"What Are We Doing Here?"

Nostalgic Desires for a Cosmopolitan Sensory Aesthetic in the Amsterdam-based Psytrance Scene

Eva-Maria Alexandra van Straaten

Georg-August University, Göttingen (Germany)

Abstract

In Amsterdam, complaints about the apparent commercialization of psytrance parties are articulated in terms of the demise of a cosmopolitan sensory aesthetic that was ostensibly inherent to the Dutch psytrance scene. This article critically explores how, in the context of the perceived decline of this aesthetic in the scene, nostalgic narratives about psytrance parties of the past fuel a desire for the return of the cosmopolitan psytrance party. It is argued that the nostalgic desires for parties that aspire to a cosmopolitan aesthetic can be understood as an ethical rhetoric that plays out a postcolonial subconscious. This ethical rhetoric enables participants to construct themselves as ethically responsible subjects and thereby assuage feelings of guilt produced by the persisting defects of colonial power relations. I will suggest that this ethical rhetoric, while camouflaged in positive discourses, can also paralyze the need for the actual subversion of remaining deficiencies in an increasingly globalized world.

Keywords: psytrance, nostalgia, desire, cosmopolitanism, sensational forms, postcolonial critique, subjectivity

Eva-Maria van Straaten completed her Master's in Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam with an MA thesis on psytrance and cosmopolitanism in the Netherlands (August 2011). In addition to preparing a PhD in cultural musicology, she is currently working as a research assistant and lecturer at the Cultural Musicology department of the Georg-August University Göttingen, Germany. Email: <eva-maria.van-straaten@phil.uni-goettingen.de>.

Petra: *De hele experience van naar een psytrance feest gaan en de mensen met van die Indiase stippen op hun hoofd en hoe het eruit ziet, decoraties en de muziek, als dat allemaal mooi en flowing is, ja dan krijg je inderdaad zo'n geheel. Dan heb ik ook echt de mooiste ervaring en dat blijft ook heel erg sterk bij me. Want, ja er kan wel hele goeie muziek zijn, maar als de mensen wat minder zijn of de decoraties zijn er niet echt ofzo, ja dan kan je wel gaan dansen maar dan heb je niet, die hele sensory experience. Het is niet alleen wat je hoort qua muziek, maar ook wat je ziet, en wat je voelt en wat er om je heen is . . . en dan ruik je opeens wierook . . . de feesten waren een beetje oosters of niet-westers zeg maar, dat vond ik echt heel erg fijn. Mooi en exotisch . . . Tijdens een goed feestje, en zeker weten in combinatie met psychedelische drugs, kon je dat voelen en zien en aanraken.*[1]

The whole experience of going to a psytrance party and the people with those Indian dots on their forehead, and atmosphere, decorations and the music, when all those aspects are beautiful and flowing, then, yeah, then you indeed get a feeling of completeness. These moments are the best experiences, and I strongly remember them afterwards. Because yeah, they can play very good music, but when the type of people attending the party is bad or there are no decorations, then you can dance but you don't have the full sensory experience. It is not just what you hear in the music, but also what you see, what you feel and what is surrounding you . . . and then all of a sudden you smell incense . . . the parties were a bit eastern or well, non-western, I really liked that. Beautiful and exotic . . . During a party, and especially in combination with the imbibing of psychedelic drugs, one could feel, see and touch this.[2]

Introduction

With the ongoing political decolonization of the former European colonies, the world seems to have entered the postcolonial era. In spite of this shift in political power relations, the "ambiguities and defects of past colonial relations persist" (Gilroy 2004: 2). Attempts to assuage feelings of guilt produced by this colonial history and its persisting effects have resulted in a postcolonial European desire to reconcile with the former colonial Other (Barrett 1996: 242). The active practice of the ethical ideology of cosmopolitanism is one of the ways in which postcolonial subjects can deal with the need to fulfill this postcolonial desire. By being open toward divergent aesthetic experiences, tolerantly searching for heterogeneity rather than uniformity and actively devoting oneself to the interest of humanity as a whole (Hannerz 1996: 103; Robbins 1998: 1), postcolonial subjects can construct themselves as ethically responsible cosmopolitans and thereby appease their feelings of guilt over prevailing deficiencies in the world.

In this article, I propose that facets of the cosmopolitan ideology are present in the "global cultural flows" (Appadurai 1996: 33) of people, media and ideologies comprising psytrance parties in Amsterdam.[3] As a result, cosmopolitanism is present in the psytrance party's sensory aesthetic. In its conforming to the cosmopolitan aesthetic, the Dutch psytrance party is therefore understood in my investigation as a space in which participants can

imagine themselves to be cosmopolitan and, as a consequence, ethically responsible, subjects who seek reconciliation with the former colonial Other. This cosmopolitan identity is experienced as authentic exactly because it is embodied "in the concrete lived environment" (Meyer 2009: 5) of the practices, materialities and ideas that constitute the party's cosmopolitan sensory aesthetic; during the psytrance party, participants can experience the cosmopolitan through their senses and feel it in their bones. Since approximately 2006, the omnipresence of this cosmopolitan sensory aesthetic in the Amsterdam-based psytrance scene has reportedly diminished. Participants have purportedly experienced this demise in association with the commercialization of the psytrance scene, and they frame articulations of this demise with nostalgic narratives that express a desire for the return of parties that adhere to the cosmopolitan sensory aesthetic.

The complex tension between a desired future and a nostalgically narrated past is not unique to the psytrance scene in Amsterdam. Thomas notices a similar tension in her account on clubbing in the United States; clubbers are "at once enthralled by the 'futuristic', while displaying a nostalgic longing for the past 'underground house'" (2003: 193). In his ethnography of nor-tec music in Mexico, Madrid notices a similarly multifaceted relationship between a nostalgically remembered past and a desired future (2008: 172). In attempting to understand the tensions between future and past, and desire and nostalgia in the psytrance scene in Amsterdam, I follow Stewart's (1988) conceptualization of nostalgia as a cultural practice that resurrects "time and place, and a subject *in* time and place" (227). In positing a party that "'once was' in relation to a 'now'", participants create a space in which they can negotiate their identities and give meaning to their lives. My position here is that the narratives of desire articulated on the psytrance dance floor create such an interpretive framework and thereby provide participants with a space for what Varul calls "ethical selving". This argument acknowledges that people experience ethical obligation and selfhood as integrated (Varul 2009: 183). Cultural practices that implicitly confirm psytrance participants' adherence to the ethical desire for reconciliation with the former colonial Other, such as articulations of a nostalgic desire for a return to a cosmopolitan psytrance experience, can enable participants to constitute themselves as ethical subjects. I critically explore these processes of ethical selving through the lens of the Lacanian distinction between need, demand and desire as read by Žižek (1992). This leads to the conclusion that, although apparently aiming to overcome the structural inequalities and uncertainties resulting from colonial power relations, the nostalgic articulations of a desire to return to the cosmopolitan psytrance party can actually paralyze the need to subvert these persisting inequities.

In my attention to the apparent demise of the psytrance parties in Amsterdam in terms of participants' nostalgic narratives intentionally, I do not here address other facets of this multifarious and fluid phenomenon, namely the perspective and agency of DJs, producers and party crews and the relationship between transformations in the Amsterdam scene and alterations in the global psytrance scene. Also, I do not attend to the perspectives of (new) participants, DJs and party crews who do not experience the lack of a cosmopolitan sensory

aesthetic in contemporary parties as a demise of the psytrance scene. Rather than providing an all-encompassing description of recent changes in the psytrance scene in Amsterdam and the freedoms lost or gained during this process, the focus here is on the relationship between embodied forms of cosmopolitanism, nostalgia and the remaining inequities in the world resulting from past colonial power relations. With this focus, a critical note is provided on the ideology and practice of cosmopolitanism. This critical attention will emphasize that a desire for cultural practices, which enable a space to experience the Self as authentically cosmopolitan, may feed the illusion that Europe, and inherently those living in Europe, "can be disconnected from its imperial past" (Gilroy 2004: 2) and its lasting inequalities in a postcolonial era. This rather paralyzing illusion will be critically assessed in the following discussion of the Amsterdam psytrance scene.

Imagining Cosmopolitanism

Recent publications on the psytrance phenomenon have emphasized its global character (St John 2010a). In analyzing psytrance in its global context, a central aim is to gain an understanding of its "diversity, flows and flexibility", a task that includes an examination of these cosmopolitan characteristics of the global psytrance phenomenon (St John 2010b: 2). Analyses that attend to these cosmopolitan features often understand psytrance communities in terms of countercultures; these communities are conceptualized as "self-marginalized formations that, in various forms of experimentalism and contestation, seek to foster a critique that revises modernity within modernity" (D'Andrea 2007: 3). Psytrance's growth and success as a counterculture is then understood as "rooted in utopian visions of a vast, interconnected global community free of the iniquities of neoliberalism, defined instead by a return to communality and the gift economy" (Ryan 2010: 186). While it will become clear from my analysis that I question the conceptualization of psytrance as countercultural, cosmopolitanism is present in the psytrance parties in Amsterdam and, therefore, plays a major role in the construction of participants' individual as well as collective identities during these parties. I understand the relationship between cosmopolitanism and processes of identity construction in the light of Appadurai's suggestion that the imagination plays a crucial role in the constitution of subjectivities and experiences of belonging in an increasingly globalized world. Feelings of belonging are no longer necessarily related to geographic locations and face-to-face interactions, but rather have to be understood in terms of imaginings induced by the movement of media, technologies, ideologies, people and finances around the world (Appadurai 1996: 33). An analysis of these "cultural flows" present in global phenomena such as the psytrance party can therefore give us insights on the processes of identity construction that can take place during these parties.

The well-documented emergence of psytrance from the constant movement of people between Goa and the rest of the world inextricably links the psytrance party in Amsterdam to the "ethnoscape" (Appadurai 1996: 33); the increased movement of people around the globe (e.g., Saldanha 2007, 2010; D'Andrea 2010; Elliott 2010). This link is strengthened by the presence of international and "neo-nomadic" audiences (D'Andrea 2007: 6), as

well as by the international line-up of DJs playing at the parties. During an Amsterdam-based psytrance party, my interlocutors experience these "buitenlanders" (foreigners)[4] as multiple Others, with their Otherness emphasized through the use of English in party announcements and the explicit reference to the country of origin of the various DJs. The dynamics of this ethnoscape holds a dramatic effect over the production of subjectivities at these parties; these multiple Others confront the visitors with the possibility of movement, deterritorialization and, inherently, with a multiplicity of Others. The ethnoscape may therefore be understood as "a space where the Own is constantly being renegotiated: it provides a relational context, which is never unilateral and always interactive; it is in a constant state of flux" (Abels 2008: 6). Extrapolating from this suggestion, I propose that the complex ethnoscape of the psytrance party provides participants with a relational context; the psytrance party is explicitly a space in which visitors can engage with these multiple Others. One of the characteristics of cosmopolitanism is exactly this willingness to engage with and negotiate the conception of the Other. Therefore, the multiple explicit references to this ethnoscape construct the psytrance party as a space in which participants can imagine themselves to be cosmopolitans.

In addition to the dynamics of the ethnoscape, multiple narratives of the place and time of psytrance's origin must be considered. These narratives are invoked by a mediascape that includes visual imagery from documentaries, movies and interviews on Goa, India, in relation to the emergence of psytrance. An example is *Last Hippie Standing* (Robbin 2002), a popular documentary among psytrancers. The film provides a romanticized image of Goa and the processes through which it ostensibly became a hippie paradise. It describes the psytrance scene in Goa as a "melting pot of the West and the East", "very diversified" and "sharing", and shows the well-known DJ Goa Gil articulating ideas based on the Yoga philosophy of nondualism (*advaita*). In addition, references to places, names, religions and philosophies related to India often appear in the names of (Dutch) psytrance tracks, DJs, party crews and parties.[5] Furthermore, psytrance CD leaflets and party flyers carry images of Shiva, Om and other Hindu religious symbols. All of these references to India produce the psytrance party as a typically oriental Other, as Petra's view on the relation between India and psytrance parties illustrates:

> **Petra**: *Dat je toch als westers zijnde, ja precies, dat je daar kan heen gaan om zeg maar, niet westers te zijn, qua muziek en omgeving en ja dat spirituele inderdaad . . . ik ben zelf niet naar India geweest nog, maar ik denk dat er een hele sterke link is, het heeft ook met India zelf te maken en het geloof daar natuurlijk, ja, dat is heel erg gelinked, weetjewel, wij hebben hier ook van die Indiase doeken hangen en Geisha, uh hoe noem je Ganesh . . . dat trekt me heel erg aan.*

> While being western, you can still go there to, well, be non-western, in terms of music, in terms of surroundings and yes, the spiritual part. . . . I haven't been to India myself, but I do think there is a strong link, psytrance is connected with India and the religion over there of course, yes, it is very much linked, you know, we also have Indian decorations and Geisha, uh, what's his name, Ganesh . . . this really attracts me. [6]

Additionally, the Internet plays an important role in the formation of psytrance as transnational music (Ryan 2010). Websites such as <www.goatrance.net> and <www.goabase.de> provide narratives and images of psytrance parties organized in Amsterdam, as well as similar parties held at often unspecified locations elsewhere on the planet. Like the ethnoscape, this multifarious mediascape contributes to the establishment of the psytrance party as a space in which the Other can be encountered, which adds to its cosmopolitan character.

Finally, the already mentioned references to facets of the Yoga philosophy *advaita* (nondualism) seem to have been transported by those travelling between Goa and the Netherlands. These aspects are incorporated in psytrance's four ideological pillars: Peace, Love, Unity and Respect (PLUR) and reflect the cosmopolitan interest for humanity as a whole. As such, the ideoscape— concatenations of ideas and images that are often directly political and frequently related to (counter)ideologies of the state (Appadurai 1996: 36)— fosters the cosmopolitan ideology that "in the end, we are all the same"[7] and "*iedereen is altijd welkom*" (everybody is always welcome).[8] As such, the ideoscape further adds to the multiple facets of the psytrance party in Amsterdam that enable the participants to imagine themselves as cosmopolitans.

Cosmopolitan Sensations

In order to explore the processes through which these cosmopolitan identities can come to be experienced as an authentic truth, I will attend to the multisensorial aesthetic experience the Amsterdam-based psytrance party offers its participants. I perceive aesthetic experience as rooted in "*aisthesis*", defined as "our corporeal capability on the basis of a power given in our psyche to perceive . . . the world via our five different sensorial modes . . . and at the same time a specific constellation of sensations as a whole" (Meyer and Verrips 2008: 21). As such, aesthetic experiences enable a "shared sensory mode of perceiving and experiencing the world" (Meyer 2009:9) that can be induced by "sensational forms" (Meyer 2006). These forms are a combination of practices, attitudes and ideas that are inherent in the psytrance aesthetic as understood by my interlocutors,[9] and generate particular sensations to which participants attach meaning. This meaning is experienced as authentic exactly because it is embodied, it is taken for granted because it is anchored in common sense (Meyer 2009: 7).

It should be understood that the music played at the parties constitutes a sensational form while recognizing that psytrance is not a homogeneous genre. During the last two decades, a multiplicity of sub-subgenres has developed, each with its own characteristic sound (Lindop 2010: 114).[10] The type of music played on the dance floors in Amsterdam depends upon many factors, including but not limited to the DJ's preferences, the party crew, the time of the night, the audience's response to the DJ's performance and the party space. Instead of seeking to identify what would therefore be an inherently problematic definition of psytrance in Amsterdam, in my exploration of musical characteristics I seek to understand how the development and popularization of particular subgenres (i.e., "progressive" and

"full-on"), is mobilized through complaints about the demise of the psytrance scene that will be addressed in more detail in the section below. This first necessitates an analysis of my interlocutors' articulations about what a good night on the psytrance dance floor *should* sound like; that is, what participants understand to be the psytrance aesthetic. I concentrate on three levels of aesthetic evaluation: the individual track, the DJ set and the overall night. These should not be understood as three separate experiences, but rather as multiple—though for analytical purposes isolated—components of one experience.

Regarding the aesthetic qualities of individual psytrance tracks, the most important aspect mentioned is that they should always contain "psychedelic" elements:

> **Karel**: *Een kraak en piepjes en van die, ja, een bepaald soort geluiden die je inderdaad ook als je als je aan het trippen bent aan de LSD, die dan zo heel scherp binnen kunnen komen . . . gewoon het meeste van die psychedelische, beetje freaky gewoon, beetje raar . . . ja ik vind dat geweldig . . . en dan, als die geluiden goed zijn, dan kun je ook echt je, ja dan sluit je jezelf ook helemaal af van de wereld eigenlijk, dan probeer je in die muziek te zitten of dan ga je in die muziek zitten en als, ja, als die geluiden saai zijn zeg maar, of voorspelbaar, dan zit je maar een beetje om je heen te kijken.*

> A squeak and a peep and those, yeah, just a certain type of sounds that when you are tripping on LSD you can hear them crystal clear. . . . Just the most psychedelic, a little freaky, a bit weird. . . . Yeah, I love that . . . when those sounds are right, then you can really shut yourself off from the rest of the world, then you try to be in the music or you go into the music and if, yes, if the sounds are boring or predictable, you are just looking around.

These very subjective characteristics of psychedelic sounds as "surprising", "freaky" and "weird" are often produced synthetically with the help of specific sound effects that are mostly digital. The pan pot[11] assigns stereo direction to the mix so that, for example, sounds seemingly travel between stereo speakers; the reverb makes a sudden scream resonate; and the phaser filters audio signals in order to produce multiple frequency sweeps in the bass lines and melodies. All of these rather unrecognizable "*geluidjes en bliepjes en dingen*" (sounds and bleeps and things) are recognized as "psychedelic".[12]

Additionally, the psychedelic is attributed to sounds that are recognized as originating in the "not here", as the following excerpt illustrates:

> **Hans**: *Sowieso is het ook altijd best wel melodisch, tenminste vroeger wel meer, dat is nu misschien iets minder, ja echt gewoon die frygische muziek zeg maar, dus van die uh, ja zeg maar, noem het maar arabisch of oosters of wat je het wil noemen, frygisch zeg ik altijd, en dat vind ik gewoon ook het leuke . . . echt wel psychedelisch ik weet niet precies waar dat aan ligt, maar misschien, ja van die sweeps zeg maar, van die frequency sweeps, van hoog naar laag en van laag naar hoog, . . . de melodie maakt het vaak wel, een beetje mystiek, een beetje spiritueel, op een best wel authentieke manier.*

It [psytrance] is always very melodic, at least, it used to be, maybe currently this is a bit less, and yes also Phrygian music you know, so like those uh, yeah like, call it Arabic or eastern or whatever you like to call it, I always call it Phrygian, and that is something I also like very much . . . really psychedelic, I don't exactly know why it is like that, but maybe, yeah, those sweeps you know, those frequency sweeps, from high to low, and low to high . . . the melody often makes it a bit mystical, a bit spiritual, in a kind of an authentic manner.[13]

Sounds are thus experienced as psychedelic when they originate in an often unspecified location outside Europe, somewhere "*exotisch*" (exotic),[14] in "outer space"[15] and when its origin is "*totaal onherkenbaar*" (completely unrecognizable).[16] It follows that the attribution of "psychedelic" to a particular sound in a psytrance track can be related to the lack of a specific place and/or instrument of origin; these sounds can be characterized as "schizophonic sounds", or sounds split from their source (Schafer 1977). To be more precise, the "psychedelic" as described by my interlocutors refers to a split of a sound from its source in such a manner that the source becomes ambiguous or even completely unrecognizable. As such, the illustrated appreciation for "psychedelic" sounds in tracks can be conceptualized as an aesthetic of Otherness, an aesthetic that apparently "gets you in the trance feeling, with other music this does not happen, only for example from tribes in Africa or from tribes all over the world you can come in this trance but not with everyday music".[17] This (neo)orientalist notion of the "psychedelic" links psytrance to a long tradition of European interest in, and (neo)colonial desire for, the musical Other.

The "psychedelic" sounds and melodies of psytrance are often repeated in two, four, eight, or sixteen beats, and are thereby constitutive of the four-to-the-floor rhythm produced by the kick drum. This four-to-the-floor electronic dance music beat is, depending on the genre, between 130–160 BPM. Both the BPM and the specific sound of the synthetically produced kick drum are characteristic of the overarching psytrance genre. My interlocutors experience these characteristics as comparable to the beat of other transnational EDM styles such as techno, trance and house. They emphasize that this beat should be continuous; while most tracks contain at least one break, usually approximately halfway through the track, such breaks should not occur too frequently:

Sandra: *Het verassende is belangrijk, maar het is niet verrassend als DJs gewoon om de halve minuut stoppen en dan weer gewoon opnieuw beginnen, want dan denk je dat het verassend is, maar dat is gewoon heel standaard en dan.*

Eva-Maria: *Wordt het irritant?*

Ja, gewoon de hele tijd heb je na een halve minuut weer opbouw, en die gaat door en dan stopt het weer . . . maar voor mijn gevoel is het gewoon vaak als het een slechte DJ is, dat ie dan gewoon heel veel platen probeert te draaien.

The surprising element is important, but it is not surprising if the DJ just stops every half a minute, and then starts all over again, because you might think that is surprising, but it is very standard actually and then.

Then it becomes annoying?

Yeah, just the whole time building up the tension, and then it stops again. . . . I feel that if a DJ tries to play as many tracks as possible, he is simply a bad DJ.[18]

Most interviewees emphasize the importance of this tension in the music. Although surprising and unrecognizable sounds are appreciated and breaks are considered to be an important part of the experience because the overall DJ set should create an experience of a "flow".[19]. This experience of flow is invoked by a relatively continuous beat and by continuity in style within and between sets, in which changes should occur gradually rather than abruptly.

The aesthetic of "flow" additionally relates to the idea that each part of the night has a different function during the party. The music played during specific parts of the night should seemingly facilitate this:

Jan: The parties were starting a bit progressive, a bit trippy, they were going a bit hard at the peak of the night, like three o'clock four o'clock, then softening it, softening it, but it was always in a flow, all of it, and at the end, in the morning, you have the morning music they call it. More soft sounds and more melodic, sounds that take you away, dream you away. For me it's like, you go to a party, especially if you take drugs, you come to a liftoff, you leave this planet, you leave this universe, the way of life that we have here, you go to your special place, and slowly the DJ has to bring you back in a safe way, back to the civilized world.[20]

Apparently, if the type of music does not correspond to the mood of the moment, the flow of the experience is disturbed. As Jan suggests, this flow is not solely produced by the music, but is induced by multiple facets of the psytrance aesthetic to which I attend below.

Both the aesthetic of Otherness and the aesthetic of flow attributed to "good" psytrance induce particular sensations. The aesthetic of Otherness offers participants the possibility of sensory engagement with an imagined musical Other. In addition, the universal four-to-the-floor kick drum and BPM, both important constituents of the aesthetic of flow, offer the dancing participants a kinesthetic experience of this universal aspect of the music. Psytrance can therefore be conceptualized as "cosmopolitan in its shared transnational electronic musical aesthetic" (Rietveld 2010: 70) and in its aesthetic of Otherness. In this way, as a sensational form, psytrance literally makes the cosmopolitan sense-able.

Particular elements characteristic of the party spaces in Amsterdam can similarly be understood as sensational forms. The geographic locations of dance parties, usually at the outskirts of Amsterdam, necessitate bicycle commutes that differ from regular bicycle rides in terms of duration, geographic location and goal. These rides can be conceptualized as a

kinesthetic transition phase from everyday life to the party situation; each physical movement taking participants closer to the party and further from everyday life. This experience of transition is enhanced by the fact that, once close enough to the party location, the increase in music volume seems directly correlated to the increase in distance from everyday life. The party spaces themselves typically consist of a DJ table and speakers situated either in grazing land, in a small forest or in a large, often squatted, factory building or hangar. In all circumstances, participants can wander around freely, which they emphasize to be highly important for the party experience:

> **Renate**: *Ja gewoon die lucht en buiten en de natuur en weetje gewoon . . . dat je niet vastzit aan een bepaalde ruimte. En als het dan ook binnen is, dan vind ik het ook wel fijn als je meerdere ruimtes hebt, omdat je dan ook een beetje kan kiezen, dat je een beetje kan rondlopen en ja, dat vind ik wel heel fijn, trapjes, gangetjes ook, dat soort dingen, op onderzoek uitgaan*

> Just that air and out in a natural environment and you know . . . you are not stuck in one room. And that is also the case when the party is inside, I really like the spaces with multiple rooms, because then you can choose a bit, you can walk around and I really like that, small stairs, small passages, those kind of things, I can examine the spaces.[21]

Besides the aesthetic features mentioned by Renate, the virtual absence of material boundaries such as high entrance fees, professional bouncers, and even walls in the case of outdoor parties, is claimed to produce an intense physical experience of freedom of movement. Additionally, the extensive decoration of party spaces in the form of fluorescent paintings of elves, trolls, aliens, Hindu gods, Om signs and fabrics hanging from the ceiling are important aesthetic elements, that give participants a feeling of being in an Other world: "ze kleden ook die hele ruimte aan, je heb het gevoel echt in een soort van andere wereld te zijn" (and they decorate the whole space, you really have the feeling of being in a different world).[22] Finally, a space-related sensational form that ostensibly adds to the party "vibe"[23] is the smell of hash and incense that fills the party spaces. These produce olfactory sensations that participants associate with countries such as Nepal, India and Morocco and thereby add to the sensational experience of the party as Other. All facets of these space related sensational forms render the cosmopolitan character of the psytrance party sense-able. The bicycle commute to party venues can be conceived of as a transition from everyday life to the Other experience one has at the party, and as such facilitates a kinesthetic experience of the willingness to engage with the Other. During the party, hash and incense fragrances facilitate an experience of engagement with Others through the sense of smell, while the decorations trigger a similar experience by way of the sense of sight. In addition, a perceived lack of material boundaries seemingly enhances inclusivity, thereby enabling participants to achieve a kinesthetic experience that validates their cosmopolitan commitment to believing in the unity of humankind.

The consumption of psychoactive substances is crucial to the psychedelic experience in psytrance parties in Amsterdam. Hallucinogenic substances such as LSD, 2C-B, psilocybin and cannabis affect perception when ingested. Although their effects are substance specific, these substances characteristically "alter consciousness, often in dramatic and unpredictable ways" (Nichols 2004: 132). So consumed, psychoactive substances enable a multisensorial experience of the world as different from our everyday perception. The act of imbibing psychoactive substances can therefore be understood as signaling a willingness to experience the world as Other. Because these psychedelic substances have an influence on our sensory perception of the world, the consumption of psychoactive substances can be understood as a sensory experience of the cosmopolitan willingness to engage with the Other. In particular, the consumption of MDMA, the psychoactive substance most commonly used during psytrance parties in Amsterdam, enhances the ability to empathize with—and be open to— the complex ethnoscape present at the psytrance party, which can be related to the fact that "MDMA induces the release of oxytocin" (Dumont *et al.* 2009: 359) in participants' bodies. Furthermore, MDMA consumption produces a pansexual and entactogenic desire to touch (Passie *et al.* 2005: 900) both friends and strangers, which psytrance participants seem to interpret as the experience of the universality of humankind through the sense of touch. These very physical experiences of cosmopolitanism change participants' "relationship to oneself, one's body, one's place in society and the world" (Saldanha 2007: 12). In this, psychoactive substances are crucial sensational forms that "*gewoon je hele, belevenis van het feest grandioos veranderen*" (change your whole experience of the party).[24] They are a central constituent of the psytrance party as cosmopolitan and thereby assist in the construction of the party as a space in which a "conscious project of reinventing oneself" (Saldanha 2007: 32) can take shape. As will become clear, the apparent lack of these substances at contemporary psytrance parties is mobilized in complaints from participants regarding the commercialization of the scene.

To recapitulate, I propose that the aforementioned sensational forms inherent in psytrance's sensory aesthetic induce sensations that can be interpreted as cosmopolitan. In this manner, the psytrance party that conforms to this aesthetic recruits the entire body to make the cosmopolitan sense-able; the party is structured in such a way that it enables participants to experience the cosmopolitan in and through their bodies. It is a space in which participants can ethically realign themselves by realizing an authentically felt grounding to the cultural constructions that make up their lives.

The Nostalgic Desire to Return to the Roots

But what happens when the psytrance party no longer seems to adhere to these sensory cosmopolitan aesthetics? In this section, I explore the apparent commercialization of the parties in terms of participants' nostalgic comments on this shift from the non-commercial and its effects on the scene, as illustrated in the following statement:

Helena: *Ik vraag me af of de muziek meer mainstream wordt of dat het hele thema psytrance meer mainstream wordt. Ik denk eigenlijk het laatste, dat steeds meer mensen ervan horen en dat het steeds populairder wordt, zeg maar, omdat het misschien dat alternatieve karakter heeft dat misschien mensen steeds meer gaat aantrekken. Maar ik mis bijvoorbeeld in het begin dat ik echt naar die feesten ging die echt ergens bijvoorbeeld in een bos of op een dijk ofzo, en dat ze van die lampjes en dingetjes hadden opgehangen, en daar moest je echt van horen zeg maar, niet zomaar lezen op een flyer ofzo.*

I am wondering whether the music is becoming more mainstream lately or that the whole theme of psytrance is becoming more mainstream, I actually think the latter, that an increasing amount of people hear about it and that it becomes more popular, you know, maybe because it has this alternative character that may attract people. But I really miss, for example, in the beginning, I just went to those parties that were somewhere in a forest or on a dike or something, and they had those lamps and decorations hanging there and you would only be there because you knew somebody, not because you just read the announcement on a flyer or something.[25]

As this excerpt demonstrates, nostalgic articulations for past psytrance party aesthetics express a desire to return to parties that offered the cosmopolitan sensory aesthetic as discussed in the previous section. Such nostalgic utterances may be understood as cultural practices that frame the cultural present and a desire for a future that is based on an imagined past. A central question here is how participants mobilize such nostalgia to renegotiate their experience of the Self in the present. The particular framings of nostalgia seem to construct a space in which participants can imagine themselves as disconnected from inequalities that are remnants of (post)colonial power relations.

The most widely vocalized complaint about the ostensible demise of the scene is the apparent "depsychedelization" of music that can be heard at contemporary psytrance parties. The tracks played at these parties apparently lack the above-conceptualized "psychedelic" sounds:

Vincent: *Ik ben heel erg van de melodische psytrance, aan het eind van de avond wil ik best wel een uurtje van die keiharde full on psytrance horen, maar het liefst gewoon melodisch, anders ben je de hele tijd een beetje aan het luisteren naar hard techno ofzoiets. Vooral de laaste tijd horen we dat veel teveel, dan ben je naar snoeiharde psytrance aan het luisteren en dan denk ik van ja, het lijkt meer op techno ofzoiets dan op psytrance, waar is de psychedelica in dit liedje, in deze set? . . . Dat vind ik een van de belangrijkste dingen van de psytrance, het moet wel psychedelisch zijn.*

I am very much into melodic psytrance, at the end of the evening I am okay with listening to that abrasive, full-on psytrance, but preferably melodic, otherwise you seem to be listening to hard techno the whole time. Especially lately, we hear that way too much, you are listening to abrasive psytrance and then I am thinking like, this sounds more like techno than like psytrance, where is the psychedelic in this track, in

this set? . . . This is one of the most important characteristics of psytrance, it has to be psychedelic.[26]

Vincent's use of the term "lately" signals that he experiences this lack of psychedelic sounds and the overuse of the "abrasive" full-on sounds as a recent development. His comments establish a mythical moment in psytrance history when the music retained the psychedelic aesthetic as characterized in the section above. In addition, the current lack of the "psychedelic" aesthetic of Otherness in psytrance is associated with genres perceived of as commercial and mainstream such as house, techno and electro-minimal:

> **Sandra**: *Ik merkte wel dat het ongeveer twee jaar geleden, toen begon het gewoon echt heel erg houserig te worden allemaal, en dat het heel erg mee ging met dat minimal opkwam en dat er opeens ook heel veel mensen die dan [psy] trance draaiden opeens ook een beetje de minimal of heel erg housig gingen draaien en dat er daardoor ook allemaal mainstream mensen naar de feestjes kwamen.*

> I did notice that about two years ago it became really house-ish, all of it, and that it really went along with the popularization of minimal, and that a lot of people who played [psy] trance all of a sudden also a played minimal or really house-like music [progressive psytrance], which caused a lot of mainstream people to come to the parties.[27]

The indication of a timeframe beginning "about two years ago" and the use of the expression "all of a sudden" suggest transformation; Sandra nostalgically recollects a moment in the past when the psytrance party did not sound "minimal" or "house-like". Similar complaints are often framed by nostalgic desires for psytrance parties of the past:

> **Sandra**: *Ik heb het idee dat het nu juist weer terug gaat naar hoe het was in het begin, dat de DJs weer terug komen die toen draaiden en die dan ook nu weer gewoon keiharde Goa draaien en heel veel vage vaagheid erdoor heen gooien. Wat echt ook super fijn is trouwens, daar ben ik echt super blij mee, ja ik weet niet het gaat, het was effetjes, het was wel echt twee jaar dat ik vaak dacht van ja, wat doen we hier gewoon?*

> At this moment it is going back to how it used to be in the beginning, that DJs are coming back who were playing back then, who just play real Goa and who mix in lots of weird sounds. Which is really nice by the way, I am really happy about that, for some time, for two years, I really thought like, what are we doing here?[28]

Here, Sandra expresses her desire for parties that conform to the aesthetic of Otherness inherent in the music she perceives as "real" psytrance. In addition to many similar comments, critics observe that contemporary DJs are unable to keep to the aesthetic of flow; lacking mixing skills, their sets contain too many breaks and DJs do not interact with the audience. Nostalgic narratives of good DJs playing at parties of the past frame these criticisms, contributing to the idea that these parties corresponded to the above-described aspects of the sensory cosmopolitan psytrance aesthetic.

Another factor supposedly exemplifying the scene's demise is the growing difficulty in finding suitable party spaces. This problem was increased by the recent change in the Squatting and Vacancy Law (October 2010)[29], which criminalizes squatting in the Netherlands. The difficulty in finding suitable spaces has resulted in the organization of parties in legal club venues, which are generally not considered suitable for psytrance parties because participants are required to conform to club rules that often conflict with the sensory psytrance aesthetic:

> **Renate**: *Festivals op Ruigoord, ja dat is gewoon heel leuk, gewoon inderdaad die vrijheid die je hebt om daar lekker overal rond te scharrelen. Clubs ben ik niet zo'n fan van, vooral als het dan allemaal een beetje gecontroleerd wordt een beetje met zo'n beveiliger en dat soort dingen.*

> The festivals at Ruigoord, yeah they are just very nice, just that freedom that you have to just wander around. I am not a big fan of clubs, especially when it is a bit controlled, with a bouncer and that kind of things.[30]

Besides the presence of financial and physical boundaries in the form of a high entrance fee and bouncers, the kinesthetic experience of freedom of movement is further prevented by the regulated opening times of official clubs. In addition, smoking is only allowed in "smokers areas",[31] which means that participants cannot smoke cigarettes and joints on the dance floor. Finally, the prohibition of the possession and consumption of psychoactive substances is actively implemented in club venues. This curbs the sensory experience of Otherness induced by the consumption of these substances, and therefore has a dramatic influence on party experience of participants. In sum, complaints about contemporary party spaces are articulated in terms of their lack of the cosmopolitan sensory psytrance aesthetic.

Similar to complaints about the de-psychedelization of psytrance music, critiques of psytrance party venues are framed by nostalgic narratives about the party spaces in the early days:

> **Karel**: *Die loodsen, echt helemaal in het begin toen ik naar die trance feestjes ging toen had je gewoon drie of vier van die panden daar achter bij Sloterdijk, en er was altijd wel een van die, eigenlijk ging dat het hele weekend door ook, je ging vaak gewoon van de ene naar de andere.*

> Those hangars, in the beginning when I went to those trance parties, there were three or four of those buildings behind Sloterdijk,[32] and there was always one that, actually it just went on all weekend, you often just went from one to the other.[33]

Here, Karel recalls the freedom of movement one could physically experience at these psytrance parties of the cosmopolitan past. Similar narratives about parties in the meadows surrounding Amsterdam possessing beautiful, extensive decorations frame complaints about contemporary party spaces:

> **Helena**: *Terwijl die Goa feesten moeten voor mij juist warm en vol en ja, dat mis ik de laatste tijd wel heel erg. Ik denk dat het ook komt omdat als er nu een feest wordt georganiseerd, dan is het gelijk zo bomvol met mensen, ja een beetje dat commerciële . . . terwijl daarvoor had ik wel het idee dat het een soort van subcultuur was, die allemaal met elkaar hetzelfde idee hadden . . . ik weet ook nog wel een keer dat we naar een bos waren gegaan . . . dat alternatieve, dat het gewoon in een bosje naast een industrie terrein was.*

> Those Goa parties for me they have to be warm and full and yeah, lately I really miss that. I think that also has to do with the fact that now, when a party is organized, immediately it's so crowded, and yeah, a bit commercial . . . whereas before, I really had the idea that it was some kind of a subculture, who all together had the idea. . . . I remember that time we went to the forest . . . it was alternative, just in a small forest next to an industrial area.[34]

Besides multiple comparable nostalgic complaints about the lack of a sensory cosmopolitan aesthetic in contemporary party spaces, a change in the type of psychoactive substances used during the parties ostensibly marks the demise of the scene. This change is thought to correlate with a transformation in the party announcement system: announcements are no longer solely made through semi-secret mailing lists or through phone calls via friends, but can be found online and on flyers in bars all around Amsterdam. Consequently, the type of people who visit psytrance parties appear to have changed, as have the type of psychoactive substances that are associated with these events:

> **Karel**: *Ik zie gewoon aan mensen dat ze er alleen maar heengaan om, ja ik weet niet, met hun coole kleertjes en hun zonnebrilletje. Ze hebben nog nooit LSD gebruikt zeg maar, je voelt het gewoon aan ze, en ze gaan het nooit doen ook. Ik vind dat dan wel een beetje jammer, het hoort er voor mij toch wel een beetje bij, dat je echt wel een bepaalde voorliefde hebt voor psychedelica . . . ja zoals gisteren, ik bedoel, ze dragen gewoon merkkleding . . . terwijl die echt trancehippies allemaal, wat dat bij mekaar houdt, ja voorliefde voor psychedelica sowieso, maar daar mee samenhangend ook een bepaalde spiritualiteit.*

> I just see when people, they just go there to, yes I don't know, with their cool clothes and their sunglasses. They have never used LSD you know, you can just feel it, and they will never do it. That is really a pity, for me it's kind of part of the thing, that you have this liking for psychedelics. . . . Like yesterday, you see people with designer clothes . . . while those real trance hippies, what keeps them together is a love for psychedelics and interrelated a certain level of spirituality.[35]

In contrast with this love for cosmopolitan hallucinogens, the mainstream visitors display a preference for amphetamines and cocaine:

Petra: *Die gast was heel opgefokt en echt aan de speed zeg maar, en dat zijn nou de drugs waarvan ik denk van nee, dat hoort niet bij Goa, tenminste dat vind ik persoonlijk, dat hoort weer echt bij die techno house muziek.*

That guy was really worked up, really on speed you know, and this is the type of drug that does not belong to Goa, at least that is how I personally feel, it belongs more to techno house music.[36]

The association of amphetamines and cocaine with more popular EDM genres such as techno and house leads to the idea that the growing numbers of visitors who consume these substances, rather than cosmopolitan substances such as MDMA and hallucinogens, signals the commercialization, and hence demise, of the scene.

Finally, explicitly orientalist articulations of nostalgia for the roots of psytrance in India are also more than apparent in the scene. An example can be found on the website of a DJ collective organizing Goa Classics parties from the beginning of 2011. In their blog, DJ Tameesh (2011) describes these parties as follows:

What happens if you bring together crazy hippies, psychedelic techno music and acid on a beautiful beach in spiritual India? Right! You get Goa trance! . . . The first pioneers cranked the volume up, made their own loops and filled the sonic spectrum with their own weird and wonderful sounds . . . Now we bring these sounds to Amsterdam in 2011.

This desire to return to the "weird and wonderful" roots of psytrance is not limited to discourse; it is actively implemented at the party. DJ sets contain a range of "psychedelic" elements[37] that are much appreciated by the participants.

For an interpretation of these multiple nostalgic articulations of a desire for the cosmopolitan sensibilities in psytrance parties, I will an elaborate here on the concept of desire, following Žižek's reading of the "Lacanian distinction between need, demand and desire" (Žižek 1992: 5). This reading suggests that the way an experience is "destined to satisfy our needs, undergoes a kind of transubstantiation as soon as it is caught in the dialectic of demand and ends up producing desire" (Žižek 1992: 5). In the moment that we express a demand for an experience we need—in this case the multisensory experience of cosmopolitanism—the value of the experience itself "becomes a form of expression of its 'exchange value'" (Žižek 1992: 5). As the demand for the cosmopolitan sensibilities starts to function "as an index of a network of intersubjective relations" (Žižek 1992: 5), the act of demanding already indexes participants as ethical subjects. This change in the function of the cosmopolitan psytrance experience, from a desired experience to an index in a network of intersubjective relations, leads to a situation in which we no longer seek to satisfy the need attached to the experience, but rather want to confirm the "other's attitude towards us" (Žižek 1992: 5). In this process, the need for the actual multisensory experience of cosmopolitanism during a psytrance party is replaced by the need to reproduce the *context* in which this experience can be demanded and the other's attitude towards the Self can be confirmed.

This understanding of desire leads to a critical appraisal of the stated desire to return to the cosmopolitan roots of psytrance. As I proposed in the introduction, the ethical desire for reconciliation with the former colonial Other manifests itself in the form of cosmopolitanism. Through the articulation of a yearning for the return to cosmopolitan psytrance parties of the past, participants therefore implicitly express a desire for a means to reconceptualize the relationship with the former colonial Other. Nostalgic articulations of a desire for parties that conform to the sensory cosmopolitan aesthetic can in this light be understood as strategies of ethical selving. The act of expressing a willingness to reconceptualize the relationship with the former colonial Other and thereby overcome the lasting deficiencies of the colonial past indexes psytrancers as ethically responsible citizens of a global postcolonial world. As such, the nostalgic articulations of the desire to return to psytrance's cosmopolitan roots can be understood as a strategy of Self-representation through which the Amsterdam-based participants "secure their innocence" (Pratt 1992: 7) about the deficiencies in the world resulting from colonial power relations of the past, by drawing "on a long Western tradition of Orientalism" (Johnston 2002: 50).

Although articulations of such desires are usually interpreted as positive, the above conceptualization of desire problematizes a solely celebratory interpretation of these narratives. The moment that the need for a cosmopolitan experience, and inherently the need to overcome the still prevailing defects of the colonial past, is articulated, this need is replaced by the desire to reproduce the *context* in which an articulation of such desire produces intersubjectivity. Thus, since the articulation of the desire for cosmopolitanism only allows for the production of intersubjectivity in a context in which the cosmopolitan ideals have not yet become a reality, these verbalizations implicitly evoke a paradoxical need to reproduce the deficiencies and ambiguities resulting from colonial power relations of the past this ideology explicitly attempts to overcome. Additionally, the sole expression of the desire to return to the cosmopolitan roots of psytrance positions participants as ethical subjects, which alleviates the need to actually practice the ideals that cosmopolitanism adheres to.

Summarizing, it seems that the expressions of nostalgic desires for a cosmopolitan psytrance party seem rather "thin ethical precepts" (Gilroy 2004: 4); they are rhetorics of ethical responsibility that disguise their own circular libidinal foundation. These rhetorics mobilize a postcolonial subconscious in processes of ethical selving, thereby enabling participants to assuage feelings of guilt over persisting ambiguities and defects in the world. At the same time, these rhetorics camouflage the fact that psytrance participants can alleviate this guilt without actually practicing the cosmopolitan ideals they adhere to. Such rather paralyzing rhetorics should be reflected on in a critical manner.

Concluding Remarks

Based on the analysis of the cultural flows and sensational forms that define the psytrance party in Amsterdam, I have argued that the cosmopolitan sensibilities inherent in the psytrance aesthetic provide its participants with a space for ethical selving. This space allows

participants to construct their cosmopolitan identities as "not something purely cognitive but . . . rooted in the experience of the body in its entirety, as a complex of culturally and historically honed sensory modalities" (Hirschkind 2006: 101). I propose that complaints about the commercialization of the psytrance scene are articulated in terms of a lack of the sensory cosmopolitan psytrance aesthetic, a deficiency that apparently signals the demise of the Amsterdam-based psytrance scene. As I asseverated, these expressions are framed within nostalgic narratives of past parties that seemed to conform to psytrance's cosmopolitan sensory aesthetic. The expression of a desire to return to psytrance's cosmopolitan roots is understood as a rhetoric that camouflages the fact that the mere expression of this desire already indexes participants as ethical subjects, which releases them of the need to take action against the persisting defects and ambiguities of past colonial relations they aspire to overcome. With this critical insight, I would emphasize that the uncritical celebration of, and nostalgic desires for, cosmopolitanism could paralyze attempts to practice the critical ideologies it advocates.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1   My informants prefer to be anonymous. In order to guarantee their anonymity, I have given all informants a pseudonym. Any resemblance in names to a real person is a coincidence. Most conversations were conducted in Dutch. In this article, I provide the reader with the original Dutch quotation, followed by an English translation. Any mistakes in the translation are mine. The Dutch-English code-switching in some of the excerpts are original. The informal interviews took place in either my interlocutors' or my house, and were conducted between February 1st 2011 and March 30th 2011. At the time of the interviews, the age of the interviewees was between 22 and 30, and they had been attending psytrance parties as dancers for between two and twelve years.

2   Petra, interview in Amsterdam, 15th March 2011.

3   This article is based on research performed for my MA thesis (Straaten 2011). My five years of experience in the Dutch psytrance scene also contributes to the formulation of this text. Fieldwork was conducted in the form of participant observation within the psytrance scene in Amsterdam between January and July 2011 and in conversational interviews with Amsterdam-based psytrancers.

4   Hans, interview in Amsterdam, 20th February 2011.

5   For example, Tameesh, the name of one of the most popular Dutch psytrance DJs, means "lord of the night" in Hindi. The word *Namasté*, which means "hello" in Hindi, is the name of a popular party crew in the Amsterdam area, and the monthly psytrance party organized at cultural freeport Ruigoord is called "Trance Orient Express".

6 Petra, interview in Amsterdam, 15th March 2011.

7 Jan, interview in Amsterdam, 19th March 2011.

8 Karel, interview in Amsterdam, 28th March 2011.

9 By interlocutors, I refer to both my interviewees and to dancers I conversed with in chill-outs and on the dance floors of parties during my research. There were regular complaints about the demise of the scene among these participants.

10 Subgenres include "suomisaundi" (literally Finnish sound), "morning Goa", "progressive", "full-on", "darkpsy", "psybreaks" and "psybient". The latter is usually played in chillout rooms.

11 The pan pot or panoramic potentiometer (also known as pan control) determines the spread of the sound signal into multi-channelled sound fields.

12 Renate, interview in Amsterdam, 16th February 2011.

13 Hans, interview in Amsterdam, 20th February 2011.

14 Petra, interview in Amsterdam, 15th March 2011.

15 Hendrika, interview in Amsterdam, 4th March 2011.

16 Petra, interview in Amsterdam, 15th March 2011.

17 Jan, interview in Amsterdam, 19th March 2011.

18 Sandra, interview in Amsterdam, 23rd February 2011.

19 Petra, interview in Amsterdam, 15th March 2011.

20 Jan, interview in Amsterdam, 19th March 2011.

21 Renate, interview in Amsterdam, 16th February 2011.

22 Helena, interview in Amsterdam, 9th February 2011.

23 For an overview of publications on the "vibe", see St John 2009.

24 Vincent, interview in Amsterdam, 8th March 2011.

25 Helena, interview in Amsterdam, 9th February 2011.

26 Vincent, interview in Amsterdam, 8th March 2011.

27 Sandra, interview in Amsterdam, 23rd February 2011.

28 Sandra, interview in Amsterdam, 23rd February 2011.

29 *Wet Kraken en Leegstand*, which prohibits the squatting of empty buildings in the Netherlands.

30 Renate, interview in Amsterdam, 16th February 2011.

31 *Rook ruimtes.*

32 Industrial area in the west of Amsterdam.

33 Karel, interview in Amsterdam, 28th March 2011.

34 Helena, interview in Amsterdam, 9th February 2011.

35 Karel, interview in Amsterdam, 28th March 2011.

36 Petra, interview in Amsterdam, 15th March 2011.

37 An example of such a set can be found at Goaclassics Amsterdam: <http://www.mixcloud.com/goaclassics-amsterdam/>.

References

Abels, Birgit. 2008. *Sounds of Articulating Identity: Tradition and Transition in the Music of Palau, Micronesia*. Berlin: Logos Verlag Berlin GmbH.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Barrett, James. 1996. "World Music, Nation and Postcolonialism". *Cultural Studies* 10(2): 237–47.

D'Andrea, Anthony. 2007. *Global Nomads: Techno and New Age as Transnational Countercultures in Ibiza and Goa*. New York: Routledge.

———. 2010. "The Decline of Electronic Dance Scenes: The Case of Psytrance in Goa". In *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance*, ed. Graham St John, 40–54. New York: Routledge.

DJ Tameesh. 2011. "What is Goa Classics?". Goa Classics Collective. 14 March: <http://goaclassics.wordpress.com/page/18/> (accessed 15 April 2011).

Dumont, G. J. H, F. C. G. J. Sweep, R. van der Steen, R. Hermsen, A. R. T. Donders, D. J. Touw, J. M. A. van Gerven, J. K. Buitelaar & R. J. Verkes. 2009. "Increased Oxytocin Concentrations and Prosocial Feelings in Humans after Ecstasy (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine) Administration". *Social Neuroscience* 4(4): 359–66.

Elliott, Luther. 2010. "Goa is a State of Mind: On the Ephemerality of Psychedelic Social Emplacements". In *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance*, ed. Graham St John, 21–39. New York: Routledge.

Gilroy, Paul. 2004. *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* Oxon: Routledge.

Goatrance. Party Base. <www.goatrance.net> (accessed 24 October 2011).

Hannerz, Ulf. 1996. *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. London: Routledge.

Hirschkind, Charles. 2006. *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Johnston, Josée. 2002. "Consuming Global Justice". In *Protest and Globalisation: Prospects for Transnational Solidarity*, ed. James Goodman, 38–56. Annandale: Pluto Press Australia.

Lindop, Robin. 2010. "Re-evaluating Musical Genre in UK Psytrance". In *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance*, ed. Graham St John, 114–30. New York: Routledge.

Meyer, Birgit. 2006. *Religious Sensations: Why Media, Aesthetics and Power Matter in the Study of Contemporary Religion*. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit.

———. 2009. "Introduction: From Imagined Communities to Aesthetic Formations: Religious Mediations, Sensational Forms and Styles of Binding". In *Aesthetic Formations: Media, Religion, and the Senses*, ed. Birgit Meyer, 1–30. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Meyer, Birgit & Jojada Verrips. 2008. "Aesthetics". In *Key Words in Religion, Media and Culture*, ed. David Morgan, 20–30. New York: Routledge.

Nichols, David E. 2004. "Hallucinogens". *Pharmacology & Therapeutics* 101: 131–81.

Passie, Torsten, Uwe Hartmann, Udo Schneider, Hinderk M. Emrich and Tillmann H.C. Krüger. 2005. "Ecstasy (MDMA) Mimics the Post-Orgasmic State: Impairment of Sexual Drive and Function During Acute MDMA-Effects May Be Due to Increased Prolactin Secretion". *Medical Hypotheses* 64(5): 899–903.

Pratt, Marie Louise. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge.

Rietveld, Hillegonda. 2010. "Infinite Noise Spirals: The Musical Cosmopolitanism of Psytrance". In *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance*, ed. Graham St John, 69–88. New York: Routledge.

Robbins, Bruce. 1998. "Introduction Part I: Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism". In *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation*, ed. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins, 1–19. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ryan, Jenny. 2010. "Weaving the Underground Web: Neo-Tribalism and Psytrance on Tribe.net". In *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance*, ed. Graham St John, 186–202. New York: Routledge.

Saldanha, Arun. 2007. *Pyschedelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 2010. "The Ghost of Goa Trance; A Retrospective". In *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance*, ed. Graham St John, 55–64. New York: Routledge.

Schafer, R. Murray. 1977. *The Tuning of the World: Toward a Theory of Soundscape Design*. New York: Random House.

Stewart, Kathleen. 1988. "Nostalgia: A Polemic". *Cultural Anthropology* 3(3): 227–24.

St John, Graham. 2009. "Neotrance and the Psychedelic Festival". *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture* 1(1): 35–64. Available online at: http://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2009.01.01.03.

———. ed. 2010a. *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance.* New York: Routledge.

———. 2010b. "Psytrance: An Introduction". In *The Local Scenes and Global Culture of Psytrance*, ed. Graham St John, 1–17. New York: Routledge.

van Straaten, Eva-Maria Alexandra. 2011. "Sensational Forms and Flows of Sensation: Goatrance as an Experience of Belonging to an Imagined Cosmopolitan World". M.A. Thesis (Cultural Analysis), Universiteit van Amsterdam.

Thomas, Helen. 2003. *The Body, Dance and Cultural Theory.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Varul, Matthias Zick. 2009. "Ethical Selving in Cultural Contexts: Fairtrade Consumption as an Everyday Ethical Practice in the UK and Germany". *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 33: 183–89.

Žižek, Slavoj. 1992 [1991]. *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Filmography

Robbin, Marcus. 2002. *Last Hippie Standing*. Germany: Tangiji Film. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0385048/>