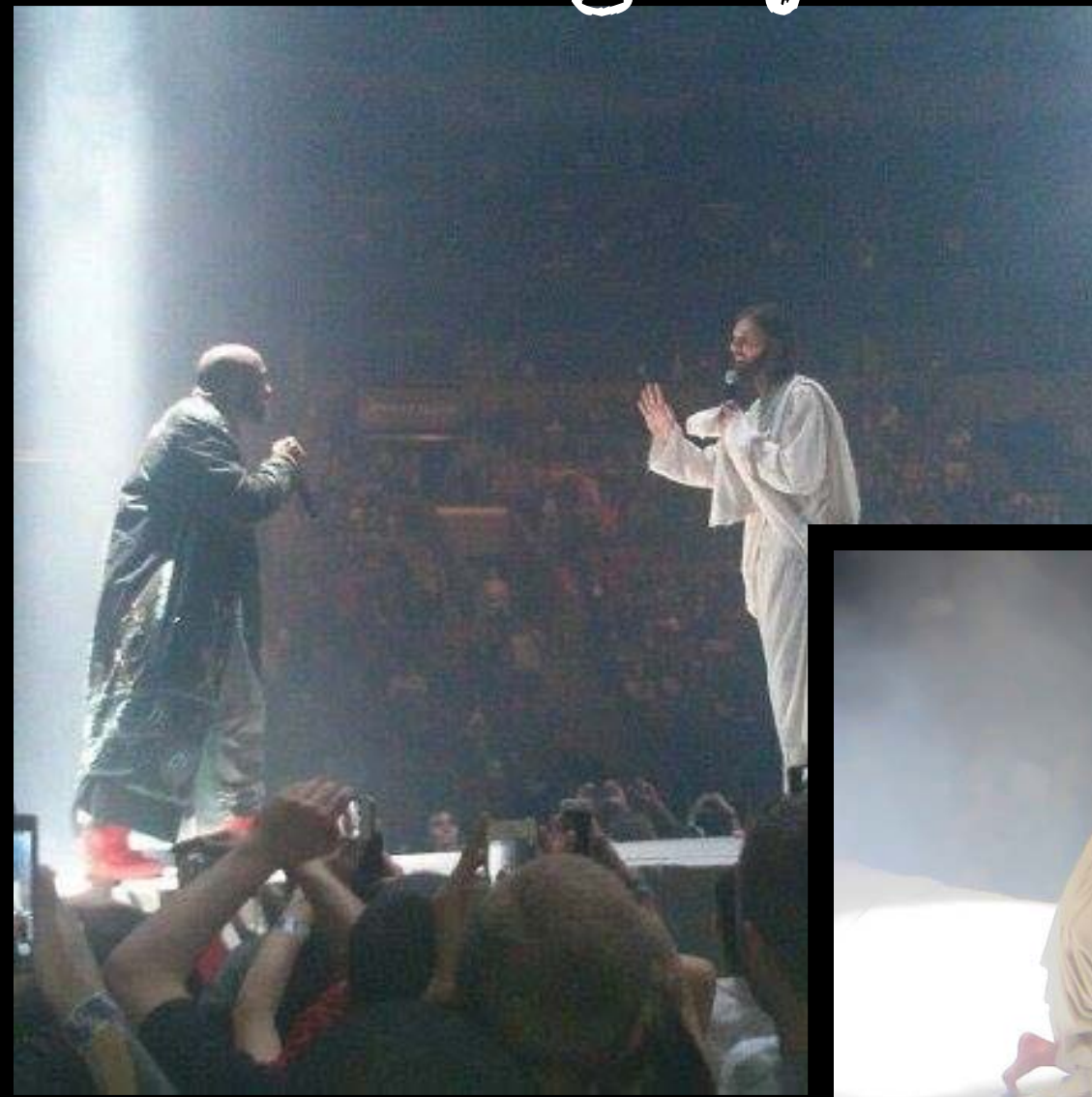
- Theomusicology
 - Jon Michael Spencer (1991)
- Nitty-Gritty Hermeneutic
 - Antony Pinn (1995)

Kanye...

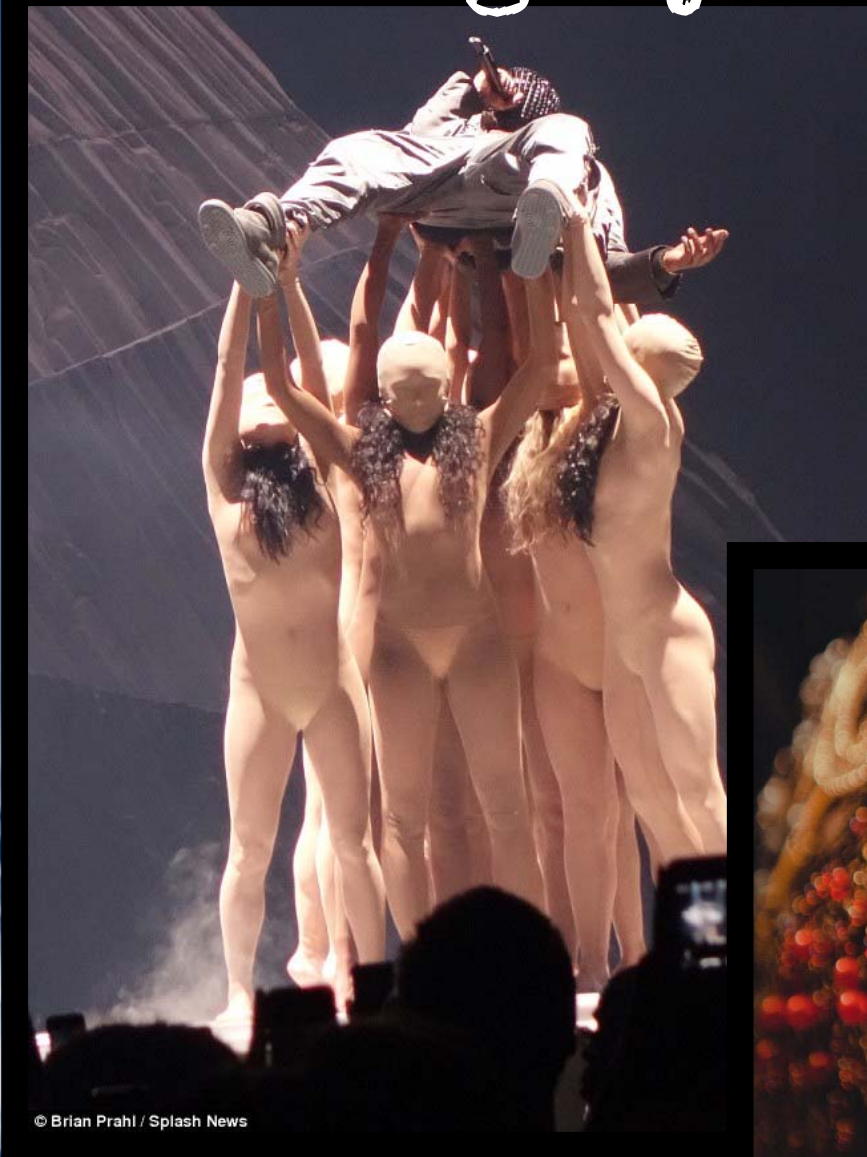


praise-uequs

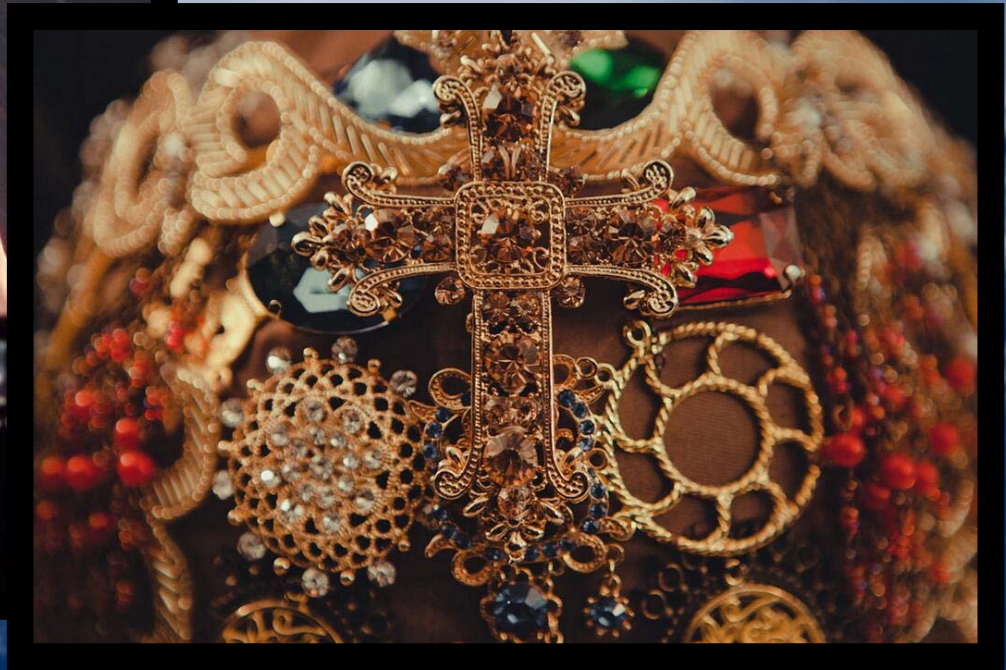
Jesuz Imagery



Jesuz Imagery



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Jesuz Imagery



Tropes...

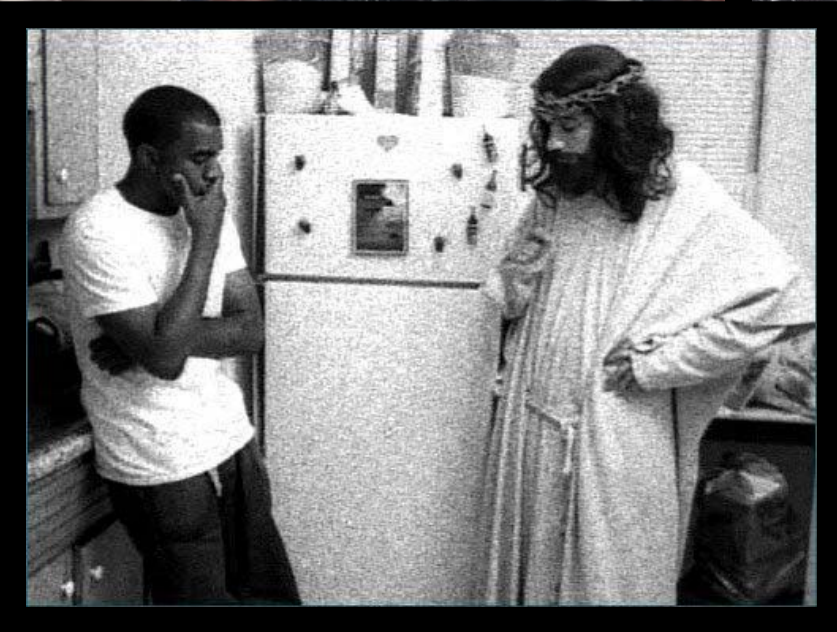
- “Shit, Kanye is this generations Pac. He’s making them connections to religion and Jesus. He’s trying to make Heaven accessible...feel me? Sure he’s cocky. But, shit, so was Jesus! [laughs] Wasn’t he the one who was always talking shit to the religious officials and saying he was God? [Smirks] Shoot, Jesus was a controversial cat.”

– Karl, 2009

Jesuz Imagery



Jesuz Imagery



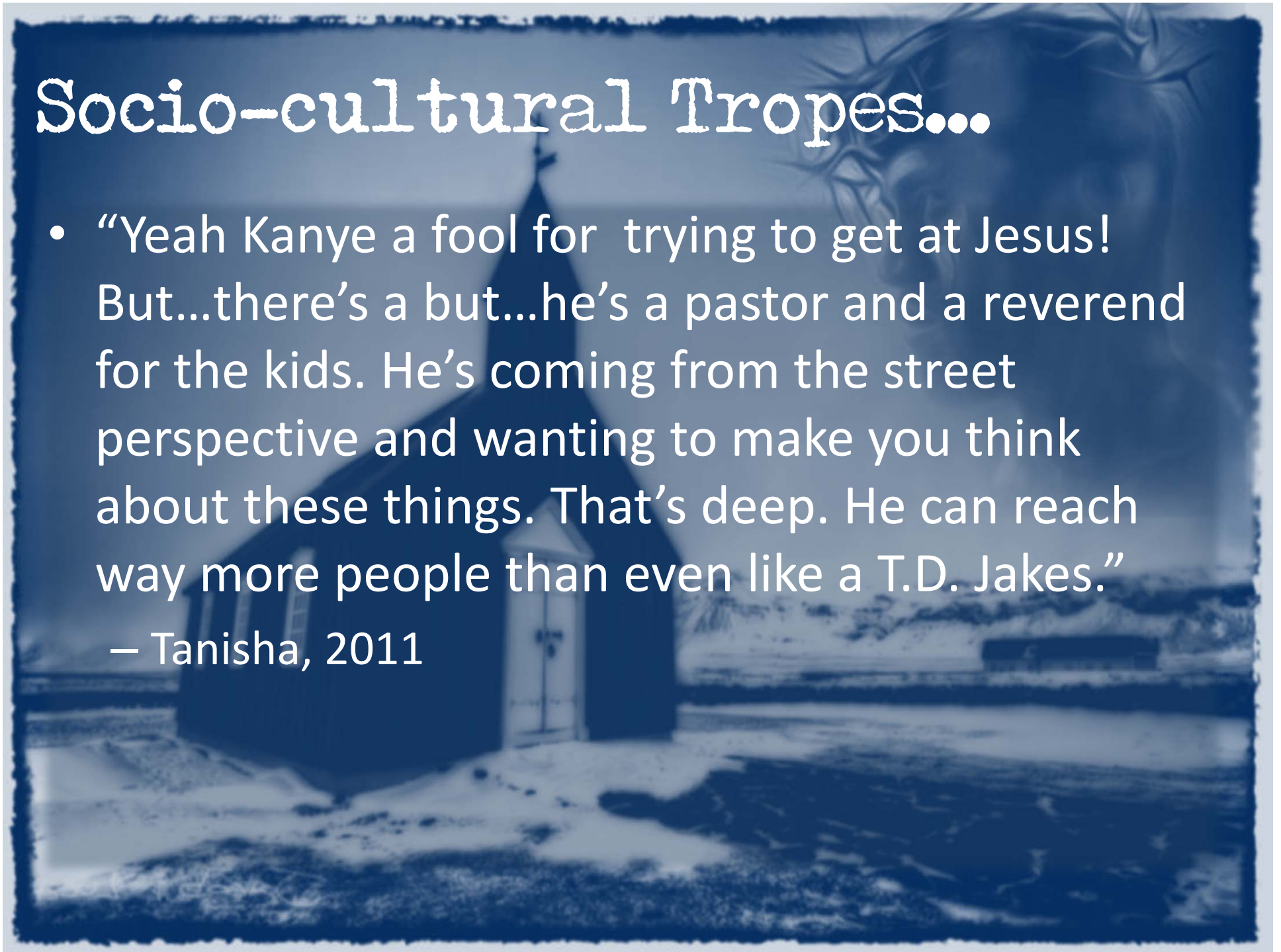
Jesuz Imagery



Socio-cultural Tropes...

- “Yeah Kanye a fool for trying to get at Jesus! But...there’s a but...he’s a pastor and a reverend for the kids. He’s coming from the street perspective and wanting to make you think about these things. That’s deep. He can reach way more people than even like a T.D. Jakes.”

– Tanisha, 2011



Jesuz Imagery



VEVO

Yeezus & Hip Hop's Central Theological Typologies

- 1) Creating of God within the context of suffering
- 2) Post Soul questioning of authority from social structures
- 3) Hip Hop community & suffering
- 4) Hip Hoppers problem solve within rap music
- 5) Distrust of hegemonic systems & networks

Intersecting with Hip Hop & Jesus

Secular

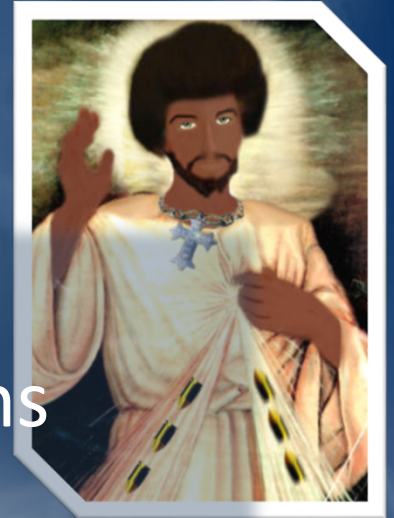
Sacred

Plane

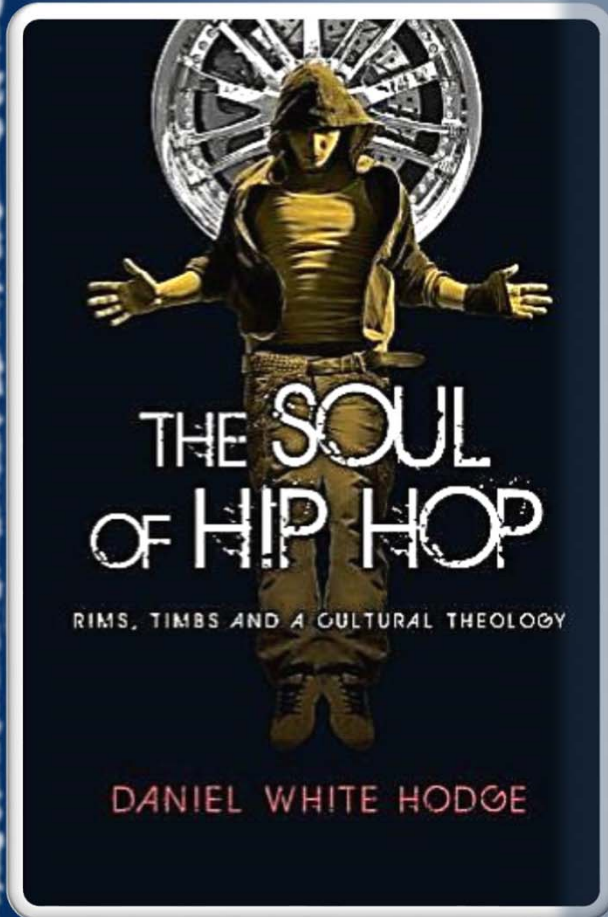
The search & connection
to deity in common
spaces outside of the
totemic norms

Toward an Ecclesiology of Sensationalized Jesuz

- The contextual Jesuz
- Attempt to access deity from the margins
- Sensationalized Jesuz needed



Contact Info



Daniel White Hodge
North Park University, Chicago

dwhodge@northpark.edu

www.jhhsonline.org

www.whitehodge.com

773.244.5211



@danwhitehodge