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Donna HOPE, *International Reggae: Current and Future Trends in Jamaican Popular Music*

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memory as much as the evidence of cultural practice still performed by Jamaicans today. That this is of value to the study and historical documentation of Jamaican cultural practice goes unquestioned and provides the evidence for further theorization as presented by Henriques's book. If Jamaican "vibratory power" as such is indeed non-representational, as *Sonic Bodies* suggests,¹ its performance event and socio-cultural clout are not, and by reading

Henriques's theoretical investigation alongside the historical documentation provided by Coester and Bender's anthology, this is clearly evidenced.

Sabine SÖRGEL

Note

1. See my review of his book *Sonic Bodies*, in this collection of texts.

Donna Hope (ed.), *International Reggae: Current and Future Trends in Jamaican Popular Music*, Kingston, London, Pelican Books, 2013.

The book *International Reggae: Current and Future Trends in Jamaican Popular Music* is an edited collection of papers presented at the 2010 International Reggae Conference hosted by the Institute of Caribbean Studies and Reggae Studies Unit at the University of the West Indies, Mona. The International Reggae Conference is a biennial academic conference that facilitates multiple and international discourses on various perspectives on Jamaican popular music and culture, both locally and internationally.

Section 1, "Cultural Interpretations," deals with the various readings and uses of dancehall and reggae music as they cross borders. According to Ellen Kohlins and Pete Lilly, authors of *Riddim Magazine*, In Europe and specifically Germany, the view of reggae and dancehall has changed from the "One love" philosophy promoted by Bob Marley's music to "One Hate." As the themes of cultural relativity and ethno-

centrism are tacitly discussed, homophobia in reggae and dancehall lyrics are analysed within Europe as inciting violence against homosexuals. Hope's empirical paper "Dancehall Violence & Jamaican Youth," reports that the link between violence, reggae and dancehall music

is insignificant. While on the other side Tomlinson shows how Jamaican popular music is used to reinforce a positive Jamaican identity, especially in Canada where many second generation Jamaican youths struggle with issues of belonging.

Section 2, "Gendered Ruminations," incites a battle of the sexes debate, with an in-depth analysis of Tanya Stephen's lyrical prowess, how she can either emasculate a man or make one, and the fact that this is almost blasphemous to Christian philosophy. The theory of language identity is a refreshing analysis by Dawkins, who applies a linguistic perspective to dancehall music, and should act to silence the disparaging comments on the genre as being "unintelligent foolishness."

A book of trends in Jamaican popular music would not be complete without a historiography of music genres. Section 3, "Musical Conversations," is perfect example of that, as it documents many important junctures, influences and contributors to Jamaican music. Although it minimally discusses the effects of technology, the integral role of radio as a disseminator is explored in a peculiar way by Webster-Prince, who shows that indeed Jamaican popular music has influenced Jamaican identity.

The final section, entitled "Reggae/Rasta International," identifies the internationalization of Jamaican music through reggae and Jamaican culture through Rastafari, and how the music and culture are consistently promulgated by foreigners, even while having their roots in Jamaica, to which many artists, musicians, enthusiasts and practitioners, visit and return to, to be legitimated.

The universality of reggae as a genre is unquestionable, a feature that inevitably contributes to the development of Rastafari as a worldview. Artists such as Alborosie, Hirie, Gentleman and every other non-Jamaican forms of reggae, roots reggae, reggaeton—to name only a few—are obvious testaments to the reach of these Jamaican cultural markers. While there are concerns about who owns the music and where the music may go and what it may evolve into, there is no doubt about its genesis.

As the book relates to future trends, discussion of a new genre is not mentioned. Chuck Foster writes that Jamaican music had gone beyond reggae, but he's not quite sure what to name what it is now, while Sly Dunbar considers that as long as the music keeps people dancing, it will have a future. But regarding what is or what will Jamaica's next genre of popular music be, the verdict is still out. There also is no discussion on the future of rhythm in musical production, while the role of Protools technology and its repercussions on studio work are considered. What is also missing from the discussion is the voice of the performing artists, song writers, production middlemen, etc., as creators.

Jamaican popular music exists in a global community to which it has to constantly explain itself—it does not feel the need to reinvent itself. It has been discussing the same themes from the time of mento, right up to dancehall. This is what makes the music Jamaican; the experiences, as the island goes through its sociopolitical struggles, natural disasters, civic upheavals etc., which inspire the creators. Asking Jamaican artists to morph to please international audiences is to seemingly make the music untrue, at the least. However,

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because of Jamaican popular music's global reach and of the impact of capitalism and ethnocentrism, while Jamaican artists may maintain their polarity within other local cultures, they will face difficulties in leaving the island's

shores, while at the same time foreign reggae and dancehall artists will set the trends in the genres.

Dennis HOWARD

Donna Hope (ed.), *Reggae from Yaad. Traditional and Emerging Themes in Jamaican Popular Music*, Kingston, Ian Randle, 2015.

Reggae from Yaad offers a gathering of Caribbean and international scholars involving some key practitioners and historical agents into a broad reasoning on the ramified pathways (or "trods") of reggae music. Donna Hope has to be hailed for editing this enlightening volume on important historical experiences and developments still (fairly) untold and the current contentious issues encompassing the sexual politics of reggae music (including dancehall). As perhaps the most prolific cultural critic of dancehall for the past decade, there could hardly be a more competent editor for this book emerging out of the 2013 International Reggae Conference hosted at UWI, Kingston, Jamaica. It is organised in four well-framed sections dealing with two major themes as indicated above, one representing "half the story never been told" of reggae within and beyond "Yaad." Yard (in English spelling) is one of the key signifiers for a presumed grassroots Jamaican identity. The ambiguous notion may take on the meaning of a private home—be it a rural household or an urban (ghetto or shanty town) housing area as in tenement yard—or, depending on the situational context, could also indicate the capital Kingston or entire Jamaica. The second major

theme reconstructs and deconstructs the practices and antics of reggae's "rude offspring," dancehall, as a social and aesthetic space.

The conference volume is no exception to the academic tradition of Caribbean studies in bringing together scholars and practitioners. Meanwhile it appears to be well established that this participatory discourse opens up new ways for research and, after all, is much more exciting than the somewhat sterile "pure" academic exchanges. Remembering very well the appearances of leading Rasta elders such as Mortimer Planno or Mutabaruka at scientific conferences, it must have been exciting moments to listen to Alan "Skill" Cole reflecting on his close "bre-drin" Bob Marley or to the authentic originators of many fresh styles in reggae, namely the producers Bunny "Striker" Lee, King Jammy and Bobby Digital. Therefore the volume paves its own access road into the "Yaad" basement of reggae with these voices under the apt heading "legendary reasonings."

Perhaps unavoidably some of the immediacy is lost when "Words, Sounds, and Power" are turned into just (written) words. Particularly in the case of Alan "Skill" Cole's chapter whose