

Vision and Viscosity in Goa's Psychedelic Trance Scene

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Abstract

This article tries to conceive what difference vision makes in organising different bodies in the rave tourism scene of Goa in southern India. Drawing on participant observations, the differentiation of bodies is conceived through the concept of 'viscosity'. With some help of Deleuze and Guattari, viscosity will allow me to discuss the non-subjective, self-organising but dynamic orderings in space and time of brown and white, male and female, rich and poor. Human bodies are not billiard balls, however. I also investigate the negotiations and ethics involved in the practical dealings with otherness. In contrast to much of the reception of Deleuze and Guattari in Anglophone geography, therefore, the concept of viscosity stresses the materialist understanding of social aggregation that they advocate, not simply their insistence on open-endedness and flux. Three sites within Goa's rave scene will be explored, each highlighting an aspect of its visual economy. Firstly, the popular bars show how architecture contributes to the pigeonholing of bodies; secondly, the beach shows that bodies actively perform

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rituals of touristic encounter; lastly, at the mystical moment of sunrise at the raves, the profoundly ethical complications of this particular theater of globalisation and counterculture become painfully apparent.

Introduction

Goa, a former Portuguese colony on the west coast of India, has since the mid-1970s been a major hub in a transnational circuit of white psychedelic culture. 'Psychedelic' here refers to a sensibility in Western modernity for a reinvention of oneself through an engagement with neurochemical, geographical and cultural beyonds. Through the ingestion of drugs (especially hallucinogens), through the abandonment to music and dance, and travelling (especially to India), the so-called *Goa freaks* have in certain ways perfected this sensibility. Since the late eighties, psychedelic culture in the northern village of Anjuna became increasingly concentrated on free out-door parties with a particular subgenre of electronic dance music, which by 1994 was known as Goa trance and later morphed into psy-trance. From the mid-nineties onwards, it has been Israeli youngsters that have taken on Goa and psy-trance with the deepest commitment. Now, central to my argument is that psychedelic transformations of self go hand in hand with the erection of new boundaries. The psychedelic attitude always risks what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987) call 'microfascism': a break-away ends up becoming intolerant and elitist because of certain countercultural rules inherent to the break-away itself. Microfascisms can be found anywhere in society, Deleuze and Guattari say: in labour movements, in the church, in youth culture; the Nazi state only feeds off more basic and 'smaller' feelings and groupings.

Deleuze and Guattari have primarily served to emphasise the fluid, unpredictable and inventive nature of social reality across the human sciences, including geography (Crouch, 2003; Doel, 1996; McCormack, 2005; Shurmer-Smith & Hannan, 1994; Smith, 2003; Thrift, 2004, to name but a few). Their frequent warnings about microfascism, especially in the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, tend to be overlooked. The collaborative work of Deleuze and Guattari has in my mind instead to be read as a sophisticated ontology of material/corporeal stabilisation (cf. Protevi & Botha, 2004). Microfascism – the possibility of there being too much movement to be good – needs to be foregrounded if a quasi-individualistic or quasi-anarchistic interpretation of Deleuzoguattarian materialism is to be avoided. Describing certain spatiotemporal patterns through which microfascism emerges in Goa, this article proposes that the music tourism under study has an intrinsic tendency towards the coagulation of bodies, mainly according to their phenotypical characteristics.

This coagulation leads to what I'll call *viscosity*. In brief, viscosity refers to the becoming-sticky of bodies relative to each other and certain spaces through

certain behaviours and physical and cultural conditions. When bodies become sticky, they collectively acquire surface tension and become relatively impenetrable by other bodies (a situation usually called segregation in the geographical literature). Everyone has had the feeling of being 'out of place' *because* of the dense presence of many other bodies, other especially in terms of physical form. In Anjuna, viscosity comes about to a large extent because its kind of tourism, though centered on music and drugs, requires *visuality* to be pleasurable. Let it be clear from the outset that I am interested in viscosity from the point of view of the Western tourists, and specifically, the Goa freaks. I am interested in what happens to white bodies seeking pleasure and enlightenment in a third world village, not whether they are welcomed or not by the locals. The basic argument is therefore that psychedelic transformations of self cannot be separated from a visual economy in which differentials between bodies lead to their spatial and temporal distribution.



Sketch 1. The village of Anjuna.

My paper draws from doctoral fieldwork in the village of Anjuna (which includes the smaller villages of Vagator and Chapora; see sketch 1). I was there during four consecutive tourist seasons (i.e. four winters), from 1998 to 2002. The first three trips were about five weeks long, the final four months. There is a deep hostility amongst the hard core of ravers and hippies against the intrusions of police, media and commodification. This is why most of the ethnography is based

on covert participant observation, though I did manage to do a few interviews. In any case I was studying practices, not discourses. Thinking though my own ambivalent embodiment as half Indian, half Belgian, an experienced clubber but hardly sympathetic to Anjuna's brand of aggressive countercultural decadence, allowed me to probe into processes seldom spoken about by the Goa freaks. This doesn't mean my understanding of the scene is idiosyncratic. On the contrary, I got many participants, especially older hippies and shorter staying tourists, to voice similar ethical concerns. If what follows seems too 'subjective' or journalistic for ethnographic description, the question is why social critique needs to be purged from ethnographic description in order to make it more convincing. Though it is possible, of course, to argue passionately for a postmodern mixing of genres, it is rather the commitment to being both rigorous and political about disclosing some of Anjuna's real tendencies that leads me to write the way I do.

I will investigate the viscosity of the Goa freaks through three quintessential sites of Anjuna's music tourism: the bar, the beach, and the party. Each gives evidence of a regularity in the ways that light, space, objects and bodies interrelate. In the bars, the built environment contributes to attracting people into social categories, a physical interlocking of bodies with geography. This pigeonholing, however, requires the active monitoring of boundaries and etiquette. This is evident on the beach, where open space, heat and intercultural misunderstandings lead to conflict and demarcation of white and Indian, especially as this demarcation intersects with gender. At the parties, it is the sun itself that provides for the starkest microfascism that Anjuna has in store. But viscosity is not only about the rehearsal of stereotypes and inequality. Corporeal difference can, and occasionally does, invite a mutual engagement with alterity. The paper ends by stating that it is never phenotype alone, but the way that it is intercepted by a subcultural economy of vision, experience and style, that leads to racial viscosities in Goa's music tourism.

The in-crowd

A 'visual economy' is a material system, one could say a *machine*, that pigeonholes bodies watching each other into ideal categories, becoming finer in its resolution as actual bodies defy categories. It is akin to what Deleuze and Guattari (1987: Plateau 7) call 'faciality', a quintessentially Euro-American process whereby bodies are assigned particular 'faces' (racial, sexual, national, socio-economic, etc. – the 'etc.' being intrinsic to faciality's working). Faces are not labels stuck *upon* bodies, but regularities in the dynamic and heterogeneous assemblage of things, environments and bodies themselves. Like political economy, faciality works mechanically, not so much through 'representations' or 'opinions' as by unmediated physical interlockings, distributions and intensive differences. What Deleuze and Guattari call the 'abstract machine of faciality' – the

virtual structure that determines which faces are probable – resides in the very way that bodies interact with each other, space and time (which of course includes non-visual interaction). The concept of abstract machine is meant to sense how both creativity and a virtual tendency towards viscosity is particular to the materiality of the social:

in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an assemblage. (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 3-4)

Faciality is a Deleuzoguattarian concept which has not found its way yet into the geographical literature. It insists there is viscosity *despite* (or perhaps even because of) the 'lines of flight' that are usually celebrated.

To describe Anjuna's rave tourism assemblage I choose two large bars which have long been crucial to Goa's music tourism: Nine Bar, on top of the cliffs of Beach Tel Aviv (Middle Vagator Beach); and Primrose Bar, a little further inland. Since the mid-1990s Nine Bar has been the place-to-be for sunset chillums (traditional Indian hash pipe), the day's first loud trance music, meeting with friends, and generally getting in the mood for the night. Becoming bigger and better organised every season also meant that the faciality machine became more efficient. The bar was expensively landscaped in 2001, with the entrance steps leading to a spacious dancefloor without a roof. Anyone entering is thus instantly visible, and remains so while walking over the empty dancefloor and getting a drink on the elevated platform. These features of the built environment have diminished the focus on the sunset. Whereas in previous seasons people would face the horizon, now they face the people coming down the steps. Only some backpackers who are on their own stare into the sea, i.e. turn their back to the faciality machine. Whereas in previous seasons the two entrances were hidden, today's conspicuous entrance makes Nine Bar reminiscent of a danceroom ball in which the distinguished guests are announced. I have often seen domestic and charter tourists hesitate at the prospect of having to be so visible.

It is in Nine Bar that white tourists cohere most into the *in-crowd*, a heterogeneous collection of slightly older Goa freaks of varying nationalities who are at the top of the style hierarchy, go to most parties, and visit a bar (in this case, Nine Bar) almost daily for months. They all know each other – at least from sight, but more properly through chillums, beach shacks and gossip. Unless you can be as cool as they are, they're unapproachable. Frequently in-crowd people would pretend they didn't know me even after I had talked with them, something many others complain about too. It is a matter of days before any visitor to Anjuna starts recognising the familiar faces of the in-crowd. They stand out in their

individualised style and demeanour, their togetherness with others of the in-crowd. Only the in-crowd will shout at each other across an empty dance floor; only someone from the in-crowd will start dancing all by themselves; only their children can run around naked in public spaces.

It needs to be emphasised that for all their insistence on visibility, the in-crowd is paranoid about *photography*. It is permitted to photograph the sunset, and take a snap or two of your friends at close range, but I've seen many a Goa freak shout at people who try to take an overview picture. Only known freaks may take pictures. Oddly, after thirty years of steady commercialisation, the myth of pristinity is still a compelling part of Anjuna's visual economy. According to my neighbour J., freaks have always been austere defending Goa from media exposure, even turning aggressive for the cause. To be able to loudly reprimand an unsuspecting tourist for taking a picture definitely places one in the in-crowd. I had my camera snapped from me in 1998 by F., a French Goa regular and deejay, after I politely asked whether I could photograph the Nine Bar deejay. I protested, saying that they were being ludicrous and I wasn't a cop (in French, to lower suspicion – I was conscious of my brown skin). My camera was handed back, but F. remained wary of me ever since.

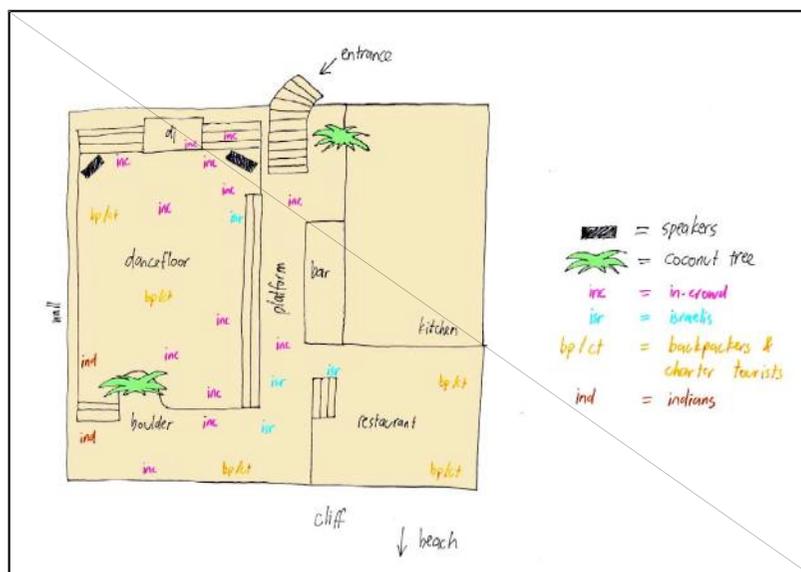
Its self-assurance means that the in-crowd is to be found in the most conspicuous spots of Nine Bar, which predictably shifted as the architecture changed. Although they all take care not to resemble each other too much, what unites the in-crowd is the dedication to looking cool and the concomitant looking down on anyone who is incapable, or unwilling, to participate in the faciality machine. This includes many Goa veterans. 'Why for fuck's sake would I want to stand there just staring at people and people staring at me?' said my English neighbour J. about Nine Bar. DJ Goa Gil, probably the world's most revered psy-trance deejay, told me equally bitterly:

It's more the locals that bring me back, and the environment and... my life here that brings me back. You see, now... I don't hang out at all, I don't go to, I mean for me all these Shore Bar, and Nine Bar, and Primrose and this and that it's boring, I mean I say that for so many years and now... the people that go aren't so interesting anyway. And also, everybody's on such an ego-trip, and then, they put this vibe on you when come in, because oh, you know, and then, because maybe because I'm Goa Gil so people know me, so... I go out somewhere and then suddenly everybody's like, coming and laying some trip on me or wants to talk to me or sending me vibes and then I have to cer- adopt certain mental attitudes, or reflexes to deal with that.

The routine condemnation of bar faciality by old-timers like J. and Gil (and many others I spoke to) underscores how suffocating the faciality machine has become.

It is not too speculative to suppose that the harshness of Nine Bar's faciality has now made most people come much later than sunset. In darkness and tumult, faciality becomes muddled. Significantly, while there would be quite a few dancing at 5 p.m. in 1998, in 2001 this moment had been postponed to 8 p.m. What is relevant to my argument is that it is only after dark that Indians arrive. Before Nine Bar was guarded by walls and a bouncer, there would even be an occasional beggar. Of the non-in-crowd, domestic tourists seem to be the most agoraphobic: they come later, and are more prone to stick to the corners, than charter tourists, backpackers, young ravers and the lonesome old-timers. Once three Indian boys entered with great bravura while Nine Bar was still light, empty, and white. They swayed determinedly to the bar to order their beers and walked straight over the dancefloor, looking around and joking. But the exaggerations of their demeanour only proved that it isn't straightforward for Indians to feel comfortable in Nine Bar. When I tried to steer conversations to this issue ('why aren't you dancing?'; 'shall we go stand there, we can see more people?'), they would pretend they didn't know what I was talking about. It's tough to admit a holiday scene can be uninviting.

The visual economy of Nine Bar divides its space into territories for specific bodies. Sketch 2 indicates 'attractors', the *tendency towards* viscosity in Nine Bar; it is not a map of a static state of affairs (cf. Protevi & Botha, 2004). Indians and the more timid backpackers and charter tourists tend to hide in the furthest corner



Sketch 2.
Distribution of bodies in Nine Bar.

from the entrance behind the palm tree, and along the wall opposite the bar. Israelis, who can make up a third of the audience, stand and dance in front of the bar and at one end of the cliff edge. The in-crowd also sits and stands along the edge, and dance in privileged places, like on the platforms next to the deejay and in

front of the speaker next to the entrance. The rest of the dancefloor is populated by younger Goa freaks, charter tourists, backpackers and some hippie elders. The in-crowd and Israelis never sit at the tables in the restaurant, where it is much calmer. Probably because it is more lit-up, there are no Indians there either, just a handful of backpackers.

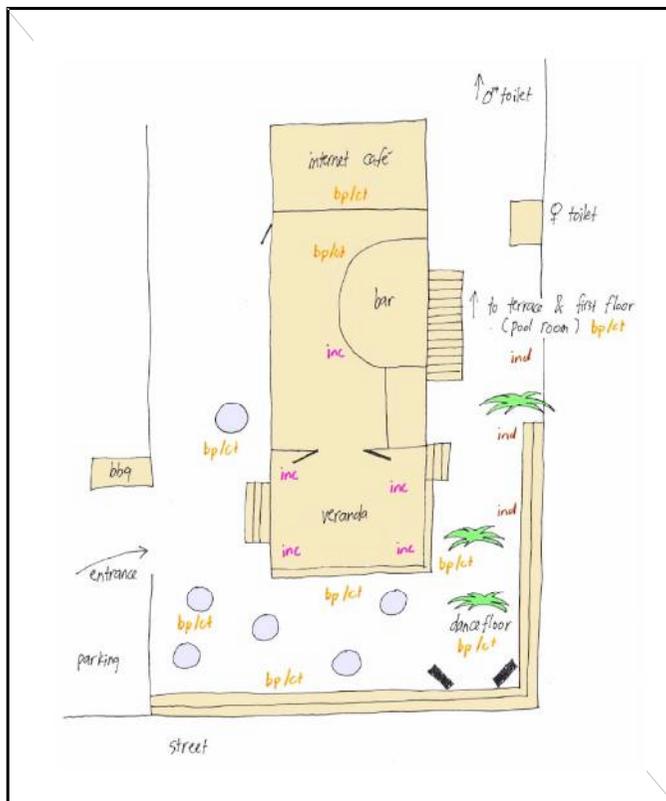
The faciality machine categorises bodies by making them cluster in certain places; it makes them viscous. The viscosity of bodies therefore tells us about the territorialisation of space, which depends on time too. On Sundays, for example, there are far more Indians in Nine Bar, including women. When there is enough *momentum* of Indians, they appear more confident and will dance in the middle of the dancefloor and amongst the Israelis, upsetting the usual territorial divisions. On a day like December 24, there are so many domestic tourists that whites become a minority. And when whites become a minority, there are fewer freaks and hardly any in-crowd. In these messy circumstances, the in-crowd is forced to be as scattered as backpackers and charter tourists usually are, and their much thinner presence suggests they don't like that.

In short, Nine Bar shows three important tenets of Anjuna's viscosity. Firstly, viscosity comes about through an abstract machine of faciality which balances the momentums of different bodies. When there are few Indians faciality comes to full force: the in-crowd is attracted to the limelight, the Indians hide. When Indians take over, the machine is still at work, but more diffusely. Secondly, the in-crowd hides and lets *other whites* mingle with the Indians until the Indians leave and the in-crowd can return to its usual place. Hence, the stickiness of Nine Bar's corners and edges for specific groups of bodies demonstrates a tacit tension between Indians and only a particular kind of whites: the Goa freaks. Thirdly, viscosity functions not only through the physical setting in which different bodies interact, but also because all these bodies are constantly *surveilling* each other (the aggression against photography being a good example of the policing that is done). To put it strongly, bodies imprison each other in a panoptic sorting device.

Nine Bar closes at 10 p.m., and people traditionally ride straight to Primrose. In 1998 Primrose was still a thriving pre-party venue, open until 3 a.m., perfect for finding out about parties and buying drugs, with some already on Ecstasy or LSD. Though it has lost a lot of its Goa trance appeal by having turned into a tourist pub, Primrose still has its in-crowd. Particularly facialising is the veranda, an elevated space with high ceilings through which you need to pass to get to the bar. Not only is everyone in the veranda visible for each other and from outside, but the eyes in the veranda have a clear view of anyone walking into Primrose. It is, in other words, perfect for the in-crowd chillum circles, especially loved by the Italians. In fact, as in the case of Nine Bar, each season the physical aspects which were conducive to looking and boundary-making have been enhanced. In 1998-1999, if you were sitting just outside the veranda, you could

easily converse across the low wall. In 2001-2002, however, the veranda had been elevated so that Primrose was in effect divided into two bars: the brightly lit veranda for the in-crowd, the darker outside for the 'tourists'. Indians sit in the darkest corner, furthest away from the entrance, between the dancefloor and the toilets, and seldom seem to enjoy themselves (sketch 3). The in-crowd never goes to the pool room or dancefloor, just smokes chillums, looks around, chats and keeps cool in the veranda. For outsiders, it is impossible to halt in the veranda while traversing it – unless they know someone of the in-crowd, which, as outsiders, they don't.

And so Primrose's veranda operates like a computer, as Deleuze and Guattari postulated about faciality (1987: 177). Bodies are *sorted*: white/Indian, man/woman, familiar/stranger, young/old, traveller/tourist, attractive/ugly, in control/intoxicated, an ever-refining grid in which anyone passing through is expected to fit.



Sketch 3. Distribution of bodies at Primrose Bar.

The binary relation is between the ‘no’ of the first category and the ‘yes’ of the following category, which under certain conditions may just as easily mark a tolerance as indicate an enemy to be mowed down at all costs. At any rate, you’ve been recognized, the abstract machine has you inscribed in its overall grid. (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 177)

For ambiguous bodies new labels are invented. She does look hip for an Indian... maybe she lives in Britain... no she speaks in an Indian accent, therefore she must be a rich Westernised Bombayite... but she was smoking chillum with some white guys, she must be okay then... she’s pretty too... Labelling isn’t done by individual minds, but corporeally, *in* interaction. Everyone and everything cooperates to place bodies somewhere in Primrose, and this makes them behave in certain ways. Still, even if faciality is an insidious and largely unspoken process, there are dozens of people I spoke to (J., Gil, Anjuna’s legendary old-timer Eight-Fingered Eddy, the more critical backpackers and charter tourists, my Indian and European friends) who agreed on the self-monitoring and territorialisation going on in Anjuna.

What this section attempted is to make explicit what everyone in Anjuna feels. Presented here is the physics of bodies that betrays the tendencies towards viscosity. In Primrose, the veranda is separated from the garden and is much brighter; the in-crowd turns to look who’s entering; no Indians stay inside; the in-crowd never ventures outside its veranda. In Nine Bar, a grand entrance ensures the visibility of all coming in; most people look at this entrance, not the beach and the sunset; the in-crowd never gets tucked in the corners; Indians seldom dance in front of the bar. It is these enduring material constellations of bodies, architecture and light that hint at the oppressive reality of an abstract machine of faciality.

Zombie Beach

The beach is an integral part of Goa’s music tourism, if one considers the function it has had for Goa trance. It is on the beach that people go to chill out after partying, and on the beach where they start dancing. The parties started on South Anjuna Beach, and the best dancing still happens close to the ocean (at Disco Valley, Nine Bar, the Temple in Anjuna, the Banyan Tree in Vagator, and Wednesday’s after-flea market Shore Bar parties). After briefly considering the importance of the tan, I will discuss Goa’s notorious antagonism between white female sunbathers and male domestic tourists. A focus on South Anjuna Beach shows how the negotiation of beach space leads to viscosity. But I’ll also argue that the encounter between tourists and vendors on the beach contains the possibility of a more engaging, more mutual connection between bodies than the icy logic of faciality allows for. Though Deleuze and Guattari write that ‘The face is not an

envelope exterior to the person who speaks, thinks, or feels' (1987: 167), they tend to downplay the ritual, more active aspects of faciality. René ten Bos and Ruud Kaulingfreks (2002) argue that Deleuze and Guattari cannot account for the contagion and turbulence that can and does happen *between* faces. If it is true that bodies are inevitably caught in a self-policing categorisation machine, it needs to be remembered that they themselves make the effort in this process.

The beach is a space for sunbathing. In Anjuna, a deep tan is indispensable for any white body to even begin contemplating Goa freak status. Untanned two-week tourists have often expressed to me their feeling of being 'so very white' amongst the bronze and healthy-looking bodies of the freaks on the beach and at parties in the morning. But it is not that Goa freaks are 'less white'. According to Richard Dyer:

A tanned white person is just that – a white person who has acquired a darker skin. There is no loss of prestige in this. On the contrary, not only does he or she retain the signs of whiteness (suggesting, once again, that skin colour is not really just a matter of the colour of skin), not only does tanning bespeak a wealth and life style largely at white people's disposition, but it also displays white people's right to be various, literally to incorporate into themselves features of other people. (1997: 49)

The longer you stay in Goa, the browner your skin, the more prestige, because one can *see* that you've been there long, that you've *made the place your own*. This prestige is only available for those bodies that can get 'tanned' – the fair-skinned ones. Of course Indians and blacks get darker in the sun. Only, their darkening cannot be readily associated with long presence away from home, with beach life. Their dark skin could well be 'natural'. There are few non-white sunbathers anyway. Most domestic tourists wear no different clothing when they walk over the beach than at work; while boys and men strip to underpants and get into the waves, women and girls might wet the hems of their salwar kameez. There is on the beach a very sharp *differential* between whites who tan, and Indians who don't. Insofar as the beach is a space for lazing around, exposing flesh to the sun, and thereby attaining the look of leisure and the good life, it is a space for whites.

Differentials become much more intense when sexuality is involved. As an ethnographic approach to men-women relationships on the beach, Jean-Claude Kaufmann's 'sociology of naked breasts' (1997) is helpful. It clearly shows that the politics of gender, skin colour, class, obesity, age and sexuality are present on French beaches too. It was a matter of two years before Bombay tourists in Goa were passing by Calangute to verify the titillating stories about naked Westerners. Below is some of the article in the *Navhind Times* of 11 January 1970 which triggered the myth of Goa's 'nudist colony', through which foreign tourists became the attractions for domestic tourists.

We can give you only verbal pictures because if we print real pictures of the hippy ‘scene’ at Calangute beach, it would invite the wrath of the anti-obscenity laws on our heads.

Picture..... of a nude girl lying on the sands, her legs spread wide and reading an Agatha Christie novel.....

... Picture..... of a voluptuous bouncing girl, sprinting like a gazelle across the sands and plonking herself down at the sleeping young man, in the altogether, and smiling up to us with a sauciness that pushed up our pulse rate.....

... We saw sights straight out of the fables of Sodom and Gomorrah, scenes that reminded us [of] chapters in banned books and blue films... a surfeit of sex and the white man’s fall on the entire beach from the Tourist Resort to Baga chapel.

... These closely-knit (they do not mix with local people for the simple reason that in their lexicon Indians are disgusting) tribalistic and obscene young men and women are plundering with impunity the traditional and honoured morality of this peaceful territory. ... These white men and women with fair skin and dark minds, are today posing a grave menace – because they feel that the ‘damn ruthless Indians’ can take it.

Bus tours from all Goan cities, Bombay and Poona to the Bardez beaches became institutionalised during the eighties. The racialised sexism that underpins bus tourism is obvious. When tourist brochures and Bollywood depict Goa as fun-loving and relaxed, they routinely require white flesh in bikinis to get the point across. Though bus tourism and tougher implementation of decency laws since the early eighties has all but stopped nudism in Goa (give or take the odd skinny-dipping or streaking at a party), the myth of nudism prevails. I have heard plausible rumours of advertisements in Bombay still promising ‘fully naked’ white women on Anjuna Beach. On Sundays buses full of eager young men shout and whistle at any white female as they drive into Goa. Indian patriarchal puritanism about sex proves a volatile combination with the media-fed imagination of a promiscuous West.

This cultural matrix of race and sexuality enframes the differential between male bus tourists and female sunbathers. Holding hands and embracing each other as is common amongst same-sex groups in India, in groups of two to fifteen, the young Indians faux-casually walk as close to white women as they dare, keeping their eyes on the sunbathing bodies as long as possible, slowing down as they come closer, sometimes making jokes and prodding each other. An old ritual consists in bus tourists asking white women (or couples) to pose with them for a photo,

usually preceded by a 'hallo which country?'. A more timid interaction is when bus tourists sit for long periods under the shade where they can get a good view of women nearby, or where they can wait for them to emerge from the water. The invasion of privacy incites very different reactions from the white sunbathers. Some women ignore the stares and 'hallos' and continue lying topless on their back. Some come to a point when they take their belongings and sit further away from the shoreline. Others will aggressively – or lazily, to show their contempt – shoo the men away before they've even arrived.

However, a few white girls, especially British, seem to enjoy the attention and will sit through some flirtations before making clear they're not interested. Three tipsy Sikhs on Big Vagator Beach managed to convince three Welsh girls one of them was a massager (I later heard from a befriended vendor boy he wasn't). The Sikh proceeded to give each girl a back massage chiefly involving breasts and buttocks. Some six vendors and twice as many domestic tourists watched in awe, even took pictures. After the last massage the girls left abruptly. Romances do occasionally happen between young female charter tourists and Indian boys, but it appeared these Sikhs were just too pushy. Rituals may therefore be relatively predictable, but there is always room for negotiation, especially when it concerns such very different bodies: a clothed, walking, often drunk, brown male majority on the beach just for the afternoon; and a nearly-naked, relatively rich, sunbathing white female minority intent on tranquility. These very different bodies comingling on the beach *cannot but* negotiate race, gender, sexuality, language, decency, wealth, class and the 'right to the beach'.

Goa freaks are not interested in negotiating the right to the beach; they go to South Anjuna Beach. On visiting me in Anjuna in January 2002, Patrice Riemens, who is amongst other things the translator of Paul Virilio, wrote 'A day on Zombie Beach' (2002) to account for the unwelcoming, uncanny sluggishness that characterises South Anjuna's stoned white bodies. Calling freaks lifeless as zombies, though a little harsh, is one way of ridiculing their self-proclaimed individuality and freedom. Of course, this lethargy requires seclusion from domestic tourism. Whites staying in Goa for longer quickly learn when and where it is possible to enjoy the beach without the intrusion of Indians. On Wednesdays, for example, South Anjuna hippie elders and families flee the flea market hordes and stay at home, or go to Morjim or Arambol for the day. Freaks also tend not to show up on Sundays, when beaches are dominated by Indians families. It is at the end of beaches, the furthest from the bus stops, that the freaks congeal: in a sense geomorphology becomes complicit with white viscosity. At a certain threshold of coagulation, these ends become too dense with white bodies for penetration by domestic tourists.

South Anjuna incarnates beach viscosity extremely well. Those charter tourists and backpackers that come to South Anjuna are recognisable by their

clothing and paler (or pink) skin. Even with little on, a freak is a freak by virtue of lungi, hairstyle, tatoos, big black sunglasses, ethnic jewellery, chillum, devil's sticks, the absence of a *Lonely Planet*, and of course, his or her tan. It is tangible to any visitor that the tradition of seclusion, lethargy and togetherness of the early seventies has since then been faithfully kept alive. This is where you always hear Goa trance and where you find old-timers like Eight-Fingered Eddy every winter; here there are the most white kids and topless women and everyone is supposed to know each other. Cleo Odzer's *Goa Freaks* (1995: 24) relates her first excursion onto South Anjuna Beach in 1975:

I slowed my steps and desperately scanned faces. Maybe I could find Greek Robert or one of the people Ramdas had introduced me to. I'd die if I reached the end of the beach without finding a place to sit. That would brand me a tourist, new to the scene. I was NOT a vacationer.

'Hi, Cleo!'

Saved!

Most of the Goa freaks on South Anjuna Beach don't read and are not alone, especially not the Israelis. Continually interacting and on the look-out for familiar faces, for which they are strategically seated, the Israeli freaks notice any body that passes or comes out of the surf: tan, musculature, sexiness, grace. Israeli South Anjuna regulars *radiate* a visual economy of attractiveness and social connectivity. Not that freaks of other nationalities don't do the same thing; Israelis merely come in larger groups and therefore do it more forcefully.

That the beach compels bodies to enact their corporeal and geographical specificity can lastly be seen in the phenomenon of *vending*. Foreign tourism has attracted so many suppliers from well beyond Goa's borders that the competition is crushingly fierce, and there is sign of neither decrease nor regulation. *The Observer* reports about Goa (11 March 2001):

'Yes madam! Is later now, OK? You will buy now yes definitely!' They awaited me like the reception party from hell as I hopped out of the sea. A torrent of abuse got me another five-minute stay of execution and then they were back. I ran.

The less the seasonal migrants sell, the more aggressively they hawk, the more they tire and irritate tourists, the less they sell: a vicious circle typical to many a tourist destination in the third world. The need to make a livelihood compels the out-of-state girls to jump on any white, especially female, body that is in sight. Of Indians, only the clearly upperclass receive similar treatment. It takes a lot of tact to convince the hawkers that you're not interested – the mistake many

newcomers make is to initially raise hope. I've seen a British guy laughingly burn a girl with a cigarette who was offering henna tattooing, to get her away. Being a Goa freak on the beach entails, however, that perfect indifference works better to ward off vendors without becoming brutal or angry. Only the most friendly of the younger, style-conscious freaks take an interest in the poor Indians on the beach – in their work, their family, their name, their very presence. There's a general consensus amongst backpackers that poor Indians are only after money (cf. William Sutcliffe's 1997 backpacker classic *Are You Experienced?*). Some shack boys or popular fruit ladies are heartily greeted, which makes visible the status of a regular; but after the greeting the attention promptly moves to friends. The regularity with which some freaks, Israelis especially, treat vendors (or any Indians, for that matter) rudely made me reckon that being disrespectful or as oblivious as possible to Indians is part of being cool, part of the work required to become Goa freak.

This isn't true for everyone. The differential between girls and young mothers from Rajasthan and Karnataka on the one hand, and rich whites happily baking in the sun on the other, can also lead to more sympathetic and memorable engagements. There are a few tourists who realise that though tragic, the vending economy contains an element of play and an opportunity to learn something about ordinary Indians. Being bored, the vendors are happy to chat even if they know it won't lead to purchase. The supposedly economic motive then becomes a source of irony. Since every vendor and 'fruit lady' has her daily territory and so do most tourists, and since beach life is so slow, there can be quite friendly relationships between the two groups. White mothers sometimes express affinity with Indian mothers. Many older male loners seem to enjoy simply sitting with locals and seasonal labourers, sipping beer amongst conversations in Konkani or Kanada. Though these interactions do not change anything in the economic and cultural disparity constituting Goa's tourism, there is at least the gentle and mutual acknowledgement of this disparity. This small minority of whites takes a modest step out of habitual faciality, into a moment of contagion and symbiosis. This requires courage, courage to swim against the tide. From my observations, these whites are unlikely to be Goa freaks.

To conclude this section, the beach is a space where there's maximum light and maximum space, hence maximum visibility. Add to that maximum bare flesh, and you have the ideal physical circumstances for a visual economy. Viscosity is an active and ritualised process requiring work of the entire body and containing the possibility of contagion. Faciality is not external to bodies. What bodies *do* – swim, sunbathe, shout, hold hands, drink, smoke chillum – determines who and where they are on the beach. What they *feel* and *think* – annoyance, excitement, prejudice, stonedness, affection for someone very different – matters too in this differentiation. And what they *look like* – in terms of gender, skin hue, wealth, age, attractiveness, clothing – is not incidental to how bodies become viscous. Anjuna's

economy of vision, coolness and money power is one which takes bodily specificity very, very seriously.

Sunlight and judgement

As the last site of Anjuna's visual economy, the parties show how *music* interacts with space, time and light to divide populations of bodies. The subcultural panopticism that has emerged in Anjuna proves that the reception of music is always something visual and collective (even if you close your eyes). There are all sorts of corporeal, economic and territorial aspects to the visual economy of music, especially as it is channelled through dance. That dance involves the kinetic distribution of bodies becomes spectacularly clear during what I call the *morning phase* of parties, i.e. from sunrise till the end of the party, which is anywhere from 8 a.m. to early afternoon (while very big parties can go on until the next morning). The morning phase is *le moment suprême* of both Anjuna's trance scene and its visual economy. For the morning phase is not only the most spiritual and sociable moment of Goa trance worldwide. In Goa it is, because of that, also the most racialising. But how does whiteness materially connect to daylight?

There is the music itself. Psy-trance became darker and more repetitive after 1999. This has alienated many hippie elders and backpackers who enjoyed dancing through the night and amongst other tourists; it certainly frightens away the Indian novices to electronic music. The nights have concomitantly become dull affairs. Because there is little light at parties except for a few UV-lamps ('black lights'), the darkness of the music now matches the darkness of the night. Parties like these just about bleed to death, until at sunrise the freaks take over.

Another factor was discussed above: freaks and many backpackers and charter tourists just don't like mixing with the Indian crowds. There is much tension at parties between white females and intoxicated male domestic tourists, fuelled by strong stereotypes on both sides. With Edward T. Hall's work on intercultural 'proxemics' (1966), it is explicable why Western and Indian feelings of body space clash. White girls (and their boyfriends) would rather wait in the party's large 'mat area' (local women selling tea and snacks with mats to sit on) until daylight makes dancing safe. On the other hand, many Indians aren't used to staying up all night, and at least before they *en masse* took to Ecstasy (before about 2000), most would be exhausted by the morning. Anjuna's music tourism ethos has come to include staying clear of the Indian crowds by sitting through the night on the mats, or as became increasingly common, simply waking up at 5 a.m. As on the beach, Goa freaks are not interested in negotiating the right to the party. While some freaks euphemise the Indian momentum by saying 'there are too many people', 'you can't even move' or 'the party is shit' – which, if left unqualified, any other freak will comprehend – others will be more explicit. A Belgian psy-

trancer told me frankly in February 2002, 'Now the scene is good, all the Indians are gone'. And as Swiss old-timer DJ Andi said around the same time, 'Now it's full house!' Traditionally, many of the hard core come after New Year, after the Indian 'hordes', some as late as March. The *later* the parties, the whiter, both in the morning and in the season. 'Full house' means empty of Indians. It means viscosity guaranteed.

In all of dance culture, coming late shows subcultural status, and the end of the rave or club night is considered the crux. But in the case of open-air psy-trance happenings, the moment of sunrise attains a mystical level, accompanied by a very tangible change in visibility, temperature, humidity, type of trance music, commotion and mood. The sun itself is psychedelically claimed. As DJ Andi told me:

Andi The sunrise was always the, the high, the highest point of the party. When the whole night you have danced, everybody was sweating, was dirty, was, was, but everybody happy no, and then in the morning the light come, the sun come, everybody sees, starts to look at each other, and... Wow!! Big smiles, you know...

I Yeah, big smiles on the faces.

Andi Yeah, yeah.

I The first rays of sun, pshew...

Andi Yeah, yeah.

I I know what you mean.

Andi And then then then again the music was eh... eh, lower, no, to prepare the people. And then the sun comes, and wrrrow, then then the symphonic stuff comes you know, really the the nectar of the sound is playing no...

I Epic.

Andi Yeah yeah.

I Epic. Yeah. Epic trance.

Andi And the people eh flying into the sun...

As an experienced deejay, Andi knows well that the differentiation between morning people and the rest of the audience follows from processes on the molecular level. Viscosity emerges from the chemical alteration of brains:

Andi In Goa, trance means trance which is designed to be danced, and to be listened to, while you're tripping. You know. And and and everybody else has to stand back. Because who is dancing the whole night, who is dancing the longest, is the people tripping.

I Yeah, tripping. They survive. If you take Ecstasy after some time you're burnt out, you can't do it any more.

Andi Yeah. The coke people they come in the morning, they get their line, they do maybe one hour jumping around, then they go home fucking, so this is not the real thing no.

I [laughs] Yeah. That's another trip [?].

Andi So the people really giving, putting energy in the party and making it happen, is the acid.

I Yeah, the real dancers are the acid people.

Andi Yeah.

LSD combines with the mystical significance of the sun and the beaming familiar faces surrounding you to create a bubble of dancing pleasure that hardly changes for hours. This is the threshold the music and drugs tourism of Anjuna has always strived for.

Now, the sunlight-judgement assemblage somehow censors all communication between freaks and Indians. I have seen enough short, disapproving glances at those rare friendly interactions between freaks and poor Indians or domestic tourists (e.g. sharing a chillum, dancing with a beggar girl, offering some water) to conclude that it's simply not-done amongst the hard core to even notice Indian presence. The hatred of 'drunk Indians' and the indifference towards vendors seems to result in an unqualified racism that undoubtedly makes Indians feel unwanted in the morning. In fact, I myself often had the impression that younger ravers I knew were less friendly to me if I'd meet them amongst other freaks in broad daylight. On mentioning this to an older Briton living in India, he claimed some whites might 'confuse' me with a 'local', even if clothes and

behaviour made me 'foreign'. Speaking about this sensitive issue with Indian friends, they agreed that they felt uncomfortable in intimate, all-white spaces like the Banyan Tree, but wouldn't put their finger on exactly what it was that caused this feeling. It was just not their scene, they said. The scene was for 'foreigners'.

And so *every* party I've been to in Goa had a white majority during morning phase, while every party before January had an Indian majority at night. Most mats would usually be claimed by Israelis at around 5.30 a.m., and I would wonder why I hadn't seen so many of them before. The steady conquest by freaks of the dancefloor would subsequently be a most interesting process to observe. Just before dawn, what I'd call 'scouts' leave the mats to check the situation of the dancefloor; slowly, more and more Israelis stand at the edge, passing chillums and starting to dance; until a whole section of the dancefloor, usually not central but conspicuous enough, is occupied when the sun breaks through. By that time the majority of Indians has magically left. The momentums of the dancefloor are reversed and the *real* party takes off.

To round up the argument, it is visibility, intoxication, outlandish music and a peculiar sociability that create 'outsiders', outsiders who by virtue of their lack of experiential ableism, relative poorness, mediocre clothing and recognisably non-foreign look are made to feel like outsiders. Old-timers have told me that this spatiotemporal division of racial groups has been operational since the beginnings of Goa trance. The most intense actualisation of Anjuna's abstract machine of faciality happens during the morning phase of parties. Come sunlight, come judgement: in this constellation, you're either comfortable enough to star in the visual and hallucinatory economy, or you're not, and you leave.

Conclusion

This article has examined the emergence of white viscosity through the configuration of light, space and bodies that comprises the visual economy of rave tourism in Goa. In a sense, what happens is *purification*, a filtering out of 'contaminant' bodies which results in white viscosity. It needs to be stressed that this purification is absolutely *immanent* to the ways that bodies interact with each other and their environment. That is, it is necessary to think of Deleuzoguattarian faces as not the cause, but the *effect* of interactions. Viscosity emerges because of the particular ways this subculture and this economy work in these material surroundings. If purification is immanent to interaction, racial segregation is in actuality never perfect. This is exactly why the viscosity was introduced, a spatiality inbetween fluidity and solidity (more in Saldanha, 2006). While many readers of Deleuze and Guattari have focussed almost exclusively on the 'deterritorialised' aspects of social assemblages, this paper suggests that viscosity

and territorialisation are as much real tendencies that have to be studied empirically and conceptually.

What I tried to describe are not demographic facts but *probabilities*: the abstract machine of faciality, which exists within the interplay of phenotypes, behaviours, objects and physical conditions, as a grid of ideal categories that bodies *tend towards*. Viscosity is not a goal that bodies intentionally aspire to achieve, but consists of virtual poles that attract and repel bodies. In this process, the physical characteristics of bodies are crucial to their clustering in space and time. Again and again, the rules for subcultural interaction in Anjuna correlate with the fact that there were very different bodies present. Differences in skin colour (including tannedness), gender, nationality, sexual practices, clothing, length of stay, income and hipness informed the capacities for bodies rightfully to 'belong' to Anjuna's touristic scene – to the bars, the beach, the dancefloor. The reality of these differentials meant that they could and did mobilise bodies, making them tend towards aggregation in actual space and time.

Because visual economy works materially, regularly, in the midst of things, it leads to viscosity. Three conclusions can be drawn using this 'machinic' perspective. Firstly, in Nine Bar and Primrose, architecture, darkness and chillum ritual conjoin to form a *sorting device* placing the in-crowd in a conspicuous position for the rest of Goa's tourists to see. In bars and beach shacks, domestic tourists are hardly visible. However, foreigners also become tourist attractions for domestic tourists, especially on the beach. To ensure purity, the zombie-like density of white bodies is inversely proportional to the number of Indians that can pass through. In spite of their conspicuousness, the in-crowd wants to keep the scene pure of photography, journalism, police surveillance and commodification.

Secondly, the ritualised bothering of white female sunbathers by male bus tourists shows how starkly *corporeal specificity* matters in social machines. Faciality does not operate on an inert or passive surface, but through bodies of flesh and blood with feelings and prejudices. Within the negotiation of difference, there is also the potential for an ethical encounter, a reciprocal friendliness in which both parties momentarily bridge worlds, a possibility Deleuze and Guattari's exposé of faciality didn't account for. And thirdly, it is when there is psy-trance music involved in Anjuna that white viscosity comes to its full glory. For the Goa freaks, psy-trance is best appreciated on LSD and with like-minded people. Because of their appearance and the way they relate to music, it is felt that domestic tourists are not in the least like-minded. Over the years this has led to one of the most curious phenomena of Goa's tourism, namely the waiting at home or in the party's mat area throughout the night until domestic tourists leave so that the morning can be subculturally pure. Only white bodies are enveloped in trance and sunshine; psychedelic bliss is defined as the absence of Indians. Though music might seem

something ephemeral, it is precisely this quality that makes it so powerful in arranging bodies: it too is a machinic force.

An important point that transpired during my fieldwork is that 'subculturally pure' in Anjuna comes to mean 'racially pure'. To belong to psychedelic paradise, the morning phase, the end of the beach and the in-crowd, you need to be cool. To be cool, you need resources: a cool look; money to stay in India for many months; experience in travelling, drugs, dancing, riding a bike; regular chats with other cool people; a skin that can be tanned; an arrogance towards new-comers and vendors. These resources, it happens, are far more easily available for white bodies. Hence whites belong more easily to Goa's psychedelic trance scene. It is the visible location in unequal global distributions of opportunity that enables both the psychedelic transformation and microfascism of Anjuna's white tourists. Perhaps the racial dimensions of globalisation can be appreciated more precisely if viscosities on larger scales than that of an Indian village are included in analysis.

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