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TRANSGLOBAL NORWEGIAN? GLOBALISATION AND THE CONTESTATION OF IDENTITIES IN FOOTBALL¹

Abstract

The paper discusses transformations of the fans' affiliations in the era of football's transnationalization and de-territorialization. Firstly, it shows that the traditions associated with local football clubs or national teams have been important elements in the symbolic construction of regional or national identities. Secondly, referring to the example of British and Norwegian fandom, it argues that these loyalties are being replaced by more complex, multiple identities. This is reflected in the transformation of football spectatorship, both in terms of matchday participation, as well as long term attachments to particular clubs and national teams.

Key words: identity, football, glocalisation, transnationalism, globalization.

INTRODUCTION

'For club and country' is an old phrase in football, denoting the traditional duopoly for allegiance and loyalty in the game, for both players and supporters. The privileged position of such local (club) and national (national team and league structure) boundaries are still evidently manifest in discourses on football and identity, especially through various post Bosman expressions of the difference between 'home grown' players versus 'foreign' players. While footballers have

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¹ This article is a reworked and updated version of an article written by the same author, published in a special issue of *Soccer & Society*, vol. 10 (3–4), about football in Scandinavia.

always been on the move [Taylor 2007], the intensification of player migration along with an increasingly neo liberal, transnational market economy has revolutionised football in most European leagues since the mid-90's. Prices for live television coverage of games from England, Italy and Spain have skyrocketed in this period, along with player salaries. Football has become a big business, whereas formerly it was either a small business or no business at all. This was generally the case in the amateur-based Scandinavian leagues until the late 1980's, despite a notable exception in the relative success of IFK Gothenburgh, IFK Gothenburgh-side, which won the UEFA cup twice during the 1980's [for a history of Swedish football see: Andersson 2002].

During the same period globalisation has become a dominant, if now ubiquitous, focus in the sociology of sport. Perspectives shift from viewing sport as the "Europeanisation of a global monoculture"[Maguire 1996] to Giulianotti and Robertson [2004], who adopted a less imperialist model in which globalisation in sport is seen as a web of complex interdependencies between local conditions and global structures, evident in the concept of 'glocalization'[1992]. David Rowe [2003] has repudiated the significance of globalisation by arguing that the very structuring principle of sport consists of producing national cultural differences, and is hence unsuitable for carrying the generic production of sameness so often associated with globalisation. In a recent article, Andrews and Ritzer [2007] use Rowe's repudiation as a starting point for a counter attack from what could be labelled the 'cultural imperialist' camp within the sociology of sport.

My argument is that both these positions ignore how passionate local identities are operationalised in a complex, yet concrete, transnational landscape. By drawing on examples from Scandinavian football and research on the influences of English football in Norway [Hognestad, 2003], this article addresses the significance of globalization and the nation – the latter depicted in academic debates more often than not in terms of rather self-evident 'local' responses to the former. I address the need to question the emotional significance of categories such as national, local and global, as well as the impact of late capitalist structures on the cultural production of sameness and difference in football.

WHO ARE WE?

While studies of football fan cultures during the 1980's were dominated by a rationalist focus on hooligan behaviour in a British context [Armstrong, 1998], football as an arena for expressing local and national identities in various corners

of the world became a new paradigmatic focus during the 1990's, notably in the edited collections by Armstrong and Giulianotti [1997], Giulianotti, Hepworth and Bonney [1994], Giulianotti and Finn [2000] and Brown [1998]. Other seminal contributions to a wider understanding of football as an arena for generating and expressing identities include the monographs of Armstrong [1998] and Archetti [1999], the sociological overview of the game provided by Giulianotti [1999] and the edited collections on football, race and multiculturalism by Carrington and McDonald [2001] and Back, Crabbe and Solomos [2002]. A number of chapters in these books deal with local or regional opposition to nationalism or hegemonic versions of national identity.

Identity is a concept often deployed in academic texts, and in common sense language, to denote an often vague 'something'; people, places, villages, towns, districts, nations, continents, languages, dialects, sexualities, gender, pets, landscapes, saints, objects, smells, technologies, tastes and just about anything else under (or above) the sky that provide people with existential meaning and/or a sense of belonging. Football supporters frequently define themselves as negations of the most relevant other. As a global game it is structured around various rivalries. Football identities evolve around local identities, yet participation in 'local tribalism' in football is not restricted to those locals born into one context. Through forces of globalisation and transnational connections, identities in football tend to contract semiotic significances that extend across terrestrial and national borders. Hence a diversity of people with various social and cultural backgrounds currently contribute to the construction of hybrid mythologies in football.

In his book on the construction of an Argentinian national identity, Archetti argues that: "... the existence of a clear boundary between 'us' and 'them' calls for the hybrid, the mixed, the less pure, which is created by the transgression or the possibility of transgression of this boundary." [1999: 24] Hybridization is a term deployed by social scientists in order to analyze the meeting and intermixing of various cultural practices in places marked by significant degrees of immigration. Theoretically, the term has in recent years been related to 'de-homogenizing' arguments derived from the idea that all societies are heterogeneous and marked by a complex variety of cultural encounters [1999: 23], rather than representing culture as 'a seamless whole'. [Keesing, 1994] Hypothetically, it is possible to imagine that a Norwegian supporter of a local English football club could be seen by locals as the incarnation of an unwanted 'globalized' hybrid. Marginalising structures in football based on race and ethnicity are analysed in the works of Back, Crabbe and Solomos [2002] and also Carrington and McDonald [2001].

It is imaginable that in football any 'foreigner' pollutes the meanings attached to having 'grown up' with the club and having one's autobiography closely woven into the physical community of the club.

However, negative responses towards Norwegian supporters were rare during my research at and around various English football grounds in the years between 1999 and 2004. The most common response was to embrace 'long distance supporters' as a part of an international club community. These encounters were characterised by *sameness* rather than difference or 'otherness'. As a cultural practice football is closely associated with collective identities and football clubs are still intimately associated with specific localities such as townships, streets and a stadium. 'The local hero' still resonates as a privileged participant in the world of football. At the same time, football is regularly described as the most globalized sport in the world, with games from the largest European leagues (notably the English, Spanish and Italian) being broadcast to a global television audience. Football is currently developing from these frictions of 'glocal' inclusions and exclusions.

A GLOBAL GAME?

Zygmunt Bauman once labeled globalization as..."a fad word fast turning into a shibboleth, a magic incantation, a pass key meant to unlock the gates to all present and future mysteries". [1998: 1] Globalization has occupied the no. 1 position as the theme of mainstream social science since the early 1990's. As a concept it resonates well with a widespread, yet paradoxical feeling of an expanding world that becomes smaller and more accessible, a condition that in various ways relates to large-scale changes concerning the speed and flow of information, finance and trade across terrestrial borders. Early on, Anthony Giddens [1990: 64] defined globalization as..."the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distinct localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa." Economists tend to relate it to the spread of market liberalisation and trade operating in accordance with transnational (rather than national) laws.

Most significantly, globalization has been strongly associated with capitalist power, seeing certain states and corporations as controlling world markets. A social and cultural homogenization, marked by the universalization of particular, dominant centres such as 'The West' or 'America', is often depicted in rather dystopic ways as the real consequence of these influences. A leading scholar

within more recent 'cultural imperialist' thinking is George Ritzer, who has taken his theory of 'McDonaldization' [1998] to a theory of 'grobalization' [2003], a term applied to denote the financial powers of late capitalist, mostly American-owned transnational corporations and the need for ever expanding markets on a global scale. These processes are deemed to carry with them apocalyptic potentials which inevitably overwhelm and erase traditional and indigenous cultural practices, derived from the grounding realisation that no corners of the world remain untouched by the hegemonic forces of globalisation. Previously, Grossberg argued that theories of globalization were often based on an assumed dichotomy between the local and the global, which tended to celebrate the local as a "heroic response" to globalization [1997]. With the introduction of the rather awkward concept of 'grobalization', Ritzer formulates a similar critique, intended as a critical supplement to the more optimistic take on the creative and subjective possibilities embedded in 'glocalization' and related theories such as 'creolization' and 'hybridization'.

Hannerz [1996: 68] argues convincingly that the new world system does not lead to cultural homogeneity, but rather a whole new diversity of interrelations, in which people can draw on a series of cultural impulses and resources in order to create identities and transform the alien into their own. This critique is embedded in Chris Barker's understanding of globalization in connection with global media and the spread of television: "...globalization is not to be seen as a one-way flow of influence from the west to the 'rest', rather, globalization is a multi-directional and multi-dimensional set of processes" [1997: 17].

Numerous studies dealing with the topic of sport and globalization have appeared among 'sports academics' during the last decade or so. The twinning of sport with globalisation has been analysed in connection with the issues of sports labour and international migration by Bale and Maguire [1994] and Taylor [2007], and in terms of national responses to the pressures of globalization, as studied by Alan Bairner [2001]. Also Joseph Maguire's study of modern sports as part of a more general cross cultural civilization process suggests that sport is neither a process of "cultural homogenization" nor representative of "chaotic cultural diversity" [1996]. This to some extent nullifies the meaning of the concept altogether, as Taylor concluded when he postulated that academic writing on the specific subject of football migration..."has tended to employ 'globalization' uncritically, as if it were an established fact rather than a contested concept" [2007: 45] Robertson's five-stage model has proved to be the among the most fruitful models of globalization [1992], applying the concept to a number of social processes that, over time, have seen a rise in various transnational connections and

an intensified global flow of ideas, mediated images and commodities between individuals, social groups, corporations and organisations. In order to underline the interdependencies between the local and the global, Robertson introduced the concept of 'glocalization' to the social sciences.

By applying their concept of 'globalization' to sport, Andrews and Ritzer underline the overwhelmingly homogenizing effects of corporate transnationalism in sport on glocal sporting communities. They assert that sports cultures and identities are structured around the financial powers of a limited number of huge transnational sports corporations that control the commercial aspects of sport; from club ownerships to control over sports media companies to companies producing sports gear [2007]. This is also reflected within the context of the sociology of sport, where local and national representation are regularly depicted as a unified response to the forces of globalization, visible in the phenomena ranging from player migration to the increasingly transnational constitution of club ownerships to the sport-media complex [Maguire, 1996]. Andrews and Ritzer take as their starting point an argument against David Rowe, who countered what he saw as the exaggerated effects of globalization. Rowe repudiates the global in the context of sports as an arena for forging identities, based on the argument that sports are concentrated on producing *national* cultural differences, and therefore unsuited to carry out the significance of globalization. Rowe draws his examples from national representations in the tabloids, based on the coverage of a global media event such as the 2002 World Cup, and asserts that "the nation... is never far below the surface of sports discourse" [2003: 286]. Like many sports researchers, Rowe presents, rather self-evidently, the nation as the primary frame for particularity and identities in sports, in opposition to the universalising principles and forces of globalization. The world wide popularity of a sport such as football can be interpreted from a principle of rivalry; without the staging of a contest between "us and them" where would the passion, drama and meaning of sport lie? The questions remain however: who are 'we' and who are 'they'?; and how important is the nation for to the dedicated fan?

Andrews and Ritzer [2007] criticize what they see as the widespread "glorification of the actor" and a dominant optimistic focus on the ability of local communities and nations to mount a challenge against the forces of globalisation in sports research. From the basic assertion that no community exists as "unpolluted" by globalization, they argue that the divide is not between the local and the glocal, but between the glocal and the *grobal*, a concept introduced in order to include "...the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations and other entities and their desire – indeed, their need - to impose themselves on various

geographic areas' [Ritzer, 2003: 194]. Building on the argument of Grossberg that theory often seems to provide researchers with an *a priori* tautological device through which their engagement with the empirical can be filtered and confirmed, Andrews and Ritzer advocate a critical approach beyond what they see as the perpetual focus on "heroic subjects" [2007].

While this is an intriguing analysis, it nevertheless appears to be a retreat to some of the old cultural imperialist arguments which tended to depict development as a one way eradication of local culture at the expense of an overwhelming transnational capitalism. From such a perspective it is not difficult to find evidence of an experienced difference between Manchester United and Nike. Even though both share the status of a highly transnational brand name with American ownership, they do not share the inducement for passionate involvement. Andrews and Ritzer present the case of Manchester United fans protesting against American business tycoon Malcolm Glazer, who purchased a majority of the shares in the club in 2005. By quoting a journalist who ridiculed these supporters for making Manchester United look like a club being run by 'some sort of worker's cooperative or hippie commune' [2007: 146], their conclusions suggest that contemporary football fandom is charged with naivety and a lack of awareness about the reality of the game. In a sports context this view appears to be exactly the same as that of Pierre Bourdieu, who claimed over 30 years ago that sports spectators are merely "illusory participants" [1978].

My concern here is perhaps an ethical one, yet no less legitimate: how do we preserve the ways the subjects of our research experience reality? Global processes manifestly effect and structure the experiences people have of living in the world, yet if we scrutinize *how* people experience the global we might find that the world does not look as big, floating and marked by overwhelming sameness as it might seem for a researcher studying global, neo liberal capitalism. While the world of our research subjects is no longer confined to local or national communities, at the same time they rarely act in a boundless 'around the globe' world. Most football supporters in the world who are older than 30 have watched Maradona play for Argentina and know which clubs he played for during his career because they interact in a global football discourse, which may be facilitated and structured by transnational corporations in various ways, but where experience and practice are always charged with a particular, local content. In studies of passionate identities, people are always focused on relatively confined localities. For a supporter of Brann Bergen and Middlesbrough football clubs, the relevant geographical territories are to be found in a very small part of Northern Europe. 'The huge rest' may exist in his mind and he may be under the influence of

transnational football consumerism and sports capitalism, but in terms of passion and experience his focus has a clear and privileged focus on two football clubs, concretely manifested through notions of 'home' attached to Brann stadium in Western Norway and Riverside stadium in the North-east of England. So if we are searching for 'local heroes' as voices opposing globalisation, sport may very well be a legitimate arena to look at. This is not meant as an excuse for ignoring the effects of capitalism on sport, which is evident in the corporate naming of stadiums such as Reebok (Bolton) and Emirates (Arsenal) in England and Color Line (Aalesund) and Aker (Molde) on the North Western coast of Norway, or in lucrative sponsorships and television deals etc. People can only navigate within the social and economic structures they are part of and it is sometimes worth recalling that globalising processes do not induce the same sense of indifference and homogenizing flow in every social and cultural context. As a consequence we cannot make simple dichotomies between 'victims' and 'assailants' in the globalization processes.

For many fans, stadiums are monuments of local, topophilic attention, linked to identities woven around specific football clubs. The sense of belonging to a collective humanity through football is not an indifferent flux experience, but quite the opposite. A Norwegian football supporter's relationship to an English club community is in many ways like a 'passionate exile', which is not to suggest that they feel 'exiled'. It is generally experienced more like a 'home away from home'. Football is to many people a constance in lives that otherwise tend to change continuously. This is not to say that football identities are unchangeable and unaffected. Football supporters travel and adapt to new impulses transmitted via media or through concrete explorations into new football universes. New layers of knowledge and meaning are thus added to their status as supporters of specific clubs, in accordance with changes in the game. The making of identities in football moves and changes, yet 'being a supporter' continue to induce sentiments and emotions related to virtues of loyalty and solidarity among the game's devoted identity agents. As shown by Andrews and Ritzer, it is awkward to integrate 'globalization' into studies of the meanings of our various "heroic subjects". Too often the term conveys self evident meanings about the intricate and complex interdependencies between large scale processes and local ones. There is an obvious need to keep a focus which takes into account the concerns of our research subjects and avoids ending up in taxonomies that tend to reduce everything to various diluted and abstract concepts of globalization.

THE GLOCAL WITHIN THE NATION

While the nation retains its structural position, evident in league systems and international tournaments such as the World Cup, the existential meanings and emotional attachments in football are ingrained in a cultural complexity that gives reason to question the assumption that the 'local' and the 'national' are part of the same emotional axis in any unequivocal way. Football in Norway is part of a universe where the significance of the nation is contested and sometimes evaporates, between a local, civic patriotism tied to the support of a local club and transnational allegiances to predominantly English club teams. While the dramatic commercial alterations of football in recent years have paved the way for new "football customers" and changed the experience for supporters and spectators alike, football clubs in general seem to retain and strengthen their significance as a generator of passionate identities.

The development of the status and influence of English football in Norway can be described as a movement from a media dependent pastime to a big business and a provider of passionate, semiotic significance. The support for English club teams would be unthinkable without the historically substantial coverage of English football evident in Norwegian media since 1902, the year the Norwegian Football Association was formed. Throughout the 20th century football passion in Norway developed with a privileged orientation towards England, an orientation certainly more marked by admiration than antagonism. While the introduction of live TV-coverage of English league matches in 1969 was an all-Scandinavian project, the passion for English football clubs has had a continuous appeal unmatched in Sweden and Denmark. Ninety percent of the 55,000 members in the Scandinavian Supporter Union for British football are Norwegian [Hognestad, 2003].

This 'anglophile' basis of football in Norway has paved the way for a football universe in which a majority of fans develop a relationship to one local Norwegian club and an English club. A century long passion for football in Norway has grown, in the last two decades, to become a major arena for forging and expressing identities, spun around themes such as rural and urban backgrounds, civic and national pride, and the more idiosyncratic semiotics connected with the support for English football clubs. It was not until the 1990's that travelling to away games and the extended social rituals which are currently evident all over the country became commonplace for Norwegian football fans, be it in connection with Norwegian league games or in pubs that make a living from showing live televised football from England [Armstrong, Hognestad 2003].

Greater affordability to travel to games in England, combined with modern technology such as internet forums or watching live televised games with fellow fans in one of the numerous football bars,² have provided the basis for the construction of new networks.

Simultaneously, attendance at Norwegian top level league matches increased somewhat haphazardly in the years between 1991 and 2007, Since the introduction of “Tippeligaen” in 1991, the average attendance at top division matches doubled, from 5,083 in 1991 to 10,521 in 2007, but then took a dive to 7,003 in 2012. This recent sudden decline in crowd attendance reflects a similar trend in the rest of Scandinavia, and may be interpreted as a negative effect of the commercial attention and glamour generated by the global football of the top European leagues such as the EPL and La Liga in particular. Nevertheless, since the professionalization of the game in Norway was introduced, fan communities around Norwegian clubs have developed, both in terms of increasing numbers of fans and also through a professionalization of supporter organisations, which currently exert influence not only through vocal support during games, but also on decisions made at boardroom level. At the same time there has been a growing tendency toward home made styles of support, which to some extent is contrasted to the transnational orientations of fans of English clubs. As a consequence the parallel orientation between a local Norwegian and a long distance English club has in recent years been challenged by a more dominant ‘monogamous’ morality, which underlines that there can only be one football club in your life - your local one - expressed through slogans such as “one life – one club”. This morality is sometimes expressed as a national response to globalization and, in this context, to impulses from a more glamorous football league.

WHERE IS HOME?

When Rosenborg played Arsenal in the Champions League in Trondheim in 2004, the predominantly Norwegian away contingent of Arsenal fans were greeted with a banner displayed by the home supporters which stated “Norwegian teams – Norwegian fans”. A Norwegian Arsenal fan told me after the game that they ought to have replied with a banner that said “International teams – international fans”. Football generates a set of complex, multiple identities, which the more “monogamous” fans see themselves in opposition to. In 1996 the then-coach of

² An estimated 30 bars in Oslo alone currently (in 2013) make most of their living from showing live football.

Rosenborg, Nils Arne Eggen, told the press how shocked and upset he was to find that most spectators were supporting Liverpool in a friendly match between Rosenborg and Liverpool at Ullevål stadium in Oslo. However, such a moral call for a nationalist-grounded loyalty appears irrelevant for a football fan based in Oslo supporting, say Liverpool and Vålerenga.

Back in 2002, on a busy night for live televised football, three Champions League matches were played on the same night: Rosenborg vs. Inter Milan, Arsenal vs. Borussia Dortmund and Valencia vs. Liverpool. In Bohemen, a pub partly owned by the Vålerenga fan group, and also a famous venue for watching live football on TV in the Oslo city centre, three matches were screened; Valencia vs. Liverpool, Arsenal vs. Borussia Dortmund, and Millwall vs. Burnley – an English 1st Division match. Bewildered pub clients looking for the Rosenborg match were told by a sarcastic barman over the speaker system that people with moustaches and cowboy boots must watch their football elsewhere. The reference to moustaches and cowboy boots here is linked to the metonymic caricatures often associated with males from the Trondheim area. This is not to suggest that a league game between Millwall and Burnley was seen to pull more people and more drinkers to a pub in Oslo than a champions league match involving Rosenborg. The bar staff knew that with the live screening of Liverpool's and Arsenal's games the pub would be full anyway. Nevertheless this was an act that quite clearly questions the relevance of a privileged nation-centred loyalty in football.

While these processes are not valid in other footballing and sporting contexts focused on national competition and rivalry, the suggestion that players always return to [a national] "home base", as Rowe argued [2003: 286], is a simplification of a much more complex reality where the significance of the nation as a frame for forging identities in football is highly debatable. The civic pride expressed through support for Brann Bergen is very much of an anti-national, anti-capital kind, antagonistic towards anything associated with Eastern, Oslo-based political and cultural hegemony, not unlike that of an average Catalanian football fan's contempt for the Spanish national team. Similar regional animosities are evident in a number of professional football leagues. For an average Brann supporter it is unthinkable to support for instance Rosenborg from Trondheim or Vålerenga from Oslo in international matches out of any meaningful, common national identity. A Brann supporter is more likely to support *any opponent* to teams from Oslo or Trondheim, similar to the attitude a lot of devoted club fans worldwide would adopt (Armstrong and Hognestad, 2003).

THE LOCAL GOOD, THE NATIONAL BAD AND THE TRANSNATIONAL UGLY?

Following the ground-breaking analysis of the nation as an ‘imagined community’ [Anderson, 1983] and as ‘invented tradition’ [Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983] the focus on the nation as a frame for negotiating and defining identities was firmly established. Despite the myriad of perspectives and theories of the origins and meanings of nationalism and national identity, the significance of nationalism as a contributor to the construction of identities is nonetheless undeniable, as noted by Mike Cronin and David Mayall [1998]. However, we need to contextualise how and why the nation is a significant generator of patriotic sentiments. In discourses on sport the nation is often treated as a privileged frame of reference for expressing identities. A sports commentator is likely to speak of ‘our men’ when referring to athletes or players representing the nation. The concept of the nation as a fairly uniform collective frame still prevails in sports media coverage all over the world, frequently supported by sweeping academic analysis which argue in self evident ways about the nation being the primary collective identity to which individuals are attached [Whannel, 1992].

Hoberman [1993: 18] quite rightly argues that ‘sportive nationalism’ should not be regarded as a single generic phenomenon, but must be related to the varying national contexts in which it appears. Hoberman’s studies of ‘official nationalism’ in sport have been supplemented by several studies of sport and national identity from historians and also from academics coming from a variety of other social scientific disciplines. Alan Bairner shows that the construction and reproduction of national and ethnic identities are manifest in sport as local responses to globalization [2001]. From an ethnographic perspective, MacClancy [1996] shows how Athletic Club de Bilbao through their ‘*la cantera*’ policy of cultivating local talent and players with a Basque ethnic origin only, became a central vehicle for expressing Basque ethnic nationalism in relation to their Spanish adversaries. In a Norwegian context, Matti Goksøyr has given several historical accounts of sport as a vehicle for expressing Norwegian national identities [1998]. Goksøyr and Olstad [2002] have also provided a historical analysis of football in Norway, which includes both local and national accounts of the significance of the game in Norwegian communities. Despite the apparent existence of transnational football fandom there seems to be a reluctance in academia to view this as generative of new identities contesting the more traditional ones related to the nation as a privileged frame for structuring and reproducing identities. Two decades ago Real and Mechikoff [1992] published an article where they discuss transnational

fandom in sports from an American perspective, but relate it solely to media consumption and the commercialization of sports, not to the experiences of 'sports consumers'. In discourses on sport the word 'transnational' is frequently associated with international capitalism, cultural imperialism, and the continuous commodification and commercialization of sport. The term is often mentioned in connection with agencies like the International Olympic Committee and others, which are regarded as central agents in the development of a global sports-media complex [Maguire 1996: 20]. Hence the whole notion of 'transnational' identities seems to fit awkwardly into the bulk of social and cultural theories on sport, possibly because it is associated with the opposite – loss of identity.

There may be moral issues among Norwegian supporters over the contrasts between support for a local Norwegian team and the support for an often more glamorous English team. Yet you will not find many devoted Norwegian fans who acknowledge supporting an English football club because of the presence of Norwegian footballers on that club. Legitimate moralities and loyalties among devoted club supporters tend to put the imagined community of the club first, rather than rotating players and their national belonging. Studies of dedicated Norwegian supporters of English clubs overwhelmingly support the argument that the national identity of a player is considered as a secondary importance. This is similar to the 'absence of nationalism' which De Biasi and Lanfranchi [1997] found among devoted Italian club supporters, more commonly known as *ultras*. The transnational nature of the game challenges the significance of the club's national location, evident in the way the squads of both small and big professional clubs in Europe and other parts of the world currently consist of players from many nations and a great variety of cultural backgrounds. Football has truly evolved into a global labour market during the last couple of decades.

Football fans also travel more, establishing transnational connections with large or small football communities. The connections between Norwegian and English fans are no longer marked by one way traffic from local Norwegian communities to English. English fans are also designing football holidays to locations in Norway, as is evident in the connections between football fans in Bergen and the North East of England [Armstrong and Hognestad, 2003]. The increasingly transnational nature of football support means that participation in various club communities is no longer restricted to local residents, but points out the readily available semiotic devices in which new passionate identities and 'liminal spaces' may be generated via television and through overseas travel. These travels, that in their individual and sometimes sophisticated nature affect the ways specific teams, grounds or cities are experienced, resemble Urry's

depiction of a 'post-Fordist holiday making' in contrast to the mass ('Fordist') tourism of gigantic holiday resorts [2002: 14-15].

Due to the many strong territorial local football communities, combined with the growing transnational and de-territorialized composition of squads and supporters, national frames of references seem to have lost its significance in many football communities. However, these processes are not necessarily applicable in other footballing and sporting contexts. The World Cup is played between nations and continues to grow in terms of global interest, and the nation retains its position as a privileged frame of reference in national media. In sports media this is expressed, for instance, through substantial coverage of star national athletes performing abroad at the international level. Yet there is substantial evidence suggesting that for many football club fans, Norway and other countries are nationless states. The nation, manifested through a national football team, simply does not induce the same level of passion as say Brann or Arsenal.

Nevertheless passion and interest, measured by crowd attendance at games in which the Norwegian national team plays, appear to be more dependent on success than on the club level, which is indicative of a shallower and less partisan support than the ways "deep playing" fans support their club. If measured by interest in national team football, my data seems to give a perfect illustration of Paul Heelas' argument that the self-determining authority of the nation has become weaker [1998]. In a survey among Norwegian football fans in 2000, just prior to Norway's participation in Euro 2000, a mere 15% stated that they followed national team football with a stronger passion than club football [Hognestad 2006]. While it can be argued that this data is a bit outdated at the time of writing this article (October 2013), it is hardly controversial to suggest that for dedicated football supporters the national team rarely attains the status of an intimate 'us', let alone something that is closely attached to a 'me'. The main concern of fans supporting teams with international players appears to be that the players will return to their clubs unscathed after appearing for the national team. The World Cup is, for some of these supporters, regarded as a pastime where support is more shallow and orientated towards maybe several national teams that include players from their local or "global" club.

CONCLUSIONS

In the world of club football the traditions associated with the club, the town or the region stand out as important building-blocks in the symbolic construction of identities. Football provides a space in which the meanings of 'partisan fanhood' are more focused on local than on national conditions and realities, whether 'the local' means the physically immediate surroundings or the location of a club located elsewhere or in a different country. Everyday football is played out in the more esoteric universes of clubs on a frequent, week-to-week basis. National team football is played with a lower frequency and generates substantial interest and passion in connection with the odd big games or international tournaments such as the World Cup. As a global media event the World Cup holds a position which no club-based tournament can challenge. Club football remains sectarian and liminal while the rituals of the World Cup penetrate societies and global communities. In this sense, tournaments such as the World Cup constitute major occasions for enacting the imageries of nations. Yet the World Cup lasts only one month every four years and attracts spectators resembling Grant Jarvie's and Graham Walker's depiction of the *90 minute patriots* [1994], i.e. spectators whose commitment is more superficial, inconsequential and limited than that of everyday club supporters. While the nation maintains its structural domination in football and other cultural contexts there are clear indications that the nation is not where the heart is for contemporary dedicated football fans. Under the influence of transnational networks, commodified semiotics and impulses they share an emotional preference for the physicality and passion created around 'glocal' club communities.

These processes of "localisation" and "transnationalisation" currently threaten the position of how significant national team football is as a marker of identities in sport in general, and in football in particular. Growing global orientations within football may enforce imageries of the nation during events such as the World Cup, yet the nation as a privileged common reference for notions of loyalty, morality and the construction of identities remains a contested proposition.

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**PONADNARODOWY NORWEG? GLOBALIZACJA
A KONTESTACJA TOŻSAMOŚCI W PIŁCE NOŻNEJ**

Streszczenie

W artykule podejmowany jest problem przemian tożsamości kibiców piłki nożnej, które towarzyszą procesom transnacionalizacji i deterytorializacji tej dyscypliny sportu. W pierwszym rzędzie ukazane zostaje, jaką rolę w kreowaniu regionalnych i narodowych identyfikacji pełnią lokalne kluby i drużyny narodowe w piłce nożnej. Po drugie, na przykładzie praktyk kibicowskich w Wielkiej Brytanii i Norwegii zrekonstruowany zostaje proces zastępowania lojalności o charakterze lokalnym czy narodowym przez bardziej złożone tożsamości. Znajduje to swe odzwierciedlenie w zmianie form kibicowania – zarówno na poziomie jednorazowego udziału w widowisku sportowym, jak i bardziej utrwalonego kibicowania i wspierania danej drużyny klubowej czy narodowej.

Słowa kluczowe: tożsamość, piłka nożna, glokalizacja, transnacionalizacja, globalizacja.