



Music tourism and factions of bodies in Goa

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abstract Tourism studies has extensively analysed how the ‘tourist gaze’ constructs the experiences and social relationships within tourism. This article seeks to engage entire bodies in the analysis of tourism and shifts away from a focus on vision. Ethnographic details from the psychedelic rave tourism scene in Goa, India, are presented to account for what could happen when differences between bodies at a rave event are considered. In the final theoretical section, drawing on Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze and Guattari, these ethnographic details are used to make some tentative suggestions as to how music is capable of organizing ‘factions’ of bodies along dynamic socio-spatial boundaries. The main argument is that it is not music itself, but its material connections to bodies, spacetimes and objects, that enable social differentiation in the multiracial touristic environment of Goa.

keywords *drugs materialism rave tourism sociology of music*

Music, like drugs, is intuition, a path to knowledge. A path? No – a battlefield.
(Attali, 1985: 20)

Tourism and vision

Within tourism studies, there has been a consistent effort to show in what ways leisure travel is structured by the faculty of sight. From Dean MacCannell’s seminal semiotics of tourism in *The Tourist* (1976) to John Urry’s *The Tourist Gaze* (1990), and collections such as *The Tourist Myth* (Selwyn, 1996) and *Destinations: Cultural Landscapes of Tourism* (Ringer, 1998), it has been argued that social relations and experiences in tourism cannot be conceived without taking into account the agency of visual signs and technologies: photography, advertising, museums, guidebooks, brochures, ‘views’. But important though vision has been in the economies and everyday interactions of tourist destinations, are tourists merely pairs of eyes? Don’t tourists swim, climb, stroll, ski, relax, become bored perhaps, or ill; don’t they go other places to taste, smell, listen, dance, get drunk, have sex? What happens when we conceive of travel as a process

involving entire bodies – and *different* bodies? When we conceive of body and landscape, subject and object, self and other, knowledge and feeling, not as separate realms but as intertwined in complicated material events that cannot be made intelligible by semiotics alone (cf. Thrift, 2000)? Encouraged by Eeva Jokinen and Soile Veijola's call for a materialist analysis of tourism (1994), and David Crouch's recent edited collection *Leisure/Tourism Geographies* (1999), this article will explore what might happen when tourism studies involves more faculties than sight alone.

Goa

The case through which I'd like to think about tourism as an event involving different bodies is the psychedelic rave scene in Goa. I will try to capture the flow of this rave scene through what might be called 'sensuous scholarship' (cf. Stoller, 1997). Obviously, in my case, the sensuousness of tourism is connected to music much more than to sightseeing. I won't be coming back to the problematic of the gaze in tourism. Rather, in the latter part of the article, I will suggest some ways we can conceptualize the agency of music in a space where very different people come together. By drawing on Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze and Guattari, my basic argument will be that music, through the connections it enables between bodies, artefacts and physical conditions, *orders* those bodies into grids of power and social difference. In a Third World tourism destination such as Goa, this ordering becomes especially salient, and a matter of political and ethical concern.

Goa is a small coastal state some 400 km to the south of Bombay, with a little over one million inhabitants. It is a former Portuguese enclave, and Goans – especially the Catholics who make up a third of the population – have a strong sense of identity (Ifeka, 1985). Goa's beaches are among the best in India; that is, they are long, white, sunny (temperatures being perfect during winter), lined with palm trees, cheap and relatively clean. Towards the end of the 1960s, when India was known in the West as the province of spirituality and authenticity (May, 1996), Goa's northern beaches were 'discovered' by hippies. By the mid-1970s, their presence on Goan soil was definite, especially in the village of Anjuna. Life centred around taking drugs, swimming in the nude and listening to rock music (see Odzer, 1995).

In the wake of the hippies, however, a charter tourism industry quickly developed during the 1980s in former fishing villages such as Calangute and Baga. As is the case with many economically and ecologically vulnerable tourist destinations, tourism in Goa was from the beginning heavily politicized, most of the critique these days coming from environmentalist and legal action NGOs (see Routledge, 2001). Before Goa was placed on the map of the global tourism industry, there were hardly any domestic tourists to be seen on Goan beaches. However, news of white tourists – especially the naked female ones – rapidly spread all over India and, by the late 1970s, the majority of tourists came from

India, especially Bombay. By 1997, the number of visitors to Goa during winter outnumbered the number of Goans (Tourism Department, 2000). But the tourism in the area around Anjuna remained comparatively undeveloped. Up to this day, almost all tourists in Anjuna stay in simple rooms rented from local families, and the hippie past of the village is still tangible in the mélange of globetrotters, nearly resident hippie families, New Agers, ravers, artists, musicians and *sadhus* (wandering holy men) who congregate there every winter.

Goa trance

Anjuna has a long history of hybrid economics; hybrid as in, between illegal and legal, between informal and taxed, between local and intercontinental. Back in the 1970s, the hippies had done an efficient job in establishing Goa as a port for the international traffic of drugs. Not only was there a big demand in Goa for LSD and cocaine from the West, but heroin and hash could be smuggled back to Europe and America via Bombay (Odzer, 1995). The hippies would hold all-night parties on the beach, especially at full moon and on Christmas and New Year. They'd play psychedelic and progressive rock from cassettes brought from their home countries. Often there was live rock too, amplified through equipment supplied by Goans. A couple of local village women sold *chai* (Indian tea), snacks and cigarettes at the parties. Once in a while, a cop would come, and they'd bribe him to keep quiet.

Parties were intimate and generally held some distance from the village, so the villagers could sleep. Both Goans and older hippies can be quite nostalgic about how the parties represented a more or less symbiotic relationship between locals and foreigners. Psychiatrist Régis Airault (2000) thinks that what young Europeans looked for in Goa was the 'oceanic feeling' lost in adolescence – they literally felt at home in 'Mother India'. The drugs taken at the full moon parties served simply to reach Peter Pan's Never-Neverland quicker. Whatever the oceanic thrust of the scene back then was, there is no denying that the political-economic conditions for the later development of music and drugs tourism were already present.

The music played in Anjuna was always music to get stoned to: Pink Floyd, The Grateful Dead, Bob Marley, The Beatles, The Doors, Led Zeppelin, even some Parliament. Then, in the mid-1980s, something quite unexpected happened, something shrouded in mythical narratives of origin common in most popular music (Straw, 1991): music in Goa started becoming electronic. It seems to have happened like this (cf. Reynolds, 1998: 150–2). Travellers were bringing more and more post-New Wave music such as Front 242 and synth pop into Anjuna, especially extended remixes and B-sides. The LSD takers started preferring the weird noises made possible by synthesizers to the wah-wah of Jimi Hendrix. Electronic music proved more danceable too. As house and techno were developing in Chicago, Detroit and New York, acidheads in Goa started looping the bits they liked by sticking pieces of magnetic tape together,

exchanging the tapes with friends, becoming deejays. Certain of the more atmospheric and ethnic-inspired electro, acidhouse, dub, ambient and techno tracks in Europe and America became veritable 'dance hits' in Anjuna at the close of the 1980s. People at parties no longer just sat there staring into candle flames, but actually danced. The acid made them dance for ages, and they felt very much connected and alive (Malbon, 1999).

Back in Britain, Germany and Scandinavia, travellers started trying to make music that captured those feelings best. They then brought the resulting music to Goa. Thus, there was a rapid circuit formed of music being made in Northwestern Europe, but danced to in Goa. By 1992 or 1993, ravers were so confident that something new was happening, they christened the new music 'Goa trance'. Goa trance can be identified by a punchy kick drum and swirling, hypnotic and densely textured staccato sounds in vaguely Eastern melodies (cf. Cole and Hannan, 1997). A year later, you could hear few other genres being played in the bars, restaurants, markets and parties of Anjuna (*Goa Today*, 1996).

What's more, the psychedelic atmosphere of Anjuna's parties, complete with the decorations, Hindu imagery, performances, chai and, of course, LSD, was simulated by travellers across the world (d'Andrea, 2000). Goa trance raves and club nights are held not only all over Western Europe, but in Thailand, Japan, South Africa, Australia, Brasil, Hungary and the US (see Chaishop, 2001). Particularly in Israel, there are big Goa fans – Goa being a favourite destination to 'lose it' after the completion of military service (Lion, 1999). Although the music has, in recent years, evolved into the much darker and minimal 'psy-trance', Goa is still the rave capital of the Third World. You can find a Goa trance section in record shops and read about it once in a while in trendy magazines, but the main media through which it spread were the travellers themselves and the Internet (Thornton, 1995). Young people travelled for music and the music travelled with them (cf. Ingham et al., 1999; Lion, 1999; Richard and Kruger, 1998). But is it only about music and youngsters travelling, or also about places being affected by the music and youngsters? Let's turn our attention to the place where Goa trance emerged first – Anjuna.

First, a note on method. The data presented here derive from an ongoing PhD project. Participant observations of the raves were carried out at about 40 raves in Anjuna during three five-week stays in the tourist seasons (i.e. winters) of 1998, 1999 and 2000. Being half-Indian myself, being interested in the politics of globalization, and having some experience in clubbing, I had both the personal and political investment necessary to conduct research of this kind. Additional information was obtained from two organized pilot discussions with ravers in focus groups, and interviews with people with firsthand knowledge of the scene in the 1970s, for example the late Cleo Odzer (see Odzer, 1995); a former drug dealer; a doctor; journalists; lawyers; environmentalists, and other professionals. I had countless informal conversations with ravers, local residents, 'hippie elders' and interested Goan social scientists. Secondary information on tourism in Goa came from Goan press archives, NGO and official documents,

websites on Goa trance music (for example, Chaishop, 2001), email discussions, and contacts with the Goa trance scene in Europe, particularly Belgium. There is much to be said about the problems of access to the trance scene in Goa, given the shady economics involved and the cliquey character of this tourism. While more or less covert participant observations were possible, getting people into formal interview arrangements proved difficult. It can be held against me, therefore, that in the following ethnography my interpretation of the rave event is speculative and insufficiently tested against what other participants have to say about it. While it is certainly true that some of them would contest what I make of the raves, the purpose here isn't to reach an objective description of an event. It is precisely to show how, according to my analysis, different groups of people can be positioned differently in the rave event (and will concomitantly have different things to say about it). If the length of this article cannot permit taking into account the complexity of the discourses on the scene (among the locals, domestic tourists, police, seasonal vendors, backpackers, hotel owners, and so on), then it is my own argumentation about this differential positioning that will have to be foregrounded.

I will be presenting how things *typically* happen during the *peak* of the season (i.e. around Christmas and New Year). Also, I am presenting how things typically connect to the body subjectivities of what I call the 'Goa freaks', the ravers and hippie elders who stay for at least a month in Anjuna or neighbouring villages, who have travelled around a bit, and who have inside knowledge of the music, the drugs, the organization and the mystical discourse of the psychedelic trance scene (see Chaishop, 2001). Other identifiable groups are: a) the domestic tourists, the majority of whom are male and middle-class; b) the foreign charter tourists; and c) the locals and seasonal workers from elsewhere in India, some of whom also attend the parties and are quite savvy about the ins and outs of the scene. It has to be remembered, however, that it is only in late December, only since the late 1990s and – to my knowledge – only in Goa that locals along with domestic and charter tourists are together more plentiful than freaks at psychedelic raves. Even though I won't be saying much about the experiences of these groups, it should be clear that, by their very status of not being considered part of the scene, yet being present in large numbers, they threaten the identity of the Goa freaks. The reason why I deliberately construct the experiences of the Goa freaks as the norm, against which other experiences are evaluated, is that I want to talk about these experiences as a resource for subcultural differentiation in a later section.

Goa trance parties

1

Anjuna's psychedelic raves – 'parties' – take place on the grounds of restaurants or rented spaces in the forest, on the beach or on hills. The parties start in

November and last until March or April. The Goan tourist season reaches its zenith in the week from Christmas to New Year, when there are 30 to 40 times as many tourists than in the (very hot) summer (Tourism Department, 2000). It is important to know that, during this time, most tourists actually come from India, primarily Bombay. Many of these also go to the trance parties; the rest of the year, the audience at the parties is nearly exclusively white.

There are parties at least a couple of times a week in Anjuna, attracting anything from a few hundred to several thousands of attendants – that is, if there is no so-called party ban. Party bans are regularly imposed by the courts and police, and they show how strikingly *precarious* the organization of the trance scene in Goa is. Because any amplified music after 10 p.m. is illegal, every party is technically breaking the law. The police – and sometimes the judiciary – have had to be systematically bribed since the beginning of the rave scene. The *bak-sheesh* (bribe) comes from the profits made from the bar, and sometimes from the box that goes around in the mornings if the police threaten to close the party down. For you can never be sure whether your ‘permit’ is legitimate or not, whether the party can go on ‘till 6, 8 or later. The cops can just turn up and order the party to stop, for many varied reasons – for instance, because their relationship with a competing party organizer has suddenly become more favourable, or because there’s been a change in government.

Regular club venues in Calangute and Baga pay off enormous sums at the highest level (i.e. to politicians), and so need not fear the police. But the parties in Anjuna are a little trickier, being held outdoor and driven by a drug economy.¹ It is the raves and not the commercial clubs that regularly receive criticism from the press, Catholic activists and the Hindu nationalist BJP (for example, *Goa Today*, 1996; see Lion, 1999). Though they often exhibit a tendency to sensationalize and moralize, the critics are right to point out that Goa trance has worsened India’s deeply embedded corruption. Whether there is music or silence in Anjuna depends on dirty politics at levels unfathomable for most attending the actual parties. Anyway, who cares – they’re just glad that they can dance.

The music is loud; you can hear it kilometres away, depending on the wind. Locals, especially the elderly, often complain about noise pollution. Imagine going to church on Sunday morning in a little coastal Indian village with psychedelic trance as Muzak. Sometimes residents (generally middle-class Catholics who don’t make any money from tourism) phone the police, who won’t do a thing when they’re properly bribed. But most villagers accept the nuisance. Everyone knows that without parties, no people; without people, no business. Since the locals and seasonal workers living off the raves are mostly poor, they are quite dependent on the very sounds that keep their bodies tossing and turning at night.

2

This is how parties are generally experienced – at least, by the Goa freaks. Sunset makes you flock from the beach to your favourite bar or shack. Ninebar,

on top of a cliff at Vagator Beach, is a popular spot. This is the time to get your first joints and *chillums* circulating (hash pipes traditionally used by sadhus), to socialize, maybe have a beer, and start nodding or dancing to the music. By about 10 p.m., you go for dinner, relax a bit, have more joints. Then the agendas diverge. If you're an Anjuna regular – that is, if you know what the scene is like – you're likely to continue relaxing till 3 or 4 a.m., or even dawn. If you're a backpacker or a domestic or charter tourist, and in Goa for only one or two weeks, you'll be dancing much sooner. The music starts pounding properly by about midnight. Between 3 and 5 a.m., the parties are generally at their peak in terms of the number of people dancing. Most of these people are groups of young, male, Indian tourists. You will be able to count the number of dancing Goa freaks at this time on one hand.

For the Goa freaks, the real party starts only in the morning. Apart from the profound symbolism of sunrise at parties, they just don't like mixing with the two-week charter crowd, the *tourists* (as opposed to 'travellers'; May, 1996) that drink and take only ecstasy or, worse, speed; come in taxis and not on their own motorbikes; and don't know much about the music, its philosophy, its movements. The resentment towards Indians on the dancefloor is even stronger. There have been small disturbances as Indians and foreigners bump into each other on the dancefloor, especially drunk Indian tourists bumping into white girls. Indian tourists are predominantly male, shirt tucked in their trousers, shouting and laughing about. There's barely communication between them and others. Even if they genuinely enjoy themselves on the music, and many of them aren't out for the white girls, none of the other groups likes them – not even the locals.

Charter tourists, non-drug-taking backpackers, domestic tourists and local boys form the *contaminants* of subcultural purity (Thornton, 1995). The Goa freaks appear on the dancefloor when these contaminants start leaving. Before that, freaks patiently sit out the night on the mats next to the dancefloor. At every party, there is an enormous area that could be called the chillout zone, with hundreds of kerosene lamps, making it resemble a huge Oriental bazaar. The chillout is based on what I call the 'mat economy': local women (*chai mamas*) sitting stoically through the night, fighting their sleep, selling chai, coffee, snacks, cigarettes, fruit, and so on, with mats for the customers to sit on. By generating profit for hundreds of local families, this mat economy forces the villagers to consent to rave tourism. The mat economy is principally why they protest against party bans. But the revenues are low and the competition fierce. Sometimes chai mamas get into arguments about on whose mat a stoned foreigner is actually sitting or lying down. Some foreigners find this amusing.

On the mats, the Goa freaks are waiting 'till dawn, the smell of hash fumes spreading above them, chatting, staring, drinking chai, getting acid, until the Indians and charter tourists have left. When you ask the freaks why they're not dancing, you hear the euphemizing statement, 'Too many people'.

3

Getting to parties can be troublesome. If you're an Anjuna regular, you'll know how to get to the location; but if you don't, the badly lit, narrow and potholed roads going through paddy fields aren't easy to orient yourself in. In the early 1990s, when the parties were less monopolized by a few big venues, it was fun finding the parties by ear. This is what you do: get about 10 motorbikes together, drive in the general direction, then everyone stops, switches off the engine, listens carefully, and continues driving in the direction the kick drum is heard. Nights in Anjuna are continually disturbed by the racket of passing motorbikes, especially Anjuna's old favourite – the 350 cc. Enfield.

Upon arrival, more disorienting experiences. Motorbikes, scooters, taxi vans and cars are chaotically parked all over. In the darkness and blinding headlights, it's difficult to see where the parking is supposed to be. What is the road, the paddy field, the beach, the ditch, and what is someone's garden? And the same problem arises when you need to pee – obviously, there are no toilets at a rave in Goa. The problem of darkness persists when you try to get to the party, even at the party itself. Often you need to work your way through bushes, rocks, sand, fields, blindly heading to the source of the music. Prudence is still advised at the party, where irregularities everywhere caution you to keep your balance. The dancefloor isn't stable ground in Anjuna.

But then again, this is the charm of the scene, its intertwining with nature (Thrift, 2000): the presence of sand, rocks, ocean, paddy fields, vegetation (notably palm trees), even other people's gardens, makes it all the more exciting and authentic. Any Goa freak will tell you that dancing in Goa is the real thing, with the stars and moon above, the sea breeze, the fluid boundaries of party space (Lion, 1999). *No roofs, no walls* – how unlike the indoor happenings at home! No entry charge, queues, bouncers, guest lists, surveillance cameras, cloakroom, fire extinguishers, first aid. This is clubbing in the wilderness.

But, obviously, the clubbing itself needs some modification of the physical environment to call it clubbing space (cf. Malbon, 1999). Nicely metonymic are, for example, the *Om* and yin-yang symbols painted on the trunks of coconut trees in fluorescent paint. Nature is cool, but just not enough; it has to have that little psychedelic touch. *Om*, by the way, is omnipresent in the Goa trance scene – on stickers, as tattoos, drawn in the sand, on websites, vehicles, clothing. It's one of those Hindu elements that was appropriated to signify ancient Indianness, mystery, sacredness, cosmic rapture. Apart from the usual hallucinogenic clichés – mushrooms, planets, spirals, bubbles – you can also see Ganeshas and Shivas in the fluorescent paintings hung up by artists at parties. The paint lights up brightly by virtue of the UV-lamps – usually the only lighting on and around the dancefloor – around which large insects twitch. Parties are livened up by fire-jugglers, fire-eaters, fireworks and bonfires. Further visual decorations include fluorescent ropes, Christmas lighting, a rare film projector or strobe. And, if it's

a full moon party, the event gets that eerie silvery flavour so celebrated in film and literature.

4

Walls of loudspeakers stand menacingly on all four corners of the dance floor. Most of the electric energy goes into the bass, so that just passing in front of the speakers makes your intestines swirl. Then again, you might be one of those freaks on acid who would crawl into the speaker if it was possible. Most of the dancing crowd faces the speakers. The deejay spins from somewhere conspicuous, always with a whole posse of friends and party organizers. Goa Gil – a dreadlocked American deejay, one of the 1970s originals and Goa trance's favourite – doesn't spin without turning the deejay table into an altar: photographs, incense, pictures of Hindu gods, candles and chillum.

Dance culture discourse renders the deejay the modern day shaman, the man who leads 'his' (hardly ever 'her') congregation into trance with magic, song, drugs and drumming (Rietveld, 1998: 188–98; cf. Rouget, 1985). A good deejay in psychedelic trance is supposed to take his congregation on a trip through the night and morning, playing specific subgenres at different times: light and slow at the beginning, gradually build up to the dark and repetitive stuff, reach a climax just before dawn, then switch to the more uplifting and epic trance once the sun breaks through. When it's clear that everyone is in for the 10 to 12 a.m. phase, get back to the heavy and repetitive trance, and alternate once in a while with an epic track.

Sunrise at a party is arguably the key moment in Anjuna's music culture. The dancefloor has been gradually becoming lighter, you can gradually *see* who's dancing around you, can find back your friends. Again, the chillums come out, more chemicals are taken, another chai drunk. People prepare for the morning. For most Goa freaks, this is when the party commences. It's been coldish – the temperature can drop quite abruptly during the night – but those first rays of sunlight on your face: that is what many seek in this rave scene. When the sun reaches up, smiles emerge everywhere on the dancefloor. The music immediately sounds different. If it was monotonous just before, now it gives new energy. If it was gloomy and going nowhere, now it's full of purpose, full of promise. The remaining diehard chillers on the mats finally come and join in. Some people only arrive after dawn. Sunrise is the ultimate and magic arbiter in Anjuna. For most party animals, it's the time you avoid. It's the stark opposite for the Goa freaks.

5

And thus the party goes on. And on. Sense of time lapses. You don't wear a watch in Goa: time is measured by the sun and the state of your body. When you're exhausted and fully dehydrated, and the sun shines high and the acid is wearing off, it's time for bed (or the beach). The music usually stops around noon, but big parties can go on for several days. Deejays play for 12 hours, 24

hours, 36 hours. From sunrise 'till late morning, very few people leave the party. Those on E mostly drop out by 9 or 10 a.m. The acidheads remain, alien molecules in the blood differentiating bodies from other bodies. Among the LSD takers, there is a shared, machine-like feeling that once you're in the ship, you're not leaving 'till the end. Acidheads never rest in the morning, jumping around wildly, becoming bats, bears, robots, puppets of the music. Dancing on Goa trance has something less controlled than in other dance scenes. When there's a climax in the music, some acidheads laugh aloud; insane laughs, saucer eyes, jerky movements that only other acidheads seem to comprehend.

The sun warms you up quickly, and the light makes your tired eyes squint. Most boys and men take off their T-shirts. Beach culture. You can see who has been around longest in Goa. The tan: embodied subcultural capital (Thornton, 1995). The hard core of Goa ravers have their own postmodern fashion, which is something inbetween acidhouse, skate and hippie: fluorescent, brightly coloured, tie-dye textiles; images of psychedelia, comics and Eastern culture; lots of zips and pockets and plastic; piercings, tattoos, dreadlocks, shaven heads, hats, beads, bare feet, anklets; and, last but not least, huge groovy sunglasses. Not that everyone dresses like this; it's a very heterogeneous scene. Still, you can easily judge from the freakiness of clothing who's a proper freak and who's merely *en passant*.

Nine a.m. and you're really sweating again. Anjuna regulars don't wear deodorant, so you can *smell* the dancing. Slowly, the dancefloor gets dry, and the feet stamp up clouds of dust which makes breathing difficult. Local kids are paid to run around and sprinkle water from buckets to prevent more dust from forming. There are practically no mats left by this time. The dancefloor is still fully occupied, but there are far fewer people, leaving lots of room for dogs and cows to scavenge whatever the ravers have left on the ground. And there are beggars too – children, mothers with babies, elderly people. In India, where there are white people there are beggars. Goa is relatively 'well off' and doesn't have many beggars of its own, so of late they've been coming from outside Goa in semi-organized fashion, like the thousands of seasonal labourers. Their tactic at parties is to stand, minutes at a stretch, in front of someone dancing and look miserable – which isn't difficult among all these white people enjoying themselves.

Beggars must be the most shocking sight for the unexpected clubber, you might think. A more in-your-face reminder that the entire scene is built on top of the poverty of the Indian nation is hardly imaginable. But the beggars are mostly ignored by the ravers, *habitually* ignored. Just focus on the music, on your trip, *your* trip. This is the way to deal with the irritating presence. What also demands habitual – nearly ritual – ignoring are the plentiful vendors who continually walk around the dancefloor. Men aged five to 50 selling cigarettes, water, chewing gum. In the mornings, watermelon, sunglasses, doughnuts, ice lollies.

These vendors hardly do any business, but stubbornly persist in asking you. The interaction between spaced-out foreigners and poor Indian people is most

interesting to observe. Most of the relationship is based on the feigned indifference of the former and the demand for attention by the latter. Sometimes the beggars and vendors are pushed or barked or danced away. But sometimes older hippies play with the kids, hug the beggar women, give them a soft drink. Rare moments of intercultural communication. Often the local kids dance themselves, as do some of the more daring local men. This is a party – you're supposed to have fun, right?

If you were so preoccupied that you hadn't noticed during the night, you see in the morning that there are actually quite a lot of poor Indians around. In India, the division of labour is often so elaborate that there are more individuals than prescribed 'functions' in an organization. At Anjuna's parties, some are there to help set things up and to clean the area when the music stops. I didn't mention that there are no rubbish bins either at parties, so there's enough work when it's over. Some men standing around belong to the organization, the bar or the nearby restaurant. Some are just curious workers or farmers who come and have a peek at the wondrous weirdos before starting their day's work. Then there are numerous 'taxiwallahs' with their 'tourist vehicles' (Maruti vans). They become sparse as the morning progresses though, as the Goa freaks who people the party at that time all have their own bikes. Sometimes, on Christmas morning, Catholic families, nicely dressed up for mass, come and have a look at what is for them, well, a freak show. It is important to try to imagine how other-worldly the behaviour and appearances of the Goa freaks are to most Indians.

6

Let me round up. There are a few points I'd like you to remember about Anjuna's music tourism. First, on its own (even if we could think this), music is meaningless. The sounds mean because they're connected to a range of other entities and conditions: the sun, the moon, the temperature, the coconut trees, the rocks, the smells of kerosene and cannabis and sweat – all these are implicated in the Goa trance event. Second, the most important connection music makes is with human bodies. Bodies dancing, of course, but also selling, buying, sitting, deejaying, working. Different bodies have different relationships to the music, and move around the event in different ways. Third, Goa trance and trance in Goa are about the continuum of music and drugs (Lion, 1999). Chemical molecules (ethanol, tetrahydrocannabinol, methylenedioxymethamphetamine and especially lysergic acid diethylamide) matter a lot in the differentiation of bodies and their behaviour.

So, fourth, there are patterns of spatiotemporal politics discernible at the party event. It's primarily, but not only, the *visibility* (or when it's still dark, the *invisibility*) of bodies, their clothes and adornments and ways of doing, their nationality, gender, age and wealth, that matters here. The sounds interact with the sights and the physical layout of the party space to produce what could be called *factions* of bodies. Bodies are white and non-white. Some bodies dance well and easily; others don't. Some are pinned down: chai mamas. Some have to keep

walking around: vendors and beggars. Some appear just before dawn: Goa freaks. And, between these factions, there are continually frictions, negotiations, alliances happening. This micropolitics should keep us wary of rave culture's self-proclaimed universalism. Peace, love, unity, respect – sometimes abbreviated to PLUR – are what many Goa trancers, especially on the Internet, proclaim in mystical language (Chaishop, 2001). But it's not so much unity as factions that the music and drugs produce on the dancefloor.

Music and bodies

Now, that was some detailed story. Such complexity, such different things, jumping scales from the stellar to the molecular, passing through fashion, beer cups and bikes. How on earth does it all hold together? I'd like to propose that it's the music. When the music stops, everything ceases to make sense, as many a thoroughly disappointed dancer knows when the cops abruptly pull the plug out of the system. Anjuna lives off sonic tourism (see Connell and Gibson, 2002). No music, and the ravers go to Thailand or South Africa instead (Chaishop, 2001). In the economic, political, semiotic and experiential reproduction of Anjuna as tourist destination, music seems to be the crucial force. In the remainder of this article, I want to try and make sense of how music does this. I'm not arguing for some sort of musical determinism. Music has effect, but never in itself, never as an ideal *form* or abstract *function*. It can only be constituted as powerful through other, extramusical forces: electricity, weather, drugs, phone calls, paint. We can identify music's 'own' positive agency only because of its concrete, material *connections*.

I think the most crucial connection is with human bodies. The uniqueness of the human body in Goa's rave tourism might easily be forgotten when putting things like darkness and dogs on the same materialist plane of analysis. But human bodies are peculiar; for them to connect to music, they have to *know* how to do it. This is where the sensuous ethnography of the event on its own won't be enough, and sociology of music comes into play. As, for instance, Simon Frith (1996) points out, it's not just what music does to your body, but how your body has learnt to let the music do this to itself (Malbon, 1999; Pini, 1998; Thornton, 1995). Enter concepts like 'habitus', 'cultural capital', 'taste', 'distinction', which in Goa become markers differentiating between and within groups of foreigners and Indians.

These concepts are Pierre Bourdieu's, of course, and his treatment of the relationship between embodied knowledge, cultural meaning and power is useful (see Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu's is essentially a sociology of classes of taste; he has had less to say about how the subject arranges itself and conditions around it so that cultural forms become appealing. Gilbert Rouget (1985) concludes, after a lengthy overview of anthropological studies on shamanism, ecstasy and possession, that music merely 'triggers' the trance state, never directly causes it. *How* it does this depends on cultural conventions, individual dispositions, the

social organization of the event, and the drugs taken. One recent article extending actor-network theory talks about the agency of music and drugs being constructed by the listener/drug taker arranging things, chemicals and sounds in such a way that s/he can lose her/himself (Gomart and Hennion, 1999). Passion is willed passivity. Knowing how to appreciate music and drugs then becomes a form of subcultural capital (Thornton, 1995). The more others there are who also start appreciating the same music and drugs, the more the 'expert users' will try to preserve the purity of the music and drugs.

The musical masterpiece or the user's favourite cocktail 'itself' is not slowly diluted with technical methods, rituals, and discourses 'on' the object. . . . The verbal and technical virtuosity of the users are co-produced in the same experience as the pleasure and the 'purity' of the drug. Only to an expert user is there 'pure' heroin, or 'pure' Bach. (Gomart and Hennion, 1999: 238)

The material arrangement of space, time, sight, sound and substances at a rave are such that they create the conditions for trance and hours of dancing. You let the music control your body.

In the way it relates to the body, music is unique in three respects. First, it is a temporal medium, it *unfolds* in time. Alfred Schutz (1970: 209ff.) says of musical communication that it involves the sharing, between composer and audience, not of 'objective', quantitative time, but of what Bergson called *durée*, inner time. It's the nonlinearity and profundity of inner time that 'gear' the listener into the world. Second, and this should be impossible to think separately from the first aspect, music doesn't just unfold, but it unfolds by *filling in a space*. You need to be within earshot. Music therefore always draws boundaries. Music, more than painting or literature, *envelops* the body. But, unlike architecture, you can't touch it – it touches you, in a rather immediate and visceral way. And, third, while cinema may also be enveloping, you can *dance* to music, or at least close your eyes and smile. While it is possible to dance with buildings and on poems, I think the kinaesthetic, tactile and emotional affectivity of music is of a more primeval kind. I will come back to music's affect shortly.

As a cultural practice embedded in a social formation, music interacts with other forms. There are album covers and video clips, as there are books on music and paintings of music. This leads Richard Leppert (1993) to suggest that music is fully connected to sight. Via its production and reception, music connects to visual, visible, situated and interactive bodies. Leppert says a 'sonoric landscape', for example an opera performance or shamanic ritual, attains meaning because both musician and audience can *see* the music being made and listened to. Sadly, Leppert has said nothing about what happens to this relationship between music and vision in the age of mechanic reproduction, of listening to music absolutely everywhere, combining all sorts of sounds with all sorts of sights (for instance, electronic dance music with Third World villages).

So, saying that music is unique, saying that people also travel for music, shouldn't obscure the fact that music is never experienced as sound alone (just

as landscape is never experienced as sight alone; Thrift, 2000). Contra Schutz, the subject relates to music in a material context which is *more* than just listening. It's here that we have to turn to the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. All corporeal experiences for Merleau-Ponty (1962) are connected. In our everyday dealings with the world, it's impossible to isolate sensory inputs from the ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hands, legs, stomach, lungs, skin. Merleau-Ponty enables us to think the whole moving body with its surfaces and pores, its intensities and extensions, its clothes, exhaustion, hunger, shiverings, pains, pleasures, blood contents, diseases, dreams and hallucinations (see Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 334ff.). I hope you noticed that the Goa trance event is a true bombardment of the body – sorry, of *many* bodies. Sensation, as bodily making sense of the world, never happens by one rational 'mind' alone in an isolated here-and-now.

What is given is not myself opposed to others, my present as opposed to my past, sane consciousness with its *cogito* as opposed to consciousness afflicted with hallucinations, the former being the sole judge of the latter and limited, in relation to it, to its internal conjectures – it is the doctor *with* the patient [who hallucinates], myself *with* others, my past *on the horizon of* my present. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 337)

The sensory interconnectedness and dialogic working of embodied experience should make us realize that listening to music is done by material, fleshy bodies, and hardly ever alone.

The visibility of bodies in Anjuna means that you can see who you have in front of you (especially in the morning). Bodies are categorized: brown or white, foreigner or local, tourist or traveller, rich or poor, man or woman, young or old, hippie or clubber, attractive or unattractive, cool or nerdy. The spacetime of the party is dynamically *gridded*, and bodies are distributed in certain ways. Some sit down, others never stand still. While Goa freaks chill on the mats 'till dawn, Indian tourists start dancing as soon as they enter. Poor locals shyly stand at the edge, party animals dance in front of the deejay or the speakers – dealers are usually a bit more hidden. The distribution of bodies also includes the fact that the parties are no-go areas for most Goans. There are few inhabitants of Anjuna who know exactly what happens at the parties. Some concerned journalists and NGO activists would like to come and have a look, but would feel very uncomfortable and visible (*Goa Today*, 1996). Even more out of place at a party are policemen. Their bodies in uniform immediately draw the attention of all eyes, and they are quite nervous when they have to stop the party and disappoint so many.

In Anjuna's tourist setting, music might bring people together, but sight divides them into factions. It's not that the visual is *autonomous* in factioning the dancefloor. In navigating around the party, vision is fully connected to the tactile and the kinaesthetic, which in turn are connected to the sonic. But, in my opinion, vision does *enable* stratification more than hearing. It competes with hearing.

Music is not in visible space, but it besieges, undermines and displaces that space, so

that soon these overdressed listeners who take on a judicial air and exchange remarks or smiles, unaware that the floor is trembling beneath their feet, are like a ship's crew buffeted about on the surface of a tempestuous sea. The two spaces are distinguishable only against the background of a common world, and can compete with each other only because they both lay claim to total being. They are united at the very instant in which they clash. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 225)

The experience of the party is embodied for everyone, but this doesn't mean all are geared into that space the same way. Differences between corporealities give rise to segmentations and micropolitics (a consequence insufficiently developed by Merleau-Ponty). Bodies have different histories, have been in different places, so that not everybody has the same resources to do things like buying, kissing in public, dancing to techno, reading Merleau-Ponty (cf. Bourdieu, 1984 again). Bodies never simply intermingle. The body-subjects present at a Goa trance party feel themselves as different from each other, and move in different ways through its space. They have to negotiate corporeal and symbolic boundaries. What Merleau-Ponty calls 'spatiality' (1962: 98ff.) is as much about differences in perception as it is about power relations and politics.

Order-sounds

What I wanted to show in my ethnography, and diversion via Merleau-Ponty, is that music has the rather mysterious power to *move* us (even if it pins us down), to *position* us in relations of power, to *connect* us to certain times and spaces, to our 'place' in the material and social world. Of course, there are many other things and activities that also do that, language being the most extensively theorized. Brian Massumi (1992: 28) invites us to think about what real changes a simple statement like 'I do' during a wedding ceremony performs. Rather immediately and drastically, 'I do' changes the bodies of a man and a woman. These bodies now enter new networks of legislation, sociability and sexuality. The force of 'I do' derives from it being spoken millions of times by other couples – millions of persons who have voluntarily followed their hearts.

The transformation of the bodies saying 'I do' is very real, inserts itself deep into the emotions and behaviours of bodies, but is not itself physical. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, in Plateau 4 of *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987: 75–110), call this expressive effectivity of language 'incorporeal transformation', and I want to elaborate on their critical understanding of language and bodies. The statement 'I do' is an example of what they call an 'order-word', both ordering you *in* social formations and ordering you *to do* certain things. This might sound like quite a pessimistic theory of ideology, but Deleuze and Guattari are arguing for a pragmatics of language. Precisely because '[t]he incorporeal transformation is the expressed of order-words, but also the attribute of bodies' (1987: 108) is it possible that language is used against itself. This means that

the order-word is also something else, inseparably connected: it is like a warning cry or a

message to flee. It would be oversimplifying to say that flight is a reaction against the order-word; rather, it is included within it, as its other face in a complex assemblage, its other component. (1987: 107)

Now, we might call music, or rather specific performances of music, order-sounds to account for the way it, like language, grids bodies into social identities and practices. Instantly, a few remarks. First, likening music to language is very tricky, even when done ‘metaphorically’. Order-sounds are ‘like’ order-words not because music represents in the way language represents, but because music too, like language, but also like food and cars, connects us to networks of power. Second, we shouldn’t make too much of Deleuze and Guattari’s repeated claim that incorporeal transformation is ‘immediate’ and ‘instantaneous’. As stated earlier, the force of order-sounds is mediated by the cultural knowledge embodied in the subject being positioned by the music. Human beings aren’t billiard balls. Finally, the question remains whether bodies are ordered by music the *same* way as they are by cars or words. This is plainly not the case, as the specific intellectual, emotional and kinaesthetic embodiment of music accords it with a different sort of power. ‘Since [sound’s] force of deterritorialization is the strongest, it also effects the most massive of reterritorializations, the most numbing, the most redundant. Ecstasy and hypnosis. Colors do not move a people. Flags can do nothing without trumpets’ (1987: 348).

Why do trumpets move a people more than flags do? We come back here to the affective quality of music. Deleuze and Guattari argue that music mobilizes bodies more than, for example, paintings do, because it is more capable of exposing bodies to the way the world itself is organized. The world is organized, they seem to be saying, like music, through ‘refrains’: rhythms, motifs, counterpoints, intervals, intermezzos, oscillations, styles, orchestration (see Plateau 11). ‘[T]he question of music is that of a power of deterritorialization permeating nature, animals, the elements, and deserts as much as human beings’ (1987: 309). Music is then the cultural form best suited to extract the energies already oscillating in and inbetween human bodies and their surroundings, to *carry them elsewhere*, to enhance their powers. In this way, it intensely connects bodies to particular spacetimes (a nation, a region, a street, a bedroom). Order-sounds ordering bodies around, around countries and around dancefloors. Music does such a good job in ordering that it travels great distances, notably as recorded in materials such as scores, guitars, Minidiscs and MP3s. Music flows and it fixes. It fixes because it flows. It flows because it fixes.

And it is exactly by cohering subjectivities and places, by providing a sense of belonging (even if it’s belonging to an escapist psychotropic nowhere), that music also erects boundaries, becomes exclusionary, closing in on itself. ‘Music has a thirst for destruction, every kind of destruction, extinction, breakage, dislocation. Is that not its potential “fascism”?’ (1987: 299). If music gives you a sense of belonging, it will give others a sense of nonbelonging. For them, it will be noise (cf. Ingham et al., 1999). Paradoxically, it is precisely the potential for

escape that can turn music into not only something imperialistic (trumpets and empire), but also a narcissistic revolution changing nothing to overall systems of domination (see Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: Plateau 9). It is this exclusionary aspect of dance cultures that has been downplayed in many academic accounts, and which I wanted to draw attention to in my ethnography.²

Politics

In Plateau 10 on 'becoming', Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 299–309) afford a privileged political status to *becoming-music*, as they do to becoming-woman, becoming-child, becoming-animal. Music is when desire is released to change relations of power, relations enabled especially by the eye, by what Deleuze and Guattari call 'faciality' (Plateau 7). What they call 'music' is when bodies escape from rigidity, when every body becomes faceless (1987: 186–91). 'Being a man or a woman no longer exists in music', they write (1987: 304). And, we might add, neither does being white or brown, rich or poor, straight or gay, visitor or local. In music proper, every body *becomes the music*, and the music becomes every body. Even though I have stressed the fracturing effect of Goa trance, it's undeniable that music tourism in Anjuna does bring together people from incredibly differing backgrounds. Also, compared to other tourist destinations (and other rave scenes), commodification and mediatization are to some extent resisted because Goa freaks feel it's music and drugs, and not the spectacle of an exotic other, that Anjuna should be all about (cf. Connell and Gibson, 2002).

There is, therefore, in Anjuna certainly *potential* for what Deleuze and Guattari call 'smooth space' (Plateau 14). Might the deterritorializing effect of the sun, the drugs and the trance release desire in such cosmic gushes as to transform all raving bodies into one giant, blissful, pulsating super-individual (cf. Jordan, 1995)? Yes, sort of – but only the raving ones. Sadly, smooth space just isn't the whole story. What Goa trance shows blatantly is that the same space can be smooth for some (the Goa freaks) and striated for others (the chai mamas). The space in which music is enjoyed has to be constructed on top of other people's suffering. How many backaches go into building an opera house? How many peddlers jailed for you to enjoy your E? Seasonal workers in Anjuna earn less in a month than many foreigners spend in one night. Free raving in a Third World village is accompanied by corruption, insomnia, paranoia, competition, conspiracy and exploitation.

But let's end our musings on a positive note. I wouldn't like to understand the psychedelic rave scene in Anjuna as irredeemably colonialist. I'd like to keep the *tension* between smooth and striated, between the factioning and the flying away, between fascism, imperialism and multiculturalism. There's never pure exclusion or pure inclusion; music is the realm where this is most aptly felt. Jacques Attali's (1985) utopian prophecy of a future music, based on creativity and tolerance, a participatory knowledge in which all rhythms and styles

converge, seems puzzling (as is his claim that music heralds social change). This music or 'composition'

gives voice to the fact that rhythms and sounds are the supreme mode of relation between bodies once the screens of the symbolic, usage and exchange are shattered. In composition, therefore, music emerges as a relation to the body and as transcendence. (Attali, 1985: 143)

Music doesn't *have* to be about order-sounds, objectifying gazes, pollution; all depends on its material connections to capital, state, environment, and raced and sexed bodies. Music tourism in Anjuna is far removed from harnessing what Attali calls composition. Still, it does somehow coalesce very different people. It does make possible freakish connections between the molecular, the corporeal and the stellar. It is invested with a lot of desire, energy and heterogeneity. This investment is a condition, not a guarantee, of Anjuna's becoming-music. Anjuna needs to know itself; it needs a micropolitical commitment to overcome its factions. There won't be a single path to follow. Revolving as Anjuna's tourism does around music and drugs, it is more likely to be a battlefield.

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NOTES

1. The exact political economy of the Goa trance scene is difficult to disentangle in a few words and is not the focus of this article. The parties are traditionally free of entry charge, and the money for baksheesh (bribes for the authorities), sound and light system (rented from Goans), deejay (mostly a foreigner) and labour (poor locals and seasonal migrants) comes from the profits made by the bar, which is usually set up by a Goan restaurant owner with the help of local boys and taxi drivers. The 1990s saw the gradual institutionalization of the bribery system and the rise of an oligopoly of party venues. It is this capitalism run wild which quickly ended the small-scale 'symbiotic' beach party economy I spoke of earlier. How profits from sales in drugs feed into the organization of the scene is unclear and depends on the scale of the party, but obviously dealers do good business at and before the parties.
2. Scholarly and journalistic literature on club and rave culture is prolific. Examples of sympathetic academic accounts include d'Andrea (2000), McRobbie (1994), Malbon (1999), Redhead (1993), Richard and Kruger (1998) and Rietveld (1998); compare the more critical evaluations of Ingham et al. (1999), Jordan (1995), Pini (1998), Reynolds (1998) and Thornton (1995).

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