




eating raw meat soaked in vodka (p. 150) and the tragic destiny of the Alexandrov Ensemble (p. 207).

Giacomo Bottà 

University of the Arts, Helsinki
giacomo.botta@uniarts.fi

Manchester Unspun. Pop, Property and Power in the Original Modern City.
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Until his recent retirement, the well-connected Andy Spinoza led a Manchester-based public relations agency. Before that he was editor of *City Life* (1983–1989), Manchester's alternative 'what's on' weekly. When the *Manchester Evening News* (*MEN*) took that over (1989–2005) 'Spin' ran *MEN*'s *Mister Manchester* gossip column. He has known the city's football stars, pop musicians, soap idols and politicians. It is the interplay of these demigods and monsters by which this memoir – covering roughly 1980–2020 – deserves the attention of this journal. After all, there are a number of books about the Manchester music scene, most of them feeble in their delineation of facts and horrible in the quality of writing. Scholars on this subject need a practised and even-keeled editor like Spinoza to lead them through the multiform connections between, say, football manager Sir Alex Ferguson, Simply Red singer Mick Hucknall and pop producer Pete Waterman. Spinoza encountered them 'at the intersection of the city's social life – regeneration, music and football' (p. 224). In particular he focuses on property.

There are plenty of anecdotes of the kind that traditionally decorate memoirs, my favourites here being the *MEN* editor who kept referring to Van Morrissey, and the credible tale of The Smiths' singer hiding from one of his enemies in a fashion store changing room and refusing to come out until his foe had left (p. 226). However, of greater value is Spinoza's attempt to re-examine the muddled Manchester mythology of Factory Records (1978–1993), the suicide of Joy Division's singer Ian Curtis in 1980, the travails of the Hacienda night club (1982–1997, demolished 2000) and the death in 2007 of Tony Wilson, television personality and Factory founder. Wilson often said, 'When forced to pick between truth and legend, print the legend' (p. 280), and a number of Factory faces have obliged him. Spinoza recalls a celebratory book assembled by Factory to mark 10 years of the Hacienda. He was asked by its editor Jon Savage to 'write what you want'. Spinoza did so, comparing the club's original libertarian principles to the 'Faggots are disgusting' banter coming a decade on from Factory's new signing Happy Mondays. According to Spinoza's account, Savage said that this contribution 'pushed the wrong buttons', and he rejected it (pp. 141–143). Instead they printed the legend, and continue to do so.

Aiming in contrast for evidential veracity, Spinoza starts with the arrival in 1979 of Margaret Thatcher's government which delivered to the North 'a Darwinian death sentence to [light and heavy] industry ... Between 1972 and 1984 the city lost 207,000 manufacturing jobs' (pp. 39–41). In 1986 Thatcher abolished

the Leftist metropolitan councils of Manchester, Merseyside, Sheffield and London. For a time Liverpool fought back with a Militant campaign ultimately foiled by Thatcher's tactics of rate-capping, surcharges and disqualification. Rising leftist councillors in Manchester such as Richard Leese (knighted 2006) told Spinoza that 'we were minded instead to tackle the causes of deprivation, not just deal with the symptoms. To do that we needed to create jobs' (p. 97).

They lighted on the night-time economy as a potent source of employment and property development, noting that 220 licence regulations had been blocking or limiting city centre night life since the 1960s (p. 99). Placing the Haçienda in this story of urban emancipation – together with New Order's bar Dry, the Barca bar of Simply Red's Mick Hucknall and other urban spaces – makes much more sense of its role than 'the legend'. Hucknall is revealed here as a leading figure in the post-Thatcher flowering of Manchester, as a musician, property developer, political 'leftie' and soccer sponsor. It is not surprising that, along with Tony Wilson, the most space is devoted to him (pp.114–160).

A weakness of this account is the lack of analysis given to the range of 'Manc' bands, from Swing Out Sister and 808 State to those centred around the Manchester Musicians' Collective such as The Fall and The Distractions. Instead Spinoza dwells validly on the city as a postwar space where music has played a dynamic part in its progress. There have been design disasters, the Haçienda being one – Urbis, the Heatherwick Statue, the Super Casino. While Manchester failed twice to land the Olympics, however, the bids themselves gave the city growing confidence, as Spinoza points out, and the bidders were surprised to find that the creative reputation of Manchester went before them in terms of football and music. However, he underplays the strong institutional and aesthetic benefits that Manchester has gained from the subsidising role of the European Commission (since 1975) and the capital grants of the National Lottery (from 1993). In fact, Manchester can be placed within a bigger story of the postwar urban developments backed by the European Union and first experienced in cities such as Barcelona, Lille and, later, Berlin. Spinoza ends with the building of the controversial (costly, late, necessary?) 7000-seater arts centre The Factory International, due to open after publication of both his book and this review. Its very name is surely sardonic, or a foreboding.

The photos are interesting and often playfully ironic; printed on the page, though, they lack tone. The index is perfunctory and insufficient for a book dealing with such a range of themes. Overall, Spinoza's memoir is very well written and he offers an antidote to the deficient journalism we have suffered over the popular music history of Manchester and its story as Britain's 'second city'.

Richard Witts 

Emeritus Reader in Music and Sound, Edge Hill University
rwitts@mac.com