The imagined village

Culture, ideology and the English Folk Revival

Georgina Boyes

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Georgina Boyes' award-winning book, *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival* will be published in a new, illustrated edition in August 2010. Out of print for several years, this comprehensive examination charts the emergence of the Folk Revival movement in England through the determined proselytising of Cecil Sharp and the development of organisations to encourage performance from the Esperance Guild and English Folk Dance Society to the emergence of Folk Clubs, mummers' teams and Folk Festivals.

Alongside this, however, runs the analysis that The Folk" themselves were a convenient fiction. They and their culture were created and used in the cause of conflicting ideologies – including the Women's Suffrage movement and British Fascism. Issues of Englishness, class and creativity are all dealt with in this fascinating and controversial history of the Folk, who existed only to sing and dance in an Imagined Village.

> *The Imagined Village* won the Katharine Briggs Folklore Award and was later the inspiration for Simon Emmerson's musical experiments featuring Martin and Eliza Carthy, Chris Wood, Billy Bragg and others.
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> "Just make sure you read this book, it is important." Ken Hunt, *Folk Roots.*
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> "an effective demolition of many of the myths long entrenched around the 'English pastoral' school … a wealth of damning detail… If not the definitive history of the Folk Revival, it's a book every future historian will need to confront." Calum MacDonald, *The Times Literary Supplement.*
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> "…this book is a significant and important study which deserves to be widely read … an important and thought-provoking book, a standard by which future studies will be judged, raising issues which those future studies must address." Derek Schofield, *Folk Music Journal.*
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> "*The Imagined Village* sets out the history of the English Folk Revival as a long a bloody tale of internecine strife and the collision of ideologies, with assorted Fabians, Fascists, Marxists, Romantics and Utopians jostling to plant their pennons on the mild greenswards of Merrie England … [A] lively and arresting book." Raymond Greenoaken, *Stirrings.*

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by Georgina Boyes
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