

# Liminal Places: Raves in Transition

## Atmospheres of Exclusive Inclusion

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Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen

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A r k a d y G a v r i l o v

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### **Research Field: Rave Scene**

My field work focusses on the berlin raving subculture. In the 90's it started as a counter-cultural movement that revitalized unoccupied wasteland or empty industrial halls by celebrating ephemeral festivals. Nowadays Clubs are gathering places for different raving "Taste-Scenes" (Thornton 1995). I specialise on the DIY/ playfull techno scene in particular. The pursuit of hedonistic & ecstatic experiences defines the scene. Such "Taste-Communities" have their own "Spirit" (Schwanhäuser 2010) that shall be described in my work.

### **Theory & Methods**

I try to understand the historical developments and socio-cultural practices of clubbing and raving through the dimensions of *Communitas* (Turner 1996), body regimes, cyborgical embodiment (Haraway 1991) & ecological anthropology (Ingold 2010).

All in all my approach was explorative. I have done expert interviews, joined conferences and round tables, practiced observant participation, done archive research, wrote notes and diary, done informal talks and digital ethnography to gain my data. Theories of collective ecstasy will help me to understand the ritual process of the rave events (Kéline 2018).

### **Results**

The raving culture is a complex mesh of historically developed socio-cultural practices that combines such ambivalences as free space vs. safe space, inclusion vs. exclusion, autonomy vs. hierarchy, uniqueness vs. mass occupation, involvement vs. escapism, community vs. loneliness, experimental vs. routinization, subversive vs. exploitive or euphoria vs. melancholia, just to name a few. My working hypothesis so far is, that every raving culture has its own collectively created atmospherical *Vibe/ Spirit* which produces its own affective mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion. This affective Exclusive Inclusion builds on the enlived world view or "public imagery" (Reynolds 1997) of the scene which is articulated in dressing, music style, preferred substance-use, joking relations and other habit forms. It follows that Inclusion & Exclusion takes place accordingly to insider-performativity and "subcultural capital" (Thornton (1995)).

### **Interest**

The Questions I will try to answer are: Which ambivalences define the rave culture? How are mechanism of Inclusion and Exclusion created within the scene? Which need is being satisfied through clubbing? In which way is clubbing a meaningful practice? Which affects do the atmospherical Vibes create and how are they connected to the community-building processes of the scene?

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