



The Genesis of Sporting Events as Social Facts: FIFA World Cup South Africa.¹

**La génesis de los eventos deportivos como hechos
sociales:
Copa Mundial de la FIFA Sudáfrica**

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Abstract

The present paper discusses theoretically the sociology of mega-events and event management, as well as the regulation of rivalry and violence in the sporting event. With a focus on the South Africa 2010 World Cup, we discuss critically the importance of festivals and mega-events in the configuration of societal ethos. Tourism, far from what the literature suggests, is more than an economic-centered activity; rather it is the touchstone of society.

Key Words: Event Management, Tourism, South Africa 2010, Consumption, Anthropology.

Resumen

El presente artículo analiza teóricamente la sociología de los megaeventos y la gestión de eventos, así como la regulación de la rivalidad y la violencia en el evento deportivo. Con un enfoque en la Copa Mundial de Sudáfrica 2010, discutimos críticamente la importancia de los festivales y los megaeventos en la configuración de la ética social. El turismo, lejos de lo que sugiere la literatura, es más que una actividad centrada en la economía; más bien es la piedra de toque de la sociedad.

Palabras clave: Gestión de eventos, turismo, Sudáfrica 2010, consumo, antropología.

Introduction

Nation-states celebrate every four years sports competitions as Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup which generate not only a great expectation in a global Audience but attract thousands of tourists. In this context, though further attention was given to these media-events in tourism-related fields. Doubtless, the economic factor plays a vital role in the organization of these events (Kim & Petrick, 2005; Kim, Gursoy & Lee 2006). This is the reason why governments and their respective policymakers have devoted considerable resources and financial aid to improve the already-existent infrastructure towards these types of mass-tourism. Interesting studies revealed how the organization of these events helps local economies by means of multiplier effects, proper of tourism, but redefine the cultural borders of identity (Green & Challip, 1998; Daniels, Norman & Henry 2004; O'Brien, 2006; Daniels 2007; Smith 2005). Over recent years the specialized literature brought into the foreground to what extent, little attention has been paid to qualitative methods that can validate the idea that explains the cultural roots of sports competition. In fact, there is a connection between the archetype of heroism and national-being which merits to be discussed.

As this backdrop, in this chapter, we synthesize a self-ethnography conducted during the FIFA World Cup South-Africa 2010 in Buenos Aires and other Argentinian cities. Though written in an informal way, this chapter explores anthropologically not only the cultural background of Event-Tourism but how the needs of rivalry pave the ways for the national-affirmation. Our main thesis is that, far from promoting hedonism or consumption, South Africa 2010 reinforced the pre-existent material asymmetries found in capitalist societies while emulating the contrasting interplay between life and death. Though not verbatim, the transcriptions of tape-recorded interviews are organized for the reader to gain further readability, at the same time, they can expand their current understanding of this much deeper-seated issue.

Preliminary Discussion

Within academicians, there is some consensus in embracing festival tourism to boost not only the organic-image of destinations, but also to other derivative enhancement as the development of skills in volunteers, the revitalization of national pride for heritage, or even the adoption of sustainable programs to protect the environment. Still, specialists ponder Event-Tourism as a platform to highlight the importance of culture and history to forge a sentiment of nationality nourished by collective self-esteem (Uysal & Wicks, 1993; Crompton & McKay, 1997; Molloy, 2002; Prentice & Anderesen, 2003; Gonzalez-Reverté & Miralbell-Izard, 2009; Chew, 2009). In this respect, Crompton & McKay suggest six reasons which if dully managed, lead towards efficient festival management. Researchers recognize the following variables in order

for policy-makers to manage events: cultural exploration, novelty, recovery needs, socialization and gregariousness (Crompton & McKay, 1997). Even if the effects of event-management were widely studied, results are contradictory or subject to controversy. While Prentice & Andersen (2003) acknowledge “the organic destination image” is the key factor which correlates with Event Management, others academicians as Berlanga Adell (2004) focuses on micro interactional variables, as socialization, adjoined to the reduction of rivalries between hosts and guests. Not surprisingly, under contexts of political disputes, geographical discrepancies or previous conflictive states of war, tourism is far from reducing hostility from locals to tourists but under some other contexts, tourism and event management can be used as an instrument of peace-building. Korstanje, in earlier studies, has documented the historical conflict between Argentinians and Chileans over the recent decades. Though both countries shared an extensive borderland, plausible of many conflicts and misunderstandings, the return of democracy cemented the possibility of a new hypothesis of warfare. Anyway, far from being controlled, the hostility between Chilean tourists and Argentinians still remains alive. In this context, sports competence not only fails in reducing the long-simmering sentiment of hostility but sometimes may very well aggravate it. What is more important, since locals come across with a subordinated role respecting to tourists, the sentiment of hate is temporarily masqueraded (Korstanje 2011; Korstanje & George 2012). It is interesting to see how these findings contradict the literature that emphasizes tourism as a peace-builder. Additionally, Jonker, Saayman & De Klerk (2009) studied the factors necessary to engage demands with the type of spectacle Sports Games offers. These researchers conclude that the promotion of festival as well as “tourist products” is integrated into the formation of expectancies, which is conducive to satisfaction. In that way, instead of the economic factor, the most important variable of event-management is personal satisfaction. Last but not least, Gonzalez-Reverté & Miralbell-Izard (2009) argue convincingly that events should be framed into four possible grids, a) event as brand builders, b) events as an indirect but not for that less strong business generator, c) events as tactical levers and d) events as a vehicle for local pride. The orchestration of intangible resources as pride, solidarity and trust are of paramount importance to produce the necessary synergy to festivals captivates attendants. These spectacles offer “a space of catharsis” where hierarchies blurred but at the same time, the mainstream cultural values are reinforced. At some extent, event management exhibits a new type of escapement for ordinary-people not only producing an atmosphere of rivalry and excitement but recycling the stages of production and economy (Molloy 2002). Starting from the premise that workforce is educated by the interplay of sports, Molloy adds, no less true is that workers revitalize all their daily frustrations by adopting “a process of retaliation” where the other’s success is internalized as an indicator of the in-group superiority. Performing a fictionalized history, nation states appealed to produce allegories around Olympic Games or World Cup Ceremonials in order to protect their interests. Undoubtedly, in other terms, politics and Event Management are inextricably intertwined (Molloy 2002).

The above-noted studies focus on the effects of event management in society, though they leave behind the cultural values that determine media-events. This means that in fulfilling this gap, we have to place not only the conception of sports under the lens of scrutiny but infer in how unless dully regulated the staged state of rivalry and hate may usher community into “ethnocentrism” and “racism”. Since these events give to viewers a false sentiment of superiority (as winners) which serves to engage with national symbols, it would be interesting to discuss in-depth to what extent sports symbolize the manipulation of destiny humans have done for survival purposes. To put this slightly in other terms, sports emulate the intersection of death with life. This point of entry, which will be fleshed out later, has been historically ignored by specialized literature, and it represents today a good platform from where this chapter prompted to make a substantial contribution.

The background of Mega Events

Recently, Rodanthi Tzanelli, Senior Lecturer at the University of Leeds, UK published her newest book *Socio-Cultural Mobility and Mega Events*. Though this work is not centered on South Africa, but in Brazil, it serves as a fertile ground to reconsider the impact of mobility in these spectacles. She triggers a hot debate around the aesthetics of Brazil 2014 (FIFA World Cup) and how the allegories of nationalism are formed, but also she dissects the performance of Open and Closure ceremonials, which are ideologically disposed to disseminate a message. One of the aspects that define the message is oriented to explain why things happen, which means to explain the World. Thus, it is safe to speak of a “cosmetic” of mobilities that are commonly adjoined to politics. In this respect, Tzanelli adds, the paradox of Festivals and Sports Games consists in while accommodated-classes enjoy the visual spectacle, the lower are pressed to launch to streets to protests. This happens because of two main reasons. The first and most important, capitalism expands producing a great asymmetry among classes. Secondly, media devotes considerable attention on these types of events. However, at the time, an ideological allegory is exhibited to a global audience; the real life of Brazil (or South-Africa) is covered. Historically, Brazil has developed a mourning respecting to its bloody past, which is enrooted in the colonial slavery. Since local voices were debarred by European ideals, in Brazil two contrasting nations coexisted. In view of this, the white lord exerted a radical violence against the bodies of slaves, exploiting them insofar to consolidate centralized extractive institutions which regulated politics and economies during a long time. At the time, technology serves for a nation-state to control local crimes, thefts and any attack against tourists, it can be used to discipline the internal agents, which means “the non-European others”. Tzanelli acknowledges that Brazil 2014 offers a landscape of freedom and emancipation alluding to a much wider cosmopolitan spirit of cooperation and understanding, but this happens inside stadiums, the streets, riots, and manifestations are violently repressed by police.

Following Reijnders (2009), Tzanelli clarifies that the logic of exploitation, which was historically cemented by Portugal, created two version of the same mythology. This

corresponds with the dynamic of “guilt-landscape” that characterizes the consumption of populated cities.

The center-periphery dependency is perpetuated by what she dubbed as “cosmographies of riches and desire”. Starting from the belief that centrality is drawn by the combination of national signs, symbols, and authorities, Tzanelli explains that emancipation of colonial periphery (from central nations) developed a profound desire to belong (to the world of civilized citizens). At the time, more distance these emergent nations took from Europe, major attraction experienced. This is the reasons why first world tourists are venerated in the local periphery. In perspective, ceremonials in Brazil 2014 was oriented to produce a shared sentiment of Brazilianness in order to be commoditized and exchanged in the market of global consumers. Brazilians looked to sublimate all their burdens and frustrations reaching the cup but once humiliated by Germany (7 to 1), their resentment was rechanneled against Rousseff and Argentina (Tzanelli 2014).

The upshot in this book is that the degree of hospitality is given to an external object (e.g Rousseff’s administration, or even Argentinian hooligans) in order to avoid social fragmentation, which is accelerated by a dual sentiment of hate-love which produces uncertainty. The archetype of heroism and masculinity represented by Blacks balances the frustrations of a nation, which oscillates between happiness and slumming. The process of homeostasis in the social structure is balanced by the expression of hostility, derived towards a third-object. In hating an external object, ego reduces the ambiguity of two contrasting emotions. Doubtless, these games are posed to achieve social communion in host countries. As Freud observed, extreme fears to strangers as well as phobias resulted from the attempts of mind to prevent a “fragmented personality”. That way, the ego copes with contrasting feelings, oddly love and hate. The imagined phobic object (in this case Argentineans) re-channels the internal conflicts to achieve social cohesion. This explains the rivalry between Brazil and Argentina in Football and other sports.

The Archetype of Heroism

Human beings recognize their ontological vulnerability to the magnificence of creation. Even, American Anthropologist Vincent Crapanzano, in his book *Imaginative Horizons*, observes cultures are formed from the borderlands which legitimize “the in-between places”. From its inception, cultures were created not only to explain contingency and death but what lies beyond human knowledge. Therefore, imaginations are vital forces that reinforce social institutions. The faculty of imagining future mediates between reality and unreality as psychoanalysis noted (Crapanzano 2004). The same applies on mythologies and the archetype of Heroism.

Among the disciplines that delved in heroism, doubtless, anthropology made substantial advances in the understanding of myths, legends, and stories where heroes are pressed to confront to Gods and Demons. The life of heroes are often fraught of obstacles, tragedies, and contingencies they successfully face to protect humankind. The functionality of heroism lies in reminding how the founding parents resolved the problems providing to others solution for their current concerns. In other words, heroism is aimed at resolving the obstacles of species, lessons which are documented (in different ways and sources) through mythology. This suggests the following axiom, how founding parents resolved the limitation to subsistence, in the same direction, we have to go. At a first glance, heroes mediate between humans (and their fragilities) and Gods. In their adventures, heroes cross the borderlands to struggle against Giants, Demons and other evil-doers. The risks they are running are proportional to the glory and game reached after the travesty (Bauza, 2007). While F. Bauza found common allegorical elements in the figure of heroes which can be compared to modern sportsmen, Elias & Dunning (1992) emphasized the role of heroism as the main conduit to politics. The rise and expansion of nation-states not only appealed to the archetype of heroism to crystalize inter-class authority insofar it signaled to temporal states of competence in order for controlling emotions. At the time, capitalist system advanced, citizens were pushed to express emotions in their private life. As a result of this, games and sports-events liberate emotions within the circuits of production and consumption. Elias and Dunning are interested in developing a model to understand hooligans' violence in Football. They found that attendants are in quest of excitement in order to not only their lives but their being-in-this-world. In consequence, Atkinson adheres to the thesis that sports are aimed at de-routinizing the sense of security provided by the Nation States in controlled quotas sometimes facilitate the rise of violence. Following this reasoning, sports emulate the needs of sacrifice to understand "suffering", which is inevitable to existence. Those who win emulate certain supremacy over the Gods (Atkinson 2008). The attention of the audience in these types of events was widely explored by Dayan and Katz, two senior professors who discussed with accuracy how sports delineated the borders between inferiority-superiority among participants. Unless this can be limited, sports may engender climates of ethnocentrism and imperialism. In sum, media-events which oscillate from Royal Weddings to FIFA world cup are self-oriented to enhance the trust among members of in-group. At the time, attendants accept the allegorical discourse of their politicians; they formulate new bonds to officialdom (Dayan & Katz 1994).

As the previous argument given, media coverage potentiates the ranking of selected destinations, but serious risks should be faced to enhance security. In some cases, locals exert considerable violence against tourists, but in others, attendants are victims of attacks, local crime even terrorism (Deery & Jingo 2010). Media events are often targeted by many minorities and groups which needs to call the attention of nation-states. While each time these types of events take place the subordination of periphery to the center is re-validated, no less true is that any attacks in these exemplary centers cause serious political instability (Korstanje, Clayton & Tzanelli 2014; Korstanje 2015).

At a first glance, leisure and sports events improve social cohesion which is vital to reduce social discontents. As N Garnham puts it, the example of Ireland and Rugby as long as Boer's war shows how sports emulate the roots of the battlefield, sometimes aligning old prejudices and unresolved hatred feelings. The visit of Springboks and Canadian team from 1902 to 1906 in the United Kingdom waked up profound imperial connotation in supporters and detractors. The question of whether separatists saw in the Irish alignment to Boers a sign of symbolic independency nourished the belief that unionists considered this as an act of betrayal. The degree of antipathy or sympathy with the British Empire depends on an early historical backdrop that gives sense to the event. The pervasiveness of sports in the process of ethnogenesis is unquestionable. In addition, Garnham recognizes that South-Africa's team visit engendered the union of all whites in South Africa under the same flag while in Ireland provoked an opposite result (Garnham, 2003). This raises a more than a pungent question, ¿is sports-tourism or event management the epicenter of ethnogenesis?

One of the founding parents of French sociology, Emile Durkheim envisaged that ethnogenesis formed and evolved around combined and shared symbols, which were orchestrated to undermine the bearable degree of uncertainty. As a protecting shelter built to be protected from the external environment, ethnogenesis provides meaning to contingency. His main thesis seems to be that national symbols derived as residual construes crystalized after "European evolution". For Durkheim, the power and influence of the Totem in primitive tribes set the pace to "nationalism" in secularized societies (Durkheim 1992). Furthermore, C. Castoriadis reminded how "Homer Chronicles" which were a real inspiration for many generations and civilization to date, bespeaks of an adventure where humans meet with Monstrosity (Cyclopes), some mythical giants who live beyond the law. Originally, Homer not only is horrified on this situation, but he comes across with the onset of tragedy. For ancient Greeks, the genesis of the tragedy was resulting from the end of law-making, which means the upsurge of chaos and decontrol. Unlike other mythologies embedded with Christianity or Judaism, World has not been created to be administered by humans; this suggests that humans should demonstrate there are virtuous to live according to the rules of Gods. This happens because of two main reasons. Firstly, destiny (Moiras) rules for all created thing in the earth, but not for the law. Ancient Greeks do not believe in prophecies or predestined fate, in which case, sports functioned as conduits to confront against God, in the same way, heroes defied their crave in the immemorial times. The quest of "excellence" was a distinctive hallmark that characterized Ancient Greece, and in part, the social background that determined modern sports. As Nigel Spivey (2004) observed, Ancient Olympics suspended within a time-frame the possibility for cities to conduct the war against neighbors. These games were innovatively an invention not only to foster "the sentiment of hospitality" which is necessary for Games but corresponded with a political decision to avoid the Hobbesian "war of all against all".

Let's explain that Hobbes (1998) was a pioneer who envisaged that human soul debated around two contrasting tendencies, the needs of possessing others' properties, but at the

same time, humans are moved by a much deeper fear not to be killed by others. This contradiction between curiosity and fear of otherness was ultimately resolved by the introduction of a third-object (dubbed as Leviathan) that monopolizes the use of violence. Following this standpoint, one might speculate a game symbolizes this utopian encounter between two rival factions. In terms of Elias and Dunning sports, and of course, the soccer upends the logic of conflict and economy. The violence is projected in a specific time and space in order for the system to stimulate a regulated drive of aggression inherited in all human beings. An encounter between Argentina and Brazil not only encourages old rivalries but also emulate a battle under the requisites only one of them will be victorious (Dunning and Elias, 1992). After all, some voices suggest that sports symbolize the needs for humans to defeat “death” which was the touchstone of “culture”. Games are sacred-plays simply because they are isolated in times and space from routine and rule. As Jean Baudrillard explained, the process of sacralization is based on two contrasting forces, a soil where the founding myths took shape, and the amalgam of stories, myths, and legends that shaped such a territory. These myths signal to a mythical connection of Men and Gods in the Golden Times where suffering and sacrifice were unknown. The tension between proximity-distance associates to politics to operate bestowing to an external object a sacred-status which is legitimized by solemnity and respect (Baudrillard 1995). In this respect, M Evans reconsiders the classic meaning of the sacred, into four new conceptions: personal-sacred, spiritual-sacred, civil-sacred and religious-sacred. While the first sub-type refers to all individual significations, which not necessarily involve physically places or group, the spiritual sacred corresponds with beliefs previously enrooted into territories and geographies that trigger an emotional connotation for people. The attachment to the soil as well as the constructions of borders is ideologically conditioned by “the spiritual sacred” whereas “the civil-sacred” alludes to national signs and symbols like flags, museums and other objects helpful to give identity to the community. The social conflict plays a vital role configuring internally the sacred-space at the time hostility is diverted against the neighbors (Evans 2003).

South-Africa 2010

In this section, it is interesting to discuss the main outcome of a self-ethnography conducted in 2010 during the FIFA World Cup. This research ranged from May to June 2010. With the gathered data-set, we formed four stages well-defined by actions and reactions in each game. One of the promising points, which this World Cup was different to others, associates to the presence of mythical player Diego Armando Maradona as D.T of Argentinian team. He was considered one of the best football players enthralling in the fame of players once Argentina defeated England in Mexico 86. More than a celebrity, Maradona replaced Alfio Basile as coach in the middle of the qualifying tournament. Each section describes the rise and evolution of a facet while Argentina was incompetence as well as the main outcomes left by each play.

Stage 1: Pre-conceptualization of nation-hood.

This facet is characterized by the multiplication of speculations, dreams, expectancies, and rumors about players and the backstage of game. At this instance, journalism prioritized certain stereotypes based on the emotionality of nation-hood. This includes not only biographies of sportsmen but also details of their private lives. The content of programs was staged to show what players eat, how they live or buy for relatives. What players do not only situates as a question of state but one of the priorities to be covered by journalists. The coverage of media adjusts to outstanding traits, like Homer epical legends. At this stage, journalism disseminates positive stories of sportsmen which range from the emotionality of compromise to sacrifice. In this vein, rivals are framed under negative stereotypes, and considered as “staunch enemies”, sometimes even linked to femininity and weakness. A strategy of this caliber helps a group to enhance their self-esteem, sometimes exaggerating their own probabilities to win. Even though the World Cup attracts people without distinction of the genre, the fact is that soccer is lived as a sport of males. The masculine archetype seems to be frequently replicated in all spheres of social life during this tournament. During previous days before the game, journalism recreates statistics of similar matches where the proper team defeated. See, for example, the coverage around the classic Argentina Vs. Germany where both teams played semifinals and finals in 1986 and 1990. The arousal of this encounter has been widely promoted by the media reminding the last encounter where Argentina was defeated by penalties in the World Cup held in Germany in 2006. In foregoing, the pre-conceptualization of nationhood is a relevant stage that evokes the sacredness of nationhood. What remains important is to consider how personal frustrations are projected towards favorite teams, with a focus on nationality and chauvinism. The day-to-day frustrations are blurred in this pre-stage. This happens because “being Argentinian” signifies “other old problems as unemployment, poverty, local crime, and social worries are sublimated in this quest of excitement, brilliantly described by Elias and Dunning. The collective esteem is forged at the time, individual frustrations are temporarily forgotten.

Stage 2: Struggling for

As stated, if the first stage transformed daily frustrations in hopes, this new emergent facet plays a leading role by sublimating emotionality into the channels of “nationhood”. With the passing of days, this hope sets the pace to uncertainty, simply because Argentinians do not know who will be the champion. While this sentiment endures, World Cup engages with a global audience generating higher levels of attraction. Randomness, like destiny, confers to participants a privileged status. All they keep hopes but have no assurance. The possibilities to lose the game or being seriously offended by the rivals predispose the supporters to experience higher degrees of anxiety that are overtly channelized in means of drugs or alcohol consumption. Tickling in the stomach and other associated symptoms as excessive sweat are a product of the nervousness the supports feel each time sometimes important are in dispute. Players

know they are ripe to cross the boundary and behind them are many people, a nation who wait for access to the privilege to be the only one, the best of the tournament.

The pride, reputation, fame, and glory are three of the requisites that are at stake in the game. This assumption may be validated whenever Nicholas Sarkozy, president of France, committed to the bad performance of his team during South Africa 2010, summoned the star T. Henry to give more clarifications about the embarrassing elimination of France. Each team represents not only the colors or symbols of Nation-State but also its reputation for which all conational citizens will be judged once finished the event. Here the politic life converges with the nature of sporting competition. A bad performance in the game entails that stereotypes as cowards, weak, and colds involve all France. Like the religiosity in Middle Age, football today paved the pathways in order for citizens to live their life with major intensity. By winning the cup players assure to gain the fame enough to make profitable agreements once the competition ends, but first and foremost being champion buttresses a strong sentiment of supremacy which is proportional to the rivalry. If players do their best to be champions, this means an eternal life. Rather, any failure in the trace towards Final equals to a symbolic death.

Stage 3: Cathartic Effects.

In Goffmanian terms, any game should be understood as a theatre constituted by a back and front stage. The audience beyond the TV broadcasting feels cathartic emotions that merge the audience with the game. This means that the outstanding features of players are replicated by supporters elsewhere. For one moment in time, a broader audience offsets its own frustrations emulating the dodge of Leonel Messi, Wayne Rooney or even Cristiano Ronaldo. During this stage, viewers and attendants negotiate new transitory identities that should be restituted once the media-event ends. In view of this triumphs and victories extend the frame wherein these negotiations are accomplished. A team defeated in the early stage of tournament keeps fewer probabilities to captivate new supports than a team that accesses to the final match. If the ethnogenesis of heroes is the basis of any sport, the cathartic effects facilitate lay-people may identify with players.

As the previous backdrop, this stage ranges from the early identification with a hero (starring player) from the collective celebrations at squares, airports or bus stations. The main thesis here seems to be that ordinary persons are subject to diverse frustration and rules. These types of events liberate not only the adrenaline necessary for the competence but also cure the deprivations produced in daily life. However, things do not last forever, and once the favorite team is eliminated, the involved supporters should come back to the principle of reality. Unfortunately, this process of identification post and pre-FIFA World Cup remain unstudied. The person one used to be, and the ideal person to be in future converges. Emulating specific cultural values such as bravery, nobility, and warfare, present in the life of West, with individual emotions like love, hero and resentment, World Cup (like others events) leads attendants to imagine they

are another person which really they are not. If this process is not maintained on a temporal basis, the personality runs a serious risk of dissociation. Interesting pathological issues surfaced by sports.

Stage 4: A sad re-accommodation to daily life.

After further examination, it is safe to say that all teams are predestined to lose with the exemption of only one, the champion. In terms of Elias and Dunning, this frame is based on two contrasting concepts, contingency, and hope. Excitement is almost always given in the context of competence but the results should be kept unknown for involving participants. This is the reason why nations convene to celebrate these games. The contingency seems to be the key factor of sports. On another hand, the involving competitors do not know further about their fate, strategies are aimed at maintaining the rivalry. With this argument in mind, once the sporting competence finalizes, lay-people should be driven to their daily and routine life. To wit, negotiations between daily and outstanding roles in people are no easier. In cases of frustrated lives, subjects might exert considerable resistance to come back their previous conditions.

Following this, the cathartic effect well-described in previous stage 3, situates in a new form of social climate where the otherness melts with selfhood. As long as this process takes room, the self (audience) emulates favorite players (national teams) adjusting their frustrations into a new kind of staged-reality; However, since nothing lasts forever once ended the tournament, lay-people appropriate “the allegorical discourses of nationhood”, speaking not only the jargon proper of game, but playing the sports with colleagues and friends. These amateurs’ practices replicate the social values socialized by the discipline as well as it the ways of framing the superiority of some nations over others. The cultural superiority achieved by “the Champion” not only is endorsed to all citizens where players are coming from, but it is explained by the needy sacrifice, which is the precondition to defy Gods’ whim (randomness).

Therefore, World Cup Championship not only facilitates the circulation of merchandises, tourists, and signs worldwide during a lapse of time but also replicates some mainstream cultural values which are the alma mater of capitalism and the nation-state. In a globalized world where loyalties are daily dispersed because of the increasing mobilities, which would entail the disappearance of national boundaries, event management confers exclusiveness and pride to citizens to resume their commitment to their country. Secondly, it is important not to lose the sight that, as a media event, the World-Cup regenerates the necessary tendons of nationalism buttressing major attachments to heritage and traditions. Sports emulate, to some extent, the cycles of death and life, in the same way, mythical heroes do.

Conclusion

The experiences derived from this self-ethnography seem to be staggering and very difficult to narrate with words. After all, we are talking about emotions. This study explored the roots of nationalism and how it operates in daily contexts. Undoubtedly, victories and defeats are lived in analogy to life and death. When teams win the sentiment of euphoria invades the minds of all supporters while an indescribable despair surfaces once the national team is eliminated. Zygmunt Bauman did a coherent diagnosis when he refers to liquid modernity as a metaphor for Big Brother. In this reality-show participants not only exaggerate their possibilities to win but avoid any cooperation with “others”. This happens because they are underpinned in a narcissist culture that prioritizes “the outstanding performance” over other values. Games are not exceptions. Subject to the climate of social Darwinism where all struggle against all for surviving, participants in FIFA World cup emulates the founding values of capitalism where few have monopolized almost 80% of produced-wealth.

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