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### **Rock concerts and football stadiums as 'bowls of hysteria'**

In sociological and anthropological studies, the affinity between religious rituals and contemporary practices in rock concerts as well as sports events has frequently been observed (Kähler 2012; Gugutzer and Böttcher 2012; Klein and Meuser 2008; Schultz and Sheffer 2015; Alpert 2015; Koenot 1997; Till 2010; Inglis 2006; Mattig 2010). Thus, it is well known that such rites play a significant role in forging communities (of fans), inciting euphoria and forming identities, with a particular emphasis on adolescence. What has never been properly analyzed so far, however, are the ways and means by and through which particular axes of resonance are created in such repetitive practices. The guiding hypothesis of this project is the idea that such axes of resonance are created and reinforced in all four dimensions: First, we find that certain persons (musicians, players) are bestowed with 'magical' powers and energies such that horizontal relationships of resonance are established. Moreover, resonances among the group of fans and 'devotees' are also created through collective, repetitive rituals such as singing, clapping, dressing in symbolic outfits, the preservation and communication of 'expert knowledge' etc. Second, in all of these cases, certain material objects are sacralised or 'energised', too, for example, drumsticks and guitar plectra, the shirts and shoes of players, or concert posters with signatures etc. Material (or diagonal) resonance, however, can also be observed with respect to 'sacred grounds' (Anfield Road, Wembley Stadium, Castle Donington) and 'holy times' (Saturday afternoon for the Bundesliga, the Wacken-weekend in August etc.). What is rather unclear, though, are the precise ways in which there might be an element of 'vertical resonance' in the sense of some perceived 'transcendent' power. Certainly, with legendary events during important football games (e.g. when Liverpool equalised a 0-3 in a Champions League final) or great rock concerts (e.g. when Pink Floyd briefly re-united after 24 years for the Live Aid Concert), there is a vibrant sense among fans that 'history is written today'. Furthermore, in and during such events, fans feel that they are connected with the history and community of a much wider collectivity which they are a part of. This, then, also connects to the ways in which football games and rock events restore and reinvigorate the sense of 'second order resonance', i.e. of the self being *connected*, physically and symbolically, to earth, life, the others and (one's own) history and/or biography. Thus, an important question to be answered by this project is whether and how the everyday life of participants is affected by these events, and whether and how those axes of resonance are relevant outside the ritualistic practices themselves. But first of all, the precise form of such resonances needs to be explored and researched in this project. How are those axes established, preserved, conceptualised, materialised and embodied? Which are the forms and significances of repetition in the relevant practices? How are power relations constituted, invigorated, modified or subverted through the occurrence of resonance? Methodologically,

research will draw on a wide variety of ethnographic and sociological research. Based on the insights and guidelines of Grounded Theory, a triangulatory mixed-method approach including participant observation, expert and biographical interviews and a thorough analysis of documents will be suggested.

## References

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