# NEW ETHNOGRAPHIES OF FOOTBALL IN EUROPE

## PEOPLE, PASSIONS, POLITICS

*Edited by* ALEXANDRA SCHWELL, NINA SZOGS, MAŁGORZATA Z. KOWALSKA *and* MICHAŁ BUCHOWSKI

FOOTBALL RESEARCH IN AN ENLARGED EUROPE

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New Ethnographies of Football in Europe

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## People, Passions, Politics

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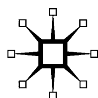

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# Foreword

## Ethnography and the Study of Football Fan Cultures

*Geoff Pearson*

### Illuminating football fan cultures

The football crowd is a complex, misunderstood and much maligned entity. Its reputation throughout much of the world, and particularly in Europe, is of being loud, disruptive, difficult to manage and prone to disorder and violence. Football fans are treated by the legal systems and policing strategies of many countries in a completely different manner to those following other sports; football spectators are frequently segregated and contained, kept under constant and intrusive surveillance and other intelligence-gathering techniques, denied access to alcohol and subjected to routine interventions by heavily armed riot police. And yet such blanket methods of crowd management are too readily based on prejudices, misunderstandings and occasionally deliberate attempts by those in authority to exaggerate the threat posed by football supporters.

The truth is that there is no such thing as the 'typical' football crowd. In terms of size, constitution, motivation and behaviour, football crowds vary widely. This variation can be seen between different clubs, cities, localities and countries, but it can also be seen between different fixtures in which the same clubs are playing each season. Most importantly, football crowds do not consist of the same 'type' of person in terms of demographic and motivation. Research on football spectators in England alone has identified many different sub-cultures of fans; families, tourists, anoraks, corporates, carnival fans, and of course that small much-researched group of 'hooligans' or 'risk fans'. Elsewhere in Europe we see those labelled (or self-labelled) as Ultras, a term which means many different things to different people. Many of these sub-cultures are fluid, and a spectator may attend different matches in different 'guises' even during the course of a single season. Aside from having a desire (which may vary in enthusiasm between individuals and fixtures) to

watch a particular sporting spectacle, football spectators are not a homogeneous group and any attempt to understand them, manage them or commercially exploit them as such is likely to fail.

In the United Kingdom, ethnographic study of football spectators has played a fundamental role in illuminating the complexity of the football crowd. One of the early ethnographic studies of English fans, by Marsh et al. (1978), drew attention to the different sub-groups that would gather together on a single terrace supporting a single team, as well as casting a critical eye on the threat of 'football hooliganism'. The work in the 1980s of the 'Leicester School' (1988; 1989; 1990) sought to understand football disorder and violence through participant observation and interviews with those groups it identified as risk, looking to locate them in their socio-economic context. In the 1990s the depth of ethnographic study on British football supporters increased as Armstrong (1998) lifted the lid on the reality of football 'hooliganism' in Sheffield, King (2000; 2002) considered English football fans in a changing football landscape and Giulianotti (1991; 1995) looked at Scottish fan behaviour abroad. More recently, the work of Stott et al. (2001; 2012) has used ethnographic methods to great effect to understand the dynamic between crowds and those managing them, and to roll out across Europe best practice in terms of policing strategies and methods. And ethnographic work on football crowds continues apace in the UK from disciplines as varied as social anthropology, sociology, criminology, socio-legal studies and social psychology.

None of these studies, no matter how thorough and authentic, can by themselves account for football fan behaviour, but each places a new piece in a jigsaw that is helping us gradually to understand football spectator and football crowd behaviour. Ethnographic study of football crowds helps us to overcome the prejudices and misunderstandings that may result from 'outsider' research, particularly that carried out by those in authority with vested interests, or by media outlets searching for the sensational. Furthermore, by immersing themselves in the field, ethnographers of football spectators are also able to peer through layers of deception, presentation, 'bluff', fear of authority and reputation management that many football spectators create in order to protect themselves, their fellow spectators, and their clubs.

## A personal ethnographic journey

I 'entered the field' of football crowds in the mid-1990s when I embarked upon a PhD at Lancaster University's Law Department, in

the North-West of England. I carried out research with fans of a lower-league club, Blackpool FC, standing on the terrace behind the goal for every term-time home game for three years and attending the majority of away matches to investigate the effectiveness of legal responses to football crowd disorder or 'hooliganism'. My intention was to evaluate the impact of legislation, policing responses and court judgments upon football crowd behaviour, and to assess the effectiveness of these interventions in reducing public disorder and also on fan civil liberties and human rights.

The research was ethnographic, based on covert participant observation within crowds of football fans at home and away matches. The reason for adopting this methodology was that I did not trust the reliability of data that I could obtain by interview or survey techniques alone. As my primary focus was on spectators committing criminal offences, I was concerned that those engaging in the more serious offences might hide their behaviour from me, whereas others might attempt to exaggerate the extent of their involvement. Ethnographic research (for example, Armstrong, 1998) and the accounts of so-called 'self-confessed hooligans' indicate that football 'hooliganism' is a phenomenon constructed upon reputation; in the UK in particular, the activities of the 'firms' appear to be based upon the desire to enhance their reputations in terms of their ability to defend their own territory and also to lower the reputation of rival firms by humiliating them (either by 'taking' territory at away matches or overcoming them in group confrontation). Furthermore, the reputation of individuals *within* firms is also important; those engaging in these social groups need to be seen to be engaging in violence and disorder at appropriate times and with appropriate opponents in order to gain respect from their peers. As a result, there are agendas at play that can lead to misleading data if research is carried out without observation; those claiming to be 'hooligans' may have an incentive to exaggerate their own involvement, but equally importantly, both 'hooligans' and fans expressing positive attitudes about the value of 'hooliganism' (see Rookwood and Pearson, 2011) may see social value in exaggerating the threat posed by the 'firm' representing their team.

Accounts in hooligan 'confessionals', or those posted on social media, of the same incidents of football disorder frequently disagree upon the outcome of the confrontation and whose reputation was enhanced. Furthermore, even without a deliberate intention to mislead the researcher, qualitative research based completely on interviews or surveys in this area may still lead to inauthentic data. The problems of how football

fans can construct their match-day reality in different ways is set out in this account from Marsh et al.'s *The Rules of Disorder*:

> (I)t is quite clear that fans are capable of giving two very different accounts concerning what happens in conflict situations. At one level (...) they present a picture of violence and destruction – fans get 'booted', 'nutted' and generally beaten up and bottles and flying bricks result in bloodied victims. At a second level, a picture of orderly conflict is presented in which fans make a lot of noise, put on a big show but are really trying to stop the opposition 'giving it a lot of mouth' rather than seriously trying to injure them ... (F)ootball fans construct not a single reality but two distinct realities. On the one hand they view events on the terraces as being bloody and dangerous, and on the other they see the same events as orderly and safe. (1978, p. 95)

We can therefore see the dangers of reliance on 'white-room' interviews (although in this case the researchers were able to pick apart the inconsistencies and challenge the initial account presented to them), and the advantages of the researcher actually going into the field, 'getting their hands dirty' (van Maanen, 1983, p. 280), and observing (and experiencing) the events with their own senses. The above example does, however, also demonstrate that good ethnographic analysis is *possible* without complete immersion in the field.

In the days before institutional research ethics committees were commonplace, I was able to adopt the method of covert participant observation with little opposition. I chose this method primarily to avoid distorting the field so that I could gather more accurate or 'natural' data, but also because I was fearful for my personal safety should I admit to being an academic researcher. British football supporters had to this date not had particularly good experiences with people 'going undercover' – the undercover police operation 'Own Goal' led to several alleged 'hooligans' receiving long custodial sentences for conspiracy to commit violent disorder in the 1980s, and journalists were accused of writing sensationalised reports of violent football crowds that demonised match-going fans (for example, Buford's much maligned *Among the Thugs* [1992]). The year I began my research coincidentally saw the release of the film *ID* (Polygram, 1995) about a team of undercover police officers infiltrating the fictional 'Shadwell Dogs' football club and using the strapline, 'When You Go Under Cover, Remember One Thing ... Who You Are'.

In retrospect, the justifications for choosing the ethically dubious method of covert research were overstated (see Pearson, 2009). Some fans would have undoubtedly refused to assist in my research for fear of being reported to the authorities or being the victims of a media exposé, but the experience of non-covert researchers in football (even following teams they did not personally support) suggests that, actually, football crowds are quite open to academic researchers (see Spaaij and Geilenkirchen, 2011). Likewise, while distorting the field would have been a problem to a certain extent, three years in the field should be enough to gain the trust of research participants and gather enough good quality data to provide findings that were accurate to the reality of what was occurring 'in the field'.

However the problem I was facing when determining my methodology is one familiar to many PhD researchers. For contemporary academics, the PhD is often the best opportunity to engage in an intensive and immersive research project. Doctoral students are usually new academics who are largely free from the pressures of leadership/administration and the pressure to deliver research funding. But they also typically lack the experience that would assist in making methodological decisions. This can be alleviated by the advice of a good supervisor, and guidance from ethics and research committees, but in stark contrast to normal employment practice, in academia one of the most significant career decisions an employee will make is made by those with the least relevant experience.

The other issue with my first ethnographic project was that it was not an ethnography. In fact, the words 'ethnography' and 'ethnographic' were not mentioned once in my thesis. The research was certainly ethnographic, but approached from a critical-legal perspective, it was couched in terms of 'descriptive approaches' and phenomenology. Fundamentally, my thesis was not an ethnography; instead it merely borrowed ethnographic methods and description to achieve its aims of evaluating legal measures and practices. It only set out to describe or explain the culture of the research participants insofar as this behaviour had direct relevance to the legal tools and policing approaches that were the primary focus of my research. As a result, large amounts of ethnographic data were put to one side for well over a decade.

Following the completion of the thesis and joining the University of Liverpool's Football Research Unit, I continued to use participant observation, both covert and then increasingly overt. First, I undertook a study assessing the policing of English fans abroad (both supporting the national team and various club sides). I already had experience of

carrying out ethnographic research with fans of the England national team abroad, having travelled to France for the 1998 World Cup and experiencing one of the most sustained football 'riots' in Europe, involving England fans, local gangs and French riot police over two days in Marseilles. In 2000, I undertook ethnographic research amongst England fans in Belgium at the European Championships, and again witnessed major disorder, this time in Charleroi when England fans in the town square were water-cannoned by Belgium riot police.

More significant for my research on this trip was that in the same town square (and shortly before the water-cannon was deployed), I met Dr Clifford Stott, a social psychologist who also utilised ethnographic techniques to gather data on the effectiveness of public order methods used against football fans. This was to be the start of a large-scale pan-European project investigating best practice in terms of the policing of English fans that in its first stage was funded by the UK Home Office. The primary methodology for this project was again to use immersive ethnographic techniques to uncover how fans experienced the forces of public order, only this time focusing on policing strategies and tactics throughout Europe. Social psychologists from the Elaborated Society Identity Model (ESIM) school led by Stott were able to demonstrate the key importance of policing in terms of whether or not large-scale disorder involving England fans occurred. Ultimately Stott and his colleagues were able to use the data, primarily drawn from ethnographic observations, interviews and qualitative surveys, to persuade the Public Security Police (PSP) in Portugal to adopt a low-profile 'friendly but firm' approach in their management of fans at the 2004 European Championships. Despite initial ridicule in the English-speaking media about the approach, it proved a dramatic success, with only one arrest of an England fan for disorder and no major incidents in any of the PSP-controlled areas. The story of the development of the project is set out in *Football Hooliganism: Policing and the War on the 'English Disease'* (Stott and Pearson, 2007) and demonstrates that although ethnography is of course descriptive, it does not lack the power to influence and change social policy.

The final stage of my ethnographic research focused on match-going supporters of Manchester United. I was a Manchester-based United fan, but for the purposes of my research I started attending matches with a new group of match-goers, attempting to reduce the risk of 'going native' at the outset of my research. Two years into this final stage I finally stepped out of the covert role, satisfied that I would be able to identify any major field distortion and that I would not lose my research

position. This enabled me to gather the type of rich ethnographic data from verbatim conversations and interviews which had been lacking in my covert work. For this final stage, encouraged by colleagues with whom I had established the annual Ethnography Symposium (which in 2015 celebrated its 10th anniversary), I also looked further than the issue of the law, policing and crowd management and started to pay more attention to the culture and behaviour of the fan groups under observations. These I labelled 'carnival fans' because the primary reason for their match attendance was to engage in Bakhtinian 'carnivalesque' activity (Bakhtin, 1984) – transgressions from the norms of everyday life, the gathering in large groups and the heavy social consumption of alcohol. Combining this with shelved data from my work with Blackpool and England fans, I set out my understanding of this supporter sub-culture in *An Ethnography of English Football Fans: Cans, Cops and Carnivals,* which was published by Manchester University Press in 2012.

## Ethnography and the ethnographic

Ethnography is currently one of the popular buzz words in social scientific research, at least in the English-speaking world. However, its appeal is going far beyond the academy; companies selling goods and services are increasingly likely to employ 'ethnographers' to help them understand their consumers and how they use their products. The extent to which these employees are bona fide ethnographers is debateable; indeed, there is still considerable disagreement about exactly what constitutes ethnography. 'Definition of the term *ethnography* has been subject to controversy. For some it refers to a philosophical paradigm to which one makes a total commitment, for others is designates a method that one uses as and when appropriate' (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, p. 248). The latter of these positions is, I believe, untenable: there is an important distinction between ethnographic research and ethnography.

The term 'ethnographic' refers to research methods and approaches that are employed to understand culture. There are a number of methods that are considered ethnographic, most often observation and unstructured or semi-structured interviews. Methods considered to be ethnographic take place 'in the field' – ethnographic researchers normally enter into the cultural space of those they are researching to gain an understanding of how those people live, behave and interpret the world around them. The extent to which research methods that take place outside the field can be considered ethnographic has also been

challenged. Qualitative 'white-room' interviews, surveys and questionnaires, and the use of CCTV or video technology can of course be used to try and understand complex social phenomena and put forward descriptive accounts of culture, but for many researchers (particularly those from the anthropological tradition) the failure to enter the field reduces the claim of these methods to be considered ethnographic.

But even in the case of 'genuine' ethnographic fieldwork, where researchers immerse themselves in the culture they wish to study, we should not assume that the product of these labours will be an ethnography. Ethnographic methods can be used to produce many different types of research; they may, for example, be used to inform or assess the effectiveness of social policy or to support or test a particular theoretical standpoint. However, an ethnography is a very particular outcome and as such may be closer to a research discipline than a methodology (and it is certainly much more than a mere collection of methods): 'Ethnography is not a research method. It is a way of writing about and analysing social life which has roots in both the sciences and the humanities' (Watson, 2011, p. 210).

There are differing opinions on what makes an ethnography, and I would not presume to suggest my own view is definitive or even persuasive, but for me, an ethnography must consist of the following:

1. It must be a written representation of culture (Atkinson, 1994; van Maanen, 1988). Ethnography by definition means quite simply writing about people; ethnographies record accounts of specific communities, social groups, cultures or sub-cultures. The development of so-called 'netnography' also raises the question of whether ethnographies can be written of online or virtual communities, although if so, researchers need to take care that they are describing 'merely' the online rather than attempting to look behind the screen.
2. The account must provide 'thick description' (Geertz 1973, 1983; Ryle 1971) of the social environment. Description is *the* key element of an ethnography. While ethnographers will inevitably look to analyse and theorise, the account should first provide detailed description that goes beyond merely detailing what is apparent on the surface or to the outsider. The understandings, interpretations and motivations of the actors in the field must be understood and form part of the account: ethnography is 'concerned to make sense of the actions and intentions of people as knowledgeable agents . . . and attempts to make sense of their making sense of the events and

opportunities confronting them in everyday life' (Ley, 1988, p. 121). Furthermore, 'the trick of ethnography' is to then 'adequately display the culture . . . in a way that is meaningful to readers without great distortion' (van Maanen, 1988, p. 13). However, while ethnographers may aspire to 'pure description', they must be aware that their account is in fact merely their own interpretation of the field rather than 'an exact, literal picture of some "thing"' (Emerson, 1983, p. 21).

3. In an ethnography, theory can only come after description and must give way to it. The ethnographer should enter into the field, or start their account of the field, with as open a mind as possible rather than with a theory or hypothesis of how the culture works that they are looking to test. Although ethnographers again need to be aware of their own values and prejudices, they should look primarily to provide an account that is true to the field. Theory should be informed by ethnographic description, not the other way around.
4. Ethnographies are invariably microscopic (Geertz, 1973,p. 21). Due to the nature of the type of description needed, and (almost inevitably) the type of longitudinal research techniques required, ethnographies cannot be over-ambitious in scope and instead should focus on a small social sphere. This means that ethnographers must be careful not to claim that their findings can be extrapolated beyond the boundaries of their own research field. Where other ethnographies of similar groups are putting forward similar findings, then a wider picture can be put together like a jigsaw puzzle, but a single ethnography cannot claim to be representative of other groups that have not been under study.
5. Ethnography must provide an authentic account of the field. Because of their microscopic nature, it is rare that the same social group will come under the same level of academic scrutiny. Therefore the ethnographer has a special duty to ensure that their findings are authentic and true to the actual observed reality of the field. One way in which an ethnographer can demonstrate authenticity is to try and make their account accessible to those who were the subjects of the study, but this is of course not always possible.

I have not included the use of ethnographic methods or 'immersion in the field' in my summary of the features that make ethnography a unique approach to social research. This is controversial, and many ethnographers argue that immersion in the field is an essential part of ethnography. For example, van Maanen argues that ethnography

comes from the combination of fieldwork, headwork and textwork (van Maanen, 2011, p. 218) and Willis and Trondman argue that 'Ethnography is the disciplined and deliberate *witness-cum-recording* [my emphasis] of human events' (2000, p. 5). My assertion is that it is conceptually important to separate ethnography and ethnographic methods. Ethnography is a very specific type of recording of culture and the emphasis for its definition should be on *the nature and presentation of the record*. I contend that ethnography does not by definition need to be the result of immersion in the field, observations or repeated qualitative interview. However, it is clear that such ethnographic methods are by far and away the best way of ensuring that the account is a genuine and authentic account of culture. Indeed, without such immersion it is virtually impossible to produce such an account and be sure of its validity. Therefore the point, while conceptually important, in practical terms may well be irrelevant.

## Insider research and the new age of football ethnography

The level to which immersion within the culture of the field is important for the gathering of authentic data raises another issue relating to the problem of 'going native'. This phrase (which has received criticism from researchers of indigenous groups) refers to the situation where the ethnographer assumes the values and prejudices of those under observation and uncritically replicates these 'biases' in their account, or – more commonly – fails to report that which has been normalised by the research participants but which is worthy of academic enquiry and report. This poses a dilemma for ethnographers who on the one hand are informed that they must immerse themselves in the field in order to have any chance of uncovering authentic data, but on the other told that they must keep sufficient distance in order to avoid 'going native' and failing to report the right data. Geertz describes the ethnographer's juggling of authenticity and distance as an impossible act of 'ethnographic ventriloquism' (1988, p. 145) and Pearson suggests that that all the ethnographer can hope to achieve is 'to give voice' to research participants and 'bridge between the experiences of actors and audiences' (1993, p. xviii).

Famously, the Leicester School's critique of ethnographic accounts of football 'hooliganism' accused some ethnographers of going native and judging the nature and scale of the issue by the standards of the 'hooligans', thereby downplaying the seriousness of the problem. In particular they suggested that Armstrong 'may have been "native" from the

outset' (1991, pp. 467–8). While my own view of Armstrong's account was that it was sufficiently reflexive in its approach and in what it reported to deflect this claim, the critique of ethnographic approaches does raise some interesting questions for the current crop of football crowd ethnographers. Can and should ethnographers study football groups they are closely acquainted with? Are the advantages of studying fans of the team you support in terms of authenticity outweighed by the disadvantages in terms of distance? Have we focused too much on the importance of immersion and being – or becoming – an 'insider'? Can outsiders cast a more critical eye on complex social structures such as football crowds than a researcher who is a 'native'?

In my own research, I attempted to steer a course between the two extremes. I was an outsider when I began my research with Blackpool FC, and even after a number of years' covert participant observation this fact was occasionally highlighted by comments from the fans in relation to my accent: 'You're not from round here, are you,' stated one participant on an occasion when I attempted to engage in terrace 'banter'. However, I did have family connections to the town (helpful for obtaining tickets and for my 'cover' as a covert researcher) and in terms of age, race and gender I fitted the 'typical' fan that I was researching; I certainly felt I was an insider by the end of my fieldwork, even if my accent was not quite right. Similarly, I also felt an outsider when I started my research with England. I was English and fitted well the demographic of fans travelling with the team, but my support of the national side was by no means wholehearted and I also felt a distinct outsider when research participants expressed openly racist views, which was not uncommon. The closest I was to a complete insider was during the final part of my research with Manchester United. As a United fan and Manchester resident, it could be claimed that I was a 'native'. However I also ensured that the fans who formed the focal point of my research were not from the same social groups I had previously attended matches with (although many became good friends and social match-going companions afterwards). With all three of the clubs researched I felt that I 'got' what it meant to be a fan, while retaining enough distance to record what I should and without uncritically replicating biases. But then of course the problem is that the ethnographer is in the worst position to be able to identify whether or not they have 'gone native'!

In football research particularly, the emphasis has been on the importance of 'fitting in' to the crowd in order to avoid distorting the field and to gain acceptance amongst research participants. One critique

of ethnographers of European football is that they have been overwhelmingly young to middle-aged, male, white, able-bodied, expressing heterosexual norms, and that they tend to be researching fans falling into the same demographic (Hughson, 1998; Poulton, 2012; Richards, 2014). Meanwhile most of the *ethnographic* research into female football fans has been carried out by female researchers (for example, Jones, 2008; Pope, 2013). Of course there have been exceptions to the rule that ethnographic researchers tend to focus on their own demographic (for example, Richards, 2014; Sale, 2010; Spaaij, 2006) but if the majority of researchers feel limited in this way, this is clearly not a healthy situation for the future of ethnographic research into football fans either in terms of opportunity for researchers, or the 'type' of fan groups that will be researched. Furthermore, does this pattern run the risk of missing data that may best be uncovered by outsiders? Now we have a solid base of ethnographic knowledge about European football fan behaviour, is there an advantage to be had in terms of data-gathering by deliberately distorting the field and seeing what results arise?

*New Ethnographies of Football in Europe: People, Passions, Politics* adds to the existing body of ethnographic research on football fans, crowds and sub-cultures by bringing accounts from across Europe and Israel. It is also a timely collection that goes some way towards addressing building concerns about the nature of ethnographic study of football fandom. Countering some of the criticisms about the type of fans typically selected for study, this collection includes accounts of previously under-researched groups: female fans, gay fans, children's fan cultures and exiled or displaced fan communities. Appropriately it also returns to the home of ethnographic perspectives on football in Gordon and Grundlingh's chapter on 'Max Gluckman and the Anthropology of Football'. *New Ethnographies of Football in Europe* provides 11 new pieces of the jigsaw that helps to build up our understanding of the long misunderstood and misrepresented football fan community, and puts new and innovative forms of football fan ethnography into the academic spotlight.

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# Series Editors' Preface

*Albrecht Sonntag and David Ranc*

Imagine, like the anthropologist Desmond Morris did over thirty years ago (Morris, 1981), arriving on planet earth in UFO from outer space. You have gathered some information about the place, and it suggests you land in Europe, which seems to be the favourite destination of the spontaneous intra-terrestrial travelling which the earthlings have named 'tourism'. You steer your spaceship towards the statistically most popular destination called 'France' and you schedule your landing in the middle of the solar year when temperatures are the most favourable.

If everything went according to plan and you happened to land in France in June 2016, how would you explain the bizarre behaviour of all these humans gathering in huge roofless temples or huddling up in open spaces with painted faces and weird hats, waving colourful pieces of tissue? You would probably interpret it as a kind of sacred dance, religious ritual or magical invocation. You would probably shake your head (or whatever it is you'd shake as an alien) in disbelief about these savage earthlings and their obsessions, but you would nevertheless be intrigued by this ritual called 'football' and give it a close look. If it means so much to them, there must be more to it than meets the eye!

Obviously, as an extra-terrestrial, you would not have been socialised into a football community, and it is highly unlikely you would develop a liking for this game. But that would not be a problem. Once returned to your home planet or galaxy, you would not need to become a promoter of this strange pastime (although you would not be the first one to export football to a culturally very different environment), but you would be expected to be able to explain what it says about the place you visited. Perhaps you would invent a new term, in whatever language or form of communication is favoured by your home society, for your role in analysing, understanding and explaining what you observed on site. Or you might come up with something like 'anthropologist', an individual devoted to the 'study of the behaviour and the social and cultural development of earthlings'.

Some of the pioneers of ethnographic football research, such as Desmond Morris, Christian Bromberger or Max Gluckman (to whom a chapter of this book is dedicated), must have felt like extra-terrestrials in their academic environment, having to justify over and over again their interest in what they called 'the soccer tribe' (Morris, 1981) or 'the most serious trifle in the world' (Bromberger, 1998).

Their successors, such as the international consortium of researchers that compose the FREE Project (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe) and on whose work this book series is based, still face some raised eyebrows with their trivial pursuit, but times have changed. Nowadays even the most sceptical intellectual must admit that football, Europe's most widely shared social practice and popular passion, capable of reaching out to hundreds of millions of individuals, has something to say about contemporary European society. If the social sciences are about gaining a better understanding of the society that surrounds us, about questioning what 'goes without saying', about searching for coherent explanations of the 'strange' behaviour patterns and often contradictory actions of different social groups, then football stadiums, sports bars and giant screens are excellent places to start with.

The very existence of this book series is due to this new academic legitimacy of football studies. When, in 2010, the European Commission issued a call for innovative, collaborative European research projects that would study 'The Anthropology of European Integration' by focusing on 'day-to-day lives, experiences, perceptions, values and identities of citizens' and looking 'from different disciplinary perspectives at cultural, social, behavioural formations and transformations of everyday life in the context of European integration', the authors of this call did not think of football as a potential topic. Instead, they suggested dealing with issues such as 'European mobility programmes', 'effects of the free movement of labour', or 'the introduction of the euro'.

The initiators of the FREE Project, despite their strong assumption that there could not be a better subject than football for studying perception patterns and identity dynamics outside the political sphere, were well aware of the fact that they were taking a great risk in drafting a proposal entirely based on such an allegedly 'futile' object of research. Still, to the surprise of everyone involved, they succeeded in convincing the evaluators of the pertinence and relevance of their topic.

The project itself was a unique opportunity to explore both the 'Big Picture' – European society and the public sphere of football it hosts – and the multitude of small pictures that ethnographic field work in

social groups of all forms and sizes and in a large variety of local settings can reveal. In order to get a grasp of the former, the project was genuinely interdisciplinary in nature, bringing together researchers from different disciplines of the social sciences and humanities. But in order to get a deep idea of the latter, it was designed around a strong anthropological core, which was constituted by the teams from Vienna and Poznań, and it reached out to other researchers around the continent and beyond who were engaged in ethnographic field work in different football communities.

The conference, which is at the origin of this volume, held its promise to collect highly original studies of what football means to very specific groups in very specific settings. While the book series in which it is published provides a large frame for the 'Big Picture', the present volume may be compared to an album that offers a revealing look at many small pictures – pictures that are complementary and that mutually reinforce their respective messages, pictures that make a very relevant contribution to the series' overall objective.

It is with a very straightforward expression of deep intellectual satisfaction that the series editors (and former coordinators of the FREE Project) introduce this collection of 'New Ethnographies of Football in Europe'. It is no less than a convincing confirmation of the project's basic assumption about football's capacity to tell us something about what living together in Europe actually means. And living together on our small continent indeed hinges on people, passions and politics, as the volume's sub-title very appropriately recalls.

We also abuse our privileged position in this preface in order to thank not only the four editors for their work, but to extend these thanks to Geoff Pearson, one of most outstanding protagonists of ethnographic research on football (Pearson, 2012), who has enriched the collection with a recollection on his own discovery of fan cultures, as well as to Simon Kuper, one of the world's best-known football writers and commentators, who has been among the first supporters of the FREE project's very rationale, and who has offered us an insightful and encouraging afterword.

We always thought that in football there is much more than meets the eye. Drowned by the permanent media noise generated by top-flight professional football, many of its social and cultural dimensions do not get the attention they deserve, either from society or from academia. But thanks to books like this, our assumptions about the sheer diversity of football's many facets find themselves confirmed in the most convincing manner.

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**Simon Kuper** is a columnist for the *Financial Times* and author of football-related books. His first book, *Football against the Enemy* (1994), won the William Hill Sports Book of the Year award. Other football-related books include *Ajax, The Dutch, The War: Football in Europe during the Second World War* (2003) and *Soccernomics* (2009), which he co-authored with economist Stefan Szymanski. He has 33,000 followers on Twitter.

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**Geoff Pearson** is Senior Lecturer in Criminal Law at the University of Manchester. Previously he was Director of Studies for the MBA (Football Industries) programme at the University of Liverpool. Since his PhD, titled ‘Legal Responses to Football Crowd Disorder’ (1999), he has established himself as a scholar focusing on the relationship between football and the law. His research interests include law and civil liberties, the policing of football crowds, football hooliganism, and professional football in the European Union. A founding member of the Ethnography Symposium, he is well known for his application of ethnographic fieldwork methods to football fans. His most recent book, *An Ethnography of English Football Fans: Cans, Cops and Carnivals* (2012), was based on 15 years of ethnographic research.

**David Ranc** is an Assistant Professor in European Studies at ESSCA School of Management in Paris (France), where he is part of the ‘EU-Asia Institute’. He has researched football over the last ten years (including supporters’ reaction to the influx of ‘foreign’ players in their club; and the passion for Sócrates Brasileiro or George Best). He is the author of *Foreign Players and Football Supporters: The Old Firm, Paris Saint-Germain,*

*Arsenal* (2012). Between 2012 and 2015, David Ranc was the project manager for the FP7 Football Research in an Enlarged Europe (FREE) project which included nine partner institutions in eight countries. Born in Paris, David lived in the UK (Cambridge and London) for 11 years and, among other places, in Brussels and Singapore for a shorter while. His personal website is at www.davidranc.com.

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**Albrecht Sonntag** is Professor of European Studies and Associate Dean at the ESSCA School of Management in Angers (France), where he is in charge of the 'EU-Asia Institute'. He has researched extensively on international football over the last 15 years. His book *Les identités du football européen* was awarded the UCPF prize for the best academic football book in 2009. He was the initiator and coordinator of the FREE project (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe), a transnational and

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**Nina Szogs** studied European Ethnology, Peace and Conflict Studies, and Russian Philology in Marburg, Gießen and Kazan. After her graduation, she worked for a human rights organisation in Berlin. In the FREE Project (FP7), Nina was part of the anthropological research strand located at the University of Vienna. Her research focuses on transnationalism, mobility and migration. In her ethnographic study of Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe fans in Vienna, she looked into the translocal strategies and practices of football supporters abroad. For her research, she conducted qualitative interviews and participant observations in Austria, Turkey and Germany over a period of 18 months.

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# 1
# Introduction
## People, Passions and Much More: the Anthropology of Football

*Michał Buchowski, Małgorzata Z. Kowalska, Alexandra Schwell and Nina Szogs*

### Football: a complex transnational phenomenon

Football has acquired an enormous transnational popularity, of which, it seems, we do not have to convince anybody. Football is one of these phenomena such as reality shows, soap operas, Sudoku, Rubik's cube, pop songs, food-to-go, Pepsi or Coca-Cola, hot-dogs, pizza and sushi, that in many respects meet the basic requirements for becoming globally diffused: 'little culturally specific knowledge'; 'an emotional, sensory or intellectual appeal which transcends local concerns'; something that 'is effectively marketed transnationally' (Eriksen, 2007, p. 156).

The first point in particular emphasises that the content of this knowledge should be easily communicable and understandable for the 'masses', popular and accessible like a driving licence. This makes a given phenomenon so 'easy' that virtually everybody has something to say about it as an 'expert', equal to anybody else. Whether football is popular globally, however, is questionable, despite its Eurocentric image. It is difficult to have a conversation about football on the streets of New Delhi, where most people you will talk to are able and eager to discuss cricket. New Zealanders are keen to comment on rugby rather than football. In their home country, Finnish footballers can only dream about the salaries and popularity of hockey players. In the last case, players of the national team in hockey play for leading and rich clubs in the US, Russia and Canada, while members of the national football team are usually secondary players dispersed across the continent in clubs ranging from (rarely) top leagues to (mainly) meagre ones. The salary of the

best paid hockey player in 2013, Mikko Koivu ($7.3 million/year) from Minnesota Wild (Bhandari, 2013), is hardly comparable to, for instance, the salary of one the top Finnish footballers of today, Mikael Forssell, formerly playing for Chelsea, Birmingham, Leeds and now VfL Bochum (currently in the 2nd Bundesliga). In short, we have to realise that there are parts of the world, and even countries in Europe, where football is not the dominant discipline that preoccupies minds and hearts of the majority of sport followers and enthusiasts. This is the main reason why we opt to call this popular game called football, and everything that surrounds it, a *transnational* rather than a global phenomenon.

There is another, in fact partly sad, reason to take a restrained attitude towards football's assumed dominant place in ordinary people's symbolic universe and emotional reality. It is generally being taken for granted that all humanity has access to live coverage of major football events; but this is wishful thinking or a kind of imaginary imperialism. In many regions of the world whole populations do not even have access to electricity, let alone TV sets or broadcasters showing football games. Even if, as it was the case, the *clasico* between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid on 22 March 2015 was watched by four hundred million people around the world, it comprises 'barely' 17–18 per cent of the world population. Of course, this is an impressive number for any kind of event, but claims that all people on earth are interested in, have the possibility to watch or are actually willing to watch football, are vastly exaggerated.

Still, the name of the game is probably one of the most popular words in the world, present in many languages in a literal translation from its original English meaning. Just a few examples: *Fußball* in German, *fotbal* in Czech, *fotboll* in Swedish, *fotball* in Norwegian and *fodbold* in Danish. The name of the game may sound more 'odd' in some non-Anglo-Saxon European languages such as *piłka nożna* in Polish, *nogomet* in Croatian, *calcio* in Italian, *jalgpall* in Estonian, *jalkapallo* in Finnish or *labdarúgás* and *foci* in Hungarian. Its designations may appear even more 'exotic' to any European language speaker if we go elsewhere – *zúqiú* in Chinese, *soccer* in American English or *paanv se khelne ka gend* in Hindi. But there is nothing strange about the fact that one deals with a phenomenon which has many names, especially when they sound similar or mean the same when translated. We could use Ferdinand de Saussure's (1931) old and celebrated scheme about the relationship between 'object in the world' and 'sound image' in order to interpret this in terms of structural linguistics.

However, it is not the contributors' aim of this volume to delve into the linguistics of the word 'football'. As social scientists, we are fully

aware that there does not exist a single, 'unified' phenomenon in the world 'out there', which may be called differently in various languages, but essentially means 'the same' thing. This is not to imply that we deny the existence of a set of practices habitually called 'football' in English, or, in order to be more inclusive and cover a wider area of social life, 'football-related-phenomena'.

Certainly, football exists as a team sport that has its basic rules, which have been changing in details and interpretation over decades. But, more importantly for us anthropologists, as a game football is played every day by tens of millions of people of divergent skills, age, gender, social status, ethnicity and religion, both as amateurs and as professionals. The latter category implies that football has become a form of vocation, a job, an occupation for hundreds of thousands of people around the world – players, managers, coaches, physical education teachers, physicians, psychologists, and in some countries even sorcerers and priests. With people 'working in football', it has become an industry, a business, a branch of the economy; as an industry it responds to market demands as well as to desires, both of which have to be produced and kept alive. The market also involves advertising and raising consumption needs; consumers' needs are therefore served not only by footballers and staff from the clubs and leagues, but also by journalists, marketing specialists, stadium builders and many others. The end consumers are football fans who watch the game live or on screen. The game's enormous popularity makes 'football' and 'football-related-phenomena' integral parts of popular culture. By engaging people it forges social relations and mobilises communities, and such mobilisation requires and engenders identities based on inclusion and exclusion. We can go further in expanding this list of facts and occurrences that are more or less closely connected with this contemporary worldwide practice and well-known game called football. Nevertheless, the aim of this exercise is merely to show how complex these football-related phenomena are, and, *eo ipso*, how difficult it is to study such their intricate social and cultural complexity.

## The anthropology of football

It is no wonder that such a multifaceted and transnational phenomenon is a subject of study of many long-established disciplines, such as sociology and political sciences (see Bora and Senyuva, 2011; Brand et al., 2010; Dietschy et al., 2009; King, 2003; Roose et al., 2010), media and cultural studies (see Sandvoss, 2003; Marschik, 2006), and gender studies

(see Dietze, 2012; Erhart, 2011; Nuhrat, 2013; Selmer and Sülzle, 2010). One may even say that a new field of 'football studies', bringing together experts from various disciplines, has emerged.[1] The book series, of which this volume is a part, gives evidence to this fact. This volume, however, is about the sociocultural *anthropology of football*. We have already mentioned how complex such culturally popular phenomena are – not only do they transgress the borders of states and continents, but moreover they are deeply embedded in social life to influence grass-roots-level behaviours, habits and customs. Football-related events, facts, images and practices seem to be 'natural' candidates for anthropological investigations – or, as the famous football anthropologist Christian Bromberger concluded at the Kick-off conference of the FREE Project in 2012, 'I still think football is a precious gift to anthropologists. I sometimes even wonder if it was not invented to please them!'

Several reasons inevitably come to mind. Firstly, football bears striking parallels to one of the classical objects of anthropological concern: *ritual* performances. In this respect, there are contradictory currents present in both ritual and in sport: formalisation and rigidity on the one hand, and spontaneity on the other. Football, both on the pitch and among spectators and distant viewers, is about rules and tactical discipline, but at the same time improvisations are highly valued and expected – an extraordinary strike reminding one of a kung-fu kick (in the style of Zlatan Ibrahimović) or even an unexpected funny slogan, like the one displayed by Lech Poznań fans at the Legia Warsaw stadium on 27 September 2014: 'Warsaw is the Radom of Europe' (Radom being a small city in Poland, a popular Polish icon of parochialism and backwardness). The football game resembles a ritual with a prescribed scenario, and a person who attends games systematically can have the impression that s/he participates in a weekly religious service – raising hands, singing the club's anthem, shouting slogans, jumping up, and whistling or clapping (see Bromberger, 1995a). There are actors and spectators, leaders and followers, engaged participants, aloof watchers and cold experts. As a kind of a ritual act the game shows features of rigidity, formality and redundancy. In a sense it is a 'drama itself that can be analysed with methods that are appropriate for studying theatrical performances'.

Rituals are not only routinised acts with a margin for impulsiveness, but can also have certain *social functions*, such as celebrated rituals of rebellion, a term coined by Max Gluckman. In his two major publications on South African tribes he provided two different understandings of these rituals. Initially (1954), he understood these rituals to be just

superficially rebellious, while in fact being conservative, renewing and in effect strengthening the status quo. In the introduction of his next publication, however, Gluckman (1963) admitted that such rebellions could eventually lead to social splitting and divisions – in his words, revolutions. In any case, we do not have to be concerned here with the classification of social functions, whether they are merely unruly, but conformist acts or world-shattering enactments. More importantly for us, several behavioural patterns of football fans that are understood as rituals could be read as challenging political and cultural hegemony, the existing social order. Football games give an opportunity for staging carnivals, and openly repudiating mainstream values and established hierarchies (see Pearson, 2012). Often, football supporters ostensibly and deliberately express standards and morals that are generally repudiated or even condemned by the dominant majority. It was Pierre Bourdieu who perceived spectators as caricature of militancy, since their participation in the sport field is only imaginary. This is true, since their knowledge has been appropriated by the coaches, journalists and bureaucrats (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 185), as well as, we may add, more recently by scholars such as ourselves, working on sport. However, Eduardo Archetti rightly notes that Bourdieu's 'hypothesis was [...] advanced before football hooliganism became [...] an acute social problem in England and other European countries' (Archetti, 1999, p. 92).

Beyond hooliganism, in many countries on the Old Continent football fans persistently resist existing cultural hegemony and social order. They can also act as important agents in the political scene. It was the Zvonimir Stadium in Zagreb during the game between Crvena Zvezda Belgrade and Dinamo Zagreb on 13 May 1990[2] where the first sparks of the bloody conflicts in Yugoslavia occurred (see also Đorđević and Žikić, Chapter 3 in this volume; Hodges and Stubbs, Chapter 4 in this volume). The role of football fans in the Arab Spring has now been fully acknowledged (see Poupore, 2014; Ranc and Alpan 2015, p. 20). Joint political action of the three big Istanbul clubs was aptly presented in the documentary 'Istanbul United', directed in 2013 by Farid Eslam and Oliver Waldhauer.[3] Polish fans, divided in many ways in antagonistic, hostile factions and alliances, nevertheless are capable of forming a united 'patriotic' front against the government, rallying on the streets of Warsaw each year on the national holiday (see Niezależny, 2011). More recently, we have also been witnessing a systematic rise in the importance of fans as active agents in the organisation and functioning of football clubs (see Garcia and Welford, 2015, pp. 20–21). In sum, football

supporters are not at all devoid of their agency, but quite the contrary – they are anything but passive viewers. Last but not least, this view can be supported by an obvious commercial reason: the so-called popular modern football cannot simply function in the capitalist economy without consumers ready to watch it and pay for watching it.

The second aspect of all football-related practices that makes them 'natural' candidates for anthropological investigations is the ways in which they create group *identities*. Modes of inclusion and exclusion are multifarious and occur on different levels, they crisscross and cut through the social strata. This aspect of football fans' lives, especially so-called football hooliganism, issues of tribalism, loyalties and community formation, has already been extensively researched. Let us underscore here two questions, one of which has at least become partly forgotten. Many sports practices, and football-related practices in particular, should be treated, *inter alia*, as tools of *indoctrination*. Some scholars (such as Hargreaves, 1986) claim that sport, either consciously or unintentionally, establishes certain lifestyles, values, a simultaneous spirit of rivalry and cooperation; it creates role models and shapes attitudes to life, peers, community and others. Some among these values are characteristic of capitalist society, while others feed social *tribalism* that can take the shape of *nationalism* or even chauvinism.

The latter two have already been addressed in the literature. Football teams are often treated as representations of national groups, which supporters aim at strengthening, and with whom they emotionally identify. Analytically, on the one hand, a given team and its national fans are treated as a *metaphor* of the state or nation. In such a symbolically permeated perception based on James Frazer's 'Law of Similarity' (1963, pp. 12–14), this relationship assists a more 'relaxed attitude' to the question of nation and nationalism. For instance, it is a joyful expression of national belonging when fans across the world watch contemporary mega-events such as the World Cup and support their national teams. This is what all of the authors of this introduction observed during the European Championship (Euro 2012) in Poznań, among the Irish fans in particular (see Buchowski and Kowalska, 2014). On the other hand, national teams can be perceived as metonyms of the nation where the Frazerian 'Law of Contagion' is at work. The national team then figures as *pars pro toto* of the nation itself. In such a context the game becomes a question of honour, almost a matter life and death. A defeat of 'our' team is regarded almost literally as a shame to all of 'us', while victory proves our superiority. The qualifier between the national teams of Croatia and Serbia held shortly after the Yugoslav wars, presented

in the documentary *The Last Yugoslav Football Team* directed by Vuk Janić in 2000, is a telling example. It is pivotal to keep in mind that in practice metonymic and metaphoric associations often go hand-in-hand. Metaphor easily transforms into metonym, and vice versa; frequently they merge and form a sort of palimpsest (see Buchowski, 1996).

## Anthropological studies on football

There is no doubt that so far we could indicate only some selected items of anthropological interest in football, and some of them have already been covered by ethnographic research. The following short overview of these studies can only complement the previous part of this text and illustrate when and how various domains of football relevant for the content of this volume have been studied in anthropology.

According to Eduardo P. Archetti (1999: pp. 94–96), it seems that Brazilian scholars were among the first to cast their anthropological eye on football. Already in the 1960s, Mário Rodrigues Filho (1964) published a book on black players and racism in Brazilian football. This line of social inquiry was continued, for instance, by Anatol Rosenfeld (1992) and J. Sérgio Leite Lopes (1997). But it was Roberto DaMatta (1982), formerly an expert on Amazonian Indians, who opened the doors for fully fledged anthropological studies on football in Brazil. According to his studies, football expresses the fundamental symbolic values of Brazilian society. In a symbolic system that strictly distinguished between the universes of home and street, football represents a public ritual in which both the personalised social universe of home and the depersonalised universe of the street come together (DaMatta, 1982, p. 17; after Archetti, 1999, p. 94). Football is an arena that provides a possibility for individuals to break free of the rigid shackles of a social hierarchy that is defined by race, class and poverty.

In the English-language literature, usually Desmond Morris (1981) is mentioned as the first one who interpreted football-related phenomena in terms of anthropology. As a matter of fact, in a pioneering fashion he gave an original insight into the behaviour patterns and rituals of what he called 'The Soccer Tribe'. He used football as an example to illustrate his larger theoretical insights on human nature, but for him it soon became clear that 'each centre of football activity – each football club – was organised like a small tribe, complete with tribal territory, tribal elders, with doctors, heroes, camp-followers and other assorted tribesmen' (Morris, 1981, p. 8). This study set a pattern for many followers

who strengthened their research using ethnographic methods. The first among them was the French anthropologist Christian Bromberger (1995b) who, with his associates, carried out an ethnographic study in three southern European cities: Turin, Naples and Marseilles. Drawing upon this comparison, he was able to demonstrate the complexity of the process of creating intricate local identities, which involved passions and emotions. Similarly, the contributions to the book *Entering the Field*, edited by Armstrong and Giulianotti (1997), constitute a rather sociological attempt to present football in a both comparative and universal perspective. Football here was treated as an emotionally charged ritualistic channel through which various ideals are expressed – ranging from masculinity via the creation of the 'other' and the glorified self to the formation of a community in which hierarchies can be turned upside-down, like in the Bakhtinian carnival. It is noteworthy that these are exactly the issues that lie at the core of anthropology, as mentioned above.

Moreover, many authors closely scrutinise the divergent meanings football acquires in local contexts and for different groups of people. In a popular writing, in the footsteps of Simon Kuper's pioneering book *Football against the Enemy* (1996), Franklin Foer (2004) has shown how football functions in disparate locales in Serbia, Glasgow, Vienna, London (Chelsea), Brazil, Ukraine, Milan, Barcelona, Tehran, and in the United States. Like Kuper, he portrays football's different faces in these places, such as hooliganism and corruption, racism, ethnic hatred, anti-Semitism, nationalism and patriotism. In most of these publications the 'field' emerges as a notion with a double meaning – either the local club, inviting anthropologists to conceive of fans and fan clubs in terms of 'tribes', or the national arena as a locus of wider identity and social issues.

Football hooliganism is the football-related issue that has attracted the most attention from social researchers. This is football fandom in its most expressive and violent form, often coupled with an interest in the link between football and nationalism or excessive local/club patriotism (Armstrong, 2003; Frosdick and Marsh, 2005; Spaaij, 2006; Cawthorne and Cawthorne, 2012). Following the disasters of Heysel (1985) and Hillsborough (1989), football hooliganism was clearly on the research agenda in the United Kingdom, both with regard to policy relevance and access to funding. Skinheads, having been described as one of football's numerous subcultures, John Clarke as early as 1976 found that they aim at a 'magical recovery of community' in football (Clarke, 1976). Indeed, football fans can be described using categories that have

been developed within subculture theory, particularly pointing to the homology of appearance, jargon and attitude (Hebdige, 1996) – issues that, again, are close to anthropologists' attention.

## Beyond an anthropological state-of-the-art

The contributors to this volume have the ambition to go beyond the paradigms of cultural studies and sociology by applying anthropological tools and concepts to the study of football. Their aim is to address the important symbolic meanings that are inherent in processes in which many social, cultural, political, economic and historical dimensions and antagonisms related to football are negotiated. This is thanks to football's strong symbolic dimensions, its role as a proxy for political and social dispute, and its carnivalesque rituals and playful performances that often entail a social inversion.

The chapters presented within this book analyse football's impact on *everyday lives and identity dynamics within Europe*. Thereby, the football phenomenon is not only perceived as being related to class relations and subculture, but at the same time as a symbolic domain that produces social identities at various levels. Well aware of the fact that modern football was born in England and that Ultra groups and hooliganism are an important part of football fan culture, the book looks beyond these traditional research fields to open a new and fresh perspective on the subject of European football.

Using *anthropological research methods* and data collected from *ethnographic fieldwork*, most of the respective chapters analyse social fields in fan culture and the everyday lives of supporters. Many of the contributors have spent a significant period of time with football fans trying to understand what fandom means to them and how it is embedded in socio-cultural contexts. In effect, there is a significant value added resulting from a detailed analysis of transnational and European phenomena from a close *grass-roots* and *actor-centred* perspective.

Playing and watching football is strongly linked to power structures in various respects. The respective chapters discuss why football is often perceived as a predominantly male, heterosexual and 'white' sport in the public imagination. Several chapters meticulously scrutinise the strategies of the *new actors* that are entering the field and (re)claiming it.

By scrutinising different football microcosms in Europe the book shows how global and European developments not only influence the everyday lives of football fans, but also of other actors beyond the pitch. Rather than perceive actors as 'cultural dopes' (Swidler, 1986),

the different chapters emphasise their agency. They view them as active cultural agents, thus taking into account the possibility of negotiation and also subversion. Nonetheless, since Europeanisation and an increasing mobility in Europe, by both supporters and players, have a crucial impact on the self-perception of football fans, the contributions also analyse how fan performances are created and practised in an entanglement of Europeanisation, globalisation, commercialisation and migration – in short, they offer a glimpse into football's impact on people's lives from an anthropological perspective. An in-depth analysis of football therefore must stretch beyond usual geographical and thematic foci.

## The content of the book[4]

The contributions in this book focus on the ways in which the 'Other' is created among fans and on the way exclusion and inclusion practices are enacted, narrated and reproduced. This also affects social fields that are not directly linked to the football pitch. Following a very personal account by Geoff Pearson (Preface) on his experience with ethnological field work on football, the collection starts with a chapter on a historical figure of football anthropology. In 'Going for the Reds: Max Gluckman and the Anthropology of Football', Robert Gordon and Marizanne Grundlingh scrutinise the pioneering interest in football developed by Max Gluckman, the South African-born anthropologist. He was appointed as chair at Manchester University in 1949 and turned out to be a passionate supporter of Manchester United. Gluckman went so far as to even compel his colleagues and students to attend his favourite team games. Gordon and Grundlingh investigate the contribution of Gluckman to the establishment of what is now called the Anthropology of Sport. He also encouraged other people to study sports, especially football, and was active in works of scientific boards interested in sports. The authors convincingly demonstrate that Gluckman's interest in football had an influence on his general social theories, in particular those dealing with ritual and conflict.

These two contributions are followed by a section focusing on 'The Political Field'. Ivan Đorđević's and Bojan Žikić's account of the football matches which people are most passionate about in Serbia and Croatia, that is, those between the two national teams, revolves around the topics of self-orientalisation and the martial past of the region. The latter is still being recalled and referred to in contemporary processes of building both national and European identities in the two

countries. Despite the emphasis on 'normalisation' in official public discourses – required by the procedures of accession to the EU – the two researchers argue that football still evokes strong emotions and resentments in Balkan stadiums. Moreover, these emotions, as well as the constant dialogue between the old foes and 'new' neighbours, are essential to the process of creating and recreating the two national identities, although they are being reshaped in new political circumstances and by new political needs. Therefore, matches between Croatia and Serbia remain of much greater importance than almost any other football meeting on the international level. There is no doubt that this chapter on 'Normalising Political Relations through Football: the Case of Croatia and Serbia' fits into the tradition of anthropological studies on the relation between football and nationalism. This one is based on extensive ethnographic research that makes the authors' conclusion empirically well-grounded and therefore all the more convincing.

Andrew Hodges and Paul Stubbs remain in the same region. Focusing on the Ultra groups of two clubs in Zagreb, in their contribution on 'The Paradoxes of Politicisation: Fan Initiatives in Zagreb', they discuss the 'perceived membership of the supporters' world' and 'a sense of the everyday meanings which fans place on themselves and others'. Their account is an illuminating illustration of how longitudinal ethnographic fieldwork – including personal engagement – can be used in the anthropological analysis of particular identities, alliances and negotiations of meaning. Here again, on-site research and ethnographic analyses are windows into complexity (see Candea, 2007, p. 181), which open a possibility to challenge the validity of such supposedly 'obvious' categories as neoliberalism, Ultra culture and the infamous 'Balkan ghosts' (Kaplan, 1993).

Closing this section, Hani Zubida's contribution, 'We Are One! Or Are We? Football Fandom and Ethno-National Identity in Israel', provides an in-depth insight into the Israeli context. Building on the tradition of football and identity studies, Zubida argues that Jewish football fans of Beitar Jerusalem create a nationalistic, even racist discourse excluding others, but that this is not uniquely specific for supporters of this club alone. Other clubs' fans also use a similar discourse, which obviously leads to the exclusion of the Arab 'Others'. Referring also to research on fans of Hapoel Tel Aviv and Maccabi Tel Aviv, Zubida manages to show in a nuanced way how various latent and explicit discourses compete and coexist, and thus form and utilise the nationality discourse. In reaction to this, the Arab identity is strengthened: Arab fans

congregated around one team, Be'nei (or Abna') Sakhnin, representing the Palestinian nationality.

The following section focuses on 'agency'. Małgorzata Z. Kowalska turns our attention to football-related phenomena in the sphere of public discourses on social values and well-being. In her chapter on 'Hegemony in Question? Euro 2012 and Local Politics in the City of Poznań', she discusses the impact of a football mega-event. In the Polish city of Poznań, Euro 2012 was considered a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create the city's image as a truly European metropolis, and to reinforce its position in the global competition for attracting profitable investments and affluent visitors – a chance which could not be wasted. However, what was seen as an obligation for the city officials and a self-evident truth for middle-class and business investors was not necessarily perceived as a civic duty by others. Not only did Euro 2012 change the infrastructure and brand of the city, but it also engendered a discussion on its future shape and character. Kowalska scrutinises both the reasons behind the popularity of the neoliberal hegemony in Poland and the ways in which it has been recently challenged, while at the same time proposing a glimpse into the discussion on the future development of today's growth-oriented Polish cities. The ways in which Euro 2012 was run, perceived and resisted to is a consequence of a particular historical setting, as well as of global flows of economic, political and cultural capital. It is the very essence of these settings and currents – and their interpretation – which must be characterised as part of anthropological research.

Stefan Heissenberger's chapter, 'Travelling European Gay Footballers. Tournaments as an Integration Ritual', introduces us to the world of gay football as seen from the perspective of a heterosexual player and coach. His contribution not only presents the environment to the reader but, more importantly, it tackles the question of defining and redefining one's identity through ritual behaviours in particular settings. It also gives a vivid example of what 'being in the field' means, and how grand anthropological theories – especially van Gennep's scheme of rites of passage – can be applied to studies on football, and vice versa, how football can be used as a lens to scrutinise questions of identity and gender, and subsequently enrich the discussion in social science research in general. In his findings, he claims that the gay tournaments create connections within the team, and also between other teams and their players on both a national and a European level. These events are safe spaces where the simultaneity of gay men and football is not a contradiction. Gay footballers and people who assist them are efficient in

creating spaces of joy and security, common memories and a feeling of belonging and community.

Daniel Regev's and Tamar Rapoport's chapter takes us back to Israel. In their contribution on 'To Pass and Not To Pass – Female Fans' Visibility in the Football Fandom Field', the authors assume that the fandom area is a hyper-masculine space in which women are marked as internal 'Others'. Because of this, women's behaviour is permanently observed and their authenticity questioned. Bodily differences make women suspect and hinder their integration into 'true fandom'. By studying the visibility of female fans, the authors explore questions of how women handle their behaviour, perform their body and claim membership in the crowd. Intricate relations between male and female fandom evolves. Women function as a 'token', as evidence of men's open-mindedness with regard to their sexism. At the same time, women are aware that even mimicking men's practices will not make them men and they will remain different. Nevertheless, by creating different fandom templates, women fandom's visibility challenges the exclusive character of the masculine-normative fandom model.

Introducing the following section, focusing on 'Embodiment', Stine Liv Johansen discusses connections between football, fan cultures and media in her chapter, 'Being a Football Kid. Football as a Mediatised Play Practice'. Today media have grown in their volume and outreach, touching new target groups, especially children. Kids enjoy dealing with football in the media. Their interest is fostered in various ways: through football-related products and practices, digital as well as analogue, alone or with friends, online and offline. Johansen charts these practices by employing a holistic ethnographic approach. She conducted her fieldwork among Danish children in online and offline settings, in private and public settings (schools, football clubs and so on). In her research, she seeks to find an answer to the questions about how fan culture and play shape practices in children's lives. Special attention is paid to the role of digital media as a defining factor in contemporary play.

Viola Hofmann's chapter 'Why We Wear It: The Football Shirt as a Badge of Identity' focuses on the football shirt as a body technique and as an identity-establishing object of knowledge. The football shirt turns out to be both a money-spinning item of the football industry and an article of high visibility. As such it attracts attention of clubs and organisations as well as of product managers. The marketing managers of the football industry have established a whole set of regulations defining how football shirts should be designed. As a result, by wearing them,

fans advertise clubs and both directly and indirectly support the football economy. However, this commercial aspect of wearing a football jersey cannot eclipse its multifarious anthropological meanings. The football shirt is an encasement allowing individuals to socialise; it often ushers them into a given group membership. Anthropologists are well aware that conveying meanings through garments is an established and common body technique. The football shirt as a commercial product is a relatively new invention and, as such, it represents a combination of traditional and modern identity-shaping processes. Hofmann observes these kinds of processes on match days. Crowds of 'uniformed' people outside stadiums engage in everyday routines. She reads it as an embodied expression of equality.

The final section is dedicated to 'Mobility and Transnationalism'. In the chapter, 'Performing Loyalties/Rivalries. Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe Fans in Vienna', Nina Szogs discusses the construction of loyalties and rivalries of transnational football supporters. Fans often want to actively support their favourite football club, even if they move abroad or have grown up in a country other than that of their team. Accordingly, the football rivals from Istanbul, Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe, are also popular clubs in Austria. The chapter focuses on the (re)negotiation of fan rivalries and loyalties in the Viennese context. Drawing upon 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Austria, Germany and Turkey, the chapter draws conclusions about the situational and contextual notion of loyalty and rivalry practices. Szogs shows how events such as the Gezi protest in 2013 and discourses about migrants and migration in Austria strongly influence the performances and narratives that maintain and likewise circumvent the antagonism between Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe.

In his chapter, 'Building a Turkish Fan Community: Facebook, Schengen and Easyjet', John McManus takes a sideways glimpse into the everyday processes of constructing fan identities in our century by looking at international fans for the next Turkish top-flight football team discussed in this book: Beşiktaş has followers not only in Istanbul and Turkey, but also in the Turkish diaspora across Europe. McManus inquires into how technologies, such as cheap airline flights, T-shirt printing, as well as smartphones and social media, allow Turkish migrants to come together to support a Turkish football team. The author draws some innovative, counterintuitive, conclusions based on meticulous and extensive ethnographic fieldwork. Contrary to the commonly reproduced opinion on the 'freedom' that new Internet-based technologies allow, he maintains that there is a continuing importance of geography, physical gatherings and conservative technology use

amongst fans. The fans that McManus followed on their trips, interviewed and observed are using the potentials of the Internet to 'repair allegiances to religion, nation and family, rather than trying to escape from them'.

Finally, Simon Kuper, the reputed football writer and *Financial Times* columnist with a strong affinity for anthropology, gives his personal account of this book. Slightly fed up with all the 'fake anthropology' that can be found in today's football writing, he appreciates the contribution that anthropologists, especially those who figure in this volume, make in the sense of authentic advancement of studies on football. We can only appreciate his kind acknowledgement – and hope that other readers will share his opinion.

## Notes

1. One example is the international summer school 'The Culture of Football: Passion, Power, Politics' that took place in June 2012 at the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder) in Germany. Football researchers from various disciplines and many different countries around the world discussed football and fan cultures against the backdrop of Euro 2012. Last, but not least, the summer school has significantly inspired the title of this volume; see www.kuwi.europa-uni.de/en/studium/summeruniversity/archive_vsu_2012/index.html.
2. For a photo documentary of this event see: www.ultras-tifo.net/memories/3151-memories-dinamo-zagreb-crvena-zvezda-13051990.html.
3. See www.imdb.com/title/tt3672026.
4. Many chapters originally contained pictures that could not be included in this edited volume. These pictures can be found on the FREE project website: www.free-project.eu/books

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# Part I
# Beginnings

# 2
# Going for the Reds: Max Gluckman and the Anthropology of Football

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## The education of a pioneer

One of the objectives of this volume on the anthropology of European football is to explore the symbolic domain that produces social identities at various levels. Undoubtedly, a, if not the, pioneer in this field of study was Max Gluckman (1911–1975). Despite being a somewhat contentious figure, Gluckman made ground-breaking contributions to social, legal and political anthropology as a scholar, teacher and organiser of research. Less well-known is his pioneering role as one of the first social scientists to analyse sport, in particular football. This leads one to speculate how this interest might have influenced some of his major theoretical contributions.

Gluckman's energetic obsession with sport goes back to his school and student days. A student journal from his days at Wits University, after lauding Gluckman for his considerable academic achievements, continued in the following terms: 'As a sportsman, Mr Gluckman excels at golf and cricket, and in both these games he has frequently represented his University. For many years, too, he has played for the University's Football first XI, and from 1931 he has captained the team.[1] He is also a keen yachtsman. Mr Gluckman has always taken an active interest in the Scout Movement in Johannesburg. At present he is District Pathfinder Master' (*The Nusas*, 1934, pp. 70–71).

Unlike most other anthropologists of his era, Gluckman always listed his school, King Edward VII (KES) in Johannesburg, on his CV. Clearly he felt that it was important both in shaping him and as a status symbol. When it was founded in 1902, Lord Milner, the British High

Commissioner, wanted it to be another Winchester College by stressing values, manners and that highly difficult to define quality, 'tone', generally taken to mean courage and self-control, best developed institutionally through Houses, Prefects, cadets and sport. Typically such schools were run by a long-serving, powerful, autocratic and eccentric headmaster, in this case Desmond Davis, known as a strict disciplinarian who abhorred slovenliness and ill-manners and inspired respect rather than affection. Sport was so important that the school could boast a professional cricket coach as early as 1911. Its 'tone' is perhaps best visualised by the prominent war memorial erected in 1922 in the quad to honour its 66 old boys who died during the First World War (and, later, the 198 who died during the Second World War) yet at the same time there was not a word of sympathy in the School Magazine for the first Old Boy to die in the war or to be taken prisoner (Cartwright, 1974; Hawthorne and Bristow, 1993). As Gluckman's near contemporary, Cecil Margo, put it, KES provided an education with '"God Save the King", "Land of Hope and Glory", Sir Henry Newbolt's "Vitae Lampada", Rudyard Kipling, Rupert Brooke and similar sources as the cornerstones of our patriotism and the watchwords of our faith' (Margo, 1998: 11). Of course it did have its periods of anti-semitism (Tatz, 2003) but that probably did not worry a star athlete like Gluckman, who himself was Jewish. KES offered not rugby, but football as the winter sport, not as some political act or social status protest but for the simple reason that matches had to be played on fields which did not have grass.

## Becoming Mancunian

In the fifties and stretching into the sixties during the Gluckman era of what became known as the 'Manchester School', Gluckman was renowned for encouraging, some would say compelling, colleagues and graduate students to attend the Manchester United games. Audrey Smedley, an African-American graduate student, recalls how in the late fifties, Max invited her to a football match with instructions to dress warmly. They then all piled into Max's small car for the trip to Old Trafford and then proudly stood in the working-class stands, and while they could not see a thing because the smog was so thick, she was impressed at how Victor Turner could anticipate players' moves and mimic their actions before the players made the actual move (Smedley, personal comment 2013). Turner was one of Gluckman's most illustrious students and is renowned for his work on ritual, symbols and rites of passage among the Ndembu tribe of Zambia. Gluckman's small

car eventually was replaced by a Bedford van with a sliding door to accommodate more spectators and seminars, which were held on the Stands. Neophytes were also told to shout 'Go Reds' (the one exception was Bill Epstein, who remained a staunch Liverpool fan). According to Gluckman's son, Peter, still an avid Reds fan, Gluckman was interested in what motivated people, and football in Manchester certainly did that. Keith Hart, who was born and raised near Old Trafford, returned to Manchester to teach in the Anthropology Department after Gluckman's heyday, and he found the tradition still alive, perhaps more on a voluntary basis: 'I found it odd to join a group of foreigners shouting for my team and soon dropped out' (Hart, n.d).

Of course, like all good stories, this one suffers from exaggeration. While Gluckman might have tried to persuade his Department to attend the Manchester United matches, he was not that successful. Writing to his friend, Sir Roy Welensky, then Prime Minister of the ill-fated Central African Federation, in what might be conceived as the heyday of the Department, he notes, 'As I look out of the window I see the crocuses in full bloom. Of course, for all of us in Manchester the last month has been a very sad one with the air crash involving our great football team. The whole of the family, including Mary, are great fans of this side, and about half of our Department go with us every week to watch them play. It really was a great loss' (Gluckman to Welensky 6 March 1958, Gluckman Papers, RAI).

The Munich air crash of 1958 claimed the lives of 23 passengers, eight of whom were part of the Manchester United team returning from a European Cup match in Belgrade. Indeed, so ardent a fan was he, that after the tragedy, according to Peter Worsley, he 'rallied the troops', even those living outside Manchester, to go down to London for the next match at Highbury (Worsley, 2008, p. 147). Such was Gluckman's stature that he was reportedly asked to deliver the eulogy after the crash on the BBC. While we have not been able to track this eulogy, we have found several scattered references and a request to Gluckman for a paper entitled 'Requiem' (Letter from P. Matthey, citing information from Jack Goody, 9 December 1972. Gluckman Papers, RAI).

But even before these events, Gluckman's student Ronnie Frankenberg, after being refused permission to do research in the Caribbean, wound up doing fieldwork in a Welsh village and publishing his results as *Village on the Border*. The longest and most important chapter features the local football club. In his introduction to the monograph, Gluckman noted the similarity between the 'ceremonial symbolism' of these recreational activities: 'These ceremonies exhibit certain standardized

conflicts within the group which performs the rites, while at the same time stressing that these conflicts exist within the overall acceptance of common values and goals, and the group's unity', a notion first mooted in Gluckman, 1954 (*Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa. Frazer Memorial Lecture)* and 1955 (*Custom and Conflict in Africa)* (Frankenberg, 1957, p. 5). The 'ceremonial symbolism' was to remain a leitmotif in his work, especially as it pertained to football.

As Hart notes, Gluckman was one of the academic pioneers on radio and television programmes, along with philosopher A. J. Ayer (a passionate Spurs fan). Not only did he openly admit his interest in football, but he also spiced up his talks on what were considered serious topics with references to football. Prior to this, British intellectuals did not admit to such 'trivial and common interests'. But Gluckman went further. In a weekly broadcast stretching over nine weeks dealing with the anthropology of contemporary Britain, at least two of his talks were devoted to football. The first, on village football, was based on Frankenberg's Welsh research and showed how the football team symbolised the feelings of identity and community of the village, despite major divisions in the village, but at the same time contained within it the seeds for conflict. The second focused on football in the city and suggested that teams represented the pride of the city and evoked feelings of community. This talk concentrated on spectators but it was deemed interesting and important enough to be published in a slightly different and abbreviated form in the BBC magazine *The Listener*. Significantly, this essay-talk, originally broadcast on the North of England Service on 10 February and published on 19 February 1959, was released almost on the anniversary of the Manchester United Munich air crash (Gluckman, 1959b). It drew an almost immediate enthusiastic response from at least two major publishers who expressed their eagerness to publish work on this topic.

This essay, however, must be read in conjunction with another one published a month before in *The Listener* entitled 'How Foreign Are You?' Concerned with the rising tide of xenophobia in Britain, the BBC asked Gluckman in early September 1958 to do a 20-minute talk on 'What Is a Foreigner?' to be broadcast on the Third Programme later that month and published three months later in *The Listener* (January).

After describing his early African experiences, Gluckman relates how eventually he became an anthropologist and settled in Manchester, 'where I become a Mancunian only when I watch Manchester's football teams play, and my foreignness is temporarily submerged in the local patriotism which brings together the Manchester born, the Irish and

the European immigrants, the Africans and West Indians, who follow the two great Manchester football clubs' (Gluckman, 1959a, p. 99).

In his radio talk, he describes how going out to buy a packet of cigarettes took longer and longer:

> Because in every shop where they know me, the shopkeeper and I have to debate last week's game, the form of this player and that. So it is when I have my hair cut, or go into a pub. My day spins out in this talk, and I am a Manchester man, differences of origin, of class, of religion, of occupation, fade into this community feeling that is for us symbolized by our team.
>
> Home crowds therefore have a lot of general fervour, existing from their wish to escape from the amorphous isolation of city life into a community of loyalty; and they put this fervour into supporting and cheering on their team, so that it is much easier for a team to win at home than to win away.

Or, as he put it in his Foreigner essay:

> Though it may be a truism, it is nevertheless important to stress that always the fact of 'belonging', as against being a foreigner, defines membership of one group in opposition to some other group. When I watch Manchester United play Manchester City, and cheer for United with my fellow spectators, it does not matter that I have lived in Manchester only a few years, that I am a Jew, that I come from South Africa, that I am a university teacher: I am at one with the host of other United supporters of different ethnic origin, of different religious persuasion, and of different occupation. (Gluckman, 1959a, p. 100)

One of Gluckman's former students, Emanuel Marx, confirmed the appeal of what football had for Gluckman, in terms of providing him an opportunity to share a common experience with other supporters. Marx recalls Gluckman's motive for following football as such:

> What Max really loved in football was to be with the common people, those who paid a pound at the turnstile, and occupied standing places. He loved the beer fumes, the swaying of the crowds following the movements of the ball, the vocal reactions of the crowd and to exchange expert opinions about football strategies with wild strangers. And yet, he did not want to be alone in this foreign

territory, perhaps that's why he expected staff and graduate students to regularly attend the Saturday matches. (Marx, personal comment, 2013)

## Communitas: exploring crowd behaviour at Old Trafford

Clearly these comments suggest an imagined community as Anderson (1991) would later term it, and more importantly, a forerunner to the notion of *'communitas'* which Gluckman's student, colleague and avid fellow United fan, Victor Turner, would make famous. Victor Turner's formulation *communitas* refers to a relatively undifferentiated community which generally has a strong feeling of immediate community. The origin of this concept is said to lie in Turner's Ndembu fieldwork, the US sixties counter-culture, his Second World War camaraderie with his fellow Bomb Squad members and, of course, his Catholicism (St John, 2008). We want to suggest another important factor: football. Indeed, in explaining to Gluckman why he converted from being a Communist to a Catholic, Victor Turner specifically cites as one of the reasons the 'United Disaster' which had made him realise that in one's short life one had to make crucial decisions on issues of 'were we made, who made us, or did it just happen?' (Victor Turner to Gluckman 7 July 1959. Gluckman Papers, RAI).

Edith Turner, reflecting on Gluckman and Victor Turner's obsession with football and Manchester United, notes how they themselves entered a state of transcendence when watching football; a type of football spectatorship zone, characterised by a state of the psyche in which our acts appear to follow each other in a united, organic way, without our conscious participation (Turner, 2012, p. 50). Writing on this spectatorship zone, and Gluckman's and Victor Turner's experience thereof, Edith Turner (2012, p. 52) suggests: 'The anthropologist Max Gluckman, the old mentor of Turner and myself, was interested in this phenomenon in 1956. I can see him now telling us how the psychologists were trying to train athletes to reach this curious state of being, for which they had few words. Max and Vic saw and experienced flow and zone in their time when they watched the "Reds", the Manchester United football team.'

Edith Turner claimed to be able to see in their eyes when something marvellous happened in football, and one could at once recognise the kinship between zone and *communitas*. Evidently the zone, as a subconscious experience of all action going according to plan and without much thought or effort, one in which the team, opponents and

spectators are at one in a great play, is an experience not only reserved for players on the field, but also for spectators. This experience of flow and zone that Gluckman and Victor Turner experienced is symptomatic of a sense of *communitas*, which Turner defined as a 'transient personal experience of togetherness'. Clearly this sense of communion was experienced and made possible for Gluckman and Victor Turner alike, through their support and spectatorship of matches at Old Trafford. Football could therefore well have been the means through which their theories on ritual, *communitas* and social conflict were informed.

Victor Turner is widely believed to have been the colleague Gluckman was closest to and they exchanged news and views on Manchester United's fortunes right up to Gluckman's death.[2] Indeed, the last conference Gluckman helped to organise was that on 'Secular Ritual', which he did in collaboration with Victor Turner and his protégé Sally Falk Moore (Moore and Meyerhoff, 1977).

In one of his lesser-known essays Victor Turner elucidates his approach that 'the way people play perhaps is more revealing of a culture than how they work, giving access to their "heart values"' (Turner, 1983, p. 104). He uses the expression 'heart values' for the heart has its values plus its reasons. He is interested in how behaviour becomes conduct. Games are obviously social dramas in his view and he suggests that spectators fall under the spell of mimicry. 'Through mimicry one can become an imaginary character oneself, a subject who makes believe or makes others believe that he/she is someone other than him/herself' (Turner, 1983, p. 108) and at sports events spectators engage in competitive mimicry.

Gluckman's approach is similar, but he was more interested in how spectator behaviour could influence players on the field based on observations he made at Old Trafford. Why did United start losing games, especially home games, after an almost unassailable lead? If one assumes that most of the First Division teams are at a fairly standard level of skill except for a few stars, then part of the explanation lies in the expectations and hopes of the fans for the team as a whole. Success raises the fans' expectations, a sort of relative deprivation in reverse, and this increases pressure, especially on the star players who are subjected to a verbal battering if they do not meet these increased subjective standards. After a successful run of victories which sated the fans, mistakes that were previously ignored now elicited groans. 'Players who had off-days were picked on. The players seemed to get more anxious. Moments of hesitation and doubt enabled opponents to cover the unmarked men and the gaps: players lost confidence in one another and did not move

for the open space at speed. A vicious circle set in, and quickly the cohesion of the team was lost' (Gluckman, 1959b, p. 332). Eventually, the manager dropped four of the stars and brought up some of the reserves, and this restored the team to its winning ways.

The crowd did not simply cheer the good and boo the bad play but varied from club to club and from one match to another. Spectators were also not necessarily skilled judges of play, focusing almost exclusively on what a player is doing with the ball, ignoring the much more important factor of what they are doing when they didn't have the ball. Gluckman compares the spectators at the Manchester City games. City had a much more mixed record: it would be a seesaw between being in Cup finals and being relegated. This produced an 'in-and-out' crowd which was always hoping for victory but never expecting it, which produced a cynical, even sarcastic attitude, full of bitter jokes but never really as vicious as at the United games.

Gluckman concluded his broadcast by suggesting that there was more to these observations than casual analysis, and that football club managers needed to send scouts not only to assess players, but also to assess how crowds react as well. 'What I have been describing suggests to me that players need replacing by reserves when the crowd gets sated with their good play; and a manager must judge at which moment to replace the players who have become targets for the crowd. Yet I wonder how many managers take into account team selection, the developing hostility of the crowd towards players, and whether they explain this to players' (Gluckman, 1959b, p. 332).

These efforts, now seemingly naïve albeit pioneering, were enough to get Gluckman appointed to the newly constituted British Sports Council and receive an invitation to give a plenary address to a high-status Conference on Sports in Society held in conjunction with the 1972 Munich Olympic Games.

## The Sports Council

After the Labour Party won the 1964 elections, the new Prime Minister Harold Wilson acted on his belief that sport was a subject 'essential to Britain's economic and social development' by creating the Advisory Sports Council in 1965 to advise it on matters affecting amateur sport and physical recreation. The Council was chaired by Roger Bannister and included other luminaries such as Sir Learie Constantine, the cricketer. In a rather haphazard and ad hoc manner, it tried to do two things: facilitate more participation in local level sport under the slogan 'Sports

for All', possibly to deter local disorder, and at the same time to raise standards in sport. It was given executive powers in 1972 by Royal Charter courtesy of the newly elected Conservative Party, and became the Great Britain Sports Council (Polley, 1998, pp. 20–23), now known as Sport England.

To facilitate its mission the Council established several committees including one, the 'Research and Statistics Committee', which was tasked with developing sociological research into motives for participation and trends in the popularity of certain types of sports. This Committee in turn created a Study Group, which in turn constructed a list of people who might be willing to 'think through' these issues. Based on his interests, publications and talks on football, Gluckman was invited to chair the initial meeting of this group that included not only academics but practitioners. They organised Seminars such as 'Trends in Society: The Place of Sports in the 1980s'. A few years later, in 1974, the Sports Council created a new Advisory Group to advise on questions of policy and questions of setting a research agenda, which Gluckman was again invited to participate in. Since he was going on sabbatical to Israel, it was unclear and unlikely that he participated much in its activities.

## Munich 1972

As part of the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, the Olympic organising committee created a large inter-disciplinary conference on 'Sport in the Modern World – Chances and Problems' in Munich which attracted over 2200 participants. Given the diverse nature of the topics and interests, the organisers called this 'scientific pluralism'. The conference was thereby divided into 11 themes, one of which focused on 'Sport and Conflict' which Gluckman gave what amounts to the keynote address to this theme[3] (Gluckman, 1973).

In this address, he emphasised that as a social anthropologist, his paramount interest was in the social setting and social effects of sport as part of a broader question of how standardised conflicts in society and international society are handled. Building on the theories of Simmel (as re-examined by Coser) and his own early work (Gluckman, 1955) Gluckman suggested that conflict emerged when principles which organise society are discrepant, in conflict, or, even in Marxist terms, contradictory.

Social conflict as a stipulation for the establishment of social cohesion had been central to Gluckman's analysis of tribal societies in Southern Africa, and he applied this analysis to sport as a potential site of

conflict. The result is that conflicts in one set of relationships '...lead to the re-establishment of social cohesions' (Gluckman, 1955, p. 2). But even this insight has a longer history. In 1942, Gluckman was asked by the Northern Rhodesian Regiment to give a lecture on 'Tribal Prejudice'. He concluded this lecture in terms which cricket-loving Brits could appreciate and which prefigures the famous argument made in *Custom and Conflict in Africa* (1955). He closed with a sporting analogy which undoubtedly appealed to the settler soldiers: 'Great hostility between sections of a group united in a common purpose makes the group stronger. As in the case of bodyline bowling between England and Australia – but as a group they are strongly united against the Nazis!'

In terms of sport, as a social setting where such conflicts could play out, Gluckman (1973, p. 49) notes that 'the problem of socio-anthropological and sociological analysis is to work out how various forces and processes operate in particular kinds of games in particular social contexts, control and even reduce conflict, or touch off and even aggravate conflict'. For Gluckman, the rules and values of a game has an important effect on the relations between players, in that friendships may be produced, where otherwise hostile relations would reign based on social affiliation. He is however cautious to assume that the discharge of aggression in games might lead to games replacing war to express hostilities between nations and other groups. The actual form of the game, its rules and values, had important effects. Football is not necessarily an alternative to war, but it can aggravate aggression, and Gluckman points to considerable evidence from football matches that the excitement of many spectators is likely to exacerbate trouble (Gluckman, 1973, p. 50).

His paper can be considered as a primitive forerunner in understanding conflict, as manifested in spectatorship behaviour, or later in football hooliganism and Gluckman would undoubtedly have quoted his friend Eric Hobsbawm in explaining hooliganism to the effect that pirates had a vested interest in lawful commerce.

## Secular ritual

The last conference in which Gluckman participated before he died was the one that the Wenner-Gren Foundation sponsored on 'Secular Ritual'. At this conference, he and his wife Mary, in true Mancunian style, provocatively posed the question: 'Could games, athletic contests, sports and dramas be considered "secular rituals"?' The Gluckmans rejected this notion, arguing that 'despite the fact that games embody moral principles, it would be missing essential differences to bring them

under the rubric of "ritual"' (Gluckman and Gluckman, 1977, p. 242). '(T)o call all formality and ceremonial "ritual" is to blur the distinction between formal activities that address and move the spirit world (which [they] called "ritual") and formal activities that do not' (Gluckman and Gluckman, 1977, p. 242). This position received some support: while accepting that certain personal and collective rituals occur within the context of sport, Blanchard underwrote Gluckman's hesitancy in treating sport as a form of secular ritual, by distinguishing between sport as engrained with a competitive element, and ritual which does not. As Blanchard (1988, p. 51) put it: 'One cannot help but notice the ceremony, the pomp and circumstance and the ritual-like trappings that surround the typical public event . . . yet in all cases the game is first and foremost a game. It is competition not ritual. Its participants are players, not religious practitioners. Its major objective is success, and success in a game means winning, not achieving some ritualistic goals.' Similarly, Gluckman preferred to discuss secular contexts in terms of 'ceremonious behaviour'.

## The socio-cultural milieu of Manchester

In this era of globalised branding, fluid identities and 'super-stars' which propelled United into becoming one of the world's richest and most famous football clubs, it is hard to imagine the era in which Gluckman and his mates attended the United games which so influenced them. Even as Manchester was slowly losing its textile base, there was a lot of local pride, especially in the Reds, who went from being a financially impoverished club without a stadium at the conclusion of the Second World War (Old Trafford suffered bomb damage during the conflict), to FA Cup winners, League Champions and European contenders in the following 12 years.

This local pride in United was further stimulated by their famous manager, the later knighted Sir Matt Busby and his 'Babes'. Busby had set up a youth scheme, the Manchester United Junior Athletic Club, which aimed at developing local talent. So successful was this scheme that when United won the league in 1955–56 the team's average age was 22.

In those days, a colleague of Gluckman's, Peter Worsley, recalled Manchester United was very democratic, and regular supporters, not just season-ticket holders, could cut out tokens from their match programmes and get tickets to Cup and European ties. Eventually, along with several other professors, Worsley managed to get seats on the Cantilever stands (Worsley, 2008, p. 157).[4]

Football was central to the working-class experience, drawing both spectators and players from its ranks. Its core values of physical aggression, masculinity and regional identity merged well with working-class culture. Arthur Hopcraft, a Manchester-based journalist and author of the path-breaking book, *The Football Man, People and Passions in Soccer* (1968) argues that

> the Saturday match became more than a diversion from the daily grind, because there was often no work to relieve. To go to the match was to escape from the dark despondency into the light of combat. Here, by association with the home team, positive identity could be claimed by muscle and in goals. To win was personal success, to lose another clout from life. Football was not so much an opiate of the people as a flag run up against the gaffer bolting the gates and the landlord armed with his bailiffs. (Hopcraft, cited by Critcher, 1979, p. 161)

As Britain slowly worked its way out of austerity, the stadium was the site of sporting beauty for the British working class. The stadium formed an important part of Gumbrecht's aesthetics of sport. Fans went to the huge open stands at Old Trafford, just to be there amidst so many, relishing the urban setting and the collective experience (Holt, 2008).

Given this milieu and its close association with United, the Munich air crash had an exceptional impact in Manchester, creating a heightened sense of what later became known as *communitas* in which ordinary status did not count.

Under the headline 'The Day After: I See a City Draw Breath, Live, Die and Sigh as a City', an exceptionally insightful *Daily Mail* journalist captured the ambiance:

> Being in Manchester in the past two days has been like intruding . . . [into] the heart of the family. This is not an occasion on which dramatic words are necessary, and all I can say is that I have never before known anything like this sensation of awareness that around me a whole city was drawing together, proud, hurt and resentful of strangers in its midst. We are often told today that ordinary people can no longer have the same feeling for the large cities in which they live as their forefathers used to have or their villages and country towns. I no longer believe this. In these past two days I have seen a city draw breath as a city, live, die or sigh as a city.

> Gradually, one began to realise that there was hardly one person in Manchester who did not have some feeling of personal contact with the United team. But it was not just a question of football fans. Wherever one went, the subject was at first avoided then suddenly brought into the open and then gloomily discussed. It made no difference whether one was with 'top' or 'bottom' people. Businessmen at the Bodega, top businessmen and headwaiters at the Midland [hotel], top people at the Reform Club, they were no less concerned than the workers at Metro Vickers, no less hurt and feeling no less deprived.
>
> There it is then. The vast city, the centre of the largest conurbation in the country, apparently without personality, shape or unity. There it is, its personality suddenly cohering so that even a stranger can sense it. Suddenly taking shape before ones eyes. Suddenly united and exclusive.
>
> Where, we are so often asked, is the heart of a large industrial town? What symbol gives one a sense of belonging? Dare one say it? Dare one say that where the symbol once lay in a village inn, or a church, or 'the big house', it now lies in a football team? (Mellor, 2004, pp. 269–70)

## The Gluckmanian legacy

Football, as a spectacle, is a phenomenon which allows for the diminishing of the differences of origin, of class, of religion, of occupation and transcends into a community feeling, a feeling that Gluckman not only used to make sense of his own identity and notion of belonging as a foreigner in Britain at the time, but also used to inform his deliberation on the ceremonious aspects of sport.

Essentially, Gluckman's analysis of sport spectatorship shows how group identity can be forged through spectatorship, and in turn bring forth a sense of *communitas*. He was also aware of how the attitude of the crowd influences the level of play on the field and especially how the level of play would be influenced by the gestures of the crowd.

Certainly his ideas and concepts have been applied rather successfully to later studies of football, and not just in the narrow English-speaking world. Roberto Da Matta, the doyen of Brazilian anthropology, for example, showed how a study of Brazilian football can provide understanding of the wider society by examining it as a form of ritual and used the notion of dramatisation to do so (Da Matta, 1982). He was, he writes,

inspired by the works of Victor Turner (1957, 1974) and Max Gluckman (1958, 1962). He was motivated thus by their work on ritual rather than on football per se. This is to ignore how Gluckman's and Victor Turner's work on ritual was influenced by their love of football.

Giulianotti (1994, p. 10) notes that 'although the world's leading team sport, it was not until the 1960s that the social significance of football received substantive and separate attention from social scientists and historians', but he neglects to mention the work of Gluckman in this regard. Gluckman, as an observer of football fandom and his work on modern sport was groundbreaking, in that significant studies on football fandom and spectatorship only really surfaced decades after Gluckman's publications in *The Listener* in the 1950s. The work on football fandom by scholars such as Spaaij (2006), Holt (2008), Armstrong (1998), Giulianotti et al. (1994) and Armstrong and Harris (1991), to mention a few, has built on empirical evidence and theories to understand football spectatorship in the modern world, but Gluckman must be considered as one of the first social scientists to recognise the significance and ambiguities associated with fan behaviour.

There is scope to continue research on the symbolic domain that produces social identities at various levels and specifically how such identities play out through sports participation and spectatorship. Holt (2008) eloquently pleads for such a perspective:

> For a better understanding of spectator team sports, of the passions, the routines, the jokes, the generations and all rest of it, we need good sociologists and anthropologists. Sociologists have been more concerned with hooligans than fans and anthropologists have neglected the ethnography of the crowd. Social and cultural historians, too, have failed to crack the code while club histories focus almost exclusively on the team and forget the crowd. (Holt 2008, p. 62).

Gluckman, as a pioneer of the anthropology of football, has provided the foundation for present-day anthropologists to understand the complexities surrounding sport and sport spectatorship as it relates to issues of identity, belonging, regionalism and nationalism.

## Notes

1. Football certainly ranked higher and was much more competitive. Gluckman played for the 1st team from at least 1929 (with Simon Kuper (Snr), Adam Kuper's father and Simon Kuper's grandfather) and was awarded a Half-Blue in 1932.

2. That Gluckman was very knowledgeable about the game is clear from a letter he wrote to Turner (Gluckman to Turner, 9 March 1967, Gluckman Papers, RAI): 'United lost to Norwich by just bad tactics on top of bad luck. The first goal was scored with the centre half slipping; and then we attacked, attacked and attacked and got one goal. Their goal keeper was brilliant, and they marked Best tightly, and the bad tactics was that instead of going to the wing and drawing his men out he kept going in and drawing that pair or three of defenders in front of his colleagues.'
3. He was one of only two identifiable anthropologists, the other being Brian Sutton-Smith, who gave a talk on play in Gluckman's session.
4. Ironically, fans were often treated with contempt by the clubs, having to urinate in the open air, queue for ages for a stewed cup of tea and wait for tickets (while Directors and Season ticketholders were served first) and then stand in a cramped space.

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# Part II

# The Political Field

# 3
# Normalising Political Relations through Football: the Case of Croatia and Serbia (1990–2013)[1]

*Ivan Đorđević and Bojan Žikić*

'In football, everything is complicated by the presence of the opposite team.' This aphorism, attributed to Jean-Paul Sartre, can be applied to the situation in Yugoslavia at the end of the 1980s: football was very complicated indeed. During that period, football stadia across the country became breeding grounds for nationalist conflicts, especially between football fans from Serbia and Croatia. Yugoslavia, at that point, was facing deep internal crises, economic as well as political, while interethnic tensions between the constituent nations were driving the country further towards what seemed like an inevitable dissolution. Like most of Western Europe during the 1980s, Yugoslavia had serious problems of hooliganism and football violence. While in Britain Margaret Thatcher was cracking down on what was identified as a 'slum game played in slum stadiums watched by slum people' (Goldblatt, 2008, p. 542), the roots of football-related violence in Yugoslavia were of a different nature.

Newly formed fan groups, created mostly during that decade, quickly changed their focus from regular football rivalry to national issues. Chants of ethnic hatred echoed around stadia – which was all the more incredible if one considers that overt display of nationalism was still a crime in Yugoslavia. The stadium became the 'national vanguard', a sounding board for nationalist rhetoric, creating a vast space for manipulation within the beautiful game.

Verbal nationalist violence between football fans soon led to something worse. As we will show in the next section, the game that was supposed to be played on 13 May 1990, between Dinamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade at the Maksimir Stadium in Zagreb greatly changed the

history of football in the region (see Hodges and Stubbs, Chapter 4 in this volume). The violent clashes between Serbian and Croatian supporters and the police that happened before the game started, had a number of political consequences that are still visible today, particularly when it comes to the question of football.

From that moment onwards, football and football fans were permanently linked to nationalist violence. Every potential match between Serbian and Croatian clubs or national teams was perceived in advance as having broader implications and as being a potential site for violence. Even after 2000, when the nationalist governments of Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman were defeated, leading to less hostile relations between Serbia and Croatia, football remained a space for the expression of still widespread nationalist feelings. In that sense, the World Cup qualifying matches between the two national teams, held in March and September 2013, illustrated how political relations between Serbia and Croatia gradually normalised, but also gave a sense of the potential obstacles still standing in the way of full reconciliation.

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the presence of narratives referring to relations between Croatia and Serbia, two decades after the war. More specifically, this analysis focuses on local media narratives concerning the 'normalisation' (*normalizacija*) of relations between the two countries, through media reports of the match in both countries, as well as through ethnographic fieldwork conducted during the World Cup qualifying match between the Croatian and Serbian national teams held in Zagreb in March 2013.

As the combined analysis of media discourses and ethnographic fieldwork shows, the legacy of war and ethnic violence in the 1990s still weighs on the ways in which football games between Serbia and Croatia are perceived and narrated. On the other hand, the actual threat of violence is very low, and nationalist discourses are perceived by both Serb and Croat supporters and observers as ritualised. While war-like metaphors remain widespread in contemporary media discourses, these metaphors coexist with narratives that emphasise the discontinuity with the violent past shared by the two countries, also in view of the process of European integration that is ongoing in the region.

Due to the symbolic weight carried by matches between the two national teams, the narratives we analyse present a high degree of ambivalence, shifting between discourses of normalisation and the reinstatement of nationalist tropes. In the first section of the chapter, we deal with the history of football in the region during the 1990s, addressing the interconnections between football and nationalist violence.

In the second section, we analyse the new political context in which the 2013 World Cup qualifier was played, examining media reports in Serbia and Croatia. Finally, in the third section we present our ethnographic fieldwork of the Zagreb match, and consider how potential nationalist tensions were anticipated and managed before and during the game.

## Football and nationalist violence in the 1990s

While at the end of the 1980s nationalist insults were common in Yugoslav stadia, actual nationalist violence between football fans did not occur until the club game between Dinamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade on 13 May 1990. The match was played two weeks after the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), under the leadership of Franjo Tuđman, won the first free parliamentary elections in Croatia. Tuđman's ultra-nationalistic programme complemented that of the Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević. At that time, certain fan groups of both football clubs – Red Star's Delije and Dinamo's Bad Blue Boys – were closely connected to the new elites in power, serving as a stronghold of nationalist propaganda. The venue was Maksimir stadium in Zagreb and the riots began before the match had even kicked off (Mihailović, 1997; Mills, 2009; Sack and Suster, 2000).

The skirmishes began with the arrival of the Red Star fans in Zagreb and evolved into the tearing down of banners and, at that point, minor clashes between them and the Dinamo supporters in the South Stand. Dinamo's supporters that were originally located in the North Stand, marched towards their colleagues in the south to assist them, broke the fence, and engaged in a conflict with poorly equipped and outnumbered police forces on the pitch. A massive fight and chaos culminated when Dinamo's captain, Zvonimir Boban, kicked a police officer in the chest in an attempt to rescue a Dinamo supporter. Since these clashes were recorded and broadcast live, riots later spread to the streets of Zagreb, where Dinamo fans fought with police and set cars with Serbian number plates on fire.

The riots set off a chain of events that heavily influenced the ongoing crisis in Yugoslavia on a political as well as a symbolic level. The epilogue of this game that was never finished wasn't just a massive fight between the supporters and the police, it also had some important political consequences. Most notably, Croatian police evicted the Serbian managerial staff from the stadium, and the newly elected government of Franjo Tuđman used the incident for propaganda purposes. The riots at Maksimir stadium anticipated the Yugoslav break-up, while

football – thanks to the phrase 'The war started at Maksimir', which was coined and heavily exploited immediately after the match – became an inevitable symbolic factor in explanations of the Yugoslav crisis (Đorđević, 2012). Soon afterwards, when the war broke out, football fans were the first to join the territorial defence army in Croatia and voluntary paramilitary formations in Serbia. Under the leadership of future paramilitary leader and war criminal Željko Ražnatović Arkan, Serbian football fans, mostly from Red Star, joined the Serbian Voluntary Guard, one of the most notorious paramilitary formations engaged in the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Čolović, 2000). The aggressiveness of football fans, therefore, gained relevant symbolic capital for nationalist and ethnic hatred, and football fans became literally cannon fodder during the Yugoslav wars (Čolović, 2000, p. 348). The shift from football-related violence to actual war violence showed that 'one can die from symbolism, and that this is not only symbolic for those who perish' (Battacchi, 1988, p. 326, quoted in Vrcan, 2003, p. 84).

Because of the hostility created by the war, and because of UN sanctions against Serbia, which included sport events, football encounters between Serbian and Croatian clubs and national teams did not occur again until 1997, when two matches between Partizan Belgrade and Croatia Zagreb (formerly and currently known as Dinamo)[2] took place in the qualifying round for the European Champions League. No incidents occurred on this occasion, most likely since visiting fans were banned from the stadium. After that, in 1999, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia[3] was drawn with Croatia in the same group in the Euro 2000 qualifications. Only two years after its huge success at the 1998 World Cup in France where it finished third, Croatia was expected to win the matches. However, the Belgrade match ended 0–0, and after a dramatic game in Zagreb that resulted in a 2–2 draw, Yugoslavia eventually qualified.

Both matches raised tensions in the media in both countries, but major incidents were avoided thanks to a ban on visiting fans in an effort to avoid potential clashes at the stadium. However, both games were played in the shadow of the war, ended just a few years before, in 1995. Therefore, jingoistic articles in the local newspapers and hate speech in the stadia were an integral as well as expected part of the atmosphere before and after the matches, particularly bearing in mind the almost mythical character of the unfinished match at Maksimir in 1990 (Đorđević, 2012; Sindbæk, 2013). At that point, relations between the two countries were officially at a low level, given that the nationalist regimes led by Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman were still in

power. However, during the Belgrade match, signs of upcoming political change were apparent. During an electricity outage that interrupted the game, to the dismay of Croatian players, Serbian football fans started to chant 'Slobo odlazi', asking for the resignation of Milošević. The same process was happening in Croatia, where Tuđman was losing ground before the next elections.

The fall of Milošević's regime in Serbia in 2000, as well as a turning point in the Croatian government's politics following the death of President Tuđjman in 1999, led to an official warming in relations between the two republics of former Yugoslavia. This political shift was not just a result of internal politics, but was also and predominantly an effect of external pressure applied by the European Union. Serbia and Croatia, in fact, had to comply with the EU's demand of good neighbourly relations as part of their accession and integration process. References to the recent conflict and ethnic violence, however, persisted in public and private narratives in Serbia and Croatia, despite government and policy changes (Đerić, 2008). During the 2000s, for different reasons, no match was scheduled between the two national teams (Serbia and Croatia), and few matches were played between Serbian and Croatian club teams. Regular matches, however, were played between Croatia and Serbia in other sports, for instance basketball, where post-Yugoslav states had been affiliated in the Adriatic League (ABA) since 2001. No incident occurred, thanks to the ban on visiting fans, but also due to the fact that basketball is generally less connoted with nationalist violence than football. In the next section, we will consider the first significant match played between Croatia and Serbia since the late 1990s, that is, the qualifying match for the World Cup 2014 held in Zagreb in March 2013.

## The game of the century

Given the symbolic importance of previous football matches, it is unsurprising that public interest in the match between Croatia and Serbia began from the very moment after the draw for the qualifying matches for the World Cup 2014 in Brazil. The sporting press was occasionally full of articles announcing the game, with the main focus on the rivalry between the two coaches of the national teams, the Serb Siniša Mihajlović, and Croat Igor Štimac, a rivalry that dated from the last 'Marshal Tito' Football Cup in 1991. This rivalry was not only political, but also related to their personal histories and ethnic backgrounds, since Mihajlović is from the Serbian minority of Croatia, born in Borovo, a site of nationalist clashes in the early 1990s. Similarly, newspapers often

evoked the most striking detail from a match between the two national teams held in 1999, when Yugoslav player Zoran Mirković clashed with Croatian defender Robert Jarni, being expelled immediately.

The reduction of the 2013 match between the two national squads to two almost legendary clashes indicated the tensions underlying the game. In this sense, as the match was getting closer, the media increasingly forged narratives about 'the historical game', which would certainly mean more than participation in the World Cup finals. A few days before the match, one could read, for instance, that the Croatian player Domagoj Vida had the habit of listening to the notorious nationalist song *Čavoglave*, interpreted by Marko Perković Thompson (24 sata, 19 March 2013) while warming up. Thompson is a highly controversial Croatian singer, whose repertoire is often connected with the pro-Nazi Ustashe movement, which was in power in Croatia during World War II. In this particular song, the singer calls for the extermination of Serbs, while Ustashe symbols are regularly used. The Serbian media strongly condemned this episode. The tabloid *Kurir*, in an article titled 'He Sets Fire: Štimac Is Waiting for Serbia with Thompson', asked if the Croatian coach was 'preparing for a war or a football match' (*Kurir*, 20 March 2013). On the other hand, the Belgrade daily *Blic* warned: 'there's a problem when someone's personal attitude, like Vida's, is being presented to the public as something totally normal. When presented without criticism, this kind of attitude becomes socially acceptable. And when "chasing the mob" – part of one verse – becomes socially acceptable, horrible things can happen' (*Blic*, 20 March 2013). Tensions during the match were anticipated through the imposing of security measures, and through a huge display of police forces in Croatia. Moreover, supporters of the Serbian national team were banned from entering the stadium, facing a penalty of one month in jail if they did.

Just before the match, however, tensions were suddenly reduced as a result of political intervention. The Serbian President Boris Tadić and the Croatian President Ivo Josipović deliberately decided to watch the game together, as a symbolic statement of cordial relations between the former warring nations. Media reports also emphasised a new, friendly attitude between two old foes, coaches Štimac and Mihajlović. They reported on a sudden warming of their relationship, as well as their exchanging gifts and expressions of mutual respect. Fair support for the national team at the stadium was promoted. A rather unusual press conference took place, in which the president of the Croatian Football Association Davor Šuker (the 'hero' of the 1998 World Cup), coach Štimac, and Croatian Prime minister Zoran Milanović took part. Talking about

the forthcoming match, Milanović stressed: 'It is up to us to prove and present ourselves as responsible hosts and as a civilized country. On this occasion, I call on everyone who will be at the stadium to back up Croatia by supporting, without hatred towards the opponents. If anyone hears anything which insults their Croatian civic and civilized identity, their answer should be singing or booing' (Večernji list, 21 March 2013). This quote highlights the importance of a 'civilisational discourse' in Croatian public narratives. This discourse was used to distance Croatia from several other former Yugoslav republics, stressing the more Westernised character of the country, as opposed to 'barbaric Balkans', such as Serbia (Jansen, 2001, Todorova, 1997; Živković, 2001). In 2013, this discourse was used not only to mark a difference between Croatia and its neighbours, but also to stress Croatia's European identity in view of imminent EU accession.

The Croatian and Serbian media covered the game with some degree of ambivalence. On the one hand, nationalist stereotypes and war-like metaphors were reinstated. The headlines in the Croatian mainstream media on the very day of the match stated: 'Let's be proud', 'Let Lijepa naša[4] thunder!', 'Let our hearts lead us to victory', 'Victory will make you legendary', but also, 'To the battle, coolheaded'. At the same time, despite the reinstatement of this war-like repertoire, it was also acknowledged that nationalist violence should not be repeated. While Croatian media exposed the high tension associated with 'the match of the generation', they also called for a fair game, insisting that 'times have changed', and that there is no place for the usual expression of hatred.

The mainstream media in Belgrade also announced the match in a relatively calm tone. The daily newspaper *Politika* simply stated: 'Tonight is the big derby: Croatia – Serbia' (*Politika*, 22 March 2013), while the Belgrade-based internet portal B92 stressed the story about the intention of Croatian president Ivo Josipović and his Serbian colleague Boris Tadić to watch the game together in Zagreb (B92, 22 March 2013). However, the quiet tone and calming down of tensions was not the only media discourse that was present in Serbia. For instance, Serbian National Television (RTS) announced the game with the slogan 'Maksimir live: The night before hell' (RTS, 21 March 2013), while the tabloid *Kurir* made the appeal: 'To the battle, heroes!' (*Kurir*, 22 March 2013). According to the magazine *Alo*, in a piece titled 'Mamić brings Ustashe to the match!' (*Alo*, 21 March 2013), the top representative of Dinamo Zagreb football club was allegedly coming to the stadium accompanied by notorious right-wing supporters. Moreover, the daily newspaper *Telegraf* described the situation in the town before the match in the following manner: 'The

Eagles [Serbian national team] have arrived, ZAGREB UNDER SIEGE' (*Telegraf*, 21 March 2013).

Besides this ambivalence between nationalist stereotyping and normalising narratives, Serbian media portals also contained references to a shared cultural repertoire, characterised by conflict, but also by peaceful coexistence. Titles such as 'War, peace, Maksimir' (*Novi magazine*, 21 March 2013), or 'In Zagreb: uncomfortable encounters and drinks with friends' (*Sportal*, 21 March 2013.) evoke a specific form of cultural intimacy, referring to elements that are common knowledge for both Serbian and Croatian publics (such as the 1990 game in Maksimir, or the possibility of having remained friends with people in Zagreb despite the war). Herzfeld defines cultural intimacy as 'the recognition of those aspects of cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality' (Herzfeld, 2005, p. 3). Following this concept, we argue that openly evoking the memory of recent war and hostilities between Croats and Serbs is not considered acceptable from the point of view of newly introduced policies of European integration and good neighbouring relations. The memory of previous enmities, rooted in shared cultural knowledge and internal hierarchies (Bakić-Hayden, 1995; Bakić-Hayden and Hayden, 1992; Živković, 2001), is, therefore, hidden, and comprehensible only to members of Serbian and Croatian societies. The picture sent to the 'outsiders' shows only the acceptable picture of 'civilised European societies'. The memory of past war events and hatred is therefore part of the sphere of cultural intimacy shared by Serbs and Croats.

In the next section we will further address the issue of cultural intimacy and shared knowledge, reflecting upon our position as 'Serbian anthropologists' during our fieldwork conducted in Zagreb in March 2013.

## He who doesn't jump is Orthodox

Attending the match as anthropologists with Serbian citizenship presented a number of potential difficulties determined by the tense atmosphere and security measures that were in place before the game. First, organising this kind of fieldwork implied, in a way, bypassing 'security' rules declared by the police before the game. Due to the ban on Serbian supporters,[5] tickets for the match had to be purchased through the help of Croatian colleagues, who asked for a favour from the staff of the Croatian Football Association, motivating the visit as one with

scientific purposes. Tickets were sold personally to the authors, noting their ID number, in this case passports of the Republic of Serbia. This was the only way to circumvent the ban, and to be able to attend the match.

Despite having obtained the tickets, however, we still faced the possibility of not being permitted to cross the border between Serbia and Croatia, since there were large-scale media reports describing strict controls on the State border the day before the match. However, crossing the border eventually went smoothly, but a tense atmosphere was felt in the city of Zagreb. When we wanted to check in at our hotel, the receptionist asked us if we were going to attend the game. After we confirmed we would, she informed us that, in cases like ours, she was under instruction to call the police. The police in fact contacted our hosts, inquiring about the purpose of our visit. After being convinced that our visit was only for scientific reasons, they suggested potential security measures for our safety, such as a police escort to the stadium. Luckily this never happened – any police agent accompanying us would have likely made us a 'moving target' in the grounds of the Maksimir stadium.

Immediately before the match, the city landscape also changed: police forces became highly visible, as well as streets and shop windows covered with different symbols of the Croatian State, while on one of the highest buildings in Zagreb a huge jersey of the national squad was prominently displayed. This urban transformation is far from unusual before important games like this. In this case, however, the massive presence of Croatian flags and national symbols – perceived as threatening in Serbian public narratives – evoked some uncomfortable feelings of conducting fieldwork in a potentially 'hostile environment', despite the rational awareness that these symbols do not constitute an actual threat. Due to years of conflict between 1991 and 1995, nationalist propaganda and lack of communication, Croatian and Serbian national symbols can still unconsciously evoke feelings of fear and anxiety in much of the Serbian and Croatian publics, respectively.

In this context, as researchers we found ourselves in a quite paradoxical position. On the one hand we had access to the specific cultural intimacy of the social background, sharing the same language. On the other hand, our use of a different dialect (Serbian rather than Croatian), and our accent could be perceived as a signifier of a potential enemy position, thus forcing a constructed 'Serbian identity' upon us, even though we do not identify with Serbian nationalist stances. This odd positioning meant that, before going to the stadium, we discussed at length desirable behaviour whilst in the stands (we had tickets for the

'regular' part of stadium, not the VIP section). We considered the option of speaking English, since the Serbian accent is easily recognisable in Croatia, and could have potentially exposed ourselves to a risky situation in the midst of Croatian football fans. In the end, we resolved to speak Serbian when needed. Similarly, we performed a kind of mimicry when the Croatian national anthem was played, holding Croatian football banners like the rest of the crowd. This was supposed to have the function of hiding the (unwanted) ethnic identity with which we feared we would be marked.

Despite our initial intentions, it soon became clear that 'hiding' could not last too long, nor were such precautions needed. After an initial moment of anxiety, we started to chat with our colleagues from Zagreb, being completely aware that the rest of the crowd could guess where we were from. This did not elicit any aggressive reaction and we started to feel at ease in the crowd, despite the fact that nationalist songs and slogans were sang by football fans ('Kill the Serb', 'He who doesn't jump is Orthodox', 'If I were a Serb, I would kill myself'). This ambivalence between actual non-violent behaviour and verbal, that is, symbolic, nationalist violence highlights the paradoxes intrinsic to the process of the normalising relations between Serbia and Croatia. While, on the one hand, there is no real threat of nationalist violence, verbal violence is seen as acceptable and expected. These elements are part of the cultural intimacy shared by both sides. As mentioned earlier, we define cultural intimacy as shared cultural knowledge that is not comprehensible to external observers. When it comes to relations between Serbs and Croats, it is commonly understood that evoking war is unacceptable, but also that warm relations are unlikely in the near future. An episode occurred during our fieldwork illustrating this aptly: a young Croatian fan, sitting just behind one of the authors, immediately after the 'Kill the Serb' chant, very kindly asked for a cigarette lighter, not in the least bothered by the obviously 'different' ethnic origin of the lighter owner.

It could be argued that most of the slogans may be best understood as part of a specific folklore, rather than a call to an act of violence. They had the ritual function of confirming the Croatian founding myth (Đerić, 2008; Kuljić, 2006), whose constitutive notions are, among others, the Homeland war and the conflict with Serbia in the 1990s. The football match against the 'old foe', therefore, constituted a convenient occasion for such national homogenisation. However, as our ethnographic research showed, Croatian public narratives also changed over time. A sign of the normalising political relations with Serbia was the tangible avoidance of explicit reference to the pro-Nazi Ustashe

movement and to their politics of extermination of Jews, Roma and Serbs during World War II in the chants and slogans heard during the match. While these references were occasionally mentioned in media discourses, they were no longer considered as legitimate during the match. These references, however, were common during football matches between the two countries in 1999.

The game ended with a victory for Croatia, a victory that was perceived as particularly special since the last match against Yugoslavia in 1999 had ended with a defeat. The next day was therefore a day of celebration for the Croatian media. 'Croatia smashed Serbia', 'They brought smiles back on our faces', 'That's how you fight for Croatia' were some of the headlines stressing the importance of this event. While war-like metaphors were present, the general narrative celebrating the national team's victory, however, was simultaneously conciliatory, insisting on the 'marvellous atmosphere at Maksimir, without a single incident' (*Sportske novosti*, 3 March 2013). Zagreb's mayor stressed that the city had shown a 'hospitable, cultured, and European face', indicating the importance of the normalising relations with the former adversary, but also of reinstating Croatia's status as 'civilised' (vs. 'Balkan barbarism') on the eve of the entry of the country into the European Union (Bakić-Hayden, 1995; Bellamy, 2003).

In the Serbian media, on the other hand, the predominant sentiment was disappointment at the defeat, with commentaries focused on criticizing the coach and the players. While admitting that the organisation of the event was satisfactory, media also stressed the nationalist incidents on the stands. Belgrade-based media outlet B92 described the game with the title 'Thompson, whistles, celebration and mourning' (B92, 22 March 2013), stressing how before the match began, music by the previously mentioned, notorious singer Thompson was played, and particularly the chant 'Kill the Serbs'. The daily newspaper *Politika*, in an article titled 'We applaud, they whistle', claimed that 'our players kept their promise, applauding the Croatian anthem, while the local supporters whistled all the time', adding how 'during and after the match local fans could not resist from adopting the usual repertoire, that is, insulting their adversaries' (*Politika*, 23 March 2013). The tabloid *Kurir* asked for UEFA's response, since 'towards the end of the game the whole stadium was singing in the direction of the Serbian coach "Siniša Ustashe". This was only a drop in a sea of offenses against our State and our people' (*Kurir*, 23 March 2013). While references to 'Ustashe' were not very common during the game, in this particular case hailing the Serbian coach as Ustashe was another 'internal joke', shared between the Serbian and

Croatian public. Croatian fans were, in fact, mocking Mihajlović, on the basis of the fact that his mother is an ethnic Croat. In this deep play of shared cultural knowledge, the term 'Ustashe' rather functions as another example of cultural intimacy, where Mihajlović's 'Serbdom' is being challenged through the fact known only to Serbs and Croats, that Mihajlović is not a 'pure Serb', but, in fact, half-Croat.

The media in both countries, then, underlined in the first place that there were no bigger problems at the stadium, highlighting that relations between Croatia and Serbia are much better than they used to be. However, the Croatian press, despite the expected triumphalism due to the victory, emphasised first of all the 'great atmosphere without incidents', avoiding nationalist insults. On the other hand, the Serbian media insisted on the small number of incidents and on the nationalist slogans in order to show that, despite normalisation, nationalism in Croatia is still present (without mentioning the fact that similar incidents and nationalist chants are common in Serbia as well).

## Concluding remarks

As this chapter shows, the match between Croatia and Serbia casts a light on the current relations between the two countries. Despite a lasting legacy of enmity between the two countries, media discourses overall insisted on the fact that the World Cup qualifying match 'was just football'. A chief sign of the normalising of political relations was the focus on the firm control measures, and the Croatian Prime Minister's as well as other actors' role in preventing any incidents. This indicated that the main goal was to send a message attesting to Croatia's eligibility for membership in the 'European family of nations' on the grounds of its civilised and cultural standards, on the eve of Croatia's EU accession. A similar narrative exists in Serbia. The insistence on the normalisation of neighbouring relations by local political elites in Serbia and Croatia is complementary to the proclaimed aim of EU integration. The intention is to show that the Balkans – to which Serbia, unlike Croatia, allegedly belongs – are not any more a 'powder keg', but a legitimate member of Europe whose values they accept and share. Thus, Serbian media insisted on the proper behaviour of Serbian players, who applauded the Croatian anthem, rather than openly glorifying hostile attitudes, as in the case of the 1999 match mentioned above.

Intrinsic to this process of normalisation, however, was the knowledge of a shared past of enmity and conflict, and the awareness that this past could not be easily undone. In Serbian and Croatian media narratives,

the prevailing mechanism is the strategy of self-explanatory silence (Đerić, 2008). In other words, while war-like metaphors were used in anticipation of the game in mainstream media, a detailed analysis of the media texts shows that these references were used without in-depth recalling of specific responsibilities or war-related events. Among both the Croatian and Serbian public, there is a shared assumption that this past is extremely significant, and that football games between the two countries are not just games, but carry a greater symbolic weight. This shared knowledge operates within the internal cultural context in which there is no need to discuss self-explanatory categories. This kind of 'cultural intimacy' is not limited to the imagined community of 'Croathood' (*hrvatstvo*), it is shared with the 'old foe' Serbs, and *vice versa*, where both sides have access to the understanding of the reasons why this match is 'more than a game'.

A good example of these mechanisms is a commentary from a Croatian sports newspaper, which stated: 'In the future when we will talk of this generation of players, this match with Serbia will merit a separate chapter. It is a simple fact, and the players are very aware of it. They don't live in Denmark or the Bahamas' (*Sportske Novosti*, 22 March 2013). In dropping such hints and implied meanings, the Croatian media mobilised a repertoire of feelings relating to the past that are easily understood by the Croatian public, precisely since they do not live in Denmark or the Bahamas. Similarly, the Croatian team's coach Štimac pointed out: 'this match will mark me and my players. It is a different story now. We will forever be remembered for defeating Serbia, that's the difference' (Jutarnji list, 19 March 2013). It is significant that he did not find it necessary to account for the historic importance of this match and for its current symbolic significance. Similar mechanisms were present in the Serbian media. Titles such as 'This is (not) the game of a lifetime' (*Večernje novosti*, 21 March 2013) or 'Serbo-Croatian football, more than a game?' (RTS, 21 March 2013) suggest the importance of the match without the need for broader elaborations on the reasons for that importance. In this sense, it is illustrative to quote an article from the tabloid *Kurir*, introducing the match in the following manner: '"D-Day", "Armageddon", is coming, after which nothing will be the same. Don't get me wrong, I am talking about the football match between Croatia and Serbia, it has become more than a game, like it happened long ago, in 1999' (*Kurir*, 21 March 2013). In this short quote, starting with two strong metaphors, the relevance of the match is strongly underlined, but, as in the case of the Croatian media, the author of the article does not feel the need to explain why this match

would be a D-Day. The reference is understandable for 'the chosen ones', thus functioning in a space of shared meanings mediated between the Croatian and Serbian public.

Despite normalising political relations, therefore, nationalist metaphors and feelings still function within a repertoire of shared knowledge relating to the past, scarcely comprehensible to external observers, and functioning on the basis of the assumption that 'that we don't love each other and we know too well why'. Twenty years after the war, such an assumption still has a certain influence and is capable of mobilising the 'national spirit' to some extent. However, as the fieldwork in Zagreb and particularly at the stadium clearly indicates, nationalist mobilisations of this kind have a limited effect, belonging rather to the ritual sphere. In fact, football games like this one allow supporters to temporarily enjoy feelings of national euphoria, forgetting for a moment the present dire socio-economic situation of the two countries. The process of European integration, in fact, did not deliver its promises of economic prosperity, and both Serbian and Croatian states are facing high levels of unemployment, industrial decline and widespread poverty (Buden, 2014; Petrović, 2014; Listhaug et al., 2011). Most football supporters, in Belgrade or Zagreb, will go to the market tomorrow, trying to find a way to afford a decent meal. Both Croatia and Serbia are, at this point, an impoverished semi-periphery of a deeply divided Europe in crisis, and football is not an exception. As a matter of fact, except for when Serbia and Croatia play against each other, not many people watch football anymore.

## Notes

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2. Dinamo Zagreb, following the will of the late Croatian president Franjo Tuđman, was forced to change its name first of all to HASK Gradjanski, and after that to Croatia, as its former name Dinamo was considered part of the communist legacy. This change led to very serious revolt amongst Dinamo fans, ending in a very interesting political battle within the football milieu (see Brentin, 2013; Vrcan, 2002).
3. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Savezna Republika Jugoslavija), also known as 'rump Yugoslavia', consisted of Serbia and Montenegro and existed from 1992 to 2003.
4. The Croatian national anthem.

5. The question of the ban on visiting fans opens many issues that are beyond the scope of this chapter. An interesting question is how to define a supporter of one national team in a region in which national and ethnic identities do not always coincide with citizenship. The use of citizenship (a passport) as a mode of determining who was allowed into the match and who was not also meant that, for instance, an ethnic Croat living in Serbia and having Serbian ID and citizenship, according to the criteria, would also be banned from attending the match, regardless of his or her 'national feelings'.

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# 4

# The Paradoxes of Politicisation: Fan Initiatives in Zagreb, Croatia

*Andrew Hodges and Paul Stubbs*

## Introduction

The idea that football is closely connected to national identity and nationalism is not new. Several aspects of the game – the competitiveness, focus on physical strength, idealisation of the body, the associations that clubs make with fixed geographical identities and the often deep sense of emotional connection, make the link an easy one to make, and it has been made countless times in football research. However, the connections between football and nationalism, and sociological studies of nationalism in the Balkan context more generally, have been the predominant focus over the past two decades by sociologists, activists and Western media reporting on the recent wars. They have tackled themes such as football clubs' use of history (Sindbæk, 2013), particular violent incidents as a key to understanding the escalation of war, such as the clash at Maksimir Stadium in May 1990 (see Đorđević and Žikić, Chapter 3 in this volume; Đorđević, 2012; Mihajlovic, 1997), the enrolment of and control of sports' associations by Tuđman's government in Croatia (Brentin, 2013), as well as critical analyses of media representations of football fans as hooligans (Obradović, 2007) and constructions of masculinity amongst Bad Blue Boys in Melbourne, Australia (Hughson, 2000). Whilst much of this body of scholarship has drawn important conclusions, in this chapter we have chosen to focus on more positive modes of political engagement amongst fans in Zagreb from the nineties to the present day. Due in large part to the effects of the war during the nineties, the context we describe is one in which there exists a large degree of politicisation and ideologisation of the everyday. We explore certain paradoxes this situation creates. The

first is a critique of Franjo Tuđman's authoritarianism by a predominantly right-wing fan association (*navijačka udruga*) associated with GNK Dinamo – Bad Blue Boys (henceforth BBB). The second paradox considers the various kinds of solidarities of a left-wing fan association, White Angels Zagreb (henceforth WAZ) in Zagreb associated with NK Zagreb and the complex vectors induced by members' experiences, which have even occasionally led to solidarity with right-wing Ultras groups on some issues.

The first half of the chapter offers a historical overview of fans' political engagements from the nineties to the present day. The second half considers the situation at present, drawing on conversations and participant observation with White Angels Zagreb, a fan supporter group associated with the team NK Zagreb. WAZ subscribes to an antifascist and direct democratic political platform, which sometimes brings it into conflict with other supporters' groups, such as Dinamo Zagreb's Bad Blue Boys as well as the club's management. We examine and compare WAZ's descriptions of and attitudes towards NK Zagreb's chairman Dražen Medić with the BBB's attitudes towards Dinamo Zagreb's executive vice-chairman Zdravko Mamić, both figures who symbolise crony capitalism. The chapter concludes with an analysis of modes of solidarity amongst the members of WAZ and how they motivate particular group practices. We begin with a small amount of background information concerning the clubs and the economic organisation of football in Croatia.

## The organisation of football in Croatia (1990s–present)

The majority of top-league football clubs in Croatia today are organised as citizens' associations (*udruge građana*), governed by the Croatian Football Federation (*Hrvatski nogometni savez*). Up until Croatia's EU accession, which took place on 1 July 2013, professional football clubs received funding from the state and local state budget (Hina, 2013). This is now technically illegal, although the youth divisions of some football clubs are still permitted to receive funds from the city council budgets (*Grad Zagreb*). Furthermore, when discussing this issue with fans associated with the '*Zajedno za dinamo*' initiative, they argued that the management of GNK Dinamo would continue to receive large amounts of funds from the city council budget.

The other main source of income for clubs at present is through selling players – income from ticket sales, marketing and television deals is negligible (Business, 2013). Players often move from lower-ranking

clubs, such as NK Zagreb and clubs from the lower divisions up to GNK Dinamo or Hajduk Split, before being sold on the international market. Owners and managers of clubs have often also benefitted, directly or indirectly, as players' agents from the transfer fees which they helped to negotiate. From the perspective of many fans, a number of significant problems remain concerning financing, as the WAZ fanzine describes:

> On the surface, from a supporter's perspective, citizens' associations provide the best model for managing a football club. However, in Croatia, throughout the twenty year history of the HNL (*Hrvatska nogometna liga* – Croatian Football League), it has become clear that this model has been most often chosen in order to hide streams of money, to avoid paying taxes etc. Aspects such as transparency, the real participation of citizens, openness, the principle of voting on the basis of the 'one member, one vote' rule, have been completely ignored by those in charge of the clubs, for two basic reasons: the silencing of illegal practices by legislators and the inadequate level of organisation and educational level of fans regarding their civil rights.[1] (WAZ Fanzine, 2012)

In the top league, ten teams play at present, including two from Zagreb (Locomotive and GNK Dinamo). NK Zagreb were relegated at the end of the 2014 season to the second division. Almost all teams in the top divisions have a fan association, many of which consider themselves as Ultras.

## GNK Dinamo Zagreb: a short history

Football in Yugoslavia before the bloody wars of the early 1990s had long been something of a litmus test of relations within the socialist Federation. Violent clashes between groups of supporters gained popular and media attention throughout the 1980s, at 'derby' matches between top teams both within and between the republics, notably matches involving any two of the big four teams: Dinamo from Zagreb, Hajduk from Split and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) and Partizan from Belgrade. However, it was the events at Maksimir stadium in Zagreb during the match between Dinamo Zagreb and Crvena Zvezda on 13 May 1990 – the 'mythical' dimension of which is also referred to in Chapter 3 by Đorđević and Žikić in this volume – which came, to many, to symbolise the beginning of the end of the Yugoslav Federation and signalled the inevitability of war. Sociologists such as Srđan Vrcan, however,

saw the rise of nationalism as only one part of the problem, referring also to a crisis in values, subcultural marginalisation and the increasing commercialisation of football (Vrcan, 2002). It is certainly the case that the 'othering' of football supporters was frequently mapped onto wider nationalist 'othering', as a kind of instrumentalised politicisation (Mihajlovic, 1997, p. 106) as tensions grew across the Yugoslav Federation.

The match took place just a few weeks after Croatia's first multi-party elections won by the nationalist HDZ led by Franjo Tuđman, whose name was shouted repeatedly by the BBB fans, along with other slogans such as 'Croatia all the way to Zemun' and 'Serbian Gypsies' only to be retorted in the same way by the Delje Crvena Zvezda fans chanting 'Serbia all the way to Zagreb' and 'We will kill Tuđman' (Mihajlovic, 1997, p. 154). The most controversial aspect was the actions of the police. Dinamo's captain Zvonimir Boban quickly gained the status of a national hero in Croatia when aiming a kick at a policeman attacking a Dinamo supporter.

Tuđman was not slow to realise the significance of the event for the nationalist cause. In June 1991, on the day Croatia declared independence, the club's name was changed to Hašk-Građanski, a return to the pre-communist era. More significantly, Tuđman was instrumental in changing the club's name to 'Croatia' (pronounced Croacia) in 1993, tying the club's fate to his nation-building project (Sindbaek, 2013). President Tuđman regularly attended Croatia's matches, forging close links between the team and his party HDZ. Given the fact that a significant part of Tuđman's power base was amongst the Croatian Diaspora, it is not surprising to find a parallel BBB world amongst supporters of Sydney United, gathering Australian-born men of Croatian descent (Hughson, 2000).

Tuđman's support for the name Croatia drew him increasingly into conflict with the BBB. His rejection of the name Dinamo as 'Bolshevik' did not resonate with hard-core fans who, although supportive of Croatia's independence, wished to preserve the name, seeing little or no connection between Dinamo and the socialist regime, and unwilling to be mobilised as a kind of second national team. At a time when Tuđman's rule was at its strongest, and with Dinamo/Croatia fans including the BBB actively involved in military actions to secure Croatia's territory, the terraces at Maksimir frequently rang out to chants of 'Vrati nam Dinamo' (Give us back the name Dinamo). As early as 1992, before the change of the name to Croatia, the rock band Pips,

Chips and Video Clips recorded 'Dinamo ja volim' (Dinamo I love you), which quickly became the BBB fan anthem.

The contradictory politicisation of the BBB, erecting a monument to BBB volunteers killed 'at the altar of the Croatian homeland' (Sindbaek, 2013, p. 1017) and yet scathing of the name change of the club, is worth exploring in more detail. At the time, the relationship between BBB and sections of the club's management was at its strongest, culminating in BBB's being allowed to move from the rather bleak South stand to the somewhat better North stand in 1991. Sindbaek's discussion of the controversy as largely a result of generational differences between BBB and nationalist politicians is only part of the story, although it is certainly the case that the dispute, more than anything, reflected competing memories:

> While for Tuđman and others, the communist past implicated by the name Dinamo was undesirable and unworthy of commemoration, for BBB it was a period of brave exploits made both by themselves and the club, despite regime opposition, and certainly worth remembering. The BBB's view on the club and its name was shared by a large part of Zagreb's youth for whom the name Dinamo had nothing to do with support for Yugoslavia or socialism, but rather with the club as a symbol for Zagreb and Croatian football. (Sindbaek, 2013, p. 1018)

The BBB opposition to the name change certainly had a spillover effect when Tuđman's allies conspired to remove the Zagreb radio franchise from Radio 101 in the late 1996. This removal led to mass protests in Zagreb, in which BBB played a significant role. Tuđman, diagnosed with cancer, increasingly turned on 'enemies within' and developed a whole series of conspiracy theories regarding the existence of a concerted attempt to restore Yugoslavia. Importantly, as Vrcan argues (2002), what began as a 'difference of opinion', became 'a case of public dissent' and ended 'in a radical conflict with very important political implications' (Vrcan, 2002, p. 62). He argues that this was the 'first expropriation' of the club from BBB, led not by private capital, which would at least have to bear financial risks, but by a political elite used to having their top-down structures being obeyed unquestioningly. In the process, despite the nationalism of BBB, a key component of the nationalist ideology, that everyone in the nation wants the same thing, was shattered. Pointing to the important role that the conflict played in reconstructing political identities in Croatia, this was less 'non-political' than a kind of

'sub politics' or the elaboration of a kind of autonomous radical politics, which could not be contained by the new elites.

In February 2000, less than two months after Tuđman's death and the loss of power by HDZ, Dinamo Chairman Zlatko Canjuga, a close ally of Tuđman's, agreed to change the name of the club back to Dinamo Zagreb, even suggesting that this was one of the last wishes of the dying President. The 2011 change to Građanski Nogometni Klub (GNK) Dinamo could be seen as another attempt to reconnect the club with its pre-communist history, but we suggest it is more a rather crude attempt to pretend that the club is owned by members/citizens and an attempt to illustrate that Dinamo is as old as clubs such as HNK Hajduk Split, who celebrated their centenary that year. In reality, over the last decade, Dinamo, like many other Croatian clubs, have become leitmotifs for a form of crony capitalism in which the first wave of privatisation winners expanded through 'insider interests, extreme clientelism, non-market based financial sector allocation, and a close link of the state and the government with entrepreneurs and the financial sector' (Bičanić, n.d., p. 1; cf. also Stubbs and Zrinščak, 2012). Throughout, BBB have combined a resurgent right-wing ideology with a popular distrust of the new elites, again showing the paradoxical nature of the politicisation of Croatian football whereas, as we see below, 'Zajedno za Dinamo' purges the position, to an extent, of its right-wing ideology in pursuit of broader-based change.

## Contemporary initiatives: *Zajedno za dinamo* and *Vratit ćemo Zagreb*

'*Zajedno za Dinamo*' is a campaign which aims to build a more accountable Dinamo, responsive to its fans. It emerged in reaction to concerns many fans had that the current key manager, Zdravko Mamić, partly hiding behind his position as Executive Vice President since 2003, was using the club for his private business and that he was extracting money from the club and using it for money laundering. One of the founding members, Tomislav Marinović, who now works on the PR side of the initiative, described the aim behind the initiative as follows in an interview one of us (Andrew Hodges) conducted with him:

> We wanted to change public awareness about what is going on in Dinamo and we started to do a series of media events where we presented our model, where we presented what is wrong in Dinamo and we gained wide public attention and wide public support and we even

> had some contacts with people from politics, people in the Ministry to whom we proposed what should change in the law, so we filed several lawsuits to the state attorney . . . We also publicly announced that Zdravko Mamić has private contracts with some players, that he is a member of the club and so by law he has a conflict of interest and shouldn't be doing what he does.

The initiative quickly gained popularity, both amongst the Ultras group BBB and amongst a much wider base of Dinamo fans. Whilst the initiative was largely organised by members or ex-members of BBB, the decision was made to detach itself from BBB, making its own separate decisions in order to attract a much wider base of supporters. It currently has a Facebook group numbering over 18,000 followers and a website, which states the initiative's objectives as follows:

> *Zajedno za Dinamo* (Together for Dinamo) is a civil initiative which wishes to bring together all those people for whom Dinamo is in their hearts, who wish to get actively involved in working for the well-being of the club. The initiative is guided by the idea of uniting all fans with the aim of achieving the best results possible for Dinamo. We understand this as meaning the transparent and legal work of all management bodies connected with FC Dinamo, expert and competent leadership, the promotion of positive values, a struggle against violence which accompanies football matches, the education of a young growing mass of fans and wholehearted and unreserved support for players who wear the sacred blue kit.

Besides the political aims of the group, they advocate a variety of other activities, including educating young fans and organising humanitarian campaigns, notably '*Plavo srce za djecu Vukovara*' (Blue heart for the children of Vukovar), where funds were raised for a nursery in Vukovar in collaboration with a sailing group, and an association of Vukovar war veterans based in Zagreb (Zajedno za dinamo, 2013). Such humanitarian actions illustrate the link with Croatian nationalist ideology to which the vast majority of the BBB subscribe, yet a commitment to strong nationalist positions is not a prerequisite for participation in the *Zajedno za Dinamo* (ZZD) initiative – many members of the leftist WAZ, for example, commented positively on ZZD.

ZZD advocates participatory democracy, based on the *socio* model of club ownership, looking for inspiration to teams in the German Bundesliga and Spanish La Liga. Such a model is not necessarily against

privatisation, although it is critical of the neoliberal model, as Tomislav Marinović further described in the interview:

> The *socios* model can include privatisation. I will give you the example of Bayern. Bayern Munich is in its nature, in its roots, *socios*, but members of Bayern, they also founded Bayern Ltd and they have decided to sell 49% of their shares to Deutsche Telekom,[2] so basically you now have a club which is an association, a *socios*, where members can decide about the board and on the other hand it is also commercialised because 49% of the shares of Bayern Ltd is owned by a private company, not the majority, only 49%, so there is a way to combine those two models, but basically we would like to have a 100% *socios* model where members of the club would pay let's say annually 100 euros and where they could choose the board of the club and members of the club's assembly and where they could have insight into the club's business.

Nevertheless, neoliberal models which focus on fans as consumers were viewed as stopping many working-class fans from affording ticket prices, whom Tomislav Marinović referred to as 'McDonald's supporters', and which the UK premiership typified to the most extreme degree. He was particularly critical of UEFA's political correctness (it's OK to hiss and boo, it demonstrates passion, but that passion must have borders). The campaign was also willing to engage with the government and legal system to work with lawyers in order to seek changes to the Croatian constitution, and so on. The campaign is one of a number of participative democratic projects in Zagreb, the most recent of which is Za Grad, a loose activist initiative, which gained significant support as an alternative to 'politics as usual' in recent Zagreb elections. An extreme of participative democracy is self-organisation, whereby groups seek to completely organise by themselves, disregarding state procedures. Given the radical left ultra-positioning of WAZ, was their campaign more radically positioned than ZZD and if so, how?

The White Angels Fanzine states the initiative as follows:

> FC Zagreb today is a club, or rather an association which ordinary citizens cannot join. To make things even more tragicomic, fans who try to join don't get any kind of explanation regarding why membership isn't possible. The association's statute isn't available to view, although all such statutes have been validated by town institutions and therefore are, we hope, completely legal. The idea for the

> initiative 'Vratit ćemo Zagreb' was born on the terraces of the Kranjčevićev stadium, through contact between the White Angels and other loyal Zagreb supporters. The essence of the initiative is contained in its name 'Give us back Zagreb', which denotes the requirement that this sports collective with a hundred year long tradition once again becomes a club for its fans, a club for all Zagrebians, a club for the local community and a club towards which town dwellers feel positive emotions. The basic idea is the uniting and self-organising of Zagreb fans of all ages, groups, beliefs and attitudes, coming from the desire to participate actively in creating a better future for the football club which we all love, and which as the years go by loses out more and more, both in terms of results/league position and in terms of identity confusion. (WAZ Fanzine, 2012, p. 67)

The group has an official platform and position regarding Dražen Medić, NK Zagreb's Chairman, consisting of a campaign, *Vratit ćemo Zagreb*, as well as a series of chants, and banners calling for Medić's resignation. Medić is viewed as representing the incursion of clientelistic and business interests in football. For example, his son, Lovro Medić, is viewed by WAZ as having an unfair advantage and receiving special treatment in the football team and Medić is understood as having close links to the town mayor, Bandić, in a parallel with the situation regarding Zdravko Mamić in Dinamo whose brother Zoran, a former captain, has the position of first-team trainer. While a comparison with ZZD can be made in terms of political discourse, the campaigns are incomparable in scale; ZZD is a large-scale campaign which has fought for several years to remove Mamić from GNK Dinamo, whilst VCZ consists merely of a Facebook page, and a small number of low-key meetings. This difference was visible when the two groups were contacted – ZZD had a media spokesperson that replied to our mail within 24 hours and arranged to meet, while a reply from those involved in VCZ took over a week.

In contrast to ZZD, which seeks to manage the commercialisation of football and give the fans a voice in official discussions, VCZ and the White Angels are against privatisation per se, from an anti-capitalist, radical-left positioning, advocating direct democratic governance – although the positioning is sometimes more ambiguous amongst the membership. A spokesperson for the campaign, Robert,[3] when asked this question directly, responded:

> The initiative is against any form of club privatisation. We are of the opinion that football clubs shouldn't be private toys for

> rich individuals by whom they are used as a means of extracting profit or laundering money: rather they ought to be organised from below, which means that fans, through assemblies, participate in the work and club decision making. In this way, we can make sure that clubs really belong to their fans, that fans are an integral part of the club and that they are held responsible to the local community/neighbourhood/town from which they come.

One key specificity to VCZ is the focus on 'loss of identity', associated with Medić's rebranding of the club. A club identity, emblematised in a logo and club colours, was viewed as important. Comparisons were made with other, similar situations, such as the Cardiff City takeover, whereby a change in strip colour was purportedly made for economic reasons after the club was taken over by a business tycoon.

All football fans are powerfully connected with the symbols associated with their club and the history which those symbols represent.[4] For this reason, they are very sensitive regarding any kind of playing around with these symbols. The beginning of the conflict took place at the moment when Medić decided to 'rebrand' the club, which resulted in the removal of the historical crest of NK Zagreb and the introduction of new club colours, as a result of which many fans lost the feeling of connection with their old club and so they stopped coming to football matches.

The issue of the importance of a club identity – the name in GNK Dinamo's case, or the strip and emblem in NK Zagreb's case – links the two and places fans' struggles in what fans referred to as the 'supporters' world' (*navijački svijet*). We now move to consider in more detail what this means in terms of solidarities, from a fan perspective.

## Fan solidarities: positioning selves and others

In the previous section, the history and key elements of the political discourses surrounding *Zajedno za Dinamo* and *Vratit ćemo Zagreb* were discussed. What is missing in the above analysis is a sense of the everyday meanings, which fans placed on themselves and others; how they understood what they were doing, what going to football matches entailed and how particular feelings of connection, belonging and opposition emerged through fan practices and engagements. The following observations are made on the basis of participant observation of WAZ by one of us (Andrew Hodges, hereon AH) as an active member, combined with knowledge of the Zagreb context and of the

activities of certain other fan associations. AH has been a member of WAZ for over three years, coming to them through the organisation *Mlade antifašistkinje Zagreba*, of which he was also a member for several years. The following observations are made from an 'involved' perspective, sympathetic to the group, employing an ethnographic strategy we name 'deconfusion'. AH found significant differences in the members' judgment and opinions concerning a variety of topics with which the group engaged, On occasion, this led to arguments. We can understand such differences in opinion as connected with different kinds of solidarities members asserted. In order to better understand the motivations behind members' different positionings, we therefore list the vectors along which different solidarities operated, thus 'deconfusing' the discussions in which members came to clash.

Before discussing the ethnographic material in more depth, it is important to describe a distinction AH frequently came across, between the terms *navijački svijet* (the supporters' world) and *Ultras kultura* (Ultras culture). As these terms underpin fans' commitments and consequently their actions, it is worth elaborating on them in more detail before moving on to consider their engagements.

First and foremost, the supporters' world was characterised by a love and passion for following and/or playing football. Members of WAZ who positioned themselves as from this world were people who had followed football, and often NK Zagreb, for many years and who were both extremely knowledgeable (regarding fixtures, details of matches, players and so on) and passionate about NK Zagreb and football in general. They also had a thorough knowledge of football in many locations the world over, especially throughout Europe, in particular the UK, Germany and Italy.

Overlapping with the supporters' world was 'Ultras culture', which consisted of the various Ultras groups. From a fan perspective, 'Ultras culture' referred to a constellation of cultural references, political orientations and shared concerns. For example, films representing fan cultures such as *The Firm*, *Football Factory* and various insignia resonating with different political currents – Ultras were typically left or right-wing in their orientation – ranging from red stars and pictures of Che Guevara to Celtic crosses and swastikas, were adopted. Such political references referred to both globally recognisable insignia and more local references – such as right-wing Ultras' celebration of the Oluja military action in 1995, or the use of icons associated with Zagreb such as the Zagi squirrel mascot from the final World Student Games held in Zagreb in 1988, remembered nostalgically as a shop window for both

the city and, amongst left-wing groupings such as WAZ, as one of the final international events held in Socialist Yugoslavia.

Those who were most involved in the Ultras groups considered themselves to be from the supporters' world and, in some cases, viewed themselves as its vanguard as the following quote illustrates:

> [B]eing an Ultra means having a new attitude to life (their Ultra identity), being "extreme", having fun and being part of a separate new football fan and youth culture. Unlike other fan club activities, a person is an Ultra not only at a weekend game but also during the entire week. Everything is subordinated to football and/or the fan movement. (Pilz and Wölki-Schumacher, 2009, p. 6)

The vast majority of Ultras in Croatia, including the mainstream of BBB, were right-wing and subscribed to a strong nationalist ideology. Whilst WAZ did not agree with the political activities and positionings of almost all other Ultras' groups in Croatia and the region more generally, which were generally from centre to far right politically, there was still a feeling that these groups were part of a common Ultras' culture and were the subject of much commentary. Occasionally solidarity was implied on issues where the groups had common ground, such as increases in police restrictions at games – all groups shared a dislike of police, encapsulated in phrases such as A.C.A.B. (All Cops Are Bastards) – the English acronym being used by fans in Croatia. Understanding such identifications and solidarities is crucial to understanding fan practices:

The first aspect is political solidarity amongst fan association members. This is grounded in shared political views. In WAZ, this was fairly flexible; members had political views ranging from anarchist to communist to social democratic. Points of common ground included antifascist, antiracist, non-homophobic and antinationalist positioning, at odds with both the dominant right-wing Ultras leitmotifs of BBB and, indeed, opposed to strong authoritarian-clerical beliefs within the wider Croatian population. Whilst many members accepted and/or used national categories – what the sociologist Billig described as 'banal nationalism' (Billig, 1995) – none advocated strong nationalist ideology, a finding which contrasts with Spaaij and Viñas' (2013) discussion of left-wing Ultras groups in Spain, where several groups advocated 'peripheral' nationalisms. They noted a similar degree of ideological flexibility amongst group members, stating that:

> it should be noted that although left-wing fan groups draw on 'thick' ideologies to articulate their beliefs and legitimize their actions, we

> must bear in mind their often shallow ideologisation, which in many cases goes no deeper than the display of symbols and paraphernalia. In that regard, it is arguably more pertinent to speak of a 'pseudo-ideology' built on image alone, lacking any coherence or depth of thought . . . Nonetheless, as we will show in this study, the cognitive and social functions of their ideological discourse should be taken seriously, and their appropriation of left-wing ideology is a demonstrable reality. (Spaaij and Viñas, 2013, p. 185)

Regarding WAZ, around half of the members were involved in political organisations and purported to practice, in everyday life, the values they upheld at football matches. Football match displays were focused around spectacle, but they were backed up by a range of activities off the pitch, such as organising football matches with asylum-seekers, organising a series of workshops in schools and so on, suggesting a wider, left-oriented cultural sensibility and engagement. By focusing on 'the Ultras scene' as an object of analysis, Spaaij and Viñas pass over other forms of solidarity informing group members' actions which cross-cut ideological affiliations and group membership, such as belonging to the aforementioned supporters' world, a second solidarity we might name generalised fan solidarity. This does not relate to following a particular team, but asserts a generalised solidarity with all other fans who follow teams and who are passionate about football. This form of solidarity is shared with others who were not committed to Ultras culture, and/or who had very different political opinions. The third kind of solidarity concerned Ultras culture and can be subdivided, from the perspective of the WAZ membership, into intra-group Ultras solidarity (through being in the same Ultras group; through having shared concerns and practices) and generalised Ultras solidarity, which asserts a generalised solidarity with others involved in the Ultras scene. The intra-group solidarity emerged from shared group practices, specifically the match-day routine and meetings. Generalised Ultras solidarity was also important as there was a recognition that other groups in the Ultras scene operated under similar constraints, particularly with reference to police and other forms of surveillance, even if they had different ideological interpretations of such modes of surveillance. Irrespective of political differences, there was also recognition of certain 'shared struggles' such as comparing the 'corrupt club management' of Dinamo's Zdravko Mamić with NK Zagreb's Dražen Medić. Whilst there was a certain degree of inter-group respect, this was also accompanied on occasion by dislike and possible surveillance by other Ultras groups.

The various solidarities described above varied from member to member depending on how involved they were in group activities, in Ultras culture and in the supporters' world. These different tendencies led individuals in WAZ to position themselves in relation to both other group members and others outside of the group, including Medić and the club management.

## (I) Positioning the membership

As mentioned earlier, not all members of WAZ were understood as being from the supporters' world. Within the group, people were often categorised along a continuum. At one end of the continuum there were people who were from the supporters' world, whilst at the other extreme there were people who were attracted to the group due to its antifascist political positioning and/or who were attracted by the prospect of joining an Ultras subculture, or who simply enjoyed the joking around, match-day routine and social aspects of membership. Whether or not a WAZ member belonged to the supporters' world was clearly ascertained through one's approach and comments during meetings and at football matches; belonging presupposed having a wide knowledge of Croatian and European football and having, or quickly gaining, knowledge about NK Zagreb and their positioning within a wider world comprised of teams, each with their own special qualities and struggles. This knowledge was both a detailed factual knowledge and a practical knowledge, which entailed in the most literal sense, having a 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 66).

As regards the membership for those who were not fully part of the supporters' world, other factors – specifically political positioning and the extent to which the members identified with and engaged with facets of Ultras culture were important. The various positionings and inclinations of different group members were often commented on. For instance, whilst visiting a conference in Amsterdam, one of us (AH) sat outside on the grass with two other members of the group whilst consuming wine mixed with Coca-Cola (bambus). Inside, a UEFA representative was giving a talk on sanctions against fans, a topic we found unsavoury and which marked us, as an Ultras group, as separate from a number of other fans – 'liberals' – inside. Another member of the group, Vjeko, who was on the conference organising committee, had to stay inside for the talk however. Another group member, Filip, made the following comments:

Filip: Andy, I see you more as material for the committee than Vjeko.
Andy: Why?
Filip: Because you're more from that world, than from the real supporters' world (*pravi navijački svijet*). Vjeko is [from the real supporters' world]; actually he's maybe a better choice because of that.

These statements situated a group, which included UEFA representatives and more generally committee members in pan-European fan organisations, as distanced from the 'real supporters' world'.

Members of the antifascist group who had no interest in football were occasionally invited and their presence was appreciated, but as soon as it became clear that an interest in football and Ultras culture was not developing amongst them, they wouldn't be deemed worth inviting again, except perhaps to big matches where a large turn-out was hoped for. Being part of the supporters' world was seen as crucial in constituting the core of the group, whilst a wider array of activists and sympathisers circled around them. Some members who were clearly from the supporters' world were sometimes commented on negatively as they were not viewed as part of Ultras culture. For instance, one member of the group, Tomislav, was particularly keen to speak whenever cameras were present, to give statements for the media and so forth. He was also a vocal critic of other members of the group who claimed to be 'against modern football' – the name of an Ultras slogan decrying the commercialisation of modern football, but from an ambiguous position which could be associated with anti-capitalist right and/or left-wing perspectives. He argued that he liked large-scale organised football tournaments because he thought the quality of the football was higher, and that these larger-scale organisational structures and associations enabled this. He was imputed by some to be a 'liberal', which from the perspective of some group members distanced him from Ultras culture, but his affection for and commitment to the club was acknowledged.

## (II) Positioning 'others'

Besides other left and right-wing Ultras groups, the police and Europe-wide institutions such as UEFA and FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe),[5] an important 'other' which group members spoke about, and had a position on, was the club management, personified by Dražen

Medić, who WAZ claimed even lost control and hit one of their members on one occasion.[6] Like 'others' such as the police, Medić was neither part of Ultras culture nor had similar political sympathies to the group. Whilst the police and Medić were viewed as outside the supporters' world, they were all the more disliked because they were interfering in it, Medić perhaps more so than the police. Actions such as seeking to change the club identity were seen as demonstrating his lack of interest in the concerns of everyday fans. He was viewed as close to the Zagreb mayor, Milan Bandić, himself widely seen as corrupt, and as symbolising the incursion of clientelistic interests and organised criminal connections in sport, and in the mismanaged process of privatisation more generally, as discussed in the earlier section.

Medić was frequently compared with Dinamo's Mamić, who had most recently been in the news[7] in connection with a fine the club had received from UEFA, due to a contingent of Dinamo fans chanting '*Mamiću Cigane*' (Mamić, Gypsy), which was understood by many to be racist.[8] Indeed, the UEFA sanctions came from the combination of '*Mamiću Cigane*' and '*HNS, pederi*' (HNS, fags), deemed both racist and homophobic.

Tomislav, from the Zajedno za Dinamo initiative, argued that the chant was not racist; that it would be if fans chanted 'kill gypsies' or 'gypsies leave Croatia', but that this was not the case. He argued against the use of political correctness in sport, stating that such comments are often used as general insults in Croatia in a joking context and made another, subjectivist argument, that if you call someone a 'gypsy', it is up to that person how they interpret it, whether they see it as an insult or not. Tomislav also argued that somebody in UEFA or FARE, possibly via Zdravko Mamić, who – it was claimed – had strong connections in UEFA – had deliberately used the incident to put pressure on the BBB with it actually being in Mamić's interest to have some European matches played behind closed doors.

This argument also came up in discussions amongst WAZ members, who regularly commented on Mamić and the local footballing news. Some members were confused as to why FARE had been chasing the BBB so much recently, suggesting (as Tomislav had) that Mamić had connections in UEFA and FARE, which he was using to put pressure on the BBB. One member of WAZ suggested we write '*Mamiću Cigane*' on the White Angels website page in solidarity, arguing that the issue was topical and related to the issue with Medić on the basis of a generalised solidarity with other Ultras groups. It was concluded that this would not be appropriate and that WAZ, as a group, should distance

themselves from the BBB who were ‘a herd of uneducated cows’ (*stoka neobrazovanih*), a conclusion reached by others in the conversation on the basis of following comments made on various online forums. WAZ’s positioning within the Ultras scene was also used as an argument, with reference made to the group’s size: ‘given that nobody experiences us, so we don’t have to experience others’ (‘*Tak i tak niko nas ne doživljava, ne moramo ni mi druge*’). Indeed, whilst encounters with other groups were rare, when they did occur they were frequently talked about, particularly when actions, such as the raising of a banner, were noticed by other groups such as the BBB – even if they were commented on negatively, as they largely were, such commentary helped legitimate a positioning within the Ultras scene. On issues where there was common ground, other groups also displayed positive solidarity with WAZ. For example, at one match, a member of WAZ released a flare and the police came down heavily and arrested them. Following this incident, WAZ decided to leave the terraces for the rest of the game in protest and BBB cheered, giving them support against the police.

The relation between BBB and WAZ merits further research. For instance, during the nineties before WAZ had a leftist platform, WAZ was constituted largely of BBB, who chose to attend NK Zagreb matches for ‘fun’ when club and wider political repression was at its height. Additionally, on one occasion one of us (AH) spoke with a member of BBB who lived in the same neighbourhood (*kvart*). He said that some members were aware of the activities of WAZ and that they knew some members by name, but that they had left a space for them as they understood them as supporting a Zagreb tradition, which they viewed as a positive thing as it did not come from ‘outside’. However, their politics were disliked, and particular issues such as supporting LGBTQ rights were particularly disdained.

## Conclusions

Whilst the fan initiatives discussed relate to different political traditions, their struggles have several similarities which emerged through their location in what fans referred to as the supporters’ world and Ultras culture, as well as the Zagreb context, which we assert is highly politicised in comparison to many other locations in Europe. Issues concerning the preservation of ‘authentic’ club identity are common to both BBB and WAZ, respectively with references to the club’s name and the strip/emblem. Without the widespread support of the fan base, changes to club identity have clearly had a dramatic effect on attendance and

fans' feeling of connection with their club. Both BBB and the initiative '*Zajedno za Dinamo*' are highly critical of crony capitalism in the form it has emerged in Croatia over the past few years. In the case of '*Zajedno za Dinamo*', the negative emphasis is on the cronyism – in the interview Tomislav considered this a communist legacy. This initiative sought to manage commercial interests in football rather than deny any role for them. In the case of the '*Vratit ćemo Zagreb*' initiative, the emphasis was more firmly on capitalism as having negative effects, calling for the removal of all private interests in football and a focus on direct democracy – a radical extension to the participative democratic approach '*Zajedno za Dinamo*' advocated.

The paradoxes we refer to in the title relate to the different directions in which the membership of the groups are pushed as they strive, in this highly politicised context, to enact solidarities and form alliances. Individual members of groups such as WAZ and BBB draw on different levels of commitment to and engagement with the supporters' world and Ultras' culture, which partially explains the different directions in which their arguments and engagements move. The focus of the latter on political protest created, for example, new divisions amongst those perhaps initially sympathetic to Tuđman's nationalist and pro-capitalist government, with members of BBB choosing to critique its authoritarianism. What new fan configurations and paradoxes emerge in Zagreb as the context changes, ranging in possibilities from general depoliticisation to a repoliticisation in a new crisis period, remains to be seen.

## Notes

1. All quotes in this chapter from the fanzine are our translation.
2. The argument regarding the 50% rule is correct, however the example given – Deutsche Telekom – is not.
3. We use pseudonyms throughout for the members of WAZ.
4. For instance, see Ranc (2012) and Robson (2000).
5. See www.farenet.org/ date [accessed 11 February 2014], for more information.
6. See www.index.hr/sport/clanak/ljutiti-medic-izgubio-kontrolu-i-udario-navijaca-white-angelsi-organizirali-prosvjed/518193.aspx [accessed 11 February 2014], for more information.
7. See www.sportcom.hr/sport/nogomet/dinamo/mami%C4%87u-cigane-navija%C4%8Di-dinama-misle-da-vrije%C4%91aju-mami%C4%87a-dok-uefa-upozorava-da-vrije%C4%91aju-rome.html [accessed 11 September 2013], for more information.
8. The term *Cigan* (gypsy) is generally viewed as pejorative and not politically correct; the term Roma is more neutral.

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# 5
# We Are One! Or Are We?
## Football Fandom and Ethno-National Identity in Israel

*Hani Zubida*

### Introduction

While football is considered a prominent arena for the manifestation of nationality, it is usually done so at the national level. Moreover, patriotic sentiments are usually expressed during international matches, mainly the World Cup and Continental championships, such as the Euro, and other international competitions. In some cases, this becomes a new arena for national feuds that can escalate to a full-scale war; see the case of Egypt and Algeria double header in the qualification for the World Cup in 2009 (see Bertoli, 2014). However, at the local club level, it seems that other aspects are cultivated by the fans; local patriotism is one, and in some rare cases we might witness a nationalist identity that diverges from the dominant national scheme of the State at local club level. These instances are infrequent; however, they do exist. For example, we can turn to the Catalan identity manifested in FC Barcelona, and Basque-based club Athletic Bilbao. Both clubs represent a national identity that is not consistent with the dominant Spanish national identity. Yet both clubs play in the Spanish league and represent Spain in European competitions and its players play for the national team. However, these examples are rare cases. When it comes to local clubs, most of the clubs and their fans cultivate local identity centered on the team, the city or some other local context (Ben-Porat, 2003).

At this intersection between national and local identity of football fans, the Israeli case poses a unique mixture. While on the one hand it adheres to the general pattern of local identity of fandom, on the other hand, there is an alternate expression of an ethno-nationalistic

identity discourse (see Đorđević and Žikić, Chapter 3 in this volume; Hodges and Stubbs, Chapter 4 in this volume). For example, one locally based identity is more or less an inclusive one that revolves around the teams' identity and its fans. The other identity is more complex; while it is team-based, it has some ethno-national-religious features that create a divide between various Israeli groups, mostly excluding Arabs from the team's fan base. This raises the following questions: who can and should be considered Israeli? Is this identity exclusively Jewish? Or can the Arabs be incorporated into this Israeliness? Moreover, is there a consensus on the concept of Israeli identity?

The literature on Israeli football and identity offers a well-documented discussion about the inner-Israeli identity tension. In some parts it discusses the manifestation of national identity (Sorek, 2002), such as the national Palestinian identity, while arguing that football does not serve as a ground for the development of such identity (Sorek, 2003a), which I will try to show the contrary. Finally, the literature examines football as a ground for the manifestation of multiple identities found in the inner-Israeli discourse (Carmeli and Bar, 2003). Moreover, there are various scholarly efforts that refer to football as an integrative arena between Jews and Arabs in Israel (Sorek, 2003; Liebmann and Rookwood, 2007).

In this chapter, I offer an exploration of the Israeli case study, concentrating mainly on the complex nature of identities that Israeli society offers and their manifestation in Israeli football fandom. I offer an analysis of the juxtapositions between the various modes of identity present in Israeli society and the way they affect the balance between local and national identity at club level. This mixture is composed of various identities: first and foremost, the religious-national identity, Arabs vs Jews, which shows how Palestinian national identity entered the Israeli discourse making it a bi-national and not local discourse; second, the inner Jewish ethnic identity, Ashkenazi vs Mizrachi. With respect to this mixture, a consideration will also be made of the political orientation of Hawkish vs Dovish. All of these are expressed through club membership and fandom. The mixture between the various above-mentioned identities lingers into the local club level and plays a major role in the club and fans' identity and also becomes the base for inclusion or exclusion from the collective identity.

## Identity and belonging (not just in Israel)

The literature about primordial and constructed identities is well-documented, just to mention a few: Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (1991); Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (1990); Gellner,

*Nations and Nationalism* (1983); Smith's work, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1988) and the Kanchan-edited volume titled *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics* (2012).

However, I would like to skip this step and delve directly into the literature on football fandom's ethno-national identity formation. Some argue that identity is constructed in a dual way – on the one hand it is based on the *other*, who is considered to be the outsider, the one with whom we contrast; on the other hand, it is an inner process of dialogue between the different groups or elements that are the base of the collective and/or the identity (Billig, 1997). Football matches and football fandom groups became a significant part of the above-mentioned activities in which the *otherness* is set and identities are molded. It is documented that sport, with a focus on football, is used by states to reinforce identity elements that are chosen by the state (Stoddart, 1998; Ben-Porat, 2001, 2003). However, that is not to say that national identity is the only identity that arises in sport in general and football in particular – other identities such as religious and ethnic 'come into play'; and, in certain cases, all of these identities juxtapose on the pitch.

The most significant manifestation of this identity discourse is through fans and fandom. According to Hobsbawm (1990), fans become a symbol for the extension of the nation through the way they portray the nation-state in their actions, clothes and fandom performances. While in many cases the literature will also refer to hooligans when looking at the national identity discourse (for example see: Foer, 2004; Goldblatt, 2006) this is not the way the argument is set forth in this chapter. Instead, I would like to argue that Israeli local football club fans, through their behaviours, clothes and other actions – namely flag-waving – are at the forefront of the national identity discourse, combining the ethno-national and, in some cases, the religious facets of this intense identity discourse 'struggle'. I present an analysis of the phenomenon that emerges from the fandom discourse, and hope to present evidence to the significance of this discourse to fans. Hence, in the following sections I would like to delineate the various identity structures that are present in the Israeli case and elaborate on how they affect local football clubs, fandom identity and national identity, as well as how they are affected by the fandom discourse itself.

## In, but actually not: Arabs in Israel

Israel's population is about eight million residents, and about 1.5 million of them are Arabs (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012; approximately 21 per cent of the total population). Moreover, and more importantly,

Israel is defined as a 'Jewish State', and this is probably the most dominant narrative in and of the State. However, some argue that Israeli citizenship, which is one of the most significant components of the Israeli identity, was framed as 'Jewish citizenship' mainly because it served the Jewish-Arab divide. This remains, outside of Israel, the most significant prism through which to understand Israeli politics and society (Shafir and Peled, 2002). Inside Israel, the citizenship/identity narrative is more nuanced and reflects the various internal ethno-social-national division over the purpose and goal of the State – for instance, Jewish ethnicity, Mizrachi-Ashkenazi, becomes essential (Kimmerling, 2004).

As was mentioned, the Israeli State vision was established as a Jewish State. The Arabs represent Israel's first major attempt to include non-Jews as members of the State. Under the Israeli Nationality Law, Arabs present in Israel on the day of its declaration as a sovereign state and their descendants are granted Israeli citizenship.[1] Unlike Jews, Arabs retain formal citizenship as well as political and formal social rights; however they lack rights of return and associated social benefits, and thus remain at the fringe of Israeli society.[2] In addition, 'the Arabs' are not a monolithic social group, and this fact will become more significant when I will present the Israeli society outlook on the integration of Arabs/Muslims in Israeli football. Some ethno-religious groups, such as Druze, Circassians, Christian-Arabs and Bedouins, have privileged relationships with the State. The Druze and Circassians accepted the existence of the state of Israel and Zionism and as a result have the most citizenship rights and some obligations, like conscription.[3] Bedouins and most of the Druze and Circassians also enlist into the security forces. All others, although they can volunteer, are excluded and thus remain on the periphery of the citizenship discourse.[4]

When looking at all the equality indices, it is obvious that Arabs are not treated equally when compared with Jews in Israel (Cohen, 2006; Kimmerling, 2004). Nonetheless, Arabs can exercise formal aspects of citizenship, that is, voting, election to political office, passports and freedom of entry and exit. However, it should be clear, this is true only for Arab citizens of Israel, not Arab non-citizens, that is, Palestinians.

## The Inner-Jewish identity divide

When examining the Israeli State one might mistakenly consider it to be the State of the Jews; however, within the Jewish collective there is a deep cleavage with significant impact on the way this collective is

constructed. The Israeli State began with the imagination and settlement of Ashkenazi Jews from Europe in Palestine. Later, Jews from predominantly Muslim countries in Asia and Africa, who are known as *Mizrachi* (or Sephardic), immigrated to Israel (Zeltzer-Zubida and Zubida, 2012). Their arrival challenged the dominance of the Ashkenazi founders of the State. Ashkenazim and the Mizrachim have experienced great social disparity that is reflected in socio-economic standing, political power, political party affiliation, residency, marriage patterns and so on (Cohen et al., 2007). Gaps between the Ashkenazi elite and the Mizrachi lower strata are not narrowing over time, even when analysing the levels of education and income of the second generation (Cohen et al., 2007; Nahon, 1987).

Yet, this disparity cannot explain the permeation of the national aspect into the local fans and clubs level.[5] The missing aspect that clarifies this permeation is the combination between the former identity cleavage, Arab-Jewish, and the Mizrachi situation as a result of the Ashkenazi-Mizrachi cleavage. Most of the Mizrachi Jews were not born in Israel but raised in Arab-Muslim countries and immersed in Arabic-Muslim life and culture. Upon arrival to Israel, during the 1950s (see Zeltzer-Zubida and Zubida, 2012), they found themselves in a new reality, where the Arab-Muslims were no longer the dominant group and the Arabs were the enemy, depicted as a 'fifth column' within the new Jewish state (Smooha, 1990; Ghanem, 2001; Dowty, 1998, 1999; Migdal and Kimmerling, 2001). As a result, the Mizrachi Jews were caught in a 'Catch 22'. On the one hand, they had the command of the Muslim-Arab language and culture embedded in them as well as the mid-eastern appearance; on the other hand, they did not want to be identified with the 'Arab enemy'. Hence they wanted, in part, and were forced, institutionally as well as socially, to differentiate themselves from Arabs and/or Muslims. Shenhav (2003, 2006) described this process as the 'de-Arabization' of the Middle Eastern Jews. The result was that those who could have been the best bridge to the Arab society in Israel became those who most wanted/had to divorce themselves from it.

Consequently, these two major social cleavages – the ethnic disparity, Mizrachi-Ashkenazi, and the national, Arab-Jew – in Israeli society juxtapose and create an environment of heightened ethno-national-religious tension, which results in a significantly higher presence of the national identity discourse among football fans at the local club level in Israeli football. Yet, it is important to stress that Mizrachi and Ashkenazi identities are not neatly dichotomously clustered. However, in the Israeli ethos, all Mizrachi Jews are in some aspect considered Arab-Jews.[6] As for

the non-existent dichotomy, Rimon-Or, in her article 'From the Dying Arab to "Death to the Arabs"' (2002) offers an analysis of this phenomenon and argues that in order for the Mizrachim to be a part of the hegemonic Zionist discourse they have to renounce their 'Arabness', while this 'obliteration must remain unspoken'. This unspoken 'ethnic erasure' of the Mizrachi Jews mostly holds, yet when it comes to the football pitch in certain instances it collapses. While some scholars have already analysed the ethnic (Sorek, 2009), national (Ben Porat, 2001, 2003, 2007) and even ethno-national (Sorek, 2007) aspects in Israeli football, in this chapter I would like to offer two addendums to this discourse.

Whereas most of the scholars highlight the Jewish football fans of Beitar Jerusalem for creating a national, some argue racist, exclusive discourse (Sorek, 2007, 2009; Ben Porat, 2007), I would like to argue that this discourse is not exclusive to Beitar fans and that other clubs' fans have started using the religious-national discourse as well. The result is a similar exclusion of the 'other' in the Israeli context, mostly denoted as the Arab, however, in some cases even non-Arabs. First, I would like to set forth the common ethno-national discourse, the one represented by the Beitar fans. To this discourse I would like to add two new discourse spaces: one is juxtaposed with latent Jewish ethnicity, and is an excluding discourse, supported by the hegemonic Ashkenazi Zionist group (see Kimmerling, 2001), which will be exemplified using the example of Hapoel Tel Aviv fans. The other discourse that will be presented utilises the nationality discourse; however, in this case, it is done in an inclusive manner, and this will be done by looking at the fans of Maccabi Tel Aviv. On one hand, it is important to note that regardless of the discourse presented, the Israeli-Jewish national identity that is presented in those offered discourses is probably the most significant one. On the other, as we can see the development of various discursive spaces in Israeli football, it becomes clear that Arab identity is no longer in a defensive mode. Arab fans from all over the country have congregated around one team, Be'nei (or Abna') Sakhnin, and are now raising the flag of a competing nationality, the Palestinian nationality. In the next section I would like to delve into these new developments in Israeli local football clubs.

## The Israeli case

As was mentioned in the previous section, I will concentrate on some new developments in Israeli football. Let us start with the

ethno-national discourse. Today three main discourses emerge in literature on debates regarding ethno-national discourse spaces:

**1 The militant Mizrachi ethno-national discourse**

> *'Every Team in the Israeli premier league has had an Arab player'*
>
> '*Except us'* (both the interviewer, Jeremy Schapp, and the Interviewee, Guy Israeli – one of Beitar Jerusalem's Ultras leaders – say at the same time).
>
> '*Except Beitar, you're proud of that?'*
>
> *'Of course, of course I am proud of that and its will be so all my life, and all the people that come after me. We are special, all the other frence* (meaning the other clubs) *what they special? What they have? We are special! Don't say we don't have Arabish people say you have Jewish people!'*[7]

This type of discourse is usually identified with the fans of Beitar Jerusalem. Ironically, Beitar is the team that is identified with the current Israeli ruling party, the Likud. Nonetheless, its Mizrachi fans feel that they are on the fringe of Israeli society (Tsfadia and Yiftachel, 2001; Swirski, 1981), and the 'outcasts' of Israeli football and society. Their sense of oppression is backed by multiple data that stems from the State (for example, see Cohen et al., 2007), and is also manifested through their struggle and competition in the secondary labour market between Mizrachi-Jews and Israeli-Arabs (see Shafir and Peled, 1998). Arguments range from hatred against the 'Ashkenazi political left' that for years have oppressed the Mizrachi population (Shohat, 1988; Shenhav, 2007) to the need to maintain the positive Jewish demographic balance – that is, maintain Israel as a Jewish state.[8]

This Mizrachi national-ethnic discourse is not depicted as a football-related struggle; however, one that is expressed as a national struggle. Beitar owners sought to bring Arab-Muslim players to the team (Sorek 2007). These attempts were unsuccessful until January 2013. During January 2013, after brief negotiations with their Chechen team, Terek Grozny, two Muslim players signed with Beitar Jerusalem: Zaur Sadayev and Gibril Kadayev.[9] In a 'Ligat Ha'al' (the Israeli top division) match before the players joined the team, the fans decided to protest against the attempt. This can be seen in two pictures: in ***Photograph 1***, the fans hold a banner stating '*Beitar Pure forever*',[10] and in ***Photograph 2*** the banner states '*70 years of principles*'.[11] Both banners refer to the attempt of the team owner to bring a Muslim player to the team. The first photograph refers to the fact that Beitar fans will not tolerate

an Arab-Muslim player on the team, and they refer to the ethno-national-religious ‘purity’ of the team, while the second banner is stating the obvious – 70 years of maintaining the principle of ‘non-Arab players’.

This type of behaviour and discourse, however, is not unique for Beitar fans. Few days before the arrival of the players, Moshe Zimmermann, the director of the Richard Koebner Minerva Center for German History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in a television interview made comparisons with Nazi Germany, expressing the fact that sport is politically a very important realm, and it was the first field from which Jews were expelled during the Third Reich. He also added that the racist fans would not accept the teams’ success as a result of the performances of the newly acquired Muslim players because the players were not part of the fans’ racial scheme (London and Kirshenbaum, 2013). This is exactly what took place in a match between Beitar Jerusalem and Maccabi Netanya on 3 March 2013.[12] Zaor Sadayev, one of the new Muslim players, scored a goal for Beitar. In a reaction to this goal, Beitar fans started cursing the scoring player, and hundreds left the stadium (Ben Shimol, 3 March 2013).

In an attempt to calm the fans, the team’s coach, Eli Cohen, said: ‘I do not understand the fans, there are about one billion Muslims in the world and we have to live with them. There is a difference between a European Muslim and an Arab Muslim. I did not know they were Muslims. I do not sign a player according to his ID card [in Israel, ID cards states religion and citizenship]. I can see the problematic aspects. I hope we will find a solution’ (Ben-Ziv, 26 January 2013). This did nothing to influence the minds or deter the Beitar fans from protesting. The players’ arrival was followed by an immediate outburst from the fans. During Sadayev’s and Kadayev’s first practice, an estimated fifteen fans came to the practice facility of the team and chanted ‘death to the Arabs’, cursing the players, the owner, the team, the general manager and management personnel. They were all furious about the two newly transferred players (Tuchman Yaniv, nrg.com, 31 January 2013). Meanwhile one of the players, Zaor Sedayev, replied in an interview: ‘I am not an Arab, neither a Muslim, I am a football player. From now on the Beitar emblem is ours. Maybe through our arrival peace will be promoted’ (Petersburg, 30 January 2013).

The stage was ready for the players’ premiere, and it was a stormy one to say the least. The first match, which took place in Jerusalem, was between Beitar and their nemesis, Benei Shaknin, a team that

represents the Israeli Arab-Palestinian population. The fans, consequently, decided to cheer against the players, the team and the owner. An undercover reporter captured the impressions from the stands. In the video, fans were caught chanting 'Arcady (the team owner) dead, Fuck you Sadayev', '…every Arab that will step here (Beitar FC) we will give him hell…', 'Itzik Corenfine (the team GM), the entire crowd hates you!' (Uzan and Kliyochin, 11 February 2013). The match ended up in a 2–2 draw, but not before a Shaknin player, Muhammad Kalibat, scored a goal and celebrated by displaying a traditional Muslim prayer act which sent the Beitar fans into a frenzy of slurs and violence. Over 100 fans of both teams were arrested by the police during and after the match as preventive measure and for rioting. This was topped only by the first goal scored by Sadayev for Beitar, in a match against Maccabi Netanya. Immediately after Sadayev scored, hundreds of the team's fans left the stadium, regardless of the fact that this goal was crucial for the team as they were struggling to stay in the premier league. When the opposing team scored the equaliser, which was an own goal by Omri Ben-Harush, a portion of Beitar fans clapped and cheered (Ben-Shimol, 3 March 2013). It took these Chechnian players less than three months to leave Beitar. On 15 April both Zaur Sadayev and Gibril Kadayev left Israel and never returned. The official club announcement stated that they left for a family vacation; however, they never returned to Israel. Yet, this changed nothing. Beitar fans continue to chant anti-Arab songs during football matches, now targeting, yet again, the Israeli-Arab players, as in one case Salim Tuama, Hapoel Tel Aviv midfielder:

> 'This is the Jewish state!
> This is Israel, Salim Tuama!
> I hate all the Arabs!
> I hate you Salim Tuama!
> I hate all the Arabs!'[13]

Other chants include slurs of Muhammad (the prophet) and Muslims in general. The only difference is that when Beitar arrived to the Doha stadium in 2013,[14] which is Benei Sakhnin's home stadium, they were met with great opposition by the Arab-Israeli fans. A new national theme then became prevalent in Israeli football matches. This is associated with Palestinian nationality. This new discourse will be developed in the next section.

## 2 The re-discovered Palestinian nationality in Israeli football

While most of the nationalistic sentiment in Israeli football is seen to originate from the Jewish fans (Ben-Porat, 2001, 2003, 2007; Sorek, 2007, 2009), on 17 December 2013, in a match between Benei Sakhnin and Beitar Jerusalem, a new phenomenon emerged among Israeli-Arabs or Israeli-Palestinian[15] football fans – flags of the Palestinian Authority were waved in the Benei Sakhnin stands.

As can be seen in ***Photograph 3***, the Arab fans of Benei Sakhnin waved Palestinian flags during the match against Beitar.[16] This was the first time that national identity signs were shown by Palestinian-Israeli citizens (Ben-Dror, 1 January 2014). The reactions that resulted from the Arab sector were diverse and ranged between apologetic, which was showcased by the team management, the team Ultras and some of the Israeli-Arab leaders, to very militant, which was expressed by Arab political leaders and other prominent figures. However, in the Israeli-Jewish side the reactions were harsh and hostile (Ben-Dor, 2014). Jewish fans' racist and/or nationalistic behavior was not criticised. However, the first sign of Palestinian nationality was viewed as a threat to the existence of the state of Israel, no less. It is important to note that the Israeli police decided that this was not an offence and it did not investigate the issue any further. Moreover, it is also important to emphasise that the waving of the Palestinian flag is not illegal in Israel.

The Benei Sakhnin Ultras reaction was as follows:

> It is important for us to explain, we are Palestinians living in Israel, we have no problem with any State on the globe, neither with Israel, but we do have a problem with Beitar fans that hate us and our heritage and hurt our feelings. We are not racists and we respect each and every human being with no regard to color, nationality, race or gender . . . Our fore-fathers were born on this land and it is our land. The Palestinian flag relates to our feelings and we do not see any contradiction and hostility to the State of Israel, and if it infuriates Beitar fans and their supporters (*i.e. politicians who openly support Beitar*), so be it. We will keep the flag waved proudly in Doha (*Sakhnin stadium*). We are people who know how to behave within the law and those who are trying to hurt us are flawed, and their words are flawed, racist and primitive. (Ben-Dor, 21 December 2013; author's translation)

While the Ultras were semi-apologetic in trying to appease the general Israeli public and to avoid alienating it, they introduced in the same communiqué a brand new message to the Israeli-Arabs: 'we are

Palestinians living in Israel and we will not be deterred from our national identity or national symbols – while accepting the Israeli State' (Ben-Dor, 21 December 2013; author's translation).

This was very confusing. Unlike the Beitar fans who are part of the hegemonic Israeli-Jewish nationality in Israel, the Israeli-Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel are excluded from the collective, yet, they contend that they do accept the State of Israel. Why? We know that the State of Israel does not accept them fully (Shafir, and Peled, 2004; Migdal and Kimmerling, 2001). Why do they offer a new identity, one that might overcome the identity tension in which Israeli society is engulfed? This is not clear. However, it is a very significant statement that adds another layer to the very limited inclusive-exclusive identity discourse in Israel.

To add to the confusion another meeting on the matter of Palestinian flag-waving took place. This time the former team general manager, Basam Ganaim, who in the meantime was elected as mayor of Sakhnin, assembled the fans and the team management led by the new team general manager, Muhammad Abu-Yones. They tried to reach an agreement on the issue of the Palestinian flag in the stands. After a long discussion, the outcome was as follows: 'The Sakhnin fans are starting over with a clean slate and will not wave the Palestinian flag in the stands ... ' (Ben-Dor, 1 January 2014; author's translation). The main argument against the flag-waving was that it created a distraction for the team and a lot of animosity between the fans of the rival teams.

However, this was not the last word in this debate. Ahmad Tibi, an Israeli-Arab-Palestinian politician, the leader of the Arab Movement for Change (Ta'al) and a member of the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, is also known as one of the avid fans of Benei Sakhnin. After the match with Beitar, Tibi was interviewed on the Palestinian flag-waving issue on the most popular radio sports talk show in Israel titled 'the sport show of Israel', which is hosted by Ofira Asayag and former football star Eyal Berkovich. The interview began with a question about the match and then went on to the topic of the security checks the Beitar fans are subjected to when arriving at Sakhnin's Doha Stadium. Then Eyal Berkovich was given the opportunity to ask a question, and here is a partial transcript of the interview (Ofira Asayag, Radio Tel Aviv Interview, 18 December 2013; author's translation):

Berkovich: I think that Sakhnin fans showed a great cheering exhibition, but at the end of day, I personally cannot stand the fact that in the stands fans wave flags of Palestine and other Arab states. Are

we playing in the State of Israel or in Palestine? Maybe you could explain this to me?

Tibi: By the way it is good that you said the Palestinian flag and not the PLO[17] since it is the flag of the entire Palestinian people, and waving it is allowed in the state of Israel.

Berkovich: Says who?

Tibi: The law. By the way, this flag is waved at the Israeli PM's house whenever a senior Palestinian figure arrives for an official visit…

Berkovich: Does it seem reasonable to you that in the State of Israel Palestinian flags are waved?

Tibi: Firstly, yes. It is not a flag…

Berkovitch: MK Tibi thank you very much you have answered everything, if this seems reasonable for you then fine.

Tibi: Of course it seems OK, what do you want me to answer according to you?

Berkovich: No you have the right to answer whatever you wish but I do not think this is appropriate.

Tibi: In my home I have a Palestinian flag.

Berkovitch: No problem, we already know how much you love the state of Israel… Your true face is already publicly known…

Ofira: MK Tibi we checked while you were speaking and there is no legal prohibition… On waving the Brazilian, Spanish, and Palestinian flag…

Berkovich: Ofira, they should not be surprised that they suffer from racism from the Beitar fans, yes?

Tibi: By the way what do you think about the 'Death to the Arabs' chant that was chanted yesterday at the end of the match by the Beitar fans?

Berkovich: If you are allowed to wave Palestinian flags then the Beitar fans are allowed to do whatever they like!

Tibi: You are rude, you are rude.

Berkovitch: Why are you allowed and they are not? We are a democratic state, no? Every person can do as he pleases…

Tibi: Eyal Berkovitch you are rude, racist and inferior…

Berkovich: I am rude and you are an Israel hater that sits in the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament)… You are an Israel hater, you are an Israel hater… People like you should be deported from here!

Tibi: You are a racist piece of trash if you support the 'death to the Arabs' chant…

Berkovitch: You are an Israel hater and should be out of here…

The interview deteriorated to mutual slurs and was ended with MK Tibi threatening to sue Berkovitch and the program. Yet, concentrating on the discourse and the framing of the national discourse, it was obvious that there was a huge disparity between the perceptions of Tibi and Berkovitch on the matter of flag-waving. While Tibi was looking at the legal aspects and the fact that 'objectively' Israeli-Arabs are Palestinians, Berkovitch viewed this as an act of defiance against the State. For him, regardless of the legality of the act, it should not have occurred. This act was a confirmation of the most inner fears of the Jewish-Israeli population, that the Arabs are a treacherous fifth column.

In the same interview Ofira Asayag tried to focus on the problematic aspects of the flag-waving by saying: 'well you can wave the Brazilian or Spanish flag but the Palestinian?' This really pointed to the core of the debate. It became obvious that the problem was not waving flags, the problem was waving the Palestinian flag. Obviously, the two were not comparable, but, for the Jewish Israeli side it did not matter whether the flag-waving was legal or not. This was not a legalist discourse, this was a nationalist discourse loaded with sentiments which could 'determine Israel's future existence'. Hence, any comparison was valid. Although the Arab-Israeli's Palestinian flag-waving was legal, if this resulted in racial slurs and incitement to kill Arabs then this was the price they had to pay according to the Israeli-Jewish fans.

The Israeli-Jewish side has been no less extremist. Israeli politicians themselves participated in the discourse. First, a member of the Knesset (i.e. MK), at the time, Michael Ben-Ari, from the National Unity party, came to Sakhnin's Doha Stadium with a few followers and dispersed Israeli flags all over the stadium (see ***Photograph 4*** in which MK Michael Ben-Ari and followers are seen at the Benei Sakhnin vs Beitar Jerusalem waving Israeli Flags[18]), none of which were taken from him. This was as legally legitimate as waving the Palestinian flag. However, unlike the case of the Palestinian flag-waving, Ben-Ari was not asked to remove the flags because they might hurt the feelings of the Arab-Israeli fans. Finally, MK Miri Regev from the Likud party said on a radio show the following:

> I believe that sport and culture are two fields that have significant effect on society in general and on youth in particular. It is about time that people understand that you have to honor the State and the State's symbols. A situation in which a team that is partially financed by the State has fans that wave Palestinian flags during games is

> unacceptable...Hence, I will move for a cease of the state's financial support of the team and its suspension from the league. I will also promote legislation on the matter. (Asayag, 20 December 2013)

Tibi's answer was simple: 'This criticism is the result of ignorance and an automatic anti-Arab attitude. The Israeli flag is waved and it bothers more than a few people in the Netherlands, but no one punishes Ajax FC. Waving the Brazilian, Uruguayan, German and the Palestinian flags is allowed. By law, waving the Palestinian flag is not an offence. People should get used to it, and the automatic reaction of the 'Maniacs from the right' should end. It is the easiest choice to crack down on Sakhnin and not to deal with the tearing of the Koran and the 'death to the Arabs' chants by Beitar fans...' (Asayag, 20 December 2013).

This Jewish-Arab militant discourse resulted in the return of the Palestinian flag to the Sakhnin stands in less than a week. After the first incident, in the next match against Beni-Yehuda, on 4 January 2014, Palestinian flags were waved again by the Sakhnin fans. This time it happened despite the team's front office's attempt to defuse the situation and hang signs like 'Sakhnin – one home for Jews and Arabs'. It seemed that the national Arab-Palestinian discourse was threatening the team management as well, and they were trying to subdue this new development. I would argue that this was a result of the extreme reaction by the Israeli media and the Israeli public. Yet, one must keep in mind that this was not an illegal action. Nonetheless, it seemed that the public and media reaction disregarded the law completely and concentrated on shifting the discourse from a Jewish racist discourse to a Jewish-nationalist vs Arab-Palestinian discourse, and it seemed that on both sides, Jewish and Arab, people were not equipped to handle this new reality.

### 3 The latent inclusive/exclusive discourse

While the previous discourses were blunt and militant, the one that will be presented in this section is milder. Nonetheless, it is a nationalistic discourse that lacks the Arab-Jewish ethno-religious facet and as a result it is not as threatening as the previous two discourses and it does not lead to a disproportionate reaction by the public or the media. Two important clarifications need to be made: first, this discourse takes place within the Jewish hegemonic group with very short episodes of Arab presence; second, this discourse evades the ethnic and the national discourse each by itself and their juxtapositions. This discourse is 'about football' yet, as will be shown, this is not really the case.

Two of the four largest football clubs in Israel are located in Tel Aviv, Hapoel Tel Aviv and Maccabi Tel Aviv. Hapoel, the Reds, cultivate an image of a social-democratic club. However, the club has a capitalist model and a wide upper-class fandom that is linked to the Labour party, which represents the old Ashkenazi elite (Kimmerling, 2001). Maccabi, the Yellows, lack specific political orientation (for further information about the clubs see Carmeli and Bar, 2003).

During 2001, while Hapoel was competing in the UEFA Cup with great success, it reached the quarter-final and lost to AC Milan. Nonetheless the team became very popular in Israel. Following this event, the Hapoel Ultras, in an act of protest, exhibited a sign stating 'We Represent Hapoel and NOT Israel' (see ***Photograph 5*** showing Hapoel fans with the sign 'Representing Hapoel and NOT Israel'[19]). The sign was displayed for the first time in an international match against Locomotiv Moscow. The Ultras took this sign with them to all the team matches and even created a song with the words 'We do not represent Israel'. These fans paved a new road in which they took themselves out of the ethno-national discourse and moved into a local football club discourse. This was a new form of protest against the ethno-national discourse and against other Israeli football clubs. Moreover, it promoted a whole new football fandom discourse. This discourse was between the local and the national, thus the question was: does a local team that succeeds in the international arena immediately become a 'property' of the nation? Moreover, for which nation?

This new discourse that stemmed from the core of the Jewish hegemony came as a shock to many. The reaction was immediate and it was harsh. Hapoel became the 'hated team' everywhere it went, though not in the Arab sector. All over the country, during matches against Hapoel, the opposing team fans chanted racial slurs towards the Hapoel team and fans, mostly tying the team to Arabs. In fan forums and in matches, chants were 'Hapoel Arabs', 'Death to the Arabs' and 'The Reds are Traitors' and more similar chants.

This did not change the fans' discourse. At this point it should be stressed that the fan base of Hapoel is, as was mentioned before, socially associated with the Israeli hegemonic Ashkenazi-Zionist elite and as such, is well endowed with social capital. Hence, the fans' reaction stood contrary to what some expected. It drew the fans tighter together and within the fans' forums the language became 'US (Hapoel fans) against THEM (all the rest)' (see NRG, 11 May 2010). This in turn created some sort of camaraderie between Hapoel fans and Sakhnin fans since both were considered ostracised from the Israeli football fandom

scene. On 7 January 2012, the security company hired by Hapoel and the stadium management company decided that the sign will not be allowed in matches. The team fans then threatened to sue the management, accusing them of infringement of freedom of speech. Once again, while the act is legal, the public and media outbursts and reactions against the act created a social atmosphere that promoted acts of violation of basic social rights, which are legally grounded in the name of the Judeo-national collective.

As harsh as the reactions were toward the nationalistic acts committed by the Hapoel fans, they did not reach the same magnitude as the reactions that resulted by the waving of the Palestinian flag in Sakhnin. This is associated with the ethno-national composition of the fans, which consists of predominantly Jews on one side and Arabs on the other. Still, this act resulted in the new 'derogatory' nickname for the team and its fans, 'Hapoel Arabs', which in turn meant that the Hapoel fans were out of the national collective. They were outcasts and were not part of the hegemonic Jewish collective (Carmeli and Bar, 2003; Sorek, 2003a). The fact that Hapoel and Sakhnin fans were not a homogenic part of the ethno-national Jewish football fans received the final verification, in the eyes of many, in another incident that occurred during a match between Hapoel Tel Aviv and Benei Sakhnin, that took place in Sakhnin on 21 December 2013. During the match a Palestinian flag was waved in the Hapoel stands for no longer than a few seconds. However, a picture was taken of the incident, which intensified the de-legitimisation and exclusion of the Hapoel fans (Editor Column, 21 December 2013).

While the Reds found themselves out of the Jewish national consensus, on the other side, Maccabi tried to find its way back to becoming the most popular club, and their fans found the way. They started a new inclusive discourse, one that had ethno-national ambiguity. In a Europa League match against Paris Saint-Germain on the night of 26 August 2010, Maccabi fans presented a new sign that said 'We Represent Maccabi and Israel' (see ***Photograph 6*** in which Maccabi fans are holding a sign stating: 'Representing Maccabi and Israel'[20]). This new discourse was a reaction to the Hapoel excluding discourse but also a reaction to Beitar and Sakhnin ethno-national discourse. This new statement set forth by the Maccabi fans was as follows: 'while you, the fans that use the excluding discourse, might support us, or not, when we play in the international arena we see no difference between us and any other local club; we represent Maccabi and the nation.' However, the question that was not answered was: who are we? And who is included

in Israel? Is it all of the citizens, Jews and Arabs? Or is it just the Jewish collective? This question remains unanswered.

## Concluding remarks

This chapter offers a look into the various identity discourses that are taking place in Israeli society and are, in some part, led by Israeli football fans. These discourses as presented in this chapter are: the militant Mizrahi ethno-national discourse, the re-discovered Palestinian nationality among Arab-Israeli citizens and, finally, the latent inclusive/exclusive Israeli discourse.

The three discourses that were presented in the chapter offer great diversity in the participants and the logic of the discourse. The first discourse is based upon the concept of Israel as national home of the Jewish people. The second discourse is based on a dual logic. On one hand, it refers to the Palestinians' right to the land that is not recognised as Israel. However, at the same time it offers a second base, the Israeli-Palestinians' right for equal citizenship in the state of Israel under the state law, stressing the democratic aspect in the definition of the state of Israel as it was defined by the Israeli legislator 'A Jewish and Democratic State'.[21]

Nonetheless, while these discourses offer different logics, the discourses themselves are very similar. One can examine the level of intensity or the content that prevails. Both vary significantly when looking at the different discourses. However, all of them ask the same basic questions: who are we? What does it mean to be an Israeli? Who is part of the collective and who is excluded from it? Unsurprisingly, the various groups in Israeli society deeply disagree on the answers to these questions. These disagreements are not likely to be solved in the near future; hence, I do not expect these discourses to fade. On the contrary, I expect them to intensify, especially when examining Israeli football fandom. Yet one thing is common to all the groups: the need for the *other* which lies at the base of their identity.

Finally, it is important to reiterate the following: the discourses presented in this chapter mirror the main tensions and cleavages in Israeli society. In some cases, the fact that these tensions find their way to the football pitch puts both sides on the same venue and results in heightened levels of intensity as well as crude and offensive dialogue. Yet, as presented in the chapter, Israeli football fans 'accommodate' these tensions in the format of various discourses, and since no solution to the identity problem in Israeli society is seen in the near future, I argue

that we will encounter these discourses in the Israeli case for a while. The decision to focus on football fandom was the result of the fans' significance in the ethno-national-religious identity discourse, at least in Israel. The added value of the football fandom is their uninhibited and raw presentation of arguments unlike in any other public arena. The fans offer an updated and a 'real' mirror of the core conflicts in Israeli society unlike any other Israeli groups. This ties us back to Hobsbawm's (1990) observation in which he argued that fans become a symbol of the nation. In light of the various identity discourses presented in this chapter I argue that, in the Israeli case, the nation is still under construction and football fans are in the midst of the debate trying to solve the most significant question that underlies the entire identity dispute: *what is the nation's identity?*

## Notes

1. See www.israellawresourcecenter.org/israellaws/fulltext/nationalitylaw.htm
2. The literature discussing Israeli Arabs as citizens is rich (see Smooha, 1990; Pinson, 2008; Rekhess, 2007).
3. Here, too, there are exceptions. Some Druze, mostly concentrated in the Golan Heights, do not recognise the State of Israel, have no Israeli passports and do not serve in the military.
4. Military service is considered a main citizenship responsibility in Israel, and yet it should be noted that many orthodox religious Jews do not join the military despite holding full citizenship rights, creating tremendous internal tension between secular and orthodox religious Jews. For Arabs, this distinction is especially poignant, as military service is not just a marker of belonging and an agent of socialisation but also the mechanism for receiving certain rights and opportunities. The State confers certain benefits on those who serve (or are excused from service) but does not pass on those benefits to Arab Israelis.
5. For more on the permeation of the national level to the local football in Israel see Ben-Porat (2003 and 2007).
6. While this terminology was rejected when offered by Yehuda Shenhav (2003) as an answer to the Ashkenazi Jews' terminology of European Jews, mostly since the Mizrachi Jews felt it was derogatory – in the Israeli discourse Mizrachi Jews are related to as Arabs, not out in the open, since it has racist connotations and far-reaching effect on the Zionist collective, but in a latent way. Known linguistic manifestations of this social phenomenon can be found in Yiddish words that were used to depict Mizrachi Jews as well as Arabs.
7. Taken from the Jeremy Schapp report on ESPN E:60 on Beitar Jerusalem. The entire report can be found at: http://vimeo.com/52976047
8. While this argument is heard less and less, the fans now identify the 'Ashkenazi political left' with the attempt to erase the Jewish nature of

the Israeli state, that is, its 'ethnocratic' nature, and turn it into an equal democracy for all its citizens, Jews and Arabs alike.

9. It is important to note that the players were not Arabs, they were Muslims from Chechnya. However, this did not change the reaction of the fans to their arrival.
10. Link to the Photograph: http://wp.me/PJ07z-i9V
11. Link to the Photograph: http://wp.me/PJ07z-i9V
12. See further report and video here at: www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4351437,00.html
13. The translation is taken from Jalal Abukhater blog and can be found here: http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/jalal-abukhater/watch-espn-documentary-exposes-israels-racist-football-club
14. The stadium was named this way because it was co-financed by the Qatar Olympic Committee.
15. The importance of the two different terminologies will be explained in the following section.
16. Link to the Photograph: http://wp.me/PJ07z-i9V
17. PLO is the acronym for 'Palestinian Liberation Organization'.
18. Link to the Photograph: http://wp.me/PJ07z-i9V
19. Link to the Photograph: http://wp.me/PJ07z-i9V
20. Link to the Photograph: http://wp.me/PJ07z-i9V
21. The state of Israel was defined as the state of the Jews in the declaration of independence – the Democratic was added in the amendment to the 'basic law: the Knesset' and passed in 1985 (see amendment 9, clause 7A).

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# Part III

# Agency

# 6
# Hegemony in Question? Euro 2012 and Local Politics in the City of Poznań

*Małgorzata Z. Kowalska*

## Defining the field-site

This article is part of ethnographic research which took place between 2012 and 2014 for a PhD thesis on the legacy of Euro 2012 in Poznań, one of Poland's four host cities for the Championship. My study has been inspired by what Gavin Smith calls 'the perspective of historical realism', which 'partly reflects the need to understand society entirely in historical terms, and partly ... to emphasise the realness of history over its constructedness' (see also Smith, 1999, p. 15; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1991, 2012; Thompson, 1968; Williams, 1973; Wolf, 1982). Anthropological endeavour therefore is not confined to describing 'cultural background', but rather means a constant, dialectical shifting between two levels, between individuality and the system, that is, people's self-understanding and the particular historical conditions which influence this self-understanding. However, rather than drawing 'holistic' conclusions, I am discussing grand narratives and challenging larger quantifiers in local settings. Poznań in my research can therefore be called, after Matei Candea, an 'arbitrary location', a bounded field-site which 'is perhaps best understood as the symmetrical inversion of the [Weber's] "ideal type" ... [which] was an abstracted notion, nowhere existing and for that very reason easily definable [and] which served as a "control" for comparative analysis of actually existing instances ... The arbitrary location, by contrast, is the actually existing instance, whose messiness, contingency, and lack of an overarching coherence or meaning serve as a "control" for a broader abstract object of study' (Candea, 2007, pp. 179–180).

This contribution, although part of a larger scientific project on relations between football and identity dynamics, is not about sport per se: rather, I use Euro 2012 as the starting point for my analysis of the local meanings of power, capitalism and politics in contemporary Poznań. Again, I am not seeing these terms as self-explanatory or, for that matter, explanatory to anything else; on the contrary, I will try to demonstrate how we can look at football mega-events, or sports mega-events in general, as lenses to study ethnographically local negotiations over values and senses (for the uses and misuses of terms such as 'neoliberalism' or 'political' in anthropological literature see, respectively, Ferguson, 2010 and Candea, 2011). In my analysis, I am firstly scrutinising how and why Euro 2012 has been used by the city elites as a tool to secure the status quo of power relations, and secondly, I ask an overall research question of whether the Championship could be seen as one of the triggers, albeit an involuntary one perhaps, for a certain change in the official discourse both at the regional and national level. While doing this, I loosely refer to the definition of hegemony, which puts emphasis on how it is perceived as common sense, as something natural: in the words of Raymond Williams, it is 'a lived system of meanings and values – constitutive and constituting – which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming' (Williams, 1977, p. 110). One of the crucial features of the notion is the role of dominant groups in securing the hegemony, but rather than thinking of it as of a way of indoctrinating those less powerful by those in power, one should bear in mind that hegemony is always partial, and that all groups are 'equally mistaken about the fundamental processes of capitalist reproduction' (Smith, 1999, p. 247; cf. Williams, 1977). It resembles Mary Douglas's excellent discussion on the legacy of Durkheim and Fleck, and 'the social origins of individual thought', when she says that '[c]lassifications, logical operations, and guiding metaphors are given to the individual by society. Above all, the sense of a priori rightness of some ideas and the nonsensicality of others are handed out as part of the social environment' (Douglas, 1986, p. 10). I am interested in how different people justify their actions towards and against the system they live in, especially in a situation when their rationality and values are being questioned. And this is, I believe, what we have been observing in Poznań – and in Poland – in the public discussion since the Championship.

My input is an example of both 'anthropology at home' (Jackson, 1987) and of 'studying-up' (Hess, 1996; Marcus and Fischer, 1999; cf. Nader, 1972). On the one hand, a few years' experience of working in the public relations sector and access to certain political and

decision-maker circles made my field-work in Poznań easier. On the other hand, however, I had to learn how to distance myself from the hegemony which I was trying to define – and I would argue it is only possible when this very hegemony is challenged – and, at the same time, did not forget to see myself as part of it. As Chris Gregory once put it, 'the present is much harder to grasp because, like goldfish in a bowl, the water we swim in is the last thing we know about' (Gregory, 2009, p. 286). One of the biggest difficulties of my fieldwork has been to avoid depicting 'policy-makers as people out there ... [and to] view [them] less as distanced people in power than as persons with power acquired, thereby stressing the relational and fluid character of power and its daily negotiations' (Verlot, 2001, p. 345). Power, as Marc Verlot reminds us in his review of Cris Shore's anthropological investigation of European political structures, is not 'something in itself' (Verlot, 2001, p. 347); it is constantly constructed and retransformed in a particular context. The people to whom I talked were born and raised under very particular historical and geopolitical conditions; some of them were my age and had grown up in the rapidly changing Polish reality of the late 1980s and 1990s. Acknowledging this made me more concerned about the question 'why' than 'what', which hopefully answers Judith Butler's call for a truly anthropological critique (Butler, 2000).

## The entrepreneurial tradition

The cities of today are affected by global competition for investment, whether they are located at the centre or on the peripheries of the globalised economy (I intentionally refer to these binary categories as they belong to the set of key-words commonly used to justify economic policies and capital flows, also in my particular field-site). Poznań also participates in a constant process of the scaling and rescaling of cities (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2011; see also Brenner, 2011; Buchowski and Schmidt, 2012). Hence, in order to attract globally mobile capital, it has to focus on promoting the 'brand' of the city worldwide. The new-EU countries or post-socialist states of the former Soviet bloc tend to be, however, more dependent on foreign-led capitalism (investments) than their peers in the European West (Jasiecki, 2013, pp. 229, 289–309).

The image of a European city with a strong entrepreneurial drive and spirit plays a crucial role in Poznań's urban growth strategy, where attracting global capital has been understood as attracting business, and usually big business at that (Strategia, 2030, Stryjakiewicz et al., 2007). At least from the interwar period (1918–1939) Poznań has been

considered by its citizens as politically liberal, middle-class and with strong merchant and entrepreneurial traditions, which to some extent refers to the legacy of having been part of Prussia for more than one hundred years up until 1918 (my interviews; cf. Mergler and Pobłocki, 2010; Znaniecki and Ziółkowski, 1984; Stryjakiewicz et al., 2007). When the city was preparing to host the General National Exhibition in 1929 (Powszechna Wystawa Krajowa, PWK),[1] the Institute of Sociology started its studies on Poznań. The sociologists conducted a survey among the citizens, who stressed the fact that 'brought up in Prussian rigour, [Poznanians] lost some of the Polish or Slavic shortcomings and obtained some very positive features, such as diligence, conscientiousness, thriftiness, loyalty in business, orderliness, and had got rid of laziness, day-to-day living, unpardonable recklessness and, to some extent, quarrelsomeness.... [But] very hardened in their life struggles, they do not see their brothers as neighbours; they are eager to do business together, but they lack the Old Polish hospitality' (Znaniecki and Ziółkowski, 1984, p. 114); and that 'there is a need, love and practice of comfortable life in Poznań. Cleanliness, order and the solidity of buildings, and some features inherited from Germans made Poznań a typical western German city... Gone is also impetuousness, quick temper and Slavic hastiness, and instead there is slow and deliberate calculation typical of the German middle class' (Znaniecki and Ziółkowski, 1984, p. 115).

The local self-stereotypes survived the post-war decades of socialist politics and the planned economy (Znaniecki and Ziółkowski, 1984). When in 1964, in a press opinion poll, the group of sociologists asked the citizens of Poznań about their perception of their city, they indicated the 'virtues of order, scrupulous work and honesty' as the main characteristics of its inhabitants (Znaniecki and Ziółkowski, 1984, p. 199), and the majority stressed the economic functions of the city as its most important (over scientific, educational, and cultural ones) (Znaniecki and Ziółkowski, 1984, p. 280). The entrepreneurial character and economic potential of the city are emphasised in the research of contemporary geographers (Stryjakiewicz et al., 2007), who also call Poznań 'one of the most dynamic Polish cities, a leader in the process of social and economic transformation' (Stryjakiewicz et al., 2007); economy and thriftiness are presented as one of the biggest strengths in the newly updated Strategy for the City of Poznań (Strategia, 2030).

In view of the length of this chapter, I am not able to scrutinise all the nuances of the post-1989 process of 'decommunisation' in this region and in Poland as a whole. There are several illuminating books and

articles on 'the implementation of the free market' in Poland and other parts of post-Soviet Europe (cf. for example: Buchowski, 2006; Dunn, 2004; Hann, 1980, 2000; Hann et al., 2005; Humphrey, 1983; Nagengast, 1991; Wedel, 1992, 2001). Suffice to say, the very trajectory of choices and changes within the region had tremendous consequences for its current identity and the shape of its institutions. Although I would put into question 'clear-cut' theories on radical changes which supposedly occurred in Poland in 1989, and rather agree with Carol Nagengast when she says that 'the reinstitution of capitalism in Poland was not the logical and inevitable victory of a superior system but rather . . . [that] this new, old capitalism also reflects processes set into motion in the eighteen, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries' (Nagengast, 1991, p. 1), the introduction of foreign capital and policies in the region was indeed paired with testing neoliberal solutions and theories (cf. Lipton and Sachs, 1990; Ost, 2005; cf. Wedel, 1992, 2001). They have been part and parcel of the transition and for a quarter of century remained a key reference for the mainstream public debate.

Poznań has been determined to develop its official strategy as a supposedly business-friendly city (Strategia 2030, Stryjakiewicz et al., 2007). Its official discourse has drawn on the Prussian/early-capitalist tradition already mentioned and claimed that modern economy and business more than suit the innate virtues of the city (perhaps, paraphrasing the original meaning of Karl Polanyi's famous term, we could ironically call it an 'embedded economy' [Polanyi, 2001]). For instance, the 2009 international city campaign with a new logo and motto partly in English – Poznań. Miasto know-how/Poznań. The city of know-how – was coupled with an advertisement of all business brands which had their headquarters or branches in the region. Both civil servants and city councillors to whom I talked were referring to the strong Prussian legacy in Poznań: they associated it with local reverence for *Ordnung* and a 'protestant' flair for business. At the same time, they are most usually relatively young, in their thirties and early forties, which means they gained education at departments of political science, economics and marketing in the 'brave new Poland'. They were not taught Marxism, for sure. Conversely, they were the first generation which not only longingly looked to the West, but was told it could become truly European: liberal, affluent and economically rational, and all that by joining the global market of investments and capital flows. This image, or rather an aspiration, also underpinned the decision to organise Euro 2012, which has become a 'promotional vehicle' for the city (Lowes, 2002).

## Image is everything

Despite the increasing volume of literature and study on 'the performance paradox of megaprojects' (Flyvbjerg et al., 2003; Gratton and Henry, 2001; Hall, 2006; Whitson and Horne, 2006), Poland made a bid to organise Euro 2012 without the proper risk assessment. As John Horne and Wolfram Manzenreiter point out in their introductory article to the volume on the sociology of sports mega-events, '[w]ith respect to megaprojects there is a . . . fantasy world of underestimated costs, overestimated revenues, underestimated environmental impacts and over-valued economic development effects' (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006, p. 10). When the world was facing the biggest economic crisis in decades, and sports stadiums in Portugal and Greece were already known to be 'white elephants',[2] UEFA Euro 2012 was considered by the political elites to be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create the city's image as a 'truly European metropolis', and to reinforce its position in the global competition for attracting profitable investments and affluent visitors – a chance which could not be wasted. In 2007, when the Championship was awarded to Poland and Ukraine, newspapers and politicians all around the country celebrated the future benefits of organising the event, which, here in Poznań, was presented as a key component of the process of turning the city into an even more business-friendly environment.[3]

The event ostensibly aimed to boost the international city's image, enable Poznań to obtain EU funding for necessary infrastructure, and subsequently attract more business and tourism to the city (on EU funding cf. Jasiecki, 2013, pp. 180–205, 289–309). This idea met with a sympathetic ear among local business elites and media, and the official promotional campaign began; a campaign, which, in the words of Kimberley Schimmel, could be described as 'designed to legitimate the actions of urban growth coalitions by expressing them as being necessary for the betterment of the community-as-a-whole . . . a campaign that not only seeks to promote the interests of the dominant class but also seeks to legitimise political solutions to urban "problems" by symbolically constructing consensus . . . behind the banner of pro-growth' (Schimmel, 1995, after Lowes, 2002, pp. 82–83). The slogan 'Wszyscy jesteśmy drużyną narodową', 'We all are the national team', implied not only support for the football team, but, maybe more importantly, a 'civic obligation' for all Poles to create the 'positive image' of the host and, consequently, a 'good business climate'. This also applied to city level.

The city of Poznań spent 24.8 million PLN (c. 6 million €) on the preparation and promotion of the event (Deloitte, 2012), excluding approx. 750 million PLN spent on renovating the city's stadium[4] and loans taken out for the city's own contribution to infrastructural projects funded by the EU. The main benefits of Euro 2012 were the promotion of the city[5] and the acceleration of infrastructural modernisation (Deloitte, 2012; cf. Ministry of Sport and Tourism, 2012). On the national level, the impact of Euro 2012 has been called 'the Polish effect', and the Ministry of Sport and Tourism claimed:

> Already today the experts determine the impact of the Euro 2012 preparations and organisation in Poland as the Polish Effect, whose influence on the economy, image and national development is greater than in [the] case of the Barcelona Effect.[6] The Polish Effect consists, above all, of such elements as considerably faster infrastructure modernisation and [an] increase in the productivity of the economy, [a] strengthening of the image of Poland abroad, or [a] greater than expected increase in foreign tourism and revenue on that account. Another significant element of the Polish Effect is the establishment of a major social capital. The Polish Effect includes also the acquirement of the very valuable know-how regarding the management of complex, large and difficult projects. (Ministry of Sports and Tourism, 2012)

Polish football, apparently, has not benefited excessively from 'the boost' (Zych, 2013; cf. UEFA, 2013). Consultancies and companies engaged in the preparation and promotion of the event, however, were highly praised for outstanding service in building a 'modern Poland', as one can read on the award granted to the Chairman of the municipal company Euro Poznań 2012 for his performance.

Those who were opposed to the common wisdom and pointed to the fact that the city could afford neither Euro 2012 nor broader social obligations were disregarded and discredited as 'unserious', as in the interview with the Mayor of Poznań a few days after the end of Championship, when he declared that the majority of citizens were happy with all the changes taking place in the city and therefore understood the necessity of the high costs of the event: 'It is very rare that a really serious citizen would think that all this [infrastructure] is unnecessary' (Ponad 20 mln debetu, 2012). A few weeks after all the tourists had left, when asked about the city spending and portended budgetary cuts, he insisted on seeing Euro 2012 first and foremost as an organisational

success and claimed that 'we never thought it could have been a financial one' (Euro to sukces organizacyjny, 2012). When the costs and revenues were calculated (the former mostly on the part of the city, albeit paired with European and state funding, the latter mostly private), the organisational and promotional effect of Euro 2012 was deemed to be the most important benefit of hosting the event. It is not surprising that this view was shared by Ryszard Grobelny – a fifty-year old economist, who happens to be the President of the Polish Cities Associations and Poznań's Mayor for 16 years – as well as civil servants and city councillors. But it was also stressed by many other people with whom I had a conversation about the Championship that Euro 2012 had opened economic possibilities for entrepreneurial individuals, mainly for hoteliers, restaurateurs, taxi-drivers and owners of other small businesses. The view clearly sprang from a shared belief that 'a rising tide lifts all boats', although I came across only very few successful examples of short-term profits, and no rags-to-riches stories.

A young civil servant from the Mayor's office considered that 'every city would want to host the Euro' – even though he was not himself a football fan. I asked him how the event affected the lives of the ordinary citizens. He enumerated several infrastructural investments conducted in the city:

> A citizen of Poznań will drive on the new Głogowska street, on the new Bułgarska street, go to the new railway station, can go to the new stadium, or to [the new aquapark] Termy Maltańskie, take a tram to Franowo or from Piątkowo to the station, and fly from the airport. And we got all that just in 2–3 years. It probably would have been built anyway, but no sooner than in 5–10 years. I think we can call this acceleration a benefit.

Asked whether he thinks most citizens will benefit from this change, he answered:

> Well, you cannot make everyone happy. It is like in this old joke, if you do not play the lottery, you cannot win. We played and won. And of course there are people who are always very negative, people who prefer to take little steps, but when you see a challenge, you have to go for it. I think that Euro 2012 was a great chance for everyone with a business idea.
>
> *And, for instance, for a young waitress from Dębiec [a former workers' district on the outskirts of Poznań, and currently one of the poorest*

> *and underfinanced in the city]? Was Euro 2012 a great chance for her too?*
>
> But during Euro 2012 waitresses got very good tips! It was their heyday too!'

When I asked him and his colleague what they thought about those who criticise the city for privatising profits and socialising the costs of the event, for instance by cutting back on the welfare and education budget, he reacted in a fierce way:

> It must have been said by someone who cannot count at all. It is not that I can build something whenever I want or wait to start it whenever I want! It is classic, inflation and deflation . . . Neither Euro 2012, nor the European budget would have waited . . . We did not organise the Euro for education . . . Nowhere in the world are public finances on such a level that they could be spent on anything you want. In general, if a city wants to develop, it must invest. If we stop investing, of course we have more money in the wallet, but we stop developing. This is the core . . . of basic economic knowledge . . . So what you say is not a rational economic criticism, it is a purely political move.

The same question was met by a furious reaction from another interlocutor of mine, a civil servant in his thirties with the immaculate presence of a banker from the City of London. He also disregarded the Euro's opponents as 'lacking basic economic knowledge':

> Let's just agree that I won't comment on these accusations. I really do not understand these arguments. They are below any standard. They say that we have nothing left but loans to pay . . . What kind of argument is this? It is not supported by any facts . . . any knowledge. I do not want to forbid them to speak their minds, but they should get some knowledge before they make all these judgments.

When discussing the benefits of the event, he put forward the same arguments as most of his colleagues, and emphasised the need to attract foreign investment and capital. He also explicitly referred to his personal beliefs:

> The Euro was beneficial to all citizens, the quality of life is higher now because of all the investments. We have new buses and trams, and roads, and all those investments which would have not been built if it were not for the Euro. This new infrastructure will attract more new

> investment to the city. It all gives us a chance for growth. I believe there is a group of people contesting everything that was done, but myself, I cannot see any minuses. Development is only possible when a city attracts new resources: capital, people and ideas . . . and this is possible when a city broadens its offer and changes in order to attract these three types of resources. If it does not change, if it is not growing, it is not developing. Of course, this all affects the citizens, because it is they who are the beneficiaries of this development. The more the city is developing in terms of growing and attracting new resources, the richer it is. And the market will settle anything.

Could he not possibly agree with the argument that the city should be improving living conditions rather than spending public money on big ideas?

> We can build kindergartens and nurseries . . . playgrounds, but in my opinion they will not attract new resources to the city and they will not keep people in the city, now that they are moving to the suburbs. I make this point because this is precisely what was discussed when the City Council was voting against the Youth Olympic Games [an event which had a chance to be hosted in the city in 2018, see following pages], the event on one hand and budgetary cuts on the other, we experienced the same situation with Euro 2012 and kindergartens – first we should build new kindergartens and then we could think of the Games . . . I am not saying this is not important, but I am not sure if kindergartens are more important than promoting the city and attracting new resources. It is always a question of what results this will bring. We have to remember we are under constant pressure, we take part in a competition, this is our five minutes and we have to make a good use of it.

When confronted with the idea that not everybody takes part in this competition, he replied:

> Listen . . . Those socialists always lay claim to something . . . I also see a lot of poverty, a lot of evil, but I am not going to do anything about it. My priority is my happiness. I am a liberal, I do not want anything from the government. I believe in myself and I do not want anything from anyone . . . everyone should take care of oneself and do their job.

These short extracts from two conversations which I had with civil servants reflect the background of city politics, based on the assumption

that nothing is more important than transforming the city into a place which is attractive for big business, which implies the need to build a very specific type of infrastructure and to cut budgets of anything deemed to be irrelevant. Poznań can therefore be called an 'entrepreneurial city', which strives for 'socio-economic development... rather than the provision of welfare services to the inhabitants of the city; thus [it is] growth-oriented rather than concerned with the income distribution' (Çağlar 2010, p. 119). Discrediting the critics as 'irrational', 'uneducated' or as 'socialists' allowed my interlocutors to see their arguments as 'political' and unjustified. This made any discussion impossible.

## Beyond hegemony

However, the official city rhetoric has not been bought by everyone. Contrary to the presumptions and expectations of those who decided to organise it, at least on the Polish side, Euro 2012 had the (unexpected) effect of countering the hegemony which had hardly ever been challenged in the official city discourse for the past 25 years. Instead of being commonly perceived as a 'gargantuan civilisational jump', as Joanna Mucha, the Minister of Sport and Tourism of the Republic of Poland said six months before the Championship (Euro to boost economy, 2012), Euro 2012 was questioned, for example, as a 'new five-year plan'[7] used by the power bloc as a 'superstructure' to legitimise its activity (Pobłocki, 2012). It is not that the general opinion on Euro 2012 has changed dramatically: exactly a year after the event 64 per cent of Poles were still happy that Poland had hosted the Euro (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013). But although initially questioned only by few, it has now been more broadly criticised in Poznań. Of course, several other factors at the local and higher levels have influenced this change, such as the 2008 crisis (used by the authorities to justify some non-deliveries, or cuts in welfare in the city); the emergence of urban movements; public discussion on public space and urban planning. It is still difficult to decide where this change will lead, but 'a sort of ferment', as one of the city activists told me, has seemed to shake the foundations of the politics of the city.

When, in the autumn of 2012, only a few months after the Euro, the Mayor of Poznań asked the City Council to support him in the bid to organise the 2018 Youth Olympic Games (YOG), and in borrowing 77 million PLN for this purpose, he was supported by only four councillors. Twenty-seven voted against the YOG. The voting was preceded

by a heated discussion on the city's debt and the rationale behind organising another sporting mega-event (MIO 2018 nie, 2012; Grobelny chce milionów, 2012). The atmosphere was very different from that which preceded Euro 2012. The main reason for this was the recent information on the planned budgetary cuts, which were most felt in education, roads and public transportation. The education budget was to be decreased by 20 million PLN, the equivalent of the cost of the Fan Zone built in the city centre during the Championship (Brakuje 51 milionów, 2012; Cięcia w budżecie, 2012).[8] These circumstances, although initially anticipated by few voices, raised certain doubts about the rationale behind the idea of hosting Euro 2012, and opened a debate on the goals and strategies of the city.

First, the question was raised whether the city's investment strategy has been at all successful, whether attracting business depends only on infrastructural change in the city (cf. Stryjakiewicz et al., 2007) and whether attracting any kind of business is always good. The city politics and decisions were accused of being short-sighted, opportunistic and causing irreversible damage to the city. A young journalist, whom I asked about his recent move to Warsaw, admitted that he was tired of writing about the same failures and mistakes over and over again, and seeing it did not change anything but only made him frustrated and weary:

> This is the best city in the country but it is permanently wasting its potential. It is frustrating to observe how it is being destroyed by the short-sighted policies of its authorities. We all lose by budgetary cuts and this place is slowly becoming a ghost city. All the investments built because of the Euro were a gigantic wasted potential, both financial and architectural . . . so many projects conducted without bidding, planning, too expensive and probably not as functional as they could be . . . The city will have to pay for all these curiosities. The European Union will not pay for these absurd inner-city highways, which seem to be our authorities' main goal! All these initiatives are implemented despite all the critical voices, despite expert analyses, and as we were blind to other cities' experience and advice.

Secondly, there were more and more concerns raised about whether Poznań should be not only business-friendly, but also more 'citizen-friendly'. With money locked into new roads, a new railway station (not particularly functional and criticised for being built only as a cheap annexe to yet another shopping mall in the city), an airport and, last but not least, a stadium; and in contrast budgetary cuts for

education, culture and public transportation, the city's politicians have been accused of acting in favour of affluent citizens who can afford private schooling and tickets to new leisure centres (cf. Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006; Hall, 2006; Lowes, 2002).

One city councillor, after giving a press interview during Euro 2012, where he praised the atmosphere of the event and called for using this experience and new energy in the future, was also slightly more sceptical towards hosting mega-events when I talked to him a few months later about the voting against the YOG:

> I am happy that Euro 2012 was organised in Poznań, it would be bad if it had happened somewhere else instead. Of course, at the back of my mind . . . I still see some problems . . . but most certainly it was an important event for the whole country, in spite of all Europe's economic problems. Poland makes its way and needs events like this. It was a sort of verification that we are on a good path and can now promote ourselves as a mature city, able to organise mega-events like the Championship. It also made some investments possible: we have a new airport and railway station, and even if this work is still unfinished, which is a topic for another discussion, building them would not have been possible if it was not for the Euro. It also speeded up the introduction of some necessary laws . . . above all that, it is still a historical event, one of the most important in the history of this city. The question is how will we use this success? We only had three matches in Poznań. The thing is, I am not saying we should not organise new mega-events, not necessarily the YOG . . . but this requires reorganising the whole municipal administration. I have recently had a little argument with the Mayor, when he compared YOG to PWK [General National Exhibition]. It is a clear misuse. Especially now, when many cities are out of breath because of the crisis, we should first and foremost think of a plan. We should not jump from one event to another: all events should be complementary to our political strategy. The city should have a strategy, should improve the quality of life, because this is the key to everything, it makes people want to live in the city, ties them to the city and will eventually attract new investments. Therefore for me what's most important is the vision. Events are not the goal, which, I reckon, was the logic behind the Mayor's insistence on organising the YOG.

Thirdly, the authorities were called into question for being authoritative and not consulting over their decisions with citizens. Again, some people are concerned with the fact that current developments pave

the way for capital investment and consumption, but can cordon off space to regular users of the city. How hallmark events and investments reorganise the urban space around lifestyle consumption sites and turn citizens into consumers is another important dimension of the problem (Lowes 2002, pp. xi, xv). Here, however, it may be time to draw attention to the link between mega-events and how they have recently tended to provoke discussion about democracy and participation at both the regional and global level. A city activist with whom I discussed the Championship and the quality of the Polish public debate pointed to the deceptive information that the media and politicians were selling before the Euro, and how the citizens were gradually convinced to indulge in the celebration of an event presented as if it were a national holiday:

> None of these irrational decisions were made in consultation with the public. Nobody told the people what they would lose, nobody explained to them that Euro 2012 implied certain costs. We were told we would make big money and eventually open to Europe, and we are stuck in a traffic jam with the same problems which we used to have. I cannot even say it was a rich boys' game, because I am not quite sure who actually benefited from the event, apart from UEFA, I suppose. Most people had little to say and little to gain, but definitely quite a lot to lose.

These arguments reflect the broader discussion on the future shape and character of the Polish economy and democracy. The stars of the transformation from the planned to the market economy show their doubts and disappointment with where it led the country (for example, when Marcin Król, a philosopher and former oppositionist, is concerned about the lack of great ideas in modern society [Król, 2014]). Economists question the dogmas of their discipline and criticise the neoliberal changes in the Polish education, healthcare and pension systems (Oręziak, 2013; Wilkin, 2013). Of course, the neoliberal doctrine has been challenged before and by various opponents, but this critique was never taken seriously; quite to the contrary, it was always ridiculed or shrugged off. For the first time in years, however, it has now been broadly discussed in the mainstream media.

The withdrawal of Cracow's bid for the 2022 Winter Olympics is an excellent illustration of this evolution. Although initially praised and promoted by politicians and sportsmen as a lucrative opportunity for new business and investments, increasing opposition to the project

forced the Mayor to promise a referendum on the issue (Olimpijskie referendum, 2014). The referendum was held on 25 May 2014 and the bid was rejected by almost 70 per cent of the voters. Quite a change from the 'there is no alternative' atmosphere in Poznań before Euro 2012.

The evolution of the public debate in Poznań and the Cracow referendum bring me to Jean and John Comaroff's quote, which initially served as an opening motto of this article: '[T]he moment that any set of values, meanings and material forms comes to be explicitly negotiable, its hegemony is threatened; at that moment it becomes the subject of ideology or counterideology' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992, pp. 28–29). I am arguing that Poznań (and Polish society in general) is witnessing an important debate about 'collective imaginations', the legacy of the transition, and the language we use to justify our everyday choices, which, to a certain extent, also reflects the global dilemmas after the financial crisis. Although they still underpin the decisions and choices of the municipality, the old truths are put into question and meet with resistance. No longer are they taken for granted, they are rather seen as ideology, a terrain of negotiations.

My field-site, as Matei Candea put it, 'can only ever be a window into complexity, and never a holistic entity to be explained' (Candea, 2007, p. 181), but it betrays a discussion on the meanings of such terms and ideas as 'democracy', 'citizenship', 'modernisation' and 'growth'. Some questions, however, remain. Can we already speak of a forthcoming systemic change? Or, on the contrary, will the proponents of the 'free market' incorporate certain elements of their critics' arguments in their PR strategies, such as the ideas of public consultation or civic activism, or revitalisation plans (as we might already be observing all around Poland)? The ethnographic 'peculiar insistence on intimacy' (Herzfeld, 2000, p. 236) can be a useful tool to follow these fascinating processes.

### Addendum

On 30 November 2014, in the second round runoff of the local elections, Ryszard Grobelny was replaced by Jacek Jaśkowiak after 16 years at post as the Mayor of Poznań. In an interview given a few days later, the stepping-down mayor said that the crowning achievement of his governance was Euro 2012.

## Notes

1. The General National Exhibition was an international fair which took place in 1929 and initiated the city's long tradition of international exhibitions, also

linking it with Western Europe in the post-war period. The first exhibition was organised in order to show the work which had been accomplished in the ten years following the reestablishment of the Polish State after the end of World War I.

2. 'The phrase "white elephant" is purported to derive from the practice of the King of Siam (modern Thailand) to deal with threats to his rule by giving these sacred and therefore purely symbolic, but expensive, animals to rivals. The cost of maintaining the animal was more than they were worth' (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006, p. 21).
3. On the website of Poznań – the Host City of UEFA EURO 2012 one can read that 'Poznań is a place where the energy of the New Europe is merged with the civilization of the West. A metropolis with over half-a-million residents, Poznań is situated in the most economically developed region of Poland, closer to Berlin than to Warsaw. Poznanians can be counted on – they are well-educated, competent and welcoming. The city is focused on achieving success, grounded on a 1000-year tradition of competence. The most ambitious of projects and the bravest of visions have a chance to succeed here. The state of Poland was born in Poznań and it was also the location of the Greater Poland Uprising, the only successful armed bid for independence in Poland and a proof of the exceptional resourcefulness of its citizens. The people of this metropolis also stand out in terms of their spirit of enterprise, renowned for generations' (About the city, 2012).
4. Modernisation of the stadium cost more than 750–800 million PLN (approx. € 200 million), of which € 30 million was a state subsidy. According to the *Financial Times*, the Polish government invested approximately 30 billion US dollars in Euro 2012 (including four stadiums for 4.5 billion PLN, 2 billion of which was allocated to building the National Stadium in Warsaw).
5. The promotional effect of the Championships was measured by using Advertising Value Equivalency, which in Poznan was estimated at 231 million PLN (€ 57 million). Advertising Value Equivalency is an index used to measure PR efficiency by estimating the amount of money one would have to pay for editorial, Internet, radio or TV coverage if it was an advertisement. AVEs have been criticised by both professionals and scholars as irrelevant, yet the tool was considered as a measure of the international success of the promotional strategies at the host city and national level. Nobody asked if anyone actually remembers which cities in Austria and Switzerland hosted the Championship just four years before Euro 2012.
6. Barcelona 1992 is often cited as the exemplary Olympic Games. The 'effect' combines the material profits (improvement of infrastructure, tourist boom, revenue profits, enhancement of transportation) and intangible ones (favourable perception of the host city and other kinds of so-called 'projective profits') (cf. Davis 2012). Despite being an example of how staging the Olympics can help redevelop the city and the province, the legacy of the Barcelona Olympics has not been left unquestioned (cf. Malfas et al., 2004).
7. That is, nation-wide centralized economic plans in the USSR and former Soviet-bloc countries, which were considered a top priority and the fulfilling of which served as a measure of the progress towards a truly communist state.
8. For the reason of space and coherence of this chapter, I will discuss neither the planned budgetary costs nor the city debt. What is important here is the

summer discussion on the factual costs and consequences of Euro 2012, which preceded the City Council vote against the YOG in the autumn of 2012.

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# 7
# Travelling European Gay Footballers: Tournaments as an Integration Ritual

*Stefan Heissenberger*

Football often is considered to be the most important sport in the world, and this assumption holds particularly true in regards to Europe. As has been pointed out many times, football can be seen as a total social fact (see Porro and Russo, 2004, p. 220) in the sense of Marcel Mauss (2000 [1923]). It permeates essential fields of society such as leisure, culture, economy, media and law. For many people, it is a central aspect of their identity, whether as a player, a coach or a fan. Therefore it is not surprising that in recent years an increasing number of academic works on the various dimensions of football have been published. In this paper, I focus on what many consider the last taboo in sport: gay football players. I will discuss how international gay football tournaments are playing an important role in creating a gay football community in Europe. I will use theories of ritual[1] to understand the processes and practices of such events. My PhD research is based on participant observation with two German gay football teams as a player and as a coach. Before turning to the empirical results, I shall frame my work through a brief overview of the state of research, general aspects about gay football teams, my field and my methodological approach.[2]

## Outlining a research process

Seen through a long-term perspective, research on (modern) sports does not draw on a strong or deep tradition in anthropology. It is only recently that an increasing number of publications about this phenomenon has appeared (Blanchard and Cheska, 1985; Brownell, 1995; Bunzl, 2000; Husmann and Krüger, 2002; Dyck and Archetti, 2003; Besnier, 2012), especially on football (Bromberger, 1995; Armstrong and

Giulianotti, 1997; Archetti, 1999; Schmidt-Lauber, 2004; Sülzle, 2011; Müller, 2013; Szogs, 2014).

What most of these football-related publications have in common (Müller, 2013, is an exception to the rule) with those in other fields of the social sciences is that they do not include much empirically based discussion of the teams themselves.[3] Most of the publications focus on professional football, fans, and the media, investigating aspects of identity, globalisation, nationalism, racism or gender.

To bring men's amateur football teams into focus, I did my first research on two non-professional mainstream football teams in Austria through participant observation as a player. Cultural anthropologist Tatjana Eggeling (2008, p. 78; see also Pronger, 1990, 37) uses *mainstream* to describe the (pretended) heterosexual sporting world – I was particularly interested in the construction of masculinity. The grammar of dominant masculinity[4] is based on five overlapping fields: 1) sports performance; 2) heterosexuality; 3) (verbal) distinction against opponent teams, against women and gay men; 4) transgression of emotions (Heissenberger, 2012) and transgression of violence against one's own bodies and those of opponents (Heissenberger, 2010); 5) (masculine) staging toward teammates, (female) fans (see Regev and Rapoport, Chapter 8 in this volume), the referee, or opponent teams.

As a rule, there are no openly gay players on mainstream teams. This type of absence amounts to a (homophobic) distinction against gay men that is located on a symbolic level as expressed in speech, which would translate from vernacular German into: 'Don't pass like a fag' or 'You run like a queer'. Such audible insults of (verbally) activated homophobia are common in mainstream men's football. The media as well as a number of academic studies frequently speculate about the possible consequences of a prominent player coming out, such as homophobic chants from fans.[5] Not much is known about gay football players, in spite of rare examples such as the tragic case of Justin Fashanu[6] in Great Britain in the 1990s as well as the cases of Marcus Urban[7] in Germany in the 1990s, Robbie Rogers[8] in the United States in 2013 and Thomas Hitzlsperger in Germany in 2014.[9] From the outset, most attention has been directed at professional football players. Only a few commentators (including a limited number of researchers such as Jones and McCarthy, 2010) appear to be aware that there are gay amateur or leisure teams. To experience the athletic lives of these (seemingly) 'rare beings', I decided to do my PhD fieldwork on the gay football team of Vorspiel (engl. Foreplay) SSL Berlin[10] using a holistic ethnographic orientation. I thereby follow Heidi Eng's appeal,

who points out that 'with regard to local national contexts there is a need for more knowledge' (2008, p. 121) about gay/lesbian sports clubs. In the following, I will focus on the individual and the collective integration aspects of gay football tournaments at the European level.

## Gay football teams in Europe

There have been gay football teams in many European countries since the late 1980s (for example, Vorspiel SSL Berlin was founded in 1987, Stonewall FC from London was founded in 1991), each with its own founding history and purpose. Most of them share a passion for football and the discomfort and annoyance about the common prejudice involving the supposed contradiction of gay men enjoying football. They see their teams as a safe space for gay and gay-friendly footballers.

Most of the teams are based in big cities in Great Britain and Germany (Eastern Europe has markedly few). There is even an entire gay football league in England (Jones and McCarthy, 2010). Very few teams play in a regular league (with exception to teams in England or Vorspiel SSL Berlin, which compete in a university league). Even fewer play in amateur football leagues of the official national football associations, as the Streetboys Munich do. Gay football teams usually practice – as many mainstream teams do – once or twice a week. Aside from these activities, gay football teams regularly travel to gay football tournaments or to major multi-sports events like the Gay Games, the OutGames and the EuroGames. Many teams allude to their peculiar status in their names: Stonewall, HotScots, Streetboys Munich or Vorspiel ('Foreplay') SSL Berlin.

Besides their names and their mostly gay club members – compared to mainstream football teams – the constant balance between sporting ambition and social inclusion is a further characteristic of gay football clubs. According to their own self-understanding, all teams are open to gay (and gay-friendly) men who want to 'kick', regardless of their football abilities (see also Jones and McCarthy, 2010, p. 168).

The inclusion aspect is a 'sacred rule' for most teams. Everyone can come to the training sessions. But the rule is stretched to the limit when it comes to competitions, since there is always a tension between the desire to be inclusive and to have athletic ambition.

As there are often fantasies of 'gay locker room culture' on the part of journalists, scientists or ordinary (gay) people, I quote a teammate: 'For more than 15 years I have been involved in gay sports. I have never seen any kind of sexual interaction in the shower or in the locker room. Even

the few couples do not touch each other in the shower. We are all too tired after the training or the game to do such things.'

However, gay teams are fairly conventional: the joy of victory; anger at referees, opponents and stubborn teammates; group beers after the game; and football-related activities outside the field such as group viewings of Champions League matches on television.

## Field and methods

Niko Besnier and Susan Brownell emphasise that as 'a research method, ethnography could contribute to understanding the social problems in sport, such as [...] homophobia' (2012, p. 454). For a season and a half (16 months in 2012–2013) I conducted participant observation of the gay football team Vorspiel SSL Berlin. For the first six months, I practised and played with my new teammates. Then they asked me if I could be one of the two coaches. I accepted the offer. This is a sign of the tolerant attitude of the team toward heterosexual men. In addition to other (attributed) identity aspects (such as an Austrian or a good but injury-prone footballer), I am considered more or less as one of the few heterosexuals in the team. This is not the place to discuss in detail the advantages and disadvantages of being such a central figure in the field you conduct your research. Because of a lot of injuries during the fieldwork I had problems with keeping up with my teammates. As a coach, I had the duty and the 'natural right to exist' in all team-relevant spaces. In addition, through my new duties I could gain other insights.

Between 12 and 26 men come to the practice sessions. Most players are between 24 and 50 years of age and define themselves as *schwul* (English, gay); three players define themselves as heterosexual. Most of the players are German nationals, one player is from Argentina, one from Austria (me), one from Spain and one from the United States. Vorspiel trains once a week, regularly plays in a university league, and travels to gay football tournaments. Throughout my research, we travelled to Prague, Hamburg, Munich, London, Dublin and Cologne. Furthermore, a three-day trip to the Baltic Sea, a party to celebrate the last season in summer and a Christmas party are fixtures in the course of the year of Vorspiel Berlin. Apart from these 'official' occasions, members are involved in many other activities: birthday parties and barbecues, collective football watching (on TV or at the Olympia Stadium, where Hertha BSC has its home games), post-practice and post-match beers, board-game parties, and help with relocation.

Counting the players and fans, my field contained about 60 people. If one includes the people I met at the (international) tournaments,

the number is much higher. My fieldwork can be described as a Berlin-centred multi-sited ethnography. In addition to my research in Vorspiel Berlin, I joined Streetboys Munich with two of my Berlin teammates at the EuroGames 2012 in Budapest.

The main part of my data comes from participant observation. This research method gave me access to all relevant public and private social spaces of the team like the pitch, the locker rooms, bars, private apartments and accommodations during the tournament trips. Each session with participant observation had specific and strong body dimensions. In my case, this included athletic aspects (feelings of individual and collective flow, enjoyment, anger, stiffness or injuries) as well as social aspects like flirting or fear (during the 2012 EuroGames in Budapest, participants received police protection because of threats from right-wing extremists). In addition to participant observation, I conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews with players, officials and fans. To complement this fieldwork, I obtained data from official team websites, Facebook profiles from teams and players, and brochures and flyers from the tournaments.

## Gay football tournaments: an integration ritual

In the following section I use the present tense to describe a prototypical gay tournament. When I switch to the past tense I am referring to a specific event.

Two months before the tournament in Prague, the president of Vorspiel received the following email from the tournament organizer

> 'Dear sportmen!
>
> Are tournament is slowly coming... Can we count with your team also this year?
>
> And bonus, something what is not mention on our web...
>
> Our tournament is outdoor one and take place in 'student city' so during playing matches we having also nice 'surroundinds'... Then, Prague is nice, guys and men are hot and cute and Prague is very cheap for foreigners... And our tournament is probabbly only one, where in only for 30 Euro per person you could have mostly everything... Party with nice prformance, very good buffet during whole Saturday, accommodation... So what more you can wish?)) If you have any questions, just write me! :-)))' (original email from 12 June 2012)

The invitation e-mail was sent to the teams who had participated in the tournament in previous years as well as to potential new guests. The e-mail focused on 'hot and cute' guys as well as the reasonable prices in Prague. The mention of 'outdoor' matches was the only information that was relevant to football as a sport. Not all of the invitation e-mails refer directly to the possibility of meeting other men for an adventure. But most of the time there is a reference to some aspects of 'gay life' in the city of the tournament. Not included in this e-mail was an offer to sleep at a local player's place. This offer is usual for most tournaments; it is for those who cannot afford a hotel or for those who would like to get to know local players.

Due to different obligations, not all players of the same team travel to the tournament city together. But smaller groups always travel together to the tournament location. Sometimes a boyfriend or a spectator comes along. During the trip by car, train or plane, they tell each other stories of previous tournaments. These include athletic successes and failures as well as funny and erotic events at parties. In addition to such pleasantries, sports-related themes such as starting lineups and the team's chances at the upcoming tournament are also discussed. One player told me how much he loves these tournaments, attending them whenever possible. When his teammates tell stories about the past tournaments, he becomes sad because of his missed experiences due to his coming out late in life (in his forties; he was previously married to a woman).[11]

In the course of the afternoon and early evening the players arrive. Around 8pm the registration starts. Usually it takes place in a gay bar, often the favourite bar of the organizer. Right away there is a happy tumult: greetings, hugs, laughter, conversation and flirtation are in the air. The teams sign up and obtain information. Sometimes each player gets a gift bag. In Prague, it contained the tournament schedule, information about the gay life in the city and a condom.

After registration, the teammates gather together at a table with a beer. They look out for familiar and unfamiliar faces. There are discussions about who is a good footballer and who is cute. The arrivals of old friends are met with a hug. There are cross-team conversations about results at past tournaments, team news, missing players, and how players feel. Some players are on the lookout in an elated way for a special old friend to catch up with. Others sit, a little shy, watching the scene with their beer.

In Prague, there was much discussion about what happened at the 2012 EuroGames in Budapest. Before the EuroGames, the participants received serious threats from Hungarian right-wing groups. Some

political leaders denied the organisers support and staged protests with homophobic slogans. The police escorted the teams from the subway to the football pitch. The organisers maintained a low profile, behaving as inconspicuously as possible, for instance not wearing T-shirts that referred to the EuroGames or gay/lesbian status. In Budapest there was little public evidence of the EuroGames: no rainbow flag or advertising for the games. Past events of this kind were large public events. The absence of the rainbow flag was definite proof of the perceived undesirability of gays and lesbians. Many of the participants were aware of that before the games; they knew that they would not have as much fun there as at past events in Cologne and Amsterdam. Many adopted a 'now more than ever' attitude. One player said, 'We have to wave the flag on this issue'. Many athletes came to Budapest in order to show solidarity with the local athletes.

Many players go home around midnight after two or three beers. On the way home, they talk about the events of the evening and trade bits of gossip. Some players remain in the bar with new or old friends and celebrate into the wee hours.

On the day of the tournament, the participants meet about 45 minutes before the first game. The players who went to bed early anxiously await those teammates who stayed out the night before. With a mixture of fun and worry, the team speculates who will come in time for the game and in what condition. If a player comes into the changing room bleary-eyed, he will be the object of good-natured ribbing. Eventually the coach gets the team to focus on the upcoming matches and informs his team about the lineup for the first match. The coach points out the importance of this game, since a good start is often crucial to the course of the tournament later on.

Around the pitches there is much hustle and bustle. A mixture of players, coaches, tournament organisers and fans spend their time discussing, joking, running, stretching, eating and drinking. In the area, there are many advertisements from tournament sponsors (often from gay companies or gay businessmen) as well as rainbow flags. Sometimes there are national flags from the home countries of the participating teams and an EU flag too. Water and local fruits are provided to the players free of charge. Coffee, cakes and sandwiches are also available at an affordable price (sometimes this is included in the registration fee).

Aside from a few people who flirt or hold hands and the gay insignias on the walls, bystanders familiar with mainstream football do not quickly notice that this is a gay tournament. They will see running, kicking, cheering, cursing, and jubilant or annoyed players, coaches and fans.

With the kickoff most of the attention is focused on the pitch, and the flirting level declines dramatically. After the second game it is clear how the day is going to end. If you survive the group stage, everything gets more serious. The teams who will play in matches after a failed group stage focus on fun (often with a feeling of gallows humour). A couple of players are angry for the whole day. The emotional state depends on individual and collective expectations and ambitions.

Those who had been celebrating the whole night prefer not to complain about physical discomfort. They know fully well that they will not receive much sympathy. The rule is: you may celebrate, but you should be able to run and fight as usual on match day.

The closer a team gets to the final match, the greater the thrill. Within the team, a feeling of flow is establishing. The flow is the euphoria over the recent victory and the prospect of winning the tournament.

How hard the players play depends on the emotional connection to the opponent and the course of the game. There are sometimes hard fouls, but a general sense of fair play predominates. In contrast to mainstream amateur/leisure football, the aspects of togetherness rather than rivalry have higher salience. The unspoken motto is, 'We are here, we are gay, we play football, and we have fun together'. In some teams there are players who define themselves as heterosexual. The gay players are fine with this as long as the heterosexuals play in their gay team regularly. Teams who use heterosexual 'ringers' just to increase their chances of winning are scorned. One player said, 'That makes me angry. That is beside the point when they include a player just to win the title'.

Even if it seems like the tournament is about nothing (no one except those involved notice it), during the game it means (nearly) everything to the participants. In these couple of minutes the boundaries of the pitch are the boundaries of their life. Large-scale media coverage, fan interest and money are not essential when it comes to evoking emotions in football (see also Heissenberger, 2012). For the two teams who play the final match, the feeling of flow is at its peak. Sometimes the final ceremony takes place on the pitch. Each team is called forth and gets applause. From tournament to tournament the prizes differ: handshakes, certificates, trophies or medals.

Jubilant, the winning team may dance and sing in the showers. Exhaustion and euphoria are in the air. Couples hug and kiss. After showering, the teams go back to their accommodation or to a restaurant. Depending on the level of success attained, the mood is good or not so good, but (as a rule) never really bad.

If one's team was not very successful, one enjoys the company of the teammates, the city itself, and later, at the party, the company of the

players of the other teams. If one's team was successful, the road to the title is discussed with excitement, accompanied by alcohol, eating and singing at the restaurant – often in such a way that the other diners take notice. After dinner the team goes to the party, which is always held at a gay bar. The organisers occasionally hold speeches to recap the tournament. They refer to the matches of the day and congratulate the winning team and give comfort to the losing team of the final match. They also gratefully acknowledge that some teams travelled long distances to attend. In addition, they emphasise that the community aspect is more important than athletic rivalry and that 'we are all one big family.'

The party is characterised by a shared feeling of flow across all teams and individual participants. The flow is generated by the excitement and euphoria of the football games, alcohol, and expectations of a fun night and potential adventures. There is a lot of joking, ribbing, laughing, dancing and flirting.

On Sunday, there is often an open brunch late in the morning. Not all of the players and teams attend. Some players run out of steam, some have to depart very early, and some are sleepy. A few of those at the brunch are clearly in the throes of a hangover. Generally there is a lot of joking about the previous day and night. The teams talk about the tournaments where they might see each other again. Several footballers are melancholic because the weekend is coming to an end. One player told me before the journey back home that he is looking forward to the next tournament because 'it is always fun to see the familiar faces again. It is nice to get away from your daily life and to see other cities, especially to see what they have to offer at night. Furthermore, I like to compete at all levels. In addition, I feel so comfortable in our team that I want to spend my free time with all these guys.'

## Analysis

After this (atmospheric) description of a gay tournament, I will elaborate using 'ritual' theory how the European gay football community establishes and renews itself. I will also focus on individual as well as collective successful integration aspects. In other texts, the following questions could be discussed: why are migrants, Muslims, non-whites, transsexuals, transgenders and bisexuals underrepresented or not present? Are there unaddressed reservations among the gay teams? Are there reservations among the underrepresented or not present? Although the segregation between men and women at gay tournaments

is not as strict as in mainstream football, why is it not common that women participate?

Rituals in general are regularly repeatable courses of action. They take off from everyday life and create a collective self-conception (Gingrich, 2006, p. 27). Rituals have strong corporeal and emotional dimensions. Participants of a ritual build a community – *communitas*, to use the term of Victor Turner – because of shared experiences. Rituals are often staged as extraordinary ecstatic possibilities (Gingrich, 2006, pp. 28–29). As mentioned by Arnold van Gennep (2011 [1909]), transitions between two life stages are performed through rites of passage. They usually have a three-phased schema of separation, transition and reincorporation. Van Gennep concentrated on life-changing events like christenings or weddings. Victor Turner looked closely at the segregation phase, which he called liminality (1995 [1969]). He extended van Gennep's theory to less formalised and non-secular rituals. Turner stated that 'liminality and communitas also characterize modern "performance genres" like theater, art, music games – and sports' (Besnier and Brownell, 2012, p. 445). With respect to leisure in secular societies, he emphasises the experimental and ludic aspects. For Turner leisure is freedom *from* work and freedom *to* play with ideas, fantasies and social relationships (1977, p. 42). Both kinds of freedom play an essential role in gay tournaments, although the positive freedom constitutes the charm and unique appeal.

Liminality on a general level is marked by anti-structure. A person who stands beyond their ordinary social status is 'betwixt and between' and is characterised by a state of ambiguity. Old norms and social obligations play no or only a minor role. In this period, a *communitas* is being established. Solidarity, sociability, and a feeling of flow are typical here (Turner, 1995 [1969], p. 135). In this chapter, flow is understood as a moment or moments 'in which there is little distinction between self and environment; between stimulus and response; or between past, presence, and future' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1972, quoted in Turner, 1974, p. 87). Sports is in our society one popular place were flow can be experienced (Turner, 1974, p. 87) and *communitas* itself 'has something of a "flow" quality' (Turner, 1974, p. 89).

Time and space are 'interwoven and embedded' (Gingrich, 1994, p. 127). Against this backdrop we are dealing with a nested dual three-phase structure of a team travelling to a gay football tournament. In an outer bracket there is the journey (Friday), the stay in the tournament city (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) and the homeward journey (Sunday). The middle phase can be divided into three phases. Friday: journey (as a fluent transition into the liminal phase), arrival, registration,

followed by a party. Saturday (the liminal highlight of the weekend): football, followed by a party. Sunday: brunch, farewell, departure and the homeward journey (as a fluent transition into everyday life).

The liminal phase here is not only about what each individual is doing but also about what each individual could possibly be doing. The joy of the game, meeting old friends and getting to know new friends or maybe lovers, to be in a safe space where being gay and playing football is not a contradiction – in this atmosphere the European gay football communitas arises. Several levels and aspects of integration and transitions can be observed:

1) Due to the intensity of such a journey, new players are more quickly integrated into the team than would be possible at home in the everyday life of the team. During the weekend, the team members spend time with each other almost constantly, creating closeness and trust.
2) New players get in touch with other gay football teams and their players along with their entourage. In only three days, the individual gay footballer is being advanced into a European gay football community by an act of integration. The more you take part, the more you are integrated.
3) The same applies to teams participating for the first time at a gay football tournament. Most of the time they have been founded quite recently, and they want to get in touch with other gay teams as quickly as possible. The best way is through tournaments of this type. New teams become the centre of attention. One of the main topics of conversation for the older and established teams is the newly founded teams: the reason they have established themselves, what plans they have for the future, what problems they are facing, and whether they need help at any level.
4) Old relationships between established teams and between individuals will be renewed and deepened.

On Friday, past and future plays rather a big role in the communication[12] of the actors: 'How are you doing?' 'How are things going with football?' 'How are things going with your boyfriend?' 'How has it been going with the past tournaments?' 'Are you also coming to our tournament?' The registration evening is like the reunion of a big family gathering where several nuclear families – each team – come together. In fact, the term *big family* is often used by the actors in this context. Elective relationships 'can [...] engender bonds of great loyalty, a desire to help, a

readiness to listen and a commitment to the relationships, which are resources for solidarity within personal relationships' (Wilkinson et al., 2012, p. 1173).

The individual and collective feeling of flow induced by football, alcohol and expectations dominates the whole weekend. The contents of the Prague gift bag symbolise what is going on and what could possibly be going on during this weekend on a material level. The flow in its highest intensity can be observed at the Saturday night party. With the dawn of farewell and departure rapidly approaching, only the present counts (Grimes, 2006 [1982], p. 130). Exultation and drunkenness promote this process. Against the backdrop of a general debate in ritual anthropology, are we dealing here with a 'formal and rule-governed character' of ritual action or with 'informal and spontaneous activity' (Mahmood, 2001, p. 827)? In a certain sense, it is both. Saturday night is based on the premise of the party with all its associations: celebration, alcohol, flirting, joy, dancing, laughing and so on. In this frame, spontaneous events and emotions are possible. But not all are desirable on Saturday night. It is not so much that indulging one's sadness, problems and seriousness will leave behind any lasting unpleasant residue, but they stand out, oppose the predominant mood, disturb the shared flow, the self-celebration of the European gay footballer community and the 'duty' of happiness. (Friday and Sunday are the time for these themes.) Following Grimes, it can be viewed as a formalised emotion (2006 [1982], p. 130). Compared with mainstream football or daily routine, the whole weekend and especially the Saturday events can be seen as an anti-structure, with all of its promise and possibility.

The actors emphasise that such a tournament is in many ways not different from a mainstream tournament. Football being played is the same. However, they testify that they enjoy their otherness and the related liberties predominantly expressed on a bodily level (non-erotic massages and hugging as well as flirting and sex).

On Saturday, the various body-related incidents during the tournament and the party are constitutive for the shared collective memory. The accumulation of shared memory is one major adhesive (aside from the awareness of facing a similar situation) that holds the community together throughout the whole weekend.

Furthermore, these processes have to be viewed in the context of travelling. Each team (except for the organisers) is on a journey. In this way, everyone has a break from everyday life. On a general level, travel time is a liminal phenomenon itself, with all its aspects of norm and relation shiftings (Turner, 1977; Graburn, 1989). Temporality as

processual experienced time (Gingrich et al., 2002, p. 3) is characterised by freedom, possibility and curiosity, which on the other hand create excitement, solidarity and a sense of community. So the tournament weekend is being experienced by some as 'more real than real life' (Graburn, 1989, p. 26) because such moments are what makes life worth living.

For a long time, many gay men who were football enthusiasts could not experience both of these aspects openly and freely at the same time. The feeling of 'unbelonging' and disconnection may still exist and is experienced with different levels of intensity by various players, which, according to Judith Halberstam (2003, p. 314) is an essential component in the constitution of a subculture. When gay men join a gay football team, they experience ordinary football as well as a gay environment. Players come to a gay team because of the gay aspect. At the same time, in a certain way this leads to its invisibility. When everybody is gay, this initial criterion of categorisation doesn't matter anymore. Other identity aspects become the focus. On a mainstream team an openly gay man would, in the first place, always be the gay man, not 'Karl', not 'the funny guy', not 'the good footballer', and so on. For some, the gay football team is also an alternative to traditional gay bar scenes (see Jones and McCarthy, 2010, p. 161; Pronger, 1990, pp. 234–235).

If you go to a gay football tournament with your team, the sense of belonging is transferred to an international European level,[13] with the rainbow flag and the EU flag as its symbols.

The rainbow flag marks the pitch as a gay pitch during the match day. Together with gay social interaction (like flirting or holding hands) it is an occupation of a heteronormative space. The flag stands for pride and the diversity of gays and lesbians. It is a visual sign that heterosexuals also understand. Heterosexuals are welcome but they are expected to acknowledge the unity of gay football. If the flag is absent, it is often seen as a sign of discrimination, as was the case in Budapest during the 2012 EuroGames. The actors of the gay football teams who took part in this event perceived a homophobic 'You are not welcome here' atmosphere created by right-wing extremists and the political authorities in Hungary.

The EU flag is the symbol of the European Union, whose motto is 'United in Diversity'. The flag stands for unity, solidarity and harmony. In the Treaty of Lisbon, one of the principles is the fight against social exclusion and discrimination. These are values of which players are aware, even though they do not know the exact terms and language of the Treaty, which states, 'it is about how Europe and European ideals

form the horizon of [their] lived experience' (European Commission, 2008, p. 5). It is no coincidence that Streetboys Munich in Budapest wore T-Shirts with the phrase 'Claim your rights, be different'.

## Summary

The gay tournaments create and strengthen connections within the team and between other teams on a national and international or European level. On a collective level, the European gay footballer community is constantly renewing and deepening itself at gay tournaments. The gay tournaments are safe spaces where the simultaneity of gay men and football is not a contradiction and where several identity aspects are addressed. As an example, the individual footballers from the team which I analysed, Vorspiel Berlin, feel themselves to be gay footballers, members of Vorspiel Berlin, as Berlin gay footballers, as German gay footballers, and as European gay footballers, all at the same time. At once they feel – maybe for the first time – that they are part of a community that shares their passion for football. The rainbow flag and the flag of the European Union on the pitch serve as symbols of this community. There are accomplished complex individual and collective overlapping integration processes within a specific time and space. This can be seen as a ritual, according to Turner (1977). It takes place in a nested dual three-phase structure. The *communitas* establishes itself and is held together through understanding, shared flow and shared memories. The appeal of being away from home and the freedom acquired therein underpin these processes.

For the actors the tournaments are highlights in contrast to the everyday (football) life at home. But these are not separated spaces. After the reintegration in ordinary life contexts, there are some changes to observe. While within a team the welcome between new and established players before the tournament was by handshake; after the weekend it is expressed with a hug. Players and teams link and befriend each other on Facebook to keep up with their new friends from other teams, to share photos or to help each other in different situations.

## Notes

1. For another example of the connections linking football, anthropology and ritual theory, see the well-known text by Christian Bromberger (1995).
2. I want to thank Niko Besnier, Christian Bromberger, Friederike Faust, Katharina Fösel, Małgorzata Kowalska, Andre Gingrich, David Ranc, Marina Rehfeld, Martin Schneider, Claire Nicole Smith, Albrecht Sonntag and Almut Sülzle for their critical comments on this text.

3. One of these works is from Barbara Cox and Shona Thompson (2000). Based on participant observation in a women football team in New Zealand, they 'explore how female soccer players experience their bodies within the discourse of sport, gender, and heterosexuality' (p. 5).
4. I use the term 'dominant masculinity' as a soft form of Connell's (1995) 'hegemonic masculinity'. This term 'was distinguished from other masculinities, especially subordinated masculinities' (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). 'Hegemonic' refers not to the majority of men in a statistical sense but refers to those who exert a normative force in society. In my view, Connell's concept of masculinity is located on a macro level. My research was on a micro level, so I use 'dominant' instead of 'hegemonic'.
5. See Heissenberger (2013) for steps to overcome homophobia in mainstream men's football.
6. See www.thejustincampaign.com/justin.htm [accessed 2 September 2013].
7. See Blaschke (2008).
8. See http://robbiehrogers.com/blog/ [accessed 2 September 2013].
9. http://www.zeit.de/sport/2014-01/thomas-hitzlsperger-homosexualitaet-fussball; accessed 24 January 2014. Eric Anderson interviewed 26 openly gay and mainly white male athletes from the United States from different sports who came out between 2000–2002 and 2008–2010. He came to know that the 'athletes in the 2010 cohort have had better experiences after coming out than those in the earlier cohort, experiencing less heterosexism and maintaining better support among their teammates' (Anderson, 2011, p. 250) because of the 'cultural shift, from homophobia to a stigmatization of homophobia' (Anderson, 2011, p. 254) in society. Although most of the athletes he interviewed were the best on their respective teams, and only a few were from contact sports, I think this cultural shift could have a similar positive impact on nonprofessional football in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.
10. Vorspiel SSL Berlin is a multi-sport lesbian and gay club. I did my research in the men's football section.
11. This often-described gay mourning or gay melancholia (Butler, 1997, p. 139; Woltersdorff, 2005, pp. 163–164) because of missed opportunities and experiences appears here in a football-specific context.
12. In a broader analysis it would be productive to take a closer look at language, especially in the areas of humour (Oring, 2003) and gossip (Besnier, 2009).
13. There are also overseas tournaments. Through geographical distance and the associated costs, the European dimension is dominant in community-building. The factor of language leads to a situation where, for example, the German teams feel somewhat more connectedness for each other than to, say, an Italian team.

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# 8
# To Pass and Not To Pass
## Female Fans' Visibility in the Football Fandom Field

*Daniel Regev and Tamar Rapoport*

Tamar: *'Even though I feel Katamon is like a home for me, I will never be seen as an "authentic fan"'*
Efrat: *'Your fandom will never be your native tongue. You might learn the language but you will always have an accent.'*[1]

This dialogue is taken from one of many conversations conducted by Tamar and Efrat – two researchers of Hapoel Katamon Jerusalem FC (HKJ)[2] fans – about their experience as women in the fandom field (FF).[3] During this conversation, Tamar expressed a certain frustration about the feeling that because of her otherness as a new fan in her sixties, she will always be viewed as an outsider in the Katamonian FF. Nodding her head, Efrat signalled to Tamar that she had had similar experiences and told her she also felt she would never be considered an authentic fan within the hyper-masculine FF. The gaze, the social eye, they both agreed, is untrained in seeing a woman in the manly, crowded, sweaty and adrenaline-drenched FF.

Our research explored the experiences of female fans and the fandom practices they employed in regards to the exclusionary nature of the hegemonic-masculine model of fandom within the FF. Our study aims to shed light on the interface between gender, visibility and fandom by exploring how women do, but also undo, fandom, and manage their visibility in the hyper-masculine FF. Our more general aim is to expound a greater understanding of the makeup and meaning of the emerging category – female fan.

Sports play an essential part in the gendering process. Studies into the history of football have clearly shown that from the outset, the football

game functioned as a masculine sphere, constituting and preserving gender dichotomies (Williams, 2007; King, 1997).[4] The masculine model of fandom, and its expression as a genuine form of maleness, is presupposed and accepted as 'natural'. Thus, the constraints and pressure to adopt masculine fan practices is dictated to women fans, who are given no option but to opt for feminine practices in place of the masculine ones, as such practices do not yet exist (nonetheless, see Lenneis, 2013, p. 5).

For men, fandom is habitual; it is their 'native language', learnt by the majority of them at an early age through their bodies (Friedman and Rapoport, 2014). As a result of this process, men feel and are perceived as belonging to the FF. For women, as Efrat told Tamar, the case is different. They cannot 'pass' as authentic fans because the language of fandom is and will always be foreign to them, not inculcated into their bodies and identity. Similarly to other social categories – like race and ethnicity – the gendered dichotomy is historically, culturally and socially grounded as 'natural', and thus seems impassable. Hence, even an attempt by women to emulate masculine fan practices and 'pass' as men is futile because they will always look and sound alien in the FF.

Labelling women as strangers in the FF continually places their commitment and authenticity in question. Even women who accurately imitate and emulate male practices of fandom are still suspect. Thus, deviation from 'proper feminine behaviour' entails the risk of being marked as an unladylike masculine woman. In such context, female fans find themselves entrapped: If a woman feels freedom [sexual] in the field then she is not a 'real fan', but if she exhibits interest and knowledge of the game itself, then she is not a 'real woman' (Rubin, 2009).

Despite the fact that over the last decades more and more women have joined the FF, both social research and public discourse have paid little attention to the makeup and the significance of the category 'female fan' (Pope, 2010; Rubin 2009) and the manner in which they perform and negotiate fandom in the FF.[5] The growing numbers of studies on female fans tend to explore their fandom in *contrast* to the male model of the 'authentic fan' (see, for example, Ben Porat, 2009; Gosling, 2007). Given that only a masculine model of performing fandom exists, most women are pushed to reflect on their doing of fandom against what is considered to be the authentic masculine model.

In investigating female fandom, we employ West and Zimmerman's (1987) conceptualisation of 'doing gender' – the recreation of gender

dichotomies and hierarchical structures, as well as challenging them, as based on the successful execution of gender norms. These norms are continuously compared to the expectations and standards of accountability designated to the respective female gender category. Gender, according to West and Zimmerman, is enacted and created through interactions conducted in accordance with criteria and structures of accountability. In doing fandom, fans present themselves to others on the basis of cultural values, norms and expectations (see Lenneis, 2013). Thus, exploring visibility is inseparable from an inquiry into the doing of gender.

Inspired by West and Zimmerman's practice-based approach, we coined the term 'doing fandom' to emphasise the role of gendered performance in regards to visibility. Our term denotes the embodied qualities of fandom manifested in performing bodily practices. Using this approach we explore the cultural and interactional manifestations entailed in performing fandom and the manner fans conduct, manage and negotiate their visibility in the stadium.

## The research journey

The ethnographic-feminist research was conducted over six years (2007–2013) particularly in the stadium, using two central methods: individual open interviews were conducted with a wide range of men and women fans, both old-timers and novices (24 men and 20 women). Each interview lasted for about an hour and a half in a place chosen by the interviewee. In analysing the interviews, we paid particular attention to how participants represented and reflected on their doing fandom and what meaning they attributed to their visibility in the FF. Secondly, all researchers conducted ongoing participant observations during the entire span of the research's duration. In addition we read the male-dominated fans' forum,[6] and conducted numerous incisive conversations about fandom experiences among ourselves and with other fans.

## Studying female fandom in a fan-owned club

HKJ was founded spontaneously in the summer of 2007 by a small group of passionate male football fans who decided to split from their original club, Hapoel Jerusalem (HJ). After growing increasingly disenchanted by the mismanagement of their beloved HJ, the club's poor sportive achievements and its owner's general disrespect towards them, these

men decided to found an alternative club of their own. The grass-roots initiative HJK brought the gospel of fan-owned sports clubs to Israel.

The club's agenda stands for democratic-communitarian ideology that defies racism and violence as well as going against capitalism, globalisation and commercialisation. Katamon fans instituted a community-based, non-violent and non-sexist[7] agenda which successfully translated into an atmosphere unique and characteristic to the Katamon FF. This atmosphere succeeded in drawing a fairly large number of novice fans, and encouraged women, families and children to join the Katamonian FF. Many of Katamon's female fans are first-timers, most of them lacking football-fan habitus. Their significant visibility in the games serves as a proof of the familial and civilised community atmosphere that the club's agenda strives to promote. Female fans have been perceived in the Katamonian FF as a symbol of true partnership, as a 'token' (Moss Kanter, 1977), but not as truly equal partners.

## The Katamonian male gaze on female fans

Within the Katamonian FF, girls and women are often 'suspected' of being 'hitchhikers',[8] as only escorting male fans, coming 'to hunt' for a male partner or only wishing to have a fun time with a like-minded group of people (Noy et al., 2014) but not because they were 'really' interested in football. In this regard, some male fans served as gender gatekeepers, outlining the female fans their 'proper place' in the FF with their remarks and gaze.

Candidly, without complying with the informal rules of political correctness, Nathan attempted to devalue the female fandom by explaining why and how he views them with a suspicious eye:

> The truth is that I don't believe many female fans when they present themselves as hardcore fans. When I see a woman in the heart of the (hardcore) bloc of cheering and cursing fans [...] it looks fake to me. If she is sitting on the side and wearing the right colours then it's OK, but standing up and cursing? I don't buy it. It's not right, not right [...] I have a feeling that I have sensors to know who is a real (fan) and who isn't. I need to see it with my own eyes.

Nathan is certain in his well-honed senses and his scrutinising gaze allows him to identify and definitively rule which (female) fan is authentic and which is not. If a certain female fan did not attempt to 'pass' as a male fan he 'was fine with it', but when she employed male fandom

practices (for example, cursing) he felt something was wrong, because she somehow crossed the gender line.

In contrast, like other male fans with a feminist outlook, Ariel rejected the claim that women are not authentic fans, saying: ‘There are women who really are fans, and it is wrong to make generalisations – I see them in the stands’. Such a claim, which focused on specific women, failed to take into account the wider group of female fans, and thus strengthens the claim that women being perceived as authentic fans is the exception and not the rule.

Women are more than aware of the suspicious gaze being pointed in their direction by men, and responded to it in different ways. When Sigal was asked if her fandom was accepted by her immediate surroundings, she answered:

> In the stands, no. Until today I feel it when conversations about football start. It’s like ‘sure, what do you know’ or I run the risk of being perceived as an oddity. And it still bothers me . . . I consider myself very feminist and the principle of it pisses me off. So sometimes I give up, I don’t need it.

Sigal examined men’s exclusionary treatment of women’s fan practices and understanding of football through a feminist perspective. In a certain regard, this perspective freed her from the scrutinising male gaze, allowing her to ‘forget they’re even there’ and perform fandom in her own way. Despite her self-depiction as ‘very feminist’, she decided to give up on passing in advance and avoided confronting sceptical male fans in the stands.

## The visibility of fandom

Fandom is a bodily undertaking; it is the story of a body performing in space whose essence, manifestation and materialisation is embedded into the very presence and visibility of bodily doing within the FF. However, research into fandom in sports has largely passed over the body, and research into the body has passed over fandom. This is rather surprising given that as an embodied experience, fandom is learnt, created and performed with and through the body (see Hofmann, Chapter 10 in this volume).

As a social-cultural text, the body of the fans is ‘open’ to interpretation, and embodies their visibility more than any other signifier. Such a signification stems from visibly discernible identifying bodily signs

(Goffman,1963) – for example jumping and hugging to celebrate a goal, facial paint, tattoos of the club's logo etched into the fans' body, and so on. But 'while the male body is "unmarked", that is, a body perceived as neutral, universal and thus allegedly "genderless" [...], consciousness to the bodily existence of human experience is stronger for women' (Hirsch, 2010, p. xi).

In the FF, which has historically celebrated the 'masculine body', women's bodies are marked as an 'other'. This excludes them from participating in the 'brotherhood' of fandom which is realised among men through bodily practices: jumping, partial undressing, hugging, singing and physically rubbing up against one another, especially among the bloc of hardcore fans (ultras).

Dana, a third-generation hardcore fan, enthusiastically supports the Katamonian agenda. During her interview, Dana stated that football is the centre of her life, and described working behind the scenes for Katamon throughout the week. She described the men in the club as her friends who protect her in the case of sexist behaviour on the part of fans from other football clubs – to whom she assigns the sole responsibility for her visibility. In other words, Dana exempts the male Katamon fans from the gaze being aimed at her:

> You feel gawked at the stadium [stares pointed at you], I try to ignore it. There is something strange in walking down the street and feeling as if everyone is looking at you, someone is walking behind you and he's staring at you, at games that is always the feeling [...] and there were times when it got to me, and there were times that because we play in lower leagues, [men] had to protect me. Even in Rahat,[9] when I came to the game in a tank top, and it was inappropriate [...] it happens that someone will make a comment because I'm a girl, but it doesn't happen in our side of the stands, it mostly happens, like 100 per cent of the times, from other teams, and it doesn't feel good, but who said sports has to feel good.

Dana performs her fandom within the heart of the devoted bloc of fans together with a few other women. She is acutely aware of being a young and pretty woman whose presence is conspicuous and attracts a lot of attention: 'I know that it sticks out and somehow makes me very different within the club (...) but I don't think that my appearance differentiates me as a fan or... it's just more photogenic, it's nicer on the eye.'[10] In an attempt to legitimise her fandom practices and claim they were no different than those of male fans, Dana tried to make the

impossible differentiation between her fandom practices and her being a photogenic fan. She purported to be uninterested in being portrayed as a female fan and would like to believe such a situation is possible, but she knows it is not. Dana was aware of her visibility but simultaneously wished to ignore it. She did not 'forgo' her femininity but hoped it would go unnoticed in the FF. In other words, Dana hoped she would not be visible, but being a female fan she knows she will always be observed.

Foucault (1980) conceptualised the gaze as a metaphor for what the observer can cause the subject: to penetrate its body, to define it, punish or label it. According to him, the disciplining and regulatory gaze is manifested in structures of social power, and is thus always political. The gaze is internalised by the subject, becoming an integral part of its subjectivity and not only an external force. As a result, the gaze gains sway over our behaviour when we feel we are being looked upon. Because humans are constantly subjected to the gaze's oversight and supervision, it is almost impossible to evade it. Nonetheless, attempts to avoid the gaze and/or resist it are an integral part of the human experience and activities.

Following this idea, we consider and explore female fandom as an agency capable of returning the gaze. As a subject, the fan is endowed with a gaze of her own and might formulate an independent form of doing fandom. Like other social relations, visibility in the FF takes place in the overlap between the observer's gaze and that of the subject being observed. The gazes call attention to fandom by delineating its symbolic and social borders (Lamont and Molnar, 2002), outlining the engendered forms signifying types and levels of social affiliation, at both the individual and group level.

In the case that women make up the majority of the crowd (as was true at the 2002 World Cup games in Japan and South Korea) the gaze destabilised the gender power structure, allowing women to gaze upon men. Women who were at the games, Rubin (2009) claims, turned into observers themselves, as opposed to being only the observed. The media at the World Cup games reacted to this reversal by focusing on the visibility of the few women who chose to bare their bodies, despite the fact that the majority of female fans were dressed exactly the same way as male fans, they were ignored. Thus, by highlighting female visibility the connection between football, fandom and masculinity was recreated, reinforcing the binary definition of gendered categories and preserving them in the FF.

Visibility pertains to issues relating to belonging, affiliation and recognition; as well as questions relating to social boundaries, and mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. Hence, visibility touches upon the moral cornerstone of acceptance. Thus male reluctance to recognize the authenticity of female fandom testifies to a wider reluctance to recognise their subjectivity as fans.

In this context, many female fans told us that any attempt they made to 'dare' and express their knowledge of football (regarding, for instance, offside, tactics, a referee's decision and so on) was met with apprehension. The clear message sent to a woman was that she is an outsider who has crossed the border – someone attempting to 'pass' as something she is not. Using the conceptualisation of passing allows us to clarify if, how and why female fans utilise performative fandom practices to 'pass' as part of the fan crowd.

## 'Passing' – a lens for exploring 'doing fandom'

The term 'passing' connotes an attempt to conceal an invisible stigma or labelling in order to appear to be part of the dominant (that is, not stigmatised) group, and to pass from a situation which is normatively undesirable to a desirable one. The concept was originally developed in academic thinking by scholars from the Symbolic Interactionism school of thought.

In this regard, Garfinkel (1967) treats passing as a strenuous activity, demanding secrecy and complex manoeuvres. Because the stigma entails an abnormal aspect, the effort to pass is justified as worthwhile by the fear that its discovery would sully the one attempting to 'pass (moral) borders' (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 136) and thus undermine the attempt to pass. Under the same paradigmatic umbrella, Goffman (1963) dealt in depths with the phenomenon of passing, especially in his book *Stigma*. As part of his discussion on everyday attempts to deal with groups with a socially discredited reputation, Goffman identifies a number of passing techniques exhibited by people living under stigma and attempting to hide their identify and pass as something else. These techniques include, among others, concealing one's 'true' identity, hiding stigmatic signifiers and replacing them through impersonation (Renfrow, 2004). The last of the three techniques is of special interest to us because of its congruence with our research into the fandom practices of female fans.[11]

Embarking from a post-colonial perspective, Fanon (1952) interprets the labelled person's attempt to pass as a relentless and futile desire to

erase the border between the visible and the invisible, between what is seen and what is assumed as trivial. For Fanon, impersonation or imitation does not truly allow the border to be crossed, its residue remaining omnipresent even if the subject/immigrant 'completely' adopts hegemonic patterns of conduct. Fanon and other post-colonial theorists who deal with passing from an inter-racial perspective place power relations at the heart of their thinking and use this perspective to examine the narrow line being navigated by the stigmatised individual. Much like attempts to pass between races or ethnicities, the visible otherness of women in the FF places them under the constant 'test' of authenticity and belonging (see Sasson-Levy and Shoshana, 2013).

In dealing with the idea of passing, Butler (1990), similarly to Goffman, embraces a dramaturgical perspective in her attempt to account for performance, while, like Fanon, also paying particular attention to power relations. Keeping in line with other scholars in the constructivist tradition, Butler contends that gender is culturally constructed and does not exist *a priori*, but is rather created and accomplished through interaction. Gender, she explicitly states, is what one does in presenting oneself to others and not what he or she 'really' is. To pass as a new identity, she claims, refers to receiving public recognition of it as authentic. Developing the idea of transgressing gender boundaries from the perspective of queer theory, Butler is particularly interested in how passing exposes the failure of the heterosexual hegemonic regime to maintain its own ideals.

According to her, in passing the body, gender categories are reproduced, but this can also challenge the categorical regime: by politically passing over gender borders and portraying the gendered body and its arbitrary social signifier in a parodying light. The visible 'otherness' of the gendered body both internalises and externally expresses social and personal significations, offering the occasional possibility at subverting and challenging them, while simultaneously preserving the individual and group identify and visibility.

Along this line, we contend that women's doing of fandom should be studied in relations to what is considered and constituted as the authentic masculine model.

Developing further the idea of performance – what the subject does, her act of self-presentation – Butler conceptualises the idea of performativity, a concept which denotes the gestures that perform the woman's identity and bring her identities into being. 'The subject, rather than pre-existing the deed is performativity constituted through the acts that are purported to be the result of it being...' (ibid., p. 174). Passing therefore is an act of performativity.

The concept of passing, as it is theorised by the different theoretical perspectives, interfaces with the issues of the gaze, body and visibility. This concept serves us as a lens through which we examine the performative praxis of women who do fandom. This concept is especially befitting for our examination due to the exclusivity enjoyed by the pre-existing hegemonic male model of fandom. In light of this we examine the different modes in which women do or do not do fandom, and whether these fan practices recreate, diverge or transgress from what is considered legitimate fandom.

## Ways of passing

Our analysis revealed three main practices, or options, for doing fandom and managing visibility. Each strategy represented a different manner of performing fandom. As we shall see, the female fans embrace and negotiate, resist and divert from the masculine model of fandom in three distinct ways of passing: the first connotes an attempt to adopt, or mimic (copy the 'original'), masculine-normative performative practices. This mode of doing fandom brings into being a regulated notion of fandom. The second way of performing fandom involves a partial selection of performative practices that constitute the hegemonic model; while the third way refers to mere physical presence in the FF that does not involve attempting to imitate fandom performatively. The three different options for doing fandom and managing visibilities are analytical, non-exclusive, dynamic and flexible (changing over time as well as in different clubs and circumstances) categories.

The first strategy exhibited a model of fandom based on emulation. The performer adopted the masculine model of doing fandom as a matter of fact. It concerns women fans who laboured to 'pass', and sought to be accepted as authentic fans. In mimicking men's practices, these women aspired to blend into the crowd and render their gender invisible.

Women who attempted to emulate male fan practices constituted a different kind of masculine fandom, because they would never become men themselves. At the same time, their performativity challenged the allegedly natural connection between fandom and masculinity. An interesting case of female fans taking on male practices was the game between Iran and Bahrain (June 2005), in which young Iranian girls, barred from the soccer games for reasons of religious modesty, tried to sneak into the stadium disguised as men. Donning male clothing, drawing moustaches, adopting a masculine walk, and so on, these young women hid their body and attempted to pass as male fans. Through

their disguise they protested their exclusion from the games, yet they were discovered for what they 'really are' and were expelled from the FF to a temporary jail on the stadium roof. There they performed fandom which embraced the hegemonic male model, following along with the screams and shouts they heard the men in the stadium make.[12]

Turning back to Katamon female fans, we meet Shiran. During game-time Shiran was observed to be completely immersed in performing her fandom 'like a man': shouting, cursing, jumping and so on. More than a few heads turned upon hearing her raising her voice to scream at a referee's decision. In an interview immediately following the game, she said that as far as she was concerned cursing the referee was an automatic and 'natural' response for any real fan like herself. As the following quote exemplifies, Shiran believes that her fandom allows her to 'pass' as an authentic fan, and 'erase' her gender-related differences and visibility:

> I don't feel seen, not at all. I think that when you saw me [she told the interviewer] I was shouting like anybody else in the stands. I climbed down a few rows and cursed the linesman [...] It feels strange to see that I'm surrounded by men, like, but I'm not doing it just so people will see there is a woman, I really do enjoy (cheering) and helping the team [...]

The fandom practices of women like Shiran challenge the presupposed overlap between the gendered body and its performative visibility (see Johansen, Chapter 9 in this volume). Nonetheless, Shiran, who claimed during the interview that she acts like male fans 'not just so they'll see there is a woman', indicates that this overlap still remains firmly in place, and thus women will never be able to pass completely.

Ruth, who opposes the emulation of male supporters, voiced criticism in the interview at fans like Shiran: 'I am very critical of all those women that come wearing all that...who come with ten scarves and three shirts one on top of the other to show that they are a part, it's just like Tzipi Livni [a senior Israeli female politician] who wants to show that she became a minister, masculine, like some military woman.' Ruth's gaze, like that of male fans, barely permitted breathing room for fans like Shiran, who were criticised by male and female fans alike, rejected as authentic fans while being branded as an imitation bordering on fake.

Dana (whom we met earlier), like Shiran, is immersed in cheering for her team during game time. 'You cannot sit idly on the sidelines and

not cheer [...] I don't have the privilege to not sit in the stands with those cheering,' she told Daniel the interviewer. When he then asked her 'if there is any type of behaviour which she avoids, like cursing or certain movements...' she offered an indirect answer riddled with inconsistencies, testifying to her reluctance to directly address the issue:

> No doubt, I think I do it [but] with more elegance and not as aggressive...but I do everything [...] let's put it this way...there are a lot of things I would like to do but don't.

The example Dana gave for holding back hinged on her appearance and the issue of female visibility. Though she would like 'to come in shorts and a tank top' and 'to take off my shirt like men do', the reactions her physical appearance would inspire would render the situation intolerable. However, she stresses, besides these practices she does everything a male fan would do. Despite her best intention, as the aforementioned has shown, what is considered as overexposure of the female body within the FF will lead to a direct and disciplining gaze by men.

Dana's desire to experience and create a genderless fandom – to disconnect gender and fandom – was expressed through the visceral discomfort exhibited by her throughout the interview at questions relating to her visibility. She dreams of a reality in which women will do fandom like men yet without the visible connotations and implications it currently entails for them. In such a reality, the role played by the visibility in the FF will be minimised. However, Dana knows well that the reality is not so, and that gender categories and her visibility as a women precede her attempt to pass, and thus cannot be ignored.

In her discussion on drag performance, Butler (1990) conceptualises the idea of women constituting masculinity through discursive terminology. According to her, the attempt to 'pass' is futile; however the attempt does succeed in challenging the prevalent form of masculinity and gender binarism. In her attempt to pass, the woman carries with her the conditions for her subjugation, as well as the power relations which render her attempt to leave the categorisation (language) impossible. The gap created between the gender of the one attempting to pass and that of the category being passed into, infuses the subjugation with a different discursive meaning, but the binary nature of the gender categories themselves remains firmly in place. In other words, though drag represents a struggle against the gender categories' means of production, it does not undermine the conditions facilitating gender binary dichotomies or their social reproduction.

An attempt to pass in other hyper-masculine fields – like the army, for example – was researched by Orna Sasson-Levy (2006) who examined the bodily practices and visibility of female soldiers serving in 'combat' roles in the Israel Defense Force (IDF). Sasson-Levy found that women in such a situation embrace male patterns of behaviour, and even found strength and proof of their alleged equality within it. However, through their imitation and embrace of male performativity they inadvertently participated in the 'masculine' discourse which had initially excluded them and placed them in a situation of inferiority.

Like Sasson-Levy, Lovell (2000) also examined the army as a hyper-masculine arena. Exploring the possibility of passing vis-à-vis Bourdieu's theory of habitus, Lovell looked into historical cases of women posing as male soldiers. If indeed the habitus works to (re)inforce the differences between classes, genders, groups, ethnicity and so on, then, Lovell asks, how is it even possible to pose or imitate? In her answer, Lovell enlists Butler's (1993) theory of performativity. She suggests that impersonation and emulation are performative acts which challenge the allegedly 'solid' foundations and presuppositions on which the habitus rests.

The second mode of fandom performance, which was also the dominant way of doing fandom, indicated a partial performance of selected fandom practices. Each female fan compiled for herself a set consisting of several practices, and thus created her own toolkit of doing fandom. Implementing a dynamic selection of hegemonic-male practices, these fans shaped their own doing of fandom in accordance to their experiences, personal circumstances and tendencies, and thus managed how and when to be visible.

According to what these fans told us, fandom should be performed in a proportional way. They did not denounce male fan practices, but rather criticised their excessive, disproportionate usage: 'I very much like to attend the matches, but I will never stand under the rain,' said Miriam, marking the limit of her fandom practices. By performing some practices, in a proportional way, these women subverted the monolithic manifestation of the fandom toolkit, offering a more flexible definition, loosely based on the repertoire constituting the 'authentic model'.

Rivkah, a national-religious woman and childhood fan of HJ and now a fan of HKJ, performed selected fandom practices in accordance with her religious adherence. During the games she stands not far from the group of hardcore fans beating the drums 'so that', in her words, 'I can see the game better, but also to feel part of the central group of fans'. Wearing modest clothing, Rivkah chooses to forgo some of the fandom practices exhibited by the relentless fans and notes that she does not

feel comfortable cursing or getting worked up in the FF. She consciously tried to suppress her visibility, and selected practices which bode well with the social expectations demanded from the religious collective in regard to women's visibility in the public sphere.

A similar claim concerning 'keeping things in proportion' was made by female fans when they compared their fandom performance to their activities outside the FF. Idit noted that 'despite herself', her fandom allowed her to overcome her self-ascribed tendency to extremity and 'obsessiveness':

> There are very few things in my life that I've managed to take without all-encompassing hysteria, and despite that, in Katamon, I did it, and it's like some sort of a balanced phase in my life. So I don't even try to take fandom to the extreme. It just naturally comes out, not obsessively like it usually does . . . like it's in proportion.

In consciously managing her visibility, Idit has opted out of performing authentic fandom; her choice allowed her to 'take it down a notch' and regulate her personal tendencies, finding release from her everyday habits in the FF.

While the first two manners of female fandom were articulated in contrast to the masculine model, the third option refers to women who disengaged from it, and did not attribute almost any particular significance to their visibility as fans. These fans largely freed themselves from the endeavour of 'passing', either by avoiding it or diverging from it, either completely or partially. In stark contradiction to fans like Shiran and Dana, these women did not attempt to pass, did not wish to pass, and do not even believe that passing is possible or necessary for them. They are aware of and accept that they will never be 'native' speakers of the fandom language, and will 'always have an accent'. In their eyes, there is no fault or disadvantage in such a position and it does not devalue them as fans.

Both Tamar and Efrat view themselves as ideological fans. Tamar claims to have given up in advance on the desire to be an authentic fan. For her, the important thing is that she shows up and is present in the FF of her beloved team in the hopes that there will be a visibly large crowd of supporters for her club agenda. Fans like Tamar came to the stadium because they supported the club's social principles, and wanted to enjoy its realisation in the friendly, pleasant atmosphere in the stands. Nonetheless, the team's achievements, success and continued existence are highly important to them.

Among these ideological fans those who define themselves as feminist are particularly interesting. Efrat's account of doing fandom clearly indicated that over time, fan practices were transformed as a result of experiences in the FF. Efrat, who described herself as a political-feminist fan, said that immediately after she became a Katamon fan, she consciously strove to do fandom like an authentic fan: 'My motivation,' she said, 'was to prove that through the traversing of gendered categories gender equality is possible; that we women can also understand football and be fans like men.' However, shortly afterwards Efrat was quick to realise that in her very attempt to support like a man, she in fact reproduced gendered visibility and stereotypes. 'I understood,' she said in the interview, 'that my drive to "prove" the possibility of gender equality through the imitation of male practices was a result of my own internalisation of the external male gaze.'

Consequently Efrat gave up her attempt to be an authentic fan. Instead she chose to participate and be seen 'as a woman', consciously choosing to do fandom in her own way. According to her, the nonviolent nature of the Katamonian FF allowed her to formulate a different 'non-masculine' form of fandom. 'Often,' she said 'I just come to the FF with my little daughter to see my father and talk with the many fans I know.'

Edna, also a self-described feminist, ruled out from the onset any attempt to 'pass' as a man. In her interview, she claimed that though it is easy to 'pass' as an authentic fan, and says to have seen women succeed in doing so, she was not interested: 'I can fake it [fandom] in a minute,' she dismissively said. According to Edna, although passing is possible and easy, she cannot ignore the deception embodied in such imitation, and therefore chose to stay out of this game, and to take time out. Edna's use of the expression 'fake it in a minute' is a metonymy, referencing the popular discourse regarding women's sexual ability to 'fake an orgasm' and impersonate pleasure from sexual relations.

By implementing different yet variable ways of performativity, female fans manage their body and visibility. Each of the three types we discussed challenges in its own way the dichotomous structure and meaning of gendered fandom, thereby disclosing its arbitrary nature.

## Conclusions

Despite the centrality of visibility in understanding female fandom, studies into this topic have failed to address it directly. Our study attempts to fill this analytic lacuna, if only in preliminary manner.

Through the instrumentalisation of the concept of passing we unveiled women's fandom strategies in relation to the male model of fandom. It allowed learning about visibility through the study of fandom, and about fandom through the study of visibility.

As the category of female fan is thus far unclassified, no clear standards and expectations for its doing fandom and visibility exist. Thus forms of performativity exhibited by women in the FF are puzzling. Although they have been entering the FF in growing numbers, society is not accustomed to seeing female fans, and the modes in which they are visible, in the FF. In transgressing the domain of consent's male borders by coming to games in substantially larger numbers, women threaten to destabilise the engendered social order (Bauman, 1990, 1991) of the FF. The women's continued transgression of this border might, with time, foster standard operating procedures for doing fandom and thus serve to infuse the category of female fans with a more distinct definition. Over time, this process might sow the seeds needed for the emergence of a full, coherent category of female fan.

Our examination of women's fandom revealed a plethora of performative patterns that emerge based in different ways on the authentic (masculine) model. All the female fans were aware of their inability to fully pass in wake of their being women. Among them, particularly interesting were fans who expressed their fandom practices through an ideological perspective. These fans were overtly aware of the meaning of their fandom practices and that passing – doing like a man – was prescribed to them. The women fans with social-liberal outlook mostly chose to perform their fandom through a physical presence in the FF. They and many other female fans do fandom in their own way, freed in one way or another from performing fandom 'properly', be it consciously or not. They infuse their fandom with different meanings, and demonstrate that female fans are not a uniformed group.

While simultaneously using male fandom as a model, the women also treated it as an object of criticism and dissent. This was the case, for example, when they spoke ironically of the obsessive nature characteristic of male fans' fandom, and criticised men's dismissal of women who expressed an understanding of the game. By revealing the arbitrary nature of the socialisation process found at the base of the gendered order, women fans succeed in challenging and subverting it (Butler, 1990). Their fandom performativity also challenges the conflation of masculinity and fandom, problematising the hegemonic status of male behaviours as 'natural' and 'normal'. Nonetheless, as long as the gender categories preserve their prominence in the social order then full

passage will never be possible (ibid.), the ways women are visible in the FF will continue to exist, and their performativity will not deconstruct the re-construction of the binary and categorical social order inside and outside the stands. Discussing their idea of doing gender, West and Zimmerman (2009) express this idea in similar words. According to them, gender may be 'redone' but never 'undone', as the accountability structure may change but gender itself will not disappear.

So far the redoing of gender in the FF has led the contribution of women to the collective doing of fandom to be considered minor and insignificant. The classification of fandom as entertainment and its perception as a recreational activity further devalues its importance and implications in the 'real world' outside the FF. This is true for fans in general, but specifically more so for women. As we have seen, in the case of Katamon, women served as a token, as evidence attesting to the actualisation of the club's agenda. Women serve as tokens in other football-related occasions, for instance, when their club is penalised for the unruly behaviour of male fans by permitting only women and children to enter a club and show support.[13] Paradoxically, this case, which allegedly idealises women's fandom, actually recreates gendered stereotypes, and is indicative of the diminished importance of their fandom and self-worth as fans. Such rare yet telling cases demonstrate the manner in which the meaning of women's fandom is constituted only in relation to the male model and is gauged within the cultural discourse and the FF in terms of passing – either doing or not doing male fandom, moving closer to and further from accurately approximating the authentic fandom model.

The constant zigzagging exhibited by female fans to and from the domain of consent by negotiating passing and the management of their visibility granted them a unique freedom to select their practices.

While in other arenas of the public sphere women are constantly engaged in doing gender and are accountable for it (West and Zimmerman, 1987), in the FF they create occasional and divergent possibilities to suspend and release themselves temporarily from it. As the habitus of doing gender is not inculcated in women's bodies, they enjoy more options (than men) and have more breathing space for interpreting fandom in their own way. This leeway is also related to the fact that their performativity in the FF has little bearing on their off-field reputation, social status and gendered self-evaluation. In comparison to their everyday life in more 'serious' arenas (family, work and so on), the norms and practices of doing gender in the FF are more ambiguous and thus the omnipresence of gender is eased. Our claim then is that women

fans in the FF allow themselves to relax from the never-ending doing of gender and visibility. We suggest that under the unique conditions offered by the hyper-masculine FF – namely the lack of a pre-existing model for female fandom and the general impossibility of truly passing – women can temporarily undo gender and experience what we term a sense of 'gender relaxation'.

This idea departs from West and Zimmerman's (1987) idea of 'doing gender' which conceptualised gender as a continuous endeavour and the ceaseless reproduction of gender. The term of gender relaxation enables us to take into account situations in which gender is not performed habitually. Following Hirschauer's (1994, 2001) idea about the need to explore undoing gender, we argue that there are contexts in which gender can be undone, for instance in cases when it does not serve as the most important category of identity, or in situations in which identity is 'forgotten' or put aside. By making space to undo the performative gendered scheme of fandom, women disrupt and challenge the taken for granted gendered regime of the fandom field.[14] Such relaxation indicates women's agency and the possible emergence of an alternative articulation of fandom.

Such an alternative form of fandom is offered, for example, by Spanish fan clubs – *peñas*. One such group of women fans formed a women-only club to watch football games together. The women claimed that watching football without men allowed them to find freedom from the never-ending disciplining and scrutinising male gaze. These female fans wanted to perform fandom like male fans, but to enjoy their fandom in the company of other women (Llopis-Goig, 2013). Nonetheless, the visibility they constituted is somewhat paradoxical – on the one side they want to argue over referee calls or shout and curse like men, but on the other hand they choose to watch football in an enclosed space where they can remain unseen.

Another alternative perception of fandom was expressed by Anna from Katamon. In the interview she said: 'What is happening in Katamon is that we [female fans] don't come to the game to be like men who come to football, (...) we want to come as women who come to football games, to be a woman at a game, and not a "man-woman" at the game, I think that's the real difference between Katamon and the rest.' Rejecting the possibility of being a 'man-woman' in the game, Anna, who described herself as a feminist, rejected the prevalent exclusive male option which dictates how female fans should do fandom – passing. When she states that she wants to be a 'woman at the game' she expresses a desire to be a fan unoccupied with passing and discards the

convention that female fandom should be based on femininity. Instead she wishes that in doing fandom, gender would be devoid of power relations.

## Notes

1. This research was funded by 'The Israel Science Foundation', Research Grant no. 325/11, 2011–2014. The paper is the product of a long-term research project entitled 'Gender in the Fandom Field: The Case Study of H´apoel Katamon Jerusalem Football Fans'. The research was conducted by Tamar Rapoport (Principal Investigator), Efrat Noy and Tali Friedman. We thank Efrat Noy, Tali Friedman, Ori Katz, Omri Grienberg and Itai Arzi for their assistance in conducting the research. We would also like to thank Omer Benjakob for helping with the translation. Except for the researchers' names all other names were changed.
2. A Jerusalemite fan-owned football club that promotes a democratic agenda. After spending several years in lower leagues, the club climbed in 2013 to the national second league. According to rough estimates, the club has between 3000 and 4000 fans, an unusually high number for lower leagues in Israel. About fifth of these are women.
3. The term 'football field' is commonly used to define the physical parameters of the pitch. The term 'fandom field' which we coin follows Bourdieu's (1994) conceptualisation of 'field' to emphasise that the two fields are inseparable. According to Bourdieu a field is a relatively autonomous arena or sphere of social activity with its own logic and regularity.
4. The link between football and hegemonic masculinity is extensively discussed both in literature on masculinity and on sport (see summary, Alpan, 2013).
5. Arguing again and again that there is dearth in research about women fans, particularly research projects conducted by women, more and more women are more recently conducting such research – see, for example, Lenneis (2013), and the FREE Project, Copenhagen, June 2013.
6. See www.katamon.co.il/forum.
7. The club does not have an explicit anti-sexist agenda although anti-sexism is implicit in it. In our observations and personal experiences in the stands we have not encountered any sexist physical or verbal offenses.
8. Translator's note: hitchhiker is slang for some who takes advantage of the efforts of others.
9. A Bedouin, Muslim, traditional small city in the South District of Israel where women are generally excluded from the public sphere. The visibility of Jewish-Israeli women fans in the FF of the rival team often steer reactions.
10. In the citations, the sign (...) stands for shortening the citation, [ ] indicates clarification, and... points to a pause in the talking of the interviewee.
11. Discussing directly issues related to gender display, Goffman (1979) defines it as a way to conceptualise the manner in which individuals act in a gender-appropriate manner.
12. The events are documented in the film 'Offside': www.imdb.com/title/tt0499537

13. As was in the case of Turkish club Fenerbahçe: see www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwJNV3vgJNM
14. The discussion of doing and undoing gender are inseparable, yet following the endeavour to understand how gender categories emerge and are reproduced, attention to the subject of undoing gender has been paid only recently. According to Deutch (2007) 'We need to shift from talk about doing gender to illuminating how we can undo gender.' A similar argument was raised by Riessman (1987), contending that paying attention to undoing gender will advance and enrich the research related to doing gender. In her book *Undoing Gender*, Butler (2004) focuses, from a different perspective, on how gender is continuously undone, discussing possible disruptions of binary gender concepts.

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# Part IV

# Embodiment

# 9

# Being a Football Kid. Football as a Mediatised Play Practice

*Stine Liv Johansen*

> Frederik (11): '... it's like there is football in everything. It's kind of a core, where everything begins, almost. It's like ... How can I explain it ... ? (...) It's the starting point. Also, there is something that keeps you going. For example, if you only sat there, looking at each other, and like ... "How are you doing?" "Yeah, the weather is nice" ... But then, in FIFA, you can sit and play and "wow, goal!" instead of just "ooh, ooh". You can keep yourselves going more, so to speak.'

There has always been a close connection between football, fan cultures and media. In contemporary media culture, this connection has expanded to a wide range of media – digital, in particular – and to a wider range of users, children included. Through their networked media practices, children form and perform their identities, related to specific communities of practice or fan cultures as social practices of interpretive reproduction (Reckwitz, 2002; Frykman and Gilje, 2003; Corsaro, 2005). Media form the basis of our interactions, and mediatisation must be seen as a prerequisite for children's play today (Hepp, 2012; Hjarvard, 2013). Children's fan cultures cover a wide range of topics; yet football is a field with specific explanatory power due to its structural and cultural specificities.

In the present study, I engage in empirical fieldwork on football as a mediatised play practice. Nowadays, children with an interest in football can nurture this interest through a massive range of football-related products and practices, digital as well as analogue, alone or with friends, online and offline. All in all, these practices form the basis of identity- and network-building processes in which children themselves act as both active practitioners and more passive audiences of media content,

forming a certain participatory or 'remix' play culture (Jenkins, 2006; Willett et al., 2008).

This chapter outlines perspectives on these practices through a holistic, ethnographic approach in which fieldwork is carried out in online as well as offline settings, in homes and institutions (schools, football clubs and so on), with Danish children between 8 and 13 years of age. The key research questions include discussions of fan culture and play as the forming and founding practices in children's lives, with a specific focus on the affordances of digital media as a defining factor in contemporary play. Also, I put specific emphasis – especially in the latter part of the chapter – on the differences between boys and girls and their practices of being 'football kids'. The purpose of the chapter is to describe a range of mutually intertwined everyday life practices that, on one hand, is specific to this particular group of children and, on the other hand, holds general explanatory power for the understanding of how and why football fan cultures are so deeply rooted in the heart and soul of many individuals.

## Introduction

In a small Danish town, approximately 10 per cent of the inhabitants are members of the local football club. The vast majority of them are under 25 years of age.[1] Of those, most are boys and young men, although there are quite a few girls and young women, too. These children often wear their local club's blue and white jersey, but team jerseys from Spanish, British or Danish teams are seen on the local football field, too. In their backyards, they have wooden or metallic football goals; in their living rooms, they play Fifa on PlayStations or iPads; and, on weekends, they go to stadiums in nearby, larger cities with their fathers. Their bedrooms are decorated with fan posters or bed sheets; and, in the schoolyard, they play football games, distinguishing themselves and their friends as football kids. As they grow older and become active in different kinds of social media, they use them to strengthen and perform their sympathies with specific teams and to tease their friends when they support different teams. Underneath these everyday activities, a stream of media products and uses is flowing, forming the basis for their identity-building and friendship formations.

I understand children's everyday practices to be a combination of learning, playing, communicating and identity-building practices, which are mutually intertwined and dependent upon each other. In this particular study, I focus on the notion and concept of play, understood

as a practice as well as a mediatised field in society and culture (Hjarvard, 2013; Johansen, 2011). Media – understood in a very broad sense – have immense explanatory power in describing and understanding the practice of play, since play happens with, through and is inspired by media of different sorts (Johansen and Karoff, 2010). In this chapter, the case of 'playing football' will be outlined through its different mediated manifestations, including football games and TV programmes, computer games, magazines, books, YouTube videos and football trading cards. Therefore, mediated manifestations, which are ascribed meaning through social practices of interpretive reproduction (Reckwitz, 2002; Frykman and Gilje, 2003; Corsaro 2005), form the grounds for the understanding of the concept of 'football' as a participatory or 'remix' culture (Jenkins, 2006; Willett et al., 2008) or as a mediatised field within children's play culture. In this chapter, I will also touch on the concept of fandom. A range of practices in which children engage is related to the concept of being a fan; furthermore, this is a challenged and often negotiated concept among them. The point in this chapter is that being a 'football kid' has to do with much more than supporting a specific team. 'In its proliferation, its growing importance in the construction of identity and its social and cultural classification, fandom has something to say about the very substance, premises and consequences of contemporary life' (Sandvoss, 2005, p. 4).

Often, discussions – academic as well as day-to-day – of children's media uses are set up as pro and con, good or bad, more or less, and so on. Furthermore, academic research has a tendency to focus on the uses of new and old media in a formal, educational setting. Only a few studies actually zoom in on children's and adolescents' everyday interactions, negotiations and practices with and around media, particularly in relation to different everyday activities, such as – in this case – football and the social and cultural practices related thereto. Exceptions can be found, for instance, in Ito et al. (2008) or Willett et al. (2013). In this study, I aim at investigating the practices children perform in their peer relations, their families, and inside and outside schools and other kinds of adult-initiated settings. The knowledge that can be gained from this perspective holds potential for more formal settings as well through its focus on motivation, peer culture and learning.

## Theory

Children's fan and play cultures are understood in this study through the lens of mediatisation theory, on the one hand, and of play and

practice theory, on the other hand. Play in this study is understood to be characterised by delight as well as by voluntariness (Sutton-Smith, 1997), with media as well as other play tools being used to facilitate social interaction excitement, entertainment, and a playful mood. Play demands practice – or learning – which is achieved through play itself. This happens when younger children observe and imitate older children or interact with the play tool – for instance, a computer game, which in itself holds a potential for learning and development. Earlier work (Johansen 2008; Johansen and Karoff, 2010) has shown that children use a plethora of tools and technologies in their everyday practices and play, and that they use whatever is at hand and what seems valuable for whatever specific practice they are engaged in. To understand contemporary play, one must understand its connection to media and technology. Play, like society in general, is mediatised (Hjarvard, 2013), defined and influenced by media logics, organisations and technologies. Among other things, this means that children nowadays find their primary inspiration for play in media, just as play takes place with and through media. From my perspective, play is a fundamental part of children's everyday life, just as it is a common human state of being, which should be treated in its own right. Play and playful activities are something we all seek to take part in, although adults might call it something else – party, sports, shopping or even research.

Nowadays, media and mediated narratives and expressions fill an independent and comprehensive role as a kind of motor that keeps play going both at a general level across time and space and, quite specifically, in the play practices of a certain group of children in a certain context. As such, play with media can be said to function as a continuous movement back and forth between media's narratives, genres and expressions. Play practice itself, with or without different forms of media, computer games, mobile phones, tablets, the Internet, toys and so on, works not as a one-to-one transition or mimic acquaintance but, rather, as a form of interpretive reproduction (Corsaro, 2005). Media hold specific technological and semiotic affordances that can be seen as having a kind of 'molding force' (Hepp, 2012, p. 2) on the practices with, through and in which different people perform, but these practices are not determined in advance. Mobile, interactive media such as the iPad may especially be used in a range of different ways – and can provide good as well as not so good play, learning, social interaction or entertainment, depending on the content and the context.

Mediatisation should, therefore, be seen as processes in which play as a cultural practice is directly as well as indirectly influenced by media logics, technology, economic structure, symbolic content and

communicative properties (Jenkins, 2006; Lundbye, 2009; Hepp, 2012; Hjarvard, 2013). The point in this case is that direct *and* indirect mediatised processes *as well* as their interplay must be understood as contributing to the cultural field as a whole. Mediatised play seems to offer different affordances than non-mediatised play, since media and technological play tools are often mobile, easily accessible and also bring game play and inspiration with them.

## Media as practice

As stated above, media are important for children's play. Play happens with, through and in media; and, as such, you can say that play is mediatised. In addition, play is commercialised in new and more subtle ways in which both mass media and Internet media play a huge role. Finally, children nowadays spend a lot of their time at home, which is one way in which play can be said to be domesticated as well as institutionalised. More and more of children's leisure activities take place in the home or in adult-initiated and structured settings, which means that children nowadays have less time of their own, away from adult supervision and surveillance (Balslev and Jessen, 2003; Karsten, 2005).

Within media studies, Nick Couldry (2012) in particular has advocated using the term 'practice' in order to understand simply what people do with media. This definition obviously also encompasses media play – or media-inspired play. Focusing on practices rather than on specific media enables a broader scope of inquiry across a range of different media and tools. One example might be media-inspired play (Johansen, 2011; Willett et al., 2013). Children's uses of technology and new media in their everyday life, therefore, should not be seen as a replacement for formerly known or traditional toys but, rather, as a supplement that expands and transforms play to new arenas and makes new forms of interaction possible. Previously, knowledge about plays' rules, routines, and rhythm was transmitted from older to younger children (Balslev Nielsen and Jessen, 2003). The conditions for such transmission have changed, since children's everyday life is now highly institutionalised and children today spend most of their time in adult-structured settings with other children who are the same age (ibid.; Johansen and Karoff, 2013).

## Methods

The study presented in this chapter is based on empirical inquiries during the period from 2010 to 2013. The inquiries include analysis of

media products, outlining the mediatised field, analysis of online play and children's own media production, participant observation at summer schools, at football matches, in cars (often with myself as the driver) to and from matches, as well as group interviews with a total of 15–20 children, from 8 to 13 years of age. Five of them were girls. The interviews took place at the football summer school (in 2012) as well as in my own home, to which I invited and interviewed my own son's football team, consisting of nine boys, ages 10 to 11. I also analysed my own son and his interests and practices as a point of reference throughout the study. Ethnographic research – not only in your own backyard but, literally, in your own living room – is, of course, debatable. Analytical distance is definitely put to the test when you yourself are part of the object of study. Still, the privileged access and the reflective space you are given provides interesting perspectives and possibilities that are otherwise difficult to obtain. For instance, when interviewing, negotiating access to the summer school or engaging in discussions with coaches or other parents, being L's mum gives me specific credit that would take me much longer (if at all) to achieve if I were just any random media scholar.

Interviews have been recorded and transcribed; online material has been partially transcribed, and the data consist of a wide selection of pictures, other web resources and so on.

## Being a football kid – outlining the field

The most prominent question in trying to outline football as mediatised play is to define and limit the empirical basis of analysis. The following should be seen as one suggestion – or merely as a starting point from which analysis and additional research questions might emerge. Basically, a division between media products and mediatised practices could be applied, keeping in mind that one should be understood in the light of the other – and vice versa. At an overall level, all these different media, artefacts and practices can be seen as part of this specific genre in children's play culture, which is in itself related to the global media distribution, advertisement and structuring of football as an enormous entertainment industry. What is of analytical interest is to describe this in terms of individual artefacts and related practices and to grasp and understand their interrelations and connections. The point is that everyday practices and media practices cannot be separated. Individuals and peer groups move in and out of social settings and practices that, in one or more ways, may or may not be related

to football. All of the children in this study have mutual interests, just as they obviously also attend school, have friends who are not football fans, and do things with their family that are not related to football. But football is as an underlying stream throughout their lives, and they define themselves as football fans – they define football as part of their identity.

## Playing football

First and foremost, for children, though, football is about playing football – in schoolyards, back gardens or in organised practices in local football clubs; 41 per cent of Danish children play football,[2] which makes it the most popular organised leisure activity in Denmark. The complexity of practices related to this is huge, ranging from the rules and regulations of the game itself, the bodily experiences of playing or cheering, the peer and/or fan community of the club, or parents' framing of children's football practice through direct or indirect involvement (Facebook sites, and so on), just to name a few. All of them are related in more or less subtle ways to mediated and mediatised notions and understandings of the field.

Football clubs in Denmark are organised as part of DBU – Dansk Boldspil-Union[3] – which organises amateurs as well as the Danish national football team and has the slogan 'Fra leg til landshold'/'From Play to National Team'.[4] The 'food chain' is based on a balance between breadth and elite, on specific talent programmes as well as on activities such as summer schools, women's football fitness and the commercial structures related to fan merchandise, and so on. Seen from a child's point of view, the road to becoming a professional football player is clear and accessible if they possess enough talent and will.

Apart from organised football lessons at least once a week, children play football in backyards and, especially, in schoolyards. The schoolyard is in itself a very specific setting and framing for children's play culture, where physical as well as social structures are ascribed meaning through everyday practices (Marsh and Richards, 2013, p. 7). In these structures, football is an important factor. Girls seek boys' acknowledgment through their football skills and succeed in being accepted as a 'good player' in an otherwise closed male culture. 'Football kids' are distinguished from 'playful kids'[5] through the practices that take place in schools during recess. Moreover, children in different grades and age groups negotiate and fight over scarce and restricted physical space in which playing football is possible as well as allowed. This is a very

common subject in interviews with children, especially those younger than 12 years old.

## Media practices

Many different kinds of media are used in and are related to football at a general level as well as specifically incorporated into children's football and play culture. Media form the basis for children's information-seeking and provide them with knowledge of results, transfers and so on, from leagues all over the world (or, at least, Europe). In addition, they use media as an inspiration for their own practice, looking for goals on YouTube or watching specific (parts of) matches over and over. The media they use cover a wide range from trading cards, books and magazines (analogue) to news sites and apps, which they access from their PCs or – more likely – from their iPads or smartphones, and include spectator sports (live or on TV) as well as merchandising, clothing, posters and so on. In the following, I will outline a selection of these – well aware that any presentation of this thoroughly mediated as well as mediatised field will never be exhaustive. I will organise the presentation according to practice categorised as a) information-seeking, b) play and games and c) identity-building, well aware that these categories are overlapping and interdependent.

## Information-seeking

Children need knowledge of specific facts and structures in order to take part in play and other kinds of interactions. Knowledge about football players, teams, transfers and gossip are important to obtain and to be up-to-date on. Depending on age and access to different media, children will seek this knowledge from media of different kinds. The youngest ones collect, swap and play with trading cards, which is a medium that can by no means be called new. Since the mid- to late 19th century, children have collected cards with adverts, movie or sports stars. From the early 1990s, collectible card games also became very popular; football trading cards relating to national football leagues or international tournaments – as we know them nowadays – are a combination of these two types, providing play opportunities such as collecting and playing matches against one's friends. What should not be underestimated, furthermore, is the amount of factual knowledge about football players and teams and leagues that is possible to retrieve from the cards.

The same kinds of knowledge may be gained from magazines such as *Goal*. Unlike older print media such as *Tipsbladet*, a weekly newspaper primarily concerned with national Danish leagues, *Goal* is directly targeted at a younger audience, providing news, facts and gossip – as well as posters to decorate one's bedroom walls, and is thereby relevant as yet another artefact suitable to the process of identity formation (Sparrman, 2006).

In the town where I have done most of the empirical work for this study, most children have an iPad. The municipality have given iPads to all pupils in public schools, and they use them both in school and in their leisure time. Obviously, they also use them for activities – in this case, information-seeking – related to football. The youngest ones use YouTube for inspiration and entertainment: watching spectacular goals, for instance. The slightly older ones – primarily, the boys – are quite engaged in keeping track of transfers and standings in different leagues, and they discuss this using gossip terminology. In addition, they discuss the credibility and usability of different websites and apps and share tips and tricks regarding the best ways to stay up-to-date.

A specific part of children's information-seeking relates to their purchases and acquisition of different kinds of equipment. This is a major subject of discussion among children, which also relates to their identity formation and performance (see below). Yet, the credibility of information and the different methods of obtaining it are very important for children. In this process, they relate to their peers, their parents, trustworthy sales people (especially, in local stores in town), or they read recommendations or discussions on websites such as, for instance, unisport.dk – a store with an extended online fan and user community in which children themselves can also recommend and discuss football boots, shin guards or Cristiano Ronaldo's hairdo.

## Playing and gaming

A range of activities relate to children's own immersion in playful activities. Among them are physical play, practising and performing techniques and skills, computer games, and children's own structured and organised play activities.

In schoolyards and in gardens, children play a range of self-organised and invented football games. Apart from matches with two teams and two goals, they also play games such as 'Champions League', 'Manager', or '10–12', which they apparently have made up themselves. These games have different ways of judging and counting goals and

can be played by smaller or larger groups of children. Moreover, these games sometimes include children who are not 'football kids'. Rules are negotiated and passed on from child to child. The children whom I interviewed are all members of the same football club but attend different schools, and they are all familiar with these games, perhaps with minor differences. As such, these games follow the paths of traditional play cultures, passed on through physical interactions.

Moreover, in computer games such as Fifa, players themselves may take part in the matches, setting up teams, choosing stadiums and discussing pros and cons related to the depicted teams and players. Research shows that, in many cases, children use computer games or other kinds of media as raw material for physical play (Johansen, 2011; Willett et al., 2013). How – and whether – this is the case in relation to football is still an open question. What is also interesting in relation to computer games is how physical play influences meaning-making in the game and how new and mobile gaming consoles such as the Nintendo DS or iPhone/iPod/iPad might influence the gaming experience and the role of gaming in football play culture as such.

Furthermore, children engage in a range of smaller games with football as a theme, particularly on the iPad. They are usually only of interest for shorter periods of time, and new games and apps appear frequently. These games are usually one-player only and fill breaks and gaps in children's everyday life alongside a range of other small games or time-killing activities. Children's uses, sharing and negotiation of apps are described in Johansen's article (2013). What is generally interesting is the negotiation and performing practices that take place when children share and seek information about relevant games and apps with each other. As I see it, this is in itself part of the playful practice as well as the anchoring practices of a group of peers. 'You show me yours and I'll show you mine, and through this we adjust and confirm our relation to each other.'

## Identity-building

The peer group, the football team (their own), the school class, and the family are primary points of reference for the children in my study. Through their sense of belonging to these groups, they build and perform their identity as boys or girls, Danes and football kids. The notion of identity formation through social relations, particularly structured through and with media, is explored for instance, by Ito et al. (2008) and Boyd (2014). The main point in these sort of studies is that for

children and young adults, the building of identity happens through their belonging to – or distancing from – specific groups, be it institutional or organisational (like families and schools) or interest-based (like fan communities). For these children, supporting one or more specific teams might be important. However, it is far less important than their family (where it may have its origin, especially in their relation to their fathers) or their peer group. As such, these children's identity as football kids reaches far beyond their fan culture practices. To them, football is very often a part of their upbringing and also an interest they spontaneously tell that they wish to pass on to their own children. All of the boys in the group interview agree that when they grow up, they want their own children to play football, too. Obviously, they associate this sharing of interest with something very positive. In this study, football is mostly a shared interest between a child (boy or girl) and a father. Sometimes, though, the whole family shares this interest. Often, they were encouraged to start playing football by their fathers, and they often refer to episodes in which they watched games (on TV or live) with their fathers, or in which their fathers taught them things about football. Sometimes, they share a fan interest with their father; sometimes, this interest is even in opposition to the teams of which their friends are fans. My study suggests that this practice is more common among boys and their fathers. Also, the general practice of engagement in fandom is more common among the boys in my study. Whether this is a general tendency or not is not possible to say through this kind of study.

Their support for different teams is expressed in several ways. Most prominent and obvious is, of course, their use of team jerseys and other kinds of equipment. Age is important in this matter. Young children – under the age of 10, regardless of gender – are primarily fans of FC Barcelona – Lionel Messi, in particular – and, as they grow older, they use their fandom to distinguish themselves as unique. British teams are especially popular among the 10–11-year-old boys, and they playfully tease each other with their individual proclivities. They also express their excitement about specific players in relation to their own football practice; they relate it to their physical appearance (light-footed or heavy) and their position on the field. The players they like as well as the equipment they buy, possess or wish for should be aligned – if you are a slim-figured forward, like Ronaldo, it is OK to wear a pair of colourful, synthetic football boots. But if you are a more solid back, like Daniel Agger, a classic leather boot would be right for you, they argue. As such, they relate their own identity projects to their fan culture and to their consumption of clothes and merchandise.

Clothes and other kinds of merchandise media might be a subject for discussion. Nevertheless, I am emphasising these kinds of products as parts of – or examples of – porous media text, since their relation and reference to other kinds of more familiar media texts (films, television programmes and so on) are so powerful in the way children act and make meaning (Johansen, 2008). For instance, clothing provides an opportunity for the user to express their fandom through a particular product or, in this case, to signal their support for a particular team to other fans or opponents and also to have the bodily experience of being not only a spectator but also a participant in a football game.

## Football girls

Throughout this chapter, I have discussed football kids with only few distinctions between boys and girls. But my study has shown that for girls, being a football kid is in some ways special and holds specific challenges. Football is one of the most common sports among girls in Denmark – a quarter of all girls play football on a regular basis.[6] Girls, as well as boys, enjoy playing, juggling the ball and hanging out with their friends at practice and matches. What is obvious, though, in a mediatisation perspective, is the lack of media and fan culture products and merchandise aimed at girls, since most media products are related to or depict male players.[7] This is partly due to the fact that only very few – if any – female football players have had a commercial breakthrough in the media, which is why there are only few – if any – jerseys, posters or even news on female role models. This leads to remarkable differences in boys' and girls' football practices (see Heissenberger, Chapter 7 in this volume; Regev and Rapoport, Chapter 8 in this volume). Although similar when it comes to the joy of the game itself as well as the family activities and the highly valued friendships they establish through their mutual interests, girls are much less interested in media-based football, such as watching games on TV or playing football computer games. The youngest of the girls might have a Messi poster on their bedroom wall or wear a FC Barcelona jersey, but this is a less common practice among the older girls. One could say that young girls are less oriented toward gender; they are just fans of the best football players. Also, younger girls articulate dreams of playing in the national team, regardless of the fact that they are not able to mention just one female player. Older girls tend to tone down the fan aspect of their football practice, perhaps because they don't find any relevant idols out there. The Danish Football Association (DBU) is working specifically at targeting pre-teen and teen girls

with both football and media products, which are presumably relevant to them. For instance, they publish an annual magazine, *Fodboldtøzer*,[8] which is directly targeted at girls. The magazine looks like any other girls' magazine, with a pastel coloured layout and with articles and gossip of both male and female football players and on pop stars, models and actors, who are football players or fans themselves. As such, the approach is less hard-core and more nuanced.

In addition, football girls themselves articulate gender differences and their struggles for acceptance among the boys in their school. One girl told me that she wasn't allowed to join the boys' football game during recess, which was the main reason why she started taking organised football lessons. When she got better and more skilled, the boys had to admit that she was 'quite good' as she put it herself, and she got accepted as a football player. This points to differences in the identity processes for male and female football children; for boys, the identity and practice related to football is more naturally given, while for girls it requires more work and more negotiation of norms and codes of practice.

## Discussion

Football kids are active users of media, active play practitioners, and active performers of identity projects in relation to friends and family. As such, being a football kid is a matter of doing and being a child like any other child but in a slightly different way. Football is understood as a starting point, a grounding or a core for their everyday practices. Frederik, age 11, whose quote is mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, relates his football interest and practices to a notion of a 'core' inside of him. For Frederik, football is a standpoint from which he views the world and to which he relates his daily practices. Football is both something inside him and something that connects him with the world around him. As such, football identity is both a being and a practical doing, as pointed out in Lave and Wenger's theory of 'community of practice' (1999). Identity is what happens when an individual makes his or her way into and through a community in which certain practices are carried out. Children's mediatised play practices allow them to interact and perform through and with analogue and digital media. Media function as information sources, toys and tools and stages for their identity projects. In addition, media are the centre of attention in their affective relationships to their friends and family. However, first and foremost, being a football kid is about playing, feeling and living the game.

## Notes

1. Calculations are my own, based on the official statistics of members at the Danish Football Association (www.dbujylland.dk/klubservice/dbuj-statistik/Medlemstal/jbu__klubberne__medlemstal_top_25) in combination with the statistics of inhabitants in the town of Odder, a small town in Mid Jutland, Denmark.
2. Cultural habits of the Danes/Danskernes kulturvaner 2012, at: http://kum.dk/Documents/Publikationer/2012/Bogen%20danskernes_kulturvaner_pdfa.pdf
3. The Danish Football Association.
4. Author's translation.
5. In Danish, 'fodboldbørn' or 'legebørn'.
6. Cultural habits of the Danes/Danskernes kulturvaner 2012, at: http://kum.dk/Documents/Publikationer/2012/Bogen%20danskernes_kulturvaner_pdfa.pdf
7. One recent exception is a training app for iPhones in which five professional football (soccer) players – among them, women's national team player Alex Morgan – teach children, 7 to 13 in age, tips and tricks: http://mashable.com/2013/10/15/questions-soccer-alex-morgan/
8. The magazine can be read via: www.dbu.dk/boern_og_unge/bornefodbold/fodboldtoezer.aspx

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# 10
# Why We Wear It: the Football Shirt as a Badge of Identity

*Viola Hofmann*

## Preliminaries

Nowadays the football shirt is one of the most profitable marketing tools of the football industry. In five years alone, from 2007 to 2012, Real Madrid, Chelsea, Barcelona and Bayern München sold 30 million shirts (Sportintelligence, 2012). This is just the tip of the iceberg; the total number of shirts in circulation can only be guessed. It is undeniably true that the football shirt is one of the world's bestselling and most sought-after sport and fashion accessories. Its market, on an upward trend for years, is still increasing, especially in Asia (cf. *Financial Times*, 2013; *Forbes*, 2015). Major labels, leagues and clubs profit from the fans' desire to adorn their bodies with their club colours and the names of their favourite players. Today, expensive player transfers are partly refinanced through football shirt sales. For PR and marketing, the football shirt is a matter of critical importance (cf. Gottschal and Schuster, 2007, p. 319).

In the everyday iterations of sport and fashion, the football shirt has become indispensable. Like other sartorial phenomena such as jeans and the t-shirt, it has become a global uniform. Its special heraldic design unites teams, clubs, fans and spaces on the field as well as off it. It is known almost everywhere in the world and its symbolism is familiar to everyone. It serves as an aesthetic and performative mode expressing collective identities (cf. Ranc, 2012, p. 105) and as a visual signifier of football's importance. The shirt proves that football has progressed to become an extraordinarily significant cultural figuration (cf. Giulianotti and Finn, 2000; Klein and Meuser, 2008; Nübel and Fleig, 2011). At first glance only a few clothing items have had such a homogenising effect and have been accepted so unanimously.

Despite its economic and cultural significance, the *taken-for-grantedness* of the unassuming football shirt leaves room for further

elucidation of its complex cultural meanings.[1] It belongs to a very young product category of sportswear which first evolved in the nineteenth century in Europe (cf. Mauch, 2005). Its history started as soon as football became popular. Ever since then it has been a key piece of sports kit, a corporate uniform and an object which is constantly being redesigned and modified. In the struggle for football as a cultural figuration, it has become the material embodiment of this process and the screen onto which symbols of functionality, morality, tradition, modernity, space and identity are projected.

Nowadays the ways of wearing, combining and displaying football kits depends on a number of other relevant factors such as sex, gender, class, ethnic, religion, politics and authenticity (cf. Szogs, 2014). So on a second glance one can see that against the backdrop of conformity lies a constant dynamic or tension between consensus and change (cf. Millward, 2011, p. 61; Ranc, 2012).

An extended treatment of all these topics, particularly with a historical and current perspective, is not possible in this chapter. I will therefore single out one aspect which I shall analyse: the link between the football shirt and fan from the perspective of material and cultural studies, which brings the practice of embodiment into focus.

This branch of cultural studies seeks to understand objects, their materiality and their social use as symbols and platforms for social spaces and social relationships. It attempts to describe objects produced by humans, including fashion, but most of all the clothed body, by focusing on past and present processes of cultural formation from the perspectives of the actors and their material practices. In the course of this process, discourse analysis, ethnography and action research are employed. These techniques were also used over three terms in the seminar project at the Department for Cultural Anthropology of Textiles at the Technical University of Dortmund, whose results form the empirical basis of this chapter.

The project was concerned with the genesis and the meaning of the football shirt in a cultural context. Its results were exhibited at the football museum BORUSSEUM, which showcases the history of the football club Borussia Dortmund. For this reason the examples, which take the form of objects and fans' opinions, and which were mined through participatory observation, non-standardised interviews and questionnaires, are drawn from this particular club.

Based on the project's findings, my hypothesis is that the nexus of the football shirt and the fan contributes to, firstly, the cooperative community building of fans; secondly, to the visualisation of football

in mass media; and thirdly, to the self-management and the social mise-en-scène of the emotions and knowledge connected with football. The shirt engineers a special relationship between fan and sport. Being a fan is socially recognised and validated by wearing the right kit. The fan's body becomes the site for a declaration of loyalty which becomes available for social interaction and negotiation (see Regev and Rapoport, Chapter 8 in this volume). The football shirt thus replaces verbal communication with easily recognisable body imagery. The wearer positions him- or herself alongside like-minded people, just as they are separated from their opponents. Fans become a uniform mass by means of collective clothing in the stadium. The fans' colour-coded, uniformed and packaged bodies intensify their choreographies, their synchronised movements, and the vocal background. The creation of this unique performance defines the stadium as a very special, exceptional social space (Alkemeyer, 2008, p. 91; Pearson 2012, p. 72). As Christian Bromberger has put it, 'the football stadium [is] one of the few spaces where a modern urban society can offer itself a material image of its unity and its differences' (Bromberger, 1995, p. 300).

But in addition to the stadium, the football shirt has become a focal point, a signifier and a communicative tool in the social space occupied by football. Some fans share a common passion of constantly tracking down old and new shirts. The most desirable and the most valuable are those which have actually been worn by players, and which have usually arrived on the market by devious routes. The collectors develop an astonishing expertise in distinguishing between replica shirts and those which have actually been worn.

## The beginnings – everyday clothes, banners and chants

Strikingly, photographs of German fan groups from just fifty years ago show that, without exception, everyone is wearing clothes which could be used on other social occasions. In the stadium, on their way to and from matches, in pubs; supporters are dressed as they would be on their way to work or to church. Depending on the day of the week, they wore everyday clothes, or finer Sunday clothes, and, depending on the location of the public space, coats, hats and caps could also be worn. Differences in the fans' clothing provide clues as to their social class, but specific clothing items signalling their loyalty to their club are not in evidence. Almost the only deviation from daily routine might be the carrying of a flag with club colours, which was either homemade or bought from street sellers on the way to the stadium. This

manner of dressing is evident in the description a chronicler wrote of the 45,000 people in Dortmund who flocked to a Sunday match in 1957: 'Many fans have completed the rituals of churchgoing, the morning pint and lunch [...]. In their suits, with their hats on their heads or in company of their equally well-dressed wives, they mostly look even more solemn than usual [...]' (Schnittker, 2011, p. 48 [author's translation]).

At important games these large movements of people through the city were hard to ignore, but at this point even contemporaries had difficulties assigning these groups to one team or the other. One observer noted that fan groups were only recognisable in the stadium when their flags were waved and their songs sung. Similar observations were made in the sports section of a regional newspaper in 1964 (Steffan, 1992, p. 29). The article states that the several hundred Dortmund fans who made their way to Milan for a match were virtually swallowed up by the huge city unless they drew attention to themselves by waving their flags and singing. In the San Siro Stadium the group finally lost its defining contours when their flags drooped in response to Dortmund's unimpressive performance (Steffan, 1992, p. 29).

## From aesthetic turn to mass performance

The 1970s mark a turn in the aestheticisation of football. The norms of respectable clothing which had been observed on most social occasions, including entertainment, began to lose their hold. After the 1960s in Germany, social groups started to develop their own norms and values, in which clothing styles played a key role (cf. Soeffner, 1992, p. 9). This process extended to sport, which became increasingly commercialised and anchored in everyday life, and it led to new habitual patterns. The groups' choices of sports clothing helped to define and cement their identities (cf. Pfister, 1992, p. 29; Schreier, 1989, pp. 122–3).

Sportswear became wearable in other social domains outside sport, and it had become acceptable to combine it with everyday clothing (cf. Craik, 2005, p. 171). New codes and messages emerged as a result. It became possible to communicate personal taste and states of mind. This process of change could be seen within the stadiums. The fans wore increasingly varied leisure wear, which was partly selected to mirror club colours. In addition to the usual flags, caps and scarves embroidered with insignia, there were important objects which allowed a display on one's body of allegiance to a club. Occasionally fans could be seen among the crowd wearing t-shirts with club logos.

According to reports by football shirt collectors we interviewed, fan shirts had reached the market by the end of the 1970s. Up to then, many clubs in Germany did not yet have contracts for their strips with major sportswear firms. Merchandising through accessories was only established gradually. The first shirts produced explicitly for fans were initially considerably different from the players' shirts. The fan shirts of today, so-called replicas which are virtually identical to contemporary players' shirts, were not yet widespread. Fan shirts were, at this earlier stage, only designed in club colours or they may have carried the club's name, the outfitter's insignia and perhaps the sponsor's logo. Players' numbers were not normally found on the fan shirts. Replicas also lacked players' names as they were not printed on the original shirts. It was only in rare cases that someone could get hold of an original player's shirt. The range of items was still unsatisfactory or simply too expensive for many fans we interviewed. Some made do by sewing or writing icons or messages on their shirts themselves. One fan recalls that he had an Adidas shirt in the colours of his favourite club. However, it had no mention of a sponsor, the name of his favourite player or a shirt number. In order to make the shirt 'real', he painted on the missing parts himself. Other fans worked out similar solutions.

From a cultural studies perspective, these hybrid forms and activities are interesting. They show that new communication channels have been created through self-fashioning. It thus becomes apparent that the identification with football goes far beyond the desire to be present. The investment in new aesthetic techniques for bodily adornment shows that fans have organised themselves into an autonomous performance community. Not only does this community react situationally through performances at the match, but the preparations for the match are increasingly meticulous (cf. Pearson, 2012, p. 74). Importantly, getting dressed and made up for the match is a culturally determined, staged performance planned by participants/fans. The careful preparation at home is, as Rubinstein has put it, referring to Goffman, an 'attempt to project the desired image' of a public self from the social backstage, 'knowing that people read significance into such cues as manner of dress, body position, gestures, and facial expressions' on the social front stage (Rubinstein, 2001, pp. 52–53). The process of kitting up in their fan gear enables fans to imagine themselves as part of an undivided and utopian community. With every game, the transposition to a special situation is ritualised by the process of dressing the body in approved ways. Social differences and everyday antagonisms existing within each social fan group are not forgotten but they are overlaid by generally shared

sartorial practices. Thus, football shirts 'can be read as vehicles to dramatize and exaggerate a cultural identification' (Armstrong and Young, 2000, p. 204).

Since the 1980s in Germany, performative interests and merchandising have been converging and the scenery on the stadiums' backgrounds has become increasingly more homogeneous. Replica shirts have imposed a uniformity on the fan blocs that was unknown until now. The homogeneity of the clothing styles in contrast to everyday clothing habits fuses the individual with the mass until they become part of an overall shape or grid. Within this grid, differently attired individuals make no visual impact. They become small particles absorbed by the uniformed mass. Viewing this concourse of fans from a distance, exceptions automatically fail to register, and cognitive mechanisms eliminate anomalies.

In most of the German 'Erste Bundesliga' stadiums, enormous walls of colour have become standard in the past years due to coordinated consumption and clothing practices. The architecture of the new arenas encourages this process. The extremely steep stands configure this stock arrangement into a two-dimensional image. The fans look as if they have been mounted onto a collage, the overlapping individuals forming a single layer in space. In prominent German stadia, such as the Signal Iduna Park in Dortmund, this effect is enhanced by huge areas where fans even today still stand. This special arrangements form the synchronised background of the event. The fans form part of a generic ensemble, encouraging pattern recognition and well-rehearsed responses. Nonetheless, the fans' attire and performance transmit differentiated messages. They signal, for instance, who should be regarded as the enemy, who is playing at home and who is playing away. The German stadiums are increasingly turning into aesthetic sites in which fans have a key transmedial and informative role in a dramaturgy with the stadium as its backdrop (cf. Armstrong and Young, 2000, p. 174).

The mass-media broadcasting of matches profits from the fan's self-staged mise-en-scène. Nowadays, games on the football pitch are highly organised affairs, in which the opportunities for surprise are limited. The fans' performance provides a different kind and style of emotion, heightening the pleasure of watching a football match (cf. Alkemeyer, 2008; Pearson 2012, p. 41). It is only through the fans that the football event becomes extraordinary and takes a potentially carnivalesque turn (cf. Pearson 2012). Their intensity energises the game. For the television spectator the fans' seemingly unrehearsed choreography is a sensual and aesthetic pleasure, while the fans' commitment to the match provides

an emotional thrill by enabling TV spectators to identify with the fans. A focus on the fans' performance has thus become an integral part of football broadcasting. As a result, the tightly packed crowds become surrogates for the absent viewers.

Consequently, cameras focus the viewers' gaze on the fans' performance as much as on the events on the football pitch, thereby creating a multi-dimensional atmospheric experience. The identification with the fans' rituals and performances binds the viewers into the experience of watching the game, thus allowing them to share in the fans' fiercely felt emotions. At the same time, fans nowadays are aware of their function as extras in a theatrical illusion. Their self-conscious performances are always addressed to the crowd outside of the stadium and at home watching TV. They are intensified and professionalised for the spectators.

In this respect, fans' performances cannot simply be seen as the construction of a utopian fan community. In fact, self-fashioning, which can, to some extent, be seen as exhibitionistic, has become a way for fans to draw attention to themselves. The fans have created a self-reflexive image for the benefit of external consumption, but one which is still based on traditions available to them through their own specific social group. The group derives its claims to legitimacy from the coordination of its aesthetic resources. The stadium can therefore be viewed as a site of self-empowerment, one which depends on all the other actors playing their part. Although other elements remain important, the stadium has become a magical stage for a vast community performance by the fans (for example, Bromberger 1995, p. 306ff).[2]

## Away from the pitch – the football shirt as a local badge of loyalty

In the first section of this chapter we talked about the spectators who in the 1950s and 1960s made their way to league games in their everyday clothes. As is the case today with watching amateur football, at that time professional football was integrated in a number of significant everyday rituals. Schnittker, for instance, reports on early morning drinking, a visit to church, lunches and walks (Schnittker, 2011, p. 48). The football game was enjoyed less as a spectacle, but rather, as many local descriptions and reports agree, as a part of local and social activities anchored in regional structures, and was part of a flourishing culture of excursions (Dohrenbusch, 1980, p. 41). Most of the spectators came from nearby urban neighbourhoods or cities and were accordingly ready to interact

with their counterparts in these clearly defined contexts (Gehrmann, 1997).

This traditionally locally determined situation (Pyta, 2004, pp. 18–19) has been faced with stiff competition from the increased media coverage devoted to top-level football and the simultaneous integration of its public into the global audience. The broadcasting of football has generated larger imagined communities, which are spatially isolated from the football arenas and their associated spectators, and also separated from those spectators watching on television. Even in cities with huge stadiums, separate sports centres have been developed. These, even though they have emerged from within the 'total social context', nonetheless have closed themselves off from the 'inner social context through their own operative forms of communication' (Alkemeyer, 2008, p. 90 [author's translation]). The new super-arenas with their large capacities tower over their frequently marginalised localities as singular, highly conspicuous entities. Their sophisticated architecture guarantees that the streams of fans can flow in and out in ordered fashion, and in the meantime can locate their seats and look after themselves (for example, FIFA, 2011).

A position of cultural pessimism would see this process of standardisation as involving postcolonial strategies which erode the cultural values of local football and which 'cause the disappearance of the origins of football, the local context' (Klein, 2008, pp. 40–41 [author's translation]). Other, perhaps more convincing interpretations suggest that programmes supporting local identities have in fact been constructed and reinforced by the vigorous reorganisation of the game and by the media circulations of football. It is in the 20th century and especially since the 1950s that German football has become a signifier of regional culture. It fills those gaps caused by urbanisation, the deterioration of social contexts, and the loss of influence by traditional organisations such as the church (Pyta, 2004, pp. 24–25).

Against the backdrop of the fans' mise-en-scène, these constant attempts to recapture a sense of collective identity are also to be found outside the stadiums. Nowadays, if one attends 'Bundesliga games', it is not just football fans who are aware that the stadiums are open and that, in the true sense of the word, football events are taking place. The physical separation of the huge stadiums from spaces dedicated to everyday social events has resulted in new infrastructures and physical activities. From central junctions such as train stations, bus stops and parking lots the fans surge down pre-set paths to the stadium. Their club colours dominate the urban space. Their comings and goings outside

the stadium, not just within it, create powerful images which act as an intervention, taking over whole cities through their choreography. Maffesoli described such street scenes as an invitation to the spectator 'on a travelling road show' (Maffesoli, 1996, p. 76).

The fans' clothing, consisting of shirt, scarf and cap, through sheer quantity tends to fuse into an impressive totality, although some differentiation can be recognised. However, the primary effect is the transformation of individual items into a uniform whole, a structured unit. As already discussed, individuals are categorised because they wear the same clothing and have coalesced into a relatively unified group vis-à-vis the 'others'. Those wearing a style uniform can see themselves as a unit just as much as observers do. Especially in an urban space which, since the advent of modernism has functioned as an aesthetic backdrop for stylistic variation and individual self-realisation, uniforms produce extraordinary impacts: spatial, corporeal, aesthetic and mental (cf. Mentges, 2012).

Clothing is intrinsically a liminal surface on which different levels of human intersubjectivity become subject to social negotiation. Clothing lays claim to the body as well as the adjacent space and relates both to each other. Since the modern period the leeway for intersubjective interaction has been enormously extended through rapidly changing fashions. Fashion has become the realisation space for generating images of individuality. Against the backdrop of this development, the idea of subjecting oneself to a uniform has taken on unattractive connotations, especially if the historical dimension is taken into consideration (cf. Mentges, 2005). Subjecting oneself to wearing a uniform, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, is considered to be a form of self-harming and of self-degradation as well as an indication of a lack of self-defensive and proactive reflexive skills.

On the other hand, uniforms exercise a fascination because they imply an underlying organisational principle, which manifests itself visually. Their uniformity has a calming effect which gives pleasure to both the uniform wearer and the spectator alike, and both of these are impressed by a spectacle which 'fixes the individual body firmly in a unit and reveals it to be part of a well-functioning whole' (Mentges, 2007, p. 19 [author's translation]).

The colours which are part of the shirt, the pattern, the imprinted insignia, the club name and the city name are already charged with significant meaning. Black and yellow, Dortmund, BVB and 09, like all the other figural elements related to individual clubs, have their own specific aura linked to symbolic mythologising. The tales of football, the region,

the ups and downs in hindsight merge with each other, and in the process the stories are dramatically refashioned. On the fans' uniforms the individual elements are amalgamated into a local patriot's profession of belief, one which is performed collectively.

In this sense, the arrival of the fans in the city with their colours and uniforms is a special event. In its forms and processes and by way of its ritual recurrence it is reminiscent of a procession or perhaps a ceremonial arrival. The entry of the uniformed fans results in the homogenisation of an otherwise unstructured street scenery. The alliances of the fans demonstrate who has taken possession of the urban territory, at least for as long as the event lasts. In the home match situation they determine how their home space should be seen, while in the away situation they demonstrate the space and image with which they should be identified. The fan uniforms are screens on which myths of identities can be projected, in particular the myth of belonging to a community. A sample of fans interviewed by students during a home game shows that fans are well aware that their shirts are a gesture and employed as such. Some of the key words which were voiced as part of the fans' messages were *connectedness*, *belongingness*, *identification* and *solidarity*.

Many large clubs are in a process of continual transformation: managers, players and styles change constantly, they participate in international competitions, and they even become companies quoted on the stock exchange. The fans' performances lend stability and provide local roots for the clubs. They not only express the possibility of belongingness, but also represent a performatively realised dedication to the task of stabilising the fluctuating constructs of local tradition and returning them to the site of their origin.

## The history and the sociology of the football shirt

The season is an important metric for time. Concerning its modern denotation it is a division of the year marked by important cultural occasions and periods. Regarding football, its rhythm structures events, both on and off the pitch, as well as on several front and back stages. Since the Bundesliga has gained social significance in Germany, the impact of the season has been reinforced by merchandising imperatives. Each new season is aesthetically flagged by a change in shirt design. In recent years the release of the new season's top secret design has been celebrated by high-profile events in imitation of the fashion industry's public relations strategies of stimulating an appetite and a desire for the latest commodities.

The advent of the modern era, with its focus on progress, has given innovation a highly positive image. In particular, mass-produced objects have come to symbolise progress because of the relative ease with which they can be substituted for each other. Their substitutability undermines their materiality and mirrors the 'contemporary conviction of the necessity of perpetual innovation' (Bosch, 2012, p. 67 [author's translation]). The football shirt, with the constant formal and technological changes to its design, is no exception. Every season utopian ideas of progress are linked with the fresh invention of the football shirt. In conjunction with the new start to the competition, the new shirt promises a rejuvenated team and conjures up prospects of new successes, sometimes at the cost of fan resistance to being 'milked'.[3]

Even more incentives are needed to ratchet up the fans' shirt consumption, so the season is extended by marking the distinction between *home* and *away*, while the difference between various types of competition is also flagged by subtle differentiations. Within the framework of the rather rigid network of design regulations watched over the DFB and the clubs themselves, there is still sufficient leeway to produce surprise variations, just as the game itself, though bound up in regulatory systems, nonetheless constantly produces new, sophisticated versions of itself. For the spectator, both the aesthetic surface and the event of the football game itself merge on the pitch.

Designs featuring the sponsors Artic, UHU and Samson are prominent and popular examples of collectible Dortmund shirts. Among supporters of all clubs there is a collectively shared preference for certain models, which are connected with nostalgic time travelling into the past. This suggests that football is not an activity which only looks forward to future events, structured by the anticipation of the new season, and the expectation of additional competitive events. In fact, the special designs are retrospective milestones for football history. Like fashion in general, football shirts are a reflection of the typical taste and usage of contemporary and historical periods. Retrospectively, the characteristics of a football shirt can be assigned to a particular period even more precisely than mainstream fashion. As a result of the incorporation of football into other visual cultures, the footballers' strips become part of an everyday culture of reintegrating the past. By evoking the look of football in earlier times, the modern and the historical are interwoven.

Furthermore, unused and discarded football shirts can become objects and important resources of historiographic discourses. Like all objects, the uses and associations of football shirts are charged with significance and emotions. For this reason human objects are also cultural relics

that provide evidence illuminating epochs, events, biographies and destinies (Plessen and Spoerri, 1981, p. 7). Nonetheless, the fragility of these objects leads to their being replaced or eliminated. This insight has become even more relevant as the accelerating innovation processes typical of modernisation and globalisation have become pathological. Paradoxically, this has also led to the feeling that objects in general, in their function as cultural messengers, are disappearing irrevocably, a feeling which used to especially impact cultural commodities, but which is nowadays increasingly affecting everyday objects (cf. Virchow, 1875; cf. Thompson, 1979; cf. Schmidt, 2005). They have industrial origins and are integrated into consumerist cycles, which means that they are in danger of rapidly becoming obsolete and ending on the rubbish heap of history.

Football shirt collectors have a special place in the ever-shortening cycle of their object of desire's planned obsolescence. They arrive on the scene when a particular football shirt is about to be withdrawn and replaced by a newer exemplar. The cycle of obsolescence is interrupted through their activity of saving, storing, accumulating and ordering numerous old football shirts, transforming everyday articles into something special. The particular expertise of the collectors, their selection and arrangements, endow their objects with a new value, also on the rational level, since the value of specific knowledge is added to them.

In the context of our exhibition project, we had the opportunity to meet three well-known shirt collectors. Their activity, which mainly focuses on shirts worn in matches, does not simply involve being trackers, guardians and archivists of museum memorabilia; they are simultaneously guardians and generators of jointly and individually experienced football history. The specialised knowledge and methods of the collectors, who have made it their goal to reconstruct historical situations and game lore against the backdrop of football shirts, enables them to analyse the shirts on the basis of material, form, design and typography, and test them for their authenticity by employing their finely tuned sensibilities, their technologically experienced vision and their in-depth knowledge. In disputed cases they co-operate by swapping their expertise with each other. To avoid auctions spinning out of control, they have formed networks, and in the case of anonymised auctions they can identify each other on the basis of their aliases.

Collecting these *genuine* shirts provides them with 'solid material', 'solid opportunities for action and experience' for constructing a history validated as authentic and credible (Bosch, 2012, p. 67 [author's

translation]). The very fact that players have left their traces in these football shirts recreates 'something of the aura of the directness and uniqueness' of a previous football era. The objects serve as concrete proof that in recent football history something as significant as events in the present day must have happened.

Apart from that, the collecting of football shirts in an era when the media permanently and in detail replay and recapitulate games can be seen as a desire to view the sport in a sharper and richer historical focus. To help fulfil this need, some collectors construct their own websites, presenting neat and tidy collections as if they were in a virtual and museum-like space. They share their objects and their insights publicly and in so doing they construct new starting points for the transfer of knowledge and experience. According to Bosch, the taxonomies used in the structuring of collections stabilise our confidence in social life by concentrating on a 'realistic selection of this universe' (Bosch, 2012, p. 59 [author's translation]). The interaction with objects – transferable in this case to collecting – grants us 'the certainty that our surroundings display immutable characteristics' (Bosch, 2012, p. 59 [author's translation]).

## Summary

The football shirt has become a taken-for-granted everyday object, which on re-examination reveals itself as a key fetishised commodity located in institutionalised football and its cultural history. Its relevance lies in its career as a marketable and very profitable element of clothing. Thus, it has become a talisman, a materialised metaphor for the way that football has been embedded as a cultural practice and as a commodity in everyday life.

Beyond that, the commoditised football world is rich in subsystems, each with its own logic, which are explicitly rooted in football and in its special aesthetic and cultural practices. The football shirt incorporates the tentative self-explorations and the attempted self-definitions of diverse actors on the football scene. Thus, the football shirt is not just an economic epiphenomenon which envelops the fan's body, but becomes an inscribable element which enables genuine self-presentation and self-definition. As a kind of mobile installation expressive of social participation and responsiveness, its flexibility explains its attraction to many football devotees. The collection and curation of football shirts deserves attention in its own right, a scrutiny which would – as is usual in cultural studies – develop via its objects more ambitious questions

about ‘systems of orientation, interpretation, and classification’ (Korff, 2003, p. 2 [author’s translation]).

It is to be hoped that the issue of social formations in football can be again based on social relationships and social practices, and their material realisation. This chapter, while attempting to base its analysis on such an approach, would not claim to develop standardisable metrics, but rather to present a snapshot of a project whose principles and aims might lend themselves to further development.

## Notes

1. On the basis of ethnographic research Christian Bromberger (1995) has highlighted the rituals linked to the football jersey. David Ranc (2012), for example, teased out the political meanings of the football shirt in his comparative study of *Foreign Players and Football Supporters: the Old Firm, Arsenal and Paris Saint-Germain*.
2. Giulianotti’s first chapter of his book *Sport. A Critical Sociology* (2005) gives an overview of Durkheimian models based on correspondences between religious ceremonies and football match rituals.
3. A lot of fans, not only in Germany, criticise these forms of commercialisation fiercely. The fans to whom the students in the project spoke said this ‘fashion theatre’ is unaffordable. Some of them feel exploited by the clubs’ marketing departments. Quite recently a storm of protest was triggered by the pricing policy for the DFB Replica Shirt on the occasion of the Football World Cup 2014.

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# Part V

# Mobility and Transnationalism

# 11

# Performing Loyalties/Rivalries: Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe Fans in Vienna

*Nina Szogs*

Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe are not only the most popular Turkish clubs in Turkey, but also among the most popular football clubs in Austria. Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe represent two thirds of the Istanbul 'big three' *(üç büyükler)*, and their relationship is characterised and performed as a traditionalised rivalry (Erhart, 2014, p. 1735). Supporters living in a different country or far away from the stadium of their club is nothing new to the world of football. When Cornel Sandvoss talks about 'mediated encounters' (2012, pp. 89–91), he denotes that new broadcasting rights and habits facilitate the identification of fans with teams abroad. Having access to matches of any league, no matter where the fan is located, produces transnational fan loyalties and communities (cf. Kaya, 2001, p. 156).

For Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe fans in Vienna the access to the matches of their teams is of utmost importance. When looking at the case of being a fan abroad, the advancement of technology (see McManus, Chapter 12 in this volume) has changed and continues to change the chances of participation in football fan cultures for every fan. However, being a fan abroad and at the same time being part of one of the biggest migrant communities in Vienna[1] affects the (self-)perception as a football fan. Schwenzer and Selmer point out that anthropologists and social scientists have studied the entanglement of migration and football in German-speaking countries before, but usually with a focus on migrant football teams (or players) rather than on individual migrant football fans (2010, pp. 389–390, cf. Zifonun, 2008, cf. Liegl and Spitaler, 2008).

In some aspects, football is a space where extraordinary rules apply in terms of how emotional practices (cf. Schäfer, 2010) or masculinities (cf. Sülzle, 2005, 2011) are performed. At the same time, football is greatly interwoven with a fan's everyday life (apartment decoration, job, friends, family holidays, travelling and so on) and different layers of identifications (father, daughter/son, bar owner, Viennese, Austrian, Turk, migrant and so on). As a result, it is not only legitimate but also necessary to analyse fandom as an everyday life practice (Schmidt-Lauber 2009, p. 421).

In this chapter I will look at the construction and performance of loyalties and rivalries. The excitement about being a supporter of either Galatasaray or Fenerbahçe is strongly connected to the celebration of antagonism between these two clubs. This chapter does not, however, focus on football derbies,[2] but rather, looks at the contextual and situational narratives and practices of rivalries and loyalties. Benkwitz and Molnar (2012) point out that this aspect has been neglected in football studies:

> A particular aspect of football fan rivalry which has received only a small amount of academic interest is how rivalries manifest themselves within the football (sub)culture, or put differently, how a rivalry is actually acted-out and lived-through by fans and fan communities. (2012, p. 483)

By introducing three examples, first I will analyse different performances of rivalries and loyalties. Then I will illustrate the impact of the Gezi protests on loyalty constructions in Vienna. Lastly, I will discuss how in the context of migration, rivalries and loyalties are performed. My analysis draws upon ethnographic fieldwork in Austria, Turkey and Germany that I conducted from July 2012 until December 2013.[3] I consider my data to be embedded in socio-cultural contexts that are flexible and process-related. This also applies to the concept of fan identities, loyalties and rivalries, as they are hybrid and processual constructs (Bauman, 2000; Hall, 1996).

## Performing rivalries

My field consists of two groups of football fans: a group of students and a group of people who gather in a pub. As different as my interviewees are in terms of education, place of birth or political views, all of them have lived in Vienna for at least a couple of years or were born in Vienna.

Thus, all of them have had experience in supporting a Turkish club in an Austrian city.

The first group of supporters is predominantly a group of Galatasaray fans who moved to Vienna no more than ten years ago to study at one of the Viennese universities. All of them grew up in Istanbul in a middle-class setting and have obtained a high level of education. They are politically active in Istanbul as well as in Vienna. The male and female students are mostly in their twenties.

The second group comprises people that frequent a pub in a Viennese district that contains many Turkish restaurants and shops. The place is not specifically branded as a football pub; however, during football matches it is particularly crowded. In this pub, visitors are mostly Fenerbahçe fans, since the owners are dedicated Fenerbahçe fans themselves, but the pub is also popular among Galatasaray fans. The clientele comprises a high percentage of people in their early twenties to early thirties and includes both male and female guests. This location will be referred to as the Fenerbahçe pub.

In March 2013, I interviewed the owner and the main bartender of the Fenerbahçe pub. The owner, Emre, is a dedicated Fenerbahçe fan and the main bartender, Alper, is a passionate Galatasaray supporter. Whereas Emre has been switching between living in Istanbul and in Vienna, Alper has spent his whole life in Vienna. The interview at some point got rather heated due to the fact that they were quite vividly arguing why their respective team is the better one. The following interview section is an example of this discussion.

E: Galatasaray is a great team. Beşiktaş likewise. But at Fenerbahçe you notice quality, I would say. How they behave, what they do. No, it is really like this. [...] Galatasaray is a great team, Fenerbahçe too, but if you look in terms of quality Fenerbahçe is a bit better, for the whole of Turkey. Fenerbahçe is more European.

A: No, no, it has nothing to do with that, in my opinion, because Galatasaray is more European. The problem is that Galatasaray has more Kurdish fans. That's the bad thing.

E: More Anatolian fans. Let's put it this way.

A: But you know that we have this problem: Turkish–Kurdish. And Gala has more Kurdish fans and that's the ugly thing about it.

E: They are not as civilised as Fenerbahçe fans. Well, not as a fan, there are Kurds that are Fenerbahçe fans. In Urfa [city in the Southeast of Turkey], for example, there are more Fenerbahçe fans than Galatasaray fans. If you really look at regions you can really measure

it up. [...] But, what he is saying and what I am saying is totally different. Galatasaray is better in European football than we are. But I am not talking about football. I'm saying that Fenerbahçe is managed in a more European way than Galatasaray is. Until now.

N: Ok, what do you mean exactly?

E: I am trying to say that we ... how can I say that? You simply notice quality. For example, if you go to the Fenerbahçe stadium and you look around, there are probably 50,000 people of whom 40,000 came with an original jersey. And for sure it was bought in the Fenerium, the official Fenerbahçe shop. If you look around in the Galatasaray stadium, though, it's just less. Why? Because fans of Galatasaray are a little poorer ...

A: They are coming from poor ...

E: Exactly.

A: The poverty line ...

E: The richest fans are Fenerbahçe fans.

[Emre, owner, Fenerbahçe fan, male, 29 years old; Alper, main bartender, Galatasaray fan, male, 23 years old; 20 March 2013]

The discussion about the better team is a central part of the rivalry construction. 'Othering' (Baumann, 2004) the opposite team by attributing, in their opinion, negative characteristics to it, is crucial for the distinction and therefore for the performative creation of the antagonism. Thereby, Emre and Alper refer especially to the category 'Europe'. Europe is often an important point of reference for Turkish football (cf. Alpan and Şenyuva, 2015). One reason is that Turkish football teams have long been accepted as a member of UEFA and they have the possibility to gain recognition in Europe. On the other hand, Turkey has long fought for membership in the European Union. Bora and Şenyuva summarise:

> In this sense, games against other European national and club teams allow for revenge against the Europeans for what is traditionally perceived cunning and historical efforts to exclude Turkey and Turks, culturally, politically and economically. (Bora and Şenyuva, 2011, p. 38)

Still, even though Turkey has been affiliated with UEFA since 1962, it does not mean that all members are equal partners (Dietschy et al., 2009, pp. 130, 137). Dietschy et al. emphasise that Turkey in the past was

willing to undergo 'a long, often humiliating process of recognition' (ibid., p. 131) to prove its 'Europeanness'.

In the interviews that I conducted, Europe often represents modernity, freedom and (financial) progress. Interview partners who are eager to identify with those categories used Europe as a reference point while talking about their fandom. Nevertheless, Europe is a vague term that can refer to a number of different political, social and cultural concepts such as the European Union, UEFA, a place of yearning, financial stability, a way of life and so on. Consequently, it provokes various images and interpretations. In the interview section above, Emre and Alper refer to different definitions of Europe and consequently argue about what Europe and European means to them.

It is true that Galatasaray is located in Istanbul's European side whereas Fenerbahçe is located in the Anatolian side of the city, which might implicate notions of what is considered 'European' and 'not European'. However, both Emre and Alper are claiming that their club is 'more' European. Thereby, they are referring to imagined or cultural geographies, which shape symbolic meaning. Alper links 'European' to European competitions like the Champions League and the Europa League whereas Emre links it to a specific form of management, meaning having a good marketing concept and fans that buy expensive jerseys.

Europe was a point of reference mentioned on several occasions throughout the interviews. In the football context Europe received an entirely positive connotation *if* mentioned. This led to sentences like:

> C: For me, Galatasaray is the part of Turkey that could become part of the European Union with a good conscience. Fenerbahçe symbolises for me a ploy and (takes a deep breath) the newly rich who are doing everything for money and with money. Yes. They don't care about manners.
>
> [Cem, Galatasaray fan, male, 34 years old, 21 August 2012]

Cem's definition of Europe and his explanation of why Galatasaray is the better club differs from Emre's and Alper's definitions, particularly from Alper's argument. Alper and Cem both assign positive connotations to 'Europe', but Alper understands it as a category of success on a European level. Cem on the other hand attaches more a culturalised political meaning to it, namely what constitutes the European Union. Particularly in Cem's case, the football club becomes part of a cultural geography: Galatasaray can obviously never become part of the

European Union as it is only a football club, but he uses it as symbol for the part of Turkey that he considers 'ready' to join the European Union.

Thereby, he claims that Fenerbahçe is not fit to join the European Union because of its capitalist, money-oriented attitude and because of being less 'cultivated'. He implies that characteristics that fit the European Union are well-mannered and thus 'civilised'. This again contradicts the argument that Alper and Emre agreed upon: that Galatasaray does not have as 'civilised' fans as Fenerbahçe because of a possible bigger Kurdish or Anatolian fan base. In their case, Anatolian and Kurdish equals being poor. All three of them oppose directly or indirectly 'civilised vs. primitive' when describing the other club. This opposition can be understood as an 'orientalising' (Said, 1978) practice to 'other' others.

Both Emre and Alper were exchanging political views by referring to prejudices rather than talking about the club's demography or policies. Emre's and also Alper's lines of argument that stress Galatasaray's inferiority do not only reveal the inclusion and exclusion practices behind how they define a legitimate fan. Via the practice of othering by using the concepts of 'Turkish vs. Kurdish/Anatolian', which implies dichotomies based on 'quality vs. bad' and 'wealthy vs. poor', they find a way to bond even though they are fans of antagonistic teams. The bonding in the discussion is especially crucial for Alper, because of the social hierarchy in this interview situation: Emre is, after all, Alper's boss and Alper is additionally one of the few Galatasaray fans in this pub.

There are millions of Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe fans in both Turkey and in other parts of Europe which makes it hardly possible to make generalisations about supporters. Thus every fan can to a certain extent create his or her own fan loyalty by projecting his/her values and beliefs on the club, as we can see in the two interview sections. Consequently, narratives about the club image are deeply entangled with constructions of belongings such as being left-wing, nationalist, educated, Turkish, Viennese and so on. Stuart Hall writes that '[i]n language, we use signs and symbols [...] to stand for or represent to other people our concepts, ideas and feelings.' (1997, p. 1) In the current case, the football clubs Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe can be considered and are used as signs and symbols that represent the 'concepts, ideas and feelings' of my interviewees. Cornel Sandvoss analyses this phenomenon from a psychoanalytical perspective:

> [T]he relationship between fans and their objects of fandom is based on fans' self-reflective reading and hence narcissistic pleasures, as

fans are fascinated by extensions of themselves, which they do not recognize as such. (2005, p. 121)

Referring to Roland Barthes' (1957) 'myths' and semiotics in general, Sandvoss further argues that 'facts become relative within the meta-narrative of the myth, which in turn is reflective of the fan's values, beliefs and image of self' (2005, p. 135).

A club has to represent extremely diverse and manifold signs and symbols so as to capture all of these different 'extensions' of the self. In a nutshell, if a fan projects his/her own image of self onto the club and then consequently talks about this self-image when talking about the club, the club must be open for a variety of 'encoded' (Hall, 1980) meanings. As a consequence, this is only possible as long as other representations do not become overwhelmingly powerful.

## 'Loyalty crisis'

Whereas for Emre, Alper and Cem the football clubs are an ideal medium through which they express their affiliations, in this example I will discuss how a fan object cannot arbitrarily be adapted to one's own loyalty constructions. When the Gezi protests against neoliberal construction plans and President Erdoğan's conservative and repressive politics[4] sparked off in Istanbul in early summer 2013, the concepts of loyalty were frequently discussed by football fans in Vienna.

In Istanbul, some fan groups of Fenerbahçe, Galatasaray and Beşiktaş gathered and formed the symbolically powerful 'Istanbul United'. Erhart summarizes: 'Eternal rivals seemed to have united against the riot police and the government' (2014, p. 1725).

These 'football rivals' were now working together to fight for a mutual cause (cf. Dorsey, 2013). However, not all fan groups were participating in the protests, which became very clear when I attended two Süper Lig matches in Istanbul in August 2013.[5] In one part of the stadium people were yelling '*Her Yer Taksim Her Yer Direniş*' ['Everywhere Taksim Everywhere Resistance'] while in the other part they were booing. Football fans were as divided as the whole of Turkish society (cf. Nuhrat in Selmer, 2013). However, it was slightly different with Beşiktaş' ultra group Çarşı. Çarşı is known for being leftist and anarchistic (cf. Nuhrat, 2013; McManus, 2013) and the majority of Beşiktaş fans, particularly seen through the dominant readings of the club, have been associated with a working-class culture (Erhart, 2011, p. 93).

For some of my interviewees, the changing situation in Turkey had an immense impact on how they perceived their football fandom. It

strongly depended on how much they identified with the protestors as well as their interest in Turkish politics. Everybody at least had an opinion about the events in Turkey but not everybody took action. Selin is in her late twenties. She was born and raised in Vienna and travels quite often to Istanbul where close relatives and friends live. She is a Fenerbahçe fan, politically active, leftist and an artist. On top of the influence of the Gezi protests on football discourses, Fenerbahçe and Beşiktaş both were excluded from the European championships on the grounds of match fixing[6] accusations. In the following interview section, we were talking about the consequences of the match-fixing incidents, which Selin links to the Gezi protests in the second section:

N: What do you think about Fenerbahçe getting disqualified from the European matches?

S: Well, I guess there are lots of teams that did *şike* [match-fixing] it's called, but they weren't punished so hard. I think that's pretty mean (laughs). I am sad, yes, it was a moment when I said to myself that Fenerbahçe is less existent for me now in some ways. It's not that present anymore, it's a bit phoney in this sense. But then I started thinking: shouldn't I change to Beşiktaş? Because I like their philosophy much more and Fenerbahçe is totally elitist and totally out now. But then I get the feeling again: no, I have always been there for them, so to speak, I cannot give up just like that now. And then I get the feeling again and I am still Fenerbahçe, unfortunately.

In this first part of the interview section, Selin refers mostly to the dichotomy 'elitism' vs. 'working class'. In the next section, she discusses how the political situation in Turkey provides a reason for her to doubt her loyalty to Fenerbahçe as she perceives Beşiktaş fans to be more committed to the protests:

S: Well, it did not surprise me that Beşiktaş were there [at the protests] and participated because Beşiktaş always had this image: we are the ones, we are the working class in quotation marks, we are anarchists, we are always opposing. That's always the slogan, we are not only a football team but also political, right? It's less the case for Fenerbahçe. Fenerbahçe is more, well I am simplifying this now, Fenerbahçe is capitalism. Beşiktaş rather communist, socialist, also very much simplified.

[Selin, Fenerbahçe fan, female, 28 years old, 3 November 2013]

Selin has doubts about her loyalty to Fenerbahçe. The Gezi discourses are so powerful and tightly interwoven with football that projecting her ideas and values onto the club is not that easy anymore. Gezi becomes part of a hegemonic discourse, which for some people and also for Selin becomes more important than football and is at the same time positioned right in the middle of football.

Fenerbahçe and Galatasaray are most of the time well-suited for a 'narcissistic self-reflection' (Sandvoss, 2012, p. 82). The two clubs are also part of certain dominant representations, but these are so diverse and manifold and sometimes even contradictory that it is, to a certain extent, possible to cut club images into shape as needed. In interviews, Galatasaray was often linked to an elite culture and Fenerbahçe to a bourgeois culture (cf. Dmowski, 2013, p. 339), but again only by fans that identify with these categories. However, in Selin's case we can see how constructing the image of oneself via the club is not always possible (cf. Sandvoss, 2003, pp. 163–5). New, dominant discourses like the ones around Gezi question these representations and change them. As a result, loyalties can be brought into question.

## Performing rivalries/loyalties in the Viennese environment

In the first two examples, I pointed out how the rivalry constructions work via othering practices for the case of Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe fans in Vienna. In accordance with Sandvoss, I showed which personally informed characteristics are attributed to a club depending on the self-image of a person. Then I discussed how this is only possible so long as representations of the club do not become contradictory to a fan's self-image. In the last example, I will discuss how rivalries and loyalties can further shift to a certain extent even though they are narrated as inflexible. In order to maintain the antagonism and thus also the excitement about being a fan, it requires permanent negotiation. I will look into these negotiations and especially into the role that a diasporic or migratory context plays in this process.

For the specific case dealt with in this chapter, 'the growing negative undertone in public, media and political discourses on Turkish immigrants' (Sievers et al., 2014, p. 267) is particularly relevant. One example for this discourse is that Turkish football and its fans, although being a visible part in the Viennese public space (fans in jerseys, celebrations of Turkish championships in the city centre and so on), are frequently ignored by many German-speaking media in Austria. Exceptions include

a Turkish team playing an Austrian team, high-level Champions League matches or pitch invasions.[7] This means that most of Austrian media are only concerned when Turkish football and its fans are linked to teams of the Austrian football league, European championships or when it has a sensational, often negative connotation.[8] Consequently, the fan loyalty can obtain a political dimension due to a possible lack of recognition (Honneth, 1996) being attached to it. This becomes particularly visible when looking at how the Galatasaray fan Metin handles his rivalry to Fenerbahçe.

I made the acquaintance of Metin during an away trip to Salzburg in July 2013 when Fenerbahçe was in the qualifying round for the Champions League. Metin is a Galtatasaray fan, married, has two children and has been living in Vienna for more than twenty years. He travels to Istanbul a couple of times a year to visit friends and relatives, and also to go to the stadium. In addition, he attends Galatasaray, Fenerbahçe and Beşiktaş matches in Austria and in neighbouring countries on a regular basis. I was confused when I saw a Galatasaray fan riding on a Fenerbahçe fan bus. During the bus trip he explained to me that he occasionally supports Fenerbahçe but would never wear the Fenerbahçe jersey. Instead, he wears the jersey of the Turkish national team. I asked him about his support for Fenerbahçe again in an interview a couple of weeks later when he told me about attending a Fenerbahçe match in Hungary:

N: So you really like to watch Fenerbahçe matches, like in Salzburg?
M: Well, yes. But if Fenerbahçe loses I am not that sad. But ...
N: But anyhow you are supporting Fenerbahçe...
M: Fenerbahçe is still a Turkish team. If I go to my workplace the next day, I am teasing the Austrians, if Fenerbahçe won (Metin's wife and I start laughing). Once, Beşiktaş was playing Rapid [Wien]. About three years ago. I said, if a Turkish team comes I'll always support them. [...] I was, but before I was also wearing a Beşiktaş shirt.
N: Really?
M: But I wouldn't wear a Fenerbahçe shirt.
N: Ok. And why is Beşiktaş OK and Fenerbahçe isn't?
M: Yes, Fenerbahçe is like an enemy. Do you understand?
N: And Beşiktaş?
M: Beşiktaş not so much, not so bad, but Fenerbahçe is different.
N: So if Fenerbahçe is playing Beşiktaş...

M: Well, if you hand me a Fenerbahçe shirt, for example, and you tell me that you would pay me a hundred euros if I wore it, I wouldn't do it. I swear.

N: OK (laughs). But Beşiktaş is OK?

M: Beşiktaş is OK. Well, not to wear it always, but for one match . . .

N: And what do Fenerbahçe fans say if you go to a Fenerbahçe match wearing a Galatasaray jersey?

M: Ah, there [in Sopron, Hungary] people were looking at me but didn't say anything. But in the Fenerbahçe stadium – you cannot do it there. They would cut it off. In Vienna, people are also fanatic, wearing scarves and so on, but nobody told me I should take it off or something like that.

[Metin, Galatasaray fan, male, 45 years old, 9 October 2013]

The logic of my research field would usually exclude the idea of supporting the rival. Therefore, Metin applies a certain strategy to justify his shifting support. He claims that supporting another Turkish team than Galatasaray is self-evident for him in an international context. However, he would never wear the Fenerbahçe jersey, but the jersey of the national team instead. The football shirt becomes an important symbol (see Hofmann, Chapter 10 in this volume) of the limits of his loyalty. Thereby, he expresses his loyalty to Turkey and maintains the rivalry to Fenerbahçe. Likewise, Metin experiences the rivalry between Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe as 'softer' than what he would in Istanbul. Wearing a Galatasaray jersey at a Fenerbahçe match in Hungary was possible for him because he assumed that other fans of Turkish football in Central Europe would be of the same opinion in this matter.

Metin is able to use his fandom for Turkish teams to apply a strategy of 'doing home' and belonging. Binder writes that migrants are often confronted with the prejudice that migration equals rootlessness, which means having no home and being foreign, before they even have the chance to say what being home means to them (2010, p. 194). Metin has several places where he feels at home depending on the perspective and the situation. Asking him from a football perspective, he would mention Turkey as a reference point and a place of yearning because he uses football as a tool to close the geographical gap between his two homes. When talking about his family, work and colleagues, Vienna is his reference point. Additionally, every football match becomes a homelike place.

In his case, fandom can be considered as a 'tool kit' that helps to create 'strategies of action' (Swidler, 1986, p. 273). Swidler defines strategies less as a conscious plan, but as 'a general way of organizing action' (1986, p. 277). Applying this theoretical concept to Metin's case, we can consider football fandom as part of a 'tool kit' to create homelike emotional spaces in which he feels comfortable. Furthermore, Metin mentions his joy in playfully teasing his Austrian colleagues at work the next day if a Turkish team won against an Austrian team. He does, therefore, not only express his loyalty to Turkey but at the same time differentiates himself from Austrians in the football context when he emphasises the superiority of Turkish teams. At the same time, by 'teasing', he applies a type of humorous communicational interaction, thereby stressing both his difference and also his sameness (cf. Klingenberg, 2013).

As mentioned above, my interviewees are quite different in terms of where they grew up, educational background and their political views. One aspect shared by many of the interviewees who grew up in Istanbul is that football for them constructs a space where it is possible to (re)tell concepts of home and belonging and likewise spaces where the distance to a geographically distant home can be minimised for ninety minutes and more. A Galatasaray fan of the student group from Istanbul explained it to me like this: 'When we watch it, when we see the people, then we have the feeling that there is no distance' [Galatasaray fan, female, 26 years old, 3 December 2012).

In a diaspora context, the Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe antagonism becomes for some fans more negotiable than for others, but the conditions under which supporters can temporarily shift their loyalty sometimes require practical strategies, as we could see in Metin's case.

Contrary to this example, for many of my interviewees who do not identify with the concept of nationality, the thought of supporting the antagonist team only because it is a European championship is simply unthinkable. Also, for those fans who grew up in Vienna, their fandom has a different connotation. For many of them, it is a strategy to maintain family links as well as to share and create a link to the former home country of a family member, very often the father. Kaya, who researched Turkish hip-hop youth in Berlin-Kreuzberg, talks about a 'symbolic bridge between the country of settlement and the homeland' (Kaya, 2001, p. 156). For others of the same group the family ties and links to a 'Turkish belonging' are less important because being a Galatasaray or Fenerbahçe fan for them is mainly a Viennese habit of socialising with friends and peer-groups.

## Conclusion and outlook

In this chapter, I looked into the rivalry and loyalty practices and performances in the Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe football fan cultures in Vienna. The antagonism between Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe is central to the excitement of following the Turkish football league. Even though the rivalry is narrated as inflexible and insurmountable, the interviews and participant observations revealed that it actually requires permanent negotiation to maintain the rivalry.

In the first example, I looked into the narrations of how this rivalry is performed. Via othering practices, my interview partners, Emre and Alper, tried to construct the idea of fans, the style of play and the management of the opposite club as a fundamental other. Comparing the categories they used for this rivalry performance, it became clear that fans attribute, in accordance with Sandvoss, their own meaning onto the club. Sandvoss's psychoanalytical approach to football fandom as 'self-reflection' is useful to carve out categories that are relevant for my interviewees and are expressed via their fandom. Every one of them characterised his or her respective club as something very special and crucially distinctive from the rival. However, they were often loving their club and hating the other club for the very same reasons.

From another angle, the second example showed the limits of loyalty and rivalry constructions when other dominant discourses occur that put loyalty and rivalry performances into question. For some fans, like Selin, the representations of Fenerbahçe became too (a)political with regard to the Gezi park protests. Fenerbahçe, for her, started to represent the exact opposite of what the Gezi protests were about: Fenerbahçe's allegedly capitalist and corrupt structure.

The last example discussed how fandom can become a 'strategy of action' (Swidler, 1986). Thus, fandom is not only a cultural practice to express oneself, but is also used to deal with everyday issues. For Metin, fandom becomes a strategy to tackle matters that can come along with moving to another country such as questions of home and belonging. The philosopher Axel Honneth claims that every individual struggles for recognition on three levels: love, rights, and solidarity. Consequently, individuals attempt to overcome attacks on one or on several levels to avoid experiences of disrespect [*Missachtungserfahrungen*] (1992, 1996). In their contribution to research on fans and migration, Schwenzer and Selmer emphasise the usefulness of Honneth's theory for the analysis of processes related to migration because they are very often connected to

a 'struggle for recognition' (2010, pp. 387, 395). Alongside Schwenzer and Selmer, Kaya also refers to the aspect of how experiences of exclusion can be negotiated in popular culture. He writes about the role of Turkish Hip-Hop in Berlin-Kreuzberg and the role of being a fan of a Turkish club that they 'form [...] a kind of part-time communitarianism that provides them with a political response to their exclusion from the public space in Germany' (Kaya, 2001, pp. 157–8).

The 'struggle for recognition' might happen on a rather individual level, in a class context, and also in a migratory context through emphasising the superiority of one's club or of the country's football as we could see in Metin's case. Further discussion needs to be made on whether and how fandom can become a strategy to overcome disrespect in different parts of people's lives – not only in a migratory context. After all, Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe fans in Vienna are watching football predominantly to enjoy the game with friends and family.

## Notes

1. In 2013, 74,970 Turkish immigrants and their descendants were living in Vienna. Other migrant groups in Vienna: Serbs and Montenegrins 94,282, Germans 49,706, Croats 22,993. Source: Official homepage of the city of Vienna, at: www.wien.gv.at/statistik/bevoelkerung/tabellen/bevoelkerung-migh-geschl-zr.html [accessed 29 October 2014].
2. The literature on football derbies in Europe is too vast to include it all in this chapter. Moreover, the chapter does not focus on football derbies per se but on the actual practices, narrations and performances of rivalries and loyalties. Dmowksi (2013) offers an interesting inventory on club rivalries in Europe.
3. Next to 34 participant observations, 16 qualitative interviews were conducted in this period of time. All names of persons and places are changed except for names of cities and football stadia. Furthermore, all interviews that are quoted in this chapter were conducted in German and then translated into English by me. Turkish terms and phrases were not translated and will be indicated in English in square brackets.
4. As plans were being realised to build a shopping mall in Gezi Park, which is located right next to Taksim Square in the very city centre of Istanbul, thousands of people gathered to protest against the neoliberal construction plans of the government. Soon the protests became part of a broader movement against President Erdoğan's conservative, repressive, authoritarian and neoliberal politics (cf. Yıldırım, 2013; Navaro-Yashin, 2013). A crucial aspect of the protests was that members of all different parts of society, such as 'feminists and football fans, secularists and anti-capitalist Muslims, members of Istanbul's bourgeoisie and the working classes, LGBT activists and professional lawyers, Kurds and Jews' (Navaro-Yashin, 2013) were now fighting for a mutual cause. The protests were soon met with extraordinary police violence such as tear gas and water guns.

5. Match 1: 19 August 2013, Galatasaray vs. Gaziantepspor, Türk Telekom Arena; Match 2: 24 August 2013, Fenerbahçe vs. Eskişehirspor, Şükrü Saracoğlu Stadyumu.
6. For more information, see www.theguardian.com/football/2013/aug/28/fenerbahce-expelled-europe-match-fixing.
7. There are exceptions such as the Austrian football magazine *Ballesterer* that reports regularly on Turkish football from various angles (cf. Selmer 2013; Federmair, 2013) or *heute.at* that has the online section 'Leserreporter' (reader reporter) where fans have reported about celebrations of Galatasaray or Fenerbahçe winning the championship that were celebrated in public places in Vienna (cf. Heute.at [Geyik, E. L.], 2013; Heute.at [Vfb, Ö.], 2014).
8. For example the pitch invasion of Beşiktaş fans in 2013 (Krone.at, 2013) or the discussion of UEFA punishing Fenerbahçe because its fans used pyrotechnics in the stadium in 2013 (Standard.at, 2013).

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# 12
# Building a Turkish Fan Community: Facebook, Schengen and Easyjet

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It is a crisp, cool February evening in Braga, a small city in northern Portugal. In the stadium on the outskirts of town, SC Braga, a Portuguese premier division side, are playing Beşiktaş Jimnasik Kulübü (Beşiktaş Gymnastic Club), one of Turkey's largest football clubs, in the 'round of 32' stage of the Europa League. It's the second half and Beşiktaş have just scored to go 2–0 ahead, prompting an outburst of screaming and hugging from two thousand or so away fans. In one corner of the crowd, two men are being pulled to their feet after over-enthusiastic jumping snapped their plastic seats. From another part of the stand, a frantic drum beat pounds out while someone else holds a flare aloft, dancing. When the initial euphoria of the goal subsides, a fan perched on the advertising boards at the front takes up the role of conductor and the crowd launch into a chant. The seats shake as thousands of Beşiktaş supporters jump in unison, singing 'La la la la la la la la la . . . oooh Beşiktaş!'

Such a sight is familiar in many European cities on a weekday evening during the football season. Hundreds of the top clubs from across Europe perform in the two Europe-wide competitions – the Champions League and the Europa League – and tens of thousands of fans travel across the continent to watch their side play. Nevertheless, if we pause to survey the crowd in greater detail, salient anomalies emerge. The banners and scarves are all in the black and white of Beşiktaş, but most of the locations they refer to are outside of Turkey – London, Berlin, Switzerland, Mannheim. Listen in more carefully and you will hear amongst the Turkish chants snippets of German, English or Dutch. Indeed, if you ask around, of those who have travelled to Portugal to watch this Turkish team play, only a handful have come from Turkey. The majority of the

crowd is comprised of Beşiktaş fans who reside in Western Europe – countries such as England, Holland, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland (see Szogs, Chapter 11 in this volume). Some were born in Turkey, but many were not; most do not even have Turkish passports. And yet here they are, at their own expense and having taken time off work, on the other side of Europe, clad in Beşiktaş merchandise and screaming their heart out for Beşiktaş.

It is evident that these small groupings of fans from the UK, Germany or Switzerland feel themselves part of a transnational community, a Turkish-language[1] brotherhood (they are nearly all men) based around football. Evident, too, is that there are many different aspects to this 'production of locality' (Appadurai, 1995) that occurs when fans get together, both in the stadium and beyond. Government legislation, cultural notions of being a 'minority', the history of migration patterns, the infrastructure of the city and globalised sporting calendars all play a role in turning spaces into 'Beşiktaş places'. Whilst engaging with elements of all these, this chapter's specific focus is the mechanisms by which such notions are realised; that is, the devices and processes by which notions of identity are 'mediated' (Mazzarella, 2004; Meyer, 2009). By mediation I mean 'the processes by which a given social dispensation produces and reproduces itself in and through a particular set of media' (Mazzarella, 2004: p. 346). Twenty-first-century professional football, with its televised matches, shelves of merchandise and cosmopolitan cast of stars, operates as a highly globalised, mediated business. In this chapter, I explore the effects of these processes for fans; specifically, how contemporary technological practices such as Internet communication, travel and media consumption provide resources for (or mediate) certain types of footballing experiences and fan identities.

An important by-product of football's increased mediation has been a reconfiguration, contested in some parts, of the activities and requirements one needs to undertake in order to be defined as a valid 'fan'. Being photographed wearing the right merchandise, or participating in the right online messageboard, for some are of equal (or greater) importance than the 'traditional' requirements of physically attending a game. As a consequence, there has been an exponential rise in recent decades in the number of people who are situated geographically far, usually overseas, from a club but who nevertheless call themselves 'fans' (see Giulianotti and Robertson, 2006, 2009; Millward, 2011, pp. 76–93). Here I concentrate specifically on one such grouping – overseas fans in Western Europe for Beşiktaş – in an attempt to uncover the resources being used in order to allow such transnational fan identities to occur.

I begin by drawing on recent scholarship in media anthropology and science and technology studies to argue for a broader definition of 'technologies'. The chapter then proceeds by using this conceptual lens to uncover the movements, chains of connections and interactions that European Beşiktaş fans are engaging in through their football support. A wider frame reveals the true scale of barriers to generating the characteristic togetherness and conviviality of a fan club across transnational space. Accordingly, we come to a better understanding of the role these technologies are playing in fan club construction; that is, not as providing liberation from conceptions of place but the opposite, drawn upon to bind fans to images of 'Turkishness' and links to the 'homeland'.

## Technologies, community and belonging

Exploring the 'technological dimension' of a community is a well-worn path, from Benedict Anderson's study of how literacy and the printing press historically played a role in generating the 'imagined community' of the nation (Anderson [1982] 2006), through to more recent studies that investigate group formation in the age of Internet-mediated communication (Boellstorff, 2008; Miller and Slater, 2000). Regrettably, much of this scholarship is grouped around two poles, arguing either an overly technological deterministic version of community formation (Anderson, 2006; Goody and Watt, 1963), or else going down a social constructivist route where the technology is often sidelined (MacKenzie and Wajcman, 1999; Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Winner, 1999).

To help steer a course between these extremes, I propose three reconfigurations of 'technology'. Firstly I conceive of technology use as a process of crafting and assembling. In doing so, I draw on the work of Tom Boellstorff, who reaches back to the Greek root of the word – 'techne' – noting both its association with art and craft and its significance historically in debates surrounding technology use. An emphasis on craft ensures fans are not rendered agentless subjects of technological change but take an active role in using technologies to 'engage . . . with the world and thereby result in a different world' (Boellstorff, 2008, p. 55). Secondly, and relatedly, I wish to argue strongly for viewing this interaction with technologies as a process of mediation. Putting the stress on a process rather than a 'thing' helps us avoid the essentialist tendencies of much of the writing about 'global culture' (Mazzarella, 2004, p. 355). Emphasising mediation also helps prick the bubble of exceptionalism surrounding modern digital technologies. If we view all relationships as inherently mediated, then we are compelled to view mass media less as instituting 'unprecedented' processes but simply

*an* or *the* contemporary element of the ongoing constitution-through-mediation of identity and culture. From Greek plays to the printing press, human communication has always been mediated (Boellstorff, 2008, p. 55; see also Boyer, 2012). Finally, I will speak of technolog*ies* rather than an amorphous 'technology'. Speaking in the plural seems to capture more accurately the 'polymedia' environment in which we find ourselves increasingly operating (Miller and Madianou, 2012).

Additionally, it is important to view community formation as an inherently fluid and contingent process. In their study of communities in Greater Manchester, UK, Mike Savage, Gaynor Bagnall and Brian Longhurst point out the need to distinguish between familiarity and belonging; it is perfectly possible to have a sense of familiarity with an area or grouping but that is not enough to generate 'a full and assertive sense of belonging'. By 'electing' to belong, through generating narratives about their reasons for living in a place, individuals can create a deeper notion of belonging and feel 'at home' (Savage et al., 2005, p. 48). Whilst many people in Western Europe do not have to, or want to, conceive of themselves as 'mobile', through wider changes to their communication practices, or migration flows affecting the composition of their 'local' neighbourhoods, they are nevertheless exposed to a world of greater movement taking place around them (Appadurai, 1995; Chambers, 1995; Glick Schiller and Salazar, 2013; Sheller and Urry, 2006). For a transnational fan community like Beşiktaş, comprised of migrants or those recently descended from migrants, the most productive paradigm is to view belonging as an elective process of 'embodying attachments that permit various kinds of global connections to be drawn' (Savage et al., 2005, p. 53). This chapter provides an ethnographic corollary to this assertion by showing some of the technological processes by which European Beşiktaş fans create 'new kinds of solidarities' and certain global connections to Beşiktaş.

The conception of 'technologies' has been narrowed unnecessarily by the failure of scholars to consider sufficiently the diachronic aspect of technological production or interrogate the ready elision of 'technology' with simply 'media' (for a critique see Coleman, 2010; Postill, 2002). Sports scholarship, too, mostly glosses 'technology' as 'media' and subsequently remains focused around questions of fan (self)presentation in or through mass communication devices, be that the press (Armstrong, 1998), television, Internet or a combination of the above (Gray et al., 2007; Krovel and Roksvold, 2012; Sandvoss, 2003).

One way of achieving a wider scope is to take on board ideas propounded by Actor Network Theorists. Pioneered by Michel Callon (1986), Bruno Latour (2005) and John Law (1992), Actor-Network

Theory (ANT) suggests that the impact of technology is neither due to its intrinsic qualities nor the sociology/politics of the situation but rather a networked combination of the two. Facts, truth, knowledge and technical capacity are all a combination of elements held together in a network. Crucially, this is a heterogeneous network, comprising alliances of two elements: human ('actors') and non-human ('actant'). Objects do not just reflect the social, they transcribe and displace the interests of people and things. Taken together with Miller and Madianou's idea of 'polymedia' (2012), we can glimpse a drive to view technology use in the plural.

If we take on board ANT's desire to 'flatten out' and consider the wider range of actants that affect what humans are doing, then we can build up a more complex image of the role of technology in structuring the experience of transnational football fans. The specific phenomenon of diasporic football support is, of course, reliant on processes made possible by the Internet and mobile phones. Yet what emerges when we extend our field of vision further is a host of other 'technologies' that are contributing to the construction of fandom but which are often ignored. For instance, the rise of budget airlines, the Schengen agreement, machine-readable travel documents and cheap t-shirt printers.

The following analysis explores the issue through this larger frame. It pulls on observations and conversations garnered through two years of ethnographic fieldwork at over a dozen football matches in European competitions, within Turkish-language communities in the UK and Germany and online via fan websites, message boards and social media, principally Facebook.[2] By considering the online and offline equally as spaces to be examined ethnographically (Moores, 2012, p. 27) and proceeding to conduct multi-sited fieldwork across a range of places, both offline and on, the role of these technologies in processes of fandom is thrown into more stark relief. From this wide-angled perspective, I argue, technology use can be viewed as inherently mundane, that people are using technological potentials 'as a means to repair allegiances to religion, nation and family, rather than trying to escape from them' (Miller and Slater, 2000, p. 18).

## Sports channels, the Internet and smartphones

A warm November night in Tel Aviv. Three months before their trip to Braga, Beşiktaş are in Israel, playing Maccabi Tel Aviv in the group stages of the same Europa League competition. Having gone two goals down,

the home side has brought it back to 2–2 with only a few minutes left to play. There are perhaps 500 Beşiktaş fans at the game, yet despite the excitement and high stakes the atmosphere in the away end is flat and the crowd subdued. There is only a small clutch of fans that have travelled to Israel specifically for the match – a handful from Western Europe and perhaps a few dozen from Turkey. The majority are Turkish-speaking residents in Israel who don't seem to know the chants or feel particularly compelled to shout. After various attempts at counteracting this lethargy by leading the crowd in song, Mehmet,[3] a young fan from London, turns to me in exasperation and says: 'I hate when the crowd are bad. I get laughed at on TV. It ruins my reputation.'

This comment illustrates a number of important ways in which the modern-day fan experience is intrinsically mediated (indeed, co-constituted) through contemporary media production and consumption (Rowe, 2004). A key element relates to what Martin Hand has dubbed the 'ubiquitous' visualisation of communication, through photography and recording at events such as football matches. For Hand, there has been an explosion in the last decade of visual content, as 'communications and social relations are increasingly mediated through or accompanied by digital images' (Hand, 2012, p. 1). Hand notes that this increasing visualisation of communication has an important knock-on effect for how 'authenticity is understood and practiced' (ibid., p. 22). Mehmet is worried about how he looks, yet crucially not to anyone physically present in the stadium. The audience in whose eyes he needs to be seen as 'authentic' are those watching on TV. The fact that the game is televised means that, even though he is thousands of miles away, he cannot escape the gaze of his peers in London, Germany or Turkey.

There is another way in which the actions of Mehmet come in for media attention. The digitisation of image-capture and recording does not just lead to the proliferation of images but also makes their transmission easier, through both 'unofficial' channels, such as texting or sharing on social networking sites, and the 'official' media. To focus firstly on the 'official': digital television signals require lower bandwidths than analogue, meaning that digital broadcasters can provide more channels in the same space. One consequence of this has been the emergence of channels dedicated to broadcasting content strictly related to sport, such as *Sky Sports News* in the UK or the Turkish *NTV Spor* (NTV Sport). The increased spectrum has also afforded clubs the opportunity to generate their own exclusive TV channels. In the case of Beşiktaş, the channel is called *BJK TV* and broadcasts twenty-four hours a day. The channel can

be received in both Turkey and across Europe via various satellite and cable TV packages.

Increased focus on sport requires greater amounts of content, especially at times when no live action is taking place. One consequence of this need to fill airtime is a renewed interest in news stories about fans. Before games, at the airport or in the pub, it is not uncommon to see official news cameras circulating through the crowd of Beşiktaş fans and microphones being pushed in the face of potentially newsworthy individuals. Indeed, this is what happens at the Maccabi Tel Aviv match. A Turkish news photographer spies the attempts of Mehmet to 'take the lead'. He takes a picture that then appears on a news story on the website of a leading Turkish newspaper (*Milliyet*, 2011).[4]

For most fans, the recording of an interview or news story is an event of much excitement. Following its broadcast, fans often scour the Internet for the footage produced. Once located, more often than not it is shared, usually through Facebook or on a Beşiktaş fan messageboard. Such practices also take place at the visit to Maccabi Tel Aviv. A few days after the game, I spot in Mehmet's Facebook News Feed a video of the highlights of the game, introduced with the title: 'at 2 minutes 18 you see me' (*dakika 2.18 beni görsünüz*). In addition, the profile picture of his Facebook account has been changed to the image featured in the news article.[5] Despite talk of the increased democratisation of media production, the case of Mehmet shows that the rise of social networking has not 'replaced' traditional media. There is a distinct hierarchy where appearing in a *NTV Spor* broadcast results in far more kudos than an amateur video posted by a friend on Facebook. A fan-made video is an empowering outlet for supporter creativity but is also often produced in the hope that it will be picked up and broadcast by professional media, or that its creators will achieve sufficient notoriety as to warrant an interview from 'proper' media sources.

The development of smartphones – mobile devices that, amongst other functions, allow for quick mobile Internet use – means that these processes are sometimes instantaneous. Those fans who are not physically present can be folded into events, conversations and interactions in real time (or something very close), via a phone's onboard camera, an Internet connection and a few swipes of a user's finger. An important part of the match experience for many fans is documenting their adventures and eliciting commentary via social networking websites, the most common being Facebook. To give an example: in October 2011, I was sitting with three interlocutors, having a coffee in Kiev on the morning of a match. They were a bit bored and so decided to use a phone to take

a photograph of me and a fan making silly poses. The photograph was taken, uploaded immediately to Facebook, given a caption and added to the fan's Facebook wall. As usual, the photograph provoked comments from Facebook friends who were not with us. A quick glance at the timings of these comments revealed how people were commenting almost instantly. Each comment announces itself as a notification in a user's Facebook account and the fan duly kept picking up his phone and relaying these comments back to those of us gathered around the table, offering a running commentary as they came in one by one.

It is not simply the case that those who are not physically present are being made to feel 'a part' of the match-day experience. More significantly, they are influencing its course. Smartphones, Wi-Fi and extensive 3G (telephone data) networks allow for those at the game to document their activities quickly and easily, and the medium of Facebook 'affords' individuals who are not present the opportunity to respond in real time to this content (Hutchby, 2001). Miller argues that Facebook's capabilities do not just allow new social connections and networks to be formed but actually contribute to a changing notion of space and time 'as a social medium' (ibid.). Whether or not one wants to go that far, in the example of the fans in Kiev we can see experiences at home and abroad being explicitly conjoined, conceptualised as unfolding synchronically.

## Easyjet, Schengen and stash

Yet there are a host of technologies away from digital media that are no less important to the structuring of the fan experience. The first is cheap transport. Most fans are extremely cost conscious. Getting to these games consists of searching for the cheapest flight or, where possible, choosing to drive. Coaches are often the cheapest form of transport for journeys of more than a few hours. For shorter trips, people pool cars and chip in for petrol money. If required to fly, travel is exclusively on budget airlines such as Ryanair, Easyjet and Wizz Air. I have travelled to over a dozen games in European competition by all the above means, at an average transport cost of £70.[6] For many, the ability to travel to a match for such a small amount is a crucial determinant in the decision to attend.

So too is EU border policy. The enactment of the Schengen Agreement in 1995 created the Schengen Area, now a composite of 22 EU countries and four non-EU member states (Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) in which internal border controls have been eliminated. The increased ease of mobility across European countries facilitates the

experience of fans coming together for games, although not everywhere: the UK and Ireland have opted out of the Schengen Agreement whilst Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania have yet to join.[7] Of course these laws by themselves do not shape the movements of fans. In day-to-day life movement is controlled by the technologies of machine-readable documents, what Navaro-Yashin calls the 'the primary paraphernalia of modern states and legal systems' (Navaro-Yashin, 2012, p. 114). Not only is travel visa-free between countries that have signed the agreement, most travellers do not even require extra documentation beyond what their state requires them to carry in their day-to-day life.[8]

In line with Yael Navaro-Yashin, I view documents such as the passport and the visa not as neutral tools of governmentality stripped of emotion but instead as 'ideological artefacts' through which the state is governmentalising affect (Navaro-Yashin, 2012, p. 239). The removal of border controls, however, vastly diminishes the points of verification and hence the (often visceral) separation of travellers into categories of nationality. Turkish passport holders who reside in mainland Europe most often have a Schengen-area visa, granting the same rights of movement within the Schengen area as those with EU passports. Consequently there is no experiential difference between being a Turkish or EU national in the context of intra-Schengen football fan travel.[9] Travelling outside of the Schengen area, however, requires a separate visa. Given that visa application processes can be costly, time-consuming and contain no guarantee of acceptance, many Turkish passport holders decide it is not worth the hassle for a two-day trip. As a result, the crowd at games in the non-Schengen United Kingdom, such as Manchester United vs. Beşiktaş in November 2009 or Stoke City vs. Beşiktaş in September 2011, often misses a swathe of 'regulars' who would ordinarily attend games in European competitions. We glimpse in documents, then, the potential of technologies to generate feelings of anger, exclusion and asymmetry amongst members of the group.

The final technological process I would like to draw attention to is the crafting of fan merchandise.[10] One of the most eye-catching sights at Beşiktaş matches in Europe is the array of different scarves, hats, t-shirts and banners bearing the club's colours of black and white. Whilst official club merchandise is prevalent, fan-produced merchandise holds higher cachet. Normally limited to small runs (anything from 20 to 150) these fan-produced items include scarves, coats, t-shirts, hats, flags and banners. The sartorial is as much a method of communication for fans as text messages or Facebook posts. As Dick Hebdige has noted, subcultural items such as mod scooters or punk safety pins act

as a uniform, the outward manifestation of one's fanaticism (Hebdige, 1979).[11] Products often carry a geographical reference to the city in which fans live, generating a notion of exclusivity (I'm from London) within broader fellowship (I support Beşiktaş). There is a significant amount of one-upmanship amongst European Beşiktaş sub-groups for what is considered the 'best stash'. One of them, the *Çarşı* group of ultra-dedicated fans, will often prioritise its own name over that of the football team.[12]

Although I have separated them for the purposes of explication, it is through the symbiosis of these technological processes that specific fan identities form. For instance, information about cheap flights is not acted upon individually but circulated on the European fan Internet messageboard, playing an important role in structuring the organisation of an away match. As one fan told me: 'Everyone goes on that site . . . en masse, buying flights . . . For instance [saying] "It's really expensive from Frankfurt" then looking [and saying] "also really expensive from Cologne". We organise flight tickets, hotels – we all stay in the same hotel. I mean, we act en masse.'[13] Other examples abound: items of merchandise are posted to fans in another country, or handed to a friend to be passed on and photographed in incongruous settings – from the Western Wall in Jerusalem, to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. These images and videos are then uploaded to the Internet to generate the impression of a fan group such as *Çarşı* being 'everywhere' (*her yerde*).[14] On match day, the presence of free Wi-Fi in a particular pub prompts the mass movement of fans, eager to document their experiences of the match abroad but unwilling to pay the high roaming fees. Flares, a bright burning pyrotechnic favoured by fanatical fans (sometimes called 'Ultras'), are bought online from Italian mail-order shops. They may be posted to Germany, set off amongst a packed terrace at a game in Ukraine and filmed for the purpose of a fan in Turkey.[15] To bring out the more fine-grain details of how these technologies are combined and crafted to generate fan communities, I turn in the final section to an ethnographic vignette.

## Transnational fandom in practice

Adi is a Beşiktaş fan who was born and grew up in Israel. She has an Israeli passport, Hebrew is her native tongue and, although her Turkish is fluent, she cannot shake the Israeli accent. When Beşiktaş came to play Maccabi Tel Aviv in November 2011 (the game described above), she decided to greet the team at the airport with banners she created – sheets

of fabric with spray paint and colours – based on the design and materials used by the main fan group in Istanbul. This activity was picked up by an Israeli sports channel (www.one.co.il) in the 'official' media that, perhaps to satisfy its need to provide regular fresh content, took pictures of Adi and constructed a news story based around her fanaticism for a feature on its website.

I was attending the game in Tel Aviv along with two Beşiktaş fans from London. None of us had met Adi before, but we were put in contact via a fan who had met her on Facebook. When we arrived in Israel, she hosted and involved us in her match preparations. On the day of the game, we were sat in Adi's apartment before the match. She was surfing the Internet and found online the news story featuring her. She immediately posted it to her Facebook page. The vast majority of Beşiktaş fans do not speak Hebrew, so she elected to frame the story by giving it a Turkish caption. She then got up from the computer and went to prepare some bits and pieces for the match. Whilst she was busy, Mehmet, the London-born Beşiktaş fan mentioned previously (another Beşiktaş fan without a Turkish passport), logged into his Facebook account. He is Facebook friends with Adi and so her post appeared in his News Feed. He decided to repost the story on the page of the London Beşiktaş group, in which he's an active member. The story subsequently became co-opted into another network of supporters, this time the London-based fan grouping for the same team.

It is worth dwelling on the simultaneity of technology use, circulation of objects and the entanglement of communication paths. Banners are produced based on the image and genre of fans in Turkey in order to cement the authenticity of a Beşiktaş fan living abroad. These then become captured by Israeli press for commercial gain (or simply to fill up space), bolstering the kudos of the image in the eyes of fans and leading to the article being 're-captured' and shared more widely, allowing it to accrue yet more 'authenticity' (Lindholm, 2008). Individuals are made aware of these images not through direct messages, but through textual and visual postings on sites such as Facebook. As Danny Miller notes, this process 'enables this information to carry across continents and diasporas, allowing news and information to travel vast distances with extraordinary effect'. He signals two important aspects of such processes, their 'unprecedented simultaneity' but also 'a digital inscription that lasts' and concludes that 'Facebook is as precisely a positive transformation and expansion of spacetime as a social medium' (Miller, 2011, p. 209). Certainly Facebook is playing a role in altering the way that the two categories of 'space' and 'time' structure our experiences. It may be productive to join DeNicola in arguing that we should not

stop at the idea of landscapes becoming mediated. Perhaps media can also become 'landscaped' – ordered according to 'spatial sensibilities' (DeNicola, 2012, p. 97). Facebook's topography of 'walls', 'news feeds' and 'albums' acts as a receptacle for fan texts, images and videos to circulate and rub shoulders. Such intermingling affords the possibility of their recombination in unexpected or innovative ways, stretching futher the skein of Beşiktaş fan imaginaries.

A conceptual manoeuvre increasingly employed in the study of contemporary communities is to use the term 'media' as the heuristic to bind the study (Coleman, 2010; Postill, 2009). Given the increasingly mass-mediated nature of everyday routines and practices of community generation, such a shortcut is understandable. An unintended consequence, however, is for explorations of technologies to be telescoped into 'media' practices. By looking explicitly at *non*-media technologies that other writers mention in passing, I show the potential for change to be distributed across a much wider array of technological practices. The fan from London might not have been in Israel to have his picture taken were it not for budget airlines extending their reach to Tel Aviv, or visa-free travel to the country for UK nationals; Adi may not have caught the eye of the journalist without the banners and merchandise that she had herself created.

## Conclusion

In a recent working paper about webcam technology, Danny Miller and Jolynna Sinanan suggest that humans 'have always possessed the cultural ability to imagine ourselves as others see us and strive to work on that appearance'. They continue: 'What has been lacking is the technical facility that matched this cultural facility, other than the static mirror' (Miller and Sinanan, 2012, p. 4). What I have attempted to do in this chapter is two-fold: firstly, to use the example of transnational football fans to argue that such 'technical facilities' should not simply be limited to digital media technologies, and secondly, to show how broadening the focus allows more of the entanglements and intricacies of community creation to be shaded back into social analysis.

It is possible to view transnational Beşiktaş fandom ultimately as a form of intimacy between individuals in relation to an idea of 'homeland'. As Miller and Sinanan note elsewhere: 'all forms of intimacy [are] thoroughly dependent upon the construction of particular conditions of ambience that allowed people to experience this feeling of togetherness as natural'. What technologies do, be they mobile phones, cheap air travel or t-shirt printers, is draw attention to how much work it takes to

'culturally create the conditions of feeling natural and close' (ibid., p. 5). Indeed, the sense of being natural and close is at the heart of the match-day experience. Sometimes this feeling is exalted, such as in a moment of transcendental union of coordinated singing and movement. Yet, just as often, attention is being drawn to its absence. Perhaps there is a fan who can't attend a match due to the colour of his passport. Maybe a lack of coordination in the chanting has put a dampener on things or an angry exchange about the merits of being a Kurd versus a Turk has taken place on the fan messageboard. The 'solution' to such arguments is just as likely to be the age-old outlet of swearing and fisticuffs as is it is to be newer channels, such as messageboard mediation or Facebook messaging. As with technology-use in general, fans do not think in terms of discreet units but more in line with what Manning and Gershon have labelled as 'a new media persona in which online and offline practices are seamlessly intertwined' (Manning and Gershon, 2013, p. 126).

The entire phenomenon of transnational Turkish football support illustrates the width of the gap that these particular diasporans are trying to bridge. Extreme geographical dispersion across Western Europe, a diversity of cultural backgrounds in Turkey and a multitude of differing migration experiences are just a few of the many elements that disrupt and complicate the process of generating an ambience of togetherness. Consequently, the use of technologies in this process satisfies more mundane, 'homely' goals. Fans drum up funds to print a set of t-shirts, scour the Internet for cheap flights and coalesce for a few days on the other side of Europe not to 'escape' constructions of themselves as Turkish-speaking diasporans, their allegiances to a nation, family or background, but instead to repair them. Of course the idea of reconnection with one's 'true' Turkishness is itself an idealised construction, for the links and relationships being generated are intrinsically new. Technologies (broadly defined) are an organising device in this process, used by fans to craft 'the conditions of feeling natural and close'. Viewing the role of such tools in this manner allows us not only to better understand participation in popular culture practices, such as football support, but also the broader set of habits and customs by which we craft identity and belonging in twenty-first-century communities.

## Notes

1. I will be using the term 'Turkish-language' or 'Turkish-speaking' rather than the perhaps more common 'Turkish' to refer to the fans in question. Placing emphasis on language avoids homogenising what is in fact a diverse

community containing many 'non-Turks', most commonly Kurds and those from North Cyprus.

2. Facebook is the world's most popular social networking website, with 1.39 billion monthly active users (http://newsroom.fb.com, accessed 7 March 2015). It operates by allowing users to create a profile populated with information and photos about themselves. Users can then add other users as 'friends'. Once friended, users can interact with each other by a number of means, such as writing on each others' profiles, chatting in an instant message or posting a status update.
3. All names of individuals have been altered to preserve the anonymity of interlocutors.
4. Most European football clubs have established terrace leaders. Usually the most well-respected of fans, they are responsible for leading the chanting and galvanising the crowd. Although Beşiktaş have terrace leaders both in Turkey and among the European fanbase, none were present at this particular game, allowing Mehmet to step into the breach.
5. The News Feed in Facebook displays a select snippet of what one's friends are up to, ordered according to time and importance. A profile picture is the image associated with the user's profile within Facebook. Such graphical representations of users online are also referred to as avatars (see Manning and Gershon, 2013).
6. Travel took place between October 2011 and June 2013. The £70 includes travel to and from both airports and public transport whilst at the destination of the game.
7. Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania are obliged to eventually join under the rules of the Schengen *acquis* (European Union, 2001).
8. The exception is if they are flying. Even on domestic flights, airlines frequently require some form of official documentation in order to board the plane.
9. Of course this is not the case more widely. Tax forms, benefit payments, employment documentation – the experiential difference of having a Turkish or EU passport in non-footballing contexts is no doubt very large.
10. Technologies constitute an integral part of merchandise creation, such as buying an object and submitting bespoke designs to printing companies or producing the items oneself with the aid of online applications. During fieldwork I witnessed European Beşiktaş fans engaging in both practices.
11. Indeed the sartorial is inextricably linked with social media practices: a great deal of Facebook postings are designed to show off a particular item of merchandise.
12. *Çarşı* comes from the Turkish for 'market place' or 'downtown' and is the largest supporter's group for Beşiktaş (see Dikici, 2009). It has links to various European offshoots, including Çarşı Londra and Çarşı Berlin. For more information see: www.forzabesiktas.com [accessed 29 April 2015].
13. Interview with the author, 23 February 2013.
14. BESIKTASwirdverarsch, 'Carsi Hooligans in Mekka', YouTube, at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCeojLTEmTw [accessed 29 April 2015].
15. For more on Ultras see Podaliri and Balestri (1998) and Testa and Armstrong (2010).

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# 13
# People, Passions – but What about Politics?

*Alexandra Schwell, Nina Szogs, Małgorzata Z. Kowalska and Michał Buchowski*

Football, we hear, is the 'beautiful game' (at least according to Pelé and Andrew Lloyd Webber). We have also learnt that it is 'the people's game' (James Walvin), and it is certainly a 'game of two halves', if it is not altogether 'more than just a game', since football – or a certain football club – is 'a way of life', or even the essence of 'life' itself.

All clichés aside, the contributions in this volume provide an impressive panorama of the manifold ways in which people's lives can be impacted on by what Gary Lineker famously called a simple game: 'twenty-two men chase a ball for 90 minutes and at the end, the Germans always win' (Hogan, 2012). Fortunately, not only for the sake of excitement and variety, but also for a taming of potential nationalistic hubris, the Germans only win from time to time. The last time they did was at the World Cup 2014 in Brazil. Passions ran high and reached a premature culmination point on the occasion of the highly traumatic semi-final of Brazil vs. Germany. This 1–7 result created a memorable football *lieu de mémoire* (Nora, 1993), not only for the Brazilians and the Germans, but also for everyone who watched the match, read, heard or tweeted about it. It is one of these football moments that fit neatly into the arsenal of stories to be told and retold, such as Zinédine Zidane's headbutt in the 2006 final in Berlin or Schumacher's assault on Battiston in Sevilla (1982). Such incidents tend to acquire a life of their own and become an integral part of the chorus of YouTube videos to be watched over and over again in the years to come; some are even creatively adapted by dedicated fans who thereby express their love for the game through 'football art'.[1] But at the same time, these football moments become icons also because they are part of larger narratives, of thought patterns and of imagined geographies that help us to order the social

world, often assisted by a rather simple moral: good vs. bad, foul play vs. fair play, us vs. them.

Yet football does not only order the world according to nations, regions, or clubs, but its political dimension reaches far beyond the pitch. Rumours and suspicions of bribery and corruption accompanied the awarding of the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. For years, it seemed impossible to prove any of these allegations. When, finally, several FIFA officials were arrested in May 2015 the world of football stood still for a moment. Time will tell whether FIFA takes the affair as an opportunity for substantial change in world football. But not only corruption charges cast shadows over what is considered the 'beautiful game', also workers' exploitation and modern slavery at the sites reveal the far-reaching consequences of football politics.

In Chapter 6, Małgorzata Z. Kowalska explicitly analyses political processes and power struggles that take place far away from the pitch, but that nevertheless are inextricably linked to it. Mega-events do not only fascinate millions of fans and spectators who watch at stadiums, sit in front of TV sets and view on large public screens worldwide, but they have a very concrete impact on local and national economies and societies, with repercussions for actors that might not even be remotely interested in football, but often feel them years after the event.

Football, in short, is indeed 'more than just a game'. As the contributions in this volume vividly show, the beautiful game bears a highly political dimension. Football is political in various ways that go way beyond the common view of politics as men in grey suits, parliamentary debates, and more or less intelligent election campaigns.

Unlike classical political science approaches, based upon the traditional triad of policy, politics and polity, anthropology treats the political in a much wider sense (Shore and Wright, 1997; Shore et al., 2011; Aronoff and Kubik, 2013). While political scientists tend to focus on formal institutions and electorates, anthropologists and like-minded social scientists employ a broader scope and ask how policies, political imaginaries, but also political institutions and tools permeate various realms of social life, as Hani Zubida's analysis in Chapter 5 illustrates impressively with the example of Israel. His chapter also shows that the unresolved question of 'what is the nation's identity?' is highly contested and discussed in various social domains. Zubida shows that football fandom is one of the sites within that discursive field where that discussion takes place.

It is a focus on bottom-up politics, the micro-politics of everyday life, while taking into account the wider national and transnational context

that is the strength of an anthropological approach. It allows the broadening of the view beyond traditional political arenas and include those of popular culture, as is visible in the account of Ivan Đorđević and Bojan Žikić in Chapter 3. They perceive football as a proxy for nationalist narratives and negotiation of belonging and exclusion. They also argue that 'even after 2000, when the nationalist governments [. . . ] were defeated, leading to less hostile relations between Serbia and Croatia, football remained a space for the expression of still widespread nationalist feelings'. To see the political 'normalisation' of relations between Serbia and Croatia through the looking glass of football allows us to analyse football as a vehicle that fosters the expression of nationalistic hatred. Đorđević and Žikić also point towards the importance of the media who turn the match into a 'battle'. Nationalism kicks in not only on the pitch and in the stands, but within the ethnographic research itself. Their account gives us an important insight into how the researchers themselves and their fieldwork situation as Serbian citizens were shaped by the hegemonic narrative of political tension, reflecting their own position and situated knowledge, resulting in a forced Serbian subjectivity.

Anthropological accounts of policies and politics scrutinise how political power struggles shape the lives of citizens and non-citizens, but also how various groups of actors engage in negotiations with these very power structures, actors and narratives, and challenge them. Andrew Hodges and Paul Stubbs in Chapter 4 analyse politically active fans who take the fate of their clubs in their own hands. They oppose the dominant narrative and its intended instrumentalisation of football, but focus instead on the supporters' solidarity. At the same time, Hodges and Stubbs make it clear that these fan groups do not operate in a national or post-Yugoslav vacuum, but that they rely on transnational ties and links particularly within the 'Ultra culture'.

Such contacts and ties among fans of different clubs, but particularly between fans of the same clubs, have accelerated with processes of globalisation, migration and transnational networks, that raise many new questions regarding participation and citizenship issues, but also, as John McManus in Chapter 12 shows, regarding the facilitating role of technologies. His chapter points towards the need to not only consider the role of narratives, practices, discourses and social context, but also the very tangible circumstances, technologies and tools that enable new modes of fandom which were hitherto not possible. New practices, new types of fans, and new loyalties emerge through the use of technologies as diverse as Easyjet and the Internet. Some observers might

feel tempted to subsume the activities of, say, German Turks uniting with other diasporic Turkish descendants under the banner of Beşiktaş as a symbol of failed integration and a failure to support one's 'own' local football club. Yet, this is not a nationalistic revival and failure of belonging, but we are actually witnessing the emergence of something new that in itself is permanently in flux and being negotiated.

Football fandom and loyalties can function as signifiers for political belonging and commitment, but they can more often than not be framed and interpreted in a specific way by the media. Turks cheering for Germany as well as the sight of German flags at Turkish Döner Kebap booths become powerful symbols that allow people to temporarily forget the failures of German integration politics and the growing inequalities, at least during World Cups. Expressions of fandom are signifiers that aim at locating the self and the related other within a specific social and political space, which can amount to symbolic struggles regarding one's place in the imagined geography of political and cultural Europe. Both Nina Szogs (Chapter 11) and Đorđević and Žikić explicitly refer to the cultural category of Europe as a symbol for civilisation, epitomised in Đorđević and Žikić's account by the antipole of war and barbarism. The political dimension of Szogs' research is particularly visible in the attempt to locate one's club, and thereby oneself, on the imagined map of Europe. The claim that one's own club is more European and thereby more progressive, civilised, enlightened and well-behaved, and to justify the rejection of the other club as non-European, that is, primitive, fits neatly into thought patterns that exist also with respect to other cultural geographical relations such as East–West or North–South asymmetries that have been explored in detail first and foremost by Said (1979) in his classic on 'Orientalism', Wolff (1994) for Eastern Europe or Todorova (1997) for the Balkans. Interestingly, in the case of Galatasaray, a thought-provoking twist is added as 'Europe' is juxtaposed with imaginations about 'Kurdish' qualities. Last but not least, it appears that the concept of Europe functions as a rather empty signifier that can be used *à la carte* by anyone who seeks to appropriate and instrumentalise it.

Football unites and football divides. The 'father' of the anthropology of football, Max Gluckman, is no exception to this rule. In Chapter 2 Robert Gordon and Marizanne Grundlingh illustrate that Gluckman himself benefited from the community aspect of football fan culture as a foreigner in a xenophobic environment. For Gluckman, the participation in a football crowd or rather the 'football family' of Manchester United fans meant having a break from being an outsider in England.

Football offers collective identity for many, but not necessarily for all. Stefan Heissenberger, for example, in Chapter 7, discusses the issue that playing football as a homosexual man still causes raised eyebrows in society. This is due to the fact that masculinity is still a central condition of the performance of football fan culture. It does not fit the hegemonic discourse of a 'good' fan or player to be homosexual nor does it fit to be a woman.

Homophobia and sexism are central practices to (re)produce masculinity in football stadiums. Using the example of gay football teams, Heissenberger illustrates different ways of how to subvert and change heterosexual dominance. Whereas in heterosexual-dominated teams a gay person will always be predominantly perceived as 'the gay guy', in gay teams he can be all different kinds of things and is not limited to his sexual identity. Surprisingly, gay teams display not only the rainbow flag during tournaments across Europe, but also the flag of the European Union. The motto of the European Union, 'United in Diversity', is thus adapted to emphasise the lack of (sexual) diversity in the world of football.

People entering heterosexual and male-dominated spaces, in this case the different football arenas, deal with different kinds of problems to be accepted as equal participants. In Heissenberger's case, gay men create an environment where not complying with a male heterosexual discourse is not only legitimate but the rule. Tamar Rapoport and Daniel Regev on the other hand discuss (in Chapter 8) how women adapt to and subvert dominant masculinities when *entering* male-dominated spaces. This does not necessarily lead to full acceptance as an 'authentic fan' amongst men. Especially, the 'imitation' of male behaviour is often sanctioned by other women.

In their case, wearing fan shirts and scarves is assumed to be an imitation of male football culture. Viola Hofmann, who in Chapter 10 discusses the history of the football shirt's symbolic meaning in fan cultures, argues that the football shirt has led to a uniformisation of fans. Thus, the football shirt could be understood and interpreted as a unifying tool that supports gender equality. Rapoport and Regev showed, however, that gender hierarchies are much too complex to be levelled by a football shirt. Considering the football shirt as a male accessory reveals how fan performances and symbols that are understood as 'authentic' and 'correct' behaviour are defined predominantly male. At the same time, these performances and symbols are crucial when showing loyalty to a club which leaves women in a dilemma.

The heteronormative dogma still impacts football cultures to a great extent. However, as we have seen, people that do not comply with this

dogma are a regular part of football culture, although they are often invisible or inferiorised and considered to be an 'exception'. Stine Liv Johansen's study on the socialisation of children into football culture (Chapter 9) hints in the same direction. The lack of media and other merchandise products that are aimed at girls and the lack of female role models result in the reproduction of gender inequalities. Girls use and refer to media products that were produced for boys and that represent male football culture. Some girls consequently have a smaller interest in media-based approaches to football such as computer games. The crucial thing is that Johansen does not imply that girl footballers cannot use male players as their role models. But lower media attention for female professional players and the omnipresent male-dominated football culture reproduce gender stereotypes already in the school yard: boys playing football is perceived as something 'natural' whereas girls have first to prove their skills to be accepted in the game.

Cultural and social anthropology's specific contribution to the football field lies in their own added value, both on the theoretical and the practical level: the discipline's claim to analyse local events as embedded within a wider (national and transnational) context makes it particularly suited to scrutinise questions that transcend the local level and need to be analysed reciprocally. An anthropological approach takes into account that football is differently experienced and culturally imagined, but simultaneously creates an imagined football community. Both the praxeological approach and the ethnographical methodology are particularly apt to analyse the dynamics of football fandom from an actor-centred perspective.

Football does not only carry a meaning for those who would sell their last shirt for their club, but it has practical and tangible implications for other actors beyond the pitch and the pubs. Furthermore, as a profoundly social event, football cannot be analysed detached from its immediate context in a diachronic perspective, and, what is more important, it is itself an important actant within this context, and it is a symbol that transports meaning and can be used by various groups of actors who seek to interpret it in their favour. It seems that Johan Cruyff was not wrong when he said that 'football is a game you play with your brain'.

## Note

1. See, for example, the French art collective Pied La Biche's amazing reenactment of the 1982 France–West Germany semi-final, Pied La Biche (2010) Refait, at: https://vimeo.com/9426271 [accessed 13 February 2015]. The same

match has also been the object of a theatre play *(Le Bourbier de Séville)*, of a major historical documentary film *(Un 8 juillet à Séville)* and a kind of autobiographical novel by French author Pierre-Louis Basse.

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# Afterword

*Simon Kuper*

In early 2004 I went as a journalist to watch a Portugal–England friendly on the Algarve. After the match I shared a taxi with some English fans. We chatted a bit about our evening, and then one of the fans asked, 'What was the score, then?'

He hadn't come to Portugal for the game. He had come to be an England fan, and to commune with other England fans. The sense of community is what draws many fans to football. Yet it struck me then that nothing that we journalists would write about that evening's game addressed that man's experience. Instead, we would describe events on the field, and try to extract quotes from managers and players intent on saying nothing. If we wrote anything about the fans, it would be about violence – even if there was nothing more interesting to report than a few people pushing and shoving in an Algarve bar, the sort of thing that happens in British city centres and European holiday resorts pretty much every night.

For about a century both sports journalists and social scientists almost entirely ignored the mainstream fan experience. In the 1950s when Max Gluckman, anthropologist in Manchester, began to think of the football crowd as a community – and even to conduct unofficial half-time seminars on the stands at Old Trafford – he was a pioneer. I am guessing that most social scientists thought football was too profane an object for study. The only supporters anyone took much interest in were the hooligans. This book shows that social scientists have finally dived into the field of fandom. We sports journalists need to join them.

I am the son of an anthropologist, and as soon as I developed a dim sense of what anthropology was about, I began applying it to what I knew about football. The game, after all, was clearly central to the communal identities and emotional lives of large numbers of people.

The present volume shows that today's generation of anthropologists has grasped that. It also suggests methods that we sports journalists could copy. It might even be worth our going to talk to some anthropologists sometimes.

The notion underlying this book is that ordinary non-violent fans are a worthy object of study. As Viola Hofmann argues in her chapter on football shirts, fans are no longer just spectators but performers at the match. They dress up, they sing, or they spend the match bonding globally with fellow fans on social media from in front of their TV sets. Often the match – especially if it's dull – is just an excuse for this staging of community. Yet we journalists ignore these people. In this book the Belgrade anthropologists Ivan Đorđević and Bojan Žikić give a fascinating account of sitting among Croats in the stands at a Croatia–Serbia match in Zagreb. Their chapter illuminates relations between Croats and Serbs today: some rhetorical violence, much actual tolerance.

It made me think that we journalists should try sitting in the stands too. We might discover some interesting things about supporters. Instead we all huddle together in the 'media tribune', from where we watch the match in a sort of context-free vacuum. The match reports we produce are increasingly pointless anyway, now that all big games are live on TV, and commented on live by viewers worldwide on social media.

The only people we journalists typically try to speak to are the players and coaches, who are now so media-trained that they almost never make a genuinely felt statement or divulge any insight. Often at the post-match press conference, the losing coach will try to distract attention from his own and his team's shortcomings by blaming the referee. Then we report the ensuing controversy. The press conference has become a classic example of the 'manufactured pseudo-event' identified in 1961 by the historian Daniel J. Boorstin. The fans don't even need us to write about it, because it's now typically live-streamed online. Yet we journalists persist in this ancient ritual.

Sports journalism – an industry that is dying almost as fast as the rest of the media – needs to make the turn to covering fans. That would entail more than simply repeating the fans' own myths. The most prominent of these myths, often parroted by journalists, goes more or less as follows: 'The true fan is a man who watches his local club and has watched it all his life, ever since he was taken there as a child by his father. Any other type of fan is inauthentic.'

The chapters in this book show how far this myth is from representing the experience of most fans. Daniel Regev and Tamar Rapoport

describe the strategies of female Israeli fans to insert themselves into this male-dominated terrain. Stefan Heissenberger's account of gay players highlights another group that doesn't fit the conventional story of football people.

And Nina Szogs and John McManus both show that the old narrative of 'blood-and-soil' local fans decreasingly applies in today's globalised world. You can live in Vienna and love Galatasaray; or as Stine Liv Johansen recounts, you can be a child in small-town Denmark and support Barcelona like all your friends. The journalists' account of fans has to include the vast majority of supporters who will never attend a match of the club they support – who may never even visit the country where that club plays its home games. Manchester United officially estimates that its fanbase includes nearly one in ten people on earth. Clearly this statistic is questionable. But there is no doubt that for enormous numbers of humans, from Shanghai to Cairo to Los Angeles, one of their multiple identities is 'Man U fan', or 'Liverpool fan', or perhaps both at the same time. That tells us something about identity in today's world. If we journalists could only get out of the press conference, it's a topic we could pursue. The anthropologists have pointed the way.

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