common field of studies as perceived by the people, that is, as a whole, as an intrinsic part of everyday living'. To that end, Philip continued, 'cooperation should be the order of the day, mutual respect and the absence of professional or disciplinary egotism our ethical strategy.' Journals do not perhaps need such rallying calls in the way that organisations sometimes do, but had a manifesto for *Popular Music* ever been needed, we could have done worse than adopt the spirit of this one.

Like Richard, I too celebrate this anniversary and congratulate all who have been involved in its production for their contributions – the by-now huge list of authors, the tireless (and often long-serving) editors and, by no means least, the staff of Cambridge University Press who have served the journal so well.

# *Popular Music* is Growing Old(er)

RICHARD MIDDLETON

As I hazily recall, when you're in your teens or twenties, the prospect of one day reaching the grand old age of 30 looms in the far distance as a moment marking impending decrepitude. As one arrives, of course, this moment is miraculously reinterpreted as signalling the onset of vigorous maturity. Which is it in our case? Is *Popular Music* growing old? Or is it, rather, just healthily grown-up? Perhaps both.

Weirdly – if readers will forgive a brief moment of autobiography – the journal's first 30 years have run almost exactly in parallel with the equivalent phase in the lives of my own three children. They seem pretty youthful to me. Does *Popular Music* feel like a fourth infant? Sort of – but any claims to parentage would have to be swiftly and comprehensively qualified, not only for the obvious reason that so many others have played key roles, at the start and since (far too many to be mentioned here individually), but also because the birth event, as is also the case with human genealogy, was as much a renewal as an *ab initio* beginning. My generation has a tendency, sometimes, to talk as if 'popular music studies' didn't exist before 1981. But many of those involved with the journal from the start – I think for instance of Paul Oliver, Bert Lloyd, János Maróthy, Charles Hamm – had already been studying popular music for years; if the disciplinary definition is made as wide as it should be, it's easy enough to trace the genealogy still further back, into the 19th century or even earlier. One way in which the discipline – and this includes *Popular Music* – is arguably *too* 'youthful' is the overwhelming emphasis on the contemporary; it's a point often made, but it bears repeating: we have not yet properly got to grips with the full extent of the history, either of our discipline or of the music we study.

One feature of the early years of the journal – and here the parallelism would be most obviously with the concurrent development of IASPM – was an intense interest in *theory*, including a pressing engagement with the *political* dimensions of the theoretical debates. For a novel disciplinary excursion, this is normal, no doubt. And just as normal is that this prominence, this pressure, should fade with time. Growing older, growing quieter, more accommodating, more unquestioning, more 'realistic' – more conservative: a sequence that constitutes a familiar trope. Is it inevitable? No, and nor is it uniformly evident in the publications of recent years. Besides, a

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more important factor than any 'cyclic' intra-disciplinary structure is, in my view, the broader developments taking place in global capitalism over this period, which have tended to push intellectual work as a whole into an increasingly de-politicised cage or cul-de-sac. The significant 'cycle' here isn't that recorded by registrars of births and deaths – either of people or of disciplines – but that mapped by Marx. As the 'Arab Spring' erupts around us, are we interested in the musical dimension of this struggle? I don't mean this just on the obvious, empirical level. It would be fascinating enough to know more about what the young revolutionaries are chanting and singing on the streets, and what songs and musical genres are important to them, and I hope we will be told, in detail. But on the deeper level – the generic level of the 'people' discursively housed within 'popular music' – surely such eruptions within, and their relationship to, the structure of the global neo-liberal order must stand in some identifiable relationship to the formations of popular music worldwide. What is it? Perhaps the true test of 'growing up', here as elsewhere, would be whether the world is helped to renew itself, to be *young again*.

That would be a birthday to celebrate! And in that spirit – the spirit of *departure* or, better, of *exodus*, as Ernst Bloch (not to mention Bob Marley) called it – I do indeed celebrate *Popular Music*'s first 30 years.

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