*Mad Dogs & Englishness. Popular Music and English Identities* (220pp, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. isbn 9781501311253)

With Brexit looming, and ongoing questions of 'Britishness' and 'Englishness' in relation to borders, immigration, migrant workers and national independence within the UK being asked, this book couldn't be more timely. In her illuminating 'Foreword' Rupa Haq notes that, although the days of Blair's consorting with rock bands may be over, lyrics, along with pop facts and myths, are now part of mainstream culture. Editors Lee Brooks and Mark Donnelly note they have been since pop music arrived after World War 2, but point out – as does the book's title – that English identity is plural, that there are many identities, not one.

As academic introductions are prone to doing, Brooks and Donnelly summarise and contextualise the books' contents, highlighting and comparing some of the chapters, noting the pluralities and contested nature of Englishness. These include a consideration of sound in Dr. Who, the Union Jack flag in relation to The Jam, the Sex Pistols and the Royal Jubilee celebrations, Bowie's constant reinvention and assimilation, P.J. Harvey's nostalgic revisionist remembering of England, and Burial's complex, urban dubstep.

Neatly divided into three sections, starting with 'English Heritage', then 'Spaces of Identity' before the concluding 'Performing Discrepancy', the book opens with a discussion of 'family, home and cultural identity in the music of Ray Davies and the Kinks'. The Kinks were working class and from an urban background, and their idealised visions of 'Waterloo Sunset' and elsewhere were firmly rooted in the realities of 1960s London, not the Swinging London invented by newspapers and advertising agencies. Although occasionally now marketed as a heritage band, Carey Fleiner is keen to dissociate them from this, showing how they resist and question everything they sing about, including the very notion of 'Englishness'.

David Bowie is considered next, again in terms of the inability of even the V & A museum to neuter and freeze him in their retrospective exhibition *David Bowie Is...*. Clever, yet chameleon-like, Bowie changed his music and image to suit his mood, his imagination, and what fans wanted or would soon want. Re-inventing himself until the very end of his life, he resisted ideas of heritage or normality; Richard Mills adroitly points out that even when being nostalgic Bowie was only using it to look forward, that if he was in any way English (and elsewhere, Mills suggests 'Bowie's identity is indeterminate' [p50]) that it was 'an Englishness that is of its time, but not of its time'. (p50)

In 'Mod Cons' Ben Winsworth attempts to unpick and decipher the Jam's use of the Union Jack, setting it in direct opposition to the Sex Pistols' (or rather Jamie Reid's) torn and stylised flag. For this reader, he never quite gets to the bottom of the conundrum of fashion, conservatism, upset and band dynamics. Abigail Gardner is much clearer in her discussion of P.J. Harvey's albums as 'part of an archiving process that contributes to a reframing of Englishness' (p67), suggesting that in her songs she 'foregrounds the forgotten, the rural, the disappointed'. (p66)

The book moves cleverly from 'Harvey's readings of the importance of place to memory' (Garner, p79) to three discussions of space and identity. I confess that however interesting it may be, a chapter about 'sound as experience in *Doctor Who*' seems out of place here, however hard Dene October tries to link it to 1960s England. Better is Jon Hackett's discussion of Cabaret Voltaire in Sheffield, theorised through Marxism in relation to production and labour. His discussion of what he summarises as 'utopian impulses in [...] obsolete modes of production' is critically astute and interesting, without being nostalgic, whereas Johnny Hopkins' discussion of 'The Union Jack as a contested symbol of Englishness in popular music or a convenient marketing device?' can do little more than summarise the flag's appropriation and conclude with the warning to readers that 'those who invoke Union Jack symbolism in pop music culture should do so carefully' as it can 'create provocation and ambiguity'. (p139)

The third section of this book is the best. Raphael Costambeys-Kempczynski offers a brief but intelligent summary of the commodification of punk and it's relation to royalty, common decency, dissent and self-expression. Nothing very new but it's well done. Christian Lloyd and Shara Rambarran posit Tricky as oppositional to Britpop (for the sake of this book retitled Engpop), as he 'constructs, deconstructs and reconstructs elements from an eclectic musical past, present and future , regardless of origin' to make 'songs that are [...] personal, observational, informative, contradictory'. (p172) This, argue the authors, encourages listeners to construct their own song meaning(s) in relation to the culture they have constructed for themselves, and help them understand they are doing so, and why.

Gabriel Marino follows, discussing Burial in relation to the journalistic pursuit of the then anonymous musician, which hoped to unmask and name him, seemingly in an attempt to somehow disempower him. This of course, did not happen, since Burial does not market himself in terms of personality, only music; the occasional interview or statement has done little to alter the critical or popular reception of his work. Burial, like Tricky, works by producing 'a collage of memories, distant and vivid, personal and shared' (p174) but finds himself critically considered within hauntology, his soundscapes buying into a communal urban mythology and soundscape shared with psychogeographers and much visual art. Marino goes further, suggesting (and seemingly agreeing with the idea) that 'Burial presents himself as the borderline conscience of English underground electronic music: a secluded bard for these days of future past.' (p189)

The book ends with an intriguing discussion of Bishi's *Albion Voice* album, framing the music as 'creative rearticulations of English identity, made in a particular time – the early twenty-first century – and from the particular perspective of a second-generation Londoner of Bengali heritage.' (p193) Here is true contemporary Englishness: the past reinterpreted through the new eyes of today, 'understood through the lens of cosmopolitanism'. (p193) Bishi asserts her right to question ancient Englishness, the Albion of her album title; critique imperial Englishness as a direct descendent of the colonised; and also write as a contemporary urban DJ and musician. Using 'cultural materials from England, India and Europe suggests an inclusive aesthetic that forges *post hoc* connections and resonances, and disturbs those essentializing discourses that commonly articulate cultural uniqueness via the citation of distinct histories.' (p206) By focusing on hybridity and contemporary context our culture is enriched by music and musicians with similar concerns, those with developing and changing identities rather than nostalgic or conventional ones.

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