

Trade), was carried out during the 1990s (a decade which saw the rise and fall of Britpop), and lasted well into the 2000s (a time of renewed interest in the indie genre), it is impossible not to wonder whether audience conventions and the role of the gig fluctuated accordingly. Maybe they did not (which is what has to be assumed from Fonarow's account), but this raises the question of why the meaning and structure of the concert gig remained stable while other aspects of the musical culture changed considerably.

These points should not take away from the fact that *Empire of Dirt* is a substantial and significant contribution to indie music scholarship. That said, the book's most valuable offering to popular music studies more generally may well lie in what we can learn from its distinctly anthropological agenda. In either case, it's hard to imagine a scenario in which an interested researcher wouldn't find this book both useful and thought provoking.

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Bob Marley: Herald of a Postcolonial World? By Jason Toynbee. Cambridge and Malden: Polity, 2007. 263 pp. ISBN-13: 978-07456-3089-2 (pb) doi:10.1017/S026114300900186X

Jason Toynbee begins *Bob Marley: Herald of a Postcolonial World?* by describing Marley as the only Third World musician to become a global celebrity and the only musician from anywhere to attract a widespread following across 'the poorer periphery of the capitalist world system' (p. 10). The book's two main questions follow: 'What part did Marley himself play in achieving this unique status?' and 'What has been the meaning of his work in cultural and political terms?' (p. 10). Toynbee answers these using the analytical framework of critical realism which, as he outlines in Chapter One, requires him 'to understand Marley as a social agent and choice-maker, always located within the structure of world capitalism yet by no means completely determined by it' (p. 11). The result, which Toynbee describes as a 'sociological case study of a specific person' (p. 12, Note 7), is the most intellectually nuanced and comprehensive treatment of Bob Marley available.

The book is organised more-or-less chronologically. Each chapter examines a phase in the artist's life and career, analysing it as the contingent outcome of the interplay between structural conditions and his own agency as a social actor. Chapter Two focuses on the period from Marley's birth in 1945 to the start of his recording career in the early 1960s. Toynbee represents him as a youth whose identity and early aspirations for social change were strongly moulded by the context of late colonialism, a strong Jamaican culture of anti-colonial resistance culminating in independence in 1962, and the Rastafarian movement with its 'mix of critical thinking and the assertion of Black self-worth' (p. 68).

The third chapter finds Marley and his band mates in Kingston in the early 1960s, struggling for success as recording artists in the midst of a complex and contingent matrix of circumstances that spawned an indigenous Jamaican popular music industry around that time. The chapter describes how Bob Marley's early musical career was shaped by this 'reggae conjuncture' and argues that the development of reggae during the ska and rock steady eras was itself influenced by the song-writing and sonority of early Wailers' hits.

Chapter Four follows Marley's career from the mid-1960s until just after his first two Island albums – *Catch a Fire* and *Burnin'* – were released in 1973. Three themes are emphasised: the Wailers' contributions to the development and intensification of a roots reggae sensibility and international reggae idiom; their shift from producer to producer in search of stylistic development, a larger audience, and more money; and Marley's 'translation' from the Jamaican music scene to the context of British rock. Toynbee portrays Marley as working with and struggling against the constraints of the Jamaican and international music business during this period in order to realise his ambitions to 'make beautiful music, change the world, praise Jah, and have a lot of sex' (p. 26).

Chapter Five concentrates on Bob Marley as international rock star and political actor from 1973 until his death in 1981. In grappling with the social significance of Marley's work in this period, the chapter emphasises contradiction: between the emancipatory message of his songs, his commitment to African liberation, and the material support he gave many of Kingston's 'sufferers' on the one hand, and, on the other hand, his exploitative treatment of women, his Rasta-inflected rejection of formal political mobilising (i.e. 'politricks'), and his involvement in the international music business, itself part of the 'Babylon system' he vehemently opposed in his music.

Marley's lasting cultural and political impact – his success in enabling structural change – is considered more fully in Chapter Six (After Bob), which examines how he was co-opted posthumously by the Jamaican state, exploited by the culture industry, and adopted by post-colonial peoples around the world. In assessing the artist's legacy in terms of 'the movement for human emancipation' (p. 199), Toynbee concludes that Marley's status as the Third World's only superstar, his unrelenting advocacy of 'post-racial solidarity across the world system' (p. 230), and the nature of his appropriation by 'sufferers' around the world, combine to qualify him as 'the herald of a postcolonial world that is yet within our grasp' (p. 230), despite his inevitably contradictory positioning within an exploitative culture industry.

The book is based almost entirely on published secondary sources and, except for scattered insights gleaned from conversations Toynbee had with a few Jamaican musicians who knew Marley, contains no new factual information; its contributions lie in the way it assembles information that is widely available in the existing

voluminous literature on Bob Marley, and in the even-handed and systematic analysis it offers of Marley's *oeuvre*, career, and lasting social significance. Key to this is the critical realist theoretical perspective Toynbee outlines in the first chapter and employs throughout; readers who aren't comfortable with social theory may not like Chapter One, but neither are they likely to 'get' the rest of the book without reading it carefully. There are places where I think Toynbee's analysis could benefit from post-structural and post-colonial theorisation, which would enable a more sustained and nuanced treatment of Bob Marley's legacy in Africa and other parts of the third world. I would also like to see more analysis of the strongly masculinist characteristics of Marley's self-presentation, *oeuvre* and lasting impacts, beyond what the book says about his relationships with women. Still, Toynbee's analytical framework yields convincing interpretations; indeed, the book exemplifies nicely the analytical power of a rigorous and carefully applied social theoretical framework.

I am less convinced by Toynbee's strategy of occasionally inserting brief recollections from his own life that 'touch on Bob or reggae music', and descriptions of the 'field trip' he made to Jamaica in 2005 (p. 6). These seem superficial and out of place, and would need to be developed further to serve Toynbee's purpose of enabling 'a degree of triangulation' on his topic. They do help locate the author as a Marley admirer – as does calling him 'Bob' throughout the book – and perhaps also inadvertently exemplify the extraordinary extent to which Marley's listeners, even critical realists, want to identify with him.

In summary, I think this is an excellent book, and I'm delighted that someone has finally given Bob Marley the elegant and sustained critical analytical treatment that he deserves. It is the richest, most serious, and most interesting scholarly analysis of Marley available.

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*La Movida*¹ has been one of the most important cultural movements in recent Spanish history. In the 1980s, Madrid became the centre of a movement that found new ways of expressing the image and the energies of a country which had just returned to democracy. In the aftermath of Franco's dictatorship (1939–1975), indeed as it was drawing to a close, a new generation emerged to take the cultural leadership of what became new political and social times. The music of Alaska y Los Pegamoides, Kaka Deluxe, Nacha Pop or Radio Futura, the films of directors like Pedro Almodóvar, as well as graffiti, pictures and comics originally created in the context of the *La Movida* movement, came to define the times. They have been so central to the cultural scenario that recent years have seen a nostalgic *Movida* revival. For many people, the music of the *Movida* provided the inescapable soundscape of their formative years, memories strongly linked to songs like Los Secretos' '*Déjame*' (Leave Me), Nacha Pop's '*La chica de ayer*' (Yesterday's Girl) or Alaska y Los Pegamoides' '*Bailando*' (Dancing).